

WREA SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER



We can all relate!

Table Contents

of

Cartoon	pg., 1	Reno Aces game	pg. 13
President's Message	pg. 2	In Memoriam	pg.
14-15		WREA Activities	pg.
Forging a Friendship	pg. 2	That's all Folks! Stay tuned.	Pg. 22
16-21			
Election results	pg. 3		
Welcome New Members	pg. 4		
NEA Benefits	pg. 5		
Insurance info	pg.5-7		
Follow us on FB	pg. 8		
Walking Group	pg. 8		
Scholarship Winner	pg. 9		
Walking Group Pics	pg. 10-11		
Book Club News	pg. 12-13		



President's Message

by Susan Kaiser

4x4 relay races are run with a strategy in mind including passing the baton to the next runner. It has been my pleasure to act as President of WREA for the last four years. Growing our fundraising capacity through our Oktoberfest, building our pre-retired member roster and trying out new events like the Aces Baseball game have been both fun and rewarding. Yet, it has all

been possible because of a hardworking Board of Directors and dedicated members who support **Team WREA**. As a reader of this newsletter you know there have been challenges presented by politics and bureaucracy but as a team, we have persevered and prevailed. I am grateful for all the new friends and learning that happened along the way. I won't be going far and will continue to be a regular participant in WREA activities, just as I hope you will. I am leaving this association in good hands beginning August 1st. Read on to find out more. Enjoy your summer!



Forging a Friendship

by Susan Kaiser

I met Ellen Townsend at a little soiree for new retirees hosted by WREA in June 2019. I went for the free appetizers and to toast my next chapter in life as a retired educator. What happened was we found ourselves elected to the Board of Directors!

This is how our friendship began and over time it grew as we worked together - at meetings, setting up for events and just talking. We got to know each other so that when I asked her to serve as WREA Treasurer, she said YES! Not only did she create a digital accounting system and tracks attendees RSVPs and their payments for our events, but she facilitated a recasting of our Bylaws. She has been an **MVP of Team WREA**. Like me she will be stepping down on August 1st, but she is leaving a system in place that runs like clockwork. Thank you - Ellen - for your 6 years of service to the WREA!

ELECTION RESULTS

As many of you know, WREA holds Board elections on a regular basis. The officers, President, Vice President, and Secretary, are elected to a 2 year term, for which they may choose to run again at the end of their term. The Board members, of which there are 6, are elected to a 2 year term as well, on an alternating basis. Seats 1,3, and 5 hold their election on odd numbered years, and seats 2, 4, and 6 hold their election on even numbered years. The election is done completely electronically with the amazing help of Lisa Toth and goes very smoothly. This year, the process concluded on June 9th. and the results are as follows.

President: Fran McGregor

Vice President: Dana Galvin

Secretary: Holly Esposito

All 3 of these ladies were elected by acclamation which means that they were the only nominees and therefore, an election was not needed.

The 3 people elected to fill seats 2,4, and 6 are:

Jencie Fagan

Carol Perrigo

Leina Starbuck

Congratulations to our new/returning officers, and to our returning and new board members.

The other continuing Board members are **Mary Owens** and **Michele DeLano**. There will be an open seat on the board beginning on August 1st which may be filled by appointment of the Board for a 1 year term. The treasurer's seat will also be open beginning August 1st. and the President may appoint someone to fill that position. Stay tuned for that information in our next newsletter.



by

Susan Kaiser & Fran McGregor



**25-26 Membership Drive Recruits
18 NEW Members!**

Welcome to the newest members of the WREA! And without further delay...the winner of our Free Lifetime Membership drawing is

Alissa Wilmet, a pre-retired member who at press time was unavailable to provide a photo and Bio. Watch for it in the next edition. Congratulations, Alissa!

Thanks to all those who joined TEAM WREA this year.

Catherine Jacobson

Kristin Nguyen

Beth Stoker

Robert Pratte

Rhianon Etcheverry

Kimberly Gray

Tiffany Kaiser

Corrine Paiva

Jamen Neef

Carleen Ernest

Mary Basso

Patrick Rossi

Tracey Tresley

Julie Horn

Joshua Novick

Alissa Wilmet

Sherri Lenz

Kristina Stewart



Your Membership Pays!

By Susan Kaiser

In case you missed this item last month, as a member of WREA you are also a member of NSEA and NEA. Each of these organizations offers additional benefits of membership. For instance, you can obtain advice from an attorney with a discount through NSEA. **NEA offers a small FREE Life Insurance benefit** to every member. You just need to sign up for it and keep your beneficiary information up to date. To access this benefit, visit the **NEA Member Benefits website and search their page for “No Cost Benefits.”** You will need to login to access these offers that are issued only to NEA members.

District Insurance Update

By Jacquie Wiebe

Are you retired AND covered by district insurance? The Group Insurance Committee is asking for input from YOU on how to proceed with upcoming decisions to be made regarding premium increases.

Information regarding these changes can be found in the link below. The first four slides explain the current status and potential options, and the final slides show the benefit changes and rates for each option.

<https://washoeschools.community.diligentoneplatform.com/document/823d7d6f-6132-4268-94d2-b2203be52ef3/>

If you are a retiree insured under the district, please take a careful look at the options and contact Jacquie Wiebe (webejax@icloud.com) with your thoughts by Sunday, June 21.

At the June 24 meeting of the Group Insurance Committee, representatives will discuss and vote on how to proceed with insurance rate increases. Make your voice heard by emailing Jacquie ASAP.

See the following pages for more information on this update.

Insurance Rate Increases and Plan Design Changes



Annual Health Insurance Rate Process

- Each year, the Health Insurance Fund is evaluated to determine if current premium revenues are enough to pay for claims costs in the next calendar year.
- If projected claims costs exceed the current premium revenues, then the Group Insurance Committee is presented with a recommendation to raise health insurance premiums or adjust the health plan benefits to align projected costs with revenues.

Rate Increases

- When premium rates are increased, the employee-paid premium paid by the district increases, resulting in costs to all funds, including the General Fund and grant funds which have limited resources.
- Premium rate increases also impact employees with dependents, as dependent premiums raise at the same rate as employer-paid premiums.

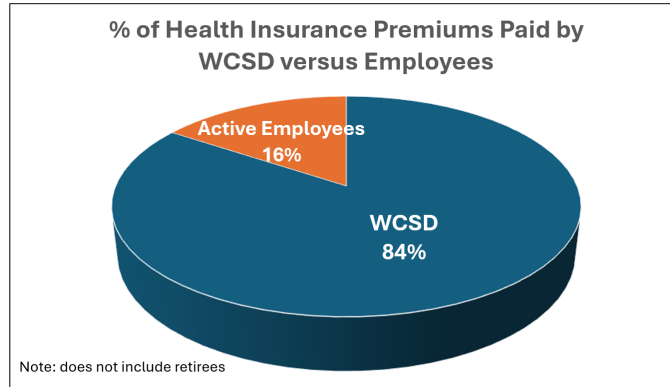
Plan Design Changes

- When health plan benefits, such as deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, and co-pays are increased, this shifts some costs from the Health Insurance Fund to plan members that use the plan.
- This does not result in cost increases to members through dependent premium increases and instead results in cost increases to those that utilize the health plan.

- The Group Insurance Committee can recommend one method, or a combination of both rate increases and plan design changes, to the Board.

Health Insurance Rate Increase Impact

- Because the District covers 100% of the Employee Only cost and the equivalent cost for plans with dependents and because the number of employees on our plans is 1.65X the number of dependents, the District pays for the vast majority of premium costs.



- A 1% rate increase to premiums equates to a District cost of \$0.6 million.

Insurance Rates vs. Plan Design Changes

Entity/Fund	Health Insurance Rate Increase	Health Plan Design Changes
Health Insurance Fund	Revenues increase	Costs decrease
Washoe County School District (employer)	Employer-paid health insurance premiums result in cost increases to other District funds, including the General Fund and grant funds, that have limited resources.	No impact
WCSD Employees	All members with dependents see cost increases, as dependent health insurance premiums increase.	The cost of deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, co-pays, etc. increase. This only impacts members as they utilize the health plan.



Follow us on Facebook

Stay in the loop with WREA activities and more news you can use. Visit: <https://washoeretirededucation.weebly.com/>
You can always email a question to us at wrea.nevada@gmail.com



WREA Walking GROUP

By Mary Owens

Walk, Don't Run, in Your 1st Year of Retirement

To say I'm happy to be retired is an understatement...however, having your whole schedule back takes some getting used to! Thankfully, the WREA has many activities to help with that. I still wanted to be involved in education, have teachers to hang out with (because we are 100% the best people), and create opportunities to take better care of myself.

That is how I found myself leading one of the Spring walks to the lovely Dewbeyúmuwe? Park in Truckee, CA. A small group of us carpooled from my home, enjoyed a gorgeous sunny morning walking by the river, then chatted through a leisurely & delicious lunch. (Truth be told, long lunches are definitely one of my favorite things about retirement, that and using the restroom whenever I need!)

The WREA walks, book club, luncheons, game afternoons & special events have given me fun & educational things to do within my new schedule. And the best part, my new schedule is exactly as busy as I choose it to be...

I hope to see more of you walking with me through retirement next school year.

Happy Summer!
Mary Owens
WREA Board Member

WREA Bernie Anderson Scholarship



Winner

This year's scholarship winner is Sarah Leary.

Good Afternoon!

Once again, thank you so much for all of your generosity!

Would you like the short biography to be in the third person? Here is third person:

Sarah Leary is a graduating senior from the University of Nevada Reno. She is earning her degree in Integrated Elementary Teaching with endorsements in Special Education and English Language Acquisition and Development. She will be teaching second grade at Van Gorder Elementary in the fall. As a Sparks native, she is very excited to begin teaching students in the community she was raised in!

Thank you,
Sarah Leary

WREA is happy to congratulate Sarah and welcome her to the wonderful world of education. Good luck in all your endeavors.

Walking Group Pictures

By Mary Owens





BOOK CLUB NEWS

by Fran McGregor

July's selection is **Paper Girl** by Beth Macy. Urbana, Ohio, was not a utopia when Beth Macy grew up there in the '70s and '80s – certainly not for her family. Her dad was known as the town drunk, which hurt, as did their poverty. But Urbana had a healthy economy and thriving schools, and Macy had middle-class schoolmates whose families became her role models. Though she left for college on a Pell Grant and then a faraway career in journalism, she still clung gratefully to the place that had helped raise her. But as Macy's mother's health declined in 2020, she couldn't shake the feeling that her town had dramatically hardened. Macy had grown up as the paper girl, delivering the local newspaper, which was the town's civic glue. Now she found scant local news and precious little civic glue. Yes, much of the work that once supported the middle class had gone away, but that didn't begin to cover the forces turning Urbana into a poorer and angrier place. Absenteeism soared in the schools and in the workplace as a mental health crisis gripped the small city. Some of her old friends now embraced conspiracies. In nearby Springfield, Macy watched as her ex-boyfriend – once the most liberal person she knew – became a lead voice of opposition against the Haitian immigrants, parroting false talking points throughout the 2024 presidential campaign. This was not an assignment Beth Macy had ever imagined taking on, but after her mother's death, she decided to figure out what happened to Urbana in the forty years since she'd left. The result is an astonishing book that, by taking us into the heart of one place, brings into focus our most urgent national issues.

My Friends by Fredrik Backman is the August selection. Most people don't even notice them – three tiny figures sitting at the end of a long pier in the corner of one of the most famous paintings in the world. Most people think it's just a depiction of a wide expanse of sea. But Louisa, soon to be eighteen years old and an aspiring artist herself, knows otherwise. She is determined to find out the story behind these three figures. More than two decades before, in a distant seaside town, a group of teenagers find refuge from their bruising home lives by spending long summer days on an abandoned pier telling silly jokes, sharing secrets, and committing small acts of rebellion. These lost souls find in each other a reason to get up every morning, a reason to dream, a reason to love. Out of that summer emerges a transcendent work of art, a painting that, after a chance encounter in an alleyway, will unexpectedly be placed into Louisa's care. She embarks on a surprise-filled cross-country journey to

discover how the painting came to be and to decide what to do with it. The closer she gets to the painting's birthplace, the more anxious she becomes about what she'll find. Louisa's complicated life is proof that happy endings are sometimes possible, but they don't always take the form we expect them to.

The Book Club is currently reading **The Boys of Riverside** by Thomas Fuller. The Book Club meets the last Tuesday of the month at the WEA office at 10 AM. If you are interested in joining us, please feel free to do so!

ACES Baseball night!

We distributed tickets at the "LOVE" sign...


Then all bundled up sat down to watch the game. Kathy Howard caught a T-shirt, but it was unseasonably cool and sadly the Aces lost to the River Cats. Still a good time was had by all who attended.



Thanks to Jencie Fagan who made all the arrangements and then couldn't attend because she was sick!



In Memoriam Steve Horner



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

STEVE HORNER

UNION STRONG FROM
JULY 1951 - JUNE 2026

Steve dedicated his life to public education, union solidarity, and the belief that working people are strongest when we stand together. He was a tireless advocate for educators, retirees, students, and every member of the NSEA family. His love for this union was unmistakable. Steve did not just believe in the power of unions, he believed deeply in his union, the Nevada State Education Association, and he carried that pride everywhere he went.

Even in recent years, Steve continued showing up for members, mentoring new leaders, canvassing for candidates, attending events, encouraging activists, and reminding all of us why our work matters. His kindness, humor, wisdom, and unwavering commitment touched generations of educators and activists across Nevada and beyond.

Steve leaves behind a legacy of courage, compassion, and service that will continue to inspire us. We are better because of him.

On behalf of the entire NSEA family, we send our love and deepest condolences to Steve's family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Steve may no longer be with us, but his solidarity is forever. Rest in Power.



Nevada State Education Association

It is with profound sadness that we share the passing of our friend, colleague, union brother, and lifelong advocate for public education, Steve Horner.

Steve dedicated his life to public education, union solidarity, and the belief that working people are strongest when we stand together. He was a tireless advocate for educators, retirees, students, and every member of the NSEA family. His love for this union was unmistakable. Steve did not just believe in the power of unions, he believed deeply in his union, the Nevada State Education Association, and he carried that pride everywhere he went.

Even in recent years, Steve continued showing up for members, mentoring new leaders, canvassing for candidates, attending events, encouraging activists, and reminding all of us why our work matters. His kindness, humor, wisdom, and unwavering commitment touched generations of educators and activists across Nevada and beyond.

Steve leaves behind a legacy of courage, compassion, and service that will continue to inspire us. We are better because of him.

On behalf of the entire NSEA family, we send our love and deepest condolences to Steve's family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Steve may no longer be with us, but his solidarity is forever. Rest in Power.

WREA SPRING ACTIVITIES

By Michele DeLano & Mary Owens

The WREA continues to have many different activities to keep our members engaged. Along with the above-mentioned walking group and the Aces Ball game, we also had several fun activities this season. We started off with our annual Saint Patrick's Day luncheon at Bistro 7 where great food and a good time was had by all.



Dana Galvin & Summer Kay

The lovely Janet
Carnes
Fran McGregor &
Phil Kaiser



Gordy McGregor

Our own Jencie Fagan

Mary Owens & Melissa Sewell



Members having a great time, good food, and wonderful conversations.

Then it was on to Taco Tuesday at Tacos Tijuana to celebrate Cinco de Mayo.



And finally, on to our End of School luncheon and the announcement of our

Scholarship winner, held at The Cup in Reno Town Mall.



Carol Perrigo, Board Member



Mary Fagan,
Board Members



Sarah Leary, Scholarship Winner
& President Susan Kaiser

Owens & Jencie



Fred & Sue Dailey with Sharon Berry



Fran McGregor, incoming WREA President &

Susan Kaiser, outgoing WREA President





That's it for now. Please keep updated with your WREA association by following us on Facebook and/or visiting our site at www.washoeretirededucation.weebly.com

We hope to see you when we return in August with our calendar of events for the 2026-2027 year. Enjoy your summer.