

# Capitol Chronicle

February 2024

Oklahoma County Retired Educators Association

Volume 23-24

## February 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting

The Oklahoma County Retired Educators will meet Saturday, February 17, 2024, at the Maps 3 Health & Wellness Center, 11501 N. Rockwell. Registration and coffee at 9:30am. The program begins at 10:00am.



**Shirley Nero**, Board Member of the Oklahoma Historical Society, will be our guest speaker. (See the article on page 2 for more details.)

See you there!



## What Does That Mean?

If you've looked at the word above your name on the mailing address on the front of the newsletter, you may wonder what it's all about.

**Comp** means you receive a complimentary copy of the **Capitol Chronicle** as a lawmaker or an employee of OREA.

**Due** means it is time to pay your \$15.00 OCREA dues for the 2023-2024 year.

**Life** members paid a large amount several years ago and don't need to pay dues. If you are a Life member and want the yearbook mailed to you, a \$3.00 payment will take care of it.

**NewR** means you retired from an Oklahoma County school district in 2022-2023.

**Paid** means you are a step ahead and have already paid your OCREA dues for the 2023-2024 year. Thank you!

Please contact me if you have questions, concerns or suggestions.

**Diane Laase**

dlaase@hotmail.com  
405-692-0456 | 405-206-0456



## OCREA News!

- ◆ OCREA member **Betty Jeane Hipp** was an elementary teacher who retired from the Mid-Del district. She taught for many years in the lower grades and counted her greatest success in working with children who lacked self-esteem. Several years ago she contributed to the OCREA scholarship fund and one of our scholarships is named in her honor. Jeane passed away at the age of 92 on August 3, 2022. OCREA was named as a beneficiary in her trust. We have received a substantial trust distribution and we will be providing more information about it in the future.
- ◆ The OCREA November 2023 meeting was held on Veterans Day so our theme was Red, White and Blue. **Jo Ann Johnson**, President of the Putnam City Retirees Travel Club was our guest speaker. She shared a list of all the trips that have been scheduled for 2024. Contact her at [wpjjaj@aol.com](mailto:wpjjaj@aol.com) for more information. We also heard from **Annette Fisher**, **Bill White**, **Jesse Yap** and **Joe Wynn**. It was a great meeting!



## Oklahoma Historical Society

The mission of the Oklahoma Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma and its people.

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) was founded on May 27, 1893, by members of the Territorial Press Association. In 1918 the OHS was relocated to the State Capitol, and in 1930 moved to the Wiley Post building. The Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City opened in 2005. Over the years, the OHS has developed numerous collections, programs, research centers, museums, historic homes, and military sites across the state.

The OHS is an agency of the State of Oklahoma and a private membership organization governed by a Board of Directors.



Oklahoma Historical Society

[www.okhistory.org](http://www.okhistory.org)

# Shirley Ann Nero



**Shirley Ann Ballard Nero** is a retired secondary social studies teacher who taught for 27 years. She attended East Central University, Northeastern State University, and Oklahoma State University, earning a bachelor of arts in home economics with minors in sociology and psychology, as well as a master of arts in history.

In 1976 Nero began her teaching career at Sapulpa Junior High, where she taught geography and Oklahoma history. While there, she taught GED classes and spent a few semesters at Tulsa Community College teaching American history. In the course of her career, she was named Sapulpa Junior High Teacher of the Year and Sapulpa Public Schools District Teacher of the Year. She also was named the Oklahoma Social Studies Teacher of the Year and the Oklahoma Heritage Teacher of the Year for Indian Territory. Nero spent her last four years in education at Porum High School teaching social studies before retiring in 2004.

During his term, Governor Brad Henry appointed Nero to serve on the OHS Board of Directors, where she served until 2020. She was reappointed by Governor Kevin Stitt in 2022. As an OHS Board member, Nero has served on several committees, chaired the OHS Black Heritage Committee, served as the OHS Board of Directors treasurer, and was vice president for a short term. Nero also sits on the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Committee, where she serves as chair.

Nero was born in Clearview, one of Oklahoma's historically All-Black towns, where she attended school until integration. She and her husband, Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr., reside in her hometown on their DNS Ranch.

### From the Executive Secretary

**THANK YOU** to everyone who has paid your dues for 2023-2024. A few reminders:

Please remember to keep track of your Volunteer Hours. A form is included with this newsletter. Bring it to our February meeting or send it to Nancy Bailey, [baileynancy01@gmail.com](mailto:baileynancy01@gmail.com).

We will be awarding scholarships at the April 20th meeting. Scholarship donations are always appreciated.

Please contact me with questions about dues or changes of address, phone number or email address.

—Diane Laase  
[dlaase@hotmail.com](mailto:dlaase@hotmail.com)  
 405-692-0456  
 405-206-0456

♥ HAPPY  
*Valentine's*  
 DAY ♥



### Memorial Minute

Listed below are those members who have passed away since our last meeting:

Charlotte M Chatman

## Oklahoma County Retired Educators Association Saturday, February 17, 2024

Health and Wellness Center  
 11501 N. Rockwell Ave., Oklahoma City

- 9:30 am ..... *Registration and Coffee*
- Greeters** ..... *Annette Fisher & Jim Roblyer*
- 10:00 am ..... *Call to Order*
- Presiding** ..... *Kenya Kraft & Joe Wynn, Co-Presidents*
- Devotional** ..... *Willa Olden*
- Pledge of Allegiance** ..... *Kathryn Enloe*
- Welcome New Members and Guests**
- Memorial Minute** ..... *Kenya Kraft*
- Treasurer's Report** ..... *Diane Laase*
- Program**

**Shirley Nero, Board Member**  
 Oklahoma Historical Society  
[www.okhistory.org](http://www.okhistory.org)

- Business**
- Legislative Update
- Other

### Announcements & Adjournment



## Need to Pay Your Dues?

Fill out the form on the right → and mail it with your check to:

OCREA  
10801 W Country Dr  
Oklahoma City, OK 73170

Be sure and check your address label...you may have already PAID!

## OCREA Unit Meetings

**2023-2024 OCREA Meetings**  
are scheduled for

Saturday, February 17, 2024  
Saturday, April 20, 2024



**Maps 3 Health & Wellness Center**  
11501 N Rockwell, Oklahoma City

9:30am Registration & Coffee  
10:00am Meeting begins



## Important Web Sites

Legislative Web Site:

[www.oklegislature.gov](http://www.oklegislature.gov)

OREA Web Site:

[www.orea.org](http://www.orea.org)

Like us on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/okctyrea](https://www.facebook.com/okctyrea)

**Strength in Unity**  
OCREA / Capitol District



## OKLAHOMA COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS (OCREA)

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM 2023-2024

(MAIL: OCREA, 10801 W Country Dr., Oklahoma City, OK 73170)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to receive an emailed *Capitol Chronicle* newsletter.

OCREA DUES \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

OCREA DUES (SPOUSE) \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLARSHIP DONATION \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAGE FOR YEARBOOK \$ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

OREA (STATE) DUES \$42 \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to **OCREA.**

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_



## Congratulations!



OCREA member **Linda Manaugh** has been awarded the **OSU 2024 College of Education and Human Sciences Outstanding Alumni Award**. This award is presented to alumni who seek opportunities

to grow in their talents and purposefully serve others. Their quest for excellence is shown through their accomplishments and service to the community.

Linda has spent her career educating Oklahomans of all ages, from children in the classroom to professionals across the state about early childhood. She is passionate about the importance of the first three years of life and how, in community and collaboration, it's everyone's responsibility to provide our youngest generation with a solid foundation for life.

Linda is currently the Chief Programs Officer for the Potts Family Foundation.

**CONGRATULATIONS, LINDA!!**



## Upcoming Events



**Monday, March 25, 2024**

**10:00am**

**Admission: \$10.00**

Join OCREA members at the First Americans Museum.

We plan to tour the museum and have lunch. Please join us!

More info coming to the OCREA Facebook page.



SAVE THE DATE  
**2024 OREA CONVENTION**

OCTOBER 7 & 8

HILTON GARDEN INN  
2833 Conference Dr. Edmond, OK

OCREA  
 10801 W Country Dr.  
 Oklahoma City, OK 73170



PRSR STD  
 US POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 Oklahoma City, OK  
 PERMIT NO. 1512

Join us at the  
 next meeting!  
 Saturday, February 17

**Upcoming Meetings**

February 17, 2024  
 April 20, 2024

All meetings are held at the  
 Maps 3 Health & Wellness Center  
 11501 N. Rockwell  
 Oklahoma City

**Executive Committee**

Co-Presidents  
 .....Joe Wynn & Kenya Kraft  
 Vice President .....Jim Roblyer  
 Secretary ..... Danna Senkowski  
 Past President ..... Weldon Davis  
 District Director .....Joe Wynn  
 Executive Secretary/Newsletter  
 ..... Diane Laase

**OREA Member Benefits**

[www.orea.org/benefits](http://www.orea.org/benefits)

## OREA Legislative Goals 2024

- ◆ **BENEFIT ADJUSTMENT**  
 ⇒ Adjust benefits to offset inflation
- ◆ **DEFINED BENEFIT**  
 ⇒ Protect the defined benefit plan for current and future retirees
- ◆ **FULLY FUNDING TRS**  
 ⇒ Ensure funding by opposing reductions of dedicated funds to the system
- ◆ **HEALTH INSURANCE**  
 ⇒ Protect and increase the insurance benefit  
 ⇒ Protect and increase the death benefit
- ◆ **BOARD INDEPENDENCE**  
 ⇒ Oppose consolidation with other systems  
 ⇒ Allow voting authority to TRS association representative
- ◆ **EDUCATION FUNDING**  
 ⇒ Safeguard funding for all PUBLIC education levels



The Oklahoma Legislature convenes for the second session of the 59th Legislature on Monday, February 5, 2024.



This event is an opportunity to meet your lawmakers and share your views on important legislation.



Monday, March 11, 2024