



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION
Surf City—Santa Cruz Chapter 009
February 2024



We are retired California public employees working together to maintain and improve the quality of the lives of our members by protecting and improving our retirement and medical benefits.



Surf City - Santa Cruz RPEA Chapter 009

LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday - March 5, 2024
Community Room - SCRCNV
612 Ocean St., Santa Cruz

Doors Open at 11AM - Meeting at 11:30

Served Lunch

Soup du Jour
Chicken Caesar Salad
Dessert
Coffee and Tea
\$15 per person.

Guests welcome.
Raffle prizes and book table too!

How can you protect yourself from fraudsters? What are current scams seen in Santa Cruz County?

Our speaker will be
Shandra Handley

Consumer Fraud and Environmental Protection Unit, County of Santa Cruz
Office of the District Attorney

Make your reservation by **February 27, 2024**
Call Marge Laxon at 831-476-2960 or email robtmarge@yahoo.com

Book Exchange — Sue Pierce

We will have the Book Exchange at the March 5th luncheon meeting. Members are welcome to take up to 3 books. Books may be returned at another meeting, kept, or given to others. Please limit the books you want to give to the book exchange to 3.



**RPEA CHAPTER 9
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

2022-2023

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1 Director Vacancy

Term 2022-2023

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COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MEMBERSHIP: vacant **CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!**

HISTORIAN: Alverda Orlando

SUNSHINE: Pat Jones

HEALTH/INSURANCE: Lynn McKibbin

LEGISLATION: Nancy Carr-Gordon

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Dena Taylor

PROGRAM: vacant **CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!**

OUTREACH: Sue Pierce

AREA III ASST. DIR.: Bob Culbertson

RPEA Chapter 9 website:

www.rpeasantacruz.org

Webmistress: Becky Taylor 421-9284

beckytaylorlortutor@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report – Steve Redfield

Beginning Balance: 1-1-2024 \$5,378.82

Ending Balance: 2-1-2024 \$5,328.93

FUND BALANCES

General Fund \$4,925.56

Investment Opportunities \$403.37

TOTAL 2-1-2024 \$5,328.93

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — Bob Culbertson

Dear fellow retirees,

All of us will be receiving mail-in ballots starting NOW. Please VOTE. We are a democracy and it only works if we all participate. Study the issues and let your vote count!

Thank you.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT — Nancy Carr-Gordon

The California Legislature is back in session, following the holidays. We are in the second year of the two-year bill cycle, with the month of January being typically busier at this time. New bills must be proposed by February 19, with hearings to follow in March.

The Governor's budget was presented on January 10th in accordance with state bylaws. The identified \$25 million budget shortfall is addressed by spreading the deficit over multiple years and \$8 billion in cuts to specified funds and project funding. After April 15th, the May budget revision is issued. Our RPEA lobbyists are not anticipating any drastic cuts. Most importantly, retiree health and the state CalPERS contribution remain wholly funded. We are continually monitoring those issues and proposed bills potentially impacting our members and will report back.

VOTE. VOTE. VOTE.
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MARCH 5 - MARCH 5 -
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What 2024's leap year status means

Aliza Chasan -- CBS News January 2024

A new year is upon us, and it comes complete with an extra day. Unlike most years, which have 365 days, 2024 is a leap year, which means it has 366 days. Here's what you should know about the change to your calendar:

When is the next leap year?

Leap years happen approximately every four years. This year's leap day will be on Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024. After that, expect leap years in 2028, 2032 and 2036. Leap days will fall on Tuesday, Feb. 29, 2028; Sunday, Feb. 29, 2032, and Friday, Feb. 29, 2036.

Why do we need leap years?

While we follow the 365-day Gregorian calendar, it actually takes the Earth a bit more than a year to orbit around the sun. Without the extra day in leap years, calendars and seasons would gradually fall out of sync. That, in turn, impacts planting and harvesting. A year based on Earth's orbit around the sun is equal to 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds, or 365.2422 days, according to [NASA](#). Most years, the calendar is rounded down to 365 days, but those nearly six extra hours don't disappear.

To account for the difference those hours make, an extra day is [tacked onto February](#) every leap year, giving the month 29 days instead of 28 approximately every four years. While it's a small difference, those hours would add up over time if not for the existence of leap years. "For example, say that July is a warm, summer month where you live. If we never had leap years, all those missing hours would add up into days, weeks and even months," according to [NASA](#). "Eventually, in a few hundred years, July would actually take place in the cold winter months!"

The math of leap years

While leap years normally come every four years, that's not always the case. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII reformed the calendar by specifying that all years divisible by 4 are to be leap years, with the exception of century years, which must be divisible by 400 to be considered leap years.

There's a bit of math in figuring out when leap years fall under the Gregorian calendar: The year must be divisible by four. If the year can also be evenly divided by 100, then it's not a leap year unless the year is also divisible by 400. It's why the year 2000 was a leap year, but 2100, 2200 and 2300 will not be leap years.

Just thought you needed to know.

Project SCOUT provides free tax assistance to seniors, individuals with a disability, low-income families, and other individuals in Santa Cruz County.

They do not accept walk-ins at this time. Call: 831-724-2606 or email: projectscout@seniorscouncil.org. Please tell Project SCOUT your full name, phone number, age, city or town where you live, and what sources of income you need to report in your taxes. You will be contacted to schedule an appointment.



A Little Introduction to the History of Surf City-Santa Cruz RPEA Chapter 009

Our Chapter 009 Historian, Alverda Orlando, has been compiling the history of our chapter. The State organization has been operating for over 65 years. Our chapter has been in existence for almost that long. Here is Alverda's first installment.

In February 1954, the Retired Government Association was formed. This organization would be later known as the Retired Public Employees' Association of California. Fred Lockner was the principal organizer. He started in 1957 with 18 members. In 1958 Chapter 009 received its charter becoming the 9th chapter in the newly formed statewide Retired Public Employees' Association.

Chapter 009's first meeting place was the City of Santa Cruz Council Chambers. Soon the membership grew to 43 members. The meetings were held at Heckley Hall until 1966, and then moved to Harvey West Club-house. By 1971 the membership had grown to 213 retirees. The membership growth was probably due to enjoyable meetings with potlucks, dinners, breakfasts, and of course raffles. 276 people attended the summer BBQ in 1973. All Bar-B-Ques took place at Harvey West Park.

In the beginning, lunch meetings were once a month at no charge. Members were asked to bring a can of soup (no cream or fish) which were mixed together in one big bubbly pot and served with good bread. Desserts were homemade cakes and pies – usually donated by the wives of board members.

Meetings kept the board busy throughout the year. Besides monthly meetings, the board members went to training workshops in San Jose, Santa Clara, and other towns. These were given by the State organization. Also, there was General Assembly biannually. Reports were brought back to the Chapter 009 membership. Communication at that time was by phone tree. *To be continued...*

Chapter 9 has 503 members!!



Two years of the newsletter are archived on the chapter website. Go to www.rpeasantacruz.org and click on "Newsletters."



*Chapter 9 member
Linda Wilshusen*

This month's newsletter sponsored in part by:



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Ready or not, election season is upon us

March 5th is the date for the Presidential Primary Election this cycle. Here is some information gathered from the County of Santa Cruz Elections Office, The Santa Cruz Sentinel, and the online publication Outlook Santa Cruz. Please call the County Elections Office if you have any questions at 831-454-2060

On your ballot will be candidates for US President; US Senate; US House; the CA State Senate and the State Assembly.

There will also be county and city office candidates and ballot measures. County elections officials will send all registered voters a mail-in ballot starting Feb. 5, 2024. Your ballot will have the candidates and measures for your district based on your address.

California's open primary system allows registered voters to participate in primary elections, regardless of their political party affiliation. In a traditional closed primary, only voters registered with a specific political party can participate in that party's primary election. The presidential primary is a closed primary and which candidates appear on your ballot depends on your party registration. All other offices are in an open primary system, and all voters, regardless of party registration, receive the same primary ballot.

Here's how the open primary typically function in California:

Voter Registration: To participate in any primary election, a voter must be registered to vote. California allows online voter registration, making it easier for eligible citizens to sign up.

Ballot Distribution: Before a primary election, all registered voters in California would receive a single primary ballot containing all the candidates from all political parties running for various offices, such as governor, senator, or other state and local positions.

Vote Casting: Voters could select candidates of their choice from any party listed on the ballot. This means a voter could vote for a Republican candidate for one office and a Democratic candidate for another office, all on the same ballot.

Top-Two Primary System: California also adopted a top-two primary system. In this system, regardless of party affiliation, all candidates compete in the same primary election. The two candidates who receive the most votes in the primary, regardless of party affiliation, advance to the general election. This could lead to a scenario where two candidates from the same party end up competing against each other in the general election. (Note: The Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act does not apply to candidates running for U.S. President, county central committees, or local offices.)

General Election: The two candidates who received the most votes in the primary, irrespective of their political party, would face off in the general election. Voters, once again, have the opportunity to vote for either candidate, regardless of their own party affiliation.

The open primary system aimed to encourage broader participation and reduce polarization, as voters were not confined to voting within their registered party. It provided more choices and allowed candidates to appeal to a wider electorate, not just their party's base.

You can return your ballot by mail postmarked by election day (3/5/2024) and received by 3/12/2024. You can return your ballot to any polling place, county vote center, ballot drop box or county elections office. See list and open dates at end of article.

Besides the Presidential Primary Candidates, other offices that will be voted on in the March election:

FEDERAL

U.S. Representative in Congress, 18th District

Zoe Lofgren, Democratic Party, incumbent and chair of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation.

Peter Hernandez, Republican Party, former San Benito County supervisor.

U.S. Representative in Congress, 19th District

Jimmy Panetta, Democratic Party, incumbent.

Sean Dougherty, Green Party.

STATE

State Senate, 17th District

John Laird, Democratic Party, incumbent, chair of Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 (education).

Michael Oxford, self-described tradesman and coach who does not list a party affiliation on his campaign site.

State Assembly, 28th District

Gail Pellerin, Democratic Party, incumbent, chair of the Assembly Elections Committee and former Santa Cruz County clerk.

Liz Lawler, Republican Party, former Monte Sereno city councilmember.

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State Assembly, 29th District

Robert Rivas, Democratic Party, incumbent, speaker of the California State Assembly.

State Assembly, 30th District

Dawn Addis, Democratic Party, incumbent, chair of the California Legislative Central Coast Caucus.

COUNTY SUPERVISORS

The March 5 primary will give local voters an opportunity to reshape the county's Board of Supervisors, with three seats up for grabs, and only one incumbent running.

The departures of longtime District 5 Supervisor Bruce McPherson, who is retiring, and three-term District 2 Supervisor Zach Friend, whose wife is city manager of Coronado in San Diego County, could result in three new members, including women, to join two supervisors, Justin Cummings and Felipe Hernandez, who were first elected in November 2022.

OTHER MEASURES

The most debated initiative on the primary ballot is Measure M in the city of Santa Cruz, which would limit the height of high-rise buildings without approval by city voters. For official information see <https://votescount.santacruzcountyca.gov/Home/Elections/March5,2024PresidentialPrimaryElection/LocalMeasures/MeasureM.aspx>

Then there are the tax measures:

- A half-cent increase in the sales tax in the city of Santa Cruz, which would go to 9.75%.
- An increase in the sales tax in the unincorporated areas of the county, from 9% to 9.5%.
- In the Pajaro Valley Health Care District, voters will be asked to fund a \$116 million general obligation bond that would pay for improvement projects at Watsonville Community Hospital.

POLLING PLACES

Voting hours

Once a location opens for voting, it will remain open through election day, March 5, for the following hours each day:

- Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (beginning Feb. 24)
- Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (beginning Feb. 25)
- Election day, Tuesday, March 5, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Voting locations in Santa Cruz County include:

Open Feb. 5 for voting:

- Santa Cruz: Santa Cruz County Clerk/Elections, 701 Ocean St., Room 310.
- Watsonville: Watsonville City Clerk's Office, 275 Main St., fourth floor.

Open Feb. 24 for voting:

- Aptos: Temple Beth El, 3055 Porter Gulch Rd.
- Santa Cruz: Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, 5200 Soquel Ave.
- Scotts Valley: Scotts Valley Community Center, 360 Kings Village Rd.

Open March 2 for voting:

- Aptos: St. John's Episcopal Church, 125 Canterbury Dr. (Sunday, Feb. 25, hours are 1-9 p.m.).
- Boulder Creek: Boulder Creek Fire Station, 13230 Highway 9.
- Capitola: New Brighton Middle School, 250 Washburn Ave.
- Felton: Zayante Fire Department, 7700 E Zayante Rd.
- Santa Cruz: Bonny Doon Elementary School, 1492 Pine Flat Rd.; Depot Park, 119 Center St.; Masonic Center, 828 N. Branciforte Ave.; UCSC Stevenson Event Center, 520 Cowell-Stevenson Rd.
- Scotts Valley: Scotts Valley High School, 555 Glenwood Dr.
- Soquel: Soquel High School, 401 Old San Jose Rd.
- Watsonville: La Selva Beach Clubhouse, 314 Estrella Ave.; Pajaro Valley Community Trust, 85 Nielson St.; Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, 2601 East Lake Ave.

Open election day only for voting:

- Corralitos: Corralitos Community Church, 24 Browns Valley Rd.
- Davenport: Pacific Elementary School, 50 Ocean St.

Continued on next page

Ladybugs Overwintering — Sue Pierce

What do ladybugs do when the weather turns cold? They find a place usually found on low-growing vegetation in moist locations such as rotting logs, under rocks, fallen leaves, or inside houses to overwinter. Overwintering is a form of mild hibernation during which the ladybugs huddle together in clusters called aggregations, moving slowly and rarely eating as they wait for warmer weather to breed and continue their life cycle. Redwood forests provide an ideal location.

I have found large clusters of ladybugs overwintering on logs, in stumps of trees, and plants in the forest around my home. This is the first time I have seen them overwintering in the planter pots and on the plants. During the short time the sun warms the pots and plants, I see the ladybugs slowly move around. I haven't seen them fly though that doesn't mean some have.



Ladybugs overwintering in planter pots.

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- Los Gatos: CT English Middle School, 23800 Summit Rd.
- Santa Cruz: Christian Life Center, 1009 Mission St.
Vote Mobile: Santa Cruz County has a mobile voting trailer that will be used throughout the county.
Check www.votescount.us for dates and times.

Drop boxes (open now and will close at 8 p.m. on March 5)

- Aptos: Resurrection Catholic Church, 7600 Soquel Dr.; Polo Grounds near the dog park, 2255 Huntington Dr.; Cabrillo College Parking Lot R by the stadium, 3732 Cabrillo College Dr.
- Ben Lomond: Highlands Park, 8500 Highway 9.
- Boulder Creek: Boulder Creek Community Church, 12465 Highway 9.
- Capitola: 420 Capitola Ave. in the city hall parking lot.; mall near the old Sears, 1855 41st Ave.; public library, 2005 Wharf Rd.
- Corralitos: Community center, 35 Browns Valley Rd.
- Davenport: fire station, 75 Marine View Ave.
- Felton: Covered Bridge Park at Mount Hermon Rd. and Graham Hill Rd.
- Los Gatos: Summit Store, 24197 Summit Rd.
- Santa Cruz: 701 Ocean St. in front of the county government center.; 212 Church St. in the public parking lot.; UCSC Quarry Plaza; Trescony Park, end of Trescony Street.
- Scotts Valley – 1 Civic Center Dr. in the city hall parking lot.
- Watsonville: 316 Rodriguez St. in municipal public parking Lot 14; County Health Center, 1430 Freedom Blvd.

Retired Public Employees Association of California-CH 9
PO Box 413, Capitola, CA 95010

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Time Dated Material
Please Deliver by Feb. 20, 2024



if you're not already receiving this newsletter via email, please consider doing so! It will save our chapter considerable money each month by reducing the printing and mailing costs. Just let me know. We want to hear from you! Please email your letters to the editor to me at detaylor@cabrillo.edu or send to RPEA, P.O. Box 413, Capitola CA 95010.

All members are welcome to join our Board meetings via zoom! Meetings are held at 10am on the last Tuesday of the month.

Email Dena at detaylor@cabrillo.edu for the link. We encourage you to bring up issues of concern. In addition to joining our meetings, you can always contact us by emailing a Board member (see p. 2) or writing to us at RPEA, P.O. Box 413, Capitola CA 95010.

We are seeking sponsors to assist the chapter with the cost of printing and mailing our newsletters. The sponsorship will not only be printed in the newsletter, but will be on our chapter website, reaching over 700 people. The cost for a business-card size sponsorship is \$25 for 1 month, \$60 for 3 months, \$100 for 6 months, or \$180 for 1 year. Contact Dena Taylor by email, detaylor@cabrillo.edu, or call (831) 588-0746 if you are interested or can direct us to an interested sponsor.

Need tech help? Our webmistress Becky Taylor is available for consultation and assistance to RPEA members with computer technical issues.

See page 2 for contact info.



FEBRUARY SUNSHINE



**LOVE MAKES THE
WORLD GO ROUND**

HAPPY FEBRUARY ALL

You may reach me with requests to send cards at: rcjians@gmail.com or by calling me at 831-688-3863.

Sincerely, Pat Jones