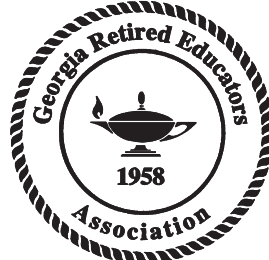


THE GRETA BULLETIN



JOURNAL OF NEWS AND REFLECTIONS FOR
RETIRED EDUCATORS OF GEORGIA

Make Plans Now

GRETA 47th ANNUAL CONVENTION

MAY 3, 4, 5, 2005
RADISSON RIVERFRONT HOTEL
AUGUSTA

VOL. XXIII, NO. 4

GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

SPRING 2005

Justice Robert Benham, Rev. Claude McBride To Highlight 2005 Convention

The Annual GRETA Convention will again this year feature two well-known and accomplished Georgians as keynote speakers. Georgia Supreme Court Justice Robert Benham, whose biographical background was published in the *Winter Bulletin*, will be the featured speaker at the Convention Banquet on Wednesday night. Benham spoke at the 1999 GRETA convention and challenged the attendees to "stand firm with strong family and moral values."



Claude McBride

Reverend Claude McBride, who is currently serving as an associate in the University of Georgia Alumni Office, will be the guest speaker at the convention luncheon on Wednesday. Before working with the Alumni Association, McBride was pastor of the Milledge Avenue Baptist Church in Athens and was recently named Pastor Emeritus. He is a native of Columbus and a graduate of UGA and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. McBride served as Chaplain for the Georgia Bulldog football team for 32 years and presently is Chaplain Emeritus. He is active in church and

community affairs in Athens and Clarke County. He is a popular convention and after-dinner speaker who both entertains and inspires his audiences.

President Zimma Jones said, "We are very fortunate to have two such prominent Georgians as speakers for the convention. Much work has gone into planning and preparing for the 47th Annual Convention, which we hope will be enjoyable and meaningful for all of the attendees. I look forward to seeing many of you in Augusta."

Convention Tour

As part of the 47th annual convention a Historic Driving Tour of Augusta will be available on Wednesday, May 4th. The tour will include the Historic Downtown District, the Augusta Canal Area and beautiful Summerville.

On the tour of Historic Downtown participants will see such landmarks as the Imperial Theatre; the Lamar Building, Augusta's first skyscraper; the Site of the Great Fire; Artists' Row, the Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson; the Amanda America Dickson House; and some of Augusta's most prominent historic churches.

Built in 1845 as a source of water power to attract manufacturing to the South, in its heyday an estimated 250,000 bales of cotton moved along the banks of the Augusta Canal. Today the canal is one of 18 nationally-designated heritage areas and popular spot for walking, biking, and canoeing. The canal is also the location of the historic Enterprise Mill which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Summerville is the hilltop Augusta neighborhood which dates back to the late 1700's as a distinct community, separate from Augusta. Large tracts of land on the hill were acquired by prominent Augusta citizens like George Walton, John Milledge, Governor of Georgia and Thomas Cuning. Many such citizens used their hilltop homes only during the summer months when the heat and humidity along the Savannah River made their Augusta homes uncomfortable.

The tour will depart 2:15 p.m. and all participants should assemble in the lobby of the Radisson Riverfront Hotel at 1:45 p.m. The cost of the tour is \$15.00.

GRETA 47th Annual Convention May 3, 4, 5, 2005 Convention Schedule

TUESDAY, MAY 3

Registration	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
GRETA Executive Committee	9:30 a.m.
Credentials Committee	9:30 a.m.
GRETA Governing Board Meeting/Lunch	10:30 a.m.
Exhibits	10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Hospitality Room	10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Silent Auction	1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Leadership Seminars*	1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
GRETA Chorus Rehearsal	4:45 p.m.
Local Unit Presidents/Awards Banquet	6:30 p.m.

*All Convention attendees are invited

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

Registration	8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Exhibits	8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
First General Session	9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Luncheon	12:00 Noon
Hospitality Room	8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Best Practices	2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Breakout Sessions	2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Silent Auction	2:15 p.m.-4:15 p.m.
Tour	2:15 p.m.-4:15 p.m.
GRETA Foundation Board Meeting	2:30 p.m.
Banquet	6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 5

Registration	8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.
Exhibits	8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
Memorial Service	9:00 a.m.
Second General Session	9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
Adjournment	
Luncheon	11:30 a.m.

GRETA Governing Board and GRETA Foundation Board of Directors

Convention Hotel Reservations

As of March 25, 2005, rooms are still available at the Radisson Riverfront Hotel and the Country Inn and Suites. For reservations call: 706-722-8900. Be sure to say that you are attending the GRETA Convention.

GRETA

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GAINESVILLE, GA 30501-8522

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Message from the President

By Zimma C. Jones



Zimma C. Jones

Another great year for GREA fades away, but our strength and our unity remain. Today, I write to say that I am exceedingly grateful for the opportunity of having served as your president. I have had the wonderful privilege of traveling across this beautiful state during all the seasons of the year to meet and visit with you, to make new friends and to hear delightful stories, all of which have enriched my life. I will treasure the friendships, the memories, and the gifts that you have

given to me.

Our theme for the year has been "GREA UNITED" and I believe that we have achieved success through cooperation and collaborative efforts. While we have not achieved all of the goals set for the year, GREA is bigger and stronger than ever before. Our highest priority of the year has been open communications among local units and between local units and the state office. The purpose of the GREA Board is to govern the association in such a way as to serve the best interest of the association, the local units and each individual member.

As president, I have been impressed MORE and MORE with the quality and the local leadership and with the commitment and willingness of our members to accept special responsibilities and to go the extra mile. I want to remind the local unit presidents to award Emeritus Membership status to members when they reach their ninetieth birthday. Personalized certificates are available from the state office.

Spring creates within us a desire for fresh air, the feel of grass, the smell and beauty of flowers and many other things that remind us of new life. A word that comes to mind that is associated with these things is *contact*, which brings me to the central purpose of this message. The teachers who retired last year have had a year to adjust to their new life and may now realize their need to maintain contact with their profession and their professional colleagues. Teachers who are anticipating retirement may need a *contact* to assist them in preparing for their new life style. You are that *contact*. Use your experience and your influence to recruit them into your local unit and into GREA. By doing so, you have done a service for them and for our association.

I cannot adequately express my gratitude to all of the state committees that have served us during the past year. Some of their accomplishments include:

1. Revision of the GREA Bylaws
2. Revision of the GREA Policy Manual
3. Addition of Dental/Vision Insurance to the services for our members
4. Revision of the Retirement Planning Booklet
5. Membership initiatives
6. Active lobbying efforts

Our gratitude is extended to the chairpersons of all of the committees and to every committee member.

Finally, I look forward with great anticipation to the 47th Annual GREA Convention to be held at the Radisson Riverfront Hotel in Augusta on May 3-5, 2005. A very special program has been planned and I hope to see many of you there.

Local Unit President Receives 2005 "Super Senior" Award



Sarah Mashburn, Colquitt County REA President has been honored for her lifelong work in her community and for retired educators. Mashburn is shown at left receiving a plaque from *The Moultrie Observer* publisher **Dwain Walden**, sponsor of the award. The award, in its first year, is designed to honor senior citizens who continue to give to the community and be of

service to others. CCREA named Mashburn Retired Educator of the year in 1998 and presented her with the Leadership award in 1999. After serving in several positions in the local unit, she took over as President of the Colquitt County REA in 2004.

CONVENTION PREREGISTRATION FORM GEORGIA RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION CELEBRATING 47 YEARS

RADISSON RIVERFRONT HOTEL AUGUSTA

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

MAY 3, 4, 5, 2005

Please complete a separate form for each person attending.

Preregistration DEADLINE is APRIL 22.

Name _____ Local Unit _____ Area _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Office Held (if any) _____ Life Member? Yes No

Convention registration fee must be paid by everyone attending any part of the Convention. Admission to meetings by badge only. Meal functions require a ticket. No exceptions please.

CONVENTION PREREGISTRATION \$30.00 No. _____ Amt. _____

ON-SITE REGISTRATION \$35.00 No. _____ Amt. _____

2004-2005 LOCAL PRESIDENTS/AWARDS DINNER
(Tuesday, May 3, 6:30 p.m.) \$28.00 No. _____ Amt. _____

LUNCHEON—Speaker, Rev. Claude McBride
(Wednesday, May 4, 12:00 p.m.) \$21.00 No. _____ Amt. _____

BANQUET—State Supreme Court Justice Robert Benham
(Wednesday, May 4, 6:30 p.m.) \$32.00 No. _____ Amt. _____

TOUR—Historic Tour of Augusta
(Wednesday, May 4, 2:15-4:15 p.m.) \$15.00 No. _____ Amt. _____

TOTAL AMOUNT _____

Circle—YES—I will be willing to sing with the choral group at the Wednesday Banquet.

NO REFUNDS AFTER APRIL 22, 2005

Your check should be for the total amount shown above. Please do not include any other types of payments/donations in your Registration check. All other types of payments/donations, including Hospitality Donations, Spotlight Ad Payments, Membership Dues, and Foundation Donations should be in separate checks. Thank you for your help in this regard.

Return Convention Registration and payment to:
GREA, 615-C Oak St., Gainesville, GA 30501-8522

Convention Leadership Seminars

Convention Kickoff

"Introduction of Governing Board"

"Overview of Seminars" Zimma Jones, GREA President

Lester Dean, GREA President-elect

1:30 p.m.–2:00 p.m.

All delegates invited

President's Workshop

"Training Local Unit Presidents" Lester Dean

2:15 p.m.–3:15 p.m.

3:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

Help Is At Your Fingertips

"Services for GREA Members" Brenda Bigham, Area XIV Director

Sue Thornton, Service To Members

Committee, Chairperson

2:15 p.m.–3:15 p.m.

3:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

Can You Hear Me Now?

"Legislative Issues" Charlie Roberts,

Legislative Services Chairman

2:15 p.m.–3:15 p.m.

3:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

2005 Proposed GREA Bylaw Amendments

The following eight proposed Bylaw amendments were recommended by the GREA Governing Board at its meeting on January 20, 2005. In accordance with GREA Bylaws Article XIII, Amendments to the Bylaws, the following recommended changes will be presented at the Annual Convention to be held May 3-5, 2005. A two-thirds vote of the members present is required for approval.

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #1

Article I, Section 3—Motto

This recommendation changes the motto to place service before support.

Proposed Motto: FELLOWSHIP... SERVICE... SUPPORT

Current Motto: FELLOWSHIP... SUPPORT... SERVICE

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #2

Article VII, Section 6, E—The Treasurer's duties are as follows:

Add the following:

5. Assist the President-elect in preparing the budget.

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #3

Article VII, Section 5—Local Units

Add the following:

B. All officers of local units shall be required to be GREA members.

Renumber the current Article VII, 5, B to VII, 5, C.

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS #4, #5, AND #6

Article VIII, Section 2—Standing Committees

Change items VII, 2, B, 1—Membership;

VIII, 2, D, 1—Public Information and Program Planning;

VIII, 2, J, 1—Service to Members,

to all read as follows: "The committee shall consist of a chair and at least two other members."

Currently these items are different and they read as follows:

VIII, 2, B, 1—"The committee shall consist of a chair and at least two, but no more than five members."

VIII, 2, D, 1—"The committee shall consist of a chair and at least one other member."

VIII, 2, J, 1—"The committee shall consist of a chair and at least three other members."

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #7

Article IX, Section 1—Vacancy in office of Area Director

Add the phrase, "or for any other reason," so that the item reads as follows:

"A vacancy in the office of Area Director resulting from the failure to nominate at the appropriate time *or for any other reason* shall be filled by the candidate recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the Governing Board."

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #8

Article IX, Section 3—Other Vacancies

Change this section as follows:

Proposed wording: "A Vacancy in the office of President-elect or Secretary resulting from failure to nominate at the appropriate time or for any other reason shall be filled by the candidate recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the Governing Board."

Current wording: "A vacancy in any other office shall be filled by the Governing Board upon the recommendation of the President."

Pre-Convention Golf Outing

Plans have been made by Past State President Reid Mullins for the Second Annual GREA Golf Outing to The River Golf Club in Augusta (five minutes from the convention site). Arrangements are as follows:

Date: Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Time: Tee Time—8:45 a.m.

Cost: \$37.00—includes greens fees, cart and taxes

Players: Open to male and female golfers

Anyone interested in joining this group for fun and golf should contact Reid by the April 9, 2005 deadline in order to be included. Checks should be made payable to Reid Mullins and mailed to: Mr. Reid Mullins, 3400 New Hope Rd., Dacula, GA 30019-1906.

Clara W. West 1977-1978 GRTA President, Dies



Clara West

Clara Williams West, Thompson, 1977-1978 President of GRTA passed away at her home on November 21, 2004. Clara West believed that, "learning was living and the more you learned, the better you lived. Wherever she went she would extract the best and bring it home to her family, church, and community."

West graduated from Paine College in 1928 and earned her Masters degree from Atlanta University. She was married to the late Rev. John H. West who served as GRTA President in 1973-1974. They are the only couple who have both served as President of GRTA in the history of the association. Mrs. West

served in leadership roles in her church and in her community. She was a leader in obtaining equal rights for African Americans in both the political and educational arenas. GRTA was fortunate to have the leadership of a person of her vision, commitment, and compassion. A tribute to Mrs. West included a poem from Helen Steiner Rice, a portion of which reads,

"And for my sake and in my name

Live on and do things the same

Feed not your loneliness on empty days,

But fill each waking hour in useful ways."

—H.S.R.

In her honor, donations may be made to the J. H. West Scholarship Fund, 789 Old Washington Road NE, Thompson, GA 30824.

Chick-Fil-A Founder Truett Cathy With Gwinnett County REA Members



Truett Cathy, founder of Chick-fil-A Restaurants, is shown above with Jane Alexander, Gailya Raines, and Mary Long, members of the Gwinnett County REA. He was the keynote speaker at the 1996 GRTA Convention in Macon. Cathy's business practices and personal convictions

have been an inspiration to thousands, young and old alike. He was a presenter at the Day of Study and Workshops at the Harmony Grove Methodist Church in Lilburn.

NRTA To Recognize GREA Volunteers

By Patricia Bassett

NRTA (formerly National Retired Teachers Association) will present NRTA Day of Service tee shirts to 500 local unit members who participate in the National Day of Service. Local unit members will be eligible for a tee shirt by participating in the National Day of Service on May 12, 2005. Many local unit members do volunteer work all year. Any individual or group volunteer activity which takes place on May 12th will entitle the participant(s) to receive a tee shirt in recognition of their work. The activity can be anything of a volunteer nature including work in a school, nursing home, hospital, local service agency, library, and etc. The only requirement is that the activity actually takes place on May 12th. All participants are eligible to receive a tee shirt as long as the supply lasts. Additional information, including forms for the Local Unit Presidents, will be available at the Annual Convention in Augusta.



MITCHELL/BAKER REA OFFICERS

(Left to right): Katie Thomas, President; Ruth Merritt, Vice President; Jaan Thomas, President-elect; Claretha Vicks, Acting Secretary; Hattie Weeks, Assistant Secretary; and Glennelle Marcus, Treasurer.



DOROTHY WILSON SPEAKS TO BULLOCH REA

(Left to right) Local Unit President Dr. Charles Bonds and Area Director Dorothy Wilson.

Area VI Director Dorothy Wilson was the guest speaker at the January 12th meeting of the Bulloch REA. She congratulated the unit for its service in the community and its active participation in state activities including the annual convention. She gave special recognition to the unit for its successful membership drive which now has a total of 162 members. Wilson is a native of Savannah and retired from the Chatham County School System.

"Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten."

—B. F. Skinner



MADISON COUNTY REA

(Left to right): President Vivian Teasley and Emeritus Member Janie McKenzie.

The Madison County REA honored Janie McKenzie on her ninety-second birthday with a "This Is Your Life" program. She is the only Emeritus Member in the unit and is still active and attends all of the unit meetings. "Miss Jenny," as she is affectionately known, was presented with a hand-crocheted lap robe by the President at the conclusion of the program.

Convention Speakers:
Justice Robert Benham
Reverend Claude McBride
Make your plans to attend!
May 3, 4, 5, 2005
Radisson Riverfront Hotel
Augusta



State Senator George Hooks, District 14, recently spoke to the Thomaston/Upson Retired Educators Association.

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it."

—Aristotle



BULLOCH REA HONORS DR. KEMP MABRY

Dr. Charles Bonds, left, 2004-2005 President of the Bulloch Retired Educators Association, presents Dr. Kemp Mabry with a plaque containing a gavel. Dr. Mabry was honored in recognition of his unselfish and dedicated service to the local unit. Mabry is the only person to have served two terms as president. As noted by Bonds, "His voluntary contributions to the community are too numerous to mention at one small event."



Renew Your Annual Membership and Join the ADD Plan Membership

Renewals will be mailed in May.



GEORGE MOORE, TROUP REA, ELECTED MAYOR PRO-TEM

Troup County REA member and past president George R. Moore was elected Mayor Pro-Tem of LaGrange City by the Mayor and City Council members at its first meeting of the year on January 11, 2005. Moore served as teacher, counselor, assistant principal and principal in the LaGrange City Schools before retiring in 1989. He has served as a member of the LaGrange City Council for ten years.

"Education has as its object the formation of character."

—Herbert Spencer



EUGENE WYLES INDUCTED INTO HALL OF FAME

On January 28, 2005, Worth County REA member Eugene Wyles, pictured above with his wife, Gail, was inducted into the Georgia Bandmaster's Hall of Fame. Induction into the Hall of Fame is based on outstanding contributions and service to music education. His picture and a plaque with his accomplishments will hang in the Lowell Mason room in the Savannah Civic Center.



TREUTLON COUNTY REA

(Left to right) President Carolyn Heath and Emeritus Member Eudora Moxley.

President Carolyn Heath presented an Emeritus Certificate to Eudora Moxley at the monthly meeting. Mrs. Moxley celebrated her 90th birthday on February 2, 2005. She taught for thirty years in the Treutlon County Schools.

"It is possible to store the mind with a million facts and still be entirely uneducated."

—Alec Bourne



Eleanor Lee, Waycross, 1984-85 GRTA President.

Legislative Report

By Charlie Roberts

This update is being written with six Legislative Days remaining in the 2005 General Assembly. As projected, this has not been "business as usual" as the citizens of Georgia elected the first Republican leadership in 134 years. Georgia, and the nation, have new political direction and focus with change being an ongoing process.

From my experiences this session, I am firmly convinced that GREA and the Senior Citizens of Georgia could not be in better political hands than the House and Senate Retirement Committees. Both are highly motivated and keenly interested and have outstanding leadership in Rep. Ben Bridges and Sen Bill Heath.

The Legislative Priorities set by your Legislative Committee have been addressed during this session:

- Our Cost of Living increases appear secure.
- Pension Equity, for our oldest members, is on the agenda for the House Retirement Committee Summer Study. These increases are within the authority of the TRS Board and Dr. Gardner and I continue to work this opportunity. This is HB 400 authored by Rep. Brooks Coleman.
- HB 495, which corrects the TRS concerns with last years Return to Work Law needs only Senate approval and is on track for approval. Every effort was made to move the retirement date to 12/31/05 but it met opposition.
- The Governor included funds in the Budget to help with increasing costs and retirees can expect options when we renew coverage this spring.

As we go to press a major battle is going on in the Senate over Venture Capital Investments using retirement funds. We have opposed this activity at every step and GREA and PAGE stopped this bill at the Committee level last week. It has now been attached to a House Bill that passed the House and the data used by GREA and PAGE has been distributed to every member of the House and Senate. Local Retirement Association assistance will be needed to defeat this attempt and the courage of Chairman Heath is deeply appreciated.

It has again been a pleasure to represent you at the Capitol. On behalf of the Legislative Committee, I want to thank the local unit Presidents and all members who worked to assure that their local elected delegations knew that GREA was politically active. This year members of the General Assembly were provided with a Directory of Education Advocates and the Georgia Retired Educators Association is included.

AARP 55 Alive Driver Safety Program

The 55 Alive Driver Safety Program is designed especially for motorists age 50 and over. It is intended to help the mature driver improve skills while learning to avoid accidents and traffic violations. The program is aimed at improving road safety by helping drivers become more aware of factors that can affect their ability to drive as they grow older.

In two four-hour sessions, the program covers topics of interest and relevance to today's more experienced driver, including adjusting for changes in vision, hearing and reaction time, avoiding driving hazards and handling various road challenges.

AARP makes this program available to drivers for a nominal fee. Most companies give an auto insurance discount for completion of this course. No tests are given.

Schedules and registration information are available by calling toll-free: 1-888-227-7669 or writing: AARP 55 Alive, 601 E. Street, NW, Washington DC 20049.

Visit the GREA Website at www.grea.biz

The GREA website is in its second year. The website provides legislative updates, convention registration forms, GREA Handbook, GREA Bulletins, GREA history, photos, membership benefits, links to local unit websites and other related organizations and much more. Over 1,200 visits are being made to the website each month and the number is increasing. We thank Ralph Greene, Gwinnett County REA, for maintaining this site.

Grandparenting Essay

By Patricia Bassett

Almost 60 local units signed on to do the Grandparenting Essays this year. This is more than double the number of units that participated last year. This means that there will be a large increase in the interaction between retired educators and young people. That is one of the goals of NRTA in the With Our Youth project. They feel that young people today are missing an important part of their life when they do not have interaction with seniors, and retired educators can fill the gap.

Several units have sent in their information from the essays. I am looking forward to receiving many more in the next two or three weeks. If I can be of help, please call at 478-836-3234 or email to lpjbassett@pstel.net.



GREA Member Runs 100 Marathons

GREA member Joyce Hodges-Hite is shown finishing her 100th marathon (26.2 miles) at Tybee Island on February 5, 2005. The Jenkins County Unit Secretary retired in 1996 after 30 years of teaching high school English and has run competitively in over 25 states and six foreign countries, including 13 Boston Marathons, winning two bronze medals in world competition and a second place in a 50 kilometer (31.1 miles) race in France in 2003.



New GREA Membership Card Includes ADD Authorization

Following the recommendation of the state membership committee, the GREA membership card has been revised so as to include ADD authorization on the card itself thus eliminating the need for the separate ADD Authorization Form formerly required. TRS has indicated a willingness to accept the new form. The new card may be found on the GREA website at www.grea.biz. A supply of new cards have been mailed to all local units and will also be available at the annual convention and the June Area meetings. The previous membership cards should be discarded as soon as new cards are received: however, they may be used in the meantime.

Membership renewal notices will be sent to all annual members in May. We encourage all annual members to consider joining the ADD plan and show your continuing commitment to GREA—The only organization that works exclusively for the benefit of Georgia Retired Educators.

GREA'S NEW MEMBERSHIP CARD

2005-2006

LAST NAME

FIRST NAME

MIDDLE INITIAL

GREA MEMBERSHIP FORM

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

AUTOMATIC DUES DEDUCTION (A.D.D.)

My signature below authorizes TRS to deduct \$2.00/month from my TRS pension payment. This authorization will remain in effect until I choose to terminate it by notice to Georgia Retired Educators Association.

\$24 ONE YEAR \$360 LIFE

Send check with this card to the address below. Make check payable to GREA.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

I.D.#

CONTROL #

DATE

Signature

Date

Address

Social Security # (Optional)

City

State

Zip

Phone #

Return this portion to: Georgia Retired Educators Association • 615-C Oak Street • Gainesville, GA 30501-8522

Executive Director's Message

By Bill Gardner

It hardly seems possible that it is already March and the end of another year will soon be here. What that means, of course, is that in less than three months there will be approximately 5,000 newly retired educators in Georgia. We want to make every effort to recruit them into GREA. Hopefully, plans are already in place about how and who will contact each of the new retirees. If not, that should be done right away. New retirees are more likely to join if they are approached just before they retire or very soon thereafter. I am pleased that for the current year a number of local units had 100% of last year's retirees join the local unit and GREA. Let that be the goal of every unit in the state for the coming year.



William Gardner

The Convention Planning Committee, under the leadership of Bert Thomas, has been working for over six months and has planned what promises to be another informative, interesting and fun convention. The convention kicks-off Tuesday with the Leadership Seminar followed by the Presidents/Awards Dinner that evening. A tour of historic Augusta will be available on Wednesday afternoon following the luncheon. Further details about the convention can be found elsewhere in the *Bulletin*. We hope that every unit, 145 in all, will be represented at the convention and make the association **"GREA United."**

The Service to Members Committee, under the leadership of Sue Thornton, recommended adding Dental and Vision Insurance and Medical Air Transport Service to the growing list of benefits available for GREA members. The Governing Board has approved these recommendations and representatives from AMBA (Association Member Benefits Advisors) will be present at the convention to tell us more about these benefits and provide information about how to enroll.

I have had the privilege of visiting with a number of local units since the first of the year and have invariably been impressed with the participation and programs going on across the state. Most of our units are growing not only in numbers but in programs, projects, commitment, and enthusiasm. The **NRTA Grandparenting Essay Program** has more than tripled in participation in the past two years. GREA members and local units received five national "With Our Youth!" Awards at the NRTA Convention in August. Retired educators continue to make significant contributions to the welfare of their communities through the local units.

The year is not yet over, but I would like to commend and congratulate each of the Local Unit Presidents for the dedication, commitment, and outstanding leadership that you have already given to your units. Let's make the last two months of the year a springboard for the next year. **See you in Augusta for fun and fellowship.**

The GREA Membership Grapevine

DOUGLAS COUNTY WINS AWARD FOR HIGHEST INCREASE IN TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

The Douglas County REA received the award for the highest increase in total membership in Class AA at the 2004 Annual Convention. Agnes Greene, the Douglas County REA Membership Chair gets the names, but not the addresses or phone numbers, of all of the retiring educators from the Douglas County School System. Agnes divides the names among the members of the Membership Committee, who then look up addresses in the telephone book. This is a time-consuming activity, but is manageable if enough people are involved. For those retirees for whom addresses cannot be located in the phone book, the committee members try contacting educators who worked in the same school for helping in locating addresses. In all except the largest systems, someone in the local unit usually knows the retiree personally. They also make use of the internet to locate addresses. Through this variety of resources and persistence they have been successful in locating the addresses of over ninety percent of the new retirees.



Agnes Greene

Then the process of contacting the retirees and inviting them to attend and join the local unit and GREA begins. New retirees are contacted by phone, letter or personal contact and invited to a monthly meeting. For those who do not join in the spring just before retiring, they are invited to the first meeting of the new year in September and again in October. It is due to this deliberately planned and organized effort that Douglas County REA was able to receive the largest increase in total membership for the 2003-2004 year. The DCREA Membership Committee is happy to share these ideas with other units. When asked, "How do you achieve membership growth?", someone said, "We work at it every day."

HENRY COUNTY WINS AWARD FOR HIGHEST PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN TOTAL MEMBERSHIP



Marilyn Werner

The Henry County Retired Educators Association is very fortunate to have as its membership chairperson, Marilyn Werner. Membership has grown each year through her never-give-up attitude. Each year, newly-retired teachers are contacted and invited to attend a year-end social, sponsored by the local unit. Marilyn makes personal contacts and has local and state membership forms ready for the retiree to sign. She makes in-home visits and explains the benefits of belonging to the local and state associations. Renewal notices are included in each member's newsletter before the expiration date. The Henry County REA gives a one-year free membership in the local association for all those who join GREA. Each local member who sells a SPOTLIGHT ad receives a one-year free membership in the local unit. Members are "fined" \$.50 for not wearing their name badge at meetings. The money goes to the scholarship fund.

June Area Meetings

Registration Time: 9:00 a.m.

DATE	AREA(S)	LOCATION
June 6	11 & 12	Pansy's Restaurant, Louisville
June 7	7	Southern Star Grill, McRae
June 8	5 & 6	Carey Hilliard's Restaurant, Savannah
June 9	8	China Buffet, Warner Robins
June 13	9 & 10	TBA
June 14	4	Lang's Restaurant, St. Mary's
June 15	3	TBA
June 16	1 & 2	TBA
June 20	17 & 18	Gainesville Civic Center, Gainesville
June 23	15 & 16	White United Methodist Church, White
June 27	13 & 14	Gwinnett Board of Education, Lawrenceville

A GREA Approved Hearing Plan for Members and Family

with

American Hearing Aid Associates, Inc.

Network of Hearing Healthcare Providers

- Substantial discounts on hearing aids including testing, fitting, orientation, and maintenance.
- Warranties for loss or damage of instruments.
- Grace period to return instrument if dissatisfied.
- No enrollment is necessary. This program is available to GREA members and their spouses.

To find the hearing healthcare provider nearest to you, call 1-800-984-3272 or check the website at www.AHAAnet.com



GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES LIST: We extend our sincerest congratulations to the following GREA members who have celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversaries: **LOETTE AND HUEY GLISSON OF WRIGHTSVILLE, FEBRUARY 6, 1955; BILLIE AND RAY WORLEY OF TIFTON, JANUARY 30, 1955.**



PICKENS COUNTY REA: A community outreach project of the PCREA is the donation of books to the Hope House, a temporary shelter for hurting children. Donations have been made for several years. We commend PCREA as another exemplary way in which retired educators are continuing to make a difference in their communities.



HALL/GAINESVILLE REA: History Committee Chairperson, **Ondee Ravan**, has worked diligently to place the history of the Hall/Gainesville REA in order. The thirty-three year old local unit is complete with a copy of the first constitution and bylaws. The history will be housed in the Northeast Georgia History Center at Brenau College. Congratulations for preserving the history for future generations.



CATOOSA COUNTY REA: The Catoosa County REA members were given a special tour of the new Woodstation Elementary School by the Principal and Superintendent of Schools. The members were treated to lunch by the school and given an update on the local school system by the Superintendent. REA members donated books to the school library.



CRAWFORD COUNTY REA member **Janice Hunt** is the recipient of the NRTA With Our Youth! Dedication Award. The award recognizes individuals for their meaningful efforts to improve the lives of youth and the broader community.

FAYETTE COUNTY REA: FCREA member **Marion Key** is serving her second term on the Fayette County School Board. **Alice Mallory** serves on the Board of Directors of the Coweta-Fayette EMC. In recognition of her leadership in the "Silver Haired Legislature" the local chapter of AARP made **Joan Neal** an Emeritus Member of the Board of Directors. The art work of Local Unit President **Carol Lunsford**, has been chosen for display in the Lamar Arts Gallery in Barnesville. Her stories and poems have been selected for inclusion in the Fayette Writers Guild's first published work, "Go With Us." We commend these members of FCREA.

Let's Go To Augusta
GREA 47TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
"GREA United"
Radisson Riverfront Hotel—Augusta
May 3–5, 2005

TRS Report Available

The Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) is pleased to announce the availability of its *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* (CAFR) for fiscal year 2004. Also, in an effort to summarize the more detailed CAFR, TRS has created the *Summary Annual Financial Report* as a communications tool to help educate members on the value of the TRS defined benefit pension plan. This summary brochure contains financial highlights, a brief look at TRS initiatives and information on our Board of Trustees, retirement eligibility, calculating your retirement benefit, membership and benefit statistics, legislation and the benefits of being a member of a defined benefit plan.

The CAFR and the summary brochure can be downloaded from the TRS website, www.trsga.com, under the Publications tab. Copies can also be obtained by contacting the TRS office at 404-352-6500 or 800-352-0650. For detailed information about TRS, members are encouraged to visit the TRS website.

"To keep the heart unwrinkled, to be hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverent is to triumph over old age."

—Amos Alcott

Important Telephone Numbers

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS

Nurse Call 24 1-800-524-7130
 State Health Benefit Plan Retiree Line. . . 1-800-586-9288
(Not for Prescription Drug Questions)
 Internet Site for Provider Lists. . www.healthygeorgia.com
 Blue Choice Vision Program. 1-800-377-6436
 Express Scripts, Prescription Drugs 1-877-650-9342
 Medical Pre-Certification (MPC) 1-800-762-4535

TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

JEFF EZELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Atlanta Area 404-352-6500
 Toll Free 1-800-352-0650

VARIABLE ANNUITY

State Area 1-800-448-2542

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TOURS

State Area 770-534-4203
 Fax 770-531-1978

AMERICAN HEARING AID ASSOCIATES (AHAA)

Toll-free 1-800-984-3272
 Web site www.AHAAnet.com

GREA OFFICERS:
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 Lester Dean, President-elect
 Mary Long, Past President
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