



Pima County School Retirees' Association

May, 2019

We welcome all retired school employees



PCSRA POEpourri

~ Steve Poe



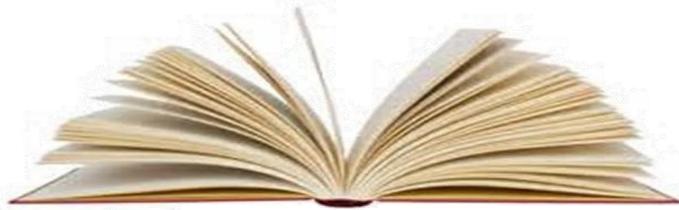
**Have Fun, Be Safe,
and Stay Tuned...**

As we close out another season of the Pima County School Retirees Association, I am happy to report that our ASRS pensions appear to be safe for another year. Unless some strange “strike all” amendments pass the legislature in the waning days of budget negotiations (which are ongoing here in early May), our pensions are safe. Stay tuned for next year’s legislative session, though.

My last statement about the AZ Legislature is about the budget. PLEASE remember to call, email, or write your own legislators about the importance of returning public education funding to the levels before the 2008 crash and recession. Although the Governor promised a 20% increase over a 3-year period, nothing is firmed up in the budget at the time of this writing. Also, remember that specific restrictions placed on the “promise” did not include much of our school community who do not have a classroom full of students. Support services have to scrounge for \$\$\$ along with other kinds of teachers and necessary classified staff.

As we enter the summer season, let me thank you again for your sincere efforts to make our Tucson area community a beacon of light in society. We have some of the hardest working and most generous people in our community, whose only real goal is to help those who need the help. YOU are the ones who work toward this fine community goal. All the board members of the PCSRA thank you for continuing this fine work. Please remember to log your volunteer hours and your monetary or in-kind contributions for the report we ask you to submit after the end of 2019.

Wherever you go this summer or whatever you do, please enjoy your time, any family you may encounter, and take care of yourself. YOU are our most valuable asset and we want to see your smiling countenance in our fall season. If you happen to be in the area of Heber-Overgaard this summer, give me a call (on my cell # in the directory) and let me know how you are doing. We even have a few good lunch spots nearby.



PCSRA BOOK CLUB

Next meeting: June 6 at 1:00 p.m.

May is a comfortable month to read something with a little history and a little family. Our May selection is *A GIRL'S GUIDE TO MISSILES* by Karen Piper.

A surreal and poignant coming of age on a secretive missile facility, and "an incredible view of...life in a town built for war."--Booklist

"The China Lake missile range is located in a huge stretch of the Mojave Desert, about the size of the state of Delaware. It was created during WWII, and has always been shrouded in secrecy. But people who make missiles and other weapons are regular working people, with domestic routines and everyday dilemmas. Four of them were Karen Piper's parents, her sister, and--when she needed summer jobs--herself. Her dad designed the Sidewinder, which was ultimately used catastrophically in Vietnam. When her mom got tired of being a stay-at-home mom, she went to work on the Tomahawk. Once, when a missile nose needed to be taken offsite for final testing, her mother loaded it into the trunk of the family car, and set off down a Los Angeles freeway. Traffic was heavy, and so she stopped off at the mall, leaving the missile in the car.

Piper sketches in the belief systems--from Amway's get-rich schemes to propaganda in *The Rocketeer* to evangelism, along with fears of a Lemurian takeover and Charles Manson--that governed their lives. Her memoir is also a search for the truth of the past and what really brought her parents to China Lake with two young daughters, a story that reaches back to her father's WWII flights with contraband across Europe. Finally, it recounts the crossroads moment in a young woman's life when she finally found a way out of a culture of secrets and fear, and out of the desert."

Looking ahead, our June selection is *LESSONS FROM LUCY* by Dave Barry.

Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and bestselling author of *Dave Barry Turns 40* now shows how to age gracefully, taking cues from his beloved and highly intelligent dog, Lucy.

PCSRA Wants You to Help Plan the 2019/20 Programs

PCSRA members will be planning for next year's program at meeting on Thurs. May 23, from 10 -12 at Barbara Macpherson's house. All interested in planning for next year are welcomed. Barbara Macpherson will provide doughnuts. Her address is 9862 E. Creek St. Phone 298-2427. Directions: Go east on 22nd St., Golf Links, or Broadway. Take a right on Harrison. Take a left on the second street, Creek, after Golf Links. Follow Creek to end. Barbara's house is the next to last house on the right. You will see the chains and the sea gulls and know you are at 9862. The Kool Box is the neighbor. See you at the program meeting.



April Report

Membership	
PCSRA: 184	[189 (5/2018)]
AASRA: 106	[92 (5/2018)]
Scholarship Fund: \$970.30	
	[\$696.61 (5/2018)]

Faced with the obstacles and challenges of life after middle age, Dave Barry turns to his best dog, Lucy, to learn how to live his best life. From "Make New Friends" (an unfortunate fail when he can't overcome his dislike for mankind) to "Don't Stop Having Fun" (validating his longtime membership in a marching unit that performs in parades—and even Obama's inauguration), Dave navigates his later years with good humor and grace. Lucy teaches Dave how to live in the present, how to let go of daily grievances, and how to feel good in your own skin. The lessons are drawn from Dave's routine humiliations and stream-of-consciousness accounts of the absurdities of daily life, which will leave you heaving with laughter and recognition.

Laugh-out-loud hilarious, whether he's trying to "Pay Attention to the People You Love" (even when your brain is not listening) or deciding to "Let Go of Your Anger," Dave Barry's *Lessons From Lucy* is a witty and wise guide to joyous living. I am looking forward to the humor in our June selection.



Legislative News

~ Jerry Holmes

Other words
for dragging
your feet?



equivocating, postponing,
dawdling, dilly-dallying,
playing for time, delaying,
loitering, tarrying, stalling,
hampering, lagging behind,
stonewalling, lingering...

In our last newsletter I wrote about the slowdown in the legislature as the Republicans replaced Rep. David Stringer in an effort to restore their slim majority in the House. I predicted the wheels of the legislative train would soon be rolling again. I've never been a good prognosticator. There is still little happening in the legislature as behind closed doors budget discussions go on between the governor's office and various groups within the law-making bodies. No one wants to put a lot of effort into drafting a budget that will not get approved in both houses and signed by the governor.

As a result, each facet of the budget must be negotiated before the whole package can get to the floor for a vote. The very slim margin held by the Republican majority in both houses means that any legislator, especially a Republican, holds a vast amount of power and must agree to each feature in order for the process to go forward. Any objections require meticulous negotiation to reach accords. This tedious process may go on for some time before final agreement is reached.

According to legislative protocols the lawmakers were to be finished sometime during the last full week of April. It is usually agreed that the session will last 100 days. Since we are well beyond that point now, tension is high among the members as the process drags on. Like most of us the lawmakers want to return to a normal life, take a vacation, or simply leave behind the stressful, contentious environment of their capitol colleagues and environs. Some have predicted the session may last until the end of June. I won't make a prediction because of my lack of insight and past record of prognostication. Just know that the state's budget is a house of cards that will have to be rebuilt at various points in its development.

Increasing funding for education is a hot topic in the legislature at the moment; but it has little support on either side of the aisle. Earlier this year I wrote about separate bills pushed by three Republican lawmakers to raise the sales tax by 0.4¢ and dedicate the new proceeds to education. Sen. Sylvia Allen, Sen. Kate Brophy Magee and Rep. Michelle Udall each introduced bills to raise the current sales tax imposed by Prop 301 from 0.6¢ to a full penny per dollar. Each of their bills had a slightly different approach to distribution of the additional funds. And each of their bills, because it would raise taxes, would have to be approved by voters.

In order to avoid hairsplitting and defeat, the three lawmakers found a way to reach a compromise and their efforts were combined behind one bill that was passed by the Senate Education Committee chaired by Sen Allen. But they could never get enough votes, in either the House or Senate, to bring the issue to a vote on the floor. It seemed the compromise bill was doomed.

On April 22nd, out of the blue, the chair of the state Republican Party, former state Senator Kelli Ward, announced her support for the measure. In a press conference with Rep. Udall and Sen. Allen, she urged Republican lawmakers to back the funding effort. She said she was not urging lawmakers to raise taxes, but rather to put the measure before voters so they could decide if they wanted to raise taxes on themselves.

Democrats opposed the measure because they say that any increase in sales taxes is regressive and hits low income families harder than middle- and upper-class consumers. Republican lawmakers, for the most part, do not want to be identified in any way with a tax increase so they are not supportive of the measure. However, Kelli Ward has a different outlook. She feels that placing the issue before voters "...would allow Republicans to take the lead on boosting funding for education, but still claim they have never voted to raise taxes – instead they simply voted to allow the voters to raise taxes on themselves."

Chairwoman Ward further explained the reasoning behind her support with the following statement. "There are many in the demographic who have drifted away that are with Republicans in terms of our ideas; people that are young, suburban, women, have drifted to the socialist side, the Democrat side, and proposals such as this bring them back to the table for the great ideas of the Republican Party." See **Jerry** on Page 4

Farewell



ARVIZU, John (80) ~ 4/8; School Custodian

CARY, Marcia (73) ~ 4/10; Elementary Teacher

EBERT, Joan (87) ~ 4/6; English and Drama Teacher
at Marana and Amphi High Schools

GIFFORD, Nancy (58) ~ 4/22; Teacher



HALLETT, Jane (85) ~ 4/21; Teacher

HERZMARK, Barbara (?) ~ 3/22; Teacher

KNIGHT, Catherine (62) ~ 3/23; Teacher's Aide

LOWE, Noele (95) ~ 3/30; Teacher

Friends

MCCONNELL, Richard (89) ~ 4/23;
Coach at Sahuaro High School



NEEL, Thomas (89) ~ 5/1; Superintendent

RIECHERS, Nancy (83) ~ 4/28;
Teacher at Manzo Elementary

Colleagues

SCHALLER, Maxine (90) ~ 4/12;
Substitute Teacher

Mentors

SHOCKEY, John (80) ~ 4/16; Teacher in Virginia

SHROPSHIRE, Mary (92) ~ 4/16; Teacher



TWAITS, Merle (81) ~ 4/24; Teacher

Jerry, continued from Page 3

The outlook remains dim for new funding for education during this session of the legislature. AASRA continues to monitor various bills in the legislature that might affect education or the ASRS. I hope that you have been receiving the legislative updates from our Legislative Liaison, Joe Carter. Joe sends out regular email updates to AASRA members. If you have not been receiving those updates and Joe's comments regarding some of the bills, contact me at cerrada68@gmail.com. I will make sure you are added to our distribution list.

Some bills we are watching include HB2015 – penalties for politicized statements in the classroom, HB2184 – ELL instruction, HB2525 – Experienced Teacher Retention Pilot Program and several minor bills affecting ASRS. AASRA follows bills whose titles and short descriptions fill 32 pages..

AASRA is still actively involved with the Arizona Retirement Security Coalition (ARSC) in watching for anything that would adversely affect our pension system. We feel it is unlikely that anything will happen this year. However, we also feel strongly that behind-the-scenes efforts will be made to put forth proposals during next year's legislative session that would fundamentally change our system.

We continue working diligently to educate lawmakers and others about the importance of retaining our very successful pension system. We also work to expand the number of retiree groups that are aware of potential problems and active as part of our coalition. We will keep you posted.

A Letter to Remember! Excerpts from Nov. 18 AARP article by Jane Bryant Quinn

By Terry Bagwell

I have boxes of items that Mom saved. It's wonderful to read cards that people sent to her, including many written by my siblings. I also have all of the cards that Mom wrote me over the years. How wonderful it would have been to have a letter from her written when she was in good health about memories we shared.

Jane Bryant Quinn suggests writing letters to friends and loved ones as part of your estate planning. "Good letters start the way you might expect – acknowledging the important people in your life, telling them that you love them and expressing pride in their achievements. You might also mention treasured moments you spent with your child, family, or friend. Next comes a harder part – the apology section. One letter won't heal a distant relationship, but it may make them (and you) feel a little better. You might also forgive anyone you love who has hurt you in the past, if you can. It's solace for those you love and cathartic for you. Finally, remember to thank people for the love and care you have received, and say goodbye. Written, your words can be held in the hand, and cherished, for life."