

Engineering Retirees Society

ERS Newsletter

Quarterly meeting

Join us for our next all-member meeting, Thursday, Sept. 3. **Big location change!** Due to SPEEA contract negotiations, we plan to meet in a hybrid meeting based at the Burien Public Library, 400 SW152nd, Burien, Washington. Check for any late changes. Light lunch is planned for 11:35 a.m. in the library meeting room, with our meeting starting at noon. There will be a Zoom connection available. Zoom ID and Passcode should be in your meeting notice. We would like to have you join us if you can.

Guest speaker

Our guest speaker comes from AARP to let us know **“How to spot a scam before it’s too late.”**

Do you think you'd never fall victim to a scam? With the help of AI, scams are trickier than ever. Learn the key warning signs and how to protect yourself. Don't become one of 200,000+ victims who reported losses of \$38,000 on average to the FBI in 2025. Seniors are attractive targets.

Do you have a related story to share? We'll allow time for stories after the presentation - two minutes maximum, please.

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.

Minutes from the June 4, 2026 all-member meeting:

John Meeker, ERS President, called the hybrid Zoom & SPEEA hall Tukwila meeting to order.

Guest Speakers: Estate Planning Attorneys **Jared Adams** and **Alice Xu**, who are with Condie and Adams Law firm, condie-adams.com, were our guest speakers and were introduced by **Dave Watt**. They presented estate planning information including comparing trusts to wills. One factor that may influence your decision to use a trust versus a will could include owning real estate in a state where probate is expensive, like California, which would favor using a trust to avoid probate.

They also discussed transfers to heirs and encouraged checking your designated ben-

eficiaries on retirement accounts. They explained Grantor Retained Annuity Trusts (GRATs) which are used by more than 50% of the wealthiest families to transfer wealth that exceeds the lifetime estate and gift tax exclusion provided by the IRS (\$15 million in 2026). The creator receives annuity payments while transferring appreciating assets to heirs with growth passing tax free to minimize tax liabilities.

They described charitable distributions at death and donor-advised funds. They encouraged establishing a durable power of attorney in case you're incapacitated.

Agenda: The day's meeting agenda had been emailed and was approved as submitted.

Secretary: **Jessica Bonebright's** March 2026 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

President: **John Meeker** reported our ERS annual state filing with the WA Secretary of State is up to date, and we are working toward filing with the IRS to get a current federal 501c5 status. **John Neller** introduced **Kim Jan-Ai**, an ERS member who has experience with IRS non-profit filings and agreed to help us. She will work with Katrina and other ERS officers on this. Kim agrees 501c5 seems to be the appropriate status for ERS.

John also reminded us that ERS has several openings for committee chair positions for programs committee, website committee and communications committee.

Treasurer: **Bob Ferguson** reported ERS account balances at BECU are savings: \$5,697.58; checking: \$603.70; money market: \$30,799.50; three CDs: \$12,356.49 each, for a total on deposit \$74,170.25. Last year's total was \$72,922.28 as reported at our June 2025 meeting. Our expenses were \$3,387.29 for the last year, up about \$300 compared to the prior year.

Steering Board & Newsletter: **Dwight Rousu** reported the ERS board met and the newsletter went out.

Vice-President: **Steve Ellis** reported on committees he is chairing as reported below.

Committee and Representative Reports

Social: Chair **Steve Ellis** took input from the member-meeting attendees. A good fraction of the approximately 25 people attending the all-member

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Minutes from the June 4 – all-member meeting - Continued from page 1

meeting seemed to favor his idea of having a social lunch at Ivar's Salmon house on North Lake Union. Thursday, Aug. 20 seemed like a preferred option if it's available. Steve will e-mail ERS members and ask for RSVPs. Our target is 30 participants. Members are encouraged to bring their spouse or other guests. The central location will be nice for those who live in the North. Attendees will pay for their own entrées, which are about \$30, and there is a no-host bar. ERS intends to reserve a meeting room with a view

Membership: John Neller reported ERS membership count is currently... oops! John gave his usual thorough detailed membership report to the steering board and at the all-member meeting, but the official minutes accidentally omitted any record. Rest assured we still exist in about the same abundance as last quarter. As of Aug. 11, we had 513 members paid up at least to today.

Meeting Programs: Chair Dave Watt (Dave is phasing out) - Mark your calendar for upcoming meetings - almost always Thursdays. Dave, after long years (over 20) of ERS service, would like to phase out his service as Program Chair. Members are encouraged to help Dave to identify speakers for future quarterly and investment ERS meetings and encouraged to take on the position of Program Chair. This person arranges speakers for our meetings. AARP has been invited to give their presentation on AI & fraud at our Sept. 3 general meeting. We're always open to suggestions for speakers for our future meetings.

Sunshine Committee: Co-chairs Myrv & Joan Johansen received notification from SPEEA that Russell H. Ashleman passed away Dec. 3, 2025. We could not find any obituary notice. We sent a sympathy card addressed to Family of Russell Ashleman. Thomas M. Mechler passed away March 13, 2026. His obituary is in the Tributes Archive. He was 94 years old. Tom was a former ERS badge chair. We sent a sympathy card to his wife Yvonne and added a sympathy wish in the Tribute memorial site. After learning of the passing of NRLN President Bill Kadereit's wife, Rose Marie, we added a condolence message to the tribute site. The membership of Engineering Retirees Society (ERS) wishes to express their condolences to the Bill Kadereit Family on the passing of their beloved Rose Marie.

Travel Committee: Cochairs John Neller and Corinne Kumano: For questions, contact JohnNeller1949@gmail.com or corinne.kumano@gmail.com. John Neller reported on the one-night cruise from Vancouver, B.C., to Seattle. There will be another repositioning cruise this fall from Pier 91 to BC. Corinne and two others went on the spring cruise. John met them in B.C., because they wouldn't allow him to bring his bike on the ship. As a side note, John also reported Seattle will have direct flights to Iceland starting in July.

Governing Documents: Katrina Jones reported continuing working on meshing tax status properly into our governing documents.

Insurance and Health: Katrina Jones reported U.S. Senators Maria Cantwell

and Patty Murray of Washington state and others have introduced legislation to block the federal pilot program WISer which started Jan. 1, 2026, in a few states including Washington. It uses AI for prior approval and possible denial of care to override doctor recommendations for some treatments and procedures under Traditional Medicare.

Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA): Liaison Jessica Bonebright reported PSARA is sponsoring a great Juneteenth celebration -- visit [PSARA.org](https://psara.org) for more information. There is a link on their site to join PSARA for \$20 per year. Members receive a great monthly newsletter.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

No reports for: Governing Docs, Communications, SPEEA liaison, Badges, Finances, Nominations/Elections, Pensions, Refreshments

Upcoming meetings: Thursday, Sept. 3, is our next quarterly membership meeting starting at noon for Zoom participants and at 11:35 a.m. in person for a pre-meeting light lunch at the Tukwila SPEEA Hall. The next ERS steering board meeting is 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 27. Investment meetings are at noon on the third Thursday of odd months. The next investment meetings are Sept. 17 and Nov. 19.

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted, Jessica Bonebright, secretary

On the lighter side:

I get most of my exercise these days from shaking my head in disbelief.

The leading cause of injury in old men, is them still thinking they're young men.

Never hike alone in bear country. Always hike with someone you can trip and outrun.

Bedtime tip: Ring your doorbell on the way to bed. This clears the dogs off the bed.

I want more credit in life for the things I manage not to say.

Proud! I finished a jigsaw puzzle in 6 months, and the box said 2-4 years.

Flatulence: emergency vehicle that picks you up after being run over by a steamroller.

Ex-wife texted me: "Wish you were here!" Does that every time she walks through a cemetery.

President's Corner

As SPEEA pursues a new contract, ERS hopes for greater member participation in various facets of the club. We have website updates in progress that should help that. We have open committee chairs in the investments committee and in the program committee. These functions are needed to secure interesting and helpful speakers on a variety of subjects. The role of our leadership is to assist and inform our members in enjoying their retirement. You've worked and saved for this retirement, now let this retirement work for you. ---John Meeker

Please feel free to contact me at 206-225-4925 or johnmeeker@comcast.net.

Editor's Corner

What is one to say to a bunch of retirees? We pretty well know the past, but how do we protect the future? What can we do with our time and energy to help ourselves and our community to live better and safer lives?

ERS has mostly tried to look out for the well-being of our group of technical retirees, but our well-being also depends upon others around us also having a good living environment. Will others in our present age (and future ages) have a livable climate, a working health care system, a humanist and democratic government, justice, peace and a good quota of joyous moments to offset the other moments?

As actions to support us and all our grandchildren, it seems worthwhile to donate time, energy and even money to our organization and the hundreds and hundreds of other good organizations. They send me snail mail solicitations, email solicitations, phone solicitations, cell phone annoyances and campaign sign entreaties. I swear softly when there are too many, but in our world, they seem necessary.

Thank you for what you do, darn it. --Dwight

Service Corner:

The Bluebills service organization of all Boeing retirees has been trying to revive their organization, but their previous web site has been taken over by frauds. Avoid that site.

ERS and NRLN

ERS pays NRLN \$3 per member per 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. See the letter from NRLN on P4 for details. The issues are bigger than ever this year.

Volunteers who make it all happen

Elected officers

President



John Meeker

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) Dave Showalter / KJ
Medical Ins & Pensions Katrina Jones
Governing Documents Katrina Jones aka KJ
Discounts **OPEN**
Finance, Elections Steve Ellis
Refreshments John Meeker / Steve Ellis
Investments Meetings..... **OPEN**

Social Steve Ellis
Legislative & Public Affairs Dwight Rousu / Dave Watt
NRLN Liaison Steve Ellis
SPEEA Liaison Roger Aisaka
Membership John Neller
Sunshine Joan and Myrv Johansen
Travel Neller / Corrine Kumano
Pensions **OPEN**

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

ERS SPEEA contact: Carissa Xayasensouk

(206) 433-0991 / carissax@speea.org

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

Joint Letter To: Engineering Retirees Society Members

Retirees need a voice in Washington, D.C. The ERS and the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN) work together to provide a voice in DC for ERS members. Your contribution to the NRLN helps make it possible. Here are three examples of the NRLN's work.

Fact one: The Social Security Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund will only be able to pay 100% of total scheduled benefits until 2033, according to the 2025 Trustees report. At that time, if no changes are made, reserves will be depleted, and income will only be sufficient to pay 77% of benefits.

NRLN advocates: Social Security's funding gap should be closed, but not by cutting benefits or raising the eligibility age for full benefits. The NRLN supports closing the funding gap through a modest increase (possibly between 0.5% and 1.5%) in the current payroll tax rate of 6.2% for employees and 6.2% for employers and eliminating the 2026 wage cap of \$184,500. Reduce the tax when funding is sufficient for the 75-year period.

Fact two: The original Medicare Hospital Insurance (HI) Trust Fund is projected to only be able to pay 100% of total scheduled benefits until 2033; after 2033, without changes, only 89% can be paid.

NRLN advocates: Congress must find a way to fund Medicare to prevent a reduction in benefits. Pressure must be applied to reduce medical inflation. The standard Medicare Part B premium that must be paid by original Medicare and Medicare Advantage (MA) enrollees is \$202.90 per month in 2026, which is an increase of \$17.90 (9.7%) from the 2025 premium of \$185. For comparison, the Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2026 is 2.8%. The Medicare increase of \$17.90 would take a big chunk out of the average monthly 2026 COLA increase of \$56.

Fact three: At increasing levels, companies continue to eliminate pension plan responsibilities, by purchasing replacement annuities from insurance companies, thereby transferring financial responsibility for execution of the pension payments to the insurance company and derisking the company's future-debt responsibilities. This also strips retirees of federal [PBGC](#) pension protections.

NRLN advocates: Foremost among the protections that the NRLN advocates is requiring annuity contracts for full reinsurance of the monthly benefit itself. Only a group annuity contract that requires independent, third-party reinsurance by a highly rated insurance company can reliably replace PBGC's guarantee and thereby protect payments to pension plan participants.

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 on the “Contribute” tab at the top of the NRLN website.



John Meeker, ERS President



Bill Kadereit, NRLN President

NRLN INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION FORM – Boeing Retirees

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

Name _____ Amount of Check \$ _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address (if available) _____

Mail your check or money order of \$35, \$50, \$75 or more (any amount is appreciated) to:
NRLN Inc, PO Box 69051, Baltimore, MD 21264-9051