



# The Retired Educator

Vol. XXVI Issue 1

Fall 2023: Sep., Oct., Nov.

**OCREA  
General  
Membership  
Meetings**

10:00 a.m.  
(11:30 Feb & May)  
First Thursday  
Sept.—May  
(Jan. no meeting)

**Location**

Church on the Drive  
1914 Edgewater Dr.  
Orlando 32804

**2023-2024**

**Theme**

OCREA -  
Our Legacy Lives On

**OCREA Website**

[ocreafl.org](http://ocreafl.org)

**Facebook**

OCREA

**OCREA Officers**

President

**Christine Woods**

Vice President

**Janice Quint**

Rec Secretary

**Fran Burns**

Cor Secretary

**Cathy Thompson**

Treasurer

**Jennifer**

**Cunningham**

**FREA Website**

[frea.org](http://frea.org)

**FREA Convention**

May 14-16, 2024  
Saddlebrook Resort,  
5700 Saddlebrook Way  
Wesley Chapel, FL

**President's Message**

Welcome to OCREA!

We hope to see you at our meetings and field trips this year.

Great programming is planned honoring our theme *OCREA - Our Legacy Lives On*.

Our Program Chair Janice Quint has secured great speakers on IDignity, Longevity, OC Library Anniversary, Ronald McDonald House, along with the regular celebrations.

Last season's programs included House of Hope founder Sara Trollinger, juggler Michael Clark, holiday musical celebration, celebration of our new 90 year olds, former newscaster Martie Salt, and Amanda Cypriano, Adult Literacy League.

Attend our meetings to enjoy good fellowship connecting with other educators.

Your OCREA Yearbook contains important dates, places, and contact information.

The OCREA FaceBook page and [ocreafl.org](http://ocreafl.org) website have updated information.

Bring a friend with you to our meetings and field trips. ...The more, the merrier!

*OCREA - Our Legacy Lives On!*

*Christie Woods, M.Ed.*



Members were honored for their volunteer services in April, including Volunteer of the Year, Sue Brown, in center.



In May, Tom Ard gave a lovely Necrology service honoring our members who passed.

**Vice President, Programs, and Retired Educators Foundation of Orange County (REFOC) Scholarship Chair: Janice Quint**



Our 2023-2024 programs have the theme **Our Legacy Lives On**. Our organization's mission is to support retired school personnel and provide assistance to students and current teachers through scholarships.

Join us each month as we learn about our local community and individuals who have and continue

to have a positive impact on our community.

September's meeting will feature IDignity, an organization that helps the disadvantaged in Central Florida go through the complex steps of getting personal identification.

October's meeting is still TBA, but it will be great.

In November, Jane Tracy will speak about the 100th anniversary of the Orange County Library.

As always, our December meeting will feature OCPS musical students, and February is our 90's birthday celebration and potluck. There is no January meeting.

**5th Grade Essay Contest Chair: Debbie Smith**

Congratulations to our local 2023 winner Mischa Uppal from Sand Lake Elementary who won a \$210 family 4 pack for Fun Spot. She wrote about how her grandfather helped her prepare for a math competition. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> place



winner was Emily Visser from Thornebrooke Elementary. Emily won 4 tickets to Congo River Mini Golf. The essay topic was to write about an experience with a grandparent or grandparent figure(s).

Please give thanks to and support these local businesses by bringing your youngsters.

Anyone is welcome to join this committee. It would involve getting information out to

schools and coming to the February meeting early to look over the final entries and judging them on the criteria provided by the state. Our February meeting is a late start so you would just come at the normal 10:00 time.

If English is your thing, come join us!  
Contact Debbie Smith for more information at:

[kenanddebbiesmith@icloud.com](mailto:kenanddebbiesmith@icloud.com)

**Volunteer Services Chair: Monica Johnson**

Educators make the best VOLUNTEERS because they possess the special gifts of caring and supporting groups and individuals toward improving the lives of everyone. I am thrilled and honored to be continuing the rich history and tradition of OCREA volunteers, with the guidance of an amazing lady, Joanne Canarelli.



The motto from Mrs. Canarelli says it all – ASK – Any Simple Kindness! We all have many talents to share, and our volunteer hours enhance the spirit of those with whom we share our talents and

kindness. We will continue to collect our volunteer hours monthly and pledge to meet and exceed our previous total of volunteer hours.

As always, you will have the opportunity at our monthly meetings to report your volunteer hours, or you can email me at [cimabonniejean@outlook.com](mailto:cimabonniejean@outlook.com) with your hours if you are unable to report at the meetings. Remember to report all your hours and your various volunteer services. It is exciting to see how everyone reaches out to our community. You may use the Report Form on page 4.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or ideas. This will be an exciting fall, full of opportunities to put our unique and varied talents to great use. See you soon.

**Membership Chair: Kim Stutsman, Ed.D.**

Thank you for renewing your membership in OCREA and FREA. In case you have not renewed yet, you can complete the application found in this newsletter.



If you happened to renew directly with FREA, please let us know. You can call me

at 407-721-3782 and leave a message or email me [stutsmankim85@gmail.com](mailto:stutsmankim85@gmail.com). The FREA office only notifies us once a month, so your membership may not reach us in a timely manner.

If you know a retired educator who might enjoy our interesting programs, informative meetings, culturally and socially valuable field trips and the collegiality of fellow educators, please invite them to become a member.

**Hospitality Chair: Suzanne Lincoln**

Welcome to our second year at Church on the Drive where we bring refreshments to enjoy as we “Chat and Chew” with old and new members.

not to exceed 3 minutes, and a Table Decoration for our refreshment table.



There will be a sign-up sheet at our September 7th General meeting for volunteers needed each month: Two Door Greeters, *A Thought for the Day*

Your OCREA board will take care of the September 7th duties.

Refreshments for the general meetings will be according to last names:

- October: A – D
- November: E – J
- December: K – M
- January: NO meeting
- February: Pot Luck Luncheon
- March: N – S
- April: T – Z
- May: End of the Year Luncheon

**Cultural Affairs Chair: Anne Gardepe**

Several OCREA members who have attended our cultural outings, or field trips, have asked me how I find these interesting places to visit. Several years ago, we had a group of seniors in our church called Prime Timers led by a very energetic and curious lady named Bonnie. She would see something in the paper or hear about a place and she and her husband would “scout it out,” making sure there was a good place to have lunch nearby. Then she would plan the trip and her husband would drive the church bus and off we would go.

I have repeated numerous tours from Bonnie’s list for our OCREA members. John and I have found that even if we have been to a place before, we enjoy it very much since it has given us a chance to get to know our fellow retired educators more personally.

Since we do not have an OCREA bus, I try to keep our visitation sites to a reasonable driving distance. And most are free or low-cost.



I am still working on detailed plans for our cultural outings this year. In October we will tour the House of Hope

Orlando on October 19. You likely remember that we were impressed to hear founder, Sara Trollinger, speak at our October meeting last year. I have tentatively planned a home and garden tour at Nehrling Gardens in Gotha in November. We will visit a historical site in February and a play or concert in the spring. More details will be forthcoming. Please try to join us for one or more of our 2023-2024 trips! [annegard64@gmail.com](mailto:annegard64@gmail.com)

## 2022 VOLUNTEER HOURS REPORT FORM

Return to Monica Johnson  
cimabonniejean@outlook.com

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
Month(s): J F M A M J J A S O N D  
(circle the above months)

Religious \_\_\_\_\_  
Literacy \_\_\_\_\_  
Environment \_\_\_\_\_  
Ecology \_\_\_\_\_  
Library \_\_\_\_\_  
Personal Help \_\_\_\_\_  
Hospital \_\_\_\_\_  
Nursing Home \_\_\_\_\_  
OCREA/FREA \_\_\_\_\_  
Shopping \_\_\_\_\_  
Schools \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Projects \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Hours:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Florida Retired Educators Foundation (FREF)/ OCREA Scholarship Chairman: Kim Stutsman, Ed.D.



Supporting high school seniors who want to become teachers is one of the most fulfilling aspects of being a member of OCREA and FREA.

Donations to “The Little Red Schoolhouse” are collected at our meetings. Each year we present the Ernest and Ruth Hawk Scholarship to a deserving OCPS student.

The student’s application is also submitted to FREF (Florida Retired Educators Foundation) to compete for an additional scholarship.

### OCREA Membership Application

Hand out the application below  
and invite a friend to a meeting!



### Orange County Retired Educators Association 2023-2024 Membership Application Dues: \$55.00 Annually (FREA/OCREA) July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024



Date: _____		_____ <b>New</b> _____ <b>Renew</b>
<b>General Member:</b> Retired School Teacher, School Administrator, School Transportation, School Maintenance, School Cafeteria, School Para, etc.		<b>Associate Member:</b> Any person not affiliated with a school system but wants to support the mission of the Association may apply for membership.
<b>FREA Benefits are fully available to ALL General or Associate members.</b>		
Name and Title		Phone — Cell preferred
Mailing Address		Birth Month and Year
City	State	Zip
E-mail address: _____		

**\$55.00 FREA/OCREA Unified Dues**

**\$ 4.00 Legislative Donation**

**\$ \_\_\_\_\_ FREF donation**

**\$ \_\_\_\_\_ OCREA Ernest & Ruth Hawk Scholarship donation**

**\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed (Make check payable to: OCREA)**

**Mail check to:**  
**OCREA**  
**P.O. Box 678236**  
**Orlando, FL**  
**32867**

**PayPal**  
**Send payment to:**  
**ocrea.treasurer@gmail.com**  
**Please remember to add \$2**  
**to the total to cover PayPal**  
**fee.**

Legislative Donations - OCREA and FREA are advocates for your pension and the future of education in the State of Florida. Donations support advocacy for all present/future Retired Educators and other beneficiaries of the Florida Retirement System like First Responders. All donation money will be used in a non-partisan way.



opportunities. Once you open one of these CDs, just sit back and relax while you watch your savings grow... visit [AdditionFi.com/CDPromo](http://AdditionFi.com/CDPromo) for more details.

Visit any branch or [AdditionFi.com/ReferAFriend](http://AdditionFi.com/ReferAFriend) to learn more!

**Make sure your information is up-to-date**

We want to make sure you have access to the full digital banking experience, so it's important that we have your current email address on file.

Make sure your profile is complete and up-to-date by signing into your digital banking account and viewing your settings. You'll be able to make any necessary changes inside of your account, or you're welcome to stop by your local branch and a team member will help you out (no appointment necessary).

**You need to see these CDs**

For a limited time only, we are offering special rate savings certificate

**Homebuying is within reach when you apply for a 5/6 ARM (Adjustable-Rate Mortgage)**

Maybe you haven't found that dream home, but you found something close... or maybe you're new to the area and you're not sure where you'd like to call "home"... or maybe you're just looking for a lower rate home loan opportunity. Wherever you are in your homebuying journey, let us give you a hand! Or better yet, an ARM. Visit [AdditionFi.com/ARM](http://AdditionFi.com/ARM) to learn more.

**Member Referral**

It's true, friends make life richer... When you refer friends or family member to Addition Financial, you can earn up to \$300 and they can earn up to \$300! Now that's true friendship.

**Don't sweat it. We'll help you own your business space**

It can be difficult to have a temporary location while trying to grow your business. That's why we want to take the burden of renting your business space and help you own it instead.

Contact us today: [BusinessServices@AdditionFi.com](mailto:BusinessServices@AdditionFi.com) or call us at 407-896-9411 x2489

**Addition Financial Holiday Closures**

- Monday, September 4 in observance of Labor Day
- Monday, October 9 in observance of Columbus Day
- Saturday, November 11 in observance of Veterans Day
- Thursday, November 23 in observance of Thanksgiving Day
- Monday, December 25 in observance of Christmas Day

**Legislative Chair: Claire Stephens**

According to the July FREA e-Newsletter, good things happened for retirees in the last legislative session. Some things will only impact future retirees but an increase to the insurance subsidy was approved for everyone. The maximum payment will now be \$225 and should be available starting with your July pension payment.



One area that needs our support is the COLA! In 2011 the legislature stopped COLA increases for new hires. COLAs for existing employees were grandfathered in but only for the years worked prior to 2011! This impacts any of us who retired after 2011 since those years are not calculated in our annual COLA increase. Last year SB 239 passed in the Senate only; this bill would have brought back the

COLA increase for everyone. We need to contact our legislatures to let them know we want this bill to be reintroduced and passed!

Use the links below to identify your representatives in State government.

- Florida House of Representatives: <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/FindYourRepresentative>
- Florida Senate: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators>

**Information Services Chair: Pat Franklin**

Hopefully summer heat did not derail your exercise routine.

Did you know that 20 minutes of walking a day reduces your risk of early death by 16 to 30%? You might consider lifting

weights inside. If you are 70 or older, you only need to lift weights two days a week.

Don't go overboard! Use 5 pound weights for your upper body and you will feel a difference.

I hope you didn't gain a few extra pounds like I did. A year ago,

we were told it was cheaper to eat out than pay high prices at the grocery store.

We still have 4% inflation, but food prices have gone down and restaurant prices have gone up. It is now cheaper to cook at home; so grab some healthy recipes and enjoy a home

cooked meal. As this New (school) Year begins, let's spend our time prioritizing a healthy future.



ORANGE COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 678236  
Orlando, FL 32867

Address Service Requested

**NON-PROFIT ORG.**  
**U.S. POSTAGE**  
**PAID**  
**Permit #494**  
**Orlando, FL**

**THANK YOU to ADDITION FINANCIAL for sponsoring our Newsletter.**

**2022-24 Officers**

**President**  
Christine Woods

**Vice-President**  
Janice Quint

**Recording Secretary**  
Fran Burns

**Corresponding Secretary**  
Cathy Thompson

**Treasurer**  
Jennifer Cunningham

**Directors**

**2022-2024**  
Judith Hays (2nd term)  
Suzanne Lincoln (1st term)  
Frank Mattucci  
(completing another's  
1st term)

**2023-2025**  
Richard Gomer  
(completing another's  
2nd term)  
Prince Kelley (1st term)

**Ex Officio**  
Dr. Gayle Hodges

**THE RETIRED EDUCATOR**

**Published**  
September, December & March

**Orange County Retired  
Educators Association**  
PO Box 678236  
Orlando, FL 32867

**Editors**  
Yearbook – Jennifer  
Cunningham, Christine Woods,  
& Dr. Kim Stutsman  
Newsletter - Christie Woods

**Sunshine Contact**  
Monica Johnson