



The Peralta Retiree

October—December 2008

Vol. 5 No. 1

<http://www.peraltaretirees.org>

From the President...

by Jerry Herman, PRO President

Health Benefit Bond Income Ok – Tom Smith

In these days of unprecedented economic turmoil, as we experience portfolios shrinking and savings melting away, as the former pillars of the American financial system have been pulverized to dust, the investments from the bonds that pay for Peralta retirees' lifetime health benefits appear to be holding their own. Tom Smith, Peralta's CFO, reports that "broad strategic allocation" of the investments has been keeping income more or less stable throughout these dark economic times. The investment diversification includes a significant percentage of fixed income assets such as government and corporate bonds, which are far less volatile than stocks.

According to Smith, the value of the Peralta bond investment is up eight percent since inception, and he expects it to keep increasing, though at about a five percent rate in the immediate future until the economy becomes more stable. Lehman Brothers, which was administering the investment, has collapsed, but its subsidiary that actually worked with the bond investments was bought by equity firms (Bain Capital and Hellman & Friedman) that will now administer the assets. Smith emphasized that the assets are protected. They are held in trust, so the administrators have no control over them.

The number of retirees now receiving health benefits is about 650, or 41 percent of the total number of Peralta benefits recipients, but Smith expects the number of retirees to eventually surpass the number of active employees. For the past two years the cost of retiree health benefits has been about \$6 million a year, all of which has been paid for by the

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Plan to Attend ...

PRO's Annual Membership Meeting

Wedgewood Banquet Center
at
Metropolitan Golf Links
Oakland

Thursday
November 6
11 AM to 3:30 PM

See Details on Page 3

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(From the President... Continued from page 1)
income from the bond investments. The benefits cost for actives was about \$10 million last year.

Annual Luncheon and Membership Meeting

Please save November 6 on your calendars for the annual membership luncheon and membership meeting. This year again we'll be at the Wedgewood Banquet Center near the Oakland airport. The food is good and the price is right (see details on page 3). The luncheons have been a great time to see old Peralta friends and colleagues and to catch up on PRO's activities. I hope to see you there.

Another PRO Gala Night At The Theater

Close to fifty PRO members, family and friends gathered on September 5, a beautiful balmy night in the Oakland hills, for opening night of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* at the Woodminster Amphitheater. We began with a picnic dinner before the sun set and the performance began. It was a lavish production with a large, talented cast, and everyone had a grand time. PRO's theater events have been especially successful. We look forward to many more.

PRO Picnic Before *Pirates of Penzance*



PRO members, family, and friends enjoy good food, lively conversation, and the balmy weather before the show begins.



Shirley Nedham and Trudie Fator chat about Gilbert and Sullivan

PRO'S Annual Luncheon and Membership Meeting

'The Golden Years'

Thursday, November 6

Social Hour	11 AM—12 PM (No Host Bar)
Buffet Luncheon	12 PM—1:30 PM (\$15/PERSON)
Business Meeting	1:30 PM—3:30 PM

Featuring the **Ben Luis Ensemble**
 for your entertainment
 Door prizes and surprises

Location

**Wedgewood Banquet Center
 Metropolitan Golf Links
 10051 Doolittle Drive
 Oakland, CA 94603**
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Driving Directions

From Sacramento: I-80 toward SF. Take I-580 East toward Alameda/San Jose/Downtown Oakland. Merge onto I-980 West toward Downtown Oakland. Merge onto I-880 South toward San Jose. Take the Hegenberger Road exit toward the Oakland Airport. Turn right on Hegenberger Road. Turn left onto Doolittle Drive (last turn before the airport entrance). Golf course is on the right.

From San Jose: I-880 North toward Oakland. Take the Davis Street exit. Turn left onto Davis Street. Turn right onto Doolittle Drive. The golf course will be on your left.

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- Luncheon Reservations
- Required by Sunday, Oct. 25.
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- To reserve: Send a check made out to 'PRO' for \$15 for each person in your party attending the luncheon. Mail your check to:
- **PRO**
- **PO Box 1951**
- **El Cerrito, CA 94530**
-
- Please include the name(s) of all attendees that you are paying for. There is no charge to attend the business meeting, and it is not necessary to reserve if you do not plan to have lunch.
- **Name** _____
- **Number Attending** _____
- **Names of additional guests attending:**
- _____
- _____
- _____
- **Total enclosed (\$15/person) \$** _____

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Peralta Retiree Takes District to Small Claims Court to Enforce Medicare Reimbursement

By Renata Polt Schmitt

The Peralta Community College District, no stranger to Small Claims Court, will be there again on November 19th at 1:45 p.m. at 661 Washington Street, Department 102, Oakland. You are all invited to attend.

Here's the case:

I retired from Peralta on June 1, 1991. In about 2002, the District passed a resolution to reimburse all pre-July 1, 2004 retirees for our Medicare B premiums. Later, Peralta ruled that, as regards Kaiser members, *only those who joined Kaiser Senior Advantage* would receive reimbursement. I have not joined Kaiser Senior Advantage. When I spoke to District financial officer Tom Smith about this, he stated that *my contract* required me to join Senior Advantage. Since Senior Advantage didn't even exist at the time of my retirement, which was covered

by the contract for July 1, 1988 to June 30, 1991, Smith's statement was obvious invalid.

Why have I refused to join Senior Advantage? At the time of my retirement and for a few years previously, I was covered by Blue Cross, joining Kaiser after the District discontinued Blue Cross. During those years with Blue Cross, I was cared for by several doctors whom I choose to keep on seeing under my Medicare coverage. Kaiser Senior Advantage doesn't permit seeing any non-Kaiser doctors. Therefore I would have to leave these doctors, which I prefer not to do.

I have been billed \$1,771.20 by Medicare to cover my Medicare B premiums from December 2007 to November 2008. I am suing the District for this amount. If I win the suit, I will sue them again annually to make them pay what they have committed themselves to pay.

WATCH OUT FOR JURY DUTY SCAM

Most of us take those summonses for jury duty seriously, but enough people skip out on their civic duty that a new and ominous kind of fraud has surfaced. This has been verified by the FBI (their link is included below). The scam is spreading fast so be prepared should you get this call.

The caller claims to be a jury coordinator and that there is a warrant for your arrest because you failed to appear when summoned. If you protest that you never received a summons for jury duty, the scammer asks you for your Social Security number and date of birth so he or she can verify the information and cancel the arrest warrant. Give out any of this information and your identity was just stolen.

The fraud has been reported so far in 11 states including Oklahoma, Illinois, and Colorado. This swindle is particularly insidious because they use intimidation over the phone to try to bully people into giving information by pretending they are with the court system.

The FBI and the federal court system have issued na-

tionwide alerts on their web sites warning consumers about the fraud.

Check it out here:

www.fbi.gov/page2/june06/jury_scams060206.htm

IN MEMORIAM

The following Peralta retirees have passed away during the last months. PRO extends our deepest condolences to their families and loved ones.

**Marian Beeken
Mary Greer**

If you have any information about the passing or the serious illness of a Peralta retiree, please contact Bruce Jacobs at: webmaster@peraltaretirees.org or by writing to PRO, PO Box 1951, El Cerrito, CA 94530.

A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder

[... although none of you may suffer from this condition, watch out; it's symptoms may creep up on you...]

A.A.A.D.D. is Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder. This is how it manifests:

I decided to wash my car. As I start toward the garage, I notice that there is mail on the hall table. I decide to go through the mail before I wash the car. I lay my car keys down on the table, put the junk mail in the trash can under the table, and notice that the trash can is full.

So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the trash first. But then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the trash anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my checkbook off the table, and see that there is only one check left. My extra checks are in my desk in the study, so I go to my desk where I find the can of Coke that I had been drinking.

I'm going to look for my checks, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over. I notice the Coke is getting warm, and decide I should put it in the refrigerator to keep it cold.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke, a vase of flowers on the counter catches my eye. They need to be watered. I set the Coke down on the

counter, and I discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning.

I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers. I set the glasses back down on the counter, fill a container with water and suddenly I spot the TV remote. Someone left it on the kitchen table. I realize that tonight when we want to watch TV, we will be looking for the remote, but nobody will remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the den where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.

I splash some water on the flowers, but most of it spills on the floor. So, I set the remote back down on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill. Then I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day the car isn't washed, the bills aren't paid, the trash hasn't been taken out, there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter, the flowers aren't watered, there is still only one check in my checkbook, I can't find the remote, I can't find my glasses, and I don't remember what I did with the car keys.

Then when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day long, and I'm really tired. I realize this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some help for it, but first I'll check my e-mail.

Ticket to Exile Finalist for Saroyan Prize

Laney retiree Adam David Miller's book *Ticket to Exile* was selected as a finalist in the 2008 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing. Intended to encourage new or emerging writers and honor the Saroyan literary legacy of originality, vitality and stylistic innovation, the Saroyan Prize recognizes newly published works of both fiction and non-fiction. There were a record number of entries in this year's competition for the prize. A prize of \$12,500 was awarded in each category, and the prize winners were recognized publicly during Stanford's Saroyan Centennial celebrations.

brations.

Miller's memoir, *Ticket to Exile*, which came out last November, reconstructs the series of events that led to his exile from the South. Interspersed with his poetry, the narrative takes us to the poor backstreets of his hometown where intricate hierarchies dictate behavior. By the time he is forced into exile, we realize that this fate was inevitable for a young man too discerning and aware of the limitations of his environment to stay there without disastrous consequences.

Scenes From the 2008 PRO Picnic



Marcia Gerin and Jack Mooradian



Judy Thomas



Alze Roberts checks her number as her granddaughter picks a raffle ticket. Jay Quezada is holding the tickets.



PRO President Jerry Herman and PRO Veep Bruce Jacobs

PRO Board Re-elects Officers—Nominations Open for Board

PRO's By-laws call for the election of PRO's officers by the members of the Board. At the October 1 meeting the PRO Board re-elected Jerry Herman as President, Bruce Jacobs as Vice-President, Ann Whitehead as Secretary, and Shirley Timm as Treasurer. Members will be given the opportunity to ratify the Board's choices during the general Board election which will be held in December.

The by-laws also require that the membership elect two Board members this year. Those seats are currently held by Linda Japzon and Ned Pearlstein. Nominations for those seats are officially open until the Annual Membership Meeting which is scheduled for Thursday, November 6 (see page 3 for details). You can nominate a PRO member to run for a place on the Board by submitting his/her name by US mail to the PRO PO Box or by email to webmaster@peraltaretirees.org. Nominations must be received by November 6. Please verify prior to submitting the nomination that anyone you nominate is willing to serve.

The Board meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the month in Oakland.

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

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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
Alvina Baranco	Marilyn Rowe
Marian Beeken	Rose Hong
June Spence and Alvina Baranco	Robert Johnson
All Deceased Peralta Colleagues	Steve Schneider

Get Ready for PRO's Annual Book Drive

The time has come again when we need your book and magazine donations for our book drive to benefit the Peralta libraries. The Book Drive is sponsored by PRO's Service Committee.

Please bring your tax deductible donations to our annual PRO membership meeting on Thursday, November 6. This is a great opportunity for all of us to clear our book shelves and also to make a beneficial contribution to Peralta students.

Thanks, and see you at the PRO meeting.

Sondra Neiman
 Chairperson of the PRO Service Committee



It's Time To Renew Your PRO Membership for 2009

Please renew your PRO membership for 2009 if you have not already done so. If you are not sure whether you are paid up for 2009, please check the mailing label on this newsletter to see when your membership expires.

Dues are: \$20-1 year, \$55-3 years, \$80-5 years, and \$250-lifetime.

Name _____

Address _____

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

Phone _____

Email _____

Mail to: PRO, PO Box 1951, El Cerrito, CA 94530

***Peralta Retirees Organization
P. O. Box 1951
El Cerrito CA 94530***