

Sno-King School Retirees



April 2009

www.sksr.org

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Alice Bingaman, Retirement Planning/ Scholarship
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The SKSR Bulletin

A Message From Our President



Being on the mailing list for Newsletters from the other Units in our region (Sno Isle, Skagit San Juan, and Whatcom) apprises me of important regional and state issues. This time, without exception, we are all concerned about “Unfunded Liability!”

Ever heard of it? What follows is an attempt at a mini primer on Unfunded Liability and why we all need to be watchdogs throughout this legislative session.

Unfunded Liability refers to the State contribution to our Pension Funds that matches what you contribute (six per cent) every paycheck. Some years in the past, in difficult financial times, the State has received a waiver to not make it’s full contribution (in fact, only half) accruing a debt to the Pension Fund it must pay back. That debt is called “Unfunded Liability.” Right now, for the PERS and TRS Plan I Pension Funds the amount owing is more than \$5.897 billion due to be repaid by 2024—extended from 2016.

This year, the Governor’s budget proposes cuts in the State contribution **again** in order to save the State \$385 million. Our concern is that in order to achieve that much savings, some state contributions would need to be shaved from Plans 2 and 3 as well as Plan I. Currently, Plans 2 and 3 allow **no** Unfunded Liability. A law would have to be changed to exempt the State from contributing the full amounts to these plans. Of course, we are very much opposed to starting the slide down that slippery slope.

Although funds are adequate to pay retirees their pension dollars currently and are mandated by the state the future is ours to protect. For instance, Plan I COLA improvements or restoration of purchasing power is lost over time for Plan I long timers. It always meet with resistance that it’s too “expensive”, basically because of the already big “tab” the State has in Unfunded Liability for Plan I. Also, to pay it back, the State now has to invest in riskier investments in order to get the needed rate of return, and we have fewer dollars to invest now when good deals become

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www.sksr.org

SKSR Board Meetings

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

April 9
May 14
July 9

**MARK YOUR
DATEBOOK**

April 16 Scholarship Luncheon
Edmonds Unitarian Church

May 21 General Meeting/Sno-Isle
Sno-Isle Skills Center

June 8-10 WSSRA Convention
Vancouver, WA

July 16 picnic
Edmonds City Park

SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON

We're looking forward to seeing you at the Spring Scholarship Luncheon, at noon on April 16. The luncheon is at the Edmonds Unitarian Church, 8109 - 224th SW, Edmonds. We always have wonderful food prepared by our members. The spring luncheon features Sno-King cooks' special salads.

Please call Erma Snook, 425-776-2067, Cheryl Bickford, 206-363-2731 or Betty Odle, 206-525-8276 by Monday, April 13 for reservations for the \$5 donation luncheon. If you would like to contribute food for the luncheon let Erma or Betty know when you make your reservations.

This is a good time to invite your retired school employee friends to attend the luncheon with you - they will enjoy the food and fellowship and the great entertainment planned for this meeting. (See map p. 3)

If you are unable to attend the luncheon but would like to support the scholarship fund, you can make a donation to the Sno-King School Retirees Scholarship Fund and mail it to P.O. Box 33962, Seattle, WA 98133-0962. There is a donation form below which can be delivered to the meeting or mailed to SKSR

SNO-KING SCHOOL RETIREES' SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The purpose of the SKSR Scholarship Fund is to assist carefully selected graduating seniors majoring in education from Edmonds, Northshore and Shoreline School Districts in reaching their goals. Contributions are tax deductible.

Enclosed is a contribution of \$ _____ As a special gift _____

Or in memory of _____

Or in honor of _____

on the occasion of _____

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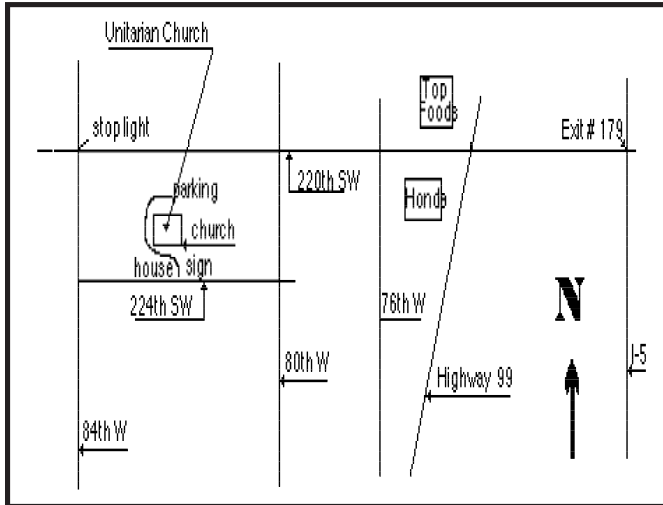
Address _____

Donor's name _____

Address _____

Make check payable to *Sno-King School Retirees' Scholarship Fund*. Mail to Sno-King School Retirees, PO Box 33962, Seattle WA 98133-0962.

Map to Universalist Unitarian Church



Staying Sharp

The DVD “Staying Sharp is available to borrow for your home viewing. It was shown at the February meeting and received complimentary reviews. It is an hour long panel discussion by experts of brain function, physiology, dysfunction and remediation that is very understandable, close captioned, and very informative. Remember the best way to stay sharp, the programs suggests, is to pick your parents very carefully! Contact Erma Snook at 425-776-2067 to borrow the DVD.

Tap Your Toe and Sing Along

We look forward to seeing you at the April Scholarship Luncheon on April 16th. SKSR members will provide a potluck Salad Luncheon at noon. Our program will be the Sound Singers under the direction of our own Bob Jones. Put it on your calendar, bring a friend and come to enjoy the performance, tap your toe and sing along with your favorites while supporting our Scholarship Fund!

RSVP by April 13 and/or sign up to bring a salad by calling Cheryl Bickford 206-363-2731, Betty Odle 206-525-8276, or Erma Snook 425-776-2067. Lunch is \$5.00 at the Edmonds Unitarian Church, 8109 224th St. S. W., Edmonds, WA 98026.

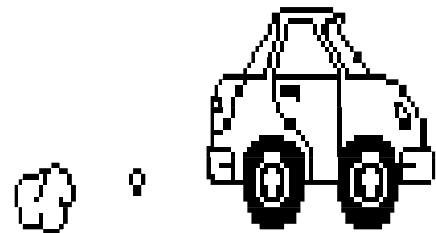


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AARP Driver Safety Program (55 Alive)

AARP’s *Driver Safety Program (formerly 55 Alive) Mature Driving Class* is a refresher course teaching preventive measures that save lives when driving. Pay \$12 (AARP members, \$14 non-members) 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 1:30 PM at the Anderson Center, 700 Main Street, Edmonds. For alternate dates and locations, contact Bob Jones at 425-438-2727 or bobpatjones@verizon.net. Note that the class is a “two-consecutive-days class,” which can be selected during the month of your choice.



Spring & Summer 09 dates

- April 16 & 17
- May 20 & 21
- July 1 & 2
- No June dates

Health Services

By Gordon Bowers

Gosh – When do I give up driving?

“Not yet”, says the Alzheimers Association, but if moderate or severe dementia, turn in the keys. However, driving performance should be the determining factor. The American Academy of Neurology is tougher: patients with mild dementia should consider getting off the road. This could be a major life crisis for some family member.

Brown University researchers ran a three year study with 44 healthy elderly drivers, and 84 drivers with mild dementia or possible Alzheimers. The authors of the study recommend a driving test every six months for those with dementia symptoms. To find a testing service in your area, call the Alzheimers Association at (800)-272-3900. More about dementia; it is a term that means a deterioration of mental capacity due to organic brain disease, according to Columbia University College of Physicians. The term is often confused with senility. Both have been thought to be caused by ageing, but not so. Most people do not suffer dementia just by growing older. So when the question of when a family member or friend should quit driving, use careful words and empathy for the person who will face the trauma of this decision. It can be devastating. Some of the warning signs from the Brown University study include trouble remember routes or getting lost in a familiar area, drifting in and out of traffic lanes, driving too slow, inattention to speed, mistake gas for brake, frequent honking from other drivers, anger or confusion while driving, or evidence of damage to the car.

As we age, we all lose some functioning ability in driving, in sports, etc. These abilities vary with each individual. Counseling to give up the keys can come from the doctor, police officials, driver's license official, minister, or trusted friend. The most effective helps the driver realize that he or she is a hazard to others' safety. If not cognitive to know this, take the keys!

My wife and I had more than 25 years experience in a step by step mental deterioration in an

elderly neighbor who slipped from a very successful businessman, snow-bird driving south for the winter, gradually becoming confused and lost in a grocery store. The next step was assisted living, lost his wife, asked for help in selling his car & recognized he was a safety hazard. This was a stage of dementia, he then went to the Edmonds Alzheimers facility, where he passed away. Hope this will relieve some worry about when to quit driving.¹

Stem cell research is alive and well – These studies did not end with the U.S. administration ban eight years ago. Some leading scientists moved to Singapore, Britain, or China, where such work was welcomed. Some scientists remained in the U.S. and continued work on Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation funding and cell studies.

Progress has made it possible that stem cells can be generated either with or without using embryos. Due to doctors like Harvard's Douglas Melton who shared stem cell research with others around the world and at the International Society of Stem Cell Research in Toronto in 2008 a Japanese researcher, Shinya Yamanaka presented his study on a breakthrough that has become known as the “Induced Pluripotent Stem Cell Breakthrough:”

This complex process makes it possible to produce unlimited quantities of a patient's stem cells that can be combined with any cells the body might need to repair or replace. Thus the doors have been opened for cures of diseases, using the body's own cells.²

Senior Moments – a few shocking items from John Hopkins Medical: If you are over age 40 and haven't noticed a change in your mental alertness and memory, maybe others in the family are aware. When we reach 40 and beyond, cognitive powers and acuity are not as sharp. Our ability to recall dates, facts, figures, and names gradually decline. We are not alone, everyone in the world faces the same problems. However, loss of memory and mental capacity can be slowed, halted or even reversed through new therapies, drugs, nutrition and genetic testing. The most important for some is that alcohol can help you think better. One to six drinks per week lowers the risk of dementia. This is from studies by the John Hopkins Medical Memory Team.

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Early diagnosis and treatment is best, ignoring the symptoms can compound your problems.³

Best Bumper Sticker – “Let’s Not Meet by Accident”

Hope: Of all the forces that make for a better world, none is so powerful as hope. With hope, one can think, one can work, one can dream. If you have hope, you have everything.⁴

¹John Hopkins Medical Letter, article on driving February p 2-3

²Park, Alice: “The Quest Begins” *Time Magazine* February 9, 2009 p. 38-43

³John Hopkins White Paper, “Memory” December 08 p, 1-2

⁴Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

PAINTING PAIN?—I can help you

Since retirement almost four years ago and for 25 years before that, we have had the privilege of helping members with their painting needs. References are available from many of them. I would also be happy to help you with your needs. Help is also available to fix some of those small household repairs that need to be done. We serve the east side and north end of Lake Washington.

For information call
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Memorials and Donations

to our Scholarship fund;

- Fred Cochran in Memory of Kathleen
- Jeannie Matthews in memory of Marge Wiitala
- Phyllis Fiege in memory of Betty Garrison
- Ellie Bonanno in memory of Betty Garrison
- Rachel Lake in memory of Betty Garrison
- Shirley Williams in memory of Marilyn Thompson
- Phil & Georgia Elvrum in memory of Betty Garrison
- SKSR in memory of Ron Lee, Merle Blevins,
- Kamilla Aarseth, Carole Sorensen,
- Bernadette Denby-Shinn

- Margaret C Dezell - donation
- Lynda B Watson - donation

Corrections:

- Pg 18 Bystrom, Leslie – Change first name to Natalie
- Pg 34 Humphrey, Lynda W – Change tel number to 206-364-5683, add email LyndaLarry@aol.com
- Pg 34 Husarik, Edward J – Change telephone number to 425-493-2588
- Pg 45 McLeod, Arlene M – Change phone number to 425-483-0374
- Pg 45 McMurry, Cora M – should be CoraMae. Tel No. 253-303-0063, technicalbooks@comcast.net
- Pg 62 Stark, Marlyn & Mary Ellin – change email address to: mamestark@comcast.net
- Pg 63 Stoffer, Maurice H – email changed to Mhstoffer4@gmail.com
- Pg 66 Uchida, Jody T – change phone number to 360-387-6434

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President *continued from p 1*

available and we have to sell some of our assets at these low prices to meet current pension obligations instead of having the cash on hand. It's a downward spiral that we need to arrest, not perpetuate!

For more information on this issue, go to our Washington State School Retirees web site www.wssra.org, select the "Legislative" link and choose "Legislative Insight". See page four and five for complete information on Pension Funding. Leslie Main, our State Legislative Coordinator, prepares this update and this issue is particularly thorough!

As of this writing, no legislation has been formulated (no bill number) to change Plan 2 and 3 contribution rates. We are on alert! However, it is not too early to get out your "green card" (you received in the mail) and contact your legislators to encourage them to always vote to fully fund our State Pension Funds.

To the much cheerier side of our SKSR work, invite a friend and plan to attend our Scholarship Luncheon on April 16th. We look forward to the Sound Singers' performance, good food and great camaraderie! See you there!

Happy Spring! Erma Snook, President

Thanks for the Memories!

I can't thank SKSR enough for all the help they have provided over the years to enable me to give my students new unique equipment and the opportunity to create memories. My first grant I was given was over 10 years ago and was for a digital camera. It was a new concept and a very powerful tool for learning. I used it to photograph students doing a skill or activity to show proper form, to provide visuals for directions to stations, and to commemorate my students by putting their pictures up on a bulletin board.

Through SKSR many of my dreams have come true. Again with their support I was able to create a DVD library for my students with special needs. Activity lessons are put on a DVD and sent home so my students can practice and enjoy with their families. Three years later, my DVD library continues to grow as does the positive growth of my students. Ribbon sticks and circus equipment, also purchased through a SKSR grant, continue to be used with in

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

by Rachel Lake & Ellie Bonanno

This legislative report is written on March 11 so when you read this, things probably will have changed. You can find up to date information by calling Washington State Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000 or via the internet at www.leg.wa.gov.

The Access to Mailing SSB5248 was passed by the Senate on March 4, (thanks to many of you who called your senator) and has been sent to the House. There was a companion bill in the House but the decision was made to keep the same # and make it ESSB 5248. It is now in the Government and Tribal Rules Committee. We need to have it brought out to the House floor so they can vote on it. We have not activated the telephone committee but everyone should call their legislator and either encourage them to support it or if it has passed, thank them for supporting the bill.

The Projected Unit Credit (PUC) Funding Method Plans 2/3 is opposed by WSSR. As yet, it still does not have a number. On March 19th, there will be the revenue report and then we should know more of what is proposed as far as spending cuts. We want responsible spending funding.

The two other bills Prescription Drug Privacy HB 1493 and Aging in Place HB 1330 never got out of committee. They came from the Senior Advocacy group and since we backed them, they were thankful for our efforts. At least the bills received more discussion and publicity.

The members of your State Legislative Committee will be in Olympia on March 25 and 26th to talk to our representatives. The session this year adjourns on April 26th and we hope they finish on time.

Don't forget to contact those that represent you asking for their support and/or thanking them.

Denise Gardner LMP

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P.E. and are helping students meet health/fitness standards in a fun way.

I believe if you can create positive activity memories with your students they will continue to be active all through their life. Thanks for sharing and thanks for the memories!

WSSRA Convention

Installing President Rita Requa

After serving a year-in-waiting, we are looking forward to Sno King's own, President Elect, Rita Requa's installation. At the WSSRA Convention in Vancouver, Washington June 8-10, we will see her take her place as WSSRA President. Her theme for the year is "Staying Connected." We hope you will attend as one of our delegates to represent Sno King School Retirees, or attend on your own and join Sno King delegates as we enjoy Convention and support "Prez Rita!"

We are allowed 26 delegates based on our membership numbers. If you would like to be a delegate and continue to lend your service to our Unit, Sno King Retirees usually subsidizes the cost to the delegates as best we can. Contact Erma Snook to sign up! Your registration (\$30), meals (ones provided by Convention) (\$67) will be paid. Your transportation will be subsidized by WSSRA—we try to carpool as we are reimbursed at four travelers per car, or this year, we may travel by AMTRAK, as parking is limited. We then decide how much we can subsidize room reservations based on double occupancy—last year it was \$100 per delegate and most delegates only paid breakfasts, and slight remaining room costs—last year about \$45 per person. You must make your own room reservations at the Vancouver Hilton, by going to www.wwsra.org and clicking on the Convention link at the left side. Try to arrange a roommate for maximum economy.

On Wednesday, June 3rd, Convention delegates are invited to a delegates' meeting at Barlees Restaurant, 7929 Lake Ballinger Way, Edmonds, 98026. This is a pre-convention meeting to discuss issues and plans for our Unit at Convention. We will meet at noon. RSVP to Erma Snook 425-776-2067 or egsnook@comcast.net. We'll have fun—join us!!

Superintendents Update Us

On February 2 at our general meeting, Superintendent Nick Brossoit, Edmonds School District, and Superintendent Larry Francois, Northshore School District, addressed our group regarding the "woes" and "wows" of their respective districts. Both Superintendents touted the financial downturn and the annual uncertainty of budgets as particular woes. In the "wow" department, Superintendent Francois cited the development of a new district-wide Math program and Superintendent Brossoit cited the Edmonds School District partnership with Families Advocating For Students of Color to address the unique challenge impacting the educational experience and academic performance of students of color in the district.

Both Superintendents signed the Governor's Proclamation honoring Washington State School Retirees Week, March 16-22. The Proclamation is to be read at the Northshore School Board Meeting the third week in March. Both Superintendents are WSSRA members!

Following a very informative Q and A session with the Superintendents, we viewed the video "Staying Sharp." It was a panel discussion of neurological experts on brain function, dysfunction and remediation. It was surprisingly upbeat and very enlightening!

Superintendent Sue Walker, Shoreline School District, sent her regrets, unable to attend, we look forward to visiting with her at a later date.



*Larry Francois,
Superintendent
North Shore school
District*



*Nick Brossoit,
Superintendent
Edmonds School
District*



Sno-King School Retirees
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

HELP US WITH INFORMATION TO PUT IN THE *BULLETIN*

The deadline for the next newsletter is 8:00 AM, **Friday, April 24.**

Send news and other materials to

Dave Johnson, 814 6th Ave. So. Edmonds, WA 98020, damajo3@comcast.net, or 425-776-7298.

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

If you know of illness, please call Sunshine Chair, **Evelyn Nordeen** evie.nordeen@verizon.net or 425-775-1127

To help with mailing our next *Bulletin* on **Monday, May 5**, call **Alice Bingaman** 425-778-1343 or **Betty Odle** 206-525-8276,

Address Changes:

Pg 11 Asbury, Eva E, 3616 NE 97th Ave, Vancouver, WA 98662-7412

Pg 21 Creager, Jeffrey, 5313 NE 180th St, Lk Forest Park, WA 98155-4328

Pg 60 Sevig, Paul W, 530 Homeland Dr, Edmonds, WA 98020-4026

Pg 67 Wagar, David E, 102 State St S, Kirkland, WA 98033

Deceased:

Pg 10 Aarseth, Kamilla 1/19/09 (Shoreline Dist)

Pg 23 Denby-Shinn, Bernadette 2/16/09 (Edmonds Dist)

Pg 47 Moberg, Dorothy R. 12/19/09 (Edmonds Dist)

Pg 61 Sorensen, Carole 1/10/09 (Edmonds Dist)

Sherwood, Jack (Shoreline Dist) Powell, Joan (Shoreline Dist)