



From the President...

By Debby Weintraub

As retirees we generally have more choices about what we will do with our time than when we were employed.

Even seven years in to my retirement, I am still thinking about what it is I want to do with myself and prioritizing my options.



Among all the choices of ways to spend my time, why did I decide to devote a few hours a month to PRO? There are many pressing social/political concerns, family obligations and interests that tug at me, and yet I decided that the Peralta Retirees Organization was worth a bit of my time. Some of it had to do with the personal ask of Bruce Jacobs and Jerry Herman to consider becoming involved with PRO when I retired. I respect each of them, and I knew they had each already spent close to ten years serving retirees, so it seemed fair to get involved. I am eternally grateful for my lifetime benefits and to the people who hammered out deals to make it possible for many of us to retire without the otherwise common worry of how health needs will be covered as we grow older. Drawing me in as well was that PRO can be more than an organization that safeguards our benefits; we can also develop ways to support students and faculty via mentoring. We also can (and do) serve on committees either at the District or in the community providing insights and institutional memory, attributes that retirees can use to continue contributing to community colleges and to help former colleagues. It is a positive way to keep a connection with my years at Peralta.

Being an active member of PRO has enabled me to continue to serve on the District Benefits Committee where PRO is vocal about the needs of retirees, including services we feel the Benefits Office should

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Upcoming PRO Event:

**PRO's Annual Luncheon
and Membership Meeting
Wednesday, November 6
11 AM to 2 PM**

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provide. Here are some ways a person interested in our health benefits could become involved.

Volunteer re Health Benefits

- Volunteer to work on improving the website the District maintains regarding health benefits. There are multiple areas of need from understanding web design to providing feedback about what does or does not work on the current pages.
- The PRO Board has discussed the need for a Survivors Handbook which would help the spouses/family of a deceased Peralta retiree with lifetime benefits understand what their rights are. Working on this project, from layout to content, could be useful and ensure that it could get done.
- Our Summary Plan Description (SPD) is a document that always needs attention, and someone willing to look over the SPD with others who have been doing it for multiple years would be helpful, not only because it helps share the workload, but also because knowing this information is vital.
- Every year Bruce Jacobs puts together an excellent workshop on How Medicare and District Benefits work together. We have long discussed creating a video of the workshop so that once Bruce tires of doing it, we will have his work saved and able to use. Video and editing skills are needed. It would also be important for several other retirees to spend time learning the content so we don't lose it.

Citizens' Oversight Committees

PRO has afforded me the chance to serve on the Citizen's Oversight Committee for Measure B (Parcel Tax) and Measure A (Bond). This has given me an opportunity to be involved with multiple Peralta communities who want to ensure our tax dollars are being appropriately spent. I will soon be finished serving on the Citizen's Oversight Committee so below is another volunteer possibility if you become active in PRO.

- Become a member of one of the two Citizen's Oversight Committees for the tax measures voters approved. As a member of PRO, you could fill two potential needs: being member of a Senior

Citizen's Group or a member of a support organization of the District.

Retirement Board

Linked to the use of Parcel Tax and Bond money spending is the general financial health of the District that is important to retirees not just because most of us want to see the best access to education for community college students, but our lifetime benefits are connected to the District. The OPEB Bonds established in 2006 with the collaboration of the District and the District unions were set up to help defray the cost of lifetime benefits for pre-July 1, 2004 employees and their partners/family. However, the District is ultimately responsible for providing our lifetime benefits whatever happens with the OPEB Bonds. Fortunately, the OPEB Bonds have worked as designed and seem to be doing well. PRO has three non-voting members that serve on the Retirement Board which

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Peralta Retirees Organization

**484 Lake Park Ave., #598
Oakland, CA 94610-2730**

<http://www.peraltaretirees.org>

President – Debby Weintraub
info@peraltaretirees.org

Vice-President – Bruce Jacobs

Secretary – Judith Cohen

Treasurer – open

Past President – Jerry Herman

Board of Directors

Karen Anderson

Helene Maxwell

Alex Pappas

Stan Peters

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Helene Maxwell

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The Peralta Retiree is published four times a year by the Peralta Retirees Organization (PRO)

Volume 16 Number 1

PRO's Annual Luncheon & Membership Meeting

Wednesday ■ November 6
Socializing/No Host Bar 11 AM – Noon

Buffet Luncheon Noon – 2:00 PM
\$22/Person

Location
Eve's Waterfront Restaurant
15 Embarcadero West
Oakland, CA

(Adjacent to Jack London Square)

Panoramic waterfront dining by celebrity chef Brandon Peacock

Driving Directions

From the Peralta District Office: Exit the District parking lot, turn right and then turn right again at 5th Avenue. Turn right at Embarcadero. Proceed for about one half mile. Turn left and then right to the restaurant's parking lot. There is ample free parking.

Luncheon Reservations Required by **Monday, Oct. 28**

To reserve: To pay securely by credit card go to: www.peraltaretirees.org/Docs/lunch19.htm

To pay by mail: Send a check made out to PRO for \$22 for each person in your party attending the luncheon.

Mail your check to:

PRO
484 Lake Park Ave., #598
Oakland, CA 94610-2730

Name _____

Number Attending _____

Names of additional guests attending:

Total enclosed (\$22/person) \$ _____

Questions? Call or text Jerry Herman at 510-260-6379

Peralta Board of Trustees Selects New Chancellor

On September 24, 2019 the Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees announced Dr. Regina Stanback Stroud, former president of Skyline College, as their choice to be the next district Chancellor.

Dr. Stanback Stroud has more than 35 years of experience as an educator and leader. She served most recently as President of Skyline College in San Bruno CA from 2010 to 2019. Upon her retirement in July 2019 she was named President Emerita by the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) Board of Trustees. She is highly regarded for her expertise on student equity and diversity; education/industry collaboratives; economic empowerment and anti-poverty strategies; community workforce and economic development; and regional and state educational policy. As a faculty leader, Dr. Stanback Stroud served as the President of the State Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and served on the Academic Senate Executive Committee for five years.

Julina Bonilla, President of the Board of Trustees, said, “Dr. Stanback Stroud’s reputation as an innovative force for student equity and diversity precedes her. Early in the search process when we talked about the type of Chancellor we wanted, we said



Dr. Regina Stanback Stroud

we needed a strong administrator like Dr. Stanback Stroud. We’re absolutely thrilled she is willing to continue her career here at Peralta. We believe our faculty, staff, administration, and particularly our students will be well served by her thoughtful leadership.”

Stanback Stroud said, “As an Oakland resident, I am home. This is my community.” She continued, “Peralta is a phenomenal district and there’s so much that is done well here. But it is no secret that there are some real challenges. I’ve read the FCMAT. We are coming to grips with some very real issues and we know what needs to be done. I am confident that with leadership, commitment, and political will we can steer the district to financial stability while we continue to provide affordable educational opportunities and a vibrant culture for the communities we serve.”

Contributions Received for the PRO Scholarship Fund

Contributor	In Honor Of:
Aiko Asato	Remo Arancio
Ken Hurst	PRO Board
Contributor	In Memory Of:
Susan Chin	George Herring
Michael Paine	C Toland Draper
Barb & Tom Southworth	Joseph Calistro
Michael Wirth	George Herring

Memorial at Merritt College for Dr. George Herring

In August 2019 a memorial was held at Merritt College for Dr. George Herring who passed away in July. Hundreds of Dr. Herring’s colleagues, friends, and co-workers joined his family to honor him and share loving and funny stories.

Dr. Herring retired in 2002 from PCCD after 32 years of service. During his tenure, he served as Assistant Dean of Students, Dean of Student Services, President of the College of Alameda and Senior Vice Chancellor for the Peralta District. Post-retirement, he served as Interim President at both Merritt College and College of Alameda.

In the time span after George retired and before he returned to work as an administrator, he served on the PRO Board.

Dr. Herring was among the first generation of African-American leaders in community college education and he mentored and supported educators across the country who were interested in entering this field.

To read more about Dr. Herring’s life and memories shared by others, you can go to

<https://tinyurl.com/y3joh77o>



Dr. George Herring



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

If you wish us to send a card to family or friend acknowledging your gift, please provide their address below.

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, 484 Lake Park Ave.,
#598, Oakland, CA 94610-2730

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

Rewards of Volunteering in Retirement

By Roger Newman

Volunteering is a great way for retirees to stay active and give back to the community. It has many pay-offs both for the volunteer and for the agency where you volunteer. It is a win-win situation.

Although I have volunteered in many ways over the years, as many of you have, my main gig now is volunteering as a docent at the California Academy of Science (CAS) in Golden Gate Park. At first the idea of bucking the San Francisco traffic gave me pause, but I have found that it is not prohibitive at 8:30 on a weekend morning, so I sign up for shifts on Saturday and Sunday AMs.

Because of my experience teaching anthropology, I started working in Africa Hall. CAS has a nice collection of hominid and primate skulls to show the



Roger Newman with visitors to the California Academy of Sciences.

guests, although maybe not as good as the one I was able to build up at Berkeley City College with the support of my department chair, Chuck Wollenberg.

One of the benefits of this position is the opportunities it has given me to learn new material. Over the several years I have been at the Academy, I have been able to branch out and have picked up specialties that allow me to work in coral reef ecology, arthropods, pterosaurs, coastal California ecosystems, and many other areas. I don't have to be an expert in each field; I just need to know some interesting facts and enjoy interacting with our guests.

The most important guests are the children, helping them to enjoy and connect to the natural world. Since they are the ones who are going to inherit the world, you can be sure that conservation is one of our most critical topics.

Another benefit is that I get to meet a wide range of people, since the Academy is one of the top attractions in San Francisco. We get visitors from all over the world. I enjoy using my Spanish, Portuguese and French to interact with foreign visitors. Our docent program draws people from a wide variety of backgrounds, so interacting with them is rewarding as well.

The Academy is very important to the residents of San Francisco. We have free days every quarter when libraries and schools in targeted zip codes give out free passes to local residents. Spanish is a help here as well, although I often wish I could speak Chinese and Tagalog.

Another perk of the job is that I can get half price on any level of membership. I like to have the Family Plus level, since it allows me to bring friends and family whenever I go.

I will attach the url for volunteering at the Academy in case you are interested. There are a lot of opportunities, not just as a docent, although I feel that this role is a very good segue from my career teaching in community colleges.

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Of course, there are many other volunteer positions available in our community. My wife, Audre, and I have volunteered for several non-profits over the years. Currently she volunteers for Golden Gate Audubon, taking inner-city school children on field trips to natural areas in the East Bay to learn about ecology. She is also training as a docent at the UC Botanical Garden in Strawberry Canyon.

We both volunteer for Ashby Village, which is a non-profit organization based in Berkeley which seeks to help seniors stay in their homes as long as they can. Audre leads nature walks and serves as a welcomer for new members. I act as a handy-person fixing small problems around the house. I also conduct home safety assessments and advise members on measures they can take to stay safe, such as putting in grab bars and hand rails.

Wherever your passion takes you, I hope you find a way to pitch in and reap the rewards of volunteering.

<https://www.calacademy.org/volunteering-at-the-academy>



Ned Perlstein, Bruce Jacobs, Audre Newman, Rochelle Galat visiting Roger Newman at the CAS.

Renewal Due for Retirees Whose Membership Expires at the End of 2019

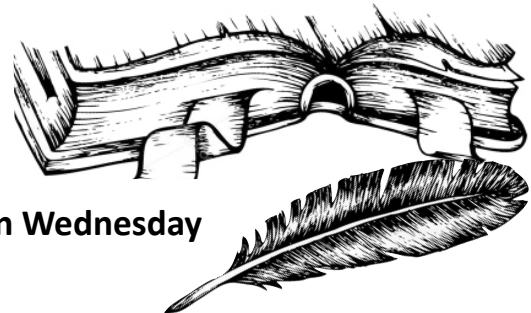
Check the label on your Newsletter to determine when your membership expires. If the label says 2019 or before, then you need to renew for 2020.

Dues are: \$20 — 1 year | \$55 — 3 years | \$80 — 5 years | \$250 — Lifetime

It's easier than ever to renew your membership in PRO.

You can now pay your dues for 2020:

- **securely pay by credit card at the PRO website**
—Just go to: www.peraltaretirees.org/index.htm
- **by mailing your check to:**
PRO
484 Lake Park Avenue, #598
Oakland, CA 94610-2730
- **by bringing a check to: PRO's Annual Meeting on Wednesday**
November 6 (see page 3).





Retirement Board members Mike Wirth, Michael Mills, Jerry Herman

PRO's Annual Picnic in the Redwoods



Judy Thomas and her husband,
Tom Port

August is the time for PRO's Annual Picnic in the Redwoods. Retirees gathered at the Huckleberry Picnic Area in Oakland's East Bay Regional Park on Wednesday August 21. The day was lovely and the setting, with redwood trees towering over the picnic tables, was idyllic. Thanks to all those who attended.



Jack Moradian, Tom Turman, Stan Peters

WWII Eco-thriller dredges up dirty past

Former department chair of Laney's Architecture/Engineering Department, architect, and prolific author, Tom Turman, has a new novel, *The Faculty Gang*. The following article is from Tom's website. —Ed

Who could have guessed that lonely Meyer Island would be at the center of racist greed, murder, and revenge? *The Faculty Gang* is the ecological thriller

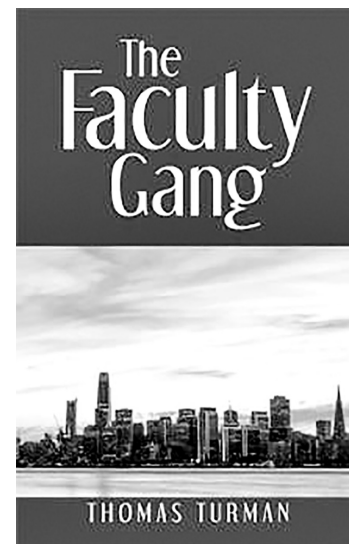


Tom Turman

recounting the troubles that arise when the US Navy tries to rid itself of Meyer Island, a former ammunition storage facility in the Sacramento River Delta on the eastern edge of San Francisco Bay. Meyer Island, a remnant of WWII, is now a natural bird sanctuary often shrouded in

fog, muting the ghost ship-haunted memory of what went on there in the forties. It has healed itself with natural grasses and welcomed back birds, where a symphony of birdcalls often freezes visitors to listen. An agency set up by the government must select the private proposal that will best use the land. This brings into deadly conflict the plan of a group of vicious businessmen who wish to exploit the island

and the proposal of the local university's faculty for a more benign use of the land. Romance, racial tension, humor, revenge, murder, and ultimate satisfaction dance together in this timely eco-mystery tango. One reviewer said, "This well-timed novel is like *Silent Spring*, as if written by Rachel Carson, James Lee Burke, and George Carlin with help from Erica Jong."



Tom's book is available through his website www.thomasleeturman.com.

Welcome New Members

PRO welcomes the following members who have recently joined

Burt Dragin
Rick Greenspan
Patrick McDermott

IN MEMORIAM

The following Peralta retirees have passed away. PRO extends our deepest condolences to their family and loved ones.

Shirley Connor George Herring

If you have any information about the passing or the serious illness of a Peralta retiree, please contact Helene Maxwell at: helenemaxwell13@gmail.com or by writing to PRO, 484 Lake Park Ave., #598, Oakland, CA 94610-2730

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oversees the management of the OPEB Bonds. Eventually, members who have served for years will decide to do something else with their time and will need replacements.

- Consider becoming involved by attending Retirement Board meetings to learn what is going on and become ready to be a PRO representative.

PRO Board

Lastly, there are still needs on the PRO Board.

- A treasurer/bookkeeper
- Organizer of social events
- Oversight of the Student Scholarships
- Help with the newsletter: editing, content, delivery

Nobody on the Board is getting any younger; some have served close to 20 years. More recent retirees need to become engaged.

I am pleased to report that our annual picnic held on August 21st was quite lovely. Time was spent

catching up. Bruce Jacobs and I did a brief update about the state of our SPD work. All three of the PRO Retirement Board members — Jerry Herman, Mike Wirth and Michael Mills — were in attendance, so there was an opportunity for a good conversation about the OPEB Bonds.

Finally, PRO will be holding its Annual Luncheon and Membership Meeting on Wednesday, November 6 at a beautiful new venue: Eve's Waterfront Restaurant located on the Embarcadero in Oakland.



Eve's Waterfront Restaurant features a delicious buffet and stunning views of the waterfront. Don't miss this opportunity to visit with former colleagues to catch up on the latest Peralta news (there's a new Chancellor), and to learn what PRO is doing to safeguard your medical benefits.

***Reserve your spot by October 28.
(See page 3 for details.)***

**Peralta Retirees Organization
484 Lake Park Ave., #598
Oakland, CA 94610-2730**