The good news is that Social Security recipients will get a cost-of-living increase beginning in January.

The bad news, it's been a long time coming, since this is the first increase since 2009, and recipients will also see some increase in their Medicare premiums.

For many senior citizens, life on Social Security hasn't been quite the fun and games of retirement living that they had envisioned when they first decided to retire.

Many saw some of their "extras" for retirement, like pension plans and healthcare extension, fall to the way side as businesses were forced to deal with a plunging economy.

Many retirees also didn't have the big IRA investments like today's employees will have behind them when they think of retirement. Of course, some of those investments went deep south as well during these past few years of economic woes.

The welfare of senior citizens is a big concern here in Iron County. We have a lot of seniors living in our midst, and they don't get a discount on goods and services just because they're on Social Security, so that government check has to be spread around to cover a multitude of living costs, just like the rest of us.

For far too many, that Social Security check is the only income they see. And the ability to make a little extra at a part-time position is about as dry as cup of water in the middle of a desert.

With no COLA increase for the past two years, and the cost of actual living going up every year, it's been a tough haul for many seniors who are averaging about $13,000 a year.

In comparison, our elected officials in Washington, who seem to have some kind of personal agenda about Social Security, are probably averaging something like $175,000 a year for a part-time job, plus government paid health insurance and a nice little retirement benefit.

Perhaps if our illustrious and "exceptional" leaders had to live on $13,000 a year, they might be more willing to act in a bipartisan effort for the good of their country and their fellow citizens. After all, isn't that what their oath of office is all about?

--Allyce Westphal