

# PARTA

# SOUNDINGS

SEPTEMBER 2016

Peoria Area Retired Teachers' Association

## Welcome New Retirees

### MEETING

**September 12**  
**Barracks Cater Inn**  
**11:30 A.M.**  
**Luncheon – \$12.00**

### RESERVATION REQUIRED

*If you pay by check, make check payable to "Cater Inn".*

### Greeter

 **Susan Bartlow**

### Invocation

 **Susan Leighty**

### Pledge

 **Susan Leighty**

### Luncheon

Roasted Chicken Breast  
Rice Pilaf  
Vegetable  
Assorted Salads  
Assorted Desserts

### Program

**Illinois**  
**Teacher of the Year**

**Kim Thomas**  
*PPS 150 - Woodruff*

**BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Dave Barnwell, Chair**



**Roger Hampton**  
**Soundings Editor**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings! Hope you have had an enjoyable summer. Our first Fall meeting will be September 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 at Barracks Cater Inn. As most of you know, we meet nine times per year. We meet at Cater Inn at 11:30 on the first Monday of the month except for September (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday) and there are no meetings in January, July or August.

At our September meeting, we will have as our guests, the retirees from the "graduating" class of 2016. We will recognize them for their many years of dedicated service to the young people of the Peoria area.

Our program promises to be a good one. We will be hearing from Peoria's own Illinois Teacher of the Year, Kim Thomas. I'm sure this will be a program you will not want to miss. Hope to see you at our September meeting. It will be great to see our friends and colleagues as we welcome our newest "crop" of retirees.

*Dave Barnwell, PARTA President*




## OCTOBER PARTA MEETING

**District 150 Foundation – Cindy Morris**  
**"Horizons" & "Adopt-A-School" Programs**

**Check PARTA's website for updates.**  
**[pa-rta.weebly.com/](http://pa-rta.weebly.com/)**

### A Reservation MADE is a Reservation PAID

 A number of people do not keep the reservation they have made for the luncheon/meeting each month. We realize that circumstances can change after a reservation has been made, and we ask that you be courteous enough to notify Nancy Wing (243-9218) or your caller (*Names and phone numbers are in the front of your directory*) in the event you will not be able to attend as planned. Bills will be sent to those persons not providing notification in the event a reservation is not honored.

# SOUNDINGS

## PARTA Luncheon Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2016

Dave Barnwell welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the greeters, Frances Farraher and Susan Bartlow. Marty Sprecher gave the Invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Attendance today was 79, which included one guest.

After the luncheon, Ann Winget introduced the speaker, Patrick Kirchhofer, the Peoria County Farm Bureau manager. He gave an interesting program about genetic modified organisms, or GMO's. After the program, Dave opened the business meeting.

- The minutes were in the *Soundings*. They were approved as printed.
- Jeff Vallosio said copies of the Treasurer's Report were on the tables and summarized in the *Soundings*. The report will be filed for audit.
- Membership – The executive board recommended that dues be raised. John Rathbun said it wasn't necessarily needed today, but we do need a steady source of income for the future. The executive board made a motion to raise the fees for 2017: the annual dues from \$10 to \$15 and lifetime dues from \$75 to \$120. John seconded the motion. It was stated during the discussion that a person could join for life for \$75



(\$65 if already paid \$10 for year) through December 2016.

The vote was taken, and the motion carried.

We welcomed a new member today.

- Legislative – Roger Hampton said the Area 4 Conference was held in Springfield. Pensions were discussed. State legislative issues and insurance updates were given. IRTA will endorse candidates that have consistently been on the teachers' side for pensions and benefits. IRTA Political Action Committee information was distributed.
- Scholarship – Valda Shipp said we hope to again award three scholarships.
- IRTA Region 10 Director Sally Weber reported Area 4 held a good conference with quite a few people attending. We're getting better communication, and we're sharing program information.
- The Nominating Committee is working. Let the officers know if you're interested.
- We'll be reaching out to new retirees before the September meeting.
- Our speaker for September will be Teacher of the Year, Kim Thomas. The meeting will be Monday, September 12, due to Labor Day.

IRTA PAC



## PARTA Board of Directors' Meeting

August 17, 2016

Present: Dave Barnwell, Jeff Vallosio, Susan Leighty, Peggy Shane, Maxine Blane, Ann Winget, Nancy Wing, Valda Shipp, Linda Sedgwick, Laveine Birditt, Eric Johnson, and Kathy Simpson  
Jeff Vallosio distributed the Treasurer's Report and answered questions. He said the investments were up and down.



### New business:

- Linda Sedgwick reported that she is sending a letter to the new retirees inviting them to a complimentary buffet at our September meeting. The letter includes the date, time, place, program, history, and a buffet ticket. They will be called the first week of September for reservations.
- Nominations: The committee has been working, but the slate is not complete yet. They will continue to look for candidates.

### Committee Reports:

- Program: Ann Winget reported the program for September is Kimberly Thomas, Teacher of the Year, October is Cindy Morris from PPS Foundation, and December is Denise Adams and the sing along. The other months she has interesting possibilities. Ann will pass out new index cards in September to all present to fill out. We will start over in September with the new cards. She'll have cards and an information sign in front thereafter.
- Publicity: Laveine Birditt sends notices to the local television stations' web sites, besides sending to the Journal Star.
- Scholarships: Valda Shipp said we gave three scholarships last year. She encouraged people who know someone in education at ICC to check with ICC about the scholarship.
- Historian: Susan Leighty had a question from the obituaries. There are those mentioned as teachers, but not mentioned as members of PARTA. It was suggested that she check with John Rathbun.
- Parliamentarian: Maxine Blane said she would not be available to serve as parliamentarian after next year.

ICC

Respectfully submitted

Kathy Simpson Secretary

I'm going to stand outside. So if anyone asks, I am outstanding.

# SOUNDINGS



## 2016 SCHOLARSHIPS to College Students

PARTA - IRTA Area 4 (Includes Peoria County)  
 \$3,000 \$4,000

### RETIRED TEACHERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Total PARTA Finances	Jeff Vallosio, Treasurer
Life Membership Fund*	\$ 30,566.61*
Investment Balance	\$ 40,820.58
Savings Balance	935.89
Checking Balance	4,371.24
Working Cash (cash boxes)	100.00
Post Office Bulk Mail Fund	366.29
Post Office Returned Mail Fund	87.83
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 46,681.83</b>

\*This is not an additional amount. It is included within the Investment Balance.

### PARTA DUES

- Annual: \$10.00      ➤ Life: \$75.00 (*Best Deal*)
- JOIN NOW – DUES WILL INCREASE NEXT YEAR!**



## ALL PARTA MEMBERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO JOIN IRTA

### IRTA DUES

- ➔ (BEST DEAL) ←
- Dues Deduct: \$30.00 per year (\$2.50 deducted each month from your pension check.)
  - Annual: \$40.00 each year      ➤ Life Members: \$400.00

**My monthly 18% Verizon discount more than pays for my IRTA membership. That's just one benefit of IRTA membership. Consider joining today!**

IRTA provides legislative representation and advocacy for YOUR retirement benefits.

### INTERESTING HEADLINES

- Work after Death
- Hospitals Sued by 7 Foot Doctors
- Two Convicts Evade Noose, Jury Hung
- Kicking Baby Considered to Be Healthy
- Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant

- Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge
- Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft
- If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last a While
- Court Rules Boxer Shorts Are Indeed Underwear
- Smokers Are Productive, but Death Cuts Efficiency
- Experts Say Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash

I used to jog, but the ice cubes kept falling out of my glass.

Does running late count as exercise?

Does being part of the human race count as exercise?



I asked the Gym instructor

"Can you teach me to do the splits?"

He said, "How flexible are you?"

I said, "I can't make Tuesdays".

# SOUNDINGS

## LEGAL OPINION

Gino L. DiVito (retired justice of the Illinois Appellate Court) & John M. Fitzgerald

# UNCONSTITUTIONAL

We were honored to represent Doris Heaton and certain other (IRTA) plaintiffs in Heaton v. Quinn, the litigation that resulted in a unanimous opinion by the Illinois Supreme Court which invalidated Public Act 98-0599 (SB 1). As attorneys who have a longstanding interest in protecting the pension rights of public sector employees in Illinois, we deeply appreciate the legal scholarship of Eric Madiar. Mr. Madiar is an outstanding lawyer and legal scholar, and his analysis of the Pension Protection Clause of the Illinois Constitution (Art. XIII, § 5) is mandatory reading for anyone who wants to understand that constitutional provision.

Mr. Madiar recently authored an article for the Illinois Public Employee Relations Report with the title, "Illinois Public Pensions: Where To From Here?" The article combines Mr. Madiar's exhaustive and illuminating legal analysis with bold prescriptions for pension reform. One of those bold ideas, however, gives us pause.

Mr. Madiar ascribes a certain pension reform proposal to Illinois Senate President John J. Cullerton. His explanation can be found online at: [irtaonline.org/documents/PensionReform7-25-16\\_000.pdf](http://irtaonline.org/documents/PensionReform7-25-16_000.pdf)

While we appreciate that bold and creative ideas are necessary to address the problem of pension system underfunding, this particular idea could not withstand judicial scrutiny. As described in Mr. Madiar's article, the Cullerton proposal would force upon pension system members a choice between two diminishment of their constitutionally protected pension rights. The fact that a "choice" is offered does not matter. Either "choice" would be a pension diminishment and a violation of the Pension Protection Clause of the Illinois Constitution. We applaud Mr. Madiar for his continued scholarship on this crucial legal subject. We also agree that creative ideas will be necessary to address the chronic problem of pension system underfunding in this State. We strongly believe, however, that this particular proposal is unconstitutional.

Source: [irtaonline.org/documents/PensionReform7-25-16\\_000.pdf](http://irtaonline.org/documents/PensionReform7-25-16_000.pdf)



## Illinois Issues: Rewriting the Rule Book

**A law going into effect next month will ban zero-tolerance policies in schools and turn suspension and expulsion into disciplinary options of last resort. Districts throughout the state are taking different approaches to prepare for the changes.**



Article and Information online at: [nprillinois.org/post/illinois-issues-rewriting-rule-book#stream/0](http://nprillinois.org/post/illinois-issues-rewriting-rule-book#stream/0)

A young doctor had moved out to a small community to replace a doctor who was retiring. The older gent suggested the young one accompany him on his rounds so the community could get to know the new doctor. At the first house a woman complained, "I've been a little sick to my stomach." The older doctor said, "Well, you've probably been overdoing the fresh fruit. Why not cut back on the amount you've been eating and see if that does the trick?" As they left the younger man said, "You didn't even examine that woman. How'd you come to your diagnosis so quickly?" "I didn't have to. You noticed I dropped my stethoscope on the floor in there? When I bent over to pick it up, I noticed a half dozen banana peels in the trash. That was what was probably making her sick."



"Huh," the younger doctor said, "Pretty clever. I think I'll try that at the next house." Arriving at the next house, they spent several minutes talking with an elderly woman. She complained that she just didn't have the energy she once did. "I'm feeling terribly run down lately." "You've probably been doing too much work for the church," the younger doctor told her. "Perhaps you should cut back a bit and see if that helps." As they left, the elder doc said, "Your diagnosis is almost certainly correct, but how did you arrive at it?" "Well, just like you at the last house, I dropped my stethoscope. When I bent down to retrieve it, I noticed the preacher under the bed."



My first job was working in an orange juice factory, but I got canned! I couldn't concentrate!!!



# SOUNDINGS

## The Illinois General Assembly Passed a 6-Month Budget at the Last Possible Minute

There were five bills that passed the House and Senate that constitute a compromised budget package that will get the state of Illinois through January 2017 and ensure education is funded through the 2017 fiscal year.

### SB 2822

The Chicago pension parity bill that will require the state to contribute to the Chicago teachers' retirement fund for one year creating parity with the money already provided to the downstate teachers' pension fund.

### SB 2562

A Tax Increment Finance Bill, specifically TIF areas for the Chicago Transit Authority as well as TIF's for other areas across the state.

### SB 1810

The Budget Implementation Act for the stop gap measure (SB 2047) giving the state the authority to expend these state/federal funds for the purposes set out in SB 2047.

### SB 318

Allows Chicago to levy a tax to pay into the Teacher Pension Fund of Chicago.

### SB 2047

A stop gap budget bill that will fund education for a year as well as human services, spending \$25 billion in state and federal funds for the current budget year, and another \$50 billion for the upcoming fiscal year. Schools will get just over \$11 billion to stay open for a full year.

Under the plan, schools are getting over \$500 million more in state aid than they did last year. There will also be a \$250 million "equity" grant to help schools with low-income students. Chicago would get \$100 million of that. Part of the deal includes passing legislation to allow Chicago to raise \$250 million in property taxes to help with teacher pension payments. A companion proposal will have the state cover \$215 million in future pension costs beginning in June, like it does for all other Illinois school districts, but only if lawmakers pass legislation to reform the overall pension system.

The emerging plan calls for a \$673 million increase for human services programs, including \$20 million to restore programs that Rauner suggested eliminating. There is also \$1 billion for colleges and universities — about 85% of what they received the last time the state approved higher-education funding.

## How Illinois Is Unravelling Its Human Services

Illinois Partners for Human Service, a group of 850 organizations operating in the state, released an interactive online "Heat Map" to identify the specific effects of state spending reductions. Information online at:

[sites.google.com/a/robparal.com/the-damage-done-v3/](http://sites.google.com/a/robparal.com/the-damage-done-v3/)

### \$383 Million in Total Lost Payments to IDHS and IDOA

31.4% less to IL Department of Human Services

29.8% less to IL Department on Aging

### Early Retirement Option Sunset

The TRS Early Retirement Option automatically expired on July 1 because the General Assembly did not vote to extend the program. Active and inactive TRS members will be eligible later in 2016 for a refund of payroll contributions they paid to help fund the program. TRS will notify eligible members when they can apply for a refund. Do not contact TRS at this time. TRS will not be able to calculate refund amounts until school districts' 2015-2016 annual reports are processed this fall. In addition, the TRS payroll contribution paid by active members was reduced on July 1 from 9.4% to 9.0%. The ERO sunset does not affect retired TRS members.

### Rules Unchanged

The sunset of the ERO does not change any TRS retirement eligibility rules. Tier I members can retire between the ages of 55 and 59 if they have at least 20 years of service, but their initial pensions will be reduced by 6% for each year they are under age 60. This automatic reduction does not apply to members under age 60 who have at least 35 years of service.

### CHURCH SIGNS

When "down in the mouth", remember Jonah. He came out alright.

Have trouble sleeping? We have sermons – come hear one!



# SOUNDINGS

## New State Law Regulates Health Insurers' Prescription Drug Policies



Governor Rauner signed legislation regulating health insurance protocols that require patients to start treatment with the least expensive version of a medication their doctor prescribed, even if it means the treatment could fail.

“One of the things insurance companies do sometimes is they’ll say that every single patient, no matter his or her circumstance, must first be started on the cheapest medicine on the insurance company’s formulary (or list of covered medications). Every insurance company is required to have medications to treat all illnesses, so they’ll say, ‘We’ll allow the following medicines to be prescribed but you must start every patient on the absolute cheapest medication.’ “The only way a doctor is allowed to prescribe a more expensive medication is for you to fail on the cheapest, then you move to the next cheapest medication, and then if you fail on this, you’ll move to the next cheapest medication,” said Mark Heyrman, a clinical professor of law at the University of Chicago.

The practice is known as step therapy. The new law doesn’t eliminate it, but adds some exceptions to it and makes the appeal process more transparent.

“Say I’m on a medication and it’s working for me and I’m stable, and my insurance changes and this medicine is covered under my new insurance. Because I’m stable on this drug, I don’t have to start the step process over again,” said Illinois Representative Fine, who sponsored the legislation. “I can keep taking my medication. Prior to this legislation even if you were stable [on a prescribed medication] you’d have to start over if your insurance changed.” Exceptions to step therapy are also allowed if



doctors submit documentation on behalf of their patients showing that a specific medication was already tried and either failed to treat the patient or the patient experienced intolerable side effects. Step therapy can delay treatment as patients are required to try multiple medications and create more work for doctors who may have to call insurance companies to see if a prescribed medication will be covered or file an appeal when a patient is denied that medication, according to the Alliance for Patient Access, a national network of physicians advocating for patient access to approved therapies and appropriate clinical care. If a cheaper medication can effectively treat a patient, Heyrman says “there’s nothing wrong with that,” but there are situations that warrant the use of more expensive medications. “Failure can be catastrophic for the patient. It is often the case that the doctor and the patient will already know that the cheapest medication won’t work,” he said. “There are some medicines in my area of mental health that are not recommended for people who have hypertension or who are overweight or who have diabetes. No reasonable doctor would start you on that medication, and the doctor has a sound clinical reason for not choosing that medication and choosing something else.”



The law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018. Source and full article online at:

[chicagotonight.wttw.com/2016/08/16/new-state-law-regulates-health-insurers-prescription-drug-policies](http://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2016/08/16/new-state-law-regulates-health-insurers-prescription-drug-policies)

**Grateful Grandma:** I attended a wedding the other day with my granddaughter and as we were following the crowd in for the reception, my granddaughter observed that my slip was showing. She quietly whispered, "Grandma, it's snowing down south!" I whispered back, "Darling, Grandma is just grateful that it's not raining!!!"



**Mother Knows Best – Eventually:** One day, a young girl was watching her mother make a roast sirloin of beef. She cut off the ends, wrapped it in string, seasoned it and set it in the roasting dish. She politely asked her mom why she cut off the ends of the roast. Her mom replied, after some thought, that it was the way that her mother had done it. That night grandma came to dinner and the girl and her mother asked why she had cut the end off of the roast before cooking. After some thought grandma replied, she cooked the meat the way her mother had done it. Now great-grandma was quite old and lived in a residential nursing home, so the young girl, her mom and grandma went to visit her and again asked the very same question. Great-grandma looked at them a bit surprised and said, 'So it would fit in the roasting dish, of course.'



# SOUNDINGS

## NEW PENSION WORRIES

The Wall Street Journal is reporting that long-term investment returns for public pension plans are poised to drop to the lowest rate of return since measuring began 16 years ago —something that could cause additional problems in Illinois, which has the largest unfunded state worker pension program in the nation. The Journal reported the 20-year annualized return on investment of public pensions are expected to be 7.47% — a far cry from the 12.3% annualized return in 2001, when Wilshire Trust Universe Comparison Service began tracking pension returns.



Illinois had a \$111 billion unfunded pension liability as of June 2015, based on the latest state reports available. But the lower investment returns have been factored in slightly. The largest pension fund, the Teachers Retirement System, acted two years ago to reduce its expected investment rate of return from 8% to 7.5%. The Journal report noted long-term investment returns have dropped in large part due to two recessions over the past 15 years and a continued period of low interest rates. *(Rick Pearson)*

Source: [www.facebook.com/IllinoisRetiredTeachers/?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/IllinoisRetiredTeachers/?fref=ts)

## TRS Voted to Lower the Expected Rate of Return on Investments

The board that oversees the Teachers Retirement System voted 9-0 to lower the expected rate of return on investments from 7.5% to 7%. The Governor appointed three new members to the board to fill previous vacancies. However, one of those members withdrew his nomination because of residency issues and the other two newly appointed members abstained from the vote. This alteration will mean the state of Illinois will have to pay TRS an additional \$421 million in the coming fiscal year. When the board last altered the assumption from 8% to 7.5% in 2014, the state ended up on the hook for an additional \$200 million in pension payments.

## Rauner's Office Warns Teachers' Pension Change Could Be 'Devastating'

Article can be found at:

[www.sj-r.com/news/20160824/rauners-office-warns-teachers-pension-change-could-be-devastating](http://www.sj-r.com/news/20160824/rauners-office-warns-teachers-pension-change-could-be-devastating)

## Retired Teachers Encourage IRTA Membership During Volatile Budget Times

IRTA calls for member support and solidarity during difficult budget times

JOIN

for the State of Illinois! Encourage a fellow teacher to join IRTA today, or encourage your spouse or friend to join as an Associate Member!

Others “Fought” for What We Have – Now We Must Join the “Fight”!

## DIRECTORY CHANGES - Please make changes in your PARTA Directory

Blane	Maxine	Lutheran Hillside Village, Apt 404	Peoria	IL	61614		Address Change
Hampton	Roger	roger.hampton11138@gmail.com					New Email
Hanlon	Earlene				696-3457		New phone #
Ziegler	Anita	3309 N Elmcroft TER	Peoria	IL	61604-1809	688-0698	New member
		alziegler@hotmail.com					

Snyder      Donna      Deceased: June 22, 2016

PARTA members, **PLEASE** help keep the database current.  
Let John Rathbun, Membership Chair, know of ANY **changes to your status.**

Peoria Area  
Retired Teachers' Association  
308 James Parkway  
Washington, IL 61571-1041

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# PEORIA AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

## **PARTA OFFICERS 2015 - 2016**

- Dave Barnwell, *President*
- Nancy Miller, *1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*
- Ann Winget, *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President*
- Kathy Simpson, *Secretary*
- Jeff Vallosio, *Treasurer*

**SERVING RETIRED TEACHERS  
for OVER 60 YEARS**

**PARTA WEBSITE**  
**pa-rta.weebly.com**

*Sally Weber, Webmaster*