

# SAN JOSE Retired Employees Association

A non-profit association devoted to the welfare of all retired City of San Jose Employees and dedicated to the protection and integrity of the Retirement System

Volume 15, Issue 8

August 2011



## From Your President

### Looking Ahead/Moving Forward

Edited by Bob Leininger, SJREA President

#### LOOKING AHEAD/MOVING FORWARD

As we reported last month, the Mayor and City Council voted on June 24th to defer to August 2 consideration of a Declaration of a Fiscal and Safety Emergency as well as discussion of retirement reform ballot language. This Board (and most of the bargaining groups) spent quite a bit of time in July gearing up for that City Council meeting, but the decision was made by the Mayor to again defer these items, with action to declare an emergency to be considered no earlier than Sept 20. This is more consistent with the City's agreements with the unions that set an October 31 deadline to complete negotiations for retirement reform changes, as well as getting union input on any possible ballot language. A ballot measure clearly will not go to the voters this year, with the General Election in November 2012 the most likely time. Based on the August 2nd discussions of the City Manager's polling results for new revenue initiatives, any tax proposals would most likely also be set for November 2012.

With these extended timelines, it is easy to fall into what could be called a "complacency trap". The Mayor and the City Administration have put out draft ballot language that would drastically affect our COLA rights, as well as the SRBR funds and even medical plan costs. As my friend and ardent Police and Fire retiree advocate Bruce De Mers, recently deceased, told me when I first became involved in retiree matters, "don't rely on others to carry your water; retirees need to look after their benefits and not fall into the trap of thinking that somehow we will

taken care of." Following this solid advice, this Board is preparing on a variety of fronts. We are trying to analyze the City's retirement contribution projections to make sure that they are based on reasonable assumptions etc. We will spend a lot of time with the bargaining units reps to make sure they understand the impacts on retirees from changes to SRBR and medical plan costs (reminding them that they will be retirees someday and will have to live with what is lost today). We also are continuing our work with our attorneys so we are prepared to file legal actions in the event a political solution is not possible. We will be meeting with the City Council members to make sure they understand the severe impacts of the proposed "take-aways" and the intention of this organization to pursue all legal remedies. And, of course, as important City Council decisions are scheduled, we will ask all of you to again write or call the Council and the mayor, and to show up at the meetings. We will do our best to keep everyone informed and will use the email list to alert members of any fast-breaking situations.

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#### SAVE THE DATES

**September 1** Health Directives/Power of Attorney  
**October 6** General Membership Meeting  
**November 3** General Membership Meeting  
**December 7** Holiday Luncheon - Wyndham Hotel

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT CONT.

On a related matter, some of us on the Board have been talking about strategies with the voters should a city retirement reform measure be placed on the 2012 ballot. One approach you might want to keep in mind with your friends who are active public employees or retirees with other cities, the county, state, federal, or are teachers, and who may otherwise be supportive of the City's reform measures, is to remind them that a successful challenge to current San Jose retiree's vested pension rights will most likely have far reaching consequences. When that door opens, they should expect that their retiree benefits could be next in line for "reform". Voter beware! Not a bad message to begin planting with all public employees and retirees.

We had a great travel presentation and slide show at the August 4th General Meeting from former city employee Jack Van Sambeek and his San Jose high school teacher son, Joe. They traveled most of South America over an 8-month period, including the coastal areas, cities, and jungles. They provided an excellent narrative on cultural experiences, the food in the various locales, and of course all things wild in the remote areas. Makes the City Hall jungle look tame by comparison. Anita Phagan has a nice recap on the next page.

We have a senior attorney with SALA (the Senior Adults Legal Assistance non-profit) talking to us on September 1st about legal directives, powers of attorney etc. that we all should consider. Should be very informative. Also in this newsletter is a notice regarding a fund-raising golf tournament on September 19th for SALA. They provide valuable (and usually free or very low cost) legal services for low-income seniors and have been taking big hits to their grant funds from the State and other sources. There is a number you can call for more info on this Stanford golf course event.

Hope everyone is having a great summer. Get out there and make every day count. We only retire once.

**Speaker of the Month**

Jack Van Sambeek and his son, Joe, both former City employees from the 1990's, gave a very interesting slide presentation on their driving trip through South America on a route that ultimately took eight months and 25,000 driving miles. The plan was hatched during a trip in 1994 when they visited Costa Rica, so after years of planning,

they left North America in October 2003. Their Toyota Forerunner was shipped to Chile, and there they began their odyssey, exploring regions quite diverse and definitely quite taxing for most normal travelers.

They camped and hiked in parks, looking at flora and fauna, and shared some of the scenery of the Lake District, the volcanic regions, and the glacial areas of Torres del Paine in Chile and Ushuaia, Argentina. Trading travel in the SUV for a boat, the pair visited the Falklands and Antarctica during the short window of "summer-time" for visiting the southern points of Earth.

Onward they traveled to Iguassu Falls, a majestic series of miles wide waterfalls thundering near the border of Argentina and Brazil. They continued crossing back and forth between Argentina and Chile numerous times, visiting the barren landscape of copper mines in northern Chile and the Atacama Desert.

As they progressed northward, the two were joined for short stretches of their trip by several folks close to the City of San Jose, among them the daughter of former attorney Dick Karren, and Ellis Jones, Jr., GS and IT director. Among the sights that Jack and Joe recounted were:

- Andean condors
- RORO (Roll On Roll Off) ferries to traverse nearly one-third of Chile's coastline
- Patagonia and Cueva de las Manos
- Cameloid species such as guanaco and Llama
- Bolivia's most dangerous road in the world with its steep drop off and quick descent to lower elevation while maneuvering on a less than 2-lane road
- Lake Titicaca and the Incan regions of Peru as well as Machu Picchu

Resorting to shipping the truck again since there is no traversable road or secure travel from Bogota, Colombia to Panama, the two still flew into Columbia to visit. Later they got to see the ethnically indigenous population of the San Blas Islands on the Gulf side of Panama. Finally it appeared that eight months of travel was beginning to wear them down, and they managed to drive all the way from Costa Rica to Nicaragua and on through Texas and back to San Diego, California in six days!

Along the way, Jack acquired a daughter-in-law, a young woman who poured wine for them in northwest Argentina and won her way to Joe's heart almost immediately!

**FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**2011 OFFICERS

Bob Leininger President	(408) 448-3070 Blein4@gmail.com
Bill Thomas 1st V.P.	(408) 268-8791 ALOYTHOMAS@aol.com
John Pletsch 2nd V.P.	(408) 274-2992 jeplet@sbcglobal.net
Dorothy McGinley Treasurer	(408) 267-0143 dorothymcginley@comcast.net

**Richard F. Doonan**, Senior Investigator Collector, retired 1/7/1978, died 6/29/2011.

**Orville Jolly**, Maintenance Superintendent, retired 2/20/1988, died 6/25/2011

**Bett McGowan-Mirabella**, Senior Account Clerk, retired 4/15/2000, died 7/17/2011

**Robert L. Oliver**, Planner IV, retired 2/4/1978, died 7/3/2011

**Richard A. Patonai**, Communications Technician, retired 2/24/2007, died 7/10/2011

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Dave Armstrong	(408) 294-3412
Sue Bradford-Moore	(408) 723-7965
John Eastus (Emeritus)	(408) 264-9603
Ed Flemate	(408) 578-3492
Donna Jewett	(408) 264-6780
Joan Lockwood	(408) 371-1989
Ed Overton	(408) 859-4162
Sharon Pardun	(408) 225-4034
Anita Phagan	(408) 259-6557
Bev Rettus	(408) 866-9300
Maurice Stevenson	(408) 294-2465

**From the Department of Retirement Service**

1737 N. First Street, Ste. 580, San Jose, CA 95112  
Phone: (408) 794-1000 or toll free (800) 732-6477  
Email: retirement.dept@sanjoseca.gov

RETIREMENTS

FEDERATED RETIREMENT BOARD ON  
VACATION THIS MONTH

CONDOLENCES

**Ailie L. Bonior**, Secretary I, retired 6/7/1980, died 7/5/2011

**Nicholas Border**, Senior Librarian, retired 7/15/1995, died 7/12/2011

**Joseph P. DiCiuccio**, Senior Deputy City Attorney, retired 6/12/2010, died 6/28/2011

**ON THE LIGHTER SIDE! :)**

Submitted by Bob "Pi" Silverstein

## How to Get the Police to Your House

An elderly man from Georgia was going up to bed, when his wife told him that he'd left the light on in the garden shed, which she could see from the bedroom window. He opened the back door to go turn off the light, but saw that there were people in the shed stealing things.

He phoned the police, who asked "Is someone in your house?" He said "No," but some people are breaking into my garden shed and stealing from me.

Then the police dispatcher said "All patrols are busy. You should lock your doors and an officer will be along when one is available." The old guy said, "Okay." He hung up the phone and counted to 30.

Then he phoned the police again. "Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago because there were people stealing things from my shed. Well, you don't have to worry about them now because I just shot them" and he hung up.

Within five minutes, six Police Cars, a SWAT Team, a Helicopter, two Fire Trucks, a Paramedic, and an Ambulance showed up at the residence, and caught the burglars red-handed.

One of the Policemen said to the guy, "I thought you said that you'd shot them!" This wise old man said, "I thought you said there was nobody available!"

## Discover the Season's Bounty at Your Local Farmer's Market



### WHAT'S IN SEASON?

- **Apricots, peaches, and nectarines** are now full of flavor. Look for a good background color near the stem to pick the ripest fruit. And follow your nose. What smells great often tastes great.
- Santa Rose Plums are ready with their deep purple tart skin and sweet juicy bite.
- Valley **cherries** are reaching the end of their season.
- Several different kinds of **yellow** and **green summer squash** are available.
- Don't forget **watermelon** and **cantaloupe**.
- **Cherry tomato** varieties are finally here. **Heirloom tomatoes** should be ripe and ready soon.
- A limited supply of local **sweet corn** is here. The late cool rains were especially hard for tomato and corn farmers.
- **Strawberries** have the longest season and longest storage life. Put the berries in an airtight container and do not wash them until you are ready to use them. Place a dry paper towel inside to regulate the moisture in the container as it sits in the refrigerator. They should keep for about a week this way.
- **Blueberries** will be ending their short season soon.
- **Loganberries, ollaliberies, blackberries, and boysenberries** will be coming in soon. Of these, loganberries and ollaliberies have the shortest season. They are also very delicate and juicy which make them great for smoothies and cobblers.
- **Blackberries** are firm and sweet making them great for snacking, but don't forget to wash them first.
- **Boysenberries** are a cross between blackberries and raspberries.
- **Raspberries** are now ready as well, and are loaded with vitamin C. You might even find yellow raspberries.

### SHOPPING TIPS:

- **Go early, but not too early** - the best stuff goes fast.
- **Or go late, but not too late** – from time to time, farmers may discount their produce toward the end of the day.
- **Bring your own bags** – although some farmer's market vendors have bags and boxes, it's easiest if you bring your own reusable bags with handles.
- **Bring a cooler** – make sure to have coolers with ice packs in your car.
- **Bring cash & small bills** – cash is the easiest currency, specifically small bills.
- **Dress comfortably** – wear walking shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. Most farmer's markets are open rain or shine, so be prepared.
- **Buy the ugly stuff** – folks can be fickle about the food they eat and if that peach lacks just the right blush and if that apple isn't perfectly round, they can be difficult to sell. The flavor is the same and these fruits and vegetables are great to preserve for the winter months. Take care, though, to check the produce thoroughly before making your purchase. Some unscrupulous farmers have tried to pass off moldy peaches as #2 fruit. #2 fruit means that the appearance is marred, but not the quality.
- **Take your time** – have fun browsing. Make a slow loop around the market making notes of stands of special interest.
- **Ask questions** - make sure you ask questions to the vendors when you see unfamiliar produce. Vendors and farmers love to share their knowledge and can give you recipes and cooking tips.
- **Experiment** – don't be afraid to try something new. Have fun! You'll probably discover a new favorite fruit, vegetable, bread or cheese.

(Source: California-grown.com)

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### LOCAL MARKETS:

**Campbell**, Campbell Avenue between 1st Street & Central. Sundays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., year-round.

**Cupertino**, Vallco Fashion Park, Wolfe Road at Interstate 280. Fridays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., year-round.

**Los Altos**, State Street between 2nd & 4th Streets, Thursdays. 4-8 p.m., May 3 – Sept. 27.

**Los Gatos**, Montebello Way & Broadway Extension, downtown Los Gatos. Sundays, 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., year-round.

**Morgan Hill**, downtown train station at Third and Depot streets. Saturdays, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., May 12 – Nov. 17.

**San Jose/The Alameda** – The Alameda & Hanchett. Saturdays, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., May 26 – Sept. 29.

**San Jose/Alum Rock Village**, 57 N. White Road. Sundays, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., year-round.

**San Jose/Blossom Hill**, Princeton Plaza Mall, Kooser Road & Meridian Avenue. Sundays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., year-round.

**San Jose/Cambrian Park**, Camden and Union avenues. Wednesdays, 4-8 p.m., May 2 – Oct. 31.

**San Jose/Downtown**, San Pedro Square between Santa Clara and St. John streets. Fridays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., May 4 – Dec. 14.

**San Jose/Evergreen**, Evergreen branch library, 2635 Aborn Road. Sundays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., end date not set.

**San Jose/Japantown**, Jackson Street between 6th and 7th streets. Sundays, 8:30 a.m. – noon, year-round.

**San Jose/Kaiser-Santa Teresa**, Cottle Road and Highway 85. Fridays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., year-round.

**San Jose/Santana Row**, Stevens Creek and Winchester Boulevard. Sundays, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., year-round.

**San Jose/Willow Glen**, Lincoln Avenue & Willow Street, behind the Garden Theatre. Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., April-November.  
(Source: Mercury News)

### SALA Golf Tournament September 19 at Stanford Golf Course

Senior Adults Legal Assistance (SALA) is a non-profit law office whose mission is to support Santa Clara County elders in their efforts to live independently, safely, and with dignity. Georgia Bacil, who has spoken to the SJRA a number of times on seniors' legal issues, is the Directing Attorney of this organization

SALA will be holding its Tenth Annual Golf Tournament fundraiser on Monday, September 19, 2011, at Stanford University Golf Course. It's a rare opportunity to play the Stanford course and help support SALA's program of free legal services to over 1,500 Santa Clara County seniors annually. Funds raised by this even are even more important this year as SALA's public funding and grant support will be reduced by \$70,000 from last year's level.

Registration begins at 10:00 a.m., with a putting contest at 10:45 a.m. and a shotgun start at noon. Box lunches and beverages are provided on the course. The day concludes with an Awards Reception, including a barbeque dinner and silent auction, with all activities ending by 7:00 p.m. Player fee is \$350 of which \$150 is tax-deductible.

SALA will be accepting reservations for foursomes and for individual players until September 11, 2011. To reserve your spot, contact Georgia Bacil, SALA's Directing Attorney, for a registration form at [gbacil@sala.org](mailto:gbacil@sala.org).

### Fresh Tomato Salad with Blue Cheese Dressing

4 oz. blue cheese  
 ½ cup mayonnaise  
 ½ cup yogurt  
 ½ cup heavy cream or half & half  
 Juice of one lemon  
 1 tsp. kosher salt  
 1 tsp. freshly cracked pepper (divided)  
 1 ½ lbs. tomatoes (thickly sliced)

Add blue cheese, mayonnaise, yogurt, cream, lemon juice, salt and ½ tsp. pepper to food processor or strong blender. Process until combined but still slightly chunky. If dressing is too thick, add additional cream. Arrange tomato slices artfully on a serving plate. Pour dressing over top and sprinkle with remaining pepper.

•This is especially beautiful with a variety of colored heirloom tomatoes.

Adapted from Ina Garten by Market Chef Erica Emme

### TOURING WITH THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS

#### AUGUST 23, 2011 – POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

Point Reyes National Seashore was established to preserve and protect wilderness, and natural ecosystems, in the **Drakes Bay** area of California. The Seashore is a sanctuary for myriad plant and animal species and for the human spirit – for discovery, inspiration, solitude and recreation – and exists as a reminder of the human connection to the land. While there you will visit the Bear Valley Visitor Center for information about the area and view films about the history and nature of the Point Reyes Seashore. A hosted lunch will be provided at the Farm House Restaurant in Olema. The final stop will be at the **Drakes Bay Oyster Company** where you will learn how they farm Oysters. You can purchase and enjoy some fresh oysters right there, or bring a cooler and take some home with you.



**LEAVE: 9:15 a.m.                      RETURN: 5:45 p.m.                      COST: \$52.00**

#### SEPTEMBER 15, 2011 – WINE TASTING – THE NOVITIATE WINERY

Right here in our very own backyard we have the Bay Area's oldest continuously operating winery in Los Gatos. The **Novitiate Winery** began production with the harvest of October 11, 1888. The Jesuits constructed the winery of two-foot-thick hand chiseled sandstone walls which are still standing today. The husband and wife team of Rob and Diana Jensen purchased the winery in 1993 and renamed it **TESTAROSSA**, (Italian for red-head) a nickname Rob got while a student in Italy. You will have a brief History Tour of the grounds and buildings along with some wine tasting.

**For more information call Mike Console at (408) 246-1080**

#### San Jose Retired Employees Association – Membership Form

(X) I authorize the Federated City Employees Retirement System to deduct the approved current monthly rate of \$4.00 from my retirement check for SJREA dues. I understand that this approval would include the deduction of future dues changes from my pension check. Any dues changes would require a vote of the general membership. I also authorize the FCERS to release my mailing address to SJREA. I may terminate my membership at any time by contacting FCERS.

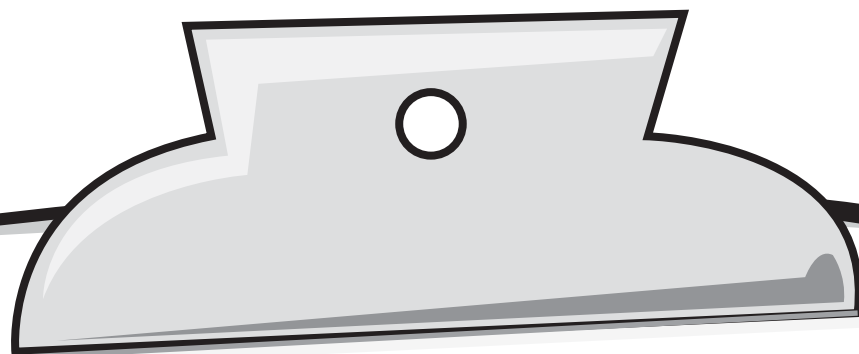
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Retirement \_\_\_\_\_

**Tear off and mail to: SJREA, P.O. Box 26515, San Jose, CA. 95159-6515**



Visit our website...

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

LET US HEAR FROM YOU...check out our website [www.SJREA.org](http://www.SJREA.org).  
You can download the Newsletter; view upcoming events and links to useful sites.

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Sent a note to: [newslettersjrea@gmail.com](mailto:newslettersjrea@gmail.com)

**Calendar of Events**

<b>September 1st</b>	Health Directives/Power of Attorney
<b>October 6</b>	General Membership Meeting
<b>November 3</b>	General Membership Meeting
<b>December 7</b>	Holiday Luncheon - Wyndham Hotel

If you change your **e-mail address**, please send to [CSJREA@yahoo.com](mailto:CSJREA@yahoo.com) and if you change your **mailing address**, send to [sjretirees@aol.com](mailto:sjretirees@aol.com).

**Welcome** new member **Tim Town**. Also out of town members **Rich Correa** (El Cajon, Ca), **Thayne Waldron** (Folsom, Ca), and **Gary Richert** (Portland, OR).

**Thanks** to **Fleur Kettmann** for the refreshments.

**Congratulations** to **John Marsh** and **Franey Romer** our August Door Prize Winners!



Would you like to submit a story, vacation travels, or special events and have them published in the Newsletter? Please send to Joan Lockwood at [joanL49@msn.com](mailto:joanL49@msn.com) or mail to SJREA, P.O. Box 26515, San Jose, CA 95159-6515

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NEXT MEETING:	<b>September 1, 2011</b>
TIME:	<b>Board Meeting - 9:00 - 10:30 AM</b> <b>Membership Meeting - 10:30 - 12:30 PM</b>
PLACE:	Leininger Center 1300 Senter Road <b>\$2.00 parking fee</b>
PROGRAM:	Health Directives/Power of Attorney Georgia Bacil - SALA