

Neglected Birch State Park Undergoing Restoration

Although he had never been officially named the "Father of Ft. Lauderdale Beach," the brochure *Hugh Taylor Birch* states that this is perhaps an idea "whose time has come." In the more current brochure "Friends of BSP," we learn that Birch was recently inducted into the Ft. Lauderdale Hall of Fame and granted this title. In 1942 Birch donated 180 acres to the state stipulating that it should forever be protected from development and used

as a state park. Hugh Taylor Birch State Park opened in 1954. From the mid-60's to the mid-80's it had a million visitors a year. From then until now, that number has declined to 300,000 as many of the park amenities ceased to exist. Today The



Friends of BSP are involved in an all-out effort to return the park to its former glory. **Gale Butler**, Executive Director of this group, speaking at the November meeting of BCREA, showed a video about Birch and the park and discussed the efforts currently underway to restore it to its former glory. She distributed sev-

eral brochures and stressed the need for volunteers. Jobs range from the mundane (office work) to animal and plant caretakers to driving visitors around in golf carts! There is also a need for teachers to present educational programs. If you want to meet new people, use your talents and experience, be in a natural environment, work with visitors from all over the world and assist in maintaining the park, call Gayle at 954-566-6660! BSP needs YOU!

Important Upcoming Dates!

December 3 Meeting

Time: 11:45 am

Place: Deicke Auditorium

5701 Cypress Road, Plantation
(1 block off Broward at Royal Palm)

Program:: The John Knox Villagers
Ann French - A Golden Moment

December 10: Board Meeting, 11:30 am
Bev Hoppe's home

Bring to meeting:

Potluck Dish to Share	Chewing Gum
Blankies & Pillows	Books for Literacy
Boxtops & Labels for Education	
Aluminum pull-tabs	Coupons for our troops
Cell Phones	Eyeglasses

December 6: Happy Hanukkah

December 25: Merry Christmas

December 26: Happy Kwanzaa



A Golden Moment...
Mary Ellen Fowler points out the many areas in which BCREA members volunteer: Education, Community, Pets, Clubs, Religion and more!

Mark Your 2016 Calendar:

BCREA

Invites You and Your Guests
to our

50th Anniversary Scholarship Luncheon

Thursday, February 4, 2016

Social Hour: 11:30

Lunch served: 12 noon

Tropical Acres Restaurant

2500 Griffin Road

Tickets will be sold at the
December and January meetings

or

Order them by mail with the coupon on Page 6.

President's Corner

Fifty years ago Edna Jacobs organized a group of retired educators to form the Broward County Retired Teachers Association which became the BCREA. It was an idea to bring educators together and for them to connect. I hope this year of 2015 - 2016 there will be many connections.



Our Golden Moments Committee has done a wonderful job of planning and presenting ways that we all can connect. At the November meeting Mary Ellen Fowler had posters of many ways of volunteering. At the end of the meeting the posters were filled with names of members who reported where they volunteered. I hope it promoted many of our members saying to each other, "I didn't know you volunteered there. So do I!"

Our luncheon had many people bringing in Family Recipes. Sally Sherwood brought in little flags for people to identify what they had brought in to share. I sat with Ann French who had brought in a dish that was made by her family in Massachusetts. Another person at our table knew exactly where Anne had lived. It is wonderful encounters like this that make our group so vibrant.

This year will be devoted to all of us making new connections. Our members have a wealth of experience. We have members who have traveled the world, members who speak other languages, and other members who have music in their souls. What group of people could be as diverse as we are? So this is the year for us to celebrate our wonderful Broward County Retired Educators Association.

Echo



Rear: Anne French, Marelise LeClerc, Rosetta Watkins, Linda Horton, Josephine Walker, Kathlyn Barno, Margarite Falconer, Frances Smoot; Front: Carol Roland, Echo Heyer attended the District 10 Workshop on October 7

From the President-Elect

In addition to our 50th Anniversary Golden Moment, for December's meeting, our program will feature a holiday musical selection. **The Villagers**, John Knox Village Men's Chorus, directed by BCREA member **Ron Davis** will be leading us in familiar holiday tunes, so be sure to warm up your vocal chords on your way to the next BCREA meeting.



Gale Butler, who discussed the history and future of Birch State Park, at November's meeting indicated that any members interested in volunteering at Birch State Park or just interested in additional information about the progress of park renovations can contact Gale at gbutler@birchstatepark.org.

Carol

Community Service / Directories

Chairman: **Darcia Drago**
954-977-7247 dardra@att.net



Community Service

Thank you for your donation of food and clothing to LifeNet4Families. We collected a record amount this year! At our December meeting we will collect packages of wrapped gum (including bubble gum) for our troops. Please continue to report your individual service hours at each meeting. Remember that our definition of community

service is very broad, including help to friends and neighbors. Be sure to include your travel and prep time.

Wishing you and your family a happy holiday and all the best in 2016!

Directories

The 2015-16 directory, re-named the **Membership Handbook**, will be distributed at our December meeting.

Darcy

We Need Items For the Raffle!

Don't forget to start saving NEW items for the big raffle at the February Scholarship Luncheon. Please do not clean out your closets and donate things you no longer want. Others probably won't want them either! Christmas or Hanukkah gifts you don't want would be good - but please leave them unopened! Are we being picky? YES! Donate only things you'd like to win!

Passages



Happy Birthday to our
 Birthday Club
 (members over 85!)

- Barbara Doherty 12/07
- Jean Funk 12/18
- Alzora Simmons 12/18
- Panchitta Chisholm 12/19
- Caroline Hooper 12/20
- Toni Merton 12/20
- Doris Emmett 12/26
- Betty Deacon 12/31
- And turning 85...
- Lillian Hearn 12/20



In Memoriam
 Ken Hendricks
 12/19/14



Joanne Davis
 Shirley Ernst
 Nancy Ruiz
 Josephine Walker



BCREA Officers....

- President
Echo Heyer
 954-523-0661
- President-Elect
Carol Roland
 954-472-2389
- Secretary
Josephine Walker
 954-742-2430
- Treasurer
Marelise LeClerc
 954-962-7343

Social Committee

Chairman: Sallie Sherwood
 954-629-3712 matildatwo@aol.com



Bev's
 Bytes...



A huge **Thank You** to those who cleared their leftover food items and containers from the back table. Another large **Thank You** to those "helping hands" who assisted with setting up the table for this meeting. As we were cleaning the back table, it was discovered that **Anne French's** lid was missing from her Pyrex serving bowl. We discovered another lid that was left behind. This round lid had a fluted center handle. If you brought

a clear glass serving dish/ bowl to the meeting, please check to see that you have the correct lid. If your lid does not match your bowl, please let Anne or me know. And **Thank You** to those who participated in the Fall Family Favorite Recipe theme. If you wish to participate, the theme for the December meeting will be Favorite Holiday Recipes. The Social Committee wishes everyone a beautiful Thanksgiving with family and friends. **Sallie**

Many thanks to **Marjuree Larin** and **BrightStar** for providing us with two 50th Anniversary logos which will be used throughout the year. **Nancy Ruiz** just ordered 5 more copies of the cookbook! She has bought about 20 copies - maybe more! She gives them to all her friends! So she's participating even if she can't attend meetings! There were 81 members and friends at the November meeting according to **Martha Pipes**. The winners of the Scholarship raffle were \$20: **Joyce Stokes**; \$10 each: **Mary Beth Schmid** and

Information Services

Chairman: Kathlyn Barno
 954-581-4731 BB9214@aol.com



"Tis the season" for partying, shopping and watching out for unsavory characters who want to steal our identity. Unfortunately, one of our members, **Louise Costello**, through no fault of her own, became a victim of identity theft. She became aware of this when she discovered a negative report on her credit report, resulting from unpaid bills sent to an address in Palm Beach County. However from this incident she received some very valuable information and wants to pass it on to all of us. After filling reports with the Fort Lauderdale Police and the FTC Louise went about the business of repairing her good credit. In the process she contacted BrightStar Credit Union. There she was put in touch

with a service called Balance which deals in wide variety of consumer counseling, including identity theft issues. BrightStar Credit Union offers this to all its members free of charge. There she was put in touch with a counselor who helped her spot irregularities in her three credit reports and how to refute them. The counselor was very helpful and very accessible, unlike one of the banks with which she does business. The good news is - Louise's credit is now restored! Louise advises us to get a free annual credit report and if you have any consumer or financial issues, contact BrightStar Credit Union.
 Kathlyn



Louise Costello.



Flower arrangements were won by



Ann Graves and, for the 2nd month in a row -



Pat Schroder! Happy Holidays to all! **Bev**





Cultural Affairs

Chairman: Judy Edwards
954-850-1692 jadzeta@bellsouth.net



Last Call...

All Aboard the Murder Mystery Train



BCREA 50th Anniversary

Fun-Fabulous Event
January 22-23, 2016

\$192.00 Deposit is due by December 11th; Final Payment of \$93.00 Due January 7th

Make payment payable to: BCREA

Payments for the Broward Center musical events are also due by December 11th.

We cannot get seating confirmation until ticket requests have been paid for. **Judy**

Legislative

Chairman: Nancy Adams
954-784-7128 NancyannBR@aol.com



There are no specific bills regarding retiree issues for the upcoming legislative session in January 2016. Committees are currently meeting to draft proposed legislation. BCREA's parent group has 2 representatives in Tallahassee attending the meetings - **Larry Carmichael** and **Linda Edson**.

They will have input on retiree issues. **Roger Cuevas**, our FREA president, recently attended a national conference on So-

cial Security payments for 2016 at Boston College held by the National Retired Teacher's Association (NRTA). There will be no cola increase for anyone this year due to the low inflation rate. For 40% of retirees there may actually be a decrease because Medicare deductions have increased. People in higher brackets will have more for medicare taken out of their Social Security check. **Nancy**



Membership...

Chairman: Susan Lochrie
954-525-8503 or slochrie@bellsouth.net



Our meetings and pot luck luncheons are a good way to stay in touch with your retired friends. As we strive to increase our membership, let our slogan work for you: EACH ONE, REACH ONE. Let's each of us invite at least one potential member to come to a meeting and perhaps they will decide to join BCREA.

Members who have not renewed this year have received a reminder. New members may go onto the website <http://browardrea.org> to download a membership form - or contact me for information. **Susan**

Welcome New Members



Shelly Box
Roger Leff
Kathleen Ginestra
Lea Seymore



Lea Seymore and Shelly Box

FREF Extravaganza Tickets - Only \$10.00

Buy your tickets now for a Chance to WIN:

- \$500 Cash - 1st Prize
- \$300 Cash - 2nd Prize
- \$200 Cash - 3rd Prize
- \$100 Cash Guaranteed Prize to a winner in District 10: Dade, Broward or Palm Beach.

Donations are used to fund scholarships for future Florida teachers. Buy Tickets at the December - March meetings or fill out the form below and send with a check to:

Anne French
1017 NE 28 Drive
Wilton Manors, FL 33334

Make your check payable to FREF (Florida Retired Educators Foundation).

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Friendship

Chairman: Julia Penley
561-465-2739 jgpen581@aol.com



Happy Thanksgiving Everyone! Hope the holiday is a delicious and fun one with family and friends! Thank you again for your help in getting birthday, get well and sympathy cards out to our members. One special member, **Martha Pipes**, shared with me at our last meeting her appreciation for her birthday card and how much she enjoyed getting it. She was looking forward to celebrating her 88th on November 6th. Wow!! Best wishes again on her special day! What a sweet, delightful and active member she is!

I also want to ask everyone for their thoughts and prayers for our secretary **Josephine Walker**, as she lost her dear mother on the day of our meeting, November 5th. I am sure all our hearts are with her as she and her family mourn her passing.

Nancy Ruiz is still waiting for a surgery date from her doctor. It has been a difficult journey for her, but she continues to remain cheerful and smiling through it all. Also, **Joanne Davis** is continuing to recover from pneumonia and **Shirley Ernst** is home after a night in the hospital. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and any member who is ill or having physical difficulties. Again, please let me know (email or phone) of any member who is ill, had surgery or other health problems and anyone who has lost a family member. We love good news too! If someone has a happy event, we like to know that as well! Nine members will be celebrating their 85+ birthdays in December!! Happy Birthday to them!! Have a happy and healthy holiday everyone. *Julia*

Literacy

Chairman: Sandy Lefkowitz
954-473-9480 Slef123@bellsouth.net



In November our chapter launched this year's Fifth Grade Essay Contest. Let's encourage fifth graders to write more than text messages! **Margaret Poppell**, a long-time advocate for literacy, began a writing contest for fifth graders. Last year we were excited when our BCREA winning entry **Skyler Wilkerson** went to the state and became an FREA finalist. Any Broward County fifth grader may enter the contest by submitting an essay of 500 words or less about an experience with a grandparent or grandparent figure. The essay may be an individual task or a class assignment. Complete directions and posters were distributed at the November meeting and will also be available in December.



Please spread the news to schools and invite fifth graders to participate. If you would like more informa-

tion emailed to you please, please contact me. 954-557-5817.

Also a big thank you to everyone who has donated children's books this year. Our goal is to develop a love for reading and what better way than to provide children with their very own book. Please bring new or gently used books to our meetings.

Here's an idea the Literacy Committee would like to share. As the winter holidays approach, we often stop and take time to reflect and give thanks. Many of our relatives are able to provide books for their children and thankfully, their children are readers. As

the children grow and outgrow their books, ask your relatives to please pass the books along. A

"secondhand book" can bring a smile to some child's face, heart and mind. **Sandy**

The cost of the BCREA Newsletter is underwritten by:

Bright Star
CREDIT UNION

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Serving Broward Educators Since 1946

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 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 FORT LAUDERDALE, FL
 PERMIT NO. 409

- DATED MATERIAL -
 PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

Scenes at the
 November
 meeting!

Myken Brady holds the
 2014-2015 scrapbook
 she created.



Marsy Smith
 will share her
 chocolate pecan
 pie recipe



Maria Moore tells about
 the Literacy Contest



Joanne Corder and Missy
 Belsito organize the do-
 nated coupons and labels

Scholarship Luncheon Ticket Order Form

Number of tickets: _____ @\$35.00 each

Entrée choices: Prime Rib of Beef
 Stuffed Chicken
 Broiled Salmon

Name	Entrée Choice
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Send a check made out to BCREA
 by January 16 (no refunds!)
Include a Self-addressed, stamped envelope
 to
 Anne French
 1017 NE 28 Drive
 Wilton Manors, FL 33334-3722

BCREA VOLUNTEER REPORTING FORM

Name _____
 (Please Print)

Month _____, 20__

Volunteer hours working with adults _____
 (persons who are non-family members;
 this also includes literacy hours)

Volunteer hours working with youth _____
 (Persons 25 years of age or younger;
 This also includes literacy hours)

Bring this to our next meeting, e-mail it to me at
dardra@att.net or mail it to me at:
 Darcia Drago
 4346 Carambola Circle North
 Coconut Creek, FL 33066