

At Your Service

Orange County Employees Retirement System
VOLUME 3 NUMBER 3 MAGAZINE FOR ALL MEMBERS JULY 2004



You've got questions?

We've got answers
(Page 6)

At Your Service



Members of the Board of Retirement

Reed L. Royalty, Chairman
Sharon Neebe, Vice Chairwoman
Keith L. Concannon
Frank E. Eley
George W. Jeffries
Thomas J. Lightvoet
John M.W. Moorlach
Lisa Welch Silbar
David J. Thompson
Richard A. White, Jr.

Chief Executive Officer

Keith Bozarth

Assistant Chief Executive Officer

James Buck

Assistant Chief Executive Officer

Stephen Cadena

Chief Investment Officer

Thomas E. Flanigan

General Counsel

Julie E. Wyne

At Your Service is published for members and retirees of the Orange County Employees Retirement System.

Comments and suggestions should be directed to:
Robert Kinsler, Public Relations Analyst
E-mail: rkinsler@ocers.org
Or contact:
OCERS
2223 Wellington Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92701
Telephone: (714) 558-6200
Toll-free: (888) 570-6277
Web site: www.ocers.org

At Your Service is written and designed by Robert Kinsler, Jayne Ritchey and Cuong Nguyen.

Board of Retirement Meetings:
All regular business meetings are held in OCERS Board Room at 8:30 a.m.

August 30, 2004 October 18, 2004
November 15, 2004 December 20, 2004

Look for OCERS at OCEA fair

As part of its effort to provide better service for all members, OCERS provides a number of programs such as seminars and one-on-one sessions for those within two months of their retirement.

In addition, OCERS staff often participate in health and wellness fairs throughout Orange County as an effective way to provide in-person information to our members.

On Tuesday, October 5, 2004, OCERS will have an information table at the 13th annual Orange County Employees Association (OCEA) Health Fair.

In addition to the OCERS' information table, more than 60 vendors will provide health-related information at the OCEA Health Fair. Health Fair vendors will provide free information on illness and injury prevention and will educate employees about proper fitness and eating habits. In past years, attendees have been able to participate in screenings for posture, cholesterol, bone density, melanoma, stress, glucose, blood pressure and more. Vendors are expected to supply information on first aid, CPR, self-breast exams, sexually-transmitted diseases, back care, stress and sleep disorders, skin cancer, tobacco use prevention, nutrition, pre-natal care, crime prevention, bicycle safety, child safety and retirement information from OCERS.

Last year, more than 2,000 municipal employees and retirees enjoyed the Health Fair.

The 2004 Health Fair will be held at OCEA Headquarters, 830 North Ross St., Santa Ana, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Oct. 5. If you have any other questions about the fair, please visit www.oceamember.org or call (714) 835-3355.

County of Orange Retiree Health Insurance Open Enrollment is near

Attention all eligible retired participants who are currently enrolled in a County of Orange retiree health plan; Open Enrollment is right around the corner - it's coming in November. If you have experienced a recent address change, please make sure you notify the County of Orange Benefits Center by calling the Benefits Resource Line toll-free at 1-866-325-2345. In addition to notifying the Benefits Center, you must also notify OCERS whenever you change your address. You need to do this to ensure you receive all the important retiree health insurance info sent to you by the Benefits Center.

Board of Retirement election process update

Eligible members are invited to participate in the upcoming election to fill two open seats on the Orange County Employees Retirement System's Board of Retirement.

In following procedures approved by the Orange County Board of Supervisors, an election will be conducted among General Members for the "Third Member" (currently held by Frank Eley) and among Retired Members for the "Eighth Member" (currently held by Keith L. Concannon) on OCERS' Board of Retirement. Both the "Third Member" and "Eighth Member" terms expire on Dec. 31, 2004.

In late August 2004, OCERS notifies the Registrar of Voters that the retirement system would like to conduct an election. The Registrar of Voters will then set a timeline detailing the process. That information will be posted on OCERS' official Web site, www.ocers.org.

Once the Registrar of Voters has set a timeline, nomination papers will be available only from the Registrar of Voters Office, 1300 South Grand Ave., Building C, Santa Ana, CA. Twenty-five qualified Retired Members' signatures will be required to nominate a candidate running for the "Eighth Member" post, while 75 qualified General Members' signatures will be required to nominate a candidate seeking the "Third Member" position.

Candidates must sign a "Willingness to Serve" form and may submit a biographical statement of no more than 400 words in length, which will be included with each official ballot.

The Registrar of Voters will randomly draw for placement of candidates names on the ballot, before the ballots are mailed to all eligible voting members in November 2004. The completed ballots must then be returned to the Registrar of Voters and will be counted sometime in December, with election winners' names announced in mid-December 2004.

Both the "Third Member" and "Eighth Member" terms will run Jan. 1, 2005 through Dec. 31, 2007.

www.ocers.org; your first stop on the Web

Going online? Then log on to www.ocers.org to learn more about retirement, disability, death and survivor benefits offered by OCERS to members. OCERS' official Web site provides a wealth of information and services for anyone with access to the World Wide Web. One of the most popular features at OCERS' site is the Benefits Calculator, which allows any member to get a fast estimate of their projected retirement allowance based on their current salary, age and years of service. No registration is required and it only takes a few seconds to complete the easy-to-use form.



In addition, members can now register to take any of a variety of free seminars offered by OCERS through the Web site. Other features at www.ocers.org include the monthly online newsletter OCERS Extra, a printable version of OCERS' official Power of Attorney form for those who want to designate someone to look after their retirement account if they become unable to look after their own needs, as well as a Beneficiary Change form.

Financial Strategy Seminars help prepare for future

If you are planning to retire within the next 3 to 30 years, you should plan to attend one of the following Financial Strategies for Retirement Planning Seminars held at:

**OCERS (Training Room)
2223 E. Wellington Avenue
Santa Ana, CA 92701**

The Financial Strategies for Retirement Planning Seminar consists of a three-session workshop. Each meeting will cover important topics for successful planning; individuals and couples are welcome to attend. The third meeting concentrates on information from an OCERS Retirement Program Specialist.

The seminar is free and there is plenty of free on-site parking for those attending. Various topics of interest and importance will be covered over the course of the three-session workshop.

Among the important topics covered in the comprehensive three-session workshop:

- Deferred Compensation investment choices
- Tax-free and low-cost investing for profit
- How to determine retirement goals
- Investment choices to consider in the current stock market

The third meeting of each workshop focuses on information relating to OCERS, including such topics as:

- Eligibility for Retirement
- Reciprocal Benefits
- Benefit Calculations, and how to apply for your retirement benefits from OCERS

Don't miss out on this valuable information. It will help you prepare for your future. The seminars are free, but reservations are required. To make your reservation to attend this seminar, please log on at www.ocers.org and click on "Retirement Seminars."

An important note: anyone registering for the Financial Strategy Seminar should plan on attending all three sessions. For more information on upcoming Financial Strategies for Retirement Planning Seminars, please call Catie Moore at Financial Management Specialists, (714) 704-6502.

SCHEDULED DATES:

The Financial Strategy Seminar is a three-session workshop, and persons signing up should plan on attending all three sessions of the Workshop.

Dates are as follows:

Workshop

Wednesdays

September 1, 8, and 15, 2004
6-9:30 p.m.

Workshop

Wednesdays

October 6, 13 and 20, 2004
6-9:30 p.m.

Workshop

Wednesdays

November 3, 10 and 17, 2004

OCERS offers Pre-Retirement Planning Seminars

When it comes to retirement planning, it's never too early – or too late – to get started. So no matter when you plan to retire, it's important to attend a Pre-Retirement Planning Seminar offered by OCERS.

The few hours you spend at the seminar can have beneficial and long-lasting impacts on your quality of life after you retire.

The Pre-Retirement Planning Seminar is held twice a month at OCERS, 2223 E. Wellington Ave., Santa Ana, and includes a presentation by an OCERS Retirement Program Specialist.

The one-session, five-hour seminar is free and there is plenty of free on-site parking for those attending.

Various topics of interest and importance to you will be covered. A representative from "Deferred Compensation" will be addressing options for withdrawing funds from your 457 plan; a Social Security representative will discuss your Social Security benefits; a representative from Retiree Medical will discuss medical benefit options; and an OCERS Retirement Specialist will focus on your OCERS retirement plan. Among the topics covered by the OCERS representative:

- When you are eligible for retirement
- How to determine your future monthly benefit from OCERS
- How to determine OCERS-related benefits for your beneficiaries
- When should new retirees expect their first retirement check
- Reciprocal benefits for employees who have worked for two or more retirement systems
- How to schedule an appointment with an OCERS Retirement Program Specialist

Don't miss out on this valuable information. It will help you prepare for your future. The seminars are free, but reservations are required. For more information and to make your reservation to attend this seminar, please log on at www.ocers.org and click on "Retirement Seminars."

SCHEDULED DATES:

These one-session seminars will be held from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Dates are as follows:

September 1, 2004

September 15, 2004

October 13, 2004

November 3, 2004

November 17, 2004

'Divorce and Your Retirement' Seminar dates now open

The Legal Division at OCERS offers a one-session "Divorce and Your Retirement" seminar on how divorce may impact your retirement benefits. It will be held on the following dates and times:

- **Tuesday, August 17, 2004; 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**
- **Tuesday, October 19, 2004; 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**



The seminar focuses on how OCERS handles divorce materials and what types of court orders comply with the retirement plan. The OCERS legal staff cannot offer legal advice on your specific rights under California community property laws.

The seminar is free and open to all members. The seminar will be held at OCERS, 2223 E. Wellington Ave., Santa Ana. To reserve a space go to our Web site and click on "Retirement Seminars."

New Member Annual Statements update

The Orange County Employees Retirement System mailed out Member Annual Statements to every active and deferred member in July 2004. OCERS staff has subsequently received a number of calls from members, and we wanted to address some of the most commonly asked questions that members have about the revised statements.

Many of the questions relate to the revised format of the statement; these changes are due to the new pension administration software that is now being used by OCERS. These are some of the most commonly asked questions that members have about their statement.

- Q. My beneficiary and current demographic information are wrong and I just changed them with you. Why?
- A. The statement covers the period of time from Jan. 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003. If you have provided us with updated information after that date it isn't reflected on this statement. The information is correct in our records and will be included in your future statements.
- Q. My reciprocal service is not reflected on my statement. Why?
- A. Members who have established reciprocity with another retirement system may not see this listed correctly on their Member Annual Statement. This is a temporary omission because of the implementation of new software. However, the information is listed correctly in your records here at OCERS and will be included in all your future statements. Future statements will be mailed out to each member the month after their birth month, beginning in January 2005.
- Q. My beginning contribution balance on this statement is different than last year's ending contribution balance. Why?
- A. The statement generated last year looked at the span of pay period 1 of 2002 to pay period 26 of 2002. In most cases pay period 26 ends in the middle of December. The new pension software now uses the actual date, not pay periods.
- Q. The service credits that I am currently purchasing are not included in the total service credit balance. Why?
- A. Only completed Service Purchase Contracts ("buybacks") allow your balance to be increased. If you are currently purchasing the time, the service credit will not be reflected in your balance.
- Q. The statement shows no contributions were posted to my account. Why?
- A. One, if you are a 30-year member and were a member of OCERS as of March 7, 1973 or prior, your contributions may have been stopped; two, if you are a deferred member and if the date was prior to Jan. 1, 2003, you are not contributing to OCERS.
- Q. I'm a part-time employee and my first eligible retirement date shows age 70. Why?
- A. Statements for part-time employees who are currently not eligible to retire will show that they will be eligible to retire on the date they reach age 70. This is because OCERS cannot predict when you will have accrued the required amount of service to be eligible based on your current part-time work schedule. If you would like a retirement estimate that reflects your earliest retirement date based on projected information, please send us a request via our Web site (www.ocers.org), or call our office at (714) 558-6200.

(Continued on page 7)

New brochures available for OCERS members

Members often have questions about specific elements of their retirement and are looking for easy-to-understand information from the Orange County Employees Retirement System.

In addition to OCERS' official Web site and the quarterly At Your Service magazine, OCERS has begun producing a series of free brochures addressing issues that are of interest to many members.

Three brochures have just been published; Service Purchase Contracts addresses the "buyback" of service credit, Divorce looks at how a divorce may impact your retirement from OCERS, and Disability Retirement Process provides a guide for those seeking details on the series of administrative steps necessary to apply for a disability retirement.

Future brochures will focus on topics such as the various Benefit Options members select before retirement, reciprocal service (also known as "reciprocity") and how retirees can sign up for electronic deposit of their monthly retirement allowance.

All three of the completed brochures can be picked up at OCERS' office, 2223 Wellington Avenue, Santa Ana, California. Office hours are 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Mondays-Thursdays; and 8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m. on Fridays.

They can also be downloaded via www.ocers.org by directing your browser to the OCERS "Publications/Forms" section of OCERS' Web site; all are linked to PDF documents that members can read online or print.



New Member Annual Statements update

(Continued from page 6)

- Q. My public service buyback information is not on the statement you sent me. Why?
- A. Your annual statement is a reflection of your year-to-date contributions and interest. The estimate provided reflects only County of Orange/OCERS-covered employer eligible service.

If you would like confirmation of the information we have on file, please feel free to contact our office at (714) 558-6200 or send us a request via our Web site (www.ocers.org).

Poll Workers Needed for Election Day

County of Orange employees are being asked to help work at polling places on Election Day. In January 2002, the Board of Supervisors approved a plan that allows County employees to volunteer during work hours to work at polling places.

“County employees will be a great asset,” said Steve Rodermund, County Registrar of Voters. “But even with these additional resources, the student poll worker program and our dedicated group of returning poll workers, the need to recruit new poll workers is great.”

Twice a year, in even-numbered years, Orange County conducts major countywide elections. This involves establishing about 1,300 polling places and staffing them with 7,000 volunteers. These volunteers give of their time (from 12 to 16 hours on Election Day) to ensure that all eligible County citizens are able to exercise their constitutional right to vote. A full staff of volunteers is needed so that polling places will open on time with courteous poll workers trained to assist voters and answer their questions. Filling last-minute vacancies is difficult, however. And the problem is compounded when cancellations come for much-needed bilingual poll positions.

Poll workers must be United States citizens, 18 years of age or older on or before Election Day and be able to read and speak English. They also must be able to work from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Election Day. This year’s poll worker recruitment theme is Poll Workers, Heart of America... Volunteer Today!

The Registrar’s office also has an active Student Poll Worker program. If you know of students that would be interested in working the polls the requirements are that they must be United States citizens, 16 years of age or older on or before Election Day, and a senior in high school. In addition, they must have a minimum of a 2.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale and must have the permission of their school and parents.

For information on volunteering as a poll worker, call the Registrar of Voters at (714) 567-7580.

Orange County Employees Retirement System
2223 E. Wellington Avenue
Santa Ana, California 92701

Pre-Sort First Class U.S. Postage PAID Anaheim, CA Permit #422
