

BREA News

<https://bera.bnl.gov/brea/>

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May/June 2022

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 attend and participate.

The Laboratory site was recently opened to retirees. Even so, BREA's next meeting, on May 10, 2022, will be held on Zoom via video link. Contact any officer for help to join this meeting.

Meeting Schedule

May 10, 2022

June 14, 2022

July 12, 2022

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* * *

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From the President

by Arnie Moodenbaugh, moodenba@optonline.net

To fellow BREA Members,

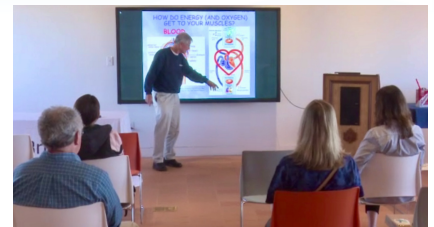
I just tuned in to an Earth Day talk by Steve Schwartz, who spoke about "Energy, Climate, CO2 & You." He was part of a BNL event at Jones Beach on April 22. The talk was very good – and easy for me to watch live on my computer at home. It was advertised as an interactive talk for elementary and middle school children and their families. As you can see from my photos, Schwartz had lively audience participation.

This newsletter features an article about scams and, hopefully, how to avoid being victimized by them. We are bombarded daily by various scams, arriving by phone, text and email. Read the article. The experiences and advice from our own BREA members could help you avoid some major headaches. Comments or questions? Participate in a discussion at our May 9 BREA meeting via Zoom.

Brookhaven Lab is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2022. This year also marks BREA's 25th anniversary. If you live locally or plan to visit, stop by at the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook to see a new exhibit on BNL, "Atoms to Cosmos," from now through mid-October.

BREA's May 10 meeting will start with a talk at 1 p.m. EDT. Michael Sivertz will speak about the radiation environment of space. A particle physicist with extensive experimental experience at Fermilab, SLAC, CERN, AGS and RHIC, Sivertz has been with BNL's NASA Space Radiation Lab (NSRL) since 2005. He will discuss our understanding of space radiation and NSRL's role in studying the effects of solar and galactic cosmic rays on biology and

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Who Gets Scammed?

According to AARP, it isn't *who* you are that matters but *how* you are. In other words, your emotional state plays a key role in how susceptible you are to fraud.

In a 2021 report, AARP (originally named American Association of Retired People) estimated that 229 million adults in the U.S. – 9 in 10 adults – experienced an attempted fraud in the past year. Within that group, 33 million adults – nearly 1 in 7 – lost money.

The biggest factor in getting scammed is stress. It's not how old you are or how educated you are or how clever you are. It's how you are feeling at the moment you get the pitch.

Laura Miller volunteered to share a recent experience. "I received a message from what I thought was Microsoft telling me I needed to update my password, with a button in the middle of the message," she said. "I'd received the email before and I kept deleting it, thinking it didn't sound right. But that day, I was late for the BREA meeting, rushing and not thinking. When I saw the message, I just reacted and entered my password. BAM! That's all it took."

At the time, Miller was already logged into the BREA Zoom meeting. Within seconds, Gwyn Williams sent a private message to her, saying he had just received a very strange email from her asking him to purchase gift cards. Said Miller, "The scammer had taken all my contacts and sent emails to each with the same request Gwyn received. After that, it was a nightmare trying to get to people before they did something rash, like send me money."

She stopped two people just before they were going to make the purchases. "Unfortunately, I reached a third person just as the cashier handed her gift cards she had purchased," Miller said. "But at least she was able to give the cards to someone and not send them to the scammers."



Take this 30-second test

Read the following text from an actual email.

I am sorry for bothering you with this mail, I need to get a GOOGLE PLAY Gift Card for my niece, It's her birthday but i can't do this now because I'm currently away and i tried purchasing online but unfortunately no luck with that. Can you get it from any store around you? I'll pay back as soon as I am back.

Notice the run-on sentence? That's just one clue. This email appeared to come from the real Dave Cox. But a reply would have been diverted not to Cox's correct address but to exipatdave@hotmail.com. A careful check would have revealed that this was a scam: the "i" stuck in the middle of the name doesn't belong there and the email service provider is not the one Cox uses.

– MSR

"Of course, had I looked at the email address, I would have known it was a scam. It was my haste that got me into trouble," she noted. "If there's anything I would recommend to people, it's to take a few minutes to stop and think. Is the sender someone I know? Is the text correct – formatting, language, etc. Does this make sense?"

Miller said, "I'm not happy that I fell for it, especially after spending so many years at BNL and going through the Lab's annual computer security training. I consider myself to be a fairly intelligent person who wouldn't fall for anything so dumb. I guess I could say I'm an example of how it can happen to anyone. Because it can. Ugh!"

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Here's more advice from Cheryl Conrad. "A few years ago, my partner got a call from someone claiming to be his grandson," she recounted. "The caller said he was in an accident in Maryland and needed money. He said the reason he didn't sound like himself was that his mouth was wired closed."

"My partner told him that before he sent any money he had some questions for him. He asked the caller the names of my children. At that point the caller hung up," said Conrad.

She added, "My partner is a calm individual. I don't know if I would be so calm if I got a call like that!"



This is a classic "grandchild" scam. It's a variation on a common tactic: Someone impersonates a relative or friend of yours. He/she is in trouble and asks for money. Maybe it's ransom money in a kidnapping. Whatever the tale, try not to panic. Take a deep breath, slow down and think first before doing anything.

Here are some other tips to avoid getting scammed.

- Avoid any unexpected contact.
- Never give out personal information.
- Keep your computer operating system and virus protection software up-to-date. Ditto for mobile devices.
- Make sure all accounts have a strong password. Don't use the same password for multiple accounts and change them regularly.
- Use safe and secure WiFi connections and avoid public WiFi.
- Sign-up for a call-blocking service.

Conrad also says that if you do online banking or bill paying, you can set up alerts to your email and/or cell phone whenever a withdrawal or charge above a certain amount is made to your bank accounts or credit card accounts.

And remember: No matter how enticing the offer, never click on a link in an unsolicited email. If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.

– Mona S. Rowe, msrowe.hi@gmail.com

President's Message (continued from page 1)

electronics. Our business meeting will follow the talk.

BNL reopened its site to retirees and family members on April 18, as part of a relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions. BERA Supervisor Christine Carter forwarded that notice to retirees, along with an invitation from Joe Gettler to attend the BNL Lecture on April 20. According to Gettler, who is on the BNL Lecture committee, the lectures were on hiatus for awhile but restarted virtually in 2021. This was the first hybrid talk since then – offered both in person and virtually. Perhaps some of you were able to come on site for the lecture.

I've learned from Peter Genzer, who manages the Media & Communications Office, that the Lab currently has a mix of about 1,400 staff coming on site on any given day. Most are working full time on site or teleworking one or more days a week. Here's something fun: Folks were given cookies a few weeks ago to mark the 75th anniversary, and the "75" was drawn in the Lab's new logo colors.

Requirements for site entry have been relaxed. Masks are optional, self checks of health are recommended, but some issues need clarification. Rules could also change depending on the local level of Covid cases. Note that retirees are not currently allowed to use the gym or weight room. Carter says these facilities are expected to be available to retirees some time in May.

Carter also tells us that BERA outings are anticipated. She hopes to schedule a few over the summer, but mostly local trips.

At BREA's May meeting we will discuss the possibility of conducting some of our meetings on site at BNL. We will have to talk to our Lab contacts about the possibility of setting up ZOOM simultaneously, for a hybrid event.

Summer meetings will be June 14 and July 12, with a hiatus in August. We'll keep you posted on plans for the summer meetings.

– Arnie Moodenbaugh
moodenba@optonline.net

Renew BREA Membership

Membership expires on December 31 of every year no matter when you paid your dues (which are requested by January 31 of the following year). To stay on BREA's mailing list, complete the form below and mail it to me along with your payment. Include your email address so BREA can send you timely information.

If you have questions or if your contact info has changed, email me at hellobylin@yahoo.com.

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

In Memoriam

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

Joseph Hanson, 80, April 3, 2022
Russell F. Lowell, 84, May 2, 2020

More information may be found at BREA's website: <https://bera.bnl.gov/brea/>. To post an obituary for a deceased BNL employee or retiree, email information to msrowe.hi@gmail.com or mail it to BREA (see panel below for address).

In person and virtual Celebrate BNL's 75th

Brookhaven Lab marks its 75th anniversary this year.

- To kick off the year, U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, Lab leaders, staff and members of the public gathered for a virtual event on January 27, 2022. Secretary Granholm thanked and congratulated BNL. Then three Lab leaders shared their vision for the future of nuclear and particle physics, climate science, quantum information science and more before taking questions from the audience. Go online to the Lab's newsroom webpage at www.bnl.gov/newsroom/ to watch a recording of the live stream.
- Remember Brookhaven's history at the Long Island Museum's new exhibition: "Atoms to Cosmos: The Story of Brookhaven National Laboratory," on view in Stony Brook now through October 16, 2022. The exhibit uses artifacts, historic photographs, film and interactive components to recount BNL's history.

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association

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