

# BREA Minutes

**Meeting Date and Place:** Tuesday, May 13, 2014; Building 400, Rm RSB 2

**Attendees:** Arnold Aronson, Elliot Auerbach, Bob Barone, Louisa Barone, Carmen Benkovitz, Violet Bezler, Nate Carter, Victor Cassella, Anita Cohen, Maurice DuBois, Kathy Einfeldt, Eena-Mai Franz, Louise Hanson, Bob Kinsey, Lillian Kouchinsky, Al Mallen, Ken Mohring, George Oldham, Arnie Peskin, Mona Rowe, Liz Seubert (by phone), Steve Shapiro, Bonnie Sherwood, Richard Skelton, and Jackie Timko

Ken Mohring opened the meeting at 1:06 pm.

The minutes of the April 8, 2014 meeting were accepted pending a correction requested by Victor Cassella.

Steve Shapiro gave the Treasurer's Report. Dues continue to come in. He is also receiving checks for the June luncheon.

## **Old Business:**

Membership: In the last month, Carmen Benkovitz said she has received approximately 20 new membership renewals. BREA now has more than 300 paid-up members – Carmen did not have the exact number.

Medical Insurance Benefits: Ken Mohring will set up a meeting with Bob Lincoln to discuss the 2015 retiree insurance benefits. Ken is hoping that BREA can obtain early information on any planned changes for 2015 so that we have time to prepare. For the past several years, BREA had been informed of significant changes late in the year, *after* decisions had been finalized and BSA was ready to mail out its announcements. One possible scenario is that BNL will follow the lead of National Labs like Oak Ridge, where retirees are given a lump sum that can be applied towards the purchase of secondary insurance from the insurance market. Last fall BREA was told that a change to a voucher system would require a six month lead time and that consultants would be brought in to advise those affected. A lively discussion ensued: grievances were voiced concerning broken promises made to union members and to people who took early retirement in the 1990's, and many suggestions were put forward on how to approach and plan for possible future scenarios. The Benefits Committee that was appointed by Dave Cox last fall will be reactivated.

DOE M&O (management and operations) solicitation for BNL: BREA did not attend the April 17 pre-proposal meeting for prospective bidders. Information on that meeting as well as the RFP (Request for Proposal) is available on-line at <http://bnlcompetition.science.energy.gov/>. Proposals are due on June 19.

Annual luncheon: The luncheon is being organized by Lillian Kouchinsky and will take place on Wednesday, June 11, at the Bellport Country Club. The cost is \$36 per person for members and their spouses. The venue needs a head count by June 6. The sign-up form for the luncheon was included in the May/June Newsletter. Unfortunately, there has been a delay by the Lab in mailing out the Newsletter; however, Mona Rowe later confirmed that it was mailed out on May 13. People are already sending in checks. Steve Shapiro will keep tabs on the mail, create a spreadsheet of the luncheon participants, and pass this information on to Lillian.

This year, as an outreach to members, BREA plans to facilitate transportation to the luncheon for people who indicate they need it. BNL Director Doon Gibbs still has the event on his calendar. A list was made of additional invitees. Some of these people will need permission from their supervisors; Ken Mohring will take care of that. Lillian also needs to order the photographer. Liz Seubert told her to contact Peter Genzer, who is the new acting head of CEGPA.

Newsletter: As mentioned above, the May/June Newsletter was mailed out late (May 13). The July/Aug Newsletter will consist mostly of photos from the June luncheon.

DOE Worker Compensation and Screening Programs: Victor Cassella gave two phone numbers for contacting the FWP (Former Worker Medical Screening Program): local people can call 1-888-241-1199; "out-of-district" people can call 1-866-812-6703, to arrange for their free medical screening. Former DOE-site workers are entitled to a free screening physical every three years. A series of videos (known as the Joint Outreach Task Group Video Series) has been created by DOE to provide on-line information about the EEOIOCPA and FWP programs. They can be viewed at [www.energy.gov/ehss/joint-outreach-task-group-video-series](http://www.energy.gov/ehss/joint-outreach-task-group-video-series). Victor also has a copy on CD.

Steve Shapiro had a word of warning for those submitting a claim to the EEOIOCPA: if the receptionist of the examining physician on Long Island (actually his daughter) offers to help with the paperwork, as an advocate she will charge a 2% commission for doing "essentially nothing". The forms are apparently not that difficult to fill out. Victor has offered to help people for free.

To be eligible for compensation through the EEOIOCPA, one needs to have worked on-site for at least 250 days during 1947-1993. If you have suffered from one of the 21 listed cancers, you have only to prove that you worked here. If you suffer from another condition that may be covered, you will need more extensive documentation. Kathy Einfelt mentioned that she discovered that the DOE has no AEC (Atomic Energy Commission) records and that she had a hard time tracking them down. In the early 60's, the Lab was rather cavalier about assigning/monitoring film badges.

Field Trip: Last fall Steve Shapiro mentioned that another BREA trip to Plum Island might be possible. Unfortunately for those of us who were unable to go two years ago, it is no longer possible. Steve said that Plum Island is in flux, his friend has left/is leaving, and the property is up for sale.

#### **New Business:**

Site of future meetings: Due to increased attendance at the last several BREA meetings, we no longer fit comfortably in Room 2 of Bldg. 400. Ken Mohring will see if he can book Rooms 1 & 2 (they open into one another) or Room B in Berkner Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

June 2014 meeting: Tuesday, June 10, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

July 2014 meeting: Tuesday, July 8, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

Minutes submitted by Louise Hanson