



AEA-RETIRED~
Protecting Our Future

THE CONDUIT

Volume 37, Issue 3

December, 2022

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Calendar



Check the last page for updates of your Chapter meetings.

Dec. 13 Executive Board Meeting
Jan. 9 AZ Legislature Conven - Capitol Building, 9am
Jan. 10 Executive Board Meeting
Jan. 18 AEA-R Day at the Capitol, Capitol Building, 9 am
February
14 Executive Board Meeting
23 AEA-R Day at the Capitol
March
12-13 NEA Retired Conference
14 Executive Board Meeting
April M.O.R.E. Event date TBD
May 12-13 Annual Meeting and Delegate Assembly



A Call to LEADERSHIP!
 AEA Retired Annual Meeting and Elections and AEA Delegate Assembly

Mark Your Calendars!

AEA Retired is happy to announce the **35th Annual Meeting** and invites all members to join us for a stimulating and informative day. We return once again to the beautiful Scottsdale Resort at McCormick Ranch in Scottsdale beginning Friday, May 12th from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. The **AEA Delegate Assembly** will follow in the same location starting at 6:00 PM to 9:30 PM after delegate caucuses and continues Saturday, May 13th until end of business around 5:00 PM.

The AEA Retired Annual Meeting is a celebratory opportunity to engage and reconnect with retired colleagues as well as become more familiar with the operations and business of the AEA Retired Association work. Registration for AEA Retired Annual Meeting will be available in early 2023. More details will be in the March 2023 issue of *The Conduit*.

Planning is underway, and the committee hopes to see many of you at the Annual Meeting. The meeting agenda will be filled with fantastic speakers, informative resources, business items, awards and board positions, elections and more. We encourage you to engage in leadership by nominating yourself using the [link](#) found on [page 3](#), to be an AEA Delegate, a candidate for an AEA Retired board position or both.

You do not need to be a candidate for office or be a delegate to attend the meeting. However, only delegates can vote on business items and candidates for office presented during the business meeting. Registration will occur in the Spring of 2023. Details will be included in the March issue of *The Conduit*.

One of the many highlights of the AEA Retired Annual Meeting is the presentation of the **Les Reynolds Distinguished Senior Service Award**, named after the first President of AEA Retired. It is a prestigious award given annually honoring an AEA Retired member who has provided outstanding service to AEA Retired and the community. Last year, the recipient of this honorable award was Kenneth Freed, currently our AEA Retired Vice President. Please take time to nominate a colleague who is deserving of this award. The nomination form is on [page 11](#).

By Norma Jimenez

ASRS UPDATE BY STEVE RAMOS



Unstable Markets Leave ASRS returns flat. Permanent Benefit Increase will not be repeated in 2023.

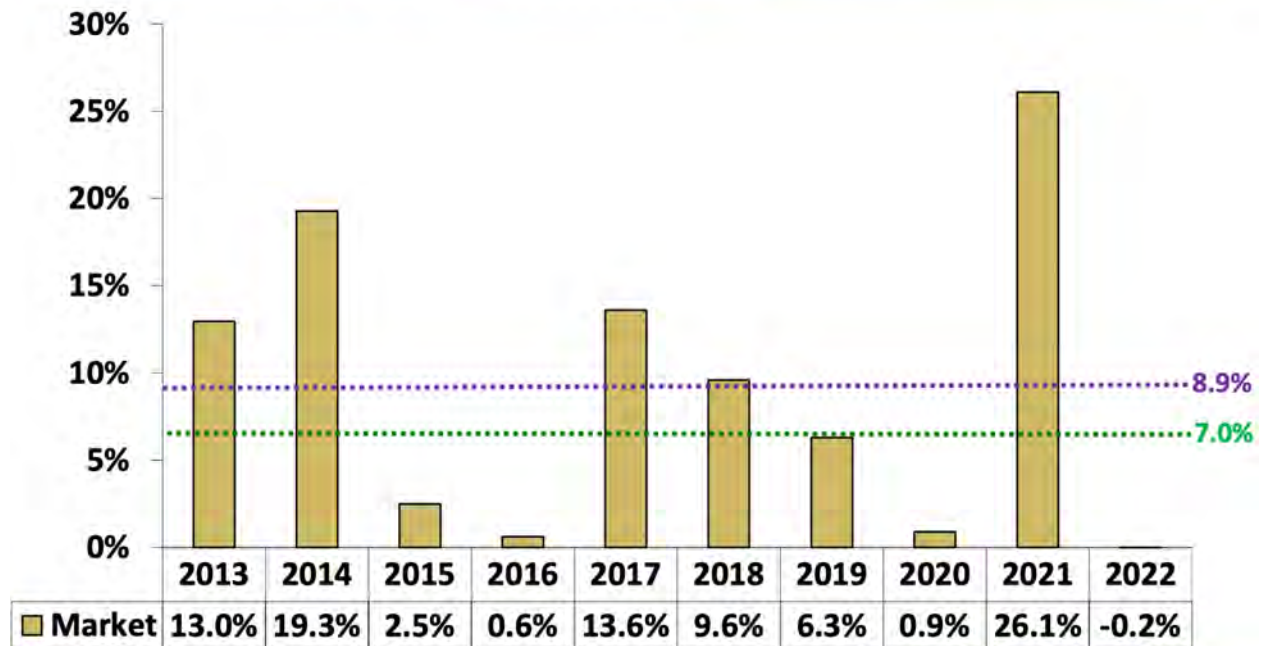
US markets, measured by the S&P 1500 Index, went through a correction in the first 10 months of 2022, dropping 17.37% for the period. The lower investment returns were primarily driven by tighter monetary actions taken by the Federal Reserve and central banks around the world, as well as conflicts overseas, particularly in Ukraine.

As always, Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) assets are fairly diversified and along with investing in the stock market (48%), ASRS also has investments in credit (23.6%) real estate (19.8%) and bonds (6.8%). In fiscal year 2022, the combined ASRS investment portfolio experienced a one year total fund rate of return of 1.1%, compared to 25.1% return in fiscal year 2021. ASRS has an expected annual rate of return of 7%. It is important to note that although the one year return is disappointing, the ASRS placed in the top 2% of investment returns earned by U.S. public pension plans larger than \$1 billion over the last year. Since its inception in June 30, 1975, the Total Fund return is 9.6 %.

In July 2022, ASRS began paying a Permanent Benefit Increase (PBI) of \$11.49 per year of service for eligible participants. Recent poor market returns will mean that another PBI next year is not in the cards. (See Chart). Using a 10 year smoothing of returns, a little above 9%, is usually necessary to trigger the PBI. Fortunately, this same smoothing chart is used to make sure the wild fluctuations of the market are not reflected in employee and employer contribution rates. The current contribution rate is 12.17% for both. Members can expect rates to go up, but only gradually, for the next few years, before flattening and then again gradually beginning to fall.

2022 Plan Actuarial Valuation Results

Estimated Market Value of Asset Returns



8.9% average compound return (on market value) over last 10 years.

ASRS healthcare has added new gym and fitness programs for 2023. Non-Medicare age retirees, using ASRS United Health Care plans, can now take advantage of the One Pass gym and fitness benefit at no extra cost. For ASRS Medicare eligible retirees, who choose the ASRS United Health Care plan, Silver Sneakers is replaced with the **Renew Active** gym and fitness program, at no additional cost. Locations nationwide now include many premium gyms and fitness programs as well as traditional gyms with programs specifically for retirees.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY ANNA CICERO

First Lady. . .You Got This



I have always been intrigued by First Ladies of the United States of America. I found their lives amazing and in many ways so normal. On a crisp Arizona morning, I got a chance to hold the warm hands of First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden, at a rally taking place at the Arizona Education Association Union headquarters. I don't even remember clearly what I said to her, I looked into her beautiful blue eyes and said, "Thank you for all you do...from a teacher to a teacher." Her response was, "You got this, thank YOU." I wanted to hang on to those warm hands forever.

I want to "bottle" that warmth and turn it into energy to motivate, organize and take action. Her words were subtle but strong like the grip of her hands. I cling to that feeling as we continue to move forward, leading with this wonderful AEA Retired Board leadership and all its members.

To begin our organizing and engagement with our members, I personally want to focus on extending an invitation to you. Nominate yourself to serve in an elected board position such as **President, Treasurer and 6 At-Large positions**. If those officer positions are not what you are looking for, I invite you to start by joining an AEA Retired committee or attend our meetings as

a guest to get to know us better.

Nominate yourselves to be an **AEA Delegate** to the AEA Delegate Assembly and AEA-Retired Annual Meeting, May 12-13, 2023. AEA Retired is typically represented by 85 delegates and member guests are always welcome to Annual Meeting, but do not vote.

Nominate a colleague for the AEA Retired **Les Reynolds Distinguished Senior Service Award**.

Register to attend Opening Day of the Legislative Session and Advocacy-Days of Action on January 18 & February 23 by AEA Retired. Register for a Post-election presentation on December 28 from 4-5 PM by our lobby coalition, the Arizona Retirement Security Coalition (ARSC).

We must strive for the power of the majority in membership. Our strength comes from you, our retired members. Your engagement will add power to our Union. We had many wins in November. Please join us in making AEA Retired stronger by engaging to continue to protect our ASRS pension, Social Security, and Medicare. It is truly important in our profession to support the education agenda as we unite with a Governor who has invited educators to the table.

We mobilized through elections and now join us in organizing to take strong ACTION to accomplish AEA Retired goals. The momentum is there waiting for you. Our hands are just as warm as those of our First Lady. Be part of the opportunity to leave a legacy in the education profession a better place than when we began.

We need YOU!

Nominate Yourself for AEA Retired Delegate, Board Member or Officer

The time is now!

Nominations for AEA Delegates and AEA Retired board positions are now open! We hope our invitation is timely enough to convince many of you to nominate yourself for 1) AEA Delegate to the 2023 AEA Delegate Assembly, 2) AEA Retired Board Position, or 3) BOTH. **Nomination Deadline for AEA Delegate and Board Positions is February 17, 2023**

We are stronger when skillful, passionate leaders are part of the decision-making body that represents you. We encourage newly retired, as well as those of you already retired, to take on a new role with the AEA Retired Executive Board.

The focus is to increase the board's regional and diverse representation. We seek candidates from rural and urban areas of the state, **and from diverse groups**, in order to make AEA Retired leadership more reflective of membership.

Role descriptions, per AEA Retired Bylaws, are included below to provide a better idea of what each position entails. Newly elected board members shall enter upon their duties on June 1st.

[Click here](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2023RetiredNominationForms) to nominate yourself for any position. If you have trouble with the link, enter <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2023RetiredNominationForms> in your browser window.

If you have any questions or wish to nominate yourself and do not have the technology, contact Anna Cicero at cicero.anna.1013@gmail.com or by phone (480) 600-1170.

Please consider becoming involved!

(Continued on page 4)

Duties of AEA-Retired's Elected Leaders

(Continued from [page 3](#))

AEA Retired Delegate--Approximately 85 delegate positions open for AEA Retired Local. Election is done prior to the Annual Meeting. However, if the number of nominations is less than the number of positions to be filled, no election is necessary. An AEA Delegate's commitment is to attend *both days, May 12-13, 2023*, to vote on all related business items on the agenda presented to the AEA delegation. Delegates will be able to speak to the business items that are presented for voting or discussion. Delegates will also vote for leadership candidates at both the Annual Meeting and the AEA Delegate Assembly.

AEA Retired Representative At-Large--6 board Positions-- election on May 12, 2023, AEA Retired Annual Meeting.

Section 2. A. Representatives At-Large shall be elected by secret ballot for a term of three (3) years, and may only serve for two (2) consecutive terms for a total of six (6) years.

Section 5. Representatives At-Large shall:

- A. Attend at least 70% of Executive Board meetings.
- B. Be available to Chair at least one Standing or Ad Hoc Committee.
- C. Assist with member recruitment and program development and delivery.
- D. Assist the Annual Meetings Committee in planning and implementing the Annual Meeting.

AEA Retired Treasurer--1 board position open--election on May 12, 2023, shall be elected by secret ballot for a term of three (3) years and may only serve for two (2) consecutive terms for a total of six (6) years.

- A. Be responsible for the collection of dues.
- B. Deposit all monies in a bank and/or savings institution in the name of the AEA Retired.
- C. Notify the Arizona Education Association of the name of the bank and/or savings institution in which AEA-Retired dues and monies are deposited.
- D. Hold the funds of the AEA Retired and disburse them accordingly upon submission of vouchers approved by the president.
- E. Sign all checks approved by the president.
- F. Submit a written report each meeting of the Executive Board and General Membership Annual Meeting.
- G. Prepare an annual financial statement which shall be available at the General Membership Annual Meeting and a copy kept on file at the AEA-Retired office.
- H. Chair the Budget Committee.
- I. File the appropriate Federal and State forms, if applicable.
- J. May be bonded for such amount as may be determined by the Executive Board from time to time.

AEA Retired President- 1 position open--election on May 12, 2023, shall be elected by secret ballot for a term of three (3) years and may only serve for two (2) consecutive terms for a total of six (6) years.

- A. Preside over all meetings of the Executive Board and General Membership.
- B. Appoint the chairperson and members of all Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees with the approval of the Executive Board not otherwise provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- C. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- D. Represent the AEA-Retired exclusively before the public either personally or through a designated representative.
- E. Be responsible for the official correspondence of the AEA Retired.
- F. Perform all other functions usually attributed to the office. (Refer to Committee Responsibilities.)
- G. With input from the Executive Board, set the agenda for all Executive Board and General Membership Annual meetings.
- H. Fill all Board vacancies as delineated in the Constitution, Article V, with the approval of the Board.

Nominate yourself for one of these positions! [Click here](#)

Members of the 2022 AEA Retired Board of Directors



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE BY LUCI MESSING

An Invitation to Become an Activist



Now that we have all had time to recover from the 2022 midterm elections, it's time to look ahead to the 2023 legislative session. The Legislature remains the same balance of representation with a 16 to 14 ratio in the Senate and 31 to 29 in the House, a slight Republican advantage. Though the numbers did not change there will be several new faces serving in the upcoming session. Redistricting did play a part in the overall results of both the legislative and congressional races. However, we can be grateful that we have elected a pro public education governor in Katie Hobbs. That means there is very little chance of passing bills that would negatively impact education or our pensions.

Mark your calendar for some important dates. The 56th Legislative session will begin on Monday, January 9th. We intend to be there for opening day and would like as many AEA-Retired members to join us. In addition, we have two AEA-Retired Days at the Capitol scheduled. The first one is on Wednesday, January 18th and the second one is on Thursday, February 23rd. More information will be forthcoming to register and participate in these events.

AEA-Retired held an annual advocacy/lobbying training on December 8th in preparation for the upcoming legislative session. Now we would like for you to personally contact your representatives. It's important that the legislators know that AEA-Retired will be closely following the actions of our representatives. We will monitor all proposed bills that might impact public education or our pensions.

The best way to contact your state senator and two representatives is through a handwritten letter to each individual. The second best way is to send a postcard. Address postcards with the name of a legislator, 1700 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007. There is always the option to send an email, but legislators receive an excessive number of emails. That's why letters and postcards are much more effective. Go to azleg.gov to find your representatives' email address. If you are not sure which legislative district, you can go to azleg.gov/findmylegislator/.

Take this opportunity to introduce yourself as a constituent and an AEA-Retired member. Briefly share your priorities and concerns. Urge them to address the Aggregate Expenditure Limit sooner than later.

The Aggregate Expenditure Limit is a Constitutional Amendment passed by voters in 1980 which created spending limitations for school districts based on the aggregate expenditure of all districts, which excluded charter school and only applies to district public schools. If the Arizona Legislature fails to override the AEL by March 1, 2023, Arizona public schools will be forced to cut \$1.3 billion (17%) from their budgets, while charter schools will be unaffected. This will be a catastrophic cut to education funding and will lead to major staff layoffs and operation cuts in the current school year. (AEA)

Let legislators know that AEA Retired will be visiting the Capitol on January 18th and we look forward to meeting with them.

It's time to get ready to advocate for public education and protect our pensions.

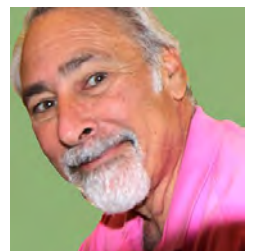
Enjoy your holiday!

VEEP Talk by Ken Freed Reflections

I am writing this article immediately after Thanksgiving, having reflected back on the last 5 weeks. Medically, this time has been trying, to say the least. I have tried to look back to determine what are the important things to me. For me, it is clearly family! I am blessed to be married to the most wonderful person I know. We have 3 great kids, their wonderful spouses and 8 terrific grandkids. As I reflect on the past, and look to the future, I will try to live the rest of my time based on my reflections.

As always, there is an ask. I would like to ask you to take some time before the coming holidays and reflect on what is important to you, the individual. For some it might be viewing a sunset, being with loved ones, making money, riding a bicycle, contributing to a charity or hanging out with friends. Of course, there are an infinite number of options based on your own reflections. Then, I want you to make a plan of action based on your reflections. Plan to do those things that have made you happy in the past. Then do them! Throw out the minutiae and focus on those things that make your life fulfilling.

Finally, I want to wish my AEA Retired family a happy holiday season and a safe and *healthy* 2023!



AEA Retired November PAC Report

By Luci Messing

WOW! What an election season! AEA-Retired members were engaged at every level to support pro public education candidates. I am so proud and incredibly thankful to all who participated. You really do make the difference! Here are the results:

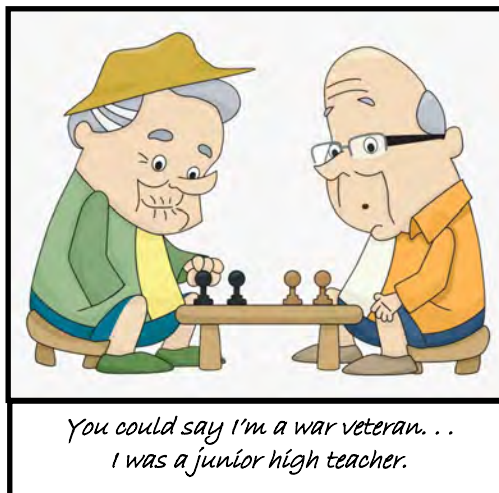
- Senator Mark Kelly re-elected to a 6 year term.
- Katie Hobbs elected Governor
- Adrian Fontes elected Secretary of State.
- Kris Mayes leads Abe Hamedah by 300 votes for Attorney General
- Kathy Hoffman lost to Tom Horne by 9,000 votes for Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Sandra Kennedy was not re-elected for the Arizona Corporation Commission
- David Schweikert re-elected over Jevin Hodge for CD1
- Eli Crane elected over Tom O'Halleran for CD2
- Ruben Gallego re-elected to new CD3
- Greg Stanton re-elected for CD4
- Andy Biggs re-elected for CD5
- Juan Ciscomani defeats Kirsten Engel for CD6
- Raul Grijalva re-elected to new CD7
- Debbie Lesko re-elected to new CD8 (no challenger)
- Paul Gosar re-elected to new CD9 (no challenger)

There has been little change in the make up of the State Legislature. Unofficial results have 16 Republicans and 14 Democrats. The House is at 31 Republicans and 29 Democrats. There were a number of propositions on the ballot and here is their status:

- 128 - Failed - Relating to initiative and referendum (state legislature authority)
- 129 - Passed- Relating to initiative measures (single item)
- 130 - Passed - Relating to property tax exemptions
- 131 - Passed - Relating to the lieutenant governor
- 132 - Passed - Requires 60% approval for initiative tax proposals
- 209 - Passed - Relating to predatory debt collection protection
- 211 - Passed - Relating to dark money in campaign spending
- 308 - Passing 51.3% to 48.6% - Relating to students tuition
- 309 - Failed - Relating to voter identification
- 310 - Failed - Relating to taxation benefitting fire districts

Rep. Andres Cano LD20 has been elected House Minority Leader. Other leadership positions went to Rep.-elect Lupe Contreras as assistant leader, Rep. Melody Hernandez and Rep. Marcelino Quinonez as Co-Whips. Senator Warren Petersen is the Senate President and Rep. Ben Toma is House Speaker. Both are extremely right wing members and could push for some very controversial legislation. Get ready, folks. We did all that we could for the 2022 elections and now is time to pivot to the State Legislature We will be handing out postcards at the December training to be sent to the newly elected and re-elected legislators. Our work begins for the 2023 Legislative session. Mark your calendars for January 9th, Opening Day and January 18th, our first day at the Capitol.

We should be proud of the work that we did for this election cycle!
We survived the threat of the extreme election deniers.



Membership Report

By Shirley Boswell, Nancy Putman and Michele Smith

Are you dreading the crowds during holiday shopping? Use **NEA Membership Benefits** website to shop from the convenience of home and save some money, too. All NEA members enjoy exclusive shopping and ticket discounts with cash-back shopping.

Sign up for a **Rakuten** account at the member benefits webpage; go to <http://www.NEAMB.com/Start>. Scroll down a bit to the shopping link. Click it and you will be asked to set up an account. You'll be able to earn cash back from many merchants. You will be paid via Pay Pal or by check.

Using **NEA Discount Marketplace**, powered by Rakuten, you will receive automatic notification if cash back is available. Coupons are automatically applied at checkout.

Opportunities to earn cash include:

- On-line purchases (with curbside pickup, at wholesale clubs, and more)
- Double Cash Back promotions
- In-store specials
- Earn \$\$\$ with gift card purchases
- Refer a Friend Bonus for even more savings

Taking the family to a movie? Use NEA Discount Tickets Programs. Visit <https://www.neamb.com/products/nea-discount-tickets-program>.

There are many more opportunities to save at the NEA Member Benefits starter page. Scroll to the bottom of the page for a complete listing of categories.

Membership & Communication Committees

2023 MEMBER INTEREST SURVEY

The Membership and Communication Committees want to get to know you better and keep records up-to-date. Please, go to the online address below to answer a few questions.

It should only take 5 minutes.



ONLINE SURVEY ADDRESS

<https://forms.gle/1bk9krErfeaQnr1V9>

Use your phone to take the survey!



PLEASE, TAKE THE SURVEY
BEFORE JANUARY 31, 2023

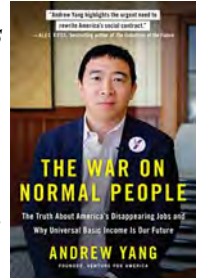
* If you are having difficulty online, or cannot access the survey online, please contact Maria Leyva, AEA Secretary at marial.aear@gmail.com or (623) 282-1992



Book Corner

By Ann Myers

Do you remember Andrew Yang, the Democratic presidential candidate in 2020 who seemed to commit political suicide when he suggested that everyone in the country should be given \$5000 a month? Every month for life! When several members of our social/racial justice book group asked to read his book, *The War on Normal People: The Truth about America's Disappearing Jobs and Why Universal Basic Income Is Our Future*, I was not entirely onboard. I read the book just before Halloween, an appropriately scary time for the first half of the book. He outlines how artificial intelligence, technology, and profit-seeking has already and will in the future, put many people out of work. Yang pulled me into his vision and within a chapter or two, I could not stop reading. The mood of the second half is the direct opposite: hopeful, compassionate; people centered. Yang's premise is that children of the upper classes receive a lot of money from families, trust funds and inheritances. The lower economic classes have no such support. A musician, actor, artist or tradesperson could take a fulfilling job and still have a safety net of \$5000 a month under his plan. Yang does not have a problem with capitalism; it has given him an extremely comfortable life, indeed. He'd like to see capitalism changed to Human-Centered Capitalism where humanity replaces profit-chasing. I want to believe that Andrew Yang is ahead of his time; that someday our society will come to see the wisdom and compassion in his views.



Our November selection was *Moloka'i* by Alan Brennert, a story about the leper colony in Hawaii. In 1893, the Kalama family's world is destroyed when 7 year old Rachel is diagnosed with Hansen's Disease (leprosy) and banished from Honolulu to an isolated area of Moloka'i. Although Rachel didn't understand at the time, being sent to Kaluapapa meant exile for a lifetime—a lifetime that too often was a few short years. Initially, Rachel is terrified by the disfigured patients and frightened at being taken from her family.



Gradually, she becomes part of the community with its deprivations, but also small joys. One heartwarming adventure based on a real story happens when Rachel and two friends "escape" for the night to attend a party. For one single evening, Rachel is a normal teenage girl, dancing and having fun. There are surprises for both Rachel and the reader which are wonderful or heartbreaking as she spends nearly all her life in this colony. For those of you familiar with Oahu, you will recognize the street names, places and businesses that Brennert mentions.

Our next online discussion will be in middle to late January with *Take My Hand* by Dolan Perkins-Valdez and *Black Cake* by Charmaine Wilkerson about 6 weeks later. If you would like to join us, or just be on the email list of book titles and suggestions, please contact Ann Myers (480) 510-8098, azann@mac.com

Barbara Matteson

An Amazing Retiree



When Barbara Matteson enters a room, she commands authority and respect. Her knowledge of local, state and federal politics is seasoned by years of experience teaching in elementary school and being involved in AEA Retired and NEA Retired, serving as the Vice-President and then President of NEA Retired. Matteson also served on many committees, shaping agendas and legislative projects. She moves easily from listening to business on the Senate and House floors to interviewing legislators on their stances on bills. And, they listen to her position.

Matteson has been a member of the Arizona Women's Political Caucus, an affiliate of the National Women's Political Caucus, a multi-partisan, grassroots organization that endeavors to increase the number of pro-choice women in elected and appointed positions. In this role, Matteson encourages and supports women running for elected office by targeting, recruiting, and training those who are interested in the political

process. "I support these candidates, attend panels when they're speaking, and work on their campaigns," she says of her work as a political activist. This work coincides with her commitment to education.

Matteson is now involved with an initiative to rescind a voucher law, signed in April by Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, It's the largest voucher expansion program the state—and the nation—has ever seen. The program gives vouchers to students to use for private and religious school tuition, as well as homeschooling. "This is a terrible thing for public education," says Matteson. When she's not working on education and political matters, Barbara is often hiking the trails around Tucson and spending time with her extended family.

Matteson was recognized as the winner of the NEA Retired Distinguished Service Award in 2017. The recognition, presented annually since 2000, is the organization's highest honor.

She is a truly amazing retiree!

A message to AEA Retired from Susan Sommer

I am pleased to announce the election of Marshall Militano as the new AEA-Retired Glendale/West Valley Chapter Chair and Jeanne Erickson as secretary. They join Tim Rockey, our treasurer. I know you will all assist them in any way you can.

As for me, I remain the AEA-Retired Chairperson for all Chapters and Executive Board Member at-large. Just know, I am not far away and you can call or text me anytime.

There are events (dates are on the front page) we hope you will consider attending. It is time to move on from the election and get things done. There is plenty to do and learn.

Thank you to all who have accompanied me in this journey so far. Let's continue to attend our chapter meetings. See you there.

"Celebrate, Celebrate, Dance to the Music"

Yes, Marshall Militano has a lot to celebrate. Finally, after three election cycles, that's five years, **Stop Dark Money** (aka Outlaw Dirty Money) made it on the ballot as **Prop 211**. He also worked for two election cycles to get the **Healthcare Rising** initiative on the ballot as **Prop 209**. Both initiatives passed with overwhelming support from the voters. The voters passed **Prop 208**, the education tax increase, by 51%, but it was later overturned by the courts.

It was a lot of work. Home became a hub for each initiative and candidate every other Saturday morning. For over three years, with help from Kelly Fisher, Michele Smith, and wife Sarah, he set up almost every Sunday morning at the Foothills Recreation & Aquatic Center. They gathered thousands of signatures and notarized thousands of petitions for the InvestinEd, Prop 208, Free As Possible, Fair Elections, Stop Voucher Expansion, Reproductive Freedom Act and other education referendums. This effort established a place where people knew they could go to sign, pick up, and have petitions notarized. This location also became a place to pick up literature and yard signs for all state and local candidates and a site to launch canvasses. Militano was recognized by the Stop Dark Money and Healthcare Rising campaigns as one of the top volunteers and remains grateful for all those who participated in this effort.

This work is not done and he is ready whenever the next initiative hits the streets.



AEA Retired Who are We?

We are over 2,000 strong
We believe in quality public schools for all
We plan and communicate with AEA locals
We are active citizens who participate in the political process
We are engaged in activities important to our communities
We show up when AEA calls us to action
We make a difference!

What does AEA Retired Do for You?

Protect the same benefits that you had as an active member
Secure your pension with ASRS and monitor possible changes
Update and educate and retirement issues
Connect with other educators when you join a local chapter
Member of NEA, AEA, and AEA Retired



Send your email address to

julie.horwin@gmail.com

Win \$100



If we already have your e-mail address, you are entered in the \$100 AEA-Retired Raffle.

Good luck!

Racial and Social Justice Committee

Have you been involved in racial and social justice in your community? Many of our AEA Retired leaders are actively involved in NEA and AEA committees, organizations and book clubs.

- AEA Cadre for Racial and Social Justice
- NEA Retired Committee for Racial and Social Justice
- NEA Transformational Journey for Racial Justice Co-Conspirators
- NEA Leaders for Just Schools
- AEA Retired book and media discussion group

We have great representation!

A few of our many RSJ Committee members have also signed up for an intensive course on "Race and Belonging" offered by AEA and the Nebraska State Education Association. That course will be meeting by Zoom for six months, three hours per month with additional work prior to each meeting. The work involves learning and understanding bias and prejudice, and how this can lead to the formation of alliances among members and colleagues. This new knowledge will be shared in future Conduit issues.

RSJ goals and strategies for this year include developing a Community Agreement for the AEA Retired Executive Board, hopefully bringing consensus and build relationships. This will be developed in committee and brought to the Executive Board for approval and implementation.

If you have comments or questions or would like to get more involved in racial and social justice work, please contact Janice Dwosh at jdowsh27@gmail.com.

Members of the committees include:

Janice Dwosh, Julie Horwin, Deb Larned, Ann Meyers, Sandy Warns, Sharin Manes, Norma Jimenez, Susan Sommer, Ellen Shamah.



The Conduit



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Julie Horwin	Past-President

The Conduit Editors
 Jan Nichols and Bart James

Traveling Arizona's Southern Border

Nogales and the Sky Islands

Traveling the southern Arizona route, an interesting journey is found in **Nogales**, near the border of Mexico. You can get the flavor of Mexico without a passport. Nogales is located just south of Tucson and currently has approximately 20,103 citizens. The name "Nogales" is derived from the Spanish word for "walnut" or "walnut tree". It refers to the large stands of walnut trees that once stood in the mountain pass where Nogales is located.



It is the county seat of Santa Cruz County. The city has a rich cultural heritage and a welcoming community. Cruise down for a day of shopping, eat authentic, marvelous Mexican food and venture into many establishments where music is playing. There are also museums to chronicle the history of the Gadsden Purchase which laid foundation for becoming part of the United States of America. Museums also delve into the history of Pancho Villa and various military campaigns. Engaging a tour can take you throughout the city and display many other cultural events.

Arizona has a really wide diversity of nature and terrain. Sky islands are isolated mountains surrounded by radically different lowland environments. Sky Islands are a phenomenon occurring in southern Arizona, not a location but part of the larger group of mountains. The Chiricahua National Monument is one example of sky islands. This isolated mountain range rises out of the surrounding desert "sea." The Chiricahua National Monument Visitor Center is 5,400 feet above sea level. The peaks are at the crossroad of the Rockies, the Sierra Madre, the Sonoran Desert and the Chiricahua Desert. The weather changes with the altitude as well as the topography. If it rains at the desert floor, it snows at the higher elevations. Snow levels average around 15 inches per year.



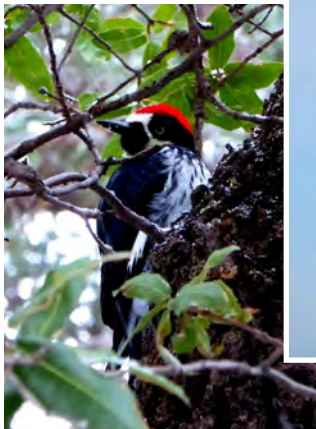
Since the monument is isolated and takes time to reach, this is not a day trip. It's an excursion to be enjoyed leisurely. Many hotels offer convenient accommodation with wonderful restaurants along the way. The Chiricahua's can be hiked or driven through, both a magical experience.

The visit to Nogales could be extended by traveling east of Nogales to the Patagonia Mountains, another example of Sky Islands. Here the vistas of the Coronado National Forest surrounded by majestic oak woodlands provide a surreal experience. The wildlife is also something unexpected if a person isn't familiar with Arizona's variance in climate and terrain. Although rare here the Chiricahuas are the northern edge of Jaguars range. Bobcats and wild hogs can be spotted occasionally in the region as well.

The Chiricahuas are one of Arizona's premier location for birders. Many species are migratory using southern Arizona as a "flyway" from Mexico to northern states. This time of year, you might spot any of the non-migratory species like the Coopers Hawk, Mexican Jays or Acorn woodpeckers.



Acorn Woodpecker



Prarie Hawk



Jaguar



Bobcat



THE LES REYNOLDS DISTINGUISHED SENIOR SERVICE AWARD

The Les Reynolds Distinguished Senior Service Award

The LES REYNOLDS DISTINGUISHED SENIOR SERVICE AWARD is named for Les Reynolds, the first president of AEA Retired. The award is presented annually to a member of our association in appreciation for outstanding service to our Association, public education and the community. Previous recipients are Robert Bloom, Bertha Myers, John Campbell, Ralph Lara, Barbara Matteson, Marion Pickens, Mary Bishop, Connie Wittig, Kathy Campbell, Frank Bing, Frank Sacco, Linda Somo, Steve Ramos, Suzan Austin, Luci Messing, Shirley Boswell, Julie Horwin and Ken Freed.

Please take time to nominate a member you believe meets these criteria. Be specific in completing the form which must be in typewritten format. You may attach additional information. The committee will not consider partially completed forms. **Nomination deadline is noon, February 14, 2023.**

LES REYNOLDS DISTINGUISHED SENIOR SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Nominee Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Nominator's Name _____

Phone (____) _____

Nominee Information: All information must be in a typewritten format.
Attach an additional pages, if necessary. There is a two page maximum.

1. Number of years as an AEA Retired member: _____
2. Association positions held at the local, state and national levels:
3. Positions held in other professional and/or social organizations:
4. Community service:
5. List and describe the nominee's involvement in activities that were beneficial to AEA Retired, education and community:
6. Other relevant information:

Please return a completed form to:

**Nancy Putman
AEA Retired
3132 E. Preston St.
Mesa, AZ 85213**

Nomination forms are due by noon on February 14, 2023

AEA-Retired Chapter News

Chapters bring AEA-Retired together. This year we expect to meet in person. Some chapters may choose to add a virtual meeting now and then or offer Zoom meetings as well. Each chapter governs itself in order to meet the needs of its members. Meetings usually include information programs and time for socializing with friends and colleagues. This is a great way to keep in touch with the latest issues in our community. Any one interested in forming a new chapter should contact Chapter Coordinator **Susan Sommer**, (623) 628-1935, ssomer114@aol.com.

All AEA-Retired members are eligible to join a chapter where they worked or currently live. This is a great way to keep in touch with the latest issues in our community.

When Chapters meet via Zoom, connection is a simple process. All you need to do is click the link you receive from your Chapter Chair via e-mail. We welcome your attendance and participation.

Glendale/West Valley Chapter: This year our meetings are being held in person at 10am at Biscuit's Café, 19420 N. 59th Ave., Glendale, AZ. We use a private room, enjoy a good brunch and good conversation. For more information call, text or email **Marshall Militano** at

Greater Tucson Area Chapter: We are meeting the third Tuesday of the month, August through May. Meetings begin at 10am at the Southern AEA office, 6873 N. Oracle Rd., Tucson, AZ, 85704. Please e-mail Chapter Chair Peter Coston at pcoston1@cox.net for Zoom meeting links.

Kyrene Chapter: Welcome to any educator, active or retired, who lives in the East Valley! Save these dates for our 2022-2023 meetings. If you are on our mailing list, you will receive a reminder of the date, time, and venue. Our meetings are all in person. **January 20** (Arizona State Legislature lobbying), **March 17** (celebrate KEA leaders and accomplishments). For more information or to be sure you are on the mailing list, contact Chapter Chair Ellen Shamah at eshamah@cox.net

Mesa/East Valley Chapter: Welcome to any educator who lives in the East Valley or anywhere else! All of our meetings are on Zoom, so you can access us from anywhere in the US! Please save these dates for our 2022-2023 meetings. If you are on our mailing list, you will receive a reminder of the date, time, and Zoom link. **December 14** (separation of church and state), **February 8** (Arizona State Legislature lobbying), **April 19** (AEA Officer Q&A). For more information or to be sure you are on the mailing list, contact Chapter Chair Janie Hydrick hydrick@aol.com

A chapter chair is needed for the **Phoenix Chapter**. If interested contact Susan Sommer at the number/email above.

Scottsdale/Paradise Valley Chapter: Until further notice, all meetings will be held on the **third Monday** of each month at 1:00, September through April (excluding December). If you're not on our mailing list, please contact **Nancy Riley** 480-600-8559 or rilevfam@cox.net.

Southeast Arizona Chapter: The Southeast Arizona AEA-Retired Chapter is located in Cochise County and is comprised of districts in Sierra Vista, Tombstone, Huachuca City, Naco, Palominas, Elgin, and Ft. Huachuca, and retirees from other states who have moved to Cochise County. The next meeting will be in January, 2023. Please contact Sally if you would like to be added to the email contact list, our only method of communication during the pandemic. Contact Chapter Chair **Sally Rosén** at **520-249-0233**, azcatsally@aol.com for details.

Interstate/Flagstaff/Northern Arizona/Reservation Chapter (INFARC). Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of the month at 2pm (MST). Meetings will be held on Zoom. Please contact Daniel Barlow at dsjbarlow@yahoo.com. A link will be sent to you to connect to the meetings.