



NEWS BRIEFS

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SACRAMENTO COUNTY RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
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December 2015 Number 4

Pamela Thomas, Editor



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Kiyoshi Adachi



At the SCREA October meeting, Mike DeBord told us the Chuck Reed/Carl DeMaio group was seeking to file two new ballot proposals to alter California's state and local public pensions. As has been reported previously here, the Reed/DeMaio groups had filed an earlier initiative entitled "Voter Empowerment Act of 2016". The State Attorney General had retitled it as "Public Employees Pension and Retiree Healthcare Benefits". Mike had told the SCREA Board this Reed/DeMaio initiative would try to close down defined benefit retirement (what we have now) for new employees in all California public agencies (there are about 3,000 public agencies in California) and require a vote of the electorate to deviate from that prohibition other prohibitions listed in the initiative. Some of the prohibitions would threaten the defined benefit system for current active employees and retirees (that's us).

On page 5A of the October 6, 2015 Sacramento Bee, Jon Ortiz reported on the filings of the two new ballot proposals. According to this article, one measure would put employees who first join a public pension system into a 401(k)-style retirement savings plan that guarantees fixed contributions from employers instead of the promised retirement payment of the defined benefits system.

The second measure would cap the amount of money employers could pay for new hires' retirement to a certain percentage of their salary. The article goes on to say for most new employees, employers could contribute no more than 11% of the base compensation to pensions or a maximum of 13% for police, firefighters and other public safety workers.

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Happy Holidays

**From the
SCREA
Board of Directors**





PRESIDENT’S CORNER

By Kiyoshi Adachi

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The proposed ballot proposal provides voters at the state and local levels would have the power to override the downgraded benefits or the cost caps at the ballot box. The article states proponents hope to put one of them before voters next year.

Mike DeBord closely follows retirement security matters for us and our state association, CRCEA. The Reed/DeMaio ballot proposals are serious retirement security issues. At the shopping centers, signature gatherers will be out. Be careful what you sign.

WELCOME NEW SCREA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS

By Linda Kimura, Chair

At the August 3, 2015 Board of Directors meeting, President Kiyoshi Adachi appointed three new Directors to the SCREA Board of Directors. Their appointments were confirmed by the Board of Directors by a unanimous vote of those present. The three were interviewed by the Nominating Committee and were recommended for appointment to fill three of four vacancies. They are Kathy O’Neil, Jane Smith and Carol Summers.

Kathy O’Neil retired from Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance in December, 2014. Her experience includes two years on the SCERS Board as an elected Miscellaneous Member, Chapter President of SEIU Local 1021 for more than 10 years, and also with the Local, served for two terms as Treasurer in charge of their \$30 million budget. Kathy serves on the Retirement Security Committee.

Jane Smith has an extensive career with Sacramento County including years with the Department of Public Works, Highways and Bridges Division, and then 25 years with the Board of Supervisors as Secretary/Administrative Assistant to Supervisor Toby Johnson, and continuing as the first Chief of Staff to Supervisor Don Nottoli. She retired in 2006 and is an active member of SCREA. Jane serves as Chair of the Sunshine Committee.

Carol Summers' County career spanned 36 years with the Department of Human Assistance beginning as a Social Worker, Client Advocate Supervisor, Sr. Personnel Analyst and Human Resources Manager. Her post-retirement experiences took her to Maui, Hawaii, where she served as a Civil Service Commissioner for five years (two years as Chairman); six years as a volunteer with Friends of the Library; and spent time with two theater groups, Maui On Stage and MAPA. Carol serves on the Benefits Committee.

President Adachi and the Members of the Board of Directors are pleased to welcome Kathy, Jane and Carol. They are bringing added expertise and knowledge to SCREA’s leadership.

Notice:

The information presented in “News Briefs” is believed to be from reliable sources. However, no responsibility is assumed by SCREA, the Editor or the writers for inaccuracies in the articles published.

Two New Pension Reform Initiatives Filed with Attorney General “Proponents Still Trying to Undermine Retirement Security”

By Mike DeBord

If you are a citizen over 18, a resident of California and write a check for \$200, you can submit a proposed State-wide initiative to the State Attorney General. A “Fiscal Impact” statement will then be prepared and the Attorney General will write a “Title and Summary”. Collect 585,407 valid signatures for a “constitutional amendment” and it’s on the ballot in 2016 (and you will only need a simple majority vote to change the Constitution). **So far this year there are a whopping 84 such initiative filings!**

The topics of these State-wide initiatives are very diverse, including several dealing with “marijuana”, a “1,000% Sales Tax on Political Advertisements”, and a “Shellfish Ban”. By the way, the proposed “Shellfish Suppression Act” initiative states that “*Shellfish are a monstrous evil that Almighty God, giver of freedom and liberty, commands us in Leviticus to suppress. They also smell bad.*” The sale or consumption would be considered a serious felony punishable by a \$666,000 fine and/or prison sentence of up to six years, six months, and six days. **Obviously, not all proposed State-wide initiatives submitted to the Attorney General are likely to qualify for the ballot or be approved by the voters!**

But included in the 84 initiative filings this year are three “public pension reform” initiatives and all would impact the State and every local public employer in California. The first is the “Voter Empowerment Act of 2016” that was filed on June 5, 2015. **The two new pension reform initiatives were filed on October 5, 2015 by the same proponents.** One is the “Voter Empowerment Act of 2016”. (Yes it is the same title, by the same proponents, but with different provisions--confusing isn't it?) The other is the “Government Pension Cap of 2016”. **All three of these initiatives would amend the State constitution and erode retirement security for public employees, targeting new hires.** If any are approved by the voters, they would likely be subject to many costly and lengthy legal challenges.

The proponents are hoping that the Attorney General will write a “nice” Summary for one of these new pension reform initiatives. When the Attorney General wrote the Summary for their public pension reform initiative back in 2013, the proponents didn't like it and sued her, but the judge ruled in favor of the Attorney General. The initiative was then dropped. Earlier this year, the Attorney General wrote a Summary for the first “Voter Empowerment Act of 2016” initiative and the proponents didn't like it either. So they wrote two more initiatives, hoping for a different Summary by the Attorney General. They say they will then “poll test” the two new initiatives, dump the one with the least likelihood of getting voter approval and start gathering signatures on the other one to qualify it for the November 8, 2016 election. The proponents are looking for **\$2.5 - \$3.5 million** to fund the signature gathering process.

Honestly, at this time, it is not worth trying to go into detail discussing these two new public pension reform initiatives. After the Attorney General writes the Titles and Summaries, and proponents decide if either or none will go through the signature gathering process, we will provide a full update. **It would be great if all these pension reform initiatives sink along with the “Shellfish Ban”. They all smell bad!**

“Pension Reformers Continue Their Long List of Failures” Chuck Reed’s and Carl DeMaio’s Credibility Should be Challenged

By Mike DeBord

Let’s **look at the track record** of the two leading proponents of the State-wide pension reform initiative effort. Even just a little bit of history about **Charles Rufus “Chuck” Reed** (an attorney and former Mayor of San Jose) and **Carl David DeMaio** (a former single-term City Councilmember of San Diego) reveals failure after failure in their efforts to destroy public pensions in California. These two former politicians are currently championing a State-wide initiative approach to destroy retirement security for all new employees that would chose to work in the public sector, including law enforcement, firefighters and teachers. But check out their track record; even their out-of-state billionaire backers must be concerned.

- In 2012, Chuck Reed, Mayor of San Jose, was the leading supporter of pension reform Measure B for the City of San Jose that voters passed by a wide margin.
- But then a **Superior Court judge overturned the main provisions of Measure B as it violated vested rights of current workers.**
- San Jose experienced significant employee turnover and vacancies, the unions sued on other issues, and after 3 years and the City spending millions on legal costs, the **City Council recently voted 10-1 to ask the Courts to invalidate the voter-approved Measure B** and replace it with an agreement with the unions. Part of this agreement would be for the **City to drop its legal appeal of the lawsuit the City lost regarding their violations of the “California Rule”.**
- In 2012, Carl DeMaio, Councilmember of San Diego, was the author and leader of another pension reform Measure B for the City of San Diego that also passed by a wide margin.
- But then an **administrative law judge** with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) **wrote that the city should reverse actions** taken to implement Proposition B **because the city had refused to negotiate with the unions.** This issue is awaiting confirmation by the full PERB Board and if upheld the consequences could be very onerous for the City.
- In October 2013, Reed and his supporters submitted a State-wide pension reform initiative, **but then they later withdrew it.**
- In mid-November 2013, Reed and his supporters submitted another version of his State-wide pension reform initiative and the Attorney General wrote the official Title and Summary.
- **Reed sued the Attorney General** over the language in the Title and Summary **but then lost in court** in early 2014. **Reed abandoned his campaign** in March 2014 citing the court’s decision.
- On June 5, 2015, Reed, DeMaio and supporters submitted a new initiative they called the “Voter Empowerment Act of 2016” and the Attorney General again wrote a Title and Summary.
- Reed and DeMaio stated they **didn’t like the Summary and they didn’t collect any signatures.**

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“Pension Reformers Continue Their Long List of Failures” Chuck Reed’s and Carl DeMaio’s Credibility Should be Challenged

Continued from page 4

- On October 5, 2015, Reed, DeMaio and supporters wrote two new State-wide pension reform initiatives, saying that they will “poll test” both after the Attorney General writes the Titles and Summaries, and then **dump the one** that has the least chance of voter approval. They will then begin gathering signatures on the other to qualify it for the November 8, 2016 General Election.
- **The failures in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 show a pattern of ineptness of both proponents!**

SCREA MISSION STATEMENT

SCREA is established to promote the welfare of the retired employees of Sacramento County in all ways compatible with the public interest, and to assist employees reaching retirement to make the transition in the most effective way possible by:

- Representing retired employees in discussions, hearings, and negotiations with County agencies and officials;
- Joining and/or supporting other organizations formed for similar purposes;
- Creating and fostering favorable public sentiment;
- Supporting legislation deemed beneficial and resisting legislation deemed detrimental to the interests of its members or sound government;
- Disseminating pertinent information to its members.

<p>For your information here are some important phone numbers and addresses:</p> <p>SCERS: 980 9th St. Suite 1900, Sacramento, CA 95814-2739, 916-874-9119</p> <p>Employee Benefits Office: 700 H St. Suite 4667, Sacramento, CA 95814 916-874-2020</p>	<p>Members are always welcome to join us for our monthly Board meetings. All meetings begin at 9:30 AM. Below are the remaining meetings for 2015 and their locations:</p> <p>November 2, Rancho Cordova Police Department, 2897 Kilgore Rd., Rancho Cordova</p> <p>December 7, Sacramento Credit Union, 700 H St., Sacramento</p>
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IN MEMORIAM

Frances Baclaski
 Oscar Bautista
 Robert Birch
 Gustav Bowers
 Mary Bright
 Darryl Camp
 Edward Ching
 Frances Cooper
 Gerald Donaldson
 Ermanold Donnelly
 Stephen Dulics
 Dorothy Dykeman
 Jack Earles
 Dorothy Farrell
 Louis Fatur
 Dale Gehres
 Willard Gladden
 Joan Harris

Mary Hatten
 Mary Heon
 Margaret Heuer
 William Hull
 Henry Jackson
 Barbara Jinkerson
 Phyllis Johnson
 Caryl Kammerle
 Jack Rodney Kennedy
 Susan Kent
 Marita Khamas
 Nan Lane
 Carolyn Largomarsino
 Julia Lavirgne
 Richard Lewis
 David Lombardo
 Carolyn Lydon
 Evelyn Marquez

Genevieve Phillips
 Daniel Polakoff
 Karen Potter
 Margaret Rahn
 Norman Readdy
 Kenneth Reid
 Arnold Rhodes
 Warren Rice
 Catherine Ryan
 Ray Saiter
 Helena Scherrer
 Paul Scott
 Edwin Seim
 Myrtle Sherman
 Stanley Sherman
 Jamie Stinson
 Charles Trumball
 Lillie Tubbs
 Janet Waldrop

SYMPATHY CARDS are sent to families of our members when we are notified of a death. GET WELL CARDS are also sent to our members who are experiencing health problems. If you know someone who would be cheered by receiving a card from SCREA, please call Jane Smith at 916-786-6502.

The surviving spouse of a member is eligible for SCREA membership. For enrollment assistance, please contact our Membership Chair, Sue Murray, at 916-359-6394.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

<p>Geraldine Core, DHA Veronica Cormier-Hubbard, DHA Sandra Fauver, Sac Area Sewer Dist Cynthia & G.L. Gargovich, DHHS/CPS M. Thayne & Marilyn Goff, Const. Insp. Sandra L. Jackson Ramiro & Susan Lopez, Water Resources Stephanie Lynch, DHHS Elizabeth Maerten, DHA</p>	<p>Toni Moore & Raymond Cadei, First 5 Sacto Karen Murase, Finance Phyllis & Timothy Nellist, Finance Robert Nishi, DPS Viola & Arthur Sanchez, DHHS Kathy Stephan, DHA David & Claire Schwartz, Airports Lucy Tosti, DHHS Judith Verlee Leonard</p>
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BENEFITS COMMITTEE REPORT

By Kiyoshi Adachi

The attendance at the 2015 open enrollment event at the Foothill Community Center on October 9, 2015 was light. The County Employee Benefits Office (EBO) staff said a similar event at the downtown County Administration lobby, 700 H Street, on October 8, was also lightly attended. Barbara Smith and I were at the Foothill location where I observed just a few attendees who appeared to be filling out a form either to change a health care provider or as a new enrollee. The current retiree and family enrollment in the County-sponsored health program is about 4,000 enrollees. This number will probably not change very much for 2016.

Open enrollment provides an opportunity for retirees and their families to seek information from vendors who offer services to us. Vendors attending were Kaiser, Western Health Advantage, Sutter Health, United Health Care, VSP (vision), Principal Financial Group (dental), Fidelity (investments) and Keenan and Associates, consultants to Sacramento County EBO. I appreciated help given me by Chris of Keenan and Associates in setting up the SCREA table.

At a recent SCREA Board meeting, we had a discussion on advance funeral planning. While the name of the vendor presenting the planning material cannot be named due to SCREA's policy of non-advocacy of any vendor product or service, the SCREA Board agreed advance funeral planning was important information that should be shared with our members. Many of us probably avoid discussing end-of-life issues. From experience, I can state that we will all need this service some day. It helps a lot if this is not something we have to do when there are a whole bunch of other things that are required at the end of life. Look for more information on this matter in a future News Brief. You can call me if you wish.

Change of Address, Telephone or Email?

**Please fill out and mail this notice to:
SCREA Change of Address, P.O. Box 573,
Fair Oaks, CA 95628**

Name: _____

New Address: _____

City _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Effective date for change: _____

Previous Address (if applies): _____

ANNUAL SCREA HOLIDAY LUNCH

By Nancy Gust



DECEMBER 11, 2015, Friday

11:00 – 2:30 pm

We held our Founders Day Picnic at Elk Grove Park Rotary Grove and I think all who attended had a good time. The weather was not too hot and the wind kept things cooled down. The winner of the Silent Auction was Nancy Wolford-Landers.

The Holiday Lunch will again be held at the Hilton Hotel off Arden Way West. The doors open at 11:00 a.m. and the parking is free. Lunch will be served at noon.

The door prizes will be provided by SCREA, the Sacramento Credit Union and from the John Descamp's Annual Christmas Gift Fund. John Descamp, the former CEO of the Sacramento County Employees Retirement System, donated a total of \$9,200 (\$8,000 + \$1,200) to SCREA. Each year \$400 must be spent on door prizes for the holiday lunch. The money cannot be used for anything else. The current balance is \$6,376.15.

We want to thank John Descamp and the Sacramento Credit Union for their donations.

Everyone must complete the reservation form found on page 10 of this newsletter to attend the lunch. The deadline for reservations is **Friday, December 4, 2015**. **If you put your check in the mail close to or on the due date PLEASE call me at (916) 725-6752 or email njgust@hotmail.com so I can have the correct count for the hotel.**

All meals given for the final count must be paid for. Cancellations due to emergencies can be made up to the reservation deadline.



Save the Date!

The March Luncheon will be held at the Lions Gate Hotel and Conference Center on March 14, 2016 (Monday).

The complete 2016/17 Luncheon calendar will be available in the March 2016 Newsletter.

PLEASE NOTE

SCREA HAS A NEW ADDRESS:

**P.O. Box 573
Fair Oaks, CA 95628**

Thought for the day:

*“Work like you don’t need the money,
Love like you’ve never been hurt
And dance like no one’s watching.”*

WEB SITE COMMITTEE REPORT

By Pamela Thomas

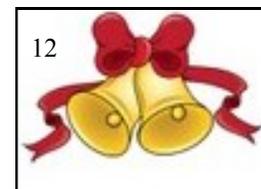
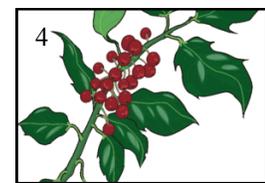
After an extensive review, the SCREA Web Site has been updated. Some of the updates are:

- Addition of new articles regarding the pension initiatives and retirement security;
- Contact info for SCREA Board members;
- Changes to the Committee assignments and responsibilities; i.e., Membership Database Management, Membership/SCERS Orientations and Web Site; and
- A new Change of Address, Phone & Email form.



Please visit our web site for a lot of info about SCREA. You can access our Bylaws, see information on County and supplemental benefits, and keep apprised of upcoming events such as the luncheons.

How well do you know your Christmas songs? Can you name the Christmas songs reflected by the pictures below?



Answers are shown elsewhere in this newsletter.

2015 SCREA HOLIDAY LUNCH

By Nancy Gust

DECEMBER 11, 2015, Friday



Please join us for our Annual Holiday Luncheon at the
Hilton Hotel Ballroom
2200 Harvard Street, Sacramento

11:00 a.m. NO-HOST BAR 12:00 p.m. LUNCH
Door prizes after lunch

The Menu includes a choice between:

Roast Pork with Caramelized Apples & Cranberries with Au Gratin Potatoes and Chef's
Fresh Vegetable de Jour
Or
Penne Pasta with Roasted Vegetables

Each dish comes with a Tossed Green Salad with Tomatoes, Cucumbers & Carrots – Choice
of Ranch or Italian Vinaigrette Dressings, wheat and sourdough rolls with butter, Starbucks
Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Hot or Iced Tea, Water

For dessert they will alternate Black Forest Cake and Lemon Chiffon Crème Cake.

COST: Members \$21.00 and Non-Members \$28.00

Please let me know of any special dietary requests on your reservation form.

Please complete the reservation form found on the back of this newsletter and return by the
deadline **Friday, December 4, 2015**. **If you put your check in the mail close to or on the
due date PLEASE call me at (916) 725-6752 or email njgust@hotmail.com so I can have
the correct count.** All meals given for the final count must be paid for. No refunds after
December 4, 2015.

Send reservation form and check to **SCREA HOLIDAY LUNCH, P.O. BOX 573, Fair Oaks,
CA 95628**

**Directions: Hwy 80, Exit at Arden Way West, right on Harvard Street. PARKING IS
FREE and is in front and on the sides of the hotel.**

California State Railroad Museum needs you!

By Pamela Thomas



The annual Polar Express train, sponsored by the California State Railroad Museum, is coming again! Starting Friday, November 27 trains will run Thursdays thru Sundays until December 21, 2015.

Parents and their children come in their pajamas to ride the Polar Express trains, while volunteers read the Polar Express story over a speaker system and serve cookies and hot chocolate. Various entertainers and dancers stroll through the trains during the run. Even Santa Claus pays a visit! Visitors to Old Sacramento can have their picture taken with Santa and/or Mrs. Claus at the Eagle Theatre. Volunteers are also needed to work at the theatre.

Hundreds of volunteers are needed to help the Polar Express run efficiently. Areas for volunteers include cookie servers (aboard the train); greeters; pre-board agents; stroller and line monitors in the station; and many others. Volunteers are also needed to work at the theatre with Santa Claus.

If you are interested in volunteering to help families and children enjoy the holiday spirit, please contact the All Aboard Desk at allaboardparks.ca.gov soon as training classes are being scheduled for the various positions.



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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LENDER

Answers to Christmas Quiz: (1) Winter Wonderland (Sleigh Bells Ring); (2) Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire; (3) I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus; (4) Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly; (5) Up on Rooftop; (6) Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer; (7) Away in a Manger; (8) Here Comes Santa Claus; (9) What Child is This?; (10) The Nutcracker Suite; (11) Angels We Have Heard on High; (12) I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day



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SCREA'S HOLIDAY LUNCH HILTON HOTEL BALLROOM RESERVATION FORM FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015

Member's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Member's Name: _____ Phone: _____

"New" e-mail addresses ONLY: _____

Non-Member's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Non-Member's- Name: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Members Roast Pork \$ 21.00

_____ Member Vegetarian Penne Pasta
With Roasted Vegetables \$ 21.00

_____ Non-Members Roast Pork \$ 28.00

_____ Non-Members Vegetarian Penne Pasta
With Roasted Vegetables \$ 28.00

TOTAL CHECK ENCLOSED \$ _____

RESERVATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 4, 2015 (FRIDAY)

PLEASE NOTE ON YOUR RESERVATION FORM IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS. ALL CANCELLATIONS MUST BE CALLED IN BY THE RESERVATION DEADLINE. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. **SEND THIS FORM** AND A CHECK PAYABLE TO SCREA HOLIDAY LUNCH, TO **P.O. BOX 573, FAIR OAKS, CA 95628**