

Official Publication of the Retired Employees of the City and County of San Francisco

# NEWS & VIEWS

A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION WORKING FOR ALL CITY RETIREES

## Health Service Committee Report

By visiting contributor  
Rosemary Passantino,  
San Francisco Health Service System

Health benefits for retirees of the City & County of San Francisco are governed by the city charter. Luckily, there are no ballot propositions in November 2015 relating to retiree benefits; but ballot propositions over the years have shaped the way employee and retiree health benefits are administered and paid for. Following is a short history of the highlights.

- From 1932 to 1995, the Health Service System and its governing board functioned as an independent agency. In 1995, voters approved Proposition E, which put a new city charter in place. This moved the Health Service System to under the Department of Human Resources for the following nine years.
- In 2004, city voters made a change, approving Proposition C. This reestablished the Health Service System as a separate city department, under the authority of the Health Service Board. Seven city supervisors supported the measure, stating "protection of our health care dollars in a trust fund needs attention, oversight and defense." This administrative structure remains in place today.
- November 2011 brought two competing ballot propositions about fiscal responsibility and pension reform. They also included provisions relating to health benefits. The 2011 Proposition C passed; among other items, it changed premium contributions for retired employees hired after Jan. 9, 2009; retiree premium contributions for these employees are now tiered, based on years of

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## Retirement Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski, Herbert Weiner,  
and Herb Meiberger, CFA

### Fiscal Year 2016/15 Earnings

- FY 2015/16 earnings continued their downtrend trend. For the first three months of the new fiscal year, the Fund lost 4.13%, attributable to losses of 4.16% for U.S. stocks and 9.29% for international stocks.
- The Chinese economy has been weak, and Chinese stocks have declined significantly, having a ripple effect across other markets.
- The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for QII, 2015 was +3.7%, increasing from the slight contraction of -.7% in QI, 2015. The employment market is strong and consumer prices are reportedly low, which is good news for the economy. The U.S. Federal Reserve continues its drama about raising short-term interest rates.

### Executive Sessions on Investments and Public Comment

- After public comment, the Board engaged in a closed-door meeting on three investment recommendations.
- Members of the public voiced their concerns about being forced to leave the meeting after public comment. Retirement Board President Malia Cohen, mindful of the requests, stated that there would be a "time certain" when the closed sessions would conclude and members could return to attend the meeting.

### Update on Request for Proposal (RFP) for Custody and Securities Lending

- As mentioned last month, the custodian bank has an important role

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## November Calendar

### Regular Meeting

Wednesday, Nov. 11  
Business meeting & program: 10 a.m.  
Irish Cultural Center  
45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

### News & Views

### Editorial Committee Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 9 a.m.  
Taraval Police Station  
All interested parties welcome.

### Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 10 a.m.  
Taraval Police Station  
All interested parties welcome.

### Public Meetings:

#### Retired Firemen &

#### Widows Association

Thursday, Nov. 19, 1 p.m.  
Irish Cultural Center,  
45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

#### Veteran Police Officers

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 11 a.m.  
San Francisco Scottish Rite  
Masonic Center,  
2850 19th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

### Retirement System

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 1 p.m.  
1145 Market St., 6th Floor

### Health Service System

Thursday, Nov. 12, 1 p.m.  
City Hall, Room 416

*The HSS Board will hold a four-hour strategic update and forum, instead of its regular meeting. Topics will include environmental plans and compliance, surrogate offerings, and the strategic plan. All are welcome.*

### UESF Retired Division

For time/location, contact  
Diane Doe at 1 (415) 822-2099 or  
[Ddoe@mac.com](mailto:Ddoe@mac.com).

### SEIU 1021 West Bay

#### Retirees Chapter

Monday, Nov. 16, 12-2 p.m.  
Union Hall, 350 Rhode Island St.,  
100 South Bldg.  
Contact: David Williams  
1 (415) 939-5149 or [iamdhw@comcast.net](mailto:iamdhw@comcast.net).

# Retirement Committee Report

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in safeguarding your assets. The custodian holds the Fund's assets, collects dividends and interest, enables transactions, calculates performance, and performs other important services.

- Northern Trust has provided custody and securities lending services since 1996. Due to Northern Trust's poor management of this program, it froze approximately \$250 million throughout SFERS' "cash accounts" in Fall, 2008. Commissioner Meiberger stated that SFERS was forced to liquidate other securities at distressed prices to raise cash to pay our benefits. In addition, SFERS lost the opportunity to take advantage of buying assets at distressed prices. Managing Director of Public Securities Robert Shaw disputed this characterization, and stated that staff would follow up.
- Commissioner Makras voiced his concerns that the 20-month delay in taking action on the RFP biases the process against new candidates. Commissioner Makras visited Northern Trust's offices in Chicago to do "due diligence," and, specifically, to observe the execution of trades. Northern Trust failed to satisfy his legitimate request.
- Commissioner Makras made the motion to delay releasing the RFP at "the call of the chair," passing unanimously. The "blackout" period remains lifted.

## Retirement Board documents are now available online!

- *Responding to public requests, Executive Director Jay Huish published online the documents that are discussed at the meetings!* Members of the public and the Board thanked the executive director for this enhanced service to the public.

## Deferred Compensation (DC) Plan

- The Board approved the release of an RFP for a manager for the Target Date Funds (TDFs). TDFs are important for members who would rather delegate fund selection to professionals.
- At the last meeting, Commissioner Makras requested that staff obtain information from other public funds on claims filed regarding the "insurance wrapper" for the Stable Value Fund. Caryn Bortnik, Interim DC Manager, stated that she researched the matter and was unaware of any such claims. Members pay about .20% (about \$3 million) annually for this insurance.

## Questions? Comments?

Contact Herb Meiberger at [herb.sf@gmail.com](mailto:herb.sf@gmail.com), Herbert Weiner at [h.weiner@sbcglobal.net](mailto:h.weiner@sbcglobal.net), or Claire Zvanski at 1 (415) 341-3085 or [czvanski@hotmail.com](mailto:czvanski@hotmail.com).

## New Members

Dan Merer	DPH	Joan Vellutini	REC
Jacqueline Robison	REC	Nancy Lim Yee	DPH
Susan Thompson	MTA		

# Health Service Committee Report

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service. The 2011 Prop. C also changed the composition of the Health Service Board, changing one elected member to a controller's appointee.

- Other important amendments have shaped City Charter Section A8.428. These include the 1984 Proposition E, which extended retiree health benefits to surviving spouses; and the 2000 Proposition E, designed to keep premium costs affordable for retirees, spouses and partners. The 2000 Prop. E was supported unanimously by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, to "protect the healthcare of people who work hard for all of us—and ensure they live with dignity and security."
- In 1898, San Francisco became one of the first places in the United States to adopt public referendums, giving local citizens direct access to democracy. City voters will continue to be presented with ballot propositions that have the power to change local law. As we can see from history, the city charter is subject to change. Being part of an organization like RECCSF will help keep you up to date and informed.

*And please note that the Health Service Board resumes meeting on Thursday, Nov. 12, at 1 p.m. in Room 416, City Hall. This meeting focuses on anticipated changes to health care benefits over the next two years.*

For meeting updates, visit [myhss.org/health\\_service\\_board](http://myhss.org/health_service_board). You may also view Health Service Board meetings online at [sfgovtv.org](http://sfgovtv.org).

## Oct. 15 Board Meeting Actions

- Approved September RECCSF Board minutes
- Accepted Treasurer's Report
- Tabled motion to rescind previous action

## Rest In Peace

The following members have recently passed away.

Sharon Christensen	PDR	Walter H. Hibbert	BOE
Elizabeth Clark	GEN	Hedda Kornfeld	DPH
Clifford S. Coull	TIS	Robert E. Leet	REC
Virginia Everson	DPH	William G. Mac Gurn	FIR
Samuel L. Garcia Jr.	DPT	Newton G. Mitzman	CON
Ann L. Hearne	GEN	Raymond C. O'Leary	FIR

# President's Message

By Claire Zvanski

The turnout for the October RECCSF Health Fair was impressive! Let's also turn out to the Thursday, Nov. 12 HSS meeting forum to hear anticipated trends in health care that will directly impact our benefits.

Listening at the Proposition C lawsuit court proceeding, I realized this is not yet over. The City has attorneys and unlimited funds to continue appeals. RECCSF doesn't have the financial resources to pursue a suit on its own, so we support POB's efforts. POB works hard to raise funds to pay legal costs. Ironically, there have been very few donations from miscellaneous retirees

who are the majority benefitting from this suit; police and fire retirees send regular donations. We have no problem demanding to know when we will get paid, or to complain that our rights have been violated, but it's challenging to "put our money where our mouth is."

As the holidays approach, please remember to be kind and accepting to everyone. Give love and thanks to family and friends, and don't forget to do something special for our pets.

Lastly, while donations to RECCSF are not tax deductible, we continue to need funds to continue our advocacy efforts on your behalf—so you can always donate to The Friends of RECCSF. There is always strength in numbers!



Questions? Comments? Contact [czvanski@hotmail.com](mailto:czvanski@hotmail.com) or 1 (415) 341-3085.

## See's Candy Gift Certificates

RECCSF is taking orders for See's Candy one-pound gift certificates at the discounted price of \$17 each. Order by mail, or at the Nov. 11 general membership meeting. Certificates will be distributed at the Dec. 9 Holiday Party.

If you wish your certificate(s) mailed to you, please check the box below, include 50¢ 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. 9 Holiday Party.

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

*All orders must be received by Dec. 4, and accompanied by a check. No exceptions!*

Questions? Contact RECCSF Office Manager Reyna Kuuk at [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net) or 1 (415) 681-5949.



### See's Candy Order Form (Please print!)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of one-pound certificates: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$17 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 50¢ per certificate in my check.

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

# October General Membership Meeting RECCSF Annual Health Fair



The RECCSF Annual Health Fair, which featured tables and presentations from vendors and free flu shots by Kaiser, attracted a tremendous attendance.



Member Richard Dolbec, DPH, signs up for his free flu shot from Kaiser R.N. Jo Ann Formoso.



Past RECCSF President Stephanie Lyons, Retirement, and member Margaret Cui, Dept. of Inspection.



Member Peggy Kang, Planning, receives her free flu shot from Kaiser R.N. Jane Diaz.



From left, member Barbara Hughes, DPT, and Blue Shield reps Adam Guenther and Charles Lee.



New member Rich Waller, General Services Agency.



Life member Patricia O'Connor, Public Health, back at a meeting after a long absence.



United Health Care R.N. Sandy Lynch gave a comprehensive overview of the new city health plan choice, Medicare Advantage PPO. Reps from Kaiser, Blue Shield and Delta Dental also made presentations.

# *Holiday Party Raffle Donations Needed!*

RECCSF is seeking donations for our  
Dec. 9 annual party raffle.

“Cash is king,” and new donated items are  
also welcome for the raffle.

If you can help, we have several options  
on how to connect with us:

- Drop off cash or items to Reyna Kuuk or Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey at the Wednesday, Nov. 11 RECCSF General Membership meeting;
- leave a message at the office: [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net) or 1 (415) 681-5949; or
- contact Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey at 1 (415) 467-6862, who can arrange for pickup.

*Thank you!*



## **Useful Phone Numbers**

**RECCSF Office**  
Email: [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net)  
Website: [sfretirees.org](http://sfretirees.org)  
Phone Number:  
1 (415) 681-5949

**S.F. Retirement System**  
Website: [www.sfgov.org/sfers](http://www.sfgov.org/sfers)  
Phone Numbers:  
1 (415) 487-7000  
1 (888) 849-0777

**Health Service System**  
Website: [www.myhss.org](http://www.myhss.org)  
Phone Numbers:  
1 (415) 554-1750  
1 (800) 541-2266

# Protect Our Benefits

By Skip McKinney

*Protect Our Benefits is an independent political action committee which falls under the provisions of the San Francisco Ethics Commission. The opinions are those of the writer.*

On Oct. 15, POB and the City met in the courtroom of Judge Mary Wiss on the motions for final judgment in the Prop C lawsuit; at this writing, a ruling is expected within the next seven to ten days. It was nice to see “a sea of gray hair” at the proceedings. I think that the court noticed it too; it put a face on the issue.

Needless to say, at the least the City was trying its best to confuse the court with its own interpretation of contractual law and the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco. The Retirement

Board, which pays our retirement pensions, **must follow the charter**. The charter is the sole reference for CCSF pension law, and can only be changed by a charter amendment voted by the electorate.

Both the City and POB will have the opportunity to submit responses to the court’s writ of mandate on Dec. 2 and Dec. 9, 2015; if necessary, there will be another hearing on those final responses.

I wouldn’t want to speculate on the court’s decision, but Protect Our Benefits will stay on top of the decision and interpret the ruling. “The goal and heart of POB is to leave no one behind.” For the latest updates on the status of the ruling, visit the POB website at [www.protectourbenefits.org](http://www.protectourbenefits.org) or our Facebook page.

There is a growing trend across the

nation to attack pension systems, so rest assured there will be other battles to fight. With the fiscal collapse of 2007-2008, the idea of blaming retirees and their pensions for the downfall became popular.

*If any RECCSF members know fellow retirees who are not aware of issues affecting their pensions, please inform them about POB and RECCSF; our best defense is to be aware of these challenges.*

*Protect Our Benefits is appreciative of your generous donations. Ongoing support is always needed. Please make your check payable to POB P.O. Box 320057, San Francisco, CA 94132, or make a donation at our website. Your donation is not tax deductible under federal or state law.*

*Remember, more than ever: “United we stand, divided we fall.”*

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## Avoiding a Financial Holiday Crisis

By Tessie Guinto,  
Member Services Supervisor  
San Francisco Federal Credit Union

**Make a list:** Decide before you head for the mall exactly who you plan on buying gifts for, and set a budget for each person on your list.

**Check it twice:** Total the amount that you will spend on all holiday gifts.

**Understand the Cost of Debt:** For example, if you plan on charging \$1500 this holiday season and your credit

card charges a 14% interest rate and requires that 3% of the balance be repaid monthly, you will find that it takes you three years and seven months to pay off this credit card, paying \$410 in interest!

**Smart Shopping:** In addition to arming yourself with a list and a budget you can also choose to shop with cash or debit cards—which will eliminate the dreaded credit card bills later. Studies show that folks spend less when using cash versus credit.

Avoiding a financial holiday crisis

starts with awareness. Knowing exactly who you need to buy for and how much you have to spend will help guide you this season. Understanding the cost of debt may influence you to use cash for most or all of your holiday purchases. The joy of the season need **not** lead to a fiscal headache in the new year.

The San Francisco Federal Credit Union can help you control your holiday spending this year. Contact us to learn about other products and services we offer that can save you money this season.

### RECCSF Secretary Position Vacant

A great opportunity to become more involved and meet other members.

Responsibilities:  
taking monthly board and general meeting minutes.  
If interested, please contact  
Claire Zvanski at  
1 (415) 341-3085  
or [czvanski@hotmail.com](mailto:czvanski@hotmail.com).

If you have any questions about *News & Views* going fully electronic as of the October 2015 issue (or have any other RECCSF-related questions), please leave a message at the RECCSF office at 1 (415) 681-5949 or email [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net); we will respond to your inquiries as soon as possible.

### Special HSS Meeting

Health Service System  
Thursday, Nov. 12, 1 p.m.

City Hall, Room 416  
*The HSS Board will hold a four-hour strategic update and forum, instead of its regular meeting. Topics will include environmental plans and compliance, surrogate offerings, and the strategic plan.  
All are welcome.*

# Travel Committee Report

By Beverly Pardini and  
Marylou Allen

Wed.–Fri., Nov. 25–27

Enjoy Thanksgiving in the East Tower at the Nugget in Sparks for two nights; includes a bountiful Thanksgiv-

## Annual Firefighter Toy Program



*If you can, please bring unwrapped toys to the Nov. 11 or Dec. 9 meeting, to help disadvantaged kids have a happy holiday. (Checks payable to SFFD Toy Program are also gratefully accepted.)*

*If you are unable to attend, please feel free to drop off your donation at any San Francisco Fire Station.*

ing buffet dinner—plus visits to other casinos for machine plays and food credits.

Mon.–Wed., Dec. 14–16

*Ebenezer—A musical Christmas Carol* is a classic Dickens story presented at the El Dorado in Reno, with an included buffet dinner. Two nights at the Silver Legacy, with escort-hosted cocktail party upon arrival, and visits to other casinos during stay.

Friday, Feb. 12

Visit to Monterey Bay Aquarium features expert guide for ADA-accessible 60-minute tour. Learn how they care for more than 35,000 plants and animals, make a home for a shark, grow a living kelp forest & more; lunch on your own.

Sun.–Wed., March 20-23

“Las Vegas at Leisure” includes three nights at the downtown Golden Nugget, roundtrip deluxe motor coach transportation, baggage handling, escorted day trip to Laughlin on the Colorado River, and a night motor coach tour of the “strip,” stopping at the Bellagio.

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



## Save the Date!

### Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2015

### RECCSF Annual Holiday Party Hosted Refreshments

The RECCSF Board will be hosting tea sandwiches, and fruit and vegetable platters at no cost to members!

If planning to attend, please RSVP to the RECCSF office at  
1 (415) 681-5949 or  
[reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net) by Wednesday, Dec. 2.

A signup sheet will be available at the Nov. 11 General Membership Meeting.

If planning to attend, please RSVP by Wednesday, Dec. 2, to help us plan for adequate refreshments.



## Membership and Subscriptions

for retired city employees as of July 31, 2015

Membership application: [www.sfretirees.org](http://www.sfretirees.org); email: [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net).

- \$48, annual
- \$600, lifetime (payable over six months in six payments of \$100 per month, or annually over six years in increments of \$100 per year)
- Subscriptions for mailed printed copies will be available for an additional \$25 a year. (Exceptions may be made for members without computer access.)

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

Submissions to *News & Views* are solicited and encouraged.

Submit in Word document to: [sheilamullen@mac.com](mailto:sheilamullen@mac.com), or  
Sheila Mullen, editor, RECCSF office, 3915 Irving St., San Francisco, CA 94122-1294  
Telephone: 1 (415) 681-5949, Fax: 1 (415) 681-5398



Retired Employees of the  
City and County of San Francisco,  
3915 Irving St.,  
San Francisco, CA 94122-1294

### *News & Views*

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Sheila Mullen, Editor

Office: 1 (415) 681-5949

Fax: 1 (415) 681-5398

Office email: [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net)

### **RECCSF Officers:**

Claire Zvanski, President

Linda Tabor-Beck,  
First Vice President

John Madden,  
Second Vice President

Secretary, Vacant

George Lau, Treasurer

Leo Martinez, Sergeant-at-Arms

### **Executive Board Meeting**

Nov. 17, 10 a.m.

Taraval Police Station

2345-24th Ave.

All interested parties welcome.

### *Note to members:*

Please keep RECCSF updated  
with changes in address,  
phone number and email.

### *News & Views*

**December Deadline:**

☛ Friday, Nov. 13, 5:30 p.m.

Please email your submissions to:  
[sheilamullen@mac.com](mailto:sheilamullen@mac.com).

Letters to the Editor of 50 words or less welcome.

All letters subject to further editing.

### **Visit our website:**

[sfretirees.org](http://sfretirees.org)

RECCSF office

email address:

[reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net)

## Welcome, New Retirees

### **Upcoming General Membership Meetings**

Wednesday, Nov. 11 “Roads” Scholar — Educational Program  
Al Garza, Nutrition Coach

Wednesday, Dec. 9 RECCSF Annual Holiday Party

The RECCSF Board will be hosting tea sandwiches, and fruit and vegetable platters at no cost to members! If planning to attend, please RSVP the RECCSF office at 1 (415) 681-5949 or [reccsf@att.net](mailto:reccsf@att.net) by Wednesday, Dec. 2, to help us plan for adequate refreshments.