

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Larry Carmichael, LWREA President

If you missed our September 6 meeting, make sure to mark October 4th down on your calendar for attending the next General Meeting. We expect to learn much about helping to detect and report Medicare fraud which is costing us all big bucks. Our meeting in September was very well attended, and we were happy to see so many first time attendees (nine I think). After all the new attendees were introduced, I took the opportunity to introduce our officers and committee chairs to our members; unfortunately I omitted two very important committees, Ouida Talley of the Sunshine Committee, and Donna Heald of the Community Services Committee.

Camille Park told us all about the "Sharing Tree" operation, then June Townsend and Prince Lemons conducted a program to identify and collect input for planning activities of the organization. Jim Croteau gave us many reasons for belonging to FREA and LWREA. He explained that the Health Insurance Subsidy we receive each month is a direct result of lobbying effort by FREA (led by our own Fay Kirkland), and the organization continues to vigilantly watch legislative activity to protect the benefits we receive including our annual Cost of Living Adjustment. But he explained there are numerous other reasons for membership including informative and enjoyable meeting programs, maintaining professional associations, having opportunity to work together with other educators for our common good and for giving service to our community. Linda Edson echoed some of the points made by Jim and challenged us all to get someone we know who isn't a member, but should be, to join in order to give our association a stronger voice in speaking to legislators.

We had lots of good food and beverages, and many commented to me that we were off to a good start for the 2011 - 12 year. I hope to see you October 4th, and I'm looking for someone to bring us a good "Thought for the Day" at this meeting. Call or email; 877-7618 or lkcarmichael@hotmail.com (that's l underscore k).

This Month's Quote:

"Most people are mirrors, reflecting the moods and emotions of the times; few are windows, bringing light to bear on the dark corners where troubles fester. The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows." -Sydney J. Harris

UPCOMING LWREA EVENTS -Tuesday, Oct. 4
LWREA General Meeting Envision Credit Union,
North Monroe 2-4 p.m.

Remember to bring your old jewelry and books to the October 4 meeting to be recycled with the profits going to the scholarship fund.



FRS UPDATE- Linda Edson, LWREA Chairman

During this past legislative session the Florida Retirement System underwent many changes. This included 3% contribution by members of FRS, the reduction of DROP interest rate to 1.5% (down from 6%) and a limit to the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). These changes started on July 1st and affect people who have not entered the DROP program. Thus many of those who were eligible to enter DROP did so prior to June. Last year (2010) around 130 people from Leon County Schools joined the DROP program. This year close to 230 people signed up for DROP, almost double the number, a trend that was noticed throughout the state. Many of these people will end their DROP program sometime during the school year in 2016. It would be interesting to see if these teachers will be allowed to complete the school year or will they be forced to leave the classroom in the middle of the year.



Currently retirees have not been touched by this legislature. However at some of the meetings there were discussions about eliminating COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) and health subsidy for retirees. This would be disastrous for those of us who are on a fixed income. Thanks to

Larry Carmichael and the other legislative chairs, the congress listened to their constituents and did not pass any legislation against retirees. However, our luck may not last forever. We need to be proactive in these matters and let our needs known. There are some things each of us could do.

1. Contact your legislators and let them know that changes to COLA and Health subsidy would put a hardship on retirees.

- Senators: District 3: Charles Dean; dean.charles.web@flsenate.gov
- District 4: Don Gaetz; gaetz.don.web@flsenate.gov
- District 6: Bill Montford; Montford.bill.web@flsenate.gov

2. Convince your educator friends to become members of the local and state retired educator's organizations (LWREA and FREA). The more members we have the louder our voices will be (strength in numbers). The \$40 membership fee is far less than one month's health subsidy.

Remember if you do nothing, you can't complain when things don't work out the way you want. Doing nothing may cost you \$150 a month for life.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is a feeling you get when faced with a challenge. In small doses, stress can be good for you because it makes you more alert and gives you energy. But feeling stressed for a long time can take a major toll on your mental and physical health. Even though it may seem hard to find ways to de-stress with all the things you have to do, it's important to find those ways. Your health depends on it. There are steps you can take to help you handle stress in a positive way and keep it from making you sick. This month I will share two tips with you and finalize the article next month. Enjoy!

DEVELOP A NEW ATTITUDE

• **Become a problem solver.** Make a list of the things that are causing you stress. From your list, figure out which problems you can solve now and which are beyond your control for the moment. From your list of problems that you can solve now, start with the little ones. Learn how to calmly look at a problem, think of possible solutions, and take action to solve the problem. Being able to solve small problems will give you confidence to tackle the big ones. And feeling confident that you can solve problems will go a long way to helping you feel less stressed.

• **Be flexible. Sometimes,** it's not worth the stress to argue. Give in once in awhile or meet people halfway.

• **Get organized.** Think ahead about how you're going to spend your time. Write a to-do list. Figure out what's most important to do and do those things first.

• **Set limits.** When it comes to things like work and family, figure out what you can really do. There are only so many hours in the day. Set limits for yourself and others. Don't be afraid to say NO to requests for your time and energy. Relax.

• **Take deep breaths.** If you're feeling stressed, taking a few deep breaths makes you breathe slower and helps your muscles relax.

• **Stretch.** Stretching can also help relax your muscles and make you feel less tense.

• **Massage tense muscles.** Having someone massage the muscles in the back of your neck and upper back can help you feel less tense.

• **Take time to do something you want to do.** We all have lots of things that we have to do. But often we don't take the time to do the things that we really want to do. It could be listening to music, reading a good book, or going to a movie. Think of this as an order from your doctor, so you won't feel guilty!



 FINANCIAL REPORT	Scholarship Fund	\$295.84
	Checking Account	\$1,202.49
	Certificate of Deposit	\$3,627.05



When it opened in August of 2010, The Sharing T.R.E.E. began as a resource center with reusable items for teachers. The founding partners included LCS, Goodwill, Leon County Govt, and Sustainable Tallahassee. Located in Building 6 on the Lively campus (in the former horticulture building), the T.R.E.E. (Teachers Reusing Everything for Education) has now evolved into a resource center for anyone in the community. Additionally, support for the center has been provided by the City of Tallahassee. Leon County Schools has provided memberships for all teachers to shop at the center each month at no cost. Community members, artists, youth group leaders, and others, can now purchase an annual membership for \$20 which entitles them to \$5.00 off their purchases each month. Shopping days are Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon until 6:00 pm, and the second Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

There are also some special shopping events called Bag-It-Up Days. For \$5.00, ANYONE can bring a shopping tote (like a green bag from the supermarket) and fill it up with items from special bins. Some store items are not included in this sale price. Bag-It-Up Days will be on September 24th and October 15th. Dates for the winter will be announced later this fall.

What are some of the items at the Sharing T.R.E.E.? Just like any donation center, the inventory changes almost weekly. However, usually there are: lots of books (youth, adult, teacher, reference, etc.), office supplies, binders (which are FREE to members), recycled file folders (also FREE), desk trays, yarn, paint, scrapbook supplies, manipulatives, games and puzzles, fabric, buttons, wrapping paper, ribbon, magazines, maps, stickers, crayons, and much more.

Members of L-WREA can support the Sharing T.R.E.E. in several ways. First, donations are always welcome. School supplies, craft items, books, fabric, yarn, etc., are always popular. Donations can be dropped off at the center. Secondly, volunteers are needed to stock the shelves, help with shopping events, and help with other tasks as needed. Thirdly, L-WREA members can share information about the Sharing T.R.E.E. with friends about the center and its purposes. Keeping items from being discarded into the landfill and finding another use by someone else is much

more preferable. In fact, the T.R.E.E. staff will now be weighing purchases to show the evidence of how many pounds of items are NOT being thrown away in our community but are finding other uses within our classrooms and our homes.

If you have any questions about the Sharing T.R.E.E. such as how to donate items or how to volunteer, you can visit the website at www.TheSharingTreeFL.org. Carly Sinnadurai is the Executive Director and she can be reached at 487-7568 or cell: 264-4035. The Sharing T.R.E.E. is also on Facebook. Plan now to make a visit out to the center so that you, too, can Reuse, Recycle and Re-purpose by donating and purchasing items from this wonderful center!

OCTOBER MEETING TO HIGHLIGHT SENIOR MEDICARE FRAUD PROJECT -Jim Croteau

Recent news has highlighted rampant health care fraud in Florida. The Medicare Strike Force arrested 24 people in Miami alone. They were charged with participating in various fraud schemes leading to over \$100 million in false claims. To help combat this problem, grassroots education and outreach is required. The Florida SMP Program is a statewide volunteer program designed to educate beneficiaries and caregivers on how to protect their Medicare information, detect fraudulent activities on the Medicare Summary Notices, and to report fraud. At the October 4th meeting, we will get an update on the most recent frauds and scams. We will learn how to together we can help protect this most important benefit for seniors and reduce our risk for increased costs and cuts in services due to false claims and fraud.

SUNSHINE NOTES Margie Cash

Remember these members in your thoughts and prayers: Margie Cash had a stint put in and is recovering at home. Nanci Hamilton-Hoffman, June Townsend and Gladys Caswell are participating in rehab after their recent surgery. They are all recovering well. All members are encouraged to send information regarding members in need of "sunshine" to our new Sunshine Chairman, Ouida Talley at otalley@comcast.net.



LEON WAKULLA RETIRED
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

1828 Wagon Wheel Cir W.
Tallahassee, FL 32317

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

HAPPY BIRTHDAY LWREA MEMBERS!

Nanci Hamilton-Hoffman



- LaDonna Hutchinson 10/1
- Gloria Simmons 10/2
- Ray M Tipton 10/3
- Olivia Ann Carter 10/5
- Fredric Zerlin 10/6
- Hazel C. Hayes 10/8
- Rep. Curtis Richardson 10/8
- Carolyn P. Jones 10/10
- Charlotte D. Griffin 10/11
- Doris Davis 10/12
- Willie Mae Miles 10/15
- Queen Webster 10/16
- Devurn Glenn 10/17
- Kathleen Funderburk 10/17
- Michael Blair 10/19
- Patricia Stallworth 10/23
- Blanche White 10/23
- Virginia Plott 10/24
- Linda Rossow 10/24
- Marilyn Kennedy 10/28

SEPTEMBER MEETING

LWREA is pleased to announce we have seventeen new members, as of the first meeting in September. When you see them with their blue ribboned name badges at meetings, be sure to introduce yourself and give them a hearty welcome. Members are what will keep us moving, with a strong voice to the Florida legislature. Thank you to all the members who invited guests and brought new members to the September meeting. The member who won the beautiful potted dish garden, generously donated by Tallahassee Nurseries, was Linda Edson, who brought five guests to the meeting. Be sure to bring a guest to the October meeting, so you will have a chance to win also.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The deadline for November Newsletter articles and/or information is **October 8th**. Please contribute any information, articles, and upcoming events of interest to our members and forward to Kathy Carmichael at Kathycarmichael@live.com
THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

Welcome New Members !!!

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| • Betty Blair | • Deborah Lindsey |
| • Michael Blair | • Jerri Patterson |
| • Robin Brinkmeyer | • Virginia Plott |
| • Maxine Cohen | • Emma Richardson |
| • Liz Farmer | • Betty Rinehart |
| • Evelyn Gentry | • Sandra Sumrall |
| • Beth Hickey | • Blanche White |
| • Marilyn Kennedy | • Geraldine Williams |
| • Connie Koenig | |

REFRESHMENTS FOR OCTOBER 4TH meeting will be provided by members whose last names begin with A-C. You should bring refreshments no later than 1:45 p.m. - Hospitality Chairman Jerry Gilmore, 575-2410.