



T R E N D

(Thinking Retired Employees Need Direction)
Retired Employees of Kern County

Volume MMXI-IV

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www.reokc.org

Phil Franey, President (661)872-4530

M. L. Bennett, Editor (mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net)



President's Message Phil Franey

Our mission is to promote the education and earned benefits of all retirees of Kern County, advocate the safeguarding and continuation of Kern County retiree pension and health benefits, provide avenues of support and information for Kern County retirees and beneficiaries, ensure proper and necessary representation on the Kern County Board of Retirement, and participate as an integral contributor in our Kern County communities quality of life.

We hope everyone enjoyed a very pleasant Spring with our cool weather and some rain. Although we are not so sure about cool weather when we attend our July luncheon - free BBQ for all members and their spouses. We also are planning to have our first health fair that same day from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Both the luncheon and health fair will be held at the North of River Veteran's Hall on Norris Road. The health fair is still in the planning stages with further notification forthcoming.

As I mentioned last month, your REOKC Board contracted with Sidles, Duncan and Associates (SDA) for membership health benefit consultant services. This will begin a new era for REOKC in addressing the needs of our membership for enhanced health benefit information and guidance. This program was established to compliment current services provided by the County health care administration. County staff performs well in providing the health services and we appreciate their efforts, but staff and resources are limited. Health care costs, regulations, and related matters become more and more difficult and confusing every year. With that in mind, your REOKC Board will be working with SDA in developing a health benefit program to include SDA acting as health care administrative liaison, work with health vendors to better manage costs, improve participant health services and training (health fairs, newsletters, direct mail, etc.), and to improve overall health care services to our membership.

Eric Barthel will be our SDA representative so expect him at our luncheons and as a regular contributor to the TREND.

On the topic of health care, I read a very informative article in the June 2011 AARP Bulletin entitled, "Easing Pain, Palliative Care is not what you think". The article stated that palliative care can ease the burden of complex illnesses such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes, but confusion and fear keep many from getting this service. Similar to hospice, with which it is often confused, palliative care focuses on helping patients with their pain and symptoms, offering counseling and other services. Unlike hospice that provides comfort and support for the terminally ill, palliative care is about making the most of life whether the disease is terminal or not. Palliative care takes a team approach, providing a doctor, nurse, social worker, and chaplain working together to go beyond strictly medical issues to address all of the patient's needs. About 58 percent of the U.S. hospitals provide palliative care, according to the Center to Advance Palliative Care, a number that has more than doubled since 2000. The article closes with a quote from Thomas Smith, M.D., a palliative care researcher and director at Massey Cancer Center of Virginia Commonwealth University that states, "Patients should not be afraid to ask for palliative care consultation. It doesn't mean they'll die sooner. In fact, they might live better and longer."

In the same AARP Bulletin, boomers are one of the fastest growing age groups in U.S. divinity schools, increasing from 12 percent of students in 1995 to 21 percent in 2010. So, if you have the calling, you probably will be in the company of many of your peers.

As an ongoing reminder to save publishing and mailing costs, all of our 4,500 plus members are encouraged to request placement on REOKC's email list by contacting Mary Lou Bennett at mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net to receive timely notice concerning important retirement matters. You also may access past Trend issues and other important retiree information at reokc.org.

Don't forget our next luncheon will be on July 12, 2011 with serving by table number beginning at 11:30 A.M.

(President's Message continued on page 5)



YOUR RETIREMENT BOARD

by **Norman Briggs**

Greetings - Once again it is time to report the recent happenings with your Retirement Board. It has been a busy year starting in January with four new board members plus a returning safety member alternate.

As mentioned earlier we have completed the transition of \$1.3 billion to seven new money managers, firing five previous at a cost of approximately \$1 million. We have reduced our risk exposure and increased our potential for greater returns. See the table for early results at the end of my column.

Our last Retirement Board meeting was held on June 8. We had earlier sent out an RFP for hiring a new consultant from which we received seven responses. The Investment Committee culled the seven responses down to four finalists. Our Executive Director and I visited the offices of the final four, spending approximately 3+ hours with each. At the June 8th board meeting the four finalist were given 30 minutes to make their respective presentations. The Board then discussed the pros and cons of each and chose Wurt's Associates, Inc. as our new financial consultant.

Also at the last Board meeting I read into the record the following statement:

"A lawsuit has been filed against Wilshire Associates in Los Angeles County Superior Court. Although authority

to file the lawsuit was given to counsel at a Special Meeting held on May 26, 2011, it was contingent upon Wilshire rejecting an offer of settlement put forth by KCERA. A public announcement of the possibility of filing the lawsuit **at that time** would have prejudiced any possibility of a good faith consideration of the offer of settlement on the part of Wilshire. KCERA's offer has since been rejected by Wilshire, and this meeting is the first opportunity to report the Board's action publicly. All inquiries regarding the lawsuit should be referred to trial counsel."

If you are interested, a copy of the filed complaint will be shortly placed on KCERA's website (www.kcera.org).

Prior to the review of the four finalists for our consulting contract we received an executive summary of KCERA's investment performance from our outgoing consultant for the first quarter of 2011. The following are some of the highlights of the report. Remember our investment objectives are:

1. Achieve a 5.5% real return
2. Exceed the actuarial discount rate of 7.75%
3. Meet or exceed the policy benchmark and
4. Exceed TUCS Public Funds Median (Trust Universe Comparison Services Median return of public funds)

The current total fund Market Value (as of 3/31/11) is \$2.81 billion and the fund composite return for the quarter was 3.80%. The following table details the various asset sectors and their time weighted returns for the quarter. As with our Country, we are slowly recovering from the "hit" everyone took in 2008. Remember the Hare won the race.

Until next time stay cool, enjoy your summer and above all diversify, diversify, diversify.

KCERA's QUARTERLY INVESTMENTS GAINS/LOSS as of 03/31/2011

SECTOR	BEGIN VALUE \$(000)	NET CONTRIBUTION \$(000)	DIST & ADM FEES \$(000)	INVEST FEES \$(000)	INVEST GAIN/LOSS \$(000)	ENDING VALUE \$(000)	TIME WEIGHTED RETURN _(%)
Domestic Equity	685,134	(26,262)	1	93	47,584	706,363	7.14
Fixed Income	732,097	(194,686)	75	142	2,199	539,393	0.59
High Yield	135,320	(28,439)	--	142	4,049	110,789	3.82
Managed Short term	29,628	76,472	59,913	--	138	46,325	--
International Equity	689,911	1,128	--	1,128	23,881	713,791	3.30
Real Assets	161,149	173,081	2,300	401	12,644	344,174	5.30
KCERA Alt. Invtmts Composite	184,548	10,700	9,913	--	11,418	196,753	6.17
Absolute Return	130,279	20,000	--	--	4,010	154,289	3.07
KCERA Composite	2,748,065	31,995	72,201	1,905	105,923	2,811,877	3.80

DO YOU HAVE INTERNET ACCESS?

TREND EMAIL LIST CONTINUES TO GROW!

Thanks to all of you who have signed up for membership in the TREND Email list. We are almost up to saving **\$3,300.00 per year** and that's not chump change!

We need to keep this "trend" going. :)
So, if you have internet access, please email Mary Lou Bennett to sign up and help our budget.

To receive the TREND newsletter electronically:
Send an email to mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net with your name, current mailing address and your email address. (**Subject: TREND mailing list**).

Host/Hostess Project

During the month of April 2011,
25 volunteers worked 77 hours assisting 723 visitors at the County Administrative Building.

During the month of May 2011,
32 volunteers worked 98 hours assisting 753 visitors at the County Administrative Building.

Since 1992 our volunteers have assisted more than 294,000 visitors to the County Administrative Complex at 1115 Truxtun Ave.!

There is always a need for additional volunteers.
Please contact **Mary Lou at 871-5270** if interested.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR

REOKC is happy to announce that we are hosting our first **Annual Health and Wellness Fair** on **Tuesday July 12, 2011, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM** at the Veteran's Hall, 400 Norris Road. There is no charge for this event, and all retirees (and spouses) are welcome, regardless if they purchase their retiree health insurance from the County.

Our consultants, Eric Barthel and Sharon Catania from **Sidles Duncan & Associates** are working with **Kaiser Permanente, San Joaquin Community Hospital, Liberty Dental, Pacific Group Agencies and VSP** to provide information, tools and services that will help you manage your health more effectively.

A raffle for door prizes will be held at the end of the health fair. You have to attend to participate in the raffle, but do not have to be present at the time of the drawing.

(If you plan to attend the free luncheon also, you must obtain tickets by July 6, 2011—see last page.)



July 12 Health & Wellness Fair 9:00 am—4:00 pm
REOKC FREE Luncheon—Tickets required
Members and Spouses Only
Norris Road Veteran's Hall
Lunch served from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon

July 13 KCERA—Investment 8:30 am
Board Meeting—KCERA Office Building
11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

July 27 KCERA-Regular 8:30 am
Board Meeting—KCERA Office Building
11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

August 9 REOKC Board Meeting 10:00 am
Norris Road Veteran's Hall

August 9 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am—noon
General Meeting 12:00 noon
Norris Road Veteran's Hall

August 10 KCERA-Investment 8:30 am
Board Meeting—KCERA Office Building
11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

August 24 KCERA-Regular 8:30 am
Board Meeting—KCERA Office Building
11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

LUNCHEON MENUS



July 12th, 2011

Hamburgers and Hot Dogs
Cowboy Potatoes—Chili Beans
Coleslaw
Peach Cobbler
Iced Tea, Coffee, Water

August 9th, 2011

Spaghetti—Garlic Bread
Chef's Mixed Vegetables
BLT Salad—Fresh Fruit Salad
Lemon Cake
Iced Tea, Coffee, Water

PAYROLL DEDUCTION FORM

To sign up for (or stop) payroll deduction, check the box(es) below, complete the form, and submit it to the KCERA office.

- REOKC Luncheon Payment**
By checking this box, I authorize KCERA to deduct \$4.00 per month from my pension benefit as an additional elective payment to REOKC. This deduction shall begin with my next pension payment.

(Sign up for the luncheon payroll deduction and save \$1.00 per meal!)

- REOKC Membership Dues**
By checking this box, I authorize KCERA to deduct \$2.00 per month from my pension benefit as dues for my REOKC, Inc. membership and to pay that organization. This deduction shall begin with my next pension payment. I understand my authorization and REOKC membership are voluntary and may be revoked by me, in writing, at any time.

Name (print): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____

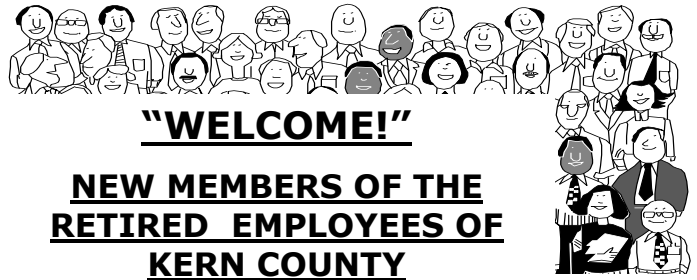
Date: _____

Detach form and send to:

KCERA / 11125 River Run Blvd. / Bakersfield / 93311

STOP DEDUCTION(S)

- Check box to stop your deduction for the luncheon.
- Check box to stop your deduction for REOKC membership dues.



Karen Albitre—Probation; Todd Albright—Aging & Adult Services; Dennis Allen—Human Services; Manuel Aranda—General Services; Rodney Avery - KMC; Rita Avila—Human Services; Robert Barnett—KMC; Thurman Beasley—Probation; Janet Beckman—Human Services; Donalda Biscar—Human Services; Jeanne Blair—KCERA—Admin.; Elora Brodrick—KMC; Sherry Bullock—Probation; Phyllis Burciaga—Child Support; Sue Burgeis—Human Services; Vicki Caine—S.J. Valley UAP; Linda Casavant—KMC; Moses Castro—Sheriff; Linda Caywood—Human Services; Steven Chambers—Health; Robert Daniels—Sheriff; Edwina Davis—Fire; Teri Devlin—Child Support; Jeanette Dillard—KMC; Eddie Dominguez—Employers' Trg. Resource; John Dotson—General Services; Ursula Egan—KMC; Mark Epps—Fire; Betty Erickson—Supervisory Dist.; Marshal Farr—Probation; Sharron Field—KMC; Kelly Frederick—KMC; Connie Glenn—Roads; David Gonzales—Human Services; Kristina Grasty—Aging & Adult Services; David Hernandez—Fire; Richard Hershberger—Roads; Sharon Hicks—Community Development; Rachelle Hill—Superior Cr.; Mark Hirai—Sheriff; Ramon Jacquez—Probation; Scott Jelletich—Sheriff; Norman Kaszycki—West Side Rec & Park; Randall Lara—Probation; Kevin Loomis—Fire; Douglas McAfee—Roads; Carla McGowan—Child Support; Michael Mendenhall—Sheriff; Jerrienne Meyers—Probation; Denise Miller—KMC; Bruce Mortimer—Employers' Trg Resource; Glynda Myers—Human Services; Arlene Naegelin—Human Services—Joven Nazareno—S.J. Valley UAP; Mae Nickerson—Human Services; Robert Nolde—General Services; Terone Olarry—Sheriff; Roberta Papion—Superior Cr.; Fredrick Plane—KMC; Patricia Poeschel—D.A.; Jerry Puckett—Roads; Maria Puente—Public Defender; Carlos Rigdon—Sheriff; Linda Riggle—Human Services; Janice Rockholt—Superior Cr.; Diana Rodriguez - Superior Cr.; Diane Rofkahr—West Side Rec & Park; John Saleen—D.A.; Enrique Salinas—Auditor Controller; Helen Schmidt—Fire; Brenda Scobey - Library; Baxter Self—Construction Services;

(New Members continued on page 5)



HEALTHY NOTES

by Audrey Cochran, APRN, BC, CCCN

Dr. Scott Reuben, a former member of Pfizer's speakers' bureau agreed to plead guilty to faking dozens of research studies published in medical journals. He reportedly signed a plea agreement requiring him to return \$420,000 received from drug companies, including one for a study showing Celebrex helped reduce pain during post-surgical recovery. It turns out no patients were ever enrolled in the study. With shaky "science" like this it's no wonder attorneys have jumped into the fray. An e-mail ad I received today was from one offering a free case evaluation if I or a loved one had been injured by Avandia causing a heart attack, congestive heart failure, stroke, liver failure, bone fractures, or death.

On the international front, according to the June 2011 Public Citizen *Worst Pills, Best Pills News.*, Johnson and Johnson paid a \$70 million settlement to the Securities and Exchange Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice; the first of a large number of cases under investigation by the SEC which states that since at least 1998 J&J's subsidiaries paid bribes or kickbacks to public doctors and or hospital administrators in Greece, Poland, and Romania to use J&J devices and drugs, as well as kickbacks to Iraq in order to obtain contracts under the "UN Oil for Food Program."

Lesson 1. Ask your doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant if there is something you can do for your problem which does not involve taking medicine, like physical therapy for back pain. Follow the example of the Latino volunteers in "Promotora" (Tues. June 14 *Bakersfield Californian*) promoting group exercise and community gardens, which will do far more to decrease the high rate of out of control diabetes in that population than newer versions of Avandia.

Often, more is not better. The other day a patient reported taking 19 prescription drugs, some of which surely contributed to symptoms we were concerned about. I suggested she ask for an appointment with her pharmacist so he could talk to the doctor about eliminating some. Years ago a client, now dead, was on 26 prescriptions. During one visit her doctor was about to start a diuretic, the same one discontinued several months prior because of severe side effects. I pointed that out and the doctor looked in her records and discovered that was true.

Lesson 2. You or a family member need to take to all appointments a list of current medicines as well as ones you have tried and what the results were because patient reactions vary, and due to seeing many patients every day a doctor might not remember yours.

Doctors' impulse to grab their prescription pad to solve a patient's problem is because of the way they are

educated. Progressing through medical school they learn to diagnose and treat various illnesses. This desire is facilitated by pharmaceutical representatives paid a base pay plus a bonus for the increase in prescriptions written in their territory. For years this has given lucrative results to the drug companies. In my files I had an e-mail in 1999 from one of my professional organizations about Alza, the then current maker of Ditropan XL (for twitchy bladders), being sold to Abbot. Those who held Alza stock made a 40% profit in just 3 days. Another noted the Detrol brochure claimed its effects were selective for the bladder and not the salivary glands so it would calm the bladder without causing dry mouth. But that was based on research only using cats, not humans. For humans, besides causing dry mouth it only reduces by one trip a day a woman's hasty search for toilets. Besides, it costs about \$65 a month.

Lesson 3. Phone me at (661) 831-1132 and I'll tell you what to do instead. Remember, you are the expert in your body because you live in it, so pay attention, do research on Internet, the library or seminars advertized in the newspaper or on TV, or phone me for help.



WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER OUR DECEASED REOKC MEMBERS:

Margeret Allen—Library
Keith Avery—General Services
Barbara Barrett—General Services
Elena Calastro—KMC
Paul Clemons—General Services
Mary Davidson—Library
Floyd Felty—Parks and Recreation
Robert Floyd—Information Tech Services
Patricia Hardin—Child Support Services
Linda Hopper—KMC
Belva Jared—Superior Court
Kathryn Leicht—KMC
Carlyle Millar—County Administrative
Garvin Montgomery—Sheriff
Haden Neely—Building Inspection
Opal Niebel—KMC
Virginia Ontiveros—KMC
Joseph Peterman—Fire
William Sault—Sheriff
Jerry Schmidt—Fire
Gene Stark—Agricultural and Measurement
Marguerite Steinmetz—Health Department
Doris Weddell—Library
Yvonne York—Risk Management

NOTICE: The information presented in the TREND is believed to be from reliable sources. However, no responsibility is assumed by REOKC, the Editor, or the writers for inaccuracies in the articles published.



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Retired Employees of Kern County
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Please contact **JOSIE DE LA TORRE** at
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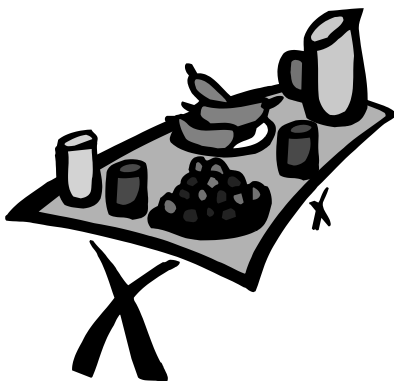
July/August 2011
Time Dated Material

Official Newsletter of
The Retired Employees of Kern County Inc.

FREE July Luncheon Reservation - Members & Spouses Only (TICKETS REQUIRED)

July 12th, 2011— Lunch served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Veteran's Hall, 400 Norris Road



**Note: Please enter number of tickets and send this
Reservation to Brenda Preston, 5817 Lenz Court,
Bakersfield, CA 93307 along with a stamped, self-
addressed envelope before July 6, 2011.**

(Reservations **not** necessary for payroll deduction members)

Member___ Spouse___ Total___
**(Advance tickets required for the luncheon. No tickets
required for the Health and Wellness Fair)**

(This is not a valid ticket)

August Luncheon Reservation

August 9th, 2011 -11:30 to noon, Veterans' Hall, **400 NORRIS ROAD.** If you wish, you may use this form to order tickets for this luncheon. Please send your check, made payable to **REOKC**, together with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Brenda Preston, 5817 Lenz Court, Bakersfield, CA 93307-5579. Deadline for reservations is the Wednesday prior to the luncheon (08/03/11). Phone reservations are not accepted. You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda at (661) 835-0294 prior to the deadline. Cancellations after the deadline cannot be refunded.

Member's name (\$5.00)_____ Spouse(\$5.00)_____

Guest (\$8.00)_____ Total tickets_____ Amount enclosed \$ _____