



Retiree Advocate



STAY CONNECTED • BE PROTECTED • ENJOY BENEFITS



Dana Dillon, President
CTA/NEA-Retired

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Happy Not-Returning to School! Another year begins, and **CTA/NEA-Retired is already hard at work.**

Your CTA/NEA-Retired Board met in August to plan for the upcoming year. We are pleased to report that we achieved most of our organizational goals last year. This year, we will continue to involve more members and increase our communication frequency.

Our Communications Committee is introducing an **electronic newsletter** to keep members up to date more quickly than we can with our printed *Advocate*. The *Advocate* is becoming too expensive to print four times a year. We began to send it electronically last year and will continue to do so. We also gave members the option of receiving it electronically only.

Our Political Involvement Committee (PIC) members and Board members are working especially hard this fall. There are 2-3 PIC members from each region, who will collaborate with regional CTA/NEA-Retired Board members to form

regional teams. These teams will reach out to members, first urging them to vote yes on Prop. 50, and then organizing them for the signature-gathering efforts to extend Proposition 55.

Prop. 50 demands our immediate and urgent action! The campaign is already becoming contentious. Conservative states are gerrymandering districts to preserve Congressional power. Prop. 50 is a temporary solution to maintain Congressional balance after Texas skewed its districts toward the GOP. This isn't politics as usual. Critical funding has been slashed for education, meals for hungry children, and other community services. Families, communities, and democracy cannot afford additional years of this administration's unprecedented power grabs.

Last spring, some CTA/NEA-Retired chapters passed **resolutions supporting the extension of Proposition 55**. This fall, **one of our campaign goals is for all chapters to pass resolutions** by the October CTA/NEA-Retired Annual Business Meeting at CTA State Council. **We also aim to gather petition signatures from a high percentage of our members.** Our challenge is that only a small portion of members belong to a local retired chapter, so individual contact will be essential to our success. Expect a PIC team member to contact you!

Don't forget the 2026 school board elections. CTA/NEA-Retired members can play a vital role in supporting active chapter campaigns for endorsed candidates. Retirees can canvas

neighborhoods, write postcards, and some are willing to phone bank. We encourage members to contact their local CTA chapters now to build relationships needed to support local school board campaigns.

CTA/NEA-Retired Members continue to join protests, rallies, and marches. Many members participated in community Labor Day events, and many have also taken part in activities organized by other groups. Our involvement shows our ongoing commitment to partnering with CTA and others to advocate for what is right for students, public education, and the country. As this administration attacks policies and programs that impact us and those we care about, CTA, NEA, and our allies will keep organizing actions. We encourage members to attend, document their involvement (take pictures for future *Advocate* and newsletter stories), and keep retiree voices active in the fight for fairness and democracy. **A major rally, "No Kings," is being planned for October 18th.** We will share information about other significant events via all-member e-mails as we become aware of them.

Due to concern that this issue would not arrive in mailboxes before November 4 election ballots, on September 29, we emailed the issue to each member for whom we have an email address, and will email it again closer to the election.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Dana Dillon

Cell: 530-949-2676

danad.cta.nea.r@gmail.com

Vice President

Debra Sheehan

Cell: 949-633-7222

Dsheehan.ctanear@yahoo.com

Secretary-Treasurer

Don Stauffer

Cell: 916-802-3005

djstauffer@gmail.com

District 1 Director

Lynette Henley

Cell: 707-688-3004

henleyl@aol.com

District 1 Director

Kathy Sharp

Cell: 203-505-2180

KATHYLSHARP@MSN.COM

District 2 Director

Karen Schuett

Cell: (661) 301-4415

kschuett8@gmail.com

District 2 Director

VACANT

District 3 Director

Sandy Keaton

Cell: 661-618-8085

drsandykdistrict3@gmail.com

District 3 Director

Anne Johnson-Curtis

Cell: 760-954-4299

nedanne@me.com

District 4 Director

Patty Blume Taylor

Cell: (909) 226-8364

pattysbta@aol.com

District 4 Director

Gerald Gandolfo

Cell: 949-395-1292

maruk@cox.net

Ethnic Minority Director/At-Large

Mary Rose Ortega

Home: 323-254-2919

Cell: 323-839-8857

Mortega25@aol.com

EDITOR

Bonnie Shatun

Email: bshatun@aol.com

PHOTOGRAPHS

Retired Members

BOARD REPORT by Donald Stauffer, Secretary-Treasurer

CTA/NEA-Retired Meetings: Key Actions and Updates from the May 12, 2025 Virtual General Meeting and June 6, 2025 Board

Approved appointment of Deborah Burfeind to the NEA Communications Committee. **Approved** notice to C4OB that staff, regional and local, should be informed about contract negotiations that affect the health benefits of retirees. **Approved** sending two members to the Summer Institute Member Benefits strand.

President Dana Dillon Three priorities: continue protecting members' Social Security benefits, as well as Medicare; elections for State Council alternates; and broad participation in the May 17th Fight For Schools rallies. She urged members to bring family and friends, document involvement, and keep retiree voices visible in the fight for fairness and democracy.

Vice President Debra Sheehan highlighted outreach/engagement activities. She reported CTA/NEA-Retired exhibit tables provide a place for active members to connect and learn about our association.

Secretary-Treasurer Don Stauffer discussed the 2025–2026 budget planning process, including expense projections and resource management. An updated draft of the 25-26 budget was presented, which will be reviewed at the summer planning meeting, with adoption at the membership meeting in October. Key points: expenses are categorized by activity and not position. Next year's adjustments to the strategic budget will be based on this year's experience.

Committee Reports

- **Awards:** No Retired WHO Award was given in 2025. An all-member email will launch the 2026 award process in October. A pilot recognition program debuted at the 2025 Retired Issues Conference.

- **Bylaws:** Planned adjustments will align standing rules with bylaws.

- **Budget:** Expense projections for 2025–2026 were reviewed, more work ahead.

- **Communications:** Efforts are underway to expand outreach through the new BlueSky account (@ctanear.bsky.social) and updating our website.

- **Elections:** Election for State Council

alternates is in progress.

- **Issues:** The committee is refining the mission statement, and recommends holding CTA/NEA-Retired orientations for NEA-Retired delegates.

- **Membership/Marketing:** Focusing on strengthening recruitment and visibility.

- **Political Action:** Urged members to participate in the May 17th rallies and other democracy-related activities. NEA's lawsuits on academic freedom and religious schools were noted, as was the importance of Proposition 55, which generates \$9 billion annually - extension is slated for the 2026 ballot.

- **Scholarships:** Announced Russo (May 15) and Pedretti (May 17) deadlines.

- **REAC:** Raised concerns about retiree exclusion from CTA's Racial and Ethnic Affairs Committee bylaws.

Regional representatives reported efforts to revitalize local chapters. Chapter programs include recruiting mentor teachers, hosting retiree celebrations, and supporting lobbying activities. Retired chapters also organized field trips and peaceful protests.

At the NEA-Retired level, committees reported progress: The Communications Committee is testing a digital-only newsletter, the Legislative Committee warned against pitfalls in Medicare Advantage, and the Member Benefits Committee highlighted expanded options for healthcare and travel. The PAC Committee has announced upcoming auctions, virtual and in-person.

Staff reported that petitions in support of Proposition 55 will circulate this fall, along with resolutions for distribution to locals.

During the open comments, members expressed concerns about outdated CTA communications, loss of institutional knowledge, and the potential benefits of forming a virtual retiree chapter. Questions about Social Security benefits and membership dues were addressed. There was also confirmation that dues will remain unchanged for next year.

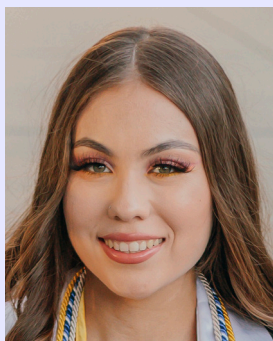
CTA/NEA-RETIRED 2025 PEDRETTI SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AWARDED

By Orval Garrison, Past President

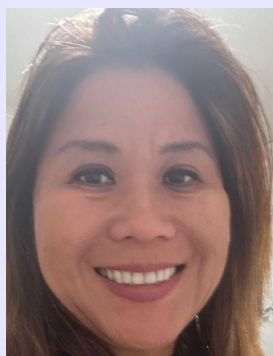
Gloria Pedretti Scholarships (\$1,500 each) are administered by CTA/NEA-Retired and are made possible because of a generous endowment from the late Gloria Pedretti, a CTA/NEA-Retired member. Scholarship recipients have indicated their goal to earn an Elementary or Secondary teaching credential. The 2025 recipients are Krista Jules (Region 1), Andrea Guevara (Region 2), Emily Chen (Region 3), and Anthony Beltran (Region 4).



Krista Jules from Pittsburg, California, has a degree from Chapman University, is a member of CTA Aspiring Educators, and is pursuing a Secondary teaching credential. Her self-identified multi-ethnic and mixed racial background motivates her to commit to a quality public education system that provides opportunities for all students. She has been involved with Neighborhood Watch, helped establish a school Black Student Union chapter, and has encouraged students to celebrate at multicultural events. Krista is working at a Title 1 school assisting underserved students. Colleagues with whom she works at the local junior high school indicate that she is a passionate supporter of public education.



Andrea Guevara credits her mother as a driving force, encouraging her as a very young immigrant child to learn English, adapt to a new culture, and enjoy the safe space and support of her elementary school in Stanislaus County. Living in Turlock, California, and attending CSU Stanislaus, she has a BA focus in Liberal Studies and is working in the Elementary credential program. She is a member of CTA Aspiring Educators and has served as president of the chapter. Andrea has been involved in food and blood drives, job fairs, and tutoring programs. Her Academic Advisor refers to her as having “significant leadership and communication skills.”



Emily Chen from Cerritos, California, has degrees in Political Science and Psychology from UCLA and Pepperdine. Seeking a Secondary credential with focus on Special Education, she is currently working in the Los Angeles COE Beginning Teacher Program. Emily has attended CTA State Councils as a registered Delegate Guest and is connected to the Lynwood Teachers Association. Additionally, she has done political party canvassing and campaigns, food donation drives, worked with physically and mentally disabled young adults, and provided math and language assistance to students in Special Day Classes. Her fieldwork coordinator in the Intern Teacher Program lauds her for her professional promise and high expectations for all learners.



Anthony Beltran is enrolled in the University of California, Riverside, Teaching Graduate Program. From Corona, California, he has a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and is working on a Secondary credential. He credits parental guidance as a prime motivator for him to excel in school: “It’s extremely important not to take it for granted . . . it [school] will lead to a more prosperous life.” Anthony has been involved in a mentorship program, has done field work/study activity with the university, and has been part of an Expanded Learning Instructor program. He is currently pursuing a Masters in Education and a Secondary credential in order to become a high school Math teacher. His advisor remarks about his “dedication to teaching math to his students” and “making a positive impact” in the school community.

THE 40TH NEA-RETIRED ANNUAL MEETING WAS HELD IN PORTLAND, OREGON

By Debra Sheehan, Vice President

NEA-Retired President Anita Gibson said, "We will stand proud and tall in our fight for justice, just as we did while seeking a full repeal of GPO/WEP. . . It's not only our right, but our responsibility, to educate others about the injustices that plague our profession. NEA-Retired members must mobilize to protect students, Social Security, Health Care and Medicare."



One of the goals of CTA/NEA-Retired is to serve as a strong voice for education in national, state, and local policymaking. This commitment was exemplified by your 20 elected delegates to this year's NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, held in Portland, Oregon, June 29-30, just prior to the NEA-RA. A total of 309 delegates from all 50 states met to discuss policy, education and social justice issues, and our next steps in defending public education and our democracy.

First, we celebrated a major win for public school teachers and other public employees. After 40 years of activism and advocacy by NEA-Retired and NEA, the Social Security Fairness Act became law on January 5, 2025, signed by former President Biden as one of the final acts of his term. This law finally ended the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) provisions in Social Security law, which have prevented educators in 15 states and public employees in 26 states from receiving the Social Security benefits they earned!



More than twenty-five CTA-NEA-Retired members attended the Retired Annual Meeting in Portland Oregon in June to discuss and take positions on issues coming up later in the week at the NEA Representative Assembly.

While the delegates were discussing Bylaws, policy statements, new business items, elections, and raising money for political action, the three NEA officers came to address us and motivate us to action. NEA President Becky Pringle said, "Donald Trump and his Secretary of Education, Linda McMahon, want to shut down the Department of Education and leave our students with one thing: *less* than they deserve. They want to whitewash, erase, and rewrite our country's history." NEA Vice President Princess Moss encouraged our continued activism by saying, "Your collective wisdom, built through decades of classroom experience and union activism, provides an essential foundation for our continued work." NEA Secretary/Treasurer Noel Candelaria asked attendees to consider this moment in history: "We are living in unprecedented times. What will we do in this critical moment? The fight for racial and social justice cannot be delayed."

Continued on page 6

Retired members joined active educators in standing up for students, families, public education and our democracy.



FIGHTING FORWARD: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2025 NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

By Susan Kitchell, RA Delegate Representing UESF-Retired

The rumble of the TriMet MAX trains outside the Oregon Convention Center in Portland diminished to a mere whisper in comparison with the roar of the 8000 delegates to the 2025 NEA Representative Assembly. Delegates from across the country gathered in the annual meeting to advance the agenda of the National Education Association by establishing policy and priorities for the three million-member organization. Attendees brought with them a shared sense of concern about the direction of the country in general and the state of public education in particular.

President Pringle gave a rousing “state of the union” address, exhorting all of us to turn “fight back” into “fight forward” by focusing on seven action verbs to guide our work and meet head-on the multi-pronged assault on public education. She enumerated those seven verbs: educate, communicate, organize, mobilize, litigate, legislate, and elect, giving powerful examples of how NEA will turn those words into concrete actions to achieve our goals.

One immediate action that delegates were able to take while at the RA was to write Congress while in the convention center using electronic methods provided by the NEA. Needing to hold our elected leaders accountable to our communities, delegates lifted their voices by choosing to write Congress about education funding, vouchers, workers’ rights, immigration, and other concerns.

In order to provide delegates with additional skills and strategies to meet the challenges of the moment and take important learnings back to their locals, the RA was reorganized to accomplish almost all business during the first three days of the RA and reserve the final day for

teaching/learning sessions. The manner in which New Business Items (NBIs) were brought to the floor was also new this year with the creation of six “buckets” to group NBIs together. Those six areas were: Elevating Our Professions & Supporting Student Learning,



nea NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

“We must use our power to take action that leads, action that liberates, action that lasts,”--- NEA President Becky Pringle in her July 3, 2025 Address to the NEA Representative Assembly

Ensuring Equity by Advancing Racial, Social & Economic Justice, Growing Our Union, Demonstrating Democracy, Promoting Peace, and NEA Operations. After some initial grumbling and confusion, debate proceeded in a timely and productive fashion. All NBIs were debated and discussed, voted on or referred to committee by the close of business on July 5th.

NBI 93 was brought forward by CTA/NEA-Retired Vice President Deborah Sheehan on behalf of the NEA Women’s Caucus, which includes many retired members on their Steering Committee. The aim was to raise awareness about child marriage. Thirty-five states in America allow children under the age of 18 to be married to older adults. California DOES NOT have a law against this! The underage child’s rights are assigned to the adult spouse and

the child is not allowed to file for a divorce or seek help in a shelter for abused individuals. The 50 required signatures were all from the NEA Retired Annual Meeting. The NBI passed and an article to raise awareness will be published digitally.

The final day of the RA was reserved for a “Day of Teaching, Learning, and Organizing for Power” sessions. Delegates were able to choose a morning session and an afternoon session from the following topics: Kids Not Cuts (Social Media and Advocacy Skills to Mobilize and Fight for Our Students), Not on Our Dime (A Strategy Lab on Taking Action Against Vouchers and Privatization), Values, Vision, and Victory (Promoting Racial, Social, Economic, and Education Justice through Inclusive Education), Building Power for the Common Good (Tools and Strategies for Organizing and Action), and Countering Authoritarian Overreach (Making Attacks on Our Democracy Backfire). Delegates reported a great deal of engagement and excitement in their sessions, stating they felt the sessions enabled them to actualize President Pringle’s exhortation to educate, organize, mobilize, communicate, litigate, legislate, and elect.

The RA closed with passage of the annual budget and a determination to move ahead, fighting forward to meet the needs of educators and students throughout the country. Next year’s RA will take place in Denver, CO. Won’t you consider running to be a delegate and become a part of NEA’s policy makers?

(President Pringle's full remarks are available at <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/nea-president-representative-assembly-we-must-fight-forward>)

IN ANY EVENT, IT'S NOT HOW MANY YEARS, IT'S WHAT YOU DO WITH THEM

(The following article appeared in Healthy to 100: The Science to Social Connection, Volume 2 and was reprinted with permission from the Longevity Project.)

What the residents of the Westminster Oaks Senior Living Community in Tallahassee, Florida were doing last week was lying in the middle of the street, trying to block the Florida Department of Transportation from painting over a crosswalk in front of W.T. Moore Elementary School. The seniors and students together had painted the crosswalk in the school colors (green and yellow if you're taking notes), and some 30 seniors came out to protest its removal.

Why, you might ask, was the State of Florida seeking to destroy a cherished local project like this? An excellent question, and it traces back to an order from the Florida Department of Transportation to remove all art and decorations from public roadways. Styled as a

safety measure, the order is widely understood to be an attempt to cover up rainbow decorations associated with the LGBTQ movement. One of the first to go was a rainbow crossing that served as a memorial for the 49 people fatally shot by a gunman at the Pulse LGBTQ nightclub in 2016.

The intergenerational project in front of Moore Elementary School is simply an innocent victim of our misshapen politics. As one senior noted, "I think the whole thing is pretty darn stupid. I know why they are doing all that and removing them all. (It's) so they don't have to explain why they are just removing the ones with rainbows and political stuff." See, seniors are wise.

THE 40TH NEA-RETIRED ANNUAL MEETING WAS HELD IN PORTLAND, OREGON

Continued from page 4

A high point of our Annual Meeting is often when Mary Kusler, Director for the Center for Advocacy, takes the stage. She shared newspaper clippings about the Trump Administration's ICE raids, their proposed tougher Medicaid cuts, funding cuts to the Department of Education, health care cuts for the poor, a \$4.5 trillion tax breaks for rich Americans, abolishing funding for English learners, adult ed and teacher recruitment, as well as K-12 programs. She added, "Everything that is happening now we predicted. We knew this was coming. . . The trauma of this moment is real. They want you to shut down." She concluded, "We are the resistance and we need to organize in the streets, in the courts, at the U.S. Capitol and in the State Houses, and in our neighborhoods." For more information, go to NEA.ORG/TAKEACTION.

Through live and virtual auctions, members contributed generously to NEA's political action committee (PAC), which works to elect friends of public education. You can find more information on advocacy at nea.org/retired.

CTA, NEA and CTA/NEA-Retired Thank Ed Foglia

Nope, it's not goodbye, because those of us who know Ed, know he will advocate for public education even though he's retired from his elected union life. Ed's "second retirement" is well deserved. We know of no one who has contributed as much to our union, active and retired, as he has. Known as the Father of Prop. 98, Ed also advocated for decades to have the Social Security offsets repealed – among dozens of other causes. Congratulations and thank you to Ed, a tireless fighter for educators, retirees, and public education!



Ed Foglia addressed Council for the last time as an elected member of Council and received a standing ovation in appreciation of his many years of dedication and outstanding service.



What It Does

Prop 50 temporarily adjusts California's congressional map to cancel out 5 extra GOP seats Texas grabbed through gerrymandering.



Why It Matters

Critical funding has been slashed for education, meals for hungry children, and other essential community services - all to provide tax cuts for billionaires. Texas's efforts are designed to consolidate power and maintain control of Congress. Public education, healthcare, and essential community services can't afford for this to happen. This isn't just Texas; other states are copying the tactic.



Democratic Fairness, Not "Cheating"

California voters decide at the ballot box - not politicians in smoke-filled rooms. Prop 50 expires in 2030. Texas's map is permanent.



California's Tradition

We normally use one of the fairest independent systems in the nation. Prop 50 is a one-time exception to protect democracy from manipulation elsewhere.



Bottom Line

Prop 50 = Using democracy to defend democracy. Temporary. Fair. Voter-approved.



cta.org/our-advocacy/prop-50



stopelectionrigging.com



Retiree Advocate

CTA/NEA-Retired
California Teachers Association
1705 Murchison Drive, Burlingame CA 94010

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
US POSTAGE
PAID
OAKLAND, CA
PERMIT NO. 379

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nominations Are Open for the 2026 ELLEN LOGUE WHO (WE HONOR OURS) AWARD

Annually, CTA/NEA-Retired honors one member who has continued to be active in retirement by exhibiting leadership in the Association, in public education, and in the community. The recipient will be recognized at our Annual CTA/NEA-Retired Issues Conference to be held March 12-13 in Orange County.

Past winners of the award are:



- *2024 – Sheila Bell
- *2023 – Ned Curtis
- *2022 – John Graham
- *2021 – Ed Foglia
- *2020 – Marc Sternberger
- *2019 – Jim Burfeind
- *2018 – Bob McDonough

- *2017 – Frank Tarantino
- *2016 – Arlene Pavey
- *2015 – Bonnie Shatun
- *2014 – Val Muchowski
- *2013 – Orval Garrison
- *2012 – Tim Jenkins



Nomination forms can be found online at www.cta.org/retired. If you would prefer to receive the form in the mail, please call CTA/NEA-Retired at 650/552-5439 or email CTA-Retired@cta.org.

Deadline for submission is Friday, February 13, 2026 at 5:00 pm.