



T R E N D

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

Volume MMXII-II

MARCH & APRIL 2012

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.

Your Board of Directors has been busy on many projects including our next health fair and a new scholarship program. On a very important note, the retirement board has approved a new Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) for 2012 pension payments (see Norm Briggs' column on page 2). I will also comment on upcoming elections and many other matters of membership interest.

At our January luncheon, the presenter discussed the importance of managing your medicine. By working with your primary physician and pharmacist you may be able to better manage the amount of drugs you take and minimize the cost of medicine. Always have your primary physician review all the medication you are taking to avoid any dangerous combination of drugs. Your pharmacist may be helpful in providing information as to various drug side effects. Your medical team should also advise you on the cost savings of using generic drugs instead of expensive brand name medicines. It is your health so take the extra effort, save some money, and avoid adverse effects of combining conflicting drugs.

Your REOKC Board of Directors recently approved a scholarship program. This year we will begin by awarding two \$750 scholarships available to high school seniors. See the scholarship program information on page 5 of this issue concerning application filing for immediate family members. All scholarship requirements and timelines will soon be provided on our website along with the application forms.

We are again planning to conduct the membership health fair during the day of our July BBQ luncheon (free to our membership). This year's health fair will be a similar format as last year. We are early in planning and will keep you updated as we progress. The health fair was very successful last year with many positive responses from our membership.

In the last Trend, I said there would be no discussion of politics and elections. Unfortunately, this issue cannot avoid that we are facing a presidential election year with many pension and tax issues being considered for California voters. Local election interest will include three Board of Supervisors' seats and a few state assembly seats as we vote for our next president. We have a lot of work to do to ensure our interests are preserved with the intended fair representation at all levels of government. Regardless of political affiliation or even undeclared, it is necessary to take extreme care on how you review the candidates and decide on the various initiatives. On any initiative, pension and other, always consider who is sponsoring the initiative, including its merits and shortcomings.

Before stressing too much about elections, you need to think about preparing your state and federal tax returns unless you already filed. There are free services for the elderly and for simple returns by some tax preparation and filing services. As you are reminded to change the batteries in your home smoke or fire alarms when the time changes to or from daylight saving time, you need to do something very important when you prepare and file your personal income taxes. You need to request a free annual credit report at www.annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228. This report is available, free once a year – do not pay for it unless you want a periodic report. This annual check-up on your credit is just one of many measures you can take to minimize your risk of credit fraud.

A few other timely reminders to note: never pay for something you do not understand, and remember – if it is too good to be true, you will lose your money; cross shred all important documents when no longer needed; and, if you have a home alarm, use it and use it when you are at home.

Every day our retirees and their families unselfishly volunteer their time and effort for many community projects and causes. Since 1992 many retirees and spouses have volunteered their time at the Information Desk in the Kern County Administrative Building on Truxtun Avenue. As

(President's Message continued on Page 2)



YOUR RETIREMENT BOARD

by **Norman Briggs**

Greetings - The ides of March (the 15th) are upon us again, however Spring is not far behind. As mentioned a year ago, we established the Chief Investment Officer (CIO) position for KCERA and have hired our first CIO. Mr. Peter Tirp is on board and quickly getting acclimated to KCERA and Bakersfield. Mr. Tirp has an extensive background in the financial arena and is always willing to discuss investment issues with our members.

More good news - The COLA is coming. The CPI, which is the basis for annual COLA level, this year was 2.7% (remember last year it was negative!) Therefore we retirees will be receiving the maximum COLA of 2½% this year. This increase in your retirement pay will appear on your check at the end of April.

This past Board meeting The Segal Group, our new actuary firm, presented KCERA's "Actuarial Valuation and Review as of June 30, 2011". This annual review summarizes the actuarial data used in the valuation, establishes the funding requirements for fiscal year 2012-2013 and analyzes the preceding year's experience. This complete report may be reviewed and seen in its entirety on our web page -- www.kcera.org. Once there, click on "Investments" in the left most column, then select "Investment Reports" and then choose "Actuarial Valuation -- Year Ended June 30, 2011". This report presents all the data and assumptions used in the determination of issues like:

- The market value of plan assets earned during this period (21.7%)
- The ratio of valuation value of assets to accrued liabilities (decreased from 62.7% to 60.8%),
- Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL) (decreased from 62.7% to 60.8%)
- Recommended average employer contribution rate (increased from 38.98% to 42.78% of pay-roll).

This report is over 100 pages in length and warrants your review to put the status of our fund in perspective. If you do not have access to the web page, a copy is available in our office at 11125 River Run Boulevard. Enjoy your spring and prepare for the summer to follow.

(As a KCERA Board Member, Norman Briggs' opinions are not necessarily those of the KCERA Board.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—Continued from Page 1

of this past January, the volunteer program has assisted more than 300,000 visitors at almost 24,000 hours. In recognition of this effort, an annual luncheon is hosted by the County Board of Supervisors and General Services for our volunteer retirees and spouses. Congratulations on a job well done and the recognition so well deserved.

As an ongoing reminder to save publishing and mailing costs, all of our 4,600 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 may also access past Trend issues and other important retiree information at reokc.org.

Don't forget our next luncheon will be on March 13 with serving by table number beginning at 11:30 A.M. The general meeting will begin at 12:00 Noon.

"If you have been voting for politicians who promise to give you goodies at someone else's expense, then you have no right to complain when they take your money and give it to someone else, including themselves"

Thomas Sowell (American Writer and Economist)

(As a KCERA Board Member, Phil Franey's opinions are not necessarily those of the KCERA Board.)



WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER OUR DECEASED REOKC MEMBERS:

- Alice Anderson—Jury Services
- Zeferino Barron—Museum
- Homer Belden—Parks & Recreation
- Mary Burgin—Superior Court
- Bill Buzard—Fire
- Marlene Byers—Fire
- Benny Edwards—Animal Control
- Lura Funk—Resource Mgmt. Agency
- Leon Harris—Personnel
- Wanda Idema—Kern Medical Center
- Nancy Johnston—Information Tech. Services
- James Jones—Assessor
- Lois Kirschenman—Human Services
- Richard Kyker—Sheriff
- Geraldine Ladd—County Counsel
- Sharon Light—Human Services
- William Maynor—Probation
- Gerald Prator—Parks & Recreation
- Bert Satterfield—District Attorney
- Rosamond Tolliver—Human Services
- Hazel Toone—Kern Medical Center

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 **\$3,475.00 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 December 2011, 28 volunteers worked 86 hours assisting 802 visitors at the County Administrative Building.

During the month of January 2012, 31 volunteers worked 95 hours assisting 875 visitors at the County Administrative Building.

Since 1992 our volunteers have worked over 23,895 hours assisting more than 300,600 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.

LOOKING FOR ANOTHER WORTHWHILE VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY?

Recently, REOKC was contacted by the Chair of the 2011-2012 Kern County Grand Jury Public Relations and Recruiting Committee, asking that our organization members be encouraged to volunteer for service on the 2012-2013 Grand Jury.

If interested, the best source of information about the Grand Jury Service, including the eligibility requirements and application, can be found online at:

www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury

The application deadline is April 13, 2012. You can also call the Grand Jury Hotline at 661-868-4800. It's an opportunity to once again serve and assist the people of Kern County.



March 13 REOKC Board Meeting 10:00 am
Norris Road Veteran's Hall

March 13 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am—noon
General Meeting 12:00 noon
Norris Road Veteran's Hall

Mar. 14 KCERA—Investment Committee 8:30 am
Investment Board Meeting 10:00 am
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

March 28 KCERA Regular Board 8:30 am
Meeting—KCERA Office
11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

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

April 10 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am—noon
General Meeting 12:00 noon
Norris Road Veteran's Hall

April 11 KCERA—Investment Committee 8:30 am
Investment Board Meeting 10:00 am
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

April 25 KCERA Regular Board 8:30 am
Meeting—KCERA Office
11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

LUNCHEON MENUS



March 13th, 2012

Corned Beef and Cabbage
Red Potatoes—Steamed Carrots
Napa Salad—Coleslaw
Wheat Rolls—Cherry Cobbler
Iced Tea, Coffee, Water



April 10th, 2012



Lasagna
Garlic Potatoes
Grilled Vegetables—BLT Salad
Tomato & Cucumber Salad—Fresh Fruit
Rolls—Jello with Strawberries and Cool Whip
Iced Tea, Coffee, Water



March 11, 2012
Daylight Saving Time Begins
set clocks ahead one hour

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: _____

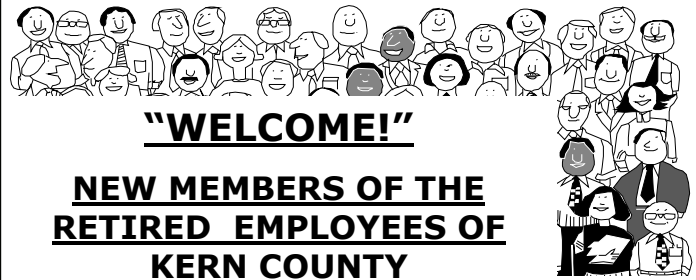
Date: _____

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.



"WELCOME!"

NEW MEMBERS OF THE RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF KERN COUNTY

Fe Aragon—KMC; Jesus Arruejo—Roads; William Aseltine—Sheriff; Peggy Barker—KMC; Judy Barnett - District Attorney; Jay Beechie—Sheriff; Lawrence Bentley—District Attorney; Vera Bettis—Parks & Recreation; Jean Bouton—Fire; Terry Brown—Sheriff; Rosabelle Bryant—Mental Health Services; William Burgin—Superior Court; Felecia Canady—KMC; Kent Christianson—Human Services; Bethany Christman—Human Services; Joseph Christo—Sheriff; Donna Clardy—Resource Mgmt Agency; Patsy Collins—KMC; Leslie Dalton—Probation; Nieves DeLaGarza—KMC; Bruce Divelbiss—County Counsel; Nick Dunn—Fire; Martha Florin—Superior Court; Mary Frost—Substance Abuse Program; Michael Gambell—Sheriff; Cosmas George—Health; Beverly Gieg—Probation; Grinnell Griffin—Public Defender; Robert Hammond—Probation; Rosa Hernandez—Human Services; Wayne Johnson—Eng. & Survey; David Kaus—Fire; Howard Kent—Fire; Robert Kinsella—KMC; Janie Lucero—KMC; Donna Marquez—Mental Health Serv.; Dennis Martin—Sheriff; Jacqueline Martini—Fire; Ruth McNaughton—Superior Court; Gina Millinder—Sheriff; Coleen Minnick—Sheriff; Rosalba Neira—Human Services; Scott Nester—S.J. Valley UAP; Vincent Newton - KMC; Cheryl Nutt—S.J. Valley UAP; Laurie OBrien—KMC; Cynthia Peralta—KMC; Johnnie Powe-Magee—Human Services; Craig Powers—Probation; Peter Provenio—Sheriff; Lyn Rous—KMC; David Rozell—Aging & Adult Services; Richard Ryan—Parks & Recreation; Barbara Sager—Human Services; Eleanor Sawyer—Roads; Dale Siemens—Mental Health Serv.; Martha Smith—Recorder; Randy Smith—Roads; Janet Sporer—KMC; Laurie Stinnett—General Services; Tony Swan—General Services; Bonnie Tippet—K.C. Water Agency; Robert Toledo—Human Services; Diana Ulloa - Child Support Services; Michael Walter—Human Services; Bill Williams—Sheriff; William Wilson—Assessor; Raymond Wolosz—Human Services; Harold Youngblood—5th Supervisorial District

WE APPRECIATE ALL OUR MEMBERS!

(The above are retirees and/or beneficiaries who became members during the latter part of December, 2011 and the first part of January 2012.)

KERN COUNTY HISTORY



ROSAMOND

By **WALTER E. STEWART**

It is contentious as to whether Rosamond, the desert town three miles north of Los Angeles County on the south-east corner of Kern County, was named for “Rosalie”, the daughter of a railroad executive, or the rose colored hill near Rosamond. Today Rosamond calls itself the gateway to Edwards Air Force Base.

Charles A. Graves, a Kern County pioneer of African decent, played an important role in the development of Rosamond and southern Kern County. Graves settled in Rosamond in 1882. He was among the first successful miners and cattlemen (including sheep) in the area. Graves served as the first postmaster from 1898 to 1903. Children living in Rosamond had to travel to Willow Springs for their schooling. Graves donated land for the first school in Rosamond in 1907. He then procured the first teacher. Members of the Graves family still lived in Rosamond in 1966. I don't know if any of the family resides there today.



The Southern Pacific Railroad owned land where Rosamond evolved. The railroad sold 32 lots, February 24, 1887, to E.H. Seymour. C.C. Calkins bought the town site in 1904 from Seymour for \$13,000. Calkins lost his investment when Charles H. Stimson, who held the mortgage, foreclosed in 1907. Stimson deeded the town site to the Union Rescue Mission of Los Angeles. The mission built a wayside chapel and installed a water system in 1935. Later, George Hummel, who replaced Mrs. Marie Loomis as the mission representative, bought the water company and eventually purchased the mission property. Agriculture developed during the 1920s. Crops included alfalfa, cotton, onions, carrots and corn.

Rosamond is adjacent to six gold mines: Tropic, Cactus, Crescent, Four Jacks, Golden Queen and Treasure Island. Back in the 1960s, I was Noble Grand Humbug of the ancient and honorable order of E Clampus Vitus, Peter Lebeck Chapter 1866, the oldest active historical society in California. Glenn Settle granted permission for the ECV gray beards to escort “poor blind candidates” into the depths of Tropic Gold Mine for induction into the Hall of Comparative Ovations. Miraculously, all PBCs, greatly enlightened by their elucidation, emerged from the mine unscathed and humbly edified by the ECV credo: “Credo Quia Absurdum” (I believe because it is absurd).

REOKC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

REOKC’s Board of Directors has established a scholarship program for member’s children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews who are in their senior year of high school.

Please be advised that a total of two (2) scholarships are being offered by REOKC for the current school year.

These scholarships are offered to the above relatives of REOKC members in the amount of \$750.00 each. Two scholarships may be awarded for an accredited trade school or university/college each year. Questions may be directed to the Scholarship Committee Chairperson.

Scholarship procedures and amounts to be awarded will be reviewed annually by the REOKC Board of Directors.

Application information/forms will soon be available on line: www.reokc.org.

Applications must be submitted no later than April 15th of each current school year.

Each applicant will provide verification of school attendance and a GPA of 2.5 or better. Each applicant will submit a typed, double spaced, 200-300 word essay which will include the following as appropriate:

- Community service they have performed
 - Service clubs in which they have participated
 - Career goals and further educational plans
- Three letters of recommendation from teachers or community leaders will be required.

Essays to be judged by a panel of three REOKC members, at least one of which will be a member of the REOKC Board of Directors. These judges will be appointed by the REOKC President with Board approval. Each application will be given a number so judges will not know the identity of any applicant. Annual scholarships to be limited to one family member.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- March 13, 2012:**
- Michael Whittaker, MBA and Tonya Gares-Matney, MPT, OCS with Glinn and Giordano Physical Therapy will be speaking on the importance of exercising and keeping active.
- April 10, 2012:**
- Our speakers will be Ann Holdren, Executive Director and Gloria Dominguez, Assistant Executive Director of Kern County Employees’ Retirement Association (KCERA).





HEALTHY NOTES

ORGAN DONOR?

by Audrey Cochran, APRN,BC,CCCN

You just may want to take a look at your driver's license, and remove that little pink circle from it. I did, and urged all my family members to do so also!

Almost daily we read in the newspaper about grieving relatives, after a family member has been severely injured in an auto accident, taking comfort in knowing that organs can be given to others to restore sight, replace failing organs, or otherwise enhance the life of others. Doctors receive great national newspaper and TV acclaim for performing this skilled surgery, even more acclaim than they would for saving the life of the injured which might be done with initial hypothermia and later physical therapy.

In an article entitled, *What Makes Killing Wrong*, which appeared in a recent **Journal of Medical Ethics**, the authors admitted that the practice of donating vital organs ignores traditional medical ethics. You can view the article in the journal online at: <http://jme.bmj.com/content/early/2012/01/19/medethics-2011-100351.full>

Traditional ethicists respond that this stream of thought, now common in the medical community, will ultimately undermine the right of anyone to life or the protection of law, and will annihilate public trust in the medical profession. "If this dreadful doctrine is permitted and practiced it is impossible to conjure up the degradation to which it will lead," said Anthony Ozimic, communications manager of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC). "A physician has but to certify his patients as unproductive and he receives the command to kill." Ozimic called the article obnoxious and warned that its authors have forgotten the lessons of the 20th century, referring to the utilitarianism-based eugenics programs of the pre-war Nazi government.

Ozimic quoted the famous 1941 sermon of Clemens von Galen, Cardinal Archbishop, known as the Lion of Munster for his opposition to the Nazi euthanasia program. "Once admit the right to kill unproductive persons, then none of us can be sure of his life." Ozimic said that if this is allowed to continue, the concept will spell the end of our current understanding of medicine as doing good for human persons. But the **Journal of Medical Ethics** authors admit that the situation is already grave from the point of view of traditional medical ethics. The so-called dead donor rule, they say, is already routinely violated in transplant practice anyway.

In order to be consistent with traditional medical ethics the practice of organ transplants, already a multi-billion dollar international medical industry, would have to be stopped immediately. But stopping organ transplants on the mere grounds that it kills people, they said, would be extremely harmful and unreasonable from an ethical

point of view. The opinion is that since they can no longer make money, they are obsolete machines, comparable with some old cow that can no longer give milk or some horse that has gone lame. What is the lot of unproductive machines and cattle? They are destroyed. But men and women, Ozimic said, are neither machines nor cattle who can be discarded when they no longer serve the needs of others.

Shocking as it may sound to the laymen's ears, however, this position is not unusual in the bioethics community. The notion that the value of human life is founded upon the individual's abilities has become run-of-the-mill in universities and, more crucially, in hospital ethics committees. It was popularized by Peter Singer, the professor of ethics at Princeton University, who infamously proposed that parents have the power to convey personhood upon their newborn children, and should be allowed to kill them at will.

The fixation on autonomy, one of the three principles that utilitarian secular bioethics regards as the ultimate indicators of human value, has driven much of the international pressure for legalized euthanasia. Experts have noted that this form of bioethics, as distinct from classical, Hippocratic medical ethics, has since the 1970s become the leading stream of thought in most medical organizations in developed countries. The movement has succeeded in legalizing euthanasia in the Netherlands and Belgium and assisted suicide in three US states.

In addition to outright euthanasia and legalized assisted suicide, other means of killing patients are sneaking in under the legal radar in response to the demands of autonomy-obsessed Bioethics. Terminal sedation and death by dehydration or withdrawal of life-saving drugs and treatments have become common causes of death among elderly and disabled patients in the US, Canada and across Europe. (I intervened when I saw this done with one of my clients right here in Bakersfield, and will NOT refer anyone to that hospice!) Natural death, such as occurred with my husband who had pancreatic cancer and supportive hospice care, involves a loss of interest in eating and drinking, as the function of the stomach, gut and kidneys slowly, (over about a month's time) slows down then stops.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE NOTICE

**If you know of any of our members who could use a get-well or sympathy card, please contact JOSIE DE LA TORRE at (661) 348-4222
Thank you!**

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.



We're committed to you.

Our commitment to Kern County shows by the growing number of members who have come to depend on us when buying a car or home, or seeking the convenience of online banking. We're Kern Federal Credit Union, your local choice in banking.

Home and Vehicle Loans • Money Market, Share Certificates and IRAs • Home Equity and Lines of Credit • Free Checking and Online Banking • Free eStatements

661.327.9461 • www.kernfcu.org

KERN
Federal Credit Union

Your savings federally insured to at least \$250,000 and backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government National Credit Union Administration, a U.S. Government Agency.



**Retired Employees of Kern County
P.O. Box 2592
Bakersfield, CA 93303**

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**March and April 2012
Time Dated Material**

**Official Newsletter of
The Retired Employees of Kern County Inc.**

March Luncheon Reservation

March 13th, 2012 —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 **REOKC, PO Box 40801 Bakersfield, CA 93384-0801**. Deadline for reservations is the Wednesday prior to the luncheon (03/07/12). Phone reservations are not accepted. You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda Preston at (661) 835-0294 prior to the deadline. Cancellations after the deadline cannot be refunded.

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

Member's Phone No. (required) _____ Email _____

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

April Luncheon Reservation

April 10th, 2012 -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 **REOKC, PO Box 40801 Bakersfield, CA 93384-0801**. Deadline for reservations is the Wednesday prior to the luncheon (04/04/12). Phone reservations are not accepted. You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda Preston at (661) 835-0294 prior to the deadline. Cancellations after the deadline cannot be refunded.

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

Member's Phone No. (required) _____ Email _____

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