



The Peralta Retiree

From the President...

by Debby Weintraub, PRO President

PRO is not a political organization in the sense that, other than our support for our earned lifetime benefits, we do not necessarily have a set of shared beliefs. 2020 has been a year in which the political/ideological divisions in this country have been torn open in frightening ways. Sometimes it feels that we have gone almost too far to come back to a place of having meaningful dialogue as a nation about our differences, including how we respond to COVID as individuals and collectively; it has become political to the point which confounds and alarms me. Yet, here we are.



In the last newsletter I wrote about my desire to see PRO become a more active voice as regards national health care – to become outspoken advocates for accessible and affordable health care for everyone. I know most people are too busy to respond to my suggestion, so for now, we remain a group that is focused on protecting our own lifetime benefits and having a place to keep connected with former colleagues, both worthy reasons for an organization. But our lack of shared world view makes certain conversations, like discussing COVID’s impact on us, or health care for the majority of people in the United States including our own former colleagues or students at PCCD, more complex and political. However, I hope PRO manages to respond to this public health crisis in some way while considering a range of ideas on how best to do that as an organization.

As I look towards 2021, I feel there are promises of better times. I have hope. I am inspired by the masses of people of all ages and races across the globe proclaiming that Black Lives Matter, the largest outpouring/advocacy of that nature ever. And the lines of peo-

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Happy

New

Year

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Peralta Update:

Board Elections and State Intervention

Board Elections

Bill Withrow emerged as the victor in the only contested Peralta Board election.

Withrow, who has served on the Board for more than 15 years, won another four year term, beating challenger Jeff Heyman.



Withrow, in addition to his regular duties as one of Peralta's trustees, has also served as Chair of the Retirement Board and has played a leadership role in protecting the programs for retiree healthcare (OPEB). PRO has worked closely with Trustee Withrow to make sure that the OPEB funds are used for their intended purpose.

In addition to Withrow two new Board members who ran unopposed were elected to the Board. They are Kevin Jenkins and Dyana Delfin Polk. Leaving the Board are veteran members Meredith Brown and Karen Weinstein.

Peralta Retirees Organization

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Oakland, CA 94602

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State Intervention

The CA Community College Board of Governors has been reviewing Peralta's fiscal and management situation since mid-2019 when Peralta's June 2019 FCMAT (Fiscal Crisis & Management Assistance Team) report was completed. That report identified a total risk score of 69.9 percent (a score of 40 percent is considered high risk) and provided 75 recommendations to fix the identified concerns. The State Chancellor assigned fiscal monitor Jim Austin to the District. In May, Austin estimated the district's risk score had been lowered to under ten percent. However, his report included concerns about "hostility" and "micromanaging" in shared governance processes. In July, previous Peralta Chancellor Regina Stanback Stroud resigned nine months into her contract, writing a scathing criticism of the Peralta Board. Also weighing on Peralta is the district's probationary status, which the ACCJC (Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges) assigned to all four colleges in January.

Peralta faces a strict timeline from the Board of Governors to address identified problems. The district is expected to:

- Appoint a permanent chancellor by March 1, 2021
- Respond to ACCJC concerns by November 1, 2020
- Ensure audit findings are met by May 31, 2021
- Ensure FCMAT findings are met by December 31, 2021
- Report progress on the above actions to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office by December 30, 2020

There are a number of actions that the State Chancellor's Office can take if the timeline is not met. These range from appointment of someone to monitor the fiscal decision making (and nothing else) to assignment of a special trustee. A special trustee can overrule the elected board, essentially taking state control of the District. The Board of Governors will be discussing Peralta at its scheduled meeting in January.

Opinion about state intervention is mixed in the District with the PFT opposing the State stepping in while other unions and organizations are supporting some form of State control. Board Member Linda Handy informally commented in favor, saying, "Peralta does not stand a chance for a turnaround without oversight and monitoring from the BOG."

Dr. Jill Biden Will Continue Teaching Community Colleges Find An Advocate In Future First Lady

The following article by Ashley A. Smith is reprinted from EdSource.org.

For the first time in American history, the nation's First Lady will hold a job outside the White House, and that job will involve teaching.

Jill Biden will continue teaching English at Northern Virginia Community College, where even as Second Lady, she has advocated for students and education after high school.

"For American educators, it is a great day for y'all," President-elect Joe Biden said during his victory speech the Saturday after the election. "You're going to have one of your own in the White House. And Jill is going to make a great First Lady."

The decision to continue teaching is historic. Biden, who has four degrees, including a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Delaware, would be the first First Lady in more than 230 years to maintain a paying job outside the White House.

And her position as a community college professor brings greater attention and perhaps advocacy to the sector.

"It's a very important signal to students in public higher education across the country that we have a president who attended a public university and a First Lady who dedicated her life to the community colleges and teaching," said Eloy Ortiz Oakley, chancellor of California's 116 community colleges. "It sends a very clear and important signal that public higher education matters and community colleges matter tremendously to the country."

Amy Leonard, an English professor at De Anza College, said Biden's words about Jill Biden being an advocate for teachers was exciting.

"Community colleges don't get the love they deserve from the higher ups," she said. But most importantly, Jill Biden can advocate for career and technical education, or CTE, programs from the White House.



In her own words, Jill Biden speaks proudly about being a teacher. "If we get to the White House, I'm going to continue to teach," she told CBS News last August. "It's important and I want people to value teachers and know their contributions and lift up the profession."

Biden knows that community colleges offer short-term certificate and credential programs and CTE classes that appeal to students because they prepare them for specific skills needed for 21st century careers, Leonard said.

**"Teaching
is not
what I do.
It's who I
am."**

— *Dr. Jill Biden*

There's no doubt that Jill Biden will bring a teacher's voice to the White House. "I teach a lot of immigrants and refugees," she told CBS News in August. "I love their stories. I love who they are as people and I love the fact that I can help them on their path to success."

Chella Courington, a retired English professor at Santa Barbara City College, said Biden's statement about having "one of their own" in the White House was an emotional moment.

"When he said that in his acceptance speech, I said, 'Finally,'" Courington said.

"For four years, public education was obliterated. We had a Secretary of Education who knew nothing about education," Courington said referring to Betsy DeVos. "But not only is Jill Biden active and will stay teaching at a Virginia community college, but she's very much an advocate for public education."

Courington, who taught English in the community colleges for 20 years before retiring last year, said Biden would provide insight on a wide range of diverse students and the issues that affect them.

"Teachers are front line workers," she said. "They're always there, and it's just nice to think that finally, educators will get the kind of emphasis and voice that they so deserve."

Although the First Lady has not yet announced her main initiative, her influence is already felt in the President-

(Continued on page 6)

PRO News

Ann Elliott To Serve As New PRO Newsletter Editor

The PRO newsletter will be getting Ann Elliott as its new editor starting with the April-June 2021 edition of *The Peralta Retiree*.

In 1991, Jerry Herman and Carmen Rezendes, as Laney's English Department co-chairs, launched Ann's Peralta career hiring her as an adjunct English instructor at Laney, where she shared an office with Marie Wilson. From there she went to Merritt College. Ann coordinated the Learning Center and taught English and ESL, served as Department Chair for many years, Faculty Senator, and for one long year, interim dean of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. For a time, she was the Merritt representative on the PFT. She also served as the Staff Development Officer working at the District Office with then vice chancellor Judy Walters. In this role, she enjoyed meeting a number



of staff, faculty and administrators from all four Colleges. Ann indicated that she is looking forward to working with the PRO Board on the newsletter and is inviting retirees to share their ideas for what would be interesting and helpful to include.

PRO Has a New Mailing Address

Starting immediately all mail for PRO should be sent to our new mailbox:

**Peralta Retirees
Organization—PRO
4200 Park Boulevard #605
Oakland, CA 94602**

Note: We will still collect mail at the old box until the end of February

Renewal Due for Retirees Whose Membership Expires at the End of 2020

If your PRO membership expired at the end of 2020 (or before) you should have received an email letting you know that you need to renew for 2021. If you did not receive an email renewal notice at the end of October and you think your membership needs renewal you can send an inquiry email to: webmaster@peraltaretirees.org

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

It's easy to renew your membership in PRO. You can now pay your dues for 2021:

- securely by credit card at the PRO web site (using PayPal).
Just go to: www.peraltaretirees.org/index.htm
- by mailing your check to PRO, 4200 Park Boulevard #605, Oakland, CA 94602
(note new address)

Medicare Update

Medicare To Cover Full Cost of Covid-19 Vaccinations

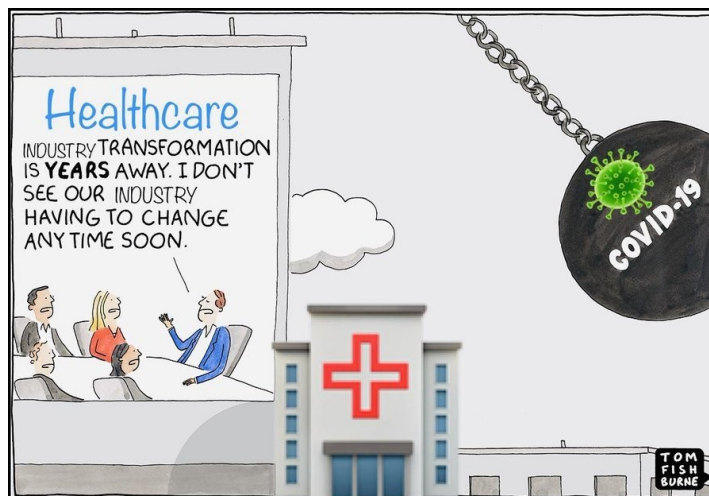
The following information is excerpted from the Medicare web site that deals with the Corona Virus.

Your health, safety, and welfare in the face of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is our highest priority. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung, or kidney disease seem to be at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness. **This means that most people with Medicare are at higher risk.**

Medicare covers the COVID-19 vaccine

Medicare covers FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines.

Pharmaceutical manufacturers are now working to distribute the vaccine to federally- and state-approved locations to start the vaccination of priority groups. State governments will handle the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Look for updates from your state or governor as more doses of the vaccine become available for additional priority groups



Be alert for scammers. Medicare covers the vaccine at no cost to you, so if anyone asks you to share your Medicare Number or pay for access to the vaccine, you can bet it's a scam.

Here's what to know:

- You can't pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
- You can't pay to get early access to a vaccine.
- Don't share your personal or financial information if someone calls, texts, or emails you promising access to the vaccine for a fee.

Medicare covers related needs

- Medicare covers the lab tests for COVID-19. You pay no out-of-pocket costs.
- Medicare covers FDA-authorized COVID-19 antibody (or "serology") tests if you were diagnosed with a known current or known prior COVID-19 infection or suspected current or suspected past COVID-19 infection.
- Medicare covers monoclonal antibody treatments for COVID-19.
- Medicare covers COVID-19 vaccines. You pay no out-of-pocket costs.
- Medicare covers all medically necessary hospitalizations. This includes if you're diagnosed with COVID-19 and might otherwise have been discharged from the hospital after an inpatient stay, but instead you need to stay in the hospital under quarantine. You'll still pay for any hospital deductibles, copays, or coinsurances that apply.

(Note: for Peralta retirees and their dependents all hospital expenses not covered by Medicare should be covered by either Trustmark (Blue Cross) or Kaiser.)

Scammers may use the coronavirus national emergency to take advantage of people while they're distracted. As always, guard your Medicare card like a credit card, check Medicare claims summary forms for errors, and if someone calls asking for your Medicare Number, hang up!

(Jill Biden ... Continued from page 3)

elect's extensive *Plan for Education Beyond High School*, which includes investing in community colleges to strengthen the middle class. (As Second Lady, Biden's work centered on supporting military families and American troops.)

"Dr. Jill Biden, a current community college professor, refers to community colleges as America's best-kept secret," according to the plan.

Oakley recalls attending the announcement of America's College Promise, the initiative to promote tuition-free community college, alongside President Obama and Jill Biden in 2015. Back then, Jill Biden led the effort as the chairwoman of the independent College Promise Advisory Board, which also promotes tuition-free college programs.

"That effort has been successful," Oakley said. "State after state adopted the fundamental premise of what President Obama was trying to launch and the Biden administration has the opportunity to build on that."

Oakley, who leads the nation's largest community college system, said the three areas the Biden campaign has talked about, and he supports, would be financially supporting low-income students, forgiving \$10,000 of student debt for all borrowers and valuing students in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

"We should be signaling we'll no longer be attacking students who are trying to add value to their communi-

ties," he said.

Joe Biden's higher education plan doesn't just focus on tuition but also on increasing grants to expand apprenticeship programs and dual enrollment opportunities. Joe Biden has also discussed increasing funding to colleges to provide more support services to veterans, single parents, students of color and low-income students.

It's also likely that the next First Lady will expand her focus beyond community colleges.

Martha Kanter, the former U.S. undersecretary of higher education in the Obama administration and former chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, has worked with Jill Biden both inside and outside the White House. Kanter now leads the College Promise nonprofit organization to advocate for tuition-free programs nationally.

She said the Bidens recognize that students go to school and college to be successful earners and citizens for the nation's future. Kanter said she hopes and knows that Jill Biden will support the idea that there should be more focus on civic education and thinking critically.

From her work with Jill Biden, Kanter said she sees Jill Biden and President-Elect Biden as being sympathetic to student needs to support themselves. "And let's not uncouple education and basic needs support," she said. "You have to have some basic money. A roof over your head and food. Otherwise, you can't concentrate in school."

Letter to the Editor

In Memory of John Holleman

This is to inform you of the death of John Holleman December 17 due to Alzheimer's.

John began teaching at Merritt/Grove St. in 1957 — biology, chemistry, marine biology. He later became president of Vista College (1977-86), followed by president/superintendent at Gavelin College in Gilroy.

He was instrumental in designing the science department at the new Merritt including the shark tank! Yes, he and the students collected the sharks when they went out on the Bay in Merritt's buoy tender bought from State Education Department surplus for (I believe) \$500. Some of PRO's older retirees could tell tales about John.

Nancy Holleman

IN MEMORIAM

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

**Cecelia Arrington
Anita Black
John Holleman
Diana Lara
Adam David Miller
Norma Singleton
Ron Temple**

If you have any information about the passing or the serious illness of a Peralta retiree, please contact Bruce Jacobs at: brucejacobs@gmail.com or by writing to PRO, 4200 Park Boulevard #605, Oakland, CA 94602.

Benefit Reductions, Price Hikes Coming for CalPERS Long Term Care Insurance Plans

The following article by Wes Venteicher appeared in The Sacramento Bee.

CalPERS hasn't publicly estimated how much it might raise premiums on its long-term care insurance policies next year, but the anticipated rate hikes are prompting the system to consider a wide range of changes including benefit reductions.

The California Public Employee Retirement System's board reviewed information in meetings this week that show the depths of the financial challenges faced by its \$4.7 billion long-term care insurance fund.

The board plans consider specific changes in November, when it will likely weigh premium increases that would go into effect in July 2021. The system suspended enrollment in the plans in June and warned of "significant premium increases" to come.

The fund supports long-term care policies that help cover costs for nursing homes and in-home care. It is separate from CalPERS' \$413 billion pension fund.

CalPERS offices are trying to find ways to minimize the projected increases.

One possibility is giving policyholders options to reduce their benefits instead of paying higher premiums, chief health director Don Moulds told the board.

Right now, the policies start covering costs of long-term care after a policyholder has been paying the costs themselves for 90 days. The system could increase that delay to 180 days to help keep premiums down, Moulds said.

Other possibilities for benefit reductions include adding deductibles, reducing the policies' duration and reducing daily benefit amounts, he said.

Policyholders also could be given the option to pay a lump sum to keep their premiums stable, he said.

"We don't like them and our policyholders wouldn't necessarily choose them," if they weren't facing rate increases, he said.

CalPERS is still fighting a class-action lawsuit over an 85% premium increase introduced in 2013. Policyholders who purchased "inflation protection" when

they signed up for the plans said in the lawsuit that CalPERS improperly increased their rates. They estimate CalPERS could have to pay as much as \$1.2 billion if they prevail.

CalPERS has said it had the authority to raise the rates, and that any payment to close out the lawsuit would further drive up premiums. A jury trial has been delayed several times and is now scheduled for March 29.

The outlook for the troubled line of insurance worsened dramatically from 2017 to 2019, and then got even worse during the coronavirus, according to financial summaries.

The average policyholder is 75 years old and sicker on average than in the past, according to the summary. The system now is paying out more in benefits than it is taking in, according to a presentation to the board.

Two-thirds of the fund's portfolio is invested in bonds and other fixed-income assets that return money to investors based on interest rates, according to a summary the system's investment staff prepared for the board. With investment rates at historic lows, returns are suffering, according to the summary.

Investment staff offered a preliminary recommendation for the board to consider reducing its projections for investment returns to 4% from the current 5.25%. The change would force the fund to look elsewhere for the money it had counted on from investment returns.

The system is considering moving some of its money out of the stable class of investments to other investment types that likely would be riskier but offer the potential for higher returns, such as stocks. Those changes could help minimize premium increases.

At the end of June 2018, the fund estimated it had 101% of the assets it estimated it would need to cover future costs. If the board accepts the projections of its actuaries based on a sicker population, worsening financial outlook and changes in enrollment, that percentage would drop to 69% for the end of June 2019, according to the meeting materials.

What We Are Reading and Watching

The PRO Board met via Zoom on December 2 and during the meeting, in addition to our usual business, we found ourselves sharing information about what we are reading and watching during these shelter-in-place days. We then thought others in PRO might also be interested. We also thought PRO members might have some recommendations to make to other retirees. So below are some of the recommendations of PRO Board members. If you have a recommendation you would like to share, please send an email with a brief description to webmaster@peraltaretirees.org, and we will publish those recommendations in the April issue.

—Bruce Jacobs

Jerry Herman

A Promised Land by Barack Obama

One reviewer said of *A Promised Land* that in fifty years it will be one of the very few American presidential memoirs worth reading. Here's the good news. You don't have to wait fifty years. You can read it now. Whatever opinion you may have of Obama as president, after reading *A Promised Land* you will likely agree that he is a superb writer. With eloquence, incisive intelligence, humor, and a novelist's eye for keen and detailed observation, he describes his life and presidential tenure, from the gritty politics of it to the belief in the ideals of America that led him into the political arena in the first place.

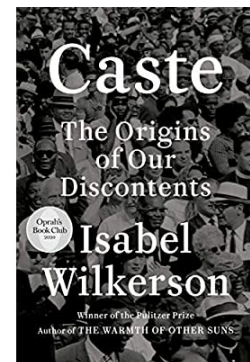


The book is compelling reading. Obama humanizes his presidency. He sometimes agonizes over the challenge of balancing being president with being a loving husband and father. He doesn't shirk from taking responsibility for his mistakes or admitting weaknesses. (Unlike most politicians, he actually admits to making mistakes.) He ponders the meaning of being the first African-American president. For me, the most poignant moment in *A Promised Land* comes when the Obamas ask the African-American White House butlers just to treat them like ordinary people. In respectfully declining that request, the head butler says to the president,

“See, you and the First Lady don't really know what it means to us Mr. President. Having you here! You just don't know.”

The Warmth Of Other Suns
Caste
by Isabel Wilkerson

Both of Isabel Wilkerson's highly acclaimed books make for riveting reading. In *The Warmth of Other Suns* she chronicles the Great Migration, the emigration of African-Americans roughly from the end of the 19th



century from the Jim Crow South to the seemingly less oppressive Northeast, Midwest and West Coast, which demographically changed America. Through rigorous historical research she shows the magnitude and the meaning of this vast human odyssey. Although she vividly characterizes the general, more abstract effect of the migration on American society as a whole, it's her focus on the fates of five individuals and their families over the course of a half century that makes the book come alive.

If *Warmth of Other Suns* concentrates primarily on the lives and fortunes of individuals, *Caste* widens the lens to show how some cultures have established hierarchical social structures that rank their populations in layers from superior to inferior. Those cultural levels - castes - form the core of these societies and their values. The two most obvious of these societies are the United States and India. By positing that caste, not race or class per se, predetermines the fate of hundreds of millions, Wilkerson brilliantly establishes a perspective that will open your eyes so you can see and understand social, political and economic inequalities in America as you never have before.

(Continued on page 9)

(**Reading and Watching** ...Continued from page 8)

Karen Anderson

I'm binge watching **The Crown** on Netflix. Scenes behind the scenes of England's Queen Elizabeth, grandmother of Harry of Sussex. Riveting.



I've enjoyed **Jeopardy** since Art Fleming days. I watch it daily though I think they've already answered everything familiar to my memory. Now new categories and a replacement for Alex Treback.

Also, **Xfinity channel 195** shows great old black & white film noir movies if you don't have Turner Classic Movies.

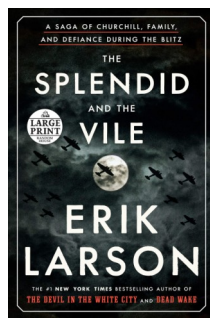
Debby Weintraub

Books:

The Friend by Sigrid Nunez

A book about friendship and relationships-involves a dog too.

The Splendid and the Vile by Erick Larson



Churchill's first year as Prime Minister.

American Primitive by Mary Oliver

Any of her poetry is soothing.

TV

The Bureau

French spy drama
(Sundance Now)



Rita

Danish series about a school teacher that is a bit of a hot mess- but lots of fun often.
(Netflix)

Gavin and Stacey

English series about two young people that fall in love and their families- mostly lots of good English fun
(Prime Video)

Other Activities

Climbing the stairways of Oakland — Rockridge has dozens — good aerobic exercise and great views.

Taking on-line art classes

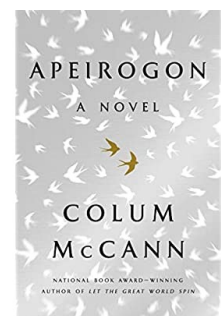
Signing up for "tours" of museums all over the world, many of which are free. I have had some great ones through the Art Institute of Chicago as well as some wonderful getting to know an artist, see their studios, etc. through SFMOMA.

Bruce Jacobs

Books:

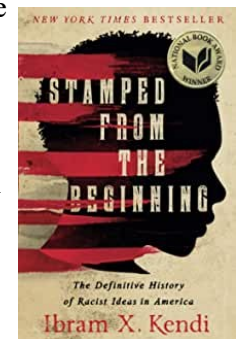
Apeirogon by Colum McCann

This Irish author has written a beautiful novel based on real events from the Palestine-Israel conflict. It tells the tale of two fathers — one Palestinian, one Israeli — who have lost their beloved daughters to terrorist attacks and who develop a friendship as they both struggle to find a way to create peace. Artfully written in an innovative style with lots of info about history, culture, and nature.



Stamped From The Beginning by Ibram Kendi

The best book I have read about the history of racism in America. The book won The National Book Award and it deserved the honor. Kendi chooses five important figures from different eras — colonial to Barack Obama's presidency — and explores the intellectual and cultural manifestations of racism and anti-racism. The last section



(Continued on page 12)

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, 4200 Park Boulevard #605 · Oakland, CA 94602

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

Contributions Received for the PRO Scholarship Fund

In Honor of:	Contributor
The PRO Board	Sue Chin
In Memory of:	Contributor
Ida Pound	Valerie Arango
Ann Gabor Arancio and Anne Blau	Jerry Herman

Welcome New Members

*PRO welcomes the following retiree s
who have recently joined.*

**Leonard Chung
Regina Davis
Leslie Fleming
Newt McDonald**

(From the President ... Continued from page 1)

ple waiting to vote – no matter how they voted – demonstrating those people’s belief and commitment to one of the fundamental keystones of democracy in this country is exhilarating to me still.

The arrival of the vaccines is an enormous relief. The real possibility of an end to this long dark journey we have all been on is simply amazing.

I am hopeful too that as the vaccine is distributed it will enable us to return to some form of normalcy and even allow us to have PRO Board meetings in person again. This would make PRO’s ability to address and resolve issues that have been lingering over 2020 much easier.

Here are a few goals I hope we can achieve early in 2021:

- Clarify and finalize retiree SPD language with the District and Alliant so we no longer have to doggedly review any new SPD publications.
- Enforce SPD review guidelines so that changes – if any – get reviewed and agreed upon according to the legal requirements – in negotiations between the District and the District unions; and hopefully in consultation with PRO.
- Complete an Administrative Board Policy that gives all retirees emeritus status as an acknowledgement of years of service to the District and which would enable retirees who chose to, to remain on the Peralta.edu for two years after retirement, and, for a minimal fee, be allowed to park in PCCD lots, and obtain a retiree ID to be used at PCCD facilities (library, gyms...) or PCCD events.
- Disseminate definitive information concerning the vaccine and our health coverage that we receive from the District. At this time the District is working with Alliant to clarify information regarding how Kaiser , Anthem Blue Cross and Medicare will handle payment (if any) of the vaccine for actives and retirees as well as any distribution guidelines. **But as of now - the District has no specific information regarding the vaccine.**

I hope PRO manages to respond to this public health crisis in some way while considering a range of ideas on how best to do that as an organization.

I am hopeful too that in 2021 we can resume our annual membership luncheon, which we had to cancel this year. Since we hold elections at those meetings, all the people that were up for re-election in 2020 have agreed to remain on the Board until a vote can take place.

I would also rejoice in welcoming more members and hoping the new energy will not only relieve people who have devoted close to 20 years to PRO but bring exciting ideas. To start 2021 off, Ann Elliot, a recent retiree, has agreed to begin heading up the newsletter. Perhaps recent members will also help PRO by thinking of ways our organization can grow and involve more members. I know that during this election cycle some retirees worked on registering PCCD students to

vote and partnered with active PCCD employees to start a campaign to get students to become lifelong voters. What a worthwhile endeavor!

2020 is receding as I write this. It has been a year of profound losses on so many levels for almost everyone. COVID has dominated much

of our external and internal landscapes. To those of you who lost loved ones, my deepest sympathy; and to all who have missed your families, sharing occasions like weddings, special birthdays, holiday rituals and even moments of grief, I know that loss too.

I have learned during these last 10 months that being in the moment and appreciating the simplest of activities is good for my outlook. And, as a result of the pandemic, a creativity in connecting with others blossomed. I am particularly fond of an early Fall memory when, full of uncertainties, my two siblings and our spouses, sat outside in the damp chill of a Bay Area evening, yards apart, teasing one another, retelling old family stories, laughing until our sides ached. Though we could not touch one another, we were definitely in each other’s embrace. Sometimes it makes me uncomfortable to feel any joy in the midst of such enormous global grief, but yet I do.

So, with a heart that has ached (and swelled) during 2020, I am wishing all of us a 2021 that heals us in body and spirit.

(Reading and Watching ... Continued from page 9)
which focuses on Angela Davis takes the reader through the Black Power movement to Obama's presidency, an era most of us lived through and experienced, some of us by participating in the events described.

TV

Occupied

Norwegian series about the occupation of Norway by Russia with the backing of the European Union after Norwegians elect a "green" government and stop producing and exporting petroleum. A resistance to the occupation develops.

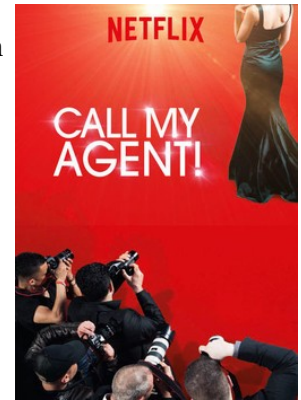
(Netflix)



Call My Agent

A delightful French series about a small talent agency in Paris that is constantly grappling with the demands of famous French actors and actresses (played by themselves) while the agency teeters on going out of business. Clever, with lots of laughs, and you get to see some of those great French movie stars having fun.

(Netflix)



Wishing All
Peralta
Retirees
and
Their Loved Ones
A Happy and Healthy
2021