



The Bulletin



Volume LV No. 3

The Seattle School Retirees' Association

March-April, 2019

Upcoming Luncheons

Please e-mail or call ahead to reserve your space: ssra44@juno.com or 206 521-5170 (the SODO office number). Please let us know ahead of time!

SSRA's March 5th, 2019 Luncheon

Date: Tuesday, March 5th

Time/Place: Lunch at 12:00 at The Canal Restaurant in Ballard next to the Locks

Price: \$20.00 for a buffet lunch

RSVP Deadline: Monday, February 25th

Program: Nicole Tsong, former contributor to The Seattle Times 'Pacific Magazine' and an expert on exercise workouts, will speak about them and various yoga techniques. She presently lives in Seattle but has lived in places around the world, including Alaska, China and Washington, D.C. Ms. Tsong teaches yoga at different studios in Seattle. She has also written books about yoga including *Yoga for Hikers* and *Yoga for Climbers*.



She is in a long-term relationship with the mountains and beaches of the Pacific Northwest, the violin and her husband Chris and their pup Coco.

SSRA's April 9th, 2019 Luncheon

Date: Tuesday, April 9th (2nd Tuesday)

Time/Place: Lunch at 12:00 at The Canal Restaurant in Ballard

Price: \$20.00 for a buffet lunch

RSVP Deadline: Wednesday, March

27th

Program: (Note that the date, April 9th, is the second Tuesday in April. This was done to insure that current Seattle School employees could come during Spring Break for a special price of \$10. Hopefully each will bring a new SSRA member.)



David Horsey, well known political cartoonist, will be our speaker. He grew up in Seattle and started doing cartoons for the *Cascade* newspaper at Ingraham (continued)

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Don't forget that The Canal's caterers need a fairly firm count ahead of time. So please let us know by the RSVP date to guarantee your seats for our excellent buffet lunches.

- If you do not wish to have lunch with us, arrive by 12:50 for the program. There will be extra seats available in the back for those who come only for the program.
- Bring non-perishable food items or checks and personal items to donate to the West Seattle Food Bank and The Compass Center.

UPCOMING DIRECTORY OF SSRA MEMBERS

We are planning an updated directory for our members' use only. If you do **NOT** wish to have your contact information included, please notify us by phone at the SSRA office (206 521-5170) or by email at ssra44@juno.com. (We would also like to add email addresses for those we don't already have.) More on page 2.

(David Horsey—continued from Page One)

High School. He then attended the University of Washington where he did political cartoons for *The Daily*. He graduated in 1976 and became a reporter for the *Bellevue Journal American* but soon became editorial cartoonist for *The Seattle P.I.* In 1976 he earned a master’s degree in international relations from The University of Kent in England and in 2004 he received an honorary doctorate from Seattle University. After leaving the *P.I.* he has had his work published in a variety of newspapers including *The Seattle Times*.

Mr. Horsey received a Pulitzer Prize for his cartoons in 1999 and in 2003 and in 2014 received the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award.

Please welcome another Seattle Public School graduate who has made a positive difference!

MORE About SSRA’s New Members’ Directory:

We haven’t published a new members’ directory since 2011 when PEMCO printed it for us. Now Michele Hunter in WSSRA’s office is willing to help SSRA prepare one with the membership data she works with daily. She will accept calls from any of our members who do not want their addresses and phone numbers to appear in a new directory so you can ALSO call her or leave a message for her to opt out of SSRA’s new directory by calling WSSRA at 1-800-544-5219, Extension #116 by May 7th.

Upcoming Retirement Seminar!

This Retirement Seminar is sponsored by the Washington School Retirees’ Association King County Units (which includes SSRA) and will be held at Madison House, a retirement complex located in Kirkland on **MARCH 23rd** in 2019 from 7:45 a.m. until noon.

It will include speakers for TRS/PERS and SERS for Pension Plans 2 and 3, PEBB and VEBA. There will be no charge to those who preregister. The flyer with the application is reproduced on the next page.

SSRA Leadership for 2018-2019

President.....Pat Cygan
President-elect.....Someone New
Immediate Past President.....Sharon Green

Recording Secretary.....Mary Wallon
Treasurer.....Sue Battin

Committee Chairs

Audit Review CommitteeRoxanne Trees
Budget/Finance.....Jim de Jarnatt
Communications/Outreach.....Ron Cygan
Community Services.....Marilynn Miller
Drawings and Baskets.....Marilynn Miller
Health Services.....Myrna Muto
Historian.....Kathy Purcell
Legislative.....Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon
May Luncheon.....Margaret Nelson
Membership.....ALL SSRA MEMBERS
Parliamentarian.....Edith Ruby
Programs.....Pat Cygan
Resolutions/Bylaws.....SSRA’s Board
Retirement Seminar Planning.....John Thorp
Scholarships.....Patricia MacGowan
Burbank Rideout/SEED Grants.....Sharon Green
WSSRA-PAC.....Mary Wallon and Edith Ruby

NOTE: If you are willing to chair our Friendship Committee or become SSRA’s next President or Co-President, please call President Pat Cygan at 425-493-0352.

Words Worth Remembering

“A self-taught man usually has a poor teacher and a worse student.”

Henny Youngman

“No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new heaven to the human spirit.”

Helen Keller

The Bulletin is published five times per year by the Seattle School Retirees’ Association. **Membership meetings** are held on the first Tuesday of each month from September through May (except January) with a buffet lunch served at twelve noon; then a meeting and guest speaker/program follow our buffet luncheon at **The Canal Restaurant** located at 5300 34th Ave. N.W. Our SODO office is rarely staffed, but you can reach us at 206 521-5170 and leave a message or by e-mail at ssra44@juno.com.



Planning for Your Best Retirement

For All Public School Employees

Research shows that early retirement planning is important but 57% of pre-retirees have not planned for retirement. Many miss important information they will need to make informed decisions.

Our seminar for public school employees is free and will cover the following:

- *Pension Plans-2 and -3 TRS/PERS/SERS
- *Public Employees Benefits Board/PEBB's Healthcare Options for State Employees-Retirees
- * Deferred Compensation and VEBA
- *An Introduction to Washington State School Retirees' Association (WSSRA).

Saturday, March 23, 2019

7:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Madison House, 12215 NE 128th Street, Kirkland, WA 98034

Call Tina at (206) 819-7338 for more seminar information or to leave a message.

Madison House is located near the Village at Totem Lake. Take exit 20B off 405, to Totem Lake Boulevard, continue straight on to 120th and turn right on 128th. Madison House is located to the right.

PRE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Pre-register for the event simply by providing your name, mailing address, e-mail address, your anticipated retirement date, and present school district employer in an e-mail to: TinaWSSRA@gmail.com.

Name: _____ Anticipate Retiring In: _____

Address: _____ WA Zip _____

School District Employer: _____ E-mail address: _____

A confirmation e-mail will be sent to you. All public school employees are welcome.

This retirement seminar is sponsored by Washington State School Retirees' Association King County Units. To learn about WSSRA's 4 King County Units, or more information about the upcoming retirement seminar, please visit (1) Renton South King Retired School Employees' Association Facebook Page; (2) the Seattle School Retirees' Association website at www.seattlesra.org; (3) Southwest King County's web page southwestkingcountysra.org or (4) email East-King School Retirees at hstamps1@frontier.com.

SSRA's Committee Reports

- Health Services Committee

Myrna Muto, Chair

Other than bananas, what foods are high in potassium? Why is potassium important? According to Maxine Young, RD, potassium is an electrolyte that helps with nerve and muscle function in the body. Potassium also helps regulate the heart and blood pressure by counterbalancing sodium. Adequate potassium intake has been shown to help protect bones and reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

If you consume a healthy diet, you will likely meet your daily requirement of 4,700 milligrams of potassium for men and women. If you are not eating a well-rounded diet with a variety of foods, one of the results could be potassium deficiency. This could manifest as inflammatory bowel disease, malabsorption conditions, eating a diet high in salt, and periods of excessive diarrhea, vomiting or sweating. Certain medications, such as diuretics, may also cause a drop in potassium.

Most people are taught that a medium banana is very high in potassium at 422 mg.

The following foods are higher in potassium content than a banana: a medium baked potato, half-cup beet greens, one cup plain non-fat yogurt, half cup baked sweet potato, three ounces of Atlantic Wild Salmon, half cup Swiss Chard, half cup lima beans, three ounces of cooked tuna, or a half cup of acorn squash.

A dinner consisting of Wild Salmon with baked potato and Swiss Chard with a banana yogurt smoothie for dessert equals 2,933 mg of potassium.

[Some facts come from Laura Newcomer at Silversneakers.com]

- Community Services

Marilynn Miller, Chair

I recently gave 72 pairs of white socks to Reverent Rick Reynolds, the head of Operation Nightwatch. He wished to thank all of you for your generosity.

Colder weather is here and will likely take a toll on those who are needy. Please bring non-perishable food and personal items including white socks and other apparel as donations for the West Seattle Food Bank and The Compass Center. Your help is appreciated.

- Program Committee

Pat Cygan, Chair

For the program on **March 5th**, **Nicole Tsong**, a regular weekly contributor to *The Seattle Times' Pacific Magazine*, will discuss her latest exercise routines that she herself practices in various neighborhoods in the city. (Her articles explore a wide variety of exercise programs.) Our **April program will be on the 9th** (instead of the first Tuesday) so that current workers in Seattle schools can attend. We will feature Pulitzer-Prize winning political cartoonist **David Horsey**, an Ingraham High School graduate, who recently moved back to Seattle and creates timely political cartoons for *The Seattle Times*.

Our **May 7th** luncheon, which will honor our members who are 85 years or better, will feature noted actress and historian **Debbie Dimitre**. She hopes to premiere her newest program on Bertha Landes, Seattle's first female mayor.

We are also trying to get Seattle Public School Superintendent Denise Juneau to do a brief presentation at one of our lunches. If she can't attend, we will try to persuade another spokesperson for Seattle Schools to attend a luncheon during this school year.

- Scholarship Committee

Patricia MacGowan, Chair

THE FOLLOWING ARE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AND TEACHER INTERNS:

The Lynn Fuller Memorial Scholarship provides a great opportunity for any SSRA member to nominate a student who is graduating or has graduated from the Seattle School District and is interested in pursuing a field in elementary education. Two \$2500 scholarships are available.

The Phil Konkel Memorial Scholarship provides two \$2500 scholarships for Seattle Public High School students interested in secondary education.

All that is required for both the above scholarships is a letter explaining why the SSRA member-nominator believes the student is worthy of the scholarship as well as a short essay by the student regarding his or her goals in the field of secondary education.

Nominations are **due May 31st** and recipients will be notified by June 15th, 2019. Two \$2500 awards are made annually for each of these scholarships and will be sent to the recipient's selected post-secondary institution.

SSRA will offer two \$5000 TEACHING INTERN SCHOLARSHIPS for future teachers who are student teaching during the 2019-2020 academic year in a college/university program and are working on initial certification in an educational field. Applications are **due September 1, 2019**. Scholarship application information is available from the SSRA website, www.seattlesra.org or from Patricia MacGowan, SSRA Scholarship Chair, at pmac@uw.edu or by phone at (206) 851-0232.

I would also like to thank these recent donors to SSRA's Scholarship Fund:

Patricia Siggs in memory of Joan Trunk

Madeline Lickey in honor of Doris Leavens (Mercer Middle School science teacher)

Carmen Tsuboi Chen in honor of Walter Trotter.

- Seattle Educational Enhancement Dividend (S.E.E.D.) Committee

Sharon Green, Chair

SSRA is proud to offer grants to any employee of Seattle Public Schools for the benefit of students in their building. Grants can be used for supplies, entrance tickets, transportation, guest speakers, room decorations, furniture, educational equipment, etc. There is no comparison of the requests to determine who receives grants.

Members of SSRA (also known as Actives) can apply annually for a grant of up to **\$500**; non-members are eligible for a one-time grant up to \$200.

Think about it. If you usually spend \$500 out of pocket for student supplies, you recoup \$416 from an SSRA S.E.E.D. grant.

The application can be found on our website: www.seattlesra.org. It is a simple one-page application. APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY MARCH 31ST!

- Audit Review Committee

Roxanne Trees, Chair

I would like to thank all those who volunteered to review the fiscal activities of SSRA. This includes: Sue Battin, Julia Peeler, John Thorp, Patricia MacGowan as well as Jim de Jarnatt, the Budget/Finance Chair as an observer.

- **Drawings and Baskets**

Marilynn Miller, Chair

Thank you again for your generosity in contributing baskets and other items for our drawings. Funds raised from these go to SSRA Scholarships or SEED Grants.

- **May Luncheon**

Margaret Nelson, Chair

Remember that those members who are 85 or older are eligible for a free lunch at the May luncheon. It's not too early to pre-register by phone or by e-mail to let us know ahead of time so that when you arrive for the May luncheon to register we'll know your status. We hope to see a number of you there to receive special recognition.

In Memoriam



It saddens us to learn that the following members have passed away:
***Daphne Burkhalter, Clifford Hogle, Cleta Hughes, Phyllis Ramsey,
Lila Richards, Robert Terry and Thomas Spinney.***

We would also like to acknowledge the passing of **Nadeen Bass**, a long-time educator in Seattle Public Schools, who was a strong advocate for students of all abilities.

SSRA Member Nancy Smith Graphically Illustrates How S.E.E.D. Grants Assist Seattle's Students

by Pat Cygan and Sharon Green, SSRA President and Immediate Past President/SEED Chair

On December 26, 2018 Olympic Hills Elementary Art Teacher, Nancy Smith, sent SSRA a packet of *Thank You's*—her collage of her students' artwork in color plus twenty student cards expressing with color crayons their individualized versions of *Thank You* for the \$500 S.E.E.D. grant we awarded Nancy Smith so she would be able to buy extra art supplies for her many students. Not only did Nancy Smith buy paint, paper, print-making materials, etc. for her classroom but she guaranteed that her students would be able to handcraft a bit more artistry this school year. Thank you, Maya, Chloe, Rafael, Tori, Katherine, Etael, Brody, Zora and the other student-artists in Nancy Smith's art classes who sent us such graphic reminders that a \$500 SEED Grant can be a tremendous help to classrooms whose school PTAs can't always raise sufficient extra funding for classrooms.

Nancy Smith noted that her students are "a creative bunch who absolutely love having the time, space and materials to bring their artistic ideas to life." Most of you also teach such students!

If other SSRA members currently employed by Seattle Public Schools wish to apply for a SEED grant up to \$500 each school year, go to your computers to get a S.E.E.D. application at www.seattlesra.org and fill it out before **SSRA's March 31, 2019 deadline**. Non-members may apply for a grant up to \$200 once only. Our SEED Grants are not unlimited, but some grants are still available for the 2018-2019 school year.

SSRA Members, please note that your \$84 per year (or \$7 per month) membership dues in WSSRA and SSRA will entitle you now to obtain a \$500 classroom grant. That's a savings of \$416 if you've been spending about \$500 a year to buy your own supplies or activities to enhance your students' opportunities!

FYI: Did you know that you can use your watch as a compass? If you are ever lost without a compass at hand, point the hour hand of your watch at the sun. Halfway between the hour hand and the 12 on your watch will be SOUTH. This even works while 48 of our U. S. states are on Daylight Savings Time!



A New Year and a New Legislature

by Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon, Co-chairs, SSRA Legislative Committee

Washington's legislature convened January 14 with 27 new members and substantial Democratic majorities in both House and Senate. With over 1500 bills submitted our legislators will have a busy spring before adjourning April 24. Major issues include increasing support for mental health, saving the Orcas, funding K-12 special education, and finding additional dollars for our short-changed higher education system. Despite a healthy economy, our state doesn't have enough revenue to meet all its needs, and proposals to add new taxes on carbon and capital gains may not have the support to pass.

WSSRA's challenge is to see that legislators do not overlook the needs of school retirees as they set their budgets. Seattle's three WSSRA Legislative Team members, Patricia MacGowan, Edith Ruby, and Mary Wallon spent January 30-31 in Olympia talking with local legislators. Since the Plan 1 COLA was eliminated in 2011 Plan 1 retirees have seen their pensions lose over 12% of their purchasing power. Last year we were disappointed that our request for a onetime 3% COLA for Plan 1 retirees was cut to 1.5%. This year we are again asking for a onetime 3% increase on the first \$25,000 of pension income. Why not ask for a continuing COLA like those in all state pensions except TRS 1 and PERS 1? Because the Plan 1 pension funds are badly underfunded, this is not going to happen at this time. We have a reasonable chance for this year's 3% and will continue to work for a COLA each year.

We are also asking for an increase in the number of dollars allocated by the state to lower the cost of supplementary medical insurance to Medicare eligible retirees. In 2010 our state decreased the premium cost to each retiree purchasing insurance through the Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB) by \$183/month. In 2011 this benefit was decreased to \$150/month. Last year the legislature recognized our members' difficulty in affording insurance and increased the benefit to \$168/month. This is one reason our monthly premiums for both Kaiser and Uniform Medical decreased for 2019. We asked this year that our benefit be increased to at least the \$183/month we had in 2010. A bad surprise was that Governor Inslee's budget contained no increase. But the governor's proposed budget is not final. Both House and Senate will submit their own budgets by late March. We are urging legislators in both houses to put the benefit increase in their budgets.

Restrictions on early retirement need to be loosened. Last session WSSRA successfully advocated for Plans 2 and 3 classroom teachers retiring at age 62 to work as substitutes without pensions cuts. Counselors, coaches, administrators and other school employees still cannot sub before age 65 without penalty. We are urging legislators to correct this inequity.

Legislators are willing to listen to WSSRA Legislative Team members because we are not professional lobbyists. We go to Olympia as volunteers because we want a secure retirement for ourselves and our colleagues. However, we are a small group. They need to hear many voices. Someone has said that legislators estimate that each letter received represents the views of 100 constituents. Pick up your pen or put your fingers to the keyboard and let our legislators know the financial challenges that we face as we age.



Seattle School Retirees' Association
 151 South Lander St. #C
 Seattle, WA 98134

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 Seattle, WA
 Permit # 1445

SSRA Scholarship and/or S.E.E.D. Grant Fund Donation Form

Date _____

Enclosed is my gift for:

SCHOLARSHIP FUND



Helps provide scholarships for post-secondary education and training for graduates of Seattle Public Schools.

BURBANK RIDEOUT SEED FUND



Seattle Education Enhancement Dividend provides mini-grants to school employees for special classroom projects.

If a box is not checked above, your donation will be placed where the need is greatest.

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Person or family (and address) to be notified of my gift:

In honor of _____

or

In memory of _____

My name _____

Please make checks payable to SSRA Scholarship and Grant Fund

Mail to: SSRA, 151 S. Lander St. (Suite C) Seattle, WA 98134

Donations are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent allowed by law. You may double your gift by enclosing a matching donor form from your (or your spouse's) employer. Please check here if you would like information about including the Scholarship and/or Burbank Rideout SEED Fund in your estate planning.