



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION  
*Surf City—Santa Cruz Chapter 009*  
February 2026



*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 3, 2026

Unity Room - SCRCNV  
612 Ocean St., Santa Cruz

Doors Open at 11AM -  
Meeting at 11:30

#### Served Lunch

Lasagna Soup or  
Tuscan Bean Soup  
Salad & Garlic Bread  
Yummy Dessert  
Ice Tea and Lemonade  
Still Only \$20 per person.  
Guests welcome.

#### Meeting Speaker

Find out what is happening in  
CA state legislature this Spring

Raffle prizes and book table too!

Make your reservation by **February 24th**  
Call Mary Doherty at 831-331-7965 Or email [maryatscruz@aol.com](mailto:maryatscruz@aol.com)

**RPEA CHAPTER 9  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**2026-2027**

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Margie Riopel 801-8306

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**Term 2026-2027**

Director vacancies

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**MEMBERSHIP:** vacant **CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!**

**HISTORIAN:** vacant **CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!**

**SUNSHINE:** vacant **CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!**

**HEALTH/INSURANCE:** Margie Riopel

**LEGISLATION:** Nancy Carr-Gordon

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Dena Taylor

**PROGRAM:** Mary Doherty

**OUTREACH:** Sue Pierce

**AREA III ASST. DIR.:** Bob Culbertson

RPEA Chapter 9 website:

[www.rpeasantacruz.org](http://www.rpeasantacruz.org)

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**Treasurer's Report – Steve Redfield**

Beginning Balance: 1-1-2026 \$12,061.82

Ending Balance: 2-1-2026 \$12,212.55

**BALANCES**

General Fund \$12,076.88

Investment Opportunities \$135.67

**TOTAL 2-1-2026 \$12,212.55**

**Legislative Report—Nancy Carr-Gordon**

The state legislature has begun its second year of the two-year CA state legislative cycle. The Governor's proposed budget is \$300 billion. The budget had an earlier projected shortfall of \$17-18 billion, but is now estimated at \$3 billion. This is primarily due to revenue from last year exceeding its initial estimate due to AI and stock performance. The revised budget will be presented in May after 4/15, once a revenue analysis is completed.

All bills held over for possible action must be out of their house of origin by 1/31, and introduced in print thirty days before being heard in committee. Our contracted lobbyist is in the process of gathering information related to the anticipated 2,800 introduced bills, amendments, and second year bills going forward from last year. Of particular interest is a bill for making jury service optional after age 80 and the status of AB 83 regarding Elder Financial Abuse. It will continue to be a fast-paced cycle. We will report on legislative bill priorities for RPEA in future newsletters as they develop.

**Chapter 009 has 490 members!**

## Message from the President — *Bob Culbertson*

Dear fellow Retirees,

We live in a turbulent time. I have been saddened and dismayed as I watch the news each day about so many things happening that I have no control over.

Last week I attended a memorial service for a woman who had been my church Pastor for 22 years. She died after a long battle with cancer. Her life was a gift to me and to others she touched. I am sure that you also have lost friends and loved ones and people that brought joy to your life. None of us will live forever.

So, while dealing with the pain and sadness of news and loss I find that counting my blessings helps me cope.

One of my blessings is working with my fellow retirees. We have a great Board of Directors in chapter 9. They have fascinating life stories of service and are still giving to each of us, their time and spirit. Our Board zoom meetings each month lift my spirits as we try to help each other and you navigate the issues of ageing civil servants.

I would like to share this experience with more of you. We have some vacant Board positions and need, for example, a new volunteer to do the "sunshine" job. If you are not sure about taking full responsibility for a Board position, I invite you to consider volunteering as a committee member.

Pick something you are interested in -- legislation, finances, community service, newsletters, etc. and be a support person for one of our existing Board members.

I know that these Board members have given me hope and support in days that I have been depressed. I offer you an opportunity to join our RPEA Board at whatever level you can. I am sure it will be time well spent, and I look forward to seeing you more frequently online and at our in-person Chapter 9 meetings.

Contact me or any of our Board members by phone, e-mail, or in person to find out more about joining our Chapter Board. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing the experience and joy with you.

### Pajaro Valley's 'Five Mile House'

"Five Mile House" at the intersection of Freedom Boulevard and Corralitos Road. The general location was originally a tavern and stagecoach stop established in the 1850s, and some say the stop was on famed stagecoach driver Charley Parkhurst's mail route. Interestingly, the "Five Mile House" designation was applied to different buildings on both sides of Freedom Boulevard over the years, as it was largely considered a location rather than a building — 5 miles from the Watsonville Plaza by road, a bit over 5 miles from the Pajaro River as the crow flies. Over the years the designation was applied to a saloon, a popular dance hall, a service station, natural food store and a grocery store. Today, the "Five Mile House" is the eclectic building constructed in the 1920s as a service station, and currently home to Lito's Community Café & Market. Courtesy Pajaro Valley Historical Association



## Health and Benefits — *Margie Riopel*

### Want to Change Your Mood? Listen to Your Favorite Songs

If you're feeling on edge, start with an angsty song or two, then play your favorite calming tune.

By Kimberly Goad, AARP Updated October 28, 2025

Have you ever turned on classical music hoping it would calm you down? Or cranked up some classic rock to set an upbeat tone? Makes sense. Music's ability to change your mood is its superpower.

Music allows you to feel the emotion of another person without the need for words, explains Dr. Charles Limb, neuroscientist and director of the Sound and Music Perception Laboratory at the University of California San Francisco School of Medicine. He says this is why music can influence your mood.

But the latest songs preselected by recording companies and labeled with directives like "party," "relax," or "get happy" may not help as much as you'd think. Research shows that your favorite genres and songs are more likely to improve your mood than broadly defined "mood" music selected by someone else.

But using music to change your mood may involve a two-step process. "We've consistently seen that whether you're in a depressed or anxious mood state, simply putting on happy music may not help and can sometimes make you feel worse," says Edward Roth, a professor and director of music therapy at the University of Houston. "What tends to work better is choosing music that matches where you are emotionally and then gradually shifting toward the state you want to reach."

#### You know your favorite songs

Who knows better than you the songs that will get you from where you are to the desired mood ahead? Your favorite tunes earned a spot on your various playlists for a reason. They've been road tested.



A [review of research](#) published in the journal *NeuroImage* in 2020 shows that a complex neural network made up of areas of the brain known for their roles in emotional processing and reward are activated by music that evokes a range of emotions — from mere goosebumps to all-out joy to deep sadness.

"It's no coincidence that people use music for all manner of behavioral tasks with very specific goals in mind," Limb says. The trick is to pick the kind of music you like.

#### How to get to the mood you want

Roth recommends creating a playlist — or tweaking an existing one — so that it includes a progression of songs. "Start with music reflecting your present state and then move step-by-step toward the mood you'd like to achieve," he suggests. "That progression supports your brain's natural emotional response to music."

Say, for example, you're feeling anxious, angry, and wound tight at the end of a workday. Start with music that falls squarely within that emotional ballpark (think "Get Off of My Cloud," by the Rolling Stones or Bruce Springsteen's "Born to Run"). Then gradually move toward more mellow selections. The tracks should reflect a gradual shift from the way you feel in the moment (agitated after a long day at work) toward the way you want to feel by the time you get home (laidback).

This "start where you are" strategy is based on a well-established music therapy known as the iso principle which has been shown to improve mood and manage stress.

"There's always a piece of music that exactly encapsulates what I have felt," Limb says. "Whether it's positive or negative, music has a way to help us understand the full range of human emotion and experiences."

## What should be in your emergency kit?

**North State Public Radio | By NSPR staff** Published June 28, 2018, as part of NSPR's coverage of the Oroville Dam spillway emergency.

Being prepared means being equipped with the proper supplies you may need in the event of an emergency or disaster. Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate. At a minimum, you should have the basic supplies listed below:

- Water: one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- Food: non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home).
- Flashlight battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phones with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s) of the area

Consider the needs of all family members and add supplies to your kit. Suggested items to help meet additional needs are:

- Medical supplies (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc.)
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Games and activities for children
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Transistor radio
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Manual can opener

This information is from the [American Red Cross](#).

## Katz Cancer Resource Center

*I've used the Katz Cancer Resource Center many times for myself, friends, and family members with a diagnosis of cancer. I have always found the staff there to be knowledgeable and kind. You don't need to have your doctors attached to Dominican to use this service. – Mary Doherty*

The Bennett & Suzy Katz Cancer Resource Center at Dominican Hospital offers you and your loved ones a place to get the support you need, providing access to information and services related to all aspects of cancer care. Our staff includes oncology certified nurses and patient navigators to help answer your questions, coordinate your care, and refer you to support services. Every program and service we offer is free of charge.

### Cancer Support Groups

At the Katz Cancer Resource Center, we are focused on providing support and resources as you make the journey through cancer. We offer a number of oncology support services, including the following support groups.



- Advanced/Metastatic Cancer
- Bone Marrow Transplant
- Cancer
- Caregiver
- Lymphedema
- Prostate Cancer

### Other Cancer Support Programs and Classes

- Chemotherapy 101
- Quimoterapia 101/Radioterapia 101
- Creative Expression Through Art
- Eating Well Through Cancer
- Gentle Yoga
- Look Good Feel Better
- Fireside Chat

The Katz Cancer Resource Center is located inside of:  
Mary & Richard Solari Cancer Center  
3150 Mission Drive, First Floor  
Santa Cruz, CA

We're open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. by appointment only.

If you have questions, we're here to help. For more information about the Katz Cancer Resource Center, please call [\(831\) 462-7770](tel:8314627770).

## Check your change! New coins honor America's 250th anniversary

Michelle Del Rey and Mike Snider, USA TODAY , January 5, 2026

One of the coins created to commemorate the United States' 250th anniversary will begin circulating on Monday, Jan. 5, the [U.S. Mint announced on social media](#). The [Mayflower Compact Quarter](#) is the first of five new Quarter Dollar designs for 2026. The collectable features two pilgrims, a man and a woman, under a banner that reads "E Pluribus Unum," which translates to "out of many, one." The other 25-cent coins slated for circulation include the Revolutionary War quarter, the Declaration of Independence quarter, the U.S. Constitution quarter and the Gettysburg Address quarter.

The Revolutionary War coin features George Washington on the front, with a Continental Army soldier at Valley Forge on the back, and the inscription "Revolutionary War." The Declaration of Independence quarter displays a side portrait of Thomas Jefferson on the front with the Liberty Bell on the back. The U.S. Constitution quarter features a portrait of James Madison; the Gettysburg Address quarter features Abraham Lincoln on the front, with two clasped hands on the back and the inscription "A New Nation Conceived in Liberty."

Other coins being minted for the occasion include a dime with the face of Liberty, a nickel with Thomas Jefferson and a "1776~2026" inscription, a Liberty half dollar and a 1776~2026 penny.



*2 anonymous  
Chapter 009 members*

This month's  
newsletter  
sponsored in  
part by:

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*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](mailto:detaylor@cabrillo.edu) or send to RPEA, P.O. Box 413, Capitola CA 95010.*

### **Project Scout- Free Tax Assistance**

Project SCOUT provides free tax assistance to seniors, individuals with a disability, and low income residents of Santa Cruz County. Project SCOUT also assists with general tax questions. This free tax service will be available at the following libraries: Aptos, Felton, Capitola, and Downtown. Call 831-427-7713 or visit the branch to make an appointment.

Project SCOUT will be at Mid County Senior Center every Wednesday from 9am – noon, and at the Main Watsonville Library every Wednesday from 1pm – 8pm.



### **PICKLES: By Brian Crane**

