

BREA Minutes

Meeting Date and Place: Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2015; Bldg.400, Rms RSB 1&2

Attendees: Violet Bezler, Mulki R. Bhat, Robert M. Brown, Nate Carter, Victor Cassella, Chellis Chasman, Anita Cohen, Cheryl Conrad, Leslie Fishbone, Eena-Mai Franz, Sheryl Gerstman, Louise Hanson, Joseph Indusi, Georgia Irving, Lillian Kouchinsky, Jim Lemley, Al Mallen, Lois Marascia, Ken Mohring, Arnold Moodenbaugh, George Oldham, Arnie Peskin, Mona S. Rowe, Liz Seubert, Steve Shapiro, John Skalyo, Joan Skelton, and Richard Skelton.

Ken Mohring opened the meeting at 1:06 pm. He invited the attendees to help themselves to refreshments - coffee, cookies and brownies. These were provided as a thank you to the outgoing BREA officers and as a welcome to the newly elected ones, who will begin their term in January, 2016.

Business:

Minutes: The minutes for the October 13, 2015 (there were several small changes) and the November 10, 2015 (minus the Constitution addendum) BREA meetings were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Steve Shapiro reported that there have been deposits of \$720 of dues and no withdrawals. Any BREA member who would like to know more about the BREA accounts should contact Steve directly.

Ken Mohring said that BREA will spend about \$2800 at the end of the month for mailing out the Jan/Feb 2016 issue of the "BREA News" Newsletter to *all* BNL retirees (see below). He also read an email from BERA Supervisor Christine Carter concerning the postage for "BREA News" Newsletters in 2016. There were different interpretations of what she was saying that need to be clarified. In the past, BERA has covered the cost of the mailing of newsletters to BREA members; it was not clear whether this would no longer be possible for *any* 2016 mailings or just the extraordinary one.

Newsletter: Mona Rowe reported that the Jan/Feb 2016 "BREA News" Newsletter will be mailed to all retirees, not just BREA members (this about 2200 people). BNL will handle the mailing. HR's Melissa Schuchman (formerly Bittrolff) will provide Copy Service with the latest list of retiree addresses. Because of the size of the mailing, BREA will pick up the tab. The Jan/Feb 2016 Newsletter will include a message from the new BREA President (Liz Seubert), a description of the medical screening and compensation programs, a membership form, a notice to send Sheryl Gerstman updated email addresses, the "In Memoriam" column, and "notes from retirees". The material for this Newsletter must be submitted by Monday, Dec. 14 - earlier than usual - because of the December holidays.

Membership: Sheryl Gerstman reported that she is still updating BREA's membership records by systematically reviewing old database files and past mailings from members, when available, going back several years. Currently, BREA has 426 members; of these, 332 are in good standing and 94 are

delinquent in their dues. These 426 people receive BREa emails and mailings. [She does not have working email addresses for 111 members.] There is also a database of archived records. People in this category do not receive BREa emails and mailings. BREa members' records are archived for two reasons: they are deceased, or they have stated that they will not send dues. To get in touch with Sheryl regarding BREa membership, dues, or to update your mail and email addresses, please email her at sigronkonkoma@gmail.com or send her a letter addressed to BREa Membership Chair, 46 Richmond Blvd. Unit 3B, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779-3692.

General Announcement and Classified Ad Emails: Sheryl Gerstman no longer wants to be responsible for mass emails to BREa members, including distribution of BNL classified ads. She has sent the new officers an email list so that they can send out general announcements to BREa members independently of her. Members who would like to receive BNL classified ads can do so by sending an email to BREa Supervisor Christine Carter at ccarter@bnl.gov with the words "subscribe to classified ads" in the subject line.

BREa Elections: Louise Hanson reported that all four candidates for the 2016-17 BREa offices: President, Liz Seubert; Vice President, Bob Kinsey; Secretary, Arnold Moodenbaugh; and Treasurer, Steve Shapiro, were elected unanimously. Congratulations!

BREa Constitution: Arnie Peskin is leading an effort, with help from Louise Hanson and Bob Kinsey, to review and up-date BREa's Constitution. A copy of BREa's Constitution along with proposed changes was included as an addendum to the draft Nov. minutes so that members would have a chance to read them before the meeting. A lively discussion ensued. Steve Shapiro thought that the Membership Chair should be an elected office. Ken Mohring disagreed, saying that it was not so easy to turn Membership "on and off" every two years. It was then decided to make the Membership Chairperson "a member of the Board" and to add wording to that effect. Also discussed: how to best distribute the proposed changes as well as the ballots required by the current Constitution to the general membership while avoiding a mass mailing. It was ultimately decided to include a paragraph outlining the proposed changes and a mail-in ballot in the Mar/Apr "BREa News" Newsletter, with a pointer to the BREa website for the full text. Louise Hanson offered to prepare a copy with highlighted changes for posting.

OPM Security Breach: Arnie Peskin said that the OPM (the Office of Personnel Management) data base was hacked last summer. The OPM holds records of personal information of BNLers with security clearance as well as employees/retirees who once held or applied for Civil Service positions with the US Government. The compromised records go back to the early 1980's and contain all the information on you, your spouse, and your children required for obtaining a security clearance, as well as your fingerprints. Starting in October, people whose personal data was compromised should have received a letter. The letter gives a remedy and Arnie encouraged people to sign for it. Sheryl Gerstman was concerned that the remedy – monitoring – was provided for only three years. She felt that the stolen data could easily be stored for that long and then used maliciously at a later time.

Medical and Drug Insurance Programs: George Oldham again encouraged veterans to take advantage of the VA's medical and drug benefits. CIGNA now offers a New York State Medicare-approved plan that he likes. Victor Cassella mentioned that veterans get a deduction from their school taxes in some NY/LI districts.

Miscellaneous: Two comments worth considering made during the meeting: 1) BREa needs an IT person. 2) Can the tables in Rms. 1 and 2 be reconfigured during a meeting?

Changing of the Guard: Retiring BREa President Ken Mohring welcomed the new BREa officers who will take over in January 2016. He thanked the people who had helped him during the last two years. Former BREa President Arnie Peskin thanked Ken for handling the past two years - the most turbulent two years in BREa's history - with grace and wisdom. Louise Hanson, who is stepping down after six years as BREa's Secretary, was also thanked.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

January 2016 meeting: Tuesday, Jan. 12, 1 pm, Bldg. 400, Rms RSB 1 & 2

February 2016 meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 9, 1 pm, Bldg. 400, Rms RSB 1 & 2

Minutes submitted by Louise Hanson