

NAU Retirees FLASH

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

Fall Picnic 2026

Date: Thursday, September 10th
Place: Ponderosa Pavilion west of Walkup Skydome
Program: TBD
Social: 11:00 - 11:30
Lunch: 11:30 - 1:00
Price: \$15 per person
RSVP: Friday, September 4th

6" Sub Sandwich Selection

- Turkey & Cheddar Sub
 - Ham and Swiss Sub
- Roasted Veggies and Hummus Sub
 - Lettuce, Onion and Tomato
 - Assorted Bags of Chips
 - Cookies and Brownies
 - Iced Tea and Water

Make luncheon reservations by Friday, September 4th, 2026. You can RSVP and pay online at [nau.edu/naura](https://in.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 September 4th. A prepaid reservation is required.



President's Corner

Hello Dear NAURA Members!

How do **YOU** spell SUMMER?

Summer! Plenty of that when you live in the Valley of the Sun. 100+-degree temps are no strangers to Valley NAURA members!

Umbrellas! Use them and hold on to them when you visit Chicago in the middle of a “tornado” in June.

Memories made! Family gatherings for celebrations big and small!

Moments to cherish! Especially when everybody is taking pictures at a family wedding.

Events! The planning, the excitement, the “once in a lifetime” celebration.

Relaxing; Reading; Recover; Rehabilitate; Replenish; Rest and Repose; Reduce Stress; and Refill our calendars for the upcoming events for NAURA—summer, fall, winter and spring!

So, how do **YOU** spell **SUMMER**?

Join the fun! Meet amazing new friends. Return to the NAU campus where you gave so much of your time and talents. NAURA makes it easy to make **SUMMER** a time to rejuvenate our commitment to serve the NAU community.

Our new NAURA members are encouraged to spend part of their summer with our NAURA family. Our long-time friends welcome each of you!

I am especially delighted to be part of YOUR SUMMER. Come be a part of mine!

Gratefully serving,

Claire Schonaerts
NAURA President



Treasurer's Report

TREASURER'S REPORT:	Submitted May 15, 2026	
Starting Chase Bank Balance:	March 15, 2026	\$ 22,238.79
Revenue:		\$ 3,552.63
Dues / Deposits - (20 memberships-10 Annual and 10 Lifetime; 23 lunch Payments)		
Expenditures:		(\$ 4,311.65)
NAU CSV—\$3,855.52 Spring Luncheon—\$456.13		
Total in Chase Bank Account:	May 15, 2026	\$ 21,479.77
Edward Jones Account Balance:	March 15, 2026	\$102,110.73
Gain in Account Value—		\$ 385.80
Total in Edward Jones:	May 15, 2026	\$102,496.53
Total in both accounts:	May 15, 2026	\$123,976.30
Scholarship Donations Fiscal Year 2026		\$ 275.00

*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 **Spring Luncheon**, held on April 30th, was a success in so many ways! The food was delicious, the conversation was lively, we had new members attending, and the amendments to the NAURA constitution were approved. We also gained two Members-at-Large for your NAURA Service Board — Mirna Lord and Tessie Moate. A success all around.



- ANNUAL Membership Renewals** — Parking permits expired on June 30, 2026 so if you haven't already, it's time to renew your annual membership to NAURA. To renew, go to nau.edu/naura and follow the instructions on the Join/Renew Membership link.
- BBQ at the Schonaerts**— NAURA members are again invited to a gathering at Claire and Phil Schonaerts' cabin on Friday, August 7th from 11am—2pm in the cool pines of Munds Park—20 miles south of Flagstaff and 105 miles north of Phoenix. Watch for a SPARK email with more details and instructions to RSVP.
- Highway Clean-Up** – This spring's NAURA Highway Cleanup was a great success! Eight people came out on May 13 to the Marathon Market on Highway 180 and picked up numerous bags of trash and other things that couldn't fit into bags. We had a couple of rookies and several people who had been out many times on a very nice morning. Thanks to all who took part. Please look for notice of our fall Cleanup in October.
- After several years of being condemned, the **SBS West** building is finally closing and its occupants are moving to different locations on campus. NAURA, along with the Center for Service and Volunteerism (CSV) will move to the classroom in Sechrist Hall by the end of June.
- If you are a natural-born leader in search of a group to lead, the NAURA Service Board has an opportunity for you! We have an opportunity for you to become President-Elect of NAURA. Are you a copious notetaker? NAURA is seeking a Secretary who is an important gatekeeper for our organization. Meetings are via Zoom or Teams so travel is not necessary. To volunteer or see a job description for these offices, please contact NAURA at naura@nau.edu.



Coast-to-Coast Hike in Northern England

By Karen Plager

In May 2025 I had an amazing adventure hiking Coast-to-Coast in northern England for 13 days, including one rest day. I joined a group through the travel adventure organization, Distant Journeys, now renamed Field House Adventures. This is an all-women run business in Camden, Maine. They have an array of hiking trips in the USA and around the world that are both guided and self-guided. I have had the pleasure of doing one self-guided tour in the Dolomites (2022) and two guided, Norway (2023) and northern England (2025). Their adventures are graded easy to strenuous.

The northern England hike was moderate to strenuous. We hiked 12 days with one rest day. Each day was an amazing hike in the beautiful spring countryside. We averaged 8-13 miles a day. We really lucked out with gorgeous weather and no rain. They needed rain, but rain might have been a game changer hiking through wet, boggy moorlands, over fells (British word for mountains), and through grassy fields with sheep and their baby lambkins. I loved the mamas and their babies, iconic British countryside.



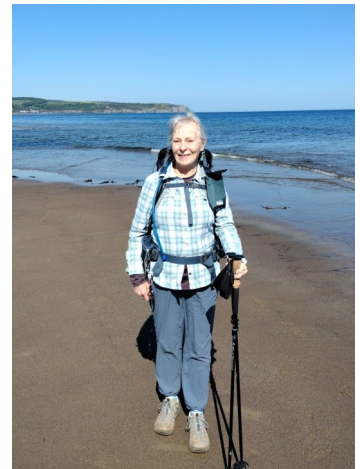
At the end of each day of hiking, we stayed at beautiful old inns in small villages or in the open countryside. We had delicious meals, breakfast, and full 3-4 course gourmet dinners served at each inn. There were several days when we stayed two nights at an inn. Especially our rest day, we stayed at a wonderful Edwardian hotel, Stone House Inn, for two nights. Our rest day consisted of the option of walking about a mile across a field into the town of Hawes in the Wensleydale Valley in the Northern Yorkshire Dales. This lovely little market town featured the Wensleydale Creamery, where we enjoyed a demonstration of how the cheese is made and then a tasting of a variety of delicious English cheeses.

Coast-to-Coast Hike in Northern England—continued

But I am getting ahead of myself. Departing the USA, I arrived a couple days early in Manchester, England (our rendezvous site), so that I could rest up from the long flight and experience a little of Manchester. It is a lovely city on the Mersey River with a rich history. Famous for its soccer teams, they even have a Manchester University Campus of Football Business, and its former cotton trade. Allen Turin, the father of computers, mathematical genius and WWII code breaker, was from Manchester. I enjoyed a private city tour with a retired high school history teacher, perfect for giving me an overview of the sites and history of Manchester, more so than if I had a travel book and tried to do it by myself.

Our group met up at the Manchester Airport then traveled about two to three hours by bus to our first hotel in Goathland about 10 miles from Whitby on the North Sea. This is where our first day of hiking officially started as we were hiking coast to coast from the North Sea to the Irish Sea where we would dip our feet in both bodies of water. We each carried a small stone from the North Sea to leave on the beach of the Irish Sea.

We hiked east to west, which is the opposite direction that most people hike this trail. The rationale being “with the sun at our backs and the gentler terrain to start, we save the most challenging and best for last.” We first traversed the North York Moors National Park across high heathered moors and wide-open vistas. Next, we traversed the Northern Yorkshire Dales with lush green valleys, ever present dry stonewalls, and quaint old market towns. The “crown jewel of England’s national parks”, the Lake District comprised the last 5 days of hiking and it was indeed stunning and challenging as we hiked up and over steep rocky fells with cascading becks (streams) and glittering lakes (hence the name Lake District).



Coast-to-Coast Hike in Northern England—continued

We stayed in places with names like Mallyon Spout Hotel, Lions Inn, King's Head Inn, The Fleece Hotel, Charles Bathurst Inn, Stone House Inn, Black Swan Inn, Inn on the Lake, Wasdale Head Inn, and finally The Traddock. Each was unique, charming, and beautiful in its own way. Because my planned roommate had to cancel at the last minute, I stayed in the most amazing double occupancy rooms which often had huge bathtubs that I would fill full and take a long, hot soak after our long days of hiking. What a luxury that was! Probably the last place we stayed, Traddock, was my favorite. I had a huge suite with a separate bathroom and an enormous clawfoot bathtub. The Traddock is where we had our final, and very elegant, dinner in a private dining room.



Some of my favorite things were all the spring flowers in bloom in the English countryside: gorse, wild garlic, blue bells that gave the ground a blue haze, violets, sweet William and many others. Spring gardens in villages were resplendent with tulips, lilacs and the most giant clematis vines I have ever seen. We passed through old forests with larch, gnarled old oaks, and huge beech trees as well as ash, linden, horse chestnuts, sycamores and maples. The English love their sheep and so did I. It was spring lambing season, so every ewe had 1 or 2 lambs, some even had 3. They came in many varieties, including Swaledale, Blueface Leicester, and Herdwick. The beloved Herdwick is apparently not good for its wool or meat but is a nationally conserved treasure through a perpetual grant of the Beatrix Potter



Endowment. We saw many bird species like Gray Geese, Kerfew, Sand Martins, Grouse, Pheasant, Lapwing, and Oyster Catchers. My very favorite was a unique pony breed, the Cumbria Fell Pony, which apparently was a favorite of Queen Elizabeth as well. They are semi-wild in the Lake District. Unfortunately, we didn't get to see any wandering the steep sides of the fells.

The scenery was varied and stunning all along the way; the Lake District being the most extraordinary. It is interesting that a 2500 foot fell can be every bit as challenging as climbing our own Mt. Humphreys. We didn't get to see the heather in bloom on the moors as it is fall flowering, but the spring flowers made up for it in every way.

The English people were charming and delightful all along the way, ever welcoming and generous in their hospitality. I was pooped at the end of each day but regaled in the beauty and variety of the English countryside. A trip I would recommend, if you are up to the challenge!

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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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 - 02/28/2026—6/16/2026

Lisa Coleman Ashley

Paul S Bakke

Landon Hope Bradford

Jacqueline G Buchanan

Cynthis A Catizone

Shannon Williams Clark

Melissa A Cohen

Kathleen Anne Corak

John Richard Ellison

Robyn M Hansen

Lisa J Heflin

Amy Hitt

Cynthia Clare Ivy

Rick Keeling

Paula Ann Logie

Robin Fritts Long

Jerome D Mahaffey

Kelley Sliva McKee

Suzanne B McWilliams

Mary Mullen

Pamela J Olsen

Russell B Peterson

Elizabeth M Pifer

Dawn Marie Rivas

Lori Ann Rubino-Hare

Michael Jason Smith

Wendy Anne Tappan

Lonnie E Wederski

## 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.

Norman Joseph Bertram (1942-2025) - Norman passed away on June 22, 2025 at the age of 83. He served as NAURA president in 2017-2018. Norman was a loving father whose strength, kindness and guidance shaped the lives of his family. He will be remembered for his warmth, his wisdom and love he gave. He is survived by his wife, Edith Bertram, and sons Norman Bertram Jr., Rodney Bertram and preceded by his death Joseph Karl Bertram. His memory will live on in all who knew and loved him.

James Manley (1953-2026) - Jim Manley, age 72, passed away on February 3, 2026. Born in Kansas City, Missouri on November 10, 1953, Jim was known for his determination, curiosity, and, as a teacher, his love and dedication to his students through the years. Jim enjoyed his teaching career in the Mesa School District, including Jefferson, Stevenson, and Mendoza Elementary Schools, and at Northern Arizona University. His many professional accomplishments included a National Presidential Award for Excellence for Math and Science, 2000 Arizona Teacher of the Year, and the Milken National Education Award in 2000. He took immense pride in teaching and mentoring his students, community involvement, and enjoying life to the fullest.

Throughout his life, Jim had a strong interest in many things and especially appreciated the outdoors. He loved to camp, bike, hike, and ski. He favored tie-dyed t-shirts, tinkering with things at home, and listening to music of all genres. Jim was always curious about things and deeply dedicated to his family and students.

Together with his wife, Julie, they enjoyed bike touring in many parts of the country. Jim's story was uniquely his, and he will be remembered in his way by those whose lives he touched.



Executive Committee Directory—2026-2027

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:

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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
Member-at-Large	Mirna Lord	mlord03@icloud.com
Member-at-Large	Tessie Moate	tgmoate@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	VACANT	
Admin. Support	Nydia Nittmann	nydia.nittmann@nau.edu

NAURA PRESIDENT LIST—last 20 years

2007-2008	Charles Barnes	2017-2018	Norman Bertram
2008-2009	William Nietmann	2018-2019	Kathe Shinharn
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
2016-2017	Toni Fox	2026-2027	Claire E Schonaerts

NAU Retirees FLASH Newsletter

Published by NAU Retirees Association
Northern Arizona University
P. O. Box 5601 Flagstaff AZ 86011-5601

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