



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Area III Monterey County

Salinas Chapter 020 Newsletter

(Home of the California Rodeo, Steinbeck Country
& Salad Bowl of the World)

January/February 2017

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT: Monday, February 6, 2017; 11:30 to 1:00 p.m.

Where: Park Place Bingo (entrance & parking in back), 1045 S. Main St., Salinas.
Lunch \$4.00; non-members \$8.50. No charge for first time prospective members.

Choice of chef's salad or ham sandwich (desert and beverage included).

Please call the following *to reserve* your choice for lunch: Robin Valentine @ 831/449-2628
or Cathy Burns @ 831/758-5650. Failure to make a reservation may result in no lunch available to you.

Welcome New Members!

Happy New Year everyone! As we begin the New Year, we would like to announce that we have gained an additional 155 members who join us from all around the Monterey Peninsula. We invite you and look forward to meeting you all at our upcoming chapter meeting in Salinas. We hope to have a large group in attendance to come out and welcome our new members from the former Chapter 067 of the Monterey Peninsula.

Our meeting site is located right as you come into the city limits from Hwy 68, or from Marina on Blanco Road. Please note: Hwy 68 turns into Main Street after passing the Nob Hill shopping center on the corner of Blanco Road and Main Street. Continue to travel in a quarter mile. Make a right-hand turn onto San Miguel Avenue, then a quick left and proceed straight in. The Bingo Parlor is right next to the bowling alley.

Also, if you would like to get your newsletter via email, please let us know and we will include you on our email list. You will not get a hard copy. This will help to save on postage as well as the cost of printing up the newsletter. FYI a lot of our members who move away from the area, like to keep close ties with their chapters and so they are still included in our newsletter mailing list.

In addition to informing members about our pension rights and benefits, we also include information of value to our members as well as local information that benefits our safety, health and welfare.

We invite new members to submit any information of interest that you would like to include in our newsletter that would benefit the whole chapter. Please contact our acting president, vice-president, or any other board member as listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Election of Officers

Election of officers was held in December. We are currently without a permanent president; however, the current officers will take up a leadership position in order to keep the chapter going until we find someone interested in taking over. The duties of the president do not take up a great deal of personal time. They are the liaison to RPEA headquarters, receiving all pertinent information for the chapter and the membership. The president chairs both the Board of Directors' meetings as well as chapter meetings. We have five Board of Director meetings and five chapter meetings from September through June. We work hard at our meetings but we sure have a lot of fun and it gets us out of the house.

Additionally, we have member who come from all walks of life. Among them are officers from the law enforcement field. Perhaps you would like to step up? Walter Scott and Bill Lippert were two such retirees who dedicated their time to the presidency. After Walter's passing, Bill worked diligently to hold the chapter together in his role as president. Bill is still with us and we are so grateful for his continued membership and support, always attending together with his wife Ruth.

Finally, it seems that from time to time, we have to pull together in order to keep our chapter alive. And, it almost always falls on those few loyal members who are so dedicated to RPEA that they are willing to give of their most precious time for the benefit of the rest of us. Again, if you are interested in joining our leadership team, please call me or anyone else on our Board as listed at the end of this newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you!

Media Attacks

Please be advised that over the last few months, the media has been reporting negatively on public servant and retiree benefits. Some of our members report reading about this even in the Wall Street Journal, though this is not the first time they've reported on issues affecting California government. We are being depicted as having gained too many benefits, benefits that must be cut back. It is being reported that due to CalPERS management of public service funds over the last few years, that they will not be able to keep up with pension costs in the future.

Additionally, several suits are being heard by the State Supreme Court that may affect our pensions. Mostly, it has to do with the State allowing employees to purchase extra time in order to add extra years to their retirement; however, this practice quickly ended back in 2012 when the media caught wind of it.

For these reasons we are all encouraged to contact the media, print or otherwise, in order to fight back to protect our earned retirement benefits. You can also attend CalPERS Board meetings that are open to the public. The internet address is www.calpers.ca.gov.

Please check the website for dates of open meetings as well as the ability to view via a live telecast. If you attend, you can give your input on topics of importance to you and the membership. Be sure to report back to us so that we can share your feedback and experience on our newsletter.

Health News

RX Info - For those of you who have prescription drug coverage through Anthem Blue Cross, your vendor provider is now OptumRx, having replaced CVS/Casemark. OptumRX will provide your meds via mail-order if this was your preferred method of purchase. However, if you were getting your meds locally, then you must fill out a form to select a new vendor under the new plan. All this information has been trickling out through the mail over the last few months and can get confusing for some of us. If you need additional help on this or other questions, please contact headquarters and ask to speak to our health benefits advisor.

Insurance Benefits - As you may know, RPEA has contracted with AMBA (Association of Member Benefits Advisors & Insurance Agency) to provide our members with dental and vision care, Medicare supplemental plans, pet insurance and many types of leisure services. If you have retired without insurance benefits or have reached the age to apply for Medicare, AMBA can assist you with an insurance plan.

Please note that if you do not apply for a supplemental insurance plan after Medicare eligibility, you will be penalized and will not be able to apply until the next open enrollment.

AMBA is located in Austin TX. They provide their services throughout the country. For more information, you can call them at 1-800/258-7041, or through their website at myambabenefits@amba.info. AMBA has agents working throughout the state of California. And, because they are so new to our Association, we will try to have an agent come to a chapter meeting to give a more thorough explanation of their services.

Membership

We are in need of someone to take over membership duties. Headquarters did not report any new members joining over the last two months. Since people tend to retire at the end of the year, let's keep up the recruitment process by inviting anyone that we may know who has just joined the ranks of retirees to join RPEA.

It is very important to inform new retirees or non-members that after retirement, there is no other body within public service that is going to fight for their retirement benefits. We have a better chance of protecting our benefits and in gaining services if we have more members within RPEA or any other affiliate employee retirement association.

Dues/Member Addresses

It has come to our attention that some of our members are behind on paying their dues. Though the association gives us a 3-month grace period, it is very important to pay your dues timely. These funds are managed by REPA for administrative upkeep as well in hiring and keeping the best professional people to represent us before the California Legislature whenever threats to our benefits are detected as well as with cost of living increases, etc. Currently, we have an excellent workforce of lobbyists fighting for us in Sacramento.

Also noted are members who fail to report a change of address to headquarters. If we do not have your address, RPEA cannot send you their newsletter nor will you receive your chapter newsletter. Information contained in the REPA newsletter is very informative and valuable to the members. So don't miss out.

Please see the announcement at the end of this newsletter for the address or phone number to contact for this correction.

Chapter Name

Now that we serve a larger boundary, we are thinking about a name that will incorporate the Monterey Peninsula. Though we are called Salinas Chapter 020, we feel that the addition of our logo is a fun type of logo that identifies our city at its best. We can keep the logo but include the Monterey Peninsula in the name, or we can choose another name.

Please email your ideas to your newsletter editor, or our acting president. We look forward to your entries. The winner will be announced at a later meeting and will get a free lunch. Additionally, we have raffles at our meetings, giving away prizes as well as a free lunch. You will receive one raffle ticket with your lunch purchase.

Just for Fun

Some of our members are into book clubs, reading the latest books or any topics that suit their interests, particularly history books. One of the latest readings was on the huge (and I do mean huge!) text of the popular Hamilton book in which the current block-buster New York Play is based on. If you want to get involved, please come to our meetings and hook up with our book-worms. They will be happy to give you more information on their clubs.

NOTICE!! If you have recently moved, and for the delivery of this newsletter, please notify RPEA Headquarters at 200 T Street, Sacramento, CA 95811, or call 916/442-7732.

www.rpea.com
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