

NAU Retirees FLASH

NAU Retirees Association (NAURA)
<https://in.nau.edu/naura/>

Spring 2025 Luncheon

Date: Thursday, April 24th
Place: NAU DuBois South Union
Aspen Room C
Program: 1) Nominations/Voting/
Installation of New Officers
2) Athletics Rep and Student
Social: 11:00 - 11:30
Lunch: 11:30 - 1:00
Price: \$25 per person
RSVP: Friday, April 18th

Tex Mex Buffet Menu

- Seasoned Beef Taco Meat
- Cumin Grilled Chicken
- Tex Mex Veggies
- Spanish Rice
- Flour and Corn Tortillas
- Cheddar Cheese, Guacamole, Sour Cream, Shredded Lettuce
- Pico de Gallo and Chunky House Salsa
- Mexican Chocolate Chile Cookies
- Iced Tea and Water

Please consider volunteering or nominating a fellow retiree for an open position on the board for the upcoming year.

Make luncheon reservations by Friday, April 18th. Enclosed with this newsletter is a reservation form for the Spring Luncheon. You can RSVP and pay on-line at [nau.edu/naura](https://in.nau.edu/naura) or you can mail your check along with the reservation form to the NAURA Treasurer in time to arrive by April 18th. A prepaid reservation is required.



President's Corner

Greetings Fellow Retirees!

Thank you for supporting me as the President of the NAU Retirees Association for the past two years. As my presidency ends, I feel we have accomplished much. We now have a more permanent part-time position supported by our membership dues. Nydia Nittmann has done a marvelous job in this role, taking on more responsibilities over the last two years. Her support of the NAURA president, membership chair, and other committees has been invaluable. Nydia also compiles our newsletter, The Flash, and ensures it reaches all our retirees in a timely manner. She keeps our membership directory up-to-date and sends out Sparks to keep you informed of upcoming events. I deeply appreciate her support.

Moving forward, Claire Schonaerts will need your support as the incoming President. We are facing a time when your involvement in our organization is more crucial than ever. As a former volunteer manager, let me list 10 great reasons to volunteer:

1. **Boost Your Health:** Volunteering increases your endorphins and is beneficial to your health.
2. **Give Back:** It's a chance to give back to the community you have been part of for so many years.
3. **Find Purpose:** Volunteering gives you a sense of purpose, especially now that you are retired.
4. **Build Community:** It fosters a sense of community.
5. **Make Friends:** It helps you make new friends and meet new people.

6. **Learn New Skills:** Volunteering can teach you new skills. Yes, you can teach an old dog new tricks
7. **Feel Happier:** It's proven to make you happier (remember those good endorphins?).
8. **Boost Self-Esteem:** It can improve your self-esteem.
9. **Enhance Social Skills:** It can increase your social skills.
10. **Have Fun:** Above all, it's fun!

Please think about volunteering on the NAURA Board or the Executive Committee. We need a President-Elect and Secretary for the Board and a Benefits Committee Liaison for the Executive Committee. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact Nydia.Nittmann@nau.edu as she has job descriptions for each position.

While I am leaving the office of President, I remain on board as Past President and look forward to another year with NAURA. Thank you again for your support.

Carole Mandino
NAURA President 2023-2025



Treasurer's Report

TREASURER'S REPORT:	Submitted February 12, 2025	
Starting Chase Bank Balance:	October 15, 2024	\$ 32,135.80
Revenue:		\$ 3,177.05
Dues / Deposits - \$2,906.49		
(14 memberships - 9 Annual and 5 Lifetime;		
\$555 scholarships; 32 lunches; \$20 donation for carolers)		
Edward Jones - \$270.56		
Expenditures:		\$ 7,904.22
Fall Picnic - \$664.12		
Operations (CSV) - \$7,120.10		
Carolers—\$120		
Total in Chase Bank Account:	February 12, 2025	\$ 27,408.63
Edward Jones Account Balance:	October 15, 2024	\$ 90,521.83
Paid to Chase Account		(\$ 270.56)
Loss in Account Value		(\$ 856.88)
Total in Edward Jones:	February 12, 2025	\$ 89,394.39
Total in both accounts:	February 12, 2025	\$116,803.02
Scholarship Donations Fiscal Year 2025:		\$ 555.00

*I will not show amounts from Vanco until they are actually recorded in a Chase statement. Hence, payments from Vanco (and some debits) will be slightly behind by roughly three weeks.

Respectfully Submitted,
Greg Larkin
Treasurer



Announcements

- On December 11, 2024, NAURA had the **Winter Holiday Luncheon** in the Havasupai Room at NAU's University Union. Attendees enjoyed a plentiful and delicious Native American Buffet while listening to holiday songs sung by a small choir from NAU. Louie's Cupboard benefited from the very generous food and hygiene item donations made by luncheon attendees.



- The NAU Scholarship Application Process** is underway for the 2025-2026 academic year. If you have a child or grandchild attending NAU please encourage them to apply for the NAURA Centennial Scholarship by going to nau.edu/osfa and submitting an application through Scholarship Universe. The deadline to apply is April 15th, 2025. You can find more details on the NAURA Centennial Scholarship at nau.edu/naura.
- Highway Clean-Up** – The next NAURA Highway Cleanup will be Wednesday, May 14th at 9:00 am. The section for clean-up is on Highway 180 from milepost 219-220. It is just past Schultz Pass Road on the way to the Grand Canyon. This effort usually takes about 1.5 - 2 hours. If you are interested in participating, please contact Dick Coast at Richard.Coast@nau.edu to be placed on the list.
- ANNUAL Membership Renewals**—mark June 1st on your calendar as the start date for annual membership renewals. Please do not pay your 2025-2026 \$30 annual dues prior to this date to allow NAURA to match the NAU parking permit window of July 1st—June 30th. NAURA will send out a SPARK reminder in late May to all Annual members.
- CSV's 2025 Earth Day High Altitude Service Project** is scheduled for the afternoon of Friday, April 18th at Picture Canyon and other city locations. There will be multiple outdoor service opportunities. Watch for a SPARK for more details soon.
- There are three open positions on the **NAURA Board**: President-Elect, Secretary, and Benefits Committee Liaison. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact NAURA at naura.nau.edu.

Welcome New Retirees - 10/28/2024—2/07/2025

Andrea B Abrego	Chad Stephen Hamill	Herbert Bryant McLaughlin
Karen Arlene Bertilson	Barbara Elizabeth Jenkins	Leona M Mensay
Anita Jean Burns	Jennifer A Johnson	Claire Marquiss Nyce
Sheila Colleen Byron	William Eric Johnson	Anthony P Schierl
Kathleen Carpenter	Kris A Kuhn	Daniel Frederick Stoffel
Deidre E Crawley	Susan Mary Lauerr	Susan Townsend
Frederick De Micco	Cecile Gabrielle LeBlanc	Dorene R Washington
Pamela Sharon Fleece	Olivia Lopez-Villanueva	

A Special THANK YOU to Outgoing Board Members

This year is unlike any other since I joined NAURA in 2020. After our Spring Luncheon, four of our dedicated board and executive committee members will be stepping down. Let's take a moment to express our gratitude to these remarkable individuals:

Harlan Johnson: Harlan began his journey with NAURA in 2004 as President-elect. He served as President in 2005 and Past President in 2006. Since 2007, Harlan has been our Archivist, contributing over two decades of service to NAURA. Thank you, Harlan, for your dedication. We'll miss you on the board and the invaluable history you carry with you.

Gae Johnson: Gae retired from NAU in 2014 and has been our Secretary ever since. Her meticulous note-taking and active participation have been invaluable for over a decade. Thank you, Gae, for your excellent minutes and commitment to the board. You will be truly missed.

Betsy Kerr: Betsy joined NAURA shortly after her retirement in 2019. She was elected President-elect in spring 2020, served as President from 2021-2022, and became Past President from 2022-2023. Betsy also served as our Benefits Liaison, working tirelessly for our organization. We'll miss her enthusiasm and heartfelt contributions to the board.

Kathi Zahl: Kathi began her involvement with NAURA in 2019 as Membership Chair, later becoming President-elect in spring 2021, and serving as President from 2022-2023. She also managed our website from 2021-2023. As President-elect for the past two years, Kathi has given her time to edit our newsletter, offer excellent suggestions, and share the nicest, sweetest comments with everyone. Thank you, Kathi, for everything.

Let's give a big round of applause to our retiring board members. You will be missed, but we hope you'll continue to participate in our luncheons and other activities.

Carole Mandino

In Memory of our Beloved Members

Our condolences to the families of these NAU retirees who have recently passed away. If you know of a retiree or spouse who has died, please contact Nydia Nittmann at nydia.nittmann@nau.edu.

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**James Barrett, Jr (1944–2024)** - Passed on December 1, 2024 at the age of 80 years old. Mr. Barrett retired in January of 2011 from Capital Assets.

**Eudora Larson (1925—2024)** - Passed on December 18, 2024 at the age of 99. Born on November 9, 1925, Eudora attended public school and pursued higher education in her home state of South Dakota where she also met the love of her life—Harold C. Larson. They married in 1947 and had two children. The family moved to Flagstaff some years later. Eudora was active in the Federated Community Church of Flagstaff, Northland Hospice, NAU Retirees Association and the local chapter of PEO. Eudora's long life was defined by her commitment to her family and her ability to connect with others in meaningful ways.

**Miguel P Luna—**Passed on April 2, 2024. Mr. Luna retired from Facility Services.

**Laura Theimer (1950—2024)** - Passed peacefully due to end-stage autoimmune liver disease on December 15th under the kind care of Northland Hospice. Born January 14, 1950 in Balboa, Panama, Laura lived a life with family and friends at its core. Laura was an advocate for a number of groups, including women's groups, the mentally ill, and the HIV and the LGBTQIA communities. While much of her work career was centered around office administration duties, it was always the people with whom she worked that were her passion. The two efforts that meant the most to her were her work in the HIV field and being a support to the students and like-minded colleagues at NAU, for which she received several awards of recognition. Her utmost honor and joy was being invited by family of blood and choice to help in raising their young boys. Kevin, Nick and Sebastian were the greatest lights in her life. Laura leaves you with one bit of wisdom: tell those you love how much you love them at every opportunity. She never failed to do so.

**Mina Thompson (1922—2024)** - Passed away on November 5, 2024 at the age of 102. Born in Fox, Arkansas, Mina and her family relocated to Flagstaff when she was two years old. Mina's childhood years were shaped by the pioneering spirit of her family. At 18, Mina moved to Seattle, Washington to attend college, dance and model and enjoy an active life that included snow skiing and golfing. She worked at Boeing Aircraft during WWII where her strong work ethic and independence blossomed. In Seattle, Mina met Richard J. Thompson and in 1951 they returned to Flagstaff to raise their three children. They founded 'The Letter Shop' - a local print business, and she was a dedicated member of Order of the Eastern Star and Soroptimist. After her divorce in 1974, Mina pursued a career at NAU, working for the Dean of Continuing Education. She earned her Bachelor's degree at the age of 62, demonstrating her lifelong commitment to learning and personal growth. After retiring from NAU, she went to work at Lowell Observatory. Beginning in 1985, and well into her late 90s, Mina spent winters in San Carlos, Sonora, Mexico. Mina's life was defined by her courage, creativity and a fierce belief in women's rights. Mina lived a life full of adventure, love and inspiration. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her and will forever be remembered for her trailblazing spirit and unwavering belief in the power of independence.

## In Memory of our Beloved Members—continued

**Susan Weaverling (1948—2024)** – Passed away in the early morning hours of Sunday December 29, 2024, after a short illness. Susan was born in Ambridge, Pennsylvania on February 19, 1948 and moved with her husband and children to Flagstaff in the 1980's where she earned her Bachelor's degree at Northern Arizona University. She worked for NAU for many years. Since retiring, Susan has been a community volunteer with the Assistance League of Flagstaff where she took great pride in her participation in Operation School Bell. She also volunteered at Flagstaff Family Food Center. Susan was always available to help her friends who needed a ride, a lunch out or just someone to listen. She was happiest when busy, and also enjoyed her painting classes and playing Pinochle with friends. Susan will be lovingly remembered and sadly missed by her family and friends.

**David Williams (1936—2024)** - Passed on January 18, 2025, at the age of 88, in Tucson, Arizona. David lived his life dedicated to service, education, family and faith and was a preeminent educator and beloved community leader. He was born February 27, 1936, in Carthage, Mississippi. He grew up with his three brothers and was an avid fly fisherman known affectionately among Lee's Ferry anglers as "Walk-in Dave" on the Colorado River.

After serving his country as a Russian Linguist in the United States Air Force Security Service, David graduated from Northern Arizona University with a teaching degree, and over time both his master's and doctorate degrees in education. He began teaching middle school for Flagstaff Unified School District in 1961 and filled his summers as a National Park Ranger at Sunset Crater and Wupatki National Monument.

From teacher to principal to Superintendent of the Flagstaff Unified School District, David was unwavering in his commitment to ensure every child had what they needed to learn. His leadership and innovation earned him a spot as one of the Top 100 School Administrators in North America, and his expertise in education and school law was widely sought out, providing invaluable guidance to educational institutions and law firms.

After 22 years with the school district, David moved to higher education at Northern Arizona and Baylor Universities. His versatile leadership skills continued to be called on as Dean of the Center for Excellence in Education, Dean of the College of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism at NAU and Interim President of Coconino Community College.

His contributions to community and education is evident through his participation in various organizations and boards, in Flagstaff and in Tucson, and earned him numerous honors, including the Northern Arizona University Hall of Fame and the establishment of the David A. Williams Award for Innovation presented annually in his honor.

David is survived by his wife, and lifelong companion of nearly 70 years, Beth. He leaves behind three children, five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and two of his brothers.

# San Diego - Happiness is Calling

By Carole Mandino

As a proud Zoni, I've lost count of how many times I've visited San Diego. I have an enduring love for the ocean and the bay, and the endless activities make it impossible to be bored there.

My first trip to San Diego was a childhood family vacation. Although my memories are hazy, I recall staying at a hotel in the Hotel Circle area and visiting SeaWorld. The next trip was in 1982, my husband and my first vacation after our honeymoon the previous year. With family in Phoenix, we typically start our journey there, stay overnight, and leave early in the morning. The six-hour drive from Phoenix to San Diego is well worth it, especially in the summer when you can relish the cool coastal breeze as soon as you step out of the car.



In 1982, we initially booked a hotel on Dana Point Mission Bay, drawn by the coincidence of my husband's name being Dana. While the hotel is now renovated and quite nice, it wasn't the best back then. Unsure of our stay, we called Vacation Village Resort (now Paradise Point Hotel and Spa) and discovered they were only \$4 more per night. We promptly switched our reservations and enjoyed a delightful vacation. Although we've stayed at Paradise Point many times, with its beautiful rooms on and off the bay, and lovely bay beaches, it's self-contained and not within walking distance to many attractions. Thus, we now choose to stay at either the Catamaran or our favorite, the Bahia. We have reservations at the Bahia Resort for next month.

San Diego offers a wealth of activities that could keep you entertained for weeks. Our top picks include exploring Balboa Park and its gardens and museums, visiting the San Diego Zoo, touring the USS Midway and the Maritime Museum, taking a harbor cruise or riding The Duck, and wandering around Seaport Village. You can also catch a Padres game at Petco Park, have fun at SeaWorld, visit the Whaley House Museum (which, at our suggestion, the staff came to Flagstaff and visited the Riordan House Museum), explore the Gaslamp Quarter, Old Town San Diego, or venture to La Jolla to see the Birch Aquarium or go kayaking (I famously managed to flip our kayak in just 6 inches of water!).

During our last visit, we decided to try something new and visited Cabrillo National Monument. Another great option is to stay or visit Coronado, just across the bay from San Diego. We once walked from San Diego Bay to the Hotel del Coronado and Frank Baum's home, though it's sadly not open to the public.

While we prefer the Mission Bay/Mission Beach - Pacific Beach area, our son and his family favor Coronado. Each area has its own charm, and we love being able to walk just a couple of blocks to Mission Beach from our stay on Mission Bay. We enjoy strolling from Mission Beach to Pacific Beach, whether on the bay side or the ocean side, especially for breakfast at Kono's. Best of all, we love taking a beach chair and reading a book by the bay or the ocean. No matter what you choose to do, a great time in San Diego is guaranteed.



# Community Engagement

We missed the deadline for Community Engagement stories for this issue of the FLASH! We will post stories received after the deadline in the Summer 2025 FLASH. If you would like to share your story, send an email to [naura@nau.edu](mailto:naura@nau.edu) with a short description of your activity and how it supports your community. Thank you to all who provide a service that is beneficial for the health, strength and well-being of your community.

If you are looking for volunteer opportunities, the **Center for Service and Volunteerism's Axe of Service** platform serves as a centralized hub where anyone in Flagstaff can sign up for volunteer opportunities/events and track their hours all in one user-friendly site. Axe of Service will connect you with many organizations that need your support and where you can contribute to your community. Examples of volunteer opportunities are: Louie's Cupboard bi-weekly food distributions, Southside Community Garden Service Day, Sharon's Attic Thrift Store Support, Catholic Charities Casino Night, and Special Olympics Track and Field Competition in Sedona. New opportunities are posted regularly.

If you would like to learn more about this platform visit [axeofservice.nau.edu](http://axeofservice.nau.edu).



# Executive Committee Directory—2024-2025

## ELECTED:

|                        |                   |                            |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>President</b>       | Carole Mandino    | carolem.naura@gmail.com    |
| <b>President-Elect</b> | Claire Schonaerts | claireschonaerts@gmail.com |
| <b>Past President</b>  | Kathleen Zahl     | koz1946@hotmail.com        |
| <b>Secretary</b>       | Gae Johnson       | gae.johnson@nau.edu        |
| <b>Treasurer</b>       | Greg Larkin       | greg.larkin@nau.edu        |

## APPOINTED:

|                                     |                |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Activities Chair</b>             | Wallace Rande  | wrande@gmail.com           |
| <b>Archivist</b>                    | Harlan Johnson | harlan.johnson@nau.edu     |
| <b>Athletics Dept. Liaison</b>      | Molly Munger   | Molly.munger@nau.edu       |
| <b>Health Benefits Cmte Liaison</b> | Betsy Kerr     | betsy.kerr@nau.edu         |
| <b>Highway Cleanup</b>              | Richard Coast  | richard.coast@nau.edu      |
| <b>ASRS/ADOA Liaison</b>            | John Hagood    | john.hagood@nau.edu        |
| <b>Membership Chair</b>             | John Nauman    | johnknauman@gmail.com      |
| <b>Newsletter Editor</b>            | Nydia Nittmann | nydia.nittmann@nau.edu     |
| <b>Scholarship Chair</b>            | Nydia Nittmann | nydia.nittmann@nau.edu     |
| <b>Web Master</b>                   | Leslie Mathews | leslie_mathews@hotmail.com |
| <b>Admin. Support</b>               | Nydia Nittmann | nydia.nittmann@nau.edu     |

## NAURA PRESIDENT LIST—last 20 years

|           |                             |           |                |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2005-2006 | Harlan Johnson              | 2015-2016 | Warren Johnson |
| 2006-2007 | Ben Zinnecker               | 2016-2017 | Toni Fox       |
| 2007-2008 | Charles Barnes              | 2017-2018 | Norman Bertram |
| 2008-2009 | William Nietmann            | 2018-2019 | Kathe Shinham  |
| 2009-2010 | Zinnecker, Barnes, Nietmann | 2019-2020 | John Nauman    |
| 2010-2011 | Walter "Hoppy" Hopkins      | 2020-2021 | Rich Bowen     |
| 2011-2012 | Don McCallum                | 2021-2022 | Betsy Kerr     |
| 2012-2013 | David Best                  | 2022-2023 | Kathleen Zahl  |
| 2013-2014 | David Best                  | 2023-2024 | Carole Mandino |
| 2014-2015 | David McKell                | 2024-2025 | Carole Mandino |

## NAU Retirees FLASH Newsletter

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