

Your All Retirees Newsletter



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

October 2025

October is here and we can surely say Fall has arrived. I have truly enjoyed the wonderful Fall weather with the coolness and rain that we have had recently. We always need rain!

Karen and I had a wonderful time at the State NMAER Conference in Santa Fe. I even got to spend a little time walking at the Plaza. The attendees were friendly and it was neat to meet and interact with retired educators from all over New Mexico. One person I met lived and worked in Shiprock but now lives elsewhere. I invited her to come visit and attend one of our meetings and she explained she might because she wanted to visit with a very good friend in Aztec. Being from Aztec, I inquired “Who?” and discovered the friend was my across the street neighbor!! Small world!

I also enjoy attending our state conferences because I get to learn more about our wonderful organization and how much it actually does to help educational retirees. I am hoping this year to bring more of what we do to our meetings to educate all of us on the importance of being a member and getting involved. I invited the new state president to visit and Karen and I are working with the rep from AMBA to have her share with us all the wonderful benefits that our membership includes.

Another highlight of my trip was a visit to the Coronado Historic Site in Bernallillo on the way home. I have driven by that sign countless times and finally decided to stop. It was well worth my time and I plan to take my husband some time. If you haven’t been there, you, too, should make the stop and visit New Mexico’s first State Monument.

Looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

Debbie Klein,
SJAER President





SJAER -- we are a local organization of retired educational employees. We've worked in all departments and positions in San Juan County schools. We have fun, and we also contribute to the welfare of the community. Join us today!

SJAER BOARD

PRESIDENT

Debbie Klein

VICE PRESIDENT

Marilyn Montoya

PAST PRESIDENT

Jim Conyers

TREASURER

Susan Kannard

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Kathy Martin

SECRETARY

Diane Cook

MEMBERSHIP

Phyllis Meier

PROGRAMS

Karen Morrison

Marilyn Montoya

PUBLICITY: NEWSLETTER

Debbie Klein & Trish Murphy

PUBLICITY: WEBSITE

Chuck Culpepper

SUNSHINE

Nancy Tyson

SCHOLARSHIP

Marilyn Montoya

SJRCM REPRESENTATIVES

Karen Morrison

Jim Conyers



2025-2026 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Social Security _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

County _____

Zip Code _____

Phone # _____

E-Mail Address _____

Birthday _____

Would you like to receive a reminder call before each meeting? NO YES

____ I hereby authorize the Educational Retirement Board to deduct NMAER **state** dues from my retirement check in the amount of \$2.50 a month. I understand this authorization makes me a continuing member of the association and can be canceled only by a written notice from me.

____ Already on **automatic state** dues.

____ \$30.00 enclosed for annual **state** dues.

____ \$10.00 enclosed for annual **local** dues.

____ \$5.00 non-retired member dues

Signature of Retiree

Date: _____

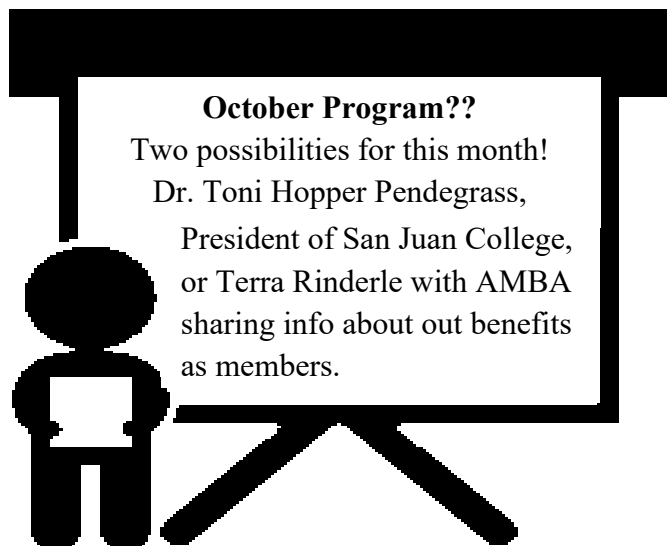
Make checks payable to SJAER.

Mail to: SJAER Membership Chair, Phyllis Meier, 3305 N. Cochiti, Farmington, NM 87401 i

(Dues are Not tax deductible)

Sponsored by Phyllis Meier

Unit Sponsored by San Juan AER



October Program??

Two possibilities for this month!

Dr. Toni Hopper Pendegrass,

President of San Juan College,
or Terra Rinderle with AMBA
sharing info about out benefits
as members.

2025/2026 Membership Report			
	AUTO	NMAER	SJAER
SEPTEMBER	11	7	18
OCTOBER	0	3	3
NOVEMBER			
DECEMBER			
JANUARY			
FEBRUARY			
MARCH			
APRIL			
MAY			
TOTAL	11	10	21

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Reminder

Our State organization encourages volunteerism among its members, realizing that volunteering has multiple benefits for both the retiree and the recipient. SJAER has embraced this project, and has a strong history of helping our neighbors. We were recently recognized at the State conventions as being in the top 9 units of the State. Keep up the good work, friends! We have already volunteered more hours this month than the same month last year. Yay!

PS: If you are unable to attend monthly meetings, you can report your volunteer hours at: trishshsh@live.com

2025-2026 Volunteer Year	Volunteer Hours
September	320
October	
November	
December	
January, 2026	
February	
March	
April	
May	
Summer, and some annual reports	
Total for 2025-26	320

2025 - 2026 Meeting Dates

General Membership meetings are held at 11:30am on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at No Worries Sports Bar and Grill. Please mark your calendars.
October 14, 2025
November 11, 2025
December 9, 2025
January 14, 2026
February 10, 2026
March 10, 2026
April 14, 2026
May 12, 2026 - Picnic

Treasurer's Report

Our treasurer reports a balance of \$2343.73 in our account and \$666.50 in our scholarship fund. Funds from the monthly drawing go into the scholarship fund. There are no outstanding bills at this time.



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS	
Crowley, Jana	10/7
Gallegos, Dolores	10/14
Farley, Joann Marie	10/20
Bell, Sandy	10/31



SJ Association of Educational Retirees Board Meeting Agenda
10:30 A.M., September 9, 2025 No Worries Sports Bar & Grill

- I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Marilyn Montoya, SJAER vice president. Board members present included: Trish Murphy, Marilyn Montoya, Susan Kannard, Kathy Martin, Nancy Tyson, Diane Cook, Karen Morrison, James Conner, Phyllis Meier, Debbie Klein.
- II. Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve Agenda was passed unanimously.
- III. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve Minutes was passed unanimously.
- IV. Treasurer's Report: (see Yarn) Susan and Kathy presented the proposed 2025-2026 budget with only a minor change in speakers' line item, i.e., no request for additional funds. Motion to approve Treasurer's Report was passed unanimously. A copy of the budget is filed with the minutes.
- V. Unfinished Business (Debbie arrived and directed meeting at this point.)
- A. 501 (c)(3) Process: Debbie will request that Tom Stanford complete the process. Debbie will follow up on the issue of less than \$5000 in our account.
- B. Constitution/Bylaws: Debbie
1. Constitution, Article II: Membership changed to read as follows: "A person currently employed by an educational institution may join SJAER upon payment of Associate Member dues and shall have all the benefits of membership, with the exception of voting, holding elective office, or serving as delegate."
 2. Constitution, Article IV: Rules and Regulations changed to read as follows: "The abridged Robert's Rules of Order shall be used to conduct all meetings."
 3. Constitution: A motion to approve the draft (with edits) of the Constitution for adoption by membership was made by Marilyn Montoya, Karen Morrison seconded, motion passed.
 4. Bylaws: Article II - Membership Article 2.1: Board discussed the subject of SJAER membership to include employees of private schools. Debbie will check with State officials to determine if Private school employees are eligible.
 5. Bylaws: Article 2.4: To read as follows: "Annual dues pertain to the meeting year from September 1 to August 31 of the following year."
 6. Bylaws: Article III - Meetings: Strike black type in 3.1 and use only "red type" for sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4.
 7. Bylaws: Article V - Terms of Elected Officers: Add: "there shall be no term limits"
 8. Bylaws: Article VI - Executive Officers: 6.7: Add "immediate past president assistant treasurer."
 9. Bylaws: Article VII - Standing Committees and Their Duties 7.5 Duties of Scholarship Committee: To read as follows "and will act with the selection committee to determine recipients."
 10. Karen noted that the Bylaws were revised in 2021 by a committee composed of Rebecca Hunter, Connie Alley and Karen.
 11. A motion to approve the new draft of Bylaws with edits for adoption by membership was made by Marilyn Montoya, seconded by Susan Kannard, motion passed unanimously.
- C. Recruiting: Debbie (see Yarn Letter from President)
- D. Website:
1. The Board discussed need to update and improve current SJAER website.
 2. Debbie will contact Chuck Culpepper, current webmaster, and obtain access to website.
 3. Debbie friend is willing to build a website on Word Press at an approximate cost of \$500.00.
 4. Karen suggested area high schools compete to design a SJAER website, and she offered to contact local school districts to discuss the project.
- VI. New Business
- A. Business Card/Invitation: Karen presented a finished card/invitation complete with envelope that will be used by SJAER members to recruit new members. Cost was 50 cards for \$67.00, paid by Karen. Motion to reimburse Karen was made by Debbie, seconded by Trish, motion passed unanimously; however, Karen graciously offered the cards as a contribution to SJAER. Motion rescinded. Thank you Karen.
- B. Organization File Box: Debbie demonstrated a file box that could be used to store SJAER documentation/paperwork, which can then be easily passed on to succeeding presidents. Debbie will invest in a box for this purpose.
- C. 501(c)(3) Application: Debbie discussed this item in V.
- D. Other Items from the Floor: none
- VII. Reports:
- A. President's Report: Debbie Klein (see Yarn)



- B. Treasurer's Report: Susan Kannard and Kathy Martin, assistant treasurer (see above and Yarn)
- C. Membership: Phyllis Meier, no report
- D. Sunshine: Nancy Tyson, no report
- E. Programs: Marilyn Montoya and Karen Morrison: This year, SJAER members will hear speakers from a variety of local organizations and agencies such as Chamber of Commerce, San Juan College, Animal League, local elected officials, etc.
- F. Webmaster: Chuck Culpepper, absent
- G. YARN: Debbie Klein, no report
- H. Hospital Representative: Karen Morrison/Jim Conyers (see Yarn)
- I. In Memoriam/Volunteer Hours: Trish Murphy (see Yarn)
- J. Scholarship: Marilyn Montoya, along with Jim and Karen, will form a committee to research and identify recipients for upcoming scholarships.
- VIII. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn at 11:26 a.m. was made by Marilyn, Phyllis seconded, motion passed unanimously.
- Respectfully Submitted, Diane S. Cook, secretary

Member Spotlights



Susan Kannard
Treasurer

Can we trust her with our money? Let her write checks on our bank account? We had better, because Susan Kannard is our SJAER Treasurer!

Born in Denver on July 17, Susan traveled to Durango for college. Earning a BA Degree in Education at Ft Lewis College. She later achieved a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Canyon University.

Susan was a true K-12 educator. She taught 3rd Grade and Title I Reading at Animas Elementary and was the Title I Reading Specialist at Hermosa Middle School. Then she spent time at Rocinante High School serving as the Title I Reading Specialist and Assistant Principal.

Hey Susan...your check is in the mail!



Debbie Klein
Unit President

Debbie is a Texan born July 29 in Harlingen. She attended U of Texas and received a BA Physical Education and Biology. Her time at Adams State University allowed her to gain a Master's Degree in Special Education.

She taught Special Ed at McCoy Elementary in Aztec, then at Aztec High School where she also served as became a Sped. Department Chair and IEP Coordinator

Debbie loves to travel anywhere and everywhere and has been to all 50 states. She has traveled overseas with Caliente Choir and added a trip to Egypt, too. Her favorite local travel destinations are Ouray and the San Juan Mountains.

Her hobbies include volunteering and serving on the Boards of SJAER, Aztec Chamber of Commerce, Aztec Museum Association and Leadership San Juan Alumni Association. Debbie currently serves as this year's SJAER President.

Tales of a Teacher - anecdotes by Debbie Klein

I remember one time when...

I was teaching a visually impaired student in kindergarten. Teaching her letters and numbers required letter shapes and manipulatives and guides for writing the alphabet and numerals. A more challenging activity was teaching her the colors. Being nearly blind, her sense of smell was quite acute, so I decided to use the scented markers or "Smelly Markers" as we called them. To introduce a color, I would provide the authentic item such as an orange, or mint, etc. for her to smell and associate with the color. Success! She got really good at identifying each marker color leaving a rainbow-colored mustache on her upper lip!



Help Debbie create the YARN!

Do you have a touching, amusing, unforgettable story of your teaching days? Want to share them with us? Just deliver your anecdote to Debbie and she will put it in the YARN for all of us to enjoy! You can write it and give it to her at a meeting, you can email it to her at aztecnana@gmail.com, or you can call her up and tell her your story at 505-330-4631. I'm sure each one of you have at least one story you can share.



In Memoriam October 2025



Ethel Ann Palmer. 12/9/42 – 8/31/25. Kirtland. Worked at Central Consolidated Schools: taught elementary and middle school; Principal of Ruth N. Bond; Director of Elementary Education 1997-99; Assistant Superintendent 1999-2003. SJAER member.

Imogene Calder. 3/18/28 – 9/6/25. Farmington. Worked at Tinker Air Force Base during WWII, co-owned Calder Welding with husband, and then drove a school bus.

Elma Caroline Palmer. 10/9/42 – 9/9/25. Bloomfield. Drove a school bus for the Ignacio School District for 11 years.

Kimberly Renee Brown. 4/24/64 – 9/12/25. Aztec. Controller of Finance and Assistant Superintendent of Finance at Gallup-McKinley Schools; Chief Financial Officer of Gallup Middle College High School.

John George “Jack” Loehr. 9/20/41 – 9/27/25. Farmington. Co-founded Independent Learning School in California; First Superintendent of Education at Alamo Navajo School; Trustee of United World College of the American West; Regent of NMHU; served on NM Commission of Higher Education and the State Finance Board.

Nelda Elena Prado. 10/2/48 – 9/18/25. Farmington. Teacher's aide at Valley of the Sun for the Handicapped school in Phoenix.

Maria Cecilia Campbell. 4/10/43 – 9/30/25. Bloomfield. Teaching assistant at Bloomfield's Central Primary School for 30 years. SJAER member.

Important request from NMAER, our State Office

Outstanding Member, Volunteer Hours, and Electronic Survey

Outstanding Member Nominees: When considering the low number of responses in the last few years the first question is **(A)** do we want to continue recognizing an outstanding nominee from each local unit?

If we are going to continue with the presentations **(B)** do we produce a booklet that includes a picture and short biography or do we only use the NMAER Newsletter to present nominees' pictures and biographies?

(Note: The production of the Unit Member of the Year booklet is getting quite costly to print)

Volunteer Hours: The purpose of collecting service hours is to show the Governor that retired educators are still active, engaged in service and deserve our pensions. Each year, the number of hours reported is converted into the dollars that would be spent to provide those hours of service and presented to the Governor in a large ceremonial check. Until about five years ago there were two categories of service and presently there is only one category. There have been many questions concerning how and what hours should be counted. **(A)** Should we continue with this activity? **(B)** If it is to continue, do we change the restrictions on what hours are eligible to count as volunteer hours? Please include any suggestions as to what volunteer hours should be allowable especially the care of loved ones.

Membership Renewal and Newsletter: With the rising costs of printing and postage, the state office is considering offering membership renewals and the State Newsletter sent to members electronically. What are your thoughts or preferences?

Please let us know by completing the survey at a meeting or emailing Debbie at aztecnana@gmail.com

**San Juan Association of Educational Retirees General Meeting
September 9, 2025, 11:30 a.m., No Worries Sports Bar and Grill**

- I. Call to Order: Debbie Klein called meeting to order at 11:38 a.m.. Seventeen people signed the sign-in sheet. Sandy Allred led pledges. Marilyn Montoya led in prayer.
- II. Welcome: Debbie welcomed members and visitors.
- III. Constitution and Bylaws: Debbie discussed the revised Constitution and Bylaws which will be submitted for membership approval in the near future.
- IV. Unit Member of Year: Two SJAER members were recognized as Unit Member of the year: Trish Murphy for year 2021 (belated recognition due to Covid year); Karen Morrison for current year 2025.
- V. Service Hours: Debbie discussed the options that constitute countable service hours for members, such as caregiving, meeting preparation, attendance at other meetings, church activities, tutoring, etc. All members are encouraged to submit hours of service to Trish Murphy.
- VI. Tibbetts All Ability Park: Marilyn Montoya gave an update on construction of the All Ability Park located at the site of old Tibbetts School on Apache Street. Phase 1 is nearing completion, perhaps October 1. In order to raise funds for Phase 2 and 3, Tibbetts All Ability Park Foundation is planning a virtual “walkathon” fundraiser, scheduled for October, in which participants will pay a fee and have all month to complete the “walk”. This type of fundraiser will allow people living outside of Farmington to contribute and support the All Ability Park.
- VII. Membership: Phyllis Meier requested that membership dues be paid now for the upcoming year. She is also in the process of compiling a Membership Directory. If any member does not want to be in the directory, please let her know.
- VIII. Marilyn announced that a former SJAER member, Kit Doerfoert, now living in Oklahoma, is ill and will appreciate cards and letters from friends. Please contact Marilyn for more information. I
- X. Recruitment: Karen Morrison discussed an opportunity for SJAER to recruit new members by distributing “invitation cards” to friends and acquaintances. The cards which include envelopes, give detailed information about SJAER including meeting place, date, time. Each member is encouraged to share at least two cards with prospective retirees.
- XI. Speaker: Jamie Church, Chamber of Commerce President and CEO. Introduced by Karen, Ms. Church, who assumed her position in January 2019, discussed some of the CoC changes necessitated by “before Covid/after Covid”, including developing a new tagline, Commerce to Community. Citing the importance of small, local businesses to the well being of a community, Ms. Church discussed various community activities sponsored by the CoC, including a July luncheon for new teachers in the Farmington Municipal Schools, recognizing crossing guards at Apache Elementary School, sponsoring a monthly morning coffee for new residents at various local businesses, and promoting Red Coats, local citizens who act as ambassadors for CoC and Farmington community. Other upcoming events include a “Poker Run Business After Hours” for downtown chamber members and a Women’s Summit (theme- Navigating Leadership with Purpose and Power) November 6, Civic Center. Ms. Church offered to place the new SJAER recruitment card in the chamber newsletter, which contains a list of community events. During the question/ answer period, she indicated chamber members are mostly locally-owned businesses. A new CoC program has been established to support young entrepreneur membership (25 years or younger) by offering half price dues with all the benefits of full membership.
- XI. Adjournment: Debbie adjourned meeting at 12:33 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted Diane S. Cook, secretary

KAREN’S NEW MEXICO AER CONFERENCE REPORT

In September, I had the opportunity to represent SJAER with Debbie Klein at the State Conference in Santa Fe. I was welcomed as a voting Delegate with a bag of goodies and smiles from the registrars...one of whom was Mary Helen Kelty, the college roommate of our own Trish Murphy! The location was the Marriott Courtyard and the meeting room was adequate although pretty cold as the weather had turned to near winter but the AC still blasted. We were welcomed by NMAER Executive Director Russell Goff, and Joelyn Pafford of Raton. The Certification of Delegates recorded 50+ delegates representing 14 Units. The results of the election of officers for 2025-26: Joelyn Pafford, President who told a school related joke at every opportunity; Ray Vincent, Vice President; Cheri Dotson, 2nd VP; Allen Templeton, 3rd VP. I think the number of VPs is to create a succession to the office of president. Good idea... Delegates were welcomed by Allen Weber, Santa Fe Mayor; Dr Christine Griffin, Santa Fe Schools Superintendent; Richard Grainger, Golden Apple Foundation; and others. Presentations included those about retirement benefits, AARP, AMBA (Association of Member Benefit Advisors) and Legislation priorities for the coming year. I was particularly impressed by Dr Griffin who started her career as a classroom teacher and made some impressive remarks. She reminded us as retirees that “You are the story tellers, wisdom holders and truth seekers. Current educators stand on your shoulders. Your influence has not retired! You still matter and your voices are still needed. We are all champions for children, bus

drivers, cafeteria ladies, counselors, custodians, classroom aides, teachers.” She was more impressive to me than the keynote speakers who spoke as though we were still active in the classroom...what the heck?!?

Some random things I learned: 6000 retirees get the NMAER newsletter; when the mine closed in Raton, the population fell from 12,000 to 4,000; the words to the Salute to the NM Flag...well maybe I read them while everyone else recited them; the names of educators who died in the past year took three and a half pages of double columns; Albuquerque will host the 2026 Conference; Trader Joe’s has tons of my favorite things; there are so many nice retirees from around the State I think I ate a meal with most of them!

Closing with one of Joelyn’s funniest remarks...”When I realized that a regular physical workout was a total failure for me, I made a change. No more calling the bathroom the “John.” Now I call it the “Jim!” LO

EVENTS

Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Cost
Oct. 18	Saturday	9 pm – 3 pm	B.P.O. DOES annual Fall Festival Craft Fair	Elks Lodge	\$2
Oct. 18	Saturday	3 pm – 7 pm	Basin Good Neighbor Foundation - evening of live music, local eats, and a silent auction supporting compassionate hospice care.	Farmington Museum	\$20
Oct. 19	Sunday	4pm - 5pm	Showcase on Dustin – A Brief History of Ragtime by Hoyle Osborne – Benefits Tres Rios Habitat for Humanity	First Presbyterian Church	\$10
Oct. 21	Tuesday	6:00pm – 7:00pm	Tuesday Club Mysteries meeting to discuss their most recent book!	Farmington Library	Free
Oct. 22	Wednesday	6pm – 8pm	San Juan Historical Society presents “Journey of Turquoise” talk and exhibit with Venaya J. Yazzie	Farmington Civic Center	Free
10/23-10/30 10/24-10/31 10/25-11/1 10/26	Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	7:30pm 7:30pm 2pm & 7:30p 2:00pm	The Addams Family, a delightfully dark musical comedy, is fun for the whole family! Four Corners Musical Theatre Company	Farmington Civic Center	\$16 to \$28
Oct 25	Saturday	8 - 10:30am	Breakfast with the Sheriff	Outback	\$10
Oct. 28	Tuesday	6:00pm – 7:00pm	Concert -Tomás Lozano, singer, musician composer, scholar, and folklorist from Barcelona singing Spain’s ballads.	Farmington Library	Free
Oct. 29	Wednesday	6:00pm – 7:00pm	Tomás Lozano delivers an educational talk about the hurdy-gurdy, a musical instrument dating back to the Middle Ages.	Farmington Library	Free
Oct. 29	Wednesday	7:00pm – 9:00pm	Frankenstein – A living comic book where modern monsters—climate change, AI, and technology—come to life	Total Theatre	\$5 to \$20
Oct 29	Wednesday	7:30 – 9:00pm	Walking with Ghosts: An Evening of True Crime Hauntings with Amy Bruni	Total Theatre	\$16 to \$20
Oct. 31	Friday	9:00am – 5:00pm	Monster mash classic monster films on the big screen! Bela Lugosi as Dracula, Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's Monster, and more	Farmington Civic Center	\$16 - \$28
Nov 1	Saturday	6:00pm – 8:30pm	Path's 15th Annual Chocolate Affair, the Dia De Los Muertos Gala	Farmington Elks Lodge	\$75
Nov. 5	Wednesday	6:00pm – 8:00pm	San Juan College Native American Center invites the community to its first-ever Native-inspired Community Fashion Show	Henderson Fine Arts Center	Free
Nov 20	Thursday	7:00pm	Caliente Choir présente a Renaissance Royal Feast – Dinner and a fabulous show Tickets must be purchased by Nov. 6	Farmington Elks Lodge	\$50

For more summer activities and events go to <https://farmingtonnm.org/events>