

RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION
Surf City—Santa Cruz Chapter 009
September 2022

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, October 4, 2022

Back Nine Grill and Bar at Pasatiempo
Doors open at 11AM - Meeting at 11:30

Served Lunch

**A delicious meal will be served
including dessert,
coffee and tea.**

The no-host bar will be open.

\$20 per person.

Guests welcome.

Raffle prizes and book table too!

**Our speaker will be
Connie Fortunato, founder of
Music Camp International
which holds in-person music
camps at refugee sites along the
Ukrainian border: Romania,
Slovakia, Poland, Moldova,
Hungary**

Connie Fortunato, Founder of Music Camp International

Connie Fortunato has a passion to inspire children to dream big dreams and then work hard to achieve them. Connie began working overseas in 1993, focusing her work with orphans in Romania. In 2000 she conducted a music camp for children in three villages, a "first" for a post-communist country. Since then, her passion has led her to Ukraine and the major cities of Romania. Everywhere she goes she works with all children regardless of economic background or talent. She works with the Ministry of Education and Departments of Social Services to include children with various challenges, as well as foundations, foster homes, and orphanages.

Connie is a graduate of Wheaton College in Illinois, with majors in both music and literature. She has been involved in music for over 40 years and published music education curriculum for preschool through adult.

In May 2014, Connie was named "Honorary Ambassador of Peace for Ukraine," the only non-Ukrainian to ever receive this award. Her proclamation was signed by Petro Poroshenko who was elected President of Ukraine two weeks later.

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

County Health Dept COVID 19 protocols will be followed.

RPEA CHAPTER 9

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS—2021-2022

PRESIDENT

Bob Culbertson 724-0860

bculb@sbcglobal.net

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Mary Doherty 423-3610

maryatscruz@aol.com

VICE-PRESIDENT

Lynn McKibbin 338-7074

lynnmckibbin@cruzio.com

RECORDING SECRETARY

Mary Doherty 423-3610

maryatscruz@aol.com

TREASURER

Steve Redfield 476-8120

sredfi3717@aol.com

DIRECTORS

Term 2022 -2023

Bill Philipps 831-476-4584

philipps999@gmail.com

Sue Pierce 408-353-2832

sapierce48@gmail.com

1 Director vacancy

Term 2021-2022

Jo Paulson 916-677-7226

cappyjo@kalenda.com

Dena Taylor 831-588-0746

detaylor@cabrillo.edu

Nancy Carr-Gordon 831-438-0108

Gordon741@comcast.net

1 Director vacancy

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MEMBERSHIP: Bill Philipps

HISTORIAN: Alverda Orlando

HOSPITALITY: vacant

HEALTH/INSURANCE: Lynn McKibbin

LEGISLATION:

Jerry Bowles, Nancy Carr-Gordon

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Dena Taylor

PROGRAM: vacant CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!

OUTREACH: Sue Pierce

SUNSHINE: vacant CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!

AREA III ASST. DIR.: Bob Culbertson

RPEA Chapter 9 website:

www.rpeasantacruz.org

Webmistress: Becky Taylor 831-421-9284

beckytaylor@tutor@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report – Steve Redfield

Beginning Balance: 8-1-2022 \$6,766.61

Ending Balance: 9-1-2022 \$6,638.31

FUND BALANCES

General Fund \$6,330.94

Investment Opportunities \$307.37

TOTAL 9-1-2022 \$6,638.31

Book Exchange & Outreach — Sue Pierce

Adopt-A-Family Christmas Gift Program



I can't believe it is time to start collecting money for the Adopt-A-Family program. The program Chapter 009 has participated in for many years is managed by the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County. We

will start collecting contributions at the October meeting.

If you want to contribute but won't make the October meeting, send a check made payable to *RPEA Chapter 9*. On the memo line put *Adopt-A-Family*. Mail to RPEA Chapter 9, P.O. Box 413, Capitola, CA 95010.

Last year our members generously gave \$1,190. We adopted two seniors (an 87-year-old woman and a 75-year-old man) and a family of five (mom, dad, children ages 9, 16, and 20).

In early November when the Volunteer Center posts the list of families and individual seniors, I plan to adopt two seniors and one or two families depending on the number of people in the families.

Call me at 408-353-2832 or email sapierce48@gmail.com if you have questions.

Book Exchange

Books will be brought to the October meeting. You are welcome to take up to three books at a meeting. Return the books at a future meeting or pass them on to others. Donations of up to five books at a time are welcomed.



New Omicron-targeting COVID-19 boosters are approved. Here's what you need to know.

By REBECCA COREY September 2, 2022, Yahoo News

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approved new COVID-19 boosters by Pfizer and Moderna on Thursday, following authorization by the Food and Drug Administration on Wednesday. The new vaccines should start to arrive at clinics within days. Here's what you need to know before getting boosted.

How is this booster different from other COVID-19 vaccines? The new booster is what's known as a bivalent vaccine, meaning it offers protection from more than one virus or subtype of a virus. So far, the available boosters and primary vaccines have been monovalent, targeting the original strain of SARS-CoV-2. But Pfizer's and Moderna's new bivalent boosters target both the original strain and the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants, which the FDA says are responsible for most cases in the U.S. and are expected to circulate this fall and winter.

The bivalent boosters will replace the monovalent boosters that have been used in the U.S., but Pfizer's and Moderna's monovalent formulations will continue to be used as primary vaccines. While this is the first time a bivalent vaccine has been used in the U.S. to fight COVID-19, the employment of bivalent vaccines is nothing new. Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr, a professor of epidemiology and medicine at Columbia University, told Yahoo News that the polio vaccine, for example, was developed to protect against multiple subtypes of the poliovirus, and that this technique "is a good way of keeping up with the coronavirus as it evolves over time."

Who can get the booster dose? The Pfizer booster is approved in children and adults ages 12 and older, and the Moderna booster is approved in adults ages 18 and older. Some have argued that a fall vaccination campaign should focus on reaching the most vulnerable populations, including older and immunocompromised Americans. But during a press conference on Wednesday, the FDA pointed to risks associated with "long COVID" as one reason the new boosters should be available more broadly, saying that a third dose of vaccine can probably reduce the chance of getting long COVID by more than half.

When should you get vaccinated? Individuals will need to wait at least two months after receiving their primary vaccination or at least two months after their most recent booster dose before they can get the new bivalent booster. In a statement on Thursday, CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said, "If you are eligible, there is no bad time to get your COVID-19 booster." El-Sadr advised Americans to get ahead of a possible spike in cases as temperatures drop and people begin congregating indoors. "I think it's also important to keep in mind that the time to get a booster is not in the middle of the surge," El-Sadr said. "We recommend that people take the next booster dose before the anticipated surge, meaning taking these booster doses early in the fall before we encounter a potential surge of COVID-19 this winter."

OTHER VACCINATIONS TO KEEP UP TO DATE. **Shingles:** The CDC recommends all healthy adults 50 and older get two doses of [Shingrix](#), the newest shingles vaccine. You should get the shots 2 to 6 months apart. It's much more effective than the older Zostavax, which was taken off the market in 2020. You should get Shingrix even if you've had Zostavax or if you can't remember whether you have had the chickenpox. Most people have been exposed to the virus. (The vaccine is also approved for anyone over the age of 18 who are at risk for shingles because they are or will be immunodeficient or immunosuppressed.) **Flu:** Older adults should get the flu shot every year. A big majority of people who die or are hospitalized with the flu are seniors. If you're over age 65, ask about the Fluzone High-Dose vaccine, which has four times more antigen than regular flu shots. Another vaccine called Fludax also may offer more protection to seniors. **Pneumococcal vaccine:** Being older makes you more likely to get pneumonia, blood infections, or meningitis from the pneumococcal bacteria. Two vaccines -- PCV13 (Prevnar 13) and PPSV23 ([Pneumovax](#) 23) -- can protect you against pneumococcal disease. The CDC recommends that all adults 65 and older have both shots, a year apart. They also recommend PPSV23 for all adult smokers and for people with certain medical conditions. **Tdap shot or booster:** If you skipped the Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) booster shot as a teen or an adult, get one now. Or if you did get it but it's been at least a decade, get a booster against tetanus and diphtheria, called Td, every 10 years.

Upcoming Elections for Retiree Seat on the CalPERS Board of Trustees

Randall Cheek, RPEA Legislative Committee Chairperson, was at our picnic last month reminding us of the importance of the upcoming election for the Retiree Representative seat on the CalPERS board. We need a representative we can trust to ask tough questions and fight for transparency. For more information on the issues of concern for retirees with CalPERS you can see the articles on this in the last two Chapter 9 newsletters.

Randy is the only candidate with experience in local government, schools, and state government. In retirement Randy has continued to fight as the Legislative Director at the Retired Public Employees Association – advocating for more transparency in CalPERS decision-making so we have a voice in protecting hard-earned pension funds for retired public employees.

CalPERS retired members may vote online (www.calperselections.com), by phone (833/442-4829), or by mail. Voting instructions are included in the ballot package, along with information about each candidate.

The term of office for this position begins immediately upon certification by the Secretary of State and expires on January 15, 2028. Ballots for the retiree seat election will be mailed August 26 and votes must be received by September 26. Members who do not receive ballots by September 2 should call (877) 610-8637 to ask for a replacement.

RETIREES ONLY GET ONE REPRESENTATIVE ON THE CALPERS BOARD. RPEA HAS ENDORSED RANDY CHEEK. PLEASE VOTE!!

Legislative Report — *Jerry Bowles*

Newsom signed SB 850 (Laird), Special Death Benefits, and SB 1168 (Cortese), Public Employees Retirement Beneficiary Payment. They will become law on 1/1/2023, and Laird's bill will be retroactive. The legislative session has finished for the year. This is the end of a two-year cycle for bills. The RPEA legislative committee won't have anything to report until January.

Membership — *Bill Philipps*

We have 528 members



<Clean, Modern, Affordable, Electric Transit>

Courtesy of former Regional Transportation Commission executive director and RPEA member Linda Wilshusen.

This month's
newsletter
sponsored in
part by:



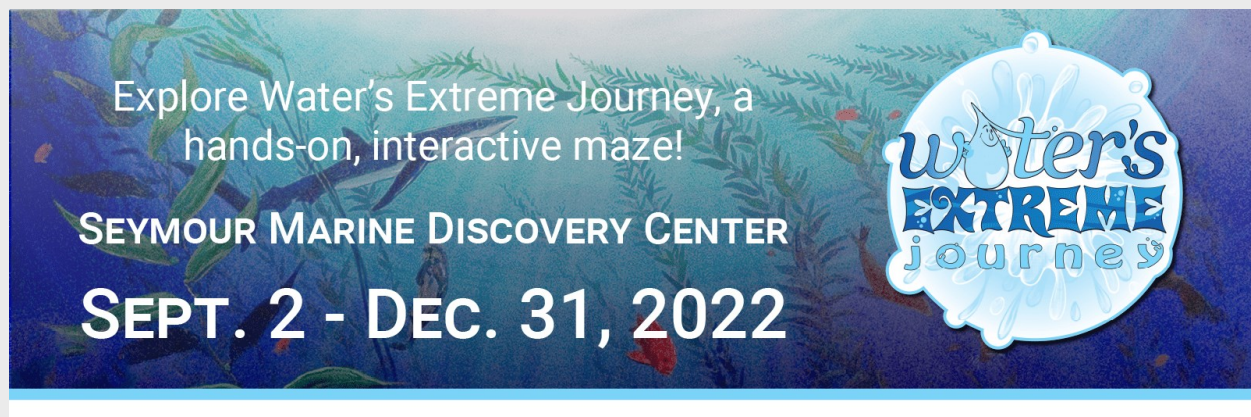
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New exhibit opens: *Water's Extreme Journey* at Seymour Marine Discovery Center.
www.seymourcenter.us

Visitors to the Seymour Marine Discovery Center this fall will be able to experience the cycle of a single drop of water when they take part in *Water's Extreme Journey*, a hands-on, interactive maze designed by Minotaur Mazes. The *Water's Extreme Journey* maze takes visitors on a wild role-playing adventure where they are transformed into a raindrop and challenged to stay clean. Visitors are sent on a journey through mountains, streams, and even their own backyards, where everyday decisions impact their chance of staying clean and reaching a healthy ocean.

This fully interactive maze experience engages visitors through play, scientific inquiry, art, and action, illuminating human impacts great and small while teaching how to contribute to healthy, safe water in their community and beyond. The maze also will highlight water research happening at UC Santa Cruz and in the greater community, and encourage people to support clean water initiatives. Features within the maze have been tailored to represent Santa Cruz County water issues. Exploring the maze is included with admission to the Seymour Center.

The *Water's Extreme Journey* maze takes visitors on an exciting and important quest for clean water. Visitors experience the watershed as a water drop, exploring firsthand the science behind the water cycle. But it's not all wet and wild—through powerful interactive activities and local messaging, visitors realize that daily decisions can immediately improve the watershed in their own backyard. [Come visit](#) *Water's Extreme Journey*, open to the public September 3rd – December 31st.

HEALTH BENEFITS/INSURANCE — Lynn McKibbin

Getting Those Benefits: I think I have the final chapter regarding my new benefits from UHC which I accessed during my recent events July 11 through August 31, 2022. I discovered THE KEY to accessing my three new benefits (meals, transportation and 16 hours per month of non-medical home care) was in the hands of a Case Manager (CM) assigned by UHC at the time of discharge from the hospital, which nobody told me about in all my inquisitions to UHC trying to find out how to access these benefits – NOT in my hands as I am used to doing as a 40-year public health nurse (RN) for my self and family. When I finally landed on the CM's office phone and was told her name and a bit about her role and told her about my failure to obtain all three of these benefits in a timely manner, she promptly "educated me" about where UHC and I went wrong and fixed the referral path for me. I did have a chance to "educate her" about all the pitfalls I went through for two months, and she acknowledged and thanked me for the feedback. I can only hope that she can change all the pitfalls to more fluid waterfalls to help others access these vital benefits for seniors. And so far, the 21 meals each week are coming (for 4 weeks).

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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SANTA CRUZ, CA
PERMIT # 200

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Time Dated Material
Please Deliver by Sept. 20, 2022



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.

Sunshine

Happy Birthday to all Chapter 9 members with birthdays in September!

In 2022, the autumnal equinox—also called the September equinox or fall equinox—arrives on **Thursday, September 22**. This date marks the start of fall in the Northern Hemisphere and spring in the Southern Hemisphere. The equinox occurs at the same moment worldwide.



After the autumnal equinox, days become shorter than nights as the sun continues to rise later and nightfall arrives earlier. This ends with the **winter solstice**, after which days start to grow longer once again. The word “equinox” comes from Latin *aequus*, meaning “equal,” and *nox*, “night.” On the equinox, day and night are roughly equal in length. The sun will rise directly east and set directly west. Set your sundials and solar panels. ☺

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CalPERS Announces Health Plan Premiums for 2023! Did you get your email about the plans? I did too but then it disappeared for some reason and I couldn't find it filed (by me) anywhere! Fortunately for me our webmistress Becky Taylor saw it too and posted it on our website www.rpeasantacruz.org on the Health Benefits and Insurance page, the very first on the list! The first two sentences of their July 12, 2022, announcement sum it up, stating that “their Board approved health plan premiums for calendar year 2023, at an overall premium increase of 6.75%, and that overall premiums for Medicare Advantage plans decreased for the third straight year.” CalPERS members can change health plans during the annual open enrollment period, Sept. 19 to Oct. 14, 2022, and all new premiums take effect Jan 1, 2023.