

# *MRTI News*

## *Minneapolis Retired Teachers, Inc.*

*November 2013*

*Founded in 1926*

*Vol. 64 No. 2*

### *MRTI Programs Coming Up*

#### **December 17, 2013 - Holiday Music**



\* In December we have a special holiday music program presented by Minneapolis Public Schools students. The highly regarded Madrigal Singers from Field School will perform holiday music. They will be joined by the classical guitar students from Southwest High School. Both groups are led by Ruth LeMay.



#### **January 21, 2014 - Lucy Rose Fischer – “ I’m New at Being Old”**

Lucy Rose Fischer, PhD is an award winning author, artist, gerontologist. She explains her book, I’m New at Being Old, a whimsical picture book about aging.



#### **February 18, 2014 - Mellow Fellows**

Men’s Vocal Ensemble Mellow Fellows will perform for us singing show tunes, Americana, religious/spiritual, seasonal, and popular music.

#### **March 18, 2014 - Wayne Jorgenson**



Local author Wayne Jorgenson is an expert on the First Minnesota Regiment which provided exemplary service in the Civil War. He shows photos and shares the personal stories of many of those courageous men, some well-known, and some not. We will also see some of the actual artifacts that were on the battlefield with those Minnesota soldiers.



#### **April 15, 2014 - David Taylor, Storytelling Magician**

David Taylor is a lifelong resident of Bloomington who has performed for audiences young and old. He brings a special touch of storytelling to his magical repertoire.



#### **May 20, 2014 - BRAVA!**

BRAVA!, the Twin Cities’ premier women’s choral ensemble will perform for us again. BRAVA! brings together women from diverse backgrounds, ages and interests. Together they share the common goal of offering outstanding women’s choral music.

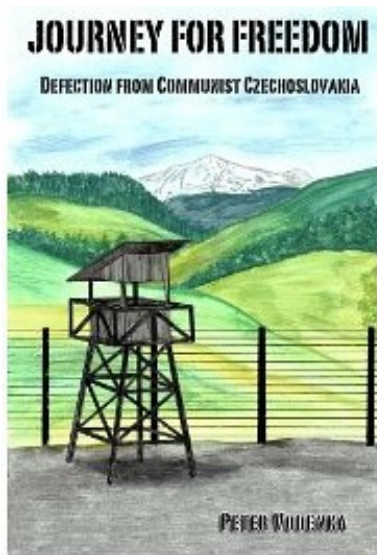
## 2013-2014 Off to a Good Start

Attendees at our September luncheon enjoyed our speaker, naturalist and author Jim Gilbert. A lifelong educator, he is comfortable to listen to, and so very engaging as he talks about ordinary, like explaining the purpose of ragweed (Yes, it has a role in nature's world!) Lunch was good, too.

In October local actress Sally Wingert shared the story of her path to the Guthrie Theatre stage. Her family's move from Duluth took her to Robbinsdale High School where she immersed herself in theatre. She described the wonderful dramas and full scale musicals where she found such joy. She emphasized the importance of her teachers and their support. Those in attendance concurred as she lamented the decline in support for the arts in today's public schools. Sally obviously has many fans, as we had a full house for lunch.

## A Book Review by Margaret Tuma

### *Journey for Freedom by Peter Vodenka*



Last May many of us heard Peter Vodenka tell the compelling story of his family's escape from Communist Czechoslovakia in 1983. That terrifying ordeal is only a small part of the story.

In this book the author tells of the way of life under Communist rule (which we as Americans would find intolerable). He also explains the political circumstances as well as providing glimpses into people's personal lives, all of which led to the years of preparation for his family's escape. Once safely in America there is freedom. As the story continues we share in the family's struggles learning to live in world where everything is different.

This book provides amazing insight into a world away from the one we know. It is informative, engaging, personal, and hopeful. Well worth reading.

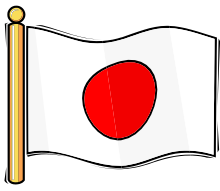
## Craft Fair Held in October



MRTI members offered their handmade crafts for sale at this annual October event. One could choose from beads and bows, photography, original art work, yarn goods, hand-hewn walking supports, and travel opportunities. Thank you to Mildred Clarke who donated a collection of her handmade goodies for a special door prize. Charles and Mildred Clarke deserve special thanks as they continue to organize this event after many years.

## Savaiano Visits “Land of the Rising Sun”

Lindstrom resident and former Minneapolis Public School educator M. J. Savaiano recently traveled to Japan with 38 high school students as part of a Student Ambassadors program with People to People. While in Japan, the delegation visited many different towns and cities for two weeks in July. This program introduced delegates to a wonderful cultural experience that began in 1956, thanks to the support of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower.



Japanese culture is a jumble of ancient and modern. It is a captivating country, a kaleidoscope of ancient traditions swirling alongside of modern technology. The Japanese are very creative and combine hip culture and technology in Tokyo's Akihabara shopping district, known also as “Electric Town,” where one can buy robots, televisions, video games and comics, and see fantasy characters on the street. Visitors have the opportunity to view the city from the 45<sup>th</sup> floor of the Government Offices and experience business efficiency with the opportunity to choose and order lunch there by letter or number in the cafeteria. Students enjoyed learning about and experiencing Japanese anime, one of the largest industries in Japan using digital technology and animation. Near these modern buildings, one can catch a glimpse of the Imperial Palace, the main residence of the Emperor of Japan, and take photos at the picturesque Nijubashi Bridge. We see masses of people pouring in all directions on the streets when lights change. Traffic flows neatly when the light changes again and everyone follows the rules. About 12 million people live in Tokyo, and 130,000,000 in Japan--about the size of California.

Mt. Fuji, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is 75 miles from Tokyo and the summit is at 12,388 feet.



We drove to the 5<sup>th</sup> station above the level of the clouds and trekked to the 6<sup>th</sup> station at 8,500 feet on July 4th. There, we sang our national anthem while I waved our national flag—an emotional moment! It would take five hours to reach the summit and many climb at night to see the sunrise. Open only from July through August for hikers, it is the most celebrated mountain in Japan and considered sacred and a privilege for all who set foot on it. About 400,000 persons climb Mt. Fuji yearly. The mountain guides were very helpful as they directed us through scrub brush and rocks. It was like being on an island, rocky and barren, in the middle of the ocean—a very unique experience.

After spending our evening in Hokone, a resort spa town with geothermal hot springs and set against the backdrop of Mt. Fuji, we went on to the small city of Kikugawa, with a population of about 47,000 and known for green tea production. Students were guests at a local middle school and stayed among various families for three days enjoying the hospitality of host families. This was a unique opportunity to learn about daily life in Japan. Japanese homes can be very narrow and many still use traditional tatami mat rooms for sleeping. Delegates ate meals with the host families and participated in a variety of activities around the local area. There are 1,000 rice paddies currently being farmed by 50 families and just designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Kikugawa would like to have a Sister City in the United States.

En route to Gifu for our 4 hour ride, we stopped to pick green tea leaves and sample the many products made from green tea. Gifu is important because it was shogan from Gifu, Ieyasu Tokugawa, who unified Japan and began to rule from Edo, now known as Tokyo. After dinner we walked to the Nagara riverbank after dark to watch the cormorant birds dive into the water to catch ayu, a kind of trout, off the boats lit with fire on the bow, the way it was done in the 1300 years ago.



Best known for its artisanal legacy of woodworking and carpentry, the craftsmen of Takayama are credited for the masterful work in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Kyoto Castle. The ancient streets of this town felt like stepping back in time. We visited a morning market and explored the shops in Takayama. The nearby Hida folk village was very interesting with over 30 buildings, some with thatched roofs and others with shingles dating back to the 1800's. We saw a weaver and a wood carver actively working their crafts.

Then we rode a super-express bullet train toward Hiroshima and saw villages along the way, mountains everywhere, and went through many tunnels at 185 miles per hour! The city of Hiroshima is most widely known as the first city in history to be targeted by a nuclear weapon. On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city toward the end of World War II. The destruction and loss of life caused by this attack coupled with the atomic bomb dropped on the city of Nagasaki led to the cessation of hostilities, ending the war. This tragic destruction and loss of life resulted in the building of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in 1955. The city continues to be a global advocate for abolishing the use of all nuclear weapons. We made a vow of peace and left our own folded origami cranes near Sadako Sasaki's monument.

In the morning, we took a ferry to Miyajima Island, home of the Itsukushima Shrine. It was high tide so we could see the vermillion Grand Torii gate, which looks as if it is floating in the water. Built in 593, this gateway to a Shinto temple consists of two uprights supporting a concave crosspiece with projecting ends and a straight crosspiece beneath it. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it holds a lot of respect and power, as the ocean is part of Japanese culture. Sea Samurais worshipped at this Shinto shrine in past times. We walked around the island and were very lucky to see part of a wedding ceremony in traditional dress.

Kyoto is a museum town, unlike Tokyo and was the capital from 794 to 1868. There are thousands of gabled Shinto shrines and serene Buddhist temples in the area. It is known as the place where everything is suburb and elegant, the height of culture. We explored the Nijo Castle, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, built in 1603 of cypress with wood carvings and sliding door. There were 33 rooms with 800 tatami mats, squeaking Nightingale floors constructed to "sing" at every footstep, a moat and stone walls to protect shogun from real and imagined enemies. Then it was on to the Golden Pavillion, one of Kyoto's most famous sites and now a Zen temple, built over a pond. This UNESCO World Heritage temple is covered in gold leaf and topped by a bronze roof. We walked around the Gion District, one of the pleasure quarters, in Kyoto where at its height there were about 3000 *geisha* and 700 teahouses in the area. Students practiced calligraphy with a professional calligrapher and learned about the comedic art of Kyogen dancing. On our final day we visited the holy building called "Sanjusangendo" originally built in 1164 with 1001 statues of the Buddhist deity in a large hall.



"One ringee dingee..

## Is this the party to whom I am speaking?"

Calling all MRTI members...you now have the unique opportunity to volunteer from the comfort of your home by joining the much coveted MRTI Telephone Committee. Requests for calls have greatly increased, so we need more callers. Your time commitment would be approximately 25 minutes a month (no, that is not a misprint...25 minutes per month), September to May. It is not necessary that you attend our meetings (unless, of course, you want to!). If you are interested, Please drop everything and give Carol Lauder "one ringee dingee" at 763.557.6564 as soon as possible. Your help is greatly appreciated!!!

### *Limited Medical Assistance Fund*

**Access the Limited Medical Assistance Fund** to help cover medical costs according to the guidelines:

- Reimbursement is **not** for co-pays, prescriptions or office visits.
- The reimbursement is up to a "reasonable amount" of costs remaining after an insurance payment for hospital care, out-patient surgery, treatments, etc.
- You are eligible no matter your age and/or Medicare status, with proper documentation.
- To receive application forms call TRA at 651.296.2409.
- Distribution of funds is made throughout the year, with no particular deadline.

**At the End of the Year**, if more money is available from the trust than was needed for the health care reimbursement explained above, then the balance will be distributed for health care insurance premiums. This eligibility is more strict than the process for medical expenses:

- A retiree must be 65 or older,
- Must have retired from a Minneapolis school after May 1, 1974 and before January 1, 2000 **and**
- Must not be eligible for free Medicare Part A.

### *Newsletter Advertising*

MRTI is providing an opportunity to advertise products or services in the newsletter.

**Who May Advertise?** MRTI members, their family members, and charities which MRTI supports.

**Content cannot be of a political, religious or illegal nature.**

**Rates for black and white, camera-ready copy for one-time placement:**

Page Size	Member	Non-member
1/8	\$15	\$20
1/4	\$25	\$35
1/2	\$40	\$55

Copy needs to be submitted for committee approval and space availability to David Rolek at [dmdr@aol.com](mailto:dmdr@aol.com). FFI call him at 952.894.4925.

We are also anticipating the opportunity to accept ads in the future for the annual membership directory. Watch for further information.



## MRTI Archives Find a New Home

by Dave Rolek

The MRTI Archives dating back to 1926 that used to be stored in a tiny room in the basement of First Christian Church finally found a new home.

After finding out that the church had been sold and we needed to find a new place for our meetings, it dawned on the Board members that the Archives needed to move also. We called around to different places in the Twin Cities and no one indicated that they had any interest in them. So, several Board members took boxes to their homes and stored them in attics, garages, and basements.

At one of our monthly luncheons, retiree Mary Petersen approached me and said she was willing to help us with our desire to do something more permanent with all of these items. After several months of discussions about what we should do with them (that seemed to be leading to nothing more than confusion), she showed me an article from the St. Paul Retired Teachers group who had the exact same problem. This article led me to Duane Swanson, Curator of Manuscripts at the Minnesota Historical Society. He most graciously accepted our Archives, went through them piece by piece, formally cataloged them, and they now are available to be seen. So, if by chance, you are interested in seeing them, stop by the Minnesota Historical Society and have a look!

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## *Important Notes*

### \* MRTI

P.O. Box 24034  
Minneapolis, MN 55424-0034

\* **Report** address changes and email addresses to membership chair Denny Lander, 612.926.8478 or dlander222@comcast.net.

\* **Cheer and Service Committee:** If you know someone who is ill or just needs a kind word or a member who has died, contact Doris Arnold, 952.431.7471 to have a card sent. Mary Karen Dorniden, 952.941.8833, mkdorniden@msn.com will send birthday cards to our honoree members.

\* **Food Shelf:** Donate at our monthly meetings. Just a \$1.00 donation buys \$9.00 of food!

\* **We Need You!** Contact a Board member or any committee chair if you want to take an active role in MRTI.

\* **Do You Have an Interesting Story?** Do you know a fascinating retired teacher? Did you just take a trip of a lifetime or read a great book? Contact Becky Grover to contribute an article to the Newsletter at rlgrover14@gmail.com.

\* **A Little Extra:** Every year there are members who send in their membership dues with a "little extra" as a gift to the organization. Then, too, there are Honorary members who continue to send dues even though they have become non-dues-paying members. These donations are appreciated, and the money is used to defray the costs of scholarships.

\* **Gifts or Legacies** given to the MRTI are welcomed and appreciated. You may use these gifts to honor departed friends or relatives. Direct contributions to treasurer Bob Ryder, MRTI. P.O. Box 24034, Mpls, MN 55424-0034.

\* **Committee of 13 Website:** Get updates on the Committee of 13: [www.committeeof13.com](http://www.committeeof13.com).

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

**Be sure to visit the new website for MRTI.**

**Contact Denny Lander if you have any suggestions to help make the site more informative.**

## *Board of Directors*

### **Officers**

Jan. 31 to Dec. 31 (2 years)

Joanne Lambrecht	President	2012-2013
Dave Rolek	VP/ President Elect	2012-2013
Gregory McDaniels	Recording Secretary	2012-2013
Christine Poppe	Asst. Rec. Secretary	2013-2014
Elmer Koch	Asst. Corresp.Secretary	2013-2013
Gayle Marko	Corresp. Secretary	2013-2014

### **Directors**

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 (3 years)

Rebecca Grover	Past President	2012-2013
Margaret Tuma		2012-2014
Barbara Kuenne		2013-2015
Josephine Bunton		2011-2013
Mitch Trockman		2013-2015

Ed Andersen	Legislative Chair	Board Appointment
Denny Lander	Membership Chair	Board Appointment
Larry Risser	Investment Chair	Board Appointment
Becky Grover	Newsletter Editor	Board Appointment
Robert Ryder	Treasurer	Board Appointment
Sylvia Farrells	Scholarship Chair	Board Appointment
Elmer Koch	Advisor to the Board	Board Appointment

## *Lunch Reservations Going Well*

Our phone callers record the names on the reservations, not just numbers. Those reservations will be held at the ticket table and names will be checked off. No-shows will be billed for the cost of the luncheon.

**Meatless Choice:** When you are called for a reservation, you must request this choice.

If you have **NOT** been called by the Wednesday before the Tuesday lunch and want to attend, you may call **Gayle Marko, 952.920.1395**, to make a reservation.

The Board reports that this policy has helped us provide accurate numbers to the caterers.

**Minneapolis Retired Teachers, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 24034**

## **MRTI Newsletter March 2013**

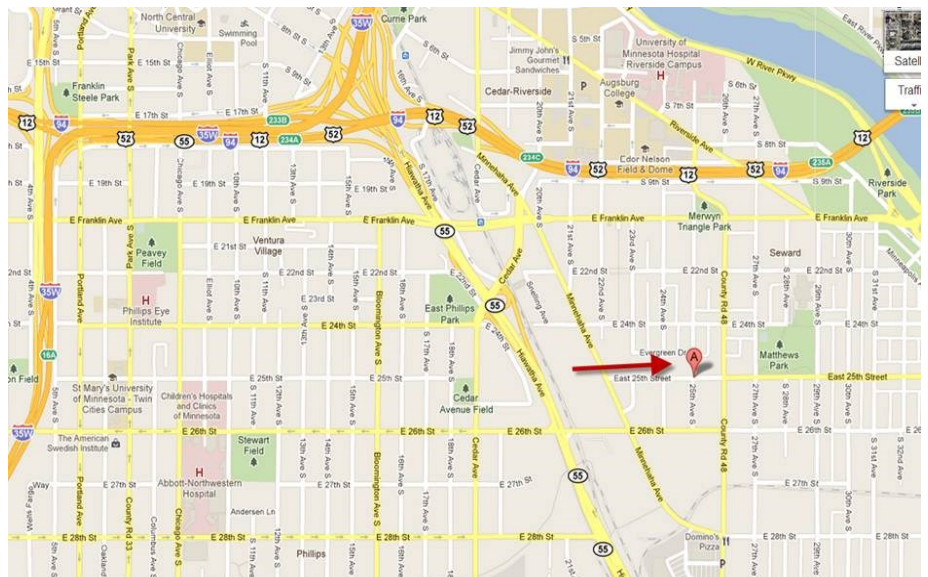
**Becky Grover, Editor**

Articles, points of view, and  
comments are welcome  
and should be directed to:

Becky Grover  
5904 Oliver Ave. So.  
Mpls., MN 55419  
rlgrover14@gmail.com

### **Our New Meeting Location**

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



**Plenty of free parking!**