

After School...

The Newsletter of Minneapolis Retired Teachers Inc.

Website

www.mrti.org

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On Tuesday, September 17th, members of Minneapolis Retired Teachers, Inc. (MRTI) gathered for our annual celebration of the newly retired members of our teaching fraternity. A class of 88 teachers, principals and specialists was recognized and applauded for their many years of work and dedication to Minneapolis students. Nearly 130 MRTI members, joined by four members of the Minneapolis School Board, three representatives of the Committee of 13 and one representative from TRA (Teachers' Retirement Association) gathered to welcome our colleagues into the wonderful world of retirement.



Debbie Goodlaxon, Tish Monjeau, Diane Archer & Tarri Levine accepted congratulations on behalf of their fellow retirees, and enjoyed a delicious lunch of roast turkey and all the fixings with entertainment by the University of Minnesota Jazz Quartet. With



guitar, percussion, bass and vocals, the quartet performed music from a variety of periods, including such favorites as "Route 66," "It Don't Mean a thing If It Ain't Got That Swing," "Yesterday," by the Beatles and Gershwin's "Summertime." A delightful celebration for dedicated service!

Photos by Larry Risser

HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE!

Remember the chaos last year in selecting the appropriate health insurance to go with your Medicare? Well, those of you who chose an **ADVANTAGE** plan will remember that that was a one-year offering. If you do nothing, your plan will automatically renew even if what that plan is offering for next year is different from what you now have. The renewal period is again between October and December.

The companies offering **ADVANTAGE** plans re-configure their policies each year, and so it is important for you to re-examine what you have and what other options may be available to you. You may find that your premium has changed, and/or that co-pays are different. So you may not want to just automatically renew with your current provider.

ADVANTAGE plan holders are NOT subject to the “underwriting” (questioning) if you choose to change providers.

MRTI will NOT be holding large group meetings as a source of information regarding changes as we did last year. The options with **ADVANTAGE** plans are an individual issue, so you need to explore this on your own. One resource that could be available to you is **Leslee Gold, Minnesota Medicare Consultants**, who helped with our decision making last year. She is willing to set up individual meetings and/or consultations to review your options and possible changes being offered by the various companies. You can reach her at lillygoldinc@aol.com leave your name, contact information, and identify the **ADVANTAGE** plan you now have. She will get back to you within 24 hours to assist in making your new decision. Remember this pertains to **ADVANTAGE** plan holders only! If you selected a **SUPPLEMENT** plan, you do not need to do anything at this time.



Bill of Fare

October - John’s Beef Stroganoff w/ egg noodles, salad, apple crisp.

November - Make-your-own Chef’s salad, carrot cake.

December - Fried chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, roll, chocolate pudding.

January - John’s Roast Beef, gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed veggies, cantaloupe with sherbet

As always, a vegetarian option is available; just let your caller know or contact Gayle Marko. No other options are possible. Phone callers record both names and phone numbers for reservations which will be checked off at the ticket table. No-shows will be billed for the cost of the luncheon.

If you have **NOT** been called by **Monday, a week before the luncheon**, and you wish to attend, please call **Gayle Marko** to make a reservation: **952-920-1395**.

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- Help fund the efforts to preserve our Pensions! Contribute to the Committee of Thirteen!
 - Donations may be sent to:
 - Committee of Thirteen
 - P.O.Box 8997, Minneapolis, MN 55408

Fall & Winter Programs



October 15 -
Minnesota's First Lady,
Gwen Walz



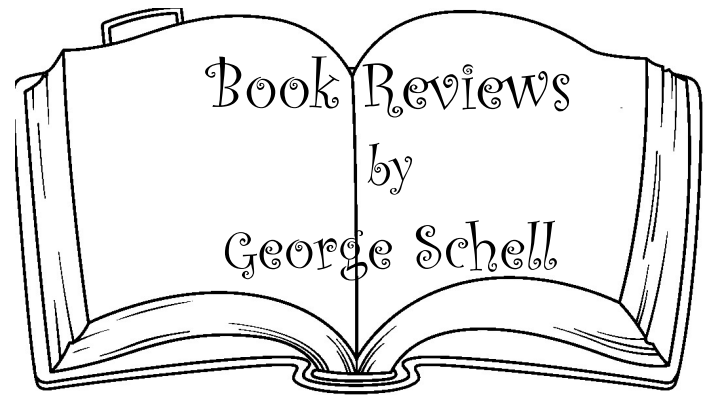
November 19 - Rick Nelson,
Minneapolis StarTribune
Food Critic



December 17 - Brandanahh
Musical group



January 21 - "Teaching in
America/Teaching in
Sweden" presented by
Anthony Sutton.



Three books captured my attention this past summer and provided great leisure reading on three educational levels-- elementary, high school, and university. Two of the books are non-fiction and one a novel. All three were written by teachers with each having interesting, informative, and humorous narratives.

32 Third Graders and One Class Bunny

is a delightful and moving read focusing on students in a third grade classroom. **Phillip Done** is a 20-year-plus veteran of the California school system who has won several awards and was honored as a Teacher of the Year in California.

After a moving introduction explaining why "I am a teacher," Done takes the reader through the entire school year, month by month, with various episodes in the classroom. We meet several of his students and I'm sure that, if you have been an elementary teacher, you can easily recognize a student you have taught. Many classroom incidents should be easily recognizable, too.

One chapter is about the traditional classroom Christmas party, where the teacher has to unwrap each present. An unwritten rule says that you can't take a wrapped present home. Each student has to see what others brought. Done writes: "This is lovely, Mark. What is it? Thank you, I didn't know you could make a napkin holder out of nails!"

You'll laugh your way through the school year, episode by episode, and wish it wouldn't end.

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Interested in political activity?

Retired Teachers Council 59 (RTC 59)

Soup, Salad & Substance Luncheons

October 22, December 3 - 11:30 am

**MFT Local 59 Office,
67 8th Avenue NE, Mpls**

Book reviews, cont.

I Want to Apologize to Every Teacher I Ever Had...

written by **Tony Danza**, the song and dance man and actor from the 60s and 70s long running tv series "Taxi" followed by his own series "Who's the Boss?" Right away in his introduction he tells of his motivation. "I have heard so much about how bad our educational system is, and I know it isn't that bad. I want to find out for myself."

Danza updated his degree and approached the Discovery Channel with the idea that a tv crew tape a weekly series filmed in a real class, with real students, in a real high school, taught by a real teacher. Now to find a high school that would take both Danza, a first year teacher, and a tv film crew.

The producer did—a north Philadelphia high school set on the edge of the inner city—not unlike South High School from which I retired.

Danza met a tough, but fair, lady principal who said, "Danza, if you screw up, I'll have your ass out of here before you can count to ten!" He didn't, but after six episodes, the producer dropped the series because "nothing was happening...they're just sitting there learning...let's jazz it up somewhat!"

Danza refused but continued to teach the 10th grade American Lit and grammar class for the entire year. As a first year teacher, he had a "teacher coach"—an experienced colleague who offers sound advice at each debriefing session. Danza learns like his students do. His chapters are moving, insightful and full of humor. He writes about directing the annual variety show—which the students renamed "ExtravaDanza." It was a huge success. There's a great chapter where he takes his class on a field trip to New York. After studying "Romeo and Juliet" in class, students had matinee tickets to see a revival on Broadway of "West Side Story," with a plot that parallels the literature classic.

The students enjoyed the show and

recognized the similar plots. The book is moving and, in the end, Danza proves that education is not as bad as the public sometimes hears. You'll enjoy this book whether you are an experienced teacher or a first year one.

The Shakespeare Requirement is by **Julie Schumacher**, a creative writing instructor at the University of Minnesota. She has written a previous novel, Dear Committee Members, which is made up of letters and memos. This new novel is sort of a sequel in that some of the characters are the same and the setting is the same - Payne University (yes, an obvious pun).

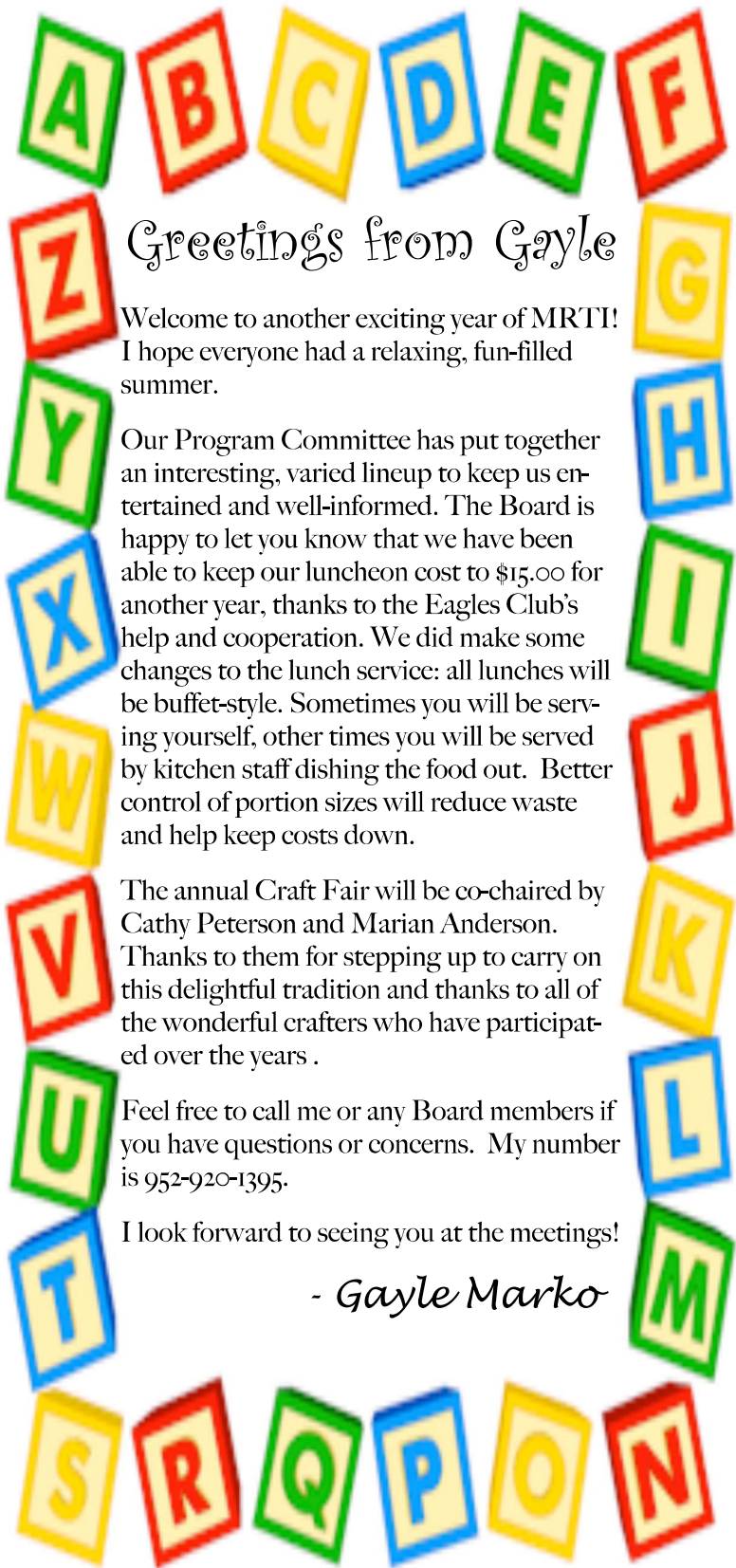
The newly elected English Department chair is Prof. Jason (Jay) Fitger, who reluctantly takes over the almost dysfunctional department housed in a forty year old building—not unlike Folwell Hall on the UMN campus. The English department is housed in the basement and first floor while the second floor has been totally remodeled for the Department of Economics.

You'll find yourself laughing out loud before you finish reading the first chapter as you meet at least seven characters, some professors and some students. We're on the Payne University campus and learn to deal with school politics and college life.

Prof. Fitger deals with the Shakespeare specialist who insists on every English major having one course in the Bard's works before graduation. You want to keep turning pages into the next chapter to see what happens and how the chairman brings the whole hilarious plot to a suitable ending.

George Schell, an MRTI member since his retirement in 1998, received his BA from Nebraska's Wayne State College, followed by graduate work in Journalism and Theater Arts at the University of Minnesota. He began teaching English, journalism and theater classes at the old South High School in 1963, moving to the new South in 1970.

His career encompassed producing and directing theater productions, advising the school newspaper staff, spending a year as an exchange teacher at Wesley College in Melbourne, Australia and researching and writing an illustrated history of South High for the Centennial Celebration in 1992.



Greetings from Gayle

Welcome to another exciting year of MRTI! I hope everyone had a relaxing, fun-filled summer.

Our Program Committee has put together an interesting, varied lineup to keep us entertained and well-informed. The Board is happy to let you know that we have been able to keep our luncheon cost to \$15.00 for another year, thanks to the Eagles Club's help and cooperation. We did make some changes to the lunch service: all lunches will be buffet-style. Sometimes you will be serving yourself, other times you will be served by kitchen staff dishing the food out. Better control of portion sizes will reduce waste and help keep costs down.

The annual Craft Fair will be co-chaired by Cathy Peterson and Marian Anderson. Thanks to them for stepping up to carry on this delightful tradition and thanks to all of the wonderful crafters who have participated over the years .

Feel free to call me or any Board members if you have questions or concerns. My number is 952-920-1395.

I look forward to seeing you at the meetings!

- Gayle Marko

CONGRATULATIONS, NEW RETIREES!

A

Faruq Abdal-Sabur
Diane J Archie

B

Julie M Babineau
Margaret U Berrisford
Stacy L Bezanson
Gail A Blosberg
Diane A. Bonniwell
Nanacy F Bradehoff
John P Breyfogle
Bettye P Brown
Dottie D Brown
Janine S Bunkowski

C

Cynthia M Callahan
Crawford M Campbell
James B Carr
Shari K Couch

D

Ellen F Debe
Ida Downwind

E

James C Elander
Laurel A Engman
Julianne K Evers

F

Florian K Fairbanks
Mary E Ficzeri

G

Mario E Galindo
William B Garner
Camilla J Glattly
Sharon J Goetzen
Debra J Goodlaxon

H

Mary C Halasz
Cynthia Marie Hanson-Best
Lorna F Haug-Lee
Lisa A Haupt
Leah R Herzog
Alan D Husby

J

Christina M Jermihov
Susan D Johnson
Janet R C Johnson

K

Robert A Kincaid
Camille L Kouri

L

Lisa F Lange

Wendy Sue Larson
Jacqueline L Larson-Knott
Timothy J Leach
Nancy A Lee
Tarri J Levine

M

Marlene K Maloney
Deborah J Martel
Hamid A Masheya
Cindy K Masloski
Daryl L Monjeau
Elizabeth A Moore
George J Mountin

N - O

Richard P Nohel
Michael R O'Connor
Cary J O'Reilly
Mary K Osowski

P

Kirstin D Parker
Lowell Peterson
Roxanne D Poindexter
Daniel G Pratt
Jeffrey W Priessler

R

Catherine A Ridge
Claudia Ryan

S

Julia A Schoborg
Lorie L Shiels
Jolina M Simes
Maria E Singh
Linda L Smith-Kiewel
Polly A Small
Florence M Sommers
Marjorie J Southward
Patricia M Sullivan
Susan T Sussman
Jay D Swenson

T

James R Thomas
Philip J Tillmann
Mark W Trumper
Kandis A Tsuchiya

V

Sarah P Van Valkenburg
Hans P Verbeten

W

Kathleen M Watson
Paula Williamson
Sandra L Witebski

If you have moved within the past year, you should probably contact TRA (info@MinnesotaTRA.org or 800-657-3669) to give them your new address, insuring that you get your MRTI membership materials in a timely manner.

Transitioning

by Art Indelicato

I've never heard of a single person who said that "moving" from one home to another or, one apartment to another or, even more challenging... down-sizing, from a home to an apartment ...was FUN! It isn't! Let's get that cleared up right now.

That's not to say that there isn't ANTICIPATION, EXCITEMENT, FEAR, ANXIETY, SLEEPLESS NIGHTS, QUESTIONING ONE'S SANITY...YOU PUT IN THE WORD (PHRASE). There is!

First of all, you've got to decide if you're ever going to move. If you decide not to move...you're done!

A few years ago, we started thinking about how nice it would be not to worry about shoveling snow, (heavy, wet snow) and mowing the lawn (high grass because we didn't get around to it soon enough). Don't tell me how much you enjoy doing this work, because there comes a time when you're tired, your back aches a little bit (or a lot), the machinery breaks down and you need repairs and/or replacements...on and on.

When Mary and I began thinking about downsizing, I was struck with the enormity of the entire project, moving through all its phases to the final completion. A good place for us to start was our clothes closet. Who among us cannot find something to throw away? Just stuff it in a big plastic bag...and when it gets full, take it to Good Will and get rid of it. Très simple! No effort, no exertion, no thinking. Don't forget the boots - the two pair you have can be reduced by half - or the artificial Christmas tree - Good Will will take it after October 1.

There are two areas over which you will struggle mightily: books and pictures. I struggled over my collection of 25 books on Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire, ultimately keeping just one book: GENGHIS KHAN and the Making of the MODERN WORLD by Jack Weatherford, a Macalester professor: scholarly, yet readable. The rest I mailed to my son, the historian lawyer. It hurt to see that box of books go.

Pictures: Get rid of those picture albums. Put everything on the computer along with your list of books read and to be read. Why don't I have any pictures from 1993? Haven't a clue! The real problem with pictures is the big picture that you framed and hung in the living room...and the glacier pictures in the dining room, and that fjord you loved so much when you were in Norway. And, don't forget the hilltop shot of Machu Picchu. But, the one that is impossible to get rid of is the 1980 3 x 4 foot painting of your dad that a young artist friend painted as her senior dissertation and whose reputation has since

EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE AND PENSIONS

Minneapolis teachers, active and retired, need to be politically aware of the 2020 Minnesota Legislative session and 2020 state and federal elections. Our MRTI Legislative Chair, Dr. Ed Andersen, offers some key issues facing us voters.

1. The "black" TV ads targeting Senator Tina Smith are aimed at her bi-partisan Senate bill mandating that the health insurance companies' negotiated health provider rates be applied to all users of the health care. For example, my health insurance company was billed over \$8,000 for care but allowed payments of only \$3,000. Senator Tina's bill will allow only the lesser amount be charged to everyone. This a great use of federal regulations. Adequate funding of Medicaid will keep hospitals and clinics open in all towns.
2. The 2020 Minnesota Legislative session will focus on the state bonding and capital expenditures bill.

Are we going to fund capital expenditures on schools, colleges and libraries or are we going to fund roads and bridges? MnDOT reports that during the Fiscal Year 2017 Minnesota General Revenues (Property Taxes, Sales Taxes, Minnesota Bonds and Income Taxes) accounted for 53.3% of Minnesota spending on roads, streets and bridges, while user fees (Gas Taxes and Licenses Tab Fees) accounted for 31.3 % and Federal Funds 15.4%. In addition, during the 2018 legislative session Speaker Kurt Daudt diverted \$1.3 billion to general revenue to build rural highways.

Minnesota counties and cities are increasing property tax assessments to maintain streets and roads. Public school districts are conducting school bond referendums paid by local property taxes, but my farmland property tax for schools receives a 70% rebate while my home receives no tax rebate.

Sales taxes, property taxes and income taxes need to be reserved for the good of all Minnesotans. User fees are increasingly needed for higher education and healthcare, therefore user fees (gas taxes) should be used to fund roads.

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blossomed into literally thousands of dollars.

**Just remember:
What you don't get rid of, you must take with you!**

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**Have you renewed your
MRTI membership for 2020?
It's not too late!**

Your \$25 dues will provide you with:

- the 2020 Yearbook
- the MRTI Newsletter - 3 times each year
- the opportunity to share our monthly luncheons, excellent programs and special events
- access to our MRTI website
- the chance to stay connected to our wonderful profession, re-connect with colleagues and make new friends.

Mail your check to:
MRTI

P.O. Box 24034

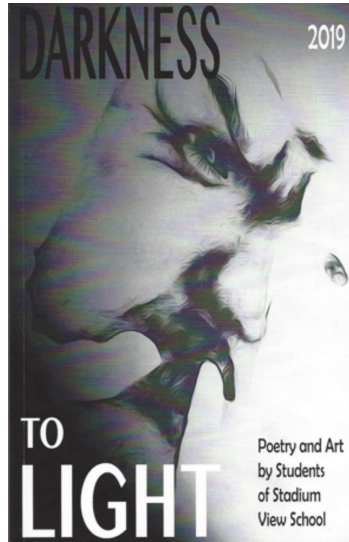
Minneapolis, MN 55424-0034

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MRTI Grant Program in Action

Since its inception, the MRTI grant program has provided MPS teachers with funds to enhance their classroom experiences - everything from field trips to cameras, rugs to library books. Our teachers have found infinitely creative ways to address student needs.

Located in the Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Center, Stadium View School provides education for young men and women incarcerated there. With limited opportunities for self-expression and creativity, Stadium View students have found their voices in poetry and art, producing a volume called Darkness to Light. Publication costs were covered by an MRTI grant.



One wish

If I could have one wish,
I would change the very moment
When my whole life switched.

When you're a victim of the system
There's a whole lot that you miss.

If I could have one wish
I would go back to the start.
When people really cared about you
And kept your interests at heart.

If I could have one wish,
I would wake out of a day's slumber
And be a normal person instead of a case number.

I know I said one wish, but I came up with three.
I don't wanna be locked up when there's so much I can be.
M.B.

Regrets

To the sun I won't see again
To the strangers who call themselves friends
To the love I had - it's gone with the wind
To God - please forgive me for my sins.
The pain I feel as if I've been killed
Focused so much on hard time, forgot how to live
Times like this I wish I was a kid...

K.T.

Violence (Acrostic poem)

Violence
Is not the answer.
Object to anyone who's against you. Be
Liable for your own actions.
Educate others. Don't be
Negative or naysay.
Care for others that care for you.
Encircle yourself with good people.

T.T.



Minneapolis Retired Teachers, Inc. •
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MRTI Newsletter October 2019
Chris Poppe, editor

Our meeting location

Eagles Club #34 American Legion
(On the corner of E. 25th St. & 25th Ave. S)
2507 E. 25th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Articles, opinion essays and
comments are welcome and
should be directed to:

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