



# THE INTERCOM

Newsletter of the California Retired  
County Employees Association (CRCEA)

July 2020

[www.crcea.org](http://www.crcea.org)

Issue #3-2020



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, here it is, the middle of 2020 already. But why does it seem like we need a new start to the year? Could it be that be that we have all been "locked up" for 3-4 months of this year? While all of us enjoy our families and our homes, it sure would be nice to have been able to get out, go to lunch with friends, or maybe shopping for someone's birthday, Mother's Day, or Father's Day. Unfortunately, as I sit here writing (actually I'm typing) the future does not look all that promising. Sure we have some loosening of the lock down, but new cases and hospitalizations and deaths keep going up. Hopefully tougher restrictions will not return – we each need to do our part. I hope that each of you is taking the precautions

necessary to keep yourself healthy and safe. This social distancing can be stressful, but it does appear to be necessary. Whether we like to admit it or not, we are in that demographic most susceptible – we are getting older.

I spoke in December last year about the disheartening cancelling of the October Conference in Sonoma. Well, once again nature has descended its vengeance on us with the COVID-19 situation and as a result, we had to again cancel a conference in Tulare. And, then we got bit again. This time the virus did not cooperate by receding, but rather kicked up again. So, it seems that we will again be prevented from meeting in Modesto (Stanislaus County). Stanislaus and Merced County associations were forced into the unenviable position of asking to cancel the Fall Conference. Considering the need to look out for the well-being of our overall membership, coupled with the statewide and local health restrictions, there really didn't seem we had

much choice. Once again, the work done by our host counties cannot just be ignored. I said it before, and will continue to praise the efforts and time put in by those who host our conferences. The association officers and volunteers always put forth work on behalf of hosting to ensure that their local association shines and to also ensure that the conference itself is a positive one. To those folks, let me say "Thank You!". Now let us look forward to the Spring, with hopes of a better set of circumstances.

So, it has been nearly 18 months since all of us have been able to get together to conduct the actual business of CRCEA that needs to be done. The Executive Committee has continued to operate in the absence of the conference business sessions (the meetings of our Board of Directors) but some operational changes and decisions can only be made by the delegates. We are trying to figure out a mechanism that will allow the delegates to get together, possibly

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electronically, in order to have our business conducted.

The proposal for a bylaws' change that would stagger the terms of the officers on the Executive Committee and the staggering of elections that should have taken place in October 2019, and then put over to April 2020, was reworked to accomplish the goal intended. The revised proposal that will get us where we want to be was on the business agenda for our Fall Conference. This proposal, and the rationale, will be sent to all associations for review and possible action. Our By-Laws Committee will have to weigh in.

The Executive Committee also asked for input on a more global look at our by-laws, and that will be reviewed to try to do some "clean-up" to keep us up-to-date.

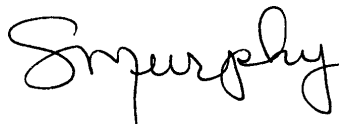
Elsewhere in this newsletter is an update on the CalPERS LTC action. It appears that any settlement may be a wish, and the court date should happen later in the year.

The Technology Committee recently provided an update on its efforts and some recommendations to move CRCEA forward into the

technology age with specific direction on improving member communication and efficiency of the organization. Gene Pennington and the committee worked hard and continue pulling some specific information together. A smaller working group, named the Technology Steering Committee, is made up of some members of the original committee as well as two members of the CRCEA Executive Committee. The goal is to help CRCEA, as well as each member association, streamline and enhance its ability to use technology going forward.

As I close, I want to again urge you to be careful and stay safe, while at the same time keeping your mental health and your physical health up. Clearly this organization could not be what it is without your help.

Until next time.....



SKIP MURPHY, President

*Independence Day  
July 4, 2020*



### **Future CRCEA Conferences**

There will come a day when, again, we'll be able to safely gather together. In that spirit, following is the schedule for the next several conferences:

Spring 2021  
Los Angeles (RELAC)

Fall 2021  
Fresno (REFCO)

Spring 2022  
Orange (REAOC)

Fall 2022  
Sacramento (SCREA)

Spring 2023  
San Bernardino (RESBC)

Fall 2023  
San Joaquin (RPESJC)

**WE HOPE YOU WILL BE  
ABLE TO JOIN US FOR  
GREAT INFORMATION,  
NETWORKING, AND,  
OF COURSE, FUN!**



**REPORT ON CalPERS  
Long-Term Care Litigation  
by Dave Muir (June 9, 2020)**

Mike Bidart, our lead counsel in the case, held a 90-minute teleconference on June 8, 2020 with several individuals who have been active in monitoring the case to bring us up to date on the current status. Mike Sloan, Robert Palmer, and I were on the call.

On April 21, 2020, the CalPERS Pension and Health Benefits Committee disclosed that CalPERS would potentially impose “significant premium increases” for the Long-Term Care (LTC) Program. The CalPERS Chief Health Director stated:

Lastly, today in closed session, the Committee discussed competitive strategy for the Long-Term Care Program. Much of that discussion was about the potential need to reduce the discount rate for the Long-Term Care Program in light of recent returns of fixed income investments, the Long-Term Care Fund’s primary holding.

**Such a reduction would unfortunately require significant premium increases.** Management is continuing to evaluate this and related issues and will come back in open session in June with a full presentation.

It is important to note that the LTC Fund and its discount rate are totally separate from the CalPERS pension fund.

The CalPERS Pension and Health Benefits Committee will meet virtually on June 16 at 8:00 a.m.

There is a closed session item on the agenda: “Long-Term Care Program Competitive Strategy,” followed by an open session item: “Challenges and Potential Changes Facing the Long-Term Care Program.” Our counsel is encouraging class members to register to provide public comment on how badly they have suffered as a result of the rate increases.

The full CalPERS Board of Administration is scheduled to meet on June 17 at 10:00 a.m. There is a closed session item on the agenda covering discussion of the LTC lawsuit.

Progress in the litigation is currently stalled due to closure of the courts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On December 18, 2019, Judge Layn Phillips was appointed as “Special Settlement Master” to oversee settlement negotiations. Judge Phillips is a retired federal judge and former U.S. Attorney for Oklahoma nationally recognized for his expertise in settling cases. His fees are \$35,000 per day!

Our attorneys have moved to amend the complaint to specifically name the State of California as a party. The State opposes the motion and contends the State is not liable for the damages suffered by class members. Currently, a hearing on the motion is set for the 1<sup>st</sup> of July.

**FEELING YOUNGER  
COULD HELP YOU LIVE  
LONGER**

It's not uncommon for Paula Lester's jaw to drop when she spots a patient's age on the chart. The New York-based geriatrician treats plenty of people in their 90s who could easily pass for 70. She also has patients in their 70s who say they feel decades older.

When it comes to age, Lester says, "It really is just a number. It's about how you feel."

The notion of how old you feel versus how old you really are has been attracting more attention from researchers and medical professionals. Recent studies have linked subjective age — the age that you feel — to a range of health outcomes, including depression, dementia and longevity. The findings: The younger you feel, the better off you may be.

Adults who feel younger report fewer chronic conditions than those who feel older. They also take fewer medications, visit the doctor less often and are more likely to maintain a normal weight, according to data collected from a large national study on health and

well-being led by the University of Wisconsin.

Biology may be at play when it comes to the association between feeling younger and living longer. Researchers recently identified more favorable biomarkers associated with liver and kidney function in adults 55 and older who reported feeling younger than their chronological age, compared to those who felt their age or older. This finding could help explain the lower prevalence of age-related disease among more youthful-minded adults, says pathologist Bharat Thyagarajan, the study's lead author and an associate professor of laboratory medicine and pathology at the University of Minnesota.

**Find what makes you feel young**

Asking patients how old they feel isn't common medical practice yet. But Thyagarajan said it is a "fairly easy" thing to include during a routine doctor's visit, and doing so could help identify patients at higher risk for age-related diseases so they can be screened more intensively.

One problem with posing the question, however, is that most physicians aren't

equipped to "help guide people to feel the best they can," says Lester, who practices at NYU Winthrop Hospital and is a clinical associate professor of medicine at NYU Langone Health.

It's not as easy as telling patients who identify with an older subjective age to "think young," Lester says, especially if that patient is dealing with a debilitating condition. Instead, she encourages adults who feel their age or older to "think about what's important to them" and to do what makes them feel young.

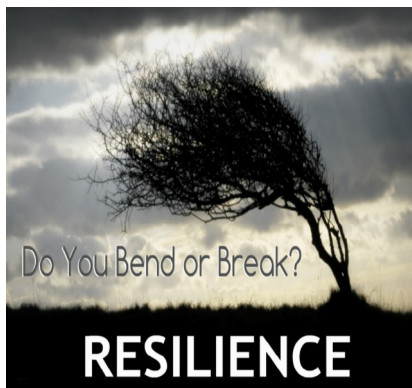
"Some people might feel younger if they go for a walk outside, or, if they can't walk, if someone takes them in a wheelchair outside," Lester says. "Someone might feel younger if they play a card game or an activity that they did when they were younger.... It's a matter of finding what they enjoy, and if they have to adapt it, figure out a way to adapt it."

Lester also advises her patients, who range from 65 to 105, to prioritize their days, recognizing that long to-do lists may be harder to tackle, and that setting unattainable goals can lead to discouragement.

"You start every day with a bucket of energy, and you have to decide how you want to use that bucket," Lester says. "Do you want to use it washing the floor and vacuuming? Or do you want to use it talking to a friend or going to play bingo or going to the movies — whatever it is."

And be sure to take assistance where you need it. A walker might make your morning stroll goals a reality; a hearing aid could improve quality time with friends and family — both of which could help you feel younger. When patients resist these devices, Lester reminds them: "It's better to use a little bit of help to be able to do things and enjoy things. And sometimes you need a little bit of help to avoid a lot of help."

*Author: Rachel Nania  
AARP online  
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### **SIMILAR TO LITTLE DEBBIE'S STAR CRUNCH COOKIES**

- 5 cups crispy rice cereal
- 1.5 cups chocolate chips
- 1 cup peanut butter (may use any nut/seed butter)
- 1/4 cup coconut oil
- 1/2 cup maple syrup

Line a large baking tray with parchment paper and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, add crispy rice cereal and set aside.

In a microwave safe bowl, or stove top, combine chocolate chips, peanut butter, maple syrup, and coconut oil. Melt until fully combined. If you use microwave, melt on medium power in 30-second intervals to avoid burning.

Pour liquid mixture over the crispy rice cereal, and mix well. Using a large spoon or cookie scoop, drop crunch cookie batter on the lined baking sheet, about 2-3" apart. Press each cookie and refrigerate until firm.

Enjoy!



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