



# *UNIT 21*

## Skagit-Island-San Juan

School Retirees' Association

October, 2012

### OFFICERS

Co-Presidents: Barbara Robinson  
Diane Visten  
Co-Treasurers: Barbara Landrock  
Joe Best  
Secretary: Joyce Moon

### COMMITTEES

Sunshine: Eloise Stendal  
Newsletter: Joanne Jones  
Health: Joyce Scoll  
Outreach: Reidar Ytgard  
Legislative: Barbara Landrock  
Website: Kathy Reim  
Membership: Harriet Smith  
Grants: Harriet Smith,  
Glenda Hobbs



Some pictures taken in Anacortes at the June Unit 21 meeting and tour of the W.T. Preston.



### Treasurer's Report

Checking	\$3,267.21
Savings	2,016.41

### Welcome New Members

Alan Parker  
 Lamora Parker  
 Eva Pedersen  
 Pamela Robinette

### We Remember

Alice Bowman  
 Sheila Ellis  
 David Fitzgerald,  
 Spouse of Alice  
 James Forbes  
 Jean Hoyt  
 Gerald Little  
 Don Morris  
 Robert Pickering  
 Bill Riggins  
 Peter Stroosma  
 Nancy C. Thompson  
 William M. Thompson,  
 Mount Vernon

### Dates to Remember

October 1 Coordinating Council at Royal Star 10 a.m.  
October 13 Candidates No Host Luncheon/Forum  
 Farmhouse – lunch at noon, speakers begin at 12:45  
November 5 Unit 21 Board Meeting at Royal Star at  
 10 a.m. Lunch provided  
December 5 Holiday Luncheon at Skagit Golf and  
 Country Club  
**Food Bank** – Alger. Bring to October 13 meeting

**PLEASE** – Send us email addresses.

### Income Tax Volunteers Needed

Learn how to prepare tax returns for low and middle income households in the Anacortes, WA area; become a counselor or greeter with us this winter. The literate have some knowledge of tax law and are willing to study tax law and the software we use. Our training series runs October to mid-December, or you can self-study online. VITA also needs greeters for having their taxes prepared. Greeters receive orientation in January. All volunteers work at least on half-day shifts per week from mid-January to mid-April. Contact Joyce Moon (360) 766-6869 or Darci Shields (360)899-5562 or email [anacortesvita@gmail.com](mailto:anacortesvita@gmail.com) if you would like more information or think you would like to join this program.

*Joyce Moon*

### **A Very Busy Summer for the Skagit-Island-San Juan Members:**

On June 18th we met at the NWESD building on the Anacortes waterfront for a short informational meeting. We heard a brief review of the WSSRA State Conference in Spokane from the members attending. Flowers and thanks were presented to our own venerable veterans for their years of dedicated service to our own Unit 21 group. Those honored were Leon and Bonnie Greene, Bill and Eloise Stendal, Harriet Smith, Joanne Jones, Barbara Landrock, Reidar and Millie Ytgard, and Joyce Scoll. Honored also but not attending were Kathy Reim and Glenda Hobbs. Without these special people our group would not exist. We were served a tasty lunch by Gere-a-Deli, then we all trekked down to the docks for a personal tour of the W.T. Preston, the last sternwheeler to work on the Puget Sound. We learned many interesting facts about it and how it helped keep the Skagit River clear of log jams for many years. We have Joyce Scoll to thank for this event.

### **Getting organized**

On July 16th our members met at Padilla Bay Breazeale Interpretive Center in Bay View to plan for the year ahead. We clarified the job descriptions of officers and committee heads. We made plans for important, interesting and fun events. We set our calendar and determined items to be addressed including the newsletter, website, by-laws, and our directory. We enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch provided by our attendees while building a plan for the coming year. The information was presented at our September 17th Board meeting.

***Remember all members are invited to our Board meetings. Lunch is provided.***

### **Wine in the Sun**

Our first annual Wine in the Sun event took place on August 7th at Carpenter Creek Winery in south Mt. Vernon. We had over 40 retirees and actives enjoy fine local wine, music and friendship with former colleagues. New WSSRA President Richard Anderson and Marianne Harvey, our Northwest 1 State Representative, joined us and helped out with our basket drawings. We raised a little money for our grants too. Be sure to put the first Tuesday in August on your calendar for next year's fun summer social event.

### **Our Unit 21 Volunteers**

While I only received a few responses to the Volunteerism Survey, I was surprised by the variety in our volunteering assets. **Laurel (Pruitt) Christiansen** feels her life has really broadened out after retirement. She has spent seven years as a youth officer, one-and-a-half years as a drug and alcohol rehabilitation counselor and some months as an educator/counselor for victims of violence. Now she volunteers in Christian counseling, writes history articles for families and edits a monthly newsletter.

**Glenda Hobbs** is also a busy volunteer, referring to herself as having a "passion for scholarships!" She helps organize and participate with several organizations to honor outstanding recipients. She works with the American Association of University Women to honor the Outstanding Math, Science, and Technology senior girls in our five high schools with a family brunch at the Skagit Golf and Country Club. She works with the First Baptist Church Clarence and Eileen Summers Scholarships Program enlisting and selecting applicants, choosing 11 plus honorees. She also participates in the AAUW annual scholarship program. This year a PHD WSU Vet School student was honored. In PEO she served on the scholarship committee. In WSSRA she is the chairman of the Holiday Luncheon each year, planning the event for over 40 members arranging the food, the entertainment and the publicity. She also serves on the annual WSSRA Unit 21 grant committee that offers grants to active school employees.

We had one gentleman, **Danny Beatty**, respond to our survey. He is using his personal expertise and his creative talents when he works with people in fly tying. He shares his knowledge through fly tying workshops at the Anacortes and Burlington Senior Centers. He has attended fly fishing shows where he demonstrates his skills. He has served as a member of the Advisory Group for the fly fishing collection at WWU. **Jeannette Beatty** volunteers her time and efforts at Fidalgo School.

These members while sharing their knowledge and interests continue to be a vital and active part of our communities.

*Barb Robinson, Co-President*

## Health Notes



### PEBB Medical Plans

Both Medicare and non-Medicare retirees' medical premiums will increase for 2013, while the state's contribution for Medicare retirees' premiums will hold steady at the lesser of \$150 or 50 percent of the monthly premium. There are no benefits or cost-sharing changes for PEBB's Medicare plans in 2013. (Note: The PEBB Board does not vote on benefit changes for Medicare Supplement Plan F, which is regulated by the federal rules. The federal government will release any 2013 changes to Plan F in October.)

Retirees' dental premiums will increase slightly for Uniform Dental Plan, remain the same for Delta Care, and decrease for Willamette Dental Group. The retiree term life insurance premium will also stay at \$6.57 per month in 2013.

No specific dates have been announced for 2013 open enrollment. Usually enrollment begins the end of October and ends November 30. If you are satisfied with your plan, you do not have to reregister. **Remember, if you decide to change to a plan outside of a PEBB plan, you will never be able to apply for one of the PEBB plans again.**

### Wellness

An excellent state website for employees, retirees and family members brings selected resources together to help you make healthy choices is [www.wellness.wa.gov/](http://www.wellness.wa.gov/).

### Uniform Plan \$30 Gift Card

This was offered for members who fill out a fitness questionnaire. Forms had to be sent in to the office by June 30, 2012. There was no mention of continuing the program in 2013.

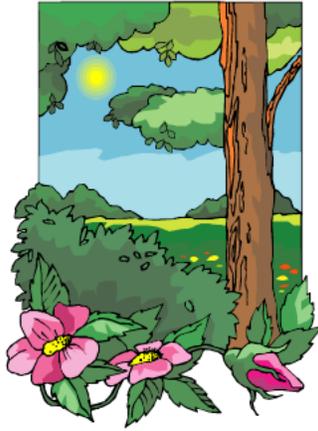
*Joyce Scoll, Health*

### DRS Seminar

The Department of Retirement is holding a seminar on November 3, 2012, in Bellingham. For more information or to register, contact the Seminar Registration line at 1-888-711-6676 or register on line at

<http://fortress.wa.gov/drs/retirementplanning/main.asp>.





MEADOW VIEWS by Kathy Reim

Things are changing here in the meadow. We are going to combine households with our daughter Rachel and her domestic partner Tammy and their two dachshunds. We plan to do this for a year to see if they would like to have this as their home. Taking care of these five acres and this meadow has been my life's dream. It might not be theirs. Secondly, we are going to see if four can live more cheaply than two and if both families can strengthen our financial base. Lastly, we hope it can be fun to be in each other's lives at a time when we are still well and can enjoy the things we love- movies at the Lincoln and barbeques on the deck.

People seem a little concerned about how this will play out for us, and we are having frank conversations. I will be in a house with three devoted football fans which changes the current one-to-one ratio. I have a room set up with only music- no TV. I find myself laughing sometimes that this new arrangement is seen as a hardship. We have two toilets, two showers and a tub, seven sinks, over 500 square feet of space per person, three TVs, three cars and five acres to roam and play. When I think about how I grew up or even more about my parents, we will still have more luxury than they could have pictured. The greatest struggle we have is that we have so much "stuff." Boxes and boxes are going into storage where I am guessing we will forget what is there in spite of my careful labeling and inventory list. Some of you are familiar with this dilemma.

I share this because like a lot of you, I think we are in for a different era and we will either define it as something horrible or something familiar. In other countries multiple generations live together. In this country they once did. My mother-in-law, Opal (96) always had a grandparent living with her as she grew up in Minnesota along with a maiden aunt or bachelor uncle.

Besides getting rid of items we don't need or want, the other challenge will be blending our pet families. Three small dogs and two cats -- I am not sure how that will go. Chablis, the beautiful Siamese (thank you Mark Johnson) rules the outside and Spunker, the rescued tabby, rules the inside. I think the dogs will figure it out. Luckily all of the humans in this plan know the cats are in charge.

And who know- -by this time next year I might start calling movie intermissions half-time? Go Seahawks.



## Candidate Forum

Are you a voter in the 10th, 39th, or 40th district? Do you have questions for the candidates running for state office in those districts? Are you concerned about:

Restoration of our cost of living adjustment as soon as possible?

Restoring the Medicare Eligible Healthcare Subsidy to \$182 per month?

Maintaining the PRS/TRS defined benefit retirement for future school employees?

A constitutional amendment requiring the State to fully fund K-12 education first and pensions immediately thereafter?

Whether or not you have made up your mind about your vote, here is a chance to meet, listen to, and question most of the candidates that represent you in Washington State.

Washington State School Retirees Association, Unit 21, is holding a luncheon/ candidate forum, on October 13, Saturday, at the Farmhouse Restaurant, on Highway 20 and LaConner Whitney Road. It will begin at 12:00 with a buffet luncheon. The cost is \$13 which includes tax and tip. At approximately 12:45, the candidates will give a three-minute talk on one of four concerns important to School Retirees of Washington State.

We are happy to have a total of 16 candidates attending our forum. These include surrogates for both candidates for governor, as well as all the candidates for the 10th district, and most for the 39th and 40th. Dan Matthews, running for Congress from the 2nd District, is the only representative attending among those candidates. While we wish all could come, we understand that they are extremely busy.

Now comes your job! We have secured the speakers, and we need an interested audience to listen and ask questions. A good turnout from Unit 21 is a MUST! Friends and family are more than welcome. Please encourage everyone interested to attend—if not for lunch, then for the forum beginning at 12:45 PM.

Also, an approximate number attending would be appreciated by the restaurant. Please e-mail Diane Visten at [dvisten@wavecable.com](mailto:dvisten@wavecable.com) or phone 360-387-1348 with the number in your party.

Let's make this event a real success! See you on October 13.  
*Diane Visten, Co-President*

## Helpful Tips for Dealing with Spam

1. Don't reply to any emails asking for information. If the spam seems to be coming from a disreputable source, do not follow the unsubscribe directions. This only verifies your true email address.
2. Don't buy anything from a spam email.
3. Treat an email from a charity asking for money as spam. If you believe in the charity, contact them directly.
4. If you can't confirm that the sender is valid, delete the message immediately without opening any attachments.
5. Don't forward chain email messages that state, "Send this on to all of your friends."

*Kathy Reim*

### Astrophysics comes home

I swear that  
our home is filled with black holes:  
spaces in the fabric of the universe  
where matter and light enter  
never to escape.  
This seems a particularly cogent way  
of explaining my frequent  
loss of pens, datebooks, cameras,  
special tools I need for special jobs  
which, without said tools,  
remain undone.  
Certainly, this also explains so well  
mysterious disappearances  
of candy, given or received, and  
remains of cake and pie  
left after guests have gone home.  
Perhaps I should begin immediately  
to pen a treatise on this phenomenon:  
one that will satisfy my wife's doubts  
about the tenability of my theory.  
I must begin immediately lest I disappear  
before I finish....

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**School's back in session—have a great year!**

**WSSRA Unit 21 Meet the Candidates**  
**Farmhouse Restaurant**  
**Saturday, October 13, 2012**  
**12:00 p.m. No Host Lunch**  
**12:45 p.m. Candidate Forum**  
**\$13 per person**  
**RSVP appreciated**

**Guests are welcome**  
**PLEASE JOIN US!**