



SAVED BY THE BELL

Newsletter of MEA-NEA Region 6 Retired August 2008

Meeting Notice

Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 10:30 AM
MEA/NEA Local 1 Office
38550 Garfield Rd., Clinton Twp., MI
Between 17 Mile Rd. and Clinton River Rd.

Guest Speaker: Linda Myers, MEA Government Affairs
Assisted by Jeanne and Rich Deneweth, PAC Consultants for MEA Retired
Bring your checkbook



PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

Welcome to all new retirees, and of course to all of you returning members. Isn't it nice to look forward to Labor Day without the back-to-work jitters? To that extended summer break? To fewer tourists in all your favorite places?

Once again let me urge all of you to keep in contact with your colleagues and EDUCATION issues by keeping your membership in our chapter of retirees current. We would love to see you all at meetings, but we know that your schedules may not permit that. By paying your chapter dues you may continue to receive our newsletter four times a year, in addition to the Michigan

Retirement Report sent by the MEA-Retired state organization.

Much is happening that will affect your benefits for sure, and maybe even your pension, if we are not vigilant and active.

Again, welcome! Bring a buddy to a meeting. We hope to see you in September.

Jo

CALENDARS AVAILABLE

We should have MEA pocket calendars available at the September meeting.

MEMBERSHIP LABELS

For this August Mailing we use the MEA database for our labels rather than our chapter records so there may not be a membership paid year listed on your label. The other mailings (October, February, April) will be to chapter members only so will have the year noted. Please keep current so we can count you for being apportioned delegates to the Annual Meeting.

YOU MAY RECEIVE 2 newsletters this mailing. Because of the volume of labels it is difficult to sort and pull duplicates.



FREE LUNCH AVAILABLE!!

Part of our chapter dues pay for lunch at our meetings. We do ask however that you throw a few dollars into a can, for contributions to NEA fund for Children and Public Education. Last year we were the highest contributing chapter in Michigan. (As we should be as we're the biggest.) We're running behind last year's pace so please bring lots of green and other colored money to the meeting. There is no paperwork associated with these contributions.

PENSION FACT

There are one hundred twenty-five retirees over one hundred years old. Their pensions must be paid in peanuts.

RETIREMENT ISSUES: **CHUCK AGERSTRAND**

Most of the midnight changes to the retirement programs (PA 111 and PA 112) will not affect those of us already retired or currently employed. However, the program for future new employees is a significant loss of benefits, especially for part time ESP members. Just changing terminology can change meaning. For example, substituting the word "subsidy" for the word "benefit" makes a difference. What the legislators gave, they can take back in a flash. This messy law also dealt a big blow to buying service credit. There are still people willing to throw union members under the bus—many passing themselves off as our friends. Please support our PAC efforts whenever you can.

The good news is there is now an effort to record, track, and regulate employees who retire one day and come to work in the same job the next day as a consultant. The consultant then draws pension and health benefits from our retirement program while the district banks the money and more, as it does not contribute to the retirement fund. This is not law yet so mention it to your legislator.

SCHOLARSHIP GOLF

Over \$36,000 was raised this year; down significantly from prior years, but still respectable.

Even golfers are feeling the pinch!



BALLOT ISSUES: LINDA MYERS

Linda will be speaking at our September 18th meeting so I'll save you time not reading details here.

The Compassionate Care proposal can be checked out on line at www.stoparrestingpatients.org.

The Stem Cell research proposal can be checked at www.curemichigan.com.

Reform Michigan Government Now may or may not make it to the ballot. The "Right to Beg" language is waiting for 2010.

ED SARPOLUS/ GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS LOBBYISTS

Watch for MEA sponsored hearings around the state being held to highlight critical education issues. Attend. Testify. State board of education members as well as media have noticed the current set on dropouts. A side effect of the program has been to raise awareness that MEA is passionate about learning conditions for children, not just salaries for members.

Also watch for recognition of the new graduation requirements needing review if not outright revision.

MEA supports candidates on both sides of the aisle when they support quality public education.

Replacing 45 legislators at once spotlights the mess that such short term limits has left for us. Nobody needs to get along, as they'll be gone. Ah, but not without pension and health benefits after only a few years working.

MACKINAW CENTER

Craig Signet, a member of the MEA research team follows the Mackinaw Center literally round the clock. For those of you not aware of this group, it was co-founded by then State Sen. John Engler in 1987. They are supported by nearly every right wing group in Michiganincluding G. M., Chrysler, the DeVos —father and son, and the other founder of Amway, Van Andel. Only about 2 to 3 million of their funds can be identified because the rest of their sources are hidden under federal law.

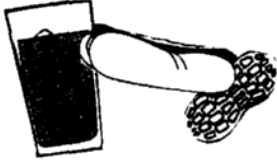
The Mackinaw Center, has been the driving force on every anti-public-education issue. (Cut teachers pay and benefits, 'after all any clown can teach') However, their two "big" issues are the challenge to (1) any school district to be the first to privatize EVERY school employee.... parapro through superintendent and (2) the complete privatization of the University Of Michigan.

SPRING ELECTION TIDBIT

There were about 4,000 ballots returned of the 26,000 sent to Retired members. If our 450 voted, we could certainly influence the outcome.... And we did. Our Eastern Zone is now closer to the correct proportional number of representatives and we have a few friends.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

In case you missed the May meeting, our documents have been approved! Copies will be available at meetings if you need more paper to file.



MEA ANNUAL FUNFEST

The Funfest will be held at Freedom Hill Park on Friday, September 26th, from 3:30-7:30.

ALL RETIREES AND CURRENT MEMBERS ARE INVITED.

MEET OUR ENDORSED CANDIDATES and ENJOY GOOD FOOD, FRIENDS, AND FUN !!

Volunteers are needed to help set-up snacks and refreshments. This has been the job for the retirees for several years.

If you can help, call Jo or Jack Ellis (586-777-3262) or sign up at our September 18th meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Share Drafts	\$ 2,101.32
Savings Account	1,924.05
 Total	 \$ 4,025.37

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

President	Joellyn Ellis
Vice President	Jack Ellis
Secretary	Kay Mullaney
Treasurer	Gary Cynowa
 6-A Trustee	 Bill Sachs
6-B Trustee	Diane Adolph
6-C Trustee	Barbara Gates
6-E Trustees	Gary Cynowa
	Jack Ellis
	Joellyn Ellis
	Eleanor Tocco
6-F Trustee	Jane Eginton
Board Member	Joellyn Ellis
Alternate	Gary Cynowa

Contact people and phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses:

Jo Ellis: jellis2170@comcast.net

Blue Cross/Blue Shield www.bcbsm.org
Bronko 1-800-422-9126

MEA: www.mea.org
1-800-292-1934

MSPERS: 1-800-381-1511

www.michigan.gov/orsschools

VSP www.vsp.com
1-800-877-7105

Delta Dental www.deltadentalmi.com
1-800-521-0149

MEA Retired- Carol Price, (chief source of info for MEA Retired)
cprice@mea.org

Kaye Mullaney, Secretary
kavinez@aol.com

Gary Cynowa, Treasurer
gcynowa@comcast.net

Theresa Lowe, Newsletter and Membership database
TL2mchp@bignet.net

Local I 586-228-0100

Website Information:

Michigan Legislature:
Legislature.mi.gov or
Michiganlegislature.org

MEA Art Purchase: mea.org/awards/art

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE:

Branko Bojicic

This year has seen more changes in the programs, as most of you are all too aware. Some positives are the availability of care and case management. For instance, there is a 24/7 phone number answered by RN working in Southfield, Michigan that can answer emergency questions as well as providing information and/or better understanding of health problems and/or medications. On the BCBS website you can complete your own health risk appraisal, keep a personal health record, of link to other sites and services.

One change we need to know about is that instead of coming to our chapter meetings, Branko and his team are setting regional meetings. Invitations will be sent to all BCBS subscribers as to time and place. In the Metro area there may be more than one/day with sorting by zip code or alphabet, as there are so many of us.

Lastly, Walgreen's and Meier's generic drug may be cheaper than paying the insurance co-pay. Check it out on their lists before you show your card.

24/7 # 1-800- 775-2583

Website: www.BCBSM.com

SHINGLES AGAIN

The vaccine is covered only under the Medicare drug benefit program. (Not Medicare, not covered) Get a prescription from your doctor then take it to a pharmacist certified to give shots, e.g. at a Five A.I.D. The vaccine comes frozen and is only viable for about 36

minutes. You could also try your local health department clinic. Just get the shot, even if you have to pay.

HELP PROTECT OUR BENEFITS! **DO SOMETHING!**

Our most important contribution to electing public- education-spirited legislators is to volunteer to work for someone's campaign. The second way to help is to give money. Of course, you can do both. Please bring your checkbook to the meeting(s). There are still weasels in the woodpile that need watching. Look what happened last September 30th to MESSA and new employees. Every little bit helps.

SUMMER LEADERSHIP **CONFERENCE**

President and Vice President Ellis attended the SLC at Saginaw Valley State University campus the last week of July. Much of the information in this newsletter comes from sessions attended by one or both of us.

The opening general meeting this year was a discussion of legislative education issues by Rusty Hills, former chair of the state Republican Party, Mark Brewer, current chair of the state Democratic Party (and from Macomb County) and moderated by Ed Sarpolus, the new director of MEA Government Affairs. Even though the party people said they would not agree on much of anything, they only strongly disagreed on presidential candidates. Watch for more details in the Voice and on the MEA website.

The other sessions attended have their own spaces in the newsletter.

.....Cut and Detach Form Here

2009 Membership Form for MEA/NEA Region 6 – Retired

Name: _____ Life Member MEA Retired _____
(Please Print)

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

District from which you returned _____ Year _____

Annual Dues - \$10.00 Check # _____ **September 1, 2008 – August 31, 2009**
Date: _____

If 80 or older, its free! Check here **Make check payable to:** Region 6 MEA/NEA-R

Mail form(s) with your dues to:
Gary E. Cynowa, R-Treasurer
MEA/NEA Local 1
38440 Garfield, Suite B
Clinton Twp MI 48038-3406