



# T R E N D

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

Volume MMXIX-II

March & April 2019

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.*

I hope that all of you enjoyed Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day with your families and friends. On March 17, St Patrick's Day, we all get to put on our green and pretend that we are Irish. April brings Easter and Passover, so the next couple of months are what I like to refer to as family months when families get together often.

Very good news - the KCERA Board on February 13th approved the COLA for 2019 at 2.5%; Phil Franey will have more to say on this subject in his article. Also, as you are aware, John Mattly resigned late last year as the Alternate Retiree Member of the KCERA Board to spend more time with his family. I have been appointed Alternate Retiree Member of the KCERA Board to finish his term of office through 2019 which I will serve to the best of my ability.

Your new REOKC Board is continuing in its efforts to modernize and update the organization's policies and procedures. The Finance Committee has already made changes to the investment policy which should increase our interest revenue by ten times. They are also working on a new data base for our membership, a new method and accounting system for budgeting and they are looking into state and federal laws on record retention.

The January meeting was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> with attendance in excess of 180 members for lunch and the Business Meeting. The guest speaker was Elvie Martinez, a Crime Prevention Specialist with the Kern County Sheriff's Office. Elvie talked of personal safety around your home as well as when you're out and about. When at home, keep your doors locked and keep plants and trees away from windows and doors so that you have a clear line of sight. Get to know your neighbors and watch out for each other. When out in public be aware of where you are and the people around you and always check your car before you get in. Elvie also stated that Neighborhood Watch is a proven preventer of crime, so join or start one in your neighborhood.

The February meeting was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> with more than 220 members present for lunch and the Business Meeting. Our special guest speaker was Major General James T. Whitehead Jr. USAF (Ret.). General Whitehead talked about the Minter Field Air Museum in Shafter, CA. He discussed the history of aviation in Kern County and told us about Minter Field and Gardner Field where approximately 25% of all pilots trained during WW II. Most of us did not know the first 55 U-2 spy planes were built in a building on Norris Road in Bakersfield. They were then flown out of Meadows field at night in Air Force cargo planes. General Whitehead spoke on the upcoming Founders' Day Event for the Museum and invited the public to visit the Museum.

I hope to see you at our next meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup> at Hodel's Country Dining with lunch starting at 11:30 a.m. and the Business Meeting starting around 12:00 noon. Tickets are no longer required - just pay \$7.00 each for members and spouses at the door. If you're planning to attend the luncheons on a regular basis, the payroll luncheon deduction is available for only \$6.00 per member or \$12.00 for member and spouse.



## 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).*

Good news!! A Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) as of April 1, 2019 will be seen on your retirement check at the end of April. According to Segal Consulting the COLA amount is based upon a comparison with the annual average CPI (Consumer Price Index) for the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim 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 31870 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 fluctuations of CPI over the years and depending 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. However, this year the following **COLA rate of 2.5%** will be applied to all retirees and beneficiaries for those in retirement prior to April 1, 2019. As always, direct all question concerning the COLA to KCERA Administration.

As to KCERA Board business during 2018 John Mattly resigned from the KCERA Board as the Alternate Retiree Trustee. All of us need to thank John for his dedicated service to KCERA. In February John De Mario was recently elected as the replacement Alternate Retiree Trustee to serve the remainder of the current term ending 2019. As many of you may know, John De Mario has extensive experience and numerous years as Alternate Trustee while being Assistant Kern County Treasurer-Tax Collector and more years as a retiree representative. We look forward to John’s support in matters concerning KCERA business.

The November and December KCERA Board meetings approved the consent agenda items (routine and noncontroversial items); heard and approved presentation: on part-time credit, Over/Underpayment Policy, 4th Quarter December 31, 2018 Investment Performance Report, and 4th Quarter September 30, 2018 Hedge Review. The Board also heard various staff administrative reports.

During the February Board meeting Verus (Investment Consultant) presentation included the fund balance and investment performance (net of fees) for the period ending December 31, 2018 as follows:

Total Assets -	\$3,960,230,538
1 Year -	(4.1%)
3 Years -	5.4%
5 Years -	4.2%
10 Years -	7.8%

As of June 30, 2018, the assumption rate was stated at 7.25% (expected long-term return using a three-year phase-in from 2017 at 7.5%) and current funding ratio of 65.1% (% of fund assets available to pay liabilities).

As of January 31, 2019, membership was 17,684: active - 9,139; retirees - 7,110 (REOKC has more than 5,100 of those members); and deferred vested and reciprocal - 1,435; non-membership: survivor - 999; alternative payee - 211; and deferred non-vested - 1,297.

More detailed information and reporting may be obtained from the KCERA website at [www.kcera.org](http://www.kcera.org). All members are encouraged to attend Retirement Board Meetings on the second Wednesday of each month. The next meeting will be held on March 13, 2019.

### QUOTES

~ “With courage you will dare to take risks, have the strength to be compassionate and the wisdom to be humble. Courage is the foundation of integrity.”

~ “The world owes you nothing. It was here first.”

~ *Mark Twain* ~

## 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).

### PROBLEMS WITH VSP COVERAGE

We have been made aware that the VSP plan administered by HealthSmart and which was offered to Kern County retirees several years ago has been moved to a new administrator, Pay-Pro. Pay-Pro failed to notify the retirees of the change in a timely manner, thus leaving some retirees in a quandary. It turns out that Kern County is not the only county affected by this change in administration.

If you have been in contact with Pay-Pro and have re-established your payments with them, no further action is needed.

If you contact PGA, which manages the VSP plan offered through REOKC, you may obtain VSP coverage now and have the monthly premiums taken out of your retirement payment.

We will continue to monitor this situation and keep you posted. If you have signed up with PGA and still get Pay-Pro requests for payment, you can ignore them.

### ONE LINERS

You are stuck with your debt if you can't budget.  
A boiled egg is hard to beat.  
A will is a dead giveaway.  
You can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish.  
To write with a broken pencil is pointless.  
The batteries were given out free of charge.



**March 12 REOKC Board Meeting** 9:30 am  
**Hodel's, Carriage Room, 5917 Knudsen Dr.**

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

**March 13 KCERA Board Meeting**  
Investment/Regular Board 8:30 am  
KCERA Office, 11125 River Run Blvd., Bakersfield

\*\*\*\*\*

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

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

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

### UPCOMING REOKC PROGRAMS

#### March 12, 2019:

- A representative from Levan Institute of Lifelong Learning will be our speaker.

#### April 9, 2019:

- Our speaker today will be a representative from Hoffman Hospice.

### LUNCHEON MENU AT HODEL'S



March  
Sliced Beef  
Fried Chicken  
Tortellini Pasta  
Steamed Vegetables

April  
Deep Pit Beef  
Grilled Chicken  
Ranch Beans  
Rice Pilaf

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) \_\_\_\_\_

Dept. from which retired \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

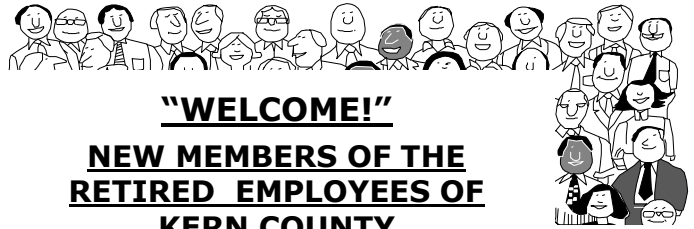
Date \_\_\_\_\_

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.



**AG & MEASUREMENT:** Marilou Lagasca; Richard White

**ANIMAL CONTROL:** Aleda Denton

**ASSESSOR:** Paula Burchett

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & REC.:** Lillian Castellon

**BERRENDA MESA W.D.:** Ronald Hasty

**BUILDING DEPT.:** Mary J. Sawyer

**CHILD SUPPORT:** Rosalva Bautista; Margaret Christie; Norma Rodriguez

**CORRECTIONAL-LERDO:** Gil A. Bicera

**COUNTY COUNSEL:** Kirk Perkins; Steven Sanders

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:** Charles Webb

**EMERGENCY MED. SERVICES:** Ross Elliott

**ENVIRON. HEALTH SERVICES:** Beverly Briano; Sharon Stockton

**FIRE:** Juanita Banks; David R. Baxter; Janie Heffner; Kirk Kushen

**GENERAL SERVICES:** Murlene J. Brown

**HUMAN SERVICES:** Marion Adams;

Maria E. Benavides; Romana A. Carbajal;

Monica Dulan; Suzanne Evans; Jamesetta Gaines;

Tommie Jones; Leroy Jones, Jr.; Theresa Monsibais;

Carole Morrison; Brigid Prins; Debra Robberstad;

Cheryl Washington Clayborn; Larry J. Wiedeman

**INFO. TECH. SERVICE:** Scott S. Neufeld

**KERN COUNTY HOSP. AUTH.:** Bill Soto

**KERN COUNTY WATER AGENCY:** John S. Marriott; Richard Turner

**KERN MEDICAL CENTER:** Kathy Blue; Susan Boyd; Betty Lackie; Lisa Ohlfest; Mary E. Ortiz;

Carmen Rivera; Patricia Stafford-Rosen

**KERN SANITATION AUTHOR.:** Robert Cole

**MUSEUM:** Carola R. Enriquez

**PARKS & RECREATION:** Camilla Martin;

Johnny A. Soranno; Anson Worley

**PROBATION:** Darrin W. Crowell; Alfred Gregg; Scott E. Hemingway

**PUBLIC DEFENDER:** John Hamilton; Gladys Stout

**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Timothy A. Murphy

**PUBLIC WORKS:** George Keegan; Aaron Leicht; Timothy Mullican

**ROADS:** Michael A. Sanchez

(continued on next page)

**SHERIFF:** Kelly Allen; Royce G. Berry;  
Loni Dunnagan-Holt; Linda Henry; Steven Irby;  
Tina Koivu; Linda Ott; Dana Plowman;  
Donald E. Rhoads; Anthony Todisco  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Lyle Erric Walker  
**UNKNOWN DEPT.:** Ramona Martin-Goatcher

### **OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES**

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, “Why are some of your hairs white, Mom?”

Her mother replied, “Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.”

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, “Mommy, how come ALL of grandma’s hairs are white?”

### **TRAVEL TIPS**

#### **Tuesday, March 19th & April 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

#### **New Year’s Cruise Aboard the Sky Princess:**

December 28, 2019 - January 4, 2020—Depart from Ft. Lauderdale, to Princess Cays, Bahamas, St. Thomas, St. Maarten. Balcony Cabin \$2034 per person + airfare.

**Italy’s Great Cities Bus Tour:** July 13 - 21, 2019  
Visit Rome, Assisi, Venice, Pisa, Florence, Tuscany area. \$2497 per person + airfare.

**Alaska:** June 13 - 27, 2020 (14 Days)  
Roundtrip Los Angeles—See Ketchikan, Icy Straight Point, Juneau, Hubbard Glacier, Skagway, Sitka and Victoria, British Columbia. Balcony Cabin \$3799 per person.

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](mailto: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—John De Mario  
jjdmario@aol.com

#### **Kern County District Attorney’s Office**

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

#### **Kern County Aging & Adult Services**

- **661 868-1000**

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

- Margie Anderson—Kern Health System
- Jean Bastow—District Attorney
- Aggie Black—Human Services
- Helen Bloxom—Planning & Comm. Devl.
- William Burgin—Superior Court
- Bettie Burnett—Roads
- Armogene Cannon—Human Services
- Sarah Carrasco—Courtroom Support
- Julie Cazzell—Hospital Authority
- Barbara Cook—Human Services
- Allan Fanshier—Fire
- Eva Gage—Sheriff
- Verdell Gamble—Kern Medical Center
- Dolores Goodwin—Courtroom Support
- Jerlene Harris—Kern Medical Center
- Walter Jones—Department Unknown
- Daniel Maher—County Counsel
- Georgia McTaggart—Plan. & Comm. Devl.
- Peggy Rascoe—Human Services
- Lawrence Richmond—Fire
- Patricia Sceales—Plan. & Comm. Devl.
- Sheila Tiede—Courtroom Support
- Truman Waltman—Sheriff

*“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**

- ~ The art of conversation depends upon an equal amount of listening.
- ~ True friendship comes when silence between two people is comfortable.
- ~ How do you explain counterclockwise to a child with a digital watch?

**REOKC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

We are now accepting  
Applications for the  
2019 Scholarship Awards  
for Graduating  
High School Seniors!



Two scholarship awards of \$1,000 each will be presented at our August 2019 luncheon/meeting. Relatives (children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews) of **REOKC members** are eligible to apply.

Scholarship application forms, instructions and relevant information are all available on our website: **www.reokc.org**



Applications and required documents must be submitted no later than  
**April 15, 2019**

**MARCH 10, 2019**

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS**

**SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR**

**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.



# 70-DAY SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OFFER

*We are celebrating our 70th anniversary  
by offering a special rate when you open a certificate with us.*



One lucky winner will receive 7.77% APY for the life of their certificate\*\*

## CERTIFICATE SPECIALS

7 month term at .70%APY\*

17 month term at 2.57%APY\*

27 month term at 2.70%APY\*

37 month term at 3.07%APY\*

1717 Truxtun Ave | 4180 Coffee Rd | 661.327.9461 | [stratacu.org](http://stratacu.org)

\*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Rates are effective for certificates opened 2/1/2019 through 4/11/2019. Minimum balance to open is \$1000.00. Penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal.  
\*\* All members opening any special or regular certificate between 2/1/2019 and 4/11/2019 will be entered into the drawing. Winner will receive 7.77% APY on their certificate on amounts up to \$100,000.00 for the term of the certificate. StrataCU roll-over certificates are not eligible for the drawing. Not available to employees and volunteers of StrataCU or their family members.

**STRATA**  
CREDIT UNION  
formerly Kern Federal Credit Union

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

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

**March & April 2019  
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)**

**MEMBERS WITHOUT PAYROLL LUNCHEON DEDUCTIONS  
WILL PAY AT THE DOOR FOR EACH MONTH:**

**TUESDAY, March 12, 2019  
REOKC members and their spouses \$7.00 each  
Guests \$10.00**

**TUESDAY, April 9, 2019  
REOKC members and their spouses \$7.00 each  
Guests \$10.00**

**Lunches served at 11:30 a.m.**

**(Payments requiring no change will be greatly appreciated.)**