

The REACTOR

Retired Employees Association
California Teachers Association

October 2022

PASSING THE GAVEL

By Dom Summa, President

It is with great pleasure that I submit to you my last column as President of REACTA. I have enjoyed my time as your president, but am happy that a new group of officers will take over on January 1, 2023. I decided to look back at my first year of office and find out what I was hoping to accomplish. The first edition of REACTA HOT TOPICS was sent on March 3, 2017 and opened with the following remarks:

Welcome to the first edition of REACTA HOT TOPICS. As President, I am committed to improve the communications between the leaders and members of REACTA. Our members have multiple ways in which to receive information about issues that impact their retirement. We have the REACTOR newsletter published every few months, a Facebook page with current information, email blasts when information needs to get sent to members with email accounts and the one-on-one conversation when members share information they hear from other sources. What has been missing is the timely, regularly scheduled dissemination of information to members from reliable sources. It is my goal to use a monthly email blast to members with accurate information about the hot topics impacting us for that month. This will include the following:

- ***Reports from REACTA leaders and chairs on their current projects***
- ***A calendar of events listing luncheons, meetings and other activities***
- ***A list of active staff who have given notice of retirement***
- ***Action taken by either the Employee Pension Trust or the Health Benefits Trust that impacts retirees***

This first edition will keep you informed of current Hot Topics. Please share this with former colleagues who are not REACTA members. We want them to see what we do and why it is important for them to join.

Over the past six years with the help of fabulous leaders, REACTA has greatly improved its communications with members. I believe this effort has resulted in more successful activities (think...Medicare Advantage!) and increased membership. We have also built a stronger relationship with CAS, CSO and CTA Management. I have always been committed to the three important steps of effective communication; Tell people what you are going to do, DO IT, and tell them you did it! I am confident our new officers will continue to effectively communicate with REACTA members. Our organization will be stronger because of this effort. Thank you for your support!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Dom Summa steps down from REACTA presidency after 6 years of stellar representation for members.



Pam Bowen receives thank you gift from REACTA for all her work as Secretary.



Felice Strauss presents **Marilyn Bittle** with a thank you gift card from REACTA for all her work as Director at large.



THANKS IS **NOT** ENOUGH

By: Margaret Wallace

We all knew **Dom Summa** from different vantage points – a CTA Colleague, a CTA manager, a friend, and most importantly for us, as a REACTA President for the last 6 years.

He has led the way in a new direction for REACTA by providing ideas for expansion of the membership, opening doors with CTA, CSO and CAS, and expanding communication with REACTA members.

Dom's hard work has not gone unnoticed. His behind-the-scenes coordination of events, committee development and communication have been critical for a new era in REACTA. Just as he did as a manager, Dom found volunteers within the REACTA ranks and encouraged them to get involved in what they were good at and simply let them do the job. And he always put them in the limelight.

REACTA is a vital conduit for retired CTA employees, and it can honestly be said that REACTA is even more indispensable because of Dom Summa. Thank you for all you have done and for the seeds that you have planted. Now it is everyone's job to keep up the watering.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Fall - REACTA Scholarship Applications available online

October 17 – Officers and Bylaws ballots mailed out

November 14 – Deadline for ballot return

December 6 – REACTA officer meeting.

December - TBD –CTA Regional Holiday parties

February – Scholarship applications are due

April – Scholarship results are announced

April and May 2020 – TBD Regional Lunches



Karen Kyhn and Stanley Fix attend their first REACTA annual meeting.

PASO ROBLES –

New Place For Friends and Meetings



The REACTA Annual Meeting started with a REACTA hosted happy hour giving friends a chance to catch up on the past year's experiences. Many members were accompanied by their significant others adding dynamic conversations and stories.

After breakfast the next morning the Annual Meeting jumped right into reports from Committee Chairs, Officers, CTA, CAS and CSO. More than 50 members attended REACTA's annual meeting in Paso Robles plus additional members participated via Zoom.

Day Two: The Oxford Suites hosted a second happy hour in their spacious lounge. Members graciously accepted their generosity as evidenced by the line at the bar.

The day ended with a delicious dinner and thank you gift presentation to outgoing officers, **Dom Summa, Pam Bowen and Marilyn Russell Bittle**. Attendees expressed their appreciation with a solid union clap.

As always REACTA ended with a raffle of gift cards and wine. Afterall, this is wine country.



Juan and Merri Fuhler, Ernie and Nancy Ciarrocchi, Alva and Gilberto Rivera, Gary Campbell, Bruce Colwell, and Nicky Amodeo



REPORTS FROM CTA, CAS, CSO

Once again **Joe Boyd**, CTA Executive Director, **Jill Coert** CAS President, **Bruce Saathoff**, CSO President, **Wei Pan** CTA Asst. Ex. Controller, and **Jake Anderson** CSO Trust representative participated in this year's annual meeting either in person or by Zoom.

Joe Boyd shared that CTA had a very well received statewide staff meeting - first time in years. He indicated that CTA membership is down due to decline in student enrollment. Local staff are focusing on school site visits. "We see some real challenges in the next few years," said Joe Boyd. Over half of the CTA staff are under 5 years of employment. CTA has dedicated money into member leader release time to address this new challenge for CTA.

His political update indicated that CTA recommends a NO on Proposition 28 and Proposition 30. Joe reminded us that all CTA recommendations are online CTA.org, including governor and state school superintendent.

Jill Coert, CAS President, also shared the employment reality within CAS ranks. "Half of the CAS members in the room at the statewide meeting are under one year of experience," said Jill. Their workload has greatly changed and expanded. She also reminded us of the No Surprises Act 2022 which took effect in January.

Bruce Saathoff, CSO President, described the same picture within the CSO members. There is an extraordinary number of new members, and challenge of decrease in teacher numbers. Statewide meeting was a great success.

REACTA shared that they are prepared to help especially with new staff. CTA's success is important to all members. **Joe Boyd** said, "Mentorship is something we could look at."

Delta Dental is still an issue for current employees as well as retirees. It is crucial that everyone checks with their dentist before any appointment to make sure that the dentist still accepts Delta.

CTA's retirement parameters have changed including retirement age and employee contribution. "We are now in the yellow zone," said **Wei Pan**, "with a chance to turn green."

Jake Anderson, CSO, confirmed that Medicare Advantage is still on the radar and that they do not support it. Experience and investment are of concern to everyone. "We hit a pothole this year."





MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Robin Rose

One of our continuing goals has been to make REACTA a “household” name with **active** CTA staff, so that upon retirement they know who we are and will eagerly join their former colleagues in REACTA. Welcome to our newest REACTA members who have joined this year.

Marilyn Green	Terry Skotnes	Susana and Alfred Rodriquez
Roberto Gallegos	James Tom	Diane Borst
Debby Baker	Cindy Menzel	Kim Cheney
Mary McNulty	Marilyn Aden	Juan Furler (Spouse)
Penny Sevoian	Craig Hamilton	Tim and Marijke O’Neill
Quinnetta Gill	Tami Benton	Norma Ortiz
John Figone	Steve Savage	Frances Feldon (Spouse)
Denise Correia	Arleigh Kidd	

Another continuing goal has been to encourage current members who pay by check to switch from cash dues to automatic pension deduction. It is an easy and effortless way to remain a member, and you are never behind in your dues! Currently, automatic pension deduction is the only option for new membership enrollments. Thank You to these members who have made the switch:

Sandra Lee Young	Diane Lavigne	Josephine Park
Mary Sue Weston	Karen Kyhn	Diane Crow
Dixie Ditsler	Gerri Gonzales	Rhonda King
Michi Higashi	Becky Johnston	Ramon Gomez
Julie Nissen	Roseanne Becher	Mark Young
Priscilla Winslow		

If you know any of the following retirees who have not yet joined REACTA, please reach out and encourage them to join:**Region 1** Patricia Alvarez, Sophia Georgiadis, Sandra Jones, Carole Anne Luckenbach; **Region 2:** Tammy Brooks, Isabelle Garcia, Jackie Hanna; **Region 3:** Dawn Murray, Ingie Williams

Finally, it is always heartbreaking to lose some of our colleagues. This year we lost **Peter Haberfeld, Marjorie Baldwin, Tommye Hutto, Wiley Jones, Doug Appel, Dick Sawtelle, Audrey Ohlson Smith, Pat Drow, Nina Lyon, Ron McPeck.** May these CTA warriors rest in peace.

REACTA Membership Committee

Region 1: Maureen Keating, Shirley Horn, Kerry Moriarty, Roseanne Becher, Danita Keefe; Region 2: John Stephens, Marla Reyes; Region 3: Robin Rose, Patricia Williams, Gary Campbell; Region 4: Merri Furler, Craig Nelson, Alva Rivera, Ann Adler



WHAT

are you reading

Joanne Summa recommends The Good Lie, by A.R. Torre

Margaret Wallace recommends: Lessons in Chemistry, by Bonnie Garmus

Karen Stephens recommends: American Dirt, by Jeanine Cummins; Many Daughters of Afong Moy, by Jamie Ford

Susan Midori Jones recommends: Our Missing Heart, by Celeste Ng

Marianne McCarthy recommends: Horses by Geraldine Brooks

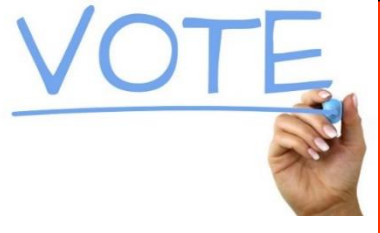
Ruthmary Cradler recommends: Prince Charles: The Passions and Paradoxes of an Improbable Life by Sally Bedell Smith

Priscilla Winslow recommends: Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell and Cloud Cuckoo Land by Anthony Doerr

Marianne McCarthy and **Edna Steele**, avid book readers, add to the book list.

Arleigh Kidd enjoys happy hour drinks with **Dom Summa** and **Conrad Olson** on his third day as a retiree.

Marijke O'Neill, new member spouse status, wins the new member drawing. Reminder that significant others can join for only \$15 a year. Welcome to **Karen Kyhn**, **Tim O'Neill**, **Marijke O'Neill**, **Christine Gale**, **Richard Gale**, **Arleigh Kidd**



ELECTIONS

Officers and Bylaws

Due to an error in assembling the Ballot mailing, the usual small blank envelope was not included. The board decided to amend the instructions as follows:

1. Fill out the ballot.
2. Fold ballot so that print side is hidden, insert into stamped envelope addressed to Pam Bowen, that was provided.
3. Legibly sign your name on the return address area of envelope, seal and mail.

All Ballots must be postmarked by November 30. Ballots counted early December

A big thank you to Election Committee for all the hard work of printing, collecting, and counting the ballots. This is not their first rodeo. They have been doing this for years.



Robin Rose, **Merri Fuhler**, **Shirley Horn** and **Joe Colton** are on the ballot for the new REACTA officers. Ballots are in the mail with a November 14th deadline for return.

ANNUAL MEETING

Provided Information and Thank You's



AGENDA

Call to Order

Minutes

Committee Reports:

Treasurer

Fiscal Oversight

Member Assistance/Legal

Membership Promotion

Scholarship Committee

Nominations/Elections

Health Trust

Reactor

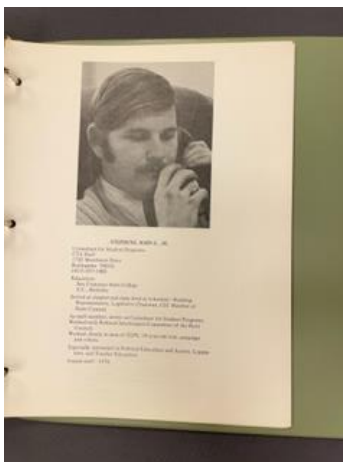
Social Activities

Budget Adoption

Elections Nominations

By Laws

Member Concerns/Issues



Alan Frey shares statistics from the Pension Trust.

Members listen to reports and vote on agenda items.

From the past to the future, CTA staff book from the past, shows **John Stephens** hard at work.

Marilyn Bittle, outgoing director at large, reports on scholarship recipients.

Call to Order started with 50+ members attending in person and 10+ zoom members.

REACTA budget and Oversight Committee is in good hands with **Felice Strauss**

	2022 Actuals as of 9/18/22	2023 Adopted Budget 10/4/2022
INCOME		
Members	10,250	15,000
Annual Meeting	2,250	2,500
Addl Scholarship Donations	0	500
Other	875	50
Total Income	11,937.50	18,050
EXPENSES		
Executive Board	265	3,000
Committees	974.76	9,600
Elections		200
Membership		3,000
Nominations		100
Political Education		200
Scholarship	92.70	2,000
Trusts	882.06	4,000
Other		100
Communications	999.12	2,950
Directory		50
Facebook		200
Hot Topics		50
Newsletter (REACTOR)		100
Website		300
CAS/CSO/CTA	570.20	1,500
Printing Mailing/Supplies	428.92	750
Membership & Advocacy	2,087.30	22,000
Annual Meeting		9,000
Member Assistance		4,000
Legal Expenses		5,500
Regional Activities	87.30	1,500
Scholarships	2,000.00	2,000
Other	1,020.00	100
Total Expenses	4,940.35	37,650
Total Income	11,937.50	18,050
FFCU	8/31/2022	
Convenience Checking	62,401.03	
Prime Checking	12,567.75	Scholarship 2000
Association Savings	28.07	
Total Assets	74,997.00	60,000



TREASURER'S REPORT

By: Felice Strauss

The Fiscal Oversight Committee recommendations

1. Do not increase dues cost of 2023; continue at \$60/30/15
2. Maintain the registration fee for the 2023 Annual Meeting at \$40



ANNALS of BARGAINING

By: Darrell Gifford

During the late 1980s, the Burlingame Hyatt was a favorite hotel for field staff summoned to the state headquarters of the California Teachers Association. The Professional Staff Organization bargaining team chose to reside there during several days of contract bargaining.

Being a cross section of staff, we were a motley crew. This was never more obvious than when we dined. Each day, before heading out to meet with the CTA bargaining team, we would eat breakfast in the hotel.

Ken Johnson would order his breakfast bacon rare. Really rare. As in tepid. **Wiley Jones** ordered his breakfast bacon well done. Really well done. As in charred. **Jeannette Logue** ordered vegetarian – or at least tried to. A room service employee once informed her that an entrée was not vegetarian because it included a beefsteak tomato. The rest of us settled for food *de jure*.

The experience was a teachable moment. Our diversity did not detract from our assignment. We were a team on a mission. The rare, the charred, and the vegetarian contributed to the process as did those who accepted the daily specials.

It made for a savory settlement.

BUDDY LIAISON PROGRAM

By: Ann Adler

The late John Prine captured the longing of AARP-aged folks for verbal communication with a song called *Hello in There*, a poignant piece about the need to talk to others as we grow older.

In the last year, the REACTA Membership Committee has created an offering for us folks that would provide an opportunity for a buddy/mentor as you begin your retirement years (or even if you have been retired) and face new opportunities and sometimes challenges. We call it the REACTA Buddy Program (RBP).

Our leadership began the process of rolling out this new support program at the Annual Meeting by asking for mentor volunteers. Now it is your turn to say *hello in there*.

If you would enjoy talking and listening to a fellow retiree, contact Ann Adler at Adlermvea@aol.com, text her at 951-990-4110 or fill out, and return the sign up below either by snail mail or uploaded. We are on track to train mentors virtually in January and provide resources.

Say *Hello in There* to your colleagues and friends!

- I wish to be a mentor to support a colleague
- I wish to have a "buddy"

Include your name, address, email, phone number and what department/region you worked in.





RETIREMENT TRUST REPORT

By: Alan Frey

BACKGROUND

The retirement Trust held its third quarter meeting last in Burlingame at the CTA Headquarters. The meeting was the first since the outset of COVID to be held in person.

The Trust operates through a Board of Trustees consisting of three members each from CSO, CAS, Management, and an equal number of alternate directors.

The Trust covers active employees, inactive vested former employees, and of course, pensioners and their beneficiaries. At the last census there were 462 active employees, 70 inactive vested former employees and 781 retirees.

At the current time there is one active employee for every 1.9 retirees.

The Trust operates through committees that are assisted by the professionals in its decision making. The Trust employs; Investment advisors, Auditors, Lawyers, and a plan manager-Benesys.

INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE

Unless you have been living in a cave it should be no surprise to you that the Stock Market has not performed well this calendar year. As of last week, the portfolio is down around 12% and there are still three months left in the Trust's fiscal year to either improve or drop further.

Many of you are familiar with the federal rules that categorize multi-employer pension plans by zones. Green-good, yellow-not so good and red-not good at all.

Currently our plan is in the yellow zone for 2022. While the current market is not good, the Trust has been helped significantly by the new Collective Bargaining Agreement recently negotiated with active CTA employees and management. Increased contributions, as a result of this compromise, have improved the long-term outlook of our plan.

Additional changes were made last year when the Trustees approved a Funding Improvement Plan (FIP) that took advantage of federal rules for amortizing and smoothing portfolio accounting.

At this point in time, the Plan is projected to be in the Green Zone in 2023 if investment returns are – 17% or better.

REACTA Officers

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Felice Strauss
Treasurer
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949-742-0377

Pam Bowen
Secretary
Pambow7@hotmail.com
951-235-1722

Marilyn Bittle
Director-At-Large
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562-434-7113



OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONES

By: MARGARET WALLACE, EDITOR

REACTA retirees have so many interesting stories to tell from their adventures while working for CTA to the new ones after retirement – interests that they didn't have time for when they were working.

Kelly Horner pursued her volunteer work with Habitat for Humanity. She



choose to start domestically in South Carolina and then ventured off to Ghana, Vietnam, Nepal, and Bulgaria. Last trip to Austin.

Kelly encourages everyone to go outside their comfort zones and try it. "Anyone can push a wheelbarrow and you learn so many other things along the way." She wants to go again soon.

Laura Terman, Region 3 staff, started her new journey into stand-up comedy by simply taking an acting class. Encouraged by her teacher, Laura went to a comedy stage to give "Open Mic" a chance and she was hooked.

"I'm basically shy but when I am up there, I become a new character who is acting."

She focuses her material on the older early crowd and is starting to have a following, enjoying her "poor me" comedy slant.



Robin Rose and Paul McKernan have seen her perform and really enjoyed her blossoming on the stage.

Committees

Membership Team: Robin Rose, Chair – Region 1, Maureen Keating, Theo Austin-Symth, Shirley Horn; Region 2, Marla Reyes, John Stevens; Region 3 and Chair, Robin Rose, Patricia Williams, Gary Campbell; Region 4, Ann Adler, *Craig Nelson*, Merri Furler; **Scholarship Committee:** Marilyn Russell Bittle, Joe Colton, Alice Clement, Kelly Horner, Jim Gutman; **Health & Welfare Trust Liaison:** Merri Furler **Retirement Trust Liaison:** Alan Frey. **REACTOR Newsletter:** Margaret Wallace, Editor, Dixie Ditsler, Pam Bowen, Kathie Casas. **Nominations & Elections Committee:** Dixie Ditsler. Pam Bowen, Kathie Casas; **Web Site & Facebook:** Kathie Casas; **Legal Expense Fund and Member Assistance Fund:** Felice Strauss, Mona Marra, Craig Nelson