



*Volume 28, Issue 1
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Spring 2020*

BCBSM Retirees Newsletter

Officers

President	Ray Newak
Vice President	Jerome Brown
Secretary	Open Position
Treasurer	Joyce Obenhoff
Immediate Past President	Kathy Elston

Committee Chairpersons

Finance - Richard Dow
Fundraising - Beleta Williams
Internet - Imogene King-Dugan
Membership Liaison – Helen Huseltine
Operations - John McCrary
Planning - Susan Lettner
Social - Annette Foster
Senior Advisory Committee - Tom Winkler

Update from the BCBSM Retiree Association

Ray Newak

The Coronavirus outbreak in Michigan has greatly impacted the BCBSM Retiree Association this year and the board has been constantly readjusting its schedule of events to react to the situation. We wish you the best and hope that each of you are taking appropriate precautions to prevent coming down with the Coronavirus. Please know that the Retiree Association Board is carefully monitoring the situation to assure that Association members are not put at unnecessary risk.

Only two of the scheduled events for 2020 have been held so far: The DSO Coffee Concert in February and the Florida Luncheon in early March. All other scheduled events through the end of August have been cancelled. This includes: the Glass Academy Tour in March; the Bowl-A-Rama event in April; the Spring Luncheon in May; the Meadow Brook Theater event/lunch in June; the Clinton River Canoe/Kayak event in June; the Lake Huron Boat Trip in July; and the Chinese Cultural Bus Trip in August. Depending on the status of the lockdown in Michigan and the Board's assessment of the risk to our members, the next scheduled event will be the Golf Outing on September 11 and a possible rescheduling of the Glass Academy Tour in late September.

The BCBSM Retiree Association Board is continuing to meet monthly via conference call and will continue to do so until at least August. We want to assure our members that the Association will not resume its schedule of events until the Board is convinced that it will be safe to do so. Please be on the lookout for Association flyers announcing these upcoming events including: the Golf Outing in September; the Annual meeting in October; the Ford Piquette Plant Tour in November; and the Holiday Luncheon in December.

We regret to inform you that our Planning Committee member and friend, Sandy Crossley, passed away unexpectedly in March. She will be greatly missed.

We would like to thank Adrienne Starling, our Board Secretary for the past five years, who left the Board at the end of last year. Adrienne did an outstanding job as one of the officers of the Association and will be missed. As a result of this opening, the Board is looking for a volunteer to fill this important position. Please call Joyce Obenhoff, who is filling in for Adrienne, or Ray Newak if you would like to volunteer to assume this position. In addition to this position, the Board is always looking for volunteers who are willing to join a Board committee or just help with events, Please contact any of the Board committee chairmen if you are willing to spend a few hours a month helping the Association.

We would also like to thank Jerome Brown, who was elected to the post of Vice President of the Retiree Association and began serving in January. Mr. Brown is a recent retiree who has a long history at BCBSM and is a businessman with great management talents. We greatly appreciate his contributions to the Association.

The Board extends its best wishes to all Association members. Please take care. We hope to see you soon at an Association event.

2019 Golf Outing

Kathy Elston

Rain threatened the annual Bill Burke Memorial Golf Outing held on Friday, September 6, 2019 at Riverbank Golf Club in South Lyon. The golfers did get wet about halfway through the course but fortunately it cleared up and everyone continued their play. The winning teams and closest to the pin winners were:

Men's: Dennis Kehrer, Ed Smith, Rich Hover, Raul Vaghy with a 66

Women's: Jean Tymczak, Sue Slottke, Alice Innes, Judi Farley with 73

Mixed: Toni Clark, Al Pope, Iain McCloud, Brad Gavle with 65

Closest to the Pin for Women were Jann Cantelon and Judi Farley on two holes. Markers were on four holes but apparently no one got close on the fourth hole.

Closest to the Pin for Men were James Kujawa, Tim Beigas and Dennis Kehrer on two holes.

Before heading out to the course, 52 golfers and 5 volunteers were provided a hearty breakfast. Riverbank has a terrific chef who also turned out an excellent supper after golf. Our servers, and really everyone at Riverbank, gave our group great service and they are all dedicated to making sure we have a good time.

Many thanks to the volunteers who made this outing happen including the Golf Committee of Kathy Elston, Brad Gavle and John McCrary and the volunteers who kept everything running smoothly including Imogene King-Dugan, Annette Foster, Joyce Obenhoff and Beleta Williams.

The golf outing happens because we have generous hole sponsors. This year Greg Huffer and Brian Maxson, both representing Merrill Lynch, each sponsored two holes, as did Tom Burzynski from Total Technology Management. Jann Cantelon representing Ruby Ribbon, Dean Sellers Ford and Kathy Elston each sponsored a hole. We are very grateful for their continuing support!

Special recognition goes to The Glass Academy in Dearborn for their generous donation of prizes. They also invited us to their facility to enjoy their glass pumpkins and other glass finery shown and sold weekends in October.

It really was a terrific day for all! The 2020 Outing will stay at Riverbank and is scheduled for the Friday after Labor Day, September 11, 2020. Mark your calendars. We hope to see you there!

St. John Tour

Joyce Obenhoff

In April 50 members and guests attended the Sanctuary and Museum tour of St. John Armenian Church. Very Rev Fr. Aren Jebejian spoke of the architecture of the church as related to our traditions. Once the Church tour was complete our Curator Lucy Ardash explained the various areas of the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum. When you walked into the museum there were 6 young ladies dressed in various costumes depicting cities in Armenia. Then everyone was able to walk through the museum. The lunch consisted of various Armenian delicacies. Everyone had a very enjoyable afternoon.

Holland Trip

Annette Foster

The Holland Tulip Time Event on May 6, 2019 was a success! The time on the bus gave us a chance to visit with other BCBSM retirees. We stopped at McDonalds for a quick breakfast before we arrived in Holland. When we got off the bus we were welcomed by a beautiful array of tulips. We watched a documentary video that explained the beginning to now history of Holland's tulips. The DeZwaan Windmill could be seen from the Gazebo and visited via the drawbridge. The family style lunch was held at the Beechwood Inn. The food was plentiful and delicious! We had time to shop on 8th Street in downtown Holland. And, also, at the gift shops adjacent to the Pavilion amongst the many different beautiful tulips. We had an opportunity to purchase bulbs to be sent to us in October for planting into our gardens to enhance the memories of our trip to Holland. As a bonus, we had a tour of a Holland neighborhood. The bountiful tulips were in full bloom! The trip to Holland was a delight.

Charity Donations

Beleta Williams

On Saturday, April 13, 2019 we held our Ninth Annual Bowl-a-Rama fundraiser at Country Lanes of Farmington. With such a low turnout, it was still an all-around enjoyable successful day. There were 3 bowlers (Karen Stecher, Katie Lawson and Rochelle Hampton) who received a \$25 gift card and the non-bowlers (Imogene King-Dugan, Adrienne Starling, Ewanda Watkins and Gwen Wilson) each received a \$5 subway gift card plus a designer bracelet. With the participation from members, friends and donations we raised a total of \$220.

On Tuesday, April 30 and Wednesday, May 1, 2019 some of the Board Members had the opportunity to tour two of our charities (The Capuchin Soup Kitchen and Gleaners Food Bank) to see their operation. They both voiced their concerns about needing more volunteers throughout the year. The Soup Kitchen has a shower program for the homeless and need travel size toiletries and socks. Gleaners sponsors mobile pop-up grocery stores during the week at different communities that services seniors and veterans at a low cost.

This year's Annual Spring Luncheon was held at Vintage House Banquet Center in Fraser Michigan on Thursday, May 16, 2019. The 50/50 raffle was presented as the fundraiser for the event raising \$227. The winners were: Claudette Momenee - \$55, Pat Hey - \$33 and Janet Lickman - \$17. Some tickets were sold after the money had been divided, and the extra \$15 was added to \$106 for charity totaling \$121. Door prize winners: (each received the table centerpiece) Phyllis Gliganich, Marilyn McCowell, Rebecca Underwood, Shelia Wood, Sandy Crossley, Karen McCrary, Pam Rechul and Robert Alpiner.

We enjoyed lunch and a relaxing boat ride on the Clinton River Cruse in Mt. Clemens, Michigan on Wednesday, June 19, 2019. The 50/50 raffle was presented raising \$222 with \$111 going towards charity. The winners were: Pat Bevil - \$65; Wanda Black - \$30; and Karen Szumny - \$16.

The Retiree Association's 37th Annual Fall Meeting was held at the Hungarian Rhapsody Restaurant in Southgate, Michigan on October 22, 2019. We had a 50/50 raffle, Chinese Auction and door prizes. With the 50/50 raffle, we raised \$256 and half went to charity (\$128). Winners: Jill Perry - \$80; Pat Raths - \$35; and Pat Hey - \$13. Chinese Auction, we raised \$159. Winners: Bruce Hayes, Janet DuBois-Reynolds, Delores Gelemey, Kathy Elston, Imogene King-Dugan, Ray Newak, Susan Lettner, Maryanne Monk and Geri Wojczynski. Door prize winners: (each received a \$25 gift card) Rachel Griffin, Sharon Ford-Hayes, Mary Ellison, Dolores Lucca and Betty Parker.

Thanks to all retirees who donated the travel size toiletries and socks at the Annual Meeting for the Soup Kitchen's shower program. We collected 527 items to be presented at our November event.

A special thanks to Chiquita Black-Spencer, Kathy Elston, Wanda Page, Rose Witherspoon and Helen Huseltine for donating items or monetary gifts towards the Chinese Auction.

If you are interested in helping with committee, please contact Beleta Williams/ Fundraising Coordinator at bwill@att.net or (313) 538-4959.

Operations:

John McCrary

The Association enrollment form was recently revised on the web site. Currently completed forms are sent to BCBSM. They, in turn, are then sent to the Retiree Association. A new address will be provided in the near future for these forms which will have them returned directly to us. This will enable the Association to update our Retiree Listing and new members will be able to choose which method they would like to receive our newsletter, upcoming events and other communications – either via e-mail or USPS.

An often-asked question that we receive from family members of a retiree is what should be done when a retiree passes away. You are asked to call the BCBSM Retirement Administration directly, 1-800-922-0699. This is the same number as designated for pension and member's insurance questions. It is also requested that the family

additionally notify the Retiree Association of the member's passing in order to have the member name removed from future communications. The information may be sent to the Association mailing address:

23332 Farmington Rd - #685
Farmington, Mi 48336

Painting With A Twist June 24, 2019

Kathy Elston

Twelve daring people participated in a group painting party at Painting With A Twist in Dearborn and a whole bunch of you missed a really good time. Most everyone will tell you they have no artistic abilities at all. The people teaching the classes are quite skilled in breaking down a picture, instructing step by step, layer by layer, until WOW, you have a picture you painted yourself!

The painting we chose was Lake Michigan Moon. You can see the results in the picture of the paintings!



Snacks, beverages and good company made this a really enjoyable afternoon. Professional artists should not fear competition from our group, but we learned a lot and laughed more! If this event is offered again, you really should try to attend. It is a blast!

Walk for a Cause

Helen Huseltine

"We tried something a little different this year and created a BCBSM Retiree Association team for the Making Strides walk this past October. This is an annual walk sponsored by the American Cancer Society that promotes breast health awareness and multiple support services for those affected by breast cancer.

Four retirees, and my husband, joined the team. Out of the 720 teams who registered for this event, our team was actually 190 with the \$252.00 we raised.

You may have participated in the walk when you worked for BCBSM but we were not aware of their having a team this year. In prior years, there were registration fees. No registration fees this year. And this year, they had what they called a "rolling" start time to walk. You could begin the walk any time between 9:00 and 10:00 AM.

It turned out to be a beautiful, sunny, although windy day at Detroit's Hart Plaza. And after calling for rain on that Saturday for most of the week, there was none. 😊

I'm wondering if you would be interested in doing this walk another year or any of the other worthy walks for heart disease, other cancers, diabetes, Alzheimer's, etc. If you are, please let me know and we'll see what we can do about trying this again."

Resources

We all need assistance with one thing or another, especially as we age. The following websites are designed to help with keeping us healthy and fulfilled:

[The Source for Blue Cross and Michigan Health News](#)

Visit the website:

<https://www.mibluesperspectives.com/for-you/>

[Programs and Services for Adults 55 and older, Adults with disabilities and their families:](#)

Detroit Area on Aging – Serving Detroit, the five Grosse Pointes, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Highland Park. Contact 313-446- 4444 or visit the website: <https://www.detroitseiorsolution.org/>

Area on Aging 1B – Serving Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw counties: Contact 248- 357-2255 or visit the website: <https://aaa1b.org/>

[Eventbrite](#): Discover Great Events that match your passion, brings people together through life experiences. Visit the website <https://www.eventbrite.com/>

Internet/Communication

Imogene King

We are sure you are enjoying our monthly events. How would you like to share some of your photos taken at one of the events? You can submit your pictures to our email address at information@miretireeassoc.com. We will do our best to post as many pictures as possible. These pictures will be post on our website at www.retireeassoc.com. Please take time and visit our website.

If you have a new email address, please send an email to information@miretireeasso.com.

Social Chairman Newsletter

Annette Foster

During 2019, we offered many events: a concert, a casino trip, a Florida event, a bowling party, a museum tour, a trip to Holland, MI, an artist experience, a cruise, a ball game, a mural bus tour of Detroit, a theatre play, a picnic, a golf outing, and an opportunity to learn about Blessed Solanus Casey's life.

As 2019 came to a close, another year of events was being planned. We listened to the results of the surveys you filled out during a few of the events. We believe we came close to inspiring you to join us in 2020. However, due to the Stay Safe, Stay Home order that our Governor instituted, events through August were cancelled. Below are the events we hope will take place.

- Riverbank Golf Outing in South Lyon on Friday September 11, 2020
- Glass Academy & Lunch in Dearborn on Thursday, September 24, 2020
- Annual Meeting in Warren at the Gazebo on Wednesday, October 21, 2020

- Ford Piquette Avenue Plant in Detroit on Friday, November 20, 2020
- Holiday Lunch in Westland at the Hellenic Center on Thursday, December 3, 2020

If there are changes to the revised schedule, we will let you know. Attending these events, offers an opportunity by the Retiree Association for you to continue the friendships you acquired during your time at BCBSM!

Healthy Soul Food with a side of Community Engagement

Jerome Brown

Detroit Soul is a minority owned restaurant talented in a healthier approach to food preparation and catering services for traditional comfort food. The owners Jerome B. Brown and Samuel VanBuren are Detroit natives, descendants of parents and grandparents that relocated from the Alabama area during the Great Migration of the 40's and bring with them the recipes that became the basis for Detroit Soul's menu items. The owners ensure that family recipes are mastered daily using local farm to table produce. The same care placed in the cooking process is also invested into the customer service experience. Detroit, with its shifting demographics and redevelopment projects downtown, is in need for businesses in the neighborhood to consciously create spacing that feels comfortable to eat, shop and simply be an important factor for Detroit Soul. We want to bring back some of the nostalgia lifestyle of living in a city where you can walk out your door or take a short car ride to get food service, retail, haircut or even a car repaired. Detroit Soul's intentional location is to improve the economics and employment in the community.

The restaurant, which stands off the corner of Harned Street and East Eight Mile Road, offers counter service with a dining area of daily combinations meals, sides and specialty desserts. Combination plates feature a range of meat options such as fried and baked chicken, smothered pork chops, meatloaf or baked turkey wings. Among several side options are candied yams, baked macaroni and cheese, collard greens, cabbage and cornbread dressing. Weekend specials like fried fish and outdoor smoked BBQ dinners dominate the menu.

Detroit Soul offers catering services for public events, business meetings, home gatherings and corporate events. We provide catering services for all menu items as well as custom American cuisines. Detroit Soul has received numerous recognitions of success from Small Business Partnership with U of M, Osborne Business Alliance, City of Detroit Council, HOUR Magazine and Podcast WDET just to name a few. Visit our website "Detroit soul.net" to view more restaurant offerings.

May They Rest in Peace

Marvin Plets	05/07/2019
John Flint	05/08/2019
Audrey Falzon	07/17/2019
Rey Brandt	08/13/2019
Mary Meakin	10/08/2019
Gene Gibbons	11/15/2019
Craig Gladden	11/27/2019
Elizabeth Green	02/11/2020
Sandra Crossley	03/14/2020
Jill Perry	03/20/2020
Margaret Primeau	03/24/2020
Dr. George Gerber	04/07/2020
Elinor Decoopman	04/21/2020
Gregory Anderson	04/30/2020
Florence Coin	05/16/2020
Patrick O'Donnell	06/02/2020



Welcome New Members

Kathy Alden	Suzanne Amateis	Michael Arm	Kathy Baharozian
Catherine Beyers	Beatrice Birdsong	Demetria Bonventre	Mary Bragg
Michelle Brennan	Susan Brewer	Joel Brickner	Felicia Brown
Carolyn Bunkley	Gloria Edwards Cammon	Karen Carter	Linda Carter
Matthew Case	Patricia Catanzaro	John Colaluca	Marc Connolly
Eve Corey	Susan Crenshaw	Laverne Curry	Elizabeth Dalziel
Deborah Davis	Karen Warren-Davis	Rozanne Darland	Carol Deutsch
Raymond Dobson	Renita Dorsey	Jonathan Drake	Judith Dreslinski
Claudia Duff	Marianne Dyer	Robin Edwards	George Eichorn
Jeanette Elsberry	Catherine Ferguson	Paula Fillmore	Debra Fletcher
Elaine Foster	Robert Galac	Janice Gardner	Cheryl Gassaway
Jacqueline Good	Alane Gray	Noreen Gurney	Dwight Harris
Brenton Henderson	Joy Holmes	Regina Holmes	Kathleen Isenhardt
Peggie Jarvis	Kim Johnson	Donna Jones	Margaret Julian
James Keller	Renee Koncsol	Edith Kentner	Gina Kisiel
Kevin Klobucar	Elana Kozik	Julie Lambert	Julie Laube
Mary Lefief	Pegeen Loch	Karen Mackay	Nora Maloy
Janice Mariano	Alean Martin	Trine Martinez	Darlene Marshall
Frank Maslowski	Michael Mattei	Edward Maul	Brenda McCain
Andre McCier	Faye McClure	Sharon McDonnell	Jana McFarlane
Brenda McGrew	Denise Miller	Patricia Miller	James Mills
James Milles	Donna Monfette	Cindy Monroe	John Moreau
Todd Moss	Janet Mullican	Maryanna Nadolski	Linda Norton
Cynthia Nuno	Laura OConnor	Gregory Ohly	Annette Pace
Cheryl Payne	Roslyn Pegram	Carol Penzin	Wendy Perry
Ilean Pierce	Joseph Pirch	Jack Priebe	Sandra Pryor
Penelope Pullum	Jane Rafferty	Victor Raybaud	Francine Rea
Lisa Redick	Stacey Reed	Marguerite Reeves	Maryann Regula
James Rembowicz	Fred Richter	Cathy Ruiz	Julie Russ
Erima Saxton	Carol Schouster	Jodie Sheedy	Kathleen Sheehan
Alane Shimel	Debra Shreve	Lisa Shue	Edward Skupny
Karen Smith	Linda Soles	Gary Southern	Chiquita Spencer
Patricia Stone	Dean Swanson	Vanessa Swezene	Donna Swiech
Carrie Sykes	Denisa Terrell	Rita Thomas	Gary Vance
Lisa Varnier	Claudia Vockler	Lisa Waelchli-Bade	Cecil Walker
Sandra Walther	Darryl Ward	Vivian Warren	Margaret Wasierski
Mary Wasierski	Dennis Wisniewski	Gayle Zellmer	



This newsletter is published by and for members of the BCBSM Retiree Association.

Be sure to check our website at miretireeassoc.com for information about upcoming events and photos of past events. We also publish an E-mail Directory, which is a voluntary listing of members who wish to share their e-mail address with fellow retirees. To add your e-mail address to the Directory, make a correction or remove your name from the list send your request to information@miretireeassoc.com.

The BCBSM Retiree Association is an organization of former employees of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan that is not otherwise affiliated with the company.