



The Peralta Retiree

From the President...

by Jerry Herman, PRO President

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

PRO membership cards have finally been mailed to members, and we hope you have received yours and like it. I think the design by Bruce Jacobs is quite attractive. The feedback from members has been positive. You now know when your membership expires, and you can flash the card in appropriate settings to impress those who see it and convince them you are an important person. Just don't try to use it as ID to get through airport security. Airport personnel will be neither impressed nor convinced and might subject you to humiliating full body searches. Enjoy.

UPCOMING PRO EVENTS

You can get detailed information about PRO's upcoming annual picnic (August 14) and our theater party to see Pirates of Penzance at Woodminster in the Oakland Hills (September 5) inside this issue of the newsletter. I want to add a personal note about the two events.

PICNIC

The picnic has been a wonderful way for PRO members to enjoy each other's company in a lovely shaded redwood grove in Redwood Regional Park. We've had superb weather and a genuine sense of camaraderie as Peralta retirees who may not have seen each other for years delight in renewing old friendships, catching up with the events of their lives, and dishing about the weird, dumb and funny stuff of Peralta when we were just kids. Although there is a parking fee (\$5), our site (Huckleberry) is adjacent to the parking lot, which means a walk of

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Upcoming PRO Events



PRO's 4th Anniversary Annual Picnic

Thursday, August 14

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PRO Theater Party at Woodminster Amphitheater

The Pirates of Penzance

Friday, September 5

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only a few yards to get to the picnic. Linda Japzon and Jay Quesada, PRO's Social Committee co-chairs, always come up with fun things to do. For the first time, this year there will be door prizes – though there aren't any doors. C'mon out and see old friends.

WOODMINSTER

If you've never been to Woodminster, you've missed one of the grand attractions of summertime in the East Bay. The natural outdoor amphitheater is a glorious place to experience musical theater. At our last Woodminster theater party, to see *Ragtime*, we were bowled over by the professionalism of the production and the performances. This year we'll be seeing Gilbert and Sullivan's classic *The Pirates of Penzance*. We have great seats at half price. A picnic dinner will precede the performance. What a deal! We only have fifty tickets so order yours immediately. They will go fast.

Update on Shingles Vaccination

By Bruce Jacobs

In the January-March 2008 issue of *The Peralta Retiree* we reported that it was not possible to use our CoreSource/CareMark insurance coverage to obtain the shingles vaccine by filling a prescription at a pharmacy. That information (which came from a retiree) turns out to be inaccurate.

Earlier this spring my physician recommended that I have the vaccination. He gave me a prescription to obtain it. He told me that there were two possibilities for getting the actual inoculation: one, to obtain the vaccine at a pharmacy and then bring it to his office within 30 minutes for the actual administration; or two, to go to a pharmacy where the pharmacist could administer the vaccine immediately. I called CareMark to enquire about coverage and was told by a customer service representative that the vaccine was in the formulary and that I was covered with my usual co-payment (\$1—note that retirees who retired after July 1, 2004 will have a higher co-pay).

I then discovered that not all pharmacies in the East Bay carried the vaccine. In Oakland I was referred to Long's at 3300 Webster and in Alameda to the Safeway Pharmacy at 867 Island Drive. The Safeway pharmacist indicated that when I came in to fill the prescription he would administer the vaccine for a charge of \$20. I decided to use the Safeway Pharmacy and was able to immediately obtain the vaccine and the vaccination for a total charge of \$21.

I submitted the receipt for the cost of the administration of the vaccine to CoreSource and they reimbursed me for the \$20 payment. Thus, I was able to get the shingles vaccination for a total cost of \$1.

Pay Your 2008 PRO Dues

PRO dues are \$20 for one year, \$55 for three years, \$80 for five years and \$250 lifetime. If you are not current with your dues please mail a check to:

PRO ■ PO Box 1951 ■ El Cerrito, CA 94530

Join your fellow Peralta retirees for

PRO's ANNUAL PICNIC

*in the redwoods at the Huckleberry Picnic Area of Oakland's beautiful
Roberts Regional Recreation Area*

**Thursday, August 14
11 am to 3 pm**



Bring your own food and beer / wine. PRO will supply buns, soft drinks, charcoal, condiments, plates, utensils, and chips and dip.

Come join in the fun and games with prizes and surprises.

Parking: \$5 per car

Wheelchair Accessible

Driving Directions:

From Highway 13 (Warren Freeway)

Take the Joaquin Miller exit and go east, up the hill on Joaquin Miller. Turn left at Skyline Blvd. Proceed one mile to the Roberts entrance on the right.

From 580

Exit on 35th Ave. and proceed up the hill on 35th, which will eventually become Redwood Road. At the intersection of Redwood and Skyline Blvd., turn left

and proceed for one mile, then right to stay on Skyline. Proceed for one mile to the entrance to Roberts on the right.

RSVP: Let us know if you're coming and how many will be in your party. Call or e-mail Social Committee Co-Chair:

Linda Japzon

510-483-7183 · coolbigeyes@sbcglobal.

Hunting Fungi – A Perfect End to a Lake Tahoe Holiday

By Remo Arancio

I have a great passion for mushroom hunting. I've been at it since I was a boy. For me it's a thrill to locate and identify the elusive fungi, not to speak of the exercise I get tramping through the forest, all topped off with the delight of preparing and eating the exquisite morsels. There is also a meditative quality to the experience that can be reflective and relaxing. What follows is an account of my latest mushrooming foray. I present it with the idea that it may motivate my PRO readers to explore the possibilities of becoming mushroom hunters themselves.

This June my wife Ann and I were invited to spend several days with our daughter Vicky at her cabin at Lake Tahoe. It was the end of the season for spring mushrooms, and Vicky's and my longing was to find the elusive *boletus edulis* (also known as porcini or ceps). These beauties, which can grow up to ten inches in diameter and weigh up to two pounds, may be found at certain times of the year near some of the pine trees that grow throughout the Tahoe Basin, in meadows, along streams and on ridges – but not everywhere, not always and not easily.

So great is my desire to hunt and consume this delicacy that I generally go on a short quest immediately upon arriving at Tahoe, no matter how tiring the drive from the Bay Area may have been. However, on this occasion, we had left late and arrived as the sunlight was diminishing. There is a point when the lengthening shadows cast by objects on the forest floor (pine cones, stones, bits of fallen limbs, etc.) give the false appearance of mounds under which one may find a young mushroom forcing its way to the surface. To chase all such misleading indicators as twilight approaches becomes futile, so we reluctantly decided to begin our assault the next day in full sunlight.

With the mid-morning sun illuminating our search, Vicky and I started our slow, methodical search of the forest floor looking for the telltale slight rise in the duff that might signal the prize. Carrying our baskets containing knives and brushes and with

mushroom sticks in hand, we gently probed each discernible mound as we made our way from tree to tree. After hours of careful scrutiny we managed to find only some desiccated, inedible varieties of fungi. We did, however, discover innumerable pinecones and stones deceptively hidden under a mantle of pine needles, as well as a few beer cans and other human discards slowly being blanketed by the falling tree litter. No luck. It was time to return to our cabin.

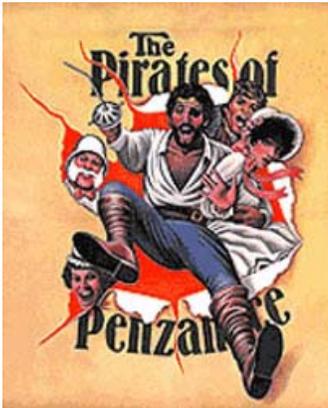
After a couple of frustrating days without success, we decided to give ourselves one last chance, in an area that had been cleared several years before by the Forestry Service of dead pines that had succumbed to bark beetle infestation. The ground surrounding the still standing live trees was so trampled that for a number of years we saw no evidence of the *boletus edulis*. We had given up on the area but thought that now, even with the odds against us, it would be worth another look.

For every mushroom hunter there is that "Eureka!" moment when the first mushroom of the day – or in our case the week – is uncovered. I won't go as far as to say that mushroom hunting is a competitive sport, but every hunter wants to be the first of the group to find a mushroom. Only a few minutes into our hunt, Vicky, a truly astute fungi hunter, shouted, "I found one!" winning her the day's bragging rights and ending our frustration of coming home with empty baskets. After her first find we both discovered a small number of beautiful, plump porcini. Finally, our hunt paid off, but the pleasure in mushroom hunting was only half over. We couldn't wait to prepare and eat the fungi.

That evening and the following morning we feasted on porcini. A couple of the large mushrooms, with caps several inches in diameter, were sliced thickly, and half of the slices were barbequed and the other half were baked in the oven. The smaller ceps were sliced more thinly, sautéed and served with scrambled eggs. Luscious! There even remained an older

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Order your tickets now for the PRO Evening at the Woodminster Amphitheater



A New Version of
Gilbert and Sullivan's

The Pirates of Penzance

Directed by Joel Schlader • Choreography by Jody Schlader

Woodminster presents a fresh take on one of Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular comic operas. This updated version of "The Pirates of Penzance" took New York by storm when it premiered in Central Park in 1980, leading to a subsequent smash-hit Broadway run. Wacky, irreverent and as entertaining today

as it was when it first opened in 1879, "The Pirates Of Penzance" spins an hilarious farce of sentimental pirates, bumbling policemen, dim-witted young lovers, dewy-eyed daughters and an eccentric Major-General, all morally bound to the often-ridiculous dictates of honor and duty.

Friday □ September 5

\$21 per ticket

(center section—close to the stage—regular price for these tickets is \$40)

Before the show PRO will have a picnic/barbecue for theatergoers. Details will be included when we mail your tickets.

To reserve your tickets (friends and family are welcome) complete the form below and mail by August 8 to:
PRO, PO Box 1951, El Cerrito, CA 94530

✕

Please send me _____ tickets for the Woodminster Summer Musical *The Pirates of Penzance* on Friday, September 5. Enclosed is my check for _____ (\$21/ticket).

(Please print)

Name _____

Address _____ Email _____

Phone _____

PRO Awards Four Scholarships

by Sondra Neiman

Thanks to our successful fund raising efforts PRO was able to award \$1000 scholarships to four deserving students from the Peralta Colleges. Each of the campuses held its own awards banquets and ceremonies in May, 2008. We were pleased to have PRO members present at three of the events to personally make the presentations.

The Laney College Awards Ceremony was held at the Oakland Airport Hilton Hotel on May 22nd. The recipient of the PRO Scholarship was Zhicheng Xue. This remarkable young man was the recipient of two other scholarships. He received the Henry Fort Memorial Scholarship and was the 1st Place winner of the 2008 Associated Students of Laney College Academic Scholarships. The PRO presenter was Sondra Neiman, PRO Board Member and Chairperson of the PRO Service Committee.

The College of Alameda Awards Ceremony was held aboard the Commodore Yacht on May 23rd. The recipient of the PRO Scholarship was Rudy Gonzales. Rudy is working toward a degree in Humanities, Health Science, Liberal Studies. He plans to finish in the fall of 2008, and then transfer to San Francisco State University to join the nursing program. He is going to work in the field of oncology.

The PRO presenter was Linda Japzon, PRO Board Member.

The Berkeley City College Awards Ceremony was held on the 5th floor Student Lounge overlooking downtown Berkeley on May 21st. The recipient of the PRO Scholarship was Alexander Franklin Sing. Alexander has a disability and uses a wheelchair. He has been attending BCC since 2006, studying Computer Science and American Sign Language (ASL). He expects to earn his AA degree next year, then transfer to CSU East Bay, which offers a minor in ASL. The PRO presenter was Chris Hadley, an active member of the PRO Service Committee.

The Merritt College Awards Ceremony was held at the Merritt Student Lounge on May 22nd. The recipient was Janki Jarawala. We were unable to send a PRO presenter to the ceremony so we have no information about the recipient at this time.

Our thanks to all the PRO members who contributed to making these scholarships possible. We ask that everyone in PRO continue to support our Scholarship Fund with the same generosity you have been showing (see page 7 for details about contributing). As you can see, this is a very positive and rewarding activity for us to be involved in and a gratifying way to stay involved with Peralta students.

PRO Board Honors Juanita Peterson For Her Service



The PRO Board honored Juanita Peterson for her service to PRO on June 11 at a luncheon at the Café Venezia in Berkeley. Juanita served as the organization's first secretary and as a founding member. She resigned as secretary in March of this year. The Board presented Juanita with an inscribed blown glass bowl.

Photo: Pat England

Contribute To The Pro Scholarship Fund By Honoring Or Memorializing A Friend Or Loved One

✂

.....

Yes, I want to support the PRO Scholarship Fund with a contribution.
 (Please print)

In honor of: _____

On the occasion of: _____

In memory of: _____

Please send acknowledgement card to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Contributor's Name: _____

Contributor's Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Make check payable to: **The Peralta Foundation—PRO**
 Send to: PRO, PO Box 1951, El Cerrito, CA 94530

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Contributions Received for the PRO Scholarship Fund

In memory of	Contributor
Ruth Ann Gardenhire Johnson	John Gardenhire
Ted Kowalski	Dorcas Kowalski

PRO Went To The Ball Game



Jay Quesada and Russ Gregory joined fellow retirees at an Oakland A's game last May. Photo: Jerry Herman

(Hunting Fungi Continued from page 4)

but sound cep that we sliced and dried in the sun for use in future pasta sauce. It was the end of a perfect holiday.

For those of you whose appetites may have been whetted by our mushroom hunting and dining experience, a word of caution: some mushrooms are poisonous! Don't pick and eat any mushroom you don't know thoroughly and recognize as edible. If you are interested in learning about fungi and wish to go on forays, you may want to consider joining the Mycological Society of San Francisco, c/o The Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco, CA 94114. The society's website is www.mssf.org.

Happy hunting and *buon appetito!*

Remo Arancio was a Laney Math instructor and long-time administrator at three of the Peralta colleges and the District Office. He is currently a member of the PRO Board.

MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENTS

by Alex Pappas

PRO strongly recommends you receive your reimbursement from Benefits Dynamics by electronic deposit into your checking or savings account. There are two very good reasons for this:

1. You get your money **safely** (no checks in your mail box for someone to steal or you to forget to deposit).
2. You get your money **faster**. For example I got my July 1st reimbursement on June 23rd. Those getting their money by regular mail did not get them until sometime after July 1st in most cases.

Just send a letter to Benefit Dynamics requesting direct deposit. Be sure to include a voided check or savings deposit slip with your request. Also identify yourself as a PCCD retiree along with your address and Social Security number.

Benefits Dynamics
c/o Pension Dynamics
2300 Contra Costa Blvd - Suite 400
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523-3955
Telephone (925) 956-0514

PRO Membership Cards Mailed to Members

During June PRO issued membership cards to all retirees who are current with their dues payment. If you did not receive your card or if it contains inaccurate information (incorrect spelling of your name or wrong expiration date), please notify Bruce Jacobs by email at webmaster@peraltaretirees.org or by sending a note to the PRO mailbox: PRO, PO Box 1951, El Cerrito CA 94530.

Website Dedicated to Protecting Retiree Health Benefits

Peralta retiree George Pacheco urges everyone interested in protecting retiree health benefits to check out the Protect Seniors Organization website. Their mission is to pass The Emergency Retirees Health Benefits Protection Act (HR 1322), a bill that makes it illegal to take away earned retiree health benefits. The address for the website is <http://www.protectseniors.org>.

Peralta Retirees Organization
P. O. Box 1951
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