

BREA NEWS

www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/

Volume 12 Issue 4

November 2012

BREA Meetings

BREA meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month (except for August), at 1 p.m. in one of the conference rooms in Bldg. 400 (except where noted).

All BREA members are invited to attend and participate.

Meeting Schedule

November 13, 2012

December 11, 2012

January 8, 2013

BREA Officers

President

Dave Cox
expatdave@aol.com

Vice President

Ken Mohring
kenwadingriver@gmail.com

Secretary

Louise Hanson
hanson.louise@gmail.com

Treasurer

Steve Shapiro
shapiro@bnl.gov

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Newsletter Editor

Mona S. Rowe
mrowe@bnl.gov



Retiree Marty Van Lith took these pictures of a Glossy Ibis and red fox. For more wildlife photos by Marty, turn to page 3, where you will also find emailed notes from other retirees.

From the President

by Dave Cox

I'm afraid that in this issue of the newsletter I have little but bad news to pass along to you. By now you will have read in the Benefits Program brochure recently mailed to you that in 2013 all retirees will see a steep increase in their monthly medical premiums – those who retired before 2002 and paid nothing prior to 2012 will now be faced with a doubling of their monthly payments to about \$174 for a couple; for after 2002 retirees there is a 50% increase to \$260 (for IBEW retirees, the transition date is 2004).

In fact, these figures are fast approaching the cost of coverage for current employees in the median salary range, whose premiums will remain unchanged. These increases seem to reflect the nationwide trend towards making retirees pay a larger proportion of their medical costs, and will undoubtedly have a serious impact for many of our members.

Also, the CIGNA prescription drug plan for Medicare-eligible retirees will be shifted to a Medicare D drug plan with similar
(continued on page 2)

From the President (cont'd from p. 1)

coverage. As far as we can tell, the changes are relatively minor, but we expect to get more details from the CIGNA information package that will soon be mailed to retirees.

BREA officers recently had a meeting with Human Resources management and will continue to analyze and evaluate plan changes. If you are presently making premium payments by electronic fund transfer, this is an opportune time to check whether you will be automatically debited for the increased amounts, or whether you will need to make new arrangements with your bank. To download the benefits plan, go here: <http://www.bnl.gov/HR/Benefits/OpenEnmntRet2013.asp>

Unfortunately, this is not the only bad news. You may have heard by now (see article on p. 4) that as of November 30, *The Bulletin* will no longer be published, a victim of budget constraints and the shift towards digital publication. This is indeed a sad occasion, for *The Bulletin* has been a fixture at the laboratory for practically its whole existence, and has served as a vital connection for generations of retirees, especially our older members without internet access. A much-abbreviated substitute for *The Bulletin* called *Brookhaven This Week* will be distributed as a weekly email publication for employees (for an example, go to www.bnl.gov/newsroom/thisweek/), and we encourage retirees with email addresses to sign up for an off-site version. In the meantime BREA officers have been meeting with Media and Communications staff seeking ways to provide these retirees with some additional content from the old *Bulletin*, which will no longer be a part of this email version. However, rest assured that we are committed to continue producing a printed version of the BREA quarterly newsletter!

I would also like to remind you that we are fast approaching the end of the year, which means membership renewal time! You will find a renewal form on the back page. Note that 2012 marks the end of the first batch of five-year memberships initiated in 2008, so please make sure to check if you are in this category. If in doubt, you can find the expiration date of your membership at the top right on the address label of the newsletter. Since we are becoming increasingly reliant on electronic communications, it is especially important that you let us know your email address if you have one, or update your existing one if necessary.

On a final note, please keep in mind that the success of BREA depends very much upon your support and active involvement, so if you have suggestions or concerns, please share them with us. If you live locally, think about attending our monthly meetings, volunteering for office, and participating in other activities such as our occasional lunchtime lectures and tours of Lab facilities. And be sure to make a note on next year's calendar for the annual luncheon, which will be held in early June!

- Dave Cox, expatdave@aol.com

Change in Federal Energy Workers Compensation Program

Effective June 10, 2012, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services added an additional class to the Special Exposure Cohort at Brookhaven Lab under the federal Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act, which affects current and former Brookhaven Lab employees and contractors. The new class covers the period from January 1, 1980, through December 31, 1993. The original class, established in 2010, covered from January 1, 1947, through December 31, 1979.

Learn more about the workers compensation program and obtain application forms and instructions by visiting www.dol.gov/owcp/energy. To apply for compensation, contact the program's New York Resource Center at (800)941-3943 or (716)832-6200, or send an email to newyork.center@rroho.com. Additional information is also available on BNL's website at www.bnl.gov/eoicpa.

Here and There: Catching up with Retirees

“We still keep up with all the news at BNL via the *BULLETIN*, *Monday Memo*, *Particle Post* etc. and despite being retired since 1994, we still have friends at BNL who keep us up to date. We always stop by at BNL when we are visiting the “North Country” and do keep in our memory our days of working there (40 years for Charley and 30 years for Anne). We love retirement and couldn't be happier in magical Pinehurst, NC. Sure glad that I donated my mink coat before we moved down here!!!! Give our best to anyone who may still remember us and tell them that we are always open to visits if anyone is in our area.”
- Anne and Charley Flood, flood@pinehurst.net



From left, Great White Egret, box turtle and Blue Heron, all photographed by retiree Marty Van Lith, who lives in

Brookhaven hamlet with his wife, retiree Anita Cohen.

“My wife Bev and I moved to a continuing care retirement community in Lexington, MA, in May of 2005, and have been here ever since. The reason for moving here was to be near our two daughters, one of whom lives in Lexington and the other in the town of Medford, which is nearby. The name of our community is actually, believe it or not, Brookhaven at Lexington! There are about three hundred residents in the community. We lead an active cultural life here – there are many lectures, concerts, and courses offered on site, and in addition we have subscriptions to the Boston Symphony Orchestra and several chamber music series in Cambridge and the near-by town of Concord. We also volunteer to serve on various committees. For example, I am on the staff of the community newsletter, “The Voice,” for which I have written various pieces. We have made some good friends here, but we still miss those we left on Long Island. I read the *Lab Bulletin* avidly when it arrives, but, sadly, recognize fewer and fewer names and faces that appear in it. Well, that’s life.”
- Gene Weinstock, Evweinstoc@aol.com

“As the winds picked up on October 30, the day Superstorm Sandy rolled over Long Island, Martine and I drove down to Bellport Marina to watch the waves crashing over the dock. Amazingly, a few boats were still berthed in their slips, one even tethered to a buoy. That boat later washed ashore and was destroyed. It seemed inevitable that the power would go out before long, and, sure enough, a large tree took out the power lines around 4 p.m. We spent the next five days like most Long Islanders, cooking on an outside grill, groping around the house with flashlights, piling extra blankets on the bed, and most of all wondering when we would see a LIPA truck in the area. However, these are really minor inconveniences compared to the flooding and property damaged

suffered by many people in low-lying areas of the island and the city, and our thoughts are with those of you in this situation.”

- Dave Cox, expatdave@aol.com



The Bulletin to End Publication Sign up for Online Brookhaven This Week

The Lab's Communications and Web Services groups have been moving toward online products. This maximizes our effectiveness using available resources and mirrors what's going on outside the Lab. Continuing in that direction, we will be phasing out *The Bulletin*, our major print publication. The final edition of *The Bulletin* will be on November 30. In its place, we'll distribute the latest Lab news through a new weekly email to retirees, employees, and others, augmented by continued direct mailings of key benefits information from Human Resources.

The Lab has maintained a print newsletter since its 1947 founding, and *The Bulletin* holds a special place in the hearts of many. Since 1999, the publication has been served by editor-in-chief Liz Seubert. Liz has brought her understanding of the Laboratory, its people, and its achievements to each week's issue of *The Bulletin*.

Starting in December, we'll deliver the Lab's news, features, events, and items of Lab community interest to you through *Brookhaven This Week*. See an example at <http://www.bnl.gov/newsroom/thisweek>.

We encourage retirees to sign up to receive this email by visiting the subscription page at <https://lists.bnl.gov/mailman/listinfo/thisweek-1>.

- Jim Green, jgreen@bnl.gov
- Gary Schroeder, schroede@bnl.gov

Renew BREA Membership

The mailing label on your newsletter will show your membership status. If you see the year 2012, you need to renew your membership. Complete the form below to continue receiving the BREA newsletter.

Membership type:

annual (\$10) 5 years (\$40) life (\$95)

Last name: _____

First name: _____ MI: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check made out to BREA for \$ _____

Mail to: Carmen Benkovitz, Membership Secretary
12 Sandy Drive
Smithtown, NY 11787

Check for upcoming BERA events:
<http://www.bnl.gov/bera/recreation/events.asp>

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association

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