

PARTA

SOUNDINGS

MAY 2024

PEORIA AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LOCAL UNIT 32 OF THE ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LUNCHEON MEETING

MAY 6

Barracks Cater Inn

11:30 A M

GREETERS

 **SUSAN BARTLOW**

 **ANN CHRISTOPHEL**

PLEDGE & INVOCATION

 **JO TROMPETER**

LUNCHEON

Luncheon – \$15.00

RESERVATION REQUIRED

(Details on Page 4)

Entrée

Chicken Parmesan

Potato / Vegetable

Salad / Roll / Drink

Dessert

PROGRAM

ROBERTA

ENGLISH

CEO @

Wildlife

Prairie Park

*Program begins
around 12:15 P.M.*



MEETING

Dixie Wheeler

PARTA President, Chair




Roger Hampton

SOUNDINGS Editor



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'd like to mention one of the benefits of our Aetna insurance plan – Silver Sneakers. Just recently our CD player refused to play my workouts. So, I went in search of workouts via the internet, and I remembered Silver Sneakers! I was totally awed by what I found.  Not only were there multiple videos for strength training, flexibility, and endurance that you can watch anytime, but also classes you can register for, even just one at a time. Of course, there are live classes in our Peoria area, but I prefer my home. Last Sunday night, for instance, I did 3 classes of 10 minutes each for strength, flexibility, and balance. I can revisit those same classes or try different ones. Classes are designed for seniors, so you won't be doing anything crazy with your body! There are men and women trainers to choose from with choices of multiple classes. You have no excuse—these classes are made to help us stay in our homes so we can live independently. I'm totally sold. Go to your Aetna page and you will see Silver Sneakers. Start getting healthier now!



Dixie Wheeler, PARTA President

UPCOMING MEETINGS



JUNE 3

KAY PRICE

STORYTELLER FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART



JULY & AUGUST – NO MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 9 (2ND MONDAY)

OCTOBER 7

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

PARTA MEMBERS DECEASED 9/1/2023 – 9/1/2024



NOVEMBER 4 | DECEMBER 2

Check PARTA website for updates: pa-rta.weebly.com

Sally Weber, Webmaster



The earth

laughs in flowers. ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

SOUNDINGS

PARTA LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 1, 2024

The PARTA meeting for April took place on April 1, 2024, at the Cater Inn with Dixie Wheeler, President, leading the meeting. There were 72 members present, and no new members were added. During the meeting, President Wheeler announced the treasurer's report was available on the tables for everyone to access. Greeters Mary Nelson and Carol Rogers were thanked for their service. Jeff Vallosio led the pledge and invocation.

Lee Ann Meinhold introduced Mike Rucker, a guest speaker renowned for his work on the history of bicycles and children's books.



During the presentation, Mike shared fascinating details about the Duryea and its owners' connection to Peoria and Central Illinois. Interestingly, Mike himself has driven a Duryea in the past. If you want to see a replica of the Duryea, you can find one at the Riverfront Museum.

BUSINESS MEETING

Jane Glover announced that the Peoria Kiwanis organization will present a Teacher of the Year Award to outstanding teachers from both high schools and middle schools. Jane distributed copies of the list of awardees and urged members who knew the recipients to attend the award ceremonies. The award ceremonies will be held on April 10th for the high school awardees and April 24th for the middle school awardees. If you need any further details regarding the award ceremonies, please get in touch with Jane Glover.

Morton Civic Chorus will perform at the Bertha Frank Fine Arts Center in Morton from May 23-26. Tickets will be available for purchase from Denise Adams in May.



AUDIT REPORT—Dave Barnwell reported that PARTA's financial records are in good order, thanks to the efficient management of our treasurer, Jeff Vallosio. Trent Strong from Legacy Investment Services also provides outstanding care for our investments.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—During the legislative report delivered by Dixie Wheeler, it was stated that Governor Pritzler plans to fund the pension fund

fully. The legislative advocate for IRTA, Andrew Bodewes, provided information regarding changes in the Tier 2 category for teachers, which will take place in 2027. Retirees in this category can expect to see reductions in salaries. There will also be reviews of salaries, COLA, and retirement age.

Currently, the retirement age is 67. During the meeting, concerns about Aetna Insurance and whether people were experiencing problems were raised.



It was also noted that Mayo Clinic is not currently accepting any Advantage Plans.

MEMBERSHIP—Roger Hampton expressed his appreciation for Dixie Wheeler serving as the chair of the IRTA Legislative Committee and Deloris Turner as the Area 4 Representative. He mentioned that both individuals will update the members with information gathered from various meetings.

Roger shared some information with the members regarding pending retirees from Peoria County. He explained how the members could encourage these retirees to become members of PARTA. Roger suggested that the members contact anyone on the list who taught in the same district or school or lives in the same community. The email addresses on the printout are school emails, so it is recommended that members reach out to them before the school year ends.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

IRTA NEWS—TRS's mission, vision, and core values are on the back page of the *Soundings*.

Additionally, TRS is launching a new webinar series covering questions that members frequently ask. Members will receive an email regarding the webinar, and if they miss it, all webinars will be posted on the TRS website for their convenience. Jeff Vallosio mentioned that the treasurer's report includes a \$250 deposit from IRTA. Thanks go to President Wheeler for pursuing the paperwork for PARTA to be designated as a Unit of Distinction, which resulted in the organization receiving \$250. President Wheeler asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Roger Hampton made the motion, which was seconded by Peggy Shane.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

DELORIS TURNER, RECORDING SECRETARY



If you don't like me, you should get tested! One of the symptoms of COVID is: NO TASTE!

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MAY 2024 TREASURER'S REPORT SUMMARY

Investment Balance \$ 56,766.93
 Savings Balance 4,072.17
 Checking Balance 2,022.60
 Working Cash (cash boxes) 100.00

Post Office Bulk Mail Fund \$ 340.86
 Post Office Returned Mail Fund 53.37

GRAND TOTAL \$ 63,355.93

Jeff Vallosio, PARTA Treasurer

**AN ASTONISHING
FACT**

*THERE ARE NEARLY 30,000,000 FORGOTTEN 401K ACCOUNTS
HOLDING A STAGGERING \$1.65 TRILLION IN ASSETS.*

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGE TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Cornelius	Peggy	5750 Balcones DR	Austin TX	78731-4269	New Address
Vallosio	Jeff	309.219.4061	Correction (incorrectly printed last month)		

**PARTA
MEMBERS**

Please keep PARTA informed of your current contact information.

Send updated information to Roger Hampton: roger.hampton11138@gmail.com

ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (IRTAPAC)



- Organized to protect, preserve, and improve benefits for individuals receiving a pension from the Illinois Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).
- Exists to elect, educate, and build rapport with legislators and officials who understand the important role pensions and healthcare benefits are to our retired public state educators.
- Funds are used to support candidates for political office who support Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) members and the issues important to you.
- In addition, funds are used to enhance political awareness of IRTA members and increase their contacts with elected officials and candidates.



YOUR VOICE IS KEY TO BETTER RETIREMENT PROTECTION!

Supporting IRTAPAC helps ensure retired educators have a strong voice when decisions are made that impact the promised pension and healthcare benefits.

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE:

➔ Visit www.irtaonline.org ➔ Click on "PAC" and choose the DONATE option.

• If you are a TRS annuitant, you can fill out the online form that allows TRS to **DONATE \$1 EACH MONTH FROM YOUR MONTHLY PENSION CHECK.**

• You can also mail a check payable to **IRTAPAC**

828 S 2nd ST 4th FL, Springfield, IL 62704

Your continued support of IRTAPAC ensures that IRTA has the resources to continue fighting for you. By working alongside our members, and speaking with one collective voice, the IRTA will continue to maintain its presence as a powerful advocate on behalf of the Illinois retired teacher community.


Jeff Vallosio is an IRTAPAC committee member. THANKS JEFF!

Always make sure someone in the relationship has good credit.

That's why it's called **SIGNIFICANT** other. **SIGN-IF-I-CAN'T**

SOUNDINGS

IMPORTANT PARTA LUNCHEON INFORMATION

CANCELLATIONS If there is a need to cancel your PARTA lunch reservation, please call 309.697.3385 by the Thursday before the Monday luncheon. **RESERVATIONS** are submitted to Barrack's Cater Inn days ahead of the luncheon. 

PAYMENT FOR MISSED LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS If you miss a luncheon for which you made a reservation, for whatever reason, please send a check to the chairperson by mail. It is too confusing to take luncheon money and cash handed in at the same time for missing luncheon meals. 

CORRECT CONTACT INFORMATION All PARTA members, please make sure your address and phone number are current. It is too difficult to try and reach people if their phone number has changed or is no longer in service. 

NEW LUNCHEON ATTENDEES Please encourage any retired teacher you may know to attend one of our PARTA luncheons. If a retired teacher is new to PARTA, their first meal is free. If you have invited a new person to PARTA please make sure Patti Monks is aware of this. PARTA is always looking for new members.

PATTI MONKS, PARTA CALLING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

FORMER RETIRED EDUCATORS

FOUGHT FOR THE BENEFITS WE RECEIVE

NOW IT IS OUR TIME AND OUR OBLIGATION

TO FIGHT FOR THE BENEFITS OF TIER II TEACHERS



HB 4873 is one of many nearly identical bills, including HB 3519, HB 3520, HB 4098, HB 4099, and HB 4873, that would make benefit increases for Tier II participants. This is being driven both by the recruitment and retention issues faced by schools, as well as **Tier II's non-compliance with federal social security requirements**. IRTA has been engaged with ongoing meetings and hearings about achieving relief for Tier II members. The final legislation will likely not be ready for passage until November 2024.

IRTA MEMBERSHIP IS VITAL

Currently, the projected deficit for the state's FY 2025 operating budget is \$891 million. In response to the state's ongoing dire fiscal outlook, the Illinois General Assembly will continue looking for avenues to reduce expenditures, which may include pursuing legislation aimed at reducing expenditures to our pension funds. This is why it is critical that retired educators remain politically engaged. Without a strong collective voice, your interests may not be adequately represented. IRTA must remain vigilant and prepared to fight against legislation that would jeopardize our pension and healthcare benefits.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO IRTAPAC ARE IMPORTANT!

FYI: *If you see me out past 10 pm, just know that I've had an afternoon nap for at least 2 hours.*

SOUNDINGS

NEXT AMBA WEBINAR

PREPARING FOR SUMMER - DISCOUNTS AND BENEFITS

WHERE and HOW to find Thousands of Discounts Via Passport

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024 AT 10:00 A.M.

A GREAT opportunity to explore this great online option for savings.

NEXT IRTA PRESENTATION VIA ZOOM

IRTA MONTHLY BRIEF – UPDATES & MORE

WITH JESSICA HOSELTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY

& CONGRESSMAN DARIN LAHOOD

Representing the constituents of the 16th Congressional District of Illinois

THURSDAY, MAY 23 AT 2:00 P.M.

1439629723

THE IRTA FOUNDATION

In 1985, after identifying a large number of former educators who were experiencing financial difficulties because of low pensions and rising inflation, the

Illinois Retired Teachers Association established the Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation, Inc. The initial purpose of the Foundation was to build an endowment to provide assistance to retired educators.

Since that time, the IRTA Foundation has provided:

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**TO RETIRED EDUCATORS
FOR LIVING EXPENSES**

SCHOLARSHIPS

**TO ASPIRING
TEACHERS**

GRANTS

**TO EDUCATORS
FOR STUDENT PROJECTS**

FOUNDATION

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION GRANTS FOR TEACHERS



The Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation is making \$42,000 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. Please download, complete, and submit the application online by visiting www.irtaonline.org – under the IRTA Foundation section.

All proposals must be submitted by June 1, 2024. A special committee will select the recipients of the grant money over the summer. Grants will be awarded in the fall.

A man who correctly guesses a woman's age may be smart, but he's not very bright! ~ Lucille Ball



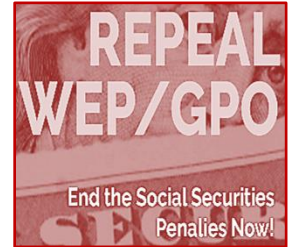
Tact is the ability to describe others as they see themselves. ~ Abraham Lincoln

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WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION and GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET

On Tuesday, April 16th, the U.S. House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee heard testimony from Social Security experts about the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). As IRTA members are aware, these policies unfairly harm retired educators, police officers, firefighters, and other public servants. The Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82, and S. 597, seeks a full repeal of WEP and GPO.

Unfortunately, the committee hearing served as a subject-matter hearing only and did not result in a committee vote. It is understood that this is frustrating, and is not the desired outcome. However, IRTA will continue engagement with elected officials in Congress and encourages IRTA members to remain vigilant in expressing support for a full repeal of WEP and GPO.



INSPIRING SUCCESS STORY

Your success and happiness lie in you. ~ Helen Keller

This quote says a lot about the way we live our life. Everyone looks towards the external sources for success without knowing the key to success is in themselves. It is really important to know that success takes years of hard work and failure. Focusing on positivity certainly is important but so is looking at the things that made that happen.

Rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life. ~ J.K. Rowling



J.K. Rowling's life story is one of the most notable inspiring success stories ever. Rowling, one of the most renowned authors of our time, is responsible for the creation of Harry Potter – an iconic and inspiring fictional character. Everyone knows the fantastic world of Harry Potter today but not everyone knows about the person who brought that world to life. After the death of her mother, she moved to Portugal to teach English. She married a man there and had a daughter with him. However, after some time they parted ways and filed for a divorce. This was a turning point in her life as she moved to a different city with her daughter and three chapters of Harry Potter that she had written before. Rowling suffered depression and anxiety during that time. After about two years she finally completed Harry Potter, which was rejected by 12 publicists. Eventually, the book was accepted and published – the rest is history. Her story taught her that no matter what life throws at us, the solution is always inside us. Source: leverageedu.com/blog/inspiring-success-stories/

Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties. ~ Helen Keller



I wish I had a twin so I could know what I'd look like without plastic surgery. I've had so much plastic surgery that when I die, they will donate my body to *Tupperware*. ~Joan Rivers



SOUNDINGS

EXTRAS THAT ARE PART OF TRAIL INSURANCE

TRANSPORTATION TO APPOINTMENTS With Aetna MAPD PPO, you get 24 one-way trips to your doctor, with unlimited mileage.

MEAL HOME DELIVERY Get 28 delicious and nutritious meals delivered to your home after your hospital stay.



FAST-GROWING SCAMS

• **CHECK COOKING:** *Check Cooking* involves fraudsters taking photos of stolen checks and using digital tools to alter information such as the name and the amount.

• **VOICE PRINT SCAMS:** Scammers are now recording voices and using Artificial Intelligence to copy the cadence of your voice to get into your personal accounts. So, be careful about answering the phone if you don't know the number – it could be a Voice Print Scam.

• **DELAYED ACTION SWEEPSTAKES:** Sweepstakes scammers have recently come up with a new variation on an old scam. Instead of trying to get you to pay taxes or other fees in advance to collect a nonexistent prize, scammers will ask for personal information so that they can validate you and set up the payout. Account withdrawals start small, but increase as they use your account to obtain credit cards and lines of credit in your name to siphon off money, giving them a potentially bigger payday down the road.

• **CELEBRITY IMPERSONATION:** Fake celebrity profiles offer fans personal connection, VIP access, investment opportunities, or the chance to support favorite charities. These criminals attempt to create a bond through messaging or even a phone call from their “rep.” With the power of AI, these scams can move from messaging to deepfake videos.

• **MULTISTAGE GRANDPARENT SCAMS:** This is a new, more sophisticated version of the old grandparent scam. Now, scammers set up call centers staffed with young people who pose as a grandchild, or they use voice cloning and AI which allows scammers to use a clip of a loved one's voice to impersonate them. The grandchild usually states that they are jailed for various reasons. Scammers provide a case number and instruct the target to call their defense attorney or the local prosecutor – fraudulent numbers provided.

• **PARIS OLYMPIC SCAMS:** With every event of the magnitude of the Olympics, there's a predictable surge in scams related to ticket sales, merchandise, and travel packages.

INFORMATION ON HOW TO STAY SAFE, ONLINE AT:

<https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2023/top-scammer-list.html>

A scammer called my Grandpa and said that they had all his passwords. Grandpa got a pen and paper and said, “Thank God for that! What are they?”



While visiting my granddaughter I asked if I could borrow a newspaper.

She informed me that this is the 21st century and that

“We don't waste money on newspapers”.

“Here, use my iPad”, she said.

I can tell you this! That fly never knew what hit him!!!



SOUNDINGS

SPOTLIGHT ON IRTA/AMBA MEMBER BENEFITS

TRAVELING THIS SUMMER?

ENJOY UP TO 20% OFF AT WYNDHAM HOTELS AND RESORTS



As a *Passport* member (free for IRTA members), you can enjoy up to 20% off Best Available Rates.

24 BRANDS | 95 COUNTRIES | 9,000+ HOTELS

With discounts and exclusive limited-time offers through IRTA and AMBA, *PASSPORT* provides you with great travel deals.

There are also hundreds of thousands of other travel discounts available through:

PASSPORT TRAVEL SERVICES – powered by HOTEL PLANNER.

Save up to 65% worldwide on all your lodging and travel needs: ALL MAJOR BRANDS, PLUS AIR, CAR RENTAL, and other travel services. **GUARANTEED BEST RATES WORLDWIDE**

Check the *PASSPORT* website or app often, as they are always adding exciting new deals.

See “Members Only” section of the IRTA website: irtaonline.org

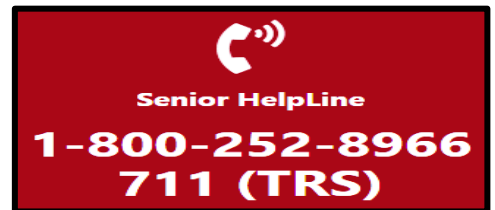


Teachers always tell us to follow our dreams...
but, then they don't let us sleep in class?!?!?!?



ILLINOIS SENIOR HELPLINE – HERE TO . . .

- H**elp you locate services in your community,
- E**valuate your needs and answer questions,
- L**ink you to local care coordination services, and
- P**rovide information, assistance, and literature.



In addition to local information and assistance sites, the Senior HelpLine provides information on programs and services. It links persons 60 and older and their caregivers to local services. Professional staff briefly assess needs, send literature, and write referrals for care coordination services, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, legal services, transportation, employment, and nutrition services. Senior HelpLine staff also provide abuse intake and accept appeals and service inquiries from the Community Care Program clients.

> I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap. ~ Bob Hope

> I enjoy waking up and not having to go to work. So I do it three or four times a day. ~ Gene Perret



*MY FACE IN THE MIRROR ISN'T WRINKLED OR DRAWN.
MY HOUSE ISN'T DIRTY AND THE COBWEBS ARE GONE.
MY GARDEN LOOKS LOVELY AND SO DOES MY LAWN.
I THINK I MIGHT NEVER PUT MY GLASSES BACK ON!*

