

BREA Minutes

Meeting Date and Place: Tuesday, November 9, 2010; Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 1

Attendees: Elliot Auerbach, Dave Cox, Eena-Mai Franz, Louise Hanson, Ken Mohring, Martine O'Conner, Arnie Peskin, Mona Rowe, Frances Scheffel, Myron Strongin, and Joyce Tichler (by phone).

Eena-Mai Franz opened the meeting at 1:07pm.

The minutes of the Oct 12th meeting were accepted as presented.

Ken Mohring presented a Treasurer's Report for July through October, 2010.

Old Business:

The Eric Forsyth presentation on his circumnavigation of North America has been scheduled for Tuesday Nov. 16 at noon in Berkner Hall by Ken Mohring. The notices have appeared in the Bulletin and Ken has contacted Ray Dumont with regard to audiovisual needs. Because Ken will be out-of-town on Nov 16th, Louise Hanson, who has crewed for Eric, will introduce him.

BREA brochure: At long last, the BREA Brochure has been distributed! It was mailed out with last week's Bulletin.

BREA newsletter: The November issue of the Newsletter has been mailed to BREA members. Thank you Mona Rowe! Planning for the next issue, February, 2011, is underway. Mona said she is always looking for photos.

SeniorNet: Ken Mohring and Dave Cox filled in for Ronnie Evans. SeniorNet's next open house will be Dec. 7.

BREA website: Ken Mohring said he has been extremely busy lately and has not yet been able to attend to the website as promised.

Retirees' BNL e-mail accounts: Retirees, except those with a guest appointment, officially cannot keep their bnl.gov accounts. According to Tom Schlagel, this policy is hard and fast and will remain so.

However, this issue has morphed into a broader discussion concerning on-line communication between retirees and BNL. On September 23, Mona Rowe met with Bob Lincoln, Denise DiMeglio, and Melissa Bittrolff, all in HR; plus Tom Schlagel and Mike Dooling from the Information Technology Division. That discussion and a subsequent e-mail exchange yielded the following list of retiree-relevant items of interest to HR, Occupational Medicine and CEGPA:

HR/Occupational Medicine

- 1) Retirees being able to view and make changes to their medical and dental coverage on-line
- 2) Retirees being able to update contact information (changes to mailing and e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, and names) on-line

- 3) Including on the Benefits Office website information about medical coverage, such as links to provider directories, customer service phone numbers, and forms, and literature specific to retirees
- 4) Providing contact information for retirement accounts (website, telephone numbers)
- 5) Providing links to the DOE Former Worker Program and Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program websites

CEGPA would like access to a retiree e-mail list for:

- 1) Sending the Bulletin as pdf file with a link to the on-line version
- 2) Communicating Lab news and information
- 3) Soliciting volunteers for various programs/activities

Tom Schlagel has committed this fiscal year to setting up an e-mail list for retirees, starting with employees as they retire. He will also have his staff work with HR to add a retiree webpage on the HR website. Eventually, not this fiscal year, Schlagel's staff will develop a web portal, as HR is especially interested in giving retirees the ability to view and make changes to their medical and dental coverage on-line, as well as update their addresses, e-mails, telephone numbers, and names.

The next step will be for Tom Schlagel and Arnie Peskin to discuss the details of how the retirees' e-mail list would be set up.

Contact with retiree organizations at other DOE Labs: Myron Strongin is still reading through the material given to him by Joyce Tichler. Eena-Mai Franz asked - what were we trying to find out? Dave Cox explained that the original idea was that in case DOE tried in the future to pressure legacy contracts by reducing benefits, having contacts with retirees and their organizations at other Labs might provide a stronger united voice to oppose unwanted changes.

New Business:

DOE's Former Worker Medical Screening Program (FWP): Under this program, external teams of health experts screen former workers who may be at significant risk for disease because of occupational exposures. This program is still in its early stages at BNL; it has not been publicized and the screeners have not been appointed. However, progress is being made. Mona Rowe reported that BNL has put together a flyer that must be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before it can be made public.

One of the items listed above is an interest expressed by CEGPA in soliciting retiree volunteers for various outreach programs and educational activities. This led to discussion among meeting participants of how to attract and keep volunteers and of a complaint that in the past CEGPA has identified potential volunteers and then failed to follow through.

Elliot Auerbach provided an addendum to his item in the November Newsletter concerning changes to Medicare as a result of the new Healthcare Law.

Dec. meeting: Tues, Dec. 14, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 1

Meeting adjourned at 2:20pm

Minutes submitted by Louise Hanson