

PARTA SOUNDINGS

APRIL 2019

PEORIA AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LUNCHEON MEETING

APRIL 1

Barracks Cater Inn

11:30 A M

Luncheon – \$12.00

First time guests eat free

GREETERS

☂ Carla Stokowski

☂ Joyce Trompeter

PLEDGE

☂ Chris Stevens

INVOCATION

☂ Chris Stevens

LUNCHEON

Honey Glazed
Baked Ham
Potato
Vegetable
Assorted Salads
Dessert

MEETING

Abby Humbles

PARTA President, Chair



Meetings begin
around 12:20 P.M.

Check
PARTA's website
for updates:

pa-rta.weebly.com

Sally Weber
Webmaster

Roger Hampton
Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings PARTA Members,
I hope everyone is enjoying the milder
weather. Spring is here and a welcome
one at that. We hope the milder temperatures
make it easier for folks to get out.



This month, I look forward to our guest speaker. We hope you will join us to learn more about human trafficking in Peoria, Illinois. While we ask our guest speakers to keep their presentation under 30 minutes, we understand if you need to leave early.

As always, please let us know if you have any meal restrictions or need transportation to our meeting. Simply inform your caller of your requests.

Abby Humbles, PARTA President

MEETING PROGRAMS – BRING A FRIEND

APRIL 1

"HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS"

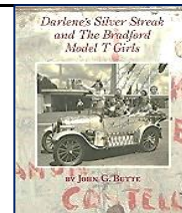
SARA SEFRIED, DIRECTOR
Human Trafficking Services -
Center for Prevention of Abuse



MAY 6

"THE BRADFORD GIRLS"

JOHN BUTTE, AUTHOR
(signing and sale of books available)

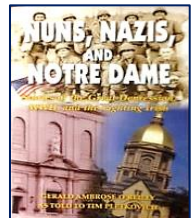


JUNE 3

JEOPARDY GAME ON

"NUNS, NAZIS, AND NOTRE DAME"

Organized by Tim Pletkovich



There is no glory
in star or blossom
till looked upon
by a loving eye;

There is no fragrance
in April breezes
till breathed with joy
as they wander by.

William
Cullen
Bryant

SOUNDINGS

PARTA LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 4, 2019

Scott Montgomery led the Pledge and gave the Invocation. President Abby Humbles welcomed the first-time people. Seventy-nine people were present. Abby thanked today's greeters, Eldon Petzing and Peggy Shane. Abby also thanked the callers and the money takers.

After the luncheon, Chris Mangold introduced the speaker, Sam Kherat, Ph.D. Dr. Kherat, a professor of robotics at Bradley University, gave an informative and interesting talk about driverless vehicles.

Abby opened the business meeting.

- The minutes were approved as they appeared in the Soundings.
 - Copies of the Treasurer's reports were on the tables. A summary is in the Soundings. The report was filed for audit.
 - Ann Winget will be installed as 2nd Vice President next month.
 - June 4 is the date for the conference in Springfield.
 - Annual dues are paid to Jeff Vallosio.
 - Frances Farraher reported two members' deaths.
 - Valda Shipp said the forms and envelopes for donations to the PARTA Scholarships are on the tables.
 - Dixie Wheeler reported that HR 141 is being discussed in Washington. Contact your U.S. Representative.
- The meeting was adjourned.



RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

KATHY SIMPSON, RECORDING SECRETARY

APRIL '19 TREASURER'S REPORT SUMMARY

Investment Balance:	\$ 43,270.86	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund:	\$ 299.04
Savings Balance:	6,973.59	Post Office Returned Mail Fund:	37.67
Checking Balance:	1,115.50	Grand Total:	\$ 51,696.66
Working Cash (cash boxes):	0.00		

Jeff Vallosio, Treasurer

At Every PARTA Meeting

Book Exchange Table: Bring books, calendars, magazines, and other paper goods to share with our members.

Used Battery Recycling Collection

PARTA Distributes Candy Bags to Area Schools

A committee of PARTA members (Abby Humbles, Jeannie Blane, Mary Nelson, and Sally Weber) delivered Candy Bags and Information Sheets to several Peoria County schools. The Information Sheet explained who PARTA is and what we do. It also highlighted how PARTA helps current educators with teacher grants and assists aspiring teachers with scholarships. The county schools were divided into thirds with each third receiving Candy Bags over a three-year period. We hope to become better known to area educators and when retirement comes, they will choose to join our association.



"Today is April 1, April Fools' Day, a day that people try to fool their friends and relatives. Don't confuse that with April 15, when people try to fool the IRS." ~ Jay Leno

SOUNDINGS

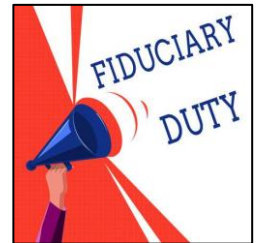
TRS TRUSTEES CALL FOR RESPONSIBLE PENSION FUNDING

The Teachers' Retirement System Board of Trustees has unanimously approved the following statement concerning state funding for the System as presented in the Illinois state budget proposal for fiscal year 2020:



The Teachers' Retirement System is currently 40% funded. The system is at a growing risk of insolvency in the event of an economic downturn. This danger is the direct result of eight decades of state contributions that always have fallen far short of actuarially based funding. TRS long-term investment returns consistently exceed the System's expectations; but investment income alone will not be enough to prevent insolvency.

The TRS Board's fiduciary duty to its 417,000 members is its paramount concern. The payment of future TRS benefits are jeopardized without a credible plan to address the System's long-term sustainability. The TRS Board and staff unanimously adopts the following positions and will actively pursue their realization as a state government budget is developed for fiscal year 2020:



- TRS opposes any Fiscal 2020 budget for the state of Illinois that will appropriate to the System less than \$4,813,577,696, the contribution calculated under state pension funding law and certified by the System on January 14, 2019.
- TRS opposes any extension of the target date currently in statute for the System to reach 90 percent funding. The target should remain no later than fiscal year 2045.
- TRS repeats its long-standing warning that the state's current pension funding law perpetually locks in underfunding for the system. A "full funding" state contribution for TRS in FY 2020 is \$7,878,670,709, as certified in January of this year.

- TRS opposes any expansion of the current member "buyout" program if an expanded program does not fund the buyouts with monies other than from System assets. At a funding level of 40 percent, TRS is not accumulating any assets to pay the future benefits of active members and could not afford to buy them out.
- We respectfully request that, as in recent years, TRS and our system actuaries participate in the fiscal analysis and evaluation of any proposals that would impact the system and its members.

We stand ready to work with anyone on solutions to these important issues.



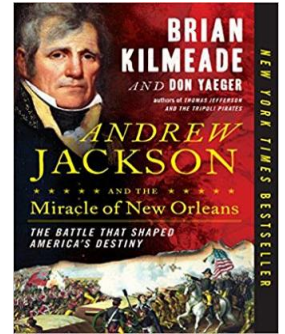
Do You Make Purchases Using AMAZON?

A percentage of all your Amazon purchases will go to the IRTA Foundation by using this link:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/37-1183315>

An EASY Way to Help Support 3 Important IRTA Foundation Programs:
Financial Assistance | Scholarships | Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers

PARTA MEMBERS – READ AND RECOMMEND



Andrew Jackson and the Miracle of New Orleans: The Battle That Shaped America's Destiny by Brian Kilmeade & Don Yaeger

"The book fleshes out the battle itself with interesting details and provides the logistical and political lead up to the battle PLUS the diplomatic activities in Europe concerning ending the War of 1812 AND what the resulting map would be. Not only are the battle descriptions interesting but the background details to the battle and the eventual peace agreement were new to me. A lot more than the final pivotal assault is addressed. A lot of things had to "go right" and the activities of General (later President Jackson) were critical to the success. Good for the military and political history buff."

SON: "Daddy, may I ask you a question?"

DAD: "Yeah sure, what is it?"

SON: "Daddy, how much do you make an hour?"

DAD: "That's really none of your business. Why do you ask?"

SON: "I just want to know. Please tell me, how much do you make an hour?"

DAD: "If you must know, I make \$100 an hour."

SON: "Oh. (With his head down)."

SON: "Daddy, can I please borrow \$50?"

DAD: "REALLY?! If you're asking to borrow money for some silly toy or game, you can just march yourself straight to your room to think about why you're being so selfish. I work hard every day to provide for this family, and this is the thanks I get?"

The little boy went quietly to his room and shut the door.

The dad sat down and started getting even angrier about his son's questions. "How dare he ask question like that just to get some money?" he stewed.

After an hour, the dad calmed down, and started to think: "Maybe there was something he really needed the \$50 for? He doesn't ask for money often..."



So, the dad went to his son's door and opened it.

DAD: "Are you asleep, son?"

SON: "No daddy, I'm awake".

DAD: "I've been thinking, and maybe I was too hard on you earlier. It's been a long day and I took out my aggravation on you. Here's the \$50 you asked for."

The little boy sat straight up, smiling.

SON: "Oh, thank you daddy!"

Then, reaching under his pillow, the boy pulled out some crumpled-up dollar bills. When the dad saw the boy already had money, he started getting angry again as the little boy slowly counted out his money and looked up at his father.

DAD: "Why do you want more money if you already have some?"

SON: "Because I didn't have enough, but now I do. Daddy, I have \$100 now. Can I buy an hour of your time? Please come home early tomorrow. I would like to have dinner with you."

The father was crushed. He put his arms around his little son and begged for his forgiveness through a stream of tears.

Just a reminder to all to not let time slip through our fingers without dedicating special time with those who matter most.



SOUNDINGS

2019 SPRING LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



So far, this legislative year has been more positive than many previous years in Springfield. The State is continuing to operate under a budget, and it seems likely that there will be a budget next year as well, although we are in the early stages of the budget's being drafted.

Legislation supported by the Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) continues to move and legislation the IRTA is opposed to has failed at the committee stage. This year is generally moving slower than previous years, likely due to the number of freshmen. With nearly 40 new lawmakers in Illinois, there are an unprecedented number of new faces in Springfield.



Governor Pritzker proposed reducing the Illinois Teachers' Retirement Contribution by over \$500 million. This is a concerning issue, and the IRTA strongly and vocally stated their concerns about any underfunding to TRS and the resulting increased long-term costs to the State. The IRTA immediately contacted legislators and issued a press release expressing these concerns. It is important to keep in mind that the Governor's budget address was merely the opening suggestion by the Governor, and there are months before a final budget is approved. It should also be noted that the Governor did propose fully funding the Teachers Health Insurance Retirement Program (TRIP) benefit.



HB 2700

The IRTA was successful in passing their legislative initiative out of House Committee. HB 2700, an initiative of the IRTA, sponsored by Representative Katie Stuart from Collinsville, is an attempt to bring fairness to the situation where a retiree overpays or underpays their premiums for TRIP or TRAIL. We were able to pass the legislation out of House Committee as introduced, but we are working with CMS to achieve equity between the agency and the member. We hope to align the amount of time a retiree would be required to repay an underpayment with the amount of time that a retiree would be eligible to receive a refund of an overpayment. Under current law, a retiree is only eligible for a refund of six months of an overpayment, but must repay the entirety of any underpayment.

HB 1472

HB 1472, another bill supported by the IRTA, has passed the Illinois House of Representatives. This legislation renews the provision which allows a retiree to return to teaching for a longer period of time in subject shortage areas. HB 3131 was filed by Representative Grant Wehrli, Naperville. The legislation requires each pension system, including TRS, to develop and maintain an annuitant database from which a retiree's personal information can be searched. IRTA opposed this legislation and the bill has not moved out of committee.

eBay is so useless -- I tried to look up lighters and all they had was 13,749 matches.

SOUNDINGS

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO YOUR DIRECTORY

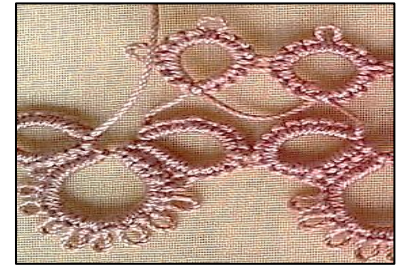
Jackson	Annette	2723 W Hayes ST	Peoria	IL	61605-2839	637-4384	New member
JACKSONATS5@AOL.COM							
Moore	David	128 Hillside CT	Dunlap	IL	61525-9705	243-1901	New member
BOYLAKE@FRONTIER.COM							

Frances B. Boone, 71	Deceased: February 1, 2019	
Frances L. Bierly, 92	Deceased: February 18, 2019	

DATABASE MAINTAINED BY JOHN RATHBUN

Did you know that April 1st is "International Tatting Day"?

Tatting Day has been celebrated internationally since the late 1990's. Tatting is the skill of making delicate, elegant tatted lace. It is enjoyed by thousands of people. On this day, "tatters" around the world have different activities, mostly educational, to celebrate their hobby, and introduce it to others. Often, they celebrate by eating chocolates and making tatted lace. Other April events:



APRIL IS:

- National Humor Month
- International Guitar Month
- Keep America Beautiful Month
- Lawn and Garden Month
- National Kite Month
- National Poetry Month
- National Pecan Month
- National Welding Month
- Records and Information Management Month
- Stress Awareness Month
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month

APRIL WEEKLY CELEBRATIONS:

- Week 1:
Library Week
Read a Road Map Week
- Week 2:
Garden Week
- Week 3
Organize Your Files Week
Medical Labs Week
- Week 4
Administrative Assistants Week
National Karaoke Week

*In addition, a list of 90 holidays, special, and wacky days can be found at:
holidayinsights.com/moreholidays/april.htm (source)*

Funny True Stories and Tales from Travel Agents

I had someone ask for an aisle seat so that their hair wouldn't get messed up by being near the window.

A client called in inquiring about a package to Hawaii. After going over all the cost information, she asked, "Would it be cheaper to fly to California and then take the train to Hawaii?"

A man called, furious about a Florida package we did. I asked what was wrong with the vacation in Orlando. He said he was expecting an ocean-view room. I tried to explain that is not possible, since Orlando is in the middle of the state. He replied, "Don't lie to me. I looked on the map and Florida is a very thin state."

SOUNDINGS

SPOTLIGHT ON IRTA MEMBER BENEFITS

Exclusive discount for IRTA members when you book a Globus, Cosmos, Monograms Vacation, or an Avalon Waterways River Cruise!

With nearly 90 years in travel, the award-winning Globus family of brands creates vacations that offer travelers culture-rich experiences featuring must-see sights, the stories behind the scenes and countless joy-filled memories in more than 65 countries on six continents across the globe.

FACTS ABOUT THE "\$100,000 SALARY AND PENSION CLUB"



ISSUE: In 2018, a website was launched that identified 30,000 TRS members as a "\$100,000+ Salary & Pension Club." The website has been circulated via social media and several news sites.

DISCUSSION: The website was created by the OpenTheBooks.com watchdog organization. In *Forbes* magazine, the group said that Illinois is home to "the most out-of-control" and "corrupted... education pay-and-pension systems..."



However, a closer look at the numbers shows that membership in this "\$100 K Club" was the exception for Illinois teachers, not the rule. The website's data was based on two-year-old statistics gathered at the end of fiscal year 2017. TRS provided the group with records through a Freedom of Information Act request. There were 30,492 active or retired TRS members in 2017 who either received a salary or a pension of \$100,000 or more.

But here's what OpenTheBooks.com chose *NOT* to mention:

- There were a total of 268,608 active and retired TRS members in 2017. Therefore, the \$100 K Club comprised just 11.4% of these TRS members. In other words, 88.6% of active and retired teachers in Illinois were *NOT* members of the \$100 K Club.
- School districts throughout Illinois paid 18,760 teachers a salary of \$100,000 or more in 2017, out of a total of 160,488 active members.
- There were 11,732 retired members – out of a total of 108,120 – receiving a pension of \$100,000 or more in 2017.
- The average active TRS member salary in 2017 was \$71,773. The average TRS pension in 2017 was \$54,180.

The website created by the OpenTheBooks.com enables anyone to search a map of Illinois and pinpoint all TRS members who received either a salary or a TRS pension of \$100,000 or more in 2017.

TRS did not provide OpenTheBooks.com with any member addresses or other personally identifiable information but was required by the FOIA law to sort member salary and pension information by the school districts where active members were employed and by the last districts that employed retired members.

Source: <http://www.trsil.org/>

*The reason a dog has so many friends is,
he wags his tail instead of his tongue.*

SOUNDINGS

DOUG STRAND - IRTA ENDORSED TRS TRUSTEE CANDIDATE



The Teachers Retirement System, commonly referred to as TRS, administers the pension accounts for retired teachers and administrators. It collects, invests, and disperses the money. TRS is governed by a 13-member Board of Trustees. Trustees include the state superintendent of education, six trustees appointed by the governor, four trustees elected by contributing TRS members, and two trustees elected by TRS annuitants.

**V
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E**

TRS trustees are instrumental in setting policy for the agency to carry out. They approve the investment strategies and provide oversight. The two elected TRS annuitant trustee positions have always served as the voice of IRTA members on the board. From April 1 – May 1, 2019, an online election to elect a new TRS annuitant trustee will occur.

After an exhaustive search and interview process, the IRTA board of directors unanimously recommended that IRTA member & East Moline resident Doug Strand of the Blackhawk unit be their endorsed candidate.

STRAND'S CONSIDERABLE QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDE:

- Working for a time with an accounting firm in Chicago
- Teaching business and consumer economics at United Township High School in East Moline
- Serving on the East Moline police pension board
- Serving on the Black Hawk College board of trustees

IRTA was informed that TRS will email a notice to all eligible voting annuitants with an email-on-file when voting begins online, which is planned as April 1. If an email is undeliverable, they will send the member a mailed ballot to the address on file with TRS. All members without an email-on-file will receive a mailed ballot at the end of March. The election ends at 10 a.m. on May 1, 2019.

“It is critical that IRTA members vote for Doug Strand so that IRTA’s most important presence continues on the TRS board,” stated IRTA President Roger Hampton. “We cannot and must not leave our pension investments to chance. I urge all members to vote for Doug Strand in April.”

Members are advised to call TRS at 877-927-5877 if they do not receive a ballot via email or by mail by April 10, 2019. Voting annuitants will need to use their TRS login to vote in the secure area of the TRS website. If you have any questions, please call TRS.

