

Winter  
2015

# C.A.R.E. Newsletter

Chabot-Las Positas Community College District

Association of Retired Employees

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[www.care-news.org](http://www.care-news.org)

## Contact us:

[www.care-news.org/contacts](http://www.care-news.org/contacts)

## President's Message

As most of you probably know, we have had some very sad news over the last month or so. Dr. Barbara Mertes, founder of Las Positas College, has died. She was honored with two memorial services: one at Las Positas College, held in the Mertes Center for the Arts, and mainly handled by family members. They were the main speakers. The second memorial was also at Las Positas, held in the former cafeteria, and a much smaller event, where anyone in attendance was free to speak. There were not too many people at the second event, but it was nice to see all board of trustee members there. I had the privilege of reading a wonderful piece written by Art Tenbrink, who was out of town. Art's tribute can be found on our web site in the [History Project](#). Having attended both events, I came away feeling a new appreciation for Dr. Mertes and everything she accomplished.



Speaking of Art Tenbrink, I have some exciting news. In January of 2016, Art will become the new president of our retirees club, and I can confidently predict that he will be a superb leader. He has all the qualities to be a great president, and I believe he will lead the retirees club in some new and exciting directions. Since Irene Plunkett, another wonderful, bright board member, has expressed an interest, we're hoping she will assume the vice-presidency. I can hardly wait!

As one period starts, another ends. I will finish my term as president, having served, I believe, five times, sometimes reluctantly, but always with a lot of support from the board. I can't say I'm unhappy about this, but the end will be slightly bittersweet. I have loved being an integral part of CARE, ever since I retired in 1997, and I have seen so many wonderful changes in the club over the years since then. A big leap forward was when Bill Threlfall established our website. If you haven't yet looked at [care-news.org](http://care-news.org), I recommend it highly. One feature, the [History Project](#), has some interesting short pieces written by your colleagues about many things, many events, and many people. After reading it, I hope you will be moved to add your own bit of history there by following the included [brief instructions about how to contribute](#).

When you get this newsletter, the board will be preparing for our annual meeting in January. We will be having a nice luncheon, many raffle prizes, and congenial fellowship. If you have not yet joined us for our annual gathering, I strongly encourage you to do so. You won't be sorry! Just return the reservation form on page 6 of this newsletter. In the meantime, please know that I will always be very proud to be part of this wonderful organization.

Thank you all for making our retirees club so successful.

With fond good wishes,

*Helen Bridge, President*

Join us January 23, 2016 at the annual CARE Reunion.

See reservation form on page 6.



# CHABOT COLLEGE NEWS

Irene Plunkett Reporting

Chabot has had a busy and productive fall, as usual. Here are a few of the highlights that retirees and the larger community might find interesting:

This accreditation cycle officially ended in October with the 13-member team completing and reporting on its site visit. The official report will be released in early 2016, but the group noted some positive aspects of the college culture. One was the visible and passionate commitment of the faculty and staff at Chabot. They also noted cases of innovative instructional approaches to, for example, developmental education and cohort and research-based programs that removed barriers for students and the team identified them as functional and beautiful.

The Building 100 project is still ongoing, but most of its parts are now open for business. As Dr. Marcia Corcoran notes: "Building 100 is the new Library, Learning, and Media (LLM) Center. The LLM was created to unify the various efforts on campus that develop, support, assess, and disseminate teaching and learning initiatives and resources. The LLM houses the Chabot College Library, the Learning Connection, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Office of Institutional Research, Chabot TV, the radio station, and offices for current faculty and student-led initiatives that foster student learning, collaboration, and academic success."

Chabot and district representatives were on hand to celebrate the October opening of the new San Leandro site of the Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center. Chabot has long partnered with this community-based health-care organization and it has provided internships for Chabot's dental hygiene and nursing students.

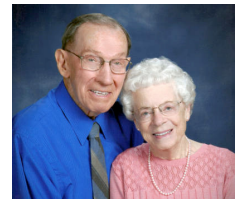
Chabot has seen its first student enrollment increase in five years according to Chabot Institutional Research coordinator Dr. Carolyn Arnold. She notes a 700-student increase from Fall 2014, resulting in an additional 1,000 enrollments. She also announced that the new Institutional Research location is in Building 100, near the tutoring center.

Finally, as the landscaping on Hesperian Blvd. nears completion, new banners greet current and potential students. The picture at right is just one example.



## Retiree News

The remarkable seventieth wedding anniversary of retired Chabot math instructor Ray Edwards and his wife Doris was recognized in the 7/29/2014 Contra Costa Times article: *Dublin couple's marriage turning 70 years young*. Beyond simple recognition, the article offers a rich biographical sketch of the couple and their 40-year history in the Livermore Valley.



Read the article at:

[www.contracostatimes.com/my-town/ci\\_26238013/dublin-couples-marriage-turning-70-years-young](http://www.contracostatimes.com/my-town/ci_26238013/dublin-couples-marriage-turning-70-years-young)



Philip Manwell has happily retired to his former life as a professional organist, playing extensively throughout the United States and Europe. He recently performed at the Resurrection Parish in Santa Rosa, offering Franck: Choral in A Minor; Prelude, Fugue and Variation; Cantabile, Fantasie in A Major; and Priere; Choral in A Major.

Learn more about Philip's musicianship and work at Las Positas College at [www.concertartistcooperative.com/manwell.html](http://www.concertartistcooperative.com/manwell.html)

## Meet Your Board Members - Dick Albert



Born in New York City, I spent grade school years in Mountain Lakes, New Jersey, a lovely small town where I learned how to ride a bicycle and catch fireflies. That was followed by a cross-country move to a small farm on the Olympic Peninsula at 11. They made me leave my cat behind. I lived a year with my alcoholic father, then joined my mother and three sisters, Alice, Dawn and Grace, in a big house in Seattle. Running away at 14 and hitchhiking to New Mexico, I lived with my Aunt Florence and attended the "I AM" School, run by a cult my mother's family embraced for a while. Extremely ascetic, we were vegetarians, did not smoke or drink alcohol, wear red or black, or generally approve of "the outer world."

Expelled at 16, I came to California to live with an uncle in Mount Shasta. At 18, I returned to Santa Fe to graduate from the "I AM" School, not because I loved the cult but because I loved a girl named Joy. After I spent a summer fighting forest fires back in California, Joy turned down my proposal, so I joined the army, going from private to first lieutenant and becoming a paratrooper in the 82nd airborne division. The Korean War GI Bill gave me an education at Chapel Hill and Berkeley.

In 1962 I began a forty year career teaching English at Chabot College. I taught everything from remedial English to creative writing and Shakespeare. I was also very active in the teachers union, The American Federation of Teachers. Beginning in my army years, I was very active in the civil rights movement.

I married three times and have three daughters, Gwen, Amy and Ashley and two grandchildren, Madeline and Evan. I have one dog, Jordy, and one cat, Jim Bridger. My wife, Carol Henrie, named the cat.

In my retirement I still write an occasional poem, and my lifelong interest in singing continues with my membership in the DMT Chorus in Hayward. I am also a plein air watercolor painter. I love reading and usually have two or three books going at a time, currently Don Skiles' "Football," Chris Cleave's "Little Bee," and Cheryl Strayed's "Wild." During World War II, my father encouraged my sisters and me to plant Victory Gardens and I have loved gardening ever since and spend more time now in the garden than anywhere else. My only other interest is shooting pool with my friend Larry Cain every Thursday afternoon. And movies, I love movies.

### THIS AND THAT

#### A Retirement Chat By Chet Rhoan

The attack on Social Security and Medicare continues. Did you get a COLA raise this year? The move to defund these programs, which are the bulwark of a stable middleclass, is funded by Wall Street interests in promoting underperforming money market and 401(K) accounts. Like CalSTRS and CalPERS, Social Security and Medicare can be fully funded for the next generation if the current generation has the political will to elect Senators and Congressmen who support these programs.

On another note, the crazy-making attack on CalPERS and CalSTRS continues. After failed efforts last year, proponents now seek to eliminate defined benefit pensions and instead make 401(k)-style defined contribution plans the default for all public employees hired after January 1, 2019. In addition to several contribution changes, the new proposals would limit employer contributions to 11% and subject future retirement benefit increases to voter approval. See: "[Voter Empowerment Act of 2016](#)" and "[Government Pension Cap Act of 2016](#)." At this writing, both are in the new 30-day statutory feedback period where comments can be submitted directly to the initiative backers.

### New Retirees

Deborah Buti, Chabot College, December 2014  
 Ora Bigelow, District Services, October 2015  
 Lynn Bustamante, District Services, November 2015  
 Shirley Dazhan, Chabot College, June 2015  
 Donna Hawkinson, Las Positas College, December 2015  
 Debra Kuita, Chabot College, August 2015  
 Oscar Livings III, District Services, December 2015  
 Robert Picht, District Services, October 2015  
 Geoffrey Smyth, Las Positas College, July 2015  
 Randolph Taylor, Las Positas College, December 2015  
 Christine Warda, Chabot College, January 2016  
 Phyllis Webb, Chabot College, July 2015  
 Gilberto Victoria, Las Positas College, September 2015  
 Carl Yamasaki, District Services, January 2016

### Deceased

Elaine Crouse, Chabot College, June 2015  
 Barbara Mertes, District Trustee, September 2015  
 Johnn Miller, Chabot College, March 2015



## LAS POSITAS COLLEGE NEWS

*Dee Roshong Reporting*

**Remembering Barbara Mertes.** The Las Positas College News page is dedicated to our founding Dean, Dr. Barbara Mertes, who passed away on September 4, 2015.

Dr. Mertes' career spanned more than three decades and included not only being the founding administrator for Chabot College-Valley Campus, in 1975, which came to be Las Positas College in 1988, but serving as District Vice Chancellor of Institutional Planning and Facilities Development. In that position, Dr. Mertes secured over \$100 million in competitive grants and allocations for both Las Positas and Chabot College. She also worked on policy issues at the state, national and international levels.

In her retirement, Dr. Mertes was elected to serve on the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District Board of Trustees where she served for 14 years, retiring last year.

Celebrations of Dr. Mertes' life were held on September 26, 2015 in the Barbara Fracisco Mertes Center for the Performing Arts and on October 20, 2015, also on the Las Positas College campus.

Several of Dr. Mertes' colleagues have chosen to contribute brief anecdotes as a tribute to her and to her meaning in their lives:

Marge O'Leary:

When I was asked to write a paragraph on Dr. Barbara Mertes, I asked myself where do I begin?? A paragraph and even a chapter would not be sufficient to cover her devotion and commitment for education. Both Barbara and her devoted husband shared their knowledge to the fullest in giving most of their lives to further and improve the standard of higher education. Like in their personal lives, they were committed, gracious, giving and elegant. Having known and worked with Dr. Barbara Mertes for 40 years was the most rewarding experience in my life. She taught me that learning was a continuing process, and that knowledge shared is knowledge gained. Reminiscing over the years, what struck me as her greatest asset was her writing ability. She submitted many grants to the State and every one she pondered over and rewrote several times were all successful!! How awesome is that?? I will always treasure her memory but so saddened to have lost a friend and mentor.

Art Tenbrink:

I first saw Dr Mertes in the early '70's where she stood with Reed Buffington and other pioneer educators on a decked-out-flatbed-trailer parked in a windy field right about here. What she spoke that day rang thru these hills and settled in a vision of a new Valley Campus of Chabot college. She implored us gathered there, to carry this vision forward thru the passage of Bond initiatives. Though the Bonds did not pass, the vision held and gained momentum. In the face of uncertain times, Valley Campus opened under her Deanship in 1975. As with most pioneers, no mere hard times could constrain her desire to grow a college to serve the Valley. It took Dean Mertes but half a decade to secure needed resources, to hire enough eager faculty, to innovate new campus programs including auto, electronics, horticulture, and her great love, performing arts.

Dee Roshong:

I had the privilege of commuting with Barbara daily from Foster City to Livermore during the early years of the College. We came to know each other well during that time and established a life-long friendship. Barbara saw talent in her students and during this time, in her faculty. She helped people develop their talents and put them to work for the College. For me, she helped me develop my public speaking skills, as we made known our beloved College to the local community and she served on the committee for my doctoral degree, which she had encouraged me to earn. Barbara loved this District and many of us who have had the privilege to be part of it. Her contributions to the District and to those of us who knew her well are treasured.



*continued on page 5*

Continued from page 4

Art Larson:

Recalling memories of Barbara is an exercise in observing the evolvement of an extraordinary professional career. I first knew Barbara as a member of the Language Arts Division where she shared office space with Wally Leeing. They were both outstanding speech teachers. Barbara excelled in producing Readers' Theater productions. I can't recall the interim steps leading to her leaving the classroom and becoming a member of the administrative staff and then the Dean of the Valley Campus. As such she was given the chair next to me at the Board Meetings. It was then that we became friends as well as colleagues. Barbara led in the planning and development of the Valley Campus from a rented high school classroom to the portable campus and onward to the construction of the great new campus we enjoy today. She was a skilled grant writer, and she led the way in the procurement of funds needed to create Las Positas College. I venture to say that to my knowledge there has not been one other person who has had greater personal influence in creating a community college than did Barbara. She advanced her career to become a dedicated member of the Board of Trustees. She served until the end, and I regret she didn't have a few years of retirement to enjoy and bask in her achievements.

Jack Healey:

Barbara Mertes was a compassionate and creative leader. She knew her staff and faculty on a personal and professional level. Health issues and work issues - she always made time to listen and helped in any way that she could. There are many examples of her support for faculty but one I recall is that she fully supported me when I was President of the California Association of Chemistry Instructors (University through High School). I shared many hours with Barbara discussing a broad range of topics, i.e. course content and communication between the high schools, community colleges and universities. Her insightfulness was very helpful to me and our students. She was a great friend, counselor and leader.

Elva Cooper:

Barbara Mertes was very instrumental in my life. She and her husband, Dr. David Mertes, convinced me that I should run for the Chabot College Board of Directors. It was with the express purpose to try to make Chabot Valley Campus into an independent college. Before that, my only connection with Chabot Valley Campus was as a part time teacher there, and that my two children had graduated from there and into the UC system.

After being elected to the Board in 1987, Barry Schrader and I had her encouragement and help any time we needed it. She was a true educator, and wished the very best for both Chabot and Las Positas Colleges. The grants she obtained were instrumental in all the building that was possible at both campuses. The Chabot-Las Positas Community College District would have been very different without her tremendous influence and help.

Mary Straight:

I was acquainted with Dr. Mertes before attending Chabot College-Valley Campus. We were both born and raised in Livermore and attended St. Michael Church. When I walked onto campus that first day back in March of 1975, Barbara was out in front of building 100, helping those of us find our building and classrooms. I can't remember a time when she wasn't outside around campus and or in her office. Many of her outside strolls were with Babe Castillo, making sure the campus was clean and litter free. More than once, I saw her pick up a piece of paper or trash and put it in the proper receptacle.

When I decided to attend Cal State-Hayward, Barbara encouraged me and always asked about my classes. When I was trying to decide if I wanted to pursue a MA degree, she was one of my biggest supporters. I began my career on campus in 1980, as a part-time, on-call employee. The campus had such a warm and welcoming atmosphere that I really wanted a permanent position there. In 1984, I applied for a position in Student Services that later became the Assessment Specialist. I joked at my retirement party that Dr. Mertes got so accustomed to seeing me around she offered me a job!

I would often see David and Barbara at our favorite Chinese restaurant, and if I was alone, they would always invite me to join them. It does seem strange not to see them about or the yellow VW parked by Peet's Coffee.

Thank You, Barbara - for forty years of friendship, encouragement, guidance and support.



## 2016 CARE Reunion

Please join your colleagues at our upcoming reunion and annual meeting!

We will enjoy a wonderful opportunity to socialize with friends and co-workers, a delicious buffet lunch, and a fun prize drawing.

When: Saturday, January 23, 2016      11:00 a.m. No-Host Social  
Where: San Ramon Country Club      11:45 a.m. Business Meeting  
Cost: \$22.00 per person      12:15 p.m. Lunch

Directions to San Ramon Country Club:

From 580 east or west go to the 680 interchange.  
 Go North on 680 to ALCOSTA BLVD. (The first off-ramp).  
 From the North take 680 South to San Ramon Alcosta Blvd. Off-ramp.  
 Go East on Alcosta, through 3 signal lights to FIRCREST LANE, and turn left.  
 You will see the golf course. Take Fircrest to the club parking lot.



*Detach and return*

**Reservation For  
 Annual CARE Reunion and Lunch**  
 January 23, 2016, 11:00 a.m.  
 San Ramon Country Club



Please complete this form, enclose your check payable to C.A.R.E., and mail to

**Sharon Trethan, C.A.R.E. Treasurer**  
**5122 Blackhawk Dr.**  
**Danville, CA 94506**

Name/Names \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 (please print clearly)

➔  **Yes, please add me to the CARE Member Directory. (E-mail address required)**

Number Attending	_____	x	\$22	=	_____
2016 Dues (If not already paid)			\$10	=	_____
Total Amount Enclosed				=	_____

**Reservation Deadline:  
 January 8, 2016**

**Reservations must be prepaid.**  
 There is no pay-at-the-door option.

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CARE Photographer

**Contact the board:**  
[www.care-news.org/contacts](http://www.care-news.org/contacts)

**Change of Address**

Please send your change of address to CARE Treasurer,  
Sharon Trethan via [e-mail](#) or  
5122 Blackhawk Drive, Danville, CA 94506.

**Change of E-mail**

Please send your change of e-mail address to CARE Communications Director,  
Bill Threlfall via [e-mail](#)

**District Retirement Benefits Contacts**

Deborah Dobbins 925-485-5505 [ddobbins@clpccd.org](mailto:ddobbins@clpccd.org)  
Rosalyn Tucker 925-485-5504 [rtucker@clpccd.org](mailto:rtucker@clpccd.org)

*Detach and return*

**C.A.R.E. Dues 2016**

Your dues are used in direct support of our newsletter and web site.  
No stipends are paid to board members, who volunteer their time and service.  
Thank you for your support if you have already paid your 2016 dues!

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

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→  **Yes, please add me to the CARE Member Directory.**  
(E-mail address required)

**AMOUNT ENCLOSED:**

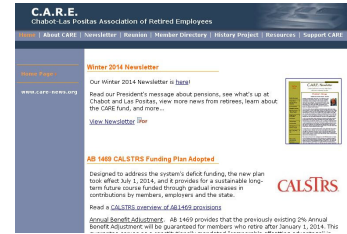
\$10 per year or  \$100 lifetime membership (Thank you!)

Please cut and mail this form and your check payable to **CARE** to:

**CARE c/o Sharon Trethan**  
**5122 Blackhawk Dr.**  
**Danville, CA 94506**

**New on the CARE web site:**

- [Tribute to Barbara Mertes](#), a new History Project piece by Art Tenbrink.
- [Memories of Glenys Wilson](#), a new History Project piece by Rita Goldhor.



**Featured on the CARE web site:**

The [Reunion Page](#). The page includes reservation information and dozens of pictures from past CARE reunions that provide a sense of this social occasion.

To visit the Reunion Page, just select **Reunion** from the top main menu at [www.care-news.org](http://www.care-news.org).

Chabot College  
25555 Hesperian Blvd.  
Hayward, CA 94545  
President's Office