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Take Note—The Annual Meeting is Coming UP!

Get yourselves set for a trip to Tacoma on **May 15** for the chapter's **Annual Meeting** and a free (that's right, no charge) tour of the Washington State History Museum. Festivities will begin at **noon**, with lunch (no charge for that either!) to be provided at 12:30, followed by a business meeting to consider a bylaws amendment (*see* page 2) and a resolution considering Social Security and to nominate and elect officers for the next two years.

The meeting will be held at the **Hotel Murano** in Tacoma, which is located at **1320 Broadway**, and which is about three blocks north of the History Museum. The tour will begin at about 2:30 p.m.

There are nine elected positions in the chapter, and the term of each position will be for two years, beginning immediately after elections are concluded. The positions are as follows:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Directors (5)



Ross Rieder, President
 Susan Levy, Vice President
 Sandra Schroeder, Secretary
 Mary Hale, Treasurer
 John Guevarra, Director
 Carol Hamilton, Director
 Rachael Levine, Director
 Rita Smilkstein, Director
 Rosemary Thurston, Director

Roger Carlstrom, Editor

Merrilee Miron, AFTWA Staff Liaison

At the March 31 meeting of the executive board, the following nominations were made: **Mary Hale** for President, **Susan Levy** for Vice President, **Rosemary Thurston** for Treasurer, and **John Guevarra** and **Ross Rieder** for Director. No nominations were made for Secretary.

At the annual meeting itself, these names will be placed in nomination by **Carol Hamilton**, nominations chair, as will be any other nominations she may receive between now and then. In addition, there will be a call for further nominations from the floor.

If you'd like to make any nominations before May 15, please do so by contacting Carol, either by phone, 206-363-4940, or by email,

carolahimilton@gmail.com.

Come to the meeting! See friends. Make friends. Have food (it's free). Have conversation. Tour the Museum. Have a good time!

RSVP to Merrilee Miron at 206-242-4777 or 866-992-1892 or mmiron@aftwa.org not later than May 5.

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Bylaws Amendment, proposed by the chapter executive board

Add to Article VI – Meetings:

Section 4. Voting between regular meetings. The President may conduct a vote of the Executive Board through mail, email, telephone or other electronic means provided that:

A. The motion to be voted on is clearly stated by the president with whatever supporting information is needed so that Board members can make an informed vote.

B. All Board members are given an opportunity to participate.

C. Conditions of a quorum are met by the responses.

D. The motion passes with a majority vote, or a two-thirds vote if required.

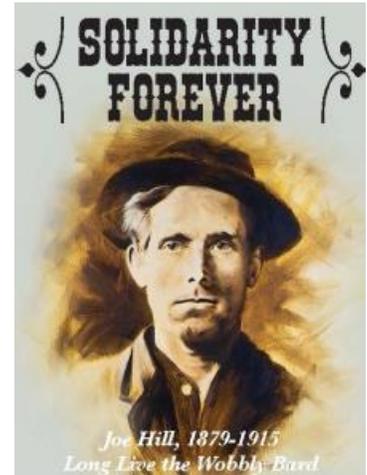
E. The president tallies the votes and informs the Board of the outcome. The action is recorded in the next Board minutes.

F. The time frame for returning votes is 4 days.

G. This process is used only for straightforward votes under time pressure, not for votes that require deliberation or debate.

Pacific Northwest Labor History Association Conference, May 1-3

If you're a labor-history buff, mark your calendar for **May 1 to 3** when the 47th annual conference of the **Pacific Northwest Labor History Association** will be held at the Double Tree by Hilton Seattle Airport (18740 International Boulevard). Our own **Ross Rieder**, president of the PNLHA, will be presiding.



An evening social from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Friday, the 1st, will be followed the next morning by a Keynote Address by **Bill Fletcher, Jr.**, a college graduate turned welder turned workplace- and community activist.

In the afternoon on Saturday, there will be a luncheon, with a keynote presentation by *Labor Notes* editor **Al Bradbury**, speaking on "Youth and the Future of the Labor Movement." The luncheon will be followed by workshops. That night, there will be a social, followed by an awards banquet and then a singing session entitled "The Songs of Joe Hill with **Jon Bartlett** and **Rika Ruebsaat**."

Registration fees include all conference workshops and plenary sessions, materials, and refreshment breaks. The registration fee is \$85 if paid through mail or online forms before April 15, \$100 after that date. The Saturday lunch charge is \$20, and the Awards Banquet charge Saturday night is \$40. The hotel room rate is

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\$119 + taxes per night if you make your reservation before April 15.

For more information or to register online, go to the following website and scroll down to find what you want:

<https://pnlha.wordpress.com/2014/12/24/2015-conference/>

What should we expect from the Mariners this season?

As spring training for the Seattle Mariners was starting up in late February, the *Newsletter* sought out the views of **Bill Faller** on what he thought of the Mariners and their



Photo by Gini Faller

chances for the 2015 season. Bill is a legend in community-college baseball circles and beyond. In 26 years of coaching baseball at Yakima Valley College, his teams won 664 games, 11 conference championships, and 18 league and regional titles. The NWAACC Baseball Championship trophy is named **The Bill Faller Award**, and on April 17, Parker Field on the college campus will be rededicated as "**Parker Faller Field**." He retired from the college in 1986.

He said he was disappointed that the Mariners did not secure another strong hitter to go with new acquisitions **Nelson Cruz** and **Rickie Weeks**, and he's not sure how dependable the "barely adequate" outfield will be. **Austin Jackson** is their only center fielder, and there's a reason, Bill said, that Detroit dumped him last year. **Dustin Ackley** is no more than a barely

adequate outfielder who runs fast to first base but then just slows down when he runs to the other bases. Bill thinks that Weeks will probably replace Ackley in left field.

As for the infield, he thinks that **Chris Taylor**, with his better defense, will beat out **Brad Miller** at shortstop. (Unfortunately, Taylor broke his wrist on March 13 and will be out of action for four to six weeks, so Miller has become the shortstop by default.) Provocatively, however, Bill wishes the Mariners would move **Robinson Cano** to that position from second base. "The only reason Cano didn't play shortstop for the Yankees was that Derek Jeter was there." (That's the same reason, Bill said, **Alex Rodriguez** didn't play shortstop when he went to the Yankees.) **Logan Morrison** is just an average first baseman, but **Kyle Seager**, of course, is outstanding at third base and a terrific hitter.

Catching would be improved a lot if **Mike Zunino** could start hitting.

Pitching, both in the starting rotation and the bull pen, is as good as any in the league, he said, and the depth there may allow the team to add another strong bat at some point. Also, the Tacoma Rainiers may have "the strongest pitching in the minor leagues."

Manager **Lloyd McClendon** is a stoic who gets good results.

We didn't ask whether he thought the Mariners would go to the World Series, and Bill didn't volunteer an opinion!





Mariners to honor Bill Faller

Just as the *Newsletter* goes to press, we have learned that between the top and bottom halves of the fourth inning on Opening Day (April 6) in Seattle, the Mariners will honor **Bill Faller** as a Prisoner of War from World War II.

According to his daughter, **Gini Faller**, Bill wanted to be a pilot in the Army Air Corps and was called to active duty in August of 1943. By the time he completed his training, however, the Air Force had an abundance of pilots but not enough navigators, so Bill chose navigation and, by late summer in 1944, he had earned his wings and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Subsequently, he was assigned to the 96th Bomb Group in England.



Second Lieutenant

He started flying combat mission in January of 1945, and on March 9 that year, his plane was shot down over Frankfurt on the crew's 13th mission. Gini told us that all of the crew parachuted to safety but that Bill landed in trees too low to stop his parachute. He crashed through to the ground and hit it hard, with his legs crossed; the hard landing resulted in crushed vertebrae and caused temporary paralysis. People from a small village, Gini said, "rushed toward him armed with forks or shovels or anything they could grab," but they were concerned that Bill might have a weapon, "so they stopped, and an older man took charge and came up to him by himself and made Daddy a prisoner of war without incident." Because Bill was injured, he was kept in the Dulag Luft prison camp in Western Germany and was not released "until early April, when the prisoners were liberated by the US 4th Armored Division as it rolled across Germany."

He received two purple hearts and an air medal and was discharged from active duty as a First Lieutenant in November of 1945 in time to be home for Thanksgiving.

On April 14 this year, he will be ninety years old.



Bomber crew – England, Jan. 1945

Is "advisories" a better word? By Marcia Barton



Ed. note: In both our October/November 2014 and January/February 2015 issues, we ran articles on "trigger warnings" in the classroom and whether they should be given or not. Following publication of the latter issue, Marcia Barton responded as follows to the articles

Michael Kischner and Sid Smith wrote about the subject.

I was interested in Michael and Sid's exchange in the recent newsletter. I seem to have missed the first article in the series, but these two did make me think and remember.

About advisories, which I learned to discuss with students, as I suspect many teachers do, from the students themselves – from their voiced questions and discomforts and distresses, because as one student said, "It matters to me."

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And I think there's a good deal to be said for not blindsiding readers in a classroom situation. But we don't expect — oughtn't to expect, perhaps? — for example, to tame a work of literature any more than we would ask that "Guernica" not shock a first-time viewer. Nor can we always foresee that a work will explode. Believe me, *The Scarlet Letter* can go off like a bomb. So can *Portrait of a Lady*.

One virtue of advisories is that they can show that a teacher is open to discussing the questions and discontents that arise when a reading comes to life and evokes memory as well as imagination. It is reasonable, I think, to justify the choice of a text, to explain why one believes that confronting a particular set of explosive subjects and language is worth the hazard, and, further, why one feels it worthwhile to trust a particular writer to conduct readers into the minefield.

Like Michael, I love Huckleberry Finn, both the character and the novel, and I loved teaching it. But it has a significant payload. It's funny and exasperating and most of all genuinely painful at every turn. Not surprising, if one supposes that Twain wrestled with some of the issues that the story raises. Some subjects, he famously said, require a pen warmed up in hell. How true. Perhaps they also require hazmat attire for readers willing to confront the danger.

Marcia Barton is a frequent contributor to the Newsletter.

From the left coast to the deep South—a vacation in Alabama

Much to the surprise of friends, chapter vice president **Susan Levy** and **Garet Munger** traveled on vacation to Southern Alabama in February. (Susan describes Garet as her POSSLQ, that is, a person of the opposite sex sharing living quarters [and a dog].)

They like to get in a car and go wherever they want, and that's what they did, after first flying to New Orleans.

In Alabama, they were able to celebrate Mardi Gras in Mobile, after having first traveled to Montgomery through back roads, including the town where **Harper Lee** wrote and still writes.



Photo courtesy of Garet Munger

They had never been in the South and didn't really know what to expect but were surprised by Southern hospitality and graciousness. "People," Susan told the *Newsletter*, "were really nice." She also was intrigued by the degree of integration or segregation that exists there today. "I really don't want to say too much because I'm not sure what I saw was typical." She learned that there are two Mardi Gras Associations in Mobile, one white, the other black. "Thus," she said, "there are two Mardi Gras Kings and two Mardi Gras Queens." She was told by at least five different people that there are two because that's the way people want it. On the other hand, one "lovely black woman" who worked at the hotel where they were staying told her that it was probably true about the people wanting it that way, but there are some people in town who want to change that. At the Mardi Gras parade itself, "all the people on the floats were white, and all the marching groups were black." The audience, however, "was totally integrated."

In their travels, they were able to see the "beautiful shores of Dauphin Island on the gulf coast" and the "cracked sidewalks and bumpy streets of Selma, with everything, or almost everything, in between." She and Garet visited

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the Rosa Parks Museum, several civil rights museums and memorials, the route of the Selma-to-Montgomery March, the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and churches that organized the demonstrations and had speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr. They also saw the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery, with its room devoted to Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy, the Southern Poverty Law Center and its Civil Rights Memorial with a water feature designed by Maya Lin, which was a block away from the huge Alabama Education Association building. They saw a play/musical, "Always Patsy Cline," at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

The trip, she said, "was eclectic."

Looking back

By Ross Rieder, President



Lately, I've been musing about some things.

For one, I've been recollecting my time as president of the Washington State Federation of Teachers (WSFT), from December

of 1967 through May of 1975, and I recall a young female part-time instructor at the central campus of what was then Seattle Community College. She came to the WSFT executive board and fairly demanded that we form an organization for what were her people: part-time faculty members – "temporarily" hired to work full time at half-time (less than half-time) pay. Her name was **Rita Phipps**. After I left WSFT in 1975, she continued her fight for part-time faculty even long after she became a full-time faculty member herself. Now, some 40 years later, she serves on the chapter executive board as a director and has done so

since the end of December 2013. (Rita also served in that capacity from 2003 to 2007, and is a charter member of the chapter.) She's known as **Rita Smilkstein** now.

In late 2009, some of my favorite retired comrades from those WSFT days and other comrades whom I had come to know in the AFTWA retiree chapter talked me into becoming chapter president when **Ann McCartney** resigned. I have enjoyed serving in this position and working with the chapter executive board, a group of good-grade union educators. I have enjoyed very much working with past AFTWA President **Sandra Schroeder** and present AFTWA President **Karen Strickland** and with the staff of AFTWA as well. I'm saying these things because I have decided not to run for chapter president at the annual meeting in May. I have agreed, however, to continue as a director if I am elected at that meeting.

Finally, my father was a junior high teacher in Yakima for thirty years until he and my mom moved to Silicon Valley to finish out their careers as well as make a living. I was as proud of him as I could be when I learned that he turned down an offer to become an administrator in the Yakima Schools. "I belong in the classroom," he told 'em.





Nothing's happening very fast in the legislature!

By Mary Hale



As I write this article in time for submission for this issue of the *Newsletter*, our state legislature is still in session, with the 2015-2017 budget yet to be resolved. The House Democrats' budget

proposal was released in late March, with the House Republicans' budget proposal to follow in early April. Front and center, as you know, are (a) K-12 funding as a result of the State Supreme Court's funding mandate (*McCleary* decision), (b) the class-size initiative passed by a narrow margin of state voters last November, and (c) mental health issue funding.

As is almost always the case in a two-year budget-adoption session, the legislature will most probably need to add a special session (or more) to accomplish its work. (Washington State law requires a balanced budget--income that matches expenditures.) This is no small challenge for deeply divided Democratic and Republican legislators with differing philosophies, and, as we all know, there are deep divisions in this legislature.

On a note of special interest to many of our retirees, a bill to restore COLA (cost of living adjustment) increases for TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees was introduced during this session. COLA restoration would positively impact many of our AFT Washington retirees (number unknown). In 2011 the legislature denied pensioners in these two oldest and most vulnerable state pension plans the ability to receive COLA increases. Pensioners in all other state pension plans can receive COLA increases and, indeed, have received a COLA this year. When I contacted my district legislators, as

well as a few in neighboring districts, all said they would support TRS 1 and PERS 1 COLA restoration but doubted that it would go anywhere this year. (It's a budget issue.)

Coming in the next issue: comments on my favorite political commentators and political books I've recently read!

The life inside By Marilyn Smith



When I began teaching a course I had created for senior adults at our college in 1980, I was still a young thing, knowing little about what it would mean to age. How removed I felt then even to the possibility. I listened to the essays my senior students read in

class and became their student of the history I had not yet lived. One student had witnessed the end of the Russian Revolution, and two men almost got into a fisticuff over having fought in the opposing Red and White armies.

The lesson most personal came from a woman named Harriet: "I still carry all the years I've lived right inside me, but the only age that people see now in me is Old Age." How many times in my own recent life have I returned to and felt her truth?

We know how vulnerable we each are to the misperceptions others make of us every day. We can lose ourselves without much warning in the ravages of disability, both physical and mental. We are rightly terrified by threats of dementia and Alzheimer's as the years chip parts of us away. A 2012 documentary examining the

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victims of these processes, “Alive Inside” – now available through Netflix – recounts the power that music evokes in even the most damaged patients when earphones become the conduit for music relevant to their past. As if the patients have been touched by a magical force – as music has the power to become – they return to the present and begin to tell stories from their past, their eyes alive again.

The part of the brain that processes and loves music is not touched by the assaults of mental deterioration, the doctor in this documentary explains.

My friend Eric told me recently that if such forces diminish him, he wants simply to be plugged into the great symphonic compositions and pass on listening to and conducting them.

I think I would choose to be forever photographing flowers, a love of flowers inherited from my friend June many years ago. I have thousands of such photographs to underscore this passion – moments that others can delete in the touch of a button when I am not here to record the light shining through a coral petal rimming a golden center or the tiny mountain orchid slipper hiding just under a leaf. I am hoping that whatever mental deterioration attacks me will not erase my awe for the work that flowers must do to bloom into miraculous beauty.

Marilyn Smith is a frequent contributor to the Newsletter.



The Voting Rights Act comes to Yakima

By Roger Carlstrom, Editor



August 6 of this year will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act by **President Lyndon B. Johnson**.

In August last year, federal judge **Thomas O. Rice** held that the City of Yakima’s at-large voting system for electing city council members violated Section 2 of the act. That section, according to Judge Rice, “prohibits states and their political subdivisions from utilizing voting practices or procedures which result in ‘a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.’”

In February of this year, he enjoined the city “from administering, implementing, or conducting any future elections for the Yakima City Council in which members of the City Council are elected on an at-large basis, whether in a primary, general, or special election.” Moreover, he required that elections for all city-council positions be held *this year*, “using a system in which each of the seven members of the City Council is elected from a single-member district” and in which “Each councilmember must reside in his or her district, and only residents of a given district may vote for the councilmember position for that district.”

In Yakima, “no Latino has ever been elected to the City Council in the 37-year history of the current [at-large] system” – despite the fact that Latinos account for approximately 41 percent of the population. In crafting the new election system to remedy the Section 2 violation, Judge

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Rice created one district where the Latino population will have “equal electoral opportunity for the Latino populations to attain one of the seven city council seats [and another with] . . . a genuine possibility to obtain a second seat.”

You should hear the yowling of two of the three sitting councilmembers who have two years left on their current terms that will terminate this coming election season as the result of the judge’s order.

You should hear the yowling of the citizenry, as we learn how much the current, “fiscally conservative” council has spent on fighting this issue since August 2012: \$946,132, as of February 28, according to a March 20 article in The Yakima Herald Republic. Moreover, ACLU Washington, which brought the case, has filed a claim against the city for more than \$2.8 million in legal costs.

The judge has brought big change to Yakima. I embrace it and celebrate!



Contact us:
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labor donated