



821 Williamson Street * Madison, Wisconsin 53703-4503 * Phone (608) 257-0491 * Fax (608) 257-1168

Solidarity!

Protect *Your* Wisconsin Retirement System - Meeting February 1

In partnership with the grassroots group, **POWRS** (*Protect Our Wisconsin Retirement System*), MTI will host an informational meeting on potential risks to the WRS on **Wednesday, February 1 from 5-7:00 p.m.** at the **South Central Federation of Labor Temple**. All active and retired MTI members are encouraged to attend to learn more.

While most public employees are acutely aware of the negative impact of the Act 10 legislation which gutted collective bargaining rights and required employee contributions toward retirement (and eventual greater contributions toward health insurance), **not many are familiar with the WRS Study mandated by Wisconsin Act 32**, passed by a party line vote and signed by Governor Walker shortly after Act 10. **Along with cutting state support for public education by \$1 billion, Act 32 included many other items, such as a “study” of the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS).**

According to the WRS, “*The study must specifically address the issues of: (1) establishing a defined contribution plan as an option for participating employees; and (2) permitting employees to not make employee required contributions and limiting retirement benefits for those employees to a money purchase annuity. The study is due no later than June 30, 2012, and the findings and recommendations must be reported to the Governor and the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance.*”

While the announcement of a WRS study would typically raise few eyebrows in “normal times”, these are not normal times. The WRS is a highly-respected, fully-funded public employee retirement system. And hundreds of thousands of employees, retirees and their families are dependent on the continued financial stability of the WRS. Changes to this highly complex agency typically undergo significant scrutiny and study. **However, such has not been the case recently as has been shared by outgoing Employee Trust Fund Secretary Dave Stella in the WRS News, September, 2011.**

Stella writes, “*In these pages you will read about recent legislative changes that were made to the WRS. As part of my fiduciary responsibility, I advocated that the changes be studied before their enactment to determine their fiscal effect on the WRS. My requests went unheeded. This means the financial and structural impact and associated risks of these law changes in both the short and long term may not be fully understood. Given the complexity and extremely large financial impact of the WRS on Wisconsin, proposed changes must be thoughtfully constructed, carefully studied and meticulously implemented. The almost 600,000 members of the WRS, and the citizens of Wisconsin, need to be assured that the WRS will remain financially strong and sustainable.*”

All WRS participants need to pay attention. While a “study” has at least been requested this time, **should the Governor and Legislature elect to force through either of the two changes noted above, such could have a serious impact on the continued viability of the WRS in its current form.**

And we all know how quickly legislation can be proposed and enacted. Attend the February 1 meeting to educate yourself.

Walkerneezzer Scrooge is Undone by La Follette’s Solidarity

Every MTI member understands how Scott Walker’s union busting bill and poor budgeting decisions directly attack education employees’ standard of living and quality of life. *Act 10 forced negotiations with the School District that resulted in agreements for each employee to pay half of his or her retirement benefits, conceding more decision-making to the employer on health insurance and hourly wages.*

The teachers at La Follette High School noted that the financial pain of Walker’s Act 10 was being felt most acutely by the lowest wage earners and resolved to do something about it. *Many La Follette SEAs have been hit particularly hard by the Walker bill and are fearful of what could happen this spring when the School Board determines hourly pay rates and sets health insurance premiums.* Just before winter break, **MTI’s La Follette Faculty Representatives passed the hat throughout the building and raised nearly \$1,000 to divide among the building’s SEAs.**

While that amount of money does not make up for the damage Walker has done, it made some families’ holidays a little brighter, and it demonstrates the strength and value of union solidarity in these most difficult times. People united will never be defeated.

State Journal Demands More

With an apparently insatiable appetite for reading other people’s notes, the Wisconsin State Journal **has demanded that the School District turn over copies of additional absentee notifications submitted by MTI members during the days in February when up to 135,000 protested Scott Walker’s union busting at the Capitol.**

The newspaper’s open records request asked for “*sick notes*” submitted during the days that classes were canceled in February due to the protests. **The Journal is now demanding copies of all notifications of absence during those days, whether they were medical in nature or not, including sick notes that were rescinded by members.** Notifications related to professional conferences, bereavement leave, childcare arrangements, and those in which employees stated they would be absent to exercise their first amendment rights to protest.

The School District has sent notification to employees whose notifications are affected by this additional release. As with the original set of notes released to the State Journal, names and other identifying information will be redacted from the notices before they are released. MTI will provide representation where needed.

Teacher Retirement and TERP Deadline February 15

In order for one to be eligible for the *MTI negotiated Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP)*, he/she must be a full-time teacher, at least 55 years old, with a combined age (as of August 30 in one's retirement year) and years of service in the District totaling at least 75. (For example, a teacher who is 57 and has eighteen (18) years of service to the MMSD would be eligible: $57 + 18 = 75$.) Teachers who are less than age 55 are eligible if they have worked for the MMSD at least 30 years. Up to ten (10) part-time teachers may participate in TERP each year provided they have worked full-time within the last ten (10) years and meet the eligibility criteria described above.

Retirement notifications, including completed TERP agreements, are due in the District's Department of Human Resources no later than February 15. Appointments can be made to complete the TERP agreement and discuss insurance options at retirement by calling Sharon Hennessy, MMSD Benefits Manager (663-1795).

MTI was successful in negotiations for the 2009-11 Contract in negotiating a guaranteed continuance of TERP for four years. **Thus, MTI members can be assured that TERP runs through 2013 and not feel pressured into retirement before they are ready.**

MTI Assistant Director **Doug Keillor** is available to provide guidance and/or to provide estimated benefits for TERP, insurance continuation, application of one's Retirement Insurance Account, WRS and Social Security. Call MTI Headquarters (257-0491) to schedule an appointment.

Dues and Taxes

When calculating one's income tax, a union member may use union dues as a deduction, subject to the 2% IRS code reduction. If one itemizes deductions, dues, with the exception of that which is used to support the Union's political action program, are deductible. The amount of each bargaining unit's political action contribution, which can be found below, should be subtracted from the annual amount of dues. For those in the MTI, EA-MTI, SEE-MTI and SSA-MTI bargaining units who elect not to become members are required to make fair share contributions because of MTI's obligation to represent them in employment matters and because they receive all of the rights and benefits of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Such individuals do not pay into MTI's political action committee. Premiums paid for health/dental insurance and union dues for 2011 are listed on each employee's last payroll check stub in 2011.

MTI - Teachers who worked full-time in the Madison Metropolitan School District for the entire calendar year in 2011 (January through December) paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$1,115.90. Of that amount \$295 was for WEAC, \$169.60 for NEA, \$607 for MTI, \$14 for SWEIO, and \$30.30 for MTI VOTERS (MTI's political action committee). Because of wide variances, teachers employed under part-time contracts should check their last payroll check stub in 2011 for the correct amount to use in calculating their taxes.

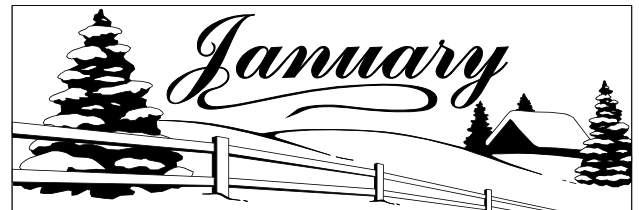
Addenda B & H - Employees who worked full-time in the Madison Metropolitan School District for the entire calendar year in 2011 (January through December) paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$889.52. Of that amount \$147.52 was for WEAC, \$92.14 for NEA, \$607.04 for MTI, \$12.50 for SWEIO, and \$30.32 for MTI VOTERS (MTI's political action committee). Because of wide variances, employees under part-time contracts should check their last payroll check stub in 2011 for the correct amount to use in calculating their taxes.

EA-MTI - Members of MTI's educational assistant collective bargaining unit (EA-MTI) who worked full-time paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$188, of which \$8.96 was for MTI VOTERS. Those working part-time (i.e. one working less than 19 hours per week) paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$94, of which \$4.48 was for MTI VOTERS.

SEE-MTI - Members of MTI's clerical/technical bargaining unit (SEE-MTI) who worked full-time paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$316.70, of which \$15.20 was for MTI VOTERS. Those working part-time (i.e. one working less than 19 hours per week) paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$158.30, of which \$7.50 was for MTI VOTERS.

SSA-MTI - Members of MTI's school security assistants bargaining unit (SSA-MTI) who worked full-time paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$310.80, of which \$14.80 was for MTI VOTERS. Those working part-time (i.e. one working less than 19 hours per week) paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$155.36, of which \$7.36 was for MTI VOTERS.

USO-MTI - Members of MTI's substitute bargaining unit (USO-MTI) paid dues/fair share in the amount of \$179, although substitutes pay dues only in the months in which they work. Substitute teachers who wish to know what they paid in dues/fair share should check their last payroll check stub in 2011.



- **Tuesday, January 17, 4:15 p.m., SCFL**
MTI Faculty Representative Council
- **Wednesday, January 18, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI Communications Committee
- **Thursday, January 19, 6:00 p.m., MTI**
MTI Movie Night - *At the River I Stand*
- **Monday, January 23, 4:00 p.m., MTI**
MTI Constitution Committee
- **Wednesday, January 25, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
USO-MTI Board of Directors
- **Tuesday, January 31, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI Member Engagement Committee

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org
MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org