

ROSE Newsletter

Retired
Oregon School
Employees



Looking out for the rights and benefits of retired OSEA members

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Benefits of being a ROSE (Retired Oregon School Employees) member include OSEA life insurance, member discounts, OSEA publications, PERS information, training, events and social activities.

Happy New Year! The year 2025 was a bit challenging for seniors. There have been numerous changes to Medicare, including the elimination of some Advantage plans, premium increases, and modifications to the drug plans. Concerns about Social Security continue, with ongoing discussions labeling it as an entitlement, which raises fears about potential threats to our benefits. So far, we have managed to navigate many of these difficulties. We remain vocal about these changes and the attacks on our benefits.

PERS continues to face challenges. Fortunately, for many retirees, we were able to retire with protected PERS benefits. However, current members and future retirees do not have the same protection from PERS that we received under Tier 1 or Tier 2. We must continue to ensure that PERS remains a viable pension available to all school staff.

What steps can we take to safeguard our retirement benefits and those of future



By **BONNIE LUISI**
ROSE Chair

retirees? As ROSE members, we associate with several organizations that share our goal of protecting all aspects of retirement. Let me share some details about a few of these groups.

ROSE is a statewide organization for retirees of OSEA. The ROSE board consists of retired OSEA members, many of whom

have served as OSEA chapter officers and several who have held positions as state officers. ROSE members continue to serve on OSEA state committees, doing the necessary work to keep OSEA strong. ROSE members are also engaged at both the state and national levels, working with retirees across the United States to help enact changes and protections.

AFT is the national organization

representing members across the country. Currently, I am the only classified member

on the AFT National Retiree Board. Three of our ROSE board members—Merlene (Zone IV), Tim (Zone III), and I (Zone VII)—

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Calendar

All ROSE members are invited to our monthly meetings!

- **Friday, March 6 at 2 p.m.**
Remote via Zoom
- **Friday, April 3 at 10:30 a.m.**
State Office
- **Friday, May 1 at 2 p.m.**
Remote via Zoom
- **Friday, June 5 at 10:30 a.m.**
State Office

GET CONNECTED AND STAY CONNECTED

Like and follow OSEA and ROSE on Facebook



OSEA: www.facebook.com/osea6732
ROSE: www.facebook.com/RetiredOregonSchoolEmployees

Visit our website

OSEA: www.osea.org
ROSE: rose.osea.org

From the Desk of Your OSEA President

Happy 2026! A New Year — A New Start!



It's 2026! None of us has been here before, which makes this a fresh start for all of us. In these interesting times, we may bring our troubles and worries into this fresh start but, more importantly, we bring with us our heart, blessings and gifts to our work.

This is our year to make sure that we're reaching out to everyone in our communities. When we open

our doors wide, we bring in the people who need us most.

I look forward to being in community with you all and I look forward to fighting the good fight alongside you in this new year!

- Sarah Wofford

OSEA State President

Rogue Community College

Chapter 152

What to Do When a Loved One Dies

By **TIM STOELB**

ROSE Secretary-Treasurer

Losing a loved one can be one of life's most difficult experiences. Whether expected or unexpected, it's never easy. In addition to the emotional weight of grief, you're often faced with urgent decisions and logistical tasks you may not feel prepared for. Knowing what to do after someone dies — both immediately and in the weeks and months that follow — can bring clarity during an otherwise disorienting time.

First and most importantly, know that grief is real. It's OK to step back along the way for reflection, celebration, grief and self-care. Do not be afraid to acknowledge your feelings, to ask for help, and to seek out grief counseling. Take your time and allow for rest and breaks.

There are essentially 11 steps to properly and legally close out someone's life. Some of these may be accomplished simultaneously but all will need to be accomplished at some point.

These steps are:

1. Get a legal pronouncement of death.
2. Organ or tissue donor (if applicable).
3. Notify immediate family and close friends.
4. Arrange for dependents and pets (if applicable).
5. Find and review the estate plan.
6. Make arrangements for the remains.
7. Plan the funeral.
8. Secure the estate assets.
9. Inventorying and documenting assets.
10. Notifying formal entities.
11. Settle the estate.

AARP has an article that spells out these steps in greater detail which can be found at <https://www.aarp.org/family-relationships/when-loved-one-dies-checklist/>. You can also find a link to this article on the ROSE website (rose.osea.org) under Estate Planning on our References page.

Whether expected or unexpected, it's always extremely difficult to lose a loved one. Having a checklist of what to do and documents needed when someone dies can serve as a guide to help navigate the difficult and overwhelming time.

Choose Your Long-Term Care Wisely!

By **KATHRYN RIEGGER**
ROSE Zone V Coordinator

Kathryn Riegger is living in her second assisted living facility and she's learned, first, that the standards of care vary widely between facilities and, second, that you must stand up for yourself in senior living. Kathryn often supports her neighbors when she learns they're not getting the care they were guaranteed when they signed on the dotted line. When it comes to things like medicine schedules, food allergies and standards of care, she says it's vital that you stand up for yourself.

"I just don't like people being taken advantage of, people being disrespected. I don't like marketing making promises that there's no way they're going to follow through on," Riegger said.

As longtime union members, ROSE members know how to advocate for ourselves and our neighbors. We are on the lookout for injustice and contract violations, and we are prepared to speak up and be heard.

Kathryn has some tips on what to look out for:

Before you make a commitment to an assisted living facility, you need to investigate the regulatory history of the facility. The standard of care differs significantly between facilities, making it crucial to research providers and verify their licensing and inspection history. The Oregon

Department of Human Services (ODHS) Office of Safety, Oversight and Quality (SOQ) licenses these facilities, conducts inspections to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations, and investigates complaints regarding potential abuse or neglect. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman is an independent agency that serves to protect the rights of residents in these and other long-term care facilities. Each building of your facility should have an assigned ombudsman - file serious complaints with them.

Current inspection reports are available for public review. Be sure to ask for a copy or access to this prior to signing a move in contract. Open complaints with general description are available on the ODHS website.

Assisted living often involves high fees, which may increase over time and surpass a resident's available savings - make sure you're aware of all fees associated with your care.

High staff turnover rates can make it difficult for residents to form relationships with caregivers and can indicate a larger problem with staffing - ask about staff longevity and current plan to fill vacancies.

Verify procedure details for after hours and weekends.

This is crucial, ask who is in charge and how to contact management in an emergency.

Be sure to get your concerns in writing. Marketing often makes unrealistic promises or advertises unavailable services. You can also ask a trusted person to listen when raising care concerns.

Please specify any dietary requirements or special needs. Facilities must provide three meals and snacks each day. Weekly menus are to be available for residents. Menu changes must be in writing.

On a personal note: where I live, the kitchen ran out of featured entrée and substituted without asking me if the alternate item was acceptable.

I have a food allergy and the chef or manager has been informed by my doctor. A few weeks ago, beef ribs were replaced with pork ribs by the supplier. It's difficult to distinguish pork from beef ribs because of the sauce. If I hadn't asked, eating the ribs would have made me seriously ill for six to eight hours. It's important to stay vigilant and to ask questions. You are paying for this care and you should receive what you pay for.

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have also served as AFT national vice presidents.

Zone II Coordinator Everice Moro is a past president of the Oregon Chapter of the Alliance of Retired Americans (ARA), a national organization dedicated

to protecting the health and economic security of seniors.

ROSE member Jay Osborne (Zone II) serves as the president of the Oregon PERS Retiree Inc. (OPRI) Board. OPRI's mission is to defend current PERS benefits, protect future retirement and

serve as our voice in the Oregon Legislature.

As you can see, the ROSE Board is made up of resolute retirees who are still committed to fighting for our rights. As the AFT slogan suggests, Activists never retire!

ROSE Recipe: Mississippi Pot Roast

Ingredients:

- 3-4 lb Chuck Roast
- 1 packet Hidden Valley Ranch Seasoning (dry)
- 1 packet Au Jus Gravy Mix (dry)
- 1 stick of butter
- 6-7 pepperoncinis

Directions:

1. Place ½ cup water in Crock Pot.
2. Add Roast.
3. Pour both dry mixes over the roast.
4. Place 1 stick of butter on top.
5. Place pepperoncinis on and around the roast.
6. Cook on low 8 hours or 4-5 hours on high.

I usually shred the meat and serve with mashed potatoes and make gravy from some of the juices.

The rest I save and make French Dip sandwiches and use the drippings for the Au Jus.

If you want a full crock pot meal, add potatoes and carrots 2 hours before it's done.

We love it. Don't worry about the ranch dressing and/or pepperoncini. It all melds together perfectly.

- Bonnie Luisi
ROSE Chair

A Thank You from Executive Director Miller



Dear Honored OSEA Retirees, ROSE,

As we welcome the new year, we pause with deep gratitude to recognize you - our leaders and advocates who laid the foundation of our union and

shaped the organization we are so proud to be part of today. Your leadership, dedication and solidarity strengthened not only our workplaces, but the lives of countless OSEA members and families. The rights we protect, the standards we uphold and the unity we carry forward all exist because of your courage and commitment. Your legacy lives on in every contract we've won, every member we supported and everyone's future we fight to improve.

Though you may have stepped back from daily work, your impact remains ever-present and important in shaping our

future. You are and always will be a vital part of our union family. We honor your service, perseverance, sincere friendships and the example you've set for generations to come. May the new year bring you good health, peace and joy. Thank you for all you have given and may you take pride in knowing you have, and continue to make a difference!

With respect, appreciation and solidarity,

Susan Miller
OSEA Executive Director