



# T R E N D

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

Volume MMXXII-III

May & June 2022

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.*

Over the last two years we have all suffered through a great many hardships and negativity, so I've decided on a more positive message to all our retirees in this issue. I hope you enjoy this article which was sent to me some years ago:

GOD spelled backwards is DOG. (True Story) In 2003, police in Warwickshire, England, opened a garden shed and found a whimpering, cowering dog. The dog had been locked in a shed and abandoned. She was dirty, malnourished, and had quite clearly been abused.

In an act of kindness, the police took the dog, which was a female greyhound, to a Wildlife Sanctuary, which was known as a haven for animals that are abandoned, orphaned, or otherwise in need.

The sanctuary staff went to work with two aims: to restore the dog to full health, and to win her trust. It took several weeks, but eventually both goals were achieved. They named her Jasmine, and they started to think about finding her an adoptive home.

Jasmine, however, had other ideas. No one quite remembers how it came about, but Jasmine started

welcoming all animal arrivals at the sanctuary. It would not matter if it were a puppy, a fox cub, a rabbit or, any other lost or hurting animal. Jasmine would just peer into the box or cage and, when and where possible, deliver a welcoming lick.

The staff relates one of the early incidents. "We had two puppies that had been abandoned by a nearby railway line. One was a Lakeland Terrier cross and another was a Jack Russell Doberman cross. They were tiny when they arrived at the centre and Jasmine approached them and grabbed one by the scruff of the neck in her mouth and put him on the settee. Then she fetched the other one and sat down with them, cuddling them."

"But she was like that with all our animals, even the rabbits. She takes all the stress out of them, and it helps them to not only feel close to her, but to settle into their new surroundings."

Jasmine, the timid, abused, deserted waif, became the animal sanctuary's resident surrogate mother, a role for which she might have been born. The list of orphaned and abandoned youngsters she has cared for comprises five fox cubs, four badger cubs, fifteen chicks, eight guinea pigs, two stray puppies, fifteen rabbits and one roe deer fawn. Tiny Bramble, eleven weeks old, was found semi-conscious in a field. Upon arrival at the sanctuary, Jasmine cuddled up to her to keep her warm and then went into the full foster-mum role. Jasmine the greyhound showers Bramble the roe deer with affection and makes sure nothing is matted.

Jasmine will continue to care for Bramble until she is old enough to be returned to woodland life. When that happens, Jasmine will not be lonely. She will be too busy showering love and affection on the next orphan or victim of abuse.

President's Message concluded on page 4



## 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 St. Patrick’s Day and Easter. I also wish everyone a safe Memorial Day. Since many of us are in an at risk health group, please adhere only to official medical advice in maintaining your health including a mask when advised. On the brighter side and as a reminder, your April pension payment will include a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) rate of 2.5% to be applied to all retirees and beneficiaries. As always, direct all questions concerning your COLA to KCERA Administration.

During the March and April 2022 KCERA Board Meetings other than approving consent items (routine and non-controversial), the Board received presentations and took appropriate action on the following agenda items: Private Market Fund recommendations, Fiduciary Responsibility and Governance, selection of Actuarial Provider Segal, Alameda Decision Phase 4, Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) Implementation, Capital Efficiency Program and Annual Strategic Asset Allocation and Asset Allocation, 2022-2023 Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation Criteria, KCERA’s voting delegation for State Association of County Retirement Systems (SACRS) and SACRS Board of Director Elections 2022-2023. The preceding list is not all inclusive, but Board and Committee Agendas and Minutes with supporting documentation are available for review at [www.kcera.org](http://www.kcera.org).

As explained in earlier articles and to accomplish many of these responsibilities, the Board has established specific standing committees - administrative, finance, investment and nomination. The services of special consultants and professionals (accounting, actuarial, investment, legal, etc.) are required for the necessary committee due diligence before, during, and after preparation and submittal of recommendations to the Board for approval and action. Please understand that the Board reviews all matters thor-

oughly, but the committee system allows for the needed pick and shovel work - due diligence. The retirement administration plays an integral role in the support and completion of these duties and responsibilities.

The foundation for the many responsibilities of the Board and administration, other than the California Law (The 1937 Retirement Act), is a comprehensive governance structure. Governance enforces how a group agrees to work together by establishing chains of responsibility, authority, and communication. The objective of governance is to provide a decision framework so that decisions are made proactively to prevent delays in the operational and implementation processes. KCERA administration and management is a very complex, multifaceted operation. Many consider such pension programs the most demanding and complex public agencies.

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, 2021 as follows:

Total Assets -	\$5.557,439,932
1 Year -	13.7%
3 Years -	13.5%
5 Years -	9.8%
10 Years -	8.6%

As of June 30, 2020, the actuarial assumption rate was stated at 7.25% (expected long-term investment return) and current funding ratio of 64.4% (% of fund assets available to pay liabilities).

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 hear and/or view Retirement Board Meetings, usually on the second Wednesday of each month. The next meeting, however, will be held on May 4, 2022.

### QUOTES

By Yogi Berra

“In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.”

“We made too many wrong mistakes.”

“Why buy good luggage? You only use it when you travel.”

“I usually take a two-hour nap from 1 to 4.”



## 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**

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECO:** Charles McKinney

**BENEFICIARY:** Robbie Penney; Jil Streed-Studer; Clestie Thompson; Beatrice Voyles

**CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES:** Connie Neufeld

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY:** Diana Ruff

**ENVIRON HEALTH SERVICE:** Brian Hodge

**FIRE:** Ira Peshkin

**KERN MEDICAL CENTER:** Guadalupe Galindo; Paul Panero

**PARKS & RECREATION:** Mark R. Galindo

**PROBATION:** Thad Kennedy

**PUBLIC WORKS:** Ali A. Annan

**SHERIFF:** David W. Benson; Heriberto Flores; Jefferson B. Huot; Gilbert Valdez, Jr.; Marcia D. Williams

**WEIGHTS/MEASURES:** Barbara Brenner

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

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** - concluded from page 1

Again I say, too often we underestimate the power of:

A touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the power to turn a life around.

Our lunch meetings continue to be very successful and for both March and April we had about 150 attendees who enjoyed great meals and socializing with old and new friends.

I hope to see some of you at our May 10th and June 14th luncheons in the Liberty Hall at Hodel's. Doors open at 10:45 a.m. and lunches served at 11:30 a.m.

**Robb Seibly**



**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**

**10 Day Mexico Cruise Princess Cruise Line  
October 23 – November 2, 2022 :**

Balcony Cabin \$2213.00 Per person including port charges and taxes - Cabo San Lucas, La Paz, Loreto and Puerto Vallarta

**7 Day Mexican Riviera Cruise Princess Cruise Line - December 3 – 10, 2022:**

Balcony Cabin \$1414.00 per person including port charges and taxes PLUS beverage package, Free Wi-Fi and Crew Appreciation - Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlán & Puerto Vallarta

**15 Day Hawaii Cruise Roundtrip LAX Princess Cruise Line - January 6 - January 31, 2023:**

Balcony Cabin \$3727.00 Per person including port charges and taxes PLUS beverage package, Free Wi-Fi and Crew Appreciation - Honolulu, Hilo, Maui, Kauai & Ensenada

**7 Night Cancun, Mexico Land Package - All Inclusive:**

Omni Cancun Deluxe Ocean View Room  
November 15 - 22, 2022 - \$1635.00 per person includes airfare, hotel, All meals, unlimited beverages in 7 bars, free wi-fi, in room mini bar restocked daily, transfers and cancellation insurance for Future Travel Credit

All rates are based on double occupancy and are per person, based on availability and can change at any time. Travel Insurance also available.

**Julie Salazar– Garcia (661) 324-6910  
cruiseport@sbcglobal.net  
The Cruise Port, 1800 Oak St., Suite D, Bakersfield, CA**

**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.

**Pacific Group Agencies, Inc.**

- Supplemental Insurance Plans  
Available at Discounted Rates  
**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 –  
[franep@bak.rr.com](mailto:franep@bak.rr.com)
- Alternate—Robb Seibly -  
[seiblyrl@gmail.com](mailto:seiblyrl@gmail.com)

**Kern County District Attorney's Office**

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

**Kern County Aging & Adult Services**

- **661 868-1000**

**KERN COUNTY EMPLOYEE'S  
RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION  
KCERA UPDATES  
Dominic Brown, KCERA CEO**

**New View Access – Board of Retirement Meetings**

We are excited to announce new access to live video of KCERA Board of Retirement meetings. Members, stakeholders and public now have the option to call in to listen to live audio or use a link to access live audio and video of Board meetings in progress. Instructions to participate in either manner are listed on the cover page of any meeting agenda, available on KCERA's website [www.kcera.org](http://www.kcera.org).

**Recent Salary Changes – Effect on FAC**

Whenever your pensionable salary changes because of promotion, step increase, or other change, that amount will be reflected in your KCERA portal account a few weeks after payroll is processed. Your pension at retirement is based, in part, on your highest average pensionable earnings (referred to as final average compensation "FAC"). A salary increase will be fully included in your FAC after you have earned that amount over the required number of months. If you are a Legacy member, you must work twelve consecutive months at the higher salary for it to be fully included in your FAC. The FAC for PEPRA members is based on a three-year period. So, if you are a PEPRA member, you must work 36 consecutive months at a higher salary to be included in your FAC.

**KCERA Office is Going Green!**

Construction is currently in progress to install solar panels in the KCERA parking lot. This initiative will also result in overall cost savings to the KCERA plan. Although parking may be slightly impacted until the project is completed, the KCERA office remains open to serve our members.

**Cybersecurity Reminder**

KCERA has learned that unaffiliated third parties contact our members and request to meet and discuss "retirement planning". KCERA does not engage third parties to discuss retirement planning with its members. If a third party contacts you to discuss such topics, please know that they are not associated with KCERA.

KCERA encourages members to safeguard personal financial information, including KCERA portal login credentials. We also encourage our members to

use the KCERA Member Portal (<https://memberweb.kcera.org/member/MemberLogin.jsp>) for retirement planning, and to view the KCERA End of Career Seminar

(<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=qu9GJgtmPXc>) session on our KCERA YouTube channel (<https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCnJof0tK40K8mBrYMewdgyw/videos>).

Whether you are a new member or approaching retirement, it's always a good time to do retirement planning!

**We are Hiring**

We are recruiting for a Senior Accountant position. We continue to seek highly talented individuals to add to our growing KCERA team and encourage you to please share this opportunity with anyone you know would be a great fit. Specific information and requirements can be found on the Kern County Human Resources website at <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/kernco/classspecs/1453631>.

**DO YOU HAVE INTERNET ACCESS?**

**TREND EMAIL LIST CONTINUES TO GROW!**

Thanks to all of you who signed up for membership on the TREND Email list. We are now saving over **\$6,000.00 per year!!**

As you can see, we have finally recalculated the savings amount due to our TREND email recipients and we are pleased to announce the amount above! Keep those savings coming folks!!


*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).**

**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.





# OUR NEWEST BRANCH IS JUST A CLICK AWAY!

Strata Credit Union is proud to announce our **ONLINE VIRTUAL BRANCH**. Everything you can do in a branch, you can do with our Virtual Branch

To learn more or **LIVE video chat** with our expert staff go to [www.stratacu.org](http://www.stratacu.org)

**STRATA** [www.stratacu.org](http://www.stratacu.org)  
CREDIT UNION 661.327.9461

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

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**May & June 2022  
Time Dated Material**

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

**REOKC LUNCHEONS AT HODEL'S**

**5917 KNUDSEN DRIVE, BAKERSFIELD**

**TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2022**

**LIBERTY HALL (building north end of parking lot)**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2022**

**LIBERTY HALL (building north end of parking lot)**

**Members without payroll luncheon deductions will pay at the door each month.**

**REOKC members and their spouses \$7.00 each  
Guests \$10.00**

**Doors will be open at 10:45 a.m.            Lunches served at 11:30 a.m.**

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