



# *The Bulletin*



*Volume LXXX No. 3*

*The Seattle School Retirees' Association*

*March-April, 2025*

**News from SSRA Acting President Julee Neuhart**

## **MEMBERSHIP DRIVE STARTED**

The WSSRA, our state-wide organization is asking all the local chapters to start a membership drive to add to our numbers and grow the association.

The SSRA board is beginning a program to reward members who recruit a new member. We will give the recruiter and the new member a \$25 gift card to Starbucks. We hope this will encourage our current members to contact their school friends who are still working and who are nearing retirement and ask them to join us. We also hope members with school friends who have retired lately to join our association.

There are two ways to get a membership form to give to a potential member. Every issue of the WSSRA Journal contains a membership form. You can print off a copy and distribute it. (The membership form for SSRA and the WSSRA is the same form.) If you do not have any copies of the Journal, I'll be glad to send you a membership form. Contact me at my email address.: [JULEEN1526@gmail.com](mailto:JULEEN1526@gmail.com). If you recruit a new member, be sure to include your name and contact information so that we know where to send your gift card.

## **SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Our next meeting ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025 is during the school district's spring vacation. Call your friends who are still working and on vacation that day and bring them to our meeting. And members who are still working, here is your chance to come and have lunch with us and see what our meetings are all about. We will meet at the SWEDISH CLUB aka the SWEDISH CULTURAL CENTER. The location is 1920 DEXTER AVENUE N in Seattle. This is more centrally located in Seattle on the east side of Queen Anne Hill overlooking Lake Union. In addition to having a spacious room, there is plenty of free parking. There is a parking lot on the south side of the building on Dexter Avenue. There is also free parking across the street on Dexter and a third lot behind the building. The room we will be using is on the street level, one floor up from the south side parking lot. An elevator is available near the south side entrance and there is a bus stop at the front side of the building for any members who use public transportation.

Our guest speaker for April 16<sup>th</sup> will be RON CHEW, a prominent member of the Chinese-American community in Seattle. At the UW and for most of his career in Journalism, Ron involved himself in labor and social justice organizations He advocated for Alaskan cannery works, the Seattle Rape Relief organization and for various groups of Chinese Americans. He was also recently named the head of Washington AARP.

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*In Memoriam*

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

Ruth Locke of Snohomish  
Patricia Groves of Seattle

Members who worked with those we have lost are welcome to submit short notes for the Bulletin about our lost members and their work in Seattle Schools. Send information by email to the Bulletin Editor, Joani Harr, at [joaniharr@aol.com](mailto:joaniharr@aol.com).

**HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

**America Invented St. Patrick's Day Parades**

St. Parick's Day was also celebrated in America in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Irish soldiers were fightin on the British side duint the Revolutionary War in the U.S. in 1762, those Irish soldiers in New York City held the very first St Patrick's Day parade in an attempt to remember their Irish roots from so far away. The parade idea caught on, especially with Irish immigrant communities in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago. It was a way to honor their patrin saint, display their Irish identities and bond with one another. In fact, the show of solidarity blossomed in 1962, when the city of Chicago dyed a part of the Chicago River green to commemorate the day.

**SSRA Leadership for 2024-2025**

Acting President.....Julee Neuhart  
Past President.....Pat Cygan  
Chairman of the Board.....Edith Ruby

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

**Committee Chairs**

By laws.....Roxanne Trees  
Budget.....Julee Neuhart, Interim  
Community Services.....Open  
Drawings and Baskets.....Open  
Health Services.....Myrna Muto  
Interim Historian.....Eleanor Toews  
Legislative/PAC... ..Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon  
May Luncheon.....Margaret Nelson  
Membership.....Julee Neuhart  
Newsletter.....Joani Harr  
Parliamentarian.....Edith Ruby  
Programs.....Pat Cygan  
Scholarships.....Patricia MacGowan  
SEED Grants.....John Thorp  
Website.....Ron Cygan  
WSSRA's NW-2 Representative. .Patricia MacGowan

**NEED MONEY FOR YOUR CLASSROOM?**

*For those of you currently working for Seattle Public Schools, you can recoup unreimbursed costs by applying for an SSRA S.E.E.D. GRANT.*

**SEE OUR NEXT PAGE FOR FOR AN APPLICATION.**

**SSRA's Bulletin** is published five times per year by the Seattle School Retirees' Association. We plan to hold 4 members' meetings for the 2024-2025 school year. Even though our SODO office is rarely staffed, you can leave messages for us at the office number (206 521-5170) or by email at [ssra44@juno.com](mailto:ssra44@juno.com).



Seattle Education Enhancement Dividend (or S.E.E.D. Grant)
Classroom Grant Application
September 1, 2024 to May 1, 2025

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SSRA MEMBER? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO Best Phone Number/Times To Reach You? \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Request? SSRA MEMBERS MAY REQUEST UP TO \$550 IN A SCHOOL YEAR. \_\_\_\_\_

A NON-MEMBER MAY REQUEST UP TO \$300 ONE TIME ONLY. \_\_\_\_\_

Your School and Its Address? \_\_\_\_\_

Your Position/Role? \_\_\_\_\_ Your e-mail? \_\_\_\_\_

Grant Amount Requested? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Benefitting Students? \_\_\_\_\_

Mail check to whom and where? \_\_\_\_\_

Important Alert Notice: Usually each school year falls into 2 calendar years [e.g., Sept. 2024 to June 2025]. If SSRA were to send you SEED Grants of \$600 or more in the same calendar year [=Jan. to Dec.], both SSRA and you would be required by the Internal Revenue Service to fill out a 1099 form—thereby reporting that sum to be a potential addition to your income for that tax year. Thus, SSRA Members, if you apply for a SEED grant in 2 different but adjacent school years, please space your requests for S.E.E.D. grants so that the total for both grant requests will not equal \$600 or more dollars between January and December of the same calendar year.

Is This A Combined Project? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No If combined, with whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Is This A Summer School Project? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No Is This An After-School Project? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Briefly describe how this grant will be used to enhance students' learning? (Use back if necessary.)

What specifically do you plan to purchase with this S.E.E.D. grant? (Use back of this sheet if necessary.)

Project's Start Date = \_\_\_\_\_ Project's Finish Date = \_\_\_\_\_

Next, you will need to show this request to your school's PRINCIPAL OR PROGRAM MANAGER FOR HIS/HER SIGNATURE. YOUR PRINCIPAL/PROGRAM MANAGER'S SIGNATURE IS REQUIRED.

PRINCIPAL or PROGRAM MANAGER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Please PRINT Principal/Program Manager's Name.

MAIL A PAPER APPLICATION TO John Thorp at 11033 39th Ave. N.E., Seattle, WA 98125 OR send application by email to jhthorp3@outlook.com (We must receive the application by May 1, 2025)

## SSRA's Committee Reports

Health Committee

Myrna Muto, Chair

### Strong Bones, Strong Lives: Osteoporosis

One in three women and one in five men over the age of fifty will experience bone fracture due to osteoporosis. In the US, as the population is aging, the prevalence of osteoporosis, a condition that impacts bone integrity, causing pathologic brittleness (bone fragility) is expected to rise. A person could bend over or cough and break a bone.

Bones are made up of connective tissue reinforced with calcium and specialized bone cells. The body is constantly remodeling the skeleton by building new bone tissue and breaking down old bone tissue. Healthy bones need a balanced diet, regular weight-bearing exercise, and the right levels of various hormones.

Men do have a deterioration in testosterone levels, but this happens more gradually, rather than abruptly. Postmenopausal women are considered the higher risk group when it comes to osteoporosis.

After menopause, women lose a lot of estrogen around the age of fifty. It is the start of having a significant imbalance. Women start losing bone at menopause and the first few years following menopause. Caucasian women seem to be at the highest risk, followed by American Indians and Hispanics. In general, Asian Americans and Black people have much less incidents of fractures with age. They have more resilient bones to the effect of aging.

Another category of people that need to be concerned are those who are taking medications that may affect the integrity of the bone or have conditions that can affect it.

The skeletal bone does not exist in a silo. It has a relationship with the muscles...the musculoskeletal system. It also has a relationship with the fat tissue or adipose tissue in our body. The better the muscle system the more protection on the bone. The less fat and fatty tissue in the body, the healthier it is for the bone and the less likely it will break.

A healthy diet where we consume nutrients that are important for bone metabolism. Calcium and vitamin D are essential for building strong bones and to control diseases that contribute a negative impact on the bone, like diabetes.

Dairy products like milk, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream are high in calcium. However, people who are lactose intolerant should avoid them. Leafy green vegetables like kale and spinach, almonds and walnuts are also good sources.

Vitamin D is much less prevalent in diets. Vitamin D is also known as the sunshine vitamin. To get good exposure to the sun, means exposing both arms and legs to the sun at midday for about 10-15 minutes daily. However, many people are at risk for skin cancer and avoid exposure or put on a lot of SPF containing creams to protect themselves. The biggest food sources of vitamin D are fatty fish, salmon, tuna, and mackerel. Some foods are fortified with calcium and vitamin D, like orange juice and milk

We need weight bearing exercise, meaning that the skeleton feels that there is a need for it to build strong bones to support our body. Weight-bearing exercise is different from weight-lifting exercise. You do not have to belweight bearing. Walking is weight-bearing because you are putting your own body weight on your spine and axial skeleton. Biking is less weight-bearing because you are in a seated position.

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(committee reports continued).

The focus on exercise is part of protecting the skeleton that keeps us from falling. Most fractures happen after a fall. Strong core muscles protect us from falling and gives us balance.

Osteoporosis is the beginning function of age. We are not able to reverse the aging process with exercise, be we can limit the impact on our body. You can still protect the body from breaking a bone by having strong muscles, even if the bone has deteriorated slightly over time. It is recommended that women should start screening for osteoporosis at age 65, ten to fifteen years after menopause, with a bone density test.

Interview of Dr. Jad Sfeir by Dr. Christina Chen, Mayo Clinic Podcast “Aging Forward”, Feb. 6, 2025

### S.E.E.D./CLASSROOM GRANTS

John Thorp, Chair

SEED Grant applications are coming in at twice the rate they did last schoolyear. As of February 15, we have 40 applications from teachers in 19 schools. Want–lists include high interest reading materials, multicultural library books, math and word games, field trip transportation, art supplies, headsets with recording microphones, white boards for small group work, school garden supplies, picture books for preschoolers and first-aid supplies.

Teachers may apply for grants of up to \$300 (\$550 if they are SSRA members). See the application form in this newsletter.

### PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Pat Cygan, Chair

Ron Chew has agreed to be our speaker on April 16<sup>th</sup> at The Swedish Club. At the UW and in most of his career in journalism, Ron involved himself in labor and social just organizations. He advocated for better treatment of Alaskan cannery workers, the Seattle Rape Relief organization and for various groups of Chinese Americans

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A buffet lunch will be offered for a cost of \$18. Members with dietary restrictions are welcome to join us to hear our speaker and not participate in the lunch. Patricia MacGowan will be taking the head count for lunch. Members planning to attend need to contact Patricia by **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>th</sup>**. Patricia’s email is [CMACGOWAN@COMCAST.NET](mailto:CMACGOWAN@COMCAST.NET) or by phone at 206-851-0232

### **AGENDA**

- 10:00 a.m. Check in and social hour
- 11:30 a.m. Buffet lunch
- 12:15 a.m. Speaker
- 1:15 p.m. Announcements
- 1:30 p.m. Adjourn

(committee reports continued)

### Scholarship Committee

Patricia MacGowan, Chair

Thank you for your support of the SSRA Scholarships this year. SSRA recognizes the generous donations to our scholarship and mini-grants from Ron and Pat Cygan, Joanne Franey, Lyndia Gayton and Michael Hooper in honor of Betty Hooper, Genevieve Gardipe in memory of Enid Havens, Samara Hoag, and Carmen Tsuboi Chen in memory of 7 Seattle educators and employees who made a difference in her life.

This is a record setting scholarship year for SSRA. Congratulations to the scholars and to all the SSRA members who supported these scholars. We had so many excellent applicants that needed support and we appreciate their time in applying. Future teachers need our support now more than ever.

We appreciate the generous donation of her book, “Your Voice Matters, Together We’re Better!” by member Stephanie Ione Haskins. Stephanie has 30 years of education experience in Central Kitsap, Everett, Lake Washington and Seattle School Districts. The books will be provided to our teacher intern scholar and to our mini grant awardees and to our board members.

In addition, SSRA provides \$25,000 support to the Seattle Schools Scholarship program that will provide \$10,000 scholarships to Seattle School seniors, a few in every Seattle High School.

SSRA will also support 4 high school senior scholarships (\$3,000 each) that will be awarded in June. These are in honor of Lynn Fuller and Phil Konkel. Teacher Intern Scholarships at \$5,000 each will be awarded in September. Patricia MacGowan and Myrna Muto distributed WSSRA Scholarship information to the Seattle High Schools.

The scholarship applications are available from the SSRA website [www.seattlesra.org](http://www.seattlesra.org) or from Patricia MacGowan., SSRA Scholarship Chair, [cmacgowan@comcast.net](mailto:cmacgowan@comcast.net) (206) 851-0232.

### By laws

Roxanne Trees, Chair

The SSRA Board has continued to review and update our 501(c)3 Non-profit SSRA Scholarship and Grant Fund By-Laws to bring them into compliance with Washington Secretary of State and IRS.

When approved by the SSRA Board, By-Laws will likely be introduced to members attending either the April 16<sup>th</sup> or May 28<sup>th</sup> General meeting at the Swedish Cultural Center. A vote for final approval and adoption will follow at a later meeting.. Board members located original WA Secretary of State Articles of Incorporation, previous By-Laws, minutes and original Secretary of State reports. SSRA Board members participating thus far in searching officer files and the archives include: Pat Cygan, Patricia MacGowan, Mary Wallon, Edith Ruby, Julee Neuhart, Eleanor Toews, and Roxanne Trees.



*School History* by Julee Neuhart



Central I, ca. 1870., SPSA 094a-1

**BUILDING FOR LEARNING** *Seattle Public School Histories, 1862-2022* was published last year. It supersedes all previous editions, from 1951 to 2002.

The following is an excerpt from the chapter on Administrative Buildings:

*Planning for the district's new administrative building at 815 Fourth Avenue North began in 1946 after consultations with staff and principals revealed a favorable reaction toward the construction of an administration building. The new administrative building was named Seattle Public Schools Administrative and Service Center (A&S) on May 20, 1949. Lister Holmes & Associates was the architect. The building dedicated a large percentage of space for direct services to pupils and teachers, even though some services were still decentralized. The Center was completed and occupied that August, and formally dedicated in a ceremony on September 25. When this 60,000-square-foot building was dedicated, the district had 87 buildings and what is now Memorial Stadium. The operating budget was \$13.8 million.*

*A&S was the first administration building specifically designed for district use. The building was constructed on the site of Mercer School, demolished just the year before (see Mercer).*

*Promotional material for the dedication stated that less than 30 percent of the building had routine business and administrative activities and association offices and conference rooms, while the remaining 70 percent, housed departments that served children directly, including medical, guidance and home visiting. Also included were a Department of Instructional Aids, a library, a board room, and offices for teaching consultants. That service center model over a traditional facility was what led the school board to ultimately authorize the new building.*

*"Hundreds of visitors crowded through the \$800,000 structure for its first public house and dedication ceremonies," The Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported the next day. "The ceremony was brief and to the point, with good wishes from State School Superintendent Pearl Wanamaker, Mayor William F. Devlin, Mrs. Edna Mundt, president of the Seattle Public School Council, and other notables."*

*The Raven and the Salmon Lady" legend pole was dedicated at the Administrative and Service Center on August 22, 1973. The pole was created by master carver Morrie Alexander, who was born on the Lummi Island Reservation near Bellingham, Washington in 1915.*

Copies of the book may be purchased through the Seattle Public Schools Records and Archives Department. The cost is \$65 per book or \$75 with shipping. To place an order, please contact Melinda Lamantia, Records and Archives Manager, [mmlamantia@seattleschools.org](mailto:mmlamantia@seattleschools.org)

**Let's Pass a COLA Bill That Saves the State Money!**  
By Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon, SSRA Legislative Committee Co-chairs

Not a fun year to be a Washington state legislator facing a \$12 billion state budget deficit and draconian cuts in federal funding for badly needed state programs. Truly a challenging year for WSSRA's Legislative Committee members to successfully plead the case for legislation to meet our members' needs.

Just as inflation has been one cause of that \$12 billion deficit, inflation continues to eat away at the buying power of retirees, especially TRS/PERS 1 retirees who are never sure that they will receive even a small COLA in their monthly pension checks. With only five COLAs in fourteen years, future financial security is increasingly uncertain. Most legislators recognize the need for all state retirees to receive annual COLAs but are struggling with how to ensure funding while dealing with a large budget deficit.

But there is a way! Just as in the past the state underestimated dollars needed in the TRS/PERS 1 funds, it overestimated what was needed in LEOFF 1, the long-closed police and firefighters fund. This fund now has an amazing \$2.9 billion surplus! Only 11% of this fund was contributed by LEOFF members. The rest is from the state. Sen. June Robinson has proposed a solution to the dilemma of funding TRS/PERS 1 COLAs while actually helping the state budget. Her bill, **SB 5085**, merges the three closed pension funds, TRS 1, PERS 1 and LEOFF 1. This would ensure that members of all three funds receive full lifetime pensions with COLAs.

Is there opposition to the bill? Of course. While police and firefighters already have far more generous pensions than school employees, they would love additional enhancements. Other groups are also looking for ways to tap into these funds. It's up all of us to convince our legislators that restoring the long missing yearly COLAs for TRS/PERS 1 members is the best use for funds originally set aside for pensions.

Legislators listen best to their constituents. Communicating with the senator and representatives in your legislative district is easy. Go to [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov), click on Legislators, then Find Your Legislative District, key in your home address, and click on Find My District. You will see your district number and the names of your three legislators. Click on their names to send an email.

While restoring Plan 1 COLAs is WSSRA's top priority this session, there are other bills that WSSRA also supports. Did you know that the state prorates our pension check for the month we die? Best to die near the end of the month. If you die near the beginning, there may not be enough money in that final check to cover your medical insurance for month of death. Your survivors will need to find a way to pay your final month's medical bills. If passed HB 1312/SB 5114 will end month-of-death pension prorating and your survivors will not be faced with that unexpected expense.

Legislative action can move slowly or very rapidly. For the latest information go to WSSRA's web page, [www.wssra.org](http://www.wssra.org), and click on Legislative. Remember, "You are either at the table or on the menu."



## SEATTLE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

The Seattle Schools Scholarship Fund Trustees would like to invite all SSRA members to attend its annual awards ceremony at Franklin High School (3013 South Mt. Baker Blvd) on May 8th, at 7 PM.

The Fund receives a generous donation of \$25,000 annually from SSRA and is regularly represented by two SSRA members on its Committee of Trustees, Myrna Muto and Eleanor Toews.

It is an honor for the Seattle Schools Scholarship Fund to be so consistently and generously supported by SSRA. The number of high school graduates who will be selected by counselors for having overcome obstacles and various challenges on the way to graduate this year is 73; 5 from each of our eleven traditional high schools and 3 from each of our 6 alternative high schools. Each awardee will be receiving \$10,000 to continue their studies at a university, college, or technical school.

Please join us at this event to see and hear from our awardees as they cross the stage to be congratulated and given the opportunity to say a few words.

Please contact Eleanor Toews [eleanor.toews27@gmail.com](mailto:eleanor.toews27@gmail.com) or Myrna Muto [myrna.muto50@gmail.com](mailto:myrna.muto50@gmail.com) if you have any questions about this event.

## WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREES' 78<sup>TH</sup> CONVENTION

We invite you to join us at the WSSRA convention June 2-4, 2025 at the Yakima Convention Center. Each year SSRA helps support members to attend the WSSRA State Convention.

The conventions have great speakers and members from Units across the state share best practices and enjoy working together to support public education. SSRA would love to have you join our team from our unit. Contact Julee Newhart at (206) 794-7760 or email [juleen1526@gmail.com](mailto:juleen1526@gmail.com) to join the Seattle team attending the convention.

## THOMAS GRAY RECOGNIZED BY STATE OF WASHINGTON

Thomas Gray was recognized by the Washington State Legislature by the passing of House Bill 4626 on February 28, 2025. Thomas is the widower of Nyra Gray, longtime School District administrator and SSRA member. This resolution commends Thomas Gray for his extraordinary contributions to aerospace engineering, his tireless efforts to educate and inspire, and his unwavering commitment to advancing the field of engineering within the State of Washington. Congratulations Thomas Gray!



Seattle School Retirees' Association  
P.O. Box 31027  
Wallingford Post Office  
1329 N. 47th Street  
Seattle, Washington 98103

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US Postage  
PAID  
Seattle, WA  
Permit #1445

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

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my gift for:

**(A) SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

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.)

OR

**(B) BURBANK RIDEOUT SEED FUND**

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

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

**In honor of** \_\_\_\_\_

or

**In memory of** \_\_\_\_\_

My name \_\_\_\_\_ and address \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to SSRA Scholarship and Grant Fund and mail to:

SSRA, P.O. Box 31027, Wallingford Post Office, 1329 N. 47th Street, Seattle, WA 98103

Donations are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent allowed by the law.

Please check here \_\_\_ if you would like more information on including either of these funds in your estate planning.