



COUNTY'S RETIREMENT COSTS TO DECLINE AGAIN

Strong investment performance has strengthened *SamCERA's* Actuarial Balance Sheet each year for the past four years. Consequently, the Board of Retirement has adopted employer contribution rates that have actually reduced the County's retirement costs, despite growth in the County's payroll.

As a result of these reduced costs, the County has additional resources to deploy to other uses. Next fiscal year's retirement costs will be about \$6 million less than this year's costs. That should be good news for employees as the next round of collective bargaining gets underway.

NO NEWS IS ... NO NEWS

Remember *Ventura*? The California Supreme Court changed the definition of "compensation" in October, 1997, thereby changing the way twenty California County Retirement Systems calculate their members' retirement benefits.

Your Board of Retirement adopted the "premium pay" and "shift differential" portions of *Ventura* in December of 1997. Teamsters Local 856 then sued *SamCERA* and the County in an effort to get "terminal pay" included as well as "retroactivity" for current retirees.

There are currently some 26 post-*Ventura* lawsuits in the State. As this newsletter went to press a Sacramento judge was considering a request to coordinate the proceedings for all of the lawsuits. We hope to have more news for you soon.

In the meantime, *SamCERA* encourages all members who are retiring soon to consider "cashing-out" the amount of vacation that can be accrued in one-year--just in case the Court eventually rules that it should be added into your retirement calculation.

SamCERA'S UNFUNDED LIABILITY IS SHRINKING

The Actuary reports that *SamCERA's* Unfunded Liability on June 30th totaled \$112 million. That is a big decline since June 30, 1995, when it was \$294 million. Strong investment returns are the major reason for the improvement.

SamCERA now has 89% of the assets which it would need to pay off all of our Actuarial Liabilities. *SamCERA* is scheduled to be 100% funded by the year 2011.

MEDICARE PART-B PREMIUM REIMBURSEMENT A BIG SUCCESS

More than 1,300 *SamCERA* retirees are participating in the new Medicare Part-B program. \$350,000 in premium reimbursements have been distributed during the first six months of the program.

The Medicare Part-B Premium Reimbursement program is a cooperative effort between the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Retirement that provides a tax free benefit for *SamCERA's* eligible retirees, beneficiaries and survivors.

To be eligible for *SamCERA's* new program, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part-B. The Federal Government deducts the Part-B premium from the monthly Social Security benefit. *SamCERA* then reimburses the participant for the cost of the monthly Part-B premium. The premium was just increased on January 1st to \$45.50.

If (1) you are drawing a monthly benefit from *SamCERA*, (2) you are enrolled in Medicare Part-B and (3) no one else is reimbursing you, then you are eligible for participation in *SamCERA's* new program. To request an application, send a copy of your Medicare Identification Card to *SamCERA*, 702 Marshall, Suite 280, Redwood City, CA 94063.

PERS' offers Long-Term Care Insurance Program to *SamCERA* Members

The majority of us face the financially disastrous prospect of spending some portion of our life in a nursing home-type environment. So like it or not, long-term care is an issue we should not ignore.

With more than a million participants, California's Public Employees' Retirement System decided that it should take the lead in creating insurance options that are as consumer-friendly as possible. Consequently, CalPERS' innovative Long-Term Care Program offers the most unique health insurance available in this country.

The County's Employee Health & Fitness Program and *SamCERA* have teamed-up with CalPERS to sponsor a series of briefings on PERS' innovative long-term care health insurance program.

Come to any one of the following sessions to learn more about what the CalPERS' Plan has to offer:

Wednesday, April 28th

1:15 - 2:15 SCORPA Luncheon Presentation
Veterans Memorial Senior Center
1455 Madison Ave., Redwood City

3:30 - 5:00 San Mateo Health Services Building
225 West 37th Ave., Room B

Thursday, April 29th

9:30 - 11:00 County Office Building, Room 101
455 County Center, Redwood City

12:00 - 1:30 No. County Court House, Jury Room
1050 Mission Rd. So. San Francisco

***SamCERA's* Spring 1999 Retirement Planning Seminar Coming in March.**

SamCERA has teamed up with Net Equity Associates to bring you this highly acclaimed four part seminar that will teach you everything you need to know to begin to prepare yourself for A Successful Retirement. Join us for an eye opening reality check.

See page 3 for a list of the topics covered during the four sessions.

When? Four Thursday mornings: March 4, 11, 18, and 25, 1999, from 8:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Where? The seminars will be held in the Belmont Sports Complex.

How Much? While tuition is usually charged for this program, *SamCERA* & Net Equity Associates are picking up the full cost of providing it to *SamCERA's* members. There will be no cost to *SamCERA's* members and guests.

Sign up Now! Simply complete the Enrollment Form on Page 3 and send it to *SamCERA*. Enrollment is limited to 80. Retirement Planning is so important to your future well being that you should bring your spouse or significant other along. If space becomes a problem, preference will be given to those nearing retirement. If necessary, a waiting list will be established for the next seminar.

Confirmations will be sent the first week of February. Please do not call with questions prior to February 17th.

LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD SENIOR PEER COUNSELORS

Would you like to be of service to your fellow seniors? Do you have a genuine interest in the well being of others? Are you 55 years of age or older? Do you have access to transportation? Are you willing to complete a comprehensive seventy-two hour training course that is provided for counselors at no expense? Can you spare six hours a week to be of service to others?

During the past thirteen years, San Mateo County's Senior Counselors have provided thousands of hours of caring service to our seniors. Counselor and client both benefit from sharing, caring, solving and accepting.

Training begins February 3rd. If you are interested in participating, call (650) 573-2716.

Yes, I want to register for *SamCERA's* & Net Equity Associates' Four Session Course on *Financial Strategies for A Successful Retirement.*

I / We will be attending 4 Wednesday Mornings from 8:15 am to 11:45 am

Name: _____ Projected Date of Retirement: _____

Spouse or Significant Other: _____ **[if attending seminar with you]**

Home Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

PONY Address: _____ Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Complete this Application Form and Mail it to SamCERA today at PONY RET 141.

Sign Up Today for *SamCERA's* Retirement Planning Seminar

SESSION 1 - MARCH 4TH

- Your *SamCERA* Benefits
- Healthwise Living for a Healthy Retirement
- Your Social Security Benefits
- San Mateo County Retiree Health Benefits

SESSION 2 - MARCH 11TH

- Foundation for a Successful Retirement
- Retirement Planning is for Everyone
- Retirement Income: Perception vs Reality
- Objectives of Retirement Planning
- The Success Triangle
- Nine Main Reasons people fail to capitalize on their retirement years
- You can put your dollars to work with compound interest
- The impact of inflation on income
- Taxes and their impact on retirement planning
- The "double whammy" of taxes and inflation

SESSION 3 - MARCH 18TH

YOUR OTHER RETIREMENT INCOME

- IRA's
- Home Equity
- Working After Retirement

PUTTING YOUR DOLLARS TO WORK WITH FIXED INCOME SECURITIES

- Savings and cash reserves
- Tax-deferred annuities
- Corporate & Treasury Bonds
- Municipal bonds- tax-free income

- Nine Steps to Retirement Success
- Your Personal Retirement Plan

PUTTING YOUR DOLLARS TO WORK WITH EQUITY INVESTMENTS

- Common & Preferred Stock
- Mutual Funds
- Inflation Proofing Income
- Tax-deferred Investing in variable annuities
- Direct participation programs
- Portfolio hedging with tangible assets
- Asset Allocation

SESSION 4 - MARCH 25TH

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Medicare
- Long-Term Health Care
- Life Insurance at Retirement
- Disability Insurance

ESTATE PLANNING

- Objectives of Estate Planning
- Understanding Probate
- Advantages of Joint Tenancy
- Using trusts to Reduce Estate Transfer Costs
- Three Ways to Avoid Estate Shrinkage
- Charitable Giving

Optional, free, private Financial Planning Consultation will be offered after the conclusion of the Seminar.

San Mateo County Employees' Retirement Association

Attn: Sid McCausland, Chief Executive Officer, RET 141

702 Marshall, Suite 280, Redwood City, California 94063-1823

***SamCERA* STAFF REORGANIZES**

Linda Manning has been promoted to the newly created position of Assistant Executive Officer/ Benefits Manager. Gary Clifton has been reclassified as Investment & Finance Manager. Alena Rehacek has been reclassified as Retirement Analyst II. Virginia Waldrop has joined the staff as our Office Assistant II. Virginia comes to us from the Federal Arbitration Service. Lonni Hocker, Information Technology Manager, and Sid McCausland, Chief Executive Officer, round out the staff. Anne Hernandez has retired. Anne extends her appreciation to all of the County employees she worked with over her decade with the County.

MEMBER STATEMENTS DELAYED

Distribution of the Annual Member Statements will be delayed while staff completes the recruitment and training of a new staff member. Anne Hernandez' retirement leaves us short-handed. So we have decided to focus our limited resources on getting the 1099 tax forms in the mail first.

ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

SamCERA's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for periods ending June 30, 1998, is now available. Drop us a post card, if you would like a copy.

COLSON JOINS BOARD

Donna Wills Colson has been appointed to the Board of Retirement by the Board of Supervisors. As a former investment consultant to pension funds, Ms. Colson brings a wealth of experience to her new position as a trustee for *SamCERA's* members. Ms. Colson was a consultant with Callan Associates in San Francisco for many years, prior to becoming a Senior Vice President with Baring Asset Management. Her three year term runs through June 30, 2001. She is one of four trustees appointed by the Board of Supervisors under the terms of the County Employees' Retirement Law of 1937.

Ms. Colson replaces Lauryn Agnew Bierdeman, who as Chair, guided the Board of Retirement through many of its decisions regarding asset allocation and independence.

YOUR BOARD OF RETIREMENT

Dennis J. Cosgrove, Chair

John J. Carberry, Vice Chair

Tom E. Bryan, Secretary

Lee Buffington

Donna Wills Colson

William R. Cottle

Aron H. Hoffman

Michael E. McMahon

Bette Perroton Stuart

