

# NEA-Alaska/Retired

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## Our retirements, public education, and more are at risk if voters convene a Constitutional Convention

You may already know that the question, “Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?” will be on the 2022 general election ballot. But, what many don’t know is how devastating a Constitutional Convention would be for Alaskans.

First, let me be clear: a Constitutional Convention puts your earned retirement at risk, and it puts public education as we know it in Alaska in danger. You may not be familiar, but there is a “diminishment clause” in the Constitution that protects your retirement. Further, the clear and strong language around public education is the foundation of our K-12 system. There is almost nothing more frightening than considering the implications of what could happen if Alaska were to rewrite our model state constitution in this current political environment.

The prospect that Alaska voters could make the grave mistake of approving a Constitutional Convention keeps me up at night. Let me tell you why.

First, Governor Dunleavy’s legislative agenda has focused on repeated attempts to pass legislation that would place constitutional amendments on the ballot, specifically dealing with the Permanent Fund Dividend and new sources of revenue. The legislature has been rightfully skeptical of these efforts and has repeatedly rejected them on the grounds that it would put Alaska on unsound financial footing and could lead to devastating consequences for our budgets. While the legislature has so far shielded Alaska from these proposals, there will be a motivation to achieve the same policy goals by convening a Constitutional Convention. This leads me to my next point.

Those who are pushing for a Constitutional Convention are doing so in a coordinated effort to further an extreme partisan agenda. These groups are well funded by dark money from Outside interests who are eager to establish a constitution that allows for public money to be spent on private and religious schools, removes the impartial appointment of judges, and creates a host of other issues that would affect the uniqueness of Alaska’s constitution.

Late last year, legislators from the Mat-Su Valley, in their efforts to support Dunleavy, began publicly calling for support of a Constitutional Convention. This was a chilling change as it signaled the shifting of the narrative from fringe elements to elected officials. Even more frightening is the prospect that many of these same elected officials will serve as delegates to a new Constitutional Convention.

Finally, it’s important to recognize that there are current mechanisms in the law that allow for single-issue amendments to the constitution to be made by following clear procedures. The Alaska Legislature, by a two-thirds majority, can pass legislation which will place an amendment before Alaska voters. This approach is far more focused and allows for clarity and certainty about the lasting implica-

tions of altering our most cherished document. The processes and rules for a Constitutional Convention are unclear and could lead to chaos and gridlock, much like we have seen in the Alaska Legislature in recent years.

The stakes are simply too high for us to remain on the sidelines and not engage in this critical election. Labor organizations, educators, bipartisan groups of former legislators, and even authors of the Alaska Constitution have joined together to oppose this effort. I am asking you to join me in this righteous cause. We need everyone who loves our state, relies on our systems of public education, and believes in a fair and just Alaska to stand together to oppose this Constitutional Convention.

— Matt Moser, NEA-Alaska Govt. Relations and Community Outreach Director

## In This Issue

Constitutional Convention Risk .....	1
President’s Message .....	2
Election News You Need to Know .....	3
NEA-Alaska Board of Directors Meeting .....	4
Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board .....	5
The Masked DA .....	5
Alaska Retirement Management Board .....	6
In Memoriam .....	6
A Little Windfall Elimination Background .....	7
Windfall Elimination Provision Insights .....	7
Covid Home Test .....	7
Health Benefit Contact Information .....	7
Busy Bees .....	8
Calendar of Events .....	8

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**President's Message**

There is a lot going on in the world and in our own arc of that world.

Conflict over Ukraine looms. That is disturbing. The potential for conflict beyond Ukraine is extremely concerning. Issues are complicated, and Americans disagree as to the resolution.

For two years, we have been dealing with a pandemic. Many of us have been sick with Covid-19 or one of its variants, or have seen family members, friends, and colleagues sickened by the virus. Many of us have lost family members, friends, or colleagues to Covid-19. Thousands of students lost parents and grandparents to Covid-19. Through it all educators kept teaching and helping students in their grieving.

Meanwhile, educators are accused of indoctrinating students. Some states have passed legislation that restricts what educators are permitted to teach. Educators in these states are compelled to parse out what would and would not be permissible to discuss in their classrooms. They are concerned with threats of legal action if certain topics are discussed. Rather than encouraging discussion and learning, this restrictive legislation essentially keeps educators and students from talking about important national issues. There seems to be a disconnect between what some groups think is being said and taught in the classroom and what is actually being said and taught in the classroom.

Efforts to ban books are surging in some states. Conservatives' or liberals' challenges to certain books are not a new phenomenon, but there seems to be a heightened and deeper political divide. Librarians and educators are caught in the middle. In more than one state, librarians are concerned they could face retaliation or be charged with criminal activity should a parent or any other citizen complain about the content of a book or a lesson.

There is a lot of blame placed on public schools and public school educators for the changes in society, and for the challenges and frustrations we all have faced. It shouldn't be a surprise that educators are leaving the profession.

In Alaska, as in other states, we are also challenged by inadequate school funding; staff shortages in many areas; and now, for political expediency, a possible Constitutional Convention which would effectively bypass our representative democracy and put at risk our public schools and our retirement. I encourage everyone to research the issues posed by a Constitutional Convention. Find out who is financing the effort. Understand how it could impact you.

But all is not doom and gloom! Democracy is alive and well in NEA-Alaska and NEA-Alaska/Retired.

Revisions to the NEA-Alaska/Retired Bylaws passed with a majority vote. Retired election results are in and those results are noted in this newsletter. Thank you to all who voted! And many thanks to all the members who submitted their nominations for one of the open NEA-Alaska/Retired positions.

According to the NEA-AK Bylaws, and based on our membership numbers, Region R now has four directors on the NEA-AK Board of Directors. Judy Salo and Roxanne Abajian were elected in 2021. Christine Villano and Barbara Stek were elected in 2022. Members of the Board of Directors serve for two years.

The hybrid 2022 Delegate Assembly was successful. The delegation of retirees had 12

*Cont. on pg 3*

Editor: Barbara Stek

*This newsletter is the official publication of NEA-Alaska/Retired, printed three times a year. Retired members are encouraged to submit articles, as well as voice comments and concerns. Articles should be sent in Word via email to bwstekak@yahoo.com no later than the 1st of the publication month.*

*“President’s Message” Cont.*

attending virtually and 26 attending in person. As you read in President Tom Klaameyer’s January 21, 2022, Legislative Update our elected delegates from around the state convened to establish NEA-Alaska’s legislative priorities. New Business Item (NBI) Priority 1s are the legislative priorities upon which NEA-Alaska will focus attention and advocacy at the Alaska state capital.

Delegates voted for the following NEA-Alaska Priority 1 NBIs:

- **NBI 22-08: Retirement:** NEA-Alaska shall lobby for HB 220, or any pension option which re-establishes a defined benefit plan option for TRS Tier III and PERS IV employees. In addition, NEA-Alaska will advocate for a statewide and/or local divided vote for TRS members to have the option to return to Social Security.
- **NBI 22-09: Mental Health Services for Alaskan Public School Students and Staff:** Mental Health Services for Alaskan Students and Staff: NEA-Alaska shall actively lobby for funding for school mental health professionals as well as additional certified school counselors.
- **NBI 22-22: Repeal of the WEP/GPO (Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset):** NEA-Alaska shall collaborate with the NEA Board of Directors to lobby to repeal the GPO-WEP. NEA-Alaska shall provide tools and resources for advocacy and also educate members and the public about the adverse effects of the GPO/WEP.
- **NBI 22-23: Class Reduction:** NEA-Alaska shall lobby for a reduction in elementary and secondary class sizes.

Thank you to retired delegate Steve Click for submitting and speaking to NBI 22-22: Repeal of the WEP/GPO.

Educators, both active and retired, have worked and made gains to repeal GPO-WEP. Social Security’s Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) penalize educators, public safety officers, and any other state and local government employees who dedicate their lives to public service. In Alaska, Senator Bill Wielechowski introduced Senate Joint Resolution 12 (SJR 12) urging the US Congress to repeal GPO-WEP.

We continue to make gains in restoring a reasonable retirement for educators. The Labor and Commerce Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Zach Fields and Rep. Ivy Spohnholz, passed HB 220, which would restore a defined benefit pension option for our public employees. This bill would strengthen recruitment and retention of state employees and help support our local government and school district employees.

We should take hope in knowing that public educators, active and retired, are united with strong resolve to continue to do what is right by students, and by our profession. We continue to power on. Educators keep moving forward one day at a time,

and continue to care for students, their families, and our schools.

Retired educators might be retired from our positions with our school districts, but we are not retired from caring what happens to our chosen profession, as well as our beloved schools, colleagues, and students.

I am honored to be among retired educators who gave and continue to give so much to our profession. Our experience is important and our voices matter. It is imperative that we stay united and choose to be part of the action; choose to help protect public education; choose to support educators and students; and choose to work to secure benefits that we as retired educators have earned.

– Roxanne Abajian

## Election News

### *You Need to Know*

**Although we could not cast our votes for NEA-Alaska President and Vice President and NEA Director...**

- Tom Klaameyer is President
- Laura Capelle is Vice President
- Kathy Simpler is NEA Director

**Here are the results for our recent retired election:**

- President: Roxanne Abajian
- Vice President: Trena Richardson
- Secretary: Barbara Stek
- Treasurer: Gayle Harbo
- Directors-at-Large: Susan Stitham (1-year seat)  
Pamela Lloyd and Marilyn Pillifant (2-year seats)
- Region R Directors: Christine Villano and Barbara Stek
- Representative Assembly: Pamela Lloyd and Howard Maxwell

**The NEA-Alaska/Retired Board thanks you for taking the time to vote!**



*Please make sure we have your current email address. Contact Makana Bender at 274-0536 to make changes.*

# NEA-Alaska Board of Directors Meeting

**Region R Directors: Chris Villano, Judy Salo, Roxanne Abajian | January 12-13, 2022**

The SOAR Committee is meeting quarterly and has developed goals and outcomes for 2021-2022 that include:

- educating members about the current retirement system,
- increasing public awareness how it has failed educators and the state educator retention since 2006,
- developing a smart plan for each of NEA-Alaska's committees to work on the retirement system dilemma, and
- working on videos to educate on our broken retirement.

April 22: The US Senate introduced a Social Security Fairness Act that would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision. Our Senators support it.

NEA-Alaska has met with State Legislators on Rep. Grier Hopkins Retirement Bill HB 220. It would improve Alaska's broken retirement system for public sector employees hired after 2006. It gives employees the choice between a defined benefit or a defined contribution. It is cost neutral and considered doable. One of its many goals is to retain and attract educators. It does not return us however to a Tier II TERS. As of the Board meeting it was in House Labor and Finance. All are encouraged to look up legislative updates for more information and check out NEA-Alaska's SOAR link on the webpage for progress on the bill. Testimony, letters, emails, and phone calls on the bill are needed.

## NEA Director Report

- The focus of the NEA meeting was social justice.
- At RA there will be NBIs on Transformational Action, school safety, and justice issues.
- The Board passed the budget which then will go to Representative Assembly for review and vote.
- The Board discussed the possibility of a virtual RA.
- Jacob Berra, Anchorage Education Association, was an NEA Foundation Teacher of the Year runner up in 2020.

## Region Reports

All regions reported that it has been a hard year for their associations with Covid concerns, looking for superintendents, and bargaining for new contracts within the backdrop of state financial difficulties. There are staffing shortages throughout the state and substitutes are hard to find everywhere. Retention of educators is becoming a problem in each region, especially in rural regions. Covid and the broken retirement system continue to discourage educators. Glenn Bafia called for every local president in each region to attend the monthly leadership calls.

*Region R thanked Ron Fuhrer and Nancy Allen for their service on the NEA-Alaska Board. We now have Chris Villano, Roxanne Abajian, and Judy Salo serving as retired board members with Chris Villano representing us on the NEA-Alaska Executive*

*Committee. Our By Laws revision was approved by our membership. At Delegate Assembly our Membership Table's theme will be BEES. Chairs of membership are Barb George and Pat DeSmet.*

## Management Report

- We discussed the current Dushane cases before NEA-Alaska in a closed-door meeting.
- Glenn was proud to report that the last 3 UniServ Directors hired were people of color. There has been some shifting of UniServ personnel in our regions.
- There has been a loss of members over the past three years since the Janus Case. Glenn wants to give incentives to DA members to recruit new members in their regions (maybe gift cards). Our messaging should be strength, belonging, and connection to each other. We know through those avenues we can more effectively bargain for salary, health benefits, and working conditions.

*Glenn's evaluation was stellar. He makes the workplace culture positive, manages staff well, and makes ideas reality for us all.*

## President's Report

### Action Items

1. Seating of Delegates – list **APPROVED**
2. Approve Tim Parker, Chair of LRC **APPROVED**
3. Approve appointment to PTPC **APPROVED** (Nominees to the Governor: Segue Grant, Kristine White, Emma Melkerson (NWA region))
4. Approve ARM Board appointments **APPROVED** (Nominees: Sandi Ryan, Chris Taylor, Chris Benshoof, Gayle Harbo) Update: Chris Taylor removed his name; Mike Vieira nominated
5. DA Assignments – committees and other assignments (i.e. approving minutes, adopt agenda, leading pledge) **APPROVED with flexibility of substituting different Committee Chairs as some chairs are attending virtually rather than in person. Chairs need to attend in person.**

## Elections, PACE (LRC), and Region Directors:

- Each region will in caucus elect PACE members. Current PACE members will attend the LRC to determine NEA-Alaska Priority 1 NBIs to focus on in 2022. (Pam Lloyd, Chris Villano, and Howard Maxwell will represent Region R)

## Member Polling

Some of the highlights of the poll given to a sampling of state members showed that 14% of members support the direction that education is going in the state. 65% think the state is on the wrong track. In regard to safety issues, 69% support

*Cont. on pg 5*

*“NEA-Alaska Board...” Cont.*

masking in schools, while 26% do not. 58% of those polled support vaccination mandates, while 36% oppose mandates. 70% of our polled members felt they were satisfied with the representation of their concerns by NEA-Alaska. However, of the 70%, 44% of them were only somewhat satisfied with our Association. Educators are feeling highly stressed. They are worried about health care costs, sub shortages, and unfilled positions at their buildings, as well as the loss of planning and preparation time due to filling in for shortages. Glenn Bafia has the complete poll data by regions available.

### Other Items

The Board voted to contribute \$5000 to the Kentucky Affiliate Association Relief Fund as a donation to the tornado relief effort. We also talked about developing a rubric to determine criteria for funding requests for donations from NEA-Alaska.

### Political Concerns

Matt Moser reported on one problem with the state redistricting plan that has to do with combining Eagle River and East Anchorage into a Senate district despite the fact it is not a shared population with common interests. There is a lawsuit against the plan by **Alaska For Fair Redistricting**. NEA-Alaska will contribute \$10,000 to the legal defense fund.

The Board took a position to vote against the ballot item to open our State Constitution. We support using the amendment process to make changes to the document.

**Max Mertz, Auditor** – review of 20-21 audit

The Board had no issues with the audit report and it passed.

– *Report respectfully submitted by Christine Villano,  
Region R Director, NEA-Alaska Board of Directors*

## Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board

The Board met via video-teleconference on February 10th. Ben Hofmeister from the Department of Law briefed the Board on legal issues, including the recent State Supreme Court decision on the DVA lawsuit. The most current information on this and other litigation is available on line.

The majority of our meeting dealt with the emerging field of medical gene therapy, a very exciting, interesting, and expensive area of medical treatment that replaces or repairs defective genetic material within a cell. Currently, the conditions treated by gene therapy are very rare, but we have already had claims to the AlaskaCare plan. The Division Health Care Team along with the Board are working to ensure that members maintain access to necessary treatments, have the clinical and logistical support they need, and that the plan risk, quality, and cost controls are in place for this emerging treatment.

The May Board meeting will include a continuation of the proposal to manage the coverage of gene therapy in the most beneficial manner.

Also announced at the meeting is the development of a new and streamlined design of the Division of Retirement and Benefits website including the AlaskaCare webpage that will launch this Spring. Stay tuned for more information and check out the website now to fully appreciate the changes and the vast source of information available to you.

– *Judy Salo, Chair*

## The Masked DA

Well, this year’s hybrid Delegate Assembly went off without a hitch - at least to those in the audience at the Captain Cook Hotel. During our retired caucus meetings, we were able to interact with those on zoom who chose to work from their homes.

All voting was done on our laptops, smart phones, or iPads. Results were instantaneous - no need for divisions or standing votes! Of course, even though those events didn’t slow us down, we did not finish until 2:39 am - yes, am - on Sunday morning, quite reminiscent of some of our previous marathon DAs.

Matt Moser, NEA-Alaska Government Relations and Community Outreach Director, spoke to us during our Thursday caucus about the possibility of a constitutional convention. Opening up Alaska’s entire constitution could cause those sticky, unintended (or intended) consequences. NEA-Alaska Pace and the NEA-Alaska Board of Directors oppose a convention.

There was a lot of concern raised during DA about the lack of qualified special education educators to address IEP goals. To recruit and retain related service providers is a goal.

The Legislative Review Committee moved four motions which were adopted. These represent items for active lobbying. We continue to look forward to returning to a Defined Benefit option for TRS Tier III and PERS Tier IV, along with the repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. One New Business Item sought to legislate secondary class size. The last NBI’s goal was to secure funding for school mental health professionals and additional certified school counselors.

– *Barbara Stek*

# Alaska Retirement Management Board

## December 2021

The nine-person board met in person, in Juneau, December 2-3. The meeting was preceded on Wednesday, December 1st, by four committee meetings: audit, defined contribution, actuarial, and operations.

The Board manages the investment of over \$44 billion in six asset classes, \$18 billion managed in-house. This meeting focused on the Private Equity asset class which is 14% of the portfolio. The pension funds have invested in Private Equity since 1998 and it is one of the best performing classes, producing an annual return of over 13% since inception. Only 2 companies have been used since '01, Abbott and Pathway, and starting in 2007 a significant portion of the portfolio has been managed in-house. Unlike Fixed Income which is used to provide liquidity, PE requires holding assets for long periods for slow, but steady, growth and returns.

In other business the Board received the notice of a clean audit for FY'21 and notice of preparation of the annual financial report on the pension funds. The Division of Retirement and Benefits has been the recipient of annual awards for the excellence of this publication.

Our actuary, Buck, began the process for a new experience

study where the Board must look at assumptions, both demographic and economic, in this once every four year process. One of the most important assumptions is the rate of investment return which is currently 7.38%, consisting of a real rate of return of 4.88% and an inflation rate of 2.5%. Considering the recent rise in inflation this assumption will probably generate much discussion.

In the first quarter of FY'22, 463 PERS Direct Contribution members and 114 TRS DC members took full disbursement of funds held for them and left the system. A total of \$160.6M was disbursed through the end of October in all categories, almost \$47 million from the DC plans. As of September 30, 2021 there were only 613 PERS Tier I actives left and only 143 TRS Tier I actives. The health plans continue to benefit from the participation in EGWP along with the pharmacy contract with OPTUM Rx. Both have resulted in sizeable rebates to the system and the health care portion of both PERS and TRS Direct Benefit is over 100% funded.

The next meeting of the board will be in Juneau, March 17-18, 2022.

– Gayle Harbo



## In Memoriam



*The following names were read aloud at the 2022 Delegate Assembly by President Tom Klaameyer.*

Philip VanDaff – Anchorage EA • Damon Carey – Anchorage EA • Sam Soderstrom – Ketchikan EA  
 Bonnie Franklin – Bering Straits EA • Rebecca Lewis – Education Support Staff Association  
 Charles Rollins – Education Support Staff Association • Carla Goldizen – Education Support Staff Association • Lisa Thomas – Kenai Peninsula EA  
 Richard Hamlin – Ketchikan EA • Timothy Michrina – Lower Kuskokwim NEA • Kathleen Lamont – Lower Yukon ESPA  
 August Naranjo – Mat-Su Classified • Michael Backus – Mat-Su EA • Autumn Rue – Northwest Arctic ESPA • Janelle Farvour – Sitka EA  
 Mary Larsen – NEA-Alaska Retired • Margaret Menting – NEA-Alaska Retired Leslie (Brett) Hiatt – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Kay Rue – NEA-Alaska Retired • James Peotter – NEA-Alaska Retired • Edna Fields – NEA-Alaska Retired • Thomas Thiesen – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Muriel Wattum – NEA-Alaska Retired • Constance Griffith – NEA-Alaska Retired • Janie Cesar – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Michelle Hawkins – NEA-Alaska Retired • Jack Reiland – NEA-Alaska Retired • Alvin Powell – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Jacquelyn Donoho – NEA-Alaska Retired • Leslie Hiatt – NEA-Alaska Retired • Becky Kesskey – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Vilma Grassi – NEA-Alaska Retired • Mary Mitchell – NEA-Alaska Retired • Robert Pfisterer – NEA-Alaska Retired, AEA past president  
 Henry Anderson – NEA-Alaska Retired • Barbara Anderson – NEA-Alaska Retired • Joann Hoogland – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Becky Lessley – NEA-Alaska Retired • Belinda Daniels – NEA-Alaska Retired, AEA past president  
 Irene Matheis – NEA-Alaska Retired, ESSA past President • Bob Packard – NEA-Alaska Retired • Mona (Kay) Person – NEA-Alaska Retired  
 Octavia Pratt Hansen – NEA-Alaska Retired, Former NEA-Alaska President  
 Hollis “Hank” Harrison – NEA-Alaska Retired, Former NEA-Alaska President  
 Barbara Chernikoff – NEA-Alaska Retired • Gina Ireland-Kelly – NEA-Alaska Retired

## A Little Windfall Elimination Provision Background

We in Alaska along with fire fighters, police officers, and other first responders participate in a public retirement system without contributing to Social Security. We may have held other jobs where we did pay into Social Security, but those benefits are impacted by the Windfall Elimination Provision.

The WEP is a federal law adopted in 1983. The amount an individual might receive in Social Security benefits depends on the number of quarters an individual has where money was contributed to Social Security.

WEP can substantially reduce public employees' SS benefits. Reduction in benefits may be somewhat arbitrary and may impact those in lower-earning households significantly.

Over the years, NEA, NEA-Retired, and NEA-Alaska have tried to encourage members of Congress to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision. Right now we might be on the road to WEP reform, rather than repeal, as this may be less onerous to legislators.

Be on the lookout for information on contacting key legislators and letting them know how the Windfall Elimination Provision has affected you.

– *Barbara Stek*

## Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) Insights

A webinar sponsored by the National Council of Teacher Retirement Systems (NCTR) featured presentations from a current retirement administrator in Ohio, a former 20-year retirement administrator from Massachusetts, and NEA staff who work with pension fund trustees. The hour long discussion on February 16 can be found on the nctr.org website. Many of us who have worked on either the repeal or reform of this unfair law for more than 25 years can identify with the frustration of little movement in all this time.

Two members of the House of Representatives have been working on repeal/reform for some time and have introduced legislation. The legislators, Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Richard Neal (D-MA), have similar, but slightly different bills (Brady HR5834 and Neal HR 2337).

The panelists agree that NOW is the time to get something done and two felt reform has more chance than a costly repeal. They agree, since Brady plans to retire, it is now or never to get something done, or we will have to start all over. It is hoped that these two legislators could work together and bring forward bi-partisan legislation to pass this year even though staff on their subcommittee prevent cooperation.

You are urged to contact these two representatives and stress the need to pass legislation now. Even the NEA staff person agreed that reform would be less costly, have more of a chance at passing, and would be a foot in the door. **Please continue your efforts to reform the very devastating windfall elimination provision.** Every year of delay costs retirees dollars. **Push Representatives Neal (MA) And Brady (TX) To Make A Deal.**

Thanks for your efforts!

– *Gayle Harbo*

## Need an At-Home Covid test?

There will be no up-front cost for the kits at Rite Aid Pharmacy, Sam's Club Pharmacy, Walgreens, Kinney Drug, or Walmart Pharmacy. You simply need to present your OptumRx pharmacy ID card. They will submit the information to your plan for coverage. For additional information, go to the AlaskaCare section on the Alaska Department of Retirement and Benefits website.

### Health Benefit Contact Information

Division of Retirement and Benefits

Member Service Center: (907) 465-4460 | Toll Free: (800) 821-2251

Medical Benefits: *Aetna Concierge*

Member Services: (855) 784-8646

Dental Benefits: *Moda/Delta Dental*

Member Services: (855) 718-1768

Pharmacy Benefits: *OptumRX*

Member Services: (855) 409-6999

Long Term Care Benefits: *CHCS Services, Inc.*

Member Services: (888) 287-7116



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email: info@neaalaska.org

## Election Results Inside

### Busy Bees

The retired membership table at Delegate Assembly was buzzing with excitement! Our theme this year was bees. Pat DeSmet and I organized for the event, and we along with other retired delegates staffed the table.

We asked delegates to join our lifetime retiree “hive” and “bee-come” advocates for students and other active educators. It was great to be able to see people in person this year and to have some contact with virtual delegates.

Nine delegates joined our lifetime retired hive. Please encourage your active educator friends to join us too. It’s a great way to stay in touch with education and retirement issues. I hope you all have a great year. Bee healthy, bee kind, and bee happy!

– Barb George, NEA-Alaska/Retired  
Membership Chair



*The Queen Bee*



*Pat DeSmet and Barb George*

## Calendar of Events

### March

16-18 NEA-Retired Conference

20-22 NEA-Alaska Board of Directors Meeting

### April

22-24 NEA-Alaska Fall Event (moved to spring)

### June

3-4 NEA-Alaska Board of Directors Meeting

### July

TBD NEA-Retired Annual Meeting

2-6 NEA Representative Assembly