

## Annual Memorial Service Honors 8 Jeff and Lexie Introduce AMBA Passport

Each year BCREA takes time to remember the members who have passed away in the previous year. This year 8 members were honored at the March meeting. They were

- Bobbie Lou David*
- Garnett Ferguson*
- Leda Itzkowitz*
- Dorothy Johnson*
- Madeline Levine*
- Ann McClintock*
- Jean Shiskin*
- Darlene Utry*



Missy Belsito read the names of each person and told a few things about them followed by a moment of silence.



Pictured above right: Jeff and Lexie with winners of their Publix gift cards, Karen Avery and Donella Reddick

AMBA Passport has been re-imagined to include new and enhanced benefits. We have exclusive savings at over 2,500 merchants, including premium travel discounts and a wide variety of local and national merchant discounts. There are so many ways AMBA Passport can help you elevate every step, every stop, every stay.

**Want to upgrade your home?** We have great discounts for you. For instance, take advantage of name brands that specialize in fixtures, faucets, mattresses, and more.

**Want to upgrade your travels?** Our big savings on hotels, car rentals, and even cruise lines will have you in the lap of luxury. No matter what, you will enjoy lots of fun and celebrate the good times.

Plus, AMBA Passport is offering a fantastic bonus when you sign up. For a 30-day trial period, you'll have the opportunity to take advantage of Passport's Dining Upgrade on top of your complimentary membership. This includes exclusive savings at over 850 Passport Dining restaurants! After that, if you're enjoying the additional Passport Dining Upgrade benefits, you can keep your upgraded access after the trial period for only \$7 per month! You can cancel at any time. Get more information online

<https://blog.getamba.com>

<https://amba.passportmembership.com/>

### April 9 Meeting

**Time:** 11:45

**Place:** Jim Ward

Community Center

**Address:** 301 NW 46th Ave,

Plantation

**Program:** Broward County Elections Supervisor



**Passover**

4/01-4/09



**Easter 4/5**



### Bring to meeting:

- Volunteer Hours
- Picnic Potluck to share
- Aluminum pull-tabs
- Old eyeglasses & Cell phones
- A New Member
- Supplies for the Humane Society
- Voter Registration Card

## President's Corner

Greetings BCREA members and Friends, Spring is upon us! We are busy concluding this month with our annual March Memorial Service, where **Missy Belsito** led us as we commemorated our deceased members. **James Etta Warner** provided the "Thought for the Day" with a tribute to our beloved pets titled "The Truest Friend." We are Playing in the Park' on March 11, 2026. Contact **Anne French** for more information. We hope you can join us!



Also, if you have not purchased your BINGO cards, please see **Barbara Lewis** prior to April 16, 2026. At our March meeting, we were also pleased to host special guest **Michael Cardona** from **Bright Star Credit Union**, who presented BCREA with a donation and other gifts of appreciation. Additionally, we welcomed **Jeff Hesse** and his wife **Lexie**. ([Jeffrey.Hesse@getAMBA.com](mailto:Jeffrey.Hesse@getAMBA.com)), who shared AMBA Passport updates and also offered tokens of appreciation. We are excited to have both of these organizations partner with the Broward County Retired Educators' Association, as we look forward to expanding our reach.

For our April meeting, we will host the Supervisor of Elections office to discuss new requirements and updates for the upcoming elections. Please ensure you attend and bring your voter identification cards with you.

We still have an open position for President-Elect for the upcoming year. I hope someone will accept the clarion call and step forward before our May meeting. If you have any questions regarding the requirements of this role, please contact **Anne French** or myself. We are happy to provide any information you need. Membership renewals also happen at each of our monthly meetings. It is imperative that your renewal is done with membership chairperson, **LuAnne Comes**. This will assist with proper recording and acknowledgement.

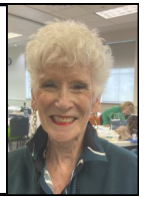
Best regards, JAKS



## Legislative

Chair: Sue Colton

954-695-5065 [scolton@bellsouth.net](mailto:scolton@bellsouth.net)



She stood in the storm, and when the wind did not blow her way, she adjusted her sails."

Elizabeth Edwards

I am writing this article on Sunday, March 8, 2026, for our April BCREA Newsletter.

Happy International Women's Day! I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the BCREA Village for all you do.

THANK YOU to our BCREA Cupid Crew for another successful year of sharing love & joy! 400 live roses were wrapped in tissue paper and ribbon, attached to our hand-decorated cards, and delivered to our members who cannot attend meetings due to health or transportation issues, as well as to other worthy community organizations and human hearts in need.

THANK YOU to our Legislative Committee and all members who diligently contacted our Broward Legislative Delegation and other key Florida Senators and Representatives to advocate for our public schools, students, teachers, staff members, and FRS retirees. The 2026 session ends (sine die) on Friday, March 13, 2026.

THANK YOU for allowing me to serve as your Florida Retired Educators Association (FREA) District 10 Director (Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties:-) Stay tuned for information on our FREA Virtual Convention, May 27, 2026. Agenda, Registration, and Online Auction information is available in the FREA Spring Bulletin, on our BCREA Facebook page, and in our *May Newsletter*.

Sue



## Community Service/Handbooks

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



At our April meeting we will collect supplies for the Florida Humane Society a volunteer-based, no-kill organization dedicated to saving the lives of homeless cats & dogs, as well as providing spaying-neutering services to reduce pet overpopulation. They also assist local law enforcement in cases of animals injured due to neglect or abuse & they rescue animals from overcrowded shelters.



Items on their "wish list" include:

- Dog or puppy canned Pedigree
- Canned cat food (not in gravy)
- Cat litter (clay or clumping)
- Paper towels
- 13 gallon garbage bags
- Laundry soap
- Fabuloso cleaner
- Copy paper

Darcy

## Information Services

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



According to AI the saying "March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers" was first recorded in 1886. The original intent was to offer hope that after a difficult time, things would improve. March happens to be American Red Cross month. You can offer assistance by donating blood, volunteering in communities during their difficult times or taking CPR/first aid classes. April is National Stress Awareness Month. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) offers suggestions: regular physical activity, maintaining social connections and seeking support, volunteering, adopting a pet, practicing mindful-

ness, 7-9 hours of sleep, and limiting alcohol. (Remember you can donate to Red Cross). When stressed try the 3-3-3 rule: name 3 things you see, name 3 sounds you hear, move three body parts. Apparently this can interrupt your anxiousness by connecting to your surroundings. My calming activity is gardening. Just read a book by Peter Wolleben, The Hidden Life of Trees. Trees actually reduce their stress by using fungi in their roots and communicating with their neighbor trees and saplings!!!! Stay fit, stay sharp and send positive thoughts to others.

Sallie

## Social Committee

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



Spring is about to arrive and April is close behind. During the month of April, we celebrate Easter, Passover, National Peanut Butter & Jelly

Day (Apr. 2) and Earth Day (Apr. 22) to name a few. The Social Committee provides a garbage can for recycling the soda cans and water bottles that you drink during lunch. The recycling can is located near the drink table. Let's try to do our part to help Mother Earth and put those cans and bottles in the recycling can. Our next meeting is on April 9. See you there.

Marianne



## Fund Raising

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



Hi Everyone!  
Our next fundraiser is our Fantastic Zoom Bingo on April 16, at 100. Bingo cards are \$10 for 5 games. I will be selling Bingo cards at our next meeting April 9 or you can send me your money or check to:

Barbara Lewis  
10210 NW 24 Street  
Sunrise, FL 33322

If you have any questions call me at 954-562-1936. Our Zoom Bingo money goes to buy new books for children at Joe DiMaggio children's hospital. Help support this worthy cause. Hope to see you on April 9.

Barbara



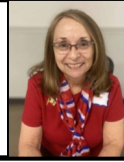
We guarantee **BRIGHT** Service every time



SunSentinel MEDIA GROUP

# Membership

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



## 2026 - 2027 BCREA Membership Dues

The luck of the Irish was definitely with us at our March meeting as we welcomed four new members! We also thank our members who encouraged their friends to join the group! In March, BCREA began collecting dues for July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027. Dues of \$60 include membership in FREA. Thank you to all the members who have already submitted their dues! It is also important to let us know of any changes in your address, phone number or email address so we can stay in touch. This is especially critical since newsletters are now sent via email. Also, let us know if you or another member do not get the newsletter by email so we can verify the email address we have on file with what you currently use. You can mail dues to me or bring them to the next meeting. Please contact me if you have any questions.

*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: \_\_\_\_\_

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  
Birthday Club

(members over 85!)

Mary Bedard 4/02

Lillian Johnston 4/03

Dorothy Howard 4/15

Eleanor Majerus 4/23

Ronald Mayhew 4/30

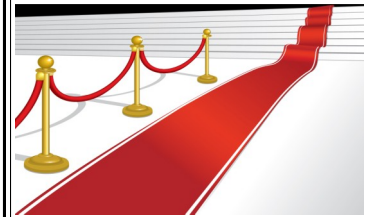


Thinking of You...

Louise Costello

Darcy Drago

## Welcome New Members



Audrey  
Warren



Jackie  
Latchman



Leila  
Lumpkins

# Literacy

Chair: Sandy Lefkowitz & Cindy O'Linn  
954-473-9480 Slef123@bellsouth.net



I always said "You can never have enough books." However, I have to say that our BCREA members have donated more and more books this year and I'm about to change that phrase. "You can never stop BCREA from donating books." Thank you all for the children's books and

the adult novels. Please do not bring any books to the April or May meetings. The books are delivered to happy hands and excited readers. The literacy committee can't thank you enough, We ask you to save books over the summer because our book campaign will definitely be one of our activities next year. Thank you all again.

*Sandy and Cindy*

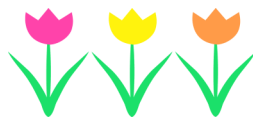


Winners in the March Scholarship Fundraiser were Below, L-R: Robin Newman, \$20; Lenora Smoot, \$10; Ellen Emery, \$10; Alyce Aspler, \$10; Val Proffer was the winner of the Community Services drawing.

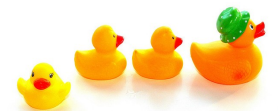


*Bev's Bytes...*

Just before Valentine's Day, 400 roses were delivered to **Sue Colton!** This was part of "Cupid Crew." For the 12th year, Wish of a Lifetime of AARP delivered cards and roses to hundreds of thousands of older adults on February 14 through its Cupid Crew network of volunteers. The annual tradition aims to help tackle the nation's loneliness epidemic, which threatens the health and well-being of millions of people in the U.S. On March 11 Cultural Affairs hosted "Fun in the Park." About 15 members enjoyed yummy food, played games, giggled and teased each other. A good day for all. Happy Passover! Happy Easter! Happy Spring!



*Bev*



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM



BY MIKE PETERS

Loose Parts



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



effort. Please consider using the mail in form with your check so you can be a part of the drawing with two chances to win. Please hurry we have an

April 30th deadline when all returns are due into the state office. A HUGE Thank YOU to all who have already supported this effort.

To all reading this notice: PLEASE CONSIDER buying one FREF EXTRAVAGANZA RAFFLE ticket if you have not already done so. You have two chances to win!!! In the past 3 years, 3 of our members have been winners! Please bring your \$10 to our next meeting. Or send me a check - let's help support future teachers. THANK YOU for your consideration in this



**FREF Scholarship Extravaganza**

**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

Fill out the form below and send with a check to:

Shirley Swartz  
 1921 SW 52 Terrace  
 Plantation, FL 33317

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**BCREA VOLUNTEER REPORTING FORM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please Print)

Month \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

**Number of hours assisting non-family members or volunteering in any way in the community. This also includes literacy hours**

\_\_\_\_\_

Turn in this form at our next meeting, e-mail it to me at [dardra@att.net](mailto:dardra@att.net) or text it to me at: 954-552-3479

**Darcia Drago**  
 2505 Dagoon Avenue  
 Coconut Creek, FL 33063