

# PARTA

# SOUNDINGS

**NOVEMBER 2023**

**Peoria Area Retired Teachers' Association**

**ROGER HAMPTON**  
SOUNDINGS EDITOR

## MEETING

**BARRACKS CATER INN**  
11:30 AM - NOVEMBER 6

## GREETERS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PLEDGE

### & INVOCATION

**JACKIE GILLES**

## LUNCHEON

**LUNCHEON: \$14.00**

**TRADITIONAL  
THANKSGIVING  
BUFFET**

*Turkey, Dressing,  
and all the "Fixin's"*

## PROGRAM

**GREATER PEORIA  
HONOR FLIGHT**

**GENE WALLACE**  
**ALINE WALLACE**  
**BOB REED**



*Greater Peoria  
Honor Flight  
recognizes  
the sacrifices  
made by our*

*military every day to  
ensure our freedom.*

[greaterpeoriahonorflight.org](http://greaterpeoriahonorflight.org)

## BUSINESS MEETING

**DIXIE WHEELER**  
*PARTA President*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello, PARTA members and friends, "CALM DOWN!" our convention speaker, Tom Morris, told us.

Professor Morris, a long-time teacher at Notre Dame, had one of the most popular classes with one eighth of the student body in attendance each semester.

Tom is a philosopher who brought us wisdom from the ages and how we should look at CHANGE. He told us three concepts to keep in mind during our lifetime: Use Self Control, Value the Right Things, and Imagine Life Positively.

Let me share one of his examples—the CALM DOWN outlook. Rather than rushing to judgement, think about the situation like looking through a telescope. If you use the large end, the problem always looks bigger. Try looking at the situation using the small end. How different things look! How about this, the *Art of Positive Action*. Professor Morris says we need self-knowledge so we can act positively. We need to govern our attitudes, look for opportunities to grow and not be complacent, and take the initiative. When change is unexpected my first thought, is "Oh, no!" It should be, "Okay, this is all right." Then take positive action.

I really enjoyed the IRTA convention. One of the special moments for me was our eight delegates sitting around the lunch table at the end

of the convention and just talking. It was special because the moment was just us—PARTA members enjoying each other!

**Dixie Wheeler, PARTA President**



## NEXT PARTA PROGRAM

**DECEMBER 4**

**MUSIC OF THE SEASON**  
**DENISE ADAMS, ORGANIZER**



Updates & 2024 Programs listed online at: [pa-rta.weebly.com](http://pa-rta.weebly.com)  
Sally Weber, Webmaster

# SOUNDINGS

## GENERAL LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

**OCTOBER 2, 2023**

The PARTA meeting for October took place at the Barracks Cater Inn on October 2, 2023. PARTA President, Dixie Wheeler, presided over the meeting, at which sixty-eight members attended. There were no new members or guests present.

President Wheeler thanked the meeting greeters, Chris Stevens and Jo Trompeter. Dave Barnwell led the Pledge and Invocation. President Wheeler reminded the members the treasurer's report was on their tables, and there was a book table and a battery recycling box in back of the room.

 Trent Young, Senior Partner for Legacy Investment Services, could not attend the October meeting as scheduled. Trent was expected to speak on PARTA's investments.

Jeannie Blane and President Wheeler coordinated the yearly Celebration of Life Program. Members made endearing comments about the deceased members displayed in the presentation. President Wheeler commented on the importance of honoring our members who have passed on.



### BUSINESS MEETING:

**PROGRAMS** - Jeannie Blaine announced that the November program will be the Greater Peoria Honor Flight. The next Honor Flight was scheduled for October 10, 2023. She encouraged members to send cards to the Peoria Honor Flight Program.

**IRTA CONVENTION** - The IRTA Convention is scheduled for October 16 and 17. Attendees at the convention were Deloris Turner, Valda Shipp, Pat Hampton, Dixie Wheeler, Peggy Shane, John Rathbun, Roger Hampton, and Kathy Simpson.

President Wheeler asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was moved by Peggy Shane to adjourn and seconded by Mike Olson.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED, DELORIS TURNER, SECRETARY**

REPORT	November 2023		TOTAL PARTA FINANCES: \$59,890.40	
	Investment Balance	\$ 53,629.46	Working Cash (cash boxes)	\$ 100.00
	Savings Balance	4,052.80	Post Office Bulk Mail Fund	155.85
	Checking Balance	1,890.19	Post Office Returned Mail Fund	62.10
<b>JEFF VALLOSIO, PARTA TREASURER</b>				

## PARTA MEETINGS / PROGRAMS for 2024

NO MEETINGS: JANUARY, JULY, & AUGUST

**FEBRUARY 5** Dr. Bernice Gordan-Young, *Peoria City Council At-Large Member*

**MARCH 4** Elizabeth Crider, *Regional Superintendent of Schools*

**APRIL 1** Mike Rucker, *"History of Bicycles" and his children's books*

**MAY 6** Roberta English, *CEO of Wildlife Prairie Park*

**JUNE 3** Kay Price, *Storyteller for the Young at Heart*



SEPTEMBER 9 | OCTOBER 7 | NOVEMBER 4 | DECEMBER 2

*I'm not sure if we get wiser as we get older or if we just run out of stupid things to do!*

# SOUNDINGS

## KATHY SIMPSON, PARTA Unit Honoree



### IRTA BIENNIAL CONVENTION

Crowne Plaza Hotel  
Springfield, IL

October 20, 2023

Certificate and Gift  
*presented by*

**JIM BACHMAN**  
IRTA Executive Director

## CONGRATULATIONS PARTA UNIT OF DISTINCTION

PARTA was recognized at the IRTA Biennial Convention as being both a 2021 and a 2022 IRTA “Unit of Distinction.”

The “Unit of Distinction” Program is a program designed to help guide and direct local unit leaders, as well as acknowledge IRTA units that are the best in the state. Only 25% of the units received this award in 2022.

### TIPS FOR SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

- Keep Your Regular Routine
- Think Moderation
- Be Realistic
- Stay Connected
- Throw Guilt Out the Window
- Don't Be Alone If You Don't Want to Be
- Focus On Today, Not Yesterday
- Just Say No
- Ask for Help
- Be Good to Yourself

[psychologytoday.com/](http://psychologytoday.com/)

### A FEW UPCOMING CELEBRATIONS

- Veterans Day (November 10)
- Sadie Hawkins Day (November 13)
- Equal Opportunity Day (November 19)
- Thanksgiving (November 23)
- St. Nicholas Day (December 6)
- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (December 7)
- Hanukkah (December 18-26)
- Christmas (December 25)
- Boxing Day (December 26)
- Kwanzaa (December 26 – January 1)
- New Years Day (January 1)



There's a strange voice in my head saying: "Vacuum the floor! Clean the house!"  
Luckily, my mom always told me to never listen to strangers.



### **RECOMMENDED PERMANENT INCREASE TO DRIVING TEST AGE REQUIREMENT**

The Illinois Secretary of State's office recommended a pandemic-driven state law that raised the minimum age for required behind-the-wheel driving tests for license renewals from 75 to 79 be made permanent. The law raising the age that was passed in 2021 expired October 1, 2023. A study compiled by the Secretary of State's office showed the rate of traffic crashes in Illinois in 2022 involving motorists aged 75 and older was nearly identical to the year before, indicating there is no reason for the state to return to the minimum age of 75 for mandatory road testing.



- Get your “fat” pants ready! Gobble ‘til you Wobble!
- What's the best thing to put into a pumpkin pie? *Your teeth.*
- Grandma was overheard saying: “Alexa, stuff the turkey.”



# SOUNDINGS

**LUNCHEON** Please make sure your LUNCHEON RESERVATION is CONFIRMED with your caller, or with Patti Monks, by THURSDAY @ NOON before the Monday luncheon meeting. Reservations cannot be accepted after the Thursday date due to the fact the reservations have already been called into Barricks Cater Inn. Barricks prepares enough food for the set number of luncheon reservations that have been previously called in.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION IN THIS MATTER.

**VOLUNTEERS** Our volunteers play a big part in our fantastic organization. These volunteers arrive way ahead of all our members. They sit at the back table and are either cashiers or checking in the members who have made a luncheon reservation. Thank you to the following people who go above and beyond for our organization:



**CASHIERS**

**RESERVATION CHECKERS**

**PATTI MONKS | MIKE OLSON**

**MARY LOU BOETTGER | KATHY SIMPSON**

Also, a big **THANK YOU** to **MIKE OLSON** for collecting all the tickets for the luncheon. This is a great help when finalizing the count and verifying the money owed to Barricks Cater Inn each month.

**PATTI MONKS, PARTA CALLER CHAIR**



## THIRD STRAIGHT YEAR TRS FINANCES IMPROVED

For the third straight year, the long-term funded ratio of Teachers' Retirement System has improved, reaching 44.8% at the end of fiscal year 2023. That is a positive increase of 1% over the previous year's funded status of 43.8%.

The TRS Board of Trustees gave preliminary approval to a \$6.20 billion state government contribution for the System in fiscal year 2025. That is a 2.7% increase over the state's \$6.04 billion contribution for the current fiscal year. "We have made significant progress over the past four years to improve our funded ratio," said Stan Rupnik, executive director and chief investment officer of TRS. "In each of the past three years, the Governor and Illinois General Assembly have made contributions to the System in excess of the statutory minimum funding. Their commitment to funding, combined with our positive, long-term investment returns, has led to this increase." The total TRS unfunded actuarial liability at the end of fiscal year 2023 was \$81.9 billion; a 1.5% increase over the \$80.6 billion unfunded liability recorded in fiscal year 2022. In the last decade, the TRS funded ratio averaged 41.6%. Projections by Segal show slow but steady improvements in the funded ratio between fiscal year 2023 and fiscal year 2045, when state law requires TRS to have a funded ratio of 90%. The funded ratio has seen the most significant improvement since fiscal year 2020, from 40.5% to 44.8% in fiscal year 2023.



Source: [www.trsil.org/news-and-events/Finances-improve-FY25-Contribution-Increase-of-2.7percent](http://www.trsil.org/news-and-events/Finances-improve-FY25-Contribution-Increase-of-2.7percent)

**Questionable Advice: Invest in TENNIS BALLS! They have a high rate of return!**

# SOUNDINGS

## 2023 IRTA FOUNDATION GRANT WINNERS

This Fall, the Illinois Retired Teachers Foundation (IRTF) awarded **\$ 42,000** in grant money through the *Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers* program to several public-school educators from across the state. This grant money will allow these educators to enrich their instruction with materials not otherwise available to them. Their students are the real winners! You can find the name of each winner listed, along with his/her school, and a paragraph summary about each project in the winner's own words online at:

[irtaonline.org/foundation/2023irtafgrantwinners/](http://irtaonline.org/foundation/2023irtafgrantwinners/)

### FOUR OF THOSE TEACHERS ARE TEACHING IN PEORIA COUNTY SCHOOLS:

- **LEIGH BLUMER**, *Banner Elementary School, Dunlap*
- **KATHY GILLES**, *Wilder-Waite Grade School, Peoria*
- **NICOLE LOSER**, *Brimfield Grade School, Brimfield*
- **VALERIE ROCKE**, *Banner Elementary School, Dunlap*



In addition to the *Excellence in Education Teacher Grants*, the IRTA Foundation has distributed so far this year:

**\$ 48,000+** in financial assistance to retired teachers experiencing financial difficulties.



**\$ 26,500** in scholarships to college students majoring in education.

### IRTA MEMBERSHIP IS VITAL

*Do you enjoy getting your 3% annual increase in your pension check each year?*

IRTA's successful lawsuit resulted in each TRS annuitant receiving an average of \$1,625.00 annually from their 3% COLA, AND IT GETS COMPOUNDED.

SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO JOIN IRTA



**FORMER EDUCATORS FOUGHT FOR OUR CURRENT PENSION BENEFITS. NOW IT IS TIME FOR ALL OF US TO STAND WITH THE NEXT GENERATION.**

May your stuffing be tasty. May your turkey be plump.  
May your potatoes and gravy have nary a lump.  
May your yams be delicious, and pies take the prize.  
May your Thanksgiving dinner stay off your thighs!



➤ An optimist is a person who starts a diet on Thanksgiving Day.  
➤ One thing I'm thankful for on Thanksgiving is elastic waistbands!

- 😊 Whatever you do, always give 100%. Unless you're donating blood. ~ Bill Murray
- 😊 Even if you're on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there. ~Will Rogers
- 😊 If you think you are too small to be effective, you've never been in the dark with a mosquito! ~ Betty Reese

# SOUNDINGS

**HELP KEEP THE PARTA DATABASE CURRENT AND ACCURATE**

*Please send any changes for your:*

➔ **NAME**

➔ **ADDRESS**

➔ **PHONE NUMBER**

➔ **EMAIL**

to **ROGER HAMPTON, PARTA MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

**EMAIL:** roger.hampton11138@gmail.com    **TEXT:** 309.360.6190 (cell)

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 11138 N Stone Creek DR, Dunlap, IL 61525-9797

## SPOTLIGHT ON AN IRTA AMBA BENEFIT FIXED INDEX ANNUITY

Are you concerned about being jolted by sudden changes in the stock market that could impact your investments? With this annuity, you can create guaranteed income with a guaranteed interest rate.

- No medical underwriting
- You can protect your investment by never losing money
- Enjoy market gains without downside risk
- Offers guaranteed interest rates
- Provides income for your entire lifetime
- From a carrier you know and trust: A+ rated by Standard and Poor



Call **LORI FAIRFIELD, AMBA BENEFITS SPECIALIST**, at 815.647.8716

for details and information regarding this and other IRTA/AMBA Benefits.

Information regarding all IRTA member discounts, Passport Program, and discount codes are also available for IRTA members online at: [members.irtaonline.org/](http://members.irtaonline.org/)

## HOW TO HAVE MORE ENERGY AFTER 60... ACCORDING TO TODDLERS

Grandparents often say: *"I love spending time with the grandkids but I'm glad to give them back to their parents at the end of the day. I'm exhausted, they have so much energy!"*

If you're wondering how to have more energy after 60, toddlers can teach you a lot!

### **THEY MOVE ALL THE TIME UNLESS THEY'RE ASLEEP**

We know movement keeps us healthy. Getting used to being in motion throughout our day will keep our energy high. Stand, crouch, shift, reach and climb as you go through your day and you'll feel a lot better.

### **THEY FOLLOW THEIR INTERESTS AND LEARN CONSTANTLY**

Staying interested and learning is an opportunity to create new synapses and activate the brain to be engaged. Engagement leads to a feeling of "flow," a state of absorption and creativity.

### **THEY HUM, SING, TALK AND EXPRESS THEMSELVES**

Remember what we used to say about the kids, "When it's quiet there's trouble brewing"? Children express themselves constantly with their vocal cords. The vibration of words and song energizes the body.

Additional information can be found online at:

[sixtyandme.com/how-to-have-more-energy-after-60-according-to-toddlers/](http://sixtyandme.com/how-to-have-more-energy-after-60-according-to-toddlers/)

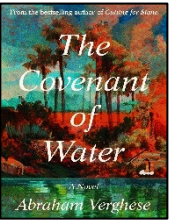


# SOUNDINGS



The TRAIL Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug (MAPD) Program Open Enrollment runs until November 15, 2023. No action is required, unless you have a change, or you wish to opt-out of the plan.

## PARTA MEMBERS READ & RECOMMEND



*The Covenant of Water*  
by Abraham Verghese

EXPAND YOUR MIND  
READ A BOOK



*Why Has Nobody Told Me This Before?*  
by Julie Smith



Spanning the years 1900 to 1977, *The Covenant of Water* is set in Kerala, on South India's Malabar Coast, and follows three generations of a family that suffers a peculiar affliction: in every generation, at least one person dies by drowning—and in Kerala, water is everywhere. The family is part of a Christian community that traces itself to the time of the apostles, but times are shifting, and the matriarch of this family, known as Big Ammachi—literally “Big Mother”—will witness unthinkable changes at home and at large over the span of her extraordinary life. All of Verghese's great gifts are on display in this new work: there are astonishing scenes of medical ingenuity, fantastic moments of humor, a surprising and deeply moving story, and characters imbued with the essence of life.

Filled with secrets from a therapist's toolkit, *Why Has Nobody Told Me This Before?* teaches you how to fortify and maintain your mental health, even in the most trying of times. Dr Julie Smith's expert advice and powerful coping techniques will help you stay resilient, whether you want to manage anxiety, deal with criticism, cope with depression, build self-confidence, find motivation, or learn to forgive yourself. The book tackles everyday issues and offers practical solutions in bite-sized, easy-to-digest entries which make it easy to quickly find specific information and guidance. Packed with proven strategies, Dr Smith's empathetic guide offers a deeper understanding of how your mind works and gives you the insights and help you need to nurture your mental health every day.

## IT'S THE SEASON TO PURPOSEFULLY BE THANKFUL



As we enter the holiday season, you may be thinking about making a '*SHOPPING LIST*'.

**Suggestion:**

Also start to think about making a '*THANKFUL LIST*'.

### Some Items to Start Your List

- |                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| • Family               | • Seasons       |
| • Close Friends        | • Clean Water   |
| • Your Education       | • A Good Book   |
| • Your Pet(s)          | • Art / Music   |
| • A Good Night's Sleep | • Laughter      |
| • Modern Healthcare    | • A Comfy Chair |

### Some Humorous Type Suggestions

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| • Indoor Plumbing        | • The Five Second Rule |
| • Toilet Paper           | • Happy Hour           |
| • Deodorant              | • Wi-Fi                |
| • Food Delivery Services | • Duct Tape            |
| • Bacon                  | • GPS                  |
| • Fresh Baked Cookies    | • Naps                 |

😊 Until you retired, you never really knew what you could get done in your pajamas! 😊

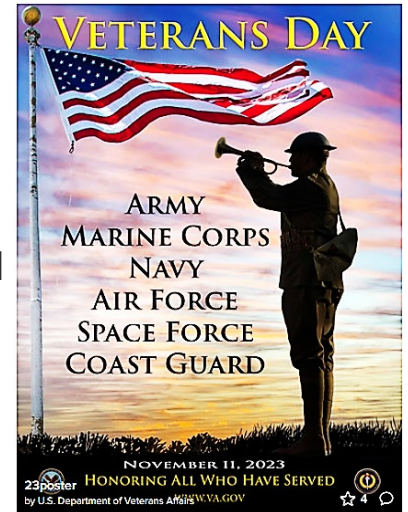
# SOUNDINGS

## VETERANS DAY SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2023 HONORING ALL WHO HAVE SERVED

Veterans Day is an important day for showing appreciation to members of our military, past and present.

“The theme for Veterans Day 2023 is ‘Service’. Veterans are proud of their military service in defending our Nation. Honor reflects the military value and tradition of answering the call to duty. There is distinct honor in serving to protect our way of life and the Constitution of the United States of America.”

<https://department.va.gov/veterans-day/>



### VETERANS DAY MOMENT OF SILENCE ACT (PUBLIC LAW 114-240)

"The President shall issue each year a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe two minutes of silence on Veterans Day in honor of the service and sacrifice of veterans throughout the history of the Nation beginning at 1:11 P.M. Central Standard Time..."

The set time of 2:11 PM EST allows for all 50 states and Puerto Rico to take part simultaneously.

Originally, the day was known as "Armistice Day. The 'Moment of Silence' gesture took place on November 11, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I fighting at 11 A.M., November 11, 1918 (the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month).

**DID YOU KNOW?** Veterans Day was briefly celebrated in October? In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed, which moved Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. The law went into effect in 1971. However, in 1975, President Gerald Ford returned Veterans Day to November 11 due to the important historical significance of the date.

My mother always used to say: "The older you get, the better you get, unless you're a banana." ~ Betty White as Rose on *Golden Girls*

Bob: "Looks like you've been missing a lot of work lately."

Peter: "I wouldn't say I've been missing it, Bob."

~ Paul Wilson as Bob and Ron Livingston as Peter on *Office Space*.



The Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Illinois is the 42<sup>nd</sup> largest pension system in the United States, and provides retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to teachers, administrators, and other public-school personnel employed outside of Chicago.

During fiscal year 2023, TRS paid benefits totaling \$7.9 billion.



For 84 years, TRS has paid all benefits in full and on time.

The System serves over 448,000 members and had assets of \$66 billion as of September 30, 2023.

Challenge your brain to explore possibilities for purpose, especially now.  
If you have a pulse, you have a purpose.