



IRTA-UNIT 90

Northwest Suburban - Unit 90

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

President's Notes



I hope that you are all having a happy and healthy new year!

This new year ushers in a benefit that many of you have earned and are entitled to receive but were denied due to the passage of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) as amended in 1983. I'm confident that you have heard by now that both the WEP and GPO have been repealed. The repeal was signed into law on January 5, 2025, but as of the date of my submitting my notes for this newsletter, the rollout hasn't been implemented yet, so I have provided you with the following link to the Social Security Administration which is supposed to update the information as it becomes available. [Social Security Fairness Act](#)



Some items to think about:

--You may have heard people say and/or read articles stating that the repeal of WEP and GPO will move up the insolvency of Social Security another six months. I would just note that Congress has many tools to shore up Social Security without decreasing benefits or placing the blame game on the backs of retired teachers and other public sector workers. In fact, I submit to you that teachers and other public sector workers extended social security for years by not receiving their earned benefits.

--There is legislation pending in the Illinois General Assembly which will increase a mandatory road test to renew a driver's license from age 79 to 87. Illinois is the only state that requires a driving test for seniors based on age. According to the Illinois Department of Transportation, seniors tend to have lower crash rates than any other age group.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

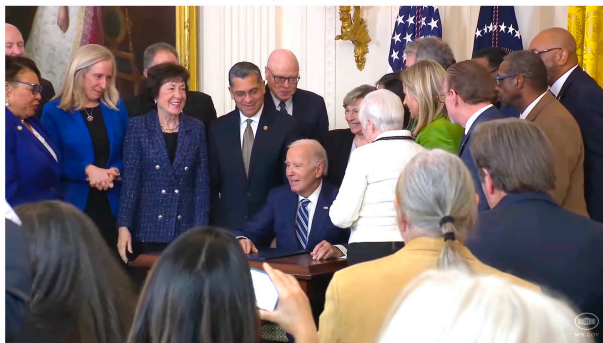
Feb. 19 , 2025	Feed My Starving Children from 9-11 am (More info on page 4)
April 5, 2025	See "The Play That Goes Wrong". There are a limited number of tickets. Tickets are \$21.85 each. More information will follow.
May 1, 2025	Vote for Lorraine "Rainey" Kaplan for an annuitant (retiree) trustee on the TRS Board of Trustees. More information will follow
June 13, 2025.	Our June luncheon will be held at the Inverness Golf Club. More information will follow.

Bob Lyons' TRS Report -Our Pension



What is important to each of us is that every month our pension check arrives and that in February it grows by three percent. Your check was there in January and you can count on it in February. Enjoy.

Bob Lyons



4:00 PM ET
President Biden Signs the Social Security Fairness Act
The White House

There has been a lot of talk circulating regarding dental and vision insurance for retired teachers. This is what I know as of now. The IRTA has been working with Central Management Services of Illinois to get definitive dates for the beginning of a new dental and vision insurance to be offered by the state.

Members will be automatically enrolled in the plans with Delta being the provider for dental insurance and EyeMed for vision if they are enrolled in a healthcare benefit plan. It is hoped that TRAIL member enrollment will begin January 1, 2025 and TRIP member enrollment will begin July 1, 2025. The cost is estimated at \$5.20/ month with a cap of \$7.36, dependents at a cap of \$11.00.

Members are encouraged *not* to drop or switch any dental and vision insurance that they presently have until there are finalized dates of when the plans will begin.

In another matter, Gov. Pritzker is proposing a 100% funding level for TRS in the 2026 budget. The IRTA will be working hard to gain support for this....

President Boumstein's Report

(Continued from Page 1)

The Illinois General Assembly has "reform" bills (legislation) pending in the House and the Senate pertaining to amending the pension code by making changes to Tier 2 benefits.

Keep in mind that this is an attempt to make the retirement benefits of teachers hired since 2011 more compliant with federal law in that governments must provide benefits that are at least equal to Social Security. It is interesting that the current Tier 2 pension systems for judges and members of the General Assembly are more generous than for teachers. None of the proposals being considered brings teachers hired since 2011 up to the standards of Tier 1 retirees, and we would still have the inequity of two classes of teachers teaching side by side. Instead of a "fix" we should have an "undo".

Although our classroom educator voices may have retired, we should not allow our voices to be silenced when it comes to our collective interests. Just as you dedicated your professional lives to helping others, you should be cognizant of the following two items that will allow the Illinois Teachers Association to continue to work on your behalf.

This is the 70-year anniversary of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association, and it continues to be important to advocate for our common interests. There is strength in numbers and the IATA Political Action Committee supports those in government or seeking government positions who will advocate on our behalf. For only \$1.00

**ILLINOIS
RETIRED
TEACHERS
PAC**

a month we can continue the mission to advocate on behalf of retired teachers. Here is the link so you can participate the easy way to help keep your retirement secure. [IRTAPAC](#)

Mark Boumstein

December 5, 2024 Holiday Luncheon (Inverness Golf Club)



Carolyn White: Volunteers Are Always Needed...



IRTA Unit 90 is returning to *Feed My Starving Children* (FMSC) on Wednesday, Feb. 19 from 9:00 - 11:00. This will be our fifth time volunteering at the Schaumburg FMSC site located at 740 Wiley Farm Court. There are a variety of jobs ranging from quite active to seated. Most of us will be standing around large steel tables



measuring out the ingredients for a complete nutritious meal and putting them into a bag that someone holds under a funnel. The bags are then weighed and sealed to be placed in shipping boxes. More active volunteers are in the warehouse, transporting boxes of nutrients to resupply the packing tables. The seated jobs involve placing labels on the bags in preparation for them being filled. There's a job to suit everyone and great camaraderie. In the past, some of us have gone out for a late breakfast/early lunch when we finish at 11:00. You can decide if you're able to join us that day since we can't make reservations in any of the nearby restaurants. To sign up to join us on Feb. 19, send an email to Carolyn White at whitecarolyn14@gmail.com. I'll confirm your email and then send you an email or two with further instructions closer to the date.

"Ask the IRTA Vice President"

Q & A with IRTA Vice President, Rainy Kaplan



What inspired you to get involved with the IRTA and take on a leadership role?

The IRTA's work on pensions has been an inspiration to me. I served as a TRS Trustee and know how important the IRTA's work has been to preserve our benefits over the years. My husband, Bob, has been very active in the IRTA since his retirement, so I always knew I would become involved. One of my beliefs is that every organization is strong if members get actively involved. It is vital to have active participation for a healthy Association, and I believed that I needed to get involved. Last May, when I retired, one of my first emails from IRTA was a Google form that invited members to get involved. I filled it out. I quickly learned that there was an urgent need for a Vice President. I said yes, and here I am. Luckily, my fellow officers and the previous officer team are wonderful mentors who help me every step of the way.

Can you share a memorable experience from your teaching career that has influenced your approach to your work with the IRTA?

I spent my active career as a Spanish teacher, cross-country and track coach, as well as the Athletic Director. I was also a member of our local union's Executive Committee for over 30 years. While I cannot pinpoint one memorable experience from my career that influenced me, I would say that the entirety of my teaching career helped mold me to take on the position I now hold. I love being super involved and keeping myself busy. I love meeting new people and seeing how different groups approach the work that needs to be done.

Can you share any short-term and long-term projects or visions you have for the IRTA?

One of my goals is to help activate our membership in order to make our local units stronger. We have the power and the voice to have a very positive impact on pensions and retiree health insurance. I also would like to see members from different parts of the state get to know each other to further strengthen our Association.

Janette Wanner's Membership Report



Unit 90 (Northwest Suburban) is one of the 87 Units of IRTA in Illinois.
We are in Area 2, Region 3.

Currently we have **551 members** in Unit 90,
488 of those are also members of the State IRTA.

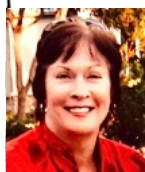
We now also have a Unit 90 Life Membership available for \$100
(or for **free, if you're 90 or older**).

We currently have **247 Life members**.



**Membership forms , for State and Local,
can be found on our webpage: [Click Here](#).**

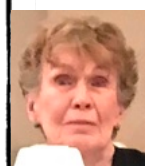
Unit 90 Members Who Recently Died



Poncher, Karen (July 18, 2024)



Rodenburg, Linda (Sept. 13, 2024)



Williams, Mary (August 4, 2024)



Kolze, Dick (Oct. 21, 2024)



McKenna, Audrey (Sept. 2, 2024)



Prisching, Cindy (Oct., 2024)

Diane Pfister: Foundation News



The IRTA Foundation's goal is to assist past, present and future teachers. This is accomplished by assisting retired educators with living expenses, providing scholarships to aspiring teachers, working to protect the rights of the elderly, and providing grants to educators.

Our unit supports the activities of the state IRTA Foundation by making a memorial donation when one of our members passes.

Please email us when you become aware of a death, so that we may honor that person's memory.

December 11, 2024 Kids Above All (1801 E. Oakton St., Des Plaines)



More pictures at: <https://www.irta-unit90.org/events/>



Dear IRTA Members,

My name is Bob Kaplan, and I serve as the Chairperson of the Leadership Development Committee with other volunteer members from across our state. Our committee consists of Gail

Wright, Area 1; John Braglia,

Area 2; Ray Kaufman, Area 3; Jean Sowers, Area 4; David Savage, Area 5; and Diane Kunkel from Area 6. We have all freely decided to give up our time and energy to help IRTA achieve its goals of advocating for our organization and continuing our fight for the quality of life for all our members. We realize that within our membership, there are many potential leaders with different skills and voices that can also shape the future of our organization.

We need strategic thinkers, team builders, and inspirational leaders who want to help keep IRTA as a leading voice protecting our pensions and benefits! Simply put, we need new volunteers to step up and lead, just like you have previously for your students and fellow colleagues! During the Area Conferences, our state officers all shared their personal histories on how they became leaders at the local (unit) level, then transitioned to either a committee or leadership opportunity in the region or area, and finally led them to a state position.

Like many new members, I really didn't know much about IRTA when I retired. However, I had finished my career as an Elementary School Principal. When I was active, I'd been a member of the Illinois Principals Association. I had very little time to get much out of my membership while I was working. However, I had been told that my membership in IPA was being continued with the IRTA. When I sent in my membership fees, my check was returned, stating my membership was already active. I don't know about you, but that is the only time anybody has sent me a dues membership back. Luckily, I joined my local group, which, like many of you, had many familiar faces in the room. Many of my own

teachers belonged to my unit, and others I'd seen over the years were also in our area. Very quickly, almost too quickly, I became the President of my local unit for six years. I was then encouraged to run for Area Representative and, of course, served on a couple of committees as well.

Our committee knows that there are individuals from each part of our state who have led in their classrooms or their communities in many wonderful ways. **IRTA is no different; we need YOU!** Whether you volunteer at the unit, area, or state level, please consider signing up to do something, from becoming a candidate for office to serving on a committee. It is our hope that the Leadership Development Committee can assist you in having a more rich and rewarding experience through your active participation in our great group of retired educators!

Please go to the IRTA website or call the office in Springfield and let them know you are willing to volunteer. We can also assist by connecting you with a unit active in your area of the state. Our next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17th. The committee will be reviewing goals and plans for our future leadership and training for prospective volunteers. IRTA can only get stronger and reach new heights with the energy of our growing membership.

Please contact me or any committee members if you have questions or suggestions on how you can become more informed, interested, and involved in our association! Thanks!

Sincerely, Bob Kaplan
Leadership Development Chair





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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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