

SOUTH PINELLAS COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION

Summer 2026

Carol Huber, Editor



President's Message



Save the Date

Dear members,
Oops, we thought we were sending out our last letter in May, however, since we send out a Summer newsletter, we are still co-presidents until July 1st. We had a great meeting in May when Dockery MacDonald provided an overview of Fisher House. In addition, we recognized departed members with a memorial service (pg 7).

But the most exciting event was the welcoming and swearing in of our newly elected executive board, with **Vickie Coleman** as our new president. We trust you will give Vickie and her board your full support for the upcoming years.

Speaking of upcoming years, this is the 75th anniversary for our unit - a special year with special programs and activities. It's a real chance for your involvement and to involve others by inviting them to our upcoming meetings.

So, we say adieu for this year and look forward to seeing you at our first meeting on **Thursday, October 8, 2026**.

Pat Davey & Jan Wallis, co-presidents

UPCOMING MEETING DATES & TENTATIVE PROGRAMS

We are currently
setting up programs
for the 2026-2027
meetings and would
love suggestions for
*speakers and/or
areas of interest.*
**Please contact our
Presidents-Elect.**

Welcome to the 75th
SPCREA. We are thrilled to
throughout this



Anniversary year of
celebrate with you
forthcoming year, as we

reflect on many of the memories from our past, all while we anticipate what the future invites us to explore. Each month in our calendared meetings, we will remember one decade of the eight that make up our unit's "lifespan". We will highlight the 50's at our October 2026 meeting, so don't be "square", be a "cool cat," and rummage around your "pad", to dig out any item that will make you "flip your lid" about the 50's decade, and bring it or a picture to our meeting. (If there a story behind it, oooh, share it "daddy-o"). After October, be prepared for the developing years of the 60's and 70's decades. Not to worry, our regular program will still be included during our meeting time. While past memories are great, there is "BEYOND" per Buzz Lightyear (Toy Story "cool cat"!). Join us in October 2026 with your nod to the '50s!



No Meetings

See you at our next meeting on

Oct 8th

@11:00 AM

Buffet City

**1030 58th Street N
St Petersburg**

Traditionally, we collect school supplies for distribution to local schools at our October meeting.

Often requested items include:

- ✓ hand sanitizer
- ✓ one-inch white binders
- ✓ dry erase markers & sharpies
- ✓ small dry erase boards
- ✓ Sticky-Tack/poster putty
- ✓ Crayons, regular markers, colored pencils, highlighters
- ✓ notebook paper
- ✓ tape, glue sticks
- ✓ clear shoebox sized bins with lids

The "Used-To-Be" Club

They gather at noon with a sprightly gait,
Although some arrive fashionably late.

No bells to ring, no kids to scold,
Just stories of glory from the days of old.

"Remember the time," someone says with glee,
"That Johnny brought in a live bumblebee?"

They carry no pens, they have no grade books,
Just sharp, judgmental, experienced looks.

They meet to discuss young teachers today,
And how they've forgotten to "file it away."

They brag on their travels, their grandkids, their leisure,
And complain about taxes with wonderful pleasure.

The treasurer reports on the state's pension fund,
Then asks for a motion to quickly debate.

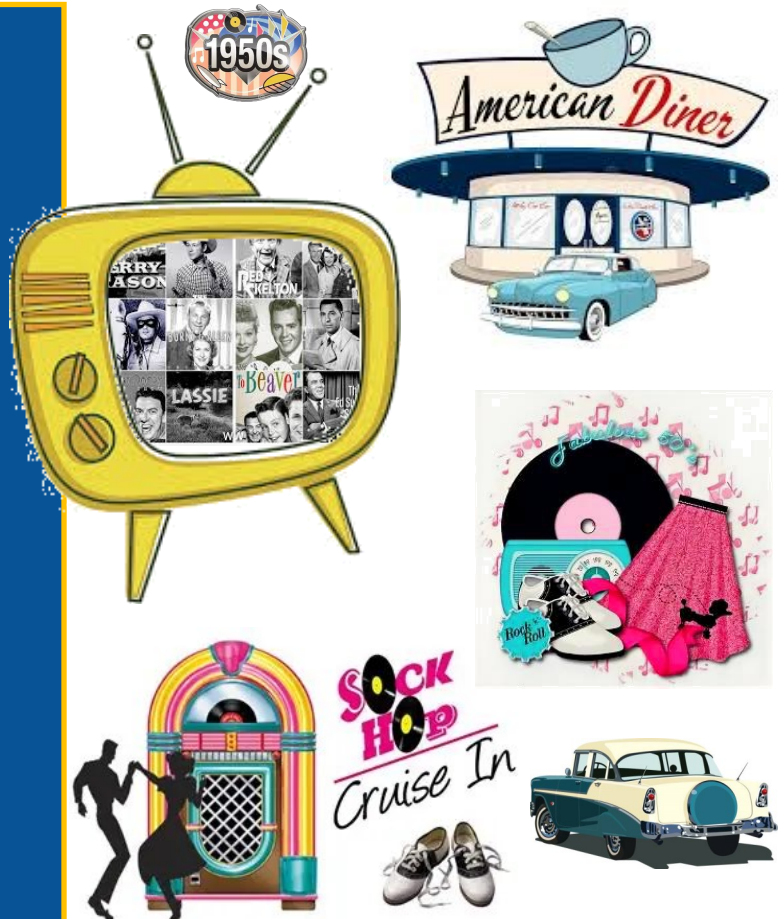
Where they'll hold the luncheon next month for the group,
And ensure that the restaurant serves excellent soup.

The meeting adjourns with a sigh of relief,
"No lesson plans? Joy beyond belief!"

With canes and wisdom, they head for the door,
The hardest part is not walking the floor.

So, raise up your cup in a toast to the crew -
the retired educators who knew what to do!

They survived all the spitballs, the drama, the fuss,
Now **they're** raising hell on the senior-trip bus!



SPCREA Executive Board

President - Vicki Coleman -
vickileman49@gmail.com

Co-Presidents-elect -
Dee Burns bodeeburns@yahoo.com
Cheryl DiCicco diciccocc@gmail.com

Treasurer - Paula Walker -
spcrea2024@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary - Donna Fannin
donna.fannin@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary - Julie Bush
Trijulie123@gmail.com

Past-Presidents -
Pat Davey - stingraydavey@gmail.com
Jan Wallis - retirededucator@mac.com



***We submitted
393 hours for
May.***

Our logged hours combine with other districts in the state to present a

strong front to our Legislature. **It's extremely important for FREA to present a solid body when communicating with our representatives regarding our interests, and our numbers to do that!**

Use the form below to report your hours or look for one at the Membership table each month. If you aren't able to attend, send your volunteer hours to Alan Blessing at blessingalan@gmail.com.

SPCREA Volunteer Hours for:

Name: _____

Hours volunteering for SPCREA _____

Hours volunteering with children _____

All other volunteer time _____

TOTAL volunteer hours _____

MONTH _____

**WE ♥ OUR
VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteer hours can be, but are not limited to...

- ◇ Work preparing for SPCREA
- ◇ Literacy and membership activities
- ◇ Volunteering at schools, churches, hospitals, etc.
- ◇ Participating in other non-profit organizations, *i.e. civic clubs, scouts, PTA*
- ◇ Tutoring, judging educational events
- ◇ Reading at a nursing home
- ◇ Mentoring high-risk youth
- ◇ Assisting other persons (*non-relatives*) in any kind of helpful activities.

*If you're not sure what might constitute Volunteer Hours, use the list above as a guide, but don't limit yourself. We should log in a large number of hours over our summer hiatus! **Give ourselves credit!***

Dee Burns & Vicki Coleman were our gift card winners, from among those who turned in their hours for May. They graciously donated their gift cards to **Fisher House**.



SPCREA Standing Committees

Bylaws – Vicki Coleman

Cultural Affairs – Phyllis Hand/Julie Bush

FREF & Legislative– Wanda Dudley

Hospitality/decorations – Paul & Gloria Drouin

Information Services – Nancy Wudtke

Membership – Carol Huber

Music – Jackie Thornton

Newsletter – Carol Huber

Nominations – Cheryl DiCicco

Project Cheer – Paul Drouin

Publicity – Cheryl DiCicco

Thought for the Day – Laura Hunter

Volunteer & Community Services – Alan Blessing

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



How wonderful to see members **Julie Bush, Jodi Oberer, Elaine Aljasir,** and **Marcia Lork** back with us at our May meeting, and **Wanda Dudley** brought a

new face, her grandson, **Nathan**. We love to see young visitors learn how our group works! We always welcome **Bob Carroll** at the meeting when can attend, supporting both our mission and his wife **Ann**. We love seeing our long-time friends while making new ones! We miss you when you aren't here!



Julie Bush, Jodi Oberer, Elaine Aljasir, & Marcia Lork

Come join our Membership Team!

I'd like to set up a small group to reach out to members who we haven't seen in a while and encourage their participation through personal contact. Team members would provide contact through a personal phone call or other means to encourage meeting attendance and generally catch up on our members well *being*. *It's a lovely way to connect with some members who haven't attended meetings in a while through outreach and caring.* Please contact **Carol Huber** at SPCREAssoc@outlook.com or (727)403-0027.

We look forward to seeing all of you again at **Buffet City** for our meeting on **October 8th @ 11am**.

Bring two friends!!! Remember to pick up some of our trifold brochures to share our vision with them.

We're open to ALL educational staff.

Please consider auto paying your dues (*see below*) so you will never have to wonder if you're ***up-to-date!***

We are now at the end of the school year, and many of our fellow school personnel are joining our retirement ranks, so ***be sure to reach out and bring them to our next meeting in October!***

Combined dues are \$55

NEVER WORRY if you're UP-TO-DATE

Set up your dues through AUTO PAY - either directly from your bank or on the FREA website.

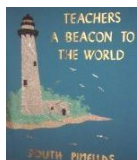
- ☼ Using your **bank's Bill Payer** section, set up **an annual payment** to our treasurer **Paula Walker** on a specific date (I use January 15th). Your bank will then generate a check that will be sent to Paula automatically for the amount you designate.
- ☼ Log in to your account on the **FREA website** (<https://www.frea.org/>). Select Auto Pay and Billing. This should allow you to either make a one-time payment or set up Auto Pay. FREA will let us know when it has been credited your account.

You will still need to contact Paula or Carol with any updates (email, address, phone#, etc.)

FREA sent dues reminders in May to those members who have a current email on file. You can pay BOTH State & Local dues through us, so disregard that notification if you have paid through SPCREA. Check with Paula if you received a notice, but have paid to be sure you have credited correctly.

We encourage all members to wear your name badge to meetings! If you left it with us, be sure to pick yours up at the Membership table.





South Pinellas County Retired Educators Association

Membership Application

2025 - 2026



Unified Dues: \$55.00 Annually

- ☐ New Membership
☐ Renewal of Membership

General Member (*Circle One*):

Retired School Teacher/School Administrator/Support Staff/Other:

FREA Benefits are fully available to ALL FREA members whether Regular or Associate.

Associate Member

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:

Name:

Spouse's Name:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

() home

() cell

City:

State

Zip

County

E-mail address:

Birthday: (Month/Day/Year)
(optional)

School District Where Retired:

Year Retired:

Position Retired From:

SPCREA 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 is used in a non-partisan way.

Unified Dues for July 1—June 30 \$55.00

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

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

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Have questions? **Contact Membership Chair Carol Huber at SPCREAssoc@outlook.com**

Please make checks payable to: SPCREA (South Pinellas County Retired Educators Association)

Mail to: Paula Walker

3600 15th Ave N

St Pete 33713-5324



Treasurer's Report

The State of Our Affairs

CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE (CAB) as of 5/31/2026		\$3818.75
INCOME		
State dues (26/27)	\$270.00	
Local dues (26/27)	\$60.00	
FREF dues - (26/27)	\$5.00	
Legislative - (26/27)	\$4.00	
Donation	\$17.07	
VA donations (for Fisher House)	\$170.00	
TOTAL INCOME (5/31/26)		\$573.00
EXPENDITURES		
FREA Renewals (26/27)	\$486.00	
New Checks	\$21.26	
Speaker's Lunch	\$17.07	
Newsletter (April)	\$11.55	
Check to Fisher House (Bay Pines) (<i>uncashed</i>)	\$170.00	
Stamps (<i>uncashed</i>)	\$78.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (5/31/26)		\$783.88
CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE (CAB) (on 5/31/26)		\$3607.87
Dividend	\$0.10	
50/50	\$0.05	
SAVINGS ACCOUNT BALANCE (5/31/26)		\$1213.04
<i>Present Funds for Local Scholarship</i>		\$1213.19



Have a great

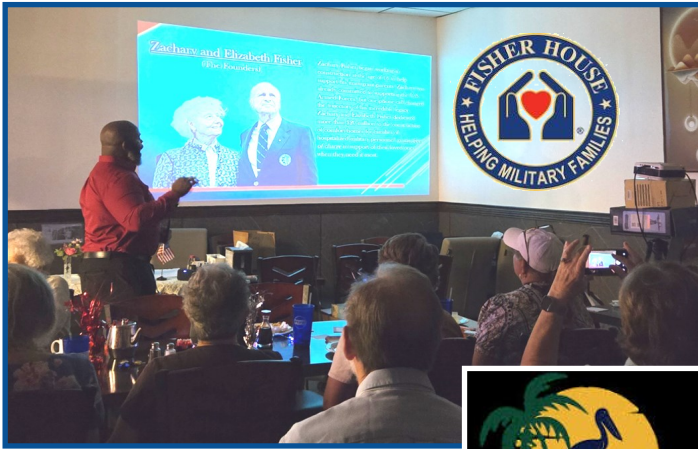
 Summer
 Vacation!

Respectfully
submitted,
Paula Walker,
Treasurer



The total for both State & Local dues is \$55.

All dues collected now will be considered for the 2026-2027 year. We will not collect back dues and you can bring your membership up-to-date by simply paying the current year's dues.



*Our own Bay Pines VA features **two Fisher Houses** on their grounds for these families.*



Each May we salute our Veterans with speakers who honor our military heritage, and this month **Dockery McDonald** shared information about **Fisher Houses** in VA centers around the world. Their residential facilities provide a "Home Away from Home" near military medical centers for families experiencing a personal medical crisis, both in the US and in some foreign countries.

<https://www.fisherhouse.org/>

***Paul Drouin** shared that his Eagle Scouts built toy boxes for the children who visit the Fisher Houses at Bay Pines. At the end of their stay, each child is given one toy to take home.*



***Vicki Coleman, Jan Wallis, Dockery McDonald, Cheryl DiCicco, and Dee Burns** showcase our donations to our Fisher Houses at Bay Pines.*



***Alan Blessing**, our Volunteer coordinator, presented a certificate from our unit to **Wanda Dudley** in recognition of her nomination and subsequent award for outstanding volunteer work in 2026.*



Our new Officers took their oath

Vicki Coleman, president; **Cheryl DiCicco**, co-President Elect; (Nancy Wudtke swearing them in); **Dee Burns**, co-President Elect; **Paula Walker**, Treasurer; **Julie Bush**, Recording Secretary; **Jan Wallace**, Past co-President; **Donna Fanin**, Corresponding Secretary (not present).



***Jackie Thornton & Nancy Wudtke** wore their finest "Cat Attire" - shirts and earrings - honoring their feline fur babies!*





Each May we honor those members who have passed away during the previous year with a small remembrance ceremony. As Jan read each name, Paula turned on a candle (no flames) and Vicki rang the small crystal bell in his honor as we remember our friends and loved ones.



Henry Shaw

Henry was an active member of SPCREA for many years, until his health declined 6 years ago. He has been honored for his volunteer and community service by FREA as well as the city of St Petersburg. In 2012, he was presented with a Key to the City and inducted into the Senior Hall of Fame. He was one of ten recipients of the state's FREA Volunteer Award in 2013.

He will be missed, his contributions well-noted, and fondly remembered by all.

Art Harris

Art was a lifelong educator and coach for 42 years, both in New York and Pinellas County, and strong supporter of SPCREA. As a boater and fisherman, he combined fishing with his love of travel, following his sport to Hawaii, Alaska, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. He was the reigning family Jeopardy champion, and his delicious Prime Rib was famous. He loved nothing more than sharing his culinary talents with family and friends. Art will remain in our hearts and warmly remembered by all.

South Pinellas County Retired Educators' Association

3600 15th Avenue North

St. Petersburg, Florida 33713



We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

Thursday, October 8th

11:00AM

Buffet City

1360 58th Street North (Tyrone Gardens)

Encourage your retired education friends to join our group.

Bring a friend to our next meeting!



[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/1004834239656454/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1004834239656454/)