



The REACTOR

*Retired Employees Association
California Teachers Association*

August 2026

REACTA IS LIGHTING THE WAY

By Robin Rose, President



As I reflect on REACTA and what we are all about, I revisited our purpose, which you can find on our website. It states:

- To support, protect and enhance the California Teachers Association (CTA) Employees' Retirement Benefits Plan and the CTA Employees' Health and Welfare Benefits Plan.
- To communicate with members on matters of interest.
- To perform tasks, functions, and activities as determined by the membership.
- To provide social contact between members.

I believe that this year we have, in fact, lived up to our mission statement. I am honored to work with an amazing group of volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors, Committee Chairs, Trust Liaisons, and all of you.

As a clarification and sometimes misunderstood, REACTA does not serve on any governance or other bodies of the California Teachers Association. Although it is absolutely critical that we maintain a strong relationship with CTA and its various groups, we do not have decision making authority. We do, however, advocate for retiree needs. We also do not serve as a Trustee on the two Trusts, but we stay informed and involved through our two REACTA liaisons who attend Trust meetings. Again, it's our relationships with these groups that can help influence decisions that they make.

As another year begins to wind down, please consider volunteering and bringing forth your ideas to make REACTA an organization we can continue to be proud of.

I hope to see you in Paso Robles/Atascadero for our Annual Meeting. It's a great way to stay connected with former retirees.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



REACTA member, **Chris Gale**, joined Region IV members for springtime luncheon in Temecula.



Felice Strauss hosted the Taco Truck luncheon at her house in Costa Mesa.



With years of collegiality and friendship, Region 3 members surround **Ed Romeo** celebrating his 100th birthday.

Don't forget to register for the Oct 19-21 Annual Meeting in Atascadero.

Go to REACTA.ORG for details.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 19 – Membership subcommittee meeting at **Ann Adler's**

August 28 – Last day to submit nomination form.

August 31 – Membership Committee Zoom Meeting, 2:00

September 8 – Nomination Committee Meeting

September 22 – REACTA board, 2:00

September 25 – Last day to get REACTA room rates for annual meeting.

September - Retirement Trust Meeting

October 18 – REACTA Board Dinner Atascadero, 6:00 pm

October 19 – REACTA Board meeting 10:00

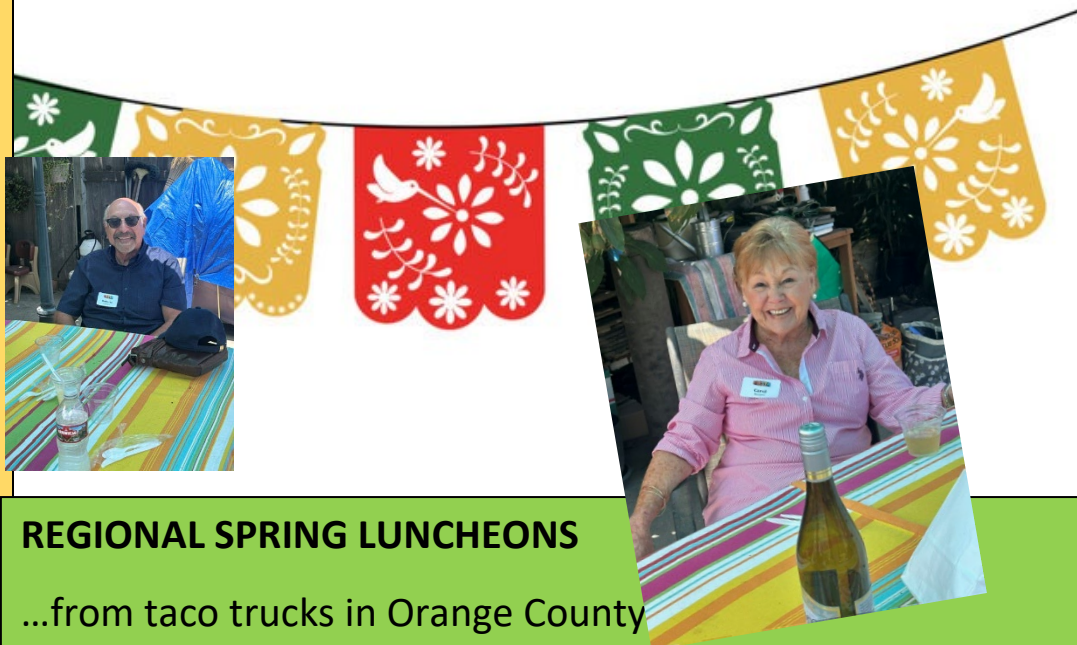
October 19-21 – REACTA Annual Meeting Atascadero. Room reservation details and meeting registration form on [REACTA.org](https://www.reacta.org)

October 20 – Committee Meetings 8:30

November 8 – Election Day

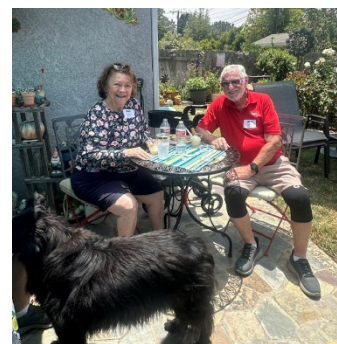
Have you moved? Have you changed your email or phone number? Let REACTA know so that we can stay connected. Contact **Kathie Casas** kcasas@aol.com

A friendly reminder that the deadline to submit a 2027 Nomination Form for REACTA Officers Election is August 28. The form and a letter explaining the election process are available on our FB page and REACTA website. If you have any questions, please send an email to dsummacal@aol.com. Thanks for your support of REACTA! 951-532-8979



REGIONAL SPRING LUNCHEONS

...from taco trucks in Orange County



Roberto and Vivian Tay were two of the twenty members enjoying the Taco Fiesta at **Felice Strauss** House in Costa Mesa. **Carol Kangas** drove up the coast from Laguna Hills. **Patricia Williams** really appreciated having the luncheon so close to home as did **Tom and Bertha Hollister**. **Paul McKernan** fits in with a visit even as he prepares to move to Nipomo on the Central Coast.

REGIONAL SPRING LUNCHEONS

...to wine tasting in Temecula.



Kathie Casas and **Teri Dulak** catch up on what is going on in their lives. **Margaret Wallace** and **Dixie Ditler** get together often when **Dixie** comes out to Palm Springs. **Ed Sibby** and **Mark Young**, old friends, are so happy to see each other. **Pam Bowen** and **Gary Campbell** regularly attend the Region IV spring luncheon. The Region IV REACTA luncheon is always well attended, but the loss of members created an obvious void. They will be missed.



FOUR SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Teague Neilio, granddaughter of **Donna Jefferson**, received one of four REACTA scholarships. Her love of math is directing her to major in engineering at Loyola. She hopes to help others design sustainable solutions. Teague has an early history of strong involvement starting with the Girl Scouts. She beat the sales record selling 15,000 boxes. "Try putting a tiny scoop of vanilla ice cream between 2 frozen Thin Mints," said Teague.



Ernie Ciarrocchi's grandson, **Cooper Williams**, sees AI as a learning tool and looks forward to applying this tool to civil engineering at Oklahoma State University. Cooper is looking for an internship and working with Engineering Without Borders. Music has also been a serious part of Cooper's life. "I've been the top euphonium player at Union for 3 years, and I've been a member of the top ensemble for all four years of high school," said Cooper.

Moving from Arroyo Grande to Whittier, **Reid Bronson**, **Annie Aquino's** grandson, starts at Whittier College in August. **Reid plans** to join the baseball team playing in the outfield and pitching. He plans to major in psychology. "Cooking and spending time with my family are also very important parts of my life," said **Reid**.

Jordan Wegner, **Mary Carole Hester's** grandson, is a UC Berkeley student pursuing Legal Studies and Theater, and is someone who has built his life combining practicality with creativity. He runs an insurance agency in California and is now focusing on a legal career. He has many interests including building, coding, and music.



GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS...

Time to Educate our Membership

POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

By: Arleigh Kidd-Chair

Good news and bad news on the political front. The good news is that CTA was able to get the desperately needed extension of Proposition 55 on the ballot, it will be **Proposition 3**. The bad news is that the Billionaire's Tax proposition along with several propositions trying to prevent the Billionaire's tax are also on the ballot. We can expect a slew of negative advertisements against the Billionaire's tax and the fear is that it could also drag down support of Prop. 3 as CTA battles to make a distinction. This will mean REACTA members will need to help educate their communities about the need to pass Proposition 3, so we do not see school funding slashed by fifteen percent in 2030.

On the candidate front CTA has endorsed Javier Becerra after first endorsing Eric Swalwell, then endorsing Tom Steyer and now Javier Becerra. His opponent Steve Hilton is endorsed by Donald Trump, and current polls show Becerra leading with 51% of the vote and Hilton at 32% and 17% are undecided.

Governor Newsom also had his last budget as Governor approved. The budget is balanced but mainly on one-time revenues from the AI stock trade. The Governor and Legislature withheld 3.9 billion in Prop 98 funding to schools, and we may very well see a lawsuit filed over this. But overall schools will see a COLA of about 4.36% and for the first time educators will receive paid leave for pregnancy etc.

As the election draws near the Political Education Committee will keep REACTA informed with the latest developments. See you all in Atascadero in October!

BOOK CLUB READING LIST

*Help us expand our book list for the next REACTOR. Send your book recommendations to **Margaret Wallace**, marwall@aol.com*

Under Major Domo Minor by **Patrick DeWitt**

Get Lost by **Justin Halpernt**

Angel Down by **Daniel Kraus**

Audition by **Katie Kitamura**

Whistler by **Ann Patchett**

Nobody's Girl by **Virgina Roberts Giuffie**



RETIREMENT TRUST REPORT

April 11, 2026

By **Alan J. Frey**, Retirement Trust Liaison

The California Teachers Association Retirement Trust met on April 8 in the CTA office in Monrovia.

This was the second meeting of the Trust for the year 2026 and is where the finalization of the Trust performance for the calendar year 2025 is presented.

Importantly this is the meeting where the Trustees receive Zone Status for the year 2026 and projections for ensuing years.

The meeting began with a recap of our financial performance with regard to all the Trust holdings. However, in this session a significant amount of time was spent on the performance of the holdings in Private Equity. This area of investment is a long-term process sometimes covering up to seven years. The investments are made in private companies (not publicly traded) with the potential for high returns.

After the conclusion of the discussion of Private Equity holdings a recap of year-to-date returns was given. As expected, the returns for 2026 have been spotty with the February returns at 3.44%. Time will tell how the Trust fares over the remainder of the year in light of the economic turmoil the markets are experiencing.

Now for some good news. The Actuaries (Horizon Actuarial Services) reviewed the performance of the Trust for the year 2025 and revealed that the Trust's investments returned 14.99% or more than double the 7% standard set by the Trustees.

Translated, the good performance of Trust Investments has placed us solidly in the Green Zone for the year 2026 and if there are no significant declines in the economy and the markets, our green zone status looks good for the next few years.

The rest of the meeting dealt with the normal business of the Trust. Next meeting is in September.

PEG BUTLER CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

By: **Kathie Casas**

This amazing young lady celebrated 100 years at Bogle Winery with about 50 friends, most adorned in Hawaiian attire. Peg Butler began her CTA career in 1964 and "trained" 6 managers starting when Region 2 was Northern Section. When Peg applied for her first position, she "lied" about her age as she was afraid, she wouldn't be hired. Peg worked with Haze Bergeron, Ted Kostyshak, John Donaldson, Gary Harrison, Joe Nunez and Marlene Bell. Every day Peg would run home to fix lunch for her sweet husband Harry who had a love of kit cars. They were married in 1961 and had 2 daughters - Lynn and Betsy.

Known for wearing her signature pearls every day! Has gotten a tattoo. She does love Hawaii and everyone was given fresh leis to wear at the party. She attended a Lady Gaga concert. She once snuck into a movie theater with Judy Saxby. Peg still uses her computer.

Retired CTA staff in attendance were Jeanne Akins, Kathie Casas, Connie DeCoud and Judy Saxby.





MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Be Well and Keep in Touch

By: Ann Adler, Membership Committee Chair

Since our last Annual Meeting, REACTA is 443 strong with 12 new members!!!

Dave and Geri Brown, Tamara and Tom Conry, Vernon Gates, LaChester Green, Lisa Edelheit and Charles Lammers, Tim Luckinbill (spouse of MaryAnn), Janet Smith, and Wendy and Ian Lockhart (effective October).

WELCOME! WELCOME! WELCOME!

Sadly, REACTA has also lost 5 members. Sincere condolences to our one-time warriors, colleagues, friends, and spouses. They are deeply missed and REACTA is diminished by their absence ...

Jim Clark, Juan Furler, David (Wayne) Johnson, Dale Maurer, Mary Mosquera, Patricia Sawtelle, Janet Stephens (recent finding, passed 2 years ago)

In other news,

The REACTA Board, at the recommendation of the Membership Committee, modified Standing Rule 1-Budget and Finance, B2 Membership Dues, to read "Beginning January 1, 2027, all cash payers will pay a fee of \$10 in addition to the annual dues for processing costs such as materials, postage and member labor." To understand why this occurred, here is a bit of REACTA history.

When REACTA first formed, there was no ability to have dues deduction from our CTA pensions. That changed over 14 years ago. REACTA allowed those who previously paid by check to continue to pay yearly but urged all cash payers to change to dues deduction. Throughout the years, there have been various incentives to do so. To that end, the majority of members have become pension deduction. In the meantime, the cost of repeated mail attempts to secure dues and the time it takes to stuff envelopes and do emails has become expensive monetarily and physically.

Since 2020, all new members have had to join via pension deduction because of a by-law change. While REACTA respects the choice of all, to avoid the extra fee and save your retired colleagues some time, we encourage the remaining cash payers to now begin to use the deduction process as per the new Standing Rule. REACTA appreciates your understanding and willingness to assist your organization.

We thank **Bill Bianchi, Alana Garris, Linda Hawkins, Scott Postel, Dan Saling, and Demetrios Smirlis** for stepping right up and choosing to become deduction members rather than pay the extra processing fee. In August, the Membership Committee will send letters to the remaining 27 cash payers in the hope that they will join the other 417 of us. Together we can do it!

And speaking of together, I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Annual Meeting in October!!

Finally, many thanks to the Membership Committee! YOU ROCK!

Jackie Butler, Gary Campbell, Kathie Casas, Tamara Conry, Sydney Greenberg, Susan Midori-Jones, Alva Rivera, Barbara Smith, John Stephens, Patty Taylor, Patricia Williams, and Board Liaison Merri Furler.



CTA HEALTH & WELFARE BENEFITS TRUST

By: Merri Furler, REACTA Liaison

Tri-Partite Bargaining

The recent Tri-Partite Bargaining resulted in CTA making a one-time cash only contribution of \$5 million to the CTA Employees Health the Welfare Benefits Trust.

In addition, a new MOU as agreed upon by the CTA/CSO/CAS Tri-Partite bargaining parties, with a sunset date of 08/31/2029, states: In the event the Health Benefits Trust drops below \$13 million, nothing herein shall limit the containment measures prior to and for purposes of preempting a drop in the Health Benefits Trust reserve below \$10 million. In the event such modifications are made by the Trustees, CTA agrees to match the savings from such modifications with equal employer contributions. Payment shall be made simultaneously with the implementation of such plan design or other changes as approved.

Scripps Health San Diego/Anthem Contract Negotiations

In May of 2025, both parties agreed to extend the current contract while continuing negotiations. That extension is set to expire September 30, 2026. If the contract expires, Scripps would be considered as an out of network provider with higher out of pocket expenses. The contract expiration does not affect patients covered under Medicare or any Emergency services. If you or a family member is a current Scripps Health patient receiving treatment for serious or complex conditions and **NOT** covered by Medicare, you can download a Continuity of Care form from the Anthem website.

GLP-1 Prior Authorizations

As noted in the Summer 2026 CTA Employees Health and Welfare Benefits Trust newsletter, all GLP-1 current and new prescriptions will go through a prior authorization process. The parameters to receive this medication with the new process are as follows: BMI of 30 or above or BMI of 27 or above + 1 comorbidity. Consult your physician about this new process.

The next CTA Health and Welfare Benefits Trust meeting will be October 20, 2026 via Zoom.

REACTA	2026 Adopted	2025 Actuals
	Income	
Member Dues	18,296	10,077
Annual Meeting	2,600	1,412
Add'l Scholarship Donations	800	0
Other	50	0
Total Income	21,746	11,489
	Expenses	
Executive Bd & Committees	7,700	1,467
Elections	200	0
Membership	2,000	0
Nominations	100	0
Political Education	300	0
Scholarship	2,500	0
Trusts	2,500	1,467
Other	100	0
Communications	1,500	160
Directory	50	0
Facebook	200	0
Hot Topics	50	0
Newsletter (Reactor)	100	0
Web Site/Zoom	300	160
CAS/CSO/CTA	500	0
Printing/Mailing/Supplies	300	0
Membership/ Advocacy	32,600	1,324
Annual Membership	14,000	579
Member Assistance	5,500	0
Legal Expenses	6,000	0
Regional Activities	1,000	745
Scholarships	3,500	\$8 K pending
Other	100	0
Total Expenses	41,900	2,951
	Assets/FFCU	
Convenience Checking		71,778.30
Prime Checking		8,907.61
Association Savings		28.07
Total Assets	65,000	80,713.98

TREASURER REPORT

By: **DICK GALE**, Treasurer



As we approach the 2/3 mark of the year, REACTA's treasury is in very good shape. Our year-to-date income is around \$11,500, while YTD expenditures total less than \$3,000.

This makes sense since most of REACTA's expenses occur in the last quarter of the year and are related to our Annual Meeting in Atascadero. So far, 23 REACTA members have registered for this year's event. We hope you will consider doing so, as well. It's a great opportunity to reconnect with our former workmates.

We will soon be sending out REACTA scholarship checks totaling \$8,000 to four young people who can definitely use the money. All are related to REACTA members and are pursuing their higher education goals. Thanks to our members' generosity, this year's scholarship total is 25% higher than last year.

Overall, the balance in REACTA's accounts at First Financial CU is \$80,713.98 (as of 8/2/26).

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Committees

Scholarship Committee: Anita Benitas Gardella (chair), Ginny Jannatto, Debbie Diaz, Sydney Greenberg, Frank Wells, Susan Midori-Jones (Board Liaison). **Health & Welfare Trust Liaison:** Merri Furler.

Membership: Ann Adler (Chair), Merri Furler (Board Liaison); Gary Campbell, Kathie Casas, Jackie Clark, Sydney Greenberg, Susan Midori Jones, Alva Rivera, Barbara Smith, John Stephens, Tamara Conry, Patty Taylor, Patricia Williams. **Retirement Trust Liaison:** Alan Frey. **Fiscal Oversight Committee:** Dick Gale (Chair), Felice Strauss. **Nominations & Elections Committee:** Dom Summa (Chair), Kathy Schlotz, Marilyn Aden.

REACTOR Newsletter: Margaret Wallace (Editor), Dixie Ditsler, Kathie Casas, Shirley Horn. **Social Media Specialist:** Kathie Casas.

Database and Directory: Kathie Casas. **Facebook:** Kathie Casas. **REACTA Webmaster:** Kathy Schlotz.

Legal Expense Fund and Member Assistance Fund: Susan Midori-Jones.

Political Education Committee: Arleigh Kidd, Felice Strauss, Ed Sibby.

Fiscal Oversight Committee: Dick Gale, (Chair)



SPOUSAL SUPPORT

By: MARGARET WALLACE, Editor

Significant others have always been visible when our members were employed by CTA. But they have expanded that visibility into active participation with dues paying membership in REACTA.



Some of them were CTA members who were longtime active CTA members at the local and state level. Others met while working for CTA as did **Kathy and Jim Schlotz**.

Spousal support is rooted way beyond just attending conferences but expanded to feet on the ground participation. **Robin Rose and Paul McKernan** have continually joined rallies all over L A County. They are soon to be walking the rally route near their new home in Nipomo on the Central Coast.



Juan Furler, Merri Furler's husband, was one of those spouses that gave his full support to **Merri** and to REACTA. "We make each other laugh," said **Merri**. He made us all laugh and we will miss him. **Juan's** commitment to help Vietnam Veterans access their benefits changed

the lives of many veterans and will continue to benefit them and their spouses.