



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Chico Chapter 77

April 2017 Newsletter

Mission Statement:

We are active and retired California public employees working together to maintain and improve the quality of the lives of our members by protecting and improving our earned retirement, medical, and other benefits. RPEA represents the rank and file retired public employees.

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MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017 - 11:15 A. M.

Manzanita Place (Chico Elks Lodge)

1705 Manzanita Avenue, Chico - (Lunch cost: \$15)

SPEAKERS:

**Michael LePeilbet – Senior Senator
U.S. Army retired Brigadier General
Private Investigator and Process Server (Corning)**

**John Pereira – Senior Assembly Person
U.S Air Force retired Master Sgt.
Works for Rush Personnel in Chico**

TOPIC: “California Senior Legislature”

The California Senior Legislature (CSL) helps preserve and enhance quality of life for older Californians and their families. The CSL does this by holding an annual four-day model legislative session during which they develop proposals which are then presented to State lawmakers to potentially author. The CSL legislators work tirelessly all year to support passage of the authorized bills.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT - By Margaret Ballinger

AT LAST—WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE! You are surely aware of all the water we have had and the many problems with Lake Oroville, the spillway, etc. Most of my time through February was spent watching the TV and trying to understand everything that was going on. Alas, a lot of it! I didn't understand, but still had concerns for the full Lake and worried about what could happen. Fortunately, we had those who knew what they were doing; and with their hours and hours of attention to this problem, there was not a gigantic tragedy. We give thanks to all who participated! When an emergency arises, Chico, Oroville, and smaller towns in this area come through and never hesitate to get involved.

There were 37 or 38 present at our last meeting, and it was great. Our speakers provided us with much information concerning programs available to seniors and others who qualified—a good portion of which are free.

Election of officers was held, and our new President is Norm Stump, Sr. All officers were filled, and a list of these new officers is included in the newsletter.

The Board of Directors looks forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Please don't disappoint us! There is much planning that goes into each meeting for our enjoyment. Lunch is always fresh and plentiful. You can take as much or as little as you want. SEE YOU THERE!

HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT – By Al Raitt

At the March 9 Stakeholders meeting CalPERS staff reviewed the experience the approximately 500,000 affected members have had to date transitioning to the OptumRx pharmacy benefit program; and although there has been smooth sailing for many, there have also been a large number of problems reported. On Feb. 23 a “corrective action plan” meeting was held by CalPERS staff with OptumRx staff, and on Feb. 27 CalPERS staff went to the OptumRx call center in Southern California with specific recommendations about how to provide better service. There have been over 200,000 calls to the center, and 1.8 million pharmacy claims have been handled. The problems identified so far include: Inadequate training of call center staff; inability of call center staff to deal with pharmacy benefits specifically related to the CalPERS program; inadequate management of call center staff; problems with the secure portal and processing claims online; Walgreens pharmacy staffing at insufficient levels and pharmacies not being available in more rural areas; prior authorizations (PA’s) not being completed in a timely manner; tier and formulary changes resulting in increased co-pays; the appeals process not working. These problems have been frustrating enough for some members that they have gone back to using CVS even though it costs more to do so. Prior authorizations have been so difficult to get approved that some doctors won’t apply for them on the member’s behalf. CalPERS staff reports that they are now meeting daily with OptumRx staff to address these concerns.

CalPERS staff made it clear that if anyone is experiencing these or other problems, they want to hear about them by contacting staff at: (888)CalPERS, (888)225-7377.

On a non-health related note, it was also announced that beginning July 1, 2017, CalPERS will be switching to a paperless online monthly notification of direct deposits. This will impact approximately 58,000 retirees who currently receive a monthly paper “direct deposit advice” as confirmation of their direct deposit. In April and May notices will be sent to all retirees who receive the monthly paper regular (“snail”) mail advising that CalPERS will be switching to the paperless notification. The notice will provide the retiree the choice to “opt in” to continue receiving the monthly paper advice; however, this will be for only twelve additional months after which only paperless online notices will be sent. Information about this change will be available in the “PERSPECTIVE” publication, social media sites, and on the CalPERS website. So, if you receive direct deposits, be on the lookout for the notices due to arrive in April or May.

2017-18 CHAPTER 77 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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