



# SCREA

Seminole County Retired Educators Association



## Newsletter March-April 2023

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

GREAT NEWS! EXCITING TIMES! Our March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting will super fantastic!! We will be dedicating the meeting to recruiting new members and need the help of each and every one of YOU. We have sent invitations to this event to over 600 retired, potential members and all current members need to be present to warmly welcome our guests.

The FREA affiliated benefits groups, AMBA and FRG (Florida Retirement Group), will be on hand to help us showcase the benefits of joining FREA and SCREA.

**PLUS! – ALL NEW POTENTIAL MEMBERS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH!**

This is our chance to showcase what a valuable organization we are to those who may not know what they're missing. Please plan on attending and bringing a retired friend.

Remember, our organization is not just for retired teachers, but also for school administrators, school transportation, school maintenance, and school cafeteria retirees. Anyone who touched the lives of children in the educational system and especially those that are receiving a pension from the Florida Retirement System are encouraged to join. Our strength is in our numbers!

Of course, we will also be highlighting FUN! As usual, door prizes and great sharing with friends will also be on the agenda with our Spring décor.

Kerry McRae  
kerrym10303@aol.com

### **Calendar of Events**

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 12 March 2023 | Daylight Savings; Spring Forward.         |
| 14 March 2023 | SCREA Luncheon and Benefits Presentation. |
| 12 - 17 March | SCPS Spring Break.                        |
| 17 March 2023 | St Patrick's Day.                         |
| 20 March 2023 | Spring Equinox.                           |
| 9 April 2023  | Easter                                    |



### **Officers and Committee Chairs**

- |                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| President               | Kerry McRae        |
| President Elect         | Darlene Cooper     |
| Treasurer               | Tom Billings       |
| Recording Secretary     | Cindy Huggins      |
| Corresponding Secretary | Gail Ward          |
| Membership Chair        | Doris Duxbury      |
| Information Chair       | Lemuel Stallworth  |
| Legislative Chair       | Queen Esther Jones |
| Public Relations        | Ruth Crowell       |
| Volunteer Chair         | Rebekah Richey     |



## OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS!

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, a group of SCREA members met to help plan the future of our group. The complimentary lunch for potential members was one idea that came out of this meeting, but we also discussed organizing extra social activities in addition to our regular meetings. Suggested activities included ideas like: a Sunrail trip to Winter Park, events at Rollings College, tours on the St. Johns River, Debarry Hall, Seminole State College, visit a ceramics or painting studio, and the Sanford Museum. I would love to hear more ideas from those of you who could not attend, so feel free to add to our list! The goal is to get out of the house and add more laughter and enrichment to our lives.

A special “thank you” to Cindy Huggins, Queen Esther Jones, Doris Duxbury, Gretta Edwards, Paula Smathers, Lemuel Stallworth, Darlene Cooper and Tom Billings for attending this meeting and sharing ideas!

## FREA STATE CONVENTION TIME!

The FREA State Convention will be held this year at the Bluegreen’s Bayside Resort and Spa in Panama City Beach May 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup>. This is always an exciting and fun-filled event! If you are interested in attending, just let me know. Carpooling will be available. For more information, visit “Events” at [www.frea.org](http://www.frea.org).



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It’s that time of the year! Membership dues for the 2023-2024 year are now being accepted. The total is \$60 (\$35 to FREA, \$20 to SCREA and \$5 for local scholarships). In addition to our hefty benefits package, membership also includes numerous opportunities to socialize and increase involvement in our community.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Rebekah Richey**

#### **1. WWW.SCPS.K12.FL.US.COM Community Involvement**

Reading with children at Kindergarten. At Goldsboro, we are called Nanas, Papas and Friends. Tutor with Reading Acceleration Program ( RAP). Sign up for training and Finger Printing through Misa Mills or Katie Burris. Training in March coming ups

#### **2. Sharing Center: Food pantry, showers, social work, job training, Volunteer Coordinator:**

Melissa Siler [melissa.sileo@thesharingcenter.org](mailto:melissa.sileo@thesharingcenter.org) to sign up to volunteer ( ex. Sort clothes on a Saturday morning)

#### **3. Tools for Seminole Schools**

free store for public school teachers in Seminole County. Manager - Becky Miller [becky\\_miller@scps.k12.fl.us](mailto:becky_miller@scps.k12.fl.us). to sign up to volunteer individually or as a small group

#### **4. Retired Senior Volunteer Program ( RSVP )**

Sign up and receive ideas for volunteering. Insurance is provided to cover volunteers while traveling to event, at the event, and returning home. Sharon Smith [ssmith@vcfl.org](mailto:ssmith@vcfl.org) to sign up or get more info.

#### **5. JOSH: Just Our Soldiers Helpers.**

PACK CARE PACKAGES for soldiers deployed overseas. [justoursoldiershelpers.org](http://justoursoldiershelpers.org);  
Founder Kathy Hewitt - [khewitt@justoursoldiershelpers.org](mailto:khewitt@justoursoldiershelpers.org).

Contact Rebekah for additional info: [rebekah.richey@gmail.com](mailto:rebekah.richey@gmail.com).

## **NOTES FROM YOUR OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

### **President Elect Darlene Cooper**

When I moved to Seminole County, SCREA was the first organization I joined. It seemed to be a good place to start my new life in this area. Then Covid hit and we screeched to a halt. But even through Covid, SCREA tried to carry on and I made some friends and learned about the group. Now that we are back to “normal”, I am excited for all the good things to come. We are welcoming new members and hope that they will become friends we see more than once a month or so. We are encouraging all members to “find your niche” within our various committees. And, we still need someone to serve as President Elect when I take over the Presidency in May. We all learned from this last wonderful holiday party, that many hands really do make light work. I loved working with the board and Kerry during my training period. We all have great skills - after all, we were educators! Please consider how you can continue to serve.

Darlene Cooper  
[drcooper@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:drcooper@tampabay.rr.com)

### **The Money File From Treasurer Tom Billings**

We have recently made changes to our banking, meaning that we now have access to our accounts via the Internet. It will reduce the time involved with paperwork and reduce paperwork so that less will need to be filed. Our accounts are healthy and we will be able to meet our expenditures for the moment. However, with expenses increasing due to the current economy, we will want to accomplish some fund raising to improve our holdings. Obviously new members can help with raising our accounts and, taking advantage of donations, 50/50s, and fund raising, we can enjoy more community outreach.

Currently our Checking and Savings accounts show just over \$3000.00 each. A properly detailed Treasurer’s report will be presented at our March meeting, but will not be published in public documents. We now have the use of a debit card which will make tracking our account activity easier and means less need for checks. We also have a Federal Tax ID number so that if anyone needs to purchase something for the Association we can do it tax free. A document will be provided to you should you need one. Please contact me if you have questions:

Tom Billings  
[tm\\_billings@yahoo.com](mailto:tm_billings@yahoo.com).

### **Corresponding Secretary Gail Ward**

Please let me know of any important events in your life or in the lives of other members. For example: Celebrations like births of grandchildren or anniversaries, illnesses or deaths in the family, or prayer requests. Thank you!

Gail Ward  
[gailward@yahoo.com](mailto:gailward@yahoo.com)

### **Membership Chair Doris Duxbury**

Please send in your 2022-2023 dues and update your information (email, address, phone) on the forms sent out to you. That way we can keep in touch!

Doris Duxbury  
[djduxbury83@bellsouth.net](mailto:djduxbury83@bellsouth.net)

## Information Services Lemuel Stallworth

The following centers are offering free personal tax return services to individuals of all ages. Call to make appointments!

### Sanford Senior Center

401 E. Seminole Blvd, Sanford 407/688-5129

### Seminole County Public Library (East Branch)

310 Division St, Oviedo 407/665-1560

### Winter Springs Senior Center

400 N. Edgemon Av, Winter Springs 407/327-6554

### Casselberry Senior Center

200 N. Triplett Dr, Casselberry 407/262-7700 (ext. 1507 or 1576)

### Christian Sharing Center

600 N. Hwy 17-92, Longwood 407/260-9155

Lemuel Stallworth  
[lemray@bellsouth.net](mailto:lemray@bellsouth.net)

## Public Relations Ruth Crowell

Check out our Facebook page!

“SEMINOLE COUNTY RETIRED  
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION”

Be sure to post a “Hello” message!

### Ruth Crowell

[ruthcrowell@gmail.com](mailto:ruthcrowell@gmail.com)



## From Carrie Frye, Executive Secretary

FREA State Membership Ad Hoc  
Committee

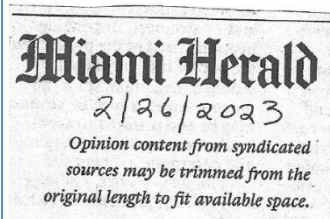
386-668-4409 (H) 407-765-8857 (C)

The FREA state legislative committee members will be in Tallahassee March 27 - 29 advocating to keep our pensions. That is our #1 priority on behalf of Florida Retired Educators.

Attached is a letter that appeared in the Miami Herald.

It is written by George Ellis, co-chair of the FREA state legislative committee. This is his second letter to be printed by the Herald.

Carrie Frye  
[cfrye@att.net](mailto:cfrye@att.net)



### WHOSE CHOICE?

Florida House Bill 1 (HB1) is moving through the state Legislature with little conversation about the costs for expanding voucher programs. The estimated cost over the next five years is \$4 billion, and legislators have yet to address the cry from homeschoolers. Further, there has been no information on where Tallahassee will find the funds.

Long-standing efforts to privatize all Florida education under the guise of choice continues the quest to bankrupt public school districts. A major issue in

the bill is parents being able to replace their private school tuition costs with state funds.

In Arizona, the expansion of vouchers mostly helped the wealthy use public funds to pay for their children's private schooling.

Vouchers try to help less economically able families. However, HB1 shows no restrictions and little accountability.

When Gov. DeSantis signs HB1, another bill should be proposed to make consistent funding and accountability a reality for any school that takes state money, regardless of a parent's choice of school.

- George L. Ellis, Miami