

Sno-King School Retirees



March 2005

www.sksr.org

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The SKSR Bulletin

A message from our co-presidents

Spring is near—or maybe here?

by Donna Murrish, 206-363-5753, donnamurrish@comcast.net
and Ellie Bonanno, 425-778-0751, ejbonnanno@aol.com



Donna Murrish



Ellie Bonanno

It may be a bit chilly yet but as I write this, it surely looks like spring! Winter seems to have skipped right by the Pacific Northwest.

With spring comes a wealth of activities within our organization—beginning very soon with the annual Retirement Seminars March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Edmonds School District administration building. See inside this issue for further details.

On the social side, our scheduled March meeting is a joint one with the East King unit. They have invited us to join them at the Newcastle Golf and Country Club on Thursday, March 17. WSSRA Executive Director Ed Gonion and Membership Coordinator Karen Keller will be special guests that day. See inside

for a map and directions.

With an eye toward the Legislature, we are very close to finally having a voice on the Select Committee for Pension Policy's Executive Committee (SB 5193/HB 1323). One other important bill is SB 5246/HN 1324, SCPP package legislation regarding Plan 1 and Plan 3 gain-sharing replacement benefits and deferral of pension contribution rates. This "package" legislation represents a win/win for active and retired employees and state and local government employers. Stay tuned by monitoring WSSRA's web site at www.wssra.org and/or the Legislative Message Center at 1-800-221-1269. Let your voice be heard by contacting Governor Gregoire and your legislators and ask that they support these bills.

One more thing—our organization needs more members! This is
see **PRESIDENT** on page 6

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SKSR Board Meetings
 1:00 PM, Edmonds SD ESC
 20420 68th Ave W, Lynnwood
 Everyone welcome!

March 10 April 14 May 12



MARK YOUR DATEBOOK

Coming Events for Sno-King School Retirees

- March 17 Joint Meeting with East King
Newcastle Golf and Country Club
 Ed Gonion and Karen Keller, WSSRA
- April 21 Scholarship Luncheon, 12:00
Edmonds Unitarian Church
 Music performance
- May 20 Joint Meeting with Sno-Isle
Sno-Isle Skills Center
 Karen Holm, slides of Chile
- June 6-8 WSSRA Convention
Pasco
- July 22 SKSR Picnic
Edmonds City Park

Our March meeting information

Let's do lunch!

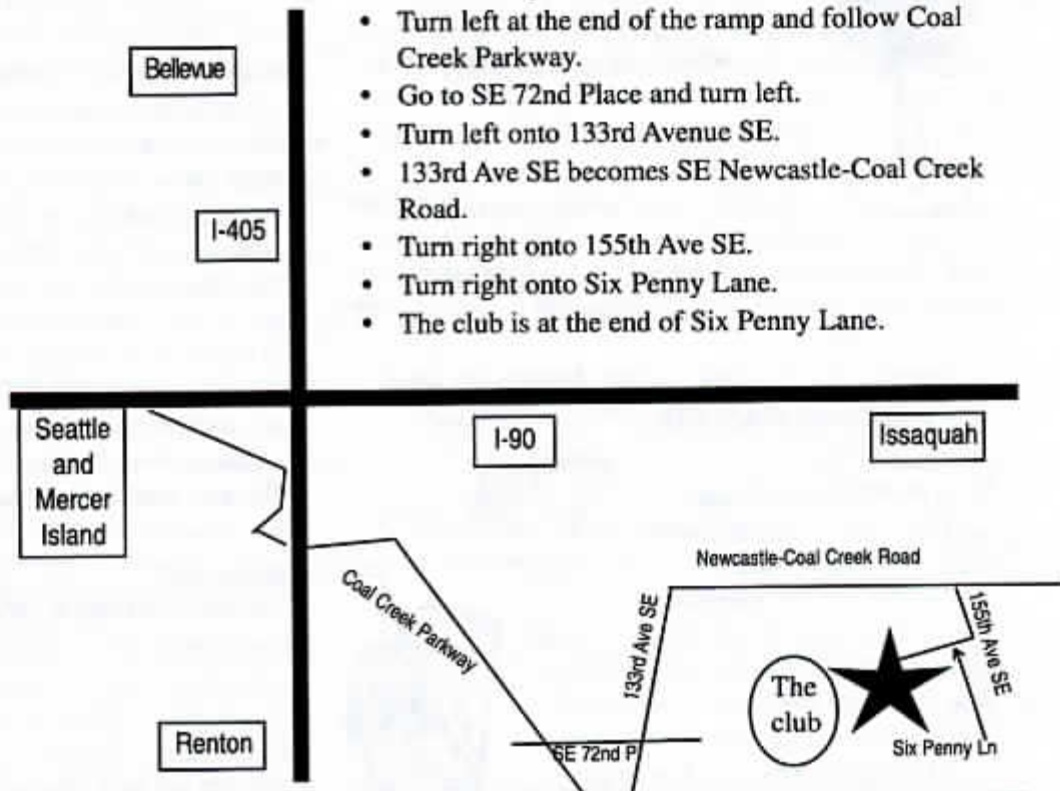
We have an invitation to lunch with the East King unit on Thursday, March 17, at the Newcastle Golf and Country Club. Lunch will be served at 11:30 am and you may choose from an open menu (\$10-\$15). Special guests will be Ed Gonion, WSSRA Executive Director, and Karen Keller, WSSRA Membership Coordinator.



Ed Gonion,
WSSRA Executive
Director



Karen Keller,
WSSRA
Membership
Coordinator



- Here are the directions for getting there:*
- Get onto I-90 and cross Mercer Island and the East Channel Bridge.
 - After leaving Mercer Island, take the second exit and head for I-405 Southbound.
 - Don't get onto 405, however, but keep right and exit immediately at the Coal Creek Parkway exit.
 - Turn left at the end of the ramp and follow Coal Creek Parkway.
 - Go to SE 72nd Place and turn left.
 - Turn left onto 133rd Avenue SE.
 - 133rd Ave SE becomes SE Newcastle-Coal Creek Road.
 - Turn right onto 155th Ave SE.
 - Turn right onto Six Penny Lane.
 - The club is at the end of Six Penny Lane.

AARP Driver Safety Program (55 Alive)

AARP's Driver Safety Program (formerly 55 Alive) Mature Driving Class is a refresher course teaching preventive measures that save lives when driving. Pay \$10 materials fee to AARP instructor at class time. Participants register through Edmonds Parks and Recreation, 425-771-0230. Graduates may have a possible discount on auto insurance. Classes meet 9 AM to 1 PM at the Anderson Center, 700 Main Street, Edmonds. For alternate dates and locations, contact Bob Jones at 425-787-2727 or bobjones@premier1.net. Note that the class is a "two-consecutive-days class," which can be selected during the month of your choice.



Winter 2005 dates

March 14-15

April 18-19

Health tips for you

Live longer—and enjoy it!

by Gordon Bowers, health chair, 425-778-9202

Ladies, have a drink to keep your mental abilities

About 12,000 elderly women in a study at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston took a drink of wine, beer or other alcohol every day. As reported in *The*



New England Journal of Medicine, women in the study had about 20% lower risk of problems with their mental ability later in life; low levels of alcohol seem to protect the brain the same as protecting the heart—by improving blood flow.

For men, be of good cheer. Though no similar studies have been made on men, they should benefit with up to two drinks per day. More is not better, and the "drink" is equal to a glass of wine or a can of beer.

Source: *New England Journal*, January 20, 2005; *Washington Post* and *Everett Herald*, January 20, 2005, P. A10.

More on how to live longer

The Johns Hopkins Medical Board offers several suggestions that you have control over in life, especially after age 50. **Physical exercise**—this is the best medicine for your whole body. **Don't smoke**—it's not too late to quit. After not smoking for five years, you are at about the same risk as those who have never smoked. **Eat smart**—choose a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. **Use vitamins wisely**—multiple vitamin supplements generally do it, but older adults may wind up short of B6, B12, folic acid, vitamin D and calcium. **Drink several glasses of water** or other clear liquids daily. **Protect yourself from the sun.** **Reduce stress** by meditation, yoga or exercise. **Challenge your mind**—develop new skills and maintain old ones. **Cultivate satisfying relationships**—positive social interaction with family and friends can give positive support to life's problems. **Consider preventive medicine**—use drug therapy, including statins for high cholesterol and plavix for fatty cholesterol control.

Source: *Johns Hopkins Medical Letter*, complimentary issue, January 2005, pp 1-2.

Almost too much

There has been such an avalanche of articles on

health in the past few months that the best we can do is summarize briefly some of the most informative. For example, the February 2005 *Readers' Digest*, pages 73 to 94 has articles on heart research titled, "Are you a Ticking Time Bomb?" "Tests to Stop your Heart Attack Before it Starts," "Magic Bullets on the Drawing Board," "Tips for a Heart-Healthy Life" and "Young at Heart." All are advice for a long happy life.

Medicare adds heart device

Similar to a heart pacer, this device gives an electrical shock to avoid sudden death by monitoring a patient's heart rhythm and activates when arrhythmia (hear stoppage) occurs. These defibrillators are similar to ones used by fire departments and even schools for protecting athletes, but this type is implanted into the chest as with heart pacers. Medicare coverage makes 500,000 seniors eligible. These cardiovascular defibrillators cost \$28,000 each. Approval and acceptance is expected to be slow.

Source: *New England Journal of Medicine*, January 2005, and *Seattle Times*/Knight Ridder article by Tony Pugh, January 28, 2005, P. A6.

Feel the pain

It was a pleasant surprise to find a magazine article by our family physician, Dr. Dean Thompson. His advice covers six pain symptoms that should be checked out: 1) **Chest pain**—He says, "Really with a pain anywhere from the belly button to the jaw and down the left arm, you need to ask, 'Could this be a heart attack?'" 2) **Leg cramps**—This can be a sign of artery disease. 3) **Pelvic pain**—This can be a signal to a range of problems, including uterine or ovarian cancer. 4) **Bone pain**—this can be a sign of prostate or breast cancer if it's not the kind of pain that comes and goes. 5) **Abdominal pain**—Aching in the abdomen or mid-back above the waistline, with a fever at or over 100° should be checked ASAP. 6) **Head pain**—For anything more than a little headache, see your doctor. All data



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will be valuable in your file.

Source: Stevens Hospital *Bulletin*, January 2005, pp 6-7.

Mayo on fatigue

Did you know there are a number of reasons for being exhausted? They are usually lifestyle factors such as too busy a schedule, loss of sleep, stress, etc. Prolonged fatigue may be caused by underlying medical problems that even baffle doctors.

Almost any illness can cause fatigue, even the effects of this season's 24-hour flu. But the common medical causes are anemia, blood disorders, radiation, chemotherapy or other cancer treatment, depression, mood disorders, diabetes, heart attack, infections and thyroid problems.

How do you get rid of fatigue? On your own, learn how to manage stress. Just say "No!" Set priorities. Pace yourself. Be active. Try to get 30 minutes of exercise daily.

Source: *Mayo Clinic Health Letter*, February 2005, pp 4-5.

Choosing your parents

If you could have done so, living to a very old age runs in families. Researchers studying genomes of centenarians and their relatives are trying to find long life genes to slow the aging process. So far, one of the most important findings was that very few centenarians have the APOE4 gene associated with Alzheimers' and heart diseases, and that most who live to age 100 have had very few serious illnesses. The Harvard medical staff named three profiles of the "old-old," age 80 to 100. **Survivors** had at least three serious illnesses before turning 80. **Delayers** had serious illnesses after age 80. **Escapers** at age 100 had never had a serious illness. The future problem will be to preserve the quality of life as well as the quantity.

Source: *Harvard Health Letter*, Vol. 30, February 2005, P. 1-2

Mental Massage



Questions aboard the cruise ship:

- "Is that island surrounded by water?"
- "How do I know which photo is mine?"

Lawyer to defendant in court: "Were you alone or by yourself?"



The businessman explained to the officer that he had driven 40,000 miles a year and never gotten a parking ticket. The officer handed him a parking ticket and said, "We should have caught you long ago."



WANT TO BE AN INFORMED VOTER?

The LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY invites you to become an informed and active citizen participant in promoting good government. We study issues chosen by the members. After consensus we take action to implement our positions. The League is dedicated to informing citizens about registering to vote, election methods and ballot issues. We are non partisan. We do not endorse candidates. We do aim to educate about issues we have studied; we lobby for/against legislation and we sponsor candidate forums.

Contact Janet Chalupnik 425-776-5544 for more information.

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PRESIDENT from page 1

something all of us can help bring about. If each one of us can encourage just one person (active or retired school employee) to join WSSRA, what a boost it would be! Remember, this is in your own best interest as well as in the best interest of the group as a whole.

Our own Sno-King membership committee, headed by Virg Rayton and ably assisted by co-president Ellie Bonanno, has been working diligently on this by contacting some of the schools and presenting information there. They can do only so much, however, and that's where we all can help. If you need "talking" materials, call us and we'll see that you get them.

Plan ahead

Betty Odle's niece, Karen Holm, will be presenting slides of her Chilean trip at the May 20 meeting with Sno-Isle. You can find Karen's writeups on the trip by visiting her website at www.mountainminded.com or going to the SKSR website and looking at the May and July 2004 editions.

Keeping an eye on the Legislature

Benefits on the table

by Jack Rogers, legislative chair

The state's 59th Legislature convened on January 10th facing challenges and opportunities. The challenges include a budget shortfall of approximately \$1.8 billion and an uncertainty to the outcome of the governor's race. The opportunities pertain to the prospect of a democratically controlled House, Senate and governor's office.

PEBB Medicare eligible subsidy: The subsidy for 2005 is \$116.19. Rates for 2006 and 2007 call for a 13.5% increase each year. These are in keeping with the Health Care Authority's projections on inflation, and the cost of these increases is included in the proposed budget for now. Contact your legislators and ask that they support these increases in subsidy rates.

Select Committee on Pension Planning (SCPP) request legislation: This package is a trade-off between gain sharing and an increased COLA for Plan 1 and Plan 3 retirees. Under this proposed legislation gain sharing would be repealed in exchange for three comparably valued assured benefits.

They are: 1) Increasing the Plan 1 COLA. This will benefit those who have been retired the longest and lost the most purchasing power. 2) Adjusting when the age 66 COLA is received. The bill would call for awarding the COLA in July of the year when the retiree turns 66. Currently anyone turning 66 after June 30 must wait nearly a full year to receive it. 3) Improving the \$1000 minimum benefit. The bill calls for indexing the benefit so that a 3% annual increase would be given.

This package of legislation is included in SB 5246/HB 1324. WSSRA supports this proposal. Check in with the Hotline to see how these proposals are doing and be prepared to contact your legislators to lobby for their support.

Remembering . . .**SKSR Member****Charles Taylor**

Chuck Taylor died suddenly Friday January 21, 2005, at the age of 70. He was born

and raised in Bellingham, graduating from Bellingham High School and Western

Washington University. Chuck married Charlene Philliber in 1956; they had four children.

He was a teacher and administrator in the Shoreline School District from 1963 until his retirement in 1991. He spent 15 of those years as vice principal and principal at Shorecrest High School.

Chuck was honored at a memorial reception at the Shoreline Center on January 28.

SKSR Friend**Winfred McMullen**

Win McMullen died January 26 at the age of 74. Win was a minister with the Free Methodist Church prior to teaching in the Edmonds School District from 1950 to 1961.

He is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and siblings. Private family services have been held.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

The Edmonds School District, EEA, and the Sno-King School Retirees are providing the District's 2005 Retirement Seminars for Edmonds, Mukilteo, Northshore and Shoreline school districts. These sessions are provided for employees and spouses at no cost and confirmation to attend is not necessary.

Please note a change in time for Session 3 with Department of Retirement Systems. All remaining sessions will be held from 7:00 - 9:00 PM.

Location: Edmonds School District Administration Building (ESC)

Session 1

Wednesday – MARCH 2, 2005

- **Who What When and Why**
Katie Sherwood, Benefits Supervisor
Edmonds School District
- **"What You Wished Someone Had Told You"**
Panel of Retirees
- **Q & A**
Katie Sherwood & Panel

Session 2

Wednesday – MARCH 9, 2005

- **Getting Your Financial Ducks in a Row**
Richard Fowler, CFP
Sr Vice President, Investment Officer,
Portfolio Manager
Christy Gatien, AAMS
Financial Advisor, Portfolio Manager
- **Long Term Care Insurance**
David Riffe, Smith Barney
Representative

Session 3

Wednesday – MARCH 16, 2005

- **WA State Retirement System**
DRS Representative
Board Rooms
5:00 - 6:30 PM TRS 2/SERS 2
7:00 - 8:30 PM TRS 1
- **WA State Retirement System**
DRS Representative
ROOMS 101 & 102
5:00 - 6:30 PM PERS 1
7:00 - 8:30 PM TRS 3/SERS 3

Session 4

Wednesday – MARCH 23, 2005

- **State Medical/Dental Plans**
Health Care Authority
Sandra Lakey, Benefits Representative
- **VEBA III**
John Fulbright, VEBA Representative

Session 5

Wednesday – MARCH 30, 2005

- **Social Security and Medicare**
Frank Mendez, Social Security
Representative



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HELP US WITH INFORMATION TO PUT IN THE *BULLETIN*

The deadline for the next newsletter is 8:00 AM, **Sunday, March 13.**

Send news and other materials to

Jo or Bruce Caldwell, PO Box 1117, Edmonds WA 98020, sksr@wmea.org, fax 425-776-1795, phone 425-778-9390.

Address, phone or e-mail changes should be sent to **Donna Murrish**, donnammurrish@comcast.net or 206-363-5753.

If you know of illness, please call Sunshine Co-Chairs, **Winnie Smith** (425-778-3979) or **Pat Jones** (425-787-2727).

To help with mailing our next *Bulletin* on **Tuesday, April 5**, call **Betty Odle** (206-525-8276),

Ellie Bonnano (425-778-0751) or **Ruthann Warren** (206-367-0742).

The changing scene

Change of Address:

Pg 56 **Schuricht, Charlene M**—1854 NW 195th St #213, Shoreline 98177, 206-533-8748

Pg 57 **Sharpe, Kristine J**—16803-6th Ave W #A, Lynnwood 98037, 425-745-8526

Pg 64 **Ware, Reggle**—16030 Sentinel Dr, Sun City West, AZ 85375, 623-546-6161

Pg 67 **Young, Stephen D**—12530 NE Marine View Dr, Kingston, WA 98346, 425-770-1818, stevey@halcyon.com

New Members:

Pg 21 **Cobb, Jennifer J**—1115-8th Ave S, Edmonds 98020, 425-774-6995

Pg 36 **Kemp, Stephanie E**—18011-67th Ave W, Lynnwood 98037, 425-776-3597

Deceased:

Pg 61 **Taylor, Charles W**—January 21, 2005, Shoreline District
Thiele, Miriam "Mimi"—January 18, 2005, Shoreline District
Torgerson, Cindee—January 22, 2005, Edmonds District



Snowbirds

If you haven't already done so,
please let Donna Murrish know when you're returning.