



BCREA Newsletter



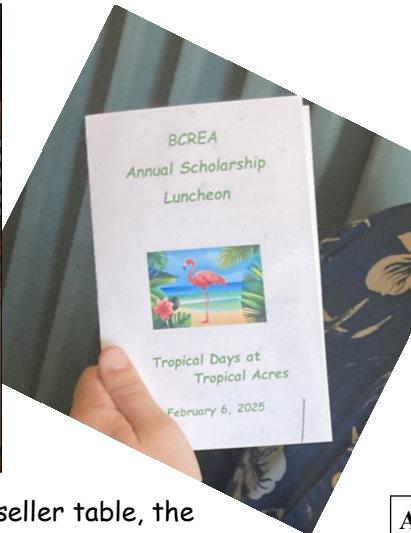
March, 2025

Broward County Retired Educators' Association

<https://browardrea.org>

Number 324

Pink Flamingoes, Pink Sandbuckets, Pink Napkins Set the Scene



Flamingo decorations were bright and colorful, the food, as always, was delicious and there were 70 beautifully wrapped prizes on tables that stretched the length of the room. The only problem was the size of the room which was a tight fit for the 86 people, ticket-

seller table, the karaoke set-up and the many waiters trying their best to get food and drinks delivered to tables. Tropical Acres apparently had 3 different groups in 3 different rooms - and BCREA was not in their usual spacious room, but in an adjacent one approximately 1/2 the size they were used

AMBA rep Jeff Hesse presents a tablet to Lenora Smoot

Anne gives Kim Meade the Pot of Gold.

to. Just trying to walk between the tables was next to impossible and for those with wheelchairs it was even more difficult. But in spite of all that, most people had a grand time! Eighty-four tickets were sold for the Pot of Gold which

was won by **Barbara Legette** and her aide **Kim Meade**.
Total = \$197.52
\$69 in bills,
\$86.25 Quarters
\$27.30 Dimes
\$11.55 Nickels
342 pennies. (\$3.42)
+3 pesos

March 6 Meeting
Time: 12:00 pm
Place: Plantation Community Center ****
Address: 5555 Palm Tree Road, Plantation
Program: Author **Peter Reiss**
 Memorial Service - **Darcy Drago**
 March 17 - **St. Patrick's Day**
 March is **Women's History Month**

Bring to meeting:
Service Hours Reports!!
 Picnic Potluck to share
 Aluminum pull-tabs
 Old eyeglasses
 Old Cell phones

WOMEN

"STOP! In the name of love!" sang one of the karaoke groups who got a lot of support from the audience!



**** PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF MEETING PLACE FOR THE MARCH MEETING! Directions will follow, DON'T FORGET TO WEAR GREEN!

President's Corner

A Tropical Day at Tropical Acres was a fun event for the 86 attendees. There were lots of flowered shirts and many, many flamingos. Even if we were squished in like sardines, there were laughs and karaoke songs.

The 70+ gift baskets were a treat and profitable for our scholarship fund. We raised \$1,600, which I believe is a record. Thank you to the Controlled Chaos Crew, who assembled these treasures. A big thank you to **Diane Texter** and the luncheon committee: you did an outstanding job.

The 2025 FREA Convention will be held in historic St. Augustine May 20-22. This year's theme is Fire and Ice - Lighting the Way, Freezing the Moment. Rooms are \$139 (this rate is also good for 3 days before and/or after the convention.). The meal package is \$225 (2 dinners and 1 lunch).

BCREA members have traditionally shared rooms to curb costs. For more info, go to **FREA.org** and look under the events tab. Please let me know if you are interested in attending. The registration deadline is April 11. Note there are hefty refund fees and firm cancellation deadlines.

On January 13, several BCREA Board members attended the Southern **Region Symposium** in Okeechobee, Florida. At this event we looked at BCREA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis). You will have a chance to give your input about BCREA's future in the coming months. BCREA received awards at this symposium. We received a certificate of recognition for our support of FREF (Florida Retired Educators Foundation). We also received an award recognizing us as one of the top six Units for our volunteer services activities. To keep this award going, please turn in your volunteer service hours to **Darcy Drago** - it makes a difference!

In January, I got a note from **Madeline Martin**. She is a past-president of BCREA and now lives in Vermont. She recently had an accident and could use some Sunny South Florida wishes. She is listed in the directory.



Anne



From the President Elect

Greetings BCREA,

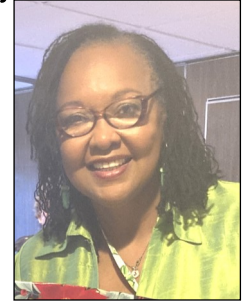
I am still joyous from our recent annual scholarship luncheon. So much fun was had by members and friends of BCREA. We are gearing up for Cupid Crew this Valentine Day and hope that your loved one is treated to a nice card and beautiful flower.

I am equally excited about our March meeting where author **Peter Reiss** will lecture on becoming an author and his experiences from writing. We will also have our Memorial Service for our departed members.

I would like to encourage each of you to think of our plans for next year. I hope to survey as many of you as possible to assist us in growing and working at our capacity. At our FREA regional symposium in January, we conducted a "SWOT analysis" of our perceptions of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. I will share more of this in the coming months.

Thank each and every one of you for making the Scholarship Luncheon a tremendous success.

Sincerely, **Dr. JAKS**



Legislative

Chair: **Sue Colton**

954-695-5065 scolton@bellsouth.net



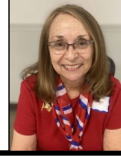
The Opening Day of the 2025 Florida Legislative Session is Tuesday, March 4, 2025. This year, our main priority is to continue the 'Reinstate COLA' push. [Click here to download the 2-sided handout sheet to give to your local legislators.](#) As a member of our FREA Legislative Team, we will be in Tallahassee from March 24 to March 27. Stay tuned for my update at the BCREA meeting on March 6. To find your District Senator and Representative, download our Broward Legislative Delegation Catalog here: <https://www.broward.org/Legislative/Documents/LDDirectory.pdf>

Sue

<i>BCREA</i> Officers....	
President Anne French 954-579-1719	Secretary Karen Avery 954-806-1678
President-Elect JoAnne Kitchen Simmons 954-804-0647	Treasurer Carol Roland 954-472-2389

Membership

Chair: LuAnn Comes
954-475-1510 lacomes987@aol.com



Florida Retirement Educators Association (FREA) and Broward County Retired Educators Association (BCREA) work hand-in-hand to support the needs of all its members. The FREA focuses most of its attention on safeguarding the retirement system and preserving our benefits, supporting public education, encouraging community involvement and being a source of information for its members. BCREA focuses on monthly local meetings promoting fellowship, community involvement, and a variety of activities supportive of scholarships. For more intensive information, check out the websites for each at www.frea.org and browardrea.org. Collection for BCREA and FREA Membership Dues of \$60 will begin in March. The dues will be for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. We encourage you to pay the dues directly to BCREA so you have only one mailing. We also encourage you to pay before June 30. The dues of \$60 include the FREA state dues of \$45 and the local Broward Unit dues of \$15. When you send one check to BCREA, Carol Roland, our Treasurer, sends your state dues to FREA. You may pay the dues at a monthly meeting or mail in your dues using the form below. Feel free to call or email me with any questions you might have regarding membership.

LuAnn

BROWARD COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

I would prefer to receive my *Newsletter* by email only

Date Retired _____ Retired From _____

Position _____

Dues:\$60.00; Donation for Scholarships: _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Please make check payable to **BCREA** and mail to

LuAnn Comes, BCREA Membership

107 NW 107 Terrace, Plantation, FL 33324

Passages

Happy Birthday to our

Happy Birthday

Birthday Club
(members 85 and over)

- Marsha Macary 3/02
- Sally Creswell 3/05
- Becky Williams 03/09
- Nancy Adams 03/20
- Ethel Gerakas 03/20
- Carol Merz 03/31



Thinking of You....
Arline Ziller



In Memoriam
Diana Carter 1/28/25
Lizzie Johnson 2/10/25

March

March is Nature's housekeeper
She rids the land of debris.
She dusts away broken branches
Making all safe and free.

She rakes away burnt grasses
Melts icicles on the trees
Sprays rays of sunbeams here
and there

Offering comfort to birds and
bees.

After raking, dusting, sweeping
She clears the sky of snow
Colors it pink, purple, blue
And paints a twilight down
below.

Yes, March is Nature's trusted
helper,
And her breath that's sweet and
low,
Now has Earth calmly sleeping
Waiting for April showers to
show. Lillian Lampkins

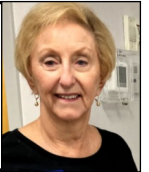
Information Services

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



Volunteer Services / Handbook-

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



March is the month of change, "coming in like a lion and going out like a lamb." We begin shaking off the darkness of the last few months and begin to welcome the longer sunny days and the blossoms of spring. March is full of many occasions to celebrate: St. Patrick's Day (and rivers turning green), Daylight Saving Time, and March Madness. Alexander Graham Bell's first telephone call (1876), Monopoly Game (1935), Coca Cola (1886), Girl Scouts (1912) and Peace Corps (1961) were all introduced. March is also National Optimism Month, so just as we let the darker days of winter fade and begin to let go of negativity, we should start smiling and embrace the bright side of days that are ahead. According to MIT Press Reader (Mass Institute of Technology) having an optimistic attitude is extremely beneficial. Optimists are

happier, more successful and healthier, living 11 to 15 percent longer than pessimists, and tend to be protected against depression and are more resistant to stress. If you see a glass as half-full or if you look on the bright side of things, you are an optimist. If you think that the best possible things will happen, keep it up... your dreams may come true. Let's not forget World Sleep Day on March 14. Getting enough sleep, which is sometimes more difficult for older individuals, helps you stay healthy and alert. National Institute on Aging has a helpful article on "A Good Night's Sleep," <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/sleep/good-nights-sleep>. This article discusses insomnia, sleep apnea, pain factor and tips and tricks to help you obtain a good night's sleep. Stay safe, stay sharp and send positive thoughts to others. *Sallie*

Are you a volunteer? Even though we are retired we can still contribute to our community. Some examples of volunteer services are:

- Serving on your HOA Board
- Tutoring or mentoring
- Donating to a charitable cause (financially or with goods or services)
- Assisting a friend or neighbor
- Being a docent
- Volunteering at a school, hospital, an animal shelter, beach clean-up, or at your

house of worship - Basically any service that you provide to a non-relative counts. Be sure to count preparation and travel time and be sure to submit your volunteer hours at our monthly meetings or send them in to me. Together we can make a difference!
>> Please remember to report your hours to BCREA each month. *Darcy*

Literacy

Chair: Sandy Lefkowitz
954-473-9480 slef123@bellsouth.net



- B**e positive and wear a smile. Choose a book that makes you happy.
- C**heck out a library book or borrow one online. Support your community bookstores and libraries.
- R**each out to family and friends. Read and discuss a book with them.
- E**xtend your love for books by reading to children. Encourage others to read beyond the internet.
- A**nd above all thank you for donating books. And please keep donating new children's books. *Sandy*



We guarantee **BRIGHT** Service
every time



SunSentinel
MEDIA GROUP

From the Treasurer

Chair: Carol Roland
954-472-2389 carolrbeads@aol.com



I want to thank everyone who assisted in making our February luncheon such a wonderful event. This year we hosted 86 members and guests. Special thanks to AMBA which donated a computer and to Bright Star Credit Union for donating a

\$2000.00 check earmarked for Handbooks and Newsletters. They donated two \$100 gift cards which were won by **Diane Texter and Missy Belsito**. Thanks to everyone who donated to our scholarship fund. As a result of everyone's generosity we distributed

70 prize baskets and raised over \$1600.00 for scholarships.

Thanks,
Carol



Fund Raising

Chair: Barbara Lewis
954-562-1936 barbarabeth1@att.net



Hi Everyone,

It was great seeing all of you at our annual BCREA Luncheon. We all had a great time, as well as raising a lot of money for scholarships. Kudos to **Diane Texter** for a fantastic luncheon.

Our **SUPER ZOOM BINGO** is Thursday April 17 at 1:00 on Zoom. Please! BCREA needs your help.

The money from Bingo goes to buy new books for children at **Joe DiMaggio Hospital**. Even if you don't play Bingo buy a card and give it to someone else. Bingo cards are \$10 for 5

games. I will be selling Bingo Cards at the March and April meetings. Also, you can send your money to: **Barbara Lewis**
10210 NW 24 Street
Sunrise, FL 33322

Please include your address. We always have tons of fun. The more people who play the more fun we have. See you at the March meeting

Barbara



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
2505 Dagoon Avenue
Coconut Creek, FL 33063

Social Committee

Chair: Marianne Scott
954-321-9174 mscott33317@yahoo.com



Welcome to March. Women's History Month finds us welcoming Daylight Savings Time and celebrating Easter and St. Patrick's Day so get your Kelly green ready for our meeting on March 7. After a month off, it's time to get those recipes out to find the delicious food you will bring to the Picnic Pot Luck lunch. If you have any reusable containers, the Social Committee would appreciate you bringing them to the meeting. Many, many were used at our January meeting and our supply is running low. Please don't forget that we are recycling bottles and cans. The recycling bin

hasn't been very full at our last couple of meetings. Along with the special days previously mentioned. March brings us Peanut Butter Lover's Day and Chip & Dip Day. A little food for thought as you plan your luncheon item. *May the dreams you hold dearest, be those which come true. And the kindness you spread, keep returning to you.* - An Irish blessing

Marianne



**- DATED MATERIAL -
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

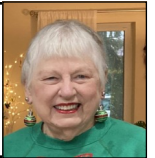
FREF

Chair: Shirley Swartz
954-536-3401 Shirley.swartz@gmail.com



Bev's Bytes....

954-587-9275 HapiHopi@aol.com



I want to thank our members who have purchased an FREF Extravaganza ticket for the 2025 drawing. Your support is greatly appreciated. Remember it is two chances to win when you purchase one ticket. I was a lucky winner one year!!! These tickets will be on sale until April 20th.

FREF Scholarship Extravaganza 2025

Tickets - Only \$10.00

Buy your tickets now for 2 Chances to win:

First, you will be in the District drawing for a \$100 winner in Broward, Dade or Palm Beach.

Second, you will have a chance to win:

\$500 Cash - 1st Prize

\$300 Cash - 2nd Prize

\$200 Cash - 3rd Prize

Buy Tickets at the January - March meetings or fill out the form below and send with a check to:

Shirley Swartz
1911 SW 52 Terrace
Plantation, FL 33317

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

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

All donations will be used to fund the general scholarship program as well as the operating expenses of the Foundation.

WARNING! I was scammed!

Just after I sent out the Newsletter last month, my computer started going Boing! Boing! Boing! Then a number popped up - supposedly from Microsoft to call to get it to stop. So I called it!

That was my first mistake!

Then a man who said his name was Victor Singh started giving me instructions and asking me questions. If I hesitated to answer, he'd say, "Ma'am, I can't help you if you don't tell me this." So I'd tell him.

My second mistake. And so on until I let him take over my computer using "remote access."

Another mistake! He had me on the phone for 4 hours!

I had to go to a meeting and he told me I couldn't leave. I told him I had to because I was taking some other ladies. He finally told me I could go but I wasn't to tell ANYONE about this! I still didn't catch on! I didn't mention it to one person!

There was more - too much to type!

It wasn't till the middle of the night when I finally realized I'd been had! I got up and turned off the computer. It had been scanning everything on the computer for hours! I couldn't believe I was so stupid!

Thank goodness for **Anne French!** She told me to call the Geek Squad - and I did. A very nice young man arrived quite quickly and within an hour and a half had me on my computer again!

I always thought it couldn't happen to me! Well! It could and it did! Never call a number that pops up on your screen!. And that's the last byte for March! *Bev*