



## RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION Chico Chapter 077

### JULY 2018 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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It's Summer Time! We hope that you have a fun and relaxing summer and enjoy a wonderful vacation or two before Fall arrives. **Reminder: There will be no RPEA Chapter 077 meetings in July and August. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, September 6.** Reminder: Lunches will cost \$16 beginning in September. It will be helpful to the Treasurer if you bring the correct amount and not require change. Please mark this date on your calendar, and plan to join us again after our two-month summer break. We are challenging all of our members to recruit a new member or two before our meetings resume in September!

#### HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT – By Al Raitt

This is to provide information about the upcoming open enrollment period for health benefit plans beginning January 1, 2019. At the June 14, 2018 stakeholders meeting at the CalPERS headquarters in Sacramento, staff announced that open enrollment will be from September 10 through October 5, 2018. After nearly a year-long negotiation process, recommended

premium rates will be presented to the CalPERS Pension and Benefits Committee on Wednesday, June 20, in closed session. The Office of Stakeholders Relations will then facilitate an ad-hoc meeting with interested stakeholders after which the premium rates will be announced in open session.

On August 27 an email will be sent by CalPERS announcing the open enrollment period and how to obtain Health Plan Statements. There will be four ways to access this information: (1) Go to your "My CalPERS" account; (2) Go to the CalPERS web site and use your zip code to get information about plans that are being offered in your area; (3) Call CalPERS; and (4) Use a new "mobile app" that CalPERS will make available for use through your mobile phone or tablet. CalPERS will soon be providing information about this app through their "going mobile" program to access Health Plan Statements including monthly premium rates. The existing rates for 2018 will be provided along with the new rates beginning 2019 so that a direct comparison of new and existing premium rates will be possible.

Data for 2017 reveals that 86% of health care recipients (representing approximately 900,000 people) obtain their information on-line, and 14% (or about 150,000 people) still use snail mail for this purpose. During last year's open enrollment period 96% of health care recipients remained in their same plan, and 4% switched to another plan. Switching to another plan can now be accomplished entirely on-line.

Following the August 27 email, a second "reminder" email will be sent shortly before the September 10 start of open enrollment, and a third will be sent prior to the October 5 end date. Start watching your mail towards the end of August for the first announcement about open enrollment information!

*Al*

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT – By Margaret Ballinger

Ah – If you think about it, half of 2018 is almost all gone – oh dear, what have I accomplished???? If I try to remember what, nothing exciting comes to mind. However, if I really think about it, many wonderful things have happened: Meeting with the RPEA Board each month, attending General Membership meetings, making all scheduled appointments on time, and visiting with friends and family. It seems like lots of great happenings have come my way. Hope it is the same with you!

Although we don't meet again until September, we still need to keep our thoughts on RPEA, getting new members, and keeping those we have. Our membership this month totals 325, so we are holding our own even though we gained six new members last month and three new members this month. We lost several under various circumstances, and thus our total remains about the same most of the time. I'm asking you to think of someone you know who is retired and not a member – we just need their name (yours need not be mentioned), and we will contact them either by telephone, email, or letter. We will do the follow-up. Some will join and some will not, but we don't want to miss those that will!

Oh yes, not too many at our last meeting! We have to pay for a minimum of 40 lunches, and this really affects the budget when we get less than 40 in attendance. Programs are scheduled to coincide with our interests, so we need you to attend the meetings to enjoy them. Just think...wonderful food, friendly folks to visit with, and a program! Just two hours out of your day to keep you tuned in to what's going on. YOU ONLY PAY FOR EIGHT REGULAR MEETINGS A YEAR; OUR CHAPTER TAKES CARE OF TWO. WE NEED YOU TO ATTEND!

Time to wish all of you the best of the summer...stay cool, travel, or rest...whichever suits you best! Try to do something you want to do even if it is just driving through Bidwell Park in Chico or some place near where you live. You are very important to us and those who know you!

*Margaret*

*P.S. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.*

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT – By Mary Kowta

On June 14 our lawmakers sent Gov. Brown a \$200B budget which will provide \$16B for a reserve fund, \$78 B for K - 12 education, and many additional millions for higher education, grants to cities for homeless issues, new state buildings, etc. This is all good news, but some legislators noted that the unfunded pension commitments remain as they were and those debts do not bode well if a financial downturn occurs. Sen. Moorlach (Costa Mesa) observed "We look like passengers on the Titanic." (Sac Bee 6/15)

The US Supreme Court has yet to decide the Janus case. The expected decision may do away with "fair share" fees collected from non-union workers. Why are we concerned? Mainly, because unions continue to be our supporters. You may recall that recently union members appeared on our behalf before the legislative committee hearing on SB 1031 which would have prohibited future COLA adjustments for retirees if the unfunded liability of the pension fund is greater than 20%. Unions will be hampered in their efforts to negotiate for safe, fair workplaces for all workers and reasonable pensions for retirees if non- member workers no longer contribute a "fair share".

### Other News

A measure to split California into 3 states has qualified for the November ballot. This is bank-rolled by SF venture capitalist, Tim Draper. Fabian Nunez, former Assembly speaker, is organizing the opposition. Many Californians ask, "Do we really need this chaos in our lives?" (More on the November ballot next time.)

We hope you will read the RPEA Newsletter (*May/June 2018 issue*) for recent news from Sacramento and, on page 13, an article and photos of Chico Chapter 077 honorees Jim Gregg and Bobbie Svihus. Nice photos and outstanding members of our Chapter 077! *Mary*