



The Bulletin

Volume LVI No. 5 *The Seattle School Retirees' Association* Summer, 2020

Can SSRA Revive Our Members' Luncheons at *The Canal Restaurant* in 2020-21? by SSRA President Pat Cygan

"One of the difficulties of being alive today is that everything is absurd but fewer and fewer things are funny." That insight, recently attributed to humorist Alexandra Petri by *The Washington Post*, was especially relevant to me amidst our nation's fumbling strategies to cope with a devastating novel coronavirus pandemic. Many Americans do not feel safe enough to leave our homes now. But others are pursuing seemingly risky behaviors to have a good time with fellow deniers similarly unwilling to believe that any will get very sick and maybe die. Some Americans even allege that they have a *"constitutionally guaranteed right" to do whatever they want to do whenever our political leaders and health authorities prescribe the best ways to stay safe and to ensure other people's health/safety during this pandemic.*

Incidentally, I wonder who has actually read the U. S. Constitution since I've heard so many falsehoods about its provisions recently—forcing me to ponder whether we Social Studies teachers successfully taught it to anyone. A clever humorist might turn our nation's current ironies into laughable, stinging quips! After all, both comedy and tragedy derive their central plots from similar points; what we laugh about is also what may drive us to tears.

That's my backdrop as to whether or not SSRA can safely schedule any members' lunches and programs at *The Canal Restaurant* in Ballard during the 2020-2021 school year. First I checked with *The Canal Restaurant*'s management team to see if they can safely serve us in their venue during the 2020-2021 school year. And, of course, as all of us who are watching and reading the news know, our governor has not authorized any King County restaurants to safely/fully open to customers as they normally would. Staging one of our luncheon meetings and programs at this time would neither be safe for *The Canal's* employees nor for any of us retirees/attendees at this time. Secondly, since I am both SSRA's President and Program Chair, I needed vital input from SSRA's Board on whether to schedule/hold any lunches at our oh-so-lovely venue at *The Canal Restaurant* until these crises end. So I convened a "virtual meeting" of SSRA's Board on Thursday, July 30th—thanks to WSSRA's Tara Teitzel's adept setup of a ZOOM Platform for us.

We had several important decisions to make about this next year's projects then, but our most immediate concern was deciding which—if any—luncheon meetings to schedule. It did not take us very long to decide to cancel our members' luncheons and programs at *The Canal Restaurant* for September, October, November and December in 2020. Even though we believe it's unlikely that things will get much better by next February or March so that we'd be able to resume our lunches and programs for March through May, 2021, we decided to wait a while before finalizing those decisions.

Finally I called the three people I had pre-scheduled to deliver our first three programs to cancel (or at least postpone) their appearances. I'll tell you more about them in *The Bulletin's Programs Committee section* of this edition since SSRA's Board suggested some creative ideas for potential substitute-programs via use of our unit's website.

Thus--to be clear--SSRA will NOT host any members' luncheons/programs at *The Canal Restaurant* in the Ballard area on the First Tuesdays of September, October, November or December in 2020. SSRA's Board will decide later this year whether we'll resume our luncheons and programs next March, April and May—if our nation, state, county and city will be coping with *Covid-19* a lot more successfully by then.

And, as my feeble attempt to find humor in this situation, just remember William Shakespeare's wise directive: "*All's well that ends well!*"

Quotable Quotes

“True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The opposite of a fact is falsehood, but the opposite of one profound truth may very well be another profound truth.”

Danish physicist Niels Bohr

“It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles; the less they have in it, the more noise they make in pouring it out.”

English writer Alexander Pope

“Everyone is entitled to my opinion.”

Newscaster David Brinkley

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”

Author Anne Lamont

“To err is human—but it feels divine.”

Mae West

“True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost.”

Former Tennis Champion Arthur Ashe

“A culture war is something only the other side fights. The side you are on is merely talking sense.”

Robert Shrimslay

“What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other.”

George Eliot (pen name for English author Mary Ann Evans)

SSRA Leadership for 2019-2020

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

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

Committee Chairs

Audit Review.....	Roxanne Trees
Budget.....	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.....	Unfilled Spot
Scholarships.....	Patricia MacGowan
Burbank Rideout/SEED Grants.....	Sharon Green
WSSRA-PAC.....	Mary Wallon and Edith Ruby

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

Don't Forget to Check Out the SSRA Website

At www.seattlesra.org





What's a PAC and Why Do We Need One?

Edith Ruby, SSRA Legislative Committee Co-chair

The size of our paychecks while working and pension checks in retirement are decided by the women and men we elect to our state legislature. It is in our financial best interest to elect legislators who compensate us fairly for the work we do.

It takes money to run a successful political campaign. Most legislative candidates aren't rich enough to fund their own campaigns. They need help. Many of us write the small checks we can afford to the campaigns of candidates we know and respect. Candidates appreciate our individual help, but often larger contributions are needed. That's where a PAC (Political Action Committee) comes in. PACs are political organizations that pool contributions from members and donate these funds in larger amounts to candidates they believe will best advance their members' interests. These PAC contributions must be kept separate from the dues members pay to their organization.

About 20 years ago a WSSRA member, Betty Swanson, decided to run for the legislature. She didn't win but learned the importance of an adequate campaign fund. She saw that to have influence with legislators, retired school employees would need to play a larger role in their election. To do this they would have to be able to make substantial contributions to candidates most likely to support them. Betty decided that the best way for school retirees to do this was to form a PAC. With the support of other members, the Washington State School Retirees' PAC (WSSR-PAC) was created. This organization is legally separate from WSSRA with its own officers and bylaws. To become a PAC member a WSSRA member must make a separate contribution to the PAC.

The week after this August's primary WSSR-PAC's Executive Committee will meet (by Zoom) to decide which candidates will receive contributions from the PAC treasury. Funds in the treasury come from individual contributions and low cost fund raisers by units all over the state. Most years many WSSRA convention delegates write a check at the PAC table. Because of COVID, those convention contributions are missing this year. At the August meeting PAC officers will discuss with WSSRA leadership and lobbyists which current legislators have been most helpful in advancing legislation benefiting our members. Officers will look at possible new legislators who seem likely to help school retirees. They will consider candidate recommendations from WSSRA members around the state. WSSR-PAC is a nonpartisan organization so contributes to both Democrat and Republican candidates. Two years ago the PAC gave \$1,000 contributions (the maximum amount allowed) to 20 candidates. There is hope to contribute to more candidates this year as a very difficult legislative session is anticipated.

Current PAC Executive Committee members are Pres. Louie Osmonovich, Cle Elum; Vice Pres. Edith Ruby, Seattle; Secretary Mary Wallon, Seattle; Treas. Lora Brabant, Port Angeles; East Side Representative Larry Scholl, Yakima; and West Side Representative Ester Wilfong, Olympia. They, along with PAC Board members from each WSSRA coordinating council, make final decisions on contributions. There is always a PAC information page in the *WSSRA Journal* and a website, wssr-pac.org.

Contributing to the PAC is easy. You can either make out a check to WSSR-PAC and send it to Treasurer Lora Brabant, 125 West 11th St., Port Angeles, WA 98362-7709 or send a contribution electronically through the website, wssr-pac.org.

In Memoriam

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



George Adair, Bruce Benge, Karin Dickerman, Richard Dyksterhuis,

Ray Gerring, Hans Heia, William Lagreid, Patricia Nelson, Peggy Stanley,

Dorothy Tierney, Karl Walters, Donn Weaver, and Donald White.

Forbes Bottomly

April 20, 1921--May 8, 2020



Dr. Bottomly, former superintendent of Seattle Public Schools, was born in Kansas City, Missouri. He later graduated from the University of Montana and eventually earned his doctorate in Educational Management from Washington State University. He began his teaching career on Montana's Blackfoot Indian Reservation. He also served as a Naval officer during World War II and learned to fly seaplanes. He developed a love for the water and boats that lasted for the

rest of his life. (He eventually built and sailed a thirty-eight foot ketch.) He wanted his epitaph to read: "He was a master boatwright."

Dr. Bottomly served as Seattle's Superintendent for eight years, facing considerable challenges including the first years of voluntary school desegregation. After leaving Seattle he worked on a cooperative plan for the Boston metropolitan area to help integrate their public schools.

Dr. Bottomly had far-reaching influences in education nation-wide, but in education circles he always referred to himself as a teacher first.

Cora Jean Howard

Cora Jean Howard, Seattle educator and wife of former principal Ted Howard, Senior, passed away on April 3rd at the age of seventy seven. Her son is Ted Howard II, current principal of Garfield High School.

Cora Jean was born and raised in Lufkin, Texas. She met Ted Howard when they were still in school and they married in 1962. Years later they moved to Seattle's Central Area where each became involved with Seattle Public Schools—she as an

elementary school teacher and he as a school administrator. She became known for the care she showed for her students. Though small in stature she earned a lot of respect. Most of her career was spent at Emerson Elementary School.

She and her husband spent their retirement in a home they had built in the Leschi neighborhood. She passed away from COVID-19 complications which similarly affected Ted Howard, Senior.

Richard Dyksterhuis

Richard Dyksterhuis passed away June 10th at 93 years of age. He was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. After high school he served in the Army until 1948, mostly overseas. After returning stateside he pursued degrees in higher education. He eventually became a teacher and administrator for Seattle Public Schools, working at Monroe, Blaine, Ballard, Ingraham, Rainier Beach, West Seattle, Nathan Hale, Garfield, Cleveland and Meany.

SSRA's Committee Reports**• Scholarship Committee**Patricia MacGowan, Chair

Seattle Schools Scholarship Award Ceremony:

The Seattle School District scholarship awards increased from \$2500 to \$5000 this year.

Twenty-six scholarships were presented to Seattle High School seniors from 16 schools. SSRA member Eleanor Toews and SSRA Board member Myrna Muto serve on the District's Scholarship Committee. SSRA again provided \$12,500 support for the scholarships this year. The scholars are selected by counselors from each Seattle high school. Our congratulations to each of the recipients. They will be featured on the Seattle School District website under *Seattle Schools Scholarship Fund*.

Lynn Fuller Scholarship Winners:

The 2020 Lynn Fuller Scholars are **Jaimie Spott** and **Jonathan Barrera**.

Jaimie Spott from West Seattle High School will be attending South Seattle College. Her goal is to become an elementary teacher. Jaimie presented for the Skills Center at a Seattle School Board meeting this year. She volunteers with Team Read and worked with students at LaFayette Elementary. She has assisted a kindergarten teacher, helping with technology since the closing of schools because of the virus. She also created a video for the children on a craft project related to "The Rainbow Fish" book.

Phil Konkel Scholarship Winners:

The 2020 Phil Konkel Scholarship recipients are **Isaiah-James Draculan** and **Mario Daniel Garcia**.

Isaiah-James Draculan is from Cleveland High School and will be attending Seattle Central College. His goal is to teach math, humanities or coding. Isaiah has been working with a sixth grade teacher at Mercer Middle School, teaching about calculating volume and area.

He is tutoring many students on line and shows kindness and patience. He also volunteers at his church on Beacon Hill tutoring students in science, reading, arts and crafts.

Mario Daniel Garcia from Sammamish High School is going to the University of Washington. His goal is to become a secondary teacher. Mario has been active in community activities at Kelsey Creek Farm and has helped run a science camp and 4-H activities there. At his high school, he has been involved in many activities including Curriculum Night, Stem Fair, and Showcase.

These \$2500 scholarships support student tuition, books, lab fees and other education-related expenses.



Jaimie Spott



Jonathan Barrera + family



Isaiah-James Draculan



Mario Daniel Garcia

*Committee Reports Continued:***We would also like to thank these recent donors to the Scholarship Fund:***Genevieve Gardipe in honor of William Gardipe**Kenji Onishi in honor of Dan Peterson and Bill Lagried**Suzanne Hittman in honor of Dr. Forbes Bottomly**Correction from last "Bulletin"--Oleine Hedeen gave to the SSRA Scholarship Fund***Health Committee****Myrna Muto, Chair****Underlying Conditions for Severe COVID-19 and the WSSRA Health Services Survey**

The WSSRA Committee received 1,427 completed Health Surveys by May 31, 2020. Results show that the majority of WSSRA members live with family or in their own homes; 68% exercise 20-30 minutes daily, are active in social organizations and volunteer in their communities. Eighty percent are meeting our nutritional needs and read nutritional labels regularly, forty-four percent of us are overweight, forty-six percent report a chronic health condition including cardiac issues, diabetes, and hypertension.

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) expanded the "List of Underlying Conditions for Severe COVID-19" on June 25, 2020. The information on who is most at risk for severe illness from a coronavirus infection, more clearly defining the level of evidence associated with each condition that could lead to a severe case of COVID-19, was updated on July 31, 2020,. Older adults and people with underlying health conditions remain the primary high-risk populations. The CDC now cautions that "among adults, the risk increases steadily as you age, it is not just those over the age of 65 who are at increased risk for severe illness". Underlying health conditions contribute to complications that arise from COVID-19.

There is strong evidence that the following conditions increase risk for severe illness from COVID-19: Serious heart conditions, Cancer, Chronic kidney disease, COPD, Obesity (BMI of 30+), Sickle cell disease, Solid organ transplantation, and Type 2 diabetes.

There is mixed evidence that the following conditions increase risk for severe illness from COVID-19: Asthma (moderate to severe), Cerebrovascular disease, Hypertension, Pregnancy, Smoking and Use of corticosteroids or other immunosuppressive medications.

There is limited evidence that the following conditions contribute to increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19: Bone marrow transplantation, HIV, Immune deficiencies, Inherited metabolic disorders, Liver disease, neurologic conditions, other chronic lung diseases, Thalassemia, and Type 1 diabetes.

In review, 46% of WSSRA members report that they have cardiac issues, diabetes, and hypertension; 44% are overweight. They are all on the list for Underlying Conditions for Severe COVID-19 with strong or mixed evidence. The survey did not differentiate between Type 1 and 2 diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is on the limited evidence list.

Committee Reports Continued:

According to Robert Redfield, CDC director, "While we are all at risk for COVID-19, we need to be aware of who is susceptible to severe complications so that we take appropriate measures to protect their health and well-being." According to the CDC, "Knowing if you are at increased risk for severe illness can help people make more informed decisions about which activities to resume and what level of risk you will accept, especially as more communities begin to loosen restrictions."

Sources used:

DeRosa, S.; Bumgarner, J. (2020), Health Services Committee Survey Results, "The Journal", WSSRA, Sept. 2020

Nania, R., (2020), CDC Expands List of Underlying Conditions for Severe COVID-19, AARP.org, July 31, 2020

- Community Services

Marilynn Miller, Chair

Even though we have cancelled a number of luncheon meetings, our favorite charities are still in need. Please try to donate what you can to the West Seattle Food Bank, the Compass Center and Operation Nightwatch. Your generosity is appreciated.

- Program Committee

Pat Cygan, Chair

I have some great news to share with you readers of this Summer, 2020 ***SSRA Bulletin!*** Even though SSRA's Board and I cancelled our September through December, 2020 members' luncheons and programs at *The Canal Restaurant*, I have discovered a special set of programs that some of you may be able to "hear" from one of our most popular speakers.

Remember our very talented historian-performer, **Debbie Dimitre**? Well, she is reprising some of her most popular historical recreations on radio podcasts—at 6 P.M. on Wednesdays. You can tune in to **KBFG (107.3)** to hear them—which is most likely true if you live in the Ballard, Fremont, Greenwood and University areas of Seattle since that Roosevelt Way station only reaches a limited listening area. By early August Debbie Dimitre's podcasts recreated radio-friendly versions of her special programs on *former First Lady and Diplomat Eleanor Roosevelt*, *Seattle's first female Mayor Bertha Landes*, and about-to-be-taped *American Poet Emily Dickinson*.

Those of you who are computer-savvy and/or *Goggle* users can find her podcasts in other ways your searching skills enable you to use. One way is to type in debbiedimitre.com and then go to "Special Events" on her home page—where hopefully you'll find those 3 podcasts and any other future ones she produces.

I may soon be able to give you information on accessing *special Middle East Studies programs* that may be available to you on *You Tube* and feature another one of our favorite luncheon speakers, **Dr. David Fenner from the University of Washington's international studies programs.**

I will continue to see what other entertaining platforms I can locate that may intrigue you.



Don't Forget! August is National Women's Suffrage Month. Keep in mind the Nineteenth Amendment of 1920.



Seattle School Retirees' Association
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SSRA Scholarship and/or S.E.E.D. Grant Fund Donation Form

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

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

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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

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