

The Journal

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION

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



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Unit 2 Chelan/Douglas members Jan Ottosen, Denise Perkins, Sharon Salley, and Christi DeKraai attend Wenatchee's Annual Veteran's Day Parade

WSSRA At Work For You



A message from the president

The Key Differences With Millennials and Generation Z



by Pam Francis, president

For this Journal article, I'm going to share with you some informational facts about our up and coming new members for local units and WSSRA, both actives and retired. This information comes from the "2019 Pew Study." It explains the different generations and their impact upon business in new and different ways. My thought is, new members of WSSRA can use these traits when recruiting new members.

Millennials, also known as Generation Y or Gen Y, were born between 1981 and 1990. The culture and climate that they were born into was far different from any previous generation, their attitudes, beliefs, and desires. It all comes down to the fact that this generation is completely shaped by technology! They are the fastest growing segment of today's workforce.

An educational psychologist believes that Millennials are "digital natives." This generation is native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games, and the internet. While each generation has common characteristics, there are seven basic traits to the Millennial group: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving.

For some Millennials, they are content with selling their skills to the highest bidder. They have no problem jumping from one organization to another. That's not to say that you can't motivate this generation because you can by offering skills training, mentoring, and feedback. Culture is also extremely important for this group. According to the 2017 Millennial Impact Report, some of the causes Millennials are passionate about include the environment, college and post-secondary education, health care, poverty and homelessness, mental health and social services.

Generation Z follow the Millennials and were born in 1990-2000 they make-up 25.9% of the United States population. They are the largest percentage and contribute \$44 billion to the American economy. By the year 2020, they will account for 1/3 of the U.S. population. Some of these people may be our new members of local units and WSSRA; we will need to adapt some of our membership building efforts. Each group has their own set of unique characteristics.

What's intriguing about the Gen Z group is that 53 percent prefer face-to-face communication. They live in a world of continuous updates. Gen Z's process information faster than other generations and their attention spans might be significantly lower than Millennials. Gen Z's are less focused than their Millennials counterparts. Here's an inside picture of how they process: they create a document on their computer, do research on their phone or tablet, while taking notes on a notepad, then finish in front of the TV with a laptop, while FaceTiming a friend.

Join the 18,000 members of WSSRA



Keeping our Retirement Alive, Growing and Strong!

It takes each of us to make a difference for all of us.



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JOURNAL articles to:
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editor@wssra.org

**Upcoming JOURNAL
article deadlines**

February 5, 2020
for Mar./April 2020 issue

April 5, 2020
for May/June 2020 issue

WSSRA At Work For You



A message from the executive director

**WSSRA Members Volunteer
in Their Communities. A lot!**



by Alan Burke, Ed.D., executive director

Often in the hustle and bustle of legislative advocacy we forget that WSSRA stands for more than just lobbying for pensions. To be sure, advocacy is at the center of what we do and do well, but it is not the only thing our organization does.

In fact, one of our purposes, as stated in our mission statement, is to “foster involvement by school retirees in educational and community activities and organizations.” This means community service, which is a central focus in each of our 30 units.

From back-to-school supply contributions, to holiday food drives, to socks for kids, to Teddy Bear Teas, to Books for Babies, and onto senior citizen help during tax season, WSSRA volunteers donate thousands of hours to helping those in need all across the state. Add to this scholarship programs for high school seniors and student teachers, plus mini-grants that support teachers and para-professionals with on-site project funding, it is easy to see that WSSRA members fill important community needs. And we can't forget about our members who volunteer in the schools tutoring kids, or reading to those living in care facilities.

All of this philanthropy is sometimes forgotten in Olympia as we work with legislators and policy makers to maintain and improve

pensions. This is unfortunate, and needs to be remedied.

This is the reason that we have asked unit leaders to collect the number of volunteer hours that their members have accumulated in 2019-20. As we approach legislators with an “ask” for pension relief, we want them to know that WSSRA does more than extend a hand asking for money. We do community service, and do it well. We just need to make sure that leaders in Olympia understand and appreciate that.

So, we will be collecting volunteer hours from all of you this school year. When you attend unit meetings, you can report your hours on a form that will be on your table. You can also go on the WSSRA website and fill out an online form that can be sent to the main office with the click of a mouse. All of the details are on the website, and the goal is more to get a count of total volunteer hours than to acquire a description of each activity. We already have a good idea of the latter.

Basically, we know the wide range of volunteering that we do; the idea here is to let everyone—and especially legislators—know that WSSRA cares about more than just pensions. Indeed, we care deeply about making our communities better places to live.



Legislative News



Unfinished Business for 2020 Legislative Session



by Peter Diedrick, legislative director

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 2020 Legislative Session begins January 13. This session will be a shorter, 60-day, session to tweak the state budget and wrap-up unfinished business from the 2019 Legislative Session. As you are aware, school retirees have unfinished business regarding Plan 1 retirees.

For retirees, the 2019 Session concluded with some wins and a slap in the face. Legislators restored the retiree medical benefit to the pre-recession peak of \$183 per month. They also made some critical improvements to pension plans 2 & 3 and made it easier for seniors to qualify for property tax deferrals and exemptions. Unfortunately, the Plan 1 COLA missed the cut in the Senate budget.

Retirees do have friends in this COLA fight. We have received unyielding support from Representatives Leavitt (Lakewood), Kloba (Bothell), Dolan (Olympia), and MacEwen (Shelton). Senator Holy (Spokane) never flinches at our requests, even the most expensive ones. The full list of supporters is too long for this article. Less supportive elements in the Senate are stating a desire to work on Plan 1 issues in the upcoming session. The caveat to that optimism is always state revenue, funding, and competing priorities from other lobby groups.

Both tax revenue and state expenses are increasing. Since the autumn edition of this publication, state tax receipts have increased by approximately \$400 million. At a cost of \$20 million, the new money is more than necessary to cover the cost of a Plan 1 COLA. However, new obligations have also arisen. The passage of the \$30 car tab initiative has upended the budget discussion. At the state level, that pot of money funded the State Patrol, a road fund, and much of the state ferry system. In order

to keep the State Patrol whole, Puget Sound will likely see a 50% reduction in the number of ferry runs. It will be very tempting for legislators to try and backfill that spending. If they do, Plan 1 COLA money would dry up in a hurry.

FEDERAL UPDATE

In October, a few WSSRA State Legislative Committee members attended the National Retired Teacher Association's fall legislative conference in Washington D.C. At the national level, the Retired Teacher Association is a division of the AARP national office. Our members were treated to briefings by the AARP executive lobbying team, and spent a day lobbying Washington State's congressional delegation. In fact, the message from D.C. was cautiously optimistic.

President Trump and Democratic leaders in the House of Representatives want to pass legislation regarding prescription drug prices. The White House legislative staff and Speaker Pelosi's team work well together behind closed doors, and they are in the final stages of an agreement on drug prices that could be included in the next budget or spending bill. The most likely area of improvement is allowing importation of drugs from Canada. Also, the President's emphasis on courting older voters has blunted efforts by Senate Republicans to attack Medicare and Social Security.

IN CONCLUSION

Please stay tuned. The upcoming legislative session is only nine weeks long and will move fast. Retirees should be prepared to contact their legislators on short notice. If you are online, please sign up for our email updates and follow us on Facebook to stay up to date.

**Stay
Informed

Get
Involved**

**Visit WSSRA.ORG,
click on "Legislative"**

**Information about legislative priorities,
contacting your legislator, session bill
reports, and the WSSRA Legislative Podcast**

Plan 2/Plan 3 Corner



Actives: Getting to Know DRS -- Department of Retirement Systems



by Alan Burke, Ed.D., executive director

Note: This is the first of a five-part series highlighting the “Big Five” of retirement planning—Department of Retirement Systems (DRS), the Health Care Authority/Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB), Social Security, Medicare and Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA). This month’s topic is the DRS. Because of space limitations, this summary is necessarily broad.

The Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) is the state agency charged with the collection and distribution of pensions. It monitors 15 separate programs including Plan 2/3 Teachers Retirement System (TRS) and Plan 2/3 School Employees Retirement System (SERS).

TRS covers teachers and other certificated personnel, while SERS serves all classified K-12 employees. Plans 2 and 3 began in 1977. Before that, school employees were covered through Plan 1 TRS and Plan 1 Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). This article applies only to Plan 2/3 TRS and SERS. Plan 2 is a defined benefit (DB) plan, meaning that pension fees from employers and employees are kept at DRS (invested through the State Investment Board) with distribution rules set by that agency. Plan 3 is a hybrid system with half of pension fees going to the state in a DB account, and the other half in an IRS Section 403(b) account that essentially is owned by the employee but managed by the state. This portion is known as defined contribution (DC) account. All active employees make a one-time, irrevocable decision to enter either Plan 2 or Plan 3 when they were first hired. There is not an opportunity to switch plans.

Normal retirement age for Plans 2 and 3 is age 65, with five years’ service credit required for Plan 2 while ten years (with some exceptions) needed for Plan 3. In addition, those with 30 years of service can retire at age 62 without an actuarially reduced pension. An early retirement opportunity is also available (as early as age 55) but with roughly a 3% per year reduction in payout for each year between 55 and 65.

Upon retirement, those in Plan 2 are given options on disbursement of their DB account. The annual payout is computed as the average of the highest five years’ salary (with 2% given for each year of service) and is distributed monthly. A retiree can take the full amount, or choose to take a lower amount (with either 100%, or 66.7% or 50% survivorship) that guarantees a continuing payout for a spouse upon death of the retiree. Both Plans 2 and 3 have an up-to-three percent annual COLA

feature in their DB portions. Retirees also can purchase a fixed distribution annuity. Note: Plan 1 retirees do not have a COLA.

For Plan 3, the distribution formula works the same as for Plan 2 for the DB portion (with one percent for each year of service), but not for the DC account. For that account, a retiree can choose a lump sum or partial cash distribution (a taxable event), or roll the DC into a tax-free eligible plan, such as a qualified IRA. An annuity can be purchased, or the amount can be left in the DRS account with a schedule of installment payouts.

For both DB and DC accounts, it is important to recall that both have been built over the years tax free, meaning that all withdrawals are subject to federal income tax. Many Plan 3 retirees roll over their DC into a tax-sheltered account with plans to withdraw those funds at a time when tax implications are lessened.

DRS does much more than doing the basics for pension accumulation and disbursement. They offer deferred compensation programs (basically placing a portion of regular salary into a tax-free investment account) for active employees. They administer the return to work eligibility and requirements for employees with a break in service. In addition, they establish rules for handling a myriad of complex retirement situations that range from employees who have worked in dual systems to computing service credit for part-time school workers.

The DRS website (www.drs.wa.gov) includes a wealth of information on all retirement planning matters. It is advised that active employees set up their own DRS account. Doing so will allow online access to a calculator that will give specific projections based on personal work/salary history.

For those considering retirement in the near future, a visit to DRS (6835 Capitol Blvd, Tumwater, WA 98501) is helpful. In addition, a call to the agency (360-664-7000) normally will result in a referral to an expert who can answer a particular retirement or pension question.

Membership: Strength In Numbers

Connecting With Members



by Don Parks, state membership committee chair



A belated Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all in Washington State School Retirees' Association. Here's hoping all is well with you and yours this winter season.

Membership as of December 1 stood at 17,476, including 4,276 actives and 860 cash members. The good news is that we have achieved roughly a 2% growth in overall membership since December 2018. That's quite an accomplishment; hats off to all who are actively building membership. We have about 370 retirees and about 80 actives pending as of December 1. That is great work—Thanks much! Kept up, this pace could well put us at 40% growth by December 2020! This work is all the more important in light of the 400+ deceased members over the past year. Our condolences to the families of these great folks who are no longer with us.

I have heard from local and regional membership chairs describing how they go about making things fun and effective. For instance, Marilyn Larson of Pierce County reports that at the monthly luncheons they ramp up the fun utilizing riddles, chocolate, beach balls, and '60s pop music. Benton-Franklin uses drawings for free lunches and outstanding programs that alternate between entertaining and informative. Walla Walla-Columbia does an annual Teddy Bear Tea that is a hit with the community; they have fun working toward that event months in advance.

Three of our local units deserve recognition for their efforts. Jefferson County, Pend Oreille County, and Columbia Gorge are small and mighty groups of retirees whose combined membership totals about 200. Congratulations to the leaders and members in those units—they obviously are sincere and energetic in their approach to support and growth.

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 or 360-413-5496, ext 116

WHAT DO WE WANT? 10% GROWTH WHEN DO WE WANT IT? NOW!

With the legislative session just around the corner, WSSRA is serious about doing what we can to better communicate with all of our members. Email seems to work best. Letters and cards are, these days, too slow and too expensive to be viable. The state office has emails on file for just over 1/3 of our members. If you have email and have not shared it with the state office, now would be a great time to do that. An email to anyone at the state office would be enough to get your email address into the files. (Texting seems to be a medium we need to explore.) Then, when we need a combined voice to "educate" our legislators on an issue, we will have the maximum clout with them. Need I say "Plan 1 COLA?"

It is my pleasure to serve as the State Membership Chair. If you have a concern or point to make regarding membership, just let Michele Hunter or myself know.

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
Mike Tucker, state president
Doug Shadel, Washington state director

Senior Citizens' Lobby
360-754-0207 WASENIORLOBBY.ORG
WSSRA Liaison: Gene Forrester

President, continued from page 2

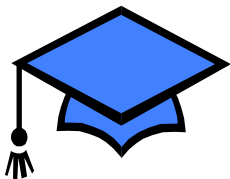
According to a recent Morning Consult study, Gen Z is on track to be the largest, most ethnically diverse, best-educated, and most financially powerful generation ever. In the coming years, their distinctive habits will play an outsized role in shaping American culture and commerce.

Generation Z traits and habits include:

- Gen Z is a generation that understands technology and human potential like no preceding generation. Some have said that while Millennials are dependent on technology, Gen Z will drive technology. They embrace three values in particular: achievement, significance, and challenge. While Millennials are known for asking "why," Gen Z will be known as the generation who asks "how."
- Gen Z can quickly and efficiently shift between work and play, with multiple distractions going on in the background, working on multiple tasks at once.
- Gen Z is full of early starters. Many employers are predicting that more teens, between the ages of 16 and 18 will go straight into the workforce, opting out of the traditional route of higher education, and instead, finishing school online.
- Gen Z is more global. Millennials were considered the first "global" generation with the development of the internet, but as more of the world comes online, Gen Z will become more global in their thinking and interactions.
- The Gen Z is the youngest adult consumers and they still prefer shopping in stores over using their laptop. They like Instagram feeds or Amazon's Alexa according to a recent Morning Consult study.
- This is the first time in modern history that there are five generations working side-by-side: Traditionalists (born 1928 – 1945), Boomers (1946 – 1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Millennials/Generation Y (1981-1990), and Generation Z (1990-2000).

The past November, Bob Duke, Alan Burke, Les Francis and I went to the AMBA Roundup in Texas. While we were there, we attended a session on membership. A unit in the southeast part of the United States has hired a high school student (a Gen Z) to type their newsletter and share her ideas about being a Gen Z person. What a great idea!

Supporting Future Educators



WSSR Foundation: You Can Help



by Tom Anderson, WSSR Foundation chair

You can contribute to our scholarship fund and enjoy spending time with old friends at the same time this June. The summer WSSRA convention offers the opportunity to connect with former educators from across our state and to reflect on the changes and challenges in education today. The convention is always a good time to discuss current issues in education and reflect on our past. For example, when you graduated from college, how much did your degree cost you back in the day? You know the cost of attending college and earning a teaching certificate has risen dramatically. You also know the cost of earning a teaching degree is a huge impediment for many young people today with some financial assistance.

We all know the cost of a four-year college degree is an obstacle to many bright and talented young adults desiring to enter the teaching profession. Unlike when we started, teacher shortages are a reality throughout the country and Washington State is among those experiencing the impact. We understand the need for financial assistance and we are pleased to say that our organization is helping many future educators navigate through the burdensome financial maze. Our scholarships can assist in reducing the financial expense associated with earning a teaching certificate. We are proud to note that many Washington State School Retiree members contribute to local scholarships each year. In addition, many former school employees contribute to

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 _____ | | |
| Address _____ | | |
| City _____ | State _____ | Zip _____ |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In Honor | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial | \$ _____ |
| Name _____ | | |
| Person to be Notified _____ | | |
| Address _____ | | |
| City _____ | State _____ | Zip _____ |

☐ Please check box if you would like to receive a receipt for your records.
The WSSR-Foundation is a 501(c)(3) and donations are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

Check \$ _____ # _____
Cash \$ _____

ONLINE FOUNDATION DONATION

wssra.org Foundation link > Donation Form

and strengthen the teacher preparation pipeline by participating in the summer convention raffles and silent auction events where their dollars make a big difference for many future educators.

You too can help. We encourage each of you to attend the WSSRA convention, connect with old friends, and join us in participating in the many raffle and silent auction activities. We want you to be a contributor to the fun and financial reward of the extremely popular gift basket raffles and silent auction opportunities. Your attendance and participation at the summer convention will help to ensure that many future educators will benefit financially by earning one of our scholarships. Funding for the scholarships has primarily come from those attending the convention, the basket drawings program, silent auction, and contributions made throughout the year. If you cannot attend the convention, we encourage you to support our fundraiser by helping your local unit to provide baskets and auction items. Your local support will be greatly appreciated. We hope to see you joining in on the fun at the WSSRA convention in Pasco this coming June.

Foundation Contributors

Rosalie Bond - in memory of Denise Monaham, Dick Sovde

Bob & Bev Davison - in memory of Laurence Keeler

Kathy Fletcher - in memory of Don Markham

Linda Gaines - in memory of Margaret Cooper

Carol Hutchinson - in memory of Laurence Keeler

Jean Keeler - in memory of Laurence Keeler

Nick & Kathy Schultz - in memory of Don Markham

Patricia Siggs - in memory of Joan Trunk

Chelan/Douglas SRA - in memory of Donald Smith, Frank (Ike) Cummings, Kathleen Ryan, Mary Morse, Norman Veach, Salley Baumgardner

Lewis County SRA - in memory of Ronald Smith, Charles "Bill" Carlson, James Sines

Renton/South King SRA - in memory of Edith Porter, Paul Jackson

Southwest King SRA - in memory of Diane Burke, Douglas McCullom, Robert Ewing, Suzy Kido

Spokane Area REA - in memory of 2018-2019 deceased members

Thurston County SRA - Gene Forrester Scholarship

Whatcom County SRA - in memory of deceased members

Yakima County SRA - donation

Scholarships

An Invitation to Apply...

Neil D. Prescott Student Teaching/Internship Scholarship



If you know someone attending college to obtain a professional educator's certificate who is preparing to student teach or conduct an internship in the next academic school year, 2020-2021, (family, neighbor, friend, colleague; undergraduate or graduate), please invite them to apply

for the Neil D. Prescott Student Teaching/Internship Scholarship.

It doesn't matter where they are attending college, it only matters that they graduated from a high school in Washington state, and profess a strong desire for gainful employment in Washington State as an educator.

For instance, if you have a family member who graduated from a high school in Washington State and is attending Michigan State University's College of Education and planning to student teach or conduct an internship in 2020-2021, and wants to teach in Washington State, she or he qualifies to apply.

WSSRA offers eight (one per region: NW1...E8), one-time, scholarships for \$1,000 each; and each local unit is encouraged to offer a scholarship of their own to any of the applicants who graduated from a high school within their jurisdiction for whatever amount that unit deems reasonable.

Imagine the potential we have to help these struggling college students if each unit gave at least one scholarship.

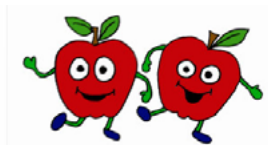
How to Apply?

Simply go to **wssra.org** click on the **Foundation**, then **Scholarship**

**Deadline for applications is
March 2, 2020**

Pictured above: Scholarship recipient Sydney Pettit, from Tumwater, on her very first day of student teaching.

Your Health Matters



For Your Health: Strokes



by Myrna Muto, Unit 20, health services chair

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States and a major cause of serious disability for adults. Approximately 750,000 people in the US suffer a stroke each year. Strokes are preventable (4 in 5) and treatable. It is also referred to as a brain attack that occurs when something blocks the blood supply to the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. Because it cannot get oxygen, parts of the brain become damaged within minutes or die. The result is a stroke, which can cause long-term brain damage or death. An ischemic stroke occurs when blood or other particles clot and blocks the blood vessels to the brain. A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel bursts in the brain itself. Symptoms of the damage begin to show in the parts of the body controlled by the damaged brain cells.

Quick action and treatment are critical. If you suspect a stroke, ask the individual to smile. Does the one side droop? Ask the individual to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward? Ask him/her to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? If the answer is yes, call 9-1-1 immediately. Treatment begins as soon as emergency medical services arrive.

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in men. It is the leading cause of long-term disability. For men, the main risk factor for strokes is high blood pressure or hypertension. Other risk factors for men are smoking, obesity, diabetes, too much alcohol and not enough physical activity. One in 5 women in the United States will have a stroke. It is the fourth leading cause of death for women. The main risk factor is also hypertension. Other risk factors for women are high blood pressure during pregnancy, using certain types of birth control in conjunction with smoking, higher rates of depression and anxiety and obesity.

Prevention? Take aspirin in consultation with a doctor. Control your blood pressure. Manage your cholesterol. Do not smoke.

Source: Center for Disease Control. www.cdc.gov

WSSRA Health Survey



WSSRA Health Survey

Please take a few minutes to fill out the health survey (see page 11) that the WSSRA Health Services Committee has prepared and would like for all members to complete and submit. The purpose of the survey is to develop a baseline of where members are with respect to a number of health-related issues and concerns. Information from the survey will be used to plan future committee activities with a focus on meeting the health-related concerns and challenges expressed by the membership.

The idea of a survey emerged during the "Living a Healthy Life" session at the 2017 Wenatchee Convention as attendees brainstormed ideas in four major health-related categories: personal and social well-being, nutrition, exercise, and financial wellness. Since Wenatchee several programs, new and re-emphasized, have popped up all across the state in our local units. Units have sponsored walking groups, presentations on heart health, diabetes, Alzheimer's, yoga, cooking for one person, and the like. During 2018-19 each issue of *The Journal* featured an article submitted by members of the Health Services Committee regarding these elements.

Basically, the idea is to learn from you, our members, how as an association we are doing pertaining to these four major elements. A report and analysis of survey data will be shared at the Pasco Convention in June. All data collected will be secure and anonymous.

You can complete the survey on the next page (see page 11). If you received the survey through your email, you are encouraged to use that option. Of course, we request that members fill out the survey only one time using one of the distribution methods.

Thank you for completing the survey and please come to the 2020 WSSRA Convention in Pasco to learn what we have discovered.

Mail completed Health Survey to:
WSSRA
PO Box 5127
Lacey, WA 98509

WSSRA Health Survey

1. What is your age bracket?

- ☐ Active to 65
☐ 66 - 75
☐ 76 - 85
☐ 85+

2. On which side of the state do you live?

- ☐ Eastern
☐ Western

3. Your gender

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ N/A

4. Do you have a health insurance plan?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

5. If you are covered by PEBB (Uniform, Kaiser, Premiera Plan F or G, or SEBB) to what degree are you satisfied?

- ☐ Strongly satisfied
☐ Mildly satisfied
☐ No position
☐ Mildly disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

6. Do you have a primary doctor?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

7. Are you seeing a physician for a chronic health condition(s)?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

8. Do you use a cane, walker, or crutches?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

9. Have you had any falls in the last six months?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

10. Do you smoke or vape?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

11. Which best describes your personal living arrangement?

- ☐ Personal residence
☐ Apartment
☐ Retirement Community
☐ Other

12. Do you live alone?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

13. Are you active in social organizations?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

14. Do you volunteer?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

15. How do you rate the quality of your life?

- ☐ Low
☐ Ok
☐ High

16. Do you have a Power of Attorney?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

17. Do you have an updated will?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

18. Do you have a health directive?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

19. Amount of exercising on a daily basis?

- ☐ 0 minutes
☐ 1 to 19 minutes
☐ 20 to 29 minutes
☐ 30+ minutes

20. Where do you exercise?

- ☐ Neighborhood
☐ Mall
☐ Sports Gym
☐ Hikes-Walking groups
☐ Home
☐ Other

21. How are you meeting your nutritional needs?

- ☐ Some problems
☐ No problems
☐ Struggling

22. Do you regularly check the Nutrition Food Contents label?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

23. How do you rate your weight?

- ☐ Below normal
☐ Normal
☐ Above normal

24. The Washington Legislature is meeting our Medicare subsidy and COLA needs?

- ☐ Strongly satisfied
☐ Mildly satisfied
☐ No position
☐ Mildly disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

25. I will vote for the political party best supporting our Medicare subsidy and COLA needs?

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Mildly agree
☐ No position
☐ Mildly disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

26. My monthly income comes from the following: (select all that apply)

- ☐ Pension
☐ Social Security
☐ Military Benefits
☐ Investments
☐ State Assisted Benefits
☐ Other

27. Do you still drive your car?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

WSSR-PAC News



WSSR PAC: 2019 Wall of Support



by Lora Brabant, WSSR-PAC treasurer

Let's give a round of applause to our generous supporters for 2019!! Listed below are the contributors who gave to the WSSR-PAC so that our voice is heard in Olympia, letting our legislators know that we do care about the promises made while we were serving our community and our children.

Want your name on the 2020 Wall of Support? That is easy, contribute to WSSR-PAC and let us know that your name can be published! You can either contribute by credit card on WSSR-PAC.org and hit the "Donate Now" button (the on-line form will ask you if we can publish your name) or you can hit the "Contribute" button right under the "Donate Now" scroll down and print out an "Individual Donation Form" send the completed form and a check to: WSSR-PAC Treasurer, Lora Brabant, 125 West 11th Street, Port Angeles, WA 98362.



**Please support
WSSR-PAC by making
a contribution today!**

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Check Payable to: WSSR-PAC

Mail to: WSSR-PAC Treasurer

c/o Lora Brabant

125 West 11th Street

Port Angeles, WA 98362-7709

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Eloise Stendal
Pete Doumit
Carolyn Horne
David and Zuma
Billups

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Unit 29 Benton-Franklin
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\$0 to \$49 Level

Anderson, Kay
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Dekraai, Gordon

Ottosen, Janet
Salley, Sharon
Perkins, Mary
Buckner, Marie
Kellogg, James
Kellogg, Evelyn
Geoff-Sanders, Mary
Crill, Kriss
Crill, James
King, Mary
Frack, Mary
Schreiber, Shirley
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Crowe, Joan
Kellog, Jan
Sweeney, Larry
Sweeney, Robin
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Hoffman, Judith
Morganroth III, Chris
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Frazer, Linda E

Brown, Beverly
Moilanen-
Moilanen, Martin
Emil
Gilliland, Lois
Beck, Al
Beck, Joanna
Simmons, Pat
Harrison, Wanda
Hammer, Debra
Bunger, Don
Morris, Allison
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Garrison, Robert J
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MacGowan, Patricia
MacGowan, Craig
Battin, Susan D
Landrock, Barbara
Harvey, Ken

Bishop, Kay
Bishop, John S
Eggleston, Pauline
Powell, Laurel A
Powell, Dale A
Endicott, Cynthia J
Endicott, Walter J
Davis, Shelley
Blair, Diane
Fennell, Gary
Moersch, Edward S
Moersch, Edith M
Keller, Karen C
Diedrick, Peter M
Carrell, David R
Carrell, Zinita L
Parks, Donald E
Parks, Kathyleen C
Davison, James L
Davison, Patricia A
Helm, Joan
Wascisin, Eileen
Sumner, Dale
Sumner, Linda L
Evert-Garvin, Loranda
Schultz, Clifford (Nick)
Trepanier, Linda
Young, Peggy L

Widman, Donald E
Widman, Elaine M

\$50 to \$99 Level

Kane, Susan L
Sloan, Theresa
Brabant, Bernie
Bridge, Mary
Homer, Marcia
Homer, Robert
Bucher, Doris
Perin, Ken
Robinson, Barbara
Schultz, Dale
Cygan, Patricia J
Cygan, Ronald A
Harvey, James
Harvey, Marianne
Sisiel, James
Sisiel, Andrea
Hayes, Carol S
Wilfong, Ester
Larson, Michael
Larson, Merrilyn
Williams, Marsha
Smith, Marlet K
Smith, Anita H
Painter, Susan
Anderson, Richard

Scholl, Larry G
Scholl, Rebecca E
Schultz, Kathy
Miller, Janice
Bourn William H

\$100 to \$199 Level

Sharratt, Gene
Gleason, Gary
Datisman, Eve
Hall, James T
Hall, Shirlee M
Fletcher, Robert A
Fletcher, C
Ruby, Edith
Thorp III, John
Knopf, Timothy
Knopf, Jackie
Requa, Rita C
Duke, Robert W
Duke, Penny C
Burke, Alan M
Burke, Pamela
Milligan, Mina Kay

\$200 + Level

Peterson, Dennis
Scholtes, Susan
Wallon, Mary T

Remembering



Irene Gleason

WSSRA President, 1992-93

Irene Gleason, WSSRA President in 1992-93, passed away on November 6 at the age of 96. Irene was a longtime media/library specialist at Garrison Junior High in Walla Walla, and, upon retirement, was an active member of the Walla Walla Columbia School Retirees' Association.

Irene came into education in an unusual manner. She graduated with a degree in Social Work from Marylhurst Academy in Portland, and then worked and taught in school systems in Portland, Burbank, California, Touchet and College Place before settling into the library position in Walla Walla.

She loved to play golf, but loved even more helping those in need—especially through programs that helped low-income seniors. She served as the chair of the Garden Court Senior Low-Income Housing Project, and a bit later, joined with her family in support of the Elizabeth House (Providence Health System) in Seattle. With her passing, her home will be donated to the Providence St. Mary Foundation in Walla Walla.

Irene's theme for her WSSRA presidency was, "Up, Up, and Away with WSTRA." She was very much a leader who believed in adherence to the committee structure, and "walked her talk" by consistently pointing out the accomplishments of the Member Services, Retirement Planning, Community Service, and Health/Protective Services Committees. She reminded all that achieving a permanent Plan 1 COLA was the top priority of the organization, and made sure that legislators understood the need for retirees to maintain—and not lose—the purchasing power of their hard-earned pension.

To those who knew her, Irene was a kindhearted individual who valued fairness in all of her interactions. She certainly was opinionated, but made sure to listen to all sides of a debate prior to taking a position on a particular issue. She was modest about herself, and had a great sense of humor. She will be missed.



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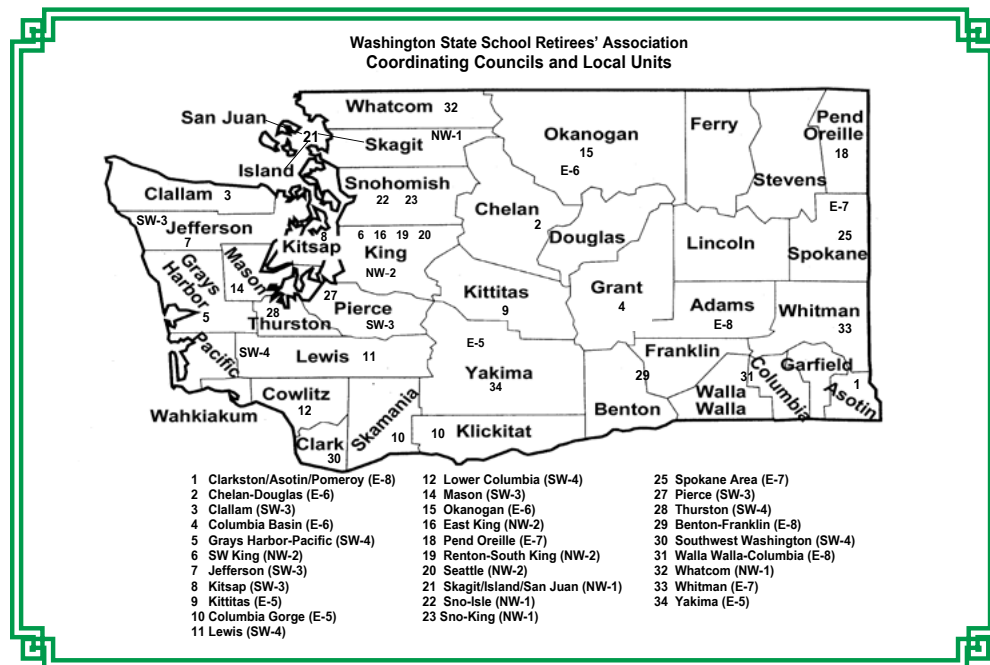
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WSSRA Around The State

What's happening in...

From the Coordinating Councils and Local Units



NORTHWEST-1

Unit 21 Skagit/Island/San Juan: This fall, Unit 21 was able to distribute 26 mini-grants to school staff in the area. Also, three \$100 mini-grants were awarded to winners of a drawing for new WSSRA members. With these and the \$1,500 scholarship awarded to Carissa David, a WWU senior doing her student teaching, the unit is truly making a difference in their community.

This fall, the unit has been in contact with a local school district in regards to the federal McKinney/Vento legislation for homeless students. At the unit's annual holiday luncheon, one of the speakers was Heidi Hixon, an elementary

school counselor, who discussed the underfunded needs of the homeless students in her district. At the luncheon, unit members raised money to be used to help the District assist the homeless students in her district.

Also at the luncheon, WSSRA honorary memberships were presented to **Reidar Ytgard**, long serving unit outreach chair, and **Danny Beatty**, a hardworking legislative conduit for the unit. These awards were well deserved and it was nice for them to be publicly recognized for their tireless efforts. Others recognized were two retiring district superintendents, **Carl Bruner** of the Mount Vernon School District, and **Mark Wenzel**, of the Anacortes

School District. Lastly, recently retired Senator Barbara Bailey from the 10th Legislative District was presented a certificate for her service to the area.

Unit 22 Sno-Isle:

November was National Homeless Youth Month. Sno-Isle 22 heard from a spokesperson of a local organization, The Cocoon House, which serves to break the cycle of homelessness through outreach, housing, and prevention. Their mission supports the belief that every young person deserves a home and the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential. Unit 22 learned about how their new facility helps in that goal. The presentation left

members with a sense of pride of the work being done in our county to address this serious problem. At the lunch that followed some members came up with the idea of providing an Easter dinner later this year.

In December, Sno-Isle 22 enjoyed a wonderful holiday brunch at Le Bistro - Snohomish County's high school culinary skill center. Entertainment was provided by Kamiak High School's barbershop quartet, known as The Midnights. These students give up their lunch break to perform. A significant amount of toys as well as \$550 was collected for Christmas House, a local charity located in Everett.

Sno-Isle has no meeting in January but will be getting ready to present \$13,000 to grant recipients in Snohomish County public schools.

Unit 23 Sno-King:

In October, at the kickoff gathering for the 2019-2020 year, Sno-King members dined to Le Bistro cuisine. On the program, hosted by Past President **Jim Sissel**, was a speaker on Elder Law and **Dr. Rebecca Miner**, Shoreline School District Superintendent. Individual honors and recognition went to members **Linda Fitzgerald** and **Evie Nordeen**. **Linda** received the AARP Community Service Award as the Sno-King scholarship co-chair for over

WSSRA Around The State

20 years, each year involving several months of work. Her extended community involvement includes being awarded The Living Legend from the Edmonds School District and being a trustee on the Edmonds Foundation Board. **Evie** was recognized for her 12 years as sunshine committee chair. She sends personalized notes of caring to members and she represents the heart of Sno-King; and her commitment to serving on the Sno-King board, attending nearly all Sno-King events and WSSRA conventions is outstanding!

In November, Sno-King members gathered for brunch, organized by Past President **Cheryl Bauer** and Secretary **Jan Phillips**, and catered by Chef Dane. An AARP representative and Sno-King's own, **Keith Lindaas** informed

the group how to keep cyber activity safe from cyber crime. A well-received surprise was a singing presentation by the Richmond Beach Lutheran Church preschool.

December brought a luncheon hosted by Past President **Erma Snook**, to celebrate the holidays and honor the work and dedication of the Sno-King board. Lunch was enjoyed at the Edmonds Pancake Haus. After opening memento gifts, each one containing a prompt about some aspect of his/her career in education, much jovial conversation highlighted the celebration!

During November and December, the Sno-King educator grants were applied for and awarded. Operating under a new and more formal process, Chairperson **Karen McElliot**, guided her grant com-

mittee through administration of the new rubric. This will be a year of evaluation.

Unit 32 Whatcom County:

At the October meeting, Unit 32 guests were Ferndale Superintendent **Dr. Linda Quinn**, Ferndale High School Students - FFA President Lars Holein, FFA Vice President Jamie Mason, and Student School Board Member Avneet Pannu. The members found it exciting to hear these students speak about their different positions.

In November, Katrina Roy from the Department of Financial Institutions gave an informative presentation on "Elder Fraud and Identity Theft." In addition, she brought lots of "goodies" for all members present. Additionally, **Mary Lindsey**, WEA-Retired president, and a member of Unit 32, has been in attendance and shared information with the group.

group about how our parents and grandparents modeled saving stuff which was a requirement for getting along during the Great Depression. She used humor to teach how to sort and discard with ease.

Unit members will receive the SWKSRA newsletter about the beginning of February, which will include the meeting schedules for 2020.

The February 24, 2020 unit meeting will feature Anila Goldie talking about teaching English in the Sudan many years ago.

Unit 16 East King:

With health resolutions abounding in the New Year, it was only fitting that East-King invite Paige Denison to do a presentation for members in January. She talks about her work with evidence-based health programs for Sound Generations and stresses the importance of belonging to groups, like WSSRA, that contribute to educators and education.

NORTHWEST-2

Unit 6 Southwest King:

Thanks to **Sally Carlos** and **Karen Richter** for helping to serve unit meals for several years. Much appreciated! Unit members also appreciate the many years that **Carol Brandt** has put in as treasurer for SWKSRA.

At the October meeting, Denise Frakes entertained the

February will feature Nikki Davidson who will talk about the non-profit, Big Table. This organization provides help for the working poor. They care for restaurant and hospitality employees who are in crisis. Forty-three percent of this industry's workers make wages that are below the poverty level.



Unit 22 Sno-Isle: Members brought new toys to a recent unit meeting. The toys will be donated to Christmas House.

WSSRA Around The State



Unit 1 Clarkston-Asotin-Pomeroy: Patty Strasser (left) receiving a mini-grant from E-8 representative Sharon Hoseley.

Unit 19 Renton/South King: November 5th, Renton-South King held their monthly meeting at The Chateau in Renton. Mayumi Tsutakawa, from Washington Humanities, gave a presentation in honor of the 100th anniversary of Women's Suffrage. Mayumi spoke of five Washington feminists who made a difference. Afterwards, the Chateau provided refreshments for members.

Unit 19 members had their annual holiday luncheon at Lakeshore Retirement Home on December 3. After a delicious salmon luncheon, the members enjoyed listening to and did some singing of holiday music while Lyle Schaefer played the accordion.

On December 19th, **Joan Morgenstern** and her mini-

grant committee members **Sue Perez** and **Tina Underdahl** presented a \$3,000 check to Enumclaw Superintendent Mike Nelson. The mini-grants were given to Mimi Brown, principal at Bryan Kibler Elementary School for her staff. Also, "Random Acts of Kindness" gifts have been given to 25 teachers in the Renton and Kent school districts.

Renton-South King will not have meetings in January or February. The next general meeting will be March 3 at The Chateau in Renton. The guest speaker will be Debbie Dimitre, who will portray Eleanor Roosevelt.

Unit 20 Seattle:

The Unit's December 3rd luncheon featured well-known Northwest author J. A. Jance

who explained her own story on how she became a professional mystery author. She also promoted her latest Detective Beaumont novel that is set in Seattle.

At the last SSRA board meeting, **Roxanne Trees** continued helping with the board's work on firming up policies and procedures and keeping accurate records. The unit by-laws were updated last year.

Sharon Green continues promoting the unit's mini-grant program to help present school employees with unreimbursed expenses. The program is called S.E.E.D. This program also helps promote enrolling new members.

SOUTHWEST-3

Unit 3 Clallam Co.:

Clallam County School Retirees' Association met at Joshua's Restaurant in Port Angeles on October 15. **Bernie Brabant**, a recipient of one of the mini grants provided by CCSRA spoke about how he used the funds for a high school project. Marty Brewer, superintendent of Port Angeles School District, gave a presentation about the upcoming plans for district facilities and ideas to fund them. Many schools are in need of upgrades and the plans cover the next 25 to 30 years.

During the last week of October, members delivered large

bags of popcorn as a treat for staff members at all Sequim, Crescent, and Port Angeles school district sites.

Guest speakers at the November 19 meeting included two senior staff members from CCH Individualized Support Services, an organization that serves adults with lifelong disabilities in both Clallam and Jefferson Counties. **Gary Gleason**, a CCSRA member, serves on the board of CCH and contributed to the discussion. **Jeff Burgess**, from Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA), gave a presentation about new and ongoing benefits available for members.

A CCSRA Christmas party was held at Joshua's Restaurant on December 17. Festivities included a white elephant gift exchange with a game. **Beverly Brown** led a sing-along of Christmas favorite songs. Several members stayed after the luncheon to read mini grant applications and choose recipients.

Unit 27 Pierce County:

Pierce County hosted a successful Legislative Meet and Greet on October 15th at La Quinta Inn in Tacoma. A highlight was hearing from Representative Laurie Jinkins, first female Speaker of the House. Supporting the event were WSSRA Executive Director **Dr. Alan Burke** and WSSRA Legislative Director **Peter Diedrick**.

WSSRA Around The State

Unit 27 has prioritized FUN, along with the important business of protecting member benefits and supporting present and future educators. The November speaker, Dennis Foster from Enhanced Vision spoke of innovative vision devices. A free jewelry-making party with Becky Bowker followed him. The December meeting presented the "History of Hats" where presenters and attendees alike were resplendent in a variety /parade/conglomeration of hats! Speaking of fun, members have been surprised by riddles, candy tosses, and unexpected tunes.

With cold winter weather in mind, Pierce members collected and donated many pairs of socks to the Nativity House at St. Leo's Catholic Church in Tacoma. The socks were distributed to homeless friends in the community.

On Thursday, February 20, the next PCSRA meeting will tell of one of Tacoma's best-kept secret museums. Please join us for an informative and fun gathering at Tacoma's La Quinta Inn at 12:00 noon for a sumptuous buffet lunch!

SOUTHWEST-4

Unit 5 Grays Harbor Pacific: Grays Harbor/Pacific Unit 5 had a very interesting and informative program in November. Linda Anderson presented the pro-

gram explaining how thirteen churches in Grays Harbor are involved in an ongoing project called, Family Promise. It has been organized to house and feed homeless people with children. The churches take turns feeding them supper and having them sleep in the church overnight for a week at a time. There is a center in a parish hall in Aberdeen where they can shower, do laundry, and have breakfast and lunch. A large van takes them to the church at suppertime and picks them up in the morning. Schools send someone to pick up the children and return them to the Center before and after school. The project is working well.

For Make a Difference Day, residents of Pacific Care in Hoquiam and Montesano Rehab were visited and given "Thinking of You" cards. On Veterans' Day, the vets at Monte Rehab were visited and given homemade cookies and "Thank You" cards.

Unit 5 members are looking forward to the next meeting, which is on January 22.

Unit 11 Lewis County:

Lewis County Unit 11 met at Dawn's Delectables in November and welcomed **Ron Crawford**, District 4 Representative. **Ron** gave an update on current state activities and legislative issues.

Seven mini-grant applications were selected to receive funds

for a variety of interesting projects.

Jean Bluhm discussed the unit's involvement in next year's special recognition to honor volunteers at the Borst home and Pioneer School in Borst Park. The unit was responsible for building the one-room school 25 years ago. **Jean** also provided information on the Pioneer Church that is still in progress.

Unit 28 Thurston County:

Unit 28 had a wonderful traditional Thanksgiving dinner at its November meeting that included cranberry Jell-o salad, dinner rolls, turkey, gravy, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, and green beans and followed by pumpkin pie with whipped cream for dessert. The program featured ESD 113's teacher of the year for 2019, **Ryan Healy**. **Ryan**

teaches for Yelm Community Schools at Ridgeline Middle School. **Ryan** talked about his educational philosophy and described his program of teaching leadership.

A highlight of the November meeting was the presentation of a Lifetime Achievement Award to **Gene Forrester**, recognizing his many years of service to Unit 28 and to the state association. **Gene** was presented with a plaque and a donation to the scholarship fund created by him.

A tradition at the unit's November meeting is taking a voluntary collection for the Salvation Army and this year the unit donated over \$1,600 for the charity.

Community Service Committee chairperson **Sally Jones** organized Unit 28 volunteers to help a local charity pack



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WSSRA Around The State



Unit 30 SW Washington (Vancouver):
Unit Treasurer Marty Erickson has led the unit's Foundation Grant program, which donates money to local school district foundations to support student programs. Since 2017, the unit has donated over \$7,000 to local school foundations.

turkey dinners for delivery to the needy on Thanksgiving.

Sally Jones also directs the unit's socks collection, which will be donated to a local charity.

Jo Edwards led the mini-grant committee, which selected 34 elementary teachers for grants that varied between \$100 and \$300. The grants were delivered in mid-November. The secondary committee will begin working on secondary-level mini-grants in January 2020.

Unit 30 Southwest Washington (Vancouver):

Mina Milligan, manager of Unit 30's website, constantly guides members on accessing WSSRA. She is encouraging members to submit "positive efforts" or testimonials about meetings, speakers, and activities they enjoy. Prior to Unit 30's website, only two teachers submitted mini-grant

applications via postal mail. However, this year, 38 public schools employees submitted them online directly to Wanita Filbin, mini-grant coordinator. Eleven high school and middle school teachers, specialists, a music teacher, and a principal were selected. Each will receive a mini-grant of \$300. A giant success!

On October 15, at The Bates Center, **Dr. Alan Burke** and Unit 30 President **Jeanie Anderson** met with 35 Vancouver School District principals to discuss the benefits of joining WSSRA. Twenty-seven became active members!

Retirement seminar: The organizational committee, **Dr. Burke**, and **Jeanie Anderson** are planning a free Retirement Seminar for March 10, 2020, from 5p to 8p at Fort Vancouver High School. All area schools' personnel are invited to participate.

The October 22 unit program included legislative speakers.

Representative Vicki Craft (LD17) spoke of state challenges, short and long-term priorities, and the need to focus on quality education. Vicki backs the COLA but unfortunately, is in the minority. Representative Sharon Wiley (LD 49), stated, "I have the most interesting job in the world" and shared that 467 of the 2,211 bills passed and were enacted into law. Sharon has a strong record of accepting the unit's invitations, and backing WSSRA's COLA desires. Representative Paul Harris (LD17) was unable to attend but stated, "Quality education, jobs, businesses, and families are my priorities."

Unit 30's December holiday season meeting each year is brightened by the Battle-ground Choir, under the direction of Darcy Schmitt.

The January 10, 2020 luncheon speaker will be Coach Kerri Nelson addressing, "Balance." For the 100th

Year of Women Voting: Unit 30's winning candidate is Pat Jollota — historian, author, former curator at the Historical Museum, and frequent guest speaker.

In 2017, Unit Treasurer **Marty Erickson**, initiated Unit 30's Foundation Grant Program to donate money to local district foundations to support student programs. Over the years, Unit 30 has given \$4,200 to area elementary, middle and high schools through these foundations. An additional \$3,000 was donated this spring. Unit 30 has also donated \$5,860 in mini-grants to staff members for special students' projects. Each year Unit 30 funds a scholarship program in honor of long time member, **Doris Troxel**. This scholarship goes to a prospective teacher attending Clark College.

Besides serving as Unit 30's treasurer for more than a decade, **Marty Erickson** serves his Vancouver community. This will be his twentieth year preparing income taxes, three days weekly, at the Vancouver Library - a free service sponsored by AARP. For years, **Marty** has volunteered services to the Doernbecker Children's Hospital. **Marty** has made children's rocking chairs. He sings bass in "The Touch of Class" ensemble, previously sang in the "USA Singers," and the BRAVO Choral. Unit 30 members are proud of his participation in the community.

WSSRA Around The State

EAST-5

Unit 9 Kittitas Co.:

Unit 9 met in September and November at Rosewood Activity Center and in October in Cle Elum at the Putnam Senior Center. Each meeting was preceded by lunch, which was enjoyed, by the members and guests in attendance.

In October, President **Louie Osmonovich** presented an overview of legislative activities and the part that lobbying plays. **Louie** has been a part of the legislative activities for several years.

The November meeting included a report by grant chairman, **Tim Bow**. Members were pleased and proud to approve the granting of monies to all thirty applicants, eleven of whom, as members, received \$200 each and nineteen, as non-members, received \$100 each. By the generosity toward the latter, the unit hopes to gain more active members. Members **June Fischer** and **Sally Gililand** assisted **Tim** in his committee work.

A highlight of November was the entertainment after lunch provided by **Louie Osmonovich** on his guitar and his friend and fellow musician, **Floyd Rogalski** on his accordion. They played a variety of popular and familiar selections to the delight of everyone.

The unit will meet next in the

new year on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at Rosewood for a soup luncheon followed by a regular meeting. The program has not been announced at this time.

Unit 34 Yakima Co.:

Is there anything better than a potluck? Yakima County SRA enjoyed good food, a Christmas choral presentation by 75 students from neighborhood Gilbert Elementary School and a Legislative session preview by Executive Director, **Alan Burke**. Adding to the festive atmosphere were nutcracker table decorations shared from **Ken Stenjhem**s collection. The celebratory meeting concluded a time of Unit 34 activities, which included the awarding of over \$12,000 in mini-grants. The next article will report on these awards and the compilation of volunteer hours by members.

EAST-6

Unit 2 Chelan-Douglas:

The first fall meeting was very well attended and the program was exceptional. **Lisa Karstetter** from Microsoft explained her work of helping rural communities become part of the modern tech world. Money from Microsoft funds these programs. The other speaker was **Nancy Grette** from the Therapeutic Horse-Riding Center, Alatheia. After the unit meeting, members

went on a field trip to her ranch and saw the work being done with special needs children and young adults. It was a wonderful experience for all who attended. Unit 2 supports scholarships for this program. The unit also continues to donate money to the Homeless Children's Fund in several school districts, Small Miracles, a summer lunch program for low-income children, and many STEM projects.

The October meeting featured **Dr. Paul Gordon**, the new Wenatchee School District superintendent. He shared his philosophy of always focusing on student needs. It appears that he will be a

positive leader for Wenatchee. The unit also welcomed Senator **Brad Hawkins** (12th LD), and applauded his work for education and retirement issues. The board reported its monetary support for the "Every Kid at the Performing Arts Center" (EKAP) program. Large numbers of students throughout the area are able to attend live theatre at the PAC. This month a number of members volunteered to help at a grade school during their sensitivity training. This training helps students better understand their special needs classmates.

Mary Perkins received a national "With Our Youth"



Unit 2 Chelan-Douglas: Members Mary Perkins, Micki Crowe, and Wilma Stellingworth were recently recognized. Mary received a national award for her leadership with the Rock Island School project. Micki and Wilma were awarded honorary memberships in recognition for their exemplary participation in the state and unit organizations.

WSSRA Around The State



Unit 29 Benton/Franklin: Sam De Rosa leading exercises at the December luncheon meeting. It's standard operating procedure to have simple exercises at each meeting to keep members active and alert. Sam serves on the state Health Services Committee.

award for her leadership and work with the Rock Island School project for the past 10 years. As the nomination stated, "Every unit needs a **Mary Perkins!**" WSSRA awarded both **Micki Crowe** and **Wilma Stellingworth** "Honorary Membership Awards" for their exemplary participation in the state and unit organizations.

Unit 2 active member, **Dr. Sue Kane**, was instrumental in the North Central Educational Service District being awarded \$200,000 to expand student career opportunities to the region. She is the director for STEM at the region's ESD.

November 11th was a special day for the Unit 2 monthly meeting. Members started

by attending the Wenatchee Veteran's Day Parade, then had lunch with a program following. Tucker Mueck, clinical supervisor at the Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD) gave an overview of this program, which works one-on-one and in small groups with its clients. This is a national clinic, which has nine centers in Washington State. Because these services are considered medical, most of the costs are covered by insurance. It was an interesting look at the help that is available for students with these special needs.

Unit 4 Columbia Basin:

The year 2019 came and went in the blink of an eye, yet Columbia Basin Unit 4 members completed many

projects, volunteered in their communities, and enjoyed life as retirees! The fall luncheons were well attended and very informative.

In October, the WSSRA Executive Director, **Alan Burke** visited the group, shared information about the state legislature and answered many questions. TRS and PRS Plan 1 retirees were reminded that theirs are the only state pensions that currently do not receive a yearly COLA, causing them to lose buying power every year. Members were asked to contact legislators to encourage them to correct this inequality.

The November luncheon guest was a representative from the Salvation Army, who thanked Unit 4 for their yearly donation, which helped to fund the camping program, allowing several low-income children to attend summer camp during the past summer. Members were also thanked for their past volunteer help in being holiday bell-ringers at area business locations. Several CBSRA members signed up to help again for the 2019 holiday season.

The Grant Committee received and accepted twenty-four grants from CBSRA members, requesting funds for a large variety of classroom programs, projects, and educational activities. Unit 4 also granted six scholarships to student-teachers in the Columbia Basin area, to help

offset some of the costs that they incur while completing this experience and serving in local schools.

The Columbia Basin Unit 4 members are looking forward to another year of activities and volunteering in their communities in 2020!

Unit 15 Okanogan:

OCSRA's fall grants have been awarded to the following active members: **Heather Downey**, Okanogan pre K-5 life skills class – cooking items; **Kelwy El-Haj**, Omak kindergarten – flexible seating; **Jackie Gliddon**, Tonasket 6 & 7 grade history – passports program for mapping skills; **Tamara LaMotte**, Omak North Librarian – large screen; **Amy Harris**, Oroville K-6 – yoga supplies for anger management; **Jancey Marsh**, Okanogan 4th – noise canceling headphones; and **Gail Morris**, Tonasket Elementary music – giant keyboards. The next round of applications will be due February 15 to **Carol Payne**, OCSRA Grants Committee chair.

The Unit hosted Washington State Senator, Shelly Short, and husband Mitch together with WSSRA President, **Pam Francis**, and husband **Les** at its September meeting. Discussion about WSSRA's legislative approach was spirited.

Penny Garrison, unit retirement chair, organized an

WSSRA Around The State

October countywide after-school Retirement Seminar. Twenty-six attendees from the geographic area enjoyed member-supplied homemade cookies and brownies while gaining reams of information from the ESD endorsed team, Financial Alternatives. **Donna Sanford** worked with **Penny** on this project.

Four members of the Washington State Department of Transportation answered and explained concerns and questions about North Central Washington road priorities, roundabout stats, Omak Wal-Mart intersection, and percent of money for Okanogan County at the regular October meeting.

Scholarship Chair, **Gail Thompson**, and member, **Barb Christensen**, are in the process of contacting colleges and universities about the availability of the OCSRA Scholarship to students planning to enter the field of education and who have reached junior status.

Members approved the year's Community Service Committee's proposal to support the Oroville Food Bank with \$100; Wenatchee College student gasoline cards, \$200; and Okanogan County Outreach School's Bulldog Bites Food Pantry, \$200. Committee chair, **Mary Johnson**, together with committee members, **Jennie Hedington** and **Carol Payne**, have contacted the countywide Support Center

about its needs. Members are encouraged to donate household items (e.g. pots, pans, bedding, anything that can be used for setting up housekeeping). First collection happened at the November social.

November was dedicated to fun and socializing plus member donations to the Support Center. **Connie Palmer** and **Carol Payne** led the crafting session while **Doug Woodrow** supplied musical entertainment.

Kim Sanford Lancaster on the topic, "Archeology of the Okanogan," will be featured at the January 31 meeting.

EAST-7

Unit 18 Pend Oreille Co., Unit 25 Spokane Area, Unit 33 Whitman Co.:

On September 18, representatives of the E7 area met with E8 representatives in Pasco in preparation for its support role for the WSSRA convention in June of 2020. **Brad Beal**, president of the Spokane Area Unit, **Don Kackman**, **Char Shelling**, **Cookie Billups**, and **Pam Francis** picked up the leadership role with help from **Debbie Burgess** and **Alan Burke** while **Les Francis** kibitzed. The group completed their task in record time with registration, meal door checks, and bereavement all organized between the three units, Whitman County,



Unit 30 Southwest Washington (Vancouver): Principal Steve Lindblom (left) accepting a mini-grant check delivered by Gary Anderson.

Pend Oreille County, and Spokane Area.

Also in September, **Les Francis**, **Pam Francis**, and **Don Kackman** attended a meeting of the Whitman County Unit at the new museum at WSU in Pullman, Washington. It was an excellent experience and marvelous architectural feat and historic content. Great job Linda.

The next month, October, the same group met again in Pullman to visit WSU's new art facility, which housed some unusual modern art, which **Les** identified as "Millennial Art." **Pam** disagreed. The tour concluded with lunch (and **Les** and **Pam** disagreeing).

October was also filled with meals and meetings. Spokane

Area had a luncheon with entertainment organized by **Bill Marvin** and children's books collected by **Jeff Hunter**. The next Monday, **Don Kackman** had a coordinating council meeting at the Golden Corral with a Spokane Area executive board meeting at ESD101 followed by the general unit meeting on the 30th. **Brad Beal**, SAREA president is developing the talent of conducting meeting in record time.

In November, WSSRA President (and Unit 25 member) **Pam Francis**, along with her husband **Les**, attended a conference hosted by AMBA in San Antonio, Texas over seven days. Much new information was shared throughout and the WSSRA delegation managed to touch bases with **Jake Henderson**, AMBA

WSSRA Around The State

vice president, on multiple occasions. The focus of the conference was making retiree organizations attractive to the next generations (Millennials and Generation Zs). President **Pam Francis** spent much of the fall researching Millennials and Generation Zs and wrote a fascinating article reflecting her insight into the minds of the new generations.

The fall was topped off with the Spokane Area's holiday luncheon at the Manito Country Club with entertainment provided by the Ferris High School Canterbury Belles (recruited by **Bill Marvin**). The event also included a winter coats drive, **Jeff Hunter**, and special guests, **Dr. Mike Dunn**, superintendent of ESD101, and Pend Oreille Unit President **Sandi Ellersick** with husband **Dick**. Also attending were **Don**

Kackman and his wife **Kris** representing Whitman County Unit. This is the first time all three units met together at one event. Hopefully it will bare fruit. **Char Schelling, Marilyn Richards, Brad and Kathy Beal** organized this gala event. There were five Spokane police officers collecting the more than 50 coats, the officers will distribute the coats to those in need.

Following the scholarship meeting in early November, the scholarship section of the Spokane Area website was re-written to explain each of the scholarships sponsored by either PEMCO or WSSRA. Also available are \$5,000 in funds provided by the SAERA treasurer, **Kathy Beal** with applicants going through the same application process as the other candidates.

EAST-8

Unit 1 Clarkston/Asotin/Pomeroy:

Unit 1 members are excited to begin using the newly approved "official" unit name of Clarkston-Asotin-Pomeroy (CAP for short) and are hoping to "CAP-ture" your attention with unit activities.

This fall, Unit 1 granted 20 teacher grants that affected 1,244 students in the three area school districts. It is fun to see what the teachers request - everything from volcano supplies to jump rope hot spots to wobble stools. The committee of **Sheryl Andrews, Kay Andersen, and Vicki Frei** enjoyed reading the grant proposals and making the final decisions.

The Kindness Connection sang at four different nursing homes this fall in the Lewis-Clark valley and were able to spread kindness and small gifts to the residents. A good time is always had by all! The group has an open door policy for anyone to join at any time. In December, the group sings carols up and down the halls of some assisted living and retired facilities around town.

Karle Warren gave a stand out program this fall. She showed great pictures and talked about her 23-day trip to Antarctica to see and interact with the penguins. It was a fascinating talk and made all of those in attendance want to become more adventurous.

The December Christmas luncheon and auction again honored the school office managers and other clerical employees that help keep the schools moving. It is a fun way to recognize them for all the hard work they do! All "CAP-ital" from the auction goes toward unit scholarships and mini-grants.

Be sure to "CAP-ture" some time to yourself in the New Year!

Unit 29 Benton-Franklin:

The November luncheon meeting of Benton Franklin Retired Educators was filled with activity. Members enjoyed the music of singer, Mary Lou Gnoza and pia-



Unit 15 Okanogan County: OCSRA's annual Christmas card & tags "Make-it, Take-it" social. (left to right) Doug and Marie Woodrow, instructor Carol Payne showing materials to Pat Gilmore, and in background, Maralee Bowling. One OCSRA member's Make-it, Take-it creations.

WSSRA Around The State



Unit 29 Benton/Franklin: One of the tables of toys collected for the Salvation Army at the unit Christmas toy drive. Members love providing toys for the kids.

nist, Steve Haberman. **Alan Burke**, executive director of Washington State School Retirees' Association, was a special guest. (You may recall last winter, **Alan** attempted three times to attend a luncheon meeting but had to cancel due to abnormal weather conditions.) Members brought toys for the annual Toy Drive for the Salvation Army. Membership directories were distributed. Old directories were collected with plans to shred.

The WSSRA Neil D. Prescott Student Teaching/Internship Scholarship became available, as did the BFSRA scholarships. As the year progresses 25 mini-grants at \$200 each will be awarded to active teachers.

At the January luncheon meeting school superintendents from Pasco, Kennewick and Richland discussed present and future plans. In addition, school supplies were collected for SHAKE. February will be a travelogue, by member **Margaret Holloway**, about her travels to Australia.

Current/future program information and news can be found on the webpage <http://bfsraunit29.blogspot.com/> and in the monthly newsletter. All luncheons are held at the Pasco Red Lion, 2525 N. 20th, Pasco.

Unit 31 Walla Walla/Columbia: Mini-grants were awarded with a new flair

this October. Checks for \$200 were attached to helium balloons and delivered to 16 active members in their classrooms or offices. The balloons seemed to generate an excitement as much as the check as students or teammates celebrated with the winners.

The luncheon program in October included leaders from three nonprofit organizations who presented volunteer opportunities in their respective agencies. Representatives from CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate), Helpline (a local agency serving as a clearinghouse for those in need), and "Picture Lady" described the activities and volunteer opportunities in their respective organizations.

At the November luncheon, **Jim Fry**, superintendent of the College Place Schools, spoke about the issues and ac-

complishments of the school district. His passion for helping students comes from years of experience in a wide variety of positions. Jim Fry's talk followed the energy of the Berney 4th grade choir presenting songs to celebrate Veterans Day. A sad note to November was the passing of a long-time member, leader, and advocate, **Irene Gleason**. She leaves a legacy that will long be remembered.

In December, Todd Hilberg, superintendent of the Columbia-Burbank School District described the goals, accomplishments, and uniqueness of a small school district that serves as a community center. The luncheon featured a traditional holiday dinner with all the trimmings. The Walla Walla High School Chamber Choir added festive music to the program. After lunch poinsettias were delivered to shut-in members.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please Notify:

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*Dedicated to preserving, protecting and improving
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- 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.

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