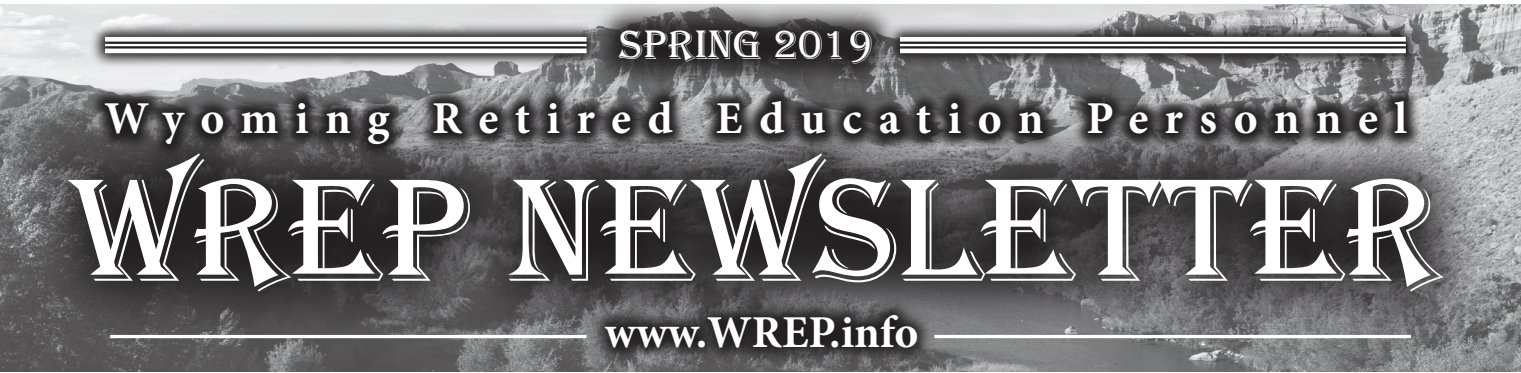


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FROM YOUR WREP PRESIDENT

Owen Jones
June 2019

One of our goals this past year has been to look at options available for Wyoming Retirement System (WRS) retirees for a cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in the next few years.

During the 2018-19 period we have joined the WCHR (Wyoming Coalition for a Healthy Retirement). With our combined effort, a bill was put before the House Committee in support of a COLA (the first time in many years) and received a 26 to 30 vote defeating the bill.

This year, 2019-20 we are building our Education Campaign in conjunction with WCHR, to again present to the 2020 Legislature the need for a COLA or inflation adjustment for retirees.

How can you help during the interim? Please take the opportunity to contact your legislator and express the need for an inflation adjustment especially for long time retirees.

1. Many legislators need to learn what a COLA is and why we need one.
2. You, as a retiree, need to make sure legislators hear from you during the interim?

Your WREP Board plans to keep the communication lines open with you regarding our progress. We want to express our appreciation to Steve Harshman and his cohorts for their support efforts during the 2019 session. We will continue to encourage them again during the 2020 session. Your voice needs to be heard this summer during the interim. Please share with us your thoughts, concerns and ideas.

On June 18, 2019, the WREP executive committee is planning to meet with Governor Gordon to share our feelings about the need for an inflation adjustment and get his feelings about how to achieve that for all Wyoming Retirement System retirees. We will share with you any thoughts and ideas the Governor shares with us.

**Wyoming Retired Education Personnel Association
2019-2020**

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Spring 2019 WREP scholarship winners announced

Madison Morrow of Powell, WY, and Janissa Martinez of Wheatland, WY were announced as our WREP 2019 scholarship winners. Each recipient will receive \$750.00 to help them continue their goal of graduating in the field of education. If you know them, congratulate them and wish them the best as they continue to serve in the field of education.

Your executive committee has explored the possibility of offering a \$500. scholarship at each of the

community colleges. These would offered in the Spring of 2020 for use in the Fall of 2020. You are welcome to share any thoughts about our offer of giving scholarship at our community colleges by either calling or emailing any of the executive committee members.



Looking at the impact of what not receiving a COLA means to you.

As expected, those that have been retired the longest have suffered the largest reductions in purchasing power. Thru 2008, some of the reductions were offset by WRS awarded pension COLA increases. Since 2008, no COLAs have been awarded.

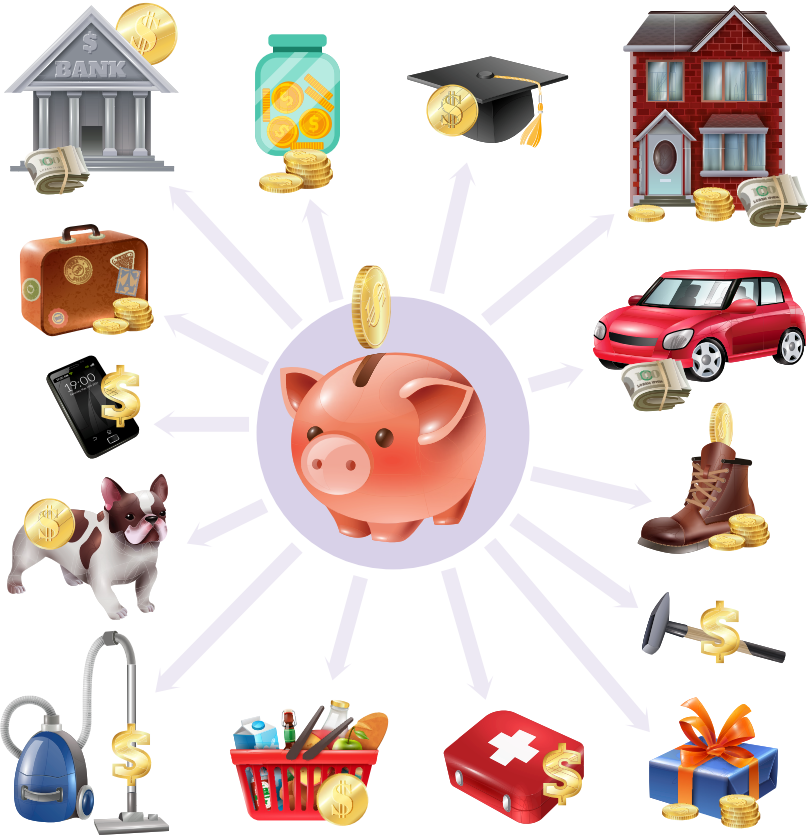
The “class of 1993” is illustrated by the following information. A \$1.00 awarded in pension that year increased overtime by the various COLAs awarded, reaching \$1.30 in 2008. However, inflation had progressed at a larger rate and the \$1.30 in 2008 was estimated to have a purchasing power of only 74 cents in 2008. Since 2008, no more COLAs have been awarded. The \$1.30 remains; it now has a purchasing power of only 62 cents.

Long-time retirees have been impacted both by no COLAs since 2008, as well as, previous COLAs that beneficial, but nonetheless fell short of inflation as measured by the Wyoming Cost of Living Index (WCLI).

Had the class of 1993 not had any COLAs, then the purchasing power of \$1.00 awarded in 1993 would be only 47 cents now (vs. 62 cents with the COLAs).

For the class of 1993, the value of the pension has dropped by 38% to 62 cents on the dollar in purchasing power as of the end of 2017.

Results for other “classes” will vary, but all WRS retirees are losing purchasing power with their current pension.



This information is from WRS and provided and assembled by Gabriel Roeder Smith & Company from Denver, Colorado.

Retirees need one of two things—a law change to allow for a COLA from the current WRS funds or a one-time allocation focused on giving a COLA to retirees. Please share this information with legislative candidates and then ask them to support a COLA for retirees.

Invitation to visit with your legislators.

When the Wyoming Coalition for a Healthy Retirement (WCHR) met on May 7, 2019, they suggested we ask you to share with your legislator your thoughts on why you need an “inflation adjustment” on your WRS monthly payment. We would ask any of you that know a legislator on this list to visit with them in the next 3 months. You may use the inflation article included in this newsletter to help you in your discussion.

WCHR members went through the list of votes on HB 314 and HB 1 and decided to focus on reaching out to the following legislators:

- Burkhart
- Crank
- Duncan
- Eklund
- Eyre
- Flitner
- Furphy
- Lloyd Larsen
- Laurson
- Lindholm
- MacGuire
- Newsome
- Roscoe
- Salazar
- Sommers
- Stith
- Walters
- Western
- Wilson

Thank you for helping by discussing the need for an “inflation adjustment” for WRS retirees.

NOTES from your Treasurer — Stan Christensen

WREP is funded primarily by the annual dues you as members pay. The Executive Committee members serve in a voluntary role and receive no compensation for their work other than being reimbursed for any travel or supplies costs they may incur in carrying out the activities of the Association.

One Project of the group is in providing annual scholarships for two senior students attending UW and majoring in an approved teaching preparation program. Another activity of Organization is publishing a minimum of 3 Newsletters per year mailed to each of the over 1800 members.

Also, a close relationship has been developed with the Wyoming Retirement Board and we have representation at each of their quarterly meetings . Our emphasis with this activity is to keep a close connection with them regarding the status of the pension plan available to retired educators. The Cost of Living Adjustment(COLA) is one such area that is of major interest and we will be needing your help as we work for legislative approval for some form of an Inflationary Adjustment. More details of this need are presented in a personal story of a retiree found in this newsletter.

Say Hello to our new Vice-President, Mickey Douglas

Hello! Looks like spring has sprung and we are now in Wyoming’s other season, “Construction”.

This newsletter is an opportunity to introduce myself to the WREP membership. I retired from Central Wyoming College-Lander, Riverton, Wyoming. After retirement I served on the CWC Board of Trustees. Recently I relocated to Sheridan, Wyoming, where my late husband, George Douglas, began his career in education.



I have been involved in education most of my working career. Besides Lander and Sheridan, I grew up in Newcastle and worked and lived in Jeffrey City, Laramie and Mountain View. I appreciate the opportunity to work with WREP on behalf of all Wyoming retirees.

If anyone wants to say hello or has a personal story relating to your need for an inflation adjustment please feel free to contact me.

Have a great summer!

Mickey Douglas
mickeydouglas24@gmail.com

Announcement of our Fall Conference -

Remember to mark Saturday, September 28, 2019, on your calendars. We will be hosting a morning General Meeting of the Association in Laramie. WREP will have a free brunch for attendees and will give attendees a free ticket to the University of Wyoming vs Idaho University football game that afternoon. If you are interested in having one of the free tickets to the UW football game, you must call Wayne Schatz at 307-672-0224 before August 1. If I am not there to answer, leave your name and phone number. I will add your name to my list.

Remember: You must RSVP to receive your game tickets.

More details about our lunch location and game details to come in our fall newsletter.