

# THE GRE A BULLETIN

JOURNAL OF NEWS AND REFLECTIONS FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS OF GEORGIA

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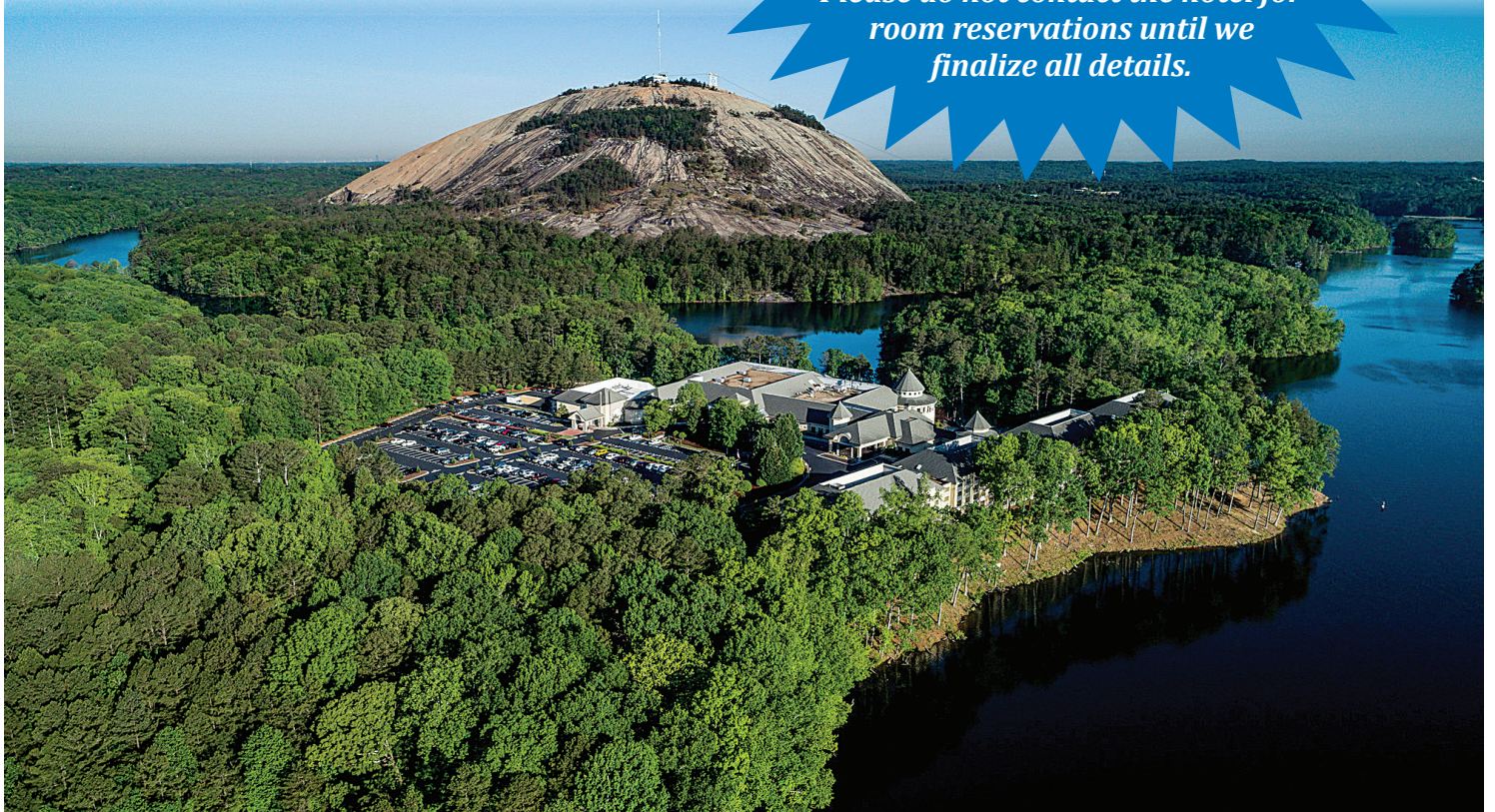


## Convention Postponed!

Due to the ongoing Coronavirus threat in our country we have, out of an abundance of caution, postponed our May convention. We hope to reschedule our convention for August and will send you details as soon as they become available to us. All room reservations have been canceled by the Marriott. If you have mailed us your convention registration we will hold those until a final decision has been made.

### BREAKING NEWS:

*The GRE A Convention is tentatively scheduled for August 19-21. Please check our website and Facebook page for further information as it becomes available. Please do not contact the hotel for room reservations until we finalize all details.*





# Message From the President

## *Oh, the Places You'll Go*

—Dr. Seuss

By Jo Ann Tomlinson, GREA President

Oh, what a Wonderful Year this has been.  
Oh, the Places I have been in our great state of Georgia.

Oh, the Fun I have had meeting and visiting with GREA Members while "Cheering for GREA."

Oh, the Opportunities afforded me this year while serving as your State President of GREA.

Oh, the "Cheering for GREA" Convention has been canceled! We are hopeful we can have the convention in August.

Oh, let's look for ALL the positive things about our life at this uncertain time. Hopefully, you are well, safe and do not have the Coronavirus. Life is different from the way we knew it just a couple of weeks ago. As educators, we are flexible, resourceful, and creative!!!!

Oh, we WILL get past this uncertain time and Life WILL be GOOD again!

Oh, Thank you to each person reading this for ALL your hard work to strive for your Local REA to achieve the Unit of Distinction or Unit of Excellence! Kudos to all the GREA members who became a part of their REA Team whether serving on the Leadership Team or being a worker and attending the meetings! Everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to share their talents.

My first goal is to gain 2,600 new members (after subtracting sadly the ones who have passed on) during 2019-2020. AMBA, you are our "Hero" with all the members you have joined for GREA! Local REAs have done an Outstanding Job of Membership this year! Keep up the GREAT work! I am soooo proud! 2019-2020 can be a real Stellar year for GREA and Membership!

My Humanitarian Project, the Alzheimer's Association, has been a huge success with ALL the credit going to the members of GREA across the state. We are doing research for the first survivor and your donations will go a long way. It is very humbling to know how many of you have given to this disease. Thank you from the very bottom of my heart. May God richly Bless each one of you.

Special thank yous go to Patsy Harrell and Karen Chauncey, my traveling buddies, they have been faithful to go any and everywhere I needed them; Becky Upchurch, my Convention Chairperson, it's hard to imagine all the details that go into planning a convention for three days for 600 people; Johnny Smith for the wonderful new brochures and additions to GREA website and Facebook page; Linda Wright for help-



Jo Ann Tomlinson

ing me so many times when I needed information; Janet Graham, GREA photographer, who is always quietly moving about taking pictures to make a lasting memory for us; Lenora Rouse, Winky, who made my little truck T-shirts, red bags, red shirts, and ironed all the linens for the Afternoon Tea; Shirley Grant has gone above and beyond what I have asked of her and I thank her for the chocolate pickup trucks; thank you to all the Governing Board members for serving on the committees and who so graciously agreed to do whatever was asked of them either at the Fall or Spring Governing Board Meetings or at the upcoming Convention in ??August??; Dr. Henrietta Gray, President-Elect, has been by my side, uplifting, supporting and helping me in every way possible as a special friend; Dr. Sloan has been a wonderful leader and supporter always including and keeping me in the loop during this term of my Presidency; Dr. Beverly Roberts as Secretary of GREA, Treasurer Dr. John Upchurch and Jesse Hunter, Building Manager of GREM, for all the time, hard work and efforts given to GREA; and Marilyn Werner and Nancy Hall for making sure the convention bags are filled with goodies and always willing to set up and sell GREA merchandise. Thank you to Lisa Conner for giving me the Dr. Seuss book *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* in 1999. You are the folks that make GREA the BE ST BEST!!!

Oh, thank you to all the Local REA's that invited me to visit and speak at your meetings.

Oh, the generosity in donations you have given to the Alzheimer's Association. Please continue to send your checks to: Alzheimer's Association

Attn: \_\_\_\_\_ Walk (Your local unit name or county)  
Amy Richardson, 41 Perimeter Center East, Suite 550, Atlanta, GA 30346

Oh, how I love GREA and look forward to seeing all of you at Stone Mountain! (fingers crossed).



Oh, Keep on  
"Cheering for GREA"!!!!  
# GREA is the BEST  
# FellowshipService  
Support

Oh, take care, stay  
well, use your talents  
to help, Blessings and  
SMILE because you are  
retired in Georgia!!!

## Ramblin' Around With the Executive Director

By Bill Sloan, Executive Director



William Sloan

Wow! It is a busy time for GREA! Local Unit Presidents sending reports to Area Directors, Area Directors sending reports to the Awards Director for the convention, producing the new Local Unit Planning Guide, convention registrations, convention planning, legislature still in session, spotlight ads finishing up, finalizing membership awards, doing this *Bulletin* and many other various things. Thanks to Linda Wright, Joy Smith, Janet Allison and Johnny Smith—the employees of GREA who do such an outstanding job in making all this happen.

President Jo Ann Tomlinson, President-elect Dr. Henrietta Gray, Past President Mickey Wendel and the entire Governing Board members have worked hard this year to make it the best year ever for GREA. I appreciate their great work. GREA would not be in such great shape without all of their work.

As I am writing this on March 2nd, we have already broken the previous record for new members this year. The old record was 2,569 and we already have over 2,700 for this year with a month to go. The

GREA leadership thanks you so much for your efforts in recruiting new members.

AMBA has done a great job this year in helping recruit new members, I wish to thank all of them for their excellence! Ryan Greenfield and Brad Jones and their teams have been all over Georgia recruiting new members for us. They gave added over 1,000 new members to our rolls. Thanks ladies and gentlemen of AMBA for your work.

The State Legislature has been in session since January and it has been a rocky road this year. We survived an attempt to really change our TRS for beginning teachers and from changing our COLAs from two a year to only getting one per year. Our strength in numbers really helped with this problem. I wish to thank all of you who made calls, wrote letters and emails to legislators. Without your help, it would have been much more difficult to produce the results we wanted. In addition, GREA wishes to thank PAGE, GAEL, GAE, AFT and TRS for helping with stopping the changes. It takes a team effort.

As we close this year, I hope all of you will begin preparing for another great year in 20-21. GREA is blessed and I enjoy being a part of this organization.

# Hello Spring

By L. C. (Buster) Evans, Ed.D  
Executive Director, TRS of Georgia



Buster Evans

What a great start to the New Year! Can you believe that it is already spring? I hope 2020 has been good to you so far and I'm sure you are holding fast to your resolutions. We have been busy improving our processes and communications to better serve you all.

Did you know that TRS retirees help support the overall financial health of our state by pouring funds back into local economies? Approximately 7.3 billion dollars are circulated throughout the state due to both direct and indirect investments our retirees initiate. You all help to create new businesses and jobs as well as improve public infrastructure. Please check out our economic impact video under the About Us section on our website that highlights how much you mean to our wonderful state.

As a way to serve those that mean so much to our state, I would like to bring attention to our retirement planning seminar series that we host throughout the year. Aside from our individual counseling sessions and workshops, we provide ½-day seminars to help active members prepare holistically for their retirement. We are proud to announce that Mike Zarem held our first ever post-retirement seminar to provide resources to over 200 retired educators! Speakers presented information on personal health, estate planning, long-term care, and pension benefits. Future seminars may include different topics, including dealing with senior citizen medical conditions, such as Alzheimer's, financial planning, senior safety and fraud, and Social Security/Medicare Advantage.

On a different note, the 2020 legislative session commenced on January 13, 2020, to begin meeting for the second year of the 2019-2020 biennium session. Legislation introduced in 2019 that has a fiscal impact and was forwarded for actuarial study remain active for 2020. Fiscal bills that were not forwarded for actuarial study have "died in Committee" and will not be considered for the remaining of the session. Additionally, fiscal retirement bills cannot be introduced during the 2020 session. There are currently approximately 12 bills in the House or Senate Retirement Committees that have been or are under consideration. House bills 109 and 336 have received quite a bit of interest from the education community. At this point, these bills have quite the journey ahead before they can be considered for a vote. We will be tracking any pertinent bills throughout the session and will update our membership accordingly.

We look forward to another prosperous year and wish you the best for you and your loved ones. I encourage you to visit us at [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@TRSGeorgia) to keep up with the latest updates on legislation and our system.

## Harry Werner's Vision is Now a Reality

By Mickey Wendel, GREM President



Mickey Wendel

Yeeeeeeeah, Woo Hoo, Hooray!!!! Harry Werner had a vision. Now that vision of a Georgia Retired Educators Museum has been built and paid off. The first two eras of our story of public education in Georgia is on the wall in the museum. The Developmental Period (173 -1866) and the Establishment Period (1867-1954) is now up for viewing the history and pictures of those eras. The Equalization Period and the Accountability Period will be on the wall in the next few weeks. A big Thank You to our Museum Curator Committee members for their work in researching the history to make our story. A special thanks to our chair Marcia Wendel, Pat Denney, and Becky Upchurch for the work they have done in preparing the mock library and preparing signage for the artifacts

# GREA—In Good Hands

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



Henrietta Gray

Most of us are familiar with Allstate's tag line "You are in Good Hands with Allstate." Without fear of contradiction, I can unequivocally declare to you that GREA is in good hands with the incumbent Executive and Leadership Team. We solicit and will appreciate your continuing support as we build GREA into an educational game changing power. We are purposed to serve you well and work "SMART." Each initiative is Smart, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Transferable for enhanced impact.

I am enjoying being your President-elect, mainly because of the pleasure of serving with our wonderful President. I continue to be encouraged and inspired by her impactful Leadership and genuine passion for the well-being of GREA.

I applaud this GREA Board. I must admit that I was somewhat apprehensive about the functionality of this Board given the large number of new members—so I prayed. The title of this article is stated because of my being pleasantly surprised and indeed grateful at the end of our October Board meeting for the demonstrated preparedness and knowledge shown for the charge of the GREA Board and commitment and enthusiasm to serve GREA. Our Board of Directors have clearly exhibited a profound grasp of the profundity and far reaching effect of what we do as we handle the business of GREA. They are to be applauded.

Further, may it be documented how fortunate we are to have Dr. William G. Sloan as our Executive Director. Dr. Sloan's knowledge, vigilance, and attention to details in diligently monitoring issues that affect Educators—Retired and Incumbent is to be commended and greatly appreciated. This was clearly seen as he led the fight against HB 109. Dr. Sloan's work to safeguard and enhance our rights and benefits should NOT be taken lightly or for granted. I hope you agree.

Your GREA Leadership Team has been active and on the move. Dr. Sloan, President JoAnn and I attended the AMBA National Conference in San Antonio, Texas in November, 2019. It was electrifying, informative and greatly increased my appreciation for who AMBA is and what a valuable resource they are for GREA. Space is not allotted sufficient for me to enumerate the full range and superb intricacies of ALL they do—may it suffice that you know that they are indeed a lavish and lucrative asset for us. Also, in November I had the pleasure of fellowshiping with President JoAnn, Area 4 Director Karen Chauncey, and special Assistant to President JoAnn, Patsy Harrell, in my home in Pooler. We had a great time and very nice dinner.

As the date for our May, 2020 Convention approached, we unfortunately had to postpone it. Hopefully, later we will be able to have an exciting and productive conference. You should participate in the brunches, evening activities and other activities as they are opportunities to experience our commitment to fellowship, deepen our connection and grow lifelong relationships.

Moving with elevated intensity I continue to plan and pray preparing to become President of this organization, GREA. Finally, I admonish all of us to further assist, encourage, and work cooperatively with President JoAnn as we all continue CHEERING FOR GREA.

May God Bless Us All!

around the museum. We are very pleased with the results and look forward to all you having the opportunity to view our efforts. Thank you to all of you and your brick buying efforts to make this vision come into focus in 2020.

The Silent Auction proceeds at the convention this year will benefit our Georgia Retired Educators Museum. This will help us pay the \$19,000 needed to put the four periods of public education on the wall and to update the entrance way into the museum. Please consider donating items to the silent auction to help us finish our museum project. Let's keep Cheering for GREA as we also keep Sharing the Light.



## Want to Live Longer? Be Positive!

When it comes to longevity, genetics, diet and exercise are the factors we usually think of.

But according to a recent study by Boston University School of Medicine and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, our attitude about all of that—and life in general—can have an even greater impact.

Researchers found that the most optimistic participants, who were tracked for up to 30 years, showed an 11-15% longer lifespan, with far greater odds of reaching 85 than those who were the least optimistic.

Being positive isn't easy, or even natural. In fact, we're hardwired with something called negativity bias, a survival mechanism that brings our attention to negative events over positive ones.

If we're enjoying a delicious meal while the house is on fire, the fire is what gets our attention. This is helpful—but not when our life isn't threatened. For example, when we're stuck in traffic, we're alive and safe and all is well, and yet many times we feel frustrated, or worried we'll miss the first inning.

Clinical health psychologist Natalie Dattilo of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston says that optimism can be learned, even by adults struggling with anxiety and depression.

"We examine their thinking under a psychological microscope," she says. "If we can look at that together, we can begin to uncover systems of beliefs and assumptions people are making about themselves in their lives and we can begin to change those."

Like anything else, it takes practice, which means a lot of repetition. Each time you react negatively, examine the thought, ask yourself if it's important or even true. Then shift your focus to consider what's positive.

"Just try it on," Dattilo suggests. "Try on a different thought, attitude or mindset and play that out and just see what happens."

Enjoy more, worry less. Your AMBA agent can help with that. With health coverage and other retirement products endorsed by Georgia Retired Educators Association, you can spend more energy focusing on the positive. Members of GREA can call 866-619-6463 today to schedule your Free Benefits Review.

Here's to a long, happy, healthy life.

### SOURCES:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/09/01/>

[755185560/optimists-for-the-win-finding-the-bright-side-might-help-you-live-longer](https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-bias-4589618)

<https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-bias-4589618>



## Building Manager Report

By Jesse Hunter



Jesse Hunter

In this report I will repeat some information from a past report on the Honor Roll Plaza and update building and grounds information.

One of the appealing aspects of the Georgia Retired Educators Museum is the Honor Roll Plaza on which bricks are placed to memorialize or honor individuals as well as emphasizing many of the local units across the state.

Generally, when GREA members visit the museum, the first thing they want to do is look for their bricks. To facilitate locating their bricks, there is a computer in the lobby to accomplish this task.

Since the opening of the Museum/GREA Offices in April 2015, approximately 3,300 bricks have been placed in the plaza. In the current year (through February) 250 bricks have been placed in the plaza leaving approximately 250 spaces for new purchases. So, if you wish to get in the plaza, send in your brick order.

The other responsibility area is building and grounds. In this role, I am overseeing the maintenance of the building and grounds with the responsibility of recommending any needed services beyond the regular services to the GREM Board of Directors. Dr. Sloan, an employee of GREA, handles the day-to-day maintenance of the building and grounds. I work with Dr. Sloan on a regular basis to assess the needs of the facility and ensure it is maintained in a satisfactory manner.

During the current GREA/GREM year, several projects have been completed. Inside the building, the pictures of past presidents of GRTA and GREA were moved from the museum to the board room. This project makes available needed wall space in the museum for artifacts and pictures. Additionally, a two-sided wall (8 feet high by 39 feet long) was installed in the middle of the museum. This wall will display the four periods of the history of Georgia education. The first two periods have been installed.

A drainage project was completed this fall which alleviated standing water around the building. Also, a tree service was employed to remove dead and diseased trees from the wooded area surrounding the east and south side of the building.

Our landscaping maintenance company has completed winter maintenance projects—pruning, fertilization, mulching, and straw application. The company does an exemplary job of maintaining our plants, shrubs, and trees.

The GREM board in February has okayed the project to install Bermuda sod in the front area of the building and hydroseeding the remaining areas with a combination of Bermuda grass and love grass. This will be done in May. The success of the new grass will be facilitated with an irrigation system that surrounds the grass area.

Thank you for the opportunity to assist in the maintenance of the GREM/GREA building and grounds. Hope to see you at the convention.



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GEORGIA RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

# News From GREA Local Units

**Berrien County REA** met at the Ag Center at 12:00 on February 12th. Joyce Akins, president, called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance which was led by Donna Herrin. For the devotion, Vanne Tucker read the lyrics to George Strait's song "A Father's Love" and gave the meal blessing. The tables and room were attractively decorated by Wade Hand and Faye Griffin using a Valentine theme. The delicious meal was hosted by Retirement Consultants Network from Adel and prepared and served by the Berrien High School Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) under the direction of Mrs. Leigh Johnson. Two FCCLA members, Leigha Kimbrell and Kaitlyn Ray presented a program on the activities, accomplishments, and awards that the FCCLA members are involved with on the district, state, and national levels. Mr. Schramm, the guest speaker, presented an informative program on wealth management and changes in the laws for the retirees.

**Burke County REA** congratulates GREa Area 12 Director, Emanuel Larkin, Jr. He received the 2019 Savannah State University National Alumni Association Distinguished Community Service Award for Outstanding Voluntary Service. He also celebrated his 50th College Class Reunion. Gloria Lewis and Esther Moore represented BCREA in the Christmas Parade in Midville, Ga. Our unit enjoyed a Christmas Luncheon at Doubletree Hotel, Augusta, Ga. on December 5th. The speaker for January 2nd was Magistrate Judge Ashley Moore who shared highlights about the Optimist Club including its purpose as they work with youth, the creed, activities and their mission. Congratulations to Rose Clinton who was named BCREA's Educator of the Month. Kudos to members Hazel Andrews, Marie Darling, Dorothy Latimore, Hattie Outlaw, Toni Searles and Leona Simpson for their hard work and dedication. The 2020 MLK Committee members Loretta Brinson, Emanuel Larkin, Jr., and Jackie Payton planned the 2nd Legacy Banquet and Commemorative March and Parade and the 94th African American History Month and Heritage Awards Program. On February 6th we enjoyed our Annual Heart Luncheon at Fish Eye Grill in Girard, Ga. Members donated \$590.00 for the American Heart Association.

**Clayton County REA** met on January 21. Our speaker was one of our own members, Jim Carter. He and another volunteer for the Clayton County Humane Society, Carol Boatwright, spoke of the work volunteers perform at the animal shelter. This shelter is one of the few "no kill" shelters in Georgia. In February another one of our CCREA members, Deborah Hibben, will discuss the work of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities and State Rehabilitation Council.

**Coffee Atkinson REA** met at Gaines Chapel for their December meeting. President Cheryl Evans called the meeting to order. Lena Vickers gave the inspiration. CAREA member Danny Haddock gave a very informative program about safety tips for everyone. He also stressed things senior need to be aware of in their home or when in public. Haddock also stated he would be willing to speak to other groups about safety and security, even in churches.

**Coweta REA** is having a GREa-T year #Cheering For GREa. Officers and Executive Board set the goal of earning CARE's second ever Unit of Distinction. After attending the Area Meeting in Columbus, Unit President Sherry Warren brought back ideas to carry out the State President's vision. In October John Daviston, owner and president of McKoon Funeral Home and Crematory, shared the importance of making end of life arrangements. We also took a field trip to North Georgia apple country. In November AMBA representative LeeAnn Sturtz explained the wide variety of benefits available to GREa members; and Amanda Camp, representing Court Appointed Special Advocates, described the role of CASA in assisting our community's foster children. Our Fall Semester closed with a successful Holiday Bazaar to help fund scholarships to seniors at East Coweta, Newnan, and Northgate High Schools.

**Dalton Whitfield Murray REA** (DWMREA) recently held their 11th annual luncheon/auction at Dalton Golf and Country Club. The event included a silent auction, which featured around 210 items, and a live auction to benefit the DWMREA Scholarship Fund. Whitfield County Sheriff Scott Chitwood was the auctioneer for the event, which raised over \$10,000 to benefit local high school students majoring in education in college through the scholarships. Dorothy Gray and Twinkle Chitwood are chairmen for the auction committee.

**Decatur County REA** raised over \$300.00 in the Georgia Walk to End Alzheimer's. This exceeded the \$250.00 request made by GREa president, Joann Tomlinson. Other projects provide donations to the local scholarship given to a future educator attending ABAC at Bainbridge.

**Effingham REA** enjoyed a Christmas Bazaar at their December meeting. Members and guests displayed their arts, crafts, and baked goods for those attendees to purchase for the holiday season. Dr. Randy Shearouse, retiring Effingham County School Superintendent, spoke about the improvements and progress of our growing system. In January, we were entertained by a local businessman, James Carlson, owner of Joann's Florist and Local on Laurel event venue. He spoke of his latest adventure and development plans for a new venue. EREA has hosted two Silent Auction bake sales recently at local elementary schools and profited approximately \$800. These funds will go towards our unit's contribution to our state project, Alzheimer's Association. We had 50 attendees at the January meeting which set a record!

**Gwinnett County REA** Silent Auction and Farmer's Market at their November meeting was a huge success, raising a little over \$4,200.00 as of December 2019, to support scholarships for future and current educators in Gwinnett County and Georgia Gwinnett College. It was an exciting day of shopping fun and fellowship. The GCREA Team collected \$5,425.00 and participated in the Duluth Alzheimer's Association walk to find a cure on November 2, 2019.

**Habersham REA** members have been busy collecting money for the Alzheimer's project. We have had great meetings this year with our sponsors being the guest speaker. HREA has just made the 10% membership growth, and we are looking forward to our state president's visit in March. Some of our members are already making plans for the state convention at Stone Mountain in May.

**Houston County REA** had a silent auction and raised \$600 for the Alzheimer's Association. Superintendent of Houston County Schools, Dr. Mark Scott, spoke of the state of the schools at the January meeting. He is pleased with how money for the schools is managed, gave praise to the school board for its support, and expressed appreciation to all employees for their efforts in maintaining excellence in the school system. Mike Zarem of TRS visited HCREA in February. Members were impressed with his knowledge of data and how well he explained what the numbers mean. Since November, members have been donating food and toilet paper to be taken to food banks at local churches. In order to help members learn more about each other called HCREA Member Spotlight, one person is chosen by the president to tell of a memorable moment in their teaching career. At the February meeting, Katie Dunn told of taking students to Plains to meet former President Jimmy Carter and, later in her career, having her students meet former Governor Sonny Perdue when he visited the elementary school in which she was teaching and which he attended as a child. In another getting to know you attempt called You Did What?!, Kathy Blanchard told of meeting her husband in the laundromat at Georgia Southern, going on a date that night to the fair and getting stuck at the top of the ferris wheel, marrying two years later, and recently celebrating their 51st wedding anniversary. Membership Chair, Mary Catherine Cutrell, reported that the goal of 10% growth in GREa membership had been met at the February meeting.



# GRE Foundation, Inc. Profiles Scholarship Winners

*Each spring since 2002 the GRE Foundation invites active certified educators to apply for a scholarship. The applications are reviewed and for the past three years 15 winners were chosen each year and each received \$500.00 to use toward furthering their education. We recognize the winners each year in THE GRE BULLETIN. We are supported in this endeavor by the local REA units. Most of the REA's donate \$50.00 a year for the scholarships, and this along with the Silent Auction money and individual contributions has been supplying the funding for the scholarships. Thank you to all local REA's that participate.*

—Patricia Bassett, Chair

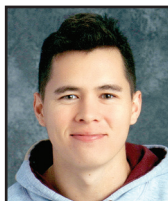
**Amy Catherine Manzella** of Canton, is a veteran kindergarten teacher with 14 years of experience. She wishes to advance her skills by earning a Specialist degree. Because curriculum and expectations are constantly changing, she realizes the importance of professional growth. She uses her teaching abilities outside the classroom to volunteer monthly at her church to help with children's activities. She is a member of PAGE and reads current information from the web and the PAGE magazine. She is involved in many special school activities. Among them—she is Teach 21 (technology endorsement) certified, MIE (Microsoft Innovative Educator) certified, Gifted Endorsed and has a Masters in Early Childhood Education. She has been a team leader for her kindergarten teammates for three years, has had two student teachers, is a part of the GKIDS (Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills) pilot recently implemented in Georgia, and has been a partner with another teacher in creating a Prayer Team for the school staff. She and her husband, a middle school principal, have one son that they adopted seven years ago. She states that the Foundation Scholarship will be useful in paying for schooling as she continues her journey to love her students and teach them daily.



**Angela Sattinger**, a fourth-grade teacher in Fayetteville, has ten years of experience. Her goal is to lead by example and inspire the love of learning she has to others. She uses her talents to serve her community and her school in extra-curricular activities. She has served 19 years as a Girl Scout Leader and/or a Unit Director; she has volunteered at VBS and served as a VBS Director several times; she has experience with other community events as well as being a member of PAGE, GAGC, NSTA, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. In the school system for the past seven years she has served as the Science CCP and she has been the Science Olympiad Team Captain; she is a member of the PBIS team; was active in the Lighthouse team for two years; presented at GAGC in 2018, and the list continues on and on. She stated that the family budget has been strained with one son in college and a husband who has been diagnosed with leukemia, and also had surgery for a broken hip. She feels that the scholarship is not only an investment in her but in her community also.



**Jacob Baxter** is a Health and PE teacher with one year of experience from Savannah. His stated goal for pursuing his master's degree is for himself, yes, but also to expand his knowledge so that he can help his students. To do this, he says he needs to be a lifelong learner with a passion for health and physical education. He says that he feels that his students will have a greater enthusiasm for Health and PE when he can model and show what an active lifestyle can do for them. He is active in his school and community organizations. Some of these are: PAGE, Georgia Association of Health and Physical Education, SHAP R America, Share the Wealth, Second Harvest, and Site Safety Committee. He is an assistant coach for softball at Islands HS and head JV coach for baseball at Islands HS. He stated that being a recent college graduate with student loans, moving to Savannah, and now starting his graduate work, the GRE Foundation scholarship would be a tremendous help.



**Jamie Pettis** is a ninth-grade mathematics teacher in Cartersville. Her educational goals include a master's and specialist degrees in mathematics. She serves her community in meeting educational improvement by attending math conferences, ESOL conferences and is a member of PAGE. On campus she has helped with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and is to become its adviser in 2019-2020. She serves as a math tutor for the school and has helped judge senior capstone projects. She states that she is single and lives on her own. The scholarship will be a definite help in successfully completing her career goals.



**Jessica Leigh Ann Dyer** is from Dawson County and has 17 years of experience with 12 years as a school nurse and the last five years as a Healthcare Science teacher. She states that the field of healthcare is constantly changing; therefore, it is vital that she stay up-to-date on the latest evidence-based practices. This will allow her to teach dual-enrollment courses at her school. She serves her community as a member of the CTAE Advisory Board—a collaborative effort to provide internship and career opportunities for students; she participates in Brenau University's Medical Scholars Program Steering Committee—this program allows HS juniors opportunities to spend a day in various Brenau campus healthcare programs. At her school she is involved with various healthcare organizations and activities throughout the school year. She stated that she has a family of five to care for and also lives next door to her parents so she can help care for her father who has Parkinson's Disease. The GRE Scholarship will be a tremendous help as she continues her education.



**Kimberly Caldwell** from Lumpkin County is a para pro with an associates degree. She has four years experience and her goal is to become a teacher, not only for her benefit, but also for that of the students. She participates in her community and school by volunteering to help agriculture students as they work at the barn. This helps her build a relationship with the children in the community. She teaches Sunday School and heads up VBS during the summer. As a para pro she attends performances at school and volunteers when needed. The scholarship will be valuable to her since she has three children with medical needs. She is working toward her degree while working full time. Even though the pay was not great, she stated that she loved her job and wanted to become a full fledged teacher. She says that she wants her own children and those that she teaches to know that determination and staying focused will pay off in the end.



**Mindi Bennett** of Habersham County is a math/science teacher with eleven years of experience. Her goal is a master's degree in curriculum instruction. She says this should help her have a deeper level of understanding and commitment to the curriculum and the profession. As a way of serving her community she is a co-founder of the Collegiate Middle School Level Association chapter for the University of West Georgia. CMLA is an affiliate of the AMLE (Middle Level) of which she is also a member. The mission of these two organizations is to help educators reach every student to help them grow professionally. In her school she is involved in the extended day program; she attends all extra-curricular activities in which her students are involved as a way to let them know she cares about them as a person as well as academically. Mindi says she is a divorced/widow mother and pursuing higher education is not possible without taking out loans. This scholarship will help with those expenses.



**Mirian Munn** from Savannah is a parapro with five years of experience. She works with Special Education in the 2nd and 4th grades. Her goal is to serve herself and her students by pursuing an education that will not only support but help her students be successful. She states that she is a life-long learner and she is teachable. She supports her school and her community meet their educational needs by looking for free or low-cost workshops and online classes. She attends community events that provide resources to herself and the parents of the community. She is a member of the Junior League of Savannah and Parent University and other organizations that have the mission to education and meet the needs in a diverse setting of the child, parent and educator. She is a single parent of three sons; she works one full-time job and two part-time jobs. This scholarship will help make ends meet as she works to further her education.



**Ashley Ragan Rogers** is an Inclusion teacher in Catoosa County. Her goal at the time of her application was to be a certified teacher in May 2019. She said that learning was a life long process that never stopped and she wanted her students to have a positive mindset about learning. In the school she is involved in many extra-curricular activities—girls' head basketball coach, assistant volleyball coach, member of the Renaissance committee, part of the Mindset Squad and the Bomb Squad. She stated that she still has student loans to pay for as well as having to pay for the certification test in the Spring of 2019. The GRE Foundation scholarship would certainly be a big help as she continues her education.



**Shannon Marisa Lee** has four years of experience with Ware County Schools; she teaches 7th and 8th-grade science. She is active in extra-curricular activities with the school. She assists with the National Junior Honor Society by helping students complete their projects and check their GPA for NJHS induction. She also assists FFA with the horse judging team which would be in their first competition in

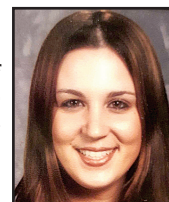


April of this year. She coached Science Fair students this past year and had students win competitions at state. She stated that she had very little community activities since she went from college into teaching and continued with university by pursuing a Master's in Curriculum and Instruction. She is now working on her SED in Instructional Technology. She said that working and going to school full time has made it hard to take on another paying job and the scholarship will help with the cost of books required for the classes.

**Stephanie Irving**, an elementary teacher from Gwinnett County, has an associate degree in Psychology and is working to complete her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She is a Mentor for children in her school and a co-teacher for a Girls and Boys mentoring group program in the school. This program provides support for the students with the target goal of building young leaders of tomorrow. She serves on the schools Literacy Committee that meets and works to increase the ways children can read and how to become independent readers both at home and at school. She stated that this scholarship, along with a partial scholarship from the university she is attending, will enable her to continue her goal of having a career in education.



**Vanessa Strausbaugh** has seven years experience and is a Special Education teacher in Fannin County. Her goal is to increase her knowledge of special education so that she can be a better teacher for students with disabilities. She desires to know more about the different types and the most effective teaching strategies of special education so that she can be more proficient in meeting the needs of her students. She serves her community and her school by coaching parents and providing support for them as they raise a child with disabilities; she is a member of PAGE; she participates in after school tutoring; she participates in special school nights—Family Night, Math Night, STEAM Night, Fall Festival. She stated that her parents were not financially able to help with her schooling and she would be thankful for this GRE Foundation scholarship.



*Continued from page 5*

**Muscogee REA** members have celebrated February! Members participated in the, "We Are The Dream," Martin Luther King Day Parade and Prayer Gathering. During our February 14, 2020 luncheon our GREA State President, Mrs. JoAnn Tomlinson, led the meeting with "Cheering for GRE!" Mr. Ronzell Buckner gave an informational talk on the "Dr. Martin Luther King Outdoor Learning Trail," located in Columbus, Georgia. Both speakers gave an inspiring talk and all members left energized and ready to keep Dr. Martin Luther King's Dream Alive and Cheering for GRE!

**Newton County REA** has had a busy winter! In December we held our annual Christmas Luncheon at the Newton College and Career Academy. As always Chef Quinlan and Chef Joy and their culinary students prepared and served a wonderful menu! We were honored to have Executive Director Bill Sloan, Johnny Smith of communications, and Alice Moore Director of Area 13 join us and catch us up on the happenings at GREA. Our members also brought in winter wraps for the Garden of Gethsemane Homeless Shelter and books for the Newton County Book Bus. Our Hospitality Committee prepared a soup and sandwich lunch for our February meeting. Our Legislative chairperson shared the latest news on HB 109; all our emails and phone calls make a difference!

**Oglethorpe County REA** welcomed program presenter, Katie Caulkin, to its February meeting. Caulkin, an employee of Athens

Piedmont Hospital, spoke on the constant use of digital technology and its positive and negative impact on our lives. She provided interesting data on limiting the excess use of technology. Guests of the unit were Oglethorpe County Elementary School principal, Katie Baldwin; OCES Teacher of the Year, Dr. Chad Galloway; and student Lyla Bryant, who was recognized for excellence in the classroom.

**Polk REA** has been busy giving back to the community. In November our group collected overnight bags for children going through the DFACS system, and filled them with toiletries, toys, school supplies, socks, stuffed animals and blankets. In December we contributed toys for "Christmas is for Kids," a Christmas program sponsored by the Rockmart Police Department. In February we donated overnight/weekend bags to the local Women's Shelter, and filled them with toiletries, socks, blankets and other personal items. Polk REA believes that helping others in our community now will result in a better place to live for future generations. We care about the children of our community and look for ways to help them throughout the year. Polk REA also celebrated our 50th Anniversary since its inception by founder Kankakee Anderson. Special activities included recognition of past presidents and oldest members, special guest speaker, beautiful 50th Anniversary table decorations and a cake.

**Rockdale REA** Silent Auction was attended by Alice Moore, Area 3 Director. This auction held in December 2019 raised a total of \$1,665.00 for our scholarship fund. RREA has given 43 scholarships for a total of \$57,000 since it began recording their efforts in 2007.

## Did you know? Facts from TRS

TRS received 17,054 phone calls in February.  
Processed 206 applications for retirement.  
236,125 active contributors to TRS.  
133,113 retirees (enjoying life).  
Payroll for retirees \$432,200,927.  
Average Age of retirees is 71.  
Average Monthly Benefit is \$3,381 per month.

### Bulletins by Email

Would you like to get your *GREA Bulletin* by email? Approximately 12,000 of our members are now getting their *GREA 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 GREa is saving approximately \$6,000 per *Bulletin*. If you would like your copy sent by email simply email us at [gre3@earthlink.net](mailto:gre3@earthlink.net) and we will be happy to put you on the email list. Thank you for considering getting your *Bulletin* by email.

### Have you moved or changed your email address recently?

It is very important that you notify  
these organizations as soon as possible  
after you move or change your email address:  
**State Health Benefits, TRS, GREa and  
Social Security (if applicable).**

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## Proposed GREa By-Laws Change

The following proposed change to the GREa By-Laws was discussed and voted on by the By-Laws committee on February 11, 2020. It was seconded and passed as a proposed recommendation to the GREa Board. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the change. This change will be voted on by the membership at the annual convention.

Page 28, Article VIII, Section 2 I #2:

2. The committee shall conduct a service at the Annual Convention in memory of deceased members. **Change the name of the service from "Necrology Service" to "Memorial Service."**

### GREa OFFICERS

Jo Ann Tomlinson, President  
Dr. Henrietta Gray, President-elect  
Mickey Wendel, Past President  
Dr. Beverly Roberts, Secretary  
Dr. John Upchurch, Treasurer  
Dr. Bill Sloan, Executive Director

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Evelyn Fillingame, Area 2  
Brenda Moore, Area 3  
Karen Chauncey, Area 4  
Marcia Wendel, Area 5

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Shirley Grant, Area 18

### GREa BULLETIN

Georgia Retired Educators Association

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

Johnny Smith, Editor

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