



## RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION Chico Chapter 077

### APRIL 2021 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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### JOIN YOUR CHAPTER 077 MEMBERS FOR A ZOOM MEMBERSHIP MEETING!



**THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021 – 11:30 A.M**

**SPEAKER: Roy Applegate, Coordinator  
Trauma Response and Recovery  
Butte County Office of Education**

#### TOPIC:

*“Responding to the Mental Health Needs of Students and Staff Following the Camp Fire as Well as Disruption of School Because of COVID-19 Isolation”*

Since November 8, 2018, schools and other agencies have been attempting to assess and provide interventions to those impacted with trauma from the Camp Fire and subsequent COVID - 19 implications with students and staff. It has been a broad effort that is narrowing to largely the burn scar areas now.

**How to join the virtual meeting by Computer or phone:**

**Date: April 1 - Time: 11:30 AM Pacific**

**Option 1: Connect online – [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)**

**Click on “Join a Meeting” in the upper right**

**Enter ID: 595 195 8383 Passcode: 990733**

#### **Option 2:**

**Phone, dial +1 669 900 6833**

**Enter Meeting ID: 595 195 8383**

**Then just wait to be connected!**

**Being on a tablet or computer is better than a phone because you can see the presentation and people’s faces.**

### MESSAGE FROM ROGER KLAVES

Assistant Area II Director (Written March 2, 2021)

March greetings....Not much change in our 074 status. If anyone wants to attend the Chico meetings on Zoom, I'll send you the link; and if you have zoom set up on your computer, you can jump in at 11:15 am Pacific time. It's not a big deal to set up your computer. If I can do it, anybody can do it! I see where a former Oakland police officer finds himself owing PERS about 200K in retirement payments after he retired with a disability and then went to work for the Department of Homeland Security. Relatively quiet otherwise "PERSwise." *Roger*

#### STATUS OF FUTURE CHAPTER 077 MEETINGS

Our Chapter 077 will continue with Zoom online meetings through May and will then reassess the situation before safely resuming in-person meetings at Manzanita Place (Chico Elks Lodge).

#### MINUTES OF CHAPTER 077 MEETINGS

The Minutes of the board and general membership meetings are posted on the [rpeachapter77.com](http://rpeachapter77.com) website for you to review. The general membership meeting minutes are subject to the approval by the members at the following general membership meeting.

### LEGISLATIVE REPORT – By Mary Kowta

"Help is on the Way". This slogan of President Biden's speeches about the passage of the Rescue America Stimulus package has special meaning for many who are in dire straits due to job loss, economic downturn, and school closures, as well as the general fatigue and worry about COVID-19. According to Pensions and Investment Online, the stimulus provides a reported \$86 Billion special relief for failing pension plans. Those who have been watching their plans dissipate in a drastic way may now have a bit of hope for a more comfortable future. We may have complaints and doubts about CalPERS, but at least the fund is relatively stable!

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT (Continued)

On the legal front, former CalPERS trustee, J. J. Jellincic is suing CalPERS to produce documents and records of closed Board meetings pertaining to the resignation of former CIO Ben Meng last August. He filed the suit in the Alameda Superior Court. He questions a number of fiscal discrepancies and criticizes the Board's handling of the situation with regard to Meng's departure. This legal event will be watched with interest.

In the past, CalPERS has published news of the Fund's effort to review investments with regard to concerns about climate change and sustainability. This was a directive by Governor Newsom, and it is taken seriously by CalPERS. In the world of finance and investing these concerns, along with diversity on the governing boards, are important issues. But, according to one elusive online report, Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett commented on CalPERS but told his minions that such items did not have to be a part of their stockholder meetings. Hmmm.

Meanwhile, in Sacramento.....there is the major distraction of the recall efforts. It seems apparent that there are enough signatures to put it on the ballot. One *SacBee* journalist opined that the Governor will survive this, barring major COVID surges, failures to open schools, and ill-advised French Laundry visits. Carl DeMaio and his cohorts have not yet settled on a convincing replacement for the Governor, but the money is apparently pouring in from the Republican National Committee and elsewhere.

There is legitimate concern that the Governor is opening up California too quickly as a political move, rather than following public health advice to go slowly. He is in a difficult situation. The best advice for most Californians is to wear a mask when out and about, keep the distance, and socialize outdoors. With good wishes for Passover and Easter and healthy days ahead!

*Mary*

## HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT – By Al Raitt

During the March 11, 2021, Stakeholders meeting originating virtually from the CalPERS offices in Sacramento, Dr. Julia Logan provided a COVID-19 update. To date approximately 8% of the State's population has been fully vaccinated. The rate of vaccination during March has been about 300 thousand per week, and this is expected to increase to 400 thousand per week in April. As of March 15, providers will be able to use their "clinical judgment" about whether or not 18 to 64 year-olds meet the criteria for having an underlying medical condition which increases the risk of serious, life-threatening complications from COVID-19. When this phase has been completed, the next phase will probably again be age-based, but the specifics of this are as yet unclear. The list of underlying

medical conditions is rather extensive; however it can be found by going to "cdc.gov" and clicking the "Diseases and Conditions" option in the drop down menu. Then click on "Coronavirus Disease 2019" and then "Latest Updates" at the bottom of the page. There you will find "COVID-19 vaccines for people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19;" then click on "List of high-risk medical conditions that put people at increased risk for severe COVID-19 associated illness." Should you know of anyone who has a condition listed, you can advise them that they can inquire about being vaccinated as of March 15. Anyone in the State of California can now determine their eligibility and register at "myturn.ca.gov." If you qualify for a vaccination, you can register and will be notified about how to get the vaccine.

The State has contracted with Blue Shield to be a third party vaccine administrator primarily for the purpose of attaining greater uniformity and addressing equity concerns which included the issue of attaining equitable distribution to more vulnerable populations. Some counties in California have decided not to sign a contract with Blue Shield for vaccine administration. San Joaquin County was given as an example. Some of these counties have said that they already have well-established mechanisms for vaccine distribution and inoculation procedures, and they did not want to go through the process of changing these. Others have apparently expressed concerns about the State requirement that at least 40% of the vaccine doses will be preferentially provided to certain more vulnerable population groups.

CDC staff had announced that on March 12 they intended to release guidelines for nursing homes. To date approximately 1/3 of deaths from COVID-19 in the US occurred in nursing homes, although in the past 3-4 weeks this had been trending downward.

Regarding variants, approximately 20% of new cases in the US are the UK strain; however, even though this variant is spreading, there has been no resurgence of overall new case totals. Vaccine providers do not keep statistics regarding which recipients are CalPERS retirees, so this information is not yet available.

Lastly (and parenthetically) an article appeared as of the writing of this newsletter article (March 14, 2021) in the journal of *Clinical Infectious Diseases* summarizing a recently-completed study by the Mayo Clinic demonstrating that those who are two weeks past their 2<sup>nd</sup> Pfizer or Moderna vaccine dose and do not have symptoms showed an 80% lower risk of testing positive for COVID-19. This means that becoming fully vaccinated significantly limits the spread of COVID-19 by vaccinated people who are without symptoms and who may unknowingly spread the infection to others. Rather remindful of "Do Unto Others." (i.e. Get the vaccine for yourself and you'll also be getting it "for others.") Some might say: "No Greater Gift."

*Al*