

❖ SNO-KING RTA Bulletin ❖

President: Jim Becker, 284-8313 Editor: Betty Odle, 525-8276 MARCH 1994

President's Message



A GOOD TIME TO LOOK FORWARD BY LOOKING BACK

For years, I have been misquoting T. S. Eliot, saying he wrote that February is the cruellest month - when actually, the line goes: "April is the cruellest month, breeding Lilacs out of the dead land..."

I continue to hold that February is the worst month of the year, giving as example that Groundhog Day is faced with dread, hoping the little fellow will not see his shadow and offer us an early Spring.

There have been years when sudden, heavy snows cause school closures. Annually, Fat Tuesday and Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent offer us the contradictory mix of high celebration and sad reflection.

But, after February comes blustery March and gracious April and sunny May. Enduring February is not so bad. The poet reminds me of the promise of the renewal of Spring:

"And indeed there will be time
To wonder, 'Do I dare?' and, 'Do I dare?'"

So, you see, I'm feeling "UP!"

We have much to feel good about and more to look forward to. Our membership is now 947 - expecting to hit 1,000 before the WSRTA Convention in June. We welcome 41 active teacher members from Edmonds this month. There is the promise of a well-attended, successful Retirement Planning Seminar for Edmonds, Everett, Mukilteo, Northshore and Shoreline School District. By the first session on February 22nd, there were 114 registered.

Our Scholarship Fund is over \$14,000 - which means we can increase the stipend to each of graduating seniors from Edmonds, Northshore and Shoreline in 1994 or add a number of scholarship renewals.

Phyllis Enger, Vice President/Program Chair, has arranged a number of interesting meetings which draw more of your members and guests to monthly meetings.

Joanne Dunn, Legislative Chair, has us writing letters to our legislators, communicating our ideas and needs. *Gordon Bowers*, Health & Protective Services Chair, has increased our knowledge and awareness of health care programs.

Ruthanne Warren, Membership Expansion Chair, is planning a number of meetings with building faculties in Edmonds for purposes of introducing our Unit's programs and services and recruiting members among active school personnel.

The Scholarship Committee has distributed applications and will soon be selecting 1994 recipients to announce at the April 21st Scholarship Luncheon.

Before May 15th, I will be completing and submitting the WSRTA form for "Unit of Distinction" award to be presented at the WSRTA Delegate Assembly in Longview in June. Units successfully completing 21 to 25 of the desired goals listed during 1993-94 will receive "Unit of Distinction"; units completing 24-25 goals will be awarded "Unit of Highest Distinction."

I am pleased to report that we will be offering evidence of completion of 25 of 25 goals set by WSRTA Awards Committee.

Do we dare? You bet!

Jim Becker, President

COMING EVENTS:

- | | | |
|----------|---------|---|
| March 9 | 1:30 PM | Board Meeting at Barbara Berg's, 714 Wandering CR DR, Bothell, 483-2671. |
| March 17 | 1:30 PM | Sno-King meeting at Edmonds School District Office, 20420-68th West, Lynnwood - Dick and Barbara Sacksteder share their search for their European "roots" via slides. |
| April 5 | 9:30 AM | Coordinating Council meeting in Bellingham. |
| April 13 | 1:30 PM | Board Meeting at Ruthanne Warren's, 1720 NE 179th #301, Seattle, 367-0742. |
| April 21 | NOON | Scholarship Luncheon - Edmonds Unitarian Church, 8109-224th Ave SW, Edmonds |
| May 11 | 1:30 PM | Board Meeting at Ed Osborn's, 2110 N 171st St, Seattle 364-3523. |
| May 19 | NOON | Joint Luncheon - hosted by Sno-Isle - details later. |



LEGISLATIVE NEWS - Joanne Dunn, Chair 363-7843

(Please call WSRTA Hotline, 1-800-221-1269 daily until end of session March 10. Bills are moving too fast for phone tree to be of use.)

The final days of this Legislature may bring some surprises for retirees. Already, there is the much-larger-than-anticipated revenue for the state. Legislators had been expecting \$100 million more revenue than had been projected when the budget was written last year. The latest projection now raises this amount to \$160 million. Most of the talk as of this writing is about tax cuts, most of which will probably benefit businesses.

We must urge legislators to use some of this gain to improve the COLA for Plan 1 retirees. We know that our retirees are hurting much more than business is hurting. The increased revenue is caused by the improvement of the economy. Business is already better off.

It is up to us to point this out to legislators. The message is simple:

State revenue forecasts are up because business is doing better.

Plan 1 retirees are not doing better.

Some of the increased revenue must be used to improve the Plan 1 COLA for former educational employees.

Retired educational employees deserve some of this windfall.

Contact your legislators, Rep. Helen Sommers (Chair, JCPP, Chair, House Appropriations), and Sen. Nita Rinehart (Chair, Senate Ways and Means).

YOUR LEGISLATORS (Olympia, WA 98504)

1st District:

Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe
402A Cherberg Bldg.
786-7600

Rep. Barbara Cothem
305 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7928

Rep. Linda Johnson
304 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7900

1st District:

Sen. Gary Nelson
106-A Institutions Bldg.
786-7640

Rep. Paul Shin
405 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7972

Rep. Jeannette Wood
415 Legislative Bldg.
786-7950

32nd District:

Sen. Al Williams
401-A Legislative Bldg.
786-7910

Rep. Grace Cole
341 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7910

Rep. Nancy Rust
407 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7880

44th District:

Sen. Tim Erwin
109A Institutions Bldg.
786-7686

Rep. Jim Johanson
437 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7892

Rep. Jeanine Long *
415 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
786-7982

*Member, JCPP

CONTINUING UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

To leave messages for Legislators (State Legislative Hotline) - 1-800-562-600

To leave messages for Legislators (Senior Citizens Lobby) - 1-800-562-6000

To get up-to-date information (WSRTA Legislative Message Center) - 1-800-221-1269

WSRTA Office - 1-800-544-5219

STATUS OF BILLS CURRENTLY IN THE LEGISLATURE - 2/27/94

B 6605 - Health Care Benefits. Senator Nita Rinehart's bill improves health care benefits for K-12 retirees. Although the Legislature provided a deferred benefit in the form of a subsidy for retiree health benefits last session, the premiums are so high that retirees have to pay much more than they did prior to last session. K-12 retirees pay \$100 to over \$200 more than other groups for the same plans. This bill gives the Health Care Authority the ability to encourage competition among providers and to require comparable premiums for all risk pools for similar benefits. **This bill passed Senate Ways and Means and is now in the Senate.**

LEGISLATIVE REPORT, CONT'D

SB 6568 - Pension Improvement Account. Takes \$25 million earmarked in the budget for pensions out of the stabilization account and puts it into a special account. This action protects these funds from the effect of Initiative 601 which does away with the stabilization account and would leave the \$25 million in the general fund, without being earmarked for pensions. The bill has passed the Senate (47 to 0) and was heard by House Appropriations.

SB 6141 - PEBB Appointments. Permits the appointment of active and retired school district employees as soon as the bill is signed, rather than waiting until January 1995. PEBB is the Public Employee Benefits Board which designs and approves our insurance plans. This bill has passed the Senate (48 to 0) and is now in Rules.

HB 2905 - "Age 65" Plan 1 COLA simplification. Currently, the eligibility for each individual is calculated. This bill provides that when the youngest over-65 person qualifies for a COLA, everyone that age and older would automatically qualify. This bill also makes the February COLA permanent. The bill was recommended by the JCPP (Joint Committee on Pension Policy), has passed the House and has been heard by Senate Ways and Means.

ESHB 1182 - Substitute Days. Increases the number of days a retiree can substitute from 75 to 90. This bill has passed the House and Senate Education and is in Rules.

Please, contact your representatives and thank them for voting for the bills noted as having passed one house.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Minimum COLA Simplification - Currently, the 3% COLA on the "minimum benefit" amounts to only 2.6% because it is figured only on the employer contribution rather than the whole benefit. The JCPP has looked at a proposal to apply the 3% to the entire benefit but has not yet recommended it. This would raise the minimum benefit from \$17.25 to \$22.33. The cost would be \$300,000 for the second year of this biennium, \$800,000 for the 1995-97 biennium.

"Age 70 Restriction" - A retiree had to be age 70 by July 1, 1993, to qualify for the *ad hoc* Cola. Retirees should qualify upon reaching age 70. The cost - \$400,000 for the biennium, \$200,00 for 1994 - could be taken from the \$25 million the Pension Improvement Account.

HOW TO DETERMINE THE REAL VALUE OF YOUR PENSION

You can use the CPI table on the right to figure how much your pension is worth today. Then, call or write your legislators giving them the information.

The table is used by the DRS to calculate the 40% loss of purchasing power (from age 65) required in order to qualify for a 3% COLA.

To use the table, divide the 1992 CPI value (0.4032) by the CIP of the year you retired. For example, the 1978 CPI is 0.1936000. That gives you 2.0826. Multiply 2.0826 by your retirement benefit which, we'll say, was \$800 per month. That gives you \$1666.12, the amount you should be getting in order to have the same buying power you had in 1978. You can calculate your percentage loss by subtracting \$800 from \$1666.12 and dividing that result by \$1666.12 and multiplying by 100. (The foregoing and the table are from an article by Worth Gurley in "Happenings", newsletter of the Pierce County Retired Teachers' Association.)

The result? 52% loss as of 1992. This means your pension was worth \$384 by 1992.

If you retired in 1978 at age 55, you would have reached age 65 in 1988. By that time, you would have lost 41% of the purchasing power of your pension. When you lose 40% of the purchasing power you had at age 65, you will qualify for a 3% COLA! On your \$800 pension, that will give you an additional \$24!

DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS CPI FACTOR TABLE

YEAR	INDEX FACTOR	YEAR	INDEX FACTOR
1937	0.0435	1967	0.1000
1938	0.0448	1968	0.1041
1939	0.0461	1969	0.1092
1940	0.0475	1970	0.1143
1941	0.0489	1971	0.1164
1942	0.0504	1972	0.1197
1943	0.0519	1973	0.1275
1944	0.0535	1974	0.1415
1945	0.0551	1975	0.1558
1946	0.0568	1976	0.1645

1947	0.0643	1977	0.1776
1948	0.0696	1978	0.1936
1949	0.0693	1979	0.2146
1950	0.0703	1980	0.2491
1951	0.0757	1981	0.2761
1952	0.0776	1982	0.2940
1953	0.0786	1983	0.2932
1954	0.0786	1984	0.3028
1955	0.0790	1985	0.3091
1956	0.0800	1986	0.3113

1957	0.0833	-----	-----
1958	0.0852	1987	0.3186
1959	0.0868	1988	0.3291
1960	0.0879	1989	0.3445
1961	0.0893	1990	0.3600
1962	0.0906	1991	0.3740
1963	0.0921	1992	0.4032
1964	0.0924	1993	0.0000
1965	0.0945	1994	0.0000
1966	0.0971	1995	0.0000

LEGISLATIVE REPORT, CONT'D

A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE 3% PLAN I COLA

The average age at which a TRS Plan I employee retires is 59. A person retiring in 1980, at age 59 with over 30 years of service would have a pension of \$16,000 a year. This assumes the person retired from a First Class School District with an above average salary schedule. This retiree would qualify for a COLA in 1999 at age 78. By this time, the individual would have lost 63.4% of the value of the pension. \$16,000 would have shrunk to \$5,863. The 3% COLA would total \$480 a year. This is the benefit of the current 3% COLA!

NEWS ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

By the time you read this **Georgianna Young** will have returned from a trip to Disneyland. Her four year old granddaughter was the recipient of a trip funded by the "Make a Wish Foundation". Georgie was asked by her daughter to join the family for this adventure.

On January 13 **Lois Grasmick** took a really bad fall that ended up with a torn Achilles tendon. She was operated on January 18th and has been recuperating at home. On February 18 Lois will be able to get around better with a walking cast. We wish to see her back at her normal activities soon and able to hop, skip, and jump.

June McMasters reports improved health from cancer.

Elbert Honeycutt had a heart attack February 11 - in Northwest Hospital for four days, then to Providence for an angiogram and then angioplasty to unblock one artery. He returned home February 20 and is doing well.

Ruthanne Warren and son Scott had a wonderful trip to Pasadena, CA attending a family wedding. Brother Don, a Presbyterian minister from Philadelphia officiated. Another brother and wife flew from Atlanta so it was quite a reunion and warm, sunny weather!

One of our members, **Oliver LaFreniere**, is one of the nominees for the 1994 Jefferson Award. His nomination states that "LaFeniere is a retired teacher who introduced chess to thousands of Washington students. He has been a tireless organizer, tournament director and chess promoter for more than 30 years.

The American flag that flies over Terrace High School was the flag that was on the casket of our member, **Paul Weaver**. It was donated to the school by his wife, **Frances**.



LOOKING FOR ANCESTERS AND THINGS ALONG THE WAY

Dick and Barbara Sacksteder will show slides of their latest trip to Europe at the March 17 Sno-King meeting at Edmonds School District Office. They were there to research Barbara's Swedish heritage and Dick's French roots. If you have never witnessed one of Dick's "slide shows" you are in for a treat! Bring your friends as we travel 7000 miles through Amsterdam, Stockholm, Belgium, France and Italy, and 6000 miles back and forth across the U.S.

See you at 1:30 p.m. on March 17!



News deadline for February Bulletin is February 20. Send to Betty Odle, 2137 N 86th, Seattle 98103. Phone: 525-8276. Please send us news about other members as well as about your activities. If you know of any illness, please contact our Sunshine Chair, Barbara Berg - 483-2671 or President Jim Becker - 284-8313, or Editor Betty Odle - 525-8276.

Sno-King Retired Teachers' Assn.
P. O. Box 5253
Lynnwood, WA 98046-5253

**FORWARD AND
ADDRESS CORRECTION**

**BULK MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Lynnwood, WA
PERMIT #277**



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