

MEA-Retired

The Commitment Continues

Michigan Retirement Report

Summer 2018

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‘Union Jack’ refuses to slow down

While other septuagenarians may have been playing a few hands of euchre, meeting friends for coffee, hiking a favorite trail or enjoying a break from winter in the south, MEA-Retired member Jack Schneider was inspiring students in his English and yearbook classes. His impressive 49-year career in education included 46 years in the Livonia Public Schools, where he served ten years as both a middle school teacher and counselor and 36 years as an English teacher at Churchill High School. During his tenure at Churchill he also served as yearbook advisor and senior class sponsor.

Why the nearly five decades working with thousands of young people? Jack is quick to respond with a smile. “I love what I did. I was interested in becoming a counselor and thought teaching would be a pathway,” he said.

In the twilight of his career, Jack continued to enjoy going the extra mile with his students, taking them on field trips and helping with fundraising efforts.

“I took leadership students to camp and slept on the floor,” he said. “Not good for my 70-year-old back. As class sponsor I helped the senior class sell donuts to raise money. I used my super sales persuasive skills to make the adventure fun and profitable. Imagine my wearing a Super Donut Man T-shirt and chanting, ‘Yummy, yummy, yummy, get a donut in your tummy! 50 cents each, special—two for a dollar!’”

Although he says his retirement routine includes naps and watching late-night television, he also loves spending time with his four children, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild after the loss of his wife Merylene two years ago.

His active involvement in causes important to him also keeps him young.

“Helping our Union and attending Democratic Party meetings cuts into my nap time,” he quipped.

“As an active party member, I have worked hard to ensure that MEA-endorsed candidates are elected.”

Devoting time to causes important to him, Jack hasn’t slowed down.

A precinct delegate and member of the Oakland County Democratic Party Executive Committee, he has been on the board in the 11th Congressional District and a member of the Democratic State

Central Committee. His attention to detail is evident in his editing of the newsletter for the Michigan Association for Retired Americans (MiARA). In addition to being a delegate to both the MEA and NEA Representative Assemblies, he serves on several MEA-Retired state committees, and is passionate about his belief in unions.

“Union is in my blood,” he said.

“These are hard times for teachers and public sector workers. Right to Work laws hurt unions. We need to fight back. We must work in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in labor or we will perish as a Union.” ♦



The MEA-Retired officers want to extend a very special THANK YOU to Delta Dental of Michigan for their \$15,000 donation to the MEA Scholarship Fund. Their generosity and support is an encouraging reminder of why we started this fund to help our young people further their education.

From the President

Judy Foster

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We now know which Republican and Democrat candidates will be on the ballot November 6th. Be sure you know the positions these people hold on the issues that are important to you. Please get out and vote on November 6, 2018!

November 3, 2018 is the absentee ballot request deadline by mail. Electors who wish to receive an absentee ballot for the November general election must submit their absentee voter ballot applications by 2 p.m.

November 6, 2018 is the absentee ballot request deadline if applying in person. Emergency absentee voting for the November general election will end at 4 p.m.

If you have concerns about a health care provider, please put your issues in writing and send it to one of the MEA-Retired officers. Your letter will be sent, or delivered in person, to the people at Office of Retirement Services. Our officers meet with ORS quarterly to discuss changes and improvements concerning our health care. We discuss other member issues as well. ♦



So you think one vote doesn't count?

Karen Zyczynski, Chair, MEA Retired LPIC

Just ask Hillary. In Michigan there were 4,830 precincts in 2016. She lost by 10,704 votes, or two to three votes per precinct. Or ask Al Gore about the hanging chads in Florida in 2000. Or ask the two candidates for the legislature in Virginia in 2017 who were tied after the initial count. **One vote DOES matter!**

Here in Michigan it is critical to public employees and public schools that we change the makeup of our state government; from governor, to the State Supreme Court, to the state legislature and on down the ballot to one that is more balanced and more tuned in to the needs of people not corporations.

In case you have forgotten, during the last eight years when Republicans pretty much controlled all aspects of government:

We became a Right to Work State.

Our bargaining rights have been seriously curtailed.

Our pensions are now being taxed. Public education took a big financial hit so the business community could enjoy a huge tax cut.

The legislature now requires more student testing which cuts into valuable teaching time.

We have more for profit charter schools than ever before which are generally performing at or below the level of the existing public schools. We can't afford two separate school systems!

In order to balance the state budget the legislature has again borrowed money from the school aid fund to balance next year's budget.

So what can you do?

- If we truly want a more balanced state government, we need to step up and do our part. The recommended candidates from the MEA have been interviewed and vetted by your colleagues. Vote for them

on November 6 and encourage family members to do the same.

- If you will be away on Election Day, sign up for an absentee ballot.
- Every candidate needs workers and financial support. If you can give an hour or two to help, do it!
- Give to MEA-PAC, \$20 pays for 5 yard signs or 40 postcards. Every little bit helps.

The bottom line is that we need **ALL** MEA affiliated members and their families to vote on November 6. No excuses!

Your vote DOES matter! ♦



Delegates elect Rudd at annual meeting

MEA-Retired Secretary-Treasurer Dan Rudd is preparing to wear yet another hat. Delegates to the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting elected him as NEA-Retired Secretary for a three-year term beginning Sept. 1, 2018.

Rudd, who ran unopposed, will be finishing a second three-year term Aug. 31, 2018 as a member of the NEA Board of Directors. During the last Michigan Caucus at this year's NEA Representative Assembly in



Minneapolis, MEA President Paula Herbart presented Dan with an award thanking him for his service to the Board.

Rudd has served MEA and MEA-Retired in many capacities. In addition to being the MEA-Retired Secretary-Treasurer for more than a decade, he has been both an MEA and NEA Representative Assembly Delegate for over 20 years, a member of the MEA Board of Directors, the MEA Executive Committee, and held many leadership positions in his local association. ♦

Annual Trustees Reports Show Social Security's Finances Remain Strong

(Michigan Alliance for Retired Americans newsletter)

The Social Security and Medicare trustees released their reports on the programs' trust funds on Tuesday, and they show that Social Security remains strong and will be able to continue making 100% of its payments to its beneficiaries through 2034. After that, it will still be able to make 79% of its payments to beneficiaries for 75 years without any changes. The estimates are mostly unchanged from 2017 projections.

The report led Alliance leaders and other senior advocates to comment that expanding Social Security is a more logical solution than ever for

the nation's looming retirement crisis. Sixty-six percent of voters are more likely to back candidates who support expanding and increasing Social Security benefits, compared to only 18% who are less likely

"We certainly can afford to expand Social Security—the funds are there," said Robert Roach, Jr., President of the Alliance. "It is a matter of making it a priority."

"Social Security becomes a more important part of millions of American families' retirement plans every year," added Alliance Executive Director Richard Fiesta in a statement. "We call on our

elected leaders to safeguard and expand Social Security benefits, provide a more accurate formula for cost-of-living adjustments, and lift the cap on earnings for the wealthiest Americans."

"In addition, Congress should stop preventing the Social Security Administration from spending just a few tenths of a percent more of its surplus on administration, so that it can restore the hours of field offices and open new locations," said Fiesta. "Since 10,000 Americans are turning age 65 every day and disability backlogs are shamefully high, this is a necessary change." ♦

MEA-Retired members like you are part of local Screening & Recommendation committees across the state that interview the candidates and determine friends of public education who deserve our support.

For the latest on MEA recommended candidates for your area (including a map to your polling place), visit our online voter guide at MEA.YourVoter.Guide.

2018 Gubernatorial Election Deadlines

After receiving your absent voter ballot, you have until 8 p.m. on election day to complete the ballot and return it to the clerk's office.

Saturday, Sept. 22

Absentee Ballot Request deadline—UOCAVA citizens:

Delivery of military and overseas AV ballots must begin for the November election by this date. All requests received since November 7, 2017 from a military or overseas voter must be honored for all 2018 elections.

Tuesday, Oct. 9

Voter Registration Ends: Last day to register for November general election.

Saturday, Nov. 3

Absentee Ballot Request

deadline—By Mail: Electors who wish to receive an absent voter ballot for the November general election by mail submit absent voter ballot applications by 2 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 5

Electors qualified to obtain an absent voter ballot for November general election may vote in person in clerk's office until 4 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 6

Absentee Ballot Request

deadline—In Person: Emergency absentee voting for November general election up to 4 p.m.

Election Day

PAC contributions critical to Whitmer beating Schuette & DeVos

In November, we have the chance to elect a true friend of public education to the governor’s office in Gretchen Whitmer who will value students, respect educators and fund our schools.

But Betsy DeVos and her allies—and their money—will be united behind Gretchen’s opponent, Bill Schuette.

Schuette’s negative track record on our issues is clear, including his six years of fighting against our 3% case and his opposition to our collective bargaining constitutional amendment in 2012.

In terms of money, just since 2010, Schuette has received more than \$175,000 from the DeVos family and their companies, according to the Michigan Campaign Finance Network. He’s a big advocate for the failed DeVos education agenda that’s hurting Michigan students.

We’re never going to have more money than Betsy DeVos and Co.—but we need to have enough to compete so that our strength in numbers can lead us to victory for Michigan public education!

Enclosed with this newsletter, you’ll find a PAC envelope to make a



contribution to MEA-PAC and the NEA Fund. We use these voluntary contributions to help elect friends of public education at the local, state and national level.

Please give what you can to PAC. Using the enclosed envelope, you can either make a one-time contribution or you can authorize MEA to take a smaller amount every month to better suit your budget. You can also make contributions online at www.meavotes.org.

When you give, please make sure to

provide the MEA local association where you want 40% of your contribution refunded to for use in races in the local where you worked or where you currently live.

Whichever way you give, and however much you can give, the important thing is that we get as many MEA-Retired members as possible to participate in our PAC drive. Our success in November for Gretchen Whitmer and other friends of public education depends on it. ♦

MEA-Retired

The Commitment Continues

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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 4, 2019, MEA-Retired members will begin casting 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 4, 2019 and continues until 4 p.m. EST on February 15, 2019.

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**

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. ♦

To receive a paper ballot, 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, 2019.

Please use the address where you will be after December 31, 2018.

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| | | |
| NAME | | |
| STREET | | |
| CITY | STATE | ZIP |