



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION Chico Chapter 077

MAY 2020 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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RPEA MEMBERSHIP AND BOARD MEETINGS CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

The RPEA Chapter 077 meetings are cancelled due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic until further notice. We hope that all of you are staying healthy and safe while being quarantined at home. Our RPEA members fall into the senior category, and seniors are most vulnerable to serious symptoms and death from this virus. Follow all of the recommendations carefully, and stay hunkered down at home! You will be kept updated about future meetings in the newsletters and the rpeachapter77.com website.



Please notify our Sunshine Chair, Lawrie Salvestrin, (519-5223 or lsalvest@gmail.com) if you know anyone who needs a get well, thinking of you, or sympathy card. Our Sunshine gal will send a card and brighten their day!

LEGISLATIVE REPORT – By Mary Kowta

On March 16 our State's lawmakers voted to suspend the session until April 13 as a result of the spreading coronavirus. That date was then pushed to May 4, but Governor Newsom has indicated that even that date could change, depending on public health conditions. Meanwhile, he and certain legislators have been carrying out essential business.

Before the recess, the legislators met to pass a \$1.1 Billion relief package for support for hospitals, local governments, and schools to mitigate the spread of COVID 19, calling it one of the biggest challenges to face the legislature in modern times. (*Sac Bee 4/5*)

May was to have been the time to review, dispute, applaud, and alter the many facets of Governor Newsom's hefty budget which he now states "...is no longer operable." (*Sac Bee 4/5*)

On March 29 an editorial in the *SF Chronicle* highlights certain weaknesses in California's "...skewed tax system, built on populist, tax-the-rich fundamentals." As the economy takes this unforeseen nosedive and the coffers dwindle, we rely on the Governor and the legislators to come up with their best actions.

CalMatters (calmatters.org 4/16) reports that the first legislative hearing on the billions already authorized by the Governor has taken place as new COVID19 expenses increase.

Meanwhile, STAY IN, STAY WELL and enjoy some Spring sunshine when you can! Oh, and keep up with the news and read the March-April *RPEA Bulletin* that you have received!

HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT – By Al Raitt

“Pandemics, Politics, and Perturbations: A more personal article than usual”

The State legislature is currently on one of its “breaks,” so there’s not much to write about regarding legislative proposals, policies, or procedures; and most “health benefits” news is focused on, well, you know: “It.” I find myself trying to process the experience of this unexpected, unanticipated (except, of course, for those epidemiologists who study this sort of thing for a living) and unwanted pandemic which is impacting the lives of so many millions of people around the globe. I’ve been wondering: So, in what way is it most helpful to internally deliberate our current state of affairs?

I’m drawn to my early-life experience (if you count 14 years old as “early life”) of reading Norman Vincent Peale’s book *“The Power of Positive Thinking,”* first published 12 years earlier in 1958. For those of you also alive during the time of “the greatest generation,” Peale wrote several books and was famous for such quotes as: “Change your thoughts and change your world.” He also said: “Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers, you cannot be successful or happy.” A particular favorite of mine is: “It’s always too early to quit.” Amongst the suggestions he gave for dealing with particularly difficult situations was (paraphrasing here): “Think of the very worst outcome, and how it turns out will often be better.” I’ve attempted over the decades since then to encourage others to take this approach when confronted with calamities, but I must admit that the suggestion has not generally been well received.

But I digress..... An essential element of trying to accurately understand what’s happening is trust. I was particularly confronted with this issue 18 years ago when I had my left hip surgically replaced. I was fretting about untoward outcomes (such as post-surgery infection and fracture) when a friend gently said: “You know, this is one of those times when you just have to hand yourself over and trust that they will take good care of you.” I’ve been trying to apply this suggestion to the two main groups offering their explanations about the pandemic: epidemiologists and politicians. It has become clear that each have their primary focus. For the epidemiologists, it’s the population as a whole; and for politicians, it’s themselves. Are you going to trust more those whose focus is society or those whose focus is self. Your choice! Just remember, however, that the longer this goes on the more the “trust” issue will be guiding our own personal decisions about how to behave. And so, like many of us, I’m perturbed. There has been a momentous disruption of how I thought the usual course of life was going, and it has been associated with anxiety, fear, and worry. What to do? As Peale suggested, it could very well help to use positive thinking, change my thoughts, believe in myself, have faith, have reasonable confidence, and remember that it’s still too early to quit. And besides: How much worse could it get.....?



Social distancing is pretty challenging, but it’s the least we can do to help each other. The smartest thing to do in this pandemic is the preservation of human life through kindness, alertness, courage, and love.