WSSRA At Work For You

A message from the president

WSSRA's Long History Giving Scholarships

by Bruce Boyer, president

In keeping with my past articles for the Journal, I will focus this one on scholarships and legislation. These are key components of our Association's DNA and both are topics now on the front burner throughout WSSRA.

Scholarships
Our organization has a long history of giving scholarships to students. Many local units give scholarships to students in their respective high schools (over $150,000 per year). In addition, the main body of WSSRA gives scholarships to students in each of the eight coordinating council regions throughout the state ($117,600 per year). More information is available on our wsra.org website, under the Foundation/Scholarship tab. Here is a summary of scholarships awarded through the WSSR-Foundation:

Scholarships for High School Seniors
Sixteen WSSR-Foundation Scholarships and sixteen PEMCO/Robert J. Handy Scholarships are available to high school seniors planning to pursue a degree in one of these areas: teacher, counselor, speech therapist, occupational therapist, or psychologist. For the WSSR-Foundation, one $2,500 award and one $1,500 award are granted in each of the eight WSSRA regions. For Handy, two $900 scholarships (redeemable for four years) are awarded in each of the eight WSSRA regions.

Two Gene Forrester Memorial Scholarships are available to high school seniors who plan to major in Agricultural Education at Washington State University. These scholarships are for $2,000 each.

Scholarships for College Students
The Neil D. Prescott-Student Teaching/Internship Scholarship is a (one-time $2,000) scholarship awarded to students who will be student teaching or conducting an internship for the 2022-2023 academic year. Sixteen scholarships (two in each of the eight WSSRA regions) are awarded. The Prescott Scholarship applications need to be mailed and postmarked by April 1, 2022.

As you can tell by the above information, WSSRA has taken an aggressive approach to funding and awarding scholarships throughout our state. If you know of someone that you think would benefit from one, please contact them and let them know the availability of these and the corresponding deadlines.

Legislation
On the legislative front, Peter Diedrick, Alan Burke, along with our two paid lobbyists and your legislative committee, have made inroads with current legislators. They started last spring working with the State Select Committee on Pension Policy and had them gather research about COLA costs. The result, was that the SCPP

President, continued on page 5...
A message from the executive director

Plan 2/Plan 3 COLA Bank Explained

by Alan Burke, Ed.D., executive director

Am I getting a full COLA this year? What’s up with the COLA bank that I hear about?

These are two questions that we are getting from Plan 2/3 retirees who want to know how their Cost-of-Living (COLA) pension rule works. To begin, the basic idea is that each July 1, every vested Plan 2 and Plan 3 retiree qualifies for an up-to-3% COLA based on the official inflation rate of the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue metro area for the previous year. For this upcoming July, the 2021 rate of inflation (initially reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics at 7.6%) would apply.

So, with a cap of 3%, how is the difference between the cap and the actual inflation rate handled? That is when the COLA “bank” comes into effect. For the current year, with the official inflation rate far above 3%, Plan 2/3 retirees can expect to see a 3% increase in their July, 2022 pension check. In addition, the percentage over 3% (likely 4.6%) will be banked for use in future years.

For instance, if the inflation rate for 2022 is, say, 2%, then the COLA percentage awarded on July 1, 2023 would be 3% — two percent from the 2022 COLA and one percent from the bank.

Of course, if 2022 inflation is 3% or higher, the bank would not be used for 2023 – but would be available for future years. A quick analysis shows that this banking system works fairly well to balance the purchasing power of a pension over the long haul, but doesn’t necessarily make retirees “whole” in the short run. If, for example, inflation remains over 3% for the next five years, an individual’s pension bank would keep growing but wouldn’t apply at all until, in this case, 2028 – meaning that the purchasing power of her or his Plan 2/3 pension would drop — perhaps precipitously – over that time.

To be sure, the Plan 2/3 COLA system is much better than what is in place for Plan 1 retirees. Those individuals get neither an automatic COLA nor access to a bank. Thus, the annual push from WSSRA and our advocacy partners for a permanent solution to the Plan 1 COLA issue.

The Plan 2/3 system is clearly better, but it is not perfect. Of the 15 statewide pension plans, only the Law Enforcement and Firefighters Plan 1 members are awarded an annual uncapped COLA. Hopefully, inflation will subside over the next year-plus, and the COLA bank can be used to replenish 2021 lost pension purchasing power for our Plan 2 and Plan 3 retirees.

ATTENTION Active Educators

Are you between one – five years of retirement? If so, please join us for the spring WSSRA sponsored Pre-Retirement Webinars

- March 15 features DRS and HCA/PEBB
- March 22 features Social Security/Medicare and Veba

Visit the WSSRA website — WSSRA.ORG
Go to the “Events” section for information and to register.
Bill Status Update
This short 60-day legislative session will likely be adjourned when this publication reaches your home or email inbox. The session should be over by March 10. That said, our legislative objectives for 2022 were moving well ahead of important legislative deadlines. Our priorities this session are:

- **Plan 1 COLA.** It is not news to anyone that the Plan 1 COLA was eliminated in 2011. HB 1721 and SB 5676 would provide a 3% increase for Plan 1 retirees up to $110 per month. SB 5676 passed the Senate 47-0 and is under consideration by the House of Representatives.

- **Retiree Medicare Benefits.** Every year the legislature must reauthorize the $183 monthly Medicare Eligible Healthcare Benefit. Without the subsidy, all PEBB Medicare supplemental plans would increase by approximately $183 per month, per person. WSSRA is working to ensure this item stays in the state operating budget.

- **Increasing the 867-hour work limit.** WSSRA is coordinating with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and school districts to shepherd emergency school staffing legislation through the legislature. OSPI was keen on getting more retirees in schools as substitutes. They have asked for our help with the pension and retirement side of the legislation. As of February 3, this bill was ready for a vote by the full House of Representatives.

- **Plan 2 PEBB Benefits.** An inequity exists between Plan 2 and 3 PEBB benefits. Plan 3 employees are allowed to defer PEBB coverage more easily than Plan 2 employees.

The result is some Plan 2 retirees unnecessarily getting locked out of PEBB coverage. WSSRA has submitted a technical bill to equalize this retirement law. This proposal has also received positive feedback and was being set up for a vote by the House of Representatives.

Redistricting & Electoral Update
Legislators working on our bills may find themselves in new legislative districts after the session ends in March. Last year’s redistricting project included some drama, but the Supreme Court said the redistricting commission met its basic obligations and the new maps are legal. The maps themselves are fascinating to look over—at least to us legislative staffers. The state’s urban areas have experienced a population boom. To make the districts work, legislative districts between Mount Vernon and Olympia shrank and shifted towards Seattle. Rural districts expanded. The grand compromise happened over the district that has traditionally been based around Wenatchee. Commissioners moved the Wenatchee / Chelan district over Stevens Pass to create a sprawling district running from Lake Chelan to Snohomish. If you would like to see the maps, they are available at: redistricting.wa.gov/final-maps

A Tribute to Ester Wilfong
In early February, I received a call informing me that WSSRA Legislative Committee Chair Emeritus Ester Wilfong passed away. Ester served on WSSRA’s Legislative Committee for 32 years—most of that time as committee chair.

Ester was no stranger to politics. Early in his career he fought for his teaching position after the school board attempted to fire him due to the color of his skin. He later became heavily involved in education policy at the state and federal level. His time at WSSRA was devoted to improving the well-being of seniors across the state.

I was fortunate to travel with Ester on several work trips across the country. On one occasion we walked the length of the National Mall from the US Capitol to the new Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, which he was eager to see after its completion in 2012. The five-mile walk was a breeze for him at age 84.

Ester was patient, kind, and possessed a wonderful sense of humor. He will be greatly missed.
Ester Wilfong’s Leadership and Legacy

by Alan Burke, Ed.D., executive director

Ester Wilfong, long-time WSSRA member and legislative advocate, passed away recently. Ester grew up in LaGrande, Oregon, graduating from LaGrande High School in 1948 and Eastern Oregon College in 1952. He began his teaching career in 1952 as a sixth grade teacher in Central Kitsap. He stayed in Silverdale for most of the 1950’s and then moved to Tacoma in 1959 and remained there for the last two decades of his teaching and administrative career.

While in Tacoma, Ester taught, served as principal, and worked as a personnel administrator and director of paraprofessional training. He also was active in the Tacoma and state level teachers’ associations, including serving as the president of the Washington Education Association in 1968-69. His strong activism eventually landed him on the National Education Association Executive Committee and Board of Directors. In addition, he worked as a graduate assistant and lecturer at Central Washington State College in the late 1960’s.

Ester joined WSSRA in 1982 and quickly became a strong voice for the Pierce County SRA and state organization. He spent the last 32 years of his life as an active member of WSSRA’s legislative committee, 18 of which in the capacity of committee president. In that role he frequently interacted with key legislators advocating for fair pensions and health care coverage for K-12 retirees. Ester was a tenacious and effective lobbyist—and well respected by his colleagues for his political acumen.

Ester’s community service centered in the Tacoma area. He was an active member of the Tacoma Urban League, Tacoma Philharmonic, Civic Art Commission, NAACP, Metropolitan Development Council, State Human Rights Commission, Tacoma Volunteer Bureau, Goodwill Jobs Advisory Council, Minority Concerns Task Force, and Chair of the Tacoma Planning Commission. He was named Educator Citizen of the Year by Tacoma Public Schools.

Ester positively touched the lives of hundreds of children, adolescents and adults during his long and rewarding professional and philanthropic career. He was a champion for civil rights, the economically disadvantaged, and underappreciated educators. He will be missed by all.

...President, continued from page 2

unanimously voted in the fall for a 3% COLA (capped at $110/month) for retired TRS 1 and PERS 1 members.

When the legislature convened in early January, bills supporting this COLA were filed in both houses and as I write this, they have been making good headway. Part of this success is because many of our members have been willing to join in on Zoom conference calls with legislators, while others have been sending weekly messages to their respective representatives.

When you receive this issue of the Journal, the legislature will be in its final days of session. You can go to our wssra.org website and click on legislation to see the status of all of our bills. Lastly, please read Peter Diedrick’s legislative article (see page 4) to see the other bills that we are supporting geared to our active members. If you would like to help make sure that our legislative goals are reached, please contact your unit president and you will be given needed contact information.
WSSR-PAC: Time to Contribute

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

In August 2022, after considering recommendations from members, units, committees, WSSRA’s legislative team, our lobbyists, the WSSR-PAC executive committee and PAC board will decide on contributions to legislative candidates. All house of representative members and half of the state senators will be on November’s General election ballot.

Legislators’ decisions affect our pensions and our medical insurance. Their decisions also impact compensation and working conditions for active members. WSSR-PAC’s campaign contributions show legislative friends that we appreciate the difficult work they do and thank them for their support. Running a viable political campaign costs a lot of money, contributions facilitate access to legislators. This summer we want to contribute to as many supportive legislators as possible, but it depends on you!

Due to COVID, we haven’t seen you in-person at unit meetings or conventions for nearly two years. Low-cost fundraisers held at unit meetings were an important source of PAC funds. Your contributions at convention PAC tables increased the treasury even more. However, this year the convention isn’t until September, well after our deadline for contributions to candidates.

We must decide on contributions in early August so we can deliver checks to candidates in time for use in their fall campaigns. Two years ago, we delivered $26,500 to 38 Democratic and Republican candidates, of whom 35 were elected. We would love to make as many or more contributions this year. At this point, this looks doubtful. Last June, the PAC had $9,704 in its treasury, by October it was $15,096. At the end of January, it had only grown to $16,333. At this rate of increase, we will be making considerably fewer and smaller contributions. We hope that you will make a contribution today.

Your individual contributions are doubly important. More contributors mean more dollars to give to candidates. They also show legislators that our members care what they do. Last year only 217 of 17,167 WSSRA members contributed to the PAC. It would be much more impressive to increase that number to at least 500! The amount is less important than the fact that you cared enough to contribute. Any contribution after January 1 makes you a 2022 PAC member. If you’ve never contributed to the PAC, become a first-time member. If you’ve contributed in previous years, we look forward to your 2022 contribution.

You can contribute electronically online via WSSR-PAC.org, or clip out the handy form on this page and mail it in with your check.

Remember... “You’re either at the table or on the menu!”

Support the WSSR-PAC — Contribute Today!

Contributor Name and Spouse (if applicable):

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Unit #/Name:  Contribution Amount $

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 county. 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:

Mail Form & Contribution to:

WSSR-PAC
125 West 11th Street
Port Angeles, WA 98362
WSSR-PAC.ORG
2022 WSSRA Convention

2022 Convention Moved to September 12–14

by Alan Burke, Ed.D., executive director

During its February 2 meeting, the WSSRA Executive Board voted to move the 2022 WSSRA Convention to September 12–14 from the previously scheduled June 6–8 dates. The September convention will be held at the same venue – the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound (south of Olympia). The date change was made in the hope that COVID worries will lessen significantly by this summer allowing many more members to attend the event.

The board will decide the format of the convention at its April 13 meeting. To make leadership transitions on July 1, and to approve the 2022-23 budget, it is likely that, in June, we will conduct voting for statewide positions (i.e., president-elect, district representatives in SW-4, E-6, and E-8, Foundation Trustee) by mail. In that case, the September convention will focus on a significant amount of leadership training, awards, recognition, and socializing. Specifications will come after the April 13 executive board meeting.

Thanks for your understanding.

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WSSRA – Washington State School Retirees’ Association
Many thanks to those donating to the WSSR Foundation and using the 501(c)(3) option. You are definitely increasing our philanthropic mission by supporting future teachers and those entering student-teaching or internships. Please support your coordinating council region by volunteering to read scholarship applications during March.

The Neil D. Prescott Scholarship supports college students entering student-teaching or an internship phase. This scholarship has been increased to two $2,000 awards for each coordinating council region and applications are due April 1, 2022. Occasionally, this scholarship goes un-awarded, as some coordinating council regions don’t receive any qualified applications. Please help us spread the word about this scholarship opportunity by contacting colleges and universities that train future educators and alerting them to this opportunity for their students. First, review the scholarship application process at wssra.org (under the “WSSR-Foundation and Scholarships” section). Then, direct the scholarship contact at the college to this site and request they post this for their students.

The students must fill out the application for the Neil D. Prescott Scholarship provided online at wssra.org (“WSSR-Foundation and Scholarships” section). You may also direct students to this site. Last year three of our coordinating council regions did not have candidates, so I’m asking you to step up and make contact with colleges so our future and current educators can access this valuable resource. Thank you.

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**DONATION FORM**

**WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREE’S 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.

☐ In Honor     ☐ Memorial     $__________  ☐ In Honor     ☐ 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.
"Plan 1 Floor" History

by Bruce Boyer, WSSRA president and Peter Diedrick, legislative director

WSSRA’s legislative team regularly talks about Plan 1 minimum benefit levels, or the “Plan 1 floor.” What is it? How much is it? Where did it come from? How many people are eligible for it?

TRS 1 & PERS 1 have minimum pension benefit levels due to major WSSRA legislative victories in the past. In 1970, a retiree was entitled to $150 per month if they had accumulated 30 years of service credit – don’t spend it all in one place. Through a series of small legislative victories, the minimum pension amount has now increased to $67.33 per month, per year of service credit for all Plan 1 retirees or $2,075 per month for those who have been retired for 20 years and had 25 years of service credit.

In 2006, WSSRA successfully lobbied for another minimum benefit victory. Senate Bill 6453 sponsored by the Select Committee on Pension Policy and Senators Mulliken, Prademore, Fraser, Franklin, and Spanel (all now retired), created a cost-of-living adjustment for those minimum benefits. Each minimum benefit increase prior to 2006 required an act by the legislature. Due to this act, minimum benefits will increase by another 3% on July 1, 2022.

Approximately 20% of TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees are eligible for these minimum benefits. WSSRA is working hard to ensure no more retirees need the minimum benefits. Every school retiree has earned their pension through a lifetime of hard work and falling into poverty should not be a prerequisite for keeping up with inflation.

Senate Bill 6453 passed the legislature unanimously. Governor Gregoire signed the bill surrounded by WSSRA’s president, lobbyists, and legislative committee members.

NOTE: A retiree must have left their pension contributions in the system to be eligible for minimum benefit levels. Plan 1 members who withdrew their contributions upon retirement would not receive these enhanced benefits.

Foundation Contributors

Gail Feagins - in memory of Mike Lanctot
Jeanne Floyd - donation
Martha Glanz - in memory of Jean Barner
Ed & Diane Gonion - in memory of Joyce Williams
James & Shirlee Hall - donation
Gayle McDonald - in memory of John E. Gilmore
Margaret Wharton - in memory of Jean Barner

Chelan/Douglas SRA - in memory of Bill Asplund, Bob Eller, Don Anderson, Dorothy Rogers, Ed Sands, Leilani Bangs, Marianne McColley, Rolf Oxos
Lewis County SRA - in memory of Jean Barner
Pend Oreille SRA - in memory of Kenneth Perin
Skagit-Isle-San Juan REA - in memory of Bobbie Parker and Karen Lamb
Winter of Our Discontent?

by Don Parks, state membership committee chair

On February 3, the groundhog apparently saw his shadow and was afraid of it. This caused the rodent to run back into his den proclaiming six more weeks of winter. Here in Washington state, warmer weather will probably come sooner than that, but the COVID winter is still lingering as access to some school buildings remain closed or very limited.

I was able to present about the Association to the leadership team at a local school district, on Zoom, so personal interaction was limited to on-screen. School buildings are still restrictive in terms of visiting their staff meetings in person. Therefore, many plans for membership building are still on hold — very frustrating. My hat is off to all members of WSSRA who are trying their best to keep the progress going.

As of February 1, we have 58 retirees and actives pending, the result of the blind mailing done before the holidays. We welcome all new members to WSSRA.

The membership total at the beginning of February was 17,117. That is down from last year (February 2021) 17,647 members. The numbers are down some from last year, and probably for good reason. It's been a tough year for both COVID and for interaction with others. We had 31 deceased in January, which is somewhat lower total than usual and we are thankful for that.

Something we can do is to make sure the WSSRA office has each of our emails. Currently, we have 7,414 email addresses on file at the state office. It is very important to submit these either to me or to Michele Hunter, WSSRA membership coordinator.

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 RETIREE'S 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/Ash IDX Pacific 11-Lewis County 19-Renton-South King 25-Spokane 31-Walla Walla-
Pomeroy 06-Southwest King 12-Lower Columbia 20-Seattle 27-Pierce County Columbia
02-Clallam/Douglas 07-Jefferson County 14-Mason County 21-Skagit/Skam/San Juan 28-Thurston County
03-Columbia County 08-Kitsap County 15-Okanogan County 22-Sno-Isle 29-Benton-Franklin
04-Columbia Basin 09-Kittitas County 16-East King 23-Sno-King 30-Southwest Washing-
05-Grays Harbor 10-Columbia Gorge 18-Pend Oreille 19-Spokane 31-Walla Walla-

Contact WSSRA for membership information: Michele Hunter, michele@wssra.org or 360-413-5496, ext 116
The Council of Committee Chairs meeting is coming up in April. Please let your regional membership chair know of your efforts so they can report them to the committee. Also, coming up, March 15 and 22, are the Pre-Retirement Seminars sponsored by WSSRA, both are via Zoom again this year. Folks planning their retirement will learn about their options.

Finally, we hope the groundhog in his fear of sunlight does not cast fears about continuing to do whatever works these days in terms of membership building.

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**Retiree Resources**

WA Dept. of Retirement Systems (TRS, PRS) 1-800-547-6657 [DRS.WA.GOV](http://DRS.WA.GOV)

PEBB and Health Care Authority (health insurance) 1-800-200-1004 [PEBB.HCA.WA.GOV](http://PEBB.HCA.WA.GOV)

SHIBA - Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors 1-800-562-6900 [INSURANCE.WA.GOV/SHIBA](http://INSURANCE.WA.GOV/SHIBA)

Social Security Administration (SSA) 1-800-325-0778 [SSA.GOV](http://SSA.GOV)

AARP Washington Office 1-866-227-7457 [AARP.ORG](http://AARP.ORG)

Jim Ko, state president
Doug Shadel, Washington state director

Senior Citizens’ Lobby 360-754-0207 [WASENIORLOBBY.ORG](http://WASENIORLOBBY.ORG)

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**WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREE ASSOCIATION**

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It's taken decades, but we are finally figuring out that, when crooks approach, it isn't who you are that matters but how you are.

To learn who is most likely to lose money to a fraud, just survey lots of people—some victims, some not—and see how they are different. Simple, right? That's what we thought two decades ago when I was on a professional research team trying to determine who is most susceptible to scams. We believed the project would take nine months, max. Once we discovered the character flaw unique to all victims, we would tell the world, eliminate this scourge of fraud and be done with it. Ah, the hubris of youth.

Turns out that solving big social problems takes time; a lot of false theories emerge before one gets it right. For example, the thinking for many years was that older people were far more susceptible to scams. That turned out to be true for some frauds but not for others. We looked at education, but college degrees or "smarts" also don't determine susceptibility. We looked at income. Nope. We looked at psychological characteristics such as introversion and extraversion. Nothing. We looked at geographic location—urban versus rural, for instance. Zilch.

After a decade of research, could we definitively say who is most susceptible? Not really. And I'll be honest: Our inability to identify a recognizable set of traits or attributes for all scam victims was one of the biggest frustrations of my fraud-fighting career.

And then, in October, AARP released "A Moment’s Notice," an AARP National Fraud Frontiers Report done in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago. It documents one of the largest fraud studies we've ever pursued. Out of some 3,280 consumer interviews conducted, 1,085 consumers had experienced a financial loss to fraud. The study's goal was to test new theories about fraud victims that have emerged from an unlikely source: scammers themselves. Convicts have long told us how they try to get victims emotionally aroused, or "under the ether," as part of their pitch. The AARP study examined this notion and the idea that it isn't who you are that matters but how you are when the pitch gets made.

The results were stunning—to the point that I can say that we have just made a huge stride forward in understanding when and why people say yes to a scam. Call it the vulnerable moment. What the study found is that most often it's their emotional state at the time of the encounter that separates victims from nonvictims in a fraud situation. For victims who lost money, five times as many experienced feelings of being out of control during the encounter as nonvictims did.

Scammers tell us there are two ways they exploit this fact. First, they can go after people they know are already in an emotionally vulnerable moment. That's why survivors listed in obituaries are targeted so often by scammers, why insurance scams proliferate after a natural disaster and why scammers troll dating websites for isolated, vulnerable people.

But more often, scammers work to manipulate you into becoming emotional, in either a positive or negative way (the study suggests either makes you vulnerable). You've won the lottery! You're about to go to jail! Your computer is on the verge of meltdown! We've kidnapped your grandchild!

The new research shows that people who respond emotionally to such pitches are more susceptible to fraud. This is important stuff. There are times when all of us — young/old, rich/poor, rural/urban — experience vulnerable moments that make us more susceptible to fraud. It's not weakness; it's human.

And the research shows something more: Fraud victims, by the time they encountered a scam, had experienced more than twice as many stressful life events as nonvictims had. Think about it. If you've had many emotional challenges in your past and suddenly a caller suggests another calamity, is it any wonder you'd react strongly?

These new findings have important implications. Previous studies have shown the effectiveness of teaching consumers cognitive skills to prevent fraud, such as using logic to determine if an offer sounds real, checking company backgrounds before doing business and knowing that government officials never call to collect money. While these are smart tips, they require full possession of one's thinking abilities to apply. The scammer's great skill is the ability to knock us off that solid cognitive foundation and into the murky and unpredictable world of passion and emotional reactivity.

We now know that preventing fraud requires both cognitive skills and emotional awareness. Possessing one without the other is like padlocking the front door and leaving the back door wide open. And there isn't a single self-respecting scammer out there who is unaware of that back door.

Have questions related to scams or think you're a target? Call the AARP Fraud Watch Network helpline toll-free at 877-908-3360.

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Why Now Is the Time to Get A Long-Term Care Policy

Though friends and family can be helpful when you’re considering benefits options for what insurance you need, there’s no substitute for the expert benefit advice of a field agent through your association and AMBA.

Why? Because your needs are as unique as you are. Your lifestyle and health issues aren’t the same as your friends and family. What’s good for them might not necessarily be right—or enough—for you. An AMBA agent knows this and can give recommendations and advice tailored for your specific needs.

For instance, if you are having issues obtaining life insurance because of health or lifestyle issues, an AMBA representative can direct you to a Whole Life policy that guarantees benefits acceptance regardless of lifestyle or pre-existing health issues.

Your own health and/or family history should also play a role in what insurance you should consider. Even which Medicare plan you choose can be a factor in determining if a MedSup plan is right for you.

And, of course, your peers and loved ones might not know about the need for a Medical Air Services Association (MASA) membership or which of our Dental Plans is right for you.

As your association’s trusted benefits partner, AMBA provides knowledgeable Customer Service Associates and insightful Field Agents. We are here to help you review options and determine the right coverage for you—whether it’s dental insurance, vision plans, or other policies. They’re just a phone call away. It’s nice to know that anytime you have questions about your insurance benefits, someone is ready to assist.

Request a FREE Benefits Review with an AMBA field agent at www.amba-review.com or call 866-615-4063 Mon.-Fri 8am-5pm CT.

Want Expert Benefits Advice? Work with An Expert: An AMBA Agent

When it comes to buying homeowners or car insurance, many of us don’t hesitate. But if you think about it, the odds of needing nursing home care at some point may be higher than losing your house to fire or totaling your car.

There are two main reasons why people put off buying a Long-Term Care policy. One, who wants to think of themselves as becoming dependent on others or needing a nursing home somewhere down the road? Two, many people assume that Medicare will cover the cost.

Unfortunately, the first assumption isn’t realistic, and the second isn’t real. First, it is increasingly normal that, as we age, we need additional support. Second, Medicare does not include long-term care coverage. In certain circumstances, it does cover short-term services, typically only for a few weeks following a difficult hospital stay. Buying a Long-Term Care policy now gives you the assurance you’re covered if and when the time comes that you do need the help.

Here’s what a Long-Term Care policy can do for you:

1. It helps you maintain your financial independence, so you won’t have to rely on family members.
2. It helps you protect your assets and preserve your children’s inheritance.
3. It makes long-term care services affordable, such as home health care and custodial care.
4. It not only pays for nursing home care if needed, it also helps give you more options than other than nursing home care.
5. It can help preserve your standard of living.

A Long-Term Care policy from your association and AMBA lets you choose everything from your daily benefit amount, as well as your elimination and benefit period. This policy has no requirement for a prior hospital stay, no waiting period for pre-existing conditions, and no premium increases with age. Plus, this policy pays in addition to any other insurance you already have.

Ask a skilled AMBA agent if a Long-Term Care policy, endorsed by your association, is right for you. Request a FREE Benefits Review with an AMBA field agent at www.amba-review.com or call 866-615-4063 Mon-Fri 8am-5pm CT.
NORTHWEST-1

Unit 21 Skagit/Island/San Juan: The unit has had a quiet wintertime so far. The unit board meeting was held via Zoom on Monday, February 14. The board made decisions on important events coming up such as nominations for the Hoban and the McNaughton awards, choosing members from Unit 21. The board also decided about making a donation to the League of Women Voter of Skagit County to print the TRY and distribute it to local schools as a community project. The TRY is a document that provides information on all government offices from the local community to the national offices. It also provides important information on voting rights.

A decision on when and who to have for the next general meeting was discussed. Next on the agenda for the board is finding new officers for the new year. Diane Visten reported that the unit’s student-teacher scholarship is again being offered through partnership with Western Washington University. The unit is also looking forward to getting trade school/tech school scholarship applications from Mount Vernon seniors after the April 1 deadline.

Unit 22 Sno-Isle: Unit 22 Sno-Isle started accepting applications for the unit’s $2,500 scholarship. It had been decided to extend the deadline to March 31 because of issues high school students are dealing with this year. Earlier, the board voted to allow recipients to reapply as long as they meet certain criteria. It could mean up to $10,000 if a student completed a 4-year degree. A February lunch event was delayed as COVID cases started to spike in Snohomish County.

Unit 23 Sno-King: In the unit’s January Bulletin, information was presented about the school levies being voted on in February and asked unit members to be informed about the choices to be made.

With the webinar assistance from WSSRA, the unit had a Humanities Washington speaker, Steve Edmiston, tell the group about “Whiskey and Wiretaps: The Northwest’s Rummaging King.” Roy Olmstead, a young Seattle police lieutenant, formed a secret gang to take over Prohibition bootlegging in the Northwest. On Thanksgiving Day, 1925 he was trapped by federal prohibition agents on a lonely Puget Sound dock. Crime did not pay.

The unit’s sending of Starbuck gift cards to active unit members in late November, was very well received.

The unit board meetings have continued to be held via Zoom.

Unit 32 Whatcom County: The WCSRA board continues to meet monthly, the first Friday of each month via Zoom, to continue to conduct the work of the unit. On January 20, WCSRA members were given an interesting and informative presentation from Washington State Historian Michael House on barns throughout the Pacific Northwest.
On March 17, the unit is having a presentation on eagles with Michelle Landis, a team leader for the Skagit Raptor Survey. Six years ago, she began watching the local bald eagle population in earnest and has extended her survey to over 62 nests. Her presentation will use photos and videos to show a year in the life of our local eagles, from courtship to fledging. All units are invited to attend. Email wcsra32@gmail.com for Zoom instructions.

The unit has received several thank you notes from recipients of mini-grants, family services, and county foodbanks.

**NORTHWEST-2**

**Unit 16 East King:**
East-King’s executive board members, Carolyn and Robert Fletcher, Jim and Shiree Hall, Jeani Goodrich and Pat Jovag, met in January and again in February. The main topic of discussion was when in-person luncheons could be held safely again. It was decided that it was best to put a hold on unit luncheon gatherings for now.

A positive aspect of the board meetings via Zoom was the sharing of principals’ responses to the grants their teachers were awarded. The unit awarded 26 grants. Some of the responses include:

“Thank you. We are excited to add the books to our school library.”
“Thank you so much for supporting my teachers!”
“That is wonderful news!”
“Thank you so much! We truly appreciate your generous partnership in support of our students and staff.”
“Awesome news!”
“Thank you for sharing this exciting news! This grant will have an amazing impact on our students. Thank you again for the support!”
“Awesome! This is the second time your association has gifted one of the schools I am at. Thank you for your generosity!”
“Wonderful! We’ll get this generous support noted on our LR website soon. Thank you so much for your dedication to and support of schools and students.”
“This is fabulous news!”

The latest unit newsletter included information on grant details and principal responses, an invitation to become a “legislative buddy,” a list of unit members’ districts and their legislators, and how to avoid falls.

**Unit 19 Renton/South King:** Unit 19 had no membership meetings in January and February. Nevertheless, Renton/South King gave a scholarship in January to Bradley Fenbert, a Kent Meridian High School science student teacher. Eileen Yamada Lamphere notified him that the check would be sent to Western Governor’s University to defray Bradley’s tuition and other costs.

Due to COVID-19, the March 1, 2022 unit meeting for Renton/South King was held via Zoom. Jeanie McKay presented “Octane for the Brain.”

The next unit meeting will be on April 12, 2022 at Browns Point Lighthouse and Cottage for a tour by Unit 19 board member Linda Van Nest. Also, refreshments will be served.

Unit 19’s membership meeting on May 3, 2022 will feature Debbie Dimitri as Bertha Knight Landes, the first female Mayor of Seattle.

**Unit 32 Whatcom County:** The unit’s March 17 meeting, via Zoom, will feature a presentation about eagles. Presenter Michelle Landis is a team leader for the Skagit Raptor Survey and surveys over 62 local bald eagle nests. All units are welcome to attend the presentation, via Zoom. For participation instructions, please email, wcsra32@gmail.com.

The meeting will be held at the Lakeshore Retirement Home with lunch at 1:00pm and the program at 2:00pm. Reservations will be required for both of the in-person membership meetings.

**Unit 20 Seattle:**
Unit 20 continues to communicate with members despite not having in-person meetings because of the pandemic. SSRA’s Legislative Committee Co-Chairs Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon, along with Patricia MacGowan, update members with the latest from the State Legislature on matters concerning retired public educators.
Unit members are also updated with information in the unit newsletter, “The Bulletin,” which was recently mailed out as well as posted to the unit website, seattlesra.org.

SSRA’s Scholarship Committee continues to accept applications for both high school graduates and teaching interns. The committee, headed by Patricia MacGowan, will announce scholarship winners later in the year.

Mini-grants for Seattle teachers are still being given out through the unit’s S.E.E.D. Grant program, headed by Kathy Purcell. Applications for these grants are also posted on the unit website.

Unit board members meet at times via Zoom and are thankful for the help from staff at WSSRA for setting up these Zoom meetings.

## SOUTHWEST-3

### Unit 3 Clallam County:
Clallam County School Retirees’ Association (CCSRA) met at Joshua’s Restaurant in Port Angeles, on January 18, and via Zoom. The guest speakers were Jody Copeland, district branch manager at First Fed Bank in Port Angeles, and Adena Whitman, digital branch manager. They spoke about banking changes concerning seniors and distributed good information about how to avoid scams.

At the February 15 meeting, the guest speaker was Mary Budke from the Port Angeles Boys and Girls Club. Tours of the new facility are available for those who are interested.

This past year Clallam County School Retirees’ Association has given out $56,425.67 in scholarships and mini-grants. The funds for these scholarships and grants include sources such as the Isabelle Whitfield Fund (CCSRA has managed for several years), the Naddy Fund (managed by member Gary Gleason), and local funds.

One of the mini-grants went to Jen Mackey, a teacher who wanted to set up a cooking program for her special education students. She didn’t have a good working stove and needed cookware. CCSRA president Lora Brabant was in the process of remodeling her kitchen and donated her very old stove to the program. She was also able to find brand new cookware at the local Goodwill store.

### Unit 8 Kitsap County:
The Kitsap County School Retirees had a Christmas luncheon at Ambrosia in Poulsbo and enjoyed each other’s company. Attendees brought unwrapped toys to Doris Bucher, unit president, to take to
Kitsap Community Resource Center. Members were very generous and filled a trunk full of toys.

In January, the unit luncheon was held at the Kitsap Pancake House. Approximately 12 members attended. Unit President Doris Bucher opened the meeting with a flag salute and the meeting proceeded with the treasurer’s report, secretary’s minutes, and business - including discussing which organizations the unit would be giving $200 to in Kitsap County. Organizations each receiving a $200 donation from the unit include the Bremerton Food Bank, Central Kitsap Food Bank, Fishline Food Bank, Bainbridge Food Bank, and Coffee Oasis. The local Salvation Army also received a donation from the unit since they house and feed people in Kitsap County.

The unit is making plans to make baskets for the WSSRA Foundation for the convention. As soon as a theme is decided on, members will start gathering materials and assembling the baskets.

WSSRA Executive Director Alan Burke came and spoke to the unit on what is happening in the legislature. He encouraged the group to keep in contact with local legislative members to encourage them to pass bills WSSRA supports.

**Unit 14 Mason County:**
Unfortunately, with the resurgence of COVID in the community, and adverse weather conditions, the January 4, 2022, meeting was canceled. The officers agreed that the pending business could wait until the February 1, 2022 meeting, which was offered in person at El Puerto de Angeles restaurant in Shelton, or by Zoom. WSSRA Executive Director Alan Burke joined by Zoom to give a legislative update and a convention update. He also thanked the unit for arranging staff meetings he could attend to discuss WSSRA and solicit membership. Unit President Eileen Perffrem also discussed the WSSRA at two staff meetings that Alan Burke was unable to attend. The in-person meetings were made in conjunction with the presentation of certificates to mini-grant recipients. In all, 11 certificates were awarded at four staff meetings, two school board meetings, and three individual presentations at the school.

The unit members decided to support six community organizations with $100 contributions each. Four food banks in Matlock, Brannon, Hood Canal, and Saints Pantry in Shelton, and two shelters in Shelton, Turning Pointe and Community Lifeline, were the recipients.

Unit President Eileen Perffrem and Treasurer Tedd Davis joined Thurston County Legislative Chair Ann Chenhall on a Zoom meeting with Representative Dan Griffin to discuss legislative actions. He was receptive to retirees’ concerns. Similar concerns were expressed to Representative Drew MacEwen on a Zoom meeting. He was also receptive to retirees’ concerns.

The March 1, 2022, meeting was also held in person at the same restaurant and by Zoom. The guest speaker was the new Shelton School District Superintendent Wyeth Jesse. He presented the achievements and goals of the district, along with the challenges of educating students and opening schools with the COVID pandemic.

**Unit 3 Clallam County:**
Mini-grant recipient, Jen Mackey, is establishing a cooking program for her special education students. Unit President Lora Brabant donated her lightly used oven to the classroom.

**Unit 27 Pierce County:**
Pierce County returned to virtual meetings for the months of January, February, and March. Speaker Jeff Burgess, AMBA, highlighted the February meeting. Just in time for Valentine’s Day, Jean Kinnaman, health chair and executive board member, also presented women’s heart health information.
UNIT 5 GRAYS HARBOR-PACIFIC: Unit 5 is getting pretty tired of the pandemic. Members would really like to have an in-person meeting, but we'll have to wait until COVID has stopped infecting people in such large numbers. In the meantime, keeping in touch with unit members by cards and phone calls will continue.

Two members from Unit 5 were present at the coordinating council Zoom meeting. It was good to see friends from other units again, even if it was on a screen.

Community service is what the unit focuses on now. Members are encouraged to help other organizations with their projects. Each person can easily find something they like to do, which, in turn, helps an organization with its projects. Some of the organizations that Unit 5 members help are Hearts and Hands, Union Gospel Mission, Clothing Bank, Food Bank, Domestic Violence Center, and Catholic Community Center.

UNIT 28 THURSTON COUNTY: Art Dolan, a retired teacher, presented an informative and entertaining program titled, “Espionage: The Second Oldest Profession” during a recent unit Zoom meeting.

Joyfully, Unit 27 plans to return to an in-person meeting in April at LaQuinta Inn, Tacoma. Just in time for the spring travel season, AAA will inform the membership about travel tips and destinations.

On a sad note, Ester Wilfong, age 93, passed away on February 2, 2022. Ester served as chair of the WSSRA Legislative Committee for over 30 years and received the Patrick T. Hoban Meritorious Award. Members are forever grateful for Ester’s service to PCSRA, WSSRA, kids, and families.

Unit 27 looks forward to being included in the planning of the annual WSSRA convention held virtually this June and in person in September.

Patricia “Pat” Clemons recently passed away. She was active in many places and events in Montesano. She will always be remembered as being the granddaughter of the Clemons who started the very first tree farm in the United States. The first tree farm was just outside Montesano.

Hopefully, even though unit members cannot meet in person for now, the unit will stay together as a group and communicate with each other in any way possible.

UNIT 28 THURSTON COUNTY: Unit 28 is still meeting via Zoom for board meetings and programs. The board gave serious consideration to holding February’s meeting in person and had made arrangements for a venue. Rising numbers of cases of the Corona variant Omicron and continuing concern about the health and safety of members, however, forced the board to reconsider.

The February meeting convened via Zoom on February 18, 2022, for a program by Art Dolan, a retired teacher, who taught primarily in the Spokane area. Art presented an informative and entertaining program titled, “Espionage: The Second Oldest Profession.” Mr. Dolan, a member and former president of the George Rogers Clark Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution (Olympia, WA), has presented other historical programs at Unit 28 meetings, including “Stars and Stripes Revolutionary Road” and “George Washington’s Secret Navy.” He is always a hit with members.

Other unit activities include discussions of potential plans for the 2022 convention, depending upon final decisions by the state association. Al-
though Sally Jones, the community service chair, is pursuing the usual projects, e.g., collecting socks for children and donations for the food bank, she sent out an appeal to unit members to share ideas for new service projects.

Unit 28 is still collecting email addresses. Unit members who have not done so, are encouraged to submit email addresses directly to the WSSRA Membership Coordinator michele@wssra.org.

EAST-5

Unit 9 Kittitas Co.: Even though the unit tried to schedule a board meeting in January, the weather prevented it from happening. Kittitas County, especially the “Upper County,” experienced heavy snowfall, from two to four feet. Everyone was busy with snow removal and now, a month later, there is a still lot of snow on the ground. This winter has had the heaviest snowfall since 1996 when many buildings collapsed and a few have fallen down this year. No meetings are planned for the immediate future until spring approaches and, hopefully, COVID recedes.

In the medical insurance world, many local members had to find alternate insurance after Kaiser withdrew from Kittitas County. These choices are limited in this county. By now, those affected should have received documentation for their new insurance carriers. News from the legislature is encouraging, a COLA increase would help meet the increased cost for some insurance and the boost to social security was welcome. In the meantime, enjoy winter pastimes, stay warm, and stay well.

Unit 10 Columbia Gorge: Columbia Gorge School Retirees’ Association held its annual Winter Warmth Drive in November and December. Unit 10 members contributed nearly 200 pairs of socks, gloves, and hats to the Washington Gorge Action Program who distributed items to homeless shelters and a food bank in Skamania and Klickitat County.

Unit 34 Yakima Co.: Omicron has slowed YCSCA activities in 2022 so far. The unit had to cancel January and some February meetings.

A major topic of discussion is how to replace co-presidents Nick and Kathy Schultz. YCSRA’s dynamic duo will be hard to replace. The unit owes them a huge debt of gratitude. They have been the glue that has kept YCSRA together for the last four years.

The next in-person general unit meeting is scheduled for March 7. Hopefully COVID will cooperate.

EAST-6

Unit 2 Chelan-Douglas: The Chelan-Douglas SRA “Decked the Halls” at their December meeting. The Eastmont High School Choir sang everyone into a holiday mood under the direction of Brittany Stevens. They were wonderful!

The unit was also pleased to hear from Wenatchee’s new Performing Arts Director, J. Woody Lotts. He explained how things were going at the Performing Arts Center (PAC) in light of the COVID pandemic. The group was especially interested to hear that they would be starting up the “Every Kid At the Pac” (EKAP) project in which regional students can come and see live performances in a theater. A $1,000 check toward this program was presented to him.

Congratulations to the 20 active CDSRA members who were awarded fall minigrants. There are some great projects in this group.

Unit 10 Columbia Gorge: This winter, unit members collected and contributed nearly 200 pairs of socks, gloves, and hats to the Washington Gorge Action Program. The program supports homeless shelters and food banks in Skamania and Klickitat County.
Unit 4 Columbia Basin:
Several members of Unit 4, Columbia Basin, recently gathered at the home of Susan Hickok to assemble book bags for their Books for Babies program. Co-President Helen Preston, Nancy Nishida, Louis Logan, Pat Simmons, Shirley Vincent, Joan Cotton, Bill Anderson, and Susan put together 500 book bags for distribution to local hospitals, where they will be given to the families of every newborn in the area.

Eighteen grants have been presented to educators from five school districts in the Columbia Basin. Tina Mullings, from the Ephrata School District, received a grant to purchase incentives for middle school students. Fourteen educators from the Moses Lake School District were also selected as grant recipients, and are listed, as follows, along with their school and project: Jennifer Kostelnik, Endeavor Middle School, purchase of The Discovery Simulation Experience. From Groff Elementary - Kim Francisco - supplies for STEM/STEAM program, Megan Cox - learning tools for STEM/STEAM program, Candace Pitts - architectural and medieval castle blocks to replicate and build within the kindergarten block center, Carina Cruz - math manipulatives. From Knolls Vista Elementary - Bill Bertram - model rocket supplies, Meghan Lamb - incentives for positive behavior to be used in a recess program and home projects, Brenda Welch Mathis - supplies for balance/auditory/vision exercises. From Peninsula Elementary - Joan Dopps, Peninsula Elementary - annual second grade pumpkin field trip and Debbie Horney - supplies for visual tracking assessment to help with reading. Rumi Hernandez, Midway Elementary - materials for multilingual language development program using math as the focus. Kelly Frederick, North Elementary - outdoor disc golf baskets. Cynthia Swan, Park Orchard Elementary - purchase of items for a calm down room. Gayle Talbot, retired Moses Lake teacher - purchase books for a Little Free Library. Amy Delp, Othello School District - pumpkin field trip. Katie Pippins, Soap Lake School District - two second grade classes to visit the community, write, and publish a classroom book, and to host an event for families and friends to celebrate the finished project. Jackie Floette, Wilson Creek School District - purchase prizes for Zoom games.

Unit 15 Okanogan:
Unit 15 has been busy seeking officers and committee chairs for the 2022 – 2023 fiscal year. Most of the positions are filled for the upcoming year. In addition, it is OCSRA’s turn to supply the secretary/treasurer and the chair for next year’s E5/E6 Coordinating Council. As of this writing, half of that roster has been completed for voting at the April meeting.

Carol Payne and the OCSRA grants committee have been advertising and judging applications for the spring grants, which are given to members actively involved in working in OCSRA area schools. Each grant is worth $300 this year.

Penny Garrison has contacted OCSRA area school districts advertising the March WSSRA sponsored pre-retirement seminars.
Members are gearing up to advertise the OCSRA Scholarship offered in May to an individual who is of at least college junior standing who is seeking initial certification in an educational field.

OCSRA secretary Maralee Bowling and her husband, Cal, did all the stuffing, labeling, and mailing of the latest OCSRA newsletter.

EAST-7

Unit 25 Spokane Area: Char Schelling, unit vice-president, initiated a cheerful holiday greeting card from the Spokane Area Retired Educators’ Association board, to be sent out to membership. Prior to the pandemic, the unit hosted a holiday luncheon at the Manito Country Club. Local high school music departments provided the entertainment. She contacted Ben Brueggemeier, music director at Ferris High School in Spokane, who immediately agreed to allow the unit to have access to their holiday music program. Unit Webmaster Ken Kohnhorst coordinated with Ben to provide a link on the unit’s website.

Kathy Braid, newsletter editor, designed a card that was sent to the SAREA membership in December. The program can still be accessed on the unit’s website, spokanecare.tirededucators.org. We wish you a Happy New Year!

Unit 33 Whitman: In Unit 33, Whitman County, grant applications are being sent out and the budget has been set. Plans for how to award the grants are based on COVID precautions. The unit is awarding grants totaling $3,000 this year. Happy New Year to all!

EAST-8

Unit 29 Benton-Franklin: Marlys Mayer is recognized for 19 years as Unit 29 treasurer at a luncheon in January. President Victoria Russell presented her with a plaque and roses.

Unit 1 Clarkston/Asotin/ Pomeroy: Unit 1 cancelled the February meeting with COVID numbers on the rise in the area. An executive board work session was held and proved very fruitful! A slate of officers was developed for the unit to vote on at the March gathering. It looks very similar to the group that has been in office for the last few years! The unit is lucky that the individuals are committed and excited to help continue to bring the unit into the post-COVID era....now if COVID would just cooperate!

The unit will be sending small gifts of support to each of the school secretaries near Valentine’s Day. Usually, the unit invites the school secretaries to a luncheon in December but it did not happen this year.
The group decided that it would be a good idea to develop a webpage since the Facebook page hasn’t developed the following that was hoped for. The newsletters, however, have been getting very positive feedback so it will continue.

The unit plans to initiate and work closely with the human resources departments at local schools to offer assistance. The hope is to get WSSRA’s name in front of more and more school staff.

Since volunteering is a great outreach, the unit thanks Connie Cohmer for volunteering to spearhead a list of volunteer opportunities in the area that can be shared as people retire and begin looking for ways to give back. Hopefully, they will join under the WSSRA umbrella when they volunteer.

Ideas were brainstormed about ways to get new staff to join, retiring staff to become active with the unit when they do retire, and ways to become more visible in the schools and the community.

The unit’s March meeting will be held at the Lewis Clark Valley Teen Resource Center as they talk about their new program and give a tour of their facility.

Unit 29 Benton-Franklin: Unit 29, Benton/Franklin School Retirees’ Association, met with 60 attendees at the January 11 luncheon featuring local superintendents from Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland. Dr. Traci Pierce, Dr. Michelle Whitney, Dr. Shelley Redinger are three women with extensive knowledge and training about Washington school process and current superintendents in Kennewick, Pasco and Richland School Districts. Their message was informational about levies being run in the February election to support teaching and learning. As much as 20% of a district’s budget may be impacted by a levy, in part due to matching monies that are available when a levy passes.

Long-term unit board member, Marlys Mayer, was recognized at the luncheon.

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WSSRA - Washington State School Retirees’ Association

BENEFITS STILL FIT?
for her service as Unit 29’s treasurer for 19 years.

Unit 29 thanks WSSRA leaders for frequent attendance and guidance at board and council meetings, and luncheons. Questions are answered thoughtfully with an understanding of future implications. Especially in the area of legislation, which WSSRA Legislative Director Peter Diedrick spoke about at the unit’s November luncheon.

The unit luncheons in February featured Lewis and Clark Expedition reenactment with unit member, Glenn Allison, as Meriwether Lewis. The unit luncheon in March will bring Elizabeth McLoughlin, executive director of the Tri-Cities Cancer Center, as the presenter.

Nine of the 20 mini-grants have been awarded this year to local educators. The last two were to science teachers from Hanford High School.

Current/future program information and news can be found on the web page http://bfsraunit29.blogspot.com/ and in the monthly newsletter.

Unit 1 Clarkston/Asotin/Pomeroy: “Selfie” during a recent unit gathering. Pictured from left to right: Bonnie Hill, Connie Cohmer, Sheryl Andrews, Kay Andersen, Judie Hanley, Sharon Hoseley and Kathi Meshishnek.

**More than one Journal in your mailbox?**

The Journal comes out five times each year. WSSRA’s longstanding practice is to send a copy of the Journal to every member. For those households with more than one member, multiple copies are sent to the same address - one for each member.

If this scenario applies to you and your spouse/roommate and you would prefer to receive only one copy per household, please contact WSSRA Membership Coordinator Michele Hunter, michele@wssra.org or 360-413-5496, ext. 116. She will make the changes to our mailing list.

**ADDRESS CHANGES**

*Please Notify:*

Membership Coordinator
Michele Hunter
michele@wssra.org

Phone: 360-413-5496, ext 116

WSSRA, PO Box 5127
Lacey WA 98509

*Please Note: If your household receives more than one copy of the Journal in the mail each time, you can let Michele Hunter know if you prefer to receive just one copy per household.*
Ask a friend to join us

Washington State School Retirees’ Association
Dedicated to preserving, protecting and improving the benefits of educational retirees.

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.

Vision
WSSRA will provide leadership and promote action relevant to all retired and active school personnel.

Don’t delay – ask today

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