

# 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 6

June 2011



## From Your President

### Looking Ahead/Moving Forward

Edited by Bob Leininger, SJREA President

#### LOOKING AHEAD/MOVING FORWARD

The City's Retirement Reform machine keeps moving down the track and critical City Council decisions are scheduled for June.

I reported last month on the City Manager's Fiscal Reform Plan, and the recommendations on the COLA as it affects current retirees. The City Council conducted a study session on this reform plan on May 18th and the Mayor placed an item on the May 24th agenda asking the City Council to declare a fiscal emergency and to direct the City Manager to prepare ballot language for a decision in August about putting a pension reform measure on the November ballot. The Mayor's memos (dated May 13th and May 24th are available at the City Clerk's web page under the May 24th City Council agenda) included a very specific proposal to reduce the current retirees' COLA to a maximum of 1% and also asked for approval of the City Manager's recommendations which included possible elimination of the SRBR and cost shifts to retirees on health plans. The City Council instead deferred action, and set June 21st for a discussion on retirement reform options that address not only new pension programs for new hires (aka, tier-two), but also to identify incentive programs to encourage current employees to "opt-in" to the tier-two system. Various other changes for current employees also are likely to be included in any reform packages, especially the issue of extending retirement ages for both future and current employees. Many Council Members expressed frustration with the lack of financial data on these issues and expressed a strong desire to

see estimated short and long-term cost savings with the various reform options at the June 21 meeting.

This Board spoke at each of the May meetings and made it very clear to the City Council and to the Administration that retirees have clear vested rights under the law, and we will not stand by and let these be taken away. Our message is that retirees have **constitutionally protected, vested, contractual rights to these benefits, which we earned under an employment contract with the City, into which we paid under the requirements laid down by the City, and on which we relied when we made our retirement decisions.** We will work with all parties between now and the 21st to influence the retirement reform options that are being developed, and our message will be repeated. We have also retained legal counsel and a letter from that law firm also will be presented to the City Council.

Please accept this column as a call for action by all retirees! A huge turnout on June 21 is crucial.

...continued on page 2

#### SAVE THE DATES



June 26th	Meeting/Picnic in Lincoln
July 7th	<b>NO MEETING</b> – Board Vacation
August 4th	South America Slide Presentation
September 1st	Health Directives/Power of Attorney

<b>Inside:</b>	President's Message	Page 1	Retirements	Page 3-4	Lunch In A Bag	Page 6
	Speaker of the Month	Page 2	Condolances	Page 4	Membership Form	Page 6
	Board of Directors	Page 3	Announcements	Page 4-5	Clipboard	Page 7

## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT CONT.

We have a list of Council Members with contact information in this newsletter. If you agree with the positions as stated above, please take a few minutes and write or call the Mayor and City Council and voice your disapproval of any "take back" of benefits (e.g., COLA reductions) from current retirees. Letters sent to all Council Members are the most effective, especially if it helps them understand the circumstances of individual retirees. Be sure to send a copy to the Association (to Joan Lockwood).

**HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE AT THE JUNE 21 CITY COUNCIL MEETING.** It will most likely be in the afternoon, but it could change to the evening. Things are moving pretty fast in City Hall these days, and we will post breaking news/ rescheduling, etc on our website and via our email notification list. The City Clerk posts Council agendas on its website, so also be sure to check there just in case they have any agenda or schedule changes.

That's all for now. On another subject, we have continued to struggle to get a mailer out from Retirement Services regarding the \$4 dues issue. Some of you are not yet at that rate, and rather than wait any longer for a mailer, we have an approval card printed in this newsletter. If you are one of those still at the old rate, please cut out this form, sign, and return it to us at P.O. Box 26515, San Jose, CA 95159-6515. Thanks for your help. Costs to fight the City will be steep and every little bit will help.

## San Jose City Council

District 1	Pete Constant	535-4901	District1@sanjoseca.gov
District 2	Ash Kalra	535-4902	District2@sanjoseca.gov
District 3	Sam Liccardo	535-4903	District3@sanjoseca.gov
District 4	Kansen Chu	535-4904	District4@sanjoseca.gov
District 5	Xavier Campos	535-4905	District5@sanjoseca.gov
District 6	Pierluigi Oliverio	535-4906	District6@sanjoseca.gov
District 7	Madison Nguyen	535-4907	District7@sanjoseca.gov
District 8	Rose Herrera	535-4908	District8@sanjoseca.gov
District 9	Donald Rocha	535-4909	District9@sanjoseca.gov
District 10	Nancy Pyle	535-4910	District10@sanjoseca.gov

**As Allergy Season Arrives...Prepare Yourself**

As the weather gets warmer, we enjoy staying outdoors longer. Picnics, weddings, graduations and other delightful outdoor gatherings are so much fun – but for millions of people with allergies and asthma, pollen and stinging insects can make life a misery.



People with allergies and asthma are more likely to itch, wheeze, sneeze, cough or come out with a rash. Occasionally, a memorable occasion can turn into an agony that you will never forget. If

you have an allergy, the following steps may help make your summer outdoor experiences more enjoyable:

- **Treatment** – before going out, take your allergy medication. Do not wait for symptoms to appear. If you do, the medication will be less effective.
- **Cover** – wrap-around sunglasses help keep your eyes free of pollen. Wear a hat.
- **Bees and insects** – people who are allergic to stinging insects should do their best to avoid them. Remember they tend to hover around uncovered foods and open soda cans, so stand as far away as possible. Bright colored clothing will attract them, go for darker ones. Avoid perfume, bees love perfume! If somebody nearby is stung, walk away. When a bee stings a chemical is released which attracts other stinging insects.
- **Food allergies** – beware of outdoor foods that might contain dairy, nuts and other common allergens. They may be hidden in barbecue sauces, salad dressings and salads. If you are particularly sensitive, ask for your grilled food to be cooked in aluminum foil, this prevents cross-contamination.
- **Bushes and other foliage** – stay away from poison ivy and other nasty plants you might be allergic to. This means positioning yourself in the middle of open areas, thus minimizing your risk of brushing up against one of these plants.

Allergy specialists in California, Chicago, Atlanta, New York and many other parts of the USA are warning of a difficult season to come for people with allergies. April this year in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois was the wettest since records began in 1895. A very wet April is typically followed by a bad season for allergy sufferers, experts say.

*Source: American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*

**ON THE LIGHTER SIDE! :)**

Submitted by Bob Silverstein

At a southern university, students in the psychology program were attending their first class on emotional extremes. "Just to establish some parameters," said the professor to the student from Arkansas, "what is the opposite of joy?" "Sadness," said the student. "And the opposite of depression?" he asked of the young lady from Oklahoma. "Elation," she said. "And you sir," he said to the young man from Texas, "what about the opposite of woe?" The Texan replies, "Sir, I believe that would be 'giddy up!'"

**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

**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

**Ruben E. Alvarez**, Associate Structure Landscape Designer, Public Works Department, 6/25/2011

**Connie L. Aparicio-Yanez**, Program Manager II, Human Resources Department, 6/11/2011

**Lisje Archdeacon**, Senior Office Specialist, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services Department, 6/11/2011

**Anna Ayala**, Senior Office Specialist, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 7/9/2011

**James (Jim) E. Burnett**, Network Engineer, Library Department, 6/30/2011

**Linda C. Byrne**, Marketing & Outreach Manager, Department of Transportation, 5/28/2011

**Lawrence J. Castellano**, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services Department, 6/25/2011

**Susan L. Cate**, Code Enforcement Inspector, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 6/25/2011

**John H. Cheung**, Lab Technician, Environmental Services Department, 6/25/2011

**Audrey M. Crouch**, Program Manager I, Fire Department, 6/4/2011

**Rick D. Dale**, Analyst II, Police Department, 6/25/2011

**Helmut J. Denk**, Senior Environmental Inspector, Environmental Services Department, 6/25/2011

**Timothy M. Donohue**, Building Inspector, Public Works Department, 6/25/2011

**Richard Dressler**, Marketing Representative, Library Department, 4/13/2011

**Rodney Fong**, Senior Permit Specialist, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 6/25/2011

**Dean M. Greer**, Building Inspector, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 4/21/2011

**Robert A. Guerra**, Warehouse Worker II, Finance Department, 6/11/2011

**Tellis Hynes**, Environmental Inspector II, Environmental Services Department 5/28/2011

**Michael E. Johnson**, Mechanic Assistant, Public Works Department, 6/25/2011

**Vito Maletta**, Alarm Technician, Police Department, 6/30/2011

**Garry D. McLeod**, Enforcement Inspector II, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 6/25/2011

**Albert C. Muccia**, Associate Inspector, Department of Transportation, 6/30/2011

**RETIREMENTS cont...**

**Nancy J. Nelson**, Staff Specialist, Fire Department, 5/28/2011

**Bonnie G. Ouchida**, Associate Engineering Technician, Public Works Department, 6/25/2011

**Deborah A. Post**, Secretary, Police Department, 6/11/2011

**Amos H. Rendler**, Associate Engineering Technician, Public Works Department, 6/25/2011

**Joseph A. Rivas**, Facility Repair Worker, Airport Department, 5/14/2011

**Larry L. Rogers**, Building Inspector, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 6/11/2011

**Loren N. Rundle**, Senior Landscape Architect, Public Works Department, 6/25/2011

**Grace L. Russo**, Staff Specialist, Police Department, 6/25/2011

**Marcie L. Silva**, Recreation Leader, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services Department, 5/28/2011

**Andrianna Snively**, Senior Office Specialist, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services Department, 6/25/2011

**Michael P. Terwilliger**, Building Inspector Supervisor, Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department, 6/11/2011

**Randal L. Turner**, Deputy Director, Public Works Department, 6/11/2011

**Mohini Vijay**, Senior Account Clerk, Library Department, 6/25/2011

**Barbara C. Wright**, Legal Analyst, City Attorney's Office, 6/25/2011

**David J. Young**, Warehouse Supervisor, Finance Department, 6/11/2011

**Gary C. Zatkin**, Associate Construction Inspector, Public Works Department, 3/31/2011

**DEFERRED VESTED**

**Fergus P. Gallagher**, Air Conditioning Mechanic, Airport Department, 4/26/2011

**Douglas C. Humphrey**, Principal Sanitary Engineer, Environmental Services Department, 6/30/2011

**John A. Martinez, Sr.**, Warehouse Worker II, Finance Department, 5/2/2011

**Esther Ruiz**, Custodian, Airport Department, 4/13/2011

**CONDOLENCES**

**Ethel M. Blake**, Engineering Technician IV, retired 12/24/1977, died 5/11/2011

**Gordon T. Castro**, Senior Maintenance Worker, retired 3/20/2010, died 5/13/2011

**Edgardo Carranza**, Gerontology Supervisor, retired 11/7/1992, died 5/9/2011

**Aurora Kammerer**, City Council Secretary, retired 9/25/1983, died 5/1/2011

**Steven Hartman**, Electrical Inspector, retired 7/30/2011, died 4/30/2011

**Gerrit Niver**, Plant Equipment Mechanic, retired 3/22/1982, died 5/6/2011

**SJREA Meeting/Picnic in Lincoln**

The annual SJREA meeting for members living in the Lincoln, Roseville and surrounding areas will be held on SUNDAY, June 26th from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm at the Del Web Sun City facility in Lincoln. SJREA will provide a box lunch for participants. The hot topics for discussion will be retiree's benefits, the City's budget, pension reforms and SRBR. If there are any retirees that have retired since June 2010 and live in the area, please contact John Pletsch so information can be mailed to you. For more information, contact John at (408) 274-2992 or jeplet@sbcglobal.net



**ALTON ELVIS JENSEN**  
**November 11, 1925 – May 19, 2011**

Though we've lost  
 someone dear to us,  
 we'll celebrate a beautiful life  
 and we'll keep  
 the happy memories  
 to share in times ahead.



**A Short History of Al Jensen's Life by Juli Jensen**

Alton was born in the small town of Ripon, just outside of Modesto. He was raised in Oakdale, where he attended school through High School, then attended Modesto Junior College and graduated from San Jose State. He became an Eagle Scout and leader. He went to work for the City of San Jose on September 19, 1950 as a draftsman and jack-of-all trades until retirement in August of 1978. He learned his love of wood-working at the knee of his father, a love that lasted throughout his life. He was never too busy to lend a helping hand or help anyone who asked. He will be missed by all.

City retirees have lost one of their finest with the passing of Alton Jensen. All of us who knew Alton are aware of his continuing work as a founding member of our Association.

**TOURING WITH THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS**

**June 23, 2011 – OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA HISTORY**

The museum specializes in the natural science, history, and art of the Golden State. The museum was closed for two years undergoing an extensive \$62.2 million interior makeover and was reopened last May. The completed changes include redesigned, reconceived Art and History galleries, new acquisitions, a new gourmet Café and an expanded gift shop. The biggest change, however, may be the enhanced opportunities for interactive experiences. They include visitor feedback stations, an exhibit where people can record an oral history of their life in California and a place where they can sketch a self-portrait and then, thanks to state-of-the art technology, see it appear on the wall. **Lunch will be on your own at the Museums new Blue Oak Café.** The museum provides unique collections, exhibitions, and educational opportunities, designed to generate a broader and deeper understanding of California.



**LEAVE: 10:00 a.m.      RETURN: 4:30 p.m.      COST: \$38.00**

**JULY 29, 2011 – GILROY GARLIC FESTIVAL**

For the past thirty-two years the fun loving folks down in Gilroy have thrown open their doors, their arms, and their cooking pots to the entire world at the gala garlic gastro mania known as the **Gilroy Garlic Festival.** Ah, **THE STINKIN' ROSE**, beloved of all Mediterranean cooks. Dress very, very casually and bring mad money so that you can swill down some Zinfandel Wine while you inhale a couple of new items on the garlic festival's menu along with the usual steamy flavors of garlic calamari, garlic prawns, garlic ice cream, garlic everything! Expect plenty of live music, dancing, vendors, cooking demonstrations, entertainment stages, and pageantry. Breath freshener gum will be provided!

**LEAVE: 9:30 a.m.      RETURN: 5:00 p.m.      COST: \$37.00**

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

**Amendment of By-Laws:** A thirty (30) day notice is hereby given that the revised SJREA By-Laws will be adopted at the August 4, 2011 General Membership meeting.

### Lunch In-A-Bag

Bob Leininger led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance; Joan Lockwood checked in members and guests for the lunch; Ed Flemate distributed numbers for the antiques appraisal program of guest speaker, Steve Yvaska. Bob discussed the Mayor's proposals, including the draft City Charter amendment Mayor Reed brought forth at a recent study session. Bob strongly encouraged all members of SJREA to show up at the City Council meeting on June 21 when this and other possible options will be voted upon by the Council. **EVERYONE SHOULD ATTEND!** Each of us should speak to Council members and local voters and friends about the fact that we have constitutionally, protected, vested, contractual rights to the benefits for which we (1) earned during employment, (2) paid into, under employee agreements, and (3) relied upon as we planned and decided on our retirement.

Many attendees shared concerns about backlash against public employees and the proposed changes being considered. Letters should be written to all Councilmembers, and don't forget to SEND A COPY TO SJREA – send to our mailing address or email address so we can gather comments which show the impact and the concern about changing to COLA, SRBR, and medical benefits expenses that are being proposed.

Steve Yvaska, our guest speaker, began his program by expressing support and good wishes for the membership, as he is also a union-represented retiree of the San Jose Mercury News and relies every month on his retirement pension. He mentioned how many people look to collectibles and antiques as a potential source of funds, but his advice is "BE CAREFUL!" Everything does have a value, sometimes only a personal sentimental value, though. Auction houses may have high or low days, depending on the bidders at the time: just remember, "The value of something is what someone will give you for it". He reviewed a few antiques; those items classified as over 100 years old, and then looked at attendees' treasures.

Bev Rettus brought in her Shirley Temple doll that she had played with as a child; Chuck Christensen showed his early 1900's art deco table lamp; and Howard Fleming offered up a pocket watch for review. Curt Miller's beer stein was marked "Germany" which indicated a production from the 1930's or earlier – later items were stamped "Made in Germany." Judy Jones shared her green glass "girlie things" as Mr. Yvaska called them, a powder box and perfume bottle; Carol Williams brought a painting – more research can be done on the artists of signed paintings by contacting Harvey Clars company in Oakland. Kay Rooney's tureen and platter were from the late 19th century, and Gail Dance's full sized carnival merry-go-round horse has seen its own ups and downs in valuation – Steve recommended she hold onto it another couple decades. Period items such as cowboy merchandise or decorative plates are best sold while popular or familiar to collectors – perhaps younger generations won't place the same value on such items. Rose Crimi Muench brought in a cast iron Crane Company horse (Chuck Johnson proved it was made of cast iron by putting a magnet on it). Old silver dollars may or may not be rare, depending on the year and the mint location, as well as the condition. Several items were not able to be given a rough value, because of their particular genre: seek out experts in the type of antique you have, in order to get the most accurate estimate of value. For books, go to [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) which is an excellent resource.

---

#### 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.

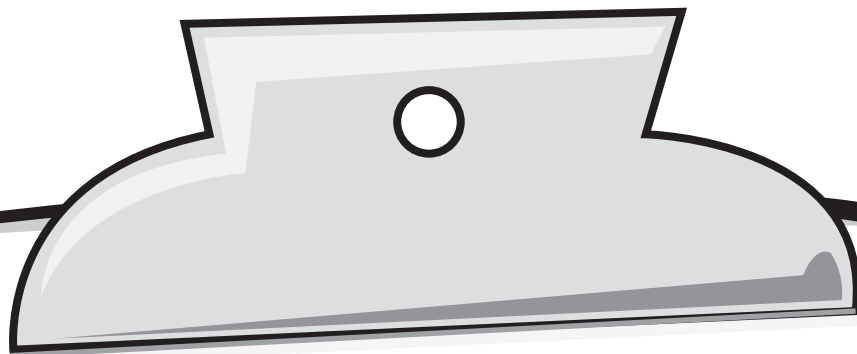
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

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.

**Save money, save paper! Sign up to receive the newsletter through e-mail.**

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



### Reminder when you move...

**Notify us of your new address/phone number/email address**

Send a note to

**SJREA P.O. Box 26515  
San Jose, CA 95159-6515**

### Calendar of Events

**June 26th**

Meeting/Picnic in Lincoln

**July 7th**

**NO MEETING** – Board Vacation

**August 4th**

South America Slide Presentation by Joe VanSanbeek

**September 1st**

Health Directives/Power of Attorney

**Know a retiree that is not a member? Recruit a friend, and help protect the interests and benefits of all Federated Retirees.**

**Welcome new member.....**

**Monica Schefski and Tony Seebach**

**Today's Raffle winners were John Marsh,  
Tony Seebach, Toma Schaeffer and Sandy Garcia**



We are in need of a new treasurer. Our treasurer for the last 6 years, Dorothy McGinley, will be retiring at the end of 2011. The primary duty is preparing financial reports. If you would like to become active in the organization that protects your retirement benefits, this is a perfect opportunity. You may call Dorothy at (408) 267-0143 or contact her by mail at: SJREA, P.O. Box 26515, San Jose, CA 95159.

SAN JOSÉ RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 26515  
San José, CA 95159-6515

PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 3903  
SAN JOSE, CA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



---

***REMINDER....No meeting in July***

**NEXT MEETING:** **August 4, 2011**

**TIME:** Board Meeting - 9:00 - 10:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 10:30 - 12:30 PM

**PLACE:** Leininger Center  
1300 Senter Road  
**\$2.00 parking fee**

**PROGRAM:** South America Slide Presentation  
Joe VanSanbeek