

SCARE Newsletter

Sonoma County Association of Retired Employees

Published Quarterly

November 2017

Volume 304 Issue 4

Calendar of Events 2017

General Membership

Meetings

Steele Lane Community Center in Santa Rosa at 1:00 PM—Social at 12:30

11/28/17, 2/27/18

Luncheons

Quail Inn in Oakmont at 1:00 PM

12/13/17, 3/14/18

Board Meetings

1:00 PM Location changes so call Board member first.

11/1/17, 1/3/18

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, which is really important as we work to protect retiree health benefits and take legal action. Plus you get the newsletter in color and can increase the font for easier reading!! If you are willing to get the newsletter and notices 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.

President's Message by Alix Shor

These past few weeks here in Northern California have tested most of us. Some have lost our homes while many others including me have lost their sense of safety. Sonoma County will be forever changed by the most devastating wildfires in state history but our sister counties of Napa, Lake and Mendocino have also suffered. This fire was an equal opportunity destroyer sparing no neighborhood be it a middle, lower or upper income level.

The numbers of first responders who came to our aid is truly amazing. We saw fire-fighters, police and members of the National Guard from all over the country and from as far away as Australia. Next came donations of food, water, clothing, a safe space for us and our pets to stay.

Local government as well as state and federal agencies are all working together to help those in need. The County mobilized its workforce setting up a one-stop information center for those who have been displaced and have lost vital documents such as driver's licenses, insurance papers, military papers, etc. Nursing services were organized in evacuation centers. Many county employees worked overtime often ignoring their own problems to help those of us in need.

The Redwood Credit Union in conjunction with the Press Democrat and State Senator Mike McGuire has established the 2017 North Bay Fire Relief Fund. You can donate by going to <https://rcu-community-fund.squarespace.com/donate/> If you need help from this fund go to <https://www.unitedwaywinecountry.org/our-work/financial-stability/wildfire-relief-fund/>

On another note, our two representatives to SCERA are up for reelection in December. John Pels is our Retirement Board member and Neil Baker is our Alternate Retirement Board member. Your SCARE Board of Directors recommends that they both be reelected as they have many years of experience with SCERA. You will receive a ballot from SCERA on November 15. It must be returned to SCERA by December 5, 2017.

Six SCARE Board members are up for reelection at the November Membership Meeting. They are Carol Bauer, Bob Bulwa, Dick Gearhart, Lou Maricle, Bill Robotka and Phyris Tobler. All have agreed to serve another 2 year term. Nominations can also be made from the floor at the meeting.

Retired Santa Rosa attorney George Luke is suing the county over the enhanced retirement benefits that went into effect in 2003. He accuses elected officials of conflict of interest for benefits affecting them directly and failure to disclose long-term pension costs. We will keep you apprised as information becomes available.

On behalf of the Board we wish a happy holiday season and hope you will join us for our SCARE holiday luncheon at the Quail Inn on Wednesday, December 13 at 1:00. Please look for the flyer on page 5 of this newsletter.

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

Bill Adams

Bob Bulwa

Dick Gearhart

Greg Jacobs

Lou Maricle

John Pels

Retirement Board Retiree Reps

John Pels

Alternate: Neil Baker

Committee Chairs & Tasks

Health Benefits/JLMBC: Phyris Tobler

Financial Oversight: Phyris Tobler

CRCEA Rep: Lou Maricle

Alternate: Dick Gearhart

Legal: Phyris Tobler

Membership: Patty Hamley

Legislative: Lou Maricle

Bylaws: Dick Gearhart

Newsletter Editor: Lonna Necker

Facebook Coordinator: Bob Bulwa

Programs: Bob Bulwa

Scholarships: Bob Bulwa

Nominating: Bill Adams

SCCLO: Bill Robotka

PAC: Bill Robotka

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

Minutes of the SCARE Business Meeting of August 22, 2017

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Alix Shor at 1 p.m. There was a quorum today, as more than 25 members were present.
 2. Guest Speaker: Carroll L. Estes, Ph.D., spoke on the importance of preserving and protecting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act, and answered many questions from the audience. She encouraged supporting legislators who support these programs, including Jared Huffman, Mike Thompson, and Mike McGuire, and provided several handouts.
 3. CRCEA: The Annual CRCEA Fall Conference (California Retired County Employees Association) will be held on October 23-25, 2017, at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1800 Powell Street, Emeryville, CA 94608. Lou Maricle will be representing SCARE at the conference.
 4. JLMBC: Bill Robotka announced the County Health Plan is up for replacement. Requests for proposals have been sent out.
 5. Next SCARE Luncheon: Alix reminded members of the September 13th SCARE Luncheon at the Quail Inn in Oakmont. Reservations (\$21 for members/\$25 for non-members) must be sent to Patty Hamley by September 6th. Fliers were included in the August Newsletter and were also on the back table.
 6. Health Reimbursement Account: Alix announced there were handouts on the back table, including HRA Claim Forms and Eligible Expenses.
 7. Drawing: 36 signed the roster for today's meeting. Richard Kelly and Bob Gillen won the drawing for a free SCARE luncheon at Oakmont.
- Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Patty Hamley, Secretary

Resources for Fire Victims and Volunteers Needed

SCARE is unable to give money directly to members but we have made sizable donations to the Redwood Credit Union/PD fund mentioned on the first page and also to Deputy Sheriff's Association Firestorm Store.

The Deputy Sheriff's Association set up a store with goods for first responders and Sonoma County employees or retirees who lost their homes in the fire. The store is located at 3843 Brickway Blvd, Suite 101, Santa Rosa. It is off of Airport Blvd. The hours are MWF from 10 until 6 and Sat. & Sun. from 10 until 4. Store will be open through Dec. 3rd. All items are free.

Volunteers are needed to help at the store. Contact Clancy Faria at 799-7427 if you can help. Also call him regarding what kind of donations are needed. Their space is small so they have to limit what they take.

There is also a larger store in Healdsburg that is open to anyone who lost their home in the fire. They expect it to be open for many months. The address is 190 Foss Creek Circle, Unit K, Healdsburg. They are open 7 days a week from 9-7. You can contact them about volunteering at the store by going to www.facebook.com/pg/healdsburgfreestore/about/?ref=page_internal

JLMBC Report by Phyris Tobler

There is not a lot to report this time. Our last meeting was cancelled since the Human Resources Department had their hands full dealing with the results of the firestorm we had in Sonoma County. Many employees (about 150) and retirees (we don't know how many) lost their homes and everything in them. Back to JLMBC— two Requests for Proposals were done this year. One was looking for a replacement for the County Health Plan. While not finalized, that one doesn't look like it will help us. The other was for dental insurance. That produced four proposals. I'm not on that committee so I don't have details yet on whether any provide better coverage than our current Delta Dental Plans. We should have all the information on this for our next newsletter.

There was a small amount (\$24.84) added to your HRA account after the initial amount you received on July 1, 2017. We thought the County was going to let people know about this second installment but I don't think it happened. You should check your account at P & A and see what your balance is. You may have a little more that you can spend this year. Note: Anything you don't spend carries over to next year but the P & A fee of \$2.95 will continue to be taken out monthly.

Insurance through Sutter and Western Health Advantage are relatively new. We have not heard from retirees whether those who switched to these plans are happy with them or are having any problems. I'd be interested in hearing from you if you really like the plans or have had some problems with them. You can send comments to me at phyris@sbcglobal.net.

Changes in How We Send Email to Members by Phyris Tobler

We are using a new program to send out emails to our members. It is called MailChimp (strange name I know) but it makes it much easier and quicker to send out emails to a large group like ours. It takes your email address right off our database so as long as you notify us at communications@sonomacountyretirees.com or at maricles2@gmail.com of your address changes, we should be able to get your newsletter and notices to you without a problem. This program gives you an option to unsubscribe. You have always had the option to change back to receiving a hard copy of the newsletter and notices and you still do. This is best done by notifying us at communications@sonomacountyretirees.com that you want hard copies of the newsletter.

This new program also tells us what percentage of people opened the email. On the recent email, after a week, only half of the people it was sent to opened the email, and this was a pretty important one (resources available to retirees who had lost their homes). This may have happened because the email went into your spam folder. We recommend that you add our email address to your contacts (communications@sonomacountyretirees.com). That will help prevent our emails from showing up in your spam folder instead of your inbox. The most common email you will get from us will be our newsletter. The subject line will always say SCARE Newsletter plus the month. For instance the subject line for this newsletter is SCARE November 2017 Newsletter. That will help you to recognize it.

Just to let you know—we will occasionally send out emails to members who have told us they have an email address but who want to get a hard copy of the newsletter. We did that recently with the email regarding resources available to the Sonoma County firestorm victims. We will only do this when it is urgent information that we won't be sending out as a hard copy.

CRCEA (California Retired County Employees Association) Fall Conference

October 23-25, 2017, Submitted by Lou Maricle

I attended the CRCEA Fall Conference at the Emeryville. As you may know it is an association of retired employee organizations like SCARE from the twenty 1937 Act counties. These counties differ from other counties in California because they don't participate in CalPERS and maintain their own pension funds. The conference was hosted by Retired Employees of Alameda County, REAC. They did a great job organizing the conference and having interesting speakers. It was a three day conference with a lot of great information for retirees. I will share what I felt were some of the highlights of the conference.

The keynote speaker was Rosa "Rosie" Gumataotao Rios, 23rd Treasurer of the United States under the Obama administration. This was my favorite speaker of the entire conference. She was dynamic and enthusiastic as she touched upon so many topics and interesting bits of information. The first part of her talk was of her time running highest financial institution of our country. She dispelled myths like the penny is going away and that our economy can be "cash-less", relying on credit cards and digital forms of money. Ms. Rios said that the mint is making more money than ever today and will continue to do so. By the way do you know that it costs 1.66 cents to mint a penny? Another tidbit: illegal activity does greatly increase the amount of money in circulation. Look for 50 new quarters with a famous woman from each state. Final tidbit: Look at the signature on almost any paper bill and see if it is hers (there is \$1.2 trillion in currency out there with her name on it).

She also spoke about current issues such as the proposed tax cuts. Her take is that it will mainly benefit corporations and the rich. Ms. Rios then discussed her involvement in righting the imbalance between men and women in the workplace as well as in our everyday life. Look up "Teachers Righting History" to see how teachers add pictures and stories of famous women to their classrooms. I could go on but need to share more about the rest of the conference.

Attorney Ashley K. Dunning was the afternoon speaker who spoke about current and pending litigation related to retiree benefits. She talked about the courts views on "vested" benefits and counties changes to retiree benefits. Ms. Dunning discussed several specific cases citing the pros and cons of each litigation. Closer to home she did address the "Luke v. Sonoma County, SCERA, et al" which has recently happened in our area. From what she said about the case I think that it will either be thrown out or lose due to statute of limitations and the substance of the complaint.

Rashida Washington was the final speaker on Monday. Her subject was: The Millennials. She dispelled many of the myths about this age group and gave me a better perspective of their goals and ways of doing things. Personally, I am proud to be a Baby Boomer.

Tuesday we had a presentation by Wendy Hausotter from Kaiser about retiree wellness. The key learning from this was if you want to lose weight, start exercising, start by taking tiny steps i.e. "I'm going to lose 1 pound this week", not "I have to lose 30 pounds!!" This applies to any other changes you want to make.

There was a talk about the Affordable Care Act - Repeal and Replace. Essentially the speaker felt that it will be very difficult to repeal "Obama Care" especially since the repeal would affect the congressmen and their voters. The Health Care Freedom Act, or skinny repeal which was a bill targeting only parts of ACA were defeated 49-51. I'm sure we will hear more about this subject down the road. Tidbit: did you know that Congress voted 60 times to repeal the ACA since its inception?

The final speaker was a captain in the Alameda Sheriff's Office talking about the drones his department pioneered in California. The first drones were very expensive at \$45,000 and now they can be around \$1,500. He said the cameras they attach to the drones are about \$10,000 because of the functionality, especially the infrared night vision capability. They are very sensitive to privacy issues and limit the use to mission involving criminal activities or emergency situations such as fires. In fact, his department supported some of the operations related to fighting the fires in Sonoma County.

SONOMA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

When: Wednesday, December 13, 2017
Where: Quail Inn Restaurant, Oakmont Golf Club, 7035 Oakmont Drive, Santa Rosa
Time: 1 p.m. (This is a sit-down luncheon.)
Cost: \$21.00 (tax and tip included) for Members & Associate Members
\$25.00 (tax and tip included) for Non-Members and Guests

M E N U

Baby Mixed Greens Salad with Apples, Dried Fruit, Candied Walnuts & Apple Cider Vinaigrette

Dinner Rolls

Coffee & Tea

Entrées:

- (1) Roast Turkey Breast, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Seasonal Vegetables
- (2) Baked Snapper with Fruit Salsa, Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables
- (3) Tortellini with Seasonal Vegetables and Gorgonzola Cheese

Dessert: Warm Berry Cobbler

(Please be sure to indicate your preference of entrée for lunch.)

Holiday Music by Barbershop Quartet "Just One More Song"



RESERVATIONS AND CHECKS DUE BY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6th.

(We can take late reservations until Thursday, Dec. 7th, if you call Patty Hamley at 579-1726)

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

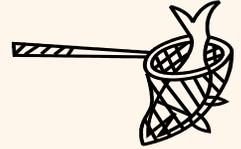
Name _____ Choice of Entrée _____
Name _____ Choice of Entrée _____
Name _____ Choice of Entrée _____

Member _____ Associate Member _____ Non-Member _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ Phone Number _____

F.I.S.H.

Friends In Service Here - A Food Pantry for All



Donations are accepted at our quarterly luncheons.

Our last luncheon the collection totaled \$104. Thank you one and all.

What is Happening in Washington and How does it Affect Us?

It is hard to keep up with proposals being made in Washington right now but even though it is frustrating, you might want to pay attention. While we are not sure yet what the effect will be, cuts to ACA or Obamacare may affect insurance rates which could impact us. Cuts to Medicare in the budget are likely to affect us although we don't yet know how. It is really hard to determine impact of some of these changes but I think we can assume they will not likely help us. Proposals being made related to tax cuts could also affect us. While they cannot affect our pensions, some recommendations like cutting the amount that can be contributed to 401(k)s would likely decrease amounts saved by people for whom 401(k)s are their way to retirement security—certainly not as good as defined pensions like we have. We are already scapegoats for the public that does not have pensions. This will not improve that situation. You may want to contact your representatives about some of the proposals as they come up. This is not a time to be complacent. Let your federal representatives know what you think they should do.



SCARE Membership and Financial Information

As of October 31, 2017, SCARE had 1399 members and 151 associate members. We no longer include our financial information in the newsletter, but if you are interested contact me and I can provide you a copy of our year-end (2016) financial statement (contact information on page 2). I can send this information to you either via email or postal service.

Bill Robotka, Treasurer

From Bob Bulwa: Reminder—SCARE now has its own Facebook page

It 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.

Updating Contact Information

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

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.

SCERA - You get your pension check from them. Contact them to report changes at 433 Aviation Blvd., Suite 100, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, or call them at 707 565-8100.

Sonoma County Human Resources Benefits Unit - They handle health, dental, and life insurance and send out Open Enrollment Booklets. If they don't have your current address, you may not received your Open Enrollment Booklet in time to make changes before the deadline. Contact them at 575 Administration Drive, Suite 116C, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, or benefits@sonoma-county.org, or 707-565-2900.

Thank you, Lou Maricle



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

- Jose Acevedo - Sheriff
- Sherry Alderman - Human Services***
- Timothy Anderson - Water Agency
- Kimberly Ballachey - Clerk/Recorder/Assessor
- Barbara Beaudet - Health Services
- Scott Beck - Regional Parks
- Christopher Bingham - Human Services
- Catherine Brown - Probation
- Robyn Brown - Health Services
- Julie Burress - Courts
- Donna Caldwell - Transportation & Public Works
- Yolanda Cervantes - Courts
- Bridgett Claussen - Human Services
- Dennis Daly - Water Agency
- Sally Dent - Health Services
- Sher Ennis - Information Systems
- Beverly Esperon - Clerk/Recorder/Assessor
- Barbara Fitzmaurice - County Counsel
- Patricia Flint-Owen - District Attorney Investigator***
- Steve Freitas - Sheriff
- Keith Fulton - Health Services
- Steven Garner - Health Services
- Philip Gilbert - Information Systems
- Jill Hager - Human Resources***
- Caroline Healy - Human Services
- Jacqueline Hogan - Child Support***
- Jose Guillen - Courts
- Reid Harper - Health Services
- David Huber - Sheriff
- Rene Huber - Sheriff
- Deborah Justice - Clerk/Recorder/Assessor
- Gary Keifer - Fairgrounds Christine Love - Health Services
- Jean Krider - Human Services
- Susanne Lake - Information Systems***
- Stephen Lange - Transportation & Public Works
- Laura Levin - Human Services***
- Leroy Lewis - Human Services
- Michael Livenspargar - Information Systems
- Sherman Louie - Sheriff's Office***
- Christine Love - Health Services***
- John McCarthy - Transportation & Public Works
- Lourdes Macias - Community Development Comm
- Scott Murray - Public Defender
- Allen Nishikawa - Health Services
- Daniel Peccorini - Sheriff
- Terri Pozzi - Tax Collector***
- Deborah Price - Child Support Services
- Regina Ramos-Hooker - Health Services
- Michelle Riebli - Water Agency
- Elaine Samuelson - Probation
- Janice Samuelson - General Services***

- Jane Shaw - Probation***
- Cordel Stillman - Water Agency
- Diana Stornetta - Health Services***
- Martin Swift - Water Agency
- Harold Taylor - Health Services
- Susan Taylor Fellbaum - Ag Commissioner
- Janice Vance - Probation
- Cindy Williams - District Attorney***
- Richard Wishnak - Courts
- Michael Yoder - Sheriff

In Memoriam

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



- Jesse Edwards*
- Scottie Ferris*
- Joyce Kernohan*
- Norma Lamb*
- Dick Navone*
- Donald Okeson*
- William Parr*
- Willard Stillman*
- Stephen Tucker*
- Edward Urban*
- Beverly Winston*
- Albert Young*

Membership Meeting Speaker

Before and After the Next Big One

Preparation for fires, earthquakes, and floods. What to do before, during and after the fact. We hope to have Supervisor Gore as our speaker but that has not be confirmed yet. The recent fire storm showed that many people were unprepared to have to make a speedy evacuation.

The SCARE Newsletter is printed quarterly. The information printed in the newsletter 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.

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>.

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 November 28th. You can also bring books, cd's, and calendars.



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

Address Service Requested

General Membership Meeting— November 28,2017

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—SNACKS PROVIDED Please join us if you can**

AGENDA

BUSINESS MEETING

- I. WELCOME
- II. SPEAKER Topic is preparing for disasters and what to do during and afterwards.
- III. LEGAL UPDATE
- IV. SCARE BOARD ELECTION
- V. SCCLO REPORT
- VI. DRAWING