



**RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
Chico Chapter 077**

SEPTEMBER 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.*

Sharon Salcido, Editor – 893-0181 – sharonsalcidofromchico@gmail.com

Matters concerning your address should be directed to Barbara Evans – barbevans37@aol.com - 342-4783

RPEA Chapter 77 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 6415, Chico, CA 95927-6415

Chapter Website: www.rpeachapter77.com

**JOIN YOUR CHAPTER 077 MEMBERS
FOR A ZOOM MEMBERSHIP MEETING!**



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 – 11:30 A.M.

SPEAKER: ANN NIKOLAI

Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)
California State University, Chico

OLLI is offering a full slate of peer-led online Zoom classes in the fall. Online enrollment/schedules are virtually user friendly. Speaker will explain details of “attendance” for enrollees not familiar with distance learning!

You should have received a postcard from RPEA Headquarters with the information below:

How to join the virtual meeting (You can join from a computer, iPad, or Tablet!):

Option 1: Connect online – www.zoom.us

Click on “Join a Meeting” in the upper right

Enter ID: 325 908 2109

Option 2:

Phone, dial +1-669-900-6833

Enter Meeting ID: 325 908 2109#

Then just wait to be connected!

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

Lance Brogden, RPEA/AMBIA Liaison, has agreed to host our Zoom meetings until we can safely attend in-person meetings. We held an “experimental” meeting on August 6 to get everyone comfortable about staying connected via Zooming, but only a couple of non-Board members joined us. Hopefully, there will be more participants at our September 3 meeting!

MESSAGE FROM ROGER KLAVES

ASSISTANT AREA II DIRECTOR (Written 8-4-2020)

Howdy displaced Paradise 074 Lunch-bunchers!
Our chapter is still suspended at this time. There looks to be a lot of rebuilding in Paradise, but it will still be a long time until there is a normal atmosphere up there. The numbers for CalPERS at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 are not great; but considering the trauma the fund experienced this spring, pretty darn good. To hear the Sac Bee tell it, PERS “missed its goal” with a return of 4.7 percent; the goal being 7 percent. Well, any fund would miss their goal when they dropped 70 BILLION dollars down a dark hole, like PERS did in February and March due to COVID-19. The fund was at about 400 billion dollars at the first of the year and finished up at 397 billion dollars at the middle of July; not bad for a “period of unrepresented change,” said their chief investment officer. Remember, PERS is in this “for the long haul.” For our friends at CalSTRS, they hit 3.9 percent of their goal of 7 percent. They had 246 billion dollars at the end of June and are about 64 percent funded. Finally, the California Supreme Court unanimously ruled on July 30 that pension spiking by inflating working hours, working extra shifts, and cashing out accumulated leave at the end of one’s career is illegal and can’t enhance pension payments. The court previously said workers couldn’t purchase service time to enhance pensions, either. The California rule remains untouched; i.e. promises made at hiring regarding “core benefits” must be kept. Stay safe and keep your masks handy!

LEGISLATIVE REPORT – By Mary Kowta

The lawmakers are intent on getting many bills through the process and ready for the Governor to sign by the end of August. The major focus is on COVID-19 related bills, such as an omnibus health bill and energy and wildfire topics. The Appropriations Committee is reviewing and rejecting!

AB 1460 was signed by the Governor on 8/17, requiring all 430,000 CSU undergrads to take an ethnic studies class as part of their academic program. This, while not COVID related, has been in the works for some time, and recent events involving social justice and racism gave it momentum.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT (Continued)

We all know Aaron Read, right? He is our RPEA lobbyist, who along with his associate, Pat Moran, provides us with the "Legislative Update" in our RPEA bulletin. You may not know that he is a venerable veteran lobbyist advocating for State employees and retirees since the sixties when Reagan was Governor and Willie Brown was an Assemblyman! (If you are our long time member, Jim Gregg, you do know this!)

HEALTH BENEFITS REPORT – By Al Raitt

At the August 13, 2020, stakeholders virtual meeting in Sacramento, CalPERS staff provided information about four topics of particular interest to retirees: (1) Competition amongst health insurance providers; (2) Risk Mitigation Strategy; (3) Online PERSpective newsletter; and (4) Cybersecurity.

CalPERS has for years been encouraging competition with regards to types and amounts of coverage as well as premium costs between health care insurance providers when these companies are submitting contracts in response to RFP's (Requests for Proposals). A report to the full CalPERS Board in July explained how this "competition strategy" helped to reduce overall costs and gave as an example a "Novel Network System" in Santa Barbara. The hospital in that area lowered its costs when CalPERS required that the retiree health insurance program for that area reduce hospital reimbursement rates thereby effectively "competing" with the hospital.

The Risk Mitigation Strategy (RMS) being proposed by CalPERS identifies which health insurance companies attempt to enroll more "healthy" retirees, as contrasted to "sick" people, in an effort to insure more "healthy lives" and thereby reduce insurance company costs compared to companies who accept more "unhealthy lives." Those retirees who enroll in plans which have attracted more "healthy lives," and therefore have lower costs, may discover that they have less coverage than needed if they become "unhealthy." CalPERS intends to begin "factoring in" the RMS strategy in an effort to require all plans to accept both "unhealthy" and "healthy" lives. This would be applied to the next open enrollment around November of 2020 for plans that become effective January 1, 2021.

The Winter 2020 CalPERS "PERSPECTIVE" newsletter is the last that will be provided as a paper version. There will be no printed Spring 2021 issue. Due to the current pandemic, the State Office of Printing employees are working at home and therefore cannot print. As a pilot

project, CalPERS will be offering the newsletter an email platform which involves using the over one million email addresses CalPERS has on file. They have already used this system to do eight separate emails since May of this year. This required over 4 million emails and resulted in a notable increase in members accessing the "myCalPERS" site to gain additional information, including one day when over 115 thousand "hits" to this site occurred. The two major issues researched were retirement amounts and health insurance plan coverage and costs. Lastly, CalPERS is devoting considerable resources to cybersecurity both for staff and retirees. Several examples of "COVID-19 Cyber Targets" were given including attempts to access health records and other health-related documents as well as the "ransomware" attacks on hospitals. Presenters recommended that retirees use the "two-step authentication" process when accessing their "myCalPERS" account. They also recommended people use the "haveibeenpwned.com" site to see if one's email account has been compromised. If this has happened, a list of accounts will be provided. Some accounts will allow removal of compromised data to be deleted online. Those who don't can be contacted by telephone and a request made for removal of all private data. They are legally mandated to comply. On a personal note, some of you may have seen the article in the July 25 edition of the *Enterprise-Record* describing a website "BC19.live" developed by a former Chico resident for the purpose of providing an unofficial tracking of Coronavirus cases in Butte County. I have found it useful as a complement to the Butte County Department of Public Health data site.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE REMINDER

If you know of anyone who could use a *Hello, Thinking of You, Get Well, or Sympathy* card, please email Lawrie Salvestrin (Sunshine Chair) lsalvest@gmail.com so that she can spread a little sunshine their way.

CHAPTER 077 MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS

At the September 3 virtual Membership meeting via Zoom, members will be asked to approve the minutes of the last official membership meeting held on March 5. The minutes may be viewed on the Chapter's website: rpeachapter77.com. Members with computers may print themselves a copy. If you attended the March 5 meeting but do not have a computer, you may contact Membership Chair Al Raitt (893-0435) to have a copy sent to you.