

PARTA

SOUNDINGS



NOVEMBER 2017

Peoria Area Retired Teachers' Association

MEETING

Barracks Cater Inn
November 6
11:30 AM
Luncheon: \$12.00

Greeters

-  Deloris Turner
-  Rhonda Kokos

Pledge

-  Susan Leighty

Invocation

-  Susan Leighty

Luncheon

THANKSGIVING FEAST

- Turkey / Dressing
- Potatoes & Gravy
- Vegetable
- Assorted Salads
- Cranberry Sauce / Roll
- Pumpkin Pie

Meeting

Chair:
Abby Humbles
PARTA President



Soundings Editor
Roger Hampton

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear PARTA Members,

Greetings to you all. Thank you to those who commented on last month's memorial service. We had such positive responses and hope to continue this yearly. Thank you Frances Farraher and Roger Hampton for doing such a nice job remembering our fellow PARTA members.

We also were pleased with the Bring and Buy sale. Over \$500 was raised for the scholarship fund! Great idea Ann Winget! Thank you to all who helped or participated.

I look forward to seeing you at our November meeting. Fall season is upon us. Please have a safe Halloween!

Abby Humbles, PARTA President

**PARTA's ICC
Scholarship
Fund**

PARTA PROGRAMS

NOVEMBER 6, 2017

SAIDO Learning: *A promising, non-drug Cognitive Therapy Program for dementia that has shown to slow symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.*



PRESENTERS: Denise Durst & Allison Marlow



DECEMBER 4, 2017

A Fun Holiday Program

PRESENTERS:

Peoria Area Accordion Club
Judy Ernst, President

BRING YOUR SPOUSE OR A FRIEND

Updates online at: pa-rta.weebly.com
Sally Weber, Webmaster

Veterans Day: November 11

A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



SOUNDINGS

General Luncheon Meeting Minutes


October 2, 2017

President Abby Humbles welcomed everyone to the meeting. She thanked today's greeters, Sally Weber and Gail Snowden. Abby welcomed the new retirees. Dave Barnwell gave the Invocation and Pledge. Attendance today was 95. Abby introduced Frances Farragher to honor our departed members. Frances read the names, Abby lit a candle for each, and people were invited to make short remarks of remembrance. The family members who attended were invited to take the candle.

After the luncheon, Abby called the business meeting to order.

- Good comments were heard about the memorial service; we plan to have one every year.
- The minutes are in the *Soundings* and were approved as written.
- Copies of the Treasurer's Report were on the tables and summarized in the *Soundings*. The report will be filed for audit. Instead of a program, we had a social time to browse and buy the "treasures" brought by members to share. The donations of \$521.50 will go to the Scholarship Fund. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy Simpson, Secretary

REPORT 	OCTOBER 2017 TOTAL PARTA FINANCES: \$49,105.48			Jeff Vallosio, Treasurer
	Investment Balance	\$39,149.85	Working Cash (cash boxes)	\$100.00
	Savings Balance	\$6,944.20	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund	\$244.64
	Checking Balance	\$2,605.27	Post Office Returned Mail Fund	\$61.52



Attorney General Lisa Madigan created the first-ever Illinois Identity Theft Hotline. The hotline provides Illinoisans who have been victimized by identity theft with one-on-one assistance as they work to report the crime to local law enforcement and financial institutions, repair their credit, and prevent future problems.

If you have been the victim of identity theft or believe your personal or financial information may have been compromised, please call the toll-free Identity Theft Hotline at: 1-866-999-5630. In addition, there are documents that may help answer your questions concerning identity theft and the recovery process online at: www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/consumers/hotline.html

DEADLINE FOR RETIRED TEACHERS TO REINSTATE THEIR LICENSE WITHOUT PENALTY

Through December 31, 2017, any educator who has retired, and whose license has lapsed for failure to renew, may reinstate that license without penalty by providing proof of retirement from a state retirement system to the Regional Office of Education.

Individuals must submit a copy of a letter from a state retirement system on official agency letterhead confirming the educator's retirement. This verification letter should be sent to the ROE. They will forward to ISBE and will also provide you with additional information on how to reinstate.

This verification letter will be used in lieu of a \$500 penalty fee or 9 semester hours of college coursework. The educator will not need to input any owed professional development and will not need to pay any back or forward registration fees to maintain the registration.

REINSTATE

For more information, please contact ROE #48 at 309.672.6906 by December 31st!
Beth Crider-Derry, Peoria Regional Superintendent

We could certainly slow the aging process down if it had to work its way through Congress. ~ Will Rogers

SOUNDINGS

BIG PENSIONS JUST A TINY PART OF BIG PENSION MESS

Better Government Association (BGA) analysis of new data underscores how chronically bad government policy, not fat pensions, lie at the heart of soaring pension debt now hobbling the state's and Chicago's efforts to pay for schools and other critical services.



A BGA analysis of 2017 data from major pension funds for state and municipal employees vividly illustrates the disconnect between high-rolling pensions, legally protected but irksome as they may be, and the deep financial plight experienced by many of those funds. Simply put, the state's 17 major pension funds are slated to pay out more than \$17.3 billion in benefits to some 483,000 retirees and survivors this year, totals that underscore the broad reach of pension checks for former public employees. Those payments do not come directly from tax money, though there is an indirect correlation that can render the public confused and budget makers dyspeptic.

The financial perils faced by Illinois pension funds are both real and ripe for misunderstanding and political demagoguery. The aim with any public pension fund is to make it financially self-sustaining so that it can pay obligations to pensioners well into the future without stressing government budgets. In a perfect world, a pension fund would thrive on earnings from investment of its assets, as well as regular payments from workers and government employers to cover only the cost of retirement benefits as they are earned. That decidedly has not been the case with many of the largest pension funds in Illinois, where government officials have spent decades skimping on money they owed to cover the employer share of retirement benefits for public workers. The result is those public bodies have rung up enormous interest debt on woefully past due pension bills and are now forced to play catch-up, in the process squeezing resources available for schools, public safety and other crucial functions of government.



The commission attributed the largest share of that debt growth, \$44.6 billion, to the shortfall in employer pension contributions from the state. Meanwhile, employee salary and benefit increases collectively grew the debt by \$1.7 billion, or just 1.3%, the commission reported.

In fiscal 2016 alone, the state obligation to TRS and the other four employee pension funds it maintained was \$6.8 billion, according to Ralph Martire, executive director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability. But Martire said only \$1.6 billion of that amount, less than 24%, was needed to cover the so-called normal cost of pensions, benefits actually earned by employees in 2016. The other \$5.2 billion amounted to late payment charges.



Complete article at: www.bettergov.org/news/big-pensions-just-tiny-part-of-big-pension-mess

DRESS CODE

Two elderly ladies were discussing the upcoming dance at the Botley Grange Country Club. "We're supposed to wear something that matches our husband's hair, so I'm wearing black," announced Mrs. Hickling. "Oh dear," uttered Mrs. Packer, "I'd better not go in that case."



FITNESS TIP FOR RETIREES

The trouble with jogging is that by the time you realize you're not in shape for it, it's too far to walk back.

GRANDPA'S AGE

When my grandson asked me how old I was, I teasingly replied, "I'm not sure." "Look in your underwear, Grandpa," he advised. "Mine says I'm 4 to 6."

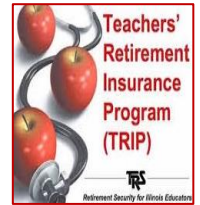
HOW TO PLAY GOLF

"What is your handicap these days?" one retiree asked another. "I'm a scratch golfer. I write down all my good scores and scratch out all my bad ones."

SOUNDINGS

RETIRED TEACHERS ALMOST LOST TRIP CONTINUING APPROPRIATION FUNDING

Looking back over this year, it is important to acknowledge the impact Senate Bill 42 (SB42) could have had on our teacher retiree health insurance benefit. SB42 is the implementation arm of the state budget. This piece of legislation provides the spending authority to the comptroller to spend the funds allocated in the budget.



The original version of the bill would have taken out just a few words in the state statute, but these words would have ended the continuing appropriation the Teachers Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP) enjoys. The continuing appropriation sets out under the law that regardless of whether TRIP funding is listed as a line item in the budget or not, the program will still continue to be funded.



Through the use of the voterVOICE system, IRTA members were able to reach their Senators and Representatives to tell them that taking this continuing appropriation out of statute was unacceptable. Believe it or not, they listened. The final version of the bill ensured these funding streams remained in place.



If you are an IRTA member

who responded quickly to the VoterVoice Urgent Request, we thank you for your effort in saving TRIP continuing appropriation funding. Keep being involved!

If you are NOT an IRTA member

you should thank an IRTA member for acting on your behalf. Then, you should immediately plan to join IRTA to do your part in helping to defend your pension benefits.

BILLIONS IN ILLINOIS BILLS NOT SENT FOR PAYMENT

Illinois is chasing a moving target as it tries to dig out of the nation's worst budget crisis, and a review obtained by The Associated Press shows \$7.5 billion worth of unpaid bills – as much as half the total – hadn't been sent to the official who writes the checks by the end of June.

Although many of those IOUs have since been paid, a similar amount in unprocessed bills has replaced them in the last three months, Comptroller Susana Mendoza's office said Monday. That's in addition to \$9 billion worth of checks that are at the office but being delayed because the state lacks the money to pay them.

The age of bills is important because many that are 90 days or older face a 1 percent-per-month late-payment fee; about \$5.5 billion of the current \$15.9 billion backlog is subject to the penalty. Mendoza estimates the state will ultimately pay \$900 million in late-payment fees on the existing pile of debt.

Source: www.sj-r.com/news/20171010/billions-in-illinois-bills-not-sent-for-payment

If you can't remember my name, just say "Chocolate" and I'll turn around.

SOUNDINGS

TRS FOLLOWS NEW LAW AND RELUCTANTLY LOWERS THE STATE'S FY2018 CONTRIBUTION BY \$531 MILLION



The Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) Board of Trustees reduced the State of Illinois' annual funding contribution to the System for FY2018 by \$530.8 million; reluctantly adhering to a new law that changes the statutory pension funding formula. The revised state contribution for TRS is now \$4.034 billion. The previous FY 2018 contribution was \$4.564 billion. "The changes enacted this year in the pension funding formula move TRS further away from financial stability and continue to kick the can down the road. Period," said Dick Ingram, executive director of TRS. "Cutting the state's contribution only increases our concern that TRS will eventually become insolvent." Ingram added that the System's \$71 billion unfunded liability – one of the largest in the country – is a direct result of decades of underfunding by state government. In FY 2018, the state's contribution will fall \$2.839 billion short of what the System's actuaries say is "full funding" for the year, or \$6.873 billion. "For every \$1.00 that the state cuts from the TRS contribution now, they will have to spend \$3.00 down the road to replace that revenue because of the interest costs," he said. "A \$530 million funding cut today just puts off the inevitable and will create a payment of \$1.6 billion in the future."

\$1 → \$3

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A new state law approved in July by the General Assembly changed the pension funding formula in two significant ways that reduce the state's allocation to the System:

- TRS must retroactively "smooth" the fiscal effect of any changes made in the TRS assumed rate of investment return over a period of five years. The "smoothing" applies to any assumption changes from 2012 on.
- Local school districts will pay more of the cost of a member's pension if that member's salary is equal to or greater than the governor's statutory salary of \$177,412. The district will be responsible for paying the actuarial cost of the benefits earned on the portion of the member's salary that exceeds \$177,412. Source: www.trsil.org/news-and-events/August_2017_Board_Meeting

IT IS JUST CONTINUING TO KICK THE CAN FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD



Kick the can down the road, a ubiquitous phrase in American politics over the last few years, is not a reference to the game of kick the can. It refers to the practice of kicking a can ahead of oneself while walking along a road. So, metaphorically, the phrase means *to defer conclusive action with a short-term solution*.

Source: grammarist.com/usage/kick-the-can-down-the-road/

1900

One Hundred Years Later

2017

A father waited for the doctor to tell him when the baby arrived.

Dad must wear a smock, know how to breathe, and make sure a new tape is in the video camera.

A father came home from work to find his wife and children at the supper table.

Dad comes home to a note: "Jimmy's at baseball, Cindy's at dance, I'm at the gym, Pizza in the fridge."

SOUNDINGS

RAUNER LOOKS TO WASHINGTON FOR THE POWER TO CHANGE YOUR PENSION



Governor Rauner has been telling groups at recent events that he is pushing Congress to change the law to supercede the state constitution and restructure Illinois' pension debt. He stated at a U.S. Changer of Commerce event: "We've got a bill now, we're working with Congress. (If) Congress passed a law, we're lobbying right now, allow states to restructure their pensions, supercede the restrictions that the special interest groups have put on the state. And I'm hoping to get it done with the tax overhaul that we're doing. If we can get this bill passed — transformative for Illinois government and taxpayers." Rauner said his administration lawyers are "talking to everybody in the federal government" about the idea. U.S. Representative Peter Roskam, the Ways & Means Tax Policy Chairman who is taking a lead role in the tax overhaul effort, said, "I've heard the concept discussed, I've not seen the language... There's some theory about the capacity of federal courts to get the jurisdiction to allow some level of bankruptcy. There is some discussion."



www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/politics/ct-met-bruce-rauner-washington-20171020-story.html
www.sj-r.com/opinion/20171024/our-view-pension-liabilities-are-state-not-federal-problem-to-address

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Carrescia	Susanne	9515 W Whittingham PT	Mapleton	IL	61547-9329	630.650.6030	New member
		sgcarrescia@gmail.com					
Carrescia	Robert	9515 W Whittingham PT	Mapleton	IL	61547-9329		New member
Hartman	Sandra	12069 S Valley RD	Princeville	IL	61559-9735	309.360.7563	New member
		gmahart@hotmail.com					
Ruff	Mary	6801 N Ruff LN	Peoria	IL	61614-2843	309.691.4552	New member
		meabruff@aol.com					
Wheeler	Dixie	1528 Harborway DR	Chillicothe	IL	61523-1930	309.258.0749	New member
		dwheel0709@gmail.com					
Zuckerman	Karen	903 W Moss AVE	Peoria	IL	61606-1842	309.231.7451	New member
		kzuckerm@comcast.net					



Deceased

Ruth Livingston (76) – October 9, 2017

Sandra Carruthers (77) – October 18, 2017

DATABASE MAINTAINED BY JOHN RATHBUN

1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN

The Peoria Public Library is proud to introduce *1,000 Books Before Kindergarten* as an ongoing program at all locations to foster a love of reading in children before they start kindergarten. This free program encourages and rewards your children for the books that are read to them. Stop by any Peoria Public Library location to sign up for the program and pick up a reading log, or track your progress using the app in iTunes and the Google Play Store. Complete directions on the program will be given to you at the time you sign up.



How come you never see a headline like, "Psychic Wins Lottery"?

SOUNDINGS

TIER III PLANNING

TRS has begun the complicated process of creating a new Tier III “hybrid” benefit structure for future members, in compliance with a new state law enacted in July by the General Assembly. Based on preliminary planning conducted over the last few months, TRS anticipates that the earliest date that Tier III may be implemented for members is July 1, 2019. The TRS Board will establish the final implementation date of the Tier III plan. The new benefit structure does not affect active Tier I members or retired members in any way. There are no changes to Tier I benefits, active member contributions, or health insurance coverage.



“HYBRID” RETIREMENT BENEFIT

The process of creating Tier III is complicated because TRS has never before administered a “hybrid” retirement plan that has two distinct and separate parts – a small life-long “defined benefit” (DB) pension and a “defined contribution” (DC) plan similar to a 403(b). Since its creation in 1939, TRS has administered only defined benefit pensions for its members. Successfully administering a hybrid plan will require extensive modifications within TRS that include new information technology systems, a new structure for member accounts, enhancements to existing TRS reporting systems, alterations to the structure of the TRS investment portfolio and enhanced communications efforts to members. Planning, building, testing and implementing all of these changes will take many months.

T I E R I I I D E T A I L S

- Once Tier III is implemented, all new TRS members automatically will be placed in Tier III, but they will have a one-time opportunity to switch to Tier II. After the activation date, all existing Tier II members will have the option of permanently joining Tier III.
- Members will make payroll contributions to their DB pensions that are based on the full cost of this part of the benefit, but no more than 6.2% of salary. The DB contribution rate for Tier III active members will be re-evaluated and changed annually, if necessary.
- Members will contribute a minimum of 4% of their pays to the DC portion of the plan.
- Normal retirement age is determined by Social Security rules, but it will be no earlier than age 67.
- The Tier III calculation for an initial pension is Service Years multiplied by Final Average Salary (FAS) multiplied by 1.25%. For comparison, the Tier I and Tier II initial pension calculation is Service Years multiplied by FAS multiplied by 2.2%.

- The FAS used in the initial pension calculation is the member’s average salary during the last 10 years of service. By comparison, the Tier I FAS is the highest four consecutive salaries out of the last 10 years of service and the Tier II FAS is the highest eight consecutive salaries out of the last 10 years of service.
- The automatic annual increase (AAI) is similar to the Tier II AAI – 1/2 of the previous year’s consumer price index, not compounded. The Tier I AAI is 3% annually, compounded.
- Local school districts, rather than the state, will bear the primary burden of making the “employer contributions” to both the DB and DC plans in Tier III. Beginning in 2021, school districts annually will pay 2.58% of their TRS member salaries to the System for the DB benefit and between 2% and 6% of each individual member’s pay to the System for the DC portion.



I put so much more effort into naming my Wi-Fi than naming my children.

SOUNDINGS

SPOTLIGHT ON AN IRTA INFORMATIVE BENEFIT

Vacations By Rail is the trusted authority on the most comprehensive provider of rail travel and tours. Travelers can choose from the largest selection of independent rail vacations, escorted rail tours, and luxury rail journeys to destinations in North America, Europe, and beyond. **Vacations By Rail** provides superior customer service giving travelers peace of mind about their vacation with access to 24/7 Customer Service before and during travel.



Information regarding this and other IRTA discounts are available online at: irtonline.org

FAMILY BUSINESS STORY FROM GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

With recent news about possible slave labor from North Korea processing fish for US markets, you might be interested to know about Sitka Salmon Shares, a business run out of Galesburg, Illinois. All fish is caught by family-owned boats and flown to Galesburg. It is then delivered to your door.

Their story began in 2011, when a Midwestern college professor and his two students traveled to Sitka, Alaska, for the summer. There, they engaged in conversations and deepened their understanding of the importance of protecting Southeast Alaska's wild salmon populations and the pristine environment that supports one of the world's last great salmon reserves. They returned to the Midwest with boxes of line-caught, wild Alaskan salmon, harvested by their fisher friends in Sitka. To say the fish was well-received would be an understatement. People raved about the salmon's taste and were impressed by its traceability. They quickly made the connection between their consumption and the impact this small act could have on conservation efforts and the health of Alaska's sustainable fisheries. Perhaps, the group thought, they were on to something.



While in Alaska, this band of merry Midwesterners met Marsh. Marsh was the self-styled foodie and passionate gourmand of Sitka's hook-and-line salmon fleet. A local legend on the Sitka dinner party circuit, Marsh's favorite pastime included sourcing ingredients from the wilds of Southeast Alaska and elevating them with techniques learned from stints in professional kitchens. As you might suspect, Marsh's quest for perfect food spilled into his work as a commercial fisherman. He obsessively handled his fish every step of the way to guarantee that eaters on the other end of his line enjoyed the perfection he sought in his own kitchen—including his family down in the proud town of Green Bay, Wisconsin. With a lot of passion and even more luck, Sitka Salmon Shares was born.

Ann Winget's Product Testimonial: "I have really loved my share!"

Recipes and purchasing information can be found with the rest of the story at: sitkasalmonshares.com

Real Courtroom Q&A

Q: All your responses must be oral, OK?
What school did you go to? **A: Oral.**

Q: The youngest son, the twenty-year old, how old is he? **A: Um, 20!**

Q: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?
A: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

Q: So, the date of conception of the baby was August 8? **A: Yes.**

Q: And what were you doing at that time? **A: Uh...**

