

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

Check out our website at www.slocree.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. We are pleased that many new retirees are indeed getting application forms from our website.

Remember: The 1st year of membership is free. After that you'll have the option of renewing for 3 years @ \$40.00 or renewing annually at \$15.00 a year.

October's shout out goes to all cancer survivors. Over the years I've read and been told that cardiovascular disease and cancer are the 2 most common causes of death in the US. In the past 15 years, I have seen that first hand. Nevertheless, being diagnosed with one or the other does not necessarily mean you will die from it or that you won't at least have many more years of an enjoyable life.

There are many things you can do to reduce your likelihood of having either of these diseases, or of mitigating their impact if you are diagnosed with one of them. Of course, first and foremost, living a healthy life reduces the odds of contracting either disease and makes a good recovery more likely if you are diagnosed with either one. Eating well is important. Likewise exercising well and sensibly.

As my oncologist told me at our 1st meeting (20 years ago): "Healthy people do get cancer, and healthy people recover well." I clung to those words as I journeyed through chemotherapy. I also enlisted the support of a Naturopathic Doctor, an Acupuncturist and a Chiropractor, each of whom provided complementary support.

Detecting cancer early is key to having a good outcome. Paying attention to what tests can help diagnose cancer in its earliest stages can help. There have been some amazing advances in diagnosing cancer in the past 20 years: Just a few months after I completed chemo, a test to determine who would benefit from chemo and who really doesn't need it (the breast cancer is not aggressive) became available.

There have been significant advances in mammography and ultrasound for breast cancer detection. 3-D mammography is very helpful. Computer-assisted ultra sound is also helpful. Today you can have both of these diagnostic tests done at the same appointment. No need to wait for a scary call back from "The Scheduler."

We know much more about specific causes of cancer, or what elements contribute to a person's developing cancer or enhance the likelihood that a person will have it. Just in genetics alone, huge advances have been made. For example, for cholangiocarcinoma, a rare biliary cancer which is highly lethal because it is silent in its early stages, there are more than 10 different genes whose mutations can

cause it. The trick then is to determine whether a mutation in one of those genes is causing a specific person's cancer, identify which one, and provide a treatment (usually in pill form) that interferes with the action of that specific gene mutation. Such treatments exist today, whereas they did not just a few years ago.

Researchers are finding and developing new treatments at a much faster pace now than just 15 – 20 years ago. Nevertheless, prevention is still best. You can help yourself (no guarantees) prevent both cancer and cardiovascular disease through healthy nutrition. And a good exercise routine. Walking is probably the best all around exercise: you can do it just about anywhere and you can control how vigorously or leisurely you do it. Swimming is also excellent because the water supports your weight; thus the exercise is gentle on your joints. Yoga, Tai Chi and other Asian disciplines are also helpful.

Good nutrition and gentle to moderate exercise also help people through cancer treatment. And help prevent secondary cancers beyond that. Both also help prevent &/or mitigate cardiovascular disease. Consult your doctor for guidance with your own specific situation.

Other elements to seriously consider include toxic environments. Do your work and/or home environments promote stress or promote serenity? If your environments are not helping, what can you do about them?

And then there's financial health. Have a sensible plan and follow it as best you can. Remember to include IRAs and Deferred Compensation in your plan. Then you'll have a 4-legged financial stool for retirement: Defined Benefit Pension through Pension Trust, Social Security, IRAs, and Deferred Comp.

Upcoming SLOCREA Meetings

General Meetings:

Monday October 03, 2022 @ 12 Noon: Taco Cart at El Chorro Regional Park. Presentation by Pacific Wildlife Rescue. Want to attend? RSVP to mikigillman@gmail.com by Friday 09/30/2022.

December Holiday General Meeting: Time and Place TBD

Board Meetings:

Monday October 03, 2022, right after the general meeting.

Monday November 14, 2022: Time & Place TBA

The opinions expressed in this article are solely those of its author and are subject to change without notice.

www.slocreea.org