



**AFT Washington  
Retiree Chapter  
Local 8045R**

# Retiree Newsletter

*A Union of Professionals*

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## Reclaiming the Promise

Those of us with grandchildren or great grandchildren of school-age or moving towards school age, or, well,

most of us, considering our backgrounds in education, whether we have grandchildren or not, probably would agree with the preamble to a sign-up page for the national AFT's "Reclaim the Promise" (link appears below):

Our public schools represent our nation's commitment to helping all children dream their dreams and achieve them. A high quality public education for all children is an economic necessity, an anchor of democracy, a moral imperative and a fundamental civil right, without which none of our other rights can be fully realized. ["Reclaim the Promise," available on the AFT website, link provided below]

The page invites you to reclaim the following promises:

**I will reclaim the promise of public education** – not as it is today or as it was in the past, but as we imagine it for our children – to fulfill our collective obligation to help all children succeed.

I will reclaim the promise to fight for **neighborhood public schools that are safe, welcoming places for teaching and learning.**

I will reclaim the promise to ensure that **teachers and school staff are well-prepared, are supported, have small class sizes, and have time to collaborate** so they can meet the individual needs of every child.

I will reclaim the promise to make sure our **children have an engaging curriculum** that includes art, music and physical education.

I will reclaim the promise to ensure that **children have access to wrap-around services to meet their emotional, social and health needs.**

**I will reclaim the promise of public education for all children.**

Here's a link to sign on to the pledge:

[http://action.aft.org/c/44/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup\\_page\\_KEY=7122](http://action.aft.org/c/44/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KEY=7122)

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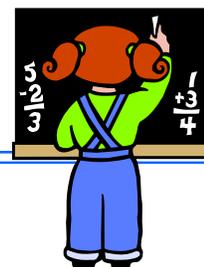
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## The ARA has Medicare stories

Characterizing September and October as “Potentially Menacing Months for Seniors,” the **Alliance for Retired Americans** solicited Medicare stories from seniors that can be used to help keep Congress from making cuts to Medicare. A September 12, 2013, news release describes the effort this way:

Politicians in Washington are keeping Medicare cuts on the table in debt ceiling and budget deal negotiations. To combat these efforts to cut Medicare, the Alliance for Retired Americans gathered stories from retirees nationally who benefit from the program, but who still struggle to keep up with out-of-pocket costs. These stories help illustrate that now is not the time to cut Medicare or shift costs onto beneficiaries. Future generations will need Medicare, and there are ways to strengthen the program – such as negotiating the lowest rates for prescription drugs with big pharma – that would save billions of dollars and would not require shifting costs onto seniors.

To view the stories, go to

<http://retiredamericans.org/issues/medicare-and-rx-drugs>.

## Here’s help with nursing-home problems

The national AFT has recommended a booklet entitled “20 Common Nursing Home Problems – and How To Resolve Them” that may interest you or members of your family. Pointing out that “Too often, standard operating procedures in nursing homes harm residents and violate federal law,” AFT tells us that this “hard-hitting guide from the National Senior Citizens Law Center offers proven strategies to residents and family members on what to look for and how to fight

back against the most common illegal practices.”

The booklet, AFT says, answers questions like

When must a nursing home follow the preferences of an individual resident?

When are physical restraints and feeding tubes illegal?

Can Medicare stop Part A reimbursement because a resident has “plateaued”?

How can residents move from a non-certified to a Medicaid-certified bed?

When must a nursing home readmit a Medicaid-eligible resident after a lengthy hospital stay?

As a member of the chapter, you are a member of AFT so you can obtain the guide on-line for five dollars, which, AFT says, is “one-third off the regular purchase price.” Go to the following link, which will get you to another link at the bottom of the article (that second link being too long to fit in this space!): <http://www.aft.org/yourwork/retirees/20questions.cfm>. \

Payment options are PayPal or credit card.





## Help end discrimination in religiously-affiliated medical facilities

**By Susan Levy, Vice President**



*Ed. note: The following article appeared in the September 2013 issue of the Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action publication, The Retiree Advocate, under the title "Restrictions on Health Care at Religiously Affiliated Medical Facilities."*

*The article here appears in slightly modified form. Susan serves as PSARA Outreach Vice President, in addition to being Vice President of our chapter.*

Patients may be at risk of being denied services at some religiously affiliated medical facilities in Washington. This will become increasingly commonplace as more secular hospitals merge (or affiliate) with religiously affiliated ones and come under the control of religiously affiliated health care corporations.

As PSARA Outreach Vice President, I am working with the ACLU of Washington to ensure that no patient is refused access to lawful health care because of the religious doctrines of the institutions running hospitals, clinics, or other medical facilities. Health care facilities open to the general public should not refuse to provide reproductive health care and end-of-life care services; nor should they refuse to serve the full medical needs of LGBT people. Religious ideology should not dictate which health care services a patient may choose.

More and more Washington State hospitals have entered or are entering into relationships with religiously affiliated hospitals. Currently, about 40% of the hospital beds are in religiously affiliated hospitals.

**Why does it matter whether a hospital is religiously affiliated?** A hospital's religious affiliation may impact access to health care services. For example, Catholic-affiliated hospitals follow the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, which restrict access to reproductive and end-of-life health services, counseling, and referrals.

**All Washington State residents should be able to make their end of life and reproductive health care decisions and be treated without discrimination.**

Can you help? Do you know of any examples where patients have been denied services or discriminated against in religiously affiliated health care facilities? If so, please e-mail me at [sjlevy.01@gmail.com](mailto:sjlevy.01@gmail.com), or go to the ACLU-WA website: <https://www.aclu.org/secure/patient-and-provider-web-intake>.

## Here's an update on our work to develop a chapter treasury

**By Ross Rieder, President**



As many of you know, AFTWA Local 8045R is actually a chapter of AFTWA, our state body.

As a chapter, we are a line item of \$3,000 in the AFTWA budget. There are no dues received from AFTWA Local 8045R. Retirees have already paid their dues.

As we grow, and as the state body grows, the need for additional funds also grows.

We've been thinking about this for several months. I proposed dues. The wisdom, truly, of the Local 8045R Board has opted for a contribution system. That's why you will soon be receiving a communication from AFTWA Local 8045R asking for your donation. *(continued on page 4)*



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So, we hope you will receive our request kindly and help us develop some added flexibility in function. Things like funding additional workshops, paying honorariums for special speakers, moving around and holding meetings at various campuses, etc.

We're holding a special Board meeting on Tuesday, October 15 beginning at 11.00 a.m. at the AFTWA offices in Tukwila. We'd welcome your input, so please call me at 206-406-2604 with any ideas you may have.

In advance, we thank you for your support.

## In defense of the Yakima River Basin water plan By Elaine Smith



I must respond to the Sept. 28th *Seattle Times* article on water in the Yakima River Basin: "Longtime foes unite over water plan for Eastern Washington" by **Andrew Barber**. My comments reflect the fact that

I have lived in Yakima for 48 years. Since 2009, I have been attending the public meetings of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project's study group.

I must object to the remarks in the article attributed to **Norman Whittlesey**, retired WSU "ag-econ" professor: "Everybody in the Yakima Valley is going to get something out of this, and all they have to do is get the taxpayer to pay for it." He ignores the fact that the state's economy benefits from exports of Eastern Washington produce. We all eat the valley's fruits, vegetables and organically raised beef, drink wine from Eastern Washington vineyards and beer made

from Yakima hops, and we chew gum made with Yakima mint.

Equally near-sighted is Snohomish representative **Hans Dunshee**, Democrat. He complains that the "overall price of \$4.2 billion" (in 2012 dollars) for the water conservation plan compares unfavorably with a \$3.1 billion cost for the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement. Of course, he is by election a defender of the interests of his "west side" constituency commuters. He says the project is a "sweet deal" for water users, including farmers, who don't have to pay for the water. By that logic, commuters should pay tolls for roads, elementary school children should pay back their state-supported educations, and the indigent ill should pay hospitals for their care.

Of course, I am appealing to the principle that taxation in a democracy seeks to redistribute wealth so that those of us with resources can pool them to care for the whole. Only by acting together do we afford roads, schools, water, symphony halls, and flu serum from the CDC.

Ultimately, water will no longer be available for human use, period. The first warning sign has been the loss in the Cascade snowpack. The stakeholders in the Yakima River Basin, brought together by the force of drought in a desert economy dependent on river flows, and by the force of law to amend the loss of fish habitat needed for another waning food source, have come together in a fragile coalition to take care of the future of water for Yakima Basin's agricultural and fisheries economy.

I say "hurray" and "thank you"!

*Elaine Smith began teaching English composition and literature at Yakima Valley College in 1965 and retired in 1993. Her article, "Consider the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project," appeared in the January/February 2013 issue of the Retiree Newsletter.*



## I recall Egypt as it was 46 years ago By J. Kaye Faulkner



The chaos that is Egypt today stands in marked contrast to the experiences I had there in 1967.

I remember lecturing to mostly Muslim students at the American University Cairo though there would be some Christians, Coptic and Maronite Catholic as well. It always bothered me that what I was saying in class seemed so “out of phase with what I saw outside.” I remember the first time I heard a donkey bray and it scared the hell out of me. It sounded very much like someone was inside calling to get out. The experience was not at all unlike the Disney film of Pinocchio; the bad little boys were turned into donkeys for misbehaving.

I survived the times there, but not without plenty of doubts about what I was doing and the role of the Americans who were placed there to do the work of the State.

On one occasion **Connie**, my wife, and I were invited to the home of an Egyptian in Connie’s class who was married to an American woman. We talked of many things, including the “meta cultural” reasons for the University being there and my contribution to that effort. The Egyptian man was critical of American professors coming to their country. He took not unseemly delight in telling me that “while they liked us they did not want to become like us.”

His point was precisely what struck me about what I was doing in the classroom. There was no intellectual engagement with what we were saying from any of the students. They simply memorized the lectures and reassured us of what we said by repeating back our words on test day. It

was the simplest fraud in the world. The Kiwis (when I taught in New Zealand) practiced the same routine, though they would not bother to ask any questions. The students at AUC would occasionally show something, but I am not at all sure what. It could have been mistaken for interest.

I haven’t been back since, but I keep wondering if in the intervening years classrooms there are any different now than they were then. Does the chaos in the streets today in part come from the university classroom, or does the classroom now remain as insulated from the outside world as it was in 1967?

*J. Kaye Faulkner is a frequent contributor to the Newsletter who has written about his experiences as an organizer for the Washington Federation of Teachers and the national AFT.*

## You’ll know me by my clothes! By Nancy Moore



Long gone are the days when I considered what Nordstrom suit or blazer and Barry Brick-en pants, Cole Haan loafers or Ferragamo heels I would wear into the classroom.

While not a fashion maven by any means, I did rack up quite a bill at Nordstrom’s over a 30-year period in my effort to look “professional.” I did enjoy fine tailored clothing, no question. Still do, but all that has changed since I retired in 1999.

One reason for my new retirement wardrobe is, as one waggish gift stated, “Retirement: twice the time, half the money.” Even so, the gatherings I go to now have to do with the Washington

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Koi & Water Garden Society, and there is no required attire. However, I do have a varied koi wardrobe, and a closetful of choices. There's this year's koi show t-shirt, based on a Cody Turtle "Gosanke Petals" design. One of my favorite sweatshirts is the Thomas Deir "Bekko" design, which has the Hawaiian Islands hidden in the sumi (black). When gardening, I revert to the older Robin James sweatshirt, which shows off my now deceased tancho kohaku, Pancho.

For dress up, I have the matching t-shirt and sweatshirt from the 2011 Koi Show, "In the Current Moment," by artist Sybil Shane. It's basic black, good for evening events. Actually, the shirt looks great with a dress up jacket (silver) from Chico's. For colder weather, there's my royal blue Washington Koi & Water Garden Society jacket, water resistant. Most of my koi colleagues have this same wardrobe. We look like a bowling team.

For summer wear, I have my "Phoenix Rising" shirt, created by California's Inland Koi Society, which I bought at the 2007 AKCA seminar in Mesa, AZ. Also, I have a series of Patti Magee shirts, featuring Northwest Koi & Goldfish Club winners, which work well on cooler summer evenings. All of these shirts can be further spruced up with show pins; each koi show I compete in has a commemorative pin for that event.

So, basically, my wardrobe now consists of koi-themed clothes. Toss in black pants (dress up) or blue jeans, sandals or walking shoes, and I am all set. So far, I have not found koi underwear, though socks pop up now and then.

But I outgrew my Edmonds Community College sweatshirt a long time ago, and I don't plan to get another one.

*Nancy Moore taught English at Edmonds Community College for nearly 30 years, with two years off to serve on the Washington Federation of Teachers staff. She retired in 1999.*

## You call that a card?

**By Roger Carlstrom, Editor**



I have always loved the game of cribbage, from the time I was a boy too small to play the game myself as I watched – and listened to – my father and my Uncle Ray play. "Fifteen two, fifteen four, fifteen six, and a pair is eight."

"That's a go." "Thirty one for two." "Cut me a card." "You call that a card?" "This is the second nineteen in the crib I've had this game." "I smell a skunk." "Don't say I never did anything for you." "I'm in the stink hole." "These cards are complete strangers." "And His Nibs for one."

There's a patter to the game. My sister-in-law once asked my brother and me to play because she just liked to hear us talk. And as the patter goes on, conversation on any number of topics is had—between the players and between them and others in the room, who might chime in with this thought or another, or even with the request that the players pipe down. The same thing can happen with backgammon, dominoes, gin rummy, and other games, of course, though they generally lack the patter of cribbage.

In August, I thought of my love for cribbage when I walked by a boat tied to the reciprocal dock at the Oak Harbor Marina. Two obviously retired fellows were seated at a table on the boat, and I guessed they were probably playing cards of some kind, perhaps even my favorite game. But no, not at all. Each was engrossed in an electronic tablet of some kind. No patter, no conversation, no eye contact even. Their activity appeared to be completely insular. The next day, I walked by again. They weren't at the same table this time, but their attention was glued to their tablets in the same, insular way.

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More and more, I find insularity in my world. I'll see thumbs tapping on (virtual) keyboards soundlessly, probably "communicating" with someone on the other end of something. I have seen people in a room playing computer games on a tablet or phone, instead of, say, playing actual games face to face with one another. I'm not blameless: I can get wrapped up in a "smart phone" as easily as anyone.

I see sociability in a day of "social networking" largely fading from my world. We're left to our own devices, you could say.



For back issues of the Newsletter, go to <http://wa.aft.org/retirees/aft-washington-retiree-chapter-newsletter>

*labor donated*