



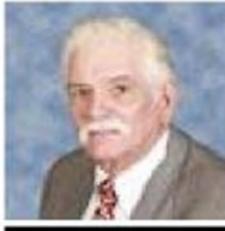
THE INTERCOM

Newsletter of the California Retired
County Employees Association (CRCEA)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here we are at the end of one year, heading into yet another. It seems like only yesterday when I was talking about the Fall Conference being right around the corner. Now it's gone; Halloween is gone; Thanksgiving is gone; Christmas is around the corner (as I write this); and the year of 2016 is right behind that.

Let me hope that the past holidays were times of family, friends, and good times. We all seem to get caught up in things, and it is easy to forget that family comes first. I plead guilty, and need a reminder now and then.

Well, the waiting is over and we now know that the Attorney General has issued the Title and Summary for the Reed-DiMaio initiatives. Personally, I am disap-

pointed in the soft (no, very soft) language and description that was provided this time around. The first time I thought that the language was right – a disastrous impact on defined benefit plans. This time, however, the real impacts were not set forth. In fact, the reference to both significant savings and costs to state and local government basically said nothing.

CRCEA's Retirement Security Committee worked tirelessly with those in Sacramento on the impact of the proposals. More specifically, let me again recognize Mike DeBord from Sacramento County for his major efforts in getting information and documents prepared for us to understand the ramifications of this initiative.

So, I guess the next move belongs to the proponents of these initiatives. Will they try to qualify both? Will they select one to run with? There are a number of thoughts being bantered about on the subject. Bottom line: remember that those signature gatherers don't really care

about the initiative, they want your signature that is worth anywhere from \$2 to \$5 in their pockets. They will misrepresent the petition itself in order to get you to sign it. Don't be fooled. Don't sign any of them.

I finally made the trip up to Marin County to meet with the retirees of MCARE at a quarterly luncheon. I spoke on several issues and then had an opportunity to speak individually with many of them. I found it a worthwhile endeavor in explaining CRCEA and what we do. Also present were representatives from the Marin County retirement system. It was great to interact with them, and there were way more agreements on issues than there were disagreements.

Okay, here I go again. CRCEA continues to reach out for Affiliates. Those are businesses that provide services to retirees or otherwise support public employees and retirees that we can approach to be affiliates of CRCEA. Bill de la Garza made a plea for assistance

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at the conference. If anyone has a suggestion or recommendation, please contact Bill de la Garza, or any member of the Executive Committee, and we will do the follow-up work.

I cannot let this message go without a shout-out to San Joaquin County (RPESJC) for the great job they did as host of our Fall Conference. Good information, a good mix of topics, and how could we complain about being educated on the Lodi area wineries. Oh yeah, we even got to sample. Good thing it was at the end of the work day. To President Bob Palmer and Committee Chair Pat Lynch and the entire cadre for volunteers – WELL DONE!

CRCEA is the only organization looking out for the retirees of '37 Act counties on the state level. February and March are generally high retirement months in our counties. If any of you know any retirees who are retiring and are not signed up to be members of your local retiree association, talk with them and encourage them to join. Only through numbers do we have strength and only through our strength can we obtain success.

Let me close with a wish for each of you for good times

and good health as we head in to yet another year. Yes, we have issues to deal with, but with our combined efforts we can overcome the obstacles.

Until next time.....



SKIP MURPHY, President

2016 STANDARD MILE-AGE RATES FOR BUSINESS, MEDICAL, AND MOVING ANNOUNCED (article provided by Carlos Gonzalez, Treasurer, CRCEA)

The Internal Revenue Service today issued the 2016 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2016, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 54 cents per mile for business miles driven, down from 57.5 cents for 2015
- 19 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes, down from 23 cents for 2015

- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The business mileage rate decreased 3.5 cents per mile and the medical, and moving expense rates decrease 4 cents per mile from the 2015 rates. The charitable rate is based on statute.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs.

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

A taxpayer may not use the business standard mileage rate for a vehicle after using any depreciation method under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS) or after claiming a Section 179 deduction for that vehicle. In addition, the business standard mileage rate cannot be used for more than four vehicles used simultaneously.

These and other requirements for a taxpayer to use a standard mileage rate to

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calculate the amount of a deductible business, moving, medical or charitable expense are in Rev. Proc. 2010-51. Notice 2016-01 contains the standard mileage rates, the amount a taxpayer must use in calculating reductions to basis for depreciation taken under the business standard mileage rate, and the maximum standard automobile cost that a taxpayer may use in computing the allowance under a fixed and variable rate plan.

~~from IRS Newswire

**NEVER GIVE UP
(author unknown)**

One day, a mule fell into a farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule praying, or whatever mules do when they fall into wells. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule, nor the well, could be saved. Instead, he called his neighbors together, told them what had happened, and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially the mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued

shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, HE WOULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!

This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up... shake it off and step up... shake it off and step up!" He repeated this over and over to encourage himself. No matter how distressing the situation seemed, the mule fought panic and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!

It wasn't long before the exhausted mule stepped triumphantly over the wall of that well! What seemed like it would bury him actually helped him . . . all because of the manner in which he handled the adversity.

THAT'S LIFE! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, we can achieve anything!

"There is one kind of robber whom the law does not strike at, and who steals what is most precious to men: time."

~~Napoleon Bonaparte

HAVE YOU EVER VISITED THESE INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE WEBSITES?

- * www.sigalert.com
(traffic conditions)
- * www.freeshipping.org
(free shipping codes for myriad sites)
- * www.walkopedia.net
(some of the world's best walks)
- * www.sharecare.com
(ask questions of health experts)
- www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk
(Research Library/Univ of Oxford)
- www.loc.gov
(Library of Congress)
- www.dot.ca.gov
(California Department of Transportation)
- * www.travelzoo.com
(travel offers — be sure to check out "Top 20 Deals")
- www.si.edu
(The Smithsonian)
- www.wikipedia.org
(online encyclopedia)
- www.nfl.com
(official site of NFL)
- www.ehow.com
(how to ?)
- www.va.gov
(for veterans)
- www.quizwise.com
(take general quizzes)



**NEW CRCEA WEBSITE
NOW FULLY
OPERATIONAL
Mike Sloan
Vice President
CRCEA**

At the 2015 Fall CRCEA Conference, hosted by San Joaquin County, I made a presentation to the attendees and advised that our new website was up and fully operational. The attendees were given a visual overview of the content and its operation, however, since that time we have decided to include a new link on the site that we call "Member Login". With the addition of this link, located at the bottom of the home page, we will be able to post information that is either copyrighted (with author permission), information considered not appropriate for public display, or confidential member information.

In the past, it has been tradition to include a list of the conference attendees and their contact information, in all conference registration packets. Unfortunately, due to an oversight on my part, the list was not prepared for this last conference. Because of this, some people were asking if we could post the contact information on our new website. While this sounded like a good alternative at first, the final decision

was made not to post any personal contact information that would ultimately be accessible to anyone from the public logging onto to our site.

We have been given authorization by Amy Brown, our lobbyist in Sacramento and author of *The Public Retirement Journal* (PRJ), to post current copies of the Journal on our site. The only caveat was that this information could not be accessible to the public, since this publication is sold on a subscription basis. However, through CRCEA's contract with Amy, we are given permission to access this very worthwhile publication. Currently, we have the last three editions of the Journal posted for your reading pleasure.

Also, along these lines, there may be times when the Executive Committee would want to make information available to the general membership regarding financial matters or legislative plans, which we would prefer to remain within the confines of the organization.

To access the "Member Login" link on the website, you must use the login name "member" (without quotes) and the password is "CRCEA-M-92331" (without quotes). These fields are case sensi-

tive. As we go forward, we may decide to make this area more secure and use individual login names and passwords. If that happens, we will notify you via this newsletter.

The website is intended to provide a location where all members of CRCEA can get information about CRCEA, as well as information on how to contact each of the 20 member counties. You can find information about who we are and what we do, a little history about our organization (which is being expanded and updated on a regular basis), and how to contact your Executive Committee. Also available is updated information regarding ongoing pension reform issues which are being monitored closely by our Retirement Security Committee.

The site's calendar is being constantly updated as more and more member associations submit information about their meetings and events. (Note: If you are reading this, and were not aware that your county's association can post event information on the website, please contact me and we will make sure it is added right away.) Also, newsletter editors, if you will send me your newsletters in a

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digital format, I will also have them posted on your individual Association link.

What I believe is the most important link on the site is the "Resources" link. You can access the Conference and Delegate Manuals, and there are also examples of various forms used by CRCEA which can be printed directly from the website. This is also the link where you can read all the latest research by the Retirement Security Committee regarding pension reform, and there is a ton of information regarding what you can do to help protect your pension benefits. If you are looking for where you can get the latest court ruling in the CalPERS Long Term Care lawsuit, this is the spot.

The "About CRCEA" link is where you can read our By-laws, Mission Statement, Executive Officers, and history. Here you can learn what each of the CRCEA committees do and locate contact information for each chairperson. For instance, if you have an idea for a possible affiliate, you will be able to contact Bill de la Garza to inform him (and I cannot tell you how happy this would make him). If you are looking for the photos taken at the last conference, this is where

you will find them posted.

Finally, I invite you to visit our new website (<http://www.crcea.org>), and explore all the information available to each member. Also, if you have the time, please visit each Affiliate's link and thank them for their support of our organization. To date, we have over 100 visits to our website, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Once you have had a chance to evaluate the website, I would really like to know your thoughts about its usefulness, and we are always open to suggestions about how to improve the site. You may reach me at mesloan1@aol.com, and I will let you know if we can implement your suggestions.

Thank you.

Future CRCEA Conferences

Spring 2016
Kern (REOKC)

Fall 2016
Contra Costa (CCCREA)

Spring 2017
Ventura (REAVC)

Fall 2017
Alameda (REAC)

HOMEMADE BUTTERFINGER CANDY

1 lb candy corn
16 oz. jar of peanut butter (creamy or smooth)
Chocolate for coating

Melt candy corn in microwave on high for one minute.

Stir candy corn and continue cooking in 15-second intervals until melted, stirring after each interval.

Stir in peanut butter. Spread mixture in an 11" x 17" lightly buttered pan (or spray pan with Pam). Score mixture to make pieces about 1" square.

Cool completely in refrigerator. Finish cutting into squares.

Dip in melted chocolate, if desired, and let set on wax paper. Makes approximately 40 squares.

Enjoy!



"Knowledge is knowing what to say. Wisdom is knowing when to say it."

~~author unknown

**CRCEA
Executive Committee**

E.F. "Skip" Murphy
President

Mike Sloan
Vice President

Carlos Gonzalez
Treasurer

Virginia Adams
Secretary

William "Bill" de la Garza
Immediate Past President

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William "Bill" de la Garza

Benefits
John Michaelson

Bylaws
David Muir

Communications
Virginia Adams

Conference
Mike Sloan

Executive
E.F. "Skip" Murphy

Finance/Audit
Jerry Jacobs

Legislative
Art Goulet

Legislative Advisory
E.F. "Skip" Murphy

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(continued)**

Membership
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Nominating
Will Hoag

Retirement Security
Mike DeBord and
George Shoemaker

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Associations/
Presidents**

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Contra Costa County
Mike Sloan

Fresno County
Linda Hutcheson

Imperial County
Manuel Quintero

Kern County
Phil Franey

Los Angeles County
David Muir

Marin County
Russ Hunt

Mendocino County
Sue Thornhill

Merced County
Leon "Sandy" Teague

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Member
Associations/
Presidents
(continued)**

Orange County
Linda Robinson and
Doug Storm

Sacramento County
Kiyoshi "Pat" Adachi

San Bernardino County
Wes McDaniel

San Diego County
John McTighe

San Joaquin County
Bob Palmer

San Mateo County
Linda Bruzzon

Santa Barbara County
Annette Paladino

Sonoma County
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Stanislaus County
Rhonda Biesemeier

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Ventura County
Nancy Settle

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