

# After School...

## The Newsletter of Minneapolis Retired Teachers Inc.

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# HAPPY NEW YEAR 2023!



Local musician **Paul Imholte** entertained at our Holiday celebration on December 20. A raconteur, vocalist and master of stringed instruments, he presented a variety of holiday music from Hanukkah to Henry VIII, playing the guitar, mandolin, banjo, violin, harmonica and two varieties of dulcimers. For great entertainment like this, come join us.

A place at our table is waiting for you!



# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## GEORGE ROBERTS,

### RETIREE, COMMUNITY ACTIVIST

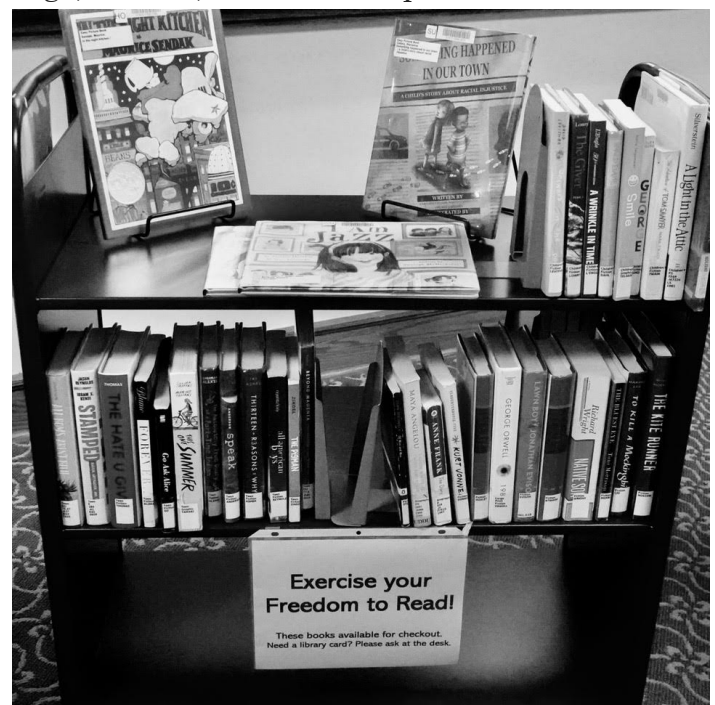


**G**eorge Roberts, poet, handset printer, entrepreneur has enjoyed a remarkably productive second career since retiring from teaching English at North High School in 2001. As he was about to retire, he purchased an old building on Plymouth and Russell Aves. North and renovated it, turning it into Homewood Studios, an art gallery with artist studios. Since opening in 2001, the gallery has hosted approximately 270 shows featuring established and emerging artists. The gallery has also served as a community center and venue for concerts, readings, classes, and workshops.

**So what has George done recently for the civic life of his neighborhood and city?** Last September, during **Banned Books Week**, he led a discussion at Sumner Library on the subject of book banning, commenting on the 33 works of banned fiction that he had taught over the years.

George mounted a display of those books, blanking out objectionable sections and making them unreadable. His approach was to defuse the tension around attempts to censor books rather than challenge would-be censors. Objections, he pointed out, are often made over words or short clips from a book taken out of context, so he attempted to get challengers to read the book and engage them in conversation. In addition to the display and talk, George sat for two hours a day for a week at Sumner Library, visiting with people at the library about the display.

- Larry Risser



**Exercise Your Freedom to Read!**



# Bill of Fare

**January 17** - Beef stroganoff with noodles; apple crisp for dessert

**February 21**- Soup & Salad  
Tomato -Basil or Wild Rice soup;  
cherry cheesecake for dessert

**March 21** - Corned beef & cabbage;  
peppermint bonbon ice cream and a  
brownie for dessert

**April 18** - Taco Bar; ice cream sundaes

**May 16** - Hamburger on a bun  
strawberry shortcake for dessert

**The dining room opens at 11:30**  
A vegetarian option is available; include the  
request when making your reservation.  
No other options are possible.

The lunch price is \$20.00, which includes the  
lunch, tax, tip and the program. We happily  
accept cash or checks.

Phone and email reservations are recorded and  
will be checked off at the ticket table. Should  
you need to cancel your reservation, call **Gayle**  
**Marko** by the Friday prior to the meeting or be  
billed for your non-attendance.

If you have **NOT** been contacted by **Monday**, a  
**week before the luncheon**, and you wish to  
attend, please call **Gayle** to make a reservation.

**952-920-1395**

## 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 Luncheon email  
contact starts in January  
2023.** If you signed up for  
email lunch contact, you  
should have received a test  
email from  
[MRTILUNCH@GAMIL.COM](mailto:MRTILUNCH@GAMIL.COM).

Jan Wahl has sent a test  
message to be sure all  
addresses are correct. If you  
requested an email contact  
for lunch but did not receive  
the test email or the invite to  
the January 17th Luncheon,  
please do the following:

1. Check your spam  
folder
2. Send an email to the  
above address
3. Call Gayle Marco at  
952-920-1395 to  
reserve a spot at the  
luncheon.

## Winter & Spring Program Schedule



January 17, 2023

**James Lileks**

Star Tribune  
Columnist/ humorist

"Teachers I have  
known and Newspapers  
I have closed"



February 21, 2023

**"Bango" Party**

Play games and win  
prizes



March 21, 2023

**Irish Step  
Dancers**

Lively Irish St. Patrick's  
Day Celebration



April 18, 2023

**Malt Shop  
Melodies**

Music of the 50's &  
60's



May 16, 2023

**South High Musical  
Group**

## Grant Committee Update

The MRTI Grant Committee exists to support active Minneapolis classroom teachers, providing funding for materials and programs to enrich the experience of students. The application form invites teachers to request funds for things from the mundane to the fanciful.

This year a record-breaking 55 teachers submitted applications totaling \$43,807.66. The committee approved grants of \$9,817.75 to 28 teachers.

The committee was forced, with limited resources, to deny and reduce many requests. Nonetheless, those receiving an award are expressing overwhelming gratitude for the support they received.

This year's grants funded a wide variety of requests including books and headphones, support for an overnight camp for 5th graders, garden materials, drums, robots and a guitar.

Your contributions to the Scholarship and Grant Committee supplement available funds from MRTI's investments and help the committee respond to more of the needs of active teachers.

- *Larry Risser*, Chair

Would you like to help find programs for our luncheons? The Program Committee has openings for new members! If you are interested in becoming a member, contact Elmer Koch at

[EandJKoch@comcast.net](mailto:EandJKoch@comcast.net)

# LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

## THE COMMITTEE OF 13, 2022 ELECTION ACTIVITIES & FUTURE FOCUS

During the 2022 election cycle, the Committee of Thirteen appointed an Election Campaign subcommittee chaired by Clarence Falk and made up of 12 volunteers who were charged to positively affect the outcome. The subcommittee identified 22 House and Senate district candidates with the most potential for impact on public employee pensions. They contributed financially to 58 candidates, primarily in districts in suburban, ex-urban and Greater Minnesota. They found no GOP candidates with an expressed support of public pensions. This was a marked departure from previous years. **This financial support came from member contributions.**

The candidates supported by the Committee of 13 had a winning record of 76% in the election. The committee advocated for special help for Representative Mary Murphy, guardian angel of public employee pensioners in Minnesota, who had a particularly difficult race in a redistricted district in Hermantown.

The subcommittee identified the Committee of 13 members residing in target districts, then designed, created, printed and mailed a color postcard to be sent to members in the target districts. They held postcard-writing sessions and farmed out postcards for members to add personal messages and sign the postcards to their colleagues in the targeted districts. They created and sent online email newsletters to these members, outlining the issues and the positions of the candidates.

They recognized the important role that the State's Constitutional officers play in public pension decision-making, so they extended the

campaign to the larger number of members residing outside target districts for support. Those members received news-letters and postcards.

### **Special Thanks to Clarence Falk and his election subcommittee of twelve Workers.**

Looking toward the 2023 Legislative session, we are advocating to improve our pensions to reflect our new economy.

#### **• Improve our Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)**

Most of our TRA Retirees do not receive Social Security benefits which increase by 8.6% in January 2023, so we need an increase in our 1% COLA from TRA.

Note: PERA adopted a COLA linked to the Federal Social Security figures.

**• Improve the 62 and 30 (Rule of 92)** by reducing the reduction percentage for each year below the Normal Retirement Age of 66. This is a Tier II benefit that allows for COLAs and reduces the early retirement penalties.

#### **• Restore the 3% annual augmentation of an early retirement basis**

Since the State Board of Investment rate of investment return is set by the state at 7.5%, early retirees would harvest a portion of this expected return.

*- Ed Andersen*  
MRTI Legislative Chair



# So You Shouldn't be Bored..

## Are you downsizing?

Would you like to help an active Minneapolis classroom teacher?

If so, one teacher works with middle school kids overhauling bikes in an after-school program during the winter and then takes them on rides in the spring and summer. That teacher is looking for the **wrenches and tools** he needs for bike repair.

Another teacher needs the **materials and supplies for Batik**. She would like the students in her grades 9 - 12 art class to create designs that reflect the different cultures that those students represent.

If you have these things and would like to donate them, call or email Larry Risser with the MRTI Grant Committee (612-922-6596, [lerisser10@gmail.com](mailto:lerisser10@gmail.com)).

Those teachers will give new life to these things that you are ready to part with.

## Yikes!

The cost of our June activity has made a turn for the worse. Every year that I have made arrangements for the June outing, MRTI has subsidized the cost of our bus transportation. This year's Field Trip will be to see the "Million Dollar Quartet" at the Old Log Theater. The cost for the lunch and ticket for the play is \$56.00. As of today, the cost for taking our group to the Old Log Theater by bus has doubled from \$600.00 to \$1200.00.

Many members choose to drive to the theater; leaving about 25 to 30 people who ride the bus. If we were to ask bus riders to pay for their transportation, it would amount to an additional \$20 to \$25 each.

Another option is for theater goers to provide their own transportation and/or arrange to carpool.

Are there other options available? To share your opinions and ideas, contact me via email.

- Denny Lander [dlander222@gmail.com](mailto:dlander222@gmail.com)

**BENEFIT FOR SOUTH HIGH MUSIC**

**PLAY IT FORWARD 2023**

**LIVE PERFORMANCES BY ROCK & JAZZ BANDS**

**TICKET: \$10**

**VENUE: HOOK & LADDER MINNEAPOLIS, MN**

**TICKET INFORMATION COMING SOON!**

## MRTI Grants in Action

Last fall, Jonathan Edington, South High Music teacher, submitted a grant request for guitars. Since good quality instruments are expensive and we could only grant him enough money for one or two, we put out a request for MRTI members to donate their unused guitars to the program. On January 24, you can enjoy the results of your generosity. Come to the **Hook & Ladder** at 6:00 PM for "Play It Forward."

## Interested in political activity

### Retired Teachers Council 59 (RTC 59)

"Gathering, Learning and Action"

January 24, 2023, February 28, March 28  
10:00AM on Zoom

April 25, May 23 meetings will be at the  
Local 59 office - 67 8th Avenue NE.  
Watch for notices in your email ....



Overview	Medical Expenses	Health Insurance Premium Expenses
<p>The Limited Medical Assistance Fund (LMAF) was established in the 1930s through a bequest of a retired Minneapolis teacher.</p> <p>A trust was established to reimburse certain medical costs of retired Minneapolis teachers, and is administered by the Teachers Retirement Association.</p> <p>To qualify for reimbursement, a retiree must have been a Minneapolis Special School District #1 teacher</p>	<p>Allowable medical expenses, if these expenses are not covered by Medicare or any other form of insurance, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inpatient or outpatient procedures performed at hospitals, clinics or surgery centers; and</li> <li>• extended nursing care or prosthetic devices.</li> </ul> <p>Expenses that are not eligible include: dental care, nursing home care, medication, therapy, glasses, out-patient services, non-medical items.</p> <p>Reimbursements are reviewed and disbursements made twice a year.</p>	<p>(when funds permit)</p> <p>To be eligible for health insurance premium reimbursement, a retiree must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be age 65 or older;</li> <li>• have retired after May 1, 1974, but before July 1, 1999; and</li> <li>• not be eligible for free Medicare Part A coverage.</li> </ul> <p>Reimbursements are reviewed and disbursements made twice a year.</p>
<p><b>Reimbursements</b></p> <p>Eligible retirees may request reimbursement for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable medical expenses</li> <li>• Health insurance premiums (when funds permit)</li> </ul>	<p><b>How To Apply</b></p> <p>Call TRA to request information. If expenses are determined to be eligible, an application will be mailed to you.</p> <p>Complete and return the application to TRA, along with expense receipts.</p>	<p><b>Contact Us</b></p> <p>Teachers Retirement Association 60 Empire Drive, Suite 400 St. Paul, MN 55103-4000</p> <p>651.296.2409 or 800.657.3669 651.297.5999 (FAX)</p>

## Our meeting location

MRTI Newsletter January 2023  
Chris Poppe, editor

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:

Chris Poppe

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



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