

Engineering Retirees Society ERS Newsletter

Quarterly meeting

Join us for our next all-member quarterly meeting, Thursday, Sept. 4. Our planned guest speaker is our own Jessica Bonebright. Jessica is our Secretary and also is Administrative Vice President of Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA). She will give a presentation on “One Big Beautiful Bill (for Billionaires): How It Impacts Seniors Including Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP and the Temporary Tax Deduction for Americans Over 65.”

Speaker topic

Jessica will share a summary of the 900-plus page bill that became law July 4. It includes about \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts over 10 years – with 70% of the benefit going to the wealthiest corporations. It contains roughly \$1 trillion in Medicaid and other cruel cuts; and increases the national debt by \$4 trillion over the next 10 years. Usually, Republicans use the fear of debt to oppose spending on social programs and investments in the environment, education and infrastructure. If they were really worried about it, they would go after tax cheats (that’s \$600 billion a year) and refuse further tax cuts for the rich.

About the meeting

We are again planning a hybrid meeting based at the SPEEA union hall at 15205 52nd Ave. S, Tukwila, WA. Light lunch is planned for 11:35 a.m. at the hall, with our meeting starting at noon. There will be a Zoom connection available. The Zoom has provided OK listening and some speaking participation but no lunch. Look in your email for a meeting notice with Zoom link info and any changes in the plans. We would like to have you join us in person if you can.

Investment meetings

We hold investment meetings on the third Thursday of odd months. We typically email meeting notices with the Zoom link and a link to any speaker-supplied information. The planned speaker for Sept. 18 is Matt Boelter from Edelman Financial Engines. The subject is being finalized.

Minutes from the June 5 all-member meeting:

ERS President **Dave Baine** called the hybrid meeting to order at noon.

Guest Speaker: Steve Bauck from Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA) presented “Hands Off Social Security.” There is an all-out war being waged to line the pockets of billionaires with our earned Social Security benefits. Drastic cuts to staffing and rules changes will lead to millions being denied the benefits they have earned. Although the present attack on Social Security is extreme, it is not new. There has been a war on Social Security for more than 40 years. In 1983, the Cato Institute called for a guerrilla war against “both the current Social Security system and those who support it.” They have sought to convince the public that Social Security is just a retirement plan with a poor rate of return on investment, that it is going broke and will bankrupt the country. Those are lies. Social Security is an insurance system providing a basic source of income for:

- retirement, no matter what the circumstances are when we retire nor how long we live,
- becoming disabled (2/3 of workers have no other form of disability insurance).
- if we die early and leave minor-age children.

Furthermore, Social Security cannot by law go broke and is self-funded so it can contribute nothing to the federal debt or deficit. However, their disinformation war has been largely successful. Many younger people believe that they will not get the Social Security benefits they have earned.

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Minutes from the June 5 – all-member meeting - Continued from page 1

We need to fight back, communicate with friends and family about threats to Social Security, insist on adequate staffing and combat the lies that are being told to people to erode their confidence in Social Security.

Visit www.PSARA.org for more information about how you can support this effort, including asking your government representatives to support it.

Business: The day's agenda was approved as submitted.

Secretary: Jessica Bonebright's March meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

President: Dave Baine reported Social Security is also an issue the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN) works on. If you are not getting their emails, you can sign up for them at www.NLRN.org to keep up with issues important to seniors. ERS pays \$3/year per member of your dues for your membership in NRLN.

Dave reported ERS meetings will continue to be hybrid. The ERS pension chair position is open. Please consider volunteering if you're interested in pension issues. Just share any pension news or information you think ERS members would be interested in.

Treasurer: Bob Ferguson reported that ERS account balances at BECU are: Checking: \$1,600.05; Savings: \$5,286.86; Money Market: \$30,079.86 and three CDs totaling \$35,955.51 for a grand total of \$72,922.28. We reported a total of \$72,669.06 at our June meeting. Bob moved \$5,000 from savings to a money market for about 2% higher interest rate.

We issued checks for the donations approved at our December meeting. One of them to SPEEA Cares Fund didn't get deposited, but we've followed up. ERS dues renewal reminder letters went out recently and a few people paid twice.

Finance & Budget: Steve Ellis reported everything looks good and our budget variance is positive.

Steering board Activities: Chair Dwight Rousu reported the board met and went over everything on this agenda. SPEEA helps the chair with the ERS Newsletter, but they have current workload challenges causing about a week's delay. We only mail 25 hard copies, so Dwight did that printing and mailing personally. It cost ERS about \$100. We'll evaluate whether to continue that approach. Besides the newsletter, when there was concern the newsletter would not arrive prior to the meeting day, we sent a shorter email notice for today's meeting to about 600 members. It was a huge job without using Mail Chimp due to Walt's illness. Thanks to Dave Westman!

Committee and Rep Reports

Membership: Chair John Neller reported we have 691 total ERS members. The vast majority are paid up through last year or this year. Those who paid twice will be extended for next year as well.

Social and Finance: Chair Steve Ellis discussed a possible cruise or a get-together at a local restaurant. About half of those attending indicated they'd be interested in participating.

Service Bluebills: Open position due to the recent passing of Dick Beham. Dave Baine will try to identify someone else to connect with ERS.

Sunshine Committee: Co-chairs Myrv & Joan Johansen received an e-mail from John Neller. He could not reach Gerry L. Leadley either by phone or e-mail. Could not find any notice or obituary for Gerry L. Leadley. Donald A. Zeek, 75, of Bremerton, WA, passed away March 4, 2025. He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Ruth Cvetic Zeek. Not having a current address, we added an ERS condolence message: *The Engineering Retirees Society (ERS) membership renewal form for Donald A. Zeek was returned undeliverable. We see that Donald passed away in March of this year. The membership of Engineering Retirees Society (ERS) wishes to offer their condolences to Donald's family.*

In another e-mail, John Neller reported renewal notices for Todd C. Neumann and Gary Gould were returned as deceased. Todd C. Neumann, 61, passed away April 30, 2023, as reported on the Bonney Watson website. We added a message to the guestbook. Gary L. Gould, 79, passed away Aug. 20, 2024. We added a message to the Memories Section on Legacy.com on the Everett Herald's site.

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Minutes from the June 5 – all-member meeting - *Continued from page 2*

Richard (Dick) M. Beham passed away May 25, 2025. Dick was involved with the Boeing service organization Blue Bills. He provided reports at our ERS meetings as services representative. We sent a sympathy card with the following message: *Your friends at the Engineering Retirees Society (ERS) wish to express their sympathy to Dick's family.*

We sent a Thinking of You card to ERS Communications Chair Walt Ditlefsen. Walt had been dealing with health issues for quite some time. Our message read as follows: "Walt, the membership of (ERS) Engineering Retirees Society extends their prayers and well wishes for your recovery as you deal with your illness." **Editor's note: Walt has since passed away.**

Travel Committee: John Neller reported travel nationwide is up this year, both flying and driving. ERS may start travel meetings. Corine Kumano, formally with Boeing travel office and Travel Club, is an ERS member and attended this meeting. Dave Baine recently took a cruise/tour of Antarctica.

Insurance and Healthcare: Katrina Jones reported that if you signed up for the Aetna Advantage plan and if your provider is with University of Washington, Valley Medical or Fred Hutchinson, their contracts terminate June 1. There was a local news article in the Seattle Times. You may have received a letter stating Boeing employees are exempt. **Editor's note: There have since been further events of interest.**

Information for "Life Kits" is offered at Kent retiree senior activity center. They've provided training on completing this in the past. Katrina is working to get information and maybe invite them to give a workshop to set up an estate action plan. This would help someone else to have all the information they'd need to take care of things in case something happens that you'd need help with.

Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA): Jessica Bonebright invited everyone to attend PSARA's June-teenth event. Seniors will be impacted by cuts to Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other programs if the "Big Bill" passes by July 3 as Congressional Republicans intend.

Refreshment: John Meeker arranged for today's pizza and salad lunch. There were leftovers.

Communications and website: Dave Westman has been filling in for Walt. **Editor's note: Dave Showalter has come forward to take over after the vacancy.** Please, if you're comfortable around computers, consider helping as an assistant or backup with this work that is a core function of ERS.

Governing Documents: Katrina Jones has added chair of this committee to her ERS roles.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

SPEEA Liaison: Dave Baine hasn't been able to meet with Ray Goforth, SPEEA Executive Director, who is busy with negotiations coming up.

National Retiree Legislative Network (NLRN): Steve Ellis reported the NLRN is planning a fly-in to meet with legislators in Washington, D.C., for the third week of September. ERS has a budget for three people. Ed Beltram from NLRN contacted ERS about getting in touch with WA representatives. **Editor's note: Currently, Stan Sorscher from ERS and Judy Stenberg, a NLRN vice-president from Bellevue, are planning to join forces in D.C.**

Legislative & Public Affairs: Dwight Rousu said the issues NLRN will be addressing on Capitol Hill include:

- Protect retirees in pension risk transfers (de-risking) actions
- Enforce Medicare Guaranteed Issue Right and Special Enrollment period
- Need to fund Social Security

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- Protect against cuts to Medicare benefits
- Pass H.R.1357 Susan Muffley Act of 2025, to Help Delphi Salaried Retirees
- If reintroduced in current 119th Congress, pass the Bob von Schwedler Permanent Health Coverage Tax Credit Expansion Act, or the Health Coverage Tax Credit Reauthorization Act. Enacting either bill will help those ages 55-64 who lost healthcare benefits due to their former employer's bankruptcy.

(No reports this meeting for program, badges. Watt was touring the planet somewhere.)

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Upcoming meetings: Thursday, Sept. 4 is our next quarterly membership meeting starting at noon for Zoom participants and at 11:35 a.m. in person at Tukwila. The next ERS steering board meeting is 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 28. Investment meetings are at noon on the third Thursday of odd months. The next investment meeting is Sept. 18.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted, *Jessica Bonebright, secretary*

Reminder about links

For those receiving a print copy of the newsletter, we try to make links live in the newsletter posted [online](https://www.engineeringretirees.org/newsletter.html) at <https://www.engineeringretirees.org/newsletter.html> if you or your grandkids have access to a computer. The link target is accessed by CTRL-left CLICK on the link.

Service Corner

The Bluebills is a service organization of all Boeing retirees. See [BlueBills.org](https://www.bluebills.org). They invite you to become an active Bluebill member and join their efforts. Their motto is "Together, we can make a difference!" Their newsletter can be read at [BB](https://www.bluebills.org).

BlueBill contacts:

Central & South Puget

TBD

North King & Snohomish County

Alan Rice arice77@yahoo.com

Olympic Peninsula

Clinton Webb

cwebb91275@aol.com

On the lighter side

Alternate meanings for common words:

- Coffee - the person upon whom one coughs
- Flabbergasted - appalled over how much weight you have gained
- Abdicate - to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach
- Esplanade - to attempt an explanation while drunk
- Negligent - absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown
- Lymph - to walk with a lisp
- Gargoyle - gross olive-flavored mouthwash
- Flatulence - emergency vehicle that picks you up after being run over by a steam-roller
- Balderdash - a rapidly receding hairline
- Rectitude - the formal, dignified bearing adopted by proctologists

Editor's Corner

ERS pays \$3/year so each of our members are members of the NRLN. We have also agreed to solicit individual donations from our members to help finance the NRLN efforts. The following page is that solicitation. The issues are bigger than ever this year. - Dwight

The ERS and the National Retirees Legislative Network (NRLN) are working together to provide a voice in Washington DC for ERS members. The following are the NRLN's top agenda issues for 2025.

More companies are doing “de-risking” (Pension Risk Transfer) of their pension plans by purchasing substitute annuities from third party insurance companies. This strips retirees of federal law protections. The NRLN has proposed a statute that such annuity contracts must include full reinsurance of monthly benefit payments. **Only a group annuity contract that requires independent, third-party reinsurance with a highly rated insurance company can protect pension plan participants.**

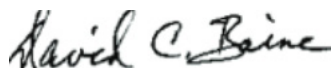
The Social Security Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust, as estimated by 2024 budgets, would only be able to pay 100% of total scheduled benefits until 2035. After that, income would only be sufficient to pay 83% of benefits. **The NRLN supports closing the funding gap by making all wages subject to the payroll tax. Social Security's Chief Actuary said eliminating the taxable maximum would close 70% of the shortfall, until 2060.**

Medicare Hospital Insurance (HI) Trust Fund would be able to pay 100% of benefits until 2036. At that point, the reserves would be depleted, and income would only be able to pay 89% of benefits. The NRLN advocates Congress stop listening to lobbyists for health insurance companies and properly fund Medicare.

Humana, CVS- Health Aetna, Wellcare-Centene, and Cigna terminated 1.1 million “unprofitable” Medicare Advantage (MA) plans for 2025. Of those who responded to an NRLN survey, 66% of those who lost coverage did not receive notice of their Guaranteed Issue Right (GIR). The NRLN is advocating that the federal law be enforced for GIR. A GIR prohibits insurance companies from denying coverage or overcharging a terminated applicant for a replacement Medigap or MA policy, regardless of pre-existing health conditions.

The NRLN continues to **lobby members of Congress against the high cost of healthcare shifted to retirees** and the unfairness of the chronic illness subsidized benefits that are being denied to 27 million original Medicare Parts A and B participants. **NRLN's proposal equalizes chronic benefits for all over age 65.** NRLN wants legislation to end pay-for-delay and other brand-name drug-makers' tactics that keep generics off the market. We support bills to **allow Americans to import prescription drugs from Canada.**

How You Can Help – Please make an annual contribution of **\$35, \$50, \$75 or more**. Any amount contributed is appreciated. Make your check or money order payable to **NRLN, Inc. and mail it with the form below**. Or, make your contribution with your credit card or PayPal at www.nrln.org. Click on the “Contribute” tab at the top of the NRLN website.



Dave Baine, ERS President



Bill Kadereit, NRLN President

NRLN INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION FORM – Engineering Retirees Society Members

NRLN is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Because we lobby, contributions are not tax deductible.

Name _____ Amount of Check \$ _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Zip + 4 _____

Phone _____ Email Address (if available) _____

Mail your check or money order to: **NRLN Inc, PO Box 69051, Baltimore, MD 21264-9051**

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

BadgesRoger Aisaka

Communications (website).....Dave Showalter

Governing Documents.....Katrina Jones

Finance, Elections.....Steve Ellis

Investments..... Dave Watt / Ken Kuehn

Legislative & Public Affairs.....Dwight Rousu / Dave Watt

SPEEA Liasion.....Dave Baine

Sunshine.....Joan and Myrv Johansen

Travel.....John Neller

Programs..... **OPEN** (Dave Watt)

Medical Ins & Pensions.....Katrina Jones

Discounts.....**OPEN**

Refreshments.....John Meeker / Steve Ellis

Social.....Steve Ellis

NRLN Liasion..... Steve Ellis

Membership.....John Neller

(Bluebills).....**OPEN**

We would like **VOLUNTEERS** for the chair **OPEN**-ings noted above. You can dip your toes in by volunteering to be a committee member.

ERS SPEEA contact: Carissa Xayasensouk (206) 433-0991 / carissax@speea.org