



# Newsletter



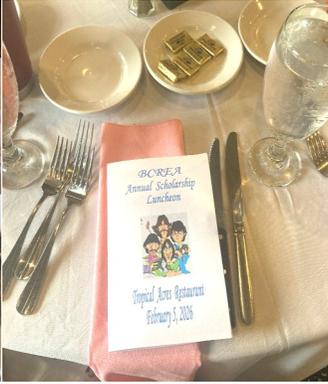
March, 2026

Broward County Retired Educators' Association

<https://browardrea.org>

Number 332

## Pink Jackets, Pink Napkins & Poodle Skirts Set the Scene



The Pot of Gold which was won by **Sue Redfern** had a total of \$371.25, Sue's giving it all back to the Scholarship Fund! Above far Left - Diane made centerpieces out of old records and large musical notes! Programs featured a cartoon of the Beatles; **Veduria McBride** and **Jill Wilson**

**March 5 Meeting**  
 Time: 12 noon  
 Place: Jim Ward Community Center  
 Address: 301 NW 46th Ave, Plantation  
 Program: Darcy Drago - Memorial Service  
 Broward Elections Supervisor  
 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**



wore poodle skirts and Saddle shoes. **Karen Uris** won the active picture frame given by **Amba's Jeff Hesse**. Seventeen members and friends attended *Menopause the Musical* at the Parker sponsored by Cultural Affairs. **Judy Hunter, Josephine Walker, Anne French** and **Sue Colton** wore beautiful pink boas to the celebration! It was a fun performance

## President's Corner

Dear BCREA Members and Friends,

What a way to "Rock and Roll!" Our annual scholarship luncheon was a magnificent success. The event was well attended, and the

theme, "We Know How to Rock and Roll," was reflected in a day filled with fun and entertainment. Committee



Chair **Diane Texter** and her team did a phenomenal job in making sure that we all had a great time. The entire team of BCREA members are the bedrock of scholastic excellence! I am too proud to be a part of this group!

We are still searching for a president-elect to take the helm of leadership in 2028. While that date

may seem far off, it will be here soon, and we encourage interested members to consider this role.

Our March meeting will include a special recognition and memorial for our members who have made a lasting impact on our community of educators. We will also be joined by **Michael Cardona** from **Bright Star Credit Union**. We sincerely appreciate the ongoing support and services that BSCU offers our organization.

Best regards, **Dr. JAKS**



## Legislative

Chair: Sue Colton

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



### CALL TO LEGISLATIVE ACTION

**SB 424 (Senator Rouson) & HB 6023 (Representative Gantt)** both bills are designed to amend existing Florida legislation regarding "Schools of Hope."

**"Colocations Provision Removed:** The bills delete the rule that allowed a School of Hope to co-locate with another school in a public school facility.

**Facility Usage Provision Removed:** Deletes the requirement for school districts to permit Schools of Hope to use under-used, vacant, or surplus district facilities.

**Funding Calculation Change:** Eliminates the requirement that students enrolled in a School of Hope be included in the district's total capital outlay FTE (full-time equivalent) membership.

**No-Cost Facility Use Removed:** Deletes the provision that allows School of Hope operators to use public school facilities at no cost.

**Find your legislators' email links:** Go to [frea.org](http://frea.org) and click Legislative Advocacy.

Click Find your Senator. Click your Senator's picture. Under the picture, click the "EMAIL YOUR SENATOR" link. Then click Find Your Representative.

On the next page, enter your home address. Under the picture, click **DETAILS**, then click **Contact Member** to open the email page.

**Find your legislators' email links:** Go to [frea.org](http://frea.org) and click Legislative Advocacy. Click **Find your Senator**. Click your **Senator's picture**. Under the picture, click the "EMAIL YOUR SENATOR" link. Then click **Find Your Representative**.

On the next page, enter your home address. Under the picture, click **DETAILS**, then click **Contact Member** to open the email page.

#### SAMPLE EMAIL:

Dear (Name of Senator or Representative),  
I am writing to ask for your support for **SB 424** or **HB 6023**. This bill is critical for promoting equitable funding and facility use for all public schools in Florida. I hope you will support these bills if they come to a vote in the full House or Senate. Thank you for your commitment to our public schools and students.

**Please** text me at (954) 695-5065 or email [scolton@bellsouth.net](mailto:scolton@bellsouth.net) when you complete.

THANK YOU *Sue*



### BCREA Officers....

#### President

JoAnne Kitchen Simmons  
954-804-0647

#### President-Elect

Vacant

#### Secretary

Karen Avery  
954-806-1678

#### Treasurer

Gwen Lampkin  
(Ask for her number)

## Membership

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



Just like our members at the delightful Scholarship Luncheon, time is also rocking and rolling. Yes, it is that time again! BCREA and FREA Membership Dues of \$60 are currently being collected. Dues are being collected for July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027. We encourage you to pay the dues directly to BCREA by June 15 to avoid the association expense for a mailing. The dues of \$60 include the FREA state dues of \$45 and the local Broward Unit dues of \$15. You may pay the dues at a monthly meeting or by mailing it to me. If possible, please include the form below. Including the form helps us stay up to date with your address, phone number and email. Invite your friends to join us at a meeting and encourage them to join. 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



DJ and Entertainer William Penn House - played and sang



We guarantee **BRIGHT** Service  
every time



SunSentinel  
MEDIA GROUP

## Information Services

Chair: Sallie Sherwood

954-629-3712 matildatwo@aol.com



## Volunteer Services / Handbook-

Chair: Darcia Drago

954-977-7247 dardra@att.net



During the month of February we showed love, kindness and gratitude to others. Now, as we recall and heed Shakespeare's warning to "Beware the ides of March" we need to direct that concern for others to ourselves. March is **National Health Month**, a perfect time to make those Doctor's appointments that we have delayed. March symbolizes transformation and new growth. According to an article in **Readers Digest** by Brandon Spector, people around the world celebrate renewing activities in Spring. Some of us attempt certain rituals such as "spring cleaning", others begin to plant seeds in the gardens, even certain animals get into the act by awaking from hibernation. **Valerie Johnson**, on *Pinterest*, shares some great ideas entitled "**Cheat Codes For Life That No One Tells You.**" Perhaps since March offers us "new beginnings" here are a few "cheat codes" to help take better care of ourselves: You can't pour from an empty cup, take care of yourself first. Wake up

early, more time equals less stress. Use the two minute rule, do small tasks immediately. Take deep breaths, and calm your mind instantly. Don't look back, you are not going that way! These might be positive practices to help us move into our spring transformation. For those cat lovers, **Respect Your Cat Day**, occurs on March 28. Hug your furry family. It has been proven that loving on an animal, actually lowers your blood pressure and reduces cardiovascular disease. Some things to do as we welcome spring: **Southeast Florida Scottish Festival & Highland Games** 9 AM - 7 PM. Saturday, March 1, at Plantation Heritage Park. **Water Matters Day** Saturday March 8, 2026, 9:00 AM to 3 PM Free trees for Broward residents are offered at Tree Tops Park in Davie. **HEALTH FAIR.** Saturday, March 28, 2026 10 AM. - 2 PM at Lauderhill Mall 1267 NW 40th Ave. Lauderhill, FL 33313. Stay fit, stay sharp, send positive thoughts to others. Happy St. Patty's Day.

### Volunteer Services

At our April meeting we will collect supplies for the **Florida Humane Society**, a "no-kill" shelter in Pompano Beach. Details regarding their "wish list" will be in next month's newsletter. This will be our last group project of the year.



At our annual memorial service at our March meeting we will honor & remember the 8 members that we lost in 2025.

**Handbook/Directory** Hooray! The 2026 edition is ready for distribution at our March meeting.

Darcy

### Volunteer of the Year by Darcia Drago



**LuAnn Comes** our Membership Chair is our nominee for District Volunteer of the Year. In addition to chairing membership LuAnn serves on the budget & literacy committees & assists with the handbook/directory & memorial service. She has been a member of BCREA since her retirement 10 years ago.

LuAnn is the chairperson of the audit & hospitality committees of the Broward County Genealogical Society. She is also a board member of Delta Kappa Gamma & the Village Gate Homeowner's Association. In addition she procures for State required assessments at Sheridan Park Elementary School. In 2023 she was named a "Modern Pioneer" by the Broward County Historic Preservation Board. LuAnn was also awarded a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition for "outstanding & invaluable service to the community". Good luck to LuAnn in District Competition!

♥♥♥♥♥ REMINDER/UPDATE ON CUPID CREW: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13th TIME & LOCATION: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. RIVERLAND BRANCH LIBRARY, 2710 WEST DAVIE BLVD. FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33312 We will unwrap 200 live roses, wrap them with tissue and ribbon, and attach our decorated cards for delivery. If you would like to assemble and deliver roses, please email me your name to scolton@bellsouth.net We have identified a list of our members and addresses who cannot attend meetings due to health or transportation, and those who have recently lost a loved one. ALSO: You may also deliver to cherished friends or family members of our retirement community, from your place of worship, or other organizations you may belong to. YOU, our BCREA Cupid Crew, will then go forth to spread joy and love to those human hearts who need it the most. THANK YOU ♡ Sue

## Cultural Affairs

Chair: Anne French  
954-579-1719 [Annefrench10@gmail.com](mailto:Annefrench10@gmail.com)



Fun, Fun, Fun

BCREA will be playing games, applauding winners, teasing losers, laughing and having a good time..

What: Fun in the Park

When: Wednesday, March 11, 2026  
12:30 PM

Where: Heritage Park in Plantation  
1100 South Fig Tree Lane, Plantation

Admission: Snacks for the group - Chips, cookies and granola bars, etc.

Rewards: Giggles, chuckles and belly laughs

*Anne*

## Fund Raising

Chair: Barbara Lewis  
954-562-1936 [barbarabeth1@att.net](mailto:barbarabeth1@att.net)



Hi everyone. Our luncheon was a huge success. Kudos to Diane!!!

Our next fundraiser event is our ZOOM BINGO on April 16. The cost is \$10.00 for 5 games. I will be collecting money at our March 5 meeting. pe to see you there.

*Barbara*

## Literacy

Chair: Sandy Lefkowitz  
954-473-9480 [Slef123@bellsouth.net](mailto:Slef123@bellsouth.net)



Here's a little known secret. Our BCREA members volunteer to read to preschoolers at Kids in Distress. One of our members reads to 3 and 4 year old classes during the month. Each volunteer does it once during the year. Our members are naturals! The children give them smiles and hugs as they thank each volunteer. Think about volunteering! Guaranteed to make you feel young. This is only one of the many wonderful things our members do to encourage literacy and the love of reading. At

left is **Carole D'Ausillo** reading to kids!

*Sandy & Cindy O'Linn*



## 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

## Social Committee

Chair: Marianne Scott  
954-321-9174 [msscott33317@yahoo.com](mailto:msscott33317@yahoo.com)



Instead of March coming in like a lion, it was February! Being from the Northeast, I was loving every cold day! The 50's were alive and well at our Scholarship Luncheon. A great time was had by all in attendance. March will find us welcoming Spring and St. Patrick's Day. Now that you've had a month off from cooking, it's time to get back in the kitchen and prepare something yummy for our March 5th meeting. Don't forget to recycle your water bottles and soda cans in the bin near the kitchen. If you bring a pie or cake for the buffet table, please cut it before you arrive. Please remember Social Commit-

tee members are also BCREA members. We are NOT employees of the City of Plantation. It is NOT our job to pickup your trash. When you are finished eating, throw your garbage away in the MANY garbage cans provided by Jim Ward. See you on March 5th and don't forget to wear your green!  
May you have leprechauns, castles, good luck & laughter, Lullabies, dreams and love ever after.

An Irish Blessing



*Marianne*

**BCREA NEWSLETTER**

Published 8 times a year, September – April by the  
**BROWARD COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION**

**NON PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL  
PERMIT NO. 409**

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

**FREF**

Chair: Shirley Swartz

954-536-3401 Shirley.swartz@gmail.com



Remember you have two chances to win whenever you buy one ticket for FREF EXTRAVAGANZA!. Tickets are on sale at our next meeting. Huge thanks to all who are helping with this efforts to give scholarships to future educators.  
Sincerely, Shirley

*Bev's Bytes.....*

954-587-9275 HapiHopi@aol.com



Those of you who've been buying scholarship fund-raising tickets during the past several meetings had an opportunity to buy tickets to win some really special band new items. Like me, you may have wondered where these great prizes came from. **Karen Avery** is the one responsible for them being available, but they came from someone else - **Bettye McCray**, Karen's godsister. Betty has been the lucky winner of them at a casino where she

plays - and wins - BIG! And she shares them with BCREA! Thanks, Bettye!



**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.**

