



## Spotlight on Retirees in Action

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** The AFT Washington Retiree Chapter Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, May 18, 2019, from 11 AM to 2 PM at the Hotel Murano in Tacoma. We will be electing new chapter officers. We ask that you, or others you think would be good leaders, consider running for an office in the Retiree Chapter. If you are interested in running, please contact Susan Levy.

At our business meeting, we will also discuss resolutions, a list of tasks and duties the chapter leadership should undertake during the new term, and have a brief presentation on Social Security and Medicare. Lunch will be provided by AFT Washington. We are also invited to participate in a retirement workshop at 3:30 PM.

Please let Susan Levy ([sjlevy.01@gmail.com](mailto:sjlevy.01@gmail.com)) or Cortney Marabetta ([cmarabetta@aftwa.org](mailto:cmarabetta@aftwa.org)) know that you will attend and to get directions to the location. All are welcome!

**Carol Hamilton (Seattle College)** When I became a mom in my mid-thirties, I didn't have "any" family in Seattle or nearby. I took a full year away from full-time teaching to be on leave because our contract allowed me that unpaid privilege. Now, my oldest daughter—in her late thirties—is a mom with two children who are three and one. She is "not working" outside of the home; her husband commutes and helps a lot around the house, but anyone who has had children knows that it is "work" to raise little ones. I love to help by taking the 3-year-old to music class where I participate, too. I also have my day with each—one day at their house with the youngest—who loves to dance as only a budding walker can to any music that I find on my phone. The day with his sister is "her Nana day," and we have adventures from the mundane to the educational: The Imagine Children's Museum in Everett, the wonderful swimming pool in Montlake Terrace, library story times in Seattle, and her favorite park, Ella Bailey on Magnolia. I am deeply rewarded and so aware that these two precious ones may have Grandma around in the future, but now I am able to care for and truly get to know them. I feel happy and blessed in my Grandma days in retirement.

**Diane Clifford (Shoreline College)** Since retiring in 2014, I've spent some quality time with my alto saxophone, and am currently playing with two adult student groups, one a rock band and the other a jazz combo. I find music to be a great stress reliever in troubled times! Most weeks I participate in a news discussion group at a neighborhood bookstore in Greenwood. It's invigorating to be part of a community of

folks who pay attention to what is going on and who share varied knowledge and reasoned insights. I'm also into international travel with the Italian Alpine Club, which has a chapter in Seattle (the only officially recognized one outside of Italy). This summer our group went to Iceland, which was very cool, both literally and figuratively. Closer to home, my dog and I take off in my Roadtrek on road trips (I do most of the driving). We'll be heading to the California desert early in the new year to spend a couple of weeks in the sun. I really enjoy being retired.

**Sharon Benson (Shoreline College)** Boyd and I live on Harstine Island where we have three acres on Peale Passage in the South Sound. I'm active in both the Community Club and the Women's Club where I serve as treasurer. Boyd keeps telling me to quit raising my hand. We are grateful to be out of the city rat race and in the country with the deer, bear, coyotes and cougars.

**Karen Patjens (Bates Technical College)** Upon retiring in March, my husband and I have traveled both near and far. We spent 10 days in Ireland, and made shorter jaunts to Lincoln City and Ashland, Oregon, and Northern California. I am still singing with the Symphony Tacoma Voices and serving on the City of Fircrest Planning Commission. When not traveling, I spend time with my three lovely grandchildren. My husband spends time with his 93-year-old mother. Retirement is grand!

**Minnie Collins (Seattle Central Emeritus)** I have published two solo collections of poetry and memoirs: *The Purple Wash* (2013) and *Palm Power: Hearts in Harmony* (2018). Also, I have been included in several anthologies: *Raven Chronicles*, *Emerald Reflections*, *Voices That Matter*, *Crosscurrents*, *Threads*, *Fly to the Assemblies!*, *Seattle and the Rise of Resistance*, and *Blackpast.org*. A catalyst for these publications was my membership in the African American Writers' Alliance writer's group in Seattle. With other members, I read in several venues such as the monthly Writers Read program at Seattle's Columbia Library, Third Place Books in Seward Park, Open Hand, Onyx Fine Arts Gallery, churches and other community events. Continuing life-long learning, I am a docent at the Northwest African American Museum and have traveled with my husband and travel groups to Europe, China, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. I do miss building teams and creating programs for Learning Communities at Central. Retirement, however, is fun and productive!

## THE 2020 ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

### Ask Questions | Make Your Voice Heard

We are approaching or are already in the middle of the 2020 election season. Your retiree chapter, along with AFT Washington, PSARA, Social Security Works Washington, and other organizations, are researching the positions of various candidates for president and legislators on the state and federal level. We need to know the candidates' positions on retirement security issues such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and pensions. We will be reporting on these issues in upcoming issues. In the meantime, as candidates for local, state and other federal offices approach you for your support, please take the time to ask them for their positions on these issues and let us know what they have to say. 2020 will be an important election for our retirement security issues, and I know retirement security will be important for our union and the labor movement as a whole. You can help by raising these issues whenever you can.

Also, the AFT National Executive Council recently approved a "presidential endorsement process" designed to ensure unprecedented member input and engagement in deciding who will receive the union's support. On March 19, AFT President Randi Weingarten joined 30,000 AFT members and local leaders for a telephone town hall to announce the launch of [AFTvotes.org](http://AFTvotes.org), a new website that will help AFT members actively participate throughout the endorsement process.

### TAKE ACTION – SIGN UP

Want to know what's happening politically with the AFT Washington legislative and political agenda? Sign up for the AFT Washington Legisletter by contacting Sandra Toussaint ([stoussaint@aftwa.org](mailto:stoussaint@aftwa.org)) or Cortney Marabetta ([cmarabetta@aftwa.org](mailto:cmarabetta@aftwa.org)).

Want to be able to receive e-mail alerts from the AFT Washington Retiree Chapter? Contact Susan Levy ([sjlevy.01@gmail.com](mailto:sjlevy.01@gmail.com)) or Cortney Marabetta ([cmarabetta@aftwa.org](mailto:cmarabetta@aftwa.org)).

Subscribe to AFT National Retirement newsletter at: <https://www.aft.org/action/subscribe-aft-e-newsletters>

Check out WSARA and PSARA at: <https://washington.retiredamericans.org/> and <https://psara.org/>

See what's happening at Social Security Works at: <https://socialsecurityworks.org/>

## OUR MEMBERS SHARE OPINIONS

Have you ever written a letter to the editor? Elaine Berman, who is a member of the AFT Retiree Chapter, recently submitted this Letter to the Editor at the Seattle Times on one of today's hot topics: Big Pharma.

### Ban Prescription Drug Ads from TV

March 26, 2019, at 3:37 p.m.

Instead of including prices on TV drug ads, as President Donald Trump has suggested, perhaps it is time to ban all drug ads from TV, as was done in the past for liquor and cigarettes.

To see the same ads repeatedly for Humira, Xeljanz, Cosentyx and many others that require advice of physicians anyway, is an annoyance and waste of viewer time, and undoubtedly contributes in large measure to high drug costs.

Let doctors prescribe medications which patients need — to the chagrin and opposition, I am sure, of TV ad-space sellers who will need to find advertisements of greater benefit and less potential cost to their viewers.

Elaine Berman, Seattle

Letters editor: [letters@seattletimes.com](mailto:letters@seattletimes.com) and read all about it – do some research! Amazing statistics!

## CONVENTION WORKSHOP

### Making Retirement Work

Steve Bauck, Education Chair of PSARA has been invited to give a presentation on preserving and improving Social Security and Medicare at a workshop scheduled for 3:45 to 5 PM on Saturday afternoon. The workshop will also include a discussion on preparing for retirement and what retirement is like. Your participation will be valuable.



**AFT Washington Retirees Meeting, May 2016**  
*Photo Courtesy of Garet Munger*