

The Voice



A Newsletter for Yakima County School Retirees

February 2024

FEBRUARY'S MESSAGE

By Kathy Fletcher



Happy New Year to all of you. May 2024 bring special memories, big and small. I am very pleased to be leading the February meeting. It is always a pleasure to see smiling friends.

A little bit about me - I was born and raised in Yakima and have lived and worked here almost my whole life. Retirement has been lovely mainly because so far I have good health, except for the usual "old age" issues. I have found that 80 is not the new 60! In fact 80 is just plain 80 where clerks call you "honey" and almost everything you once knew is obsolete or hopelessly old fashioned.

Lately I have been doing a lot of reading. Here are some of my recent favorites...

"The Magnificent Life of Marjorie Post" by Allison Pataki

"The Moonshiner's Daughter" by Donna Everhart

"The Second Life of Mirielle West" by Amanda Skendore (about leprosy in the 1920s)

"My Sister's Grave" by Robert Dugoni (excellent detective writer)

"The Housemaid" and "The Perfect Son" by Freida McFadden (psychological mysteries which keep you guessing)

And if you like great character books, Catherine Ryan Hyde is a master. Two of my favorites are "Allie and Bea" and "Have you seen Luis Velez?"

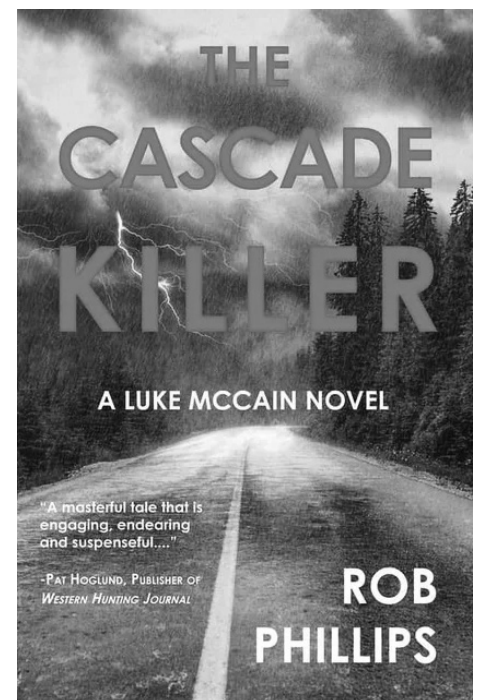
Something to make you smile - The kids text me "plz" which is shorter than please. I text back "no" which is shorter than "yes."

MEET ROB PHILLIPS AT FEBRUARY'S MEETING

Rob Phillips is an award-winning newspaper and magazine writer and the author of the critically acclaimed "Luke McCain mystery series," featuring a fish and wildlife officer who, with the assistance of his faithful yellow Labrador retriever Jack, patrols the mountains, streams, and trails of the Pacific Northwest. Since the beginning of COVID in early 2020, Phillips has written and published seven books, including six novels in the Luke McCain series, along with a book about his life with dogs, titled "A Dog's Life Well Lived."

His first book, "The Cascade Killer," is the all-time best seller at Inklings Bookshop in Yakima, and the series has sold nearly 50,000 copies around the world. Phillip's column, "The Northwest Sportsman," has appeared almost every week for the last 33 years in the Yakima Herald-Republic.

Rob and his wife Terri live in Naches Heights on a very small cherry orchard with one very spoiled Labrador retriever named Bailey





THE VOICE

Board of Directors

Unit Contact

Nick & Kathy Schultz
509 966 9341

Secretary

Linda Trepanier
509 966 7430

Treasurer/Community Service

Carolyn Wilson
509 952 1911

Health Services/Memorials

Lorry Evert-Garvin
509 961 0125

Legislative

Larry Scholl
509 966 0801

Membership

Norma Haney
509 966 6441
Patrick Walsh
509 391 4906

Retirement

Paul Schafer
509 453 2606

Social

Peggy Young
509 453 7250

Historian

Peggy Campbell
509 453 1680

Sunshine

Millie Stenehjem
509 966 3409

Web Coordinator

Sandy Gavin
509 952 9855

Outreach

Jan Saxton
509 658 1527

Welcome/Registration

Jan Saxton
509 658 1527

Coreen Fortin
509 966 2669

Mini-grants

Kathy Schultz
509 966 9341

GENERAL MEETING

When: Monday, February 5, 2024

Where: Englewood Christian Church, 512 N 44th Avenue

Fellowship: 12:30 pm

Coffee/Tea and treats are provided

Program: 1:00 pm

Rob Phillips, book author and outdoor sports writer for The Yakima Herald newspaper, will be discussing his distinguished career during this month's program.

The Following People have signed up to bring:

FOOD

Kathy Fletcher 509 654 0350
Peggy Campbell 509 453 1680
Norma Haney 509 966 6441
Sandy Gavin 509 952 9855
Steve DeLude 509 949 8952

DRAWING PRIZES

Jane Watson 509 833 4289
Kathy Schultz 509 966 9341
Norma Haney 509 966 6441
Sandy Gavin 509 952 0855
Nick Schultz 509 966 9341

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Grandchildren are God’s way of compensating us for growing old.”

**Make sure we have
your proper email**

If you have changed your email address in the last year, please send me a corrected one. Thanks!
Sandy Gavin, sandyg1948@gmail.com

Opinions expressed in **The Voice** are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the view of the YCSRA Board or the editors. Editorial contributions and articles as well as ideas for articles are welcome. The deadline is the 15th of each month. Send information to Kathy Schultz. Co-editors. Kathy Schultz • 509 966 9341 chevvhvn@charter.net Eric Patrick • 509 985 7768 ecpatrick@charter.net

WE SEND OUT WSSRA GREETINGS!

Let's support our members with get well wishes, condolences, thank yous, congratulations, thinking of you and more. Email or call me with names and I'll get the card(s) sent out for you. Email: cmstenehjem@msn.com or 509-966-3409. Leave a message if no one answers.

~ Millie Stenehjem



BITS & PIECES



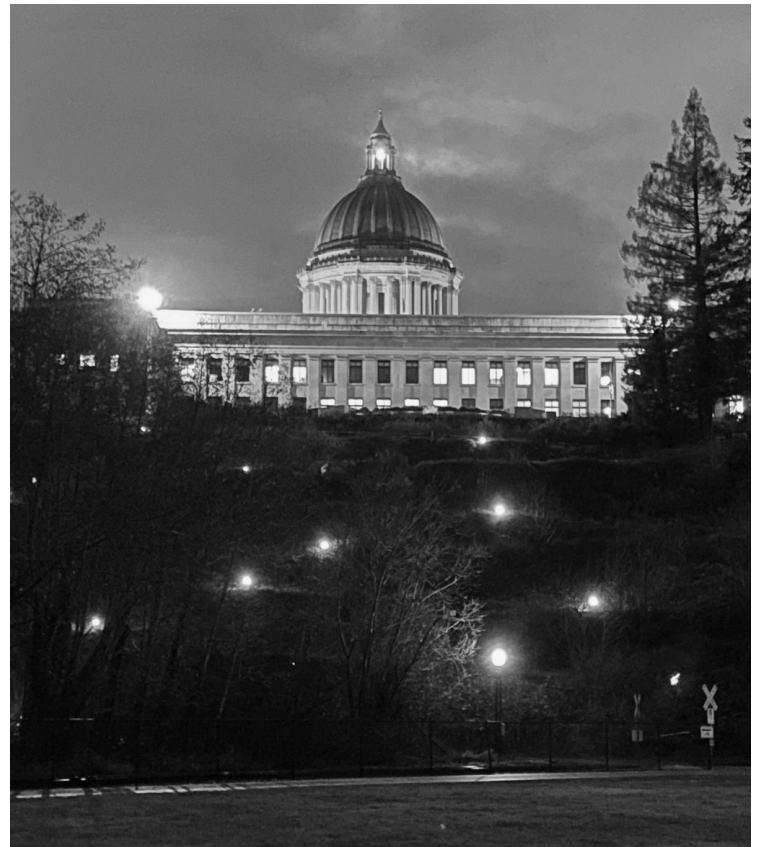
By Peter Diedrick, WSSRA Legislative Coordinator

Here's the latest as of January 15. The 2024 Regular Legislative Session started January 8. This is a short 60-day legislative session and it's moving fast. The first deadline to pass bills out of committee is January 31.

Critical retiree issues are receiving public hearings and legislators' attention. The Plan 1 COLA (HB 1985) and the legislation granting benefits for the full month of death (HB 2013) received public hearings on January 15. WSSRA is pushing for a fast vote so the bills move ahead of the critical deadlines. Legislators are also reviewing proposals from the Governor to lower retiree health costs. The next newsletter will have updates on the committee, and hopefully House floor votes.

A bit of inside baseball. Legislators made a strategic decision NOT to introduce House and Senate companion versions of our retiree priorities this year. Meaning the Plan 1 COLA (HB 1985) MUST pass the Legislature for Plan 1 retirees to get a COLA this year. There's not a backup bill waiting in the wings in case someone drops the ball. That is true for the month of death legislation (HB 2013) as well. The decision to have one bill makes sense for the prime sponsors, but means we need to pass HB 1985 and HB 2013 through all the critical steps by mid-February so both chambers can build the costs into their 2024-2025 budget proposals.

Legislative updates are being posted every Friday on Facebook and our website: www.wssra.org



SOME GOOD NEWS ABOUT INFLATION

New IRS brackets could lower taxes for some. Inflation has hurt lots of people on fixed incomes, but it has also created a potential piece of good news. The money you make this year might be taxed a bit less as federal tax brackets have been adjusted to reflect inflation.

That could mean you may fall into a lower bracket, paying a smaller percentage of taxes on income.

Another change: The standard deduction is \$14,600 for single filers for the 2024 tax year, up from \$13,850 for 2023. The standard deduction for couples filing jointly is \$29,200 in 2024, up from \$27,700. And more good news for older taxpayers: Joint filers can increase the standard deduction by \$1,500 apiece, for a total of \$3,100 if both joint filers are 65-plus. In total, a married couple 65 or older would have a standard deduction of \$32,300.

(AARP Bulletin Jan/Feb 2024 p. 4)





QUESTION OF THE MONTH



What are you looking forward to in 2024?

The 2 trips we have scheduled: 1.Southern Caribbean
2.Galapagos Islands & Equator. ~ **Ken Stenhjem**

Done with the election. ~ **Millie Stenhjem**

Peaceful feelings in these difficult times. My God's got this! ~ **Maureen Scott**

New Grand baby! Family and friend time. ~ **Chris Thier**

Peace, of course! And walking unassisted.
~ **Doris (no last name given)**

Van camping for short and long road trips.
~ **Susan Kaphammer**

More time with my family! ~ **Jan Saxton**

Good Health and fun Travel. ~ **Jane Butler Nix**

Now that my husband has retired, I hope to do more traveling. ~ **Coreen Fortin**

Traveling post Covid. We have signed up for 2 trips through the Harman Center, 1 trip with Road Scholar and a family reunion with cousins in North Dakota.
~ **Kathy Schultz**

Looking forward to our 3 trips. ~ **Nick Schultz**

Paying off our house! ~ **Jeannie Ferguson**

Positive election results! ~ **Barbara Merz**

I am looking forward to more time with my family and traveling with my husband. ~ **Sandy Leavitt**

Visiting my grandchildren in Houston.
~ **Debbie Dougherty**

The year used to begin in September but now it starts in January. I always like new starts. ~ **Candace Dulude**

I'm looking forward to more family time. Fishing and hiking with grandkids. A new year with our bees.
~ **Steve Dulude**

Great Question! Being in harmony on the way. ~ **Anon**

Travel! Morelia & Denmark.
~ **Ulla Whitmont**

"Staying Alive!"
~ **Linda Trepanier**

Peace! ~ **Norman Haney**

A return from alternative reality to that which is self evident. ~ **Robert Swope**

Lots of travel.
~ **Barbara Clark**

Having good health to do the things I love! ~ **Carol Mills**

Less Pandemonium. ~ **Anon**

Long live Bab's sister.
~ **Anon**

Everything! ~ **Lynda Bauer**

December 31! ~ **Anon**

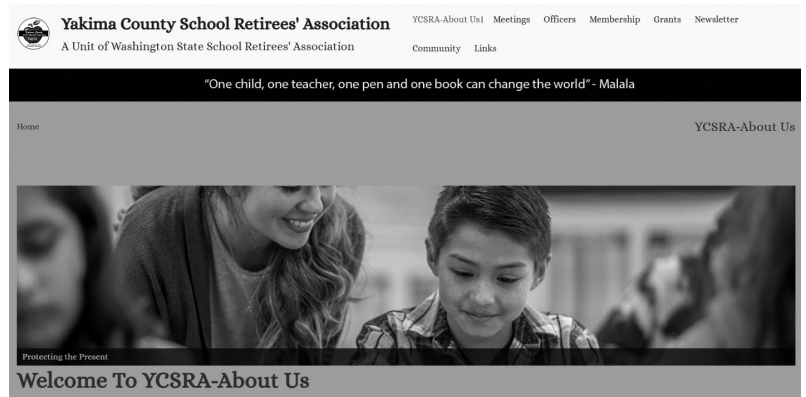




www.yakima-county-sra.org is our new website address.

We are happy to announce that our new website is up and running. Visit the site for:

- Meeting schedules
- Newsletters
- Grant information
- Community service
- Membership information
- Officer slate
- About YCSRA
- Links

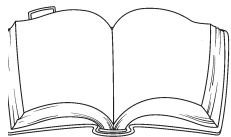


CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP by Kathy Fletcher

Ingredients:

2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts	1/2 teas. olive oil
1/2 teas. minced garlic	1/4 teas. ground cumin
2 cans chicken broth	1 cup chopped onion
1/2 teas. chili powder	1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 cup chunky salsa	1 cup frozen or canned corn kernels
1 can black beans, drained	

Directions: Cut chicken into cubes. Saute in oil. Add garlic and cumin. Mix well. Add broth. Then add onion, chili powder, lemon juice, corn, beans. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for 20-30 minutes. Break up some tortilla chips and put in the soup bowls. Pour soup over chips. Top with grated Monterey Jack cheese and sour cream.



Book Corner

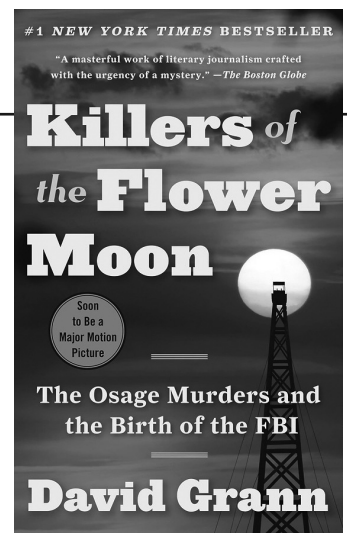
“Killers of the Flower Moon” by David Grann

In the 1920's, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation of Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, they rode in chauffeured cars and lived in mansions.

Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed. Mollie Burkhart watched as her family became a prime target. Her relatives were shot and poisoned. Other Osage were also dying under mysterious circumstances, and many of those who investigated the crimes were themselves murdered. As the death toll rose, the case was taken up by the newly created FBI and its young, secretive director, J. Edgar Hoover.

Struggling to crack the mystery, Hoover turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White who put together an undercover team, including a Native American agent. They infiltrated this last remnant of the Wild West, and together with the Osage began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.

(from the back cover of the book)



H A P P Y

Valentine's Day

PRSRM MKT
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1
Yakima, WA

Yakima County
School Retirees' Association
3261 Lateral B
Wapato, WA 98951

