

Terry's Table Talk

Grocery bills are going higher and higher. At first, I attributed this to Covid and the problems with the supply chain. But once we got back to “normal,” prices didn’t go lower and they also did not remain steady. They increased. Additionally, the amount of goods in the packages began to be less.

There is a word for the practice of reducing the size of a product while maintaining its sticker price. It is called shrinkflation.

Consumer food prices have jumped 10.9% over the past year, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics – the biggest 12-month increase since 1979. Margarine, coffee, soup, and eggs are among the worst-hit food items, according to the BLS data. Egg prices have increased nearly 40%.

Below are some examples of shrinkflation:

Coffee – a 54 oz. can has become a 43.5 oz for the same price

Cans are smaller - like tuna has gone from 6 oz. to 5 oz.

Cake mixes have gone from 18.5 oz to 15.25

Cereal boxes are slightly smaller and hold less

Drink mix packages – less in package

Kleenex – fewer sheets in the same size box

Sugar – a five pound bag has become a four pound bag at a higher price

Napkins – have become a little smaller and the texture is not as soft as previously

Cheese sticks – less amount of cheese in a package

Soup – most canned soups have simply increased astronomically in price

Snack foods (like potato chips) have less in the bag but the air pumped in fools the buyer into believing there is more in the bag than there actually is

Make-up creams – smaller jars or less in jars

Paper Wipes (texture and amount) in restaurants, gas station’ bathrooms, in our homes, etc.



The reason for Shrinkflation is the increase in production costs. Shrinkflation is the practice of reducing the quantity or size of consumer goods (a product) while maintaining the sticker prices. It is mainly in the food and beverage industries. In some cases, it is the input costs. However, raising the price is also a **strategy to boost profit margins**. (Read the other FOCUS POINTS for more information.)

Shrinkflation runs the risk of customers moving away from a product or brand and go to another cheaper brand. The companies believe customers will likely see the product price increases, but they believe the amount for a product will not be noticed by the consumer. In other words, the packaging is the same so they believe the consumer will not notice that the box is not full or is less or the consumer might not notice the can is a bit smaller.

Research has shown that consumers notice **price increase** rather than the smaller amount for a product. It also helps **boost** or maintain profit margins. It also makes it harder to measure price changes.

Shrinkflation reduces weight, volume or quantity of products. Notice shrinkflation by spotting a redesign of the packaging.

In order to prevent Shrinkflation when you purchase products, you should find competing brands or a store brand, rather than name brands. Many of the decreases are subtle. **Check the net weight of products** before you buy.

Fall Luncheon

MNEA-Retired held its fall luncheon on November 17 at Maggiano's Little Italy in St. Louis. There was a silent auction to benefit CHEER and we were able to raise over \$1300. Guests at the luncheon included MNEA President Phil Murray, MNEA Vice President Rebeka McIntosh, and MNEA Executive Director Dr. Patrick Layden.



Donations to the auction were plentiful and lovely.



Lunch was “family style” and folks had a great time! If you didn’t attend, you missed out.

It’s Time to Run!

MNEA-Retired is seeking candidates for the following officer and delegate positions:

Secretary (two-year term 2024-25 and 2025-26)

Executive Council Member-At-Large (4 positions; two-year term from 2024-25 and 2025-26)

Board of Directors (three-year term 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27)

Delegate to NEA-Retired and NEA RA (5 positions; one-year term) July 3-7, 2024 - The MNEA-Retired president will serve automatically. Those running for NEA RA delegates who are not elected will serve as alternates.

Delegate to MNEA Representative Assembly (12 positions; two-year term) Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025, and Spring 2026 - The MNEA-Retired president and vice president will serve automatically. Those running for MNEA RA delegates who are not get elected will serve as alternates.

If you are interested in running for a position, you need to declare your candidacy at www.mnea.org/retired-candidate by **March 15**. There’s a little form to complete. You need to send in a headshot photo and a short bio of 100 words or less.

The election will take place electronically between **April 11-17**. However, you need to register to vote and attend the annual meeting by **March 28** in order to receive you ballot. Watch your email inbox this March for voter registration. Results will be announced at the Annual Meeting on April 19.



Annual MNEA-Retired Meeting

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 19, at the Lodge of the Four Seasons, Lake of the Ozarks. As usual, elections will have been held. Bylaws revisions will be discussed and voted on as well. Register online at www.mnea.org/retired for the MNEA-Retired Election, Annual Meeting & Luncheon. Watch your email for the notice saying materials have been posted. This is coming soon.

You will be able to register:

to **VOTE and ATTEND THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING** or

to **VOTE, ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING, AND BUY A LUNCHEON TICKET.**

Luncheon cost will be \$25 per person and tickets must be purchased online in advance. This year, we will have a selection of box lunches (turkey, roast beef, vegetarian sandwiches with sides, dessert and a beverage). If you need help registering online, you may email or call Olivia Compton, 417-569-1402 or Olivia.compton@mnea.org.

Deadlines for Elections and Luncheon

March 28 is the deadline to purchase a luncheon ticket.

March 28 is the deadline to register to vote and attend the meeting.

Voting will take place **April 11 - Noon on April 17**. Once you register and voting opens, you will receive an email with a link to vote.

Schedule for the Annual Meeting:

10:30-11:30: Registration; drop off PAC items

11:00-12:00: shop the PAC Auction

Noon: Dearld Snyder from PSRS/PEERS will give an update to the members

1:30: Business meeting starts

Committee Openings

There are openings on all of the retired committees. If you would like to serve, please let President Terry Reger know. We have had a name change: the Elections Committee will now be the Credentials Committee. We need volunteers for this committee since no officer or member of the Executive Council may serve on this committee. We also are establishing a new Policy Committee. Members of this committee will help to interpret the new MNEA-Retired Bylaws and establish policies for implementing them.

Finally, the Legislative Committee has been renamed and is now called the Advocacy Committee.

Focus Points . . .

- ❖ According to Free and Fair Democracy, CEO pay skyrocketed by more than 1,209 per cent over 18 times the productivity growth.
- ❖ As people grapple with record-high inflation spurred by corporate greed, CEOs are earning 399 times the pay of the median worker – the highest disparity in 50 years.
- ❖ From 1979 to 2020, net worker productivity rose 61.8 percent, but workers' pay rose only 17.5 percent.
- ❖ Fentanyl has killed more Americans than the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq.



May 1 – will be the only Capitol Action Day for retirees. Please sign up now and join us in Jefferson City.

We're looking forward to a good turnout.

Sign up for Capitol Action Days at www.mnea.org/CAD.



Contribute to CHEER

Lend a hand to our colleagues working in the classroom and virtually by making a contribution to help fund future grants.

www.mnea.org/CHEER.



Retirement PSRS/PEERS Meeting Report

Missouri NEA Legislative Director Otto Fajen represents MNEA and MNEA-Retired members at the meetings of the PSRS/PEERS Board. Read the report of the latest meeting at www.mnea.org/PSRS.



1810 East Elm Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101
573-634-3202 / 800-392-0236
www.mnea.org/retired



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