

NewsLetter

PPSPERA IS SUPPORTED BY COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 11

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From Your Co-Presidents

This column is again coming to you from your co-presidents. However, the names have changed! This year Meredith Jobe will continue as co-president with Gerry Olvey assuming the other co-president position. Sandy Patton has assumed the role of past president on the PPSPERA Board of Directors as she also starts her term as president of Colorado School and Public Employees Retirement Association (CSPERA), our state organization. We are looking forward to working together this year to have a successful PPSPERA year.

Many of you are receiving this newsletter by electronic communications for the first time! We are excited to initiate the electronic communications in hopes of increasing timely communications with members and also saving on postage.

In order to be successful, we need your updated, current email address. Please send any changes in your email address to our membership committee (www.membership@ppspera.org) – be sure to sign your email. If you do not have email access or wish to receive a paper copy of the newsletter via the mail, you need to let us know that, too, by sending a note with your current address to PPSPERA, P.O. Box 7969, Colorado Springs 80933-7969.

As you will see, our newsletter contains LOTS of information. In this newsletter you can read about our past and upcoming legislative issues, the new PPSPERA-PILLAR partnership, our 2012 scholarship recipient and scholarship renewals, the 2012 community service award recipient and the 2012 distinguished service award recipient, the 2012 Pre-Retirement Meeting, and the state CSPERA meetings held in Colorado Springs in May. Be sure to check out the **PPSPERA CALENDAR 2012-2013** for a list of all of this year's activities. If you have suggestions or ideas concerning our PPSPERA newsletter, please contact Alan Rasmussen, our newsletter editor/chairperson.

It is almost time for our annual August Picnic! This year's picnic will be on **TUESDAY, AUGUST 7 at 11:00 AM at Bear Creek Park, Pavilion 1**. No reservations are

required for the picnic and we encourage you to bring a friend or colleague from the public employees sector or the schools. We would love to have more members join from all of the eligible membership groups! You will hear the latest PERA information, learn about PILLAR activities from Dave Rich, Executive Director at PILLAR, and meet our 2012-2013 PPSPERA officers and committee chairpersons at the picnic. See the picnic information in this newsletter for the details and what to bring. You will also receive a reminder closer to the picnic date.

The 2012-2013 PPSPERA membership year starts on September 1 and ends on August 31, 2013. **Now is the time to renew your membership or to join.** Our local dues are the same as last year - \$7.50 for the year. A membership brochure is included in the newsletter and will be available at the picnic.

As you can see, we are looking forward to another busy and productive year at PPSPERA. We hope to see all of you at our August 7 picnic and at our three general membership meetings throughout the year!

Meredith Jobe and Gerry Olvey

Scholarship Committee

Invitations for the \$1500 2012 PPSPERA Scholarship Award were sent February 21, 2012 to all El Paso and Teller county high schools.

This year's winner is Tiffany Bauman from Miami-Yoder High School. She plans to attend Colorado State University in Fort Collins to become a mathematics teacher. Tiffany and her parents, Jim and Donna Bauman, were introduced at the May general meeting.



Last year's recipients, Christine Anderson at Washington College and Bethany Wallace at Colorado State University, have both had successful freshman years ending with 4.0 GPA's. They have both been awarded a second year \$500 scholarship.

New PPSPERA Board Members Meredith Jobe and Gerry Olvey, Co-Presidents; LuAnn Long, President Elect; Joyce Smaltz, Secretary



CSPERA Meets In Colorado Springs

Colorado School and Public Employees Retirement Association (CSPERA), our parent organization, had a wonderful board meeting and conference in Colorado Springs May 16-17. It was a jam-packed conference program with Meredith Williams' farewell address as executive director of PERA as a high point of the day. Carol Hedges wowed the audience and Mark McNulty shared information on the positive fiscal impact of PERA on the Colorado economy. Arti Cowan was awarded the CSPERA Member of the Year award. Winners of the Grandparent Essay contest were present and did a great job reading their essays. Greg Smith ended the program by challenging each of us to stay involved politically and to support those candidates who support us

At the sold-out Bernadine Mack breakfast, winners of four \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to people actively working in K-12 public education in Colorado to further their education. Winners are - Amanda Arlington (metro division), Michelle Starling (southern division), Beth Myers (western division), and Michelle Patterson (northeast division).

During the board meeting Sandy Patton was installed as president of CSPERA. It meant a lot to have so many PPSPERA members in attendance. Tom Tonoli from Fort Collins was installed as president-elect. Mary Lynn Jones was appointed to complete Tom's term as secretary.

Thank you to the local planning from PPSPERA – Meredith Jobe, Gerry Olvey, Alan Rasmussen, Joyce Schmaltz, Terri Stevens and Brenda LeBrasse and from Fremont County Retired School Employees Association (FCRSEA) – Leonard Nelson and Cheryl Erickson. Bud Lehmkuhl was at both the board and conference taking pictures. Also thanks to Kathy Zinter and Marlis Hamm. Great job!! Thank you to all the PPSPERA members who attended either or both days.

CSPERA is the statewide organization that represents over 6,000 retired school and state employees in the state of Colorado. Eligibility for membership in the association includes all retired and active school, state and public employees and their spouses who fulfill their financial obligations, all PERA annuitants, as well as other individuals interested in education and public welfare. The association was organized in 1950 (PPSPERA is older) to promote and protect the economic well-being and quality of life for all retired school employees. In 2007, the Board voted to expand membership to include all retired public employees who pay into PERA, including state, DOW, CDOT, corrections, judicial, parks, etc. Our efforts in legislation, health issues, retirement seminars, membership workshops, leadership training, volunteerism and communications are geared toward maintaining a high standard of living for Colorado retirees.

Community and Volunteer Service Awards

It was a great pleasure to pay tribute to Ms. Pat Gray and Mr. Dave Rich with our Community and Distinguished Service Awards for 2012.

Mr. Dave Rich, PILLAR Institute Executive Director, is the recipient for our 2012 Distinguished Service Award. Since taking the helm at PILLAR, Dave has shown outstanding and innovative leadership that includes the development and implementation of an ambitious business plan, expansion of community partnerships, including a partnership with PPSPERA, reorganization of PILLAR, including the development of an operations manual with written job descriptions for most positions and an updated website.



Dave Rich and Marje Swearinjen

Our 2012 Community Service Award was presented to The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Auxiliary. Ms. Pat Gray received the award on behalf of the Auxiliary that includes 107 docents that volunteer to support the zoo and its educational programs. In addition, 8 docent trainees completed their certification in March. During 2011, 7,356 volunteer hours were logged and they are on track to meet or exceed those hours this year.



Pat Gray

Docents provide presentations called "safaris" to school classrooms in preparation for their visits to the zoo. "Safari" instruction and Zoo tours are based on approved curriculum from grades 2 and up. Docents also provide a variety of student tours when classes visit Zoo.

Pre-retirement Seminar

The annual PPSPERA pre-retirement seminar was a huge success this year with over 100 potential retirees from several area school districts and PERA organizations attending on April 12th. Attendees received information from Viki Endsley regarding benefits and how to prepare for them, Dave Parker on transitioning from work to retirement, and AMBA concerning financial readiness. Amy Taylor from PERA spoke about everything you need to know about PERA retirement. We are now looking forward to the 2013 Pre-retirement Seminar on April 4 from 4-6 p.m. at Tesla and hope to have even more attendees from more districts and organizations than this year.

PPSPERA-PILLAR Partnership Begins 2nd Year

PPSPERA is happy to announce that it will continue a partnership with PILLAR Institute for Lifelong Learning for the coming year. As a complementary Partner Member, PPSPERA members qualify for an Associate Membership at \$30 per year (general membership dues are \$60 per year – a \$30 savings for PPSPERA members). PILLAR members also pay a reduced fee for all classes, trips, and tours and receive invitations to special events. Members will receive the PILLAR Preview catalog and may elect to receive weekly emails regarding upcoming classes and events.

PILLAR is a non-profit organization that fosters enrichment through lifelong learning. Class offerings are varied and appeal to a wide range of interests. Summer classes include: Islamic Law...Opera and the French Revolution...Antarctica: A Travelogue...Our Best and Worst Presidents: How Historians Rate Our Presidents...Swing...Minding Your Meds: Avoiding the Pitfalls of Prescription Medication...and many more in addition to regularly scheduled discussion groups, book groups, and Sunday movies. There are also opportunities for you to volunteer or become a PILLAR instructor. PILLAR wants to hear from you if you have a topic of interest or passion to share with others. Dave Rich, executive director of PILLAR and also the recipient of the 2012 PPSPERA Distinguished Service Award, will join us at our August 7 picnic to further discuss our partnership and the opportunities available through PILLAR.

To start your PILLAR membership you need to complete the PILLAR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION in this newsletter and return it to the PILLAR office. You can also stop by the PILLAR office at 202 E. Cheyenne Mtn. Blvd., Suite I – to complete an application in person. Find out more about PILLAR at www.visitpillar.org or call 633-4991.

2012 Legislation: What is the latest on the Bills that have been proposed?

In our last newsletter the article focused on how we individually can become good citizen lobbyists by actively involving ourselves in legislation. The most important activity that made a difference in the outcome of the bills was getting our voices heard in legislation - by helping getting to know our legislators on a personal basis, going to town hall meetings, writing letters to our legislators and volunteering to make phone calls for our legislators. As citizen lobbyists, it is important that we become familiar with all the bills that have been introduced and take a position on those bills that are of interest to us.

Where do we stand on the recent bills that we have become familiar with and have piqued our interest? The following bills have been postponed indefinitely, all of which are opposed by the PERA Board:

- SB 12-016- Local Government Option to change PERA contribution rates
- SB 12-082- PERA Retirement Age same as Social Security
- SB 12-084- PERA Transparency
- SB 12-119- PERA Fiscal Sustainability
- HB 12-1142- New Employee Defined Contribution Choice
- HB 12-1150- PERA Seven Year Highest Average Salary Calculation
- HB 12-1250- PERA Health Care Trust Fund Employer Contributors
- SCR 12-004- PERA Transparency

In addition, HB 12-1179- Composition of the PERA Board (replaces four elected Trustees with Governor-appointed Trustees approved by the Senate) has been assigned to the House Finance Committee and is opposed by the PERA Board.

For further information contact: www.copera.org, the Legislative Information Center or the Ambassador Website. Office locations are 1301 Pennsylvania Street, Denver, Colorado or 1120 West 122nd Avenue, Westminster, Colorado, 303-832-9550 or 1-800-759-PERA.

It is never too late to get involved and become knowledgeable concerning the bill that you are lobbying for or against. Know how and when to lobby on a particular bill. Our voices are being heard so let us continue to be heard!

PERA REMINDER

This is just a reminder – more bills to make changes to PERA will be brought to the fall session of the legislature. It will be critical that all of us remain vigilant in this regard and contact our legislators. There are those who want to replace four elected members of the PERA Board of Trustees with four persons to be appointed by the Governor. Appointees become political and will have a different agenda than those we elect to represent us.

Another issue is a discussion of defined benefit plans versus defined contribution plans. One major difference in these plans is the defined benefit has guaranteed benefits and the defined contribution plan doesn't.

Please stay tuned. The issues noted above are just two of the many that may come. Some of the bills which were defeated may come back with language which may sound more palatable. The organizations and persons who are bringing these challenges have a definite agenda, and that is self-interest, not interest in preserving the successful pension we know.

Peggy Gardner

PPSPERA CALENDAR 2012-2013

August Picnic

Tuesday, August 7, 2012 11:00 AM Bear Creek Park, Pavilion 1

General Membership Meetings

(All general membership meetings are scheduled at 9:30 AM at Valley Hi Golf Club)

Thursday, November 8, 2012

Thursday, February 7, 2013

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Board of Director Meetings

(All Board Meetings are scheduled at 9:00 AM at Peak Grill)

Friday, June 8, 2012

Thursday, August 30, 2012

Friday, October 12, 2012

Thursday, January 10, 2013

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Tuesday, June 4, 2013

Pre-Retirement Meeting

Thursday, April 4, 2013 4-6:00 PM Tesla

CSPERA State Meetings

October 10 & 11, 2012 Denver

May 15 & 16, 2013 Denver

IT'S AUGUST - IT'S PICNIC TIME!

**You are invited to the
Pikes Peak School & Public Employees Retirement
Association Annual August Potluck Picnic**

**New Retirees are our Special Guests!!!
Bring a fellow Retiree who has not attended in the past**

**When: Tuesday, August 7, 2012
Where: Bear Creek Park, Pavilion 1
What: Pot Luck Picnic (See below for what to bring)
Program: PERA Update on Fiscal and Political Issues,
Meet PPSPERA Board Members, Learn about
2012-2013 PILLAR Partnership
Bring: A - G Main Dish, H - O Dessert, P - Z Salads
Time: 11:00 Networking
11:30 Eating with Program to follow**

**Donations will be accepted and delivered to
Partners in Housing**

**Items needed: Diapers, Dish Soap, Laundry Soap, Paper Towels, Toilet Paper, Shampoo, Lotion,
Shower Soap, Bath Soap, and Women's Personal Hygiene Products**

Set-ups and Drinks Provided - Dress is Comfortable & Casual