

September Zoom meetings, pg 4

Stan McNaughton Award, pg. 6

HAPPENINGS

Publication of the Pierce County School Retirees' Association (PCSRA)

Volume XXXI Issue 1 September 2020



General Meetings/Luncheons

VIRTUAL

Sept 17 Fall 2020

Thursday, at noon

Upcoming Meetings:

VIRTUAL Board Meeting

September 10th, at 10 am

VIRTUAL SW3

September 22, at 10 am

**Pierce County School
Retirees' Association**
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VIRTUAL General Meeting

September 17

Program: "20 Books in 20 Minutes"
Books to Enrich our lives in a Pandemic



We are fortunate again to have Carolyn Petersen joining us for our program on Thursday, September 17th at noon. Carolyn is a Washington State Librarian in Olympia with a special penchant for giving book reviews. We have had many requests for her appearance, and she will be featuring 10 Fiction and 10 Non-Fiction titles.

Since we will NOT be meeting at LaQuinta, Carolyn will be with us "virtually." Some of you can join and see her via Zoom or you can join us by telephone. Give it a try! See below for instructions for both Zoom and telephone. Want to know how to Zoom? Carolyn's technical advisor will be available to assist us in practicing (and troubleshooting) our Zoom techniques the day before, on Wednesday, September 16th at noon. Come practice with us!

So fix a yummy lunch on Thursday and enjoy hearing Carolyn expound on current book titles and hearing what is going on with PCSRA. Karen Chapman, Program Chair, offers these wise words to help us get through this challenging time: "Eat dessert first; tomorrow is short."

(See Instructions for Zoom via computer/phone on next page 2)

SEPTEMBER 2020 HAPPENINGS

Presidents' Message September 2020

Due to the influence of COVID-19, our wonderful in-person luncheon meetings have been cancelled through December. We miss the fun and fellowship and we will continue to meet with you virtually! Check this newsletter for

instructions regarding how to access the meetings by telephone conferencing (easy) or by Zoom.

Exciting news for PCSRA was earning the Unit of Highest Distinction Award for 2019-2020 and receiving the "All-Time High" Membership Appreciation Award (1200 members). The membership award is a testament to the leadership of **Merrilyn Larson** (and committee) for four years of increasingly successful recruitment. We will miss Merrilyn and wish her well in her new adventure as she moves to Idaho to be with kids and grandkids. Additionally, it is an honor to announce that our own **Bob Duke** was elected and installed as President of the state association, WSSRA, for next year 2020-2021.

Unit 27 is pleased to announce the Pierce County School Retirees' Association (PCSRA) Future Educator's Scholarship Award winners: Chloe Callow attending Washington State University, Ella Jones attending Eastern Washington University, and Ari Zantkovsky attending Washington State University. These students have achieved Junior status and have declared a Major in Education.

Kudos to our "active" (still working) members as you face by exceptional challenges in educating our youth during the pandemic.

By Diane Blair and Laurel Powell, Co-Presidents

Instructions for Zoom "Tech support" meeting on Wednesday, September 16th at noon:

Option A – Telephone 1 253 215 8782 and use ID 870 6514 8251 and then enter Passcode 830640

Option B – Google Zoom and click on "Join a meeting" on upper right and use ID 870 6514 8251 and enter Passcode 830640

Instructions for Program on Thursday, September 17th at noon "20 BOOKS IN 20 MINUTES"

Option A – Telephone 1 253 215 8782 and use ID 882 4836 9904 and then enter Passcode 786221

Option B – Google Zoom and click on "Join a meeting" on upper right and use ID 882 4836 9904 and enter Passcode 786221

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS For 2020/21



Chloe
Callow

Ari Zantkovsky



Ella Jones

PIERCE COUNTY MINI-GRANTS

Hi! I'm **Sandy Grape** and I am your Pierce County Mini-Grant Chair.

The Pierce County School Retirees' Association is pleased to announce the school **Mini-Grant Program** was available again for the school year 2019-2020. The program is open to districts in Pierce County on a rotation basis. The mini-grants are awarded in amounts up to \$200. This past year, the program was offered to elementary school educators in the Clover Park School District.

With the deadline this year in April, school buildings had already been closed and moved to online learning. Fortunately, all we had to do was add a PDF Application download to our website and educators were still able to apply. Here are some of the selected mini-grants:

- Electronic Books - for distance learning
- Epic Pen – used with electronic devices/screens
- S'more Digital Newsletter/Kahoot Subscription
- Reading and Math Materials – for use in virtual lessons
- Cubetto – the Wooden Robot
- Wi-Fi Router – for remote teaching

Mini-grants are a great opportunity for educators and PCSRA will be offering them again in 2021.

Zoom September Meetings Numbers

**Board Meeting – Thursday, September 10th at 10:00 a.m. –
New time!**

**Option A – Telephone 1 253 215 8782 and enter ID: 819 0851 7064
then Passcode: 936621**

**Option B - Google Zoom and click on “Join a Meeting.” Enter
ID: 819 0851 7064 Passcode: 936621**

**SW-3 Coordinating Council Meeting (Southwest 3 Region) –
Tuesday, September 22nd at 10:00 – 12:00 noon**

**Option A – Telephone 1 253 215 8782 and enter ID: 929 5537 8795
then Passcode: 707535**

**Option B – Google Zoom and click on “Join a Meeting.
Enter ID 929 5537 8795 Passcode: 707535**

**THANK YOU TO KEVIN GLACKIN-COLEY,
FOOD CONNECTION DIRECTOR!**

Congratulations and thank you to Kevin for your years of service to children and families in Pierce County! Educators know Kevin best for his establishment of the weekend backpack food program for students in need throughout Pierce County. Kevin’s compassion for kids and his leadership style brought out the talent of others and led to the amazing success of this program since its establishment in 2008.

**Happy Retirement, Kevin, and best wishes as you begin
your next life chapter!**

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Colleen Cline, long-time volunteer and community advocate, interviewed her fellow volunteers at the **ST. LEO'S FOOD CONNECTION** in this article. Colleen is a PCSRA member, a 2018 nominee for the WSSRA Stan McNaughton Community Service Award, and is a retired school social worker/counselor. Several families, including their middle and high school students, along with college students from the University of Washington, School of Education, volunteered to work at the Food Connection. Volunteer ages ranged from ages 11 to 68.

Why did you volunteer?

“We had extra time and wanted to find a way to pitch in and help during this hard time. We chose St. Leo’s because of our connection to the food bank and community. It’s important to me that my kids always ask themselves, ‘What can I do to help/change things?’”

“I have been a volunteer for 7 years with the children’s food bank program. Why stop when the need is so great and I am healthy?”

“I volunteer to support a good cause for the community and to stay connected with my friends.”

Upon entering the Food Connection, what were your initial reactions to your surroundings?

“It’s a familiar spot. I am always struck by what an amazing operation it is, AND I wish we could put more food in those bags.” “It looked clean.”

“I enter a warehouse, busy with activity. I pass people in a line, 6 feet apart, wearing masks, holding their bags and waiting to get into the food bank.”

Previous volunteers (staff, students, reserve soldiers) were familiar with the Food Connection and the St. Leo campus that also houses Catholic Community Services, Nativity House Shelter, the Neighborhood Clinic, Emergency Services, and the church and rectory.

Describe your work routine.

“Each shift is 3 hours. On Wednesday, we put certain amounts of produce into bags which are then boxed and refrigerated. On Friday, we move various dry goods, take off the packaging and place like items in crates.”

“A rhythm of cooperative work begins. Volunteers are always looking for the next task. There is laughter and parts of stories told.”

What safety precautions are in place because of Covid-19?

Group summary: “First we take our temperatures before entering the work area. All of us wear masks and gloves. We frequently wash our hands, disinfect surfaces. We have sinks readily available and maintain social distancing.”

How do you feel about your experience?

“It gets us out of the house, away from technology and in the company of really good people. It feels like a tangible accomplishment in a time of intangibility and uncertainty. It is feeding our need for being useful and connected as much as it is meeting very real needs in our community.”

“I needed to find a way to assist. The physical and social aspect of working with and for others is invigorating.”

“I feel the biggest satisfaction, knowing somebody gets food assistance.”

What might you tell your family and friends about your volunteering?

“It feels nice to give back to the community, especially during this time of crisis.”

CONNIE RICKMAN

NOMINEE FOR THE WSSRA 2020 STAN MCNAUGHTON AWARD



Connie Rickman has served as a beacon of community leadership for youth, families, adults, and seniors at the local, state, national, and even international level for many years. Her service and accomplishments are lengthy and legendary. Yet she acknowledges the contributions of others. Connie states, "Being at the right place at the right time with the right people with the right knowledge and skills who are willing to share them with those who need them" have allowed her to encourage others to share their expertise and thus deliver results.

Veterans have been especially honored through Connie's work on the National Hero Project. A statue of Pappy Boyington, a World War II hero and alumni, was erected and celebrated at Lincoln High School. In addition, a huge "Recognition Display" of educator veterans' personal stories, were collected and exhibited at the state WSSRA Convention.

Connie served and chaired the City of Destiny Awards Committee, which honors volunteers in Tacoma, Washington. She also organized an alumni group at Lincoln High School in Tacoma and went on to chair the 75th and 100th anniversary events.

Connie championed the Pierce County Youth Safety Summit, wrote the report, and was invited to Washington D.C. with youth leaders to share the results with Congress members. Another time, she was invited by the South Korean Government, one of 16 former Principals, to visit and observe their country's educational system. Not to be overlooked are Connie's election to the Tacoma School Board of Directors and service on a national AARP committee. Connie's contributions live on in the community in many ways. Her dedication as chair of the state and local Community Service Committees for many years is evident in WSSRA's continued use of her thorough and detailed Community Service Report.

Tacoma Schools still utilize an Advisor/Advisee time in the schedule, advanced by Connie, where communication and support are offered in small groups to students. The Hilltop Glass

Artist's Program at Jason Lee Middle School was established during her administration. Students learn to make original one-of-a-kind blown glass art. This program continues to be prized by the wider Tacoma community.

Connie serves and soars! In fact, she "flew" with the Blue Angels, at their invitation, in recognition of her service to youth and families!



Adventure Corner

By Evonne Howard

PCSRA Member and Past Chair of Mini Grant Committee

“A Lifetime of Sailing”

When I was just a wee child, about 9 years, my parents bought their first sailboat. I have memories of sailing in Commencement Bay, laying on the deck with my two older sisters, and scooping up small clear jellyfish when the boat was heeled over. We had many adventures sailing in the south sound, visiting friends on Minter Creek and having seafood feasts.

After about four years my father tired of the upkeep on a wooden boat and donated it to the Sea Scouts. Fast forward about ten years when I met a man who had a sailboat that he raced in the local area. He invited me to go with him one Saturday and I was immediately hooked. A group of women sailors out of Tacoma Yacht Club started the Tacoma Women’s Sailing Association with volunteer instructors and donor boats, so that women could learn to sail without a man yelling at them about what to do or not do. Having been yelled at many times, I signed up for lessons, only to be told by the founding mother that I knew plenty and the best way to learn is to teach (sound familiar?) I was put on a boat with another teacher as a co-teacher. I eventually became president of the association and introduced racing and navigation classes.

About 1976 I became unemployed, so I decided to start my own sailing school and charge money for lessons. I did and eventually linked up with a company in Seattle that had started a business of time share leasing of sailboats. They were looking for someone in Tacoma to start a fleet and train lessees. I interviewed and they hired me I still ran my sailing school on the side and raced when I could. I was invited to race with an all women crew that was hot and fast and won a lot of races. We lost a few but won many 1st place trophies. I won Sailer of the Year, because of the all-around sailing experience, from the Tacoma Women’s Sailing Association one year and Sportswoman of the Year from the Corinthian Yacht Club

the next year. I was teaching sailing and racing in the spring, summer and fall. I also did a lot of cruising in the Puget Sound area and points north where I was thrilled to see many sea animals like whales, including gray , orcas and humpbacks. During all of this I met a man who was a sailer as well as a downhill skier who taught me how to snow ski. Hooked again! Eventually I became a ski instructor, married this man and had a child together. Fast forward when the child starts elementary school. Teaching sailing and skiing requires working weekends, summers, spring break and evenings. You can't do that with a child in school. I went back to college, got my Masters degree in teaching and became a "real" teacher. I taught in the Tacoma School District for 20 years, including 8 years as a middle school science teacher.

And, yes, I still sail occasionally, but have given up the snow skiing.

**Pierce County School Retirees' Association
P.O. Box 112493
Tacoma, WA 98411-2493**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Membership Directory

For those members who receive the newly published **2020-2021** Pierce County Retirees Directory,

Call **Marianne at 253-435-1234** and she will mail one to you. Security concerns caused her to change the way the directory is distributed.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Don't throw your empty pill bottles away!

Remove labels and bring them to a meeting when we meet again in the future. They will be filled with needed hygiene products – shampoo, lotions, soap, etc. – and will be delivered and distributed to our homeless population through St Leo's Nativity House.

Thank you!