

PARTA

SOUNDINGS

MAY 2022

PEORIA AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

**PARTA
LUNCHEON MEETING
11:30 AM - MAY 2
BARRACKS CATER INN
LUNCHEON - \$12.00**

GREETERS

- 🌸 Carla Stokowski
- 🌸 Sherry Perez

PLEDGE & INVOCATION

- 🌸 Catriona Ritenhouse

LUNCHEON

Chicken Parmesan
Spaghetti w/ Marinara
Vegetable
Garlic Bread / Salads
Dessert

PROGRAM

**HOW TO AVOID
BECOMING A VICTIM**

**Aimee
Shinall**



Victim Services
Coordinator for Peoria
County Sheriff's Office

MEETING

Dixie Wheeler
PARTA President, Chair



Program begins
around 12:15 P.M.

Roger Hampton
Editor

PARTA GREETINGS,

Do you enjoy your morning coffee with friends?



Once a month IRTA Executive Director Jim Bachman invites you to join him for just that: a cup of coffee with IRTA members (*well, you need to provide your own coffee!*) I decided to participate with cup in hand and just listen in

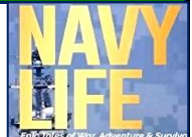
on what other IRTA members are concerned about from around the state. Although we didn't solve the state's financial problems, we agreed that we are all concerned about issues that affect retired teachers. These chat sessions are all via Zoom so you can stay at home, participate, or just listen and enjoy your java! The next coffee is on May 14th at 9:30 A.M. Hope to see you there.

Dixie Wheeler, PARTA President

UPCOMING MEETINGS/PROGRAMS

JUNE 6

FOR THE LOVE OF NAVY LIFE
Doug Wright, Submarine Mission Commander



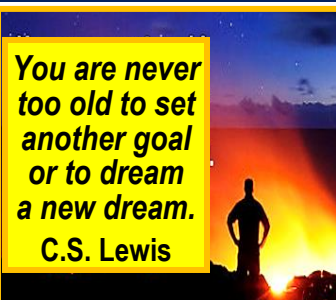
NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST

SEPTEMBER 12 (2ND MONDAY)

**CELEBRATION OF LIFE MEMORIAL
NECROLOGY SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 - AUGUST 31, 2022**

Check PARTA website for updates:

pa-rta.weebly.com Sally Weber, Webmaster



Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.

~ Albert Einstein

Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts.

~ Winston Churchill

Believe you can and you're halfway there. ~ Theodore Roosevelt

FOLLOW YOUR DREAM. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF. DON'T GIVE UP.

SOUNDINGS

PARTA LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 4, 2022, AT 11:30 AM

The April PARTA meeting was held at Cater Inn on April 4, 2022, with President Dixie Wheeler presiding. There were 70 (seventy) members in attendance and 4 (four) members on Zoom. There were no new members present. President Wheeler thanked the meeting greeters, Peggy Shane and Catriona Ritenhouse, and Linda Sedgwick for filling in for Kathy Simpson at the check-in table. Jeff Vallosio led the Pledge to the Flag and offered prayer. President Wheeler reminded the members that the treasurer's report was on the tables. The 2022-2023 PARTA directories will be available at the May meeting.



The meeting program presenters were Laurie and Tim Bailey from Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). They were introduced by LeeAnn Meinhold, program committee member. OLLI through Bradley University is an organization designed for Peoria-area residents ages 50 and older. It was founded in 1977 by Bernard Osher and funded through the Bernard Osher Foundation. OLLI at Bradley is recognized as an Osher program of distinction. The institute provides classes, study groups, and learning trips.

BUSINESS MEETING

President Wheeler reminded board members to submit their job descriptions to her.

The next board meeting is scheduled at PPL Lakeview Branch on August 22 at 10:00 am. The Area IRTA Conference is on June 16, 2022.



President Wheeler encouraged members to register and attend.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT COMMITTEE Dave Barnwell reported on the audit conducted last month. Records and finances are in order and in excellent shape. Thanks to the efficiency of PARTA's treasurer, Jeff Vallosio.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE Dixie Wheeler reported that the Legislative Committee met to set goals and make plans to ensure legislators know

who IRTA is and its purpose. More information is forthcoming from this committee.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE Letters will be sent to this year's retirees with information about PARTA and encouraging them to join.

PARTA AND IRTA DUES Jeff Vallosio reminded members to pay 2022 PARTA dues and sign-up to join IRTA. The forms were available at the back table.



OTHER NEWS Roger Hampton announced the following PARTA members serving on IRTA committees: Dixie Wheeler (Legislative Committee), Jeff Vallosio (IRTAPAC), Sally Weber (Member Benefits Committee), Pat Hampton (Chair, Member Benefits Committee), Roger Hampton (Chair, newly-formed Nominating Committee), Deloris Turner, (newly-formed Nominating Committee).

Roger Hampton also informed the membership of various virtual events occurring monthly through IRTA: coffee with Executive Director Jim Bachman, winemaking class, and Watchdog events pertinent to IRTA members.

IRTA PAC COMMITTEE (Jeff Vallosio) Please see the detailed explanation of the committee in the Soundings on page 4. Jeff asked members to support the IRTAPAC by filling out the form in the IRTA brochure available at the membership table. Donations are minimum (\$1.00 per month through deduction from pension checks). Jeff Vallosio reminded the members that the treasurer's report was on the tables.



ANNOUNCEMENTS Denise Adams announced the Morton Civic Chorus fundraiser on May 26-29. She will have tickets for the event at the May meeting. All proceeds from the event go to area kidney patients.



President Wheeler asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Peggy Shane moved to adjourn the meeting. Jackie Gilles seconded the motion.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

DELORIS TURNER, SECRETARY

I felt very uncomfortable driving into the cemetery.

My car GPS blurted out: "You have reached your final destination!"



SOUNDINGS

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Epstein	Marianne	5917 N Roxbury LN	Peoria	IL	61614-4121	309.360.8371	Renewal
		Mariann130@aol.com					
Gilles	Jackie	jackiejocile@gmail.com			309.369.6924	New email, phone	

Yvonne "Bonnie" Swanson, 76 | June 14, 1945 - April 17, 2022



DATABASE MAINTAINED BY JOHN RATHBUN

QUESTION: *Do all fairy tales begin with "Once upon a time"?*

ANSWER: *No, many of them begin with, "If I am elected, I promise..."*

MAY TREASURER'S REPORT SUMMARY

Investment Balance:	\$ 53,200.73	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund:	\$ 178.78
Savings Balance:	8,022.01	Post Office Returned Mail Fund:	92.39
Checking Balance:	2,283.12	Working Cash (cash boxes):	100.00



GRAND TOTAL: \$ 63,877.03
Jeff Vallosio, Treasurer

WARREN BUFFETT ON ENDING THE DEFICIT

I could end the deficit in five minutes. You just pass a law that says anytime there is a deficit of more than 3% of GDP, all sitting members of Congress are ineligible for re-election!



IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND AN IN-PERSON MEETING YOU CAN STILL ATTEND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM.

Zoom access any time after 11:25 | Meetings usually begin ~12:15 P.M.
<https://zoom.us/join> | Meeting ID: 847 3934 4964 | Passcode: 344638

EASIEST WAY TO CONNECT: *A Direct Access Link will be sent via email to PARTA members prior to the meeting.*

If you have any questions or problems accessing this meeting, please contact Roger Hampton: 309.360.6190 | roger.hampton11138@gmail.com

Issues of **SOUNDINGS**: Printed and distributed at meeting and published online.



Son: *I feel like you're always making up rules and stuff.*

Mom: *Like what?*

Son: *Like if I don't clean my room a portal will open and take me to another dimension.*

Mom: *Well, that's what happened to your older brother.*

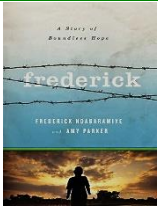
Son: *What older brother?*

Mom: *Exactly!*



SOUNDINGS

PARTA MEMBERS READ AND RECOMMEND

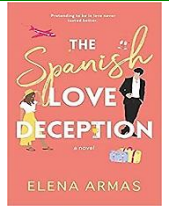


**FREDERICK:
A STORY OF BOUNDLESS HOPE**
by Frederick Ndabaramiye

“My God won’t let me do that.” These seven words of boundless hope would irreversibly change the life of the teenage boy who spoke them.

On April 7, 1994 the life of Frederick Ndabaramiye and his family changed forever as the Rwandan genocide erupted in their homeland. When Frederick faced those same genocidaires a few years later, he noted the machete that hung from the right hand closest to him and wondered if his would soon be added to the layers of dried blood that clung to the blade. Either way, young Frederick knew that he wouldn’t be able to carry out the orders just given to him, to raise that blade against the other passengers of the bus, regardless of the race marked on their identity cards.

That bold decision would cause Frederick to lose his hands. But what the killers meant for harm, God intended for good. The cords that bound him served as a tourniquet, saving his life when his hands were hacked away. This new disability eventually fueled Frederick’s passion to show the world that disabilities do not have to stop you from living a life of undeniable purpose. From that passion, the Ubumwe Community Center was born, where “people like me” come to discover their own purposes and abilities despite their circumstances.



**THE SPANISH
LOVE DECEPTION**
by Elena Armas

Through miraculous mercy and divine appointment, Frederick forgives those who harmed him and goes on to fully grasp his God-given mission. In this extraordinary true story of forgiveness, faith, and hope, you will be challenged, convicted, and forever converted to a believer of the impossible.

Catalina Martín desperately needs a date to her sister’s wedding. Especially since her little white lie about her American boyfriend has spiraled out of control. Now everyone she knows—including her ex and his fiancée—will be there and eager to meet him.

She only has four weeks to find someone willing to cross the Atlantic and aid in her deception. New York to Spain is no short flight and her raucous family won’t be easy to fool.

Enter Aaron Blackford—her tall, handsome, condescending colleague—who surprisingly offers to step in. She’d rather refuse; never has there been a more aggravating, blood-boiling, and insufferable man.

But Catalina is desperate, and as the wedding draws nearer, Aaron looks like her best option. And she begins to realize he might not be as terrible in the real world as he is at the office.

I still think I got the test question RIGHT and the teacher got it WRONG!!!

Circle the SMALLEST Number

- | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|---|
| 1) | 39 | 42 | 67 | X |
| 2) | 17 | 71 | 15 | X |
| 3) | 96 | 60 | 86 | X |



SUGGESTIONS for HUSBANDS

Don’t ask your wife when dinner will be ready while she is mowing the lawn.

Arguing with your wife is like trying to read the “Terms of Use” on the internet. Eventually, you just give up and say, “I Agree.”

Being kind and listening to people are often more important than constantly seeking to be right and prove others wrong. ~ F. Scott Fitzgerald

SOUNDINGS

GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL PARTA/IRTA MEMBERS

What: Area 4 IRTA Conference
When: Thursday, June 16 @ 9:30 AM
Where: Virtual

- Meet Members of your IRTA Team
- Learn What's New in the IRTA
- Agenda Details in June *Soundings*

PLEASE CONSIDER AND ATTEND THIS FREE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

"EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION GRANTS FOR TEACHERS" SPREAD THE NEWS

The Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation is making \$36,500 in grant money available statewide in Illinois. This special grant money will provide additional funds to public school educators (Pre-K through 12) so that their students will have the means to participate in special projects.

Teachers can download, complete, and submit the application online by visiting www.irtaonline.org and looking under the Foundation section (Grants). All proposals must be submitted by June 1, 2022.



PENSION FUNDS' ROSY PROJECTIONS SPELL TROUBLE

The opinions stated in this article are for informational purposes only.

They do not reflect in anyway an opinion of the IRTA, PARTA, or the Soundings editor.



Whether state retirement systems will be solvent to fully fund those promised pension benefits in 40 years also remains in question. While the state's official projections show all five state funds will reach 90% funding by 2045, this assumes the funds make at least 6.5% returns on investments for the next two decades. The state has regularly underperformed on these optimistic investment projections in the past, even when the economy was growing, leaving Illinois taxpayers to make up the difference.



From 2010 to 2019, taxpayers were forced to pay \$7.6 billion more into the retirement system than the state sources estimated they would. On average, taxpayer contributions to annual pension obligations were 15% above state estimates during this past period. But despite being asked to pay more each year and more than expected, taxpayers still could not keep up with growing pension debt. A pre-pandemic actuarial stress test of the retirement systems commissioned by the Illinois Policy Institute in 2019 showed this underfunding left pension funds highly vulnerable to insolvency in the case of a serious economic downturn. Had state-run pension funds averaged roughly the same returns seen in the 10 years after the Great Recession and lost 20% of their asset value during the COVID-19 pandemic – the same loss experienced in 2009 – the state's major retirement systems would have run out of money in less than 30 years.

While Illinois avoided this dire outcome with the assistance of billions of dollars in federal stimulus bolstering the state economy, it none the less demonstrated how fragile the current system is and the need for reform.

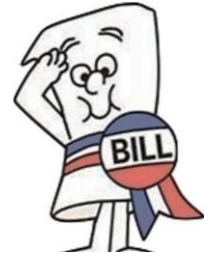


SOUNDINGS

LEGISLATION CONSIDERED BY LAWMAKERS THIS SPRING INCLUDES:

HOUSE BILL 1167 Governor Pritzker signed this bill that creates “COVID-19 paid administrative leave” time for TRS members who are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus. For TRS members who used sick time during the 2021-22 school year to deal with the coronavirus, the bill requires school districts to replace any “sick time” used for that purpose with the new COVID-19 administrative leave time. The sick time would be added back to a member’s accumulated sick leave “bank.”

HOUSE BILL 5472 and **SENATE BILL 3201** Expands the number of days during the 2021–2022 school year that retired TRS members can teach school full-time without that service negatively affecting the payment of their pensions. The current 120 days limit would be increased to 140 days. The bill also may extend the number of days during the 2022–2023 school year.



HOUSE BILL 5705 Sets up the process that would require TRS and the state’s four other pension systems to divest money from Russian companies due to the country’s invasion of Ukraine. The bill calls on the Illinois Investment Policy Board to identify all potential Russian investment opportunities and place them on a “prohibited” list. TRS and the other pension systems would then have a set amount of time to pull all investments in those companies.

SENATE BILL 932 Makes it easier for state boards and commissions, including TRS, to substitute a virtual meeting for an in-person meeting due to potential health risks. The substitution would be at the discretion of the board chair or president.



HOUSE BILL 4292 Allows state government to borrow up to \$1 billion in additional money to continue funding the two public pension “accelerated benefit” programs. The state has borrowed \$1 billion over the last two years to fund these member “buyouts.” The bill also extends the life of the two “buyout” programs until 2026. The original sunset date was June 30, 2024.

(Additional Information on HB 4292 on page 8)

Source: www.trsil.org/news-and-events/Spring2022-Topics-and-Report

EVERYONE HAS A STORY IN LIFE

A 24-year-old boy seeing out from the train’s window shouted, “Dad, look! The trees are going behind!” Dad smiled and a young couple sitting nearby looked at the 24-year-old’s childish behavior with pity. Suddenly he again exclaimed, “Dad, look! The clouds are running with us!”

The couple couldn’t resist and said to the old man, “Why don’t you take your son to a good doctor?” The old man smiled and said, “I did, and we are just coming from the hospital. My son was blind from birth. He just got his eyes today.”



Everyone has a book inside themselves. What's your story?

SOUNDINGS

SPOTLIGHT ON IRTA MEMBER BENEFITS

PASSPORT TRAVEL SERVICES, POWERED BY HOTEL PLANNER



Book your lodging with Passport Travel Services and save up to 65%. All major brands, plus air, car rental and group travel.



These exclusive offers are provided by Hotel Planner for Passport Members.
Your Portal to myAmba Discounts Participant Benefits



For a FULL list of IRTA member-only benefits and discount codes, log in to the Members Only section of the IRTA website (irtaonline.org) and click on “Member Benefits”.



A young man asked his fairy godmother to make him desirable and irresistible to all women. She turned him into a credit card!



Words are seeds - they do more than blow around, they land in our hearts and not the ground. Be careful what you plant and careful what you say. You might have to eat what you planted one day.

GRILLING SEASON HUMOR

- Accidentally burned dinner on the grill. Missteaks were made.
- I can't decide whether to grill chicken breasts or chicken thighs. I guess I'll just wing it.
- It took me two hours to grill a chicken the other day, and it still didn't tell me why it crossed the road.
- My friends invited me to barbecue night yesterday. I said no, but now I'm regretting it. That was a missed steak.
- At the office barbecue, I grilled a medium-rare steak for my boss, and he said, "I like it well done!" I said, "Thanks. That means a lot."
- Before every barbecue, I tell myself I'll eat healthy and stick to the salads. But then my plan takes a turn for the wurst.
- I hate when my mom grills brats for dinner. She's the wurst.



*Is an argument between two vegans still called a BEEF?
Did you know that cows are vegetarians so that you don't have to be?*

SOUNDINGS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON HB 4292

Illinois established the *ACCELERATED PENSION BENEFIT PAYMENT PROGRAM* in June 2018 as an alternative means to save money for the state and its underfunded pension systems by offering early benefit buyouts to pension recipients. Illinois lawmakers might borrow \$1 billion to extend pension buyout programs until 2026. Experts warn the efforts have been a disappointment and will do little to ease Illinois' worst-in-the-nation pension crisis.

The early buyout program offered Tier 1 and Tier 2 participants in the state's Teachers' Retirement System, State Employees Retirement System, and State Universities Retirement System a lump sum equal to 60% of the present value of their accrued benefits. The pensioner would then be permanently removed from the system.

A second offer only available to Tier 1 recipients who still work for the state would give pensioners a lump sum upon leaving the workforce in return for halving the automatic annual 3% increase in their benefits after they retire. That sum is 70% of what the retiree would have received in full benefits if they had not taken the lower rate.

Source: www.illinoispolicy.org/illinois-may-borrow-1b-for-pension-buyouts/



CAN STRETCHING MAKE YOU A BETTER LISTENER?

Source: www.grassamchiro.com/2022-april/?article=lead&id=15884&sid=361762&site=344

Has a friend ever told you that you aren't a great listener? Or maybe you've heard that you tune out of conversations early, missing something important. If that sounds familiar, there's something you might want to try: **STRETCHING**.

STRETCHING DEVELOPS ATTUNEMENT,

WHICH IS BECOMING AWARE OF YOUR OWN MIND AND BODY.

Gentle stretching helps you tune into your own body by making you look, listen, and interpret what it's telling you. It may help you identify your limits, push boundaries safely, and even improve physical and mental health. It's easy to see how this could help you in other aspects of your life! The more awareness we have over our own bodies, the better we're able to practice attunement in other situations, like listening. **GIVE IT A TRY.**



INTERESTING REAL BUMPER STICKERS

THOSE WHO CAN, TEACH.
THOSE WHO CAN'T,
PASS LAWS ABOUT TEACHING.

BIOLOGY
IT GROWS
ON YOU



KEEP CALM OR I WILL
USE MY TEACHER VOICE!