



April/May 2020  
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](http://www.wlsu.weebly.com)

**Only 100 Tickets Available for June 23 Frida Kahlo Exhibit Group Tour!**

**BUY TICKETS NOW! See Flyer on P. 6**

## **President's Message**

PROTECT THE VOTE!

I hope each of you voted in the Illinois Primary. As a DuPage County Election Judge, I again witnessed my fellow citizens, neighbors, and friends proudly, confidently exercising their most precious American right. The looks on their faces as they saw their ballot counted as it went through the ballot box reassured me that our values as Americans are still strong no matter our divisive politics.

However, there is one voting issue that does not instill me with confidence. While the instances of voter fraud and suppression may not be as flagrant in our personal polling places as in other areas of the country, we all must be concerned that protecting the integrity of the national vote is important. A correct vote, counted and reported accurately, and allowing the greatest number of Americans to exercise their right at the ballot box is inherent in the term “free and open elections.”

For instance, we need to care about the insanely long lines in California and Texas on Super Tuesday. Remember the name Hervis Rogers, the man at a polling place at Texas Southern University, one of the country's largest black universities, who waited six hours and twenty minutes to vote? He said he wanted “to get my vote in to express my opinion. I wasn't going to let anything stop me, so I waited it out.” He thought about leaving because of such a long line, but “it felt like it was set up for me to walk away.” However, Mr. Rogers would not be deterred because “every vote counts.”

In Harris County, where Rogers' polling place is located, state legislators have eliminated 52 polling places over the last 8 years even though the population has increased over 15%. Yes, the turnout was above projections; yes, the voting machines malfunctioned, but this became an unacceptable length of time to wait. We must make voter registration and ease of voting paramount. When I served as an attorney in the Voter

Suppression Unit of *Obama for America* during the 2012 campaign, I received countless phone calls from across the country, reporting scenarios of even more flagrant violations of the voting rights laws. Legislators or private groups were trying to disenfranchise voters in a number of ways: overburdensome ID regulations, loss of registrations in computer systems of already registered voters, even one polling place where the sheriff was on the courthouse polling place steps telling people of certain ethnicities to go home.

We can all do something to help insure “free and open elections.” Here are several national organizations where you could volunteer your time to help protect the vote.

Vote.org at [vote.org](http://vote.org)

League of Women voters Illinois at [lwvil.org](http://lwvil.org)

American Civil Liberties Union at [ACLU.org](http://ACLU.org)

Common Cause at [commoncause.org](http://commoncause.org)

Let America Vote at [letamericavote.org](http://letamericavote.org)

Fair Fight at [fairfight.com](http://fairfight.com)

**Prepare and Protect the November 3rd vote for all Americans!**

**Kate Singletary, President**

### **Membership Report**

In the spring of each year our membership committee begins the task of recruiting new members from the ranks of our 39 WLSU school districts. If you know anyone retiring this year or will be retiring in the near future, they are good candidates for membership. Encourage them to go to the IRTA website and join online, or forward the name and address of the prospective member to Louise Sterett or Onofria Perricone.

It is not necessary for the prospective member to be from one of our 39 WLSU school districts; anyone can join WLSU. We are prohibited from contacting school districts outside of the WLSU area and recruiting therein, but we can approach individuals and ask them to join our local. Current teachers, who have alerted their school district that they'll be retiring in a certain year, are eligible to become pipeline members of both IRTA and WLSU. Dues are waived until retirement. Thereafter, they become IRTA dues deduct members and annual WLSU members. Any question, contact Louise or Onofria. See the WLSU Contact Box for email address or phone number.



It's interesting to note where our members live. Our largest concentration of WLSU members lives in the nearby suburb of Oak Park. We have 125 members residing there, and this is followed by 122 members who live out of state of which only 3 states have members in double digits. The leader with 28 is Florida. This is followed by Arizona with 17 and Wisconsin with 14. In third place is Chicago with 86 members. Rounding out the top 10 are La Grange Park—60, Western Springs—51, Downers Grove—49, La Grange—45, Berwyn—39, Brookfield—30, and Naperville with 28. Except for the concentration in Chicago and out of state, most of our members live in west Cook County and eastern DuPage County.

Happy Spring, and thank you for being a member of WLSU. **Tom Szot—Membership Emeritus**

## **IRTAPAC — We Need You**

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. There is currently a little over \$160,000 in the PAC fund.



The IRTAPAC Committee, headed by Ed Wollet, 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 the committee has 4 goals: To recommend endorsements of legislative and gubernatorial candidates. To raise money for the IRTAPAC by increasing participation in the \$1/monthly deduction program. To assist in organizing campaign volunteers, particularly in units that will have Tier 1 races. To explore avenues to initiate a federal PAC.

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All four goals are important, but the first goal will be a main focus this election year. While our pensions have been constitutionally upheld by the Illinois Supreme Court, no such guarantee has been ruled on for our TRS health insurance programs. In fact, this year's state budget reduces the state's payment by over \$51 million. It is imperative that we endorse those candidates who will protect our hard fought for TRIP and TRAIL insurance.

At this moment, our region does not have representation on the PAC committee. The committee will meet on March 24 and July 30 in Springfield. All expenses, including mileage, are paid. If you can serve on this committee, please notify Kate Singletary. There are no special qualifications other than a willingness to work to get to know the campaigns and the candidates who are running in your Illinois legislative district.

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](http://www.irtaonline.org), and sign up for deduct of PAC donations.

### **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: 800-728-4782

**IRTA HOTLINE**—Members who wish to hear the latest information about legislation regarding pensions and health insurance should telephone the IRTA office at 1-800-728-4782, [irtaonline.org](http://irtaonline.org).

Other helpful numbers:

**Teachers' Retirement System** 1-877-927-5877,  
email— [members@trsil.org](mailto:members@trsil.org) website: <http://www.trsil.org>

**ALERT: 90 Years Old and Above**—You qualify for free Life Membership in IRTA & WLSU. To qualify, you must contact us—Act Now. Contact Onofria Perricone or Louise Sterett.

**WLSU SPRING LUNCHEON**



**A TRAVEL LUNCH TO GREECE**

Join us on **Wednesday, May 13**, at **Greek Islands, Lombard** from **11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** and enjoy a **family style Greek lunch** and listen to a **travelogue on Greece and the Islands**. A short business meeting will follow the program.

Cost is **\$25.00 per person; \$30.00 for guests**. Please fill out the form below or write the information on a piece of paper and return with your check to Marie Trankina.

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WLSU May 2020 Luncheon: **A TRAVEL LUNCH TO GREECE**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2020** at **Greek Islands Restaurant, 300 E. 22nd Street, Lombard, Illinois Phone; 630-932-4545**

Return this form **on a piece of paper with the information** and a check for \$25 members and \$30 guests to Marie Trankina, 400 W Butterfield Road, Apt. 465, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126. Reservations must be received by April 29, 2020. No telephone reservations. Make Checks payable to West Lake Shore Unit. Family style lunch includes soup, salad, chicken entrée, sides, desserts, coffee, tea, soft drinks. Please alert Marie to any dietary restrictions.

Member Name (s)

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Guest Name (s)

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Member email address

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Confirmation of receipt of your reservation will be done by email only.

WLSU/IRTA WELCOMES THESE NEW MEMBERS



Randall Bullen Anne Jaeger Carol Wilkinson Cliff Joiner Todd Koehler  
Cynthia Maziarka Gail Luperini Marcia Gevas Marilyn Goldenberg  
Jolynn Alexander Linda Balicki Karin Grimes Lee Ann Wach



For each of our recently deceased members , WLSU donates \$25 to the IRTA Needy Teachers Fund.

Beryl Dollar Judith Wehrmeister Robert Bures Arlene Rittenhouse Dolores Cvetan



**Foundation News**

In 1985 the IRTA Foundation established an endowment to provide assistance to retired educators who were experiencing financial difficulties.

Currently, the Foundation is assisting eight annuitants on a monthly basis and is further assisting other annuitants with real estate and medical expenses. Applications are found on the IRTA website at [irtaonline.org](http://irtaonline.org) by going to the Foundation link and clicking on FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. Applications can also be obtained by calling the IRTA office at 1-800-728-4782 or by contacting Fran Pettersen at [narfp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:narfp@sbcglobal.net). One need not be an IRTA member to qualify and all information is confidential.

The IRTA Foundation continues assistance to classroom teachers by offering \$36,500 in grant money. This grant provides needed funds to public school educators (Pre-K to 12) so that students will be able to participate in special classroom projects. Applications can be found on the IRTA website at [irtaonline.org](http://irtaonline.org). Click on Foundation and follow the link to GRANTS. Applications must be completed and submitted online by June 1, 2020. Many of us are still in contact with active teachers. Please do them a favor and pass this information on to them. **Fran Pettersen, Foundation Chair**

**Legislative Update**

**IRTA's new Government Affairs person is Courtney Hayes. Her update as of March 6 was sent to you via email. As of that date the House and Senate were both in session on Tuesday and Thursday but not much transpired. Check out the email for more information or go to [irtaonline.org](http://irtaonline.org). Watch for future email updates.**

W/LSU Contact Information		Website: <a href="http://www.wlsu.weebly.com">www.wlsu.weebly.com</a>		
President	Membership	Membership	Treasurer	Foundation
Kate Singletary	Onofria Perricone		Louise Sterett	Frances Pettersen
508-737-1336	708-408-4088		630-325-6470	630-985-7508
<a href="mailto:singletarykate@gmail.com">singletarykate@gmail.com</a>	<a href="mailto:operri@sbcglobal.net">operri@sbcglobal.net</a>		<a href="mailto:lasterett@yahoo.com">lasterett@yahoo.com</a>	<a href="mailto:narfp@sbcglobal.net">narfp@sbcglobal.net</a>

Laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break in. Jonathan Swift



**ONLY 100 TICKETS AVAILABLE!**

**BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!**



**FRIDA KAHLO EXHIBIT GROUP TOUR**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2020 11:00AM-1:15pm**

**COLLEGE OF DUPAGE**

**Cleve Carney Art Gallery**

**Glen Ellyn, Illinois**

**TOUR TICKETS ARE \$21.00**

**\*\*\*LUNCHEON AT WATERLEAF TO FOLLOW TOUR\*\*\***

Fill out the form below or write the information on plain paper and return with your check to Kate Singletary, 422 Commons Circle Clarendon Hills, Illinois 60514. Confirmations will be sent by email only.

Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

How many tickets @ \$21.00 each? \_\_\_\_\_

Member's email: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: WEST LAKE SHORE-IRTA**

**YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR TICKET(S) AT THE EVENT.**

**DIRECTIONS ON PARKING AND MEETING LOCATION AT THE ART GALLERY TO BE SENT BY EMAIL IN MAY.**

**LUNCHEON COSTS AND DETAILS TO BE SENT IN MAY.**

**QUESTIONS? CALL KATE AT 508-737-1336**

## Adopt a School 2020

This school year WLSU will be partnering with Walsh Elementary School in Summit. To date we don't have a supply list from the principal. As soon as we have one, we will send it to you via Constant Contact email. Watch for it. We will include instructions about drop offs, or you can wait till the September membership meeting to bring your school supplies for Walsh. Again this year staff from Wharton, last year's school will attend our May luncheon. Hope to see you all there.

**Julie Jeter, past president, Adopt a School**

### Mark Your Calendar— 2020

May 13, Wednesday	Membership Luncheon	Greek Islands	11:15 a.m.
June 9, Tuesday	Executive Board Meeting	Plymouth Place	10:00 a.m.
June 10, Wednesday	Area Three Conference	Bradley, Illinois	
June 23, Tuesday	Frida Kahlo Group Tour/Lunch	College of DuPage	11:00 to 3:00
August 4, Tuesday	Executive Board Meeting	Plymouth Place	10:00 a.m.
September 8, Tuesday	Membership Meeting	Hinsdale Community House	10:00 a.m.
October 20, Tuesday	Executive Board Meeting	Plymouth Place	10:00 a.m.
December 4, Friday	Membership Luncheon	William Tell/Holiday Inn	11:00 a.m.

## Health Insurance (TRIP)

In case you missed the email from CMS:

### Attention TRIP and Medicare Advantage Participants (February 6, 2020)

The Department of Central Management Services (CMS) has partnered with HMS Employer Solutions to conduct the Dependent Eligibility Verification Audit, also known as DEVA.

DEVA is the Dependent Eligibility Verification Audit which validates the eligibility of dependents covered by State-administered insurance plans through records submitted by the Member.

The DEVA audit will be implemented in three phases addressing three groups. Only two of the groups affect retired teachers. The groups are Retirees/Survivors not covered by the Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug (MAPD) plans, and Retirees/Survivors covered by an MAPD plan, over the course of the year. Failure to recertify will result in termination of the Dependent's coverage.

### 1st Phase: Retirees/Survivors not covered by an MAPD plan

Audit Period: January 27-March 20.

Terminations effective April 1

Phone number: 855-424-0849

At the conclusion of the audit, Dependents for whom the Member does not provide verification documents will be terminated. **IF YOU ARE IN PHASE 1, YOU SHOULD HAVE OR WILL BE RECEIVING NOTIFICATION FROM HMS.**

## Go Green

We all like to save time and money. Help WLSU do that by agreeing to receive the Direct Line by email rather than by snail mail. Choosing email would save about \$2830 a year, not to mention the time it takes to pick up, stamp, label, sticker, and deliver the newsletter to the post office. This option is particularly useful for snow birds since you can access the latest WLSU news wherever you are if you have access to WiFi and a computer or mobile phone. Just a reminder: You don't have to print the luncheon coupon to send it in. If you don't have a printer, just write the information requested on a plain sheet of paper and mail it with your check. If you have an email address but have not provided it to us, please do so. We do not divulge your personal information to anyone. If you agree to email delivery, please contact Marge Sucansky at 630-985-2620 or [sucansky@comcast.net](mailto:sucansky@comcast.net).



### IRTA State & Local Unit Membership Form

828 S. Second St., 4th Floor • Springfield, IL 62704 • 1-800-728-4782  
e-mail: [irta@irtaonline.org](mailto:irta@irtaonline.org) • webpage: [www.irtaonline.org](http://www.irtaonline.org)

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 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

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

- Local Unit Dues
- First Year Free

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature required for Dues Deduction)

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_  
(Only required for Dues Deduction)

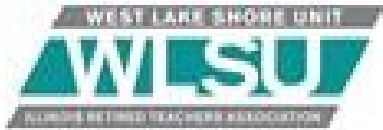
Please print or use your return address label.

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.

**There is a sufficiency in the world for Man's need but not for Man's greed.**

**Gandhi**



**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”

**Send for your Frida Kahlo tickets NOW—only 100 available. See P 6**

**May 13 Luncheon at Greek Islands. Information on P. 4; RSVP by April 29**