



The Bulletin



Volume LV No. 4

The Seattle School Retirees' Association

May-June, 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 May 7th, 2019 Luncheon

Date: Tuesday, May 7th

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

Price: \$20.00 for a buffet lunch—but remember those members who are **85 or better** get a free lunch. Let us know when you register at the front desk if you qualify.

RSVP Deadline: Monday, April 29th

Program: Debbie Dimitre, well-known actress and historian, is returning by popular demand. Last year Ms. Dimitre did her performance as Grandma Moses, and the year before that she “was” Rachel Carson.

Her background in theater began with studies at the University of Oregon and Portland State University. She has done her dramatic presentations in recent decades and does her own historical research for each presentation, performing throughout the Pacific Northwest.

She is now a resident of Kirkland and a wife and mother to three adult children.

Her dramatic presentation as Mrs. Bertha Knight Landes is her most recent program.



Debbie Dimitre as Bertha Landes

Bertha Landes, who in 1926 was not only Seattle's first female mayor, but the first woman mayor of any major metropolitan city in the United States.

Please welcome Debbie Dimitre once again!

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, 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 get email addresses for those we don't already have.)

We haven't published a new members' directory since 2011 when PEMCO printed it for us. Now the WSSRA's office is willing to help SSRA prepare a new directory with membership data that WSSRA has. Michele Hunter of the WSSRA office will accept calls from current SSRA members who **do not want their addresses and phone numbers to appear in the new directory**. You can call her at WSSRA at 1 800 544-5219, Extension 116, by May 7th to opt out of having this information printed in the new directory.

A number of our members have asked for a new directory to have current contact information. After all, it has been eight years since the last directory!

2018-2019 S.E.E.D. Report
by Sharon Green, S.E.E.D. Chair

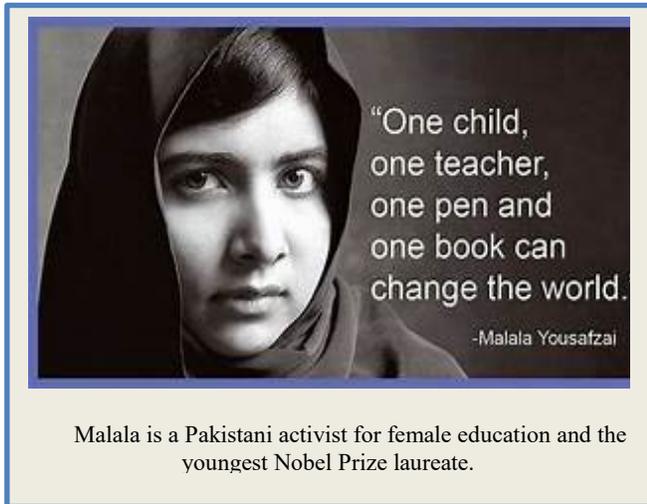
The current school year saw a doubling of S.E.E.D. grant applications. In 2017-18 we received ten applications. This year saw an increase to 21. We were thrilled to see the types of innovative ways in which the funds are being used to help all grade levels, including Special Education students, to improve their instructional and educational experiences.

A revised application will be available on our website (www.seattlesra.org) beginning August 1, 2019. **The application period is from September 1st to March 31st.** Instructions and criteria for how to apply are also listed. An **“active” member** (currently employed by Seattle Public Schools in either a certificated or classified position) who has paid the annual \$84 dues may apply for **up to \$500 each year.** A **non-member** may apply for up to **\$200 one time only.**

This past April we moved our monthly meeting to the second Tuesday of the month to coincide with the District’s Spring Break. David Horsey was our speaker and he brought out a large crowd. We had about twice as many guests with about a dozen of those being current employees.

We appreciate your coming and hope you saw how pleased we are to be able to provide this small amount of financial assistance to you for the benefit of your students.

Have a great summer and we hope to hear from a number of you “actives” next year!



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.

A Quotation Worth Remembering!

“For everyone of us that succeeds, it’s because there’s somebody there to show you the way out. The light doesn’t always have to be in your family; for me it was teachers and school.”

Oprah Winfrey

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.



Sausage Making Time in Olympia

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

There is a saying in politics that two things that you never want to watch being made are sausage and legislation.

As we write this less than three weeks before the end of the legislative session, we are watching nervously as our legislators negotiate a final budget. WSSRA's two top priorities are a onetime 3% COLA for Plan 1 retirees and restoration of the Medicare Eligible Healthcare Benefit from its current \$168/month to the \$183/month we received in 2010. The healthcare benefit helps all retirees in Plans 1, 2, and 3 who purchase supplementary insurance through the Public Employees' Benefit Board.(PEBB)

When the House issued its budget in late March it contained the increased Medicare insurance benefit. It did not contain the 3% COLA. We are grateful to Representative Drew McEwen(R) Shelton who proposed an amendment to add the COLA to the budget. The amendment passed 94-0. Please thank House members from your legislative district for their vote!

To our dismay, the Senate budget contains neither a COLA nor the increase in the Medicare Eligible insurance benefit. When Senator Jeff Holy(R) Spokane proposed an amendment to add the COLA, it was defeated on a straight party vote with all Senate Democrats voting No. You might express your disappointment to your senators for their vote to deny to Plan 1 retirees for still another year a badly needed cost of living adjustment and to all Medicare eligible retirees a small increase in their medical insurance benefit.

Other issues still in play are a bill to place new employees who do not choose a retirement plan into Plan 2, a defined benefit plan, rather than Plan 3, which combines elements of planned contribution with defined benefit, and a proposal to loosen limitations on post-retirement employment for early retirees. The Plan 2 default bill seems likely to pass. The bill to allow more early retirees to work in part time school district jobs has been rolled into an omnibus education bill. The bill was voted out of Senate Rules Committee and seems to have a fair chance of being enacted.

Members of the House and Senate must now come to an agreement on what will be in our state budget for the next two years. It is a difficult task with many needs to fill. Democratic senators will argue that the \$88 million required for the 3% COLA and \$12 million for the Medicare Eligible insurance benefit are budget busters. But this is a small drop in a biennial budget of over \$50 billion. What kind of employer lets the needs of its oldest employees continue to drop off the bottom of its priority list?

This budget setting session of the legislature is scheduled to end April 28. A special session is possible if representatives and senators cannot agree on a final budget by that date. Most of the same legislators will return next January for a shorter session. The main job of the 2020 session will be to write a supplemental budget. If House members cannot prevail on their Senate colleagues to add the COLA and increased medical insurance benefit to this year's budget, we need to be ready to push for both again next January. It was in the 2018 supplemental budget that Plan 1 retirees received a 1.5% COLA and all three plans received an increase in their healthcare benefit from \$150/month to \$168/month. If you care about these issues, let your legislators know what you think of the sausage they produced this session.

SSRA's Committee Reports

• Health Services Committee

Myrna Muto, Chair

There have been several Food Guides adopted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The first was the "Basic 7" during World War II. The food groups included green and yellow vegetables, oranges, tomatoes and grapefruit, potatoes and other vegetables and fruits, milk and milk products, meat poultry, fish and eggs, bread, flour, and cereals and, last, butter and fortified margarine. It was followed by the "Basic Four" from 1956 to 1992. The "Food Guide Pyramid" was introduced in 1992 to include recommended servings of each food group. It emphasized vegetables and fruits, less meat, salt and sugar. The tip of the Pyramid included fats, oils and sweets. Twelve years later "My Pyramid" was released. The Chart was redone to include more refined grains, meats and commercial and fast foods due to the influence of grain, meat and dairy industries subsidized by the USDS. In 2011 the pyramid was replaced by the plate. "My Plate" includes a plate divided into four food categories (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein) and a glass (dairy). It offers "tips and ideas to help an individual create a healthy eating style to meet their individual needs."

Researchers at Tufts University created a modified version called "My Plate for Older Adults." Picture a plate which is 50% fruits and vegetables of various colors, 25% grains (mostly whole grains), with the remainder including protein (nuts, beans, fish, poultry and lean meat) and a little low-fat or fat-free dairy (milk, yogurt and cheese).

Sources: Lisa Fields, "The New Pyramid for Older Adults," Silversneakers.com;
www.choosemyplate.gov; Historical Dietary Guidance Digital Collection

• Scholarship Committee

Patricia MacGowan, Chair

The following are scholarship opportunities for High School Seniors and Teacher Interns. All applications are available on our website: www.seattlesra.org.

THE LYNN FULLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP provides a great opportunity for all SSRA members to nominate a student who is graduating and/or has graduated from the Seattle School District and is interested in pursuing a career in the field of Elementary Education.

THE PHIL KONKEL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP provides scholarships for Seattle High School Students interested in a career in secondary education.

All that is required for both the Lynn Fuller Memorial Scholarship and the Phil Konkel Memorial Scholarship is a letter explaining why the nominator (SSRA member) thinks the student is worthy of the scholarship as well as a short essay from the student regarding his/her goals in the field of 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 each recipient's selected post-secondary institution.

SSRA TEACHING INTERN SCHOLARSHIP

Four \$5000 scholarships are available for future teachers who are student teaching during the academic year 2019-2020 through a college/university program in Washington State if they are
(continued on next page)

(Scholarship Committee article continued)

working on initial certification in any educational field. **Applications are due by September 1, 2019.**

Your generous support also provides \$12,500 to the Seattle Schools' Foundation which will honor Seattle Public High School graduates who won on May 9th at The Stanford Center. All SSRA members are invited to attend this event scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m. Please carpool if possible.

Any questions about SSRA scholarships should be sent to Patricia MacGowan, Scholarship Chair at pmac@uw.edu or 206 851-0232

- **Seattle Educational Enhancement Dividend (S.E.E.D.) Committee** Sharon Green, Chair
(See Sharon's article on Page Two.)
- **May Luncheon** Margaret Nelson, Chair
Remember that those SSRA members who are 85 or older are eligible for a free lunch at the May luncheon. Please remember to pre-register by phone or e-mail to let our office know ahead of time so that when you arrive at the front table at The Canal we know your status and can obtain enough gifts. We hope to see a number of you there to receive special recognition.
- **Drawings and Baskets** Marilynn Miller, Chair
The last two luncheons have been a great success for fundraising. Remember that funds raised from these drawings go toward SSRA scholarships, S.E.E.D. grants and funding special projects. Thanks again for your support.
- **Program Committee** Pat Cygan, Chair
We hope you enjoyed the programs at the luncheons this year. In looking ahead, we would appreciate any suggestions for new speakers for next year's lunches. When you make suggestions, please include contact information on the speaker, either a phone number or an email address. Please send suggestions to the SSRA Juno website or by calling the SSRA office at 206 521-5170.
- **Community Services** Marilynn Miller, Chair
Your generosity has been appreciated, but we still need socks and other wearing apparel as well as non-perishable food items. Donations will go to The Compass Center, the West Seattle Food Bank and, on occasion, Operation Nightwatch.

Quiz for the Day: Female National Leaders

Name the country led by each of these women. (e.g. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister during the 1980's. Answer: Great Britain)

1. Golda Meir, Prime Minister 1969-1974
2. Isabel Peron, President 1974-1976
3. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister 1980-1984
4. Corazon Aquino, President 1986-1992
5. Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister 1988-1990 and 1993-1996
6. Angela Merkel, Chancellor 2005 to present
7. Yulla Tymoshenko, Prime Minister 2007-2010
8. Julia Gillard, Prime Minister 2010-2013
9. Dilma Rouseff, President 2011-2016

9. Brazil

Answers: 1. Israel 2. Argentina 3. India 4. Philippines 5. Pakistan 6. Germany 7. Ukraine 8. Australia

In Memoriam

It saddens us to learn that the following members have passed away:
*West Kelley, Stephen Nelson, Tim Phelan, Patricia Toth, Lois Youells, and
Mattie Woodson.*

Special Recognition for Mattie Woodson

Most of you who come to the luncheons will recognize Mattie Woodson. She was a faithful attendee at several SSRA luncheons until her health failed. She passed away on February 27th at the age of 97. Ms. Woodson was a long-time administrator with Seattle Public Schools who held a number of positions. Funeral services were held at Westwood Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia. Mattie grew up in the Richmond area.

We will miss her gracious presence at our luncheons.

David Horsey Brings Down the House at the April Luncheon

by Ron Cygan



Our April luncheon took place on the second Tuesday of the month of April so that current Seattle School employees could attend since this took place during their Spring break. We had over 90 guests at the luncheon, the largest crowd since we hosted author J. A. Jance a few years ago. The main reason for the large attendance was our guest speaker, David Horsey.

Mr. Horsey, a Seattle Public School and University of Washington graduate, went on to receive the Pulitzer Prize for his political cartoons. His work eventually became nationally syndicated. His cartoons now appear in *The Seattle Times* as well as *The Los Angeles Times* and other newspapers.

During his presentation he showed some of his artwork as a child and how that influenced his professional choices later on.

Above is pictured SSRA's Sharon Green and Roxanne Trees with David Horsey at the luncheon.

A number of SSRA Board members helped in the preparation for this event and deserve thanks for their efforts on a job well done!

Pre-Retirement Seminar

A pre-retirement seminar was held on March 23rd at Madison House, a retirement living facility in Kirkland. The seminar included current Public School employees plus those from other units in King County. WSSRA also helped promote the event and gave guidance in obtaining professional speakers. Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon from SSRA worked in advance to organize various activities. Sessions covered Plans 2 and 3 of TRS, PERS and SERS, PEBB benefits, Deferred Compensation and VEBA.

Will Air Travel Ever Be Comfortable, Less Stressful And Well-Regulated Again?



by Pat Cygan, SSRA President

As many travelers board any airplane—whether American or international carriers—we are very likely to encounter too many frustrating, uncomfortable and harrowing experiences. Many airlines now charge extra fees for what used to ordinarily be “included in the ticket’s price”. Almost all airlines have shrunk their seats’ widths, aisle areas, legroom between rows, and even the number of toilets on board a plane. Security issues since “Nine Eleven” force passengers to face embarrassing/uncomfortable levels of pre-flight surveillance. This list of what’s wrong with traveling in today’s planes could go on and on.

Recently while I rummaged through some old newspaper clippings I’d saved, I found an August 1, 2017 political cartoon by Dave Granlund in *USA Today* that spoke volumes. In it, five rowers have been forced to row a small galleon commanded by a very chunky bully. One rower says to his fellow reluctant oarsman, “Could be worse . . .” His companion answers, “Yup, we could be on airlines with much less legroom!!” As if that were the only flight issue!

Passengers usually emerge from their planes looking flustered and stressed out—only glad that they finally have some real space around them. Some members of Congress who are on their way to or from their home districts may express their displeasure with flying now—especially if they flew “coach” instead of “business or first class.” Sometimes members of Congress or their constituents make appeals to the federal regulatory agencies (like the FAA) to urge them to create and enforce more humanizing policies from the airline industry for the flying public. But, thus far, nothing in this 21st Century or even in the last years of the 20th Century have effectively changed air travel to make it better. Making more money alone seems paramount for the Air Industry! Alas, we seem to be trapped by INERTIA that prevails among the providers of airline travel as well as those who could change what exists.

But I keep asking myself and others who fly often aboard these planes: WHY DO WE ALLOW THE AIR INDUSTRY TO PROVIDE US SUCH BAD SERVICE AND CHARGE US MORE AND MORE FOR LESS AND LESS? Is paying for First Class or Business Class our only options?

Fifty years ago (1969) I flew on my first trip around the world—in very comfortable coach seats the whole way as I went aboard a variety of airlines. Since then, my husband and I have traveled a lot, using various modes of travel. However, the very thought of “flying coach” makes me sick. In Air Museums around our country, I have sat in the old Pan Am and other “early coach seats” which ironically are actually wider and more comfortable than those used today on most carriers’ Business Class seats. Isn’t that weird? (Think about that as you plan your summer travel over the next few months.) Is it time for all of us to consider staging a national or even international series of strikes for better service and more reasonable costs?

“I refuse to accept the idea that the ‘is-ness’ of man’s present nature makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the ‘outness’ that forever confronts him.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Don’t forget to check out the SSRA website at www.seattlesra.org to find out more about the organization and to see *The Bulletin* in living color.



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

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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.