



The Peralta Retiree

January—March 2012

Vol. 8 No. 2

<http://www.peraltaretirees.org>

From the President...

by Jerry Herman, PRO President

Don't Read This Item If You're In Medicare

This item is not for everyone. If you are over 65 and enrolled in Medicare A and B, jump to the next item in this column now. You're not involved. For those 85 or so eligible Peralta retirees and their dependents who are not in Medicare (about 10- 15% of all retirees), please help save our health care benefits. That may sound alarmist but the threat is real.

If you are not enrolled in Medicare A and B and you experience – God forbid – a catastrophic medical event resulting in enormous hospital and treatment expenses, Peralta is on the hook for the entire bill. That might amount to a million dollars or more – per event. This is not hypothetical. It has already happened!

Medicare covers 80% of the medical expenses for those enrolled. Peralta covers the remaining 20%. So you can see the potential savings for the district are enormous, and that is crucial to maintaining our benefits at their current levels. Anything we can do at this time of dire financial straits for Peralta to help the district save money makes our benefits that much more secure.

Joining Medicare costs Peralta retirees and their dependents NOTHING. Peralta covers ALL Medicare costs. You lose no benefits. In fact there is an actual slight gain. To add a little nasty prod Peralta is threatening to curtail your benefits if you don't join. The window for joining Medicare is open now – from January 1 to March 31. To find out how to join Medicare, see PRO's Medicare Tutorial on the PRO website www.peraltaretirees.org. Please join Medicare for

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Plan to Attend . . .

PRO's Evening at Yoshi's Jazz Club

Featuring

The Manhattan Transfer

Sunday
February 12
6 PM

\$26.50

(Details and Ticket Order Form on page 3)

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your own sake and for the sake of the hundreds of other Peralta retirees who want to feel slightly more reassured that their health benefits will not be in jeopardy.

Join Us For An Evening At Yoshi's On Feb. 12

PRO recently conducted a survey regarding events we should sponsor. (See article on page 6). The number one choice among those who responded was an evening at a jazz club. We chose the best-known club in Oakland, Yoshi's, and we chose a performance by one of the best jazz vocal groups ever, The Manhattan Transfer. We negotiated a great price with Yoshi's - \$26.50 (instead of \$35) for a limited number of tickets. It's what you wanted so it should be a great evening. Reserve your ticket(s) now. Details on page 3.

Pro Board Election

For the first time in many years PRO was required

to hold a membership-wide election for five open PRO Board seats. In past elections there were the same number of candidates as seats open (five candidates for five seats, for example), so the candidates were elected by acclamation at the annual membership meeting. This time there was a contest: six candidates for five seats, thereby requiring a vote of the entire membership.

We sent out 360 ballots to paid-up PRO members, expecting maybe 100 to be returned. Imagine my surprise and delight when we ultimately received 210 ballots (a scant few came in too late to be counted). That's about 60%, a greater percentage of voters than in every national presidential election since 1968 – and you had to put your own stamp on the envelope, too! (See results on page 6.) It's heartening for me as your president to know there are so many of you out there who are paying attention and care for what's going on with PRO. Kudos to all of you who voted. Give yourselves a pat on the back.

Peralta Retirees Organization

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El Cerrito, CA 94530
<http://www.peraltaretirees.org>

President - Jerry Herman
jerrherm@sbcglobal.net
Vice President - Bruce Jacobs
Secretary - Ann Whitehead
Treasurer - Anna Pavelka-Lodato

Board of Directors

Remo Arancio
Pat England
Linda Japzon
Alex Pappas
Ned Pearlstein
Jay Quesada
Socorro Taylor

The Peralta Retiree Editor - Bruce Jacobs
webmaster@peraltaretirees.org

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PCCD To Reimburse Monthly

Starting with January 2012 the Peralta District will reimburse retirees and dependents for Medicare payments monthly instead of quarterly. This means that once you have submitted your paperwork to verify your Medicare expense, you will receive your reimbursement each month.

For details about Peralta's reimbursement procedure including documentation requirements go to the PRO website (www.peraltaretirees.org), click on the "Medicare Tutorial" link and then on the "Reimbursements" link.

Welcome New Members

PRO welcomes the following retirees who have recently joined.

Janet Barnett
Iris Brooks
Joseph Camara
Shirley Coaston

Angelita Finlayson
Pat Jameson
Josephine Rhone
Betty Van Meter

Celebrate Valentine's Weekend With PRO at



Jazz Club in Oakland

Featuring

The Manhattan Transfer

10-time Grammy winning jazz-pop vocal group



Grammy-Award winning jazz/pop vocal group The Manhattan Transfer celebrate their 40th Anniversary with the highly anticipated release of The Chick Corea Songbook. The Chick Corea Songbook, which marks the innovative vocal quartet's first new record in five years, was inspired by the classic work of jazz great Chick Corea, and features fresh and exciting vocal interpretations of many of his popular compositions, including "Spain" and "500 Miles High."

More info at Yoshi's web site:

www.yoshis.com/oakland/jazzclub/artist/show/2374

**Sunday, February 12
6 PM**

\$26.50/ticket

(regular price \$35—Order Early: PRO has a limited number of tickets and cannot get additional tickets at this price)

Make checks payable to PRO, and mail to PRO, PO Box 1951, El Cerrito, CA 94530

Orders must be received by Monday, January 30. Detailed info about directions and parking will be mailed with the tickets.

Ticket Order For The Manhattan Transfer at Yoshi's

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

No. of Tickets _____ X \$26.50 = _____

Images From the PRO Luncheon



Eddy Chandler, Tom Southworth and Barbara Southworth



Ned Pearlstein and Pat England



Shirley Timm



Elaine Chen-Ramirez, Toni L'Esperance, and Jeannette Louie



Ralph Marinaro, Ann Whitehead and PFT President Matt Goldstein



Jack Mooradian and Tom Turman

And Annual Meeting on Nov. 10



PRO President Jerry Herman and PRO Social Committee Co-Chairs Linda Japzon and Jay Quesada



Adam David Miller and Carole Ward-Allen



Rosalie and Charlie Harris



Sondra Neiman and Remo Arancio



Yvonne Lewis and Odell Johnson



Brenda Lacey and Alze Roberts

**PRO RoundUp . . .
News, Events, Announcements**

PRO Election Results

PRO members submitted 210 ballots in the Board election held at the end of 2011. Thanks to the committee of volunteers (Linda, Japzon, Sondra Neiman, Ned Pearlstein and Ann Whitehead) who counted the ballots. Results were as follows:

Alex Pappas	196
Remo Arancio	187
Pat England	169
Jay Quesada	154
Socorro Taylor	124
Barbara Joans	88

The top five vote-getters were elected and will serve two-year terms.

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PRO Survey Results

PRO distributed a survey in the last newsletter and at the Annual Meeting to determine member interest in various types of events and gatherings that PRO could sponsor. Favorites were jazz evenings (check out plans for February 12 at Yoshi's on page 3), museum visits and theater parties. Thanks to everyone who submitted their preferences.

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Retirees in the News

Retired Laney English instructor Adam David Miller received the 2011 PEN Oakland Lifetime Achievement Award for his body of writing at a ceremony at the Rockridge Library on December 10. Adam read excerpts at the PRO luncheon from the nearly-completed second volume of his memoir entitled *Fall Rising*.

Retired MEDCO instructor Roger Ferragallo was selected to exhibit his digital artwork in the juried show *Digital'11: The Alchemy of Change* mounted by Art & Science Collaborations, Inc. You can see the show at the New York Hall of Science until February 5. For more information go to www.asci.org.

In Memory of Cecil Webb

by Marion Fay

Cecil Webb, who died in July 2010, taught in the Peralta District for 35 years or so. An English instructor, Cecil gave his heart, mind, and energy to teaching. His special love was Shakespeare. The office we shared at COA was decorated with his Shakespearean mementos, including a model of the Globe Theater. He generously offered his expertise when I was teaching a Shakespeare play in English 1B and even gave guest lectures to my classes.



His other love was a course called The Bible as Literature. He was fascinated not only with theological issues but with the poetry and the metaphorical literary style of the Bible.

I first met Cecil at Grove Street College where we also shared an office. He went directly to COA when Grove St. closed and I went there, too, but after a sojourn at Laney. We shared offices for a total of 20 years.

A special memory I have of Cecil comes from our trip to Asilomar for an English teachers' conference at which Anais Nin was the featured speaker. I had told him earlier that I was reading Nin's Diaries with great interest, and that is why he made the arrangements for us to attend the conference. As it happened, I actually met Nin there, and we became friends until her death. I had a meaningful correspondence with her and visited her in her LA home several times. I have Cecil to thank for making the initial meeting possible.

Cecil spent his last three years in a board and care home in Richmond. I visited him there a number of times and observed that despite physical decline, his intellect remained intact, his curiosity — about Peralta in particular and the world at large — remained strong, and his wry sense of humor ongoing. He continued reading stimulating material and keeping up with the news. Overall, he seemed to accept the aging process. I cannot report that I

(Continued on page 7)

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
- Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by federal and state law.

Contributions Received for the PRO Scholarship Fund

In Memory of	Contributor
Alvina Baranco	Vickie Redus
Rip Matteson	Roger Ferragallo
Berndt Scharlach	Roger Ferragallo
General Contribution	
Raymond Barnett	

IN MEMORIAM

The following Peralta retiree has passed away during the last months. PRO extends our deepest condolences to her family and loved ones.

Suzanne Dye

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.

(Cecil Webb Continued from page 6)
 liked going to the boarding home but am glad I did. Cecil cared deeply about COA and especially his students and their well being. I came to know a number of those students; they all spoke with great respect and fondness for their teacher, Cecil Webb.

Interested in a PRO Book Club?
 PRO is considering starting a book club for retirees who would like to get together with others periodically in order to discuss a shared read. We are looking for one or two retirees who are interested and who would like to help get it organized. If you are interested in helping to set up PRO's book club, contact Bruce Jacobs at webmaster@peraltaretirees.org.

California Supreme Court Decision Favors Retirees

The following is excerpted from a story that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle on November 22, 2011. PRO signed on to an amicus brief filed by PFT Attorney Bob Bezemek which supported the Orange County retirees. The text of the Supreme Court decision is available at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/documents/S184059.PDF

by Bob Egelko

The state Supreme Court put limits on a local government's ability to cut health care benefits for retired employees. The court said in a unanimous decision that a city or county that sets retirement health coverage at a certain level, and implicitly promises to maintain it, can't revoke that pledge later and reduce benefits for employees who have retired.

Orange County, joined by city and county governments statewide, had argued that it could reduce retirees' health benefits retroactively because county supervisors had never expressly guaranteed that the benefits would remain untouched.

But the court said a county's dealings with its employees - in labor negotiations, Board of Supervisors actions and the rules and practices of their retirement plans - may add up to a binding promise of stable health benefits.

The court interpreted California law at the request of a federal appeals court that is considering a challenge by 5,400 Orange County retirees and survivors to an increase in their health insurance premiums in 2008.

County officials had approved the change while negotiating a pay raise with employee unions, who did not represent the retirees. Ernest Galvan, a lawyer for the former county workers, said county officials estimated the premium increase would cost each retiree or their family an average of \$3,000 per year, a figure disputed by Arthur Hartinger, the county's lawyer.

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