



T R E N D

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

Volume MMXX-II

March & April 2020

www.reokc.org

Robert Seibly, President

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



President's Message

ROBB SEIBLY

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 is good news and there is Good News.

For the Good News – Dominic Brown, KCERA (Kern County Employee's Retirement Association) Executive Director announced that we would receive a 2.5% COLA on our April pension payment.

Now for the good news. Your Board of Directors voted on having your TREND newsletter published in color for the rest of the year, as was done in January; different from the past that has been in black and white (upgrading is always good for an organization).

At the January General Meeting (luncheon meeting), held on the 14th with attendance around 192, Mary Beechie, Program Director for The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Kern County was our speaker. She shared with us that RSVP works as a Volunteer Center for all of Kern County and they have 56 sites for which they send volunteers. So, if you want something to do, there are many volunteer opportunities if you are interested.

At the February General Meeting, held on the 11th with attendance around 195, Cheryl Tikanen from the 60+ Club at CSUB was our speaker. She gave an overview of what is offered to their membership. The 60+ Club is celebrating 32 years of service, learning, and fellowship. They have several Interest Groups, Committees, Action Networks, and Projects available in which to get involved as a member.

Don't forget STRATA Credit Union has a Document Shredding day on March 6th at their Riverlakes Branch at 4108 Coffee Road from 2 to 4pm (high volume, commercial cross-cut, shredding).

I asked at both the January and February meetings if there was anything that the membership thought might make our meetings more meaningful and/or helpful to the membership. In January there was one item brought to my attention about the long lines waiting to get into the meeting hall. Without any delay we were able to assess the issue and help solve one of the waiting line problems. I must thank Margaret Smith who volunteered her assistance and was working on solving the problem at our February meeting.

Since then, 4 more concerns have come up and your Board is discussing them: a) Seating Issue; b) Lunch Room Opening; c) Quantity of Food; d) Taking Food Home. This was shared with the membership at our February meeting and we need to work together to fix these issues. Any ideas, please share with a Board member or send your ideas to contactus@reokc.org. The Board of Directors' contact information is in your "Directory and Bylaws 2020" brochure that was updated and given out at the January and February meetings. Your Board is listening to your concerns and we want to make your Luncheon Meeting experience more worthwhile, educational, and memorable.

NEW MEMBERS (and old members too), please take the time to look over our REOKC website at www.reokc.org. Areas to view: Home, Who We Are, Membership Benefits, Governance, News & Alerts, Resources, and Affiliates.

THESE AREAS COVER YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HELPING HANDS, MEETINGS, AND HOW TO JOIN. ALSO, BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP SUCH AS: DENTAL INSURANCE (PPO & HBO OPTIONS), VISION INSURANCE (WITH VSP), PET INSURANCE, AND VARIOUS OTHER INSURANCES AVAILABLE AT DISCOUNTED RATES ALONG WITH OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. OUR 2020 DIRECTORY AND BYLAWS, OUR NEWSLETTER "TREND," ARE ALSO AVAILABLE. ALERTS, SPECIAL NEWS,

(President's Message concluded on Page 3)



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, 2020 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 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. Although 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, 2020. As always, direct all question concerning the COLA to KCERA Administration.

As recently mentioned, John DeMario has finished his last term on the KCERA Board as the Alternate Retiree Trustee after numerous years as the primary and others as alternate Retiree Trustee. All of us need to thank John for his many dedicated years of service to KCERA as well as REOKC. Robert “Robb” Seibly was recently elected as the replacement Alternate Retiree Trustee to serve in John’s position. Prior to Robb’s retirement as a Kern County Senior Personnel Analyst, he served in the U.S. Army for 20 years and completed his service with the rank of Major. Robb is following the path of many retiree Board representatives while serving as REOKC President. We look forward to Robb’s support in matters concerning KCERA business.

During the January and February KCERA Meetings the Board approved consent agenda items (routine and noncontroversial items); heard and

approved presentations: Disability Overview; 2020/21 Executive Director Performance Review Criteria; Various Equity Policy Revisions; Private Market Review; 4th Quarter December 31, 2019 Investment Performance Report; 4th Quarter December 31, 2019 Hedge Program and the External Audit Services. 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 ended December 31, 2019 as follows:

Total Assets - \$4,501,428,840.

- 1 Year – 15.4%
- 3 Years – 7.9%
- 5 Years – 6.1%
- 10 Years —7.1%

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 December 31, 2019, membership was 18,220: active - 9,442; retirees - 7,285 (REOKC has more than 5,100 of those members); and deferred vested and reciprocal - 1,493; non-membership: survivor - 999; alternative payee - 219; and deferred non-vested - 1,491.

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. The next meeting will be held on March 11, 2020.

QUOTES

“You got to be careful if you don’t know where you’re going, because you might not get there.”
~ Yogi Barra ~

“If you could kick the person in the pants responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn’t sit for a month.”
~ Theodore Roosevelt ~

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”
~ Thomas A. Edison ~

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.



"WELCOME!" **NEW MEMBERS OF THE** **RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF** **KERN COUNTY**

AG & MEASUREMENT ST.: Cortney Lapp

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL: David A Jones

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECO.: Julio Armenta;
Charlotte A. Badgley; Roxanne Jafari; David S. Rivera;

BENEFICIARY: Rosalie Baker; Cheryl Boyd;
Maria R. Calvillo; Heidi Dixon; Jean Fields;

Sue A. Norton; Phone Oubsuntia; Jackie Tisdale

COUNTY ADM. OFFICE: Sally Weissman

EMPLOYERS' TRG. RESOURCE: Christina Berry

ENVIRON HEALTH SERVICES: Danny Starkey

FIRE: David Agee; Deborah Duncan; Billy Goatcher;
Rodger A. McDonald

GENERAL SERVICES: Donald Anderson;
Patrick Loughridge; Michael P. Murdoch;

David Scales

HUMAN SERVICES: Sherri Aud; Robert Bacio;
Sonja Bennett; Daniel S. Dominguez; Maria A. Flores;

Vivian Gamon; Donna Gilzean; Suzanne Hoffman;
Tony Lopez; Elbira Mancera; Delfina Martinez-Davis;

Jeff Mendoza; Sharon Redding; Sherry E. Ross;
Kathy Toerner

K.C. WATER AGENCY: Christopher Bumatay

KERN MEDICAL CENTER: Carmen Beadle;
Diana Hailey; Margie L. Williams

KERN MOSQUITO & VEC.: Paul Coburn

MUSEUM: Douglas L. Davidson

PUBLIC HEALTH: Jessie Sanchez

PUBLIC WORKS: Lester Carroll; Michael Hummel

RISK MANAGEMENT: Colleen E. Boren

ROADS: Jesus Marroquin; Clarence Williams

S. J. VALLEY APCD: Sharyl Preskitt

SHERIFF: Earl Barnes; Mark Brown;

Barbara Fassel; Thomas Heimforth; Debra Kadel;

Christa Lacertoso; Carol J Looker; Donna McMillin;
Shawna Morley; Carol A. Turley; Thomas Vollmer;

Jack Yeley

SUPERIOR COURT: Nadia McNeill

VETERANS SERVICES: Richard D. Taylor

W.S. RECREATION & PARK: Connie J. Redfield

UNKNOWN DEPARTMENT: Christopher Cardamone;
Edna J. Jones; Eddie Summers; Amelia S. West

REOKC wishes all Kern County retirees a long and happy retirement!

MARCH 8, 2020

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS

SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR

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

Tuesday, March 17th & April 21st:

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.

Golden Princess 14 Day Alaska Cruise: Roundtrip Los Angeles June 27 - July 11, 2020 Balcony Cabin from \$2811 per person. Itinerary: LA to Ketchikan, Icy Strait Point, Juneau, Hubbard Glacier, Skagway, Sitka and Victoria, Canada.

Globus Bus Tours: Vietnam & Cambodia: A Grand Adventure—Nov. 28 - Dec. 10, 2020—13 days, \$3498 per person plus Airfare. Cities to see: Ho Chi Minh City, Hoi An, Hue, Ha Long Bay, Hanoi and Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Royal Caribbean Cruise Line: Jewel of the Seas 15 Night Transatlantic Crossing Rome to Galveston, Texas. Balcony cabin \$975.77 per person plus Airfare. Sail from Rome to Alicante, Spain, Gibraltar, United Kingdom, Canary Islands, Nassau, Bahamas & return to Galveston, Texas.

Avalon Waterways River Cruise - Envision: Prague to Budapest July 28 - August 6, 2020 (10 days) \$3380 per person plus airfare. Visit Cities: 2 nights in Prague, Nuremberg, Roth, Regensburg, Passau, Linz, Melk, Vienna and Budapest.

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—Robb Seibly -
seiblyrl@gmail.com

Kern County District Attorney's Office

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

Kern County Aging & Adult Services

- **661 868-1000**

REOKC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Income taxes aren't the only things due on April 15, so are the scholarship applications of your high school senior children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews. This year your REOKC board has voted to raise the scholarships for incoming college freshmen to \$2000. These scholarships can be used not only at a junior or four year college, but also at a trade school. A limited number of scholarships will be awarded.

This scholarship program was established back in 2012 by REOKC's Board of Directors as a benefit for relatives of REOKC members only, with increases in the scholarship amount being made over the years as financial conditions allowed.

Detailed application information/forms are available on our website: www.reokc.org. All forms must be completed, printed, signed and mailed no later than April 15th.

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 adults who have provided leadership will be required.

Essays and application information will be judged by a panel of three REOKC members. These judges have been appointed by the REOKC President with Board approval. Each application will be given a number so the identity of any applicant will not be known to the judges. Scholarships are generally awarded each year at our August luncheon/meeting.

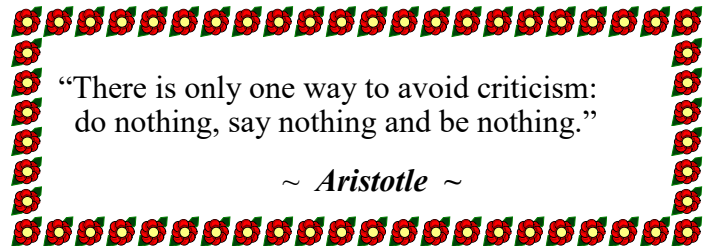
www.reokc.org



Donna Aguilar—Treasurer-Tax Collector
Kelly Allen—Sheriff
Margarita Comer—Public Health
Vincent Cunningham—Fire
Wanda Desmond—Kern Health Systems
Dorothy Edmond—Planning & Comm. Devel.
Josephine Fraire—Comm. & Econ. Devel.
Barbara Garman—Sheriff
Teresa Gutierrez—Beneficiary
James Hage—Human Services
Mary Hake—Beneficiary
Jan Hendricks—Human Services
Cathie Jackson—Human Services
Robert Jaggars—Sheriff
Pairlee McCain—Kern Medical Center
Betty Mord—Human Services
David Paul Rozell—Aging & Adult Services

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

Author unknown



“There is only one way to avoid criticism:
do nothing, say nothing and be nothing.”

~ Aristotle ~

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.

STRATA

CREDIT UNION



IT'S TIME TO IMPROVE

- Landscaping
- Updated kitchen and bath
- Solar Energy
- Pool and Patio
- Offer good from 2/21 - 5/1

Borrow up to 133% of your home's value for improvements. Apply for a Home Equity Loan today!

www.stratacu.org | 661.327.9461

Downtown 1717 Truxtun | Riverlakes 4180 Coffee Rd

Panama 1535 Panama Ln



Applicant may be eligible to borrow up to 133% of the value of the home for qualified home improvement projects. Strata CU reserves the right to distribute payments to approved licensed contractors on behalf of the borrower. The interest on the portion of the credit extension that is greater than the fair market value of the dwelling is not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes; please consult a tax advisor. Credit restrictions apply including but not limited to; all borrowers must have a minimum qualifying credit score of 680 at the time of application. Subject to acceptable appraisal and title search. Strata Credit Union membership and a share savings account with a minimum deposit of \$5 is required. Federally insured by NCUA.

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

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**March & April 2020
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 EACH MONTH:**

**TUESDAY, March 10, 2020
REOKC members and their spouses \$7.00 each
Guests \$10.00**

**TUESDAY, April 14, 2020
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.)