

The Voice



A Newsletter for Yakima County School Retirees

February 2026

CHAIR YOGA / MAT YOGI

Program arranged by Co Presidents for February
Jan Saxton & Coreen Fortin

Our February program will be Chair Yoga / Mat Yogi with Cindy Chartier. Chair Yoga is a modified form of yoga that is practiced while seated or using a chair for support, making it more accessible to individuals with mobility limitations.



Cindy began her practice of yoga in the 1980s and felt that it would become very popular. She began teaching yoga in 2004 and has taught students from 2 years old to 92 years old. Cindy has taught all types of classes, including family yoga, private groups, and classes on Zoom. At one time, she taught 25 different classes. Her training includes many different styles of yoga.

Cindy is currently teaching at The Yoga Collective on Wednesdays, and at Selah Covenant Church on Tuesdays at 11:30 and Thursdays at 10:00. I stopped by to interview Cindy in Selah at the Covenant Church, and the other class members were very welcoming. Her students pay by donation, which is usually about \$5.00.

I am excited to pursue Chair Yoga further. Chair Yoga can help improve strength and maintain muscle mass while also increasing flexibility.



Jan Saxton



Coreen Fortin

HOW DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE 'THE VOICE'?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING HOW YOU RECEIVE "THE VOICE"

If you want to continue to receive The Voice through US mail you don't have to do anything. Many of our readers have requested that "The Voice" be emailed rather than sent through the US mail. Beginning with the February 2026 issue that will be an option.

YOU must be certain that Sandy Gavin has your current email address:

sandyg1948@gmail.com

Those receiving The Voice by email will receive it from a different email than previously. (newsletter@yakima-county-sra.org) So check your spam if it doesn't arrive.

If you wish to receive the paper copy AND email, be sure to let Sandy Gavin know. Our webmaster, Jon Klarich, is working on this. Be Patient as we do our best to make this happen.





THE VOICE

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Mini-grants

Linda Sumner
509 248 1875

GENERAL MEETING

When: Monday, February 2, 2026

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/ Mat Yogi with Cindy Chartier

The Following People have signed up to bring:

REFRESHMENTS

Norma Haney 509 961 8615
Peggy Young 509 953 7250
Chuck Weedon 509 697 8040
Susan Martin 509 509 952
Kathy Schultz 509 901 2148

DRAWING PRIZES

Norma Haney 509 961 8615
Larry Scholl 509 674 9352
Chuck Weedon 509 697 8040
Carol Mills 509 307 2060
Ulla Whitmont 509 260 0192

If you want your issue of 'The Voice' delivered by e-mail, YOU must be certain that Sandy Gavin has your current email address:

sandyg1948@gmail.com



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.

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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



MINI-GRANT RECIPIENTS

Yakima County School Retirees' Association Mini-grant List for 2025

East Valley School District

Rhonda Boyle
Trina Locke
Alyssa Drader

School

East Valley Elementary
Moxee Elementary
East Valley High School

Toppenish School District

Kirsten Mulvaney

Toppenish High School

Zillah School District

Caren Moritz

Hilton Elementary

Granger School District

Melissa Gonzalez

Granger Middle School

Highland School District

Jackie Panattoni
Brandon Jensen
Gretchen Vachon
Patrick Hazen
Megan Jacobson
Teresa Brooks

Tieton Elementary
Tieton Elementary
Highland Middle School
Highland High School
Highland High School
Highland High School

Yakima School District

Suki Covell
Susan Harper
Ana Montemayor
Joe Rodriguez
Nichola Hill
Jennifer Malwitz
Ceri Callan
Jennifer Jackson
Chris Palmateer
Deanna Quenzer
Laurie Sevigny
Julie McGregor
Teresa Blondin

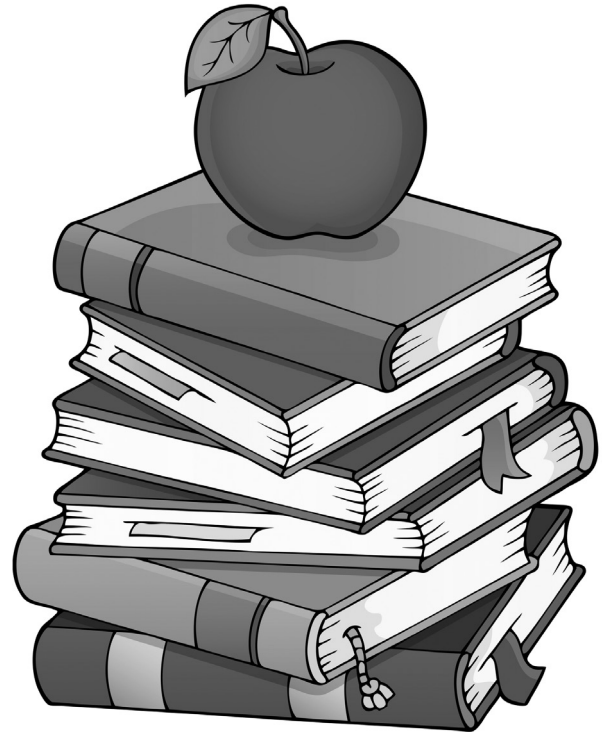
McClure Elementary
Stanton Academy
Franklin Middle School
Franklin Middle School
Robertson Elementary
Robertson Elementary
Robertson Elementary
Robertson Elementary
Nob Hill Elementary
Nob Hill Elementary
Adams Elementary
Whitney Elementary
Whitney Elementary

Private School

Denise Copeland

St. John Kronstadt Orthodox

Total of 26 Grants, 17 schools across 6 Districts plus 1 private school



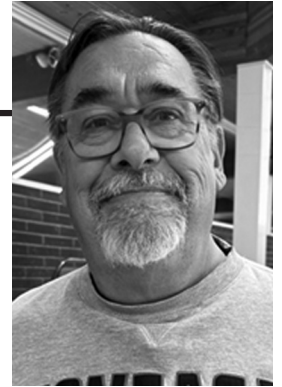
Congratulations
to all our recipients!

Happy Valentine's Day



HEALTH MATTERS

By John Osegueda



Christmas and the New Year are well in the rearview mirror, and it seems like the shorter days and even longer nights are here to stay. For many people, there is a vague sense of not feeling so great this time of year, without really understanding its origin.

This feeling is often called malaise, which is French for “discomfort” or “unease.” You may see your doctor and complain of weakness, fatigue, or just not feeling good and “coming down with something.” Malaise can vary in intensity, and people often put it off as being tired or stressed. However, if the feeling persists and you can’t seem to shake it, it may be something worth looking into and addressing.

Some common causes of malaise include simple infections, chronic health conditions, mental health concerns, medications, nutritional deficiencies, sleep disorders, or lifestyle factors. Tackling the underlying causes begins with pinpointing the root cause. You may need to consult your doctor, who can conduct a thorough physical exam. If you have a simple infection, it can often be addressed with medication. If you suffer from a chronic disease, reviewing your prescriptions may help determine whether unintended side effects are contributing to how you feel.

Lifestyle changes may be another way to overcome malaise. Starting a new exercise regimen can help boost energy levels, and starting a new hobby may help break the cycle.

Here are some ways to address malaise:

- Improve your diet and add supplements if needed
- Stay hydrated
- Regular exercise can boost energy levels
- Good sleep is essential. Aim for 7–8 hours a night
- Manage stress
- Monitor alcohol consumption and smoking

Finally, make a commitment to make needed changes. Here is to a happy and healthy 2026!



PRE-RETIREMENT ZOOM WEBINARS

SPONSORED BY THE WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREES’ ASSOCIATION

Certificated and Classified Employees: If you are within 1-5 years of retirement, you will want to attend these (no fee) virtual webinars to learn about your retirement plans (Plan 2 or Plan 3), medical/dental options, sick leave buyout (VEBA), Social Security options, and Medicare.

Please fill out the registration form here: WWW.WSSRA.ORG

DATE: MARCH 9, 2026 TIME: 5:00 PM

Topic: DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS & HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY/PEBB

DATE: MARCH 10, 2026 TIME: 5:00 PM

Topics: SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDICARE & VEBA





MEMBERSHIP MESSAGE

By Patrick Walsh



Dear YCSRA members,

We have entered another calendar year and another semester in the school year. For members who are still in the classrooms and hallways, those of us who are retired are cognizant of your dedication and hard work and send you our best wishes for happiness and success through the remainder of the school year. Please remember that your work is essential to a healthy society and democracy.

The latest Membership Compilation (January 2, 2026) shows membership in Yakima County to be 1,463. This is one more than the count for last month and seven fewer than at the same time one year ago. The loss is largely the result of non-retired members leaving a school district or retired members passing.

In this school year, the Yakima County Association has awarded a total of \$11,977 toward 26 mini-grants, ranging from \$270 to \$500 each. The importance of these grants should not be underestimated. They may mean an important stimulus toward success versus failure for many students. The mini-grants are just one of the good things the Association does each year. Please, when you have the opportunity, encourage a friend or colleague to join.

Joining is easy, through the website (yakima-county-sra.org) or by contacting me at 509-391-4906 or patwalsh057@gmail.com.

There are no contracts, and the association is nonpartisan. Finally, make it a commitment to make needed changes. Here is to a happy and healthy 2026!



Favorite Recipes from Our Members

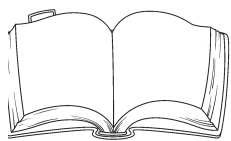
HEARTY ITALIAN SAUSAGE SOUP

From the Kitchen of Jan Saxton

What You Need!

- 1lb. Italian sausage (bulk or casings removed)
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1 can (15oz.) cannellini beans, rinsed
- 1 can (14.5 oz) stewed tomatoes, undrained
- 1-1/2 cups of baby spinach leaves
- 1 onion chopped
- 2 cans (14.5 oz) chicken broth
- 1 soup can water
- 1 cup rotini pasta, uncooked

Make It! Cook sausage, onions and garlic in large saucepan for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add next 4 ingredients. Bring to boil. Stir in pasta; cook 8 minutes or until tender, remove from heat. Stir in spinach. Cover and let stand 5 minutes.



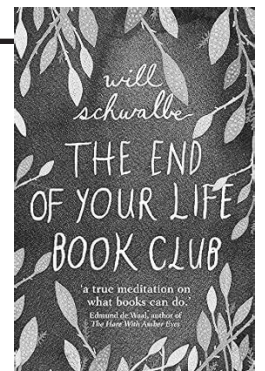
Book Corner

“The End of Your Life Book Club” by Will Schwalbe. Submitted by Jan Saxton

Mary Anne Schwalbe is waiting for her chemotherapy treatments when Will casually asks her what she’s reading. The conversation they have grows into a tradition: soon they are reading the same books so they can have something to talk about in the hospital waiting room. The ones they choose range from classic to popular, from fantastic to spiritual, and we hear their passion for reading and their love for each other in their intimate and searching discussions.

A profoundly moving testament to the power of love between a child and parent, and the power of reading in our lives.

I read this book in the book club I belong to. It really spoke to me because, like Will, I had such a wonderful mom. She was the one who modeled the love of reading for me. I have the fondest memories of her reading to my sister and I when we were little.



HERITAGE UNIVERSITY REQUEST

My name is Dr. Halle Weimar, and I am the Project Coordinator for the SAGE program, a National Science Foundation–funded initiative at Heritage University in Toppenish, Washington. The goal of SAGE is to increase the retention and success of students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors.

One of the ways we support our students is by offering skilled tutors and mentors. I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to share this opportunity with members of your association who may be interested

Tutors set twice-weekly, two-hour drop-in office hours over Zoom, where students can receive academic support. Our areas of greatest need are chemistry, physics, and middle- and high-school-level math. Many tutors also choose to serve as mentors by offering guidance on topics such as time management, effective study strategies, and applying for jobs or internships.

Tutors/mentors are engaged as independent contractors and are compensated at a rate of \$20 per hour. We believe this opportunity may be a good fit for retired teachers who enjoy working with students and supporting their academic success.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to provide additional details or answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Halle Weimar, PhD (she/her/hers)

NSF SAGE Project Coordinator, College of Arts & Sciences

3240 Fort Road, Toppenish, WA 98948

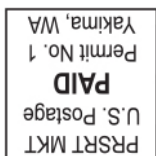
Office: (509) 865-8541 (Internal Ext. 2342) Cell: (509) 987-7153

heritage.edu

Yakmumamí Tíichám

(The land of the Yakama People).

We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the homeland and the first peoples who have stewarded it from time immemorial.



Yakima County
School Retirees' Association
4708 Fechter Rd
Yakima, WA 98908

