



T R E N D

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

Volume MMXVIII-V

September & October 2018

www.reokc.org

John De Mario, President

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



President's Message

JOHN DE MARIO

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.

There was a very good turnout for the Health Fair at our July 10, 2018 meeting. We had over two hundred REOKC members taking part at both the Health Fair and July luncheon held this year at Hotel's. In attendance for our Health Fair were vendors who conducted blood tests and blood pressure readings, pharmacists to check your medications for compatibility, and medical professionals to answer your questions. Lots of healthy snacks, promotional items and great raffle prizes were donated by the vendors and enjoyed by our members. All the credit for the success of this year and prior years' Health Fairs rightfully belongs to Jeanne Berkshire and all the members of her hard working committee. We have received only positive feedback from both the vendors and our members on the event. Soon we'll be starting to plan for the 2019 Health Fair and I know it will be bigger and better than this year's event, so if you could not attend this year we look forward to seeing you in 2019.

As REOKC has done in the past, the July meeting is held concurrently with our Health Fair. The luncheon is free to all members of REOKC. The July luncheon menu has been the same since the B-B-Q was started more than thirty years ago. It began as a gift from the REOKC Board who furn-

ished all the food and did all the cooking for the members as a thank you for their attendance and help through the year (average attendance was 50 to 75 members). As the luncheons became larger it could no longer be done by the Board alone and it started to be catered, but was still kept free to all members. During this whole period the menu for the July luncheon (B-B-Q) has always been the same: hamburgers, hot dogs, beans, salads, and desserts. As the July luncheon (B-B-Q) was a gift from the Board, no business meeting was conducted so that a good time could be had by all.

The August luncheon was attended by approximately 180 members. The guest speaker was a representative of the District Attorney's staff who spoke of senior scams. The IRS scam, the grandparent scam, and other scams were discussed. Elder abuse was discussed with a surprising statistic: direct immediate family members account for the greatest majority of elder abuse and scams.

I hope that you received your new SRBR 4 in the amount of \$21 dollars in July. If you are like me you only took home about \$17 or \$18 dollars after taxes. Having the money, no matter the amount, in the hands of our members for their much needed use is much better than the money sitting idle and not being used for any purpose other than making the balance in the bank look good.

REOKC has invited Mr. Dominic Brown, Executive Director of KCERA, to speak at our September 2018 luncheon at which time he will be discussing the direction he would like to see KCERA take in the future. Also, other items of importance to REOKC will be discussed so we hope to see you there!

I want to remind all members that the fires in the north and south of us have left our air in the Valley very bad for older individuals to breathe. Stay inside as much as possible, monitor the Air Quality Control Districts announcements and take adequate precautions.



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).

I hope everyone had an enjoyable July 4th with family and friends. After the holiday the monthly KCERA Board Meeting was held the following week. During each meeting the Board is presented with staff and committee reports along with new items of business. The staff reports are presented by the Executive Director, General Counsel, and Chief Investment Officer. Committee reports are presented by Administrative, Finance, Investment, and KCERA Property Inc. Board.

Some sections of the report presented by Dominic Brown, KCERA Executive Director, during the August Board Meeting follow: *The KCERA Reorganization is done and recruitment and hiring efforts are in full swing. Four new Retirement Services Representatives are expected to start on August 20. A robust training plan is being developed by the Member Services section in order to integrate these important and valuable new resources. The recruitment for Retirement Investment Officer and Assistant Executive Director have opened. The Administrative Services division recorded 22 appointments in the month of July. The front desk greeted and assisted 141 walk-ins for a variety of retirement-related requests and questions, and staff responded to 698 phone calls. In July, Accounting and Reporting Services processed 108 new members who became employed by a KCERA plan sponsor. There were 18 members who terminated employment from a KCERA plan sponsor, and disposition packets were sent to them. In July, Member Services calculated and processed 12 new retirees, as well as 42 death benefits. Due to staffing shortages and office absences, the backlog of service purchase requests has increased to nearly 100 and members are experiencing significant delays. Staff have continued to work moderate overtime in order to address this issue and general administration of benefits. During July, 22 service-credit calculations were completed to assist members in purchasing eligible prior public service. Retirement estimates were provided to 68 members to assist them in retirement planning. KCERA staff is continuing to make progress on disability files, with focused attention on the oldest cases. There are now only three cases with original file dates older than 2015 and six cases with original file dates older than 2016. [Information Technology Services] An automated phone attendant was*

launched to help route member inquiries to the appropriate section of the office without going through the front desk. In the first month, calls going through the front desk were reduced by approximately 300, easing the backlog at the main reception area and reducing member wait times. Early feedback from users has been very positive, but staff will continue to evaluate this new initiative and make changes as appropriate. New members continue to sign up for the member portal. There are now approximately 4,400 users, which is approximately 24% of the total membership...

The July and August KCERA Board meetings approved the consent agenda items (routine and noncontroversial items); heard presentation for the 2nd Quarter Portfolio Hedge Fund Performance by Alborne America LLC for the period ending June 30, 2018; heard presentations on the 2nd Quarter Investment Performance Review for the period ending June 30, 2018 by Verus; and approved other agenda items.

During the KCERA August meeting the Verus presentation included the fund balance and investment performance (net of fees) for the period ending June 30, 2018 as follows:

Total Assets - \$4,150,297,655 and the following returns net of fees:

- 1 Year – 6.5%
- 3 Years – 5.8%
- 5 Years – 6.9%
- 10 Years – 5.1%

As of June 30, 2017, the assumption rate was 7.25% (expected long-term return) and funding ratio was 63.2% (% of fund assets available to pay liabilities).

As of July 31, 2018, membership was 17,394: active - 8,969; retirees - 7,058 (REOKC has more than 5,000 of those members); and deferred vested and reciprocal - 1,367. Non-membership: Survivor - 982; alternative payee - 205; and deferred non-vested - 1,196.

More detailed information and reporting may be obtained from the KCERA website at www.kcera.org. All members are encouraged to attend Retirement Board Meetings on the second Wednesday of each month.

?GETTING OLDER?

~ The things you used to care to do, you aren't as interested in anymore, but you really don't care that you aren't as interested.

~ You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV 'ON' than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep."

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).

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

~ A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah."

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him."

~ Four-year-old Noah was contentedly stroking his cat in front of the fire. The cat began to purr loudly. Noah suddenly seized her by the tail and dragged her away from the fire. His mother said, "Noah, you must not hurt your kitty."

"I'm not," said Noah. "But I've got to get her away from the fire, she's beginning to boil."

The three-year-old grandson looked out the window and saw lightning for the first time. "Look, Grandma!" he exclaimed. "God just took my picture!"



September 11 REOKC Board Meeting 9:30 am
Hodel's, Carriage Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.

September 11 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am - noon
General Meeting 12:00 noon
Hodel's, Kern Room, 5917 Knudsen

September 12 KCERA Board Meeting
Investment/Regular Board 8:30 am
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

October 9 REOKC Board Meeting 9:30 am
Hodel's, Carriage Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.

October 9 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am - noon
General Meeting 12:00 noon
Hodel's, Kern Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.

October 10 KCERA Board Meeting
Investment/Regular Board 8:30 am
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

UPCOMING REOKC PROGRAMS

September 11, 2018:

■ **Dominic Brown**, Executive Director of the Kern County Employees' Retirement Association (KCERA) will be speaking (rescheduled from the August meeting).

October 9, 2018:

■ Our speaker will be someone from the Levan Institute for Lifelong Learning.

LUNCHEON MENU AT HODEL'S



Selections:

- 1 Beef Entree
- 1 Chicken Entree
- 5 Different Salads
- 3 Different Desserts

Coffee, Tea & Water
will be on each table



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 \$6.00 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

ANIMAL CONTROL: Patricia Creach

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH: Dwayne Wilson

FIRE: Scott B. Hunter

HUMAN SERVICES: David Sierra; Kelsey L. Spann

KCERA: Cindy J. Wilkinson

KERN MEDICAL: Dominic Carrillo

PROBATION: George Llana

PUBLIC WORKS: Nancy L. Ewert

SHERIFF: Troy Kresha; Linda Morgan

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED



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Rosemary Barlow is one of the 2018 REOKC scholarship recipients. She attended La Habra High School in La Habra, California and is now enrolled in Arizona State University - West, majoring in Forensic Psychology in order to obtain her career goal as a Forensic Psychologist.

While in High School, Rosemary demonstrated leadership and devotion to her studies, activities and fellow students. As a Captain of the Color Guard Team and involved in the La Habra's Link Crew Mentoring Program, she went above and beyond her role as a leader, working with other students.

Rosemary has three aunts who are members of REOKC: Christine Gallardo, Mary Lou Gallardo and Kathy Lizalde. All of REOKC certainly wish Rosemary all the best in her endeavors to achieve her goals!

CALENDAR EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 3, 2018 - LABOR DAY:

Labor Day became a public holiday in 1894 and is celebrated on the first Monday in September in honor of the American labor movement and the contributions that workers have made to the strength, prosperity, laws and well-being of the country.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2018 - GRANDPARENTS DAY:

In 1978 Congress passed the legislation proclaiming the first Sunday after Labor Day as National Grandparents Day and a Presidential proclamation made this day official. The purpose: "to honor grandparents, to give grandparents an opportunity to show love for their children's children and to help children become aware of the strength, information and guidance older people can offer."

SEPTEMBER 22, 2018 - AUTUMN BEGINS:

The first full day of Autumn is September 23, 2018.

OCTOBER 8, 2018 - COLUMBUS DAY (observed):

Columbus Day became a federal holiday in 1937 and commemorates the landing of Christopher Columbus in the Americas in 1492.

OCTOBER 31, 2018 - HALLOWEEN:

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. Happy Halloween!

TRAVEL TIPS

Tuesday, September 18th & October 16th:

Chukchansi Casino Bus pick-up behind McDonald's on Real Road at 8:00 a.m. - back at 7:00 p.m. \$15.00 per person. Includes roundtrip bus, \$10.00 cash & \$5.00 food voucher

Princess Cruise Line on Star: April 27 - May 9, 2019
12 Day Alaska Roundtrip from LAX - Balcony Cabin \$2938.00 per person. 2nd date available Sept. 17 - 29, 2019 - Balcony Cabin \$3109.00 per person

Viking River Cruise: October 24 - 31, 2019 - Paris and the Heart of Normandy 8 Days: Paris-Rouen-Paris.
From \$2374.00 plus air. Each stateroom will receive \$350.00 in shipboard credit and a bottle of wine

Single travelers who don't want to pay the single traveler supplement and are looking for a travel partner, contact Julie at The Cruise Port.

Call **Julie** at **The Cruise Port**, (661 324-6910) with any questions or to make reservations for your travel plans.

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

- 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**
- **Membership**
- **Address/Email Change ***
- **Scholarship Program**

Mary Lou Bennett 661-871-5270

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 Mattly
jmattly@bak.rr.com

Kern County District Attorney's Office

- **Elder Abuse:** 661 868-2400



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

- Lloyd Baker—Solid Waste Ent. Fund
- Robert Balch—Probation
- Katherine Blinn—Superior Court
- Bethany Christman—Human Services
- Nettie Collins—Kern Medical Center
- Carol Darling—District Attorney
- Mary Dean—Beneficiary
- Everett DeGough—Fire
- Barbara Emerson—Kern Medical
- Calvin Emerson—Sheriff
- Sharron Field—Kern Medical
- Surjit Gill—Kern Medical
- Georgia Herald—Human Services
- Louis Loustalot—Fire
- Roy Main—Fire
- Robert Moorhead—K.C. Water Agency
- Henry Prado—Kern Medical
- Randy Quisenberry—NOR Sanitation
- Evelyn Richmond—Human Services
- Mary K. Shell—Board of Supervisors
- Samuel Trivitt—Fire
- Dean Vanzant—General Services
- Cary Welch—Kern Mosquito & Vec. Ctr.
- Charles White—District Attorney

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

Author unknown



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!**

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

- ~There is no greater blessing than a friend who's there when good times aren't.
- ~It always seems impossible until it's done.
- ~One beautiful heart is better than a hundred beautiful faces.

**2018 SCHOLARSHIP
AWARDED**



Chayce Perlis, pictured above with his parents is one of our 2018 scholarship recipients (REOKC member is his father - Charles Perlis). Chayce graduated from Frontier High School and plans to attend Bakersfield College before transferring to a university to become an elementary school teacher.

An exemplary student in high school, Chayce demonstrated an excellent work ethic which carried over to his interests in the performing arts and Kern County community service. Throughout high school he was involved in the Key Club, Interact Club and the National Honor Society all while performing and directing in musicals and plays.

We at REOKC are very proud of all of our young recipients and certainly wish them well in all their endeavors to achieve their goals.

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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Bakersfield, CA 93303**

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**Sept. & Oct. 2018
Time Dated Material**

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

September Luncheon Reservation

September 11, 2018—11:30, **Hodel's, Kern Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr., Bakersfield.**

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**. Reservations should be made by the Wednesday prior to the luncheon (09/05/18). You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda Preston at (661) 204-4386 or Mary Thorp at (661) 378-2103.

Member's name (\$7.00) _____ Spouse (\$7.00) _____

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

Guest (\$10.00) _____ Total tickets ____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

October Luncheon Reservation

October 9, 2018—11:30, **Hodel's, Kern Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr., Bakersfield.** 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**. Reservations should be made by the Wednesday prior to the luncheon (10/03/18). You may cancel your reservations by calling Brenda Preston at (661) 204-4386 or Mary Thorp at (661) 378-2103.

Member's name (\$7.00) _____ Spouse (\$7.00) _____

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

Guest (\$10.00) _____ Total tickets ____ Amount enclosed \$ _____