

Levy-Gilchrist Retired Educators Association

FEBRUARY 2026

OFFICERS:

President & Website — Paula Marczynski
marcyp52@gmail.com

VP & Legislative— Cheri Brodeur
cabrodeur12@gmail.com

Secretary — Sue Reed
suepepperreed@att.net

Treasurer — Larry Bachle
lawrencebachle@gmail.com

Volunteer Services— Cora Lord
Cora.lord@icloud.com

Scholarship — Rick Reed
jostreed@bellsouth.net

Sunshine & Shadows— Karen Philman
circle17klp@yahoo.com

Devotion—Alphonso Johnson
alphonsojohnson2016@gmail.com

COME JOIN US!

Levy and Gilchrist counties are located in rural north central Florida. The Suwannee River forms the western boundary of both.

We meet on the **3rd Monday** September thru May at **10:30 a.m.** at **The Trenton Library in Trenton.** We welcome all retired school personnel living in our area, no matter where you worked.

The Levy-Gilchrist Retired Educators Association is a unit of the state-wide **Florida Retired Educators Association.** Association (FREA) organization.



Members are accepting donations for a chance to win a \$400 gift certificate to Bass Pro Shop. Contact a member for more details.

Schedule of Events:

- Jan—MLK/Black History (Alphonso Johnson Host)
- Feb—FREA Virtual Unit Spotlight (Cora Lord Hostess)
- Mar—Levy Superintendent (Cheri Brodeur hostess)
- Apr—Scholarship Recipient (Larry & Harriet Bachle Hosts)
- May—TBD (Paula Marczynski hostess)
- JUN & JUL — NO MEETINGS

JAN

Paula gave an update on the Cupid Crew activities. **Cheri** checked with Ayers about participating, and **Rick** and **Sue** checked with Tri-County nursing homes. Since we don't know exactly when the roses will be delivered to us, we made flexible plans for distributing them. This is a new activity for us, but we are looking forward to participating in it.

Handouts were distributed for the Feb **Virtual Unit Spotlight** with **FREA President Harriett Jenkins.** Paula asked members to be thinking about this and to bring anything they would like to share.

We decided to once again hold a raffle for a Bass Pro Shop gift card to raise funds for our high school senior scholarship.

Alphonso gave an inspirational presentation about **Dr. Martin Luther King** in honor of his birthday. It was especially poignant because he personally knew Dr. King and had been at his home.

Happy Birthday to Harriett!

L-GREA Activities

DEC

Paula reported that our Cupid Crew application was accepted for 250 roses. We will have more details on this at the January meeting. At this time, we did our white elephant gift exchange and shared goodies that members brought.

NOVEMBER

Following our opening procedures and committee reports, **Paula** reported she had sent in our application to participate in the Cupid Crew program. We are waiting to hear back from them.

We have been approved to hold our FREA Virtual Unit Spotlight with President **Harriet Jenkins** at our February meeting. Please come prepared to share ideas, successes, concerns about our unit with her.

Sue presented our program which was an online discussion with **Gabby Herman** from the Boone, NC office about the work of the Samaritan's Purse ministry and the various ways they help those in need. Some examples are Operation Christmas Child, Operation Heal Our Patriots, and the International Crisis Response Team. They can set up an operational mobile medical field hospital and provide much-needed supplies within a couple of days of a disaster.

OCT

Rick and **Larry** gave us an update on the banking account situation.

Paula gave a handout for the Wednesday Webinars provided by FREA. We discussed signing up for the Cupid Crew Valentine Day program. It was agreed to participate if we are selected as rose recipients.



We had a very informative presentation on guidance services and the status of students in our two counties. **Katie Corbin**, Levy County School District, and **Lynnette Langford**, Gilchrist County School District, spoke to us about the challenges and successes in their respective school districts. Thank you for coming and sharing your information!

SEP



We had a nice display at the Gilchrist County Back-to-School event. We had some goodies to share with teachers and staff and took the opportunity to explain about the benefits of joining our organization and ways we can help with scholarships, grants, and other activities.

FREA CONFERENCE 2025

Cora and **Paula** represented the unit at the FREA convention. This was our basket contribution for the FREF scholarship fund. It was filled with lots of beautiful and delicious honey-related items.

The time was spent with information-filled sessions like legislative updates on pensions etc, innovative ways to promote our units, trivia night, and awards and recognitions. The Memorial service honored those we have lost over the past year.

This was the trophy we created for team building exercise



L-GREA Activities cont.

APR

Rick reported that they had three applicants for our local scholarship. He and **Sue** will interview them and select a recipient.

Gina Geiger, Gilchrist County School Superintendent, spoke to us about bills pending in the state legislature that impact public schools — especially those impacting rural counties. She also addressed issues ongoing in Gilchrist and her plans for future improvements. We talked with her about the programs available through FREA and emphasized our desire to be educational partners and mentors where needed.

We selected a slate of officers for the next two years who will be installed at the May meeting: President -**Paula Marczynski**, VP & Legislative- **Cheri Brodeur**, Sec - **Sue Reed**, Treas -**Larry Bachle**, Sunshine/Shadows – **Karen Philman**, Vol Serv –**Cora Lord**, Devotion - **Alphonso Johnson**, Scholarship—**Rick Reed**.

Congratulations to Sue Reed who won our Scholarship Quilt Raffle gift card!



MAR

Our meeting was short and sweet. **Rick** called the meeting to order in the absence of President **Cheri**. **Larry** reminded us that our dues need to be renewed soon and he still had a few Extravaganza tickets left to purchase.

Rick and **Sue** reported that no students had submitted applications for the FREF Scholarship by the state deadline, but they would continue to contact school guidance counselors to see if any students were interested in applying for our \$500 local scholarship.

Rick did a presentation on his dough sheeter and explained how it made his pastry baking so much easier. He then passed out samples!



FEB

Following the call to order, the opening procedures, and committee reports, we discussed the upcoming state convention in May. **Larry** shared information about the extravaganza tickets and several members purchased them. **Paula** was selected as our delegate as **Cheri** is unable to attend. **Cora** will also attend the convention.

Tickets for the T-shirt quilt raffle were distributed. The drawing will be at our April meeting.

Since we had no scholarship applicant this year (which is usually our March program). **Rick** will provide a presentation on his new dough sheeter.

Alphonso provided a very interesting presentation on **Stanley Harris**, who was one of the distinguished Tuskegee Airmen. We greatly appreciate his service!

Door prizes were won by Alphonso, Sue, Paula, Rick, Cheri, Karen, Harriet, and Larry.