

NAU Retirees FLASH

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

Spring 2026 Luncheon

Date: Thursday, April 30th
Place: NAU DuBois South Union
Aspen C
Program: Nominations/Voting/
Installation of New Officers
Social: 11:00 - 11:30
Lunch: 11:30 - 1:00
Price: \$15 per person
RSVP: Friday, April 24th

Please consider volunteering or nominating a fellow retiree for an open position on the NAURA Service Board.

Stir-Fry Bowl Station

- Grilled Chicken
- Roasted Vegetables
- Jasmine Rice
- Teriyaki, Soy, and Sweet Thai Chili Sauces
- Mixed Greens Salad
- Ranch and Balsamic Dressings
- Assorted Cookies and Brownies
- Iced Tea and Water

Make luncheon reservations by Friday, April 24th. You can RSVP and pay online at nau.edu/naura or you can mail your check along with the reservation form provided on the website to the NAURA Treasurer in time to arrive by April 24th. A prepaid reservation is required.



President's Corner

Dear Members of NAURA:

I have often thought of the next few weeks as a time of movement. We **march** into **Spring** and we marvel as tulips **push through** the earth and flowers **burst** into bloom. So should it be with us as we move into a season when the weather beckons us to do a little more with our time, our talents, and our treasure.

A list of the many ways NAURA has made a difference to our community was compiled and is being shared with you in the Community Engagement section of this newsletter. We have made a difference in many ways and to many others. Now is the time to re-commit to **doing**; doing a little more, a little better, a little longer. Many of our Service Board Members have continued to be part of the NAU Retirees Association for several years. Some of our newer members have also shown an interest in learning how we support each other.

Perhaps there is one-little-extra-something that you can do as we march into Spring. Your **extra** helps us be **extraordinary**. As President Cruz Rivera shared with us in December, "Our time at NAU **thickens** the experiences we have received and given." Please consider how your forward movement can continue to support our association.

Can you . . .

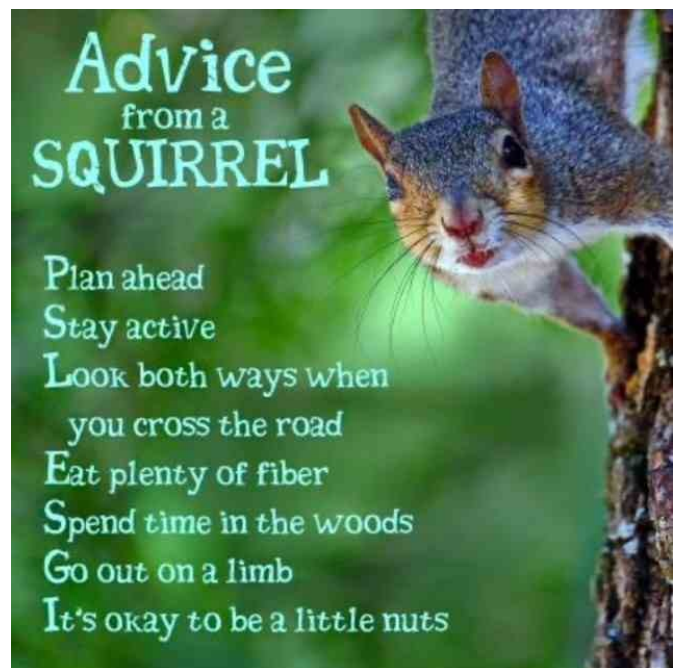
- Volunteer to take the minutes at one of our meetings?
- Call a new retiree and bring them to our luncheons?

- Make a connection for a tour, a field trip or an outing that would be of interest to our members?
- Serve on the NAURA Service Board as a Member-at-Large?
- Continue to be part of the in-place volunteers that already do so much as part of NAURA?

I have a dozen little tufts of grass in my backyard where the squirrels have rediscovered their hidden winter treasures. In the process of digging them up, I am reminded that good things don't stay hidden for long. You have so much to offer and your willingness makes Spring a season of joy.

Gratefully yours,

Claire Schonaerts



Treasurer's Report

TREASURER'S REPORT:	Submitted December 31, 2025	
Starting Chase Bank Balance:	September 30, 2025	\$ 28,007.31
Revenue:		\$ 2,027.42
Dues / Deposits -		
(8 memberships-4 Annual and 4 Lifetime; \$750 lunches;		
\$50 Louie's Cupboard; \$10 Scholarships)		
Expenditures:		(\$ 5,391.82)
NAU CSV—\$3,808.72		
Holiday Lunch—\$759.65		
Holiday Cards—\$727.42		
Mailing Labels—\$33.13		
Louie's Cupboard—\$62.90		
Total in Chase Bank Account:	December 31, 2025	\$ 24,642.91
Edward Jones Account Balance:	September 30, 2025	\$ 94,504.31
Gain in Account Value—\$1,068.58		
Total in Edward Jones:	December 31, 2025	\$ 98,187.63
Total in both accounts:	December 31, 2025	\$122,830.54
Scholarship Donations Fiscal Year 2026		\$ 10.00

*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

- The **Winter Holiday Luncheon**, held on December 10th, was a delightful event that included a delicious and plentiful Pot Roast Buffet, NAU Carolers, and a visit from Dr. José Luis Cruz Rivera. The focus of Dr. Cruz Rivera's presentation was on the positive foundational impact that NAU retirees had, and continue to have, on the experiences of students, staff and faculty at NAU. Louie's Cupboard benefited from the very generous food and hygiene items donated by the attendees.



- **The NAU Scholarship Application Process** is underway for the 2026-2027 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 a scholarship application through Scholarship Universe. The deadline to apply is April 15th, 2026. 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 13th 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. Specific information will be sent to all those on the list a couple of weeks before the clean-up.
- **ANNUAL Membership Renewal** — Mark June 1st on your calendar as the start date for annual membership renewals. Please do not pay your 2026-2027 \$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 2026 Earth Day High Altitude Service Project** is scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday, April 4th at NAU's duBois South Union. This year the project will be a community clothing exchange called Flagstaff Fashion Flip where everyone is invited to bring their no-longer-worn clothes and exchange them for new-to-you items. Watch for a SPARK for more details soon.

On the Road—A Week's Vacation Close to Home

By Sandra Dannenfeldt

How lucky are we to have so many vacation choices close to Flagstaff? Even if you have visited before, years may have gone by and maybe it is time to consider visiting again.

Our week-long loop adventure included:

- Stopping in Winslow at the LaPosada Hotel and restaurant for some Harvey Girls history and to view the largest single-loomed Navajo rug in the world in the LaPosada Museum.
- Visiting the Petrified Forest National Park and the Painted Desert near Holbrook. Hundreds of thousands of years' time in the rocks and sands.



- Taking a Navajo-guided tour of Canyon de Chelly. Our guide told us ten families still live in the Canyon itself (without electricity and running water) and most are elderly, traditional Navajos. The young families live in Chinle closer to the children's schools, McDonald's and WiFi.
- Shopping! at the oldest trading post on the Navajo Nation, the Hubbell Trading Post in Ganado. The 'rug room' has to be seen to be believed! Talented Navajo weavers exhibiting the best of their art.



On the Road—A Week's Vacation Close to Home

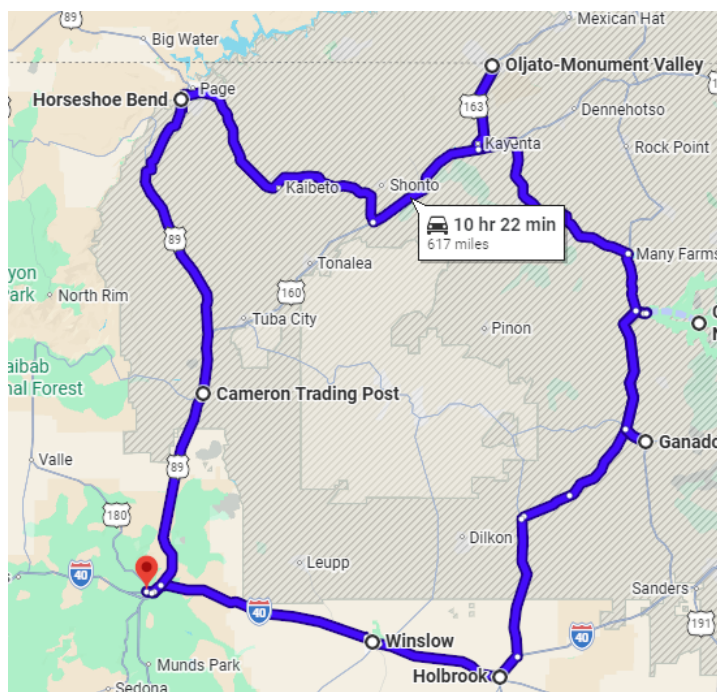
Continued—

- Enjoying a Navajo-guided tour of Monument Valley. The spectacular beauty of the rock formations and the stories of our guide made us realize why Monument Valley is the second most visited tourist attraction in AZ — behind the Grand Canyon, of course.
- Hiking to Horseshoe Bend on the Colorado River near Page. A hike with little shade and no water, but we were prepared.



- Home again (with a suitcase full of dusty clothes and a phone full of pictures) via a stop for a Navajo Taco and green chili stew at the Cameron Trading Post.

We loved our Vacation Close to Home.



Community Engagement

The goal of the Community Engagement section is to share stories of your fellow retirees and their activities in their communities. If you would like to share your story, send an email to 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 the community.

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In this edition of The FLASH, NAURA would like to highlight the volunteer opportunities promoted by NAURA to which many members donated volunteer hours. Those opportunities include:

- NAU Athletic Events
- NAU Martin Luther King Celebration Events
- NAU CSV Earth Day High Altitude Service Project
- NAU CSV Family Weekend High Altitude Service Project
- Highway Clean-Up
- Flagstaff Family Food Center

Volunteers helped clear drainage ditches, remove trash, make sandwiches, build bicycles, assemble hygiene kits, serve as ticket-takers, and serve meals. Thank you to all who have supported your community by donating your valuable time.

If you are looking for volunteer opportunities to support your community, go to Volunteer Needs at <https://axeofservice.nau.edu/need/>. Also watch for future SPARKS announcing events.

## Welcome New Retirees - 10/20/2025—2/18/2025

Louise Alvarado

Eric W Bradford

Jacquelyn G Buchanan

Steven C Burrell

Donald Russell Carter

Scott Christopher Curran

Robert Carl Daugherty

Mary Dejong

Patricia Ann Fortin

Kathleen Ganley

Alice Coulter Gibb

Terri Lynn Hayes

Bahe Yazzie Katenay

Murali Shroff Kosgi

Mirna G Lord

Bruce H Lowell

Dana M Mandino

Thomas J Miller

Kurt T Ristinen

John Paul Roccaforte

Cynthia Lynn Samuel

Joseph Alan Tritschler

Wayne Elloit Tso

Lisa Renee Whelan

## 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](mailto:nydia.nittmann@nau.edu).

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Obituaries may be edited from the original due to spacing limitations.

Gary James Buckley (1944—2026) - Passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family, on January 21, 2026 in Portland, Oregon from complications following bypass surgery.

In 1972, Gary began his teaching career at Northern Arizona University, one that would last over 36 years. He was professor of Political Science, faculty advisor to the Blue Key Honor Fraternity and was recognized as the 1983 Homecoming Dedicatee, an honor he truly treasured. He served as Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences ('80-'84), directed the Taft Institute ('77-'79) and later the Arizona Honors Academy ('88-'90). His many years studying American foreign policy and nuclear weapons policy led him to a deeper interest in the mediation of conflict and peacemaking, which would become a professional calling when he took the position of University Ombudsman in 1998. Following his retirement in 2008, Gary and Diane moved back to the Pacific Northwest in 2010 and spent the last 15 years in the Hillside Retirement Community in McMinnville, Oregon.

Gary loved to travel and often remarked that he had visited places and had experiences beyond his wildest dreams. He was an avid, voluminous, and eclectic reader and could be relied on to share fascinating facts and all manner of thoughtful observations on his latest read and life in general. His was a lifelong odyssey of learning and his knowledge of and perspectives on politics, history, and life will be deeply missed.

Geraldine (Jerry) Hales (1930—2025) - Jerry was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and moved to Arizona for elementary and high school. She spent a year in Japan after WWII and joined the Women's Army Corp where she made many lifelong friends. After her Army service, she married Charles Buthod, and together they had 2 daughters. After a business venture running a bar in Bisbee, Arizona, Jerry decided to go to college and entered nursing school at the University of Arizona. Her career took her to various nursing positions, always moving towards leadership. She taught at Arizona State College in Flagstaff, Arizona and then decided to pursue a Master's of Science degree in nursing at UCLA. She returned to teach at Northern Arizona University. Her career took her to nursing positions in Texas, Nevada, and California where she was Administrator of Patient Care Services in Berkeley. She later returned to finish her professional career teaching at Northern Arizona University. Upon her retirement from her career, at age 65, she bought a 40-acre ranch in Snowflake, Arizona, where she raised a few cattle, pigs and sheep and planted an orchard. After satisfying her desire to live the ranch life, she returned to live in her home in Flagstaff, Arizona, and ultimately moved to South Bend, Indiana, to live with family.

Jerry was a voracious reader, a talented writer and she loved music. She modeled for all of us how to live life to its fullest and not be afraid. Most of all, she loved deeply. She loved her daughters, sons-in-law, grandchildren, great grandchildren and she loved her friends. Jerry passed away peacefully on September 8, 2025, after a life fully lived.

In Memory of our Beloved Members—continued

Arnold Richard Johnson (1938–2025) - Arnold was born at home on December 5, 1938, and passed on July 13, 2025. He grew up hiking and camping along midwestern stream beds with his dog and camping gear that he made for himself. He graduated with BA and MA degrees from the University of Nebraska, and taught English Literature at WSU-Oshkosh from 1965-1967 and at NAU from 1968-1997. He worked as a patrolman and lookout for the Forest Service during the summers of 1969-1972. He was an independent and creative thinker, and he loved making things and indulging in ingenious problem-solving. He studied Zen Buddhism with Joshu Sasaki Roshi. He is survived by his wife Ann and many close friends and caring nieces and nephews.

Dianne Lingerfelt (1934—2025) - Passed on Tuesday, December 8, 2025 in Portland, Oregon at the age of 91. Diane grew up in Memphis and attended college in Mississippi and Texas, where she received her BA in English. She later received her MA in Education from NAU.

Diane had a varied career teaching first grade, kindergarten and college English and Drama courses in California. She held many secretarial and administrative assistant positions, the most recent being as administrative assistant for the Associated Students at NAU..

Diane, along with her husband, Joe Edward Lingerfelt, were joint NAU Homecoming Dedictees in 1997. Diane lived a life of faith and service. She was "Mom" to many and was known for her energy, enthusiasm, generous hospitality, and loving heart.

Michael Malone (1941—2026) - Passed away peacefully at home on January 20, 2026. Mike is survived by his beloved wife of 57 years, Lana Malone; his two children and numerous grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

After completing his higher education in Utah and Texas, Mike was offered a professorship at NAU in 1972. During his 38 year tenure at NAU, he served in every rank including professor, Chairman, and Dean. As Chairman, he was proud of his ability to recognize talent and mentor new professors. Beyond teaching and research, Mike served on many major standing committees in the department, the college, and the university. He was especially proud of his participation in the International Animal Care and Use Committee to ensure animal rights in scientific studies. Upon his retirement, he was awarded the title of Professor Emeritus at NAU, and an Endowed Scholarship was created in his name.

Mike was active and adventurous. He loved to travel and had the opportunity to travel to 20 different countries. He enjoyed sports, including fast-pitch softball, golf, tennis, and racquetball. He coached his son's youth sports. He loved time with family and friends and looked forward to his long-standing book group, poker group, and routine lunch with friends. In his retirement, he volunteered with The Literacy Center and the Flagstaff Family Food Center. He was tremendously respected and had great admiration for friends who took the idea of morality seriously and valued intellectual pursuits. He was a loving and dedicated husband, father, colleague, and friend. He will be deeply missed, and his legacy will be far-reaching.

In Memory of our Beloved Members—continued

Tom Reno (1939–2025) - Passed away peacefully surrounded by his family at home. Tom was a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

An ASU graduate, ('62) Tom served with the Peace Corps and taught English in Iran; an experience that broadened his worldview and fostered cultural understanding and compassion. When Tom returned home he worked on the Navajo Reservation helping to facilitate the transition of school leadership from the BIA to the Rough Rock Demonstration School run by the Navajo Tribe. Tom went on to earn his doctorate at Michigan State which led to a career spanning 58 years; dedicated to improving teaching and learning. Tom worked as a superintendent in Apache Junction and Yuma.

Tom and his wife Vicki had three children together, Lucy, Fran, and Matt, who all followed their parents in the field of education. Tom and Vicki eventually divorced. He was lucky to find yet another wonderful woman, Jackie, who he married. She and her young son Michael joined Tom in Tempe and his family grew. Tom and Jackie built a wonderful life together, celebrating nearly 50 years of marriage. Tom became an associate superintendent at the State Department of Education and years later, he joined the faculty at NAU as a professor, then as the Executive Director of NAU-Mojave. Tom continued working with graduate students online as an NAU Professor Emeritus.

An avid hiker, Tom conquered both the Havasupai Trail and the Grand Canyon "Rim to Rim". He never missed the annual Turkey Trot in Havasu. He was a big fan of ASU football; go Sun Devils! Tom was also a spiritual person, he and Jackie faithfully attended Mass together throughout his life. Tom is survived by his beautiful wife, Jackie, his four children and six grand-children. Services will be private. In memory of Tom, please participate in the Walk to End Alzheimer's or make a donation to the Peace Corps.

Pat Snow (1933—2025) - Passed away from this life on August 31, 2025.

Pat enlisted in the United States Navy in November, 1953 and was honorably discharged in September, 1957. He received a good conduct medal and a National Defense Service Medal. When he left the Navy he traveled to the Flagstaff area to work with his Dad at Fischer Sawmill. He worked in the area for a few years and met Bonnie Taylor, who he had known from his birth place, Wright City, Oklahoma. They dated and were married July, 1960. Pat worked at NAU as a bus driver for the athletic teams and worked in the physical plant. He retired from NAU in 1990. He also worked for Paul Carter Oil driving a gas truck from 1982-2009.

Pat enjoyed hunting and fishing.

He is survived by his wife, Bonnie; daughter, Debbie Powell of Oklahoma; son, Delbert Snow of Cottonwood, sisters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Executive Committee Directory—2025-2026

ELECTED:

President	Claire Schonaerts	claireschonaerts@gmail.com
President-Elect	VACANT	
Past President	Carole Mandino	carolem.naura@gmail.com
Secretary	VACANT	
Treasurer	Greg Larkin	greg.larkin@nau.edu

APPOINTED:

APPOINTED:

Activities Chair	VACANT	
Athletics Dept. Liaison	VACANT	
Health Benefits Cmte Liaison	VACANT	
Highway Cleanup	Richard Coast	richard.coast@nau.edu
ASRS/ADOA Liaison	VACANT	
Membership Chair	John Nauman	johnknauman@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Nydia Nittmann	nydia.nittmann@nau.edu
Scholarship Chair	Nydia Nittmann	nydia.nittmann@nau.edu
Web Master	Leslie Mathews	leslie_mathews@hotmail.com
Admin. Support	Nydia Nittmann	nydia.nittmann@nau.edu

NAURA PRESIDENT LIST—last 20 years

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
2015-2016	Warren Johnson	2025-2026	Claire E Schonaerts

NAU Retirees FLASH Newsletter

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