



Whatcom Connection

Newsletter for School Retirees of Whatcom County

November 2018

WCSRA

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Please Join Us November 15 for Lunch at Bellingham Golf and Country Club.

November 15 is the week of Veteran's Day. So we especially invite veterans to attend. We will introduce any veterans among those who attend and they may share their memories of their service in the military. If you know a veteran, invite them. Come and visit with your colleagues. We will update you on WSSRA activities. The election will be over and we can discuss the implications for retirees. Also, this will be our last unit meeting for the year. So come out and make it a good one.

Lunch is at 11:30 A.M. There will be a buffet lunch with sandwiches, soup, salad, coffee and small dessert. Cost is \$16.

We would appreciate letting us know if you plan to attend so that the club staff can prepare appropriately. Call

Jeanne Chadwick at 360-354-9919 or email

jegchadwick@gmail.com

Note: If you have not attended one of our meetings before, and you are newly retired, we will buy you lunch!

NEXT Event

November 15

11:30 A.M.

**Bellingham Golf and
Country Club**

**Come and
bring a friend!**



WCSRA Representatives Attend Donor Appreciation Breakfasts.

Richard Anderson represented Whatcom County School Retirees Association at Whatcom Community College Foundation Appreciation Breakfast. Our \$1000 donation was awarded to Rose Adams. Rose was born in South Carolina but now her family has moved to Bellingham. Rose is taking classes pertaining to Early Childhood Development at WCC. Rose spent two years studying at a college in Florida. Now she is planning to earn a Bachelor's Degree when finishes her two years of classes at WCC. Rose presently has a part time position in child care at Unity Church on Telegraph Road. The church is planning to build a child care facility and has offered Rose the position of Director of Child Care, a full time job, when the facility is operational.

David Simonson represented our Retiree unit at Bellingham Technical College Foundation Breakfast. WCSRA's \$1000 Velma Wendt Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Kevin Clarke who is studying Geometric Technology.



Richard Anderson and Rose Adams at WCC

We Have High Hopes

The first priority of the WSSRA Legislative Committee for next year's legislative session is TRS and PERS 1 Pension Recovery. Plan 1 pensions do not have a COLA. There never has been one. But a couple of times the Legislature has granted a small cost of living adjustment to Plan 1 pensioners. The most recent "adjustment" was the last session when Plan 1 was given a 1.5% raise.

There are more than a dozen pension plans in the WA State Pension System. Plan 2 and Plan 3 pensions have a uniform COLA as well as most other plans. TRS and PERS Plan 1 is the only system that has no COLA. Those in Plan 1 are the oldest members and have been retired the longest. Their pensions have lost one-third to one-half their purchasing power. Most Plan 1 pensioners retired when salaries were much lower than today's salaries.

WSSRA plans to work hard to rectify this imbalance, and many legislators have said they support our efforts. But that doesn't necessarily mean legislators will actually vote to give Plan 1 pensions a COLA should a bill actually get as far as a floor vote in the Legislature.

A lot depends on you. Your voice can be powerful when joined with hundreds of others. Have you provided our Legislative Director Peter Deidrick with your email address? Things can happen quickly and when Peter sends out an email alert will you respond immediately? Legislators pay attention when emails start piling up. Silence on your part can be interpreted as satisfaction.

Health Notes

From Harvard Health Letter and University of California
Berkeley Wellness
Submitted by Jo Praetzel, Health Chair

When to be anti-antibiotics

In spite of professional guidelines and educational campaigns to reduce the overprescribing of antibiotics, the problem is still widespread. It's estimated that at least one-third of prescriptions for antibiotics given in U.S. outpatient settings are inappropriate. The biggest misuse: antibiotics given for viral respiratory infections, such as colds and flue. Antibiotics can treat only bacterial infections. Overuse of the drugs contributes to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, which cause an estimated 2 million illnesses and 23,000 deaths in the U.S. each year.

Do urgent care clinics over-prescribe antibiotics?

Urgent care clinics are convenient when you don't feel well and can't see your doctor right away. But a study published online July 16, 2018, by *JAMA Internal Medicine* found that people who go to such clinics may be more likely to be given prescriptions for unnecessary antibiotics. Researchers analyzed 156 million insurance claims from 2014 and found that 46% of people treated at urgent care centers for viral conditions—like a bad cold, the flu, or viral bronchitis—were prescribed antibiotics.

Seeing the same doctor over time, known as continuity of care, is associated with reduced mortality rates. That was the conclusion of an analysis of 22 studies from around the world, published recently in *BMJ Open*. The studies came from nine countries with very different populations and health-care systems and controlled for factors such as age, race, socioeconomic status, chronic health conditions, and insurance coverage.

If you or someone you care for has cognitive problems, take precautions to prevent falls. People with moderate cognitive impairment or dementia are twice as likely to fall as their cognitively healthy same-age counterparts, and they are more likely to end up in a long-term care facility in the aftermath.

Dear Whatcom School Retirees,

I want to thank you on behalf of my students this past year. Your grant money allowed us to partner with a Bellingham kindergarten class. We built friendships by writing emails to each other. Students had opportunities to share cultural experiences and things they like about their school day. Relationships were strengthened when students realized they had many similarities to each other.

In May my class took a field trip to visit their kindergarten friends. I taught a Gfletchy math lesson (problem solving) to the whole group. My students partnered and assisted their "buddy." It was wonderful to see the confidence from some of my reluctant learners while they worked with their younger friend. The kindergartners were happy and engaged and asked us if we could return. Your grant allowed this learning to take place.

Jennifer Jones, Lummi Nation School

I Did Not Speak Out

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

**The United States Holocaust
Memorial Museum**

**WCSRA
P. O. Box 29503
Bellingham WA 98228**

**PRSR STD
U. S. Postage Paid
Bellingham WA
Permit Number 249**

Treasurer's Report

Savings Account \$7565.66
Checking Account \$13,056.66

2017-2018 DUES

State dues \$60.00 Local dues \$24.00
Total \$84.00

Please send Check to:
**WCSRA
Box 29503
Bellingham WA 98228**

Or

Why not try automatic dues deduction?
ADD is just \$7.00 monthly from your
retirement allotment.

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**11:30 A.M.
Thursday, November 15**

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