

MNEA-Retired is an affiliate of the
Missouri National Education Association

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Terry's Table Talk

This has been a learning year! MNEA-Retired has become a local association instead of functioning under the wing of MNEA. With independence comes big changes. Many of the benefits that we used to have are no longer available. We don't have an MNEA office professional lending a hand. We don't really have a director who handles membership, finances, and budget, and many travel arrangements. We're learning how to function on our own, and it's exciting but a little exhausting.



Once again, MNEA-Retired members will be voting online for new officers, Executive Council members at large, and delegates for the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting and NEA RA, and MNEA RA. Declarations for these positions are due Feb. 14. [Declare Your Candidacy >>](#)

All members of MNEA-Retired will receive an electronic ballot by email. These will be available beginning March 6 and closing March 14. **Results will be announced at the Annual Meeting.** Be sure to come!

Make sure you have lunch before you come to the meeting because luncheon prices were astronomical! Instead of lunch, we are having dessert! There will be cake and cupcakes and coffee. Guest speakers will be our own retired member, Connie Steinmetz who is serving her first term in the Missouri House. The other is Martha Karlovetz who will talk about the Social Security Fairness Act (GPO/WEP) and be available to answer questions.

Registration for the Annual Meeting by March 10 at www.mnea.org/retired. Hope to see you there.

Social Security Fairness Act Passes!

We did it . . . finally!



I am thrilled that Congress finally passed the Social Security Fairness Act which repealed the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). As many of you know, NEA has had the repeal of the Social Security Offsets as a legislative priority for almost 40 years. I personally have lobbied Congress on this issue on several occasions, most recently in May of 2023 with NEA-Retired Executive Council/Florida FEA-Retired President, Janice Poirier, and Andy Slaughter, NEA Board member from Missouri NEA. In this final effort, NEA members sent over 423,000 messages to Congress. I'm pleased to report that Missouri Senators Hawley and Schmitt did vote for the bill in the Senate where the vote was **76 for** and **20 against**. In the House the vote was **327-75** with Missouri Congressmen Graves, Cleaver, Luetkemeyer, Alford and Bush all voting in favor. President Biden signed the bill on Monday, January 6, 2025.

Because of the Social Security Fairness Act passing, 2.7 million people including teachers in 15 states and policemen, fire fighters and government workers in all 50 states, will receive an increase in their Social Security; another 700,000 or more people will receive survivor benefits that they had previously been denied. No one seems to be sure how long this will take to implement but it's my understanding that the reimbursement will be retroactive to January 2024. As long as Social Security has the correct contact information for you, you do not need to do anything. You can stay up to date on implementation on the Social Security Administration website.

As you meet with family and friends, you may hear questions or concerns about how the repeal of the Offsets will put an additional burden on the Social Security Trust Fund leading to insolvency even sooner than the current estimated date of 2035. However, there is an obvious and easy way to resolve this simply by raising the cap on Social Security contributions. Why should someone making more than \$160,000 annually no longer have to contribute? I mentioned this to an incredibly successful nephew of mine and he replied that he probably wouldn't even notice.

Thanks to all of you who contacted your congressional representatives on this issue even though you may not be personally impacted. Passage of the Social Security Fairness Act does illustrate that working together with both sides of the aisle, we can accomplish much to help public education and public education employees!

Martha Karlovetz

More information from Social Security

If people go to the Social Security website, they can sign up to receive email updates on the Social Security Fairness Act. Social security is still figuring out how to handle these GPO/WEP law changes, so there are frequent updates.

For example, there is some updated info on the Social Security website under the question, *What should people do now?* The link below will take you to a lot of information.

https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/social-security-fairness-act.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery&tl=5%2C7%2C10%2C11

Exciting News!

The Annual Meeting is coming up! MNEA-Retired will be gathering on **Friday, April 4**, at the Doubletree in Chesterfield. Let's meet for sweets (cake/cupcakes) and coffee at 12:30. There will be our usual bag auction to raise funds for PAC, so be sure to bring a goodie for the auction. (Need an idea? We'd love to have fun things for the auction, like chocolate, wine, candy, gift cards, new books, etc.)

In addition, there will be some special items up for a live auction by our auctioneer *extraordinaire*, Janet Leachman. Information about registration will be coming soon. Election results will be shared. A good time will be had by all.



Change is in the air.

MNEA offered a fall conference this year in Kansas City for active members. MNEA-Retired had the fall luncheon at Trezo Mare Restaurant. A delicious lunch was served and guests MNEA Director Patrick Layden and MNEA President Phil Murray spoke. The CHEER auction was held at the luncheon. Goody baskets by the MNEA-Retired regional groups were auctioned at the final meeting of the conferees on Sunday.



CHEER auction items were many and varied. President Reger and Vice President Innes were ready for our meeting.



Folks were ready to order their lunch off the menu prior to the auction drawings and Executive Council meeting.

The baskets for auction by regional groups were well-received.



Thank You!

A great big “thank you” to all Regional Presidents and members for putting together the wonderful baskets for the CHEER raffle at the fall conference in Kansas City. They were terrific.

Reminders . . .

Voting for officers takes place March 6-14.

Registration for the Annual Meeting will be open **Feb. 7** and close **March 10**. Check your email.

Bring an item for the PAC auction and enjoy a taste of the *Sweet Life* with old friends.

Capitol Action Day is **May 7**. Plan on attending so our voice may be heard by our legislators.



Contribute to CHEER

Lend a hand to our colleagues working in the classroom and virtually by making a contribution to help fund future grants.

www.mnea.org/CHEER.



Retirement PSRS/PEERS Meeting Report

Missouri NEA Legislative Director Otto Fajen represents MNEA and MNEA-Retired members at the meetings of the PSRS/PEERS Board. Read the report of the latest meeting at www.mnea.org/PSRS.



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