

# Sno-King School Retirees



March-April 2024

## The SKSR Bulletin



A message from your board

### What's happening

by Cathy Webb, chair

Welcome to spring! It's astonishing to realize that over half of our 2023-24 activities are now history. If you've missed out on the fun and connecting with friends, this issue of the *Bulletin* provides essential details. I encourage you to join us!

It is with a heavy sadness that we learned of the unexpected passing of a dear leadership colleague, Virg Rayton. What a gentle, compassionate and competent educator, mentor and friend. His love of vanilla ice cream cones, his willingness to serve in multiple roles, and his passionate support for SKSR and the Washington Kids in Transition program are just a few of the many significant contributions Virg made to our organization since 1996. Virg is profoundly missed by all of us who knew and loved him.

#### OFFICERS

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*Cathy Webb*, Vice President  
*Jan Phillips*, Secretary  
*Jennifer Altena*, Treasurer

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*Barbara Berg*, Scrapbook  
*Linda Fitzgerald/Keith Lindaas*, Scholarships  
*Robin Randles*, Health  
*vacant*, Community Service  
*vacant*, Hospitality  
*Barb Bumgardner*, Sunshine  
*Karen McElliott*, Active-Member Grants  
*vacant*, Legislative  
*Jim Siscoel*, Membership/Retirement/Website  
*Erma Snook*, Membership Records  
*Jo Caldwell*, Bulletin Editor

#### Coming this spring

As we look forward on our calendar, I hope to entice more of you to join in and get involved. We're touring the Climate Pledge Arena in downtown Seattle for our March field trip. The April Scholarship Luncheon, where four talented high school seniors are awarded scholarships, is always a celebration. This year our guest presentation showcases the Cascadia Search Dog organization and speaker Trina Eddy. Our May gathering features number crunching and an intriguing look at local history. Mike Pellicotti, Washington State Treasurer, will present valuable details on how our pension funds are invested and protected. Local historian, Brad Holden, will entertain us with pictures and stories of Rosewood Manor. The WSSRA convention in June is planned for Wenatchee this year. And, of course, July finds us at the Edmonds City Park for our annual picnic.

*(chair's message continued on page 2)*

Our next event

## April Scholarship Luncheon to showcase Cascadia Search Dogs

by Cathy Webb

Want to spend a lovely spring day visiting with SKSR friends, enjoying delicious food, meeting and congratulating our new scholarship award-ees, and hearing about a remarkable local organization for a steal of a price? Of course! Mark your calendars!

It's time for our annual Spring Scholarship Luncheon hosted at the First Lutheran Church of Richmond Beach, 18354 8th Ave NW, in Shoreline. We'll meet on our usual third **Thursday, April 18**, starting at 11:30 with our meal being served at noon.



Our guest presentation features the work of the Cascadia Search Dogs. Trina Eddy will share about the essential services these dogs are trained to perform, as well as inform us of their organization's many programs.

Chef Dane Catering is serving up a delicious, classic meatloaf, creamy mashed potatoes, mixed greens salad, and assorted bread basket, with cookies for dessert.



The unit-subsidized, modest lunch price is \$10 for members and \$15 for guests, payable at the door. Because the lunch is catered, **we need your reservation no later than Thursday, April 11**. If you cancel after April 11, please send \$10 to our treasurer, Jennifer Altona, as the caterer charges us for your lunch.

Invite your friends and reserve your place with **Cheryl Bauer (bauerc1@frontier.com or 425-743-9755)** today.

Our last event

## "That Ribbon of Highway: Guthrie in the Pacific Northwest"

by Roberta Hawkins

The Edmonds School District Center was alive with conversation and music on February 15.

Our guest speaker, from Humanities Washington, was Joel Underwood, teacher, folksinger, historian and actor. His topic for the day was "That Ribbon of Highway: Guthrie in the Pacific Northwest." His presentation opened with the song "Rolling Man" and took us on a musical journey through Guthrie's early life and his time along the Columbia River under contract with the BPA for 30 days.

His challenging childhood was marked by questionable choices made by his father, a fire resulting in his sister Sara's death, the family house burning down and his mother having depression and suffering from Huntington's disease, Guthrie eventually

roughed it alone for several years before finally marrying. And while he tried to make it work, as Joel Underwood noted, "Life just got in the way."

We learned that Guthrie felt he was on the outside of life; he was always reaching for more.

*("Guthrie..." continued on page 7)*

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*(chair's message continued from page 1)*

Whew! We've covered quite a span of topics and activities for 2024. Please take a few minutes to share your feedback and suggestions on programming with any of your SKSR leaders. If you're feeling inclined to get involved in the planning and organizing, be sure and let that be known, too! We're looking for willing, enthusiastic 2024-25 leadership candidates!

Legislative update

## We're nearing the finish line

by Pete Diedrick, WSSRA Legislative Director

The 2024 Washington State Legislative session is half complete. When you receive this newsletter, legislators will be close to or at the finish line. There's never a guarantee, but legislators have provided enough information for us to make an educated guess about the outcome of the 2024 Legislative Session.

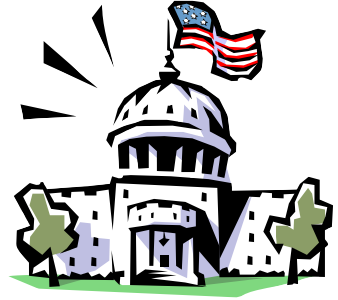
Legislators seem set on providing a **Plan 1 COLA this year**. The House passed Substitute House Bill 1985 to provide a 3% benefit increase to Plan 1 retirees. The increase would be capped at \$110 per month. House and Senate members have indicated they plan to make room for this proposal in the budget.

**Health benefits are trickier.** We've learned the state is likely to lose some future federal funding used for subsidizing retiree health plans. The Senate indicated they intend to make up the difference somehow. We're watching the House and Senate budget proposals closely for any changes in retiree medical benefits.

The DRS-sponsored **Month of Death bill** is

**not moving.** HB 2013 would have paid a surviving spouse or a retiree's estate the full-month's pension benefit during a retiree's month of death. The House Appropriations Committee favored a cheaper proposal to pay the retiree's PEBB-insurance premium during the month of death. The new bill, HB 2481, passed out of all the necessary House committees and was waiting for a vote by the full House of Representatives. It is unknown if the Senate will be interested in the pared-back bill.

House Bill 2471 to **increase the pension income for Plan 2/3 employees working past 30 years of service has died** in the House Appropriations Committee. Passage was a tall order for a first-time bill. We were pleased to get it sponsored and get analysis started. The bill sponsors are working with WSSRA to get all the needed financial information on the proposal so it could move further in the process if it is submitted again.



Coming up this spring, summer

### Mark your datebook

#### March 21

A Field Trip to Climate Pledge Arena.

#### April 18

Scholarship Luncheon, First Lutheran Church of Richmond Beach, 11:30-2:00

Feature: *Cascadia Search and Rescue program*

#### May 16

May Gathering, Edmonds

ESCBoarA/B, 11:30-2:00

Feature: *In the Know with WA State Treasurer, Mike Pellicciotti*

#### June 3-5

WSSRA Convention in Wenatchee

#### July 18

Picnic, Edmonds City Park, 11:30-3:00

#### August 8

Board Retreat

Scholarships

### The clock is ticking!

by Linda Fitzgerald, scholarship co-chair

The clock is ticking! Scholarship applications are available in all of the high schools in the Edmonds, Northshore, and Shoreline school districts and on our web site at [www.SKSR.org](http://www.SKSR.org). The due date is March 15. Four scholarships will be awarded with each worth \$2,500 and renewable for another year at \$2,500. The requirement is that a degree in a school-related field will be pursued. Help spread the word to your high school seniors!



## Grants

**Second round of SKSR Educator Grants Announced**

by Karen McElliott, grants chair



**W**ith funds remaining in the grants budget, SKSR accepted a second round of mini-grant applications from its active members during December and January. Fifteen members applied and were awarded \$4,363, making a grand total for this school year of \$9,439 spread over 33 grants. A major difference in this year's requests has been the increase in field trip applications.

**EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT****Cedar Way Elementary**

**Laura Baker:** Storybook Theater presentation of Jack and the Beanstalk field-trip expenses. (Kindergarten)

**Christine LaSalle:** Multiple sets of Hi-Lo Beanies Diversity Decodables readers that align with needed phonics skills. (Title 1)

**Kristyn O'Connor:** Tulalip Hibulb Cultural Center field-trip expenses. (4th grade)

**Leann Onishi:** Junior Learning books to augment the district's phonics program. (Title 1 Reading)

**Jennifer Phipps:** Storybook Theater presentation of Jack and the Beanstalk field-trip expenses. (Kindergarten)

**College Place Middle School**

**Amber Shelley:** SPARK materials, including an online subscription, to supplement her P.E. curriculum. (8th Health and P.E.)

**Edmonds Heights K12**

**Erin Zackey:** Art materials for an integrated art and science curriculum. (Science/Art/Language Arts)

**Hilltop Elementary**

**Joelle Mertel:** Multiple copies of six historical-fiction books for a literature unit. (4th grade)

**Lisa Reid:** Five sets of Little Sprouts decodable books. (K-3 Reading Intervention)

**Seaview Elementary**

**Brian Kelly:** Everett's Imagine Children's Museum field-trip expenses. (K/1)

**Spruce Elementary**

**Rochelle Tabladillo:** Tulalip Hibulb Cultural Center field-trip expenses. (3rd grade)

**SHORELINE SCHOOL DISTRICT****Briarcrest Elementary**

**Sadrina Dorn:** Sensory items (e.g., fidget toys) for the school's reset stations. (Dean of Students)

**Beth Heinz:** A classroom license for IXL math. (Title/LAP Intervention)

**Lake Forest Park Elementary**

**Britt Harris:** Whiteboards and dry erase markers for kindergarteners. (Office Manager)

**Syre Elementary**

**Katie Dawdy:** Salmon Release field-trip expenses. (5th grade)

*Mary Telstad and Brookside intermediate students show off their watercolor art supplies for her first-round grant. Mary, a classroom volunteer and retired teacher, will use these materials in watercolor workshops she conducts there.*

**Congratulations**

**to our 2023-24 recipients!**





SKSR Vice President Cathy Webb (R) presents grant certificates to Canyon Creek's Annie Hall (L) and Michelle Vancour (R). Annie plans to expand the library's comfortable reading space, while Michelle intends to purchase six digit microscopes.

**Congratulations to all these grant recipients!**

**To date, SKSR has distributed over \$124,000 in grants to the Edmonds, Northshore, and Shoreline school districts.**



Presenter Jim Siscel with Tina Whicker, Hazelwood Elementary grant recipient. Tina will use the funds for Maker Space materials, such as jigsaw puzzles, Legos, snap circuits and board games.



Hilltop fifth-grade teacher Sarah Allsop-Fine (L) receives a certificate from Karen McElliott. Sarah, who received a first-round grant, will use the money to purchase sets of high-interest books for struggling readers.



Jim Siscel presents Nanette Peppin (Maplewood Cooperative) with her grant certificate. Nanette, a third-grade teacher, will buy sets of decodable books that focus on specific phonics skills.

**A reminder to all active SKSR members:**

The next window for grant applications will be **September 1**. Check your September *Bulletin* and [sksr.org](http://sksr.org) website at that time for 2024-25 updated information and forms.

**Member Information Updates**

**Deceased**

- Marilyn Dickey**, January 2024  
Retired from Northshore•Member since 1992
- Phillip M Elvrum**, January 2024  
Retired from Edmonds•Member since 1996
- Susan Klock**, January, 2024  
Retired from Northshore•Member since 1996
- Robert McGuire**, January 2024  
Member since 1996
- Virgil L Rayton**, February 2024  
Retired from Edmonds•Member since 1996

**New Members**

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Barta, Anastacia * | Osborne, Arlys      |
| Boyce, Scott *     | Reighter, Cathy     |
| Chaiten, Joan      | Richardson, Craig   |
| Durden, Brenda *   | Toenyan, Cheryl     |
| Grover, Matthew    | Whicker, Tina*      |
| Lehman, Elissa *   | Willwerth, Loretta* |
| Mertel, Joelle     | Ziontz, Ellen       |

\*=active member

Health news

## Is it a sweet potato or a yam?

compiled by Robin Randles, health chair

In the United States, it is most likely a sweet potato. There are two common varieties of sweet potatoes grown in the U.S. The most common variety has a smooth orange or red skin, orange flesh and a sweet flavor.

### What's the difference?

True yams, have a rough, hairy brown skin, a starchy white flesh, and a neutral flavor. Yams are tropical, grown in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. The tropical or original yams aren't as sweet as sweet potatoes and are starchier and drier. They

### Health benefits of eating sweet potatoes

Sweet potatoes are said to have many health benefits because of all the vitamins, antioxidants and phytochemicals, plant compounds that protect the body from illness and infection. They have been shown to boost the immune system, fight cancer and improve gut, heart, and eye health.

One medium sweet potato has about 100 calories. It has vision-protecting vitamin A, the antioxidant vitamin C, and the health-promoting plant compounds beta-carotene and anthocyanins, an



can grow up to seven feet long and weigh over 100 pounds! True yams need to be cooked before eating, as they can be toxic if eaten raw. The slaves brought yams to the United States from West Africa and called the new-world sweet potatoes “nyami” or over time “yam.”

More confusion in the “yam” name started in the 1930s when Southern sweet-potato growers grew the Puerto Rican variety of sweet potatoes and called them yams. These farmers hoped to distinguish their crop from the inferior varieties of sweet potatoes grown at the time. Most vegetables labeled yams grown in the United States are a variety of sweet potato. The USDA requires any label with *yam* to also include *sweet potato*.

Surprisingly, sweet potatoes are not related to the potato. True yams (Dioscoreaceae family), sweet potatoes (morning glory family), and potatoes (nightshade family) are all from different plant families.

antioxidant compound that give the yellow/orange and purple varieties their color.

About half the fiber in a sweet potato is soluble fiber, which helps lower cholesterol levels. Anthocyanins might lower your chances of getting colorectal cancer.

Sweet potatoes contain B vitamins, calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, thiamin, and zinc.

One regular-sized sweet potato, about five inches long, contains two grams of protein, four grams of dietary fiber and 26 grams of carbohydrates.

A dietary caution is that sweet potatoes are high in carbohydrates. They are usually fine to eat in moderation.

The orange-fleshed sweet potato ranks number one among all vegetables from a dietary and nutritional point of view. Sweet potatoes are a delicious way to “eat” your vitamins.

(“Guthrie...” continued from page 2)

Underwood spoke of Guthrie’s growth and his being an “imperfect messenger of an important message.” Several examples from Guthrie’s life reflected just that. One was the letter from a college student that led to his four-step template for change after being called out for use of inappropriate language in a song: 1) Apologize, 2) Thank them for setting you straight, 3) Tell them you will change, then 4) Do better.

The 30-day contract with the BPA, which thankfully didn’t require a background check, saw him riding in the back seat of a car heading east along the Columbia River. During this time he “wrote” 30 songs. We learned that Guthrie considered himself a writer/poet not a composer, so some of his songs were different lyrics set to familiar tunes. We listened to that historical adventure and heard the songs and sang along to some and became far wiser about the man, Woody Guthrie

Underwood’s unique talents and experience provided a remarkable view of Guthrie’s early life and of the period of time during which Grand Coulee Dam was being constructed.

The audience response was electric! He closed with “This Land is Your Land,” saying that Guthrie’s song challenges us to keep our promises, to do better.

Many questions followed regarding what happened to the box of tapes with the songs recorded for the documentary? And what about the documentary film about the building of the Grand Coulee Dam? Was it ever finished and shown? Yes, and it is available online, and the songs were utilized as well. Another member said that there are 14 verses to “Roll on Columbia,” which reveal a broad knowledge of history. Still another asked if Guthrie were a reader. Underwood said that yes, Guthrie was an avid reader.

Guthrie seemed to be in a rush to absorb and share as much as possible, perhaps because he saw himself as a ticking time bomb given his family history with Huntington’s. His death from that disease at 55 would validate his rush to live.

Joel Underwood gave an outstanding presentation; it was lively, entertaining, and thought-provoking.

## Is your SKSR contact information correct?

We have 1,084 members who receive SKSR information via email. We have 300 members who receive SKSR information via US mail. *Is your contact information current?*

- If you have changes in the past year and have not notified us, please **send changes to** Erma Snook, SKSR Records, at [egsnook@comcast.net](mailto:egsnook@comcast.net).
- Please update your email address, US mail address and phone number.
- You need do nothing if there are no changes.

We will be distributing an updated SKSR Member Directory via email very soon, as we have done annually. **We need your corrected contact information by March 20.** We will not be printing a directory this year.

We invite anyone to convert from US mail to email to receive our communiques. It is cost-saving for SKSR, and you get more timely and complete information from WSSRA and SKSR by using email.

Thank you for your assistance.



## Why English is hard to learn

We begin with *box*; the plural is *boxes*,  
But the plural of *ox* is *oxen*, not *oxes*.  
One fowl is a *goose*, and two are called *geese*.  
Yet the plural of *moose* is never called *meese*.

You may find a lone *mouse* or a house full of *mice*;  
But the plural of *house* is *houses*, not *hice*.  
The plural of *man* is always *men*,  
But the plural of *pan* is never *pen*.

If I speak of a *foot*, and you show me two *feet*,  
And I give you a *book*, would a pair be a *beek*?  
If one is a *tooth* and a whole set are *teeth*,  
Why shouldn’t two *booths* be called *beeth*?

If the singular’s *this* and the plural is *these*,  
Should the plural of *kiss* be ever called *keese*?

We speak of a *brother* and also of *brethren*,  
But though we say *mother*, we never say *methren*.  
Then the masculine pronouns are *he*, *his*, and *him*;  
But imagine the feminine...*she*, *shis*, and *shim*!



## Help us with the *Bulletin*

The deadline for the next *Bulletin* is **April 13**.

Please send changes in your mailing address, telephone number, or e-mail address to Erma Snook, [egsnook@comcast.net](mailto:egsnook@comcast.net), or call 425-776-2067.

If you know of illness, please call Sunshine Chair Barb Bumgardner, 206-364-8413.

We have resumed our regular schedule of preparing the *Bulletin* for mailing.

*If you would like to help on **May 1**,*  
call Robin Randles, 206-542-6428.