



email: npcra@gmail.com

North Pinellas County *Retired Educators Association* NEWSLETTER



PO Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758

Vol. 50, Issue 4

MAY/JUNE 2025

Our 50th Year!



**Fun
Picnic
Food
Prizes
Raffles**

Recent Events:

Tuesday, March 11, *St. Patrick's Day Luncheon, Clearwater Country Club.*

Tuesday, April 8, *Spring Fling Luncheon, Clearwater Country Club.*

Wednesday, April 16, *Spring baskets to residents of Coral Oaks Assisted Living.*



Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, May 13, *Country Fair Luncheon, 11 am, Clearwater Country Club. Wear your country boy or girl outfit. Bring \$10+ items to be raffled off. Bring mementos you may have saved from NPCREA's first 50 years.*

Tues, May 20, to Thurs, May 22, *FREA's Annual Convention at the Renaissance Hotel near St. Augustine.*

Our **Tuesday, May 13**, luncheon is our annual celebration of the school year ending. We are celebrating teachers and students being off for the summer.

Please wear your country picnic clothes and bring in items to be raffled. Also bring money to participate in the donated items raffle for tickets at \$1 each.

See page 9 for a \$10 ticket to the Country Fair Super Drawing for valuable prizes from local merchants. Mail your ticket stub and check by May 7, or come to the Fair and buy your tickets there.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Sharon Ozbun



Here we are chasing May and reaching the end of my first year as president of our amazing unit. This has been a year that was certainly filled with many service projects and donations to great causes. None of it would have been possible without the help and support of all of you.

We have helped children prepare for going back to school with the supplies and clothes that they needed. We have given toiletries and necessities to homeless shelters. We have collected holiday toys for kids through the Salvation Army and rang the bells to collect funds for people who needed a little extra help during the holidays. We have brought a smile to those in assisted living through our Cupid Crew and spring surprise bags. We have raised money through our silent auctions and country fair to help with needed funds; and most of all, we have helped one another through hurricanes, floods, and the loss of wonderful older members.

Our group has grown this year, and I hope that we continue to do so, while also enjoying the camaraderie of those who are longtime members. I am proud to be a member and lead this chapter of FREA, and I look forward to the adventures of next season as well.

As we prepare for next season's luncheon programs, we will be looking for ideas from our members regarding what their interests are. While I have a variety of speakers that I think would be interesting to hear from, I also want to make sure your needs are being met as well.

Regarding this, the May meeting will have handouts asking for different topics or names of speakers that you would like to meet and learn more from. The form you will be given will ask you for suggestions and if you happen to know someone who speaks about that particular topic. You can also email

your ideas to either Katrina Pershing (pershingk@gmail.com) or to me, Sharon Ozbun (ozbunsharon@gmail.com). I look forward to seeing your suggestions.

As we take a break for the summer, I hope that you will keep track of your activities and share them with us in September. Feel free to send your adventures to Mary Blackmon (maryfairway@aol.com). She'll be happy to include them in our fall edition. It's always nice to know what everyone is up to.

I will be away in May for a Rotary service project in Mexico, and I'll be traveling with my family in June. I hope to see many of you at the convention in St. Augustine on the 20th of May.

Enjoy the Annual Country Fair, and help raise money to fund NPCREA. See pg. 9 of this Newsletter for a ticket to participate in the Country Fair Super Drawing. Please send in the ticket stub and your check by May 7 so you won't be left out.

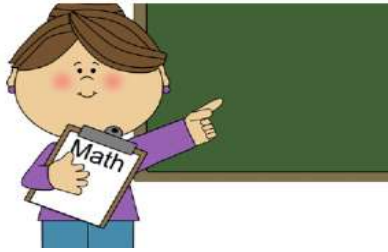
Why Belong to FREA?

By being a member of Florida Retired Educators Association (FREA), you gain 3 important benefits:



1. You help strengthen our voice in our fight to preserve the Florida Retirement System for the present and future health of retirees and Florida's economy.
2. You save money by using our Member Benefits and Discounts
3. You join a community of retired educators and school personnel who continue to make a positive difference in the world around us.

Note: All FREA Members, General or Associate, regardless of which state you came from, may take advantage of FREA's Member Benefits.



...EVENTS

Tuesday, May 13, 11am

Bring a friend and wear your country clothing to Clearwater Country Club for our Country Fair Luncheon. Please bring a \$10+ item for our Country Fair raffle and some money to buy tickets for the raffle. See page 9 for a Country Fair Super Drawing ticket to be filled out and mailed by May 7, or you can buy tickets for \$10 each at the luncheon.

RSVP by March 6 to the Evite in your email or to npcra@gmail.com.

Lunch will be barbecued chicken sliders, baked beans, coleslaw, and apple cobbler for dessert. You may order the Clearwater Country Club salad as an alternate meal if you choose.

Please bring any items or photos you may have that celebrate NPCREA and its 50 year history from 1975 to 2025.

Tuesday, May 20, 1 pm, thru Thursday, May 22, 11 am

Our FREA Convention at the Renaissance Hotel in World Golf Village near St. Augustine.

June and July -- No luncheon meetings in June and July.

Friday, August 1 - Plan ahead to attend a **Not Back to Work Lunch** at Capogna's Restaurant in Clearwater. In-service teachers will be going back to work that day, but we'll be sleeping in and enjoying a lunch at Capogna's. Gather school supplies for Stuff the Bus.

Monday, August 11 - Not Back to Classes Breakfast. Location TBA
Gather school supplies for Stuff the Bus.

Wednesday, April 16

The residents of Coral Oaks assisted living in Palm Harbor had an extra treat on April 16 when the Easter bunny came bearing spring baskets for the residents. The baskets were provided by our club's generous donations of toiletries, playing cards, word puzzles, decorative socks, candies, and each topped off with a cute little plush animal.

The activities director, Krysta Waterfield, said, "The residents are so appreciative of the gift bags and they had a wonderful time at the tea." She thanked us for our efforts and said, "It is so wonderful to have the community involved at Coral Oaks."

The day involved various goodies, a visit



from a very tall Easter bunny, music, laughter, and fun. Through our desire to help others, we helped brighten their day.

Krysta was happy to know that we look forward to being a part of this activity again next year.

At our March 11 St. Patrick's Day luncheon:

The meeting was called to order by President Sharon Ozburn at 11:30 am. Rick Pope led the Pledge of Allegiance. Linda McGeehan gave the Thought for the Day, asking us to write down three qualities we would not change if we were to remake ourselves. Then she advised us to pick one quality each day and exercise it.

Sharon asked everyone to fill out a Volunteer Services half sheet, accumulating volunteer hours for the month of March 2025.

Our speaker was Jerry Dilley, survivor of the devastating fire and explosions aboard the USS Forrestal aircraft carrier during the Vietnam War. He spoke eloquently about the changes that have been made in Navy regulations since the tragedy, as well as continuing efforts by survivors to honor those servicemen lost in the tragedy.



Jerry Dilley, U.S. Navy Retired



Retired Chief Dilley and his wife received a Certificate and a coffee mug from NPCREA

Vice President Katrina Pershing presented the awards after Chief Dilley answered many questions from members and friends who attended the luncheon.

Bob Stephens asked us to donate change and dollars to finance gift cards for the upcoming Country Fair. To purchase a ticket to qualify to win valuable prizes at the upcoming Country Fair on May 13, see p. 9 in this Newsletter.

Sharon said she is headed to Tallahassee to lobby legislators for retired educator issues, such as reinstating the yearly COLA, promoting the Florida Retirement System (FRS) pension as the default option, and designating educators as endangered employees or first responders.

Sharon reminded us of the FREA Annual Convention at the Renaissance World Golf Village Resort from May 20-22. Mary Blackmon asked for convention goers to volunteer to sing at the Convention as part of the FREA Chorale, headed by President Harriet Jenkins. Two more members of NPCREA volunteered to sing if their plans to attend the Convention work out, Lora Mills and Linda McGeehan.

Anne Fagan and Diane Lynch, office executives of FREA, attended our meeting as guests. They suggested we look up info on the May 20-22 State Convention of FREA online at frea.org.



Members were asked to bring any memorabilia they may have from NPCREA's first 50 years to the April or May meetings.

Lunch was corned beef and cabbage, potatoes, carrots, rolls, and ice cream sundae for dessert. Quite a few attendees ate the Clearwater Country Club salad as an alternative meal.

Six attendees won door prizes. Two attendees won Share the Wealth, \$20 and \$32.

ATTENTION, VOLUNTEERS:

If you're looking to learn about some great non-profit organizations in our community, the East Lake Library is having a Volunteer Fair on Saturday, May 10. The library is located at 4125 East Lake Road S., Palm Harbor, FL 34685.

NPCREA will be having a table set up to show some of the things our organization does. Feel free to come and spend some time at the table, and invite others to join our organization. As you can see, we managed to get billing right in the middle of the poster.



EAST LAKE NONPROFITS OPEN HOUSE AND VOLUNTEER FAIR

EXPLORE VALUABLE RESOURCES AND AVAILABLE SUPPORT
LEARN ABOUT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
FREE GIVEAWAYS, REFRESHMENTS, AND RAFFLE PRIZES

Discover services that can help improve your life and connect
with local organizations at our event.

SATURDAY, MAY 10TH
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
EAST LAKE COMMUNITY LIBRARY
eastlakelibrary.org
(727) 773-2665

In the Spotlight

by Katrina Pershing

Scott Watson

Following a 20-year career in the U.S. Air Force, Scott Watson taught at a high school in Salt Lake City, Utah, for 25 years. In his own words, he “taught everything Geek.”

These geeky subjects included Engineering, Electronics, Robotics, Computer Science, and Cyber Security.

The best part of his teaching career, he says, was “inspiring youth to pursue technology and engineering careers.”

Today he is still teaching as a volunteer mentor-coach for four robotics teams in the Pinellas County area.

His plans for his retirement years include being a volunteer with the robotics teams, and with veterans groups, and at senior citizen centers.

Currently his favorite volunteer work is being a lunch pal to elementary



school kids. He volunteers as a lunch pal at a local elementary school.

He usually spends at least 80 hours per month on his volunteer activities. These include helping robotics team member learn to design, build, program and market competition robots.

He also helps senior citizen with technology issues at an assisted living center and volunteers with Guitars for Vets at the Veterans’ Administration,

The best part about volunteer work, he says, is “helping and getting to know others.”

He joined NPCREA in 2024 and has attended all of our luncheons this school year.

At our Spring Fling, April 8, Luncheon:

The meeting was called to order by President Sharon Ozbun at 11:30 am. Rick Pope led the Pledge of Allegiance. Maura Hedrich gave the Thought for the Day about what is really important in life.

Sharon asked everyone to fill out a Volunteer Services half sheet, accumulating volunteer hours for the month of April 2025



Maura Hedrich

Our speaker was Kathleen Nishimura of Dementia



Care & Cure Initiative. She brought her son Matthew to assist her in sharing information about caring for dementia sufferers and their caregivers. In Florida, we have over one million dementia caregivers and about 613,000 known cases of Alzheimers, many of whom will wander at some point. Goal: To provide information on dementia, to protect those suffering, and to provide help to caregivers.

Bob Stephens asked us to donate change and dollars to finance gift cards for the upcoming Country Fair. He had Country Fair Super Drawing tickets to sell to attendees at the meeting.

Sharon reminded us of the FREA Annual Convention at the Renaissance Hotel World Golf Village Resort from May 20-22. Mary Blackmon asked for convention goers to volunteer to sing at the Convention as part of the Convention Choir.

Our collection was items for Easter bags for residents of Coral Oaks Assisted Living in Dunedin.



After the meeting, four members stayed to help prepare the 25 bags of goodies for the assisted living residents. Left to right: Maura Hedrich, Nancy Whitlock, Sharon Ozbun, Marie Grein



Members were asked to bring any memorabilia they may have from NPCREA's first 50 years. Lunch was Par 3 Salad, broccoli cheddar soup, roll, and cookies for dessert.

Bob Stephens told us about the upcoming Country Fair on Tuesday, May 13. He urged us to buy \$10 Country Fair Super Drawing tickets and to bring donated items for our \$1 ticket raffle at the Country Fair. He also asked us to look for Pinellas 11th and 12th grade students who might want to apply for an FREF scholarship and to contact a Florida teacher who might want to apply for a Practicing Educator Grant.

Twelve attendees won door prizes.



North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association Membership Application



Unified Dues: \$60.00 Annually – July 1 to June 30

<input type="checkbox"/> New Membership <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Membership	General Member - Circle One: Retired School Teacher/School Administrator/School Transportation School Maintenance, School Cafeteria. Other:		
FREA Benefits are fully available to ALL FREA members be they Regular or Associate.	Associate Member Associate: Any person supporting the mission of the Association may apply for associate membership. (Associate members may not vote as a delegate.)		
Circle One: Miss, Mrs., Ms., Mr., Dr., Other		Date:	
Your Name:		Spouse's Name	
Mailing Address	Apt./Condo	Telephone—Cell phone preferred ()	
City	State	Zip	County
E-mail address:		Your Month/Day/of Birth:	
School District Retired From:		Year Retired	Position Retired From

NPCREA and FREA are your advocates regarding your pension and the future of education in the State of Florida. Would you like to support our efforts on behalf of all present and future Retired Educators, and other beneficiaries of the Florida Retirement System like First Responders, etc.? This money will be used in a non-partisan way.

Yes, I would like to support FREA's Legislative Advocacy: \$ 4.00

Unified Dues for July 1—June 30: **\$60.00**

Yes, I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Florida Retired Educators Foundation of \$5.00

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: NPCREA (North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association)

Mail to: NPCREA, P.O. Box 4248 Clearwater, FL 33758-4248

Have questions? Contact NPCREA: NPCREA@gmail.com

NPCREA has many active committees. All of our committees welcome new people, ideas and /or suggestions. The work of the committees listed below is explained at our meetings.

Please indicate your interest in one or more of them by checking the line by the committee. The chair will contact you personally.

Volunteer Services		Information Services		Newsletter	
Hospitality		Legislative		Photography (Historian)	
Sunshine		Name Tags		Retirement Planning	
Phone Tree		Membership		Publicity/Website	
Cultural Affairs		Nominating		Thought for the Day	



NPCREA Country Fair 2025

at Tuesday, May 13, Luncheon
Clearwater Golf Club, 525 N. Betty Lane

A \$10 donation makes you eligible to win ONE of the following:

- *A Round of Golf for 4 at the Clearwater Country Club (\$200 value)
- \$15 Gift Certificate to Starbucks Coffee
- *\$20 Cash
- *A Gift Basket (\$25 value)
- *\$25 Gift Certificate to Harps of Trinity Restaurant
- *\$25 Gift Certificate to Rusty Bellies Restaurant of Tarpon Springs
- *\$25 Gift Certificate to Capogna's Italian Restaurant in Clearwater
- *\$25 Gift Certificate to one of six Darden Restaurants
- *25 Gift Card to Bealls
- *\$25 Gift Card to Amazon
- *\$25 Gift Card to Total Wine
- *\$25 Gift Card to Publix

- *Please make checks payable to NPCREA (your cancelled check will be your receipt)
- *Bring your check & completed form to the luncheon or mail both **NO LATER than May 7**
to NPCREA P.O.Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758
- You do not need to be present to win!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Cash: _____ Check #: _____ Received by: _____

**NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY
RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 4248
CLEARWATER, FL 33758-4248**



NPCREA LEADERS FOR 2024-25

PRESIDENT	SHARON OZBUN
VICE-PRESIDENT	KATRINA PERSHING
TREASURER	LINDA MCGEEHAN
RECORDING SECRETARY	MARY BLACKMON
CORRES. SECRETARY	MARCIA LORK
INFORMATION SPECIALIST	MAURA HEDRICH
MEMBERSHIP	CHERYL GOOD
PATRONAGE	RICK POPE
VOLUNTEER SERVICES	ELDON WEAVER
HISTORIAN/NEWSLETTER	MARY BLACKMON

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