

## Michigan Retirement Report

October 2017  
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If Dean Parling isn't joined by his wife Vicki on a treasured visit with their daughters and families, embarking on historic tours of Presidential museums or appreciating the scenery from a Great Lakes lighthouse, he could be directing his attention to high school baseball players on the diamond, "umping" one of the four dozen or more games he helps officiate annually.

### Parling makes difference in hometown

Born and raised in Ithaca, Dean spent most of his 38-year career as a math and science teacher in the same district where he grew up. Dean is quick to credit two of his own teachers—both who later became colleagues at Ithaca High School—with starting him on his path to the teaching profession.

"William Kirby, my ninth grade algebra teacher and a basketball coach, was significant in my life as both a teaching and coaching mentor. I remember that he always said, 'Work hard and play hard.' My chemistry and physics teacher John Clark ended up teaching across the hall from me. We both taught physics my first year there," Dean said.

MEA played a significant role in his career from the very beginning, even during his student teaching experience in Niles, where he taught with two educators who were working on the Tenure Act. He cites several association legends as role

models during work and retirement, and reflected on the importance of those individuals.

"When I taught in Carman-Ainsworth, I met Mary Christian and Earl Hagstrom. We couldn't bargain at first. We had no tenure. When I became involved in MEA-Retired, Barb Brotherton and Harvey Miller mentored me."

While teaching in his hometown of Ithaca, Dean served many years as a key individual in his association. He was on his area's Coordinating Council when UniServ was born and was part of a team that hired the Council's first UniServ Director. As a member of the Ithaca Education Association, he served as an association rep, local president, and member of several negotiating teams. Dean shared his talents at the bargaining table outside Ithaca EA, serving as a SNAP for the intermediate district's local association.

As an MEA-Retired member, Dean has stayed active in both the local and state organizations. He was one of the charter members of the Saginaw-Gratiot chapter of MEA-Retired, and served as its first president. At the state level, he has served on the budget and mentor committees, as an alternate to the MEA-Retired Board of Directors, and—maybe his favorite—a reader of MEA Scholarship applications.

Dean and his wife Vicki, a retired Ithaca elementary teacher who was also an association activist, enjoy spending time with their daughters and their families. Kelly, an

oncologist in Holland, and Maria, a math teacher in Nashville, inherited their dad’s interest in science and math. As students and athletes, they also played a role in their father being a passionate advocate for Title IX and other gender equity issues.

Dean can be proud of a storied career as both a coach and sports official. In addition to stints coaching football and tennis, he coached both Ithaca HS girls’ and boys’ basketball teams to over 400 victories each, and was named as the area Coach of the Year by the *Lansing State Journal*. His impressive 20-year career as a high school baseball and softball

umpire include the experience of being an ump at seven state finals in baseball, and are an asset in his role as a trainer of umpires, as Vice-President of the Heart of Michigan Officials Association and as a charter member of the National Association of Sports Officials.

Whether watching a fly ball to center field, splashing in the waters of mid-Michigan’s Crystal Lake with his family, conducting the latest meeting of the Ithaca Investment Club or fattening a cab driver’s wallet while checking yet another museum off his list, Dean Parling hits a home run on a daily basis. ♦

## From the President

### Judy Foster

MEA-Retired has over 37,500 members. We have power! The impact we could have with legislators, state and national elections, and local elections is unbelievable. Will we use our power? I hope so. Children, educators and retirees are counting on us.

MEA-Retired members are working hard:

- Several of our members continue to lobby the Legislature on our behalf since active educators cannot leave the classroom without repercussions.
- MEA-Retired officers and committee members meet with MEA lobbyists who work hard with legislators to help us understand about the effects of proposed bills which impact education and retirees.
- The MEA-Retired officers meet regularly with the Office of Retirement Services to take your concerns to them, and for information about changes in

coverage. Members also attend the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System meetings to know what is happening at that level.

- We have 37 elected delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly, and the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, where delegates share ideas and inform each other on legislative issues in each state.
- Thirty-seven elected delegates represent us at the MEA Representative Assembly.
- The MEA-Retired Public Relations Committee creates articles for the *MEA Voice*, which is a valued publication read by both active and retired members.
- We publish the *Michigan Retirement Report* five times a year, send out the *Tribune* monthly by email, and keep you posted through the Constant Contact program.
- Members attend region councils and coordinating councils to represent MEA-Retired.

- Members support causes important to them by participating in petition drives, getting behind candidates and speaking up at meetings, in social media and letters to the editor.
- PAC donations are made by members from all over the country who want to see the political climate change. You received a contribution envelope in the last issue of the *Michigan Retirement Report*. Please help our cause by becoming a generous donor.
- Thousands of our members contact legislators by writing letters, making calls, meeting with them face to face, and attending hearings.

I thank each and every one of you who has used your power to make an impact in some way. I encourage those of you who have not yet chosen to make a difference, please do so. WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! WE MUST MAKE A DIFFERENCE! ♦

# Betsy DeVos names John Engler to chair national education assessment board

*Todd Spangler, Detroit Free Press, Sept. 28, 2017*

WASHINGTON—U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos today named former Michigan Gov. John Engler—with whom she worked as a state Republican Party official when he was in office—to a national education assessment board as chairman.

DeVos appointed Engler and five others to four-year terms on the 26-member National Assessment Governing Board, beginning Oct. 1. The board helps set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which conducts periodic assessments on student

performance in nearly a dozen subjects.

Engler was a driving force behind education reforms in Michigan in the 1990s including the push for charter schools in the state. DeVos was brought on as education secretary by President Donald Trump this year after a long history as a school choice advocate and, along with her family, active Republican fundraisers and financial supporters.

NAEP is part of the National Center for Education Statistics, which is under the Education Department.

The governing board determines the subjects and contents of NAEP tests, assesses achievement levels and releases the results.

“I am ... thrilled that Gov. Engler has agreed to serve as board chair. He is a tireless advocate for all of our nation’s students and his strong leadership will be a substantial asset to the board,” DeVos said.

DeVos served both as state party chairwoman during part of Engler’s tenure as governor as well as a member of the Republican National Committee. ♦

## Have you ever wondered how decisions about your retiree health coverage are made?

Most retirees think the plan changes come from union negotiations or from insurance vendors, but this isn’t the case. Insurance vendors selected through a competitive bidding process administer their part of your health care coverage, but they don’t make any decisions about the plan benefits, coinsurance, deductibles, copayments or out-of-pocket maximum amounts.

Unlike the benefit plan you had as an employee of Michigan public schools, your retiree health care benefits and costs are decided by the Michigan Public School Employees’ Retirement System board of directors with guidance

from ORS benefit specialists and external health care benefit and actuarial consultants. The board of directors is comprised of 12 members: 11 members represent active and retired public school employees and one represents state government. Keeping your health plan sustainable in the current health care environment is a serious responsibility to which the board of directors, ORS and all of our vendors are committed.

Every dollar spent on retiree health care coverage comes directly from public school budgets. The board’s goal is to maintain a quality health care plan that is affordable to both the retirees and the schools. That’s

a challenging task given continuously rising health care costs. And yet, the board has been greatly successful. Over the years, the board has approved the addition of numerous benefits such as routine physicals, disease management programs, medication management programs and the LivingWell program, while keeping overall cost increases less than three percent.

The ORS and the board of directors will continue to work on your behalf to make sure your health care plan is there for you when you need it most. We’ve got you covered. ♦

# Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

We've been made aware that a right-wing group called American Transparency conducting various Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests regarding compensation information on MEA members across the state.

- 1) They FOIA'd the Office of Retirement Services in August for retiree names, pension amounts, and retirement effective dates.
- 2) More recently, they are FOIA'ing individual school districts for salary, hire dates, and names of all employees that worked in 2016.

The Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA) reached out and questioned American

Transparency about the reason for the FOIAs and they indicated they were developing a nationwide database to compare salaries.

Of course, the data requested is public information and falls under the auspices of Michigan's FOIA Law, and both ORS and districts are complying with the requests. While we are confident that both the state and local districts will properly comply with the requests and provide only the requested information, it is worthwhile to contact your district to ensure they do not provide anything further than what is legally required. Absent the release of more sensitive information (like social security numbers, birthdates and

health information), legal action to block or challenge the release of the information is not viable.

We want you to know that MEA is aware of these FOIA requests and is carefully monitoring the situation, both in terms of proper compliance and, then, what American Transparency is actually doing with the data. We are flagging the situation with NEA as well as other labor groups and partner organizations so they are aware as well.

In solidarity,

Mike Shoudy  
MEA General Counsel

Doug Pratt

MEA Director of Public Affairs ♦

## Routine hearing services available exclusively through TruHearing™ providers

Effective Jan. 1, 2018, your routine hearing care benefits will be exclusively available through a national network of TruHearing providers and you will no longer have to pay the 10 percent coinsurance, annual deductible and the difference between the

provider's charge and the Blue Cross approved amount. Routine hearing services and hearing aids will be covered only when you call TruHearing at 1-855-205-6305 and follow the directions you're given. Your routine hearing benefits cover an initial audiometric exam as well

as Flyte 770 or Flyte 990 hearing aids for both ears once every 36 months. For information about your hearing benefit coverage, appointments or support issues, call TruHearing at 1-855-205-6305 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. TTY users should call 711. ♦

## EyeMed is your new vision plan vendor

Effective Jan. 1, 2018, your retirement system vision coverage will transition from BlueVision to EyeMed Vision Care. You will receive an EyeMed Welcome Kit, including new vision ID cards, in December. Members on the same policy will get identical vision ID cards. If you share a policy with your dependents or spouse, you will receive two ID cards.

Each card on a shared policy will have the retiree's name on it.

As part of your EyeMed Welcome Kit, you will also receive a list of up to eight independent and retail providers nearest to your address. You can use your EyeMed coverage to visit a provider outside of the EyeMed network. However, your costs will be lower if you visit a provider inside the network.

To locate a provider in the EyeMed network go to [www.eyemed.com](http://www.eyemed.com) or call EyeMed at 1-866-248-2028.

Questions about your EyeMed coverage? Call EyeMed at 1-866-248-2028, from 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday. ♦

## Notice of cases to be argued—3% case

The Michigan Supreme Court has issued its Notice of Cases to be Argued during the November 2017 session which includes the 3% case. Oral arguments will be held November 7-8, 2017 at the Michigan

Hall of Justice in Lansing. The schedule of arguments will be posted on the Supreme Court's homepage on October 10, 2017. We will notify you of the schedule after it is released. Court will convene on

both days at 9:30 am. After oral argument, the Court will issue a written decision. We do not know the date the decision will issue. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available. ♦

## MEA-RETIRED ELECTION

MEA-Retired will hold online elections again this year.

**POSITIONS:** MEA-Retired MEA RA Delegates, MEA-Retired NEA-Retired Annual Meeting Delegates and MEA-Retired NEA RA Delegates. We are also electing Directors for the even numbered Regions.

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** Attend ALL sessions and meetings. Be in attendance for ALL business sessions and elections. You should plan on staying to the end of the RA.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** Currently our funding does not cover all your expenses. MEA RA Delegates currently receive ½ room rate, mileage, and meals following MEA guidelines—if not furnished. NEA-Retired Annual Meeting Delegates currently receive \$900 to be used for transportation, lodging, food, and registration. NEA RA Delegates currently receive ½ room rate and meal allowance.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applications will be taken from September 1, 2017

until December 15, 2017. Contact your Region Director and/or Dan Rudd (papadan43@comcast.net). A 50-word bio is due to Dan Rudd no later than December 15, 2017 if you want it to appear with the election material.

**It is important that if you choose to run that you plan to attend all the meetings.** ♦

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# MEA-Retired

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## The Commitment Continues

1216 Kendale Blvd., PO Box 2573  
East Lansing, MI 48826-2573  
800-292-1934 ext. 5539 (office)  
800-292-1934 ext. 5547 (MEA-Retired officers)  
[www.mea-retired.org](http://www.mea-retired.org)  
[www.facebook.com/mearetired](http://www.facebook.com/mearetired)

### MEA-RETIRED STAFF

Judy Foster .....President  
Kay Walker Telma .....Vice President  
Dan Rudd .....Secretary-Treasurer  
Lisa Andros .....Staff Secretary/Editor

The *Michigan Retirement Report* is the official voice of the Michigan Education Association-Retired. It is published five times a year in East Lansing and is sent to all pre-retired and retired members of MEA-Retired.

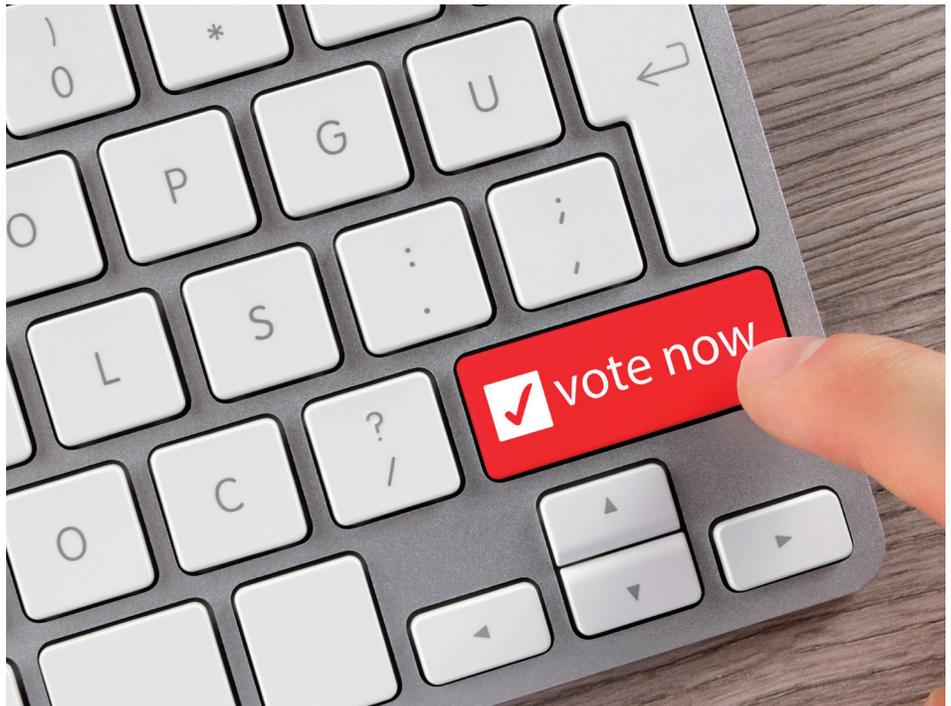
# MEA-RETIRED ONLINE VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

On February 5, 2018, MEA-Retired members will begin casting their ballots for MEA-Retired delegates to the MEA Representative Assembly, the NEA Representative Assembly, and the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, as well as Region Directors.

**Online voting begins at 8 a.m. EST on February 5, 2018 and continues until 4 p.m. EST on February 16, 2018.**

Here's how—You can use your own computer, your neighbor's, your grandchildren's or one at your local library.

1. Go to the MEA website at **[www.mymea.org/onlinevoting](http://www.mymea.org/onlinevoting)**
2. Follow the Login instructions:  
**First Name**  
*(often your legal first name)*  
**Last Name**  
**Last four digits**  
of your social security number
3. Click the "Login" button.
4. If your record is found and the polls are open, your ballot will be displayed.



5. Select the candidates for which you wish to vote. Clicking the "Additional Info" link next to a ballot item will allow you to read biographical information on the candidate if it has been submitted.
  6. Once you have made your selections, click the "Confirm Ballot" button.
  7. A preview of your ballot selections will be shown. To modify any of your selections, click the "Modify Ballot" button.
  8. To cast your ballot, click the "Cast Ballot" button. Once your ballot is cast, you will see a confirmation page.
  9. Click the "Sign Out" link to log out of the system.
- If you have any problems using the MEA Online Voting application, contact the MEA IT Department at 517-337-5440 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday – Friday. If you call after hours, please leave a voicemail, and your message will be returned as soon as possible. ◆

If you are interested in receiving a paper ballot you will need to fill out this form and return it to Dan Rudd c/o MEA-Retired, 1216 Kendale Blvd, PO Box 2573, East Lansing, MI 48826-2573.

**The request MUST be postmarked no later than January 8, 2018. Please use the address where you will be after December 31, 2017.**

NAME		
STREET		
CITY	STATE	ZIP