

MTA **REPORTER**

RETIRED *The Voice of MTA Retired Members*



There are always a number of topics that might be of interest to retired public employees. Some folks might have an interest in pending legislation or the state budget, some in the upcoming political elections, and others in what might be on the horizon with respect to health insurance.

This year there will be four breakfasts and one luncheon scheduled around the state (see below). We invite you to join representatives of the MTA Retired Members Committee and guest speakers, as well as your colleagues, to learn the latest about some of these issues.

SAVE THE DATE

for upcoming MTA Retired Member Spring Breakfasts & Lunches.
More details will be provided in the March edition of the *Reporter*.

SPRING BREAKFASTS (9 a.m. – Noon)

Verve Crowne Plaza, Natick Tuesday, April 25, 2017	Crowne Plaza, Woburn Thursday, April 27, 2017
Holiday Inn, Taunton Tuesday, May 2, 2017	The Cape Codder, Hyannis Thursday, May 4, 2017

SPRING LUNCHEON (11 a.m. – 2 p.m.)

Collegian Court, Chicopee
Wednesday, May 3, 2017

RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE 2016-2017

CHAIRS

Richard Liston, *Everett*
Kathleen Roberts, *Raynham*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Susan Baker, *East Falmouth**
Eileen Cleary, *Brockton*
Mary Gilmore, *South Yarmouth*
Jacqueline A. Gorrie, *Randolph***
Kathleen Harrigan, *Hanover*
Paul Mazut, *Lee*
Julia Monteiro-Johnson, *South Dennis*
Lois Powers, *Quincy*
Gerry Ruane, *Malden***
Robert Travers, Jr., *Cambridge***
Anne Wass, *Marshfield***

RETIRED/STUDENT MEMBER ORGANIZER

Robert Whalen
rwhalen@massteacher.org
617.878.8206 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8206

GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGNS COORDINATOR

Eric Smith
esmith@massteacher.org
617.878.8194 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8194

MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor
Quincy, MA 02171-2119
800.392.6175 ■ www.massteacher.org

MTA MEMBER BENEFITS, INC.

800.336.0990 ■ www.mtabenefits.com

MTA MEMBERSHIP DIVISION

617.878.8118 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8118

*Appointed Active Member

**MTA Board of Directors/Executive Committee



MTA RETIRED MEMBERS LOBBY THE LEGISLATURE FOR COSPONSORS TO MTA'S LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Over 30 retired MTA members came to Boston on January 24, 2017 to participate in a Lobby Day to gather cosponsors to MTA's legislative agenda for the upcoming Legislative Session. Retirees broke into groups of 2 or 3 each and were seen throughout the halls of the State House as they met with key legislators to gather commitments from legislators to cosponsor the bills in MTA's legislative package, including An Act to Provide Fair and Affordable Public Retiree Benefits which is outlined below:

S.875 An Act to Provide Fair and Affordable Public Retiree Benefits

Lead Sponsor: James E. Timilty (D-Walpole)

Staff Contact: Molly Sullivan Molly.Sullivan@masenate.gov

1. **This bill seeks to provide modest economic security for retired public servants.**
2. **This bill ensures that pension benefits are better able to keep pace with inflation.**
Increases the annual Cost of Living Adjustment for retired state employees to \$480 (currently \$390).
3. **This bill provides municipal retirees increased stability in insurance premium payments.**
Sets the retiree's health insurance premium contribution share at the percentage the employee paid when he or she retired, bringing the benefit more in line with what is offered to state employees.
4. **This bill protects retired public employees who are not eligible for Medicare.**
Creates a mechanism to cap out-of-pocket expenses for those retirees who are not Medicare-eligible at \$2,500 for individual coverage and \$5,000 for family coverage.

THE NEA-RA IS COMING TO BOSTON

And you can get involved

The 2017 NEA Annual Meeting and Representative Assembly, the largest democratic deliberative assembly in the world, is coming to Boston. This means roughly 8,000 delegates from across the country – NEA members from all segments of the education profession – will converge on our city from **June 30 to July 5**. There are many opportunities for MTA members to get involved and experience the RA firsthand.

There are many ways to get involved.

NEA's Annual Meeting brings approximately 15,000 people – delegates and their families, exhibitors, press, visitors, and Association staff – into the host city for a week of intensive activities.



MTA is looking for volunteers for the 2017 Host Committee. The Host Committee chairs are organizing volunteers to work on one of five Host Committee sub committees to facilitate the smooth operation of the NEA Annual Meeting. NEA members who accept positions on the Host Committee cannot serve as delegates or officers to the RA during the Annual Meeting.

The Host Committee Chair is Julia Monteiro Johnson and the Treasurer is Richard Liston.

For more information about the specific committees and volunteer opportunities:

massteacher.org/news/conferences/nea_ra

HONOR OUR OWN AWARD

Each year, the MTA Retired Member Committee sponsors the “Honor Our Own” award. The award honors an active or retired MTA member for his or her outstanding influence on students, beginning educators and association members. Think now about who you will nominate. Guidelines include, demonstrated professional responsibility and achievement in one’s field; displays of leadership, creativity or innovation; evidence of the nominee’s impact on the school community, students and the association; and examples of how the nominee has improved the image of public education. ■

The nomination form, which is due June 2, 2017, will be included in the March issue of the *Reporter* and can be found at www.massteacher.org/honourown.

“HONOR OUR OWN”



AWARD

MTA ELECTION FOR RETIRED DELEGATES FOR MTA ANNUAL MEETING

The MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates will be held on Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20, at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. MTA had a very high level of engagement from retired members, but unlike last year the number of nominations does not exceed the anticipated number of delegates allocated to the retired district. The election waiver will apply, and candidates will be declared elected. ■

SO...WHAT IS **v**OTE?

At many MTA events and at Annual Meeting each year, MTA asks members in attendance to contribute to VOTE! Just what is VOTE? MTA’s VOTE (Voice of Teachers for Education) is a PAC (Political Action Committee) fund, focusing on supporting candidates for statewide and legislative offices who demonstrate committed support for issues important to educators, students and public education. Voluntary contributions to VOTE from MTA members make it possible for MTA to contribute to candidates who will stand up and advocate for educators and public education by supporting MTA’s

legislative priorities and fighting against anti-public employee and anti-collective bargaining proposals. By pooling the contributions of MTA members, VOTE can give educators a stronger voice in helping to elect candidates who will champion educators’ issues.

Elections matter. They also cost money. MTA’s VOTE PAC provides funding from voluntary contributions from educators to help support and elect candidates who will listen and promote proposals that reflect the collective values of educators, their students and public education in Massachusetts. ■

If you have some news from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send to Robert Whalen at rwhalen@massteacher.org

A MESSAGE FROM MTA BENEFITS

Save on Top-Quality Hearing Aids

MTA Benefits and Hear in America have partnered to offer MTA members, their families and extended family members top-quality hearing aids at 30-70% off MSRP with no enrollment fees or premiums. In addition, members receive FREE hearing screenings, lifetime office service, financing options, a 3-year repair, loss and damage warranty and 3 years of FREE batteries with a purchase. A visit to an audiologist to be properly fitted for a hearing aid will improve quality of life to those who experience hearing loss. Get started today by visiting www.hearinamerica.com/mta.html or call 800.286.6149.

*As an MTA member,
you are entitled to the
discounts and programs
offered by MTA Benefits.*

www.mtabenefits.com

MTA Retirees Donate Supplies to Help Students



Photo by Bob Duffy

A staple of the MTA Retired Gathering each September is the donation of school supplies to a district with a high level of need. On Nov. 28, retired members brought boxes of supplies to the Southbridge Public Schools administration building. At the dropoff, from left to right, were Southbridge Education Association members Joan Sullivan and Peg

Lanctot; MTA Retired member Christine Coughlan; MTA Retired Organizer Robert Whalen; SEA members Julianna Robb and Becca Tsitsilianos; Kathy Harrigan of the MTA Retired Members Committee; Southbridge Public Schools Finance, Human Resources and Operations Director Dan Deedy; and MTA Field Representative Lois Mason.

GIC'S PROPOSED CHANGES ARE BLASTED AT MEETING

Higher education, preK-12 and retired MTA members joined several hundred fellow public-sector employees and retirees in filling Rabb Hall at the Boston Public Library on Feb. 1 to protest health insurance changes provisionally accepted by the Group Insurance Commission.

The GIC was scheduled to formally vote on adopting the changes on Feb. 9. They would go into effect July 1.

Commissioners at the meeting explained the plan design changes, which include higher out-of-pocket costs for doctor visits and prescriptions, as well as freezing Tufts and Fallon plans to new subscribers.

The GIC's decision on the freeze prompted an outcry from public employees and elected officials from Haverhill and Hingham, which recently joined the GIC based on the availability of Tufts Navigator.

"Freezing access to Tufts Navigator and Fallon Health is a 'bait and switch' for employees who agreed to join the GIC because those plans were available during their decision-making process and were a large factor in deciding to go into the GIC," said Alec Porter, president of the Hingham Education Association.

"It's chilling to sit here and hear these stories while the GIC tries to present an austerity narrative," MTA President Barbara Madeloni said after several speakers described how rising out-of-pocket costs for medical expenses will hurt families and retirees. The crowd rose in applause when Madeloni chastised the commission for not holding a legitimate public hearing before accepting the changes.

C.J. O'Donnell, president of the Massachusetts State College Association, took issue with the fact that the GIC has been severely underfunded through several state



Photo by Scott McLennan

The audience applauded MTA President Barbara Madeloni's remarks.

budget cycles. The solution is not to shift health care cost increases entirely onto workers, he said.

Phyllis Neufeld, a retired MTA member, told the GIC how out-of-pocket costs have skyrocketed into the "thousands of dollars" since her community joined the GIC.

Janelle Quarles, president of the Classified Staff Union at UMass Boston, defended the right of workers to have quality health care that is affordable. She said that it would make more sense for the GIC to work with public employees to fight rising costs rather than simply pass along increases.

Marlene Kim, president of the Faculty Staff Union at UMass Boston, said that the weakening of insurance benefits, coupled with other austerity measures on her campus, will hamper the school's ability to attract the best instructors and researchers.

"This will have an impact on our students," she said. ■



—SAVE THE DATES—

MTA 2017 Retired Gathering

October 17 & 18, 2017

Location To Be Determined

HELP A FUTURE EDUCATOR SUCCEED

Become a Retired Mentor

Volunteer as a Mentor to a Future Educator through the MTA's new Retired/Student Member Mentoring Program. Retiree Mentors will be paired with pre-service educators who are members of the Student Education Association of Massachusetts (SEAM) who are going into the Student Teaching component of their higher education experience. Mentors will be expected to counsel their Mentee at least once a week through one-on-one meetings, via email, text and/or over the phone. If you are interested please complete the interest form at <http://masstea.ch/2kCgNfv>.



FREQUENTLY REQUESTED CONTACT INFORMATION

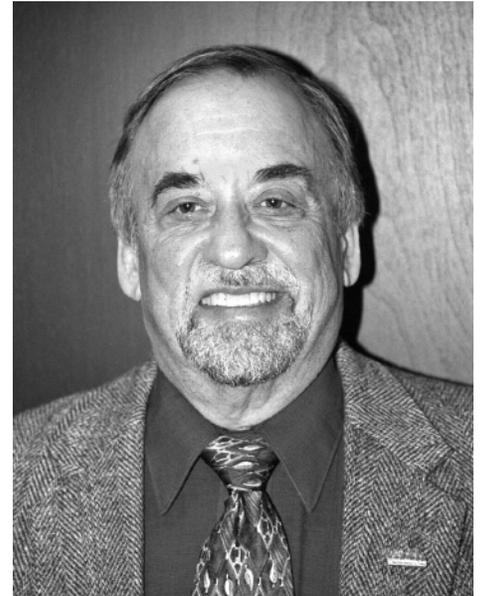
<p>Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS) <i>www.mass.gov/mtrs</i></p>	<p>State Board of Retirement <i>www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire</i></p>
<p>MTRS Headquarters 617.679.6877 500 Rutherford Avenue, Suite 210 Charlestown, MA 02129-1628</p>	<p>SBR Boston Office 617.367.7770 One Winter Street, 8th Floor Boston, MA 02108</p>
<p>MTRS Western Office 413.784.1711 One Monarch Place, Suite 510 Springfield, MA 01144-4028</p>	<p>SBR Springfield Office 413.730.6135 463 Dwight Street, Room 109 Springfield, MA 01103</p>

Questions regarding your MTA Member ID Card or Calendar can be directed to:
Renee Gatewood – rgatewood@massteacher.org – 617.878.8208

BROUSSEAU RECEIVES MTA ENDORSEMENT TO PRIM BOARD

Robert (Bob) Brousseau received the unanimous endorsement of the MTA Board of Directors at its meeting on Saturday, February 4, 2017, in his bid to be elected to the Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (PRIM). Brousseau currently sits on the PRIM Board and is seeking re-election. Ballots will be delivered to all eligible voters by April 4, 2017 and must be completed and received back by 5:00 pm on May 9, 2017. Results will be announced May 15, 2017.

Ballot Statement: Candidacy endorsed by Massachusetts Teachers Association, Plymouth County Education Association, Retired Educators Association, Massachusetts Thirty Years' experience overseeing our pension funds which have grown to 63 billion dollars. Retired classroom teacher, (Wareham). Committed to ensuring highest investments returns, fully funding our pension system, and increasing our retirement and COLA benefits. ■



Bob Brousseau

ELECTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MTA RETIRED MEMBERS

A Reminder: Deadline is March 3, 2017

Statewide Retired Region Executive Committee Member

The Executive Committee seat representing the Statewide Retired Region will be up for election. The Executive Committee, along with the Board, is a governing body of MTA, with various responsibilities including real estate, finance, and personnel oversight and decision-making. Executive Committee members automatically also serve on the MTA Board of Directors. Terms are for three years, beginning July 1, 2017. Candidates must be members of the Statewide Retired District. There is a self-nomination process, with a deadline of March 3, 2017. The election will take place at the 2017 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates, voted on by the delegates representing the Retired District.

Those wishing to run for this seat should submit a self-nominating letter no later than 5:00 p.m. on the first Friday in March, specifying the candidate's name and address and the office being sought. The letter should be addressed to the Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, and may be faxed to 617-570-4908 or emailed to MTAGovernance@massteacher.org.

MTA Retired Members Committee

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected by the Statewide Retired District Delegates at the 2017 Annual Meeting. This committee plans the statewide retiree conference and serves as an important voice of retirees within the MTA. The committee seats have terms of two years, starting July 1, 2017.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at www.massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, March 3, 2017.



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