



IRTA-UNIT 90

Northwest Suburban - Unit 90

<http://www.irta-unit90.org>

President's Notes

I am currently reading a book ("Eruption" by Steve Olson) about the eruption of the volcano Mt. St. Helens in 1980. For months the scientists and the other people in the area knew the volcano would erupt, but none knew when, or how powerful the eruption would be. The waiting was very difficult.

It reminds me of our situation today, with the Pandemic, and the Election coming up (as I write this before election day). We hope that, as we vote, we will see the results of the election improve our lives in Illinois and the nation, and we hope that by following the advice of medical

experts, everyone around the world will see the last of COVID-19. But the waiting is long and difficult.

On the home front, we are fortunate in Unit 90 to have members like Bob Lyons and Karl-Heinz Gabbey, plus our excellent IRTA state staff, who can keep us up-to-date with how the election results in Springfield will affect retired teachers. We have an informative [IRTA website](http://www.irta.org) maintained by the state organization and, of course the [Unit 90 site](http://www.irta-unit90.org) maintained by our own Reinhard Taylor.

Check these sites out to keep abreast of the news pertinent to retired teachers, and remember that you are most welcome to join us for our monthly (now on Zoom) meetings on the first Wednesday of the month, excluding the months of July and December. Let me know, at wcm211@comcast.net, if you would like a Zoom invitation.

Please do all you can to keep yourself healthy and, if you can, help others to make it through this difficult time. Be well.

Jane McCauley



December 2019: Remember when we used to sit together?



Bob Lyons' Report:



TRS asks the State of Illinois for a Contribution of \$5.69 Billion

The TRS Board has asked for a contribution of \$5.69 billion for Fiscal Year 2022, an increase of 10.7% over the current year's \$5.14 billion. Our return on our investments was finally calculated

for FY 2020 ending on June 30 at 0.55%. Halfway through the fiscal year on December 31 we were up 13.4 %, but the effect of COVID-19 on the market brought us down to just above breakeven. The system's unfunded liability increased by \$2.6 billion to a total of \$80.7 billion. The total liability - all benefits to all TRS members for all time is calculated to have increased by \$4.1 billion to \$135.6 billion. We ended the fiscal year with \$51.6 billion in assets.

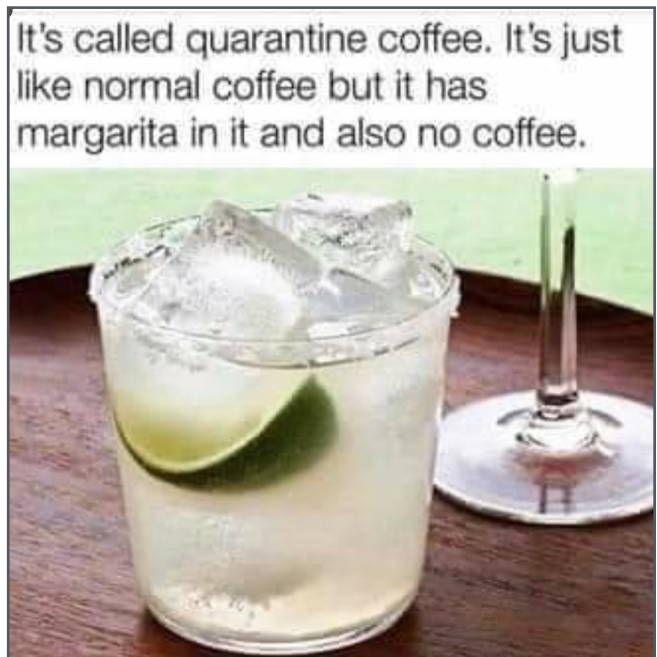
Despite the growth of the unfunded liability in FY 2020, the funded status of TRS remained relatively stable at 40.5 percent compared to 40.6 percent in FY 2019.

Since the start of this fiscal year our fund has grown and in mid-October our fund had improved to over \$54 billion. The stock market of course has been down with the current increase in COVID cases and hospitalizations. What is important for all of us that are currently retired is that we are covered and that there is more than enough money to pay our pensions. If the Fair Tax Amendment passes on election day, the state next year will have several billions more in revenue. If Biden is the new president and the Democrats control both houses of Congress, Illinois will get additional help from the federal government. If the constitutional amendment does not pass and/or the Democrats are not successful, the State of Illinois is going to be looking for new sources of revenue.

Even with the last year, where we barely showed a profit, TRS has shown positive returns for every year in the last decade and a 40 year average of annual returns of nine percent.

Bob Lyons

Regional Director 3
Retired Annuitant Trustee



To: Total Retiree Advantage Illinois (TRAIL) Eligible - Members
From: Jim Bachman, IRTA Executive Director
Re: Questions concerning TRAIL enrollment

As an individual who is enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B, your Annual TRAIL MAPD Open Enrollment Period will be held in the fall of each year. The TRAIL plan year is January 1 through December 31. The Open Enrollment Period is from October 15 - November 16.

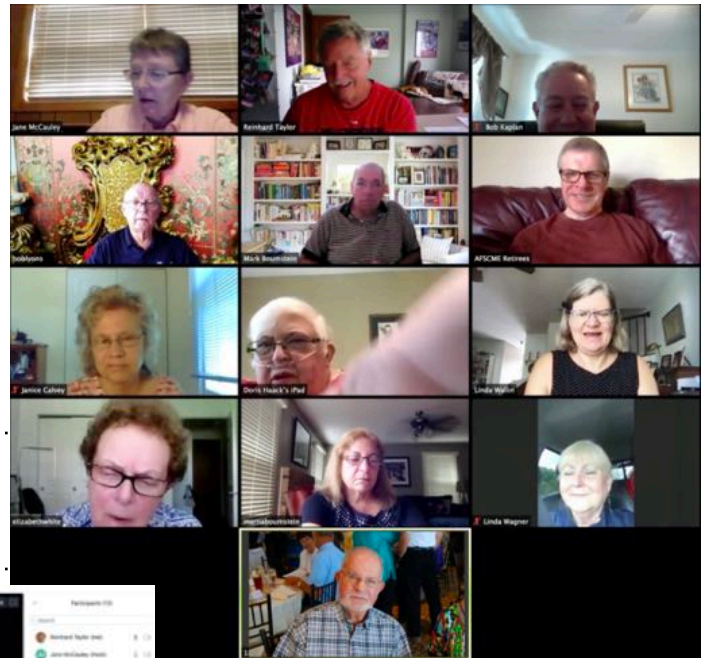
Many enrollees have been calling the IRTA asking questions concerning the open enrollment process. Please read the information sent to you thoroughly.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Materials sent to you from the TRIP - sponsored TRAIL MAPD plan administrators will feature the TRAIL logo
- If you are currently enrolled in one of the TRAIL plans, your coverage will continue - you do not need to do anything unless you want to make a change.

You can download the guide on TRS's website:
[click here](#)

**Previous Event: August 5
Zoom Board Meeting**



**Previous Event: September 2
Zoom Board Meeting**



**Previous Event: October 7
Zoom Board Meeting**





Jim Bachman - IRTA Executive Director

Yesterday, October 27th, TRS held its first stakeholder meeting in several years. The web meeting had several presentations by the TRS staff and Chairman Devon Bruce opened the meeting. The following is a summary of the staffs' presentations:

- TRS staff shifted to remote work in March.
- TRS staff transition back to the office in July. A maximum of 50% of the staff is physically at the office daily.
- May 3, 2021, there will be an election for two teacher trustees & one annuitant.
- Candidate nominations require 500 valid handwritten or electronic signatures.
- Electronic signatures are a new option available due to COVID - 19.
- The pandemic magnified already volatile stock markets globally.
- TRS took a defensive posture designed to protect assets within difficult market environments.
- TRS's goal is to maximize expected return with a prudent level of risk.
- Fiscal Year 2020 membership - 163,115 active members. (Tier 1 - 112,004; Tier 2 - 51,111).
- There are 125,927 annuitants/beneficiaries.
- The oldest retiree is 109 years old.
- The oldest active teacher is 81 years old.
- The average monthly benefit for recipients is \$5,027.
- Assets as of June 30, 2020 are \$54.9 billion.
- Funded ratio 40.5%.

The IRTA will be sending a link to our members Monday, November 2nd to sign the IRTA endorsed TRS Annuitant candidate, Larry Pfeiffer's petition.



While you're surfing: Links to try

[**irta-unit90.org**](http://irta-unit90.org)

[**irtaonline.org**](http://irtaonline.org)

[**irta-infoservices.weebly.com**](http://irta-infoservices.weebly.com)

[**moviesmotivate.weebly.com**](http://moviesmotivate.weebly.com)

AND JUST LIKE THAT

**HAVING A MASK,
RUBBER GLOVES,
DUCT TAPE,
PLASTIC SHEETING
AND ROPE IN YOUR
TRUNK IS OKAY**

Janette Wanner's Membership Report



Unit 90 (Northwest Suburban) is one of the 93 Units of IRTA in Illinois. We are in Area 2, Region 3.

Currently we have **712 members** in Unit 90, but only **633** of those are members of the State IRTA.

We now also have a Unit 90 Life Membership available for \$100 or for free, if you're 90 or older. We currently have **222 life members**.

The State IRTA and the Unit 90 memberships are separate. Membership forms for both can be found on our webpage: irta-unit90.org. You should join both!

The memberships of 142 of our members will expire at the end of this year. We'll send you a renewal form by email or a letter in November.

JUST DON'T INVITE CHICO

by Mike Schmidt, State Membership Committee Chairperson

Groucho Marx once famously quipped, "I don't want to belong to any club that will have me as a member." Obviously, Groucho never heard of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association because not only would he want to join our organization, but we would love to have him as a member, as well as Harpo, Chico, Zeppo, and Gummo. (On second thought maybe not Chico since he wouldn't be able to pay his dues because of a gambling addiction!) Even though our membership number is the highest it has ever been in our sixty plus years of existence, we have a great many new and long-time retired teachers and non-TRS annuitant spouses of retirees who need to join the IRTA.

Here is one important reason as to why that is. In this time of economic uncertainty compounded by the pandemic, it's apparent that the state government will be looking for ways to deal with increasing budgetary pressures. Based on past actions and threats, it's also apparent that TRS and we, retirees, will come under scrutiny again. After all, we are a significant part of the budget. We also know based on the past that members of the General Assembly are very impressed with two things. One is the fact that our association is aggressive in protecting our rights and benefits. The other is that we have such a large, vibrant, and active membership; large numbers have an important bearing on politicians who rely on the votes of constituents in every election year.

In order to maintain that advantage, we must continue to add new members. In this year of pandemic, that's especially difficult since units have had a serious challenge in contacting 2020 retirees, as well as inviting them to meetings that can't be held. Every IRTA member who knows a new retiree needs to make contact and invite them to join IRTA. Be sure to impress on them, that we are the only state organization solely dedicated to protecting and preserving our state benefits, just as we have done in the past and will always do in the future.

Just have them go to our website at irtaonline.org where they can get more information and can sign up as a new member. But you might not want to mention, why Groucho isn't one of our members.

Carolyn White: Volunteers Needed



The Elk Grove Township Food Pantry needs a few volunteers for various jobs. The pantry, located in the Township Building at 600 Landmeier Rd in Elk Grove, is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 - 12:00 and 1:00 to 3:30. Volunteers assist clients, who must make an appointment, with their shopping and check out. Other volunteer duties are to sort, organize and check expiration dates, as well as restocking pantry shelves during hours other than the open hours. Everyone must wear a mask. If interested, contact Kailee Tomasic at 847-437-0300.



Habitat for Humanity has two ReStores in the area open to the public; ReStore Elgin (800 No State Street) and ReStore Arlington Heights (955 E Rand Road) are open Wednesday through Sunday 9 to 4.

Volunteers are really needed at both locations to process incoming donations and assist customers. All new volunteers "attend" a virtual NEW TO RESTORE orientation held twice a week and then set up their own schedule. Serve as little as four hours every other week.

Interested? Contact Lance at Volunteer@ReStoreElgin.org or Volunteer@ReStoreArlingtonHeights.org

Upcoming Event (Check the website for updates)

2020 Holiday Luncheon (Inverness Golf Club)
Friday, December 4, 2020
(probably will have to be canceled)

2020

More details and photos at:

<http://www.irta-unit90.org/events/>

**What kind of joke can you tell
during quarantine?**

An inside joke...



Dear IRTA Members,

We are living in some extraordinary and crazy times. For now, and especially for retirees, the world will be a different place for the foreseeable future. Please know that the Illinois Retired Teachers Association will continue to be here for you.



The IRTA will continue to support our members and maintain our goals and objectives using an abundance of caution without placing our members or staff at risk.

The staff is currently at work in the office and has been since June 1st. We are taking precautions by taking our temperature every morning prior to entering the office, disinfecting surfaces, and we are keeping our social distance by staying in our individual offices. I continue to monitor the region's and state's recommendation on whether we should go back to working remotely.

Communicating with our members and keeping you informed continues to be a priority. We accomplish that goal by primarily using technology. We are frequently updating our website, producing informational videos, posting on social media, and sending email blasts. In addition, we continue to publish our newsletter quarterly with useful articles.

As we navigate the coming months, please be reminded, the IRTA is here for you. We will stay connected with you through our website, emails, social media, and newsletters.

Please stay safe!

Sincerely,

James Bachman
IRTA Executive Director

**DUE TO MY
ISOLATION. I
FINISHED 3 BOOKS
YESTERDAY.
AND BELIEVE ME.
THAT'S A LOT OF
COLORING...**



***If you're a State IRTA member
you're eligible for
all these and many more
benefits:***

1.800.728.4782

<https://www.irtaonline.org/benefits>

Northwest Suburban IRTA Unit 90
12 Country Oaks Ln
Barrington Hills, IL 60010-9620

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

<http://www.irta-unit90.org>