



## **WREA SUMMER NEWS**

This is the last newsletter of the 2024-2025 season. The next one will begin in August for the new 2025-2026 session. We hope that you have found our news to be helpful and informative. Enjoy your summer and we hope to see you next year at our social events.

Table of Contents                      pg. 1

President's message                      pg. 2

2025 NV Legislative info                      pg. 2

Retiring members                      pg. 3-4

Welcome New Members                      pg. 5

Lifetime Membership winner pg. 5

Book Club News                      pg. 6

NEA PAC fund winners                      pg. 7

WREA Scholarship winner                      pg. 8

Your Money Matters                      pg. 9

NEA Benefits                      pg. 10

Follow us                      pg. 11

Election results                      pg. 11-12

End of School lunch                      pg. 12-13

Stay tuned                      pg. 14

## President's Message by Susan Kaiser

Looking back on the 2024-2025 school year I would be lying to tell you that everything is just fine. Instead, I choose to admire the silver lining of some of our accomplishments. At a national level, public sector workers are seeing their rightfully earned Social Security benefits restored after successfully repealing WEP-GPO in the final hours of the 118th Congress in December. Here in Nevada, as of Friday our Governor has set a new veto record - killing 87 bills passed by the Legislature, however PERS Equity was not one of them. That means that ESPs who work 900 hours during the school year will get a full year of credit toward their PERS benefit (like certified employees have always earned). You can read the details of wins and losses at the state and national levels in email communication directly from NEA and NSEA. Watch for them! Meanwhile, here locally our affiliate recruited 9 new members to WREA and some of them ran for a seat on our Board of Directors! We identified an exceptional candidate as the recipient of the Bernie Anderson WREA Scholarship and contributed almost \$1K to the NEA PAC Fund for Children and remember...we are retired! Continue reading to learn about these successes and more. Book Group will continue over the summer but our other activities will resume when school begins again. Until then, enjoy your summer!



## It's a Wrap! What happened in the 2025 Nevada Legislative Session? By Susan Kaiser



Through a small group of active volunteers who joined the NSEA Ambassadors, retirees helped active educators push back on proposed legislation and supported the efforts of our teacher-legislators. This advocacy group generated multiple Op Eds and Letters to the Editor in publications across the state in addition to phoning in testimony for or against bills and to inform our elected officials about the ramifications of their legislation. Our presence was definitely felt in the building. However, given the results of this session there is still a need to educate Nevada voters and citizen legislators about issues impacting our public schools before the next election cycle. If you are furious, channel that energy into action and join this team. Please contact Susan Kaiser at [wrea.nevada@gmail.com](mailto:wrea.nevada@gmail.com) for more information. To become an informed public education voter be on the lookout for a more detailed summary of the Nevada Legislative session. It will be sent to your personal Email address soon.

## **WREA Retiring Board of Directors' Members**

Melissa Sewell

By Gordy McGregor



Melissa and I met when we were both serving as WEA Building Reps. Shortly after we met, she was elected to both Delegate Assembly and Representative Assembly. We got to know each other well while attending meetings and I could tell right away that she was a leader. When I retired, Melissa was president of WREA. In those days we had our elections during our end of the year luncheon. Prior to the luncheon Melissa had encouraged me to run for the WREA Board. However, when I arrived at the luncheon, she asked me to run for Vice President. At first I thought it was because she recognized my talent, but I found out later that no one else was running for the position! My job as Vice President allowed me to continue to work closely with Melissa and gain even more

appreciation of her leadership skills. We worked well together and under Melissa's leadership WREA became a stronger association. Besides empowering our board to make our association one that attracted members, she did an excellent job of presenting and defending the NSEA family's goals during each legislative session that she attended. After Melissa termed out as president, she served on the board. She is the one that helped our association transition from running our elections during membership meetings at the year end luncheon to voting by email or by paper ballot. This allows more members to vote. Melissa has continued in this capacity until her retirement from the board. She also was always lending a hand whenever we had an activity to help make sure it was successful. I treasure my years of working with Melissa, she is a credit to our profession and our association. She will be missed.

## Kathy Howard

By Janet Carnes



Kathy Howard may be stepping away from WREA Board, but she can still be found walking, biking, and working on her many special interests. Since 1987 when Kathy began her career as an educator, she joined and led as a building rep our local and state teachers' association. Kathy could be seen at all building rep meetings, and she helped plan the yearly banquet. She became a lifelong member of WREA 10 years before she retired. It wasn't long after retiring in 2020 that she was elected to the WREA Board of Directors. During her tenure, she served on the social and membership committees. Kathy participated in the Wednesday walks. Her food contributions to Octoberfest, bingo, and any activity with edibles were always attractive and delicious.

Kathy continues to utilize her teaching skills in a variety of activities. Kathy coaches members at OsteoStrong to become stronger and healthier. She shares her successful soap making knowledge at Copper Cat Studios and TMCC. Kathy, her husband Witt, and their 5 dogs take time every day to bike and walk around their Pleasant Valley neighborhood. If you don't find Kathy at any of those places, look for her at the many fairs and marketplaces around Washoe County. Combining her degrees in Home and Career (aka Home Economics), biology, and math, Kathy created Wild Sierra Soap Company. Her handcrafted, locally sourced soaps and beauty products are pretty and great smelling. Many of us have called Kathy to ask about gardening, cooking, chicken coops and eggs, husbandry, entrepreneurship, and anything related to her vast and deep knowledge of biology. She is always willing to bestow her wisdom.

Everyone at WREA appreciated the time and thought that Kathy contributed to make WREA a strong and inviting organization. Thank you, Kathy.



## WREA WELCOMES OUR NEW MEMBERS

Edith Cushing	Kimberly Howland	Georjan Kavanaugh
Gilbert Lenz	Deborah Russell	Mary Striejewske
Stacie Tiernay	Maryanne Thompson	Colleen Tuttle

## **WREA LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP RAFFLE WINNER**



### **Gilbert Lenz**

I am Gilbert Lenz. Thank you for the membership! I teach Agricultural Welding, Power, and Structure Technology at North Valleys High School. I have been a teacher for fifteen years. I currently serve as the Treasurer for the Washoe Education Association, and I serve on the board of the Nevada State Education Association. I have also served in the Nevada Army National Guard since 1999 where I am currently the Executive Officer of First Squadron 221<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Squadron. My wife and I are both AG teachers and we have three sons who love to get outside and play sports and go on adventures. I look forward to being part of the WREA family!

## WREA Book Club News

By Fran McGregor

, Kamali.

July's selection is The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife by Anna Johnston. Frederick was born with an extra helping of kindness in his heart. If he borrowed your car, he'd return it with a full tank of gas. The problem is there's nobody left in Fred's life to borrow from. At 82, he's lonely, broke and on the brink of homelessness. But his luck changes when, in a bizarre case of mistaken identity, he takes the place of grumpy Bernard Greer at the local nursing home. Now he has warm meals and a roof over his head – as long as his poker face stays in better shape than his prostrate and his look-alike never shows up. Denise Simms is stuck breathing the same disappointing air again and again. A middle-aged mom and caregiver at Bernard's facility, her crumbling marriage and daughter's health concerns are suffocating her joy for life. Wounded by her two-faced husband, she vows never to let a man deceive her again. As Fred walks in Bernard's shoes, he leaves a trail of kindness behind him, fueling Denise's suspicions. This is a hilarious, feel-good, clever novel about grief, forgiveness, redemption, and finding family.

A Council of Dolls by Mona Susan Power is August's selection. It is a profoundly moving novel spanning three generations of Yanktonai Dakota women from the nineteenth century to the present day. Sissy, born 1961: Her relationship with her volatile mother is difficult, even dangerous, but her life is filled with beautiful things, including a doll called Ethel. Ethel whispers advice and kindness in Sissy's ear, and in one especially terrifying moment, maybe even saves Sissy's life. Lillian, born 1925: She was born in her ancestral lands in a time of terrible change. Lillian clings to her sister Blanche and her doll, Mae. The sisters are forced to attend an Indian boarding school far from their home and Blanche refuses to be cowed by the school's abusive nuns. But when tragedy strikes, Mae finds her way to defend the girls. Cora, born 1888: Born into the brutal legacy of the "Indian Wars," Cora isn't afraid of the white men who remove her to a school to be "civilized." When teachers burn her beloved beaded buckskin doll, Winona, Cora discovers that the spirit of Winona may not be entirely lost. A Council of Dolls is both quietly devastating yet ultimately hopeful.

June's book is The Lion Women of Tehran and we will be meeting on Tuesday, June 24 to discuss this book.

The WREA Book Club meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM at the WEA office. All members are welcome to attend. For questions, contact Fran McGregor at mcgregor.gordon@att.net or 775-544-3644.

## NEA PAC FUND FOR CHILDREN

Congratulations Beverlee! Her ticket was pulled as the winner of the NEA PAC Fund basket. Thanks to all WREA members who bought tickets for PAC baskets this year. Your generosity helped raise \$980 for the NEA PAC Fund for children.



## **And the winner is: Kasandra Medina-Torres**

This year's WREA Bernie Anderson Scholarship Winner



My name is Kasandra Medina-Torres, and I am about to graduate from UNR with a Bachelor's degree, majoring in Elementary Education and minoring in Human Development and Family Science (HDFS). My love for education developed over many years of having caring teachers who helped me believe in myself and my capabilities. That love grew even stronger during my nearly three years working at the on-campus child center and through completing my student teaching with the most special group of first-graders. I feel fortunate to have spent the last few years giving back the care I once received, curating lessons and fun activities for students of various ages, and I'm excited to continue this work in my own classroom. In my second year at UNR, I got involved with the on-campus Education Association, where I learned how important it is to advocate for students both inside and outside the classroom. And, I plan to continue union work as an educator. My next step is teaching in Washoe County while I pursue my Master's degree in HDFS. I'm incredibly honored to receive the WREA/Bernie Anderson Scholarship, and I'm grateful for the support as I begin this next chapter! Thank you!

Kasandra Medina-Torres





# Your Money Matters

*An informational Newsletter from PlanMember*

## Choosing your account beneficiary

### *Errors can be costly to your heirs*

Proper designation and regular review of your retirement account beneficiaries are essential to ensuring that what remains in your account(s) after you pass away goes exactly where you wanted. Improper designation or failure to update account beneficiaries can lead to unnecessary delays, taxes, legal battles, or the money simply not going where you intended.

#### The basics

Always designate both primary and contingent (secondary) beneficiaries. Primary beneficiaries are the first in line to receive your account assets. Contingent beneficiaries will receive your assets in the event that your primary beneficiary(ies) die before you do. If you have multiple beneficiaries, then you should also designate the percentage each beneficiary is to receive.



#### Designating your spouse

For 401(k) and other plans subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), a spouse is the automatic sole beneficiary of your account unless your spouse waives his/her right in writing. For IRAs, non-ERISA 403(b) plans, and other retirement plans not subject to ERISA, you may name anyone you wish as your account beneficiary. However, if you live in a community property state, your spouse has a right to 50% of the account assets that were accumulated during the course of your marriage.

#### Designating your children

When designating your children, it's especially important to list them by name and include their Social Security numbers. Keep in mind that if you become divorced, the assets may end up in the hands of the minor child's guardian, which may be your former spouse. In this instance, you may want to name a trustee or custodian rather than the minor child.

#### Keep a list

Use PlanMember's Beneficiary Summary Report® to create a list of accounts and registration information that your heirs will need when you pass. By law, plan administrators, custodians, and insurers cannot disclose the names of your account beneficiaries to anyone except you or your beneficiaries, and are under no obligation to contact your beneficiaries.

#### Reviewing your beneficiaries

You should review your beneficiaries on a periodic basis and make adjustments as needed. Life events such as marriage, divorce, child birth, or the death of a designated beneficiary can all warrant a change.

*Learn more about designating your beneficiaries or to review your choices.*



**Sandra Chapman, CFP®**  
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

Phone: (775) 828-5050

[schapman@planmembersec.com](mailto:schapman@planmembersec.com)  
[planmember.com/schapman](http://planmember.com/schapman)

Chapman Financial Group Inc. and PlanMember Securities Corporation are independently owned and operated.



CHAPMAN  
FINANCIAL  
GROUP INC.

Representative registered with and offers only securities and advisory services through PlanMember Securities Corporation, a registered broker/dealer, investment advisor, and member FINRA/SIPC.

6187 Carpinteria Ave., Carpinteria, CA 93013 | (800) 874-6010

©2024 PlanMember Financial Corporation

YMMChoosingBeneficiary0224

# Being an NEA member means **No-Cost Benefits**

## Your No-Cost Benefits are Waiting for You.

NEA Introductory and Complimentary Life Insurance, as well as the Student Debt Navigator and NEA Mental Health Program are no-cost benefits that are generously provided by the Members Insurance Trust.



### NEA® Introductory Life<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Life insurance protection, exclusively for *NEW* members

### NEA® Complimentary Life Insurance<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Life insurance protection for members

### Student Debt Navigator<sup>2</sup>

A 1-year, paid subscription to the Student Debt Navigator – members who use this tool save an average of \$2,000 annually on their student loans

### NEA Retirement Program

Access to the Kiplinger Monthly Retirement Report – a great resource for educators of all ages

### NEA Travel Program<sup>4</sup>

Register to get \$500 travel dollars plus gain access to exclusive travel discounts

### NEA Mental Health Program<sup>2</sup>

A complimentary subscription to AbleTo, a mental health app developed by experts that ensures the highest quality care

**Learn More**  
[neamb.com/nocost](https://neamb.com/nocost)



<sup>1</sup>NEA Life Insurance coverages are issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark, NJ. 1067017-00001-00.

<sup>2</sup>Provided by the NEA Members Insurance Trust. <sup>3</sup>NEA Retired members are eligible for the \$50,000 Accidental Death & Dismemberment coverage only while acting on Association business in the capacity of an Association Leader. Life members must be actively employed in the field of education. <sup>4</sup>Travel Dollars not applicable to airfare. You will receive \$100 Travel Dollars once you complete the flight.

## **FOLLOW US**

WREA News and information can be found on our Facebook page as well as on our website. Please consider following us on Facebook, Washoe Retired Education Association and on our website:

[www.washoeretirededucation.weebly.com](http://www.washoeretirededucation.weebly.com)

## **WREA Elections 2025**

By Bernice Servilican

### **NEWLY ELECTED WREA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEMBERS**



Stacey Clark



Michele DeLano



Dana Galvin

With a flurry of activities and events taking place this year, more retirees are interested in becoming involved in running for the WREA board. As a result, some new faces and names threw their names in the hat and stepped up to become involved in the board. With that being said, although not all are successful in their bid for a board seat, their involvement is exciting and appreciated as we move forward! This summer we congratulate Michele Delano, Dana Galvin and Stacey Clark as new and returning board members. Your skills and positive involvement in WREA activities can only enhance what WREA does for retired teachers.

A huge thank you to Melissa Sewell for her leadership in directing and assisting the election process these past few years. Her leadership allowed the election



process to run smoothly while making sure those who ran adhered to the system in place that she helped to develop. We look forward to her continued involvement and input in WREA. Thanks also to Lisa Toth from NSEA for coordinating the online voting process to ensure fairness and integrity. Your assistance at the state level is invaluable.

Others involved this year to assist with the elections include Regan Hartzell and Bernice Servilican. WREA is appreciative of their assistance as well.

As we move forward, without the interest of members to serve on the board, fair elections wouldn't be possible. We encourage members to continue to "step up" and stay involved to have an impact on our service to WREA members.

### End of School Year Luncheon

Our annual End of school year luncheon took place at The Cup in Reno Town Mall. More than 30 of us gathered to celebrate the end to another year of school, welcome new retirees to our organization, enjoy a book exchange, and honor our WREA Bernie Anderson Scholarship winner, Kasandra Medina-Torres. The food was scrumptious, the company fun, loud, and enjoyable, and a good time was had by all. Here are a few pictures from that event. You can also find more pictures on our FB page.







## STAY TUNED

The new calendar of events will be out in the next newsletter on or about Aug.22-23. We hope that you enjoy your summer, whatever plans you may have and look forward to seeing you at our events and activities in the future.

