

National:  
Mentoring Month  
Blood Donor Month  
Glaucoma Awareness Month

# Pima County School Retirees' Association

January, 2017

*We welcome all retired school employees*

## New Years' Celebrations

Think back to your favorite New Year's Celebration ... Maybe it was the first year as a little kid that you got to stay up really late to watch the New Year come in. Maybe it was the year you turned twenty-one, and at 12:00 midnight you got to toast with actual champagne.

I'll bet it was not 1999! Remember "Y2K" (year two thousand), when a calendar change spooked fears for the end of the world? A Time magazine article explained the problem: "The bug at the center of the Year 2000 mess is fairly simple. . . many system programmers set aside only two digits to denote the year in dates. Trouble is, when the computer's clock strikes 2000, the math can get screwy. That can prompt some computers to do the wrong thing and stop others from doing anything at all." The possibilities included a catastrophic breakdown of electricity and communication, cities going dark, banks crashing!

In fact the Time's cover showed the headline: THE END OF THE WORLD!?! But the story's conclusion was that such an end was unlikely to come. However, some folks had holed up in bunkers in preparation for the new year. One family was left with twelve cans of Spam that they swore to eat, disaster or not.

So when we think of New Year 2017 with the Inauguration of Donald Trump as America's new president just days away, "Hope Springs Eternal." Time Columnist Joe Klein stated, "What if this turns out to be a popular presidency? It is entirely possible . . . the Russians, based on common commercial interest, will be good for the peace of the world. It is possible that Trump's . . . appointees will clean out the cobwebs in departments and agencies. . . . It is even possible that Trump's . . . conflicts of interest will be a good thing—the more hotels and golf courses and oil deals he and his cronies have around the world, the less likely they'll be to blow it up. Nothing is unthinkable anymore."

As citizens, we just have to believe that our America will remain strong and survive as powerful as ever!

AMERICA WILL SURVIVE!

"GOD BLESS AMERICA!"

Happy New Year!

## The Time Has Come, Once Again, to Send Those Volunteer Hours in!

PCSRA members received volunteer hours tally sheets this fall. Please review your 2016 calendars and record the hours spent helping individuals or organizations since last New Year's Day. On the back of the sheet, please provide a list of ways in which you accrued those volunteer hours. PCSRA must report the number of members' volunteer hours to its parent organization, AASRA by January 31.

Send your form to Gail Schuessler at 2025 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Tucson, AZ 85719-5104 or email it to [gschuessler@yahoo.com](mailto:gschuessler@yahoo.com).



## President's Desk

~ Ann Reaban



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## December Report

PCSRA Membership: 215

AASRA (state) membership: 74

Scholarship Fund: \$815.93

## Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> Luncheon at Our Saviour's L. Church

### PCSRA Authors Discussion Panel

\$11.00 each      Postmark by Feb. 2 to:  
PCSRA Reservations, 4315 E. Seneca St., 85712.

**Menu:** Chicken Cacciatore, Green Salad, Rice Pilaf or Noodles, Rolls, & Valentine Dessert.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest \_\_\_\_\_

## February: Meet Our Authors

Those who come early to the February PCSRA Luncheon will have the opportunity to visit with the PCSRA published authors who are being honored for "Love of Reading" month. Twelve authors have been invited to arrive at 11:00 with their books for sale and autographing. Some of the authors have published new books since we met them last year.

Published PCSRA authors include: Peg Aughenbaugh, Bill Black, Peter Bourret, Dr. Nicholas Clement, Gayle Jandrey, Lorna Kraemer, Burgess Needle, Bill Peltier, Paris Rebl, Roni Capin Rivera-Ashford, and Antonia "Kita" Scrivner.

Several of the authors mentioned above will participate in a panel discussion moderated by Bill Black. They will talk about the creative process and answer some questions posed by the audience.



Bill Black (shown with his wife, Sue) will moderate the panel discussion.

## Want to be more of a Techie?

AARP Bulletin / Real Possibilities, 12/16

AARP offers an easy way for us to become more competent in areas from computer fundamentals to using computer tools to be more productive. Go to [aarp.org/skillsinventory](http://aarp.org/skillsinventory) to take a quiz that lasts about twenty 20 minutes. After that you'll receive recommendations about some short videos that you can watch to learn more about using your computer and being more functional online.



Some of the areas you might learn about are some popular writing, mail and spreadsheet programs and various search engines. For more information and to take the assessment, go to; [aarp.org/skillsinventory](http://aarp.org/skillsinventory).



## Experts Offer Health Guidance

AARP December 2016, Your Best Health 2017

**"Get into the habit of a brisk daily walk with a friend: the aerobic conditioning gets your heart to pump oxygen and nutrients to your brain; the conversation will further strengthen your neural circuits."**

Gary W. Small, MD, professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences, David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA

**"Pay attention to early WARNING SIGNS and keep up with screening exams."**

Robert N. Golden, MD, dean, School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**"EAT LESS MEAT AND MORE PLANTS."**

David L. Katz, MD, director, Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center.

**"A major source of stress on the body is an irregular schedule. Try to eat, sleep and exercise at the same time every day."**

David B. Agus, MD, professor of medicine and engineering, University of Southern California.

**"Engage in a new activity that stimulates you physically, mentally and socially. Ballroom dancing, bowling, biking or birding --- just to name a few 'B' possibilities!"**

Reisa Sperling, MD, director, Center for Alzheimer's Research and Treatment, Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

**"Everything in moderation, including moderation."**

Bruce Leff, MD, director, Center for Transformative Geriatric Research, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

**"Understand that there is NOT a magic bullet, but rather the accumulation of small decisions and actions over a lifetime."**

Dariusz Mozaffarian, MD, dean, Tufts University, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

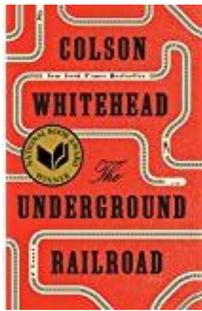
**"Do everything you can do to avoid being alone. Find an active group to belong to and participate."**

John J. Ratey, MD, Clinical associate professor of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School.

# PCSRA's First Book Club to Meet

By Jim Marr

Our membership has expressed an interest in starting a book club. **This is an open invitation to all to attend.** We anticipate that this club will provide a forum for stimulating discussions and new friendships. Future book selections and formats will be developed by the participants.



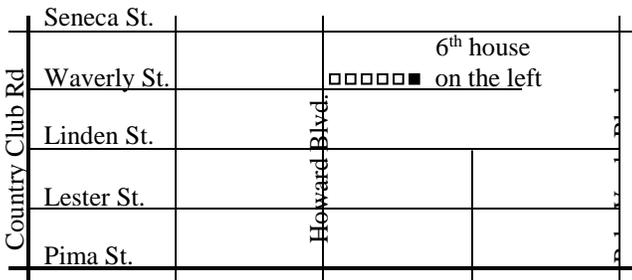
We will discuss The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead at our first meeting in February. Mr. Whitehead won the National Book Award for fiction in 2016 for his unique style of storytelling that alternated between fact, fiction, and fantasy. Oprah Winfrey brought national attention to this book when she selected it for her book club.

“The novel follows a slave named Cora who escapes a Georgia plantation and, in a surreal twist, travels north via a literal underground subway.”<sup>1</sup>

“Although the setting is surreal, the characters are grounded in the harsh reality of African-American history, toiling ever harder for survival even as the promise of freedom looms around the bend.”<sup>2</sup>

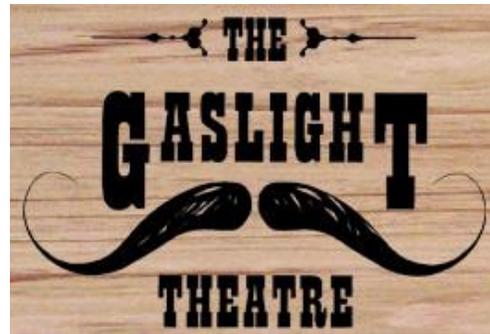
This book is available from Amazon as low as \$12.98 (+ \$3.99 shipping). A Kindle version is \$13.99. An audio version is \$30.98. Barnes and Noble sell this book at \$18.86. Please check at your favorite bookstore for additional availability. Contact Jim Marr at jbm500@cox.net or 977-9438.

**Thursday, February 16 at 1:00 p.m.  
3331 E. Waverly Street**



<sup>1</sup> Colson Whitehead wins National Book Award for ‘The Underground Railroad’, by Alexandra Alter, the New York Times, November 17, 2016

<sup>2</sup> The 10 Best Novels, by Sarah Begley, Time Magazine, December 19, 2016, pg. 149.



## Sell, Sell, Sell Those Tickets!

We are quickly approaching the deadline for the sale of the Gaslight Theatre tickets, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. This fundraiser is to increase our scholarship fund as well as to provide a fun time for our members. "Dos Amigos" is scheduled for Sunday, February 19 at 3:00 PM. The doors open at 2:15 PM. We have reserved excellent seats for 52 people. It's a great way to celebrate Rodeo Week too!

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at our next PCSRA meeting on January 12 or by contacting, Terry Bagwell at 748-1720, Paris Rebl at 885-7724 or Judy Hokett at 740-4464. Make your checks out to PCSRA. Cash is fine too. We hope to see you at the Gaslight Theatre!!!

## You Can Raise Scholarship Fun(d)

Did you receive new and wonderful items for the holidays? Would someone else like to own the item you replaced?



**it for our Secret Ticket Drawing!**

Do you create things? Do you know other people who do? Ask them to donate for our fund raiser in March and April! Decorative items, Day of work, Jewelry, Hand-crocheted scarf, Some hours of genealogical research, Specially baked items, Quilt, Blown glass, Restaurant gift card, Art work!



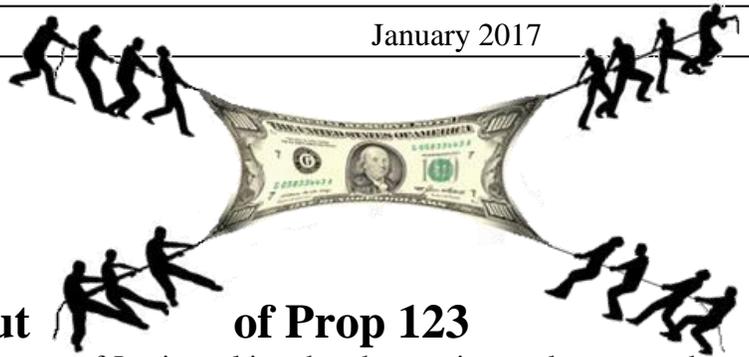
**it for our Secret Ticket Drawing!**

Bring items to the February meeting, and give them to Terry Bagwell, Judy Hokett, Paris Rebl or Sue Ellen Coltrin. You could also call one of us to arrange to drop items off at our homes.



## Education News

~ Jerry Holmes



### Ryan Makes a Federal Case Out of Prop 123

A complaint has been filed with the US Department of Justice asking that they review and overturn the results of the spring 2016 election that implemented Proposition 123. Proposition 123 was prompted by a lawsuit filed by schools claiming the legislature had inadequately funded schools for several years in non-compliance with a voter approved mandate in 2000. Prop 123, which accelerated the withdrawal rate from the State Land Trust from 2.5% annually to 6.9%, was proposed by Gov. Ducey to settle that lawsuit and was approved by a very slim margin at a special election in May of 2016. The Advocates for School Trust Lands, represented by Attorney Thomas Ryan, is claiming that the federal Enabling Act, which allowed Arizona to become a state in 1912, does not allow Arizona to accelerate the withdrawal rate of funds from the Land Trust Proceeds without the approval of Congress. The Enabling Act vested the new state with about 10 million acres of what had been federal land that should be sold or leased in order to benefit several entities, primarily public education. Today about 9.2 million acres remain under the state's control. A suit had been filed in federal courts by a single individual protesting the acceleration of withdrawals, but the suit was eventually dropped because of the formidable costs associated with pursuing it.

### No Dough for Full-Day K

A coalition of leaders from business, politics and education is seeking funding for full-day kindergarten in Arizona. Currently, if districts choose to offer full-day K they must fund the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the day from their own coffers or charge parents for the additional time. The group went before the State Board of Education on October 25<sup>th</sup> asking that the board back efforts by the group to gain full day funding. Virtually all parties involved agree that Gov. Ducey's prioritization on the issue will be the deciding factor on whether full-day K is funded. A Ducey spokesperson, Daniel Ruiz, says the governor supports the idea, but that money must be available in order to have the governor throw his weight behind the effort. There is no current estimate made available to the public on the cost involved in full day kindergarten. However, in 2010 when full-day K was defunded, \$218 million was cut from the state budget. At this moment there would not appear to be a surplus in state revenues that would cover such an expense.

### Tax Credits Program Expanded to Include Testing Fees

During its last session the state legislature approved changes to long standing tax credit policies for public schools. In the past, the activity had to be optional, non-credit, school-sponsored educational or recreational activities that supplemented a school's educational program. Most importantly the governing board had to institute fees for extracurricular activities in order to make those activities eligible to receive tax credits. That is no longer the case. Collection of fees is optional for an activity to be eligible to receive tax credits. Tax credits can now be collected for: 1. Standardized testing fees for college credit or readiness, standardized testing prep courses or materials and career and technical education industry certification assessments. 2. Character education programs 3. Extracurricular activities. One sticking point is that the fee must be paid to the school. If a testing agency charges the fee then tax credits are not eligible for use. The limits of \$200 for a single taxpayer or \$400 for a joint return still apply. One other change that has occurred is if you make a tax credit donation between January 1 and April 15 of 2017 or subsequent years, the tax credit can be applied to the prior year's tax obligation. So if you make a donation in February 2017, for a student to participate in an upcoming band competition out of state, you can apply that donation to your 2016 tax return.

## **Douglas Cites Needs – Legislators Scoff**

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, State Superintendent of Instruction Diane Douglas proposed an additional \$680 million in spending on Arizona schools. Her proposals, entitled Arizona Kids Can't Wait, are aimed at teacher pay raises of at least 5%, rural schools issues, maintenance on existing school buildings and construction of new facilities. Douglas suggested using the surplus in the state's rainy day fund and the general fund. This brought several rebukes from legislators. Don Shooter (R), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, responded "It's just not going to happen unless people come up with a funding source."

## **It Took Them a Year to Figure That Out?**

The Classrooms First Initiative Council, a committee chartered by Gov. Ducey in 2015 to make recommendations regarding improving Arizona school funding formulas, issued their report on December 14<sup>th</sup>. One of the group's recommendations was to equalize funding between public and charter schools, resulting in more money for charters. The group suggested simplification of funding formulas, standardized and consolidated tax rates among school districts, reducing reliance on bonds and overrides and additional funding for schools in low income areas. The committee went beyond the scope of their assignment to recommend higher salaries for teachers as a means to attract more teachers to the profession, and incentives to attract teachers to rural and low income areas. They included a reminder that Proposition 301, a sales tax funding source, will expire in 2021 and Prop 123 will expire in 10 years. They also stressed the profound need for capital improvements for schools' facilities. Gov. Ducey told reporters that he will have "an exciting education agenda" for the upcoming legislative session that will include some of the groups' proposals. Speaking of implementing the Council's plans Ducey said, "... we want to do what's politically possible in this next (legislative) session".

## **Been There, Done That**

On Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Heather Carter, (R), told reporters she was working on a "grand plan" to provide new money for K-12 education as well as our underfunded post-secondary system. While she did not spell out the details, she indicated that the plan would include a 1% sales tax increase to be approved by voters that she projected would provide about \$1 billion annually in funding to schools. Her plan would be contrary to Ducey's campaign promise to reduce taxes every year of his term. Carter's main focus is raising teacher salaries. The average salary in Arizona for a teacher is \$45, 477 compared to the national average of \$58,064. Bringing Arizona's teachers up to the average could cost as much as \$750 million. Carter said, "We want to make sure we are doing everything we can to attract and retain the best and brightest teachers in all of our classrooms...". Carter's plan would be a ballot referendum or initiative and bypass the necessity for the governor's signature.

## **Judge Bucks Rate Raise**

A recent Arizona Supreme Court ruling has cast a wide shadow on the Arizona retirement system practice of raising contribution rates for employees since 2011. The case involved a judge whose contribution rate to the Elected Officials Retirement Plan was 7% when he took the bench. Subsequently, the state raised the rate to more than 11% to protect the viability of the fund. The judge sued saying this violated his contract with the fund. The Supreme Court agreed and ruled in his favor. The Arizona Supreme Court ruling specifically applied to the Elected Officials Retirement Plan and the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System. Because the ruling is so recent, it is unknown at this time if the ruling could affect thousands of employees in various state retirement funds. Interpretations and responses from various agencies are pending. There are only seven states that have constitutionally protected public pension plans. Arizona's plan is regarded as one with the strongest protections in the country. That means that any change to the plan could be submitted to voters. It is likely that we will soon see a ballot measure aimed at changing the language of the Arizona Constitution, Article 29 Section 1C, that says "public system retirement benefits shall not be diminished or impaired".

## Farewell

**Anderson**, Eleanor (84) 11/22; Sp. Ed. Teacher  
**Argraves**, Michael (60) 12/23; TUSD Sp. Ed. Teacher/Coach  
**Brantley**, Edna (91) 12/2; Teacher at Naylor & Secrist  
**Brunso**, Beth (48) 12/26; Teacher  
**Calmes**, Mary (90) 12/3; Rincon Bio/Chem. Teacher  
**Cipinko**, Stuart (69) 12/1; Teacher  
**Colonna**, Bernard (67) 12/10; Educator  
**Galhouse**, Marie (90) 11/19; Teacher  
**Gilbert**, Margery (73) 12/2; K Teacher at Erickson  
**Harris**, Elizabeth (95) 3/1; Canyon Del Oro Librarian  
**Hauge**, Dr. Lawrence (88) 1/2017; Teacher/Principal  
**Heilman**, Jacquelyn (90) 12/28; Teacher  
**Hickman**, Nina (51) 12/1; TUSD  
**Hutcherson**, Irene (98) 12/30; Teacher  
**Joseph**, Elaine (85) 12/2; Teacher  
**\*McCormick**, Fay (86) 12/16; Air Force Major,  
 P.E. Teacher in Morenci, Casa Grande, & Tucson,  
 Tennis Coach at Cholla  
**Paterson**, Kelly (76) 12/29; Teacher, Amphi ESL Dir.  
**Ramirez**, Dorothy (95) 12/29; Utterback Teacher  
**Shirey**, Naomi (88) 12/11; Teacher  
**Sims**, Mary Louise (95) 11/4; Teacher  
**Sutton**, Carol 1/1; Teacher

## Directory Corrections

Adalyn Mains  
 210-646-5504  
[AdalynMains@gmail.com](mailto:AdalynMains@gmail.com)  
 (Adalyn says hello to everyone.  
 She's doing well!)

Josephine Myers  
 5620 E Peak View Rd.  
 Cave Creek, AZ 85331-6426

Dr. Richard Sherfey  
 450 W. Cool Drive, Apt. 222  
 Oro Valley, AZ 85704

## Poetry Corner



### *Cattlemen at the Cantina*

*The old cattlemen were out for a night  
 In old Tucson, gonna do it right.  
 They would revive some old memories  
 As the night and the drinks increased by  
 degree,  
 Making them younger and stronger  
 And the real story would stretch a bit longer.*

*Stanza One . . . Bill Black*

### *a poet's unconditional love affair with a blank page*

*the snow white paper only smiles  
 knowing that someone bothered to sprinkle  
 words  
 sometimes lyrical  
 sometimes sad and filled with ancient pain  
 these words  
 all citizens of the heart  
 beg to be heard  
 by that true inner ear  
 that listens beyond the letters that huddle  
 together  
 becoming words and phrases*

*Peter M. Bourret*