



# Your All Retirees Newsletter



## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

December 2025

Tis the season . . . ! For me Thanksgiving and Christmas kinda run together as we often listen to Christmas Carols on Thanksgiving Day and you know the stores have Christmas out during Halloween! My favorite Christmas song is “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year” by Andy Williams. I like other versions, too, but Andy’s is my favorite. It just fits the season so well! Most of you may not know this, but I was the founder of Fantasy of Lights in Aztec and ran it for 10 years. Each year we created a CD for our radio station to recognize our sponsors and provide Christmas music as visitors toured the show. You can guess what the first song was that opened the show every night!

I ventured out on Black Friday, but not to Christmas shop. I was shopping for new glasses as I figured there would not be many people at the optical on Black Friday. Found some I liked but still haven’t ordered any.

We do most of our Christmas shopping online, picking items from lists provided by our kids and grandkids. It’s okay, I guess, because everyone gets what they want, but I miss the shopping looking for that special gift and the surprises when opening the gifts. Luckily, nearly everyone in our family gets at least one little surprise gift.

Whatever your likes and traditions are this holiday season, I wish the very best for you and your family. If you travel, be safe and if you stay home, stay warm!  
Looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

Debbie Klein,  
SJAER President





SJAER always has fascinating, fun and informative guest speakers at each luncheon/meeting. Why not join us and see for yourself?  
**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!**

- 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



**December Program**  
**Roberta Rogers, Marketing and**  
**Communication Director San Juan**  
**Regional Medical Center,**  
**will present a video about**  
**the history of the hospital.**  
**Don't miss it!**

**THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS**

| <b>2025/2026 Membership Report</b> |      |       |       |
|------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|
|                                    | AUTO | NMAER | SJAER |
| SEPTEMBER                          | 11   | 7     | 18    |
| OCTOBER                            | 0    | 3     | 3     |
| NOVEMBER                           | 1    | 3     | 4     |
| DECEMBER                           |      |       |       |
| JANUARY                            |      |       |       |
| FEBRUARY                           |      |       |       |
| MARCH                              |      |       |       |
| APRIL                              |      |       |       |
| MAY                                |      |       |       |
| TOTAL                              | 12   | 13    | 25    |

**Volunteer Reminder**  
 “Things of the spirit differ from things material in that the more you give the more you have.” (Christopher Morley)

Volunteering helps not only the receiver, but those who volunteer as well. Wishing you many blessings as you continue to give.

Please continue to report your volunteer hours. If you are unable to attend monthly meetings, you can report your hours at: [trishshsh@live.com](mailto:trishshsh@live.com)

“Unselfish and noble actions are the most radiant pages in the biography of souls.” (David Thomas)

| <b>2025-2026 Volunteer Year</b> | <b>Volunteer Hours</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| September                       | 320                    |
| October                         | 233                    |
| November                        | 303                    |
| December                        |                        |
| January, 2026                   |                        |
| February                        |                        |
| March                           |                        |
| April                           |                        |
| May                             |                        |
| Summer, and some annual reports |                        |
| <b>Total for 2025-26</b>        | <b>856</b>             |

**2025 - 2026 Meeting Dates**

General Membership meetings are held at 11:30am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at No Worries Sports Bar and Grill. Please mark your calendars.  
 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 \$1984.31 in our account and \$751.50 in our scholarship fund. Funds from the monthly drawing go into the scholarship fund. There are no outstanding bills at this time.



| <b>DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS</b> |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Schmidt, Victoria         | 12/3  |
| Overlin, Zelith M         | 12/20 |
| Johnston, Joyce K.        | 12/23 |



**San Juan Association of Educational Retirees Board Meeting  
10:30 A.M., November 11, 2025, No Worries Sports Bar & Grill**

- I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 10:38 by Debbie Klein, president. Other board members present: Phyllis Meier, Marilyn Montoya, Karen Morrison, Trish Murphy, Kathy Martin, Jim Conyers, Diane Cook.
- II. Approval of Agenda: Kathy made motion to approve the agenda, Marilyn seconded, motion passed unanimously.
- III. Approval of Minutes: Marilyn made motion to approve the minutes, Kathy seconded, motion passed unanimously.
- IV. Treasurer's Report: Kathy reported \$2430.31 in the General Fund; \$711.50 in the scholarship fund. Two invoices were presented for reimbursement: Karen for state conference expenses; Trish for YARN printing expenses.
- V. Unfinished business:
  - A, 501(c)(3) Process Update. Debbie reported that copies of revised Constitution/Bylaws, approved last month, are available for distribution to membership. Karen will take a copy to Tom Stamper, CPA, for his use to complete SJAER 501(c)(3) application.
  - B. Constitution/Bylaws: Debbie reported that copies are on file.
  - C. Website: Debbie requested subject be tabled for discussion until future meeting.
- VI. New Business:
  - A. Debit Card: Board members briefly discussed pros/cons of obtaining a debit card for the organization. The item is tabled for further discussion at a future meeting.
  - B. Scholarship Committee Meeting: Jim, Karen and Susan reported that since individual recipients were difficult to identify, another possible form of teacher support would be to participate in "Donor's Choice", as suggested by Susan. Through this grant-in-aid program, classroom projects in local schools would be funded (either partial or in full). The Scholarship Committee will report more fully at future meetings.
  - C. Items from Floor: none
- VII. Reports:
  - A. Membership: Phyllis reported that copies of membership list had been emailed to all members to verify and/or correct information.
  - B. Sunshine: none
  - C. Programs: Marilyn and Karen reported that upcoming January program is to be determined.
  - D. YARN: Debbie reported that at the suggestion of Karen, the SJAER logo has been placed on the front page of the YARN to readily identify the newsletter as a SJAER publication.
  - E. In Memoriam/Volunteer Hours: Trish reported that deaths of educators and employees in local school districts will be in the Spring state newsletter.
- VIII. Adjournment: Marilyn made a motion to adjourn at 11:15 a.m., Karen seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted, Diane S. Cook secretary



## In Memoriam November 2025



**Maggie Beyale Nez.** 4/10/48 – 11/3/25. Shiprock. Cook Manager at Central Consolidated Schools where she also worked at three different elementary schools.

**Katherine Cadman.** 9/16/45 – 11/4/25. Shiprock. No mention of school or position. However, the name is listed in our SJAER membership directory (archival version). Her Tri-City Record photo radiates a lovely, caring demeanor. I'm sure we would have treasured her as a valuable educational colleague.

**Deborah Barnes.** (no birth or death dates listed). Durango. Served as a science teacher in Durango School District for 25 years.

## Member Spotlights



Sarah Menapace

Sarah Menapace was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, maybe she enjoyed eating a bowl of Cincinnati 5-way chili before heading off to Gallup New Mexico. (Let's ask, it's delicious! Even 4-way or 3-way is tasty.)

She graduated from Gallup High then set off for the University of New Mexico where she received a degree in Business Education and Language Arts. Fifteen years later she earned a degree from Adams State University in Alamosa, CO in Secondary Education and Communication. The following year she attended San Juan College for a degree in Business Administration, then received her ESL Certification from Ft Lewis College.

Sarah taught for 25 years at Heights Middle School, 1989-2014.

Her favorite travel destinations include Cancun, Mexico and St Petersburg, Russia. When she's not traveling, Sarah enjoys scrapbooking, swimming, camping and writing.



Kerry Meyer

If you want to go camping and need a suggestion where to go, just call Kerry Meyer. He spends his free time looking around in nature and if you look for him, he might be found in the Colorado South Fork area or roaming around Cox Canyon snapping landscape photos. Kerry was born in La Junta, Colorado a small community in the Arkansas River Valley, June 11. He attended University of Colorado and got a B.S. degree (not that kind!) in Auto Parts and Service. Later he went to New Mexico State and received a Master's degree in Education Administration. He worked for many years at San Juan College as an Auto Instructor and even served as the Program Coordinator.

Now that he's retired, Kerry enjoys photography, working with Photo Shop, shooting (photos?) and checking out classic cars.

His favorite travel destination would be the Grand Cayman Island, although he'd probably be just as happy hiking around the Bisti Badlands south of Farmington.

### Tale of a Teacher - anecdote by Phyllis Meyer

*The day the exterminator came to visit.*

I was teaching in a classroom full of computers when a stranger entered the room. He says, "I hear you have a mouse problem." My mind immediately thought about the computer mice. In my confusion, I look at the class and say, "Is anyone having trouble with your mouse?" The stranger says, "the four-legged kind," and everyone burst out laughing!



"Hello, young man. They tell me you're quite the wrapper!"

**San Juan Association of Educational Retirees General Meeting  
November 11, 2025, 11:30 A.M., No Worries Sports Bar & Grill**

- I. Call to Order: Debbie Klein, president, called meeting to order at 11:47 a.m. Fifteen members were present.
- II. A. Welcome: Debbie welcomed attendees with a few vignettes such as:
  - a. Local SJAER chapter is 9th in the state for documented service hours;
  - b. Total of 243,704.5 service hours were reported by NM educational retirees;
  - c. The state association prorates service hours into hourly pay to determine monetary value and presented a giant ceremonial check for \$8,456,561.86 to the governor's office to highlight the value of educational retirees in their communities. This is a \$500,000 increase over last year.
- B. Pledges: Sandy Allred
- C. Prayer: Jim Conyers
- III. Unfinished Business:
  - A. Member Directory: Phyllis reported that all members have been sent an email confirming their information and as soon as corrections are received, a revised membership list will be sent. Hard copies will be available to anyone requesting one.
  - B. Constitution/Bylaws: Debbie announced that the Constitution/Bylaws are finalized and copies are on file.
  - C. The Pantry: Kathy reported that The Pantry has been resumed at Farmington High School for students. Members can bring quick, simple, nonperishable foods (microwaveable, individual servings) to our meetings and she will take to FHS.
- IV. New Business:
  - A. Scholarships: The Board tabled the report on the scholarship program. Updated information will be presented at next meeting.
- V. Announcements: Marilyn announced that Tibbetts All Ability Park Foundation is sponsoring "Toast & Twilight" on November 15th, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Artifacts 302 Gallery. Proceeds from the event supports the inclusive play space for children and families located on Apache Street.
- VI. Program: Karen introduced Megan Culip, who presented an overview and update of changes to Medicaid, SNAP and Education. She reported the Federal programs have seen a net cut of approximately 3.4 trillion in total. Megan's discussion included local impacts. For instance, San Juan Regional Hospital depends on approximately 42% of its funding from Medicaid. A question/answer session concluded her presentation.
- VII. Adjournment: Sandy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 p.m., Trish seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Diane S. Cook, secretary



Food Pantry - There are a surprising number of high school students living on their own or even homeless. A pantry has been set up to provide food, toiletries, and other basic needs for these students. Members are asked to support this project by bringing items to our meetings which will be given to the counselors running the pantry. Nonperishable, easy fix, microwavable food items, hygiene items, feminine products, etc. are needed to support these students and keep them in school.



# Weird but True Christmas Trivia Game



Who ever answers the most questions correctly wins!

1. What were the first artificial Christmas trees made of?  
A. Holly bush      B. Palm trees      C. Goose feathers & green dye
2. Which reindeer name means "thunder"?  
A. Donner      B. Blitzen      C. Rudolph
3. What famous holiday song was originally written for Thanksgiving?  
A. Oh Christmas Tree      B. Jingle Bells      C. Deck The Halls
4. In Japan, what fast food is traditionally eaten for Christmas dinner?  
A. Chinese Food      B. KFC      C. McDonalds
5. What's the most dangerous Christmas decoration according to emergency room reports?  
A. Tinsel      B. Garland      C. Bulb ornaments
6. How much does the average Christmas tree "drink" each day?  
A. About a quart      B. About a gallon      C. None, buy a fake one
7. In which country is it traditional to hide a pickle ornament in the Christmas tree?  
A. Puerto Rico      B. Germany      C. Ireland
8. What do Swedish people watch every Christmas Eve without fail?  
A. Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> St      B. Santa Clause      C. Donald Duck
9. Before electricity, how were Christmas trees lit?  
A. Candles      B. Flashlights      C. Tinsel
10. What is Santa Claus called in the Netherlands?  
A. Befana      B. Krampus      C. Sinterklaas
11. How many gifts would you receive, if you got everything from "The 12 Days of Christmas"?  
A. 364      B. 144      C. 295
12. What U.S. state declared Santa Claus illegal because they thought Christmas was too rowdy?  
A. Florida      B. S. Dakota      C. Massachusetts
13. What animal is considered a symbol of good luck at Christmas in Ukraine?  
A. Polar Bears      B. Spiders      C. Skunks
14. Which country's Santa is known for using a goat instead of reindeer?  
A. Finland      B. Greenland      C. Poland



# EVENTS

| Date                          | Day                            | Time                           | Event  | Location                       | Cost                                 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Dec. 10                       | Wednesday                      | 6 pm – 7 pm                    | Once Upon a Crime – Yogurt Shop Tragedy Murder of 4 girls at an Austin yogurt shop,  | Farmington Library             | Free                                 |
| Nov. 12<br>Dec. 31            | Wednesday<br>- Saturday        | 10am – 4pm                     | Visions of Shiprock - artwork featuring Shiprock Peak and Diné weavings  | Navajo Art & Culture Museum    | Free                                 |
| Nov. 20-<br>Dec. 17           | Mon.-Thurs<br>Friday           | 10am – 5pm<br>10am – 6pm       | A Magical Mystery Tour of Color & Light-An exhibition featuring the radiant creations of the SJC Stained Glass Encore students.    | Henderson Fine Arts Gallery    | Free                                 |
| Dec. 8 -<br>March             | Monday -<br>Friday             | 10:00am –<br>5:00pm            | Objects Tell Stories – Display of artifacts of our community’s past and their stories.   | Farmington Museum              | Bring dish to share                  |
| Nov. 10-<br>Dec. 13           | Monday-<br>Saturday            | 10am – 5pm                     | San Juan Quilters Guild presents – Anything and Everything Quilt Show  | Farmington Museum              | Free                                 |
| Dec. 8 –<br>Dec. 12           | Monday-<br>Friday              | 11am – 6pm                     | Animal Shelter Drive - Donate a pet item for \$1 off Cold Stone Creamery creation. Wish List at farmingtonnm.org/events            | Cold Stone Creamery            | Donations<br>\$1 coupon              |
| Dec. 9                        | Tuesday                        | 6:30                           | Bloomfield Christmas Parade – A Cowboy Christmas – 1 <sup>st</sup> St, Broadway, and 5 <sup>th</sup> St.                           | Bloomfield                     | Free                                 |
| Dec. 9                        | Tuesday                        | 7:00pm                         | San Juan College Jazz Ensemble featuring the music of jazz greats  | SJC Connie Gotsch Theatre      | Gen Ad \$10<br>Seniors \$8           |
| Dec. 11                       | Thursday                       | 6:30pm -<br>9:30pm             | Martinis & Mistletoe Christmas Mingle! support Sexual Assault Services NW NM   | Artifacts                      | \$40/person                          |
| Dec. 11<br>Dec. 12<br>Dec. 13 | Thursday<br>Friday<br>Saturday | 7:30pm<br>7:30pm<br>2pm+7:30pm | Heather McGaughey Youth Theatre presents “A Charlie Brown Christmas” stage adaptation of animated television special.              | Farmington Civic Center        | \$10                                 |
| Dec. 12<br>Dec. 13            | Friday<br>Saturday             | 4pm – 9pm<br>9am – 4pm         | Kristkindlmarkt Fine Arts & Crafts Show. handcrafted gifts by local artists/artisans   | Zion Lutheran Church           | Free Entry                           |
| Dec. 12<br>Dec. 13            | Friday<br>Saturday             | 7pm<br>1pm+4:30pm              | The Nutcracker & Christmas Spectacular presented by Mann Dance Academy   | Henderson Fine Arts Center     | \$15                                 |
| Dec. 12                       | Friday                         | 8:00am –<br>12:00pm            | AARP Drivers Safety Course - valuable opportunity to refresh knowledge and sharpen your driving skills – Space limited             | Bonnie Dallas Senior Center    | \$2 fee +<br>\$20 Member<br>\$25 Non |
| Dec. 13                       | Saturday                       | 2pm – 5-pm<br>6pm parade       | Aztec Sparkles 2025: A Very Abominable Christmas - a magical day throughout Aztec, festive activities and Yeti-themed fun for all. | Aztec Downtown                 | Free                                 |
| Dec. 13                       | Saturday                       | 9:00pm –<br>4:00pm             | Toys for Tots and Teens - Bring an unwrapped gift for cookies & entertainment  | Ziems Ford Corners             | Free                                 |
| Dec. 13                       | Saturday                       | 3:30pm-<br>5:00pm              | Write to Publish: Book Drive/Story Share to benefit Child Haven.   | Quill & Quest Bookstore        | Free                                 |
| Dec. 13<br>Dec. 20            | Saturday                       | 6:00pm –<br>9:00pm             | Saturday Night Dances to the music of Otis and Rhythm for 50+ Bring a snack to share.  | Activity Center<br>208 N. Wall | \$3/person                           |
| Dec. 14                       | Sunday                         | 3:00pm                         | San Juan College Symphonic Band present a delightful and action-packed program   | Henderson Fine Arts Center     | Gen Ad \$10<br>Sr/Militar \$8        |
| Dec. 17                       | Wednesday                      | 6:00pm –<br>7:00pm             | Memorial for the Unclaimed honoring those who have died in isolation/without next of kin.  | Artifacts<br>302 Main          | Free                                 |
| Dec. 19                       | Friday                         | 7:30pm                         | Light of Christmas by The Silhouettes, the world-renowned shadow dance company   | Farmington Civic Center        | \$16-\$28                            |
| Dec. 21                       | Sunday                         | 2pm – 3pm                      | Walk with a Doc! every 3rd Sunday  | Kiwanis Park                   | Free                                 |

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