



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Clara County Chapter 031 Newsletter

Volume 57 #05
May 2022

An Association of CalPERS Annuitants committed to the goal of helping all public employees maintain their physical and economic health during retirement

NEXT ZOOM MEETING – July 27, 2022 at 12:30 PM

OUR GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE ELIZABETH TREVINO from FIDELITY INVESTMENT SUBJECT – DEFERRED COMP

**The Zoom invitation will be sent out in July.
There will be Zoom information in the July
newsletter and on our website.**

***THERE WERE NO MEMBERS ADDED
SINCE THE LAST PUBLICATION OF THE
NEWSLETTER***

IN MEMORIAM: Our deepest sympathy to the families and loved ones of Alan Coffey, Alicia Collver, Alvin Draper, Michael Gowen, Colleen Halter, Ruby Herring, Harvey Incerpi, Dolores McGinnis, Marlin Shadoan, Ruth Starmack, and Marjorie Volk.

They will truly be missed.

NOTES FROM THE APRIL BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Our Chapter Board met via Zoom the morning of April 27. Here are some highlights of the meeting:

- We received a thank you card from the family of a deceased member, grateful for our contribution to the RPEA Building Fund in memoriam.
- Three members have volunteered to help out with our September picnic!
- The Volunteer of the Year Committee will meet and select a Volunteer of the Year.

Our Chapter Membership meeting met via Zoom the afternoon of April 27:

- Rhonda Schmidt, SCC Benefits Director, gave her annual presentation.
- Treasurer's Report: We have \$26,876 in checking and \$31,536 in our C.D. Expenses have been the newsletter, storage shed, and contributions to the Building Fund in memory of deceased members.
- Courtesy Report: Over the past three months we have had 24 deaths. If you know of a member who is ill and would appreciate a get-well card, please notify Sue Farr.
- Membership Report: we have 2,126 members, no new members.
- Elks Lodge remains closed for upgrades, so we will continue to meet via Zoom.
- If you would like to nominate someone for the Volunteer of the Year award, please contact Sue Farr. Her committee will meet on May 2 to make a decision.
- If you would like to help with our picnic in September, please contact Kathy Miller. There will be a planning meeting on June 9.
- Rosemary Knox, a member of our Chapter and President of RPEA, was present and reminded us that there will be a special election for a retiree on the CalPERS Board; only retirees can vote for this seat, so please remember to vote! The voting will be held August 26-September 26. We will be getting more information on the candidates from both RPEA and CalPERS.
- Randall Cheek, RPEA Director of Legislation, was present and gave some legislative updates.
- We had 52 participants at our meeting!
- A reminder that full, official minutes of our Board and Membership meetings are posted on our Chapter website as soon as they are approved.

THE HISTORY CORNER

MARIANNE DAMON, RPEA CHAPTER 031
HISTORIAN

Exploring Guadalupe River Park

In continuing our river journey, your editor Mary Mitchell and I took a trip to downtown San Jose. After driving along its length, we realized that we would be making several trips to report on all of the features of this urban park.

Our first visit was to the Rotary PlayGarden: [Rotary PlayGarden – Guadalupe River Park Conservancy \(grpg.org\)](http://grpg.org) Mary and I arrived on a weekday just before their opening time of 10 am.

There is plenty of parking. We observed staff wiping down play surfaces and tending to the plantings. When we entered through the gate, we were amazed. This playground is designed for all children to use and enjoy. Every feature has been carefully thought out and designs and artwork speak to our local ecology. This is a lovely place to bring the children in your life, or to visit even if you don't bring any children. There are multiple levels with a gradually sloping ramp-path to loop you up to the top and down again.

There is a bathroom and picnic tables inside the enclosed play area. Looking out of the playground, you can sight the Historic Orchard and the Heritage Rose Garden.

Check the website before you go, as days and hours have changed. Also, check to see if picnicking inside the play area is allowed yet; it has been restricted due to Covid.

The Visitor and Education Center is adjacent to the playground and, although small, is definitely worth a visit to see some critters and a beautiful mural. Ring the bell and you will most likely receive a personalized tour. Of special interest are two terrariums set up to be self-sustaining environments.

Next, we used the walking path just outside of the playground to walk over to the orchard and the rose garden. We noticed it was best to use walking paths when available instead of the pedestrian & bike paths, as many bike riders tend to go very fast. We passed by a handful of temporary campsites of people living in the park. The orchard is being rehabilitated and replanted with fruiting trees that tell the story of orcharding during the heyday when we were known as The Valley of Heart's Delight. The rose garden has more varieties than any other public garden in the Western Hemisphere. The weeds and ground squirrels have taken their toll on the garden, and the area needs some tender loving care (and hard work!), but it is well worth seeing when the roses are in bloom. We noticed that this area abounds with birds and birdsong, and we were especially excited to watch a pair of red-tailed hawks build a nest up in a eucalyptus tree near the Play Garden. Not having a picnic lunch, we crossed Coleman Street to the San Jose Market Center and had a selection of a few restaurants with outdoor seating. We decided our next outing will be the "top end" of Guadalupe River Park, anchored by the Children's Discovery Museum. Until next month...



INFO FROM OUR APRIL SPEAKER ON BENEFITS

Rhonda Schmidt, our Employee Benefits Director, gave a presentation to our membership at our quarterly April meeting. She had some really good news to share with us.

First, she has reorganized the Benefit Representatives by separating current employees from retirees. These four reps will only handle retirees:

- **Melinda Lum 408-970-2618 A, B, E, F, I, J, W, Y**
- **Crystal Nicolas 408-970-2613 C, G, P, R, Z**
- **Michele Dallara 408-970-2615 D, H, M, O, Q, U, V**
- **Rosalinda 408-970-2623 K, L, N, S, T, X**

The address and main phone line remain the same, but we have a new dedicated email address of retirement@esa.sccgov.org

Second, executive retirees now have the same rates as non-executive retirees. This has already gone into effect, so we will no longer have two separate rate schedules.

Third, this year she has good rate changes to share with us! For example, Kaiser Senior Advantage has a 2.32% decrease and Health Net MCare has no change.

Open Enrollment is May 1-31, and changes will be effective July 1. You must apply within this window if you want to switch your plan, or enroll or remove dependents. Check the website for live webinars: [Retiree Benefits - Employee Services Agency - County of Santa Clara \(sccgov.org\)](#)

We will post whatever information that Ms. Schmidt provides us from the presentation on our Chapter website.



BAY AREA OLDER ADULTS

More fun outings and lectures are in store for us through Bay Area Older Adults. View descriptions and register for these events at their website. Some are not listed because they have already filled to capacity!

- May 25: Henry Coe Tramping, easy, picnic lunch included.
- May 26: Visit Veggielution at Emma Prusch Farm Park. Picnic lunch included. This is a 6-acre community farm where you'll see what is being grown and do some light gardening.
- June 9: Lecture, Seven Types of Bird Feathers, 11-12:15, virtual.
- June 14: Day Trip, Redwood Walk and Art Extravaganza, easy walking.
- June 22: Hike, Journey thru Quarry Park at Sanborn, a moderate 4.5-mile hike. Picnic lunch included.
- June 23: Private Moffett Field Museum Tour—if you can fit, you can sit in a P-3 Orion Sub-Hunter cockpit!

SANTA CLARA COUNTY PARKS

Our parks host lots of year-round activities. Appropriate to our articles on Guadalupe River and Park, Saturday May 21 is National River Cleanup Day. There are five county parks that will be having clean-ups from 9 am to noon: Calero, Hellyer, Uvas, Ed Levin and Los Gatos Creek. Another activity that relates to our river is the 2022 Salt Marsh Safari, a 1.5-hour boat ride from Alviso Marina County Park with rangers and docents. Unfortunately this event is full, but hopefully it will be repeated. I do want to take this tour and explore the area where our Guadalupe River joins the Bay. Also catching my interest is Mindful Walking in Nature, Sunday May 22 at 9 am at our newest park, Martial Cottle. To find out more, take a look at our County Parks website: [Home – Parks and Recreation – County of Santa Clara \(sccgov.org\)](#) You can also sign up for their monthly Santa Clara County Parks e-Blast, which is a handy way to keep up with their events.

RPEA SANTA CLARA COUNTY CHAPTER 031
P.O. Box 111865
Campbell, CA 95011-1865

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RPEA CHAPTER 31 OFFICERS

President:	Kathy Miller	408-887-7151	kmiller1955@yahoo.com
Vice President:	Mary Chaboya	408-971-9918	rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Board Secretary:	Lynne Jorgensen	408-960-9530	rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
General Meeting Secretary:	Vacant		
Treasurer:	Brian Mark		rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Sgt.-at-Arms:	Brian Geer	408-720-1672	rpeachapter31@yahoo.com

DIRECTORS / COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Program:	Vacant		
Director at Large:	Jo Pugsley		rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Benefits & Ins.:	Kathy Miller	408-887-7151	kmiller1955@yahoo.com
Sunshine:	Sue Farr		rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Historian:	Marianne Damon	408-225-6205	rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Hospitality:	Connie Jimenez	408-251-7638	rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Information Desk:	Vacant		
Membership:	Kathy Miller	408-887-5151	kmiller1955@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editors:	Mary Mitchell	408-734-9144	jeanniemit@comcast.net
Associate Editor:	Marianne Damon	408-225-6205	rpeachapter31@yahoo.com
Webmaster:	Mary Mitchell	408-394-0421	jeanniemit@comcast.net

Website: rpea-31santaclaraco.org
Email: rpeachapter31@yahoo.com