



Pima County School Retirees' Association

February, 2018

We welcome all retired school employees

PCSRA POEpourri

Time Flies...

It is hard to believe we are already more than 1/12th the way through 2018. The warm temperatures are also hard to fathom this early in the season. Yet, we persist in completing the tasks of life in the Tucson area.



President's Desk

~ Steve Poe



Thank You

I want to commend you for your support of PCSRA, AASRA, our community projects, our Scholarship Fund, and your response to requests to help with the small tasks associated with our membership meetings. I also want to thank you (maybe in advance, for many) if you sent in your volunteer hours and donations to be recorded for our reports to our state organization. If you still need to do so, Gail Schuessler will still take them by phone or email. Tucson area people really DO make a difference.

Join Us

As a part of our ongoing efforts to support public schools and our ASRS pensions, I want to invite you to attend with other PCSRA/AASRA members, the AASRA Legislative Day (in conjunction with PDK) to be held on Wednesday, February 14th, at our Arizona State Capitol. It will be a busy and productive day visiting our local State Senators and Representatives, as well as hearing some of the leaders of important education organizations. If you wish to hitch a ride or need time & parking info, contact any of our officers by phone or email. They will get the info to you ASAP.

Let's Support Jerry

Lastly, you are likely aware that our own Jerry Holmes has been elevated to the office of AASRA President. He was to be President-Elect and "ease" into the office over a two-year learning curve. Unfortunately, the timeline was moved up with the resignation of the new AASRA President in August. Therefore, Jerry will now be chairing the AASRA Annual Meeting (the state convention) in early June. It would be a real boon if we could help Jerry by making a significant appearance at the convention.

Treat Yourself

The convention is in Phoenix on June 5-6, 2018. Room rates at the Four Seasons North Phoenix are reasonable in June and sharing rooms is acceptable. Most meals come with payment of your registration fee (\$65 for early registration), and the speakers and camaraderie is well worth it. Registration forms are in your latest AASRA Newsletter and will be available on the AASRA website, www.AASRA.org.

Use the information in the directory to contact Jerry, Terry or me if you would like more info.



January Report

PCSRA Membership: 179

AASRA Membership: 104

Scholarship Fund: \$1,807

March 8th Luncheon at Viscount Suites

Legendary Leadership with Dr. Nic Clement

\$15.00 each Postmark by March 1 to:
PCSRA Reservations, 4315 E. Seneca St., 85712.

A - Spaghetti and Meatballs

B - Ham and Turkey Melt w/Fries

Name _____

Guest _____

March Speaker Invests His Talents and His Royalties to Teachers

In March, Dr. Nicholas Clement will entertain and inspire us with stories of legendary teachers from his new book, Legendary Leadership. This new work is a sequel to the children's book, The Reading Pig Goes to School, which is a sequel to How to Catch a Swamp Frog.

Dr. Clement is a retired school superintendent of Flowing Wells School District. In 2014, he persuaded the Tucson Mayor and City Council to declare the fourth Thursday of September as Legendary Teacher Day where former students contact their legendary teachers and tell them what a difference they made in their lives.

Dr. Clement will have his new books for purchase at the March meeting. Royalties go to teachers.



See **Dr. Clement** on page 6

Time for a Field Trip! PCSRA to Visit Tucson's Mission Garden

PCSRA is planning a field trip to Tucson Mission Garden on Friday, April 20, 2018, at 9 a.m. We will have car-pooling available for those who wish to ride with other members to the site near "A" Mountain.

"Mission Garden is a re-creation of the Spanish Colonial walled garden that was part of Tucson's historic San Agustin Mission. Located on its original site west of downtown Tucson at the corner of Mission Road and Mission Lane, the Garden features heirloom Sonoran Desert-adapted fruit orchards and vegetable gardens interpreting 4,000 years of agriculture in Tucson." www.tucsonsbirthplace.org



February Speaker Jan Cleere Highlights Strong Women Who Made History in Arizona

Our featured speaker on February 8 is Jan Cleere, award winning author, historian, and lecturer. Her five historical books reflect her love of the West and her skill as a researcher and writer, to bring the story of real women to life.

Jan also writes a monthly column for the AZ Daily Star on Western Women. She will be sharing stories from her book, "Levi & Lace, Arizona Women Who Made History." One of the 35 women featured in the book, Larcena Pennington, escaped from the Apache and walked bare foot in the snow to safety.

Executive Director Betty Stauffer of Literacy Connects will present the Community Talk at the February Luncheon.

See **Literacy** on page 7



A volunteer tends the crops at Tucson's Mission Garden, located at the foot of A Mountain where people have grown food for thousands of years.

The tour will include a walk around the historic Mission Garden and an overview of the vegetation cultivated during Tucson's illustrious past.

Please let any of your PCSRA officers know if you are interested in attending. A nominal donation of \$5 per person is suggested upon arrival. The duration of this tour will be about 1.5 hours.



AASRA's Legislative Day to Link Constituents and Representatives

AASRA's Legislative Day takes on special significance this year when it is held on February 14th, Arizona's Statehood Day. As we did last year, we will join forces with the Arizona Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma (DKG) for the morning activities. DKG is an international society for women educators and shares many of the same goals as AASRA.

Legislative Day will start at 8:45 a.m. at the bell in front of the Capitol. We encourage attendees to wear red, specifically your AASRA red shirt if you have one. Our schedule includes a morning address by John Moody, the AASRA Legislative Consultant.

We will also hear from current legislators talking about issues of importance to us. Our group will be introduced from the floor in both the House and Senate. Time is set aside for you to visit with the legislators that represent you. We will provide access to the kiosks where you can register in order to speak in committee or send comments on pending legislation to committees.

For more information, please see the latest edition of the AASRA Newsletter (Winter 2018) or go to the AASRA website or Facebook page. Please consider joining us for a fun and informative day at the Capitol.

AEA-R's Legislative Day to Let Retirees Be Seen and Heard

AEA Retired members will be visiting the Capitol on Wednesday, February 21st. We encourage any member who is interested in meeting with their representatives to come with us. People who have not yet joined AEA-R are welcome to participate, as well.

Our day will begin at 9:30 when we meet with our new AEA lobbyist, Stephanie Parra for a briefing on legislative undertakings. After that, you will have opportunities to meet with legislators, attend meetings, and submit comments.

Lunch will be hosted by AEA-Retired from 12:00 to 1:00. After eating, we intend to split into groups with some people meeting with legislators while others watch the proceedings from the galleries of the Senate and the House. The day ends at 3:00.

This is an opportunity to let our representatives know that we are keeping an eye on them and have a vested interest in what they are doing.

AEA-Retired members can register for the day at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018Feb_LobbyDay Those people who have already registered should have received a confirmation from Luci. PCSRA members interested in attending may contact Luci Messing at lucibmessing@cox.net.

Saddle Up for TSB Rodeo Concerts February 15 and February 16

Members of Tucson Society of the Blind, TSB, have a motto, "We may not have much sight but we have a lot of vision." Help TSB achieve its vision by participating in two Rodeo Concerts held Thursday, February 15 and Friday February 16 at Fellowship Square, 8111 E. Broadway, from 6-8:30 PM.

Two outstanding musicians, Tom Chambers will perform on Thursday and Janice Deardorff will perform on Friday. Both will sing Western favorites and tell stories about cowboys. There will be a silent auction each night with great prizes. A raffle drawing will be held on Friday with grand prize of \$100 cash. All proceeds go to the Tucson Society of the Blind.

See Concerts on Page 7

Old Tricks with “New” Money

Once again, Governor Ducey is trying to portray himself as a proponent of public education by claiming to add “New Money” to the budget. His budget proposal for ’18-’19, offered soon after his State of the State address, increases funding for education state-wide by \$250 million, in addition to the \$116 million already scheduled by the current formula. He wants \$100 million to go to soft capital needs such as busses, computers, and textbooks, \$35 million for building grants, \$34 million to make permanent the temporary raises teachers received this year, and \$88 million of new bonding capacity for new school construction.

The proposal is seen as a carrot to the schools and groups that have filed suit against AZ, claiming it has renegeed on inflationary funding for schools since 2008. Ducey hopes that his offer of new funding, gleaned by creating \$79 million in “efficiency savings” from other agencies’ budgets, will coerce the complainants to drop the suit. \$35 million of the funds will be raised by increasing Medicaid assessments to the hospitals in the state and \$15 million by cutting AHCCCS funding for developmentally disabled children.

Critics point out that the proposal does not restore the \$952 million in capital funding **not** appropriated to schools since 2008 that was mandated by statute; much of the proposal is not permanent funding since bonds are loans from the public; and the proposed budget relies on \$90 million in **projected** revenue during the budget year that the Joint Legislative Budget Committee **predicts** will be available.

“...without a dedicated revenue source, how is that going to help us to sort out the problems with underfunded and overcrowded classrooms?” Beth Simek, President of Arizona PTA

[The proposed budget is] “smoke and mirrors ...it shortchanges public education...” Senate Minority Leader, Katie Hobbs (D)

“This closes only a small portion of the funding gap that has persisted since the recession. Under the governor’s proposal, public school operational funding would remain \$950 million below 2008 levels.” Julie Erflie of AZ Schools Now

Ducey asserts that this is “New Money”. “It is simply paying back a portion of what was taken out of the budget a decade ago.” Dawn Penich-Thacker, Save Our Schools Arizona



Education and Retirement News

~ Jerry Holmes

State Sen. Steve Farley, a Democratic gubernatorial candidate, noted that Gov. Ducey’s proposal will not even cover the cuts he made to education funding three years ago and referred to Ducey’s suggestions as “very disingenuous”.

The Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA) has elected to continue, with their partners, their suit against the state for not honoring its capital funding formulas during the recession. The Arizona Association of School Board Officials (AASBO) chose to withdraw from the suit as a way of trying to appease the politicians involved in the process.

State House Minority Leader Rep. Rebecca Rios characterized the situation as schools are “literally starving for funding”. Rios went on to characterize the Ducey offer as, “Starve them long enough and eventually they’ll come around for the scraps.”

Ducey Backers Spell Out a Glossy Story about Arizona Education

Have you seen the TV ads touting Arizona’s education system? Hoping to counter what they describe as negative news about the state’s schools, the Arizona Education Project (AEP) sponsors the ads. Business groups such as the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry and corporate giant Pinnacle West are funding what they call the “other side of the story”.

Despite denying having political connections, their efforts to highlight students’ math and reading scores, school choice, and the teacher’s academy that provides free tuition to students willing to become teachers is viewed by some as a political move to support Gov. Ducey’s re-election bid.

Criticisms of the education system in Arizona are centered on lack of funding, low salaries, crowded classrooms and other political issues rather than student performance. According to AEP the six-figure funded ad campaign is a pilot project that will be evaluated to determine if it will continue.

~ A Note from Jerry ~

I'm sure that many of you want to express yourself to your legislators on these issues. We have had articles in this newsletter in the past about how to contact your legislators. There is an article in the current AASRA Newsletter (Winter 2018) about how to register to comment on pending legislation in the AZ legislature and ways to contact your legislators. Also included in the newsletter are AASRA's legislative priorities and talking points for when you meet with your reps. Read that newsletter on the AASRS Facebook site.

Feel free to contact me any time at cerrada68@gmail.com or (520) 271-6790.

Koch Brothers & DeVos Determined to Expand Vouchers in Arizona

Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Margaret Mahoney has ruled that the lawsuit to stop Prop. 305 will not go forward. The suit was filed to stop the November 2018 Referendum Vote on school voucher expansion in Arizona. The Referendum effort was initiated as a result of the Arizona Legislature's vote in the 2017 session to expand access to Empowerment Scholarship Accounts and make public funds available for private/religious school use as well.

The premise of the suit was that the defendants, who oppose the expansion, filed their petitions with the Arizona Secretary of State one day before a new law went into effect. That law, allowing certain challenges to petition drives, went into effect on Aug 9th. The petitions were filed with the Secretary of State on Aug 8th. Judge Mahoney agreed that the plaintiffs, who alleged irregularities during the gathering of signatures, had no standing to file the suit, because the new law was not in effect when the petitions were filed. The attorney for American Federation for Children, the Koch- and DeVos-funded organization that challenged the petition drive, said the group will appeal. They had five days from Jan. 30 to do so.

Maybe anticipating the judge's ruling, Governor Ducey made strong statements regarding the state's voucher program to a Koch-funded gathering in Palm Springs the weekend before the judge tossed the suit. Ducey was quoted by the *Washington Post* as saying, "I didn't run for governor to play small ball (on vouchers). I think this is an important idea". At the same time, he acceded that a loss at the polls in November would "limit or complicate" efforts to expand the voucher program in Arizona.

Responding to Ducey's statements, Dawn Penich-Thacker, from Save Our Schools Arizona wrote to the *Arizona Republic*, "The governor is correct that this is a real fight in Arizona: it's out-of-state billionaires and ladder-climbing politicians versus Arizona families and communities. What's clear from the seminar Gov. Ducey attended is that this is not about Arizona families nor Arizona's economy or future."

The *Washington Post* in a January 30 article said, "**In 2018, Koch donors see Arizona as ground zero in their push**". The Koch brothers-funded advocacy arm, Americans for Prosperity, and the Betsy DeVos-funded American Federation for Children are expected to spend heavily, possibly millions of dollars, on the referendum. The Koch network has pledged to spend \$400 million nationally during 2018 to push for their agenda on public education.

In a November 16th, 2017 the *Arizona Republic* reported that the Koch-funded LIBRE Institute will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars targeting Arizona Latino families with ads, mailers and phone calls about the wonders of educational choice. The *Republic*, earlier in the year, had reported that **most current voucher recipients were white and more affluent**. Another *Republic* Article on Dec. 7th, 2017 showed how the conservative Goldwater Institute had been instrumental in the passage of the original Empowerment Scholarship Account legislation in 2011. The lengthy December article also detailed how the Goldwater Institute had unprecedented access to the Arizona Department of Education in the implementation and oversight of the ongoing ESA program from 2011 through June 2017.

Remember the Raffle!

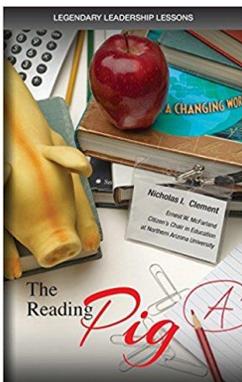
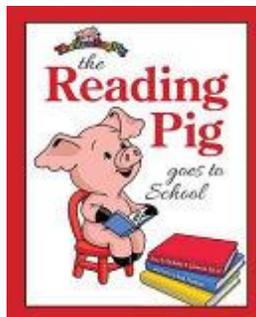
If you have items for the raffle, and didn't bring them to the February meeting, please call Terry Bagwell at 331-1715 or Judy Hokett at 749-4464 by February 24. We will make arrangements with you for delivery or pickup.

We can neither accept items after that date nor at the next PCSRA meetings. We want to take the time to prepare for all items to be displayed properly. Everything will be on display and tickets will be sold at the March 14 and April 11 meetings.

Thank you for your generosity in contributing to the Scholarship Fund. Your help means so much to a future teacher.

Dr. Clement continued from Page 2

The Reading Pig is a true to life storytelling of Nic's haphazardly earned duty as a classroom substitute for a day. While in front of a second-grade class of 30 energetic children, he fumbles through the day in an attempt to keep them busy and focused. At days' end Nic has earned a newfound understanding on the challenges of running an elementary classroom.



Legendary Teacher Stories is a heartfelt tribute to the Teachers and adults that impacted Nic both as a young student and later on as a school administrator. His storytelling is fun yet factual. From page one, the reader is invited into Nic's story of life with an all access pass. In an effort to finish big, Nic currently awards his net royalties back to the very Teachers whom he calls Legendary.



AZ Braille and Talking Book Library Available to Many

By Barbara Macpherson

You may be eligible for ABTBL's wonderful free service, because they serve other clients besides the visually impaired and blind.

Besides visual impairment there are other physical conditions that qualify such as many conditions interfere with reading such as arthritis, Parkinson's, MS, stroke, traumatic brain injury, or learning disabilities. You have to fill out an application to qualify. Call 800-255-5578 to get an application. A health professional will have to sign it certifying your disability.

The free AZ Braille & Talking Book Library is one of the best resources for the visually impaired. The ABTBL provides access to talking audio books and many hours of reading pleasure. The audio books are recorded by professional narrators, who use different voices to play different characters.

Once accepted, you will have free access to over 500,000 books in many genres including mysteries, romances, non-fiction books and biographies. You will be assigned a reader advisor who will help you select books. The books come on cartridges.

When you are finished with a book, you flip the card over and mail it back free. The portable book players are easy to use. Books can also be downloaded by computer.

Last year the ABTBL served 8,100 individuals state wide. Individual patrons read an average of three books per week, about 700,000 books and magazines per year. To see if you qualify, get your application at 800-255-5578 and sign up soon. You will really enjoy many hours of reading experiences.

Literacy continued from Page 2

Literacy Connects opens opportunities for people of all ages through literacy and creative expression. Literacy Connects has five programs, three for children and two for adults. Last year just over 1,000 Literacy Connects volunteers assisted just under 47,000 people in the greater Tucson area to improve their literacy skills.

The need is great. Over 20% of adults struggle with poor reading and writing skills that are holding them back from reaching their full potential. Our Adult Basic Literacy and English Language Acquisition programs both train volunteers to assist some of these adults.

Only 20% of preschool children in Pima County attend quality preschools which means vast numbers of children enter Kindergarten unprepared. Literacy Connects' Reach Out and Read program helps narrow this gap as pediatricians in 57 clinics prescribe reading and give a free book at well baby checkups for children between the ages of six months and five years.

In Pima County only 24% of third graders are reading proficiently. Reading Seed, another program of Literacy Connects, trains volunteers to work with struggling readers at 37 elementary schools throughout Tucson. Finally, our Stories That Soar! Program gets kids excited about writing and then brings the children's stories to life on stage.

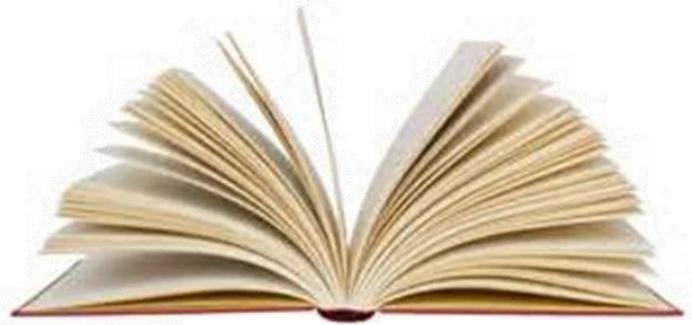
If you would like to volunteer or financially support this work check out our website www.literacyconnects.org or call 882-8006.

Concerts continued from Page 3

TSB is a non-profit organization that serves the visually impaired with recreational, educational, and social programs. TSB meets on Tuesday 10 AM-noon at 6565 E. Broadway, Christ Presbyterian Church with great programs, luncheons, and fun field trips. More information is available on website, www.tucsonsoftheblind.org

See Barbara Macpherson, 1st Vice President, to buy raffle tickets: 12 tickets for \$10, and 6 tickets for \$5. You do not have to be present to win. Maybe you will be the lucky one to win the grand prize of \$100!

For information on joining or volunteering at TSB, call Erma 520-326-3757 or Barbara 520- 298-2427.



PCSRA BOOK CLUB

Dear Friends,

Our next selection is **Turtles All the Way Down**, by John Green.

#1 *New York Times* Bestseller • #1 *Wall Street Journal* Bestseller • #1 International Bestseller

"Sixteen-year-old Aza never intended to pursue the mystery of fugitive billionaire Russell Pickett, but there's a hundred-thousand-dollar reward at stake and her Best and Most Fearless Friend, Daisy, is eager to investigate. So together, they navigate the short distance and broad divides that separate them from Russell Pickett's son, Davis.

Aza is trying. She is trying to be a good daughter, a good friend, a good student, and maybe even a good detective, while also living within the ever-tightening spiral of her own thoughts.

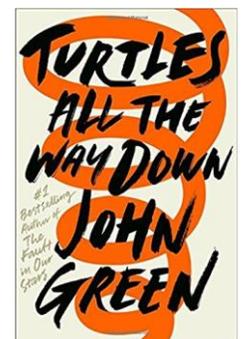
In his long-awaited return, John Green, the acclaimed, award-winning author of *Looking for Alaska* and *The Fault in Our Stars*, shares Aza's story with shattering, unflinching clarity in this brilliant novel of love, resilience, and the power of lifelong friendship."

This selection represents a new direction for us, but we are excited to explore this style of storytelling.

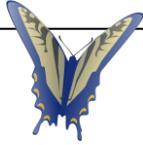
We are hoping that some of you made a resolution to attend one of our meetings in 2018!

We invite you to join us on Thursday, February 22, at 1:00. Steve Poe's house is at 3331 E. Waverly Street between Pima and Grant.

Jim Marr jbm500@cox.net 520-977-9438



Farewell



- Alzibaree, Sabah (65) ~ 1/2; Teacher
- Bernatsky, Jeanne (90) ~ 12/28; Librarian
- Bierman, JoAnn (75) ~ 1/3; Library Science Teacher
- Boak, Gladys (87) ~ 12/8; TUSD Food Services
- Del Cid, Refugio (73) ~ 2/6; Teacher Sunnyside
- DiPietro, Barbara (91) ~ 12/27; Teacher
- Hadley, Roger (74) ~ 1/11; Educator
- Hirsch, Harriet (83) ~1/20;
Special Education Teacher
- Hitchens, Marilyn (?) 1/29; Substitute Teacher
- * Langeberg, Lyda (74) ~ 1/10;
Biology Teacher Sahuarita
- McCall, Jo Ella (?) ~ 1/6; Teacher TUSD
- Naanes, Estal (103) ~ 1/11; Teacher
- Naugles, Nancy (59) ~ 1/2; Teacher
- Price, Helen (92) ~ 1/11; Teacher
- Ray, James (78) ~ 1/8; Teacher
- Rogers, Jeanne M. (98) ~ 1/13; Teacher
- Ross, Sharon (76) ~ 1/4; Teacher Catalina Foothills
- Sampson, Dorothy (92) ~ 1/9; Teacher
- Schoepflin, William (74) ~1/8; Teacher
- Sorlie, Elizabeth (83) ~ 1/19; Teacher
- Torres, Amalia (104) ~ 12/9; Teacher,
Head Start, Yaqui Community
- Tellam, Joan (?) ~ 1/5; Teacher, Amphi
- Waesch, Marion (?) ~ 12/26; TUSD
Kindergarten teacher

* PCSRA Member

Colleagues



Poetry Corner



“the noun behind the curtain”

*roam through a thousand museums
and you'll never find a portrait of love
but stroll through a park
and you will see the holding of hands
a holy homily
and a smile spoken through glistening
eyes
clues awaiting you
because someone forgot to teach you
about the grammar of love
and the riddle that is the road map in
the land of love
which doesn't exist
because it is
and then it's not
and the eyes will never find love
so stop looking
and start being
and say goodbye to that magical noun
and say hello to loving
step outside from behind the window
where you wait to see the wind
step outside and feel the wind
caressing you
as you stand naked
vulnerable and alive*

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