



T R E N D

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

Volume MMXVIII-VI

November & December 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.

At the September meeting the guest speaker was Mr. Dominic Brown, Executive Director of KCERA. Mr. Brown discussed the many changes that are taking place at KCERA; the addition of new staff to provide faster service to members, the hiring of a new Chief Investment Officer and an additional Investment Officer to provide stricter control of the KCERA investments. Also, Mr. Brown discussed the new automated phone system that was to free addition personnel to work with members on questions and interviews about retirement. I have seen many automated phone systems in the many years of my life, and in all cases the end result was a longer wait for service and less personal contact. I hope this does not happen in this case and that it does make it easier for members to receive the service they deserve.

The one change discussed by Mr. Brown of which all retirees should be aware is that KCERA will be stopping the mailing of hard copy payment advices to its members in the near future. That does not mean that you cannot get your hard copy advice by mail, but you will need to request the mailing of the advice from KCERA. As of today, out of the 7,000 plus payments by KCERA, just short of 300 members have requested the hard copy be mailed.

At the October meeting, health insurance was discussed with speakers from many of the insurance providers. At the meeting the County distributed the new 2019 insurance rates for retirees under 65 years old and those for retirees over 65 years old. The

County has mailed the Health Insurance Packet to all retirees. Please read all the attachments and if you have questions or need additional information, please attend the Retiree Health Benefit Fair on Thursday November 1, 2018. The Fair will be held at 1115 Truxtun Avenue on the 1st floor starting at 1:00 P.M. with presentations beginning at 1:30 P.M. in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers.

Over the past few months, REOKC has been undergoing changes in the way the monthly luncheon tickets were handled. Starting with the facts that there will be no more prepaid tickets for future luncheons, all attendees will either pay through payroll deductions or through cash or checks as you enter the luncheon. For those retirees who have been prepaying so their spouses can attend, REOKC has arranged with KCERA to allow for multiple deduction amounts so that you can use payroll deductions for both of you.

REOKC is also undergoing change in the way it invests funds in an effort to increase interest earnings. With the increase in Federal funds over the year, your Board is making the change in an effort to modernize and reduce costs. A new Investment Procedure is in process and will be presented to the Board soon.

For those members not yet aware, John Matly, the alternate retiree member to the KCERA Board, resigned effective July 2018. The KCERA Board will be making the decision to either hold a new election to fill the position or leave the position open until the next election which is at the end of 2019. Retirees make up just a little less than 50% of all members of KCERA, yet we have only one vote; this is hardly equity in representation. If the Board decides not to hold an election, retirees will still have its one vote, Phil Franey is our voting member, but he cannot get sick, go on vacation, or have any days off when meetings are held or we will not be represented by a retiree but by an active member who has

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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 will have an enjoyable holiday season with family and friends. So, I wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Now to some retirement business.

John Mattly has recently resigned his position as Alternate Retirement Board Member. Because of his resignation and according to current election policy, the KCERA Board may call a special election to fill a vacancy occurring in the office of any alternate member if the Board, in its discretion, determines that such action is in the best interests of the KCERA. On the other hand, the Board may decide the cost and time to process an election may not be in the best interest of the KCERA. At this same time, the retirees may not be represented in my absence next year. Due to the lack of needed votes caused by the absence of two Board members, the Board decided to rehear the matter during the November 7, 2018 retirement meeting with additional information of estimated election processing cost and timeline to review. Retirees are encouraged to attend this meeting and support the alternative retiree election agenda item.

Recently I had the opportunity to visit with Daryn Miller, KCERA Chief Investment Officer, concerning his duties with KCERA. Daryn is responsible for overseeing KCERA’s investment program including risk management, oversight, due diligence, objectives and policies. Before joining KCERA he served as Interim Chief Investment Officer of San Jose City’s two pension plans. He also has many years with Goldman Sachs as a vice president in equity research. He earned an MBA from the University of Southern California, BA from Vanguard University as a Chartered Financial Analyst. We discussed the many challenges facing KCERA. I think Daryn’s investment knowledge and experience is a great opportunity for the Board to take a more realistic approach to improving our investment program and asset allocation. In my opinion, we have too many managers and have been too risk adverse for the many years of market growth. So, I am hopeful that Daryn will provide the needed leadership to encourage the Board to get back on track.

Most of the September KCERA Board Meeting consisted

of the annual trustee education seminar that was coordinated by KCERA Administration. Various presentations by experts in their field were heard by KCERA Board Trustees including such topics as: Kern Economic Development and Forecast, Policy-Focused Boards, KCERA 2017 Board Performance Assessment, Overview of Benefits Administration, Case Study of Benefits Administration, Investment Opportunities for Continued Improvement, and closing remarks by Dominic Brown, KCERA Executive Director. To responsibly perform their fiduciary duties, trustees must remain knowledgeable and stay informed regarding pension matters. By attending continuing educational seminars and conferences on current pension matters, trustees fulfill one of their many duties in safeguarding the benefits of more than 18,000 members/nonmembers and more than \$4 billion.

The September and October KCERA Board meetings approved the consent agenda items (routine and non-controversial items); approved amendments to Investment Policy Statement, approved changes to investment manager lineup and funding for Commodities, approved various changes to hedge fund portfolio, and approved selection of a real estate manager. The Board also approved various administrative matters except the election for the retiree alternate member that will be reheard in November.

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 September 30, 2018, membership was 17,497: active – 9,006; retirees - 7,089 (REOKC has more than 5,000 of those members); and deferred vested and reciprocal - 1,402. Non-membership: Survivor - 996; alternative payee - 208; and deferred non-vested – 1,266.

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 the month, except the next meeting will be held on November 7th.

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).



California Retired
County Employees
Association

2018 Spring Conference
By
Ginger Mello, Delegate

As I listened to the welcoming presentation by Marin County Supervisor, Damon Connolly, I wanted to move to Marin County. It sounded as if the Board of Supervisors appreciated their county retirees and that may be because 27% of Marin County's population is made up of those over the age of 60.

The Conference had several excellent topics presented:

- 1). "Path to Increasing Health Span; What the Latest Research on Aging is Telling Us" given by Gordon Lithgow, PhD, Professor. Dr. Lithgow stated mechanisms of aging and disease are tightly linked. The diseases caused by aging are adult diseases (diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, etc.) and microbes are the single cause of childhood diseases (measles, mumps, chicken pox, etc.)
- 2). Public Employee Pension Rights Under Judicial Attack – "Will the California Rule Survive?" – Timothy K. Talbot, attorney for Cal Fire. Cal Fire was offered benefits when they were hired and then they were taken away from them in 2013. The case is to be heard in court in the first week of November.
- 3.) Mark Vanderscoff was the speaker on "Adult Protective Services in Marin County". One in four (25%) residents of Marin County are over the age of 60 and by 2030 that will be increased to 33% where the State of California average will be 24%.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

November 7 KCERA Board Meeting

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

November 13 REOKC Board Meeting 9:30 am **Hodel's, Carriage Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.**

November 13 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am - noon
General Meeting 12:00 noon
Hodel's, Kern Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.

December 11 REOKC Lunch 11:30 am - noon
(No Business or General Meeting today)
Installation of 2019 REOKC Board
Hodel's, Kern Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.

December 12 KCERA Board Meeting

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

UPCOMING REOKC PROGRAMS

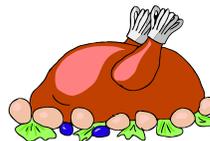
November 13, 2018:

A representative from the Alzheimer's Association will be our speaker.

December 11, 2018:

A Quartet from the Bakersfield Symphony will be the Christmas luncheon entertainment this year.

LUNCHEON MENU AT HODEL'S



November/December:

- 1 Turkey Entree
- 1 Beef/Ham 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

AGING & ADULT SERVICES: Thais Caracas;
Luanne K. Jones

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER: Susan G. Rooney

BENEFICIARY: Kit E. McGregor

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE: Richard Benson

HOSPITAL AUTHORITY: Sonia Arnold

HUMAN RESOURCES: Karen M. Kitchen

HUMAN SERVICES: Martha Orozco;
Annette Placencia

KERN MEDICAL CENTER: Andrew Hammack

PLANNING & NATURAL RES: David Press

PUBLIC HEALTH: Louise Archuleta

PUBLIC WORKS: Raymond Apresa

ROADS: Audrey Baker

SUPERIOR COURT: Lynda Hammond;
Pamela Moncada

President's Message - concluded from page 1

completely different priorities than retirees. All retirees need to send a letter to the KCERA Board, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield, CA 93311, requesting that they hold an election now.

Our next luncheon will be on November 13th with serving by table rows beginning at 11:30 A.M. and the general meeting beginning about 12:00 Noon. There will not be a general meeting at our Christmas luncheon on December 11th but we will have a quartet from the Bakersfield Symphony for entertainment and the 2019 REOKC Board will be installed. Looking forward to seeing you at both luncheons!

John De Mario



**DAYLIGHT SAVING
TIME ENDS
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2018**

**SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK
ONE HOUR
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD**

GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND

By Nancy Warnick

One of the best parts about attending a CRCEA conference is the opportunity to meet fellow county retirees from all parts of the state. Since we arrived in San Rafael Sunday evening, our Marin County hosts provided us an optional field trip for Monday morning before the conference started. The field trip was to the Guide Dogs for the Blind, the second largest dog training facility in the world, located right there in San Rafael next to a cemetery where they wouldn't disturb anyone.

Guide Dogs for the Blind has been training guide dogs since 1942. They receive no government funding and rely on private donations and endowments for their support. The blind people being paired with a dog pay nothing for the dog. In fact, Guide Dogs for the Blind provide services for the dogs throughout their entire lives. You have to be 18 to get a guide dog, but young future recipients may be given a dog who didn't make it through training as a pet to get them used to the caring for dogs. After the dogs are trained, they are paired with their new owner, and both go through an intense two week training period at the facility together. After the two week training period, there is a graduation ceremony in which the puppy volunteer formally hands the dog over to its new owner. Attendees are advised to bring Kleenex.

For more information about Guide Dogs for the Blind go to guidedogs.com.

TRAVEL TIPS

Tuesday, November 20th:

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

Festival of Lights - Thursday, December 6, 2018:

\$100 per person, includes roundtrip bus and Prime Rib Buffet Dinner - leaves at 1:00 p.m. back at 11:00 p.m.

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

"Emerald Isle" Tour: September 6 - 15, 2019

10 days Escorted bus tour \$2559.00 per person
Airfare Additional

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

- **Sunshine (Cards of Expression)**
Josie De La Torre 661-348-4222

KCERA Board Retiree Member

- Phil Franey –
franeyp@bak.rr.com
- Alternate—vacant

Kern County District Attorney's Office

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

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

- Norma Allen—Kern Medical Center
- Clara Boyles—Human Services
- Dina Cunningham—Courts
- Aurora Desilagua—Kern Health Systems
- Jessie Hall—Kern Health Systems
- Eddie Henry—Sheriff
- David Henthorne—Parks & Recreation
- Charlotte Hill—Dept. Unknown
- Marie Himes—Kern Medical Center
- Lonetta Johnson—General Services
- Donald Leddy—County Adm. Office
- Roy Mason—Fire
- Edna Mathis—Kern Health Systems
- Bruce Renehan—Mental Health
- Gayle Renner—Mental Health
- Patricia A. Schobert—Mental Health
- Gay Shuell—Sheriff
- Leora Stevens—Home Health Care Service
- Vernon Strong—Human Services
- Jacqueline Thompson—Kern Medical Center
- Rick Thompson—Solid Waste Ent. Fund
- Betty Trout—District Attorney
- Richard Williams—Sheriff
- Cynthia Wooner—Assessor

*“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

- ~ If a person’s actions are well thought out, then they’re usually well thought of.
- ~ Worry is a darkroom where fears are developed and enlarged.
- ~ Growing old is no more than a habit which a busy person has no time to form.

4). Federal Advocacy Update: Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and More. The presenter was Kevin Prindiville employed by Justice in Aging. Nationwide there are 7.2 million seniors living in poverty per Supplemental Poverty Measure. Older women are poorer than older men. A lot of the people who become homeless are over the age of 50 after they have lived a productive middle-class life.

5). “Social Media and Your Association” presented by Gene Pennington, President of Marin County Association of Retired Employees (MCARE). Marin County Retirees have an excellent web site. New members are very involved in social media.

6). Legislative Update – Amy Brown, CRCEA Lobbyist, stated that with the many cases of pensions in the courts there is a very slim chance of pensions being put on the ballot at this time. After the election there will be 8 new Senators and 10 new Assemblymen. A law was passed that limits the total number of years (12) a person can serve in Sacramento as a Senator or Assemblyman, one or the other or both.

7). Technology Tips for Managing Family Healthcare – Babette Bloch, a MCARE member and Linda Sigel from Technology 4 Life. It was suggested not to take new prescription meds unless they have been on the market for 2 years. If a person takes Warfarin to thin their blood, there is a Vitamin K injection to get if they cut themselves.

8). Our National Park Legacy – With Emphasis on National Parks of the West – Ray Murray, Partnerships Program Chief, Pacific West Regional Office of National Park Services. There are 417 National Parks nationwide, they are in every state, cover 84 million acres and had a total of 331 million visitors and 315,000 volunteers of all ages working in 2017.

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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**November & December 2018
Time Dated Material**

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



REOKC LUNCHEONS

**HODEL'S KERN ROOM
5917 KNUDSEN DRIVE, BAKERSFIELD**

**(Reservations are no longer required and tickets will no longer be
sold for future luncheons)**

**NON-PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS & THOSE WITHOUT
EXISTING TICKETS WILL PAY AT THE DOOR FOR EACH MONTH:**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2018
REOKC members and their spouses \$7.00 each
Guests \$10.00**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2018 – Christmas Luncheon
REOKC members and their spouses \$10.00 each
No Guests Please**

Lunches served at 11:30 a.m.

