

President's Column

Soon after our general meeting on Butterfly Day last October, we board members of this newly formed PGTA-R organization decided to create a newsletter. The main purpose of this first newsletter is to review with our retirees the differences in health benefits guaranteed by the school district at the time they retired. There's been much angst for some retirees when they thought their benefits should be at a certain level but were not materialized. We even learned of retirees who have not received a dime in benefits five years after they retired!

Don Luce and I talked to our current school superintendent and with his permission went into the District's files and looked at past years' contracts. We duplicated pages that spelled out what we retirees were to receive in benefits. Then Don and Bruce Belknap prepared a short summary. See the insurance summary in this newsletter. We hope this will be of some value to you.

If you want us to know the exact wording in the contracts for the year you retired, call Don or me. And remember, now that you belong to CTA/NEA again, we have legal help each year.

It was interesting for us to note that some of us have all of our medical benefits paid until we are 85 years old. Some have to pay part of our benefits each year, depending when we retired, until we reach the age of 85.

Some people have not understood that all retirees now have Medicare A. But the biggest problem is that those people who have to pay

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PLEASE SIGN THE SOCIAL SECURITY PETITION

Circulating right now are some petitions that we need to sign. Why? California retired teachers and their spouses have been penalized by having their Social Security benefits reduced since 1982. Newly retired teachers will also be penalized. The petitions address this issue.

CRTA is circulating these petitions to urge Congress to repeal the Windfall Elimination Penalty and Government Pension Offset. Both penalize teachers who paid into Social Security.

These laws reduce teachers Social Security benefits by about 50%. They affect about 40,000 currently retired teachers. These laws also reduce dependents' benefits by a much larger amount (often 100%) leaving the spouses or widows with little or no Social Security benefits at all.

Unfair? You bet this is unfair.

There are two bills in the United States Congress that will correct this: HR 594 and S 349. CRTA is mounting a drive to get people to sign three copies of the petition, one for Senator Boxer, one for Senator Feinstein, and one for our Congressional Representative, Mr. Farr.

If you are approached by someone with these petitions, please sign them.

[Information provided by CRTA]