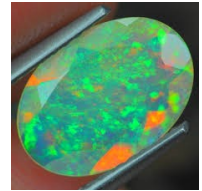


GEMS



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President's Message

On September 25-28, 2017, Connie Bunch, REAL Executive Secretary, and Barbara Blasch, President, attended the NRTA National Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC.

Part of our responsibility to you as members of REAL, was to meet with Idaho's Congressional Delegation.

We met with Senator Jim Risch in his office on Capitol Hill. He was thanked for helping pass the RAISE (Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage) Family Caregivers Act (S.1028/H.R. 3759) in the Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017. He stated he knew this was a good bill and voted for it because there was no cost to it. He also shared with us his concerns about North Korea.

Senator Mike Crapo was due to give a speech on the floor but spent some time talking with us. We discussed the future health care bill. He believes giving grants to the States will be a good choice. We reminded him that Idaho Legislators were offered money to expand Medicaid but they chose not to take the Federal money that left 78,000 Idaho citizens without health insurance.

The question was asked, "Given this history, how will the Federal Government guarantee the grant money will filter down to the citizens of Idaho?" Senator Crapo was also thanked for passing the RAISE Family Caregivers Act in the Senate.

At the scheduled times to meet with our Representatives, all House Republicans were called to a retreat on the tax bill.

We did not get to meet with Representative Mike Simpson but we did meet with one of his staffers. We shared the realities of the future health care bill and thanked him for signing on to support the RAISE Family Caregivers Act.

Representative Raul Labrador passed through his office on his way to the retreat but stopped to greet us. We met with one of his staff. We encouraged her to speak with the Representative reminding him he is the only one of our Congressional Delegation who has not signed on to the RAISE Family Caregivers Act.

Submitted by:
Barbara Blasch
President

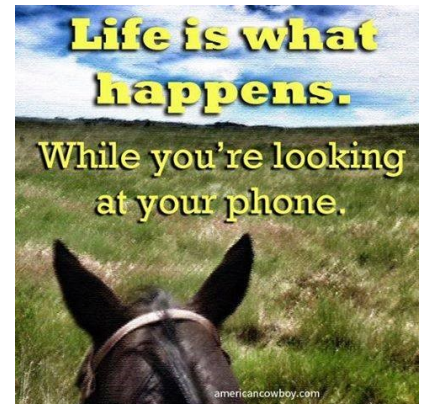
LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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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



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Executive Secretary's Message

On this glorious October day, I wish you a happy FALL. It's my favorite time of year...I love the colors and the fragrances, the brilliant blue skies, and the cooler temperatures. Having just been in Washington, D.C. last week where the temperatures were around 90 accompanied by high humidity, I know that we are blessed to live here.

Our Board meeting on August 18 was attended by most of our board members. The total solar eclipse interfered with some Eastern Idaho folks, but attendance was good. Mary Beth Dixon, an NRTA advisor, put on a couple of workshops to give us ideas for attracting new members and doing some strategic planning for our units and state organization.

Unfortunately, due to Co-president Elaine Klein's health, she is no longer able to continue in her position, so Co-president Barbara Blasch will assume full responsibilities for the rest of the term, which will end in 2019.

Important dates to remember:

Executive Board conference call: January 16, 2018, 2:00 MST, 1:00 PST

o Northern Regional Conference: April 11, 2018 at the Lewiston Red Lion

o Western Regional Conference: April 17, 2018, Amity Methodist Church, Boise

Eastern Regional Conference: April 19, 2018, Fort Hall Casino

Barbara Blasch and I attended the AARP/NRTA Advocacy Conference in Washington D.C. from Sept 25 -



Retired Educators of North Central Idaho-RENCI

RENCI is happy to have September arrive with the cooler weather and clearer air.

We had 2 local authors give a presentation at our first meeting. They explained the process of writing children's books and getting them published. It was a very informative and interesting meeting for all of the reluctant writers in our group.

In October we plan to decorate soup bowls for the YWCA fundraiser "Soupport the YWCA" that is held in February. This is a first time for our group to try out our artistic talents. Our leadership will also be meeting with NIREA to discuss the upcoming regional conference in April.

28th. Speakers were especially knowledgeable on the topics of pensions and care giving. Pensions are still under attack in many states, and legislation is being considered that will bring Federal Government intervention into the picture. AARP/NRTA are definitely opposed to this because the pension plans for public employees are set up and operated by the States. I have brochures which I would be happy to share with you. I'm pleased to report that Idaho's PERSI is in the top 5 in the nation.

The National Institute on Retirement Security prepares a Pensionomics research sheet for each state. These are some of the findings for Idaho:

o expenditures in 2014 contributed to 7,280 jobs that paid \$295.4 MILLION in wages and salaries

o \$1.0billion in total economic output
\$294.9 million in state & federal taxes.
AWESOME!!!

Barbara and I visited with Senators Risch and Crapo, and talked with a staff member in Representatives Simpson's and Labrador's offices.

November 1-4 Jerry and I will be attending an AMBA conference in Austin. I'll come back with more information to share.

In the meantime, enjoy our special days: Halloween, Veteran's Day Thanksgiving, and have a Very Merry and Blessed Christmas!

Submitted by:

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



November is our annual auction fund raiser for the scholarship we give to a local student at LCSC and for December we will meet on the second Weds. so we can share Christmas music by the high school choir.

A friend and myself went on the Eastern Canada trip in Sept. sponsored by Collette. I was truly impressed with the quality of the rooms, food, and information given by our guide. We had a small delay in San Francisco as the air mask panel on the plane fell open over Margaret's daughter's head. It was easily fixed but took time to do it. I will certainly travel with Collette again.

I wish everyone a successful and enjoyable year.

Submitted by:
Pat Hoch
Co-President

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Twin Falls REA

We started our 2017-2018 year with our annual picnic at Rock Creek Park on September 21st. We have had one of the hottest summers in recent history, but for our picnic it was in the low 50s. Mother nature has her ways to test us. We always hope to recruit new members at the picnic, but it is difficult to get addresses. However, we did have two possible recruits show up. Anyway, the food was good and the recanting of summer experiences is always enjoyable.

The Twin Falls Senior Center is hosting a legislative breakfast on October 16th. Several of our member will help serve.

Connie, I keep forgetting to let you know that our meeting date has changed. We are still meeting at Idaho

Pizza, however they took away our Thursday meeting time. Therefore, we are now meeting on the Third Monday of each month at 11:30 a.m. Our next meeting will be, again, at Idaho Pizza, Kimberly Road on at the 16th. The City of Twin Falls has been revitalizing the Old Down Town Main Street. This area was rebuilt during the 1960s' Urban redevelopment programs. Anyway, the City is about 70% finished with Street construction, and the building of the new City Hall.

Our speaker on the 16th will be Nathan Murray the head of the Urban Redevelop Agency, who will update on the reconstruction of Down Town.

Submitted by:
Edward Arndt
President

COLLETTE TRAVEL

A WONDERFUL TIME WAS HAD BY ALL ON OUR TRIP TO EASTERN CANADA. WE WERE PUT WITH A GROUP OF 32 OTHER PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM. NIAGARA FALLS WAS AWESOME. WE RECEIVED THE 10% REIMBURSEMENT CHECK FROM COLLETTE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,488.50. 20% OF THIS WILL GO TO THE STATE TREASURY. THE 80% WILL BE DIVIDED AMONG THE 4 UNITS THAT HAD MEMBERS WHO WENT ON THE TRIP.

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 OBERAMMERGAU FOR THE PASSION PLAY. THE TIME OF THIS MEETING IS TBA AT A LATER DATE.

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BOISE, KUNA, MERIDIAN REA-BKMREA

On September 12, 2017 our Boise, Kuna, Meridian unit sang in the start of the 2017-2018 year with an enthusiastic rendition of the song, "School Days." Led by our talented music duo, Bert and Phyllis Burda, our voices reflected a tribute to the art and dedication of teaching 'Reading and 'riting and 'rithmetic' albeit whose subject titles have evolved since the song's long ago publication in 1907.

Texas teacher retirees harmed by Hurricane Harvey were in the hearts and minds of BKM members attending the September 12th meeting. Their donations, totaling \$335.00, were doubled with inclusion of a matching amount from our BKM account.

Per prior arrangement with Texas Retired Teachers Association, a check in the amount of \$710.00 was mailed to the organization for allocation to TRTA members in need of monetary aid.

Members of REA, BKM will participate in the October 14th annual **Buddy Walk** to promote acceptance and inclusion of all people with Down Syndrome. The event is sponsored by the Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association which works to raise money to support its local programs. Individuals wishing to walk along for a worthy cause should sign up at the idahodownsyndrome.org website under RKM/Retired Educators, Captain Connie Bunch.

Submitted by:
Jane Brewer
President

NIREA-North Idaho Retired Educators

NIREA held the final meeting of 2016-17 on May 22 when new officers were installed. Guess what, this year's new officers are last year's old officers. We keep waiting for volunteers to step up and take over leadership. It doesn't seem to happen. But we look forward to another productive year for our organization even though leadership is OLD!

During the summer months, officer and committee chairs met for a summer planning meeting. The primary agenda item for the meeting was identifying programs for the year and assigning responsibility for contacting presenters. We decided on a couple of field trips, a presentation from a state board member and a state legislator, a music program and several others on topics of general interest to members. We also discussed membership and leadership. Also, during the summer, two of us attended the State Board meeting in Boise. At that meeting we heard about strategies for engaging new members and received reports from PERSI, AARP, NRTA Collette Travel, GEMS, as well as

officer and chair reports.

On September 25 we held our first meeting of the year at the Post Falls Senior Center. This meeting was devoted to orientation activities that included getting to know members better and reviewing plans for the year. We also heard from a community representative encouraging us to support the "TURKEYS and MORE" program that provides Thanksgiving meals through the local food bank.

On October 11, we met with representatives from Lewiston to discuss regional issues. The primary topic of discussion was plans for the regional conference to be held in Lewiston on April 11. RENC should be complimented and congratulated for the work they have already done in planning for that spring conference. Not much left for us to do except make sure we have a good turn out from our organization.

That's it for now. I hope all the regions have a productive and fruitful year.

Submitted by:
Doug Cresswell, Co-President

IDAHO FALLS REA

Hi everyone! After an exciting total solar eclipse in our own backyards last August there didn't seem to be anything that could top it. Well, we did! Well, almost. Nothing really can top seeing the total solar eclipse. One can understand why people in ancient times were awestruck. So were we. However, our first meeting started off with a "bang". We had several new people attend our meeting thanks to mailing personalized postcards inviting them to come join us for great fun filled and informative meetings. Our first meeting took us on an adventure to land of ancient times, Israel. It was presented by two of our members who travelled there last spring. What a great informative and professional presentation! Did you know there were survivors at Masada? And at

the Wailing Wall men and women are separated by a partition. When a son's religious ceremony is conducted the mothers would stand on a folding chair to peek over the tall partition to observe the ceremony and take pictures. Archeologists are still excavating new unexplored ancient ruins leading us savoring a visit to Israel and absorb the culture and heritage.

Our October meeting will take us back in time to the Civil War as we listen to a lady stitch together stories of her ancestors and their adventures in the Underground Railroad through quilts.

Here is a sneak peek at our Nov. meeting: I spy a spy. Do you spy a spy? No, all I see is a small gathering of women. Hmmmm.....I wonder what they are whispering about?

Submitted by:
Chris Blower
President

Lower Snake River REA

No news to report at this time

Submitted by:
Linda Carpenter

SEIREA

No news to report at this time.

Submitted by:
Mary Ann Hansen
Secretary

Squaw Butte REA

It is hard to believe that summer has faded into the beautiful fall colors that seem to disappear so quickly.

In April Squaw Butte Retired Educators met in Ola for one of our favorite and generally best attended meetings for the year. The gracious Ola Ladies welcomed us with open arms and provided a fantastic lunch. The program was Kathy Johns and her daughter sharing the history of Roystone Hot Springs near Sweet. (If you have never stopped to swim or spend time, please call or stop by, you will not be sorry that you did.)

On May, 22 SBRE meet for our May meeting. Our program was introduced Barbara Huguenin, Emmett business owner and entrepreneur. Barbara shared some of the many things that are happening in downtown Emmett. Barbara recently bought one of the historic buildings downtown. In part of the building is Graceful Gardens which is a coffee shop and a place where artists can hold classes and display their work. The other half of the building is "The Office", a place with rooms that can be rented to hold meetings and conduct business.

Through memorials, donations and selling raffle ticket throughout the year, SBRE awards grants to classroom teachers. This year there was six applicants, three grants were awarded: They were:

Chris Hopper: Botball travel grant, \$400.00

6th grade team will compete in Norman, Oklahoma

July 4-14.

Heidi Browne and Amy Kunka: Amazing Science Activities, \$282.04

Kristina Maxwell: Writers Workshop/Center, \$1,511.76. All 2nd graders at Shadow Butte will be involved in the writing lab. All have the opportunity to be a part of the Writers' Club. Project includes purchase of tablets.

We concluded our May meeting with our necrology ceremony. We had no current members whose names were submitted, but did honor six people how had had ties to SBRE.

Our summer activities included and extended lunch in Donnelly and a field trip to Roseberry on June 22. On August 18th, many members helped fix and then serve brunch to the teachers going back to school. August 28th, was the "We are not going back to school picnic". It is always so exciting to welcome our new retiree friends. This year was no exception.

September 25th was the first official meeting of the new year. Once again, we will be meeting at the Presbyterian Church in Emmett with lunch being served by Sharon Holford and her crew. (April meeting will be held in Ola.) We are starting the year with 71 state and local 7 local for a total of 78.

Our September program was Connie and Dave Couch. Connie and Dave enjoy traveling, rock hounding and making beautiful jewelry.

Submitted by:
Betty Griffith