

# THE GRE A BULLETIN

JOURNAL OF NEWS AND REFLECTIONS FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS OF GEORGIA

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GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

SUMMER 2021



## Welcome to Augusta, Georgia



### ***GRE A 62nd Annual Convention***

Augusta is the 2nd largest and 2nd oldest city in Georgia. It is the home of the Medical College of Georgia, the legendary James Brown, the world-famous Masters' Golf Tournament and for three days in October it will be the home of the 62nd annual Georgia Retired Educators Association Convention. As a GRE A member you are invited to enjoy all the activities that have been planned by President Jo Ann Tomlinson and the convention chair Becky Upchurch. It will be an exciting convention!

The convention will convene on October 19th at 3 p.m. and adjourn on October 21st at 12 p.m. The host hotel this year is the Marriott Augusta at the Convention Center. You can find a registration form and details on page 6 in this *Bulletin*!





# Message From the President

## Prepare to Convene

By Dr. Henrietta Gray, President



Henrietta Gray

Great things are in store for us at our October 19-21, 2021 Convention in Augusta, Georgia. We will be privileged to celebrate and honor one of the best, most devoted and hardworking Presidents GREA has ever had in the history of GREA, JoAnn Tomlinson. Meticulous planning is being done to make this a grand Celebration for our first convention since 2019.

We bid you to prepare to convene with us this year if you have never previously attended a GREA Convention. We will hear from our newly installed 2021-2022 President. We will hear her tell the full story of the 2021-2022 Theme: **Empowered to Serve**. We will hear a plethora of reasons that should inspire us to support our 2021-2022 chosen Humanitarian Project which is the March of Dimes. We will hear our newly installed President speak passionately about her Goals, Vision, and prayerful path to move GREA forward and upward.

Paramount among all our reasons to gather is that we will be together face to face again. We will be able to embrace or elbow bump in our face-to-face greetings. We will be able to thank God together that we made it through the uncharted waters of the Corona pandemic. Prepare now to convene with us.

We will see the Governing Board in action and come to know much about this Board's prolific and game changing work on behalf of GREA. New members will be informed, and long-time members will be reminded of how fortunate we are that Dr. William Sloan is our Executive Director. We will enumerate again, how strong, fiscally sound, and administratively solid we are because of our Executive Director, Executive Committee and Area Directors. Prepare to Convene with us. We want you to know you can be comfortable and will be safe in attending our October Convention. We are ensuring that every protocol and safeguard will be implemented to assure that none of us will be at risk. God will hear our prayers for safety, protection and well being of all who of us who convene. Many other things, activities, and features are being prepared for your pleasure, information, inspiration, and edification.

**Prepare to Convene, Cheering for GREA and know that we are Empowered to Serve!!**

## Hello Summer to ALL Retirees from GREM

By JoAnn Tomlinson, GREM President



Jo Ann Tomlinson

The Georgia Retired Educators Museum is open and ready for visitors. Now that there is some normalcy, get ready to travel. Plan a trip to the GREM in Flowery Branch, Ga. You will thoroughly enjoy browsing through the many artifacts that are included in Our Education Museum.

The presentation of the Timeline Through Georgia's Education is really nice! The walls, bookcases and other rooms are filled with educational items that were used in our state of Georgia classrooms. A Big Thank You to each person who has contributed to our museum. Many individuals and REA Units have shared some of their prize possessions with the GREM so that every visitor can reminisce and enjoy

# A Word from the President-elect

By Joe Boland, President-elect



Joe Boland

I am proud to serve as President-elect of GREA. I have served as President of Cobb-Marietta REA and served 4 years as Area Director of Area 15. All three groups have had a long line of outstanding leaders.

I will be the second president from Cobb. Lester Dean served as president 2005-2006. A few of the highlights of his tenure:

- chair of the search committee that hired Dr. Sloan as the Director
- AMBA selected as a partner of GREA
- first president to have a pin

Lester has remained active in his local REA. So much so, that the 2020-2021 Directory was dedicated to him for his continued service. He and his wife Betty live in Powder Springs.

Fellowship...Service...Support. Thanks, Lester Dean.

## WHY I LOVE HER (GEORGIA)

You ask me why I love her?

Well, give me time and I'll explain.

Have you seen a Georgia sunset or a soft rain?

Have you eaten a peach down Georgia way?

Have you watched a fog drifting in the coastal bay?

Have you heard a bobwhite calling in the southern pines,

Or heard the bellow of a diesel near the McCaysville mines?

Does the Amicalola thrill you when you hear her waters roar?

Do you look with awe and wonder at the Savannah shore,

Where men who braved a new world first stepped on her rock?

And do you think of them when you stroll along a Savannah dock?

Have you seen a snowflake drifting at Brasstown, way up high?

Have you seen the sun come blazing down from a bright

south Georgia sky?

Do you hail the Chattahoochee as she rushes to the sea,

Or bow your head at Kennesaw at our struggle to be free?

Have you seen the mighty Cloudland Canyon cliffs?

Have you watched an eagle soar?

Have you seen the Ocmulgee roll along Macon's shore?

Have you felt a chill at Hiawassee when on a fall day

Her trees along the mountainsides show a colorful display?

Does the word "Y'all" make you warm? Do you stare in

disbelief when you see the big granite rock at Stone Mountain?

From Tallulah Gorge to the Okefenokee, from Columbus to Augusta,

My heart cries out, my pulse runs fast at the might of this state.

You ask me why I love her? I've a million reasons why:

My beautiful Georgia, beneath God's wide, wide sky.

by Lester Dean

looking at things that were actually used in our Georgia schools.

Make a full day by visiting the Georgia Retired Educators Museum and other sites nearby such as Gibbs Gardens in Ball Ground, Ga., a beautiful waterfall at Amicalola State Park near Dawsonville, Apple Mountain and Hemlock Falls near Clarksville, Ga. and many, many more!!

Be sure to notify the State GREA office of the date and time you wish to visit the GREM.

Happy Summer, Enjoy and Blessings, JoAnn Tomlinson, GREM President

# Ramblin' Around With the Executive Director

By Bill Sloan, Executive Director



*William Sloan* Gooooood Morning, GREEEEEE! It finally appears that our great nation, state, and organization has survived the pandemic. Life is pretty much back to normal for everyone. As my favorite movie character, Forest Gump, said: "Life is life a box of chocolates because you never know what you will get." Life has been like that for the last 12–15 months as we never knew what the next day would bring. I think surviving this virus will make all of us better people and more appreciative of what we have. Retired educators are truly blessed with a great retirement system and great health coverage, and we must all help keep it strong.

Many of you have recently read and heard about troubles that have been experienced by other TRS systems in our country. The Georgia TRS is as strong as any in the nation and our Executive Director, Dr. Buster Evans, has been an outstanding leader in keeping it strong through the good times and bad. He recently announced that we have over \$100 billion dollars in assets. All active and retired educators are thankful for his leadership. We can all rest assured that our pension is in good hands.

We officially have a new leader as of April 21, 2021. Dr. Henrietta Gray was finally installed after a two-year wait as the

57th President of GREA. She is from the Chatham County and lives in Pooler, Georgia. We all welcome this exciting and vibrant young lady to the leadership role. She will continue to do great things for GREA like her predecessors in this position. She is looking forward to meeting many of you at our Area Meetings in August. (See the schedule on page 6 of this *Bulletin*.)

Our new President-elect is Joe Boland of the Cobb/Marietta REA and lives in Kennesaw, Ga. Joe will make a great GREA President next year and is a strong leader. We look forward to working with him. As I am wiring this article, he is in Omaha, Nebraska cheering on his Mississippi State Bulldogs who are playing in the College Baseball World Series. Good Luck to his Bulldogs in this exciting event.

Ok GREA members, it is time to get out of your house and come the to GREA State Convention in Augusta. The convention starts on October 19th and goes through lunch on October 21st. It is always and enjoyable time to see old friends and to make new ones. You will miss a good time if you do not attend! This convention will complete the term of President Jo Ann Tomlinson and will celebrate her two-year term as State President. Jo Ann was a great leader for GREA and served a two-year term because of the pandemic. Thank You, Jo Ann!

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## TRS in the News—Take it to Macon!

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



*Buster Evans* During my career as an educational administrator, including the years I served as a local school district superintendent, I had the privilege of working with some phenomenal leaders. I don't guess there is a one that I don't remember (mostly fondly) from time to time! One of my former colleagues had a familiar saying: "take it to Macon!" Macon, the geographical center of the state with a lot of rich history, and when you consider the Bibb, Houston, Monroe, and surrounding counties, is home to a good number of our active and retired TRS members.

**We've Taken it to Macon!** For the past five years, I have enjoyed meeting hundreds of pending retirees who visit our Atlanta office to have a personal counseling session with one of our outstanding retirement counselors. While not every retiree has a retirement counseling session, my observation is that it is probably a pretty smart thing to do since the retiree is about to make one of the most important decisions in their life. When chatting with our visitors, I frequently will ask them "where did you drive in from?" Some drive in from pretty close distances, but some will make a five or more-hour drive coming up from such places as Bainbridge, Valdosta, Brunswick, Savannah, etc. For these TRS members, it is literally an exhausting two-day trip.

I am pleased to share with you we are now conducting face-to-face counseling sessions in Macon! Thanks to the Bibb County School System, we have a nice satellite office where we are conducting both traditional as well as web-based sessions with our guests. So, unless you just want to make the drive to Atlanta, we encourage our central and South Georgia members to consider scheduling their appointment in the Macon office.

**2021 Retirements.** Retirement is an exciting time...for some it's an opportunity to travel and spend more time with family...

for others it's an opportunity to start a second career or volunteer. Regardless of what our members do in retirement, our team at the TRS of Georgia wish to say a sincere "thank you" for your service to public education in Georgia, and congratulations on your retirement!

There have been concerns for the past year that our retirement numbers would skyrocket. That, in fact, did happen in a few states that I am familiar with. In Georgia, though, that has not been our experience. Perhaps credit is due to Governor Kemp and the Georgia legislature for a \$3,000 pay increase with perhaps more coming somewhere down the road. Perhaps there are other reasons like our teachers in Georgia just love serving kids. The number of retirements we have processed for 2021 is slightly higher than last year's 10-year low, but pretty much in line with the average year.

**Legislation to Watch.** There are two pieces of retirement legislation that have been submitted to our actuary for review. HB 385 is the return to work bill that would allow for a retired teacher, after one year of retirement, to return to the classroom as a teacher in a critical needs area as identified by each RESA district. Clearly, many of our retired educators have a wealth of experience and perhaps still a desire to teach. This bill, which is also a part of Governor Kemp's teacher pipeline package, would allow that. SB 267 is a bill which would allow for a retiree to change their beneficiary in one of the optional retirement plan selection. It will be interesting to see if either of these bills will make it all the way through the legislative process next year.

Again, thank you for the privilege of serving you here at TRS! It is joy to continue to have such a wonderful relationship with so many of our retired educators who made a difference in their professional career and who continue to make a difference by being involved in GREA!

# News From GREA Local Units

**Bulloch County REA** was popping this Spring since CDC guidelines were lifted, and we were able to have back-to-back meetings in March, April, and May. The superintendent of the Bulloch County School System, Charles Wilson, attended our April meeting and joined BREa for three years. This was a first for us. Sarah Hines was presented the Outstanding BREa Member award for 2020-2021. We had the most Spotlight ads for Area 6. A big thanks to Glenerra Martin as committee chairman. Membership Chairman, Cherry Brewton and President, Becky Renfroe attended the Bulloch County Schools Retirement event to give out pamphlets and membership cards to the retirees about joining BREa and GREa. BREa also purchased two bricks from the museum and gave \$250 to the State Humanitarian Project, Alzheimer's. Carolyn Smith and Sarah Hines performed the Memorial Service at the May meeting. The seven deceased members will have their names added to the Memorial Plaques. These plaques date back to 1994 to present with 137 retired names on the plaques. The plaques are kept on display at the Georgia Southern University Museum. A new Literary Project was started by Sarah Hines called Friends of the Library. Over 200 books have been donated to the library by our members.

**Dalton Whitfield Murray REA** ended the 2020-2021 year by awarding seven local high school students and four Dalton State College students scholarships. Each student received \$1,000, and each student plans to major in education and enter the teaching career. This is an increase in the number awarded in previous years from six to seven to high school students. The Scholarship Fund makes it possible to honor area students. To begin the 2021-2022-year, Sandra Derrick, DWMREA president, attended the Area 16 Presidents Meeting in Lafayette in May. DWMREA executive/committee chairs held the annual summer meeting in June to plan events and meetings for the year. The membership committee attended the Whitfield County Schools Employee Celebration in June to present goodie bags and information concerning DWMREA and GREa to new system retirees.

**Effingham REA** had a very busy month of May. On May 5, the 2021 Effingham County retirees were honored at a program and reception by the Effingham County Board of Education. A group of EREA members attended and presented "goody bags" to all the retirees present. They were welcomed to join our unit and given information about becoming a member of GREa. At our regular meeting in May, President Kim Johnson presented Powerpoint slides depicting our recent visit to the GREa museum in Flowery Branch, Ga. The slides gave us a remembrance of some of the older equipment, documents, and ways of teaching and learning that were a part of our past in education. We will be hosting our annual banquet in September to begin our new year. New retirees will be extended a special invitation to attend and become a participant in our unit. We also awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Kaitlyn White, who is an Effingham educator presently working on her master's degree.

**Emanuel County REA** held its last meeting for this academic year on May 19. Dr. Connie Cooper, GREa's Area 6 Director, was our special guest. She informed our virtual attendees about upcoming GREa meetings and later installed our 2021-2022 officers. The scholarship committee introduced this year's recipient and his father, stating that he was the first-ever male to meet all the criteria for our annual scholarship. The committee summarized his impressive high school and college accomplishments (he just graduated from a two-year public college) and shared his plans to attend Georgia State University to major in music education. The

committee and this year's president met with the recipient after the meeting to present him the \$500.00 check and to take a picture to accompany the article for our two local newspapers. (Note: The following day, an anonymous donor called our treasurer to tell her that she would soon receive a \$500.00 check in the mail to also be given to the awardee!) Our local unit will celebrate its 50th anniversary throughout the 2021-2022 school year. The ten-member, volunteer planning committee began meeting periodically in December 2020 and will be busy this summer finalizing the variety of events which will culminate at our May 18, 2022, meeting.

**Houston County REA** helped recognize two groups of educators in May: those about to embark on their careers and those who retired from it. On May 4, 2021, the Houston County Career Academy held its Signing Day Ceremony for those high school seniors who completed the Teaching as a Profession Pathway. HCREA gave gift bags to the 15 students who were being lauded. At the other end of the teaching spectrum, on May 13, 2021, the Houston County BOE held its annual Retirement Banquet for those who were retiring from their careers as educators and, once again, HCREA was on hand to present gift boxes to those honorees as they exited the stage area. The gift boxes contained donations from local businesses and from HCREA. This year, each educator also received a gift bag to hold the overflow of items because of the generosity of these businesses. Both 2020 and 2021 retirees were saluted since COVID prevented the 2020 banquet. HCREA Membership Chair, Mary Catherine Cutrell, was given the opportunity to speak to the hundreds of people in attendance about the importance of joining both GREa and HCREA. Melissa Shiver was the HCREA member in charge of the gifts for both groups.

**Jefferson County REA** honored students and educators at its annual End-of-Year Celebration Luncheon held on June 3rd at Louisville Academy. The organization's first PACESETTER Award was presented to Jefferson County Middle School's Aniya Cunningham. This award is given to an 8th-grader who exhibits academic excellence, leadership skills, and positive involvement in extra-curricular and community activities. The celebration also included 2021 JCHS & Jefferson County STAR Student (as well as class valedictorian), Carson Cooper, and his STAR Teacher, band director Grant Davis. In addition, association president, Dr. Barbara Jordan, announced the recipient of this year's \$1,000 JCREA scholarship, Jordan Kelley. Jordan is a 2021 honor graduate of Jefferson County High School. The association was also extremely proud to honor the following 2021 retirees for their dedication and service to the boys and girls in the Jefferson County School System. The president concluded the celebration by presenting certificates of appreciation and volunteer service and leadership awards to JCREA members for their outstanding efforts throughout the 2020-2021 year despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the awards presentations, a delicious meal was enjoyed by all. JCREA continues its mission to unite retired educators for fellowship, support, and educational/community service to students, active and retired educators, and the community at large.

**Muscogee REA** held its final meeting of this year on June 10, 2021, at Rainey-McCullars School of the Arts in Columbus, Ga. Opening remarks were made by Vice Chair of MCSD Board of Education, Mrs. Laurie C. McRae. Scholarship Chairperson, Mrs. Margaret Ingersoll, presented four \$500 scholarships to Rebekah Kreyling from Fort Middle School, Emily Purser from Hannan Magnet Academy, Ashley McCoy from Johnson Elementary School, and Christopher Stalling from Aaron Cohn Middle School. President, Dr. Marietta Webb, presented the GREa Volunteer Service Award

*Continued on page 7*



# 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 two years 28 winners were chosen and each received \$750.00 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. This year 40 local REAs supported the GRE Foundation and Georgia's active educators by donating. Many of the REAs donate \$50.00 a year for the scholarships, and this along with the Silent Auction money in alternate years, some interest from the GREF investment fund, and individual contributions has been supplying the funding for the scholarships. Thank you to all local REAs that participate.*

—Patricia Bassett, Chair

**Thalia Elliott** lives in Valdosta and teaches Algebra 1 on a Provisional certificate. She plans to attend Wiregrass Technical College and work on certification. Thalia said that this first year of teaching had let her realize that teaching was the career for her. She said that a goal was to connect with her students and bring them to the “love” of math. She wants her students to grow academically while maturing mentally and emotionally. In her community she tutors high school and Valdosta State students; she is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity. As a member she has participated in soup kitchens, road clean-ups and other activities. As a first-year teacher she has not fully immersed herself in extracurricular activities, but she does support her school and students by attending football and basketball games. This had proven to be a plus for her. She has a BA in mathematics, but as she stated, she did not make good financial decisions about paying for school. She wants to make better choices as she works on her certification and the scholarship will help with that goal.



**Omar Franco**, from Hazelhurst, is a 6th-grade math teacher who plans to attend Albany State University and work toward his T-5 in counseling. He wants to pursue this degree so he could help students who get left behind. He wants to give himself and them a sense of hope. He is a member of PAGE and uses newsletters and emails to gain insights on training and upcoming events that help him become more prepared to teach his students. He is head coach for the Boys' Cross-Country team, and assistant coach for the middle and high school Boys' Soccer teams. As a coach he can teach his students they have to work hard whether winning or losing. His Spanish speaking grandfather had a saying, “Working hard will become easy.” He says he lives with his parents to help them and himself with finances. His mother and father both work; he wants this degree to help with the financial and emotional status for all five in the family.



**Hayward Johnson** is a 9-12 Environmental Science teacher from Millen. He has five years' experience and plans to work on his T-6 in Instructional Technology at Kennesaw State University. He states each year of his teaching the use of technology has increased; it has become a major component of being an effective educator. He serves on the Organizational Management Team and on the Teams Transforming Teaching Together (4T). The OM team is a leadership team that meets each month to discuss issues and necessary improvements. The 4T is a collaborative in partnership with other schools in the area, the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, and the Southern Regional Education Board. He is also the Science Department chairperson. He has served as golf coach and tennis



coach but has given up these positions to concentrate on his teaching and course work for the T-6. He stated he and his wife were both educators working on advanced degrees; thus, the assistance of the scholarship would be greatly appreciated.

**Quentin Johnson** is an 8th-grade physical science teacher from Savannah. He is on a provisional certificate but plans to work on his certification through the Tap program with RESA. He indicates the higher level of education will allow him to be more effective and efficient in the classroom. He reassures his students education will open more doors for them in their future. He said that he was a certified athletic trainer and this training had helped him educate his students about health and performance; he stressed living a healthy life helped with body and mind. He is the director and head coach for the middle school lacrosse teams at Richmond Hill Middle School. He feels that as a first-year teacher without an education background who is also working with athletics that he has dived head-first into the profession. He says he is still paying undergraduate school loans and this scholarship will cover about 1/5 of the costs for the education certificate. Good news for him.



**Susan Leonard** is planning to attend UGA and work on an advanced degree. She teaches 9-12 Social Studies in the Athens-Clark area; she presently has a T-6. The goal of her studies is to examine teachers' self-identified dilemmas of practice and to discover factors of success related to their practice. At the school level she has participated in school-sponsored professional learning opportunities; at the university she is a graduate teaching assistant working with pre-service teachers; she promotes the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers in her school community; she belongs to several educational organizations. At her school she is the chairperson of the social studies department. Her responsibilities include creating teacher schedules, ensuring the correctness of classroom protocols and procedures, developing resources, and numerous other activities. In the summer of 2019, she was diagnosed with cervical disc disease that generated neurological symptoms from her shoulders to her fingers. As an advanced degree student, the use of the computer is necessary. The scholarship will help with the expenses caused by the diagnosis.



**Joseph Martin** is a 9-12 Band teacher from Macon with 14 years' experience. He will be working on his master's degree at Georgia College and State University. Mr. Martin said he had had the desire to pursue a master's degree but had not done so. The pandemic inspired him to move forward and stop making excuses for not starting along the path of personal growth. He wants his students to realize they have the power to achieve their personal ideas of success. He is a member of the Georgia Music Educators Association, Phi Mu Alpha Fraternity of America. He is a part of Welston Winds, a community band comprised of local music educators, professional musicians, and adults with a passion for music. He encourages his students to participate in musical arts opportunities. As a band director he has after-school activities related to the musical program. He serves as the tennis coach for the school, advisor for the Junior class, keeps the game clock for the basketball games, and is a data analyst for PBIS. He stated he had paid for his education out of pocket. The scholarship will help with this effort. He wants his students, (who are loved, valuable, and important) to see his desire for education.



*Continued on page 7*

# GREA 62nd Convention Schedule

## TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19

9:00–5:00 p.m. Registration & Display Room Set-up  
 3:00 p.m. Opening Session  
 5:30 p.m. Cash Bar  
 6:00 p.m. Tail-Gate Banquet/Dinner served at 6:30 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20

8:30-Noon Registration  
 8:30–10:00 a.m. Three Awards Breakfasts  
 10:30–1:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions  
 2:30–3:30 p.m. Optional Activity  
 4:30–5:30 p.m. Memorial Service  
 5:45 p.m. Cash Bar  
 6:00 p.m. Evening Banquet / Dinner served at 6:30 p.m.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21

9:00 a.m. Closing Session / Installation  
 Noon Governing Board Luncheon

### REGISTRATION FORM

#### GREA 62nd Annual Convention

**Augusta Marriott • Augusta, Georgia  
 October 19-21, 2021**

*Please do a separate form for each person registering!*

**REGULAR REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 1st**

Name on convention badge \_\_\_\_\_

Local Unit Name and Area \_\_\_\_\_

Office Held \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Registration for the Convention \$50 Amt. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Early Bird Registration before September 10th \$40 Amt. \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Tuesday Night Tailgate Oct. 19th–6:30 p.m. \$50 Amt. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday Awards Breakfast Oct. 20th–8:30 a.m. \$45 Amt. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday Night Banquet May 8th–6:30 p.m. \$50 Amt. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Due Amt. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your check should be for the total amount shown above. Please do not include any other types of payment/donations in your Registration check. No refunds after October 1st. **A reminder that meal tickets must be bought before the convention and they will not be sold at the convention. Everyone taking part in any convention activities, including meals, must register for the convention.**

Mail to: GREA Convention Registration

P. O Box 1379 • Flowery Branch, Ga.30542

**Deadline to register is October 1, 2021.** After that registration will be at the convention! The number to call for reservations is 1-800-228-9290 or go to <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1618255038913&key=GRP&app=resvlink> to book your Group Rate for the GREA 2021 Convention.

# August Area Meetings 2021

DATE	AREAS	LOCATION
August 10	7 – 8	Macedonia Baptist Church 600 Eisenhower Parkway Macon
August 11	11 – 12	Ramada Inn 640 Broad St. Augusta
August 12	13 – 14	First Methodist Church 296 S. Main St., Madison The Wesley Building
August 17	17 – 18	Gainesville Civic Center 830 Green St., Gainesville
August 18	15 – 16	Rock Spring UMC 3477 Peavine Rd. Rock Spring
August 19	9 – 10	Royal Baptist Church 70 Mayo Royal Industrial Rd Newnan
August 24	5 – 6	Carey Hilliard Restaurant 11111 Abercorn St. Savannah
August 25	3 – 4	Homerville UMC 202 S Church St., Homerville
August 26	1 – 2	Albany Tech 1704 S. Slappey Rd., Albany

Registration 9:30 – 10 a.m. • Meeting begins at 10 a.m.

## Recovering at Home: The Benefits of a Home Healthcare Policy

Recovering from a hospital stay can be cause for great relief, but here's a statistic to consider: Older adults are even more at risk for dehydration, poor nutrition, weakness, and falls during the first 24-48 hours at home from a hospital visit.

To help prevent complications, illness and even readmission to the hospital, a home caregiver can provide excellent care to help with recovery after you or your loved one return from a hospital stay.

Even what are normally the most mundane household chores are best left to your at-home caregiver while you recover. These include:

- Cleaning the house and, importantly, keeping your floors clear of clutter to prevent you injuring yourself in a fall.
- Helping with any task that requires climbing, reaching, or walking on unstable ground.
- Ensuring you maintain a proper diet while you recover to prevent dehydration and malnutrition.
- Making sure you take all prescribed medications.

Plus, caregivers can drive to follow-up doctor's appointments, assist with medications, and help with light housekeeping. You or your loved one can rest as they recuperate. An extra set of hands at home can provide peace of mind while recovering so you can focus on getting better!

Hospital visits are sometimes unavoidable. But having access to the help you deserve while you recover is a phone call or a few clicks away. **Georgia Retired Educators Association** and **AMBA** have a Home Healthcare policy that lets you have the recovery time your doctor recommends and help prevent potential readmission to the hospital. Learn more by calling AMBA at **1-877-556-4582** or visit **amba-review.com** online to request a free Benefits Review.

## News From GREA Local Units *from page 4*

to Mrs. Bobbie Getz. Area 9 Director, Mrs. Donna Kemp, presented the GREA Leadership Award to Dr. Marietta Webb. Following these presentations, MREA held a Necrology Ceremony conducted by Mrs. Edith Carter in memory of seventeen members who had recently passed away. Area 9 Director, Mrs. Donna Kemp conducted the installation of the 2021-2022 MREA Officers. The new officers are President, Vicki Hardaway; Immediate Past President, Marietta Webb; President Elect, Carole Mashburn; Recording Secretary, Mary Ann Marshall Treasurer, Susan Taunton; Asst. Treasurer, Rita Renfro; Corresponding Secretary, Martha; Lynn Tubbs; and Parliamentarian, Jim Hayes. Outgoing President Dr. Marietta Webb read 1 Peter 4:10 NIV "Each one should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" and thanked all the MREA members for using their special gifts from God to serve others through MREA. We are looking forward to resuming our luncheon meetings next year.

**Oglethorpe County REA** resumed unit activity on September 9, 2020. A socially distanced planning meeting was held observing

all safety precautions. The unit completed four meetings during 2020-2021. Each one was held at the Lena Wise Community Center in Crawford, Ga. This facility houses the Athens Technical College GED program for Oglethorpe County. The available equipment provided OCREA with a zoom option for each meeting. There were a few members who attended in person each time. Our unit was fortunate to schedule guest speakers at a time when everyone was functioning with a tentative schedule. On November 10, 2020 Cary Fordyce presented an interesting and helpful program. The presentation focused on personal planning and financial decision making. We had the fortune of getting a very informative local school system update presented by Superintendent Beverley Levine on February 12, 2021. Our Regional Director Suellen Jones joined us at our March 12, 2021 meeting and Buster Evans presented TRS and Legislative updates. Our last meeting on April 16, 2021 was also informative as Leigh Ann Sturtz presented benefit options available through AMBA'S wide array of choices. May was a time for celebration as our unit recognized students' academic accomplishments and awarded student and teacher scholarships. We also recognized retirees with a certificate for their service to our community.

## Scholarship Winners *from page 5*

**Victoria Mead** is a seventh-grade Life Science/Biology teacher with four years' experience. She is from Clark County and plans to work on her doctorate at Georgia Southern University. She stated that by pursuing higher education she believes she will gain access to specific tools, skills, and a knowledge set that will assist her in stepping into a role as a teacher leader. She said it would grant her the ability to execute her goal to help fellow educators and students become fuller versions of themselves. She serves her community by being a member of the Winterville Education Task Force, the Summer Enrichment Scholarship Committee, the REACH Student Scholarship Committee, the Hispanic Heritage Month Committee, and several other groups. This past year she served as a mentor teacher to four new induction teachers. She has been a cheerleading coach, a track coach, and a grade-level representative for the technology support team at her school. She is presently the grade leader for the school's Experience University of Georgia field trip. She says she is an educator, a lifelong student, and a single parent who works a second job to help juggle her financial responsibilities. The scholarship will cover many of the costs related to schooling.



**Angela Denise Palmer** is a 9-12 Healthcare Science teacher with 4 years' experience as a teacher and 6 years as an RN. She is from Bremen and plans to attend Columbus State University working on a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. She believes she will better utilize her time with her students when she has better resources. It should also improve her planning and implementation of lesson plans. She attends virtual meetings and conferences related to professional learning. She is a member of GACTE and is an advisor of HOSA (Healthcare occupations Students of America) at her school. She stated she aggressively motivates her students to push past their comfort zones to perform better. She and her husband (the wrestling coach at her school) have four children. She repeated the belief that the students at her school deserve the best from the person who is administering the standards the state decides students need for their future. She said the scholarship would not remove the complete financial burden of furthering her education, but it would lessen the burden.



**Lori Ann Pierson** is a first-grade classroom teacher with a T-5. She has 18 years' experience and plans to work on her T-6 at the University of West Georgia. She wrote with today's world being filled with many challenges for children she hoped to foster her students' SEL (social, emotional learning) as well as learn more about current societal and classroom issues. She says she serves her communities' educational improvements by serving as the school's ELA CCP (English Language Arts Curriculum Contact Person) for her school district. She has been a mentor teacher for student teachers, and after retirement she wants to become an elementary education college professor. She stated that for the 18 years she has been teaching he has been involved in many school activities but two stand out. She feels the time she has spent with the National Red Ribbon Week as school coordinator and the time as a member of the Fayette County School System ELA Curriculum Textbook Adoption Committee has given her the opportunity to interact with all levels of students and educators. She stated she is a full-time educator, mother of two young children, and the wife of a law enforcement officer; thus, the scholarship will help her pursue her dreams and succeed around personal and financial obstacles.



**Kendall Touchstone** from Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. plans to attend Walden University and work on a master's in special education. She has three years as a level 4 Education teacher along with three years as a paraprofessional. She says her personal goal is to find more effective teaching strategies that will benefit her students. She says she supports her community's need for educational improvement by being a member of NEA and PBIS. She stated her school participates in Professional Learning Communities; this group flows through the community and plans ways to reach students and enrich them academically. Her involvement in school activities includes being a member of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support team. She also leads the Hospitality group for the school and is designing a Kindness promoting club for the students. She says her husband works, so they can pay bills, but the scholarship will help cover university costs without having to ask for other support.





## GREA Loses a Great Leader!



Former Area 7 Director Dianne Branch Clark, 74, passed away Thursday, March 5, 2021 at Community Hospice Inpatient Center. She was a retired principal with Wayne County School Systems and was a very active member of the retired teachers association and was a member of McRae United Methodist Church.

## Three New Area Directors



**Area 3**  
**Nancy Taylor**



**Area 11**  
**Marilyn Moore**



**Area 13**  
**Dr. Sallie Mills**

## 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@gre3.org](mailto:gre3@gre3.org) and we will be happy to put you on the email list. Thank you for considering getting your *Bulletin* by email.

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### GREa BULLETIN

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Johnny Smith, Editor

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