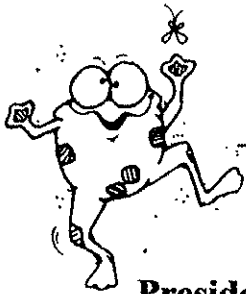


SAVED BY THE BELL

Newsletter of MEA-NEA Region-6 Retired
May 2009

MEETING NOTICE

Thursday, May 21, 2009 at 11:00 AM
McRae's Big River Grill at 9715 St. Clair Rd., Algonac, MI
810-794-3041
Directions are elsewhere in the newsletter



Presidential Ponderings

First of all I want to praise those of you who politely endured the program last month that was very different from what was intended. We had no idea that was going to happen. To those of you who missed it, don't ask. Better information is available at

www.green-michigan1@yahoo.com

Secondly, please make an effort to come to a meeting now and then. We like to know who you are and you can meet former colleagues to catch up.

Happy spring!

Jo

May 21, 2009 Meeting

Once again we will be meeting in Algonac at McRae's Big River Grill on the St. Clair River, up river from Algonac. Please note that we will begin at 11:00 AM, as that is when the Grill opens.

Sean Reynolds, PR person, from the Border Patrol Station based in Marysville, will be our speaker. He will give an overview of the latest developments in the border patrol of our area.

Direction to McRae's Big River Grill, courtesy of Jane Englinton, are on the next page.

Directions to McRae's Big River Grill....

The directions courtesy of Jane Eglinton take you off I-94 on M-19 New Baltimore to M-29 up river through Algonac. You can also take the Marine City Exit off I-94 (26 mile) and then come south on M-29. Use a good map or Map quest. The address is 9715 St. Clair River Road, Algonac. Phone: (810) 794-3041. Remember that I-94 is messy with construction. Plan accordingly.

Lunch notes.....

Lunch is ordered from the menu and is your responsibility. We will again provide a lunch allowance of \$5 per person to help you out. Of course, the PAC contribution can will be passed around several times. You are encouraged to use your money wisely. Memberships for 2010 will be available for \$5, also for those in attendance at this meeting.

Fall 2009 Dates to Save

Program your Blackberry to remind you of the AUGUST 20 mailing to 2,500 MEA retirees from Region 6 that live in our area. This takes many hands. All volunteers welcome. We begin at 9:30 AM at the Local I office and continue until we are done. Drop in any time. Last year we finished about 1:30 PM but it has taken until 4 PM if only a few people show up. There will be a sign up sheet at the May 21 meeting and a reminder sent to those who sign up. If you're there for lunch, lunch will be provided.

The first meeting of 2009-10 will be September 24 at 10:30 at the Local I Office.



MEA is polling retirees with phone calls.

If you see EPIC-MRA on your caller ID, please be sure to answer the call AND the questions. Your opinion counts!

Spring MEA-Retired Election Report

Thank you for voting in the MEA and NEA delegate election earlier this year. All of the people we recommended were elected. Jack Ellis was the second highest vote getter for MEA-RA, replacing the rank for Jo who was second highest three years ago. Thanks again. We'll all do our best to represent your issues at the state and national level.

PAC Council Delegate Election

Jeanne and Rich Deneweth were re-elected to a two-year term. There were fewer seats available so we are doubly proud. Next year may also see a cut in positions so we'll need full voting strength.



Honors for Eleanor

Eleanor Tocco is being honored by the Macomb County Democrats for her years of 'in the trenches' service to candidates and issues. About time! Thank you for all you do, Eleanor.



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
of Michigan

The Blues: Branko Bojicic

Medicare Verification of coverage forms will be sent out beginning May 1. It takes awhile to send 130,000 so be patient. If you have no other HEALTH insurance coverage than Medicare Advantage, check the appropriate box, sign, and you are done. If you have other benefits to coordinate, there are more questions to answer. Which ever applies to you, SEND BACK THE FORM.

A nation-wide network for durable equipment has been worked out. Any co-pays begun in January should end as of May 1 for in-network providers. You probably got a letter about this already.

Oh, and the PFFS designation means Private Fee For Service.

Retirement Issues:

Chuck Agerstrand

As you know, the retirement stimulus package did not survive the legislative process in spite of support on both sides of the aisle.

There is renewed effort to force bidding out of health insurance for us. Stay tuned for more info. Check websites often.

Eye Med vision insurance people are trying to smooth out considerable bumps in the transition. Call the member services number, 1-866-263-1815 with any questions/concerns.

New tax plans in Washington D.C. have created new tax withholding tables

which may cause under withholding for 2009.

A new website allows you to view and/or change addresses and/or federal withholding, beneficiaries, etc.:

www.michigan.gov/ORSSchools

Some progress has been made toward the stopping of "emergency" hires that no longer pay into the retirement system. Superintendents are no longer on the list of acceptable hardships.

NEA Fund for Children & Public Education

Our contribution this year was down substantially from last year. Please remember to contribute green/multicolored cash at each meeting. Michigan has benefited often from NEA help using our money. We were again the highest contribution by a chapter.

Interestingly, the president remarked that the rules might need to be changed to a per member basis, as it isn't fair to smaller chapters. No word before we were first. Let this be a challenge to us.

Because of our efforts, MEA Political Action Committee is going to provide lunch for our chapter at a fall meeting. Pat yourselves on the back... and bring plenty of cash to the May 21 meeting.

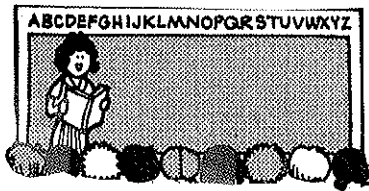


**Your Officers and
Representatives:**

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 Eglinton
Board Member	Joellyn Ellis
Alternate	Gary Cynowa

Treasurer's Report

Share Drafts	\$ 2,420.18
Savings Account	1,938.64
Total	\$ 4,358.82



Mentors Needed

If you would like to serve as a mentor to an undergrad teaching candidate, pick up an application at the May meeting or contact Karen Zyczynski at zyczynski2002@aol.com or 248-349-6342.

Annual Meeting

Thank you to the delegates that chose the annual meeting in Lansing over the tea party held elsewhere. (We know taxes support the common good...*as in our benefits.*)

Thanks to Barb Peckham, Bill Sachs, Carol Kayden, Dorothy and Richard Heldt, Elaine Christiansen, Eleanor Tocco, Gary Cynowa, Geoff Blain, Greg Loughrige, Jack Ellis, Jane Eglinton, Jeanne and Rich Deneweth, Joanne Ruzza, Ken Kelley, Louie Rochon, Marian Risebrough, and Sue Pardee. Five others absent and we missed them.

The issues of the day were not exciting although we almost had a challenge of the ruling of the chair... except she didn't rule. Too bad. It would have saved a lot of time.

A special thank you to Kay Mullaney and Doris Cook who got up early to reserve tables for our contingent. Kay even brought materials to make signs!

Several of our delegates won raffle prizes, including Sheila Blain and VP Dan Rudd who won the gas cards we donated.

MEA Spring

Representative Assembly

The meeting was held May 1 and 2 in Lansing. Anything exciting will be reported at the May 21 meeting.



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

Jo Ellis: jjellis2170@comcast.net

Blue Cross/Blue Shield www.bcbsm.org
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

Kay Mullaney, Secretary
kayinez@aol.com

Gary Cynowa, Treasurer
gcynowa@comcast.net

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

Local I 586-228-0100

Useful Website Information:

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

www.mea.org/mea-retired
www.mymea.org
www.michigan.gov/ors
www.meavotes.org

MARSP

Many of you got a “bill” for dues this winter from the MARSP organization. This group is NOT MEA. Paying their \$600 life membership in the state organization does not transfer to MEA Retired membership. (Currently, \$400 will get you state and national membership in our organization.)

The MARSP people have access to and use the state database for school personnel. The MEA does not so our recruiting is done locally. (See the article on New Retiree Packets.)

The purpose of their group is “to promote continued education of personnel” and to “assist “ with “help for their well being.” MEA-RETIRED is more specifically focused on united action locally and at the state level. Our communication network with members across the state is more focused on issues important to quality public education and retired employees.

Feel free to join them if you wish but please do not confuse the two. Our numbers will continue to grow as the pre-retired members join our ranks. This larger membership will eventually give us the seat on the Retirement Board.

Membership Update

Please check the mailing label on the envelope to see whether or not you will be on our list for 2009-10. If you are not current, please send your dues ASAP so we do not lose you. Life members do not need to send money but do need to let us know you are still with us, especially if you move.

Before Leaving For Vacation

Nothing could ruin a vacation quicker than to come home to a break-in or damage that has occurred to your home in your absence.

Pre-planning Strategies

Take special care if you plan to be away from home. If you are not going to be in your home this winter for an extended period of time, have the water system drained by a professional to keep pipes from freezing or bursting. Also, have someone check on your home on a regular basis. If there's a problem, it can be fixed quickly -- lessening any damage. Activity at your home will also reduce the likelihood that it will be burglarized.

- Make certain your auto insurance is paid to date and that your coverage extends to all states and to Canada and Mexico if either is in your travel plans. A special ID card should be available from your insurance agent when traveling to Canada.
- Make certain your bills are paid ahead
- Purchase timers for several of the lights in your home.
- Have your car checked & tuned up, tires checked and made road ready.
- Purchase or make-up a car first aid kit. Include sunscreen and insect repellent if the trip calls for it. Fill prescriptions and take Drs. and other important phone numbers in the event of an emergency.
- Purchase travelers checks.
- If a visa or passport is required, make certain they are up to date and/or in place. Also, check to see if any immunizations are required or recommended.
- Call ahead for motel or hotel reservations.
- Have the Post Office hold or forward your mail, or have a friend or relative pick it up daily
- Stop newspaper delivery.
- Arrange to have lawn care. Mowing and watering.
- Make arrangements to board your pets or to leave them with another caretaker.
- Remove valuables from your home and place in a safety deposit box.

The Day You Leave

- Set your timers to turn lights on and off according to normal time for the day and night.
- Turn down your water heater, turn off gas appliances and turn off the water for your washer and/or dishwasher.
- If you can adjust the ring to your telephone, turn it way down or off if possible. Clear your telephone messages and record a message that does not indicate your absence.
- Remove items from your porch or lawn that could be carried away or damaged by high winds if there is a storm in your absence.
- Leave curtains and blinds in normal positions.
- Do not leave valuables out where they can easily be viewed through a window.
- Leave a radio playing on a talk station.
- Lock all doors and windows. Place a brace in sliding glass doors and don't forget basement, garage or attic windows or doors.
- Leave a second car in the driveway or have a neighbor park in your driveway while you are gone.

NEW Retiree Packets

Each spring unit presidents are given packets of materials to pass on to the new retirees in their unit. This packet contains a cover letter, a copy of our newsletter, and new this year, a voucher for a year's membership in our chapter. This year I will distribute between 90-120 packets. It will be interesting to see how many new recruits we get. Those of you still close to former colleagues need to encourage joining to stay current on issues affecting us.

Officer Election 2010

Chapter officer elections will be held at the spring meeting in one year. If you would like to participate and want more information, see one of your current officers.

Our Board of Directors position and alternate will also be open. Nominations for these seats are due in December.

Executive board meetings are open to all if you would like to sample our process (and help with the mailings).

Political Action: Linda Myers

Besides getting the award for highest chapter contribution to NEA Fund, Jack Ellis got an award for being one of the highest individual contributors.

Several ballot issues are looming on the horizon, not in our best interests. For instance, a constitutional convention to re-write the Michigan constitution could very well put our currently constitutionally guaranteed pensions at risk. Watch for more information in the fall.

*****Check you mail label. Look at the number after your name, August 31st of that year is when your membership expires. You may already be paid through Aug. 31, 2010**

cut _____ cut

2010 Membership Form for MEA/NEA-Region 6 - Retired

Name _____ Life Member MEA Retired _____
(Please print)

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

District from which you retired _____ Year _____

Annual Dues - \$10.00, Check # _____ **September 1, 2009-August 31, 2010**
Date _____

If 80 or older, it's 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
38550 Garfield Rd. Suite B
Clinton Twp., MI 48038