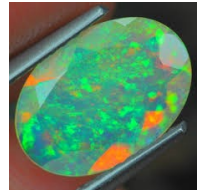




GEMS



The Official Publication of Retired Educators Association of Idaho

Volume 27 Number 1

8 September 2020

President's Message

Mona Lea Alfrey
September 7, 2020
Hello Retired Teachers,

I pray you are being safe during these days with high health concerns. It is not only our age which puts us at risk for the virus, but our desire to be social and see friends and family during our retired free time. The combination of all these things continues to make us possibly most vulnerable. My biggest complaint is not the loss of shopping and errands, but being unable to watch my grandsons and hug them.

As for our yearly State REAI meeting, in August due to Covid-19 the meeting looked different. We as a group, were unable to meet in Boise, but got the chance to learn a bit more about technology by meeting virtually on ZOOM! It really is an amazingly way to be able to see each other and carry on the business of the group. With a simple personal download of the FREE program, and a click on the link from Stan Cope's email blast, we were all

virtually in the same room. Of course, the host had a bit more work inputting all our names to the invite, and paying the \$14.00 extended time allowance fee for our several hour meeting. However, the usual FREE ZOOM, 40 minute time allowance, would work for smaller meetings as needed. Over all, a good deal! At the meeting we decided to use ZOOM again for the upcoming top of the year meeting, and we are looking into local groups using it until we can again meet in person.

For further information on the already held State REAI meeting, please peruse the ZOOM meeting minutes, which were held on August 14, 2020. Our secretary Lois Treat has provided those for you.

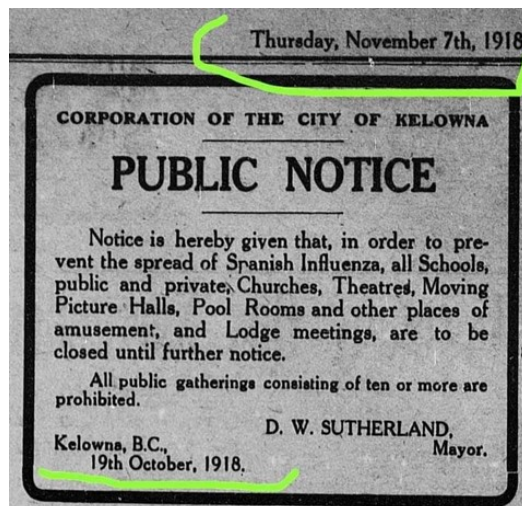
Thank you so much for your continued dedicated work and abilities to adapt and learn as we move forward.

Stay safe and healthy,

Submitted by:
Mona Lea Alfrey
State President of REAI

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Executive Director's Message

Greetings Presidents,

REA-I PILOT - VOTER ENGAGEMENT

REA-I is in a pilot project with the State office of Idaho AARP. The goal is to encourage both organizations to work together by supporting each other's efforts to improve the life of their members.

AARP Idaho has asked us to participate in their voter engagement program. AARP will be having a volunteer training for REA-I members on Zoom September 24 at 1:00pm and a listening/planning meeting on September 29 at 11:00am (MT). Each meeting will be 45 minutes.

Our involvement would be through the month of October before the election. AARP is not partisan. We would be encouraging people to vote and informing them of the ways they can vote and where they can vote - mail in, in person, etc. This might be done by phone calls, e-mail, or cards.

We can provide individual help for anyone having difficulty signing up for Zoom.

Please identify at least three or four members of your unit to participate in this effort to have a successful election. I will need their name, phone number and e-mail sooner rather than later.

VOTING

According to the Idaho Statesman (September 2, 2020), 250,000 people have already requested absentee ballots for the November 3rd election. We hope you are one of them. If not, you might consider requesting your ballot now. Senate Bill 1001 "changed the deadline for absentee ballots to be mailed to voters. All absentee ballot requests that were received at least 30 days before the election shall have the ballot sent to the voter no later than 30 days before the election." Fill out your ballot and return it immediately to prevent problems. Your ballot must be received by the County Clerk before October 23, 2020 at 5:00 pm local time. How do you get an absentee ballot? Go to the REA-I website and look under Board information. You will find

a ballot there with your County address for mailing purposes. You can also go to idahovotes.gov to find a form to be printed and mailed in.

VOTING INITIATIVE

REA-I and AARP are involved in a pilot project to support each others' goals for the enhancement of the lives of their members. REA-I is asking each unit to identify three members to participate in a voter initiative with AARP. The group will have two Zoom meetings, 9/24/2020 at 1:00 and 9/29/2020 at 11:00. rsvp: Barb Blasch c 770-841-8582.

2020 IDAHO SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION

AARP worked hard to defeat House Bill 06 but it passed and was signed by the Governor.

House Bill 06 includes the following:

- . Grants civil liability for damages or an injury resulting from exposure of an individual to coronavirus
- . Does not include Idaho public health districts, the federal government, the state of Idaho except for higher education, and foreign governments
- . Provisions sunset July 1, 2021

AARP opposed this bill for the following reasons:

- . It includes immunity for all long-term care providers.
- . It protects long-term care facilities from being sued for negligence.
- . During this pandemic, facility oversight has been minimal from the public, advocates, and regulatory personnel.
- . The ability to pursue action against a facility is already a difficult process.

2020 STATE TAXES

If you or someone you know lives and works in one state but has moved due to the coronavirus and is living and working in another state, they may have to pay taxes in both States. Each state has different tax laws. Now is the time to check out the laws.

Barb Blasch, Executive Director
c - 770-841-8582

Barconsul@aol.com

History repeats itself. Came across this poem written in 1869, reprinted during 1919 Pandemic.

This is Timeless....

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

I encourage all of our members, their families and friends to VOTE, whether by absentee ballot or in person. This election is critical for many reasons, particularly the health and continuation of Social Security.

I also encourage you to contact our senators and representatives and share your concerns. I will be contacting mine to remind them that "We the People" deserve a safe and secure election, and that most, if not all, want Social Security saved and made secure.

Idaho Representatives:

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

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

Submitted by:

Connie Jean Bunch, REAI Legislative Chair
jeanbunch@aol.com

PERSI

PERSI, updated August 31st

Board meeting Sept 14 (Monday), 12:00 noon virtual

Board meeting Sept 15 8:30 virtual

To register for either or both, click on Agenda. To access the agenda and other information, go to: persi.idaho.gov

Fund report:

\$20,026,668, 159

Fiscal year returns: 7.4%

Monthly returns: 3.2%

Thanks, and have a great weekend!!!

Connie Jean
jeanbunch@aol.com

Travel Adventures

At this time there are no plans for any traveling. Those of us that are signed up to do the Discover Mackinac Island trip are waiting to see if it is going to be cancelled. The trip is still to take place. I have cancelled and re-booked the trip for next year.

Good health to everyone.

Submitted by

Margaret Reimer
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IDAHO FALLS REA

Hi from Idaho Falls where one day it's summer and the next day it's winter. The weather seems to fit with this unusual 2020 year. Our unit will meet Wednesday, September 9th for a social get-together in one of our member's backyard. As requested by the District 7 Health Department, we will bring our own food and maintain 6 feet distance between each other. I suggested that we bring a megaphone and hearing aids so we can easily communicate. It will be great to catch up on the latest comings and goings with everyone.

BOISE, KUNA, MERIDIAN REA-BKMREA

We at REA-BKM are on hold as are the rest of the REA-I units. We have planned some great programs for the 2020-21 season including Dan Eberhart of the Idaho State Historical Society speaking on the

Squaw Butte REA

Squaw Butte Retired Educators met at Cold Mountain Creek Restaurant for the 2019-2020 "season". The September meeting featured Emmett's new school Superintendent Craig Woods. We collected school supplies to be distributed among the various schools in Gem County.

In October Meg Davis was our guest speaker. Meg spoke of the orchard industry that has made the Emmett Valley famous for its fruit. We collected warm clothes, socks, sweats for underwear for students in need.

At the November meeting Pam Walker presented her experiences of her trip to the Battle of the Little Big Horn Memorial. We collected donations for the Christmas food and gift baskets given to less fortunate families in Gem County. During the months of November and December, several members helped with the purchasing of food and gifts, the wrapping and the delivery. This is always a huge undertaking of Gem County Education staff, GCEA, students and SBRE. Our December meeting ended with a cookie exchange for those who wanted to participate.

January our speaker was the principal of PRTA (Payette River Technical Academy). Mr. Goff brought 3

NIREA-North Idaho Retired Educators

The North Chapters continue preparing for hosting the State Convention in Coeur d'Alene on April 9-11, 2021. The conference will be housed at the Coeur d'Alene Resort with the first night being a dinner cruises on the beautiful Lake Coeur d'Alene! Be sure to get your reservations for both your rooms and the cruise as soon as possible. There are plenty of great speakers eager

The September meeting will be our only meeting for the remainder of 2020. We will wait and see how this pandemic plays out before deciding if we can hold our monthly meetings once again starting in January.

In August, a newsletter was sent to all members. The letter summarized information from the state August Zoom meeting. Also, included with the letter was AARP information on voting. All members were encouraged to vote.

Submitted by:
Chris Blower
Idaho Falls REA President

Historical Town of Ustick in March, 2021. Hopefully this will be over by then. Keep safe.

Submitted by:
Lois Treat
BKM President.

students to help with the presentation. PRTA is a public charter school in Emmett.

February, we focused on collecting book and money to add books to Gem County schools. Our speaker was Kat Tigerman the director of "The House Next Door."

Each meeting we offered a raffle drawing for the proceeds of the ticket sales to be awarded to teacher classroom grants. We also encouraged member to bring money and food to be donated to Black Canyon High for their students who struggle with food security. The threat of Covid canceled the meetings for the rest of the spring. We also did not have our summer field trip for the same reason. In addition, the Western Regional Conference that was going to be held in Emmett in April was also canceled.

On August 26th, a small group met in the park to discuss how to proceed with meetings in this fall. The Nazarene Church has offered to allow us to use their building for meetings. Lily Payne from Tom's Cabin will caterer our lunch. The meetings are scheduled for the last Monday of the month with a few exceptions.

Hopefully, the next meeting of SBRE will be September 28th at the Nazarene Church in Emmett.

Submitted by:
Betty Griffith

to talk and much fun to be had. The evening of April 10, 2021, a live band will be playing for you to be able to roar onto the dance floor and kick back. If you enjoy golf, the resort has also cut us a great deal on fees for after the last day of the conference, prior to you heading home. Feel free to extend your stay a day or two and relax more at the same discounted rates.

Submitted by:
Mona Alfrey

NIREA, cont'd

The last meeting for the Retired Educators of North Idaho was February, 2020. We had to cancel our March meeting and also our April Conference with RENC. We did not have our annual summer planning meeting in August because of the virus. We are not meeting until January of 2021 if it is safe to gather as a group by then.

Hopefully we will be able to have our planned state convention in April, 2021. It is going to be at the Coeur

d'Alene Resort. We have a cruise/dinner planned for one night with many outstanding speakers throughout the rest of the convention. As soon as we know more we will be getting the information out to each local organization.

I hope you had a fun, relaxing summer and will have blessed fall. Take care.

Submitted by:
Mary Williams
Sec. NIREA

SEIREA

The SEIREA is alive and well, despite the whirlwind that is surrounding all of us at this time. Our association fully supports our educators as they start a new school year under some of the direst circumstances. Our board wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, The Idaho State Journal, expressing our appreciation for and support of the job that they all will be doing this coming year. We pray that all will be well and the students of Southeast Idaho will continue to receive the outstanding education of which they are entitled.

The SEIREA was able to generate enough funds last year to provide four scholarships to deserving ISU College of Education students. It is the association's great desire to be able to do so again. With those goals in mind, the board has opted to begin the year on Monday, November 30, 2020 with the annual Christmas Silent Auction and Raffle. This "kick off" will only take place should the state allow such gatherings to take place. So—WEAR YOUR MASKS!!

It is our honor to announce that Idaho State University College of Education has a new dean. Her name is Dr. Jean McGivney-Burrelle and she comes to us from the University of Hartford in West Hartford, CT. She arrives with a most impressive background. Among

her many accolades, she brings her most recent experience as the inaugural Executive Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation at the University of Hartford. We welcome her and her family to our area and wish her the very best.

She has already made contact with our organization and pledged to join us for our meetings when possible and will be a member well. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the COE to enhance the students' education.

We would be remiss if we didn't take a moment to thank Dr. Mark Neill, Interim COE Dean for his interest and participation in our program last year. His attendance really indicated a desire for our two entities to work together. In fact, he was quoted as saying, "I loved the Christmas Silent Auction. I got all of my Christmas shopping done!" Thank you Dr. Neil for joining us.

Our treasurer has already received many membership applications even though we are not meeting yet. That shows our retirees feel a true dedication to the association. We are very proud of our groups both local and state for what they do for our retired educators. We hope we will all get back to normal soon.

Submitted by:
Roger Wheeler
President SEIREA

Magic Valley REA

My report for the Gems will be brief.

Last spring I did send in information for the spring Gems, then the virus hit. We had a police officer scheduled for a scams report, but, obviously, that didn't work out.

Currently, an e-mail has been sent out asking for suggestions for meetings, etc. for this meeting year. Enough responses have been received so that we will have our annual picnic. Hopefully, we will come up with a plan for the rest of it.

Submitted by:
Edward Arndt
President

Community Service

No news to report.

Submitted by:
Dennis Ohrtman
Community Service Chair REAI

Lower Snake River REA

No news to report.

Submitted by:
Sharon Miller

Retired Educators of North Central Idaho- RENCI

No news to report.

Submitted by:
JoAnn Bjerke
Co-president