

WE...too
Washington Education
Association – Retired

January 2016

P.O. Box 9100, Federal Way, WA 98063-9100

WEA-Retired Lobby Day, March 3

The WEA-Retired Legislative Work Team has selected Wednesday, March 3 as Lobby Day and all WEA-Retired members are invited to join us. Our day will begin at 9 a.m. with a short meeting at the Chinook UniServ Council (5220 Capitol Blvd. Tumwater) immediately followed with a briefing by Julie Salvi, WEA lobbyist. After the briefing we will go to the Hill and meet with legislators. Each of us will make appointments with our own legislators. To ensure time for the briefing, we make appointments after 10:30 a.m. While legislators may be in session, they will usually leave the floor to meet with constituents. We often meet with their staff, which also works well.

This is a short legislative session and we do not expect great changes. It is important for us to keep our concerns in the forefront for future actions. The Plan 1 COLA bill is still an active bill but not likely to gain traction in this supplemental year. However, there is discussion regarding a study that would document the lost purchasing power in Plan 1. This retirement plan is the only one that does not have an inflation adjustment. We must make sure our stories are told to legislators so they personally know individuals who suffer hardships in meeting our everyday needs when inflation increases but we remain on fixed incomes. We also believe that the PEBB subsidy for Medicare-eligible retirees should be returned to the previous \$180 rather than the reduced amount of \$150. Last session there was a push to reduce it even further but many of you lobbied to make certain it was maintained at the \$150 level.

Your help is needed. Whether or not you can join us on March 3, it is possible for you to reach your legislators by attending at-home meetings or by email. Regular email communications containing information on how your quality of life is affected by their actions, or inaction, will make a difference. With a name and face for each story, it is more difficult for legislators to just say no to the help that is needed for retirees.

If you plan to join us on March 3, please send a message to WEARetired@washingtonea.org.

Are you one of the 180?

by Maureen Ramos

About 180 ... yes, you read that correctly. 180! That shockingly low figure is the number of WEA-Retired members who belong to WEA-PAC. With more than 5,000 WEA-Retired members I am baffled at the low membership. Many of you were members when you were active in your schools. I'm hoping you just need an invitation plus an easy way to join again so I hope to provide you with that information!

WEA lobbyists support retired members tirelessly during the legislative session, monitoring bills, beating back horrible bills and working toward our legislative goals. They strive to form relationships with legislators, while working to promote our proposals and battle to defeat harmful bills. And we know, at this juncture, there are many bills being authored to negatively impact school employees and retired educators.

Let us do our share to help elect people who will respond to the facts and information that we and our lobbyists share with them. You have seen the WEA-Retired legislative goals. Let us do our share to support children and public education. We must elect legislators who respect our profession — both active and retired — plus who will listen and act to make Washington public schools all they can be.

There is a WEA-PAC form on the WEA-Retired link on the WEA webpage, www.washingtonea.org/retired or use the printed form (page four)...too if you prefer to join in that manner. PLEASE JOIN!

From the president's desk

by WEA-Retired President, Kit Raney

Many of us were teaching prior to having the right to collectively bargain. We worked when it was OK to fire a female teacher for getting married and to pay a female teacher less than a male teacher doing the same job. The right to collectively bargain and the resulting Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) gave educators some protections and rights. Salaries increased and working conditions improved. Unions have been given credit for making and being an advocate for a stronger middle class. Unions have also been under attack and the unionized workforce in America has declined dramatically.

The above reminder is because our union is experiencing an attack from a familiar foe, the Freedom Foundation. You may remember when they were the Evergreen Freedom Foundation. The Freedom Foundation's front group, "Choice for Teachers", has been emailing and mailing WEA members across the state urging them to apply for a \$285 "refund" from WEA. What members can miss when reading these communications is that the refund is available by resigning union membership. The vast majority of WEA members receiving these messages understood where they are coming from and trashed them. WEA members value their membership and know that membership matters.

The Freedom Foundation is just one of many anti-union groups ramping up their attacks on public-sector unions because of a Supreme Court case, *Friedrichs vs CTA*. This case was heard by the Supreme Court in January and the court is expected to release its ruling before it adjourns in June. In our state, no one is required to join a union but they can be required to pay their "fair share" of the cost of bargaining and other union activities from which they benefit. The plaintiffs in the *Friedrichs* case do not think they should be required to pay anything if they choose to not join the union. They benefit from all the union does and achieves for its members but they do not want to pay anything. In my opinion, that would make them freeloaders but I am not a member of the Supreme Court.

You can read more, including WEA President Kim Mead's statement about *Friedrichs*, at www.washingtonnea.org/membershipmatters/ and on the NEA website at <http://neatoday.org/2016/01/12/educators-supreme-court-friedrichs/>.



WEA-Retired President, Kit Raney

Return to work for early retirees from OurVoice WEA

The House Appropriations Committee heard SHB 1737. The bill would allow retirees who took "2008 Early Reduction Factors" (ERF) to return to work for up to 630 hours per year as substitute teachers.

This bill is not perfect, but would provide some immediate relief to ease the substitute teacher shortage, by expanding the number of experienced educators who are available to work as substitutes. WEA supports it. The House Appropriations Committee passed this bill. The next stop is on the House Floor.

As this newsletter goes to print, HB 1737 has passed the House by a vote of 96-1. It now goes to the Senate. It also passed the House last year but did not get through the Senate.

Election results

The ballots for the election of delegates to the 2016 and 2017 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting and NEA Representative Assembly were counted on Tuesday, Jan. 12, at the Pilchuck UniServ Council. The election was supervised by Election Chair, Jan Curtis. A big “thank you” to the members who counted the ballots: Gene Dobson, Jeanne Bartlett, Marj Njaa, Carol Foort, Annette Barca, Johnnie Tucker, Jan Curtis and Carol Ann Pinto.

Several voters asked why we did not do electronic voting. Although electronic voting would be convenient and cost effective, not all of our members have access to a computer and the internet and we need to make sure that all of our members have the opportunity to vote.

You have elected as our delegates to the 2016 and 2017 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting/NEA RA: Kit Raney, Neva Luke, Maureen Ramos, Joe Ramos, Sharon N. White and Karle Warren.

Since the nominations for delegates to the 2016 WEA Representative Assembly were less than the number of delegates that we are eligible to have, the WEA-Retired Board of Directors could confirm these nominees as duly elected delegates to the WEA RA. At our Jan. 20 WEA-Retired Board Meeting, the following delegates were confirmed as our WEA-Retired delegates to the 2016 WEA RA:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Karle Warren – WEA-Southeast | 16. Karen Quinn – Puget Sound |
| 2. Bruce Williamson – WEA-Lower Columbia | 17. Karla Kragelund – WEA-Riverside |
| 3. Debbie Williamson – WEA-Lower Columbia | 18. Robert Aline – WEA-Tacoma |
| 4. Annette Barca – Pilchuck | 19. Eleanor Gilmore – WEA-Sammamish |
| 5. Gayle Hazen – WEA-Tacoma | 20. Stephen Lalonde – WEA-Eastern |
| 6. Edward Duggan – Kent | 21. Maureen Ramos – Spokane |
| 7. Virginia Smith – WEA Olympic | 22. Joe Ramos – Spokane |
| 8. Carl Taylor – WEA Fourth Corner | 23. Pam Fuelling – Pilchuck |
| 9. Donna Raymond – WEA Olympic | 24. Robert Brown – WEA-Tacoma |
| 10. Corinne Thompson – WEA Olympic | 25. Sharon N. White – WEA Chinook |
| 11. Jean Savidge – WEA Fourth Corner | 26. Mary Lindsey – WEA Fourth Corner |
| 12. Evelyn Horne – WEA-Riverside | 27. Ron Jones Edwards – North Central |
| 13. Jeanette Marquardt – WEA-Cascade | 28. Ken Mortland – WEA-Cascade |
| 14. Karen Adlum – Rainier | 29. Katherine Casey – Soundview |
| 15. Jay Young – North Central | 30. Judy Jarvits – WEA-Tacoma |
| | 31. Ann Schwandt – WEA Fourth Corner |
| | 32. Marian Griffin – WEA-Tacoma |

What if I want to substitute teach?

If you are retired under Plan 1 and you were at least age 55 when you retired, with 25 or more years of service, or any age with 30 years or more of service, you may substitute up to 867 hours per year and still receive your benefits. If you are retired under Plan 2 or 3 and you were not 65 when you retired, there are strict limitations regarding returning to work in any capacity, including as a substitute teacher. You would fall under the Early Reduction Factors, and you are unable to work in a public sector job in any capacity without losing your benefits. What this means is if you substitute even 1/2 of one day in any month, you lose that month’s retirement benefits. You may substitute after you reach the age of 65, up to 867 hours, without penalty.

WEA PAC

Your Voice – Your Vote
Membership Form

Washington Education Association Political Action Committee

Membership Information (required)

Name _____ Home E-mail Address or Phone Number _____
 Home Address _____ School District/Employer _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Local Association _____
 Job Title _____

Contribution Options—There are two ways to become a member:

Option 1: Easy Pay – A monthly WEA-PAC contribution from your checking account

VOIDED CHECK REQUIRED IF CHOOSING OPTION 1

Make the minimum contribution by choosing your employee category.

- ☐ K-12 certificated staff, full-time higher education staff, WEA staff, UniServ or affiliated staff: **\$1.67 per month.**
☐ ESP staff, part-time higher education staff, WEA-Retired or WEA Student: **\$1.25 per month.**

OR help us speak louder and choose a higher monthly contribution.

- ☐ \$4 ☐ \$6 ☐ \$10 (silver) ☐ \$20 (gold)

AND support national efforts by adding a monthly contribution to your federal PAC, The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education.

- ☐ \$1 ☐ \$2 ☐ \$5 ☐ \$10

VOIDED CHECK REQUIRED IF CHOOSING OPTION 1

I hereby authorize the WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (WEA) to initiate debit entries to my checking account indicated below and the credit union/bank named below, hereinafter called BANK, to debit the same to such account. I will not hold BANK liable for any erroneous debits made by the WEA.

Conditions: This authorization is to remain in full force and effect until BANK has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford BANK a reasonable opportunity to act on it. A customer has the right to stop payment of a debit entry by notification to BANK prior to charging account. After account has been charged, a customer has the right to have the amount of the erroneous debit immediately credited to his/her account by BANK up to fifteen (15) days following issuance of statement or forty-five (45) days after the charge, whichever occurs first. Deductions will be made on the 10th day of the month, except when the 10th falls on a weekend or holiday, in which case the deduction will occur on the next business day.

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for joining WEA-PAC. Your contribution works to support children and public education.

Signature (required)

Option 2: Annual Contribution

The WEA-PAC membership year is September through August.

If using Option 2, choose your method of payment:

- ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

If you prefer to make your contribution as a lump sum, choose your employee category.

- ☐ K-12 certificated staff, full-time higher education staff, WEA staff, UniServ or affiliated staff: **\$20 annual.**
☐ ESP staff, part-time higher education staff, WEA-Retired or WEA Student: **\$15 annual.**

OR help us speak louder and choose a higher contribution.

- ☐ \$48 ☐ \$72 ☐ \$120 (silver) ☐ \$240 (gold) ☐ Other \$ _____
 (Make **separate** check payable to WEA-PAC.)

AND support national efforts by adding a contribution to your federal PAC, The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education.

- ☐ \$12 ☐ \$24 ☐ \$60 ☐ \$120 ☐ Other \$ _____
 (Make **separate** check payable to NEA-FCPE.)

If using a credit card, fill in the following:

Account number _____

Expiration date ____/____

Exact name on card _____

Signature of cardholder _____

Automatic Credit Card Renewal Option

- ☐ I hereby authorize WEA-PAC to deduct the amount indicated above annually in the month of September from the credit card listed above. Such deductions will cease upon written notification no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled deduction date.

Note: Credit card information obtained from WEA members is used only to charge credit card accounts for authorized contributions to WEA-PAC and/or The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. This information is held in strict confidentiality and will under no circumstances be transferred to third parties.

Conditions: I understand that contributions to WEA-PAC and to The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education ("NEA Fund") are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of membership in the Association nor of employment; and that members have a right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. WEA-PAC and NEA Fund use the contributions which they collect for political purposes, including, but not limited to, in the case of WEA-PAC supporting friends of public education who are candidates for state and local office, and in the case of NEA Fund making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of candidates for federal office. Although NEA Fund suggests an annual contribution of \$12.00, this is only a suggestion; a member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount or not at all without affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA or WEA.

Federal law requires The NEA Fund to use its best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.

Contributions or gifts to the WEA-PAC and NEA Fund for Children and Public Education are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Signature _____ Date _____

Complete the form, sign and date it, and mail it to: WEA-PAC, PO Box 9100, Federal Way, WA 98063-9100.

Spotlight on Gery Gerst, from Chinook



Since retiring for the first time, after 30 years, I found that I wanted to give back to my profession, and future students vicariously, so I joined the education faculty at St. Martin's University (my alma mater). From there, I went to the Masters in Teaching faculty at The Evergreen State College for ten years, helping guide aspiring next-generation teachers of all ages. How rewarding that was, including having some of my former high school students come through that program to become teachers and principals too!! Another way I give back is through fundraising for scholarships with my Alumni Association; I serve as an officer and chair of the scholarship committee, plus we sponsor the annual Capital Food and Wine Festival in Lacey and I work in the concession booth at many events.

After I retired the second time, I joined the civic education staff at our state capitol to design and lead history/civics tours for school groups, and foreign delegations. It was so fun to get my teaching mode on again in a different way and excite kids about their history, government and capitol. I am fully retired now, but still volunteer for tours.

In the years after my first career, I've had the pleasure of giving the commencement address at St. Martin's, leading student and adult groups to Spain, learning to scuba dive on the Great Barrier Reef, serving as translator and colleague with those who twice went to Costa Rica to serve indigenous people, and even officiating more than ten weddings for former students who asked me!

Travel has loomed large in retirement, whether with family or with groups to Hawai'i (3x), Costa Rica (2x), Australia (2x), Italy, Spain (3x), Germany (2x), Switzerland, England, Scandinavian capitals and Russia. I am building a group to go to Cuba in 2017 now that it's open. Tip: a) pickpockets really are out there, and they're good; b) don't compare their cultures to ours; just appreciate, enjoy, and learn from other ways of living, other histories, other perspectives ... ask lots of questions. All travel is an education if we let it be.

I am involved in politics in a variety of ways, with the credo that "either we're the solution or we're the problem through apathy." I write letters of endorsement, donate, attend fundraisers, hold signs, mail my thoughts and more. I marched with locals who came to the capitol this year to support their/our cause. Democracy means "rule of the people", so 'we, the people' need to show up, dive in, contribute, vote for it to work.

I also found that I like to write, and cook. Working without recipes, I use cooking to meditate and create and serve others. It's so gratifying to have the time now ... how fun. As for writing, when the spirit moves I write to political figures — local, state, and national. The White House called me to tell me President Obama read ten letters that day, and mine was one of them! I also write to my friends about current issues, and to the newspapers. Last week two letters on two different topics were printed in two newspapers on the same day! I am also starting to write a book.

As for health, I have always tried to eat right and exercise regularly. Well, genes caught up with me so I had two heart valves replaced a year ago ... and those old habits paid off. So, read those labels: LIMIT salt and sugars, and seek foods with mono & poly unsaturated fats! Four keys to mental and physical wellness: Daily physical exercise of some kind for at least 45 minutes, eating right, daily mental exercise including meditation of some form, and being part of a community of others who make you feel good.

And of course, participate in your retired teachers' association! I attend luncheons and presentations, have attended the state convention once, and contribute to WEA-PAC. As we say, retired from my job, not my profession.

2016 WEA-Retired annual meeting nomination form

WEA-Retired will convene its annual meeting in Federal Way June 1-2. This year delegates will elect a secretary as well as board directors. There will also be amendments to the constitution and bylaws regarding chapter units.

Non-chapter units are: Kent (1), North Central (2), Puget Sound (5), Rainier (3), Sammamish (8), Seattle (6), Soundview (1), Spokane (3), Summit (2), Vancouver (3), WEA-Cascade (4), WEA-Eastern Washington (5), WEA-Lower Columbia (3), WEA Midstate (5), WEA Olympic (7), WEA-Riverside (3), and WEA-Southeast (5). New board directors will be elected for the units in bold print. The number in parenthesis is the number of delegates the chapter is allowed in addition to the board director.

Chapter units are: **Pilchuck (6), Tacoma (4), WEA Chinook (10), and WEA Fourth Corner (7)**. The unit in bold print will be electing a new board director this year. The number in parenthesis is the number of delegates the chapter is allowed in addition to the board director. Chapter units should elect their delegates by **March 15**.

This form can be used for nominating delegates from ALL councils, board directors and secretary. Nominees for chapter units will be forwarded to the chapter leader to be included when the chapter elects its delegates. Non-chapter delegates will be elected during the March 2 WEA-Retired Board Meeting.

All nominees must be WEA-Retired members. More than one name can be submitted for each position. You can nominate yourself and/or another retired member. If you nominate someone other than yourself, you must have the consent of the nominee. Fifty words or less biography for each nominee is optional.

Mail the nomination form to: Jan Curtis, 718 Russell Road, Snohomish, WA 98290-5617. Nomination forms must be postmarked no later than Feb. 26.

2016 WEA-Retired Annual Meeting Nomination Form — Multiple Positions

Your Name _____

Date of Retirement _____

Your email _____

Phone number _____

I nominate the following retired members for:

| DELEGATE | CHAPTER | BOARD DIRECTOR | CHAPTER | SECRETARY |
|----------|---------|----------------|---------|-----------|
|----------|---------|----------------|---------|-----------|

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Spotlight on WEA-Riverside Retired

by LaVonne Gould

Eighteen members of WEA-Riverside Retired gathered on Nov. 18 for lunch and a program presented by Midge Dobbs (LaVonne's daughter) and LaVonne Gould. They shared their pictures and stories from two weeks in S.E. India in March 2015. This was Midge's fifth trip and LaVonne's first.

A favorite activity for all ten team members was playing with the children in the orphanage and holding the babies.

We were there for Palm Sunday and followed our hosts lead on activities for the day. Often the ALMA organization chooses not to stand out among their Hindu and Muslim neighbors. But on this Palm Sunday, the children and our team banged drums, sang and prayed loudly down the neighborhood streets.

Our team held a three-day health conference. We taught health advocates about TB, diabetes, encouragement, addictions, alcoholism, teeth care, safe water and hand washing. The health advocates were regular villagers who assist fellow villagers in their medical needs. Real medical care is free but often a long walk and a day long bus trip away from their villages. The advocates help medically, locally, and we taught them about the above topics.

Groups of us visited five elementary schools and one high school, in small villages. Elementary schools are one room classrooms with openings for doors and windows but there are no door and windows. There are about 30 students in each school kindergarten - 5th grade. They are taught English even in elementary schools.

Both orphanages now have sports courts. Think of a large drive way with basketball hoops, markings for soccer ... the orphans are of the Yanati tribe who are less regarded than the untouchables. With the sports courts to play on and share, the children's place in the community is greatly elevated.



We want to hear from you

Maybe you have begun a second career, written short stories or books, worked with kids or adults in other settings, or been involved in volunteer work that was rewarding since you have been retired. Send your stories to mamaglo123@hotmail.com along with a picture or two for submission to a future WE...too!

Published by Washington Education Association-Retired six times per year. We invite your comments and contributions.

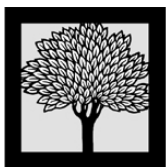
Website: www.washingtonea.org/retired

Mailing address: P.O. Box 9100, Federal Way, WA 98063-9100

Send to:

Editor: Gloria Smith, mamaglo123@hotmail.com

Editorial Board: Lee Ann Prielipp, Kit Raney and Sandy Kokko



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