

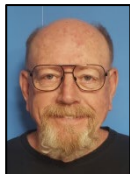


AMCRE

ASSOCIATION OF MENDOCINO COUNTY RETIRED
EMPLOYEES

Post Office Box 903 • Ukiah, CA 95482

FRIENDSHIP • UNITY • STRENGTH • GROWTH



AMCRE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another year has passed and hopefully this note finds you and yours healthy and happy!

Looks like we are getting a small pittance of a raise for 2024 of 3%, which is better than a sharp stick in the eye!! Truthfully 3% is the top amount that we can receive on our retirement so our retirement system can remain solvent for our future!

The December party was fun with Santa visiting and AMCRE's board members being sworn in by Sheriff Kendall. We look forward to having more members show up next year to visit with friends and retired coworkers.

Scholarships are back this year. AMCRE will be giving out two, and will be able to continue at that rate for some time.

I want to thank all the members who have upped their yearly dues to \$2.00 a month, \$24.00 a year. 300 members have increased their dues. THANK YOU!

Tom Ingram

President/ CRCEA representative

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

If you know of any of our members who could use a get well or sympathy card, email amcremendocino@gmail.com, with any details along with their correct names and addresses.
Thank you!

WELCOME NEW AMCRE MEMBERS

AS OF FEBRUARY 2024 1,030 Members Strong!

RETIREE NAME	RETIREMENT DATE	YRS OF SERVICE
JoAnna Quinci	09/17/2023	Sheriff's Office 33
Erin Walmsley	09/29/2023	Sheriff's Office 5
Cindy Roper	10/01/2023	Public Health 35
James Luther		Courts
Cheryll Manley	11/25/2023	District Attorney 28
Debra Anderson	12/24/2023	Probation
David Barrett	12/24/2023	Probation 17
Kathleen Burns		
Mark Duran	12/24/2023	Probation 24
Jennifer Dutton	12/24/2023	
Gary Freedman		
Gregory Hernandez	12/08/2023	
Florence Hubbs		
Margaret Luna		Sheriff's Office
Madelyn McCauley		
Daniel McConnell		
Boyd Nowlin		
Kelsey Rivera	12/10/2023	Social Services 30
Andrew Savage		Sheriff's Office
Cheryl Tiller		
Sherry Chappell	01/21/2024	Social Services 27
Lucila Martinez	01/21/2024	
Eric Riboli		Sheriff's Office
James Wells	01/21/2024	Sheriff's Office 28

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Suzane Hardie	02/01/2024	Associate
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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS .

Pg #

- Holiday Party at the Broiler Steak House
- Free COVID Tests
How to Store Lemons
- Meeting Dates
2024 Scholarship
- Phishing with MCERA
- Application for Membership and
Authorization for Automatic
- CRCEA Report
In Memoriam
May Luncheon Information

HOLIDAY PARTY AT THE BROILER STEAK HOUSE

By *Cyndi Montesonti/Party Coordinator*

What an enjoyable evening we had on Tuesday, December 12, 2023. It's always fun reuniting with our "young" friends at the Holiday Party. It was a smaller turnout than usual, but not unexpected. Before COVID we had anywhere from 80 to 99 people attending. This past December, 45 retirees showed up on the cold, rainy night. The AMCRE Board of Directors voted at the November Board Meeting to help decrease the costs from the \$45 per person the Broiler charged us for the complete meal, tax and tip to \$30 per person by chipping in \$15 each.

Sheriff Matt Kendall swore in the **2024 Board of Directors** as follows: Tom Ingram-President, Anita Toste-Vice-President, Cyndi Montesonti-Secretary, Cyndi is also the Scholarship Chair and Co-Editor of the Connection, Cyndie Richardson-Treasurer, Tom Ingram-CRCEA Rep and Board Members: **3-Year Directors:** Tom Deroches and Dorinda Miller. Dorinda is also our Membership Chair and Co-Editor of the Connection, **2-Year Directors:** Russell McCutcheon and Donna Glass, **1-Year Directors:** Juanie Cranmer and Sharon Wedegaertner. Sharon just joined our Board and we welcome her. Sharon replaced Ron Parker. Thank you Ron for all you helped with. We will miss you. Do come to some General Membership meetings now and then.

It was fun to have three Sheriffs in attendance. Sheriff Matt Kendall, former Sheriff Tom Allman, and former Sheriff Jim Tuso aka Santa Claus. After dinner, we welcomed retiree Brian L. Stevenson and his wife, Debra who ventured over for the dinner from Elk. Brian retired from Transportation on the Coast and led us in Christmas Carol singing. He did a great job. We plan to ask him next year to do that again. Thank you, Sheriff, thank you, Santa Claus and thank you, Brian and anyone else who made this dinner possible. Next year everyone should plan to come. The more the merrier.



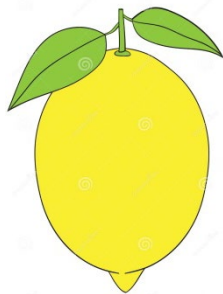
FREE COVID TESTS

Just in time for [winter virus season](#), the U.S. government is once again shipping free at-home COVID-19 tests to American households through the U.S. mail.

Each household can order four free tests on the website [covidtests.gov](#) or by calling 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489). If you skipped out on ordering a round of tests earlier this fall, you can now place a double order for eight free tests.

HOW TO STORE LEMONS

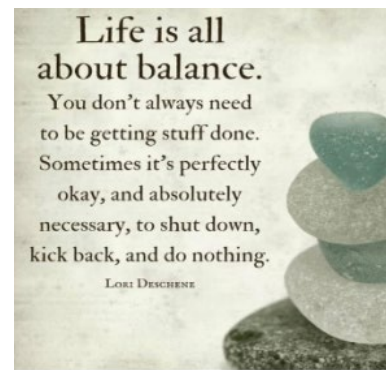
When life and trees gives you lemons, there's plenty more you can do with them than just make lemonade. Juiced, sliced, or zested, this sunny citrus gives brightness to any dish, from desserts and beverages to salads, smoothies, pastas and meals. I love lemons in everything. If you like cooking with lemon or adding it to drinks, you probably find yourself tossing a few into your cart whenever you visit the grocery store, but what's the best way to store lemons once you get home? What's more, what should you do when you have a cut lemon, extra juice, or leftover zest? Lemons aren't as perishable as, say, berries or bagged salad. Storing lemons properly keeps them fresh for longer and also maintains the soft texture of the rind and keeps their flavor intact. "When lemons are fresher, they are sweeter and less acidic than when they start to dry out, which happens quicker at room temperature," says Maddy Rotman, head of sustainability at Imperfect Foods.



Is the Refrigerator or Counter Best for Whole Lemons?

Whole lemons can be stored on the countertop but experts prefer to store their citrus in the refrigerator because this keeps the lemons fresh for longer. On the counter, they will last about a week, and in the fridge, they can last up to a month if the cut opened end is covered with plastic wrap and put in air tight containers. **One Exception: Unripe Lemons** If you happen to have unripe (green) lemons, store them on the counter until they turn yellow, then putting them in your **crisper drawer** in the refrigerator.

Storing Cut Lemons, Juice, and Zest: For leftover lemons and the right way to store half a lemon, lemon juice, or lemon zest: **Half a Lemon:** If you only use half



a lemon, cover the exposed end of the other half with plastic wrap, placing it in a sealed container, or using a Food Hugger or other produce saver to preserve it when you store it in the refrigerator. She says it's best to use it within a few days, before it dries out.

Lemon Juice: To preserve leftover lemon juice, keep it in a sealed container in the refrigerator. Stored like that, it will keep its fresh flavor for a couple of days. After that, it's best to use lemon juice for cooking or baking or freeze the rest by pouring it into ice cube trays and storing in a container when frozen. Measure 1 cup lemon juice into zip lock bags and stand in freezer and freeze. Mark on the outside how much juice you put in the bag. Keep it there until needed. I refill my lemon juice bottles with fresh lemon juice and leave in the frig. When the original bottle runs low, refill it with your fresh squeezed juice. **Lemon Zest:** Most of the

time, we want lemons for slicing or juicing so it's all about lemon flesh, but don't overlook the rind. While we don't usually eat it straight (unless we candy it), the rind has a useful component—lemon zest. Rotman urges home cooks to never throw away a lemon rind without zesting it first. "Lemon zest is so versatile in cooking and baking. Even if you don't need it right away, you can pop it in a sealed container and store it in the freezer." There are recipes for making salted lemon juice which includes the rinds. So good in Moroccan recipes, many soups and stews. Thaw when you're ready to make the lemony desserts you've been dreaming about.



MEETINGS

Below are the listed meeting dates for the Board of Directors and the General Membership for this year. These meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month, unless the president changes a date. Board meetings are usually held at 12:00 p.m. at Slam Dunk Pizza. General Membership Meeting, places to be announced.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS:

February 12

June 10

October 14 (special board meeting)

November 11

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

FREE RAFFLE INCLUDED

May 13

August 12

December 10

2024/2025 SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

By Cyndi Montesonti/Scholarship Chair

Financially 2023/2024 was a rough year for AMCRE. Things look brighter now. Always check our website. Two \$1000 Scholarships will be awarded for the 2024/2025 year. All the rules and the application are located on our website. If you are a member of AMCRE, and have children or grandchildren going to college, university or trade school; they will be able to submit an application for one of the two scholarships we are giving out for the 2024/2025 school year. They can receive \$500 each semester with proof of full-time enrollment into a college, university, or trade school and applying and submitting, per the directions in the application. A student who is returning to college, university or trade school for additional years and for graduating seniors who are going to enter college or trade school may also apply. Be sure all required letters of recommendations, transcripts, schedule of classes, and proof of enrollment are included in the application.

Go online and print out the application and read and follow all instructions. An original plus three (3) copies of everything are required. The student applying for a Scholarship should read all instructions in the **SCHOLARSHIP TAB** of our website **AMCRE.org**. Scholarship recipients, who previously won an award, may apply again.

If your child, grandchild or you won a Scholarship from AMCRE, be sure they read and understand the deadlines for submitting paperwork for their Award reimbursement.



On January 1, 2023, the AMCRE Board of Directors voted the deadline to receive the award money for fall semester must be submitted with required documents no later than October 31 each year. The deadline to receive the award money for spring semester must be submitted with required documents no later than June 1st each year. If there is a problem for the recipient to turn in the required paperwork by these dates, they must notify in writing to the Scholarship Chair to seek approval of an extension of time. Should the scholarship recipient fail to turn in the required paperwork by these deadlines, they forfeited their Scholarship award for that semester.

For further information, please contact Cyndi Montesonti, Scholarship Co-Chair @ (707) 489-7752 email: tomcyndichili@comcast.net

Check out our AMCRE WEBSITE:.....AMCRE.ORG

✓ **SENIOR DISCOUNTS:...** BEST RULE OF THUMB...ask ask ask!

Moved ? Notify the Membership Committee at amcremendocino@gmail.com, so AMCRE's records stay correct. Be sure you ALSO connect with the Mendocino County Retirement Association 625-B Kings Court, Ukiah, with any address change, telephone and email change (if applicable) as well.

Need to Write to AMCRE:

AMCRE

P.O. Box 903 Ukiah, CA 95482

or

Email to:

amcremendocino@gmail.com

Availability of *The Connection*

MEMBERS CAN NOW RECEIVE THE CONNECTION VIA EMAIL! If you are a member who would like to receive AMCRE notices by email, along with *THE CONNECTION* newsletter, just contact us at amcremendocino@gmail.com and **let us know!** We are gathering requests from members with this preference and will include you too! If we do not receive an email from you, then *THE CONNECTION* will be mailed. Thank you!

Please help us contain costs and only request the print version if it's necessary.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTION

If anyone would like to share a travel adventure or any other newsworthy information/articles, please email your article and pictures to:

amcremendocino@gmail.com

"Unfortunately, nothing has changed since December.

MCERA hopes to receive communication from the IRS leading to a new compliance statement in the near future. MCERA is cautiously optimistic that the IRS will approve a retroactive amendment to the plan document to reflect the plan's operations regarding certain service purchases to resolve the operational errors, but the IRS has not made a determination on this item yet. "

Thank you,

Doris L. Rentschler

Executive Director, MCERA

Look into businesses that allow you to make day trips to interesting places.

PHISHING WITH MCERA

By Cyndi Montesonti/Secretary,
Co-Editor *The Connection*

President Ingram suggested to Executive Director Doris Rentschler that AMCRE board members be allowed to see the presentation on phishing/and strong passwords and scams.

Doris Rentschler invited us to view the presentation on Monday, 2/26/24. In attendance were Board Members: President Tom Ingram, Secretary Cyndi Montesonti, Board Members Dorinda Kay Miller, Donna Glass and Juanie Cranmer and **Absent:** Vice-President Anita Toste, Treasurer Cyndie Richardson, Sharon Wedegaertner, Tom Deroches and Russell McCutcheon). Doris and her staff attended training on the same subjects and decided to share with our Board of Directors. She talked about the importance of using strong passwords that could be your favorite phrase or using the first letter in each word of your favorite phrase. Passwords are now supposed to be 25 characters long and changed every 60 to 90 days. **NEVER SHARE YOUR PASSWORDS** and DO NOT MAKE EVERYTHING THE SAME PASSWORD. Twelve characters can make an adequate password. Use capitals, lower case letters, numbers and symbols. Don't forget your passwords. Keep them in a safe or a safe place at home.

It is important to remember that we all get strange emails that have links attached. If you aren't sure who the email came from, take your mouse and hover over the SENT email address. If it looks strange and you did not request it, "Don't click a link if you don't recognize it and especially if you didn't request it." **PHISHING:** Don't get reeled in. Criminals try to trick you. Do not give out personal and sensitive information, or click on malicious links or attachments. Internet crime reports were up 69%. The primary reason criminals go "Phishing" is for money. Sometimes they hold you for ransom or sell your information on the black market. Be careful. Distraction is the main reason people fall for phishing scams. 81% of data breaches are from stolen identity and information.

REMEMBER THESE 10 SAFE TIPS:

1. Never click on a link without checking it out. Put cursor over the email address where it came from. Do not click if you do not recognize it or it looks crazy.
2. Verify sender and the request. Call someone you know to confirm or the company from a real number off your credit card. Not from the email.
3. STOP, LOOK, THINK. Criminals and hackers play on emotions, urgency, don't take action right away. Watch out for the phone calls that say a relative was arrested. Hang up and call the relative or a family member. Never send money or give credit card info to strangers.
4. Don't share passwords. Best to create passwords or passphrases at least 20+ characters long. You can have a password that is 8 characters; however, it is not a very strong one.
5. Use different passwords for each site. No easy patterns, no birthdates, addresses, social security numbers, pet names etc.
6. Change passwords for sensitive websites every 60-90 days.
7. If password was compromised, change immediately.
8. Security questions should be hard to answer, but don't forget them and the answers.
9. Use extra security features, passwords and codes.
10. Use password generators at home or use pass phrases that are long. Keep them strong.

Just remember to keep your personal information just that: personal.

We appreciate your prompt signing and returning of this affidavit to MCERA asap. Thank you.

AMCRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Adopted 4/10/2023



ASSOCIATION OF MENDOCINO COUNTY RETIRED EMPLOYEES

Application for Membership

AND

Authorization for Automatic Deduction

By signing and submitting this form, I agree to become an Association of Mendocino County Retired Employees (AMCRE) member.

I hereby authorize Mendocino County Employees Retirement Association (MCERA) to deduct from my retirement benefit the **current membership dues*** and pay that amount to AMCRE.

Such deduction shall continue without requiring my reauthorization of the deduction, until I provide written notification to revoke this authorization.

Name Phone Number

Mailing Address

City State Zip Code

Email Address

Date Retired Years of Service Department

Signature Date

RETURN TO: Mendocino County Employees Retirement Association:

MCERA

625-B Kings Ct. Ukiah, CA 95482

* **Currently \$2 per month.** AMCRE will provide members with at least 60-days advance of any change in membership dues. You are required to maintain membership in AMCRE to have coverage under any Pacific Agency Group plans and coverages may be terminated without warning should your AMCRE membership lapse. Membership dues are paid in arrears and are deduction from the retirement benefit – i.e., the April dues are deducted from the benefit payment issued April 30th.

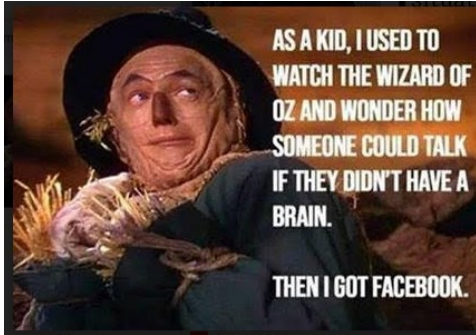
CRCEA

Report from the last CRCEA meeting:

- Went over old business
- Update on coming conference for 2024. Working on finding a venue that is not overpriced, but still a safe environment for the attendees.
- Nothing was discussed that provided threat to our retirement.

AMCRE President/CRCEA Delegate

Tom Ingram



AMCRE EXTENDS OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO
FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF RETIREES LISTED BELOW

RETIREE NAME		DATE
Yausen Epstein	HHSA	9/6/2023
Gerald Bruchler		10/9/2023
Christina Foucault	Public Works	11/2/2023
Cheryl Caudillo	Child Support	11/7/2023
John Colfax	Board of Supervisor	11/12/2023
Thomas Anderson	Associate	12/18/2023
Oliver Kolkman	Assessor	12/20/2023
Wilbert Uhlig	Road Dept	12/26/2023
Robert Hardie	Assessor	1/28/2024
Frank Seward	Sheriff's Office	1/24/2024
Joan Sherman		12/25/2023



Date: May 13, 2024
Time: noon
Location: Slam Dunk Pizza, Ukiah
Cost: \$14.00, includes tip, drink and a Limited Menu to choose from including the Pizza Buffet (Pizza, Soup, Salad)

The Scholarship Jar will be on the
registration table if you are interested
in donating.

Any questions email
amcremendocino@gmail.com

RAFFLE: Get a free raffle ticket for a chance to win 3--\$10.00 Prizes 1--\$20.00 Prizes
With the option of purchasing additional raffle tickets for \$1.00 each

----- **TEAR OUT AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO AMCRE** -----

Checks payable to **AMCRE** for \$14.00 per person.

Must RSVP; coupon and money received no later than April 29, 2024

(No refund after May 1, 2024)

Mail to: AMCRE – General Membership Meeting
Attn: Cyndie Richardson
P.O. Box 903
Ukiah, CA 95482

Member Name: _____ Telephone No. _____

Guest Name: _____



ASSOCIATION OF *M*ENDOCINO *C*OUNTY *R*ETIRED *E*MPLOYEES

Post Office Box 903
Ukiah, CA 95482

PRESORT STD

U.S. Postage

PAID

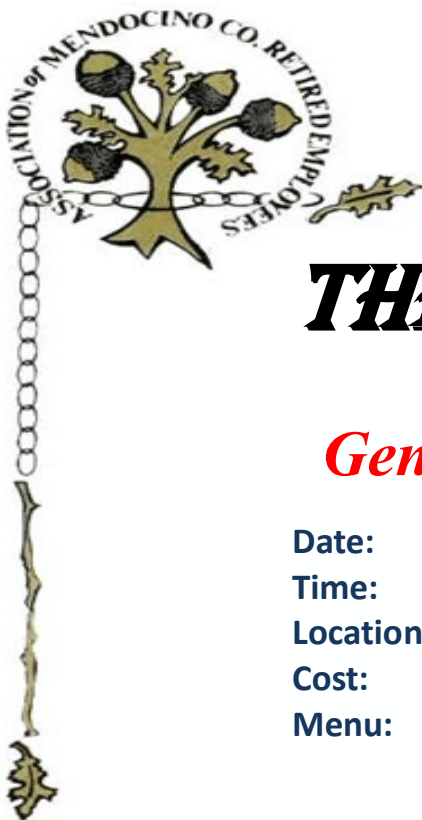
Ukiah, CA

Express-It

MOVING, or any
notification
changes?

NOTIFY AMCRE

Amcremendocino@gmail.com



FRIENDSHIP • UNITY • STRENGTH • GROWTH

THE CONNECTION

General Membership Meeting

Date: May 13, 2024
Time: noon
Location: Slam Dunk Pizza, Ukiah
Cost: \$14.00 (includes tip & drink)
Menu: Choice of item on a limited menu or
Pizza Buffet (Pizza, Soup, Salad)

See Page 7 for coupon that must be included with your check.