



# REAVC

JANUARY– FEBRUARY 2026

*"Dedicated to Those Who Have Already Served"*

## 2026 BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

President – Reddy Pakala	Directors	Directors (Continued)
First Vice President – Roberta Griego	Colleen Bruns	Cindy Schneider
Second Vice President – Ben Emami	Anne Dana	Kelly Shirk
Secretary – Will Hoag	Tracey Pirie	Board of Retirement Representative – Art Goulet
Treasurer – Paul E. Callaway	Lyn Krieger	
Immediate Past President -- Nancy Settle	Vacant	Bookkeeper – Butch Britt
Associate Member Representative. – Maryellen Benedetto	Vacant	Executive Assistant - Dee Emami

### MESSAGE FROM REAVC PRESIDENT – REDDY PAKALA

I want to start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and hoping that 2026 brings you good health, happiness, and memorable moments with loved ones. As we welcomed a fresh start this January, I'm grateful for the continued support and engagement of our REAVC members. Your involvement is what makes our organization strong and vibrant, and together we can look forward to another year of meaningful activities and advocacy.

Two of our Board members have decided to resign for personal health reasons and also to enjoy more time with their families and friends. This leaves us with two vacancies on the REAVC Board.

Tom McEachern served on the Board for more than ten years. He was Chair of the REAVC Scholarship Committee. In this position, he guided the committee to select from ten to fifteen high school students annually for scholarship awards. He was instrumental in seeing the Committee review every application with fairness and compassion.

Jacqui Richardson was our representative to the California Retired Employees Association (CECRA). This is important because being a member of CRCEA makes REAVC's voice much more powerful in protecting retirees' rights. Jacqui travelled to regional conferences to represent REAVC. Jacqui also provided several beautiful hand-made gift baskets as door prizes at our luncheons.

I want to recognize both Tom and Jacqui's dedication and hard work to REAVC. They will be greatly missed. We do wish them all the best as they focus on their health and more time with their families and friends.

That leaves us with two vacancies on our Board. We are looking for two good people to fill these vacancies. I strongly encourage you to consider joining the REAVC Board and helping us in any capacity that feels comfortable to you. If you are interested, ask any Board member listed on the front of this newsletter. You may also send an email to [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org). One of us will get back to you to provide details and answer any questions about the Board's responsibilities and level of commitment.

I do want to emphasize that joining the Board is a rewarding opportunity that directly contributes to REAVC's mission. Board members play an essential role in planning events, advocating for retirees' interests, and ensuring our organization remains a strong and supportive community. Your unique experience and perspective can help shape our future initiatives and make a positive impact on fellow members. Please consider stepping forward—your involvement is genuinely valued and appreciated.

On another note, REAVC's litigation on behalf of many county retirees regarding VCERA's pension reduction impacts is expected to be heard by the California Supreme Court in early 2026. It is possible the oral arguments may be heard in Los

Angeles. As the matter proceeds, we will continue to update our members through our newsletter or our website (REAVC.ORG).

Again, best wishes for a safe, healthy, and happy 2026!

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## **VCERA RETIREMENT BOARD NEWS - BY ART GOULET**

VCERA's portfolio continued to move up in October and November with earnings of 1.1% and 0.7%, respectively, and new high values of \$9.54 and \$9.58 billion.

At its December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the BoR committed \$40 million to HarbourVest Dover Street Fund XII, which will invest globally in private equity secondary markets.

Since 2012, the BoR has committed a total of \$207.5 million across HarbourVest's Dover Street Funds VIII, IX, X, XI as follows:

HarbourVest Dover Street Fund VIII	\$67.5 million in 2012
HarbourVest Dover Street Fund IX	\$60 million in 2016
HarbourVest Dover Street Fund X	\$40 million in 2020
HarbourVest Dover Street Fund XI	\$40 million in 2023

In the Sept. – Oct 2025 Newsletter, I mentioned it would be interesting to see how VCERA's excess earnings affect the unfunded liability when the annual Actuarial Valuation is performed in the Fall.

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, the BoR received the Actuarial Valuation for FY 2025. The unfunded liability (UAAL) dropped from \$255.5 million to \$66.3 million and the System's funding ratio increased to 99.2%, up from 96.96% in last year's valuation.

As a reminder, for actuarial purposes VCERA "smooths" income and losses by recognizing them over a five-year period. Accordingly, VCERA will be approaching the next several actuarial valuations with a "tail wind", that is four more years' of excess earnings to be recognized.

Also at the December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the BoR received the Audit of the financials for FY 2025. It was a completely clean audit to the credit of the financial staff.

Jordan Roberts is no longer an elected General Member on the BoR. He left County employment in December so is not eligible for that position. An election will have to be held to fill the remaining two years of his term.

At its December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board of Supervisors re-appointed Public Members of the BoR Taylor Dacus and Tommie Joe to new three-year terms beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year!

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Ben Emami uses Constant Contact to send the newsletter via email. If you need to update your contact information, please contact Ben at [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org) or REAVC, P.O. Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006. Please indicate "Address Update" on written correspondence. You can save REAVC dollars for other membership needs by requesting a PDF version of the newsletter by email at [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org).

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### **Attention all REAVC members:**

Scholarship applications for members' children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren attending post-high school education are due no later than March 31, 2026. Go to [reavc.org](http://reavc.org) for information, application requirements, and the scholarship application. If you have any questions or need more information, send an email to [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org) or call (805) 644-7814.

**Additional information on page 6.**

## PAPA B1- BY BUTCH BRITT – RAILROADS, BRIDGES, AND BEES

Once upon a time, when I was young and full of spit and vinegar, it was about the mid-1960's, I was still in college. But I was on a work quarter from school working for a railroad company, and they assigned me to the traveling survey crew. They called it the traveling survey crew because they moved you around wherever they might need you. You might find yourself one week in Memphis, next week near Nashville, then to New Orleans. Kind of fun for a young tadpole, just trying to make some extra money to pay for beer and college tuition. Just one problem, major for me, – I'm deathly scared of heights. And sometimes they would send you to the bridge crew to help them. And most railroad bridges crossed over rivers, creeks, or highways. There's nothing between the railroad ties except thin air – so "DON'T LOOK DOWN!" And bridge crews were rough, rowdy and plain mean – particularly toward some high-falluting college kid still wet between the ears. When they found out that I was scared of heights they were merciless, sneaking behind you to yell "GOTCHA" or some more colorful epithet. They knew I was scared, because my knees knocked together worse than a string of castanets when I tried to look casual and walk over the bridge. But after a while they got tired of razzing me and all I had to do was make sure I had extra underwear packed before I went to work with the bridge crew.



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We had several bridges crossing the waterways in Mississippi going into New Orleans that were damaged by storms. No "global warming" in those days, it was just Mother Nature showing us her propensity to strew havoc occasionally. The bridge crew was assigned to repair them, and I was sent to join them as part of the survey crew. We were working on a particularly high wooden bridge over a particularly furious river, still whirling and roaring after the recent storms. The bridge was basically intact, but the rails had been knocked out of alignment by debris rushing down the river. Not good for the rails to be cattywampus on a main rail line. Heavy trains don't fare well in that situation and had been known to jump the rail and well – Casey Jones REDAUX.

So, they had to put a "slow train" order on the bridge, until the rails could be checked and recertified. Railroad companies didn't like that either, because it meant losing money, and we were being pushed to get the repairs and recertification survey done quickly – or else.

So, on that day, being low man on the totem pole (can we say totem pole anymore?) I was assigned as the rodman to hump across the bridge, carrying what was called a level rod and setting it down at marked stations on the top of the rail about every 10 or so feet. It's hard to describe what a telescoping level rod was like but carrying one was like carrying a double two by four over one shoulder and walking the bridge ties at the same time. Meanwhile the party chief was sitting comfortably on the bank looking through an instrument containing a long telescope called a level. He recorded the number he saw in the scope. He'd wave his hand, and I'd move to the next station. He'd then take a draw on his cigar, a drink from his coffee thermos, (at least I thought it was coffee), and we'd keep at that until we had measured the elevation of the rails from one end to the other.

I was pretty confident and full of myself at that point, walking the bridge with faked confidence (a lot slower than a seasoned bridge worker, but at least not crawling) – when – I heard the entire bridge crew yelling at me. I couldn't understand them, but I wasn't about to let them get my goat again – when suddenly at the end of the bridge – I saw a big round light and then heard an ear-piercing train whistle that really got my attention – and scared the ga-jeebus out of me.



It was a freight engine pulling thirty or so heavy freight cars, going slow, but quicker than I could make it back to the beginning of the bridge, and there was no way the engineer could stop the train before he got to me or the rest of the crew. **What the hey?** There wasn't supposed to be a train through here for another four hours! But debate was not an option. In any collision between me and a train, I was going to end up as peanut butter.

The bridge crew was pretty savvy. They knew what to do. They just climbed down to a bridge member below the ties and settled in – safe and sound while the train passed over them. I wasn't too comfortable about my ability to climb down, particularly with that dang long and heavy rod. Couldn't throw it over the side. They'd charge me a day's pay for losing the rod. And where would we get a new one in that part of Mississippi in those days? Today the environmental regulators would probably accuse me of trying to spear an endangered species without a permit if I threw it in the river.

Fortunately, in those days they had these ledges built off the side of wooden railroad bridges at intervals. They were originally built to hold large barrels of water in case of a fire on a wooden bridge. Can't haul water out to the middle of a bridge to put out a fire, and these "fire barrels" as they were called came in pretty handy back in the days when train brakes often overheated and caused fires. They long ago fixed the overheating brake problem, and these fire barrels were not needed or maintained any longer, but if they held 55-gallons of water at one time, they should handle my 140-pound gawky frame. This old bridge still sported some. So, I climbed out onto the nearest fire barrel station, stowed that danged rod into the empty barrel, and held on like that barrel was my new best friend.

The train rumbled past. The engineer looked down at me and laughed. I swear a hobo looked out at me from mid-train – and laughed, and ultimately the caboose passed, and the conductor came out stood on the rear platform and laughed. I didn't care. The train passed, I was alive, and all I had to do was climb back out to the bridge and slink back to safety.

Then I heard it, first it was just a drone, then it was a loud buzz, which turned out to be a hive of very angry bees that had made a nest in the old water barrel. I'll bee darned. Again, I was lucky that the environmental regulators were not there that day. I don't know how many bees I swatted that day, but it was probably beyond the legal limit.

So, I crawled, at remarkable speed, back off the bridge dragging that darn rod and my pride. The bridge supervisor, when he finished laughing at me, called off work for the day, got on the radio, and chewed out the train dispatcher for letting a train through with no warning when he had a crew working on the bridge.

Fortunately, no one was hurt. The bees must have been too surprised to bite me too much, and I ain't bee allergic or even bee-ry sensitive. I went back to my room and tried to wash my pants and shorts as best I could and got a knock on my door. Some of the bridge guys were there. I thought they were going to razz me again, but we all went to a local catfish hut, and we had some fantastic fried catfish (maybe more than the legal limit) and home brewed beer. Take that regulators! The next day we went back, slightly adrift, finished the work and recertified the bridge.

All true, even the bees – well mostly - or as best as I can BEE-member.

Hope to see you at the next REAVC luncheon. I'll bee at the back, trying to sell Sees candy cards. Stop by and say hello. I'll bee glad to see you.



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## SEE'S CANDY GIFT CARD SALES



By Butch Britt

REAVC is selling \$25 See's CANDIES gift cards at a cost to members of \$21 each. The gift cards do not expire. They are relatively easy to mail or use as holiday gifts. But remember, they are only worth \$25 of See's merchandise.

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 CANDY table at the luncheons – usually set up in some convenient location – like behind the potted plants or outside on the 19<sup>th</sup> Tee.

(Continued on next page.)

Because of an increase in pilfered, pirated, or purloined envelopes containing See's cards, we are currently limiting mail deliveries to four cards per envelope. We purchased some special envelopes to try to stymie those pilfering pirates, and it seems to be working, but they only hold four cards. You can still order more than four, but we will have to mail them in more than one envelope. CAVEAT EMPTOR – whatever that means.



### LUNCHEON UPDATE

**THE HOLIDAY LUNCHEON** was a joyful celebration! The beautiful background music put us in the holiday spirit! We also enjoyed a Christmas Carol guessing game that tested our holiday trivia knowledge! The music, beautiful venue, lovely decorations, and a plethora of door prizes added much to the celebration. The food was delicious. We served over 180 guests. Everyone seemed to have a good time - celebrating the season with "old" friends!

**SPRING LUNCHEON:** We plan to make our Spring Luncheon a fun event as well. It will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at noon at the Sterling Hills Country Club, 901 Sterling Hills, Camarillo, CA 93010.

Doors will open at 11:00 a.m. The cost is \$20 for REAVC members and their first guest. The price for a 2<sup>nd</sup> guest is \$48- only two guests allowed per member.

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## IN MEMORIUM

LOVED ONES LIVE ON IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER



REGINO CAILING. ELLEN DEWEY. ELVIRA HERNANDEZ. RUTH MARUOKA. JAE ANN McNAY. MARVIN NIXON. MICHAEL REGAN. BARBARA RIOS. ROBERT SCHARF. PATRICIA SCHAUER. RUSSELL SPERRY. JUDY TAYLOR. BARBARA TENBROOK. SANDRA WILEY.

A member's surviving spouse is eligible for REAVC membership. Applications are on our website: [www.reavc.org](http://www.reavc.org).

### Change of Address Form

If your address has changed, please complete this form and mail it to REAVC-Address Updates, P.O. Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006. Please print your information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

New Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



# It's Time to Think About Applying for a College Scholarship Through REAVC\*

## Who's Eligible?

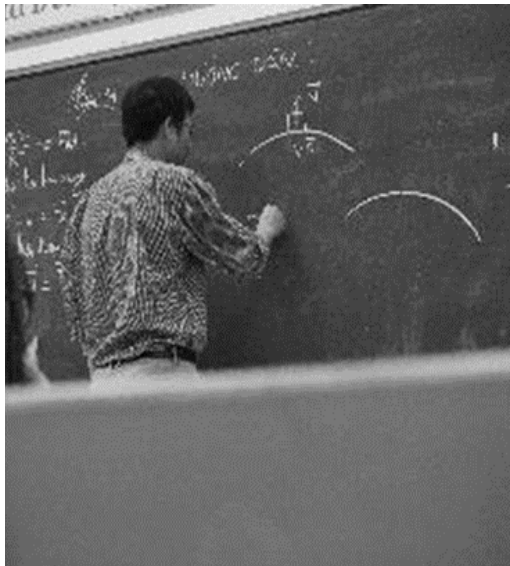
A current member or  
associate member of  
REAVC

or

A child, grandchild, or  
great-grandchild of a  
current REAVC member

or

An associate member



A  
scholarship  
award of up  
to \$1,500



REAVC must receive  
all completed  
applications, along  
with letters of  
recommendation, by  
**March 31, 2026**

For further details,  
or to receive a  
scholarship  
application form,  
visit [REAVC.org](http://REAVC.org) and  
click on  
"Scholarship  
Program"



\* Retired Employees Association of Ventura County

## REAVC LIST OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The go-to resource for “where to find anything” is 211, a 24-hour helpline with an incredible list of County services. Below is a list of county-wide resources, some of which were recommended by other seniors.

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	manymealsofcamarillo.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	clu counseling.org
New Beginnings	thenewbeginningscenter.com
Ventura County Ombudsman Program	ombudsmanventura.org
(Long-term care complaint assistance)	

Join the fun at the



## REAVC Spring Luncheon

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

Sterling Hills Country Club

901 Sterling Hills Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010

(Doors open at 11:00 a.m.)

**\$20 each for REAVC Members and one Guest, \$48 for a second Non-member Guest**

No phone reservations or walk-ins are allowed for this event. Reservations must be made in advance by February 20 by completing and mailing this form along with a check payable to REAVC to the following address: REAVC - Luncheon, P.O. Box 7231, Ventura, CA 93006-7231

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Registration form for the REAVC Spring Luncheon, March 3, 2026

***PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY***

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

Email: (*\*Required for Confirmation*) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Payment Included for: \_\_\_\_\_ Member(s) at \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

1st Guest, or Member Guests at \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Non-Member Guest at \$48.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

(2 Non-Member Guest Limit)

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

**The deadline for both reservations and cancellations is Friday, February 20, 2026!**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Anyone who makes a reservation, does not attend the luncheon, and fails to cancel by November 20, 2025, will be responsible for the \$48 luncheon cost. An exception may be made in case of an emergency. Please note that the cost for a second non-member guest is also \$48. Only attendees who provide an email will be sent confirmation of their reservation. No walk-ins or phone reservations will be accepted.*

**Reserve early; once the seating limit is reached, reservations are wait-listed.** For questions related to the luncheon, please contact: Anne Dana at 1-805-320-6408 – or email [info@reavc.org](mailto:info@reavc.org)