

August 2021

## **Planning to Retire? Plan to join SLOCREA: SLO County Retired Employees' Association!**

Check out our website at [www.slocrea.org](http://www.slocrea.org). We have links to many organizations important to Seniors, people considering retiring, &/or people needing info for aging relatives. Please let us know of any other links you'd like to see on our website.

Also on our website we have a brochure containing a new member application. We are an all-volunteer organization for everyone who receives a pension from SLO County Pension Trust. Everyone. Including DROPpers! Yes, if you are in DROP, you are qualified right now to join SLOCREA! Divorced and widowed spouses are also qualified to join.

Whereas our annual membership dues are \$15.00, this fall we are inaugurating a 3-year membership for only \$40.00! Less fuss and \$5.00 off!

Our shout out for August goes to all our employees at Superior Court. The Court had to find innovative ways to serve the public during the lockdowns.

Let's talk about The Village Movement and Aging in Place. When polled, the vast majority of senior citizens say they want to remain in their own homes (called "aging in place") as long as possible.

In my extended family each person in my parents' generation not only wanted to, but insisted upon aging in place till the very end. This can be better for everyone: It's easier for other family members to spend short periods of time with the aging elder throughout the day (as in normal times) rather than have to go somewhere else for a formal visit. The aging elder in decline can also still enjoy family meals in their own home, which is actually both calmer and more stimulating in the right kinds of ways than being in a facility.

Aging in place is where being as healthy as possible pays off, because the healthier you are as you age, the better able you will be to navigate life in your

own home without much help and on your own terms. And **all** the alternatives are **very** expensive!

The pandemic brought the advantages of aging in place into sharper focus, as senior living facilities closed to visitors, thus even further isolating residents from the outside world. In contrast, one of my very active and capable nonagenarian friends thoroughly enjoyed daily trips to the local fitness club, walking in her neighborhood with or without other friends, having fairly normal visits with family, and having one friend at a time over for lunch outdoors on her deck. She was able to continue to lead her normal life while still following pandemic precautions.

The Village Movement is catching on throughout the United States. Here we have SLO Village, which serves the entire County, though they need more volunteers and resources, especially for North County.

The SLO Village Mission Statement: “The mission of the SLO Village is to provide a community-based membership organization that encourages at-home independence and empowers adults to remain in their homes as they age. This is accomplished by providing easy access to a screened network of service providers and volunteers.”

SLO Village makes an effort to not duplicate other services, but rather to fill in gaps in services. They partner with other organizations. They offer social experiences, learning opportunities, referrals to other resources as appropriate (including referrals to vetted vendors), transportation, et cetera. The social and learning opportunities help people stay connected with the community rather than their feeling and/or being isolated from the normal community. It’s easier to maintain friendships across generations this way also.

In transporting members to doctor’s appointments, the volunteers don’t just drop the person off like a taxi or Uber driver would. They actually escort the member into the medical office. In the home, they can assess the need for items such as grab bars in bathrooms and can help get them installed. They can help change light bulbs (a big need for aging elders) and they can assess the home for fall hazards, such as extension cords ready to be tripped over, and so on.

Simply knowing that that type of help is available can be very reassuring, especially for people who are living alone as they age.

I am very enthusiastic about The Village Movement and am very glad to have SLO Village here. I had heard of the Village Movement in Austin, TX, where my widowed mom was aging in place during her declining years. It was reassuring to me to know she had someone she could trust to help her, whether with transportation to medical appointments or referrals to service providers. Someone who would really listen.

This is a great example of a program which can be helpful to you and your family if you have aging parents, can be a place you may wish to volunteer (especially once you retire), and can be there for you when you need it (some time 'way in the future, I'm sure!). Their website is [www.slovillage.org](http://www.slovillage.org).

We at SLOCREA are hoping we can return to in-person lunch meetings with our next general meeting:

**Monday October 4, 2021 @ 12 Noon: Ashleigh Szkubiel** of SLO County HR will be our speaker, on health insurance and other retiree benefits. We are planning for it to be at 12 Noon regardless of whether it's live or virtual.

**Board Meeting will immediately follow the general meeting on 10/04/21.**

You can email us via our website: [www.slocrea.org](http://www.slocrea.org), or via regular email: [slocrea@slocrea.org](mailto:slocrea@slocrea.org). We'd love to hear from you! What topics or resources would you like to hear about?

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