



President's and Regents' Retiree Association

# NetworkNews

Spring 2011

Published for Retirees of the Office of the President and Office of The Regents, University of California

## Dear PARRA Friends,

Right now—mid-February—it feels like spring, even if the weather forecasters say the return of winter rains is right around the corner. And there's been a spring-like stirring of change in the air. UC's and California's tenacious problems remain, but at least we know a bit more about where some of the answers may lie.

An example: if you read the January edition of UC's retiree newsletter, *New Dimensions* (see [http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/forms\\_pubs/categorical/newsletters.html](http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/forms_pubs/categorical/newsletters.html)), you already know the outcome of the Post-Employment Benefits Task Force's recommendations to address the University's \$21 billion unfunded liability for retiree benefits. For current retirees, the principal change approved by the Regents is to gradually lower the University's contributions to retiree health-care premiums from the current 86 percent to 70 percent over the next six years. For those 1400 or so retirees who never coordinated with Social Security and so are not eligible for Medicare, the current Regental contribution will remain the same. In the future, UC's contribution for this group will be linked to the premiums active employees pay.

According to a UCOP fact sheet, four things will NOT change for current retirees: we will continue to receive health benefits; eligibility for health benefits will not change; current pension benefits will remain the same; and retirees will not be asked to contribute to UCRP, the University of California Retirement Plan. The same website, however, also mentions that "The Regents will likely consider additional proposals [regarding post-retirement benefits generally] at meetings in 2011." Stay tuned.

Joe Mathews and Mark Paul, our speakers at the spring luncheon, will talk with us about the timely question of why this state's political and budgetary machinery doesn't seem to work anymore. Descriptions of California's ills abound, but Mr. Mathews and Mr. Paul bring something different to the table: five specific and practical solutions to the current mess. Peter Schrag, the former Sacramento Bee columnist and perceptive analyst of California politics and society, describes their recent book, *California Crackup: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It*, as "the best discussion of the issue I've seen in over three decades." Our speakers will be signing copies of their book at the luncheon. I think you will find it well worth reading.

Speaking of fiscal dilemmas, you'll notice that this newsletter includes another appeal to your generosity: Important News about Dues on page 2. We're asking you to contribute \$10 a year to PARRA instead of our longtime suggested contribution of \$5. PARRA is an exception among local retiree associations in not charging a mandatory fee for membership; both the Berkeley and the LBNL retiree groups require annual dues of

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## PARRA Luncheon on Thursday, April 7

Please join us at the Spring Luncheon on April 7 at Hs. Lordships Restaurant in Berkeley. Our speakers will be Joe Mathews and Mark Paul, authors of *California Crackup: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It*. (UC Press)

Is California beyond repair? A sizable number of Golden State citizens have concluded that it is. Incessant budget crises plus a government paralyzed by partisan gridlock have led to demands for reform, even a constitutional convention. But what, exactly, is wrong and how can we fix it? In *California Crackup*, Joe Mathews and Mark Paul provide clear and informed answers. Their fast-paced and often humorous narrative deftly exposes the constitutional origins of our current political and economic problems and furnishes a uniquely California fix: innovative solutions that allow Californians to debate their choices, settle on the best ones, hold elected officials accountable for results, and choose anew if something doesn't work.

Joe Mathews is Irvine senior fellow at the New America Foundation. He is the author of *The People's Machine: Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Rise of Blockbuster Democracy*, a columnist for *The Daily Beast*, and a freelance journalist.

Mark Paul is senior scholar and deputy director of the California program at

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## Tours Abound

The Council of UC Retiree Associations (CUCRA) has an arrangement with Collette Vacations under which it receives credit when UC retirees use this travel agency. According to Rosemary Norling, who has participated in a number of these, there are usually between 10 and 30 people on each tour. The tours involve a lot of walking on any tour and Collette's representatives are always happy to provide information on how strenuous a particular tour is and if it would be suitable for the traveler. Rosemary has found that the "webinars" (noted below) are a fantastic way of finding out more details about a particular tour. The traveler just has to make a reservation for the webinar to be able to learn more and to converse with Collette's representative. We reproduce below information from Collette's recent announcement for UC Retirees. (Please note that the webinars for the first two tours will have occurred by the time you receive this announcement.)

If you are interested in a tour and find that the indicated date conflicts with your schedule, contact Collette Vacations at 800-770-6740, provide the Sales Representative with the tour number, identify yourself as a UC Retiree and they will be happy to supply you with all the available dates for your consideration.

- Costa Rica: A World of Nature (#435673) - Basic tour is \$2,779. Webinar date, time and registration link: Wednesday, February 23, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/130996634>
- Alaska Discovery Land & Cruise (#436295) - Balcony cabin rate is \$5,044; inside cabin rate is \$4,444; and outside cabin rate is \$4,844. Webinar date, time and registration link: Wednesday, February 23, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/130996634>
- Legendary Waterways of Europe (#436307) - Middle outside cabin rate is \$6,149, and the upper outside cabin rate is \$6,599. Webinar date, time and registration link: Wednesday, March 30, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/367221259>
- Spain's Costa del Sol & Portugal's Riviera (#435676) - Basic tour is \$3,579. Webinar date, time and registration link: Wednesday, March 30, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/367221259>
- Europe's Christmas Markets (#436321) - Basic tour is \$2,649. Webinar date, time and registration link: Wednesday, June 8, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/274284274>
- From the Outback to the Glaciers (#436314) - Basic tour is \$6,179. Webinar date, time and registration link: Wednesday, June 8, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/274284274>

The cost of all tours is per person, double occupancy and includes round-trip airfare from Los Angeles International Airport, hotel transfers, air taxes and fees/surcharges (subject to increase until paid in full), majority of your meals and some additional charges depending on the tour. Contact Collette Vacations at 800-770-6740 for further information or sign up for a Webinar.

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## Important News About Dues

Voluntary dues of \$5 a year have been a long PARRA tradition. But like everyone else in today's cash-strapped world, we're finding it harder to make ends meet, largely because the Office of the President withdrew its support for our newsletter a few years ago, citing budget cuts. In addition to assuming the costs of publishing the Network News, we support PARRA's participation in the systemwide retiree association, the Council of UC Retiree Associations. This is a valuable connection because it gives us a means of communicating with other retirees around the system and with the Office of the President on issues important to you. We have been increasing our efforts over the past few years to make our positions on retiree issues known to the University administration, the Regents, and others. In today's uncertain fiscal environment for all public institutions, it's likely we will need to do more in the way of advocacy to protect your interests and the interests of all UC retirees. Your support will help us do that.

We're asking, therefore, that you consider a voluntary \$10 annual contribution to PARRA, beginning in April of this year. Future donations would also be due every April. If you wish, you can mail your contribution in the return envelope you've received with this newsletter. Checks should be made out to PARRA and sent to our treasurer, Nancy Nakayama, at 8724 Don Carol Drive, El Cerrito, California 94530. Thank you!

## Retiree News

In late February, the UC Berkeley Center for Studies in Higher Education, along with the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, is sponsoring a Leadership Academy in San Antonio, Texas. Three UC retirees are participating. UC Berkeley retiree Josie Baltodano and Jud King, University Provost Emeritus, are co-directors and faculty for this program, and UCOP retiree Ellen Switkes will also teach a session. Participants will come from all around the US.

In other news, Ellen Switkes is representing the University of California at the 90th Anniversary celebration at Xiamen University on April 5-8. This will be an exciting adventure--her first trip to China. She will also visit with CSHE recent scholar in residence, Jinlin Pan, who lives in Chanzhou city, outside Shanghai.

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## Rick Malaspina's *Italian Oakland*

Rick Malaspina served the University in UCOP's Office of University Relations and Office of Laboratory Affairs' Media Relations areas. In his pre-UC life, though, Rick was an award-winning reporter and columnist with the Oakland Tribune and the San Francisco Examiner. His assignments ranged from news – the search for and arrest of kidnapped heiress Patty Hearst, for example – to radio and TV coverage – he interviewed actors and personalities such as John Chancellor, Willard Scott, Joan Collins, and Lawrence Welk.

Some of you know that Rick has been a “recovering” reporter ever since and some of you may know that he has a passion for all things Italian. Finally, he has managed to mesh these interests and talents: On February 14, 2011, his book, *Italian Oakland*, was published as part of Arcadia Publishing's Images of America series.

Rick's grandparents settled in San Francisco in the late 1800s after emigrating from northern Italy. After his 2006 retirement he started spending more time in the local Italian social clubs – the Colombo, the Ligure, and the Fratellanza – in the East Bay. In these organizations, Italian is still spoken and the different dialects are heard and compared, the jokes are told, the meals are shared, and the songs are sung – and bocce is played competitively.

Rick recognized that the history of the Italian immigrants who contributed so much to the Bay Area and California, generally, and to Oakland, should be preserved. He put his reporter's skills to use by interviewing dozens of people and borrowing their family photographs, gathering stories and over 200 images from the early 20th century to today. The book illustrates the early immigrant experience, new communities, work life, service during wartime, athletes and other public figures, the Temescal neighborhood which was a hub for Italian Americans, and more. *Italian Oakland* is available in East Bay Area stores and from Amazon.

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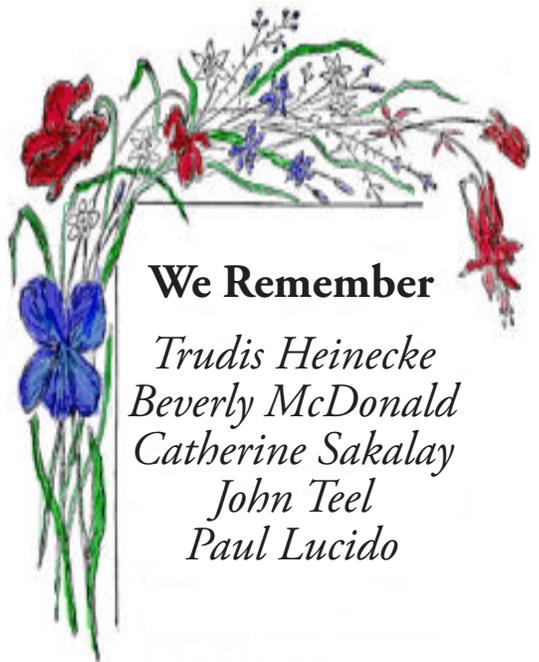
*PARRA Luncheon, continued*

the New America Foundation. He was formerly deputy treasurer of California and deputy editorial page editor of the Sacramento Bee. Mathews and Paul are authors of the article “How to Fix a Broken State” in the March 2011 issue of *Boom: A Journal of California*.

“California Crackup is brilliant. It cuts through the familiar tangle of diagnoses and quick-fix solutions to provide a comprehensive and persuasive analysis of California's dysfunctional governmental system. Paul and Mathews have coolly laid out a complicated story, made it readable, sometimes even comedic.”—Peter Schrag, author of *California: America's High-Stakes Experiment*

“I know of no other work that combines so succinctly and enjoyably a historical summary of California's existing problems with such a sweeping and provocative program of reform.”—Ethan Rarick, University of California, Berkeley

Use the form in this newsletter to make your luncheon reservation.



*President's Message, continued...*

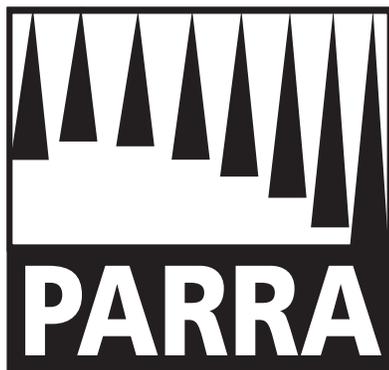
\$15. We're trying to avoid mandatory dues while we explore every possible option, so we're requesting, still on a voluntary basis, a donation of \$10 a year, payable every April, to support the newsletter and other PARRA activities on your behalf. I appreciate your considering this request for your help.

Finally, I'm delighted to add that yes, Virginia, there is a listserv. We're very grateful to Patrick Cullinane and the UC Berkeley Retirement Center for agreeing to help us get it underway at last. Thank you for your email addresses and your patience. If you have not yet signed up for the listserv and want to do so, please send your email address to our new listserv at [parra4uc@gmail.com](mailto:parra4uc@gmail.com). You can also join the listserv by filling out the email address line on the PARRA luncheon reservation form. There's no need to sign up again if you've already given us your email.

As usual, feel free to get in touch if you have ideas, suggestions, or comments about PARRA and its service to you. I look forward to seeing you at the spring luncheon on April 7. Happy Spring!

*Pat Pelfrey*  
President

[ppelfrey@berkeley.edu](mailto:ppelfrey@berkeley.edu)  
510-528-4490



## **PARRA Donors**

Adele Amodeo  
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Steve Mathews  
Patricia Pelfrey  
LaVonne Rochon  
Joan Rogin  
Elda Sayles  
Ellen Switkes  
Susan White

## **Retirement Center News and Opportunities**

To the PARRA members who responded to our retiree survey, thank you for your valuable input. Over 180 OP retirees responded, with 75 indicating PARRA membership. By the time you read this, we will be analyzing the survey data. The Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Faculty Welfare and I will be reviewing your preferences and interests as we strategize in these challenging times on the best future direction for the Retirement Center.

We hope you have received your Spring Center newsletter, *the CenterPiece*, and are taking advantage of the free, substantive educational sessions available to you.

- *The Berkeley Campus in a Time of Rapid Change* – Four campus leaders discuss their experience, March 22 & 29
- *The Two Cultures: Science and Humanities* – In the world's pursuit of a civilized and enlightened society, how do these two cultures need each other? April 19 & 26
- Fidelity Investments Drop-In Session, April 12
- Berkeley Art Museum and Tour - Docent-led tour of *Abstract Then*, an exhibit that focuses on exceptional abstract impressionist works from the 1940's to the 1980's. Tea and discussion follow the tour, April 14
- May Older Americans Month lectures: *Live Well, Live Long: Latest Evidence for Later Life Health*, May 4; *Health Care Reform and Medicare: What It Means for You*, May 19; and *Caring for the Caregiver*, May 24

You can obtain more information and register for any of these free programs by calling the Center at 510-642-5461. Retirees are eligible to purchase daily parking permits for \$5 each to attend any of these events.

To those who contributed to our annual fundraising campaign, thank you very much. As the budget challenges increase, those contributions grow in importance.

Much can happen between newsletters. Our electronic alerts can keep you abreast of important developments. Call our office and share your email address so we can include you in our news alerts. Also, we encourage you to periodically check our website home page and Breaking News -- <http://thecenter.berkeley.edu>.

*Patrick Cullinane, MS, Director*  
UCB Retirement Center  
[pcullinane@berkeley.edu](mailto:pcullinane@berkeley.edu)  
510-643-3212

## Directions to H<sup>s</sup> Lordships

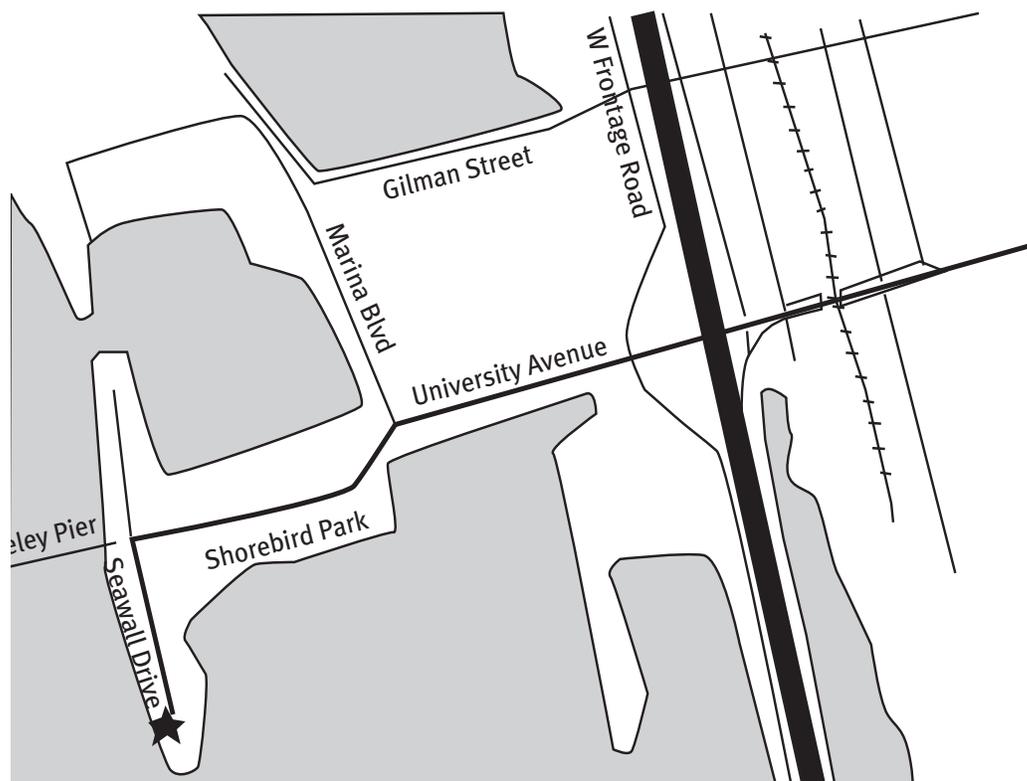
**From the East Bay Oakland, Hayward using 580 West** towards San Francisco. Proceed to I-80 East towards Sacramento. Take the Emeryville Powell St. exit. Turn left and go under the freeway overpass. Make an immediate right onto Frontage Rd., following the road until you get to University Ave., and turn left onto University. Stay in the left lane. At Marina Blvd. stop sign, stay left and go to the end. (Berkeley Pier will be in front of you.) Turn left on Seawall Dr. and go to the end of the road.

**From the East Bay Oakland Using Highway 880 North** take Highway 880 North to I-80 towards Sacramento. Exit at University Ave. and proceed on University. At the third light, make a U turn and head back toward the water. Stay on your left until you get to Marina Blvd. and go to the end (Berkeley Pier will be in front of you). Turn left on Seawall Dr. and go to the end of the road.

**From the North Bay (Richmond, Hercules, Vallejo)** Take I-80 West to Berkeley. Exit at University Ave. Follow Loop West to University Ave. Turn left onto University Ave. Stay in left lane. At Marina Blvd. stop sign, stay left and go to the end. (Berkeley Pier will be in front of you.) Turn left on Seawall Dr. and go to the end of the road.

**From San Francisco** Take Highway 101 North to I-80 across the Bay Bridge. Take the Emeryville Powell St. exit. Turn left and go under the freeway overpass. Make an immediate right onto Frontage Rd. Proceed on Frontage Rd. until you get to University Ave. and turn left onto University. Stay in left lane. At Marina Blvd. stop sign, stay left and go to the end. (Berkeley Pier will be in front of you.) Turn left on Seawall Dr. and go to the end of the road.

Free and Ample Parking H<sup>s</sup> Lordships Restaurant, 199 Seawall Drive, Berkeley, CA 94710, 510-843-2733.



**President's and Regents' Retiree Association**

***PARRA Luncheon***

**Thursday, April 7, 2011**

**H<sup>s</sup> Lordships, Berkeley**

Plenty of free parking. A map and directions are enclosed, but you probably won't need them. Just go to the end of University Avenue and at the Bay, turn left and proceed to the end (199 Seawall Drive).

**Joe Mathews and Mark Paul**

***The California Fix***



Joe Mathews is Irvine senior fellow at the New America Foundation. He is the author of *The People's Machine: Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Rise of Blockbuster Democracy*, a columnist for The Daily Beast, and a freelance journalist. Mark Paul is senior scholar and deputy director of the California program at the New America Foundation. He was formerly deputy treasurer of California and deputy editorial page editor of the Sacramento Bee. Mathews and Paul are authors of the article "How to Fix a Broken State" in the March 2011 issue of Boom: A Journal of California. Read more about Mathews and Paul in this newsletter.

\* \* \*

A no-host social hour will start at 11:30 a.m; lunch will be served at 12:00. The cost is \$25 per person. Please make your check out to PARRA and return in the enclosed envelope with your name and the names of any guests. This luncheon will be a buffet with a variety of choices, so no prior designation of what you want to eat is necessary.

**Please return this form by Monday, March 28.**

If you have any questions, please call Nancy Nakayama at 510-524-2358 or Pat Pelfrey at 510-528-4490.



Yes, I will be attending. Enclosed is my check in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ (\$25 per person) made payable to PARRA

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to:

PARRA c/o Nancy Nakayama, 8724 Don Carol Drive, El Cerrito, CA 94530-2735