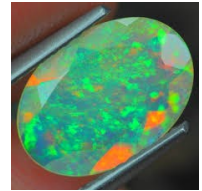


# GEMS



The Official Publication of Retired Educators Association of Idaho

Volume Number

## President's Message

Greetings REA-I Members and Friends,

We certainly hope your holidays were joyous, yet peaceful, and you are ready for the new year.

January 2024 is certainly off to a busy start with the late arrival of winter, the governor's address to the legislators, the start of the legislative session, on-going war in the mid-east and Ukraine, floods, earthquakes, and the list goes on.

There is much to be of interest to retired educators with the legislature back in session. How will the legislators act on the governor's proposal of \$2 billion spending over ten years for school facility maintenance/improvement and \$75 million for the Idaho LAUNCH program?

Also of concern is health care, the voter initiative concerning non-partisan primaries and rank choice voting, the abortion issue, censoring libraries, and school choice. Stay informed!

Your REA-I officers are preparing for the January 18 Zoom meeting that will begin at 10:00 a.m. mountain time. We are looking forward to seeing and hearing from all executive officers, committee chairs, and unit presidents. It is always good to learn of the interesting activities of each unit as well as share ideas to promote REA-I in our communities. May your new year be the best with good health and much success in all your endeavors!

Kindly,

Sharon Miller and Linda Steele  
REA-I Co presidents

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## TREASURER

Dear Members,  
The scammers are at it again and asking you to send money, gift cards, etc. to Retired Educator's Board Members. Board Members will not ask you at any time to do this. If you hover over the name of the person the email is coming from, you will notice that it is not one of

## SEIREA

Things are hopping with retired educators in SEIREA – well . . . maybe more like quick shuffling. We are retired folks after all. However, we still know how to put on our dancing shoes, and some even dance in them rather than admiring them. But I digress –

We have had good times in the Southeast region of our great state. We have new officers: Francie Stephens, President; Kent Hobbs, Vice President; Marcia Ney, Secretary; Judy Liday, Treasurer/Membership with Lyla Wolfenbarger assistant; Pete Black and Bob Myers, Communications; Rick Aubrey, Parliamentarian (like any of us pay attention to those procedures unless we're being audited); and Ronda Black, Past President.

In our meetings this fall and early winter, we have had great presentations from the ISU Athletic Director Pauline Thiros, and boy can she toot a horn – for good reason. ISU athletics have refurbished Holt Arena as well as hiring new personnel and upgrading other facilities. We appreciate ISU athletics for what they bring to our community and region. Also from ISU, Bob Divine of the Portneuf and ISU film society shared the opportunities to enjoy reasonably priced viewing at ISU's Bengal movie theater each Sunday. Our December meeting was full of haggling over our annual fund-raising raffle and bas-

## Magic Valley REA

We started our year on September 21st with our annual picnic at Rock Creek Park here in Twin Falls. Attending was Representative Greg Lanting. Discussions with him were quite informal but encouraging. I hope he will also make a presentation on April 18th, 2024.

For our October meeting, Sister Rose Mary Boesson from La Posada spoke to us about the services provided by LaPosada to immigrants, Hispanics, and the needy. Some services include tax filing and legal aid.

For November, Ron James and Anthropologist from CSI presented a history of the Chinese in the Magic Valley, and western America. Those Chinese immigrants that mined the Snake River Canyon and worked on the railroads, etc. were hired by intermediaries rather than being hired on their own. They planned to return to their

## Web Master

Many of the chapter's web pages do not have current programs listed or community information listed. If your web site is not current, please email the changes to

our emails. If you think it is valid, please call the person before sending anything to them—which is probably the wrong address anyway.

Thanks,  
Pat Kluckhohn  
Treasurer

ket drawings. The competition was stiff for bake goods, crafts and tantalizing gift baskets. We were entertained by a wonderful trio of talented ladies from our community, Angel Tones, comprised of Angela Johnson, Brita Pruse and Melissa Schrade. We thoroughly enjoyed their Christmas music and some golden oldies.

Recent articles online (I didn't fact check. I just liked their conclusions; so it must be true!!) have noted that there are more millionaire retired teachers than in other professions with much higher salaries. We know how to reuse, make do and save our pennies. But we also know how to give and share with others. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been donated to various charitable groups in our communities by SEIREA members over the past year along with thousands of hours of volunteer time. We support our Food Bank food backpack program for kids with several hundred dollars contributed at each monthly meeting. We fund scholarships at ISU, most recently to a Speech Pathology and an Elementary Education student in memory of Judy and David Sorenson. All of our lives are enriched by giving and our communities strengthened by our efforts.

We wish all a prosperous New Year in 2024. (In spite of the political ads we will hear and see ad nauseam – But GO VOTE!!)

homeland. Also, there were never any tunnels in Boise for use by the Chinese immigrants. Their impact was quite extensive.

We held our annual Christmas Party in December, which is always nice. We also provided gifts for a father and his two sons. Included were blankets, clothing, a food card, canned goods.

This week will hear from a Navigator from the State Department of Health and Welfare. What is a Navigator?

A space has been reserved in the Tayler Building at CSI, and commits from PERSI, a Volunteer to the Ukraine, and from Representative Lanting. I have some SWAG.

I probably will need some door prizes. Help!!

Edward Arndt  
President MVREA

Bill: [bkluckhohn1@gmail.com](mailto:bkluckhohn1@gmail.com). If you don't send me the information, I cannot put it on your web site.

Thanks,  
Bill Kluckhohn  
Web Master

## **Gem County Retired Educators**

The retired educators association in Emmett has been quite busy with our usual fall projects. The Ola Ladies' Club hosted our group for our September meeting.

In October we held our warm clothing drive for local school children. Donated items such as sweat-shirts, hats, mittens, and other types of clothing were delivered to the school nurses who will distribute them to needy children.

Every November, our group partners with students, teachers, and administrators to provide items for the Christmas Cheer Basket project. Donations of canned goods and cash for turkeys and gifts go toward filling not actual baskets, but pick-up loads of Christmas cheer! Deliveries to twenty families were made the week before Christmas. The generosity of all involved is much appreciated and awe-inspiring.

Other projects include our ongoing drive for personal products and food items for food pantries at the middle school and high schools in the district. Our project for February and March is Books for Schools. New books and/or cash for books make up donations to the various school libraries in the district.

We have also been meeting regularly to plan the Western Regional Conference to be held Tuesday, April 16th in Emmett. We are looking forward to hosting Lower Snake and BKM for this important meeting. More information on the Conference will be available in the near future.

## **BOISE, KUNA, MERIDIAN REA-BKMREA**

BOISE, KUNA, MERIDIAN REA is beginning 2024 with plans that include some new and some traditional activities. Our monthly meetings are held at the Eagles Lodge in Boise and the October – December 2023 programs were:

October – Legislative/Education review by Senator Janey Ward-Engelking, Idaho State Legislator, District 18

November – Gabriel from the organization BECAUSE INTERNATIONAL demonstrated their product “Shoes that Grow.” The shoes are designed to expand 5 sizes and are donated to impoverished countries. To date, they have donated to 100 countries and distributed 400,000 pairs of shoes.

Also, a member reported on the “Volunteer Summit” sponsored by AARP. She explained the partnership between AARP and REA and addressed ways our unit could support AARP. She provided a survey to members to vote on the item(s) that they felt they may be able to support in this partnership.

December – Quilt raffle, games, music, potluck, prizes for all and warm fellowship

Future scheduled programs for the remaining 2024 year include: Information on Idaho ballot initiative, open primaries, and rank choice voting; New Knowledge Adventure – Master Gardeners; History and Culture of Saudi Arabia; Speaker on ACLU; and Fitness for Seniors

As in years past, BKM will continue to work on funding grants to local teachers and scholarships to BSU senior students who are completing a degree in education thru:

- 1) Donated books to sell to membership in support of BSU Scholarship
- 2) Travel through Collette sponsored tours – which funds Teacher Grants: (America’s Music City –

## **Retired Educators of North Central Idaho-RENCI**

We are creatures of habit in the beautiful valley carved by the Snake and Clearwater Rivers. We like what we like, and deviation from that seems to be difficult. This month, we are truly waiting for our annual book review by seasoned educator Marilyn Feeney who must carry books into the shower to achieve her annual review of dozens of books. She is always on such a roll that we don’t ever have time to interrupt her, but we know where to find her for questions and to share with her after the meeting. We never tire of listening. I wish we had a fireplace, pjs and a glass of wine because we settle in as winter descends upon us to new book experiences.

I think waiting for our December program shared with the local Rotary Club is just like being a child waiting for the magic of Christmas. Two choirs, one from the local high school and another from a local grade school stimulated our Christmas spirit. Celebrating with one of the best parts of our life, children and young adults, re-

April 2024 & 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day – May 2024)

- 3) Monthly door prize drawings to support the BSU Scholarship Fund
- 4) Christmas quilt raffle in support of the BSU Scholarship Fund

BKM will also continue to support our local food bank with food and monetary donations. We will also be supporting the nonprofit learning center, Giraffe Laughs, whose mission is to prepare underprivileged children for kindergarten through donations of food, product, money, and quilts made by the BKM Quilting ladies.

We value the hard work and dedication of our membership whose contributions and participation help fulfill the goals and aspirations of our BKM unit through events, such as, Volunteer hours and monetary donations; Clothing donations for Nicaragua mission trip of a Unit member; and Operation Wishbook – the collection of new or gently used children’s books which are given at Christmas time to children who have limited access to books. Currently, there is a plan to introduce to the membership an opportunity to gather informally to discuss personal opinions regarding “current events” and its effect on our society in general.

Finally, the membership is kept abreast of events and relative knowledge through the very informative monthly BKM Newsletter which regularly shares a variety of information with its membership – List of monthly “special volunteers” // Monthly unit volunteer hours & monetary donations // Pending and current events & programs // Luncheon menus // Fundraisers // Directory updates or changes // Financial statements // Fraud watch reminders // Legislative news // Medicare health insurance notifications // Persi notifications // Travel Adventures // Board meeting notifications // and \$ donations to our Local Food Bank or Giraffe Laughs

Submitted by Leigh Oliver  
President Elect, BMK

minds us that kids are good, generation after generation.

We also spent (some of us spent more than others) dollars on donated items to support our scholarship fund. I really didn’t make a mistake when I gave \$300 to my teaching partner of 22 years to spend for me while I was at the Idaho Commission on Aging meeting in Boise. I knew she wouldn’t be bashful. We were a much smaller group this year for the auction, but the generosity was still there. One of the baskets she bought had exotic spreads for crackers and pretzels. My wife didn’t have to fight me very hard for the fig spread. Our adults draw for the baskets I buy on Christmas day. My daughter and I were the winners this year. She didn’t share as much as I. Maybe it is coal for her next year.

Now we are on to the Spring and planning for the regional conference. More from RENCI soon.

Dr. O  
RENCI president

## Travel Adventure

Greetings fellow travelers. Here is some information on upcoming tours. AMERICA'S MUSIC CITIES leaves April 21, 2024 touring Nashville, New Orleans, and Memphis. CANADIAN ROCKIES AND GLACIER NATIONAL PARK This is a 7 day trip which starts in Calgary, Canada.

Some highlights are: Head-smashed-in Buffalo Jump, Waterton Lakes National Park, Glacier National Park.

HISTORICAL GREENBRIER: This trip takes the place of Collette's American Heritage trip. This trip includes some of the same sites as American Heritage, like Washington D.C. and Williamsburg, but this trip has added a two day stay at Greenbrier Resort. This resort has been in existence since 1778. The trip is 8 days and includes 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 4 dinners which 2 of the dinners are at Greenbrier. Trip dates start in April 2024 and run to March and April 2025. Price is \$3699.00 for double occupancy. This price does not include air fare.

## Executive Secretary's Message

No news reported.

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

No Legislative information reported.

### Idaho Representatives:

Rep. Russ Fulcher 202-225-6611, 208-888-3188  
<https://fulcher.house.gov/>

Rep. Mike Simpson 202-225-5531, 334-1953,  
[www.simpson.house.gov](http://www.simpson.house.gov)

Sen. Mike Crapo 202-224-6142, 334-1776,  
[www.crapo.senate.gov](http://www.crapo.senate.gov)

Sen. James E. Risch 202-224-2752 , 208-342-7985  
[www.risch.senate.gov](http://www.risch.senate.gov)

## Community Service

No news reported.

## Lower Snake River REA

No news reported.

## IDAHO FALLS REA

No news reported.