

BREA News



Volume 5, Issue 2

April 20, 2005

BREA Executive Board Meetings

The BREA executive board meets monthly in building 475, room 107. All BREA members are invited to attend. We would like your participation in our meetings.

Executive Board Meeting Schedule.

- May 11 (Wednesday)
- June 14 (Tuesday)
- July 13 (Wednesday)
- Sept 13 (Tuesday)

BREA Officers

PRESIDENT:

Joyce Tichler

Vice President:

Lew Jacobson

Treasurer:

Barney McAlary

Secretary:

Alyce Daly

Membership Chairman:

Dave Cox

Newsletter Editor:

Graham Campbell

RETIREE MEDICAL BENEFITS MEETING

On February 15 BREA sponsored a presentation by Human Resources on the current status and future prospects for the Health Plan benefits for retirees. This was held in Berkner Hall and was very well attended. There were presentations by Bill Hempfling and Denise DiMeglio, with Hempfling covering general aspects and DiMeglio addressing the details of the coverage. There was a good question and answer session following the presentations. You can see a copy of the over-

heads that DiMeglio used on the BREA Web site: <http://www.brea.bnl.gov> in the BREA NEWS section. Here are notes taken by Joyce Tichler and Dave Cox and reviewed by Human Resources.

Bill Hempfling

BNL currently has about 2742 employees – about 10% decline in the last 5 years. In 2000, medical bills totaled \$30 million; today they are \$38 million despite reduction in benefits. Costs are going up about 15% per year for the fore-

seeable future. Total lab overhead (fringe) is about \$75 million. The budget for 2006 does not look good, and shrinking budgets are expected until 2009. Effective January 2006 there probably will be major changes in medical plans. Although specifics are not known at present, HR will consult with BREA before these changes are made. A question was asked about how legally binding the contract with current retirees are. Hempfling said he was not a lawyer

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RETIREMENT INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

At the invitation of BREA, Frank Federmann, a BREA member and financial advisor spoke on “Retirement Investment Strategies, Choices and Opportunities” at BNL’s Berkner Hall on April 8th. He discussed

investment philosophy, management of retirement assets, establishing goals in planning, understanding risk and tax implications and legacy issues. An outline of his talk, an asset correlation table, a bibliography and bio-

graphical information are available on the BREA web site: www.brea.bnl.gov.

We include a copy of the bibliography on page 2.

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and didn't know but he suspected that while providing coverage is a given, what that coverage entails is not prescribed.

Denise DiMeglio

HR provided various handouts that are available on the BREA web site.

Denise suggested using www.cigna.com to look up providers. (Ed. Note: Many people have had trouble navigating this site. You can always call a doctors office and ask if they are in the CIGNA OAPlus plan) HR also distributed books showing local providers. Denise also noted that there was no change in the hospitals provided in the new plan vs. the older plan.

Retirees who are eligible for Medicare must sign up for Medicare Parts A and B in order to be eligible for CIGNA coverage. New ID cards have been sent to retirees. These cards have a new plan number and should be shown to doctors since the old cards are no longer valid. Note no social security number appears on the new ID cards.

Questions:

Q – Do you need preadmission certification if Medicare available?

A – No but CIGNA prefers that you obtain preadmission certification so that they can coordinate your needs with your physician.

Q – Do hospitals and physicians have to file with Medicare?

A – Hospitals and physicians are

required to file with Medicare. They do not have to submit the bills to CIGNA; you may need to do that.

of the insurance card will provide doctors. Ask for directory for other places. There is no Medicare coverage outside the country but

CIGNA does provide coverage anywhere in the world.

Q – If you are Medicare-eligible and using an out-of-network provider is there any point in filing with CIGNA?

A – If the doctor accepts Medicare

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Federman Bibliography

FUN READING FOR THE CPA FINANCIAL PLANNER

1. Asset Allocation – Roger C. Gibson, 3rd Edition McGraw Hill 1996
2. Complete Guide to Managing a Portfolio of Mutual Funds – Ronald K. Rutherford, McGraw Hill/IAFP Series 1997
3. A Random Walk Down Wall Street – Burton G. Malkiel, W.W. Norton & Co. 2003
4. Straight Talk on Investing – Jack Brennan, John Wiley and Sons Inc. 2002
5. Winning the Losers Game – Charles D. Ellis, 4th Edition McGraw Hill 2002
6. All About Index Funds – Richard A. Ferri, McGraw Hill 2002
7. The Unbeatable Market – Ron Ross, Bookmasters Inc. 2002
8. Global Investing – Roger G. Ibbotson and Gary P. Brinson, McGraw Hill 1993
9. Wall Street Words – David L. Scott, Houghton Mifflin Co. 1998
10. Common Sense on Mutual Funds – John C. Bogle, John Wiley and Sons Inc. 1999
11. Against the Gods (History of Risk) – Peter L. Bernstein, John Wiley and Sons 1998
12. The Only Guide to a Winning Investment Strategy You'll Ever Need – Larry E. Swedroe, Truman Talley Books / Dutton 1998
13. The Intelligent Asset Allocator – William J. Bernstein, McGraw Hill 2000
14. Life and Death Planning for Retirement Benefits - Natalie B. Choate, Fifth Edition, Ataxplan Publications 2003
15. The Retirement Savings Bomb...and How to Defuse It - Ed Slott, Viking 2003
16. Parlay Your IRA Into a Family Fortune - Ed Slott, Viking 2005

More information on this talk is available on the BREA Web site, <http://www.brea.bnl.gov>.

Q – If in other part of country are in network providers available?

A – CIGNA has doctors and hospitals throughout the country. The 800 telephone number on the back

CAC Happenings

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) continues to be busy advising BNL, particularly on environmental concerns, through its monthly meetings. As described in a previous newsletter article by Graham Campbell, BREA is a founding member of CAC. In the recent past, the Council has dealt with several important legacy environmental issues, particularly the dismantling of the BGRR and the cleanup of the Peconic River. Milestones were achieved in both these areas recently, with

the signing of the Record of Decision which scoped the BGRR project, and substantial achievement of the Peconic River cleanup goals.

CAC also receives regular updates regarding the state of BNL in general, with presentations on science achievements, operations and budget, and plans for new facilities. At the April 14 meeting, for example, the Council heard presentations on the BNL Center for Functional Nanomaterials, and the Manhattan Urban Dispersion Project. There was

also discussion of the Laboratory's latest budgetary problems and layoffs, and CAC is exploring ways to be helpful in restoring funding health. This last initiative is indicative of a favorable relationship between the community and the Laboratory that would have been difficult to imagine a few short years ago. The CAC (and BREA participation) can certainly take some credit for this improved state of affairs.

Arnie Peskin, BREA Alternate Delegate to CAC

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assignment then CIGNA won't pay anything additional until you reach your out-of-pocket maximum. If the doctor doesn't accept Medicare assignment; CIGNA may pay something.

Denise noted that in the hand-outs R&C referred to "reasonable and customary". R&C is determined by another company and is based on where service is provided. She noted that the physicians associated with Sloan-Kettering Memorial Hospital tend to charge significantly more than R&C.

In Walmart there is a discount program for eye exams and glasses (called Vision Center). This is not a part of CIGNA coverage.

Denise said she could not comment on the new Medicare drug plan at this time since it is not as yet well defined.

Q – Why does it say at the bot-

tom of CIGNA forms for some providers "you are not required to pay the rest of the balance"?

A – Because the provider is a preferred provider. Don't pay if billed by the provider. It may take months for them to stop billing. In most cases, you are only responsible for the co-payment.

If Medicare pays an out-of-network provider, send both the provider bill and the Medicare statement to CIGNA.

Q – What choices are there for dental coverage?

A – Lab doesn't provide any. Denise will look into new plans that AARP offers to provide guidance.

For employees with dual coverage (both retirees are lab employees) questions must be answered on an individual basis.

Privacy laws mean BNL must be given permission to look at

claims if retiree wishes assistance in applying for reimbursement.

HR are always available to help out in case of problems. The staff of the Benefits Office are:

Denise DiMeglio, x2881
Benefits Manager

Joyce Wund, x7516
Sr. Human Resources Representative

Melissa Bittrolff, x2877
Human Resources Representative
Linda Rundlett, x5126
Human Resources Assistant

Enrollment for the Childrens (Think grandchildren) swimming program at the lab pool is now open. Contact the Recreation office at 344-2873 or see <http://www.bnl.gov/bera>. June 6 is the cutoff date.

BREA

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Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5



BNL Retired Employees Association

*On the Web at
www.brea.bnl.gov*

BREA Membership

During the past few months there has been a steady stream of renewals, and the total membership has now reached a very healthy figure of about 420. Nevertheless, this is still only two-thirds of the people listed in the original membership file in 1999, and we are currently in the process of making a final effort to reach the remaining one-third by e-mail, phone or letter.

In addition, we have completely lost contact with several of these old members, and we would be grateful if anyone could let us know their current whereabouts. These members (with their pre-

vious location in parentheses) are: George Apelskog (Ocala, FL), Bernard Cappel (Palm Bay, FL), Alfred Deneuve (Surfside Beach, SC), Julius Diener (Patchogue, NY), James Gilmar-tin (Manorville, NY), Marjorie Homan (Miller Place, NY), Theodore Hrynus (Titusville, FL), Warren Johnson (Hixson, TN), Stuart Kern (Dix Hills, NY), Martha Lange (Pinehurst, NC), Patricia and William Lebit-ski (Chesterfield, VA), Richard McCluskey (Ormond Beach, FL), Otto Medeck (Pine Moun-tain, GA), Cynthia and Jerry Morgan (Patchogue, NY), Ken-neth and Valerie Morton

(Ronkonkoma, NY), Irene Ozols (Marieta, GA), Edward and Eunice Reilly (Tucson, AZ)), Ju-dith Ridgeway (Hernando, FL), George Stoll (Bayport, NY), Catherine Tierney (Patchogue, NY). If you can help, please contact the BREA website (www.brea.bnl.gov), or Dave Cox (631-286-9725) or Joyce Tichler (631-563-0989).