



The Bulletin



Volume LXXXII No.1

The Seattle School Retirees' Association September-October 2026

News from SSRA President Julee Neuhart

THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR OPENS WITH AN OCTOBER 1ST LUNCHEON MEETING

I hope you all have had an enjoyable summer with friends and family and sunny adventures. The Seattle School Retirees Assoc. will begin the school year on Thursday, October 1st, with a luncheon at Ivar's Salmon House Restaurant (401 NE Northlake Way). You are welcome to pay your annual dues of \$84 at the meeting if you wish. Please bring a friend or a colleague. The food and the view are always a nice way to spend the noon hour. Our luncheon speaker will also be a treat.

The social hour will start at 10:30 am with lunch service beginning at 11:30 am. During the social hour, we will take donations to raise money for our community service organization, Mary's Place. The speaker will begin at 12:15pm and the meeting will adjourn at 1:30pm.

Lunch will again be \$20, cash or check; no credit cards, please. You will need to RSVP to Patricia MacGowan, by WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD. If you do not hear from Patricia in 2 days, please contact her again. Phone: 206-851-0232 or text at CMACGOWAN@COMCAST.NET.

You will need to choose one of the 4 menu items and report it to Patricia:

1. Ivar's world famous fish and chips
2. Blackened salmon caesar salad
3. Alaska true cod piccata
4. Veggie burger

Lunch will be served with coffee and tea. Ice cream will be served for dessert.

Back by Popular Demand by Ron Cygan

For the October SSRA Luncheon, our speaker will be Dr. Lance Rhoades who has done programs for us a number of times in the past on various aspects of film history. His presentation this time will center on "monsters in the movies," with special mention of Nosferatu (the silent version and the more recent one), Dracula, The Wolfman, and The Creature from the Black Lagoon as well as others. He will cover films from the silent era through the 1950's. Please join us for this special program and find out why Dr. Rhoades is back by popular demand.

Dr. Rhoades is a multifaceted Seattle-based scholar who completed his graduate studies in Comparative Literature and Cinema Studies at The University of Washington where he has taught for many years. He was a recipient of the UW's Excellence in Teaching Award and has spoken throughout North America, Asia and Europe on film history.



In Memoriam

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

Genevieve Reckamp, Edgewood, WA
Beverly Strain, Lynnwood, WA
Russell Quackenbush, Shoreline, WA

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



Patsy Lee Ethridge-Neal
 Feb 22, 1941 – Mar 23, 2026

Life-long Seattle resident, Patsy passed away peacefully surrounded by her three children. She spent more than 20 years as a classroom teacher, 17 of those years as a marketing teacher at Cleveland High School, which were followed by more than ten more years supporting vocational education at the Seattle School's district office. Patsy's outstanding work as a teacher was recognized in the 1990's by receiving the Washington State Teacher of the year award and also by receiving the ACTU's Lifetime Achievement award.

Outside of teaching, Patsy loved traveling, square dancing, and spending time with her family.

SSRA Leadership for 2025-2026

President.....Julee Neuhart
 Vice PresidentEdith Ruby
 Recording Secretary.....Mary Wallon
 Treasurer.....Sue Battin
 Parliamentarian.....Edith Ruby
 HistorianEleanor Toews
 Bulletin EditorJoani Harr

Committee Chairs

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 Community Services Raffle.....Jody Lemke
 Health Services.....Myrna Muto
 Legislative/PAC... ..Edith Ruby and Mary Wallon
 May HonoreesMarie DeBell
 Membership.....Julee Neuhart
 Programs.....Ron Cygan
 Scholarships.....Patricia MacGowan
 SEED Grants.....John Thorp
 Webmaster.....Ron Cygan
 Sunshine.....Marcia Lalonde
 WSSRA's NW-2 Representative. ..Patricia MacGowan

Elephant Jokes

Why do elephants have trunks?

Because they don't have glove compartments.

Why are elephants so wrinkly?

They're too big to fit on the ironing board.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:

www.seattlesra.org

or SSRA's Bulletin is published four times per year by the Seattle School Retirees' Association. We plan to hold four members' meetings for this year. You can leave a phone message or text at 206 549-4644. Our mailing address is PO Box 31027, Wallingford Post Office, 1329 N. 47th St., Seattle, WA 98103

THE S.E.E.D. GRANT APPLICATION IS BEING REVISED. AFTER THE REVISION, THE APPLICATION WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE (seattlesra.org) AND IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN.

NOVEL ABOUT ROOSEVELT TEACHER PUBLISHED THIS MONTH

Girl Without End, a novel about Seattle teacher Edna Breazeale, is being published this month. Edna taught English and journalism at Roosevelt from 1926 to 1959. Kristy Molzahn Phillips (Ingraham alum and member of the Breazeale family) wrote it, basing it on family stories, personal experiences, research, and imagination.

After she retired, Edna returned to her family's Skagit County farm. After helping stop the development of Padilla Bay in the 1960s, she donated the beachside farm to the state as a nature preserve. Today, it, along with the beach and bay, is the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. Thirty thousand people—including schoolchildren from across Western Washington—enjoy the Reserve and the Breazeale Interpretive Center's educational resources.

The book is available as a paperback and ebook through Amazon, Bookshop.org, and other retailers.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Invest in Youth is a free after-school tutoring program that has been active in the Seattle School District for several years. Currently they work with students at four elementary schools in grades 3-5.

The program offers once-per-week tutoring sessions with the same volunteer tutor for the entire school year, October through May. For the 26-27 school year, the schools participating are: Beacon Hill, Roxhill @ Hughes, Sanislo and Thurgood Marshall. They are hoping to serve 80 students this year.

Volunteers can complete an application at <https://www.investinyouth.org>. Visit and website listed above or contact Carter Rusch at crusch@investinyouth.org or (425)495-5154 to learn more.

FALL 2026 RETIREMENT WEBINARS

WSSRA will be hosting two webinars this fall. You can view information about them on the WSSRA website (wssra.org).

The first webinar will be geared towards retirees and the second webinar towards active educators interested in early retirement options.

October 14 2026 – Health Care Authority/PEBB

October 27, 2026 – Health Insurance and Early Retirement

The Most Rewarding Retirement Activity

For many retired educators, retirement is an opportunity to continue making a difference in new ways. Becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer offers a meaningful way to use a lifetime of experience to advocate for children involved in the dependency court system.

As retired Mercer Island educator and CASA volunteer Mike Radow shares

"I hear from many who are reluctant to retire, wondering how they might spend their time. Hundreds of children in King County involved in the dependency court system are in need of an advocate. You can become their voice."

King County Dependency CASA recruits, trains, and oversees community volunteers who advocate for the best interests of children involved in the dependency court system due to allegations of abuse or neglect. CASA volunteers gather information by talking with parents, caregivers, school personnel, and service providers in order to provide independent recommendations to the court through written reports to help inform the court's decisions affecting a child's future.

Mike believes retired educators are uniquely qualified for this work:

"If you enjoy working with kids, and are curious about people, this is for you. Many retired educators find this work to be inspiring, challenging, and even transformative. Teachers are uniquely qualified to be CASA volunteers because we know very well how schools work and can navigate IEPs (as they often apply)."

Whether you choose to volunteer yourself or simply share this opportunity with others, every connection matters. Raising awareness of the need for additional CASA volunteers helps ensure more children have access to a consistent, caring advocate during a critical time in their lives.

We encourage you to learn more about King County Dependency CASA and share this opportunity with family members, friends, neighbors, former colleagues, and others in your network who may be looking for a meaningful way to make a difference.

CASA information sessions are held via Zoom on the second Monday of each month from 12-1 pm. To register or learn more, visit www.kingcountycasa.org.

You can also follow us on **Facebook: King County Dependency CASA** and **Instagram: @kingcountycasa** for program updates and highlights.

If you'd like to speak with Mike personally about his experience as a CASA volunteer, please leave a message at the King County Dependency CASA office at **206-477-4245**.

If you have connections to a neighborhood association, faith community, alumni group, retiree organization, service club, professional association, or other community network, we'd love the opportunity to share information about King County Dependency CASA through a presentation, newsletter article, or outreach materials. To make a connection or learn more, please contact **Sarah Childs, Recruitment & Retention Coordinator**, at schilds@kingcounty.gov.

Which PEBB Medical Insurance Plan Is Best?

By Edith Ruby

Each October those of us on PEBB medical insurance receive a letter announcing the premium rates for the next year, and nearly every year the rates go up. Because each year we have the option of choosing a different PEBB plan, we may wonder which plan will best meet our health needs. Or should we abandon all PEBB plans for a plan with lower premiums. **It is important to know that if a member leaves PEBB coverage, they will never again be able to purchase insurance offered in a PEBB Medicare plan.**

Fortunately, the State Insurance Commissioner's Office offers help in making medical insurance decisions. By going to insurance.wa.gov/insurance-resources/medicare and clicking on Get free medical help SHIBA, we can find how to make an in-person appointment with a Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisor (SHIBA). Because these advisors are volunteers, they have no reason to steer anyone to a particular plan so they do their best to outline advantages/disadvantages of each PEBB plan. Their aim is to help members choose the plan that best fits their needs. In the fall SHIBA appointments fill up fast so now is the time to request an appointment.

PEBB offers five different plans with substantial differences in rates. Two of the plans, UMP Classic Medicare with Part D and Premera Plan G, offer Original Medicare with a medigap supplement. Premera Plan G does not offer prescription drug coverage. The other plans Kaiser Medicare Advantage, UHC Complete, and UHC Balanced are Medicare Advantage plans limiting members to doctors in their own networks which may change from year to year.

PEBB Plan monthly premiums for 2027 rounded to the nearest whole dollar are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • UMP Classic Medicare | \$396.00 |
| • United Healthcare PEBB Complete | \$343.00 |
| • United Healthcare PEBB Balanced | \$280.00 |
| • Kaiser WA Medicare Advantage | \$222.00 |
| • Premera Plan G | \$143.00 |

While it is easy to assume that the most expensive plan gives the best coverage and the least expensive plan the poorest, each individual's medical needs are different. "Best" for one member may not be "best" for a different member. My advice: talk to a knowledgeable counselor before deciding which plan is best for you.

Inexpensive Healthy Foods Myrna Muto, Health Services Committee

Eating healthy on a budget might seem difficult, but according to the American Heart Association it can be done. Stock up on these healthy foods and include them in your menu planning. Each of them costs less than one dollar per serving.

Apples (raw with skin)

- Use for snacks, green salads, main dish salads and fruit salads
- A serving is one large apple with about 116 calories, 5.5 grams dietary fiber, 17% daily value for vitamin C and 7% for potassium

Bananas

- Use for snacks and fruit salads, yogurt parfaits and smoothies
- A serving is one large banana with about 121 calories, 3.5 grams dietary fiber, 14 % daily value for potassium and 20% for vitamin C

Baby Carrots (raw)

- Use for snacks, casseroles, stews, veggie platters and side dishes
- A serving is 8-10 carrots with about 30 calories, 2.5 grams dietary fiber, 234 % daily value for vitamin A

Homemade or Canned Beans

- Use in green salads, casseroles, stews, hummus and chili. Look for no-salt added or reduced sodium options such as kidney beans, black beans, pinto, garbanzo, and more.
- A serving is ½ cup. Nutrition info for kidney beans is about 105 calories, 7 grams protein, 7 grams dietary fiber, 8% daily value of iron and 9% for potassium

Oranges

- Use for snacks, green salads and fruit salads
- A serving is one large or extra-large orange with about 70 calories, 3 grams dietary fiber, 138% daily value for vitamin C and 7% for potassium

Eggs

- Use in Omelets, frittatas, and salads
- A serving is one large egg with 63 calories, 4 grams fat, 164 mg cholesterol, 6 grams protein

Yogurt (plain low fat or fat free)

- Use in smoothies, yogurt parfaits, dips and dressings
- A serving is 6 ounces with 95 calories, 10 grams protein, 34% daily value for calcium and 12% for potassium

Broccoli

- Use in salads, mixed in brown rice or whole-wheat pasta
- A serving is 1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked broccoli with 31 calories, 0 grams fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 11% daily value for vitamin A and 135% for vitamin C

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Brown Rice (cooked)

- Use in stir-fry, side dish with veggies
- A serving is ½ cup cooked rice with 108 calories, 0 mg cholesterol and 2 grams dietary fiber

Fat-Free Milk

- Use in cereal or oatmeal, and drinking at meals
- A serving is 1 cup of milk with 83 calories, 8 grams protein, 30 % daily value for calcium and 11% for potassium

Spinach (raw)

- Use in tossed salads or steamed as a side dish
- A serving of spinach is 1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked with 7 calories, 0mg cholesterol, 1-gram dietary fiber, 56% daily value of vitamin A, 14% for vitamin C, 5% of iron and 5% potassium

Picking fruits and vegetables from a garden can be very healthy. What is the safest way to pre-prepare them to eat? This is the response from Carrie Denett, registered dietitian and nutrition therapist. Even if you don't use chemical pesticides in your garden, eating unwashed produce or just quickly rinsed root vegetables could expose you to harmful pathogens, because your soil is a living ecosystem that is open to the elements. Birds flying overhead, cats using your garden beds as a litter box or other critters (squirrels, mice, raccoons) can leave behind pathogens. While many bacteria in soil are not harmful, some are and can easily transfer to the surface of your plants. If you use homemade compost that hasn't reached a high enough temperature to kill off pathogens, you might be introducing bacteria directly to your plant roots.

Rinsing a carrot under water removes the visible clumps of dirt but does not remove anything clinging to the vegetable's surface or trapped in its microscopic crevices. Water alone lacks the mechanical force needed to dislodge these hazards.

To minimize your risk of foodborne illness, treat your garden produce with the same care you would give grocery store items. For root vegetables like carrots, potatoes and radishes, scrub them thoroughly with a clean produce brush under running water.

For additional information:

[https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/healthy-food-under-\\$1-per-serving](https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/healthy-food-under-$1-per-serving)

Carrie Dennett, "Your questions answered on vitamin D, food safety and garden produce", Seattle Times, June 29, 2026

Your Local Legislator Wants Your Vote in November

By Edith Ruby, SSRA Legislative Committee co-chair

Sometimes we get so caught up in national politics that we forget that it is our state legislators meeting in Olympia who make many of the decisions impacting our lives. These legislators are the women and men who live in the same neighborhoods as we do, shop at our local supermarkets, and send their children to our public schools. They are the legislators most likely to listen to an individual constituent.

In November of every even-numbered year we have the opportunity to vote for both members of the House of Representatives from the legislative district we live in. Senators from half of the legislative districts are elected to four-year terms. Most races are contested and candidates spend the two months before the election seeking to persuade us to give them our votes. Brochures touting the wonderful things candidates have done and will do arrive on our doorsteps. A candidate even may ring our doorbell to ask for our vote. Candidates will likely be at public events near us. This is the best time to let these candidates know our needs as school retirees and what legislation we would like to see passed to help meet these needs.

WSSRA's two top priorities for the coming legislative session are (1) maintaining the \$183/month Medicare eligible medical insurance subsidy for members covered by PEBB medical insurance and (2) ensuring that all school retirees receive a yearly COLA. We also strongly support adequate funding for all our state's public schools.

When your fall *WSSRA Journal* arrives it will list candidates who have been endorsed by WSSRA's Board of Directors. They are mostly incumbent legislators who have been helpful in the past. If any are in your legislative district, you might contact them to thank them for past support and urge support for WSSRA's priorities in the coming legislative session. Some new candidates who have indicated strong support for WSSRA's priorities are also endorsed. They need to hear from you.

WSSR-PAC, the political action committee working closely with WSSRA, met in August and chose 29 candidates to receive financial contributions to their campaigns. These are listed at WSSR-PAC.org. All candidates welcome campaign contributions of any size. Often this can be done through their campaign website. Candidates remember their contributors. Always let them know you are a public school employee or retiree!

Fall Events to Keep in Mind

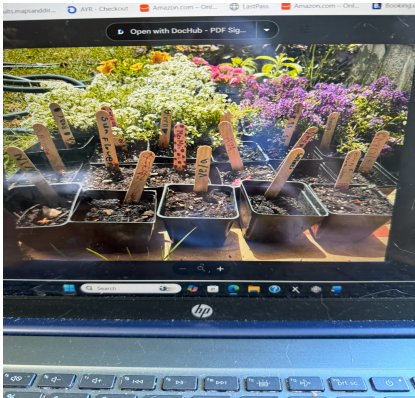
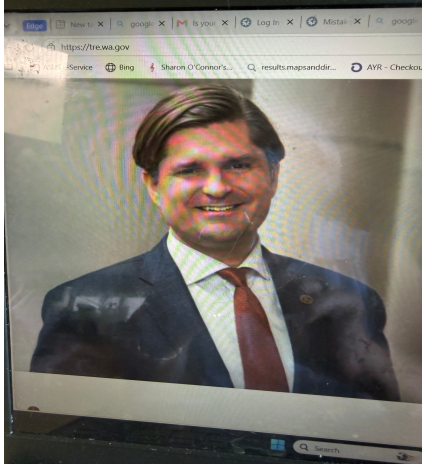
Washington State Puyallup Fair September 4 to September 27

Husky and Cougar Football Games September 12, 19, 26, October 3

Seattle Storm Basketball Games September 17, 19, 20, 23

Seattle Seahawks Football Games September 20, 27, October 4, 11

Seattle Sounders Soccer Games September 12, 19, 23, 26

	Elizabeth Burns, our May speaker, with her Harris Hawk, Alice.
	B.F. Day Elementary School used S.E.E.D. money grant to enhance their garden project.
	STATE TREASURER HAS HOPEFUL REMARKS Washington State Treasurer, Mike Pellicoti was the WSSRA June convention speaker. He reported that although the state's financial picture is tight, he is working hard to improve the State's fiscal health. He has challenged all the Trump administration's unlawful threats to Washington's finances. Mike believes that keeping the state's pension plan strong is a top priority of his office. He is working to implement pension policies that best serve all retirees. Mike is supportive of fiscal education in the schools, and he working to avoid financial risk to the state's educational programs.



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

Date _____

Enclosed is my gift for:

(A) Scholarship Fund

or

(B) Burbank Rideout SEED Fund

Helps provide scholarships for post-secondary Seattle Education Enhancement Dividend
Education and training for graduates of Seattle helps provides mini-grants to school workers
Public Schools. for special classroom projects.

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

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 law.

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