



Retiree Association

NEWSLETTER Spring 2017

Note from UNMRA President: Hello everyone. UNM has proposed a 16% increase in Pre-65 health care costs, beginning in July. This proposal is subject to Regent's approval at the April 7 Budget Summit, which will be held in Ballroom C at the SUB. The Budget Summit begins at 9:00 am. If you would like to speak about the increase, please attend this meeting. You can also email the Regents at regents@unm.edu

I would like to recognize two of our committees for the dedicated work that they are doing. Our Benefits Committee will sponsor our 3rd annual Health Care Workshop on March 22, 2017, from 12:30-4:00 pm, at the Continuing Education Building. Parking is free-please plan to attend.

Our Legislative Committee maintains and enhances an active partnership with the ERB. The Committee has created an excellent comparison of the differences between New Mexico's two public pension systems. The comparison provides a wealth of information, and is posted on the Retiree Association's web site.

The Association needs retirees to join our committees, and to become active in the Association. It will take all of us to create a strong voice that will be heard on matters that affect all of us. Please join us!!

Kathy Guimond

Events: A free Health Fair and Wellness Workshop entitled, Staying Alive, will be held March 22, 2017 at the UNM Continuing Education Building (1634 University Blvd. NE). Registration starts at 12:30. Events start at 1:00 and end at 5:00. Refreshments will be served. There will be a presentation entitled: "Healthy and Stress Free Through Integrated Medicine by Dr. Arti Prasad and Barbara Welcer, RN, BAS, HNC, CHTP/I, from the UNM Center for Life. Also, you will not want to miss "Kicking the Bucket List: Downsizing and Organizing Things to do Before You Die" presented by Gail Rubin, CT. There will be health plan representatives there to answer your health care questions as well.

February Outing: Meow Wolf road trip to Santa Fe was most successful. Thanks to the efforts of Steve Borbas, retirees met in Santa Fe for lunch at Tortilla Flats and then spent several hours exploring the phenomenon known as Meow Wolf. Exhibits meant to challenge and entertain people of all ages were explored and enjoyed by sixteen UNM retirees. Meow Wolf's House of Eternal Return has gained national attention for its creativity and interactive approach.

Check your emails and our webpage for future adventures. This is a great way to meet other retirees and learn about local attractions. We encourage carpooling and provide transportation when possible. For most events, we are given a significant discount on the admission price.

Noted Achievements: Don Duszynski, past UNMRA president and current Board of Directors member, has been appointed to the ERB Board of Trustees as the AAUP (American Association

of University Professors) Representative. Don has been on the UNMRA Board of Directors since 2011 ensuring your voice is heard. A special thank you for Don's dedication and hard work is in order!

Help Needed: Looking for a few active retirees to serve on the Board of Directors. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone send your inquiry by email to retiree@unm.edu or call (505) 277-3187 for more information.

Legislative Action: The sixty day New Mexico Legislative session included three bills, HB 34, SB 28, and SB 29, which affects the ERB. The Legislative Committee (LC) is following these bills and continues to get updates. The 2017 session ended March 18, at noon.

HB 34 – “Relating to public employees; providing for separate payment by the public employees’ retirement association and the educational retirement board of retirement benefits accumulated under multiple state systems.” This bill affects ERB members who qualify for both ERB and PERA pension benefits. It passed the House and Senate.

SB 28 – “Relating to educational retirement; amending the educational retirement act to clarify requirements for provisional membership, to establish requirements for use of a medical authority to determine disability status and to make clarifying and technical changes; repealing sections of the educational retirement act.” This bill cleans up the language for this act. It passed the Senate and House.

SB 29 – “Relating to public employees; exempting certain educational retirement board employees from the personnel act; allowing the educational retirement director to employ and fix the salaries of certain employees; providing that the board fix the director's salary.” This bill allows the ERB to be more competitive in their employee recruitment for key, oversight, investment positions. The UNM Retiree Association supported this bill with the expectation the ERB will protect members’ interests and improve return on investments. The salaries for these positions would come from the ERB fund. This bill was introduced to the Senate Finance Committee on 1-20-17, pending with do pass recommendation.

The RA President Kathy Guimond, and three LC members, Pug Burge, Dubra Karnes-Padilla, and Fred Rose, attended UNM Lobo Day at the Legislature on January 30. We spoke to our Legislators about issues concerning UNM retirees (ERB Retiree Benefits and COLA), attended informational sessions, plus the UNM Roundhouse Session held before the UNM Lobo Day reception for our Legislatures. The discussion at the UNM Roundhouse session centered on the expected budget cuts to UNM. These times are not for the faint-hearted.

The LC is in the final stages of updating the committee website. We have been busy creating educational handouts. You will find many other useful reports concerning your ERB pension benefit on the website. Our goal is to have it updated by the end of March. Please check it out www.retiree.unm.edu and send us any recommendations or other resources to include on the LC site.

The LC continues to coordinate the legislative business of the Association, including monitoring and reporting Education Retirement Board (ERB) and the New Mexico State Government Investment and Pension Operational Committee (IPOC) activities. Representatives from the LC, Fred Rose and Melanie Baise, are attending these meetings to represent the pension benefit interests of UNM retirees and make our presence known.

We want to thank all LC members for their efforts to protect ERB pension benefits - Melanie Baise, Judith Binder, Howard Bryant, Pug Burge, Dorothy Gillespie, Beth Lehman, Raqui Martinez, Richard Mertz, Fred Rose, and Barbara Spetalnik. Your participation in the LC is appreciated!

The committee meets every other month on a Wednesday. Our upcoming meetings are April 19, June 21, July 19, and August 16 at 2:30 PM. We currently meet at the UNM Student Success Center, South Campus, 1155 University Blvd., SE.

We ask you to join the LC's efforts to protect your ERB pension benefits. Please join the UNM Retiree Association.

Sincerely,

Sally Hebert and Dubra Karnes-Padilla, UNM RA, Legislative Committee Co-chairs

Annual Business meeting - May 10, 2017: Election of new Board Members and discussion of our mission. Please look for more details in the future and plan on attending.

Other News: We are discontinuing our First Thursday meetings at the Frontier due to low turnout. If anyone feels the need to discuss developing issues, let us know and we will call for a public meeting similar to First Thursday at a public location.

Continuing Your Education: UNM's OLLI or Osher lifelong Learning Institute is offering three free events. No registration or fees required. Please RSVP to tgallegosm@unm.edu or call 277-6179 to ensure your space. UNMRA and OLLI make a great pair. Check them out!

Maximillian and Carlota in Mexico: A lecture to be held on March 27 (Monday) 3:30 – 5:30 at Continuing Education North building room F. Learn more about the history of Mexico from John Bratzel, PhD, Michigan State University, Professor Emeritus.

Having the Conversation... Who, How and When? How to plan for the unplanned with Revathi A, Davidson, MA and Joan McIver Gibson PhD on April 4 (Tuesday) 1:00 – 3:00 at Continuing Education South Building room 109

Arthur Wesley Dow – O'Keefe's Greatest Teacher. Find out about a major influence in Georgia O'Keefe's artistic life. Annette Kingman and Peter Smith, April 21 (Friday) 1:00 – 3:00 at Rio Rancho Public Schools, 500 Laser Road, Rio Rancho.