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 is now open to retirees. Even so, BREA’s July business meeting will be a hybrid: both in person and on Zoom via video link. Contact any officer for help to join these meetings.

Meeting Schedule
July 11, 2023
August 2023 – no meeting
September 12, 2023

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From the President
by Arnie Moodenbaugh, moodenba@optonline.net

To fellow BREA Members,

I hope you are doing well. This newsletter’s feature is a discussion of the use of online social applications, based on the experiences of several of our members. Benefits and pitfalls are discussed. You should find the article both interesting and useful.

Brookhaven Lab has a robust social media presence. I include at left a screen capture of the various platforms that the Lab uses.

BNL’s Christine Carter has made arrangements for our next meeting to be a hybrid one. Long Island residents are invited to attend (cont’d page 4)
Social Media Is Here to Stay

When Covid hit, the pandemic accelerated our use of digital products and services. Health information online was a big plus, and social media helped people stay connected with family and friends. Do you use social media?

**Renee Warno** – I have 2 Instagram accounts. One is for my dog TJ. Yes I am one of those people. 😊 My personal account is mostly jokes and my cross stitching. 😃

**Ronnie Evans** – I joined Facebook about 15 years ago. It was a good way for our group of dancers to coordinate our activities. Because of my background in IT, I was concerned about security issues. I read about the capturing of personal information. I decided to give as little “real” information as possible. I set up an account with my nickname not my real name. I gave a false birthdate. I did not give information about my birth place, my high school or colleges.

While it started out as a place to stay in touch with my dancing friends, Facebook soon became a place to get in touch with high school friends, following a 40th reunion. Then it became a place to stay in touch with family and share photos. I became hooked on Scrabble with some friends.

During the Covid years, I joined a private group who were fans of Downton Abbey. It was a fun place to talk about the characters, costumes, plot lines and all things related, especially since life was so curtailed at the time.

One interesting thing about Facebook. My sister and I have a strong family resemblance. I once “tagged” my name in a group photo, and instead of my picture appearing, my sister’s picture came up! Facebook had been using artificial intelligence in its facial recognition software. Under Meta, the new company name, things are evolving.

Now that life is almost back to normal, I find my self using Facebook less and less.

**Rick Backofen** – I was always a bit of a geek when it came to technology so I was an early adopter of Facebook. I created my Facebook account in 2009. At that point, another social media site, MySpace, was very popular and Facebook was just beginning to gain popularity. Over the next few years, MySpace disappeared and Facebook became the dominant platform for social media.

Both of my teenage daughters came to the platform and “friended” me. I also became “friends” with some of their friends, primarily to monitor their online activities. At that time (and probably still, unfortunately), teenagers accepted friend requests from anyone because the number of friends you had was sort of a badge of honor. From the beginning, my daughters began commenting at our dinner table about some of my “lame” posts. It seemed they felt that my performance was a poor reflection on them!

As they moved to newer platforms like SnapChat and TikTok, I didn’t follow and they probably preferred it. According to them, Facebook was for parents.

I use Facebook daily to keep in touch with childhood friends and family. Facebook groups are a great way to reconnect. I also use Twitter to get the latest news because it’s so instantaneous.

**Anita Cohen** – I’m afraid I don't use social media any more. I still have my Facebook account, but I haven't looked at it in several years.

**Gwyn Williams** – I use Facebook, and I use it mainly for my contra dancing events. My account was set up when I was in the Director’s Office at Jefferson Lab because HR decided that some senior staff should monitor the posts.
I can not only learn of events throughout the country, but can also promote my own events. For example, I organized a trip to my home town of Ely, England, with bus excursions by day and dancing every night. 122 people signed up, and there was a waitlist. Promoting and advertising events this way is free and allows a discussion forum where newcomers can learn from previous attendees about the nature of the event.

I do not use Facebook for family, instead using a group and iMessage. Also I purposely do not have it on my smart phone as I don’t need to look at it except when I am at home and at my desk.

Sean McCorkle – I’ve avoided social media as much as possible, using it only when it was required or was the only choice. I find it is a poor form of communication for humans and does not provide anything that email or teleconferencing (phone or video) doesn’t already do for long distance coordination. Even interruptions from those can be distracting and defocusing; various social media are even worse in that regard. The more channels of messaging that need to be monitored, the more time is lost monitoring them.

Don Sievers – I use Facebook. The picture of me in the Corvette convertible is from my Facebook page.

I belong to the Grumman Ski Club group, which allows me to share experiences, sell/buy ski equipment and make arrangements for get togethers. GSC members also post pictures and videos of skiing and club parties.

There is a family group I use to communicate with my family with birthday wishes, holiday celebrations, and general personal news.

I use Next Generation Gardening group to get good ideas and techniques to improve my gardening skills.

Facebook Market Place is great if you are looking to buy or sell anything. I sold my truck, an electric smoker on Facebook Market Place.

On TicTok, I follow people with similar interests of mine. Cooking ideas, hunting adventures, iPhone tips and some light humor.

Les Fishbone – I only use social media when one of my sons or someone else says there is something there to look at; one son posts a lot. I myself do not post on social media at all. There is too much else in life to do.

Misinformation and Hacking

The downside of social media during Covid was the spread of misinformation. Then there’s hacking, unauthorized access to an account or computer system. BREA’s webmaster Renee Warno recounted a recent event. (See page 1 for the hacker’s initial contact.)

“It could have happened to anyone. I got a message on Instagram from a social media friend that I have known for 20+ years. She was asking me to Venmo her $500. My spidey senses went up immediately. She did it twice and then tried to call me on IG. I did not accept the call.

“I responded that I am not giving her any money. I tried reaching out to her on FB Messenger and got no response.

“So I reached out to a friend of hers who confirmed she was hacked. The moral of the story: If someone reaches out to you asking for money, do not engage. Try to reach out to them a different way to confirm the story.”
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 Membership Chair Beth Lin at hellobylin@yahoo.com. Note: New retirees get one year of BREA membership free.

PLEASE PRINT & RETURN FORM TO BETH LIN

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

In Memoriam

We deeply regret to inform you of the passing of the following retirees.
Gerry Morgan, 96, May 5, 2023
Richard Okula, 87, June 28, 2022
Frances Ramundo-Smith, 72, May 16, 2023
Pete M. Ratzke, 61, May 29, 2023

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 info to msrowe.hi@gmail.com or mail it to BREA (see panel below for address).

President’s Message (continued)

in person at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Berkner B. Remote members will be able to attend via Zoom. Long Island retirees who plan to attend should check that their ID badges are current. If your ID has expired, leave extra time to visit badging at Bldg. 400 before the meeting. We will send out an invitation via email the week before.

At the BREA June meeting, we briefly discussed the possibility of having an annual luncheon, perhaps this fall. Before Covid, we had met in late spring at the Bellport Country Club. Post-Covid, we will try to revive that event. One problem is that typical caterers require a minimum attendance of about 80. BREA likely will not come close to that minimum after the three-year lapse. To identify appropriate restaurants, we need a rough count of potential attendees. If you live on Long Island, please email me with your interest and how many would be coming.

Another matter is the biennial election of officers this fall. Please contact me if you are willing to run for office. Members off Long Island are eligible to run, but we should have at least two local officers (required for treasurer) to facilitate banking.

– Arnie Moodenbaugh, moodenba@optonline.net