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### 2021-2022 San Diego Section Officers

Section Director: Oscar Cortes  
Section President: Frank Contreras  
President Elect: Alex Balce  
VP Supervisory: Abu-Bakr Al-Jafri  
VP Rank & File: Ryan Fallica  
VP At Large: Stewart Migdal  
Secretary: Ron Palo  
Treasurer: Roy Flores

### PECG Member Recruiting is Rewarding!

- Recruitment Tools:  
<http://pecg.org/recruitment-tools/>
- To join:  
<http://pecg.org/join-pecg/>
- Rewards:  
\$50 per rank-and-file employee  
\$200 per supervisor/manager

## SD PECG Members Annual Gift Giving!

San Diego Section PECG leadership personally sponsored two children from Sonrisa de Angeles Casa Hogar during the last holiday season. SD PECG was able to provide gifts to PECG member and event coordinator, Hector Torres. Hector was able to deliver the gifts to the children and help provide a memorable time for the Sonrisa kids.

The kids were sponsored to have a set of PJs, tennis shoes, warm pink fuzzy sweatshirt, socks, candy, headbands, long sleeve shirt, a Barbie set, play pants, camouflage sweatshirt, pullover jacket, candies, and toys.



## PECG Weekly Updates

February 4, 2022

California and the nation are in the midst of a severe blood shortage. In fact, the American Red Cross has declared the first-ever national blood crisis and is reporting that health care providers are being forced to make difficult decisions about which patients receive, or do not receive, blood transfusions. So, this is certainly a good time to remind PECG members that the PECG MOU makes it easy to help save a life by donating blood.

Under the PECG MOU, with prior approval, all Unit 9 employees may be allowed reasonable release time without loss of compensation to donate blood, plasma, platelets, and other blood products to certified donation centers. To learn more, please check out Article 5.17 of the PECG MOU. The password is PECGdelivers! (case-sensitive).

PECG's comprehensive Bargaining Survey was emailed in the Weekly Update last Friday, January 28, to all rank-and-file PECG members. Your responses will help establish the Bargaining Team's objectives as negotiations with CalHR (representing the governor) get underway on the next PECG Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). PECG's current MOU expires on July 1, 2022. Please don't miss your chance to have your voice heard about the next contract!

PECG's comprehensive Supervisor and Manager Pay and Benefits Survey will be emailed to PECG's supervisory and managerial members soon. The PECG Meet and Confer Team, made up of



Section leadership thanks Hector for his annual coordination in providing a heartfelt experience for the kids.

## PECG San Diego Section Meeting Highlights

The San Diego PECG section recently conducted its first section meeting for the year 2022 on January 13, 2022 with Dawn Grosodonia as guest speaker. The meeting discussed the programs for new members that concern position range placement. The guest speaker highlighted that PECG labor

fellow supervisors from around the state, will use the survey results to establish its own pay and benefit objectives for Unit 9 supervisors and managers prior to meeting with the State. Password is PEGCgdelivers! (case-sensitive).

### **January 21, 2022**

Unfortunately, despite PEGC's many requests, the State has yet to introduce legislation (a budget trailer bill) to fund the telework stipends that are to be paid to Unit 9 members retroactively to October 1, 2021.

You will remember that with the release of the State's permanent telework policy in October, the PEGC Bargaining Team reached agreement with the State on a Side Letter that will provide Unit 9 "remote-centered" employees (working from home 50% or more of the time) with a \$50 a month telework stipend. "Office-centered" Unit 9 employees, working more than 50% of the time in the office, will be eligible to receive \$25 a month. The stipends will be paid retroactively to October 1, 2021. Employees who are not teleworking, will not qualify for a telework stipend.

But as we reported previously, while the PEGC Side Letter makes clear that employees are eligible to receive a stipend starting October 1, 2021, the money to pay the stipends must be appropriated in legislation approved by the Legislature and signed by the governor. That did not happen in 2021 because the Legislature adjourned for the year in September, prior to PEGC, and other bargaining units, coming to agreement on the telework stipend side letters.

PEGC will continue to urge the State to introduce a bill funding the telework stipends and then make certain the bill is

relations can provide assistance to new employees who believe that they are eligible for higher range classification for those who have degree and many years of engineering experience. Another hot topic that generated a lot of inquiry is the current telework policies negotiated by PEGC for its members highlighting the difference of remote- and office-centered telework and the stipend associated to the telework program.

The proposed state budget that Gov. Newsom submitted was also discussed. It includes approximately \$23M for transportation funding.

The speaker also tackled the Leave Reduction program and informed members that the cap is now 832 hrs with the PLP 2020.

There were 115 SD PEGC members who participated in the event and each received a \$15 gift card in lieu of lunch traditionally provided by the section.

## **UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley Opened**

SANDAG, Caltrans, MTS, and UC San Diego, hosted a community celebration for the Grand Opening of the Mid-Coast Extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley last year, November 21.

The event included a speaking program with dignitaries, live music and entertainment, free food and awesome giveaways, and lots of family-friendly activities!

Dozens of volunteers including some PEGC members helped with set up/clean up, passing out giveaways, crowd control, staffing booths, to make the event organized and successful.

This Blue line is a 26.3 mile light rail line in the San Diego Trolley system, operated by San Diego Trolley, Inc., an operating division of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit (MTS). This line serves the La Jolla area, San Diego area, National City and San Ysidro which is at the San Ysidro border with Mexico.

approved and signed as quickly as possible. Thank you for your patience.

**January 14, 2022**

Governor Newsom kicked off the budget debate at the State Capitol with the release of his proposed 2022-23 State Budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, 2022.

In total, the plan proposes over \$286 billion in state spending making this by far the largest budget in California history. The state continues to generate revenue at historic levels. In November, the Legislative Analysts' Office forecast a \$31 billion surplus in the upcoming fiscal year. The Governor's 2022-23 budget proposal puts the surplus at \$45.7 billion. Budget reserves are expected to grow to \$34.6 billion in fiscal year 2022-23, according to the proposal.

The proposed budget includes \$770.5 million to cover collectively bargained state employee salary increases, higher state employee health care costs, and the state's contribution to pre-fund health care for active employees. As is customary, the proposed budget does not include any funding for PEGC or other bargaining units that have Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) expiring in the next fiscal year. Funding to pay for new MOUs will come later and will be funded by budget trailer bills after PEGC and others reach agreement. PEGC's current MOU expires on July 2, 2022.

In addition to the statutorily required \$8.5 billion payment to CalPERS, the proposed budget includes a \$3.5 billion supplemental payment to bolster the fund. According to the budget, an additional \$6 billion in funding is planned to be paid to CalPERS in fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25. With those



*Shown in the above flyer is the invitation for the grand opening of the line that has the highest rideship of the San Diego Trolley's three regular lines.*

## IN THE NEWS

### Los Angeles to Las Vegas High-speed Rail Could Break Ground Next Year

By Cole Lauterbach / The Center Square

January 25, 2022

(The Center Square) – Las Vegas residents could hop on a train after lunch and step off in downtown Los Angeles before dinner in only a few years, according to a progress update from the company seeking to make the rail trip a reality.

Brightline, a Florida-based company focusing on city-to-city light rail, is working with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration for permission to begin construction on the line, which would connect the two cities.

A DOT update said the environmental review and permitting process is "on track" and expected to be completed in November.

payments, the state will have contributed an extra \$12.7 billion to CalPERS and CalSTRS since July 1, 2017 to improve the funded status of both systems and reduce the state's long-term pension obligations.

In the proposed budget, the Administration continues to support the continued use of telework. According to the proposal, the State's use of a hybrid workforce furthers government efficiency by reducing office space and the need to travel. The summary also notes that telework provides more flexibility for the state and its employees, larger potential candidate pools for telework eligible classifications, and builds resiliency in the event of future emergencies.

Of course, this is just the start of the budget process. The budget must go through review and ultimately be approved by the State Legislature over the next 6 months. PEGC will be there to protect the interests of Unit 9 employees and will keep members up to date in the weeks ahead on any important developments.

### **January 7, 2022**

The start of a new year is a good time to remind PEGC members about what unites our membership and the importance of collective action to achieve our shared goals. PEGC has developed this flyer – PEGC Delivers! Our Collective History of Success – to let new and long-time members learn more about PEGC's history and how we came to deliver competitive pay, pension protection, the best health care benefits in state service, and job protection from outsourcing.

The flyer recounts the gathering in July 1963 in which state engineers, frustrated by lagging pay and the outsourcing of



*High speed yellow train in motion on a railway station at sunset. By Dennis Belitsky/ Shutterstock*

Much of the line is approved. The latest update addressed a 49-mile line that would connect Victor Valley, California, and the Los Angeles suburb of Rancho Cucamonga, California.

Once completed, a passenger would depart from Brightline's Las Vegas terminal and connect with a public rail in Rancho Cucamonga en route to Union Station in downtown Los Angeles.

"Trains are expected to operate daily on 45-minute headways between Victor Valley and Rancho Cucamonga," the status report said. "The trip between Victor Valley and Rancho Cucamonga would be approximately 35 minutes. Service would be coordinated with existing and planned Metrolink service at the Rancho Cucamonga station to provide a convenient connection between the HSR and commuter rail systems."

The entire trip, the company estimated, could be done in less than four hours.

The project, once started, is expected to cost \$8 billion and take three years to complete, according to Forbes. Under that timeline, the rail line could offer tickets in 2026.

Brightline acquired XpressWest, a high-speed rail project with rights to develop a federally approved corridor connecting

their work, formally recognized that they needed each other to accomplish their objectives. They needed, they declared, “concerted collective effort” by a “formal organization.” The organization they created that summer was PEGC. Concerted collective effort is just as important today as it was 60 years ago.

To help advance PEGC’s objectives and protect the collective interests of all Unit 9 members, please take the time and effort to encourage non-members to join PEGC. Achieving and maintaining a high level of membership is PEGC’s source of power at the bargaining table and provides the resources necessary to effectively advocate for our members in all venues – the Governor’s Administration, Legislature, courts, media, state agencies and departments, and CalPERS. A high percentage of membership is the key to improving the pay, pensions, health care, and job security of our members.

The flyer can be accessed on the PEGC webpage here. We hope it will be a useful tool in encouraging non-members to join PEGC. As history has proven, we are stronger working together through collective effort. PEGC Delivers!

## Know Your PEGC Membership Benefits

### EXCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS

Only PEGC members can vote to approve or reject the Unit 9 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which establishes the pay and benefits for all Unit 9 employees. Only members can be elected to the PEGC Board of Directors and local section office, and only PEGC members vote in these elections.

Southern California and Las Vegas, in 2018. With the acquisition, the company received land adjacent to the Las Vegas strip for a station. The project was initially planned to launch in 2022.

According to a release, Brightline estimated the rail line would have a \$10 billion economic impact and generate \$1 billion in annual tax revenue.



Cole Lauterbach

Bio

Cole Lauterbach is a regional editor for The Center Square covering Arizona, California, and Nevada. For more than a decade, Cole has produced award-winning content on both radio and television.

## CALTRANS Approves Use of Low-Carbon Cement to Help Combat Climate Change

January 25, 2022

Source: Caltrans

Caltrans announced today it is approving the use of low-carbon cement to help reduce the carbon footprint of California’s transportation system. By advancing the use of Portland limestone cement (PLC), Caltrans’ road construction and maintenance projects can generate less carbon dioxide – the primary greenhouse gas contributing to global warming and climate change – with the same high-performance standards at a slightly lower cost.

“Using low-carbon cement can cut Caltrans’ concrete-related carbon dioxide emissions annually by up to 10 percent,” said Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin. “This is a big step in supporting California’s efforts to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045.”

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Every member receives the Informer, PEGC's newsletter, or visits PEGC's website for the latest information. Periodic informational email messages and letters provide more detailed information. PEGC leaders and staff periodically hold meetings at worksites to present information and answer questions.

## **PEGC FED-PAC AND FED-PAC RECRUITMENT REWARDS PROGRAM**

Your Voice in Our Nation's Capitol

By joining the PEGC FED-PAC, you will not only help PEGC protect your interests in Washington, D.C., you can also help yourself to distinctive, high quality FED-PAC gear.

FED-PAC Recruitment Rewards Program

To encourage the recruitment of new FED-PAC members, PEGC will provide a cash reward for each new FED-PAC member you sign up.

## **THEME PARK AND CONSUMER DISCOUNTS**

Members receive savings at theme parks such as Knott's Berry Farm, LEGOLAND, Six Flags, Universal Studios, and dozens more. Consumer discounts on car rentals are also available.

## **REPRESENTATION**

Members receive expert representation on employment and professional issues at the worksite, in the state Legislature and, if necessary, in court. Representation is provided by labor relations consultants, lawyers, or



Cement is typically produced by mining, grinding, and heating limestone in industrial kilns to temperatures as high as 2,820 degrees Fahrenheit (1,550 degrees Celsius). The process alters the rock's chemistry and creates "clinker" – the basic component in nearly all types of cement – but also generates large quantities of carbon dioxide. PLC contains less clinker.

In 2017 alone, Caltrans used 325,000 tons of cement to upgrade the state highway system. Switching to low-carbon cement has the potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 28,000 tons a year – the equivalent of removing more than 6,000 cars off the road.



Caltrans expects that the reduced energy needs associated with PLC production will make the cost similar or slightly less when

lobbyists who are experienced in representing state engineers on employment issues.

## PECG-SPONSORED INSURANCE

### Life and Disability Insurance

PECG active members automatically receive \$,5,000 of Basic Life life insurance and \$1,500 of Basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) as a benefit of membership at no additional cost to themselves.

Members have the option to purchase up to an additional \$521,000 in life insurance, and up to \$255,000 in dependents coverage. Long-term disability insurance is also available, all at low group rates. The low monthly premiums, paid for through payroll deduction, offer members an opportunity to provide security for their family members economically and conveniently.

### Auto and Homeowners Insurance

Only members get big savings on auto and homeowner insurance premiums paid via payroll deduction.

## PECG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG) is proud to offer up to 20 scholarships, for \$1,000 each, as a member-only benefit for PECG members and their dependents in their continuing education.

## PECG LOGO GEAR FOR MEMBERS

Get high quality PECG logo gear including face masks, hand sanitizers, lanyards, coffee mugs and more!

## PECG Member Involvement

compared to regular cement.

The new low-carbon cement standards are based on Caltrans-funded research conducted at Oregon State University, which concluded that PLC is equally suitable for Caltrans' construction projects as ordinary cement with a reduced carbon footprint. Throughout the review process, Caltrans worked closely with its partners at the California Air Resources Board and industry experts and stakeholders, such as the California Construction and Industrial Materials Association and the California Nevada Cement Association, to draft the new standard specifications.

In 2010, Caltrans changed its concrete standard specifications to increase the use of sustainable alternatives in transportation projects, an initiative that helped spur a shift in concrete production throughout the state. Caltrans will continue to work with the California Air Resources Board to reach the state's goal and achieve net-zero emissions from the cement sector by 2045.

# Toot Our Horns Tuesdays!

*January 25, 2022*



Another successful virtual Toot Our Horn Tuesdays was held recently on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 and this first quarter of the year has the greatest number of transportation engineers newly hired.

The new engineers were introduced in the event and some even have their short video introduction played during the virtual gathering.

## ➤ Welcome New Members

**John Esho**

**Matthew Nami**

**Julia Bermudez**

**Gina Chadergian**

**Donny Cross**

**Aldiv Divinagracia**

If you are interested in volunteering on any one of these San Diego Section Committees, please email our Section President, Frank Contreras at: [frank.contreras@dot.ca.gov](mailto:frank.contreras@dot.ca.gov)

- Events Planning Committee
- Health & Safety Comment
- Membership Committee
- Nominations & Election Committee
- Policy & Bylaws Committee
- Political Involvement Committee
- Retirement Committee
- Scholarship & Student Monitoring Committee
- Public Outreach Committee
- Science Fair Committee Events Committee
- CHEERS Committee
- Grievance Committee
- STEM Committee

## QUICK LINKS

- Visit San Diego Section  
[sandiegopecg.org](http://sandiegopecg.org)
- Follow us on Twitter  
[Twitter.com/pecg\\_sandiego](https://twitter.com/pecg_sandiego)
- Health Plan Premiums 2021  
<http://pecg.org/members/resources/health-plan-premiums/>
- MOU: 2020-2022  
<http://pecg.org/new-pecg-mou/>
- PEGC Informer  
[pecg.org/communications/informer/](http://pecg.org/communications/informer/)
- San Diego County Engineering Council  
[Sandiegoengineers.org](http://Sandiegoengineers.org)

**Gregory Zeitounian**

**Sam Barjoud**

**Mario A. Orso**

**David Timms**

**Robert Villota**

## ➤ 25 Years Anniversary

**Farah Kushkaki**

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# PECG Documentaries

## The Bridge So Far

**T**he Bridge So Far - Suspense Story” is an entertaining one-hour documentary on the often outrageous and always controversial history and status of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Tragic, frustrating, comical, and historic, this entertaining documentary/news special follows the Bridge from its original construction through the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake up to the present day. It recounts the progress, delays, setbacks, and politics during the design and construction of a new, safe bridge to re-complete the connection across the Bay between San Francisco and Oakland.

## PECG Laughs

### The Effects Of Studying Engineering

Before studying engineering, if someone asked me what one plus one is, I would have said two.

Now, I'd say I'm pretty sure it's two, but we'd better make it three just to be safe.

### The Trainee

New engineer: "How do you estimate how long the project will take?"

Seasoned engineer: "I add up the time required for each task, then multiply the sum by pi."

New engineer; "Why pi?"

Seasoned engineer: "It ensures that all my budgets are irrational."



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### Improve your public speaking and enhance your leadership skills!

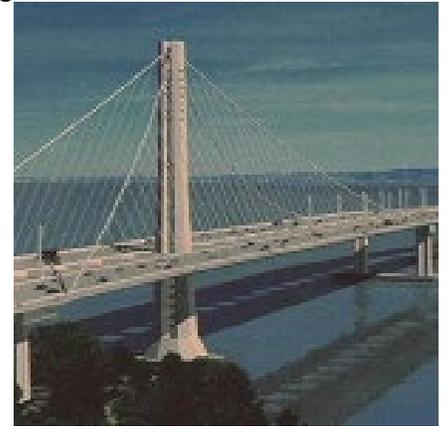
Try us out for free and join us in our virtual weekly meeting via Cisco Webex.

To get more information and to be included in our invitation list, contact our Toastmaster CalState-1733 Vice-President of Membership, Cathryne Bruce-Johnson at [cathryne.bruce-johnson@dot.ca.gov](mailto:cathryne.bruce-johnson@dot.ca.gov).



This was much more than a huge design and construction project. It was local, regional, state, and even federal politics; dollars and delays; finances and finger pointing; the U.S. Navy vs. Caltrans; northern vs. southern alignments; skyway vs. suspension bridge, with a bikeway; conceptual changes during construction; and monumental cost increases caused by such far-flung factors as the upcoming Olympics in China.

In other words, it was a doozy of a story, just waiting to be told even while chapters were being added.



Award winning filmmaker David Brown filmed and produced the entertaining story with all the drama, comedy, optimism, dashed hopes, and plot reversals that can only happen in real life. Sponsored by the Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG), Brown filmed the story from the air, from the water, on land, with computerized animation and perspectives, archival footage, original music, and two dozen interviews with key players including former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, State Senator Tom Torlakson, Caltrans Director Will Kempton, former MTC Member Mary King,

newspaper reporters Lisa Vorderbrueggen and Sean Holstege, Bay Area satirist Will Durst, bridge builder C.C. Myers, a seismologist, a White House lawyer, and many of the engineers and architects who actually worked on the new bridge.

In the end, it's a story about rebuilding after a disaster, getting the job done despite delays and wrong turns, and ultimately the very human process of using steel and concrete to make a dream a reality.

“The Bridge So Far — A Suspense Story” was sponsored by the Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG).

Producer David Brown can be reached at (415) 468-7469.

*PECG members can call the PECG Sacramento Office for a complimentary copy of We've Got the Power, The Next Frontier, The Bridge So Far, Amazing, and A Span in Time!*

