



# REAVC NEWSLETTER

## NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2022

*“Dedicated to Those Who Have Already Served”*

**CONTENTS**  
**PAST PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**  
**2022 REAVC BOARD**  
**RETIREMENT BOARD NEWS**  
**CALENDAR**  
**NEW RETIREES**  
**LUNCHEON**  
**PAPAB1’S RAMBLINGS**  
**SEE’S CANDIES**  
**EDITOR’S NOTES**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES LIST**  
**IN MEMORIAM**

**MESSAGE FROM REAVC PAST PRESIDENT – NANCY SETTLE**



Greetings REAVC Members,

You should have received the Pacific Group Agencies, Inc. (PGA) supplemental insurance packet which provides information on various insurance options including vision, dental, pet, and travel insurance. REAVC board chose to offer this insurance opportunity for REAVC members based on positive reviews from other retirement associations. We have not vetted each of the offerings but provide this option for you as a choice that is only available to County Employee Retirement Associations. Any questions on the insurance options should be directed to PGA at 800 511 9065. We hope you are satisfied with the programs offered by PGA.

It was good to see everyone at the September 6th luncheon at Sterling Hills. Our 1st Vice President, Roberta Griego (and Executive Director of the Ventura County National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) graciously conducted the luncheon meeting which included a touching and captivating presentation from Kim Quinn-Colvin, NAMI Program coordinator. She informed us of the wide range of programs now offered through NAMI for support and help for individuals and families experiencing mental illness. You can reach them online at [namiventura.org](http://namiventura.org) or call them at 805-500 -6264.

Our slate of nominees for REAVC Board of Directors for 2023 was submitted at the luncheon. The REAVC board subsequently took action to declare the nominees elected at their October 1, 2022 board meeting. Congratulations to board members Paul Callaway, Anne Dana, Tom McEachern, Reddy Pakala, Jacquie Richardson, Cindy Schneider, and Kelly Shirk and thank you for your service and thank you for serving another two-year term on the REAVC Board.

I know there are some interesting legislative items of concern regarding pension benefits. Please read on to REAVC Legislative Analyst, Art Goulet’s column. I hope to see more members at the upcoming luncheon on December 6th. Finally, remember, “Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.”

**2022 BOARD MEMBERS**

| Officers  | Directors          | Directors (Continued)                                  |
|---|--------------------|--|
| <b>President – Reddy Pakala</b>   | Butch Britt        | Cindy Schneider  |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> VP – Roberta Griego</b>   | Colleen Bruns      | Kelly Shirk  |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> VP – Ken Cozzens</b>  | Anne Dana          | Maryellen Benedetto<br>Associate Member Representative |
| <b>Secretary – Will Hoag</b>  | Colleen House      | Dee Emami<br>Executive Assistant                       |
| <b>Treasurer – Paul E. Callaway</b>   | Tom McEachern      |  |
| <b>Board of Retirement – Art Goulet</b><br><b>Immediate Past Pres. - Nancy Settle</b> | Jacquie Richardson |  |

## RETIREMENT BOARD NEWS - BY ART GOULET



AB 826, the legislation drafted by the County and SEIU with the goal of making 100% of the Flexible Benefit Allowance (aka Flex Credit) pensionable (included in compensation used to calculate retirement benefits) for Legacy members (those hired before January 1, 2013) was vetoed by the Governor on September 29<sup>th</sup>, the next to last day he could have done so. His veto message:

*To the Members of the California State Assembly:*

*I am returning Assembly Bill 826 without my signature.*

*This bill expands the definitions of "compensation" and "compensation earnable" in the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (1937 Act or CERL) that are applicable to legacy members of the Ventura County Employee Retirement Association (VCERA) who retire on or before December 31, 2025, to include an employee's flexible benefit allowance.*

*While I am sympathetic to workers who may see a reduction in their anticipated pension because of prior misinterpretations of what constitutes "compensation" and "compensation earnable," this bill would inappropriately incentivize noncompliance with the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA). The provisions, while more narrow than prior iterations, attempt to circumvent recent court decisions, undermine the intent of the PEPRA, and expose the local governments to increased costs and litigation.*

*For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.*

For a thorough discussion of the issue sought to be addressed by AB 826, see the item headlined "Governor Veto of Assembly Bill 826 and Impact on VCERA Legacy Members" later in this Newsletter.

On September 12<sup>th</sup>, the VCERA Board of Retirement (BoR) held a Retreat at which it heard presentations on "CERL Disability Retirement", "Organizational Overview and Proposed Org. Chart, and "Board Governance Best Practices". No actions were taken in connection with these presentations.

It had previously been reported the preliminary investment return on VCERA's portfolio was down 6.2% at the end of June, with an ending balance of \$7.0 billion. The BoR received the final returns at its September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, which showed a slightly lower loss of 6.03%, and an ending balance of \$7.01 billion. As comparison, CalPERS was down 6.1% and CalSTRS down 1.3%.

The new fiscal year started off up 5% at \$7.50 billion at the end of July, but down to \$7.28 billion at the end of August and down again to \$6.77 billion at the end of September.

The BoR made several new commitments to private equity and private debt and committed \$25M to Adams Street Global Secondaries Fund 7 (ASGS 7) and \$50M to VWH Master Fund III (VWH) on September 26<sup>th</sup>. The commitment to ASGS 7 adds to \$285M in previous commitments made to Adams Street. The private credit commitment to VWH is the first of its kind. Additionally, on October 24<sup>th</sup>, The BoR made a commitment of \$100M to Pimco Corporate Opportunities Fund IV, a globally diversified private credit program and added \$10M to the \$40M commitment it had made to Pantheon Credit Opportunities Fund II on June 20<sup>th</sup>.

On the same date, the BoR updated its contract with NEPC, its Investment Consultant. It also entered into new fee arrangements with Blackrock for two of its Commingled Investment Trust Vehicles, saving an approximate \$348,106 annually.

VCERA is also currently engaged in a recruitment for Chief Operations Officer (COO), a position that opened when Julie Stallings retired in 2021. As a result of a comprehensive compensation study completed last December, the responsibilities the duties, responsibilities and compensation of the position were increased, making the position more akin to an Assistant Retirement Administrator.

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, VCERA received a tentative Statement of Decision on Bifurcated Issues in the case known as Ventura County Employees' Retirement Association vs. County of Ventura et al. The bifurcated issue relates to how much annual or vacation leave that is cashed out can be included in compensation earnable or pensionable compensation. In this case an employee sought to include the value of 240 hours in his final average compensation period by combining leave redemptions (or "cash outs") from two different calendar years, but in a 12-month consecutive period, a practice known as "straddling", rather than the maximum number of hours allowed to be redeemed in a calendar year, which was 200 hours for that employee. The tentative decision is in favor of VCERA, to the detriment of the employee.

An important item of business at the October 24<sup>th</sup> BoR meeting was consideration of a resolution to implement the provision of the Supreme Court's "Alameda" decision, which clearly said that in-kind benefits such as the non-cashable portion of the FCA are not pensionable and, in fact, CERL Plans never had the authority to include them as pensionable (included in the compensation used to calculate retirement benefits) in the first place. Implementation had been delayed pending, first an attempt at declaratory relief, and then the outcome of AB 826. The bill was not passed in 2021, was amended in 2022 to limit its application only to Ventura County, and passed by the Legislature but vetoed by the Governor. The County and several unions had requested that adoption of the resolution be delayed until April to allow the County and the various unions to meet and confer on strategies to make the employees whole with respect to their pensions, which would be reduced upon the effective date of an adopted resolution. Although pensions would be reduced going forward, the proposed resolution provided that amounts overpaid to those who retired after July 30, 2020 (currently about 700 retirees) would not be directly recouped. It also provided that the contributions retirees had paid on non-cashable FCA, plus interest, would be returned to impacted retirees to the extent those contributions plus interest exceeded retirement overpayments. For active employees, all contributions withheld from their pay on the non-pensionable portion of FCA, plus interest, would be refunded.

After lengthy discussion and debate, the BoR voted 4-3 to delay adoption of the resolution as had been requested. Based on previous rates of retirement, this will add about 150 more to the ranks of those being overpaid, and from whom the overpayments will not be directly recouped.

## **Governor Veto of Assembly Bill 826 and Impact on VCERA Legacy Members**

On September 29, 2022, Governor Newsom vetoed Assembly 826, a bill sponsored by SEIU and the County of Ventura. Had it passed, AB 826 would have allowed, under specific conditions, Legacy members' compensation for calculating their retirement benefits ("compensation earnable) to include a larger portion of their flexible benefit credit (the amount the employer credits toward medical and other tax qualified benefits for its employees each pay period.) This benefit has been referred to as "cafeteria plan allowance" or other similar terms, but in Ventura County, it is most frequently called "flex credit".

Because AB 826 did not become law, the portion of flex credit that cannot be received in cash may not be included in Legacy members' compensation for retirement purposes. NOTE: For PEPRA members (those who established membership after January 1, 2013), no portion of flex credit may be pensionable so the bill would have had no effect on PEPRA members.

AB 826 was originally introduced in the 2021 legislative session, and was amended to apply only to Ventura County, but went "inactive" for the remainder of that session. The bill was amended in the 2022 session to allow the non-cashable portion of flex credit to be pensionable for Legacy members who retired prior to 2026.

### **Background: The Alameda Decision**

The veto of AB 826 was the latest in a series of events following the 2020 landmark California Supreme Court Decision, commonly referred to as the Alameda Decision. While generally the *Alameda Decision* clarified the pensionability of pay items such as standby pay, termination pay and certain annual leave redemptions, it also addressed in-kind benefits not payable in cash directly to the member. The Supreme Court in *Alameda* ruled that retirement boards do not have, and

never had, the discretion to include “in-kind benefits” (i.e., cannot be received in cash directly by a member) because they do not meet the definition of “compensation.”

So, while the *Alameda Decision* applied to public pension systems across the state, in Ventura County, the exclusion of in-kind benefits not receivable in cash had a larger impact because Ventura County’s full flexible benefit allowance had been treated as pensionable.

Flex credit is the annual dollar amount contributed by the County to the cafeteria/flexible benefits plan, and credited toward the medical premium deductions that correspond with the employee’s medical and qualified benefit choices. For most employees, this credit does not cover the cost of their premiums, though for some it may. If the flex credit amount exceeds the amount of deducted premium or qualified benefit cost, the employee receives the balance in cash. For employees who opt out of medical insurance altogether, such as when they are already covered on a spouse’s policy, they still cannot receive the entire flex credit amount in cash; the County mandates that an “opt out” fee be deducted from the employee’s flex credit so only the remaining balance is received in cash. The maximum any member *could receive* in cash is the “employee- only” flex credit minus the lessor of the opt out fee or the lowest priced healthcare plan.

To illustrate, below shows the maximum amount of flex credit that members covered under the County’s Management Resolution were/are provided, and what portion may be received in cash. (Amounts may vary based on bargaining unit.)

| YEAR | FLEX CREDIT ALLOWANCE | OPT-OUT FEE (NON-CASHABLE PORTION) | CASHABLE PORTION |
|------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 2020 | \$447                 | \$300.09                           | \$146.91         |
| 2021 | \$472                 | \$333.95                           | \$138.05         |
| 2022 | \$497                 | \$334.75                           | \$162.25         |

Put simply, had AB 826 passed, it would have allowed VCERA Legacy members who retired on or before December 31, 2025, to include the **entire** flex credit allowance amount in their compensation used to calculate retirement benefits. So, for 2022, in addition to the already-includable \$162.25 portion, they would also have included the \$334.75 portion. But given the veto of AB 826, only the cashable portion of flex credit is includable for Legacy members.

**Next Steps**

Though the *Alameda Decision* was issued in July 2020, the VCERA Board of Retirement has delayed excluding the non-cashable portion of flex credit for Legacy members, awaiting the outcome of AB 826. Now that the veto has occurred, the Board of Retirement will turn its attention back to implementation of that exclusion.

The VCERA Board of Retirement is scheduled to discuss this issue, and take possible action, at its October 24, 2022, business meeting.

# 2022 REAVC CALENDAR

## January 2022

Jan/Feb newsletter sent mid -month

## February 2022

### **1 REAVC BOARD MEETING**

15 Articles due for Mar/Apr newsletter

17 Last day to register for March 1<sup>st</sup> luncheon

## March 2022

### **1 General Membership Luncheon**

Mar/Apr newsletter sent mid -month

**31 DEADLINE FOR 2022 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION.** Must be postmarked no later than this date!!

## April 2022

### **5 REAVC BOARD MEETING**

15 Articles due for May/June newsletter

## May 2022

26 Last day to register for June 7th luncheon

May/June newsletter sent mid -month

## June 2022

**7 General Membership Luncheon & Scholarship Award Presentation**

### **14 REAVC BOARD MEETING**

15 Articles due for Jul/Aug newsletter

## July 2022

Jul/Aug newsletter sent mid -month

## August 2022

### **2 REAVC Board Meeting**

15 Articles due for Sept/Oct

28 Last day to register for September 6<sup>th</sup> Luncheon

## September 2022

### **6 General Membership Luncheon**

Sep/Oct newsletter sent mid -month

## October 2022

### **4 REAVC BOARD MEETING**

**9-12 CRCEA FALL Conference, Sacramento**

15 Articles due for Nov/Dec newsletter

## November 2022

26 Last day to register for December 6<sup>th</sup> Luncheon

Nov/Dec newsletter sent mid -month

## December 2022

### **6 Holiday Luncheon**

### **13 REAVC BOARD MEETING**

15 Articles due for Jan/Feb newsletter

REAVC = Retired Employees Association of Ventura County

Please note: This calendar is subject to change without notice. To confirm the events and deadlines on this calendar, please

call REAVC at 1-805-644-7814.

Rev. 8-9-22

## REGULAR RETIREMENTS APPROVED BY VCERA BOARD – JULY AND AUGUST 2022

| FIRST NAME      | LAST NAME | DEPARTMENT                           | EFFECTIVE DATE |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| MARIO ENRIQUE   | AGUILAR   | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/8/2022       |
| ISABEL HERRERA  | ALARCON   | SUPERIOR COURT                       | 7/8/2022       |
| ALMA            | ALMAZAN   | CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES               | 6/4/2022       |
| DANNY A         | ANAYA     | PROBATION AGENCY                     | 5/27/2022      |
| WADE M          | BENZIE    | VENTURA REGIONAL SANITATION DISTRICT | 7/1/2022       |
| TIMOTHY L       | BOUYETT   | VENTURA REGIONAL SANITATION DISTRICT | 7/1/2022       |
| JAMES J         | BUCKLEY   | VENTURA REGIONAL SANITATION DISTRICT | 7/1/2022       |
| DANIEL SR.      | CARMONA   | DISTRICT ATTORNEY                    | 6/1/2022       |
| SANDRA Y        | CARMONA   | DISTRICT ATTORNEY                    | 1/9/2021       |
| BRANDI          | CARRILLO  | FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT             | 7/1/2022       |
| JUAN M          | CARRILLO  | FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT             | 3/29/2022      |
| TERRY J         | CASTOR    | CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES               | 7/23/2022      |
| ROBERTO         | CISNEROS  | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 6/11/2022      |
| LINDA J         | DANIELS   | SUPERIOR COURT                       | 8/6/2022       |
| FRANCISCA       | ESQUEDA   | HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY                | 6/24/2022      |
| ANNIE ELIZABETH | GANDY     | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 8/6/2022       |
| JULIE A         | GOODAKER  | GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY              | 8/8/2022       |
| DON MICHAEL     | GRONER    | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 6/11/2022      |

|                   |               |                                      |           |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| BRIAN C           | HAUSER        | CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES               | 8/6/2022  |
| LAWRENCE          | JACKSON       | HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY                | 8/8/2022  |
| ERIK ABEL         | KNEPPER       | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 6/29/2022 |
| WILLIAM HOWARD    | LAWRENCE      | GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY              | 6/9/2022  |
| MICHAEL JONATHAN  | LEGGE         | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/29/2022 |
| DEANNA SANDRA     | LEMON         | HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY                | 7/2/2022  |
| DAVID WALSH       | LEWIS         | RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY           | 7/9/2022  |
| CHARLES ALEXANDER | MAC DONALD    | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/22/2022 |
| JAMES PAUL        | MARTINEZ      | GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY              | 7/9/2022  |
| MONICA JANE       | MC GRATH      | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/9/2022  |
| BARBARA JEAN      | MEYER         | ASSESSOR                             | 7/1/2022  |
| TERESA INDEMNE    | MOLLENO       | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 8/2/2022  |
| RICHARD THOMAS    | MORENO        | CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES               | 6/11/2022 |
| CHRISTINA A       | MORUA         | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 6/1/2022  |
| MANUEL            | MUNOZ         | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 6/20/2022 |
| MONICA F          | MUNOZ         | CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES               | 6/11/2022 |
| FRIEDEL           | NELKE ANHEIER | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 7/1/2022  |
| NATALIA           | PACHECO       | HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY                | 7/29/2022 |
| LOUIS ANDREW      | PELUPESSY     | VENTURA REGIONAL SANITATION DISTRICT | 7/11/2022 |
| SUZANNE M         | QUAM          | DISTRICT ATTORNEY                    | 7/15/2022 |
| MELODY HOPCUS     | RAFELSON      | BOARD OF SUPERVISORS                 | 7/23/2022 |
| JEANNETTE         | REYES         | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 6/19/2022 |
| YVONNE            | RICE          | HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY                | 6/29/2022 |
| JAMES RANKIN      | ROBERTSON     | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/7/2022  |
| BRIGETTE R.       | RODRIGUEZ     | HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY                | 8/1/2022  |
| KIM ELAINE        | ROHLFING      | INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES      | 7/30/2022 |
| DEBORAH A         | RUBRIGHT      | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/1/2022  |
| JACK              | RUSH          | PROBATION AGENCY                     | 8/6/2022  |
| SHARON ELIZABETH  | SCHWEITZER    | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 7/1/2022  |
| GRACIELA B        | SIMMONS       | PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY                  | 6/24/2022 |
| AKEMI ANN         | TAKEMOTO      | ASSESSOR                             | 6/27/2022 |
| KENNARD BISHOP    | TORRENCE      | PROBATION AGENCY                     | 6/17/2022 |
| MATTHEW WADE      | TUFTE         | HEALTH CARE AGENCY                   | 7/9/2022  |
| ALMA D            | VAZQUEZ       | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/1/2022  |
| RAUL RAY          | VILLA         | SHERIFF'S OFFICE                     | 7/1/2022  |
| PETER             | ZUNIGA        | SUPERIOR COURT                       | 6/18/2022 |



## HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

The REAVC Holiday luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 6, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. at the Sterling Hills Country Club, 901 Sterling Hills Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010. The doors will open at 11:00 a.m.

The cost is \$10 for REAVC members and guests.

Plans are underway to make this luncheon a joyous, fun, holiday celebration. There will be music, a game of holiday trivia, and maybe even a visit from Santa. We will also have holiday gift baskets and fun door prizes once again.

The reservation form for December 6, 2022, Holiday Luncheon- including the date, time, and place is included in the flyer following this article. Please Note: The final date for reservations is November 26<sup>th</sup>.

**PLEASE NOTE: RESERVATIONS ARE NEARING CAPACITY. ONCE THE SEATING LIMIT IS REACHED, RESERVATIONS ARE WAIT-LISTED.**

There is no need to call or email anyone unless you have a question or need to cancel your reservation after it is made. Contact information for questions regarding reservations or to cancel your reservation is included in the flyer.

The doors will open at 11:00 a.m. on December 6, and the check-in tables will be just inside the front door. There will be a separate table setup inside for sales of See's CANDIES gift certificates.

Hope to see you there!



## IMPORTANT REMINDER REGARDING “NO SHOWS” AND CANCELLATION DEADLINES

REAVC is obligated to pay for ALL luncheons reserved whether or not people attend. It is disappointing, as well as an unnecessary expense, for REAVC to have to pay for a meal that no one eats. Last minute cancellations and no-shows at the luncheons have become an issue for REAVC because of the unnecessary expense it causes to the general membership.

To address this issue, REAVC Board has establish the following policy:

Beginning in 2023, members who make reservations and do not show up or fail to cancel by the required date noted on the reservation form, will be asked to pay for the full cost of the meal.

Therefore, it is very important that you cancel on or before the required date!

We of course recognize that there may be emergencies that prevent you from submitting a timely cancellation or cause you to miss the luncheon. In that case, you may contact Anne Dana @ (805) 320-6408 to request a waiver of the additional charge.



# Happy Winter Holidays!

December 6<sup>th</sup> REAVC Luncheon



**Sterling Hills Country Club**

**901 Sterling Hills Drive**

**Camarillo, CA 93010**

**(Doors Will Open at 11:00 a.m.)**

**COST: \$10 for REAVC Members and Guests**

## Let's celebrate the Winter Holidays, with

Music, gifts, a holiday trivia challenge, and a maybe even a visit from Santa

Join the fun by completing this form and mailing your check payable to "REAVC" to:

REAVC - Luncheon

P.O. Box 7231

Ventura CA 93006-7231

=====  
**Registration form for the December 6<sup>th</sup> REAVC Luncheon**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

Name(s) of REAVC Member(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: (\*Required for Confirmation) \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Included for: \_\_\_\_\_ Member(s) at \$10.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Guest(s) at \$10.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**The DEADLINE FOR BOTH RESERVATIONS AND SANCTIONED CANCELLATIONS  
is Saturday, November 26, 2022.**

*Attendees will receive an email confirming their reservation, and checks will not be held.*

**PLEASE NOTE: RESERVATIONS ARE NEARING CAPACITY. ONCE THE SEATING  
LIMIT IS REACHED, RESERVATIONS ARE WAIT-LISTED.**

*For questions regarding reservations or cancellations, please contact:*

*Colleen House at 1-805-485-0445 – [clhouse@adelphia.net](mailto:clhouse@adelphia.net)*

*Anne Dana at 805-320-6408 – [ggdana@roadrunner.com](mailto:ggdana@roadrunner.com)*

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Food Share barrels will NOT be available.**





## **PapaB1. The Great American Game:**

When I was just a kid, I played baseball. We played in the vacant lot across the street, almost every day. You walked across the street with your glove, ball and bat (if you had a bat), and just threw the ball up and hit it down the field. Then you walked to where the ball landed and hit it back to where you had started. After a few minutes, usually one of the other boys in the neighborhood would come over, and you could play 500 or “Workup” until other people started to drop by. Pretty soon you could have teams, 2 on 2 or sometimes even 4 on 4. We’d play until someone hit the ball into the fenced area across the alley, or the ball went into one of the storm drains. Not much fun playing baseball with a soggy ball, and no one else seemed to bring another ball. Who wants to lose their baseball, even if it was held together with duct tape, to the dreaded fence or the storm drain?

We pitched, but no one tried to strike anyone out. That was no fun – and we didn’t have a real catcher. No one got a base on balls either. Your turn at bat lasted until you hit a fair ball or actually swung and missed three times. Hardly anyone ever struck out.

Later as it started to get dark, we knew we had to get home, particularly if we wanted supper, and the ball was getting hard to see. We tried to keep score, but that wasn’t too important. It was more fun to just run, throw and yell a lot.

Later some of us graduated to Little League or American Legion baseball. For most of us, Little League was a real shock! We had uniforms, matching baseball hats, and there were nine people playing for each side at the time. There were real catchers, real umpires, calling balls and strikes, and pitchers that could even throw strikes. We even started each game with two brand-de-new baseballs! White, no tape, and smooth. There were no storm drains to attract the ball, and if you hit a ball over the fence, well that was a good thing. You’d get it back because the snack bar would give a free sno-cone for returning it. Wow! Better than soggy french fries or wet baseballs.

But the real shock was that the higher we got, the better the competition was. The pitchers threw faster, the umpires called real strikes, and more times than not, you walked the walk of shame back to the bench having struck out. That’s not supposed to happen! Oh well, get used to it. We were all supposed to be the next Mickey Mantle or Willie Mays -- but maybe not.

As we got older, some of us graduated to American Legion ball. That was an even greater shock. Some of the pitchers had developed a decent curve ball, and they all seemed to throw faster and harder than ever. The walks of shame from the batter’s box back to the dugout became more frequent and more frustrating.

But the game was still fun. I wasn’t an awesome hitter, nor could I judge high fly balls well in the outfield, but I was a pretty decent infielder. We got to the point, where we could turn a double play on occasion, or even pick off a runner that strayed too far from the base. So, I usually got picked up for a team, even though I wasn’t an All-Star level player.

But my final year, I got lucky. Two or three boys picked for the All-Star team couldn’t make the tournament because of football camp, and I got picked up as a sub. I even got to play since there wasn’t anyone else who wanted to play first base. We all had a blast! Went to such Georgia metropolises like Leesburg or Smithville and managed to win our first few games, and even advance to the next round. But then we played a team from Valdosta, our long-time bitter rivals. These guys had matching shoes, batting gloves, fancy sunglasses, and most threw the ball harder than our best pitcher. We knew we were in trouble from the get-go.

But we gave it our best. Only lost by a little bit, something like 16-2, and we were bummed that we were eliminated from the tournament. But on the way back, one of the older boys, with a fake id card, managed to score a couple of cases of brewskys from a small gas station, and we drowned our sorrows.

I think that was the last time I played organized baseball. I went to a few professional games, later, but the thrill of the game seemed to wane. It became akin to watching grass grow. (Back when we had water to grow grass). Baseball is more fun to play than to watch.

Oh, I did try to play Slo-pitch softball some when I got older. It was fun, and being with a team again, was great, but when they eventually tried to relegate me to right field, I decided it was time to hang up my tennis shoes.

Memories are always better when savored later, and after a few brewskys. Perhaps even when they might not be strictly accurate.

*“Put me in Coach, I’m ready to play.”* Or maybe not.

---

### SEE’S CANDIES GIFT CARD SALES BY BUTCH BRITT

REAVC is selling \$25 See’s CANDIE’S gift cards at a cost to members of \$21 each. The gift cards do not expire and are relatively easy to mail or use as holiday gifts.

You can place an order for gift cards:

1. Via the postal service at REAVC, P.O. Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006
2. By ordering over the phone at 805-644-7814
3. Or visit our See’s Candies table at the luncheons – usually set up in some convenient location – like behind the potted plants. Look for the old, fat, bald guy with the white beard.



---

### EDITOR’S NOTES: MAIL SUBSCRIPTION TO THE NEWSLETTER – CHANGE IS COMING!

Beginning with the first Newsletter of 2023, the REAVC newsletter will no longer be delivered by U.S. Mail. It will be available in two ways: by email or by opening it on the REAVC website: <https://reavc.org/news-events/newsletter/>. If you are not already on the email delivery list and wish to start receiving your newsletter by email, send an email to [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org), and you will be added to our email delivery list. We understand there are those who do not have computers and/or prefer a hard copy newsletter. Please let us know if you would like to continue the hard copy newsletter by calling (805) 644-7814 or by sending an email to: [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org). You may also mail a brief note to REAVC, P.O. Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006.

Be sure to include your name and phone number, and identify the subject of your email as “REAVC Newsletter Subscription.” **All information is required, confidential, and will not be shared with outside organizations.** If you don’t send your email address to [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org) by the end of 2022, you may no longer receive your newsletter directly starting in 2023. Doing so now will reduce REAVC’s costs and help pay for other programs. Another advantage of an email subscription is that members receive their newsletter in “living color” about a week to 10 days before the U.S. Mail version arrives in black and white.



## REAVC LIST OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The first number to call for information or “where to find whatever” is 211. This help line has an incredible list of all County services and is available 24 hours a day. The following is a list of varied services throughout the County, some of which have been shared with us by other seniors who recommend them. We hope to add to the information and share more services as we go along.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Ventura Crisis Line                          | 800-273-8255   |
| Area Agency on Aging                         | VCAAA.org  |
| Food Share                                   | Foodshare.com  |
| W.I.C.                                       | FNS.usda.gov/wic   |
| Knights of Columbus                          | Kofc.org   |
| Home Helpers                                 | homehelpershomecare.com  |
| Many Meals                                   | manymealsoftcamarillo.org  |
| Ventura Avenue Adult Center                  | 805-648-3035   |
| Independent Living Resource Center           | ilrc-trico.org   |
| Livingston Hospice Care                      | lmvna.org  |
| Senior Concerns                              | seniorconcerns.org   |
| Home Caregivers of Ventura                   | caring.com/senior-care 800-973-1540  |
| Senior Council on Aging, Camarillo           | NCOa.org   |
| Camarillo Council on Aging                   | cityofcamarillo.org/residents/seniors  |
| Housing Resources guide Camarillo            | cityofcamarillo.org  |
| Ventura Downtown Lions Club                  | venturalions.org   |
| Salvation Army                               | ventura.salvationarmy.org  |
| Help at Salvation Army                       | needhelppayingbills.com  |
| Catholic Charities                           | catholiccharitiesusa.org   |
| Livingston Visiting Nurses Bereavement Group | lmvna.org-grief&bereavement  |
| Turning Point                                | turningpointfoundation.org   |
| Project Understanding                        | projectunderstanding.org   |
| One Stop showers, mail delivery              | vchca.org/health-care-for-the-homeless   |
| Four Generations Foundation                  | fourgenerationsfoundation.org  |
| Senior Support Line                          | camhealth.com/senior-support-line  |
| NAMI National Alliance                       | nami.org programs and services   |
| Ventura Counseling/Wellness Center           | venturacwc.org   |
| Alzheimers Association                       | alz.org  |
| Oxnard Rescue Mission                        | vcrescuemission.org  |
| Genesis Program                              | genesisprograms.com  |
| Prototypes                                   | healthright360.org/agency/prototypes   |
| AA Alcoholics Anonymous                      | aaventuracounty.org  |
| Alanon/Alateen                               | alanonventura.org al-anon.org  |
|  | On Right side is Alateen   |
| Dept of Rehab                                | dor.ca.gov   |
| Housing Hotline                              | hud.gov/states/california/renting 800-477-5977   |
| United Parents                               | unitedparents.org  |
| Whole Person Care                            | <a href="mailto:wholepersoncare@ventura.org">wholepersoncare@ventura.org</a> 805-339-1122  |
| Diversity Collective                         | diversitycollectivevc.org  |
| Rainbow Umbrella                             | diversitycollectivevc.org/services/#youth-services   |
| Veteran’s Crisis Line                        | veteranscrisisline.net   |
| Bereavement groups at Churches, etc.         | griefshare.org   |
| Sliding scale therapy:                       |  |
| Jewish Family Services                       | <a href="mailto:federation@Jewishventuracounty.org">federation@Jewishventuracounty.org</a> |
| Cal Lutheran                                 | clucounseling.org  |
| New Beginnings                               | thenewbeginningscenter.com   |

10/17/22

---

# IN MEMORIUM

---

## LOVED ONES LIVE ON IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER

**Lauren Anderson**

**Mary A. Burns**

**Nanci Carbonell**

**Diana Casey**

**Gregory Davis**

**William H. Hodges**

**Roger A. Hooper**

**Charlotte Johnson**

**Rosalyn Milbank**

**Diane Militano**

**Barbara Saint**

**Isabel E. Wagner**

---



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

---