



REAVC

Retired Employees Association of Ventura County, Inc.
P O Box 7231, Ventura CA 93006 Telephone: 805/644-7814

“DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY SERVED”

November/December 2017

Editor
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Email
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REAVC PRESIDENT'S LETTER BY NANCY SETTLE

Seasons Greetings REAVC Members! As many of you may know we cancelled our Holiday Luncheon at the Wedgewood due to the Thomas Fire and the fact that many people in the community including REAVC members have been devastatingly affected by the Thomas Fire. We send our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to those that have lost their homes and their cherished possessions. Besides the fact that many have lost the roof over their heads, there are the irreplaceable keep sakes, photos, family history, and sentimental possessions that are passed down through multiple generations which cannot be replaced. As you may have read in the newspapers, so far this is the 5th biggest fire in the history of California. So many organizations are now reaching out and are available to those that may need shelter, food,

and a place for lost pets and animals. We are grateful the management of the Wedgewood reimbursed REAVC the cost of the luncheon even with a last minute cancellation on Tuesday morning. For this reason, the REAVC Board voted to contribute the \$5,000 cost savings of the REAVC Holiday luncheon to organizations helping victims of the Thomas Fire including the Ventura Red Cross, Salvation Army, and the Ventura County Humane Society.

Our community has pulled together and done a tremendous job of coming to the rescue and responding to the emergency. Our fire fighters and police have been working around the clock along with many service organizations. They have our admiration and thanks for their tireless efforts! If you or someone you know is in need of assistance or help as a result of the fire there are several organizations that are available to assist. These include:

Thomas Fire Assistance Center, Poinsettia Pavilion at 3451 Foothill Road, Ventura, provides help with rebuilding, housing, mental health, replacement of birth, marriage and divorce certificates, driver's licenses, unemployment relief, insurance questions and livestock replacement. The center will be open seven days a week for the next two weeks and longer, if necessary. [Appointments are strongly recommended. You can sign up at venturacountyrecovers.org.](http://venturacountyrecovers.org)

Red Cross contact 805 987-1514, **Salvation Army** contact 805 659-3598, **Humane Society** contact 805 646-6506.

If you would like to donate funds or volunteer your time, help is still needed. You can contact the following organizations:

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The United Way of Ventura County, American Red Cross of Ventura, and the Ventura County Sheriff's office have created a service for the Thomas Fire that allows anyone to text 41444 to make cash donations. You can also make a donation over the phone at 805-485-6288. The proceeds of the fund will go directly to residents affected by the fire.

American Red Cross - The greater Los Angeles region division of the Red Cross has opened three centers for evacuees to seek shelter. You can make donations online or call 1-800-733-2767 or text 90999.

Salvation Army - You can donate to the Salvation Army's Ventura relief fund online or by calling 1-800-SAL-ARMY. The Salvation Army Ventura Corps is asking for food and water donations for evacuees at the Ventura County Fairgrounds. www1.usw.salvationarmy.org

Humane Society - Animals need help too. The Humane Society of Ventura County has enough food and water but can use monetary donations online to buy alfalfa hay for displaced horses, burrows and alpacas. 805-646-6505 <http://www.hsvc.org/>
More information on groups offering assistance can be found at <http://www.vcstar.com/story/news/2017/12/06/thomas-fire-how-help/927644001/> or <https://www.vcreporter.com/2017/12/thomas-fire-how-to-help-or-find-help/>

Other REAVC news includes a welcome to two new board members Colleen House and Colleen Bruns. We look forward to their participation on the board. You'll be finding out more about them in an upcoming newsletter for January/February 2018. A new slate of officers for the upcoming year was elected by the Board at our December meeting and includes Nancy Settle Vaniotis, President; Roberta Griego, First Vice President; Ken Cozzens, Second Vice President; Will Hoag, Secretary; and Ray Holzer, Treasurer. We thank Cindi Mathieu, Second Vice President, for six years of service on the board. We also thank her for her continued service with luncheon reservations along with Judy Sewell.

Check out our website and let us know how you find it. We updated and modified it and will continue to work on it in the upcoming year. Thanks to Butch Britt.

We wish you a safe Holiday Season and many thanks to the people and organizations that will be continuing to assist the victims of the Thomas Fire.

Please read on to find out about the change of venue for the February 2018 luncheon, impressive recipients of the REAVC Scholarship Fund, and legislative news.



REAVC Member Survivors - Please let us know if you are aware of any survivors of a REAVC member who are in need of assistance. You may contact any REAVC board member (phone numbers and email addresses are in the newsletter and on the website www.reavc.org)

Thank you, Nancy

Retirement Security Committee - Update

By Mike DeBord, Co-Chair Retirement Security Committee

As we head into 2018, the Retirement Security Committee wanted to give you an update of activities. At the CRCEA Fall 2017 conference, we heard presentations from Amy Brown, CRCEA legislative consultant, and from Ashley Dunning, an attorney who provides legal services to the majority of the 20 County systems governed by the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937. These two professionals made informed presentations on legislative and legal activities as they relate to our pension protections. And while we all continue to see many articles in the press about the increasing cost of public pensions and the problems it creates, **at this time we don't see any specific legal or legislative activities that pose a direct threat to our retirees' pensions.**

This does not say that there will not be future efforts to undermine our pension benefits. **Local and state governments are being seriously impacted by large annual increases in employer contributions necessary to fund their public pensions**, and this situation is projected to worsen for several years. The increases in employer costs are caused by two primary factors. First, the retirement systems have been lowering the annual expected rate of return on their investments, such as from 7.5% to 7.0%. Any reduction in earnings must be offset, typically by higher employer contributions. Second, most public retirement systems are not fully funded today, and increased employer contributions over time will likely be required to close this gap.

The financial pressures on local government due to increasing costs for public pensions are real and often require painful reductions of public services to balance their annual budgets. Our Retirement Security Committee is concerned that as these budget pressures continue to increase, that actions may be attempted that could potentially undermine our retirement benefits. We have already seen actions over the last many years that reduced or eliminated retiree medical subsidies in many Counties (where they were not fully vested) and several State-wide ballot initiative attempts targeting public pensions. And **while California has some of the strongest legal protections of public retirement benefits, we must stay alert to any actions that might impact our CRCEA members.** Our Retirement Security Committee has been very active in addressing a wide variety of issues on behalf of our CRCEA members, as well as supporting retirement security concerns in the private sector. The following is a brief **recap of our Retirement Security Committee efforts.**

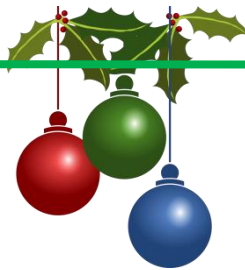
- Established the Retirement Security Committee as a **"standing committee" in CRCEA**
- Provided written and oral testimony at the State Capitol, on December 1, 2011, during the hearings that led to the **Governor's Pension Reform Act** (Implemented January 1, 2013)
- Researched, wrote, published and widely distributed two white papers on disturbing trends in U.S. retirement plans, titles: **"Transition to 401(K)--A Train Wreck in the Making, Part I and Part II"** (2012)
- Met with one State Senator and several Members of the Assembly at the State Capitol in August 2012, and provided written and oral testimony during the hearings in support of Senate Bill SB-1234, **"Secure Choice Retirement Savings Act"** that was designed to provide retirement benefits for private sector workers who work for an employer with more than 5 workers (Approved and signed into law by Governor Brown in 2016)
- Wrote a strong letter of concern on August 13, 2014 to the leaders of the U.S. Senate and House, that was co-signed by the Co-Chair of the Retirement Security Committee and the President of CRCEA, to address the impending death spiral of multi-employer pension plans if the provisions of the **Pension Protection Act of 2006** were not continued
- Provided written and oral presentations in both 2015 and 2016 to **combat multiple State-wide Initiative Proposals** that would have undermined California public pensions—we met each time with representatives

from the State Department of Finance, State Legislative Analyst's Office, and the State Attorney General's Office (The good news is that none of these Initiatives made it to the ballot)

- **Supported, through CRCEA, several class action lawsuits** in individual CRCEA associations that involved potential loss of retirement benefits for its members (such as filing a legal brief in State court in support of retirees' benefits)
- Made numerous **presentations at the CRCEA conferences and individual associations**
- **Authored many articles for our Associations and CRCEA newsletters** to keep our members up-to-date
- Created and maintained the **Retirement Security Database** accessible at www.crcea.org
- **Supported and participated in many coalitions** focused on public pension issues, a critical element to effectively mobilize efforts against future attacks on public pension benefits

Because of our involvement in these activities, the **Retirement Security Committee now has the background, structure and experience** to help address future concerns that could impact our members' pension benefits. And while we are not having to deal with any immediate threats to our retirees' pensions now, we need to continue establishing relationships with public retirement groups and others in each of our Counties so when the time comes to ask for their support and help, they will be ready. And finally, **we very much appreciate all the great support from the CRCEA organization and from all of you as members of CRCEA.**

Mike DeBord and George Shoemaker, Co-Chairs,
CRCEA Retirement Security Committee



2017 REAVC BOARD OFFICERS

President – Nancy Settle	805/658-1507	nancycassbill@sbcglobal.net
1 st VP – Roberta Griego	805/889-7674	rrodriguez367@roadrunner.com
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Associate Member Representative		
Linda Wyatt Jorgenson	805/642-4676	lindaedra5@yahoo.com
Executive Assistant		

*New board members taking office effective January 1, 2018

IN MEMORIAM

We acknowledge the passing of the following. Our deepest sympathy is extended to their family and friends.

Jane E. Benson	
Bruce Bradley	Elections
Patricia A. Cobb	PH
Joann Danch	County Clerk
Mary E. Farris	HSA
Richard R. Martinez	
James M. Matthews	
Wilma Mellwain	HCA
Melvin S. Milan	Public Works
William D. Small	Fire
Glenda Strosnider	MH
Ann Tinsley	Survivor



“There is no greater sorrow than to recall happiness in times of misery.”
...Dante



**Last Chance to purchase See's Candy Certificates at \$15
See's Candies Gift Certificates (1lb)**

Due to price increases by the See's Candy Company, the REAVC Board recently approved a price increase in the cost of See's Certificates to \$16 per certificate effective January 1, 2018. Even with the price increase, REAVC's price to members will still be substantially less than the retail price, and usually less than the "big box" stores.

The candy certificates make great gifts for Christmas or other occasions. They don't spoil, expire, and are easy to mail or wrap. And you can still indulge your sweet tooth, or just please a friend or family member at the current price of \$15 – UNTIL Jan 1, 2018.

See's Candies gift certificates are available to purchase at any of the REAVC Membership Luncheons or by mail order. To order by mail: Make check payable to "REAVC." Include a self-addressed envelope (each gift certificate weighs about 1/2 ounce).

Send check and self-addressed envelope to: **REAVC, PO Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006** For more information, please call (805) 644-7814.

RETIREMENT BOARD NEWS

By
ART GOULET

The elections for various members of the Board of Retirement have been concluded. As indicated in my last article, Will Hoag and I were unopposed for the Alternate Retired Member and the Retiree Member slots, respectively, so we will each serve another term. Incumbent General Member Craig Winter prevailed in his race for re-election and, in the race for Safety Member and Alternate Safety Member, Chris Johnston won the Safety Member slot and Tracy Towner won the Alternate Safety Member slot, which are positions they already occupy. All of us will be sworn in at the first January meeting for three-year terms, ending on December 31, 2020.

The bull market continues to run and, as a result, VCERA's portfolio increased in September to \$5.25 billion, and in October to \$5.31 billion. A vital question is "when will the bubble burst?" There are those who believe the run will continue, while others believe it will end soon and we will enter a period of low returns.

VCERA has moved forward aggressively in increasing its private equity portfolio. We should meet our goal of \$150 million in new commitments in 2017, aiming for an ultimate goal of 10% of our assets.

Also, for the first time, VCERA has ventured into the realm of private credit, with an investment of \$30 million, based on a very strong recommendation from our Investment Consultant (NEPC), concurred in by VCERA's Chief Investment Officer.

VCERA has, additionally, created a Fund of One, named Buenaventure One, LLC, together with a wholly owned companion investment partner named Buenaventure Two, LLC. Both companies will be administered by Abbott Capital Management (Abbott), one of VCERA's current Investment Managers. The purpose of this arrangement is to enable VCERA to make investments in otherwise difficult to access private equity opportunities, and at lower total costs than ordinarily experienced in the private equity realm.

The Board approves the Annual Private Equity Investment Policy and Annual Plan, authorizes the program allocation, and retains oversight of the program and its investment consultant/manager Abbott. As an investment manager, Abbott selects and approves individual investments and manages the overall private equity portfolio. On occasion, additional attractive investment opportunities may be independently identified and recommended by NEPC for Board review and approval.



We cannot direct the wind but we can adjust the sails.

I wanted to take a moment and thank all of you for your continued support of REAVC and me. Life has been very difficult for many residents of Ventura County and beyond. So much pain and loss has been experienced by so many. Let's keep them in our thoughts and prayers. Everyone stay safe, enjoy the holidays and stay close to one another.

Merry Christmas and the Brightest of New Years to all!
Sincerely, Linda



Acosta	Victor	Regional Sanitation
Alcantara	Raquel	Public Defender
Angulo	Bertha J.	HCA
Baarstad	Jenny L.	HCA
Barron	Consuelo P.	Superior Court
Barrozo	Esmeralda	Superior Courts
Bents	Gay E.	Superior Court
Bergh	Catherine L.	Fire
Biggin	Ann	Fire
Borsos	Debra A.	RMA
Bradley	James	Public Works
Brister	Larry C.	Fire
Bucholz	James G.	ITS
Cahue	Salvador	HSA
Cosma	Mihail	ITS
Creighton	Suzanne	HCA
Crockham	Sheila	Public Defender
Dearing	DarAnn L.	HSA
Denton	David	Public Works
Duarte-Roberson	Marina I	HSA
Erickson	Lori	DA
Estes	Cheryl	HCA
Ferber	Wayne T.	Fire
Flaherty	Lynn	Library
Fong	Pooi	CSS
Fouch	Judith A.	Assessor
Gill	Baljit	HCA
Gomez	Christina	HSA
Gonzalez	Mercedes E.	HCA
Haley	Barbara	Child Support
Halloran	Maria	Human Services Agency
Hansen	Douglas	GSA
Harward	Timothy C.	Fire
Hebert	Debra J.	Superior Courts
Horton	Merrill	Sheriff
Inouye	Glenna	Public Works
ind	Janet	HSA
Lohof	Rodney D.	HCA
Markov	William	Public Defender
Marra	Grace A.	
Meierhoff	Scott	Sheriff
Mendoza	Robert T.	HCA
Mesinoff	Bonnie	District Attorney
Obregon	Luis G.	Sheriff
Petree	David P.	Library
Placides	Felix	Sheriff

NEW RETIREES

NEW DAYS AND
NIGHTS

CELEBRATE
WITH ALL YOUR
MIGHT!

ENJOY enjoy!



There are more
happy retirees on
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REAVC Awards Four (4) More Scholarships to Deserving Students By Don Greenberg, Chair, Scholarship Committee

Our Association has awarded four (4) additional scholarships to excellent and deserving students. This brings to a total of ten (10) the number of \$1000 REAVC scholarships we have been privileged to award this year.

The four scholarships were due to be presented at our December 5 REAVC general luncheon. However, as you probably know, the luncheon was cancelled because of the “Thomas fire” that was sweeping through Ventura County and causing massive devastation. The scholarship checks have been mailed to each student so that there will be no delay in the student’s receipt of these needed funds. We hope to have an opportunity to honor some of the students and/or their REAVC parent or grandparent at our next general luncheon scheduled for February.

The four (4) recipients and a little about each (in alphabetical order) follows:

Coker, William (“Brett”): Brett Coker graduated from Newbury Park High School with a 3.9 grade point average. He is currently attending Mid-South Christian College in Memphis, Tennessee, working toward a bachelor’s degree in Christian Leadership.

As with the other students, he is very involved in volunteer activities and has glowing letters of recommendation.

His letters of recommendation tell about a student who is a “wonderful role model,” who has “charisma and leadership [skills],” and who serves as an excellent mentor to the youth he works with. He is an “enthusiastic student...and demonstrates character, integrity, and a teachable humility in the classroom.”

His proud father is REAVC member Pete Gutierrez who is retired from the Ventura County Sheriff’s Department.

Leon, Cecilia: Cecilia Leon graduated from St. Augustine Academy in Ventura with a 3.86 grade point average. Among many other things, she was on the honor roll, summa cum laude and maxima cum laude for the national Latin exam, co-captain of the mock trial team, involved in theater, intramural soccer, cross country, did volunteer service for school events, and was co-captain of the Londinium Team for classics day.

Cecilia currently attends Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula. Her goal is to become a “medical professional” --- potentially “a doctor, nurse, or EMT” – in order to be able “to help people in a healing way.”

Her letters of recommendation describe a “wonderful young adult” who is “passionate and enthusiastic about her education and her future,” ... “exceptionally bright, hard-working, pleasant, personable, and humble,” ... and “an especially good leader.”

Her proud grandmother is REAVC member Mary Palmisano who retired from the Health Care Agency’s Department of Behavioral Health.

Lovio, Taylor: Taylor Lovio graduated from St. Bonaventure High School in June of 2016 with a 3.5 grade point average. Among other things, she excelled on the St. Bonaventure softball team that won two CIF titles.

Since August of 2016 she has been attending Ventura College in its nursing program where she has a 3.67 GPA and has been on the Dean’s list twice. A teacher who has known Taylor since the first grade describes her as a very special person – “the student every teacher dreamed of having in class.”

Taylor is currently taking 16 units and plans to take 20 units in the spring semester. Because of college rules, that means “she will have to attend two community colleges next semester to complete the 20 units.” Thus, these scholarship funds will really help.

Taylor’s current goal is to succeed at Ventura College and be able to transfer to Cal State Channel Islands in pursuit of her nursing degree. Her proud grandfather is REAVC member Gilbert Lovio who retired from the Ventura County District Attorney’s office Bureau of Investigations.

Paul, Jackson (“Jack”): Jackson (“Jack”) Paul graduated from Murrieta Valley High School in May of 2012 and from the University of California, San Diego in June of 2015. He is currently pursuing a master’s degree at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, majoring in chemical and biomolecular engineering.

In his undergraduate studies, Jack majored in molecular biology. Now, he has added studies in chemical engineering, in the hopes of synthesizing interdisciplinary knowledge to make him a more capable researcher. His goal is to be able to create “novel pharmaceutical treatments” to advance “scientific and medical solutions” to a wide variety of problems.

His letters of recommendation tell of an extremely capable and personable young man who may someday make significant contributions “to pave the way towards cheaper pharmaceuticals, making health care more affordable for all.”

His proud grandfather is REAVC member Timothy Van Hemelryck who is retired from the Ventura County Fire Department.



Rangel	Mary	HCA
Romero	Martha	HCA
Schauer	Patricia	HSA
Strahl	Kathleen	HCA
Suwyn	Cheryl	Probation
Thomas	Charles	APCD
Valenzuela	Diane	HCA
Walker	Zachary	Probation
Weniger	Debbie	HCA
Wright	Janell J.	HCA

NEW RETIREES
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