



**PASADENA RPEA CHAPTER 007  
NEWSLETTER**

Retired Public Employees Association of California  
Published bi-monthly May 2017



**“Protecting Your Family with Pre-Planning”  
Daniel Ahn, Planning Advisor, Forest Lawn**

**Thursday, June 8 at 12:00 Noon**

**Villa Gardens Retirement Community**

842 E. Villa Street, Pasadena

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Garden Room

**Lunch - \$12**

***It's Inevitable***

We're all going to be leaving this earth sometime in the future. Many of us have already had to deal with this with our parents, relatives or other loved ones. But there are things we can do in advance that can make the event less traumatic and less burdensome financially.

Mr. Ahn, along with Marco Bracho, will present some of the following subjects at our June meeting: Life insurance vs. funeral policies; options for cemetery properties, cremation basics, services for veterans, transportation arrangements both domestically and internationally.

Forest Lawn has been around since 1906, so they know a thing or two about final arrangements. But regardless of which firm you decide to use, the information presented at this meeting should prove invaluable in helping you prepare for that final act of remembrance.

**Reservations Recommended**

Please call one of the following by

**Monday, June 5**

Leta Ross (626) 791-1880

Larry Harsha (626) 351-0183

Or e-mail to [LandCharsha@yahoo.com](mailto:LandCharsha@yahoo.com) your reservation with “RPEA” in the subject line.

Menu: Buffet

Dozens of Free Parking spaces in  
Lake Avenue Church Parking Lot

Did we miss sending you a parking permit?

Call Larry Harsha at (626) 351-0183

Public Transportation:

MTA Bus Routes 180 & 485  
Pasadena ARTS Routes 20 & 40  
Metro Gold Line - Lake Station

## 2016-2017 Officers/Chairmen

President	Larry Harsha	(626) 351-0183
Vice-President	(position vacant)	
Secretary	Barbara Barrett	(626) 798-0530
Treasurer	Diane Johnson	(626) 862-1050
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Membership	(position vacant)	
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Area V Director	Ellie Knapp	(661) 297-6348

### Want to contact your officers by email?

Pres. Larry Harsha.....LandCharsha@Yahoo.com  
Sec. Barbara Barrett..... debb70111@Yahoo.com  
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Leg. Leo Acenas..... LAcenas@sbcglobal.net  
Newsletter Ed. Walter White ..... wsquared@GTE.net  
Area Director. Ellie Knapp..... eknapp@roadrunner.com

## Upcoming Chapter Meetings at Villa Gardens

June 8, 2017 ..... Garden Room, buffet  
October 12, 2017 ..... Garden Room, buffet  
December 14, 2017 ..... Villa Vista Room. 5<sup>th</sup> floor

Regular lunch attendees should have received parking permits earlier in the year, covering all our meetings for the remainder of the year.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held at Walter White's condominium complex in Monrovia on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. Any or all chapter members may attend. Call (626) 359-5805 to confirm date and time or to get directions.

## *Senior Discounts!*

RPEA has a list of restaurants, retail and apparel, grocery, travel and a host of other companies that provide discounts to seniors. The list isn't just for RPEA members, but ANY senior can take advantage of these discounts. But you do have to ask for your discount! Most places won't give it to you automatically. On the left column of the www.RPEA.com website, choose "2017 SENIOR DISCOUNTS."

## April Meeting Notes

by Walter White

Our speaker was Tressa Thompson, Sr. Driver Ombudsman for the California Department of Motor Vehicles. The senior driver program was established about 10 years ago after an older driver plowed through the Farmers' Market in Santa Monica. Many older drivers felt they were picked on by law enforcement personnel and some of the complaints were valid. So the DMV established the special program to address these concerns.

The ombudsman is a neutral party within the process. So if you have concerns, complaints, issues or questions about age related issues regarding driving and the DMV, she can be contacted directly. Her address is listed in DMV publications directed toward older drivers.

Most of the information she presented at the meeting is applicable to most drivers, not just seniors. Many drivers develop bad habits over the years (e.g.. the "California Roll" or "California Stop"). Seniors are becoming a larger percentage of drivers in this state, but surprisingly are statistically one of the safest groups of drivers. The issue of age usually doesn't come up until there's an incident that generates a lot of media attention. The problem drivers are between the ages of 16 and 20. Many are newly licensed so they are not as experienced, don't have the judgment gained over time, are often distracted, and sometimes fail to use common sense.

As we get older our driving needs change. We don't necessarily have to drive in rush-hour traffic, drive on the freeways, drive at night, drive long distances or drive beyond familiar areas. It doesn't mean that we aren't capable of driving in those situations, but we we're less comfortable doing so. We acknowledge that our eyesight isn't the same, or our reaction time is different from when we were younger. So we self-restrict our driving to remain safe.

It's not OK to get on the freeway and drive 45-50 mph, even in the slow lane.

As we get older, our health changes: vision, hearing, flexibility, mobility, reaction times, etc. Tressa

recommends regular visits to the doctor and periodic vision tests to keep us as healthy as possible. However, if there is a severe medical condition that would impair driving, doctors are required by law to report that to the DMV. The DMV would then investigate, and they may or may not restrict your driving or add conditions to your license. This can happen regardless of age.

You don't have to be a doctor to report an unsafe driver - any individual can do it. It's often a family member or friend who reports their concern. There is even a specific form for the purpose. But the DMV does not accept anonymous referrals. You must identify yourself, although you can request that your name be kept confidential. It would require a court order to release your name, but Tressa doesn't recall that ever happening. The Driver Safety Branch in Commerce handles those reports. The time to process those requests depends upon the degree of risk to traffic safety and the office's workload. The process involves an administrative hearing with the driver (and possibly counsel or witnesses) which reviews the evidence and renders a licensing decision.

Some people have been known to refer themselves for a re-examination to satisfy themselves or their families that they are still capable of driving. DMV employees, of course, can also refer you to Driver Safety if they notice something that would impair your ability to drive.

Tressa then mentioned quite a few laws that are often broken either through ignorance or inexperience. Pulling over to the right and coming to a complete stop for police or any emergency vehicle with their red lights flashing, is one of the most blatantly ignored. Many drivers just slow down or don't move out of the way. Some get right on the bumper of the emergency vehicle after it passes them. And it doesn't matter whether the siren is being used - the red lights are enough to trigger your response. Drivers should always be scanning around them and checking the rear-view mirror periodically as part of normal driving.

The abuse of handicap parking placards is another concern. The DMV has its own investigators performing sting operations to locate scofflaws,

most recently in Glendale. It's your doctor who determines whether your condition qualifies for a placard, not the DMV. And you don't have to have a vehicle in order to request a placard. You can use it on any vehicle you are riding in. But it's yours, whether as a driver or passenger. You may not share it and allow someone to use it without your being in the vehicle. That means you have to be in the vehicle while it's being parked in a handicap spot. You have to always carry the identification paper that ties you to that specific placard's serial number. Fines for misuse are steep: about \$1,000.

There are some age-related DMV requirements. If you are 70 or older, you must go in person to a DMV office to renew a driver's license. You can't do it by mail. The knowledge and vision tests are mandatory. Upon passing, you'll get a full 5-year renewal. You pay \$33 to renew the license, and you get three chances to pass the test. You can take all three opportunities to pass the test on the same day if you want, although it's best to study more between attempts. Sample tests are available for free on the [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov) website.

The DMV is now using touch-screen terminals to administer the tests. The tests themselves haven't basically changed: there are still 18 questions with 3 possible answers to each question, and you may miss up to 3 questions. You only get one question at a time on the screen, and three minutes to answer it (although you can extend those three minutes). You can skip up to three questions if you want to address them later. In the past there were only a few versions of the test which made it easy to memorize answers. Now the questions are randomly chosen so no two tests are identical. The tests are available in 20 languages. Paper-style tests are still available upon request.

California has a senior ID for those 62 or older. It's free and is valid for 10 years. Even though the ID is primarily for those who don't drive, Tressa recommends you get the ID in addition to your driver's license. Just don't keep them in the same place in case one gets lost.

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A 60 page booklet "Senior Guide for Safe Driving" is available at any California DMV field office.



Pasadena R.P.E.A. Chapter 7  
c/o Larry Harsha  
1070 Pine Bluff Dr.  
Pasadena,, CA 91107-1750

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