



email: npcra@gmail.com

North Pinellas County *Retired Educators Association* NEWSLETTER



PO Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758

Vol. 49, Issue 5

May/June 2024

Recent Events:

March 12 - 90s Birthday Party
April 9 – Spring Bonnet Bash
Remembering Mayme Hodges

Upcoming Events:

May 7 – Country Fair
May 14-16 Convention

Be prepared to answer:

What Are You Going to Do With Your Summer?



The last luncheon of this fiscal year is Tuesday, May 7, and it is the annual “Country Fair.” Our luncheon and Fair are held a week earlier due to the state FREA Convention the following week in Wesley Chapel.

“Country Fair” is one of our favorite luncheons, so you do not want to miss it. The many great prizes will raise money for the general fund, and we are hoping to make it a huge success again this year.

Of course, our luncheon will have a Country Fair theme with barbecued chicken sliders, baked beans and coleslaw, and apple cobbler for dessert. The cost is \$18. Please RSVP by May 1 to npcra@gmail.com or reply to the the Evite.

There are two parts to the fair: \$10 tickets and \$1 tickets. \$10 tickets give an opportunity to win valuable prizes, such as gift cards, golf rounds, and baseball tickets. You DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT to win. Tickets will be put in a “hat” and pulled randomly. Winners will be notified of their prize.

Unless noted on the ticket, the President will choose the prize for you. Obviously, if you are at the luncheon, YOU may choose a prize.

\$1 tickets will also be sold at the luncheon. Members and friends are asked to bring new or slightly used items (at least a \$10 value) to the May7 Country Fair. In front of each item will be a basket for members to put their \$1 ticket in. After everyone has had a chance to spend all their \$1 tickets on the merchandise, one ticket will be pulled, and the owner of that ticket will be the winner of the item.

The Country Fair luncheon is a great one to invite a friend to. Feel free to dress up in your favorite country style.

NPCREA is counting on you, our members, and friends, to make this year’s Country Fair a big success!

Remember: NPCREA meets at 11 am on Tuesday, May 7, at Clearwater Country Club.

NPCREA District 6

Volunteer of the Year 2023-24

As featured in our last *Newsletter*, Sharon Ozbun has been a one-woman volunteering team since retiring after 36 years teaching in Pasco County. She volunteers through NPCREA, her Rotary club, the Salvation Army, and her church. In just the past month, she attended the Carwise Awards in Pinellas County, giving our \$250 NPCREA scholarship award to an outstanding senior from a local high school. She also created two dozen Easter baskets, using our donated Easter bunnies and toiletries collected at our March meeting. At Coral Oaks Assisted Living facility in Palm Harbor she handed our baskets to a 6'2" Easter bunny, who distributed them to lonely residents. This month she is preparing our display board for the FREA Convention in May, featuring many of our luncheons, volunteer work, and collections this year. The speakers, luncheons, collections, prizes, contests, and slide shows for our meetings this year have all been arranged by Sharon in her position as vice president.



Sharon Ozbun

Much of her daily life is given over to planning, preparing, and organizing the volunteer efforts of the East Lake Rotary Club, of which she is president. She also volunteers with the North Pinellas Salvation Army, her church, and as President-Elect of North Pinellas Retired Educators Association. She will take over as our new president in May of 2024. And so it comes as no surprise that District 6 (Hernando, Pasco, South Pinellas, and North Pinellas) Volunteer Services chairpersons have voted our Sharon as VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR FOR ALL OF DISTRICT 6! She will be honored at the FREA Convention on May 14.



VOLUNTEER SERVICES REPORT

Name: _____ **Month(s):** _____

Youth

Adult

Retired Educators Assn.

Community/Clubs

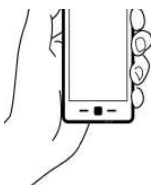
Hospital/Schools

Churches

Friends/Neighbors

All Others

TOTAL



Phone to Mr. Eldon Weaver at 954.895.1073

or email to **pegasus_fl@yahoo.com**

or cut out and bring to the meeting





Country Fair 2024

During our May 7 Meeting
Clearwater Golf and Country Club
525 N. Betty Lane, Clearwater

Money raised for this event will go toward the general fund of NPCREA. For a \$10 donation you will have the opportunity to win one of these prizes. You do NOT have to be present to win. Your canceled check is your receipt.

A Round of Golf for 4 at the Clearwater Country Club	\$25 Gift Card to Target
2 Box Seats and Parking Pass to a Tampa Bay Rays baseball game (Value \$200)	Shampoo and Conditioner from Fantastic Sams
30 minute massage @ A Center for Massage	\$25 Gift Card to Rusty Bellies
\$30 Gift Card to The Cheesecake Factory	\$25 Gift Card to Harp's of Trinity
\$25 Gift Certificate to Clearwater Family Restaurant	\$25 Gift Card to Clear Sky
\$25 Gift Card to Outback	\$25 Gift Card to Publix
\$25 Gift Card to Longhorn Steakhouse	\$25 Gift Card to Publix
Autographed book, "Unwavering"	\$20 Gift Card to Anthony's Coal-Fired Pizza
Two bottles of "Fine Wine" and gourmet nuts	\$20 Gift Card to Anthony's Coal-Fired Pizza

Please make check payable to NPCREA (your canceled check will be your receipt)

You can mail your registration form and payment to NPCREA, PO Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Cash _____ Check # _____ Received by _____

North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association is a charitable organization as defined by IRS code 501c(4). State of Florida registration number is CH-45274. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll free (800.435.7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.

Trailblazer Mayme Hodges

"It is better to serve than to be served."

Hodges, who served 22 civic and professional organizations during her 41 years in Clearwater, attributed her involvement to her upbringing. "I was reared by a Baptist minister, whose philosophy was that it is better to serve than to be served," she said. Besides her 36 years as a teacher, two of them in Broward County, she served with groups ranging from the NAACP to the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee and Safe House, a haven for substance users.

Mayme Hodges was born in Lakeland, Florida, and moved to Pinellas County in 1954. Married to Thomas Hodges, they have two children, son, Glenn T. Hodges and daughter, G. LaTanya Raffington, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

In 2019 Mayme was recognized by Marquis Who's Who Among Top Educators in America for dedication, achievements, and leadership in elementary education. A lifelong learner, she believed that a good education can set the foundation for success for every student.

Her career was marked by many personal and professional achievements. She retired in 1989 as an elementary school teacher for Pinellas County Schools in Clearwater where she taught for 34 years.. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Hampton University and a Master of Education from Stetson University.

In retirement, Mrs. Hodges continued in her involvement in the academic field through her work with the North Pinellas Retired Educators, where she previously served as co-president and president..

Mayme Hodges was known for her volunteer and civic involvement in local initiatives. She was involved with the Hunter Blood Center in Clearwater, Florida; she was a member of its board of directors and Region IV director. She served as interim city commissioner of the City of Clearwater for one-year, past chairman of the Neighborhood Affordable Housing Board, and nominating commissioner for the 6th Judicial

Court. She was a member of the board of directors for the Long Center, the multi-purpose recreational sports and swimming facility in Clearwater.



In recognition of her civic impact, she earned a Community Service Award from the Small Business Administration and a Liberty Bell Award from the Clearwater Bar Association. An unsuccessful Democratic School Board candidate in 1992 and 1994, Mayme was the first and last black woman on the Clearwater City Council, and only the third black council member.

In 1996 Mayme was awarded the title of "Ms. Clearwater" by the Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce. She was the first African-American to be honored in the 38-year history of the city's most coveted award for community service and when interviewed said, "I'm supposed to be tough, but the tears started flowing," Now she could "run Clearwater without having to run for office."

Outgoing Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce board chairwoman, Ann Wilkins Duncan, fought back tears as she announced Hodges' name. It was "neat, very exciting," she said later, for a woman to be able to bestow such an honor on another woman, especially an African-American woman.

The award often went to individuals noted for their "high business achievement," not someone like Hodges, who has "impacted so many lives" as a schoolteacher and community worker." Absolutely fantastic," Clearwater Mayor Rita Garvey exclaimed. "Long overdue."

Hodges' Activities and Awards

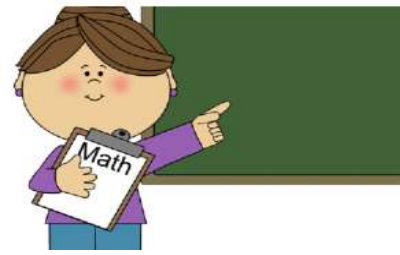
Community Service

Long Center Clearwater, Board of Directors
 Mount Olive A.M.E. Church (Class Leader, Greeters Ministry, FAST core committee)
 Interim City Commissioner December 1992 -1993
 NPCREA-School Board Representative
 North Pinellas Retired Educators Association Co. President
 Nominating Commissioner Sixth Judicial Circuit
 North Pinellas County Superintendent Advisory Committee
 Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee Member
 Upper Pinellas Democratic Women's Club, Past President
 NAACP, Member
 Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Past President, Treasurer and Life Member
 Sgt. Allen Moore Community Partnership Board Member
 Hunter Blood Foundation- Board Member
 Neighborhood Affordable Housing Advisory Board & Vice Chairman
 Democratic Women's Club of Florida Region IV
 Director State Attorney Compass Program

Awards

1982 Sisterly Spirit, Nu Beta Omega Chapter
 1986 Appreciation of Leadership, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, inc.
 1988 Appreciation for Dedicated Service, Kings Highway Elementary
 1992 Sepia Umbrella Award
 1992 Community Service Award-Small Business Administration
 1995 Community Service, Elks Lodge
 1995 Community Service, African American Awareness Month- St Petersburg College
 1996 Ms. Clearwater, Clearwater, Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce
 1996 Liberty Bell-Clearwater Bar Association
 2003 Community Service Award FREA (NPCREA)
 2004 Community Service Award FREA (NPCREA)
 2019 Marquis Who's Who Top Educators in America

Blackboard Notices



...THANK YOU, PATRONS

You have helped us to print and publish our newsletters, directories, flyers, and brochures. We appreciate all of our PATRONS of NPCREA.

Anyone wishing to become a PATRON for our new year should send a check for \$15 to NPCREA at P.O.Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758.

Patrons for 2023-24 school year have been:

Maura Hedrich
 Phyllis Walls
 Carole Pope
 Linda McGeehan
 Kali Crum
 Rick Pope
 Barbara Seiler
 Herb Johnson
 Margaret DeMeza
 Jamie Foster
 Richard Werling II
 Marie Grein
 Ceraolo-O'Donnell family

...BRIDGE-A-RAMA



Bridge-a-Rama is played on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 10:30 am. Bridge players wanted.

Call Phyllis Walls,
 727.418.7025, for details.

Tuesday, March 12

March was our birthday party for members 90 and older. We also collected Easter basket goodies for residents of Coral Oaks Assisted Living in Palm Harbor

Mike Ceraolo-O'Donnell led the pledge of Allegiance. Linda McGeehan gave the Thought for the Day, quoting a variety of Irish poets, playwrights, writers, and celebrities.

Bob reviewed our activities from 2023, including speakers, collections, volunteer hours and activities, touch cards, luncheons, donations, auctions, and other activities. He asked us to wear a spring bonnet for our April 9 luncheon meeting and wear our "Carmen Miranda outfit."

As an additional activity, we asked members to bring in donations to make "spring surprise" bags for an assisted living facility, Coral Oaks in Palm Harbor. Items being collected were decks



of cards, towels, hand soap, toiletries such as toothpaste, lotion, tooth brushes, tissues, or treats. We made 24 bags which would be delivered during a spring party at the facility.

Gay Gentry thanked the unit for our \$20 donation to FREF in memory of her husband, Elbert Gentry, who dedicated his life to teaching. Starting in the 1960s he participated in the integration of schools in St. Petersburg.

Nominations for officers for 2024-26:

Historian--Mary Blackmon
Corresponding Secretary--Marcia Lork
Treasurer--Linda McGeehan

Secretary—Mary Blackmon
Vice President-Programs--Katrina Pershing
President-Elect (no nominee)
President--Sharon Ozburn

Bob asked us to consider whether we might consider being President after two years of training as President-Elect.

Luncheon was a bowl of loaded baked potato soup, rolls, a large plate of corned beef and cabbage, and an ice cream sundae.

We watched a slide show of some of the events of 1915-2024, honored our 90-year-old members, and enjoyed frosted cupcakes with our ice cream sundaes.

Two members won Share the Wealth: Karlton Ballard and Marcia Lork. Congratulations!



Phyllis Walls (left) delivered cash to Karlton Ballard and then to Marcia Lork (below)



Tuesday, April 9

April was our Easter Bonnet Parade meeting. And we were warned about Florida wildlife and how to avoid trouble when dealing with our friends in the wilderness.

Maura Hedrich gave the Thought for the Day about planting trees for future enjoyment and for the value of nature. Bob Stephens reminded us that he will be retiring as our president in May. Then Bob introduced Sharon Ozburn, the president-elect, and turned the meeting over to her.



Sharon introduced George Hughes, Florida Wildlife Commission officer. He warned us about trying to interact with wildlife. He explained that wildlife animals with babies are

always dangerous and should be left completely alone. The FWC does not relocate wildlife unless it's an endangered species. Coyotes and snakes and the like are left alone unless they endanger humans. Humans must keep their distance from wildlife and not release pets into the wild. Officer Hughes answered many questions from the attendees at this luncheon.

Eight attendees wore their beautiful Easter bonnets, and Marcia Lork was voted Number One. She wore a custom-made bonnet composed of many recycled plastic bottles painted and cut into myriad decorative shapes. It was truly Carmen Miranda magnificent!



Lunch was Par 3 salads for everyone, with delicious bean soup and rolls, plus a large cookie for dessert.



Sharon Ozburn told of attending the Carwise Awards where many students received scholarships. NPCREA contributed a \$250 scholarship award.

She also attended the Easter Bunny celebration on March 28 at Coral Oaks Assisted Living in Palm Harbor. We all contributed Easter basket items at the March 12 meeting, and the residents of Coral Oaks were very appreciative of the baskets they received.

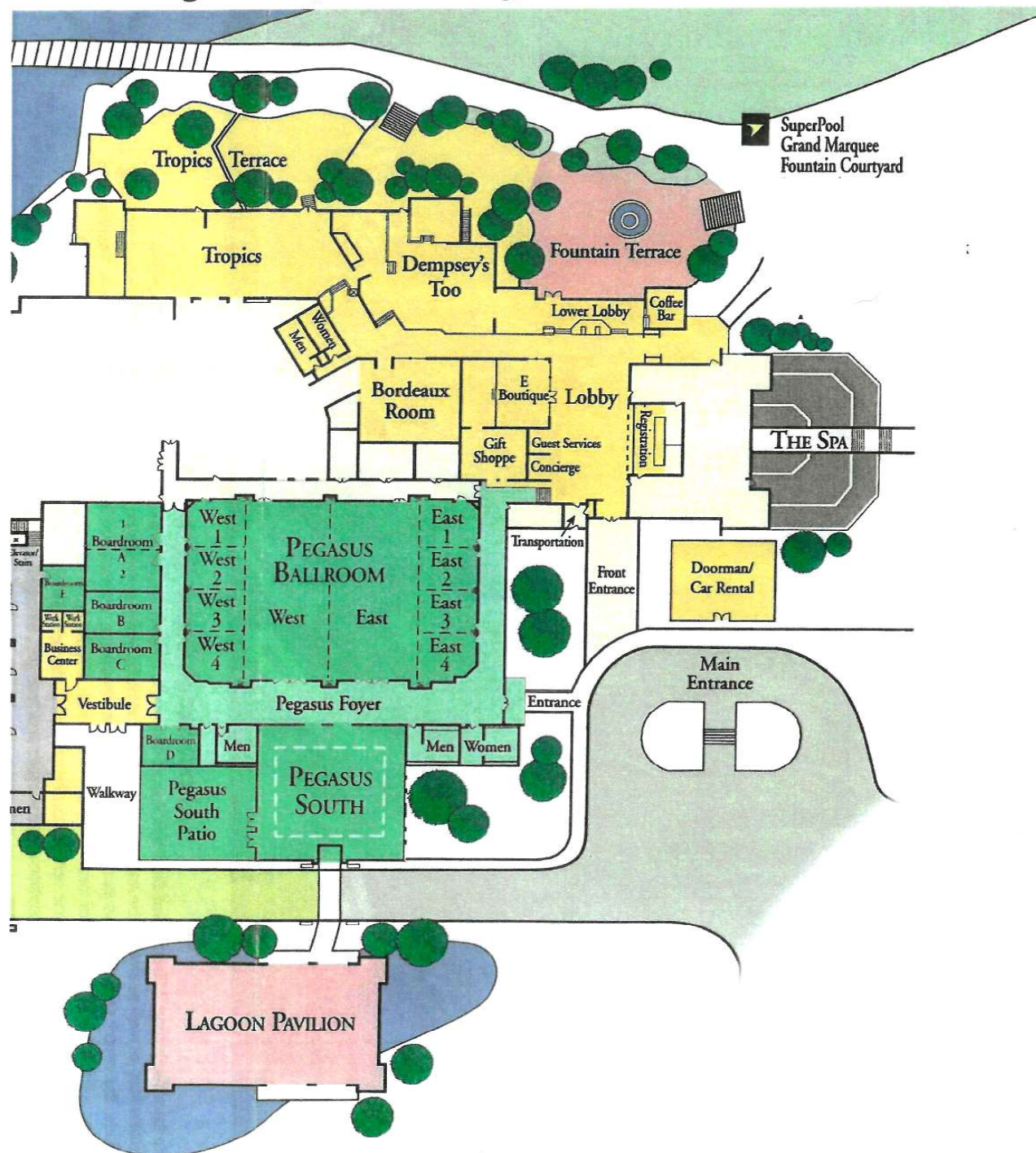
Marie Grein accepted the VFW Patriotic Essay Contest Certificate of Appreciation for the work of our volunteer judges in November. They were pictured in our January/February Newsletter--Cheryl Good, Phyllis Walls, Mary Lou Kelly, and Marie.



Marie Grein accepted the Certificate from VFW Post 2550 Commander Mike Bovee, veteran of Afghanistan and Iraq, and Mike Crews, Korean War veteran.

SADDLEBROOK RESORT

Meeting Rooms, Main Lobby, Hotel Restaurants and Shops



**5700 Saddlebrook Way,
Wesley Chapel, FL 33543**

Video: https://www.saddlebrook.com/?chebs=gl_sbk

For more information, go to frea.org, click on "EVENTS," then click on "CONVENTION"



North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association Membership Application



Unified Dues: \$50.00 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
<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, I would like to support FREA's Legislative Advocacy: \$ 4.00 Unified Dues for July 1—June 30: \$50.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Florida Retired Educators Foundation of \$5.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Enclosed \$ _____</p>		
<p>Please make checks payable to: NPCREA (North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association)</p> <p>Mail to: NPCREA, P.O. Box 4248 Clearwater, FL 33758-4248</p>		

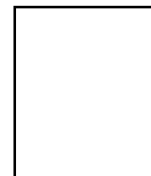
Have questions? **Contact NPCREA: NPCREA@gmail.com**

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	

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



NPCREA LEADERS FOR 2023-24

PRESIDENT	BOB STEPHENS
VICE-PRESIDENT	SHARON OZBUN
TREASURER	MARIE GREIN
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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