

# After School...

*The Newsletter of Minneapolis Retired Teachers Inc.*

## Website

[www.mrti.org](http://www.mrti.org)

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### Membership Chair - Denny Lander

612-926-8478 [dlander222@gmail.com](mailto:dlander222@gmail.com)

### Investments Chair - Larry Risser

612-922-6596 [lerisser10@gmail.com](mailto:lerisser10@gmail.com)

# Sailing, Sailing



## Welcome Aboard the Good Ship Isabella!

Our end-of -the -school-year field trip will take us to Lake Minnetonka for lunch while cruising the lake in comfort.

**When:** Wednesday, June 10

**Where:** If you want to ride the bus, be at the Eagles Club by 10:30. If you prefer to meet us at the Wayzata Depot, 403 E. Lake Street, be there by 11:45. Bus will return about 3:30

**Reservations** will be taken at the May meeting or

Contact Denny Lander ( 612-926-8478 or [dlander222@gmail.com](mailto:dlander222@gmail.com))

**Cost:** \$52.00



Elma proudly displays her kills like a World War One flying ace...

# Are you Still Driving?

by George Schell

One of the toughest decisions a Senior has to make is to give up driving. Not having a car can cause all kinds of problems for everyone. Some Seniors have labeled the decision as a "loss of individual freedom." Maybe they are right, because you can no longer just jump in the car and go get a quart of milk at the grocery store or go to the library or go to a movie when you want to.

Within the past two years, four Senior friends have had to quit driving. Some made a voluntary decision while others had the decision made for them. I was interested in the reasons why and what happened to the cars. Here's what I discovered...

**Scene 1** – Jim was always proud of his Jeep Cherokee, was always a good driver – sure, a little fast at times, but always careful. Until one day. "I had two left turns to make before entering the driveway leading to the lower level parking lot at our Senior Center. The entrance doors have a four foot high cement brick retaining wall leading to the parking lot. I may have been coming a little fast, so I put my foot on the brakes to slow down. My foot slipped off, hit the gas pedal and the Jeep ran right into the retaining wall, knocking out some bricks and extensively damaging the radiator, motor and front of the Jeep. I wasn't hurt, but surprised because this all happened so quickly!"

He lives with his daughter and her husband, who said, "I'm not going to let him drive anymore!" So the decision was made for Jim. The Jeep was towed away and found to be too expensive to repair. The retaining wall was repaired with some Seniors saying, "It's a good thing no one was coming out or going in." Jim agreed with the decision and said, "I was thinking about giving up driving anyway." Jim was 78 when this happened. Since then he has had no trouble finding rides with friends.

**Scene 2** – Dorothy's daughter laid down the law last year, a little worried, "One accident, Mom, and you're done driving!" Dorothy is 92 and drives a new Honda which she loves. She, too, is a careful driver (aren't we all!) and strictly observes all speed limits. No problem until one day when she fell in her home

*Cont. page 6*



# Bill of Fare

**May** - Hamburger on a bun; chips, cole slaw, pickles; variety pies

**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.**




**If you have moved within the past year, you should probably contact TRA ([info@MinnesotaTRA.org](mailto: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.**

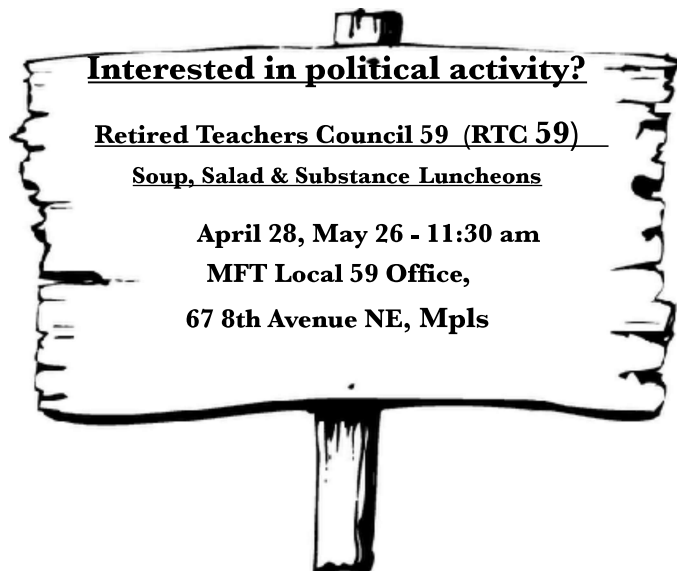
- **Help fund the efforts to preserve our Pensions! Contribute to the Committee of Thirteen!**
- **Donations may be sent to:**
- **Committee of Thirteen**
- **P.O.Box 8997, Minneapolis, MN 55408**

# 2020 Winter -Spring Program Schedule

**cancelled-** March 17 -  
"Minnesota Olympians"  
presented by Patrick Mader

**cancelled-** April 21 "Tut, Tut!  
Our Egyptian  
Adventure" presented  
by Chris Poppe

 May 19 - South High  
Pop Singers & Jazz  
Band Directed by  
Laurie Meyers & Eric Sayre



**Interested in political activity?**  
**Retired Teachers Council 59 (RTC 59)**  
**Soup, Salad & Substance Luncheons**  
**April 28, May 26 - 11:30 am**  
**MFT Local 59 Office,**  
**67 8th Avenue NE, Mpls**

# Calling All Crafters

Our annual craft sale will be held at the **Tuesday October 20th luncheon.** Crafters may request one or two tables and must be set up by 10:30 am. Change is to be provided by each crafter.

To be a vendor you must **register by October 13** with either Marian Anderson at [amazingmarian@gmail.com](mailto:amazingmarian@gmail.com) or Cathy Peterson at [tcpeterson1@comcast.net](mailto:tcpeterson1@comcast.net). If you have questions, please feel free to contact Cathy at 763-425-3362.

Errata:  
In the listing of "Other Board Members" in the 2020 Yearbook, the following Committee titles were inadvertently left out:  
Ed Andersen - Legislative & Committee of 13  
Denny Lander - Membership & Yearbook  
Larry Risser - Investments & Grants  
Elmer Koch - Advisor to the Board

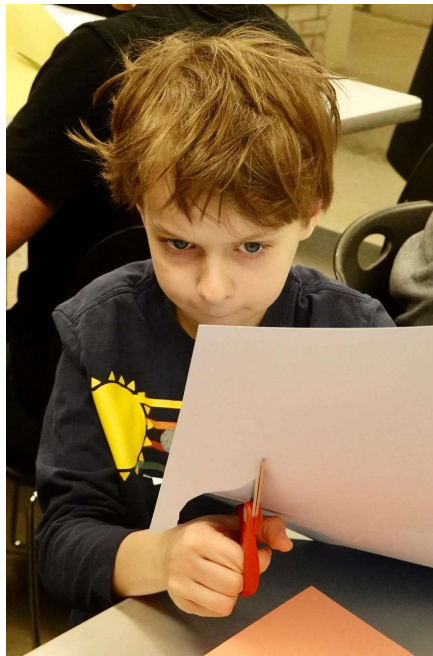
## Forewarned is Forearmed

At a time when the whole world is struggling against an unseen enemy it seems almost ludicrous to be concerned about scams. Yet, that is precisely the time when scammers and cheats come out of the woodwork to prey on our fears and uncertainties. Scammers cheat older Americans out of almost **\$3 Billion dollars a year** under "normal" circumstances. But these times of isolation and insecurity in the face of the CoVid-19 virus are far from normal.

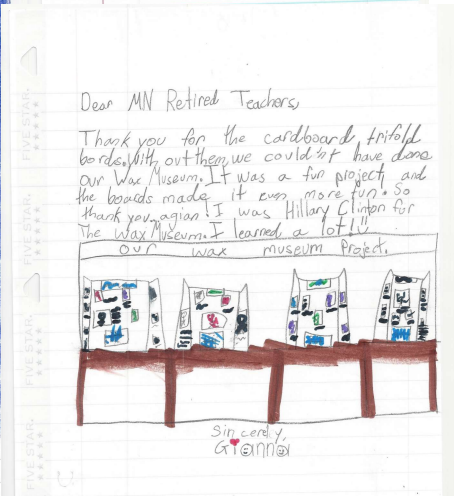
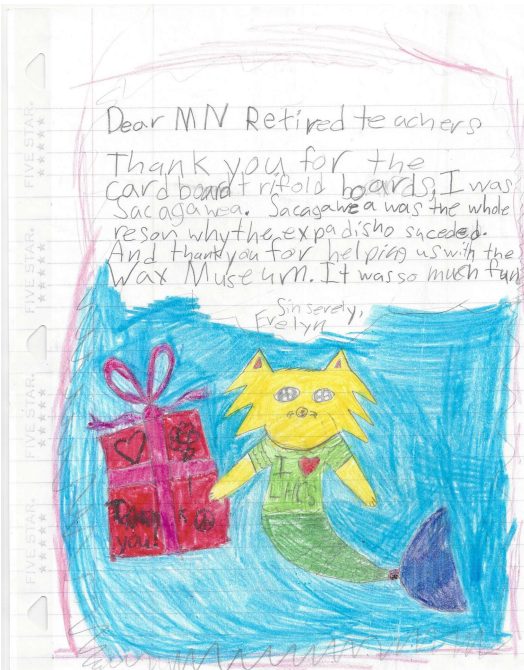
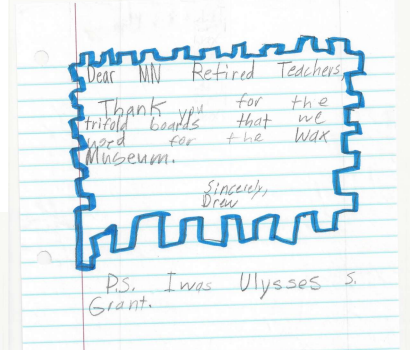
One scam Seniors are most likely to fall for is the "IRS collection" threat : *"This is the IRS. The US Marshall's service is on their way to your house. You have an unpaid tax liability of \$1670 and there is a warrant out for your arrest. Unless you pay this debt immediately, you will go to jail!"*

**What to do?**  
First, know that the IRS will NEVER call you to demand immediate payment. If there's a problem with your taxes they will let you know in a written letter through the US mail. They will never threaten you or ask for credit card or debit card numbers and they will never demand payment through the purchase of gift cards.  
On the whole, I would say that any transaction that requires the use of gift cards can be assumed to be a scam.

# MRTI Grant Program in Action



Our Grants program, through which we give funds directly to active classroom teachers and specialists, continues to be very popular among MPS staff. Funding experiences, equipment and activities, students' learning is enhanced in ways not normally possible. Students in Janet Glocker's third grade class at Lake Harriet Lower School recently learned the craft of bookmaking at Book Arts with funds provided by an MRTI Grant. The books the students made will be used to record results from their study of science.



Photos & text by Larry Risser

## NOW THAT YOU'VE ARRIVED! by Art Indelicato

So, you got that phone call. You know...the one you thought you'd never get. You know, the senior retirement complex where you put a few hundred (or more) dollars down...way back when. You knew you would eventually get that call...but, it seemed so far away. AND, now it's here. When asked the question, you replied, with some fear and trepidation, YES. YES, you and your partner were ready to move on to the next adventure of your lives.

So, now you are living in an apartment for seniors over 55 years of age. Your apartment building is probably ten stories tall and you use an elevator to get from floor to floor and to the underground parking area. One thing you notice immediately is that you are walking more than usual...walking to the elevator to get to another floor; walking to throw out the recyclables and garbage; walking to dinner in the Dining Room; walking to the laundry room. With winter in full swing walking outside is not always an option so this is a good substitute.

Most senior residences have gyms and swimming pools where members can work out. Another option is always an outside venue like the JCC (Jewish Community Center) YMCA or YWCA, which have a large array of exercise activities as well as a pool and gym and is free of charge for some medical insurance policies.

Senior living affords many amenities and you owe it to yourself to investigate them. As the newcomer, you should scope these out and make your own decisions and contributions.

There are card games available most days of the week. I gravitated toward Blackjack. This was not the blackjack I learned at Mystic Lake...or any other casino for that matter. The maximum bet for blackjack is a nickel. Double down is two nickels. That was it! I was surprised that gambling was allowed, even in this meagre form. I haven't checked out the other card games, but you can be sure that there might be some variations on the rules. You learn to be flexible. Oh, Bingo has a payoff. I think it's two dollars.

The blackjack players are all women, except for me and knew their Blackjack...at least they knew their form of blackjack...and they were not shy in pointing out those rules to me.

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# Legislative Update

The Minnesota Teacher Retirement Association (TRA) reports that there is sufficient cash on hand to pay our monthly benefits. A recent TRA technology improvement insures that the infrastructure to address questions remotely and pay our pensions and is working well.

Previous actions to merge our pension with TRA, modify our benefits and increase active contributions have provided us with a sound pension system that is fair for teachers and citizens. A special thanks to Louise Sundin, Committee of 13 lobbyist, for keeping us informed on pension issues at the Legislature and organizing a coalition of pension groups and labor organizations to unite and support our common goals. Thanks and congratulations our MRTI members for their financial contributions to the Committee of Thirteen. Thanks also to Retired Teacher Chapter of Local - 59 (RTC-59) for presenting monthly soup and salad lunches featuring legislative leaders and Progressive speakers who support our political agenda. RTC-59 organized retired and active Minneapolis teachers to do the phone calls, door knocks, post cards and get out the vote efforts that helped elect Gov Walz and flip 18 House seats to take progressive control of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

We must continue our efforts to reject on-going attempts to privatize our pension system and change our defined benefits pensions to individual 403b investment accounts with no public backup. Many of my VIP professional friends who were so proud of their investments are now realizing that they just lost 30% of their retirement accounts.

Critical issues in this legislative session are a bonding bill to support infrastructure projects in communities all over the state and maintaining our tax system as huge changes face Minnesota in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please continue your contributions to the Committee of Thirteen so that we can be effective in the November elections. Please follow the guidance from Governor Walz and stay safe in our homes,

- Ed Andersen  
MRTI Legislative Chair



## Are you Still Driving? *cont.*

and broke her wrist. The cast went from her broken wrist almost up to her elbow, and will be in place for at least six weeks. This really limited her mobility especially when controlling the steering wheel. The decision seem to be made automatically – no more driving. She has had no trouble finding rides – sometimes her daughter picks her up to run errands.

**Scene 3** – Richard, 85 lives independently and said he doesn’t drive that much to justify the expense of keeping a car in good shape. “I go to a movie, the grocery store and the library. I really don’t have to do much more driving. Like Dorothy, I have a daughter who lives close by and when I have a doctor’s appointment or really need to go somewhere else, she is glad to take me. I think it’s a worry off her mind that I am not driving.” He may be right. He donated his twelve year old car to a charity and it was towed away. His apartment rent decreased because he doesn’t need a garage space anymore.

**Scene 4** – I stopped driving because I couldn’t pass the driver’s license eye exam when it was renewal time. I could sense that my reflexes were not as sharp as they once were and it was difficult to read the highway signs. At a University eye clinic exam, the doctor gave me the label of “legally blind.” No wonder I couldn’t read highway signs so well! The Doc said I was at the edge of macular degeneration. I imagined how easily an accident could have happened and I might have damaged much more than the car! Not too difficult at age 90 to quit driving. A grandchild, old enough to drive, inherited the car.

In January, our Senior Center started a new program for people who don’t drive – using the little 12 passenger bus. They offer door-to-door delivery from house to Community Center for any events or classes. It’s so convenient and is used by more and more Seniors who, like me, have made the decision not to drive.



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**Editor’s Note:** If you are concerned about your driving skills, AAA has a number of resources to help you. At [senior.driving.aaa.com](http://senior.driving.aaa.com), they offer an Online Defensive Driving



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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, reconnect with colleagues and make new friends.

Mail your check to:

MRTI

P.O. Box 24034

Minneapolis, MN 55424-0034

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Course called “Road-wise” which you can take on your home computer. It typically takes 6-8 hours to complete, but it can be taken in short segments. You can also take a classroom Defensive Driving course through Community Ed or at a AAA office. AAA also suggests that becoming more familiar with local transportation options such as the bus, light rail, Metro mobility or DARTS, van services for disabled people, Uber and Lyft before giving up the car can help to make the transition less difficult for everyone. So, next time you want to go to the Mall, make it a field trip on some form of alternative transit!

## You've Arrived! cont.

We even have a matriarch who tells us when we are playing our last hand.

There are activities for everyone...from prayer services, to book clubs, to movies, to choral singers. You name it and they've got it! It just might be in a slightly different format than you are used to, however.

Because you moved to senior living, does not mean that you are giving up on your old friends, many of whom you have known for a long time. But, it could mean that you may find new friends in your senior retirement complex. Now you have an expanded family of friends.

Like all senior citizen residences there are undoubtedly variations on what is offered, and what these offerings entail. It also may mean that you can avoid those dark night driving times by scheduling your friendly gatherings during the daylight hours.

We have an underground parking area for us seniors who want to park their cars inside during our cold and blustery winters. I immediately noticed an unusual four wheeled vehicle that isn't typically found in a parking area: shopping carts with the names of "Byerly's" and "Target" attached. This struck me as a bit odd. Not that I haven't seen these carts at Byerly's and Target, before because I have. It is just that I haven't seen these carts in a senior residence parking area.

I asked my Black Jack cohorts how these carts came to be in the underground parking area. "Oh, probably someone bought too many groceries and couldn't carry them, so they "grabbed" a store cart, filled it with groceries and pushed it over to the residence...THEN they just left the cart in the underground parking area...for someone else to use, like taking their groceries up to their apartment via the elevator."

And that is exactly what is happening...except that occasionally when too many carts are accumulated, Byerly's or Target sends someone over to get back some of the carts. I suspect that Byerly's and Target don't mind this system because they are getting good business from the seniors. So, it is a win/win arrangement for everyone concerned.

Another area that we Seniors should be wary of is "black ice." I didn't know what "black ice" was when I first heard of it way back in 1984. Never heard of "black ice" ...until an Australian friend asked me how I

dealt with "black ice." He was coming to Minnesota for a year exchange with me in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Well, "black ice" is a very simple phenomenon that usually occurs on driving pavement. However, it can form on any area where water accumulates in above freezing weather and then freezes over when the temperature drops. It is sometimes hard to see, like when it is hiding under a light dusting of snow. There are uneven areas on streets/roads, sidewalks, and alleys. In every one of these depressions water can collect and freeze, leaving a dangerous icy area on which you can fall. Be careful!

We have a nice setup, well somewhat nice setup, around our senior citizen residence. Where the city park is, the walkways are cleaned off and are relatively ice free. But, you still need to be careful. Where the pathways are not part of a municipality, snow is probably not removed and that leads to dangerous chunky snowy/icy walkways - very conducive to falling.

Let's be honest. Will this possibly be your last residence?

You are now settled in...as hectic as that may be. But, you are here, in your own apartment, in a senior citizen living complex...and you are ready to relax. And, you should relax. Need we say it?

But, you must also come back to the reality that there is much work still to be done. All the insurance forms must be updated. You probably don't need to insure a new home, but you do need to insure the furnishings in your apartment.

Did you remember to send out the change of address to everyone?

Don't forget to change your driver's license. And, while you're at it, you might as well apply for the REAL ID that you are going to need to fly in an airplane after this October. You get the Real ID by sitting in a long line at your local AAA. A new business card might be helpful, too. Don't forget that your annual income tax needs to be filled out, too...state and federal.

Now to enjoy the next step in your Senior Experience. Welcome aboard!

Oh wait! There's one more thing...



## 2020 Scholarship Recipients

Thanks to the generous donations from MRTI members, the Scholarship Committee was able to award scholarships to seven MSP staff members, enabling them to improve their teaching through workshops, classes and degree programs.

1. Kyarra Edmond – currently an Associate Educator - Behavior Support at South High School; has been an Associate Educator at Green Central Elementary. Received a BA in African and African American Studies from the U of M. Is in the Elementary Ed Program at the U of M. Attended Mpls Public Schools her entire life.
2. Kari Ehlers – a MPS teacher since 2007, she has taught 1<sup>st</sup> grade at Bethune Community School since 2014. Received a BS in Education from University of Wisconsin-Stout. Currently attending St. Mary's University of Minnesota, working toward a Master of Teaching degree, with a Culturally Responsive Teaching specialization certification.
3. Erin Hanson – currently a Pre-K teacher at Elizabeth Hall International Elementary since 2005. Received a BS in Early Childhood Education from University of Wisconsin-Stout. Currently attending St. Mary's University of MN with a goal of receiving a Master of Education with A Culturally Responsive Teaching specialization.
4. Mohamoud Mohammed – currently is a JAG Specialist and College and Career Prep Seminar Teacher at Wellstone International High School. Received a BS in Business from Capella University. Anticipating completion of a Master of

Dear Members,

I am Barbara Smith Kuenne, your new president. Here are a few things about me. I grew up on a Kansas wheat farm. In 1966, I graduated from Bethel College in N. Newton KS. with a double degree in Elementary Education and Home Economics. I taught all 30 yrs. in Mpls. Schools. My first school was Penn Elementary on the North side. Next came Lincoln Fundamental School and I ended at Anne Sullivan. All in primary grades.

I married Tom Kuenne in 1973. We were married for 41 years before he died. During that time we bought and ran a remote American Plan fishing lodge in N.W. Ontario. Running our own mini city was exciting, challenging and definitely a learning experience.

After retirement in 2002, I got involved with Hospice and have continued to volunteer with North Memorial Home Care patients. I like to be busy and enjoy many activities. Reading is a favorite, book clubs, playing bells at church, golfing with friends, Ballroom dancing, working with Heart of Dance in 5th grade, MRTI, gardening, my cats, and definitely travel.

I am honored to be your President. If you have questions, or concerns, please reach out to me so we can find a solution. Working together makes us better and stronger.

Blessings,

*Barbara Kuenne*



5. Bridgette Schneider – currently a Special Education Assistant, in the Early Childhood Special Education department, with experience at the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Received a BA in both child psychology and anthropology from the U of M-Twin Cities. Currently pursuing a Master of Special Education in Autism Spectrum Disorders at the University of St. Thomas.

6. Karrie Silvertsen Mueller – currently employed at Edison High School as a special education assistant since 2012; enrolled at Western Governors University with a dual major in Elementary and Special Education; plans to graduate with dual licensure after student teaching in Fall 2020.

7. Micaela Torchia – is currently a Special Education Assistant in Early Childhood programs at various High 5 and preschool settings. Has an Associates degree in Early Childhood from Mpls. Community and Technical College. Twelve credits from receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Psychology from Metro State.



cont. from page 1

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[heartladyk@yahoo.com](mailto:heartladyk@yahoo.com)

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Mitchell Trockman - 763-545-7500  
[mitch.trockman@comcast.net](mailto:mitch.trockman@comcast.net)

### Did You Know...

MRTI contributes to many programs that support Minneapolis children? Your dues support annual contributions to:

- The Assistance League
- Mary's Place
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Minneapolis
- Jeremiah Program
- Harriet Tubman Center
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Twin Cities
- St. Joseph's Home for Children
- People Serving People
- Minneapolis Recreation Development

## \* Cut this out & staple into your Yearbook\*\* Yearbook Update

The following people renewed or corrected their membership listings after the yearbook had gone to press.

### Corrected Email Address:

Maggie Reed - [maggiereed1961@gmail.com](mailto:maggiereed1961@gmail.com)

### New members:

**Debra Goodlaxson**  
3630 Longfellow Av  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
612-721-6821  
[dejegood@gmail.com](mailto:dejegood@gmail.com)

**Pamela Holland-Mills**  
6617 McCauley Tr  
Edina, MN 55439  
952-649-0726  
[pamshm@gmail.com](mailto:pamshm@gmail.com)

### Late Renewals

**Cynthia Brown**  
4223 2nd St NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55321  
507-358-4542

**Bernice Spilleth**  
3417 E Minnehaha Pkwy  
Minneapolis, MN 55417  
612-722-7565  
[dspilleth@yahoo.com](mailto:dspilleth@yahoo.com)

**Rosemarie McGiffin**  
5855 Cheshire Pkwy # 3401  
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763-843-8085  
[rosemariemcgiffin@gmail.com](mailto:rosemariemcgiffin@gmail.com)

**Mary Olson**  
7033 14<sup>th</sup> Ave S  
Richfield, MN 55423  
612-866-9245  
[jamolson@q.com](mailto:jamolson@q.com)

**Rebecca Strandlund**  
5250 Vernon Ave S apt 212  
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612-636-0237  
[beckystrandlund@yahoo.com](mailto:beckystrandlund@yahoo.com)

Minneapolis Retired Teachers, Inc. •  
P.O. Box 24034  
Minneapolis, MN 55424-0034

**Our meeting location**

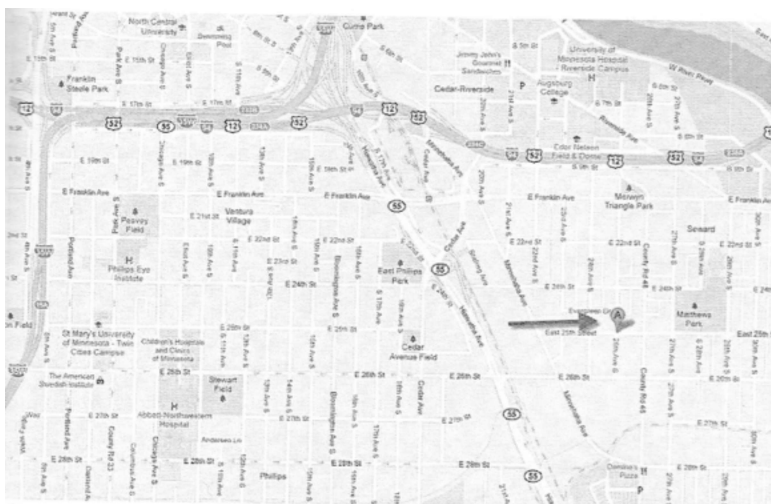
Eagles Club #34 American Legion  
(On the corner of E. 25th St. & 25th Ave. S)  
2507 E. 25th Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55406

MRTI Newsletter April 2020  
Chris Poppe, editor

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

Chris Poppe

3851 Queen Ave. N  
Minneapolis, MN 55412  
[chpop001@gmail.com](mailto:chpop001@gmail.com)



Plenty of free parking!