



BCBSM Retirees Newsletter

*Produced for and by members of the
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Retiree Association*

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War Memorial is perfect setting for spring luncheon

What better way to welcome spring than getting together for lunch with your fellow retirees. That's exactly what Retiree Association members did May 19 at the Association's annual spring luncheon, held at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial in Grosse Pointe Farms.

Although the flowers weren't in full bloom yet (this is Michigan, after all), the gardens and view of Lake St. Clair from the dining room provided a beautiful setting for catching up with old friends — and making new acquaintances.

Following the social hour and lunch, retiree Debra Pawlak gave a short talk about her recently published book, *Bringing Up Oscar, The Men and Women Who Founded the Academy*. Debra is a published author who has written numerous magazine articles and two previous books. She said this was a natural topic for her to tackle. "I've always loved old movies," she said, "and I love writing."



First-time attendees at a Retiree Association event, seated, left to right: Jackie Perkins, Irene Warren, Dolores Baldwin and Aspasia (Annie) Zois. Standing, left to right: Phyllis Gliganich, Kathleen Tiedt, Pamillia Orrell, Sharon Sturdavant, Sandy Tabaczynski, Sam Purdy, Mary Jo Wolff, Mary Weston, Mary Kay Kelly, and Marlene Sadlowski

Kath Arndt, a member of the Retiree Association board and the Association's Web master, handed out copies of our Web site home page, explained how the site worked, and described the great information you will find there.

She encouraged members to use the site, particularly to keep up with social activities (sign-up forms and maps can be downloaded for all events), check out photos following events, and find back issues of the newsletter.

The meeting closed with the 50/50 raffle and giveaway of table centerpieces. The raffle winners were Karen Stecher (\$175), Mary Jane Speck (\$100) and Geri Wojezynski (\$50).

More photos on page 2...

Spring luncheon...
(continued from page 1)



Gloria Graves (left)
and Gyneze Williams



Connie Dowe (left)
and Mary Buch
assisted with check-in



Janet Angell-Cardinali
(left) and Carol O'Keeffe



Debra Pawlik signs
copies of her book for
Gemetra Black. For
more about the author
and her new book, see
the May 2011 issue of
the Retirees Newsletter.



From left, Betty
Murtagh, Dr.
Robert Borchak and
Dorothy Ambrozy



Entrance to the Grosse
Pointe War Memorial



Joseph Samulowicz (left)
and Robert Walsh

To view more photos of the Spring Luncheon and other Association events be sure to check our Web site at **bcbsmretireeassoc.com**.

Meet retiree Linda Lee

For some folks, variety is truly the spice of life. Just ask Blues retiree Linda Lee, who retired in 2001 after 31 years with the company.

"The best part of retirement for me is the variety of activities I've been able to be involved with. I like switching from teaching to spending time with friends to reading to painting to volunteering at PAWs to digging in my garden. It's never boring," said Linda.

Linda was born in Seattle and grew up in Holly, Mich. She started at BCBSM in 1970 in Subscriber Services and soon moved on to Auto National Marketing.

"Most of my 31 years were spent in Chrysler Marketing and Auto National Retiree Services. My time at Blue Cross was, overall, happy, fulfilling and interesting. I worked with some wonderful people and made many lifelong friends," she said.

A graduate of Michigan State with a bachelor's degree in graphic design, Linda says she's always loved art, travel and animals. Since retiring she's made jewelry and followed other artistic pursuits and continued teaching marketing at Davenport University.

"I absolutely love teaching and interacting with students. I hope to keep teaching for a few more years," she said.

"I also spend quite a bit of time in Holly, hanging out with my soon-to-be 90-year-old mother. I hope to have her energy when I'm her age!"

Over the past several years Linda has devoted much of her time as a volunteer with PAWS, a nonprofit, all-volunteer group whose mission is to place homeless animals with loving foster families. PAWS is also dedicated to lowering the number of animals needlessly euthanized each year by promoting spaying and neutering. One of the group's big goals has been to open a low-cost, high-volume spay/neuter clinic, a dream that is now coming to fruition.

"We signed a lease in January for a building in Taylor on Goddard Road and have been refurbishing it since then," said Linda.

Linda's main role at PAWS has been working on fundraising events, so it was especially gratifying for her to learn last September that PAWS had won a \$50,000 Pepsi grant to put them over their fundraising goal.

"Last year, after we had raised about half of the \$75,000 we needed to open the clinic, we decided to enter the Pepsi Refresh online contest. We managed to finish in fifth place and won the grant, which put us over our goal and we were able to start looking for a building."



Linda poses in front of her mural at the new PAWS Clinic in Taylor in preparation for the grand opening.

Linda said that after a ton of renovations and hard work by volunteers, and once the building passed city inspection, PAWS applied for and also received a large grant from PetSmart Charities.

"Participating in the whole process has been such an adventure. We will be able to offer low prices while still offering high-quality surgical services. It's been shown repeatedly across the country that areas with these clinics start to see a drop in shelter intake rates and corresponding drop in euthanasia in the shelters.

"Right now I'm working on painting a big mural of a tree in the reception area of the clinic. At our grand opening, tribute tags, which can be purchased as a memorial or in honor of friends, family members or pets, will be hung from the branches of the tree," she said.

The clinic opens on Sept. 19 with the grand opening set for Oct. 1. The group's major annual fundraiser, "PAWS in the Park," is held in September.

For more information about PAWS and the services provided by the Clinic, visit their Web site at www.pawsofmichigan.com or contact them at info@thepawsclinic.com.



Shirley Wilkins (seated) and JoAnn King found a cool spot in the lobby of The Henry Ford as they waited for the tour bus. The thermometer reached 100 degrees that day.



Dave and Jean Hill drove down from Comins, Mich.



From left to right, Jo Oliver, Jack Oliver, Fay Studebaker, Cathy Mozham, Marc Mozham and Patty Kozlowski

Ford F-150 is star of Rouge tour

Watching Ford F-150 pickup trucks move along the final assembly line of the Dearborn Truck Plant was surely the highlight of the Association's Ford Rouge Factory tour on July 21.

From the factory's one-third-mile-long elevated walkway, members got a birds' eye view as workers installed steering wheels and instrument panels, assembled and built doors, and tested the finished product in the final inspection area.

The self-guided tour also included a visit to the Legacy Theater, which featured the history of the Ford Motor Company, and the Art of Manufacturing Theater, which offered a dramatic and up-close look at the manufacturing process (viewers were even sprayed with "mist" from the paint robots and felt the "rumble" of the stamping process). Members also viewed historic vehicles in the Legacy Gallery.

Another stop on the tour was the observation deck for a view of the "living" roof on the Dearborn Truck's Final Assembly building. At more than 450,000 square feet, it's claimed to be the largest green roof of its kind in the world.

Before heading home, some Retiree Association members stopped at The Henry Ford to enjoy lunch with fellow retirees in the Michigan Cafe.



Katie Jackson (left) and DiAnn Vaughn inspect sedum plants that grow on the green roof above the Dearborn Truck plant.



Chris Thomas waits for the tour bus.

Another great year for golf

Sunny skies greeted golfers at the Bill Burke Memorial Golf Outing on Aug. 19. Golfers gathered at the Heather Highlands Golf Club in Holly where the event has been held for the past 21 years. Eighteen teams participated.

The day began with registration, breakfast and a 9:30 a.m. shotgun start. Carlo Giacobelli's team, the "Hope Group," was the big winner of the day, garnering the top prize for adjusted score. His team included Rick Michaels, Carla Giacobelli and Russ Giacobelli. The "Scoring Wonders," Ron Price's team, came in second. Team members were Jack Dougherty, Jim Kujawa and Ed Hanlon.

A variety of other prizes were awarded following the buffet dinner, and everyone received a door prize. Winners of the 50/50 raffle were Nick Morakeas (\$65), Gloria Nastas (\$45) and Mike Cartier (\$25).

Plans are already underway for next's year golf event. Information will be posted on the Association Web site as soon as it is available.



And the winners are ... (left to right) Carlo, Russ and Carla Giacobelli and Rick Michaels



The "Boomers" from left, Al Kreinbring, Ken Biedermann, Toni Clark and Brad Gayle



The "1st Timers" from left, Verona Asaro, Sharon Stone, Betty Beninato and Melanie Fraczek



Left to right, Susan Reetz and Dana Bodin purchasing 50/50 raffle tickets assisted by volunteers Joyce Obenhoff and Beleta Williams. Janice Crossland, Richard Dow and Kath Arndt were also volunteers at the event.



Karen Stecher (right) assists Bill Klindt at registration.



Marge Jamerson (left) and Evaree Hays-Allen wait for the signal to head out to the green.



Ken Rogers, Joan Jonckheere, and JoAnn Schmuecker



Frank and Shirley Matthews

Bill and Maryann Drake



Take me out to the ball game...

More than 140 members and their guests cheered on the Tigers at the Association-sponsored outing to Comerica Park June 24. And while the Tigers lost 7-6 to the Arizona Diamondbacks (on a hit-winning home run by Wily Mo Pena), watching the Tigers play and enjoying the fireworks following the game made for a pleasant evening.

Jim and Mignon Nicol



Who's Who in the BCBSM Retiree Association

Officers	
President	Spencer Brown
Vice President	Ray Newak
Treasurer	Joyce Obenhoff
Secretary	Marie Bjerke
Immediate Past President	Karen Stecher
Contact Information	
Association Web site	bcbsmretireeassoc.com
Association e-mail	information@bcbsmretireeassoc.com
BCBSM Retirement Administration	Toll-free: 1-800-922-0699 Local: 313-225-9609 Fax: 1-866-238-3295 E-mail: retirementadministration@bcbsm.com
Change of address, phone number	All changes must be made in writing to Retirement Administration via Fax, e-mail or U.S. Mail at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Retirement Administration, Mail Code 0126, 600 East Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226.
BCBSM medical claims inquiries	E-mail: employeeinquiry@BCBSM.com Phone: Medicare Plus Blue customer service, 1-866-684-8216; CAREN IVR, 1-800-858-7915
BCN claims	BCN Ombudsman, 1-888-265-4703; BCN Advantage customer service, 1-866-966-2583
Retiree checks/State Street Bank	1-888-419-8769

Globetrotters Profile: George Kuljurgis visits Baltic states

In this issue, retiree George Kuljurgis shares his recent travels to the Baltic countries with his wife Christine. George retired from the Blues in 2009. He spent the major part of his career at the Blues in the Professional, Hospital and Non-hospital facilities reimbursement areas.

George says he hasn't traveled that much since retiring but he and Chris would like to do much more before they get too tired to do all the "on-the-bus-off-the-bus" stuff.

Where did you go on your Baltic tour?

We flew from Detroit to Amsterdam and then to Berlin, where we visited the Brandenburg Gate, the glass dome designed by Norman Foster that crowns the Reichstag building, part of the old wall that separated East and West Germany, and the Holocaust memorial, which was very dramatic.

Then we visited Copenhagen, Denmark; Stockholm, Sweden; Helsinki, Finland; St. Petersburg and Moscow in Russia; Vitebsk, Belarus; Vilnius, Lithuania; and Warsaw Poland.

What were the highlights of the trip?

Chris and I always wanted to see St. Petersburg and Moscow and that was the highlight of our trip. Russia has such a fascinating history and there is so much to see. The Kremlin museum with the treasury of the tsars was just fantastic. The Hermitage Museum and Peter the Great's Summer Palace in St. Petersburg, and Lenin's Tomb and St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow, were really worth seeing. Walking within the Kremlin walls was quite an experience.

English was less common in Russia than some of the other countries we visited. We traveled with Insight Vacations and we were really well-guided from hotels, to restaurants, to the sights. Doing it on your own would be very difficult because of the language, street signs, and all the traffic .

What was your most interesting experience?

Meeting my cousins (and their children and grandchildren) in Vilnius, Lithuania. My family had lost contact with my uncle's family after my mother died in 1980 but one of the cousins found us on Facebook last year. When I told them that we were taking a tour in May 2011 and it would stop in Vilnius they were very excited. After all these years we finally got together! Anyway, I went from no relatives from my mother's side of the family to about 32 or so. I still can't believe that this actually happened.

Another interesting experience occurred when we were in Copenhagen. People in restaurants asked us if we were Americans and after we told them yes, they thanked us for "getting Bin Laden." It made us proud to be Americans.

Where are you going next?

Over the years, between me and my wife, we've seen Spain, Italy, Greece, Austria, Germany, England, Switzerland and France. Even though we really like Europe and we're planning on some river cruises there, we also want to see more of the U.S. We liked the Grand Canyon and Yosemite Park. There is still so much more to see here.

With our daughter living in Texas, our eldest son in California and our second son in Maryland, we plan to visit them before going out of the country again — especially since my son and his wife in Maryland are expecting their first child, and our first grandchild, soon.



Found on Facebook! George (center) reunited with his cousins in Vilnius, Lithuania



George and his wife Chris in Moscow's Red Square



Update

Retiree volunteers help RenCen move go smoothly

The move from the Metro Service Center to the Renaissance Center Tower 500 and Bricktown facilities in Detroit is proceeding smoothly and on schedule.

As of early August, more than half of the 3,000 Metro employees had made the transition. The move is expected to be completed by early 2012.

To help with the transition, the BLUnite team, made up of a number of BCBSM departments in partnership with UAW Joint Programs, set up tours to familiarize employees with their new surroundings. The team would like to thank the following retirees who helped make the tours run smoothly: Dave Barthel (scheduled to participate), Sandra Bright, Paula Hunt, Jacqueline Perkins (scheduled to participate), Pamela Rechul, Sharon Stone and Monica Uriel.

"The BLUnite move team cannot thank you enough for volunteering to make the tours and move-ins a great success," said Melanie McCall Brown of the Community Responsibility department. "Thank you for lending a hand."

Join Us for Annual Meeting, Holiday Party

October 20 ANNUAL MEETING & LUNCHEON, CANTON

Join us for the annual business meeting and lunch at Summit on the Park in Canton.

December 7 HOLIDAY PARTY, MADISON HEIGHTS

The holiday party will be an evening event this year. Join your friends at the Club Venetian in Madison Heights.

Congratulations and Welcome to Our New Retirees

Stephanie Bailey	Sabina Homann	Hiroko Lancour	Gail Patrick
Patricia Cunningham	Gail Hooper	Gary Lassic	Ronda Ralston
Mary Davidson	Allen Iles	Titus Lassiter	Joan Schnepf
Joanne Dutcher	Carla Irvin	Nancy Masterson	Kenneth Schreck
Mary Fulmer	Grace Keng	Vicki Moore	Cheryl Ventimiglia
Patsy Gordon	Janice Knez	Dennis Murphy	Mary Wilde
Mariann Hamann	Judy Kuligowski	Marybeth Okray	Jacqualin Woods
Edward Hanlon			

The *BCBSM Retirees Newsletter* is published three times a year for members of the BCBSM Retiree Association. We'd like to hear from you. If you have a comment on the newsletter or an idea for an article, please contact us at information@bcbsmretireeassoc.com.

Also be sure to check out our Web site at bcbsmretireeassoc.com for information about upcoming events and photos of past events. We're on Facebook, too. You will find the link on our Web site.

E-mail Directory updates: The directory is updated periodically and sent via e-mail to everyone on the list. If you would like to add your e-mail address, make a correction or remove your name from the list, send your request to information@bcbsmretireeassoc.com.



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