

Minutes Of Past Wrangler Meetings

June 13, 2024

A lively gathering of our Wranglers, exchanging views and updates, then lining up for sizzling roast and an assembly of fruits, veggies and broth ... warming up for the main event. Call to Order and Annual Election: 7:00 pm arrived, and our President, Tony Ward-Smith, called the troops to order for the annual election of officers for the following year. The following slate was proposed for membership approval: President, Einer Handeland; Vice President Dan Hungate; Secretary, Rich Matrisian; and Treasurer, Bill Dowling. After discussion, and upon motion, these candidates were approved to serve for the coming fiscal year. Ward-Smith then presented our new Pres Einer with the long-standing (aging?) bottle of Wranglers wine (at least 15 years at this counting.) One day, someone will have the nerve to open it! Instead of the usual Members Moment, Pres Ward-Smith, on behalf of the club's officers, opened a group discussion that had come up numerous times in the past—"How To Assure Lively, Dynamic Wrangles." The heart of the issue speaks to the difference between just a "talk" (routine presentation) ... and a "wrangle" (something of controversy, or at least— varying points of view). The key line in our purpose statement: "To stimulate the intellect ...!" Our meetings should belong to all members, not just the speaker! In an effort to keep "rules" to a minimum, here are the essentials:

Basic purpose: set up a good "Wrangle!" • Identify (2/3/4/5) actual "issues" to be wrangled • Send these out to members in advance • Prepare a half-hour talk • If using slides...short (two/three word) bullet points • Don't read! • If possible, use photos/images.

The evening's Presentation: John Strasburger gave focus to the omnipresent imposition of the Internet (world-wide-web) and the fact that it is awash with our personal data. We (willingly) contribute additional data with our multitudinous use of myriad devices, websites, and apps. The wolf pack guarding the hen house— the data brokers who buy our data from apps, browsers and search engines and resell it to governments, other data brokers and consumers. The conglomeration is poorly regulated and is often misused for nefarious ends.

May 9, 2024

Virtually all members were present. Welcomed to new member Don Rule! The name tags for absentees were scooped up before I got back to the signup table. We warmed up with drinks and wrangling conversations, then lined up for a dinner sizzling with roast beef accompanied by delicious fruits, veggies and broth, consumed by all. **Call To Order:** Pres Ward-Smith gave a short report of recent officer's meeting. Three items reviewed: 1) *New Member Process*— members bring/introduce guests, provide short bio; mbrs make a point to meet/say hello/etc during pre-dinner social time., vote follows by email, guests then welcomed as new members the following meeting. 2) *How members prepare presentations*— need to be "wrangles", not just "talks"! 3) **New officers for coming year:** Proposed— Einer Handeland/Pres, Dan Hungate/VP, Rich Matrisian/Sec, Bill Dowling/Treas. Mbrs suggest/submit additional nominations in next two weeks. Voting at June meeting. Milan Richter's astonishing **Members Moment** recounted a lifetime of adventure from birth in Czechoslovakia, escape w/wife from Soviet rule, landing in Canada and eventually finding home in our country, raising family and pursuing a broad career in computer science and initiating new operations. DAWSON STOOPS gave us a breathless **Presentation**, noting that we wranglers love focusing on the unknowable. Enrico Fermi is the great scientist who was driven to focusing on the unknown, especially questions involving our universe. He came up with the Fermi Paradox concept that questions basically what our universe is all about. Questions focus on "Where is Everybody?" Answers are of course boundless. Thanks, Dawson. You've left our wrangler heads soaring!

April 11, 2024

Call to Order: At 7:00 pm, we started our formal gathering. (Pres Ward-Smith was waylaid with auto problems so...) VP Einar Handeland did the manage-the-meeting honors. Warm welcome to new member— Mark Southern. Joe Decuir did his **Member's Moment:** "I wake up every day grateful to be alive! My late wife Deb saved me from a cardiac arrest. I am reminded of the scene in Saving Private Ryan— the dying lieutenant pulls him close and says 'Earn it'. I did UC Berkeley (EECS & premed). Early career ranged from medical electronics, to Atari and Amiga (working video games), then two startups, and 8 years at Microsoft (Windows Networking, USB, Bluetooth). Now in 8th year at UW/Bothell teaching computer engineering. For fun: bassist in a rock band, Issaquah Citizen Corp, amateur radio, playing with grandchildren." Dan Hungate's **Presentation** focused on THE PROBLEM OF TWELVE: When a Few Financial Institutions Control Everything. The "problem" arises when a small number of institutions acquire the means to exert outsized influence over the politics and economy of a nation. The Big Four index funds— Vanguard, State Street, Fidelity, BlackRock— control 20%+ of the votes of S&P 500 companies—a concentration of unprecedented power, enabling these funds to exercise undue authority— CEOs have to listen to them perhaps more closely than they do their own boards of directors. Then the rise of private equity funds, such as Apollo, Blackstone, Carlyle, and KKR have amassed \$2.7 trillion of assets, and are eroding the legitimacy and accountability of American capitalism—not by controlling public companies, but by taking them over entirely, removing them from public disclosure and scrutiny. This quiet accumulation in the last few decades represents a dramatic transformation in how the American economy operates—a sea change that few have noticed and all need to consider. Dan's author suggests that "greater antitrust management of index and private equity funds...and the companies they own..." should involve thorough change in the massive lobbying efforts calculated to keep

such change from happening. Maybe a powerful argument for thoroughly revising how the chief players in the financial world are regulated? Wrangling followed...!

March 14, 2024

Call to Order: All but two members present— missing from our ranks: Dan Hungate and Stan Barnes. Started with festive drinks, followed by a buffet. Tony Ward-Smith introduced his guest: Mark Southern. Brian Comstock presented his **Member's Moment** commenting on an article he distributed entitled What Donald Trump Shares With Joseph McCarthy. They have some interesting similarities (challenges when in power), but also differences that tend to separate them in history. Then, as a matter of total intrigue, Brian recounted some of his undercover adventures during his early career years as an employee (operative!) of the CIA! Ray Waldmann's **Presentation** posed the question: Is Capitalism entering a New Stage? Ray reflected on the history of capitalism and the founding of major businesses in our economy in the 1800s. We are presently going through major changes to our system and even possible transition to a more government-controlled system. He presented a list of seventeen "challenges", all of which suggest significant changes or impacts on what we know as our Capitalistic system, including:

- Social Justice/liberation technology
- Stakeholders, rather than Shareholders as beneficiaries
- European Social Democracy— Union control of Boards
- Affirmative Action
- Falling trust in markets,
- Occupy Wallstreet
- Chinese model of capitalism
- Crypto emergence
- "Wokeness"
- "Too Big To Fail" bailouts
- Employee activism
- Generative AI
- Green certification
- Climate Change

As expected...good wrangling followed.

February 8, 2024

Call to Order: Reminder that Bob Wiley's service will be at 1pm, Feb 17th at the MI Congregational Church. **Absent:** Tom Davidson, Dan Hungate and John Strasburger. **Members Moment:** Jeff Martine's Members Moment reminisced about his childhood on Mercer Island, to which his family had moved in 1941. MI was growing rapidly following installation of the floating bridge in the early 1940s. Kids were free to wander at will. Jeff recalled his younger sister and her friends routinely riding horses around the island, and even across the east channel bridge! Growth drove an expansion of schools, including a new high school that graduated its first class (including Jeff) in 1958. Until then, most island kids, including our Tom Davidson and Jeff's brother Jim, attended Bellevue High School— where Tom was class valedictorian. The MI Schoolboard, less fettered in those days by Olympia and backed by energetic families, did an outstanding job of staffing the new high school, including w/Wrangler's own Milt Yanicks. **Presentation:** Joe Decuir— adjunct professor in Electrical Engineering at the UW who clearly knows what he is talking about, talked about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it affects our lives today: How (basically) it works (by storing/retrieving tons of data, algorithms), difference between computer-controlled systems and systems that learn (AI!), where we now encounter it (in very obvious places!), hacking and other problems being encountered, new developments to expect, future uses— in medicine, math, programming, electric circuit design... just to name a few! Joe is clearly our go-to guy on the subject...and he promises more of it in the future!

January 14, 2024

Virtually all members were present. **Call to Order:** Pres Tony Ward-Smith briefly mentioned the passing of Bob Wiley, and retirement (from Wranglers) of Floyd Short. Colin Brandt introduced his guest Bill Radke and Stan Barnes introduced Tom Andrew...both likely candidates for membership to Wranglers. **Member's Moment:** Don Rothenstein shared a harrowing "hand of God" episode he "lived through" while on his Honeymoon in Jamaica. Yes, it had something to do with the kind of experimenting some of us (all of us?) did in our early years. He can look back and laugh about it now...and we all had a good laugh with him at his telling. One of the more colorful MMs we've had in some time. **Presentation:** Milan Rich ter presented us with "End Of Trust" — the importance of both interpersonal and institutional Trust (with capital "T"), why, where and, how trust is eroding—"recent data from opinion surveys across a broader range of countries show a decline in trust in most public bodies since 2000" — and what we might want to do about it. Negative impacts of low trust are— a strong hesitance to express oneself freely or interact with others; isolation; weakened social cohesion and resilience; political division/gridlock; lack of cooperation and civic engagement; inefficiency, increased expenses and slower production In business; lower overall prosperity (high-trust vs. low-trust societies). Milan summed it up with a quote from Philosopher Bertrand Russell: "Social cohesion is a necessity, and mankind has never yet succeeded in enforcing cohesion by merely rational arguments. Every community is exposed to two opposite dangers: ossification through too much discipline and reverence for tradition, on one hand; and on the other hand, dissolution, or subjection to foreign conquest, through the growth of individualism and personal experience that makes cooperation impossible."

December 14, 2023

Great holiday gathering with lady guests present. **Members Moment:** Paul Sheppard grew up on our island, graduating tops at Mercer Island High. He achieved new heights including a masters degree in cyber-security, then several years of military and contractual service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many years with Boeing led to positions such as Information System Security Manager. **Presentation:** Ed Menck led a conversation about our polarized electorate, how we got to where we are today and explored strategies for how this might be less so. Among the many causes of hyper-polarization, Ed singled out: 1) where we were raised and our subsequent life experiences, 2) people we spend our time with (our Tribe), and 3) the information we consume. Ed reviewed these causes: Number One, Cable TV

outlets have learned that being partisan pays handsomely— Fox News and MSNBC relentlessly veer toward the far right and far left, respectively. Their coverage is more "entertainment" than "news." Audiences growing older (late 60's plus), yet relatively small (3.5 million daily watchers). . . offset by false/misleading segments posted on social media that has enormous impact. Suggestions for combating this? Quit watching, substitute PBS News hour and/or the 3 major networks instead, as well as major US newspapers. Still biased, but less so. Number Two, we all tend to spend our time with like-minded people. We should seek those with differing views on controversial topics and really listen, try to understand a different perspective from our own. Hard to do but should be a priority. A worthy goal is not so much to persuade, but to just listen and to make clear that I HAVE heard and understood. Number Three, our upbringing and life experience. It's blind luck where we were born. We don't choose our parents and we can't help what we overhear in our formative years. And life experiences, both good and bad, help shape our opinions. By recognizing that, it's harder to demonize those whose opinions are different than those we hold. Final thoughts: Let's not give up as we enter this election season! Seek information rather than sensational stories. Engage, listen, and work to achieve outcomes that are worthy.

November 9, 2023

Absentees: Milan Richter, Ed Mencke, Paul Sheppard. **New member:** Colin Brandt. **Guest:** Dawson Stoop. **Members Moment:** Bill Severson told how he went from a youngster who enjoyed politics and public policy to a state and local tax lawyer with a particular interest in constitutional tax law. He became an expert in Washington's constitutional tax history while as deputy prosecuting attorney for King County. He initiated a class action lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the Seattle Street Utility to illustrate how the constitution imposes limitations on the exercise of the tax power and the importance of respecting and maintaining those constitutional limits to preserve republican principles and the rule of law. **Presentation:** Bob Fahrner stepped in (for Milan Richter, out of the country) with "The Endless Conflict: Middle East Borders and Forever Wars". His primary argument that "a two-state solution resembling what the 1947 U.N. Resolution determined was fair must be found. Otherwise, wars/terrorist acts like the one that began on October 7, 2023, will continue and could escalate to levels that could include nuclear strikes. Both Israelis and Palestinians today believe they each do not have a reliable and trusted partner on the other side with whom they can work with to resolve significant disputed issues. Reconstructing Gaza cannot be separated from reconstructing the West Bank. Because of the high level of **hatred** between those connected with the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority and Gaza, trust has plummeted so that blockage to solutions is nearly insurmountable at present. Present thinking from a variety of authorities bends toward a long-term 2-state solution. Emotional red flags are everywhere, necessitating a very long-term improvement process.

October 19, 2023

Absent: Paul Sheppard, Jerry Johnson, Bill Severson. **Guests:** Mark Hafermann's son-in-law Colin Brandt. Bill Dowling's guest, Ray Waldmann. **Members Moment:** Rich Matrisian gave a recollection of pre-CADD days with modeling departments and the bold designs like BART across San Francisco Bay. He says retirement should be unique/challenging. "The same set of circumstances, early in life, will not automatically appear in retirement, unless you make it so." **Presentation:** Brian Comstock drew us to Conflicts Threatening Three Branches of Our Federal Government and its checks/balances system our founders hammered out. Each branch had restrictions on the exercise of powers and certain authority over the other branches that limited their powers— made them more in line with a balanced democracy. Judiciary Branch: Justice Thomas/wife took trips funded by someone with appeals before the supreme court. He failed to report wife's high annual income to the government, required by law. . . is now withholding decisions on cases involving parties he/wife have been associating with or received gifts. New law has been proposed that would police supreme court justices for violations of the law. Executive Branch: Our constitution assumes the president will be neutral in executing the laws of the land. Pres Biden steers away from criminal charges against Trump. Trump ridicules our present constitution and suggest we should have one like Russia has under Putin. Legislative Branch: One party that controls a branch of congress may block it from doing anything. It's what our founders intended (or at least did not know how to address differently in any other way). Annual approval of our national budget is not addressed in the constitution. Our congress can amend or do away with it if desired.

September 21, 2023

Aljoya delayed our meeting by one week (Covid scare!). **Absent:** Jerry Johnson, Ed Mencke, Paul Sheppard, Dan Hungate. **Guest:** New member Joe Decuir brought his brother Bob (visiting from California). **Biz:** President, Tony Ward-Smith introduced our club officers: VP Einer Handelan, Secretary Brian Comstock and Treasurer, Bill Dowling. **Members Moment:** Csaba Hegyvary talked of his family in Hungary and World War II when his father, in the military, got involved in combat atrocities such as the blowing up a huge bridge being used by troops. After the war, his father served as a judge in trials of Nazis. In 1972, Csaba and his family moved to Chicago and have lived here ever since. **Presentation:** Jeff Matine's topic: *Only Wrangling Can Save Civilization!* By most measures, the US and the world in general have never experienced our present levels of peace, wealth, and security. It's a veritable Golden Age, with the promise of an ever more wondrous future spurred by astonishing new technologies. So, what's the problem? How come we're often at each other's throats, and unable deal effectively with the problems evident in our cities ravaged by crime, addiction and despair? Why are so many of our young people turned off, unhappy, unhealthy, and failing to form the families upon which civilization rests? Why can't we solve the immigration problem? How come we can't attract our best and brightest to public service? How come our institutions seem weakened, and our basic values up for grabs? Jeff fleshed out these assertions and invited us to share the analysis of respected thinkers.

What followed was an outpouring of thoughts and concerns as to where we stand on a multitude of issues and what we can do as Wranglers to rectify the world we live in.

June 8, 2023

Absent: Jeff Martine, Milan Richter, Bill Severson, Paul Sheppard. **Guest** Joe Decuir. **Election:** Next year's slate of officers: Tony Ward-Smith— President, Einer Handeland—Vice president, Brian Comstock—Sectary, Bill Dowling— Treasurer. . .all elected by unanimous vote. **Members Moment:** Stan Barnes spoke of his lifelong history with gun ownership, from using a .22 rifle at his uncle's camp when he was twelve, to hunting ducks with his son. He was a marksman in the service w/broad experience with military firearms, went on to voice extreme concern of our present relationship with guns in society, about mass shootings in schools and elsewhere. He shared letters he'd written to legislators to help lessen gun violence. He gave an emotional appeal to all to follow suit. **Pesentation:** Don Rothenstein presented "*Archeology, Anthropology, Anatomy and What's for Dinner.*" Using slides, he made a convincing case for our facial and oral anatomy as similar to herbivores, our digestive tract is unlike those of carnivores, our senses and other traits are better suited to those of an herbivore than a carnivore, our most distant relative "Lucy" was an herbivore four million years ago. It wasn't until the last 400 thousand years that we began to use fire for cooking and gradually were able to consume meat, though only as an adjunct to an herbivorous diet and as a means of survival when food was scarce. A healthy wrangle followed.

May 11, 2023

Absent: Brian Comstock, Bob Farher, Dan Hungate, Jeff Martine, Milan Richter, Bill Severson, Bob Wiley. President Strasburger welcoming our newest member, Paul Sheppard, then presented the slate of next year's officers: Pres— Tony Ward-Smith; VP— Einer Handeland; Sec— Brian Comstock; Treas— Bill Dowling. The election will be at the June meeting. Re the disposition of the **final bottle of Wrangler's wine** is: Keep until final meeting/ 0 votes, drink now/ 3 votes, keep until only one original member left/7 votes, members not voting/11 **Member's Moment:** Bill Dowling spoke of being on a number of boards since his retirement from the University of Washington, including Community Health Centers in our state, which has 400 of them. The centers are set up all over the country to serve over 14000 communities. They are federally funded, and provide medical, specialty and social services to all patients regardless of income and insurance status on a sliding-fee scale. They form the backbone of the healthcare safety net, serving a large segment of our population. **Presentation:** Paul Sheppard, speaking from his background in IT and now cybersecurity, introduced us to the alarming rate at which technology is advancing. While it presents increasing risks in security, there is also the question of whether artificial intelligence will be a game changer for good or bad in the near future. The ability to collect data and use it for nefarious purposes is a constant and increasing threat. Technology is booming and the changes ahead will be disruptive. Paul suggested two books: "The Weaponization of Everything" by Mark Galeotti, "Productivity is for Robots" by Cory Mc Comb.

April 13, 2023

Pres Strasburger noted the recent passing of member Bob Lewis— long- time member who volunteered to serve those in need locally and in Central America. Was recognized as "Dentist Citizen of the Year" in Washington State this past decade. **Absent:** Stan Barnes, Bob Farher, Don Rothenstein, Paul Sheppard. **Member's Moment:** Tony Ward-Smith gave a quick history of his life of athletic adventures inspired by his golfing father— including a small outboard hydroplane, boxing. . .and boxing classes for 3rd and 4th graders. Navy— UDT (Frogman program), hockey, handball, which he continues to play with a group of dedicated friends. **Wrangle:** Bill Severson presented "The Constitutionality of Washington's New Capital Gains Tax", referring to recent Supreme Court ruling that upheld the imposition of a capital gains tax— challenged as an "income tax", which is not allowed in our state. Using historical references and numerous examples, he defined income tax as a direct tax, and capital gains tax as an indirect (excise) tax. Excise taxes are widely used in Washington state.

March 9, 2023

President Strasburger introduced Einer Handeland's guest, Paul Sheppard. . .and two new members, Jeff Martine and Don Rothenstein. **Absent:** Chick Hodge. **Member's Moment:** Einer spoke of his involvement with "growing things" as an adult. A package of dahlia tubers that he got at a home show sparked an extended interest in propagating them. He since has become a renowned expert, growing, showing, and donating them to many in the area. He regularly gives garden tours and contributes his talents to fund raisers for MI schools and others, mentors MI students. **Wrangle:** Rich Matrician talked about tunnel safety and fire control, which has been his life's work as a mechanical engineer. He gave several examples of landmark fires that have influenced the current design and safety systems built into our tunnels. He discussed the largely unseen structure that deals with tunnel fire safety and the unique methods used to fight tunnel fires. A major fire may occur only once in a lifetime, but the governing authority must be prepared for that occurrence. He pronounced our local tunnels safe from the fire suppression standpoint, giving particular praise to the waterfront tunnel and the Seattle bus tunnel. Wrangling focused on driver safety and behavior in tunnels. Most accidents occur in the first 150'— caution is needed when entering. The convention center tunnel safety was a focus, as well as driver action if caught in a tunnel fire.

February 9, 2023

Absent: Chick Hodge, Eric Horner and Tom Koll. **Guests:** Jeff Martine and Don Rothenstein. Csaba Hegyvary brought son-in-law, Luke Thomas, as his guest. **Member's Moment:** Bob Wiley spoke of his long and extensive involvement with the Boy Scouts of America where he served in many adult leadership positions and received their Silver Beaver and Silver Antelope awards in recognition. Bob

spoke of the values of scouting in building lifetime character. A show of hands revealed that 80% of members had been Scouts, 67% had sons who were Scouts, and 23% had grandsons were Scouts. **Presentation:** Csaba Hegyvary gave three scenarios from his practice of psychiatry— leading to questions involving the availability of assisted suicide; the advisability of mandatory or outlawing medical intervention such as transgender treatment; the advisability of treating the mentally ill against one's will, all of which bring about the complex decisions involving politics, law and ethics. There was little time for wrangling, but there was an informative discussion around the current state law as it applies to the freedom given to juveniles, and what they are able to do without their parent's permission.

January 12, 2023

Absentees: Jerry Johnson, Tom Koll, Milan Richter and Bill Severson. **Treasurer report:** dues of \$200 are now being accepted. **Guest:** Eric Horner. **Member's Moment:** Chick Hodge, spoke of the importance of tennis throughout his life, beginning with a tennis clinic at age 13. After being turned down for membership in the Seattle Tennis Club, he helped found the Mercer Island Tennis Club. He, with friends/neighbors, build a tennis court next to his home and is still involved in tennis outreach activities. **Presentation:** Stan Barnes: Should the former President be indicted? Prosecuted? Pardoned? An impassioned presentation of reasons for provocation and charges including the former President's business dealings, legal battles, alleged scams, attempted coercion, and his involvement in the January 6, 2021 event at the capitol which resulted in six deaths and millions in damage to government property. He cited historical examples involving other elected leaders, none that could serve as an exact precedent. The wrangle centered around action that would happen quickly in order to prevent Trump from again achieving elective office, as he is seeking election in 2024. A prosecutor would need a charge which had a reasonable chance of getting a conviction. There was concern about what would happen if he were indicted and what would be the unintended consequences.

December 2022

Members missing: Brian Comstock, Mark Hafermann, Chick Hodge, Tom Koll, Ed Mencke, Bill Severson. **Members Moment:** Tom Davidson spoke of years of volunteering as a docent at the Museum of Flight and of the pleasure and reward of being involved with this significant community treasure. **Presentation:** Bill Dowling. Professor Emeritus of the School of Public Health at UW compared the U.S. health care system to systems in other countries. His graphs and comparative metrics pointed out the problems we are experiencing relative to other developed nations. The U.S. spends twice as much on healthcare as most other wealthy nations, but is far from the best in the world. Access to care, health outcomes, equity, and administrative efficiency rank at the bottom of comparable nations. In contrast to other nations, the U.S. health system is driven by competitive, commercial, marketplace incentives. Although the Affordable Healthcare Act brought the number of people without insurance down to about 10% of the population, inequities persist, and access to care is dependent on having health insurance. Most physicians in the U.S. are specialists, whereas health systems in other countries are based on primary care physicians. The administrative cost of managing the complex and frustrating mix of public and private health insurance consumes 20-30% of the nation's health spending. Employers cover about 80% of the nation's healthcare costs in providing health insurance for their employees, but are shifting more of the cost to their employees in the form of increased deductibles and higher premiums. And, are increasingly calling for government help. Then President Trump tried to undermine the ACA, but the public liked many of its provisions, and about 60% of the public view the ACA favorably today. But the public is very concerned about costs and believes that government should enact controls on costs as exist in most other countries. The public is very pessimistic, however, that government will do anything because of the influence of lobbying and partisan politics. The four potential approaches to healthcare reform are 1) a socialized system like in the U.K., 2) a single government payer system like in Canada, 3) government price controls, or 4) a public health insurance option to compete with private insurance. There is considerable support for the option approach, but major headwinds make it unlikely that this reform will move forward in Congress.

November 2022

Guests: President John Strasburger introduced first time guest Milan Richter, who attended courtesy of Bob Farher. Milan gave a brief biography by way of introduction. Previous guests Bill Severson and Tom Koll were also in attendance. They, along with Milan Richter, were voted into active membership by unanimous approval of the those present. **Business:** A vote on the Wrangler constitution was also approved by unanimous approval of those present. **Member's Moment:** Dan Hungate talked about two supreme court cases, one of which involved land use and navigable waterways on Priest Lake, Idaho. **Presentation:** Tony Ward-Smith talked about "The Dilemma of Denial" — factors affecting why we think as we do and how those thoughts may differ from the "facts", or from how others see the same situation. He sees the institutions we have created to help us function in society as largely responsible for how we act, what we believe and pass on to our families and those with whom we interact. We accept as truth only those things that we like or agree with. This leads to the perpetration of bias as they passed along family lines. There was much to agree and disagree with the subject as presented, as is the purpose of Wranglers.

October 2022

Wranglers present: Barnes, Davidson, Dowling, Handeland, Hodge, Johnson, Lewis, Martisian, Mencke, Short, Strasburger, Wiley, Hafermann. **Guests:** Mark Lorbiecki and Csaba Hegyary. **Absent:** Comstock, Fahrer, Hungate, Ward-Smith. President Strasburger called the meeting to order, introduced guests and proceeded with his **Members Moment:** His honeymoon with his wife was a summer in

Bighorn National Forest, employed by the Forest Service in keeping watch for forest fires from a cabin with no electricity and no running water. His wife presented him with a new puppy as they began the adventure (perhaps to keep John from misbehaving?) Quite an adventure indeed and profitable as well, as there was no chance to spend the income except for weekly trips on foot and car to replenish food and water. **Presentation:** Einer focused on studies of construction of the West Seattle Bridge and the I-90 connection between the Eastside and Seattle as it traversed Mercer Island. He is an expert on these and other projects, having been a civil engineer with a specialty in managing land traffic flow since soon after his return from Vietnam. Interesting that in 1970 it took only 12 months to produce a complete study and cost estimate in building I-5 from Tacoma to Everett, whereas in today's world it may take a decade to study and approve a project of similar scope. Lots of reasons for that, not all related to red tape and politics, and its particularly challenging given today's much more rapid speed of change and difficulty in predicting future needs. Another complication is that as electric vehicles become more popular, the method of funding projects for roads, bridges, tunnels and the like has been a tax on gasoline consumption, which over time will clearly decrease. It is crucial that a different, or perhaps secondary source of funding needs to be identified and approved. A further challenge is that funds for maintenance has in the past has been ignored, with grave consequences that we are starting to see. The West Seattle Bridge closure and the collapse of a bridge near Minneapolis are but 2 examples of deferred maintenance causing horrible consequences. A vote was taken to approve Csaba Hegyary as the **newest member**. His membership was unanimously approved.

September 2022

First meeting of the new year— 13 members, 3 guests attending. **Guest:** Einer Handeland brought Rich Martrisian for the second time, and he wants to join. John Strasburger brought Tom Koll, and Bill Dowling brought Csaba Hegyary. Jerry Johnson gave us the **Member's Moment:** Members Moment. Jerry Johnson shared an anecdote about his retirement party from the King County Superior Court. While standing in a receiving line he was frequently asked what he would be doing with his spare time. Standing with him was his four year old grandson who suggested he could be a crossing guard. Jerry didn't tell us whether he applied for the position. **Presentation:** Bob Wiley Presented the qualities of two vastly different leaders in the 20th Century. "Adolf Hitler raised by a very severe father who often beat him, was also harshly treated in school as he attended five schools as a result of family moves. Although born and initially raised in Austria, the family moved to Germany and Hitler developed a very powerful belief in the superiority of the German-Aryan people. He applied to the Vienna Art School in his late teens and was rejected twice. Lived hand-to-mouth, no regular employment. As war approached he joined the German-Bavarian army, quickly proved to be a courageous, brave soldier. . . wounded in battle, received the Iron Cross, Second class. He returned to front lines, was wounded again and gassed, then awarded the Iron Cross, First Class. From his position, he did not think that troops lost the war, it had been taken away by the Jews and discredited civilian who had sat out and prospered by the war. The rest is history. He became involved in politics, took over a small Workers Party, renamed it Nazi. The party gradually won 46% of the seats in the Chancellery, he was made Chancellor and led the world into war and the death of tens of millions, soldiers and civilians, in additions to tens of millions of Jews who were systematically exterminated. He was a 2120th Century leader. Another leader, Mahatma Gandhi, raised by a loving family with stable home, his mother was a great and vital influence. She was as devout Hindu who had studied the Quran and the Bible and, as a Hindu, believed in non-violence, no injury to any human, fasting for self purification and tolerance of other creed and sects. Following three years in London for a law degree and then several unsuccessful professional years in India, Gandhi took a job in Natal, South Africa where he was highly discriminated against because of his being an India, dark skin, and totally excluded from associating with European, who harshly controlled the country and economy. He sought to establish and protect the rights of Indians and South Africans themselves where, in some situations they were the majority population suppressed by the Europeans. He returned to India, fought suppression, beatings and jail to wear down the Empire's domination of the native people and won independence. That was the 20th Century. Who will lead in the 21st? We have newly recognized groups no larger that the German Workers Party, called Nazi. For many they came out of the wood work on January 6. New names, groups most of us had never heard, Pride Boys, The Oath Keepers, Patriot Front, National Socialist Legion, and who else?

June 2022

We elected **new officers!** President: John Strasburger, Vice President: Ed Mencke, Secretary: Bill Maynard, Treasurer: Bill Dowling. **Guest** for the evening was mechanical engineer Richard "Rich" Matrisian, sponsored by Einer Handeland. And, thanks to Tom Davidson, Bill Dowling, and the crew at Aljoia, the evening was refreshingly unique. Bill and Aljoia crew lined up a dinner that fit perfectly with Tom's **Presentation:** "The Food We Eat and Its Effect on our Health and The Climate" The phenomenon of rising quantities of greenhouse gases has been widely demonstrated. CO₂ is the biggest culprit and it has been demonstrated that human activity since the industrial revolution has added increasing and rising amounts of this gas. One of the largest contributors to this increase is the worldwide farming of beef cattle for consumption and for dairy products. It has been demonstrated by studies, including those in the Book "The China Study", that animal protein is not necessary for good health and longevity and is actually harmful in large quantities. In addition, cattle farming occupies an enormous amount of the land area of the earth. More is being added at an alarming rate by cutting down forests and converting the land to pastures. The pastures are occupied by animals that emit large quantities of methane as a result of their digestive process. Methane is many times more harmful to the atmosphere than CO₂. Something we could all do to reduce our impact on the rising greenhouse gas levels— eliminate beef and dairy products from our diet. And so we had a meatless

dinner that evening! Bill Maynard, giving the **Member's Moment**, reviewed his growing and maturing years that led him into leadership, management and consulting positions in education, in ways that impacted lives of students across the state.

May 2022

Eighteen members present for Chick Hodge's **presentation**: "THE UNITED STATES ECONOMY FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE" A study of United States economic data from 1930 through 2021 shows that:

- It is important to correct historical economic data for both population growth and inflation to put it in perspective;
- The per-capita level of the gross domestic product has increased in inflation-adjusted terms to an all-time high.
- The per capita public debt level and deficit level are both at higher levels than at any time since the World War II era.
- Federal government revenues and expenses have increased significantly as a percentage of GDP
- The national public debt now approximates the GDP at \$22K per capita in 2021 dollars..
- The escalation of the deficit has been a consistent pattern for during the administrations of Presidents Obama, Trump, Biden.
- If the Fed limits interest rate to control unemployment and inflation, the result could be an interest cost of up to \$1 trillion per year.

April 2022

Nineteen were present, including **guest** Mike Martin. Thank you, Ed Mencke, for bringing your friend for the evening. Hope he has a solid desire to join us! FOCUS ON MEMBER ACQUISITION. Please redouble your efforts to bring potential members as guests to all future Wranglers meetings! NOT TOO LATE for our April meeting to extend an invitation! Tom Davidson, giving the **Member's Moment**, talked about his early years on Mercer Island. For those who spent much of their lives on The Rock, there was much to connect with. And the evening's **Presenter**, George Bouvet, helped us focus on essential ingredients having to do with Leadership. That general topic spawned conversation for an entire evening, sometimes veering into our fraught world of politics. Enlightening and useful comments regarding Boeing's leadership dynamics were center stage. We also heard two members who have been involved in leadership development, Bill Dowling and Bill Maynard, provide on-the-ground reality comments. If you want a copy of comments made by George, or citations of books he referenced, please contact him directly.

March 2022

Presenter, Dan Hungate's presentation was based upon the book "System Error: Where Big Tech Went Wrong and How We Can Reboot", written by three Stanford professors who he had seen speak at a recent reunion. He discussed the history of tech firms and how their optimization approach had ignored the values that needed to be included in their messaging. He gave an example of how artificial intelligence could never replace human intelligence and the hard work ahead to get a better handle on how high tech deals with information. Our evening had a second major wrangle regarding the future of our organization. By and large, the sense of the evening by this Secretary was that the desire of the members taken as a whole, with certain exceptions, was that what we have in the way of mission and organization operations should remain the same or nearly so. President Stan Barnes asked all members to participate in a Survey of Issues, the results of which have been forwarded to all members. Furthermore, there was general agreement (with exceptions duly noted) that members desired to terminate wrangling/discussing this general topic - - which will enable us to move forward with building friendships and engaging in powerful intellectual discourse.

February 2022

New Member: A unanimous vote of "Yes!" came in, making Einer our latest new member. GLAD to have you, Einer. Make sure, fellow Wranglers, that you introduce yourselves to this accomplished guy during our March meeting! **Member's Moment**: Thanks to Dan Hungate for his yarn about his early years as his family and homes in the Pend Orielle, ID. area grew and changed. To you both: Nicely Done! Thanks, John Strasburger, for an enlightening **Presentation** on immigration during our February meeting.: Should the U. S. increase its immigration? A survey/analyses of American's attitudes toward all aspects of immigration: <https://www.cato.org/survey-reports/e-pluribus-unum-findings-cato-institute-2021-immigration-identity-national-survey#introduction>. Lengthy but easy reading with lots of illustrative charts." Next month, an agenda item is a possible Wrangle (certainly a discussion) regarding the on-the-ground direction of our illustrious men's group. Let's remember the the two foundation elements of our Purpose during our Wrangle (above).

January 2022

Stan Barnes gave his **Member's Moment**.

December 2021

Happy Holidays, Wranglers Gentlemen - and Fay Cheetham and Jody Bower (Al Skinner's daughter!) Fifteen members, along with 11 spouses/guests were **present**. Several members were ill that night - our Best goes out to them for a quick, complete healing. The decorations and food provided by Aljoja during our meeting on December 9 were much appreciated. Our steak dinner, with great trimmings (and free wine), established a good 'festival' atmosphere. THANKS to the Aljoja staff for their hard work. In the spirit of friendship and giving, spouses/partners and two special guests graced our evening. Those **guests** were Fay Cheetham, spouse of recently deceased Russ; and Jody Bower, daughter of recently deceased Al Skinner. We miss the men, and appreciated the presence of Fay and Jody so much! Jerry Johnson, the evening's **presenter**, titled his talk "*One Nation, Under God, Indivisible*"; and it was indeed provocative. His statement is that the three pillars necessary for a functioning society are a document (Constitution), religion, and education, and he later provided this link- https://imprimis.hillsdale.edu/the-way-out/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email - as a way of providing further depth to his point of view. My observation: the serious wrangling following his presentation on the general topic of nation/religion/divisiveness indicates that it will continue to be a taut (and hot!) topic into the foreseeable future. We are continuing to call for new members - please bring guests you believe could be serious Wrangler believers! Treasurer Bill Dowling,, has

informed me that 12 members still need to make a \$200 contribution which will last through June, 2022. Please bring a check on January 14 OR send via mail to: Bill Dowling, Aljoja, 2430 76th Ave SE, Apt 425, Mercer Island, 98040.

October 2021

October's gathering was enjoyable - friends gathered, wine shared, no fisticuffs that I know of. We shared a moment of silence as we honored our dear friend, Russ Cheetham, who passed away on September 26th. He'll be remembered for his warmth, great presence, and razor-sharp intellect. THANK YOU, Russ, for all that you gave to us. Sixteen Wranglers were present, all enjoyed a fine meal. Ed Mencke, during his **Member's Moment**, presented a bit of life philosophy that has come to him through contact with canines of the world (his own included). Charles Fitzgerald gave a **presentation** about his favorite ship repositioning across the Atlantic. Members present voted to accept **Treasurer** Bill Dowling's recommendations to make two payments: Due by November's meeting date: \$100 to cover costs for our special December dinner. In January, \$200 is due for meeting/dinner through June, 2022

June 2021

Present were 14 members - including the newly-voted in **new member**, Charles Fitzgerald - brought by Dick Campbell. **Presentation** by Floyd Short - - after which a substantive conversation ensued. Thank you, Floyd! Stan's post-meeting comments: "For the very successful and well attended June "Return of the Wranglers" Meeting Floyd Short presented a well-thought-out and delivered discussion of both the book and the concept, "How Democracies Die." There followed one of the most robust, active, inclusive and informative wrangles of recent years. So robust that specific details have retreated into the general fog of intellectual stimulation and good fellowship. A fitting tribute to the value and content of Wranglers." We continue to be grateful for the financial reserves that cover our meals. Thanks to all members who made that happen.

February 2020- to- May 2021: No meetings...because of covid!!!



November 2019

President Ed Mencke was absent, so V.P. Stan Barnes provided guidance throughout the evening. Total present—17: fifteen members and two guests brought by Bob Fahrer.

Member's Moment: Bob Wiley provided a fill-in presentation (Tom Naden a no-show) centered on services offered by People's Memorial Association re end-of-life situations. Bob has forms, get hold of him if you want more information. AND, Floyd Short followed with "Physician Orders For Life-Sustaining Treatment" (with detailed email to all)—critically important info!

Presentation: Stan Barnes told about privateers, Traders, Capitalists. In 1775, one of the first acts of the new Continental Congress was to establish Letters of Marque and Reprisal for American ships— which authorized Captains to "by Force of Arms attack, seize, and take" ships, cargoes, soldiers, sailors, and "any and all things of value or benefit to the country of Great Britain". Over the course of the following war more than 2,000 American ships would take 3,500 British ships, cargoes and crews, and sell the ships at auction as "lawful Prizes". Some were sold back to former owners, some more than once. Most American privateers came from the well-established merchant-trading families of Salem and Beverly, MA and Providence, RI. Few accelerated so rapidly to the prominence of Elias H. Derby, his son John and the 125 ships they ultimately deployed with a steadily increasing network of partners against British merchants. In addition to cash, crewmen and plundered cargoes from both private merchants and Royal Navy ships, the Americans gained greater confidence at sea, improved their fighting and navigational skills, built larger, faster ships, and gained the momentum of a winning cause. Successful American privateers and battles at sea during and after the Revolution directly influenced English and American governance and relations for the next 50 years.

October 2019

Twenty-two members were present.

Member's Moment—Bob Wiley shared some personal habits that still remain, having started as a young child during the depression. A couple of examples: he presented a plastic sandwich bag and explained that he is still in the habit of, after using one, rinsing it out with soap and water and he then turns the bag inside out to dry. It's then ready for another use. Why buy more when this works just fine? Similarly, he's wearing a perfectly good, warm sweater that's 40+ years old. Who cares if it now sports elbow patches...the sweater still keeps him warm and looks great. The point of this and other examples is that there's a difference between "needs" and "wants." We do a service to our planet and to our personal finances by keeping this in mind.

Presentation: Bob Lewis slyly introduced his topic: Death and how to approach it. Death's definition; "the extinction or cessation of life" or as "ceasing to be." There is a lot of mystery about this event. It's the last great event we'll all experience. 100% will experience the grim reaper. Earnest Becker suggests that our knowledge of our eventual dying produces in the collective and one's personal psyche a great anxiety about our death and the after world. So what can we do about this dilemma? Actually, not a lot since no one has really returned from the dead to tell us about the after life. Nevertheless there are a number of things that one can do to ease this burden: write letters to loved ones, make or update a will, share concerns with your physician, or make pre-planned arrangements for how assets are to be dispersed.

May 2019

Tom opened the meeting by announcing a new officers' slate: **President: Ed Mencke, VP: Stan Barnes, Secretary: Bob Fahrer, Treasurer: Bill Dowling.** Al Skinner moved to elect the full slate by unanimous consent. Approvals followed swiftly and the slate was elected.

Member's Moment—Bob Fahrer's topic—his trombone. He pulled out his 1928 family heirloom, formerly played by both his father and his grandfather. Bob thinks of the school band director as a second father, for whom he made apparently rapid progress as a trombonist, leading to adventures in band competitions throughout the upper Midwest. Bob's father had studied trombone with Jerry Chimera in Chicago. Chimera, as director of the upper Midwest High School music festival trombone section, auditioning players for the three ability-ranked sections of the festival orchestra. He selected Bob over the heads of several older musicians to play first chair trombone. Alas, Bob's father did not much appreciate this signal honor, though his sisters were appropriately bowled over by Bob's attainment. Bob played a few notes on the trombone, apparently triple-tonguing one section.

Presentation: Tom Naden, drawing on *The Constitution Demands It – The case to impeach Donald Trump*, led off with the inclusive definition of impeachment grounds for "Treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors". Impeachment of any elected official, and most particularly of a president, entered the Constitution as the cure for a crisis of leadership, arising since the newly reorganized United States was not only a new nation, but chiefly a new approach to governing based on a rule of law rather than of men. Since its earliest days the country has had to face Lincoln's question, "whether a nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long survive on the face of this earth". George Mason, a framer who felt impeachment was the most important corrective, ("is any man above justice?")—favored the separation of checks and balances that placed initiation of impeachment with the House and the trial and

removal of impeached officials with the Senate. It was not a question of crime and punishment but a remedy for “monarchical tendencies” much on the mind of the framers. Tom’s sense is that Trump represents a clear case for impeachment since he continues to assert his position and prerogatives above the reach of justice. In Tom’s judgement, Jefferson, and all the other founders were inevitably flawed humans, but right to recognize human weaknesses in their claim that ignorance can bind nations as well as individuals. Quoting the book Tom stated that “failure to impeach miscreants threatens the existence of democracy.”

April 2019

Our meeting opened on a somber tone. In addition to remembering Lowell Ericsson’s passing, Tom announced the passing of two members’ wives, Dick Russell’s wife Betsy on April 22, and Tom Naden’s wife Ellie on March 30.

Member’s Moment: Mark Hafermann, after first apologizing for his too-good example of a drifting mind in last month’s presentation, offered to send his treatise on mental processes to any member who requests it.

Presentation: Brian Comstock first sent members in advance the text of his talk, “Massive Litigation Encircling Our President”. He then reviewed his own experience as a senior at U.W. during the McCarthy era, particularly when Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed as “Communist spies”, and noted that, “the scenery has changed”. Brian’s thesis— the 215 criminal charges, 38 indictments and 5 prison sentences from the Mueller investigation are more sideshow than main event. “....Actually quite minor, compared to all that has been handed off to other prosecutors and is arising overall[that] connects Trump directly or in some other way...”. Brian’s clear, orderly presentation mentions all the federal and state litigation already proceeding and touched on AG Barr’s 4 page summary of the 400 page Mueller report. Brian noted charges against the Trump foundation— “flagrant violations” of restrictions on foundations that constitute one or more “criminal acts”. Congress’ request for the president’s tax forms echoes the Teapot Dome scandal of 1921-23, “a bribery scandal involving the administration of United States President Warren G. Harding. Its critical outcome granted Congress statutory access to any citizen’s taxes. The statute authorizes any of three congressional committees to request and obtain copies of anyone’s recent tax returns and related documents. Compliance with this statute has never been questioned, but that now appears possible (by our Supreme Court). But many Federal judges, including Supremes, who might have jurisdiction over suits related to tax filings are recent appointees by this administration. As Mueller’s report creeps to release, Brian notes trump’s pattern to attack the report, then shift attention to a “border crisis”, fire the DHS Director, and hold a rally. Finally Brian explained that an independent prosecutor is not answerable to a President, and can legally disclose his findings to Congress. Yet in the current situation, he feels, “the judiciary is tainted, all the way to the Supreme Court”. He asks how these factors will affect the course of this administration, and of the country, likens these discussions to “a big iceberg, mostly under water”, and notes that former Governor Weld of Massachusetts has filed to oppose Trump for the republican nomination.

March 2019

Ed Mencke called the meeting to order in Tom’s absence. Treasurer’s Report: Balance of \$5,344.57 before this March meeting.

Member’s Moment: Floyd Short recounted 3 significant lessons from his early entrepreneurial career. First was that his quarterly allowance of \$.25 caused him to “experience a funds deficiency”. He tried to sell magazines around the neighborhood, yielded nothing. His aunt suggested he sell them in the lobby of the insurance company his father was the President of, he sold all his stock in one hour, learning that it’s not *what*, so much as *who* you know, and who is on your side.

Presentation: Bob Fahrer’s talk— “Revitalizing The American Creed – An Imperative for Keeping Our Democracy Alive” included a comprehensive review of several books that document the origins and need for better relations in times of political gridlock. He presented a review of approaches to current social and political disarray that might help us as Americans better understand our recent change from a Nation State to a Market State. A native of North Dakota, Bob grew up focused on the price of wheat as a measure of prosperity and well-being among his neighbors. Wheat prices ranged between \$3 and \$5 per bushel for most of the 20th century. “Nothing much happened” during that time, and North Dakota wheat farmers were mainly solvent, though still always tied to weather, fearing a disastrous weather event just around the corner. They could participate in social, economic and political life. Changes in agricultural policies, global markets, trading practices, farm ownership, and costs of seed, fuel and transportation began to generate major changes to wheat prices, which fell to \$2.50 in the mid ‘90’s. Prices dramatically increased thereafter to about \$9.00 in 2010. While the increase was welcome, subsequent falls to below \$2.00/bu since 2011 have wreaked havoc on farmers. This new market volatility made wheat farming unprofitable and drove many North Dakotans off their farms. Banks often brokered transactions that forced other, more successful farmers to acquire more land – but large corporations, which were not legal in that state at that time, could not acquire the land. Displaced farmers were also forced into more challenging urban environments. Bob closed with questions about the future of capitalism and whether means and will exist to adapt the Market State to more communal and considerate forms than abused norms, coarsened social and political discourse, and paralyzed Congress.

January 2019

The meeting began with a brief discussion of dues, costs of meals, and payment to maintain quality meals at Aljoia. Treasurer Bob Fahrer will present a formal motion at the next meeting.

Member's Moment: Tom Davidson recounted a major event in his life from his time in the Navy as a dental officer to the First Marine Air Wing, Japan, he hoped to take an observation flight in one of the squadron's TF-9-F Grumman Cougar two-seat trainers. He was finally scheduled for a Sunday following the scheduled Friday flight of his tent-mate, Dr. Charles Moberly, a flight surgeon. Their schedules got swapped. Tom flew on the Friday, and Charles was scheduled for Sunday. The pilot let Tom fly the plane for a bit. He described his amazed joy to climb rapidly to 20,000 feet in clear weather, and then to be a passenger through violent and disorienting maneuvers as the pilot simulated attacks on Navy aircraft. Tom returned happy, and with a greater appreciation of flying and of the skills and toughness of his Marine pilot. On the Sunday flight the plane entered an inverted spin from which the pilot could not recover. The pilot punched out in his seat, the aircraft fell into the sea, carrying Charles to his death. Tom shared his profound emotions at this sequence of events, which affect him to this day, his gratitude to have been granted the life he has followed since that weekend, and his profound sadness that his good friend did not get to experience a later lifetime.

Featured Speaker: "Look what's coming!" Bob Wiley began with reference to potential for a major earthquake to affect Mercer Island, then turned to a detailed review of geologic history of the globe, focused primarily on five previous species-extinction events from about 250 million to 65 million years ago that killed between 60% and 95% of living species. His talk followed arguments advanced by Elizabeth Kolbert in her 2014 book *The Sixth Extinction— an Unnatural History*. 65 million years ago, the Cretaceous age ended suddenly when an asteroid slammed into what is now Yucatan, generating a global shroud of effluvia that swiftly killed off the dinosaurs and allowed mammals and later plant forms to survive, emerge, and grow into the modern age we know. It was the Fifth Extinction. In 1991 geologists discovered remains of a 125 mi. diameter asteroid crater off Yucatan, rich in iridium. Subsequent calculations determined that ash, dust, and iridium blasted into the atmosphere must have blocked the sun for months or years, long enough to kill off the large grasses and plants that fed dinosaurs, and choke the dinosaurs themselves, leaving only small mammals to scurry from hiding in the remaining plants and begin evolving through the Cenozoic age into life forms we recognize today. Through this history of extinctions earth has shown excessive levels of atmospheric CO₂ that acidified oceans and supported algae blooms that depleted oxygen in the sea and killed multiple species. This process is happening now, accelerating since the Industrial Age, and accepted by most scientists, the UN Pollution Control agency, and the US Department of Energy in recent reports as the cause of global warming and climate change. As Bob says, "The seas are warming, climate change has dried our forests, our reservoirs are being depleted and the melting of earth's glaciers is raising sea levels causing a near-term threat to millions, hundreds of millions, if not billions of people." So today we face a potential major Sixth Extinction of species, aggravated by human-generated CO₂ emissions largely from fossil fuels burned and exhausted into the atmosphere since the beginning of the Industrial Age. Bob asks, "Should our policies be to maximize profit regardless of environmental consequences? Is a sixth extinction possible, likely, or just a foolish thought? Will what we do today impact and shape the future?" Feisty wrangling followed!

December 2018

"Ladies Night" at Wranglers— our annual holiday session (open wine bar!!!). Newest Wrangler, Bill , Introduced. We then closed out an eventful 2018 Wranglers season with two comprehensive, delightful, thought-provoking presentations.

Member's Moment: George Bouvet traced his eventful life from youth in the Bronx (who'd have known??), through (boxing) appearance at Madison Square Garden, revisit to family residence in Ireland and global negotiations to find homes for increasing numbers of sophisticated Boeing jetliners. He made us all laugh throughout!

Featured Speaker: "Wake-Up Time", Tony Ward-Smith's presentation of global evolution and evolving perils covered much ground: Big Bang— 14 billion years ago. Universe— 4 billion years ago. Earth— one planet around Sun— one of 100-to-400 billion stars in Galaxie— one of 100 billion in universe. First life— 3.5 billion years ago, evolved! Primates, 75 million years ago. Homininins split from chimps 15 million years ago. Sapiens in Africa 75 thousand years ago, now permeate every corner of the world. Just 2,000 years ago— 250 million of us. Today (just 400 years later)— 7+ billion people. Early man— hunters/gatherers., then farmers, formed "community". Cooking resulted in more complex brain, we developed language (the BIG difference!), became humans, created cultures/religions— if we don't know why some things happen...explain it as "God's will!" Then, just the last 500 years, "Scientific revolution." Developed/capacity to manipulate our physical/chemical/biological worlds, resulting in potent technological advances. Now, question is: Religion...OR...science...Or...? We operate within the rules/expectations of institutional dimensions— Government(s), Law, Marriage/Family, Education, Business, Science, etc. *We are ruled by our institutions!*— think what we are taught to think. But they are not "real"; we invented them. Our view of everything is directly influenced— *controlled?*—by our institutional formats— a limiting effect to our thoughts and perceptions. We don't/can't think out-of-the-box— don't look for facts and then make up our minds. Rather, we look for "facts" that conform to our pre-established views. Resist change, resist new info (coming at us every day!) Problems: Uninformed perspectives, misguided human intentions/short-range view (Elections/wealth). Misuse of religion. *God doesn't offer solutions!* Pressing concerns— Uneven distribution of wealth, human suffering. War/Annihilation! Environmental Dilemmas Racism Need to: Wake up to what we have created— progress/problems. Think about how we think, how we know, how we learn. Resolve religion/science issue (faith/spirituality/morality/facts). Realize— *WE are our own God!* Our future on this planet is up to us! Need to assume a direct responsibility for becoming MORE human, more curious, more active, more

informed, more "WOKE" . These issues, ideally with evolving answers, will be with us for some time. The evening's Wrangle developed slowly, then evolved into more social hour.

November 2018

Member's Moment: Bill Dowling talked about his training and certification as a member of the Mercer Island Citizens Emergency Response Team [CERT]. This City-sponsored, FEMA-certified response team is federally-supported and partnered with similar teams in Kirkland, Bellevue and Renton. Teams provide assistance to City Fire and Police services in event of an earthquake, flood, windstorm, power-outage or other emergency that exceeds normal City services response times or staffing. There are only 3 police and 5 firefighters on Mercer Island at night, which could easily leave too few hands for multiple incidents, or power outages that cripple normal communications and transportation. CERT website, a subset of MI Emergency Preparedness, <http://www.mercergov.org/Page.asp?NavID=2991>

Special Recognition: National Philanthropic Day recognized our Bob (and Maryann) Wiley as Philanthropists of the Year. Their service and contributions helped to build the Arboretum, Burke Museum, Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls, Pacific Science Center, Planned Parenthood, Rotary, Senior Service Center, United Way, and University Women's Club. A long and loud round of applause and appreciation for our distinguished member.

Featured Speaker: Floyd Short's presentation referenced Michael Sandel's book "Justice; What's The Right Thing To Do?". In one sense, Justice is easily defined and inarguable if one conceives of it as the blind lady in the flowing robe holding a balance scale. In practice, however, questions involving justice are specific, not theoretical, and always revolve around arguable questions that require values and judgement for their solution. Chief among these are— delivering the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, and— respecting all parties' freedom of choice. A major question is whether one or the other of these values is sufficient to assure justice is done. If not, what alternative solutions are available, and what have philosophers had to say on the subject? Floyd referred to two of Aristotle's ideas. First, that Justice requires a definition of the purpose of the social practice in question, and second, that Justice seems to operate on principles of relative merit. He offered three approaches to consider: 1) greatest good for greatest number, 2) respect for individual rights and freedoms, 3) the "good life" is guided by virtue and morality. With that, Floyd took us on a mini-tour of some Western political and economic philosophies expressed by Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Friedrich Hayek, and Milton Friedman. After a discussion of pros and cons of Libertarianism he described some ideas of John Rawls from his Theory of Justice.

October 2018

Treasurer's report: \$4594.75 in account after September expenses. This will pay about \$900/mo. through January. Those bringing guests in December will pay additional \$35.

Member's Moment: Dan Hungate/Music Man! Early piano lessons, followed by the violin, trombone and bassoon. A year in Stanford marching band. While at Stanford he took a date to La Boheme in San Francisco. She liked either Dan or the opera, or both, enough to marry him later. During a year at Stanford in Stuttgart he also attended Das Rheingold and Die Valkyrie. Then, "no music" in Boston during Law School— remedied by purchase of season tickets to Seattle Opera that began a 54 year cycle of opera attendance both here, in San Francisco and New York, including all but one Ring cycle in Seattle.

Featured Speaker: Al Skinner/The Evolution of God. Primitive people sought to explain natural phenomena by attributing unusual events to spirits, demons, trolls and gods (which they invented in the likeness of humans). The implacable march of science discovers explanations that are resisted by the orthodox church. Humanism led to scientific enquiry and understanding. It includes the concept of a moral society that does not need a hereafter to be "good" nor a creator to explain creation. Early Thai Buddhists played their animist traditions with an emphasis on spirits that rule the world, and the importance of Karmic balance. Christianity determined to codify the myths surrounding the arrival and ministries of Christ in the New Testament and the initial, and subsequent dogmas that have grown from it. As science began to have greater impact on human lives, many discoveries appeared to disprove elements of religious certainty, and were initially opposed by a strong, centralized Catholic Church. The absence of printing in early Christian times allowed multiple variants and simple errors into later versions of the Bible and other holy texts. Monks writing for years in the seclusion of their scriptoria might misspell words. More commonly, they and their predecessors would mistranslate terms that had originated among Jews and Pharisees, been written down first in Aramaic or Hebrew, been translated into Greek, then later to Latin. Along the way each version might differ in both trivial and important ways from earlier versions. In the religious ferment of the Middle East other sects, first Babylonians, then Zoroastrians and others introduced beliefs, practices and language that later migrated into Christian texts. Imports from other religions, and particularly from scientific discoveries began to soften ideas of god from the stern and wrathful version to a later kinder and gentler diety. In the years following the Crucifixion Christian Apostles traveled many routes, with many experiences, throughout the Middle East, and through Turkey to Rome. Along the way each individual developed different explanations, approaches to, and interpretations of what became the Gospel.

September 2018

Business: President Tom Davidson reminded members of the 10-minute maximum Member's Moment and its purpose: to enable Wranglers to learn more about the person making the presentation. Reminder: We need to leave Aljoia by 9:00 PM. Treasurer Bob Fahrer reported that 15 Wranglers had paid their dues. Prospective member John Woolley declined his membership offer. Dave Eitelbach resigned from the club.

Absentee: Brian Comstock

Member's Moment: Chick Hodge recalled his life encounters with tennis great Arthur Ashe and former Cabinet member Condoleezza Rice. He commented on the importance of minimizing artificial or trivial barriers and the need for constant perseverance to bring about masterful performance.

Evening Speaker: Tom Davidson talked about Seattle/King County Homeless Crisis— Seattle's dubious honor of having the third highest homeless population in the country. More than 12,000 homeless live in Seattle, of whom more than half live on the streets. Tents clutter public spaces, derelict vehicles used for housing are parked for extended periods on Seattle streets, and drug and alcohol use proliferates. Litter and filth accumulates despite expenditures of more than \$200 million per year to alleviate this problem, and the homeless population continues to increase. Causes of homelessness— pervasive use of drugs and alcohol, and resultant crimes within the homeless population, and the cost and management difficulties in scaling small programs to serve more people. A major problem— lack of coordination among the various agencies that attempt to manage/reduce homelessness. Public and private agencies duplicate efforts, spend funds inefficiently, and even interfere with each other's programs. Such dysfunction recently focused on the ill-fated "employers head tax" proposed in the spring and intended to raise an additional \$75 million for homeless programs. It was approved, then quickly withdrawn by the mayor and city council after public outcry, and a threat from Amazon to leave town over the lack of planning and costly negative effects on businesses in the city. Solutions? The "housing first" model that began in Salt Lake City, diversion programs to keep people from becoming homeless in the first place. Seattle has two model communities with low/no entry barriers and permissive structures: a tiny-house village in North Seattle, and an apartment building on Eastlake that allows drug and alcohol use and also offers treatment programs. Both have shown some measurable success in helping residents to regain control over their lives.

The Wrangle:: Several members discussed personal experience with homeless people or programs, including Jim Hichcliffe's years on the Salvation Army's board and success they have had with its faith-based human-restoration projects.

June 14, 2018

Business: Quality of previous meal was sub-standard, tonight's meal much improved. It is speaker's responsibility to select one of four entrée choices for the meal. **Dr. John Wooley** unanimously approved as new member. **Tom Davidson was approved as our next President.** Other new officers will be communicated to the Wranglers via email.

Member's Moment: John Strasburger described how much genealogy can be had from the Web— census records, military records, newspaper records and Google. "23 and Me" is a great source. He discovered a relative who was a member of George Washington's Guard! He is also 30% Jewish, a fact he had no previous knowledge of. Ancestry.com— another great source of information about one's family tree. Check out your own?...John recommends it!

Evening Wrangle: Bill Dowling's compelling presentation compared health care costs/outcomes among wealthy countries. US pays more than 11 other nations in a study, yet US outcomes — average life span, infant mortality, etc.— are ranked last. We see docs less often than most countries, but compensate providers far more than others; we have more specialists and use them much more, spend more for prescription drugs, incur higher administrative costs. Despite fight to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, 92% believe that citizenship includes the right to affordable health care, 87% believe supporting Medicare through taxes is a fair way to ensure everyone has access to care at age 65/beyond. Admin costs to provide Medicare/Medicaid and VA benefits—are FAR less than employer-provided and private insurance. Yes current administration is working mightily to see that it fails. Bill summarized best practices from those that obtain better outcomes at far less costs: Socialized System • Single-Payer • All Payer Rate System • Medicare as option. He says the latter is the most likely to succeed.

May 2018

Absentees: Tom Davidson, Dan Zak, Ed Mencke, Russ Cheetham, Jim Marich.

Guest (of John Strasburger): Bart Vincent.

Treasurer's Report: For the first time...ever?...we ran out of money to complete the year. Treasurer Bob Fahrer called for an additional \$35 from each member to get us through June. With eleven sessions per year...times \$32/mbr/session...plus the need to rebuild a cushion— next year's Sept and Jan tabs will be \$200 for each member.

Member's Moment: Bryan Cairns lived through WWII England with whistling German V1 Rockets overhead, scaring the entire nation (especially when they went silent). But after that it was for him—a PhD in Physics...NATO Research Fellowship (studying earth's ionosphere)... year as Stanford Sloan Fellow...leader of Boeing team to fabricate nuclear reactor... worked w/Electric Power Research Institute on safe disposal of nuclear waste...directed part of the Oak Ridge demonstration centrifuge enrichment program...

Technology Manager for the Boeing's Missile Division...headed Boeing's Physics Organization (Project: "Star Wars" program to destroy Russian missiles within a few seconds of launch)— all before retiring (1999). But then— here on Mercer Island: Involved in City's purchase of school property (now the Community Center)...pushed hard for a new library, (we have it!)...elected to MI City Council, helped negotiate hot/cold water debate for the Mary Wayte Pool...before retiring as city's Mayor (2007). Wait...he still serves on MI's Planning Commission! Bryan's talk was short, sweet, poignant. The man himself— an inspiration!

Presentation: Dan Hungate's talk was about Bitcoin— and about the future of the dollar, as drawn from "*The Death Of Money*" by James Rickards. Bitcoin is a digital coin... stored in digital addresses located throughout the Internet...that has monetary value...can be sent quickly/securely from any point in the world to another...but is not owned/controlled by a government or a central bank, therefore not subject to whims of politicians and/or etc. Currently, there are 16.5 million Bitcoins...created through a (very complicated) process called "mining"...which will continue until reaching the maximum limit of 21 million. A Bitcoin transaction is first signed by an outgoing wallet (a software program that generates digital addresses— so owners are anonymous), then is broadcast to the internet, then gets listed on the Block Explorer (log that keeps track of all bitcoin transactions)...where it is divided into blocks, each containing a number of log commands. Once the block is closed, the actual transaction takes place. It takes about 10 minutes to close a block and confirm a Bitcoin transaction. Most exchanges require at least 2-3 confirmations in order to ensure a bitcoin transaction. These transactions can be made 24/7 to any place in the world (except for the five countries that have banned Bitcoin) for a flat fee of \$2 to \$4— with no bank involved. Investment-wise, Bitcoins are traded on an open free market. Value is affected by supply and demand. The price of bitcoin jumped from \$800 to \$18,000 during 2017. Some of the appeal of Bitcoin stems from author Rickards' proposition that the world's long-standing economic systems are doomed to collapse at some point ("A Coming Monetary Apocalypse!"). He laments the abandonment of the gold standard, and wants it back again. "There is only high inflation, deflation, disorder, default, and repression..." ahead. "Severe consequences can be foreseen...It may be too late to save the dollar, but not too late to preserve wealth." So— what to do? Keep 20% in gold bars, 30% in cash, then divide the rest between art, hedge funds, insurance, and real estate...and hunker down.

April 2018

Absentees: Ed Mencke, Jim Marich, Floyd Short. **Guests:** Jack Woolley, David Jackern, Alan Butchman, Paul Fredlund.

Treasurer's Report: We're about to run out of money to cover us through June! The issue was was postponed for the May meeting!

Member' Moment: Russ Cheetham— who, by all indications, leads a much more interesting life than most— talked of working in Russia, on behalf of the World Bank. He was sent there in 1991 to help the leadership of the Soviet Union negotiate their joining this prestigious and influential organization. With the collapse of the Soviet Union towards the end of 1991, the newly created country of Russia applied for World Bank membership. But at that time, the Russian leaders indicated they were most anxious to become part of the Western European community. Things didn't go well. In 1993, NATO decided to move its boundaries to those of Poland and the three newly established Baltic States. As the Prime Minister of Russia, Yegor Gaidar, then indicated to Russ, with NATO now on Russian borders, there was no prospect for Russia become part of the European community. When Vladimir Putin became Prime Minister of Russia in 1999 and President in 2000, his byword from day one was: "Don't trust those guys in the West!" The experience with NATO in the 1990s has shaped his entire time as the Russian leader.

Presentation: Chick Hodge, along with a PowerPoint basket full of charts, presented us with an extensively detailed picture of **INEQUALITY IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD**. He started with a list of issues we would probably want to end up wrangling about. Then was quickly into his graphs, along with a qualifying reference of something called the GINI index— that measures the statistical dispersion of income distribution of a nation's residents, and is the most commonly used measure of inequality (for apples/oranges comparative purposes). It was developed by the Italian statistician/sociologist Corrado Gini (hence the name) and published in his 1912 paper "Variability and Mutability". There are both advantages and disadvantages, Chick says, of inequality. Looking at the bright side of a dark situation, the advantages (of econ inequality): It might push nations' leaders to create, promote or incentivize education, employment, innovation, entrepreneurship. All good. The disadvantages list includes— a lingering and self-perpetuating status-quo circumstance, econ/political power in too few hands, higher risk of political crisis, general stifling of economic growth. What can be done to ease national inequality— More cross-the-board education, more foreign trade, easing of labor market rules (minimum wage, etc.), taxes, social programs, infrastructure development.

March 8, 2018

Absentees: Stan Barnes, Mac Adams, Al Skinner. **Guests:** Lowell Ericsson introduced his son Neil, visiting here from the "other" Washington. **Treasurer's Report:** "So far so good..."

Member's Moment: Jim Hinchcliffe— his working life started 1971 with Republic Freight Systems...rose to VP of Operations...1973— Republic sold to Yellow Freight. At age 34 he was tasked with merging the two work forces together, starting in LA, then San Francisco, Chicago etc., ended up in New Jersey— met Anthony Provizano. Short version; Jim thought he had everything under control when it was suggested that they break for lunch. Upon resuming negotiations,

everything that had been agreed to was no longer the case. Lesson learned: "Don't interrupt a successful negotiating session until it's all buttoned up!" He took a job in Alaska with Sea Land, where he spent the rest of his career.

Evening Wrangle: George Bouvet— US Presidents and the most important things during each ones' time in office. He started by naming each president BY MEMORY. He listed 3 key events and/or accomplishments of each. One of the better real estate purchases ever must be \$7.2 million the US paid for the state of Alaska under Andrew Johnson. Another: Carter is ranked 6th in high IQ as rated by a team of social scientists, yet he was a 1-termer who lost badly to Reagan and was generally viewed as an unsuccessful president. Discussion centered on what common traits are present, if not raw intelligence, in highly successful presidents. One— surround oneself with highly skilled advisors. Another is the ability to put country first even at the expense of one's own self interest. Discussion moved to the current state of political/national affairs and the difficulty of electing highly skilled, principled candidates in this time of 24/7 scrutiny by not only the press but by social media, which makes EACH of us a "reporter."

February 8, 2018

Absentees: Mac Adams and Dick Campbell **Guests:** Yogesh Agrawal, an Engineer with a focus in the Aquatic Sciences, and Bill Maynard, former educator and high school principal at Cleveland High School and current leadership trainer. **Treasurer's Report:** "...we have enough for now!"

Member's Moment: Stan Barnes: a snapshot of his upbringing— early life in Bremerton with his family/ one brother. Stan's a "car guy", having raced cars starting at an early age— is partial to Porsche. College— Harvard , then back to Seattle, where he and his wife raised 2 kids. A great love of sailing/skiing/travelling. Stan Spoke about the state of our national political scene, urged us that now is the time to get involved if we are not already— pick a candidate for elective office that shares your views, invest time/money/talent on issues you believe in—most of all vote. Now is not the time to sit back and simply observe. We need all of us to be participants.

Evening Wrangle: John Strasburger— the US Constitution, w/focus on the amendment process and former Supreme Court Justice Stevens' views on how and why we should amend the document. It is extremely difficult to propose and ratify an amendment— only 17 have been added since the original 10 were included in the writing of the Constitution— only 1 in the past 47 years! Nevertheless, it CAN be done, as evidence by the efforts of Gregory Watson, who in 1982 wrote a college paper suggesting that an amendment proposed in 1789 regarding pay for congressional members (which failed to be ratified), be brought again and this time be approved. Through tireless efforts on Watson's part, it was ratified in 1992! John's presentation revealed several interesting issues, including gerrymandering, if state judges and officials are bound to uphold fed law which is at odds with state law (think laws legalizing marijuana), the Citizens United decision, etc. It led to a lively discussion— showing that important issues are often not easily solved and the "right" answer is not always clear. Sometimes one's own beliefs are contradictory, like what to do if you agree that Federal law prevails when it's in conflict with a state statute, and yet you support the state law? And that's just an individual's dilemma, now interject other peoples' views and it's no wonder that proposing and ratifying amendments is rare and very difficult, made more so by the current divide among our citizenry.

January 11, 2018

Guest: Fletch Waller. **Treasurer's report:** Our Banner Bank Account contains 2591.51— no outstanding expenses.

Member's Moment: Dave Eitelbach voiced considerable despair over the state of our nation's political circumstance. He pulled no punches!

Evening Wrangle: Russ Cheetham, presented an evaluation of U.S. economic performance to date, and U.S. and global economic growth prospects and drivers in the immediate future. After 5 years of weak economic growth in the global economy, a recovery began to emerge in the latter part of 2016. Global growth performance continued to improve in 2017. But there are significant risks associated with the recovery— country-specific risks, risks across countries and risks over time. In the six-year period, 2017-22, the International Monetary Fund projects global growth to average 3.7% a year – essentially the same as for 2011-16. Growth in the advanced economies would average 1.9% a year, compared with 1.7% in 2011-16. Growth in developing countries is projected to remain at about 5% a year during 2017-22. The U.S. economy is now at full employment. In the absence of external shocks (conflict with North Korea, serious deterioration in the Middle East), there is limited evidence of an economic downturn in the near-term. Given the current constraints on labor force growth and continued weak productivity growth, it is very unlikely that we will see sustained economic growth in the range of 3-4% a year in the coming years as has been proposed by the U.S. Administration. We can expect growth in the U.S. economy in the range of 1.7% to 2.5% a year for the near- and medium-term. According to the IMF, growth in the U.S. is projected to slow

December, 2017

Absentees: Based on name tags still in the box, missing the meeting were Al Skinner, Mac Adams and Ben Weyhing. **Call to Order:** Jim Hinchcliffe welcomed our “better halves” to the meeting and noted free wine thanks to their joining us and treasurer Bob Fahrer’s finance report followed: “We’re solvent!” **Member Moment:** Bob Lewis talked of the early days of Mercer Island, having lived here since 1941 ... on the south end of the island, which at the time was very pastoral. There were 1500 residents. Bob noted that 6 months after Pearl Harbor, an Army installation quietly appeared close to where Lakeridge school is now. Bob delivered newspapers to the soldiers assigned to the anti-aircraft lookout. After the war he got his undergraduate degree, then on to dental school at UW, and has continued on the Island ever since. **Evening Wrangle:** Brian Cairns’ “Women in the Workplace” recapped key events/attitudes of 1900s when 6 million women (¼ of the total workforce), held jobs. Most were in domestic service. Legal cases in the 20’s and 30’s included “Atkins vs Children’s Hospital” in which the US Supreme Court struck down a minimum wage for women. The Federal Government began to legislate social benefits and tax incentives designed to ensure family security, and unlike most other industrialized countries, benefits were based on work rather than rights as citizens. The stage was set for lower benefits due to lower pay for women, or no benefits if not employed. Despite their crucial roles during World War II, many women were asked to voluntarily quit their jobs so that returning servicemen could have them. Many did, giving rise to the Baby Boom generation. Progress HAS been made: cultural shift in 1956 thanks to Friedan’s “The Feminine Mystique”, Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act in 1965. There’s still a gap in income levels for the same work done, but women’s influence is growing, in corporate, political, medical and legal fields, and the military. **Equal Pay/Equal Opportunity:** Lower pay for women doing the same job as men continues to this day, despite legislative efforts dating back to The Kennedy Act (early 60’s) and other laws that prohibit wage discrimination based on sex. Loopholes continue and pay continues to be lower for women. Similarly, women still to struggle to climb corporate ladders and achieve positions of authority that reflect their skills. **Women in the Military:** The “Women’s Services Integration Act” (1948) allowed women to serve as regular members of the 4 branches of the military. Today women are contributing to the defense of our country, but sexual harassment and assault are far too frequent, and accountability and punishment for crimes are all too rare. **Sexual Harassment:** Definition is “any unwelcome sexual advance, verbal or physical conduct that creates a hostile, threatening, or offensive environment.” A number of high-profile incidents have made news recently. He asks “Where are we headed?” His answer is that as women continue to gain influence and power, fueled not only by the Trump election result but also by social media and it’s instant and far-reaching influence, things will change.

Points to wrangle:

- 1: Are women’s careers handicapped by the thought that marriage/family will result in them being “temporary”?
- 2: Will women continue to gravitate to traditionally lower paying professions, perpetuating lower average pay?
- 3: Should Congress revisit Title 7 and remove loopholes that restrict equal status of women?
- 4: Should differing degrees of sexual harassment be defined and addressed?
- 5: Should men report known cases of discrimination against women?
- 6: Will the disclosures of improper sexual acts lead to improvements for women in the workplace?

November, 2017

Treasurer’s Report: our current balance stands at \$2449.09. **Member Moment:** Ed: Raised in Medford OR, UC Santa Barbara grad class of ’71, apparel sales for several firms, a minor stroke temporarily wiped out his ability to speak, early retirement from Levi Strauss & Co. (age 50), residential real estate ever since. Five key interests: Family— married 33 years to Nancy, 1 daughter Hillary who lives nearby, 2 young grandchildren. Golf— played competitively till middle 20’s, still loves it, still trying to get better. Airplanes— made lots of model planes (never sniffed) got a private license at age 16. Music— loved band, orchestra, choir, sang in small choral groups till the stroke hit, still loves to be inspired and transported to another place by going to concerts. Travel— especially bike trips in Europe. **Evening Wrangle:** Jim Hinchcliffe provided a history of how the movement of goods was revolutionized in the mid 20th century when containerization finally became a reality. Putting goods in containers of various sizes for transport had been done since the late 1700’s in England. But the practice was restricted to horse-drawn flats and rail transport, in that ICC regulations prohibited carriers to own steam ship companies. It was left to an American of humble beginnings to take advantage of the efficiencies of packing goods in boxes for transport. Malcolm McLean got into the trucking business by buying a used truck during the Depression and started hauling tobacco in his native North Carolina. Over the years, this man without a high school diploma grew his firm to include 1800 tractors and over 3000 trailers, making his firm the 5th largest trucking firm in the country. But he wasn’t done, becoming aware of the ICC roadblock, he sold 75% of his firm and relinquished control, and purchased Waterman Steamship Corp. with the proceeds of the sale of his trucking firm. One of his ships, with 58 containers aboard, left Newark in April of ’56 and arrived in Houston, ushering in this new method of “intermodalism”, combining rail, trucking and shipping for the movement of goods. Competitors were not happy, as the cost of this form of shipping was but 16 cents per ton, compared with the stowage rate over land was \$5.80 per ton! McLean’s firm changed its name to Sea Land, and in 1962 they built in New Jersey the largest privately-owned container terminal in the world. Growth was rapid, with service to and from Anchorage beginning in 1964, and 1966 saw Sea Land launching TransAtlantic service to Europe. The Vietnam War effort benefitted as Sea Land handled 10% of the American shipping needs. And in 1966 they began serving the Asia Pacific region. A partnership with China in which Sea Land became a licensed operator within that country was struck in 1987. The parent company

CSX sold Sea Land in 1999 to Moller-Maersk Line, now a global leader in container shipping and port operator in 130 countries. Quite a legacy for a man named Malcolm McLean who lacked formal education but had the vision, work ethic and willingness to take enormous risks, and revolutionized an industry.

October 12, 2017

Absentees: Adams, Fahrner, Cheetham, Campbell, Eitelbach, Comstock, Hinchcliffe, Davidson, Short, Cairnes.

Call to Order: In Jim Hinchcliffe's absence, Ed Mencke called the meeting to order. Ben Weyhing has dropped out of Wranglers.

Treasurer's Report: \$3,146.44 in the account.

Member Moment: Lowell Ericsson presented his considerable experiences and accomplishments—born in Minnesota, moved to Rockford, IL, graduated from East Rockford High, majored in chemistry at Beloit College, completed graduate work at U of Chicago in 1955. Conducted research at Boeing Space Medicine Program. 1960—2000 Dept of Biochemistry at UW. Joined Immunix/Amgen in their Protein Science Department— there for 7 years, retiring in 2007. Lowell also gave brief update to his previous Wranglers presentation on Crispr gene therapy. Suffice to say that amazing progress is taking place. Now confirmed that just one single “off” gene can cause such illnesses as Sickle Cell Anemia, and for a few diseases we know which gene it is. How to “fix” the misbehaving gene in humans may not be that far away.

Evening Wrangle: Ed Mencke moderated a discussion of current topics of the day. starting with the current controversy caused by NFL players demonstrating during the national anthem, and by President Trump's focus on the issue. Hats off to the Wranglers, despite the polarized opinions of this, members made their feelings known. A belief was expressed that our nation has lost its sense of VALUES, and one of these is respect for symbols. By demonstrating during the national anthem, participants are disrespecting the symbol (and therefore the nation). Others made the point that the right to speak in dissent and to shed light on a perceived injustice is a core value upon which this nation was founded, and despite sometimes uncomfortable feelings that such demonstrations stir, it is more important to allow them than it is to suppress them. The discussion veered to the original point of “taking a knee” was to call out racial inequality and injustice, while the issue now seems in some circles to be disrespecting the military. Also noted— this debate is about what is and is not a proper time and method to demonstrate is not new— it's been with us in some form or another for centuries. The discussion did not change opinions, but it did prove one thing: thoughtful, informed people can disagree, and we proved that we CAN debate, listen to each other and be respectful. We can leave the room a little more informed about opposing points of view than we were when we arrived.

September 14, 2017

Absentees: President Jim Hinchcliffe called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. He asked for any guests in attendance, there were none.

Treasurer Bob Fahrner reported that the Wranglers currently have \$2613 in the bank. Most members are current with dues, and Bob reminds those who are not that \$150 is due each 6 months. **Member Moment:** Brian Comstock provided us with a 10-minute version of “This is Your life.” Brian was born in Omaha 85 years ago (I suppose the Cornhuskers packed their stadium even back then), and before long the family moved to Powell Wyoming. When 1941 came along his dad wanted to answer the call and he served our country in Guam. Brian and family moved to Cheyenne, and he notes that his mom was quite the musician. Soon after the “rather large bombs went off” the family headed for Seattle to give Dad a hero's welcome as he returned to US soil. The family decided, “Hey, Seattle seems like a pretty nice place to live, let's stay.” So Brian enrolled at Roosevelt High School, did his undergrad work at the UDub. Upon graduating he furthered his education at Harvard Law School. On receiving his law degree he returned to the Seattle area and started practicing, where he became Partner in what became the second largest law firm in town. 2002 arrived, and with it his forced retirement from the firm. He's not done yet though, and thoroughly enjoys showing up and being a part of his son's law practice in Bellevue (I wonder if he wears those Brumuda Shorts at the office too). **Evening Wrangle:** Dave Eitelbach addressed the worldwide fresh water crisis. With the exception of the industrialized western democracies, most nations in the world have an inadequate supply of fresh water for drinking and sanitary purposes. And the problem is getting worse as the world's population increases. This situation is largely an accident of geography. Western democracies are in areas with plentiful water, while the developing countries are in areas with very little. One example: 1.1 Billion people have less than 1 gallon of fresh water per day for drinking, and 2.6 Billion people have less than 5 gallons of water for sanitation purposes. By contrast in the US the average use per person is 150 gallons per day! This disparity is at great risk of getting worse over time due to projected population growth: By 2050 the world's population is expected to grow by 30%, to 9.85 billion people. Population in well developed countries with adequate water supply will likely grow by 5%, while growth in poorly developed countries, which already have a severe shortage of water, is projected to grow by 36%. And it's not just an emergency for drinking and sanitation, water is of course necessary to grow the world's food. Solutions: Over the centuries the world has enhanced water supplies by constructing dams and water diversion systems. Dam construction in the 20th century was very successful in evening out water supply for consumption and increasing food production. But there have been downsides to this: huge population growth and the resulting need for more water, loss of silt due to less flooding means more fertilizers required with more pollution the result. Flow of many of the world's largest rivers has dropped, and major aquifers are not being replenished. It's clear to Dave that going forward building more dams and water diversion systems alone are not enough. Holding more promise is to improve

water efficiency by using regulations sparingly and by charging more for water so that market forces are more in play (low or no-cost water encourages waste.) Dave cited a number of case studies, among them China, India, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Australia. Each has significant challenges and is dealing with them in various ways, some successful and some not so much long term. He made the point that the world is so interconnected that those nations with adequate fresh water who are complacent and “look the other way” do so at their peril. We should all be looking for ways to help each other to make more water available to the world’s population. Not to do so invites “water wars” and other bad outcomes that negatively affect us all.

June 8, 2017

Absentees: Mac Adams, Bill Dowling, Lowell Ericsson, Chick Hodge, Floyd Short, Al Skinner, Ben Weyhing

Business: Treasurer’s report: \$1033 in our account. Members should make a payment to the club treasury when we convene again in September. New associate member George Bouvet was introduced.

Members Moment: Tom Naden spoke of his days growing up and attending Shawnigan Lake Boarding School in British Columbia. Although his family lived in Seattle, his mother, a “Victorian lady”, felt it would be the best thing for him to attend. He talked about memories of the uniforms and regimented life and of work divisions to maintain the grounds. The separate living houses each had a housemaster and competed against each other. He met students from as far away as England and Peru. While he received a great education which gave him a head start at the UW, he said the only thing that was lacking was a strong social life, as the all boys school was isolated and forty miles north of Victoria.

Evening Wrangle: Stan Barnes: “Northwest Coastal Exploration before Lewis and Clark”. Extensive exploration and trade had taken place in the NW region as early as the 1500’s with the exploits of the Spanish in the New World. Not to be outdone, the British sent Drake to harass the Spanish and the Russians sent Bering on two expeditions to the area in the 1700’s. This led to Spain sending vessels in 1774 with intention of possessing the territory. A driving force was the fur trade, and the abundance of valuable sea otter skins that could be acquired from the natives, often by bartering with nails or other metals. The British sent Captain Cook on three expeditions in the latter part of the 1700’s to do extensive charting and exploration of the coastal area in an effort to discover a NW passage. He had beaten the earlier explorer’s problems of scurvy affecting his crew and also had the benefit of knowing his longitude using an accurate ship’s clock. He documented the culture of the Nootka Sound natives. The British entry into procuring of furs there led to a confrontation with Spain over territorial rights and the “Nootka Controversy”. The result of this near war was the retreat of Spain and the emergence of Britain as the dominant European influence in the area. Robert Gray was an American sea captain and fur trader largely credited with discovering the Columbia River in the late 1700’s and the large native cultural complex associated with the river. Britain’s George Vancouver extensively explored and charted the NW coast, also at that time. All of this before the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-06. Wrangling: Trade routes as first examples of globalization. The communication delays of explorers—what would happen if they had the internet? Could we do this kind of exploration today? The nature of the native culture.

May, 2017

Absentees: Mac Adams, Brian Cairns, Bob Fahrer, Jim Hinchcliff. **Business:** Nominating committee’s slate for next year’s officers: Pres— Jim Hinchcliffe, VP— Tom Davidson, Sec— Ed Mencke, Treasurer— Bob Fahrer. George Bouvet was approved as reserve member.

Members Moment: Dan Zak’s story of his life: Born at Doctors Hospital in Seattle, grew up on Mercer Island (early acquaintance with pediatrician Dr. Al Skinner). One of Fran Call’s outdoor fitness Cyclomates that rode bicycles across Canada to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Found pleasure in planting smoke bombs along the road and painting out the face of a combination lock belonging to a non-friend. Spent part of his senior year in an advanced study program at UW, with Humanities instructor Milt Yanicks. Chose a career in medicine, spent a year as a medical doctor on cruise ships, now enjoys the counsel of Dick Russell as an investment advisor. **Evening Wrangle:** Ed Mencke (“Hello, is Anybody Home?” or “How to have a conversation and have others listen”) spoke of growing up with family political discussions, high school debates and days of political signs in people’s yards. Today’s political climate is charged in such a way that civil discussion is often difficult with differences dividing people as never before. Friendships are strained and people are reluctant to talk about their beliefs or place political signs in their yard. Some of the factors affecting these changes: The 24-hour news cycle is now a source of continuous entertainment instead of the old nightly news format of previous generations. Cable news channels allow people to select which political side they are on and watch programming that supports their view instead of hearing other views. Legislators increasingly tend to live in their own district and only travel to Washington DC weekly when congress is in session— don’t form a community with others legislators beyond politics, allowing them to share ideas and interests. Newspapers are struggling as many people get their news from selected websites that have a particular liberal or conservative political view instead. People seek to resist conflict, and therefore associate more often with like-minded others. We are reinforced in our beliefs by these “tribes”. Referencing a TED talk by social psychologist Rob Willer— we may try to re-frame discussions in terms that others may better understand. Use salesmanship to frame a discussion about global warming by appealing to the sense of patriotism, respect for environment and protection that conservatives espouse. Likewise, a discussion about a conservative value may be framed to emphasize the equality and care that liberals hold as a core value. Ed finished by encouraging us to get involved, to turn off our electronic devices and talk with

each other instead of being just partisan spectators. The wrangling session: How to get good information? How to resolve polar opposite positions if we don't talk with each other? What is the effect of technology on this dynamic? How is income inequality involved in splitting us apart (the disappearing middle class)? How has the lack of a "fairness doctrine" in the broadcast industry helped to create tribal mentality? Discussion continued until adjournment.

April, 2017

Absentees: Chick Hodge, Tony Ward-Smith, Bob Wiley. Guests: George Bouvet (Tom Naden), Khalid (Lowell Ericksson).. Treasury: Currently \$2,535.. Business: Nominating committee— Jim Marich, Dave Eitelbach, Tom Davidson.. Members Moment: Bob Farher spoke of events in his life that he characterized as a 50-year theme— sparked by a trip to Morocco this past October, a trip to Washington DC where he visited the exhibit "The Art of the Koran", and the reading of a book by Avraham Burg. He told of his Air Force ROTC experience in 1965 and active duty service consisting of Special Operations training and eventually building a Middle East studies program. Here that he became interested in the Middle East and met/worked with Avraham Burg— an Israeli born peace activist who had a career in politics and is the author of several books on the Middle East. One of these is "The Holocaust is Over: We Must Rise From the Ashes". Evening Wrangle: Bob Lewis: North Korea: What To Do? Bob began by reviewing his experience three years ago when he traveled to North Korea as a tourist and his impressions of life as he saw it. He talked about the history of Korea since WWII and the separation of the Korean peninsula into two different societies living next to each other. They have been at a tense standoff with each other since the Korean War in the 1950's. South Korea is advanced and prosperous with a high standard of living and is a member of the international community. North Korea is a tightly controlled militant communist dictatorship with a repressed population and a 1.2 million man military— controlled by 32-year-old Kim Jong-un. He is unpredictable, unreliable and unaccountable to the international community. He has eliminated those who threaten his power, even members of his own family. He now has eight or nine nuclear weapons and is working on ballistic missiles to deliver them. He has crossed numerous "red lines" defined by the international community to reach this point and threatens to use his military at the slightest provocation. At present, he says an nuclear test is imminent and that he will soon have a missile capable of reaching the western United States. Bob concluded his presentation with four possible choices:

1. Negotiation—with China, the US and the United Nations taking the lead
2. Military action—A preemptory strike to cripple his army
3. Encourage China to defuse the situation by using its economic ties to N Korea as a bargaining chip.
4. Wait and see

Wrangling was lively! Discussed: the relationship of China to North Korea and the possibility that they may be using the unrest to their advantage. The possibility of reunification as an ultimate answer (but the economic burdens would be enormous—a "Marshall Plan" would be needed). Encourage them to exhaust themselves building an ever larger military, much as what happened with the old Soviet Union before it collapsed. Kim Jung-un may be rational and calculating and not really willing to start a war. There was mention of the need to preemptively strike now and remove the threat to our country while we still can. There were strong feelings across the spectrum, no consensus and no easy answers

March, 2017

Absentees: Mac Adams, Stan Barnes, Dick Campbell, Russ Cheetham, Bill Dowling, David Eitelbach, Dan Hungate, Ed Mencke, Al Skinner, Dan Zak. Treasurer's Report: We have \$2,966 in the bank. All Wranglers are paid up to date. Members Moment: Bob Wiley discussed the evolution of this part of the program— started as a 5-minute opportunity to better introduce oneself to the club. It has evolved into a longer dissertation, sometimes going over 10 minutes. Bob spoke in favor of returning it to the original purpose. He then talked about his experience as a docent at the Burke Museum and invited Wranglers, family and friends to contact him for a tour if they are planning to visit. The bylaws refer to a maximum time of 10 minutes for Members Moment presentation. Evening Wrangle: Lowell Ericsson talked on the new gene-editing tool known as CRISPR, or clustered regularly interspaced short, palindromic repeats. This important new gene-editing tool has radically changed the face and pace of biologic research. CRISPR's real promise is its potential cure for many genetic maladies. Studies are testing its effectiveness in eliminating sickle cell disease, hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, genetic forms of blindness and certain forms of cancer, among others. The technology is a three-part system: a customized guide RNA (the seeker), aCAS9 protein (the cutter), followed by the insertion of the new DNA— effectively modifying the genes. Development in this technology has been recent and rapid, and at least two entities are seeking patents. The desirability in the marketplace could be huge, and subject to many ethical considerations. Wrangling followed, largely around the ethics of the subject. If man can now read and write genetic instructions, how should we use it? Who decides how it should be used? Should it be used on the present and/or next generation? Should it only be used to eliminate disease, or to improve certain human abilities? Are there unknown undesirable consequences?

February, 2017

Absentees: Mac Adams, Russ Cheetham, Bill Dowling, Jim Hinchcliffe, Chick Hodge, Floyd Short, Bob Wiley Guests: Brian Comstock introduced Kevin Plachy. Treasurer's Report: \$3396 in the bank. Two members have not yet paid the January assessment. Members Moment: Tony Ward-Smith talked about the Tulalip Casino. Tulalip Bingo Hall was a client of his. In the early 90's, the Tribal Council asked Tony to do a study about the feasibility of a casino. He teamed with Ken Adams, a gaming consultant from Reno, which led to trips to

Reno and Las Vegas to see the inside of the gaming industry. Gilmore Research did a local market survey and found a huge demand for gaming in the area. This information was presented, along with five recommendations— from just keeping the bingo hall— to expanding to a full scale gaming operation and destination resort. They first decided to extend the bingo hall and add gaming to part of the building. But today, the expanded Resort/Casino— is a huge success story. And somewhere in the archives of the U of Nevada, Reno is a copy of Tony's study. Evening Wrangle: Brian Comstock, along with Kevin Plachy, talked of challenges facing law firms with the retiring of large numbers of the baby boom generation. Both are lawyers working with the Washington State Bar Association/Senior Lawyers Section. There are currently 37,000 members of the Bar Assn— 14,700 are baby boomers— now 55-70 years old; 10,500 are over age 60. Nationally, 1/3rd of all lawyers are baby boomers. This aging demographic poses real problems for law firms, as senior members are responsible for 1/4th of the revenue stream. Also, the historical model of mandatory retirement age has largely been eliminated, and succession plans have suffered accordingly as partners are practicing longer and are not willingly passing on their best clients to the next generation. Senior partners are looking to maintain a healthy income stream to fund their retirement plans, and large numbers of them may still have lucrative retirement agreements in place with their firm. The old defined benefit model is dead, and self-funding may require working longer to assure adequate finances in retirement. An added problem is the drastic slowing in growth that law firms have experienced since the financial crisis. These factors are placing overwhelming challenges for firms to remain viable, and meet financial obligations. An additional problem can occur when a senior partner leaves and starts a new practice, taking his client base along. In short, the traditional model of upward mobility in a law firm from beginning practice to mandatory retirement as a senior partner with a healthy income is over. A new model will emerge, but at present the problems posed by the large numbers of boomers in the profession who are retiring or about to do so will have to find a solution. It is complicated and messy. Wrangling— included discussion of general problems of retirement from all occupations and how things have changed, opportunity this presents for young lawyers, of the lowered admission standards to keep law schools full. The "LA Law" effect of increasing enrollment has run its course.

January, 2017

Absentees: Bill Dowling, Mac Adams Business: President Marich welcomed new member Stan Barnes. Our membership roster is now complete, but we are still looking for reserve members. Treasury: \$401 as of December. AlJoya provided this evening's dinner at no cost to the club. Members Moment: Mark Hafermann spoke of one of his mentors in Medical School, H Mead Calvert MD/PhD— physiologist and associate dean of Minnesota Medical School, and mentor for him on a research project. Mark also met U of Minnesota medical school alumnus, Col Mark Stapp— known for the significant experiments on the effect of acceleration and deceleration on the human body, using a rocket-propelled sled and testing the limits of human physiology. Col Stapp was the only person he himself allowed to serve as a test subject in these tests, because of the unknown risk. Mark regards Col Stapp as a public hero because of the risks he took for research. Evening Wrangle: Tom Naden talked about the Joint Plan of Action agreement between Iran and the P5+1 (US, Britain, France, China and Russia + Germany) of the United Nations. Tom served in the Air Force as member of the Development Armed Forces Special Weapons Group in the 1950's, which reviewed nuclear weapon development at the time. He gave a brief chronology of the history of Iran as it pertains to nuclear development. While it had signed the non-proliferation treaty of 1968-70, that participation came to an end with the Iranian revolution of 1979. In the late 80's, they began a nuclear program for "peaceful purposes" with assistance from Pakistan, China and Russia. They developed enrichment facilities and a heavy water facility, both of which could lead to the acquisition of weapons grade material. By 2003, they had refused access to some of their enrichment sites but were coerced by the UN to sign a new agreement to pledge full cooperation with future IAEA (International atomic energy) inspections. In the 2004 Paris Agreement, they agreed to suspend uranium enrichment by centrifuge. In 2005, Ahmadinejad became president of Iran, scuttled the agreement and again began to enrich uranium. This resulted in sanctions on Iran by the United Nations, prohibiting the transfer of technology and freezing assets. They again agreed to use their nuclear program for peaceful purposes, but appeared to continue toward the goal of enriching uranium to weapons-grade. A new president of Iran signaled a willingness to finally cooperate with the international community, agreeing to more intrusive inspections and stopping U235 enrichment in return for lifting the sanctions. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed in July of 2015 with The United Nations Security Council plus Germany and the EU. The agreement consists of 9 parts relating to enrichment and inspection. All physical limits on enrichment and storage will be removed by 2030. A healthy wrangling session centered on the efficacy of the inspections. Why should we trust Iran? The lifting of the sanctions has not been ratified by the US Congress and could be resumed, however we now have no leverage as Europe may continue to trade with Iran. More discussion followed about nuclear conflict and the fragile understanding and deterrent of threat of mutual destruction.

December, 2016 (annual holiday event)

Absentees: Mac Adams, Russ Cheetham. Dave Eitelbach Guests: Spouses...too many to list! Member's Moment: Floyd Short told about trips to the Arctic and Antarctic, separated by 40 years, First was a summer job at Resolute Bay in the Arctic in 1954, while he was still in college. His application was facilitated by Professor Larry Gould, Carleton College— a well-known scientist/explorer who had been on the famous Byrd expedition to the Antarctic. He got the job that paid one dollar a day but gave him the opportunity to experience the wild country and indigenous people of the area. Forty years later, he did a college-sponsored trip to the Antarctic where he was able to

see and compare it with his earlier experience. One memorable experience: swimming in volcanic-heated water on Deception Island. Evening Wrangle: Dan Zak's talk was about corrupt pharmaceutical companies around the world. He talked about two drugs, TPA and Tamiflu, to show the corruption in the drug industry. TPA is used to treat strokes. Dan described how to diagnose strokes and the difficulties in doing so. Overuse of this drug may cause more harm than benefit in many cases. Tamiflu, while causing less potential harm, has a minimal benefit and is very expensive. The cost is often hidden (covered by insurance). Both of these drugs in terms of a harm to benefit ratio. He credited Dr. Jerome Hoffman, a Professor of Emergency Medicine at Los Angeles County Hospital, and Jeanie Lenzer, who writes for the British Medical Journal, for helping to make this point. The reasons why both TPA and Tamiflu are "bad" drugs were discussed and how they are sold as "good" drugs was elucidated. Several national organizations (American Heart Association, Centers for Disease Control and the Federal Drug Administration) all accept money from Big Pharma. How to hold the pharmaceutical industry responsible— Dan suggested that much larger fines and sending top executives to jail might be necessary to stop abuses. A good dose of humor was infused in the talk and lively discussion that followed.

November, 2016

Absentees: Russ Cheetham, Mac Adams, Jim Hinchcliff, Dan Hungate, Chick Hodge, Tom Naden, Al Skinner. Guests: Stan Barnes— guest of Bob Fahrer. Business: Club has \$2,204 in the bank. Welcome newest member Ed Mencke. Member's Moment: Jim Marich told of his experience as a 19 years old flight engineer on a B29 in the South Pacific during WWII in 1944. He and the others in the crew of eleven were scheduled for a bombing mission over the Japanese mainland. Their regular airplane was down and they were assigned another one for the mission. Calculations made with the familiar aircraft showed the necessity for 7200 gallons of fuel to carry out the mission. Two hours into the flight, it became apparent that his plane was burning more fuel than anticipated. He notified the captain that they would be very close to critical fuel level on the return trip. They dropped their bombs on Tokyo and Yokahama, began the return flight, and ran into an unexpected 200 mph headwind, which pretty much finished their thought of returning to Saipan. He notified the plane commander when they had 20 minutes of fuel remaining. They ditched the airplane successfully in heavy swells. All of the crew got out and were rescued almost immediately by a PT boat. The B29 was expected to sink immediately but continued to float on the surface for days. The Navy finally intentionally sank it, as it was a hazard to navigation. Thanks to Jim for this story, and for his service during WWII— a fitting story as we look to the coming Veteran's Day. Evening Wrangle: Bob Fahrer presented the works of Mark Lilla, Professor of Humanities at Columbia University. Lilla's basic proposition is that western secular democracy is essentially an experiment that is very fragile, and that it is increasingly possible that Political Theocracy, a meshing of religion with secular politics, could reemerge because we are not alert and active in preventing it from happening. The danger reaches well beyond the election of any one leader or set of leaders, and is due to the natural and subtle pull of the three monotheistic religions into the political institutions of western nations. The Great Separation between church and state began with the the Enlightenment in the 17 century, and allowed for the explosion of the natural sciences and the "death of God". It did not clearly come into stable form in Europe until the period after World War II, following the attempted creation of a "political messiah" in 1917 and attempted anointment of Hitler as messiah to buttress his political and military power in the 1930's. The pull of religion can be all-encompassing, and in times of great stress and cultural and economic upheaval can wash over a culture, including its political systems. These upheavals have been particularly strong during the four Great Awakenings, the last of which began in the 1960's and in which we are presently immersed. Lilla, Mark. *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics and the Modern West*

October, 2016

Absentees: Russ Cheetham, Bill Dowling, David Eitelbach, Bob Fahrer, Jim Hinchcliffe, Al Skinner. Treasurer's Report: \$1,930 in the bank. Club Business: The membership of Ed Mencke, proposed by Bob Fahrer was unanimously approved. Dan Zak took a "straw" vote on members' preference for president. Hillary Clinton was the winner by a significant margin. Member's Moment: Jim Marich has had a long interest in singing. When at the U of Illinois, he wanted to join their prestigious glee club, but had to pass an audition. As he could not read music, he sat outside the audition hall and listened to those who went before him. He passed, and joined the glee club. Later, he was a tenor in a Barbershop Quartet group— the "Timbre Kings". They won first place in the Illinois state finals competition. . . . made it to the international contest, but had to sing one more song than they had prepared for. Their hasty version of "76 Trombones" wasn't good enough; they ultimately got 8 place. Moral of his story—be prepared. In the first case, he was— in the second case, they were not. Evening Wrangle: Tony Ward-Smith: Who are we? Why are we here? He showed a map of Mercer Island, then the world, then our solar system, then our galaxy, and then 100-200 billion galaxies in the universe. The size and distances are beyond our ability to comprehend. The time of our universe— 15 1/2 billion years; Earth— 4 1/2 billion years, and then the appearance of life in the ensuing millennia. Over time, biodiversity evolved through long periods of expansion. Over 99% of all the life forms that have lived on earth are extinct. Two million years ago, one species of pre-humans used fire to cook food, enabling more protein in the diet, thus bigger brains. They— Homo Sapiens— developed language (a major breakthrough in evolution) which allowed them to name things, to communicate, to invent and to pass information on to each other. Imagination led to invention, stories, poetry, art, philosophy science and religion. Organized societies developed. Recent development has seen the industrial revolution and the appearance of manned flight. We've also developed a means of our own destruction with atomic weapons. All this leads to the big question—Why are we here? Is it simply

natural selection, or chance, or what? A discussion of religion and the refuge it provides in dealing with the unknown emerged. Ultimately it is WE who have the ability make our lives meaningful.

September, 2016

Absentees: Dan Zak, Dave Eitelbach, Dan Hungate, John Strasburger, Lowell Erickson, Ben Weyhing. Guests: Ed Mencke, guest of Bob Fahrer; Gordy Douglas, guest of Milt Yanicks. Treasurers report: \$1400 in the bank. More checks collected tonight. Club business: Milt Yanicks submitted his request to become an emeritus member, as provided in the bylaws. Member's Moment: Tom Davidson discussed his recent class reunion and the reflection it caused him to make. A member of the "Silent Generation"— he looked back on the influence of WWII on the important things in his life, namely where he lives and who he married. He spoke of the direct influence of the war on these significant events. Evening Wrangle: Milt Yanicks discussed Leo Tolstoy and his autobiographical book A CONFESSION. By middle age, Tolstoy had become disturbed by an awareness that he had earlier passed off as insignificant— that of his impending death. It became so great as to consume him and he spoke of his thoughts of self-destruction. These things led him to seek the purpose of his life. He does so by examining four parables that ultimately reflect on his own life, its relationship to the Russian Orthodox Church, to the questioning of his faith and his ultimate acceptance of religious truth. He finds comfort in discovering his relation to the Eternal and the simple power of his intuitive faith in God. A healthy wrangling session included the meaning of life, and what it means to be human.

June, 2016

Absentees: Russ Cheetham, Bob Fahrer, Dick Russell, Floyd Short, Al Skinner, Dan Zak. Guests: Brian Comstock, guest of Jim Marich; and David Dail MD, guest of Bob Wiley. Treasurer's Report: Prior to dinner, the treasury contained roughly \$1600. After dinner expenses, about \$800, a surplus for the year. Club Business: This was the final meeting for the academic year. Wranglers will re-convene on September 8th with Jim Marich as the new President. After the meeting, Jim Marich recommended Brian Comstock as a new member and circulated his bio in email, asking members to vote on Brian's membership application. Brian's application was approved; he will join us in September as a member. Member's Moment: Bill Dowling gave a charming account of his early life in Washington, DC, and his experiences in the Quaker- oriented Sidwell Friends School where his classmates were children of famous and powerful people. Bill described early memories of life during World War II and field trips to see Congress in action. He ended with a funny story about his brother transforming the Quaker "silent blessing" to "salad dressing!" Evening Wrangle: Bob Wiley gave a spirited talk on a key problem facing an aging population - balancing the Cost of Living versus the Quality of Life. He covered four points: how we define "living"; health costs and their role in our decisions; future health costs, particularly with the rise of dementia; and finally how we will balance the cost of maintaining life versus the quality of the life preserved. His talk reviewed famous cases in which bodies were kept alive after doctors pronounced the patients as brain dead. In some cases, life was extended against the explicit wishes of the patient. Bob challenged us to look at the morality and cost of artificially prolonging life. The courts have held that enforcing life-prolonging treatment against what is agreed to be the patient's will is both unethical and illegal. Bob emphasized the need for each of us to make our wishes known -in writing- to family (especially children). Everyone should have a Living Will and Medical Power of Attorney. Bob recommended that everyone fill out a POLST document to record wishes concerning cardio resuscitation and medical interventions. Keep this distinctive green document in your freezer; first responders are trained to look for it there. Bob quickly reviewed the huge increases in health care costs since 1980, noting a 1200% increase in 30 years with huge additional expenses coming as more people develop dementia. Studies show that 30% of Medicare costs are for the 5% of beneficiaries who die each year. Bob asked what quality of life was gained for these expenditures. Finally, Bob looked at the costs versus quality of life in several situations that all of us are familiar with. He reviewed the real costs of caring for a dementia patient. He concluded the talk by challenging us to discuss the gap between Death with Dignity initiatives (which only apply to patients who would die in 6 months) and the more likely situation where you become (or care for) a dementia patient who may live for many years after the total loss of everything that made them human. A very animated discussion ensued.

May, 2016

Absentees: Tom Naden, Chick Hodge, Bob Lewis, Dan Hungate, Mac Adams. Treasury's Report: Over \$2,350 in the bank. Guests: Bob Baynham, guest of Al Skinner, Lee Stanton, friend of Dave Eitelbach. Club Business: New officers for next year were voted on: President Jim Marich, Vice President Dan Zak, Secretary Tom Davidson, Treasurer Lowell Ericsson. Member's Moment: Bob Wiley presented the member's moment (even though it was not his turn) and reminded us politely that it should reflect something about ourselves, so that fellow Wranglers will get to know us better. He also encouraged more topics amenable to Wrangling. That said, Bob talked about earthquakes and how a magnitude 7 is ten times the strength of 6, and queried the group as to how many members had an emergency kit. Evening Wrangle: Mark Haferman. A Nation's Health Care System reflects it's history, politics, economy, and national values. In some systems, the government is both a provider and a payer. In others, providers are private, but government pays the bills. And, in others, providers and payers are private. Four basic models: Bismarck, Beveridge, National Insurance, & Out of Pocket. U.S. has a hodgepodge, with elements of all four models. Over time, the U.S., in the environment of a democratic and independent free market, has ended up with a hodgepodge of fragmented systems serving separate groups, or classes of people—and vested business interests such as insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, and hospitals. On the other hand, other wealthy, industrialized, countries

developed a single universal health care model on the premise it is simpler, cost effective, and fairer to everyone. Attributes of successful functioning systems: Universal Coverage: Consider as a moral imperative—fairness. Includes guaranteed issue and individual mandate. No rationing of care, nor refusal for pre-existing conditions. “Cover everybody, but not, necessarily everything.” Necessary for proper functioning of the system. Well organized, simple, cost efficient, payment systems. The U.S. Health Care System: Does not cover everybody. In 2009, 322 million U.S. citizens (45%) were reported not covered by medical insurance because they could not afford it (Reid). Updated Information, post presentation: Obamacare Enrollment Numbers as of March 16, 2015: Current estimates show the total of newly insured to be 16.4 million bringing the uninsured rate down from a high of 20.3% to 13.2% at the start of the 1st quarter of 2015.” Cost: Whether as a percentage of GDP, or on a per capita basis, we spend roughly twice as much as other rich countries do on health care— due to a complex and extremely fragmented billing and payment system coupled with high administrative costs among for-profit insurance companies. Quality: We do not have a monopoly on knowledge and capability. Nevertheless, recognize that standards of medical leadership, education, training, research, and innovation in the U.S. are perhaps the most respected and admired as any place in the world. This includes rigorous requirements for continuing medical education and specialty recertification to improve outcomes and safety of both inpatient and outpatient treatment. At various levels: national and state medical societies, specialty groups, large and small medical groups promote quality and cost efficiencies through development of evidenced based guidelines for management of multiple medical conditions and diseases—which are tied to reimbursement and to quality outcome measures & public ratings. Outcomes: Statistics show the U.S. lags well behind peer nations in various public health statistics with regard to health outcome metrics. This is so, despite spending twice as much as these other nations do on health care. Using sophisticated metrics health care economists, developed a metric to measure the quality of medical care, which supports the but the relatively poor overall rank for life expectancy is due to failure to provide access to regular health care for 45 million (15%) citizens. Assuming the U.S. health care system's low rankings are primarily related to the economic and social impediments of access to medical care for a significant proportion of U.S. citizens. Obamacare (ACA) will favorably impact the nation's quality metrics for future generations. At this point it is unlikely the U.S. would choose to replace, wholesale, our system with a Canadian, British, or German model. Nonetheless, we can learn from these other models and apply useful ideas and techniques to make our system fairer, cheaper, and more effective.

April, 2016

Guest: Todd Huttlocker, Emergency Room Specialist from Juno, Alaska. Tom Naden's approved as new member. Bob Fahrer attended his first meeting as an official Wrangler. Treasurer: \$3040 in the treasury— we should end the year with a balance of about \$1000. Other Business: Dick Russell asked to address the group with a proposal to attract guests as potential new members. His suggestion was to allow 2 free guests at each meeting. Dave argued that the cost of a guest was probably not the issue as much as a lack of guests to invite. John Strasburger and others gave examples to prove that cost is indeed an issue. Dan Hungate suggested that we waive guest fees when attendance dropped below our Aljoia contract minimum of 20 dinners. Finally, Dave took a straw poll, asking how many members wanted to see some sort of change. At least 10 members so voted. • Jim Abbott's memorial: Sunday, April 24, from 3:00pm – 5:30pm at the Mercer Island Beach Club. Dave reported that a nominating committee had met to discuss next year's officer candidates, but had not yet made firm choices. Lowell is willing to continue for one more year as Treasurer. Dave asked volunteers for Secretary, Vice President, or President to contact him directly. He noted that in the absence of volunteers, more serious cajoling will be applied in order to fill out the slate. Member's Moment: Dan Hungate talked of bird and wildlife sightings that serve as "experience postcards" highlighting enjoyable trips over many years. His long list ranged from a morning swim within 10 feet of an adult moose in Priest Lake, to watching a mother whale teaching her calf to swim off Maui, to surviving a buffalo stampede in Africa while hiding behind a termite mound. Presentation: Floyd Short talked about "Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty"— dismissing geography, culture, or ignorance of economics as possible factors. The primary determinants are inclusive economic institutions and inclusive political systems. The authors note the difference between countries which evolved after Spanish conquests versus countries which evolved from British colonies. The Spanish set up "extraction economies" which enriched the conquerors by enslaving the inhabitants. Their inhabitants were not included in either economic benefits nor any control of government. Even after independence, many of these countries continued in the same vein under dictators who ran the countries for their own wealth without regard to the people. In contrast, British colonies evolved to provide private property (and thus, a share in economic benefits) and representative government. Floyd's talk provided examples throughout history of countries which fit the "inclusive" model versus countries which fit the "extractive" model, showing general growth and success for the inclusive countries and stagnation or failure for the extractive countries. His final example was modern China which has introduced some degree of free enterprise but is still a political dictatorship. Given the book's premise, Floyd asked if China will succeed or fail. (The book's authors argue that China's government, and therefore its economy, will ultimately fail so long as their political system remains a "non-benevolent" dictatorship.) For Wrangling: Points for Discussion Relevant to the United States—

- 1) Increasing wealth and social inequality
- 2) Impact of unlimited political campaign contributions (Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission)
- 3) Increasing limits on voting rights (e.g., required voter ID, fewer polling places, redrawn voting districts)

4) Limitations on labor union membership

5) Deregulation of financial institutions (Dodd-Frank Act a recent effort to reverse this trend) 6) Widening income gap between company CEOs and lowest paid employees

March, 2016

Absentees: Mac Adams, Bill Dowling, Dan Hungate, Dan Zak. Mark Lorbiecki and Chuck Meyer resigned before this meeting Guests: Manny Garcia & Yogi Agrawal- guests of John Strasburger, Tom Naden- guest of Al Skinner, Robert Fahrer— guest of Lowell Ericsson. Bob Fahrer, candidate for membership, had attended one meeting already so was eligible for a vote. His membership was moved, seconded, unanimously approved. Membership stands at 21 members, 3 emeriti. (Our constitution allows for 24 members and 2 reserve members.) Pres responded to members' concerns re the Wrangler dysfunctional website (www.pswranglers.com) which, hopefully, will be resolved soon! Treasurer's report: "We have about \$3500 in the bank!" Members Moment: A recent article in the Economist discusses the malignant impact of talk radio on political discourse. John Strasburger in his member's moment read from a 1960 letter from one of his California cousins, an Episcopal priest, to his father, an attorney in Dallas— about a Dallas talk radio personality who was accusing Protestant leadership in general and an Episcopal priest in San Francisco of being members of the communist party. John's father responded that the talk radio personality in question was an extreme conservative who was anti-Democratic and anti-Republican who "thinks he knows more than the experts regardless of what field you might designate." John's father counseled against a slander or libel suit because it would only further disseminate the objectionable allegations and the public would not remember who won or lost or who was right or wrong. Presentation: Al Skinner presented highlights from the Colin Woodard's book American Nations, A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America from "First Nations" to the "Far West". Each cultural block had a unique ethnic, social, religious, political, and economic mix which put them at odds with the other blocks. Their origins determined attitudes which persist today and in part explain the problems which divide their peoples in national politics and social decisions. In the brief discussion afterwards, people asked how these separate "nations" affected life in the US. Al pointed out that much of the current polarization in the country can be traced to deeply held beliefs and attitudes that are in conflict among the cultural blocks. Special Notice: After the talk, Dick Campbell announced that Floyd Short, our recent President, suffered a series of strokes while on a recent trip to California. After hospital treatment, he is now back home at Mirabella.

February, 2016

Absentees: Don Vollmer (resigned), Dan Hungate, Mac Adams, Mark Lorbiecki, Dan Zak, Dave Eitelbach, Dan Hungate, Chuck Meyer, Floyd Short. Guests: Bob Anderson, acquaintance of Al Skinner, Robert Fahrer, friend of Lowell Ericsson. Treasury's Report: Lowell Ericsson told us that there was over \$4102.12 in the bank. Member's Moment: Russ Cheetham provided the member's moment with a brief summary of his migration from rural Australia to college in the USA with the encouragement from several mentors. His Deputy Principal in high school suggested he get a university, which he would become the first in his family to achieve this lofty goal. He got in and finished with a degree in agriculture where he had his second mentor's moment that suggested his post graduate efforts should be in the USA with all the math and English classes he could take to instill logical thinking processes with the skill to communicate them. He came here with Fulbright Scholarship and became a successful contributor to our economy and a member of the Wranglers. Presentation: Jim Marich gave the thought provoking evening Wrangle. The problem is the USA has the greatest incarceration rate per capita 698/100,000 in the known world. This number includes: 6.9 million adults under supervision, 4.7 mil on parole, 54,000 juveniles. The prison population is disproportionately Poor, Non-white, mentally ill and non-violent drug users. The current system does not rehabilitate; it's considered a training program for advanced criminal behavior. 4.7 On parole, 54,000 juveniles, This number mostly includes the poor, mentally ill, and drug addicted people with a very high percentage of the non-white people. Our system defiantly does rehabilitate the exiting prisoners. Major contributing factors to the high prisoner rate: The 3 strikes law, War on drugs, Longer sentences for the same crime in most other countries, Mental illness not treated before crimes are committed. Governmental correctional institutions cost a lot more than for profit facilities which are lower cost per inmate, more educational, better socialized, less drug abuse, and less violent. To compare the cost per inmate he sighted WA: \$ 65,000 versus KT: \$14,000. Suggestions on how to resolve this inequity while reducing the overall cost were proposed:

1. Give judges more flexibility in three strikes sentencing.
2. No mandatory minimum sentencing
3. Take the comfort and cost out of jail time, put them to work.
4. Decriminalize drug use/possession and go after dealers.
5. Huge increases in public funding of treating mental health

January, 2016

Absentees: Bill Dowling, Don Vollmer (resigned), Mac Adams, Mark Lorbiecki, Floyd Short, Bob Wiley. Guests: Neil Ericsson son of Lowell Ericsson, Tony Nugent, friend of Lowell Ericsson, Lee Stanton, friend of Dave Eitelbach, Mark Madden, friend of Tom Davidson. Treasury's Report: Lowell Ericsson told us that there was over \$2,300 in the bank.

Member's Moment: Bryan Cairns provided the three part member's moment with the surprise ending that both his own father and Mr. Keen helped win the War (WW II) for the allies. Presentation: Tom Davidson spoke of the Near Future of Transportation in our Cities. He talked about how our traffic has evolved and how it is strangling our cities and creating an enormous burden on society, in the form of lost time, pollution, lost civility and financial and personal injury loss. He went on to explain some of the solutions to the problem. While those solutions include light rail and busses and more car-pooling, the real future lies in autonomous vehicles, and ultimately getting the human driver out of the equation. He briefly introduced the efforts of Google to bring a self-driving car to market and explained how a system centered on self-driving vehicles might work in the future. It involves the sale of "mobility" rather than hardware, and the novel way that software could manage such a business. He emphasized the great safety advantages of such a system and postulated that it would be a big part of creating the public will for change. He left a list of three relevant books on the subject, should anyone want to explore the subject in more depth.

December, 2015

Absentees: Jim Abbott, Mac Adams, Lowell Ericsson, Chick Hodge, Mark Lorbiecki were all AWOL from the meeting. Guests: Ruth Hansing and Mary Lu Kirchner...and all spouses! Treasury's Report: Lowell Ericsson gave none. Member's Moment: James Hinchcliffe, reported that he had been on many airplane flights, but remembered one flight into Anchorage where an intoxicated fellow tried to open the emergency exit door in flight and was taken down in a half Nelson wrestling maneuver and taken off the plane. Presentation: Bill Dowling gave the evening talk on the health care system in the USA, comparing it to other countries. Cross-national comparisons allow us to track the performance of the U.S. health care system, highlight areas of strength and weakness, and identify factors that may impede or accelerate improvement. This analysis is the latest in a series of Commonwealth Fund cross-national comparisons that use health data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as well as from other sources, to assess U.S. health care system spending, supply, utilization, and prices relative to other countries, as well as a limited set of health outcomes.^{1,2} Thirteen high-income countries are included: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. On measures where data are widely available, the value for the median OECD country is also shown. Almost all data are for years prior to the major insurance provisions of the Affordable Care Act; most are for 2013. Health care spending in the U.S. far exceeds that of other high-income countries, though spending growth has slowed in the U.S. and in most other countries in recent years.³ Even though the U.S. is the only country without a publicly financed universal health system, it still spends more public dollars on health care than all but two of the other countries. Americans have relatively few hospital admissions and physician visits, but are greater users of expensive technologies like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines. Available crossnational pricing data suggest that prices for health care are notably higher in the U.S., potentially explaining a large part of the higher health spending. In contrast, the U.S. devotes a relatively small share of its economy to social services, such as housing assistance, employment programs, disability benefits, and food security.⁴ Finally, despite its heavy investment in health care, the U.S. sees poorer results on several key health outcome measures.

November, 2015

Absentees: Dick Campbell, Don Vollmer (who resigned) and Mac Adams. Guests: Hans Frederickson, guest of Dan Hungate. Treasury's Report: Lowell Ericsson gave none. We all hope there is still money at the bank or if Lowell is day trading, he is doing well with the money. Member's Moment: Dave Eitelbach spoke of his employment career, starting with Bell in 1972, resigning in December 1981, and then working for Microsoft and noted both companies were fierce monopolists. Presentation: Dan Hungate gave a talk that he had heard earlier this year given by Ari Kelman, the author of "A Misplaced Massacre, Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek." The talk covered the 150 year old history of a battle at Sand Creek in Colorado, that was initially hailed as a great triumph by the US cavalry over the savage Indians. One segment of the cavalry division, however, refused to participate and said it was a massacre. The story seesawed back and forth for the next century plus until a NPS memorial was established in 2007 that labeled the encounter as a massacre. The ways in which history is portrayed and changes from time to time was the main focus of the wrangling session that followed; Dan added a personal history piece to the story, the fact that the massacre of his great grandfather's brother and his family was one of the precipitating factors that motivated the initial cavalry attack.

October, 2015

Absentees: Russ Cheetham, Dave Eitelbach, Chick Hodge, Dan Hungate, Bob Lewis, Mark Lorbiecki, Floyd Short, Bob Wiley. Former Wrangler, Dick Axell, passed away. Guests: Tom Gialanella. Treasury's Report: Lowell Ericsson gave none. We all hope there is still money at the bank. Member's Moment: Ben Weyhing was one of many adults and parents that volunteered for at least 12 sessions where the homes were built. The organization that formed to coordinate this ministry was first Homes Without Borders in 1998 and now Doxa a 501c3 in 2005. I did not spend much time in these organizations. The orphanage Casa Hogar de Los Ninos was a creation of Tony Ralph who cooperated and supported with our building mission. John Strasburger presented: ECONOMIC INEQUALITY. Economic inequality in both income and wealth is higher than it has been at anytime since the Great Depression. As a result of the New Deal, the Great Society, the GI Bill, building the interstate highway network, military spending for WWII, Korea and Viet Nam, and the release of spent up demand after the WWII, inequality rapidly declined from 1932 through the 1970s. However, since 1979 economic inequality has rapidly

risen (1) with almost all of the gains of income going to the top 10% and especially to the top 0.01%, (2) with middle class wages declining, (3) with increased profits from productivity going almost exclusively to CEOs, (4) with wealth inequality increasing even faster than income inequality, (5) with trust decreasing, (6) with political polarization increasing, (7) with national debt as a percentage of gross domestic product increasing, and (8) with social mobility — the ability to move to a higher economic class — declining. Today, the United States has the highest inequality of the economically advanced countries. WHAT THEN MUST WE DO?: Remedial options include (1) replacing the minimum wage with living wages, (2) raising middle wages by repairing infrastructure, strengthening collective bargaining through workers' councils and representation on boards, (3) limiting CEO wages to a multiple of average wages and facilitating shareholders' resolutions, (4) Increasing income by paying women equally, enforcing labor laws, and improving public transportation, (5) aiding families by free child care and paid sick and family leaves, (6) raising future wages by implementing universal Pre K and tuition free post secondary education, (7) guaranteed public employment at a living wage, (8) universal basic income \$1,000 per month for everyone, (8) national savings bonds at a positive interest rate, and (9) a capital endowment (national "inheritance") to be paid at adulthood. HOW DO WE PAY FOR GOVERNMENTAL OUTLAYS?: Remedial actions by the government could be paid for by (1) adequately taxing corporations based on their business activity in the U.S., (2) increasing taxes paid by the wealthy (3) taxing financial transactions, carbon, marijuana, and political action committees, (4) reducing prison populations, and (5) implementing single payer healthcare.

September, 2015

Absentees: Mark Lorbiecki, Al Skinner, Jim Abbott . Guests: Paul Fredlund. Treasury's Report: We have \$1,998.75. Fees for September-December 2015: \$155/member. Member's Moment: Bob Lewis described growing up on the South end of the Island. He met up with ground-based troops, who set up an artillery base on the south end to protect Boeing-Renton from potential Japanese planes. Bob learned how to take apart (and put back together) M1 rifles. Suddenly, one day all the soldiers were gone and the base was closed. Presentation: Chick Hodge's presentation on K-12 Education was based on two books, The Smartest Kids in the World: and How They Got That Way, by Amanda Ripley and Every School: One Citizen's Guide to Transforming Education, by Donald P. Nielsen. The Smartest Kids in the World emphasizes the differences between the US and other developed countries. It is largely based on results of a PISA test given to students, in which the US was essentially average in performance. Ripley did considerable research in comparing different countries, and concluded that the amount of money spent on education was not important. Everything depended on what parents, teachers, and students did with these investments. Three of the countries in which the students outperformed US students were Korea, Finland and Poland. The author traveled to these countries and talked with many of the stakeholders in education, and included the experiences and observations of one American exchange student in each of these countries. The reasons for the high performance in these three countries were different in each case. Korea emphasized incredible dedication and time investment by the students; Finland emphasized extreme emphasis on highly qualified teachers; and Poland made a serious effort to completely reform their schools. In addition, Ripley attributed the student performance in the high-performing countries relative to that in the United States to a number of other factors, including: accountability for results and autonomy in methods; significant parental involvement in the academic development of their children; similar content for all students, albeit rates of progress and subject depth keyed to learning capability; standard testing required for graduation; relatively uniform racial makeup and educational culture; absence of athletics as part of the school program; minimal but relevant use of information technology; teacher-student relationships and curriculum content that are more demanding. Every School, by Don Nielsen, emphasizes the characteristics and particularly the weaknesses of U.S. urban school systems, followed by specific recommendations for reform. Nielsen defines the mission of US schools as developing in each student a broad battery of skills: communication skills, math and science skills, citizenship skills, and global skills, together with desirable personal qualities – i.e., a comprehensive mission. Nielsen further emphasizes that the primary responsibility for educating a child rests with the parents, and that governments need to respect that responsibility. The role of the schools is to serve as the primary partner with parents in the total development of the child into a responsible citizen who is self-sufficient and not a burden to society. Don Nielsen's book starts with a description of the current school system in the United States that includes; ineffective growth in funding and staff levels; less-than-relevant certification required for teachers; teacher compensation based on time of service and educational credits, rather than teaching performance; a weak self-selecting process for selection of principals and superintendents; governance by elected and often ineffective school boards; student progress and promotion based on classroom time and age, rather than academic performance and learning levels; and the shortest school year in the developed world. Nielsen next discusses the external factors that have played a major role in making today's school system become less effective by not changing with the times: the factory revolution of World War II, followed by the Information Age; women entering other professions than teaching; the explosive growth of teachers unions; the flight to the suburbs of middle-class families; the increase in poverty levels in urban schools. Nielsen identifies three major areas of change in US schools that must be addressed before other reforms can be sustainable: teaching, leadership, and governance. The teaching profession should be more selective; remove certification or make it more meaningful; allow easier entry of qualified people without an education degree, provide meaningful mentoring for new teachers, provide more paid hours per year as a means of increasing compensation; include incentive compensation for excellence in teaching.. The recommendations that are made for the selection and preparation of teachers can be applied to principals and superintendents. With regard to governance, consideration should be given to replacing elected officials with appointed officials selected by knowledgeable committees, particularly in urban schools. Other reforms

that are recommended include: increased hours per year of schooling; achievement-based learning rather than time-based promotion; intelligent use of information technology; intelligent provision for school choice by parents, including consideration of charter schools and vouchers; greater emphasis on early childhood education

June, 2015

Members Absent: Chuck Hodge, Mark Lorbiecki, Bob Wiley, Dan Zack. **Treasurers Report:** Current balance is \$1,980.87.

Next Year's Officers: The slate of officers elected at the May meeting was introduced: President: David Eitelbach, Vice President: Ben Weyhing, Secretary: Dan Zak, Treasurer (reelected to a 2nd term): Lowell Ericsson. **Member's Moment:** Lowell Ericsson reflected on the similarities between himself and his father's physical features and their careers. Lowell's father, born in Sweden and emigrated to the U.S. in 1912, served in the AEF in WW I, after which he moved to St. Paul, MN, graduated from Macalester College and obtained an M.S. in Chemistry at the University of Minnesota. Lowell followed in his father's footsteps with a B.S. in chemistry and graduate studies in biochemistry, retiring from the University of Washington biochemistry department faculty. **Speaker:** Russ Cheetham spoke on "Outlook for the Global Economy", outlining four themes: 1) Current structure of the global economy. 2) Recent trends and outlook for the global economy. 3) Performance of the U.S. economy and its prospects. 4) Possible future of the global economy. Two decades ago the world's advanced economies accounted for 80% of global GDP; by 2014 this had declined to 60%, the combined economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and Indonesia had increased from 8% to 23%, and in 2014 China replaced the U.S. as the largest economy in the world. The growth of the world economy has slowed compared to the decade prior to the financial crisis of 2007-08. Inflation is almost non-existent. The International Monetary Fund predicts moderately robust growth in the U.S. for the next several years, continued weak recovery in the Euro area and Japan, and slowdown in growth in China, stemming largely from slowdown in the growth of the labor force in the industrialized countries and China. Geopolitical risks could well affect the economies of Russia and the Middle East. The U.S. economy is improving, evidenced by declining unemployment and lack of price inflation or wage pressure. However, the IMF predicts a slowdown in economic growth by 2020 because of declining growth in the labor force associated with an aging population and decline in population growth; they recommend the U.S. counteract these trends by measures to boost growth, including simplification of the tax code, increased investment in infrastructure, and skills-based immigration reform to boost the labor force. Finally, Cheetham forecasts that by 2030, China will account for about 22% of world output, followed by the U.S. with 13%, India with 11%, Indonesia with 3% and Japan with a little less than 3%; thus four of the five largest economies in the world will be in Asia, and these four countries will account for nearly 40% of global economic production. Considerable consternation was expressed and vigorous debate ensued in the wrangle that followed, including doubt that the U.S. has the political wherewithal to put in place the measures necessary to stimulate the economy.

January, 2015

Members Absent: Dick Axell, Russ Cheetham, Bill Duvall, Jim Hinchcliffe, Chuck Hodge, Dan Hungate, Chuck Meyer, John Pehrson.

Guest: Allen Wolf. **Treasurer Report:** Lowell Ericsson announced a balance of \$ 1,759.76 as of 12/14 and all bills have been paid.

Member's Moment: Mark Haferman and his wife visited the small Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan (between China and Tibet) last fall. They took a half day hike from the town at 3000 feet up to the Eagles Nest at 10,000 feet. Mark shared his experiences, knowledge and pictures of this beautiful mountainous region with us. His pictures of the Buddhist temple and the valley below were breathtaking.

Speaker: Bob Lewis also took a recent trip with his wife, in this case to the Middle East. Bob gave many details of the long festering relationship between the Nation of Israel and the Palestinians. Their complicated conflict seems to have no hope of a civilized resolution or any chance of peace in the future. Despite the USA spending over 121 billion dollars, mostly to Israel since its formation after World War II, the hopes of peace in this region are at best remote. This battle for the ownership of the land has been in the news daily for over 65 years, so there was a lot of discussion and many views, with the only agreement among the members being that a solution may never be reached until each country wants a settlement.

December, 2014

Members Absent: Dick Axell, Bill Duvall, Jim Hinchcliffe, Chick Hodge, Mark Lorbiecki, Chuck Meyer, Bob Wiley

Member's Moment: Given a last minute request to do member's moment, Tony Ward-Smith introduced his wife Mary, who shared a seasonal tradition started by her father in the 1990's. Mary's dad lovingly and laboriously made small hand-sized wood character Santas, which he presented to her each year. After Mary lost her dad, Tony surprised her by making a Santa for her, using her dad's tools. Tony and Mary passed around the charming Santas for us to see and appreciate. **Speaker:** Dan Zack told us that after being married a number of years, he and his wife felt the need to put some renewed effort into their marriage and he was going to share what he learned about LOVE. What was a hard-core scientist going to say about this? It sure captured our attention! Using a highly entertaining PowerPoint presentation, Dan shared the result of his wife's and his research that led them to study communication and work on their relationship. They attended a seminar based on the book "The 5 Languages of Love" by noted author and marriage counselor, Dr. Gary Chapman. Using humorous examples and creative multi-media, Dan shared that the 5 "languages" of love are touch, service (doing something for someone), gifts, time (attention), and words. He successfully emphasized Dr. Chapman's salient points of building, improving and maintaining the power of a successful relationship by discovering what each partner needs in order to feel loved and accepted. Often in the beginning of a relationship, the excitement and newness of the relationship is enough. But as a relationship matures, knowing

each other's "love language" (what makes them feel loved and accepted) and knowing and working to use these expressions and expectations for a loving partnership are what keep the relationship fresh and vital. Relationships require work! Dan gave away several copies of Dr. Chapman's book "The Five Love Languages". It looked like there were many starts to new conversations as the meeting ended.

November, 2014

President Floyd Short opened the meeting; Treasurer Lowell Erickson announced a \$ 3,000 balance in our account. John Strassburger mentioned the memorial service for Bill Parker was well attended. Bill Duvall is moving to Mass., to be with family. Jim Marich shared a disturbing story about his car being broken into while he attended church, with the subsequent discovery on returning home to find his house had been burgled. It is assumed that personal information in the car gave the crooks enough to find the house and take over \$ 20 K of personal goods. Other business included the suggestion that meeting minutes to be posted soon after the meeting with a request for any corrections sent to the secretary. Most members are paid up. Al Skinner suggested we use the term "Emeritus Members" in the future. **Absentees:** Mac Adams, Dick Axell, Mark Hafermann, Jim Hinchcliffe, Chick Hodge, Bob Lewis, Mark Lorbiecki, Dan Hungate, Chuck Meyer, Dan Zak. **Guests:** Levin Lynch. **Member's Moment:** Don Vollmer recalled his previous talk on a democratic economy and offered another solution to the traditional political party donations. Don also gave us a list of his daily personal goals as a way of committing himself to achieve them by presenting them to us out loud.

Speaker: Lowell Ericsson's topic was "Phishing for Phools" and "The Market for Lemons", both authored by George A. Akerlof. The topic related to the quality of automobiles, financial and insurance products we decide to buy based on imperfect information. Potential solutions and remediation are currently available to the informed consumer through: publications, consumer laws, product liability laws, Federal and State consumer protection agencies and consumer advocates.

October, 2014

Former President Mark Lorbiecki opened the meeting on time and immediately began steps to pass our leadership to the new slate of officers. An email from John Strassberger was read to encourage the installation of the updated list of current prospects. Milt Yanicks called for the vote with an unanimous approval by all present. The new officers are as follows: Pres. Floyd Short, V.P. Dave Eitelbach, Sec. Ben Weyhing, Tres. Lowell Ericsson. **Absentees:** Bryan Cairns, Russ Cheetum, Bill Wiley, John Strasburger, Dan Hungate, Don Vollmer, Dan Zak, Bill Parker, Dick Axell. Treasurer Mark Hafferman reported most members have paid their dues for this half of the year. Mark suggested the approval of the last meetings minutes by a vote of the members present could be simplified by emailing the secretary any corrections and the minutes would be amended. A general agreement followed his suggestion. Al Skinner made a motion that the reference to "Emeritus Members" be called by their original title, no discussion, call for the vote, approved. **Member's Moment:** John Pehrson has worked with land use issues in Seattle for the last 14 years logging more than 10,000 hours in meetings on these matters. John's motivation came from his move to Belltown in 2009, which began his relations with the many over-achieving developers trying to build there. John began with the formation of the Belltown Housing and Land Use Committee to review the many proposals brought by those that "worship at the altar of density". A second residence group, the Lake Union Community Alliance, was formed and was mostly successful in presenting an alternative to big money developers. They had a positive impact with limited effect on improving land use, zoning limits applied to buildings and limiting the impact of the huge volume of construction in his area. **Speaker:** Tony Ward Smith's presentation posed the question: College Football, Yes Or No? He presented a number of pro and con considerations: Pro— Generates Considerable School Spirit, Huge Alum Connection, Massive Money Brought In, Chance for Education, Teaches Life Lesson, Satisfies Aggressive Tendencies. . . Con— Over-Blown Emphasis (no academic connection!), Off-kilter Economics (i.e.: coaches' pay), Exploits Players (talk of a players' union), Scandal/Crime, Academic Shortcomings (lousy graduation rates), Regular Students Short-Changed. But the most critical issue, Tony suggested, was the growing amount of serious impact injuries, and in particular, direct-hit concussions, and the accumulated damage from being hit too many times in the head. The outcome, Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (C.T.E.) is a progressive neurological disorder found in people who have suffered some kind of brain trauma. Evidence of players at high school, college and professional levels being severely and permanently damaged in this way continues to emerge. Still, everyone loves college football! It is a prime focus of every Fall Saturday at hundreds of stadiums and millions of TV sets throughout the country. This, even as more and more parents are beginning to say "I don't want my son to play football!" Milt Yanicks (an obvious exception) related his experiences in the 50s as a UW football player. A vigorous discussion followed, with a suggestion for the U of W should sponsor a cause-of-brain-injuries study.

September, 2014

Absentees: Cairnes, Eitelbach, Hungate, Lorbiecki, Strasberger, Wiley, Axell, Campbell, Hinchcliffe, Hodge. **Membership Changes:** Doug Sigel resigned his membership. Bill Duval was granted Emeritus status (May, 2014 meeting). Gene McBryer bade farewell. Reserve Members Jim Hinchcliffe and Russ Cheetum move to Regular Member status. **Member's Moment:** In absentia, Bill Parker sent a written copy of his "Moment" to Al Skinner who recounted a spectacular, but harrowing trip, which Bill, his wife and daughter took in 2002— to Geyser National Park in Kamchatka, Russia. It is a remote mountainous and volcanic region, accessible only by air, or on foot. After walking and viewing the Park, their comfortable new 24 passenger helicopter took off from a lodge located on a ridge near a deep canyon. At 200 to 300 feet in the air, the helicopter lost power and crash landed in bushy trees that cushioned the hard landing. They

landed only 30 feet from the edge of the canyon; remarkably missing a disastrous drop of several thousand feet. Back at the lodge they spent the night eating, drinking, and singing with the other passengers, including a group of boisterous German geologists. The next day, they were taken safely back to Petro Paul in an old Russian military helicopter. Note: For a spectacular interactive panoramic video go to: www.airpano.com/files/kamchatka-Geyser-Valley/2-2. (View it full screen.) **Speaker:** Milt Yanicks: SOREN KIERKEGAARD: STAGES ON LIFE'S WAY. The central theme of Kierkegaard's writings is the meaning of personal existence. His philosophy was not to speculate about mankind, but to reveal man (the person) as he really is. Two questions lurk in his writings: 1) What is the point of a person's life? 2) What sense can be made of human existence? To make readers acutely conscious of these questions, he creates an image of human life confronted with anguish, absurdity, meaninglessness and despair, all of which he passed through. Is there a corrective to this predicament? What kind of knowledge can transform the existence of a person? Answer: Passion!...of a personal truth that demands commitment, that demands living one's truth. In this state of passion, one has "True Life." Kierkegaard's meaning of despair presents the mode of "not being in the truth." He openly declares his position to be an act of faith. Faith is a way of being! The problem is to live one's faith, as he describes in his spiritual biography, EITHER/OR. In it he describes three stages of life he passed through— the Aesthetic, the Ethical, and the Religious. The biggest Wrangle of the evening was about the Religious stage. Why should it have to be a religious stage to have reached one's Selfhood? At that point the discussion went around in circles.

June, 2014

Absentees: Tony Ward-Smith, Russ Cheetham, Don Vollmer, Bill Parker, Ben Weyhing, Dan Hungate, John Pehrson. **Member's Moment:** Gene McBrayer bid the Wranglers farewell due to his now very busy schedule, mainly traveling with his new bride. Jim Hinchcliffe spoke of the wonder of "chance meetings" and shared a couple of the more amazing of his, one being seated on a plane next to a famous attorney, and another a visit with the old friend of a politician he was scheduled to meet with. **Speaker:** Mark Lorbiecki's presentation was his proposal for the elimination of the 17th Amendment. Mark gave the history of the introduction of this Amendment in 1913, and how its pretense was to promote "more democracy", yet how it effectively (and determinatively) intruded upon state autonomy. Mark explained how the previous process of state election of Senators to the Legislature worked well for 124 years (from 1787), and how founding fathers James Madison and George Mason in particular esteemed it as essential politic. Mark showed how the presumed ideal of the Amendment was the prevention of direct individual campaign funding by extremely wealthy interests, yet, in fact, it did open the way for such influence where the old system had indeed limited that. Mark showed how a lack of such private interest funding makes the Legislature more beholden to the state/ how that is the superior and ultimate desire. The issue (a huge one today) is Federal intrusion and over-ruling of locale autonomy, undeniably a source of grief in many state departments throughout the country.

May, 2014

Absentees: Bryan Cairns, Russ Cheetham, Dan Hungate, Al Skinner, Dave Eitelbach, Bill Parker, Dick Axell, Chuck Meyer. President Mark Lorbiecki called on all members to consider various upcoming officer positions. Treasurer Mark Hafferman reported the current financial status as "solvent". Dick Russell proposed to update the speaker's obligation to notify Aljoa of the number of attendees and guests. **Member's Moment:** Bill Duvall spoke of the recent event of his wife's death due to cancer, and how, in the midst of that grief he decided to do more traveling, and how by chance he reconnected with a very old friend from the 60's, and they have subsequently become regular traveling companions. Bill expressed the hope that these travels wouldn't affect his status as a 22 year Wrangler's member and hoped for continued association with the group. It was unanimously agreed that Bill be promoted to Emeritus position. **Speaker:** Don Vollmer's presentation— "How We The People Elect A President"— how the American system of the Electoral College came into existence, how it works –and (as Don feels) it's inherent pitfalls in fair vote representation. Don laid out a tight proposal to alter this system, basically to rely on the popular vote, shorten the election process to 6 months and limit or monitor the amount of money individuals can donate to the parties. No special interest groups funding. Of note were the figures Don gave of private (individual) election donations, from 55% to 75% of the current \$567m tally.

April, 2014

Absentees: Mark Lorbiecki, Dan Zak, Chuck Meyer, Dick Russell, Floyd Short, Russ Cheetham, Bill Duvall, Bill Parker Treas. Mark Hafferman convened the meeting in Pres. Mark Lorbiecki's absence. **Member's Moment:** Chick Hodge shared his participation as a Board member for the Rainier Valley-based Tennis Outreach Program. Currently President of the Board., he shared various features of the Project— seasonal Tennis Camps, visiting Tennis Pros, special nutrition tutorials, and the Arthur Ashe incentive. Chick, who also lead the design of the current courts at the facility, relays the joy and satisfaction he derives by being part of a program that encourages this sport for primarily underprivileged youth. **Speaker:** Bob Wiley's Presentation— "A Human Dilemma, What To Do About The Death Penalty?"— "began at the beginning" by reviewing what some believe to be the origin of crime, the biblical account of the murder of Abel by brother Cain. Bob presented murder to the scrutiny of the Wranglers as ostensibly THE offense deserving of the death penalty, murder being the ultimate crime— heinous by comparison to any other -murderers being the "worst of the worst" law offenders. Many points were raised for the group's consideration: The fact that the death penalty may serve as a deterrent to the potential murderer/ it's absence lessens the fear of this severe consequence thus failing to provide this deterrence –(a 26 study by Pepperdine University: capitol punishment is "an enormous deterrent, and that as executions increase, murders in fact decrease"). The expense incurred in incarceration deprives law-abiding citizens of funding that could otherwise benefit society – (the current imbalance of prosecution vs.

the defense for the accused murderer: Three defense attorneys appointed to the case exclusively, but only one Prosecuting Attorney. Judgments typically take a long time—10, 20, even 30 years is not uncommon. 2/3 of US Voters are for the death penalty. America is the only Western nation not to abolish it, yet America has the largest number of murderers – 4.8 murderers per 100,000 US citizens. By comparison (per 100,000) .8 in Germany and Spain, 1.2 in the UK. There were 10,000 US homicides in 2010, 290 in Great Britain. It is the duty of the state to protect citizens, but fails to do so by an unexpedient and biased defense for the criminal. Prosecuting Attorney Dan Satterburg: “the current process is punitive to the public”. The cases of mistaken prosecution and punishment were not overlooked – accounts of misjudgments exist and are heart-wrenching. But Bob asserted that now with DNA testing available the number of such regrettable mistakes are drastically reduced. Bob again quoted from the bible, “the murderer must die”, and again in the “city of refuge” passage about the avenger of blood; “you shall not pity him”.

March, 2014

Absentees: Gene McBrayer, Floyd Short, John Persohn, John Strasburger, Chick Hodge, Russ Cheetham, Bill Duvall, Dan Zak

Guests: Ben Kirkendall, guest of Dick Campbell. Dick Moller, guest of Doug Sigel. **Business:** There was a request for final recording of the revised absence allowance policy. Also, the request was made (later in the evening) that the Member’s Moment timeframe be made known – as these have tended to go past the approximate 5 minute limit. **Member’s Moment:** Chuck Meyer. Liberals in general (and those in Wranglers?) misunderstand what conservatives stand for. Chuck outlined the principles that define conservatism and that conservatives believe that the Government’s purpose, its only purpose, is to protect the basic, natural rights of all men to live their lives unimpeded, free of the restrictions of a tyrannical government, but living in a secure society where the government protects their rights and their property. Natural rights come from natural law. **Speaker:** Mark Hafferman’s presentation— “The Financial Gap Between The Rich and The Poor”— was based on Hedrick Smith’s book Who Stole the American Dream. He presented a timeline review of political events and a changing business ethos during the years following the end of World War II, leading to a growing inequality in incomes and financial security between the middle class and business management. During the three decades following World War II, the U.S. enjoyed a shared prosperity accompanied by shared political and economic power between economic groups. A “virtuous circle” of good steady income for a large number of families produced high consumer demand, leading to progressive rounds of business expansion with new plants and jobs, fueling further growth, and a rising standard of living. Business leaders were tuned in on the premise that nurturing their workforce led to better products and business growth over the long term. Corporate management and labor unions were able to reach agreements which worked for both sides. Aided by relatively progressive income taxation, growth of average family income closely matched economic productivity. A pro-business power shift occurred in congress in the late 1970s and with evolving new financial incentives corporate managerial priorities were driven by cost cutting policies most of which dramatically promoted share price and company valuation. Many workers lost jobs due to outsourcing and new technologies. Productivity remained high but remaining employee and worker income stagnated. Cozy relationships between company CEOs and their boards helped to produce dramatic increases in income for management and a segment of stockholders. Extreme wealth was created for some. In the meantime, average income for employees and other workers stagnated. Smith proposes a ten point “Domestic Marshall Plan” through a grassroots movement in an attempt to “revive the moderate center and middle-class power”: 1. A public-private partnership to modernize infrastructure, create jobs, and compete better. 2. Push innovation, science, and high-tech research. 3. Generate a manufacturing renaissance. Government policy to “Buy American”. 4. Make the U.S. Tax Code fairer. 5. Fix the corporate tax code to promote job creation at home. 6. Push China to live up to fair trade to generate four million jobs in the U.S. 7. Save on War and Weapons. 8. Fix housing and protect the safety net. 9. Rebuild the political center. 10. Mobilize the Middle Class. A very lively discussion followed Mark’s presentation, with little Wrangling, but much relevant commentary and agreement with the problem. Dick Campbell’s guest Mr. Kirkendall added a wealth of information from his well-informed position in this matter. He heads the Mirabella group recently formed (and linked to other such newly-formed groups nationwide) to work for changes as outlined by Author Hendrick Smith, who personally challenged Mirabella seniors last year while speaking there.

February, 2014

Absentees: Russ Cheetham, Bill Duvall, Dick Axell, Dave Eitelbach, Mac Adams, Dick Campbell, Bill Parker

Member’s Moment: Doug Sigel spoke briefly of his oft-felt awe at the force of man expressed as it was in the Industrial Age/ its evolution to our present era of Technology. The main content of his sharing could be summed up in these statements concerning the influence of science upon philosophy: “even our present ability to blow the world apart seems to pale in comparison to the force of man unleashed in history through the point of a fountain pen”, and “for, is it not true that industry and technology render us mere conveniences, whereas the purveyors of ideas effect the furthest-reaching change?”. The split of truth into two opposing categories at the Enlightenment, by David Hume, Doug proposed, initiated the decline of objective certainty (truth) -the Postmodern expression of that being moral relativism. Cited were several modern statements, including those of CS Lewis, Francis Schaeffer, Viktor Frankl, and pertinent lyrics of the Punk-Rock artist Sting. Nihilism vs transcendence were touched upon, as well as an indictment against the intellect of man gone awry in “the boastful pride of life”. A remedy was offered in a personalized form, that being the submission of one’s intellect to the “mind” of the Creator of the Universe (if there be one), and full acceptance of / trust in HIS truth. **Speaker:** “The American Revolution From A British Perspective” John Pehrson. having having a 20+ year interest in American history and having recently read

eight books on the subject, chose to offer perhaps an oft-overlooked view of "the British side" of things. Of great interest and relevance, he discussed the context in Britain at the time, by way of a review of the recent-historic events leading to her condition in about 1775. John informed the group that during this period, 1765-1781, Britain was "spread very thin" indeed. Spread thin by the necessary defense of her Imperial holdings in the Caribbean, India, and Africa against other European powers -predominantly France- and her many issues with the American colonies. Also, the effect on the British economy of several wars (most significantly the 7 Years War) in terms of cost and loss of troops was taken into account. Four key American battles, Boston (Bunker Hill), New York, Saratoga, and Yorktown were reviewed in depth, as well as four findings that still seem to have relevance today:

1. This was an unnecessary war, expensive in human life and could have been avoided.
2. This was an unsuccessful war of a Global Superpower vs an Insurgency
3. The British people, parliament and King were not united resulting in some cases to 'gridlock'.
4. The British Global Superpower was spread too thin, over-extended.

The subject was of course dear to all present, (American as well as British), many in the room also being well-read, but this particular look into it was illuminating, and much lively discussion ensued.

January, 2014

Absentees: Dick Axell, Don Vollmer, Bill Duvall, Russ Cheetham, Jim Hinchcliffe. President Mark Loribiecki reviewed the earlier discussion concerning changes to the charter as regarding the four-time-miss-and-out rule re attendance. Proposals were made to: institute a prior notice exception rule, add an official leave of absence clause, add a grace clause for extended sickness or other unforeseen difficulty, and others. The unanimous consensus was for grace ...that there should be exceptions to the rule written in, and membership highly valued and none ever unduly excluded. The particulars were referred to the Executive Committee to be instituted and reported to all next meeting. **Member's Moment:** Floyd Short spoke of recently attending a talk at his community residence by Hendrick Smith, for 20 years NY Times Bureau Chief to Moscow and Author of "The Russians", "The Power Game", and his most recent "Who Stole the American Dream?" This book deals with the present middle-class disappearance/ extreme wealth-proportion shift. Smith reviews the elements of the former economic stability,— the GI Bill (education opportunity) and good job availability. The profoundest changes began around 1980, resulting in a wealth gap whereby income ratios (employee-to-CEO wage) shifted exponentially. During the postwar "glory years" the income ratio was about 1:20 (a CEO's wage being 20X the average employees). Now it's not uncommon to see that ratio at 1:300. Mr. Smith's solution: Readers should join with others to consider what part they might play in effecting some change to tip the scales and perhaps promote a more widespread equity. **Speaker:** Bill Parker's presentation was "Pacifism, Does It Work?" He reviewed many of the great accounts of men of action who chose pacifism rather than aggression to achieve their goals, the most notable being Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela. The mechanics of pacifistic action were discussed. Is it a form of manipulation? Those who have chosen it know that it is, and are aware of other facts resultant such as: 1. "turning the cheek" may mean risking imprisonment or even their life. And 2. though they "act for peace", they are perhaps inadvertently stirring aggression in the opposition (and so there is a question as to the validity in terms of purity of intent?). Other demonstrations of peaceful resistance —such as the 60's "sit-ins" were reviewed, as well as a look at the philosophies of "neutral" nations such as Switzerland. The ideal of a rule of love was discussed in conjunction with mention of Jesus, and Bill lent a sense of the idealist's hope that men might evolve to a regular restraint of what seems an inherent human force as pertaining to disputes or crises. One could sense a deep cry of heart for that love from the Speaker. In the Wrangle that followed, the consensus seeming to be a great admiration for pacifism though also a practical doubt as to its plausibility.

December, 2013

Absentees: Chick Hodge, John Pehrson, Bill Duvall, Russ Cheetham. **Guests:** Art & Ann Green, guests of Gene McBrayer, Tom Adams, son of Mac Adams, Mary Lou Kirchner, guest of Dick Russell, Alice Blohm, guest of Dick Axell, Ginnie Chapelle, guest of Dick Campbell (widows of departed Wranglers.) **Member's Moment:** Jim Marich related his appreciation for the Seattle Museum of Flight and the various ways his service as a Docent there has been a blessing to him. Jim's long-standing love of airplanes, including his service as crew member aboard the B-29 qualifies him well to provide a wealth of information to all guests. He meets people from the world round, but especially loves the groups of kids that visit —loves teaching them (and on occasion being taught by them!). He cherishes the rapport between the Museum's 17 active Docents who have become fast friends. Jim is also able to relay to visitors his meetings with famous figures in the history of flight, including Astronauts. **Speaker: Gene McBrayer— World Energy Outlook 2010-2040.** Although world population will increase from 7 Billion to 9 Billion people, and world GDP is expected to grow by 140%, total energy demand will grow by only 35% -- reflecting the impact of major energy efficiency improvements. In the past, energy demand grew in "lock step" with GDP growth; now, through continuing efficiency improvements, over 500 quadrillion BTUs will not need to be produced in 2040. Energy demand over the period in the countries of the developed world will be essentially flat, while demand in the developing world will more than double. Electricity demand worldwide will grow by 85%. Coal as the primary fuel for generating electricity will peak by 2025, and natural gas will become the fastest growing, and most economic fuel for electricity generation. Nuclear, solar, and windmills will continue to grow; but, will not be major contributors by 2040. New technology is opening new supply sources of natural gas and petroleum liquids, particularly in North America, greatly improving energy fuel supplies. While North America imported 20% of its

supplies in 2010; we are forecast to be self-sufficient by 2025. For those concerned about increasing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions causing global warming, emissions by 2040 in the developed world will decrease 20%; while CO₂ emissions from the developing world (largely China, India, and Africa) will double, and become 80% of the worldwide total by 2040.

November, 2013

Absentees: Dick Axell, Dick Campbell, Mac Adams, Bill Parker, Ben Weyhing, Floyd Short **Business:** President Lorbiecki reviewed membership rules and asked acceptance of Jim Hinchcliffe as new reserve member—voted in unanimously. **Member's Moment:** Dan Hungate reported on his 21 day Trek through the Himalayas. His previous trip was in 1989, Dan told of the increase in popularity of Trekking there, the numbers of visitors increasing some 600% since that time. Dan was the eldest Trekker and called a particular three-day portion of the route "Three of the hardest days I've ever experienced". The photos he brought were glorious. **Speaker:** Chuck Meyer's presentation was entitled "Anthropogenic Global Warming." Paleoclimatologists have discovered that the earth warms and cools on 1500 +/- 500 year cycles. We are currently in a warming cycle that started about 1850 as the earth was coming out of the "little ice age". At this time, the earth is about .80 degrees centigrade above 1850, when the temperatures were about 0.25 degrees below average. The net increase to date is about 0.55 degrees C (1 degree F). While many have pointed to the increase in manmade CO₂ as the cause of warming, many scientists disagree. CO₂ is a weak driver of temperature and an increase in CO₂ has always lagged an increase in temperature. Even though there has been a rapid increase in atmospheric CO₂ since 1999, temperatures over the period through 2012 rose only slightly and then have decreased more than they increased. Current climate models do not agree with the modest temperature increase experienced, overstating the increase by more than a factor of 2, and have not predicted the current decrease. Recent studies show a direct correlation between sun spot activity and the temperature of the earth—more sun spots, higher temperature and vice versa. There is evidence we are entering a period of reduced sun spot activity which could result in decreasing temperatures. History shows that there has been a marked and rapid decrease in temperatures when sun spot activity is reduced (e.g. the Wolf Minimum and Maunder Minimum). Many are concerned with the ability of earth's flora and fauna to adapt to changing temperatures, but historical records show that they are remarkably adaptable. During the "mediaeval warming", when temperatures were warmer than now, there were no reported extinctions attributable to warming and agriculture flourished. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we need to have a rational discussion of the hard science behind climate change and try to avoid the emotional arguments that are generated by misinformation from many who are simply ill-informed.

October, 2013

Absentees: Dave Eitelbach, Bill Parker, Floyd Short, Ben Weyhing, Don Vollmer, Gene McBrayer, Mac Adams, Lowell Erickson, Russ Cheetham **Guests:** Jim Hinchcliffe, guest of John Strasburger. **Business:** • President Lorbiecki proposed voting on by-law amendments as updated & clarified by John Strasburger—to be submitted to the membership prior to voting. • The possible value of the speaker sending out—in advance—the subject of his forthcoming presentation, with perhaps some outline/overview was discussed and met with varying opinions. • The group paused to sympathize with member Bob Wiley at the recent loss of his wife. **Member's Moment:** Al Skinner offered an entertaining "Personal Theology", in the manner of Gilbert & Sullivan entitled "A Model Unitarian". **Speaker:** Bill Duvall presented: POLITICS 2012: How did we get here? The paper reviewed the makeup of the 61 million Republican voters in 2012, the nature of their districts, the impact of the representatives they elected on the House and the likely changes over the next four years. The very conservative wing of the Party is in control today; they have a libertarian and anti-government outlook and their leaders have the perspective of a minority seeking to rally the like-minded, not build consensus.

September, 2013

Absentees: Dave Eitelbach, Bill Duvall, Dan Hungate, Bill Parker. **Guests:** Lisa Goldsmith, daughter of Mac Adams. **Member's Moment:** John Strasburger offered a book review of "Being Wrong" by Kathryn Schultz. All members were challenged to view and judge two optical illusive handouts John prepared, and subsequently judgments were proven by a third handout which hand-done cutouts superimposed upon the graphic material. The point of interest as related by John was to be sure we're sure, because (perhaps often) ... we're actually wrong. The lesson of humility was mentioned. **Speaker:** Chick Hodge gave a presentation replete with charts and graphs entitled: ECONOMIC DATA, THE FEDERAL RESERVE, AND ECONOMIC REFORM. A study of US economic data from 1930 through 2013 showed that: 1) Gross domestic product has increased in inflation-adjusted terms to a per capita level of over \$50K. The per capita public debt level of \$37K and deficit level of \$3K for 2013 are both significant by comparison, and at higher levels than at any time since World War II. 2) Federal government revenues and expenses, when corrected for inflation and population growth, have increased 3.6 and 4.2%, respectively, compared to 1.9% for GDP. The Federal Reserve has a significant impact on our economy via its mandate to control monetary policy. Its Central Bank role is unique in having both private and governmental characteristics and roles. In two books dealing with needed economic reform, Bill Bradley and John Taylor, although from different political parties, agree on the need to get the government deficit and debt under control, and to use the tools of government and the Federal Reserve to promote full employment, reasonable and predictable interest rates, and low levels of inflation.

June, 2013

Absentees: Mark Lorbieki, Al Skinner, Gene McBrayer, Floyd Short, Ben Weyhing, Dick Axell and Dick Campbell **Guests:** Khalid Riaz, (guest

of Lowell Ericsson) and Mark Bowers, (guest of Doug Sigel). Russ Cheetham, who was a guest of Don Vollmer at the May meeting, was given reserve member status and will become a member when the first opening occurs. President John Strasburger opened the meeting with the issue of electing the officers for the 2013-2014 year. The slate was: President: Mark Lorbiecki, VP: Floyd Short, Secretary: Doug Sigel, Treasurer: Mark Haferman. All were duly elected, unanimously. **Member's Moment:** Bryan Cairns was celebrating his 6th birthday when the Normandy invasion began in WWII. He recounted his impressions as a child in a war zone. Some of his reflections were fearful and some were childlike unawareness of the gravity of the situation. Having been born and raised for his first few years in North Wales, he told of the living conditions and his impressions after moving to the London area with his family. It was a great story. Americans, having never lived in fear of bombing and threat of invasion, should take heed of what war is really about. **Speaker:** Doug Sigel gave a talk entitled, "The Mark of Cain, man's propensity to Enslave, Deceive, War and Pillage, and ...the Remedy" The mark placed upon Cain by the Creator as a result of his slaying of his brother in the biblical account, was taken here as a metaphor for man's propensity toward ill self-assertive actions, to varying degrees, against his brother through the ages. The assertion was that the "mark" of Cain is upon us all, irremediably so, whilst man dwells upon the same earth Cain trod, and that the only hope of overcoming this propensity is belief in/obedience to/reliance upon the wisdom of the Creator, rather than man's various philosophies or attempts at social change or restructuring. Excerpts from popular songs were used to highlight sentiment reflective of concerned voices raised as pertaining to this subject. These voices were quotations of famous personalities; Bob Dylan, Emile Coue, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Francis Schaeffer being among them. Biblical quotations included the prophet Jeremiah "The heart of man is deceitful and fickle; who can know what it will produce next". Compounding the question of our relative goodness/badness—and questioning the concept of circumstantial influence—the theme of intimate care by a benevolent Creator was woven throughout. Available relationship with Him was propounded as the highest hope for man (this being portrayed as "vertical" relationship). (Relationship to our fellow man was labeled "horizontal.") Sigel proposed that if the vertical is in line (loving the Creator first, above all things, then goodness in the "horizontal" plane will naturally follow as a matter of course)... "The Remedy"

May, 2013

Absentees: Bill Duvall, Dick Axell, Mac Adams and Gene McBryer. **Guests:** Russ Cheetham (guest of Don Vollmer) and Tom Naden (guest of Al Skinner). President John Strasburger explained the nominating procedure for our incoming officers for next year. Those nominated were: President: Mark Lorbiecki, Vice President: (Wine Steward): Floyd Short, Secretary: Doug Sigel, Treasurer: Mark Haferman. **Member's Moment:** From 1995 until 2012, Ben Weyhing belonged to an organization dedicated to making diabetics live and feel like normal human beings. The organization was formed by a group of nurses who saw the effects of the disease on people who were afflicted. The Lions Club is the major supporter of the organization. Camp Leo is where diabetes victims of all ages can meet and enjoy activities together. This sounds like a very worthwhile venture, and it was obvious that Ben enjoyed his time with them. **Speaker:** Floyd Short gave a talk entitled "The Price of Inequality". This was the title of a book by Joseph Stiglitz, a Columbia University Professor of Economics. In addition to Stiglitz's ideas, the talk drew upon "The Great Divergence", a book by Timothy Noah; that title is Paul Krugman's term for the divergence in income and wealth that began in the 1970's and continues to the present. Beginning after WWII, American income deciles rose in parallel until the 1970's. Since then, the incomes of the 50th decile and below have flattened, while the incomes of the top 1% have gained 3.5% year, a cumulative excess over the lower income classes of nearly 150%. At the same time, the share of U.S. income of the top 1% has risen from a steady 8% in the postwar years to the present 24%. The consequences of this widening income and wealth disparity are that the very wealthy now live largely separate lives from the rest: gated communities, children in expensive private schools, practically unlimited spending capacity, vacation trips on private jets and access to investment opportunities unavailable to the average American. Meanwhile, following the housing and financial collapse of 2008, many average Americans have lost their jobs and seen the value of their homes, their main financial asset, decline. Stiglitz's belief is that this occurred because of laws and regulations favoring a shift of wealth from the middle and lower income classes to the wealthy, accompanied by a steady decline in labor unions and the ability of workers to bargain for better wages. This is not sustainable and eventually will lead to major societal disruption. To repair the damage, Stiglitz proposes that market excesses and disruptions be controlled by improved regulation, that the government invest in education, technology and infrastructure, that the unions be strengthened and that the ordinary citizen be guaranteed adequate economic security.

April, 2013

Absentees: Bryan Cairns, Bill Duvall, Lowell Ericsson, Dan Hungate, Chuck Meyer, Bill Parker, Floyd Short, Don Vollmer, Dick Axell and Dick Campbell. **Guest.** Milt Yanicks introduced his guest and long time friend Gordan who was born and raised in the area but now lives in California. **Member's Moment.** Bob Lewis reported on his recent tour of North Korea and the neurotic and Orwellian nature of its government. One of the interesting facts was that his tour group was warned by their guide that they were prohibited from taking any photographs of Kim Jong Un, the current leader, that cut off (did not show) his arms and legs. However, North Korea does have one or rather several good ideas. Among the accolades showered on its leader are: Superior Person, Dear Leader, Respected Leader, Wise Leader, Brilliant Leader, Unique Leader, Commander-in-Chief, Great Leader, Father of the People, Guiding Sun Ray, Beloved Father, Leader, General, Great General, Beloved and Respected General, Great Leader. Ever-Victorious, Iron-Willed Commander, The Great Sun of

Life, Great Sun of the Nation, World Leader of The 21st Century, Peerless Leader, Bright Sun of the 21st Century, Great Sun of the 21st Century, Leader of the 21st Century, Amazing politician, Great Man, Who Descended From Heaven, Glorious General, Who Descended From Heaven, Supreme Leader of the Nation, Invincible and Ever-triumphant General, Great Marshal, Dear Father, Guiding Star of the 21st Century, Great Defender, Savior ; Great Man, Who Is a Man of Deeds; His Excellency. After "extensive" debate it was decided that these titles should be henceforth bestowed on the Wrangler's presidents -- when the current one retires! **Speaker:** Jim Marich ill with deep seated walking pneumonia was unable to attend and presented his talk through his avatar, Tony Ward Smith. Jim's talk summarized Scott D. Oki's book *Outrageous Learning, An Education Manifesto*, which discusses the sad state of our K-12 education system and suggests eleven ideas for improvement: 1. Let local leaders lead; 2. Great teachers produce better learning outcomes; 3. The freedom to choose; 4. Allow more time for education; 5. Early learning rigor and optional high school; 6. Muster an army of volunteers; 7. Abandon standardized curriculum; 8. Early intervention and specialized instruction; 9. Spend money as if it were your own; 10. Plant the seeds of success in life; 11. Establish a culture of excellence. The extensive wrangle that followed dealt with the difficulty of getting from here to there. The situation is dire; the suggestions for improvement are worthy; but the current vested interests and political intransigence present obvious obstacles to implementation. Oki recognizes this difficulty and is endeavoring to create a groundswell of public involvement through the website www.outrageouslearning.org.

March, 2013

Absentees: Dick Campbell, Bill Duvall, Bob Lewis, Chuck Meyer, Gene McBrayer, Floyd Short, John Pehrson. **Guest:** Chuck Blumenfeld (Guest of Dan Hungate). **Member's Moment:** Dan Zak described a business in the U.S.A. There were many unique features in the business described. And the business was the inner workings of emergency departments around the U.S.A.

Speaker: Dan Hungate gave a presentation on a voluminous book by Herbert Hoover, describing the politics, maneuvering and intrigue leading up to World War II. Included were the inter-relationships of Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin and many of their underlings. Insights into the various summit meetings of the major participants were revealed as seen by Hoover. Little was known of this intrigue as it was evolving and some of the revelations were astounding, such as Roosevelt's positive view of Josef Stalin. Hoover did not publish his book during his lifetime, possibly because of the potential ramifications. His family made the decision to publish the book well after his death. A good wrangle ensued as might be expected with such a subject.

February, 2013

Absentees: Parker, Hodge, Vollmer, Marich, Pehrson and Strasburger. **Guest:** Alan Woog, guest of Alfred Skinner, Tim Butler (Dave Eitelbach's brother-in-law), John Platt. **Member's Moment:** Dave Eitelbach focused on his relationship with his father-in-law, whose career was spent with Hormel and the home of world famous Spam. The most memorable highlight of his younger years spent with his father-in-law and family were the stimulating after-dinner conversations. They would select a topic and everyone present, whether conservative or liberal, would take an active part, always conducted themselves in a civil manner but with voices occasionally rising in an effort to drive home a point. **Speaker:** Charter member Al Skinner introduced his subject matter with a three-sparrow joke, reminding everyone that a long Wrangler's tradition was to start a presentation with a joke. The joke was well told and even understood by all present and much appreciated. The subject of Al's speech was Plutocracy and Poverty, based primarily on a book Al had recently read. The poverty side of the equation was presented historically, starting in the 19th century, including the public works programs of the 1930s and the start of Social Security, and the Lyndon Johnson initiatives to address problems concerning the poor such as the Head Start Program. It was suggested that supporting the Head Start Program could avoid incurring jail costs that exceeded the cost of the program. On the plutocrat side of the equation, many statistics were cited regarding the gap between rich and poor and the relationship between the amount of that gap and such factors as progressive tax rates, regulations and government policies. A recent statistic cited— there are 84,700 persons in the world with assets of more than 100 million dollars and that 2/3 of them are self-made, highly educated males with engineering degrees. The finance sector and CEOs comprise major components of the super-rich. Wrangling was widespread and vigorous with viewpoints ranging from the left and right sides of the political spectrum (without evidence of extremes on either side). Al was thanked for an excellent presentation and for stimulating our thoughts on an important subject.

January, 2013

Absentees: Chuck Meyer, Bill Parker, John Pehrson and Bob Wiley. **Guest:** Jim Hinchcliff (friend of President John). **Business:** A motion was made to admit Doug Sigal (proposed by Dan Zak) into membership. The motion passed. There was discussion on a motion to make women eligible for membership. That motion failed. There was discussion on a motion by Mark Lorbieki to have a woman present a paper at the December meeting, at which women are included anyway. That motion also failed. All of this discussion raised questions as to the clarity and completeness of the by-laws of the club. Bryan Cairns suggested that Pres John appoint a committee to study the by-laws and recommend changes or additions as necessary. **Member's Moment:** Lowell Ericsson invoked the Sphinx in his talk, suggesting 3 Questions the Sphinx might have asked: 1) Where do I come from? , 2) What am I here for? 3) Where am I going? He left the second question to be answered by philosophers, theologians, spiritualists and mystics. The first question has answers from many sources, but the most truthful answers came from scientific investigation epitomized by Charles Darwin. He then sketched a bio of Darwin and a

fellow scientist, Alfred Russell Wallace. (Interestingly, Darwin and Pres. Lincoln shared the exact date and year of birth). **Speaker:** President John spoke on the state of education in the United States. Until recently, the U.S. was the world's leader in education. We were the first to establish free public primary education for all, regardless of economic status, and the first to extend that entitlement to secondary education (high schools). No child is required to pay to attend school through the 12th grade. That entitlement should be extended through tertiary education (college, junior college, trade school). Until the 1980's, public tertiary education was either free or relatively easy to afford. That is no longer true. With rising tuitions and economic inequality, it has now become increasingly economically onerous to attend college. Two thirds of undergraduates are able to attend only by borrowing substantial sums and are saddled with significant debt when they graduate. Many promising students are deterred from enrolling, and others drop out because of the actual or anticipated financial strain. As a result, our country is not keeping pace with other industrialized nations. From being a world leader in the proportion of adults ages 25 to 34 with postsecondary credentials, the U.S. now ranks 12th. This has resulted in an increase in economic inequality (as the supply of college graduates has not kept up with the demand) and is a threat to our global competitiveness and economic future. If free public education (our first and most successful entitlement) for primary and secondary education was prudent throughout the 20th century, extending it through tertiary education in the 21st century is justified and mandatory. A good wrangle was limited only by the necessity of vacating the premises by 9:PM.

December, 2012

Absentees: Bob Wiley and Chuck Meyer. **Guests:** Wives, significant others and other guests joined the members for this Holiday Party. There were 54 at the meeting in total. **Members Moment:** Gene McBrayer gave an account of his feelings at the loss of his wife Fay. They had already suffered the untimely deaths of two children. Gene felt devastated. Then he received a lovely letter from a longtime friend, Nikki, in which she encouraged him and essentially said he would heal as time passed. Nikki had been widowed and knew the feeling. Ultimately, Gene and Nikki fell in love and were married quite recently. Gene's life has taken a happy turn. It was a poignant talk. **Speaker:** Bryan Cairns gave a very short introductory paper, "A short history of Christmas" as a concession to the Christmas season. Then he gave his main paper, which was in the more usual Wrangler style entitled "America after Meritocracy". The talk was based on a recent book by Christopher Hayes entitled "The Twilight of the Elites" and its review by the New York Times columnist David Brooks. Hayes postulates that the emergence of a powerful meritocratic elite. That is, an elite elevated on the basis of grades, effort and merit is a root cause of much that has negatively impacted life in America over the last 12 years. Hayes admits that at its most basic, the logic of meritocracy is ironclad, putting the most qualified, best equipped people into positions of responsibility. But, he argues, fidelity to the meritocratic model comes with huge costs because of the inequality it produces. He finds evidence of failures caused by meritocratic elites in almost every facet of American life. Brooks takes issue with this view, finding that today's elites preserve their status mainly through ambition and self-discipline. The talk stirred a very vigorous wrangle, which was enjoyed by all. President John then asked all members to present their ideas on the subject through e-mail. Based on the number of e-mails received by your humble secretary, the idea was followed on by a great many members.

November, 2012

Absentees: Bob Wiley, Chuck Meyer, Mark Hafermann, John Pehrson and Floyd Short. **Guest:** Dan Zak introduced his guest Doug Sigal. **Member's Moment:** Dick Russell described the advances in aircraft design and performance with a photo slide depiction of all the aircraft with which he has been associated in a long career in aviation. Dick showed photos of the Stearman Kaydet, the Piper Cub, AT-6 Texan, DC-3, Lockheed Constellation, B-25, B-36, B-52 and the Boeing 747-8, some of which he has flown. He emphasized two major aviation accomplishments in his lifetime: 1) The increase in capacity of commercial airliners and 2) The significant improvement in safety of US commercial aviation. His talk illustrated an interesting, long, and successful career. **Speaker:** Ben Weyhing gave a talk on "Danelaw: The Foundation of America's Democracy". In the latter part of the first millennia, the Vikings invaded and began to colonize a large part of what is now Eastern England. They also did the same in parts of Greenland and Iceland. With them came a culture of freemen and land ownership. They resisted government by fiefdom or kingship. They simply wanted to establish self-government and protect land ownership. The land they took was swampy and unproductive and they successfully improved it into agricultural productivity. The laws by which the colonies were governed were known as Danelaw. This established cultural tradition remained mostly unchallenged through the days our ancestors immigrated to America and to some degree to our current thinking. Ben's paper postulated that it was this set of laws and traditions that our forefathers applied to their settlements in America upon arrival in the New England colonies. During the wrangle that followed, it was mentioned that religious persecution was one of the principal reasons for immigration, but Ben said his research gave large credit to the "Danelaw" traditions. Ben admitted that that it would be argued that Danelaw ceased to be a distinct political entity at the time of the Norman invasion and to some extent that is true, but he stated that political recognition is not the only way by which institutions and ideas survive and flourish. For example, William the Conqueror may have ended the political independence of the province, but neither he, nor any of his successors, were willing or able to suppress property rights. In 1066, 14% of Englishmen were property owners, well in line with the rest of Europe, but according to the Doomesday Book, freeholders made up 60% of the Danelaw population. Finally, Ben included a list of the locations from which passengers on Winthrop's fleet originated. While the list encompasses 20 different counties of England, it clearly shows that those of Danelaw origin comprised the vast majority. Point proven? A vigorous wrangle followed.

October, 2012

Absentees: Bill Duvall, Mark Lorbiecki, Gene McBrayer and Don Vollmer. **Guest:** Bob Baynham. **Business:** President John proposed that the dinner menu be left to the determination of the Aljoia chef, rather than being the responsibility of the speaker that evening. The members agreed, and that will be the course (pardon the pun) followed henceforth. Pres John also noted that we currently have 23 members, so there is an opening for one new member and a couple of reserve members. Pres John took a straw poll on the Presidential election. On top of a slip of paper, we were to write the name of the candidate for whom we would vote. On the bottom of the paper we were asked to write the name of the candidate who would win the office. Mark Hafermann was asked to tally the vote and report the results as follows: • Who do you plan to vote for? Obama:15 • But whom do you think will win? Obama: 14, Romney: 1 • Who do you plan to vote for? Romney: 7 • But whom do you think will win? Obama: 4, Romney: 3 **Member's Moment:** Milt Yanicks gave a brief report on his recent trip to Great Britain and Scotland. While he enjoyed the many historic sites, he particularly liked the Cathedral at York as well as Hadrian's Wall, built by the Roman Emperor circa 121 A.D. The British Isles were desired by the Romans because of the great tin deposits, useful in the manufacture of weapons. Milt found the people to be warm and friendly as well. **Speaker:** Dave Eitelbach gave a well-researched talk on the global warming issue. Various studies have shown that the earth has been warming over the last millennium, but at an alarmingly increased rate over the last century. Climate models have become more sophisticated and now account for most known natural variations, including those caused by sunspots, volcanoes and ocean currents. All of these models show that mankind's continuous emission of carbon dioxide is the principal cause of the increased rate of warming. But the second part of Dave's talk described an organized effort by a number of corporations and conservative groups to deny the science and discredit the research behind it. The talk spurred a good deal of comment and many questions (as our talks are expected to do), which were expertly handled by Dave. Overall, it was a good presentation and the members enjoyed a good wrangle.

September, 2012

Absentees: Bill Duvall, Dan Hungate, Don Vollmer, Milt Yanicks, Dan Zak and Gene McBrayer. **President's note:** Since our February meeting falls on Valentine's Day, an alternate date will be chosen and you will be advised. **Member's Moment:** Mark Lorbiecki told the story of acting in the movie "Top Gun" starring Tom Cruise. Mark was in the Judge Advocate General's Office as an attorney while in the Navy in San Diego. The producer's of the movie wanted a "real" attorney for a small part of the show where one of the pilot's was being tried for destroying an aircraft. Mark was chosen and told us how the whole thing evolved. He will show us pictures to prove he was in the movie, but also asked us to review the movie while looking for his appearance. It was an unusual experience and Mark learned a lot about the flaky people in the business, including Tom Cruise. Mark got Cruise's autograph, but was warned that if he told anyone about it, Cruise would deny having signed it. He claimed he does not give autographs to anyone. **Speaker:** Three years ago, Bob Lewis and wife, Ann, were part of a group of 24 Americans who went to Iran to tour the country. Lowell Ericsson and his wife were also on the tour. The country is large, with 73 million people and an area equal to the Western 20% of the U.S. Bob recounted their experiences with the general population and said they had no contact with police or government officials, who did not interfere with them in any way. Iranians are not Arabs. They speak Farsi rather than Arabic, and apparently most of the population speaks English, which they called the language, when asked why it was so prevalent. The country is ruled by, and is predominantly comprised of Shia Muslims. The women are expected to cover their hair and wear clothing that reaches to their ankles, but the younger set appears to be pushing the envelope as far as they can in terms of dress. Western garb is frequently seen. The group had no trouble asking and receiving answers to any questions about government, world affairs, view of Americans, etc. The claim about nuclear enrichment was that it was for civil purposes and not to build bombs. The Americans were allowed to see anything they wished and visited historic sites and ancient ruins, and talk with whomever they wished. The group saw a few Jewish Synagogues, which was unexpected. In short, the visit again tended to prove that where nations clash politically, it is usually the governments that do not see eye to eye. If international relationships were left to the people we might all get along much better.

March, 2012

New Members. Dave Eielback and Ben Weyhing were admitted as new members. **Treasurer's Report.** Bob Wiley reported that all but two members have paid their dues. **Absentees.** Lowell Ericsson, Ken Porter, and Bill Parker. **Member's Moment.** Mark Hafferman interpreted the Member's Moment as an opportunity or a directive to report on one of his first time events--a gorgeous and informative review of the animals of Southern Africa. His sights included leopard, giraffe, oryx, mongoose, jackal, kudu, zebra, insects, birds, lion, elephant, hippopotamus and the indigenous natives' perfect teeth. **Wrangle.** Tony Ward-Smith, never shy to promote controversial ideas and the thesis that camaraderie and controversy can co-exist, presented the QUESTIONS: Does the universe have a purpose? If so, whose purpose? What about natural disasters--earthquakes, tornados, tsunamis, what purpose do they serve and whose purpose? And if man is the cause or object of the purpose, what about the predictions that the earth will be consumed by the sun in 7.6 billion years when the sun morphs into a red dwarf or that all life on earth will have been extinguished long prior to that when the oceans boil in about 500 million years. After a brief foray into religion and the function it serves to provide a moral code to live by (e.g. the golden rule) and man's need to know answers to the unknowable and the unanswerable, Tony presented a summary of the answers by 12 luminaries to the question "Does the Universe Have a Purpose?" For their answers click on <http://www.templeton.org/purpose/> and

read their entire answers by clicking on their short answers in red. Those answers are provocative and will cause provocation. During the subsequent wrangle, the Wranglers' answers were provocative, but there was not sufficient time to address their provocations.

DECEMBER, 2011

NEWS FLASH, NEWS FLASH: This just in from the North Pole; Mark Lorbiecki will not receive a lump of coal (or in his case, two lumps) in his stocking this year. Wrangle: Mark asked a simple (actually a very complex) question: "Are you happy?" He then summarized somewhat surprising statistics (How about that alliteration?) on what does or does not make different statistical groups happy or unhappy. The most interesting was that committed Democrats and Republicans are happier than Independents. Does this prove that thinking is overrated. During the ensuing non-wrangle, members and wives made interesting philosophical observations concerning happiness and its causes. Although not technically a wrangle (no disagreements), it was edifying. Mark tried to institute a wrangle by asking whether government makes us happy or unhappy, but in the spirit of the season no one rose to the bait.

SEPTEMBER, 2011

Judged by September's meeting, it is going to be a great year for wrangling at Wranglers. Our new esteemed president, Tony Ward-Smith (one surname is not enough for this dude) pushed us off into new territory by questioning whether we should commence each meeting with the pledge of allegiance. After a brief wrangle (after all we were not fore armed for this topic) a vote was taken, and the pledge prevailed 11 to 8. However, there was a challenge to the validity of the vote because no one presented picture ID to establish entitlement to vote. The pledge was then recited by one and all. Suggestion: Subject for a brave wrangler for a future wrangle: patriotism. Member's Moment. How did I get here? Why am I here? Chuck Meyer summarized the events in the Bronx, Minneapolis, Deluth, Sioux Falls, Des Moines, and Iowa State that resulted in his being on Mercer Island to deliver his Moment. Indeed his tale seemed so unlikely that we wondered if he was actually here. Wrangle: The Issue of Medical Care in the United States by Robert Wiley. Bob Wiley presented a fact filled summary of the history of health care plans in the United States--their inception, their coverage, their cost, their growth, and their comparison with other countries' systems. He asked and covered three very important questions: Should medical care be available to all citizens in the U.S.? How much care should be given? How should care, if given, be paid for? The success of his presentation was demonstrated by the wrangle that followed. Half or more of the hands in the room shot up. When the president finally blew the times up whistle, the debate was on going and could have gone on for an hour or more. Kudos to Bob for his presentation and to the wranglers for their comments. Apropos to Bob's subject--healthcare: Ralph Blohm was unable to attend the meeting as he fell getting out of the car in front of Aljoia and was returned home after an aid car was summoned, and Joe Iwano and Chuck Hansing for health reasons may not be able to attend future meetings. New Member: At Al Skinner's request, Lowell Erickson was approved as a new member.

September, 2009

Absentees: Chick Hodge, Dan Hungate, Ivo Bricel. Business: Floyd Short proposed and accepted for membership. Joe Whitlow has resigned his membership. The Secretary with the assistance of Mark Lorbiecki will update the records of the members. Treasurer: The fall dues of \$135 was collected from 22 members; five still outstanding. However, reserves will comfortably get us through Christmas. Members Moment: Bill Parker's Members Moment was an entertaining bio of Satchell Paige's performance as a pitcher of note capped with Bill's episode with the great man. Speaker: Dick Russell led a discussion "Must we ration health care in the US, or default on promises, or other solutions???"