



Retirement Chronicles

News Today About Your Tomorrows

January 2003

Quarterly Newsletter

Reader Feedback

You may reach us at:

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Upcoming Events

Retirement Planning Seminar
May 22, 2003

Retirement Board Meetings
Investment Board
2nd Wed. of each month

Regular Board
4th Wed. of each month

Retirement Benefits Information Books

Retirement Benefits Information books are available in the KCERA office. Please stop by and pick one up or contact the KCERA office to have a book mailed to you.

Legal Update

The following items of legislation may be of interest to KCERA members. The status of these bills may have changed since the printing of the *Retirement Chronicles*.

AB616 - Assembly Bill 616, signed by Governor Gray Davis on October 12, 2001, creates three new retirement tiers for systems administered under the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL). Each of these new tiers provides a minimum of 2% of final compensation per year of service at age 50 and maximizes at either 2.5% at age 55, 2.7% at age 55 or 3.0% at age 60. AB616 is a local option bill, meaning that it must be adopted by the Kern County Board of Supervisors before it will be effective for KCERA members. Our most recent news is that an actuarial study has been prepared and that the Central California Association of Public Employees and Kern County are discussing the feasibility of adopting one of the new retirement tiers.

AB2004 - Assembly Bill 2004 was introduced as an act to amend the County Employees' Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL). In essence, AB 2004 would have added Section 31658 to the CERL, thereby allowing active members of the retirement system to purchase and receive up to five years of additional retirement service credit. However, Governor Davis vetoed AB2004 on September 29, 2002 stating that AB2004 "...confers a special benefit on legislative employees not available generally to all State employees." Governor Davis' veto was the result of a last-minute change to the bill to include legislative employees among those employees entitled to purchase additional service credit. The State Association of County Retirement Systems intends to remove the added language and re-introduce the bill in the next legislative session.

AB2023 - Assembly Bill 2023, signed by Governor Davis on September 30, 2002, extends Safety membership to local prosecutors, local public defenders, and local public defender investigators. However, AB2023 is also a

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Board Members:
Sharon Clark, Chairman Ethelyn L. Looy
Sharon Lesser, Vice Chairman Barbara Patrick
John De Mario Tony Plante
Brent Dezember Michael Bradley, Alternate
Claude D. Fiddler Lois Maujer, Alternate
Phil Franey

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KCERA Retirement Chronicles

FAQ's

Q. How can I receive information about my retirement benefits?

A. KCERA offers many ways to keep members informed about their benefits:

Retirement Counseling

KCERA's service representatives are available for individual retirement counseling. Please call for an appointment to discuss your specific retirement questions.

Web Site

KCERA's web site at www.kcera.org provides comprehensive information about member benefits. Members may download and print various forms and documents as well as take advantage of our on-line benefit estimator.

Retirement Benefits Information Booklet

This booklet provides comprehensive information about the KCERA plan and the benefits available to members and beneficiaries.

Retirement Planning Seminars

These seminars are held twice a year, in May and December. Members within five years of retirement are encouraged to attend. Speakers at the seminar include Deferred Compensation, Health Benefits, Retired Employees of Kern County, Social Security Administration, and KCERA.

Brown Bag Lunch Seminars

A KCERA representative will come to your office to give an informative hour-long overview of retirement benefits. Such talks are usually arranged to coincide with the lunch hour and must be coordinated with your department's administrator.

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local option bill meaning that it will not be operative in Kern County unless adopted by the Kern County Board of Supervisors.

Maffei v. Sacramento County Employees' Retirement System - In 1999, legislation was passed that made the KCERA and other 1937 Act retirement systems "reciprocal" with the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). KCERA and other retirement systems affected by this legislation interpreted the legislation as "prospective" meaning that the legislation was applied going forward only. Therefore, reciprocity was only given to members who left the County and became a STRS member on or after January 1, 1999. However, the Maffei case says that, even if a member moved from one system to another before the legislation was adopted making the systems reciprocal, the member is still entitled to the benefits of reciprocity. As a result, KCERA will now grant reciprocity to anyone moving between STRS and KCERA membership as long as the break in service between the two systems was no more than six months. If you believe you are entitled to reciprocity based on the decision in this case, or if you would like more information, please contact the KCERA office to speak with a Service Representative.

Profile - Meet the KCERA Staff

Wanda Castro is not new to the KCERA staff but she is new to the position of Marketing and Promotions Associate. Wanda came to work for the KCERA in March 1999 as a Retirement Services Representative. One of her main functions was to speak at the Retirement Planning Seminars and New Employee Orientations. Wanda soon began using her communication abilities to revamp member communications in the KCERA office. She began writing, editing and publishing the Retirement Chronicles quarterly newsletter in January 2001; she updated the Retirement Benefits Information handbook in May 2000; and she was instrumental in writing and helping to launch the KCERA web site in October 2001. For her efforts, Wanda was rewarded with a promotion to her new position effective November 2002. Wanda will now be in charge of all member communication efforts.

Before coming to work for KCERA, Wanda worked for 13 years with the Kern County Assessor-Recorder as an Assessment Clerk IV. During her tenure, she supervised the Realty Valuation Support section and she wrote and edited three procedure manuals. Her other assignments with Kern County include nearly three years with the Treasurer-Tax Collector and six years with the Department of Public Health.

Wanda graduated with honors from the University of Phoenix with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. She later completed course work to obtain a Teaching Credential. Wanda has been married to Robert Castro for over ten years. She has one daughter, Anna, age 9. In her spare time, Wanda enjoys reading, scrap booking, golf, and creating Christmas yard displays with her father.

The KCERA looks forward to a long relationship with Wanda as she works to improve and broaden communications with all KCERA members.

The CalPERS Long-Term Care Program

If you or a member of your family is faced with needing long-term care, will you have sufficient funds to cover the costs? In 2001, the average cost for a one-year stay in a nursing home in California was \$50,000, with costs rising at more than 3% per year. Further, long-term care is typically not covered by your health insurance. However, there is a way to provide your family with peace of mind about long-term care costs.

The California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) offers a long-term care program to all California public employees and retirees. You do not need to be a member of CalPERS to participate. All KCERA members, including retired members, are eligible to participate. The program is also available to siblings (age 18 or older), spouses, parents, and parents-in-law.

Please contact CalPERS for more information at 1-800-925-6767 or visit their web site at www.calpers.ca.gov/longtermcare. You may also pick up an informational brochure in the KCERA office.

Sign Up for Retirement Seminar

Use this form to place your name on a reservation list for the next Retirement Planning Seminar.

Name		SSN	
Address			
City		State	Zip
Home Phone	Work Phone	Dept. Number	
Please add my name to the reservation list for the Retirement Planning Seminar to be held:			
<input type="checkbox"/> May 22, 2003			
<input type="checkbox"/> December 2003			
My estimated retirement date is _____.			
Mail this form to: KCERA 1115 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield CA 93301		Retirement Planning Seminars are designed for those members who are within five years of retirement. Attendance at the seminars is limited to approximately 125 people. Make your reservation early to preserve your spot at the next seminar.	
You may also e-mail your reservation to servicerep@kcera.org or fax your reservation to 661-868-3779.			

Of Interest to Our Retirees

Meet your Retirement Board representatives

Retired KCERA members and beneficiaries are represented on the Board of Retirement by two fine individuals.

John J. De Mario was elected to the eighth Board seat by retired KCERA members and beneficiaries. Mr. De Mario has been a Board of Retirement Trustee since 1998. During his tenure he has served as the Chairman of the Audit/Actuarial Committee and as a member of the Disability Application Committee. Mr. De Mario is also active with the Retired Employees of Kern County. Mr. De Mario is retired from the Kern County Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office where he served as the Assistant Treasurer-Tax Collector.

Lois B. Maujer serves as the Alternate eighth member of the Board. Mrs. Maujer was also elected by retired KCERA members and beneficiaries and has been a Board of Retirement trustee since 2001. As the Alternate eighth member, Mrs. Maujer acts in the absence of Mr. De Mario so that KCERA's retired members and beneficiaries are always represented. Mrs. Maujer is retired from the Kern County Employees' Retirement Association where she served as the Retirement Supervisor.

Benefit Payment Dates

Following are the mailing dates for benefit checks and payment advices for the first six months of 2003.

01/28/2003	04/25/2003
02/25/2003	05/27/2003
03/27/2003	06/26/2003

KERN COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
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Return Service Requested



Sign up for the next Retirement Planning Seminar, May 22, 2003

**Do you need an updated Retirement Benefits Information booklet?
Call or stop by our office pick one up**