



The Bulletin



Volume LIV No. 6

The Seattle School Retirees' Association

Summer, 2018

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 September 4th Luncheon

Date: Tuesday, September 4th

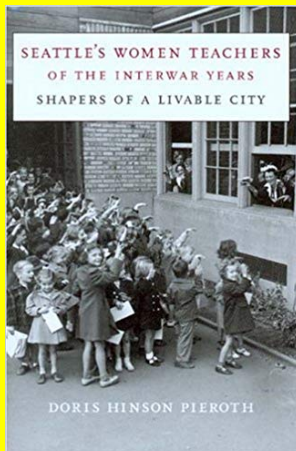
Time/Place: lunch at 12:00 at The Canal Restaurant in Ballard

Price: \$20.00 for a buffet lunch

RSVP Deadline: Monday, August 27th

Program: Doris Hinson Pieroth, who earned her doctorate at the University of Washington, is an independent scholar whose work has focused on the history of women in the Northwest during the interwar years. Her interest in Seattle's women teachers goes back to her own education in Seattle's grade schools. *Seattle's Women Teachers of the Interwar Years* centers on the day-to-day lives of teachers in the city from the 1910's through the 1930's.

Dr. Pieroth earned her BA at Oklahoma College for Women and her Master's Degree from Smith College before further study at the U. of W. She has taught at Smith College, the University of Colorado and the University of Washington.



*the cover of
Doris Pieroth's
"herstory" of
women teachers
in Seattle
between the wars*

SSRA's October 2nd Luncheon

Date: Tuesday, October 2nd

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

Price: \$20.00 for a buffet lunch

RSVP Deadline: Monday, September 25th

Program: State Senator David Frockt will discuss issues of concern for SSRA members. He has been the designated go-between from the legislature to the State Supreme Court regarding the McCleary case. Mr. Frockt graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1991 and served on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. as an aide to a member of the U.S. House. He later moved to California to work on public policy and earned his law degree from UCLA in 1996. In the late 1990's Mr. Frockt practiced law and became a principal partner with Bergman, Draper and Frockt.

Since 2010 he has served in the Washington State Legislature, first in the House and later in the State Senate, representing the 46th District.



State Senator David Frockt

State Senator David Frockt

News Flash from the SSRA Board!

SSRA's S.E.E.D. Grants will increase for the 2018-2019 school year! Thanks to Sharon Green's proposal, SSRA's Board voted to increase the amounts available to Seattle's employees who seek unreimbursed funding for student learning projects.

Non-members may apply for a one-time grant of up to \$200. SSRA members may apply for up to \$500 each school year. To be eligible for these grants apply at the SSRA website at www.seattlesra.org.

Isn't this a great way to start the school year for Seattle Public Schools and with SSRA!

In Memoriam

It saddens us to learn that the following members have passed away:

Linwood Carlson, Daniel Donohue, Louis Koser, Gordon Meeske, Joanne Mehus, and Joan Northfield.



Linwood Carlson

“Lin” Carlson was born in 1950 in Rochester, N.Y. and passed away on June 26th. He worked 22 years for Seattle Public Schools and helped develop drug prevention programs to help students overcome barriers to learning. He also served overseas in Kenya working in a clinic to help students gain access to education. This was through a program at University Baptist Church which was the site for his memorial service held July 1st.



Debbie Dimitre Acts!

Here is actress and historian Debbie Dimitre as Grandma Moses at our May luncheon. She will be returning May 7th to premier a new performance about Seattle’s first female mayor, Bertha Landes.

(photo by Frieda Kirk)

Thought for Today

*“It is impossible to make anything foolproof because fools are so ingenious.”
Corollary to Murphy’s Law*

SSRA Leadership for 2018-2019

Co-Presidents.....Pat Cygan and ?...
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
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
Nellie Sterrett.....Margaret Nelson
WSSRA-PAC.....Mary Wallon and Edith Ruby

NOTE: If you are willing to chair our Health Services or Friendship Committees or become SSRA’s next President(s)Elect or our next Historian, please call Co-President Pat Cygan at 425-493-0352.

Words Worth Remembering

*“A good storyteller is a person who has a good memory and hopes other people haven’t.”
Irving S. Cobb
American Humorist
(1876-1944)*

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. **Office hours** vary. You may now reach us by calling the SODO office at 206 521-5170. **Email:** ssra44@juno.com

Let's Keep Up the Momentum

by Edith Ruby, Co-chair, SSRA Legislative Committee

This year for the first time since 2010 legislators gave school retirees a bit of financial help. While we Medicare eligible retirees will still be paying a bundle for our supplementary medical insurance, we appreciate the \$18/month that will be added in January to the \$150/supplement we have received since 2011. Now we need them to restore it to the \$183/month we were receiving in 2010 plus something more to offset the increases in the cost of that insurance in the last eight years. Most Plan 1 retirees will see a 1.5% COLA added to their pension checks starting at the end of July. Those receiving pensions of over \$50,000/year will receive the 1.5% increase on the first \$50,000. Plan 1 retirees with the very smallest pensions, either Basic or Alternative Minimum Benefit, will see a 3% increase. All Plan 2 and Plan 3 retirees will receive a 3% COLA. Be sure to compare your July check with your June one to see that the increase is there.

We will see many new faces in the 2019 legislature. All members of the House of Representatives and half of the Senate are up for election in November. A number of legislators have opted not to run again and some others are in tough reelection battles. Because the 2019 legislature will set the next two year state budget, it is important to retirees that we have legislators who will introduce and support bills giving school retirees the financial support they need for a secure retirement.

From now until November candidates will be out in their legislative districts asking for our support and our votes. Should we give it to them? This is the time to ask them

- Will they vote to increase the Medicare Eligible Healthcare supplement to its former level with an additional increase to account for inflation?
- Will they vote for a yearly COLA for Plan 1 retirees similar to the COLAs for all other state pension plans?
- Will they refuse to support any efforts to close the current Plans 2 and 3 defined benefit pension plans and substitute a defined contribution, 401(k), plan?

Many candidates have little understanding of school retiree issues. It's our job to educate them. Let them know that although we appreciate this year's small increases in pensions and benefits, each year older school retirees struggle more to maintain an adequate standard of living. We need their help.

Candidates particularly remember constituents who volunteer to help or to contribute to their campaigns. It doesn't have to be a lot, a sign in your yard, an afternoon of doorbelling, a small check with a note. These are ways to let candidates know that we appreciate their support.

Washington State School Retirees' Political Action Committee, WSSR-PAC, is a separate organization from Washington State School Retirees' Association but works closely with it. As a political action committee, WSSR-PAC can legally make sizeable contributions to the campaigns of candidates from all over the state who we believe will be most helpful on issues important to school retirees. If you would like to contribute to the PAC, go to their web site, WSSR-PAC.org. Remember that Seattle contains all or part of only 7 of our state's 48 legislative districts. To pass our bills we need the votes of legislators from other districts as well as our own.

SSRA's Committee Reports

- [Scholarship Committee](#)

[Patricia MacGowan, Chair](#)

Seattle Schools Scholarship Award Ceremony

The Seattle School District scholarship awards were presented on May 10th at the John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence. SSRA member and (former) Superintendent Larry Nyland congratulated the student winners and, along with Leslie Harris, President of the Seattle School Board of Directors, high school counselors presented the awards to students. SSRA member Eleanor Toews, is a Trustee of the Scholarship Fund. SSRA Board members Sue Battin, Mary Wallon and Patricia MacGowan represented SSRA at the event. SSRA provided \$10,000 in support of the fund in 2018 and will contribute \$12,500 to the fund for 2019. This year 26 scholarships of \$2500 each were provided to Seattle Public School seniors from 16 different schools.

Congratulations to Our Lynn Fuller Scholarship Winners

The 2018 Lynn Fuller Scholars include **Renita Gray** and **Cheyenne Brashear**. These \$2500 scholarships support student expenses for tuition, books, lab fees and other education related expenses. Renita Gray attends Evergreen State College and is a continuing scholarship winner. Cheyenne Brashear attends Pitzer College. Both are interested in elementary education. Cheyenne Brashear, who is part Hawaiian, stated the following in her application: "I will return in the fall [to Pitzer College] ... with significantly more conviction and determination to create welcoming academic spaces for folks who also look like me. I look forward to working on creating a space for *kanaka maoli* (Native Hawaiians) to practice the Hawaiian language and find new ways to connect to our culture and *kuleana* (purpose)."



*Cheyenne Kamakaokalani
Paris Brashear*



Kidist Gashaw Wondem



Maria Gloria

Congratulations to Our Phil Konkel Scholarship Winners

The 2018 Phil Konkel Scholars are both graduates of Franklin High School. **Maria Gloria** will attend the University of Washington and her goal is to teach others about public health and safety. She said that she "wants to educate others about the topics people are not wanting to talk about." Maria currently works at Horizon House. **Kidist Gashaw Wondem** will attend the University of Washington Bothell and has been in the Academy of Finance for three years. Kidist lives with her mother and five-year-old brother and works at Goodwill. She is interested in marketing and business education.

(Scholarship Committee—continued)

Thanks to SSRA member Barbara Lynch, Business Education Teacher, for nominating Kidist and to the counselors at Franklin High School for letting students know about this scholarship opportunity.

Also of note: Elizabeth Huse, one of our past Phil Konkel scholars, has been selected to be on the board of trustees at her college—Warren Wilson College. Elizabeth changed her major but still plans on getting her teaching certificate.

- **Program Committee** Pat Cygan, Chair
As you can see on page one we have the first two speakers for our luncheons. Other speakers are being chosen at this time or will be in the near future. Stay tuned!
- **Drawings and Baskets** Marilynn Miller, Chair
We are still looking for volunteers to bring baskets or items for a basket to prepare for an upcoming luncheon. Funds we earn at each luncheon from selling tickets go toward supporting S.E.E.D. Grants. Thanks for your contributions this past year.
- **Community Services Committee** Marilynn Miller, Chair
We are still accepting non-perishable food and personal items like new white socks and other apparel as donations for the West Seattle Food Bank and The Compass Center.
- **Health Services Committee** (Position Open—Ron Cygan Subbing)
New Medicare Cards are coming. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will replace old Medicare cards with new ones that have a Medicare number that is not your Social Security number. The new number will be the only change on the card. Make sure the address that Medicare has on file for you is current. Washington State residents were to begin receiving their new cards beginning in June of this year (but may be soon after this).

The PEBB program does not have any specific information about when you will receive your new card. If you have already sent PEBB a copy of your old Medicare Card, you DO NOT need to send PEBB a copy of the new one. Please contact CMS at 1 800-633-4227 with any questions. If you are a new Medicare enrollee as of April, 2018 or later, your Medicare card should be the new version.

The idea behind this change is to help prevent identity theft.

For questions, call CMS at 1 800-633-4227 or go online to: go.medicare.gov/newcard

Another quotation worth remembering:

“Drama is very important in life: You have to come on with a bang. You never want to go out with a whimper.”

Julia Child, famous chef and celebrity

“FIERCE WOMEN OF SSRA”—AND WHY THESE FIVE PIONEERS MATTER!

by Pat Cygan from Information Garnered from SSRA’s Files

In our fast-paced world many of us may ignore or denigrate what’s happened in the past. But history influences our values and channels many decisions. I hope you’ll enjoy these “HER-story” pieces!

Lizzie Ordway came “around the Horn” from Lowell, Massachusetts to Seattle in 1864 as one of the so-called “Mercer Girls” selected by Seattle Founding Father Asa Mercer to marry Seattle’s bachelors. But Lizzie Ordway fell in love with teaching instead of a bachelor! She withdrew from the Mercer Girls who’d added the informal “Missus” title to their names. (Being a married woman would have disqualified her from teaching in our state then because of our state’s “Blue Laws” of the time.)

Lizzie Ordway first taught school in Coupeville and then in Seattle, where she became Seattle’s first public school teacher. Later Lizzie Ordway moved to Kitsap County and was employed as Superintendent of County Schools. When she died on September 22, 1897, Lizzie Ordway was buried in the family plot of Captain and Mrs. Sylvanus Libby in Seattle’s Lakeview Cemetery.

In the 1950s the Seattle Retired Teachers’ Association learned there was no marker on her grave to note that Lizzie Ordway was Seattle’s first teacher. Joining forces with the Kitsap County Historical Association, SRTA members raised money to pay for such a grave marker. Then they gathered about forty people plus a reporter from the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* for a graveside ceremony. A May 16, 1954 article in *the P. I.* described the ceremony in which Mrs. Dora S. Herren, President of the SRTA and Mistress of Ceremony for the event, joined Mrs. R. W. Rickey, Secretary of the Kitsap County Society, in placing a wreath and installing a grave marker celebrating Lizzie Ordway as Seattle’s first teacher.

During the 1930s the Seattle Teachers’ Association elected **Nellie Sterrett** to be its first President. Nellie Sterrett presided over the establishment of *STA’s \$4.00 Insurance Plan* to provide money for teachers who needed to miss one or more days of work because of sickness or disabling events—when there was no such thing as “paid sick leave” for teachers. With this special fund, teachers were able to get \$2.00 a day for up to thirty days. When the Seattle Teachers’ Association disbanded in 1958, they offered the sum of \$4,040 from the \$4.00 Insurance Fund to the newly reconstituted Seattle Retired Teachers’ Association. By 1962, that *SRTA Welfare Fund* had grown to \$4,540 and in 1967 it was renamed “*the Nellie Sterrett Mutual Benefit Fund.*” Interest earned on those funds was later used to help retired Seattle teachers with burdensome disabilities. Any remnants are in SSRA’s Scholarship and S.E.E.D. Grant Fund.

Ida Culver’s name recurs often in the official records kept by the Seattle Retired Teachers’ Association. As a retiree, **Ida Culver** was determined that Seattle’s retired teachers would find a home for sharing their retirement years together. In SRTA’s historical notes, we learn that “*in the early 1930’s SEA purchased an old family home at 1004 Queen Anne Avenue which housed eleven women and one man, all retired teachers. Miss Ida Culver, an elementary teacher and a most enthusiastic worker for teachers’ homes, died suddenly—and left \$2,000 as a beginning toward providing for retired teachers.*” In fact, the **Seattle Retired Teachers’ Association** was conceived in that Ida Culver House on July 30, 1944 during a joint meeting of the Washington Education Association’s Retirement Committee and a few Ida Culver House residents. The event went unheralded at the time because some people believed that new ideas were rarely conceived at the Ida Culver House! And, according to SRTA’s records, the WEA has always been a bit tentative in acknowledging great ideas as arising from its unruly offspring.

In early 1950 (and \$330,000 later), a new Ida Culver House was opened on Northeast 65th Street with 36 retired teachers as residents. It served as a pleasant retirement home for some Seattle teachers until 1988 when a newer, grander Ida Culver Retirement Center was built on 125th and Greenwood Avenue. At first, about 80% of that new facility was available, at special rates, to Seattle’s retired teachers or their relatives. However, the Seattle School Retirees’ Association team that tried to raise sufficient funds to pay back the monies borrowed to build such a grand facility were unable to do so. *Thus that facility is no*

continued from previous page

*longer owned nor managed by us—and those who had loaned SSRA the money to build that facility on 125th and Greenwood legally reserved the name of “Ida Culver House” for themselves. “**Foundation House facilities**” are those now associated with SSRA.*

Less well-known of these 5 FIERCE WOMEN among SSRA’s early pioneers is **Nellie Quirk**. As Seattle Retired Teachers’ Association President from 1944-1945, Nellie Quirk steered the SRTA into *statewide* involvements. Nellie Quirk inspired SRTA members to focus on creating and organizing a STATEWIDE retired teachers’ association. Three years later in 1947 the Washington State Retired Teachers’ Association sprung into life. The first joint project undertaken by SRTA and WSRTA was to lobby our state’s legislators about the inadequacy of a \$40 per month pension for public school retirees. So let’s salute Nellie Quirk’s efforts in launching the Washington State Retired Teachers’ Association in 1947. Let’s also toast SSRA/WSSRA’s on-going efforts to provide better pensions and healthcare benefits for our state’s retired public employees!

Frances M. Fraser was another strong-willed woman who made a major impact on Seattle’s retired school retirees. Interestingly, she never taught for Seattle Public Schools; she lived and taught in Auburn. She joined SRTA in 1959 and often attended SRTA’s meetings, reputedly enjoying a lively camaraderie with our members. **When Francis Fraser died in 1983, she bequeathed a large sum of money and some land to the SRTA.** In the spring of 1984, SRTA received a \$3,000 bequest from Frances M. Fraser’s estate. But, as the SRTA was soon to learn, there was *a proviso at the end of her will* which specified that anything not bequeathed elsewhere should be given to the SRTA. **By November 1984, SRTA was notified that her will’s proviso made SRTA the recipient of \$165,372.39 PLUS a promissory note for the sale of her Auburn house which was worth \$62,500 PLUS a piece of undeveloped view property in Des Moines.**

SRTA’s Board members were suddenly confronted with the major task of dealing with such a huge largess from Frances M. Fraser’s estate. They turned to PEMCO Insurance Company’s lawyers for advice. (Note that in 1983 SRTA had moved into a new office in PEMCO’s headquarters.) *PEMCO’s legal advisers urged the SRTA to turn itself into a non-profit corporation with new governance documents from Washington State and the U. S. governments.* Several officers and Board members joined the SRTA’s office staff members in preparing and submitting all of the necessary paperwork to effect those changes. By October 1984 Washington State’s Secretary of State Ralph Munro issued the SRTA a Certificate of Incorporation as A Non-profit. An Article of Amendment sent to the same office in 1999 to change our official name to **the Seattle School Retirees’ Association** was filed by Washington’s Secretary of State Ralph Munro in February 2000.

Thanks to the funds left to our group by Frances M. Fraser’s will and PEMCO’s legal advice, our retirees’ organization was more solvent than it had ever been. The federal government approved 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit group status for SSRA; our Scholarship and Grant Fund was duly granted a 501(c)4 tax-exempt status as well.

After five years of work by Frank Ross, the undeveloped view property in Des Moines that we inherited from Frances Fraser’s estate was also sold. That November 1989 sale was for \$100,000 with \$25,000 down and 12% interest for the next ten years. In other words, the amount SSRA received from Frances Fraser’s will amounted to \$370,815.81 before any bank interest was added. **Frances M. Fraser truly played a pioneer’s major role in making the SSRA a solvent and non-profit organization!**

These five pioneers deserve to be remembered by those who work for or have retired from Seattle Public Schools. All five of these Fierce Female Pioneers defined and enlivened what is now called the Seattle School Retirees’ Association to be a non-profit that offers scholarships to Seattle’s graduates, intern grants to graduate students about to start their teaching careers, and S.E.E.D. grants to the District’s current employees to enhance Seattle’s classrooms.



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.