

C2C? Learn the ‘new’ language

by David Phelps, WEA
Communications Director

Care to chat?

Just when we thought mastery of the intricate rules of English grammar and punctuation had been achieved, along comes a whole new “language” associated with social media and social networking.

Somewhere, William Strunk and E.B. White are twirling in their graves. For those who are purists when it comes to the presentation of the written word, online communities like Facebook, Twitter and My Space, along with cell phones, have turned our familiar world upside down.

How to explain or define this brave new world?

The terms “social media” and “social networking” apply to the burgeoning number of communities being established online. The explosive growth of Internet-based outreach over the last decade has resulted, according to several current measurements, as many as 85% of all Americans going “online”

at least once a week.

No longer can social media be considered the “Orphan Annie” of the communications sector. Instead, social media is now an integral and essential part of the family — and a necessary element for any successful outreach strategy.

An example of the growth of social networking communities is Facebook (www.facebook.com). Late last year, Facebook signed up user # 300,000,000. That’s 300 million individuals and organizations worldwide now have a Facebook page and presence. And that number continues



to grow dramatically.

One of the significant outcomes of the explosive growth of social media and social networking is the development of highly-individualized and focused communities. As a result, any interest, no matter how narrow in its definition and scope, can either be found online — or easily created.

This allows each of us to commune on a regular basis

with like-minded people — or to take an opposite perspective if necessary. Traditional boundaries no longer apply. It’s a sink-or-swim world.

And part of that world is the emergence of this new language. Confusing and bewildering at first blush, once learned it becomes intuitive and (relatively) easy-to-understand. The evolution of this language has been driven by two primary needs: short messages (140 characters or less) for cell phone texts and social media sites such as Twitter; and the desire for privacy by young people concerned about P911 (“parents coming into room alert”).

Here are some of the frequently used abbreviations along with the translation back into English:

- 9** Parent (or adult) is watching
 - A3** Anytime, anywhere, anyplace
 - AAF** As a matter of fact
 - AAK** Alive and kicking OR Asleep at the keyboard
 - ADIH** Another day in hell
 - ADIP** Another day in paradise
- (continued on page 6)*

President's Message

Time flies when everyone is busy

by Carl Taylor
WEA-Retired president

Oops, another year — where has it gone? WEA-Retired members have busy schedules and we contribute in more places than we did when we were busy as full-time educators. I called a member the other day to ask if she



would be able to do something for WEA-Retired. The answer was, "Sure, I can squeeze it in today between

going to a caucus meeting and selling trees at the Boy Scout lot." Today's retirees are out there giving back to their communities.

Retirement is a wonderful time of life. I have been retired for 12 years. Keeping busy in retirement has been easy for me. In the first few months, I was lost for something to do. I soon learned that volunteering was wonderful and substitute teaching was even better. As the years passed, I found that I could sub as much as I wanted both in the public and private schools.

I also volunteered at my church parish. One situation led to the next and now I am there at least three days a week. Some people coming to St. Vincent de Paul for help mistakenly take me for the priest,

they see me so much. On a personal level, life has kept me busy caring for grandchildren and elderly parents.

In the past 12 years I have been involved with our retiree organization at the local, state and national levels. I have watched WEA-Retired evolve into a viable organization through the hard work of its members. We are fortunate to have fellow WEA-Retired members who are involved volunteering to keep WEA-Retired growing. We have participated in NEA-Retired conferences around the nation sharing and learning from others on how to grow our organization. Many members have been involved reaching out to other groups, such as the Alliance of Retired Citizens and the Senior Lobby.

In the past year we have been able to involve many new members on the "other side of the mountains." Barb Brantingham works to build the MidState UniServ retired unit by hosting retirement seminars. Dolly Buckingham of North Central UniServ is busy building a retired unit. The Eastern Washington and Spokane UniServs stepped forward and are going to offer retirement seminars for their members. Karle Warren of Clarkston has become a master at organizing retirement seminars in the Clarkston area. Thankfully, we are moving EAST very rapidly and helping WEA members with retirement issues. The ride over the mountains is a pleas-

ant trip. Better than going up and down I-5 in clogged traffic.

Technology is helping us reach more members all the time. Has anyone seen Rainier UniServ's Web site? Take a look at www.wea-rainier.org and see how Chuck Richards has organized his WEA-Retired unit by having meetings and social activities.

This Fall, David Phelps, the new WEA Communications director, engaged, motivated and trained our WEA-Retired board members in social networking. He had the participants twittering, blogging and Facebooking in no time! With the help of David we were able to secure the site, WEA-Retired.org, so that we retired educators have another avenue for communicating. Watch for the start of that site in 2010.

Looking to the future, we have a full slate of people running for office, who are willing to commit their time and energy to WEA-Retired. The election will be held at our annual meeting in the spring. Our legislative team is very impressive with the work they are doing in Olympia. In addition we have Mo Ramos, recently retired from Spokane as a new legislative team player. Welcome Maureen! As we grow in the future, we want to remember and thank those who have paved the way for the WEA-Retired. We are especially thankful to the WEA staff and WEA-Retired members who work tirelessly to promote WEA-Retired issues.

WEA-Retired elections for officers, board directors, and annual meeting delegates

WEA-Retired will convene an Annual Meeting, June 9-10, 2010. This year the delegates will elect a president and vice president, as well as board directors for Kent, North Central, Rainier, Spokane, Vancouver, WEA-Cascade, WEA MidState, WEA Olympic, and WEA-Riverside (all non-chapters).

This form is for nominating non-chapter delegates, non-chapter board directors, president and vice president. Fifty words or less biography for each nominee is optional. Non-chapter delegates will be elected at the March 4, 2010, WEA-Retired Board of Directors meeting. Non-Chapter board directors, president and vice president will be elected at the annual meeting in June.

Non-Chapter Units are: WEA-Cascade (3), WEA-Eastern Washington (4), Kent (1), WEA-Lower Columbia (3), WEA MidState (5), North Central (1), WEA Olympic (6), Rainier (2), WEA-Riverside (3), Sammamish (8), Soundview (1), WEA-Southeast (5), Spokane (2), Summit (1), and Vancouver (3). The number in parenthesis is the number of delegates the chapter is allowed in addition to the board director.

All nominees must be WEA-Retired members. More than one name can be submitted to be a non-chapter delegate. You can nominate yourself or another retired member. If you nominate someone other than yourself, you must have the consent of the nominee.

Mail the nomination form to: Jan Curtis, 718 Russell Road, Snohomish, WA 98290-5617. Nomination forms must be postmarked no later than Feb. 26, 2010.

2010 WEA-Retired Annual Meeting Nomination Form — Multiple positions

Your Name _____ Date of Retirement _____

Your e-mail _____ Phone Number _____

I nominate the following retired members for:

Non-chapter delegate:

Name

UniServ Council

Non-chapter WEA-Retired Board Director:

Name

UniServ Council

WEA-Retired President:

Name

WEA-Retired Vice President:

Name

Chapter units are: WEA Chinook (11), WEA Fourth Corner (7), Pilchuck (5), Puget Sound (5), Seattle (5) and Tacoma (3). The numbers in parentheses is the number of delegates the chapter is allowed in addition to the board director. Pilchuck and Puget Sound will elect board directors for a 2010-12 term. Chapter units should elect their delegates before March 4, 2010.

Member Activities

Life after retirement

by Gery Gerst, WEA-Retired member from Olympia

After 30 years of fun teaching in the public schools, I was prepared for a transition. My busy retired colleagues were great role models for me. I emerged into retirement and found a new world waiting for me in the form of two lists: #1, "To Do <bucket>"; #2, "Never knew I was going to do that, but how cool anyway."

First, I delivered the commencement address at my college alma mater (list #2). Then I gave myself a retirement trip to Spain to visit friends (list #1). Then I led a group of students around Spain for 3 weeks. I also took students on a spring break tour of the east coast, from Boston to D.C.

I was afraid of sharks, so I took up scuba diving and faced them head on -- literally, by diving the Great Barrier Reef in Australia (list #1), where I saw LOTS of sharks and left my fear for good.

In that first year after retirement, Secretary of State Sam Reed enlisted me to create a civics curriculum to help secondary teachers foster awareness and involvement in the political process. The result is at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/just4you/curricula.aspx> and I was pleased when Vermont picked it up too.

That led to a part time adjunct professorship, and then to full time as a visiting professor. When some faculty decided to form a union, I was asked to help. My belief in the necessity of a viable teachers' organization to voice their wisdom and needs came from decades in my own career watching WEA push for collective bargaining rights under Jim Aucutt. The campaign was successful, and I helped bargain the first contract, using experience with the likes of John Chase, Bob Graf, and others. Eureka, contract ratified, and I left teaching in Higher Ed feeling like I'd accomplished something and helped to "leave the place better than I found it."

Since "retirement" I've been asked by 6 former students to perform their wedding ceremonies (list #2). Great memories ensued in an area I NEVER envisioned.

Italy, Germany and Switzerland beckoned. My Hawaii visit included a tour of the oldest active public school west of the Rockies, on Maui. I visited Cape Cod and Virginia. I took a mission trip to Costa Rica, and then returned to build a community center while living with a Spanish-speaking family.

I raise money for scholarships and serve on the Board of the Thurston County chapter of the ACLU, offering monthly forums on civil liberties issues. Recently, I helped flooded farmers in Centralia clear their lands so they could return to work. I recently "retired" from my Church Council and an after-school tutoring advisory board. I attend luncheons to stay in touch with colleagues. I make time to fish for the big ones in Canada or Westport.

This year I got a job as a tour guide at the State Capitol, specializing in school group or VIP tours, including Spanish speaking groups (list #2). I get to teach yet don't have to correct papers nightly. King 5 TV followed me around one day, impromptu, for their "good news" feature.

Life is never dull! That bucket list isn't done, and I can't find enough time to read all the books I want. If retirement means "life-long learning, on to new adventures, and personal growth", I'm retired and loving it. I can't wait for what's next: rafting down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon!

Contact Information for WEA-Retired

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Mailing address:

P.O. Box 9100

Federal Way, Wa 98063-9100

Update from Habitat

*by Kathy King, WEA-Retired
member from Issaquah*

I am finally here in Cambodia and we, a team of 20 dedicated Habitaters from the U.S. and Canada, have now finished 4-1/2 days of building in a suburb of Phnom Penh. We are working on 2 houses which are a fair distance from each other, so the team divides itself into teams of 10 each day. It's been fun to work on each house to meet the home owners and locals. These new sturdy brick homes are being built to lure families away from the garbage-dump area of the city to a cleaner, nicer community with more opportunity for them.

Our work is very demanding physically, partly because the weather is very hot and humid, and partly because we are the grunt labor. We carry and stack bricks; we dig 4-foot deep holes for the septic tank; we haul buckets of sand, gravel, water; we mix cement by hand (which is really a killer); we carry buckets of cement to fill the foundation forms; we fill wheelbarrows and baskets with dirt to fill in the floor area; if we're lucky, we get to lay bricks! At the end of the day we are all covered in dirt, brick, cement dust and splatters, and lots of sweat! I didn't know I could sweat that much! We are being constantly reminded to drink water, drink water, drink water!

One of the bonuses of these builds is interaction with the

locals. Not many of them speak English but sign language is working pretty well, and we have interpreters with us on-site all of the time. A special bonus is the children who come out of the woodwork when we arrive! They love to learn English from us and especially to play games and giggle. We played with a beach ball for the little ones and a frisbee for the older, painted glitter glue designs on their hands, taught them songs and they taught us their games: we all had a blast! As we drove away in the van, we passed through a gauntlet of smiling, waving children! Fun!

We also paid a visit to an orphanage that was a heartbreaking experience. We brought them donations of clothing, school supplies, toothbrushes, etc., and also made a monetary donation from the team. We spent time with them; they danced for us and we played games and chatted with them, since many could speak some English. So very sad to see the conditions they live in, but they still seemed quite happy.

We are staying in a comfortable hotel in the heart of the city. The food has been really good: we have breakfast at the hotel (at 6:30 a.m.) with a choice of western or Asian food. Our lunch is brought to us via tuk-tuk to the work site from a local restaurant. Dinners have been very amazing! Last night some of us ordered a real delicacy of an appetizer: crispy tarantula — it went down with

some effort and great applause from the gang! Most restaurants offer Khmer food, along with Chinese and Vietnamese at many spots (and of course the fancy-pants places also offer western choices like pizza).

Creating a real up and down emotional day, we did a city tour, including the King's Palace, but also went to S-21, the site of a prison, now the genocide museum, and the Killing Fields, both places where the Pol Pot regime in the late '70s committed horrific crimes against their own people, torturing and killing about 20,000 people — an experience similar to visiting Auschwitz or Buchenwald, complete with the skulls, clothing, photos of many who were killed and so on — a very sad page in human history. We made a stop at the garbage dump that used to attract so many of the families we are building for — it was really atrocious. The smell of the burning plastic and the horrible sight of children still rummaging around among the litter of the dump will stay with me for a long time.

After that long day of sight-seeing, we got on a boat on the Mekong and Tonle Sap Rivers and took a dinner cruise. It was Cambodian style, so it wasn't luxurious; we watched the sun set over the city and relaxed. We followed that up with a short movie (shown at a riverside restaurant) of the land mine problem here, which

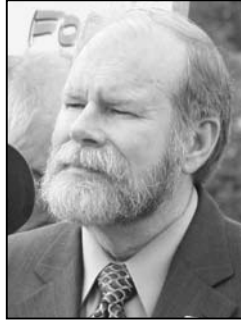
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View from Olympia

January 2010

by Mike Ragan, WEA Vice President

Welcome to the start of a new calendar year. This is also the start of a new legislative session. Last year was the budget year of the biennium and we saw massive cuts to all state budgets, including education and pensions. Unfortunately, the economy in Washington has not improved enough to prevent more revenue shortfalls this budget year. In fact, since this is the second year of the biennium budget, any cuts this year will be on top of the cuts made last year, so they will be extremely painful. The governor and legislative leaders are talking about tax increases to try to moderate these additional cuts. We will see.



Mike Ragan
WEA Vice President

At the same time, in the middle of this crisis, the state actuary has been running around leading the media and whoever listens to him to believe that Plan 1 will be bankrupt in a few years. 2016 to be specific. That is the year he gave when I heard him speaking. What most people, including the people interviewing him miss are the assumptions he uses to come up with his claim. The scenario he draws is not quite "Alice through the Looking Glass," but it is close. Wild exaggerations are needed to back up his position. Plan 1 has never been fully funded, but the DRS is not concerned about writing pension checks, and since I sit on the State Investment Board I know we are not nervous about providing the funds to back those checks. At some point Plan 1 funding will have to be increased, but there is no imminent crisis and the actuary should be ashamed of himself for scaring people in this manner.

WEA lobbyists will be working hard to minimize any additional cuts to educators during this legislative session. To keep up to date with the latest information, go to the WEA Web site: www.washingtonea.org.

Update from Habitat *(continued from page 5)*

is one of the worst (maybe Laos is worse?). We are finally home and my poor ankles look like sausages ... they are so swollen up from the heat. A cool shower helped but I must say that the humid heat is fairly taxing on the body.

As in the past, the build is a wonderful experience and we're making great progress toward providing two new houses for two lovely Cambodian families. Stay tuned . . .

C2C? *(continued from page 1)*

AFC	<i>Away from computer</i>
AML	<i>All my love</i>
AMOF	<i>As a matter of fact</i>
AYDY	<i>Are you done yet?</i>
AYSOS	<i>Are you stupid or something?</i>
AYS	<i>Are you serious?</i>
AYTMB	<i>And you're telling me this because?</i>
B9	<i>Boss is watching</i>
BASOR	<i>Breathing a sigh of relief</i>
BF	<i>Best Friend</i>
BFF	<i>Best Friend Forever</i>
BIF	<i>Before I forget</i>
BOLO	<i>Be on the look out</i>
BYTM	<i>Better you than me</i>
CAM	<i>Camera</i>
CD9	<i>Parents (adults) are around</i>
CID	<i>Consider it done</i>
CSL	<i>Can't stop laughing</i>
CU	<i>See you</i>
CUL	<i>See you later</i>
CWOT	<i>Complete waste of time</i>
CYE	<i>Check your e-mail</i>
DIKU	<i>Do I know you?</i>
DIY	<i>Do it yourself?</i>
DKDC	<i>Don't Know, Don't Care</i>
DUR	<i>Don't you remember?</i>
DYOR	<i>Do your own research</i>
EAK	<i>Eating at keyboard</i>
EIP	<i>Editing in progress</i>
EMFJI	<i>Excuse me for jumping in</i>
EOL	<i>End of lecture OR End of life</i>
EOM	<i>End of message</i>
ETA	<i>Estimated time of arrival</i>
F2F	<i>Face to Face</i>
FAQ	<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>
FBM	<i>Fine by me</i>
FC	<i>Fingers crossed</i>
FOMC	<i>Falling off my chair</i>
FUBAR	<i>Fouled up beyond all recognition</i>
FWIW	<i>For what it's worth</i>
FWM	<i>Fine with me</i>
G2G	<i>Got to go</i>
G2R	<i>Got to run</i>
GAS	<i>Got a second?</i>
GB	<i>Goodbye</i>
GG	<i>Got to go</i>
GJ	<i>Good job</i>
GMTA	<i>Great minds think alike</i>

We'll have more in the next issue.
In the meantime, start practicing!

Prospects

by Lee Ann Prielipp, WEA-Retired Legislative Chair

With the state budget at a 2.8 billion dollar deficit, this legislative session requires us to be protective of what we currently have and not expect great increases. It appears that the only way to have a balanced state budget is to cut more services and raise taxes. None of us is looking fondly upon this 90 day session.

Full funding of our pension system is top priority of all retiree groups. There will be bills with various procedures on accomplishing this task. We want a plan that actually puts funds into the system. We support the re-establishment of the June 30, 2024 amortization date for the TRS/PERS Plan 1 unfunded liability. Your WEA-Retired legislative action committee also believes that the Medicare supplement should be established in statute. Each biennium this item must be



Lee Ann Prielipp

proposed for adoption in the biennial budget document. While it has always passed, we aspire to have it permanently established in law.

Issues that we continue to pursue so they remain in view are: allowing PEBB access for Plan 2 upon severing from service; providing a PEBB health care window for those retirees who missed their initial opportunity to enroll; and providing an annual COLA beginning in year one. These issues all cost money but we want our legislators to know how important they are for retirees.

We will continue to follow bills related to retirees and encourage you to contact your legislators on a regular basis. For those of you with e-mail we will attempt to send legislative messages on key items. Your continued support can help make the changes we need for both retirees and our active members.

Very useful Web sites

From WEA-Retired, Chinook

Locally grown foods: Directory of farmers' markets, family farms and other place to buy fresh produce and other foods:

www.localharvest.org

Pill identification: Identify prescription and over-the-counter pills by shape, color or imprint:

www.webmd.com/pill-identification

Cash for electronics: Send in your unwanted digital cameras, GPS devices, laptops, MP3 players, gaming consoles, etc. at:

www.gazzelle.com

Money savers: Comprehensive listing of online discounters, outlet malls, travel bargain finders, dining deals and more at: www.consumerworld.org/pages/bargains.htm

If you know of other helpful Web sites, please send them to WE...too Editor Nancy Miller at: editor.WE.too@hotmail.org

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The WEA-Retired Lobby Day will be held on Wed. Jan. 27. There will be a briefing for participants at the Chinook UniServ Council at 9:00 a.m., followed by appointments with legislators on the hill. All retirees are welcome.

The only retired organization affiliated with WEA and NEA

