

Sno-King School Retirees



January-February

The SKSR Bulletin



A message from your board

What's happening

by Jan Phillips, chair

Happy New Year!

I hope that you had a good holiday season. At our November lunch, 30 of us enjoyed a meal catered by Chef Dane. Attendees were informed about the benefits AMBA provides and heard about the more than \$9,000 in grants we presented to 36 active teachers in 15 buildings.

Now is the time for the high school seniors to look at the scholarship opportunities that SKSR provides to those who are thinking of going into the field of education. We give four scholarships of \$2,500 each for two years and then \$3,000 for two more years. Do you know someone who would qualify?

Several interesting activities coming up—join us

In February, we will meet to hear another interesting speaker from Humanities Northwest who will talk about what has happened to Mt. St. Helens in the 40 years since its devastating eruption.

Late in March we will take a trip to Seattle to visit the Asian Art Museum. It sounds like fun.

On April 29, at our community service project for Washington Kids in Transition, we will bag summer supplies for the homeless children in Washington. See page 5 for details.

Can/will you help?

Volunteers are needed to keep SKSR running. There are many opportunities from helping with setting up the room for the general meetings, putting your name in to be treasurer or for president.

We have been without a president for a couple of years. This

(chair's message continued on page 3)

OFFICERS

vacant, President
Cathy Webb, Vice President
Jan Phillips, Secretary
Tom Hawkins, Treasurer

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Barbara Berg, Scrapbook
Linda Fitzgerald/Keith Lindaas, Scholarships
Robin Randles, Health
Virg Rayton, Community Service
vacant, 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

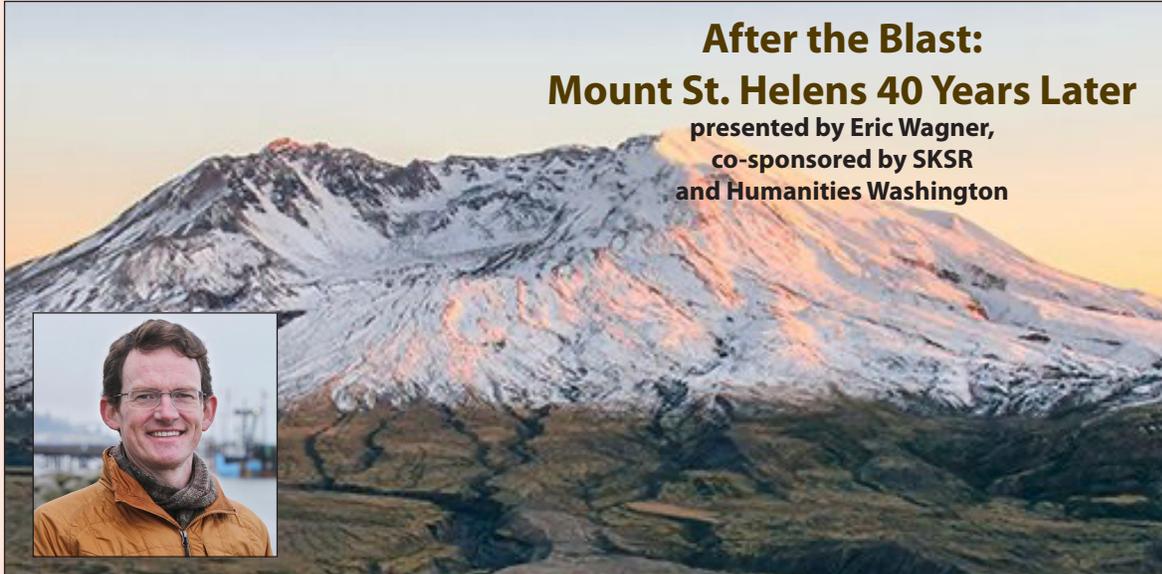
Mt. St. Helens

by Roberta Hawkins

NOW is the time to mark your 2023 calendar!

Thursday, February 16, 2023, at 12:00 PM

in the Board Room of the Edmonds School District ESC, 20420 - 68th Ave. W., Lynnwood, WA 98036



After the Blast: Mount St. Helens 40 Years Later

presented by Eric Wagner,
co-sponsored by SKSR
and Humanities Washington

From our epic wind storms of November, to equally amazing fall rains and November snow, Washington has experienced some incredible natural events during our lifetime. Certainly one of the most jarring and impactful was what transpired on May 18, 1980: the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens. Not only were the Seattle region and the I-5 corridor affected, but so were the entire state and, in fact, the world. Some of you may have vivid personal memories of that day or may have other earlier memories of happy times spent at the mountain and lake boating, fishing, camping or picking blueberries.

Eric Wagner, a writer and author of three books including *After the Blast: The Ecological Recovery of Mount St. Helens*, and biologist from Washington Humanities, will be our guest speaker. Wagner's presentation takes his listeners on a journey through the blast zone, explores the surprising survival and recovery of plant and animal life and the complex roles people have played, all while showing how fascinating Mount St. Helens still is.

A bit of history helps give some perspective to his topic. On May 18, 1980, the world watched in awe as Mount St. Helens erupted,

killing 57 people and causing hundreds of square miles of destruction. Everyone thought it would take ages for life to return to the mountain, but scientists who visited soon after were stunned to find plants sprouting up through the ash and animals skittering around downed trees. Ecologists have since spent decades studying life's resilience in the face of seemingly total devastation. Through their work, the eruption of Mount St. Helens has become known as the greatest natural experiment in Pacific Northwest history.

Remember to mark your calendars and set your reminders to join us and hear Wagner's presentation "live." A question-and-answer period follows the presentation and will offer a chance to share some of your experiences. The meeting begins at 12 noon with "meet and greet" time and a brief business meeting, followed by Eric Wagner's presentation at 1 pm.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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Legislative update

by Peter Diedrick, WSSRA Legislative Director



WSSRA Legislative priorities for the 2023 session

- **Pass Plan 1 COLA Legislation**
Reinstate a permanent Cost-of-Living Adjustment for PERS 1 and TRS 1 retirees. At minimum, WSSRA is seeking COLA legislation to provide inflationary increases in July 2023 and July 2024. The 2023 increase should match the 8.7% Social Security increase.
- **Protect and Expand Retiree Healthcare Benefits**
The Legislature lowered the Medicare Healthcare Benefit from \$183 to \$150 in 2011. In 2018 and 2019 we successfully lobbied for increases back to \$183 per month. Protecting and expanding the Medical Benefit at \$183 per month will help keep retiree medical premiums affordable.
- **Equalize Plan 2/3 retiree health insurance**
Under current law, PEBB retiree insurance allows Plan 3 retirees to defer PEBB insurance if the retiree has alternative insurance. No such exceptions are made for Plan 2 retirees. If the 60-day window is missed, a Plan 2 retiree can never access PEBB insurance. That needs to be corrected.
- **Pay Off the TRS 1 & PERS 1 Unfunded Liability**
The State Actuary has the Washington State Legislature on a plan to pay off the Unfunded Accrued Actuarial Liability (UAAL) in TRS 1 and PERS 1. WSSRA fully supports that plan. WSSRA also supports efforts to speed up the payoff dates and insists the \$800 million TRS 1 payoff scheduled for June 30, 2023, remains in the budget.
- **Recapture Lost Purchasing Power in Plan 2/3 Pensions**
Inflation is approaching 10%. Plan 2/3 retirees max-out at 3% increases and retain the remainder in an inflation bank for future years. Attention should be paid to whether Plan 2/3 retirees are maintaining sufficient purchasing power.

Ask Gov. Inslee: "Include TRS 1 and PERS 1 permanent COLA in your 2023 Budget"

The Select Committee on Pension Policy has passed an official recommendation to the Washington State Legislature regarding a TRS 1 and PERS 1 COLA for 2023. The legislation recommends the following:

- Instructs the Office of the State Actuary to study the possibility of tying the Plan 1 unfunded liability payoff to reinstating a TRS 1 and PERS 1 permanent COLA. The study would take place during the 2023-2025 biennium.
- A 3% Plan 1 COLA up to \$110 per month starting July 1, 2023.
This bill will transfer to the Washington State

Legislature as official agency request legislation for the 2023 Washington State Legislative Session.

The next step is ensuring funding for a Plan 1 COLA is included in Governor Inslee's 2023 budget proposal.

If you are a Plan 1 retiree, please contact the governor. You can easily email a message to him, send a letter or call his office.

Please watch for updated lobbying and talking points for your letters to your representatives and senators. When letters are requested, it is very important that you write. Your previous letters contributed greatly in gaining the previous 3% COLAs.

(chair's message continued from page 1)

has worked because board members have taken on portions of that job; however, it is difficult to parse out the job of treasurer. It is not time consuming but is vital to our existence. Between our grants and scholarships we give back over \$19,000 to our community. This does not include funding the various social activities. We need someone to oversee this. There is a committee and the board that helps with oversight, but the paperwork needs to be done by one person. Can you, or do you know someone who could, do this? If you do, please contact one of us and we can further explain the job.

Money news

An update on your pension investments

by Peter Diedrick, WSSRA Legislative Director

A consistent aspect of Washington's pensions is that investments generate vast returns for pensioners. In a world where investors receive 1% returns from cash, 2-3% from bonds, and 6-7% from a portfolio of stocks and bonds, how does the Washington State Investment Board continuously average over 8% returns?

Not from Bitcoin, that's for sure. Not from stuffing billions of dollars into mattresses and savings accounts either. The large returns are generated from a clever combination of short- and long-term investing. Short-term resources ensure timely payment of pension distributions. However, these funds are backed by nearly \$140 billion in public stock, private equity, venture capital, and commercial real estate. The state's massive amount of capital also ensures bulk purchasing and the lowest management fees for investors (you).

Of the nearly \$170 billion in pension money under management by the Washington State Investment Board, roughly \$2 billion is held in cash. Another \$30 billion is in US Treasury and business bonds (loans). You own \$8 billion in specialty mining and manufacturing equipment. Property management has a sizeable stake. There is approximately \$30 billion in commercial and residential property in the



portfolio – at one time you owned Columbia Tower in Seattle. The largest stake is in stocks – about \$50 billion. The final piece is \$42 billion in private equity investments. Private equity managers purchase and resell a variety of companies. For example, our friends at AMBA are currently managed by a private equity firm. All of this accumulates to the substantial 8%+ investment return on the money you paid into the pension system during your working career.

Session is around the corner

The 2023 Washington State Legislative Session will start on January 9th. Bill prefilming will begin before the Christmas holiday. The WSSRA legislative team will be working on legislation to provide a Plan 1 COLA, enhance Plans 2 and 3, and protect retiree medical benefits. The January newsletter will provide a complete briefing on the 2023 priorities and will analyze how election outcomes might affect retirees' priorities.

Coming soon
by Karen McElliott



You may remember that we were poised to have a guided tour of the newly reopened Seattle Asian Art Museum in March, 2020, and then the pandemic changed everything. We have now been able to reschedule that docent-led tour

March 24–Field trip to Seattle Asian Art Museum

for Friday, March 24. The tour begins at 12:30 and will last about an hour.

Because SKSR is a local non-profit, the museum is graciously charging us a reduced entrance fee of \$3.25 per senior and \$3.75 per adult. (SAM members will not need to pay admission, but will need to show proof of membership.)

As usual, we will car pool from the old Aurora Village parking lot.

We have 40 spaces available, so contact Karen McElliott (ksmcelliot@gmail.com or 425-743-4583) to reserve your place. She will confirm your spot and give you information on payment, etc.

Service project news

Can you help the kids...again? April 29

by Virg Rayton, chair

Sno-King School Retirees has once again adopted Washington Kids in Transition for our annual service project. There are over 1,200 children in south Snohomish County who are considered homeless and part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act. These children may live in shelters, tents, cars or other transitional housing.

How do we help?

In previous years, our volunteers have enjoyed bagging nutritious snacks which were then dispensed to the children at the end of each day by bus drivers so they'd have something to eat that evening. Covid-19 restrictions have curtailed this practice because it involved so much food handling.

In view of the joy our volunteers experienced during this activity, Director Kim Gorney suggested a similar, legitimate one. They are planning a summer program that requires art materials like crayons, paints, etc. that must be bagged. Kim has scheduled our volunteer crew to bring happy

hands to their shop at 19721 Scriber Lake Road on **Saturday, April 29**, from 10:00 to noon.

Since only 40 volunteers can be accommodated at a time, it's important for you to email me your reservation early to assure a spot. Email me at my address in red at the bottom of the article. Bring a spouse or friend if you wish, but I need their name(s).

An additional way to help

We are also supporting the kids with a \$500 monetary donation that might be used for summer art supplies or other urgent, family needs social workers discover.

Our treasurer is accepting personal checks from individual donors wishing to make an additional contribution. Please make those checks out to Sno-King School Retirees and mail them to Tom Hawkins at 9630 236th Pl SW, Edmonds, WA 98020 before April 22nd.

In whatever form you choose, your support will be most welcomed and appreciated.



RSVP to virg@raytonfamily.com to be part of the volunteer team on April 29 from 10:00 to noon.

Speaker for May 18 meeting has been "out of this world"



Save the date of Thursday, May 18, 2023, for the SnoKing School Retirees luncheon. It will be in the Shoreline area; specific details are will be available later.

Our speaker will be Dottie Metcalf-Lindenberg, a former NASA astronaut who flew on a 15-day mission as part of the STS-131 crew, an International Space Station (ISS) resupply mission.

She now lives in Shoreline with her family; her daughter is a sophomore at Shorecrest High School.

Grants for active educators

\$10,374 in grants awarded this fall

by Karen McElliott

Each fall SKSR's active members are invited to apply for grants to facilitate special projects that enrich their students' educational experience (e.g., field trips, guest speakers, materials for integrated units of study) or for materials/equipment to augment their students' learning (e.g., noise-cancelling headphones). This fall, 36 active members received \$10,374 to use with students they serve. To date, SKSR has awarded over \$115,000.

Congratulations to our 2022-23 Recipients!

EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT Cedar Way Elementary

Meghan Galvan: Imagine Children's Museum's "Creature Features," an in-school presentation to enhance the science curriculum. (Kindergarten)

Kristi Pihl: A Rick Hartman workshop in which students apply engineering principles to build rubber-band propelled boats. (1st/2nd grade)

College Place MS

Amber Shelley: A floorball stick set. (P.E. specialist)

Hilltop Elementary

Matt Grover: Books for a fantasy genre study. (5th grade)



SKSR grants chair Karen McElliott presents a grant to Amber Shelley, College Place Middle School PE specialist.

Lynndale Elementary

Julie Ledford: Two PhonicsQ sets for explicit phonics instruction and strengthening decoding skills. (Title 1/Reading Intervention)

Lynnwood Elementary

Susan Sellers: An EZ net system for quick set up and take down in the cafeteria, a secondary P.E. area. (P.E. specialist)

Seaview Elementary

Brian Kelly: Shelving and book bins for his classroom library. (1st grade)

Kathrine Lowery: 2 Finch 2.0 robots to enhance the science curriculum and provide a setting in which to practice a range of problem solving and collaboration skills. (4th grade)

Amy Rust: Sets of phonics books for students to practice their decoding skills. (Kindergarten)

NORTHSHORE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Canyon Creek Elementary

Annie Hall: Ledge shelving for the library to display monthly collections, thematic units and new materials. (Librarian)

Ashley Schaefer: A set of Little Spot social and emotional books to use in teaching social skills. (2nd grade)

Woodmoor Elementary

Catherine Kennedy: Voice amplifiers for students with articulation and phonology issues. (PreK-5)

SHORELINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Briarcrest Elementary

Cindy Ebisu: Balance scales and metric weights for a math measurement unit. (3rd grade)

Michelle Holguin and Amy Pitts: Classroom licenses for IXL, an online math program. (2nd and 3rd grades)

Carrie Wandler: Sports and hobby books for the school library's outdated arts and recreation section. (Librarian)

Brookside Elementary

Carrie Misener: A collection of graphic novels to encourage all readers, especially reluctant and struggling ones. (3rd grade)

Cascade K-8

Sheryl Yost: Multicultural books for her classroom library. (K/1st grade)

Echo Lake Elementary

Jean Bolivar: Read-aloud books that spark student conversations about race, identity and social justice. (Librarian)

Kelly Dillon: Painting supplies to create kindness rocks for the school's Kindness Week. (2nd grade)

Allison Hoover: Orange traffic cones to create safe spaces and a wagon tote to transport P.E. equipment. (P.E. Specialist)

Lake Forest Park Elementary
Kimberly Clasen, Riley Kreutzer and Tami Thompson: Transportation for a science field trip to the Brightwater Sewage Treatment Plant. (5th grade)

Britt Harris: Tickets and transportation for 3rd, 4th and 5th graders to the Shorecrest Drama Production of *The Lightning Thief*. (Office Manager)

April Johnston: A Rick Hartman workshop that applies a variety of science principles to building wooden toys. (2nd grade)

Frank Kleyn: Read-aloud picture books for beginning readers to teach self-awareness and self-management skills. (Librarian)

Rhonda Okazaki: High-interest graphic books related to science topics. (4th grade)

Parkwood Elementary

Renee Iverson: Transportation for a field trip to St. Edwards Park to apply physics, magnetic and engineering principles from

Lake Forest Park staff members Kimberly Clasen, Britt Harris, Frank Kleyn, Riley Kreutzer, April Johnston, Rhonda Okazaki and Tami Thompson are presented SKSR grants by Jim Siscal.



science to playground design. (3rd grade)

Kristin Mesler: Three boxes of Pacific NW Native American artifacts from the Burke Museum and complementary books. (3rd grade)

Syre Elementary

Heidi Alexander: Sensory items like stress balls and fidget blocks to help students de-stress and refocus. (Dean of Students)

Julie Anneberg: 10 portable lap/floor student desks to provide alternative seating options to meet a wider range of learning styles. (3rd grade)

Michelle Carroll: Books that highlight diverse, cultural celebrations. (Principal)

Chrisy Francescutti: Books that focus on Native-American, Jewish-American and Muslim cultures. (Librarian)

Jenny Hodgen: Yoga ball chairs, stools, cushions and lap desks to provide flexible seating. (5th grade)

Marybeth Scherf: Whiteboards, whiteboard markers and 4 sets of phonics-based, decodable readers for older students. (3rd/4th grade)

Member Information Updates

Deceased

- Jerry Crabb**, 11/2022,
Retired from Edmonds, member since 1998
- Gene Edwards**, 8/2022,
Retired from Edmonds, member since 1996
- Norm Goldstein**, 12/2022,
Retired from Edmonds, member since 1991
- Joe Meagher**, 11/2022,
Member since 2007
- Harry Robinson**, 8/2022,
Retired from Edmonds, member since 1977
- Brad Sarvis**, 10/2022,
Retired from Edmonds, member since 1995
- Loren Saxby**, 5/2022,
Retired from Shoreline, member since 2015

New Members

- James Bateman
- Janet Foster
- Margaret Mesaros
- Rebecca Miner



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WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE YOUR RETIREMENT



Health news

Is it done? Using a food thermometer

by Robin Randles, health chair

A food thermometer is an essential tool to have in the kitchen. A food thermometer will tell you when your dish is cooked to the right temperature so that it is safe to eat and not underdone or over cooked. Knowing the right temperatures can prevent foodborne illnesses and save time. With a food thermometer, you can check the internal temperature and not have to put food back on the grill or back in the oven.

We may have learned over the years that hamburgers are ready when their juices run clear or the chicken is done when it is not pink inside. Even if food looks done on the surface, it may not be cooked all the way through. This information can be hard to judge. Only when your food has reached a certain temperature can you know for sure that your food has been thoroughly cooked and that harmful bacteria have been killed. Then you can remove your meal from the heat source.

There are many types of thermometers but the quickest and easiest to use is an instant-read digital thermometer. They work with all types and thicknesses of foods. Choose a thermometer that gives you an exact temperature, not one that gives a done-ness range. Thermometers are available at grocery stores, hardware stores and online.

Using your thermometer

When you use a thermometer, insert it into the thickest, densest part of the meat, all the way to the middle but not touching the bone (touching the bone can give an inaccurate reading). Check each piece separately. Allow the thermometer several seconds to read the internal temperature.

Wash your thermometer probe in warm, soapy water before and after using it. Clean it also between insertions when checking partially cooked food.

Keep a food temperature guide handy with the minimum internal temperatures.

**Food Temperature Guide**

Use a food thermometer to cook to these minimum internal temperatures.

•BEEF, LAMB, PORK, VEAL

Ground meat (burgers, meatballs, sausages)...160°F
Pieces and whole cuts

Medium Rare145°F

Medium.....160°F

Well-done.....170°F

•POULTRY (chicken, turkey, duck)

Pieces.....165°F

Whole180°F

•FISH160°F

•SHELLFISH160°F

•EGGS160°F

•EGG DISHES.....165°F

•CASSEROLES.....165°F

•LEFTOVERS165°F

Check online for safe temperatures for game meats and game fowl. A good source is FoodSafety.gov.

Knowing these cooking temperatures and how to accurately measure them can keep your family safe, save time and enhance flavor by avoiding undercooked foods. Now you can relax and enjoy a good meal. Bon Appetit!

Need a little laugh?

- Stealing someone's coffee is called mugging.
- Pasteurize: Too far to see.
- Whoever invented "knock-knock" jokes should get a no-bell prize.
- The other day I held the door open for a clown. It was a nice jester.
- No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
- Energizer Bunny arrested: charged with battery.
- I put my grandma on speed dial. I call that Instagram.

Scholarship update

by *Linda Fitzgerald, Scholarship co-chair*

Awards increasing for scholarship winners

We have great news regarding our SKSR Scholarships that will be awarded to high school seniors graduating in June of 2023!

We are raising the amount of each of the scholarships to \$2,500 for the first two years and \$3,000 for the last two years.

To be eligible, students must be graduating from a public high school in the Edmonds, Northshore or Shoreline school districts. The other requirement is a planned major in Education or a major that will lead them to a school-based job, i.e. counselor, speech and hearing, psychologist.

Applications will be available in the counselor's office or Career Center at each school by mid-January. The deadline for applications is in March, and the selected students will be celebrated at our April Scholarship Luncheon.



Our previous event

by *Cathy Webb, vice president*

Connecting at the October brunch

On a gray, brisk October Thursday morning, 32 members enjoyed our first in-person brunch of the SKSR 2022-23 year. Festive fall centerpieces graced the tables of the Fellowship Hall at the First Lutheran Church of Richmond Beach. The catered menu prepared by Chef Dane was ample and delicious.

Shoreline Superintendent Susanne Reyes provided an overview of a successful start to the 2022 year. She introduced new staff, celebrated the completion of school building projects and shared the budget challenge facing the district. It was a positive, yet sobering look at difficult work being done.

A European river cruise pictorial experience that included several destination highlights was narrated by Linda Fitzgerald and Lynda Hughes. These seasoned travelers presented a wonderful program.

The proposed 2022-23 Budget was passed unanimously. Jim Siscel presented our Distinguished Unit Award. Congratulations to all!

Jim warned attendees that our unit needs a treasurer before January if we hope to continue the valuable work of maintaining and awarding scholarships. Please step forward and help us continue our unit endeavors!

Our brunch was a pleasant connecting time for all in attendance. Thank you to the many volunteers who made the success possible and special appreciation to Priscilla Strand for her behind-the-scenes expertise. If you missed the brunch, make plans now to join us for a future event!



Help needed: a treasurer for our unit

Our current treasurer, Tom Hawkins, is going to retire from his SKSR duties in June of 2023 and we need a volunteer to replace him. No accounting background is needed.

It would be a good way to volunteer your time to help our SKSR unit.

A treasurer is needed to pay our bills and issue checks for our grant and scholarship recipients. Without a treasurer, our unit cannot function.

The new treasurer would use the M/S Excel computer program to add data and reconcile bank statements in pre-made spreadsheets to create monthly reports for the board. Tom reports that he spends about four hours a month doing this work. The treasurer is a member of the board and will attend a two-hour meeting nine times a year and six events a year.

Please contact a board member by January 31st if you are interested in filling this vital position.

PLEASE HELP!





Help us with the *Bulletin*

The deadline for the next *Bulletin* is February 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.