

We remember a dedicated educator



by Kris Kain

On December 7, 2025, OEA and NEA lost a very dear and committed member and friend.

Ruth Greiner (née Preston) lost her battle with Primary Lateral Sclerosis (PLS), which is a form of ALS (Arterial Lateral Sclerosis or Lou

Gehrig's Disease).

She fought a brave battle for over 25 years. While it took a serious toll on her body, she never lost her mental abilities, compassion, and sense of humor. Whenever I asked her how she was doing and feeling, always with a smile, she'd respond, "I'm great!"

Communication became very difficult for her, but she always knew exactly what was going on in the world, and exactly how she felt about it. Ruth was first and foremost an OEA and NEA member. Her commitment to OEA began in

college at Eastern Oregon College. She was very active and began a career-long love for the Association as a student member.

She continued her involvement when she moved to Coos Bay and began her teaching career at Coos River Elementary School. Ruth completed her master's degree from the University of Oregon through the Resident Teachers' Program. In Coos Bay, she met and married Pius Greiner, and they had a daughter, Mary.

She continued teaching for Coos Bay School District 9, from which she retired in 2005. Her involvement with the local Coos Bay Education Association and the South Coast UniServ Council provided a solid foundation for OEA on the South Coast. Over the years, Ruth served as president of both groups.

Ruth had the uncanny ability to have many projects going at once and always seemed to have it all under control. From Girl Scout Cookies to Swim Teams to quilting, she was always up to
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We love finding a bargain

by Sandy Grzeskowiak

Did you know your local library has many hidden bargains?

If you want to grow fruits, flowers, and veggies, they have a free-seed library for you. They also have a gardening classes series.

If you want to go places locally, you can get two free cultural passes to places like Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, Evergreen Space Museum, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Oregon Gardens, Japanese Gardens, Pittock Mansion, Oregon Historical Society, Museum of Oregon Territory, North American Big Foot Center, Leach Botanical Gardens, Lan Su Chinese Gardens, Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education for up to five people, and Genealogical Forum Oregon.

For a \$7 ticket each, you can get two tickets to Artists Rep Theater, Friends of Chamber Music, Oregon Koto Kai, Portland Center Stage, Portland Opera, and Tilikum Chamber Orchestra

Do you need to rent, buy, or borrow equipment ever? With your library card, check out something from the library of things like a blender, pickle ball set, games, cake pans, puzzles, soldering Irons, circuit cutter, stud finders, binoculars, snow shoes, canning kits, record players, digital angle finder, fish finders, bike repair kits, GPS, air fryer, fondue maker, Legos, projector Instant Pot, and a blue ray player to name a few.

Need a notary, that is available!

Need access to a room, the only cost is your library card. Oregon City Library has two rooms for 12 people and one room for 50 people available.

Every library has something different and if your library is part of the Lincc system you can get so much more. I also found out Portland area residents can get library cards for Vancouver, Washington!

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Random remarks



by President Eileen Wende

All around us are signs that Spring is arriving. On my walks I am already enjoying the blooming daffodils, ornamental cherry trees and tiny crocuses. OEA-Retired is

also moving forward with our Spring agenda,

OEA-Retired PAC members participated in the 2026 OEA PAC Convention. A last-minute decision was made to make the convention virtual. Since OEA-Retired members live around the state, we decided to caucus together at OEA headquarters. Members who could not travel participated virtually. Despite some start up technical glitches, the convention proceeded and all candidates, who responded to the OEA questionnaire, addressed the statewide delegates.

Speeches were given followed by a timed Q and A period, then debate was held in the individual caucuses. All registered delegates then

voted. OEA-Retired was led expertly by our OEA PAC Director Bobbi Yambasu who cast our collective votes for our UniServ.

What was missing was the opportunity to talk to the individual candidates and fellow delegates from around the state, before caucusing by UniServ and voting. The most notable action of the PAC Convention, was that in the races for governor and for the representative in CD #5, the majority of delegates voted for No Endorsement. In the wake of recent funding cuts in many districts, educators are demanding better funding for education, as well as making sure schools are safe for immigrant students and their families.

On April 17-18, the annual OEA Representative Assembly will be held at the Jantzen Beach Holiday Inn in Portland. Delegates to the RA will have an opportunity to participate in PRAMs (Pre-RA Meetings) around the state to discuss action items prior to the RA. OEA-Retired elected delegates will meet at 1:00 pm. on the opening day of the RA to discuss agenda items and hear candidate speeches. OEA-Retired is gearing up to help host the OEA-Foundation's Silent Auction. In addition we will be promoting OEA-Retired membership to OEA Members, who will be retiring and to prospective retirees through a Preretirement membership.

End-of-year activities are being hosted around the state. Be on the lookout for announcements from Viki Mulick in Region I, Cherene Mills in Region II and Judy Richards in Region III for these casual member get togethers for current and future members of OEA-Retired.

Happy Spring One and All!



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CALENDAR

2026

April 1	<u>PrimeTimes</u> published
April 17-18	OEA Representative Assembly Jantzen Beach Holiday Inn
May 18	OEA-Retired Board Meeting Salem
June 1	<u>PrimeTimes</u> published
June 30-July 1	NEA Retired Representative Assembly, Denver, CO
July 3-6	NEA Representative Assembly Denver, CO
July 13	<u>Retired Board Meeting, Salem</u>

OEA-Retired shares books

by Janet Jackson

The Literacy Project happily welcomed new OEA-Retired Board Member Nancy Larsen to our committee, just in time to take the place of our long-time committee member Kathryn Warrior, who moved to Minnesota to be near her son.

We have continued to put books into the hands and homes of Oregon Children (and a few Washington children!) in the past several months. Here are the places where they have gone:

Banks Champions Summer Program, Banks
Community Based Activities Program, Forest Grove
Summer Lunch Sites, Cornelius, Forest Grove, Beaverton, Seaside, McMinnville
Cascade View Christian School, Sublimity
Woodland View Elementary School, Fairview
Hockinson Elementary School, Hockinson WA
Criterion School, Oregon State Fair
McKinley Elementary School, Beaverton
Pacific University Early Childhood Center, Forest Grove
Washington County Kids, Hillsboro
Oak Grove Academy, Gales Creek
NWRESD Early Childhood Center, Hillsboro
Liberty Elementary School, Albany
Radiant ABA Therapy, Forest Grove
Family Promise of Tualatin Valley, Tigard
Little Free Library, Beaver Creek
ABC House, Albany
Boys and Girls Club, Corvallis
TOTAL TO DATE: 36,473

Are you aware of another program that provides books for children? Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth to age five, no matter their family's income. After launching in 1995, the program grew quickly.

The first books were only distributed to children living in Sevier County, Tennessee, where Parton grew up. It became such a success that in 2000 a national replication effort was underway. By 2003, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library had mailed one million books.

Local Partners work with the Imagination Library to fund the cost of the books. Every zip code in Oregon is now eligible to participate in this great program.

You can learn more about it by visiting imaginationlibrary.com. Literacy Project Committee Member Matt Falby is a volunteer for Dolly's Imagination Library in Salem, concentrating his efforts mainly in West Salem.

Thanks Dolly and Matt!

OEA PAC completes its work

by Marleen Wallingford

We held a virtual PAC Convention this year, which made it difficult to communicate between UniServs about the candidates. We also had no opportunity to informally ask questions of the candidates.

Results were:

No Recommendation
Oregon Governor Recommended
Oregon Labor Commissioner, **Christina Stephenson**

In Oregon's federal races, the PAC made recommendations that are forwarded to NEA's PAC Council, the exclusive endorsing body for federal candidates seeking the endorsement of Oregon's educators.

Recommendations do not constitute endorsements by NEA PAC Council. It will convene later this spring to deliberate and make final endorsement decisions for federal candidates.

Our Recommended federal candidates:

US Senate: **Senator Jeff Merkley**

District 1: **Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici**

District 2: **Was not considered**

District 3: **Congresswoman Maxine Dexter**

District 4: **Congresswoman Val Hoyle**

District 5: **No recommendation**

District 6: **Congresswoman Andrea Salinas**

Membership updates

by Cherene Mills

Starting with this edition you will find a report of the number of new members in OEA-Retired. We ask for your help in acquiring new members and you should know the results of our efforts. In the months of January and February we had 28 new members join OEA-Retired.

We actively ask retired educators to join OEA-Retired throughout the whole year, and we are now nearing the most important, and busiest time of year. As educators are nearing the end of the school year, and retiring, it is important to ask them now to join OEA-Retired.

Retired members are key in keeping OEA strong by sharing
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Bargains

Continued from Page 1.

Your local community colleges offer plays, music, and art shows for nominal prices. Many have Horticulture centers (CCC) where you can audit up to eight classes tuition-free if you are over the age of 65 and space is available. (Class Fees still apply).

You can sign up for classes in landscape irrigation installation and maintenance. Plant sales at Clackamas Community College include veggies, perennials, herbs, annuals, hanging baskets, organic vegetable starts and shrubs. Sales take place in May.

CCC also has a home orchard society that puts on a meal with all food grown in the gardens.

There is also a Community Supported Agriculture program where you can order boxes of fruit if you are a member of the CSA.

Your community offers lots of bargains to be found. Go check it out!

We remember

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something!

Ruth participated on many committees for OEA and expanded her involvement by being elected to the OEA Board of Directors, where she represented the South Coast for District 6.

As her statewide experience increased, Ruth also became active at the national level. She was elected to the NEA Board of Directors, serving two terms as one of two representatives from Oregon on the Board.

It was amazing to see how sharp Ruth remained to the very end. Her PLS continued to worsen, which made traveling

to Washington D.C. a real challenge. But thanks to her sister, Mary Loomis, Ruth was able to travel and continue representing Oregon. For her advocacy on Ruth's behalf, Mary was awarded an honorary NEA Board Member plaque.

Of course, when she retired from her teaching career, for Ruth, there was only one option... OEA/NEA-Retired! She was very involved with the retired group for 20 years. As she continued to get sicker, she maintained that attitude of "I'm great." She had such a positive attitude through it all.

After Pius passed away, Ruth kept her home in Coos Bay, and even though wheelchair-bound, she lived there on her own. She adored her two grandsons, Chris and Carter. They gave her reason to go on and continue her fight.

Ruth was the true members' member. Active at every level of the Association, she shone as an example of the full gamut of membership.

Ruth was honored with the Ruth E. Greiner Membership Award established in 2006 and OEA-Retired Lifetime Achievement Award in 2022.

How very fortunate I was to have Ruth as my friend. She is missed.



Assembly informs

by Vickie Jackson

The Annual Assembly is open to all OEA-Retired members. We had 39 members attend our "Spring has Sprung" Annual Assembly. Four new members

attended the Assembly for the first time.

The program was set to help get ready for spring planting, festivals, travels or wine tasting. Our state has so much to offer! Ellen Egan from Egan Century Farm shared what we need to look for when we start planting for spring. She discussed the plants that best grow in the Willamette Valley and the plants that will help our bees

The Wildlife Safari, south of Roseburg in Winston, staff gave a talk by Zoom about some of the animals that they have in the park. It is a 600-acre drive through the park with over 550 free roaming native and exotic animals.

"One Balloon," a book to share the WWII bomb that killed American citizens in Bly, Oregon, was written by Casey Winters wanted her aunt to be remembered and to inform people about the Fu-Go balloons that were sent by Japan to kill Americans. This talk was presented by Judy Richards.

The committee members of Ardeth Woods, Sandy Grzeskowiak, Janis Eggert, Darlene Cook and Jeannette Kmetc talked about resources around the state to use for enjoying spring! Included was hiking trails from a book, "Lonely Trails," based in Clackamas County for a day hike.

The Oregon State website about festivals is a great resource to plan a trip to a festival anywhere in Oregon.

You can visit the largest Strawberry Shortcake in Oregon in the town of Lebanon during the Strawberry Festival.

Woodburn hosts the 4th largest Tulip Festival in the world from March 20 through April 26..

Oregon has over 100 wineries
Continued on Page 7.

Travel with OEA-Retired

by Ray Johnson

This may seem somewhat distant in the future, but many travelers like to plan ahead, so details—see sidebar—have just been added for the **Charms of Quebec** tour in September of 2027.

As a reminder, the deposit for our Magical Christmas Markets tour is due May 26, 2026.

Our featured tour this issue is the **Holland and Belgium Springtime River Cruise** that is scheduled for March 1-April 7, 2027. On the trip, you will savor springtime in Holland and Belgium on a cruise that highlights blooming tulip fields and iconic windmills.

Enjoy a canal cruise in the heart of Amsterdam. Stop in Arnhem, the favorite summer retreat of the Dutch royal family. Step into medieval times during a Bruges walking tour. Explore Kinderdijk and see Holland's iconic windmills.

Relax as you make your way along picturesque scenery and visit beloved cities such as Amsterdam. Visit Keukenhof Gardens, home to more than seven million tulips.

The trip is an Activity Level 2 with walking over a variety of terrains or several city blocks.

The deposit for this tour is due May 24, 2026. For more information or to make reservations at <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1377974>.

Magic of Christmas

by Lisa Orcutt-Kane

Many friends and family know that I finally took my dream retirement trip: a river cruise to the Christmas markets of Germany in December of 2025. That happened because at my very first OEA-Retired Board meeting, I was directed to the travel
Continued on Page 6.

OEA-Retired Travel

2026

Colors of New England

October 1-8, 8 days with 12 meals.

Cost: \$4,099.

Deposit of \$698 due March 25, 2026.

Final payment due July 1, 2026.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1289928>

Magical Christmas Markets

This will sell out so reserve early!

December 2-9. 8 days with 10 meals.

Cost: \$3,249.

Deposit of \$698 due May 26, 2026.

Final payment due September 3, 2026

<https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1289924>

2027

Holland and Belgium Springtime River Cruise, March

March 30-April 7, 2027, 9 days with 20 meals.

Cost: \$5,249-\$13,649. Deposit of \$898 due May 24, 2026.

Final payment due November 30, 2026.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1377974>

Croatia and Its Islands

May 1-2. 11 days with 20 meals.

Cost: \$6,949-\$13,349.

Deposit of \$898 due September 2, 2026.

Final payment due January 1, 2027.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1377959>

Charms Of Quebec

September 3-10, 2027. 8 days with 10 meals.

Cost: \$5,149. Deposit of \$698 due February 3, 2027.

Final payment due June 5, 2027.

For more information or reservations, go to <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1377993>

For questions on Colors of New England, contact Sandi Rosenfeld at 503-880-9953 or sanrosenfeld@gmail.com

For questions on Christmas Markets or Croatia, contact Viki Mulick at 503-704-8012 or mulickv1@frontier.com

For questions on Holland and Belgium, contact Nancy Lewis at 503-352-4453, or nancyjolewis@gmail.com

Region III

by Judy Richards

Southern Oregon will hold a lunch gathering:

11:00 am

April 13

Abby's Pizza Parlor

1080 S Riverside Avenue
Medford

OEA-Retired will supply food and nonalcoholic drinks. Please join us for some laughs, some sharing, catching up and information on what OEA-Retired is doing.

RVSP to Judy Richards at jarich7138@gmail.com or 541-944-8408 or

The other areas of Region III are planning activities. Watch for that information via email.

Region II

by Cherene Mills

First Tuesday

Monthly Breakfast

10 am-Noon

April 7, May 5 and June 2

Sybil's Omelettes

2373 State Street, Salem.

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

We had a nice Central Coast lunch at Gracie's Sea Hag in Depoe Bay in February. We had wonderful conversations to get to know each other better and discussed how to continue the functions. This group decided on meeting every other month for lunch at various locations in the area.

The next lunch is scheduled for at 11:00 am, Tuesday, April 21 with a location yet to be determined in Lincoln City. We hope you will join us.

At the time of this writing, we have not yet held the North Coast lunch, and plans for

events in other areas of the region have yet to be made. Watch your emails for notifications of future events.

If you have any suggestions of locations for meet ups or other events, please email Cherene Mills at cmills.ret@gmail.com.

Region I

by Viki Mulick

Our OEA-Retired Region I group most recently marked the Lunar New Year on February 17 with a delicious Asian meal at Master Kong Restaurant. Master Kong is located in the Jade District of SE Portland. Russ Fillis graciously hosted eight members while I was out of town. Thanks Russ!

March 18 found us celebrating "The Day After St. Patrick's Day." As I'm writing before the event, we're hoping the Horse Brass Pub has cleaned up its own St. Patrick's Day party by the time we come in for lunch. The Horse Brass Pub is an iconic Portland restaurant located on Belmont St. "Eirinn Go Brach"!

April and May finds OEA-Retired Region I hosting two Happy Hours for pre-retired and retired members. Come out and join us for one or both Happy Hours and welcome our pre-retired members into the fold.

We have a 4:30 pm westside event on Thursday, April 23 at Giovanni's Restaurant in Beaverton. Region I will be providing appetizers, while you purchase your own drink(s). Thank you to Ray Johnson for arranging this fun social event.

If the westside is not your locale, come join us on the eastside at 4:30 pm, Wednesday, May 20. We'll be at pFriem Family Brewers in Milwaukie hosting another pre-

retired and retired Happy Hour. Again, appetizers will be provided. Thanks to Terri and Dan Domenigoni for arranging this social event.

Save The Dates

June 15: Food Cart lunch

July 5: Thorns soccer game

We have plenty of opportunities to connect with fellow educators and meet some new friends. Come join in!



General Meeting

9:30 am, April 9

PAT Office, 345 NE 8th Avenue

Our guest speaker will be Gloria Lee from Neighbors Ready who will discuss disaster preparedness. Are you ready if your electricity and water are cut off for two weeks or more?

We will visit the beautiful Japanese Gardens in April.

Breakfast

9:30 am, May 14

Bread and Ink Cafe

3610 SE Hawthorne Blvd.

RSVP Eileen Wende at ewende72@gmail.com

Read with us

The Social Justice Book Club meets virtually every six weeks. Our next books at 9:30 am are:

April 22

"Hijacking History: How the Christian Right Teaches History and Why It Matters"

by Kathleen Wellman

June 3

"A Queer Case" by Robert Holtom

July 15

"This Book Won't Burn" by Samira Ahmed

Membership updates

Continued from Page 3.

their experience in and out of the classroom, understanding the union's history and stories, being outspoken without the fear of employment consequences, and providing perspective and institutional memory.

If you know of a retired educator who may not yet be a member of OEA-Retired, ask them to join. If you know of a current educator who is retiring this year, ask them to join.

If you know of a current educator who is nearing retirement, ask them to join as a Pre-Retired member. You and/or the prospective member can email Membership Chair, Cherene Mills, at cmills.ret@gmail.com with questions and assistance with the joining process.

Annual assembly informs

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with the majority being scattered throughout the I-5 corridor. Drive the back roads of Oregon to discover the wine you like best!

If you have never visited the Van Duzer Winery, Bruce Sonnen and Randy Coonrod are there to make your experience a different one. They will tell you how to grow, prune, and package wine. Plus they show how their wines enhance food.

At the Annual Assembly we also had an auction to raise OEA Foundation funds; book exchange; lunch; planting flowers activity; a raffle for the NEA Jack Kinnaman Scholarship;

a visit from OEA President Enrique Ferrara; and door prizes. Attend our meeting next year!

Magic of Christmas

Continued from Page 5.

it was—**Christmas on the Danube!**

I was advised to act quickly, and I'm very glad I did. I'd never taken an organized travel tour before and had no experience traveling with OEA-Retired. I made the call to Collette, the tour company, and from that first day, everything was seamless.

Our ship was beautiful, the meals were outstanding, the tour guides were knowledgeable and so friendly, and our fellow travelers were a delight. We were fortunate to have 'good' weather, as according to the locals that meant no rain or snow.

The markets were magical; we brought home candles, Bavarian smokers, and a glühwein mug from each stop. We visited every cathedral and, because it was Advent, were treated to many wonderful choir and organ rehearsals. It was transcendent!

The most memorable part of the trip was actually a moment with our fellow tourmates and our wonderful tour guide, Stephan. He was proud to share stories of his native Montenegro and told a lovely story about a Christmas tradition that ties families together across lifetimes and generations.

And that is, to me, the point of travel: meet people, learn about cultures, and make those memories that last a lifetime and beyond.



Planning a water wise garden

By Vickie Jackson

Avoid high water bills by planting plants in the best places around your yard. Do you have berms or rock edges or slopes? These surfaces need to be used for drainage of plants that need reserved water. Take note, if you have a place in the yard that is in full sun then only plant plants that enjoy the sun! Are you looking for a view to see the flowers? Plant this area with different heights of flowers and make sure they get the water they need. There are flowers shrubs and dwarf trees that will attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

If you are using a drip line do not put the line at the base of the plant. Of course, more water is need when the weather is hot. Know your microclimates and water accordingly. Turf and most flowers can survive on 1.5 inches of water a week. Use a tuna can as your measurer tool, save on your water bill.

Soil is better when it has a mix of elements – sand, little rocks, clay and other organic matter. Turn the soil over when getting ready to plant new plants. Mulch should be 2 inches thick to minimize weeds, evaporation, and erosion. Try to pull your weeds before they flower and seed. Cut then down before they spread.

If you need more information, your OSU Extension Office has great staff to consult with in your region of the state. You might have Master Gardener's in your neighborhood who can tell you more about the mini climates and correct flowers to plant in your neighborhood!

OEA Foundation asks:

Can you help?

- ✓ Every day, students in our schools need: 🍎 new school clothes
👓 eyeglasses 🧥 warm winter coats 🗣️ hearing aids.
- ✓ You can help to provide a better education for these students.
by making tax-deductible contributions to the [OEA Foundation](#).
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donation, 100 percent of your contribution goes directly to the students
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