

PARTA SOUNDINGS

APRIL 2021

PEORIA AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

VIRTUAL MEETING

10:00 A.M.
MONDAY
APRIL 12

Information
on how to access
this virtual
meeting
via ZOOM
is on page three.

PROGRAM

ZELENA WILLIAMS

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

COUNTY OF PEORIA JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

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



Keep Informed
Check PARTA's
website for updates
pa-rta.weebly.com

Sally Weber
Webmaster

Roger Hampton
Soundings Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

April greetings to all PARTA members, Bring those flowers and sunshine on-- and our last ZOOM meeting in April! Well, not exactly, as the Board has approved buying a ZOOM license so PARTA can meet in person and ZOOM at the same time! How exciting is that! We plan to use our new ZOOM starting in May, so those who feel a little unsure can still be PARTA partakers with those who are meeting in person. See you one way or the other!



Dixie Wheeler, PARTA President

UPCOMING MEETING PROGRAMS

Beginning May 2021,
PARTA will resume in-person luncheon
meetings at Barrack's Cater Inn.

*Future meetings may also be attended virtually
for those unable to attend in person.*

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 (11:30 A.M.) (2nd Monday)
CELEBRATION OF LIFE MEMORIAL
NECROLOGY SEPTEMBER 1, 2019 - AUGUST 31, 2021

OCTOBER 4 (11:30 A.M.)
TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM (TRS) UPDATES
Rich Frankenfeld, TRS Director of Outreach



Rise above the storm



and you will find the sunshine. ~ Mario Fernandez

SOUNDINGS

PARTA VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

10:00 A.M. MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2021

The March PARTA Meeting was called to order by President Dixie Wheeler followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Twenty-two (22) members were present. The program guests were Gary Devito, Regional Manager, AMBA and Lori Fairfield, AMBA's Benefits Representative. A highly informative presentation was given regarding the numerous benefits of AMBA.



COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **TREASURER** Jeff Vallosio reported that a summary of the treasurer's report was printed in the Soundings. Jeff will send the full report electronically, if requested. He is asking for a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a hard copy to be mailed.

- **CALLING COMMITTEE** Patti Monks will be contacting meeting "callers" to have them positioned to contact members for up-coming meetings.

- **MEMBERSHIP** The newly created Membership Committee members are Patti Monks, Roger Hampton, Pat Hampton, Dixie Wheeler and Sally Weber. President Wheeler reported that the committee has been investigating numerous sources with information on retired members, such as the IRTA list and the PARTA list. They are viewing the lists for accurate and current information.



Board members also will be sent a list of retirees to assist in the recruitment process. A four-point plan has been established to recruit members. A component of the plan is to send an introductory letter to retirees outlining the purpose of the recruitment process. The committee members are also planning to speak at the Fall TRS Meeting. The committee's desire is to fine tune the membership process.

- **PUBLIC RELATIONS** Kathy Simpson has contacted the former PR Chair, Laviene Birditt, and has retrieved files. She mentioned that changes have occurred during the last few years. She has discovered everything is on-line. Kathy was able to get on CIProud.com Community News to post information regarding PARTA. She will continue to work on various platforms to post information.



AGENDA ITEMS

APPROVAL OF 2021 BUDGET - Abby Humbles moved and Dixie Wheeler seconded to approve the budget. A Parliamentary Procedure was brought to the attention of the chair by LeeAnn Meinhold. The chair had not called

for a vote after the motion. The procedure was rectified by a call for the vote. The membership unanimously approved the budget.

Jeff Vallosio, the treasurer, made the following remarks regarding the budget:

- The membership has decreased by twenty (20) members during the last three years.
- The total cost of communicating with the Soundings is about \$335.
- PARTA spends more than is taken in by dues.
- The Life Membership dues are keeping the books balanced.




PROPOSAL FOR ZOOM LICENSE PURCHASE - Members voiced their opinion regarding the purchase of a Zoom license. Sally Weber mentioned that the use of Zoom will probably be a part of regular meetings. John Rathbun stated the income from the meetings do not directly affect PARTA's income. Zoom enlarges the number of people PARTA can reach. He felt it was a great idea to continue with this platform.

It was recommended that the purchase of Zoom for PARTA will be considered. We have been using Roger Hampton's personal Zoom account.

A suggestion was made for the Board to decide on the purchase of a Zoom license at its next meeting. Jeff Vallosio observed that several Board members were present and suggested a vote on the purchase be made at the current meeting. A motion was made to purchase a Zoom license for \$149 per year. It was unanimously approved.

CATER INN IN-PERSON MEETINGS - President Wheeler contacted Cater Inn for possible luncheon meetings, starting in May. Members discussed the many ways we can safely have in-person meetings. A few details, whether to self-serve or have wait staff serve food had to be determined. Another factor to be considered is the number of members willing to attend.

Winners of the raffle from the AMBA representative were Patti Monks and Jeff Vallosio. A comment was made by Abby Humbles that Jeff and Patti were worthy of the gift cards because of their hard work and commitment to PARTA. 

President Wheeler asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Peggy Shane moved to adjourn, and Patti Monks seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

DELORIS TURNER, SECRETARY

Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people.

A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough. ~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

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PARTA VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM ON APRIL 12 AT 10:00 A.M.

https://zoom.us/join | Meeting ID: 847 1912 7474 | Passcode: 150901
 ZOOM MEETING ACCESS LINK will be sent via email to PARTA members and posted on the PARTA Website prior to the meeting. If you have any questions or problems accessing this meeting please contact Roger Hampton:
 309.360.6190 (Text or Call) roger.hampton11138@gmail.com (Email)

PARTA MEETING OPTIONS BEGINNING MAY 3, 2021

IN - P E R S O N



V I R T U A L

BARRACK'S CATER INN
11:30 LUNCHEON
 ~12:15 MEETING BEGINS
COVID Restriction Details will be listed in the May issue of Soundings.



ZOOM ACCESS WILL BEGIN AT 12:00 NOON
LOG ON to see who is attending the in-person meeting. THEN, chat with other members who are ZOOMING while waiting for the meeting to begin.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. ~ Maya Angelou

APRIL '21 TREASURER'S REPORT SUMMARY

Investment Balance:	\$ 49,943.19	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund:	\$ 398.01
Savings Balance:	9,016.09	Post Office Returned Mail Fund:	97.71
Checking Balance:	2,703.76	Grand Total:	\$ 62,258.76
Working Cash (cash boxes):	100.00		



Jeff Vallosio, Treasurer

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGE TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Colmen	Dianna	colmenreg@gmail.com	Correction
Fulton (was Bouris)	Jodi	4000 N Harvard AVE Peoria IL 61614-7945	264-5729 New address
Ingwersen	William	528 Fonulac DR East Peoria IL	61611-2161 New address
Kelly	Grace	2710 N Knoxville AVE Peoria IL	61604-2868 New address
Stutz	Donna	1143 River Bend LN Lisle IL	60532-4535 New address
Wozniak	Mary J	15627 Falling Creek DR Houston TX	77068-1107 New address

Deceased | Mary Frances Cunningham, 98 | November 1, 1928 - March 6, 2021

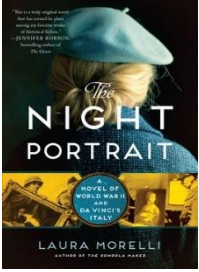
DATABASE MAINTAINED BY JOHN RATHBUN

Please send any corrections or changes to your information listed in the PARTA Directory to John Rathbun at: Genrebun@aol.com

Are your PARTA & IRTA MEMBERSHIP DUES up to date?

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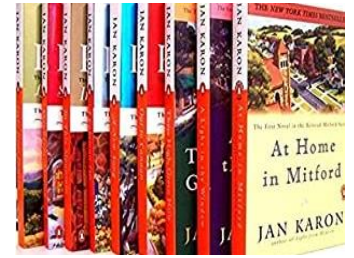
PARTA MEMBERS READ & RECOMMEND



The Night Portrait:
*A Novel of World War II
and da Vinci's Italy*
by Laura Morelli

An exciting, dual-timeline historical novel about the creation of one of Leonardo da Vinci's most famous paintings, *Portrait of a Lady with an Ermine*, and the woman who fought to save it from Nazi destruction during World War II.

The Mitford Years
Complete Set
Volumes 1-9
by Jan Karon



Set in the fictional town of Mitford, North Carolina, the story centers on the life of the rector, Father Tim, as he finds love, a family, a dog and must go through all sorts of important events with the help of the people of Mitford.

PARTA MEMBERS: Please email the name and author of a book that you have enjoyed to: roger.hampton11138@gmail.com



Jim was at the airport with a sack over each shoulder and when he was stopped at customs, they found that both sacks were full of mobile phones. When asked why, Jim said, "Well, while I was on my travels in America, I got a phone call from my mate Mick and he told me that he was starting up a jazz band and could I bring him back two saxophones."



Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see. ~ Mark Twain

The world is filled with nice people. If you can't find one, be one.

ILLINOISIANS TAX BURDEN



Illinoisans shoulder a heavy tax burden, with the second-highest property taxes in the country and the highest state and local tax burden in the nation.

Many states have moved away from taxing assets after people die because of the harm to family businesses and farms, but a new proposal before state lawmakers would double Illinois' estate tax. Unlike neighboring Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, and Missouri, Illinois is one of just a dozen states that still have an estate or inheritance tax.

Source: <https://www.illinoispolicy.org/>

On the last day of the year, my first graders gave me beautiful handwritten letters. As I read them aloud, my emotions got the better of me, and I started to choke up. "I'm sorry," I said. "I'm having a hard time reading." One of my students responded, "Mrs. Smith, just sound it out."

Sound-it-out

SOUNDINGS



PARTA's ICC SCHOLARSHIPS

It is time to start collecting money for additional ICC scholarships. I believe, that now more than ever, we need to encourage and support those in the teaching profession. I will bring collection envelopes to our May meeting at Barrack's Cater Inn.



Additional information on ways to contribute will be in the May issue of *SOUNDINGS*.

VALDA SHIPP, PARTA SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR

RETIRED TEACHERS STILL INVOLVED AND STILL GIVING BACK

Look. It's My Book!
Giving free books to Peoria's school children

Want to help a worthy cause as a retired teacher? Lookitsmybook.org in Peoria is inviting volunteers to take books to Peoria Public Schools grades 1-4. Deliveries are made monthly.



If you wish to help, contact Janeteroth@yahoo.com or call 309-453-3554.

Peoria celebrities read their favorite children's books for your child's enjoyment and encouragement. To listen, visit their Storytime page with your child or grandchild!
<http://lookitsmybook.org/wordpress/>

**CHOOSE
Kindness**

You cannot do a kindness too soon,
for you never know how soon
it will be too late." ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF BEING KIND - THE FIVE SIDE EFFECTS OF KINDNESS

1. We feel happy when we do something kind for someone. This is in part due to elevated levels of endorphins and dopamine, which lead to feel-good emotions.
2. We also feel an emotional warmth during acts of kindness. These acts produce oxytocin in the brain and body, causing a release of nitric oxide in blood vessels. This dilates blood vessels and reduces blood pressure. In other words, kindness is good for the heart and considered cardioprotective.
3. Research shows that oxytocin, also produced through emotional warmth, reduces levels of free radicals and inflammation in the cardiovascular system, slowing the aging process.
4. Kindness improves relationships by reducing the emotional distance between people, resulting in tighter bonds. Thanks to our evolutionary ancestors, we're wired to cooperate in order to survive and thrive.
5. Kindness is contagious, and its ripple effect is well-documented. One study noted that an anonymous organ donor's decision to share a kidney resulted in other family members of recipients to donate their kidneys to others in need.

Source: https://read.nxtbook.com/united_healthcare/group_retiree/renew_winter_2021/heart_of_gold.html

**BE THE TYPE
OF PERSON**

If you're still looking for that one person who will change your life, take a look in the mirror.

**YOU WANT TO
MEET.**

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ONLINE SERVICES FOR TRS RETIREES

<https://www.trsil.org/>



Teachers' Retirement System
of the State of Illinois

- Change Your Federal Tax Withholding Amount
- Request a Pension Income Verification
- Print a TRIP Premium Confirmation Letter
- Change Your Direct Deposit
- View/Print Year-to-Date Earnings
- View Divorce/QILDRO Info

SCHEDULING A VIRTUAL APPOINTMENT OR TELECONFERENCE

To schedule a teleconference or virtual appointment with a TRS Benefits Counselor, call (877) 927-5877, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

IRTA WORKING FOR YOU

TEACHERS' RETIREMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM (TRIP)

Jim Bachman, IRTA Executive Director and Courtney Hayes, IRTA Legislative Grassroots/Affairs Coordinator, sat in on the TRIP Advisory Committee zoom meeting which took place on March 2nd. Discussion included information regarding TRIP premiums which will increase by 5%.



INSURANCE PREMIUMS

IRTA is working with the Governor's office to correct a disagreement with Illinois Central Management System (CMS) over legislation that was passed previously to refund to an annuitant any overpayment of TRIP/TRAIL insurance premiums.

TEACHER SHORTAGE

IRTA is also working with leaders of IEA and IFT to update the current language used in the retirees return to work in teacher shortage areas. This is not to be confused with language that a retiree can substitute for up to 120 days.

CALL FOR RETIRED TEACHERS TO BE VIGILANT

Andrew Bodewes, IRTA Contract Lobbyist and TRS Legislative Consultant, believes that April and May will be busy months legislatively so retired teachers need to be vigilant.

Utilize IRTA's VoterVoice to quickly find the names and contact information for all federal and state elected officials in your voting district. If you need assistance, please contact Roger.



*Illinois Retired Teachers Association
strives to protect your pensions and healthcare,
and to be the voice for retired educators.*



While reviewing math symbols with my second-grade pupils, I drew a greater-than (>) and a less-than (<) sign on the chalkboard and asked, "Does anyone remember what these mean?" A boy confidently raised his hand. "One means fast-forward and the other means rewind."

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SPOTLIGHT ON IRTA MEMBER BENEFITS



DISCOUNTS FOR IRTA MEMBERS

Over 80,000 events. Millions of tickets. The best prices. Your trusted source for Concerts, Sports, Touring Shows, Movie Tickets, Major Events and more.

INFORMATION AND CODES AVAILABLE ONLINE AT IRTAONLINE.ORG



IRTA ENDORSED GROUP BENEFITS – AMBA

Thank you all for letting us attend the PARTA meeting a few weeks ago. It was nice to be able to get together with you, even if it was only virtual. We're all hoping that we can get back together soon. With that, the last year has highlighted why AMBA's supplemental benefits are so important. These benefits won't necessarily make you healthier, but they can ensure your financial health in times of need. These benefits include coverage for dental (find about the recent enhancements), vision, homecare, long-term care, cancer, heart & stroke diagnoses, life insurance, as well as emergency transportation (air and ground ambulance). In addition to that, we also have an opportunity for retired teachers to invest their money in a safe investment (many retirees call it a safe haven for their hard-earned money) that allows you to take advantage of the upside in the market, without ANY downside risk. On top of that, there are some significant tax advantages with this program.



To learn more, contact Gary DiVito, District Manager, AMBA
847-668-0531 gary.divito@amba.info

In the 1940s, there was a man who, at the age of 65, was living off of \$99 social security checks in a small house, driving a beat-up car. He decided it was time to make a change, so he thought about what he had to offer that other people may benefit from. His mind went to his fried chicken recipe, which his friends and family loved. He left his home state of Kentucky and traveled throughout the country, trying to sell his recipe to restaurants. He even offered the recipe for free, asking for only a small chunk of the money that was earned. However, most of the restaurants declined his offer. In fact, 1,009 restaurants said *no*. But even after all of the rejections, he persisted. He believed in himself and his chicken recipe. When he visited restaurant #1,010, he got a *YES*.



His name? Colonel Hartland Sanders.



They say with age comes wisdom, so therefore:

I don't have wrinkles; I have wise cracks!



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FULLY FUNDED BUDGET PROPOSED

Governor J.B. Pritzker described his proposed budget for fiscal year 2022 as a plan of “painful choices,” due to what Illinois has endured during this past year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite those painful choices the Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS) and the Teachers’ Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP) are both being fully funded in his proposed budget.

Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS)

\$5,693,707,000

Teachers’ Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP)

\$143,369,000



*IRTA strives to protect your pensions and healthcare,
and to be the voice for retired educators.*



LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE: IT’S THE ONE YOU FEED

A Cherokee was instructing his grandson about a battle that goes on in every human being. He said to the young man, “The battle is between two wolves. One wolf is slothful, cowardly, vain, arrogant, and full of self-pity, sorrow, regret, envy, and anger. The other wolf is diligent, courageous, humble, benevolent, and full of compassion, joy, empathy, and faith”.

Then there was a silence. The grandson thought about the wolves for a moment and then asked his grandfather, “Which wolf wins?” The Cherokee elder replied, “The one you feed”.



REFLECTION: Perhaps we all have a tendency to feed both wolves, but we always feed one more than the other. It is usually the wolf that we feed the most that tends to determine the quality of our life.

Source: <https://mygoodtimestories.com/>

MAKE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY

DID YOU KNOW? When you’re feeling down you might find yourself avoiding things that can help you to feel better. Be sure to stay on top of eating well, exercising, seeing friends, and taking your prescriptions.



Mental health is about your thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. Your mental health can affect how you relate to others, make choices, and how much you enjoy daily activities. You are more likely to get sick at times when you are having mental health problems. It could be because poor mental health can weaken your body’s immune system. Or you may find that you have a harder time being active when you’re feeling down, anxious, sensitive or stressed.

PEOPLE WHO ARE MENTALLY HEALTHY ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE:

- A more positive outlook on life
- The ability to laugh and have fun
- The flexibility to adapt to change
- A sense of meaning and purpose
- The skill to build and keep positive relationships
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem
- The skill to deal with stress and bounce back from adversity

Source: www.medicare.uhc.com/wellness