

Winter 2011

Ventura County Community College District Retirees' Association

The Monitor

Mark your calendar

Annual meeting set for March 30

An official from the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA) will be the keynote speaker at the annual meeting of the VCCCD Retirees' Association.

That meeting will be held from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. (note the time change) on Wednesday, March 30 at the Ventura County Office of Education Conference Center, 5100 Adolfo Road in Camarillo.

Katharine Raley, who manages the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program for the VCAAA, will address the issue of long term care.

Her presentation will be entitled, "Long Term Care: If you Need It, Can You Afford It.?"

Retirees' Association President Harry Culotta, who will preside over the meeting, said that the is-

sue of long term care for the 21st Century is a critical issue as we age.

"We are fortunate to have experts like Ms. Raley who can help us understand the implications of the long term care issue," he said.

For an introduction to long term care, see Culotta's article on the subject on page 2 of this edition of *The Monitor*.

Members present will hear the annual treasurer's report and will also vote on three modifications to the organization's by-laws, which appear on page 3 of this newsletter. Members will also vote on a policy proposal which would ensure that, if claims against the insurance settlement reserve fund exceed the available money for reimbursement, priority would be based on age, so that the oldest retirees would be reimbursed first.

Association members will also hear reports from the VCCCDRA's standing committee chairs, as well as an announcement of a retiree social event which is currently being planned for fall.



Members of the Executive Committee listen to a report during a recent meeting. Shown are Pat Gage, left, Political Committee Chair Larry Manson, center, and VCCCDRA President Harry Culotta.

Long Term Care

If you need it, can you afford it?

BY HARRY CULOTTA

As we advance in age, the likelihood increases that we may need long term care – that is, assistance over an extended period of time in performing essential, routine tasks.

These are the activities of daily living: bathing, dressing, transferring, eating, toileting, and continence. The need may be due to illnesses, injuries, or cognitive impairments such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

If our health situation requires long term care, we are also likely to need help with meals, managing medicines, managing money, house-keeping tasks, and shopping.

Long term care may be provided by a spouse, a child, other family members, or paid caregivers. It can be provided in one's own home, in an adult day care facility, a board and care facility, an assisted living facility, a nursing home facility, or a convalescent facility.

Anyone at any age may require long term care, but the need increases greatly with age.

In 2000, Georgetown University's Long Term Care Financing Project found that of those persons who needed long term care, 63 percent were over 65.

That same year, the Milbank Memorial Fund found that after age 65, almost half of all Americans will spend time in a nursing home, and almost 75 percent will need some home care.

Clearly, if we are likely to need long term care, it is prudent to consider how to pay for it.

The cost of nearly everything in California is greater than the national average, and the cost in Ventura

County is as great, and sometimes greater, than the statewide average.

Genworth Financial, one of the leading nationwide carriers of long term care insurance, surveyed the costs of care in California in 2010. For Ventura County, Genworth found the following median costs: homemaker services, licensed - \$20/hour; home health aide, licensed (*i.e.*, caregiver) - \$22/hour; adult day care, licensed - \$76/day; assisted living

'How can we afford to pay these costs, especially if they are likely to increase by 5 percent or more per year?'

facility, private room - \$4,000/month; nursing home facility, semi-private room - \$196/day; nursing home facility, private room - \$238/day.

For Ventura County, the annualized median costs are: homemaker services (4 hours/day) - \$20,800; home health aide (8 hours/day) - \$45,760; adult day care (250 days/year) - \$19,000; assisted living facility (12 months/year) - \$48,000; nursing home, semi-private (365 days/year) - \$71,540; nursing home, private (365 days/year) - \$86,870.

How can we afford to pay these costs, especially if they are likely to increase by 5 percent or more per year? Presently, retirees and families pay much of the cost from personal resources. Retirees may be forced to sell the family home, or take out a reverse mortgage, to pay for long term care.

One reason why long term care is such a financial burden is that third parties provide support primarily for short term care. For example, Medicare will usually pay just the first 20 days' stay in a nursing home if the retiree enters directly from a hospital following a hospital stay. Under certain circumstances, it may pay part of the cost beyond 20 days, and it may pay for some home health care.

Medi-Cal will pay for some health services not covered by Medicare if the retiree "spends down" assets to meet federal and state poverty guidelines.

Some retirees believe their private health insurance carrier will cover long term care. This is not true. Anthem Blue Cross, for example, will pay for short term nursing home care, hospice care, and some home health care with pre-approval, but these services are limited in duration.

Long term care (LTC) insurance has been offered as a separate product by many carriers since the 1980s. According to the California Department of Insurance, 18 insurance companies (not including CalPERS) presently sell LTC policies; another 60 are no longer writing new policies in California, but are continuing to service existing policies.

These policies typically pay benefits when the policyholder is unable to perform at least two of the six activities of daily living (ADLs) for an extended period of time, following an "elimination period" of 30 to 120 days. These policies typically provide a fixed daily rate of reimbursement for long term care when it is provided: (1) in the home, (2) in an assisted living facility, or (3) in a nursing home. These policies provide the
(See CARE, page 3)

Bylaws changes proposed

Proposed changes to the Bylaws of the VCCCDRA will be voted on by the members in attendance March 30. The proposals follow:

Article V – ELECTIONS

Section 2. The annual election of officers will be held at a general meeting held in the spring of each year on the third Wednesday of ~~March~~ **April**, or the nearest Wednesday to that date depending on availability of accommodations.

ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION OF ASSOCIATION

The Association may be dissolved by a vote **by written ballot** of two-thirds of the members present at a **general** meeting of the Association specifically announced for this purpose. **Any member may propose dissolution to the Executive Committee, which shall vote on whether to send the proposal (in the form of a motion) to a general meeting as specified above.** Notification processes for this proposed action shall be made in accordance with the procedures of article XI for amendment of the by-laws [The balance of this by-law shall remain as written.]

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

These by-laws may be amended at any general meeting of the Association by two-thirds vote of the members present at the meeting, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing to each member at least thirty (30) days prior to the General Meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon. **Publication of proposed amendment(s) in the Association newsletter, or by other written method, shall be considered appropriate written notification to the membership at large.**

Long term care: The costs keep rising

(From Page 2)

reimbursement for a defined period of time - as little as three years or as long as lifetime. They also may provide an annual inflation adjustment of the daily rate, typically 5 percent.

In California, which participates in the Partnership for Long Term Care, insurers may also offer the option that allows the policyholder to protect the assets that must be “spent down” in order to qualify for long term care paid by Medi-Cal.

CalPERS has offered long term care insurance in California to public employees, their spouses, and immediate family members since 1995.

CalPERS features mostly the same coverage options as those of commercial insurers. Many community college district employees, retirees, and their families have enrolled with CalPERS over the years with the expectation their premiums, like those of

whole life insurance, would remain level for the duration of coverage.

However, during the last decade, many long term care insurers, including CalPERS, discovered their premiums were insufficient to cover the actuarially-projected costs of care in the future.

As a result, CalPERS has enacted *three* premium rate increases in the past decade. CalPERS: (1) raised its rates by up to 30 percent, effective January 2004; (2) raised its rates by up to an additional 47 percent, effective July 2007; (3) raised its rates by up to an additional 22 percent, effective July 2010.

In all three instances, policyholders were offered options to mitigate the increases, such as reducing the daily benefit amount, reducing the benefit period from lifetime to six years or to three years.

For many retirees today, the questions are not only, “If we need long term care, can we afford it?” but also,

“If we need long term care *insurance*, can we afford it?” and, “If we already have LTC insurance, should we keep it, change insurance carriers, or drop it?”

The VCCCD Retirees Association cannot offer individual advice, but it can offer information to help retirees decide for themselves.

Katherine Raley will furnish this information in her keynote address to retirees at the association’s general meeting on March 30.

In Memoriam

**Bill Bendat
Agnes Dachtler
Bernie Ford
Eleanor Ramey**

Benefits Committee report

Benefits changes for 2010-2011 reviewed

BY GARY JOHNSON

Please read the following change information carefully and retain for your records, and for reimbursement purposes for retirees covered by the Settlement Agreement between the Retirees' Association and the District. Also, share this information with anyone who is helping you with your finances.

For faculty retirees covered by the settlement:

In October 2010, the AFT and the District negotiated a contract agreement that no salary increases or changes in the Anthem Blue Cross medical plan would occur for the next three years (2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13). The Settlement with the District sets 2007-08 as the baseline year for determining eligible reimbursements from the Settlement Fund. Since no plan coverage changes or added costs have been or will be experienced by faculty retirees between 2007 and June 30, 2013, faculty retirees will continue to be ineligible for reimbursement from the Settlement Fund through June, 2013.

For faculty retirees, the prominent features of the plan will continue to be:

- No cap on the amount of the plan premium which the District will pay for the primary plan;
- \$15 per office visit co-pay;
- \$200 medical deductible;
- \$50 prescriptions deductible;
- \$500 maximum out-of-pocket payment for mail-in prescriptions;
- \$20 cost for each 90-day generic mail-in prescription;
- \$60 cost for each 90-day brand mail-in prescription;
- \$10 per 30-day generic retail prescription and \$30 per 30-day brand retail prescription;
- \$1,500 out-of-pocket maximums for hospitalization.

For faculty retirees not covered by the settlement:

Your Anthem Blue Cross plan coverage remains the same through June 30, 2013. In fact, there has been no plan or cost change for active and retired faculty employees since July 1, 2005.

For administrative, supervisory, confidential and classified retirees covered by the settlement:

Your Anthem Blue Cross plan did change again for 2010-11, and plan changes will continue to compound into the future with both cost and reimbursement consequences.

In 2009-10 the Plan changes included an increase in the per office visit co-pay from \$15 to \$20 and the addition of a \$100 co-pay for hospital emergency room visits if you

are not admitted for an overnight stay. Also, the District set a cap on what it would pay for the plan premiums at \$13,447 per year. These changes remain in place for 2010-11. The \$5 increase in office visit co-pay and the \$100 emergency room co-pay continue to be reimbursable from the District Settlement Fund.

Due to the cap on what the District will pay for the plan premiums the following additional changes were negotiated for 2010-11:

-The prescription deductible will increase from \$50 to \$100. This increase will not be reimbursable from the Settlement Fund because it will only increase the composite cost of the medical deductible, prescriptions deductible and mail-in out-of-pocket maximums from \$750 to \$800, which is less than what the Settlement Agreement (6% annual increase) would have allowed as an increase in composite cost in 2010-11. That amount which would have been \$893.

-The prescription co-pay will change from \$10 for generic and \$30 for brand to \$10 for generic formulary, \$20 for brand formulary and \$50 for non-formulary. (The Anthem Blue Cross formulary is a list of prescription drugs that are considered safe and effective are therefore 'preferred' medications for purposes of benefit coverage. A list of medications and their generic equivalents and the prescription drugs in the formulary list can be found on the company's website at http://pd.web.anthem.com/wpff/forms/SG_GenRX.pdf. Most Anthem Blue Cross employee groups have utilized the formulary for years; the managers and classified have agreed to do so for the first time for 2010-11).

-For prescriptions purchased through mail-in, you will not be eligible for reimbursement since mail-in is part of the composite Settlement Agreement which has been previously referenced. However, if your mail-in non-formulary prescription is charged at the rate of \$50, the added non-formulary cost will cause you to meet the \$500 maximum out-of-pocket sum sooner. After you have spent \$500 on mail-in prescriptions, all additional prescriptions are free.

-For prescriptions purchased retail from local commercial sources, the amount charged above the previous \$10 generic and \$30 brand co-pay will be reimbursable.

With the above-mentioned 2010-11 plan changes, the medical insurance premium (medical, dental, vision) paid

Political Committee report**Retirees meet with Board candidates****BY LARRY MANSON**

During the past two years, the Political Committee has met with all members of the VCCCD Board of Trustees at one time or another.

With this year's election, the Political Committee again contacted all the candidates and invited them to a meeting. For this year, the Political Committee is made up of Yvonne Bodle Farris, Harry Culotta, Gary Johnson, Larry Manson (Chair), Gary B. Morgan, and Rene Rodriguez.

The committee met with Steve Blum, who was unopposed in District Area 1; with Art Hernandez, unopposed in Area 5; and with Dianne McKay, Dan Peate, and Sylvia Sullivan, all running in Area 2. The Area 2 seat became open when Cheryl Heitman decided not to run for another term.

Although they were unopposed, the committee decided to endorse Blum and Hernandez in recognition of their service as Trustees.

In the case of the Area 2 candidates, the committee decided that all three candidates had strengths and that the committee would not make an endorsement.

Dianne McKay won the Area 2 election. She has a strong record of involvement in K-12 education in the Conejo Valley.

Meantime, Area 4 Trustee Robert Huber was elected mayor of Simi Valley. His Board seat was vacated and the Board appointed a new member in his place rather than spend about \$100,000 for a special election.

Several candidates were interviewed at the January Board meeting and the Board, with strong support from Trustees Hernandez and Larry Miller, chose Bernardo Perez, a former mayor of Moorpark.

Between elections, the Political Committee will continue to maintain communications with members of the Board of Trustees to serve as a resource and to communicate retirees' concerns.

Benefits changes for 2010-2011 reviewed**(From page 4)**

by the District will exceed the negotiated cap by \$1,035 (\$14,482 is the total premium cost, minus the \$13,447 cap).

-Current classified and management employees have agreed to a two-tiered rate structure to compensate the District for the above-the-cap cost of the premium. Employees without dependents will pay no part of the premium, while employees with dependents will pay approximately \$121 per month deducted from their salary.

-Classified and management retirees hired before July 24 or August 8, 1990 (depending on status), whether in the settlement group or not cannot be charged any part of the premium for the primary plan — ever.

-Those hired after these dates (again depending on status) could be required to pay the same amount as active employees according to the District. We will have to see how the District chooses to proceed on this issue and then develop a Retiree Association response.

As a non-cost change in the medical plan, a pre-approval will be required through AIM Radiology for complex (expensive) radiology procedures such as CT Scans, MRI's and PET Scans. If such procedures are recommended or required, check with the District to determine how to proceed.

The Benefits Committee continues to stress the obvious savings value of filling long term prescriptions through the Express Scripts mail-in process.

We also endorse the benefits of signing up for Medicare Part A and B when you turn 65 if you are eligible and remind those who are covered by the settlement that doing so is a requirement for receiving some of the settlement benefits.

The Benefits Committee needs to include members who were hired before 1990 but retired after August 31, 2007, and are not covered by the Settlement. Please contact Gary Johnson (987-5069 or freevcnet@aol.com) if you are willing to serve so we can explore how elements of the settlement may apply to you and your group.

Check out the web page often

Get the latest information; site is available 24/7

BY RENE G. RODRIGUEZ

The VCCCD Retirees' Association website, www.vcccdra.org, was designed, established and maintained by yours truly (who has also been its webmaster since its inception in September 2006).

The site was created to give members quick access to information regarding the goings-on of the Retirees' Association.

The main focus of the website, through its "What's New" webpage and access to the online version of the association's newsletter, *The Monitor*, had been to keep association members informed regarding developments relating to its lawsuit against the District and subsequent negotiations which led to a successful, court-approved settlement agreement on January 8, 2010.

The Retirees' Association website continues to serve as an important source of information for settlement class retirees as the association implements the settlement agreement.

The Monitor appears on this website as soon as it is published, and it usually appears on the web site a week or two before you get your own copy in the mail, if you receive a paper copy.

In addition, count on past issues of *The Monitor* being available to you at the website whenever you need to view or download a copy for printing or simply check your

recollection on something. Often, it is much more convenient for me to go to my computer to access a copy of *The Monitor* than to dig up an issue from my files.

Here are just a few of the things

**Be sure to visit
www.vcccdra.org
today!**

you'll find on the website. If you need to know:

- when the next annual meeting of the association will be, or
 - what happened at the association's last annual meeting, or
 - when the next issue of *The Monitor* is coming out, or
 - who is on the Executive Board, or
 - who the chairs of the various committees are, or
 - who the members of a committee are
- you'll find it on the website.

If you need to gain access to important documents such as the bylaws of the association or a copy of the recent settlement agreement, or the insurance reimbursement form, then look for the appropriate page at the website's home page.

The information you seek is published at this site as soon as it is available.

If you wish to contact any officer or committee chair, or any

member of the association, or wish to send us a change in your address or phone number, or you wish to communicate with us for any reason, direct your query to the general email address of vcccdra@yahoo.com and we'll make sure your message gets to the right person.

The website is updated by each Friday if there is anything new to report. Emails directed to the organization through its email address, vcccdra@yahoo.com, are also checked on Fridays.

The website has had an average of 10 "hits" (visits) a week since it was created 3 ½ years ago, and it costs the association \$120 per year for two domain names (www.vcccdra.org and www.vcccdra.net) and its website privileges.

Future developments of the website depend on the needs and interests of association members.

If you have ideas for any additional appropriate use of this website on behalf of its members, please contact me through our site's email address, vcccdra@yahoo.com.

If you are interested in helping to maintain this website, or you are interested in helping to maintain and develop a particular page, please let me know.

Remember, the association website, www.vcccdra.org, is available to you 24/7. Make sure you take advantage of this important resource!

Membership Committee Report by Don Medley

IF YOU RECEIVE A PRINTED COPY OF THIS, AND IF THE ADDRESS HAND-WRITTEN, IT MEANS IT WAS ADDRESSED BY THE DISTRICT, WHICH CANNOT SUPPLY US THE ADDRESS. IF YOU DO NOT SEND US YOUR ADDRESS WE WILL REMOVE YOU FROM OUR LABEL FILE AND YOU WILL RECEIVE NO MONITORS IN THE FUTURE.

WE NEED ADDRESSES! THERE ARE MANY NEW RETIREES!

WE NEED ADDRESSES/PHONE NUMBERS/EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE. If you can help, call Don Medley at 805-482-8761 or email to don.medley@verizon.net. Thank you for your help.

Robert Anderson	Robert Arce	Beverly Barker	Eddie Baugh	Margaret Boles
James Botting	Elizabeth Bowker	Donald Brockett	Vincent Campo	Margaret (Peggy) Castor
Susan Carter	Linda K. Chapman	Joan Comstock	Paul Conley	Christy Corbett
Jeanette Cortez	Aseneth Cota	James Crowley	David Donaldson	Patricia Earl
Katherine Felter	Ruby Filar	Dallas Flanigan	Christina Garcia	Ron Halleran
Lucia Haro	Juan Hernandez	Teri Hernandez	Marge Imbach	Erlinda Tuyor Ispahani
Deborah Jacobson	Achla Jinda	Steven Kegley	Norma Letinsky	Michael McGann
Carolyn McKinney	Lynn Meschan	Michael Munoz	Norlene Neal	Stasia O'Neill
James Owen	Barbara Partee	Arthur Preston	Steve Price	Steve Righetti
John Roach	Emile Robb	Mary Ruiz	Joe Sabedra	Reynaldo Santos
Larry Smithson	Mark Thomas Spragins	Nancy Stewart	Diane Sukiennk	Art Szylewicz
E. Burns Taft	Joan Thompson	Neriman Urkmez	Florencia Wallace	Dora Washington
Ernest Williams	Janice Wiley			

Please correct your roster with the following changes:

Linda Courter	John Emrick	Jeff Ferguson	Sharon Newman	Del Parker
Street Name for Desmond Jones:				
Linda Porter	Linda A. Rovai	Shelley Signor	Phillip L. Westin	
Gary Van Meter	Lynn L. Vickers (nee Knipping)			

Telephone number Adds/Changes: Jack Fleming George Lanning

New Email Addresses: Marie Soo Hoo:
Sharon Newman:
Linda Courter:

All these emails were returned Ola Washington, Eileen L. Welser, Bill McEnroe, George Wymer as undeliverable

Email Address changes needed: .

Dave & Jean Abraham	Rita Beahan	Marge Berg	Alberto Beron	Armando R. Castillo
Betty R. Coffey	Tom Everton	Joan Faskin-Johnson	Hitoshi Kajihara	Marilyn Kauffman
Mary (Jean) Kauffman	Clara Kimbrough	Virginia Lawler	Clara Lawson	Norman Mallory
Lucie Marsh	Tom McDannold	Michael Meeks	Shelton Mehr	Johnna L. Morton
Mary Taylor-Parr	Susan van Marian	Steve Pollock	Beverly Pearson	Robert Reynolds
	William Thieman	Richard Phelps	Eliza Thomas	

And anyone who does not get our emails.

The Monitor, Winter 2011

Privacy Policy

The VCCCDRA does not give out member addresses, phones, or email addresses without the individual's permission. Nor does the VCCCDRA sell its mailing list.

Look for us on the Web at

<http://www.vcccdra.org>

2010-2011 Executive Board

Harry Culotta, President

Pat Gage, Treasurer

René G. Rodriguez, Past President

Gary Johnson, Benefits Committee Chair

Gary B. Morgan, Vice President

Don Medley, Membership Committee Chair

Marie Soo Hoo, Secretary

Larry Manson, Political Committee Chair

**VCCCD Retirees' Association
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