

From the President's Desk

## Pension Issue Drawing Antagonists From Expanding Areas of Society

I think it reasonable to suggest that crunch time approaches. The issue of public employee pensions has moved from what essentially have been political exchanges to discussion at the broader general public level. The Sacramento Bee recently put together a forum-style group of several dozen leaders defined as "influencers." One of these is Rob Stutzman, head of his own public affairs firm. His observation: "Pension costs are eating a hole in California's future, and our elected leaders will need to show courage to deal with these mushrooming obligations that will consume local governments and eventually crush the middle class."

Strong language, and although he focuses on city and county employees, we know state retirees are an integral element of the pension equation.

Governor Brown indicates he awaits a Supreme Court decision on a case that could set aside the so-called California Rule, the principal that retirees' pensions, once established, become a perpetual guarantee. The court agreed to hear an appeal of a lower court ruling that retirees are entitled to a "reasonable" pension, not necessarily the pension offered when they were hired.

Brown has stated that he thinks the California rule may be modified, based on the fact that several lower court opinions took the position that employees are entitled to a reasonable pension, not "any remuneration they can imagine." RPEA of course will always strive to serve your best interests. That's why we're here--**Roberta Christensen**

## What Else Is Happening?

### Chapter 084's newest members are:

Lawrence Anderson, Roseville  
Mark Cowden, Citrus Heights  
Judith Russell, Fair Oaks  
Dawn Valerio, Carmichael

### Chapter Revenue Balance:

\$7,989, up \$342 from the June report

### Celebrating Birthdays:

**JULY**--Lori Benitez, Pat Blanson, Alfredo Gomez, David Woods

**AUGUST**--Roberta Christensen, Marty Martinez, Della Owens, Dorothy Rose, Wraa Rose, Clara Shuper, Maria Sumner

And the Chapter Still Needs--A vice-president and a membership chair--could you help?

## *Some Have Converted...*

...and the chapter appreciates that. Converted their newsletter delivery to E-mail, instead of snail mail, that is. The door remains open. Advise Kent Milton ([barbjuly20@gmail.com](mailto:barbjuly20@gmail.com)) if you would like to make the switch. It's convenient, and saves the chapter money.

## New Legislative Chair Already Busy Tracking Adverse Proposals

Our Chapter 084 legislative chair, Lori Benitez, is new at that job but already deeply involved--tracking the status of two proposed constitutional amendments that could impair retiree pensions, and delving into figures on dollar amounts of existing CalPERS retirements.

The amendments are SCA 10 and SCA 8; RPEA opposes both. The former would prohibit increasing a public employee retirement benefit without a prior 2/3 majority approval vote by voters within the jurisdiction for which the increase is proposed.

That, of course, would affect all state retirees every time a COLA increase is proposed--such increment having to be approved by voters--with passage questionable (not to mention the bureaucratic logjam which the provision would create).

SCA 8 would prohibit state acceptance of any liability for payment of benefits earned by participants in the state's Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program (for private sector employees). Nor could the state appropriate or transfer General Fund moneys for program purposes (except start-up and first-year costs).

The numbers Lori researched reveal that a large majority (80 percent) of existing retirees receive benefits totaling \$50,000 or less. The figures:

- 159,280 retirees receive less than \$20,000
- 242,622 retirees receive from \$10,000 to \$30,000
- 115,329 retirees receive from \$30,000 to \$50,000
- 106,744 retirees receive from \$50,000 to \$100,000
- 22,826 retirees receive more than \$100,000

Thus, only 20 percent receive annual benefits of \$50,000 or more.

## General Assembly Due in September

Treasurer Gloria Kalthoff will represent Chapter 084 at RPEA's General Assembly in September. The chapter will gear up for that meeting with a late-August consideration of resolutions to come before the Assembly, and potential voting recommendations for our delegate.

RPEA Chapter 084  
1168 Rand Way  
Roseville, CA 95678

*Return Service requested*

### *RPEA-Roseville Chapter 084*

The Next Chapter Luncheon Meeting--Thursday, August 23, 10:45 a.m.  
at Sierra Regency, 1015 Madden Lane, Roseville 95661

#### The Menu:

*Grilled Cubano Sandwich* (roast pork, ham, Swiss cheese, pickle, mustard), or  
*Chicken, Waffle, Eggs Benedict*--with Hollandaise sauce, maple butter, fruit salad

Call Helen Field (916 783-0325) to make reservations and your menu selection. Reservations  
**must be made** no later than August 20 (Monday prior to meeting).

Cost: \$10 for members, \$12 for associate members, \$14 for guests (Please bring exact change or a check)

(If you have made a reservation and find you can't attend, *please advise Helen Field* because Chapter 084 must pay for all reservations).

#### **The August 23 Program**

Roseville's homeless have a steadfast support system managed by an organization known as The Gathering Inn, which partners with local churches to provide the homeless with dinner and a place to sleep 365 days a year. The Gathering Inn (or TGI) maintains offices and services at a downtown headquarters building, and transports homeless by bus to a local church each night. Here they get a nutritious meal and comfortable sleeping area. Our speaker will be Keith Diederich, TGI's chief executive, who will address the many additional services TGI offers the homeless, based upon their objective to provide "a hand up, not a hand out."