



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, LOCAL ONE

PO Box 2973, Martinez, CA 94553 • 4057 Port Chicago Highway, #100 Concord, CA 94520
Phone: (925) 228-1600 • Toll Free: 1-800-585-0054 •
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Representing the Past, Present & Future

Winter 2017

President's Message



I am finally back home, and trying to get back into a regular routine after spending the entire month of October traveling. When I was younger, a vacation of this sort meant rest and relaxation, but now I find that these excursions seem to be more tiring than invigorating. Don't get me wrong though, my wife and I feel we are very blessed to be physically able to travel and enjoy the beauty in the world, but it may be time for us to slow down just a bit.

OUT OF STATE RETIREE ASSISTANCE: A few months ago I was contacted by a county retiree who currently lives out of state, and was having difficulty getting the beneficiary designation changed for her retiree benefits. Working with Jerry Telles, our retirement board representative, and the retirement office staff, we were able to obtain the necessary medical information needed to complete the requested transaction.

This particular situation was problematic; one, because the retiree lived out of state; and two, their health was deteriorating and the change needed to be accomplished quickly. Another problem was the need to prove the retiree's new beneficiary had been disabled since birth. The new beneficiary in this situation is 52 years old, so you can imagine how difficult it might be to find someone familiar with their situation at birth. However, we were able to gather the necessary information for the retiree, and the new beneficiary has been designated.

So if a retiree tells you they do not want to join our association because they live out of state, or are moving out of state, you can let them know that we are sometimes the only helping hand they have.

SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON: We had a very good turnout at our September luncheon, and we were honored with an appearance by Steve Pettee, the CEO of Pacific Group Agencies (PGA). Steve explained some of the supplemental insurance programs that his company offers to CCCREA as a benefit of membership. You should have received your annual packet by now explaining each of the services offered by PGA. However, if you have not gotten yours, you can call (800) 817-8838 and they will put one in the mail right away. Steve also brought some marketing items to hand out at the registration desk, and he donated two beautiful baskets full of goodies as door prizes.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS: As we did last year, included in this newsletter is a scholarship application and a listing of the requirements for applying for a CCCREA scholarship for 2018. I am not sure what happened last year, but we may have not made clear that there are certain requirements which must be completed, along with the application. Those requirements include a certified copy of the student's most current transcripts, a letter of recommendation from someone who knows the student well, and a summary by the student as to what their accomplishments have been, and why they feel they should be chosen for this award. We received several applications last year that did not include these required documentation and those applications could not be considered.

Please be sure you make your candidate for the scholarship is aware of the requirements, and puts together a complete packet prior to submitting the application. The application rules can be found on Page 6, and the application is on Pages 7 and 8.

PROPERTY TAX POSTPONEMENT PROGRAM (PTPP): I have written previously about this program, but since I just received my property tax bill (which caused a very loud and long groan), it reminded me of this very worthwhile program which may be of benefit to some of our members.

In short, this program allows a qualifying senior to postpone paying property taxes until certain conditions occur, i.e., they sell the home, transfer ownership, refinance, apply for a reverse mortgage, etc. If one of these situations occurs, the back taxes would have to be paid plus a 7% interest. If you are interested, and think you may be qualified, you can get more information at www.sco.ca.gov, or you can call the State Controller's office at (800) 952-5661 to inquire about the PTPP.

DECEMBER LUNCHEON: As has been tradition for the past several years, we will be graced again this year with the presence of the Summerset Singers who will get us all in the Christmas spirit by presenting a program of Christmas carols. And while I am on the subject of luncheons, I need to bring up a very important issue, and that is registering to attend the luncheon. We always include a flyer with each newsletter to allow people to send in their luncheon selection early. This is absolutely necessary since the restaurant has to plan on how many people to expect.



(President's Message Continued from Page 1)

Unfortunately, in September we had eleven people show up at the door who were not registered, and this puts a strain on the restaurant to be able to provide enough food for everyone. We were lucky that six people that did register could not make it and we were barely able to accommodate everyone.

To the credit of some of those eleven people, they said they had sent their checks, but the staff at Local One did not receive some of them until the week after the luncheon. I know the Post Office deliveries can be problematic because I still have a check sent in for a luncheon last year that has never shown up.

That being said, I encourage everyone who thinks they will be attending to sit down and write out a check as soon as you get the newsletter and send it off. We do not cash the checks until after the luncheon, so if you find you cannot make it, just give us a call and we will return your check. We do not want to make a policy that you cannot pay at the door, but we do need you to call ahead to let us know you are coming. This will eliminate the embarrassment of having to be turned away at the door due to the inability to accommodate unregistered guests.

Also in this quarter's newsletter you will find an excellent article written by our retirement board representative, Jerry Telles. Jerry has packed a lot of information into his annual review, and it will give you some insight into the retirement board's accomplishments this year.

For those of you who have CalPERS Long Term Care policy, there is an update on the status of the class action lawsuit (See Page 6). Someone once said, "The wheels of justice grind slowly." I am guessing they must have been civil law attorney.

Due to space restrictions caused by printing the scholarship application in this newsletter, we are unable to include the CRCEA Legislative Report which is a regular part of each newsletter. For anyone who is interested in seeing this report, please contact me at mesloan1@aol.com or (925) 250-4796, and I will make sure you get a copy.

Please send in your Christmas Luncheon reservation right away, and we will see you there.

California Property Tax Postponement Program

Do you or a loved one need help keeping up with residential property tax payments?

The PTP Program allows eligible homeowners to postpone payment of property taxes on a primary residence.

To be eligible for PTP, you must:

- ◆ Be at least age 62, or blind, or have a disability;
- ◆ Own and occupy the home as your primary place of residence;
- ◆ Have a total household income of \$35,500 or less;
- ◆ Have at least 40 percent equity in the property; and
- ◆ Other requirements.

The interest rate for taxes postponed under PTP is 7 percent per year. Funding for the program is limited. Applications will be accepted from October 1 to February 10 each year, and will be processed in the order received. Only current-year property taxes are eligible for postponement.

Repayment under the PTP Program becomes due when the homeowner:

- ◆ Moves or sells the property;
- ◆ Transfers title;
- ◆ Defaults on a senior lien;
- ◆ Refinances;
- ◆ Dies; or
- ◆ Obtains a reverse mortgage.

More details are available on the State Controller's website.

Questions? Contact the Controller's team at

(800) 952-5661 or postponement@sco.ca.gov

California State Controller Betty T. Yee

www.sco.ca.gov



OXYMORONS

- **If a word is misspelled in the dictionary, how would we ever know?**
- **Why do we say something is out of whack? What is a whack?**
- **Why does "fat chance" and "slim chance" mean the same thing?**
- **Why do we sing "Take me out to the ball game" when we are already there?**
- **Why do you press harder on the buttons of a remote control when you know the batteries are dead?**

2018 Luncheon Dates

- March 8,*
- June 14*
- September 13*
- December 13*



Remember, if you are a new member your first lunch is free. Just be sure to call in your reservation and let us know you're a new member.

The telephone number is 925-228-1600.

Please feel free to invite friends who have recently retired to our luncheon!



Contra Costa County Retired Employees Association Board of Directors

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mesloan1@aol.com

Jan Aaronian, Vice-President
janaaronian@gmail.com

Marcia Coudyser, Treasurer
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Maya Kennedy, Recording Secretary
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email: mkennedy@inf.net

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- Carl Doolittle
- Vicki Doolittle
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- Mary Lou Williams,
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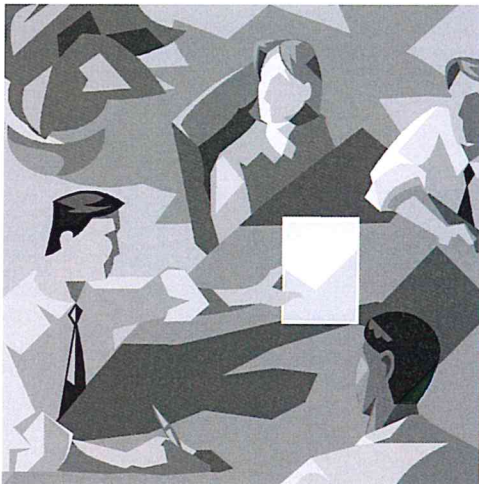
Regular Meeting Dates

2018 Regular Meeting Dates



- January 9th
- February 13th
- April 10th
- May 8th
- July 10th
- August No Meeting Scheduled
- October 9th
- November 13th

CRCEA CONFERENCE DATES



The Spring 2018 CRCEA conference will be April 16-18, and will be held in Santa Barbara at the Fess Parker Double Tree Hotel.

The Fall conference will be in Marin County (October 15-17), and will be held at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel.

Additional information about these conferences will be posted on the CRCEA website (crcea.org) as the dates get closer.

MEETING LOCATION:

TJ's Restaurant - 3210 Pacheco Blvd. (The old Pegg's Restaurant across from the Shell refinery entrance) Martinez, CA 94553.

All are welcome to attend and share your thoughts and suggestions.

Call to let us know you are coming.

(925 - 228 -1600)



 **PASSAGES** 

*Some people come into our lives and quickly go.
Some people move our souls to dance. They awaken us to new understandings with the passing whisper of their wisdom. Some people make the sky more beautiful to gaze upon. They stay in our lives for awhile, leave footprints in our heart, and we are never ever the same.*

Chicken Soup for the Soul

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Mary Jane Lyons 9/29/2017 | Isabel Mavity 7/21/2017 | Yolanda Samuels 9/12/2017 |
| Frances Sherwood 6/26/2017 | Joseph Toby 8/4/2017 | Ann Zbacnik 9/22/2017 |
| Louise Drenik 9/27/2017 | Sharon Ferguson 8/11/2017 | Rita Henderson 8/13/2017 |
| Ruth Johnson 8/30/2017 | Donald Ludwig 7/13/2017 | |

See's CANDIES.
American-Made Delicious

We've Opened
a New Shop!



Visit our new
Retail & Quantity Discount shop at:
Crossroads at Pleasant Hill
2380 Monument Blvd.
Find us next to Pleasant Hill Smile Dentistry,
across from Kohls.

to CCCREA to P.O.Box 2973, Martinez, Ca. 94553. To order by mail please enclose postage of \$1.50 for five or less and \$3.00 for more than five.

Don't forget that we have the new discount store in Concord (See above). You can buy your candy at a discount at the store but you must have your membership card. If you do not have it or they cannot find our account give them our account number, which is 6013636.

It's that time again. Don't forget to get your See's gift certificates for the holidays. The price has gone to \$16.00 but still good as they cost \$19.90 at the store, we give you a good deal. We sell them at our luncheons or you can send a check made out



KELLY-MOORE® PAINTS

All members of the CCCREA will be able to access discounted paint and sundry items with the following account information.

Account # 620-CC1600

The discount is available at all Kelly Moore locations.



kellymoore.com





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1st NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CREDIT UNION

LOW RATES & FAST APPROVALS!

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Call (925) 335-3850 or visit www.1stnorcalcu.org

*Annual Percentage Rates (APR) are subject to change. Rate, maximum term, maximum loan amount and a finance amount are based on credit qualifications. Maximum terms vary based on loan amount. We reserve the right to determine collateral value based on industry recognized guidelines or full appraisal. Must be 18 years old or older to apply for a loan. Loans are subject to a full Credit Union policies and procedures. Auto loans at 2.99% APR require a minimum FICO® 688 Credit Score. 60 months term at 2.99% APR is \$17.97 per \$1,000.00 borrowed.





RETIREMENT BOARD UPDATE

By Jerry Telles

Hello Everyone,

It has been a while since I have written an article for CCCREA. So when Mike asked me, I thought this would be a good time to bring everyone up to date regarding the CCC Retirement Board, investment changes, funding level and CCCERA becoming an independent employer.

The Retirement Board made a few changes in July of this year. Appointee Debra Allen was elected to the Bay Area Rapid Transit Board and decided not to stay with CCCERA's Board. So the CCC Board of Supervisors appointed Jay Kwon, a San Ramon resident and an investment officer with the San Jose Public Pension Plan, to the alternate appointee seat. They then appointed Jerry Holcombe, the previous alternate, to Debra Allan's seat on the Board. Both of these appointments expire in June of 2020.

Will Pigeon was elected to the Safety voting seat and Gabe Rodrigues was elected to the Safety alternate seat by the Safety members and their terms also expire in June 2020.

The general membership voted Todd Smithy to a second term and he is our current Chairperson. His term will expire in June of 2020.

The last two appointees previously sitting on the Board and reappointed this June were Supervisor Candace Anderson and John Phillips and both terms expire in June of 2020.

Many of the difficult decisions have been made in the last four years:

1. Adoption of PEPRA (Public Employers Pension Reform Act)
2. The decision to exclude some previously allowed differentials for legacy employees (those employed prior to enactment of PEPRA Jan 1, 2013).
3. The decision by the Board to allow base pay only in final average salary for employees hired after Jan 1, 2013. These are referred to as PEPRA employees.
4. Final average salary allowed for Legacy employees: Maximum \$265,000 per year, PEPRA employees: Maximum \$117,020 for

employees enrolled in Social Security, and Maximum \$140,000 for PEPRA employees not enrolled in Social Security.

My heart goes out to those hired by the County after Jan. 1 2013. We know when these people retire thirty years from now in 2043 that \$117,000 will not be enough to keep pace with the economy. Think back to 1987, thirty years ago, what income could you live on?

What has been good over the past four years has been the changes to make our retirement system sound. We voted to lower the assumption rate to 7%. I believe at the time we were the only public pension system in the State to do this. It means in order to keep the system solvent we need to make 7% on our investments each year. It also means the employers and employees will have an increased cost for their retirement. Since we have done this several other systems have followed our example including CALPERS (California Public Employees Retirement System) and CALSTRS (California State Teachers Retirement System). If you would like more information you can go to CCCERA.ORG, or you can read our "2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report".

The other two things we voted on have been to become an Independent Employer (began January 2015) and developed a new investment plan called a "functionally focused portfolio" or FFP.

The plan's functional goals/desired outcomes are:

1. Provide liquidity to meet current retiree benefit payments. (Retrieve cash quickly)
2. Produce long-term growth to offset future retiree benefit payments.
3. Protect against the adverse impacts of rising inflation and equity market volatility.

This translates into the following portfolio limits:

1. Liquidity range 16 to 28% of portfolio
2. Total equity range 60 to 80% of portfolio

3. Risk diversifying range 0 to 10% of portfolio

4. Cash and overlay range 2 to 3 % of portfolio

To assure retirees that we will be able to pay benefits over a four-year market down cycle, we have accepted and supported our financial advisors (FFP) program. This investment program will not keep us in the top quartile of pension funds, but will guarantee a conservative approach and benefits being paid through down turns in the market.

Often, we hear people ask how funded is your system? I have told you in the past that we want to be 70% funded. I'm happy to report latest funding reports have us above 84%. Again, that means if we were to cash out the system today, everyone would receive 84% of what would be owed according to the actuarial life expectancy charts.

The last thing I want to talk about is CCCERA becoming an independent employer. As mentioned earlier we separated from the County in January 2015. We now have our own payroll, negotiations, medical, human resources, compliance, legal and investments and administration departments. The latest count of retirees in our system is now 9,100 as of December 2016. The average salary for retirees was reported to me \$3,674 per month in December 2015. This included both general and safety salaries.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with the feeling that our system is sound, it is being run well by dedicated and responsible employees. Until next time have a memorable Holiday season,

Jerry Telles
Retiree Representative
CCCREA



CCCREA SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The CCCREA Scholarship Fund has been developed to promote and assist in the higher education of its members and their families.

AWARDS:

Beginning with the Fall 2016 semester, three scholarships of \$1,000 each will be awarded annually.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

The scholarships are available to all CCCREA members in good standing, as well as their children, stepchildren, grandchildren, step grandchildren, nieces, and nephews (including grand-nieces and grand-nephews).

REQUIREMENTS:

Applicant must be either a high school senior with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher and has applied to, or been accepted, a college, university, or trade school with a minimum two year course of study, OR a student with a GPA of 2.5 or higher who is already attending an accredited educational institution.

Completed applications must include official transcripts, one letter of recommendation, and a brief essay addressing the student's academic accomplishments, extra-curricular activities, and description of any community service. Applications must be post marked no later than March 31.

FINAL SELECTION:

Applications will be screened and ranked by an outside independent rater. Based on these recommendations to the Scholarship Committee, the Board of Directors will determine the award recipients prior to the beginning of the fall semester.

(Please see the following 2 pages for more)



LITIGATION UPDATES

The parties are close to wrapping up fact discovery. Plaintiffs are in the process of obtaining class member data from CalPERS' third party administrator, the Long Term Care Group, which will be used by Plaintiffs' experts to calculate class damages. CalPERS has also decided to take further depositions of the two Class Representatives, Holly Wedding and Eileen and Richard Lodyga. Those depositions will take place in the next two months.

The Court also set a new pre-trial and trial schedule at the Status Conference on Friday, September 22, 2017. Under the new schedule, Plaintiffs will be filing their proposed trial plan on December 17, 2017, which will set forth our plan for trying the class case. CalPERS will be filing a motion to decertify the class on February 5, 2018, which Class Counsel will, of course, oppose. Our opposition brief is to be filed February 26, 2018, and the decertification motion will be heard by the Court on April 19, 2018. Assuming the motion is denied, which is our expectation, expert discovery will be conducted through the summer of 2018 and completed by July 31, 2018. A trial date has been tentatively set for November 19, 2018, however, that date may be pushed out to early 2019.

And finally, the partial settlement with the Towers Watson defendants was also addressed at the September 22nd hearing. In short, the Court has reviewed Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Approval of Partial Settlement and, before ruling, she has requested some additional information regarding the terms of the proposed settlement. Class Counsel will be submitting the requested information to the Court by the end of this week (September 29) and a further hearing on the proposed settlement will likely be scheduled for a date in October. Assuming the Court grants preliminary approval of the partial settlement, a notice with additional details will be sent to Class Members shortly thereafter.



**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**
P.O. Box 2973 • Martinez, CA 94553-8868
Representing the Past, Present & Future

CCCREA Scholarship Application

PART ONE - APPLICANT INFORMATION

(Please type or print clearly)

Applicant's Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ SSN#: _____
Currently Attending: _____ Graduation Date: _____
Date of Birth: _____

PART TWO - COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

Accepted Applying (please attach complete list) Attending

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Date you plan to start: _____ Course of Study: _____
What degree/objective will you be pursuing: _____
Desired occupation after graduation: _____

PART THREE - CCCREA SPONSORING MEMBER INFORMATION

CCCREA Member Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Relationship to Applicant: _____

Applicant Name: _____

PART FOUR - APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

Please tell us a little about yourself. Include vocational and educational achievements and goals; student activities and organizations; athletics; community involvement; honors; awards, etc.

Please feel free to attach additional pages.



*Thursday
December 14, 2017*

*Zio Fraedo's
611 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill*

11:30 am: No Host Cocktails

*12:00 pm: Lunch
Choice of Prime Rib*

Or

Chicken Cordon Bleu

Return the bottom portion along with your check made payable to CCCREA *no later than November 29th*

I will attend the luncheon on Thursday, December 14, 2017.

Enclosed please find my check made out to CCCREA. Prime Rib _____ Chicken _____
Vegetarian _____

Name _____

Address _____ Phone No. _____

City, State Zip _____

Names of Guests _____

Member: _____ @ \$14.00 = _____

Guests: _____ @ \$28.00 = _____

Total: _____