

# The Voice



A Newsletter for Yakima County School Retirees

February 2025

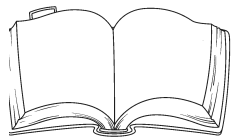
## FEBRUARY'S PROGRAM

*Arranged by Jan Saxton*

Our February program will focus on staying healthy and active. Christa Feldi, Senior Fit instructor from the Y.M.C.A. will be the presenter this month. Christa has been at the Y.M.C.A. for 8 years. She started out as a Zumba instructor for 1 year. When the Senior Fit instructor left to stay home with her baby, Christa took over the position. The Senior Fit program is for those 55 plus, with the average age being about 75. There are some participants who are in their 90's. Christa designed her program to be more rhythm with variable impact. Not only does she focus on core motion, balance and coordination but also on overall wellbeing. Socialization is also a big part of staying healthy and active.

The class is available to all levels of fitness. Some people use the wall for support, a chair, and their wheelchair. Her M/W/F classes can have as many as 100 people. The T/Th classes are smaller with about 50 people. The workouts are varied so a person can work out every day. Many people consider this a daily part of their lives. Y membership may also be included in insurance coverage.

So..... get off the couch and come and join us for a healthy, active, February program.



## Book Corner

Submitted by Jan Saxton

**Hang the Moon** by Jeannette Walls

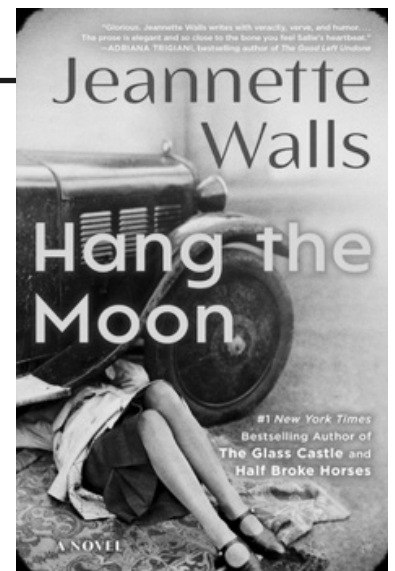
From the **Goodreads** website

Most folk thought Sallie Kincaid was a nobody who'd amount to nothing. Sallie had other plans. Sallie Kincaid is the daughter of the biggest man in a small town, the charismatic Duke Kincaid. Born at the turn of the 20th century into a life of comfort and privilege, Sallie remembers little about her mother who died in a violent argument with the Duke.

By the time she is just eight years old, the Duke has remarried and had a son, Eddie. While Sallie is her father's daughter, sharp-witted and resourceful, Eddie is his mother's son, timid and cerebral. When Sallie tries to teach young Eddie to be more like their father, her daredevil coaching leads to an accident, and Sallie is cast out.

Nine years later, she returns, determined to reclaim her place in the family. That's a lot more complicated than Sallie expected, and she enters a world of conflict and lawlessness. Sallie confronts the secrets and scandals that hide in the shadows of the Big House, navigates the factions in the family and town, and finally comes into her own as a bold sometimes reckless bootlegger.

This novel met with mixed reviews in the book club I belong to. Some enjoyed it and others found it uninspiring. I personally enjoyed **Glass Castles** and **Half Broke Horses** more.





## THE VOICE

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#### Mini-grants

Kathy Schultz  
509 966 9341

# GENERAL MEETING

**When:** Monday, February 3

**Where:** Englewood Christian Church, 511 N 44th Avenue

**Fellowship: 12:30 pm**

Coffee/tea and treats will be provided

**Program: 1:00 pm**

Chair Yoga with Christa Feldi, Senior Fit Supervisor at YMCA



The Following People have signed up to bring:

### REFRESHMENTS

Peggy Young 509 453 7250  
Millie Stenehjem 509 966 3409  
Sandy Gavin 509 952 9855  
Norma Haney 509 961 8616

### DRAWING PRIZES

Peggy Young 509 453 7250  
Chuck Weedon 509 697 8040  
Sue Ryan Osegueda 509 952 3295  
Sheila Wilson 509 969 8981

**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 12th of each month. Send information to Kathy Schultz. Co-editors. Kathy Schultz • 509 966 9341 chevvhvn@icloud.com 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



# INTRODUCING OUR NEW TREASURER

**Ulla Whitmont**, Written by Kathy Fletcher

Our new treasurer, Ulla Whitmont, was born in Copenhagen, Denmark. Growing up, her family was lucky to get a great public housing apartment with two wonderful luxuries, running water and indoor plumbing. However, there was no oven. There was a bakery across the street where they could purchase necessary baked goods with a bonus that at Christmas the baker cooked their Christmas goose!

Ulla earned a Bachelor's Degree and taught school for 3 years. At the age of 25, she decided to come to the United States to enroll in a University of Washington program to earn a degree in school psychology. However, she encountered several hurdles - she had to earn an additional Bachelors Degree before she could start the program because her one from Denmark wasn't accepted. She did that and also earned a Masters Degree. Even with these two new degrees, she could not be hired in public education until she became a citizen. She was able to work at a private counseling service sponsored by the Lutheran Church. She also met her husband at the U of W program.

Carolyn Wilson was the third grade teacher of one of Ulla's children. Carolyn recalled that when Ulla became a citizen, she came to her son's classroom with a beautiful cake decorated with the American flag so that everyone could celebrate and appreciate this most important achievement.



At the age of 50, when her children were getting ready to enter college, Ulla started working in the public schools to help with upcoming college expenses. She drove daily for seven years to Ellensburg working as a school psych and then got a job closer to home in the West Valley School District.

One of Ulla's favorites is jazz. When she was a child, black jazz musicians traveled to Copenhagen to share their talent. She also enjoys reading, knitting, sewing, and traveling. She volunteers at the food bank, teaches citizenship classes, and sews "freedom kits" for women in very poor countries. YCSRA seems like home to her. She knew many people before she became active and truly appreciates the friendly, positive atmosphere.



## CREAM CHEESE POTATO SOUP

*Favorite Recipe by Jan Saxton*

Makes 6 servings, ideal slow cooker size 3 1/2 qt

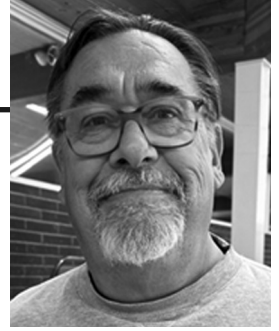
From 'Fix it and Forget It Lightly' by Phyllis Pellman Good

3 C water	1 cup diced ham
5 medium sized potatoes, diced fine	1/2 onion chopped
1 tsp garlic salt	1/2 tsp black pepper
1/2 tsp dill weed	

1. Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker
2. Cover, cook on high for 4 hours, stirring occasionally.
3. Turn to low until ready to serve



# HEALTH MATTERS



Boy, 2025 is here. With it, many of us will be looking to make a few changes that enrich or enhance our lives. Researchers suggest that only 9% of Americans that make resolutions complete them. In fact, research goes on to show that 23% of people quit their resolution by the end of the first week, and 43% quit by the end of January. One of the top resolutions each year has to do with improvement of overall health. For many the desire to “get in shape” is on the top of their resolution list and it is easy to spot these people at the gym. They have their crisp new \$200 cross trainers and a desire to make this year the “one” they meet that goal. One big reason many people fail to meet that goal is they don’t have a plan to help be successful. Any change is hard, and the long road to become more fit starts with baby steps that help make meeting the ongoing milestones much more manageable and enjoyable. Soooooo, put down that triple vanilla breve mocha and let’s hit the gym.

## Where To Go and What Is The Cost?

The Yakima Valley has numerous places where you can try your hand at cardio or strength training. Some offer exercise that is centered around warm water activities like water aerobics and water walking. Most, if not all offer senior discounts and you should inquire if your health insurance or organizations like AARP covers some or all of your membership fees. Some gyms offer discounts through Silver Sneakers or Silver and Fit. If you ask around you probably can get a good recommendation from a friend for a place you feel comfortable with.

## How older adults can get started with exercise

Exercise and physical activity are great for your mental and physical health and help keep you independent as you age. Here are a few things you may want to keep in mind when beginning to exercise.

### Start slowly when beginning exercise.

The key to being successful and safe when beginning a physical activity routine is to build slowly from your current fitness level. Over-exercising can cause injury, which may lead to quitting. A steady rate of progress is the best approach.

### To play it safe and reduce your risk of injury:

- Begin your exercise program slowly with low-intensity exercises.
- Warm up before exercising and cool down afterward.
- Pay attention to your surroundings when exercising outdoors.
- Drink water before, during, and after your workout session, even if you don’t feel thirsty.
- Wear appropriate fitness clothes and shoes for your activity.
- If you have specific health conditions, discuss your exercise and physical activity plan with your health care provider.

## Four questions to ask your doctor about exercise

Are you considering adding exercise to your daily routine or significantly increasing your level of activity? Talk with your doctor about the exercises and physical activities that are best for you. During your appointment, you can ask:

1. What types of exercise would work for me? Your medical history and current activity level will help your doctor recommend exercises that are doable and safe. Your doctor can also help you come up with a plan to gradually increase the intensity or duration of your physical activity. This information might be part of an exercise prescription, which indicates how you should exercise and for how long.

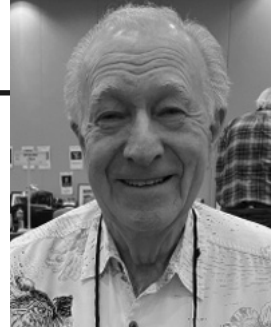
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# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

By Larry Scholl



The 2025 Washington State Legislature begins a new session on Monday, January 13th.

There will be many new legislators as the result of the November elections. Some incumbents were defeated, some incumbents retired, and redistricting created several new positions. In central Washington, the boundary lines in districts 13, 14 and 15 were redrawn to better reflect representation for majority minority populations. Several area legislators found that they no longer lived in the district they had previously represented. The regulations state that a legislator must live in the district they represent. Some of those affected by the redistricting chose to relocate their primary residence to accommodate the regulations. Others chose to “not run” for re-election.

Most of Yakima County is in Legislative Districts 14 and 15. In District 14, Senator Curtis King was returned to the Senate. The new House representatives will be Gloria Mendoza, former city councilperson and city mayor of Grandview and Deb Manjarrez, an accountant and resident of Wapato.

District 15 will be represented by Senator Nicki Torres from the Tri-Cities. Her senate seat was not up for re-election this last November. However, due to redistricting, the location of her primary residency is now in District 8, so when her current term expires, she will have to run for the senate seat in District 8 or change the location of her primary residency to someplace in District 15 so she can seek re-election for the senate in District 15. Are we confused yet? The representatives to the House in District 15 are incumbent, and long time representative, Chris Corry, and back to the House for a second term, will be Representative Jeremie DuFault.

The Senate is made up of 30 Democrats and 19 Republicans. The House is made up of 53 Democrats and 39 Republicans. Although both chambers have Democrat majorities, neither has a veto proof majority. Since Washington also has a Democrat Governor, it is known as a “Trifecta” state, meaning that the state Senate and state House and state Governor are all from the same political party. In Washington, that has been the situation for 18 years.

The “elephant in the room” for this coming session will be dealing with trying to reconcile the costs of maintaining current programs and the projected shortfall of several billions of dollars in state revenues over the next three or four years. Plan 1 TRS retirees will be looking for a permanent fix for the Plan 1 COLA issue or at least another “onetime” cost-of-living adjustment. Currently, Plan 1 is the only state retirement group without an automatic cost-of-living adjustment in their retirement plan. However, legislators will be looking for ways to reduce current spending levels, not increase them. During the COVID 19 event, there was a large infusion of federal money into state coffers to help deal with loss of revenues, employment problems, school funding issues, health care issue, etc. Those monies are now gone but the programs they funded are not gone. That is part of the problem the state is facing and must resolve. The legislature must produce a balanced budget; anticipated spending must match the anticipated income.

*Health Matters continued from previous page.*

- You can “fill” this prescription by yourself or coordinate with a personal trainer or exercise medicine specialist.
2. Are there any exercises or activities I should avoid? Your doctor can make recommendations based on your health history, keeping in mind any recent surgeries or ongoing health conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease. This would be a great time to check with your doctor about any unexplained symptoms you’ve been experiencing, such as chest pain or pressure, joint pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath. Your doctor may recommend postponing exercise until the problem is diagnosed and treated.
  3. How does my health condition affect my ability to exercise? Some health conditions can affect your exercise routine. For example, people with arthritis may need to avoid some types of activity, especially when joints are swollen or inflamed. Those with diabetes may need to adjust their daily schedule, meal plan, or medications when planning their activities. Your doctor can talk with you about any adjustments you need to make to ensure that you get the most out of your new exercise routine.
  4. Is my preventive care up to date? Your doctor can tell you if there are any tests you might need. For example, women over age 65 should be checked regularly for osteoporosis.

*This Health Matters article will be continued in the March Voice*



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