



T R E N D

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

Volume MMXXV-V

September & October 2025

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.

Greetings to our 4500+ members, all of us at your REOKC Board hope you are doing well and staying healthy and finding ways to be happy and involved. It is great to see our luncheon numbers growing, and last meeting there were approximately 225 attending. I share with you again the importance of our website and how it may help you with many things during your retirement.

We continue to work with KCERA (Kern County Employees Retirement Association) to make sure you have access to your retirement information. Their doors are open and are fully staffed to assist you with your special needs. Their website and phone number are: www.KCERA.org (661-381-7700).

You know as seniors we seem to be targeted for all types of scams; some have been around for a long time and some much more recent. Consider this: family members or very close friends post videos online, "AI" only needs a few seconds to capture their voice you know and use it against you. For example: you receive a call from your granddaughter, or a very close friend, who sounds just like your granddaughter, or your very close friend, and she tells you of a situation she is having and needs money to keep from some terrible situation she will be in if she doesn't pay. This scam does happen and is not unusual. Scammers can alter caller IDs to display their name, or they can say that their phone died and are using some other phone. Before you get your wallet, you need to ask questions that only the two of you would know (nothing easy) and even say you

will call her back (if she is not using the dead phone issue). Don't give in, you must know who you are talking to before you give anything away (especially \$ and information).

Keep your personal information to yourself: I received two calls just the other day from people that were difficult to understand (very heavy accent) requesting my Medicare card number to give me stuff that I didn't order or need. They said they had information that I had pain in my back and needed my card number to send me this stuff. When I asked a few questions they hung-up on me. Scammers will always be around, and you do not need to be their target. Keep your information to yourself. If something interests you, call your doctor or the Medicare phone number on the card, but not the number that they gave you. Stay safe, there is always someone out there that would take your retirement if you let them.

Don't forget about our website (www.REOKC.org) for help. You will find items like News & Information – covering REOKC Luncheons, Annual Health Fair, Special Notices, Articles on Pension Initiative, Blue Zone Events, Levan Classes, Kern County Elder News and REOKC Board Members and volunteers.

There are also links to available Resources such as retirement information from KCERA, KC Deferred Comp (VOYA), California Retired County Employees Association (CRCEA), State Association of County Retirement Systems (SACRS), California Association of Public Retirement Systems (CALAPRS) and Retired Employees Association (RPEA).

There is information on and links to the Credit Reporting Agencies, National Hotlines for information or to report Fraud Complaints, State Agencies to report fraud, and government agencies Kern County Government and State of California.

Finally, information and links are provided for our Affiliates: Cruise Port, Levan Institute of Lifelong Learning, Pacific Group Agencies (PGA), and STRATA Credit Union.

President's Message concluded on Page 2



REOKC Benefit Plans

Open Enrollment

We are pleased to announce the upcoming 2026 Open Enrollment period for REOKC benefit plans. For those already enrolled in a supplemental insurance plan, now is the time to ensure you're making the most of your benefits and staying up to date with any plan updates. If you are new to REOKC or looking to enroll for the first time, open enrollment is the perfect opportunity to choose the benefits that best support your health, lifestyle, and peace of mind.

Plans include high benefit dental plans (PPO & HMO), a VSP vision plan, legal services, identity theft protection, pet care, life insurance, accident coverage, and much more. This is your once-a-year chance to enroll in or make changes to your dental and vision coverages. Our plans are designed with retirees in mind—offering affordable premiums, comprehensive coverage, and convenient access to care. Many plans include nationwide provider networks and user-friendly online tools to help you manage your benefits with ease.

All retirees will receive their annual Open Enrollment Benefits Guide in the mail, and you should have it no later than October 15th. This guide details the benefit plans offered exclusively to REOKC members. The Benefit Guides are mailed to the address KCERA (the retirement system) and not REOKC (your retiree association) has on file, so if you have moved, please make sure they have your current address. The benefits guide and enrollment forms are also available online for your convenience! Visit us at www.pgagencies.com/REOKC for more information.

If you are planning to make changes to your current selections or enroll for the first time, you must complete and return your Enrollment Form no later than **November 14, 2025**. If you are not making any changes to your current coverage, you do not need to

return the Enrollment Form; your existing benefits will automatically continue into the 2026 plan year.

Submitting your form on time ensures your updated or new benefits will begin without delay on January 1, 2026.

Thank you for being a valued member of REOKC. It is our privilege to support REOKC and contribute to your continued health and wellbeing.

President's Message concluded from Page 1

It seems to me that we all seem to stay so busy with life that we sometime forget what valuable information is available to us. Being retired we sometimes lose track of how easy it is to find a person or website or just up-to-date information on things we need. So now you know where you can find just about anything quickly and without a lot of digging and hunting. We have it on our website for you. There are phone numbers, website links, names and places that are now at your fingertips. You now know how to keep track of those important things in your life. Most of them should be on our website www.REOKC.org.

We want to see you all safe, healthy, and at our next REOKC Luncheon – see this newsletter for information.

Have a Wonderful, Healthy and Safe, September & October!

SMILES

~ If I live to 100, I'm going to make up a reason why just to mess with people like "yeah I ate a pinecone every single day for 40 years".

~ On the way home from church a little boy asked his mother, "is it true Mommy, that we are made of dust?" "Yes, darling."

"And do we go back to dust again when we die?"

"Yes, dear."

"Well, Mommy, when I said my prayers last night and looked under my bed, I found someone who is ether coming or going."

~ I choked on a carrot this morning and all I could think of was, "I bet a doughnut wouldn't have done this to me".

~ Ask your doctor if a drug with 32 pages of side effects is bad for you.

~ Some of my friends exercise every day. Meanwhile, I am watching a show I don't like because the remote fell on the floor.



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**

ASSESSOR: Patricia E. Guzman

BENEFICIARY: Teresa Doty; Lila Martin;
Joan L. Taylor

DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Michael G. Bush

HUMAN SERVICES: George Luna; Petra Rueda;
Mary E. Stewart

KERN MEDICAL CENTER: Trudee Crayton

SHERIFF: George Benevides;
Mary Ann Smotherman

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM: Lily Alvarez

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

Levan Institute for Lifelong Learning Classes for Life



Want to learn something new? Take a fun, enriching class through the Levan Institute for Lifelong Learning at Bakersfield College.

Check out all our classes
and enroll at
levaninstitute.org or call

(661) 395-4431.

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

Solar Eclipse Cruises for 2027

**Princess Cruise Line - Sky Princess
July 24 to August 7, 2027**

14 Nights Roundtrip South Hampton, England
(London)

Balcony from \$9159.00 per person
South Hampton to Valencia, Barcelona, Toulon/
Provence, Cartagena, Total Solar Eclipse 2027,
Seville & Lisbon

**Princess Cruise Line - Enchanted Princess
July 24 to August 7, 2027**

14 Nights Roundtrip Rome, Italy

Balcony Cabin from 8346.00 per person
Rome, Livorno (Florence/Pisa), Genoa (Cinque
Terre), Marseille (Provence), Barcelona, Mallorca,
Cartagena, Malaga, Gibraltar, Total Solar Eclipse
2027, Sicily & Naples (Capri & Pompeii).

The above pricing includes the Princess Plus Pack-
age. Beverage Package Alcohol and non-alcohol
drinks, Wi Fi, Prepaid gratuities, 2 Premium Deserts
daily, 2 fitness class per cruise & free room service.

Airfare and Travel protection additional. All
monies paid are 100% fully refundable up to final
payment date.

**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 ***

Mary Lou Bennett 661-871-5270
mlbennett36@sbcglobal.net

- **Sunshine (Cards of Expression)**
Josie De La Torre 661-348-4222
- **Scholarship Program**
Nancy Warnick 661-205-6333

KCERA Board Retiree Member

- Phil Franey –
franep@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 AWARDS FOURTEEN (14) \$2,000 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2025!

One of the benefits of REOKC membership is the Scholarship Program. For 12 years REOKC has awarded scholarships to graduating seniors who are relatives of REOKC members. This year we are very proud to once again be awarding scholarships to the following fourteen graduated seniors:

Serina Arellano will be attending CSUB

REOKC Member
Cynthia Ward



Grayson Bradford will be attending UCLA

REOKC Member
Pamela Bradford

Haydn Chambers will be attending the University of Oregon

REOKC Member
Yvonne Chambers

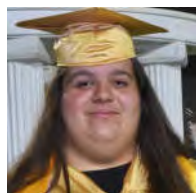


Grace Coston will be attending Seattle Pacific University

REOKC Member
Brian Johnson

Isaiah Duval will be attending Cal Poly Humboldt

REOKC Member
Josefina Salas



Preston Eigenhuis will be attending the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

REOKC Member
Tim Davis

Logan Espinosa will be attending University of Nevada, Reno

REOKC Member
Lawrence D. Espinosa



Hayden Gehring will be attending Biola University

REOKC Member
Daryl Sands

Ava Hollman will be attending Bakersfield College

REOKC Member
Robert P. Rivera

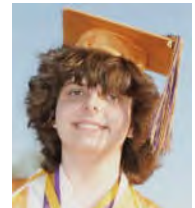


Liam McKnight will be attending UCLA

REOKC Member
Ralph McKnight

Madden Meek will be attending UC Irvine

REOKC Member
Charles Lackey



Sienna Schoales will be attending University of Erasmus, Rotterdam, Netherlands

REOKC Member
Dolores Hererra

Emma Webdell will be attending Baylor University

REOKC Member
James Webdell



Emily Wheaton will be attending Bakersfield College

REOKC Member - David McCain

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.



NO MORE PAPER CHECKS FOR FEDERAL PAYMENTS

A new executive order states that beginning September 30, 2025, the U.S. Treasury will stop issuing paper checks for federal disbursements, moving to electronic payments instead.

WHO IS IMPACTED:

- Social Security & other federal benefit recipients.
- Taxpayers receiving their refunds by check.
- Government Contractors.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO DO?

Sign up for direct deposit or other electronic payment method at godirect.gov/gpw/



Click.
Enroll online.



Call.
1.877.874.6347.



Mail.
Download & complete form on website.

To enroll in direct deposit, you will be asked to provide information such as your:

- Social Security number.
- Federal benefit check number or claim number.
- Checking or Savings account number and routing number.

A composite image showing a sample of a United States Treasury check and a Strata Credit Union deposit slip. The check is from the United States Treasury, dated 08/08/00, for \$100,000.00, payable to JOHN & JANE DOE. The deposit slip is from Strata Credit Union, dated 08/08/00, for \$100,000.00, payable to the order of Strata Credit Union. The deposit slip also shows the routing number 322273706 and the account number 123456789.

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

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**September & October 2025
Time Dated Material**

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

REOKC LUNCHEONS AT HODEL'S

5917 KNUDSEN DRIVE, BAKERSFIELD

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

LIBERTY HALL (building north end of parking lot)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025

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)