

THE GRE A BULLETIN

JOURNAL OF NEWS AND REFLECTIONS FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS OF GEORGIA

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GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

SUMMER 2017



Myrtice C. Johnson, Macon/Bibb County, GRE A's 54th President

Ms. Myrtice C. Johnson was installed as the GRE A President for 2017-2018 at the Stone Mountain Evergreen Marriott Hotel in Stone Mountain, Ga. on May 11, 2017. Approximately 400 GRE A members were in attendance as Mr. John Demons, Past GRE A President from the Peach County REA, lead the installation ceremony with Ms. Johnson's pastor, Eddie D. Smith, Sr., of Macedonia Church in Macon concluding the ceremony by installing President Johnson.



President Johnson followed up with a most inspiring speech as she introduced her humanitarian project, The Shriners Hospital for Children, and gave her testimony about how she received financial assistance when she had scoliosis as a child. Through back surgery and constant encouragement from her mother she was able to overcome this debilitating condition. She had to miss school for one year in the 9th grade as she was confined to bed rest, after surgery, while wearing a steel back brace. She

wanted to quit school but with God's help and her mother's encouragement she was able to return to school and graduate. Many people thought she would never be a success in life but she has gone on to receive four college degrees and became a very successful School Administrator in the Bibb County School System. Her schools won many outstanding state and national awards due to her leadership. Now she is the President of one of the largest retired educator's groups in the U.S.A.

She concluded by saying "My own physical challenges have caused me to better understand the challenges of others. I believe that, if we could save just one child from some of the cruelties and pains of this world, then our giving would not be in vain. It is for this reason that I'm choosing The Shriners Hospitals for Children as my humanitarian project and I'm soliciting your support and prayers in this worthwhile effort."

2017 Area Meetings

The GRE A Area Meetings will be coming soon! hope at least one person will attend from every local unit in the State. Registration is 9:30 a.m.-10 a.m. and the meetings will start promptly at 10 a.m. You will receive more info soon from your Area Director concerning meals, if applicable.

DATE	AREAS	PERSON IN CHARGE/PLACE
August 15	Areas 17 & 18	Al Money Gainesville, Civic Center, 830 Green St.
August 16	Areas 15 & 16	Joe Boland Cedartown, Cherokee CC, 150 Club Dr.
August 17	Areas 13 & 14	Alice Moore Decatur, Hillside Presbyterian Church, 1879 Columbia Drive
August 22	Areas 3 & 4	Brenda Moore Adel, 1st Baptist Church, 200 East. 5th St.
August 23	Areas 1 & 2	Marsha Bond Albany Tech 1704 South Slappy Blvd., Kirkland Bldg.
August 24	Areas 9 & 10	O'Livia Meeks Columbus St. Luke Ministry Center, 301 11th St.
August 29	Areas 7 & 8	Mary Ann McDaniel Fitzgerald, 253 Appomattox Rd., Ben Hill Senior Center
August 30	Areas 5 & 6	Harley Grove, Lyons, Chatters' Rest. 674 N.W. Broad St.
August 31	Areas 11 & 12	Dr. Janet Lee Wrightsville The Factory, 8473 South Marcus St.



Friend of GRE A Award

By Dr. John Upchurch

Our recipient this year is well known to most everyone who has attended either an area meeting or a convention during the past 10 or so years. Her name is Marilyn Werner. Many of you, in fact, know Marilyn or have done business with her at GRE A meetings.

Her record of attendance at GRE A functions over the past decade borders on the unbelievable. She has seldom missed attending an area meeting or an annual conference. Those who know her would not argue the fact that Marilyn is similar to a female Energizer Bunny; that is she is always in motion and always exhibiting exceptional stamina.

It would take more space than I have been allocated to tell you of the many ways she has been so special to GRE A. Suffice it to say she has served her local unit and GRE A with distinction. The ways she has done so are numerous. She is an active member in her Henry County local unit. Her strength in the local unit has been in recruiting and in organization. We could write about that for a long time, but since this is a statewide award, let's focus on her service activities that more directly impact the larger GRE A organization.



Continued on page 3

The President's Message

By Myrtice Champion Johnson, President



Myrtice C. Johnson

It is such an honor and privilege for me to serve as your president of the Georgia Retired Educators Association. I thank God and I thank you for this honor. As I pondered a theme for this year's message, the Lord just poured it into my spirit: "Use your own name, **Champion!**" Thus, my theme was born: "**Running with Champions**" in GREA. My colors, **purple and gold**, were derived from the theme. The color "purple," like champion, is associated with royalty and symbolizes power, ambition, and wisdom. The color, "gold," like champion, is associated with courage, wealth, love, and compassion. The dictionary definition for the word champion is "a person who is a winner; one that is successful especially through praiseworthy ability and hard work." That's who we are in GREA; we are **Champions!** Harold Herring lists seven characteristics of a Champion. Look inside yourself and find the Champion in you as I list them:

1. Champions must be committed to rising above average.
2. Champions must have the HEART of a champion.
3. Champions confront their fears
4. For champions, GOOD is not good enough.
5. Champions must be willing to pay the price.
6. Champions believe in excellence.
7. Champions must be finishers.

When you review the poster, which represents my theme, you will see that all of the runners are racing to reach the goal, which is the beautiful gold loving cup. That's just the way we are in GREA, we are all running to reach the highest goal of our great organization: The GREA Unit of Distinction. When we reach this goal, we will have fulfilled all the requirements, which keep GREA at its right standing as the greatest retired educators' association in America. We are all champions in our own way because as retired educators, we never gave up on our students and they never gave up on us.

As this year's president, and like all GREA presidents that came before me, I have established six goals that I desire to see accomplished during my tenure. These goals are only "minimum" although we all know that champions strive to exceed their goals.

Goal #1. To increase GREA'S overall membership by 5%, (1,350 new members). Membership is the lifeblood of GREA. Presently, we have well over 117,000 individuals who receive a check from the Teacher Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) with only 27,000 who are members of GREA. Without members there would be no GREA. Without GREA there would be no protection for your retirement. I'm challenging each one to just reach one more new member. Each year we lose over 300 members due to death and over 700 members who fail to renew their membership. That's 1,000 members that must be replaced with new membership plus an additional 1,000 new members that we need in order to see membership growth.

Goal #2. To encourage each area director to strive for a minimum of 50% of their units to receive the GREA Unit of Distinction Award. The Unit of Distinction Award is a most coveted award for the local units. It takes hard work from all local unit members, membership directors, and area directors to accomplish this goal. A local unit must fulfill the goals in 13 different areas in order to accomplish this distinguished title. The most difficult of them all for most local units is the recruitment of the required 10% new GREA members. I am challenging each area director and membership director to play an even greater active role in assisting his or her units to accomplish this goal.

Goal #3. To encourage each area director to strive for a minimum of 90% of their units to receive the GREA Unit of Excellence Award. The Unit of Excellence, a second place award, was designed to award those units, especially the smaller units, who may not be able to fulfill all of the requirements on the Local Unit Checklist. While this award is not the highest award, I am still challenging you in this area as well.

Goal #4. To develop a system for sending a minimum 50% of the GREA Newsletters to members via email by the Winter Quarter, 2018. Presently, 100% of our 27,000 members are receiving a printed copy of the *GREA Bulletin*, quarterly, via U.S. mail. It costs GREA

\$32,000.00 annually, for printing and \$31,000.00, annually, for postage which equals to \$63,000.00 per year for reproducing the newsletter. I'm asking that we use the \$63,000.00, annually, to pay down the debt on our GREA museum. If you desire receiving your hard copy in the mail, that's no problem, we will send it. If you would like to have yours emailed, that's even better. You will still be able to download your hard copy. We will need all local unit presidents to continue to send the email addresses of your members to our GREA office. This can happen by January of next year.

Goal #5. To encourage each local unit to sell a minimum of five bricks, \$100.00 each, in support of the Georgia Retired Educators Museum, (GREM). Presently, the brick sale is our largest means of growing income to pay down the museum's mortgage. Many of you will be able to sell many more than five bricks. The purchase of a brick is a wonderful way to preserve our history as retired educators. The engraving of the names on the bricks makes a lasting memorial to our loved ones. The engraved bricks make wonderful Christmas presents, too. The brick purchase is tax deductible.

Goal #6. To encourage a minimum of 75% participation from local units in the Shriners Hospital for Children's Humanitarian Project to assist in reaching the \$50,000.00 goal. After careful consideration of many projects, I finally decided on the Shriners Hospital for Children. This Hospital for Children is committed to providing care to children with neuromusculoskeletal conditions, burn injuries and certain other special healthcare needs regardless of the families' ability to pay. The hospital assists families who have children with physical disabilities, helping them to be able to live a normal life. All of us may have seen or known a child during our tenure as classroom a teacher who was afflicted with one or more of these physical disabilities. As classroom teachers we've always stood by our students. Therefore, I'm asking you to continue in that stand. Each of our local units is asked to "stand" by contributing \$350.00 to this cause assisting our children in living a normal, healthy life. Some may want to make personal contributions as well. All donations are tax deductible when you make your checks payable directly to the Shriners Children's Hospital. You will hear more on how to make your contributions at the Area Meetings in August of this year. I'm soliciting your support and prayers in this worthwhile effort.

Let's continue to work together in reaching our goals; always remember that we, in GREA, are "Running with Champions!" Keep the faith!

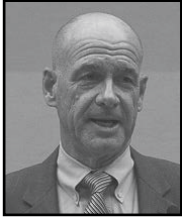
New GREA Officers For 2017-2019



These outstanding people were installed at the May 2017 Convention by GREA Past-President John Demons. They are from left to right: Mickey Wendel as President-elect for 2017-18, Mary Ann McDaniel as Area 7 Director, Dr. Janet Lee as Area 11 Director, Brenda Moore as Area 3 Director, and Alice Moore as Area 13 Director. GREA is very fortunate to have such a well qualified group of members to step forward and assume leadership. We all look forward to working with them.

TRS in the News

By L. C. (Buster) Evans, Executive Director



Buster Evans

Thanks for Having Us

Congratulations on yet another successful convention! Hard to believe the GREA Convention has been going on for 59 years (you don't look a day over 50! ☺). We truly appreciated and enjoyed the opportunity to participate this year at Stone Mountain. It was my pleasure to speak to all of the attendees during the general session on May 9th, as well as visit with so many new and familiar faces. We always look forward to assisting you throughout the year at your Chapter meetings and welcome any other opportunities to assist our retirees.

Legislative Update

The 2017 legislative session concluded on March 30, 2017, and was the first year of the two-year (2017-2018) biennium session. Retirement legislation introduced in 2017 that has a fiscal impact must be forwarded for an actuarial study in order to remain a valid bill for the 2018 session. Non-fiscal bills do not require an actuarial study and remain valid.

The House Retirement Committee met on May 9, 2017, and voted to forward HB 218 and HB 418 for actuarial studies. These bills remain viable legislation. HB 633 was tabled and not forwarded for an actuarial study. Unless the legislation is reconsidered by the House Retirement Committee, the bill will "die in committee".

The Senate Retirement Committee met on May 22, 2017 and voted to forward SB 293 for an actuarial study.

The State Auditor will provide the respective chairpersons with the actuarial studies showing the cost of each bill. A copy of the actuarial study is attached to the bill and travels with the bill throughout its life. After the actuarial study is completed, the bill may be amended only in such a manner as reduces the cost of the bill. Any substitute or amendment must be accompanied by a certificate from the State Auditor certifying whether the substitute or amendment changes the cost reflected in the actuarial study and, if so, a new actuarial study is required.

A synopsis of each bill is available in our most recent legislative update available at www.trsga.com/legislation.

Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)

The TRS Board of Trustees grants a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to eligible retirees on July 1st and January 1st of each year based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in accordance with Board policy (Administrative Rule 513-5-1-16). A retiree is eligible to receive a COLA

when the current average CPI (current index) is equal to or greater than the average CPI at the time of the retiree's retirement (base index).

Since the current index is higher than the base indexes for all TRS retirees, eligible current TRS retirees will receive a 1.5% COLA effective July 1, 2017. Please be reminded that COLA change notices will not be mailed out in an effort to reduce costs.

\$70 Billion

For the first time in the history of this System, TRS has over \$70 billion in assets. Thanks to our diligent team of investment professionals and a stronger stock market, TRS assets have increased by over \$4 billion since July 1, 2016. Our year-to-date investment return is over 10%, and we are hoping to finish this fiscal year with this strong performance which helps continue to sustainability of the retirement system.

Tis the Season

It's that time of year when many teachers, who have dedicated their careers to educating our children, are about to end their teaching journey and embark upon retirement. We are well into the busy 2017 retirement season and it looks like the numbers are similar to last year. As of May 23rd, we have received 3,154 June 2017 retirement applications, which is comparable to the June 2016 number of 2,945. As far as July 2017 retirement applications, we have received 594 so far, which is up a little bit compared to the July 2016 number of 472.

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!

We're Here to Help

We are not only available to answer questions by phone and email, but we also have staff who can meet with you here at our offices, as well as personnel who travel throughout the state. Whether in person, email, on the phone our goal is to provide excellent customer service to all of our members. We are more than happy to come speak at conferences and meetings to provide you with an update on TRS. Just call TRS at 404-352-6500 and ask for Mike Zarem or Lisa Hajj if you are interested in having someone come out. Always feel free to contact us and let us know how we're doing. We always welcome your feedback!

Again, thank you for the privilege of serving you here at TRS!

Friend of GREA Award *From page 1*

I do need to touch on a few highlights of her relationship with GREA and the museum. Here are some of the things you should know about Marilyn. She and her late husband, Harry Werner, a beloved GREA past president and the only GREA Legacy Award recipient, traveled hundreds of miles together over the years on behalf of GREA. The two were fixtures at almost all multi-unit meetings and conferences. The great preponderance of that travel was at their own expense. At the gatherings they attended, Marilyn and Harry usually sold the publicity items, and other merchandize that spread the word about GREA. The items usually included caps, license plates, books published by GREA, cups, presidential and other officer lapel pins, writing pens, scarves, and other items. Much of the merchandize was designed by Marilyn and Harry, ordered by them, and paid for by them. In most instances they simply donated sales' proceeds to GREA's general fund or to the museum.

Harry is no longer with us, but Marilyn is

still a mainstay at various area meetings across the state, traveling without reimbursement to bring pins, t-shirts, and many other items to those in attendance. By the way, she continues to sell GREA materials at most of our gatherings.

While touching on conventions, Marilyn has, for many years, assumed responsibility for organizing and acquiring all of the giveaway items found in the AMBA goody bags, as well as packing 600 of them annually. She also spends her convention days selling merchandize that was referred to earlier.

When I asked Jan and Joy, the two ladies who are essential to the smooth operation of our GREA state office, about Marilyn, I was told that she voluntarily drives across the Atlanta metropolitan area to Flowery Branch at least once every month to spend a day working at the state office. She gets no travel

reimbursement or salary. She does it because she has a deep love and appreciation for GREA.

While at the office, Marilyn routinely alphabetizes and files membership cards, orders and organizes all of the GREA pins, counts money and incoming checks, and prepares bank deposits. She also prints, cuts, and numbers all meal tickets for the convention.

Marilyn is also very supportive of the museum. She has donated a valuable collection of historical pictures of Georgia schools, an antique school bell, an old desk, other furniture, and more.

There are many other things one could say about Marilyn Werner, but I think you have a good sense of how much she does for GREA and, by extension, how much she means to all of us. She has indeed proved, beyond a shadow of doubt, that she is a very good "Friend of GREA."



Just Ramblin' Around

By Bill Sloan, Executive Director



William Sloan

The 2017 convention was an outstanding success in Stone Mountain, Ga. With over 500 members in attendance, we were all entertained by the speakers, singers and bands. The breakout sessions were outstanding and your evaluations of them were super.

Becky and John Upchurch are outstanding convention planners. Their long hours of work made the convention such a wonderful experience for all of us. Thank you Becky and John!

In addition, President Jesse Hunter was greatly involved in planning the convention. His ideas and leadership were evident throughout the entire three days of the convention. On a personal note, I certainly have enjoyed working with Mr. Hunter over the past 12 months. He is a dedicated member and leader of GREA. Thanks to his wife Debbie who allowed him to spend an abnormal number of days and hours working for GREA as President.

The convention always brings new leadership and ideas to our organization. Incoming President Myrtice Johnson hit the ground running the first week after the convention. She has already visited several local units and is displaying great leadership skills in planning for her year as President. GREA will enjoy her as our new President.

President-Elect Mickey Wendel has always been a GREA leader on both the state and local level. We all look forward to working with him this year. GREA is in good hands with Myrtice, Mickey and Jesse as your leader-ship team.

Our email project is still growing as we are preparing to send our *Bulletin* and other emails to GREA members. When this is completed it will make communication great with a large segment of our membership. We need this type of communication especially when the legislature is in session. See a request on page 6.

Membership continues to grow thanks to all of you. We are over the 27,000 mark and hope to make it to 28,000 this year. It will take all of us recruiting new members to make that lofty goal.

The GREA Governing Board voted unanimously to extend my contract as your Executive Director for one more year. I am humbled by their support and encouragement for the continued growth and success of GREA.

GREA is alive and well and I enjoy working with all of you! Have a great summer!

New GREA Staff Member



Janet Allison

The GREA Governing Board is pleased to announce the addition of a new part-time staff person in the GREA offices in Flowery Branch. Ms. Janet Allison will become the new bookkeeper for both GREA and GREM. She will be responsible for all financial affairs such as writing checks, depositing all income and working with Dr. John Upchurch, GREA and GREM Treasurer, on all financial matters pertaining to both organizations.

Ms. Allison will work two days a week beginning in July 2017. She brings a wealth of financial knowledge and experience to the position. She is a Certified Public Accountant. She was the Payroll Manager for the Hall County School System for nine years with a payroll of \$100 million annually. She entered the private business world for a number of years working as a CPA. Janet returned to the Education profession in 2007 and became the Chief Financial Officer for the Gainesville City School System. She retired in June of 2015 with 30 years experience in the public schools of Hall County. She was one of us as a member of GREA before taking this position.

We know all of you will be impressed with this lady as the newest member of the GREA Staff.

GREA Convention Report

By Becky Upchurch

The 59th GREA Convention, which was held at the Stone Mountain Evergreen Marriott from May 9-11, 2017, seems to have been a huge success. President Jesse Hunter, in his last days at the helm of GREA, brought us together for a time of fellowship, learning, and celebrating. At the banquet on Tuesday evening, President Hunter presented donations in excess of \$50,000, including \$1,000 from AMBA, to the Ferst Foundation to help provide books as part of his 2016-17 Humanitarian Project for Georgia preschoolers. Congratulations to everyone who worked to make this project so successful!

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Beyond the information gathered at the business meetings, the convention also provided the local units with the opportunity to receive duly earned GREA awards for their achievements during the past year, as well as recognizing their contributions to making Georgia a better place for all. Dr. Bill Sloan and President Hunter also recognized local units for achievements in growing the organization's membership and those units achieving the Unit of Distinction designation. The breakout sessions were very well attended and provided attendees with an opportunity to gain knowledge in various topics of interest. The two bands providing the pre-dinner music, the Georgia Classic Rhythm and the GREA Band, were big hits, as were the several vocalists who sang at the various events. Representative Brooks Coleman and Coach Vince Dooley provided us with evenings of laughter and will be hard acts to follow. Last, but certainly not least, was the absolutely beautiful and meaningful memorial service honoring those GREA members who have recently passed away.

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A gathering of this magnitude does not come together without a large number of people putting in a lot of time and effort prior to and during the convention itself. From the hotel staff to the GREA Governing Board... from President Hunter and Dr. Sloan to the volunteers, such as Liz Bouis, Carol Irwin, James Twiggs, Rufus Akins, the registration staff, and the many others...and from the Convention Planning Committee to all the many members who attended and offered their assistance...we want to express our heart-felt appreciation. GREA is a strong and viable organization because of YOU!

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Finally, we are currently going through the 200+ evaluation forms so that we can make recommendations to the Governing Board and next year's Convention Committee based on your suggestions. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts, and please plan to attend next year's annual conference to be held in Macon.

Ferst Foundation/GREA/ Lamar County REA Celebrate!

On March 29, 2017, Lamar County REA and the Lamar County preschoolers gathered to celebrate the announcement of Lamar County Retired Educators Association and Margaret Fluellyn as the "Favorite Reader" winner of the Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy (FFCL)/GREA "For the Love of Reading" Challenge video contest. Ms. Fluellyn recreated her winning performance as she entertained the audience with a spirited reading of Georgia author Eric Litwin's *Pete the Cat*. Georgia First Lady Sandra Deal, herself a former educator and member of GREA, was on hand to present the "Favorite Reader" award and speak about the importance of early childhood literacy.

The "Favorite Reader" competition is one component of GREA's support of FFCL in its mission to get books into the hands of children to mitigate the problem of children entering kindergarten without basic early literacy skills. GREA President Jesse Hunter chose FFCL as GREA's humanitarian project of the year, and REA units across the state enthusiastically embraced the project by raising both funds and awareness for the FFCL program. GREA members raised over \$50,000 for this project.

Membership Award Winners 2016-2017

Class A

41 Local Units—1-60 Members

1st Place	Stewart County	8 new—Area 2
2nd Place tie	Dooly County	7 new—Area 2
	Johnson County	Area 11
4th place	Seminole County	6 new—Area 1
5th place tie	Decatur County	5 new—Area 1
	Crisp County	Area 2
	Macon County	Area 2

Class AA

48 Local Units—61-149 Members

1st Place	Gilmer County	26 new—Area 16
2nd Place	Pickens County	18 new—Area 15
3rd Place	Effingham County	17 new—Area 6
4th Place	Dodge County	14 new—Area 7
5th Place	Bryan/Evans	13 new—Area 6

Class AAA

35 Local Units—150-299 Members

1st Place	Habersham County	33 new—Area 18
2nd Place	Golden Isles	31 new—Area 5
3rd Place	Bulloch County	30 new—Area 6
4th Place	Troup County	28 new—Area 9
5th Place	Catoosa	27 new—Area 16

Class AAAA

11 Local Units—300-449 Members

1st Place	Cherokee County	43 new—Area 15
2nd Place tie	Athens Area	38 new—Area 14
	Coffee/Atkinson	38 new—Area 4
4th Place	Douglas County	37 new—Area 13
5th Place	Rockdale County	35 new—Area 13

Class AAAAA

13 Local Units—450+ Members

1st Place	Cobb/Marietta	102 new—Area 15
2nd Place	Chatham County	63 new—Area 6
3rd Place	Bibb County	62 new—Area 8
4th Place	Muscogee	51 new—Area 9
5th Place	Henry County	49 new—Area 10

2017 10% Growth Awards

Appling	Effingham	Oglethorpe
Bibb	Forsyth	Peach
Bryan/Evans	Gilmer	Pickens
Bulloch	Golden Isles	Polk
Butts	Griffin/Spalding	Rockdale
Camden	Habersham	Seminole
Catoosa	Hancock	South Fulton
Cherokee	Hart	Stephens
Chatham	Jeff Davis	Stewart
Clinch	Johnson	Talbot
Cobb/Marietta	Lamar	Taylor
Coffee/Atkinson	Lee	Terrell
Coweta	Lincoln/Wilkes	Thomasville Thomas
Dodge	Lumpkin	Tift
Dooly	Macon	Toombs
Dougherty	Monroe	Troup
Douglas	Morgan	



Spotlight Ads Awards 2017

1st Place	Appling County	Area 5	80 ads
2nd Place	Muscogee	Area 9	71 ads
3rd Place	Thomaston/Upson	Area 8	68 ads
4th Place	Stephens County	Area 18	53 ads
5th Place	Peach County	Area 8	47 ads
6th Place	Clinch County	Area 4	44 ads
7th Place	Bibb County	Area 8	43 ads
8th Place	Henry County	Area 10	40 ads
9th Place	Griffin/Spalding	Area 10	36 ads
10th Place	Chatham County	Area 6	35 ads

Units Selling At Least 10 Spotlight Ads

Area 1
Dougherty County
Early/Clay/Calhoun
Seminole County
Southwest GA

Area 2
Lee County
Macon County
Sumter County
Terrell County

Area 3
Colquitt County
Thomasville Thomas County
Tift County
Valdosta Lowndes

Area 4
Camden County
Clinch County
Coffee/Atkinson
Waycross/Ware

Area 5
Appling County
Golden Isles
Jeff Davis
Wayne County

Area 6
Chatham

Area 7
Ben Hill/Irwin
Dodge County
Telfair/Wheeler
Treutlen County

Area 8
Bibb
Crawford County
Lamar County
Monroe County
Peach County
Thomaston/Upson

Area 9
Muscogee

Area 10
Butts County
Griffin/Spalding
Henry County

Area 11
Hancock County
Johnson County
Washington County

Area 12
Glascok/McDuffie/Warren
Lincoln/Wilkes
Richmond County

Area 13
Rockdale County
South Fulton

Area 14
Morgan County

Area 15
Cherokee County
Cobb/Marietta
Pickens County

Area 16
None

Area 17
Forsyth County
Franklin County
Hart County
Madison County
Oglethorpe County

Area 18
Habersham County
Stephens County
Townsend County
Union County

GREA Bulletin By Email

We have been working on a project to be able to send our quarterly *Bulletin* by email to as many people as possible. It cost GREA over 50 cents per mailing to send it to over 27,000 members. Obviously the cost savings would be enormous if a lot of members would volunteer to receive the *Bulletin* electronically. The *Bulletin* could easily be printed right there at your house and would save GREA over \$2.00 per year per member. We plan on using the sav-



ings to help pay off our mortgage on our State Office/Museum. Would you help us save this money by volunteering to get your *Bulletin* by email?

Many of you have already responded and will probably get the Fall *Bulletin* electronically. If you will help us, please send your email address to EXECDIR@GA-REA.ORG and say that you will take your *Bulletin* by email. This email address is for responding for the

Bulletin to be sent electronically. Thank you so much!

Foundation Scholarship Winners

The Georgia Retired Educators Foundation, Inc. gives annual scholarships to current educators in Georgia. Listed below are the winners for this year and the schools they plan to attend.

- Brandie Allen
University of Georgia
- Stephanie Almond
Piedmont College
- Meghan Grovenstein
Georgia State University
- Jenna Harvey
University of West Georgia
- Eldridge Lee
Clark Atlanta University
- Claudia Martinez
Georgia Southern University
- Kayla B. McClung
Kennesaw State University
- Dennis Moore
Armstrong State University
- Dana L. Morris
Piedmont College
- Meagan M. Odom
University of Kansas—Lawerance Campus
- Marianne H. Parker
Valdosta State University
- James Perry
Anderson University
- Whitney L. Ratliff
Valdosta State University
- Matthew R. Tyler
Liberty University
- Faith Young
Valdosta State University

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News From GREA Local Units

Baldwin County REA member Naomi Holsey Hicks Hardy taught school in Baldwin County for over forty years. When she retired from the school system, she continued to use her gift and talents to teach young people and to support civic activities in her community. She has received numerous awards for her devotion to education and love for her church and community. At 101 years old, she is our oldest BCREA member.

Bulloch REA completed the year in which it was named Unit of Distinction. BREA awarded three scholarships to local high school seniors, initiated a one-on-one mentoring program, sponsored a booth at the local fair to highlight visibility and membership, and began preparations for launching a website and Facebook page. Several members were recognized for their leadership and community service at the May meeting.

Burke County REA contributed \$100 to Relay for Life. At the May meeting, the Presidential Leadership Award was given to Belle S. Dent. The GREA Community Service Award was earned by Veronica B. Graham and the BCREA Retired Educator of the Year Award was received by Harrison Simpson. Fredrick Lewis, Jr. received the BCREA \$500 Scholarship Award.

Candler County REA welcomed Area 6 Director, Dr. Henrietta Gray, who addressed the group with updates from GREA. She encouraged local members to attend State and Area meetings. She also helped CCREA President, Dr. Felix Johnston; recognize two CCREA members, Dora White and Mae Evelyn Williams, for their attendance and loyalty to CCREA for many years.

Clayton County REA welcomed Louis F. Tompkins, Membership Director for Areas 7-12, to its May 16, 2017 meeting. Mr. Tompkins installed officers for 2017-18 and also presented an update on the GREA convention.

Colquitt County REA held its final banquet meeting with the installation of new officers at the First Presbyterian Church. Four of five Emeritus members were recognized. CCREA's local project, The Colquitt County Food Bank was presented a check of \$1000. Four \$500 scholarships were awarded. The next meeting will be in September.

Effingham REA welcomed Area 6 Director, Dr. Henrietta Gray, who brought us updates on legislative actions and news from GREA at our March meeting. Our unit sponsored a spring book distribution through FERST books, whereby elementary students were recipients of these books. We discussed the upcoming 2017 newly retired educators program and reception in the county, and made plans to contact businesses for logo items to be placed in goody bags for them. They will be given information about our organization and extend an invitation to join us. ECREA President, Sandra Moore, received unit awards, 10% membership growth and 3rd place award in Class 2 for increased membership at the State Convention.

Floyd-Rome REA recognized the Top Volunteers of the Year: Virginia McChesney, Sandra Ledbetter, June Aycock, Lee Graves, and Sally Caesar. Floyd Medical Center presented Blanche Ruston, who is 100, with the Good Samaritan Lifetime Achievement Award for meritorious service as a volunteer. Daphnie Morrison, Scholarship Chairman, presented each with \$600 scholarships to: Julie Bohannon, Hannah Camacho, Kaitlin Little, and JoAnna Parker. Area 15 Director Joe Boland inducted new officers for FRREA.

Grady County REA President Fran McCaskill and President-Elect Jan Westberg were privileged to attend the 59th GREA Convention in Stone Mountain, Ga. at the Evergreen Marriott with a theme of "Reach Out To Make a Difference." It was exciting for Jan to learn tips on unit leadership and Fran to glean about successful practices from REA's across Georgia.

Greene County REA had many activities in the month of April. At the April meeting, two scholarship recipients (Kenyatta Hutchinson and Reginald Long) were recognized and received \$1000 each. A \$500 check was presented to ATLAS Ministry, Inc., that works to help restore healthy families. Later in the month several members of the unit attended "A Graduation Celebration" for the Pete Nance Boys and Girls Club to support local youths and the ten graduating seniors being honored. Officers have been elected and are ready to "Run with Champions"!

Griffin-Spalding REA awarded their Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 to Melissa Dawn Hutson, a communications aide at Jordan Hill Elementary school, who works with special needs students who have speech or language impairments. She will graduate from Mercer University in 2019.

Habersham County REA members participated in Valentine, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter Contests at their meeting. Projects have included sponsoring 7 preschool teachers and 1 private daycare center in the FERST Foundation project, awarding two \$1000 scholarships, volunteering in the Food to Kids project, and raising money for our scholarships. Programs were presented by AMBA, United Community Bank, and Whitfield Funeral Home.

Jeff Davis REA helps the lunchroom staff and students of Jeff Davis Middle School by serving breakfast in the classrooms every morning of the week of Georgia Milestone testing. The intent is for students to have a stress-less start to the day. The lunchroom staff serves us breakfast every day and we enjoy the little get-together, even though they are so early in the morning!

Lamar REA members attended the GREA Convention in Stone Mountain on May 9-11. We were recognized on Tuesday Night for our win the GREA Battle video contest. Our reader, Margaret Fluellynn, was the star of our video. Also, Lamar REA received the Unit of Distinction and many other awards the Local Units Awards Brunch on Wednesday, hosted by O'Livia Meeks.

Macon County REA held a Law Enforcement Appreciation Luncheon on April 6, 2017. All branches of law enforcement and many city and county elected officials in Macon County were in attendance to show their support and appreciation of such a good cause.

Miller County REA has been active this year. The unit sponsored, "Planting for the Future" project which resulted in the planting of 200 trees to beautify the Miller County Schools campuses. MCREA retired teachers were honored by a proclamation signed by the mayor of Colquitt. Miller County teachers were presented planners and a breakfast for teacher appreciation day. Scholarship recipient for 2017 is Sydney Thomas. The unit also assists the schools with special projects and continues to be active in community affairs.

Continued on page 8

Oglethorpe County REA received the Unit of Distinction recognition at the State Convention. Representative Trey Rhodes, District 120, of the Georgia House of Representatives, spoke at the May meeting about possible bills being introduced which could possibly affect education and educators in Georgia. President Barbara Cabaniss presented the STAR Teacher and STAR Student awards, including certificates and gifts, at the high school's Honors Night. Scholarships were awarded to a graduating senior and also to a teacher pursuing an advanced degree.

Paulding REA had a program presented by Lieutenant Billy Hurst and K-9 Major of the Paulding County Sheriff Department. Volunteer opportunities were described by Mike Faulkner, chairman of the Paulding County Literacy Council. The slate of officers for next year was presented and Joe Boland, Area 15 Director of GREA, commended our organization on the 10% growth in membership. Donations were made to Helping Hands of Paulding.

Peach County REA sent twenty-four members to the GREA Convention at the Evergreen Marriott in Stone Mountain. Most members were transported by Trans South Bus Line. Two Outstanding Achievement Awards were presented to PCREA, Unit of Distinction and 5th place in the top 10 of GREA Spotlight Ads.

Pickens County REA members Betty McDaniel and Bobby Edge received bricks for their years of dedication and Jerry Tyson received the Golden Deed Award for community volunteerism and a proclamation from the Pickens County Commissioners. Pickens REA visited the Governor's Mansion as a reward for finishing in second place in the GREA/FERST Reading Battle. Roberta Sarchet was awarded the GRE Community Service Award and Mary Ellen Johnson was awarded the AARP Service Award. At the convention, Pickens REA was thrilled to be recognized as a Unit of Distinction.

Rockdale REA member, Mary Greco, dressed as Cat in the Hat at the Nancy Guinn Memorial Library on Thursday, March 2. Greco read some of Dr. Seuss' popular books to area children on the occasion of Dr. Seuss' birthday, which is annually observed as Read Across America Day, to motivate young students to read.

Stephens County REA received 15 awards at the 59th annual GREA convention. SCREA earned the Unit of Distinction and placed 4th in the state for Spotlight Ads sales with 53. In May, SCREA awarded two scholarships and honored 20 students in grades 1-4 as winners in an essay contest at an awards luncheon.

White County REA recently gave over \$500 to the local Back Pack Buddies program to feed needy students on weekends during the school year. We also gave a \$1000 scholarship to a graduating senior from White County High School who will pursue a teaching career.

GREA

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Coach Vince Dooley and James Twiggs

James recruited Coach Dooley to be a Life GREA member in November 2008. Coach Dooley had no idea who James Twiggs was but James was willing to introduce himself and ask Coach Dooley to join GREA! Coach Dooley even remembered who James was from 8 years ago. Quite a memory and quite a gentleman, thanks for coming Coach Dooley.



GREA OFFICERS

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Mickey Wendel, President-elect
Jesse Hunter, Past President
Dr. Beverly Roberts, Secretary
Dr. John Upchurch, Treasurer
Dr. Bill Sloan, Executive Director

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Marsha Bond, Area 1
Evelyn Fillingame, Area 2
Brenda Moore, Area 3
Jo Ann Tomlinson, Area 4
Harley Grove, Area 5

Dr. Henrietta Gray, Area 6
Mary Ann McDaniel, Area 7
Dr. Gail Fowler, Area 8
O'Livia B. Meeks, Area 9
Dr. Joan Jordan, Area 10
Dr. Janet Lee, Area 11
Geraldine "Jerry" Reid, Area 12
Alice Moore, Area 13
Dr. Larry Johnson, Area 14
Joe Boland, Area 15
Barbara Howard, Area 16
Allen Money, Area 17
Shirley Grant, Area 18

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