

Peralta Retirees Organization (PRO)
Annual Meeting, November 8, 2007
Wedgewood Banquet Center
10051 Doolittle Drive, Oakland, CA

A social hour from 11:00 AM to 12 PM preceded lunch during which the Ben Luis Trio played a collection of pieces while those present exchanged greetings and conversed with one another.

Shortly after noon, President Jerry Herman issued greetings to all and requested that we be seated at the tables provided for the buffet lunch. He then introduced the other officers: VP Bruce Jacobs, Secretary Juanita Peterson, Treasurer Shirley Timm, and members of the Peralta Retirees Organization Board: Remo Arancio, Pat England, Linda Japzon, Odell Johnson, Sondra Neiman, Ned Pearlstein, and Alex Pappas, who is currently living in Turkey.

Jerry introduced Cy Gulassa, who would speak to the group after lunch. To facilitate the serving of the buffet lunch, Jerry called out the number of each table and asked the members to serve themselves.

At 1:40 PM, Bruce introduced the speaker, Cy Gulassa, who represents Area 6 of the Peralta Colleges District. Mr. Gulassa spoke on the workings of the Peralta Board and offered insights. He said the members work well together with a focus on students. In his memory of the Peralta Board, it is a stronger board than in the past because of the working relationships that have developed between the members. He expressed the Board's satisfaction that Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville now have a new campus named Berkeley City College, formerly called Vista College. Mr. Gulassa's comments were primarily about Merritt, Laney, and Berkeley City College. Later asked about College of Alameda, he said the College is currently undergoing extensive alterations.

President's Report: PRO currently has 350 to 360 paid retiree members and is the biggest organized group of the Peralta District. Jerry said our benefits remain strong and in effect, and according to a recent financial report, benefits for retirees cost the District half as much as benefits for non-retirees.

PRO has been active this year through the efforts of the Social Committee. Linda Japzon and Jay Quesada made the lunch arrangements; they also planned the annual picnic in August and planned a theater party last fall.

Treasurer's Report: Shirley Timm reported that PRO currently has \$17,600 in the bank. Since some members pay dues a year or more in advance, about \$9,000 is available to use as needed. As of this date, about half of the PRO members have paid dues for 2008. The Organization is in good shape financially.

Newsletter and Website: Bruce has received many good comments about the Newsletter and would like to receive more feedback about the Newsletter and the PRO Website. A series has been started in the Newsletter about the experiences a member has had since retirement. In a recent Newsletter, Carmen Rezendes wrote about one of her experiences. Other retirees are asked to contribute to the series. Bruce also asked for suggestions on how to improve the Newsletter.

The Website is updated regularly. The latest Newsletter, along with an archive of past issues, can be found there as can the minutes of PRO Board meetings. The Directory is password protected; email Bruce if you need assistance. Bruce would like to know what other information the members would like to have included on the Website.

Benefits Committee Report: Kaiser benefits seem to be moving smoothly, but not so for CoreSource. Last spring the District issued the CoreSource SPD. Alex and Bruce looked carefully at how the SPD compared to that of Blue Cross. There were about 35 items that didn't measure up to the Blue Cross SPD under which retirement occurred. The District complained about the format that PRO used to compare the CoreSource (CS) and Blue Cross (BC) wording. Out of the 35 items, the District agreed to change 7 of them; one of which is that non-emergency use of the Emergency Room would require a co-pay of \$25; the District had changed this to \$80% of customary and usual. Also, the definition of emergency was changed, but they agreed to change it back.

PRO is not a union so we can't negotiate. We do have the promise of life-time benefits. Bruce will meet with Cy Gulassa and ask if the Peralta Board can get the District to meet again. One claim is being taken to Small Claims Court. PRO gave the District a 22 page list of items. Some of the items on PRO's list were changed for the active employees, but not for the retirees. This list will be put in the next Newsletter.

If a member is denied benefits, he/she should get in touch with Bruce. One fear is that one item will come up in 5 or 10 years and there won't be anyone around who has memory of the agreed change.

One change: getting pre-approval for surgery or hospitalization. The change: if no pre-approval, the District will pay only 80% of the bill. If not an emergency, pre-approval must be obtained.

It is essential to always confirm with your doctors if they are in the BC network.

PFT is also involved. AMA has removed some treatments as medically appropriate that chiropractors do. Now PCCD is saying that if a treatment is not medically appropriate, payment will not be made.

Service Committee: Sondra chairs the Service Committee which sponsors the book drive held at the General Meeting and Luncheon. She extended thanks to Chris Hadley, Art Naftaly, Carmen Rezendes, and Jan Wall for their help. The Committee has received \$2175 in contributions and asks that, when making a contribution, that the name of the person or occasion being honored be included. Recently the Committee received \$1500 from Ed Lopez in honor of his friend and colleague, Robert O'Hare.

In 2007, four scholarships of \$500 each were given to Peralta students at graduation time. The names of the recipients were highlighted in the July-September Newsletter. PRO also gave awards of \$250 to each of the four Peralta College libraries for the purchase of books for students.

Elections: Jerry explained that PRO is required to hold elections. He said that the Board has nominated Remo Arancio, Pat England, Odell Johnson, Alex Pappas, and Sondra Neiman. He then opened nominations from the floor.

MSU (Ned, Shirley) to close nominations

Jerry concluded by saying that PRO is active and doing good work, and he thanked those who attended the luncheon for their participation.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Juanita Peterson, PRO Secretary

January Board Meeting Wednesday, January 9th, 1 to 3 PM, PFT Conference Room