

THE GREB BULLETIN

JOURNAL OF NEWS AND REFLECTIONS FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS OF GEORGIA



VOL. XXXVI, NO. 3

GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

WINTER 2020

Protect Georgia's Teacher Retirement System

October 2, 2019 was a historic day for professional organizations in Georgia as we all came together as one group to give our support to the current Teacher Retirement System. We began a draft that shows our united support to protect TRS. Please review the final document below and share it with anyone that you feel needs to see it.

We all need to talk about and share the three points below. Each GREA member needs to show support and participate in this united support of TRS. Thanks to GSSA and GAEL for taking the lead to make this happen.

1.

Thank our legislators and Governor for all their support in the past. Think about it. Since the 1940s, Governor after Governor and Legislature after Legislature in Georgia have stood behind our teachers and TRS. Many have tried to take it away from our teachers before, but they took care of us. It is important that we thank our current Governor and Legislature for doing the same (so that they keep doing it!).

2.

Talk up the bullet points in the document in your own words and your own heart whenever you have a chance at any conference or meeting.

3.

Support the work of the TRS board of trustees and their executive director by allowing them to let the numbers speak for themselves. Most of us don't have the knowledge and depth to get into the number weeds, but Buster and his board do.



Unified Statement from the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders, the Georgia Retired Educators Association, the Professional Association of Georgia Educators, the Georgia Association of Educators, the Georgia School Public Relations Association, and all seven GAEL Affiliates: GAESP, GAMS, GASSP, GACIS, G-CASE, GASPA, and GSSA.

Unified Support to Protect Georgia's Teacher Retirement System (TRS)

The Georgia Teacher's Retirement System (TRS) is an investment in Georgia's economy, education system, and future success of our state. Due to the vision and commitment of Georgia leaders over the decades, TRS is an exemplar for the rest of the nation:

Top 3rd of Pension Systems

TRS ranks in the top third of pension systems in the U.S. It is actuarially sound and has a proven record of sustainability.

Recruitment and Retention

TRS provides a compelling recruitment and retention incentive for the education industry, supporting a life-long career path for high-quality teachers in Georgia schools.

Statewide Economic Impact

TRS positively impacts Georgia's economy and the economic success of our state, as pensions for over 132,000 TRS retirees are reinvested in local communities across the state each year.

Last, Best Benefit

Affords a defined benefit plan as the last, best benefit for Georgia's dedicated teachers, who are diligently preparing the next generation of Georgia citizens.

As Georgia is recognized to be the "#1 State for Business," it must also seek to be the "#1 State to Teach Children." Supporting TRS today ensures success for all of Georgia tomorrow.

Message From the President

Thankful—Grateful—Blessed

By Jo Ann Tomlinson, GREA President

Powerful words!! We see these all the time everywhere but do we stop to think what each word means to us.

During Thanksgiving and again at Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa, I hope you stopped to give some thought to these three words and how much they mean to you.

Be **Thankful**—for the things we take for granted like the fact we live in a free country, sleep in a warm bed, eat from a plentiful table, are able to go and do the things we like to do and give thanks for ALL of the above. Let's be **Thankful** for the talents we are given. When we retired, we still have a lot left in us to share of our many talents and enjoy these talents with others.

GREa is sooooo **Grateful** for all our members that make GREa great and the BEST organization GREa is **Thankful** and **Grateful** for all the people who attend our exciting and interesting meetings and share their talents by serving as the officers and leaders of all the local REAs across the state of Georgia.

Blessed—Oh how **Blessed** I am to have the opportunity to travel and visit your individual REAs. I have met so many nice, kind and hard-working people who bless all their members by sharing their talents. Each one of you are a **Blessing** to others. You all are true friends helping and Blessing each other. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "a true friend leaves a footprint in your heart." **Blessings** pour down upon each one of us every day in one way or another.

This is a Challenge to each person reading this article: Take 60 seconds to clear your mind and heart so you can truly think about these three words and what they mean to you.

Membership has continued to grow due to your help and AMBA. If you are reading this and have not renewed your annual membership, please write your check and place in the mail today!! Don't be shy, ask someone you know who is not a member to join. Share the fellowship, fun and great information you receive at each meeting by inviting someone to go with you to your local meeting. That particular person might be just the one that your local unit needs to make the 10% growth!!! WooHoo!! Look what you have done for the new member and your local unit!!! Remember, anyone can be a member of GREa and receive AMBA Benefits. School office staff, public librarians, teachers and anyone who loves Georgia Retired Educators are always welcome!

I hope you will consider purchasing a brick at the Georgia Retired Educators Museum in honor or memory of someone. Less than 600 bricks to complete the plaza!! Don't get left out!! Only \$75 in December



Jo Ann Tomlinson

and January. Get yours now!!! Go to www.garetirededucators.org to order.

Alzheimer's Association is my Humanitarian Project for this 2019-2020 year. Our goal is a minimum of \$25,000. GREa Rocks!!! We are well on our way to reach our goal. I am asking each local unit to donate at least \$250. We have some small units that are over the \$1,000 mark and one over \$1,500. I am so incredibly proud of them!!! I hope this inspires all of us to reach high above our goals!! We can do it!!! Alzheimer's affects almost every family in one way or another. One in every three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another dementia. It kills more than breast cancer and prostate cancer. Alzheimer's is the 6th leading cause of death in the United States. Every 65 seconds someone in the US develops the disease. There are 5.7 Million Americans living with Alzheimer's. Currently there are 16.1 Million unpaid care givers at an estimated care value of \$232 Billion. Let that sink in!! Let's do our part to find a cure!!

Research has helped Heart Disease and Diabetes to be decreased. It is now up to us to help with the research for Alzheimer's to help find a cure for it in our lifetime!!

Below are instructions for reporting and sending in donations.

1. Someone in your local REa needs to register for a Walk to End Alzheimer's with their name and local unit even if they didn't go to the walk. This is a way for the Association to keep up with the GREa donations.

2. Download the Walk to End App on their cell phone. Once this is done, it is pretty self-explanatory.

OR

3. Donations can be mailed to:

Alzheimer's Association

Attn: _____ Walk (Your local unit name or county)

Amy Richardson

41 Perimeter Center East, Suite 550

Atlanta, GA 30346

You want to be sure your local unit receives credit for your total amount. Of course, you can continue to collect as long as folks will give!!!

Keep on #Cheering for GREa!!!! #GREaistheBEST #FellowshipServiceSupport

Blessings and SMILE because you are retired in Georgia!!!!

Ramblin' Around With the Executive Director

By Bill Sloan, Executive Director



Happy New Year! By the time you receive this *Bulletin*, we will be deep into a Georgia winter. It was 33 degrees this morning when I left home and it is only early December. I hope winter is not going to be terribly bad! I like a little snow occasionally but I hope the ice storms stay away this year!

2019 was the best year ever for GREa! We reached three major milestones that a few years ago looked unattainable for the near future! One, in April, we paid off our mortgage on our State Office/Museum building! We now own a building and grounds worth over \$1.5 million dollars! I am so excited to say that you the membership paid for our building with your dues, buying bricks and donations. There is not one cent of outside money from any source other than our members. Two, in July, we enrolled a lady from Sumter County that made us have 30,000 members on roll. I remember when we were only 15,000 members. You have done a great job recruiting new members for GREa. I thank all of you so much for your work! Three, in late December or early January, we had over \$500,000 in the checking and savings accounts. In 2005, GREa had to delay paying its bills each month until the 15th when the

monthly check from TRS would arrive. On occasions the Treasurer and bookkeeper had to take money out of our small money market savings to just pay the bills. You can readily see what membership growth can do. I am thrilled to be a small part of what has happened for GREa in the last 14 years.

The remodeling of the Museum is moving right along. We hope to see it finished in the very near future. Mickey Wendel has an article about it in another section of this *Bulletin*. GREa and GREM cannot thank Mickey and Marcia Wendel enough for what their committee is doing here.

Johnny Smith, our new Director of Communications, is doing an outstanding job for GREa. This is his first edition of the *GREa Bulletin* and it looks great! The biggest challenge he faces is not enough room for the info that you are sharing with him. We needed about eight more pages to do what we wanted in this edition. I hope you understand why your pictures are not here. Room is so limited but every picture that you send to us is shared on Facebook to the world. Keep the great pictures and articles coming to him. He loves sharing your info with everyone.

He just told me my article is too long so I must stop! Thank you GREa members for all you do!

A Message from GREM

By Mickey Wendel, GREM President



Best wishes for the new year as we continue to *Cheer for GREA*. I pray that all of you will have 20/20 vision as you make decisions in the new year. Progress is being made on our museum. The members of the Curator Committee are Becky Upchurch, Myrtice Johnson, Frank Tompkins, Patricia Denney, Marilyn Warner, and Marcia Wendel, Chair. As president of GREM I also serve on the committee. The curator committee determined that the story we wanted our museum to tell is "The History of Public Education in Georgia." We decided to divide the history into four time periods: The Developmental Period, The Establishment Period, The Equalization Period and The Accountability Period. Each period has a summary narrative and then a panorama of pictures to provide more detail.

It is our hope that by the time you receive this *Bulletin*, at least two of the period displays will have been installed on the wall of the museum.

Some units have questioned why we are requesting that each unit contribute \$50 toward the museum when the debt has been paid. While it is true that the debt on the building has been paid, we will need \$19,000 to put the four periods of the history of education in Georgia on the wall of our museum.

We have also moved items that pertain to the history of GREA to the board room. The pictures of the past presidents of GRTA and GREA were moved to the board room. I will be sharing the other three periods with you in future *Bulletins*. I wish you and yours and a very happy and prosperous 2020.

Lift Your Hands and Say Thank You

By Dr. Henrietta Gray, 2019-2020 President-elect



Greetings and salutations to GREA and others who may read this article. By the time this article is published and read, the day we celebrated 2019 Thanksgiving will be over. Nonetheless, the import and validity of this topic will still be relevant. We should always be thankful.

The state of our readiness and willing to show appreciation and return kindness received has lifetime benefit; among them is that it opens doors to relationships, improves physical health and increases mental strength. If we pause and reflect on the many blessings God has bestowed upon us, individually and collectively, as the Body of GREA, we can all *Lift Our Hands and say Thank You!* Our hearts should be filled with gratitude. I stipulate to the words of William Arthur Ward, "Gratitude can transform common days into conquest, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings."

Jesse Hunter said in a text to the GREA Leadership Team, "We have much to be thankful for—our health, prosperity and the GREA Leadership team" I want to enlarge upon that statement with some specific delineations. May we all Lift Our Hands and say Thank You for

- Family and friends
- The gift of life and health
- The love we experience
- God's care and daily provision
- God's grace and mercy to each of us

Thank you, GREA, for all you do to support and serve the association. Without your help, support and commitment, we would not be effective servant leaders, accomplish our goals or perpetuate a GREA that is sound and prolific.

Finally, lift your hands and say thank you for the GREA Leadership Team:

Dr. William G. Sloan—Our Executive Director who is integral, knowledgeable, caring and compassionate.

To All of Our Happy Retirees

By L. C. (Buster) Evans, Ed.D



Buster Evans

Happy New Year to all of our wonderful retirees! I trust you all enjoyed the holidays and have recovered from all of the festivities, family visits, and holiday eating! Maybe you've even stuck to one or two of the resolutions you made to make this an even better year! We are excited for the New Year and are determined to make this year even better for our members!

During the last 3½ years since I've been privileged to serve as your Executive Director of TRS, one of the highlights of my job is traveling all across Georgia to share the TRS story with our GREA chapters. I've been blessed to make so many new friends during this time, and I want to thank you for your friendship and hospitality. One of the things that I have learned, and I share this frequently, is that "our TRS retirees are some of the happiest people that I ever see!" While I do think that part of this is that you have a life and a future that includes your retirement benefit, but I also think that a part of your joy is that so many of you find yourselves doing things that you enjoy. Often times, that includes such things as travel, being involved in your church or community, running a new business, or maybe even helping to take care of other family members. Just know that your joy is infectious, and our staff loves to hear of your happiness in retirement.

With the New Year, comes the beginning of the legislative session. The 2020 Georgia General Assembly will convene its second-year biennium session in January. There are several pieces of retirement legislation that we continue to watch including two return to work bills which would potentially expand the options for our retirees returning to work. We look forward to working with Dr. Bill Sloan and others from GREA throughout the session as you are represented so well at the Capitol.

Finally, there are two bits of news that we think you will like as I close. First, all of our retirees that are COLA eligible will be receiving their 1.5% increase in January. (Did I hear applause?) Second, for the first time ever, our fund increased to over \$81 billion at the end of November. During the past 3½ years, the fund has grown from \$65 billion to over \$81 billion while at the same time over \$13 billion dollars in benefits have been paid. We hope to see several years of continued recovery that further strengthens the sustainability of Georgia's TRS fund.

We look forward to another great year. Look for the latest and greatest from TRS on www.trsga.com and follow us on Facebook and/or Twitter.

JoAnn Tomlinson—Our able, dedicated, inspirational, exciting and loving President.

Mickey Wendel—Our GREM President who brilliantly Shared the Light that spotlighted and highlighted the importance of our influence and the far-reaching affect we have as Educators.

Dr. Henrietta Gray—Undergirding and helping our President as we are "Cheering for GREA." Concurrently, humbly preparing to take the reigns of our great Association and lead us forward.

Let us all lift our hands and say thank you!



A Message from AMBA

Attention Women Retirees: Educate Yourself!

According to a Financial Wellness Census, only about a third of women know what to expect for retirement income. What's even more disconcerting, less than half are confident they'll have enough money to last through retirement.

Here are a few basic suggestions to get started:

- Figure out your social security. Then you can determine how much additional income you'll need.
- Participate in financial conversations with your spouse or partner if you have one. A recent UBS report found that 56% of married women leave investment decisions up to their husbands.
- Be open to alternative income. Social Security and your own accounts may not be enough. A tax-deferred annuity, for example, can give you consistent returns with low risk.

- Make sure you have the insurance coverage you need to protect what money you have. Long term care, dental insurance, vision coverage, medical transportation insurance, home healthcare—they all play a role in protecting you and your assets.

You can find all kinds of advice on the Internet, but when it comes to retirement, there's no one-size-fits-all. Unique situations require unique solutions. Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA) will be happy to help you find the insurance coverage that can protect and stretch your retirement dollars. Members of Georgia Retired Educators Association receive complimentary annual benefits check-ups. Call 866-619-6463 to find an advisor near you.

As the saying goes, knowledge is power.

Source: <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/3-ways-women-can-plan-for-a-better-retirement-2018-10-24>

New GREA Officers for 2020

The Nominations and Elections Committee met in November and confirmed the following people to serve on the GREA Governing Board for 2020-2022. A resume of these new officers will be in the Spring *GREA Bulletin*.

President-elect Joe Boland—Cobb/Marietta REA

(one-year term and then he will become the GREA President)

Area 2—Keith Lee—Sumter County REA

Area 16—Penny Howerton—Walker County REA

Area 18—Brenda Hunt—Habersham County REA

Thanks so much to these individuals for volunteering to serve as officers in GREA!

Bulletins by Email

Would you like to get your *GREA Bulletin* by email? Approximately 12,000 of our members are now getting their *Bulletin* by email each quarter. The people who get it by email receive it approximately 2-3 weeks before the print edition is mailed to our members. In addition, the email copy is totally in color where the print edition is only partially in color due to the high cost of printing in color. GREA also saves approximately 50¢ per copy that is sent by email. You can see now that GREA is saving approximately \$6,000 per *Bulletin*. If you would like your copy sent by email simply email us at grea3@earthlink.net and we will be happy to put you on the email list. Thank you for considering getting your *Bulletin* by email.



TIME TO EXPAND YOUR COVERAGE.

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GEORGIA RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION



News From GREA Local Units

Berrien County REA held its monthly meeting on November 13, 2019 with President Joyce Akins presiding. Following the Pledge to the American Flag, Linda Butler gave an inspirational devotional and blessed the meal. The luncheon was prepared by Georgia Smokehouse, with Dixon Farm Supply and Dixon Gin, and Dixon Feed & Chemical hosting it. A Thanksgiving theme was used by Linda Trout and Brenda Carter to attractively decorate the room and the tables. This month's program was on how to take care of oneself once becoming a senior citizen. Sheriff Ray Paulk and Major Arel Valdez did a presentation on Senior Fraud providing information on ways to protect seniors from becoming victims on the street, on the phone, and at your own door. Following their program on fraud, identity theft, and scamming, Debbie Scarborough, the AMBA representative, spoke on the many policies that are available to meet retired educators' medical and long-term care needs. During the business meeting, the committee chairpersons presented their reports. The cakes for the door prizes were won by Cathy Jo Mathis and Jean Dingman.

Burke County REA was elated to have Area Director Emanuel Larkin, Jr. as our speaker for September's meeting. He shared GREa updates, installed Executive Officers and congratulated BCREA's Educator of the Year, Linburn Henderson. The guest speaker for October was State Senator Jesse Stone of District 23 who shared Legislative Updates. He also signed the Proclamation for Retired Educators Day in November. Congratulations to Toni Searles who was selected as BCREA's Educator of the Month. On November 3rd Retired Educators were recognized by businesses and churches. Ribbons were worn and the announcement was on marquees. The guest speaker for November was Terri Black, Extension Agent, who shared valued information regarding what you should know about Identity Theft, Home Maintenance and Home Safety. We donated \$100 to CSRA EOA Head Start for Burke County Adopt-A-Child. Kudos to Lonza Henderson, BCREA's Educator of the Month.

Chatham REA was a very busy for the month of October. After receiving the Proclamation from Governor Kemp designating Sunday, November 3, 2019 as Retired Educators Day, Chatham REA was presented with proclamations from the City of Savannah, the Chatham County Commission, the Savannah-Chatham County Board of Education, and the Thunderbolt Town Council. Kaylee Fleming from the Alzheimer's Association of Coastal Georgia was the featured speaker at the November 11, 2019 meeting. We also recognized and thanked our Chatham REA Veterans for their military service. We will be providing gift cards and winter outerwear for the children at Greenbriar Children's Center and the Austin House, school supplies for students in the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools, and collecting can pop-tabs for the Ronald McDonald House.

Clayton County REA met on October 15 with a presentation of Retired Educators Day Proclamation by Clayton County Commission Chair, Jeff Turner. Vicki Davis, Area X Director, spoke on the governing board meeting she had just attended. A silent auction/bake sale was held to raise money for the Good Shepherd Clinic Pillars Luncheon held in March of each year. At the November meeting, we plan to honor our veterans.

Dalton Whitfield Murray REA has started the 2019-2020 year with a bang. In August, four members attended the GREa Area 15/16 meeting at Reinhardt University. The September monthly meeting featured Whitfield County Schools Superintendent sharing news with the unit. In October a Q & A session was held discussing

State Merit Health Insurance. The November agenda featured local legislators Chuck Payne and Steve Tarvin updating the unit on matters at the state level. A moment of silence was also observed for the late Georgia House of Representative John Meadows and to honor his longtime service. Plans are underway for the annual auction in December to benefit the scholarship fund.

Effingham County REA began the new year in October with a representative from CASA speaking to the unit about their agency and the services provided. Also, Wendy Porter from Effingham Board of Education gave informative information about a new scholarship program in the middle schools known as "REACH". Students in this program will be awarded a \$10,000 scholarship at the end of high school career provided certain criteria are met. The unit held their November meeting and welcomed our State President, Joann Tomlinson. She was energetic with her message and encouraged us to keep working on our GREa membership goal. Senator Jack Hill was also present at November meeting and gave insights on TRS benefits. A mini-banquet will be held on December 9 with Dr. Randy Shearouse as speaker, and we will also be hosting a Christmas Craft and Bazaar.

Henry County REA members visited the Delta Flight Museum on November 19th. The group took a private guided tour of the museum including into "The Spirit of Delta" 767 plane that we purchased by Delta employees in 1982 to show their appreciation to Delta for company support during tough economic times. It was interesting to hear the history of Delta Air Lines as well as aviation history.

Marion County REA recently met their goal of raising \$250.00 for the Alzheimer Association. They decided to mail our check during the Thanksgiving season. They recently held a luncheon for Partners in Education at Marion Middle-High School in Buena Vista, Georgia.

Newton County REA had a busy first quarter. In September we awarded three scholarships to three deserving Newton County 2019 graduates; one from each of the district high schools. In October, Newton County Board of Commissioner's Chairman, Mr. Marcello Banes, signed a proclamation declaring Retired Educator's Day in Newton County and recognized Newton County's inductees into the Newton County Retired Teachers Hall of Fame, Mr. & Mrs. T. K. and Louise Adams and Mr. & Mrs. Jerry and Lee Aldridge. On October 27, we hosted a painting party fundraiser at WildArt in Covington to benefit our 2020 scholarship fund and to celebrate Georgia Retired Teacher Appreciation Day. In November, we recognized Retired Educators Day by giving out ribbons to our retired educators.

South Fulton REA members in kicked off the 2019-2020 in September with several members volunteering with reading and mentoring programs within our 30 community schools. Community Engagement Specialist Patrice Barlow shared interesting outlooks for the year. In October SFREA toured the Atlanta History Center and viewed the newly positioned Cyclorama mural of the Battle of Atlanta. November is welcomed as always with proud tributes for retirees at churches during Georgia Retired Educators Day. It ends with a well-deserved brunch for all at the Green Manor Restaurant. 2018-2019 ended with a dedication of Museum bricks for outgoing co-presidents V. Menefee and M. Udeh. We thank them and wish them well! We embrace our new co-presidents A. Kelton and J. Johnson. Congrats to them and the new staff for 2019-20!!

2019 Retired Educators Day

Editor's Note: This is just a representative sampling of the many photographs submitted for Retired Educators Day. Thank you for your submissions. Lack of space prevents us from using every single photo.



Presentation of the Proclamation declaring November 3, 2019 as Georgia Retired Educators Day. Left to right: GREA Treasurer Dr. John Upchurch, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp, and GREA Executive Director Bill Sloan.



On October 31, 2019 Bartow County commissioner Steve Taylor signed the Proclamation for Retired Educators Day. BCREA members, Joyce Hudson and Marcia Lester, attended the signing.



Mayor Kelly Girtz, Athens Clarke County Mayor, signs the proclamation proclaiming November 3, 2019 as Retired Educators Day in Georgia for the Athens Area Retired Educators Association.



Paulding Retired Educators joined in celebration of Georgia/Paulding Retired Educators Day Sunday, November 3, 2019. We were joined by Angelia Farries, Administrative Assistant to Paulding Commission Chairman Dave Carmichael. She brought thanks and appreciation for all retired educators have done and continue to do for education and our community. Governor Brian Kemp proclaimed November 3 Georgia Retired Educators Day and Commissioner Carmichael proclaimed November 3 Paulding Retired Educators Day. Thank you to all who remembered Retired Educators.



The Wayne County REA had a pre-celebration of GREA Day at their October meeting. Mayor David Earl Keith read the proclamation and told personal stories of how so many of the educators had impacted his life. State legislators, Senator Blake Tillery along with Representatives, Bill Werkheiser and Stephen Meeks joined the celebration and gave legislative updates pertinent to TRS retirees and senior issues.



Members of the Peach County Retired Educators Association met with Fort Valley Mayor Barbara Williams at City Hall, who signed a proclamation on October 23, 2019, proclaiming November 3rd as Retired Educators Day.



On Georgia Retired Educators Day, members of the Crawford County Retired Educators and other educators joined CCREA President Gary Barrett at Ft. Valley United Methodist Church to celebrate the occasion.



Macon County REA—The Honorable Larry Smith, Mayor of Montezuma, in Macon County Georgia signs a proclamation to declare November 3, 2019 as Retired Educators Day.



Waycross/Ware REA Celebrating Retired Educator Day at Greater Mt. Zion AME Church. Retired Teachers Let The Recess Begin. Acknowledging Retired Teachers with Apples and pinned them with a Retired Educators Ribbon.



State Senator Jesse Stone (center) of District 23 signs a proclamation designating November 3 as Georgia Retired Educators Day in Burke County with BCREA members (from left) Shirley Carlyle, Brenda Jones, Belle Dent and Hattie Outlaw.



Muscogee REA President Margaret Ingersoll, and our member and Area 9 Director Donna Kemp with association members received from Mayor B.H. "Skip" Henderson III, at the November Columbus City Council Meeting, the Proclamation celebrating Georgia Retired Educators Day, November 3, 2019. It was a wonderful honor and recognition! Thanks to everyone for supporting retired educators throughout the state!



Bibb County Retired Educators receiving the proclamation of Georgia Retired Educators Day from Macon/Bibb County Mayor Robert Richert.



The Chatham Retired Educators Association (CREA) worshipped at Overcoming By Faith Church, in Savannah on Retired Educators Day. Area 6 Director, Dr. Connie Cooper, (left) President-Elect Omie Flournoy, (center) and CREA Member Martha McCullough (right) are holding Proclamations from Governor Kemp, the Savannah City Council, and the Chatham County Commission.



Nashville Mayor Michael Richbrough signs Proclamation naming Sunday, November 3, 2019 as Retired Educators Day in Berrien County, Nashville. Local Retired Educators witnessed the signing at their October Luncheon Meeting. Behind Mayor Richbrough left to right are: Norma Gaskins, Christine Boyette, Joyce Akins, Marcia Hughes, Joan Drawdy and Veronica Robinson.

GREA loses a great leader!



Past President John A. Demons, Jr. passed away on November 25, 2019. Mr. Demons served as GREA President in 1998-1999 and he led the change of the name of our organization from GRTA to GREA. Services for him were held at the Trinity Missionary Baptist Church in Fort Valley, Georgia on December 2nd.

John was born on February 14th, 1926 in Thomson, Georgia. After a brief stint in the U. S. Army during World War II, he completed his BS Degree in Agriculture at Georgia State College (now Savannah State University) in 1949. In 1969, he earned a Master's Degree in Agriculture from North Carolina State University.

He worked in the Cooperative Extension Service most of his career and was the Assistant Director of the 1890 programs at the University of Georgia. He was Administrator/Director of Extension Services for the state of Georgia and was the founding director of the Extension Program at Fort Valley State University.

He joined the Peach County Retired Educators and served as local unit president twice and he also became a GRTA Area Director. After serving as the State President, he continued to be a very active member in PCREA.

He leaves two daughters, two sons, ten grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife of 47 years, Jacqueline S. Demons and his namesake John III.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Trinity Missionary Baptist Church Building Fund, 507 State University Drive, Fort Valley, GA 31030 or the American Cancer Society.

GREA

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GREA BULLETIN

Georgia Retired Educators Association
The Only Organization That Concentrates Exclusively On The Welfare of Retired Educators of Georgia
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