

BREA NEWS

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

Volume 24, Issue 3

May/June 2024

BREA Meetings

BREA meets on the second Tuesday of every month (except for August), at 1 p.m. in the Eastern Time Zone. All BREA members are invited.

BREA meetings are held via Zoom. Some meetings will be hybrid so that retirees living on Long Island can attend in person. Contact any officer for help to join a meeting.

Meeting Schedule

May 14, 2024

June 11, 2024

July 9, 2024

BREA Officers

President

Arnold Moodenbaugh
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Andrew Feldman
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* * *

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Bob Howe playing in the snow. What did other retirees do last winter? Read their reports about the past winter season, starting on page 2.

From the President

by Arnie Moodenbaugh, moodenba@optonline.net

To fellow BREA Members,

Andrew Feldman started our April Zoom meeting with an informative report on his role in an armed forces aerial surveillance of the smoldering World Trade Center towers just after the 9/11 attack. Thanks to Andy for his presentation.

Gretchen Cisco, Dave Cox, Steve Shapiro and I, representing BREA, met in March with Renita Hackett and Melissa Schuchman of BNL Human Resources to discuss the BSA retiree benefit for health expenses, known as HRA.

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Melissa Schuchman of BNL Human Resources to discuss the BSA retiree benefit for health expenses, known as HRA. This useful discussion was a follow-up to a letter we wrote to Human Resources in June 2023, recommending changes in the description of the program to new retirees and suggesting improvements. We four also stated that retirees would welcome an increase in the HRA benefit. We agreed that a second letter to HR, including a request for a benefit increase, would be appropriate. I showed a draft of that letter at the April meeting, and it was approved, with the understanding that the final version would be reviewed and approved by BREA's board. We thank the HR staff members that regularly work to help retirees deal with issues that arise with SelectQuote Senior (1-866-479-8317, press Option 1) and Navia.

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How Was Your Winter?

Summer is just around the corner. How was your winter?

Bob Howe, retired in December 2023

I'm certainly not at a loss for things to do – grandkids, dog, chickens, large garden to care for, splitting wood, house repairs. But no time to relax yet. In February, grandkids passed along bugs to us (wife has pneumonia and I've got a sinus infection) so we haven't done much visiting/travel. Thanks for asking!

– Bob Howe



Bob and Angela in St. Peter's Basilica at the beginning of their winter cruise

Robert Bari, cruising with wife Angela,

Last December, we were on a cruise that covered ports in Italy, France, Spain and Portugal and ended with a transatlantic passage from Azores to the U.S. We've been traveling the world over the past seven years, typically by cruise ship, with over twenty journeys with Viking. Our other journeys included African safaris, Tibet, Patagonia, Bruges, Wuhan, the Nile, and Galapagos – just to name some.

– Robert Bari, emailing from a Viking ship in the Caribbean using cellphone service at \$10/day



Xmas decorations on board

Marty Van Lith and Anita Cohen, at home on Long Island

We had a major flood on December 18, 2023. But I was somewhat prepared for it because this storm, with no name, was ravishing the country before it arrived. We did not get water in the house, which is 2 1/2 feet higher than the surrounding ground level. But we did get 16 inches of water in both garages, which are at ground level. I had picked up all things that were stored below 12 inches in the garages and put them in higher places, like the riding lawnmower. Brackish flood water killed both our washer and drier

despite their being on a raised platform (raised only 7 inches, not high enough). And, unfortunately, I did not do anything about my firewood or stored lumber, which landed all around the neighborhood.

On a brighter note, we had family for Thanksgiving. Our daughter, Diana West, came with her two daughters, Aiyanna, a freshman at Charlotte Latin High School, and Isis, in her second year at Columbia University. Home for them is Charlotte, North Carolina.

– Marty Van Lith and Anita Cohen



From left, Diana West, Anita, Aiyanna, Marty and Isis at their Thanksgiving table



Do Marty and Anita live in a houseboat? No, they do not. Fortunately, Marty was standing in a dry bedroom when he took this photo of their flooded backyard.

Yousef Makdisi, all in for OLLI

Since retirement, aside from trips to Chicago and Colorado to visit with children and grandchildren and to California to visit with brother and sister families, we also made a long trip to Portugal with a former BNL couple and then Covid hit. Starting late 2016, I joined my wife Nada Makdisi at the OLLI, Stony Brook University's Osha Lifetime Learning Institute. It keeps us busy and engaged.

Here are some of the topics I am attending this semester: India literature (by an English professor of Indian descent); Current Events; NYTimes Tuesday Science; Foreign Policy; Origin of Life; Brain and Consciousness; Topics in Philosophy; The Science Behind the Headlines – Climate Change, etc.; The 1619 Project; and Beginners Bridge. We also attend wonderful lectures from SBU School of Journalism and performances at the Staller and Wang centers.

– Yousef Makdisi
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Louise Hanson, headed south for the winter

In January, Jon and I took a cruise on Holland America's Oosterdam, going from Santiago, Chile, to Buenos Aires, Argentina. We spent six days in Antarctica. With thrusters and electric propellers mounted on 360° rotors, the Oosterdam could maneuver within tight spaces and close to the shore. We saw glaciers and icebergs, large rookeries of penguins, the occasional whale, and a variety of seabirds. The ship then made other stops: the Falkland Islands, with more penguins; the Atlantic coast of Argentina, where the beaches are breeding grounds for Southern sea lions and elephant seals; and Uruguay, where we visited with a crystallographer friend. After the cruise, we went to see Iguazu Falls on the border between Argentina and Brazil. In the subtropics, the falls make up the largest waterfall system in the world.

– Louise Hanson



Jon and Louise in Antarctica

Don Sievers, new year resolutions for 2024

Went to Vermont in March, had my skis with me, but did not go skiing. I've been having lower back issues, and I have a problem getting up if I fall. I stayed at the Grumman Ski Lodge. Being St. Patrick's weekend we had a party in the basement with karaoke. I found I can sing pretty good after a couple of drinks. I dressed up as a giant leprechaun – so much fun. Didn't miss hitting the slopes. But I need to exercise, lose some weight and get back in shape!

– Don Sievers



Don with friend Joanne

President's Message (continued from page 1)

Jonathan Corbin, Queens College, has an update on the Worker Health Protection Program (WHPP), which offers former DOE and contractor employees free, comprehensive medical exams to identify work-related illnesses. WHPP will soon introduce an early lung cancer detection component (ELCD) for former employees with an elevated risk of lung cancer. ELCD uses low-dose CT scans of the chest to identify lung cancers in an early stage, before symptoms appear, when treatment is more likely to be effective. Eligibility for this screening is based on age, job history, smoking, and health status. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, but detecting lung cancer early with low-dose CT scans can now save lives. Stay tuned for an official announcement on when this free, lifesaving test will be available to eligible BNL program participants. In the meantime, as a reminder, WHPP offers all former BNL workers free occupational health exams every three years, which includes testing for beryllium sensitivity and work-related hearing loss and breathing problems. Call 1-888-241-1199, or email info@worker-health.org, to sign up for a first-time WHPP exam or a WHPP re-screen exam. For more information about WHPP, go to: www.worker-health.org.

I have other news about health care, with an interest in minimizing costs. The U.S. government has dropped the requirements for prescriptions for hearing aids intended for people with mild hearing loss. Some useful information is at <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/hearing-aids/otc-hearing-aids-what-you-should-know>. You may want to consider this option based on your specific needs and budget. Also, I personally have found some strange pricing in the Part D prescription drug world. One example is a generic Rx. I buy 90 for \$22 cash retail at a discount store. In contrast, my plan classes this as Tier 3, with an initial price tag of \$500. A new Rx supplier is Mark Cuban's Cost Plus mail-order, where pricing is provided online, <https://costplusdrugs.com/>. Costco is also competitive, and New York residents don't need to be members. You might also look into discounts available from the web, possibly GoodRx.

On the science side: In early April, the first disbursement of a New York State grant of \$100M to support BNL's \$3B Electron Ion Collider project was announced: <https://libn.com/2024/04/10/nys-to-invest-100m-in-brookhaven-labs-electron-ion-collider/>. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm made a personal visit to Brookhaven Lab in April to show DOE's support for the EIC project. This grant marks a major BNL achievement in advancing the reengineering of RHIC into the EIC.

Our May Zoom meeting will take place on Tuesday May 14 at 1 p.m. We'll email an invitation and agenda a few days before the meeting.

– 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 employee and retiree.

John E. Burke, 54, September 10, 2018

John Skalyo Jr., 88, April 1, 2024

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).

BNLers in Bellport Exhibit

The Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society is planning a new exhibit entitled “The Innovators: Inventors and Scientists of the Bellport Area.” The show will include Brookhaven National Laboratory and its scientists.

The historical society will preview the exhibit at their annual benefit on June 1, 2024. Following that event, the show will be open through the summer on Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., ending on September 1, 2024. Check for details on their website: www.bbhsmuseum.com.

BREA News has learned that women scientists and former BREA members Joanna Fowler and Marilyn McKeown (1925-2021) will be included in the show.

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association

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