

## OEA recognizes retired members



President Reed Scott-Schwalbach(left) honors Peg Connell (center) beside Vice President Enrique Ferrer (right). Photo by Ray Johnson

by Ray Johnson

At the April 20 OEA Representative Assembly Banquet, two OEA-Retired members were honored, Peg Connell with the Ruth E. Greiner Membership Award and Deb Wisków with the OEA Lifetime Service Award.

OEA President Reed Scott-Schwalbach said about Connell: “A retired leader from Corvallis Education Association, she has dedicated her entire career to developing new leaders in her local, which includes building their leadership skills, joining the OEA-PAC, giving to the OEA Foundation, and taking on new leadership opportunities and roles within the union. So many of CEA's current union leaders started their work because of her investment in them as early career educators. She engaged newer members in bargaining every year so that CEA could continue to negotiate strong contracts, even after she retired from the profession—a true hero among us.”

## One in Thirteen Dollars Given to U.S. Campaigns (2009-21) Came from Twelve Megadonors

by Maureen Barnhart

In a report produced by Issue One, a nonpartisan group to reduce the influence of money in politics, the top 12 donors are split equally between six Democrats and six Republicans, and include Wall Street billionaires and investors, a Facebook co-founder, a shipping magnate and the heir to a family fortune dating back to the Gilded Age. The increasing role of the super-rich in American politics follows the Citizens United decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

If your TV has been on during the weeks running up to the May Oregon Primary, likely you are aware that some of that influence has reached Oregon. Through at least two Super PACs, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is running the commercials, without communication with the candidates or their campaigns (as the law dictates). Under federal law,

individuals can donate up to \$3,300 to federal candidates per election, but the amount of money that can be given through the political action committees known as Super PACs, has no cap.

Although the Federal guidelines are beyond regulation by the State, the Oregon Legislature has finally put limits on the state races. Starting in 2027, individuals and corporations can only give up to \$3,300 to a statewide candidate per election cycle, while political party committees can give up to \$30,000. “Membership organizations,” i.e. labor unions and nonprofit advocacy groups, can contribute a total of \$26,400 to a statewide candidate per cycle. (That would be money from OEA PAC contributors, but we know that our real currency is our shoe-leather campaigning for pro-Public Education candidates!)

Starting in 2028 the Secretary of State is to  
*Continued on Page 3.*

# Random remarks

by President Eileen Wende



Another academic year is coming to an end and so is the calendar year for OEA-Retired.

In September, OEA-Retired Regional Directors, Ray Johnson, Paul Schutz and Judy Richards helped

to organize regional not back to school activities in all three OEA regions, to celebrate educators not having to return to their jobs. New retirees are welcomed by active OEA-Retired retirees in settings where food and socializing were the order for the day.

In October the OEA-Retired Conference Committee, lead by Vickie Jackson and Janis Eggert put on the 2023 Fall Conference at the Old Mill Casino in Coos Bay. Participants met in the beautiful setting along the estuary to hear presentations on the history of Coos Bay; on the conservation efforts to protect the natural waterways; on the efforts of the Coquille Tribe to

regain federal recognition and to preserve their language and an in-depth explanation of how to start up a distillery followed by a tour and tasting at the actual distillery.

Janet Jackson has led the Literary Committee in the collection and distribution of books to be given to children and young adults. Janet reported that since 2009 the committee has distributed a total of 31,435 books throughout Oregon. They are always looking for donations of new or lightly used children and young adult books.

Bobbi Yambasu, at the direction of the Equity and Social Justice Committee has arranged training for OEA-Retired members at our conferences and at OEA-Retired Board meetings.

The committee has successfully organized the Equity and Social Justice Book Club. Book Club members make suggestions for books to be read and then a calendar is established for the year.

Cherene Mills, Chair of the Membership has worked with her committee to identify and signup new members, as they retire. Regional meet and greet events are being held for new and current education retirees for the first time and have been well received.

Nancy Lewis and Sandy Rosenfeld, as chairs of the OEA-Retired Travel Committee have been holding Zoom Meetings to promote upcoming domestic and world tours.

Co-chairs Ann Jones and Pat Eder have led the OEA-Retired's Foundation Committee's efforts to promote and raise donations for the OEA Foundation.

Maureen Barnhart, as Chair of the Legislative Committee has worked to keep members apprised of pending legislation pertaining to retirees and public education, as well as political  
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## CALENDAR

### 2024

June 1 *PrimeTimes* published  
June 29-July 1 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting  
Philadelphia  
July 4-7 NEA Annual Assembly  
Philadelphia  
July 8 OEA-Retired Board Meeting,  
Salem  
July 12 OEA-Retired Social Justice Book  
Club (virtual)



Deb Wisków is flanked by OEA Vice President Enrique Ferrer and OEA President Reed Scott-Schwalbach. Photo by Ray Johnson

## Deb Wisków is honored

by Terri Domenigoni

Deb Wiskow was awarded the OEA-Retired Lifetime Service Award. Since retiring from the South Lane School District as a highly respected elementary teacher, she became fully and thoroughly engaged in the work of OEA-Retired. She has held numerous positions including: including Board Director, Region II Director, At Large Director, NEA Delegate, OEA Delegate and OEA Board Director. Deb cochaired the formation of the Equity and Social Justice Task Force. She currently is serving as a cadre for the OEA Union School supporting ESPs

Before retiring, Deb was an active union member and leader, holding numerous offices in South Lane Education Association, Three Rivers Education Council, Lane Bargaining Council and the Oregon Education Association.

Deb has totally followed the retired tenet that we “retire

from our job, not our profession.”

Debra Wiskow was recognized for her dedication and engagement at all levels of our organization—retired and active. The litany of leadership positions highlights of what Deb has accomplished to make our association better, does not give full acknowledgement to much of her work. Deb is one of those rare individuals who

is indispensable in providing the backbone of our organization. So much of the time she works out of the spotlight as she provides the support for members to better engaged.

## Remarks

*Continued from Page 2.* providing information on candidates and their races.

Regina Norris, as chair of Bylaws and Policies and her committee took member suggestions and crafted bylaw and policy amendments to update our documents.

Mavis Randklev, as our outgoing Treasurer, over saw the adoption of the 2023-2024 Budget

The OEA-Retired Communications Committee, chaired by Ray Johnson, put their talents together to keep our members informed. maintained our AV equipment and helped implement our electronic nominations and voting processes. Ray Johnson managed Mailchimp to communicate with all of our members, as well as working

with OEA to update OEA-Retired’s Web page.

All our committees’ work is accomplished because of the participation of active Board Members and other OEA Retired members. It takes the interest and energy of members across the state to keep OEA-Retired a vital organization focused on the needs of retired Oregon educators and our commitment to support strong public schools for all students.

It is an honor to serve with so many retired classified and certified educators in this great organization.

As we head into the summer months, I hope you have time to relax. We use the summer months to plan for 2024-2025, so watch for your next newsletter coming at the end of summer for events in your area.

## Megadonors

*Continued from Page 1.*

create an online dashboard that lists the 100 largest contributors to candidates or campaign committees and shows how much money industry groups donate to candidates. One of the Super PACs that is currently engaged in Oregon races, Voters 4 Responsive Government, was formed on April 1 and does not have to report details about the donors until May 20, the day before Election Day.

## Senior Humor

You know you are old when you see expensive antiques and you remember one just like it that you threw away.

# Our history shared

by Ray Johnson

We hope you enjoy reading about our history.

**35 years ago**

Retired President Bob Van Houte spoke before a state legislative committee in support of a bill—that was passed—to provide additional compensation for PERS retirees who will be required to pay federal tax due to a recent federal Supreme Court ruling.

**30 years ago**

Members Merv Johnson and Edie Orner were praised for their excellent work on a special newsletter on PERS for retired members.

**25 years ago**

Five regional meetings with programs were scheduled for the summer months around the state.

**20 years ago**

OEA reported that the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission approved an NEA-supported retiree health benefits rule that clarifies that offering early retirees health insurance that is coordinated with Medicare does not violate the Aged Discrimination Employment Act.

**15 years ago**

A Task Force of retired Portland Association of Teachers—Terry Johnson, Jane Morgan, Ann Nice, Judy Taylor, Marleen Wallingford, Eileen Wende, and Bobbi Yambasu—was formed to develop a Portland-area chapter. Support was provided by PAT and OEA-Retired.

**10 years ago**

OEA-Retired was awarded the Friend of the OEA Foundation Award for our generosity and help.

**5 years ago**

OEA-Retired retired its green logo and replaced it with the one that you see in the Masthead on Page 2 of this newsletter.

## Membership committee recruits

by Cherene Mills

As the end of another school year approaches, our focus on new members is heightened. New strategies for gaining membership are being employed. We hope that you continue to encourage your active educator friends to become members.

At RA we spoke with a lot of members about becoming a pre-retired member of OEA-Retired, adding nine new lifetime members, and two pre-retired members completing their lifetime membership dues. Not only did we have the drawing for a free NEA Lifetime membership, but we also had a drawing for a night's stay for two at The Mill Casino Hotel, donated by them. Laura Warren of Lebanon ESP won the NEA Lifetime membership and Donna Harris-Wastradowski of PAT won the hotel stay.

You may remember that we tried a happy hour event in Coos Bay in October that wasn't too successful. We learned a lot and tried another in Roseburg on April 26. The event date, time and place were set in cooperation with Douglas County Uniserv Council, and we continued to communicate with them. Thanks to the additional support of the Council, we had members join us to learn about our organization.

Other strategies included meeting with UniServ staff during their April staff meeting and providing local leaders with packets to give their retirees as they approach the end of the year.

## Former PAT president recalled



Ann Nice

July 27, 1948-April 25, 2024

Ann was born and raised in North Powder, Oregon. After earning her teaching degree, she taught in Winston, Oregon and moved to Portland and taught at Lane Middle School.

Ann was the Portland Association of Teacher's president from 2002-2006. She led the union through some very contentious bargaining.

Ann was a devoted mother and educator who was a lifelong union member.

## We Remember

Gerald F Pimentel  
July 21, 1935-May 24, 2023  
Prineville OR

GM Ford Bend OR



## Region I

by Ray Johnson

Pre-retired members joined retired members and OEA leadership for their first-ever OEA-Retired Happy Hours in Region I—the Portland Metro area. The first one on April 25 was held at The Old Market Pub & Brewery in SW Portland and the second one on May 2 was at the Sapphire Hotel in SE Portland. There was a lot of talking, eating and drinking.

Our monthly luncheons continue at 11:30 a.m., June 21 at Broder Söder, SW Portland, and the last one for the year on July 22 at Prost Marketplace, North Portland. Please feel free to bring guests to our events, regardless of where they live.

RSVPs are necessary, or questions, to Ray Johnson at 503-887-0467 or rayugene@gmail.com.



by Marleen Wallingford

Join us at Beaverton's BG Food Cartel for our end of the year party. It will be an opportunity to sample one of the over 30 food carts available. There is covered seating available as well as uncovered picnic tables.

## Region II

First Tuesday Breakfast

June 4

Sybil's Omelettes

2373 State

St., Salem.

Questions and RSVP for all above to: Paul Schutz, 503-370-9208 or paul.g.schutz@gmail.com.

## Region III

Southern Oregon Coffee & Visit

July 17

Fred Meyer

South Medford Starbucks

1301 Center Dr.

Details: Coffee and a sweet provided by OEA-Retired.

RSVP: Judy Richards at [jarich7138@gmail.com](mailto:jarich7138@gmail.com)

## Bylaws and policies passed

by Regina Morris

The OEA-Retired Board forwarded, with a do-pass motion, eight bylaw amendments and five policy amendments to the Annual Assembly for approval. All of the amendments were approved by the members and have been updated. You can find the updated Bylaws and Policies on the OEA-Retired website under Governing Documents. Thank you to all who attended and to the OEA-Retired Bylaws and Policies Committee for all their work!

## Elections held

by Mavis Randklev

Elections for 2024 are over. Thank you to everyone who voted. The following people were elected to the following OEA-Retired positions:

**President** - Eileen Wende

**Vice President** - Maureen Barnhart

**Region I** no candidate  
**NEA Representative Assembly**

**Delegate**

Deb Wiskow

**OEA-Retired RA Delegate/**

**OEA-Retired Board Director**

Sandra Grzeskowiak

Matt Falby

Thelma Baldwin

Mavis Randklev

Bob Jones

Dan Domenigoni

Terri Domenigoni

Janet Jackson

Judy Richards

Maureen Barnhart

Marleen Wallingford

Nancy Lewis

Deb Wiskow

JoAnn Conroy

Lynda Sanders

Lisa Orcutt Kane

## OEA RA meets

by Marleen Wallingford

The OEA Representative Assembly met on April 19 to the 20 at the Holiday Inn-Columbia Riverfront.

Educators around the state of Oregon are facing funding challenges. Many school districts including Portland, Salem-Keizer and Bethel have announced budget cuts, highlighting the need to step up our advocacy for increased funding for our public schools.

These educators were elected for two year terms:

**Region I VP**-Stephen Siegel

**Region II VP**-Kelsey Dunlap

**Region III VP**-Sarah Barclay

**ESP-Director**-Becky Torres

**NEA Director**-Adolfo Garza

The Assembly voted on our organizations legislative objectives and one of their actions was increasing the dues for the active OEA members. The Aspiring Educator Program is a growing program that was supported by the assembly.

OEA-Retired was recognized for meeting Bylaw 3-2B on Minority Representation for 13 years in our RA delegation.

## Enjoy travel with fellow educators

by Ray Johnson

Since the April issue, the Travel Committee has added two winter holiday trips for our members: Spotlight on New York City Holiday (December 2024) and Christmas on the Danube Holiday (December 2025). Both of these were featured at our March 19 Zoom meeting.

Even though the Danube trip is not until December of 2025, please realize that it is on a first come, first served basis and quickly fills up, so to assure your spot, be sure to book right away.

For NYC, you will experience “the Big Apple” alive with the holiday spirit on this spectacular tour. From Rockefeller Center to Greenwich Village, New York City shines even brighter during the holiday season. Spend four nights in the heart of Midtown close to Central Park’s skating rink and Times Square all dressed up for the holidays. Take your seat and watch the curtain rise for an exciting Broadway show. See the Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall, featuring the world-famous Rockettes! Ferry to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island  
Continued on Page 7.

## To find out more about trips

For information on New York City, Patagonia or Alaska contact Sandi Rosenfeld at 503-880-9953, or [sanrosenfeld@gmail.com](mailto:sanrosenfeld@gmail.com)

For Spain & Portugal, Switzerland and the Danube, contact Nancy Lewis at 503-352-4453, or [nancyjolewis@gmail.com](mailto:nancyjolewis@gmail.com)

## OEA-Retired Travel-2024

### Spain’s Classics & Portugal

October 12-26, 2024. 15 days with 20 meals.

Cost: \$5,699.

Deposit of \$698 due April 13, 2024.

Final payment: August 13, 2024.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1154566>

### Spotlight on New York City Holiday

December 15-19, 2024. 5 days with 5 meals.

Cost: \$3,399.

Deposit of \$698 due June 8, 2024.

Final payment due October 16, 2024.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/12151866>.

### Patagonia: Edge of the World

February 13-26, 2025. 14 days with 24 meals.

Cost: \$10,299.

Deposit of \$898 due July 7, 2024.

Final payment: October 16, 2024.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1154552>

### Alaska Discovery Land & Cruise

May 21-June 1, 2025. 12 days with 26 meals.

Cost: \$5,399.

Deposit of \$898 due November 21, 2024.

Final payment due January 21, 2025.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1240783>

### Discover Switzerland, Austria and Bavaria

September 3-12, 2025. 10 days with 12 meals.

Cost: \$4,999.

Deposit of \$698 due March 4, 2025.

Final payment due June 5, 2025.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1240678>

### Christmas on the Danube

December 2-11, 2025. 9 days with 19 meals.

Cost: \$3,833.

Deposit of \$898 due November 27, 2024.

Final payment due August 5, 2025.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1240807>

*Note: Book right away as this fills up quickly.*



View the unique landscape of Patagonia.

## Enjoy travel

*Continued from Page 6.*

See the Empire State Building and Central Park.

Visit the poignant 9/11 Museum and 9/11 Memorial. Enjoy plenty of free time on your own to shop and see the elaborate 5th Avenue holiday window displays and the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center. Get ready to “start spreading the news!” Activity level is a 3—on-the-go walking for more than 90 minutes with increased activities.

The deposit date is coming up soon on July 7 for Patagonia: Edge of the World (February 2025). On this step into a world of pure nature in Patagonia, where crystal-clear waters meet mountainside glaciers in the snowcapped Andes between Argentina and Chile, this trip will start with the feel of Latin-infused rhythms in Buenos Aires along with a panoramic city tour.

Then, breathe in the peace and serenity of Tierra del Fuego National Park. Enjoy a four-night cruise through the fjords of Patagonia. Engage in a variety of nature hikes. Spend the day by the Pia Glacier. Trek through a colony of Magellanic penguins.

Connect with local gauchos

(cowboys) at an Argentine lamb roast. Find a haven of snowcapped Andes and ethereal fjords in the wilderness of Chile and Argentina. Activity level is a 3—on-the-go walking for more than 90 minutes with increased activities.

And, be sure to mark your calendar for the Zoom meeting on June 11 to learn about this bottom of the hemisphere tour. Send an email to rayugene@gmail.com to receive Zoom address.

All of these trips are also on our website at <https://oregoned.org/retired>

## Social justice book club

by Bobbi Yambasu

At our last book club meeting on April 26, we had an excellent discussion on Clint Smith’s *How the Word is Passed*. If you haven’t read this book, you might want to. It is very well-written, quite lyrical, and is full of new perspectives on both events and tourist sites relating to slavery and its continued aftermath.

We read a “Lesbiana’s Guide to Catholic School” by for our May 31st discussion.

I hope you will join us on May 31 @ 9:30 a.m. to discuss this book.

On July 12th, we will discuss the “Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett.

If you would like to join us and have not yet signed up to get the link, email Bobbi Yambasu

(bobby4967@gmail.com) and she will send it to you.

## NEA RA needs help

by Ray Johnson

As reported in the April issue of PrimeTimes, Portland has the honor of hosting the annual NEA Representative Assembly and NEA-Retired Annual Meeting on June 30-July 5, 2025.

If you already sent me your desire to volunteer, as 200 volunteers per day are needed, now you will need to sign up on the recently launched volunteer site at <https://forms.gle/VTR19ZyY9dGvmsTY8>, as I cannot do that.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 503-887-0467 or rayugene@gmail.com.

## Donate to the OEA PAC

by Jay Reed

How can you support pro-education candidates? Please donate to our PAC. Our allies in public office help us maintain or raise funding for education. The lack of funding has had a devastating impact on public education.

We can make our voices heard by helping get candidates elected who believe in strong public schools.

Single filers can write off up to \$50 annually and joint filers can deduct \$100 from their tax liability. Even \$5 can help us.

To donate go to: <https://oregoned.org/advocating-for-change/action-center/take-action/donate-oea-pac-today>



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by making tax-deductible contributions to the [OEA Foundation](#).
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Please mail a check to [OEA Foundation](#) (6900 SW Atlanta St.,  
Portland, OR 97223) to help our students,  
or, donate online at [www.oregoned.org/oeafoundation](http://www.oregoned.org/oeafoundation).

You also can earn redeemable points for the Foundation by registering  
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communityrewards (use Foundation number 85681), or similarly for  
Amazon at [org.amazon.com](http://org.amazon.com).

## **Have you moved or changed your email?**

Contact: Nikki Burke  
Oregon Education Association  
6900 SW Atlanta St.  
Portland, OR 97223  
503-495-2153  
[nikki.burke@oregoned.org](mailto:nikki.burke@oregoned.org)

**You are encouraged to  
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