



## **PASADENA RPEA CHAPTER 007 NEWSLETTER**

Retired Public Employees Association of California  
Published bi-monthly  
May 2019



### **“CalPERS and Me – The Future”**

**J.J. Jelincic**

**Thursday, June 13 at 12:00 Noon**

**Villa Gardens Retirement Community**

**842 E. Villa Street, Pasadena  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Garden Room**

**Cost: Free to RPEA members & one guest - Others \$5**

### ***The Upcoming CalPERS Board of Directores Election***

J.J. Jelincic has previously served on the CalPERS board for two terms beginning in 2009. He is running again in the August 30, 2019 election to fill the seat representing retired CalPERS members – that’s us! That seat is currently held by Henry Jones whose term expires in January.

J.J. has a vision for the direction of CalPERS and will explain where CalPERS has been headed and where he stands on current CalPERS policies. When with CalPERS, he served on a number of committees including the Finance Committee, Health Benefits Committee, and Investment Committee, giving him a thorough understanding of their operations.

We are pleased to have J.J. Jelincic speak again at our chapter meeting. Don’t miss this one!

### **Reservations Recommended**

Please call our reservation coordinator by  
**Monday, June 10**

Kay Ferraro	(626) 825-2585
Larry Harsha	(626) 351-0183

Or e-mail to [LandCharsha@yahoo.com](mailto:LandCharsha@yahoo.com) your reservation with “RPEA” in the subject line.

Menu: Buffet

Street Parking or  
Valet Parking Only

Enter Villa driveway near main entrance  
(The church parking lot is off-limits!)

Public Transportation:  
MTA Bus Routes 180 & 485  
Pasadena Transit Routes 20 & 40  
Metro Gold Line - Lake Station

## 2018-2019 Officers/Chairmen

President	Larry Harsha	(626) 351-0183
Vice-President	(position vacant)	
Secretary	(position vacant)	
Treasurer	Diane Johnson	(626) 862-1050
Reservations	Kay Ferraro	(626) 825-2585
Newsletter	Walter White	(626) 359-5805
Membership	(position vacant)	
Legislation	(position vacant)	
Sunshine Coord.	(position vacant)	
Members at large	(8 positions vacant)	
Area V Director	Ellie Knapp	(661) 297-6348

### Want to contact your officers by email?

Pres. Larry Harsha.....LandCharsha@Yahoo.com  
Treas. Diane Johnson.....dianebjohnson@Yahoo.com  
Newsletter Ed. Walter White ..... wsquared@GTE.net  
Area V Director. Ellie Knapp ..... eknapp@roadrunner.com

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held at Walter White's condominium in Monrovia on September 12<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. Any or all chapter members may attend. Call (626) 359-5805 to confirm date and time or to get directions.

## Upcoming Chapter Meetings at Villa Gardens

June 13, 2019 .....Garden Room, Buffet  
October 10, 2019 .....Garden Room, Buffet  
December 12, 2019 ..... Villa Vista Room. 5<sup>th</sup> floor

If you are a new RPEA member or haven't been to one of our local chapter luncheons, please come. This lunch is free for members. (Don't forget to make a reservation).

### Upcoming Meeting Programs

October: Habitat for Humanity.  
December: Charismatics from Crescenta Valley HS

## April Meeting Notes

by Walter White

Our speaker was Julia Masulis, a physical therapist on the staff of the Huntington Hospital Outpatient Rehab. She has been a therapist for over five years, specializing in pediatrics, geriatrics and neurology.

She covered the reasons that people fall, how to prevent them, and what to do if you do fall. She also listed some resources for fall prevention and wellness. A power-point presentation that she brought is available on disc by contacting your newsletter editor.

Some surprising facts: 1 out of 4 people over 65 experience falls, and if you fall, the chances of your falling again almost double. 1 out of 5 falls result in broken bones or a head injury. 3 million people in the U.S. went to the ER last year for fall related injuries.

There are many causes of falls. Not only do our muscles weaken as we get older, but our reaction time slows considerably. Our inner ears deteriorate a little, making dizziness more frequent. Neurological conditions, such as neuropathy, may cause loss of feeling in our feet. Stroke, Parkinson's Disease, and ataxia [you may have to Google that one] can be contributors to falls. Pain can cause you to walk awkwardly, increasing fall risk. Medications may have side-effects such as dizziness. If you wear glasses, particularly bifocals or trifocals, the ground you are walking on may not be totally in focus. Transition lenses might help. Blood pressure, either too high or too low, is bad. Cognitive impairment, such as dementia, can cause people to lose track of where they are. Shoes that are too big, too tight, or too high (in the case of women's high-heel shoes) are an obvious contributor. Some environmental hazards, such as grandkids' toys on the floor, should be obvious.

Hazards around the house are usually easy to eliminate. Throw rugs are a disaster just waiting to be tripped over. A non-slip rug-to-floor gripper will help. Clutter on the floor, extension cords, broken steps, uneven furniture, etc. can usually be corrected. Poor lighting may cause us to miss an otherwise obvious hazard such as pets or the grandkids' toys. We need more light as we get older. Low toilet seats are problematic for seniors. Modern toilets can have raised seats or you can buy seat risers. Grab bars can be installed to give you added support. [A friend of your newsletter editor had grab bars installed around toilets and in the shower for under \$200.] One of Julia's slides mentioned sloping driveways and sidewalk cracks. [Uneven public sidewalks should be reported to the city.]

Other fall-proofing tips: Have a flashlight near your bed in case of power outages. Keep a night light. Julia likes Himalayan Salt Lamps because the amber color is less disruptive of the sleep cycle than harsh LED lights. Objects that you use frequently, such as dishes and cups, should be placed within easy reach so you don't have to stretch. Instead of using a stepstool, using a reacher/grabber tool might be handier in some instances.

For those times when you do fall: Always keep your cell phone near you and/or wear a medical alarm such as Life Alert®. Wear grippy shoes or slippers, especially if you have hardwood floors. Have your written emergency contacts and copies of insurance cards and ID near the door where they can be easily reached by friends or emergency response personnel when needed.

Julia then had the group do a simple fitness test to see how we compare with others in our age groups. With their arms crossed over their chests, everyone rose to a standing position and then sat back down as many times as they could in 30 seconds. For men between 65 and 69, the count is normally 12-18 (women 11-16). For men 75-79, the count is 11-17 (women 10-15). Even 90 year olds should be able to do at least 7 (men) or 4 (women). Regular quadriceps exercises can help keep you fit.

Flexibility is important. Stretch regularly to prevent muscle shortening in the neck, shoulder and other areas.. Try to walk upright, rather than hunched over. Tai chi and yoga are great for our age group. Balance exercises should be done under supervision (so you don't fall). Aerobic exercises are good for the lungs and heart. Simply walking regularly at least 10 minutes, or taking aquatic classes (at the Pasadena Aquatic Center or El Monte Senior Center) or using a treadmill will help to increase your heart rate. Don't forget to train your brain with crossword puzzles and math problems.

Julia showed a slide that showed the relationship between how fast you walk and your life expectancy. As expected, the slower your normal gait, the shorter your probable life expectancy. A gait of 1.2 meters/sec (about 4 ft/sec) or more is considered good.

Things to consider before you go anywhere: Wear good shoes that fit properly. Open toes or heels are out – running shoes are in. Lighter weight shoes are better than heavier ones. Take medication with you, if required, taking into consideration timing, dosage, whether to be taken with or without a meal. Pay attention to expiration dates. Make sure you've taken any morning medication before you go. Don't leave without having breakfast. Meal timing is especially important for those with diabetes. People with

hypoglycemia know that if they don't keep blood sugar in check, they can become lightheaded and dizzy. Know where you are going. If you use a cane, don't leave it at home assuming all steps you might encounter will have hand railings or even ground. Don't forget your glasses (or keep a spare pair in your car).

Speaking of canes, Julia says that if you are only a little unsteady walking without assistance, using a single-point cane is recommended. Otherwise a quad-cane or walker would be appropriate. Use the cane on your strong side, not the weak side. The hand grip of your cane or walker should be at the level of your wrist when your shoulders and arms are relaxed. When using the cane, your elbow should be bent between 20 and 30 degrees. If you use a trekking pole or walking stick, it should be long enough to keep your elbow at a right angle (i.e. 90 degrees). Men often use poles instead of canes because they look "cool." Commercial trekking poles are available for as little as \$20.

We have good and bad days. So if you wake up thinking it might be a bad day, there are a number of things you can do. Postpone some tasks on your to-do list. Ask a friend or family member to accompany you if you're going out. Shop early to avoid crowds. There's less chance of bumping into people and more space in the parking lots.

Here's some tips while walking: Look at what's ahead of you, but don't stare directly down at your feet like you're looking for pennies. Keep good posture. The stabilizers in your inner ear are meant to work with your head upright. Walk with your heel and toe. If you drag your feet or shuffle, you are more likely to trip over something. While walking, think only about your walking, not about other distracting subjects.

If you do fall, don't panic. You are already on the floor so you can't fall any further. Assess your surroundings for people, phones or alert devices. Take time to check for injuries. If you are dizzy, bleeding from head or ear or have pain or decreased sensation or extreme pain in a limb, try not to move before aid comes. Otherwise, even if there is slight pain in the extremities, you can crawl to a stable chair, table or stairway banister and get yourself back up.

A lot of information is available on the Centers for Disease Control's website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). Search for "falls." Don't be afraid to talk to your family physician or eye doctor about fall prevention during your annual checkups.

Other resources: National Institute on Aging, STEADI (part of the CDC), National Council on Aging.



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