

IRTA-UNIT 90

Northwest Suburban - Unit 90

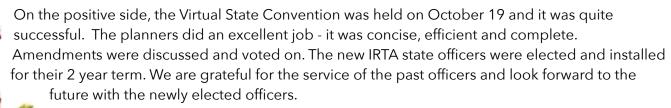
http://www.irta-unit90.org

President's Notes

Dear Fellow Annuitants,

As we grasp tightly onto Fall, pushing off the start of Winter, I hope you are getting out and enjoying the "good" Fall days.

We had all hoped that CoVid would be behind us by now, but unfortunately it is not. Therefore, it was decided at our October meeting to cancel our Winter Luncheon, lest we contribute to any virus spread before the Holidays.



Please stay well and have good Holidays,

Jane McCauley

KNOW SOMEONE WHO RECENTLY RETIRED?

We are having a hard time contacting recently retired teachers from our area. We send information in the spring to the school emails of those whose names are provided by TRS, but we know that many of those are blocked by districts, and we have no way of getting home addresses or emails. We need the help of ALL our members in reaching these recent retirees to let them know of the benefits of membership in IRTA.

Please help by talking with your retired friends and by providing us with contact information. Remember, MEMBERSHIP begins with ME! You are a part of our membership committee!

If your membership expires at the end of 2021, we will send you an email with a membership form.

Unit 90 Dues (January - December)

Yearly Membership \$10 Five Years \$40

Let us know your birth date, if you're 90 or older; membership is free!

Life Membership \$100

Please enclose a check made payable to:
Northwest Suburban IRTA

Mail check and membership form to:

Janette Wanner 12 Country Oaks Ln Barrington Hills, IL 60010-9620

If you have any questions, email, call or text: JanetteWanner@comcast.net -or- 224-234-0380

TRS paid lawyers six figures to probe Brass - FBI expresses interest

By Bruce Rushton

The state pension system for Illinois teachers spent nearly \$700,000 on lawyers to investigate two top officials at Teachers'
Retirement System, one who was fired in June and the other who resigned in August after being placed on administrative leave.

The figure comes from TRS's response to a Freedom of Information Act request from *Illinois Times*, which asked for billing records, personnel records and a copy of reports outlining any allegations of wrongdoing by Richard Ingram, former TRS executive director who resigned in August, and Jana Bergschneider, the pension system's chief financial officer, who was terminated by Ingram in July.

The nature of investigations conducted by two Chicago law firms isn't clear. TRS refused to turn over reports on any impropriety, proven or not, by either Bergschneider or Ingram. Bergschneider was hired last month as a fiscal officer by the state appellate defenders office at an annual salary of \$120,000, which is \$70,000 less than she earned at the teachers' pension system, according to records in the state comptroller's office. Reached by *Illinois Times*, she declined to answer questions about her new position or why she was hired for a state job despite being fired by TRS. Ingram could not be reached for comment.

The FBI has shown an interest in Ingram's departure from TRS. Seven days after his resignation, a Springfield-based special agent asked for a copy of a report on an investigation conducted by the Chicago law firm of King and Spalding, which TRS paid more than \$577,000 between March and September to conduct the investigation that resulted in the executive director's resignation. It's not clear whether TRS turned over a report to the FBI. The agent declined comment. TRS in August would not say whether the investigation uncovered evidence of criminal activity, and it remains unclear why Ingram was placed on administrative leave by unanimous vote of the TRS board during a special board meeting convened days before his resignation.

The King and Spalding investigation into Ingram was headed by Zachary Fardon, former U.S. attorney for northern Illinois, who billed TRS \$1,116 per hour of his time; Michael Johnston, a fellow partner in the firm, was paid \$1,129 per hour. In addition to King and Spalding, TRS paid nearly \$114,000 to the Chicago law firm of Elrod Friedman, also between March and September, according to records provided in response to the newspaper's request for bills paid to firms that investigated Ingram and Bergschneider. Ingram approved payments to Elrod Friedman until his departure from TRS, the records show, while King and Spalding sent bills directly to Devon Bruce, TRS board chairman.

In a July 2 letter to Bergschneider, Ingram wrote that she was being fired due to work performance and conduct related to the procurement process for the Gemini Project, a software overhaul aimed at modernizing the agency's pension administration system. The Gemini Project, which last March was expected to go live in January, now is undergoing review, according to a request for proposals issued last month by TRS.

In its request for proposals, TRS asked prospective bidders to evaluate the Gemini Project, which has been under construction for two years, and "conduct a high-level review, assessment and oversight." Bidders were told that the pension system, among other things, wanted to know whether the project was properly planned, whether "rigorous methodology" was followed and whether issues were being addressed in a timely manner.

With \$53.4 billion in its investment portfolio, TRS is the state's largest pension system. As of the end of last year, the system was underfunded by 40%, but TRS paints a rosy picture on its website, saying that the pension system expects to break even on the fiscal year that ended June 30 and has a 40-year return of nine percent, higher than the target of seven percent.



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)

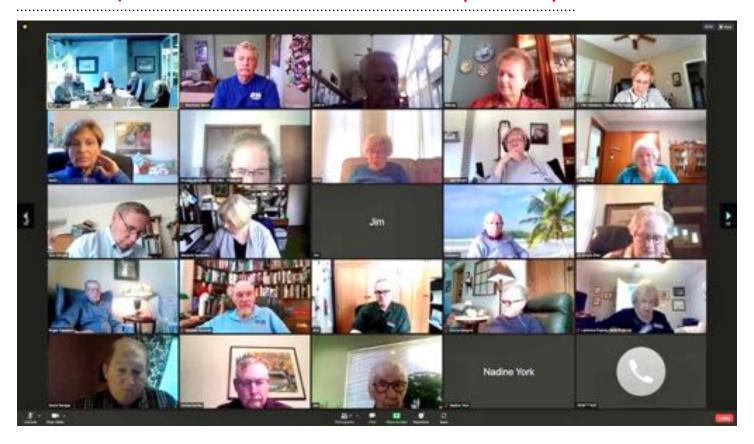
August 4, 2021 Board Mtg



September 1, 2021 Board Mtg



October 19, 2021 State IRTA Biennial Convention (via Zoom)





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 **668** members in Unit 90, but only **589** 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 **231** life members.

Help

We Don't Have a Current Address for these Unit 90 Life Members - **Do you know them???**

Evelyn M Smith formerly at 1079 E Wilson St Apt 3213, Batavia, IL

Eleanore K Wallace, formerly at 590 Central Dr Apt A10, Southern Pines, NC

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!

Our most senior members

	Last Name	First Name	Member	Age
1	Dolejs	Constance O	Life	90
2	Jackson	Anne M	Life	91
3	Jahnke	Brita Ann	Life	91
4	Hoke	Laurel A	Life	93
5	Reader	Thomas P	Life	94
6	Boesel	Robert G	Life	94
7	Norman	Courtney F	Life	95
8	Stitt	Mary M	Life	96
9	Smith	Evelyn M	Life	97
10	Wallace	Eleanore K	Life	97
11	Stahnke	Vernon E	Life	97
12	Attis	Russell R	Life	97
13	Meiller	Clydella B	Life	103

Carolyn White: Volunteers Needed



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Share your musical talent and brighten the holiday spirits of local seniors. The *Wheeling Township Visually Impaired Support Group* is looking for musical entertainment (not singing) from 1-3 individuals for their luncheon to be held on Zoom on Dec. 2. The entertainment would be from 1:30-2:00. If interested, contact Lynndah Easterwood Lahey at Wheeling Township 847-259-7730 or at wheeling.com. Wheeling Township is also looking for assistance in the food pantry on Wed. from 1 - 4. Julie Villareal is the contact for the pantry.

Connections to Care (formerly Escorted Transportation Service) is looking for friendly and patient volunteers to drive area seniors to medical appointments Mon.-Fri. Flexible

scheduling. Volunteer applications are available at connectionstocare.org.

Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley is looking for volunteers interested in building or rehabbing homes for deserving low-income families. Current projects are in Elgin, Crystal Lake, Carpentersville and Batavia. Work days are Wed., Fri. and Sat. from 8:30-4:00. If interested, go to the website, habitat.org, and follow the prompts. Habitat is also always looking for help in their ReStore shops located in Addison, Arlington Heights, Aurora, Elgin, Gurnee, Joliet, McHenry and Woodstock.

There is an ongoing need for *Meals on Wheels* delivery drivers:

Des Plaines Frisbie Senior Center - contact Halie Reyes,

DuPage Senior Citizens Council - contact Jeanine Fons

Kenneth Young DesPlaines/Mt. Prospect - contact Collete Young

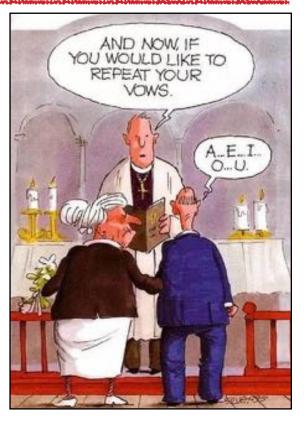
Palatine Township Senior Citizen Council - contact Peg Schuetz



If you're a State IRTA member, you're eligible for many benefits: 1-800-728-4782

https://www.irtaonline.org/







Social Media: Is It Right for You?

The benefits of using social media, what it's good for and how to use it safely by Sydney Berry

ocial media can be a wonderful "place" for friends and family to keep in touch. It provides entertainment and inspiration, and it can be a quick way to share information about an important cause. Plus, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) notes that using technology can help with loneliness, leading to a lowered risk of depression. However, social media — like anything — can have drawbacks. Here are tips for how to use social media, and what to avoid.

What social media can be good for 2017 data shows that more and more older adults are using social media. Here are some ways it can benefit you:

Stay connected. Keep in touch with loved ones, especially those who live far away. Social media can also make it easier to reconnect with people from our past.

Have a laugh. Perhaps one of the best things about social media is the readily available entertainment, funny videos and mood-boosting photos.

Join an online community.

Connect with like-minded users to discuss interests and compare ideas.

Explore new things. Social media can introduce users to new activities, music, recipes, TV shows, books, ideas and more.

The potential downsides

When using any social media, be sure to keep a few things in mind:

Don't believe everything you

read. With social media, anyone can be a "publisher," meaning misinformation can spread quickly. Therefore, social media is often not a reliable source of news.

People aren't always what they

seem. It's important to recognize that people can pretend to be someone they're not. Never send money or personal information to strangers — or to people you *think* you know.

Don't replace in-person

interaction. While it's great to connect with long-distance pals, don't let social media become a replacement for real-life socializing. Ultimately, it could have the opposite of the desired effect, leaving you feeling *more* isolated.

Avoid over-sharing. The internet is no place for private photos or videos. Before you put anything on social media, ask yourself: Would I want a stranger to see this?

At the end of the day, social media is about using common sense and can be beneficial when used smartly and safely. •



Avoid toxic interactions. Sign in at **UHCRetiree.com**, go to **Health & Wellness** and look for the **Renew Magazine** section for tips and tricks to avoid negative interactions on social media.

30 | Renew "Be kinder to each other." -Alex Trebek



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

http://www.irta-unit90.org