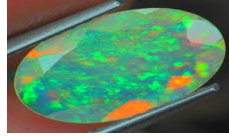




GEMS



The Official Publication of Retired Educators Association of Idaho

Volume 27 Number 3 15 March, 2022

President's Message

As I am writing this, I can't help but think of the world today and what is happening. **WAR! ...huh, yea... What is it good for? Absolutely nothing!** By Edwinn Starr 69'.

One would think of all the efforts or attempts by teachers of education afforded to the populous masses of societies throughout all civilized urban/rural countries scattered over the face of the earth that, there would be a miniscule of intelligence that would be shared among us, that would reflect in the horror brought about by the privileged and disallow their unwanted presence. Privilege is simply the opposite of oppression. We need to understand privilege in the context of power systems. Society is affected by a number of different power systems: patriarchy, white supremacy, heterosexism, cissexism, and classism — to name a few.

This is my opinion and yours should be just as important. It's always up to you whether you agree with me or not. Common sense is being overruled by those whom believe that their rights and philosophies are more important than yours or mine. It's happening in our State and others that make up parts of the United States.

We, as educators and retirees can make a difference in what is said and what we stand for. Allow your voices to be heard in public discourse and influences toward what is and should be for all those, not for just the few that make up our villages, cities and communities throughout our State. Stand behind those who are there to build up our morals and values that are taught in the educational systems, not there to tear them down.

War mongers, power and greed, poorly educated, extremists, ... makeup the Privileged... if allowed to seep into our strengths will render us too weak to be able to withstand the loss of what we all enjoy...Freedom!

REA of I President Stan Cope
skicope@gmail.com

In This Issue

- **President's Message**
- **Legislative Report**
- **PERSI Report**
- **Exec. Secretary Message**
- **Contact Information**
- **Collette Travel**
- **BKM News**
- **Idaho Falls REA**
- **Lower Snake REA**
- **NIREA**
- **RENCI**
- **SEIREA**
- **Squaw Butte REA**
- **Twin Falls**

Executive Director /Legislative

No report at this time.

Submitted by:
Barb Blasch, Executive Director
208-229-4561
bearconsul@aol.com

BOISE, KUNA, MERIDIAN REA-BKMREA

Submitted by:
Keith (Larry) Lee
BKM President.

Since our last report, our meetings have increased in both guests and members. At the board meeting in January we discussed placing newspaper ads meant to attract new members. One was created and placed in the Idaho Press

for the dates February 21 through February 22. It has been seen by several members but, so far, no one has responded to the ad. The program in January was presented by Joanne Lewis who brought in her two Therapy Dogs and explained their training and the services they provide. In February, a presenter from the Idaho Historical Society displayed a Power Point presentation on the history of the Hyde Park community. We will have programs for March, April and May. If you are interested in attending, please let us know.

North Regional Coordinator

Submitted by:
Mona Alfrey/Past President
NIREA

I am the Regional Coordinator for the North. We are not even holding local meetings up north until we feel safer about the Covid-19 situation. Therefore we are opting to not

host our Regional Conference this year. We had planned a great time for all but will just put it on hold for now. Most presenters understand our concern and say they will hold it for us in hopefully 2 years. I believe you will agree that it was worth the wait. See you at State in a year and then Regionals 2024.

RENCI

Submitted by:
Pat Hoch
Co-President, RENC I

We are all anxiously waiting for spring to appear. We thought it was here and then poof, below freezing and even some snow flakes.

Our RENC I group has been busy the last few months, almost like old times before Covid. In December we had our Christmas meeting and combined entertainment with the local Rotary Club. We enjoyed 2 school choral groups, the Gold Voices from the Lewiston High School and a combined elementary chorus. This is always enjoyable as we listen to young voices from schools many of us taught at before retirement.

In January we had a book sharing led by one of our own members, Marilyn Feeney. She always gets us interested in some of the many books she reads and we all go home with

a list to use when we go to the library or download our electronic readers. It is always interesting to find out about new and different books that may not be in the genres we normally enjoy. I know I am always pleased to get the list and to hear someone else's opinion about a book we may both have read.

This past month, we had another of our own members, Dick Riggs, present us with a quick history of what was going on in the 1950's. He is a local historian and has a great memory of the past. We all could contribute some of our own memories and it was a fantastic sharing time.

For the future meetings, in March we will have another historian, Barry Bush, do a presentation about the Chinese who arrived here many hundreds of years before Lewis and Clark; April will be a spring gardening presentation by a local greenhouse owner, Kate Patterson; and in May we have our end of the year brown bag surprise exchange as well as induction of new officers

We look forward to a warmer and healthy spring.

Community Service

No news to report.

Submitted by:
Dennis Ohrtman
Community Service Chair REAI

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Senators:

Sen. Mike Crapo 202-224-6142, 208-334-1776,
www.crapo.senate.gov

Sen. Jim Risch 202-224-2752, 208-342-7985,
www.risch.senate.gov

Representatives:

Rep. Mike Simpson 202-225-5531, 208-334-1953,
www.simpson.house.gov

Rep Russ Fulcher, 202-225-6611;
www.fulcher.house.gov

Legislative Chair

Connie Jean Bunch,
jeanbunch@aol.com

PERSI

Connie Jean Bunch
jeanbunch@aol.com

Travel Adventures 2022

Submitted by:

Margaret Reimer
208.887.6747
reimerm8@gmail.com

I now have a new contact with Collette. His name is Lucas Bialecki.

We have been in contact the past few days. I told him that there is some interest in the American Heritage trip and the Mackinac Island Trip in 2022. I have received information on both trips. The Heritage of America Trip is scheduled for October 2-10. Prices are : Double \$2748.00, Single

\$3398.00, Triple \$2718.00. Deposit of \$600.00 is due by March 26, 2022. Optional Travel protection is \$299.00 Final payment is due August 3, 2022. The Mackinac Island Trip is scheduled for Sept 25-October 3, 2022. Prices are: Double \$3549.00, Single \$4549.00, Triple \$3499.00. Reservations are due by March 18, 2022. Final payment is due July, 27, 2022. The deposit and travel insurance are the same as the Heritage Trip. The prices for the trips include lodging airfare, and some meals.

Contact Information

President

Stan Cope
2089.237.0002
skicope@hotmail.com

Co-President Elect

Linda Steele
208.866.1562
psteele500@gmail.com

Executive Director

Barbara Blasch
208.229.4561
bearconsul@aol.com

Treasurer

Patricia Kluckhohn
208.288.4295
pjkluckhohn@gmail.com

Secretary

Rick Aubrey
208.681.6312
aubrick@gmail.com

Pension/Insurance

Elaine Smith

208.232.4496
erbsmith@aol.com

Community Service

Dennis Ohrtman
208.743.0694
dwohrtman@aol.com

Western Region

Randa George
208.365.3693
rgeorge365@msn.com

North Region

Mona Alfrey
509.499.5601
mona.alfrey@gmail.com

Doug Cresswell
208.664.4674
ecresswell@myfrontiermail.com

Western Region

Randa George
208.365.3693
rgeorge365@msn.com

Eastern Region

Chris Blower
208.403.1371
robochris2@gmail.com

Legislation

Connie Bunch
208.376.8325
jeanbunch@aol.com

Webmaster

Bill Kluckhohn
208.288.4295
bkluckhohn1@gmail.com

Travel Adventures

Margaret Reimer
208.887.6747
reimerm8@gmail.com

GEMS

Jane Brewer
208.739.2789
jmbvft@gmail.com

IDAHO FALLS REA

Submitted by:
Chris Blower
Idaho Falls REA President

The Idaho Falls unit had a fun-filled Christmas meeting. We enjoyed laughing and groaning during a Christmas steal-a-gift, get-a-gift game. We also played other enjoyable, fun games. A merry time was had by all.

At our January meeting, a volunteer from CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) spoke. CASA is a great program ;volunteers work with the Department of Health and

Welfare to protect at-risk children. The speaker did an excellent job talking about the need for volunteers and about their duties, and a few of our unit members signed up to be CASA volunteers.

We are currently in the process of organizing the Eastern Idaho Regional Conference scheduled for Wednesday, April 20, 2022. Planning for the conference has had a few bumps. The College of Eastern Idaho cancelled our conference room due to Covid, so we had to scramble to find a place for the conference. Everything is working out now, and we will be holding the regional conference at the Idaho Falls Public Library. At our May meeting we hope to swear in new officers.

Squaw Butte REA

Submitted by:
Linda Steele
Squaw Butte President

Since the last GEMS submission, our unit, Squaw Butte Retired Educators, have met just once due to the challenges of COVID. We have, however continued to perform our service projects. Books for the GEM County Schools is our February and March project. Members contribute cash and books for whatever school library they wish to support. Our ongoing project is to contribute snack items as well as hygiene prod-

ucts to the Emmett Middle School and both high schools for students in need of them. We are investigating various possibilities for increasing our membership, which is now at 60. We plan to put the grant money to good use. Upcoming plans for March include sharing a favorite book read since the pandemic started, a special meeting in April at Ola when we will be guests of the Ola Ladies Club, and the traditional Necrology ceremony in May , after which we will adjourn for the summer.

NIREA-North Idaho Retired Educators

Submitted by:
Mary Williams
Secretary NIREA

The last time NIREA met was February 24, 2020. We don't have any news to report. The officers may get together this spring to talk about whether we want to try to start meetings September, 2022

Lower Snake

Submitted by:
Cris Warzyn
Lower Snake River Secretary

Greetings from the Lower Snake River REA! Our January meetings were well attended and it appears we are gaining momentum following the pandemic. Our January meeting was held in Fruitland at Ali's Restaurant. It is a locally owned Mexican restaurant with great food. Our speaker was Heather Echeveste, the CEO of Origins Faith Community Outreach from Ontario, Oregon. She informed us about programs for low-income people including tiny homes, clothing assistance, vaccine assistance, personal support and much more. We also heard from Sandy Kendall , the director of CASA about foster children and the need for more foster parents.

Our February meeting was held in Payette at Erika's Kitchen. Our speakers were Racheal Lopez and Dana Castellao from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario and Payette. They described how the clubs work and many of the services they provide. Our members filled the room and it was great seeing everyone and catching up along with a great meal and excellent speakers.

We are beginning to plan our best fundraiser, our spring yard sale. We will discuss the date and location at our next meeting. Watch the Gems newsletter for information. Why not come to Payette this spring and buy some of our great items?

Magic Valley REAI

Submitted by:
Ed Arndt
President MVREAI

Because of the advice of the Southeastern Health District that we heard and read in August, MVREAI did not hold any meetings in October, November or December. We did hold our annual September picnic here in Twin Falls at Rock Creek Park. Attendance was light, but the core members

were there and a good time was enjoyed. In December we did aide a young family of a single father, and two young teenagers. We provided some clothing gifts, and a food card. The Twin Falls School District's Youth at Risk Program advised us about the family in need. We did schedule for January with Tara McFarland from the CSI Refuge Center. Because of the Afghanistan situation, we wondered what that impact would be. for the refugees coming here to Twin Falls. However, I called the South Central Health District, and they advised against a face-to-face meeting for January. I'm hoping Omicron has spiked this February, and we can try again.

SEIREA

Submitted by:
Frances Stephens
Vice President SEIREA

On December 1, 2021, the members and guests of Southeast Idaho Retired Educator's Association attended the annual Christmas meeting and silent auction. Many items were brought by members and several raffle baskets were prepared. Many tickers were sold. We have an extremely generous group. We have raised \$2141 for our College of Education scholarships so far this year,

Judy Liday arranged for DeDe Hegsted and the Reflections Choir to entertain with holiday music. They were a wonderful addition to the holiday luncheon.

Christmas cards were signed for members who are ill or housebound. Our new member and resident artist, Bob Beason, added clever sketches to each card. In November, members donated \$107.00 to the Idaho Food Bank. Red "Emergency Folders" from the Fire Department were handed out to all members who requested them.

We had a fun, exciting, and worthwhile fundraiser this year. The leadership will meet with the Dean of the ISU College of Education and present a check for the SEIREA scholarships for this coming year.

