

Engineering Retirees Society ERS Newsletter

Quarterly meeting

Join us on **Thursday, March 7 at noon** for our spring all-member meeting.

NOTE! Due to the SPEEA hybrid Zoom meeting room needing repairs, our March meeting will be online via Zoom only. Starting time will be 12 p.m.

Check for an email notice sent out just before the meeting in case of any last minute changes.

Planned agenda

The presenter will be Maddy Jalbert, Ph.D, one of the University of Washington (UW) CIP's postdoctoral fellows. Dr. Jalbert studies disinformation; specifically, how subjective experiences influence memory, judgment and decision-making. Her work primarily focuses on factors that impact judgments of truth and risk, as well as how these judgments play out in naturalistic contexts. The goal of this work is to shed light on effective strategies for preventing and correcting the spread of misinformation.

Using examples from research in cognitive and social psychology, Dr. Jalbert's talk will provide an overview of what makes information feel true, how these feelings of truth can lead us astray and why people share false information.

When deciding whether something is true, people often base their judgments on whether the information feels familiar. Because of this tendency, the mere repetition of information (including false information) makes it seem truer -- a phenomenon psychologists call the "illusory truth effect." Dr. Jalbert will discuss the implications of this reliance on feelings and the illusory truth effect, as well as why our current social media environments leave us particularly vulnerable. She will also cover why people share false information (even when they know better) and finish with practical suggestions for how to address it.

Investment meetings

We continue to hold investment meetings at noon on the third Thursday of odd months. This **March 21**, our speakers are Financial Planner Matt Boelter and Chief Investment Officer Brian Johnson from Viridian Edelman Financial. They have presented to our group multiple times and are always well received. Boelter and Johnson will do a market update and discuss recent changes in tax laws.

We email notices with the Zoom link shortly before the event. We are anticipating this meeting to be online via Zoom only.

Minutes from the Dec. 7 – all-member meeting

ERS President Dave Baine called the hybrid meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. to allow those at SPEEA headquarters time for eating.

December guest speaker: Jared Adam, estate planning attorney & adjunct professor at UW, presented planning tools for minimizing estate taxes. Currently, WA state estate tax applies to individuals' estates greater than \$2.2 million (\$4.4 M for couples). The current federal threshold is about \$13 million (\$26 M for couples) – both are adjusted for inflation annually. The federal level will automatically be reduced by half Jan. 2026 if Congress fails to extend the change enacted during the Trump administration. Federal and state estate tax laws frequently change, requiring updates to planning. Retirement accounts should be treated differently than other assets because of implications for your heirs. He also discussed implications for surviving spouses and the importance of having a durable power of attorney in place in the event someone becomes incapacitated.

Secretary report: Jessica Bonebright's Sept. membership meeting minutes were approved as published.

Election of officers: Three officer positions were up for election for two-year terms. The current office holders were the only nominees. These ERS officers were elected by acclamation: Vice President Steve Ellis, Treasurer Bob Ferguson and Steering Board Chair Dwight Rousu. After 10 years serving in this position, Dwight would like to identify someone to step up for the role. Dwight would mentor and shadow in the role which includes writing the newsletter.

President's report: Dave Baine reported

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Minutes from the Dec. 7 – all-member meeting - Continued from page 1

on the Boeing/SPEEA change for retirees from offering a Medicare supplement plan for retirees on traditional Medicare to an Aetna Medicare Advantage plan. The selection deadline has passed; those who did nothing were automatically changed from traditional Medicare to the Boeing-sponsored Aetna Medicare Advantage plan. For more information, see the Dec. ERS newsletter article which includes a link [THIS](#) to a recording of the Nov. 9 ERS special meeting to discuss this issue. A year after the change, there is still an opportunity to switch back to traditional Medicare if you feel you made a mistake. However, there is no guaranteed ability to buy a Medicare supplement insurance policy if you decide to switch back. Insurance companies can deny you based on your then current answers to their health questionnaire.

Treasurer: Bob Ferguson reported ERS earned about \$1,000 interest, but earnings will be more in 2024 due to higher returns on our new CDs. Account balances at BECU are: Checking \$2,008.67, savings \$4,462.19, money market \$20,227.47 and CDs \$33,670.14 for a total of \$60,368.47. We reported a total of \$60,894.08 at our September meeting. Our NLRN and food expenses were lower than expected for the year.

Steering Board: Chair Dwight Rousu sent the newsletter out and the steering board met.

Committee and Rep Reports

Badges: Roger Aisaka is our new badges chair. The new badges look fine and detailed.

Communications: Chair Walt Ditlefsen sent several emails regarding the Medicare changes and special meeting. He Zoom-chaired the special meeting.

Finance: Chair Steve Ellis is working with the treasurer to complete the 2023 internal finance review.

Insurance chair: *The position is open.*

Investments: Co-Chair Dave Watt encouraged participation in upcoming

investment meetings.

Membership: Chair John Neller reported ERS has 575 members with dues paid up and 922 total. We'll be contacting those who haven't renewed recently and will drop those who fail to respond.

National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN): Dwight Rousu reported ERS works with them on national issues important to retirees. The NRLN.org website has added postings of current retiree news and opinion articles from the web, which benefit from having professional reporters and editors, making the articles more readable and current. A top current concern is a right-wing proposal for a fiscal commission to design cuts to programs including Social Security behind closed doors to be voted on without amendment after the election in the lame duck session. This would provide cover for those in Congress who vote to cut Social Security and Medicare.

Nominations and Elections: Chair Steve Ellis re-recruited the ERS officer candidates for the year.

Pensions: *The position is open.*

Service: Dick Beham was absent.

Social & Refreshment chairs: John Meeker will be running a survey to get input on food options.

Legislative & Public Affairs: Chair Dwight Rousu reported frequent ERS attendees of the SPEEA national and NW Legislative & Public Affairs meetings include Dwight, Dave Baine, Steve Ellis and Dave Westman as associate members. They monitor issues of common interest to both SPEEA and ERS.

Sunshine Committee: Co-Chairs Myrv and Joan Johansen were notified of these members' passing: Curt Rhodes passed away July 10, 2022. He was almost 100 years old. No card sent. Marvin R. Sundstrom passed away in June. He was born in 1931, making him 92 years old. We sent a card to Marvin's family at the address found in our membership list. Matthew D. Cleary passed away in April of 2023. We could not

find any obituary. We sent a card to Matthew's family at the address in our membership list. In 2023, 18 members passed. We posted messages or sent cards for 13 of them. Five had no survivors listed and no other information could be found. Since Joan and Myrv took over the committee in June 2011, there have been 212 member deaths.

Travel: John Neller reported Boeing Travel Club has three upcoming cruises we may be interested in.

No reports this meeting for SPEEA/ERS liaison nor Governing Documents.

Old Business: *None.*

ERS 2024 Budget: Steve Ellis presented the proposed budget which had been posted on our website and in the meeting notice. We compared estimates to last years' spending, and we expect to spend less than shown in the budget as we've done in recent years. NLRN remains a big part of our budget including sending ERS representatives to their fly-ins to Washington, D.C. The budget was approved without dissent.

Charitable donations totaling \$1,200 for 2023 as recommended by the steering board were approved without objection. We traditionally donate roughly the amount of interest income we earn. Each of the following eight charities will receive a \$150 donation: Uplift Northwest, Northwest Harvest, Sound Generations, Salvation Army Foodbank, Tukwila Food Bank, Food Lifeline, Downtown Emergency Services and SPEEA Cares Fund.

Door prize drawings were held for two restaurant gift certificates and 10 poinsettias. We also provided two poinsettias for SPEEA staff.

Upcoming meetings: The next quarterly membership meeting is March 7. The next investment meeting is March 21. The next steering board meeting is Feb. 29.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jessica Bonebright.



The Zoom gallery from our Nov. 9 special all-member meeting. See also the President's report in the minutes.

Editor's Corner

Nov. 9 special all-member meeting on health care

As you should be aware by now, there was a big change in Boeing retiree Medicare. Many of us were weighing questions about our future medical insurance.

The ERS steering board voted to hold a special all-member Zoom meeting on Nov. 9 to try to share information about our options going forward.

More than 130 people attended and almost all of them stayed in the

meeting for 2 hours and 40 minutes. That is staying power!

The meeting was also recorded. Communications Chair Walt Ditlefsen posted links to the meeting's Zoom recording and some of the presentation materials on our ERS website.

If you missed the meeting and want to see or review things that were presented, this gives you a means to view the meeting.

A CTRL-click on [THIS](#) will take you to the links Walt posted on the ERS website under Meetings/Medicare.

If you decide you now want to change your choice of medical insurance, the [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) website informs you when and how to do that.

Open Enrollment Period:

Oct. 15 through Dec. 7 every year

- Join, drop or switch to another Medicare Advantage Plan (or add/drop drug coverage)
- Switch from original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan, or switch from a Medicare Advantage Plan to original Medicare
- Join, drop or switch to another Medicare drug plan if you are in original Medicare

New chosen coverage will start Jan. 1, 2025.

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President's Corner

Our Engineering Retirees Society membership is composed of former members of The Boeing Company's technical workforce who have now entered retirement. Presumably they joined ERS because they value continuing social contacts and value having an advocate for their retiree issues, be it pension issues, health care coverage or Social Security.

No organization can continue providing good services without effort and costs. Some costly services to our members (publications, meeting spaces, Zoom services and dues mailing) are subsidized by SPEEA, for which we are forever grateful. SPEEA's help has helped keep our dues low. Another way in which we keep your dues low is by having no paid staff. Our five elected officers and all of our committee chairs are unpaid volunteers.

This brings me to an important point. As members, we have a shared

responsibility to help shoulder the burden.

Most of our positions don't require much effort, and there's always lots of backup help if needed. We normally only have four general membership meetings and six investment meetings each year, so there's usually enough time to get things done on a schedule of your choosing.

That said, we have two immediate needs: Both are for officer positions. One is for a new Steering Board chair. The Steering Board regular meetings are held the week before our ERS quarterly all member meetings. The ERS constitution gives the Steering Board some organizational duties, voting duties, and it tasks the chair to generate the quarterly ERS Newsletter. The chair sets the board meeting agenda and chairs the board meeting. The quarterly newsletter subject matter will vary but will usually concern a subject we hope will interest our membership.

(The newsletter editor also has the privilege of selecting bad dad jokes that are needed to fill any blank spaces. Ed.)

We are also in urgent need of a new secretary. As one would expect, our secretary records a synopsis of the voting actions and significant discussions of both the Steering Board and general membership meetings. It should be noted that since we now have hybrid meetings using Zoom, we record our meetings, which hopefully will ease the secretary's job if you have slow or illegible penmanship.

If you have an interest in either of these positions or one of the other available opportunities as a committee chair, send a note to our ERS webmaster at webmaster@engineeringretirees.org.

On the lighter side

- Have you ever noticed the roman numerals for forty (40) are XL?
- People say 70 is the new 50. The cop who just pulled me over disagreed.
- Did you know that "Dammit, I'm mad" is the same forward and backwards?
- Jellyfish have survived 650 million years without a brain. There is hope.
- I just asked myself if I'm crazy and we all said "no."
- I don't think a therapist is supposed to say "Wow!" that many times your first session.
- That's a whole other rabbit of worms.
- If you're not going backwards, you're making progress, even if you're standing still.
- We didn't mess up, we had an unscheduled learning opportunity.
- Don't criticize your wife's judgment. See who she married.
- Strange! First, I found a hat full of money. Then, I was chased by a man with a guitar.
- I told my wife I wanted to be cremated. She made an appointment for Tuesday.
- If you get fired from the unemployment office, you still have to come back the next day.
- Wine box said "once opened, will last six months." Refund! Only lasted three hours.
- Irony. We have a computer program that demands you prove you are not a robot.
- No matter how much chocolate you eat, your earrings will still fit.

YourCause

On another subject, last quarter I reported in the newsletter on some problems with trying to take advantage of the charitable donation 50% matching from Boeing's "YourCause" program.

The first problem was I could not access the YourCause website and could not get good information on what the issue was. After a couple months of intermittent frustration, I finally made contact with Chad Tucker, who works for Boeing in South Carolina.

Though I had used the YourCause system for several years, somehow my email address had been removed. Chad re-installed my email address, and I logged right in just before the matching deadline.

Finding one bright, helpful person in internet hell can keep you happy for a week!

If you have similar trouble, you might be able to trace my footsteps and take advantage of matching for 2024.

I always get a special delight from drawing some matching money from the corporate giant to good causes.

As a footnote, one set of my donations on the last day glitched, and then went through BECU twice! Chad helped fix that mess up, too. I am back to having confidence again.

• *Dwight*
(When I am doing this, maybe my name should be Ed Dwight)

Read more online

Medicare Advantage plans being dropped

» [USAtoday](#)

Longer, general Medicare article with economic and demographic trends

» [KFF](#)

AARP advocating to keep traditional Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medicare

» [AARP](#)

Kirkland Evergreen Health hospital dispute with Aetna

» [EvergreenHealth](#)

The biggest trove of Medicare data (if you search down the right path)

» [CMS.gov](#)

Medicare Advantage prior-approval graft (with a 12-minute video on the subject)

» [More Perfect Union](#)

Reminder about links

For those receiving a print copy of the newsletter, links are live in the newsletter posted [online](#) at [engineeringretirees.org](#) if you or your grandkids have access to a computer.

The link target is accessed by CTRL-left CLICK.

Service Corner

Many of us already volunteer in our communities or local organizations. ERS Services Committee chair Dick Beham is active in the Bluebills, a service organization of all Boeing retirees, engineering or not.

See [BlueBills.org](#) for meeting info and for local contact information. The Bluebills invite you to become an active Bluebill member and join their efforts.

Their motto is "Together, we can make a difference!"



Image from [BlueBills.org](#)

Engineering Retirees Society
15205 52nd Avenue S
Seattle, WA 98188

Volunteers who make it all happen

Elected officers

President



Dave Baine

Vice President



Steve Ellis

Secretary



Jessica Bonebright

Treasurer



Bob Ferguson

Steering Board Chair



Dwight Rousu

Appointed Committee Chairs and Reps

Badges Roger Aisaka
Programs..... **OPEN** (Dave Watt)
Communications (website) ... Walt Ditlefsen / Stan Lind
Insurance **OPEN**
Governing Documents Walt Ditlefsen
Discounts..... **OPEN**
Finance, Elections Steve Ellis
Refreshments John Meeker / Steve Ellis
Investments..... Dave Watt / Ken Kuehnl
Social Steve Ellis
Legislative & Public Affairs.... Dwight Rousu / Dave Watt

NRLN Liaison Steve Ellis
SPEEA Liaison Dave Baine
Membership John Neller
Sunshine..... Joan and Myrv Johansen
Pension..... Dave West
Travel..... John Neller
Service (Bluebills) Dick Beham

We would like **VOLUNTEERS** for the chair **OPEN**-ings noted above and members for Refreshments committee.

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