

PARTA

SOUNDINGS

MAY 2016

Peoria Area Retired Teachers' Association

ROGER HAMPTON, EDITOR

LUNCHEON MEETING

Barracks Cater Inn
May 4 at 11:30 A.M.

Luncheon – \$12.00
Reservations Required

GREETERS

- 🌸 Susan Leighty
- 🌸 Denise Madigan
- 🌸 Sally Weber

PLEDGE

- 🌸 Chris Stevens

INVOCATION

- 🌸 Chris Stevens

LUNCHEON

Chicken Parmesan
Potato
Vegetable
Salads / Roll
Assorted Desserts

PROGRAM

Robotics Program
in Area Schools
*Slide presentation
and robot*
Brian Lough
*Caterpillar Global
Engine Development*

MEETING

Dave Barnwell, *Chair*
PARTA President



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! What a great time of year to be out and about while enjoying Spring. What a great time to join your friends at the May PARTA meeting!



A big "thank you" to those of you who responded to last month's scholarship appeal. Although many may not have been prepared to donate in April, we still raised \$1,090. This means an additional scholarship to ICC next year and it's not too late to donate to the fund.

Our May program should be very interesting. Brian Lough, from Caterpillar, will enlighten us on various robotics programs in area schools and will even bring one of his robot friends to assist with his presentation. See you May 2nd at Cater Inn.

Dave Barnwell - PARTA President

UPCOMING PARTA MEETINGS

JUNE 6, 2016

**GMOs / Problems with RoundUP /
Organic Farming**

| *Patrick Kirchhofer, Peoria County Farm Bureau*



NO MEETINGS in JULY or AUGUST

SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

Illinois Teacher of the Year

| *Kim Thomas, Peoria Public Schools*



BE INFORMED BE INVOLVED

Check PARTA's webpage for updates:

P A - R T A . W E E B L Y . C O M /

Sally Weber, WebMaster



Your tax deductible donations to PARTA Scholarships for ICC students are still being accepted.

Valda Shipp, PARTA Scholarship Chair

SOUNDINGS

General Luncheon Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2016

Dave Barnwell welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the greeters, Ann Christophel and Lin Hoffman. John Rathbun gave the Invocation and led us in the Pledge. Attendance today was 92, which included 3 guests.

Valda Shipp, the coordinator of the scholarship effort, said we are collecting today for the scholarship for an educational student at ICC. If you write a check, it should be made out to ICC Educational Foundation. She also asked us to encourage those we know who might be interested to apply.

After the luncheon, Dave introduced Rebecca Herz from the Peoria Playhouse



Children's Museum. She said the Playhouse opened in January of 2015 and has six exhibits which all relate to Peoria. The mission of the museum is to provide tools and inspiration that children need to become explorers and creators of the world. The museum's core values include equity, collaboration and opportunity. New exhibits and programs are being planned. To

become involved, we can volunteer, donate, visit, and share our ideas.

Next, Dr. Beverly Ketel, from the Central Illinois Kidney Fund, gave a very interesting and informative talk about kidney disease and kidney transplants. Dialysis can keep a person with kidney disease alive, but a transplant restores the patient's health. The Morton Civic Chorus presents a program each spring to help support the fund.

After the program, Dave opened the business meeting.

- The minutes were in the *Soundings*. They were approved with the correction of the spelling of Dr. Ketel's name.
- Jeff Vallosio said the Treasurer's Report was on the tables and a summary is in the *Soundings*. The report will be filed for audit.
- Investments – Eric Johnson said the investments have been fluctuating, but are coming back up.
- Membership – John Rathbun said the dues are \$10, and most people have already paid.
- Altruistic – Frances said there were three deaths this month and they are listed in the *Soundings*. Dave reminded us about the scholarship collection. It was moved and seconded to adjourn.

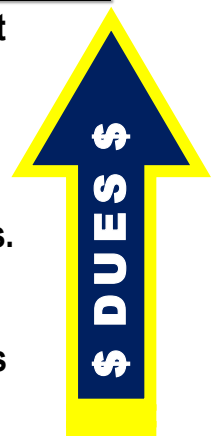
Respectfully submitted

Kathy Simpson, Secretary

Proposed Increase in PARTA Dues for 2017

The PARTA Board has proposed a change in our dues structure. Changes in dues must be ratified by the membership during the business portion of a meeting. If ratified, the dues increase will take effect January 1, 2017. Annual dues for 2017 will be collected in the fall of 2016 based on the new structure if adopted. The board is proposing to increase annual dues from \$10.00 to \$15.00. Under the proposal, life dues, beginning in 2017, will increase from \$75 to \$120.

Life dues were not changed the last time annual dues were increased. Life dues are set aside in an investment account which provides revenue to make up for fewer members paying annual dues. While that investment revenue fluctuates, annual dues are needed to provide for the primary expenses of the organization.



John Rathbun, Membership Chair



Vocabulary Builder: "Frust" (*There's a word for everything!*)
The small line of debris that refuses to be swept into the dust pan and keeps backing a person across the room until you finally decide to give up and sweep it under the rug.

SOUNDINGS

PARTA Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2016

Present: Dave Barnwell, Jeff Vallosio, Valda Shipp, Frances Farragher, John Rathbun, Sally Weber, Nancy Miller, Nancy Wing, Linda Sedgwick, Susan Leighty, and Kathy Simpson

Jeff Vallosio distributed the Treasurer's Report. He has paid out the honorarium for the deceased members to IRTA. Investments are up about \$2,000, but down about \$1,000 total for the year. An investment committee meeting is coming up on Monday, April 11. We reviewed that the board voted to recommend raising the dues to \$15 yearly and \$120 lifetime. John will formally announce the change at the May meeting, and the membership will vote at the June meeting. John will also explain the pros and cons of this plan. If the vote passes, it will become effective in January, 2017. If a member has paid \$10 dues for 2016, and then chooses to become a lifetime member before the end of December 2016, he/she will pay the \$75. It was suggested that an article be put in the September *Soundings* about where our money from dues goes.

New business:

- Committee on Nominations – The committee reports the list of candidates in October, the membership votes in November, and new officers are installed in December. Dave appointed the following nominating committee: Linda Sedgwick, Valda Shipp, Nancy Miller, and John Rathbun. They

will meet at 10:00 A.M. before the May meeting.

- October 2016 Candidate Forum – Dave will contact the Board of Elections and see if we have any contested races.

Old business: Valda reported that \$1,090 was collected for scholarships at Monday's meeting.

\$1,090

SCHOLARSHIP

Committee Reports:

- Program – The May program is "Robotics Program in Area Schools". Ann wanted the board's okay that a program on medical marijuana would be appropriate. The board thought that it would be.

- Reservations – Nancy Wing said that at the April meeting, eleven people who had reservations did not come. A legitimate reason, such as illness, is excused; otherwise, they will be billed.

- Altruistic – Frances represents PARTA at the Women's Civic Federation. It was suggested that we could observe a moment of silence at our meeting after the names of the deceased are read.

- Historian – Susan wondered if she should contact John or Frances when she reads an obituary of a teacher, but it doesn't say if that person was a member of PARTA. John has the membership list. Susan also needs a copy of the February *Soundings*.

Dave adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

-

Kathy Simpson, Secretary

May 2016 Treasurer's Summary Report

Investment Balance	\$ 38,017.61	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund (\$0.00 - this month)	\$ 366.29
Savings Balance	\$ 935.41	Post Office Returned Mail Fund (\$0.00 - this month)	\$ 87.83
Checking Balance	\$ 4,406.60	Grand Total \$ 43,913.74	
Working Cash (cash boxes)	\$ 100.00		

Jeff Vallosio, Treasurer

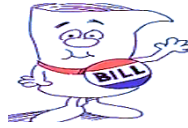


A mother and her young son returned from the grocery store and began putting away the groceries. The boy opened the box of animal crackers and spread them all over the table. "What are you doing?" his mother asked. "The box says you can't eat them if the seal is broken," the boy explained. "I'm looking for the seal."

SOUNDINGS

LEGISLATION TO WATCH

HB 6021 would allow annuitants who had received a refund for their survivor benefits at the time of retirement to repay that refund with interest and have their survivor benefits reinstated.



SB 2717 creates the 'Pension Reform Act of 2016'. The bill has no substantive language, only a title now.

Madigan Proposes Education-funding Amendment to Illinois Constitution

House speaker Michael Madigan has proposed a constitutional amendment to strengthen the state's obligation to fund public education. He introduced legislation that would declare education a fundamental "right" — as opposed to "goal" — and that the state has the "preponderant financial responsibility" for funding schools.



If the House and Senate approve, the amendment would be on November's ballot. Madigan spokesman Steve Brown says the Constitution is clear that the state should be the "primary" financial source, but that the language of the proposed amendment makes it abundantly clear.

Millionaires Playing a Large Role in the Broader Chicago Exodus

Chicago lost more millionaires than Russia in 2015, according to new research on the migration of high-net-worth individuals. The Windy City is the only American city to register a significant outflow of millionaires in 2015, topping the losses of economically and socially distressed nations such as Russia, Spain and Brazil – and tying Greece. And while Chicago has more high-net-worth individuals than Russia and Spain, the percentage of the city's out-migrating millionaires – 2% – still matched that of those countries, and even surpassed Brazil's loss of 1%. The report from global wealth data analysts at New World Wealth highlights the role of millionaires in the 2015 Chicago exodus. It estimates Chicago lost 3,000 of its 134,000 millionaires in 2015.

Net Outflow of Millionaires and Total Millionaires by City

City	Net outflow	Millionaires in 2015	Percent lost
Paris	7,000	126,000	5.6%
Rome	5,000	73,100	6.8%
Chicago	3,000	134,000	2.2%
Athens	2,000	22,000	9.1%

Source: New World Wealth

@illinoispolicy

The report specified that Chicago's millionaires went primarily to other parts of the United States, while Paris, Rome and Athens primarily lost millionaires to other countries.

Source: www.illinoispolicy.org/chicago-lost-more-millionaires-than-any-other-u-s-city-in-2015/



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.

SOUNDINGS

ILLINOIS LEGISLATORS RECEIVING THE BIGGEST PENSIONS

Taxpayers United of America, an organization that advocates for tax relief and “fighting government pensions,” has released an updated list of lawmaker pensions in the General Assembly Retirement System. At the end of fiscal year 2015, the pension fund had a funded ratio of 16.4% — the lowest of the state’s five retirement systems — and \$278.8 million in unfunded liabilities. Here are some more fast facts from the 2015 comprehensive annual financial report:

- Average member salary: **\$89,241**
- Average pension: **\$58,644**
- Average age at retirement: **60**
- Average length of service: **13.4 years**

Following is a list of legislators who are receiving the biggest annual pension payouts as of January 27, 2016.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 8. Governor James Thompson – \$147,477 | 4. Senator John Friedland – \$163,051 |
| 7. Roland Burris – \$149,734 | 3. Representative Judy Erwin – \$164,010 |
| 6. Representative Gary Hannig – \$150,967 | 2. Senator Edward Petka – \$186,968 |
| 5. Governor Jim Edgar – \$156,331 | 1. Senator Arthur L. Berman – \$235,829 |

Source and full story: <http://www.rebootillinois.com/2016/02/18/whats-hot/>

Top Pension Payouts of Other State Retirements Systems

Name	Retirement System	Pension	Years of Service
Leslie Heffez	SURS	\$547,862	30
Yaakov Abrahamson	Chicago Teachers	\$404,437	13
Paul Ray	Cook County Employees	\$322,919	29
Lawrence A Abrahamson	TRS	\$302,991	56
Edward A Anderse	IMRF	\$298,123	38
Tobias G Barry	Judges	\$204,082	
Sadashiv D Parwatikar	State Employees	\$201,575	

Smithsonian Takes Hall of Human Origins across the Country in New Traveling Exhibition



Starting in mid-May visitors to every Peoria Public Library location will see interesting displays that explain how scientists know what it means to be human. Then on Friday, June 17, the traveling exhibit *Exploring Human Origins: What Does It Mean to Be Human* opens at the Main Library in the Gallery on Lower Level One with an opening ceremony at 10:00 a.m. The exhibit is free and open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday until Thursday, July 14.

If quitters never win, and winners never quit, what dupe came up with, "Quit while you're ahead?"

SOUNDINGS

"WORD" on the Street Teachers Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP)

Health insurance companies underbid their previous contracts and thus are losing money. TRIP can only increase premiums a maximum of 5% each year – which they have done for several years. The only option for insurance companies is to change what the benefits are and at what cost to each member.



THEREFORE, I would anticipate many changes in what the TRIP benefit coverage will include beginning January 2017, and at what cost to participants: deductibles, co-pays, maximum out-of-pocket expenses etc. Keep informed regarding CMS TRIP RFPs! This is one prediction of which I truly hope I am proven wrong!
~ Roger

New Nationwide Public Opinion Research Report

Some of the research findings are:

1. An overwhelming majority of Americans believe there is a retirement crisis.
86% agree that the nation faces a retirement crisis. 57% strongly agree there is a crisis.
2. Americans remain highly anxious about their retirement outlook.
74% of Americans say they are concerned.
3. Support for steady and reliable retirement income from a pension is high and growing.
82% say a pension is worth having because it provides steady income that won't run out.
67% indicate they would be willing to take less in pay increases in exchange for guaranteed income in retirement.
4. Americans continue to feel that leaders in Washington do not understand their struggle to save for retirement.
87% say Washington policymakers do not understand how hard it is to prepare for retirement.
84% say Washington needs to do more to help ensure retirement security.
5. Americans see retirement benefits as a job feature that is almost as important as salary.
75% view salary as important. 72% view retirement benefits as important.
6. Americans express strong support for pensions for public employees.
75% realize that public pension costs are paid for with employee contributions and investment returns. 87% of Americans say pensions are a good way to recruit and retain qualified teachers, police officers and firefighters. 25% of Americans understood that public employers pay for 25% or less of public pension costs
7. Protecting Social Security benefits is increasingly important.
73% say it's a mistake to cut government spending in such a way as to reduce Social Security benefits for current retirees.



Research online at: www.nirsonline.org/storage/nirs/documents/2015%20Opinion%20Research/final_opinion_research_2015.pdf

Something to make you laugh!



I saw my math teacher
with a piece of graph paper yesterday...
I think he must be plotting something.

I like to hold hands at the movies...
which always seems to startle strangers.
Where there's a will...
guaranteed there will be a relative.

Illinois Issues: The Next Pension Time Bomb

by Tara Garcia Mathewson



Illinois has more than \$100 billion in pension debt. So far, attempts to fix it have been mostly illegal.

A recent study puts the state's Tier II pension system back under scrutiny. The report, which comes from nonprofit education consultant Bellwether Education Partners, focuses on teacher pensions in Illinois. In an effort to begin to address the unfunded liability, lawmakers approved a less generous retirement benefit package for public employees hired after 2011. The report notes that teachers hired under the new system, known as Tier II, will actually lose money on their pension contributions, when compared to their benefits, for the first two decades of their careers.

The report says that because it takes 10 years to vest in the system and become eligible for a pension, more than half of new teachers will never collect benefits.

Teachers hired before 2011 vest in five years.

Contributions taken out of the Tier II system are hit with a withdrawal tax, so teachers who don't vest would actually be better off if the money had never gone into the system.

"The state plan assumes, and depends upon, the fact that the majority of teachers will not stay long enough to collect full benefits. Under the current plan, more than half of new teachers will not qualify for any pension benefits at all," the report says. "In many cases, new and future teachers pay more in contributions than their pension benefits are worth; they are essentially subsidizing the state's debt." The report also notes that Tier II benefits will likely run afoul of federal law, and the state could be required to offer Social Security benefits to employees not currently enrolled in Social Security. This group includes teachers and public university employees.

Full report online at: wuis.org/post/illinois-issues-next-pension-time-bomb-0#stream/0



A nursery school teacher was delivering a station wagon full of kids home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting in the front seat of the fire truck was a Dalmatian dog. The children fell to discussing the dog's duties. "They use him to keep crowds back," said one youngster. "No," said another, "he's just for good luck." A third child brought the argument to a close. "They use the dogs," she said firmly, "to find the fire hydrant."

If money could talk,
it would say goodbye.

~ Anonymous

Wealth is the ability
to fully experience life.

~ Henry David Thoreau

A wise man should have money
in his head, but not in his heart.

~ Jonathan Swift

One Sunday morning the pastor noticed little Johnny was standing staring up at the large plaque of names that hung in the foyer of the church. The young man of seven had been staring at the plaque for some time, so the pastor walked up and stood beside him and gazing up at the plaque, he said quietly, "Good morning, son."

"Good morning pastor," replied the young man not taking his eyes off the plaque. "Sir, what is this?" Johnny asked. "Well son, these are all the people who have died in the service," replied the pastor. Soberly, they stood together staring up at the large plaque. Little Johnny's voice barely broke the silence when he asked quietly, "Which one sir, the 8:30 or the 10:30 service?"



Creating a Balanced Illinois Budget Doesn't Mean What You Think It Does

by Sheila Weinberg - Reboot Illinois

In his budget address yesterday, Governor Rauner called for a balanced budget. However, this does not mean the same thing in government as it does in the real world. Let's take a look at how Governor Rauner and the legislature "balanced" the 2015 budget, without raising taxes or cutting benefits and services. In essence they balanced the budget by shifting money from one pocket to another—specifically moving money from non-budgeted funds to budgeted funds. Illinois' budget law calls for only six funds, like the general and education funds, to be balanced. The other hundreds of funds are maintained off budget, except when the legislatures and governors need money to "balance" the other funds. Then the cash balances in the non-budgeted funds become fair game for misappropriation to the budgeted funds to pretend the budgeted funds are "balanced."



Right before he left office, former Governor Pat Quinn and the legislature approved the fiscal year 2015 budget which was balanced, assuming the temporary tax hike would be made permanent. Since the hike was not continued, Governor Rauner came into office in January 2015 needing to figure out a way to balance the budget before the June 30, 2015 fiscal-year end. He and lawmakers shifted money from more than 100 non-budgeted funds to the six budgeted funds. Some of the non-budgeted funds include the Motor Fuel Tax Fund, Fire Prevention Fund, Downstate Transit Improvement Fund and Wireless Service Emergency Fund. This affects ordinary citizens, because they paid taxes and fees assuming the money would go to one purpose and the governor and legislature took that money and used it for other purposes. Some would consider this "bait and switch," or worse.

For example, on each mobile phone bill is a charge for "Illinois State 911 Fee," which is supposed to be used to promote the use of wireless 9-1-1 and wireless enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) service in order to save lives and protect the property of the citizens of the State of Illinois. The governor and legislature balanced the 2015 budget by taking this money and using it for whatever they wanted.

So, when you hear Governor Rauner, or any other politician in Illinois, claim they have or will "balance" the budget, just remember decades of "balanced" budgets have resulted in the state being in a financial hole of \$184 billion.

Source: www.rebootillinois.com/2016/02/18/editors-picks/sheila-weinberg/

THINGS TO CONTEMPLATE

- Never agree to plastic surgery if the doctor's office is full of portraits by Picasso.
- How much deeper would oceans be if sponges didn't live there?



- No one ever says "It's only a game," when their team is winning.
- If you can't be kind, at least have the decency to be vague.

Don't dwell on what went wrong. Instead, focus on what to do next. Spend your energies on moving forward toward finding the answer. ~Denis Waitley