



# Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 18 – Grays Harbor County

*Johanna Standish, President*

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Hybrid Meeting April 9th, 2024 @ 11:30 AM

**\*Join from home by Zoom or in-person\***

## In-Person Meeting Location

Gepetto's  
126 E Pioneer Ave  
Montesano, WA 98520

## Computer Login Information

Go to <https://zoom.us/join>  
ID: 869 2962 6040  
Passcode: 391928

## Phone Login Information

Dial: (253) 215-8782  
ID: 869 2962 6040  
Passcode: 391928

## Program

Hi everyone. For those of you who will be joining by ZOOM, we have decided that the first half-hour of each meeting will be for members to eat lunch and visit. The business meeting will then start at noon. You are welcome to join at any time.

Our speaker for April is Walt Bowen, President of the Washington State Senior Citizens' Lobby. Walt Bowen is a graduate of Seattle University where he earned Bachelors' degrees in Political Science and Journalism. He retired in 2008 after thirty years with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Since retiring, Walt has served for multiple terms as president of the Washington State Senior Citizens' Lobby in Olympia, an organization to unite public employees for their mutual benefit and welfare. This dedicated public servant has been recognized by AARP for his many years of local civic and political action and has received The Washington State Excellence Award. He is also a member of RPEC Chapter 2.

## March Meeting

Bev Hermanson, RPEC Ch. 2, was our guest speaker and joined via Zoom. Bev is the RPEC representative on the Select Committee on Pension Policy and was appointed to this position by Governor Inslee. She also chairs RPEC's Political Action Committee. She shared information on how the PAC works. Contributions to the PAC have increased recently.

## Election of Officers

Nominations for Chapter Officers were held at the March meeting. Nominations are Johanna Standish for President, Ruth Cook for Vice President, Donna Albert for Secretary, and Al Telecky for Treasurer. In addition, Phil Jones, Jane Lauzon, and Connie Greenidge were nominated for the 3 At-large Executive Board positions. If there are no additional nominations or changes, installation of officers will occur at the end of the April meeting.

## Did You Know?

According to a recent article in the AARP magazine, the most important exercise for seniors is squats. Squats strengthen all of the muscle groups in your legs, including your calves, quadriceps, [hamstrings](#), and glutes, as well as muscles in your lower back and core. Those muscles provide the foundation for most activities of daily living.

Squats can also help protect your joints, [improve your balance](#), and [prevent falls](#), says Denise Austin, one of America's best-known fitness experts and authors for 40 years.

“Squats are one of the best overall exercises,” she says. “They strengthen the major muscles of the lower body we need to keep strong and also protect two joints we need help with on a regular basis — our knees and our hips.”

Some research even shows a link between strong leg muscles and longevity. In one study, people ages 70 to 79 with stronger quadriceps (the muscles along the front of the thigh) had a lower chance of dying over six years compared with those who had weaker quadriceps.

Here's how to get started:

### **1. Get in position**

If you're new to squats, choose a spot where you can hold on to the kitchen counter, a table, or another steady surface. Holding on for stability makes it easier to focus on your form without worrying about your balance, Austin says.

Set your feet about shoulder-width apart or a little wider. (If you have hip issues, it's OK to have your legs a little farther apart.) Toes should face slightly outward.

### **2. Lower into a squat**

Keeping your back straight, chest up and heels planted, push your hips back like you are sitting in a chair.

Try to keep your weight evenly distributed on both feet as you do the exercise, with your weight mostly on your heels, not your toes, says Lori Michiel, founder of Lori Michiel Fitness, which specializes in senior fitness in the home. Make sure your knees do not extend forward over your toes, because that can [hurt your knees](#).

If you have knee or hip issues, you don't need to do a deep bend. The coming-up part of the exercise is what really builds strength, Austin says.

### **3. Repeat**

Aim for two sets of eight to 10, at a tempo of two seconds down, two seconds up. Inhale on the way down and exhale on the way up. As your body tires at the end of the set, make sure you're not hunching over or letting your knees cave in.

For the best results, do these two or three times a week.

See you at Gepetto's in Montesano at 11:30 am on the 9th of April.

Best Regards,

Johanna Standish  
Chapter 18 President

## 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**

Beginning this month, the Legislative Update Calls will be held monthly, the first Friday of each month. Please join us on April 5 from 2-3 p.m. 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 5 Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)
- April 11 Public Employees Benefits Board (9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- April 11 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- April 12 Legislative Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 16 Select Committee on Pension Policy (10 a.m.)
- April 19 Pension Policy Workgroup (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Membership Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- April 26 RPEC Staff retreat (10 a.m.-3 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.)