



Focus

MNEA-Retired is an affiliate of the
Missouri National Education Association

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Terry's Table Talk

Great news! John Moses Lange, who grew up in St James, Missouri, has made a bequest to our CHEER (Caring Help for Educational Endeavors by Retirees) fund. John loved learning and sharing what he had learned with others and building a connection that would last. He was an inquisitive learner and always wanted more information. Though he was never a teacher by profession, John *was* a Sunday school teacher for much of his life and he very much enjoyed teaching others about something he knew. John passed away in March of 2022 leaving behind some money he directed his daughters to distribute in a way that would help students in Missouri. In December his two daughters, Leanna Griffin and Terri Lange, sent a combined \$35,000 to the CHEER Fund!



Leanna and Terri believe their father would be happy with this donation because the CHEER Fund will help so many students and teachers in the classroom. They especially like the personal connections the structure of the CHEER Fund between teachers, students, and retirees where they once taught.

John Moses Lange was 87 years old when he passed. The donation made to honor his 87 years will reach at least 87 grants in the coming years, reaching many classrooms here in his home state.



Another legacy gift to young teachers has been funded by Martha Karlovetz. Martha is a past President of MNEA and MNEA-Retired. She's been an Association activist at the local, state, and national levels since the beginning of MNEA in 1973. Her daughter, Linda Favero, was a building rep and an MNEA-RA delegate. Sadly, Linda's career as an elementary teacher was cut short due to a brain tumor. Linda's courage and positive attitude during her struggle served as an inspiration to students, parents, and colleagues. She even inspired one second grader to write a poem: "The Classroom is Bare . . . the Teacher's Not There," which became the inspiration and title of a book Martha wrote that not only honors Linda, but demonstrates the difference teachers make in the classroom and students' lives. Recently, Martha has established a scholarship for upcoming young teachers here in Missouri.

Have you considered making a legacy gift? CHEER was created from a \$100 gift to MNEA-Retired.

Annual MNEA-Retired Meeting

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 21, at the Lodge of the Four Seasons, Lake of the Ozarks. As usual, elections will be held. This year we will be voting for the offices of president, vice president, historian, budget chair, and four Executive Council members at large.

Additionally, delegates for the NEA-Retired and NEA Representative Assembly as well as the MNEA RA (fall of 2023 through spring of 2025) will be elected. Election results will be announced at the Annual Meeting.



Register online at www.mnea.org/retired for the MNEA-Retired Election, Annual Meeting & Luncheon. Watch your email for the notice that says materials have been posted. This will be coming soon.

You will be able to register:

to VOTE ONLY or

to VOTE and ATTEND THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING or

to VOTE, ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING & PURCHASE A LUNCHEON TICKET.

Luncheon cost will be \$35 per person and tickets must be purchased online in advance. This year, lunch will be a great Italian Buffet. If you need help registering online, you may email or call Olivia Compton, 417-569-1402 or Olivia.compton@mnea.org.



Deadlines for Elections and Luncheon

March 27th is the deadline to purchase a luncheon ticket.

April 12th is the deadline to register to vote and attend the meeting.

Voting will take place **April 14 - Noon on April 20th**. Once you register and voting opens, you will receive an email with a link to vote.

Political Action Information

In Missouri, public school teachers are not allowed to benefit fully from Social Security. Because we receive a “government pension” and school districts did not collect social security taxes from our checks, we are mostly excluded from receiving benefits.



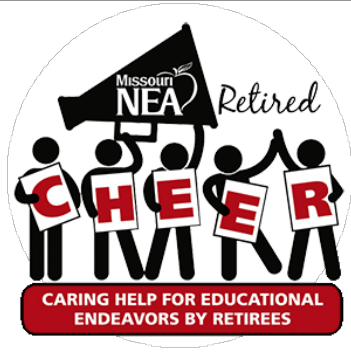
If you worked an additional job where you paid FICA, Social Security benefits will be reduced by 2/3 of your pension according to the rules of the Windfall Elimination Provision. This is not a windfall – you worked for these benefits. It is a reduction in benefits to which you are entitled.

The Government Pension Offset is another benefit reduction. If you are a surviving spouse whose husband/wife worked and paid into Social Security, you are again subject to a 2/3 reduction in benefits. It doesn't matter if your spouse worked many years and paid into the system. It has been estimated that about 90% of the time, this 'offset' completely eliminates the spousal benefit. It makes no difference that the covered spouse paid Social Security taxes for many years and earned the right to these benefits.

HB82 needs support from both houses of Congress. Please go to the NEA Legislative Action Center at: <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/action-center/our-issues/retirement-security> and let your representative know that these provisions need to be repealed.

Focus Points . . .

- ❖ Capitol Action days to lobby in Jefferson City are **April 12** and **May 3** for MNEA-Retired members.
- ❖ There have been 554 school shootings of children, teachers, and school staff since Columbine in 1999. Do we love our guns more than our kids?
- ❖ There have been 52 mass shootings with 87 fatalities since January 1, 2023. The U.S. has reached more than 600 mass shootings over the previous three years.
- ❖ America's 400 richest families pay a lower tax rate than the average tax payer. They paid an average of 8.2% in federal income taxes while the average American paid 13.3% in federal income taxes in 2018.
- ❖ The 50 richest Americans now hold almost as much wealth as half of the U.S. They are worth almost \$2 trillion according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index. This is up from \$339 billion at the beginning of 2020. The top 1% of Americans have a combined net worth of \$34.2 trillion while the poorest 50% (about 165 million people) hold just \$2.08, or 1.9% of all household wealth.



Contribute to CHEER

Lend a hand to our colleagues working in the classroom and virtually by making a contribution to help fund future grants.

www.mnea.org/CHEER.



Retirement PSRS/PEERS Meeting Report

Missouri NEA Legislative Director Otto Fajen represents MNEA and MNEA-Retired members at the meetings of the PSRS/PEERS Board. Read the report of the latest meeting at www.mnea.org/PSRS.



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