



The Informer

RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF ORANGE COUNTY, INC.

REAO Luncheons

Once again, we must report that there will not be a REAO luncheon for September 2021. We are hoping as the Covid pandemic situation improves, there will be a chance for a holiday luncheon, but it is still too soon to know if that will be possible.

As soon as we can confirm one way or another, REAO will send an email to our members with email addresses on file and post an update on our website, www.reaoc.org. We will let you know of the luncheon status by no later than October 1, 2021. In the event there is a serious outbreak, we will have to cancel the holiday luncheon.

We miss you and hope you all are safe!



Presidents' Message

From the Desks of Linda Robinson and Doug Storm

Hello, Retirees! On behalf of the entire REAO and AREOC Board of Directors we hope your summer was filled with enjoyable memories and personal well-being. As the heat of summer subsides, may the new fall season bring cooler weather AND success in addressing any challenges we may face personally or as a nation including: harm caused by the weather and recurring fires; coping with menacing Covid-19 variants; surviving the ever-changing political landscape; as well as many other critical and competing issues that demand our attention and focus. As retirees we must remember we have the experience, knowledge and fortitude to effectively manage and cope with challenges/dilemmas that test our patience and lives. We are strong and we CAN overcome impediments to the security and peace of mind we've earned.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The REAO Board of Directors and dedicated retiree volunteers continue to work on your behalf. Your Board and Executive Director continue to conduct normal business activities via Zoom and limited in-person meetings. Monthly REAO Board meetings are held to address issues related to legislation, legal updates,

review of Board of Supervisor meetings, retirement security, retiree medical, OCERS updates, networking with statewide and national retiree associations, publication of The Informer newsletter, planning for a REAO hosted virtual CRCEA conference and ever-evolving issues that directly affect retiree members.

2022 HEALTH PLANS

The County Board of Supervisors adopted 2022 retiree insurance plans and new rates at the July 13 Board meeting. Rate increases/decreases vary by plan and whether you are post-65 and Medicare-eligible or pre-65. REAO is NOT included in plan negotiations or setting of rates; however, representatives from REAO continue to meet with Human Resources/Employee Benefits staff to gain a better understanding of plan Rx and medical service experience in rate setting. The new 2022 rates are posted on the REAO website at www.reaoc.org. As described in previous newsletters, REAO and the County co-hosted annual, in-person health plan workshops in Fountain Valley. Due to on-going COVID pandemic issues last year's workshop was held virtually via Zoom. For safety and health reasons, this same virtual format will be available this year

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Covid Vaccination Card Security

After you get your Covid-19 vaccine, **keep your vaccination card safe**—scammers are using the Covid-19 pandemic to try to steal your personal information. **Don't share a photo of your Covid-19 vaccination card online or on social media.** Scammers can use content you post, like your date of birth, health care details, or other personal information to steal your identity.

You should get a Covid-19 vaccination card at your first vaccine appointment. If you didn't, contact the provider site where you got vaccinated or your state health department to find out how to get a card.

If someone contacts you to buy or sell a vaccination card, it's a scam.

If you suspect Covid-19 health care fraud, report it online at US Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of the Inspector General. The web site address is: https://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/report-fraud/?utm_campaign=20210505_cv_d_frd_gal_v2&utm_content=english&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery or call 800-HHS-TIPS (800-447-8477). TTY users can call 1-800-377-4950.

I have lost my vaccination card, what should I do?

Go to the following web site address to learn what to do. https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/?fbclid=IwAR1dUYK9qI_GWANikknqdETMX3grgQC22nnuuJI7KCfYcNsAlvC2BlS CIT8

REAOC

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Doug Storm	Co President
Rebecca Guider	Secretary
Bill Castro	Treasurer

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Gaylan Harris
John Iagjian
Larry Leaman
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Vacant	<i>The Informer</i> Editor
Vacant	Luncheon Committee
Norma Roberts	Board Watch
Linda Robinson	CRCEA Delegate
Michael Schumacher	Legislation
Rebecca Guider	Scholarship Committee

Presidents' Message

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on OCTOBER 5TH. PLEASE SAVE THIS DATE. You are invited to attend this upcoming workshop where representatives from each health plan will be available to answer any questions you may have regarding plans that are offered for your consideration. Please refer to Page 7 for additional information provided by the County. Information will also be available via email and the REAOC website. If you have changed your email or have not previously provided one to REAOC, please consider providing us with updated information. This will allow us to keep you informed regarding the workshop and, equally important, other significant issues and activities related to retirement.

IN CLOSING

On behalf of your REAOC Board of Directors, we thank you for your continued support, membership and participation. There is strength in numbers. REAOC membership is over 6,500 strong. YOU are the strength of this organization. Be safe, protect your health and take care of your loved ones and one another.

— Linda Robinson and 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.

Near-Term Legislative Agenda

by Tony Roda

This article was published in the May 2021 NCPERS MONITOR. REAOC is a member of the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS) organization that is considered to be the national voice for public pensions.

On April 20, NCPERS held its annual Legislative Conference to provide members with an overview of the legislative and regulatory priorities of the House, Senate, and Biden Administration. Speakers from the Administration and Congress presented a detailed picture of the issues they are championing and hope to see addressed this year. This article breaks down those key policy areas and highlights the issues of particular importance to the public pension community.

At the end of 2019, the SECURE Act increased the age trigger for Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) to 72 from the previous age of 70 1/2. The RMD rules apply to Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a) plans, 401(k) plans, governmental 457(b) plans, 403(b) plans, and IRAs. RMDs do not apply to Roth accounts.

We should expect a further increase in the age trigger to be included in the legislation currently being developed at the House Ways and Means Committee. The bill is colloquially referred to as the SECURE Act 2.0. (Note: The House Ways and Means Committee unanimously passed the bill, which has yet to move on to the full House. It will improve America's retirement savings system in meaningful ways.)

In addition, Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-MA) remains committed to repealing the

Social Security penalty known as the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The penalty reduces your Social Security benefit if you earn a retirement benefit from non-Social Security covered employment (i.e., no FICA tax). Twenty five percent of public employees are not covered by Social Security and may be impacted by WEP, which could result in receiving almost \$6,000 less each year in your Social Security benefit.

Chairman Neal's bill, H.R. 2337, would provide a rebate from the WEP penalty of \$150 per month for those beneficiaries currently affected by WEP and those who will turn age 62 before 2023. Those who are not in the rebate category and all future hires would receive the higher benefit of current Social Security law, which includes the substantial earnings exemption, or the new proportional formula. The proportional formula would be based on each worker's actual work history.

Please be assured that NCPERS will closely monitor the issues outlined in this article. We will keep our members informed of significant developments.

Tony Roda is a partner at the Washington, D.C. law and lobbying firm Williams & Jensen, where he specializes in federal legislative and regulatory issues affecting state and local governmental pension plans. He represents NCPERS and statewide, county, and municipal pension plans

Welcome, New Members

CEO: Sheila Carter

Child Support Services: Cynthia Magallanes

District Attorney: Karen McKinney

HCA: Reyna Brown Guillen, Janice Haffner, Lynn Kleist, Kathleen Murray, Tony Lee Price, Teresa Williams

OCCR: Kathleen Reza, Debra Eddy

OC Fire Authority: Douglas Hartman

OCSA: Betty Hong, Edith Gage, Donald Medeiros, Michelle McDonald

OCTA: Mary Shavaliere, Orlando Lacanlale

Probation: Judy Zorrilla

SSA: Azucena Holgado, Janet Franks, Cynthia Brown Cooksey, Graciela Verduzco, Anne Bloxum, Victor Chavez, James Hazard

Superior Court: Juli Diaz, Tracy Urueta, Vera Saiz, Zita Villanueva

Not Stated: Maria Sio, Patrick Velarde, Marina Ricaurte

Surviving Spouse: Violeta Rodriguez, Pamela Dillon



in California, Colorado, Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, and Texas. He has an undergraduate degree in government and politics from the University of Maryland, J.D. from Catholic University of America, and LL.M (tax law) from Georgetown University.

2021 Keith Concannon Scholarship Award Winners



We are pleased to announce the five winners of the REAOC's 2020 Keith Concannon Scholarship, named in honor of REAOC's past president and member of the Board of Retirement. His legacy is one of tireless service as an advocate for employees and retirees.

This is the 17th year scholarships have been awarded to qualified students who are related to REAOC members and are pursuing a degree at an accredited college, university or authorized institution. Each awardee receives \$2,000 to be used for tuition, books, supplies or equipment required in his or her degree program.

The Orange County Department of Education and REAOC's Scholarship Committee evaluated all applications. Scholarships were awarded on the basis of academic performance and awards, community service and honors. Three of this year's recipients are high school students who have been accepted to college or university. Two of our recipients are currently in college and will continue the pursuit of advanced graduate degrees.

This is the first year we have had

siblings receive the scholarship award. The process requires that all identifying information be removed, and numbers are assigned to all application materials, before the committee members receive them for review. Scholarship Committee members do not know the names of any of the recipients until after the selection process is fully completed.

Please join us in congratulating this year's outstanding awardees!

Brandon Arnold is the grandson of Rosemarie Vonderscher, who retired in 1969. Brandon will graduate from Trabuco High School and plans to attend Baylor University in the fall to pursue a degree in medicine. In addition to his academic achievements, he participates on his high school basketball and track and field teams. He is a strong advocate for ensuring the inclusion of students with special needs. He is the Publicist of the Trabuco Hills High School's Unique Sports Program and worked to engage special needs students in sports activities. Brandon is active in his church as a volunteer for summer camp and a participant of the Student Leadership Team. He plans to continue working with disadvan-



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: HAILEY GLENDE, LUCAS NEUKIRCHNER, CHRISTOPHER HUGHES, LAUREN HUGHES
PHOTO UNAVAILABLE: BRANDON ARNOLD

taged populations in his future career endeavors in the U.S. and abroad.

Lauren Hughes is the daughter of Tracey Hughes who retired in 2020. This year she will graduate from Orange County School of the Arts and plans to attend Stanford University. In addition to being a very accomplished ballet dancer, Lauren has a love for math and science.

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Ways to Improve Your Health

This article was shared from the Retired Employees of Santa Barbara County's newsletter

Sleep + Water

Resist the urge to binge on Netflix far into the wee hours and go to bed earlier! Studies show that lack of sleep is a risk factor for cognitive decline and the onset of Alzheimer's disease! Unfortunately, many seniors suffer from insomnia. Here are some steps to help: Go to bed on an empty stomach, limit caffeinated drinks after noon, take a warm bath at bedtime, wear loose jammies, try reading just before bedtime, darken your bedroom, limit use of screens prior to bedtime, get a new pillow, buy cuddly/snuggly sheets and blankets,

take long slow breaths as you settle into bed and clean up your bedroom, get rid of clutter and hang up your clothes – Zzz...Zzz...Zzz

Surrounded by endless beverage selections, many seniors forget to drink plain old water! The signs of dehydration include fatigue, dizziness, confusion, weakness, lightheadedness, muscle cramping and "grouchiness"—symptoms familiar to all of us. Though sometimes attributed to serious medical conditions, these symptoms frequently can be eliminated by simply drinking more water—especially in warm

weather. How much water you should drink per day depends on many factors, including how much caffeine you consume, medications you take, the efficiency of your heart-lung-kidney function, etc. The benefits of drinking water include regulating body temperature, balancing electrolytes, aiding digestion, flushing bacteria from your system and normalizing blood pressure. One way to drink more water is to fool your brain into thinking you are drinking a cocktail! Drink water from a stemmed glass, add sliced lime with a garnish and a paper umbrella. Ah, nice!!

Scholarship Award Winners

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Laura is a Senior Company Dancer for the Long Beach Ballet, is a member of her high school French Club Honor Society and has received many honors and awards for service and academic excellence. Following in the footsteps of her grandfather, she plans to pursue a degree in electrical engineering where she can create new and innovative applications for real world problems.

Lucas Neukirchner is the great-nephew of Barbara Voelkel who retired in 2016. Lucas is a 17-year-old who loves math and plans to blend his gift for math with his love of computer science. He is inspired by his sibling with Autism and hopes to continue working on projects to assist people with special needs. He is currently attending High Tech High School in Secaucus, NJ. Lucas has been a member of the Tech Club, Robotics Club, French Club, Math

League, and was inducted into the French Honor Society. He has been accepted to eight prestigious universities and he chose to attend Stevens Institute of Technology with a major of Pure and Applied Mathematics.

Hailey Glende is the daughter of Bonnie Glende who retired in 2003. Hailey is currently a student at Concordia University in Irvine and will attend Belmont University Nursing School in Nashville, TN this fall. Hailey's ultimate goal is to become a pediatric nurse specializing in mental health issues. Personal experience has inspired Hailey's career goals. In addition to her academic accomplishments, she has saved money from working starting at age 16, as she intends to pay her own way through school. Her history of academic choices and volunteer activities support her desire to specialize in the treatment of children and young

adults with mental health issues.

Christopher Hughes is the son of Tracey Hughes who retired in 2020. Christopher is currently studying at Stanford University, majoring in physics and philosophy. His ultimate goal is to pursue a career in academic research as a physicist. To that end, Chris has worked at the Air Force Research Atom Lab, in Albuquerque, NM. Additionally, he is currently at Kasevich Research Group at Stanford, working on nanosecond imaging techniques in lidar and diagnostics. Christopher is active in the Effective Altruism Club at Stanford. This group is dedicated to evidence-based approaches to maximizing career impact.

Congratulations to all of our exceptional awardees! Thank you to the Scholarship committee and all of the REAOC members for generously supporting the scholarship program.

In Memoriam

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

April 2021 – July 2021

Lynnette Almond, City of SJC
Serge Alvarez, OCSD
James Antonson, OCTA
Mary Ayala, OCTA
Reine Bramlett
Judith Bucher, OC Sanitation District
James Burda, OC Public Works
Juanita Burks, OCSD
Nancy Buzenes, OCTA
Audrey Carlson, Superior Court
Thomas Carter, OCTA
Rex Castellaw, Probation
Ramesh Chabra, OCPW
Joe Crawford, Auditor
Carol Crutchfield, Superior Court
Mitchell Churness, HCA
Walter Daniels, Treasurer-Tax Collector
Marilyn Davis, Superior Court
Darlene Denham-Martinez, SSA
Jean Dickson, HCA
Dennis Disinger, OCTA
Edward Dzierwa, SSA
Cindy Eaton
Dennis Edwards, Probation
Gary Ennis, OCSD
Anita Epstein
Thomas Espinoza, OCTA
Larry Ferguson, OCTA
William Gear, Auditor Controller
Daniel Gonzales, UCI
Christine Greenwell
Stanley Griffith, OCSD
Robin Hall, OC Waste & Recycle
Laverne Hamilton, OCTA
Lois Hardy
Glen Harvey, Jr.
Ida Hauber, OCCR
Ann Head, OCCR
Esmaralda Hillhouse, C&F Commission
John Hosanna, OCSD
Barbara Hull, OCERS
Jeanette Humphrey, SSA
Gary Jackson, OCPW
Joann Jenkins, HCA
William Kelley, Public Defender
Thomas Klein, OCSD
Roger Kuhaupt, OCPW
Robert Kuhel, Superior Court
Sidney Kysoth, SSA
Rosemary Lamb, SSA
Joan Lars, OCTA

Maurice LaTour
Jackie Lassiter, Sanitation District
Lavone Ledbetter, UCI
James Lefko, Auditor Controller
Gladys Lehman, OCSD
Emory Lehosit, OCCR
John Leonhart, Sanitation District
Robert Lintner, OCCR
Lee Lisanti, Probation
Marcia Lizaraza, HCA
Barbara Love, OC Waste & Recycle
Benjamin Luna, OCSD
James Lyons, UCI
Madeline Maddox, HCA
Mark Markowitz, UCI
Judith Marley, Probation
Emmett Martin
Carole Mc Corkindale, OCFA
Natalie Mc Dowell, Assessor
John Mc Laughlin, OCCR
David Medellin, Sanitation District
Stephen Meeker
Ted Miller, OCPW
Jose Moreno, SSA
Mary Morris, HCA
Frank Munoz, OC Public Works
Ann Murata, UCI
George Murphy, OCSD
Robert Newport, OCFA
Lan Anh Nguyen, SSA
Tiffanie Nguyen, Auditor Controller
Chico Nisperos, SSA
Janet Okamura, SSA
John O'Sullivan, City of SJC
Antonio Palacios, HCA
Harriete Perkins, Superior Court
Jeffrey Peterson, Sanitation District
Helen Potter, Assessor
William Prince, OCTA
Elaine Renta, CEO
Sherry Robb, OCCR
Shirley Romano, CSS
Vincent Rossina, Assessor
Rose Marie Santiago, Superior Court
Jeannette Shelton, OCPW
Wayne Shurts, HCA
Nancy Shirley, HCA
Joan Silverman
Tracey Sletta, SSA
Yolanda Solorio, SSA
Janelle Sowell, Assessor
Marilee Steward, OCTA

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Hans Strand, OCSD
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Judith Whittington, OCTA
Lavonne Wilkeson, OCPW
Marion Womble, OCTA
Jane Wysocki, OCWR
Gladys Zoerlein, Auditor Controller

Surviving Spouses

Kay Ajimine
Kathryn Bennett
Tonu Bruns
Edward Champine
Mary Chan
Theresa Citron
Donna Fellstad
Jane Gadzinski
Ruth Gibson
Patricia Kyler
Donald Lilja
Ellen Masters
Betty McDonald
Marie Mediati
Maria Misa
Norma Mucia
Barbara Peoples
Marie Ramirez
Gordon Rozen
Fred Shafer
Marjorie Schirmer
Carolyn Stripe
Thanh-Leili Tran
Sally Vargas
Dionisio Velarde
Louise Wiese
Rita Wiltberger

County of Orange Health Plans Open Enrollment 2022

A Message from Employee Benefits

Open Enrollment will be from Wednesday, October 20, 2021, to Tuesday, November 9, 2021. Elections made during Open Enrollment are effective January 1, 2022. Mark your calendars with the important dates below.

Open Enrollment Postcard mid to late September	Delivered to your home mailing address
Open Enrollment Newsletter early October	Delivered to your home mailing address
In Person Enrollment Presentations	October 5 at Mile Square Park
Prepare to Make Your Benefit Choices page!	Wednesday, October 13
First Day of Open Enrollment	Wednesday, October 20
Last Day of Open Enrollment	Tuesday, November 9
Correction period	Wednesday, November 10 through Friday, November 19

Manage Your Communication Preferences Right Away So You Get All The Important information—Take a moment to verify your setting on your communications preferences on the Benefits Center website, **My OC Benefits™**, or the Upoint app. Remember, you can be notified by email or postal mail to your home address. **Your Open Enrollment notification will NOT be mailed to you if you have your preference set for email.**

Tuesday, October 5, join us for a virtual **Open Enrollment presentation**. REAOC, Employee Benefits and all the health plan providers will share resources and give you an opportunity to ask your questions and get answers. The Open Enrollment presentation will be held at 9:00 am. For more information, go to hrs.ocgov.com/employee-benefits.

Starting October 13, you can

start accessing important benefits information on the **Prepare to Make Your Benefit Choices page!** Visit **My OC Benefits™** at mybenefits.ocgov.com using Chrome, Edge or Firefox. If you are Grant eligible, you will be able to see your 2022 Grant online. Compare health plans by reviewing the One Page Retiree Plan Summaries to compare health plan benefits so you and your family have the coverage you need. View educational videos that make understanding benefits easier as well as view the County's Open Enrollment presentation.

You can also obtain information online at mybenefits.ocgov.com by asking Lisa, a virtual online resource, questions. Lisa can answer most frequently asked questions. You can also start a "Web Chat" with a representative to ask your questions and get answers. You can set a sched-

uled appointment, while they last, to speak to a representative one on one when it is convenient for you.

If you are eligible for the monthly Medicare Part B Reimbursement for 2022, you will receive the lesser of **\$104.90**, your monthly Grant amount or your actual Medicare premium cost per month. Each year we ask that you provide a copy of the upcoming plan year Medicare premium statement to the Benefits Service Center. If your submitted documentation verifying the new Medicare Part B premium is received on or before December 31, 2021, your Part B Reimbursement will reflect the correct amount on your February pension. You will receive an adjustment on your February pension to include January's reimbursement. If received on or after January 1, 2022, the correct amount will be effective the first of the month following receipt of your supporting documentation by the Benefits Service Center with no retroactive adjustments.

If you have questions or want to make your Open Enrollment election with a representative, contact the **Benefits Service Center** at 1-833-476-2347. The Benefits Service Center are normally open between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday and will have **extended hours until 8 p.m. during Open Enrollment.**

History and a Salute to a Group of Former Top County Managers

In one of the periodic reorganizations of Orange County government, several major departments were consolidated under one structure and one Director in the 1970s under the name of the Environmental Management Agency, or EMA. Those departments included the Planning Department, the Building and Safety Department, the Flood Control District, the Harbors-Beaches and Parks District, Housing and Community Development, the Department of Real Property Services, the Road Department and a few others. That agency itself was



reorganized out of existence in the late 1990s as an outcome of the changes made to help the county recover from the county bankruptcy of 1994. Over the years the top management of the former EMA would meet for old times' sake periodically over lunch. This photo shows those

at a July 15, 2009, luncheon where the 90th birthday of former County Administrative Officer Bob Thomas was celebrated. Hawaiian attire was encouraged in honor of Thomas having been a Pearl Harbor survivor. Some of these men are no longer on this earth,

while others are happily retired and still with us. All left a legacy of dedicated public service, and the OC is a better place because they were here.

SEATED FROM LEFT: MURRAY STORM, BOB THOMAS
STANDING FROM LEFT: BOB WINGARD, LARRY LEAMAN, BOB HAMILTON, ERNIE SCHNIEDER, TOM MATTHEWS, BILL ZAUN, CARL NELSON, RON NOVELLO

Dated Material – Please Deliver Immediately

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INSIDE THE INFORMER

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RETIREE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF ORANGE COUNTY, INC.

The Informer

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