

National:

Women's History Month

American Red Cross Month

Irish-American Heritage Month

Pima County School Retirees' Association

March, 2017

We welcome all retired school employees



President's Desk

~ Ann Reaban



The American Irish

Having an Irish heritage, I have always loved the enchanted magic of St. Patrick's Day ... the creatures of Irish folklore ... leprechauns, banshees, pixies & sprites, Irish dancing that understands a happy heart, rainbows with pots of gold just waiting. One of my favorite musicals is "Finnian's Rainbow."

*"Look, look, look to the rainbow.
Follow the fellow who follows a dream!
On the day I was born, said me father, said he
I've an elegant legacy, waitin' for ye
'Tis a rhyme for your lips and a song for your heart,
To sing it whenever your world falls apart."*



And the world did fall apart for the Irish. It was the years 1845-1849, the Irish Potato Famine, when the potato crops failed caused by late "blight." This disease destroys both the leaves and the edible roots, or tubers, of the potato plant. The Irish famine was the worst to occur in Europe in the 19th century. Ireland's tenant farmers struggled to provide food for themselves and their families. The potato had become a staple crop in Ireland because it was hardy, nutritious, and relatively easy to grow in the Irish soil. Half the Irish population and especially the poor had always depended on the potato for their food. Starving Irish people were dying from typhus and other famine-related diseases.

In the 1840's, thousands of Irish people immigrated to America, many to the Boston area. The Irish immigrant experience was not easy because they had few skills besides cooking and cleaning or working in factories. They were ostracized by American society for many reasons other than being newcomers. They were ostracized for being Catholic, a minority religion in America. There were many in America who saw the Irish as "being angry alcoholics who drank all the time, had bar brawls, were illiterate, greedy, clannish, bred like rabbits and were a stupid servant race."

Frank Mc Court, the author of Angela's Ashes, wrote: "They scream at me and tell me I'm filthy. I try to explain that Mam has the disease and I'm worn out trying to make ends meet, keeping home fires burning, getting lemonade for Mam, and bread for my brothers." As a little boy, Mc Court went from house to house begging for coal, pushing the pram and dragging his brothers along. All he got for it is chewed out.



February Report

PCSRA Membership: 185

AASRA Membership: 89

Scholarship Fund: \$1,703.62

4/13 Luncheon -- Our Saviour's L. Church

Honoring Dr. Mary Belle McCorkle

\$11.00 each Postmark by April 1 to:
PCSRA Reservations, 4315 E. Seneca St., 85712.

Menu: To be determined.

Name _____

Guest _____

Accolades Ring for Dr. McCorkle

PCSRA will bestow the Volunteer Service Award on Mary Belle McCorkle at the April Luncheon. Dr. McCorkle has been well-known in education circles in Tucson for many years. She has been a teacher, administrator, assistant superintendent and member of the TUSD School Board. Among her other honors, a new school, Mary Belle McCorkle Academy of Excellence K-8, was opened in 2011. Dr. McCorkle has long supported all-day kindergarten and been interested in the well-being of the whole child. Join us to celebrate an educator many have admired and emulated. Invite others who know Dr. McCorkle.

Go Old West for a Day

The Empire Ranch Foundation near Sonoita will hold its Spring Trail Ride on Saturday, April 1. No fooling! While few PCSRA members would care to ride a horse for three hours, we thought it would be fun to mosey on down to the Empire Ranch to enjoy the other activities.

This is a chance to see the Empire Ranch in person and be part of the party! Trail riders will leave the Ranch at 9:00 and return at noon. Another group will ride out at 2:00pm and return at 5:00pm. Lunch is served from 11:00am until 3:00pm. There will be western music, storytelling, a raffle and docent-led tours at 11:00 and 2:00.

We will meet at 10:00am at the NW corner of the parking lot at the Wal-Mart at Speedway and Kolb. The trip will take approximately an hour each way on a sometimes quite curvy road. The temperature should be between 66° and 74°, per historic averages. Bring a hat and sunscreen; you will be outside.

Reservations are essential to ensure that we have enough transportation and the Ranch has enough food for LUNCH! PRICE: \$20.00 for lunch and perhaps a donation to your driver.

If you plan to go and will drive, please tell Terry Bagwell how many people you can take. Please pay Terry your \$20 for lunch. If you would like to go and need a ride, notify Terry Bagwell and secure your reservation with \$20. Check made to Terry Bagwell. 748-1720 or 331-1715; tbasketcase@cox.net; 5902 E. Hawthorne St., 85711-1528

To learn more, go to <https://www.empireranchfoundation.org/ranch-events/trail-ride/>.

DEADLINE: March 22 (Five going so far!)

PCSRA Book Club Coverage

Our first meeting in February was a hit! We discussed the book "Underground Railroad" and then found a variety of other topics to discuss. The conversation was friendly, insightful, supportive, and informative. The 'buzz' was so positive that two more people have decided to join. Participants are not limited by their desire to read a particular book.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 16 at 1:00 p.m. We will be meeting at Steve Poe's home, at 3331 E. Waverly Street between Pima and Grant.

Bring yourself, maybe a book to recommend, an interest in meeting great people, and be prepared to have a wonderful afternoon. Jim Marr: 520-885-8958 jbm500@cox.net

Gaslight Gig Ropes in Bucks

Thank you PCSRA members and friends for the support you provided in making the "Two Amigos" a fun-filled, pleasant and profitable event. We sold all 52 tickets which resulted in a \$291.20 profit for the scholarship fund. In addition, several members, who could not attend gave donations to increase the fund to assist a UA junior student majoring in education.

Irish, continued from Page 1

Over time the Irish immigrants became more successful at business and politics as long as they voted for the Democratic Party. When Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., the son of an Irish immigrant, was a young boy, he sold hats for a business on Beacon Hill. In later years when asked about his experiences in Boston, he said, "I stood in my doorway and made a promise to myself that someday when I had children of my own, I would be in a position to give them all the toys that these children of privilege enjoyed."

The Irish people have successfully become a part of the American way of life, but a new group of immigrants now face the same challenges. President Trump, is the America of today still willing to extend that dream, and treat these immigrants with the dignity, respect and compassion that they deserve?

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free ... Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me ...

"The New Colossus" . . . Emma Lazarus

State Seeks to Shift Desegregation Funding to Individual Districts

In late January the Senate Appropriation Committee sent SB1174 on to the Committee of the Whole Senate.

Originated by Sen. Debbie Lesko (R), the bill would eliminate the automatic levy of taxes in many Arizona school districts for funding allocated for desegregation and student achievement efforts. The bill requires that each affected district seek an override election to gain approval of the extra funding for desegregation for up to seven years. For those districts that are not successful in gaining voter approval, funding would decrease by 15% each year until 2024 when no district could levy for deseg funds without voter approval. School officials in the 19 districts affected argue that they are under court order to spend additional funds to increase educational opportunity for minorities. Sen. Steve Farley (D) responded that his constituents want more funding for all of education, not a reduction for some districts.



Legislative News

~ Jerry Holmes



Green Light for 50 Minutes of Daily Recess -- Red Light for Details

HB 2082, stipulating at least 50 minutes of recess daily for elementary students was written about in the February edition of this column. It was passed unanimously by the House Education Committee January 30th. Rep. Jesus Rubalcava (D), who introduced the legislation, claims that research shows that recess increases a student's focus, fosters social development skills, combats child obesity, reduces stress and encourages kids to work off excess energy. The bill has received not only bi-partisan support from legislators, but accolades from parents, teachers and school administrators. However, several legislators that favor the bill have reservations about specific aspects of its language and may seek amendments to clarify foreseen problems.

Vouchers for All Bill Passes Senate Education Committee

SB 1431, introduced by Sen. Lesko (R) would give vouchers for tuition (called Empowerment Scholarship Accounts or ESA's in Arizona) to all 1.1 million school children in Arizona. The vouchers could be redeemed at any school, public or private, in Arizona. The bill passed the Senate Education Committee on a 4-3 vote. Sen. Lesko maintains that the \$5200 voucher would cover virtually all of a student's cost of attendance and would save the state money in the long run. Several officials challenged Sen. Lesko's math, showing that the cost of education is substantially higher for most students. Sen. David Bradley (D) proposed an amendment that would require any school accepting vouchers to comply with the same stipulations set forth for public schools. Thus receiving schools would not be able to screen out differently-abled children and would have to test all students as well. Bradley's amendment was rejected by the committee. Sen. Kate Brophy Magee (R) opposed the bill, saying that until public schools are adequately funded she cannot support tax dollars going to private or parochial schools. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee issued a report that showed that Lesko's bill would cost the state taxpayers millions of dollars.

Take Action Today to Save Your Medicare Benefits for Tomorrow

Congress would like to turn your Medicare into a voucher program. You would have to take your health care dollars and find an insurance plan in the open market. In the name of "simplification" they would turn your government-backed health plan into a benefit for insurance companies. **DON'T LET THEM DO IT!**

Call your Senators today and every day at every office and tell them to leave Medicare alone and to vote NO on any budget bill that changes the structure of Medicare. These daily calls will only take minutes.

Senator Flake

Phoenix: 602-840-1891

Tucson: 520-575-8633

Washington, DC: 202-224-4521

Senator McCain

Phoenix: 602-952-2410

Tucson: 520-670-6334

Prescott: 928-445-0833

Washington, DC: 202-224-2235

Farewell



Aros, Robert C. (70) ~ 1/30; TUSD Custodian
Bates, Ann (68) ~ 2/9; Teacher
Birch, Wesley (63) ~ 2/5; Teacher, Flowing Wells
Boher, Fred (81) ~ 2/8; TUSD Teacher
Bradley, Larry (?) ~ 1/21; Teacher
Cissell, Donald (81) ~ 12/31; Administrator
Crowley, Paul (82) ~ 2/8; Administrator
Dexter, Sondra (73) ~ 2/18; Teacher
Downey, Terry T. (?) ~ 2/22; Catalina Foothills
 Counselor, Principal, Assoc. Superintendent
Franklin, Frances (94) ~ 12/30; Administrator
Gavlak, Elizabeth (99) ~ 2/1; Teacher
Grimm, Janet (77) ~ 1/1; Teacher
Hall, Alene (91) ~ 1/11; Teacher
Hawk, Barbara (74) ~ 1/25; Teacher
Klein, Betty (89) ~ 2/11; Teacher
Leal, Stella (86) ~ 1/28; Teacher aide
Leckie, Kathryn (?) ~ 1/29; Teacher, Tanque Verde
McFarlane, Bette (88) ~ 2/8; Teacher
Peters, Elaine (?) ~ 2/3; Teacher
 ***Prentice**, Barbara (87) ~ 4/26/16; Teacher, Principal
 at Kellond, & TUSD Adaptive Education
Scheider, Jean (60) ~ 2/8; Bus Driver
Sparacino, Rose (91) ~ 2/9; Teacher
Stephenson, Pat (88) ~ 2/6; Teacher, Wakefield
Stirling, Mary Jean (93) ~ 2/13; Teacher TUSD
Stoller, Elaine (71) ~ 1/14; Teacher
Strauss, Kurt G. (95) ~ 2/23; Counselor
Tost, Bruce (64) ~ 2/6; Band and Orchestra
 Teacher at Roskruge & Hohokam
Tran, Thanh (61) ~ 1/4; Teacher, Computer Science
Wittry, Celestine (86) ~ 1/11; Substitute Teacher
Washbourne, Henrietta (94) ~ 1/15;
 Richardson Elementary
Whitaker, Janet (87) ~ 1/26; Librarian



Poetry Corner



the magic stop sign

*Arizona sunsets,
 be advised
 there's a new kid in town
 rode in on a rainstorm*

*an indelible rainbow
 tattooed across my memory . . .
 mesmerizing momentary masterpiece
 . . . a thousand memories . . .*

*it snuck into town to say hello
 seducing
 mesmerizing
 this unexpected moment
 the best kind of magic*

*. . . if
 I allow myself to open the window
 inviting in the ribbons of the rainbow
 absorbing each breath
 letting it all in
 even the grandfather clouds
 that sing back-up
 to the main attraction*

*. . . peter m. bourret
 (poem modified due to space
 constraints)*