

Sno-King School Retirees



July-August 2021

The SKSR Bulletin



A message from your board

Leadership crisis

by Jim Siscel, chair

What a year+ this past year has been. Thank goodness for Zoom and other video platforms! Our board has continued to meet; we have had two general membership meetings; NW-1 has had three meetings; and WSSRA has hosted two conventions during this year. Without Zoom there would have been little, if any,

contact either between our membership or with our families.

Leadership-involvement challenge

In our last *Bulletin*, we pointed out that our unit needs a president, a president-elect, and a vice president. We have operated without a president for the past two years. Vice President Roberta Hawkins has been our point person to receive information from WSSRA. Now after 11 years as vice president she has asked to pass that position along to a new person. During the past two years, individual board members have stepped up to take responsibility for each month's activities as well as their assigned responsibilities. This has been hard for everyone, and it makes consistency and stability difficult to achieve for the membership.

As the second largest unit in WSSRA, SKSR—with over 1,400 members—does a tremendous amount of good. Since 1988 we have provided more than \$98,000 in grants for our active members to use to enhance their classroom instruction. We have the best scholarship program in the state for future teachers. with over \$237,000 available to award in coming years. Since 2008 we have given \$277,600 in scholarships. In 2020 we awarded \$30,000. We support local organizations that benefit children in our three school districts. We have excellent activities for our members: brunches, lunches, picnic, speakers and field trips.

(chair's message continued on page 2)

OFFICERS

vacant, President

vacant, Vice President

Jan Phillips, Secretary

Tom Hawkins, Treasurer

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Barbara Berg, Scrapbook

Linda Fitzgerald/Keith Lindaas, Scholarships

Robin Randles, Health

Marlene Johnson, Hospitality

Barb Bumgardner, Sunshine

Karen McElliott, Active Member Grants

vacant, Legislative

Jim Siscel, Membership/Retirement/Website

Erma Snook, Membership Records

Jo Caldwell, Bulletin Editor

Our next event

SKSR Picnic—July 15, at the Edmonds City Park, Shelter 2

by Jan Phillips



- Meet and greet at 11:30
- Eat at 12:00
- Enjoy an opportunity to get together and visit after our long year inside
- Meet this year’s SKSR scholarship winners, their parents and some of our grant recipients
- Visit with WSSRA President Bruce Boyer and WSSRA Executive Director Alan Burke
- Elect and install next year’s officers
- Vote on passage of three by-law amendments
- Have the opportunity to help fund the WSSRA-PAC
- Experience a return to “normalcy”

We are offering box lunches!

Each box lunch includes a sandwich, side pasta salad and a homemade cookie.

BLT on a Croissant	Veggie Wrap on a Spinach Tortilla	Turkey-Avocado Sandwich on Wheat Bread	Ranch Chicken Wrap on a Spinach Tortilla
Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato, Mayonnaise	Chick peas, Tomato, Feta, Olives, Pepperoncini, Spinach, Herb vinaigrette	Turkey, Avocado, Spinach, Tomato, Havarti Honey mustard	Grilled chicken, Romaine, Tomato, Pepperjack cheese, Buttermilk ranch dressing

We will have bottles of water. If you prefer, you may bring any other non-alcoholic beverage.

Contact Jan Phillips to reserve your box lunch: email soccerjan@hotmail.com or phone to leave a voice mail at **425-743-5034**. She will get back to you to confirm your request.

PLEASE BRING A \$5 BILL TO PAY FOR THE BOX LUNCH.

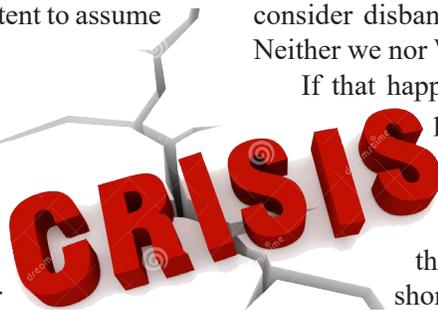
We would prefer not to make change.

(chair’s message continued from page 1)

An offer we hope you can’t refuse

During the next year, we would like to have some of our members work with one of the current board members to find out how that board position operates. Please consider volunteering to help with one of the following needs this year with the intent to assume the position in 2022.

- Health (Robin Randles)
- Grants (Karen McElliott)
- Scholarships (Linda Fitzgerald and Keith Lindaas)
- Membership Records (Erma Snook)
- Membership or Retirement or Website (Jim Siscel)
- Picnic (Jan Phillips)
- Field Trip (Roberta Hawkins)
- Locating speakers for general meetings (currently a shared responsibility that should be one assignment).



Our future may be bleak

During the 2021-2022 year, the current board members will continue to operate our unit. If we do not find other members willing to take the leadership positions for 2022-2023, the board will be forced to consider disbanding our SKSR unit after 45 years. Neither we nor WSSRA want to see the unit disband.

If that happens, members would be allowed to pick a unit to transfer to or will be assigned to the WSSRA unit where they reside.

Our funds would be disbursed to the foundations of the Edmonds, North-shore and Shoreline school districts, but would not be necessarily used in the manner that we have established for scholarships and active-educator grants.

Here’s how you can help

Please contact Jim Siscel (jsiscel@comcast.net, 425-778-7202) with the position you would like to help. He will put you in contact with the person, OR using your directory, contact the person directly.

Legislative news

WSSRA end-of-legislative-session report

by Tim Knopf, NW-1, WSSRA Legislative Committee Member



The 2021 Washington State Legislative Session that ended Sunday, April 25, 2021, was a session unlike any other in Washington state history.

It opened on January 11th at the height of the third and worst wave of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Here in Washington, new infections averaged over 2,500 per day and deaths averaged 30 a day.

Because of Covid, except for the first day, every day of the State House and Senate was held on-line. All business of the legislature was done virtually, and our legislators had to work from home the entire session.

Before the session opened, Washington suffered a catastrophic drop in revenues when many businesses closed due to the pandemic. Governor Inslee pulled \$200 million from reserves to fight Covid, and indications were that the state was facing a monumental deficit.

Our goals for this session

Knowing this, WSSRA expected to have to fight just to maintain the successes that we had achieved in recent sessions. Our bottom line was to maintain the \$183 monthly PEBB Medical Benefit for retirees 65 and older and to make sure that the state made its actuarially recommended payment to the pension fund.

We also wanted to reduce early retirement penalties for older Plan 2 and Plan 3 members most at risk to Covid so that they could retire at age 60 (House Bill 1032). We hoped as well to open an enrollment window for the PEBB Medical Insurance program so that retirees currently locked out could rejoin PEBB (House Bill 1040).

The legislature at work

This session was historic and unusual in so many ways. First among them was how state revenue forecasts oddly began improving despite the pandemic. That, plus a \$9 billion infusion from the federal government to fight Covid, led to the passage of a \$59.2 billion, two-year budget!

Democrats used their majority control of the House and the Senate to “run the table” this session, passing a number of important measures expected to change life in Washington for years to come despite Republican opposition. These included a 7% tax on capital gains in excess of \$250,000

made from the sale of long-term stock or bond assets. Also passed was

a clean-fuel program, a working family tax rebate, expanded child care support, strengthening of the social services safety net, significant reforms to policing methods, more support to fight wildfires, greater outreach and treatment for people with substance-abuse disorder, strengthening tenant rights, and banning the open carry of weapons at the state capitol.

With all that and more on the legislature’s plate, school retirees were not a priority this session. So, how did we do?

Results for retirees

Actually, we did better than expected. Not only will the state’s 2021-23 operating budget maintain the \$183 monthly PEBB Health Benefit and make the actuarially recommended payments to the state retirement fund, it also appropriates \$800 million towards the TRS 1 unfunded liability (to be paid on June 30, 2023). That is about half of the liability! Senate leaders say that it could be just the first installment to pay down the liability. This not only saves the state money, it moves us closer to the day when Plan 1 retirees could receive a regular annual COLA, just like Plan 2 and Plan 3 members.

The legislature also approved a study of the effects of a one-time PEBB open enrollment window for retirees currently locked out of PEBB, as proposed in House Bill 1040.

In addition to our own WSSRA priorities, we benefitted from bills promoted by political allies. The elimination of pension penalties resulting from 2020 Covid-19 mandated furloughs, drug purchasing arrangements favorable to retirees and the strengthening of a long-term-care patient bill of rights are all now state law.

Two other bills passed the legislature and await the governor’s signature. They are a measure to expand senior property-tax exemptions and another to treat broadband as a utility.

Our legislative frustrations include the lack of a Plan 1 COLA for 2021. Neither did we succeed in reducing early retirement penalties, nor did we

(legislative report continued on page 4)

Back-to-School Drives

Washington Kids in Transition School Supplies Drive

Washington Kids in Transition is part of the Edmonds Back to School collaboration that provides school supplies to students in need in the Edmonds School District. The goal is to fill backpacks for middle- and high-school students.

Go to signupgenius.com/go/4090d48afa928a6f49-back to see what supplies are needed. You can sign-up for the item(s) you would like to provide.

Items can be dropped off at their distribution center, located at 19721 Scriber Lake Road #B, Lynnwood, Monday–Friday: 10am to 4pm.

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Gorney at 206-697-3385. To make a monetary donation, go to the following website and click on “Donate”: [washingtonkidsintransition.org](https://www.washingtonkidsintransition.org).



Northshore Schools Foundation “Backpacks for Kids”

Northshore Schools Foundation is excited to return to its traditional “Backpacks for Kids” program in a new and unusual way. All Northshore School District students experiencing financial limitations will have access to a new, sturdy backpack and a separate school-supply kit.

We encourage the community to check out our website and social media for links to supporting this program. Whether you’re inspired to purchase a backpack and drop it at one of our collection sites, or you would rather click a few buttons and donate online to support our supply kits, we would be thrilled to have your support.

We invite you to visit our website at www.northshoreschools-foundation.org.



Shoreline School District Students Needing Support

The Shoreline and Lake Forest Park Back-To-School Consortium is excited to hold its 20th Annual Back-To-School (BTS) Event on August 21 to support a successful start to the school year for our Pre-K through 12th-grade students who are living with a low income and/or experiencing circumstances in their lives that make it challenging to prepare for going back to school.

To make a monetary or item donation, go to the following website and click on “Donate”: www.btsconsortium.org.



(legislative report continued from page 3)

pass the open-enrollment window for PEBB, but the legislature does plan to study the idea.

Commitment and involvement made a difference

The reason that school retirees got anything good from this legislative session is due first of all to the skill, insight and dedication of WSSRA Executive Director Alan Burke, WSSRA Legislative Director Peter Diedrick and our lobbyists Fred Yancey and Michael Moran.

Secondly, we should thank those members of the WSSRA Legislative Committee who stuck it out all session, meeting repeatedly with legislators to press home our issues. Notable among them are Barbara Robinson, Diane Visten and WSSRA President-Elect, Bruce Boyer from neighboring Unit

21 in Skagit, Island and San Juan counties.

We should also thank the WSSRA “legislative buddies,” who maintained weekly contact with their legislators through the session. And we also appreciate the members who joined us for Zoom conferences with legislators or who wrote to legislators to share concerns this session.

Looking ahead

Next year’s work has already begun. WSSRA legislative leaders are currently planning our “asks” for the 2022 legislative session. Some of these should appear before the Legislature’s Select Committee on Pension Policy when it meets in June.

That is how we make progress together and improve life for all school retirees.

Active teacher grants update

Bylaws changes to be voted on at SKSR picnic

by Jim Siscel

At the picnic we will be voting on the following Board recommendations to changes to our unit by-laws and scholarship fund bylaws.

Change to SKSR Bylaws dated July 19, 2018

ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS

A. There will be a minimum of five events per year as approved by the SKSR Board.

B. If health or weather-related challenges make holding a face-to-face meeting unsafe, a virtual meeting via software, e.g., Zoom, that provides live visual pictures of members and full discussion and debate opportunities can replace one or more required board, committee and general meetings. In virtual meetings all regular voting procedures (e.g., agenda approval) shall continue to be in effect as though the meeting were held in person.

Rationale:

COVID-19 has presented SKSR with new issues making meeting face-to-face impossible. For the SKSR Board to continue to meet, and according to *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, the above proposed Bylaw Amendment is submitted.

Change to SKSR Bylaws dated July 19, 2018

New Article XIV and heading to Article XV

ARTICLE XIV – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Sno-King School Retirees organization, all assets remaining after debts have been satisfied shall be distributed equally between the Foundation for Edmonds School District, a 501c3 organization; the Northshore Schools Foundation, a 501c3 organization; and the Shoreline Public Schools Foundation, a 501c3 organization, pursuant to a plan of distribution as provided by law.

ARTICLE XV – AMENDMENTS

Rationale:

The SKSR Board decided to distribute all assets on dissolution to the foundations of each of the school districts that our members represent.

Change to Scholarship Fund By-laws dated July 19, 2018

ARTICLE V – PROVISION FOR FUNDS upon Dissolution of SKSR Organization

As noted in our Non-Profit Organization documents and these Bylaws, the SKSR Board serves as the designated trustees for the Sno-King School Retirees Annual Scholarship Fund and The Winnie Smith Memorial Fund. As such, if at any time it becomes necessary to dissolve this organization, the SKSR Board will fulfill its final responsibility for the Sno-King School Retirees Annual Scholarship Fund and The Winnie Smith Memorial Fund ~~by distributing~~ *by distributing equally* any remaining monies in those funds between the *Foundation for Edmonds School District, a 501c3 organization*; the Northshore Schools Foundation, *a 501c3 organization*; and the Shoreline Public Schools Foundation, *a 501c3 organization, pursuant to a plan of distribution as provided by law. Monies received by these organizations will be used to fund scholarships for graduating seniors in the individual school district who are planning a career in education.*

Rationale:

The SKSR Board decided to distribute all assets on dissolution to the foundations of each of the school districts that our members represent.

Member Information Updates

Deceased

- Loren Reynolds, April 2021, Member since 2015
- Joyce Shepard, April 2021, Member since 2011
- David A. Wilson, June 2021, Edmonds Member since 1994

New Members

- Atkinson, Erl*
- Beeston, Antoaneta
- Hobert, Bruce

*= active member

Scholarship update

Final scholarships for four students

by Kevin Lindaas

The following college students are receiving their final scholarship award from the Winnie Smith Memorial Scholarship:

Ashley Aversano, Shorecrest HS, University of Washington, Bothell, majoring in elementary education

Freya Bloomberg, Meadowdale HS, Western Washington University, majoring in early childhood education

Justin Doyle, Shorecrest HS, Central Washington University, majoring in elementary education

Joanna Schroeder, Edmonds-Woodway HS, Western Washington University, majoring in mathematics and minoring in French



They were awarded their first SKSR scholarships in **2018** and have received Winnie Smith Scholarships for each of the following three years.

The total amount of their four years of scholarships from SKSR is \$8,500 each.

Each year, WSSRA makes available scholarships to graduating seniors in the Edmonds, Northshore and Shoreline school districts with renewal through the Winnie Smith fund for an additional three years.

*Below is a letter to SKSR from **Freya Bloomberg**, one of our Winnie Smith Scholarship winners, who shares her experiences during Covid:*

In April of 2020, I got an email that confirmed my entrance into the Early Childhood Education program at Western Washington University and I cried so hard because of how happy I was. I was also accepted into the P-3 endorsement so I can teach preschool through third grade. Because of COVID-19, spring quarter was online, and I took classes that were all about multicultural education. I loved learning how to incorporate multicultural education into my classroom in the future.

In fall quarter, which was also online, I officially started classes in my program. This first year in the program is about how to observe a child's development. Fall quarter, I took an Infant and Toddler Practicum class where I watched videos of a one-year-old and observed how she was developing. I also took a Special Education class where we learned about IEPs and what it will be like to have children with a disability in our classroom. Separately from taking classes in my program, I also took Spanish 101. The reason I took this class is because in the future, I will have

children in my classroom who will speak Spanish, so I want to at least be able to talk to them in Spanish and English.

Winter quarter was also online. Continuing with the classes in the program, I took a preschool practicum class where I observed two five-year-olds over Zoom. I also took a class that will be part of my minor that was about Education and Social Justice. We had to take another Special Education class where we looked at the typical and atypical developments of children. I also continued with Spanish and took the 102 class to learn even more Spanish so I can use that in my future classroom.

This year has definitely been difficult with COVID-19. I also want to mention that over the summer, I was a nanny to a five and nine-year-old. During that time, I realized how much I love the age group that my endorsement is in, and I'm very excited for next year to start learning how to create lesson plans to use in the future.

Active teacher grants update

“Thanks” from grant recipients

by Karen McElliott

During this school year, our unit distributed \$5,739 in grants to active members. The following are some of their responses after being notified of their acceptance.

Birgit Albiker-Osterhaug

ELL Department/Meadowdale Middle School

Thank you very much! This is great news! This unit has grown into a multi-school collaboration effort and hopefully provides some much needed interaction between students. My classes will appreciate having a paper book in their hands again (well, most of them anyway).

Again, I am very grateful that SKSR is making these grants available for us.

Jennifer Altena

Librarian–Syre Elementary

Thank you so much!

I am so happy to have won this grant! I can't wait to order the books. I did a “diversity audit” of my books and found that the library needs more books to reflect the cultures of our students. I plan on ordering books that are from the Middle Eastern, Latinx, Asian, and First Nation cultures. With the awareness of diversity in our country today, there are finally more and more books for children that have characters from these places. The other crucial piece we look for in purchasing books is finding ones that are written by an author that is of that culture or race. This is another criterion I am examining when I make the book purchases. The books on the list I submitted will all fit these categories.

When I receive the books, I plan on sending a photo of them to you. I'm hoping to find a way to take photos of the kids holding the books as we come back on March 8th.

Thank you, again, for approving me for this grant. The kids and I are going to be thrilled to get these new books!

Jean Bolivar

Librarian–Echo Lake Elementary

Thank you. That is wonderful news.

Michelle McShane

Kindergarten–Cedar Way Elementary

I am so excited and appreciative for this gift! I can't wait to go shopping and arrange delivery of the games to my students. If allowed I will try and take a Zoom picture of a group playing together and send it to you. Gratefully yours.

Kathryn Pihl

1st Grade–Echo Lake Elementary

A truly heart-felt thank you for funding my SKSR Educator Grant request. I purchased books for my take home library to support independent reading practice. With the very generous grant support I was able to purchase much needed books for my beginning readers. At the start of the year, 13 students were reading below grade level, 6 at or above grade level. With your help, we've flipped that number! Pihl kids love reading and families are grateful. Thank you!



Kristi Pihl

1st Grade–Cedar Way Elementary

Thank you so much for the \$250 grant. It allowed me to add books so I have enough for kids to borrow at good fit levels with remote teaching. This has been critical since I can have kids borrow up to 20 books at a time while still allowing me to quarantine and have enough for the next pickup. My kids and families have been very grateful, since not all teachers have the needed books to offer this. My check out library is something I started with a previous SKSR Grant. I truly appreciate your help. It has allowed me to better support my kids and families for multiple years.

Health news

Stay hydrated!

by Robin Randles. Health chair

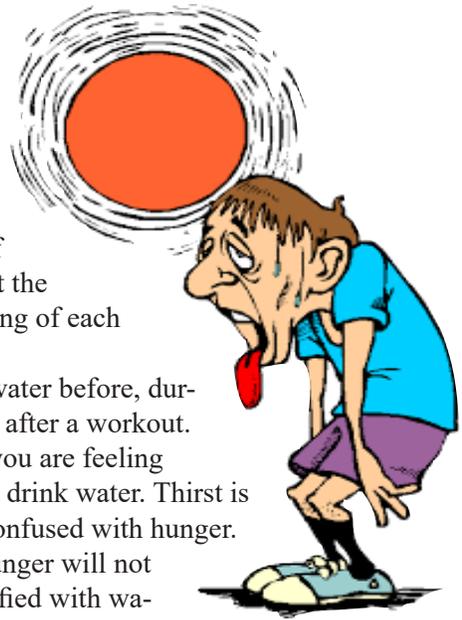
Staying hydrated is important all year long but especially in the warm summer months. It is easy to become dehydrated and not even know it. Heat-related illnesses can be especially risky for older adults.

About 60 percent of the human body is made up of water. We take this for granted until we become dehydrated. Dehydration, or a lack of fluid in the body, can cause a lower mood, muscle cramps, light-headedness, headache, confusion, fatigue, fainting and falls. Staying hydrated becomes more difficult with age because your sense of thirst tends to diminish, and many of the medications taken for high blood pressure or heart failure can cause fluid loss as well.

Dehydration is a condition when your body has lost more fluid and electrolytes than it took in, which can impair the body's ability to regulate temperature and function normally. Dehydration is one of the leading causes of hospitalization in older adults.

Tips for staying hydrated

- Drink before you feel thirsty. By the time you feel thirsty, you might be dehydrated.
- Sip small amounts of water frequently during the day. Carrying a water bottle with you can remind you to drink.
- Hydrate when you wake up and before meals. Try to have one to two glasses of water first thing in the morning and then one glass of water before each snack or meal. This will help you remember to drink during the day.



- Drink a small glass of water at the beginning of each hour.
- Drink water before, during and after a workout.
- When you are feeling hungry, drink water. Thirst is often confused with hunger. True hunger will not be satisfied with water.
- Add mint or a slice of lemon, lime, orange or cucumber to add flavor to plain or sparkling water.
- Try chilling your water or adding ice.
- Eat soups, fruits and vegetables that are good sources of liquid. Fruits like cantaloupe, strawberries and watermelon, and vegetables such as lettuce, cabbage, celery, spinach and cooked squash are full of water.
- Choose airy products including milk, yogurt and cottage cheese which are good sources of water.

Make sure you are paying attention to your fluid intake, especially during the summer months. Fluids are important to keeping our bodies fit and active. There might be something to the old adage to “drink eight glasses of water a day.”

Some laughs from 2020

1. The dumbest thing I ever bought was a 2020 planner.
2. 2019: Stay away from negative people. 2020: Stay away from positive people.
3. The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house and their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!
4. Every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pajamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.
5. Does anyone know if we can take showers

yet or should we just keep washing our hands?

6. I never thought the comment, “I wouldn’t touch him/her with a 6-foot pole” would become a national policy, but here we are!

7. I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.

8. I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to the Backyard. I’m getting tired of the Living Room.

9. Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go up to a bank teller wearing a mask and ask for money.

From WSSRA

WSSRA Virtual-Convention report

by Rita Requa

Nine SKSR members were delegates to the June 9 WSSRA Virtual Convention where WSSRA President Bob Duke presided.

WSSRA Executive Director Alan Burke gave a 2020-21 year-in-review, highlighting activities of the association. Philanthropy continues to be a core value of our units as exemplified by the 133,000 volunteer hours by our members, the \$135,000 given in mini-grants and the \$276,000 in scholarships.

Legislative Coordinator Peter Diedrick reviewed highlights of the 2021 Legislature. The virtual session went from an autumn budget crunch to the great gold rush of 2021! A sample was the \$800 million to the Plan1 Unfunded Liability, to the maintaining of the \$183 health-care subsidy, prescription drugs, etc.

Election results

- President-Elect: Brad Beal from Spokane
- Board of Directors: NW-2 Pat McGowan, E-7 Linda Marler
- Foundation Trustee, R-8 Kay Andersen

Other business of the convention

- 2021-2022 Budget of \$1,305,410 approved
- All bylaws passed with little opposition.
 - Three of the bylaws adopted involved al-

lowing electronic meetings, i.e., Zoom.

- One gave permission to hire a parliamentarian if needed.
- A bylaw, which was written by our own Jim Siscel and approved by NW-1, passed. This provided recommendations for the distribution of treasury funds in case of dissolution of unit and assigning members to other local units.



Fall convention canceled

- The board of directors approved cancelation of the fall Pasco convention, due to COVID concerns; therefore, the awards/recognition event will be scheduled in September, and unit and committee training sessions will be scheduled in October.
- The gavel was passed to the new WSSRA President Bruce Boyer. He presented his logo which focused on "Leadership, Scholarships, Communication." A special focus for his year will be celebrating the 75th birthday of WSSRA.

Meeting adjourned at 1:44 pm.

Congratulations to SKSR—recognized as a Unit of Highest Distinction



Annual planning retreat scheduled for August 12

The SKSR Board will have its annual planning retreat on August 12th at a location to be determined, depending on the current Covid-19 restrictions.

We would like to invite interested members to attend and help plan for our activities for 2021-2022.

A box lunch will be provided for all attendees.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Jim Siscel, 425-778-7202 or jsiscel@comcast.net, by Friday, August 6th.



Help us with the *Bulletin*

The deadline items for the next *Bulletin* is August **13**.

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

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

With the current conditions, there will be no group foldings and preparations for mailing of the *Bulletin*.

After we are back to "normal" we will resume that process.