



Fall 2018



# Connections

NEWS TO KEEP YOU ENGAGED IN THE PROFESSION YOU LOVE

## Continue to resist hate

By Maureen Ramos

*In September 2017, the Charlottesville demonstrations had just taken place, and I asked Maureen (Mo) Ramos to share her thoughts about it. A year later, I asked Mo to comment on if or how things compare now to last year.*

One year ago, I wrote for *Connections* about resisting hate following the despicable, hate-filled event of a new generation of emboldened racists, Klan members, neo Nazis and white supremacists demonstrating in Charlottesville. The uptick in discriminatory events, violent racist assaults and intolerance has continued to increase this year. Polarization, lack of empathy and an escalation of what can only be called hatred of differences — it continues to spread, planting seeds in fertile ground.

So now I revisit the polarization of our beloved country with the following questions. Who are we? What have we become?

I have some thoughts and opinions on those questions — they are just mine which I'm sharing. If you are a WEA-Retired member, you have memories of different times. You have memories of political parties who worked across the aisle for the good of the country, even through tumultuous times. We knew how to research facts and understood the difference between fact and opinion — in fact we taught it. In this new world of social media, political parties with no tolerance for other points of view, #Metoo, Black Lives Matter, I Believe Her, taking a knee, not taking a knee, what are we to do? What can we do to restore respect and civility in our lives and our country? I have plenty of thoughts and ideas as I'm sure you do. We may differ on the solutions. I respect our differences and these are my hopes:

- Public education is the answer and must continue to be. Privatization must be stopped.
- Civil discourse, tolerance and respect must permeate every aspect of our lives. The Beatitudes lay it out for us.
- We must vote. We must rise up. Register others to vote. Volunteer. Share and listen. VOTE!

We all need to take a collective stand, raise our voices and get involved. Elections are more important than ever. VOTE! Join WEA-PAC if you haven't already. Be active. Stand up. Speak out. We cannot be silent. We RESIST HATE!





## The President's Corner

By Neva Luke

WEA-Retired President

Dear Colleagues,

It's fall which marks the beginning of another school year. I want to extend a warm welcome to all our members, especially to those of you who have recently retired. I am proud to be part of WEA-Retired, the only retiree organization that is part of both WEA and NEA, our union that represents educators across our state and our country.

I look forward to working with members from every council to make our retirement more secure, more comfortable and more enjoyable. There are many ways to tap into WEA-Retired. I've listed many below and hope at least one resonates with you.

We know the bond between educators is a very special one. One of the pleasures of retirement is the time to get together with like-minded colleagues to maintain friendships and build new ones. Almost all councils have gatherings throughout the year where retired educators chat, share a meal, get informed and educated about issues that are relevant to us. Each council has a board director who will keep you informed about the issues that affect public education, including retiree-specific information.

The council level offers our WEA-Retired members opportunities to get involved at many different levels. This could be from chatting with other members at a lunch, to bringing in a speaker that other members would enjoy, to assisting the WEA-Retired Board Directors in whatever way is needed. There are opportunities to doorbell in your region for pro-public education candidates or lobby in Olympia for our issues. Councils also elect members to be the next board director, and to represent your region at the WEA-Retired Annual meeting.

WEA-Retired has committees that our members work on and thus give back to our members and public education in general. The legislative committee is very active in communicating with and lobbying legislators around our issues, especially pensions and health care. They are planning a lobby day for Monday, Feb. 4, 2019.

The scholarship committee awards at least eight scholarships to active members each year. There is a large cadre of retirees who hold seminars around the state to prepare active members for retirement. Our editor is always looking for articles interesting to retirees.

In December, there will be a ballot in the winter Connections. There you will have a chance to nominate retirees (including yourself) to the 2019 WEA-RA, WEA-Retired Board Directors, and the 2019 WEA-Retired Annual Meeting. Your membership in WEA-Retired also gives you access to NEA Member Benefits, including the insurance and credit card programs you may already have. And, don't forget to check out the Kiplinger's Retirement Report which is offered to retirees for free. Go to [www.neamb.com](http://www.neamb.com) to see what is available.

These are just some of the ways that you can tap into the benefits of WEA-Retired and how you can become more involved. Check out our website at [www.washingtonea.org/membership/join/retired](http://www.washingtonea.org/membership/join/retired) for more details and contact information of your Board Director.

# VOTE! The General Election is Nov. 6. VOTE!

The Nov. 6 election is extremely important as we are voting for candidates for the House and Senate in Olympia, as well as in D.C. The ballot also will have candidates for judges, local officials, and initiatives in our state. It is absolutely essential that we all vote and encourage our families and friends to do the same. The outcome of this election will determine who controls the Legislature in Olympia as well as the Congress in D.C., and the direction of our state and nation. As we know, so much is on the line.

In addition to voting, there are actions you can take to influence this election and the political climate.

Volunteer to support a pro-education, pro-union candidate. Candidates welcome your involvement. The relationships you make during a campaign can be built upon during the rest of the year, improving the understanding of what our staff and students really need and how they are affected by legislation.

WEA members, active and retired, are doorbelling for some candidates every weekend in October. The legislative districts where the doorbelling is scheduled are in these locals and/or councils: WEA Fourth Corner, Lake Washington, WEA Olympic, WEA-Sammamish, and Soundview. Contact those councils or your Retired Board Director to volunteer or go online to fill in the form indicating your availability. You can go online to sign up to doorbell at <http://bit.ly/DoorbellWEA>.

Join WEA-PAC. This is the Washington Education Association's political action committee. WEA-PAC's mission is to recommend and elect pro-public education candidates to office. Donate \$20.18 for 2018 by a one-time credit card contribution at <http://bit.ly/2018WEAPAC>. For ongoing credit card or EFT contributions, see your Chapter Board Director for a form or visit [www.washingtonea.org/retired](http://www.washingtonea.org/retired).

Join NEA-FCPE. The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education is the political action committee of the National Education Association. The NEA-FCPE recommends and supports candidates who stand up for public education issues at the national level. They endorse candidates in races for office including President, U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. Go here to see the NEA-FCPE endorsed candidates for our state, [www.educationvotes.nea.org/state/washington/#candidates](http://www.educationvotes.nea.org/state/washington/#candidates).

## Voting Schedule

Oct. 6-13: The State Voters' Pamphlet should arrive in every household in Washington state.

Oct. 19 - Nov. 6: Ballots can be mailed or dropped into special ballot boxes by 8 p.m. on Nov. 6, or postmarked by midnight Nov. 6. If you haven't received your ballot by Oct. 25, you need to contact your county's election department. Find your county's information at [www.sos.wa.gov/elections/auditors/#](http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/auditors/#).



# Understanding the Second Amendment in its historical context

**Editorial by Barbara Galler**

School safety, gun rights and gun legislation are topics highly debated and certainly a great concern for all educators. We asked our editor and former social studies teacher, Barbara Galler, to report on the historical origin of the first Eight Amendments. Thank you, Barbara Galler.

This past school year, sadly — impossibly — more public school children have been killed by automatic rifles. Even licensed animal hunters know how insane it would be to kill their prey with the feral mutilation promised by these rifles. The National Rifle Association has, over the last several decades, re-framed the Second Amendment from a right for a colonial militia, to a right for citizens to own all manner and amount of weaponry. However, the historical facts that surround the Second Amendment and its nine original mates do not match the NRA's narrative.

The American colonies were valued first as rich sources for raw material needed by Britain's factories and valued second as guaranteed markets for British-made finished goods. The Boston Tea Party was a business loss for the British, and after the Massachusetts colonists' raid on tea, King George and Parliament decreed the Intolerable Acts as a direct punishment to the Bay Colony. These prohibitive and proscriptive laws took away — among other rights — the right to assemble peacefully, the right to secure property, the right to a local and timely trial.

When it came time to ratify the Constitution, the rest of the Atlantic colonies did not forget these crushing laws, circa 1774. In fact, the colonies demanded that James Madison, chief writer of the Constitution, add a codicil that would list the exact basic rights that had been taken from the Massachusetts colonists. Here are the correlations between the Intolerable Acts and the First Eight Amendments:

1. The acts cancelled the Massachusetts Charter (its framework of colonial self-government), as well as the Bay Colonists' rights of free speech, free press and peaceful public gatherings. Sound familiar? See the First Amendment.
2. The acts forbade the right of colonists to form and keep militias, first created to fight Native Americans. Colonial hearths still had their single-shot rifles hanging above them. Store owners still had their single-shot pistols. See the Second Amendment re: right to ensure common safety using local armed militias.
3. The Intolerable Acts included the Quartering Act which forced Bostonians to house and feed the British troops sent to enforce them. See the Third Amendment re: no housing military troops.
4. The limited colonial governments had ensured the same fundamental rights of all Englishmen since the Magna Carta, including the cherished right of ownership and private property. With the Intolerable Acts, Boston homes and businesses were raided without cause and without redress. See the Fourth Amendment re: search and seizure.
5. The Intolerable Acts revoked the Massachusetts Charter's jurisprudence guarantees:
  - a. In criminal cases, the right to having a grand jury indictment to ensure if a trial is necessary, the right not to self-incriminate, and the prohibition of double jeopardy and the prohibition of the state to take one's property while the accused is awaiting trial. See the Fifth Amendment re: protection of life, liberty, and property.
  - b. In criminal cases, the right to counsel and an impartial jury, the right to a fair and speedy trial in the locality of the alleged crime, the right to call for defense witnesses, and the right to confront witnesses against the accused. See the Sixth Amendment re: rights of the accused persons in criminal cases.
  - c. In civil cases, the right to a trial by jury for questions of high monetary disputes. See the Seventh Amendment re: rights in civil cases.
  - d. The prohibition of the accused to face excessive bail, fines, or cruel and unusual punishment. See the Eighth Amendment re: forbidding excessive bail, fines, and punishments.

*(Read more on page 6.)*



# Charter Schools & Vouchers Pushed by EducationNext Organization

By Barbara Galler

As of this fall, Washington state has 12 charter schools with over 2,400 students. Here's a quick review of the birth of charter schools in Washington:

- Bad news in past: I-1240 passed in 2012.
- Good news in past: It was invalidated by the state Supreme Court in 2015.
- Bad news in past: The state Legislature passed a charter school law in 2016.
- Bad news in present time: Charter schools are funded by monies from the state lottery, begging the question of future resources if they expand.
- Good news in present time: Local tax money does not go to these schools.

But there is more bad news. Ever hear of the “liberal bias” claims against universities and colleges? Turns out that the very conservative Hoover Institution has backed “reform movements” propounding the curative powers of charters and vouchers in the public education sector. EducationNext is their university-based think-tank at Harvard. Paul E. Peterson is the editor-in-chief. And, our very own University of Washington has its “reform public education” think-tank under the auspices of Prof. Paul Hill, a member of the board at EducationNext. Other board members include anti-union, anti-public education spokesmen, Chester Finn and John L. Chubb. Here is the site's founding *raison d'être*:

The magazine was founded in 2001 out of a school choice-minded panel at Stanford University, the Hoover Institution's Koret Task Force on K-12 Education. EducationNext has been closely associated with such approaches to improving education as charter schools, private school vouchers, greater teacher accountability and digital learning.

“We do have hobbyhorses, I'll give you that,” Paul E. Peterson, the editor-in-chief and a professor at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, said in an interview. He insisted, though, that the journal abides by its mission statement that in “the stormy seas of school reform,” it will go “where the evidence points” in promoting “bold change” in K-12 education.

Thus, that “liberal bias in our universities and colleges” sloganeering is not altogether true. Indeed, our universities are more complicated and nuanced. When the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard is a bastion of the Hoover Institution; when the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at UW is connected to that group via EducationNext, then we have debatable options at our schools of higher education. And that is a good thing. What is disconcerting is that EducationNext is a for-profit organization, pursuing the goal of diminishing public schools, while UW is a public land-grant college.

From Louisiana to Washington, charter school advocates are in state courts, appealing nuances of state constitutions' foundational and financial underpinnings of public schools. This costs money, as does interest-biased polling and carefully placed academic journals. While Washington state has non-profit charter schools, the money goes with the students, so district public schools lose out. And while public schools are bound by a surfeit of laws and regulations, many, though not all, of those standards are vacated in charters.

Charters and vouchers erode public education. And organizations, like EducationNext, embedded in our finest universities are pushing them.

# My take on the 2018 NEA Representative Assembly

By Kit Raney

WEA-Retired President Neva Luke asked our WEA-Retired delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly to write about something from their experience. One would have thought that with the very recent Janus decision, this RA would have had a narrow focus on organizing and bargaining, the issues in the forefront of conversations to recruit and retain members. Those subjects certainly were addressed, along with a lot of “shout outs” to the state associations who held collective actions and walked out this spring. There also remained a healthy dose of speakers, debate and actions around social justice issues. And I was very glad about that.

My union has always spoken up and stood up for what is right. I remember attending NEA RAs in the '80s, marching with striking nurses in Minneapolis and hoping to be picked to be one of the demonstrators against apartheid in front of the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C.

In Minneapolis this year, I joined many other NEA delegates on the afternoon of our first caucus day participating with community members in the “Families Belong Together” March. Then on the first day of the RA we were treated to an amazing speech by Parkland student and shooting survivor, David Hogg. David is an example of why the youth of our country are going to get things done and make things better.

Spokane EA member Mandy Manning was honored as the National Teacher of the Year. This teacher of refugee and immigrant students shared the stage and her microphone with two immigrant students. Mandy is passionate about her students and making school a safe and welcoming place for them to succeed. Mandy’s speech, along with other speeches from the RA, can be found at [www.ra.nea.org](http://www.ra.nea.org).

Over the four days of the RA, delegates debated, discussed and amended many, many issues. We voted on six constitutional amendments, four bylaw amendments and elected officers. We also discussed, debated and voted on 130 new business items. (130 is not a typo!) These NBI’s contained many different ideas and pertained to many different subjects but all were offered as ways to address issues in our schools, working conditions and issues impacting our students and their families. Examples of some of the subjects that were addressed: the separation of immigrant families, hiring and mentoring minority educators, support for students fighting for safe schools, resources and strategies for educators when they become aware of ethnic/racial bullying, advocating for voter registration in high schools and support for members experiencing trauma.

I am a retired member of NEA and WEA and I proudly stand with my union.

## Understanding the Second Amendment ... continued

Thus, the Bill of Rights’ first eight amendments to the newly configured federal government directly correlate to the loss of Massachusetts colonists’ rights under the Intolerable Acts that helped spur the American Revolution. The Second Amendment was an historical nod recognizing that the new states would have the right to organize their own militias (in today’s lingo: National Guards), just as the First Amendment recalled the loss of broad and basic rights, and the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Amendments recalled colonists’ lost rights of the accused. Nothing in either the original blueprint for our federal government, nor in the first eight amendments, included permitting individual ownership to bear arms. The Second Amendment refers to the collective rights of states to have state-organized militias. Since that time, the rights of individuals to bear arms has been argued in the courts, across all the states, and still there is not an agreed upon resolution.

## WEA-Retired Call Center

A stated purpose of WEA-Retired is to help achieve the goals and aims of WEA whenever possible. At our annual meeting in June, delegates were asked if they would volunteer to aid in a call center that was part of the preplanning for the announcement of the Janus decision. Several members answered the call.

The call center was active on five Thursdays this past summer. Those who could squeeze in the time turned up at WEA to make calls and send out hand-written notes. The message was: We are stronger together and we are glad you are with us.

Not everyone was there every Thursday but Stacia Bilsland, Theresa Downey, Pam Fuelling, Betty Guerta, Shirley Hickey, Linda Lease, Neva Luke, Jeannette Marquardt, Debby Nissen, and Sharon White sent out 453 handwritten, personalized notes to active members who changed their status from “agency fee payer” to “active” between September 2017 to June 2018 to let them know they are appreciated and that we are glad they are with us.

These 10 WEA-Retired members also made 52 calls to former members who’d resigned membership since the Janus decision. We encouraged them to come back to membership as we are stronger together and, as a result, of the calls sent out several enrollment forms.



## Welcome our new secretary

Pam Fuelling, elected as WEA-Retired secretary at the WEA-Retired Annual Meeting in June, is new to this position but not new to WEA-Retired or Association involvement.

Pam retired in 2015 after teaching 37 years in Everett. During that time, she served as an EEA Building Rep, member of the Executive Board, member of the Bargaining Team and attended WEA and NEA Representative Assemblies. After retirement she is continuing her involvement with EEA by serving on the EEA Membership Matters Committee. She also served as co-chair of WEA’s NEA Convention Work Team and participated in the Support Our Schools program last year.

Before being elected as WEA-Retired secretary, Pam represented Pilchuck Retired on the WEA-Retired Board of Directors for the past two years.

In addition to working in support of public education, our students and our members, Pam has many other interests. She enjoys traveling, concerts, jazz, gardening, wine and is a passionate fan of the Seahawks and Mariners. She begins each day with exercise and will be climbing the Columbia Tower again in March to raise money for funding blood cancer research for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She also volunteers with Colton’s Army Guild which raises money for Seattle Children’s Uncompensated Care.

Pam is an excellent addition to the WEA-Retired Executive Board. Thank you, Pam, for your dedication to public education.



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## Important dates

WEA-Retired Executive Committee  
Oct. 17, 2018, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

WEA-Retired Board Meeting  
Oct. 18, 2018, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

WEA-Retired Executive Committee  
Jan. 30, 2019, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

WEA-Retired Board Meeting  
Jan. 31, 2019, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

WEA-Retired Lobby Day (Olympia)  
Feb. 4, 2019

WEA Representative Assembly (Spokane)  
April 25-27, 2019

## **Connections**

NEWS TO KEEP YOU ENGAGED IN THE PROFESSION YOU LOVE

*Connections* is published by Washington Education Association-Retired four times a year. We invite your comments and contributions.

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