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Much work lies ahead By Mary Hale, President



We certainly have our work cut out for us over the next four years – hopefully, no longer.

Among the probable (and ever troubling) nominees by President-elect **Donald Trump** for Cabinet positions is the man whom he would have head the Department of Health and Human Services, Representative **Tom Price**, about whom the New York Times (Nov. 28, 2016, online edition) had this to say:

If President-elect Donald J. Trump wanted a cabinet secretary who could help him dismantle and replace President Obama’s health care law, he could not have found anyone more prepared than Representative Tom Price, who has been studying how to accomplish that goal for more than six years.

And, in a Nov. 29, 2016, Press Release from AFT, President Randi Weingarten is quoted as saying,

“During the campaign, Mr. Trump promised seniors that he was a different type of Republican – that he understood the importance of Medicare and would not touch it. This nomination of Tom Price makes that promise a nullity; it would appear from this and other nominations

that raiding public funds for private profit is a more animating principle to the president-elect than Americans' healthcare and well-being.

“Tom Price would turn programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, relied on by millions, into vouchers and private accounts, while gutting protections for LGBTQ people, women and the most vulnerable Americans.”

Clearly, we have every reason to be very concerned.

Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA) and Social Security Works (two of our

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Mary Hale, President
Susan Levy, Vice President & Liaison to Other Retiree Organizations
Rosemary Thurston, Secretary
Glenda Hanson, Treasurer & Chapter Rep. to AFTWA COPE
John Guevarra, Director
Ann McCartney, Director
Ross Rieder, Director & Chapter Rep. to AFTWA Exec. Board

Roger Carlstrom, Editor

Merrilee Miron, AFTWA Staff Liaison

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activist partners) are ramping up their already considerable lobbying efforts. Anticipated soon are significant threats to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid that must be resisted. Our Chapter Vice President, **Susan Levy**, is our liaison with both organizations.

We strongly encourage you to join other AFTWA retirees (in concert with PSARA and Social Security Works) to safeguard what is currently in place and to promote Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid enhancements.

Action alerts will be sent to you via email. If you are not currently receiving an occasional email announcement from your Retiree Chapter, this means that we do not have your email address. To ensure that we can contact you via our Retiree Chapter email service, **please send me your email address at 50047@msn.com** or call me at 425-259-3027.

Retiree action in brief

AFTWA Executive Board Increases Retiree 2017 Budget: In late fall, the AFT Washington Executive Board voted to increase the Retiree Chapter budget by \$1,000 (from \$3,000 to \$4,000). This increase will help offset the increasing cost of our important quarterly newsletter. The amount remaining will be spent primarily on Retiree Chapter programming, contributions to our partners in retiree action, and reimbursement to Retiree Chapter Executive Board members (all volunteers) for extraordinary expenses they may incur while representing us. Chapter director **Ross Rieder** serves as our representative to the AFTWA Executive Board.

Executive Board Members to Meet on January 31: The Retiree Chapter Executive Board will meet on January 31 to finalize planning for our

May annual meeting. (See notice below.) In the next issue of this newsletter, we'll include a bylaws change for your consideration, a proposed slate of officers and directors for 2017-2019, and an annual meeting speaker selection.

In that regard, if you would be interested in serving on the Retiree Executive Board, please call **Mary Hale** at 425-259-3027. Let's talk!

Retirees Add to Dollars for COPE: A number of retirees are now contributing to the Committee on Political Education (COPE). These dollars support the endorsed campaigns of AFTWA endorsed candidates and state ballot issues. To contribute, mail your contribution to COPE, AFT Washington Retiree Chapter, 625 Andover Park West, Suite 111, Tukwila, WA 98188.

Chapter treasurer **Glenda Hanson** is our chapter's representative to AFTWA COPE.

Save the date for our next annual meeting!

What:

2017 Retiree Chapter Annual Meeting (to be held in conjunction with the AFT Washington Convention)

Where:

Silver Reef Casino,
Ferndale, WA (outside of Bellingham)

When: May 19, 2017, 11:30 a.m. meeting followed by lunch and a speaker (TBD)

NOTE: If you wish to stay overnight and participate in the Friday night Convention dinner, you will be able to get a discounted price for lodging.



Seattle Central College, 50 Years Ago



In our last issue, we reported on Rachael Levine's concern that a September 23 article in the Seattle Times about Seattle Central College celebrating its 50th anniversary relied almost exclusively on stories told by administrators, past and present, rather than faculty members and students. We said that the activism of the college back then came from, quoting Rachael, the "blood, sweat, and tears" of the local union, the faculty and staff. She argued that "the community should be reminded of it."

In response, we asked our readers to let us know about how a full story could be told and suggested that we could "put something together in the next newsletter (January/February 2017) that can help tell that full story and tell it well."

Four of our readers responded with articles, each of which appears below. We think you will enjoy their stories and gain important insights about what happened in those days.



**SEATTLE CENTRAL
COLLEGE**
One of the Seattle Colleges

From launch to lunch: reflections on a college legacy

By Janet Ray



Imagine my surprise upon reading the Seattle Times article concerning the celebration of Seattle Central (Community) College's 50th anniversary ("Seattle Central College Turns 50, celebrates history of social activism"

9/22/2016). I was delighted to see the college recognized, but at the same time dismayed. The article failed to capture the special qualities of the college; it didn't even get the facts straight. (Central began in the Summit Elementary School—not the old Broadway HS).

As one of the original faculty, I wondered why I hadn't heard about this yearlong celebration. Calls to other founding faculty members told me they were equally in the dark. The reporter's sources? Mostly administrators. But joyfully,

what resulted was a delightful two-hour lunch with four colleagues whose wisdom, knowledge, courage, and creativity I cherish. We met to share perspectives and talk about what the Times article didn't.

First some personal favorite accolades for the college:

- The first college faculty to choose the AFT, and the first faculty to strike in Washington State. Some academic types, myself included, didn't initially embrace the idea of a faculty union, but we were gently educated by our vocational colleagues.
- The first local coordinated-studies program at the community college level. Maybe our early, forced joint office spaces resulted in relaxed disciplinary boundaries that made these programs feasible.
- Chosen as a *Time* magazine College of the Year for our ability to attract and retain minority students, and achieve "genuine interaction among different groups" (September 10, 2001).

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- One of only two community colleges nationally selected by the Mathematical Association of America for its effective undergraduate program. (“Models That Work,” MAA Notes #38).

And a quick peek behind the scenes:

- A defiant Financial-Aid Director who shall remain nameless was known for taking out his own wallet when student funds were mired in bureaucratic red tape.
- The late-night visit of the union president, **John Barton**, to a meeting for a 1970 planned Black Student Union demonstration. His reminders about the importance of the college to the community helped move a potentially volatile action into a school takeover that left people and facilities largely intact.
- The dedication of students (juggling jobs, parenthood, and academics) who routinely met at late night coffee houses around Seattle to study together and complete their work.

What is the legacy of the college for me? A unique place of dedicated, enthusiastic, and complicated learners – colleagues and students alike.

Janet Ray served as a mathematics faculty member at SCCC from 1966 through 2004, with a brief one-year term as SCCD Faculty Development Coordinator and several quarters away as an exchange faculty member at The Evergreen State College.



Seattle Community College— first year, 1966-67

By Astrida Onat



At age twenty-six, I was one of the youngest members of the Faculty assembled for the new Seattle Community College. It now seems quite appropriate that we were housed in a grade school – we all had a lot to learn.

It was expected that persons with MA degrees would know how to teach college level classes. I structured my lectures by modeling those of my favorite professors and talked at warp speed during the first classes. The students soon slowed me down and taught me how to teach effectively.

My most successful class was Physical Anthropology. Students had to learn all the bones of the body during the first week, followed by an identification quiz. Knowing the bones early on made my lectures about primate and human evolution, as well as race, much clearer and easier to comprehend.

Lee Bennett, Donna Lee, and Edmund Kamai, all from my first Anthropology class, asked me to help organize an Archaeology Club and encouraged me to develop a Field School in Archaeology. No other community college had done such a project, but why not? The SCC administration approved funding for this unique class and added it to the summer schedule. The dig would provide some good press for the College as an innovative institution.

In the summer of 1967, I drove to Summit School early each morning and picked up some students; others commuted from their homes. We worked at excavating from 9:00 a.m. to noon, had an hour for lunch, excavated some more, and then commuted home. On hot days, we went swimming in the

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lazily-flowing Snoqualmie River. We excavated 85.4 cubic meters of earth and recovered 201 artifacts. Following the dig, students analyzed the artifacts, and Lee helped with writing a site-investigation report.

That first year at Seattle Community College was so much more arduous than I realized at the time. But youth takes on tasks that are daunting to an adult. The Tokul-Creek dig confirmed that I loved field archaeology, and I committed to having more Field Schools in Archaeology. I was glad to be part of a new college that supported the participation of students in unique and often life-changing experiences and allowed me to be creative in the discipline that would become the focus of my life.

Astrida Onat taught and developed curricula for anthropology and archaeology at Seattle Central (Community) College from 1966 until 1995. She taught anthropological specialties in the context of Coordinated Studies programs, directed 18 Field Studies in Archaeology for SCCD, served as a visiting faculty member at several institutions in the states of Washington and Oregon, and received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and from the Academy of Sciences for exchanges to the Baltic area of what was then the USSR.

The start of something big By Michael Kischner



The five of us at Seattle's Ray's Cafe in November might have been an aging couple reminiscing about their first years of life together. The cramped living space, the tight budgets, not quite knowing how it's done – deprivations endurable at the time

become downright enjoyable in retrospect, as memory calls up the energy and buoyancy that got one successfully through them.

So the colleagues who started the new Seattle Community College in 1966 recalled their first "office" – a space in the basement of the Summit Elementary School building in which they literally rubbed elbows at 16 used desks. Here, different disciplines were jumbled together; academic and vocational-technical instructors met at the coffee pot. We talked to each other. At the start of each new quarter, we rubbed elbows with different colleagues in the long hall where we arranged ourselves at long tables alphabetically by discipline to help students register. Administrators would walk up and down the aisles, calling out the numbers of closed sections. Some of us are still tickled by the memory of a colleague who objected to one administrator's "braying"!

As we thought back on it, we wondered whether this prepared the ground for Seattle Central's (and, later, North Seattle's) embrace of the Evergreen model of coordinated studies classes, which bridged disciplines to spark creativity and so much learning. Disciplinary barriers? They turned out to be as low as the partitions in the elementary school bathrooms we were forced to use!

Many of us had recently been in graduate departments, self-contained worlds of specialized disciplines in which the graduate students emulated the competition among their professors for status and salary. Blessedly, we were spared that kind of competition when we elected the SCCFT as our bargaining agent. The contract we negotiated had one salary scale for academic and vocational. Public and transparent, the contract tied salaries to years of experience and credits of faculty development.

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Years later, as American political and educational leaders jumped on the merit-pay bandwagon, creating that horrid verb “incentivize,” I thought about how very hard and collaboratively most of my colleagues worked. We found abundant incentive in our students, our professional self-respect, and our pleasure in each other’s company.

It was our students we ended up talking about that day at Ray’s Café. As for the pleasure in each other’s company, that hadn’t changed a bit.

Michael Kischner is a frequent contributor to the Retiree Newsletter

It came as a pleasant surprise By Marcia Barton



I wasn't expecting much when I began teaching at Seattle Central Community College. In moving to Seattle two years earlier, I had reluctantly left a workable, part-time position in a friendly department at Western

Washington State College. My experience in the interim, teaching part-time in a neighboring community college, had been dispiriting. I liked the students, but I knew no one on the faculty, had no office space, no desk-top nor file drawer; consequently, I felt orphaned.

I was not encouraged during my initial meeting at the Seattle district. Noticing that I had taught some remedial sections, the interviewer peered at me solemnly and said, "We've got to get Those People into school, or they'll take our stereos." (Honest, Roger, that's what he said; I couldn't make it up.) I could think of nothing to say to that, but I never saw him again, and that did not sadden me.

Thus, the college itself was a pleasant surprise. Most college transfer offices and classrooms were in a former grade school building. Faculty offices had been gym-sized indoor play areas – my own desk was one of sixteen – and the atmosphere was friendly. We were a mixture of very young beginning teachers, a few people like me with a little experience, and some old hands. We took one another's messages, shared bag lunches, or walked to the corner where the corned beef was really good, and we learned from one another's teaching strategies.

Administration was light-handed. The dean and department chairs seemed to trust us. I had my choice of text and freedom to craft my assignments. I felt the responsibility to prepare my students well, because the other faculty who would teach them were friends as well as colleagues.

Best of all, the students were a revelation. They came from all over town and all over the world. They were all ages and conditions, and (for the most part), they really wanted to be there.

Thirty-five years later, I interviewed some students from those early days, and I was surprised by how vividly they remembered. They agreed that the facilities were funny, but the atmosphere was fine. They felt welcomed, some for the first time in their school experiences. Teachers were accessible and gave them the idea that their learning was important.

One student, who has always had the gift of turning a fine phrase, said, "I loved the place. It was open and friendly, but it was serious, too. Nothing about it was cheap, except the tuition."

Marcia Barton is a frequent contributor to the Retiree Newsletter.



From the “Twitterverse” . . .

A New York Times Friday Briefing of Oct. 24, 2016, noted that on that day in 1947, **Charles E. Yeager** broke the sound barrier while flying over the Mojave Desert. The “Back Story” note indicated that Yeager has become “an avid Twitter user,” and was recently asked on Twitter “how many U.F.O.s he had encountered” during his career. The answer: “None. . . I don’t drink before I fly.”

Impact is greater than intent

Ed. note: The following letter to the editor appeared in the Nov. 19, 2016, print edition of The Seattle Times under the headline, “Impact > intent.”

Editor, The Times:

I read the article on Trump voters with interest (“Hopes and fears,” Page One, Nov. 13). I know people who voted for Donald Trump who feel the same way as Cynthia Cole about being called a bigot. A comment I read today on social media today [*sic*] sums the whole situation up perfectly and is the answer to her plight: “Not all Trump supporters are racist, misogynist, xenophobes. All Trump supporters saw a racist, misogynist, xenophobe and said, ‘This is an acceptable person to lead our country.’”

Trump supporters may not have racist, misogynist or xenophobic intent, but they have had racist, misogynist and xenophobic impact. Impact is greater than intent. So when they get called racist, misogynist and xenophobic, they should understand that their actions could enable racism, misogyny and xenophobia in the highest halls of our federal government regardless of why they voted.

--Al Marks, Seattle

Caution: Don’t be like them!

(In response to President-elect Donald Trump’s action via Twitter that helped lead members of Congress to back off their plans to gut the independent congressional ethics office)

“**Jesse Ferguson, one of the lead spokesmen for Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign, warns his party against obstructing Trump for obstruction’s sake.** ‘Simply opposing Trump because Republicans opposed Obama isn’t a winning political strategy for Democrats,’ he explains in a USA Today op-ed. ‘If one thing is crystal clear from the last 36 years — since Reagan’s election in 1980 — it’s that the more voters hate government, the more Republicans benefit. That’s their strategy. We can’t play into it. To quote Admiral Ackbar, “It’s a trap.” If our only plan is to make government nonfunctional like Republicans did to us, then we will end up invalidating the basic progressive thesis: that government action can improve people’s lives. We can’t win the public debate in elections about a progressive agenda if we end up proving the central hypothesis of the conservative agenda — that government can’t get things done — to be true instead.’”

*--James Hohmann with Breanne Deppisch,
“The Daily 202: Even when Trump shows backbone,
his haters refuse to give him any credit,”
Washington Post, Jan. 4, 2017*





Has it happened here?

By Ross Rieder, Director



Maybe 30 years ago I read a little red covered novel out of my father's library. *It Can't Happen Here* was the title of the book. **Sinclair Lewis** was the author.

It Can't Happen Here is a semi-satirical 1935 political novel published during the rise of fascism in Europe. The novel

describes the rise of a democrat US Senator who is elected to the presidency after fomenting fear and promising drastic economic and social reforms while promoting a return to patriotism and "traditional" values.

At Christmas 1939, my Aunt **Dibby** and her husband **A.J.** from the little town of Hanford, Washington, gave my dad a copy of *It Can't Happen Here*. In the front of the book, my aunt inscribed kind words. The Feds moved Dibby and A.J. (an IBEW member and Outdoor Foreman during the construction of Hanford) to Richland, House #4, soon the next year.

I was born the next spring.

Eighty two years later after publication of Lewis's novel, and fewer years ago than that after I myself had read the book, this country has elected **Donald Trump**, a president-elect who presents the possibility that maybe Lewis's story COULD come to be.

One of my first considerations was, "Well, what-the-hell, I'm 76 and, in spite of my seemingly good health, I probably won't be around for the "can't happen here" fun and games. But then again. . . .

I'm upset by citizens who have voted into office the worst possible person for my final years. With reluctance, because I usually vote for a third-party candidate, I agreed to vote for his main

opposition, **Hillary Clinton**, because a dear friend, an editor I know, said I should. Both my wife and I were going to vote as usual for a third party candidate, but we didn't. We voted for Clinton.

The other part of my ire is the quality of the political parties that offered candidates of such poor quality.

So, at my stage in life, I guess I can't ignore my citizenship responsibilities. I thought I was through with involvement in political activity. I guess not . . . and I strongly urge all our readers to consider this dilemma and their personal roles

We must resist!

By Gail Pearlman



My first "Black Lives Matter" sign was stolen from my Grants Pass lawn on a warm September night this past fall.

A few weeks later, "Black Lives Don't Matter" graffiti appeared in a County park here.

I put up a second "Black Lives Matter" sign. It, too, was stolen--on election night.

This was not the future I imagined when I picketed Woolworth's and sat in at the Liberty Bell in the early '60s. The unchecked militarism of police, the prospect of mass deportations, a Muslim registry and ban, the muzzling of the press, the felony criminalization of peaceful protest, an assault on women and gays, the proliferation of hate crimes, the reintroduction of torture, the mass suffering of people who can't afford food, housing, medical care, or prescription drugs, the untold waves of refugees, and, above all, the probable destruction of life on our planet by fossil fuels -- at 73, it's hard for me not to feel both bitter and fearful. It's hard to imagine what the country and the world

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will be like for the rest of my life. It's unthinkable to imagine the future for my children and grandson.

I feel despair, grief, and depression, but also rage. We must resist.

This morning a student at Heritage, where I was an adjunct for a couple of years, sent me a petition "to make Heritage University a sanctuary campus for undocumented students, staff, and their family members." Washington State community college presidents and the state attorney general are considering sanctuary campuses as well.

The college presidents could use some encouragement from below. At Green River Community College, for example, faculty, students, and staff plan to present a petition for sanctuary to their Board of Trustees (outcome unknown at the time of this writing).

We are all retired educators who know a lot of people connected to campuses. We have former colleagues who are still teaching. Some have moved on to new campuses. We've met teachers at conferences and in professional organizations.

After signing the Heritage petition, I forwarded it to colleagues on two campuses to ask if they would initiate similar petitions there. We can all write to our colleagues and ask if they will do this. (For detailed information about efforts on different campuses, plus the text of petitions used elsewhere, see <http://tinyurl.com/zrltkg4>).

I don't have a lot of hope. But this is one small thing we can do.

Gail Pearlman taught writing from 1988-2008, as an adjunct at College of the Siskiyous, Southern Oregon State College, Seattle Central Community College, Central Washington University, and Heritage College, and as an adjunct and then Running Start Instructor at Yakima Valley Community College. She now lives in Grants Pass, Oregon.

The selves we do not often see By Marilyn Smith



I.

Late for my doctor's appointment, I gave my keys to the attendant. When I returned soon after, he took off to retrieve my car, just as a large blonde woman was stopping to crush her cigarette on the half-moon driveway gracing Jefferson Tower.

I'd been disturbed by the garbage and butts now commonplace in our once-clean city. "Would you please pick up your butt and toss it into the garbage?" I asked, not anxious to take care of it myself.

She looked at me, scowled, but leaned over and retrieved it.

When the attendant returned with my car and its key, I told him about my brief encounter with the smoker.

The screen that separated this man from his customers lifted. "I could never ask someone to do that," he said.

"Why not," I wondered.

"Because I am an immigrant, not white, and do not have the language you have to say it. She would only ignore me—or worse."

"Where are you from?"

"Afghanistan," he said simply.

I felt his kindness then and imagined the price he had paid many times to be standing there as a valet. Cigarette butts must be small ashes in the detritus he has had to carry for years.

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II.

What happens to a person who has died? We have no answers but many anecdotes that hint at the mystery: stories that suggest their presence in strange ways and messages.

Because I do not think he wanted to die, I never asked my husband Richard if he could let me know when his soul might manifest itself in my left-behind world.

This autumn, however, I had a message from him. Every year by September the red rose bush outside our living room window climbs high enough to peer into the room. Next to it, we've had a spindly sterling-lavender rose, its stems too weak to hold the blooms upright for long. Now, suddenly, its roses were powering the red roses out of their way – reaching the viewing window and resting there as if to say, in Richard's stead, *I am here*.

Day after day I photographed those affectionate flowers that I am sure were purposeful in their presence. Others like them had once threaded our wedding canopy, and for forty years had remained a symbol for us of love.

The days of these pale roses against the window drew quietly to a close as their intoxicating fragrance faded.

Just as quietly, the red roses edged in and regained their turn.

Marilyn Smith is a frequent contributor to the Retiree Newsletter.

Contact us:
retireenews@aftwa.org

*For back issues of the Newsletter, go to
<http://wa.aft.org/retirees>*

“Bombs away”—from the attic. . . By Roger Carlstrom, Editor



In October, my wife **Connie** and I decided that we should actually clear out the attic, which meant in large part getting rid of thirteen (count 'em 13) bankers boxes full of papers from my days as chief negotiator for the

Yakima Valley College Federation of Teachers between 1973 and 1998. Those boxes were separate from the twelve archival boxes of my union papers that are stored in the archives at the University of Washington.

My attic files contained documents from which I could keep track of issues that arose during the life of a given collective bargaining agreement and from which I could reconstruct when necessary the history of bargaining on a given c.b.a., as in grievance cases, especially those that went to arbitration, and, in one instance, to the Washington State Supreme Court.

To get these files out of the attic, I had to sit on the edge of the attic opening, remove them from each box, drop them down in a cargo net that I had retrieved from my truck, and then drop each empty box down as well. It took 90 minutes to accomplish. A few days later, the files were shredded by a shredding company.

After dropping all those files to the floor, I marveled at how different my life with documents would have been had today's technology been available. All that paper then, taking up all that space. Had then been now, all of that stuff in my attic could have been on, oh maybe (depending on its capacity, of course), a thumb drive or two or six.

The same could be said of what's in the archives at the UW.

The times? They've changed.

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