

Minutes from the March 7 all-member meeting

ERS President Dave Baine called the Zoom meeting to order at 12:00

**March guest speaker:** Dr. Maddy Jalbert, post doctoral fellows at University of Washington (UW) Center for Informed Public, CIP's. CIP was founded in 2019 to resist strategic misinformation, promote an informed society, and strengthen democratic discourse. Dr. Jalbert explained that we tend to think something is true if it's arguments are easy to process especially with images or graphics.-Also if it has a logical flow, comes from a credible source and is consistent with what we already believe. Because of this tendency, the mere repetition of information (including false information) makes it seem truer -- a phenomenon psychologists call the "illusory truth effect." Why our current social media environments leave us particularly vulnerable and why people share false information (even when they know better). Whether it's true may not be relevant because they share information to inform others, for entertainment, to build social bonds, to get a laugh or to feel like part of a group.

To counter this, we can draw attention to the truth and get people to consider if it's true. Draw a connection between the truth and prior knowledge, share evidence for the truth including social consensus.

When you encounter misinformation online, reply with something like: "Where's the evidence for that?" or "Have you been there?" or "Do you have any proof?" Fact checking websites like [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com) are a good resource.

**Secretary:** Jessica Bonebright's December 7, 2023 membership meeting minutes were approved as published.

**President:** Dave Baine invited new ERS member Karen Shyne to introduce herself. This meeting is all virtual for members due to new equipment being installed at SPEEA HQ. We anticipate returning to hybrid, ZOOM and in-person for our June membership meeting.

The annual ERS financial review was successfully completed February 8. ERS IRS tax status is still in work. We also will file with the WA secretary of state and pay a fee by April.

We're looking for volunteers for ERS insurance and pension positions. Please contact Dave Baine if you may be interested in an ERS leadership position. We're also looking for our next steering board chair - Dwight Rousu is just acting and Jessica would appreciate having a co-secretary or a replacement.

**Treasurer:** Bob Ferguson reported account balances at BECU are: checking \$1,340.85, savings \$11,048.66, money market \$20,366.30 and three CDs totaling \$33,873.21 for a grand total of \$66,629.02. We reported a total of \$60,368.47 at our December meeting. Our CDs expire in early April and will be renewed probably for a 17 month term which has a higher return rate. Recent transactions include flowers for Terry Hall's retirement and annual dues to NRLN.

**Vice President:** Steve Ellis reported everything is good with finances, budget and the financial review.

**Steering Board and Newsletter:** Dwight Rousu reported the newsletter went out. – things were changing new person working at SPEEA did a good job smoothing it up newsletter. We used to e-mail a copy of the newsletter. Now you need to follow the link to read it. It includes minutes from the prior meeting, editorials & other information of interest. The latest issue included a story about the Boeing Medicare supplement switch over.

#### **Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

**Membership:** Chair John Neller reported 744 members 2/3 are up to date for 2024 dues. A 2<sup>nd</sup> mailing for renewals will go out.

**Program and Investment:** Dave Watt reported we're still looking for a speaker for our June membership meeting. Please contact Dave with your ideas and suggestions. The March 21 Investment meeting speakers will be Brian Johnson and Matt Boelter of Edelman Financial Engines. They've spoken to us in the past. Always a great presentation including market and economic updates as well as smart approaches to investing and financial planning.

**Service:** On behalf of Dick Beham, Dwight encouraged visiting the website: [BlueBills.org](http://BlueBills.org) for their newsletter as well as savings opportunities

**Travel:** John Neller reported some airfares are going down though there seems to be an increase in extra charges for things like food & baggage.

**Sunshine:** Myrv & Joan Johansen submitted a report that since our December meeting we've been notified of the following former ERS members having passed away: Roger Whitson age 90, 2023; Robert W. Gray, 2020; Joseph Gates, 2021; Thomas J. Russell, 2023; Carl G. Meserve, 2024; Warren F. Tufts age 93, 2024; Richard H. Chin, 2022; Imanta Ikstrums, 2023; Bryan Lufkin age 89, 2023; William J. Ritter; Walter J. Nothaft, 2012; Karla Nothaft, 2023; Sylvia J. Hjelmeland, 2019; David M. Marinsky, 2021; Carol Woulf-Shaffer, 2019; Robert W. Gray, 2020 and Joseph Gates, 2021. Several of the earlier passings were identified due to email delivery failures. A sympathy card or message in the online obituary memorial was extended where possible.

**PSARA Liason:** Jessica Bonebright encouraged everyone to join a webinar April 2 with 5 national leaders advocating for Traditional Medicare and leveling the playing field with privatized Medicare Advantage plans. It will also be available to view afterwards at [www.PSARA.org](http://www.PSARA.org) Dave Baine encouraged everyone to go to [NRLN.org](http://NRLN.org) sign up for alerts –a recent update came out about a bill in congress for a "Fiscal Commission" to come up with cuts to Social Security and Medicare behind closed doors. Their proposal would be taken up without the possibility of amendments during the lame duck session after the election for an up or down vote with no public hearings.

**Badges:** Roger Aisaka will have badges for people after they come to a meeting.

**Insurance:** This position is vacant, though John Neller reported CDC recommends those over 65 get a booster shot for trivalent COVID. They're working on an update for fall.

**Refreshments:** John Meeker and Steve Ellis reported no food for today but we hope for our June meeting to meet in person with sandwiches and/or pizza.

**Communications:** Walt and Julie Ditlefsen were not present. Dave Westman is covering ERS communications while Walt deals with medical issues. Dave will post the slides from today on our website [www.engineeringretirees.org](http://www.engineeringretirees.org)

**SPEEA/ERS Liason:** Dave Baine reported Terry Hall has retired from SPEEA staff. Amber Musselman is her replacement and is ERS contact person. Carissa Xayasensouk was recently hired as SPEEA receptionist and also supports ERS. Due to equipment issues, we're not able to meet in-person at SPEEA HQ at this time. We don't have a back-up location for in-person meetings right now. Dave will check with Martin about holding the March 21 investment meeting in person or via Zoom. Watch your email for the status.

**L&PA:** Dwight pointed out tonight's, March 7, State of the Union 5pm Pacific time tonight. SPEEA went to DC talked to representatives regarding Boeing quality and safety. Jessica was among about 15 SPEEA representatives at a rally in Olympia in favor of unemployment benefits for striking workers. Unfortunately it didn't pass this year.

**NRLN:** Dave Baine reported there will be a fall fly in to WA DC Sept 15-18. The ERS Steering decided to send 2 people. The President & Vice President are planning to go it at this time.

No reports this meeting for Governing Documents, Finance & Social Committee.

**Upcoming meetings:** June 6 is our next quarterly membership meeting. We're hoping it will be a hybrid meeting but please check the email to confirm as the meeting approaches. The next ERS steering board meeting we'll be May 30. Investment meetings at noon on the third Thursday of odd months,

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 1:43pm.

*Minutes submitted by Jessica Bonebright*