



# T R E N D

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

Volume MMXVI-II

**MARCH & APRIL 2016**

[www.reokc.org](http://www.reokc.org)

Phil Franey, President

M. L. Bennett, Editor ([mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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.*

Good news! The 2016 Pension Initiatives are now on hold. According to an article in the LA Times, the proponents of the two initiatives to diminish public employee retirement benefits will not be circulated for the required signatures. The authors of the initiatives are former San Diego Councilman Carl DeMaio and former San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed. They do plan to qualify their initiative in 2018 with the hope of a more favorable political environment. We shall see.

REOKC will be hosting the 2016 CRCEA Spring Conference in Bakersfield on April 11-13 at the Marriott (at the Convention Center). The California Retired County Employees Association (CRCEA) is a non-profit corporation. It is comprised of retiree associations representing the twenty counties constituted under the 1937 Retirement Act, including Kern County. CRCEA provides a forum for educating members and promoting retiree benefits and issues. If you have an interest in attending this conference, you may obtain more information on our website at [reokc.org](http://reokc.org).

Speaking of our website at [reokc.org](http://reokc.org), the revised version is now online and ready for your review and comment. Please take the time to browse our new website and experience the changes for yourself. We must thank Tony Rizos (REOKC Board Member) who was instrumental in coordinating with Josiah Vencel, KCERA staff, and website developer, Fluxar Studios, for a job well done.

Please read the retirement board article in this TREND. You will find information on the 2016 COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment). The latest COLA becomes effective on April 1st and will be shown on your retirement check at the end of April.

Just a reminder - you need to think about preparing your federal and state income tax returns unless you have already filed. There are free services for the elderly and for simple returns by some tax preparation and filing services including the County Office of Aging and Adult Services. As you are reminded to change the batteries in your home smoke/fire alarm at daylight saving time changes, you need to perform a few important tasks at the same time you prepare and file your personal income taxes. You need to request a free annual credit report at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call 1-877-322-8228. This report is available for free once a year – do not pay for it unless you want a report more often. This annual checkup of your credit is just one of many measures you can take to minimize your risk of credit fraud. You also need to review and update all your important documents at this same time - will, trust, banking, investment, pension and deferred compensation as well as other beneficiary designations, etc. and make sure your advance health care directive is current.

As an ongoing reminder to save publishing and mailing costs, all of our 4,900 plus members are encouraged to request placement on REOKC's email list by contacting Mary Lou Bennett at [mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net) to receive timely notice concerning important retirement matters. You also may access past TREND issues and other important retiree information at our recently updated [reokc.org](http://reokc.org) website.

Don't forget our next luncheon will be on March 8 with serving by table number beginning at 11:30 A.M. The general meeting will begin at 12:00 Noon. Your REOKC Board also wishes you a healthy and happy St. Patrick's Day and Easter, I leave you with the following quote:

***"Government's first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives."***

***- [Ronald Reagan](#)***

## KCERA Retirement Board

By

Phil Franey, KCERA Retiree Trustee

***“A retirement system board’s duty to the system’s participants and their beneficiaries shall take precedence over any other duty” (Section 17(b) of Article XVI of the California Constitution).***

When you receive your monthly payment advice from KCERA, please read the Special Message section and carefully review your payment advice. You are also reminded to read the recently sent Retirement Chronicles (KCERA newsletter) and any other special communication for important information that may benefit you. As a point of interest, the recent Retirement Chronicles includes important retirement information about changing jobs, 1099-Rs, and terminal and survivorship benefits. If you have any questions whatsoever, call KCERA Administration for needed explanation and information.

A COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment) as of April 1st will be seen on your retirement check at the end of April. According to Segal Consulting (KCERA’s Actuary), the COLA amount is based upon a comparison with the annual average CPI (Consumer Price Index) for the Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County Area (with 1982-84 as the base period) in each of the past two years. Our COLA is limited to a maximum of 2.0% pursuant to Section 318760 of the 1937 Act. However, the maximum COLA is increased by an additional 0.5% (to 2.5%) based upon the "Ventura Settlement" and funded through the Supplement Retiree Benefit Reserve (SRBR). Due to the fluctuation of the CPI over the years and dependent upon when you retired, your COLA may be affected. If you have not been able to build up a reserve in your COLA account, there may not be enough to bring your COLA adjustment up to the maximum of 2.5% when the CPI adjustment falls below the maximum COLA allowance. Based upon your retirement date, the following COLA rates will be applied this year for retirees and beneficiaries:

Retirement Date	COLA
On or before April 1, 2000	2.5%
April 2, 2000 to April 1, 2001	2.0%
April 2, 2001 to April 1, 2003	1.0%
April 2, 2003 to April 1, 2004	0.5%
April 2, 2004 to April 1, 2008	1.0%
April 2, 2008 to April 1, 2010	0.5%
April 2, 2010 to April 1, 2015	1.0%
April 2, 2015 to April 1, 2016	0.5%

As always, direct all your questions concerning the COLA to KCERA Administration.

Two new trustees have been elected to the KCERA Board for three-year terms. Susan Wells represents general employees and is employed at KMC as the Hospital Volunteer and Auxiliary Service Director. Thad Kennedy represents safety members (as an alternate safety trustee) and is employed at the Probation Department as the Director of Juvenile Services. Rick Kratt, current safety trustee, was reelected for another three-year term. Rick works for the Fire Department and has a MS in Finance. We welcome Susan, Thad and Rick and look forward to their support on the KCERA Board for all members and beneficiaries.

All members are encouraged to attend Retirement Board Meetings.

### SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

The April REOKC luncheon/meeting will be held on **April 19** which is the third Tuesday rather than the second Tuesday. As mentioned in the President’s Message, REOKC will be hosting the California Retired County Employees Association (CRCEA) Conference during the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the second week in April.

### HELP! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Over the last few months, we’ve lost several of our volunteers who were working the Information Desk at the Kern County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave. Also, some of our volunteers have worked the Information Desk since 1992 and are ready to “retire” again. With summer approaching, vacations and travel will reduce the number of available volunteers also.

If you need a reason to get out of the house, meet, greet and talk to people, a shift on the Information Desk is only three hours (9:00 a.m. to noon or noon to 3:00 p.m.), once a month. Volunteers only man the desk Monday through Thursday. Here’s your chance to do something fun and rewarding for both you and your community. If interested, please call Barbara Goodlow at (661) 304-0677.

## 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](mailto: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 2015, 30 volunteers worked 90 hours assisting 820 visitors at the County Administrative Building.

During the month of January 2016, 30 volunteers worked 90 hours assisting 885 visitors at the County Administrative Building.

*Since 1992 our volunteers have worked over 28,500 hours assisting more than 346,300 visitors to the County Administrative Center at 1115 Truxtun Ave.!*

**There is always a need for volunteers; please contact Barbara Goodlow at 304-0677 if interested.**

### 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!

### TRAVEL TIPS

***IT'S THE 3RD THURSDAY—WHAT ARE YOU DOING?***

**March 17, 2016:** Getty Villa

9:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. Cost \$70.00 per person

**April 21, 2016:** Reagan Library

8:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. Cost \$75.00 per person

**10 Day Alaska Cruise Aug. 29—Sept. 8, 2016**

Inside cabin from \$1,668.00 per person

**15 Day Panama Canal Cruise Nov. 1– 16, 2016**

Inside cabin from \$2,273.00 per person

Call **Julie** at **The Cruise Port**, (661 324-6910) with any questions or to make reservations for these or other trips.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 8 REOKC Board Meeting 10:00 am  
Norris Road Veterans' Hall
- March 8 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am—noon  
General Meeting 12:00 noon  
Norris Road Veterans' Hall
- March 9 KCERA Board Meeting:  
Investment/Regular Board 8:30 am  
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield  
\*\*\*\*\*
- April 13 KCERA Board Meeting  
Investment/Regular Board 8:30 am  
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield
- April 19 REOKC Board Meeting 10:00 am  
Norris Road Veterans' Hall
- April 19 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am—noon  
General Meeting 12:00 noon  
Norris Road Veterans' Hall

### UPCOMING REOKC PROGRAMS

**March 8, 2016:**

Elena Rizo and Kathy McClaren will do a presentation on the Kern County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

**April 19, 2016:**

Maria Harlan, from Kaiser Permanente, will be speaking on Medicare 101.

### LUNCHEON MENUS

**March 8th, 2016**

Corned Beef & Cabbage  
Red Potatoes & Carrots  
Green Salad—Rolls  
Pumpkin Pie w/Whip Cream  
Iced Tea, Coffee, Water



**April 19th, 2016**

Beef Enchilada Casserole  
Beans—Spanish Rice  
Santa Maria 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 REOKC.

- 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 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Clip out completed form and send to:*

**REOKC / PO Box 2592 / Bakersfield, CA / 93303**

### **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**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** Charlotte Welling

**BUSINESS & FACILITIES:** Vicki Brown;  
Cheryl K. Claborn

**CHILD SUPPORT:** Elizabeth Chavez; Phyllis Nance

**COURTS:** Barbara L. Pudgorski

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:** Linda Burrow

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY:** Libbie Mahan

**ENVIRON HEALTH:** Nina Brennan; Betty Martinez

**FIRE:** Clayton J. Flap; Darryl Hill; Andrew Shanklin

**FISCAL SERVICES:** Glenda Williams

**GENERAL SERVICES:** Glenna K. Brown

**HEALTH DEPT.:** Frances Hopper

**HUMAN SERVICES:** Glenn A. Bennett; Adrian Cancio;  
Julie Gonzales; Ruth Hearon; Cindy Holbrook;  
Lynnda K. Kidd; Susan L. Martin;

**INFO. TECH. SERVICES:** Don Wigton

**KCERA:** Pat Boyd

**KC WATER AGENCY:** Lawasa Kemble

**KERN MEDICAL CENTER:** Curt Cabral;

Polly De La Cruz; Jessie Mendiara; Ronnie Ohanesian;  
Irene Ortega; Dora Ponce; Maria L. Saenz;  
Barbara L. Williams

**MENTAL HEALTH:** Jeanette Ferrier; Selma Sexton;  
Jesus Valdez

**PARKS & RECREATION:** Vicki Hergenroeder;  
Johanna Sanders; Tommie Thompson

**PROBATION:** Theresa L. Yanez

**PUBLIC DEFENDER:** Glenn Nelson

**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Jennifer Hammons; Dennis Kalson;  
Christine King; Judith McFarland

**PURCHASING:** Nora P. McClure

**RECORDER:** Linda Scobey

**ROADS:** Robert Straub

**SHERIFF:** Canellia Johnson; Lynda Lee-Malone;  
Teresa Lira; Philip J. Morley; Debra Schafer;  
Marty Willis

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROG.:** Marlene K. Haws

**TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR:** Marilyn J. Phillips

## HISTORY



### OUTER SPACE MYTHOLOGY

By **WALTER E. STEWART**

Albert Einstein's relativity theory  $E=mc^2$  revolutionized scientific thought with conceptions of time, space, mass and gravitation. Einstein said that  $c$  is a universal "speed limit." No physical process can speed through space at a velocity approaching  $c$ , the speed of light that is 186,282 miles per second. If it were possible to attain the speed of light one would be transformed into a different dimension. A trip from earth to our moon at the speed of light would take less than two seconds.

We are the only known life in the universe. It is not known if distant stars have planets sustaining life. Earth is accompanied by nine satellite planetary bodies that orbit our sun. The sun is the closest star to earth. It is 93,000,000 miles distant. Pluto is the farthest of our neighboring satellite planetary bodies; it is 3,675,000,000 miles from earth. That is extremely close compared to Proxima Centauri, the closest star to earth with exception of our sun. Proxima Centauri is four and a half light years distant from earth. A light year is how far light travels in one year at 186,282 miles per second.



When people see something in the sky and don't know what it is, they fantasize it is UFOs from outer space. Ridiculous. Distance and time address the impracticality of UFOs visiting earth from billions of miles distant. The conclusion that UFOs are fictitious is predicated on scientific reality. When little green men with bulging eyes and antennas growing out of their foreheads peck me on the shoulder and ask to see my leader, I'll let you know.

### SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

We are now accepting applications for the two \$1,000 Scholarship Awards for graduating High School seniors.



Applications and required documents must be submitted no later than April 15, 2016. Application forms and instructions are available on our website: [www.reokc.org](http://www.reokc.org).

### Change of Address Form

If your address has changed, in order to receive the TREND newsletter and other important notices from REOKC, you must complete this form and send it to REOKC, PO Box 2592, Bakersfield, CA 93303:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(print)

NEW Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

OLD Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### REOKC USEFUL CONTACTS

**KCERA Administration 661-381-7700**  
[www.KCERA.org](http://www.KCERA.org)

- Retirement Check
- Withholding Forms
- Beneficiary Change
- Address Change (& REOKC) \*
- Retirement Board Meetings

**Retiree Health Benefits 661-868-3182**

- County – Health Insurance Div.

**REOKC Endorsed Insurance and Other Supplemental Benefits**

- Pacific Group Agencies, Inc.  
1-800-817-8838  
1-800-511-9065

**REOKC Other Related Services**

- **TREND Editor**
- **Host/Hostess - Volunteer Program**
- **Membership**
- **Address/Email Change \***
- **Scholarship Program**

Mary Lou Bennett 661-871-5270

[mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net)

- **Luncheon Reservations**

Brenda Preston 661-204-4386

- **Sunshine (Cards of Expression)**

Josie De La Torre 661-348-4222

**KCERA Board Retiree Member**

- Phil Franey –  
franeyp@bak.rr.com
- Alternate—John De Mario  
jjdmario@aol.com

**Kern County District Attorney's Office**

- **Elder Abuse:** Katie Claborn  
661-868-7617 or [kclaborn@co.kern.ca.us](mailto:kclaborn@co.kern.ca.us)

## YOUR REOKC BOARD

All persons who are retired from the County of Kern or any of the special districts under the direction of the County Board of Supervisors or independent special districts that are members of the Kern County Employees' Retirement Association (KCERA) are eligible for membership in REOKC.

REOKC is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors. The five officers on the Board are the President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The officers are elected for a period of one year, from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>, or until such time as properly relieved. Five of the directors are elected to serve two year terms, alternating the election of two directors in one year and three directors the next. The sixth director is the immediate past President of REOKC. The election of officers and directors is conducted at the general membership meeting in November with installation of the elected Board in December.

Currently, the REOKC Board of Directors is scheduled to meet at 10:00 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, prior to the luncheon and general membership meeting. The REOKC Board meetings are open to all members and your Board is in need of new members interested in maintaining retiree benefits for current and future retirees. Plan to attend some of the Board meetings this year and participate in maintaining your retirement.

## AS I AGE, I REALIZE THAT...

1. I talk to myself because sometimes I need expert advice.
2. Sometimes I roll my eyes out loud.
3. I don't need anger management. I need people to stop ticking me off.
4. My people skills are just fine. It's my tolerance of idiots that needs work.
5. The biggest lie I tell myself is, "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."
6. When I was a child I thought nap time was punishment. Now it's like a mini-vacation.
7. The day the world runs out of coffee or wine is just too terrible to think about.
8. Even duct tape can't fix stupid, but it can muffle the sound!



**MARCH 13, 2016**

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS  
SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR**



## **WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER OUR DECEASED REOKC MEMBERS:**

Elbert Cooley—Kern Medical Center  
Richard Engel—Human Services  
Pauline Garcia—Kern Medical Center  
Fred Gusman—Roads  
Richard Hedberg—Sheriff  
Truman Hill—Coroner-Pub. Adm.  
Marjorie Hodges—Sheriff  
Nora McLellan—Human Services  
Rachel Moreno—Health Department  
Nancy Ramsey—Aging & Adult Services  
Henry Sanchez—Human Services  
Louise Smiddy—County Clerk  
Eda Smith—Library  
Shirley Underwood—Waste Management  
Billy J. Willis—Parks & Recreation  
Samuel Winston—Planning & Comm. Devel.  
Joyce Woessner—Sheriff

***“A life well-lived leaves behind  
A beautiful bouquet of memories.”***

*Author unknown*

**Reminder:** The surviving spouse of a retired Kern County Employee is eligible for REOKC membership. Just complete the Payroll Deduction Form on Page 4 and mail to:

**REOKC, PO Box 2592, Bakersfield, CA 93303**

**NOTICE:** All views and opinions expressed in the **TREND** are solely the representation of each writer. **REOKC's** only intention is to fairly inform our membership. The information presented in the **TREND** is believed to be from reliable sources. **REOKC** does not sell or disclose information about our members to third parties.

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## BALANCE TRANSFER

**0%**  
APR\*  
FOR 12  
MONTHS

Offer good December 1, 2015 - March 31, 2016

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1.50% balance transfer fee ★ No annual fee

661.327.9461 | [www.kernfcu.org](http://www.kernfcu.org)

\*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. 0% promotional rate begins at the posting of your first qualifying transaction (new purchase or balance transfer) and will be in effect for 12 billing cycles thereafter. Your rate will return to your normal merchandise or balance transfer rate as disclosed in your account opening disclosure or most recent change in terms notice on the first billing cycle after the 12 month promotional rate. Regular rates are 7.25% to 18% APR depending upon your credit qualifications. The regular rates are variable based on WSJ Prime rate at 3.25% as of 11/1/15. Qualifying transactions are new purchases or balance transfers posted to your account during the promotion period. Balance transfer fee is either \$5 or 1.5% of the amount of each transfer, whichever is greater. Annual fee: none. The promotion period is 12/1/15 to 3/31/16 and all qualifying transactions must be posted to the account by 4/11/16. New credit card applications are subject to credit approval. Kern Federal Credit Union membership is required. Existing KFCU balances are not eligible for the balance transfer rate. Federally insured by NCUA.

**KERN**  
Federal Credit Union

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

**PRSRT-STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BAKERSFIELD, CA  
PERMIT NO. 349**

**March & April 2016  
Time Dated Material**

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

**March Luncheon Reservation**

**March 8th, 2016**—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 (03/02/2016). Phone reservations are not accepted. You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda Preston at (661)204-4386 or Mary Thorp at (661) 832-5578 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—Third Tuesday this month**

**April 19th, 2016**—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 (04/13/2016). Phone reservations are not accepted. You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda Preston at (661) 204-4386 or Mary Thorp at (661) 832-5578 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_