

PARTA

SOUNDINGS

MARCH 2016

Peoria Area Retired Teachers' Association

MEETING

**March 7, 2016
11:30 A.M.**

**Barrack's Cater Inn
Lunch: \$12.00**

GREETERS

- ☘ Sherry Perez
- ☘ Chris Mangold

INVOCATION

- ☘ Patricia Hartmann

PLEDGE

- ☘ Patricia Hartmann

LUNCHEON

Corn Beef
Cabbage
Assorted Salads
Assorted Desserts



PROGRAM



An Irish Pub Party

with song, dance, jokes and a sing-a-long

Chris Mangold
PARTA member

Celebration of the Arts

Mary Rous
Project Director

MEETING

**Dave Barnwell
Chairperson**

**Roger Hampton
Soundings Editor**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! Be sure to attend our March PARTA Meeting if you possibly can. Our own Chris Mangold will host an Irish Pub Party with songs, dances, jokes, a sing-a-long and all the "trimmings." We will also hear from Mary Rous about the Celebration of the Arts.

Just a couple of reminders: if you're receiving a TRS pension, you do NOT have to send TRS any "proof of birth" and state budget problems will not affect your health insurance premiums. The State of Illinois will continue to pay its share of health insurance bills for retired TRS members.

Looking forward to seeing you in March. Don't forget, invite a non or inactive member to what promises to be a great luncheon and program.

Think Spring!!

Dave Barnwell, PARTA President



Upcoming Meetings – Bring a Friend

April 4, 2016

Peoria Playhouse
- Rebecca Herz -

District 150 Foundation
- Cindy Morris -



May 2, 2016

Robotics Program in Area Schools
- Brian Lough -

June 6, 2016

GMOs - Problems with RoundUP - Organic Farming
Patrick Kirchhofer, Peoria County Farm Bureau

You can **COMPLAIN**
because a rose has thorns,
Or you can **REJOICE**
because thorns have a rose.

~ Abraham Lincoln



Check website for updates – pa-rta.weebly.com/
Sally Weber, Webmaster

SOUNDINGS

PARTA LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 1, 2016

113 Dave Barnwell welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the greeters Kathy Churchill and Susan Bartlow. Ramona Herrmann gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Attendance today was 113.

After the luncheon, Ann Winget introduced the speaker, Frank Hubbell. He presented an entertaining program called "The Inside Story of the Outhouse." It consisted of a narrated slide show and a book, *The Specialist*, by Charles "Chick" Sales.

After the program, Dave opened the business meeting.

- The minutes were in the *Soundings*. They were approved as printed.
- The Treasurer's Report was on the tables and a summary is in the *Soundings*. The report will be filed for audit.

- **Membership:** John Rathbun explained that the yearly dues are now \$10 and the lifetime dues are \$75. The board voted to recommend to the membership to raise the yearly dues to \$15 and the lifetime dues to \$120. The membership will vote on it in the fall.

- **Scholarship:** Because of donations, PARTA was able to award three \$1,000 scholarships this school year. Terry Knapp was our Scholarship chair last year and Valda Shipp is now the chair.

- **Publicity:** Laveine asked that if your phone number changes, please let John Rathbun, membership chair, know.

- **Program:** Ann Winget said next month's program will be An Irish Pub Party, presented by Chris Mangold.

- **Altruistic:** Francis Farraher reported that a member had passed this month. The meeting was adjourned.



Respectfully Submitted, Kathy Simpson, Recording Secretary

		Investment Balance	\$ 34,569.34
Jeff Vallosio Treasurer	Savings Balance		935.18
	Checking Balance		4,198.50
	Working Cash (cash boxes)		100.00
	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund	<i>spent \$ 62.32</i>	366.29
	Post Office Returned Mail Fund	<i>spent \$ 6.33</i>	87.83
	Grand Total		\$40,257.14

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Do you have some time to devote to IRTA?

Area 4 (includes PARTA) needs a volunteer to serve on the Information Services Committee. There are 2 meetings a year and the duties include assisting the Units in Area 4 with technology use (website, Facebook, etc.). If you are interested or have questions, please contact **ROGER HAMPTON** at rhampton60@comcast.net or **SALLY WEBER** at sweber2020@gmail.com.

Maybe it would be best to tell your real age?!?!?!?

A woman was in a gambling casino for the first time. At the roulette she says, "I have no idea what number to play." A young, good-looking man nearby suggests she play her age. Smiling at the man, she puts her money on number 32. The wheel is spun, and 41 comes up. The smile drifted from the woman's face and she fainted!



To Be A Kid Again – Remember when:

- ☉ "Olly-olly-oxen-free" made perfect sense.
- ☉ Water balloons were the ultimate weapon.

- ☉ It was magic when dad would "remove" his thumb.
- ☉ Mistakes were corrected by simply exclaiming, "Do over!"

SOUNDINGS

PARTA Board of Directors' Meeting

January 20, 2016

Present: Dave Barnwell, Frances Farraher, Eric Johnson, Nancy Miller, Peggy Shane, Maxine Blane, Roger Hampton, Jeff Vallosio, John Rathbun, Valda Shipp, Sally Weber, Laveine Birditt, and Kathy Simpson

Jeff Vallosio distributed the treasurer's report. There were no questions. Nancy Wing had reported that she had sent a few bills to those who had made reservations and not attended, and they were paid. Eric Johnson distributed the audit committee report. The committee agreed that the treasurer's procedures are totally acceptable and composed of a mixture of traditional written records and spreadsheet applications for record keeping and formal reports. Eric discussed the investments and Jeff presented the proposed budget. John moved to accept the budget as proposed. Laveine seconded it, and the motion carried.



NEW BUSINESS

- Valda Shipp has agreed to serve as the Scholarship Chair. Dave and the rest of the board thanked her.
- John said we needed to look at the Life Membership dues. A few years ago the yearly dues were raised from \$8 to \$10, and the life dues stayed the same, as they have for over 10 years. He suggested raising lifetime dues to \$100. Much discussion ensued. John moved to raise the yearly dues to \$12 and the life dues to \$120. Jeff seconded it. Much more discussion took place. John amended his motion to raise the yearly dues to \$15



and the life dues to \$120. Laveine seconded this. After a show of hands vote, the motion passed.

- We now provide our speakers with a free lunch, and at Ann Winget's discretion, sometimes an honorarium. We have money in the budget for speaker's fees, but they usually are not used. It was the consensus that Ann should keep her option to pay or not.
- Usually, in October of an election year, we invite all the local candidates to participate in a panel. None are invited individually.

OLD BUSINESS

Cater Inn is keeping the price for lunches at \$12 for our meetings in 2016.

Committee Reports:

- Reservations - Nancy is billing the no-shows and she is working on the call list.
- Ann may use the honorarium for speakers at her discretion.
- Membership – John said we have 30 new members. Over the years, our membership stays about even. Dave mentioned bringing a friend to the meeting.
- Publicity – Laveine reported that things are the same with the *Journal Star*.
- Altruistic – Frances distributed a list of deceased members since March 1. Jeff submits a \$10 honorarium to the IRTA Foundation for each deceased member of both PARTA and IRTA. John made a motion to send \$10 for all members on the list. Frances seconded it, and the motion carried.



Respectfully Submitted, Kathy Simpson, Recording Secretary



New This Year: IRS Form 1095 | "Health Coverage"

Many retired TRS members will receive a new IRS Form 1095 this year in the mail. This form documents your health insurance coverage during 2015 and can be used to help you complete your federal income tax return. To learn more about the Form 1095, please go to the information provided by the Illinois Department of Central Management Services. TRS does not create or administer Form 1095.

Source: trs.illinois.gov

*Dear paranoid people who check behind shower curtains
for murderers: If you find one, what's your plan?*



SOUNDINGS

IRTA

IRTAPAC is a statewide, nonpartisan Political Action Committee (PAC) organized by members of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association to benefit the entire retired educator community through political contributions to state candidates.

You can now donate to IRTAPAC and protect the status of retired teachers by donating just **\$1.00 a month** through pension deduction. Forms are available online at:

<https://irtaonline.org/documents/IRTAPACApril222015.pdf>

PAC

'Nobel' Prize for Teaching

An Illinois high school teacher known for blending hip-hop, technology and video games into lessons is in the running for a \$1 million award considered the 'Nobel' Prize for teaching. Joseph Fatheree is an instructor of creativity and innovation at Effingham High School. He's one of 10 finalists for the Varkey Foundation's Global Teacher Prize and will travel to Dubai next month for an educational forum and award ceremony.



He calls it "an amazing honor." Fatheree began experimenting as an English teacher in 1990 by weaving music, popular culture and business into lesson plans. He told the Chicago Tribune that he saw an overnight change in the excitement and interest of students. The high school is now home to a student-led film festival and technology such as 3-D printing.

Source: www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2016/02/18/illinois-educator-in-running-for-nobel_ap.html

REMINDER: Illinois Drivers No Longer Receiving Renewal Notices in the Mail

LICENSE

In response to Illinois' current budget impasse, the Illinois Secretary of State is no longer mailing license plate renewal notices to Illinois drivers. Failure to renew one's license plate on time can leave drivers with a \$20 late fee or a \$120 traffic ticket should they be pulled over with expired plates.



You can still get notices by email if you register online through the Secretary of State's website at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/. This site will also have the information needed to renew your license stickers online. Those who don't have access to email or a computer will have to go to a drivers' license facility in order to renew their stickers.

PLATES

\$2.7 Million Collected in Fines since Ending Vehicle Registration Reminders

The Associated Press reported that drivers paid more than \$2.7 million in fines from January 1 through February 22. That is \$1.2 million more than a year ago. The Secretary of State's office stopped mailing reminders to save an estimated \$450,000 a month on postage.

Illinois lawmakers are considering suspending the \$20 late fees for license plate renewals that have caused a windfall for the state after it stopped sending reminders to residents to save money.

Source: www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-illinois-license-plates-20160226-story.html

You know that tingly little feeling you get when you really like someone you've just met? That's common sense leaving your body.



I don't like making plans for the day because then the word "premeditated" gets thrown around in the courtroom.

SOUNDINGS

Report by Ken Previti – IRTA Visits Florida Retired Teachers

The Little Giant that began the legal suit to the Illinois Supreme Court that successfully defended the constitutional rights of retired Illinois teachers' pensions met with those retirees who presently live in Florida. I attended the Sarasota meeting in mid-February, and was pleased to hear their repeated promise. "We will go back to court in the event that any of our benefits are threatened," stated IRTA President David Davison.



While the Illinois Education Association had pushed hard to support SB2404, which would have surrendered some of our constitutionally protected rights and benefits, our little non-union affiliated IRTA hired lawyers to take the case to the Illinois Supreme Court rather than agreeing to diminish our incomes without a challenge. At the time, Illinois had a Democratic governor and a super-majority Democratic House and Senate. Corruption and attacks on teacher pensions have no political party affiliations.

IRTA Executive Director Jim Bachman elucidated the ongoing plans to actively support political candidates who support teachers and their earned compensation, our pensions. Included in his comments are the next General Election facts of life.

Source: reclaimreform.com/2016/02/23/the-illinois-retired-teachers-association-irta-visits-florida-retired-teachers/

"Of the nine members facing a General Election [for Illinois Senate seats], six of them have stood by the IRTA and defended our members when necessary. (Tom Cullerton, Laura Murphy, Melinda Bush, Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, Scott Bennett and Gary Forby). We are asking to provide financial support to the nine members listed, with Primary and General Elections."

Davison encouraged members to visit the IRTA site and the IRTA Facebook page for their own good. In the second half of the second decade of the 21st Century, retirees must learn to help themselves defend their own incomes by using sources beyond corporate controlled TV news and newspapers.

PERFECT GIFT? It was the end of the school year, and a kindergarten teacher was receiving gifts from her pupils. The florist's son handed her a gift. She shook it, held it overhead, and said, "I bet I know what it is? Flowers." "That's right," the boy said, "but how did you know?" "Oh, just a wild guess," she said.



The next pupil was the sweet shop owner's daughter. The teacher held her gift overhead, shook it, and said, "I bet I can guess what it is - a box of sweets." "That's right, but how did you know?" asked the girl. "Oh, just a wild guess," said the teacher.

The next gift was from the son of the liquor store owner. The teacher held the package overhead, but it was leaking. She touched a drop of the leakage with her finger and put it to her tongue. "Is it wine?" she asked. "No," the boy replied, with some excitement. The teacher repeated the process, tasting a larger drop of the leakage. "Is it champagne?" she asked. "No," the boy replied, with more excitement. The teacher took one more big taste before declaring, "I give up, what is it?" With great glee, the boy replied, "It's a puppy!"



LIFELONG LEARNING – Great Courses Series



The Great Courses are a series of classes presented on DVD for lifelong learners with engaging, immersive learning experiences you can't get in a lecture hall. Once topics are decided upon, the world's greatest teachers are paired with a team of experts who collaborate on crafting a customized and entertaining educational journey that's both comprehensive and fascinating. Peoria Public Library is now adding Great Courses to our collection. Learn the fundamentals of photography or tour the Louvre. You will currently find Great Courses on the new DVD shelf.



SOUNDINGS

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Benway	Robin	5906 W Charleston CT	Peoria	IL	61606-1075	966-0956	New address	
Fogelberg	Margaret I.	2606 Thayer ST	Evanston	IL	60201-1322		New address	
Foster	Hildegarde	3415 N Sheridan RD #212	Peoria	IL	61604-1430	648-8507	New address	
Greer-Buchanan	Jackie	3111 W Reservoir BLVD	Peoria	IL	61615-4033	369-7981	New member	
		jgreerbuchanan@yahoo.com						
Harvey	Sandy					369-9332	New phone	
Keene	David	1001 NE Glen Oak ST	Peoria	IL	61603-3345	472-1657	Correction	
Keene	Susan	1001 NE Glen Oak ST	Peoria	IL	61603-3345	472-1657	Correction	
Kellogg	Patricia					256-9692	New phone	
Keithley	Jean	No address						
Lawrence	Karen	3415 N Sheridan RD #236	Peoria	IL	61604-0687	681-0687	New address	
Kennedy	Diane	3609 Westbrook RD	Chillicothe	IL	61523-9577	274-8266	Renewal	
Kokos	Rhonda	No address						
Larke	Doris	dorislarke31@gmail.com						New email
Lawrence	Karen	3415 N Sheridan RD #236	Peoria	IL	61604-1430		New zip code	
Leverett	Glenda	No address						
Leverett	William	No address						
Picco	Ida	5015 W Jennifer LN	Peoria	IL	61607-1535		New address	
Rankin	Marsha	307 High ST	Canon City	CO	81212-8902		New address	
Sallee	Vivian	3332 N Knott LN	Peoria	IL	61604-1718	453-6458	New member	
		vivsallee@aol.com						
Schlink	Judith	meet_me_in_mauai_5@yahoo.com						New email
Sherman	Patsy	3900 N Stable CT, Unit 110	Peoria	IL	61614-6948		New address	
Shipp	Valda					369-9578	New phone	
Sleeth	Carol	5912 N Imperial DR	Peoria	IL	61614-3904	692-2595	New member	
		cisleeth@comcast.net						
Stewart	Eleanor	1217 W Woodside DR	Dunlap	IL	61525-9518		New address	
Suffield	David	1988 Chestnut LN	Washington	IL	61571-5022	444-5760	New member	
Taylor	Phyllis	4655 Victoria ST N APT 309	Saint Paul	MN	55126-5893		New address	
Tolliver	Mabel	6906 N Stallworth DR APT 126	Peoria	IL	61615-9444		New address	
Wozniak	Mary Joann	6901 N Galena RD APT 421	Peoria	IL	61614-3168		New address	
Yocum	Sally	1602 W Lincoln Wood PL	Peoria	IL	61614-2619	692-1778	New member	
		syocum46@comcast.net						

Carlton	Hazel	Deceased: February 1, 2016
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DATABASE MAINTAINED BY JOHN RATHBUN, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Keeping the PARTA database up-to-date with current information is an **ENORMOUS TASK!!!**
 Give John a "Thumbs Up" for job well done! **THANKS JOHN!!!**

I don't like the new copier I just bought. It says "put face down", but every time I do it, it blinds my eyes.

TRS is Not Going Out of Business in 2018

This incorrect 2018 doomsday prediction was made by Joshua Rauh, who currently is a professor at Stanford University. Rauh conducted an academic study to determine how long Illinois' public pension systems could pay pensions if the system's revenue streams were drastically reduced. At the time the study was written, TRS had \$28 billion in assets and spent \$3.6 billion in benefits in a year. By dividing total assets at the



time by annual benefits, Rauh came up with an answer of 7.7 years.

Rauh had told a Congressional subcommittee: "Many pension systems are approaching a day of reckoning. Even assuming 8% returns, the assets of the systems in seven states and six big cities would be insufficient to pay for today's already-promised benefits past 2020."

However, Rauh's prediction will only come true if TRS does not earn another dime in investment income or receive any state contributions over the next eight years. Using the latest financial information from fiscal year 2015, TRS had \$45.8

billion in assets and during that year distributed more than \$5 billion in benefits. If you update Rauh's simple calculation using 2015 numbers, you find that TRS has 8.8 years of assets available to pay benefits if all funding sources are cut off. In the first five years since Rauh's study was published, TRS distributed \$22.9 billion in pensions and benefits. Total TRS revenue for the five years was \$40.6 billion - \$796 million from school districts, \$4.5 billion from members, \$19.9 billion from the state and \$22.4 billion in investment income. Total TRS assets increased by 46% during that time.



Nonetheless, the unfunded liability carried by TRS at the end of FY 2014 - \$61.5 billion - remains troubling. TRS has less than 41 cents on hand for every dollar owed to TRS members over the next 30 years. If the unfunded liability is allowed to grow, TRS may have insufficient funds within the next 50 years. But the imminent collapse of TRS is impossible.

Source: <https://trs.illinois.gov/press/financial.htm>

Wishing YOU a Wonderful Day! – We ALL Need a Tree!

I hired a plumber to help me restore an old farmhouse, and after he had just finished a rough first day on the job, a flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric drill quit and his ancient one ton truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he sat in stony silence. On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family. As



we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands.

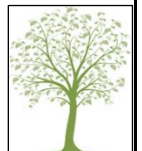
When opening the door he underwent an amazing transformation. His face was wreathed in smiles and he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss. Afterward he walked me to the car. We passed the tree and my

curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier.

Oh, that's my trouble tree,' he replied 'I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, those troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and the children.. So I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home and ask God to take care of them.

Then in the morning I pick them up again.'

'Funny thing is,' he smiled,' when I come out in the morning to pick 'em up, there aren't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before.'



Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here we might as well dance.

A recent study has found that women who carry a little extra weight live longer than the men who mention it.

SOUNDINGS

Teacher Pensions Under Attack by Chicago Civic Federation

IRTA calls for member support and solidarity to fight the potential theft of benefits! The Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA), a state-wide association of retired teachers, their families and supporters, urge all association members to come together and thwart the next potential raid on teacher benefits. On Thursday, February 11th in a news release, the Civic Federation of Chicago called for 'establishing comprehensive teachers' pension funding reform' to stabilize Illinois finances by the end of FY2019. Their proposal would consolidate the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund and the Teachers' Retirement System. "Combing the retirement systems will destabilize TRS and put pensions of every retired teacher outside Chicago in even greater jeopardy," Jim Bachman, Executive Director of IRTA said. "Consolidation is a great benefit to Chicago Teachers, but there is little, if no, value to TRS beneficiaries. Combining these systems would inflict too much of a strain on the pension system, causing a complete failure and leaving no one with the benefits they have earned." Consolidation of the Chicago and Downstate Teachers' Pension Funds would be detrimental to both CTPF and TRS because both systems are vastly underfunded. The cause is not the result of people retiring with excessive pensions or teachers not paying into the funds, but instead due to pension holidays taken by both the City and the State.



In addition, the Civic Federation's plan recommends approval of a 'constitutional amendment limiting pension protection.' Their suggestion urges the General Assembly to draft and approve an amendment to the Illinois Constitution for the November 2016 statewide ballot. The proposal would change the wording to apply only to benefits earned. Currently, benefits are protected through retirement from an employee's first day in the pension system. The Illinois Supreme Court unanimously upheld that this protection was put in place specifically to stop lawmakers and the governor from making changes to benefits while people were still working or after they retired. This is exactly what the Civic Federation is proposing. "Changing the Constitution is not the answer," IRTA Government Affairs Director Mary Shaw said. "Finding a revenue stream to adequately fund the pension systems and not defaulting on a promise is the answer the state and the governor should be looking for." "Raiding future pensions' benefits is theft, and it must be called out as such," Bachman said. "The state will be stealing from teachers if these ideas come to fruition. TRS should not be held responsible for stabilizing a completely separate pension system just because it is in jeopardy of collapse."



J IRTA encourages all members to make sure they are current with their membership status to receive all the latest news and information about this and future threats. **JOIN or RENEW your IRTA membership TODAY** by going online to irtaonline.org or calling the IRTA office at 1-800-728-4782. IRTA members are asked to relay this message to any retired teacher, spouse or any other teacher supporter who is not yet a member of IRTA. **"It will take the combined support of all Illinois retired teachers to combat this new and urgent threat," Bachman concluded.**

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Everyone has a right to be stupid. Politicians just seem to abuse that right!