



The Informer

RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF ORANGE COUNTY, INC.

Spring Luncheon Set for Wednesday, March 23



Join your REAO friends, colleagues

and guests to celebrate the beginning of Spring at the Mile Square Park Golf Course Clubhouse in Fountain Valley. See the menu on page 7.

In addition to prizes and beautiful centerpieces, you may win the Progressive Drawing. Remember you must be present at the luncheon to win.

Reserve your seat by sending the form on page 7 and your check to arrive at the REAO office no later than Wednesday, March 16. Check-in starts at 11:00 a.m. and lunch is served at noon. Please carpool if possible. See you on March 23.

Presidents' Message

From the Desks of Linda Robinson and Doug Storm

Hello, REAO Members! It's that time of year and SPRINGTIME is beckoning us to renew and take notice of the beautiful cycle of life that surrounds us. Blooming processes are taking place everywhere. Let's get out those gardening tools and prepare to dig. Daylight savings time is right around the corner and soon

we'll enjoy longer daylight hours giving us extended retirement moments to enjoy. Keep in mind that, while Mother Nature is busy renewing the scenery around us, the political landscape seems to be going ballistic. Hold onto your hats, everyone. Conceivably, the next nine months could prove to be a wild political roller coaster ride. Accordingly, and regardless of political persuasion, please attempt to remain calm, sensible and well-informed. Yes, we know, following that advice might be easier said than done. However, for personal well-being and resilience perhaps all of us can add that advice to our personal

New Year's resolution list.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES As you have previously read in this newsletter, the Reed Initiative, a proposed statewide ballot measure seeking public pension reform, which, if passed, would make changes to the California State Constitution, thereby, placing in peril the long-term security of public employees and retirees. The authors of this initiative are delaying action on the initiative process until the 2018 election cycle; this after significant opposition from many sources, including representatives of the California Retired County Employees Association (CRCEA) and REAO. Despite the delay this threat remains looming. Proponents of the proposition continue to spread vitriol and half-truths through the media and via certain politicians. The fight is definitely not over and REAO will continue to remain deeply involved in protecting the retirement security you have earned.

The Keith Concannon Scholarship

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Progressive Drawing

\$100.00

Gwen Sevier of Irvine would have won \$50 at the January luncheon if she was present at the luncheon. Remember—you must be present at the time of the drawing to win! See you on Wednesday, March 23, 2016 at Mile Square Park.

Volunteers Needed for Board Watch Committee

The purpose of the Board Watch Committee is to protect retiree rights by reviewing the Board of Supervisors agendas and minutes and listening to the Board meetings to identify any items that might affect retiree rights or be of interest to REAOC.

Currently each member listens to between four and six meetings per calendar year. All of the information is located on-line at the Board of Supervisors web site. We watch the Board meetings either live or later

that same day right from our home computers. Two brief reports are written about each meeting—one on the proposed agenda and one after the Board meets and approves agenda items. These reports are sent to the REAOC Co-Presidents. For more information, go to the REAOC website, www.reaoc.org and click on "Get Involved." If you are interested, please call Norma Roberts at 949-645-9421 or e-mail her at robertscn@att.net.

REAOC

P.O. Box 11787
Santa Ana, CA 92711-1787
Phone: 714-840-3995
Website: www.reaoc.org
E-mail: reaoc@reaoc.org

OFFICERS

Linda Robinson	Co President
Doug Storm	Co President
Jan Grimes	Secretary
Bill Castro	Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Tom Beckett
Rebecca Guider
Gaylan Harris
John Iagjian
Larry Leaman
Sara Ruckle-Harms

APPOINTED STAFF

Ilene Barcenas	Office Manager
John Iagjian	Membership Committee
Robin Mattocks	<i>The Informer</i> Editor
Bill Castro	Luncheon Committee
Norma Roberts	Board Watch
Linda Robinson	CRCEA Delegate
Lou Scarpino	Legislation
Jan Grimes	Scholarship Committee

Presidents' Message

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process is currently underway and relatives of current REAOC members are encouraged to apply. The scholarship process is an excellent way retirees give back to the community by financially assisting the next generation in their educational endeavors. The deadline for submittal of applications is April 1, 2016.

UPCOMING EVENT CRCEA, the statewide organization representing all twenty '37 Act County Retiree Associations will hold their annual Spring Conference in Bakersfield, April 11 to 13, 2016. REAOC will be in attendance to hear the latest challenges and topics of interest to County retirees. Information garnered at the conference will be shared through articles in this newsletter.

LITIGATION UPDATE The Harris, Jahn, McConnell vs County of Orange Class Action Lawsuit continues to proceed through the federal court system. No ruling has been issued by judges of the 9th Circuit panel which heard this case in February of 2014. The attorney for

the case has requested a status report on the case, but no response has been received, to-date. We will keep you advised of any case developments as they occur.

Lastly and on behalf of the entire REAOC and AREOC Board of Directors, thank you for your continued membership, loyal support and participation in REAOC. The importance of staying informed and united in today's world of politics and special interests is imperative. Take care, be well and stay united, retirees!

– Linda Robinson
– Doug Storm



The Informer is published 5 times a year. Readers are encouraged to write *The Informer* expressing their views and comments on the subjects of interest to them.

The mission of REAOC is to promote and maintain fellowship and camaraderie of OCERS retirees and their spouses by sponsoring social and recreational activities and by maintaining contacts via the newsletter, the REAOC website, e-mail, or other means of communication. A secondary purpose is tracking and dissemination of information relating to pension and legislative actions, financial matters, physical and mental health care, volunteer and employment opportunities and other concerns that may be of interest to our members.

OCERS retirees and their spouses are eligible for regular association membership. Dues are \$3.00 per month, payable through payroll deduction. Active employees, who will receive their retirement through OCERS, are eligible for Associate Membership. Dues for associate members are \$1.00 per month payable for the year each January.

Luncheons are held at Mile Square Golf Course in Fountain Valley on the fourth Wednesday of January, March, May and September, and on the first Wednesday of December. A local chapter of REAOC is active in Hemet.

Government Workers Vilified

by Rusty Kennedy, OC Human Relations

The word “government” is being used to dehumanize the people who work for our common good. Government employees who actually do good things like:

- Building flood channels to protect us from the worst of “El Nino”;
- Protecting the public from contagious diseases through proactive immunization programs;
- Incarcerating criminals that break laws while protecting their constitutional rights;
- Dispensing justice by the rules/laws we create;
- Exterminating bugs and vermin that spread diseases when they bite;
- Caring for our sick and elderly when there are no family members capable;
- Providing basic necessities for low-income moms and their young children;
- Overseeing planning and development to protect the community from unforeseen consequences of unchecked construction;
- Looking out for the mentally ill, who, with proper care can live normal lives, but often find themselves without the essential framework for sustaining their health such as shelter, medicine, and support;
- Helping people, who have committed crimes, repair the harm they have done, and restore their lives;
- Providing shelter as a last resort for the homeless;
- Mediating conflict between diverse residents.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WANT TO DO GOOD IN THE WORLD

I worked for the County of Orange for 35 years and my experience with

County Government employees is that they are people who come to this work because they want to do good in the world. In fact, one of the best management training programs that most of the key leaders in the County of Orange completed at Chapman University is called “Servant as Leader”, a humble orientation for people who want to make the world a better place for ALL people.

When I started my career as a public servant I received a salary which was about 1/2 what my brother received when he started in the private sector. I never regretted having lower pay, because I loved my job and felt I was doing good in the world.

SCAPEGOATING THE GOVERNMENT IS DELIBERATE, PREJUDICED AND UNFAIR

The vilification of government workers is often nothing more than a political ploy to scapegoat a group of people for partisan political purposes. We are vilified as a group to draw attention away from the abuses of power, uncaring policies, profiteering at the expense of the taxpayers, and the public’s own self-interest.

Among government employees there are all types from great to poor. Just like in all other organizations there will be that small percentage who abuse their power, cheat their employer, avoid doing their work. BUT most are good people trying their best, in the face of enormous challenges.

So next time you hear someone vilify a government program or public employee, you might want to see

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Mindfulness

If you missed REAOC’s January 27th luncheon presentation by Amy Harper, Mindfulness Therapist, we have provided a recap of the highlights.

In a water sport accident in August, 1997, Amy Harper fractured her spine in several places. It was uncertain whether or not she would ever walk again. Literally and metaphorically flipped on her back, she was forced to dig deep to find hidden reservoirs of strength, and through soul searching, Mindfulness, Breath work, and Yoga therapy, healed herself. In nearly unbearable circumstances, Amy discovered the gift of a renewed life purpose, and dedicated her therapeutic training to help others.

What is Mindfulness? An ancient approach to living, this simple practice is now being recognized by Western medicine as a powerful tool for dealing with stress, chronic pain, and many other medical and psychological conditions. Mindfulness is not a special state of consciousness one achieves through a trick or technique. It does not require one to sit in lotus pose or have any specific religious belief. One can choose any task or moment to practice it.

In our January 27th Mindfulness Presentation we learned:

- Mindfulness can be used anywhere, anytime, and in any condition
- Mindfulness techniques can relieve mind chatter, doubt, concentration problems, worry, insomnia, and other mental challenges
- Mindfulness is practiced to improve health conditions, including

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The Early Days – My Story

by Larry Leaman

Most likely because I have been around so long it was suggested I write an article about what it was like to work for the County of Orange back in the 1960's. This task has refreshed my mind with a flood of memories. I have included some of them in this article, and also taken the opportunity to tell a bit about my career and 50 plus years of life in Orange County.

In May of 1963 I was nearing graduation from CalPoly Pomona with a degree in Business Administration. I applied for jobs in both the public and private sectors, though I preferred the public sector. The County of Orange had an on-campus recruiter pitching three different trainee jobs. I applied for the Purchasing Trainee job, took a written test at the County Personnel Department in Santa Ana, and was selected.

Following a June graduation I reported to work in the Civic Center Engineering Building on July 1, 1963. I was really just a kid, not quite 21-1/2. For the next several months I commuted from Upland where I lived with my parents. There was no 57 freeway, no 91 freeway, and only a short stretch of the 55. I routinely made the drive in 45 minutes, most of it though farm land and citrus groves, sometimes to the pungent aroma of orange blossoms, not to mention scent from the dairies in Chino as I roared by thousands of dairy cows in my 1962 Corvair Monza. An easy commute that today could easily take 2 hours or more.

Orange County then had less than 1 million residents. Cities like

Irvine, Aliso Viejo, Lake Forest, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Rancho Santa Margarita and Dana Point did not yet exist. Driving south from Tustin was mostly agriculture, from orange groves to crops like asparagus, bell peppers, tomatoes and celery, plus a lot of open space with grazing cattle and the very active El Toro MCAS. The first real city one encountered south of Tustin was San Juan Capistrano.

I was assigned to a metal desk behind a partition. Only the top brass could have wood furniture; status, you know. Each desk in the Purchasing Department had two telephones, a black one connected to the outside world, and a tan telephone called the PAX system that was for communicating with other County departments and workers. My starting pay was \$464 a month (I still have my first pay stub to prove it). Payday was once a month with checks personally handed out at the workplace with an employee signature required.

The County had only about 3,000 employees at that time. The big deal in those days was a Xerox copy machine and its usage was tightly controlled because Xerox got paid for each copy that was run. The other hot office machine was the IBM Selectric Typewriter, the one with the ball instead of striking individual keys. Only the department Executive Secretaries were allowed to have such a machine, as they cost about \$1,000 each which was very expensive for the day. Electric plug-in calculators and a manual machine called a Comptometer were state of

the art. Hand held calculators and PC's had not yet come on scene. What automation did exist in County government was a punch card system.

Attendance and punctuality were absolutely required and closely monitored. In fact, the Assistant Purchasing Agent would station himself at the front counter and greet each employee each morning to make sure people were at work on time or were docked for the time they missed. Same drill with the one-hour lunch. At 5:00 p.m. we were all ushered out of the office and by 5:15 p.m. everyone was gone and the office was locked.

Significant events happened quickly. Two months after I started there was a heat wave that pushed the Santa Ana temperature to 110 or more degrees Fahrenheit. For a few days that made the commute less than pleasant in a car without air conditioning, a true luxury in those days. A few weeks later President Kennedy was assassinated. Seven months after I started with the county, I married the girl that I met in college, Carol Jean Smith, and we moved to an apartment in Santa Ana. We walked to work together, she in the Recorder's Office located in the now demolished Hall of Records, just north of the old red courthouse, and I in the Purchasing Department located in the Engineering Building. It is a marriage that has lasted 52 years, produced two daughters and three delightful grandchildren.

Things were very different in those days. The Purchasing Department operated the County

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The Early Days

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pony mail system in the civic center, and also a central stores office where departments could buy and pick up routine office supplies. A man named Pat was the pony mail person, a happy and jovial fellow who everyone knew.

After a few years I was eager for promotion. I enrolled in and completed the MBA program at Cal State Fullerton, attending class in the evenings. I pursued promotional opportunities that led to several different careers over my 41 years of service with the County. Some of those jobs included Purchasing Department Buyer, Harbor District and Parks Department Administrative Services Officer and Chief Operations Officer working for Director Kenneth Sampson, my role model and mentor. When Ken retired, I became Acting Director. When the Environmental Management Agency was formed and absorbed that department, I became Program

Manager of Recreation and Open Space. After the Community Services Agency was created, I applied and was selected as Director, first entering Executive Management. When I was selected for Director of the Human Services Agency (HSA), that selection came with a mandate from the Board to study the organization that had been plagued by negative Grand Jury reports and lack of constituent support. The CAO, Bob Thomas and I presented a study to the Board on what ailed the agency and provided several ways to fix it, including breaking it into a separate Health Care Agency (HCA) and Social Services Agency (SSA). The Board chose to break it up and I was given a choice to head either agency. I chose SSA which at that time had about 1,100 employees with absolutely no computer automation. When I retired 22 years later in 2003 it had 3,700 employees and everyone had a PC.

I have observed tremendous dedication by thousands of County employees. I have seen the public benefit from what it is that we do in many program and service areas, including nasty things like communicable disease, child abuse and refuse disposal that the public wants out of sight and resolved.

I have also seen the occasional scandal, mostly involving elected officials. As an agency head, I endured the 1994 bankruptcy in what was probably the most politically unpopular (but vitally necessary) agency in the County, the Social Services Agency (SSA). It is that bankruptcy era that prompts me today to tell people that I worked for 41 years for the County of Orange, retiring in 2003, and at least 36 of those years were good ones. And yes, I yearn for the scent of orange blossoms and the joy of driving on open roads that we had in the 1960s. Ah, to be 21 again.

Workers Vilified

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who is pointing the finger, and away from what they are trying to draw your attention.

And next time you feel the urge to make a joke at the expense of the government you might want to think twice about scapegoating this group or any other group. Scapegoating is deliberate, prejudiced and patently unfair.

Criticize individual misdeeds, mismanagement, cheating, ineffectiveness, inefficiency, or other shortcomings, not entire groups.

The government is our unified effort to make this a great country, and actualization of our shared values such as: freedom, equality, work ethic, helping others, mobility, science, pluralism.

***About the Author:** Rusty Kennedy retired from the County of Orange after serving 35 years as a County employee. He now serves as the CEO of a non-profit organization, www.ochumanrelations.org that provides model Safe Schools, Mediation, and Community Building Programs.*

Mindfulness

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blood pressure, heart disease, digestion, pain, and Alzheimer's, and to heal physical injuries.

- We can benefit from Mindfulness to handle anger, frustration, sadness, anxiety, and other troubling emotions more easily to maintain happy relationships for a more fulfilling quality of life.

We thank Amy Harper for sharing her personal experience and wisdom with us.

In A Cyber Age, You Can Never Be Too Secure

by Kevin Fleming

Recently news reports have shared the top 10, worst passwords one can use for an Internet sign-on, to access a bank account online, or for debit card PIN numbers. The top two were “123456” and “PASSWORD.” It’s hard to believe anyone would select something so predictable but probably they were afraid of forgetting tougher passwords.

Those who would do us no good have found many ways of accessing our personal information, so having secure passwords no one can guess is important. Experts say the best passwords include a random selection of both letters and digits, remembering to capitalize randomly. Yes, this will make it harder for you to recall your password, but it will also make it less likely for you to be hacked. Write it down until you memorize it and just remember to keep it away from your card or your computer. Those in the know also recommend using different passwords for your various online accounts rather than using the same one for each. Again, writing it down until you can remember it is important. If you do forget your password, it is easy to reset your accounts with a new one, so no worries here.

You also shouldn’t write your personal information, such as telephone or Social Security numbers, in emails because your emails are also likely to be monitored by strangers lurking in cyberspace. Another thing people neglect to do is shred credit card offers that come through the mail. Someone could go through your trash and order the card in your

name but have it sent to their address. This happens much more often than you might think.

And here’s a word about those annoying “robo calls.” Although everyone hates them, they probably will not generate illicit activity on your accounts, but you should either not answer them, based on what appears on your caller ID when the call comes in, or hang up as soon as you realize it is a solicitation.

Research has found that “landline” numbers (telephones wired in your house) are much easier for solicitors to acquire than cellular telephone numbers. If you get one, you may be prompted to press a certain button to avoid receiving additional calls. Do not do this. Responding this way validates to the user that you are there and answer your phone. You will get more calls, not only from this party, but from other parties who will get your number from lists created for profit from this company. Just hang up instead.

Other scams involving either email or telephonic contact include pleas from supposed family or friends stranded in a foreign country and asking you to forward funds or calls demanding one pay the IRS over the phone to avoid jail time or being arrested. In the first, you are told that someone you care for is overseas and has taken ill, been robbed, or somehow found themselves without funds in a foreign land. They appeal to you and your empathy to wire or otherwise forward funds. Of course, you do not know the recipient and you will have lost your money if you fall for this one.

For the second one, someone calls or emails you saying they are an IRS agent demanding you immediately pay your supposed past-due tax debts or risk criminal or other legal action. It’s incredible how much money has been lost to these swindlers. Experts state it very clearly: The IRS will never contact you by telephone to collect money. They always use USPS first-class mail for such notifications.

While this certainly isn’t a definitive list of ways you can protect yourself from fraud, these are at least some of the more common ones. Enjoy life but be safe and protect your accounts.

In Memoriam

We extend our deepest sympathy to the families and loved ones of those who meant so much to so many.

October 2015 – December 2015

Raymond Brett, Assessor
Thomas Calligan, OC Sheriff’s Dept.
Edward Carson, OC Public Works
Ernestina “Tina” Correa, OCCR
Leslie Demars, GSA Communications
Marie Dollarhide, Superior Courts
Ronald Gerritsen, Superior Courts
Bruce Hall, OC Sheriff’s Dept.
Roger James, OC Fire Authority
Dr. Sam Kawanami, HCA
Peggy Maupin, County Counsel
Edilberto Mayo, SSA
Timothy Mullins, HCA
Anneliese Odeh, Child Support Services
Patricia O’Toole, District Attorney
Arthur Paulus, OC Public Works
Michael Taylor, SSA

Welcome, New Members

Assessor: Kim Burnett, Jerome Hood

Auditor/Controller: Ester Leong, Lisa Howell

City of San Juan Capistrano: John Reynolds

District Attorney: Rebecca Fischer, Eltha Dee, Richard Butcher

HCA: Suzanne Stein, Mary Rose Decarlo, Mary Rowan, Kamal Salloum, Lynnette Huff

Human Resources: Lisa Bauer

John Wayne Airport: Elaine Rowan

OCCR: Cynthia Elizalde, Isabel del Pozo

OC Dept of Education: Judy Bolton

OC Public Works: Hazel Barnes, Florita Chea, Janice Criss, Liem Nguyen

OC Sanitation: Monique Miale-Scribner

OCSD: Richard Mendez, Jerry Davidson, Richard Fassel, Georgina La Barbera, Jill Abbott, John Kavoklis, L. Michael Mc Coy, Dan Nicolas, Gary Temple, Karen Daly, Qui Dang, Mike Miller, Sandra McCanless

OCTA: Girmai Gebreselassie, Anselmo Garcia

Probation: Richard Hook, Abraham Peralta, Carol Thompson, Lillian Avila, Cecilia Flores, Robert Stockbridge

SSA: Le Ly Nguyen, Barbara Flores, Stephen Schrieber-Smith, John Lewin,

Mozelle Taylor, Donna Mehring

Superior Court: Michael Hooker, Betty Davidson, Jean Kong, Thomas Rees, Joanne De Souza, Susan Zodnik, Marie Vodicka

Waste Management: Olga Martinez, Daniel Mercado

Not Stated: Noushin Afshang, James Dailey, Trudy Forbes, Richard Gardea, Thomas Bogdan

Surviving Spouse:

Esther Firestone



Hemet Chapter Luncheon

When: Tuesday, April 19, 2016

When: The First Presbyterian Church Family Center, 515 E. Kimball, Hemet

Price: Only \$9.50 per person

Menu: Lemon Herb Chicken, Au Gratin Potatoes, Green Beans, Carrot Cake, Fresh Baked Bread and Butter

The Hemet Chapter invites new and all REAOC members who live in the area or within driving distance to join them for the luncheons.

Call Jeri Maupin (951) 672-4594 or Joyce Emery (951) 658-2549 by Thursday, March 31, 2016 to reserve your seat.



Menu for March 23rd



Three-Meat Lasagne with Grilled Vegetables and Garlic Bread

House Salad with Italian or Ranch Dressing

Dessert

Coffee and Iced Tea



Directions to Luncheon at Mile Square Park, Fountain Valley

Mile Square Golf Course is located in Mile Square Park, 10401 Warner Ave., Fountain Valley. From the San Diego Freeway (405), take the Warner Ave. exit and proceed East on Warner. Turn into Mile Square Park Golf Course Clubhouse entrance at Ward St. and park (parking is free). Mile Square Park is bounded north by Edinger Ave., south by Warner Ave., east by Euclid Ave. and west by Brookhurst.

Luncheon Reservations Due Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Print Name: _____

New/Changed E-mail Address: _____

of lunches at \$17.00 each: _____

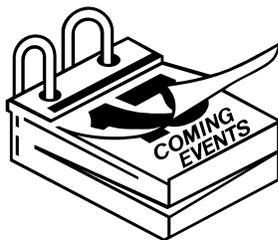
of Vegetarian lunches: _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Check-in begins at 11:00 a.m. and lunch is served at noon. Please make your check payable to REAOC and mail to: REAOC, P.O. Box 11787, Santa Ana, CA 92711-1787

PLEASE CAR-POOL!

On the Calendar: 2016 REAOC Luncheons



May 25
September 28
December 7

2015 Holiday LUNCHEON



*Above: REAOC Members enjoying holiday luncheon
Right: Holiday luncheon musical entertainment*



Dated Material – Please Deliver Immediately

INSIDE THE INFORMER
 Luncheon Set for March 23
 Government Workers Vilified
 Mindfulness
 The Early Days
 In A Cyber Age

RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF ORANGE COUNTY, INC.
 P.O. Box 11787, Santa Ana, CA 92711-1787

The Informer

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