

PARTA

SOUNDINGS

MARCH 2021

PEORIA Area Retired Teachers Association

VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

Zoom Meeting Access
Information on page 2

March 8, 2021
10:00 A.M.

PROGRAM

* TOPIC:

IRTA MEMBER
BENEFITS UPDATE

* SPEAKERS:

Gary DiVito
AMBA District Manager

Lori Fairfield
AMBA Benefits
Representative

MEETING

Dixie Wheeler
PARTA President



Sally Weber
Webmaster



Roger Hampton
Soundings Editor



Check PARTA's
Website for
Information and
Updates

pa-rta.weebly.com/



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all PARTA members,
So happy to have sunshine and better
weather—and vaccines! Although we
still are meeting via ZOOM this month, we still can feel
connected. Just follow Roger's link and instructions.
PARTA has formed a membership committee (meeting
March 4) to tackle the task of updating our member lists
and developing strategies to get more retired teachers to
join us. If you are interested in participating on this
committee, please let me know. We would be happy to
have you. Looking forward to our
next meeting—and wearing **GREEN!**



Dixie Wheeler, PARTA President

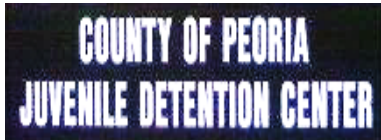
UPCOMING MEETINGS

APRIL 12 VIRTUAL MEETING (10:00 A.M.)

ZELENA WILLIAMS

Volunteer with teenage girls at
JV Detention, Zee's Blessed Dress

*Zelena welcomes donations of buttons, zippers, lace,
pillowcases, T-Shirts, fabric glue, and scraps of material.*



*We are hopeful that we can resume
in-person luncheon meetings at
Barrack's Cater Inn beginning in May.*

MAY 3 (11:30 A.M.)

PEORIA CHARTER COACH
Upcoming Trips



JUNE 7 (11:30 A.M.)

ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM
John Meisinger



NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST

SEPTEMBER 13 (2nd Monday)



An Irish Blessing

*May the best day of your past
be the worst day of your future.*

SOUNDINGS

PARTA VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

10:00 AM MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021

The February PARTA Meeting was called to order by President Dixie Wheeler followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.



Jeannie Blane introduced the program guest, Pam Winterroth, a harpist, who provided the membership with several musical renditions. The program was followed by questions and answers. Pam Winterroth's programs can be viewed at "Harp Serenity" on Facebook and YouTube.

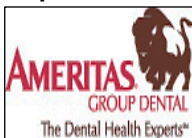
COMMITTEE REPORTS



- **Treasurer:** Jeff Vallosio reported that a summary of the treasurer's report was printed in the Soundings. Jeff will send a file to any member requesting the treasurer's report or budget report. The budget report will be approved at the March meeting.

- **Member Benefits Committee:** Pat Hampton serves as the chair of the IRTA Member Benefits Committee. The committee is a state committee, with six (6) members, one member from each area. The committee meets in September and January.

Pat provided information on the Dental Plan which was up for review this year. The committee met with the AMBA representative, Gary DeVito. An aggressive Dental Plan was negotiated and approved. The Dental Plan was approved to include dental implants. It should be noted this is a Dental Plan upgrade. The plan covers 80% in-network and 70% out of network. Another Dental Plan was also approved but the benefits are not as good.



There was no change in the Vision Plan. Members were encouraged to contact the AMBA representative to discuss any concerns regarding the Dental and Vision Plans.

- **Foundation Scholarships:** Valda Shipp reported on the IRTA Foundation Scholarships and the Excellence in Education Grants. She informed the membership that

the scholarships are for college Juniors and Seniors and applications are due March 15.



- **Membership:** John Rathbun reported that membership starts at the beginning of the year. Most of the members have Life Membership. The fee for Life Membership is \$120. Life Membership keeps members connected to the organization, even though they are not physically present at meetings.

- **Legislative Update - Dixie Wheeler** There was no Legislative report. House Speaker Welch has suspended meetings.

AGENDA ITEMS

Establishing a Membership Committee

- President Wheeler voiced a desire to establish a Membership Committee to assist in maintaining the growth and sustainability of PARTA. She was concerned that prospective members were falling by the wayside, due to the lack of an established recruiting plan. In the next month or so, she would like a few interested people to organize and create a system for member recruitment. Roger Hampton, Pat Hampton, and Sally Weber volunteered to serve on the committee.

- **Unit of Distinction Program - Information on the IRTA Unit of Distinction Program** was provided by President Wheeler. It is a voluntary program, based on the honor system, designed to help guide and direct local unit leaders in the management of their unit. Units can receive \$250, if various membership criteria are met. President Wheeler acknowledged that PARTA has met some of the qualifying criteria, but improvement is needed in the area requiring the establishment of an active Membership Committee.

The Unit of Distinction Program is non-competitive. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Pat Hampton and seconded by Deloris Turner.

**EVERY
MEMBER
A
RECRUITER!**

RESPECTIVELY SUBMITTED

DELORIS TURNER, SECRETARY

OPTIONS FOR ACCESSING ZOOM MEETINGS

EMAIL

A Zoom link will be sent to all PARTA members for whom we have an email address.

WEBPAGE

Click the Zoom link on the PARTA webpage.

BROWSER

Go to: <https://zoom.us>
Click on: "Join A Meeting"

PHONE

(Voice Only Option)
Dial: 1 312 626 6799

Enter Meeting ID
Enter Meeting Passcode

→ (Each meeting has a different link / meeting ID / passcode.)

Zoom meeting on Monday, **March 8:** Meeting ID: **883 9898 7991** Passcode: **412657**

SOUNDINGS

TOTAL PARTA FINANCES	INVESTMENT BALANCE	48,585.71
	SAVINGS BALANCE	9,015.74
	CHECKING BALANCE	2,302.81
	WORKING CASH (CASH BOXES)	100.00
	POST OFFICE BULK MAIL FUND	398.01
Jeff Vallosio Treasurer	POST OFFICE RETURNED MAIL FUND	97.71
	GRAND TOTAL	\$60,499.98



REMINDER: Dues for Annual and Associate Members are \$15.00.

Send Check made out to "PARTA" to:

John Rathbun, Membership | 4 Elm Creek DR, APT 304 | Elmhurst, IL 60126

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Cagle	Judith	635-8559	New phone
Crusen	Betty	blcrusen@yahoo.com	New email
Winterroth	Pam	508 Brad CT Hanna City IL 61536-9591	657-4356 Renewed member

Venita Webb, 85

July 7, 1935 - January 30, 2021



DATABASE MAINTAINED BY JOHN RATHBUN

Please submit any changes or additions to your information.

Miscellaneous Humor from the Hampton Vault!

- 🤔 The governor stated that we can have gatherings of up to 10 people!
I don't even know 10 people without issues!!!
- 🤔 Last night my wife asked me if I had seen the dog bowl.
I said, "I didn't know he could."
- 🤔 Two little boys were at a wedding when one of them asked,
"How many wives can a man have?" His friend answered,
"Sixteen...four better, four worse, four richer, and four poorer."
- 🤔 Got up at 5am, completed a 10-mile run, came back home, prepared a
vegetable smoothie for breakfast... Don't remember the rest of the dream.
- 🤔 When people say, "You're going to regret that in the morning,"
I sleep until noon because I'm a problem solver!



There are things in life you cannot recover:

- ✓ A stone...after it's thrown.
- ✓ A word...after it's spoken.
- ✓ An occasion...after it's missed.
- ✓ Time...after it's gone.



Life is short. Break the rules.
Forgive quickly. Kiss slowly.
Love truly. Laugh uncontrollably.
Never regret anything that made
you smile. Enjoy Life!!!

SOUNDINGS

YOUR VOICE IS KEY TO BETTER RETIREMENT PROTECTION



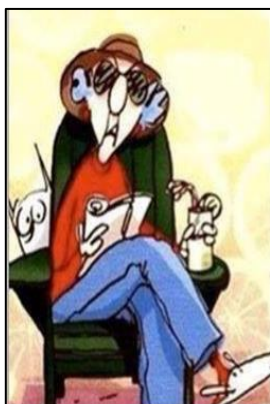
Supporting Illinois Retired Teachers Political Action Committee (IRTPAC) helps ensure retired educators have a strong voice when decisions are made that impact the promised pension and healthcare benefits. IRTPAC works to ensure elected officials making these important decisions understand that fundamental promises made need to be kept.

- The IRTPAC is the political advocacy arm for you, your pension, and your healthcare benefits. Together, we form the foundation upon which the IRTA member-retirees build relationships.
- The IRTPAC exists to elect, educate, and build rapport with legislators and officials who understand the important role pensions and healthcare benefits are to our retirees.
- The IRTPAC provides campaign financing to officeholders and candidates who are concerned about and committed to fulfilling all promised benefits.
- The IRTPAC board members determine which candidates to support based on qualifications, knowledge, sensitivity, and responsiveness to retired educator issues.

Your contribution sends a message to policymakers that the retired educator community is united and provides an opportunity to positively impact the election of candidates who recognize and support the duty of government to fully fund pensions and healthcare benefits.

Fill out the online form to donate just \$1 per month:

<https://irtaonline.org/index.php/forms/irtapac-monthly-subscription-form>
or call the IRTA office at: 1.800.728.4782



REST YOUR MIND MAXINE

I know you have been lying awake at night wondering why baby diapers had brand names such as “Luvs”, “Huggies”, and “Pampers”, while undergarments for old people are called “Depends”.

Well, here is the low down on the whole things.

When babies poop in their pants,
people are still gonna Luv’em, Hug’em, and Pamper’em.

When old people poop in their pants,
it “Depends” on who’s in the will.

Glad I got that straightened out so you can rest your mind.

Source: <http://www.funlava.com/20-top-and-funny-maxine-quotes/>

Teacher: “Give me a sentence which includes the words ‘Defense’, ‘Defeat’, and ‘Detail.’”
Student: “When a horse jumps over defence, defeat go first and then detail.”

A Strong Friendship
does not need daily conversation
and it does not always need togetherness.



As long as the relationship
lives in the heart,
true friends will never part.

SOUNDINGS

TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM (TRS) UPDATED



TRS closed out a challenging 2020, dominated by the economic upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a positive 7.9 percent investment return and a \$57.2 billion portfolio – the largest balance in the System’s 82-year history.

Even with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, the TRS long-term investment returns continued to exceed the System’s long-term assumed investment return of 7 percent. The 40-year return for TRS at the end of calendar year 2020 was 9.3 percent.

UNUSUAL INCREASE IN MEMBER RETIREMENTS

Interestingly, this jump did not occur during the system’s normal “retirement season” between January and June. The jump began in July, before the beginning of the new school year, and continued through October. Traditionally during July to October, retirement numbers decline.



Between June and September, teacher retirements jumped by 45 percent compared to the similar timeframe in 2019. In July of 2020, retirements increased by 38 percent over the two prior years and jumped by 67 percent in August 2020 compared to 2019 and 2018.



Anecdotally, members retiring in July through October mentioned to TRS counselors that their retirements were related to the drastic changes in teaching caused by COVID-19. During July and August of 2020 school officials in Illinois were making crucial decisions about distance learning, hybrid schedules and how the 2020-2021 school year would begin for students, teachers, staff and parents.

NEW OPTIONAL DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN

TRS is close to introducing its first-ever “defined contribution” offering – the TRS Supplemental Savings Plan, or “SSP.” The SSP will be “an optional benefit to any member who chooses to participate” if the member is active in Tier 1 or Tier 2. Retired and inactive TRS members will not be eligible for the SSP.



As a Defined Contribution (DC) plan, the SSP will supplement the existing TRS defined benefit (DB) pension plan. The SSP does not replace the DB plan for participating members. TRS members cannot opt out of the DB plan and place their DB contributions into the new SSP. Members participating in the SSP will still make payroll contributions to their DB pension.

Source: <https://www.trsil.org/news-and-events/Strong-investment-performance-CYE2020>

I get most of my exercise these days from shaking my head in disbelief.

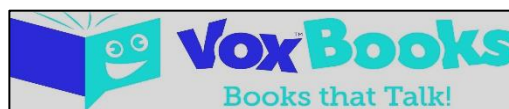
SOUNDINGS



PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

[HTTP://WWW.PEORIAPUBLICLIBRARY.ORG/](http://www.peoriapubliclibrary.org/)

INFORM YOUR KIDS / GRANDKIDS NEW TO PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY



March is National Reading Month, a month designed to motivate Americans of all ages to read every day. Peoria Public Library is trying to make that as easy as possible for its youngest readers with the newest addition to their collection: Vox Books.

Vox Books are designed to capture a child's attention by combining audio books with beautiful storybooks, thus making reading fun and, hopefully, a lifelong love.

Each Peoria Public Location has its own, unique collection of Vox books, geared to young readers, ages 4 to 8 years old. Simply push a button to listen and read along. No wifi or data required.

Studies show that read-along books improve the connection between the spoken and written word as well as help increase a child's attention span.



Just a reminder that you can access more than 70 popular and niche magazines from your computer, mobile device, or tablet. Scroll through the pages of your favorite magazines, enjoying the colorful design

and ads as if you were reading it from the newsstand. You can also access back issues, search by keyword and, depending on the publisher, even print pages from your favorite publication. Peoria Public Library has chosen a variety of magazines to appeal to all ages and interests. Just a few examples of titles:

THE ATLANTIC	VANITY FAIR	VOGUE
NEWSWEEK	BON APPETIT	THE NEW YORKER
HEALTH	FOOD & WINE	FINE GARDENING
ESQUIRE	DO-IT-YOURSELF	BETTER HOMES & GARDENS
TIME	FINE GARDENING	ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY



WINE DRINKERS - SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Put a glass of wine in each room of your home and call it a "Wine Tour"!

Blowing on the wine in the mug will help convince Zoom participants that your "tea" is hot!



The secret of enjoying a good wine:

1. Open the bottle to allow it to breathe.
2. If it does not look like it's breathing, give it mouth-to-mouth.

The happiest people don't HAVE THE BEST of everything, they just MAKE THE BEST of everything.

SOUNDINGS

2020 ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION GRANT WINNERS

This winter, the Illinois Retired Teachers' Foundation (IRTF) awarded \$36,489 in grant money to public-school educators from across the state. 65 projects were selected from 247 submitted proposals. This grant money will allow these educators to enrich their instruction with materials not otherwise available to them.



**STUDENTS
are the
REAL WINNERS**

- ★ Fourteen teachers in Area 4 were selected. Six of those were near Peoria.
- ★ Taylor Andrews, LaSalle Elementary School, Creve Coeur
- ★ Heather Brand, Mossville Grade School, Mossville
- ★ Lori Martin, South Pekin Grade School, South Pekin
- ★ Keeley Ruhland, Mossville Elementary and Junior High School, Mossville
- ★ David Sceggel, Illinois Valley Central High School, Chillicothe
- ★ Michele Stewart, Mossville Elementary School, Mossville



The name and picture of each winner is listed on the IRTA website. A paragraph summary about each project in the winner's own words is included.

PARTA MEMBERS READ & RECOMMEND



THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY

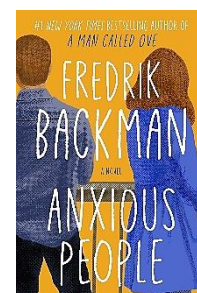
by Matt Haig

A dazzling novel about all the choices that go into a life well lived. Between life and death there is a library, and within that library, the shelves go on forever. Every book provides a chance to try another life you could have lived. To see how things would be if you had made other choices . . . Would you have done anything different if you had the chance to undo your regrets?

ANXIOUS PEOPLE

by Fredrik Backman

A humorous, compassionate, wise, and ingeniously constructed story about the enduring power of friendship, forgiveness, and hope—the things that save us, even in the most anxious of times. A poignant novel about a crime that never took place, a would-be bank robber who disappears into thin air, and eight extremely anxious strangers who find they have more in common than they ever imagined.



Email the name and author of a book that you have enjoyed to roger.hampton11138@gmail.com

Hugh Hefner became a multi-millionaire staying home in his pajamas. I'm not having the same result!



Text message: "The car is not starting! Dashboard shows the sign of a person sitting on toilet."



My friend writes songs about sewing machines. He's a Singer songwriter, or sew it seams.

**Text response: "What...???"
Send me a picture."**

To be Frank, I'd have to change my name!

I have a split personality,' said Tom, being Frank.

Son: Dad, there's a small get-together at school tomorrow.

Dad: Small get-together? How small? Son: Only me...you...and the principal.

SPOTLIGHT ON IRTA MEMBER BENEFITS

FIXED INDEX ANNUITY

Are you concerned about being jolted by sudden changes in the stock market? If so, the Fixed Index Annuity may be for you.

With this annuity, you can create guaranteed income with a guaranteed interest rate.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ No medical underwriting | ✓ Offers guaranteed interest rates |
| ✓ You can protect your investment by never losing money | ✓ Provides income for your entire lifetime |
| ✓ Enjoy market gains without downside risk | ✓ A+ rated by Standard and Poor's |



PASSPORT OFFER: Save up to \$20 on TurboTax!

Get your taxes done right with the #1 best-selling tax software. Easily file federal and state income tax returns with 100% accuracy to get your biggest refund, guaranteed

For a full list of IRTA Member-Only Benefits and discount codes, log on to the "Members Only" section of www.irtaonline.org and click on "Member Benefits".

ILLINOIS DRIVER'S LICENSE AND ID CARD RENEWAL

Secretary of State, Jesse White, has extended the expiration dates for driver's licenses and ID cards to June 1, 2021, so that those who have to visit an office may wait for warmer weather. The offices are marked off for social distancing so there is not the usual amount of waiting space inside buildings, and lines may get long outside.



The deadline for getting a REAL ID to use for domestic travel purposes was extended to October 1, 2021. With conditions still in a state of flux because of the virus, it is best to check online for the most up-to-date information at: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/

SOCIAL SECURITY IMPOSTOR COMPLAINTS SHATTER RECORD IN 2020

Crooks posing as Social Security employees triggered a record-shattering number of 718,000 complaints in 2020 and led to nearly \$45 million in victim losses, proving pandemic shutdowns did not thwart what the Social Security commissioner called a "terrible" problem. The average victim lost \$6,100 in calendar year 2020.

TIPS from AARP:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Genuine SSA employees will never promise to increase your benefits or resolve an identity theft issue if you pay a fee or move your money into a "protected" account. | • If you owe money to Social Security, the agency will mail you a letter with your payment options and appeal rights. SSA does not suspend Social Security numbers or demand secrecy from you in order to resolve a problem. |
|---|--|

The oldest computer was owned by Adam and Eve. It was an Apple with very limited memory. Just 1 byte and everything crashed!

