

PPSPERA IS SUPPORTED BY COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 12

July 2015

Editor: Alan Rasmussen

FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

Greetings everyone from your new co-presidents (well-half new). It really doesn't seem like a year ago that I was writing similar words for the July 2014 newsletter. For 2015-2016, Elaine will continue as co-president with Jan King. Lu Ann Long will assume the role of past-president, and we have NO president-elect. **WE NEED YOU!!** President-elect actually has a full year to watch and observe what it means to be president before assuming any responsibilities. Then they have a year to serve as a co-president with Jan. So, **WE NEED YOU!** I guess that will be the theme of this article. We really want to thank Joyce and John for stepping-up for another year. They both do such excellent work, and we really appreciate them and what they do. Your new officers are:

Co-presidents:	Elaine Naleski and Jan King
Past-president:	Lu Ann Long
President-elect:	?????? (WE NEED YOU)
Secretary:	Joyce Schmalz
Treasurer:	John Kerr
CSPERA Rep:	Sandy Patton

Your committee chairs are as follows:

Community Service:	Roger Louden
Social/Courtesy:	June George
Legislative:	Sandy Patton
Newsletter:	Alan Rasmussen
Membership:	Pam Hart
Electronic Communications:	Joe Morin
Historian:	Pam Berry
Outreach:	??? (WE NEED YOU!!)
Pre-retirement:	Terry and Jennifer Alley
Scholarship:	Charlotte Brummer and Barbara Watt
Program:	Terri Stevens
Publicity:	?????? (WE NEED YOU!!!)
Board Member Emeritus:	Judy McCormick

Thank you, also, to those members who so willingly serve as a committee chair on the board and help to lead our organization. Without the dedication of our members who are willing to serve in a leadership capacity, we would not have a PPSPERA and have no representation at the state level. These leaders are helping to secure your PERA for your future. If you know any of them, please thank them for what they do. If you, too, care about helping secure our future retirement would like to volunteer to fill one of our

vacant positions (even for one year), please let us know. **WE NEED YOU!!!**

We had a great crowd at our April 30 meeting at the Olive Garden. Our scholarship winners were present with their families and Judy Casey was presented the 2015 Distinguished Award. Our new budget and our new by-laws and standing rules were approved. Our other guests were CSPERA Southern Division Directors Vicky Doyle and Karen Reitz from Pueblo. The program was presented by Shannon Mendes, Business Relations Manager from Aventa Credit Union and Amanda Martinez, who is in charge of identity theft prevention for Aventa. It was an excellent program on protecting ourselves from identity theft. We will be checking to see if there is enough interest to have a separate detailed seminar on the topic

Please remember, we need your current email address and/or current mailing address in order to keep you informed as to what we are doing in PPSPERA, what is going on at the state level with our state organization, PERA, and the legislature. Please send any changes in your email address to our membership committee at www.membership@ppspira.org. Be sure to sign your email. If you need to update your mailing address, please send a note with your current address to PPSPERA, P.O.Box 7969, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7969.

MARK YOU CALENDAR~ Because the survey results were unfavorable regarding the picnic and pot lucks, we are having our August meeting at Olive Garden on August 13, and do we have a treat for you! Connie Stanton will be working with us on Stress Busters. I don't know about you, but that is something some of us can really use, especially with flooding, clouds, and just day-to-day events. Come and join us. **WE NEED YOU!!!!**

As always, we would love to hear from you. If you have any feedback, suggestions, news, or comments, email us and let us know what you are thinking. Also, don't forget to turn in your volunteer hours. We need those, too.

Looking forward to seeing you in August.

Elaine Naleski and Jan King

Save the Date to hear an Expert!!!

Watch for Registration information from
CSPERA this summer!!!



CSPERA LEGISLATIVE FORUM 2015

Embassy Suites Denver Stapleton
September 22, 2015

DAVID SIROTA is an award-winning journalist, television commentator, nationally syndicated weekly newspaper columnist and bestselling author living in Denver, Colorado. His work appears regularly on cable television networks and in 2013, his book *Back to Our Future* became the basis for the National Geographic Channel's major [miniseries](#) on the 1980s. In 2014, Sirota won Ithaca College's [Izzy Award for Journalism](#) and a [Best In Business Award](#) for investigative reporting from the Society for American Business Editors and Writers. He was also named a finalist for Syracuse University's [Mirror Award for Journalism](#). That year, the [Denver Business Journal](#) listed Sirota as one of the most influential Coloradans in the social media sphere.

Sirota is the Senior Editor for Investigations at [The International Business Times](#). The [New York Times](#) has credited his Wall Street reporting for showing "that secrecy can hide high fees, low returns, excess risk and the identity of politically connected dealmakers."

In 2014, Sirota's investigative series for PandoDaily about public broadcasting [compelled](#) a PBS flagship station to return a \$3.5 million contribution from a hedge fund billionaire. In response, [PBS's ombudsman](#) called Sirota's journalism "important," and credited him for "shining a light on what seems (to) be ethical compromises in funding arrangements and lack of real transparency for viewers." The ombudsman added that "nobody really knew (about the problem) until Sirota wrote about it."

That same year, Sirota's investigative reporting about pensions for PandoDaily and then for the International Business Times led the New Jersey state government to open a formal pay to play investigation and to divest state holdings in a venture capital firm. Sirota's reporting for International Business Times also led San Francisco officials to delay a proposed \$3 billion investment in hedge funds. In both cases, newspapers [credited](#) Sirota's work for breaking the stories.

CSPERA Annual Conference Held in Colorado Springs a Big Success!!!

A Big **THANK YOU** from Sandy Patton and the CSPERA Board of Directors to the following PPSPERA members who volunteered at the CSPERA Conference. We could not have done it without you.

Terry Alley
Jennifer Alley
Jan King
Joyce Schmaltz
Karen Hart
Barbara Watt
Alan Rasmussen
John Kerr

PPSPERA CALENDAR

Board Meeting -

October 15, 2015 @ 9:00 AM at Egg & I

General Membership Meetings –

Olive Garden Restaurant, 11:30 AM

-August 13, 2015 "Stress Busters with Connie Stanton"

-November 12, 2015 "Legislative Panel"

-February 11, 2016 "PERA Update/Ambassador Program"

-May 12, 2016 "Volunteering"

-August 11, 2016 "New Library/library System"

2015 Community and Distinguished Service Award

The Pikes Peak School and Public Employees Retirement Association's Community and Distinguished Service Award is the one award the board presents each year to someone in our community who has earned the award through their significant contributions to the fields of education and public service in our community. This year's recipient, PPSPERA member Judith Casey, was presented the award at the April 30, 2015 Spring Membership meeting by Roger Loudon, chairman of the committee. Judy was nominated by PPSPERA co-president, Elaine Naleski. (Thank you Joe Morin and D11 Production Printing for such a beautiful plaque.)

In her nomination letter, Elaine stated, "Judy Casey is involved in so many organizations the Colorado Springs Community. No matter where I go, I see Judy there working for our community and especially for our children. I know that no matter what organizations she is a part of, she devotes herself to working for children and the community. Her focus is, and always has been education, especially literacy. At this time, she is president of the America Association of University women, whose mission is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, philanthropy, and research. She is also a vital part of the Colorado Springs Rotary Club, where she spends countless hours working on the Butterfly project, providing funds to many other projects for schools, and literacy initiatives, like reading to hundreds of children for Read Across America. She is also part of the Dolly Parton reading Initiative, which gives countless books to school children in our community. She is one remarkable educator and woman."

Judy Casey has been a classroom and literacy teacher, a K-12 literacy supervisor, a superintendent/principal, a principal, and a literacy specialist. Although she is retired, she continues to be a practicum and student teaching

supervisor. She is a member of the Board of Managers of the Woman's Educational Society of Colorado College, a member of the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame Board of Directors, a member of the Colorado Women's Foundations Steering Committee, a docent at the Fine Arts Center. One can easily see that she is a very devoted volunteer.

Our award winner has won numerous other awards such as the Fannie Stabenow Award for Outstanding Contributions to CCIRA, the International Reading Association's Maryann Manning Outstanding Volunteer Service Award, the Celebrate Reading Award from the Pikes Peak Area Reading Council, and awards from the Wisconsin Reading Council before coming to Colorado Springs.

One only has to visit Judy Casey's Facebook page to see the impact of her work and volunteerism on our community.

Congratulations, Judy, for receiving this prestigious award from PPSPERA. We are so appreciative of all the things you do in serving our community and the children of Colorado Springs and the time and talent you give to our entire community.



PPSPERA Distinguished Service Award recipient Judy Casey pictured with co-president, Elaine Naleski

Successful 2015

Legislative Session Ends

This session was a success for PERA thanks to your efforts. Here's what we accomplished together:

SB 15-97 - Passed this bill with broad bipartisan support to create a mechanism protecting our most vulnerable beneficiaries—ensuring they will continue to qualify for critical benefits.

SB – 15-80 - Defeated this bill that would have cost PERA billions of dollars in increased liability by expanding a 401(k)-style plan for employees instead of the defined benefit plan.

HB 15 – 133 - Defeated this bill that would have empowered a politically appointed bureaucrat to make recommendations on retirement benefit compensation levels for state employees.

HB 14 – 1388 - Demonstrated support and educated legislators about an innovative proposal that would have strengthened Senate Bill 1 reforms by improving PERA's funded status at no new cost to anyone. Passed the House with bipartisan support, defeated in the Senate along a party line vote.

And here's what we learned:

The power of constituent contact – we heard again and again from legislators who heard from you on proposed bills and how it impacted their vote. Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver), while holding up a big stack of emails from PERA members, after reading one of them: "There are hundreds of these emails that you have received, that I have received, that we've all received, supporting this bill."

You make a difference! Stay in contact with your legislators and ask for their support on PERA issues. Be ready to write letters, make phones, send emails and/or meet with your legislator when critical issues arise.



Pikes Peak School & Public Employees Retirement Association

P.O. Box 7969

Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7969

2015 PPSPERA Scholarship Committee Report

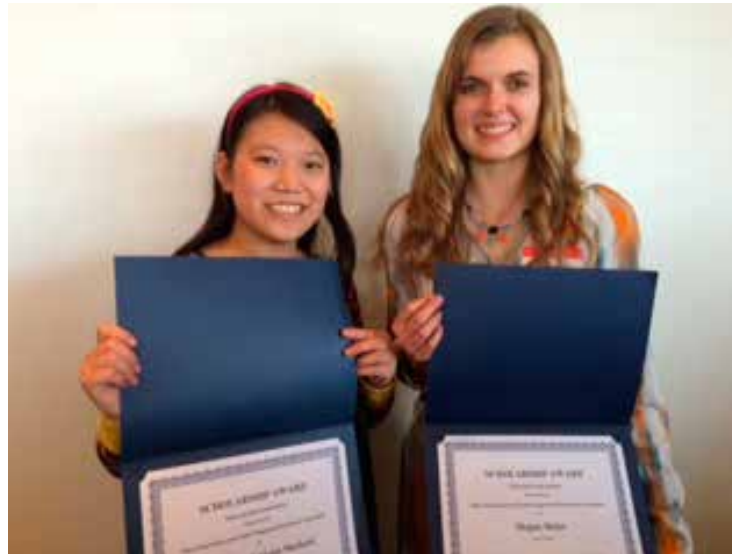
In February, 2015 scholarship information and application forms were sent to 66 high schools in El Paso and Teller counties. On April 8 Charlotte Brummer, Julia Hargrove, Judy McCormick and Barbara Watt met to read and score the scholarship applications. We received fourteen scholarship applications from graduating seniors at twelve high schools in eight school districts. There was only one male applicant again this year. Unfortunately, one application was incomplete and, therefore, could not be considered. We were pleased that most of the remaining applicants were accomplished and well-qualified and, as usual, regretted that we did not have more scholarships to award. The \$1500 scholarships were presented at the quarterly membership meeting of the Pikes Peak School and Public Employees Retirement Association held April 30 at The Olive Garden restaurant at Citadel Crossing. Both recipients were in attendance.

The scholarship honoring Wayne Bricker was awarded to Megan Meier of Lewis-Palmer High School. Megan has an unweighted GPA of 4.0 and is ranked number 1 in her class of 284. She has been chosen four different quarters by four different staff members for her school's prestigious quarterly recognition. Megan is currently the 4th Overall Colorado Horseback Rider and a Pikes Peak Athletic Conference Top 20 Golfer. She has been active in 4-H and various other school and community volunteer service projects including Ronald McDonald House, Key Club, National Honor Society, Freshmen Link, St. Francis Medical Center and a horse show fundraiser she started herself to benefit children who want to further their equine education, just to name a few. Megan plans to attend Colorado State, pursuing pre-pharmacy, then Pharmacy School emphasizing Pediatric Pharmacy.

The scholarship honoring Bill Brandenburg was awarded to Molly Merkert of William J. Palmer High School. Molly has a GPA of 4.9 and is ranked number 4 of 498 students in her class, which includes 67 International Baccalaureate students, Molly being one of them. She has won awards at

Pikes Peak Regional History Day, Colorado State History Day, and Pikes Peak Science Fair. Molly has been busy serving her school as editor of the yearbook, vice president of both Chemistry Club and Poetry Out Loud, and a tutor at the Math Tutoring Center. In addition she has done community service projects through an after-school program at an elementary school, Sertich Ice Arena's Learn-to-Skate program, eleven years as a Girl Scout, Colorado Springs Chinese New Year's Festival, National Park Association Junior Rangers, National Honor Society, and Mei Mei Club where she mentors girls ages 5-11 who, like Molly, were adopted from China. Molly plans to attend Colorado College and become a chemistry or math teacher.

Both of the PPSPERA scholarship recipients from last year applied and qualified for the second year award of \$500. Ashleigh Elsner had a very successful freshman year at Baylor University with a GPA of 3.86 and plans to continue her major in elementary education. Since her wedding, Maelynn Weaver is now Maelynn Hollaway and also had a successful freshmen year at UCCS earning a GPA of 3.31. She plans to continue at UCCS as an English major.



Scholarship Winners, Molly Merkert and Megan Meier

Needed: Your Volunteer Hours

The first line in the article about Volunteer Hours in the March 2015 issue of the *PPSPERA Newsletter* read: “My instincts tell me that members of PPSPERA are so busy volunteering that they have no time to call or email me their hours to me!!” De ja vu all over again!! The year 2013 was a banner year - 20 PPSPERA members reported a total of 8658 volunteer hours! In 2014, the figures slipped a little. Only 10 members reported their hours – 4347 - a 50% decrease!

In the first three quarters of 2015, only seven members of PPSPERA reported their volunteer hours. Instincts again suggest that there are many volunteer hours that are simply not being reported to the Volunteer Chair. Please report your volunteer hours at the end of each quarter (March, June, September, and December) by emailing Roger Louden at rogerlouden340@yahoo.com, calling him at 488-2545, or mailing the enclosed form to Roger Louden, 14065 Gleneagle Drive, CSC 80921

At the end of the March 2015 article, a suggestion was made to list the sites of member volunteer hours. The idea was well received. So far in the first quarter of 2015, the following sites or organizations were reported:

- PPSPERA Board meetings and Committee meetings (multiple members)
- HOA Landscape Committee and Board meetings
- Radio Station KCMJ
- Salem Lutheran Church
- New Horizon Band
- Gleneagle Civic Association – vice president
- Colorado Digital Learning
- School District 11
- School District 49
- Artemis
- Colorado Springs Science Center
- Girls’ STEM
- CSPERA (multiple members)
- School District 11 Board of Education
- Democratic Party Office

The next issue will probably see many additional sites listed. Get those hours reported. The 2014 figures can be surpassed or maybe even the 2013 figures!

Roger W. Louden – Volunteer Chair

**PIKES PEAK SCHOOL AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
VOLUNTEER HOURS REPORTING FORM**

Please use this form each quarter to submit your volunteer hours to PPSPERA. Total volunteer hours from retired public employees from throughout Colorado are presented annually to the Governor in the form of a check representing the value and service that our members provide to the citizens of our state. All types of volunteer hours are acceptable – church, school, community assistance, neighborhood, etc.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

HOURS PER QUARTER:

January – March _____

July – September _____

April – June _____

October – December _____

THREE EASY WAYS TO SUBMIT YOUR HOURS TO PPSPERA COMMUNITY CHAIRPERSON:

1. EMAIL Roger Louden: Rogerlouden340@yahoo.com
or
2. CALL Roger Louden: 719 488-2545
or
3. MAIL to Roger Louden: Roger Louden
14065 Gleneagle Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

FROM THE PPSPERA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, "THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT OF TIME"