

National:
LGBT History Month
Bullying Prevention Month
Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Pima County School Retirees' Association

October, 2016

We welcome all retired school employees

Watch Out for Fraud!

The U. S. Federal Trade Commission says that FRAUD has affected 25.6 million Americans, about 10% of our population.

Are YOU one of those people?

What is FRAUD anyway? Fraud is the criminal act of deceiving or misrepresenting the truth intended to result in financial or personal gain by inducing another person to part with something valuable or to surrender a legal right resulting in injury or damage. The U.S. Department of Justice states that most reported frauds deal with: unauthorized billing for buyer's clubs or internet services, weight loss products, prize promotions, and work-at-home programs.

However, in Oro Valley, on September 14, 2016, the police investigated an apparent "Virtual Kidnapping," when a mother got a frantic call from an unfamiliar voice telling her that her daughter had been kidnapped. If she hung up, her daughter would be harmed. She heard a female voice screaming and pleading for help. The caller demanded thousands of dollars in ransom. In cases like this, the FBI strongly suggests people: slow the conversation down and ask for more time; text or call the victim on another phone; and contact the police.

In Phoenix, authorities are searching for six people accused of running a money scam in which victims are promised a large amount of currency that is dyed black to avoid detection by authorities. A chemical returns the dyed money to its original form. Authorities say the money is actually black construction paper and the chemical is vitamin C and water.

In New York, a federal judge has granted class-action status to Walmart investors suing the world's largest retailer over allegations that it covered up a bribery scheme in Mexico to help its business there.

In Phoenix, U.S. District Court Judge Douglas Reyes refused to block the state from enforcing the controversial law against "Ballot Harvesting," during the coming election because there may be cases of fraud from such a practice. State GOP Chairman, Robert Graham, stated: "Ballot Harvesting is a practice... for manipulation and outright fraud."

In Atlanta, a former Verizon Wireless technician used the company's computer to obtain customers' private call records, and then sold them to an unnamed private investigator according to federal prosecutors.

In my opinion, the Wells Fargo case was the most disturbing of all. In Washington, D.C., the CEO of Wells Fargo, John Stumpf, faces accusations of fraud and calls for his resignation. "Cross-selling" is pushing account holders to open new accounts to meet aggressive sales quotas. Stumpf told Senators, "We never directed or wanted our team members to provide unwanted products and services to customers."

Elizabeth Warren stated: "The only way that Wall Street will change is if executives face jail time when they preside over massive frauds."

Knowing that FRAUD has seemingly become a pattern of life in this technological age, if you are personally affected in any way, immediately contact: United States Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Sensitive Net Work, or U. S. Department of Justice.



President's Desk

~ Ann Reaban



September Report

PCSRA Membership is currently 213

AASRA (state) membership is 70

Scholarship Fund: \$481.50



Nov. 10th Luncheon at Our Saviour's Lutheran Ch. Veterans' Patriotic Celebration

\$11.00 each Postmark by Nov. 4 to:
PCSRA Reservations, 4315 E. Seneca St., 85712

Menu: Roast turkey slices, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing,
vegetables, cranberries, homemade bread, pumpkin pie

Name _____

Guest _____

November's Luncheon to Feature Peter Bourret, Marine

Peter Bourret, a Marine, author, and also a member of PCSRA will be our guest speaker at the November luncheon. Pete served in Vietnam with the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division as an 81mm mortarman during 1967 and 1968. He is a charter member of Detachment #1344 of the Marine Corps League and is a life member of Vietnam Veterans of America. Pete volunteers at the Tucson VA, working with veterans who are experiencing PTSD.

Pete was the subject of *Strands of Barbed Wire*, a documentary about his own experience with PTSD and his return trip to Vietnam in 1991. He also participated in "Vietnam Across America," another documentary, produced by his son Jeremy Bourret. In addition to the documentary, Pete will talk about his war experience, an overview of PTSD, and its impact on the combat Veterans, as well as on the family and friends of the Veterans.

Pete's long awaited novel, *Three Joss Sticks in the Rain*, has just been published and will be available for purchase and autographing at this November meeting. Join us on November 10th to hear this inspirational speaker as we honor all Veterans, who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Fifty Percent Rent Increase Urges PCSRA to Seek New Location for Monthly Programs/Luncheons

When the time came to renew our contract with Our Saviours' Lutheran Church, they informed President Ann Reaban that the rental rate for PCSRA luncheons would increase from \$150.00 to \$225.00.

The Board discussed the feasibility of the increase at an August meeting. Given the lack of time available to find a new place, the board decided to renew the contract – at least for this year.

An increase in membership/attendance would help to offset the rise in price. Meantime, we are open to exploring other venues that would be less expensive, but with accommodations as user-friendly for our members.

If anyone knows of another venue, we are open to suggestions for next year. If you have an idea for a new meeting place, please contact: Ann Reaban at areaban@gmail.com or

NOVEMBER



HERITAGE SQUARE

Join Us for Historic Field Trip

PCSRA is hosting a trip to the Rosson House and Heritage Square in Phoenix. The Queen Anne-Eastlake style house was built in 1895 for Phoenix Mayor Rosson. It later became a rooming house before falling into disrepair. Phoenix purchased the property in 1974 and restored the home to its original glory. Other historic homes are situated on the original township block site, many open for visitation. Two award-winning restaurants and a pub/grill are also open on the block.

Our group tour is set for Tuesday, Nov. 29. We will rent a 15-passenger van and leave Tucson about 8 a.m. (site to be announced) to arrive in Phoenix about 10:15 for a 10:30 a.m. tour. After touring the home and other exhibits on the square, you can choose between the restaurants: Nobou at Teeter House, Pizzeria Bianco, or the pub Rose & Crown. We anticipate returning to Tucson about 4 p.m.

To reserve your place for this tour, mail or give a \$10 deposit to Steve Poe no later than our luncheon on November 10. Steve Poe, 3331 E. Waverly St., 85716

Depending on the number of those interested, the total cost for the van and admission will be \$20-\$25 range, with lunch on your own.

For more information, contact Steve Poe at 1-623-810-5228 or sshermanpoe@gmail.com or check out the website for the Rosson House/Heritage Square in Phoenix. <http://heritagesquarephx.org/visit/the-rosson-house/>

Let's Get Out of Town!

TO DO LIST

- Travel
- Write a book
- Volunteer
- Pursue interests
- Enjoy family

Retirement News

~ Jerry Holmes



Education News

~ Jerry Holmes



How to Respond to Those Who Say Public Pensions Strain the Economy

The National Institute on Retirement Security, NIRS, published a well-illustrated article on the impact of defined benefit pensions around the country, focusing specifically on public pensions such as those teachers receive. In 2014, \$519.7 billion paid to 24 million retirees led to \$1.2 trillion in economic output, created 7.1 million jobs, and generated \$190 billion in local, state, and federal tax revenue. At the national level, every \$1.00 of pension income generates \$2.21 in economic impact as their money moves through the economy. See the article at http://www.nirsonline.org/storage/nirs/documents/Pensionomics%202016/pensionomics_2016_infographics.pdf

A separate article in the NIRS Journal talks about the impact specifically of defined benefit public pension retirees in Arizona. In 2014, 160,164 residents of Arizona received a total of \$3.8 billion in pension benefits from state and local pension plans. Between 1993 and 2014, 22.84% of Arizona's pension fund receipts came from employer contributions, 20.71% from employee contributions, and 56.45% from investment earnings. In other words, the investments earnings made by ASRS are far outstripping contributions in the growth of Arizona's public pension funds. Nearly 40,000 jobs (over 2% of Arizona jobs) are created annually in Arizona through expenditures by public pension retirees. Read the entire article at http://www.nirsonline.org/storage/nirs/documents/Pensionomics2016/pensionomics2016_az.pdf

An article in MarketWatch, a financial newsletter, focused on the issue of teacher pensions in today's political climate. <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/worried-about-your-teacher-pension-here-are-5-tips-to-prepare-for-retirement-2016-09-28>

Governor Unwilling to Fund Pima and Maricopa Community Colleges

Governor Doug Ducey has announced a program called Achieve 60 Arizona which sets a goal of 60% of Arizonans attaining more than a high school education by 2030. He says that currently 42% of our population earns post-secondary degrees. However, at the event at which he made the announcement, he had no proposals for new funding and suggested that discussion of funding for the goal was premature.

In 2006 the state provided \$8,506 to state colleges per student. Today that amount is just over \$4,000. The same is true of community colleges where in 2007-8 they received \$1,389 per student and, in counties other than Pima and Maricopa, they today receive \$389. There are no state funds at all provided to community colleges in Arizona's two most populous counties. Asked to defend those figures, Ducey responded, "...we went through a very deep recession here in Arizona. We did have to balance the budget".

About providing funding to private AZ colleges, Ducey said, "We really do believe in choice in our state. We've seen the results and the excellence that that can provide." Referring to some specific private schools, Ducey went on to say, "I want to see them have the accessibility to do that. And that's how our tax code should reflect it and our state's priorities."

Currently, Arizona provides state funds to students attending private colleges for teacher training specifically in math, science and special education. If the student agrees to work in an underserved area the loan is forgiven. Two other Arizona voucher programs for post-secondary attendance in private schools are available, but are unfunded at this moment.

There are no state funds at all provided to community colleges in Arizona's two most populous counties.

Funding Education in AZ Still an Issue (Perhaps We Could Have a Bake Sale.)

Several ideas have been floated lately in an effort to continue to increase education funding after the narrow approval of Prop 123. One proposal would be to increase AZ sales tax, which already has one of the highest sales tax rates in the country. Another would be a separate property tax statewide.

The idea that is being discussed the most is to add a \$1.25 per-kilowatt-hour fee to our use of electricity. The distinction between a tax and a fee is important to sell the idea to Gov. Ducey who has pledged to lower taxes every year of his term. The kilowatt fee is being promoted by Dick Foreman, President of Arizona Business and Education Coalition. Foreman says the revenue generated could be used to better fund K-12 education, increase state funds to colleges and community colleges, replace money that residents of 18 districts pay for desegregation funding, reduce personal and business income taxes and establish research and development centers. Foreman points out that about a third of Arizona's electricity is sold to other states. Those states would pay the fee on the electricity they purchase. He says this is already in practice in Texas produced oil and gas. Resources from Nevada and California bear similar fees.

Most Kids No Longer Read Cursive

The State Board of Education is drafting plans that would require all third graders to be able to read and write in cursive. As part of new state standards that would take the place of Common Core, (remember Diane Douglas' campaign pledge) cursive writing is being stressed. While kids would not be required to master these skills in order to pass 3rd grade, there would still be time devoted to teaching cursive.

Gov. Ducey vetoed a bill passed by the Arizona legislature in this past session that would have required that students mastered the skill by 5th grade. This objective is part of large number of changes to state standards that can be seen at <https://k12standards.az.gov/read-2016-arizona-draft-standards-0>.

Fun Fact: The Constitution of the United States is written in cursive.

The Business Community Reiterates the Need for Full-Day Kindergarten

In 2010, the AZ legislature removed \$218 million in funding from the state budget that had been earmarked for full-day kindergarten in state schools. Now a coalition of business groups is pushing to get full-day K funding back in Arizona's budget. Many districts still offer some form of full-day K, but often charge parents for the second half of the day.

The Arizona Community Foundation and Greater Phoenix Leadership sponsored an event called the Power of K on September 19. Governor Ducey and over one third of current legislators attended.

At that event, it was pointed out that Ducey's goal of 60% of Arizonans earning post-secondary degrees was unachievable without full-day kindergarten. They acknowledged that data shows that, even years later, those who do not attend full-day K lag behind their peers who did. Also, full-day kindergarten is seen as critical to achieving the goal of third grade literacy.

Arizona State University President Michel Crow said full-day kindergarten is an economic necessity. "If we don't change our mindset (regarding) all-day kindergarten, we are literally fools." Crow later said, "We won't bear the consequences, most of us in this room, but our children and grandchildren in this state will not be competitive."

However, Gov. Ducey was not persuaded as many had hoped. In remarks after the Power of K breakfast Ducey said he supports early childhood literacy, but he also supports a balanced state budget. A Ducey spokesperson talked about "how much money the state has to spare".

Where Have All the Teachers Gone?

Attracting and retaining teachers is a huge issue in Arizona. Last month there were over 8000 unfilled teaching positions in Arizona. The Maricopa County Education Service Agency is receiving a \$60 million dollar grant from the federal government to address this issue and develop sustainable methods of improving salary climate and other issues associated with the problem. To hear more about the problem and the grant, listen to this late September interview from Phoenix radio station KJZZ at this link <http://theshow.kjzz.org/content/373972/feds-send-60-million-maricopa-county-teacher-retention>

Heritage Academy, State Board of Charter Schools, and State Education Officials Face Lawsuit over the Use of Religious-Based Text in Publically-Funded Charter Classrooms

The Heritage Academy, a 7-12 charter school with three campuses in Maricopa County, has been sued in federal court by Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AUSCS). AUSCS claims that the Heritage Academy, which receives public funding and has been operating since 1995, has been teaching religious doctrine and requiring students to read religious texts, specifically a textbook entitled *Proclaim Liberty throughout All the Land*. More than 1,100 students are enrolled in The Heritage Academy campuses.

The Heritage Academy was founded by Earl Taylor, Jr., the parent of Arizona State Board of Education member Jared Taylor. Jared Taylor is also a board member of the Heritage Academy and was one of Governor Ducey's first appointees to the state board. AUSCS claims that the Heritage Academy is violating the First Amendment by allowing Earl Taylor, Jr. to create his own curriculum.

The elder Taylor teaches a senior level American History class for the students containing the controversial topics. He says that the Ten Commandments must be obeyed in order to attain happiness and he teaches that socialism is a violation of God's laws. The attorney for AUSCS, Richard Katskee, further alleges that the Heritage Academy insists students "are duty bound to implement and instruct others about these religious and religiously-based principles in order to restore the United States to freedom, prosperity and peace". Taylor, Jr. claims that he has previously answered to similar charges from the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, a branch of the State Department of Education.

One of the regulations that govern charter schools in Arizona requires that the school "is non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment policies and all other operations". The Arizona Constitution prohibits the use of public money for religious instruction or for a sectarian school. Katske says Earl Taylor, Jr. uses materials, the above cited text, "created by the National Center for Constitutional Studies whose specific goal is to restore the U.S. Constitution in accordance with the intent of America's Founders."

The text is written by W. Cleon Skousen who is described in the lawsuit as a Mormon theologian, although the Latter Day Saints have cut ties with Skousen. There are twenty eight principles of sound government cited in the text which includes, "Without religion, the government of a free people cannot be maintained."

Katskee says, "The violation here is straightforward, obvious and egregious." Previous complaints by parents and AUSCS to the State Charter Board were closed without action. As a result, AUSCS included the State Board of Charter Schools and state education officials as co-defendants in the lawsuit. In a written statement, Earl Taylor, Jr. denied wrongdoing and said the Heritage Academy does not "teach sectarian or denominational doctrine in any class." AUSCS is suing on behalf of a parent who feels that it is the duty of the home and not the school to provide religious instruction and a Fountain Hills Methodist minister who objects to public money being spent for religious instruction.

No More Life Memberships

Your PCSRA Board of Directors voted to end the practice of offering Life Memberships in the organization. The primary reason is that we lose touch with so many of our life members. Many times we only hear from them when we receive a USPS address change. The second reason is that it's too good a deal! The recent price of a Life Membership was \$150. Most of us are fortunate to live more than 9.5 years after our retirement, so we would have many, many free years in the organization. However, the costs of operating the organization continue and rise. We encourage Life Members to make donations to the organization or to the scholarship fund.

Collections for the Community

If you are new to Pima County School Retirees Association, you may be unaware of some of our mini community outreach activities. We collect the following for distribution to the appropriate agency or organization:

Small shampoo, lotion etc.	Used postage stamps
Pull tabs from alum. cans	Cell phones
Box Tops 4 Education	Eyeglasses & cases
	Campbell's Labels



Farewell

Obituaries will return next month.

If YOU were President...

Parade magazine recently ran a feature asking celebrities and other citizens what they would do if they were President. We would like to know what your priority would be if YOU were president, and we'll print some of them in the next newsletter. Here are some from *Parade*:

William Shatner, actor: I'm deeply into the environmental thing. Bernie Sanders made a statement which I wholeheartedly agree with: "There is no other issue of more importance than recapturing the health of the environment. Everything else pales by comparison." that's what I would do if I were president.

T.D. Jakes, megachurch pastor, author and TV talk show host: I would dramatically transform both the educational and the criminal justice systems so that the former does not become a feeder system for the latter.

Kathy Griffin, actress and comedian: Proof of intellectual curiosity, humor and acts of kindness would be our new currency. The Kardashians, the cast of *Bachelor in Paradise* and those two dudes on *Botched* might be strapped for cash.

At this link, you can read several other responses that didn't make it into the *Parade* magazine. Take a look. Some are very thoughtful. <http://parade.com/506213/parade/celebrities-and-citizens-finish-the-sentence-if-i-were-president/>

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN: Tell us and our readers what you would do --- silly or serious --- if you were president: You can mail them to Terry Bagwell at
5902 E. Hawthorne St.
Tucson, AZ 85711
or email them to her at tbasketcase@cox.net.



- being

*outside my window
orange tree
obeying the wind
perfect partner
rhythmic dancing
accepting God's breath
not wondering
just being
I want to be that tree*

... Poem by Peter M. Bourret
From Snowflakes from the Other Side
of the Universe



Gaslight Theatre Fun Times & Fund Times

Look ahead at February 19, 2017, 3:00pm and plan to attend "The Two Amigos" with 51 of your best friends from PCSRA. Judy Hokett has reserved 52 seats, including a row for those who are mobility challenged. Tickets will be \$25 sold in advance only with \$19.40 for each ticket going to The Gaslight and the remaining \$5.60 going to the PCSRA Scholarship Fund. Physical tickets will not be available until we turn in all monies to The Gaslight. However, if you want to be sure to have one or more tickets, please notify Terry Bagwell or Judy Hokett to get your name on the list and pay your \$25! It's not highbrow, but it's FUN!