



Retired Public Employees Council of WA (RPEC) Chapter 46 Warren Warfield – President October 2024 Newsletter

Wednesday October 16th, 2024 @ Noon
Family Pancake House 17521 Redmond Way, Redmond WA



Dr. Kim Schrier, our US Representative for Washington's 8th Congressional District will be our luncheon speaker!

What a great opportunity to see and hear from our own representative. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity.

Before entering politics, Dr. Schrier worked as a pediatrician in Issaquah, Washington, where she became known for her dedication to children's health. Her political career was motivated by her dissatisfaction with the handling of healthcare issues. In congress she uses her medical expertise to advocate for healthcare improvements, especially for children and those with pre-existing conditions.

- Fights to lower the cost of prescription drugs.
- Supports protecting us from illicit Fentanyl.
- Secured federal money to get needed resources for law enforcement.
- Championed the insulin cap at \$35.00 per month.

Join us to hear her current efforts!

Lunch:

Order anything from the wide Family Pancake House menu. **Members pay \$10 for lunch, no matter what you order.** Feel free to bring a spouse or recently retired friend. **Guests pay \$15.**

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 20th, 2024
Noon, Redmond Pancake House
Program: King County Library Resources

2024 RPEC Convention, Wenatchee Convention Center September 24th-26th

I had the pleasure of representing Chapter 46, along with Arnetta Henninger and Charles Gelsleichter. Following are highlights from Convention:

General:

- Including the delegates, their guests and RPEC staff, there were more than 170 participants.
- RPEC Treasurer's report indicated there are currently 13,264 members, compared to around 9,750 in August 2018. The Treasurer's report was that RPEC's CY2024 budget projects a deficit of around \$96,800. RPEC's revenue source is essentially its annual membership dues; thus, this indicates a need to recruit more retirees to join RPEC.
- I was told our chapter newsletter is considered top notch amongst all chapter newsletters.
- President Clair Olivers and Vice-President Maurice Garrott were re-elected. Alma-jean Marion and Jeff Paulsen were newly elected as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Previously, Alma-jean was our District 9 Representative. Having been elected Secretary, Debbie Haigh, Chapter 30 President (South King County) was elected to replace her as our new District Representative. She joins Claude Burfect, who was re-elected as the other District 9 Representative.

Constitutional Amendments:

There was one amendment proposed that would have raised the monthly membership dues from \$7.00 to \$7.14 with an annual increase of 2.00% per year thereafter. It was defeated. Given the projected budget deficit noted above, this is an issue that bears further discussion.

Proposed Resolutions:

Eight proposed resolutions were submitted for consideration by delegates. Three were approved, one tabled until next year, and four failed. Following is the summation of the passed resolutions:

- **Defend Washington Campaign:** therefore, be it resolved that RPEC Convention delegates endorse the Defend Washington campaign to support No on initiatives 2109, 2124, and 2117. These three initiatives, if passed, will negatively impact the legislature approving a Plan 1 recurring COLA during the 25-27 biennium.
- **Implementation of a Recurring Plan 1 COLA:** therefore, be it resolved that RPEC, and affiliated organizations, continue outreach to the SCPP and the Washington State Legislature, which results in an acceptable approach in 2024 to implement and fund a Plan 1 recurring COLA no later than July 1, 2025(FY26), consistent with PERS 2/3 and incorporates banking with no cap.
- **District Pre-Convention Call Meetings:** therefore, be it resolved that RPEC staff and council, shall develop a pre-convention presentation; and be it further resolved that the presentation will explain the process and format for amendments and resolutions. The committee may devise forms to be used as guidelines for chapter resolutions.

This really isn't a bad idea. I would go one step further and review the "Roberts Rules of Order" on motions and amendments. At times, the discussion on certain issues got

argumentative and long in debating proposed resolutions and constitutional amendments.

Convention Speakers:

Four speakers did a presentation: two via video and two in person.

- **Lee Saunders, AFSCME Retirees President, and Representative Pramila Jayapal**, via pre-recorded video, thanked the delegates for their public service careers and noted the need for a universal health insurance approach for all Americans.
- **April Sims, WA State Labor Council, AFL-CIO**, was recently elected as its President and is its first female President. She was very dynamic and passionate about public service employees'/retirees' services for the public good. The other speaker was **Tim Smolen, Program Manager of SHIBA** (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors), affiliated with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. He provided an overview of the services offered by SHIBA for whom many of RPEC's members utilize in addressing their concerns and questions regarding choosing or switching various health insurance plans.

All in all, it was a successful convention with an opportunity to meet other chapter officers and see RPEC friends from around the state that I only see these days via Zoom, otherwise.

2024 Legislative Races Support

Each year, RPEC volunteers interview multiple candidates, be they incumbents or new, to evaluate their support for our legislative priorities and for active/retired public service employees. Those receiving positive concurrence are then eligible for contributions from RPEC for their campaigns. RPEC's Political Action Committee (PAC) then meets prior to the primary and general elections to allocate PAC funds to agreed-upon candidates. Chapters can then contribute to their recognized candidates. In August, Chapter 46 contributed \$200 each to the below-noted candidates. These candidates were prioritized through the following criteria:

- All have been, and are, strong advocates for public service retirement needs.
- They serve on critical House/Senate Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees which are vital to moving public service issues through the legislative process.
- Their legislative districts are where most of our members reside.

The five candidates are Representatives Lisa Callen (5th), Tara Senn (41st), Larry Springer (45th), Vandana Slatter (48th) and Senator Lisa Wellman (41st). We thank our legislators for their continuing efforts to support our retirement needs.

Chapter 46 Membership Plan

A need I recognized upon becoming President last May was to develop a chapter membership plan to provide structure, and simplicity for Chapter 46. Thus, I developed such a plan that was approved by chapter officers and our chapter executive board in September 2024. Through the same format RPEC outlines for all membership plans, our plan is divided into the following four components:

- **Recruitment:** I'm the lead contact should a request occur from RPEC or the District for chapter participation in an upcoming public event, such as a retirement seminar. Marianne Wilkins will contact members via email for volunteers willing to participate.
- **New Members:** Annette McCully and Jackie Roberts designed a very nice, informative welcoming letter for new members and transfers. Bonnie Montgomery volunteered to mail it upon receiving such information from Olympia.
- **Retention:** The best approach to retaining members is to keep them updated on retirement-related state and federal news impacting their benefits. The multiple chapters and RPEC information sources are intended to do just that. In addition, each summer the chapter will seek updated member input via a brief online survey on their issues and concerns to ascertain if the chapter and RPEC are adequately addressing them.
- **Deceased Member:** Each month, RPEC distributes updated member additions/drops to chapters. Upon receiving notice that a member has passed, Bonnie will mail a sympathy card to the family of the deceased.

I look forward to implementing our membership plan with the above-noted member volunteers to assist the chapter in recruiting and retaining additional members.

Warren Warfield, Chapter 46 President

President Warren Warfield: wdw330@comcast.net 425-599-6750

VP/editor: Marianne Wilkins: marianne@msn.com 206-799-9177

Healthcare Updates

Prepared by Linnea Mulder, Retired RN and RPEC Healthcare Workgroup Appointee

Correction from the September newsletter – I stated the Uniform premium costs were high partly due to smaller pool and sicker members. Per Ellen Wolfhagen, HCA Senior Accounts Executive, it's not true that UMP has higher utilization.

Prepare for Open Enrollment

PEBB open enrollment is October 28 – November 25. Medicare open enrollment for non-PEBB members and PEBB Premiera members who buy Part D is October 7 – December 7.

All PEBB plans, except for Premiera F and G, now have Part D embedded in the plan. This includes UMP, United PEBB Balance and Complete, and Kaiser. This is a change for Uniform, and members with Uniform will automatically continue on the new plan.

Resources for PEBB members include:

- Webinars, printed brochures, and virtual/in-person benefit fairs:
- <https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits/retiree-open-enrollment>

Resources for all RPEC members includes:

- SHIBA – provides volunteers to help with open enrollment process
- <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/statewide-health-insurance-benefits-advisors-shiba>

Medicare D changes:

Good news! As part of the Inflation Reduction Act, effective Jan. 1, 2025, Part D medications will be capped at \$2000. There will also be a voluntary Medicare Prescription Payment Plan available:

<https://www.medicare.gov/prescription-payment-plan>

Stay Healthy – COVID Test Kits

Last but not least, stay healthy! Free COVID 19 tests are now available at

<https://www.covidtests.gov/>

You may also order Covid test kits by calling 1-800-232-0233.

RPEC Chapter 46 Meeting Minutes September 18, 2024

Meeting called to order at 12:10 PM by President Warfield. All officers present and attendance meets quorum.

Guest Speaker: Paul Breit from Medicare Optimized presented “Medicare and You,” an informative review of Medicare options, including traditional Medicare, Medicare Advantage, and Medicare D. He reviewed Medicare D’s new \$2000 cap effective January 2025.

President’s report: President Warfield reviewed the August executive board meeting. Charles Gelslechter, a long-time much appreciated Chapter 46 member, announced he’s transferring his membership to Silverdale.

District report: No district representatives at today’s meeting.

Minutes for May’s meeting: Linnea Mulder. Deferred to October.

Treasurer's report: Dennis Montgomery. Reviewed, moved to accept, seconded, and approved. As of 10/18/2024:

Beginning balance: \$8,911.17

Ending balance: \$8,140.36

Committee reports:

Membership: Colleen McGinn: Colleen reviewed state membership activity. Members value PERS 1 COLA, medical insurance, decreasing Uniform Medical's premium, and protecting social security. Warren Warfield, Bonnie Montgomery, Annette McCully, and Marianne Wilkins will work on chapter membership. Annette McCully created an informative welcome letter to Chapter 46. Bonnie Montgomery will send welcome letters as well as sympathy cards to members.

Legislative: Warren Warfield reviewed chapter campaign contributions including five selected legislators and reasons for contribution. Each candidate receives \$200 from the chapter.

Committee assignments: Warren Warfield reviewed.

Old Business:

RPEC state convention: Should chapter provide a gift for PAC raffle? Motion made by Jackie Roberts to provide a \$50 gift, seconded by Charles Gelslechter and approved. Arnetta Henninger will purchase.

Plan 1 COLA update: Warren Warfield. At September's SCPP meeting, OSA was instructed to present proposed language for Plan 1 COLA legislation on October 15th.

Health insurance update: Linnea Mulder. Reviewed all PEBB policies are now embedded with Plan D, except for Premera F and G. Educational opportunities prior to open enrollment reviewed.

Chapter membership update: additional surveys returned.

New Business:

Election to replace Mark Adams on Executive Board: Warren Warfield. Jan Hemingway, trustee, previously volunteered to serve on Executive Board. Moved, seconded, and approved. A new trustee is needed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10. Next meeting October 16 at RFPH from 12:00 – 2:00 PM.

Submitted by Linnea Mulder, Chapter 46 Secretary