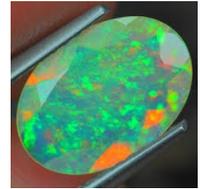


GEMS



The Official Publication of Retired Educators Association of Idaho

Volume 25 Number 1

January 1, 2018

President's Message

Executive Secretary Position

As of December, 2017 Connie Bunch has resigned her appointment as Executive Secretary of the REA of Idaho.

The Executive Committee of the REA of Idaho has identified the following qualifications needed by applicants applying for this position:

- ◆ Must be able to travel independently throughout Idaho and the United States.
- ◆ Must have computer skills allowing communication with the association and the members.
- ◆ Must have ability to work with a variety of people.
- ◆ Must have administration skills necessary for the business of the association.

Names will be accepted thru February 28, 2018. The Executive Committee will appoint the new Executive Secretary according to the Constitution.

This appointment will be for five years - the first year working with the past Executive Secretary and the last year working with the incoming Executive Secretary.

Those who are interested or have questions should contact:

President-Elect Mona Alfrey

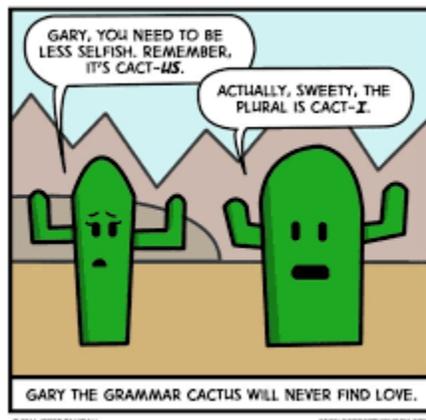
[509-499-5601](tel:509-499-5601)

mona.alfrey@gmail.com

Submitted by:

Barbara Blausch

President



In This Issue

- President's Message
- Legislative Report
- Exec. Secretary Message
- Contact Information
- Collette Travel
- BKM News
- Idaho Falls REA
- Lower Snake REA
- Squaw Butte REA
- SEIREA
- NIREA
- Minidoka-Cassia
- Contact Info., cont'd
- RENC I
- Twin Falls

Legislative Report

Idaho Representatives:

Rep. Raul Labrador 202-225-6611, 888-3188, www.labrador.house.gov
Rep. Mike Simpson 202-225-5531, 334-1953, www.simpson.house.gov
Sen. Mike Crapo 202-224-6142, 334-1776, www.crapo.senate.gov
Sen. Jim Risch 202-224-2752, 342-7985, www.risch.senate.gov

BE STRONG, SPEAK UP

Submitted by:
Barb Blasch
Legislative Chair

Executive Secretary's Message

Greetings and welcome to 2018!

This past year seems to have flown by, and here I am attempting to set some (not many) goals for the new year which begins Monday. I don't do resolutions anymore, just goals which is an easier way to approach change. Good luck with your plans for 2018!

New since our last GEMS is the trip that Jerry and I took to Austin, Texas for the AMBA conference in early November. It was the best one I've attended yet, due to the presenters that provided us with new inspiration and information. One of those speakers was Jan Hargrave, a body Language Expert, who has written 5 books which cover a wide range of topics related to body language.

Some things to consider as you interact with others:

- * A firm handshake indicates confidence.
- * Open hands with palms up indicates openness
- * Left-hand gestures are typically associated with dishonesty
- * Direct eye contact indicates honesty and trustworthiness
- * Arms and legs NOT crossed indicate openness.

Another excellent speaker was Jim Craig, who was the goalie for the "Miracle" US hockey team who went on to win the Olympic Gold Medal in 1980 at Lake Placid. He is now a motivational speaker and has written a highly acclaimed business book, Gold Medal Strategies.

Some PERSI Fast Facts for the fiscal year 2017:

- * PERSI benefits paid to retirees living in Idaho: \$742.9 M
- * Number of Retirees: 45,468
- * Average Monthly Benefit: \$1,532

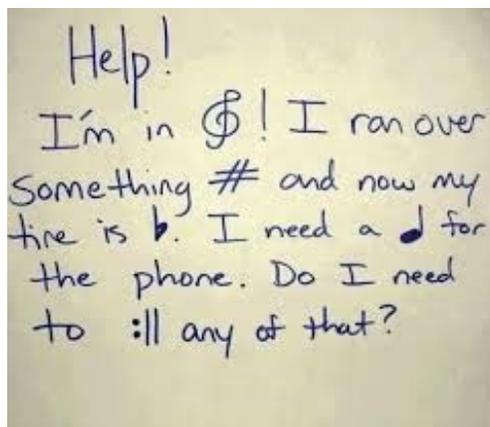
There's much more info in this newest document, so let me know if you're interested in receiving copies.

Next PERSI board meeting is Jan. 16, 8:30 at the PERSI office in Boise.

Region coordinators are probably in the thick of planning the regional conferences which will be held in April. Plan to attend one or more. They're always interesting!

Enjoy each day!!!

Submitted by:
Connie J. Bunch,
Executive Secretary, REAI
jeanbunch@aol.com



Contact Information

President:

Barbara Blasch
208.229.4561
bearconsul@aol.com

President-Elect:

Mona Alfrey
509.499.5601
mona.alfrey@gmail.com

Executive Secretary:

Connie Bunch
208.376-8325
jeanbunch@aol.com

Treasurer:

Patricia Kluckhohn
208.288.4295
pjkluckhohn@gmail.com

Secretary:

Lois Treat
208.789.7657
loisetreat@live.com

Pensions/Insurance:

Jim Coleman
208.375.4576
jodacole@cableone.net

Community Service:

Dennis Ohrtman
208.743.0694,
dwohrtman@aol.com

Legislation:

Barbara Blasch
208.229.4561
bearconsul@aol.com

Blue Cross State Insurance Rep.:

Volunteer needed.

CO-Membership:

Betty Goetzinger
208.743.1709,
bg4361@lewiston.com

Josie Marshall
208.743.4980
jmarshall49@cableone.net

Western Region:

Charlotte Moore
208.362.2133,
chmoore42@gmail.com

CO-North Region:

Betty Goetzinger
208.743.1709
bg4361@lewiston.com

Jossie Marshall

208.743.4980
jmarshall49@cableone.net

Pat Hoch

509.758.5674
patch232@yahoo.com

CO-Eastern Region:

Margene Wafford
208.237.4367
kwafford@cableone.net

Catherine Wilson
208.233.0122
crwilson722@gmail.com

Joann Dilweg
208.322.2656
swede1@cableone.net

Webmaster:

Connie J. Bunch
208.376.8325
jeanbunch@aol.com

Collette Vacations:

Margaret Reimer
208.887.6747
reimem8@gmail.com

GEMS:

Bill Kluckhohn
bkluckhohn1@gmail.com

Collette Travel

THE COLORS OF NEW ENGLAND IS OUR NEXT TRIP. IT IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 11-18 2018. BROCHURES WERE DISTRIBUTED AT THE STATE BOARD MEETING TO ALL THE UNIT PRESIDENTS. THE DEPOSIT DATE IS APRIL 4, 2018, AND THE FINAL PAYMENT IS AUGUST 12, 2018. A MEETING IS PLANNED FOR JANUARY 23, 2018 AT THE HOME OF CONNIE BUNCH. AT THAT TIME THE COLLETTE REPRESENTATIVE, LAURA HERNANDEZ, WILL PRESENT INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEW ENGLAND TRIP AND THE 2020 TRIP TO OBERAM-MERGAU FOR THE PASSION PLAY. THE TIME OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN SET FOR 9:30.

Margaret Reimer
208.887.6747
reimem8@gmail.com



Boise Kuna Meridian REA BKM

As I write this, the year 2018 is fast approaching. While some may be contemplating goals and resolutions to achieve in the coming months, our Boise Kuna Meridian unit is already actively working toward the attainment of goals it identified to fulfill during the 2017 – 2019 term:

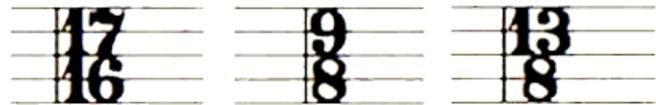
- ◆ Review and revise our REA BKM constitution
- ◆ Energize REA BKM recruitment and retention

Of course, hard work needs to be balanced with opportunity for fellowship and pleasure. To this end, BKM members have enjoyed programs that both inform and entertain. Our guest speaker in October, State Senator Janie Ward-Engelking, apprised members of the then ongoing legislative activity. In November, our very own Colleen Andrew shared narrative and power point of her birding field trip. Most recently, our annual Christmas “musicale”, presented by Director Heather Ray’s

Borah High School Choir, had us all standing in grateful ovation for a truly remarkable performance.

High credit is due the members of REA BKM. They are among the most generous and dedicated people I’ve had the pleasure of getting to know and to work with. Each month they faithfully contribute bags and boxes of nonperishable food, and Community Service Committee Chair, Bobbi Jo Anderson, sees to its delivery to the Idaho Food Bank. The months of November and December, dedicated to Operation Wishbook (Betty Reimann) and Pajamas for Kids (Margaret Reimer), saw holiday giving at its best. While the final tally on donated books and pajamas is not yet in, it was clear to me from viewing the piled high tables that members, once again, exemplified the spirit of care and respect for the well-being of others less fortunate in our community.

Submitted by:
Jane Brewer, President
REA of Boise Kuna Meridian



these are difficult times

Lower Snake River REA

No news to report at this time.

Submitted by:
Linda Carpenter

Idaho Falls REA

We, in Idaho Falls, hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and is now looking forward to a Happy New Year. Our November and December meetings were a lot of fun. In November, we had the pleasure of meeting a civil war spy, Pauline Cushman, aka Vicki Bailey retired history teacher. Fortunately, she was on her way from the stage in San Francisco to New York City and decided to pay us a visit. It was fascinating listening to her tell of her spying episodes. Who knew that young Pauline, while in her early twenties, used her wily, feminine charms to woo secrets from Confederate officers thus enabling the Yanks to gain the upper hand during the war. Leave it to men at that time to think women were addle, best suited for mundane household chores, and not able to understand a man's war. Well, Pauline Cushman was raised along with her brothers to ride and shoot, and she was mighty smart and a gifted actress to boot. Those skills were important in turning over Confederate plans to the Yanks. Pauline (along with other young women) were unsung heroes for the Yanks in the Civil War.

Squaw Butte REA

The Squaw Butte Retired Educators came together for lunch on October 23th at the Presbyterian Church in Emmett. The theme for the raffle was "something that reflects your heritage." The money collected will be used to help fund Classroom Teacher grants. Members were asked to bring warm clothing for kids. The response from members was outstanding. After the meeting the clothes was sorted by size and delivered to three school nurses in Gem County. The baby and toddler clothing were taken to the "Guest House" to be given to those in need.

Our guest speakers were two special SBRE members. Brenda Hansen crocheted 50 pair of mittens to be given to the less fortunate children in Gem County. (Brenda has done this for several years.). During the last week of September Brenda and her husband Roy, (who is also a retired educator) traveled to Washington DC to be honored at the AARP/NTRA "For Our Children" banquet. There were 18 applicants submitted, Brenda and Roy were one of the three winners. They were able to spend a few days sightseeing, although Brenda will tell you the last "trip" was most memorable. Thanks Brenda and Roy, we are proud of you.

November 27th was the date of the November lunch. We brought mugs with something warm for the fund-raising raffle. Nonperishable food and cash for the cheer baskets to be delivered in December was collected.

Our speakers were members Pete and Mary Pawlick. Pete and Mary shared photos and stories of their 26-mile pilgrimage trail hike from Cusco, Peru to the main attraction of Manchu Picchu. The trek took 4 days and 3 nights to reach Manchu Piccu. The entire trip was 14 days. The photos were beautiful and Inca culture was

December's meeting was a relaxing time to enjoy each other's friendship while singing Christmas songs, playing Christmas games and exchanging white elephant gifts. We welcomed two new visitors and invited them to join our meetings.

For the new year we look forward to our guest speakers. In January we will hear from the Humanitarian Center and learn about their worldwide service organization. February's guest speaker from Town and Country Nursery will have us all buzzing with excitement for spring as she talks about the importance of bees and landscaping with plants that will attract bees and hummingbirds. It should be a great meeting to get ready for spring and to help us bring a ray of sunshine to our homes.

Many of our members are actively volunteering their time and money in the service of our community and worldwide.

Submitted by:
Chris Blower
President

amazing. After viewing the challenges of steep, slick terrain, the struggles of high altitude and life on the trail, many of us asked about the train. All kidding aside, thank you Pete and Mary. We look forward to hearing about your next trip.

Thanks to our fearless leader's persistence our bylaws have been updated. Thanks Joanna Clausen, this needed to be done.

December was a very busy month. Several SBRE members, along with students from various EHS organizations and sports teams met two afternoons to sort and wrap gifts for needy families in our community. In the middle of the two wrapping days, three members shopped locally for gifts and food that had not been donated. Just before Christmas break, educators, (retired and some wishing they were) and community members delivered 25 cheer baskets. Thanks, Oralia Jarmin. You are the queen of organization. Thank you, too, to the many, many people who stepped up to help.

December 18th was our monthly lunch. The raffle theme was, "Gamble on a Gift." There was a cookie exchange for those who were not afraid to have that many goodies in the house. We celebrated our friendship and the birth of Christ with songs lead by the famous Mary Johns on a ukulele and Pam Walker with in auto harp. Both of whom had active in community choirs celebrating the Christmas season.

At the end of the lunch, Sheila Stickler announced our 90th member had just joined.

We look forward 2018 as we look for ways to serve students and friends while enjoying life. Wishing all of you a Happy New Year!

Submitted by:
Betty Griffith

SEIREA Southeast Idaho REA

The Southeast Idaho Retired Educators Association had a very busy and informative fall 2017.

In September we were given a presentation by Pete Black, Idaho Parks and Recreation Board Chairman. He presented an overview of state parks in the southeastern part of the state. The Department of Parks and Recreation owes its existence largely to Governor Robert Smiley. Many state parks around the state provide recreational and educational opportunities for all kinds of Idahoans and visitors.

We were informed of the loss of two long term members of the association, Gordon Waford and Mary Lou Williams. Money was sent to both families in their honor. Mary Lou's family donated their gift to Wilcox Elementary in Pocatello where she worked for many years.

In October our speaker was Danene Tayson who spoke on the topic of Art for the Retiree. She said that everyone has creativity and that we are blessed with a creative culture in our society. Art can heal, help with stress, and affect peoples' outlook on life. Danene spoke about the Pocatello Arts Center and all it has to offer. She gave members a calendar of events and encouraged people to attend.

State legislator Elaine Smith thanked members who helped the I Love ISU calling fund raiser.

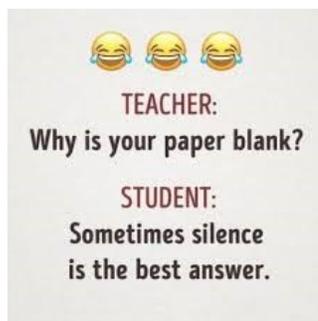
In November our speaker was Jay Christiansen, a local real estate agent. Mr. Christiansen addressed the topic

of reverse mortgages. He stressed that they should only be used only as a last resort. Monthly payments are paid based on the worth of the loan. It does not have to be repaid during the borrowers' lifetime unless they enter a care facility. At that time the home usually reverts back to the bank.

President Stan Cope complimented members on their willingness to volunteer time and money to aid people in our community. Donations were made to the Rotary Club to help students with basic needs in September and October, and donations are made every month to the local food bank. Francie Stevens reported that the donation for September alone was \$122.00.

In December we were treated to singing from The Century High School Christmas Caroling Choir. Say that 3 times fast! They were just delightful and give us all faith in the future when we see how dedicated these great kids are to music and entertaining others. We also held our annual silent auction fundraiser headed by Marjean Waford and Lyla Wolfenbarger. This auction enables us to award scholarships each year to students at Idaho State University majoring in education. This December we raised over \$1400, enabling us to award two scholarships this year rather than just one as we have done in the past. It is great to be able to support student pursuing a career in education. Hopefully it will encourage more students to enter the field of public education, the backbone of our democratic society.

Submitted by:
Mary Ann Hansen
Secretary



Teacher: Why are you late, Joseph?
Joseph: Because of a sign down the road.
Teacher: What does a sign have to do with your being late?
Joseph: The sign said, "School Ahead, Go Slow!"



NIREA-North Idaho Retired Educators

The North Idaho Retired Educators group met in October, November, and December. In October we traveled to the Silver Valley and toured the Canyon School Nature Trail. Before walking the trail, Kent Landers, a retired educator from the Kellogg School District, reviewed for us the history of how the nature trail became a reality and how it is being used today. We then walked the trail and viewed the plaques identifying trees, shrubs and other features along the way. We held a meeting at Canyon Lakes Elementary School, then adjourned to the Rose Lake Restaurant for lunch. In November we met at the Post Falls Senior Center and heard from Don Soltman, a member of the State Board of Education. Don is a resident of Rathdrum, was a long time member of the Rathdrum School Board, and has been on the

State Board for 8 years. He reviewed for us the responsibilities of the State Board, their administrative organization, and some current issues they are dealing with. In December we again met at the Post Falls Senior Center where we participated in a Christmas sing along with the entire Senior Center membership.

In October a representative group from our organization met with representatives from Lewiston at the Coeur d'Alene Casino to work on plans for the April regional conference to be held in Lewiston. In October and November we collected money for the Coeur d'Alene and Silver Valley food banks.

Hope all of you had a wonderful Christmas. We wish each and everyone a happy and productive New Year.

Submitted by:
Doug Cresswell, Co-President

Retired Educators of North Central Idaho- RENCI

The RENCi group has been active this fall. In October we decorated ceramic bowls for the local YWCA "Soupathon" fund raiser they have in February each year. We tested our art creativity and at the end of the session, it looked like we had done an over the top job. In November, the officers met with the NIREA group to discuss the regional conference to be held in April in Lewiston. It is always good to have a working lunch with them at the Coeur d'Alene Casino. Our regular meeting was the annual auction to raise funds for the

scholarship. We had many great items donated by members and we doubled the goal for the scholarship. Great job, RENCi members.

In December we combined our meeting with the Lewiston and Clarkston Chamber of Commerce and the Lewiston Rotary. We shared the entertainment of the Lewiston High School Golden Voices acapella choir. It was a really great experience joining up with the other groups and it helped get our name and image out to the younger citizens of the valley.

Submitted by:
Pat Hoch
Co-president

Twin Falls REA

I wish you a continued Happy Holiday and a Great! and Happy New Year! Looking back to October, we had our first indoor meeting. We continue to meet at Idaho Pizza on Kimberly Road in Twin Falls. However, Idaho Pizza needed our Thursday meeting time for an organization that met weekly, rather than monthly.

Therefore, we now meet on the third Monday of each month. We still meet at 11:30 to eat, and at 12:00, we generally have our program/speaker presentation.

Nathan Murray, the Twin Falls City Economic Director, and Urban Renewal Director talked about the recent changes for the city. During the late 1960s, Twin Falls qualified for an Urban Redevelopment Grant. Four blocks of Main Street were torn up and rebuilt with trees, limited parking, which made the Down Town area more pedestrian friendly. Well, approximately 50 years later, the down town area became overgrown, and the infrastructure needed up dating.

Our timing was right on. Nathan spoke to us as much of construction was just finishing up.

Also, the City had purchased the Old Bon Marche building, gutted it rebuilt it as our New City Hall. It really turned out well, although some thought a more tradition-

al front would be better. Anyway, the city staff was in the process of moving into the new building. There are still things to do, but it will all be finished sometime this Spring/Summer.

For November, Joey Heck from the CSI Herrett Center, gave us a brief history of the creation of the Herrett Center and a history of some of the prehistoric artifacts they have on display and in storage. Mr. Herrett was a tough negotiator, but the CSI Herrett Center and Planetarium has become a great asset for Twin Falls, and the State of Idaho. Joey clued us in on several sites for prehistoric artifacts. He was fascinating.

Then, as always we had our Christmas Party on the 18th of December, hosted by our member Sharon Meeks. Carol Bearup, our Volunteer Director has been very good about finding a family in need. She found and immigrant family from Africa that included a couple of kids. We provided presents for the children and parents, as well as giving them a box of groceries.

Our party was well attended, and a good time was had by all. May all of you be blessed during the New Year!

Submitted by:
Edward Arndt
President

