



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

## Santa Clara County Chapter 031 Newsletter

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*An Association of CalPERS Annuitants committed to the goal of helping all public employees maintain their physical and economic health during retirement*

**NEXT MEETING – December 6th, 2017, at HARRY'S HOFBRAU, 390 Saratoga Avenue at Stevens Creek Blvd. (No meeting in November!)**

**No-host Lunch at 11:30 - Meeting at 12:30**

### AN AFTERNOON OF SURPRISES

By Jo Pugsley



**L**ife is full of surprises – expected and unexpected. It is the unexpected that can surprise

and delight us to give us a wonderful experience. Something out of the ordinary that can make you be grateful to be at RPEA for the Christmas celebration.

This year our regular program is giving way to something new. Something out of the ordinary. Hopefully, this program will be life changing as it gives you a surprise throughout the program. We will have a more intimate meeting with opportunities to connect with our former co-workers and friends we have made through RPEA. This will give the Board members a time to connect with all of you on a personal level and to join in welcoming the Holiday Season.

We will do our special holiday dessert, our yearly expected

surprise. However, when you enter Harry's Hofbrau you will be given a small envelope. Do not open it until the meeting. When the signal is given you will open your special envelope. We wish you luck as you progress to the next step.

Please join us on December 6 at our familiar haunt, Harry's Hofbrau. We can promise a good meal, interesting company, and an afternoon of delight. Come in your holiday finery and celebrate the beginning of the holidays. **See you on Wednesday!**

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**IN MEMORIAM:** Our deepest sympathy to the families and loved ones of Barbara Allen, Howard Bjerke, Elsie Conly, Dolores Cunha, Abnan Daoud, David Gates, Clarence Moore, Mary Ruby, Zephyr Williams and Rose Yi.

*They will truly be missed.*

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### A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

**F**ollowing are the names of new members – Marialice Ames, Saba Baig, Yolanda Beauchamp, Ann Bitonti, Nancy Bosibori, Joann Cook, Kelley England, Velia Esquivel-Ferguson, Audry Fitzgerald, Chun Lundgren, Jeannine Martin, Dianne Nelson, Michael Nelson, Tenly Petrino, Georgina Ramirez, Joseph Sanchez, Bhagavathy Sankaran, Della Segura, Nancy Siu, Rigoberto Valdez, and John Vojnik

***Welcome Everyone!***

## SANTA CLARA COUNTY INFORMATION DESK

**T**hank **you** to the following members who staffed the Information Desk in October: Lupe Aguilar, Linda Baum, Lupe Castenada, Mary Ann Cathcart, Mary Chaboya, Michell Cockerille, Gloria Courtney, Sara De Leon, Sue Farr, Lidia Gonzales, Bob Hagele, Tom Heim, Vi Hill, Connie Jimenez, Mary Martinez, Kathy Miller, Alan Miramon, Janet Motha, Gerri Nedley, John Avery Palmer, Pam Saunders, and Carolyn Walsh.

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### THE HISTORY CORNER

#### Marianne Damon, Historian, RPEA Chapter 031 A STANFORD GET-AWAY



**S**tanford is a lovely place to visit. In keeping with my plans to write about local, easy to get to, low cost, interesting places,

this month's trip fulfills them all. Easy to get to from either 680 or 101 (premise: you are avoiding heavy traffic hours), the 13 square-mile campus is a lovely blend of nature, academia, local and international history and culture, and, yes, shopping!

Shopping? I was completely surprised to learn that Stanford Shopping Center sits on land owned by the University. In fact, the entire complex was developed in 1954 and operated by Stanford until 2003 when the board of trustees sold the shopping center and buildings (but not the land) for \$333 million to the Simon Property Group. SPG leases the land, and pays an annual rent equal to 25% of the net profits! The land was originally Leland Stanford's vineyards. High-end stores have anchored the Center, starting with The Emporium and I. Magnin & Co. and now with Bloomingdale's, Macy's and Nordstrom. And, of course, there is a Tesla dealership and a huge Apple Store. What makes this high-end outdoor shopping mall a low-

cost destination? There is plenty of free parking, comfortable (as in very cushy) outdoor shaded seating, gorgeous plantings, a plaza with "infinity" water fountain features, a long fire pit, charging stations for your electronic devices, and water bowls for your canine companions. One can stroll the area, enjoy the seasonal exhibits and displays, and not even go into a store. When your newsletter editor and I visited (serious research, mind you...), we enjoyed seeing hundreds of hand-blown glass pumpkins, sea shells and flowers for sale by the artist. And we spent time looking at the huge tromp l'oeil mural done by John Pugh in 1989 (he had also done a mural inside a cafe across from Valley Medical Center; I knew John and his then-wife, who was a physical therapist with me at VMC. I also came across another of his works at the New Almaden Museum, but that is a story for another time). We lunched al fresco at Max's Opera Cafe, but remarked how easy it would be to bring a lunch and eat at any of the outdoor sitting areas. Very child friendly, it's a fun place to bring the grandchildren, especially when there are children's activities. One fun event every year is the "playhouse" fund-raiser. Throughout the Center are actual themed playhouses that people can bid on. Many have very clever design ideas and all of them will make you smile and wish you could still fit inside!

Ready for more? Just a minute or so drive onto the campus are several must-see places. We'll start with the Arizona Cactus Garden. Hardly anyone knows about this special little garden. It is near the Stanford Family Mausoleum and the Angel of Grief. Leland and Jane Stanford planned to build their mansion there, but after putting in the cactus and succulent garden their only son, Leland, Jr., died at the age of 15 in Italy from Typhoid fever. They decided to build a university in his name instead: "The children of California shall be our children." The garden was planted between 1880 and 1883 and maintained until the 1920's. Restoration work began in 1997 and some of the original plants can be seen. The "Eastern Hemisphere" section has aloes, jade plants and succulents from Europe, Asia and Africa. The "Western Hemisphere" section has cacti native to the Americas.

Ready for art? Just across from the Cactus Garden, on Lomita Drive, is the Cantor Arts Center with the Rodin Sculpture Garden, and the Anderson Collection. Both are free admission; parking is

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\$2.50 per hour but free after 4 pm and on weekends. The museum opened in 1894 as the Leland Stanford Jr. Museum and is a general art collection with a specialty in Asian art. Just like the Cactus Garden, this museum fell into severe disrepair after the 1906 earthquake and the death of co-founder Jane Stanford. Some effort was made to maintain some sort of educational collection, but serious focus on restoring a great collection began in the 1950's with the founding of the Committee for Art at Stanford. In the 1980's work was done to open the B. Gerald Cantor Rodin Sculpture Garden, showcasing the largest collection of Rodin's works (400 pieces!) outside of the Musee Rodin in Paris. Another earthquake, our 1989 Loma Prieta, caused major damage yet again, causing the museum to close. It re-opened ten years later in 1999. Ready for a snack? The Cool Cafe at Cantor is just the right place for coffee, tea or lunch before you move on to our next stop. The Anderson Collection is housed in its own new building adjacent to The Cantor. Harry and Mary Margaret Anderson of Atherton became interested in collecting art after being exposed to art through their travels abroad. Harry took an art appreciation course at Stanford and began collecting post-WW II American art: Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Richard Diebenkorn, Ad Reinhardt and Willem de Kooning, amongst many others (87 total artists, to be exact!). My impression after visiting: I definitely need to come back! Both the Cantor and Anderson have docent-lead tours.

Two more close-by places not to miss: Stanford Memorial Church and Hoover Tower. The church

was built by Jane Stanford as a memorial to her husband Leland, and is known as "the University's architectural crown jewel". It was inspired by Venetian churches, with stained glass, extensive mosaics, and five pipe organs. It is the earliest non-denominational church on the West Coast and the goal has been to "serve the spiritual needs of the university in a non-sectarian way." I have been to music concerts and a wedding here, and can attest that this is a very special place. Docent led tours are available. Last stop: Hoover Tower. The tower's observation deck is open daily from 10 am to 4 pm except during academic breaks and finals. At 250 feet high, there is a great view of the campus and on clear days the San Francisco skyline can be seen. The tower has a 24 bell carillon. The first nine floors are library stacks housing President Herbert Hoover's collection to found "a library of war, revolution and peace". The last three floors are offices for the Hoover Institution research center and think-tank. The tower was completed in 1941, just in time for the University's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Of interest, the Stanfords founded the university after the model of Cornell University back East, and it was called "Cornell of the West" due to many faculty being former Cornell professors and alumni. Both universities were among the first to have higher education be accessible, nonsectarian, and open to both men and women. You might also hear the campus referred to as The Farm, a nod to the land being the Stanford's Palo Alto farm. The University has been through tough times, from budgetary crises after Leland Stanford's death, and after Jane Stanford's death, and the two earthquakes

of 1906 and 1989. This private research university has prevailed to become one of the world's most prestigious universities. Although there are many other fascinating places to visit on Stanford's land, this ends our tour for today. I hope our trip has given you some fun new places to explore.

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### **NEW SCAM TARGETS CALPERS RETIREES**

If you receive a phone call telling you to send money through prepaid credit cards in order to receive your pensions, please hang up! It is a scam!

**Please have a safe and great holiday!**

