

THE VOICE

Yakima County School Retirees' Association
www.yakimacountysra.org



NEWSLETTER FOR YCSRA

MAY 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SPRING? WE HOPE SO!

Hope springs eternal. . . .we spring forward with time. . . spring is busting out all over. I'll let it go with that one!

With the bright colors of flowers, and almost every blooming shrub known, Yakima looks its best. For once we have some good news to share.

We have almost 18,000 members statewide. Rather than diminishing in numbers, WSSRA is gaining new members.

Our new WSSRA Executive Secretary is Eileen Wascisin, from Linden, who comes with excellent credentials.

Changes to Plan 2 will not begin until 2013.

The state will make its payment to the pension fund, for this year.

New **membership forms** are in service so shred, shred, the old ones.

Now for a few withered blossoms.

Future retirees must be 65 or older *for full benefits*.

The state has not made its promised contribution in full from 2001 to the present, never putting more than 59% into the pension fund. We—school employees, have made our payments in full into this fund. When is a promise not a promise?

Betty Andrews

May Meeting Monday, May 7, 2012

Where: Englewood Christian Church
511 N. 44th Ave.
Yakima, WA (Just off Englewood Ave.)

5:00 pm Social

5:30 pm Potluck Dinner—please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share.

6:15 pm Mini Grant winners will share about the use of their grant.
YCSRA business meeting to follow program.

Our prize drawing will benefit the Trailseekers, our community service program.

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966 3364**Social****PEGGY YOUNG****Legislative News**

By Larry Scholl

The 2011-2012 Washington State Legislature finally came to a close about 7 am, Wednesday, April 11th. The Special Session called by Governor Gregoire ended at 12:00 am. The Governor immediately called the Legislature back into session and declared that none of the legislators could leave the building until a compromise budget was passed. The maneuver seemed to work. Perhaps it should have been used sooner. By 7:00 am the opposing parties finally reached a compromise and passed the budget.

The Republican Caucus was pushing for pension reforms, postponing a scheduled payment to the pension fund, rolling back the retirement age, etc., which Democrats opposed. The Democrats wanted to delay a payment for education funding into the next biennium, which the Republicans opposed.

The final agreement will TRS/PERS Plan 2 defined benefit as an option for new hires.

The \$146 million payment to the TRS/TERS Plan 1 pension fund will be made as scheduled.

Several levels of pension benefit reductions will be in place for state and school employee new hires should they opt to retire before age 65.

It is anticipated that possibly 25% of the legislature will be new for the 63rd Legislature which will convene in January of 2013. With the national trend moving toward dramatically reducing state retiree benefits and many conservative state legislatures trying to get states completely out of providing pensions to state retirees, we need to be very involved in electing representative who are sympathetic to the needs of state and school retirees. If we are not involved in the upcoming elections, none of the 25% anticipated new legislators will supportive of our pension systems as they now exist.

As of this printing, you have donated a little over \$1000 to the WSSRA-PAC. Every dollar that has been donated is greatly appreciated and will be used to support and elect legislators who are supportive of school retirees. However, we need 10 times that amount before the fall elections. Please keep the donations coming.

Again, donations can be sent to me at: 5910 W. Lincoln Ave. #39, Yakima, WA 98908. Do not sent cash. Make checks payable to WSSRA-PAC.
Larry Scholl, Legislative Chair

Action Needed

If you would prefer to have "The Voice" delivered to your e-mail address, please send your name, mailing address and your e-mail address to:

Sandi Gavin, at psgapples@aol with "The Voice" in the subject line. This will save our Yakima County School Retirees' Association printing and mailing costs.

You can also read the Voice online on our website: yakimacountysra.org

Submitted by Sandy Gavin, our Web Coordinator.

Newsletter Info

Opinions expressed in The Voice are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the view of the YCSRA Board or the editors. Editorial contributions and articles as well as ideas for articles are welcome. The deadline is the 15th of each month. Send information to Co-editors:

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Health Matters

By Inge Ricker

HOW TO AVOID FORGETFULNESS **

At some point, people experience forgetfulness but we can improve our ability to remember by exercising our brains and our bodies. Like any other part of the body, the brain improves with use. Mental games, physical exercise, social stimulation, special food and drinks, and intellectual activities all improve the ability to remember. Virtually anyone can do something on a daily basis to keep and improve brain function and the results of improving memory have significant rewards both in coping with and enjoying life.

1. **EAT HEALTHY** The brain and body require nutritious food to operate optimally. Specific food like walnuts, almonds and blueberries provide essential nutrition that lowers blood sugar and supplies melatonin, a chemical in the brain that improves function.. Drinking green tea maintains brain health according to researches at the University of Newcastle.

2. **EXERCISE** to increase the flow of blood to the brain, which helps the brain function and replenish cells. Walking reduces cognitive decline, as demonstrated in an eight-year study conducted at the University of California at San Francisco that tracked the walking habits of 6,000 women. The researcher found that the most active walkers had a 40 percent lower cognitive decline in memory function than more sedentary participants.

3. **CHALLENGE**

yourself by learning something new, whether it is physical activity like dancing or an intellectual pursuit like mastering a new language or musical instrument. Also games and crossword puzzles and computer work stimulate your brain. Travel by visiting new places and meeting new people also broadens your horizon.

4. **GET ENOUGH SLEEP**

. Lack of sleep contributes to both physical and mental decline. When people sleep, the brain catches up, healing itself. just like the physical body does. Some people use catnaps during the day to refresh themselves, providing more mental and physical energy for the rest of the day.

** Information is based on article by Jackie Johnson an "eHow" contributor.

NEWS FROM OLYMPIA: ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5940-K-12 HEALTH CARE BENEFITS

The Legislature attempted to reduce K-12 health care expenses through ESSB 5940. This legislation is significantly altered from its original version and does not affect retirees.

1. .School districts will be required to provide health plans with a wide range of premium options.
2. Family premiums will be required to be less than 3 times the cost for individual coverage. Individual premiums

In Memoriam

Compiled by Evelyn Pierce

Barbara (Barb) Rodriguez, 59, passed away on March 5, 2012 after battling cancer for many years. Barb was born and raised in Montana where she began her love for nature and its creatures. She was especially enthralled with photos of wild flowers and butterflies. Barb received her advanced education at CWU and taught special needs children for 18 years before her illness brought on retirement.

Maxene Wilcox, 87, died April 12, 2012. She attended Wapato High School and graduated from Whitman College. She married Robert Wilcox in 1948. Helping on the farm and raising their 3 sons kept her busy until 1968 when she returned to college at CWU for her Masters in Education. She taught kindergarten at Zillah Elementary for 11 years. Maxene was a Master Gardener. She loved gardening, quilting, hiking and traveling.

May Meeting Details

Drawing Prizes

Carolyn Wilson **877 3911**
Nick Schultz **966 9341**
Kathy Schultz **966 9341**

Decorations & Help in the Kitchen

Betty Andrews **966 1264**
Sylvia Hall **225 9349**
Evelyn Pierce **966 3364**

Volunteers please arrive around 4:00 pm to help set up, decorate and organize in the kitchen for the potluck. Your help is also appreciated with cleanup following the dinner. Thanks!

WSSRA Convention

June 4 & 5 Spokane will be hosting the annual WSSRA convention. Please consider serving as a delegate. Since our unit is the largest in the state, we are allotted 32 delegates. Sadly, we have only 13 people signed up to serve as delegates. This annual event is very educational. You will learn about the issues we face as an organization and be given information and tools to deal with them. It is also a lot of fun to get acquainted with others active in WSSRA. There are drawing prizes throughout which make it very festive. Our unit is very generous as we cover all your costs including: hotel, meals, and registration. There is also a mileage stipend to offset fuel costs.

If you would like to attend, contact President Betty Andrews at 966 1264 or email at : bj57andy@charter.net Please think about it and give Betty a call. You will be glad that you did.

Foundation Fundraiser

By Marion Mann

We need your help with donations for the Foundation Fundraiser at the WSSRA convention in Spokane, June 4 & 5. The Foundation accepts gift baskets prepared by individuals and units all around the state and holds drawings to raise funds for our scholarship awards. Tickets for drawings are sold to those attending the convention. Then periodically throughout the convention, we draw names of winners and distribute the baskets. There is always great excitement for the winners to see what treasures are contained in the baskets. If you would like to prepare a completed basket or contribute items to be included in baskets from Unit 34, we'll be happy to take your gift to the convention in June. We also have a silent auction of unique items. Handcrafted items, artwork, or other projects are popular. Let me know if you can help out with this fundraiser. Please contact Marion Mann, 452-4263.

Drawing Prizes at May General Meeting to Benefit Trailseekers

Yakima County School Retirees' Association is proud to be a sponsor of the Trailseekers program. Our drawing prize money from the May general meeting all goes to help fund this community service project. Carolyn Wilson, a YCSRA member, has been a proponent of this group for a number of years. Through her efforts we are able to help send young grade school boys to camp at Orcas Island. These children are identified by their teachers for mentoring which is done throughout the school year. The highlight of the year is the summer camp experience. Many young men who have gone through the program return to act as camp counselors. The boys are given toiletry bags to take to camp and lunch to eat on the bus trip.

In addition to buying drawing prize tickets, you can help by bringing the following to our May general meeting; used but clean bath and hand towels, personal hygiene items or cash to purchase underwear and socks. Also, paper lunch sacks, Ziplock sandwich bags, peanut butter, jam, oatmeal cookies, hard candy or cash so they can be purchased. Thank you for your kindness and caring.

It is said that “April showers bring May flowers”, or maybe the showers just annoy you whenever you want to go somewhere. Where was the worst rainstorm you have ever experienced? Answers compiled by Judy Markham.

A rainstorm in Estonia destroyed my umbrella. **Lynda Bauer**

Rain has come to be such a blessing. I can't think of rain as something negative. It's coming brings the possibility of a break from irrigation. **Robert Swope**

On a mission trip to New Mexico it was night, a gully washer, but the lightning was fantastic. **Paul Schafer**

The Midwest is noted for cloud bursts. It can rain inches in minutes, traffic has to stop, animals seek shelter and highways are flooded. **Irene Hlousek**

In Nara Visa, New Mexico in 1947, I wasn't allowed to cross the street (by my aunt). She said that the gully-washer would pound me flat into the ground. The rain came down in sheets of water. **Betty Andrews**

Houston, Texas was the worst rainstorm I have experienced. I don't know which was worse-the deafening thunder or the rain pouring as if from a bucket. Hurricane Carla was a good one too. No electricity for a week. **Sylvia Hall**

At my Montana home I remember a terrible cloud burst accompanied by hail. It broke out the kitchen window where lunch on the kitchen table got covered with shattered glass. No lunch that day. **Lois Brown**

A fall rain during huckleberry picking near Packwood. **Ethel Albers**

On the Oregon coast at Sea Perch campground we were in our motor home. The rain pelted us and the wind rocked us all night. I wasn't sure if the windows would hold through the night. **Don Markham**

I was at the University of Georgia training for Navy Air Corps. We had to do a 14 mile run through the red mud. We were covered when we finished. **Jerry Ryan**

Nick and I were in S. Dakota in 1987. We were heading north to a family reunion when we drove into the “eye” of a thunder storm. The rain was driving down to the point of obscuring our vision while it thundered and lightning hit the road. As screams erupted from the back seat, we pulled over and 4 kids along with me were in Nick's lap. It was a terrifying experience. **Kathy Schultz**

I grew up on the coast...Aberdeen, Hoquiam and Central Park. It rains and rains and rains. One time it rained for over 40 days without let up. We got 85 or more inches of rain every year. They ran contests to guess the number of inches of rain each year. Now, hard rain storms are fascinating. **Peggy Young**

In Kentucky, early last March, 4 inches of fell in 2 hours. Impossible to believe that Kentuckians still believe Seattle is too rainy for them to tolerate. **L. Evert-Gavin**

I went to SD for a Tollefson family reunion. We were to meet at the park in Willow Lake when the tornado sirens went off. The radio announcer said to stay away from large trees. I went to the Lutheran Church and sat in our car watching young trees bend to the ground and rain so heavy you couldn't see. The tornado didn't touch down, but I was ready to return to Washington State...immediately! **Jo Tollefson**

Don and I were in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1961 standing under a thatched rood of an outside bar. The sky opened up and the rain poured down. Before I knew it my feet were covered in water. I have never experienced a rainstorm like that since. **Judy Markham**

May Meeting

Monday, May 7, 2012

at
Englewood Christian Church
511 N. 44th Ave.
Yakima, WA

Social at 5:00 pm
Potluck Dinner at 5:30 pm

Our mini grant winners are our invited guests. They will share about their grants. We will also conduct our prize drawing to benefit Trailseekers, our community service project.

See you there!

Did You Know?

By Russ Scofield

On October 16, 1956, a special guest spoke at an association meeting. In June of that year Miss Rose Glass had been chosen as the 1956 Teacher of the Year. Before her teaching career ended in 1947, Miss Glass served in Washington State Schools. She also spent a pre-World War II year teaching at an American school in Berlin, Germany where she observed the beginning of the Nazi youth movement. After retirement she continued to be very active in education associations.

At a luncheon meeting honoring Yakima and Broadway teachers, she spoke fittingly enough on "Adding Life to Our Years."



**YAKIMA COUNTY
SCHOOL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION
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