

# The Journal

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION

Affiliated with the National Retired Teachers' Association (NRTA)—AARP's Educator Community



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Centralia Union Depot  
Lewis County, Washington



## WSSRA At Work For You



*A message from the president*

# Collaborate, Coordinate, Cooperate



by Brad Beal, president

I am pleased to have the honor to serve as WSSRA President for 2022-2023. I had the opportunity to meet with our regional coordinating councils on Zoom throughout my president-elect year. During several of those meetings I was able to express my gratitude to those in attendance for their dedication, educating the youth through their careers. I was a first-generation college student who benefited from public school teachers/custodians/cooks and other staff who provided me with positive experiences that gave me the confidence to explore my strengths and work on my deficits. I have always considered educators as my heroes! I think William James expressed it well when he said, "The greatest use of a life is to spend it on something that will outlast it."

The WSSR Foundation, Scholarship Committee, and district representatives are working to adapt to the new environment that has emerged during the pandemic. This summer, they will restructure parts of the program allowing scholarship access to more high school graduates and student teachers.

At our April and June executive board meetings, the board approved ten honorary members. To earn honorary membership status, one must have reached the age of 90, been an active, contributing member of WSSRA for at least 20 years. Our newest honorary

members' legacy has provided us with a strong foundation as we celebrate our 75th anniversary. Examples of their participation include: district representatives, state committee chairs, regional convention chair, state committee members, unit presidents/vice-presidents, and unit board members. I had the honor of calling each recipient selected this year, following a tradition that was initiated by past president, Bob Duke. A special thank you to you all!

This year's honorary members are:

### **Burt Backman**

*Unit 28 Thurston County*

### **Martha Glanz**

*Unit 11 Lewis County*

### **David Johnson**

*Unit 23 Sno-King*

### **Marlene Johnson**

*Unit 23 Sno-King*

### **Barbara McHargue**

*Unit 20 Seattle*

### **Mary Lou Salberg**

*Unit 12 Lower Columbia*

### **Marilyn Shaw**

*Unit 25 Spokane Area*

### **Barbara Van Etten**

*Unit 28 Thurston County*

### **Lola Van Campen**

*Unit 29 Benton/Franklin*

### **Jay Wood**

*Unit 28 Thurston County*

"Intelligent collaboration is like improvisational music, with each musician making a unique contribution, but with the band as a whole creating something ..."

I encourage you to join the band of active members of WSSRA. We have the need to carry on the legacy of our honorary members.



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**JOURNAL INFORMATION**

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Material appearing in The Journal, in addition to records of action by the board, councils, committees and units, is presented to promote the general welfare of WSSRA members and otherwise to fulfill the purposes of this association, as defined in Article II of the bylaws.

**JOURNAL articles to:**

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**Upcoming JOURNAL  
article deadlines:**

**September 5, 2022**  
for Oct./Nov./Dec. 2022 issue

**December 5, 2022**  
for Jan./Feb. 2023 issue

**WSSRA At Work For You**



*A message from the executive director*

## Future of Uniform Medical as a Medicare Supplement



by Alan Burke, Ed.D., executive director

Whoa! What is this we hear about the Medicare Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic going away in 2024? Are the rumors true? (Answer: Yes, that could happen.) Isn't UMP the most used PEBB Medicare supplement? (Answer: It is, with over 50% of the PEBB retirees making UMP their choice in 2022.) How many Medicare-retirees are using UMP in 2022? (Answer: Over 50,000).

Then, why is UMP Classic potentially on the chopping block? It all has to do with cost. Take a look at the following 2023 rate list:

2023 PEBB Medicare* Retiree Plan	Monthly Single Subscriber
Kaiser NW Senior Advantage	\$176.13
Kaiser WA Medicare Advantage	\$174.59
UMP Classic Medicare	\$438.34
United Health Care (MA-PD) PEBB Complete	\$145.63
United Health Care (MA-PD) PEBB Balanced	\$122.94
Premiera Medicare Supplement Plan F	\$115.16
Premiera Medicare Supplement Plan G	\$98.53

*\*2023 Non-Medicare rates are scheduled to be announced at the July 14 PEB Board meeting.*

What this means is that in 2023 a Uniform Medical Classic subscriber will pay just over \$3,500 more per year than a retiree who, say, chooses United Health Care-Complete. For a subscriber and spouse, the difference will be greater than \$7,000 per year. For comparison, in 2022 a Uniform Medical retiree is paying \$2,500 more per year—\$5,000 per couple. By

the way, we are choosing UHC-Complete for a comparison because that plan, unlike the other PEBB plans, was bid out to be the equivalent of Uniform Medical Classic.

OK, the cost differences are clear. But why the thought to phase out UMP Classic for everyone? Shouldn't those who are willing to pay extra be able to do so?

Basically, the leadership at the Health Care Authority (HCA) came to the realization that the built-in federal subsidies for Medicare Advantage plans make it impossible for a self-insured, state-managed plan like Uniform Medical Classic to compete in the current marketplace. They are confident that future rate differences will only get larger. With UHC-Complete and other Advantage plans well established in the PEBB portfolio, HCA leaders feel that it is untenable and unfair to have retirees, perhaps unwittingly, enroll in a plan that is thousands of dollars more costly but offers the same basic coverage of less expensive alternatives.

Specifically, the reasons for the increase in the self-insured, government-run, Uniform Medical plan are linked to the lack of federal subsidies for, primarily, prescription drug costs, and, to a lesser extent, Part A and Part B medical expenses. Privately managed UHC and Kaiser offerings are classified as Medicare Advantage plans and enjoy those federal subsidies. UMP, fully managed by a government entity (HCA), does not. Final note: even though the Advantage plans in the PEBB system are privately managed, they operate under the Health Care Authority and are subject to HCA rules regarding eligibility, coverage, and claims.

The PEB Board, initially rumored to vote to adopt (or reject) the staff recommendation at their June 30 meeting, apparently postponed  
*Executive Director, continued on page 4...*



## Legislative News



## Election Season in Full Swing



by Peter Diedrick, legislative director

Our elected officials are now fully in election-mode. Some policy work is being completed this summer – especially on retiree issues – but legislators are mostly on the campaign trail.

The Select Committee on Pension Policy has its proverbial hands full with retiree issues this interim. The June 21 meeting was devoted to studying retire-rehire policy for TRS, SERS, and PERS retirees. The July and September meetings will focus on the Plan 1 COLA. In July the SCPP committee staff will provide a briefing on the history of COLA's in TRS 1 and PERS 1 and will compare those to benefits received by Plans 2 and 3. The September SCPP has agenda time reserved for a Plan 1 COLA policy analysis or bill hearing. All SCPP meetings are open to the public and the committee takes written comments at state.actuary@leg.wa.gov.

Primary ballots will hit Washington state households in mid-July. Due to retirements, highly competitive candidates, redistricting, and a tumultuous political climate, 20% to 40% of the legislature could be new in the 2023 legislative session. That is between 29 and 48 brand-new policymakers to educate about pension issues. Many WSSRA units are hosting legislative candidate forums or meetings to introduce WSSRA to

future policymakers. Please reach out to WSSRA unit leaders and attend these meetings if pension and healthcare issues are important to you.

Significant changes are afoot for PEBB Medicare Supplemental Insurance. Uniform Medical Plan for Medicare Retirees – the one administered by Regence – is facing significant premium increases. The insurance plan is essentially in a death spiral and PEBB staff is recommending closing the plan after the 2023 calendar year. Please see the Executive Director's column on page 3 for additional information.

Up-to-date legislative information about your pensions is always available at [wssra.org](http://wssra.org), under the legislative tab.

**Visit WSSRA.ORG**

**click on "Legislative"**

**WSSRA legislative priorities, session podcasts, bill info, and more...**

### *Executive Director, continued from page 3...*

that decision indefinitely in order to receive more subscriber commentary, and provide staff with time to address user questions and concerns. Our understanding is that 2023 UMP rates, set by an internal HCA team based on actuarial analysis done by a contracted firm, are fixed and therefore cannot be changed for 2023.

However, the decision on the phase-out of Uniform Medical Classic is one that the PEBB Board can decide. Given the short timelines in the 2022 PEBB meeting "season" that ends in July, we understand that a decision on the phase out plan likely will be postponed at least for a year.

To be sure, with 50,000+ PEBB retirees now in UMP Classic, this potential change is a big deal for Medicare-aged retirees. On the one hand, many UMP retirees undoubtedly will become aware of these large rate differences, and likely will make a switch decision for 2023 during the upcoming open enrollment period in November.

On the other hand, and judging from past experience, many will miss the entire discussion and find themselves in UMP Classic for 2023 due to a lack of action. In these cases, January sticker shock will abound. Knowing this, HCA staff are recommending that anyone enrolled in UMP for 2023 can make a switch to another plan anytime during the year—not just in the November, 2022 window.

WSSRA is following all of this closely. We already have booked David Iseminger and Ellen Wolfhagen from HCA/PEBB to present on all of this at the upcoming WSSRA convention September 13 in Grand Mound. We also are planning two webinars on the subject—one later this summer and one in the fall. For now, please spread the word to those colleagues who may not be paying attention to these developments. And please make plans to attend the September 12-14 WSSRA Convention at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound to hear from key HCA/PEBB personnel about the latest on the 2023 Medicare insurance topic.



## WSSR-PAC News



## WSSR-PAC: It Is About The Benjamins — Please Give!



by Edith Ruby, WSSR-PAC vice president and Mary Wallon, WSSR-PAC secretary

WSSRA successfully convinced legislators to approve three out of our four legislative priorities in the 2022 legislative session. In two of the past four sessions, legislators have granted one-time COLAs to TRS Plan 1 members. Hours substitutes are allowed to work without penalty have been increased from 867 to 1,040. We could have done worse; we would like to have done better. Getting our legislation approved depends on electing legislators who will be advocates and supporters of our legislative requests.

In November, Washington's voters will elect all 98 members of our state house and half of our state senators. This summer candidates are working hard to raise money for their campaigns. Those elected will remember contributors who gave them help when they most needed it.

Candidates have already contacted WSSR-PAC officers asking for contributions. This month we are sending out questionnaires on WSSRA's priorities to all primary candidates. Following the August 2 primary, WSSR-PAC's Executive Committee will meet to consider questionnaire responses, member input, and past support by incumbent legislators. After our PAC Board approves recommended contributions, checks will be delivered to chosen candidates. In 2020, we were able to contribute to the campaigns of 38 candidates who we believed would help in

our legislative efforts. We would like to do as much this year, but our PAC fund raising has been badly limited by COVID.

**Contribute Today:** We need your help NOW so we can help to elect our legislative friends. To be most useful, candidates need contributions by late August. If you think that decisions by our legislators affect your retirement, help your PAC to elect legislative friends by writing a check or sending an electronic contribution this month. WSSRA's 2022 convention is in September. If you were planning to write a check at the convention PAC table, please do it now instead. We thank those of you who have contributed in the past. Your contributions have opened doors to legislators and helped us get our message across. But at present only 2% of WSSRA members are PAC contributors. Legislative actions decide benefits for all of us.

**Recommendations Needed:** To make the best decisions on which candidates to support, your PAC Executive Committee needs your input on which candidates in your legislative districts you believe are supportive of meeting needs of school retirees. Please do some research on your local candidates and send recommendations to WSSR-PAC Eastern Washington Representative Larry Scholl (larry.scholl43@gmail.com) or Western Washington Representative Carolyn Stella (glacier-peaks@gmail.com) by August 5.

### Support the WSSR-PAC — Contribute Today!

Contributor Name and Spouse (if applicable):

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Unit #/Name:

In memory of  
(if any):

I certify that this contribution is not organized under the laws of and does not have its principal place of business in a foreign country. This contribution is not financed in any part by a foreign national, and foreign nationals were not involved in making decision regarding the contribution in any way.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution Amount \$

Can we publish your name on the WSSR-PAC  
Wall of Support list? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Mail Form & Contribution to:**

**WSSR-PAC**

**125 West 11th Street  
Port Angeles, WA 98362**

**WSSR-PAC.ORG**



## 2022 WSSRA Convention

# 2022 WSSRA Convention Preview

September 12 – 14, 2022 in Grand Mound at the Great Wolf Lodge

Finally, the dates are set and plans are made! After three long years, WSSRA members will gather September 12 – 14 at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound for our organization's 75th Anniversary convention and celebration. This will be our first convention at a west side location in over a decade.

And what an event it will be!

With three keynoters, and more leadership training sessions scheduled than in the past, the agenda should offer something for every member. Plus, with 75th Anniversary celebratory events and acknowledgments occurring all three days, long-time convention goers will be able to relive memories from the past.

As for the keynoters, we have:

**Chris Reykdal, State Superintendent of Public Instruction**, will open the convention Monday with a look ahead of what will be happening in K-12 to get us back on track after two-plus years of COVID.

On Tuesday morning, **Mary Kae Repp from Genesis Marketing** in Spokane, will speak about ways to attract and maintain membership in the post-COVID era. With all of us struggling to find new members to lead us into the next decade, Mary Kae has ideas for consideration. In addition, she will walk us through how to revive volunteering in a time when increasing numbers of retirees prefer staying home.

Finally, on Tuesday afternoon, **Dave Iseminger, Director of the Employee and Retiree Benefits Division of the Health Care Authority**, and **Ellen Wolfhagen, Senior Accounts Manager at HCA**, will present on the recently announced large cost increase in the 2023 Uniform Medical Plan (Class-

sic) Medicare supplement, and the PEB Board's deliberations about plans to phase out that program. This development will affect the clear majority of our members who use PEBB for their Medicare supplement. Please see the Executive Director's column on page 3 for details.

In addition, we have breakout sessions offered that will focus on the uses of social media in communicating with tech-savvy members, the ABC's of using Zoom for remote meetings, an open session for unit leaders to discuss ways to re-engage members following COVID, and an AMBA update. Traditional committee-based leadership training sessions are on the docket for Wednesday morning.

Of course, the convention will be filled with opportunities for social interaction. It also will include times to celebrate unit achievements in 2021-22, acknowledge the work of WSSRA leadership at the state and local level, pay homage to those who have passed away, and complete the leadership transition from 2021-22 President Bruce Boyer to 2022-23 President Brad Beal.

As for COVID precautions, we are encouraging masking where possible and appropriate, and will insist that attendees follow COVID-related hygiene protocols established by the hotel. In addition, we encourage those who have chosen to not be vaccinated to stay home. For those who choose not to attend due to COVID risks, we will be taping keynote speeches and posting videos on the WSSRA website.

To attract as large an audience as possible, members who were not official 2022 convention delegates are free to register. To get that done, just contact your unit president and she or he can help with arrangements.

We'll see you in Grand Mound on September 12!

## Delegate Assembly Election Results

The 2022 Delegate Assembly election was held by mail this spring. Congratulations to the following 2022-23 newly elected statewide leaders:



**President-Elect Ron Crawford** (*Unit 28 Thurston County*)

**SW-4 District Representative Gail Feagins** (*Unit 28 Thurston County*)

**E-6 District Representative Denise Perkins** (*Unit 2 Chelan Douglas*)

**E-8 District Representative Paula Nichols** (*Unit 31 Walla Walla Columbia*)

In addition, delegates approved the proposed 2022-23 WSSRA operating budget. Thanks to all 2022 delegates who participated in the election.



## 2022 WSSRA Convention

# Welcome to Thurston and Lewis Counties

*by Karen Keller and Pat Slosson, Unit 28 Thurston County*

Greetings from Southwest Washington! We are excited to welcome you to our neck of the woods for the WSSRA Convention, September 12-14. Although the convention agenda is packed full of meetings, trainings, and social events, we hope you might have time to do a little exploring. To that end, we have created a list of places of interest. Enjoy!

**Talking Cedar Distillery** — The distillery, brewery, tasting room, and restaurant are very close to the Great Wolf Lodge. Craft beers and other beverages, such as a “chocolate bourbon” and flavored vodka, are available for purchase. [TalkingCedar.com](http://TalkingCedar.com) [HeritageDistilling.com](http://HeritageDistilling.com)



**Centralia Square Antiques** — Over 50 antique and collectible dealers in the 7000 sq.ft. basement level of Centralia Square (Old Elks Bldg.). The mall strives to have something for everyone in a well-lit, clean atmosphere. [MyAntiqueMall.com](http://MyAntiqueMall.com)

**Sisters Quilt Shop** — You will find everything for the quilter including fabric, notions and patterns. [sistersquiltshop.com](http://sistersquiltshop.com)

**Central Glass Works** — Take a class to make your own treasure or buy one of their spectacular items. [CentralGlassworks.org](http://CentralGlassworks.org)

**Hymann Whinery** — Yes, it is spelled as the owners spell it. Fruit and grape wines, as well as wine and beer making supplies, are available for purchase. [heymanwhinery.com](http://heymanwhinery.com)

**Fort Borst Park** — This city park is located at the confluence of the Chehalis and Skookumchuck rivers and is the home to the historic Borst homestead, schoolhouse, arboretum, and Fort Borst Blockhouse. Make a stop at the historic one-room schoolhouse. [cityofcentralia.com](http://cityofcentralia.com)



**Lewis County Museum** — Housed in the former Northern Pacific Depot in Chehalis there are many permanent displays, plus a model train set-up. The volunteers offer genealogy help for those who want to trace Lewis County heritage. Don't miss the McKinley stump outside the museum. It's not the original but what a tree it was! [lewiscountymuseum.org](http://lewiscountymuseum.org)

**Northwest Sausage and Deli** — This deli was made famous on the TV show “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives.” Besides a variety of sausages, Dick’s beer is also for sale. [dicksbeer.com](http://dicksbeer.com)

**Veterans’ Memorial Museum** — This is an exceptional small-town museum. It houses an extraordinary collection of weapons and uniforms from the beginning of our country to current times. [veteransmuseum.org](http://veteransmuseum.org)

**Millersylvania State Park** — Conveniently located between Olympia and Centralia, this large, well-visited park beckons to adults and children alike. Discover Pass is required. Many of the park structures, including the kitchen shelters, were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s, making the park a great place to see and admire the hallmark artisanship of that era. [wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/millersylvania-state-park](http://wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/millersylvania-state-park)

**Mima Mounds Trail** — Discover this 2.60-mile loop trail near Olympia, Washington. Generally considered an easy route, it takes an average of 1 hour and 4 minutes to complete. This is a popular trail for trail running, walking, and other nature trips, but you can still enjoy some solitude during quieter times of day. The trail is open year-round and is beautiful to visit anytime. [alltrails.com/trails/us/washington/mima-mounds](http://alltrails.com/trails/us/washington/mima-mounds)



## 2022 WSSRA Convention

September 12 – 14, 2022

Grand Mound – Great Wolf Lodge

WSSRA's 75th Anniversary

Keynote Speakers

Awards Ceremony

Leadership Trainings

Foundation Baskets

Looking forward to seeing you!



# 2022 Scholarship Recipients

## WSSR-Foundation Scholarships (\$1,500 or \$2,500)

Eight \$2,500 scholarships and eight \$1,500 scholarships per each of the eight WSSRA regions are available to graduating high school seniors planning to pursue a degree in education.

## Gene Forrester Memorial Scholarships (\$2,000)

Awarded to two high school seniors planning to major in Agricultural Education at Washington State University.

## Neil D. Prescott Scholarships for Student Teaching/Internship (\$2,000)

Sixteen scholarships (two per each of the eight WSSRA regions) are available to college students who will be student teaching or conducting an internship during the upcoming academic year.

## Robert J. Handy (PEMCO) Scholarships (\$900, redeemable for four years)

Sixteen scholarships (two per each of the eight WSSRA regions) are available to graduating high school seniors planning to pursue a degree in education.

For more information about scholarships awarded by WSSRA and the WSSR-Foundation, please visit our website at [WSSRA.ORG](http://WSSRA.ORG) and click on WSSR-Foundation, Scholarships.

### WSSR-Foundation Scholarships \$2,500



**Hayley Trimmer** (NW-1)  
Shorewood High School  
University of Vermont



**Hailey Nass** (SW-3)  
South Kitsap High School  
Whitworth University



**Makena Campbell** (SW-4)  
La Center High School  
Washington State University



**Braiden Wolfenbarger** (E-5)  
Ellensburg High School  
Montana State University



**Decker Marlin** (E-6)  
Chelan High School  
Whitworth University



**Ashlie Todd** (E-7)  
Central Valley High School  
University of Washington



**Calumet Kubalek** (E-8)  
Pasco High School  
Brigham Young University

### WSSR-Foundation Scholarships \$1,500



**Abigail Nelson** (NW-1)  
Snohomish High School  
Pennsylvania State University



**Abbey Goetz** (SW-3)  
White River High School  
Pacific Lutheran University



**Shelby McCombs** (SW-4)  
Prairie High School  
Clark College



**Benjamin Parker** (E-5)  
Eisenhower High School  
University of Idaho



**Jack Hensley** (E-6)  
Eastmont High School  
Wenatchee Valley College/CWU



**John Campbell** (E-7)  
Mt. Spokane High School  
Whitworth University



**Ethan Harris** (E-8)  
Walla Walla High School  
Central Washington University

### Gene Forrester Memorial Scholarships



**Haley Biemold** (NW-1)  
Lynden High School  
Washington State University



**Austin Kern** (E-6)  
Moses Lake High School  
Washington State University



# 2022 Scholarship Recipients

## Neil D. Prescott Student Teaching Internship Scholarships



**Brittany Anderson** (NW-1)  
Whitworth University  
Math & Secondary Education



**Stephanie Fosse** (NW-1)  
Western Washington University  
Early Childhood & Special Educ.



**Reeghan Crawford** (NW-2)  
Seattle Pacific University  
Secondary Education/History



**Sarah Field** (NW-2)  
City University of Seattle  
Masters in Teaching



**Ruby Anderson** (SW-3)  
Washington State University  
Agricultural Education



**Shane Wood** (SW-3)  
City University of Seattle  
Masters in Teaching



**Gia Barnhart** (SW-4)  
The Evergreen State College  
Early Elementary Education



**Averie Martinez** (SW-4)  
Washington State University  
Elementary Education



**Jessica Wilber** (SW-4)  
Washington State University  
Elementary Education and ELL



**Zach Haley** (SW-4)  
Washington State University  
Master in Teaching - Elementary



**Hayley Burgin** (E-7)  
Whitworth University  
Masters in Education/Teaching



**Courtney Renaud** (E-7)  
Whitworth University  
English



**Kristen Miller** (E-8)  
Washington State University  
Elementary Education



**Campbell Schulke** (E-8)  
Central Washington University  
Elementary Education

## Robert J. Handy Memorial (PEMCO) Scholarships



**Jenna Estep** (NW-1)  
Arlington High School  
Western Washington University



**Peyton Ogle** (NW-1)  
Lynden Christian High School  
Biola University



**Alyssa Tanneberg** (SW-3)  
Sumner High School  
Grand Canyon University



**Ashlynn Tibbot** (SW-3)  
Puyallup High School  
Western Washington University



**Taylor Langhaim** (SW-4)  
Toledo High School  
Brigham Young University



**Emily Rosenkranz** (SW-4)  
La Center High School  
*undecided*



**Thalisa Saldivar** (E-5)  
Toppenish High School  
Pacific Lutheran University



**Olivia Stoller-Black** (E-5)  
Wapato High School  
Washington State University



**Lauren Kert** (E-6)  
Cashmere High School  
Grand Canyon University



**Ella True** (E-6)  
Wilson Creek High School  
Western Washington University



**Sidney Appel** (E-7)  
High School  
College



**Evelyn Bolles** (E-7)  
Lakeside High School  
Brigham Young University



**Taylor Namchek** (E-8)  
Connell High School  
University of Idaho



**Corrigan Niel** (E-8)  
Connell High School  
Washington State University



## Supporting Future Educators



## WSSR Foundation: Almost Time For Baskets at Convention



by Dottie Stevens, WSSR Foundation president

Foundation contributors, thank you, what a great way to support our philanthropic mission, and recognize loved members and supporters of the Washington State School Retirees. It is so exciting to be reconnecting at the Great Wolf Lodge for our convention, September 12-14, 2022. I am already seeing plans for sessions that support coordinating councils, service committees, and leaders in our local units. This keeps us alive as local units, with the training and connections we need to make.

This convention is about fellowship, connections, vital information, and fun for our delegates. Don't miss out on the basket drawings and silent auction. Now is the time for units to organize, and be creative with baskets, and silent auction items that will represent your unit. The thrill of winning and joy of bidding on a treasure is truly fun and a keepsake with

happy memories. The whole unit cheers for you when your name is called. So, baskets, baskets, baskets!

As a Foundation, we have been meeting with the Scholarship Committee recently to review scholarship applications and evaluation procedures. In our changing electronic world, we are looking into how future educators can better gain access to our scholarships. We will continue focusing on this work and marketing.

The Foundation noted that three Neil D. Prescott Scholarships were unclaimed due to a lack of qualified applicants in some regions while other regions had additional qualified candidates. So, we scheduled an additional reading and awarded the three scholarships. Additionally, some regions requested scholar-

### DONATION FORM

#### WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREES' FOUNDATION

PO Box 5127, Lacey, WA 98509

Please Print

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ In Honor \$ \_\_\_\_\_ In Memory \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: If you would like the person notified of this gift, you must include their full name and address below.

<input type="checkbox"/> In Honor	<input type="checkbox"/> Memorial	\$ _____
Name _____		
Person to be Notified _____		
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<input type="checkbox"/> In Honor	<input type="checkbox"/> Memorial	\$ _____
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### ONLINE FOUNDATION DONATION

**wssra.org** Foundation link > Donation Form



ships for para-educators. This is on our agenda for future consideration as Foundation contributors and investments allow us to consider additional scholarships.

Welcome Marianne Harvey as our next WSSR-Foundation President. She has already served on the board for four of the five-year commitment to the Foundation. I will serve an additional year as a trustee while we recruit another Foundation member from Eastern Washington. It could be you!

It has been a real joy, and learning experience, to serve in this capacity on the Foundation, and to connect with other WSSRA leaders. Thank you.

## Foundation Contributors

Karen Keller - in memory of Doris Coble

Kathleen Lisignoli - in memory of Don Rifenberg

Susan Wertz - donation

Margaret Wharton - in memory of Doris Coble

Chelan/Douglas SRA - in memory of Judy Reed,  
Clarence Foster, Eugenia Miller, Hope Abadie

Kitsap Co. SRA - in memory of Valara Minear

Lewis Co. SRA - in memory of Linda Althausen,  
Doris Coble, Gregory Kirsch, Mabel Hazelrigg

Okanogan Co. SRA - in memory of Kay Sharp,  
Connie Nearents Palmer, Heinrich Banka, Harold  
Jensen Jr., Verna (Lou) Lantrip, Howard Picard,  
Larry Curtis, Judith Devon, Leona Longanecker,  
Raymond Gilman, Richard Merriman

Pend Oreille SRA - in memory of Beulah Noble

Pierce Co. SRA - in memory of 2022 passings

Renton/So. King RSEA - in memory of Dennis Olson

Skagit-Isle-San Juan REA - in memory of Marylee  
Sams

Sno-Isle SRA - in memory of Orin Fjeran, Ruth  
Scougle

SW Washington SRA - in memory of Don Rifenberg

## For Your Health

### Health Care Alphabet Soup

by Ken Harvey, state health committee

We live in a world of acronyms. Usually, we understand the meaning, such as FBI, NBC, and IBM. Other times we might look it up or just ignore it entirely. Here are some acronyms that, as a public school employee or retiree, you might come across.

#### **HCA: Washington State Health Care Authority**

The HCA oversees many health related programs including PEBB and SEBB

website: [hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports](http://hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports)

#### **PEBB: Public Employees Benefits Board**

The PEBB purchases and coordinates insurance benefits for eligible public employees and retirees. There are over 300,000 members in Washington State. The program is administered through HCA. The website has information comparing plans that are available in your area as well as other useful information.

website: [hca.wa.gov/about-hca/public-employees-benefits-board-pebb-program](http://hca.wa.gov/about-hca/public-employees-benefits-board-pebb-program)

#### **SEBB: School Employees Benefits Board**

Starting in January 2020 school employees were able to enroll in SEBB. It is separate from PEBB. Benefits and choices differ from district to district. Retiring school employees can still join PEBB.

website: [hca.wa.gov/about-hca/school-employees-benefits-board-sebb-program](http://hca.wa.gov/about-hca/school-employees-benefits-board-sebb-program)

#### **VEBA: Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association**

VEBAs are a type of trust instrument used to hold plan assets for the purpose of providing employee benefits. It is also known as an HRA (Health Reimbursement Arrangement). School districts and institutions vary as to how they put into VEBA. Some districts give the option at retirement to cash out sick days with a formula to put money into the account. You can check if you have an account by contacting 1-888-828-4953 or [customercare@veba.org](mailto:customercare@veba.org) website: [veba.org](http://veba.org/contact-veba-trust)

#### **SHIBA: Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisor**

SHIBA provides free, unbiased, and confidential assistance with Medicare and health care choices. It is a great resource, especially if you don't know where to start. website: [insurance.wa.gov/about-shiba-services](http://insurance.wa.gov/about-shiba-services)

Much of the above information and more can be found at WSSRA's website under "Resources" and then click on "Other Helpful Resources." website: [wssra.org](http://wssra.org)



## Membership: Strength In Numbers

### Summertime!



by Don Parks, state membership committee chair

The annual WSSRA Convention is just a few weeks away and I'm looking forward to an in-person event, the first in three years. I hope all who wish to attend can actually do so. The Grand Mound venue should prove very interesting and a lot of fun. I hope to see you there.

The State Membership Committee recently held its meeting to plan the membership breakout session, which will be held on Wednesday during the convention. The session will be content-rich and will include discussions and presentations on topics such as: ways AMBA assists us, what works in certain locals for building membership as described by Shirlee Jellum of Unit 10, how the pre-retirement webinars are helping with the mountain of information that prospective retirees need to be aware of, presentation packet for use at staff meetings, and other topics to help with membership building at the local level. There will be time for input from attendees to address

concerns and suggestions. One issue seems to be how the pre-retirement webinars can do a better job of signing up new members; the local seminars of the past seemed to do much better on that front.

Membership levels have stayed fairly steady statewide. On June 1, membership was at 17,158 members (compared to 17,087 in April and 17,588 a year ago). We have 31 retirees and 11 actives as pending members. WSSRA lost 40 deceased members in May 2022. That seems to be a fairly consistent number. Those folks will all be missed.

The past couple of years have had some rather unique challenges in terms of keeping up and growing membership. Many, many thanks to everyone who have continued working and thinking in order to keep us moving in the right direction. WSSRA is made up of great people. You are much appreciated.



### WSSRA MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Do you know a school retiree who should be a member? Clip this form and ask them to complete and return the form today!

#### DUES DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION FORM WASHINGTON STATE RETIREES' ASSOCIATION PO BOX 5127, LACEY, WA 98509

Please Print

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

SS Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Home/Personal Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Retirement Plan (CIRCLE) TRS1 TRS2 TRS3 PERS1 PERS2 PERS3 SERS2 SERS3

Name of WSSRA Unit (or school district last employed) \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems to deduct the following dues and any future increases as voted by the membership, from my monthly retirement allowance and to pay such deduction to the Washington State School Retirees' Association.

Should I wish to cancel ensuing deductions I will send a written notification of cancellation to Washington State Department of Retirement Systems and WSSRA.

**DUES DEDUCTION: \$7 per month or CASH DUES: \$84 per year**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

01—Clarkston/Asotin/ Pomeroy	Pacific	11—Lewis County	19—Renton-South King	25—Spokane	31—Walla Walla- Columbia
02—Chelan/Douglas	06—Southwest King	12—Lower Columbia	20—Seattle	27—Pierce County	32—Whatcom County
03—Clallam County	07—Jefferson County	14—Mason County	21—Skagit/Island/San Juan	28—Thurston County	33—Whitman County
04—Columbia Basin	08—Kitsap County	15—Okanogan County	22—Sno-Isle	29—Benton-Franklin	34—Yakima County
05—Grays Harbor/	09—Kittitas County	16—East King	23—Sno-King	30—Southwest Wash- ington	
	10—Columbia Gorge	18—Pend Oreille			

Contact WSSRA for membership information: Michele Hunter, [michele@wssra.org](mailto:michele@wssra.org) or 360-413-5496, ext 116





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WSSRA – Washington State School Retirees' Association



## Legislative History

### Select Committee on Pension Policy

*by Bruce Boyer, past-president and Peter Diedrick, legislative director*

During my presidency, I highlighted WSSRA's legislative work and past legislative victories. To complete the series, Peter and I chose to highlight WSSRA's participation in the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP).

The SCPP is the legislative committee responsible for recommending and endorsing changes to the state's pension system. The Washington State Legislature has the final say over changes, but SCPP recommendations carry substantial weight in the decision-making process. It is an "interim" committee, meaning it does not meet during legislative sessions, only in the summer and autumn. WSSRA has the most success with legislation when the SCPP endorses our bills and policy proposals. The body is especially critical in our fight to restore a permanent Plan 1 COLA.

The Committee started as the Joint Committee on Pension Policy. It was composed only of members from the House and Senate. It had a smaller executive body that met in private to determine future agendas and policy positions. In 2003, constituent groups were able to pass a law opening the committee up to new membership. New membership included

members of the State House, State Senate, the Governor's budget director, the director of the Department of Retirement Systems, and citizen representatives from employers, employee organizations, and retiree organizations. The private executive committee was also opened to public view.

In 2005, the legislature passed House Bill 1323 to further open the SCPP. HB 1323 added a retiree representative to the executive committee of the SCPP. This action ensured retirees had a voice and voting representative both at full Select Committee on Pension Policy meetings as well as the executive subcommittee. Then Representative – now Senator – Steve Conway was the prime sponsor of HB 1323 (Senator Conway was also the prime sponsor of our Plan 1 COLA bill this year). HB 1323 passed unanimously and Governor Gregoire quickly signed the legislation.

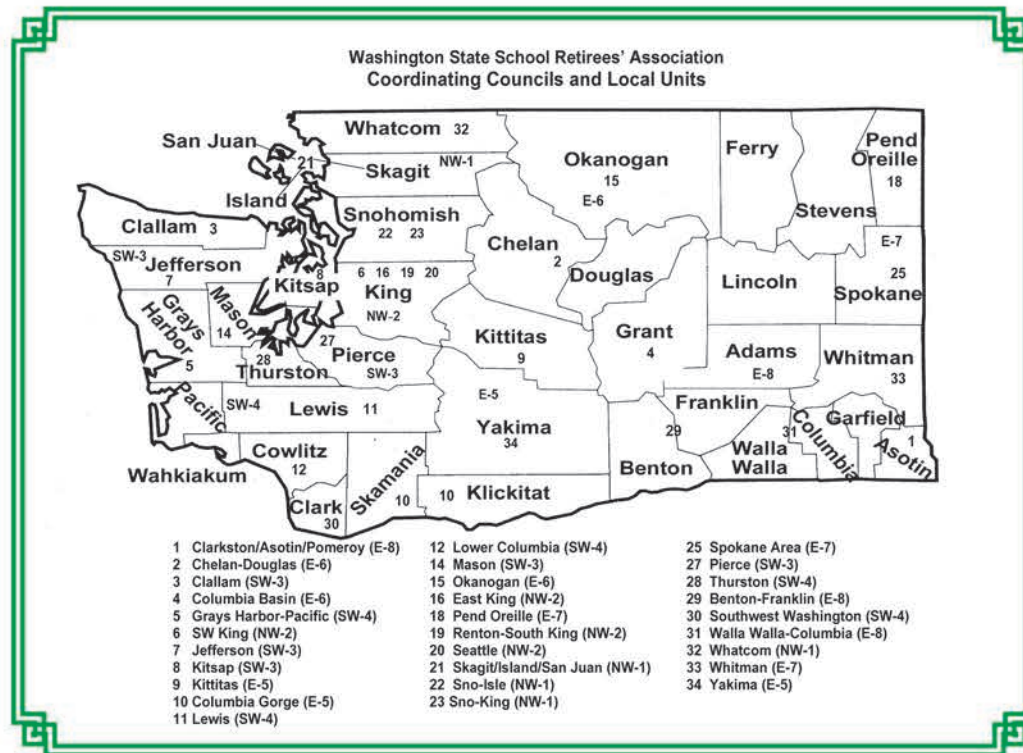
These important changes allowed for several WSSRA members to serve on the committees, including past State President Gene Forrester and former Legislative Committee Chair Elaine Banks. Their contributions were vital to moving WSSRA's political and policy goals forward.



## WSSRA Around The State

## What's happening in...

From the Coordinating Councils and Local Units



Stroup (Bothell High School), and Maggie Way (Woodinville High School). All received a framed certificate.

In May, unit members gathered for the first joint meeting in two years sponsored by Unit 22 Sno-Isle. Attendees enjoyed an excellent catered lunch and speaker. Renewing friendship after two years was very pleasant.

The board met face to face for the first time for the May meeting. The board continues to work on the procedures to hire a clerical assistant to help with the many tasks that the board members have. The plan is to post the position by the end of June.

## NORTHWEST-1

**Unit 21 Skagit/Island/San Juan:**

Before pausing for a well-earned summer break, the unit would like to thank the members who helped carry the load this year. Your willingness to be a legislative buddy helped get the message through and you can take pleasure in knowing that you helped contribute to several benefits, including the COLA that you will see at the end of July. Although meetings couldn't be held in-person this year, a luncheon is scheduled for this coming September.

The unit's end of the year newsletter was sent out in

May and asked for "volunteers" to help carry the load next year, as current leaders are not getting any younger and would like some help. We are pleased to announce that two members have stepped forward and we are looking forward to working with them in the coming months.

**Unit 22 Sno-Isle:**

Unit 22 Sno-Isle ended the year by hosting a joint luncheon for Unit 23 Sno-King. Attendees enjoyed a catered lunch. The units had not been together for three years, so there was a lot of catching up. Dr. Linda Allen entertained the group with her program

entitled "Here's to Women," which is a tribute to the suffrage movement. Dressed in costume, Dr. Allen performed original songs that went with an informative slideshow. Many of the songs called for audience participation and it turns out there was no lack of it. It was a fun gathering.

**Unit 23 Sno-King:**

The unit scholarship committee met in March and awarded four scholarships for \$2,000 each to the following students who will be entering the field of education: Clair Beaumont (Shorecrest High School), Kisanet Gabreselassie (Meadowdale High School), Ella

**Unit 22 Sno-Isle:**

Dr. Linda Allen sings about the suffrage movement as part of her program, "Here's to Women."



## WSSRA Around The State

### NORTHWEST-2

#### **Unit 6 Southwest King:**

The unit is proud to announce Federal Way Public Schools has awarded the unit a “Federal Way Public Schools Hero” award for the unit’s grant support for school staff members. For over fifteen years, the unit has offered grants to three local districts benefitting teachers, counselors, office staff, paras, and librarians. Thank you to the following SWKSRA members for managing the grant project over the years: **Kerry Lohr** (vice president and treasurer), **Nancy Tracy** (secretary), **Bill Tracy** (retirement chair), **Cathey Juhl** (grants coordinator), **Keitha Bryson** (former unit president), **Carol Brandt** (former treasurer), **Carol Nightingale** (former treasurer), and **Nell Hepburn** (longtime grants committee member).

#### **Unit 16 East King:**

East-King members have always enjoyed reading emails and letters and receiving pictures from grant recipients. This spring, however, the executive board received a special package that they are particularly interested in sharing with members. Ericka Hernandez, a dual language teacher of second and third graders at Einstein Elementary in the Lake Washington School District, sent a picture collage of books in use, one giant thank you card with 18

messages and 15 individual cards from students written in both English and Spanish. Board members can’t wait to share these treasurers with members at the unit’s August picnic!

East-King Executive Board members met in early June and will meet again in early August to nail down the details for the unit’s summer picnic. **Pat Jovag**, membership chairperson, arranged for the August 10 picnic to be held at Juanita Beach Park, and she is taking care of RSVPs and lunch orders. East-King will celebrate this first in-person get together held in a long time by providing delicious boxed lunches to members that will be catered by Seattle’s Ingallina’s. Local legislators have been invited to attend as well.

#### **Unit 19 Renton/South King:**

Renton/South King members had a luncheon meeting on May 3 at the Lakeshore Retirement Community. After a delicious lunch, Unit 19 members enjoyed the portrayal of Bertha Knight Landes, the first female mayor of Seattle by Debbie Dimitri.

Renton/South King members will not have any meetings during June, July, August, and September.

The next membership meeting will be October 4, 2022. Mayumi Tsutakawa will be



**Unit 23 Sno-King:** Unit Board Member James Siscel, at a Shoreline School District board meeting, presented a NW-1 WSSR Foundation Scholarship Certificate to Hayley Trimmer, center, from Shorewood High School and a SKSR Scholarship Certificate to Claire Beaumont from Shorecrest High School. Hayley plans to major in Elementary Education. Claire will study to teach either English or history at the high school level.

the guest speaker, her topic will be “Culture of Japanese Women in the 1900’s.”

On November 1, Unit 19 members will have a Zoom meeting with Jeanie McKay. Her topic will be, “Octane for the Brain,” about brain research and healthy living.

#### **Unit 20 Seattle:**

The Seattle School Retirees’ Association’s board members

are in the planning stages for a few in-person meetings for the coming school year. The last venue for luncheon meetings (The Canal Restaurant) has closed and the unit is searching for a new location that can provide a large enough room with reasonably priced food. The unit newsletter will come out in early September and will highlight information on the first in-person meetings and programs for the fall.

#### **Unit 21 Skagit/Island/San Juan:**

Carmelita Vasquez-Hernandez is Skagit/Island/San Juan School Retirees’ very first Professional Technology-Vocational Scholarship (\$1,500) recipient. She graduated from Mt. Vernon High School and will attend Skagit Valley College this fall.





## WSSRA Around The State

The last unit board meeting was held on June 10 via Zoom. Future luncheon meetings for members was discussed. Plans were firmed up for which SSRA members will likely attend WSSRA's state convention at the Great Wolf Lodge in September. The board was asked to submit articles for the unit newsletter, "The Bulletin," which will come out in early July and as well as September to coincide with the opening of the school year. Until an in-person unit meeting is held, communications to members will be mainly through Zoom, the unit newsletter, and on the unit website, seattlesra.org. The possibility of storing some SSRA materials in the Archives Office of Seattle Public Schools was also discussed.

Unit members are grateful for receiving informative articles on the state legislature from **Edith Ruby** and **Mary**

**Wallon**, on health issues from **Myrna Muto**, on unit scholarship program from **Patricia MacGowan**, and on the history of Seattle Public Schools as well as the organization from **Julee Neuhart**, the unit's new historian.

### SOUTHWEST-3

**Unit 3 Clallam County:** Clallam County School Retirees' Association (CCSRA) met at Peninsula College on May 17. Paul Pitkin, the executive director of the Peninsula College Foundation, spoke about the organization and how it serves students. He also led several attendees on a short tour highlighted by a visit to the longhouse on the campus. The longhouse contains many Native American art objects. Lunch was provided by the foundation. CCSRA has been contributing scholarship money to the foundation for several years.



**Unit 3 Clallam Co.:** Unit members recently visited the Longhouse on the Peninsula College campus.

Member **Mary Bell** was honored with the 2021-2022 CCSRA Community Service Award. She was presented with a framed certificate and a quilt made by Unit President **Lora Brabant**.

On June 21, the annual CCSRA picnic was held at the Four Seasons Ranch Clubhouse in Port Angeles. Food was provided by CCSRA. The next general meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2022.

For the upcoming WSSRA convention, unit members discussed who was interested in going to the convention. Members expressing interest were **Doris Bucher, Craig and Cheryl Miller, Sandy Deason, Patty Marz, Allision Morris, Jim Hunt, Susan Martin** and **Joan Lingenfelter**. The group also discussed the need to bring baskets for the Foundation drawings and silent auction items are needed as well.

The April meeting was held at the Kitsap Family Pancake House. Ideas for upcoming programs, the convention, and baskets were discussed. After the meeting, attendees went to the Brother's Nursery in Port Orchard and had a wonderful tour. Sam talked about native plants that were good to grow in the area. After the tour, some members bought plants for their homes. A group picture was taken at the Hobbit House, which was built about seven years ago.



**Unit 8 Kitsap Co.:** Members recently visited Hobbit House at Brother's Nursery in Port Orchard. Pictured (left to right): **Patty Marz, Cheryl Miller, Doris Bucher, Craig Miller, Joan Lingenfelter** and **Allision Morris**.

### **Unit 8 Kitsap County:**

The unit recently met at the Family Pancake House in Bremerton. Attendance was up slightly and members are looking forward to being back at the Family Pancake House for the rest of the year. Unit officers for 2022-23 were elected - President **Doris Bucher**, Vice President **Craig Miller**, Secretary **Patty Marz**, and Treasurer **Allision Morris**. **Patty Marz** and **Craig Miller** are gathering ideas for the programs next year.

The May meeting was held at the Kitsap Family Pancake House. **Susan Martin** brought children's books and



## WSSRA Around The State

**Doris** reminded attendees that the unit is gathering as many as possible to give out to preschools or kindergarten classes. **Peter Diedrick** talked about the gains made during this year's legislative session and priorities for next year. It was a very informative talk that was appreciated by everyone there.

### **Unit 14 Mason County:**

Mason County is happy to meet in person at El Puerto de Angeles Restaurant in Shelton. Lunch meetings are preferred. Those unable to get to Shelton or get out at all are able to join by Zoom.

The guest speaker for the May 3 meeting was Avet Waldrop, a school nurse for two high schools, the junior high, and the middle school in Shelton. She spoke of the mental health challenges to students as they returned to full time learning. The counselors manage struggling students, but nurses are sometimes the first person they see if the stress or anxiety ends up as a physical symptom. Avet's wish is for at least one more nurse added to the district staff.

WSSRA Legislative Director **Peter Diedrick** gave a legislative update on Zoom. Members need to start lobbying the committee that works on retirement plans to get a COLA for Plan 1. Several members agreed to work on them. He also encouraged

the unit to invite candidates for state senate, and the two representative positions, to unit meetings.

Unit members agreed to provide a basket of local food and wine, and some extra bottles of wine, to the convention at Great Wolf Lodge. President **Eileen Perfrement**, Treasurer **Tedd Davis** and his wife, **Peg**, plan to attend and work at the registration or meal ticket tables.

The June 7 meeting included election of next year's officers, including President **Ei-**

**leen Perfrement**, Vice President **Reva Fowler**, Treasurer **Tedd Davis**, and Secretary **Bonnie Rice**. Also during the meeting, **Bonnie Rice**, secretary and grants chair, brought all ten of the reports for projects approved in October. The members were impressed with the pictures of the projects in action. One project produced a book of stories from freshmen. The book will be circulated to all interested members to read at their leisure.

Also, during the June meeting, members welcomed **Peter**

**Diedrick**, in person. He gave next steps for legislative action and encouraged the unit to pursue senatorial and representative candidates to speak to the group over the summer or next fall.

The July 5 meeting included **Bonnie Rice's** presentation of the 11th project report, which was funded later than the others. Again, members were impressed with the quality of the project. The unit is pleased to extend mini-grants to all Mason County teachers again next year.

## Join the WSSRA Email List

Now, more than ever, technology has become a critical way to connect with people and stay informed.

Email is a simple, quick, and inexpensive way for WSSRA to connect with members.

### Join the email list in 3 easy steps:

1. **WSSRA.org**
2. **Scroll to bottom of the page**
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### Connect and Stay Informed...

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- Zoom events
- Unit happenings
- and, more!

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By submitting this form, you are consenting to receive marketing emails from: WA STATE SCHOOL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION, PO BOX 5127, LACEY, WA 98509, US. <http://www.wssra.org>. You can revoke your consent to receive emails at any time by using the [SafeUnsubscribe®](#) link, found at the bottom of every email. Emails are serviced by Constant Contact.

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## WSSRA Around The State



**Unit 10 Columbia Gorge:** Unit President Shirlee Jellum sorting donations for the Freecycle event at the community cleanup in Bingen-White Salmon.

### SOUTHWEST-4

**Unit 5 Grays Harbor/Pacific Counties:** Unit 5 has been helping Grays Harbor College with their student teacher program. The unit is offering two scholarships, \$1,600 each, to those students going into education for their second year.

A unit member has been in touch with a mentor of the student teachers, and she indicated they could use some English Language Learner books. The unit is purchasing them for the students, as well as the Teaching Channel Plus program.

Some of the student teachers have jobs and/or families to take care of, so they are very busy, and do need the help these programs offer.

Over the last two years, the unit has lost ten members by death. Recently, a book was purchased in memory of each, appropriate for that person. Book plates were made for each stating, "In Memory Of" and placed in the book. The books were presented to the school libraries where each person worked. In all, the unit visited twelve schools and left eighteen books.

Unit members are looking forward to a luncheon during the summer when all the members of Unit 5 will be invited. It will be held at a very nice restaurant. Many members are expected to join the gathering.

Twenty-five \$15 Starbucks coffee gift cards were purchased by Unit 5 to give as gifts for the Grays Harbor College students who graduated as educators.

**Unit 28 Thurston County:** Congratulations to unit member **Ron Crawford** who is the new WSSRA President-elect. **Ron** has served the unit and WSSRA in many positions and unit members are proud to support him.

At the final Zoom meeting of the year, WSSRA President **Bruce Boyer** installed the 2022-2023 officers. **Sue Shannon**, president; **Patty Gee**, secretary; **Will Gentz**, fiscal treasurer; **ZiNita Carrell**, membership treasurer; **Sue Ballard** and **Patty Gee**, nominating committee members. The meeting ended with a memorial program designed by **ZiNita Carrell** and **Karen Keller** honoring those members who passed away this year. Thanks to all current officers and chairs who have served the unit faithfully.

**Sally Jones** organized the final community service project, cleaning, sorting, and labeling children's books for the South Sound Reading Foundation.

After a dozen years, the unit's terrific newsletter editor **Sharon Dennis** is turning over the job to **Pat Slosson**. **Pat's** background as an English teacher makes her a good match for the job. **Sharon** will continue to serve as web master and will continue to design the annual membership directory.

Thanks to **Dorn Barr** who has stepped up to join **Keitha**

**Bryson** on the membership committee. **Dorn** brings a lot of experience and ideas from her work with the North Thurston Educational Foundation. Rebuilding the unit membership will be a critical goal for the coming year.

**Kim Fry**, long-time member and superintendent at Rochester School District, is retiring and moving on to a new job at WASA. Best wishes for great new adventures and opportunities.

The Unit looks forward to in-person luncheons beginning in September at a new location, Embers Restaurant at Indian Summer Golf Course. There has been a shocking and steep increase in the cost of catered restaurant meals, so the unit board voted to subsidize the cost.

**Unit 30 SW Washington:** **Loretta Babbitt** led Unit 30's May memorial luncheon, which was held at Cameo Café. It was refreshing to see everyone in person and see their smiling faces. The last couple of years have been tough! Encouraging current members back and working on recruiting new members is an ongoing process. **Marty Erickson**, **Donna Quesnell**, and **Linda Bannon** presented a \$1,000 check to Evergreen School District, Vancouver School District, and Cascadia Skill Center. Pictures were taken and submitted to the



## WSSRA Around The State



**Unit 9 Kittitas Co.:**  
Remi Davis,  
unit treasurer,  
presenting a  
donation check  
for Habitat for  
Humanity to Kelle  
Vandenberg,  
local director in  
Ellensburg.

local paper to let others understand one of the many ways Unit 30 helps local youth. This should also attract new members. Unit 30 currently has 499 members.

Unit 30 was delighted to welcome **Dr. Alan Burke**, WSSRA executive director. He shared helpful and important information. He also swore in Unit 30's officers for next year. They are Unit President **Donna Quesnell**, Treasurer **Marty Erickson**, and Secretary **Mina Milligan**. He also recognized the chairs responsible for monthly meetings. They are **Despo Varkados** (September and October), **Linda Bannon** (November and December), **Donna Quesnell** (February and March), and **Loretta Babbitt** (April and May).

During the memorial service, **Jane Madden** recognized 21 members by saying each name and placing 21 red roses in a vase. It was a lovely ceremony.

### EAST-5

#### **Unit 9 Kittitas Co.:**

The local unit met for the first time in over two years and judging from the turnout, it was very welcome. It was a luncheon meeting on May 17 at the Rosewood Clubhouse in Ellensburg. Following lunch, an informative program on local "Habitat for Humanity" activities was presented by local director Kelle Vandenberg and two of her associates. Area projects were discussed and listeners had questions to ask and have answered. Information about Kittitas County affiliation with King County Habitat was news. This collaboration will allow the small local unit to concentrate on area problems while King County will absorb many of the administrative responsibilities. The KCSRA presented a check to say "thank you" for the work done by Habitat in Kittitas County.

During the summer, the local board will meet to make plans for the coming year.

Decisions about elections for new officers will be discussed. September and November meetings in Ellensburg are expected at this time. There will be a newsletter sent in August to outline these plans. The unit wishes everyone a healthy and happy summer.

#### **Unit 10 Columbia Gorge:**

Several CGSRA members participated in the annual Bingen White Salmon Community Cleanup April 22 and 23. In honor of Earth Day, unit members helped with recycling, properly disposing hazardous waste and yard debris, and supporting the local Restore and second hand businesses. Members also recognized thirteen retiring staff from five regional schools with letters of appreciation, gift certificates, and invitations to join the unit.

### EAST-6

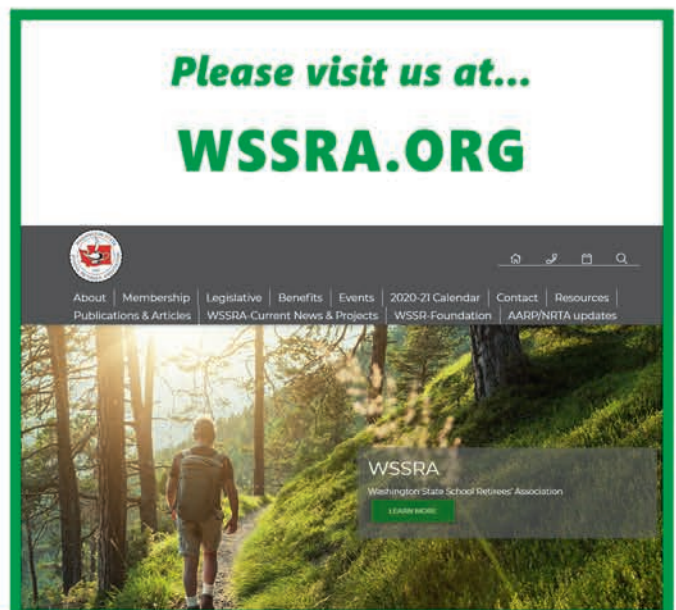
#### **Unit 2 Chelan-Douglas:**

The Chelan-Douglas April meeting was especially cheerful as the Wenatchee Apple Blossom Royalty was the main attraction. The lovely young ladies spoke of their gratitude to all the teachers who were present and had a hand in their positive education. All had plans for college and charity work in the future.

Also, during the meeting, three area legislators spoke of what they hoped to do for the retired school employees (Mike Steele, Keith Goehner & Shelly Short). This year's slate of officers was presented and delegates to the state convention were signed up. After the meeting, **Mary Perkins** spoke about the PAC and received donations. All participants were entered into a raffle

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## WSSRA Around The State



**Unit 30 SW Washington (Vancouver):** The unit recently contributed \$1,000 each to Cascadia Technical Academy, the Vancouver Public Schools Foundation, and Evergreen School District Foundation. Members Marty Erickson, Donna Quesnell, and Linda Bannon presented the checks on behalf of the unit.



and fun prizes were rewarded. At the board meeting prior to lunch, money was approved for the "Small Miracles" summer lunch program and the upcoming North Central ESD Stem Summit. "Connections - Goody Bags" which were decorated by schoolchildren, were delivered for Mother's Day and continue to be greatly appreciated.

The May meeting was a follow-up to an earlier Zoom meeting. In October 2020, the principal of the new Pinnacles Prep Charter School shared the plans for this new school, which would be started the

next fall in Wenatchee. At the May meeting, she provided an update on how things were going and their future plans. Several unit members visited the school after the meeting. WSSRA President **Bruce Boyer** and his wife, **Pat**, attended the board meeting and luncheon. President **Boyer** then spoke at the general meeting.

### **Unit 4 Columbia Basin:**

A large turnout of Columbia Basin Unit 4 members enjoyed the April luncheon, held at the Red Door Café in Moses

Lake, where **Peter Diedrick**, legislative director for WSSRA, was the guest speaker. He shared information about the recently completed legislative session and answered many questions from the group. Those in attendance were Sue Beall, **Bill and Glenda Anderson**, **Pat Simmons**, **Barb and Roger Stanford**, **Shirley Vincent**, **Helen Preston**, **Nancy Nishida**, **Susan Hickok**, **Lanita Pomeroy**, **Bev Shelton**, **Judy Dagnon**, **Gayle Talbot**, and **Karen Schafer**.

The CBSRA hiking group recently enjoyed a morning walk along the Montlake Trail in Moses Lake. After the walk, they met at Paradise Bar and Grill in Moses Lake for lunch. Unit members who went on the walk were Co-Presidents **Lanita Pomeroy** and **Helen Preston**, **Shirley Vincent** and **Susan Hickok**. **Gayle Talbot** and **Karen Schafer** joined the group later for lunch.

The May luncheon was held at Pillar Rock Grill, Moses Lake, where members enjoyed hearing about the new high school, Vanguard Academy, which will open in the fall of 2022, in the Moses Lake School District. Principal Kelly Cutter and teachers Hans Warkentin and Kimber Lybbert gave an interesting and impressive presentation about this new option for high school students in the school district. CBSRA members attending this program were **Bill and Glenda Anderson**,

**Roger and Barb Stanford**, **Sue Mabry**, **Lois Palek**, **Helen Preston**, **Lanita Pomeroy**, **Bev Shelton**, **Pat Simmons**, **Shirley Vincent**, **Linda Bishop**, **Gayle Talbot** and **Nancy Nishida**.

### **Unit 15 Okanogan:**

Okanogan County SRA has awarded its scholarship this year to Ava Mott. Ava is a graduate of Liberty Bell High School in Winthrop. Ava is working toward a Bachelor of Education degree at McGill University (Montreal, Canada) and plans to teach kindergarten and elementary classes. The unit's scholarship is awarded yearly to an individual working toward initial certification in education and who is planning to teach in public schools.

Treasurer **Penny Garrison** reports a \$300 donation has been made to the WSSRA Foundation in memory of deceased members **Heinrich Banka**, **Larry Curtis**, **Judith DeVon**, **Harold Jensen**, **Verna "Lou" Lantrip**, **Lena Longanecker**, **Richard Merriman**, **Connie Nearents Palmer**, and **Howard Picard**.

At its April meeting, the E5/E6 Coordinating Council voted **Marcelle LaGrou** as secretary-treasurer and **Rita Figlenski** as chair for 2022-23.

Gearing up for fall and hopefully face-to-face meetings,



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OCSRA Vice-President **Jennie Hedington** has lined up programs for the year. For starters, in September, Rena Shawver, executive director of Okanogan County Community Action, will present "The Needs of Our County."

October's meeting will feature local attorney and Okanogan graduate, Bess Derting, on the topic, "Senior Citizens Think/Plan Ahead."

### EAST-7

The E-7 Coordinating Council virtual meeting was held May 9, 2022. Seven attended. Moderator **Don Kackman** welcomed WSSRA Legislative Director **Peter Diedrick** who reported on legislative matters and filled in for WSSRA Executive Director **Dr. Alan Burke**, who could not attend.

WSSRA President-Elect **Brad Beal** thanked the Lacey office staff for all their support as he worked filling statewide committee positions.

E-7 District Representative **Linda Marler** reported on her work regarding improving the process for state scholarships. E-7 District Legislative Committee member **Patricia Anderson** also spoke about legislature matters, reminding members how important it is to contact their representatives about upcoming WSSRA legislative concerns. State

Retirement Committee member **John Young** reported on retirement issues.

Coordinating Council Chair **Don Kackman** was reelected for the 2022-23 year. The next E-7 Coordinating Council meeting will be October 3, 2022.

### Unit 25 Spokane Area:

On April 20, the unit board met at the Spokane Public Schools Tech Center. Students from the Culinary Arts Program, under the direction of Chef Eric Cook, served a fabulous lunch of lamb burgers, homemade chips, and dessert. The students learn everything about cooking and serving to individuals or small groups in their restaurant or putting on a large banquet in one of their conference rooms; running a well-organized industrial-sized kitchen, equipped with the state-of-the-art appliances; and the art of washing dishes correctly. Students are bused in from many different school districts, including Lake-side, Riverside, East Valley, West Valley, Central Valley, Cheney, Mead, and Spokane. The public is welcome but make reservations for their restaurant. Reservations are not needed for the snack shop. The students are incredibly lucky to have this opportunity for learning. If you can, please support this program.

On March 14, the SAREA scholarship committee met and awarded four scholar-



**Unit 1 Clarkston Asotin Pomeroy:** The unit recently honored Jerry Hendrickson to recognize his leadership and considerable involvement with the unit, coordinating council, and state level of the association. He was presented with a clock, engraved with the message, "Thank you for giving so much of your time to WSSRA!"

ships. A \$2,000 PAW scholarship and three \$1,500 scholarships to students who didn't receive a state scholarship were awarded. Applications were down this year and ways to improve the application process was discussed.

### Unit 33 Whitman Co.:

Whitman County Unit 33 held a spring picnic at **Linda Marler's** home on June 17. **Alice Davis**, who was president of Unit 33 for many years, was honored at a 90th birthday party on June 12 at Simpson United Methodist Church.

### EAST-8

**Unit 1 Clarkston/Asotin/Pomeroy:** At a recent unit meeting, members celebrated all birthdays throughout the year with a birthday cake. Also during the meeting, members brainstormed program ideas and restaurant locations for future meetings. President **Kay Andersen** will make the yearbook with all new information for 2022-2023.

Plans for the unit's upcoming "Back to School Bash" are being made. The event is ten-



## WSSRA Around The State

tatively planned for October at Riverport Brewery. The unit will invite all school staff members (WSSRA members or not) and try a new angle with recruiting new members. Fingers crossed!

The unit plans to continue the "calling tree" method of contacting members for luncheons as well as following up with a postcard reminder.

Next year, the unit will offer four scholarships for \$1,500 each (1-Pomeroy, 1-Asotin and 2-Clarkston). In the past, the unit has given out eight scholarships at \$500 each and

hopes that the increased award amount will encourage more students to apply.

The unit singing group, "Kindness Connection" will begin again this fall after taking a 2-year COVID break. New members are planning to join as well. It should be a fun time for all. Practices will be held at the Clarkston Methodist Church.

**Connie Cohmer** will be in charge of putting the baskets together for the fall convention. One will be a gardening theme and the other an LC Valley theme. Members



**Unit 29 Benton-Franklin:** E-8 District Representative **Sharon Hoseley** (left) and Unit President **Victoria Russell** (right) at a recent unit luncheon in Pasco.

will donate what they can to **Kay Andersen** or **Connie Cohmer** by the end of July.

**Sharon Hoseley** has offered to be the newspaper reporter to get the unit news in the Sunday edition of the Lewiston Morning Tribune.

The unit recently honored an indispensable member of the unit and WSSRA. **Jerry Hendrickson** was given a beautiful clock engraved with, "Thank you for giving so much of your time to WSSRA!" from your friends of Unit 1. He has been a very active member over the years as unit president, president-elect, past-president (numerous times), E-8 president and a member of state committees (legislative and finance, to name a few). The unit and association owe him a great deal for his leadership and his wonderful auctioneering skill. Thank you **Jerry**!

**Unit 29 Benton-Franklin:** Unit 29 met with 50 members at the May luncheon to install officers and for the Celebration of Life. E-8 Representative **Sharon Hoseley** installed this year's officers, Co-Presidents **Victoria Russell** and **Dottie Stevens**, Co-President -Elects **Liz Friedrich** and **Margaret Holloway**, Secretary **Lew Edming**, and Treasurer **Ardith Eakin**.

The Celebration of Life included 17 deceased members with special recognition and a yellow rose of tribute with participation from the audience recalling their service as educators. Previous BF-SRA President, **Bill Leggett** (1998), was recognized with a tribute from his wife, **Marjy Leggett**.

Certificates of achievement were presented by President **Victoria Russell** to board members and callers. Brian Swearingen provided music at this special May luncheon. A hosted fellowship luncheon

### RETIREE RESOURCES

**WA Dept. of Retirement Systems (TRS, PRS)**  
1-800-547-6657                      DRS.WA.GOV

**PEBB and Health Care Authority**  
(health insurance)  
1-800-200-1004                      PEBB.HCA.WA.GOV

**SHIBA - Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors**                      1-800-562-6900  
INSURANCE.WA.GOV/SHIBA

**Social Security Administration (SSA)**  
1-800-325-0778                      SSA.GOV

**AARP Washington Office**  
1-866-227-7457                      AARP.ORG  
Jim Ko, state president  
Doug Shadel, Washington state director

**Senior Citizens' Lobby**  
360-754-0207                      WASENIORLOBBY.ORG



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is planned for active members on July 18, 2022 at the Red Lion. The 148 potential attendees will be thanked for their support with a review of membership benefits, including the \$300 mini-grants available, and input for additional service Unit 29 may provide.

Twenty-one mini-grants were awarded December through April from BFSRA. Next year, the unit will be awarding earlier as several requests have already been submitted.

Program planning has already started with an indoor picnic in August, legislative issues in September, and an early January program featuring area superintendents to review local districts' status and share information for elections in February for levies and bonds to include a new high school in Pasco.

Baskets and silent auction items are being prepared to participate in the fun and all activities at the Great Wolf Lodge, September 12-14 at the WSSRA convention.

Current and future program information and news can be found on the unit webpage: [bfsraunit29.blogspot.com/](http://bfsraunit29.blogspot.com/) and in the newsletter.

**Unit 31 Walla Walla-Columbia:** During the April board meeting, it was voted to give four \$2,000 scholarships instead of the two given in the past. This was a recommendation of the scholarship committee composed of **Mardel Bierwagen, Shirley Rodenberg, and Sue DeRuwe.**

New unit officers were elected during the April meeting, including President **Ellen**

**Wolf**, President-Elect **Kathy Pritcher**, Secretary **Mary Jo Fontenot**, and Treasurer **Jim Briggs.**

**Rebecca Wilson**, mini-grants coordinator prepared a slide show presentation of what some of the employees do with their \$200 mini grant.

Becky Huwe from Waitsburg was the speaker of the day and she shared about serving three months in Africa working at a clinic.

During the May luncheon, the scholarship recipients were able to attend and be recognized. **Jackie Ormsby** Memorial Scholarships were given to: Campbell Schulke - attending Central Washington University, Erika Silva Parra - attending Washington State University, Alyssa Drader - attending Washington

State University, and Scott Golden- attending Gonzaga University.

WSSR-Foundation Scholarship \$1,500 recipient Ethan Harris, graduated from Walla Walla High School in June and plans to attend Central Washington University.

Campbell Schulke was awarded a \$1,000 Neil D. Prescott Student Teaching/ Internship Scholarship.

The officers for next year were present and introduced to the members attending. They closed the meeting with a memorial for members they have lost during the past two years.

### WSSRA ON FACEBOOK:

“Facebook/WSSRA”



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### ADDRESS CHANGES

*Please Notify:*

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[michele@wssra.org](mailto:michele@wssra.org)

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Lacey WA 98509

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WSSRA will provide leadership  
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**Washington State School Retirees' Association**  
*Dedicated to preserving, protecting and improving  
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The mission of WSSRA is to...

- develop, propose and implement action that will benefit all school retirees.
- propose legislation and legislative action that will enhance school retirees' lives.
- provide the support necessary to strengthen local units of WSSRA.
- foster involvement by school retirees in educational and community activities and organizations.
- communicate to local units the activities and priorities of NRTA, AARP and other entities that affect retired school personnel.
- represent all present and future Washington state school retirees, both classified and certificated.

## Don't delay – ask today

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