



**Volume 31**  
**Summer/Fall/Winter 2022**

## **BCBSM Retirees Newsletter**

### **A note from our President**

#### *Home for the Holidays*



Ahhh....the Holidays! A season of tradition, sharing, giving and ugly sweaters. A time to connect with friends and family and reflect on all the goodness inherited.

So, in the time-honored tradition of the holidays, I express my thanks to the ones that keep this wonderful organization a place of sanity and memorable journeys.

Let's start with our wonderful board members, who without waiver embrace the core sentiments of this wonderful organization and leads with fiduciary excellence. This is followed by all of our committee chair leaders that work tirelessly (while having fun) each month to complement the entertainment events we offer throughout the year. And to all of the volunteers that cause the plans and goals we charter each year to truly come to existence, you Rock!!!

To the most precious gems, our MEMBERS, you are truly the driving force for this association. We are most delighted and pleased when you lend your presence to the social events. It's your stories, laughter, memories and yes sometimes the trials, that make all the work and preparations well worth it when you enter the space.

I hope everyone had joyful holidays. I wish you the most treasures and continue to share the treasures of your existence with others.

President,  
Jerome B Brown

### **Officers**

President	Jerome B. Brown
Vice President	Kathy Elston
Treasurer	Open as of 12/2022
Secretary	Janet Kean
Past President	Ray Newak

### **Committee Chairpersons**

Finance - Richard Dow  
Fundraising - Beleta Williams  
Internet - Imogene King-Dugan  
Membership Liaison – Helen Huseltine  
Operations – John McCrary  
Planning –Ray Newak and Pam Rechul  
Social - Annette Foster

### **Newsletter Committee Report 2022**

The first newsletter of the year was sent out late Spring 2022. It included a letter from our President, Jerome Brown, reports from officers and committee chairs, notes and pictures from events and a pretty fabulous interview with Retiree Association member Sandra Gatewood showcasing her passion for

volunteering with charities who address food insecurities, especially children. Several puzzles, poems and puns were included along with the members we gained and lost and upcoming events.

We only managed to send out one newsletter last year because we desperately need volunteers to help. This issue will hopefully catch us up to mid 2023.

The Retiree Association is still trying to find people interested in writing, designing and publishing our newsletter. If interested, please contact Kathy Elston at 248 931 9864. We are always looking for ideas for articles and retirees to interview so if you have any ideas, please share them with Kathy.

## **Fundraising**

*Beleta Williams*

### **Retiree fund raising Luncheon**

I hope everyone that came out to this event had a great time "Meeting New Friends & Connecting With The Old."

Here are the winners from the Chinese Auction & 50/50.

Chinese Auction: \$198 raised

- |                    |                                     |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Corinne Vignali | Doggie Gift Basket                  |
| 2. Deborah Myrand  | Jewelry                             |
| 3. Bruce Hayes     | Men's Grooming Kit                  |
| 4. Norma Taylor    | Inspirational Books                 |
| 5. Mike Myrand     | Golf Cooler Bag<br>w/\$25 Gift Card |
| 6. Kathy Elston    | Butterfly Wreath                    |

50/50: **\$412 raised for Charity**

- |                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| 1. Ray Newak       | \$100 |
| 2. Gwendolyn Brown | \$ 70 |
| 3. Greg Jaqua      | \$ 40 |

A couple of people donated some of their winnings back and some did not purchase anything just donated.

I would like to thank everyone that participated in helping me with this event: Sharon Ford-Hayes, Lucille Willingham, Helen Huseltine and Joyce Obenhoff

Big KUDOS to my "**BC Retiree Runway Models**": Betty Zwolak, Janet Kean, Ray Newak, Kathy Elston, Helen Huseltine and how can I forget Paul Austin who volunteered at the last minute.

Here is the 50/50 fundraising results from the Spring Luncheon held at Sinbad's on May 12, 2022.

**\$689 Raised - \$346 went to charity**

Evelyn Taylor	\$200
Gloria Butler	\$ 90
Donna Marshall	\$ 54

Thanks to everyone that participated and came out on such a beautiful day.

## **Social**

### **2022 Sinbad's Spring Luncheon**

On May 12th 121 members and guests attended our reunion at Sinbad's. The weather was everything a beautiful spring day could be. The melted icy river water was a refreshing sight to introduce summer to Detroit. The Buffett was full of delicious food and the camaraderie was felt throughout the Sohar Room. It seemed like forever since our last event. We are on our way to future friendly events!

### **Edsel & Eleanor Ford Estate**

The June event at the Edsel & Eleanor Ford Estate Tour was a fabulous event. We saw both the public and private rooms in the estate and learned a great deal about the Ford's life and times. After touring the estate, we lunched in a room overlooking the lagoon which was just beautiful.

### **2022 Portofino Boat Cruise and Luncheon**

On July 20th we booked the Portofino Restaurant and Banquet Center for 63 attendees; and because of the tremendous response, we booked an additional 40 attendees on August 3rd. First, we had a delicious lunch in the banquet room of Portofino's and after lunch we boarded the MV Portofino, a 1997 97-foot s\Skipper Liner. The boat has an upper and a lower deck with two unisex bathrooms, a full-service bar and gallery. It was a lovely summer day with clear skies and soft breezes. Each group cruised the Detroit River leaving from Wyandotte and returning to Portofino's. The reminiscing atmosphere was filled with laughter and heard throughout the boat!

And the last event for 2022... The Holiday Lunch was held at St. John Armenian Hall in Southfield on December 8, 2022, hosted by Joyce Obenhoff as her last official duty as RA Treasurer. An



informative lecture was held in the church followed by a tour of the amazing relics in 8 different rooms in the museum at the church which has benefitted from the more than generous support of



the Manoogian Family. Armenian food was served at the luncheon, with some actually made by Joyce, and it was all delicious. If you have not

toured this church and museum, it is well worth your time to schedule!

## **Internet/Communication**

*Imogene King-Dugan*

We are sure you are enjoying the events we have had so far. We are working hard to keep our website updated and to keep you abreast of what is happening with the Association. Please take time and visit our website at [www.miretireeassoc.com](http://www.miretireeassoc.com).

We currently have 1657 members on our email directory. If you have a new email address, please send an email to [information@miretireeassoc.com](mailto:information@miretireeassoc.com).

If you are interested in volunteering and helping on the Internet/Communication Committee, please send an email to [information@miretireeassoc.com](mailto:information@miretireeassoc.com).

## **Planning and Social Committees**

### **2023 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

*Ray Newak*

July 20, 2023 - Bus Trip: Capitol Tour, Michigan Princess Cruise with Lunch on board and Shopping at Horrocks Farmers Market	
August 23, 2023 - Tiger Game (Detroit Tigers vs. Chicago Cubs)	
Sept. 8, 2023	Golf Outing at Riverbank Golf Course with Breakfast and Dinner
Oct. 17, 2023	Annual Meeting at The Italian American Club in Livonia
November	Open
Dec. 6, 2023 - Holiday Event at Bentley Banquet Center	

## **Membership Memories**

How's it going for you? It's been some time since our sense of normalcy was disrupted and it's still a bit weird. Now that we're well into 2022, I thought I'd have had all this time to do the things that kept getting put on the back burner while I was working. But, since I'd retired and while we were quarantining in our houses, it didn't happen. I finally took down last year's Christmas cards and just sent "Holiday in July" cards with through-the-year seasonal greetings. Received some interesting responses...

But I'm thinking I'm about ready to start having people over again. (Did I say that the Christmas cards finally came down?) Maybe dinner, some drinks, playing cards, working on puzzles... you know, those kinds of entertainment activities that you do with friends. So let the cleaning begin!

Well, going through cupboards and stocks and re-arranging this and that, I found a single box of Jiffy apple cinnamon muffin mix. I thought it was just the small project I needed to distract me from further work and cleaning for that day and I could take any successful results to a friend of ours who's been in and out of the hospital since November of 2019 (thankfully, not at all Covid-related) since he needs the calories much more than we do. Surprise! I had some very good results. But, you know, the really nice thing that happened was all of the memories it brought back to me.

That box was purchased on the last BCBSM Retiree trip to Chelsea, MI. It was part of an assorted case of mixes I purchased after we toured the Jiffy plant. (I probably still have the blue hair cap that we had to wear during the tour somewhere in the basement in case I ever need to use it again.) We saw a play at the Purple Rose theater (sorry, don't remember the title). And I was with a group that had lunch at the pub across from the Common Grill which is usually the standard for any bus trip to Chelsea. It was a nice time, a really beautiful day (although it might have been raining), and great to spend time with friends. I heard that the Common Grill closed down and I'm not sure if the Jiffy plant is still doing any tours but the Purple Rose is still doing plays.

Were you on that trip to Chelsea? Have you attended any BCBSM Retiree events lately? Be ready

because we're moving on and out! And as we continue to move our lives along, here's to more nice times on really beautiful days with great friends and lasting memories! I know they're right around the corner.

See you then!  
*Helen Huseltine*

## **Operations**

### **Operations Manual**

The Operations Committee coordinates reviews of the Association Manual for revisions and updates along with other key committees.

### **BCBSM Liaison**

Operations Committee members work closely with the BCBSM Retirement Administration Department to maintain accurate records of all Association members. Periodic reports are generated to verify changes.

The Operations Committee is the primary contact with BCBSM areas, including establishing arrangements for the use of the BCBSM communication and publication facilities. The Operations Committee also coordinates Association USPS mailings, such as Association information, events and newsletters.

Our membership continues to grow with 4,064 members as of September 2022. Please be aware that Association member enrollment and record changes are now controlled by the Association once notified by the retiree or BCBSM. Enrollees and members having a change of address, name, phone number, etc., must submit the changes with their authorized signature to:

BCBSM Retiree Association  
PO Box # 3  
Allen Park, MI 48101

## **2022 BCBSM Retiree Association Bill Burke Memorial Annual Golf Outing**

The annual golf outing was held on September 9th at Riverbank Golf Club in South Lyon.



Seventy five people signed up to golf, a number consistent with the past several years with many familiar faces returning.

Breakfast and registration started at 8am with a tee off time of 9:30am for the scramble format. Golfers



were given goodie bags with golf balls, tees and snacks.

Winners announced after a fabulous dinner were:

### **Closest To The Pin**

<b><u>Men</u></b>	<b><u>Hole #</u></b>	<b><u>Women</u></b>
Kim Sorget	2	Kathy DuBois
Steve Howe	8	None on Green
Jim Powers	12	Bev Stovall
Steve Gopoian	14	Carolynn Walton

Winners received a \$25 gift card. Congrats on those long drives!

The top finishing Men's Team of Bill Smith, Greg Sheppler, Kim Sorget and Kirk Vogeley shot a 65. Finishing with a 67 was the Mixed Team of Cindy Candela, Brad Gavle, Al Pope and Jim Powers. The Women's Team of Dana Bodin, Alice Innes, Jean Slottke and Sue Slottke came in with a 69.

Winning teams got to pick first from the table of door prizes including golf related equipment and clothing, rounds of golf and other miscellaneous items including 2 beautiful glass pumpkins donated by our friends at the The Glass Academy in Dearborn.

Helping us keep costs as low as possible were hole sponsors:

Brian Maxson from Merrill Lynch, Presenting Sponsor with 5 holes, Direct Financial CU with 3 holes, and sponsoring 1 hole each were The Burke Family, Jann Cantelon representing Ruby Red, Dean Sellers Ford, Kathy Elston and Francine Pegues for the MI Women's Golf Association.

These donations make a huge difference in what we offer to golfers during the outing. Special thanks also, to the Retiree Association for contributions to our door prize fund.

Of special note, it was announced at the outing that our own Francine Pegues was inducted into the MI Women's Golf Association's Hall of Fame. This is well deserved recognition for her many years of golf and mentoring young people in the sport. Congratulations Francine!

Our volunteers this year include the Golf Committee of Kathy Elston, Brad Gavle and John McCrary. Those working the event included Jerome Brown, Sharon Ford-Hayes, Annette Foster, Beleta Williams and Betty Zwolak. Thanks for your hard work!

Riverbank does such an outstanding job hosting this event that we are returning for 2023 on September 8th. Mark your calendars!

## **Annual Meeting**



## **Special Request from a BCBSMRA Member**

Donna Marshall who has retired after 43 years is a BCBSM Retiree Association member and brought her mother, Lorraine Sikorski, to the Annual Meeting on October 20th. Lorraine was also employed by the Blues and retired after 25 years of service. She was the Cashier in Customer Service. Lorraine started on Washington Blvd, went to the Jefferson Building and ended up on Lafayette. After she left the Blues, Lorraine did volunteer work at the Cottage Hospital and did some traveling. Lorraine turned 100 yrs. on March 31, 2023.

She is an inspiration to our seniors!

*Kathy Elston*



Came across some old files and thought all of you might find them interesting.

Janet Kean

## BCBSM retirees: Keeping in touch

*You're retiring from BCBSM. The words have a funny sound, as though they can't possibly be true. Have you really been here that long? An old cliché rings true: the years pass so quickly. You attend a retirement party. It's nice. You get gifts. You see old friends and reminisce. Maybe you'll never see them again. That's the saddest part. Leaving friends. It would be so nice if there were some way to keep in touch with them all.*

Today, BCBSM has more retirees than ever — more than 300 at last count. And up until now, the only thing they had in common was the fact that they retired from BCBSM.

Now, there is a way for retirees to keep in touch with each other after leaving BCBSM. It's a new club called the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Retirees Association.

According to **Walt Adams**, Salary & Benefits Administration, the club had it's beginnings in 1980, when a survey was sent to retirees asking them how they felt about a retirees club.

"The response was great," Walt says, "but it wasn't until last fall, when 28 BCBSM employees retired under a special program, that the retiree club ball began to roll."

Bill Burke, who retired last October, agreed to hold an organizational meeting in November. Forty retirees attended, adopted a name and selected officers. They are:

- President — **Bill Burke**
- Vice President — **Jack Lawrey**
- Secretary — **Chris Ryan**
- Treasurer — **Jean Rochefort**
- Entertainment/Activity Committee — **Jack Lawrence, Mary Alice Merchant and Edna Reading**
- Publication/Publicity Committee — **Olive Pouliot, Liz Hrenchuk and Lou Silagy**.

Plans include meetings, social activities and a newsletter.

Says Walt, "The company is behind them 100 percent, supplying mailing service, administrative support and duplicating. I'm glad we can help retirees keep in touch with old friends."



Bill Burke, Retiree Club President



Walt Adams

### Coming next month

- **Mail Services.** Meet our mail room mavens who manage to move mountains of mail.
- **Winter getaways.** Don't let the winter doldrums get you down. Take some advice from employees on places to escape from winter.
- **We've got art.** Learn about some of the art that graces our buildings, and meet some of the artists who created the works.

16 • HIGHLIGHTS • JANUARY/83

## FIRST OFFICERS

1982

### BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN RETIREES ASSOCIATION

President	William L. Burke 22716 Floral Avenue, Farmington, MI 48024 476-0729
Vice President	Jack Lawrey 71830 M-19, Richmond, MI 727-7812
Secretary	Christine Ryan 20320 Kelly Road, Harper Woods, MI 48225 527-4444
Treasurer	Jean Rochefort 99 Chatham St. - Apt 1808, Windsor, Ont. N9A6U1 519-253-6184

#### Activities Committee

Jack Lawrence	18064 Northwynd Drive, Fraser, MI 48024	293-9461
Edna Reading	11102 Windhurst Drive, Union Lake, MI	363-7348
Mary Alice Merchant	14058 Brady, Detroit, MI 48239	532-1884

#### Publications Committee

Olive Pouliot	31925 E. Jefferson, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082	293-4054
Elizabeth Hrenchuk	24452 Little Mack, St. Clair Shores, MI 48080	774-9429
Lou Silagy	2950 S. E. Ocean Blvd., Stuart, Florida	1-305-287-1101



Michigan Department of Commerce

Lansing, Michigan

*This is to Certify That* Articles of Incorporation of  
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN RETIREES ASSOCIATION  
were duly filed in this office on the 17th day of February, 1983,  
in conformity with Act 162, Public Acts of 1982.

*In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
hand and affixed the Seal of the Department,  
in the City of Lansing, this 17th day  
of February, 1983*

*Ralph J. Mason* Director

CBS-171

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9			10				11		12	
13				B	C	B	S	M	14	
15					16	17	18		19	
			20		21			R		22
		23			24			E	25	26
		27		E	E	R	I	T		
28	29			A		30	31	32		33
36				S		40	38			
39				S	40	41	Y	42		
43		44		O	45		46	R	47	
48				C			49		S	50
52					53				54	

#### ACROSS:

1. RA Operations Chair
4. Political Ideology
6. International Business...
9. Large Nests
11. Driving Event
13. Water Nymph
14. Disembark
15. Trial Balance
16. RA Planning Master
19. One of Freedmen
21. Span of Time
22. Star Trek... (acronym)
23. Gaming Term (acronym)
24. RA Past President
26. Article/Adjective
27. Opposite of Stop
28. Video Game
30. RA Financier
36. River in Europe
38. Lover of Food
39. TV Exercise guru (Initials)
40. Opposite of Me
42. Like Frogs
43. Nebraska Residents
45. Lion's Name

#### ACROSS (CON'T)

47. Comic Book Android
48. TV Detective with OCD
49. RA Lifesaver
50. Supports Low Power Devices
52. Suffix
53. Head Greeting
54. Stage Scene Furniture

#### DOWN:

1. RA Secretary with Surname Initial
2. Vegetarian's No, No
3. Slang for Home
4. Current
5. Men's Title
6. New Thoughts
7. RA Fundraiser Leader
8. RA Volunteer Finder
10. How Do I know It's You
12. Everyone
16. For Each
17. Add ARA and you will have "Oh, me, oh my"
18. After April

#### DOWN (CONT'D)

20. RA Website Guru with a K
23. RA Golf Event Financier
25. Elementary
28. RA President
29. RA Vice President
31. Maybe
32. Camping Bed
33. RA Newsletter Creator
34. Rhymes with Fiddle
35. Algorithm for Encryption of Digital Data
37. RA Membership Chair
41. You and. ...
44. Single
46. Vintage
51. 1982 Science Fiction Movie

Hint: RA = RETIREE  
ASSOCIATION

Have Fun meeting most of the  
RA Volunteers in the Puzzle!

# COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET

Listed is a brief description of each committee.

If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out the attached form and a Committee Chairperson will contact you.

<b>FINANCE:</b> *Produce an annual Association budget with breakdowns by committee  *Monitor budget activity and produce periodic reports	<b>MEMBERSHIP LIAISON:</b> *Review the monthly membership file for new members  *Send out welcome letters and communication forms
<b>FUNDRAISING:</b> *Conduct all prize drawings at Association events whenever possible  *Conduct other fundraising events	<b>OPERATIONS:</b> *Coordinate business portion of Annual Meeting  *Coordinate with BCBSM HR to obtain the most recent membership file
<b>INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS:</b> *Manage the website design and layout  *Send out email information alerts and other communications (including activity flyers and newsletters). As directed by Association Board  *Ensure photographs are taken at designated events	<b>PLANNING:</b> *Evaluate/develop a list of activities for venues, speakers and entertainers  *Review and propose entertainment or speakers – get Board approval  *Obtain contracts from vendors for all upcoming events
<b>NEWSLETTER:</b> *Produce a periodic newsletter  *Review and edit articles received from other sources  *Get newsletter ready for the website and mailed out to members	<b>SOCIAL:</b> *Develop fliers for events and determine mailing dates  *Obtain copy of contract from Planning Committee  *Finalize the interface with venues, vendors and speakers
<i>All Committees prepare an Annual Report of activities</i>	



## COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET

Please PRINT CLEARLY and circle the committee(s) you are interested in helping

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home or Mobile

(1) FINANCE	(2) FUNDRAISING	(3) INTERNET COMMUNICATION	(4) NEWSLETTER
(5) MEMBERSHIP LIAISON	(6) OPERATIONS	(7) PLANNING	(8) SOCIAL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home or Mobile

(1) FINANCE	(2) FUNDRAISING	(3) INTERNET COMMUNICATION	(4) NEWSLETTER
(5) MEMBERSHIP LIAISON	(6) OPERATIONS	(7) PLANNING	(8) SOCIAL

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(1) FINANCE	(2) FUNDRAISING	(3) INTERNET COMMUNICATION	(4) NEWSLETTER
(5) MEMBERSHIP LIAISON	(6) OPERATIONS	(7) PLANNING	(8) SOCIAL

## *May They Rest in Peace*

Susan Reetz	03/23/23
Dolores Gelemey	10/11/22
Ruth Fergusen	06/20/22
Judy Westwood	06/01/22
Mary Beth Stitt	02/22/22

Family members should contact *BCBSM Retirement Administration* at 1-800-922-0699 to notify them of a member's passing. Along with the Retirement Administration, it is important that family members also notify the BCBSM Retiree Association of loved one's passing in order to remove the name from future communications. This may be **mailed to the Association's PO Box** or sent by email to: **[information@miretireeassoc.com](mailto:information@miretireeassoc.com)**

\*\* Please note that the Retirement Administration's number, 1-800-922-0699, is also the designated number for pension and member health and life insurance questions.

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## ***Welcome New Members***

Brenda Albright	Sylvia Marsh
Ann Marie Baker	Laurie McLean
Patricia Bennett	Christian Meyer
Thelma Bogan	Denise Miller
Brian Bosak	Regina Mines
Melanie Brown	Michele Mitchell
Marilyn Buckner	Robin Mitchell
Kari Burgess	Rick Morrone
Pamela Culberson	Kathleen NazarsNewbrough
George Davidson	Valerie Prince
Nancy Dewan	Marissa Radowick
Karen Diekema	Ara Rafaelian
Dereck Dietz	Valdis Revalds
Debra DiTomaso	Allison Ried
Jing Jenny Feng	Victoria Rose
Patty Fritsch	Lou Ann Rosekrans
Robert Goodman	Jeffrey Rubleski
Kim Goodwill	Lynette Russell
Michael Grewette	Mike Seyffert
Jonathon Harvel	Gail Sheard
Gary Herbertson	Robert Shefferly
Clyde Hughey	Deborah Shugdinis
Dick Jacobs	Larita Snodgrass
John Jennings	Cindy Szabo
Jerry Johnson, M.D.	Michelle Szabo
Pratima Karnik	Pamela Trammell-Gilliam
Christine Kauffmann	Barbara Ward
Gail Kenyon	Nancy Ward
David King	Regina Williams
S. George Kipa	Valarie Williams
Sue Ann Koziej	Kathryn Winters
Laurie Latvis	Pamela Yake
Rollyn II Llewellyn	Robert Yerks
Chris Maier	Roger Yonkosk

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

*Be sure to check our website at [miretireeassoc.com](http://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](mailto: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.*

1 J	2 M	3 C			4 I	S	5 M			6 I	7 B	8 M
9 A	E	R	10 I	E	S		11 R	O	12 A	D	E	O
13 N	A	I	D	B	C	B	S	M	14 L	E	L	R
15 E	T	B			16 P	17 A	18 M		19 L	A	E	T
T			20 I		21 E	R	A	R		22 S	T	O
K		23 B	M		24 R	A	Y	E	25 S		26 A	N
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28 J	29 E		G	A		30 R	31 I	32 C	H	33 A	34 R	35 D
36 E	L	B	E	S	37 H	40	38 F	O	O	D	I	E
39 R	S		N	S	40 E	41 M	Y	42 T	O	A	D	S
43 O	T	44 O	E	O	45 L	E	46 O	R	47 L	M	D	
48 M	O	N	K	C	49 E		50 L	W	S	51 U	L	52 E
53 E	N	E			54 N	O	D			55 S	E	T

Above is the solution for the Crossword Puzzle in the BCBSMRA Newsletter. Hope you had fun!!!