

April/May 2018

Direct Line



Newsletter of West Lake Shore Unit, Illinois Retired Teachers Association

WLSU and IRTA...Your Voice in Springfield
WLSU - OVER 60 YEARS OF SERVICE TO RETIRED EDUCATORS

www.wlsu.weebly.com

Don't forget the May 10 Membership Luncheon, P. 6

President's Message

Well... the calendar says March, and when I walk the dog, I can hear birds chirping, so I know that spring is approaching. I am certain that all of us look forward to abandoning the need for heavy winter clothes and welcome more carefree walking on ice free parking lots and sidewalks.

Vince and I are now two full months into our shared presidency of WLSU. We are quickly learning that this position requires regular attention, as there isn't a day that goes by that we don't receive at least one email regarding WLSU/IRTA business. We are still contacting Marge Sucansky regularly and are blessed that she remains available to direct us. I am slowly mastering Constant Contact, a system Marge began using to send emails to various groups, from WLSU members to IRTA groups and even legislators. The Constant Contact website is helpful and enhances communication; it also lets the sender know the open rate of each of the emails sent. While the website is cheerful and tells me I have done well, I am dismayed that it appears that my Constant Contact emails are opened less than 40% of the time. It seems a lot of work, at least where I am at on the learning curve for this task, for not a lot of pay off. I encourage you to open the emails as you might find something in them of importance to you. I promise not to fill up your inbox with commentaries, but will use it for more significant information and news.

One of the issues Vince and I feel strongly about is increasing *active membership* in our organization. Our Board is currently heavily represented by retirees from two high schools, Morton District 201 and Lyons Township, and it appears it has been that way for some time. WLSU encompasses 39 school districts and numerous schools; we need to connect with many more schools and not only increase membership, but also encourage members from other districts to take some active role in WLSU. Without new people getting involved, I fear for what will happen to our unit as our current board members age and are no longer able to do what they do. If you find that you have the time and willingness to take on some role in the organization, please feel free to let one of us know. I am certain that your interest may intersect with a need we have.

Schools have been in the news as of late, and not positively. Those of us who spent our careers in school buildings are personally touched as we see images on the news regarding the events in Florida. As a country, it is clear that we are struggling with how to respond to the gun violence that is so much a part of our lives. In a democracy the power of the ballot is what each of us has to express our opinion. On March 20 primary elections will be held in Illinois. I encourage each of you to vote that day and encourage friends and family to do the same. **Julie Jeter, Co-President**

IRTA HOTLINE—Members who wish to hear the latest information about legislation regarding pensions and health insurance should telephone the IRTA office for information—1-800-728-4782. Other helpful numbers: Teachers' Retirement System 1-877-927-5877, email address members@trsil.org, website—<http://www.trsil.org>; and Central Management Services 1-800-442-1300 or 1-217-524-3438; and irtaonline.org

Membership Cards

Many AMBA and other IRTA endorsed benefits require proof of membership in IRTA. Please call the Springfield office to request a membership card. The number is 800-728-4782

Mark Your Calendars 2018—

April 26 Area 3 Conference Bradley, Illinois
 May 10 Membership Luncheon Ashton 11:15 a.m.
 May 8 Executive Board Plymouth Place 9:30
 August 2 Executive Board Plymouth Place 9:30
 Sept. 12 Membership Meeting Ashton Place 10:00
 Oct 25 Executive Board Plymouth 9:30
 Dec 7 Membership Luncheon Ashton 11:15 a.m.

ALERT-90 Years Old and Above- If you are 90 or older and are a current member, you qualify for free Life Membership in IRTA & WLSU. To qualify for this perk, you must contact us. If you are 90 or older, act now. Contact O. Perricone or Louise Sterett

WLSU Contact Information

Presidents Julie Jeter/Vince LaPaglia 708-352-7115 708-476-8400 jj149@aol.com vlapaglia@yahoo.com	Membership Onofria Perricone 630-985-5861 operri@sbcglobal.net	Treasurer Louise Sterett 630-325-6470 louisesterett@att.net	Foundation Frances Pettersen 630-985-7508 narfp@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.wlsu.weebly.com			

Meet Your New Board Members



Gus Jackson---Educational incest ruled at Morton. Like many others, I graduated (with honors) from the Mother School, Morton East, and taught English (with distinction) at East for thirty years. ("Out the door in '94.") I also dabbled in real-estate sales (with limited success). Marge Sucansky "convinced" me that the position of Benefits Coordinator was not a demanding one and that it would not cut, too much, into my nap time. I will inform my fellow members of the various benefits that accrue to being a member of IRTA. Failure to fulfill those duties may lead to my impeachment.



Barbara Lucente---I worked at Morton West High School for 25 years as a school counselor. I am looking forward to being part of IRTA's Membership Committee, handling renewals.



Carol Villa---I was lucky to work in District #201 for 31 years. I taught a variety of subjects in the special education department at both Morton East and Morton West. I hope to connect with "old" friends and new while serving on the membership committee for WLSU.



Onofria Perricone---I began my career working for CPS and ICCP, but it was at Morton District 201 where I went to enjoy my days for 31 years. As a teacher I wore many hats; I taught Italian, French, Spanish, English, and reading. I supported my students by sponsoring various language clubs and classes. Serving for several years as our union treasurer was another challenge. I hope I can now wear my new hat, serving new and old friends.

WLSU/IRTA Welcomes These New Members



Patricia Marconi
Sandra Flowers
Antoinette LaPaglia
Margaret Carpenter
Ellen Hardy
Diana Brann

Linda Powell
Gale Holmlund
Karen Reid
Steven Fox
Allen Polich
Paul Jacobson

Patricia Webster
Donna Kozica
Joan Kline
John Dorff
Rosa Vargas



For each of our recently deceased members WLSU donates \$25 to the IRTA Needy Teachers Fund
Alexandra Carpenter Fred Fahey Virginia Lamana Norbert Curtin

The IRTA is looking for a committee member from your region!

Earlier this year, a motion was made by the IRTAPAC Board of Directors that led to the separation of the Political Action Committee and the Legislative committees so that each will have separate chairs and a separate committee makeup.

The reason for this separation is to ensure that there is less confusion concerning the function of each committee. It is important to stay within the letter of the law when it comes to the function of each committee.

The function of the IRTAPAC Committee will be to make endorsements of legislative candidates, raise money for the IRTAPAC and assist in organizing campaign volunteers. They will make their determinations concerning endorsements by considering the answers to the candidate questionnaire, input from local units, the candidates platform or past voting record and input from the Government Affairs team.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in being a part of please contact the IRTA Office at 1-800-728-4782 or at irta@irtaonline.org. **Roger Hampton, President IRTA**

FYI Committee Member Resigns

Maureen Lyons who has served on the FYI Committee for fifteen years has resigned her board position. Thanks for her many years of service to WLSU. We will miss her enthusiasm on the board.

WLSU NEEDS YOU!

WLSU still needs members for the Legislative Committee. The next few years will be critical in our efforts to secure our pensions and health care. With 31 new members in the General Assembly, we will need to educate them on why the state is where it is with regard to pensions, or risk losing what we have earned because of lack of information on the part of house and senate members. Many of the people we will be losing have been our supporters in the past. We will also be losing institutional experience with these new people. Please consider joining the board, and let Julie or Vince know if you are willing to share some of your time.

A Plea to Increase Membership

There are over 70,000 retirees out there who are not members but who benefit from IRTA's efforts.. These are people who did not join IRTA when they retired. If you know any educators, retired or active, who are not aware of what IRTA has done for them, please urge them to join us in the fight to preserve our pensions. If you know educators who have signed letters of intent to retire, urge them to join via the Pipeline, which gives them free membership in IRTA and WLSU until they retire. Give retirees the application in this issue and contact Tom Szot for a Pipeline application for those still active. Help them fill it out. Offer to pay postage to mail it to IRTA. Grab a recruitment poster at a membership meeting and ask the school from which you retired if it can be posted in the teachers' cafeteria. Also, remind them of the activities of the Foundation—Excellence in Education Grants to active teachers, applications available at www.irtaonline.org; scholarships for current college students; and the Foundation's support of needy teachers. For more information, go to the website. Our lobbyists need numbers when they talk to legislators. This year will be a crucial year, considering what Rauner wants to do with our pensions and health insurance.

What is VoterVoice and Why is It Important?

VoterVoice is a method provided by IRTA that allows you to contact your legislator at any time, but most importantly at times when your pension and health benefits are on the line. It is used only for legislative issues. There are two types of messages: **Informative and Call to Action.**

All current IRTA members with an email address are on the database and should receive messages. The database is updated on April 1 each year. If a member joins IRTA after April 1, he/she must register for VoterVoice on his/her own. This can be done on the IRTA website: www.irtaonline.org or by calling Tricia at 1-800-728-4782 if you are having difficulty on line. **If IRTA does not have your email address, please send it to them and register for VoterVoice. IRTA will keep your email address confidential.**

Once you are signed up, you will receive emails when crucial legislation is being discussed and considered for a vote. **It is critical that you sign up and check your email often during crucial legislative times. Things happen so fast that we need to respond rapidly.** For example, late last year when the governor wanted to zero out funding of health insurance, legislators were not even aware that was in the bill on which they were about to vote. The bill never went to committee—only to the floor. IRTA was aware and sent out a **CALL TO ACTION**. Members responded; responses went directly to legislators, who are constantly checking their emails and calls during a vote. Because of the quick response by IRTA members, using VoterVoice, the bill failed—by 3 votes.

When a **CALL TO ACTION** is sent to you, a prewritten message is presented which is addressed to your legislators. You may add to the message or simply forward it. VoterVoice can also be used by you to contact your legislator on concerns other than pension and health issues. Also, if you have a particular issue that is of concern, not related to IRTA issues, Mary Shaw can keep track of how it stands in the legislature. You can call her for updates at 1-800-728-4782 or email at mary@irtaonline.org. **Marge Sucansky, Region 4**

Don't Unsubscribe from Emails Unless You Mean It

If you have not been receiving emails from WLSU, maybe you are happy, but if you do want to keep abreast of what is going on with WLSU and your pension and health care benefits, please contact Marge Sucansky. You may have unintentionally unsubscribed or been unsubscribed by someone to whom you sent one of our emails. I can help you get resubscribed. sucansky@comcast.net

ADOPT A SCHOOL PROJECT 2018-2019 --Partnership Program

For the fourth year in a row, WLSU will be collaborating with a school to help teachers obtain needed classroom supplies. Within the footprint of WLSU borders are 39 school districts and countless schools that serve students from pre-school thru grade 12. The superintendents of these school districts received a letter from WLSU requesting proposals for partnership opportunities in January, and as has been the practice, we chose to work with the first district that responded. This project has been a wonderful opportunity for our members to continue their investment in local educational programming. It has also allowed WLSU to make connections with districts and active teachers, a vital aspect of building our membership.

This year we will be working with Pennoyer School District 79, located in Norridge, which serves 420 students, in grades pre K thru 8. I have been in communication with their superintendent, Dr. Kristin Kopta, regarding the needs of her teachers and students. They are appreciative and excited to receive this welcome support from an organization they knew little about. Like our partnership last year with Rhodes School District, Pennoyer has only one school.

The following is the list of items that the district has requested. Please feel free to bring any donations to upcoming WLSU functions or drop them off at my home, 427 North Waiola Avenue, La Grange Park.

POST-IT Instant Dry Erase Surface 48x36	Paper Towels
Zip Lock Bags, Both large and quart size	Hand Sanitizer
Seat Sacks	Number 2 Pencils
Dry Erase Markers	Sanitizing Wipes
Colored Pencils	
C-Line Reusable Dry Erase Pockets 9x12 Assorted Primary Colors 5 Pack	

It goes without saying that we thank you, our members, for your continued support of this endeavor!

Julie Jeter

My Membership/My Benefits

Constant Group Benefits

- * Up-to-date information, at meetings and through newsletter, regarding issues affecting retirees
- * Social gatherings at banquet halls, with choices of served meals and drinks--at reasonable prices
- * Eclectic entertainment at gatherings

Travel Benefits

- * Globus Tours 866-755-8581
 - COSMOS (owned by Globus)
 - Avalon Waterways (owned by Globus)
- * Vacations by Rail ([877-929-7245](tel:877-929-7245))
- * Road Scholar Educational Tours ([800-454-5768](tel:800-454-5768))

Just For Fun

Let's end each column with a trivia question. Send your trivia question (perhaps on a topic from your subject area, along with the answer and your name and school to kotchlog@sbcglobal.net. Our crack panel will select one for the next issue. To get the proverbial ball rolling here is one from yours truly: Who said, "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.?" Answer: on last page **Gus Jackson, Member Benefits Chair**

WLSU Spring Luncheon

Thursday, May 10, 2018

Ashton Place, 341 75th Street, Willowbrook (west of Route 83 across from Hinsdale South High School), 630-789-3337)

Return this form and a check for \$25 members and \$30 for guests to Marie Trankina, 10 Algonquin Drive, Unit 2, Indian Head Park, Illinois 60525. Reservations must be received by April 27, 2018. No telephone reservations. Make Checks payable to West Lake Shore Unit.

Member Name (s) _____

Guest Name (s) _____

email address _____

Phone _____ Total \$ _____

Entrée' Choices

- Filet of Chicken Breast with Lemon Herb Sauce
- Herb Crusted Tilapia
- Peppercorn Crusted Sirloin

NO ENTRÉE SUBSTITUTIONS AT THE LUNCHEON!!!

CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT OF YOUR RESERVATION WILL BE DONE BY EMAIL ONLY.



WLSU Spring Luncheon

Thursday, May 10, 2018 11:15-2:15

Socializing, cash bar, short business meeting,
door prizes and plated lunch

Program:

A representative from the Attorney General's Office will discuss scams perpetrated on citizens

Questions:, call Marie Trankina at (708) 246-6709.

Ashton Place is located at the SW Corner of 75th and Clarendon Hills Road

IRTAPAC

1. The Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) is an organization of over 37,000 retired educators. The IRTAPAC is a way to protect our benefits. It provides financial support to legislators who support us. If members go to fundraisers for their legislators, they should contact their local president to get donations that can be presented to the legislators at the fundraiser.
2. The IRTAPAC Committee has a process to determine whom we support and endorse through a questionnaire that helps it assess the positions of Illinois legislative candidates. This year IRTA will be offering endorsements to Congressional as well as local candidates since the governor is trying to make an end run around the Illinois Constitution by lobbying Congress to pass a bill that would circumvent state constitutions with regard to pensions and nullify Article XIII in the Illinois Constitution, the pension protection clause. That questionnaire will be sent out to legislators, asking them to fill it out and return it if they would like to be considered for endorsement by IRTA. The questionnaire will be available for your review as soon as it is completed by the legislative committee. If you are interested in viewing the questionnaire, please contact the IRTA legislative member for WLSU, Vic Corder at 773-857-2161 or vcorder@rcn.com. There is currently \$156,937 in the PAC Fund. The goal is to increase the number of people who participate via deduct for the PAC Fund. Deduct takes \$1 a month from your pension check. Many of you may make a yearly contribution to the PAC; however, through deduct, our legislative committee knows exactly what to expect as far as funds are concerned. It is a more reliable measure of what funds can be disbursed for lobbying. Look for the form on the website www.irtaonline.org. The Mid-Term Elections in the U.S. will be especially critical in 2018 as all 435 House of Representative seats and 33 of the 100 Senate seats will be contested. In addition, elections for governor will be held in 36 states and 3 territories. In Illinois the General Assembly will have between 28 and 31 seats open. All of these new people will have to be educated regarding the revenue problem of the state rather than allowing them to blame pensions which we have earned and been promised.

Foundation News--2018 Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers

The Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation continues to work toward the future by offering \$36,500 in grant money to educators. Being an educator, do you often think of this phrase — Extra Funds Needed — when it comes to planning special projects for your students? You may be finding that revenue sources are not available for such unique activities.

The Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) Foundation is making \$36,500 in grant money available to ALL counties in Illinois. This special grant will provide additional funds to public school educators (Pre-K through 12) so that their students will have the means to participate in special projects. The funds are not intended to provide regular curricular materials. Please visit the IRTA website at www.irtaonline.org for further instructions. You can download, complete, and submit the application online from the IRTA website. Please submit your application to the IRTA Foundation online. **All proposals must be submitted by June 1, 2018.**

A special committee will select the recipients of the grant money over the summer. Grant awards will be presented in the fall. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) Office by phone at 1.800.728.4782 or by e-mail at irta@irtaonline.org. IRTA Foundation, 828 S. Second St., 4th Floor, Springfield, IL 62704

* Chicago Public School employees are not eligible for this grant program.

Fran Pettersen, Foundation Chair

Reminder to Members: If you change your contact information, be sure to let us know.



IRTA State & Local Unit Membership Form

828 S. Second St., 4th Floor • Springfield, IL 62704 • 1-800-728-4782
e-mail: irta@irtaonline.org • webpage: www.irtaonline.org

- State Dues**
- Dues Deduct** - \$30 a year (see left side of form)
 - Annual - \$40
 - 5 Years - \$175
 - Life - \$400
 - Membership Free for the Calendar Year of Retirement

Dues Deduct – I hereby authorize the Teachers’ Retirement System to deduct my IRTA dues in monthly installments at an initial rate of \$2.50 or as subsequently established by the Delegate Assembly.

Association Dues are Not Tax Deductible

- State Associate Dues (non-certified)**
- Annual - \$25
 - Life - \$125

- Local Unit Dues**
- First Year Free

(Signature required for Dues Deduction)

Social Security # _____

Please print or use your return address label.

(Only required for Dues Deduction)

NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	DOB		
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP	RETIREMENT YEAR	
PHONE ()	E-MAIL	UNIT West Lake Shore	SCHOOL DISTRICT	RETIRED FROM	

Please mail to IRTA.

Mark Twain



West Lake Shore Unit *Direct Line* Newsletter

Marjorie Sucansky, Newsletter Publisher
2942 Crabtree Avenue
Woodridge, Illinois 60517

Direct Line mailer: Simonette Urbain

DIRECT LINE
“Investing in the FUTURE of retired teachers”

March 10 Membership Luncheon at Ashton Place—coupon p. 6