

# BREA NEWS

[www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/](http://www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/)

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September/October 2020

## BREA Meetings

BREA meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month (except for August), at 1 p.m. All BREA members are invited to participate. ***As long as the BNL site continues to be closed to retirees, BREA may arrange an alternate mode of communication. Watch for email notices.***

### Meeting Schedule

September 8, 2020 ***via video link, BNL site closed to retirees***

October 13, 2020

November 10, 2020

### BREA Officers

#### President

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[moodenba@optonline.net](mailto:moodenba@optonline.net)

#### Vice President

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\* \* \*

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*Heavy Flavor Tracker at the center of RHIC's STAR detector. See article on RHIC's 20th anniversary, page 2.*

## From the President

by Arnie Moodenbaugh, [moodenba@optonline.net](mailto:moodenba@optonline.net)

To fellow BREA Members,

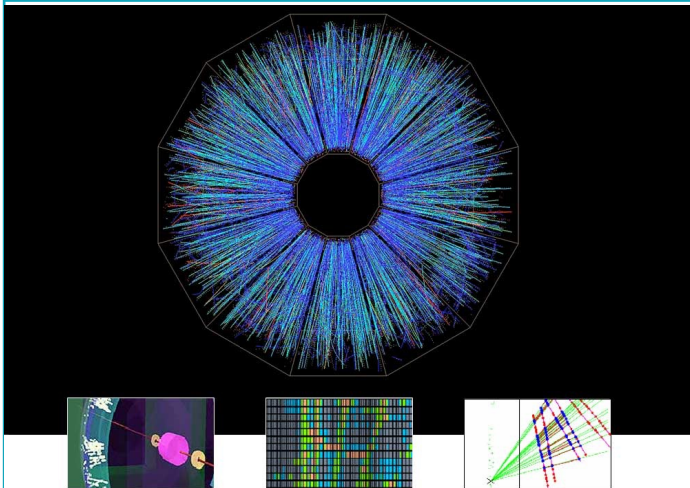
We hope you have had a good summer. The coronavirus has subsided to a good degree on Long Island, and Brookhaven Lab is in Phase 2 operation, with many employees still working from home. Notably, guests and visitors are still restricted from the BNL site. Consequently, BREA meetings continue on Zoom for the time being.

The next Zoom meeting will be on September 8 at 1 p.m. EDT. The meeting ID is 944 620 5124. The password is BREA. An announcement with agenda will be emailed the first week of September. Members should consider the possibility of making Zoom meetings a regular event. We can possibly schedule Zoom meetings alternating with in-person meetings in the future.

Stony Brook University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) offers web-based general interest courses during the pandemic. The fall semester begins on September 8.

Registration is \$165 for the semester and entitles you to sign up for unlimited courses. Course catalog, registration,

(continued on page 3)



*Images showing the tracks of thousands of subatomic particles streaming from collisions at the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC) lit up display monitors at the STAR detector for the first time on June 12, 2000. All four RHIC detector were recording collisions by June 15 (insets l to r: PHENIX, BRAHMS, PHOBOS).*

soon joined by complementary data snapshots from the PHOBOS, PHENIX, and BRAHMS detectors — appeared in newspapers and on websites around the world, declaring the start of a new era in nuclear physics.

Over the past 20 years, RHIC's nuclear physics program has been a smashing success. With collisions routinely recreating the conditions of the early universe and exploring unprecedented aspects of the colliding particles' properties, RHIC has made surprising discoveries and opened new areas of inquiry about nuclear matter — including the “perfect” liquid nature of the quark-gluon plasma and the sources of proton spin. Upgrades to detectors and a series of “world's first” accelerator advances have pushed the capabilities of this DOE Office of Science user facility for nuclear physics research well beyond the expectations foreseen at its opening. And now, with two decades of record-breaking accomplishments under its belt, RHIC is poised to dive deeper into the fundamental structure of nuclear matter with a final set of measurements to close out its experimental program. Then, a major collaborative effort will transform some of RHIC's foundational components into a brand-new nuclear physics research facility—an Electron-Ion Collider (EIC) that will take physicists into the next frontier.

— Karen McNulty Walsh, [kmcnulty@bnl.gov](mailto:kmcnulty@bnl.gov)

*Editor's note: In 2018, science communicator Karen McNulty Walsh was elected by the American Association for the Advancement of Science as a AAAS Fellow for her "distinguished contributions to science communication and public understanding of science, particularly for describing and translating technical research for the media and the public."*

## RHIC at 20 Years

Even in a time before Instagram, physicists starting up the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC) — a particle collider at the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory — knew they needed a great picture to share their success. They and the rest of the world were not disappointed. Around 9 p.m. on June 12, 2000, subatomic “fireworks” lit up display monitors in the control room of RHIC's STAR detector as gold ions (atomic nuclei stripped of their electrons) smashed into one another at nearly the speed of light. These images, capturing the tracks of thousands of subatomic particles streaming from dramatic head-on particle smashups —

### Communicating Science

I started as a science writer at Brookhaven in late September 1999. The RHIC dedication was October 4, a windy, rainy day. I remember the cheerleaders from Longwood High School and their “collide those ions” signs and cheer! I was scared one of them would fall when being lifted by rain-soaked, slippery legs!

To relive the lead-up to RHIC's first collisions, read excerpts from the Bulletin posted here: <https://www.bnl.gov/newsroom/news.php?a=217221>

Going through the old Bulletins and rereading the stories was like a time-travel adventure to the very beginning of my 20-plus years at the Lab. It was amazing to see how many of the RHIC-related (and other!) science stories I had written within less than my first full year. I'm sure I had no idea what a big deal it would be when I took the job!

It has been so inspiring to watch not just the science but the incredible expansion of technical capabilities at RHIC since then. Not many science writers get the opportunity to follow a project for that duration. And how lucky am I that I also get to be present for the start of the next adventure at the Electron-Ion Collider!

— KMW

## Eric Forsyth Pens New Book: *Wings Over Iraq*

BREA retiree Eric Forsyth has penned a new book, published earlier this year. *Wings Over Iraq* is a work of fiction, based partly on stories Forsyth heard from old timers who had served in Iraq before WWII. “I felt it was worth writing about,” he said. “But to make it a history would require a lot of research, so I decided on a fictional version.”

Some of the incidents in the book are also based on Forsyth’s own experiences as a pilot in the Royal Air Force (RAF) during the 1950s. The central character’s commanding officer, for example, resembles Forsyth’s own commanding officer in the RAF.

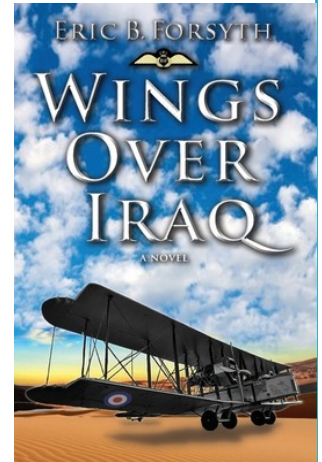
From the book jacket: *This is Iraq in the turbulent 1920s – a cauldron of intrigue, violence and death in a new country created from disparate parts of the old Ottoman Empire after WWI. The British are attempting to establish a puppet monarchy and protect the vital flow of oil using obsolete bombers. Lawless, rebellious Arab tribes roam the vast deserts, preying on anything that moves on the ground or in the air.*

*Allan Chadwick is a slightly gauche, newly qualified RAF pilot posted to a bomber squadron near Baghdad. He is soon initiated into the brutality of war and the pleasures of romantic liaisons. Although they rarely meet, he has an accidental but profound influence on the life of Dr. Kurt Scharf, a respectable professor of archaeology. Scharf is a reluctant partner of German military intelligence, which funds his dig at Ur as a front for anti-British espionage.*

*Their stories play out against the historical background of Middle Eastern conflict, the rise of fascism in Europe and the slow build-up to another world war.*

Forsyth’s new book is available in paperback on Amazon. It’s also available as a Kindle edition.

– Mona S. Rowe, msrowe.hi@gmail.com



### President’s Message (continued)

enrollment and other information are available at <https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/olli/index.php>. By the way, Osher Institutes are located in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Find an OLLI near you on this list: [http://www.osherfoundation.org/index.php?olli\\_list](http://www.osherfoundation.org/index.php?olli_list).

Medicare open enrollment  
period for 2021:  
October 15 – December 7

Fall will arrive this month. The Medicare open enrollment period begins October 15 and ends December 7. Now’s a good time to review your health insurance. The “Medicare and You” handbook is helpful, and the 2021 version should be issued within a month. You will be able to find it online as well as in print form, mailed to your home address. You also will be able to get a list of available plans in your area using this online resource:

<https://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare/#/?lang=en>. The 2021 printed handbook should also include a list of plans for your location.

We have learned that not all eligible retirees are receiving the BSA health-insurance benefit (HRA) of \$180 per month. Please review your financial documents to confirm that you are receiving BSA retiree benefits through Taben/Navia; you and your spouse are entitled to them. Contact BNL’s Human Resources (631-344-3724, -5126, or -7516) if you find a discrepancy. Also, if you are considering changing your Medicare Part B Supplement or Part C Advantage, you must do so by contacting SelectQuote Senior in order to be eligible for the BSA benefit.

Last year, many BNL retirees had problems with SelectQuote Senior (866-479-8317, press option 1). Most common was difficulty in making contact with a knowledgeable agent. Some retirees contacted BNL HR and arranged for a meeting with an agent. Other retirees may have encountered poorly trained agents that were not helpful. BNL directs us to use SelectQuote, which is an insurance agency. They are obligated to provide good service to us, their clients. If you had problems of any kind with SelectQuote, we would like to hear from you (mail or email message).

I hope to see you at our Zoom meeting on September 8.

– Arnold Moodenbaugh, [moodenba@optonline.net](mailto:moodenba@optonline.net)



## Membership Renewal

Look up what year your membership expires by going to BREA’s website: <https://www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/>

To renew, fill out the form below.

PLEASE PRINT

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership type:

- annual (\$10)
- 5 years (\$40)
- Life (\$95)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check amount: \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE YOUR CHECK OUT TO BREA

- I want to receive BREA News by mail via the U.S. Post Office.
- I want to receive BREA News by email only. Do not mail it to me via the U.S. Post Office.

Mail form and check (made out to BREA) to:

Beth Lin, BREA Membership Chair  
81 Westchester Drive  
Rocky Point, NY 11778

– Beth Lin, Membership Chair  
[hellobylin@yahoo.com](mailto:hellobylin@yahoo.com)

## In Memoriam

We deeply regret to inform you of the passing of the following BNL and DOE retirees.

- Leslie “Big L” Lawrence, 84, July 11, 2020
- Mary Fuller Phillips, 89, August 11, 2020
- Donald Jay Robbins, 80, April 14, 2020
- Mark Sakitt, 82, August 11, 2020

More information may be found at BREA’s website: [www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/](http://www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/). To post an obituary for a deceased BNL employee or retiree, email information to [msrowe.hi@gmail.com](mailto:msrowe.hi@gmail.com) or mail it to BREA (see the panel below for BREA’s address).

### Leslie Lee Lawrence



It is with great sadness that we note the death of Les Lawrence on July 11, 2020, resulting from injuries sustained in an earlier car accident. Les graduated from Tufts University in 1958 and spent his career at Brookhaven in the Applied Math Department, which grew into the Information Technology Division years later. Everyone in “Upton Town” knew Les – he was loud and friendly and impossible to miss, and was a familiar presence during the summer on the softball fields, where he enjoyed many a cold beer with his friends. Arnie Peskin was one of his many friends and colleagues, and recalls his great love of competition and mastery of many skills, excelling at basketball (competing at NCAA level), bridge, golf, chess, and even cooking! “He also expanded my horizons of what a business trip could be – serious business all day long, but after sundown the adventure started – with plenty to drink and little in the way of adult supervision,” recalled Arnie. After retiring in the mid-90s, Les was an active member of BREA after its revival in the early 2000s, and attended the annual luncheons for many years (the photo above is from the 2017 luncheon), where his persuasive talents selling raffle tickets were legendary! He will be greatly missed.

– Dave Cox

## Brookhaven Retired Employees Association

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