

Sno-King School Retirees



June 2002

The SKSR Bulletin

A message from our president

It's June too soon!

by Bob Jones, 425-787-2727-bobjones@premier1.net

Yes, I do believe that. There seem to be too many things I need to do, and there just isn't time to do them. It is time for someone else to step into the president's box and experience the joy of finding out that every member and officer does his or her part to help Sno-King keep going. Everyone says it's the president that does this and that, but in truth it is you. We just get the pleasure and privilege of being your president. I really want to thank each and every one of you for all your help. If I listed you all it would take the rest of this *Bulletin*, and I would probably miss someone. Besides, you did all the work and deserve all the credit. Thank you so very much for this year. (But I am glad that it is almost over.)

We have a few things left to do before summer. Remember the old theory, "the longer the film or video the better the educational value." That is not the case here because we have two big activities in June. One is the Delegate Assembly in Pasco on June 10- 12. The following people will be your representatives there: Dave Johnson, Corky Christensen, Bob Jones, Pat Jones, Rachel Lake, Rita Requa, Donna Murrish, Bruce Caldwell, Bob Van Ness, Wanda Grande, Wes Grande, Betty Odle, Phyllis Enger, Ray Reigers, Marie Rose, Warren Rowe, Roberta McKee, Alice Bingaman, Carol Robinson, Ron Robinson, Lynn Northdurft and Mary Ann Simons. Give them your suggestions and thanks.

The second item is our last formal meeting. It is with Bronn Journey, the renowned harpist in our area. That concert will be in the Edmonds School District board room June 20th at 1:00 PM. Read about him on page 2. We will have a brief installation of officers at the beginning.

July 18th at 12:00 noon is the picnic at the Edmonds City Park, which we invite new retirees to attend. The picnic is the first activity during Alice Bingaman's term as president for 2002-2003. Please come to the picnic and bring a friend.

Bob Jones, President
Alice Bingaman, President-Elect
Jack Rogers, Past President/Legislative
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Donna Murrish, Directory
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Ruth Woodward, Member Services
Don Denton, Membership
Wes Grande, Retirement Planning
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Next meeting is June 20

Bronn Journey is coming

by Bob Jones, SKSR president

On June 20th at 1:00 in the Edmonds School District ESC board room we will have the pleasure of hearing Bronn Journey play in concert for us. For over 20 years this noted Seattle harpist has performed in fine restaurants, hotels and also in concerts, ranging from Alaska and Canada to California.

His private lessons began at age 11 with considerable support from his mother who happens to be from Wales, where the harp is the national instrument. He continued his study through high school and ultimately received a bachelor of music degree from the University of Washington.

Seattle basketball fans might recognize him as the harpist who would often play the national anthem at Sonics games. When asked what music he enjoyed playing the most, his response indicated that the listener matters more to him than the music. He said, "Whatever people want to hear." You might remember hearing him at the joint luncheon meeting with Sno-Isle a few years back.



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MARK YOUR DATEBOOK

Coming Events for Sno-King School Retirees

June 20	General Meeting
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*Edmonds Educational Service Center
 Bronn Journey*

July 18	Picnic
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Edmonds City Park

Welcome new retirees

SKSR Board Meetings
 Last meeting of the year
 June 6, 12:00 PM
 Lunch meeting
 Coco's, Aurora Village
 Everyone welcome!

Our membership chair speaks

Active help


by Don Denton, 425-787-7881—
dondenton@jps.net


ACTIVES (those who are still school-employed), WE NEED YOUR HELP!


Please ask retiring colleagues if they are members of Sno-King School Retirees and, if not, ask them to join. Then call or email me and I will send them a membership form. Even if someone won't give you a firm commitment, please send me their name and address so I can contact them later.


Why belong to Sno-King and the Washington State School Retirees Association? Because we are the only organization whose sole mission is to enhance the benefits for school retirees, no matter what their former job title. Our lobbyists and volunteers work very hard to promote legislative improvements. Please make it your responsibility to help with recruiting of new members.

For information on our local Sno-King unit and our statewide organization, WSSRA, check out


 1. Cut this out of the Bulletin


 2. Give it to an active school employee


 3. Have him/her complete the form


 4. Mail it to WSSRA

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DUES: State \$3.00 Local \$1.00 Total \$4.00 per month.

Date _____ Signature _____

our web sites at www.sksr.org and www.wssra.org.

An active member authorization form is printed above for your

immediate use. Forms for already retired teachers are available on the SKSR website, or call me and I can send you some.

There are many ads for Long-term Care insurance lately. But why look at just one company? For no-hassle, comparative quotes from 4 or more major companies, contact

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55 Alive

AARP's 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. 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.



Final class
for 2001-2002
June 5-6

Health tips for you

Autism more prevalent than once believed

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

Puzzling—autism on the rise

Occasionally a magazine may have an excellent article on an unusual medical problem. The *Time Magazine* from May 6, 2002, has 10 pages on the unexplained explosion in numbers of autism and related disorders like Asperger's autism. California is an example of the increased numbers, going from 4,000 to 18,000 in 15 years. Schools are adding aides to assist teachers in handling the problem.

Research teams are scrambling to find the defective genes. The disorder was first identified only in 1943 by Leo Kanner (Johns Hopkins psychiatrist) and in 1994 by Austrian pediatrician Hans Asperger. Both found that some patients were intellectually gifted and some were retarded. Both researchers were studying a wide range of autism types. The disorder affects every socioeconomic class in every state, a total of 300,000 children in the United States alone. The Autism Society of America claims that more than a million Americans suffer from one of the autistic disorders, also known as Pervasive Developmental Disorder Syndrome (PDDs). There are five times as many autistics as Down syndrome people.

Researchers today are racing to identify the genes that are linked to autism. Though autism tends to run in families, diagnosis has expanded to include those from the severely retarded to the mildest cases, with very bright, successful adults classed as the "Geek Syndrome." An example of that syndrome is an assistant

professor of animal sciences at Colorado State University who has engineered cattle "dip tanks" that are used all over the US. Her life story is on page 50 of *Time*.

It's well worth reading. My wife, Edith, volunteered for 11 years at the Little Red Schoolhouse and dealt with autistic children. She was very impressed with the new data on autism, not available even two decades ago.

Source: *Time Magazine*, May 6, 2002, pp 46-56.

Good news—bone-building drug

In July, 2001, an FDA panel approved a drug that can build bone. The drug is called parathyroid hormone, which increases the activity of bone building cells called osteoblasts. The drug would be taken daily for 18 months, hopefully strengthening bone mass, cutting the risk of fractures.

Source: *Johns Hopkins Medical Letter*, March 2002, P. 4.

Health education gets failing grade

Nearly every article on health now brings up the fact that doctors have warned for years that childhood obesity has become epidemic and fat children become fat adults. Even the Associated Press articles are warning that more children are now suffering type two diabetes, almost unheard of even 20 years ago. It was previously a disease of middle age caused in part by obesity. Besides diabetes, obesity in children is blamed for worsening asthma, gallbladder disease and sleep apnea.

About 13 percent of children and adolescents are overweight, more than double the number just 20 years ago. Teachers and parents share the blame with TV, computer games, snack food, access to super-sized portions of high calorie foods and sedentary life with little physical activity.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported April 2, 2002, that, "A disturbing increase in the numbers has made hospital costs related to childhood obesity more than triple in the past 20 years." Maybe we need to call our offspring together for an updated health lesson on weight control.

Even the IRS has recognized the obesity problem by allowing medical deductions and has classified obesity as a disease. Additional warnings are that obese people are at heightened risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, several types of cancer and gall

see HEALTH on page 7

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Traveling with Terri

France and the Alscase

by Terri Malinowski, travel chair, 425-483-8344—terrim1@earthlink.net

A year of planning will bear fruit this month for part of our family—a trip to Paris and a stay in a small French village for two senior citizens, two 40-year-olds and two boys, 10 and 13. We're dealing with a myriad of interests. My husband and I have been to France a half-dozen times, our daughter twice, our son-in-law once, and our grandsons not at all.

The first lure for my husband and me is because, pure and simple, we love Paris. The rest is a "roots" search because several of our ancestors immigrated from the eastern Alsace region of France, the storied land of the "Route des Vom" or Wine Route. It is a fertile land of orchards and vineyards, tugged back and forth by Germany and France to the extent that village names and even the peoples' names are a polygot of French and German.

For our daughter and son-in-law, it's a return of sorts. Years ago, my daughter and I had taken one of those whirlwind tours of Europe when she graduated from high school. You know the kind I mean: seven countries in two weeks. Then we took her and husband with us to Europe on their 10th wedding anniversary. Unfortunately, we made the mistake of asking him what part of Europe he wanted to see. His dreamy-eyed reply: "As many places as we can see in two weeks. I want to see it all!"

We tried vainly to convince him he would enjoy a slower pace and more-focused journey, much as we have done in ensuing years. But he was unmoved, so off we went with Eurail passes in hand. We managed to hit five countries in two weeks; "hit" was the operative word for our fast-paced glimpses of Paris, Versailles, Lucerne, Heidelberg, Florence, Pisa, Venice and Monaco. After we returned, he understood what we meant. So our vow has been to return to one country and do it more slowly. My daughter speaks passable French, and I can get by in German, so I think we'll survive nicely.

As for our grandsons, it's a whole new world out there, and they can hardly wait. Their parents have researched numerous kid-friendly activities in Paris. They want to "climb the Eiffel Tower, stand under the Arc de Triomphe, float down the Seine River, see Napoleon's Tomb, view King Henry the Eighth's favorite horse (now stuffed, at Les Invalides) and look upon the Mona Lisa," among other things. When we get to the Alsace, they want to go to the village boulangerie every morning to buy croissants, wander

the village paths, and see if the Black Forest is really black. Alsace is bordered by the Rhine River, and across the river is Germany and the forest.

We leave here the day their schools in southwest Washington dismiss for the summer and return after July 4th, limited by their parents' two-week vacation schedules. But the planning began last fall with internet research on France and specifically housing. We decided on a four-day hotel stay in Paris. For the remaining 10 days, we wanted to rent a cottage in a more rural area. The hotel was easy: I found what appears to be a charming hotel in the Rue Cler neighborhood of the Left Bank in Paris. Coincidentally, the hotel is also recommended by Rick Steves in his travel book.

The proprietor is a cheery young Frenchwoman, and we exchanged several e-mails as I explained that my husband has Parkinson's Disease and finds stairways difficult. She obligingly arranged a room on the

see FRANCE on page 7



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Legislative report

Statewide initiative coming—needs your support

by Jack Rogers, legislative chair

A state-wide initiative has been filed to bring about needed pension reform. For the first time in several efforts, the Washington Education Association has signed on to help sponsor the initiative. They have agreed to help with promotion and printing and, hopefully, this will gain momentum over the summer as we seek signatures to put it on the ballot. This is a very important step to which we should all lend support.



The legislature, for too long, has viewed our bank account of retiree money as a cash cow to

help balance the budget. I know they are in dire straits because of the economic downturn, but our concern

for pension benefits is still no less diminished even in the teeth of financial shortfalls in the state budget. An important point to remember is that we went into the education business expecting a certain level of retirement and a certain level of commitment from the state to honor their contract. We will never be able to bring about needed reforms to the system if the state continues to diminish its contribution. As long as our pension program is controlled by the legislature, we will continue to be vulnerable to budget balancing tactics. This initiative demands our support.

This summer will be an important time to gain signatures on the initiative, and I hope to see you out there helping to do just that!

Visit the SKSR website

Learn about SKSR

www.sksr.org

Who we are

Membership

Calendar of Events

Newletter

Legislation affecting retirees

Executive board highlights

Medicare and Social Security issues

Links to other useful websites



HEALTH from page 4

bladder disease.

Source: *Associated Press, Everett Herald*, May 2, 2002, P. A3.

Good news

Two new drugs can put Hepatitis C in remission. The disease is four times as common as Aids. These drugs, Pegasys and PEG-Intron, have good success, no cure, save lives and transplants.

Source: *Washington Post*, April 19, 2002, P. A12.

Women at risk

The American Heart Association estimates one in five American females has some form of heart or vascular disease and half a million are lost each year, twice as many as to cancer.

Here are ten questions you should ask your doctor:

1. *What are my risk factors for heart disease?*
2. *Am I at risk for stroke?*
3. *What are the warning signs or symptoms of heart disease and stroke?*
4. *What should I know about the effects of menopause on my health?*
5. *Do I need to lose weight or gain weight for my health?*
6. *What is a healthful eating plan for me?*
7. *What kind of physical activity is right for me?*
8. *What is my blood pressure—is it at the normal level?*
9. *What is my cholesterol, and is it at the desired level?*
10. *Based on my personal history and risk factors, what can I do to lower my risk of heart disease and stroke?*

Thanks, Doctor!

Source: *Medicine Guidebook*, December 2001, pp 68-74.

FRANCE from page 5

ground floor for us. She placed the rest of our family on the second floor, "where there are only two bedrooms, and they will have the whole floor for family privacy." Don't ever try to convince me the French are haughty and unhelpful.

Next was the Alsatian cottage. I contacted the tourism bureau in Strasbourg which immediately sent me a large packet composed of maps, sightseeing ideas and a booklet devoted to rentals and hotels. We selected a cottage belonging to Madame Christine Colaianni in the tiny village of Beblenheim, near the town of Colmar. After a fax or two, we were in agreement on a price for 10 days, amounting to about \$70 per day for three bedrooms, two baths, kitchen and living quarters.

Now it was time for airfare, which we left up to our favorite travel agent. She found reasonable rates for us and managed to book my husband and me on a Seattle/Cincinnati flight, the rest of our family on a Portland/Cincinnati flight, and all of us on the same Cincinnati/Paris flight. Amazing!

On the internet I arranged rental of a mini-van to hold the six of us. We had already decided we'll take the train across northern France from Paris to Strasbourg to save time and relax. So we'll pick up the van in Strasbourg from Auto Europe, which provides rentals right at the train station.

I'm anxious to see Beblenheim, located along the Wine Route. We also plan to explore several of the



nearby towns: Ribeauville, Kaysersberg, Turckheim, and Riquewihr. Of course, there's Germany just across the Rhine. Even Switzerland isn't that far away along the motor route. And we hope to visit the tiny village of Hermersweiler where my ancestors left in 1770 for America.

I think we've tied up the loose ends now. Because of my husband's difficulty in making speed runs for the Metro subway these days, I've arranged for a shuttle van to meet us at Charles de Gaulle Airport when we arrive in Paris. For \$14 each, it will transport us to the door of our Paris hotel, an hour-plus away. When we're ready to leave for Alsace, the van will return and take us to the train station.

For the return to Paris, our travel agent suggested a hotel at the airport the night before our homeward flight. She found a Comfort Inn, of all things, at \$47 per double room including breakfast and a free shuttle trip to the airport departure gate. Perfect!

All that's left now is to notify our credit card companies that we'll be using our cards abroad so they won't be alarmed by a restaurant charge in Strasbourg, for example. We'll also ask them for a list of ATM machines without transaction fees. Our bank is obtaining some Euro currency to use initially until we orient ourselves in our Paris neighborhood. Then, we must get down to packing our suitcase and carry-on bag, mindful of the new security regulations (my Swiss army knife, nail scissors and metal nail files go in the suitcase now instead of the carry-on, for example).



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HELP US WITH INFORMATION TO PUT IN THE BULLETIN

The deadline for the next newsletter is 8:00 AM, **Sunday, June 16.**

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.
Please send TRAVEL news to Terri Malinowski, 15341 158th Ave NE, Woodinville WA 98072, terrim1@earthlink.net, 425-483-8344.

If you know of illness, please call Sunshine Co-Chairs, **Gayle Bromley** (206-364-1314) or **Frances Peters** (206-361-8594).

To help with mailing our next **Bulletin** on **Tuesday, June 25**, call **Betty Odle** (206-525-8276),
Ellie Bonnano (425-778-0751) or **Ruthann Warren** (206-367-0742).

Members on the move

Change of Address

- Pg 12 **Flatters, Kelley** 7011 6th Ave NE, #101
Seattle 98115
- Pg 22 **Lapp, F. Jay** 6918 208th St SW, #201
Lynnwood 98036
- Pg 27 **Moore, Sandra L** 23504 19th Ave SE, #3A
Bothell 98021-9516
- Pg 34 **Rutherford, Gerald** 360 Van Belle Rd
Granger 98932-9767

And the Snowbirds have returned!

New Members

- Pg 11 **Durall, Diane S** 16724 Cobblestone Dr, #103,
Lynnwood 98037 425-742-2849

