



SCARE Newsletter

Sonoma County Association of Retired Employees

Published Quarterly Aug 2019 Volume 311 Issue 3

Calendar of Events 2019

Membership Meetings

Steele Lane Community Center in Santa Rosa at 1:00 PM—Social at 12:30. Aug. 27, Nov. 19

Luncheons - Legends

Legends at Bennett Valley Golf Course 1:00 PM. Sept. 11, Dec. 11

Board Meetings

1:00 PM Dates may change so call Board member first. Sept. 4, Nov. 6

Many members have agreed to get notices and newsletters via email. This saves money and trees and lets us get info to you more quickly. Plus you get the newsletter in color and can increase the font size for easier reading!! If you are willing to get notices and the newsletter via email, send an email to : communications@sonomacountyretirees.com authorizing SCARE to send them to you. Please add that address to your address book so spam filters let it through.

The SCARE Newsletter is printed quarterly. The information printed in the news-letter is believed to be accurate and from reliable sources. However, no responsibility is assumed by SCARE, the Editor, or the writers for inaccuracies in the articles as published.

President's Message by Alix Shor

It's hard to believe it's already August. For those of us who retired prior to June 30, 2016, we have gotten the last of three large contributions to our HRA's based on the SCARE legal settlement with the County. I hope you have been using this benefit, be it to supplement your share of your insurance premium or to pay for things not fully covered by insurance. The County informs us that 760 retirees have still not used any of their HRA. If you fall in this group, go to page 3 in this newsletter for more information on how to use your HRA.

This year is SCARE's turn to host the CRCEA (California Retired County Employees Association) semi-annual conference. CRCEA is made up of the twenty 1937 Act counties (which means they have their own pension plans rather than being a part of CalPERS). The conference will be at the DoubleTree in Rohnert Park from 10/28 to 10/30. We could use some help either prior to the conference putting materials together or with staffing the registration table. It would just be for a few hours. You may contact either Carol Bauer at 874-9149 or Kathy Young at 539-8027 for further information. If you volunteer, you get into the conference free.

The conference committee has put together some very good presentations that you may wish to hear. The schedule will be available online a little later this month. Go to <http://sonomacountyretirees.com/crcea.shtml>. As a SCARE member the registration fee is only \$10.00 which helps to cover the cost of the refreshments provided for both morning and afternoon sessions. If you attend the conference, you are also welcome to join us for a reception on both Monday and Tuesday from 5:30 to 7:00 with a hosted bar and hors d'oeuvres. It's a good chance to meet people from the other 19 counties. The registration form is available on the link shown above. If you want to attend, complete it but show that you are a SCARE member and include payment of \$10. If you have questions, contact registrar, Phyris Tobler, at 707 795-6926.

Quarterly Luncheon: The Board recently voted to increase our subsidy of the luncheon which reduces the cost to \$20.00 for members. This includes tax and tip. We hope this will encourage more members to attend. It is a good chance to get together with people you used to work with. We've now had two luncheons at Legends at the Bennett Valley Golf Course and the feedback has been quite positive. I hope you will consider joining us on Wednesday, September 11 at 1 pm.

Board Members needed: Wendie Cooper has resigned from the Board. That leaves our Board short two members. We are looking for people to fill these positions. The workload is not heavy. You have to attend a Board meeting every other month and generally have some other task as we have no paid staff, but even then, you would probably only spend 5 hours/month, if that.

Board of Directors

Officers

President — Alix Shor

707-538-0708

alixshor@sonic.net

Vice President — Phyris Tobler

707-795-6926

phyris@sbcglobal.net

Secretary — Patty Hamley

707-579-1726

phamleyis@hotmail.com

Treasurer — Bill Robotka

707-570-5134

brobotka@aol.com

Immediate Past

President — Carol Bauer

707-874-9149

bfuzzy51@aol.com

Directors at Large

Ed Clites

Shaun Du Fosee

Cora Guy

Lou Maricle

Retirement Board Retiree Reps

John Pels

Alternate: Neil Baker

Committee Chairs & Tasks

Health Benefits/JLMBC: Phyris Tobler

Membership: Patty Hamley

Financial Oversight: Phyris Tobler

CRCEA Rep: Lou Maricle

Alternate: Carol Bauer

Newsletter Editor: Lonna Necker

Facebook Coordinator: Bob Bulwa

Programs: Bob Bulwa

Scholarships: Lou Maricle

Nominating: Cora Guy

SCCLO: Bill Robotka

Contact info on website

Minutes of the SCARE Business Meeting of May 28, 2019

1. Guest Speaker: Bob Bulwa introduced today's guest speaker, Renee Tolliver, Director of Social Services, for the Council on Aging. Renee reported on the 21 programs and services offered by the Agency, including Social Services, Legal, Financial, and Health. Meals on Wheels, Estate Planning, the Sonoma Wine Country Games, Age-Friendly Sonoma County are just a few of the services that require volunteers to be successful. For more information check out councilonaging.com or call 707-525-0143. Renee's extension is 124.

2. Call to Order: Following Renee's presentation President Alix Shor called the meeting to order.

3. CRCEA: Carol Bauer reported on the CRCEA (California Retired County Employees Association) Conference which will be hosted by SCARE October 28-30, 2019, at the DoubleTree Hotel, Rohnert Park. Carol asked for volunteers to help with the conference (registration, gift bags, decorations for banquet, etc.). Contact Carol at 707-874-9149 or bfuzzy51@aol.com.

3. SCCLO (Sonoma County Coalition of Labor Organizations): Phyris Tobler reported all of the unions are working together. The County is increasing contributions toward health insurance. So far, they are not suggesting depooling retirees from employees. Retirees under 65 could be depooled from actives, which would make their health insurance premiums go up. 1/3 of retirees are under 65, so this could affect a lot of people.

4. JLMBC (Joint Labor Management Benefits Committee): Phyris reported the County would like to get rid of the County Health Plan. However, they must have something for those retirees who have moved out of the area and are under 65 as they are not eligible for other County health plans.

The unions representing Safety employees have agreed to the County paying \$500 per month into a medical trust fund (DSA) or an HRA (SCLEA). The County will no longer pay the \$96.40 reimbursement for Medicare Part B for those retirees. This only affects people who retire after October 2018 and August 2018 for DSA. We don't think SEIU has even been offered this option, or, at least, they have not accepted it.

5. Member Feedback: Phyris asked for feedback from members on the SCARE Newsletter and for speaker suggestions for our Membership Meetings. We would like to know what they like or if there are other things they would like to see.

6. SCARE Luncheon: Alix announced SCARE's next luncheon will be held June 12 at Legends (Bennett Valley Golf Course). This is a barbecue buffet. Fliers were in the last Newsletter and also available on the back table today. The Board agreed at its last meeting to increase the amount the Association pays towards members' lunches to \$10. This will take effect at our September 11th luncheon. Member lunches will be \$20 rather than \$24 (all inclusive). Non-SCARE members will pay \$30.

7. Drawing: 26 members signed the roster for today's meeting. Kay Greczkowski and Gail Goring won the drawing for a free SCARE luncheon at Legends. Thanks to Carl Jackson for conducting the drawings at our Membership Meetings and for collecting the money donations for F.I.S.H. at our luncheons.

8. Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Patty Hamley, Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed at our website or you can request a copy from Patty Hamley.

JLMBC Report by Phyris Tobler

Annual enrollment (AE) has been completed. The County always gives us a migration report after AE which shows when retirees and employees switch plans. The County Health Plan (CHP) only has 26 employees left in it. Most employees have gone to Sutter or Kaiser. There are only about 100 retirees under 65 left in the plan. Given that about 85 live in areas that only have CHP available, that is not too surprising. Given the high cost of CHP, especially for non-Medicare folks, it is expected that this group would switch to the much less expensive plans. What is more surprising is that there are about 740 Medicare retirees still in CHP even though they have to pay \$238/month for single and almost \$1,000/month if they have a Medicare dependent. Only 3 people left the CHP PPO this year despite high premium savings if they went to other plans.

As we have mentioned, the County would like to phase out the CHP Plan. Don't get worried. It isn't going to happen really soon. There is the possibility of a national Medicare Advantage Plan that would be very similar to the Kaiser coverage which is quite good—low copays for medical services and prescriptions. It would cost more than Kaiser or current AARP/UHC plans but it would be much less than CHP. It would really help your reps on this committee if we knew why those on Medicare are not switching to less expensive plans—Kaiser or AARP. We understand that you may not want to change your doctor which lets out Kaiser, but you can keep all your doctors if you switch to AARP/UHC when you could save money on other plans. I'd like to hear from Members who are Medicare eligible and have CHP coverage. Question: Why do you stay with CHP? One or more reasons is fine. Please send to me at phyris@sbcglobal.net or call me at 707 795-6926 or write to me at 7675 Blair Ave, Rohnert Park, 94928.

HRA Update

Our lawsuit settlement required the County to make 3 annual deposits into class members' (those retiring before 6/30/16) HRAs (Health Reimbursement Accounts). The County made their last major deposit into class members' HRAs on July 1, 2019. The amount deposited was \$1,379.86. The reason that it was less than last year's amount was that the settlement agreement allowed the County to withhold \$250,000 in order to pay the ACA "Cadillac Tax" if that tax was still pending. While the collection of this tax has been delayed several times, it has not been repealed. However, there is hope that that may happen as the House has passed a bill to repeal this tax, but it still needs the Senate's approval so you shouldn't hold your breath.

If that bill is passed, the County would then have to distribute the \$250,000. Whether this happens or not, there will be additional small deposits on each July 1st, probably for several years. That is because as class members die with no beneficiaries, any balance they have goes back in the pool to be distributed the following July 1st. The reallocation contribution, as it is called, was \$33.58 this year and it could be something similar next year.

Statistics on usage: As of 6-26-19, 899 people had a zero balance, 1,482 had some balance but **680 members had used none of their HRA**. That means they have \$3,781 minus the \$70 that P&A charges to administer the HRA for 2 years. We think it likely that most of these people are not SCARE members because we have talked and talked about the HRAs and using your money. However, if you read this and you have not used your HRA, think about using it. It's available for pretty much any health related costs you or your spouse have, including your insurance premiums for your County insurance. If you don't have your debit card (looks like a MasterCard and has P&A Group at the top), call P&A at 1-800-688-2611 and ask them to send you a new card. You can call me if you want more info and don't feel comfortable calling P&A.

Magazine and Book Exchange

We are continuing our magazine exchange at our Membership meetings so if you hate having to recycle perfectly good magazines, bring them to the meeting on August 27. You can also bring books, cd's, and calendars.

Trivia—For those of you who have either Alexa or Echo, did you know they both have a whisper mode. If you whisper command to them, they will whisper response back to you.



Help a child learn to read!



Research shows the ability to read at grade level by the third grade is a predictor for graduating from high school. In Sonoma County, more than half of third grade students are reading below grade level. Schools of Hope is an early intervention program for children who are struggling with reading by providing one-to-one literacy tutoring. Tutors receive training and are matched with a student at a local school. Children with a tutor make measurable progress in reading. And it only takes a caring adult willing to give them a little time each week.

In as little as 30 minutes a week, make a difference in a child's life!

Learn more about the program or register for an orientation at www.unitedwaywinecountry.org. For more information about being a volunteer tutor, **please contact Ariel Vipond at (707) 528-4485 x103 or ariel.vipond@unitedwaywinecountry.org.**"



Mentor Me empowers youth in need to achieve their highest potential through mentoring and advocacy. Mentor Me, in Petaluma, needs volunteers to mentor children, grades K-12.

No special skills are needed to be a mentor, 95% of the job is just showing up! Mentors act as good role models, providing a listening ear and non-judgmental guidance. You can start with just one hour, once a week

Mentors receive initial orientation and on-going training. Experienced mentors and counselors are available for consult. School Site Coordinators make the best mentor match possible and provide on-going supervision and support to mentors.

Mentors must be at least 18 years old. The application & screening process includes references, fingerprinting and TB test.

More info can be found at www.wearementorme.org

Contact Mentor Me at:
(707) 778-4798 or info@wrmm.org

RSVP—Lead with Experience

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is one of the largest volunteer networks in the nation for people 55 and over.

RSVP shows you how you can apply the skills and wisdom you've acquired throughout your life to make a positive difference in the lives of others. A part of Senior Corps, RSVP is America's largest volunteer network for people 55 and over, with more than 300,000 volunteers tackling tough issues in communities nationwide. You choose how and where you want to serve, how much time you want to give and whether you want to share skills you have or develop new ones.

While volunteering with Mentor Me, any/all seniors 55 and over who serve are eligible for supplementary insurance through RSVP. What this means is, in the event of an accident during a volunteer's time served, the out-of-pocket expenses that incur above and beyond what his/her original insurance covers. There is no cost for this - all a volunteer has to do is enroll.

Would you like to be a part of a nationally registered network for senior volunteers?"

For more information, please contact Mindy Keegan at (707) 528-4485 x 102 or email mkeegan@ncoinc.org.

SONOMA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES

Buffet Luncheon

When: Wednesday, September 11, 2019

Where: Legends at Bennett Valley Golf Course, 3328 Yulupa Ave., S.R.

Time: 1 p.m. (This is a sit-down buffet luncheon)

**Cost: \$20.00 (tax and tip included) for Members & Associate Members
\$30.00 (tax and tip included) for Non-Members and Guests**

M E N U

Teriyaki Chicken

Rice

Mixed Roasted Vegetables

Fresh Garden Salad – Honey Poppy Seed Dressing

Carrot Cake

Coffee, Iced Tea, & Water

(Limited Vegetarian Entrée Available - Chef's Choice)

RESERVATIONS AND CHECKS DUE BY WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 3rd

****(Please get reservations in early as Patty is gone Sept 4–9)***

Non-Responsibility Declaration: All luncheons or other activities arranged for by Sonoma County Association of Retired Employees (SCARE) are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guests who desire to participate. SCARE does not assume any responsibility for the well being or safety of the members or their guests when attending SCARE activities.

_____ Cut here _____

Make checks payable to "SCARE" and send to:

Patty Hamley

2112 Berkeley Drive

Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Member _____ Associate Member _____

Non-Member _____ VEGETARIAN? _____ Yes/No)

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ Phone # _____ Email: _____

****Please send your reservation in ASAP! Thanks, Patty.***



In Memoriam

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of the following retirees:

<i>Angelina Breen</i>	<i>Donald Dakan</i>
<i>Michael Duvall</i>	<i>Sachiko Hull</i>
<i>Betty Knight</i>	<i>Lelah Myers</i>
<i>Dan Nicholas</i>	<i>Betty Seacord</i>
<i>Margaret Tunstall</i>	<i>Richard Zieber</i>

Membership Meeting Speaker

We are having a speaker from St. Joseph's Hospice program who will be speaking on dealing with loss and overcoming isolation. One of our Board members has found the Hospice programs and support very helpful. While you may not be dealing with this yourself, you may very well know someone who is in need of these services. We hope you will attend.

Updating Contact Information by Lou Maricle

If you move, you need to give your **change of address** to the following organizations. They do not share information.

SCARE - send changes to Lou Maricle via email at maricles2@gmail.com, or address to 4720 Santa Rosita Ct, Santa Rosa, CA 95405, or call 707 538-7342. I also need changes of phone numbers and email addresses.

And if I don't hear from you, this is what happens: Mail and newsletters were returned with no forwarding address for the following members - **Renan Lopez, R. Scott Murphy, Cecilia Proschold, Charlotte Quick-Paris**. Attempts to contact these people by phone and/or email have failed and we have no way of contacting them. If anyone knows how to reach them, would you please contact them and ask them to call me (# shown above) or give me their number and I'll call the person.

Sonoma County Human Resources Benefits Unit - They handle health, dental, and life insurance and send out Annual Enrollment Booklets. Contact them at 575 Administration Drive, Suite 116C, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, or benefits@sonoma-county.org, or 707-565-2900.

SCERA Update Report for July 2019 by John Pels

SCERA received its annual financial audit from Brown Armstrong, and as usual, it was an unmodified opinion, which means that SCERA's financial reports presented a fair and accurate picture of SCERA's financial position and that there were no deficiencies in SCERA's internal controls. SCERA has published its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and its Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the year ending December 31, 2018. The CAFR contains a detailed look at SCERA's operations, benefits, financial condition and investments for the year and the PAFR summarizes key information into a readable format. Both documents can be found on the SCERA website at <http://scretire.org/Financial/Financial-Reports/>.

SCERA recently hired a new infrastructure manager, Axium, to complement their existing infrastructure manager, IFM. IFM, which is run by a large Australian pension fund, focuses on large infrastructure projects and infuses capital and management expertise into the management of the asset to ensure their success, while Axium focuses on investments in operational and late-stage greenfield development opportunities in core energy, transportation and social infrastructure assets. Greenfield developments are undeveloped land typically being considered for urban development. The Board recently undertook a review of its fixed income portfolio structure and is considering whether to continue its investment in the unconstrained bond market. The Investment Committee will consider options at its August 15th meeting.

The Board heard an update on the various arrangements between SCERA, the County and other plan sponsor agencies, VSP, United Way and SCARE for deductions from retiree payments for health insurance premiums, charitable donations and retiree organization dues. The Board was supportive of the various arrangements provided they did not put an unreasonable burden on SCERA staff, and agreed with staff that a more formal agreement between the United Way and SCERA, as well as SCARE and SCERA, defining the roles and obligations of each entity was appropriate. United Way and SCARE are currently working with SCERA to formalize the agreements.

***Congratulations New Retirees and
New SCARE Members
(in italics and bold)***

Elizabeth Acosta - Clerk/Recorder/Assessor

Alden Adkins -- Retirement

Angela Avery - Human Services

Carlos Basurto - Sheriff

Patricia Casey - Sheriff

Darby Davy - Information Systems

Robert DeMiguel - District Attorney

Kate Diehl - Probation

Angelo Dieli - Probation

Alyce Frost - Courts

Tamara Geronimo - Health Services

Laura Gish - Child Support Services

Robert Gordon - Sheriff's Office

Patrice Graham - Courts

Carol Greek - Health Services

Theresa Henderson - (Associate)

David House - Sheriff

Amy Howard - Health Services

Marty Isom - Health Services

Maureen Iversen - Human Services

Helena Johnson—FY&C/HSP

James Johnson - PRMD

Lani Jolliff - Human Services

Michael Kennedy - DHS

Mary Killian - Health Services

Albert Lerma - Economic Development Board

Debra Little - Sheriff

Lara Matteoni-Diaz - Recorder

Dave Medin - Sheriff

Jill Medin - Associate

Robert Moore - Information Systems

Jeff Mrowka - Water Agency

Patrick Mullin - PRMD

Coryann Nelson - Probation

Eileen Shired - County Counsel

Darro Skidmore - Juvenile Hall

Ben Stone - Economic Development Board

John Sullivan - General Services

Andres Tlahuitzo - Fairgrounds

LaDonna Tribbitt-Peelen - Water Agency

Christopher Vivian - Sheriff

Barbar Whittlestone - Human Services

Scott Wilson - Information Systems

Rhonda Wright - Child Support Services

Encourage Fellow Retirees to join SCARE!

While we have added many new members, we are stronger with even more. If you see people you know on the above list who have not joined SCARE, please encourage them to do so. That way they can continue to have a say in the future of their benefits. You can call Patty Hamley at (707) 579-1726 to get a copy of our application form or go to our website, <http://sonomacountyretirees.com/application.pdf>.

Reminder—SCARE has its own Facebook Page

This is a private (closed) group meaning that the public may not view the contents, and membership must be requested and approved. For those of you already on Facebook, it can be found by searching for Sonoma County Association of Retired Employees (SCARE) or using the direct link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1519844528337032/> . To join the group, go to the page and at the top you will see a box that indicates "Join Group." Once I verify you are indeed a member of SCARE, or are a spouse of a member, you will be added.

Bob Bulwa

SCARE Membership and Financial Information

SCARE currently has 1546 members and 170 associate members for a total of 1,716 members.

We no longer include our financial information in the newsletter, but if you are interested contact me and I can provide you with a copy of our year-end (20178 financial statement (contact information on page 2). I can send this information to you either via email or postal service.

Bill Robotka, Treasurer

Sonoma County Association of
Retired Employees
P.O. Box 5513
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Address Service Requested

General Membership Meeting— August 27, 2019

Steele Lane Community Center DeMeo Room

415 Steele Lane (between Mendocino & Hwy 101 - best approached from Mendocino)

12:30-1:00-Meet and Greet

1:00-3:00—General Meeting

REMEMBER TO COME AT 12:30 FOR PRE-MEETING NETWORKING WITH FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AGENDA

- I. WELCOME
- II. SPEAKER FROM HOSPICE.. TOPIC IS DEALING WITH LOSS AND ISOLATION
- III. CRCEA UPCOMING FALL CONFERENCE - NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS
- IV. JLMBC Report
- V. SCCLC report
- VI. LUNCHEON SEPTEMBER 11 AT LEGENDS - COST FOR LUNCH DROPPED TO \$20
- VII. DRAWING FOR LUNCHEON