

# NEWSLETTER



Washington State School Retirees' Association

## DECLUTTER & DOWNSIZE NOW!

Are you at a point in your life where your house is overwhelming you? Have you lived there awhile and just can't bear to part with anything?...even though it might be needed at some time. We have a solution to your situation. We invite you and your friends to join us for our 2017-18 school year kick-off event. We will hear about how to update our homes from the members of "THE RED DOOR TEAM"—a team of professionals who know just how to do it! There will be an opportunity for questions and they will come complete with give aways and books for all.

**Tuesday, September 19, 10:30 a.m.**

**Our Savior's Lutheran Church (OSLC)**

215 W. Mukilteo Blvd., Everett.

**Guest Speaker(s)**

**"THE RED DOOR TEAM"**

**LUNCH:** Please bring a salad or other dish of



## **LOOK INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER!**

....Highlights from the WSSRA state convention (including the election of President Elect, Linda Averill—one of our very own from Sno-Isle unit)

....Legislative happenings and action plans

....Calendar of events for the school year

....Scholarship winners

# SNO-ISLE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Submitted by Joan Penewell and Karen Carpenter



*I chose this picture because without the support of my family I would not be where I am today :)*

## JESSICA SALTER

After a long hiatus from school, Jessica has completed her two-year Associate of Arts and Science at Everett Community College. She was recently accepted at Western Washington University to the Woodring School of Education.

Jessica's long-term goals at one time seemed to be far in the distance but are now becoming a reality and she plans to apply to school districts as a Para educator while she finishes her degree. She writes, "I now have my eye on the prize and what once seemed like a far away goal of years of schooling, is now just a couple of years away from becoming an actuality."

"I have always wanted to be a teacher. Maybe it has something to do with being the eldest of four siblings or perhaps it is something deeper. Sharing my knowledge with people has always brought great joy to me, and there is nothing like a child's face lighting up when they finally "get it". Nothing brings me more satisfaction than knowing that the information I provide to future students could someday bring them closer to their own goals in life. It is my own personal philosophy that when a child believes that someone cares for them, they will perform for you. Every child deserves to feel this acceptance, and it is my goal as a future teacher to do everything in my power to make every one of my students feel that their teacher has confidence in them, regardless of their background, culture or academic status.

## HAILY KING

Haily King a 2017 graduate of Monroe High School. She will be attending the University of Washington. Haily wrote in her application about being adopted by her grandparents at three years of age, and she named some of the many teachers in the Monroe School District that inspired her and led her to make the decision of study toward the art of educating.

Her short term goals include getting into her dream college (done) getting a good job to help pay for her schooling as well as helping out at home. Her grandfather has recently passed away so money will be short and there are bills to pay.

Haily's long-term goals include receiving a major in English, as well as in technical engineering. She plans to teach, as well as own a shop to be a small motor mechanic. Her biggest long term goal will be to not struggle paycheck to paycheck and be able to help her grandma get something more than a double wide to live in.

The following is an excerpt from her application:

"Since I was younger, I was always told that you can be whatever you please, as long as you have the drive to accomplish it. It is really amazing because at one point, I told myself that I would not go to college, rather straight to work. This decision was due to money, a selfish reason really. It was my teacher that turned my goals completely in circles... Mr. Giles told me that my future will represent my present; I cannot sit here and tell myself that I can't do it. With that mindset, I won't."

"I know I will be successful in the means of education purely because my teacher and grandparents have provided me with the drive it will take to accomplish a college education and a successful future. In addition, I have the ambition to be more than a small town kid, I want to travel and go to schools that are struggling, and make an impact on the students in rough communities. I know it will be hard, but I won't stop until I get there"

"I want to thank you for giving students like myself the opportunity to succeed.

## LEARNING SUPPORT FUNDS—YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK!

Submitted by Joan Penewell and Karen Carpenter

Sno-Isle provided \$300 to 30 active school employee members this past school year. The thank you notes just keep rolling in. We published some of them in a spring newsletter and we have more to share with you. Your Sno-Isle membership dues make it possible to assist our school employee colleagues. We plan to keep up the great work and hopefully increase our gifts this next school year.

From James Monroe Elementary, Everett First Grade Team.....

*Thank you very much for the teaching supplies we were able to purchase with your generous grant. The white boards and magnetic letters really helped my students break apart words and put them together as they sounded them out. Thanks again! Lisa Noble*

*Thank you so much for giving our first grade team a grant this year. The magnetic letters and boards played a key role in the success of my guided reading group. Alix Judy*

*Thank you so very much for giving a learning support grant of \$300. WOW! We are so grateful. We purchased magnetic boards and magnetic letters to use in our small guided reading groups. For some students, it has been a game changer! Touching the letters instead of a card with the letters helped my struggling readers begin to make words, to blend and have fun with reading words. It's an honor to receive this grant! Kelly Marshal*

## 2017 WSSRA STATE CONVENTION

Submitted by Jim Harvey

During the first week of June twelve members of Sno-Isle (Linda Averill, Karen Carpenter, Ken Harvey, Jim Harvey, Marianne Harvey, Jacquie Jensen, Tim and Jackie Knopf, Mike Lanctot, Brenda Leider, Joan Penewell, Nancy Strain) attended the annual convention for WSSRA. This year it was located at the Red Lion in Pasco, WA. Several of us attended the President's reception Sunday evening. It was an occasion for good food and networking with fellow educators. By Monday afternoon everyone was there to participate in all the events. We began with a very inspirational talk by Gene Sharratt, teacher from the Tri-Cities area. During the Awards Banquet Monday



evening Sno-Isle Unit 22 received an award of highest distinction for reaching over twenty participation goals set by the state. The Stan McNaughton and Patrick Hoban awards were also presented. Gerry Jarvis and Lora Brabant were the recipients. Tuesday the Keynote was given by teacher Jim Sporleder who works with at risk youth in the Tri-Cities. Many attendees were so inspired that we will have a presentation at a Sno-Isle meeting this year. Tuesday was filled with sessions, a scholarship lunch where 9 foundation and 16 Pemco scholarships were awarded to students from across the state, and a banquet after which new officers for 2017-18 were installed. Entertainment from schools in the area and a big band provided wonderful music for all the events. Especially great was the all-girls choir from a local middle school. During the course of the convention over \$6000 was raised for future scholarships. Two highlights of our stay there were the baskets of goodies to be won by attendees and the 70th birthday cake for WSSRA.

Sno-Isle was extremely proud to help support Linda Averill as she ran as a candidate for state President-Elect. Linda Averill is now the WSSRA State President-Elect after being officially installed at the convention. All in attendance are looking forward to having more of you come with us next year to convention in Wenatchee to see Linda Averill installed as State President.

## A School Retiree's View of Washington State's 2017-19 State Operating Budget

Submitted by Tim Knopf

This article has been difficult to write since we came so close this session only to fail in the end. We started out with four objectives, and we did manage to keep retirement plans PERS and TRS 2 available for new hires and ensure that the legislature kept on making its actuarially recommended payments to the state's pension plans. However, neither goal required legislators to change anything that they were already doing. On restoring the Plan 1 COLA and the PEBB Medicare eligible health care benefit we were totally skunked.

**The Short Version:** *If you just want the short explanation, it's in the two paragraphs below. For the gory details, please check our website or Facebook. On page 7 of this newsletter you will find highlights of the gory details.*

With just minutes to go before it's drop dead deadline of midnight, June 30th, the legislature passed its history-making 2017-2019 operating budget of over \$44 billion and rushed it to the Governor to be signed into law. It shifts the responsibility to fund staff and students at K-12 schools from local school districts to the state and will pump \$7.3 billion more into K-12 education over the next four years in hopes of satisfying the State Supreme Court's McCleary Decision. It provides additional millions for teachers, administrators, classified staff, high poverty schools, special needs and highly capable students. To pay for all this the legislature has handed property owners the largest property tax increase in state history: an across-the-board 81-cent increase to \$2.70 per \$1,000 of assessed value. With all that money being spread around, you'd think that the concerns of school retirees could be addressed. That's what we thought. We heard things like, "You won't get your COLA, but it looks like your Medicare eligible healthcare benefit will be restored. Instead, once it was approved, school retirees were virtually missing from the new budget.

Despite dozens of legislator meetings, countless letters and telephone calls, virtually nothing improved for school retirees this session. We could say we that we didn't lose anything, but that isn't true. PERS 1 and TRS 1 retirees have been trapped in amber since the legislature killed their COLA and slashed their Medicare eligible healthcare benefit in 2011. That didn't prevent healthcare and living costs from rising around them like a tide that's already up to their necks. In the end we fell victim to the recession's lingering hangover and the mad rush to meet the McCleary Decision. To create positive change for us, school retirees will ALL need to work together to tell our stories to legislators to pressure them to make positive changes and find heroes among them who will champion our cause.

### What can we do next to reach our legislative goals?

I believe we can change the future if more WSSRA members tell legislators personal stories through letters, emails, telephone calls and in person. To help with that, Sno-Isle Unit 22 has planned a forum on November 21 about how to share your story with your legislators. The job ahead is too big for just our lobbyists and our legislative committee to do. We need to show legislators that we are united and are paying attention. We need to find heroes among our legislators who will be proud to champion our cause. Partisan affiliation aside, we need legislators willing to stand up for us. We only ask for what is due us. I believe that we need to coordinate more effectively with other state retiree groups, including WEA Retired. We have common goals; why not work together to reach them?

WSSRA members need to stop thinking of WSSR-PAC as a dirty word. If we really want to catch legislator's attention, we need to be able to hand our endorsed candidates a donation for the maximum allowable amount. Well below 10% of our 18,000 members currently support the PAC, but if we had 18,000 members join by making individual donations, legislators would take notice. They care about getting re-elected, and they care about the people who help them do that. I believe that a stronger PAC can do that. At our November meeting we'll explain just how you can join and donate to WSSR-PAC.

We need to hold our legislators accountable, especially those whom we have endorsed as candidates. They need to explain what happened and why they voted as they did. The legislative session ended with a deadlock over the capital budget—an unprecedented decision in WA State history!. I plan to meet individually with each of our endorsed legislators from Districts 21, 38, 39 and 44 Districts to determine whether we can support them in the future. After all, if they can't support us, why should we support them? Stay tuned....

## Many, many thanks to **Marysville Printing!**

Debi, Huong and Julie have been working with us very closely the past few months to provide you a high quality printed newsletter. They have saved many hours for Sno-Isle board members in addressing/labeling and tabbing the newsletter in preparation for our postal mailing. **Marysville Printing—YOU ARE AWESOME!**

# 2017-18 SNO-ISLE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER:

Tuesday, Sept 19, 10:30am—LUNCH EVENT, OSLC

Monday, Sept 25, 9:30am—Board Meeting. OSLC

## OCTOBER:

Monday, Oct 2 or 9, 9:30am—COORDINATING COUNCIL, Mt. Vernon

Tuesday, Oct 17, 10:30am—LUNCH EVENT, place TBA

Monday, Oct 30, 9:30am—Board Meeting. OSLC

## NOVEMBER:

Tuesday, Nov 21, 10:30am—LUNCH EVENT, OSLC

Monday, Nov 28, 9:30am—Board Meeting, OSLC

## DECEMBER:

Tuesday, December 5. 11:30am—LUNCH EVENT, Sno-Isle Tech “Le Bistro”

## JANUARY: NO LUNCH EVENT

Monday, Jan 8, 9:30am—COORDINATING COUNCIL, Mt. Vernon

Monday, Jan 29, 9:30am—Board Meeting, OSLC

## FEBRUARY:

Tuesday, Feb 21, 10:30am—LUNCH EVENT

ANNUAL RETIREMENT SEMINAR, date/time/place TBA

Monday, Feb 27, 9:30am—Board Meeting. OSLC

## MARCH:

Monday, March 12, 9:30am—COORDINATING COUNCIL, Mt. Vernon

Tuesday, 10:30am—LUNCH EVENT

Monday, Mar 26, 9:30am—Board Meeting. OSLC

## APRIL:

Tuesday, Apr 18, 10:30am—LUNCH EVENT

Monday, Apr 30, 9:30am—Board Meeting, OSLC

**MAY:** LUNCH EVENT with SNO-KING Unit, date/time/place TBA

**JUNE:** June 4-6, STATE WSSRA CONVENTION, Wenatchee WA

## MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

ALL members are invited to attend and participating in our planning/decision-making process. Meetings are scheduled for 9:30am, once per month (except May) throughout the school year.

## COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETINGS

Sno-Isle board members and state representatives meet tri-monthly with nearby units to share

# PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

Co-President Ken Harvey

As you've probably heard there will be an almost total solar eclipse on August 21st. I'm looking forward to experiencing this one again. In 1979 a total solar eclipse swept across North America and I was teaching in a one room school in North Dakota. Besides being a wonderful true life science adventure for my students, a couple of things stood out from the event. We were in the middle of the Badlands - cattle country. The sounds of cattle and other farm animals were always present during the school day. As total darkness took hold, it became instantly quiet - eerily quiet. Birds were even silenced. The other unusual science related thing was that the temperature fell almost 30 degrees winding up below zero. The day was rich with learning for my students.

That was probably my third year of teaching and retirement was the furthest thing from my mind. I didn't know that even back then an association in Washington State was working hard to assure that I had a good retirement some 36 years later. Washington State School Retiree's Association (WSSRA) goal and focus has been to protect and enhance the retirement of all school employees.

Sno-Isle Unit 22 is one of 29 units of the Washington State School Retirees' Association - 18,000 members strong. Besides helping support the state goal of better retirement for all school employees, our local unit gives out learning support funds to local school employees. We also give out two \$2000 scholarships to students planning to enter education. Sno-Isle 22 helps support the Christmas House and the Imagine Children's Museum. We sponsor a retirement seminar to help current school employees plan for their future.

Once a month (except January and the summer months) we get together for lunch event. This year we have some great programs planned, including a presentation on decluttering your house and life. Our first event will be a potluck on Tuesday, September 19th at 10:30 AM. We will meet at Our Savior's Lutheran Church (OSLC, Everett) 215 Mukilteo Blvd, Everett, WA 98213



Like us on  
**FACEBOOK**  
Sno-Isle SRA

## WSSRA SNO-ISLE UNIT #22 GOALS

- \*Promote the economic, social and continued development of our membership.
- \*Aid in advancement of education and encourage continued identification with the field of education.
- \*Maintain interest and participate in education and community affairs.
- \*Strengthen and support local units.

### ***Need a ride to Sno-Isle Event?***

We have many members who are willing to pick other members to attend events.

Call or e-mail Marianne Harvey if you need a ride to the next Sno-Isle Event.

## **ADDITIONAL LEGISLATIVE PERSPECTIVES FROM TIM....**

### **What do we know about the 2017-2019 Washington State Operating Budget?**

The great difficulty in reaching an agreement on the 2017-2019 operating budget between the bitterly opposed Democratically controlled House of Representatives and the Republican controlled Senate pushed the legislature way beyond its normal April 23rd end of session. Governor Inslee has since had to call three 30-day special sessions

The operating budget was negotiated in secret by a handpicked bipartisan team of legislators who kept other legislators in the dark during the process. Simultaneously, another team also worked in secret to craft the legislature's answer to the State Supreme Court's McCleary school funding decision.

This over \$44 billion budget is historic for its size and for the way that it changes how K-12 education is funded in Washington State. That burden has finally become the state's responsibility. This budget increases base pay for teachers, classified staff, and school administrators and tosses out the old salary schedules. Salary levels, determined by the state, will receive regional adjustments based on inflation and housing prices in the immediate region. First year teachers will receive not less than \$40,000 per year and must receive an increase of at least 10% after four years of teaching.

The funding formula for each school district is so convoluted that district heads have rushed to meet with State Superintendent of Instruction, Chris Reykdal, hoping to figure it out. Many fear that the new funding plan will discourage more experienced or more qualified out-of-state job applicants and that currently employed more experienced and more qualified employees won't be able to switch districts because those districts will try to stretch dollars by hiring younger, less experienced employees who cost less.

Of the 15 different public employee retirement plans in Washington State today only PERS 1 and TRS 1 do not have COLA's. Under the new operating budget the Plan 2 and 3 COLA's continue, but Plan 1 retirees remain frozen, living forever as if it was 2010, the last year of their COLA.

Housing cost growth has made wage increases seem paltry. Healthcare expenses have also hugely outpaced salary increases and COLA payments. Even our own state budget will cost more from 2018 onward. Given that (according to the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems) the average annual benefit of a Washington school retiree in 2016 was just \$21,768 per year, it's rich irony that these retirees, especially the Plan 1 members who got nothing this session, will soon pay hugely increased real estate taxes to fund higher salaries for current and future education employees.

### **What were our legislative goals for 2017 and what happened to them?**

When the WSSRA Legislative Committee started the legislative year in January our legislative priorities were:

**Restore the Plan 1 COLA.**

**Restore the Medicare Healthcare Benefit to its former \$183 per month from the current \$150 per month.**

**Make the actuarially recommended payment to the state pension funds.**

**Maintain the PERS 2 and TRS 2 retirement plans for future school employees.**

By our second lobbying trip to Olympia in March, we knew that that the COLA had no chance this session. We pushed for passage of House Bill 1484, a plan that to give TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees an additional but fixed \$2 per month for each year of service. providing another \$60 per month for retirees with 30+ years of service. The bill would have cost \$35 million per biennium. For a time it really seemed possible, but it died in the House Appropriations Committee. The word was out- it cost just too much money; HB 1484 would not be allowed a floor vote.

We also failed to restore the Medicare Healthcare Benefit despite assurances from House members that its chances were good. They weren't. We thought that we also had a chance to make PERS 2 and TRS 2 instead of Plan 3 the default for new hires who didn't choose a plan in their first 60 days of employment, but we were wrong there too. We did manage to keep PERS and TRS 2 as an option for future employees, and we managed to keep the state paying the actuarially recommended payments to the pension fund. But that's just common sense since the legislature had seen the havoc caused when they didn't. One tiny light was that next year, Plan 1 Minimum Benefit will increase to \$37.50 per month per year of service for a yearly retirement of \$20,700 or those at the bottom of the retirement system. Folks in the TRS Alternative Minimum Benefit will also fair a bit better.

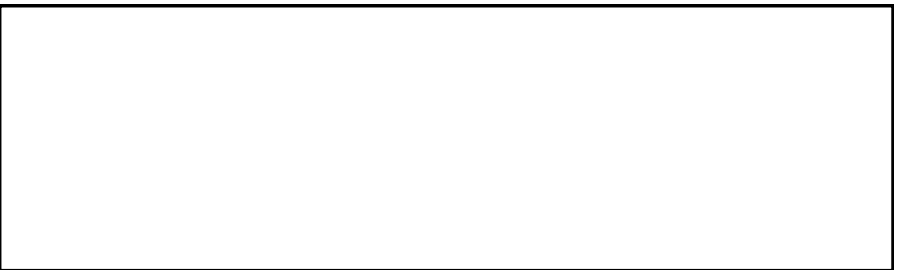
**SNO-ISLE  
WSSRA UNIT #22**

10175 Birch Drive NW  
Marysville WA 98271

**RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED**



**PRE SORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
EVERETT, WA  
PERMIT NO. 93**



**Saves \$ for Student Scholarships and Learning Support Funds ...sign up to get your newsletter online:**

Contact Jim Harvey, [jimmarh7@mac.com](mailto:jimmarh7@mac.com) or call 425-348-4993

**2017-18 SNO-ISLE BOARD  
CO-PRESIDENTS**

James Harvey and Ken Harvey

**PAST PRESIDENTS**

Mike Lanctot & Brenda Leider

**TREASURER**

Joan Penewell

**SECRETARY**

Cheryl Hogle

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**Membership—**

Brenda Leider & Marianne Harvey

**Scholarships & Learning Support Fund—**

Karen Carpenter and Joan Penewell

**Legislative—**Tim Knopf

**Facebook—**Ken Harvey

**Newsletter—**Jacque Jensen

**Retirement Planning—**

Marianne Harvey

**Community Service—**

Marianne Harvey & Ann Bain

**Health—**Nancy Strain

**Friendship—**Ken & Ella Haller

**2017-18 SNO-ISLE REPRESENTATIVES TO  
STATE WSSRA**

Linda Averill, President Elect

Marianne Harvey, NW-1 District Rep State Scholarship Committee Chair

Mike Lanctot, Foundation Trustee and Awards Committee

Nancy Strain, Executive Board Health Committee Liaison

Tim Knopf, Legislative Committee

Brenda Leider, Membership Committee