

## 2014 MTA RETIRED GATHERING

### Featuring a Call to Action

Originally written by Scott McLennan



Attendees enjoy the 2014 MTA Retired Members Gathering, September 29, 2014 at the Sheraton Framingham.

The 13th annual MTA Retired Members Gathering featured a vibrant mix of celebration, activism and education, drawing over 220 retired members to the event in Framingham. The day was divided up into workshops on topics ranging from pensions, social security, financial and legal planning to political mobilizing and a sing-a-long for attendees. Each year the MTA Retired members Committee attempts to present a number of new workshops, and this year the event had presenters from the SHINE Program and GIC, Health Care for All, as well as author Michael Tougias, who spoke about some of his books, one of which is currently being filmed in Massachusetts.

In addition the Committee presented the 2014 Honor Our Own Award to Neil Clarke, a 34 year veteran from Lee, Massachusetts. The Honor Our Own" recognition is awarded each year by the Retired Members Committee, which evaluates materials that outline the accomplishments of nominees. Joshua Hall, one of Clarke's former students who is now an educator in the Lee Public Schools, nominated Clarke.

Clarke, a native of South Boston reflected on how his work as an educator in Lee, his union activism and his current role as a Senate district coordinator in MTA's Division of Grassroots Campaigns became entwined.

"Throughout all of these experiences, it was the people I got to know and worked with who made the difference," Clarke said. "One lesson I've learned is to connect the dots regarding significant changes to the art and joy of teaching. Those dots often lead to the doors of politicians, through legislation or funding, or to boards that dictate to educators. And once again, I've found that the joy of collegiality and helping achieve positive change."

Clarke, who attended the ceremony with his wife, Barbara, taught in Lee for 34 years. He is a former member of MTA's Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

MTA President Barbara Madeloni, Vice President Janet Anderson and Executive Director-Treasurer Ann Clarke thanked the large crowd

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## RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE 2014-2015

### CHAIRS

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

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Eileen Cleary, *Brockton*  
Kathleen Comer, *Worcester*  
Gladys Durant, *Norton*  
Mary Gilmore, *South Yarmouth*  
Jacqueline A. Gorrie, *Andover* \*  
Stephen Gorrie, *Andover* \*\*\*  
Robert Lague, *Woburn*  
Gerard Ruane, *Malden* \*\*  
Louise Russell, *Shrewsbury*  
Robert Travers, *Cambridge* \*\*

### ESP/ RETIRED MEMBERS ORGANIZER

Steve Day  
[sday@massteacher.org](mailto:sday@massteacher.org)  
617.878.8314 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8314

### GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGNS COORDINATOR

Matthew Bennet  
[mbennet@massteacher.org](mailto:mbennet@massteacher.org)  
617.878.8194 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8194

### MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

20 Ashburton Place ■ Boston, MA 02108  
800.392.6175 ■ [www.massteacher.org](http://www.massteacher.org)

### MTA MEMBER BENEFITS, INC.

800.336.0990 ■ [www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com)

### MTA MEMBERSHIP DIVISION

617.878.8118 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8118

\* MTA Board of Directors  
\*\* MTA Executive Committee  
\*\*\* NEA Retired Director

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

### Winchester Retired Teachers Mobilize

By Steve Gorrie

The Board of Selectmen of the Town of Winchester in November 2102 unilaterally, but legally, voted a series of dramatic changes in the town's health insurance program for retirees, including increased co-pays and deductibles and increasing the retirees' premium contribution to 50%. The retirees were blindsided by this action which, when fully implemented by July 2014, would cause large increases, some staggering, for all of Winchester's retirees. After the initial shock wore off, Winchester's retired teachers formed the Winchester Retirees Health Insurance Committee with the express purpose of getting the Selectmen to reconsider their vote on the premium increases.

The Committee, comprised almost entirely of retired teachers, most of whom are MTA-R members, started meeting weekly. The focused on researching background material, creating dialogue with other Winchester town committees, leaders and residents, writing letters to the editor, packing Selectmen Committee meetings, leafleting homes, circulating petitions, lobbying Town Meeting members, getting two articles on the Town Meeting warrant and organizing around the town elections.

Although not all that was sought was achieved, the Retirees Committee succeeded in many areas including softening the financial blow for some retirees, lengthening the implementation time of the premium increase, insuring that a mitigation fund was established, getting, by vote of Town Meeting, a committee established for town retiree insurance issues (on which there are two retired teachers), and voting the Board of Selectmen chair out of office.

Although the first phase of the issue is over, the Retirees Health Insurance Committee is still in full gear. After taking a much needed hiatus over the summer, the Committee has resumed its meetings to focus on the work of the newly established town committee on retiree health issues and to remain active in the town political arena, especially elections for Selectmen next spring. Never underestimate the power of organizing, especially by our retired members. ■



*If you have some news from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send to [sday@massteacher.org](mailto:sday@massteacher.org)*



## 2014 MTA RETIRED GATHERING

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for their years of service to public education and their continued involvement in the MTA.

Anderson pointed out the work of former MTA President Mary Gilmore, for instance, explaining that her advocacy of strong bonds between current and retired members is vital to the association.

Madeloni urged the retirees to share their stories about what the profession was like when they were in the classroom, before standardized testing and punitive evaluation systems became the norm.

“Our active members don’t get to live out the hopes and ideals that drew them to teaching, but you could help make learning joyful again,” Madeloni said. “You have the expertise, and often the time, to speak out when our younger members cannot. And you can’t be fired anymore!”

Kathleen Roberts, co-chair of the Retired Members Committee, also spoke up for activism. She cited her recent 100th birthday as a milestone and asked her colleagues for

the “gift” of their political action in the November 4 election. Each table at the gathering was adorned with a birthday card for Roberts that doubled as a sign-up sheet for MTA activities aimed at helping to elect Attorney General Martha Coakley as the state’s next governor.

“Participation in the political process is so important today, especially to help our younger teachers,” Roberts told the crowd. U.S. Senator Edward Markey sent birthday greetings to Roberts from Washington, D.C., and the retirees enjoyed a large cake in Roberts’ honor.

Committee Chair Richard Liston reminded the members about the importance of their continued involvement, both in the MTA, and the political process. He also recognized Louise Russell, from Shrewsbury, who will be completing her final term on the MTA Retired Committee next spring, and expressed his appreciation for all of her hard work and dedication in maintaining her activism and providing a forum for retired members to have their issues heard. ■



Gerry Ruane speaks to attendees. Seated from left, RMC Co-chair Richard Liston, MTA President Barbara Madeloni, RMC Co-chair Kay Roberts, MTA Vice President Janet Anderson, MTA Executive Director-Treasurer Ann Clarke.



Neil Clarke holding his 2014 “Honor Our Own” award with wife Barbara Clarke (at left), and Jackie Gorrie, Statewide Retired Board of Directors (at right).



Attendees signed birthday cards pledging political action in honor of Kay Roberts’ 100 birthday. The celebration was complete with a brightly decorated cake.



Book donations were collected for Fonesca Elementary School in Fall River.

## REPORT OF THE CHAIRS

**Richard Liston and Kay Roberts**

Once again the MTA Retired Members Gathering was a success. We had a record turnout of over 220 folks attend the gathering in Framingham at the end of September. Our goal is to increase attendees every year, so please pass this the news on to your friends and former colleagues.

On behalf of the Retired Members Committee, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the generosity of members at the retired gathering this year. This year we collected school supplies for the Mary Fonseca Elementary School in Fall River. As of this publication of this edition of the reporter, we have not yet had a chance to deliver all the material due to activities connected to the election. However, once again the kindness and generosity of the retired members was fantastic! Thank you so much for making the lives of these students a little bit better.

We have a new addition to the Committee. Jackie Gorrie was selected as a statewide member of the Board of Directors (joining Co-Chair Richard Liston), representing retired members, replacing Gerry Ruane, who was elected to the MTA Executive Committee at the May 2014 Annual meeting.

This edition of the Reporter has the Nomination form for the Retired Members Committee. That election will take place at the MTA Annual meeting, which is scheduled for May 8 and 9th of next year. Please note the date for submission of the Nomination Form, which is March 6, 2015.

*As an MTA member,  
you are entitled to the  
discounts and programs  
offered by MTA Benefits.  
[www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com)*

In addition, please remember that as an MTA member, you are entitled to the discounts and programs offered by MTA Benefits. Information on programs and cost-saving measures can be found at [www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com), or by calling 800.336.0990.

The Committee has been discussing, and will continue to discuss ideas on how we can increase our membership, and in so doing, increase our power and influence. This year the Committee is aiming to increase the number of members in MTA Retired, so, in addition to our efforts, please

encourage other retired members, that may not have signed up, to think about doing so—especially if they want to enroll as a lifetime MTA retired member, which will remain at a dues level of \$450 only until 1/1/15, when it increases to \$550.

We have recently witnessed the conclusion of an extremely close election for the Governor's office. None of us knows what the political future may hold, but it is incumbent on us all to use our knowledge and experience to ensure that all the many advantages we were able to achieve remain in place. Your voice and insight is an important component, not just within the MTA, but within the community at large, and as we face challenges, as citizens, down the road, hopefully our collective wisdom can have a positive impact on future decisions.

On behalf of the MTA Retired Members Committee, we wish you all the best to you and your families for a wonderful holiday season and the very best for 2015. ■

*Kathleen Roberts, Co-Chair  
Richard Liston, Co-Chair*





# MTA BENEFITS OFFERS NEW PROGRAM FOR LEGAL SERVICES

## LegalShield

Members can now access legal services for a year, at a cost less than the hourly rate for many attorneys. LegalShield is a prepaid legal plan that costs just \$15.95 per month (\$191.40 per year) and provides members with access to legal assistance in non-employment matters. There is no charge for initial consultations. Letters written and phone calls made on behalf of members are included in the monthly fee as well as contract reviews up to 15 pages.



According to a 2013 Real Rate Report, nationwide, the average hourly rate for law firm partners in 2012 was \$536.47, and for associates, \$370.25. At those rates, it's clear there are financial barriers to seeking legal services. LegalShield offers an affordable option to help with everything from preparation of a will to executing a contract. For more information on this new program, go to [www.legalshield.com/info/mtabenefits](http://www.legalshield.com/info/mtabenefits). ■

## MTA BENEFITS-OUR NEW WEBSITE

### Does something look a little different?

By Bob Travers

Our website has gotten a makeover! We hope you'll find the new design easier to navigate, but if you don't, here's the secret: the Benefits section uses the same format as the *MTA Benefits & Discount Directory*. Looking for the former "PDFs and Links"? It's now called "Special Offers" and can be found once you log in. Are you still lost?

Remember MTA Benefits is all about helping our members through programs, special rates and discounts. Spread the word about MTA Benefits!!!!

We hope you like the new look and feel of MTA Benefits – and our new website. Take a look around [www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com) and let us know what you think! ■

The screenshot shows the MTA Benefits website homepage. At the top, there are navigation links for Home, Contact Us, and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter. A search bar is located on the right. Below the navigation is a banner featuring the MTA Benefits logo and a group of four people, with the tagline "MTA Benefits helps members and their families save money." Below the banner are five red navigation tabs: Benefits, Discounts, e-Offers, Giveaways, and Member Log-in. The main content area includes several promotional banners: "Giveaway Extended!" with details about an American Education Week giveaway; "Our New Website" with a message about the site redesign; "DISCOUNTS! Entertainment Tickets" listing holiday season shows; "NEW! Trip Interruption for Any Reason" with details about travel insurance; and "Register now for a chance to WIN!" with a Restaurant.com gift card offer. There are also banners for "HOLIDAY SHOPPING" and "Save up to 50%". At the bottom, there is a footer with links for About Us, Privacy Policy, Site Map, Legal Notice, Contact Us, and MTA, along with copyright information and a note about the website being powered by eManagerSite.

A grid of 15 category icons for MTA Benefits. The categories are: Attractions, Bookslores, Car Care, Entertainment, Fitness, Learning, Member Authors, Museums, Recreation, Retail, Services, Sightseeing, Sports, and Well-Being. Each icon features a small image representing the category and the category name in a blue box below it.

## OTHER NEWS

### Just for Retired Members

The Legislature, as part of the budget passed and signed this summer, added 2 years to the moratorium on changes to retiree contribution percentages from 2014 to 2016. This applies for municipalities that have adopted the changes enacted to Chapter 32 B back in 2011, and provides an additional period of stability for retirees at the local level.

The California Public Employees' Retirement System (Calpers), the largest pension fund in the U.S., has decided to withdraw all of its investments ( about \$4 billion) from its hedge fund investment program. This system was one of leaders for investing in hedge funds, but it appears that the change is based, in part, over some concern about the fees charged by these funds.

Please beware of any calls where the caller claims they are from "Medicare". These calls are trying to get people to accept having a MD come to their home the next day. Medicare will not be calling you and if you have any concern about such calls, please call the Medicare toll free number at 800-633-4227, or for TTY, 877-486-2048. ■



### FREQUENTLY REQUESTED CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS)</b>  <a href="http://www.mass.gov/mtrs">www.mass.gov/mtrs</a></p>	<p><b>State Board of Retirement</b>  <a href="http://www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire">www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire</a></p>
<p><b>MTRS Headquarters</b>          617.679.6877          One Charles Park, 2nd Floor          Cambridge, MA 02142</p>	<p><b>SBR Boston Office</b>          617.367.7770          One Ashburton Place, Suite 1219          Boston, MA 02108</p>
<p><b>MTRS Western Office</b>   413.784.1711          One Monarch Place, Suite 510          Springfield, MA 01144-4028</p>	<p><b>SBR Springfield Office</b>          413.730.6135          463 Dwight Street, Room 109          Springfield, MA 01103</p>
<p>Questions regarding your MTA Member ID Card or Calendar can be directed to:          Renee Gatewood – <a href="mailto:rgatewood@massteacher.org">rgatewood@massteacher.org</a> – 617.878.8000, ext. 8208</p>	



# 2015 NOMINATION FOR RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE

A candidate must file this nomination form or facsimile with the Executive Director-Treasurer by 5 p.m. on Friday, **MARCH 6, 2015** regardless of postmark.

ADDITIONAL FORMS MAY BE REQUESTED OR THIS FORM MAY BE DUPLICATED. FORMS MAY BE FAXED TO: **MAUREEN NOYES, 617-742-7046.**

NAME OF CANDIDATE \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ID (listed on your MTA ID Card) \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the appropriate box that corresponds to the election.**

**Membership Type:**

**I hereby declare my candidacy for:**

Retired     Retired Life

Retired Members Committee

### BIO/STATEMENT GRID – PLEASE PRINT


### INSTRUCTIONS

- MTA POLICY:** Each candidate must submit a biography/statement grid containing no more than 50 words.  
**Note:** Only the first fifty words will be printed. The Credentials & Ballot Committee reserves the right to edit the bios.
- WRITE OUT** your statement on a separate piece of paper first, and then fill out the grid.
- TYPE OR PRINT** clearly, using both upper and lower-case letters, as you expect your final statement to appear.
- INSERT** only **one word** per box.
- DO NOT combine words or numbers with hyphens or slashes.**
- "AN," "A" and "THE" constitute one word.
- ACRONYMS** such as "NEA-RA" or "MTA" count as one word.
- INSERT PUNCTUATION** in the **same box** immediately after the word you want it to follow.
- Indicate intent to commence a **new paragraph** by inserting the paragraph symbol ¶ in the same box immediately preceding the first word in the paragraph.
- A DATE** represented as "October 1, 2006" shall constitute three words. A date represented as "10/1/06" is only one word
- Send this entire nomination form to: MTA, Governance Specialist, 20 Ashburton Place, Boston MA 02108. This form must be received by **Friday, March 6, 2015 regardless of postmark**, in order for the bio/statement to be published in the April MTA REPORTER.
- Please send me a list of Statewide Retired Delegates to the **2015** MTA Annual Meeting which I will use solely for the purpose of publicizing my candidacy for election as a member as a member of the Retired Members Committee. The list will be available after **January 12, 2015.**

My qualifications are in compliance with those of the designate position for which I am a candidate.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



20 Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108

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# MTA Reporter

*The Voice of MTA Retired Members*



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