



THE BULLETIN

Retired Employees of the City & County of San Francisco, Inc.

President's Message

By Sue Blomberg, President

There's a song in the musical "Camelot" entitled "If Ever I Would Leave You." Sir Lancelot sings it to Guinevere, telling her what he loves about her during each of the four seasons. I have a great fondness for all seasons since I grew up in Portland, Oregon, which has four definite seasons. San Francisco has only two—one a little warmer, the other a little cooler.

One way I view the passage of time is through nature's cycles. This past week (early October) the weather has been manifesting itself as fall; blue sky, crisp air, leaves falling, mums in the supermarket flower stands, and pumpkins—lots of pumpkins. I especially like reverting back to standard time; it gets dark earlier—complete with welcoming lights in the windows, different wreaths on the doors, and the opportunity to count our blessings at Thanksgiving.

Winter brings a reason to wear the heavy coat that you keep in the back of the closet, and ushers in the holiday season with the various traditions that each group celebrates.



Soon, it's a new year—a chance to make plans to change our lives. And, if you live in a colder climate, it brings snow and all the beauty that generates.

Spring! New leaves coming into bud; bunches of "pink popcorn" on the flowering fruit trees; crocus and daffodils and tulips peeping through the ground; more light each day; celebrations for new beginnings;

continued on Page 2

November 2012 Calendar

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 14
 Socializing and refreshments:
 11:10 – 11:50 a.m.
 Program: 11:30 a.m.
 Business meeting: noon
 Bingo: 12:45 p.m.
 Irish Cultural Center,
 45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

The Bulletin
Editorial Committee Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 20, 9 a.m.
 Taraval Police Station
 All interested parties welcome.

Executive Board Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 20, 10 a.m.
 Taraval Police Station
 All interested parties welcome.

Public Meetings:
Retired Firemen & Widows Association
Sunday, Nov. 11, 2 p.m.
 St. Gabriel Caf., 40th Ave. & Ulloa

Veteran Police Officers
Tuesday, Nov. 13, 11 a.m.
 Pacific Rod & Gun Club,
 520 John Muir Dr., at Lake Merced

Retirement System
Wednesday, Nov. 14, 3 p.m.
 30 Van Ness, Suite 3000

Health Service System
Thursday, Nov. 15, 1 p.m.
 City Hall, Room 416

UESF Retired Division
 For time/location, contact
 Gerry Meister at (415) 956-8373 or
gerrymeister1@earthlink.net

In This Issue

Health Service Report	p. 3	POB Report	p. 5
Travel Report	p. 3	Retirement Report	p. 6
October Meeting Photos	p. 4	See's Candy Order Form	p. 7

Useful Phone Numbers

S.F. Retirement System
 Web site: www.sfgov.org/sfers
 Phone Numbers:
 (415) 487-7000 • (888) 849-0777
Health Service System
 Web site: www.myhss.org
 Phone Numbers:
 (415) 554-1750 • (800) 541-2266
 Phone Hours for both:
 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.

New Member

Christine Del Carlo

President's Message

continued from Page 1

storing the winter coat. And, let's not forget my birthday!

I don't know any child who doesn't look forward to summer—no more school! Also, beautiful flowers; abundant varieties of fruits and vegetables; long light days; getting away to visit relatives and friends; and exploring new cities and new cultures.

Of course, each season has its downside; and yes, some of them affect me. But I'm an optimist, and try to be positive in my thinking about people and events. I don't bury my head in the sand, but also don't look for negatives.

We each have our own favorite time of year, and personal reasons why it's the favorite. I challenge each of you to open your eyes and hearts to enjoy *all* the marvelous season changes.

Did You Receive a Letter From Blue Shield?

Many members of HSS have received a letter from Blue Shield regarding an undercharge on prescription medicines, and requesting payment to Blue Shield for the under-collected amount. We suggest that you contact Blue Shield to determine which medications were undercharged and whether there is a change in your co-pay for those prescriptions. You may also call the Health Service System at (415) 554-1750 or (800) 541-2266.

Membership and Subscriptions

Retired City Employees: annual membership is \$36 per year or \$400 for a lifetime (may be payable over four months or over four years in increments of \$100 per year).

- Subscription only is \$36 per year.
- Please download membership application form from our Web site, www.sfretirees.org.

The Bulletin is the publication of the Retired Employees of the City & County of San Francisco, Inc., a nonprofit organization. *The Bulletin* is published to express the policies, ideals and accomplishments of the organization. Nothing shall be published herein that is racist, sexist, ageist or that is derogatory towards religious beliefs and other personal issues; nor shall be published anything in violation of Article VII, Section 1 of the Constitution. Editorial contributions from individuals, organizations and groups other than RECCSF and its members may be included in *The Bulletin* only upon the approval of the Editorial Committee.

Subscriptions to *The Bulletin* are available for \$36. Submissions to *The Bulletin* are solicited and encouraged and should be submitted to:

RECCSF Office, Attn: Sheila Mullen
3915 Irving Street, S.F., Ca. 94122-1294
Telephone: (415) 681-5949 Fax: (415) 681-5398
alfrmsf@aol.com and sheilamullen@mac.com

Al Casciato, Editor

RECCSF OFFICERS:

Sue Blomberg, President

Al Casciato, 1st Vice President

John Madden, 2nd Vice President

Claire Zvanski, Secretary

George Lau, Treasurer

Leo Martinez, Sergeant-at-Arms

Rest In Peace

The following members have recently passed away.

Edwin T. Conway	GEN	Elizabeth M. Peirano	PUC
Kenneth H. Glasgow	BOE	Michael C. Resch	DPT
Ray S. Harman	BOE	Alice Siegenthaler	HHP
Morris Hazen	POL	Robert F. Vogel	DPH
Tillie F. Manick	FIR		

Health Service Committee Report

By Gerry Meister

2013 Open Enrollment Over — Almost

Oct. 31 is the deadline for making changes in your 2013 health plans. Because the open enrollment period for July 1—Dec. 31 was concluded so recently, the number of changes in this open enrollment period is expected to be relatively small. All but a few complicated changes should have been completed before the Jan. 1 opening of the new health plan year. If you made changes, your completed open enrollment form and any required eligibility information must have been received at the HSS office, 1145 Market, 2nd floor, by 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 31. Because of all the staff work involved in implementing this second open enrollment within one year, the annual HSS Fair had to be cancelled. We look forward to its return next year.

2012 HSS Membership: Trends & Demographics

When we talk about enrollment in HSS medical plans, we often talk about “covered lives.” That term includes HSS members and their dependents, and the total number now is 108,027 covered lives, an increase of 1,271 over 2011. For the third consecutive year, enrollment in Kaiser increased. It’s now 54,308, up 2,852 since 2011. Blue Shield enrollment is 44,384, a 225 decrease. City Plan enrollment continues to shrink. It’s now 9,335—and only 1,256 of those are employee lives. What’s happening is that Kaiser’s enrollment of both employee lives and retiree lives continues to increase, while Blue Shield’s continues to drop, but less steeply—and City Plan’s steadily decreasing enrollment is now made up mostly of retiree lives.

Another area of current interest involves the numbers of

employee lives as compared to retiree lives in HSS. At present, there are 74,213 employee lives enrolled in HSS, as compared to 33,814 retiree lives. That’s 69% vs. 31% of total enrollees. There has been no appreciable change since 2008. One other significant change—but only for HSS employers—has been that the proportion of retiree members now in Medicare has reached 68%. Since Medicare is the primary payer for these members, the more retirees in Medicare, the lower the amount HSS employers have to pay for retiree healthcare.

The city & county covers 86,166 or 80% of HSS enrollees, the school district 15,968 or 15%, the community college district 4,532 or 4%, and the superior court 1,361 or 1%.

Questions? Comments? Please contact Health Service Committee Chair Ray Mason at (650) 344-1506.

Travel Committee Report

By Beverly Pardini and Marylou Allen

Wed–Fri, Nov. 21–23

Leave all the turkey fixin’s to someone else and join the group for a two-night stay at the Silver Legacy in downtown Reno. Included: a bountiful Thanksgiving buffet dinner & other casino visits.

Thur, Dec. 20

The Highlands Dell Lodge, located on the Russian River in Monte Rio, is serving a delicious early dinner while William Florian (formally with the New Christy Minstrels) entertains with songs from the ’70s. Before return, a Santa Rosa-Rohnert

Park-Petaluma area motorcoach holiday light tour.

Sat, Jan. 19

Crab Feed in Petaluma! Lion’s Club International of Petaluma annual all you-can eat crab feed features fresh Dungeness crab from Bodega Bay; feast also includes salad, pasta, French bread & ice cream.

Wed–Fri, Feb. 20–22

Trip though The Sierra Nevada on Amtrak’s California Zephyr. Motorcoach to Sacramento to board train. (Coach continues on to Reno with luggage). Bring your own lunch or eat in the dining car. Pick up coach in Reno for two-night stay

at Silver Legacy; casino visits & refund packages included. **Reservation deadline: Nov. 20.**

Info: Marylou at
1 (800) 334-3465 or
mrylallen@yahoo.com.

Annual Firefighter Toy Program

If you can, please bring unwrapped toys to the Nov. 14 meeting, to help disadvantaged kids have a happy holiday. (Checks payable to SFFFD Toy Program are also gratefully accepted.)

OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING



*Community College Board
candidate Chris Jackson*



*District 7 Board of Supervisors
candidate Andrew Bley*



*Community College Board
candidate Hanna Leung*



*Board of Education candidate
Rachel Norton*



*District 7 Board of Supervisors
candidate Norman Yee*



*School Board candidate Beverly
Popek*



*District 7 Board of Supervisors
candidate F.X. Crowley*

**Due to Office Manager Reyna Kuk's fall class
schedule, RECCSF office hours are:
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9 a.m.–noon;
Tuesday, Thursday: 9 a.m.–11 a.m.**

Protect Our Benefits Report

By Gerry Meister,
Communications Chair

Protect Our Benefits is an independent political action committee which falls under the provisions of the San Francisco Ethics Commission and is not part of RECCSF. The opinions presented are those of the author.

Don't Forget To Vote

As the 2012 election season draws to a close, I'd like to remind you of the three recommendations POB has made this year. Although many of us feel strongly about other items on the ballot, POB's focus is always on those items that directly affect the benefits and welfare of retirees in the Health Service and City retirement systems. Here again are POB's recommendations.

No On Proposition 32

This intentionally deceptive initiative, backed by millions of dollars from Super PACs and extremely wealthy individuals, has been marketed as even-handed "political reform." In fact, it is intended to destroy the

political strength of public and private sector unions and other politically active membership organizations, while expanding the power of those who back it.

Yes On Proposition 30

Proposition 30 would raise \$6 to \$9 billion a year in new revenue for seven years, to begin restoring \$20 billion in cuts made to early childhood, K-12, and higher education in the past few years. It would increase the annual income tax rate for individuals making more than \$250,000 a year and families making more than \$500,000, and raise the sales tax ¼ cent for four years. This new revenue would allow general fund money to be used for reducing the state budget deficit and providing funding for essential local services.

No On Proposition 38

Although this proposition would raise money for K-12 education, there's nothing in it for our vital community college system. The tax rate increase to fund Prop 38 would start with

those earning \$7,300 a year. The brother of Prop 38's main backer has already spent at least \$43 million to pass Prop 32 and defeat Prop 30.

POB Lawsuit Update

POB lawyers have heard from the state attorney general's staff that our lawsuit to restore the supplementary COLA has been circulated among senior staffers and that a decision about how we can proceed is expected in November, or early December. If the ruling is not favorable, our lawyers will immediately shift the case into superior court. Check the POB Web site, www.ProtectOurBenefits.org, for the latest information. To help pay for the lawsuit, mail a check to: *Protect Our Benefits (POB), P.O. Box 320057, San Francisco, CA 94132.* Your donation is not tax deductible under federal or state law.

Questions? Comments? Contact Gerry at gerrymeister1@earthlink.net, or POB, P.O. Box 320057, San Francisco CA 94132.

Breezing Through the Holidays

By Jeremy Fong, San Francisco
Federal Credit Union

Remember the stress that accompanied the holidays last year? Would you like to avoid that stress this year?

Here's how: Set a budget and stick to it; make a gift list that includes the people you would like to buy for with a couple of ideas for each person, and a price range; plan ahead to make time for holiday errands.

Other Tips:

- Know the store's refund or exchange policy and ask for gift receipts.

- Call the stores first to see if they have what you are looking for; this will save you time, gas money, and frustration!
- Use the Internet and catalogues if you are adverse to the mall crowds, but be aware of shipping costs and timeframes.
- Throw a potluck instead of a full dinner party; it takes some of the pressure and expense off of your shoulders. Or simply throw an appetizer or dessert party instead.
- Send holiday postcards instead of greeting cards; they are less expensive to purchase and mail.
- Reduce stress by reducing the amount of social engagements that you commit to, or make plans to meet in January when time is more abundant.
- Make a New Year's resolution to budget throughout the upcoming year for next year's holiday season!

Looking for financial advice? As a benefit of being a member at San Francisco Federal Credit Union, you can have access to BALANCE, a complimentary financial education and counseling service. Call (415) 775-5377, option 4, or visit www.SanFranciscoFCU.com for more information about membership and BALANCE.

Retirement Committee Report

By Jean S. Thomas,
Herb Meiberger, CFA,
and Stephen Herold

Brian Stansbury Wins SFERS Board Election

We congratulate and welcome **Brian Stansbury** (SFPD), our newly-elected SFERS commissioner. The vote was 7,036 for Brian and 6,293 for his opponent, **Gus Vallejo** (SFERS). Brian attended his first SFERS Commission meeting on Oct. 10, and immediately displayed his investment knowledge by making informed comments and asking intelligent questions.

Plan Performance Improves

For the first quarter of FY 2012/13, preliminary figures show Plan value at about \$15.9B with earnings a solid 4.5%—compare these results to fiscal year ended 6/30/2012 (FY 2011/12) when Plan value was \$15.2B and total fiscal year earnings were 1.64%. FY 2012/13 first quarter's star performer was international equities (23% of the Fund value, about \$3.6B) which has gone from being an earnings laggard to a solid 8% earner!

Currency Overlay Program—a Long-Standing Controversial Issue

Background: The currency overlay program allows managers to buy and sell currencies with the hope of earning returns against a zero benchmark (that is, gains and losses offset). Initially, (August 2005) the program's objective was risk reduction. Subsequently, (December 2009 to June 2012), the

program morphed from eliminating risk to making money (AKA creating *alpha*). *Financial results of the program from inception to date (August 2005 to June 2012) are: gross returns, \$3.4M; less management fees, \$30.8M; resulting net loss, \$27.4M. Board's controversy and actions:* For about a year, Commissioners **Meiberger** and **Makras** have criticized the program and asked that it be discontinued—it's not doing its job and is losing money, they say. Other commissioners, especially **Driscoll** and **Paskin-Jordan**, counter; and agree with SFERS' investment staff and **Angeles** (SFERS' outside investment consultants) that the current program (making money) has been in place "only" three years, which is not long enough to judge its merits. Finally, at the Oct. 10 Board meeting, the Board majority voted to retain the currency overlay program. (Commissioners Meiberger and Makras were the only "no" votes.) Angeles conceded that the program should be reduced from 75% to 50% of the \$3.6B international equity assets, and that's where the matter stands. Although this program is very complex, we think it's worth reporting on as an example of how Board members make *difficult* decisions that affect us all. If you can, come to Board meetings and judge for yourselves how our commissioners handle our money!

Other items of interest

- Changing allocations to various sub-asset classes are in process. A major one: combining U.S. equities and

international equities into one global equity class, which recognizes that where a country is "domiciled" (has its home office) is no longer relevant in the modern world. Staff also recommends terminating the "enhanced S&P 500" strategy because performance has been disappointing.

- The Board of Supervisors' Audits and Oversight Committee will hear the S.F. Civil Grand Jury's report on SFERS' financial performance—discussed in detail in our October column—later this month. That committee can push the Grand Jury's recommendations forward to the full Board of Supervisors or permanently table them. *Stay tuned for developments.*

Questions? Comments? Contact Herb at herb.sf@gmail.com; Jean at jeansthomas@yahoo.com, or (415) 665-4149; or Stephen at Stephen.home@att.net, or (415) 664-1201.

Annual Holiday Party Reminder!

Our Annual Holiday Party will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 12, at the United Irish Cultural Center, 45th Ave. and Sloat Blvd. Party features festive decorations, special refreshments, and our very popular annual raffle! Plan on arriving early to greet all your friends, some of whom you may not often meet at our regular meetings.

SEE'S CANDY

RECCSF is taking orders for See's Candy one-pound gift certificates at the discounted price of \$16 each. Order by mail, or at the Nov. 14 general membership meeting. Certificates will be distributed at the Dec. 12 Holiday Party. If you wish your certificate(s) mailed to you, please check the box below, include 10¢ per certificate in your check, and make sure to write your address on the order form. Do not send an envelope—we can't use them to mail the certificates. Certificates not being mailed will be available at the Dec. 12 Holiday Party.

We do not order actual boxes of candy—only gift certificates.

All orders must be received by Dec. 5, and accompanied by a check.

No exceptions!

Questions? Contact RECCSF Office Manager Reyna Kuk at (415) 681-5949 or reccsf@att.net.

SEE'S CANDY ORDER FORM (Please print!)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail address _____

Number of **one-pound certificates**: _____ @ \$16.00 per certificate = \$ _____

Attached is my check payable to RECCSF, in the amount of \$ _____

Mail order form and check to: RECCSF, 3915 Irving Street, San Francisco, CA 94122

ATTN: See's Candy

Please mail my certificates to the address below.

I have included 10¢ per certificate in my check.

Street address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

The Bulletin
November 2012
Volume 113, Number 10

Al Casciato, Editor
Sheila Mullen, Managing Editor
Office: (415) 681-5949
Fax: (415) 681-5398
Office e-mail: reccsf@att.net

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 14

United Irish Cultural Center,
45th Ave. & Sloat

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 20
Taraval Police Station

➔ **LOOK NOW AT YOUR MAILING LABEL.**
The month posted on the label
is the date your dues expire.



The Bulletin (USPS 896-740) is published monthly except August for \$36 per year by the Retired Employees of the City and County of San Francisco, 3915 Irving St., San Francisco, CA 94122-1294. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Francisco, CA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BULLETIN, 3915 Irving St., San Francisco, CA 94122-1294.

Note to members

**Please keep RECCSF updated
with changes in address,
phone number and e-mail.**

Letters to the Editor Welcome at
alfrmsf@aol.com & sheilamullen@mac.com

The Bulletin
December Deadline:

• Friday, Nov. 16
5:30 p.m.

Please e-mail your articles to:
alfrmsf@aol.com &
sheilamullen@mac.com

Visit our Web site:

sfretirees.org

**RECCSF office
e-mail address:**

reccsf@att.net

Welcome, New Retirees

Upcoming General Membership Meeting Programs

Wednesday, Nov. 14

Each month we put donations into the St. Anthony's Fare Box. Now you have a chance to find out just how those donations are being used. Alina Trowbridge of the St. Anthony's Development Department will be our guest speaker, and will bring us up to date on the progress of the new dining hall and other aspects of the St. Anthony Foundation.

Nov. 14 – Regular meeting

Refreshments available: 11:10 – 11:50 a.m. • Program: 11:30 a.m. • Business meeting: noon • Bingo: 12:45 p.m.

United Irish Cultural Center, 45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.