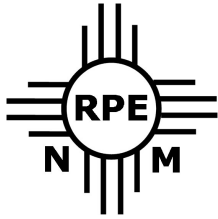


# RPENM News



## Board of Directors

### Officers

Richard Baca  
**President**

Ann Crandall  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President**

Manuel Gonzales  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President**

Isabel T Clendenin  
**Treasurer**

LaRue Goodheart  
**Secretary**

## Board Members

Eley Bourguet  
Betty Boxx  
Wesley Brown  
Wm Oscar Jordan  
Charles (Rick) F Mack  
Victor Montoya  
Jerry Rael  
James F Robles  
Paul Torres

## Executive Director

Doug Crandall

## RPENM Office

505-280-8459

## E-Mail

RPENewMexico@aol.com

## Letter From Your President

I hope you and your family are well and enjoying a wonderful springtime in New Mexico. It has been an exciting past few months for RPENM and I am pleased with our accomplishments. Much of this newsletter deals with an attempt to pass a bill during the last legislative session that would have eliminated the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority.

RPENM worked tirelessly during the session to successfully defeat that bill. Board members Oscar Jordan, Ann Crandall, Rick Mack and Isabel Clendenin, as well as Executive Director Doug Crandall deserve a *special thank you* from all of us for the hard work they did on our behalf. In addition, the Association of Educational Retirees, (NMAER) lead by President Marge

Lancaster and Executive Director Russell Goff worked hand-in-hand with RPENM in order to assure the continued existence of NMRHCA as a non-political, independent organization.

As successful as we were, though, I was disappointed that more RPENM members, especially from the Albuquerque and Santa Fe area did not get involved by going to the legislature. This issue of eliminating NMRHCA affects all of us and it will be brought up again during the next legislative session, if not sooner. **It is imperative that we all get involved to protect our health care!**

I have reluctantly accepted the resignation of Doug Crandall as our

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## RPENM & AER Join Forces To Protect Health Care

Everyone knows the old adage about strength in numbers. This is especially true in politics. As a result, RPENM has teamed up with the Association of Educational Retirees to assure the future of the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority as an independent agency.

This team approach worked in spectacular fashion during the last legislative session when we defeated two companion bills, House Bill 561 and Senate Bill 538. This legislation was intended to eliminate NMRHCA and include it as part of an omnibus health care authority combining all state employees, the Public Schools Insurance Authority and the Albuquerque Public Schools.

The proposed legislation would have created an unwieldy 30 person board, twenty-five of who would be voting members. The Governor would have

appointed fourteen of the 25 voting members. **RPENM's representation on the board would have been eliminated entirely!**

Working together with AER, the Governor and legislators received over 16,000 telephone calls, e-mails and

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## Web Sites Of Interest

PERA : [www.state.nm.us/pera/](http://www.state.nm.us/pera/)

RHCA: [www.nmrhca.state.nm.us/](http://www.nmrhca.state.nm.us/)

ERB: [www.era.state.nm.us/](http://www.era.state.nm.us/)

Soc Sec: [www.ssa.gov/](http://www.ssa.gov/)

**RPENM: [www.rpenm.org/](http://www.rpenm.org/)**

## Letter From Your President - Continued

Executive Director. He took on an enormous task when he accepted the job a little more than two years ago, and I believe that his efforts to professionalize RPENM will assure a successful future for our organization. Doug has agreed to run for the RPENM Board and, if elected, will continue to be a valuable asset.

The annual membership meeting is scheduled in Albuquerque on May 13 and 14 and I urge you all to attend! Elections are also on-going with six, three-year positions open. If you haven't voted yet, please do so before the deadline.

There are many challenges ahead of us. Membership, though up by several hundred

members in just the past two years, must continue to grow in order for RPENM to remain a valuable and vital organization. Finances are also an issue that must be addressed. Advertising in the newsletter, and corporate sponsorships are just two things that must be considered in order to keep RPENM well-funded as we continue to grow. As members, your help, and your ideas are always welcome.

I want to thank you, the members, for electing me to the RPENM Board, and I would like to thank the RPENM Board for twice electing me as your President. I am looking forward to 2004. With your help, it could be our best year ever! ■



Richard  
Baca,  
President



Joining  
Forces  
With  
RPENM

## RPENM & AER Join Forces . . . Continued

letters in opposition to the proposal. Over 80 RPENM and AER members packed the meeting room of the Budget and Appropriation committee hearing room to speak out against the legislation, which was finally tabled on the last day of the session.

At issue here is the politicization of our retiree health care. We believe that, in 1990, Governor Carruthers and the New Mexico State legislature made a promise to ERA and PERA retirees to provide a non-political health care authority to oversee the health and well

being of its members. We expect the current and future governors, as well as the current and future legislatures to honor that promise.

Unfortunately, our work is not done. There are rumors of a special legislative session this summer to deal with the health care issue again, and Governor Richardson has made it clear that he has placed this issue on the top of his agenda. RPENM and AER will be interviewing legislative candidates and making our voices heard before this issue is re-introduced. ■

## Kudos To Oscar Jordan

RPENM Board member Oscar Jordan deserves a special thank you from all NM Retiree Health Care members. Oscar, almost single-handedly at times, monitored the progress of SB 538 and HB 561 to make sure that we had a voice any time the bills were heard. Those few legislators who didn't know Oscar before the session, all knew him by the time the session ended.

Probably the only person who didn't see Oscar regularly during the session was his wife Virginia!

***Thank you Oscar!*** ■



Oscar  
Jordan



## 2004 Annual Membership Meeting In Albuquerque

### Annual Membership Meeting - May 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>

Under separate cover you should have received information regarding the 2004 Annual Membership Meeting to be held Thursday & Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> at the Sheraton Uptown in Albuquerque.

There will be a sheet of raffle tickets costing \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Please buy/sell as many as you can. Make extra copies if necessary. We have some nice raffle and door prizes and hope to get many more before meeting time.

The registration form for the luncheon states the entree choices. Please be sure to check your preference. Registration is \$25.00, which includes Coffee Breaks, Attitude Adjustment Hour and the Luncheon. Lots of good food, soft drinks, beer and Frozen Margaritas will be served at the Adjustment Hour.

Registration will begin at noon on the

13th. Board meeting will be from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. with Happy Hour following at 6:00 p.m.

Early registration will be greatly appreciated so we have an idea how many to plan for. The deadline to register is May 7th, 2004.

Each member must make their own hotel registration. Cost is \$79.00 (single or double) and Chapter #5 will refund \$10.00 on each room. Call the Sheraton Uptown at 1-800-252-7772 and be sure to mention the Retired Public Employees of New Mexico to get the special rate. **Deadline for reservations is April 12, 2004.**

LETS HAVE A BIG TURN OUT! ■

*Betty Boxx and Committee*

### Membership News

RPENM Director Doug Crandall mailed over 135 annual membership renewal forms for 2004 to our members. We have had a positive response to our request, maintaining our membership at 3900 as of this newsletter, **a 20% increase from January 2001!** Members were asked to consider becoming an auto-deduction member rather than annual dues paying member. Auto deduction members pay a \$12.00 annual dues fee from their July PERA benefit payment. Many of our annual members have changed to dues deduction members; this saves printing and postage costs for RPENM and reduces the need for an annual personal payment by a member each year. If you are an annual dues paying member to RPENM, please consider joining as an annual dues deduction member!

Hard work and dedication from RPENM Membership Committee members as well as strong statewide recruiting efforts are helping our numbers grow, but we need your help! Please tell your PERA friends about RPENM, and if you

need membership forms or recruiting information, contact Executive Director Doug Crandall. Remember, you are eligible for RPENM membership if you are a PERA member and not as yet retired. Beneficiaries of PERA recipients are also eligible for membership.

Some of our recent NEW members signing up to RPENM are: Susan H. Biernacki, Albuquerque; Deborah Martinez, Santa Fe; Victoria Gurule, Santa Fe; Gillie Saiz, Albuquerque; Sarah Schultz, Albuquerque; Johnny Gomez, Bloomfield; Leonard Torres, Santa Clara; Earl C. Gleason, Belen; Signe Rich, Albuquerque; Joseph M. Polisar, Garden Grove, CA.; Conrad G. Keyes, Ruidoso; Donald P. Dresp; Las Cruces; Donald Roquemore, Farmington; Daniel J. Klein, Albuquerque; Rose Mary Alderette, Santa Fe; Frank Gonzales, Gallup; Lorraine Gutierrez, Las Cruces; Mary McCarty, Natalia, Texas; Mary Helen Romero, Las Cruces; Paris Jordan, Los Lunas; Maria Montoya; Las Cruces; Rachel Cleveland, T or C; Ted Ortiz, Raton; Maria Bond, Albuquerque; Gail Massey, Albuquerque and Irene Aguilar, Las Cruces. ■



## **PERA News**

Elections are also underway for the retiree position on the PERA Board. Incumbent Jerry Rael and ex-officio RPENM Board member is seeking re-election. Other RPENM members who expressed an interest in running include RPENM Board member Wesley Brown and former Bernalillo County Sheriff Joe Bowdich. Ballots will be mailed to all PERA retirees in

August.

***PERA assets reached the \$9.5 billion mark in March. Returns for 2003 exceeded 23%, the second highest annual increase in the history of the fund! While retirement plans around the country are struggling, PERA remains strong and sound. ■***



## **NMRHCA Switch Enrollment Meetings**

All PERA retirees receiving Retiree Health Care Benefits were notified by mail in March 2004 that the upcoming Switch Enrollment period for health care plans is soon to be in effect. During switch enrollment, members may switch medical plans and/or dental options and add dental or vision coverage (unless you dropped an NMRHCA dental or vision plan in the last four years). **This Switch Enrollment time frame is the only period during which these changes may be made. Changes in coverage will take effect July 1, 2004.** It is important that interested parties attend a switch enrollment meeting in various parts of the state as noted in the schedule sent by mail to all NMRHCA members. If you do not have the date and time of a meeting in your area, contact NMRHCA at 1-800-233-

2576 for information.

Milton Sanchez, Director of NMRHCA, has given RPENM approval to recruit new membership at switch enrollment meetings. Executive Director Doug Crandall sent notification of this opportunity to all RPENM Board Members and Chapter Chairs. Last year, approximately 20 new members were recruited statewide from this endeavor, and hopefully, we will sign up even more members this year! Mr. Sanchez has also agreed to allow an RPENM representative address those attending the switch enrollment meeting to explain the important reasons for becoming a member of RPENM. Use this opportunity in your area to sign up new RPENM members! ■



## **RPENM Members Honored By NMRHCA**

A resolution by the Board of Directors of the NM Retiree Health Care Authority singled out five RPENM members for their hard work and tireless efforts in protecting NMRHCA from elimination. Those members were: Richard Baca, RPENM

President, Doug Crandall, RPENM Executive Director, Ann Crandall, RPENM 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Oscar Jordan, RPENM Board member, and Larry Waterman, former RPENM Executive Director. ■

**RPENM  
Thanks  
Them  
Too!**

**Fill Out  
And Mail  
Your Ballot  
Today!**

## **RPENM Board Elections**

Eight RPENM members are vying for six open positions on the RPENM Board of Directors. Incumbents Betty Boxx, Wesley Brown and Jim Robles are all seeking re-election. Others on the ballot are Doug Crandall, Sherry Kearns, Paul Mileta,

Josephine Rasacowski and Lucio A. Quinones. Terms for the newly elected board members will be three years. Current board members Ann Crandall and Manuel Gonzales did not seek re-election. ■

We  
Appreciate  
You,  
Our  
Members

## **RPENM - Working For You**

The Retired Public Employees of New Mexico (RPENM) was formed in 1962. Since that time we have served as the voice of New Mexico's retired public employees and have worked actively and diligently in YOUR interest.

Over the years, we have lobbied the state legislature, PERA and the NM Retiree Health Care to provide and improve benefits for retirees, while strengthening the institutions that serve YOUR needs.

Our many accomplishments include:

- Lobbied, supported and obtained a guaranteed 3% cost of living adjustment for all NM public retirees.
- Took lead role in passing Constitutional Amendment 4 to protect the PERA trust fund.
- Involved in the creation and protection of the NM Retiree Health Care Authority.
- Secured two retiree representative positions on the PERA Board.
- RPENM appointed member to the NM Retiree Health Care Authority.
- Provides a registered Lobbyist at the state legislature.

Built a network of 19 statewide Chapters to provide timely information to members.

RPENM has worked on behalf of its members tirelessly for over 40 years to assure the solvency of PERA. RPENM played an instrumental role in the creation of the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority, and continues to work to monitor benefits and to seek solutions to allow all New Mexico communities to become part of the Retiree Health Care program.

Each year dozens of bills are introduced in the New Mexico State Legislature that affects PERA and NMRHCA. Many of those bills, if passed into law, would be dangerous to the future of those organizations and to **YOUR** retirement. RPENM lobbies to pass bills that will benefit New Mexico public retirees, and works diligently to defeat those bills that may cause harm.

The Retired Public Employees of New Mexico is the only organization watching out for **YOUR** retirement and your health care. Our strength is in our membership and we appreciate **YOU**, our members. ■

## **Message From The Executive Director**

This will be my last message as your Executive Director. This position, which has been both challenging and rewarding, is also requiring more of my time than I am able to provide and I will be leaving on May 1<sup>st</sup>. I have enjoyed working with the Board and the membership and I will work closely with the next Executive Director to ensure a smooth transition.

I want to thank the Board for hiring me and allowing me the opportunity to serve all of you. I will continue to work hard supporting the goals of RPENM and in protecting our PERA retirement and health care benefits. ■



Doug  
Crandall

Follow  
RPENM's  
Activities  
On  
The  
Web!

## **Did You Know About RPENM.ORG?**

The best way to keep up with what's happening with RPENM is to regularly check in with our web site. You'll find links of interest to retirees, the latest RPENM News and activities, biographies of the board members and

the Executive Director and more. We will continue to expand our presence on the web so come watch us grow at:

**[www.rpenm.org](http://www.rpenm.org)**

