

The Minnesota Retired State Employees Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 416
Excelsior, MN 55331

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Permit 32797

Note: We are a private nonprofit association. Please do not confuse us with the Minnesota State Retirement System-the state agency which sends us our monthly pension checks.

Do you have a new address or phone number?
Please let us know. You may submit any changes online at mrsea.org, simply go to the contact us page, click on membership information, then click address change or call 1-877-487-0402 or regular mail MRSEA PO BOX 416 Excelsior, MN 55331



MRSEA

Please remember to renew your 2011 membership.

Please remember to sign your check and mail a separate check for renewals and River Boat Cruise registrations.

We thank you in advance for your patience in processing your renewal.



MRSEA

Minnesota Retired State Employees Association

Fall 2011

Volume 1 Issue 13

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P.O. BOX 416
Excelsior, MN 55331



Dear MRSEA Member;

There have been a couple of recent events that we feel compelled to communicate to you so that you can understand the circumstances of the events and the facts related to them; all of them relating to your membership in a retirement organization.

The first event has to do with the MRSEA annual membership renewal notice that you received in the mail from us within the past several months. With the membership renewal notice was a letter indicating that you would receive a free year of membership. Unfortunately, at least for you, that was not correct. The mail service company that we use for our mailings incorrectly inserted the letter into the mailing with the renewal notice. You should have, by now, received a letter from them apologizing for the error. The letter is intended to be sent to recent retirees who are given a free year of membership upon retirement in hopes that they will continue their membership after the free year.

Another issue that has been floating around because of inaccurate information from outside our organization has to do with member's MRSEA voluntary PAC contributions. We want to assure you that none of your membership dues goes to the PAC fund (only your specific PAC contributions) which is managed by a separate board of directors. The PAC board is currently composed of 2 former legislators (one GOP and one DFL), a retired judge, and 3 MRSEA board members. In that the MRSEA is not involved in partisan politics (it's only issue driven – your issues) equal amounts are donated to the two major caucuses.

Many of our MRSEA members also received a letter recently from AFSCME Chapter 5 announcing the creation of a new AFSCME retiree chapter. While we welcome council 5 into the arena of advocating for the interests of public retirees as MRSEA has been doing for over 75 years, we regret that it has taken them this many years to finally support retirees and that they feel compelled to derange MRSEA in the process. Without going into details, you should be aware that a number of their statements were inaccurate or distortions. AFSCME decided on this action because our organization recently chose to terminate our affiliation with them. Our membership was paying nearly \$20,000 a year as an affiliate and we could see no reasonable return on these dues despite repeated attempts to change it. We simply could not afford this cost any longer and it was not good stewardship of your membership dues.

MRSEA represents every retired public employee in Minnesota regardless of their position as an employee; whether they were AFSCME, MAPE, MMA, director, commissioner, judge, legislator, or governor; it doesn't make any difference. We intend to continue to dedicate our efforts to advocate for the interests of you and other public retirees. We urge you to continue your support and commitment to our organization in these efforts. If you desire to be a member of both organizations, that is a decision for you to make.

The pay and benefits, especially pensions, of public employees are under extreme scrutiny by legislators and others more than ever. Being a member of MRSEA is one way for you to receive information about your retirement benefits and help us in advocating for the well-being of you and all state retirees. PLEASE BE A MEMBER AND HELP US HELP YOU! If you know of any member who might have an interest in serving on our board or our committees, please contact us.

Sincerely,

THE MINNESOTA RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mission Statement

United to advocate for the well being of state retirees by:

***monitoring the deliberations of the legislature and the Minnesota State Retirement System Board of Directors; and responding as appropriate to promote , protect and enhance retiree interests.**

***providing educational information on state and national issues affecting retirees**

***maintaining working relationships with other retiree organizations**

***promoting social activities through local sub chapters and statewide meetings**

***advocating for the affordability of state retiree health and long term care benefits**

Editors Note:

Articles are contributed by MRSEA Committees comprised of board members, who are assigned to specific committees on an annual basis.



PRESIDENTS COLUMN

Greetings Members!

I would like to thank you for all your support, and continued membership renewals to MRSEA. We hope you are able to join us for the return of our Fall Riverboat Cruise. Please send in your registration early as space is limited for this fun filled event. We look forward to a great turn out from the recent retirees to join us on this event and perhaps consider being more involved with the association, this is a great event to interact and meet others you may not have seen in awhile, enjoy some Jazz Music and a great lunch. I look forward to seeing you on September 28th on the River!

**JOIN US..BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND
MRSEA'S 2011 FALL ST CROIX RIVER BOAT CRUISE**

LOCATION: **STILLWATER MINNESOTA**
DATE: **SEPTEMBER 28, 2011 DEPARTS 11:30a.m. RETURNS 2:00p.m.**



Our last Cruise was in 2006, due to popular demand we again, will be enjoying the beautiful fall colors as we slowly cruise along the St. Croix River. Come join us and relax for a couple hours as you enjoy a luncheon and are entertained by ever popular The Emperors of Jazz Band. Catch up with your fellow retirees. Mark your calendars now to join your fellow retirees on this very popular event. St. Croix Boat & Packet proudly operates five historic 1800's era River Boats, and one modern luxury yacht.

We are scheduled to be on the Avalon. The largest and most spacious paddlewheel boat in the Midwest. The Avalon is total luxury, ideally suited for groups of 250-675, it comfortably seats 500 on its inside decks. The Avalon is heated and air-conditioned, and equipped with an elevator for handicapped passenger use.

FAQ...

Are your yachts Handicap Accessible?

All St. Croix Boat and Packet vessels are "Handicap

Accessible" as determined by state law.

What is the dress attire?

Dress for the current weather conditions during your cruise time. As a general rule, we recommend casual dress attire, such as casual shorts or pants and golf shirts.

Where does the boat go?

The boat will cruise a few miles north and/or south on the St. Croix River. The direction does depend on the bridge lifts and water levels.

WHERE TO BOARD RIVERBOAT

525 Main Street South
Stillwater, MN 55082-5814
(651) 430-1234

Follow MN Highway 36 straight east to Stillwater. Turn right on main street. There is free parking adjacent to the boarding area. Follow the "Boat Parking" sign.

Boat will start loading at 11:00 a.m. will depart at 11:30 a.m. be on time, it will depart at 11:30a.m.

ST CROIX RIVERBOAT REGISTRATION

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO M.R.S.E.A.

MAIL TO: MRSEA PO BOX 416 EXCELSIOR, MN 55331

Registrations must be received by September 20, 2011

NO REFUNDS AFTER SEPTEMBER 20, 2011 • REGISTRATION IS \$20.00 PER PERSON

I/We plan to attend the River Boat Cruise September 28, 2011

Member Name: _____ Entrée # _____

Address _____ Phone (_____)

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

LUNCHEON INCLUDED WITH REGISTRATION FEE:

Roast beef brisket, brats and chicken breast, served with baked beans, fresh fruit and all the trimmings.

Total attending: _____ @ \$20.00 each TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____



**MRSEA
BOARD OFFICERS**

Ruth M. Husom
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Gene Gere
First Vice President

Fred Maurer
Second Vice President

Peter Obermeyer
Secretary-Treasurer

Peggy Hildebrandt
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HOWARD WARD

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT SUMMER 2011

LEGISLATION

As you are certainly aware the Governor and the Legislature reached a settlement following a three week state government shut down. As we reported in the spring 2011 Newsletter, several bills were introduced affecting retired, active and future employees' health care and retirement benefits. None of these bills passed the Legislature or were signed into law by the Governor.

H.F. #1144, dealing with the reinstatement of a single person and spouse into the state's retiree health insurance plan (State Employee Group Insurance Program) was introduced. Yes, legislation has passed for individuals and small groups of individuals. A second piece of legislation H.F.#14, was passed in the 2011 First Special Session. H.F #14 is generally considered a "house-keeping" bill making corrections and needed modifications to nearly all of the state pension plans. It does, however, include the voluntary consolidation of the Minneapolis Firefighters' Relief Association, and the Minneapolis Police Relief Association with the state firefighters and police pension funds. Hopefully the changes made with the 2010 Omnibus Pension Bill passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor May 15, 2010 answered the funding issues of MSRS, PERA, and TRA. As MRSEA has often said in the past, the Omnibus Pension Bill was truly a

sharing of responsibilities by all affected parties- public employers, retirees, active employees and deferred members.

JOINT STUDY

The Joint Study of the Executive Directors of MSRS, PERA, and TRA was issued on June 1, 2011. A copy of the report is available at the following web-sites:

www.mrsea.org go to Legislative Updates Page
www.lpcr.leg.mn click on Documents and Publications then click on Other Sources

LAW SUIT AGAINST MSRS, PERA, TRA

On June 29, 2011, District Court Judge Gregg Johnson upheld the constitutionality of the 2010 Omnibus Pension Bill, which corrected the funding issues of the three major state pension plans. Judge Johnson found that the legislation was a "reasonable response to a fiscal threat that jeopardized the long-term interests of Plan Members, the State and the State's taxpayers."

The MRSEA Legislative Committee believes the decision balances the interest of all parties involved, not just retirees.

The Committee appreciates your support and asks you keep us informed on legislation, state or federal that has an impact on retired employees of the state of Minnesota.

MRSEA Legislative Committee Chair- Peter Obermeyer

INTRODUCING HOWARD WARD

Howard was unanimously elected to the MRSEA Board of Directors at the May 2011 Annual Meeting.

Howard was born and raised in Mankato, Minnesota and graduated from Mankato High School. Howard served in the U.S. Army 25th Infantry Division as a company level Medical Aid Man from March, 1969 to March, 1971. Upon discharge he enrolled in classes at Mankato State University and graduated in March of 1974 with a Bachelors of Science Degree majoring in Physical Geography with a minor in Parks and Recreation Resource Management. From 1979 to 1980 he completed 36 credits of graduate level course work at Mankato State University, Department of Continuing Studies in the areas of Business Administration and Environmental Studies. After three years of seasonal employment at Flandreau State Park in New Ulm, Minnesota he was hired in a full time professional capacity as the Assistant Manager (NRPS 1 – Parks) of William O'Brien State Park in December of 1975. In October of 1977 Howard moved back to Mankato and assumed the position of Park Manager of Minneopa State Park where he remained until retirement in April of 2008.

Howard's passions include hunting, fishing, competitive shooting sports, gardening, cooking, and volunteer natural resource conservation work, and a great concern for the continued solvency of the post retirement pension fund.

Welcome Howard!!!

2011 SUB CHAPTER MEETING DATES

BRAINERD

September 15
December 15

DULUTH

October 26

MANKATO

September 12
December 5

NORTHWOOD'S

October 13

ROCHESTER

TBD

FERGUS FALLS

September 6
October 4
November 1
December 6

MARSHALL SOUTHWEST

September 22

WEST CENTRAL

TBD