



THE CLARION

April 2021

The Newsletter for Retired Educators
Maine Education Association Retired Vol. 133, No. 4

MEA-Retired
69th Annual Meeting

May 6, 2021

**"The Maine Event:
Shout Out to Maine!"**

From our President



Kay Grindall

Greetings to you on this beautiful, sunny March morning. Spring is looming on the horizon, and we will be seeing crocuses and tulips. We just turned our clocks ahead an hour. Thankfully, some things in life never change.

But wait! That word "change" would certainly describe our past year, wouldn't it?

We are making history. This is our first completely virtual statewide annual meet-

ing. On behalf of more than 5,500 members, I thank our leaders who have had to pivot, adjust, and acquiesce to blaze a trail that we never knew could exist.

They have done amazing work and are to be commended! Albeit delivery of our program is vastly different, the heart and core of this annual event remain the same.

The global pandemic is unlike anything we have ever experienced. It has etched memories in our hearts and minds that have changed our

See President, Page 2

Pre-retirement seminars on Zoom

By Bob White
Pre-Retirement Coordinator

As we began to implement our spring 2021 pre-retirement sessions, we soon learned that our three February dates quickly filled to the maximum of 100 in just three days. We had to do something to accommodate more attendees.



A quick decision by the committee added two more sessions in the first two weeks of March. Both sessions quickly filled with 200 registrants, and we had interested members "waiting."

With the help of MEA, we expanded our Zoom attendance to 500, and our MEA Liaison Lisa Collins sent the invitation again. All five sessions were reopened, and registrations numbered up to 198. There were spots for all "waiting" members.

Another advantage of offering the sessions on Zoom was that members who could only attend one of the two meetings were able to attend the meeting they missed at another session.

Instead of mailing a packet of documents to attendees, Lisa attached the presenters' materials to the email messages that contained the link to join. This saved us much money in postage and many hours of photocopying and stuffing envelopes.

Committee member and host Carl Bucciantini created a survey for attendees to complete at the conclusion of

the sessions. The results were favorable of the program, the speakers, and the ease of logging in. Some suggested that we offer the program by Zoom and face to face.

During the first 13 years of my participation in the Pre-Retirement face-to-face program, attendance averaged between 350 – 400 attendees in 10 or 11 seminars per year.

Our Zoom "sessions" included 2 one-hour meetings held on two consecutive evenings from 5 to 6:15 p.m. We had 1,068 registered and 761 attended the first meeting of the session and 684 attended the following evening.

A key to the success of the presentations was coordinating the questions of the attendees. They sent them to the chat room for the host to forward to the presenters. That system worked very well.

We are fortunate for the support of MEA President Grace Leavitt and MEA-Retired President Kay Grindall during our growing pains. We implemented changes mid-stream to provide the best program possible.

All good things have to come to an end and after 14 years, I decided it was time for a change in leadership and turn the committee over to an individual with fresh ideas and more in tuned with today's

See Pre-Retirement, Page 8

Business, recognitions at annual meeting

By Rhea Michaud
Convention Coordinator



You are invited to our MEA-Retired Annual Meeting on Zoom, May 6, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

In addition to our business meeting, guest speakers from MEA and NEA will share remarks. Recognitions and awards will be presented—Honorary Membership, Affiliate Leadership, and President's Award.

Membership and Community Participation awards will also be presented. Corley Anne Byras will present a Memorial Tribute remembering those retired educators who passed during the year.

Some changes to our bylaws and resolutions will require votes by our unified members. We conclude with

installation of new officers.

We invite all MEA-Retired members to join. Our bylaws require that we have a quorum of at least 50 "unified" members before votes can be taken. A unified member is one who belongs to MEA, MEA-Retired, and NEA-Retired.

A schedule of events and registration form are on Page 7. We hope to see you. Invite a member to come to your house if he/she does not have a computer. You will receive an annual meeting booklet and a Zoom link.

If you registered and did not receive a confirmation by April 26, please contact Pam Partridge 635-2131 in order to receive your booklet and Zoom link. Come and enjoy seeing each other. There will be breaks so you can talk to some friends you have not seen in awhile.

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Legislative Update



By Crystal Ward
Legislative Liaison



Two bills, LD 84 and LD 293, were introduced in the Maine Legislature whereby the State would increase the amount of its contribution to our healthcare insurance from 45 percent to 55 percent.

On February 17, 2021 the Committee held a public hearing over Zoom, and I testified for MEA-Retired. The Education and Cultural Affairs

Committee voted 12 to 1 to pass LD 293 and approve the increase of the state's share from 45 percent to 55 percent.

The process continues with votes needed in the House and Senate. Then, the measure goes to the Appropriations Committee for funding approval. Once that process is complete, the last step is to get the Governor to sign it into law.

We have great hope that we can get this bill through the whole process this time. Thank you goes to Honorary MEA-Retired member Rep. Jan Dodge of Belfast and the Education Committee for their consistent help and support.

Now it is time for **all of you** to contact your Maine Representatives and Maine Senators and ask them to support LD 293 and tell them why you believe it is so very

important. You can send letters or emails. Make phone calls. Visit them to talk with them.

If you do not know how to contact your representatives and senators, please contact me and I will help you. Send an email to me at cward10@roadrunner.com.

We will also need to contact the Appropriations Committee, and I will email you information when that time comes.

You can also go to the Maine Legislative website to get information—maine.gov.

Down in Washington, D.C., the NEA is working to get bills reintroduced. H.R. 82 the Social Security Fairness Act which would repeal both the GPO and the WEP has been introduced. The companion bill for the Senate has not been introduced yet. You will be updated as events happen.

The American Rescue Plan Act (\$1.9 Trillion) passed March 10 and is going to President Biden's desk to be signed into law.

This bill will help most people in Maine and is directed at the middle and poor class. This money is **not** going to the top 5 percent of Americans.

There is \$170 billion for education to enable students to safely return to school. The \$1,400 should start coming at the end of March. Help with rent and mortgage payments are also in this bill.

If you are interested in being on the MEA-Retired Legislative Committee, please send me your name, email address, phone, address and affiliate name.

Be safe and be vaccinated. We will get through this!! Remember that if you and your families need help, you can call 211.

President, from Page 1

outlook and priorities forever. Utmost in our mind are the millions of families and friends who have lost precious loved ones or have survived but with lingering effects. Another struggle is the inability to see our loved ones in nursing homes and hospitals.

We haven't been able to safely meet or go out with friends and family. Celebrations of milestones have been cancelled or abnormally quiet. Travel plans were postponed or cancelled.

True, this has been an incredibly tough year, but one

doesn't have to look far to see humanity at its best! Although Covid-19 is imprinted on our lives forever, it never stopped us. Rather, it has catapulted us to action to become more aware of others and determined to extend love and kindness in unprecedented ways.

Over the past year our members have served their families, friends, and strangers. Kindness is on the rise! Donations are more abundant than ever. Neighbors help with providing meals and rides to appointments, shoveling walkways, babysitting, tutoring, substituting, and more.

Sewing machines churn out masks by the thousands! Many kitchen tables are transformed into classrooms for grandchildren and their friends. Sensitivity to the needs of others has been the driving force to ensure care is given—regardless of the magnitude of sacrifice. This matters the most.

Practicing what we

preach, we embraced life-long learning as we implemented an online platform to hold meetings to ensure the ongoing work and programs of MEA-Retired and affiliates would persevere.

Our leaders have remained diligent and successful in the tasks to which each is called. Our membership has grown by more than 300 members during this past year.

Affiliate leaders have been proactive in holding county meetings and social gatherings online to remain connected and do business done. We never gave up!

I believe the unprecedented, life-changing past year has proven the embodiment of the famous quote by the great philanthropist, philosopher, physician, Albert Schweitzer, "The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others."

This has never been more true than now. Thank you for giving me the privilege to

serve you during the past two years. I know MEA-Retired has great days ahead!

The Clarion is published bimonthly by Maine Education Association Retired. Readers are encouraged to submit feature stories, news articles, notices of events and activities, and opinions of statewide interest by the tenth day of the month preceding publication. Please send to our editor.

We pay 50 cents for every *Clarion* returned due to "incorrect address." Please send address changes to Lisa Collins at 800-281-3191, Ext. 2400 or 207-888-3856 or via email at lcollins@maineaa.org.

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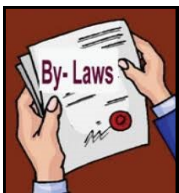
MEA-Retired is here for you!

Board of Directors Meeting
Zoom Online Venue
April 5, 2021 @ 9:30 a.m.

69th Annual Meeting
Zoom Online Venue
May 6, 2021 @ 9:30 a.m.
Contact affiliate leaders
with ideas and concerns

The report of the Maine Education Association Retired Bylaws Committee, 2021 is as follows:

These changes to the By-laws are recommended for adoption at the 2021 Annual Meeting. Add to the list of Committees: The Healthcare Committee shall consist of the chairperson, the retired trustee of MEABT, and three members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Board of Directors. The Committee's responsibility



shall be to review, promote, or develop programs for health, dental, hearing and vision insurance for members.

The term ex officio should be removed from the descriptions of members of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors except for any person serving in a national position.

The Facebook Administrator should be added to membership in the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors and the Communications Committee.

A new section in Article V, Meetings, be added: In extreme conditions upon

recommendation of the President, two thirds of the Executive Committee may vote to allow the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Annual Meeting to meet virtually.

A new Article IX, Delegates to MEA Representative Assembly, be added: The President and President-Elect shall serve as delegates to the MEA Representative Assembly.

Article VIII, Committees, be reorganized so that the various committees are listed alphabetically.

Editorial changes to the Bylaws may be made to make language compatible

Annual Meeting: Bylaws Committee Report

By Phil Gonyar, Parliamentarian

with the voted changes.

Respectfully submitted,
Bylaws Review Committee
Phil Gonyar, Chairperson
Bob Jean
Larry Given

A "Pause" year for reporting hours

By Jan Cerabona, Chairperson
Community Participation

As I reflect over the past ten years as chair of our statewide Community Participation Committee, I have been so pleased to have such great responses.

In light of the year-long restrictions of the pandemic, I proposed at the recent meeting of our MEA-Retired Executive Committee to support the request to have April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021. This will be a "Pause" year in the recording of volunteer and exercise hours.

This year has been difficult for all of us to do what we would normally do, and that includes our ability to volunteer. If things continue to move in a positive direction, we would plan to record volunteer and exercise hours starting April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022.

We will resume reporting and presenting our Community Participation Awards/Certificates at the Annual Meeting in May 2022.

Despite everything that happened, we all found new

and different ways to keep ourselves progressing in a positive direction.

For example, I worked with friends cleaning up a couple of old cemeteries once a week during August and September. We could keep our distance, enjoy being outside, have fun and accomplish a task that desperately needed to be done.

So, we are asking each county association to have a conversation with their members about their experiences during this past year. We know that many of our members participated in activities that provided a helping hand for others and we also had members who benefited from receiving a helping hand.

We would like to feature articles in the August 2021 issue of *The Clarion* that preserve for history how we coped with the year of Covid-19. We would like each affiliate to submit a summary of their creative Covid-19 experiences by July 10, 2021.

Thanks for all your support and continue to take care. Be safe. Stay healthy.

As always S.M.I. L.E.
Seniors Make It Look Easy

AARP in full swing

By Carl Bucciantini
AARP Liaison

Spring is certainly in the air and with it comes hope for a new beginning and a return to more normal times. To say that this past year has been a challenge would be a gross understatement; friends and family members have gotten ill and, sadly, some have not survived. Throughout these times, AARP Maine has stood by to provide advocacy, support and resources.

Even though AARP has determined that cancelling all in-person events on a national level through August 31 is a prudent decision, the staff of AARP Maine and its legion of volunteers remain committed to continuing their efforts in support of the age 50-plus community.

With the legislature in full swing, Tuesdays at the State House (TASH) continues, albeit virtually. TASH participants meet weekly via Zoom to engage in conversations with legislators to discuss legislation of interest to the 50-plus community and to discuss action steps for volunteers. Additionally, volunteers are tracking legislation

identified as having a positive or negative impact on the 50-plus community. Volunteers chart the progress of legislation as well as participate in committee hearings and provide testimony as needed.

Recess Regulars are volunteers who meet with our Congressional delegation or their staff during Congressional recesses to discuss issues relevant to the 50-plus community. During this current recess, volunteers have visited Congressional offices in Maine reminding the staff of the role of AARP volunteers and leaving a copy of AARP's Isolation Caregiving Guidelines as a resource for each office.

This year, AARP started "Kitchen Table Chats" where local Senators or Representatives are invited to join a small group of interested community members to have a virtual conversation about current topics and issues. These innovative chats have been met with enthusiasm from legislators and participants alike.



See AARP, Page 7

Support for Moral Injury

Maine FrontLine, WarmLine

By Gary McGrane
President-Elect

We are learning about a variety of ways in which the COVID-19 virus can hurt us, especially educators. Harms can include pneumonia, severe fatigue, difficulties with concentration, mood and sleep, and a loss of smell and taste. Aside from the physical harm there may be psychological harm or moral injury.

Social distancing does not allow teachers or support staff to help Pre-K students. They are not allowed to zip their coats, help first graders put on their little rubber boots or mittens, or flash a broad smile because of a face mask or be able to give a comforting hug to show affection or emotional support for a job well done.

These are only a few examples of the teacher's mental struggles in providing emotional and psychological support for our many students. This creates a constant state of exhaustion and frustration when teachers are conflicted with "Should I?" "May I?" Or "Will I get into trouble if I revert to pre-pandemic norms?"

What we are seeing is not just harm to the student, but also the harm that occurs to educators and support staff attempting to do their work.

Professionals and ESP's spend years training to do their work, and individually, most of us have a clear sense of what it means to do a job well. We have standards and expectations of ourselves.

In the midst of this pandemic, things have changed, and we have all been required to adapt. Now we are meeting one another with masks on, socially distancing, and washing our hands more frequently.

And we have been required to teach and help our students in unusual ways day after day, month after month. These unusual times can change almost weekly from in-person, to a hybrid or to a fully remote model of teaching and back again. This has been a challenge to say the least.

None of us were trained to do our work this way. Our habits and expectations are still there from before, but we are not doing things in the way that feels comfortable and sometimes the results do not feel quite right.

The difference between the way we think we should be working and the way we must work now, creates an unsatisfied gap between the results we expect and the results you can manage. This gives rise to a type of psychological harm, that can only be described "moral injury".

Educators and support staff are experiencing this "moral injury." In the hospital the masked nurse trying to speak to an elderly patient dealing with hearing impair-

ment and confusion may feel great distress. It feels wrong for it to be so hard to communicate and frustrating to be unable to comfort the patient.

The same can also be true in the school environment. Teachers and other educators have had years of training and many have decades of facilitating a learning environment. Much of that has been set aside to protecting students and protecting staff during the pandemic crisis. The changes have been made to protect life and avoid death.

Yet it does not feel right trying to teach from behind a mask. It is frustrating trying to reassure a student with the usual smile—a smile the student cannot see. And it is frustrating to have technology issues interfering as you try to connect with a student.

In this prolonged disaster we are not able to achieve what we hope to achieve in our work. Maine educators are working hard to achieve what they have always worked for—to give every student in Maine a quality educational experience.

Hybrid or remote teaching methods require students to acquire knowledge and skills in a very untraditional way. There are not enough hours in the day to get through all of the curricula, and some students and families are challenged in connecting with this new educational home school environment.

Maine educators are very much aware that not all of education is about gaining knowledge and skills. It is also about socialization, working together, and sharing personal experiences.

Maine educators are very much concerned about their inability to provide their students with the same opportunities to interact and develop socially that they had the previous year. They are missing out on sports, band practice, drama, and more throughout the school year.

"Moral Injury" is real for

Maine educators. A serious bruise to the most important part of who they are. Wounded in this time of an unrelenting crisis.

At some point during the day or the week it is important to take stock of what it is that feels wrong about our work, and to acknowledge to ourselves "I could use a little help from my friends."

It may help to allow ourselves to grieve about missing that smile, that pat on the back or a hug to let the student know it is alright to be sad or disappointed and to be able to connect with our colleagues who may share frustrations or anxiety.

We do better when we realize we do not have to shoulder these feelings alone. Taking care of ourselves makes us less likely to become morally injured. There are steps we can take to improve our resilience and reduce the trauma. Breathing techniques, grounding techniques, and connection with others can help us all reduce the moral injury.

Dr. Ed Pontius, MD, DLFAPA, is the founding director of Maine FrontLine WarmLine and a psychiatric physician in Portland. He has developed innovative clinical teams in the area of anxiety disorders, PTSD, and mass casualty disaster.

Richard Lewis will facilitate this program's customized online training, and all of these professional clinicians will offer ongoing support to volunteers as they begin this amazing journey of volunteerism.

You will have supervision and support. You will be joining with other MEA-Retired members who care about Maine's students, teachers, education staffs, and schools.

Any volunteer who has a cell phone or tablet with the ability to connect on occasion on the internet may access the training. Don't miss this opportunity to join a support system to help make a difference in the lives of our education personnel.

For further information feel free to call 221-8196 or text "Frontline" to 898-211.



Excellence in and out of the classroom

By Ruth Chaffey, Vice President
Washington County Ret. Educ. Assoc.

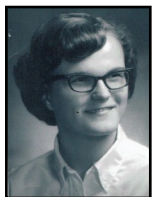
Who's that?

She's Mrs. Noonan, our new band teacher.

That's how hundreds of students for 25 years saw Dawn Noonan. The reality is she is a veteran educator, but she is also so much more.

Dawn Noonan grew up in Brunswick—the only girl in a family of four children. Raised on a working farm, Dawn learned at an early age the value of work, discipline, commitment, and love.

She could be found in the barn feeding the animals, in the field gathering vegetables, or in the orchard picking apples.



Class of '69

When the season was right, Dawn and her mother harvested blueberries, raspberries and strawberries. The farm was a source of income for the family.

Of course, sandwiched in-between the chores were pick-up softball games, horseback riding, and family outings.

Having learned the value of hard work, discipline, and commitment early in life, Dawn applied herself to her studies and graduated from Brunswick High School in 1969.

During her high school years, she found herself in Mr. Ernest George's class which inspired Dawn to explore the innumerable aspects of music from composers, to history, to performance.

Dawn said, "Mr. George was supportive of his students and required them to exhibit self-discipline. In return, he created a love of music in his pupils."

Dawn developed a keen interest in music—performing in the high school, pep,

and stage bands. This beginning of Dawn's immersion into the world of music was the first step in selecting her career.

Dawn was accepted at the Northern Conservatory of Music in Bangor. She entered with a passion and determination to teach and inspire a love of music in others.

As dedicated as she was, Dawn did not exist in a bubble. She met Henry Noonan, another aspiring young music teacher who shared her values, goals, and dreams. They married prior to graduation and spent much of their last year of college firming up their personal and professional plans.

Their professional plans were realized when they obtained music teaching positions in Washington County. She signed teaching contracts with SAD 77—Lubec, Eastport, Washington Academy, and Machias. The Noonans purchased a home in Dennysville where they raised their two daughters, Jennifer and Roxanne.

Family was and continues to be Dawn's priority. While her daughters were younger, she taught play-group for four years at the Youth Center in Edmunds.

Dawn spent 25 years teaching K-12 instrumental lessons and bands—stage,

jazz, and pep. Knowing that a music program requires more financial backing than the school budget allowed, Dawn created a "Booster Club."

Comprised of parents, guardians, business owners, and interested community members, the "Boosters" became the backbone of a wide variety of fundraising schemes designed to finance participation in parades, concerts, competitions, and trips in and out of state.

These activities provided



Dawn traveled to England where she visited many sites including a visit with the Beefeater.

unforgettable memories. As Dawn said, "I have had many

special and unique moments in my career, but taking students from Washington County to Boston, Washington D.C., and New York City was most memorable.

The looks in their wide eyes when they stepped off the



bus and saw the monuments and landmarks will never be forgotten. Taking them to a Broadway play, something most of them will never do again, is also etched in my memory."

She also coached softball and volleyball and advised the Drama Club.

Dawn acknowledged that she taught in an area where music was not recognized as a viable part of the curriculum. Yet, she experienced the sheer joy of seeing students grow to love and appreciate music.

Retiring from teaching was bittersweet. However, the transition was made easier because her husband Henry also retired. They traveled to England, Ireland, and Scotland where they met many of Dawn's relatives for the first time.

They purchased a house in Deltona, Florida, and were snowbirds until Henry died in 2012.

Henry's death was a new season for Dawn. She opted to become more involved in the community. When a need was presented, she evaluated it and determined the degree to which she could commit time, resources, and skills.

As a member of the Daughters of Isabella, she actively participated in events for St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Eastport. This dovetailed nicely with her commitment to the community support work done by the Rebekahs and volunteer hours spent weekly at the Calais Food Pantry. When the position for First Select Person for

See Dawn, Page 6

The NEA Fund is a Federal Political Action Committee (PAC) which works to elect pro-public education candidates up and down the ballot who support the issues most important to education, our students, and teachers.

It is our voice in Washington, D.C., as it speaks on behalf of our 3.2 million members from all 51 affiliates of the National Education Association.

The NEA Fund supports pro-public education candidates in gubernatorial and other important state races as well as making independent expenditures asking people to vote for political candidates based on their position regarding public education.

The NEA Fund depends solely on voluntary contributions. Not one penny of dues dollars is used for any political

advocacy. Therefore, we must rely on individual voluntary donations.

Because the NEA Fund relies on small contributions from individual members, it is important that we all contribute. Many of us do this via a monthly deduction or direct donation.

For those who do not give to this most important cause, please donate to our NEA-RA Delegate Reimbursement Fund. Remember NEA never recommends or endorses a candidate for state or federal office without the support of our state association.

Every dollar contributed to a candidate, a political party, or independent expenditures is voluntarily given. MEA-Retired does not use dues dollars for this purpose either. In order to be

effective and able to compete against those who oppose publicly funded education, it is critically important we support legislators who represent and support retirees and protect our pensions, insurance, COLA, and other benefits.

As delegates to the National Education Association Representative Assembly, we will personally contribute to this fund. Normally we as members of the Board of Directors or Executive Committee donate to the Fund by earmarking part or all of our mileage to support our NEA-RA members.

However, this year it is different because we do not meet in person, so donations are down. Please donate to our NEA-Retiree Delegate Reimbursement Fund. This will help to offset the dele-

Time for NEA PAC donations

By Gary McGrane, President-Elect
MEA-Retired PAC Captain

gates personal contributions.

Or we can contribute directly to the NEA-Fund
P.O. Box 96225
Washington, D.C.

20077-7501. Be sure to note on your check that you are a Maine Education Association Retired member so that our organization gets credit for your donation. Thank you in advance of your donation.



MEA Board Briefs

By Gary McGrane, President-Elect

The most recent meetings of the MEA Board of Directors included reminders for Board members to register for the NEA Summit in March.

Racial justice and equity have been a focus of this administration. Because of her commitment to racial equality MEA President Grace Leavitt encouraged MEA-sponsored meetings for Members of Color to meet to give voice to real or perceived injustices against Black, Indigenous, Other, People of Color (BIOC).

Membership numbers were discussed

and ideas as to how we can increase our union footprint were shared.

Two appointments to the Board were announced: Ellen Payne will represent District C and Jamie Alpine will replace Gerry French as the District ESP. Gerry needed to step down because of his accepting an administration position.

Treasurer Beth French reported that revenues seem to steadily exceed expenses because of less travel, lodging and meal allowances. Financially we are in a good or better position than the previous fiscal year. MEA-Retired request for an additional \$5,000 for *The Clarion* will be included in the discussion for the ensuing year's budget.

Dr. Sherry Brown presented her findings from a survey that was sent to all MEA members last year. Grace reviewed the results of the MEA Lincoln Park Strategies December 2020 survey. The poll was sent to Pre-K-12 members nationwide with 1,500 responses.

Action items and discussions included support for the nurses at Maine Medical Center in their effort to form a union. The Board believes all education workers should be given the opportunity to be vaccinated as part of phase 1B and be voluntary. School leaders should develop districtwide vaccination plans in equal partnership with local bargaining unit leaders.

Dawn, from Page 5

the town of Dennysville needed to be filled, Dawn stepped up and continues to serve.

Dawn has also used the skill set she developed as president of the Eastport Education Association and the Machias Education Association to promote the Washington County Retired Teachers Association. She serves as the Membership Committee chair and is a member of the Community Participation Committee.

She also received the 2018 Washington County Retired Teachers Association Affiliate Leadership Award.

As Dawn noted, these are all very worthy causes, but her family is the number one priority in her life. Dawn opts to reside in Dennysville in the home she and Henry renovated and raised their daughters. This home and Grandma have become a haven for her grandchildren, her daughters, and their husbands.

Prior to Covid-19 during a long weekend, over any given holiday, or during school vacations, friends and neighbors would likely see Jennifer and/or Roxanne with husbands and grand-

children. Brittany, Kira, LJ, Leila, Jensen and Addie would spill out of the vehicle, run up the driveway and call, "Grammie! We're here!"

When asked for a final assessment of her life, Dawn simply says, "I love being a grandmother!"

Ruth retired after a 41-year education career—teaching math at Calais High School and Portland Junior High School. She ended her career as a librarian at Joseph Leonard School in Old Town. She and her husband Richard have one married daughter.



Maine Education Association Retired

69th Annual Meeting



Zoom Online Meeting Venue

May 6, 2021

“The Maine Event: Shout Out to Maine”

Zoom room opens at 9 a.m. Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.

___ I plan to attend on Zoom.

___ I plan to attend via telephone at this number: _____

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ City/Town _____

State _____ Zip _____ Tel. _____ Affiliate _____

No registration fee. The membership status of all registrants will be checked to ensure voting eligibility.

Annual meeting registrations may be submitted via email to mearconv2021@gmail.com

Please include your USPS mailing information in order to receive the annual meeting booklet. OR

Fill out this form and mail to Pam Partridge, Registrar, 23 Union St., North Anson, ME 04958-7149.

This form may be duplicated. Please submit a separate registration form for each registrant.

Registration must be received by April 26, 2021.

Questions? Call Rheba Michaud, Convention Coordinator, at 207-564-7494.

AARP, from Page 3

Even in the best of times, social isolation is a problem. In Maine, over 135,000 people 50-plus live alone and are at a higher risk of experiencing social isolation. We all know that winter brings additional challenges.

With this in mind, AARP Maine has compiled resources for managing this isolation and has developed a free resource guide for caregivers who are facing additional challenges. Both guides are available on the AARP website: <http://bit.ly/fightisolation>

We all hope that the darkest times are behind us and that we can all return to our normal activities soon. Until that time comes, AARP is committed to provide advocacy and support for members of MEA-Retired as well as the entire 50-plus community. For the most up to date information on vaccinations, scams, support and other activities, go to: <https://states.aarp.org/maine>.

MAINE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION RETIRED

69th Annual Meeting—Zoom Online Venue

“The Maine Event: Shout Out to Maine”

May 6, 2021

9:15	Meet and Greet	
9:30	Welcome.....	Kay Grindall, President
	Invocation.....	Rev. Dr. Kevin G. Grant, Pastor Kennebec Valley Baptist Church, Waterville
	Pledge of Allegiance.....	Gary McGrane, President-Elect
	Maine Education Association.....	Jesse Hargrove, Vice President
	MEA Government Relations.....	John Kosinski
	Greetings.....	National Education Association Officer
	Minutes, 10/15/20 Annual Meeting.....	Marilyn Hylan, Secretary
	Action on Resolutions.....	Susan Grondin, Chair
	Action on Bylaws.....	Phil Gonyar, Chair
	Report & Action: Nominating Committee.....	Ed Nunery, Chair
10:40	—BREAK: 10 Minutes—	
	Legacy Committee.....	Hugh Keene, Chair
	Honorary Member Presentation.....	Kay Grindall, President
	Membership Committee Awards.....	Ben Paradis, Chair
	Community Participation Awards.....	Jan Cerabona, Chair
	Affiliate Leadership Awards.....	Gary McGrane, President-Elect
	Presidential Award.....	Kay Grindall, President
11:45	—BREAK: 5 Minutes—	
	In Memoriam Tribute.....	Corley Anne Byras, Immediate Past President
	Installation of 2021-2023 Officers.....	Phil Gonyar, Parliamentarian
12:15	Remarks & Adjournment.....	Kay Grindall



Membership Matters: “What Is MEA-Retired?”

By Ben Paradis, MEA-Retired Membership Chairperson
Aroostook Retired Educators Association



At last check with Lisa Collins at the MEA office in Caribou, our MEA-Retired membership count is 5,510. That is

about 200 more than this time last year. Many of these new members are from our Higher Ed affiliate and other new retirees.

Thanks to those who joined when MEA helped to convince the UMS Board of Trustees to retain the retirees' health insurance benefits.

The Membership Committee met via Zoom to develop new initiatives for recruiting retirees. Several ideas were discussed, and the committee decided to try out one in particular, which was to send a letter of invitation to

many new retirees to invite them to join us in a short Zoom meeting called “What Is MEA-Retired?” to be on the second Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 6:45 p.m. Our first session was held on March 11.

A few weeks ago I received an email from a friend planning to retire this spring. He was still working on getting his paperwork ready. He asked what he had to do to join MEA and MEA-Retired and what his dues would be since he is already a life member of NEA.

I advised him to go to our website to download our membership application: <https://maineea.org/membership-application/>.

His dues would be about \$4 a month. If he had not been a lifetime member of

NEA, his dues would be about \$7—still very affordable. This entitles him to all the benefits of being a “Unified” member, including top insurance plans, discounts at many shopping sites and travel rates.

The Membership Com-

mittee would also like members to make other suggestions on how to contact new retirees using the lists sent to us each month. Please contact me at paradisben@gmail.com with your input.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Pre-Retirement, from Page 1

technology.

In my 14 years with Pre-Retirement program, I appreciate the support from our presidents Paul Bouchard, Gwen Strout, Peg Newberg, Larry Given, the late Tom Moore, Corley Anne Byras, and Kay Grindall. We appreciate the work of our outstanding committee: Marc Poulin, Marta Robbins, Mike Smart, Ed Nunery, and Carl Bucciantini.

We have been fortunate to have outstanding present-

ers: Brett Hoskins and David Jones, MainePERS; Becky Duval and Sharon Beaulieu, MEA Benefit Trust and Anthem; and Horace Mann insurance agents assigned by Kurt Schaefer. They made the presentation on the Social Security and WEP/GPO programs.

“Thank you” to the MEA staff who secured meeting sites and prepared countless documents. Lastly, I cherish many friends I have made during my memorable ride of 14 years!