

BCREA Newsletter



October, 2025

Broward County Retired Educators' Association

<https://browardrea.org>

Number 327

11 BCREA , 10 Morris Scholarships Awarded + 4 Literacy Awards

BCREA 2025 Scholarship winners

l - r: Magdalena Parades, McKenzie Hicks, and Lauren Caggiano.

Those who could not attend were

Keiya Johnson, Anayah Cardenas, Ivanna Brand, Jacey Brauner, Haley Cuthrell, Melissa Joseph, Emily Brennan and Andrea Bruno-Pestana.



Standing with President JoAnn and Past-President Anne are 5 of the Morris Scholarship winners named below!

Kasim D. Liburd

Deja S. Roberts

Janelle Wright

Tamika Davis Walker

Kerry Ann Brown

Thi Nguyen

Magaline Goman

Kelly Agnew

Tiffany Ramsey

Christine Del Rossi

2025 Literacy Contest Winners

Our first-place winner is **Naomi Malacscu** from Fox Trail Elementary. Other winners were **Jaxson Gonzalez** from Harbordale Elementary, **Sasha Ulmer** for Harbordale Elementary, **Naom Kiperwas** from Fox Trail Elementary and **Thakvikha Masuram** from Westchester, Elementary. Left, **Anne French** and on the right **Cindy O'Linn**, co-chair of the Literacy Com-



October 9 Meeting

Time: 12:00 noon

Place: Jim Ward Community Center

Address: 301 NW 46th Ave, Plantation

Program: Jeff Hesse, AMBA

Bring to meeting:

School Supplies
Potluck Dish to Share
Your Volunteer hours
Used eyeglasses & Cell Phones
Aluminum pull-tabs
New or gently used kids' books
A New Member

President's Corner

What a great time of the year! The children and their parents have nestled in for a bright and vigorous new school year, and we couldn't be more excited for them!

However, we're equally excited at BCREA for the brand new ideas that are being curated from each of our dynamic committees.

Mr. Jeff Hesse of Association Members Benefits Advisors (AMBA), and one of our corporate sponsors, will lead our October 9, 2025 meeting, showcasing all the best services you receive as members. You really don't want to miss this kick-off event.

We also have other great events coming, but we need your support. Please make sure your membership is up-to-date. We really don't want you to miss out on anything! The dates for our meetings are: October 9, November 6, December 4, 2025 and for 2026, January 8, March 5, April 9, and our final meeting on May 7.

Please take note that all meetings are held at the **Jim Ward Community Center** in Plantation at noon, with the exception of our annual scholarship luncheon on February 5, 2026 held at Tropical Acres Restaurant.

Lastly and most importantly, I want to thank each and every person who has supported me through this transition of becoming YOUR president. I really appreciate your commitment in making this one of the best organizations in the nation.

Sincerely,

Dr. JoAnn Kitchen Simmons

From the President Elect

Whooooooooo?
Is it?



Legislative

Chair: Sue Colton
District 10 Director

954-695-5065 scolton@bellsouth.net



Partnerships Are Priceless

Did you know **BrightStar Credit Union** is a long-time partner of BCREA? **Dustin Jacobs**, Vice President of Marketing, and **Michael Cardona**, Marketing Specialist, are Honorary BCREA members. Each year, we receive a \$2000 donation from BrightStar to assist us with printing costs for our Newsletter and directory. In addition, they sponsored a \$4500 four-year student scholarship in 2023, and contribute door prizes for our Annual Scholarship Luncheon every February! Our BCREA Board met at their fabulous Cooper City Corporate Office for our planning meeting in August. Michael shared two NEW Educator Retirement accounts:

Educator Traditional IRA Certificate & Savings.
IRA Certificate: Competitive Rates - Longer Terms, fixed rates up to 4.5%, 3, 5, or 7 years, minimum \$500 deposit. Additional deposits are allowed 1 time every 12 months, with no penalty for withdrawals up to 20% of the balance every 12 months. IRA Savings: Balance-Based Tiered Rates, with a minimum \$2500 deposit, no penalties for withdrawals, and deposits are based on annual contribution limits. Includes current educator personnel and retirees. Make an appointment at your BrightStar Branch today - I did!

Sue

Cultural Affairs

Chair: Anne French

954-579-1719 annefrench10@gmail.com



The Cultural Affairs Committee will be launching several field trips for BCREA members-and friends-during 2025-26. The first outing will be Thursday, November 20, to the Weiner Museum of Decorative Art in Hollywood. Their new address is 3250 North 29th Avenue, Hollywood. Check out

their website - wmoda.com. We will meet at the museum at 11AM and go to lunch at the Fields Irish Pub after touring the museum. Cost for Museum: \$12.00 for seniors. Lunch cost will be your responsibility. The menu is available at www.thefieldfl.com. Interested? Contact me at anne-french10@gmail.com for further details. *Anne*

From the Treasurer

Gwen Lampkin



Greetings everyone and welcome back to another exciting year!

Thank you to those who have already made donations to the BCREA Scholarship Fund. So far we have collected over \$2,500. Our future educator scholarship winners send a BIG THANK YOU!!!

Gwen

Social Committee

Chair: Marianne Scott 954-321-9174
mscott33317@yahoo.com



Here we go again! Another year of exciting BCREA meetings is about to begin. As we have for the last several years, BCREA will continue our Picnic Pot Luck luncheon. Please remember, if you choose to bring a hot dish, we do not have the ability at Jim Ward to keep your food item warm.

The Social Committee will provide water, soda and coffee. At this point in time, we have an over abundance of take home containers. Please **DO NOT** bring any containers to our meetings until requested. Looking forward to seeing everyone on October 9.

Marianne

Friendship

Chair: Marsy Smith
954-962-6433 smithmarsy@aol.com



I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our first meeting of the new season! Throughout the year, we will be sending BCREA members who are 85+, birthday cards from BCREA. Additionally, if you learn of any member who would appreciate a card due to an illness, death in the family or just to brighten his or her day,

please let me know.

Again, this year, at each of our meetings, we will be collecting your spare change (or dollars!) in the Pot of Gold. The money collected will be among many prizes you may win at our annual February luncheon.

See you in October!

Marsy

Membership

Chair: LuAnn Comes
954-475-1510 lacomes987@aol.com



Building Membership!

Have you ever heard of a house raising or a barn raising? It was a social event to build a house where a community came together to quickly raise a house structure and provide strength to a new home. The benefit for all was a welcoming environment for one of their own. Since we want to raise our membership, perhaps now is the time for our own house raising. How did you become involved in BCREA? For me, joining was through a personal connection and a welcoming community. More of our community, our friends, have recently retired. Can you make a personal connection to someone who retired from Bro-

ward County schools recently or the past couple years? A member could also be someone from another district or state. Invite that potential member to our next meeting on October 9. Additionally, if you send me their contact information I will contact them and forward membership forms. Remind a potential member of our goals to:

1. Support retirement initiatives
 2. Develop and support friendships
 3. Provide scholarships for future teachers
 4. Support our community by volunteer efforts
- Let's work together to quickly raise our BCREA house!

LuAnn

Happy Halloween



District Director Sue Colton installs new officers, Gwen Lampkin, Treasurer; Karen Avery, Secretary; and President JoAnn Kitchen Simmons.



Members who attended the FREA Convention in May were Diane Texter, JoAnn Kitchens Simmons, Sue Colton and Anne French. Pictured here with the centerpiece they created.

Community Service

Chair: Darcia Drago
954-977-7247 dardra@att.net



Welcome to our new and returning members. At our October meeting we will collect school supplies for the Broward Education Foundation School Supply Center. Suggested items include any type of paper products, arts & crafts supplies and student incentives.

Please turn in the volunteer hours that you accrued over the summer. (FREA has eliminated "youth" as a separate category. Youth hours should now be incorporated into your total hours.

We will continue to collect used eyeglasses, aluminum pull tabs & used cell phones at all our meetings. Thank you for all you do in our community!

Darcy



Anne receives flowers from Sue and JoAnn as a token of our esteem for her years as president.



Literacy

Chair: Sandy Lefkowitz
954-473-9480 slef12343@gmail.com



Our year is off to an exciting start. We welcome YOU. Our theme this year is A BOOK IS A GIFT. So do not hesitate to build a love for books. There is nothing better than turning the pages of a book. Your gift can encourage our Broward youth to become readers.

Over the past years we have distributed 200+ books. Let us surpass that number this year! Please bring one new or gently used children's book to every meeting. For those members who would rather our committee do the shopping, donate \$ or ¢ to our book bank at each meeting.

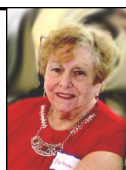
Also spread the word that our 5th grade essay contest will be in full swing. Make a commitment to share the fifth-grade essay contest with at least one school. Share information with fifth grade teachers early in the year so stu-

dents have ample time to participate. Information is always available at our meetings and on our website. Any fifth grader in Broward County can write an essay about their grandparent or a grandparent figure and enter the Margaret Poppell Literacy Contest. Fifth graders can submit entries any time of the year before the deadline, December 16, 2025.

We will continue collecting books to donate to a nursing home/assisted living facility, helping build a library for their residents. We will be collecting adult books to donate. So, all those books that you finished reading over the summer...bring them to a meeting and share with others. *Sandy and Cindy*

Fund Raising

Chair: Barbara Lewis
954-562-1936 barbarabeth1@att.net



Hi everyone! Summer is over and we're starting a new BCREA year. Hope everyone's summer was great, relaxing, entertaining, and fun.

Our fundraising committee has been very busy. We have some fantastic "fun" raising activities planned for this year.

1. First and foremost is our ZOOM BINGO on April 16.

The cost is \$10 for 5 games.

2. Next on November 24, we will have BUNCO at Duffys in Plantation. The cost will be \$10.

3. On May 13 we will have a Mothers Day (Ladies Day) Tea. More details will follow. Hope to see you at our "Fun" Raising Activities.

Barbara

Passages



*Happy Birthday to our
Birthday Club
(members over 85!)*

Charles Hofman 10/05
Phyllis Kublin 10/08
Theodora Williams 10/09
Donald Conkel 10/10
Ann Graves 10/12
Carolyn Stern 10/12
Areathea Reddick 10/22
Irene LaBelle 10/24
Willie Lou Hatcher 10/27



*Thinking of you....
Rosa Parra
Joyce Ferguson*



In Memoriam

Jean Shiskin 10/10/24
Bobbi Lou David 4/16/25
Al Parra 4/20/25
Garnett Ferguson
6/13/25



Information Services

Chair: **Sallie Sherwood**
954-629-3712 matildatwo@aol.com



Welcome to another year with BCREA. Right from the "get go" I wanted to share my personal opinion about something that some have recently discovered... Ageless Grace. If you have not heard of Ageless Grace, please check it out, I have a feeling you will greatly enjoy the fun and find it rather habit forming like I did. The purpose of Ageless Grace is to make you think about what you are doing while increasing brain function with the added benefit of increasing heart rate, coordination and balance all while sitting in a chair. (It is a different experience than traditional Chair Yoga,) Ageless Grace is for the brain, for the body, for the emotions, for the spirit and for the FUN. Several places, some public libraries and senior centers, offer free classes (Plantation Library) while others have a very minimal charge (Jim Ward Com-

munity Center \$1 for residents and \$5 for non residents) <https://agelessgrace.com> Wouldn't be information services if we didn't mention some helpful info...According to Southern Living (August 29, 2025) some foods should never be stored in the refrigerator (tomatoes, onions, potatoes, seeded fruits, etc) but we should not nestle them together in the pantry or counter because some odors can transfer from one to another. Who knew? Harvard Women's Health Watch (Vol 32, No 5) states that "falls are the leading cause of injury for adults 65 and older" but practicing standing on one foot for a minute or longer can be a boost to your balance! One of Senior Touchline Services is to provide telephone call for those over 55 years of age who live alone in Broward County. The program's purpose is to ensure that older adults can maintain their sense of well-being while

remaining in their homes and community. Supported by United Way, Jim Moran Foundation, Memorial Health Care, etc. More information to be provided at our meeting. <https://www.211-broward.org> > touchline Don't forget that AARP membership offers discounts on everything from travel, to health, to entertainment, etc., also, included are a variety of online self help videos and classes. AARP® Official Site - Join & Explore the Benefits Wishing everyone a great year and if you have any Information or PSA's to share with the group, please let **Jeri, Marelise, Susan, Lillian, Josephine** or myself know.

Sallie



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every time*



SunSentinel
MEDIA GROUP

- DATED MATERIAL -
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY



Val Proffer wins \$20; and Alyce Aspler, Betty Clarke and DonElla each win \$10 in the May Scholarship Drawing. Winners of the flowers are seated below!



BCREA T-Shirts Order Form

Royal blue $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve collared shirt with the BCREA logo on the right chest.

These shirts are flat knit 65/35 poly/cotton pique.

Cost: \$30.00 per shirt. Checks made payable to BCREA

Questions, please call Anne French 954-579-1719.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Quantity: _____

Size: __XS__S__M__L
 __XL__XXL__XXXL

Please make check payable to BCREA.

Mail check and order form to:
 Anne French



BCREA VOLUNTEER REPORTING FORM

Name _____
 (Please Print)

Month _____, 20____

Total volunteer hours including literacy

Total # of hours _____

Bring this to our next meeting or e-mail it to me at
dardra@att.net

Darcy