

## BEF Board Member Bios



**DONNA ENGLE,**  
**PRESIDENT,**  
**TREASURER**

**Donna Engle**-President & Treasurer-Donna is a Registered Nurse and received her B.S. degree in Nursing from Downstate Medical Center in 1981. Since that time, she has worked 4 years in pediatric nursing, followed by 21 years for a certified homecare agency. Since 2006, she has been working for Hudson Valley Hospice. Donna is Brenna's mother and also has one other daughter, Taryn. Donna became a Christian in November 2003, became a member of New Beginnings Church in Poughkeepsie, NY in June 2004, and was baptized in September 2005. Donna enjoys reading, horseback riding, walking, and church activities. Her vision for the Foundation is to continue the work of Brenna's Home in Ukraine, and to explore other opportunities where the Foundation can help improve the lives of children.

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**RICHARD**  
**ENGLE, SECRETARY**

**Richard L. Engle** - Secretary - Richard is an Environmental Health and Safety professional with more than 30 years combined experience in this field with Harvard University, IBM, Mirant Corporation, and the Mount Sinai Medical Center. He is now a consultant and co-owner of Nova Linea Risk Management Solutions LLC. He holds degrees from the Harvard School of Public Health and Messiah College. As Brenna's father, he also has three other daughters, Alyssa, Kyla, and Kelsey, and a step-daughter, Taryn. He is a proud grandfather to Townes, Margot, and Samuel. Richard has deep-seated roots in the Brethren in Christ Church, and is a member of New Beginnings Church in Poughkeepsie, NY. Previous missions experience includes two years teaching 5th and 6th grades with Navajo children at the Brethren in Christ Mission near Bloomfield, New Mexico. His hobbies include music, gardening, and cooking. Looking to the future, Richard envisions more involvement in the opportunities to serve the needs of children and young adults in Ukraine and Ethiopia, and looks forward to being able to spend a significant amount of time there in the future.

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CAROLANNE  
BLABAC

**Carolanne Blabac** - Carolanne attended Queens College in Flushing, New York. After working at the New York Stock Exchange for 5 years and Continental Airlines for 17 years, she moved to Poughkeepsie, NY in 2004. Carolanne and her husband, Blaise, a structural engineer, have one daughter and two sons. They met Donna and Rich Engle at New Beginnings Church where both families attend. Carolanne has volunteered at Brenna's Basement, and with her husband, have helped coordinate fundraisers for The Brenna Engle Foundation. Carolanne anticipates helping the Foundation grow and serve more needy children throughout the world.

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JOHN BRAATZ

**John Braatz**- John is Brenna's uncle (Donna's brother). His former law firm, Proskauer Rose LLP, set up the BRENNA ENGLE FOUNDATION free of charge. John received a B.A. with honors from Berklee College of Music in 1986 and a J.D. with honors from Pace University School of Law in 1995, where he served as Managing Editor for the *Pace Law Review*. Following law school, John was a Senior Court Attorney for two years at the New York State Court of Appeals, New York State's highest court, before joining Proskauer, where he practiced litigation and securities law for 14 years. He now works for MetLife in New York City.



JANET  
GERHARDT

**Janet Gerhardt** lived in Poughkeepsie, New York, for 18 years and recently moved to Watertown, NY. Janet's husband is pastor at Parkside Bible Church, after serving at New Beginnings Church in Poughkeepsie. They have three sons. Janet was an administrative assistant at Care Net Pregnancy Center and then was employed by Arlington Central Schools, where she worked in the high school health office. Her interests include music, working with children, scrapbooking and walking. In August 2008 Janet traveled to Ukraine with a team from New Beginnings. They spent time with the children from Brenna's Home and helped run a week-long camp for about 70 children, including those from Brenna's Home and the Tabitha Program. Janet says of her experience, "It was wonderful to meet the special children from Brenna's Home and the godly housemothers who take care of them. I was also pleased to see how much support and interaction they have with the local church. I now pray more fervently for the ministry in Lutsk, and hope to return someday."

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CARRIE  
RYNDERS

**Carrie Rynders**-Owner of Stagecoach Trails Guest Ranch, Yucca, Arizona. Carrie grew up in Wisconsin and married her high school sweetheart, Dan, in 1976. They lived in Wisconsin with their 3 children for many years. She was a travel agent for approximately 12 years and then retired to take care of their oldest daughter, Amy, who was in a wheelchair and required extra at-home care after finishing school. In 1999 Carrie's family moved to Arizona to fulfill a lifelong dream to build Stagecoach Trails Guest Ranch, the first completely handicapped accessible dude ranch in America. Of course Amy was their inspiration for the barrier free aspect. Carrie's favorite children's book, *The Mystery in Arizona* (where a teenage sleuth named Trixie Belden visits a dude ranch in Arizona and solves a mystery there) provided the inspiration for her dream to build a ranch just like Trixie Belden stayed at.

They are very proud of their family-owned and operated guest ranch and work hard to provide everyone who stays there a truly memorable western experience. They are also thankful that God has provided them with the opportunity to create Stagecoach Trails Guest Ranch and because of it, has also now provided them the opportunity to become involved with Brenna's Home, a place that is very close to their heart because of Brenna, Rich and Donna.