

The Voice



A Newsletter for Yakima County School Retirees

March 2026

STEPHANIE KING: AWARD WINNING EDUCATOR DOING EXCEPTIONAL THINGS

Program arranged by March president, Patrick Walsh

Introducing Stephanie King, English teacher at Granger High School.

Stephanie was raised in Westport on Gray's Harbor. She was an athlete in high school, participating in soccer, track, and basketball. Stephanie's parents were teachers, and her older brother is a teacher. She graduated from Central Washington University with a degree in English and Language Arts. She has two daughters who attend elementary school in Granger. Stephanie is the girls' soccer coach at Granger Middle School and High School. She is also a volunteer coach at the elementary school.

Stephanie has been instrumental in bringing University of Washington college credit classes to the Granger School District. Students in her *UW in the High School* English Composition 131 class became published authors through the national *We Are America Project*. The published paperback is titled *We Are America Granger: Voice of the Nation's Future*. Stephanie's English class has also partnered with the *Sunnyside Sun* newspaper, with students providing stories about issues and events at Granger High School. Stephanie has secured over

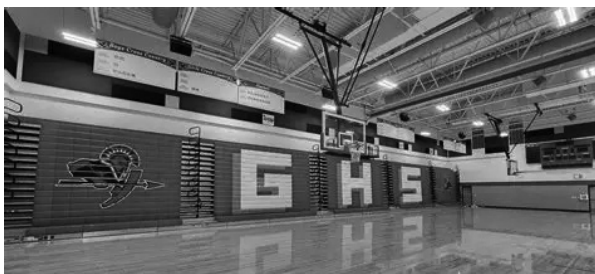
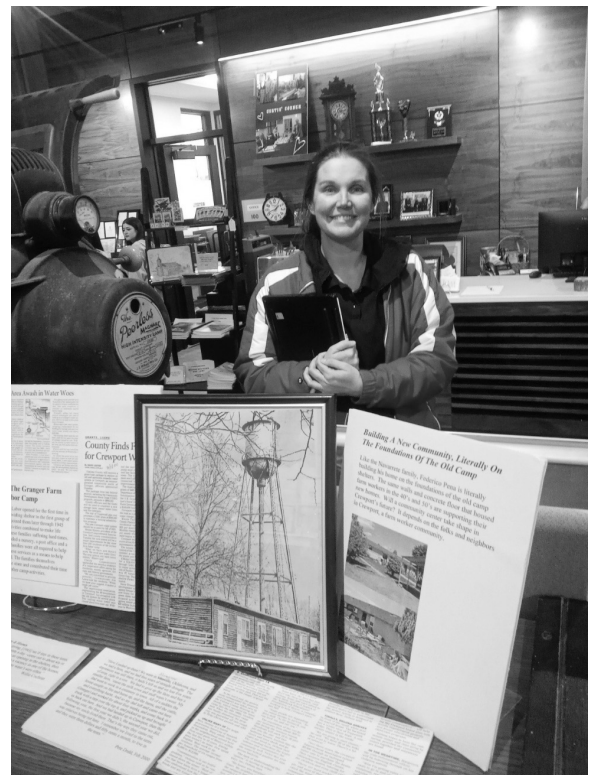
\$50,000 in grants for science, athletics, and STEM programs; mentored new educators; served as a teacher union leader; and facilitated professional development nationwide. Among the grants received was one to help fund an astronomical observatory for the Granger School District.

Stephanie has been honored by the *National Education Association Foundation* with the 2026 Horace Mann Award for Teacher Excellence. She is one of only five public school educators nationwide to receive

this award. Stephanie was honored at the *NEA Foundation Salute to Excellence in Education Gala* on February 13 in Washington, D.C., and received a \$10,000 award.

Stephanie was chosen as one of fifty finalists (from thousands around the world) for the **Global Teacher Prize**, which has been compared to a Nobel Prize for teaching. The Global Teacher Prize is an annual \$1 million award by the **Varkey Foundation** given to a teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession. Nominees number in the thousands and are from 127 countries. In January, she traveled to Dubai to be considered for the honor.

But the best thing about Stephanie is her pleasant, optimistic personality. She has agreed to join us at our March general meeting to share some of her ambitious, exciting educational experiences and initiatives. Thank you, Stephanie!





THE VOICE

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GENERAL MEETING

When: Monday, March 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

Stephanie King:

Doing Exceptional Things - she will share some of her ambitions, exciting educational experiences and initiatives.

The Following People have signed up to bring:

REFRESHMENTS

Jane Butler Nix 509 985 9942
Debbie Dougherty 509 594 5271
Layne Bezzo 360 708 7975
Paul Schafer 509 453 2626
Ulla Whitmont 509 260 0192

DRAWING PRIZES

Jane Butler Nix 509 985 9942
Debbie Dougherty 509 594 5271
Sheila Wilson 509 966 8981
Linda Sumner 509 248 1873
Kathy Schultz 509 966 9341

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

The newsletter will come from newsletter@yakima-county-sra.org



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 chevyhvn@icloud.com Sue Ryan-Osegueda • 509 895 4231 yakavegas@gmail.com Design. 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



MARCH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Larry Scholl

The Washington State Legislature is at the halfway point in this short 60-day session. Bills that have not advanced out of committee are technically dead for this session. HB 1474, a one-time COLA proposal, was our big hope for this session. Unfortunately, it appears to be stuck in House Appropriations, likely due to leadership’s unwillingness to advance it. It seems that our chances for a COLA this session are next to zero.

To our surprise, the Senate brought back a COLA bill that was proposed last session but went nowhere. The bill, SB 5862, sponsored by Senator Dozier, quickly gained momentum,



getting a hearing on February 5 and was moved on to Senate Rules. It must be “pulled” from the Rules Committee to enable it to be advanced to the Senate floor for a vote. SB 5862, a one-time COLA of 3%, needs some minor amendments before a vote can be taken on the floor. If SB 5862 receives a favorable vote on the Senate floor, it will then be sent to the House Appropriations Committee, and the process starts all over again. Keep your fingers crossed. The House Appropriations Committee is where the Senate’s permanent COLA bill died last session, and HB 1474 appears dead this session.



Complicating the whole budgeting process is the statement by Governor Ferguson stating that there will be no new money budgeted this session because the projected future revenues are about \$3 billion less than the money needed to fund already budgeted programs. To fund a 3% COLA will require some creative mathematics.

Never fear, the legislators are good at finding money that isn’t there. Please stay alert for URGENT CALLS TO ACTION. Please respond quickly if you see an alert. During a short session, “minutes” are sometimes critical.

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



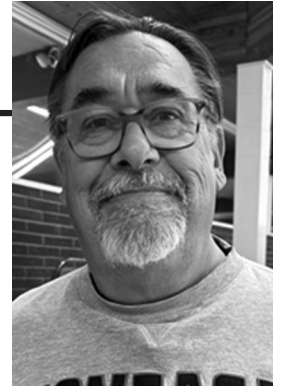


HEALTH MATTERS

By John Osegueda

For many of us of a certain age, we spent significant time under the watchful eye of a 13-inch cathode ray tube during our early years.

Besides being invited into many ideal American homes via the television, we were also indoctrinated at a very young age to the power of advertising. I enjoyed the astronaut lifestyle with a tall, refreshing glass of Tang. I can still imagine myself running faster and jumping higher in my PF Flyers. Those astonishing feats were only accomplished with the help of my Flintstones Chewables. With a Barney or a Fred working their nutritional magic, I was unstoppable.



Fast forward to my 2026 kitchen table. It is stocked with various bottles of vitamins.

Under the close (and suspicious) eye of my wife, I undertake a daily regimen of vitamins. While I miss the chalky taste of Bamm-Bamm, I am resigned to the fact that I am doing this “for my own good.” Still, I wonder how each of these lettered pills benefits my health. So this month I have for you “Vitamins from A to Z,” sharing the ins and outs of these supplements. Enjoy!

Vitamin A. Supports vision, immune health, and red blood cell production. Found in orange fruits and vegetables, leafy greens, dairy, and seafood — but too much can harm your liver.

Vitamin B1 (Thiamin). Helps turn food into energy and supports brain function. Found in legumes, pork, seeds, and whole grains.

Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin). Supports cell function and energy production. Found in fortified grains, eggs, milk, and green vegetables.

Vitamin B3 (Niacin). Helps convert food into energy and supports skin and cholesterol health. Found in tuna, poultry, lean meats, mushrooms, and peanuts.

Vitamin B6. Plays a role in over 100 body reactions and may support brain health. Found in vegetables, bananas, legumes, fish, and poultry.

Vitamin B12. Essential for energy production and red blood cell formation. Found in eggs, fortified cereals, and animal products.

Vitamin C. Supports immunity and tissue growth and helps you stay hydrated when sick. Found in citrus, peppers, berries, broccoli, and leafy greens.

Calcium. Builds strong bones and teeth and supports muscle function, including the heart. Found in dairy products and leafy greens.

Chromium. A trace mineral that may help regulate blood sugar. Most people get enough from whole foods; weight-loss claims lack evidence.

Vitamin D. Strengthens bones, supports immunity, and aids nerve function. Sunlight, fatty fish, egg yolks, and

fortified milk are good sources.

Vitamin E. An antioxidant that protects cells and supports circulation. Found in nuts, seeds, vegetable oils, and greens.

Folic Acid. Critical for DNA production and preventing birth defects. Found in leafy greens, legumes, asparagus, and citrus fruits.

Vitamin K. Necessary for blood clotting and bone health. Found in leafy greens; important to monitor if taking blood thinners.

Iodine. Supports thyroid function and metabolism. Found in iodized salt, fish, and seaweed.

Iron. Essential for healthy red blood cells and oxygen transport. Found in beans, spinach, liver, oysters, and fortified cereals.

Magnesium. Supports muscle and heart function, blood sugar control, and energy production. Found in nuts, seeds, spinach, and whole grains.

Potassium. Helps regulate blood pressure and heart function. Found in leafy greens, melons, carrots, and tomatoes.

Selenium. Supports thyroid health and immunity. Found in meats, eggs, bread, and Brazil nuts (in moderation).

Zinc. Supports immune health, wound healing, and taste and smell. Found in seeds, legumes, oysters, beef, and pork.

Please remember:

- Consult a professional if you have further questions or concerns.
- Vitamin C is NOT chocolate or caffeine, no matter what we might wish!

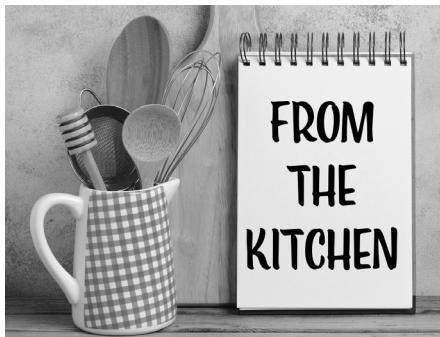


MINI-GRANT WINNERS

By Linda Sumner, Mini-Grant Coordinator

The Yakima School District Board of Directors recently honored the 13 YSD mini-grant recipients who received a total of \$6,256 for their projects funded by the Yakima County School Retirees.

Pictured are two of the winners, Suki Covell (on the left) and Jennifer Malwitz. Mrs. Covell at McClure Elementary was awarded a mini-grant for a Taproot Theater assembly for the entire school. Mrs. Jennifer Malwitz at Robertson Elementary is using her mini-grant for STEAM watercolor art supplies.



Favorite Recipes from Our Members

CORNED BEEF HASH

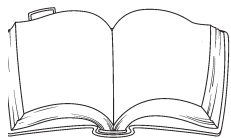
A feel good meal. From the kitchen of Patrick and Melissa Walsh.

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 5 medium potatoes | 1 mild onion |
| 3 tablespoons oil | 1 can of corned beef |
| Salt and pepper to taste | |

Directions:

1. Peel potatoes, cut into fourths and boil. (Do this ahead of time.)
2. Chop onion and sauté with oil in frying pan. Cook until lightly brown and translucent.
3. Shred corned beef into small pieces and add to onions. Stir well and cook for a few minutes.
4. Cut cooked potatoes into small pieces and add to the corned beef/onion mix.
5. Cook and brown for about 8 minutes.
6. Serve under fried eggs.

Follow with some home canned peaches!

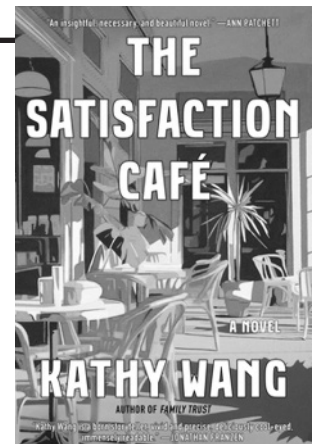


Book Corner

The Satisfaction Café by Kathy Wang. **Book Review, by Melissa Walsh**

Melissa is the wife of member Patrick Walsh. She is much smarter than Patrick and has an extensive knowledge of contemporary books. She consumes audiobooks by the dozens. Here is what she has to say about **The Satisfaction Café**.

I am always on the lookout for an interesting novel. This book was recommended on PBS by a librarian, who gave it a glowing endorsement. I really enjoyed the story because it explores human connections at various stages of life, the joy and loneliness that come with age, and how we navigate them.



THE LUPINE SOCIETY OF READERS



Last April, two representatives of the Lupine Society came to our monthly meeting and shared their mission, which is to encourage the love of reading by planting the seeds of reading with books. The Society provides books for schools, working with teachers and administrators, to get books into the hands of children. Though we are no longer in the classroom, our group can continue to share our love of reading with the next generation. At each meeting until May, a box will be at the church for donations of gently used books, for children of all ages. Similar to the children's book, *Miss Rumphuis*, who sought to make the world beautiful by planting flowers, we will be planting the seeds of reading. Any questions, please contact Sue Ryan Osegueda, her email is yakavegas@gmail.com.

YCSRA AUDIT

By Ulla Whitmont -Treasurer

The YCSRA audit was completed using the guide lines from WSSRA. Rick Gagnier, retired career accountant, guided the team consisting of Kathy and Nick Schultz and Ulla Whitmont, treasurer. Hours were spent reviewing records from the last twenty years. Records were sorted according to the retention schedule. Some records were disposed of, some were archived. The important records were compiled in a three ring binder available to the association members at any time. In addition, the record keeping was transferred to electronic records available upon request. A system of checks and balances was implemented. An audit will take place annually and when there is a change of treasurer.

