May/June, 2021 — Volume 48, No. 6

OUR PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

By John Masterjohn

First of all, I want to congratulate all the members who ran and won positions on the Board. They are: Alan Brittenham, Recording Secretary; Hillary Hamilton, who has agreed to accept the Financial Secretary position; Edie Jorgensen, Ann Kelson, Pat Kirkness, and myself. Elected as alternates are: Alan Painter, Bob Chandler, Susan White, and Martin Equidal. I do want to thank all the members who voted for me.

Some good news, Lou Walter is back attending the SCERS (Seattle City Employees’ Retirement System) virtual Board meetings. We are hoping that, soon, he will start writing his articles again.

The issue of divestment is still on the table and, as I mentioned in my last article, the SCERS Board is still studying the issue. My understanding is that the Board and their consultants are still opposed to divestment.

The SCERS Board had a recent election and they passed a motion to waive the in-person appointment for applying for the position.

Your ARSCE Board has sent a letter to the SCERS Board requesting that they record their Board meetings so that they are more accessible to the membership. When I discussed this with Jeff Davis, the Chief Finance and Operations Officer, he told me that they had considered it but, always a but, they decided not to do so at this time. What do you do with the recordings and how long do you keep them?

We are going to contact the president of the City Light Employees Association and ask if they also would request the recording of meetings. If you think this is something you would be interested in, contact the retirement system and request that they record their Board meetings.

As I always say, this might be my last article as president and, if so, it has been a blast!

John

Contact Mr. Masterjohn at president@arsce.org

YOUR PENSION NEWS

By Lou Walter, Retired Employee, Member: Seattle City Employees’ Retirement System

Update from Terry Walter:

Lou is looking great today! Here is a picture of him in his new digs at The Quarry in Vancouver WA—room 352.

He has been undergoing quite a rigorous schedule of wound cleaning. You may remember he got a bad infection in his foot and he has a wound VAC (negative pressure wound therapy) on the foot as well as twice weekly visits to a wound doctor to clean it. While the wound is healing nicely, the infection has gotten into the bone. He has been putting on antibiotics and the doctor has recommended hyperbaric treatment for 90 days.

Our hope is to save the foot and avoid amputation of his lower leg. He is in good spirits, eating well, and staying on top of other aspects of his treatment.

NOTICE of ELECTION

Notice of Regular Election for Active Member Seat

The Period for Candidacy opened on April 8, 2021 and closed on April 22, 2021. By the time this issue of ARSCE News was printed, a new member is in the selection process, or has been elected.

By way of review, the Retirement System’s assets are held in trust. The Board of Administration has a fiduciary responsibility for those assets. The two key fiduciary responsibilities are the duty of prudence and the duty of loyalty. The duty of prudence is largely about process and ensuring an investment process was prudent. The duty of loyalty requires the trustee to act “with an eye single to the interest of the members and beneficiaries.”

The Board of Administration oversees the fund’s investment activities and seeks to create a diversified and balanced portfolio.

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As we slowly work our way through this pandemic, we measure our progress by who got their vaccinations. I got my first one in early March, on a fluke. My wife was in Fred Meyer picking up some scripts when they put out a call for anyone to help them use up a few leftover shots they had at the end of the day. She called me, and I went running down there and got my first Pfizer shot right away. Since I had been online every single morning looking for an appointment with no luck, I was very happy to take advantage of this fluke.

So, here’s the tip: Every day, around 4:30pm, drop by your local pharmacy (Fred Meyer, Safeway, Sea-Mar Community Health Center, whatever) and check with them to see if they are in the same boat. So many people have made multiple appointments, then not bothered to tell them that they got their shot elsewhere. I bet this happens almost every day. If you find yourself in the same bind I was in, this might be a way to get around it if you are otherwise eligible.

Which brings us neatly to the idea that soon we may be able to gather at Feast Restaurant in downtown Renton to marvel as Mike Minato polishes off the clams while Gene Lucas, who finally, grudgingly, tried something other than fried chicken last time, continues to explore his personal culinary limits as we gather and gab in congenial splendor. This might happen as soon as May, if enough of us are vaccinated by then. I’ll send out the email later asking how many have gotten theirs. Hopefully, enough of us will have done so, and the restaurant will have loosened their requirements by then to allow us to get back into our habits. I’m getting hungry just thinking about it. Hope to see you all there soon.

You can reach Mr. Brittenham @ abrittenham@comcast.net

Here’s where you’ll find the latest news from ARSCE. Look us up!

When you visit www.facebook.com simply type in: ARSCE-Active and Retired Seattle City Employees Group

Writers Wanted!

Join the ARSCE Team as a Guest COLUMNIST

Share your knowledge with us!

Do you have a passion to share with others? Perhaps you have a unique history, interesting hobby, or fun pasttime you’re excited to encourage someone to try. Talk to us about it! It could be that you’re our next Guest Columnist. Tell us about yourself.

Contact us at: arscenews@arsce.org

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Contact us at: www.arsce.org
Or telephone us at 206.683.5461
Fritz Lang, Director: Comedy Takes a Holiday

In the 1930s Germany and Austria lost many artists who were fortunate enough to leave their country before they, and it, were lost. On the same day Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels viewed Fritz Lang’s just-completed thriller The Testament of Dr. Mabuse and saw that Lang had slipped Nazi slogans and ideas into the mouth of a madman, Goebbels banned the film, but, ironically, offered Lang the job of running Germany’s great UFA FilmStudios. Lang, knowing he’d not be long for that world, or any other, left Germany, and brought west his monocle, his experience with German expressionism, and his special feel for what became known later as film noir. The British Film Institute called Lang “The Master of Darkness.”

These films need no ghosts to do their haunting: Metropolis (1927) is a silent classic about labor and management, oppression, and redemption, and set in an alternate future. This masterpiece of production design has been substantially restored to its original glory in Kino Lorber’s latest DVD release, making that version the one to enjoy. (In German, with English intertitles.)

The Testament of Dr. Mabuse (1933) is Lang’s take on cops and a seemingly indefatigable master criminal. Madness, police incompetence and corruption, and humor co-exist surprisingly well. (In German, with English intertitles.)

In M (1931), Peter Lorre emerges from minor comedy work in the Austrian theatre to become a madman and is forever after typecast in dramas and in comedies as foreign spy, criminal and/or insane murderer. (In German, with English subtitles.)

Liliom (1934) Charles Boyer and Madeleine Ozeray are star-crossed lovers in this romantic fantasy based on the Ference Molnar play—later the source for Rogers and Hammerstein’s Carousel. (In French, with English subtitles.)

Fury (1936) Lang’s first American film stars an intense Spencer Tracy with solid support by Sylvia Sidney in this story of an innocent man facing both the fury of a lynch mob and his own.

Man Hunt (1941) is based on Geoffrey Household’s novel Rogue Male. Walter Pidgeon, before he settles in as the stalwart Mr. Miniver, is a hunter who may or may not have sighted his rifle’s scope on Adolph Hitler and is later tracked down in England by German agent George Sanders.

In Ministry of Fear (1944), from Graham Greene’s novel, Ray Milland, released from an English mental asylum, visits a quiet country village and begins to doubt his emotional recovery as he stumbles upon some folks who might be Nazis.

Glenn Ford is solid as the lead in 1953’s The Big Heat, from the William T. McGovern story, but Lee Marvin and Gloria Grahame, in early key roles, bring memorable performances to this police corruption tale set in an unidentified large city—perhaps New York or Chicago. It couldn’t happen here, could it?

These films have subtitles in English or “close captions” for the hearing impaired and are around town at video stores that carry decent inventories of the classics, but the films may not be available with subtitles or close captioning from cable or satellite, or from “streaming” resources such as Netflix and Amazon.

And here’s a bonus:

This is not in my principal picks because current DVD prints do not include English subtitles: Lang’s Hangmen Also Die (1943). It’s a Nazi-occupied Prague-set fictionalized account of the Czech patriots who dealt with real-life Reinhard Heydrich, Deputy/Acting Reich-Protector of Bohemia and Moravia (now the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic). “Protector” had a very different meaning for The Hangman.

Send ARSCE Your News, Short Stories & Poems

Mail your information to:
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(All submittals become the property of ARSCE.)
A Voice on the Phone

Working on a 24-hour crisis hotline at night is not usually boring, but this particular evening shift was going to be a long one. She didn’t mind—the calls at night were more interesting, not that that is a good word to associate with a crisis hotline. Nighttime was when miserable souls at the end of their ability to cope or lonely people needing to hear a friendly voice on the other end would call. She was rather lonely too, especially during this pandemic that forced everyone to distance from others. Speaking with callers served as a reminder that she could be a lot worse off.

She looked around her cozy kitchen and the twinkling Christmas lights in the family room. A candle scented the air. Christmas carols played softly on her holiday playlist. She found she preferred volunteering from home rather than driving into town to the sterile and dingy County Crisis call center. Her new kitten Gunnar raced about chasing a felted mouse attached to the pole she held in her hand. She was thankful she decided to get a pet. It helped during the long hours at home. The phone rang, bringing her attention back to the job.

“County Crisis Hotline. How can I assist you tonight?”

“Hi there. I don’t know if this is the correct number to call, but I figured I would get a real person answering and you wouldn’t be too busy at this hour of the night.”

“A good assumption. How can I help you?”

“Well, I’m stuck at home, in a wheelchair, and unable to get any food or meals. And I’m getting pretty hungry. Do you have any suggestions for me?”

He was right, this was not the correct number to call, but it was a slow evening and helping him was better than just watching a kitten chase a fake mouse around the kitchen.

“That’s okay. I can probably offer some assistance for you. How do you usually get food?”

“I have a friend who’s been driving me to the store, but he’s gone for the holidays. He took me shopping before he left, but that was a couple of weeks ago.”

“How about ordering groceries online for delivery?”

“I knew you were going to suggest that. I live in an area that doesn’t have internet yet. It’s coming early next year.”

Hard to believe. Maybe he just doesn’t realize it’s available and hasn’t signed up?

“I didn’t think there was anywhere in this county that didn’t have internet.”

“Well, it’s true. I don’t have Wi-Fi or TV. Even cell service can be sketchy in bad weather. I understand they just got electricity up here about 5 years ago.”

“So, are you a member of a church or a community organization that could assist you?”

“No, I’m not. I just moved to the area and it’s hard to get out to meet people, being in a wheelchair and all.”

This guy must be crazy. Why would he move to such a remote area with no access to technology, friends, or services if he’s in a wheelchair? She pushed those thoughts from her mind. It was important to remain unbiased and objective while speaking to someone on the phone. She resumed flipping the mouse in the air around her.

“Well, I’m not sure what to tell you. I could refer you to a local food bank, but I’m assuming there’s no way for you to get there. How about Meals on Wheels?”

“I hadn’t thought of that. I’d rather cook for myself, but I will try them if you have a phone number.”

“Sure. What area of the county are you in?”

“I live east of North Bend, up North Country Road.”

“Really? Believe it or not, I have a friend of a friend who lives up there. Do you happen to know the Chesterfields?”

“No, I haven’t lived here very long.”

“Well, I don’t really know them well. Otherwise I’d be happy to call them and ask if they could help you.”

“I sure do appreciate that, but I’ll figure something out. So… what’s a nice girl like you doing answering these types of phone calls in the middle of the night?”

Okay, here come the moves. This was pretty common, too, when speaking with a man in crisis at night.

“I’m somewhat of a night owl and prefer volunteering for night shifts. Ok, got a pencil? Here’s the number. By the way, can you give me your name and year of birth? I need it for the call log I must keep.”

“Sure. My name is Greg McFadden and I was born in 1970. Any other vital you need for your log?”

“The question ended on a drawn-out higher octave. She envisioned his eyebrows going up while asking. Was he being a little flirty?

“Nope, that’s it. You really don’t have anything in the house to eat?”

“Well, does a sack of dried beans and a couple cans of peaches count?”

“Not really. Should I call you back to see if Meals on Wheels worked out?”

“Sure, if you want. I would appreciate that. Do you need my phone number?”

“Nope, it’s here on the phone display. Good luck.”

The rest of the evening shift was uneventful, so she spent a lot of it thinking about Greg McFadden. He piqued her interest. She wondered what the person behind the voice looked like. He’d probably lived a fast and hard life. Unhealthy habits, broken relationships, and painful memories. Why else would you live in a remote part of the county, away from friends and services? But he sounded upbeat, articulate, and polite. She wondered why he was in a wheelchair. Maybe he was a vet and had been wounded in the war. Whatever…she could speculate all night. Greg McFadden does have a problem, but nothing that a few groceries wouldn’t solve. Still, she was intrigued by this man living out in the woods with nothing to eat. At least she didn’t need to worry about being hungry. She filled much of her time these days trying out new recipes. Her freezer was full of meals for one.

A few days later, she did call him back as she said she would.

“Hi Greg. This is Laura, calling from the County Crisis Hotline. How are you today?”

“Fine. You called back. I didn’t think you would.”

“Why?”

“Well, my problem doesn’t really seem as serious as others you must deal with during the holiday season.”

He answered her casually, like a friend. She considered her tone. Should she respond with her business-as-usual voice, or should she lighten it up? She didn’t want to seem too informal, but then she didn’t want to come off as rigid or not open to a conversation, which she was. Regardless, he was a lonely, hungry man, in a wheelchair, and she would give him the attention he deserved.

“I just wanted to make sure you aren’t starving to death up there in the woods. Were you able to get some food for yourself?”

“Yes, and no. I did call Meals on Wheels and they said they didn’t deliver to my area. But, they did give me the name of a lady out this way who is willing to shop for housebounds. She called yesterday and I gave her my shopping list. Haven’t heard back from her, but maybe she’ll show up today. I did cook some beans yesterday. Not too tasty, but a good source of protein. So, are you working the day shift today?”

continued on page 5
“Umm… no. I’m not officially on shift. I told you I would call and, frankly, I’ve been a little worried about you up there in the woods.”

“Well thanks for that—I’m fine. Tell you what. If she doesn’t show up today, I’ll call you back. Will I get you if I call the crisis hotline tonight?”

She almost gave him her personal phone number, but that was a serious breach of policy. You never give your phone number to a caller. That’s just asking for problems.

“Maybe. There are other call takers, but you can leave a message for me at that number. Please do call if you are still in need, okay? I may have some other resources for you.”

“Ok, will do. And thanks for checking on me.”

Spring came with no end to the highly contagious virus ravaging the world. Non-essential businesses and schools were still closed, and everyone was encouraged to remain at home as much as possible. For her sanity, she decided to resume some activities, like seeing friends at a distance and grocery shopping. With the longer days and drier weather, her disposition and sense of contentment improved.

This day, the weather was forecasted to stay warm and dry so she invited a friend for dinner. The meal would be outside by the firepit and coq au vin was on the menu. She was looking forward of course.

“Hi Matt. How are you? It’s been a long winter huh? So nice to have some sun and warmth out there.”

“I’m good. Yes, it is nice to see some better weather. We’re getting a few more customers back in the store, too. That helps.”

“I have a question for you. I’m making chicken coq au vin tonight and the recipe calls for a whole chicken fryer. I would rather do something a little more elegant. Can I just use a chicken breast?”

“Sure. But remember the bones in those chicken parts add a depth of flavor that you won’t get with a boneless chicken breast.”

“I hadn’t considered that, but I think I’ll give it a try. So awkward to have to deal with chicken bones when you’re having a fancy dinner. Can you give me two large breasts?”

“Laura?”

She turned to acknowledge the voice. A tall man with sandy hair and wearing a Seahawks mask stood directly behind her.

“Do I know you? I’m sorry, but it’s so hard to tell these days with everyone wearing masks.”

“I believe you do. Do you volunteer for the county crisis hotline?”

“Well yes, I do. How do you know that?”

“I recognize your voice, even with the mask on. I’m Greg McFadden.”

She was flabbergasted. She had thought about what had happened to him and what the man behind the voice looked like. This man standing here exceeded her expectations. And he remembered her voice—how charming is that?

“That’s okay. I was only in that chair for a couple of months. I had a very seriously broken leg and had surgery. Had to be totally non-weight bearing for 8 weeks.”

“Well, you look good! I mean you don’t look like you starved to death.”

She could feel her face reddening and, for once, was thankful for the irritating mask.

“Yea, I made it through the winter okay. Do you shop here often? You said you had friends nearby, but I certainly wasn’t expecting to run into you.”

“Well, I do live fairly close by. I haven’t done my own shopping all winter and decided to come today. This is one of my favorite food stores. I’m having a dinner—outside of course—for a friend this evening.”

“Well, I’m glad you did. I like to shop here too. I’d much rather spend my money in the local businesses rather than in the larger grocery chain stores. Do you have time for a cup of coffee? I’ll catch you up on what happened after I last talked to you. Outside, of course.”

“Yes, I would like that.”

She wasn’t sure where this was headed and she didn’t care if there was a crisis hotline policy against fraternizing or not. And, she knew one thing for sure. If she was around he would never be hungry again.

NOTE: This story is based on a real call I had while answering phones for the Red Cross. I took the liberty of expanding upon it and changing the outcome.

You can contact Ms. Needham @ laurieneedham@comcast.net
Pearl, the Pandemic Pup

In March of 2020, I came to terms with the fact that this thing was serious. Yes, by “thing” I mean the pandemic. I realized that having my hair done would have to wait for a while. Lunches and dinners with friends and travel plans would need to be postponed and other activities would have to be altered to protect ourselves and others. I believed I could handle it well enough because I am mostly an introverted homeowner who doesn’t need the company of lots of people to make me happy. My friend, Bruce comes over from his West Seattle home every weekend. I have my computer, my TV, Netflix and other streaming platforms and I thought I could deal with being housebound.

I walk for an hour with friends each morning and on our walks we usually encounter other walkers, many of whom have dogs and we always stop and greet them and pet their doggie companions. I am a “dog person” and have had several during my lifetime, but lost my last dog, Robbie, in 2014 after having raised him from a puppy to his passing at age 16. In about June, I started to fantasize getting a dog to keep me company during my enforced house arrest. All my friends tried to discourage me and told me it would be too much responsibility and would tie me down, but I didn’t want to listen. I wanted to provide a home for a rescue dog, a pet who really needed me. This proved to be more difficult than I imagined.

One of my major obstacles was that all the shelters were closed to visitors and any applications to adopt a rescue dog needed to be online. I registered on several pet adoption sites and was surprised at how demanding the qualifications and restrictions were. But I persevered and reviewed profiles of many dogs which came to my email. In my own mind I had some requirements. I preferred a male, youngish but not a puppy, under 16 pounds and no white dogs, please. I had owned a white toy poodle at one time, and I swore never again to own a white dog. It is kind of like having white dogs, please. I had owned a white toy poodle at one time, and I swore never again to own a white dog. It is kind of like having white dogs, please.

The entire project started to become very perplexing because every time I applied for a dog that appealed to me, I got the message that this dog had already been adopted. Also, many of the dogs had to be shipped from Korea (I was shocked to hear that those dogs had been rescued from dog meat factory operations) or from Mexico or other places which had “kill shelters.” I began to think these websites were some kind of scam just to get your information. One of the shelters even required pictures of the inside and outside of my residence, which made me wonder if I was being set up to be burglarized. My interest flagged, but I was still receiving dog pictures and profiles. It was summer and I fantasized about long doggy walks and cuddling up in the evenings.

In September I received a profile of a little dog who looked very cute. The problem was that she was a female and completely white, not my first choice. Her name was Dominga, she was two years old, and weighed about twelve pounds. The shelter was white, not my first choice. Her name was Dominga, she was two years old, and weighed about twelve pounds. The shelter was in Gig Harbor and when I called them, I was told that Dominga was still available, but I needed to come out that weekend. Bruce and I decided to drive over to Gig Harbor and take a look. The shelter named Wet Noses and Dry Paws seemed very clean, well run, and organized.

One of the volunteers, Carol, brought out Dominga and asked if we would like to take her for a walk nearby. We were given the leash and some directions about where we should walk and took off. Dominga was very shy and a little nervous especially at noises of cars driving by. When we returned, Carol asked in a very matter-of-fact way, “So do you want to take her home?” I was slightly concerned that it might not work out and then what? Carol said their rules were that we could take the dog for five days and at the end of that time, we needed to commit to adoption or return the dog. Then she gave me the back story about Dominga. She had been given up by a family and became a street dog in Guadalajara, Mexico. The shelter knew she had been with a family because she was used to being on a leash and seemed housebroken. She was taken into a Mexican shelter, spayed, and given all her shots, then shipped by air to the Gig Harbor shelter. She was taken home by a family for five days, then returned to the shelter and she was with me. The sad and appalling part to me was that all these events had happened within less than a month because her rabies shot certificate in Mexico was dated September 3 and today was September 23. I realized that this two-year-old girl had gone through more than most of us could imagine.

When I brought her home, she was very skittish and did not take well to Bruce. We had been told she did not like men. She only picked at her food and started sticking to me like glue. Upon some research I found out that rescue dogs can take up to a year or more to acclimatize to a family, so I am being very patient with her. I didn’t want to call her Dominga but, since she was all white, my sister, also a dog lover, named her Pearl and Pearl quickly learned to answer to that name. My sister has showered her with a cushy bed, toys, a new leash, and plush blankets. Pearl is unlike any dog I have known. She doesn’t know how to play with toys and when I tossed her a tennis ball, she ran away looking at me as if to say, “Why are you throwing that thing at me?” She still is a very picky eater, and it is a continual challenge to get her to eat. She is quite skinny, although she has put on a pound or two.

On the plus side, Pearl is an extremely sweet, gentle little doggie who never barks, stays at home well when I must leave the house, and dances around and is so happy to see me when I return. She sleeps at the foot of my bed and never moves the entire night. She is happy with a ten minute walk each day and has learned how to use the dog door to go outside on her own. She is company when I watch TV and provides a sense of scheduling to my day.

So, if I had it to do again, knowing then what I know now, I probably would have gone forward with my idea about having a dog to keep me company. She is probably more trouble than she’s worth. But I would never think of giving up this loving little creature who considers me her protector and mom. And she is leading a life that many dogs would envy. And it is certainly better than being a street dog in Mexico.

Many ARSCE members currently volunteer. Others would like to volunteer, but are not sure what opportunities exist. Space limitations mean we cannot list individual opportunities in the ARSCE News.

Please refer to these two extensive websites for volunteering opportunities in the Seattle area: United Way of King County located at (www.uwkc.org/volunteer). This is probably the most comprehensive of the local volunteer opportunity websites. A search of their database using the term “parks” returned 76 different volunteer opportunities; “animal” returned 65 opportunities, “home” returned 141, “senior” returned 50 and “children” returned 595. You can also register on the site and arrange to have internet “feeds” sent to you about volunteer opportunities in areas that interest you.

Volunteer Match (www.volunteermatch.org) is another very good comprehensive site with some interesting geographical limit capabilities. Enter your home zip code to start.
Hidden Reality

Now that we know, it should have been obvious all along. The leaders of the Greater Galaxy, meaning the Milky Way—a remote isolated sector of one of the smaller arms in which our Solar system is buried—and also meaning the representatives of the greater Culture that has gained hegemony over the millennia, has decided a few thousand years ago to place this planet of primitive, dangerous mammals under close surveillance, within the restrictions imposed by the Prime Directive of non-interference.

That decision has been proven correct over and over again as the human race gained in technical sophistication without managing to leave behind all their primitive beliefs and clannish behaviors and the religions, they manufactured to support those beliefs and justify those behaviors. There is an ongoing argument among the professionals in the Oversight department whether we will kill ourselves along with most of the other species on Earth before we wise up to reality and start cleaning up the messes we have made.

One side says that, to be scientifically pure and rigorous in the experiment, we should be allowed to go extinct as a result of our decisions, and a new and interesting species of being will take our place.

The other side says that, even though things are going bad fast, it is also true that the majority of people are not in a position to do much about it other than vote in the next election, though it must be admitted that less than half of us bother to do that, and an even smaller amount tries to work on the issues and for their solutions. Because of them, it is pointed out, we are worth saving, and someone should step in and put a stop to our insanity before we blow the whole world up. Not to mention that the rest of the planetary biodiversity has not been given a chance to weigh in on the situation.

The argument continues, and the betting line on the outcome is given a chance to weigh in on the situation.

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That is why, for thousands of years, especially over the last few hundreds as our culinary output grew in sophistication, the demand for Earth-made products has ensured a steady supply of smugglers and agents all scouring the planet for the next great find. Our current economic system supports all this activity nicely. Just try to think about how many anonymous warehouses exist all over the world into which things can go and never come back out, since they got transported aboard the cloaked vessel orbiting the planet.

This interest has also been spreading into jewelry and musical instruments. Think about it. We have been digging up diamonds for hundreds of years, yet the price is still so high! Like a ‘59 Gibson Les Paul sunburst guitar, some have just disappeared, and nobody knows where they went. Nobody on this world, anyway.

Many choice items are so highly valued, like Vincent motorcycles, Bugatti automobiles, or antique firearms, that people maintain lists of every known example of the marque and speculate endlessly on the fate of the missing ones. It should be clear that those have gone off-planet.

It also tends to explain all the stories we have heard, from biblical days forward, about contact between humans and God, or Gods, or any of their related Angels and Demons. It also explains the UFO stories, Area 51, and the rest. No surveillance can be perfect, and crashes do happen.

So, how do I know all of this, you ask? Easy. I made it up. There are several layers of reality, you know. You have Facts. Then you have Facts disguised as Fiction, along with Fiction masquerading as Fact, quite common on Facebook.

And then, thanks to the efforts of Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson in the Illuminatus Trilogy, you have facts disguised as fiction disguised as facts, masquerading as the Truth. Only you can decide which is which, and don’t ask me to point you in the right direction. I’ll just make something up.

You can reach Mr. Brittenham @ abrittenham1@comcast.net

After the year we’ve endured... we just have to learn to laugh a little more!

Age is of no importance unless you’re a cheese.

— Billie Burke

Don’t worry about the world coming to an end today. It is already tomorrow in Australia.

— Charles Schulz

If you don’t know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else.

— Yogi Berra

Always borrow money from a pessimist. He won’t expect it back.

— Oscar Wilde

Don’t expect me to count your blessings. I have no idea how many there are.

— Bill Murray

If you have to ask yourself if you should do something, then you shouldn’t do it.

— Tony Robbins

You can’t make old friends new. You can only make good friends of the ones you already have.

— Elizabeth S. Barnsley

Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions.

— Dalai Lama

You are unique. Don’t try to fit in. Just shine.

— Queen Elizabeth II

Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.

— Winston Churchill

You can’t always be right. Sometimes you can’t be wrong.

— Lewis Black

You can’t always laugh, but you can always laugh at yourself.

— Ellen DeGeneres

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**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

Lee Gartner, Parks  
Carl F. Kaiser, HSD

**Memorials**

May Lou Davis  
In Memory of Keith M. Davis, Range Sev.

**Golden Contribution**

Verna Hill, Health

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**In Memory**

Note: Names with asterisk (*) were ARSCE members

Please note: A number of members have asked why we no longer list the ages of retirees in our “In Memory” report. We have been advised that due to a new privacy policy for the City of Seattle, this information will no longer be available.

Abundia Andaca*  
SPD  
Retired: 07/1994  
Passed: 1/30/2021

Leslie C. Conkie*  
KC Health  
Retired: 06/1985  
Passed: 12/15/2020

David Armstrong  
SPU  
Passed: 2/8/2021

Bertha May (B. May) Dalam*  
SCL  
Retired: 03/1992  
Passed: 1/26/2021

Rose Asakura*  
Planning  
No retirement date listed  
Passed: 1/21/2021

Jesse Daly  
SCL  
Passed: 2/19/2021

Kenneth Barsley  
SDOT  
Passed: 12/22/2020

Claudette Blagsvedt Dietlin  
SPU  
Passed: 1/6/2021

Teodora (Ted) Geranimo*  
SPD  
Retired: 02/2002  
Passed: 12/18/2020

Merlyn Bell  
SPD  
Passed: 1/22/2021

Nancy Hicks  
Parks  
Passed: 1/27/2021

Emerson Bonds, Jr.  
SCL  
Passed: 1/3/2021

Ted J. Holden  
Parks  
Passed date unknown

Leonard Clark  
Engineering  
Passed: 12/17/2020

John M. (Mike) Hughes  
Parks  
Retired: 2007  
Passed: 2/2/2021

Donald Lee Jones  
SCL  
Passed: 11/21/2020

Rachel Leopold*  
Licenses & CA  
Retired: 01/1983  
Passed: 12/20/2020

Diana K. Lewis*  
SPD  
Retired: 2/2006  
Passed: 12/31/2020

Kenneth M. Lawthian*  
SCL  
Retired: 01/1987  
Passed: 12/31/2020

Dolly Matsuzaki  
SCL  
Passed: 2/18/2021

William F. Meyer*  
SCL  
Retired: 03/1991  
Passed: 1/1/2021

Daniel T. Molloy  
Municipal Court  
Passed: 11/17/2020

Myfawny Moore*  
KC Health  
Retired: 07/1993  
Passed: 2/9/2021

Nancy Nobuyama  
Admin. Services  
Passed: 12/27/2020

Theodore H. Ormbrek*  
Engineering  
Retired: 01/1984  
Passed: 9/1/2019

Eileen Piesko*  
Parks  
Retired: 09/1991  
Passed: 12/11/2020

Harry L. Pratt*  
Water  
Retired: 01/1987  
Passed: 12/24/2020

Ronald Ringnald  
SDOT  
Passed: 1/30/2021

Edward Rorning  
Seattle Trans.  
Passed: 2/10/2021

Geary M. Senter*  
SCL  
Retired: 09/1983  
Passed: 2/9/2011

Eddie Simpson  
Parks  
Passed: 12/25/2020

Edward Spirak  
SCL  
Passed: 11/28/2020

Date H. Tiffany  
Legislative

Edgar D. Tracy*  
SCL  
Retired: 08/1984  
Passed: 12/22/2020

Frankie Tsoming*  
SPU  
Retired: 04/2015  
Passed: 12/11/2020

Leroy J. Williams  
Vested  
Passed: 12/30/2020

Robert Wolfe*  
Engineering  
Retired: 01/1995  
Passed: 1/6/2021

Billie L. Young  
Human Services  
Passed: 1/8/2021

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**DONATIONS TO ARSCE**

Since ARSCE operates on a limited budget, donations are always welcome and very much appreciated. ARSCE is a 501 (c)(3) organization. Your donation will be tax deductible within the limits established by the Internal Revenue Service.

Regular donations are noted in the “Golden Contributions” section of ARSCE News, listing the donor’s name and department retired from. Donations in memory of someone are noted in the “Memorials” section of ARSCE News. The name of the deceased person for whom the donation is made and the donor’s name and department retired from are listed. If you would like the family of the deceased person notified of your donation, please include their name and address. A letter will then be sent to them telling them of your memorial donation.

Mail donations to ARSCE, PO Box 75385, Seattle, WA 98175-0385; or go online to www.arsce.org to contribute. You may also fill out the “Membership Application Form” on page 12 of each issue of ARSCE News, or donations can be made utilizing a luncheon reservation form. If you have any questions, please call Hillary Hamilton at 206-683-5461.

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**ARSCE Donation Application**

Please check appropriate box.

Golden Contribution ☐  Memorial ☐

Donor’s Name ____________________________

Dept. Retired from ____________________________

For Memorial Only:

In Memory of ____________________________

Dept. Retired from ____________________________

To Notify Family Donation ~ Provide the following:

Family’s Name ____________________________

City ____________________________ State __ Zip Code ____________

Fill in form, clip and send donations to ARSCE, PO Box 75385, Seattle, WA 98175-0385; or go online to www.arsce.org to contribute. You may also fill out the “Membership Application Form” on page 12 of each issue of ARSCE News, or donations can be made utilizing a luncheon reservation form. If you have any questions, call Hillary Hamilton at 206-683-5461.
NINTH HOUSE. By Leigh Bardugo – 2019
Alex has always been able to see ghosts, and this talent uniquely qualifies her to become part of the Lethe, a group that regulates the eight magical secret societies at Yale. When a murder happens nearby the campus, Alex suspects that a society has their hand in this and it’s not just a normal homicide.

MONOGAMY. By Sue Miller – 2020
Annie and Graham have been married for 30 years when Graham unexpectedly dies in his sleep. Although it is a second marriage for both, when Annie learns he had a recent affair it changes her mourning and spirals her into darkness, questioning whether she ever really knew this man she thought had loved her.

LOST ROSES. By Martha Hall Kelly – 2019
She ever really knew this man she thought had loved her.

The body of a murdered woman is found near the towering prehistoric stone figures at Avebury, England, which is close to Stonehenge. The Chief Inspector at Scotland Yard is sent to investigate, but can find no answers to the puzzle since there is no proof that the woman who is identified was ever in the locale. Inspector Ian Rutledge joins his supervisor to provide a second approach, but the situation becomes murkier—there is more murder, and fewer answers.

CEMETARY ROAD. By Greg Iles – 2019
Bigtime journalist Marshall McEwan never thought he would return to his small Mississippi hometown, but his father is dying and his mother can barely keep the local paper going. The town’s rebirth appears based on corruption and then an archaeologist is murdered at a construction site.

THE RED LOTUS. By Chris Bohjalian – 2020
Manhattan ER doctor Alexis Remmick is on a bicycling tour with her boyfriend Austin Harper, an experienced cyclist. The trip for him is to pay his respects to the places where his father was wounded, and his uncle killed in Vietnam and he asks Alexis to let him do this by himself, but he never returns from his solo ride. The police investigate and find his body, apparently a hit and run victim. Alexis has many questions about this verdict and when she begins her own search, she uneashes a horrifying scheme of global proportions.

A DIVIDED LOYALTY. By Charles Todd – 2020
The body of a murdered woman is found near the prehistoric stone figures at Avebury, England, which is close to Stonehenge. The Chief Inspector at Scotland Yard is sent to investigate, but can find no answers to the puzzle since there is no proof that the woman who is identified was ever in the locale. Inspector Ian Rutledge joins his supervisor to provide a second approach, but the situation becomes murkier—there is more murder, and fewer answers.

Contact Ms. Garratt at booknotes@arscam.org
Legally Seattle

If you could read my mind, you could see the City of Seattle in a time-lapse movie, watching City Hall, the Public Safety Building, the City Light Building, and the Seattle Public Library come down and pop up again, the Kingdome pop up and come down, and the West Seattle Bridge come down, go up, and start coming down again. Our buildings are supposed to outlast us, but we aren’t ancient Romans or Incans, that’s for sure.

I worked for the City of Seattle as an Assistant City Attorney from 1977 to 1983. That was only six years out of a 35-year career, but it was a wonderful experience, both for the people I got to work with, and for the work I got to do. (I can’t believe that some of those people are old enough to be retirees, such as ARSCE Board members like Ann Kelso, who was fresh from Montana working her way through college, and Jeannette Voiland, that ever-helpful librarian in the Municipal Research Library.)

When you work for the biggest city north of California and west of Minnesota, you’re bound to meet a few folks who become, at least, semi-famous. I saw curly-haired Tim Egan in City Hall trilling for stories for the Seattle Times before he wrote his prize-winning histories. I drank coffee in the City cafeteria with Gary Locke before he was a State representative, King County Executive, Governor of the State, U.S. Secretary of Commerce, and U.S. Ambassador to China.

Not even semi-famous, but besides drinking coffee with Gary, I drank coffee with Louie Holmeyer, the glass-wall contractor who was working on the Columbia Tower next door. One Sunday he issued hard hats to my two sons and me, loaded us into a construction elevator, and sneaked us up to the 76th floor, which still had no walls, just a cable around the edge. One of my sons walked right over to the edge and snapped a photograph, the other and I hugged the center of the building, just in case anybody tried to push us off.

She should have been semi-famous: I also knew a real power behind such politicians as Governor John Spellman, King County Executive Ron Sims, King County Councilwoman Dolores Sibonga, and my boss, City Attorney Doug Jewett. That force of nature was Ruth Yoneyama Woo, who was still bitter about having interred in a “relocation center” for Japanese-American citizens during WWII. I think that motivated her venture into politics, working for candidates she thought she could trust. Ruth was a plump, pleasant, casually dressed woman who spent all day on the phone like the best of word-healers, except when she took time off to go get us a cake with Bavarian Creme frosting from Borracchini’s Bakery in the Rainier Valley. “I tried Weight-Watchers one day, but it was too complicated,” she said.

My first big assignment was to handle fresh codification of all the City ordinances, from the oldest the City Clerk’s office could find through number 101,000 plus at the time. The Clerk found a few surprises in the archives—a jar of polluted water used to advocate for better sewers, the original drawing of the City seal, and an ordinance that prohibited commercial laundries from pressing clothing with water sprayed from the mouth.

We, the City, were involved in international relations: City Light proposed raising Ross Dam, but that would back up the Skagit River, flooding land in British Columbia, Canada. A treaty for B.C. to sell us power was negotiated instead. The nation of Egypt loaned us the King Tut exhibit.

We, the City, also took on interesting social issues. The Supreme Court upheld laws limiting campaign donations in 1976, and the City enacted its campaign financing law shortly thereafter. The City received money from the feds to repair the West Seattle Bridge, but we had to assure that some of the money went to women and minority business enterprises. At the same time, by law, we had to award the contract to the lowest and best bidder. We wrote a law requiring that some women- and minority-owned businesses be hired as subcontractors. We were certainly the first in the State to do it, and we consulted with the County and the State when they undertook their programs. A whole industry popped up, comprised of contractors suing each other over whether their subcontractors were bona fide women and minority businesses.

My oddest assignment involved visiting all the adult theaters and porn shops that clustered along First Avenue where the Seattle Art Museum is now. City ordinances regulated peep shows that had been supplanted by closed-circuit videos. No pun intended, but I just wasn’t getting the picture. Police Chief Patrick Fitzsimons wanted the law updated so it could be enforced because he was concerned, among other reasons, that revenue from porn was flowing to organized crime. One day, a pair of Seattle police officers took me and the director of the Law Department’s Criminal Division, Patricia Aiken, on a guided tour. Pat was a statuesque platinum blonde, quite noticeable in a porn shop. When we walked into some theaters, warning buzzers rang and the operators came rushing out to see what was happening, but they always let us in. The dancing girls pressed their faces to the windows around their stages, and seeing that women were in the audience, laughed, shrugged, and kept on dancing.

Eventually the porn shops fell to gentrification and to home blue video rentals, but Seattle history websites recount the end of the Lusty Lady, noted for its pithy, amusing marquees. You can Google it.

That’s enough chatter for one day. Here’s an unrelated, under-appreciated factoid. The ship that destroyed the original West Seattle Bridge was the Caesar Chavez. (Ralph Neslund was at the helm that day, later his wife murdered him.) The design of the replacement, a feat of engineering, sounded like a song, “Dual cantilevers in unison.” Its dedication ceremony was interrupted when a ship signaled that it needed to proceed through. The bridgebuilder, the late Darwin Sukut, told me that the first ship to go through was operating under a new name—but it was the Caesar Chavez.

Susie ~ Recruited for Private Practice, left the Law Department in 1983

All other photos courtesy: University of Washington

Pioneer Square

In 1852 the Denny party landed on Alki Beach and spent a very uncomfortable year there. The idea had been for that location to be the center of their new city, but they quickly discovered that they were too open to the elements there and began looking for better grounds. Across the bay was the mainland, in particular a narrow spit trailing down from the bluffs that formed the coastline, capped by a small island off its southern tip, and tidelands south of that, all sporting a deep-water bay perfect for commerce. Arthur Denny, Carson Boren, and William Bell quickly laid claims on the narrow beach and ridgeline to the north, while Doc Maynard laid claims to the lands south, which included the vast tidelands an east to what would become Beacon Hill. The new city was to be known as Duwamps. Doc Maynard, realizing the effect such a name would have on a struggling economy quickly worked his magic and got the territorial council to change the name to Seattle in honor of the chief of the Suiattle Tribe who resided there. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Shortly after that they made their move. The first cabin there was started by Louisa Boren, the second by Doc Maynard, and others rapidly followed. As to the layout of the streets, C. Boren and company felt they should parallel the coast while Maynard favored the more traditional north and south, east and west plan. The results are what we are still fighting today with Yesler Way being the pivot for a slight shift in street direction and a huge inconvenience for drivers.

The term “Pioneer Square” came much later, an improvement over the name “Pioneer Place,” and an acknowledgement that this was where Seattle had its beginnings.

The area was also known as “Skid Road,” and that again is a story with two heads. In 1852 a young Henry Yesler entered the picture offering to build a saw mill. Lumber was plentiful here, if milled properly, and cities like San Francisco were falling over themselves to get it. His chosen location was at the apex of the Boren, Maynard claims, the land for it being ceded to him from both parties. This allowed him access to the great stands of timber that graced the hillside we now know as Capitol Hill. To get the logs to the mill they were merely slid down a prepared chute where Yesler Way now lays, a skid road if you will. As ready lumber disappeared and other means had to be found to get the product to the mills, the skid became a trace, then a roadway.

The kicker here? Over time and due to many financial crises, the city’s center, its operating hub, shifted north and inland a little. Businesses in the area declined over time and hardship. When I was growing up the area was known as skid road, and not meant in a kindly light. It extended from Pine Street south along First Avenue to south of Yesler, an ill kept stretch of bars, dives, and failing businesses. This was a very seedy area at that time, and the moniker seemed appropriate. It wasn’t until later I learned the true meaning of the term.

Early Pioneer Square was built primarily of lumber. The city’s operating hub was north of Yesler’s mill, while south of Yesler on Doc Maynard’s properties were the bars, brothels, gambling establishments, and much more. Then in 1889, all that changed as the city burned to the ground. When finally extinguished, the entire core of the city was leveled, including everything in the Pioneer Square area. When it was rebuilt, it was done with brick and mortar, new fire standards, new water systems, and electric power. It was bigger and better, yet still managed to fall into disrepair in time.

The Alaskan Gold Rush brought untold wealth to Seattle. And with it a much needed shot it the arm for an ailing Pioneer district. It 1899 a group of wealthy businessmen stole a totem pole from the Tlingit tribe and installed it in Pioneer Square. This was the first totem pole in the Puget Sound area as the Tlingit’s were native to southern Alaska and British Columbia. In 1909 the ornamental iron pergola we know today was added, giving the area a certain charm. In 1938 vandals burned the totem pole to the ground. The pole seen today is a replacement requested by the city fathers of the Tlingit tribe, who were kind enough to carve another for the city after being properly compensated for the first one.

In the 1960s the pioneer square area was earmarked for urban renewal. In short, the idea was to level the existing structures, thought to have outlived their usefulness. The resulting outcry from the residents of the city put an immediate and permanent stop to such an idea. Instead, a project was initiated to refurbish the buildings, bring them back to their former glories with modern updates, and lobby to reestablish legitimate businesses in the area. The final result is one any city would be proud to claim. First avenue, once a stain to the city, is now a vibrant, active community with high rise condos, international store outlets, and some of the best dining experiences in the city. It also houses offices for many elite firms in its antiquated buildings.

The Pioneer Square District is loosely defined as that strip of land bordered on the north by Cherry Street, give or take, and on the south by Yesler Way, except at Fourth Avenue where it continues south to Royal Brougham Way, west to the waterfront. On the east boundary is Fifth Avenue at the I-5 Freeway. That is a larger area than it appears we have covered, yet it is what it is. Within it, though, are a myriad of shops, restaurants, store outlets, and some of the best dining experiences in the city. It also houses offices for many elite firms in its antiquated buildings.

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Duffer's Corner

By Joe Matthias

Pioneer Square, 1917. Smith Tower on right; below it is the Seattle Hotel. On the left are the Pioneer Building and the pergola.

All photos courtesy: Wikipedia
Active & Retired Employees

You’re Invited to Attend the ARSCE Board Meetings. Please Feel Free to Join Us!

Application for Membership:

Association of Retired Seattle City Employees

Name____________________________________Tel. No.______________________
Address _______________________________________________________________
City _________________________________ State ________ Zip_______________
Date Retired _________________ From Dept. _____________________________
Email Address:  ________________________________________________________

Your dues will be deducted from the check you receive in July. Please fill out the following section for the Retirement Office; include it with the rest of this completed application and mail it to ARSCE.

Association of Retired Seattle City Employees

Dues Deduction Authorization

To:  The Board of Administration, City of Seattle Employees’ Retirement System:

The undersigned hereby authorizes the City of Seattle Employees’ Retirement System to deduct from my retirement, beneficiary and/or disability allowance, such dues as are duly established from time to time by the Association of Retired Seattle City Employees (ARSCE). Until further written notice by me to The Retirement System Office, such deduction shall be made annually from my July allowance and shall be paid to Association of Retired Seattle City Employees, P.O. Box 75385, Seattle, WA 98175-0385.

Name (Please Print)                         Department
Signature     Date
Address
City                                                           State            Zip Code

Mail to:  Association of Retired Seattle City Employees
P.O. Box 75385, Seattle, WA 98175-0385

Note: Calendar is subject to change by Board approval.

2021 MEETING AND PUBLICATION DATES

Tues. May 11 News Deadline (July/Aug. Issue)
Wed. May 12 ARSCE Executive Board Meeting
Wed. June 9 ARSCE Summer Luncheon Meeting (TBD)
—Swear in Officers/New Board Members
Fri. June 11 Mail ARSCE News (July/Aug. Issue)
Wed. July 14 ARSCE Executive Board Meeting

~ARSCE~
Application for Membership:
Association of Retired Seattle City Employees

Name________________________Tel. No.___________
Address __________________________________________________________________________
City____________________State________Zip_________
Date Retired_______________From Dept._________
Email Address: ____________________________________________

Your dues will be deducted from the check you receive in July. Please fill out the following section for the Retirement Office; include it with the rest of this completed application and mail it to ARSCE.

Annual Dues: $15.00 (7/1-6/30)

Your dues will be deducted from the check you receive in July. Please fill out the following section for the Retirement Office; include it with the rest of this completed application and mail it to ARSCE.

ANSWERS:

1. PICNIC
2. SUNSHINE
3. ICE CREAM
4. JULY
5. BEACH
6. WATERMELON
7. AUGUST
8. VACATION
9. TRAVEL
10. BIKINI

Note: The first day of summer (June solstice) is when the sun is in its most northern position directly over the Tropic of Cancer. This is referred to as astronomical summer or the summer solstice.

Summer begins Sunday, June 20th, 2021
Wooohoo!

Fun Summer Word Scramble

These summer-related words are all mixed up. Take a few minutes and have some fun. “Unscramble” these letters to reveal a few of your favorite summertime words. Look out! One on the list is made up of two words.

1. NICIPC __________________________
2. ENUIHSNS _______________________
3. CMERICEA _______________________
4. UYJL ___________________________
5. CHEAB __________________________
6. REAMWNTELO ___________________
7. UTAASGU _________________________
8. OAANICVT _________________________
9. ELVATR ___________________________
10. IBNIKI ___________________________

Hello Summer!