18th Annual MTA Retired Member Gathering Registration Form

Tuesday, September 24 and Wednesday, September 25 | Hilton Boston-Woburn Hotel | 2 Forbes Road, Woburn

First Name: Last Name: MTA Member ID:

Address:__________________________

City/Town: __________________________State: _______________ZIP: _______________

Phone: ___________________________Email: __________________________

Dietary Restrictions and/or other needs:

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, do you require specific aids or services?

Indicate your 1st and 2nd choices for each session

**Tuesday, September 24**

1:30 – 5 p.m. Registration (VOTE Giveaway / Product Display Area)

3 – 4:15 p.m. Workshop Session I

A. Massachusetts Consumer Protection and Retirement Communities: What to Know Before You Go

B. Genealogy I: DNA and Genealogy

C. Social Justice and Institutional Racism

D. Social Security

4:30 – 5:45 p.m. Cocktail Reception

6 – 6:30 p.m. Keynote: Becky Pringle, VP NEA

6:30 – 9 p.m. Dinner is served

7:30 – 8 p.m. Honor Our Own Award Presentation Louise Gaskins

**Wednesday, September 25**

8 – 10 a.m. Breakfast & Registration

9 – 10 a.m. A Discussion with MTA Leadership: President Najimy, Vice President Page, Executive Director-Treasurer Gallatin

10 – 11:15 a.m. Workshop Session II

A. Elder Law Part I

B. Genealogy II: Deconstructing Obituaries

C. Art for Your Mind: Immigration in American Art

D. Educating and Mobilizing for Climate Change

E. Fannie Lou Hamer

F. Health Insurance

11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. Workshop Session III

A. Elder Law Part II

B. Genealogy III: Comparing Genealogy Record Sites

C. Art for Your Mind: Native American Journey

D. China as Everyday Chinese See It

E. Mary Surratt

F. Bridging the Divide: Race, Class and Politics in a Union Context

1 – 2:30 p.m. Luncheon

Hotel rooms are available for $150.80 per room (incl. taxes)

Hotel rooms must be requested by August 26, 2019.

Rooms can be requested through our online registration site.

If you are mailing in your registration, please complete the following information:

Please reserve a _______ Single (1 bed) Hotel Room

_______ Double (2 bed) Hotel Room

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**REGISTER NOW ONLINE!**

Register by August 30, 2019

for only $60 ($70 after Aug. 30)

www.massteacher.org/retired

Online registration has two payment options — credit card or check.

Or complete and mail this form with your check made payable to the MTA to:

Renee Gatewood

c/o MTA

2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor

Quincy, MA 02171-2119

Questions? Contact Renee Gatewood

gatewood@massteacher.org

800.392.6175, ext 8208

REGISTRATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 16, 2019
(or until conference is full)
W hether you’re a seasoned pro at using MTA Benefits’ discounts or just now learning about all we have to offer, we’re sure that some of these new discounts will get you feeling excited!

Stock up on your favorite classics or new releases with a 20 percent discount at Brattle Book Shop in Boston and Roundabout Books in Greenfield. Looking to take up a new hobby? Burlington Electric Quilters now offers free attendance at its Longarm Quilting 101 class, plus 10 percent off all quilting services or Longarm rental time. Snow Farm: The New England Craft Program in Williamsburg offers members a $25 discount on workshops in welding, glass, ceramics and more.

New admission discounts include $4 off Boch Center Tours; buy one, get one free at the Boston Athenaeum; half-off admission to Boston’s Dreamland Wax Museum; and $2 admission plus 10 percent off books and children’s items in the gift shop at The Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum in Adams, MA.

Looking for more? Your 2019-2020 MTA Benefits & Discount Directory, including 42 new discounts and 180 FREE offers, will be arriving with your member card. Discounts are effective September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2020. Visit www.mtabenefits.com to view all of our benefit programs and discounts.
A WORD OF INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR

Ah, those lazy, hazy days of summer—don’t you just love them! Trips to the beach or the lakeside, getting your boat in the water for a summer sail, visiting people and places that have been part of your summer life year after year.

But, as summer moves swiftly, the time approaches for filling our Fall days. I hope that the Retired Members Gathering (at the Hilton Woburn), is at the top of your list and that September 24 through 25, is securely reserved in your calendar.

The Gathering has always been a time to reconnect with our retired friends. Each Gathering has been packed with returning favorite and brand new workshops. The 2019 Gathering will be no different. Each Gathering has presented the Honor Our Own Award to an outstanding retiree. The 2019 Gathering will be no different. Each Gathering has always been an opportunity for retirees to hear from the MTA leadership. The 2019 Gathering will be no different.

What will be different and exciting this year is that for the first time ever an NEA Officer will be the Keynote Speaker at the Honor Our Own Dinner on Tuesday, September 24. Becky Pringle, NEA Vice President, committed early on to put the MTA Retired Members Gathering on her busy schedule. Anyone who has had the opportunity to hear Becky speak, knows she is the kind of speaker who gets you up on your feet and moving for a cause.

So, I am inviting you to be there, on September 24 at the Hilton Boston-Woburn. Bring a friend. You won’t regret it.

BECKY PRINGLE, NEA VICE PRESIDENT

This year’s Retired Members Gathering keynote speaker

Becky Pringle is vice president of the National Education Association, the nation’s largest labor union and professional association for educators. A middle school science teacher, with 31 years of classroom experience, Pringle has distinguished herself as a thoughtful, passionate advocate for educators and students, focusing on issues of educator empowerment and student success, diversity, and developing future leaders.

Pringle most recently served as NEA Secretary-Treasurer. A strategic thinker and leader, she was integral to the success of NEA’s work to transform the education professions and improve student learning. Most notably, she led the workgroup that produced the Association’s groundbreaking Policy Statement on Teacher Evaluation and Accountability—NEA’s first broad endorsement of the need for a student-centered, educator-led evaluation and shared accountability system.

Pringle has a long and notable record of Association advocacy at the national, state, and local levels. She began her leadership journey as a local president, and then went on to serve on the Board of Directors for NEA and the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA). She also served two terms as a member of NEA’s Executive Committee where she distinguished herself as a thoughtful and passionate advocate for the nation’s public school educators and students.

Pringle has been recognized by education and social justice organizations for her commitment to educational equity. She is a recipient of the Black Women’s Roundtable Education Innovation & Social Justice Leadership Award from the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation; Woman of Power Award from the National Action Network; and was named Community Woman of the Year by the American Association of University Women. The impact of her leadership is far-reaching, and includes serving as finance chair of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; on the Blue Ribbon Panel on Teacher Preparation for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; and on the Institute for Educational Leadership Task Force.

Pringle received her bachelor of science degree in elementary education from the University of Pittsburgh and a master’s degree in education from Pennsylvania State University.
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| **MASSACHUSETTS CONSUMER PROTECTION AND RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES: WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**  
*Kathleen Lynch Moncata, Esq.* | Living in Senior Housing? Thinking about a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC), or Assisted Living Residence (ALR)? Needing a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF)? Where you live determines your legal rights. This presentation provides a consumer’s perspective on the legal differences among retirement living options and includes information about federal vs. state laws and regulations; residential vs. medical housing; leases vs. residency agreements; certified vs. licensed facilities; community fees, buy-ins, arbitration clauses, and what happens when the money is gone. What you don’t know could cost you! |
| **GENEALOGY I: DNA AND GENEALOGY**  
*Susan O’Connor* | To test or not to test (DNA, that is). Confused by the commercials about DNA tests? This session just might be the answer. Participants in this session will learn about the basics of DNA, the three types of DNA testing, which test is the right one to choose, how to go about choosing which test to take, and the unexpected discoveries that can come from DNA test results. |
| **SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INSTITUTIONAL RACISM**  
*Hilario Benzon, NEA Center for Justice* | Hilario Benzon, from the NEA's Center for Justice, will be doing a presentation on Institutional Racism and Social Justice in 2019. |
| **SOCIAL SECURITY**  
*Kevin Reino, SSA* | Social Security Administration Regional Public Affairs Specialist Kevin Reino will discuss a multitude of topics regarding Social Security (SS) and the Social Security Administration, and will answer your questions. Topics for discussion will include the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO); online services; how to qualify for retirement; when an individual can retire; spousal benefits, widow/widower benefits and children’s benefits; Medicare, and continuing to work and receiving benefits. |

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| **ELDER LAW PART I: THE NUTS & BOLTS OF ESTATE PLANNING**  
*Deborah K. Blum-Shore, Esq., Partner, The Shore Law Firm* | Estate planning engages us in confronting the financial and emotional consequences of death and disability and allows us to take control of our futures. During the first session, we will learn about the fundamentals of a well-crafted estate plan. We will discuss each of the important documents that everyone should have: Durable Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy, Living Will, HIPAA Release, Last Will & Testament, and a Declaration of Homestead. We will also introduce trust planning and probate alternatives. Throughout our discussion, we will identify the special needs of people in second marriages, unmarried couples, and families with disabled children. |
| **GENEALOGY II: DECONSTRUCTING OBITUARIES**  
*Susan O’Connor* | Every day, newspapers publish stories of varying lengths and details about people who have recently died—obituaries. Participants will learn how to deconstruct and capture the information in these mini bios to better understand family relationships. They will also learn how the information can provide hints on where to look next in your research. |
| **ART FOR YOUR MIND: IMMIGRATION IN AMERICAN ART**  
*Jill Sanford* | Art for Your Mind is an engaging, educational, art observation experience designed to broaden the minds of its participants. Presentations are for people of all backgrounds — artists and non-artists alike. The featured topic, Immigration in American Art, is an exploration of powerful images portraying the emotions, decisions, struggles and successes of immigrants coming to America during the 17th through 20th centuries — all within a discussion of a variety of artistic styles. Join us for an enjoyable hour of challenging yourself to see in new ways! Visit [www.artforyourmind.com](http://www.artforyourmind.com) for more information. |
| **EDUCATING AND MOBILIZING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**  
*Craig Slatin and Ferd Wulken* | This workshop will provide a brief review of recent climate science findings that have led the climate movement to declare that we are facing a climate “disaster,” “crisis,” “emergency.” Participants will be introduced to some organizations advocating for climate change action in Massachusetts and nationally and the range of proposals that may be effective at necessary greenhouse gas reduction — from the more pragmatic and limited to those that approach a Green New Deal. The workshop will provide a forum to discuss why the climate crisis is a critical concern for the MTA/NEA, for public education and the communities in which we live and work, and how retired members could work with active members and the broad network of climate activists: in the labor, environmental, women’s, civil rights and young people’s movements, and through faith-based communities, to establish solutions for effective climate action in Massachusetts and nationally. |
### Workshop Descriptions

#### FANNIE LOU HAMER
**Kate Clifford Larson, author**

Fannie Lou Hamer was an extraordinary American activist whose fight for basic human and political rights changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. An African American sharecropper from Mississippi, she endured physical violence and economic retaliation when she challenged virulent racism and segregation while attempting to register black citizens at the polls. Her appearance on national television in 1964 pleading for the right to vote riveted the nation, setting the stage for a dramatic showdown with President Johnson and Martin Luther King Jr. who found her style of activism less appealing than his own. Her life story reminds us that some leaders rise up from the most unlikely places and against tremendous odds.

#### HEALTH INSURANCE
**John Brouder, of Boston Benefit Partners, and Anthony Moreschi, of MTA Government Relations**

This workshop will address health insurance issues impacting both municipal retirees and state retirees, whether they are currently Medicare-eligible or not. The workshop will address the 2011 state law that weakened the bargaining power of workers and review recent employer proposals to make retirees pay a larger share of health care costs. The session will also address 2019 health care initiatives currently pending in the Massachusetts Legislature. This session will allow ample time for questions and answers, so come prepared with questions.

#### ELDER LAW PART II: LIFE CARE PLANNING
**Deborah K. Blum-Shore, Esq., Partner, The Shore Law Firm**

Long-term care planning isn’t just about nursing homes anymore. In this session, we will learn about the continuum of long-term care: What is it, and how do we pay for it? Because of changes in the law, it is more important than ever to plan ahead for the care we might need in the future. We will discuss the eligibility rules for Medicaid and veterans’ long-term care benefits, including asset limits, look-back periods, ineligibility penalties, and estate recovery. Finally, we will review some of the strategies available to preserve your hard-earned assets and to ensure that you receive the best possible care.

#### GENEALOGY III: COMPARING GENEALOGY RECORD SITES
**Susan O’Connor**

Which website should I choose — Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, MyHeritage? This presentation will compare these four online record repositories to help you choose wisely depending on your ancestors, what you are researching, and your budget.

#### ART FOR YOUR MIND: NATIVE AMERICAN JOURNEY
**Jill Sanford**

Art for Your Mind is an engaging, educational, art observation experience designed to broaden the minds of its participants. Presentations are for people of all backgrounds — artists and non-artists alike. The featured topic, Native American Journey, offers a way to closely observe hand-made creations of Native Americans through time and from all across our country. See how the unique natural resources of each of America’s regions help to define the beliefs and practices of these diverse cultures. Join us for an enjoyable hour of challenging yourself to see in new ways! Visit www.artforyourmind.com for more information.

#### CHINA AS EVERYDAY
**Richard Levy**

Over the past 40 years, China has changed drastically — it has become more market-oriented, its economy has grown to the point that it is the world’s second largest, and its political, economic and military influence has increased vastly worldwide, challenging existing world structures and interests. This talk will discuss not these massive changes per se but, using pictures, examples and anecdotes, how these massive changes have been experienced by everyday people in Southern China in their daily lives. The people I spoke with include workers, farmers, students, teachers, local officials, businesspeople and retired people, some of whom I came to know over time and some of whom I met only once or twice.

#### MARY SURRETT
**Kate Clifford Larson, author**

Mary Surratt, a Southern slaveholding woman-turned-rebel-supporter of John Wilkes Booth, was hanged in July 1865 for her role in President Lincoln’s assassination. For almost 150 years, sympathizers argued that she was innocent. Smart, arrogant and devoted to her family, Surratt’s relationship to Booth and his plans defied accepted standards of feminine behavior and enraged the male jurors who found her guilty. Was she guilty or was she innocent? Her story, still contested today, is in many ways reflected in ongoing debates about the history and memorialization of the Confederacy.

#### BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: RACE, CLASS AND POLITICS IN A UNION CONTEXT
**Tess Ewing, UMB; George Luse, MTA Retired and Dale Melcher, UMA**

Public education, educators and their unions are increasingly under attack. A focus on accountability through standardized tests, constraints on union membership, loss of professional autonomy and resegregation of schools all work to demonize educators, driving a wedge between unions and communities.

The experiment in community control of schools in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville neighborhood of NYC in 1968, and the subsequent citywide strike by the largely white United Federation of Teachers, provides a provocative example of what happens when a teachers, union fails to build strong ties with the communities it serves.

This interactive workshop will examine the events of Ocean Hill-Brownsville and draw lessons that can inform current MTA initiatives to Fund our Future and build the schools our students, educators and communities deserve.
Eleven members of MTA Retired met with 300 retired members from around the country in Houston. MTA-Retired was represented by Richard Liston, Bob Brousseau, Richard Shea, Eileen Cleary, Jackie Gorrie, Steve Gorrie, Claire Naughton, Dennis Naughton, Edith Cannon, Burt Weiner and Gerry Ruane.

NEA-Retired President Sarah Borgman led the group in discussions as to how NEA Retired can help NEA fulfill its mission. We had presentations from NEA President Lily Eskelsen García, Vice President Becky Pringle, and Secretary-Treasurer Princess Moss. Executive Director, John Stocks gave a farewell address as he will be taking on a role managing NEA’s Social Justice Initiative. The New Executive Director Kim Anderson was introduced and she talked about how happy she was to be back at NEA. Kim was a lobbyist for NEA for many years.

NEA Center for Advocacy Director, Mary Kusler, reported on the state of legislation at the national level. Much of her report centered on the difficulties that NEA has had working with the Trump/DeVos administration. Many of NEA’s initiatives have met resistance on Capitol Hill. The GPO/WEP is still a priority for NEA but it is still difficult to work with legislators in many areas of the country.

During the meeting, members voted to refer a proposed mission statement and a proposed vision statement to the Executive Council. We elected Jean Dobashi vice president; Linda McCrary and Bobbie Margo to the Executive Council; and Mae Smith, Diane Larson and Marilyn Warmer to the NEA Board of Directors.

The MTA Retired delegates stayed on for the NEA Representative Assembly from July 3-July 7. At this meeting, the delegates approved a new category of membership, Community Ally, and they approved a process for intervention for affiliates that are having financial issues. The delegates failed to approve the Massachusetts-submitted new business item that proposed a national teachers’ strike to support the Green New Deal. Delegates elected Robert Rodriguez of California and Christine Sampson-Clark of New Jersey to the NEA Executive Committee.

Delegates were witness to a great opportunity. NEA had a 2020 presidential candidate forum where President Eskelsen García interviewed 10 candidates on education issues. The following candidates were interviewed: Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden, Amy Klobuchar, Julian Castro, Tim Ryan, Kamala Harris, Bill deBlasio, Jay Inslee, and Beto O’Rourke. The interviews may be viewed on www.nea.org.
MTA Attorney Ryan Dunn is representing a retiree in Leverett regarding a decision by the town to charge retirees for the cost of having a spouse on the group health insurance plan. The town pays 50 percent of the premium for retiree health insurance, but has only paid 50 percent of the cost of an individual plan only, and it charged our retired member 100 percent of the additional cost to have a family plan. In other words, the town allows spouses to have access to the group plans but it won’t pay a premium contribution for them. The statute governing the premium split talks about paying a percentage of the premium, and it makes no mention of individual or family coverage. Attorney Dunn took the matter to Superior Court and won. The town appealed to the Appeals Court. In an unexpected turn of events, the SJC has taken the case on its own motion and has now called for amicus briefs. A decision from the court is expected sometime next year. The MTA will continue this fight for the future retiree rights of our active members.

FY 2020 COLA INCREASE FOR RETIREES ENACTED BY LEGISLATURE

On July 23, 2019, the Conference Committee budget was enacted in both the House and the Senate. Governor Charlie Baker signed the budget into law on July 31. Included in the conference committee report are the 3 percent COLA increase on the $13,000 base, the expansion of balance billing protections to all plans offered through the GIC, and the transfer of $2.8 billion to the state and teachers’ retirement systems.
MTA/NEA RETIRED DUES RENEWAL
MTA/NEA Retired dues renewal forms were mailed beginning in mid-July.

Two membership renewal options are available:

ONLINE........ Go to www.massteacher.org/retired to renew online using a credit card.

MAIL ........... Send your check made payable to the MTA for the total amount, along with the renewal form in the reply envelope that is provided.

Membership applications will be processed as they are received, and you will get your new membership card and 2019-2020 Retired Pocket Calendar in the Fall. Please continue to use your present membership card until the new one arrives.

QUESTIONS
Membership Status 617.878.8118
800.392.6175, Ext. 8118
Membership Cards 617.878.8208
Renee Gatewood 800.392.6175, Ext. 8208
MTAB Directory 800.336.0990