NTA CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

As you know, the current agreement between the district and the NTA expires on June 30, 2010. The parties are currently bargaining for a successor agreement. Not only does the NTA bargain for in-service members, but it also negotiates for retirees regarding health insurance benefits. All of us support the NTA in its efforts to make an agreement that is satisfactory and fair to the entire bargaining unit. The current climate for negotiations is very difficult. We have not witnessed this level of anti-teacher rhetoric across our state and country in many years. We must continue to support one another, in-service and retirees alike, if we are to survive the challenge.

CONTRACT RATIFICATION

Under the terms of the judge’s decision in our litigation with the NTA, the union is required to include retirees in referendum voting, which includes contract ratification. In short, what this means is that when the district and the NTA reach an agreement, you will be asked to vote to accept or reject that agreement. We are pleased to report that the NTA will poll the retirees by mail ballot. We applaud that decision. If time and logistics permit, we will send you recommendations regarding your vote. We also direct you to the NTA website at www.newburghta.com. Click on the link for the Retirees Newsletter. We will update the site as needed.
YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

Because of a great deal of hard work which led to our victory in court, we won your right to vote on the contract. **Your right to vote is unprecedented as there is no other group of retirees who have that right.** It is, therefore, **absolutely critical that you vote** when called upon to do so. A failure on our part to exercise that right could ultimately lead to losing it. Just think about it. In this day and age of hostility toward public employees, you have the right to vote on any proposed contract agreement affecting your health insurance benefits! **Make sure that you vote** to protect these important benefits! A meeting between the leadership of the RTC and the NTA officers to discuss the last of the voting rights issues that still divides the parties failed to produce a resolution of this dispute. More information will be provided at a later date.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Flip Gertler, Russ Coughlin, Bette Coughlin and Barbara Fogarty for their generous contributions to the Retired Teachers’ Action Fund.

DUES INCREASE

The Retired Teachers’ Chapter has announced an increase in dues to $50.00 per year. This is the first ever dues increase since the RTC was formed in 1982. The dues increase is necessitated by higher overall costs as well as a need to rebuild the Retired Teachers’ Action Fund. The fund exists to promote the interests of retirees and those funds may well be needed to further protect our rights in the future. Thank you for your understanding.