



Upcoming Events

Black History Month.....	February 2010
American Heart Month.....	February 2010
GRPS School Board Meeting.....	February 1, 2010
GREA Executive Board Meeting	February 2, 2010
MEA Bargaining/Political Action/PR Conference	February 4-6, 2010
GRPS School Board Meeting.....	February 15, 2010
GREA Representative Assembly Meeting.....	February 16, 2010
GRPS School Board Meeting.....	March 1, 2010
GREA Executive Board Meeting	March 2, 2010
GRPS School Board Meeting.....	March 15, 2010
GREA Representative Assembly Meeting.....	March 16, 2010

Watch for your letter via interschool mail!

GREA DUES NEWS!

GREA is mailing a letter to all members who paid dues directly to the GREA during 2009, which will state the amount paid. For most GREA members, the letter is being sent to your building via interschool mail the first week in February.

Please note, GREA does not in any way claim to give advice concerning your taxes. This information is strictly a reflection of our records. Please consult your tax accountant to determine if your dues are tax deductible.

Your total dues paid for 2009 can be calculated in the following manner:

LOOK!

Amount paid directly to GREA (from your letter)	+	Amount payroll deducted by GRPS* (see below)	=	Total Dues Paid for 2009 Calendar Year
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***Members who are paid through the KISD:** Can find their annual dues amount withheld by going to the MUNIS employee self service site and look in the YTD information (<http://kentisd.muniselfservice.com>). Members will see the total amount withheld for dues in 2009.

***Members paid through GRPS:** Will find the total dues withheld in box 14 – “Other” of their W-2 Form.

New Hires (after 09/01/09): Members hired after 09/01/09 will not receive a letter from GREA because all of your dues was payroll deducted by the District. The amount on your W-2 from GRPS is correct.

All Members: The amount included in our letter to you was based on the **date posted** in our records. If your records do not match ours, use your record of payments in your checkbook registers, on-line checking or banking statements, and receipts for money orders or cash paid.

Please remember: GREA does not in any way claim to give advice concerning your taxes. This information is strictly a reflection of our records. Please consult your tax accountant to determine if your dues are tax deductible.

If you still have questions, feel free to contact Darlene Latham at dlatham@mymea.org, or via fax (616-957-2002), or phone (616-957-4732).



Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have.

- Margaret Mead

Our apologies . . .

CORRECTION

Executive Board Secretary, *Emily Holt's* name was omitted from our December Holiday Greeting. We offer our sincere apologies to Emily for this omission and recognize Emily Holt as a valued member of the GREA Executive Board.

Nominate Your Representatives



Watch for the
Green Buckets!

GREA SPRING ELECTIONS

During the January RA meeting, nominations opened for the GREA Executive Board. The following positions are open:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (1) Senior High Representative | (1) Ancillary Representative |
| (2) Elementary Representatives | (5) MEA RA Representatives |
| (2) Special Ed. Representatives | (5) NEA RA Representatives |

Nominations will close at the February RA meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2010. GREA Elections will take place April 12-16, 2010.

MEA REGION 9 ELECTIONS

Green buckets will be given out during the February RA meeting (Feb. 16, 2010) for the **MEA Region 9 Election**. This election will be held March 2, 3 & 4, 2010.

The locked buckets are due back at the GREA Building by the March RA meeting (Mar. 16, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.). **NO BALLOTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER MARCH 16, 2010 FOR ANY REASON.**

If your representative is unable to attend the February RA, please be sure someone from your building stops by the GREA office to obtain a green bucket before the election dates. Buckets obtained from the GREA office must be signed out.

RETIREMENT PLANNING

For members who are considering retirement in the next few years, Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System (MPERS) offers many resources to help you plan and prepare, including a checklist to follow as you "count down" to retirement. Check out the following tools by visiting the MPERS website at www.michigan.gov/ors

Retirement At A Glance: This handy chart outlines the age and service credit you need to retire under the MIP or Basic Plan.

Preretirement Seminars: These two-hour meetings provide an opportunity for you to hear an overview of your retirement benefits so you can make informed decisions about your retirement and your future.

Ready, Set, Retire!! The MPERS Detroit office offers this optional two-hour session for members retiring this year who need assistance with the retirement application forms.

Online Tutorials: For those who might not have time to attend a pre-retirement seminar, or those who want a refresher, MPERS offers several online tutorials.

For more information about retirement, or to register for any of the above sessions, visit www.michigan.gov/ors, or you may call 1-800-381-5111.

WEST MICHIGAN LABOR SPEAKS!

Listen to West Michigan Labor Speaks
Every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to noon
on WPRR 1680 AM . . .and coming soon to FM radio!
(rebroadcast on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.)

West Michigan Labor Speaks is a talk radio show centered on those Labor and Middle Class issues that have an effect on families in and around Grand Rapids, MI. As such, your GREA President, Paul Helder is a regular guest of the show during its second hour of broadcast.

Archived shows are available at <http://www.publicrealityradio.org/browse.php>

WPRR
1680AM