



**Skagit - Island - San Juan
Washington State School Retirees' Association
Unit 21
November 2023**



Notes from Your Unit 21 President's

The Skagit, Island, San Juan School Retiree's Association is a service organization. We offer opportunities for the school staffs in our areas but we are also social. We enjoy gathering with old friends and while doing that we also gather non perishable foods for the local food banks, we provide funds for scholarships for students and we support the Boys and Girls Club. You can find a place in our group for your enjoyment and find a fulfilling activity too. Come Join Us!

It is holiday time and we are very pleased to announce that our Unit 21 team has planned a special **Holiday Celebration** event on December 9th back at the Skagit Golf and Country Club to celebrate the season. For those of you that have been members for a number of years you will recall that this location was a favorite place to have a great meal, to renew old acquaintances and to start our Christmas season. We have booked Kelly Visten and her daughter Susie Pollino for some wonderful musical entertainment!



Susie Pollino

Kelly Visten and Susie Pollino, mother and daughter duo, will be entertaining at our December 9th Holiday Celebration. Both ladies have been involved in many local theater productions as performers and singers. Kelly is one of the founding members of Mama Dirty Skirt and the Kelly and Joe Duo. Now she is the newest member of the Fat Fridays Band currently at Angel of the Winds Casino. Susie performed with the Cantabile Chamber Choir and is producing *Seussical the Musical* coming to the Lincoln Theater December 1st through the 16th.



Kelly Visten

Unit 21 has offered **mini grants** to all school employees in our area from October 16th to the 27th. Members of WSSRA can receive \$200 and non-members \$100. We also made membership forms available for those that would like to join along with their application.

This is always a favorite program for the retiree's as we can feel like we are still a part of a very important time in students lives. We support many great projects in the schools this way. We will be sharing these mini grant projects with you in the next newsletter.

Please check out the notes on your **health insurance** plan. As you will see there are **changes** coming and dates to pay close attention to. There are important contacts listed if you have questions or concerns.

We are back in the schools this fall, giving school staff important information on their retirement options and opportunities. In October Bill DeHon spent some early morning time with the staff at Samish School in the Sedro Woolley School District. The attendees discovered it is important to be informed about the differences in Plan 2 and Plan 3 and to learn about the deferred compensation options and the VEBA program. Some were surprised at the great options of their retirement plan and that it is important to start to plan for their retirement early in their career.

Bill and his team will continue to meet with the Samish staff. Bill will also be offering this same workshop to other schools in the Unit 21 area.



***Don't miss our Holiday Celebration
December 9th
See your invitation inside***



Board Members / Contacts

Co President

Barb Robinson
babsann09@comcast.net

Co President/ Secretary

Diane Visten
dvisten@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Bruce Boyer
bnpboyer@hotmail.com

Correspondence and Historian

Lonnie Keown
lonnie.keown@gmail.com

Financial

Bill DeHon
bjdehon@comcast.net

Board Member / Membership

Kathy Caldwell
kmcald70@gmail.com

Board Member at Large

Joanne Jones
jicicchettijones@outlook.com

Secretary

Diane Visten
dvisten@yahoo.com

Newsletter

Boni Killion
bonikillion@gmail.com

Contact any of the above
individuals for information
about joining the board.

We Welcome New Faces!



Important health insurance notes!

Be sure to pay extra attention to your health insurance benefits during the open enrollment period of November 1st through November 30th. There are plan changes ahead for 2024 and many plan premiums are increasing.

For those that are insured under the PEBB (Public Employees Benefits Board) you will have received an important newsletter with valuable information. This newsletter is called **For Your Benefit** October 23rd edition.

Remember your open enrollment time to make any changes is only November 1st to November 30th.

To see the 2024 premiums visit the PEBB open enrollment webpage at hca.wa.gov/pebb.oe

If you want to change plans be sure to contact your providers (doctors, pharmacies etc)before you make any changes, to be sure that they accept any new carrier that you choose.

For questions about open enrollment send a secure message through support.hca.wa.gov or call 1-800-200-1004 (TRS: 711)

Many members made changes during the last enrollment period. There was some confusion as members were understandably worried that the new carrier's coverage would be as good as the old carrier. Over all each member that made the changes was satisfied. It is wise to check each item in the new plan to be sure it covers your important needs.

On September 26th Ellen Wolfhagen and Jean Bui from the Health Care Authority/ PEBB presented a webinar on 2024 Medicare supplement rate changes and plan options. See the WSSRA website (wssra.org under “webinars”) for a recording of this webinar.

Estate Planning Webinar: Thursday November 9, 2023 9:00 a.m. Via zoom Beau Ruff and Joel Ockey from Cornerstone Strategies in Kennewick will present a webinar on estate planning. Register at WSSRA.ORG, webinars. You need to register ahead so you can join the zoom meeting.

Pre-Retirement Webinars:

The WSSRA sponsored series of pre-retirement webinars were held October 18th and 19th. For those that are interested, these webinars can be viewed at WSSRA.ORG under the webinars site.

Retiree Resources: WA. Dept. of Retirement Systems DRS.WA.GOV
1-800-547-6657.

PEBB and Health Care Authority PEBB.HCA.WA.GOV 1 800-200-1004
Social Security Administration SSA.GOV 1-800-325-0778

Skagit-Island-San Juan School Retiree's Association
is pleased to invite you to our annual

Holiday Celebration

December 9, 2023

Skagit Valley Golf and Country Club!
Back in our favorite place to celebrate!

Punch and a social gathering at 11:30 a.m.
Lunch is served at 12 noon. Cost is \$20.00

Bring in new member with your
reservation and take \$5.00 off your meal!

Menu Choices: Cobb Salad
Chicken Picatta with wild rice
Each served with bread and butter.
Cake for dessert.



*We are excited to have Kelly and Susie
for our musical entertainment!*

Reservations a must!

Make your reservations and choose your meal choice by Monday December 4th
by contacting Diane Visten at 1-360-387-1348 or
via email dvisten@yahoo.com

You can mail checks to Diane or pay at the door.
307 Arrowhead Point Lane, Camano Island, WA 98282.

Door prizes just for fun!



As in the past we will be collecting donations for the local food banks.

Bring nonperishable foods or you can donate money.

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Skagit Island San Juan
WSSRA School Retirees
5024 n324th St NW
Stanwood, WA 98273



Bill De Hon, our financial chair with teachers from Samish School in the Sedro Woolley School District at the October retirement workshop. Christina Henriquez, Kellie Georgio, Andrea Russell were part of the group beginning to plan their future retirement options. They found that it is never too early to make retirement decisions.