



IRTA-UNIT 90

Northwest Suburban - Unit 90

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



President's Notes

A year ago, in March, we had the last in-person Unit 90 Board meeting at the Senior Center in Arlington Heights. Since that month, our meetings, like so many of everyone's activities, have been on Zoom. We are very grateful for Zoom, but we will be so happy when we can gather again in person.



We soon hope to be offering you luncheons, in-person meetings, outings, and other activities. And indeed, the State IRTA has scheduled the biennial State IRTA Convention for Oct. 17th and 18th - but more about that later.

As you have probably heard, we were all saddened to lose long-time IRTA member Doris Haack in November. In her memory, we have initiated a college scholarship in her name for a student from each of the two schools (CHS and HEHS) where Doris taught. It has been gratifying to receive the contributions from many people who knew Doris. If you have not yet had the opportunity to contribute and would like to do so, send a check made out to NW Suburban RTA to Linda Wallin, 1126 E Potomac Ln, Palatine, IL 60074.

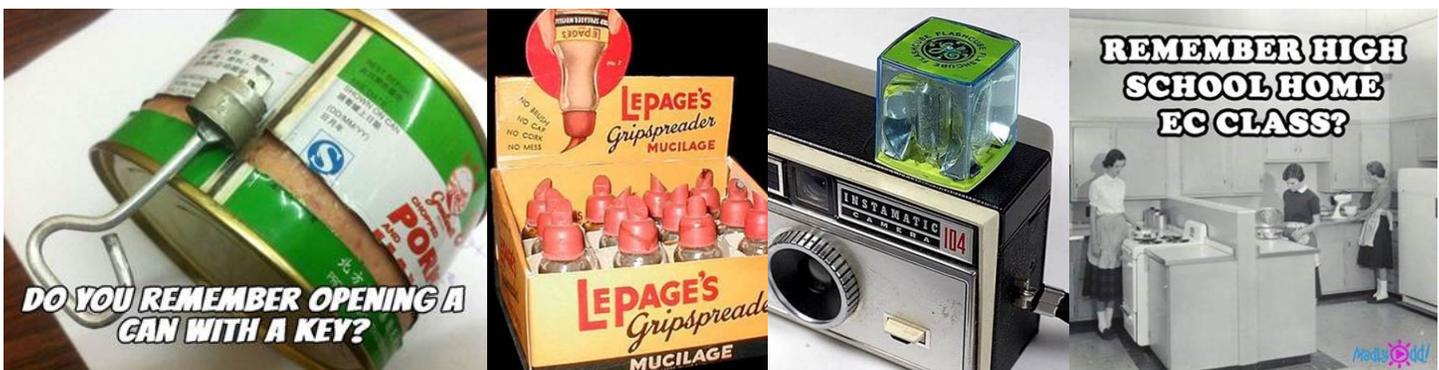
And, lastly, for all of you who are also State IRTA members and can take advantage of the dental and vision plans offered by AMBA, stay tuned for a new option to be offered later this spring.

In the meantime, continue to be safe,

Jane McCauley



Remember these?



Bob Lyons' TRS Report:



I taught for thirty-two years and took advantage the last year the state offered the five plus five option to retire early. That was in June of 1994, so come June of this year, I will have been retired for twenty-seven years. In that period covering a year short of sixty years I have never met anyone that claimed they went into teaching to gain the pension. While it was just something that happened at the end of our teaching, it has proved to be an outstanding benefit to cap a rewarding career. The only drawback is that our pension system was not drawn up with the aid of normal accounting standards and the help of an actuary.

Instead it was created by politicians and their time horizon was quite different compared to actuarial science. Instead of a goal to achieve full funding in the near future, the politicians from the start were only willing to provide sums small enough to allow them to take advantage of existing revenue for more "popular" projects sure to gain votes. When told that insufficient spending would cost the state more money in the long run, the legislators basically showed they really only cared about the next election. Of course, the lack of money spent early has cost the state much more money later. The State of Illinois today is painfully learning why credit card companies are so happy to accept only minimum payments from their card holders. The state now finds itself making payments to the fund in the billions to make up for "saving" thousands of dollars earlier.

The Illinois Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) ended its fiscal year on June 30, 2020 with \$51.6 billion and was 40.5% funded. In comparison, the State Employees Retirement System (SERS) was 38.7% funded; the State University Retirement System (SURS) was 42.2% funded; the Judicial Retirement System was 39.3% funded and the General Assembly Retirement Systems (GERS) is only 17.1% funded. The total unfunded liability for the state as of June of last year was \$144.3

(Continued on Page 4)

TRS Demographics

At present there are 163,115 active members, 31.2% of which are Tier 2. It is predicted that in FY 2025-2026 there will be more Tier 2 than Tier 1 active members.

The ratio of FT Actives to Annuitants in 2010 was 1.36. Presently it is 1.09.

1099R Form

The 1099R forms will be mailed by January 31, 2021. A duplicate copy of the 1099R form may be obtained by contacting the TRS Call Center.

3% COLA

The 3% Cost of Living Allowance will be paid on February 1 check for the month of January. It is first effective January 1 following either your first retirement anniversary or your 61st birthday, whichever is later.

TRS Trustee Election

Terms are expiring for two Active Trustees and one Annuitant Trustee. Petitions are due by January 29, 2021 and voting, if necessary, will occur from April 1 through May 3.

Member Account Access

Annuitants may log into their Member Account Access and find verification letters, benefit reports, and statements regarding their retirement account. The information regarding this account access will be forwarded by the association to members through Constant Contact and the Newsletter.

TRS Contact Information

The following contact information was provided:

Email updates list - members@trsil.org

Email - members@trsil.org

Member Services - 877-927-5877



November 4, 2020 Zoom Board Mtg



December 2, 2020 Zoom Board Mtg



**January 6, 2021
Zoom Board Mtg**

**February 3, 2021
Zoom Board Mtg**



To the IRTA Board of Directors:

I am pleased to provide you a *summary of IRTA's fiscal year 2020 activities*. IRTA has now concluded its 65th year. As an association, made up of individual retired educators, we continue to fulfill our purpose to maintain and improve benefits to annuitants of the Teachers Retirement System.

Sincerely,
James A Bachman, Executive Director

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The net position of IRTA on December 31, 2020 was \$3,310,793 (does not include IRTAPAC or Legal Defense fund). During FY2020, the net position of IRTA increased \$245,305. Dues from members were \$914,227, an increase of \$28,162 or 3% for FY20. Legal Defense Fund contributions in FY20 were \$3,171, a decrease of \$2,126. The balance was \$153,412 at the end of FY20.

MEMBERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

The end of year total membership was 39,175 an increase 487 members. During FY2020, IRTA added 1,800 new members. 1,030 new members joined as dues deduct. In FY20, 448 people joined as Annual Recurring members, a 49.8% increase over FY19.

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

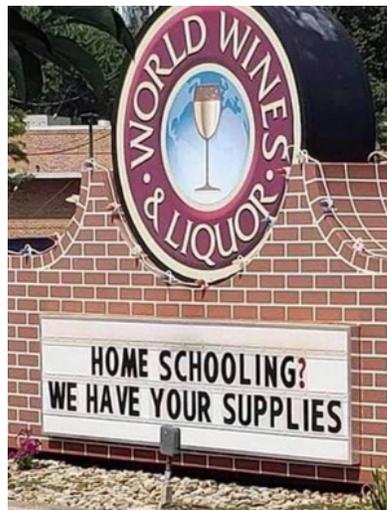
During FY20, the General Assembly met on a limited basis due to the pandemic. The IRTA supported the full funding of both the pension system and Teachers Retirement Insurance Plan. Both were funded at their certified amounts.

(Bob Lyons: Continued from Page 2)

billion. Governor Pritzker's FY 2022 budget announced last week calls for a total pension contribution from the general revenue fund of \$9.4 billion, plus \$1.1 billion from other state funds and \$264.8 million specifically earmarked for the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund. The state's payment to TRS alone is \$5,693,707,000. Also, in the governor's budget is the full state contribution to TRIP, our medical insurance, of \$143,369,000. This is significant, because in his first two budgets Pritzker had zeroed out that contribution to make it appear he was "saving money." Since the General Assembly put it back in when they passed the budget the last two years, the governor has simply accepted reality this year. The Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund is separate from TRS and, as you may know, is paid for by the city of Chicago.

At one time CTPF was 100 percent funded. The city asked the state if they could skip payments and was given that permission. Between no new payments for a number of years, plus losing money in both the dot com bust and the Great Recession of 2008, CTFP is now down to a funding of 47.4%. The city is now making its payments. Plus the state, out of guilt I would suggest, also makes a contribution.

Regional Director 3
Retired Annuitant Trustee *Bob Lyons*



Where Does Your Pension Come From

Proceeds from Investments	40.30%
Contribution from Active Teachers	15.75%
Required payments from School Districts	2.34%
Contribution from State of Illinois	41.57%

(Composite of sources of revenue from FY 2001 to FY 2020)

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 **711 members** in Unit 90, but only **630** 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 **232 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!

Mike Schmidt, State IRTA Membership Chair

The Nineteenth Century author, the Chevalier Alphonse de Lamartine once opined that “sometimes only one person is missing and the whole world seems depopulated.” We at the Illinois Retired Teachers Association understand that such can be true for a surviving spouse. Should that spouse be a member of the IRTA, we know that the state and local units are there to offer comfort and support. However, if that surviving spouse is not a TRS annuitant and not an IRTA Associate member such support is missing. Your IRTA membership offers benefits and looks

out for your retirement interests and these are also enjoyed by your spouse during your lifetime. However, ...

Should your spouse outlive you, there will, of course, be a survivor’s TRS pension benefit, but there will be so much more missing. It doesn’t have to be that way. As an IRTA Associate member, the non-educator spouse will continue to benefit from (IRTA) legislative representation and advocacy for improved benefits, legislative updates, access to member benefits, and this quarterly IRTA *Action* publication.

Still, C.S. Lewis observed that, “no one ever told me that grief felt so much like fear.” Already being an IRTA Associate member can help to alleviate a small part of that fear. Such a spousal Associate Membership is only \$25.00 a year, or even better a lifetime membership is only \$125.00. Just go to the IRTA website (www.irtaonline.org), and protect your non-educator spouse’s future by signing up for an Associate Membership.

Just as importantly, should you know of any late colleague’s non-educator surviving spouse in need of IRTA support, please share this information on how to become an IRTA member. After all, according to Billy Graham, “Over the years I’ve seen people lose a spouse and then withdraw and lose interest in life, and I believe we need to resist that.” In a small way, the Illinois Retired Teachers Association can and does help with that resistance.

Unit 90 Members Who Died Recently

Stephen H Cross	(Feb. 2020)
Kathleen M Ferguson	(Jan. 2021)
Carl F Flaks	(Dec. 2020)
Robert W Given	(May 2020)
Doris J Haack	(Nov. 2020)
Tom R Holsen	(Sept. 2020)
James J Kunnen	(June 2020)
Prabha D Lockwood	(June 2020)
Fern E Rodgers	(Nov. 2020)
Gerhard A Scholz	(Sept. 2020)



Carolyn White: Volunteers Needed



Journeys|The Road Home is looking for volunteers in several areas:

Bike repair volunteer: Clients will make appointments to bring their bikes to the Hope Center on Rt. 14 in Palatine when the repairman is available. The center is open from 8:30 - 4:00. The volunteer would repair 1 - 4 bikes per session. Hours to fit volunteers' schedule.

Hope Center Volunteers: Switching off between the food pantry, the clothing closet and the Board Room, depending on need. Duties would be prepackaging bags to hand out to clients, organizing the food pantry or the clothing closet. 1 - 2 volunteers per shift. Shifts are Mon. - Fri. from 8:30 - 10:30 or 12:00 - 2:00.

Mobile Meal Delivery Person - Shift times are Mon. - Sun. from 8:30 - 9:30 and from 6:00 to 7:00. Working with PADS sites and community partners to deliver prepared meals to clients staying in hotels. Each PADS site/community partner will have deliveries to take the meals to the corresponding rooms.

If you have additional questions on the volunteer positions above, please email Volunteer Coordinator, Heidi Meier at: h.meier@journeystheroadhome.org

RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Persons) is thinking about putting together a TelePal program to provide seniors with socialization and support over the telephone. TelePals would check in with each other once a week for conversation. If you would like to be a caller, let RSVP know at rsvp@handsonsuburbanchicago.org or give a call at 847-228-1006.



Budget Address (February 17, 2021)

Links to try while you're surfing...



I see people around my age mountain climbing, I feel good getting my leg through my underwear with out losing my balance

Today, February 17th, Gov. J.B. Pritzker laid out his proposed budget for fiscal year 2022, which he described as a plan of "painful choices," due to what Illinois has endured during this past year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite those painful choices that Gov. Pritzker was forced to make, the Illinois Retired Teachers Association is pleased to announce that the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and the Teachers' Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP) are both being fully funded.

- Teachers' Retirement System of Illinois: \$5,693,707,000
- Teachers' Retirement Insurance Program: \$143,369,000

Illinois Retired Teachers Association strives to protect your pensions and healthcare, and to be the voice for retired educators.

January 2021

Dear Retirees,

As you have probably heard, long-time teacher in Dist. 211, Doris Haack passed away on Nov. 7, 2020. Among her many activities in retirement, Doris was a beloved and active member of IRTA Unit 90, holding the post of President for many years and was well known for being a very giving person who lived Christmas throughout the year.



Therefore, Unit 90 has decided to put together a one-time scholarship in Doris' name.

Applications for the scholarship are limited to high school graduates who will be going into English studies at the college level, and are currently attending one of the schools where Doris taught, either Hoffman Estates HS or Conant HS. It is our hope that enough money will be raised so that we can award two scholarships, one for each school.

We are asking for contributions to this scholarship fund. Unit 90 is organizing this scholarship, but not financing it. Individual members are invited to contribute.

If you would like to contribute to this remembrance of Doris, please send any contributions to our Unit 90 Treasurer:

Linda Wallin, 1126 E Potomac Ln, Palatine, IL, 60074-3151

Please make out your checks to:

NW Suburban RTA, with notation: For Haack Scholarship

Thank you,

Robert Lyons and
Jane McCauley President, IRTA Unit 90

February 2, 2021

Dear IRTA Members,

The 2021 application and current guidelines for the IRTA Foundation Scholarship is now available on the IRTA website at www.irtaonline.org and located under the Foundation tab. Applications can also be obtained by contacting IRTA Administrative Assistant, Susan Goetz at the IRTA office.

This year, one \$1,500 scholarship is available in each of the six IRTA Areas of the state. Thanks to a very generous private donation, Areas 4 & 6 will offer a second scholarship of \$3,000 each. These scholarships are only available to incoming juniors or seniors in college enrolled in a certified teacher training program. The deadline to postmark applications is March 7, 2021. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Goetz at susan@irtaonline.org or call 1.800.728.4782.

Sincerely,

John Flaherty
State IRTA Foundation Chair

2006-19
Photos at:

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

***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](https://www.irtaonline.org/benefits)**

ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION UNIT OF DISTINCTION

The IRTA Unit of Distinction program is a voluntary program based on the honor system that is designed to help guide and direct local unit leaders, as well as recognizing IRTA units that are the best in the state. The IRTA hopes these guidelines are a valuable tool in the management of your unit. To receive this award, a local unit must answer, "yes" to 18 of 24 questions, and answer "yes" to number one in the IRTA Unit Membership Criteria.

We encourage all units to become an IRTA Unit of Distinction each and every year. Please feel free to contact your Area Rep. or Regional Director for assistance and to answer any questions you may have.

Unit of Distinction questionnaires must be submitted online no later than January 31, 2022 for the 2021 year. The reporting period shall be on a calendar year basis. Units receiving the Unit of Distinction Award will be recognized at the IRTA Biennial Convention, in the IRTA ACTION, and on the IRTA Website. These units will also receive a gift of \$250.

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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