

**April
2026**



SAREA HIGHLIGHTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

BUNCO FUN DAY



DATE - Wednesday, April 29th

TIME - 11:00 - 2:00

PLACE - Talbot Center at ESD 101 - 4202 S. Regal 99223

Be our guests for a great day of BUNCO! Prizes for the winners and appetizers for all!! Come say hello to old friends and meet new ones. Fun and laughter guaranteed!!! Bring new friends, especially those who would like to join SAREA. Our treat!

Please let **Char** know if you can join us so we have plenty of food, prizes and games.

Text, call or leave a voicemail at 509-270-6858 by Monday, April 27th.

SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON

DATE - Wednesday, May 20th

TIME - 11:30 - 2:30

PLACE - CenterPlace at 2426 N. Discovery Pl, Spokane Valley 99216

COST - \$30 Cash and checks will be accepted at the door.

We are honored to have LaRay Wiley, founder of the Salish School in Spokane, speak in her capacity as a teacher, board member and Elder-Linguist at the Salish School.

New or gently used children's books will be collected and delivered to our area schools.

SAREA's MARCH GENERAL MEETING

Highlights

SAREA held a General Meeting at ESD 101 on Wednesday, March 11th. Kay Tomlinson, the Speakers Bureau Lead for AARP WA, gave a current and informative presentation titled, "AI 101: Artificial intelligence and Fraud" via ZOOM, from Seattle. Debbie Ryan and Jan Hartman supported Kay by handing out informative pamphlets our members could take home.

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A few of the highlights included but not limited to;

- * Do not answer a phone number you don't know. If it is important, they will leave a message, and you can call them back. Did you know anyone can pay five dollars to have any name show up on your caller ID?
- * Do not give out ANY personal information on the phone, no matter how convincing they sound. Hang up and call the company yourself by looking the number up. Do not call the number they give you.
- * Do not argue with the voice on the other end or think you can outsmart them. Most likely, you aren't talking to a real person, but an AI-generated voice. Just hang up.
- * Red flags in Romance scams include a) Wanting to leave the dating site immediately and use personal email or instant messaging. b) Professes love too quickly. c) Claims to be from the US but is traveling or working overseas. d) Plans to visit but cancels at the last minute because of a traumatic event or business deal gone sour. e) Asks for money.
- * Contact AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline at 1-877-908-3360.
- * Freeze your Social Security so new accounts or large purchases cannot be made in your name.
- * The Police/Sheriff Departments, courthouse, Medicare, Social Security, bank or Federal Agencies will not contact you by phone. If you are unsure, call the agency yourself. Do not send crypto currency, money or gift cards.
- * AI can mimic any voice. Have a code word with family members and stress that they cannot share it with anyone. That way if you hear your loved one who is crying and appears to be in trouble, begging for help and money, just ask them what the code word is. If they don't know it, hang up and call the police.

Scholarships

Don Kackman organized the Scholarship Committee Meeting via ZOOM. We had twenty-seven high school seniors going into education, apply for scholarships. Their stories and accomplishments were so inspiring! The State awarded one \$2500 Washington State School Retiree's Foundation Scholarship and two \$900 Robert J. Handy Scholarships, renewable for four years. SAREA gave one \$1,500, two \$1,000 scholarships, and two \$1,000 Robert J. Handy supplemental scholarships to be used the first year.

A big thank you to Don Kackman and the Scholarship Committee for all of their hard work and the heart they showed for our future educators.

Recruiting new members

Bring a prospective member to our events. If they join SAREA, they will receive a \$20 Starbucks gift card.

***If you joined SAREA in 2026, you can pick up your **SAREA 2026 DIRECTORY** at any of our meetings.

Washington State Legislature

Dear WSSRA Members,

We have good news to share! On Wednesday morning, the Washington State Legislature released its final negotiated budget. **The budget maintains the current funding level for the PEBB Medicare benefit**, which is received by all retirees who purchase Medicare supplemental insurance through the Public Employees Benefits Board. This is a major victory, as the budget that the Senate proposed last month would have reduced this benefit, substantially increasing health care costs for retirees.

The budget also incorporates Substitute Senate Bill 5862, which will provide a one-time 3% COLA to TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees not to exceed \$110 per month. TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees will see their monthly pension amounts increase at the end of July 2026. All other state-managed pension plans automatically receive COLAs every July. While SSB 5862 was funded in the Senate's proposed budget, it was not funded in the House's proposed budget, and getting it included in the final budget is another big win for retirees.

On Thursday, the negotiated budget will be subject to a final vote in both the House and the Senate, with no amendments allowed. It is expected to pass both chambers. It will then go to the Governor, who will have until April 4 to sign it.

Thank you for supporting WSSRA and participating in our advocacy. You helped make this result possible.

With gratitude,

Emmett Mills
Legislative Coordinator



WSSRA CONVENTION
Great Wolf Lodge
Grand Mound, Washington
June 8-10, 2026

We will have an opportunity to connect with our colleagues around the state. I hope you will consider joining our local members to renew or make new friendships. There will be time to celebrate with our scholarship winners as well as become more aware of using Artificial Intelligence, Legacy Downsizing, Elder Law and other benefits of being part of WSSRA.

A majority of WSSRA's Member's expenses will be paid. Hotel room and meals at the convention are paid as well as 1 meal reimbursed in transit each way from the convention. (Transportation mileage paid for 2 delegates in one car/or ½ _paid for 1 delegate per car). Spouses that are not members will pay for their own meals if they plan to eat with you. **Please request a registration form from me as soon as possible. There may be a limited number of slots available.**

Thank you for your continued membership, promoting the work of improved retirement legislation, medical benefits, general welfare of our fellow retirees, as well as providing mini-grants to active teachers, and scholarships to future teachers.

Brad Beal
President (SAREA)
509-466-3561



Two Mini Grant Recipients Thank SAREA



Thank you so much for the new bench for our fitness room. Snapped a picture so you can see how great it is.

Dear Members of the Spokane Area Retired Educator's Association,

Thank you again for your generous \$250 grant in support of the Mead High School Jewelry & Metals classes. I am incredibly grateful for your investment in Mead students and more specifically, the Jewelry & Metals program.

With your grant, we were able to purchase rolling mill texture plates, which have been an amazing addition to the classroom. These plates allow students to imprint unique textures directly into their metal, opening up new creative possibilities and helping them better understand surface design in jewelry making.

We purchased the texture plates from a small jewelry supply company called Twisted Turtle in Wisconsin. Thanks to your support, Twisted Turtle graciously matched the grant, allowing us to receive a total of 26 new texture plates. The generosity from SAREA & Twisted Turtle greatly expanded the range of textures available to students and doubled the impact of your grant.

My students have been having a blast learning how to use this new tool, and we are excited to incorporate texture into many future projects. These texture plates are durable, versatile, and will last for many years, creating a lasting impact on the Mead High School Jewelry & Metals program and future students who take the class.

Thank you again for supporting arts education and helping provide meaningful, hands-on learning experiences for our students

Mike Haynes

Jewelry & Metals/Art

Mead High School



WELCOME !!!

*C Warren Ainley
Karen Baldwin-Kuntz
Monica Schaffer
Sharon Smith*

SAREA New Members

As educators for life, SAREA encourages continued interest in education and our communities as we promote the general welfare of retired educators.

We are excited to welcome the following new members to SAREA. It is our hope that they will discover the same bonds of friendship that we have found.

In Loving Memory

Please remember our members who have passed away. It is impossible to measure the number of lives they have impacted. They will be deeply missed.



*Judith Actor
Gordon Neale
Kim Pirozok
Marilyn Pontius
William Reuter*

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