

# BREA Minutes

**Meeting Date and Place:** Tuesday, Nov 13, 2012; Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

**Attendees:** Elliot Auerbach, Carmen Benkovitz, Nate Carter, Victor Cassella, Dave Cox, Denise DiMeglio (HR, invited), Eena-Mai Franz, Louise Hanson, Ken Mohring, George Oldham, Arnie Peskin, Liz Seubert (PA, invited), Steve Shapiro, Richard Skelton, Myron Strongin, Edith Thornhill, Frank Thornhill, and Joan Watson

Dave Cox opened the meeting at 1:03 pm.

The minutes of the Oct. 9, 2012 meeting were accepted as presented. Thank you, Ken Mohring, for preparing the September and October BREA minutes.

Steve Shapiro presented the Treasurer's Report. BREA currently has six CD's as well as checking and savings accounts with TCFU.

## **Old Business:**

Membership: Carmen Benkovitz reported that there have been no new members in a while. Many five-year members signed up in 2008, so their memberships will run out next year.

BREA newsletter: "Superstorm" Sandy in late October delayed the mailing of the November newsletter, however, it has gone out.

DOE former worker medical screening program: Victor Cassella reported that the number of retirees being screened has been low. He attributed this to the disruptions caused by last month's storm.

Annual Luncheon: Ken Mohring said that the date for next June has not been set because the dates for the annual RHIC User's meeting, also held in June, have not been finalized. BREA tries to avoid having the June luncheon conflict with the RHIC meeting. He is planning to meet soon with a prospective caterer.

## **New Business:**

Changes in retirees' medical/prescription drug benefits for 2013: Denise DiMeglio from Human Resources discussed changes to retirees' plans for next year and answered general questions from meeting attendees. She encouraged people who had individual questions to stop by or call HR.

Retirees should have received three mailings: a detailed one from BNL, a detailed one from CIGNA, and a summary sheet from her. The only change to the medical portion is the amount a retiree has to pay in

2013. However, starting January 1, 2013, the status of certain prescription drugs – whether and the extent to which they will be covered – will change *for Medicare-eligible retirees only*. In addition, Medicare-eligible retirees will be issued two new cards; one to be used for the supplemental medical coverage and the other for the prescription drug coverage.

The goal of these changes is lower costs for drugs for both the retiree and BNL. BNL's plan is in compliance with the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), in fact, it is more generous than that Act's provisions. For example, BNL covers the "donut hole" (unlike outside Part D Medicare plans). Any question a retiree has with regard to his/her drugs should be addressed to CIGNA directly. If a retiree so chooses, s/he can retain the medical part of the coverage and opt out of the prescription drug portion, however, there will be NO premium adjustments.

Denise was asked whether P & A will mail out an increase in payment notice, especially for retirees on an automatic payment plan. She said she will look into this. She also said retirees should check directly with P & A to ascertain whether one's specific automatic payment plan (there are several options) includes an automatic escalator.

BNL has approximately 1600 Medicare-eligible retirees and 400-500 retirees who are less than 65 years old (these numbers do not include dependents). Last spring when BNL was tracking down retirees to inform them of the changes for 2012, HR was ultimately unable to locate only 15 people.

The demise of the Bulletin: Liz Seubert, the Editor of the Brookhaven Bulletin, was invited to the meeting. BNL has decided to terminate the Bulletin. The last issue will be Nov. 30. The Bulletin has been a good friend to BREA and to retirees in general. A version of it will go online, but the concern is that BNL retirees without Internet will lose their connection to the Lab, to the obituaries of old friends, and to BNL- and BREA-sponsored events. In addition, the ads will not be available from off-site, only via on-site Intranet – however, these could be emailed to someone in BREA who could then distribute them, again, only to people with email.

Video: Eric Forsyth has a new sailing video. He has offered to show it at the Lab under BREA sponsorship. Dave Cox will follow up on this.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 pm.

December 2012 meeting: Tuesday, Dec. 11, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

January 2013 meeting: Tuesday, Jan. 8, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

Minutes submitted by Louise Hanson