

Fall Luncheon dates have changed: See Challenge Pg 3

HAPPENINGS

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

Volume XXXVII Issue 1 FALL 2025

General Meetings/ Luncheons

IN PERSON

La Quinta Inn

1425 E. 27th Street, Tacoma

Fall 2025

Sept. 18 & Nov. 20

•

**WSSRA Convention June
8-10, 2026**

**Great Wolf Lodge,
Grand Mound**

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**Pierce County School
Retirees' Association**

P.O. Box 112493

Tacoma, WA 98411-2493

Sandy Grape

President

Open

President-Elect

Carolyn Ohlson

Recording Secretary

Vickie Rettke

Corresponding Secretary

Derryl Finney

Treasurer

Conni Abernathy

Happenings

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WSSRA: 1-360-413-5496

wssra.org

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Puget Sound Honor Flights

We are so pleased to have Patty Carter for our speaker for the September luncheon. She has a heart-warming job of being in charge of our Puget Sound

Honor Flights. She is responsible for arranging veterans and their sponsors or caregivers to board an Alaska Airlines special flight to Washington D.C. There arrangements have been made for housing, meals, transportation and visiting our monuments,

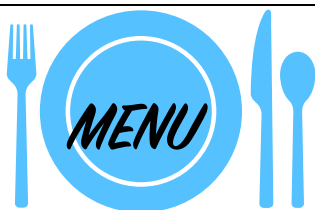
memorials, museums, Arlington National Cemetery and social events.

Many of the vets cannot walk on their own. What a thrill it is for them and others to visit our capital city. The trip has no cost to them. The funding comes from various sources.

Don't miss this program. Many vets live in the Puget Sound region. Patty Carter

has all the information in case you know of someone that would benefit from this project. Enjoy both the speaker and a nice lunch on September 18, at noon.





For September 18th

Chicken Buffet:

Chicken Cordon Bleu, roasted potatoes, seasonal fresh fruit, tossed green salad with assorted dressings, vegetable medley, dessert, coffee and iced tea.

For November 20

Thanksgiving Buffet:

Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes & gravy, cranberry compote, tossed green salad, vegetable medley, dessert, coffee and iced tea.

Cost \$15

Call Carolyn Bjerke at
253-759-3951

by September 12th
for reservation and
menu choice

AND

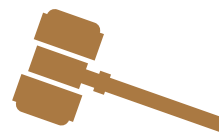
November 14th for
reservation for the
November meeting.

Membership Directory

For those members who wish to receive the newly published **Lavender 2025-2026** Pierce County School Retirees Directory, call **Marianne at 253-536-6717** and she will mail one to you, or pick yours up at the luncheon. Security concerns caused us to change the way the directory is distributed.

Fall into fellowship

—PCSRA kicks off a season of connection
and community



President's Message
September 2025
Sandy Grape, President

Welcome back from the dog days of summer! As members of the Pierce County School Retirees' Association (PCSRA), we have an exciting lineup of activities and events awaiting us this fall. We've missed the fun and fellowship—and we can't wait to reconnect at our first membership luncheon on Thursday, September 18th at Noon at La Quinta Inn & Suites in Tacoma, conveniently located just off I-5 at Portland Avenue.

We kicked off the new year with our traditional potluck picnic at Clarks Creek South Park in Puyallup. This beautiful spot provided the perfect backdrop for a day filled with delicious food and great company. Be sure to mark your calendar for next year's picnic: Thursday, August 6, 2026 at 11:30 a.m. You won't want to miss it!

In June, twelve of our delegates attended the Washington State School Retirees' Association (WSSRA) Convention in Yakima. A highlight of the event was the delightful keynote speaker duo, *The Traveling Grannies!* If you've never served as a delegate and are curious about the experience, consider joining us for the 2026 WSSRA Convention at Great Wolf Lodge.

Looking ahead, our annual Meet & Greet is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9th from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. This is a fantastic opportunity to connect with local legislators and discuss key issues impacting retirees. Join us at La Quinta Inn & Suites – Tacoma; admission is just \$5 at the door, which includes coffee and hors d'oeuvres.

As we embark on another exciting year with PCSRA, let's continue to cherish our time together, support one another, and make the most of every opportunity to connect and grow. Your participation and enthusiasm are what make our association so special. I encourage each of you to stay involved, attend our events, and invite fellow retirees to join us.

Together, we can make this year our best yet!

Sandy

Sandy Grape
253-732-3322 President PCSRA - Unit 27

PCSRA Luncheon Challenge

This is for all you folks who have your calendar scheduled for months ahead of time: The PCSRA Luncheon meetings have had an interruption in our calendar.

Our September and November meeting dates have skipped down to the 3rd week...

Some will find this upsetting, others will accept this challenge to their routine...

However you handle it, it is unavoidable.

So will you accept the challenge and come?

ByLaws Update

The committee has completed the revision of the ByLaws and presented them to the Board.

After the board has approved them and made their recommendations it will be available on-line and by request in hard copy.

Bits & Pieces, September 2025

BY WSSRA LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR Emmett Mills <emmett@wssra.org>

Please read through to the end of the article, as it contains an important call to action. As you may already know, earlier this year, the Washington State Legislature came very close to passing Senate Bill 5085, which would finally restore an ongoing COLA for TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees. The bill would merge TRS 1 and PERS 1, which are both underfunded, with LEOFF 1, a pension plan for law enforcement officers and firefighters that is overfunded by around \$3 billion. While the Senate passed the bill over loud opposition from firefighters and police officers, the House wouldn't go along, favoring a different bill that would move the \$3 billion pension surplus into the general fund. At the end of session, neither bill passed, and the legislature ordered both SB 5085 and the House's pension bill to be studied by the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP), a special committee that meets when the legislature is not in session. Our goal is to have the SCPP formally recommend that the legislature pass SB 5085 in 2026.

So far, the SCPP's work has gone as well as we could have hoped. Presentations by committee staff have highlighted two crucial points: First, LEOFF 1 members would not lose any benefits under SB 5085. Second, the extra money in LEOFF 1 came from the state, not from police officers and firefighters. Unfortunately, retired LEOFF 1 members continue to show up to every SCPP meeting in large numbers, claiming ownership of the funds. We need to show the SCPP that retired school employees are paying just as close attention to their work.

Call to action: Attend the next SCPP meeting to show committee members that retired school employees are paying attention. All you need to do is show up!

When: Tuesday, September 16, 10:00 AM

Where: House Hearing Room A, John L O'Brien Building, Washington State Capitol Campus

Pierce County School Retirees' Association Scholarships for 2025



NINA BALL PCSRA scholarship:

Abigail M. Donaldson: Bonney Lake High School



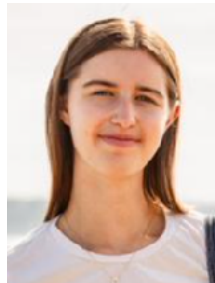
PCSRA High School scholarship:

Ava A. Johnson: Bonney

Lake High School, Savannah L. Ryan: Bonney Lake High School, Ashley M. Burnworth: Bethel High School, Madilyn S. Butterfield: Lincoln High School



Keira D. Hanson: Rogers High School, Claire E. Holm: White River High School, Harmony R. Jones: Silas High School, Isabella N. Losvar: Orting High School



Layla R. Slater: Clover Park High School
Laney R. Barkley: Orting High School
Emily M. Kincade: Rodgers High School



Chuck Abernathy Memorial Scholarships

High School Seniors:

Azariah L. Miller: Curtis HS, Grace L. Ludlow: HHS (not pictured)

Student Teacher:

Ahmira M. Elyard-Jaeger: PLU

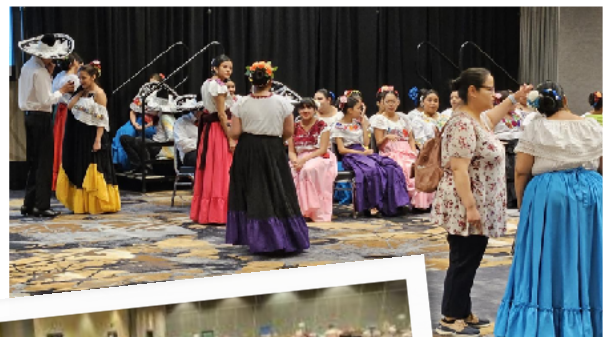
WSSRA Annual Convention June 2-4 Yakama Convention Center



PCSRA Unit 27

Captured outside the Holiday Inn, Yakima, following our team-building exercise led by our very own Vickie Rettke at the 2025 WSSRA Convention

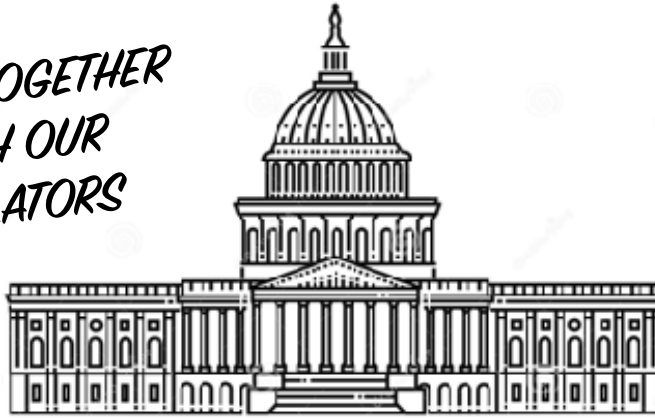
Left to right: Pat Kennedy, Barb Church, Diane Blair, Annie Ragin, Conni Abernathy, Vickie Rettke (standing), Karen Chapman, Marianne Candioglos, Curt Horne, Renate Krawiecki, Marilyn O'Malley, Derryl Finney, Ed Moersch, Edie Moersch, Charles Kennedy, Sandy Grape (taking selfie).



It was not all fun and games we got important work done for the whole state organization.



*A GET-TOGETHER
WITH OUR
LEGISLATORS*



PIERCE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE “MEET AND GREET”

Save the Date: Thursday, October 9, 2025

Come to our annual get-together with Legislators at LaQuinta Inn. This is the time for us to grow and develop our relationships with lawmakers who impact our retirement benefits. It's easy to visit over hot hors d'oeuvres, fresh fruit and cheeses, coffee and cookies in this relaxed setting! *(Back by popular demand are the delicious hot stuffed mushrooms.)*

Our Legislators need to hear that we want to restore and improve our retirement and medical benefits.

Our voices are amplified as a group!

WHEN: Thursday, October 9th at 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

WHERE: Tacoma LaQuinta Inn off I-5 at Portland Avenue exit

WHAT: Conversation over Hors d'oeuvres and Sweets, Assorted Fresh Fruit and Cheeses, Coffee, no-host bar available.

COST: \$5.00

***PLEASE MAKE ATTENDANCE AT THIS ONCE-A-YEAR EVENT A PRIORITY!
Come and protect your retirement benefits at this annual fun event.
Easy talking points available.***

Bring friends and family!

Our PCSRA Annual Picnic



The PCSRA Picnic was a wonderful kick-off to the 2025-26 year, before the food and fun we had a brief up date on membership and the Mini-grant program from Alan Burke and Diane Blair.

Jim Sabol was the chief cook and entertainer serving up his famous hot dogs and leading us all in an oldies sing-a-long.



Everyone brought wonderful food to share and there was plenty of time to visit with old friends...



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

Cost: \$5

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