



**Retired Public Employees Council**  
**Chapter 17 – Lewis County**  
**Kathie Mills, President: (360) 219-3779**  
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**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024  
**Meeting Time:** 11:30 AM  
**Meeting Place:** Ramblin' Jack's Rib Eye  
**Meeting Address:** 1336 Rush Rd, Napavine, WA 98532

Hello fellow Chapter 17 members,

We held our nominations and elections at the last meeting. Our officers are Vice President Jon Gust, Secretary Sheila-Teeter-Johnson, and Trustees Michelle Fries and Jon Gust. The President and Treasurer positions are open due to Kathie needing a break because of health difficulties.

The Plan 1 COLA bill was signed by Governor Inslee which provides a one-time 3% cost-of-living increase for Plan 1 retirees, capped at \$110.00 per month, which will go into effect this July. The month of death bill was also signed, which prevents the loss of health care coverage for end-of-life expenses for the subscriber in their month of death, which previously had burdened many survivors. We also heard about possible cuts to Social Security and Medicare.

**Leadership training is coming up! See [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for more information and to register.**

We discussed the in-progress "Strategic Plan" for RPEC. Kathie volunteered to submit an operating budget for approval at our next meeting, which will be provided as a component outlined in the Strategic Plan goals. Kathie was thanked for making the meeting reminder phone calls.

At the next meeting, we will discuss the upcoming RPEC Biennial Convention in Wenatchee from September 24-26. Expenses will be covered for anyone willing to represent Chapter 17. Please come and join us!

Kathie Mills  
RPEC Ch. 17

Did you know? This is a good time to come with a dollar to enter the drawing for a cash prize or lunch on the chapter.

## April 2024 Executive Director's Report

### **Convention 2024, Sept. 24-26, Wenatchee Convention Center**

Are you interested in serving as a chapter delegate to RPEC's biennial Convention? You do not need to be an officer or chapter committee leader to attend. Any member in good standing is eligible to serve as delegate. If you are interested in being considered for your chapter's delegation to Convention, contact your chapter president. Delegates are chosen by election at a chapter meeting. If you are selected to represent your chapter, your Convention registration fee and lodging will be covered by your chapter. Guests may also attend at their own expense. The registration fee is \$150, which covers the Convention packet and all meals. The Convention hotel is the Coast Wenatchee. The RPEC rate is \$116.00 per night before taxes and fees. Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for more details or contact your chapter president.

### **Federal Advocacy**

**Call to action on The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023:** If you have not already done so, please join your fellow RPEC members and AFSCME Retiree chapters nationwide in urging Congress to oppose The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 (H.R. 5779). If this legislation is approved, your federal benefits will be at risk. [The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 \(H.R. 5779\)](#) will create a 16-member fiscal commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the national budget. Funding for Social Security and Medicare will be targeted for cuts. **Call 844-331-0441 today! Tell Congress to vote NO on this bill and similar proposals calling for fiscal commissions that aim to reduce your hard-earned retirement benefits.** A detailed [position paper](#) about the proposed debt commission is available at <https://retiredamericans.org>.

### **Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) To Vote on Potential New Pharmacy Benefit, April 11**

On April 11, the PEB Board will act on a resolution that will change the pharmacy benefit for Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare. RPEC's Legislative Committee supports this change, as it will lower monthly premiums for most plan subscribers. The medical benefits in the plan will remain unchanged. The new pharmacy benefit will continue to be administered by Moda to provide continuity of service and care for retirees. By making this plan more affordable, the new benefit, if adopted at the April PEB Board meeting, will help to ensure that an employer-managed plan remains in the mix of healthcare plan options available to public sector retirees. Currently, all but two plans are privatized. Preserving traditional Medicare continues to be a key federal priority for RPEC, in addition to preserving these options for the public sector retirees in Washington. Members are encouraged to attend the April 11 meeting and offer comments during the Public Comment period. Visit [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov) for more details.

### **State Advocacy**

Legislative Update Calls are held monthly, the first Friday of each month from 2-3 p.m. Please join us next month. Details are available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Council Welcomes New Team Member**

Jane Hewitt joined RPEC in mid-March as our new Finance and Operations Specialist. Jane brings more than 40 years of relevant work experience to RPEC. She is married with grandchildren, originally hails from Great Britain, and is an animal lover with three rescue pets. Jane can be reached at [jane.hewitt@rpecwa.org](mailto:jane.hewitt@rpecwa.org). Please give her a warm welcome to RPEC!

### **Upcoming Events**

Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for a full calendar of Council Office and chapter meetings.

- April 25                      Membership Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 25                      Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 3                         Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)
- May 6                         Executive Board Meeting (9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)
- May 7                         Executive Board Strategic Plan Work Session (9:30-12:30 p.m.)
- May 8                         Public Service Recognition Week (at Heritage Park, Olympia)
- May 9                         Public Employees Benefits Board (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- May 9                         Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 17                        Leadership Training Registration Deadline
- May 20                        Political Action Committee (10:00 am)
- May 21                        Select Committee on Pension Policy (10:00 am)
- May 23                        Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 pm)