

THE COUNTY

BLADE



VOLUME 41, NO. 10

OCTOBER 2026

UNIT 19 MEMBERS RATIFY ONE-YEAR MOU WITH SAN LUIS OBISPO SUPERIOR COURT

FIND FEATHERS!



SLOCEA's mascot, **FEATHERS**, is hidden somewhere in this month's edition of The County Blade!

The **FIRST FIVE** SLOCEA members to find Feathers win a **\$5 JAMBA JUICE GIFT CARD!**

Email **INFO@SLOCEA.ORG** with the page number where you found Feathers for a chance to win!



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**ANNUAL GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
OCTOBER 22**

**WORKPLACE
HORROR STORIES
DON'T LET THESE
HAPPEN TO YOU!**

**WHEN
WORKPLACE
WORDS WEAR
COSTUMES**



SLOCEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

— SLOCEA MISSION STATEMENT —

The mission of the San Luis Obispo County Employees' Association is to advocate for fair compensation, safe working conditions, affordable healthcare, and a secure retirement for our members, who provide vital services to the public.

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VACANT

Seat 19

THE COUNTY BLADE

SLOCEA

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Labor Representative II

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Labor Representative II

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**HAVE A QUESTION?
CALL SLOCEA
805-543-2021**

Cover Image: Santa Rosa Creek in Cambria.
Photo Credit: John Crippen via iStock by Getty Images.

The opinions expressed in **The County Blade** do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the **San Luis Obispo County Employees' Association** unless so specified.

For advertising information, please call Tana Pigeon at 951-686-7575.

The County Blade is published digitally monthly, distributed to the SLOCEA membership through the website, email, and social media.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



JOIN US FOR

- ✓ The Annual Union Report
- ✓ Meeting of the Board of Directors
- ✓ Learn about the full range of AMBA benefits
- ✓ Food & Refreshments
- ✓ Prizes

... and MORE!

**OCTOBER
22**

5:30 pm

**SLO Vets Hall
801 Grand Ave
SLO**



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Unit 19 Members Ratify One-Year MOU With San Luis Obispo Superior Court

Emily Landis,
Executive Director



SLOCEA members in Court Supervisory Unit 19 have ratified a new one-year MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Superior Court of California, County of San Luis Obispo. The agreement covers October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027, and includes improvements to wages, healthcare contributions, bilingual pay, time-in-service benefits, and retirement protections.

While the majority of SLOCEA members work for the County of San Luis Obispo, SLOCEA also represents employees in two non-County bargaining units. Unit 19 represents supervisory employees of the San Luis Obispo Superior Court. Because the Court is a separate employer, SLOCEA negotiates their agreement directly with Court administration, independent of SLOCEA's negotiations with the County.

For this bargaining cycle, SLOCEA and the Unit 19 bargaining team made the strategic decision to pursue a one-year agreement. California's trial courts rely heavily on funding established through the State budget, and uncertainty surrounding future State funding made it difficult to assess the Court's financial position beyond the coming year. A shorter agreement allows Unit 19 members to secure meaningful improvements now while preserving the opportunity

“With members approving the agreement, Unit 19 will enter the new contract year with several immediate economic improvements and protections against rising benefit costs.”

to return to the bargaining table next year with a clearer picture of State funding and the Court's budget.

The tentative agreement was reached on September 1 and subsequently presented to Unit 19

members for a ratification vote. With members approving the agreement, Unit 19 will enter the new contract year with several immediate economic improvements and protections against rising benefit costs.



“

IMPROVEMENTS IN WAGES

Effective the pay period that includes October 1, 2026, Unit 19 employees will receive a 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). Employees will also receive a one-time \$1,000 lump-sum payment during the same pay period.

Together, these provisions provide both an immediate payment to employees and an ongoing increase in wages. Unlike the lump-sum payment, the 3% COLA becomes part of employees' regular salary going forward.

INCREASED COURT CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD HEALTHCARE

The agreement also increases the Court's monthly cafeteria contribution toward employee benefits beginning with the pay period that includes November 22, 2026. Increases range from \$60 to \$150 per month.

Additionally, the MOU provides additional protection against future increases in benefit costs. Effective December 2027, the Court's cafeteria contribution will

Unit 19 employees will receive a 3% cost-of-living adjustment

”

increase by the dollar amount of the premium increase for the lowest-cost CalPERS PPO plan, dental plan, and vision plan offered by the Court at the employee's applicable coverage tier.

RETIREMENT COST PROTECTION

The agreement provides another important protection against increased employee costs during the contract term. The Court will pick up 100% of any adjustments or increases to retirement plan contribution amounts for the duration of the agreement.

This provision ensures that increases in required retirement contributions during the contract term do not reduce the value of the economic improvements negotiated in the agreement.

IMPROVEMENTS TO BILINGUAL AND TIME-IN-SERVICE PAY

The agreement simplifies and improves bilingual compensation by eliminating the previous two-tier usage system. Under the new agreement, all eligible employees performing bilingual duties will receive \$150 per month.

Eligible employees will also see an increase in Time in Service Pay, with the monetary benefit increasing from \$500 to \$800. Employees eligible for the benefit may alternatively elect 16 hours off with pay.

These changes recognize both the additional value employees provide through bilingual duties and the experience and institutional knowledge of long-serving Court employees.

HOLIDAY CHANGES

The agreement includes two changes related to Court holidays. Cesar Chavez Day will be renamed Farmworkers Day, and the Court will return to observing Lincoln's Birthday as a Court holiday in 2027. Unit 19 employees will also retain their existing floating holiday for Fiscal Year 2026–2027.

LOOKING AHEAD

Although this is only a one-year agreement, it provides Unit 19 members with meaningful economic improvements while maintaining flexibility during an uncertain State budget environment. The combination of a 3% COLA, \$1,000 lump-sum payment, increased healthcare contributions, retirement cost protection, and improvements to bilingual and time-in-service pay provides tangible value to members over the coming year.

SLOCEA thanks the Unit 19 members who participated in the bargaining process and took the time to cast their ballots. Member participation is an essential part of collective bargaining and helps ensure that the priorities and decisions at the bargaining table reflect the employees we represent.



Workplace Horror Stories Don't Let These Happen to You!

By Brooke
Daphne
*Labor
Representative II*



October is the season for ghosts, ghouls, and things that go bump in the night. But some of the scariest stories we hear at SLOCEA have nothing to do with haunted houses. They happen right in the workplace.

Fortunately, many workplace horror stories can be avoided by knowing your rights, asking questions, and contacting SLOCEA before a small issue turns into something much scarier.

Fortunately, many workplace horror stories can be avoided by knowing your rights, asking questions, and contacting SLOCEA before a small issue turns into something much scarier.

"I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A MEETING..."

Your supervisor asks you to stop by their office for a "quick conversation." A few minutes later, you realize you're being questioned about something that could potentially lead to discipline.

Don't be afraid to ask what the meeting is about. If you reasonably believe an investigative interview could result in discipline, you have the right to request union representation. If a meeting suddenly takes an unexpected turn, you can also ask to pause the conversation and contact SLOCEA.

"I SIGNED IT BECAUSE THEY TOLD ME TO..."

A document lands in front of you and you're asked to sign it immediately. You aren't sure what your signature means, but you don't want to cause a problem.

Before signing something you don't understand, **ask what your**

signature represents and whether you can have time to review the document. Depending on the circumstances, a signature may simply acknowledge receipt, but it is always better to understand exactly what you are signing.

When in doubt, contact your SLOCEA Labor Representative.



"I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG, BUT I WAITED..."

You think your department may be violating the MOU, but you decide to wait and see what happens. Weeks or months go by before you contact SLOCEA.

The problem? **Some workplace rights have deadlines.** Grievances, appeals, and other employment matters may have specific timelines that can affect your options.

You don't need to know whether something is actually a contract violation before contacting us. That's what we're here for. If something doesn't seem right, reach out early and let us take a look.

"EVERYONE SAYS THAT'S JUST THE WAY WE DO IT HERE..."

Your coworkers tell you a questionable practice has been happening for years, so you assume it must be allowed. Not necessarily.

Past practice can matter in labor relations, but "we've always done it this way" doesn't automatically mean a practice complies with the MOU. If you have questions about scheduling, standby, pay, or another workplace issue, SLOCEA can help you determine what the contract actually says.

"I DELETED EVERYTHING..."

That email from your supervisor seemed unimportant. Those text messages were months old. Your notes from the meeting were cluttering your desk. Then a workplace dispute arose, and suddenly those records mattered.

If you are dealing with an ongoing workplace concern, **keep relevant emails, documents, notices, and your own notes about important conversations.** When appropriate, write down dates, who was present, and what was discussed while the details are still fresh.

Good documentation can turn "I remember it happening this way" into a much clearer picture of what actually occurred.

THE MORAL OF THE STORY?

The best workplace horror story is the one that never happens.

You don't have to wait until you're facing discipline, considering filing a grievance, or dealing with a major workplace problem to

call SLOCEA. If you have a question about your MOU, workplace rights, pay, working conditions, or a conversation with management that doesn't seem quite right, reach out to your SLOCEA Labor Representative.

When in doubt, contact SLOCEA early. We would much rather answer a quick question today than untangle a workplace nightmare tomorrow.

When Workplace Words Wear Costumes

Jennifer Tate,
*Labor
Representative II*



October is a season for costumes, so it seems appropriate to talk about words that are familiar but take on a different identity when they enter the workplace.

We use words such as harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and grievance in ordinary conversation all the time. There is this fly that got into my office that's been harassing me all day. My cat knocked a glass off my counter in retaliation for being put on a diet. And I've aired my grievances about poor service.

In everyday conversation, these words communicate how an experience feels. However, in the workplace, the same words have very specific meaning, often legally defined, and require particular facts.

That distinction matters because the words we use help determine which questions are asked, what action to take, what process to use, and what remedies may be available.

“

In everyday conversation, these words communicate how an experience feels. However, in the workplace, the same words have very specific meaning

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HARASSMENT

In everyday language, harassment can mean repeatedly bothering, criticizing, or frustrating someone. A coworker who constantly bothers you may feel harassing. A supervisor who closely reviews work may make you feel scrutinized.

In employment law, unlawful harassment generally refers to unwelcome conduct connected to a protected characteristic, such as race, sex, disability, religion, age, or sexual orientation. A hostile work environment claim also requires conduct serious or frequent enough to meet an established legal standard. (See [Workplace Harassment 101](#) in September's issue).

That doesn't mean falling short of unlawful harassment is acceptable. Someone may be rude, demeaning, overly critical, or extremely difficult to work with without their behavior

meeting the legal definition of harassment. The conduct still needs to be addressed, but the appropriate way to address it will be different.

DISCRIMINATION

We commonly use discrimination to describe unfairness or different treatment. In the workplace, however, employees are treated differently for many reasons. They have different assignments, responsibilities, qualifications, schedules, performance histories, or operational circumstances.

Unlawful employment discrimination generally involves an employment decision or adverse treatment because of a protected characteristic.

Seeing that another employee received something you didn't receive may reasonably cause you to ask questions. However, it does not, by itself, establish discrimination.



We may need to know whether the employee was similarly situated, who made the decision, what reason was given, and whether facts connect the difference in treatment to a protected characteristic. That employee may even be receiving an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act to allow them to perform their job duties.

RETALIATION

In ordinary conversation, retaliation may mean any negative response that follows something we said or did. At work, an employee may worry that a supervisor's tone changed after the employee raised a concern or that a new assignment was intended as a punishment.

Legally protected retaliation generally requires more than one event occurring after another. It involves an adverse action taken because an employee engaged in activity protected by a particular law or labor right. A supervisor moving an employee's desk location because they continually miss deadlines may feel like a punishment, but it's not retaliation.

Timing can be relevant, but timing alone doesn't establish motive. We would need to identify the protected activity, the action that followed, and facts suggesting a connection between them.

GRIEVANCE

The word grievance is often used synonymously with complaint.

Words matter, but facts matter more. Before deciding which label applies, start with the simplest version: What happened?

However, a Grievance is not simply something someone is unhappy about. For public employees, a Grievance is a dispute between one or more employees and the employer involving the interpretation, application or enforcement of an ordinance, rule, policy, practice or agreement.

This means a workplace decision can feel unfair without being grievable. Management may make decisions employees dislike while remaining within its contractual authority.

That doesn't necessarily end the conversation though. A concern might be addressed through a supervisor, department leadership, Human Resources, another administrative process or available avenue. It just might not be something that can be challenged through the outlined grievance procedure.

WHY THIS DISTINCTION MATTERS

When we ask follow-up questions after receiving a report of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or another serious concern, the purpose is not to minimize the experience or defend conduct.

We are trying to determine what occurred, what the available facts

support, and what process fits the situation.

Sometimes it's exactly the right word. Sometimes the experience and feelings are real and concerning, but the legal or contractual label doesn't fit. And sometimes stress, incomplete information, or assumptions about motives have made the situation appear different from what additional facts ultimately show.

Choosing a different word doesn't mean that nothing happened. It doesn't mean that the impact wasn't real or difficult to experience. It may mean someone experienced disrespect, poor communication, inconsistency, personality conflict, or a management decision they reasonably disagree with. But describing the conduct as specifically as possible helps identify what can be done about it.

Words matter, but facts matter more. Before deciding which label applies, start with the simplest version: What happened? What was said or done? When did it occur? Who was involved? What information supports the conclusion?

Once those questions are answered, then we can determine what the situation should be called and, more importantly, what comes next.



FSA Enrollment Reminders: Choose Carefully!

Carrie McGrath,
Labor Representative II

Members have lost money! Don't let it happen to you!

As benefits enrollment approaches, remember that eligible employees may enroll in a Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and a Healthcare Flexible Spending Account.

Please review your elections carefully before submitting them. Make sure you meet the eligibility requirements for each program, have eligible expenses or dependents as applicable, and select an election amount you realistically expect to use during the plan year. For full details, please see the county benefits page.

Important: Incorrect elections may result in the



Important: Incorrect elections may result in the forfeiture of funds, even if the mistake was unintentional.

forfeiture of funds, even if the mistake was unintentional. We hate having to tell a member that they cannot receive funds because they enrolled incorrectly or waited too long to request reimbursement.

BEFORE FINALIZING YOUR BENEFITS ENROLLMENT:

- Double-check that you selected the programs you intended to enroll in.
- Confirm that you meet the eligibility requirements.
 - Carefully consider how much you elect to contribute.
 - Make sure you understand the rules for using your funds and requesting reimbursement.

IMPORTANT FSA INFORMATION

If you enroll in a Dependent Care FSA, please keep the following in mind:

- Funds must be available before you can spend them.
- Elections generally cannot be changed during the plan year unless you experience a qualifying event or permitted change in status.
- Save your receipts! Reimbursement requires an itemized invoice or acceptable documentation.
- Use it or lose it: Unused or incorrectly elected funds are forfeited. Plan carefully and meet all plan deadlines.

HEALTH CARE FSA REMINDER

Your Health Care FSA account stops on the last day of active employment.

You will have 60 days from separation to submit receipts for eligible expenses that occurred during your employment.

Take a few extra minutes to review your enrollment. A careful election now can help prevent problems later!

COLLABORATING TO FORM A UNIFIED, WELL-INFORMED, AND ACTIVELY ENGAGED MEMBERSHIP!

Listed by Department

AIRPORT

Ben Franco

BU 01 - San Luis
Obispo Airport
Airport Operations
Specialist

ANIMAL SERVICES

Crystal Cullen

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Animal Control Officer

ASSESSOR

Miranda Donaldson

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Appraiser II

Chelsea Hendron

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Geographic Information
Systems Analyst II

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Sam Cvetovac

BU 01 - Arroyo Grande
Adult Services
Behavioral Health
Clinician II

Savannah Donovan

BU 01 - Paso Robles
- Drug & Alcohol
Behavioral Health
Specialist II

Janet Soto

BU 01 - Arroyo Grande
Youth Services
Behavioral Health
Clinician II

Emma Sturm

BU 01 - Atascadero
Adult Services
Behavioral Health
Clinician II

CLERK-RECORDER

Lucia Maceri

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Clerk-Recorder Assistant II

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Beth Raub

BU 05 - San Luis Obispo
Victim Witness Supervisor

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Allen Dailey

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Geographic Information
Systems Analyst III

LIBRARY

Chelsea Cutler

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Library Associate III

Rosa Flores

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Library Associate III

Kate Mitchell

BU 01 - Arroyo Grande
Librarian

PLANNING AND BUILDING

Angela Garcia

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Building Plans Examiner I

PROBATION

Esther Santiago

BU 13 - San Luis Obispo
Departmental Personnel
Technician

PUBLIC HEALTH

Norma Domingo

BU 13 - San Luis Obispo
Accounting Technician

Elizabeth Farrington

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Public Health
Microbiologist I

Kelsey Quetsch

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Environmental Health
Specialist I

SHERIFF-CORONER

Crissie Danley

BU 13 - Records
& Warrants
Legal Clerk II

SOCIAL SERVICES

Heather Griffin

BU 01 - Arroyo Grande
Employment Resource
Specialist III

Freddy Hernandez

BU 01 - San Luis Obispo
Program Review Specialist

Nate Larsen

BU 05 - Paso Robles
Employment Services
Supervisor

Mark McCullough

BU 01 - Nipomo
Employment Resource
Specialist III

Thomas McGarvey

BU 05 - San Luis Obispo
Employment Services
Supervisor

Rita Villaseñor

BU 01 - Paso Robles
Employment Resource
Specialist III

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A WAY TO GET INVOLVED WITH SLOCEA, CONSIDER BECOMING A STEWARD

ELIGIBILITY: You must be a SLOCEA member for at least one year.

As a Steward you will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of your rights as a public employee.
- Learn how to be an advocate and source of information in your workplace.

To learn more, please contact Brooke Daphne or Carrie McGrath at info@slocea.org or 805-543-2021.

Open Enrollment Reminders

October 2-16, 2026!

County Benefits Team

Open Enrollment is your annual opportunity to make benefit changes for the new plan year, effective January 1, 2027.

While many benefits will remain the same, continue reading to review several important updates and enhancements.

REMINDER

If you do not act during Open Enrollment, your current benefits will automatically roll over, except waiving medical coverage or funding a tax savings account.

If you waive County medical coverage, you must upload Proof of Other Group Coverage in BenXcel.net. Review your [MOU](#) for Proof of Other Group Coverage eligibility and requirements for waiving County medical insurance.

HOW TO ENROLL

To complete your 2027 Open Enrollment, login at [BenXcel.net](#). Visit our webpage for the single-sign-on link, [slocounty.ca.gov/oe](#).

NEW CHANGES

VOYA Guaranteed Issue Opportunity - During Open Enrollment, eligible employees can elect up to \$300,000 in coverage with no health questions asked!



New! Telus Health - Members participating in Voya benefits now have access to TELUS Health, offering confidential, 24/7 support for you and your household, including counseling, legal and financial guidance, work-life resources, and more.

GLP-1 Changes - Effective January 1, 2027, GLP-1 medications prescribed for weight management will no longer be covered under County medical plans. GLP-1 medications prescribed for the treatment of Type 2 diabetes will continue to be covered in accordance with plan guidelines.

Carrum SUD Program - Carrum Health's Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Program is available to enrolled members and dependents (18+) to provide confidential, evidence-based treatment for alcohol and substance use disorders often at little-to-no cost.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We have events throughout October's Open Enrollment to support you!

BenXcel Workshop – Need help navigating BenXcel enrollment elections and uploading required documentation? The Benefits Team will be able to help on October 7 & 15 in the Govt Center, Room 361.

Benefits 1:1 – Schedule a Teams call to the Benefits Team for support with making your benefit elections! Available October 8 & 14. Sign up [here](#).

WEBINARS

Join your Benefits Team for a variety of topics this Open Enrollment.

Delta Dental: Get the Most from your Dental Benefits - Learn how to find an in-network dentist, understand out-of-network coverage and reimbursement, estimate costs before receiving care, and take advantage of available preventive care benefits. October 12, 1:00 PM Sign up [here](#).

RESOURCES

Additional Open Enrollment information, such as 2027 cafeteria and premiums, are available at:
[slocounty.ca.gov/oe](#).



HUMAN RESOURCES

Learning & Development Center Newsletter
October Blade 2026

CONVERSATIONS WITH LEADERSHIP

Join us on Thursday, October 8th at 10:00 a.m. for the continuation series of Conversations with Leadership! This is a unique opportunity to hear from two County Department Heads about their paths to executive leadership, lessons learned, and key successes along the way. [Click here](#) to enroll. We hope to see you there!

AVAILABLE CLASSES

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO ENROLL IN UPCOMING CLASSES

- Strengths 2.0 - October 6th - 1:00pm-4:00pm
- Red Cross Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED - October 7th - 9:30am-12:00pm
- Red Cross Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED - October 7th - 1:00pm-3:30pm
- New Employee Orientation - October 14th - 9:00am-4:30pm
- Supervisor Essentials - October 22nd - 12:30pm-4:30pm

Verbal Judo

Teaches the skills necessary to remain centered and focused during any verbal circumstance.

[October 1st - 9:00am-11:00am](#)

Tools and Resources

In case you need a refresh!

- [Mentorship Toolkit](#)
- [New Employee Toolkit](#)
- [Onboarding for Supervisors Toolkit](#)
- [Strengths Toolkit](#)
- [Supervisor Toolkit](#)
- [Training Liaisons Toolkit](#)

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH!

[CLICK HERE FOR OCTOBER CLASSES](#)

JOIN THE COUNTY'S INFORMATION SECURITY TEAM AND PARTICIPATE IN A SERIES OF FUN, FRIENDLY TABLETOP EXERCISES WHERE YOU'LL LEARN PRACTICAL TIPS AND GET A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT THE COOL TOOLS THE TEAM USES TO KEEP CYBER CRIMINALS OUT OF OUR ENVIRONMENT. IN ADDITION, THE TEAM WILL BE HOSTING "OFFICE HOURS" WHERE YOU CAN VIRTUALLY MEET THE TEAM AND GET YOUR SECURITY RELATED QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Retired Or Retiring?

You Need A Plan

(Part 2)

Dennis Johnson,
SLOCREA Treasurer



Several years back, a supervisor told me about a couple books that had to do with retirement that he really enjoyed. He said they were full of good information, easy to read, and had some humor in them as well.

There are several retirement related books on the market but the two he was referring to were both written by Ernie J. Zelinski with the first book being called, "How to Retire Happy, Wild, and Free - Retirement wisdom you will not get from your financial advisor." and the second called, "The Joy of Not Working - A book for the retired, unemployed, and overworked." I highly recommend reading these books, even if you are already fully retired.

Excerpts from "How to Retire Happy, Wild, and Free" ...

What will you do with your time if you have never learned how to enjoy your leisure?

Eventually, you may end up asking yourself, "Okay, genius. What do I do now?"

In the Western world there is a big misconception about what contributes to a happy and fulfilling retirement. Many people have an idealized concept of how great and wonderful life after work is going to turn out.

This vision can include no deadlines, no rush-hour traffic, no mean bosses, exotic travel,

Regardless of how it turns out, retirement normally turns out far different from what people first envision.

hanging around cappuccino bars, and sleeping in late every day. Let's not forget the freedom to do what you want, whenever you want to do it.

Retirement can be both exciting and demanding, bringing new challenges, new experiences, and new uncertainties."

Regardless of how it turns out, retirement normally turns out far different from what people first envision. For some, it is a big disappointment. For others, it is merely a big annoyance. And still for others — much to their delight — retirement becomes an opportunity to live life like never before.

This I can assure you: You won't find genuine joy and satisfaction

by spending all your time sleeping, relaxing, loafing, and watching TV, hoping to live up to the ideal of a true idler. Many retired people with nothing to do wind up depressed and hating retirement. In this regard, Florida physician Richard Neubauer concluded that many people experience a rapid decline in physical and mental health soon after retirement — often due to idleness and feelings of uselessness.

This book was and still is very helpful to me and I highly recommend reading this. It comes in ebook format as well as paperback.

Make your retirement successful! Be prepared! It's a lot more than just being financially cozy.

ABOUT SLOCREA

Everyone who receives a pension from Pension Trust is eligible to join. First year is free, then dues are \$15.00 per year or \$40.00 for 3 years. Such a deal!

We are an all volunteer organization. Each year we have 3 lunch meetings with a speaker, one holiday luncheon with entertainment, and one BBQ/potluck picnic (outdoors).

www.slocrea.org

To retire happy, wild, and free, you must stay active. It's also important that you have goals and dreams. Retirement can be a time for life's best moments, provided that you take the time to plan what you are going to do with the rest of your life.

Just as important, you must be motivated enough to follow your dreams, and change course if adversity intrudes to put a dent in your plans. The most fortunate of retirees are those who through good planning, experimentation, and risk-taking succeed in making retirement the best time of their lives.

In short, it's up to you to design a lifestyle that is as relaxing and invigorating as you want it to be. No one else is going to do it for you. Recreating yourself as a retired person will be

challenging, but through patience and positive thinking, "you can do it. The rewards will be more than worth it.

LIST THINGS OF WHAT WE DO

My wife volunteers at the local mission as a docent, she rings the bells to Mass for the 9:00am service and is active with 2-3 committees (decorating the church, serving donuts and coffee after service, ...)

At home she enjoys cooking, she loves doing things outside like gardening, she has her business/hobby, actively oversees her mom's care at a memory care facility, goes to palates twice a week, attends classes at a local gym 2-3 times a week, reads, relaxes some during the day to watch a couple daytime game shows then back at it. She is driven and follows through with what she wants to do. We do some traveling throughout the year either just the

two of us or with family and or friends. We also meet with friends during the week or maybe a couple to few times a month to enjoy our friendships.

For me, as I said in Part 1, although I seem to be pretty busy, I do not feel fulfilled in what I am doing. I want more. I am still working on that.

From this, do you have a viable/sustainable plan?

All in all, the goal is to stay active. Walk, exercise, do not become complacent or lazy. That in itself is a bad addiction that is a slow killer. Also, join SLOCREA (San Luis Obispo County Retired Employees Association). You get to meet and mingle with other retirees and share ideas, friendships, etc. It is a great group of people.

May your time to retirement and during retirement be filled with self-worth and happiness. Mine is mostly from my faith, my family and my friends.



SEPTEMBER'S FIND FEATHERS WINNERS!



1. Rebecca Drake - District Attorney
2. Jeanette Noriega - Dept Social Services
3. Megan Bruenning-Van Artsdalen - Library
4. Dan Liddell - Sheriff-Coroner
5. Charisse Peterson - Dept Social Services

Service Anniversaries & New Members

The following County, Courts and LOCSD employees will reach a significant service anniversary during the month of OCTOBER. We list those employees who have reached their 5th, 10th, 15th and higher years of employment. These anniversaries represent the hire date of our members, not time in service accumulation.

Congratulations to these employees for their years of service!

OCTOBER SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

First Name	Last Name	Department	Years Of Service	First Name	Last Name	Department	Years Of Service
David	Jones	Golf Courses	37	Karina	Mora	Dept. of Social Serv.	19
Erika	Torres-Contreras	Public Health Dept.	28	Monique	Matta	Library	18
Frank	Asuncion	LOCSD	27	Maria	Buenrostro	Dept. of Social Serv.	16
Kathleen	Saffell	Library	26	Thomas	Arnold	Dept. of Social Serv.	16
John	Soderlund	Dept. of Social Serv.	25	Ryan	Richmond	Auditor-Contrlr-Treas-Tax-Coll	16
Jim	Tinker	Facilities Management	25	Kenneth	Hutchinson	Facilities Management	15
Alice	Henderson de Rodriguez	Dept. of Social Serv.	25	Deborah	Medrano	Behavioral Health	15
Angela	Vasta	Public Health Dept.	25	Cheryl	Ku	Planning Dept.	15
Michelle	Freeman	Planning Dept.	24	Justin	Smith	Public Works ISF	10
John	Rogers	ITD	23	Marisol	Mariscal	Behavioral Health	10
Shannon	Negrete	Clerk-Recorder	21	Stephen	Ewers	Auditor-Contrlr-Treas-Tax-Coll	10
Michael	Blakely	Public Works ISF	21	Anneliese	Kindem	Behavioral Health	5
Jason	Boardman	Fleet Serv. ISF	21	Kendra	Cover	Behavioral Health	5
Steven	Jones	Public Works ISF	21	Michelle	Brown-Silva	Public Health Dept.	5
Matthew	Thompson	Dept. of Social Serv.	21	Coleen	Buckley	Behavioral Health	5
Raymond	Bailey	Dept. of Social Serv.	20	Brandon	Robinson	Public Works ISF	5
Bernabe	Rubio	Public Health Dept.	20	Jocelyn	Prieto-Garcia	Agricultural Commissioner	5
Teresa	Johnson	Dept. of Social Serv.	19	Jennifer	Phinney	Behavioral Health	5
Angela	Spannbauer	Assessor	19	Paula	Hernandez	Dept. of Social Serv.	5
Mayra	Garcia	Dept. of Social Serv.	19				

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Name	Department	Name	Department
Jeffery Huskey	Public Works	Gabrielle Roberts	District Attorney
Jared Zimbelman	Public Works	Andrew Greene	Assessors

ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

SLOCEA Board of Directors

- Executive Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Finance Committee
- Bylaws Committee
- Members Benefit Committee
- Academic Scholarship Committee
- Summer Childcare Committee
- SLOCEA Political Action Committee (SLO PAC)
- Steward Committee
- County Healthcare Committee: Four Bargaining Unit Delegates
- Strike Committee

DON'T MISS THESE MEETINGS!

SLOCEA Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, October 22, 2026, following the General Membership meeting at SLO Vets Hall

SLO County Board of Supervisors Meetings

All meetings are conducted in person at the BOS Chambers. Watch online by going to the County's home page and clicking "Watch Live Video".
Tuesday, October 6, 2026 @ 9:00 AM
Tuesday, October 20, 2026 @ 9:00 AM

SLOCREA Meetings

Oct. 6th Contact SLOCREA for more information.

SLO County Pension Trust Board Of Trustees Meeting

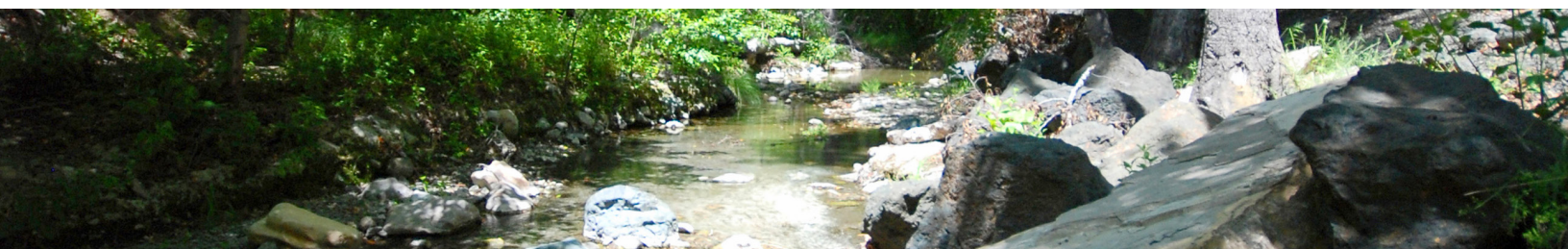
October is a non-meeting month



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS!

First Name Last Name	Birthday	First Name Last Name	Birthday	First Name Last Name	Birthday
Sean Ptaszenski	10/01	Molly Maguire	10/10	Frances Contreras	10/22
George Jackson	10/01	Reginald Holmes	10/10	Karen McCoy	10/22
Angelina McKee	10/02	Mikayla Anderson	10/11	Brian Samaniego	10/22
Fabiola Michel	10/02	Caiti-Jane Dolores	10/11	Elaine Hubble	10/22
Shayla Herndon	10/02	Hartley Hall	10/11	Ryan Minetti	10/22
Anthony Girolo	10/02	Melissa Perez	10/11	Linda Levin-Baptista	10/22
Ashley Arzola	10/02	Audrey Johnson	10/11	Ericka Scott	10/22
Jacob Hudson	10/02	Joshua Naylor	10/12	Ariel Farrior	10/23
Crystal Kirkland	10/02	Evan Estabrook	10/12	Maria Guevara	10/23
Celeste Ward	10/03	Stephen Ewers	10/12	Victoria Pulma-Zimmerman	10/23
Elizabeth McKenzie	10/03	Gwen Gipe	10/13	Jennifer Davidge	10/24
Ricky Hill	10/03	Skyler Fleming	10/13	Catherine Cooper	10/24
Cristina Solomon	10/03	Susan Halsell	10/14	Cindy Duerksen	10/24
Miriam Barajas	10/03	Haley Luna	10/14	Leslie Rowell	10/24
Soul Berna	10/03	Elva Magallon	10/14	Brooke Parker	10/24
Kayla Kerrigan	10/03	Barbara Bowden	10/14	Hudson Housley	10/24
Teresa Solis	10/03	Jesse Glazier	10/14	Leticia Ramirez	10/25
Delfina Navarro-Estrada	10/04	Taylor Foxen-Davis	10/14	Derek Brebes	10/25
James Wilber	10/04	Jeffrey Salsbury	10/15	Margarita Ibarra	10/25
Nancy Toledo	10/04	Ruby Iriarte Vega	10/15	Denise Cirisan	10/26
Laura Beltran	10/04	Kristina Paramore	10/15	Iris Martin	10/26
Diane Mann	10/04	Monique Nelson	10/16	Tommie Lehar	10/26
Scott Curtis	10/04	Melody Hanshew	10/16	Ashley Elliott	10/26
Maria Medina	10/04	Tina Phipps	10/16	Yesenia Camarillo	10/27
Anna Houston	10/05	Ranvir Singh	10/17	Lucien Gamache	10/27
Katharine Fraser	10/05	Jennifer Johnston	10/17	Danielle Holmes	10/27
Ryan Roth	10/05	Rosalind Willis	10/17	Mohamed Fahmy	10/27
Claudia Perez	10/05	Jacob Bond	10/17	Bernabe Rubio	10/27
Yesenia Mora	10/05	Kathleen Cochran	10/18	Zachary Hubbard	10/28
Amanda Heisdorf	10/05	Elizabeth Raub	10/18	Tanner Arellanes	10/28
Santos Rincon	10/06	Kevin Zarate Camacho	10/18	Watanapron Willis	10/28
Divina Diaz	10/06	Sandra Yerena	10/18	Michael McHaney	10/29
Kevin Goodman	10/07	Victor Sellinger	10/18	James Tomac	10/29
Shannon Fissori	10/07	Kevin Selman	10/18	Sarah Miller	10/29
Vanessa Gutierrez	10/07	Jacob Smith	10/18	Jayda Monreal	10/29
Julio Ramirez	10/07	Eric Valencia	10/19	Jennifer Summerell	10/30
Vincent Custodio	10/07	Fernando Alamillo	10/19	Aracely Maldonado	10/30
Alma Calzada	10/07	Arlene Parto	10/19	Thomas Donlon	10/30
Coleen Buckley	10/07	Rebecca Higbee	10/19	Rosa Flores	10/30
Antonio Ruiz Murillo	10/08	Isabella Hagwood	10/20	Jose Cervantes Hidalgo	10/30
Matthew Hernandez	10/08	Jocelyn Zacapa	10/20	Joseph Sparling-Gomez	10/31
Mahsa Maraghechi	10/08	Juana Gomez Reyes	10/20	Jackson Luepke	10/31
Lydia Aguayo	10/08	Jill Caggiano	10/20	Jorge Robles Garibay	10/31
Danielle Evans	10/08	Kylie Hulsmann	10/20		
Adrian Torres	10/09	Noemi Mariscal	10/21		
Nancy Sutherland	10/09	Ryan Larson	10/21		
Alissa Esenarro	10/09	Kevin Maxwell	10/21		
Nicole Gutierrez	10/10	Kendra Scott	10/21		
Alejandro Alvarez	10/10	Jesus Cardenas Magana	10/21		
Kimberly Douglass	10/10	Jessica Sanchez	10/21		

If your birth date is not listed above it is because we do not have it in our database. Please help us keep our records up to date by contacting us at 805-543-2021.





LIVE LIFE, UNINTERRUPTED

KEEP LIVING YOUR WAY.

You can, with these benefits and discounts from **SLOCEA & AMBA**:

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San Luis Obispo County Employees Association



AMBA

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & LINKS TO KNOW



Survivor's Endowment Grant

San Luis Obispo County Employees' Association
Survivor's Endowment Grant Program
Enrollment and Recipient Designation Form

As a benefit of Association membership, every SLOCEA member in good standing may enroll in the Association's Survivor's Endowment Grant Program. The program currently pays a \$2,000 cash grant, upon the death of the member, to the member's designated recipient ("Grant Designee"). Although this is an insurance program, the "Grant Designee" is similar to a beneficiary for a life insurance policy. Enrollment in the Survivor's Endowment Grant Program is **not** free to SLOCEA members. To enroll, please complete and return this form to the Association office via any of the following methods:

- Submit digitally via DocuSign
- Fax to 805-543-4020
- Mail to 1055 Walnut Street, San Luis Obispo 93401
- Email to info@slocea.org

IMPORTANT:
This section **MUST** be completed and returned

To enroll in the Association's Survivor's Endowment Grant Program, this form must be completed by the member and returned to the Association. Please fill in all the information requested and sign the form as indicated below.

Member's Name	Member's Job
Member's Address	Member's Phone
Member's City/Zip	Member's Date of Birth
Member's Email Address	

Grant Designee (Must be a legal resident of California)	Relationship to Member
Grant Designee Phone	Grant Designee Email Address
Member's Signature	Date of Signature

Attorney Referral List SLOCEA Legal Services Program

Attorney Referral List
SLOCEA LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

This program is available exclusively to SLOCEA members and their families and provides low-cost legal services for assistance on non-work related legal issues.

This program has no annual fee or enrollment costs. When you call the attorney of your choice to make an appointment, identify yourself as a member of the San Luis Obispo County Employees' Association in order to receive your exclusive special offer. If you have any questions or need the additional information, call us at 805-543-2021.

PARTICIPATING ATTORNEYS:

Law Office of Doreen B. Curtis, PC 10775 San Marcos Avenue, Suite 100, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 Phone: 805-468-8884 Email: dcurtis@dbcurtis.com Areas of Practice: Estate Planning, Real Estate, Construction, Business Litigation, Insurance Claims & Disputes	Stallberg & Tatum 720 Santa Rosa St., Suite 100, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 Phone: 805-544-9416 Email: info@stallbergandtatum.com Areas of Practice: General Business, Product Liability, Medical & General Malpractice, Construction Law
Law Office of Stephen M. Davis, PC 1117 First Street, Suite 200, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 Phone: 805-543-6287 Email: stephen@stephendavis.com Areas of Practice: Estate Planning, Real Estate, Construction, Business Litigation, Insurance Claims & Disputes	Law Office of Stephen M. Davis, PC 1117 First Street, Suite 200, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 Phone: 805-543-6287 Email: stephen@stephendavis.com Areas of Practice: Estate Planning, Real Estate, Construction, Business Litigation, Insurance Claims & Disputes

AMBA Discounts

As a SLOCEA member, enjoy exclusive discounts on travel, electronics, household items, entertainment & dining, and more!

Click here to download the form

Click here to download the list

Click here to get started!

YOUR RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

- If you are called in to a meeting with management, you have the **RIGHT** to know the subject of the meeting.
- If you **reasonably believe** the meeting could lead to discipline, you have the **RIGHT** to representation by SLOCEA. **You must ask for that right.** Management **DOES** not have to offer it to you.
- You have the **RIGHT** to consultation with your SLOCEA representative before the meeting.

When in doubt, call your SLOCEA representative at 805-543-2021.



SLOCEA

805-543-2021 • www.slocea.org
605 Santa Rosa St., San Luis Obispo, 93401

