

January, 2026

Broward County Retired Educators' Association

website: <https://browardrea.org>

Number 330

## Plantation Park Chorus Performs Holiday Songs



The Plantation Park Singers Chorus is an exciting, fun way to learn through music! Singing helps kids grow in many ways: it boosts memory, math, language, & social skills while making them smarter & more confident! Through singing, chil-

dren build leadership, teamwork, & compassion while mastering new music. They'll have fun exploring different styles of music, solving problems together, & developing skills that last a lifetime. Plus, they get to perform & share their music with oth-

ers—making lifelong memories along the way. Led by Mrs. Nicole Greggs (MusicMakers! Summer Camp Director since 1998) is also Plantation Park Elementary School General Music Teacher, WOWL Morning News Producer, and

award-winning Choir Director since 1991. The group opened with "Ugly Winter" then Hanukkah songs followed by Christmas and Kwanzaa songs and ended with Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer who went down in history - "like Elvis!"

### January 8 Meeting

**Time:** 12 noon  
**Place:** Jim Ward Community Center  
**Address:** 301 NW 46th Ave,  
 Plantation  
**Program:** Working on Gift Baskets



12/14  
 Hanukkah Begins  
 12/25  
 Christmas Day  
 12/26  
 Kwanzaa Begins  
 12/31  
 New Year's Eve

#### Bring to meeting:

Potluck Picnic Dish to Share  
 Items for Gift Baskets  
 Door Prize for Luncheon -  
 Gift cards, New items,  
 Baskets  
 \$\$ for Luncheon Tickets  
 \$10 for Extravaganza tickets

#### Save the Date

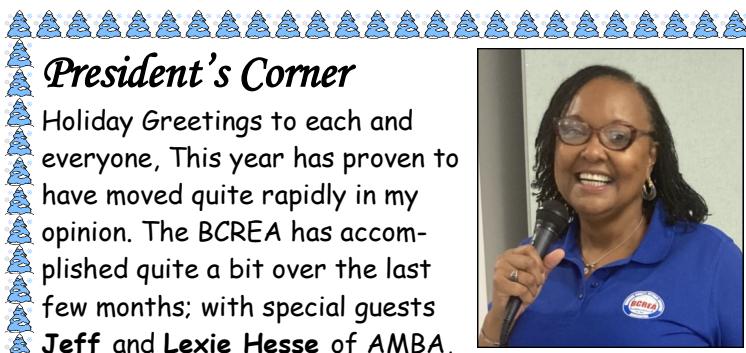
Annual Scholarship Luncheon  
 "I Love Rock 'N Roll" On  
 February 5, 2026, at  
 Tropical Acres Restaurant at  
 11:30 am

Tickets will be \$55.00 each for Prime Rib of Beef or Salmon and will be sold at our January meeting. Or you may use the form on page 6 of this Newsletter to send a check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to me.

Diane Texter.  
 742 NW 69th Terrace,  
 Margate, Fl. 33063.

So, come dressed in your best 50's or '60's outfit! I am not sure what I will wear yet but I am sure it will include my pink Boa!

Diane



## President's Corner

Holiday Greetings to each and everyone. This year has proven to have moved quite rapidly in my opinion. The BCREA has accomplished quite a bit over the last few months; with special guests **Jeff and Lexie Hesse** of AMBA, **Rozz Parker** of Wellness through Music and our December guest, **Plantation Park Elementary School Chorus**. We even had time to participate in 2 food drives, entertain ourselves with excursions to local parks and museums as well as play a couple of games of BUNCO. And, do you know we have an active book club? So, what are you waiting for to join us? We meet the first Thursday of the month (October-May) at the Jim Ward Center in Plantation.

Oh yes, we raise money for students and teachers to continue their studies in education too. Our next fundraiser is scheduled for February 2026. And, if you know a 5th grader who has the gift of writing, we offer a cash prize to the student who writes an essay about their grandparent or grandparent figure. Deadline to apply is before winter break, so send in your application asap. Applications may be found on our website at [browardrea.org](http://browardrea.org).

We do hope to see you real soon,

*JoAnne*



## Past-President's Corner

The annual Tropical Acres luncheon fundraiser for BCREA scholarships will feature dozens of baskets filled with treasures, luxuries, and gift cards. And you may have a chance to bring home the Pot of Gold filled with coins and bills. (Last year, the pot was \$197. And this year, the pot is even heavier! **What to donate?** NEW items purchased by mistake, gifts you received but do not want, and lotions and potions for your body and soul. Also, gift cards are always welcome.

**News Flash** - The gift baskets will be put together at the BCREA meeting on January 8th. Plan to bring your treasures to this meeting. If you will not be attending this meeting, contact **Anne French** to arrange for collection (954-579-1719). Baskets for this fun-filled event are DESPERATELY NEEDED.

**Cultural Affairs**



## District Director Legislative

Chair: Sue Colton

954-695-5065 [scolton@bellsouth.net](mailto:scolton@bellsouth.net)



FREA and AARP's Cupid Crew 2026 is back! At our January 8th BCREA meeting, we will again personalize and decorate the Valentine's Day cards AARP sends us. Please bring markers, stickers, and craft décor with you (no glitter!) so we can add hearts and messages along with our logo and greetings. I will also have materials available. These will be shared, along with roses, with our members who can't attend meetings, as well as shut-ins from your church or other local community groups where you belong.

The 2026 Florida Legislative Session begins on January 13, 2026. Stay tuned for how you can help us reinstate our FRS Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) this year! Thank you &

Happy New Year, Sue

## Fund Raising

Chair: Barbara Lewis

954-562-1936 [barbarabeth1@att.net](mailto:barbarabeth1@att.net)



Hi BCREA members,  
Everyone had a great time at Bunco at Duffys. We raised \$230 for scholarships. The winners were:  
Most games - Bev Hoppe,  
Least games- Rhonda ??  
Door Prize - Marilyn ??  
and lastly most Buncos ??

(sorry but I forgot who won).

Our next Big fundraiser is our annual luncheon at Tropical Acres on February 5. Have a Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Barbara

Announcing BCREA's next "field trip."  
Menopause the Musical, Part 2 - Cruising 'The Change.'

Sunday, Feb 8, 2026. 1 PM.

Where: The Parker

707 NE 8th Street

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

Venue Phone: 954.462.0222

Price: Tickets are \$60.00.

Cruising Through 'The Change' is a hilarious and heartfelt look at the joys of menopause and friendship.

## Volunteer Services / Directories

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



Please send them to me or bring them to the January meeting. Wishing you & yours happiness & good health in the New Year,

Darcy

### Volunteer Services

Thank you for your very generous donation of food & clothing to Harvest Drive! These items will specifically benefit the students of Broward County & their families & will hopefully make their holiday a little brighter. We will take a break & not do any more group projects until the Spring.

Last call for volunteer service hours for 2025.



## Information Services

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



Welcome to a New Year and a new plan for learning and enjoying life to the fullest. There are many **hobbies** which can add energy to our lives while lessening stress. According to **Martha Stewart** (age 84) we need to find activities that can stimulate both brain and body health and that can fit into our daily routine while adding fun and interest. Some of the most popular hobbies might include **Gardening** (Flamingo Road Nursery Bonsai Classes month of January, there is a fee for class and materials),

**Reading and Writing** (free course offered at Alvin Sherman Library visit [https://lib-guides.nova.edu/writing\\_works](https://lib-guides.nova.edu/writing_works)

**hopcrafts**), **Cooking** (AARP offers follow along cooking videos at <https://local.aarp.org/virtual-community-center/>), **Bird watching** (all Broward County Libraries and Helen B Hoffman have **bird watching** kits which can be checked out just like a book, kit includes both adult and child binoculars, Florida bird guide, etc), **Travel** (City of Plantation has a trip to Fairchild Botanical Garden on January 15, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, \$25 per person), **Crafting** (City of Sunrise offers making "Heart Paper Flowers", February 3rd, 10:00 am - 11:30 am \$6 to \$8, a perfect gift for friends or

family, all materials provided... perhaps a hobby for Valentine's Day). Try **investigating** local adult centers, community centers, public libraries, local community colleges and of course check the web to find your interest. Whatever you choose to learn, set a goal and stick to it! If you find something that makes you happy, please share with the group. Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. Stay fit, stay sharp and send positive thoughts to others.

Sallie

## Passages

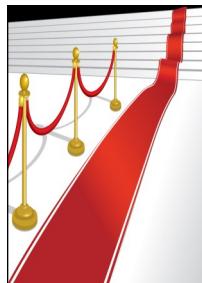


Happy Birthday to our Birthday Club (members over 85!)  
Beverley Merrill 1/03  
Marvia Simmons 1/05  
Nina Panuzzo 1/06  
Emma Black 1/08  
Maxine Boggy 1/13  
Leonore Henschel 1/31



Thinking of You

Darcy Drago  
Diane Texter



Welcome New Members

Lori Blanchette  
Elaine Cronin  
Sylvester Howard  
Leila Lumpkins  
Beverly Rao



## Membership...

Chair: LuAnn Comes  
954-475-1510 [iacomes987@aol.com](mailto:iacomes987@aol.com)



Five new members joined BCREA in November and December.

Welcome **Sylvester Howard, Beverly Rao, Lori Blanchette, Elaine Cronin and Leila Lumpkins!** We are glad you decided to join us. Thank you to our members who encouraged them to join BCREA! If you want to show someone the activities and fun of BCREA, please share the website: [browardrea.org](http://browardrea.org), where you can find previous newsletters. You could also give me their name and number so I can reach out to share information. Forty-eight members enjoyed the December meeting. Let's make our New Year's Resolution be to bring in a possible new member. Wishing each of you the happiest of holidays!

*LuAnn*

## Donations

**Member In Honor Of**  
Sally Macak Jean Funk turning 100!

## Undesignated

Susan Redfern Jean Funk Eileen Kimmich  
Pinkie Graham Leila Lumpkins



## Social Committee

Chair: Marianne Scott  
954-321-9174 [mscott33317@yahoo.com](mailto:mscott33317@yahoo.com)



Where did 2025 go? It's hard to believe that 2026 is right around the corner. A festive time was had by all at our December meeting with so many members in holiday attire and the wonderful performance of holiday music by the children's choir. As we enter a new year, the Social Committee has a request for the mem-

bership. If you choose to bring a pie or cake for the luncheon, please cut it into slices before you arrive. Don't forget to recycle your soda cans and water bottles. You can find the recycling bin near the beverage table. Enjoy the holidays! See you on January 8 for our first meeting of 2026.

*Marianne*

Great to see Marelise LeClerc back with us in line at left. and below, our new FREF District 19 Trustee Judy Hunter, below.



A **HAPPY**  
**NEW YEAR**

We guarantee **BRIGHT** Service  
every time



**SunSentinel**  
MEDIA GROUP



## Literacy

Co-Chairs: Cindy O'Linn  
& Sandy Lefkowitz  
Slef123@bellsouth.net



Do you recognize MPLLP? It stands for Margaret Poppell's Literacy for Life Project. One goal of MPLLP is to encourage literacy by getting books in the hands of youngsters. BCREA is a strong supporter and you can easily participate in this valuable program. BCREA Book Fund is moving toward reaching our goal of \$250 to buy new books for Joe DiMaggio's Children's Hospital. We are almost halfway there. Let's encourage our grandkids to read and get them involved. See how many books they can read over winter break. What child doesn't love a challenge? Multiply every book they

read by \$2, \$3 or \$4 and add the donation to our BCREA Book Fund supporting MPLLP. Bring your donation to the January meeting. We remember what **Booker T. Washington** said, "Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others." We don't know any other group that does more for others than BCREA. We are so proud to be part of this amazing group of retired educators. Take time to pamper yourself as we start the New Year, 2026. The Literacy Committee wishes all of you a happy, healthy holiday time and a fantastic year ahead.

Sandy  
& Cindy O'Linn

## Scholarship Luncheon Ticket Order Form

Number of tickets: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$55.00 each  
Extra Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Entrée choices:  Prime Rib  Salmon  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Send a check made out to BCREA  
Include a Self-addressed, stamped envelope

to  
Diane Texter  
742 NW 69 Terrace  
Margate, FL 33063  
Deadline - January 24



Bev's  
Bytes.....



The winners of the Scholarship Fundraiser this month were: \$20 - Alyse Aspler \$10 each - Val Proffer, Mary Cangemi and Earthalene Perry. Gifts donated by Karen Avery were won by (L-R) Betty Hicks, Antoinette Doughty, Val Proffer and Jan Heinrich. On the right is a picture of the Board meeting - And that's the last byte for January. *Happy 2026*

Bev



**BCREA NEWSLETTER**

Published 8 times a year, September – April by the  
BROWARD COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION  
1040 SW 52 Avenue  
Plantation, FL 33317

NON PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL  
PERMIT NO. 409

- DATED MATERIAL -  
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

Great holiday outfits on Suzanne Atkin, Marianne Barr, the Grinch and Dorothy Moore.

**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](mailto:dardra@att.net)

Darcy

## From the FREA Email Holiday-Related Scams to Watch for in 2025

Don't let the Fraud Grinches ruin  
your festive season this year

### FREF Extravaganza Tickets - Only \$10.00

Buy your tickets now for 2 Chances to WIN:

1st - \$100 Cash Guaranteed Prize to a winner in District 10:  
Dade, Broward or Palm Beach. PLUS

2nd -\$500 Cash - 1st Prize  
\$300 Cash - 2nd Prize  
\$200 Cash - 3rd Prize

Donations are used to fund scholarships for future Florida teachers. Buy Tickets at the January - March meetings or fill out the form below and send with a check to:

Shirley Swartz  
1920 SW 52 Terrace  
Plantation, FL 33317

Make your check payable to FREF (Florida Retired Educators Foundation).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

All donations will be used to fund the general scholarship program as well as the operating expenses of the Foundation.