After School...

The Newsletter of Minneapolis Retired Teachers Inc.

Website www.mrti.org

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Membership Chair - Denny Lander 612-926-8478 <u>dlander222@gmail.com</u>

Investments Chair - Larry Risser 612-922-6596 lerisser10@gmail.com





Welcome Aboard the Good Ship Isabella!

Our end-of-the-school-year field trip will be a cruise and lunch as we sail into freedom on Lake Minnetonka. To join us, you **must** have been vaccinated against CoVid19 and prepare to wear a mask.

When: Wednesday, June 9

Where: The bus leaves the Eagles Club at 10:30 am,

returning about 3:30.

Cost: \$52.00

If you prefer to meet us at the Wayzata Depot, 403 E. Lake Street, be there by 11:45. (Map on page 3.)

To Reserve Your Spot: Mail your check to Denny Lander, 4841

York Ave. So, Minneapolis, MN 55410 by May 18, 2021.

Growing Up in a Coal Mine Camp School in Southern Colorado **During the Great Depression. Part III**

by Nick Lovdjieff

Many service men, especially those who had been in difficult combat duty, experienced difficulty when they returned to civilian life. By comparison I, and many others, experienced only minor problems. We did not return with injuries and were not affected by what is now recognized as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Millions who had entered into military service in their late teens were returning as mature veterans. They encountered problems where the economy was still undergoing conversion to post-war production. Consumer goods were in short supply; there was a shortage of housing; and perhaps most important for me, good paying jobs were scarce.

After my sea chest and the rest of my clothes caught up with me, I boarded a train to Minnesota. My goals for this visit were to find a job, an apartment, to buy an engagement ring and to make wedding plans. Job interviews made me painfully aware employers were not interested in my B.S. Degree with a Major in Naval Science and Tactics. I had no success finding an apartment. I became very depressed. Concerned about not being able to get a job, I suggested it might be wise for me to request reassignment in the Regular Navy. That upset Evy. She had achieved her "dream job" as private secretary for Minneapolis Mayor Hubert H. Humphrey and was not eager to leave and marry a transient Navy officer. Our disagreement worsened when I suggested she was more devoted to her job than to our future.

Wanting to achieve something positive from this trip, I went to Jacob's Jewelers and purchased a ring. That evening when we were alone, I presented the ring. She looked it for a long time, then quietly said, "I'm sorry, I can't take your ring," and left the room. I was devastated. During my 11 day visit, I somehow managed to derail our wedding plans. I returned the ring and a few days later bid Evy a cool goodbye at the train station, returning home to Walsenburg to sort out my future plans.

Late on the day of my departure, Evy wrote a long impassioned letter telling me we had both made a mistake. It was the most important of the 105 letters I had received from her. Some excerpts follow: ".... I'm lonesome for you and wish you were here so I could talk to you.... I wish I had your ring.... my job doesn't rate at all compared to you.... I have the same feeling you have- if we don't get married now, we'll be sorry." I was

elated with her letter. I returned to Minnesota and managed to get an office job. Evy finally got her engagement

> ring and we were married on November 23, 1946.



Housing was very scarce after the war. We rented a room for several months in the home of Evy's brother and sister-in-law. In March, 1947, we moved into our first apartment, one half of a Quonset hut in a housing complex for veterans at 41st and Bloomington in Minneapolis; it was our

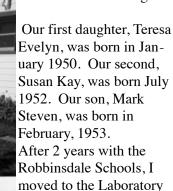
home for five years.

I had never considered being a teacher but I was unhappy with my routine office job and future prospects with Brown and Bigelow in St. Paul. So I enrolled in the College of Education at the University of Minnesota, graduating in spring, 1948. In September, I began my teaching career as a junior high mathematics teacher in Robbinsdale. Evy's boss, HHH, was elected to the



US Senate that year. He wanted her to accompany his staff to Washington and assured us he would help me get a

teaching job there. But we declined and she resigned.





School at the University of Minnesota for 2 years. In September 1951, I began teaching in Minneapolis, first at

2021 Program Schedule



April 20, 2021 1:00 PM

"Fathers, Sons and Holy Ghosts of Baseball" Presented by Tom Murray



May 18, 2021 1:00 PM

"Connecting Communities through the River" presented by Tom Evers, Executive Director of MPLS Parks Foundation



June 9, 2021 Field Trip

Cruise on Lake Minnetonka (conditions permitting)

All meetings - EXCEPT the Lake Minnetonka Boat Cruise - will be conducted via Zoom until further notice.



Zooming Directions

First, go to **Zoom.us** to **Download and install** a copy of the Zoom software on your computing device (cell phone, iPad, tablet or a computer.) Your device must have a camera built in or attached.

If you are using Zoom for the first time:

- Send Denny an email at <u>dlander222@gmail.com</u>, requesting to join the meeting.
- On the day before the meeting, you will receive an email invitation to the meeting from Denny Lander
- start Zoom
- click on the line that starts with https://.....
 It will be underlined and blue.

Below is a sample, not the actual invitation.

Denny Lander is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Denny Lander's Personal Meeting Room

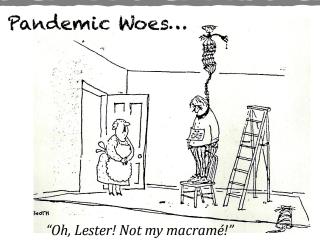
Join Meeting

https://us04web..us/j/6520476121?pwd=RU-V4ZUd3Tm0xZnB0ZUZIVU5MUVIKZz09

Meeting ID: 652 047 6121 Passcode: 3D9ryQ

Highlight and copy the passcode, in case you are asked to provide it.

When the meeting screen appears, if your name appears in a black square, you need to turn on your camera. Look for a red picture of a camera with a line drawn through it. Click on it to turn it green and your face will appear on the screen.



Coal Mine Camp cont.

High School, and finally at Susan B. Anthony Junior High School for my last year as a teacher in 1962.

Why did I leave teaching? The simple answer is "Sputnik." When Russia launched Sputnik in October, 1957, educators in the US became concerned that American students were falling behind Russian students in mathematics and science. In 1961, a 4 million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation to rewrite the science and mathematics curriculums led to the formation of the School Mathematics Study Group (SMSG). I was one of 13 junior high mathematics teachers from the US recruited to write "new math" textbooks for grades 7 and 8. We spent the summers of 1959, 1960 and 1961 at the U of Michigan, Stanford, and Yale with mathematics educators and mathematicians writing the pupils' and teachers' editions. Other teams prepared books for elementary and high school students. When published, the SMSG textbooks were made available to selected schools for experimental use and for publishing companies to use when preparing new editions of their textbooks. I used the SMSG Algebra I textbook for a grade 9 class during my last year of teaching at Susan B. Anthony. (I recently made contact with one of the students in that class who still resides in Minnesota.)

My experience with SMSG led to my being recruited to work as an editor in the Scott, Foresman Mathematics Department in Chicago. At the time, I thoroughly enjoyed teaching. Evy, I and our three children were very happy with life in Minnesota. We had relatives and many friends in the area, so this was a very difficult choice for us, but the future salary and benefits were a big consideration. For my first year of teaching I received \$2400. At that time, there was a dual salary schedule. Single women were paid less than men and married women were not hired as teachers. Teachers were paid only during the school year, so each summer I either taught summer school classes or sought a part-time job. I needed only to complete my Master's thesis to qualify for a principal's position. I felt I had a good chance of being appointed because I had placed 7th in a group of 28 on the National Teacher **Exams.** Becoming a principal would result in greater income, but I was not sure I wanted to go that route. As the post war economy began to pick up in the 1950s, salaries for engineers, construction people and other professionals became more competitive and inflation began to set in. In the 1960-61 school year, my salary was \$10,000. However, salaries in other professions had increased more rapidly than salaries for teachers. Carpenters were being

paid more than teachers. Teachers who complained about being underpaid often were reminded, "Well, you only work for 9 months a year." In the mid 1950s, I wrote several letters that were published in the Minneapolis Star Journal, advocating for greater teachers' salaries. In one, in response to a critic who wrote that teachers worked only 8 months a year and during the school year had many days set aside for holidays and conferences, I wrote, "... while true that in Minneapolis a teacher receives \$5500 after 11 years service, a teacher's salary cannot be computed on an hourly basis. Teachers do not punch a time clock, and their work day does not start or end with school time." In my letter I went on to point out that in the 11 years it takes a teacher to reach the maximum on the salary schedule, a journeyman carpenter would have earned \$14,300 more than a teacher in total earnings.

Ultimately, the decision was made, and I began work at Scott, Foresman on June 25, 1962 as an Associate Editor. As a student in the coal mine camp school so long ago, I had never envisioned working for the publishing company that had published some of my textbooks. When I enlisted in the regular Navy in 1942, my goal was to get a job with security potential. When my fiancée persuaded me to "give civilian life a try," the security potential of a teaching job had strong appeal for me. My choice to leave teaching and go to Scott, Foresman turned out to be a wise one. Eventually, I became Editorial Vice President, Mathematics, head of a department of 30 people. I retired in June, 1979 after a 25 year career.

After retirement, Evy and I were "Snowbirds," spending winters in a small condo in Naples, Florida. We joined Immanuel Lutheran Church there and became leaders of the Serving Others Ministry Committee. Our proudest achievement was getting the congregation involved with Habitat for Humanity, leading successful campaigns to raise enough money to pay for 10 Habitat Houses.

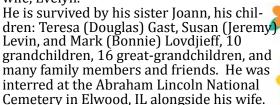
In that special letter in 1946 Evy wrote, "Everything will work out for us if we get married first and face things together." That was a prophetic statement. Everything did work out beautifully for us. But our "fairy tale" courtship and marriage ended when Evy was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in 2009. We moved into our Campbell House apartment on May 21, 2010. I was able to provide the care she needed in our apartment for 3 ½ years. After another 3½ years in a care center for dementia patients, Evy's death came at age 96 on June 25, 2017. We had been partners for 70 ½ years and blessed with 3 children, 10 grandchildren and now 13 great grandchildren. Since her death, I moved to a condo in Luther

Coal Mine Camp cont.

Village. It has been the ideal place for me. I've enjoyed my volunteer work with the Wood Workers which has enabled me to meet many other residents.

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Nick Lovdjieff, 95, passed away on September 1, 2020 after a short battle with congestive heart failure. He was preceded in death by his parents, siblings Crist, Mary, twin sister Catherine, and his wife, Evelyn.



Nick sent us several pieces of his woodworking projects and the photographs used to illustrate his story while we were working on it, but he never got to see his story in print.

MRII Teacher Grants at Work

Just as students were returning for in-person classes, the MRTI Grant committee was able to deliver 81 water bottles for students at Folwell's Performing Arts Magnet School. Shown here is **Amanda Lodermeier** who applied for grant funding to provide 81 water bottles for several classes.

Due to COVID restrictions, the school has only one water fountain to serve the entire school, so MRTI donors are doing their part to keep students hydrated. Fortuitously, a sale at COSTCO allowed us to purchase the bottles at \$3.00 each instead of the Target price of \$10.00 each. **Larry Risser** picked up the bottles and delivered them just before students arrived.



Funds are available for medical reimbursement.
Give TRA a call to request an application.
651-296-240

Limited Medical Assistance Fund (LMAF)

(administered by the Teachers Retirement Association)



Interested in political activity?

Retired Teachers Council 59 (RTC 59)
"Gathering, Learning and Action"

April 27, May 25
10:00am - 12:00 Noon
We will meet via Zoom
Find your invitation/link in your
email

Overviev

The Limited Medical Assistance Fund (LMAF) was established in the 1930s through a bequest of a retired Minneapolis teacher.

A trust was established to reimburse certain medical costs of retired Minneapolis teachers, and is administered by the Teachers Retirement Association.

To qualify for reimbursement, a retiree must have been a Minneapolis Special School District #1 teacher.

Reimbursements

Eligible retirees may request

- Allowable medical expenses
- Health insurance premiums (when funds permit)

Medical Expenses

Allowable medical expenses, if these expenses are not covered by Medicare or any other form of insurance, include:

- inpatient or outpatient procedures performed at hospitals, clinics or surgery centers; and
- licensed nursing care or prosthetic

Expenses that are **not eligible** include: dental care, nursing home care, medication, therapy, glasses, out-patient services, non-medical items

Reimbursements are reviewed and disbursements made twice a year.

How To Apply

- Call TRA to request information.
 If expenses are determined to be eligible, an application will be mailed to you.
- Complete and return the application to TRA, along with expense receipts.

Health Insurance Premium Expenses

To be eligible for health insurance premium reimbursement, a retiree must meet all of the following

- be age 65 or older;
- have retired after May 1, 1974, but before July 1, 1999; and
- not be eligible for free Medicare

disbursements made twice a year.

Contact Us

Teachers Retirement Association 60 Empire Drive, Suite 400 St. Paul, MN 55103-4000

> 651.296.2409 or 800.657.3669 651.297.5999 (FAX)

*** Cut this out and staple into your Yearbook***

Yearbook Update

These membership listings were received after the yearbook had gone to press:

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Judith DelMain

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Michael Edmunds

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Rita L. Fox

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Michael W. Wilson

554 Estes Road Taos, NM 87571 612-743-6546 michaelwilsonmpls@gmail.com

Spring Report on MN Legislature

President Biden and the Democrats in Congress passed the Stimulus Relief Act, providing many needed benefits to states, cities, counties and schools. In his revised budget, Gov. Walz is increasing basic per pupil state aid by 1.5% in year one and 2.5% in year two of the biennium state budget. There is money for all E-12 students to attend summer school this year to make up for lost class time. A big question remains for special education funding. Supt. Ed Graff reported that Minneapolis spent over \$100 million on special education services last year and was reimbursed only \$50 million, which put \$50 million on the property taxes of Minneapolis residents and businesses.

The Stimulus bill also provides \$86 billion to shore up faltering trade union and Teamsters pension systems. Many conservative actions have reduced union membership and hence reduced contributions. This action was highlighted during the RTC-59 Zoom meeting on March 23rd.

State help for businesses damaged or destroyed by last summer's protests and riots is urgently needed. We urge MRTI members to call their senators and representatives to take action on this issue. This is a case of the urban/rural divide that exists in our state legislature.

Another issue is our pension system in Minnesota. The legislature asked TRA to study the Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) in other states. The study found that the cut in our TRA COLAs, enacted to secure our pension system, has left a pension deficiency for many retired teachers. The Committee of Thirteen has again joined the Public Employees Pension Coalition (PEPC) to jointly lobby for a better approach to COLAs for all Public Employees in Minnesota. We are hopeful that the combined approach will bring clarity to the state -mandated cuts for Minnesota pensioners' COLAs.- Ed Andersen, MRTI Legislative Chair

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Janet Kujat - 612-269-5784 heartladyk@yahoo.com

Diane Penn - 651-699-5831 penndiane@hotmail.com

Deb Smith - 612-721-1109 debcottonsmith@gmail.com

Mitchell Trockman - 763-545-7500 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
 - People Serving People
 - Minneapolis Recreation Development

MRTI Scholarship Recipients

Thanks to the generosity of MRTI members, the Scholarship Committee was able to award six \$2000.00 scholarships for 2021. Congratulations to:

Jeffrey Cole currently is a teacher on special assignment at Lucy Craft Laney Elementary School where he has been for 8 years. Previously an elementary teacher at Hiawatha Leadership Academy in Mpls.and in the Boston Public Schools, he has been working on his administrative licensure credentials at the University of Minnesota since Fall of 2020.

Caitlin Cowan is currently an ESL teacher at Emerson Spanish Immersion Learning Center where she has been since Fall of 2016. Previously, she was an ESL teacher at Northrop Elementary for a year. Pursuing coursework to obtain an ABS (Academic and Behavioral Strategist) license from Winona State University, she started this past January and intends to finish the program in May 2023.

Kristin Green has been employed by the Mpls Schools since 1999 as a substitute teacher, a homebound tutor, an adult education teacher, and, currently, as a special education resource teacher at FAIR since last August. She has a social studies 7-12 license and started working toward an Academic Behavioral Specialist Special Education license this past January.

Jody Lazo is currently the Arts Integration Magnet Coordinator, Instructional Specialist, and Literacy Specialist at Bethune Community School. She has been Reading Collaboration teacher there as well. At Bethune since Fall 2013, she is close to receiving an Administrative Licensure for Principal at the University of Minnesota.

Beth Rapatz currently at Edison High School in CTE (Career and Technical Education), she has been teaching there since Fall 2016. She had to rebuild an outdated curriculum and now has to keep up with current and developing technologies. She is pursuing the CTE Licensure program at St. Cloud State University with a goal of finishing by the end of summer 2021.

Angelica Torralba-Olague has been an English Language Learner and AVID teacher at South High School since 2015. She is pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Education at the University of St. Thomas and hopes to complete it soon. With the MA degree, she can participate in the district's expansion of the Grow Your Own Programs.



MRTI's 100th birthday is coming! Get ready to celebrate!

Our first Yearbook was 3x5 inches and listed 44 members - all of whom were women! MRTI Newsletter April 2021 Chris Poppe, editor

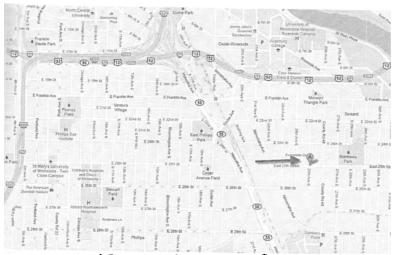
Articles, opinion essays and comments are welcome and should be directed to:

Chris Poppe

3851 Queen Ave. N Minneapolis, MN 55412 chpop001@gmail.com

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



Plenty of Free parking

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