

Direct Line



Newsletter of West Lake Shore Unit, Illinois Retired Teachers Association

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

www.wlsu.weebly.com

WLSU Luncheon—September 13 and Meet your IRTA—October 12, p. 7

President's Message

You have probably all heard about the stopgap budget that was passed by the legislature on Wednesday, June 29. It is some movement forward, but as we all know, the issue of revenue must be discussed and approved to provide real help for Illinois. Check out the IRTA website www.irtaonline.org for a complete explanation of what happened in the legislature if you did not get the email I sent.

So far the summer has been rather pleasant, but I do not look forward to the next couple of months which will be difficult because we will be bombarded with campaign propaganda from all parties. We are going to see and hear things about all the November candidates for office, some of which may be true, but many of which may be pure falsehood or exaggeration. Before we make any decisions, we must check out the source of the information and whether it is true or not. We cannot allow politicians to hit emotional buttons and coerce us into believing blindly what is being said. A great deal is at stake in the upcoming election--possibly every moral and ethical construct upon which our country was built. Keep informed of the facts. Check the IRTA website for candidate endorsements and news on www.irtaonline.org.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the summer. See you in the fall. **Marge Sucansky**

IRTA HOTLINE--For the latest news about pensions, health care, or other vital information, check the IRTA Legislative Hotline at 1-800-660-3326. This site is especially beneficial to those of you who do not have access to the Internet and do not receive Voter Voice calls to action. During times of crisis, call the Hotline to keep abreast of events. WLSU will do our best to keep you up to date concerning events, but don't hesitate to check out the Hotline as well.

Mark Your Calendar

August 3, Wed. September 13, Tues. October 12, Wed. October 18, Tues. December 2, Fri.	Executive Board Meeting Member Lunch/Monuments Men Special Event—Updates from IRTA Executive Board Meeting Membership Luncheon	Plymouth Place Ashton Place William Tell Holiday Inn Plymouth Place Ashton Place	9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m.
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WLSU Contact Information				
President Marjorie Sucansky 630-985-2620 sucansky@comcast.net	Membership Tom Szot 630-852-3138 jtszot@comcast.net	Membership Darlene McNamara 773-429-1779 darcarmac@aol.com	Treasurer Louise Sterett 630-325-6470 Lsterett@joimail.com	Foundation Frances Pettersen 630-985-7508 narfp@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.wlsu.weebly.com				

Membership Report

Believe it or not, but our state has produced a number of fine politicians who, as true statesmen, were willing to work for the good of the state and nation without first thinking of personal gain or glory. Think of Adlai Stevenson, Paul Douglas, Everett Dirksen, and Abraham Lincoln. They did not take the attitude that it's my way or the highway despite the damage, present and future, this attitude inflicts on the state's residents. After a year without a budget, the best our leaders could do is pass a stopgap measure to get them past the November election. They hope the voters will forget the economic debacle they have created over the years that has led us to this point. What are we, as retired teachers, to do to safeguard our economic future?

Choose the best answer from choices below:

_____ Move out of the state fast.

(Wrong answer. Since your pension comes from this state and follows you, how does this help?)

_____ Let someone else worry about it since you're retired.

(Wrong answer. It's your pension that is under attack no matter if you're active or retired. Being retired does not mean that the state can't find a way to change your pension despite the Senate Bill 1 decision of the Illinois Supreme Court. A constitutional amendment could change the wording protecting your pension.)

_____ Trust that reason will return and there will be compromise and good will among our state's leaders who will recognize their obligation to serve the state's residents as they vowed in taking the oath of office.

(Wrong Answer. You must be kidding, picking this answer.)

_____ Make a difference by banding together in strength and refusing to buckle under to phony threats and dire forecasts of economic doom.

(Right answer. By picking this answer you have shown yourself to be an IRTA/WLSU member who is very interested in keeping the pension you've earned after a career in education.)

If an organization is weak and non-vocal, politicians won't give it a second glance. The IRTA has shown over these past years that it won't be dictated to by Illinois politicians or by any organization looking to make a deal without thinking fully of the consequences to retired teachers. The IRTA's main goal is protection of your TRS pension and health benefits. It has proven by past actions that it will act whenever these are threatened. The IRTA is strong and is vocal in protecting your rights. What your IRTA needs is even more strength, gained by an increase in membership. Moving in the right direction, the membership number recently edged above the 37,000 mark. However, this is only one-third of all TRS annuitants. The current aim is 40,000 by the end of next year.

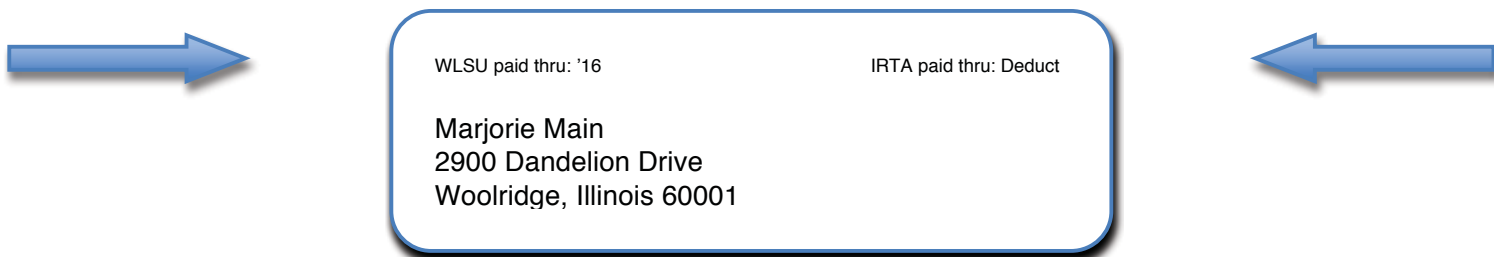
Looking back at the list of Illinois statesmen, undoubtedly the greatest was Abraham Lincoln. While seeking public office in Sangamon County in 1843 he said, "That 'union is strength' is a truth that has been known, illustrated, and declared in various ways and forms in all ages of the world." Help the IRTA/WLSU build strength by recruiting a new member; recruit a current or former colleague or a spouse who was not a teacher. (See the application in this issue.) In union there is strength, and in no union there is probably an uncertain economic future awaiting us all as retired educators. Contact Darlene Mc Namara or Tom Szot for help recruiting new members or to sign-up for a more meaningful role on the membership committee.

The August-September issue of *Direct Line* begins our renewal process for 2017. All current members who pay IRTA and/or WLSU dues on an annual basis will receive a renewal letter the first week of October. This letter will contain a form explaining exactly what is owed and how to proceed. The mailing label on this newsletter will show your current dues status. A '16 behind IRTA and/or WLSU indicates that dues are owed for next year. Any questions about membership, renewals or dues status if you received an emailed newsletter, should be directed to Darlene Mc Namara, 773-429-1779 / darcarmac@aol.com or Tom Szot, 630-852-3138 / jtszot@comcast.net. Please do your part helping out by renewing quickly and for multiple years. Doing so helps a lot since we don't have to contact you more than once. You save both the IRTA & WLSU time and money.

Darlene Mc Namara and Tom Szot, WLSU Membership Chairs

Read Your Label

Dues notices will be mailed the first week in October. Check the label on your newsletter to see if you'll be getting a notice. Your current dues status is indicated.



Note: Marjorie must send in her WLSU dues for 2017.

Her IRTA dues are paid through dues deduction. This means her IRTA dues are deducted from her pension check monthly. She doesn't send any IRTA dues or need to reapply annually.

Please contact Louise Sterett, Darlene McNamara, or Tom Szot with any questions. See the WLSU Contact Information Box in this issue.

WLSU/IRTA Welcomes These New Members

Joan Coronato	Antoinette Cofield	Margaret Bagnola	Louis Thetard	Roberta Meier
Janice Roberts	Michelle Murray	Pamela Doman	Rebecca Russow	Jeffrey Wirtz
Denise Dubin	Mark Thompson	Cynthia McGuckin	Devra Glancy	Linda Svejcar
Karen Madej	Claudia Payne	Doug Whitesell	Cynthia Eukovich	Mary Brody
Mavid Netterstrom	Darlene Kabat	Maureen Zarate	Barbara Grazioso	Robert Russ
Barbara Barr	Donna Schuler	Diane Marelli	Kathleen Drenth	Janet Poleski
Wayne Spychala	William Krause	Suzanne Hennings	John Grizzle	Donita Ries

Reminder to Members

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

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. Contact Darlene McNamara or Tom Szot. See WLSU Contact Information box.

WLSU NEEDS YOU!

Now is the time to get involved. Many of our board and committee members have served for multiple years. We are looking for additional people who are willing to spend a few hours of their time providing our membership with the service and information they have come to expect. **WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF A RECORDING SECRETARY AND A MEMBERSHIP ASSISTANT.** Recording Secretary requires only about 25 hours a year while Membership Assistant requires about 50 hours a year. It is time for others to step up. Please attend a board meeting and become familiar with the various positions. There is one that is just right for you. Contact Marge Sucansky for more information. Come to the next Executive Board meeting on August 3 at Plymouth Place, 9:30 a.m. If you have questions, please call me at 630-985-2620.

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

A Plea to Members—Help Increase Membership

The IRTA spent just under \$600,000 defending your COLA and health benefits before the Illinois Supreme Court. Almost before the ink was dry on the decision, the opposition was planning how to get around it. Currently, Rep. M. Batinick, R-Plainfield (HB 4437) and Rep. Mike Fortner, R- West Chicago (HB 5625) have proposed bills that would allow workers at retirement to take pension benefits as a lump-sum cash payment and give up guaranteed pension payments for life. This is something to watch. The IRTA has been in the forefront protecting retired teachers' benefits and has pledged to sue again if your pension or health benefits are threatened. But, we need more retirees involved in IRTA if we are to succeed in overcoming the challenges ahead.

Two years ago the organization initiated a new membership drive, which attempted to increase membership in IRTA up to 40,000. IRTA is proud to claim about 37,000+ of an estimated 106,000 TRS annuitants. Personal contact is the most effective tool in recruiting new members. That is why we need your help. We are asking every IRTA member to recruit one new member to join our ranks. How?

1. Contact **active teachers** from your former school district. If they are in the **pipeline to retire**, they can join IRTA free for up to four years. They must commit to dues deduct on the application.
2. Contact a **retiree** who is a **nonmember** and invite him/her to join, and/or attend a WLSU meeting or luncheon. Retirees are eligible for free, current year membership by choosing dues deduction on the application.
3. Sign up your **spouse or significant other** as an **Associate Member** of IRTA. Many of our WLSU Board members have done this. Associate Membership is available to noncertified individuals and is only \$25.00 per year or Life Membership for \$125.00. Associate Members are also eligible for all benefits offered through AMBA, our Member Benefits provider. If a surviving spouse is already an Associate Life member, he/she may continue as an Active Life member without further dues payment.

Please consider one or more of these options to help us create a strong voice for retired educators. Our future depends on our strength and there's strength in numbers. **Darlene McNamara**

In Memoriam

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

Annette Werle Elizabeth Spaulding William G. Bell Karen Hennessey
Dr. Walter Molo, Jr. Dorothy Ondracek

Please Take the Time to Give Us Some Feedback

The WLSU board is constantly in search of programs for our membership meetings that will be informative and interesting to members. In addition, if you know of any venues that could host our membership meetings with sufficient parking, please let us know. Please take the time to give us some feedback about recent programs or speakers or entertainers you would be interested in hearing in the future and possible venues. Drop me an email at sucansky@comcast.net.

Recording Secretary Leaves Position

Judy Mengel who has served as recording secretary for the last two years has stepped down from that position. We are grateful for her service to the WLSU community and wish her the best.

Thanks to Phone Tree Callers

Keeping all WLSU members informed of important legislation affecting their benefits and pensions, cancellations of meetings, and other information, Vic Corder maintains a phone tree. Currently 20 callers contact 122 members who do not have access to email. Through this list and emails, we are able to reach 99% of our members in times of emergency. He enlists WLSU members who are willing to make these calls. If you live out of state, please give us an email address, as we don't ask callers to contact long distance. Victor is always seeking more people to do this important job to reduce the number of calls each person must make. The job is a minimum time commitment as the phone tree is not activated that often. Consider volunteering.

We will acknowledge current phone tree volunteers in a future *Direct Line*, but for now we recognize the following people who made countless calls over the years, but have resigned from their positions on the phone tree. We sincerely thank them for their service.

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|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Larry Bond | Tom Rusnak | Rita Brady | Lois Catrambone | Susan Druffel |
| Holly Haberle | Janet Kriechelt | Carmen Lange | Trudy O'Reilly | Pat Pacholski |
| Rosemary Padula | Rosemary Pietrzak | Sanlee Radigan | Nancy Sullivan | John Vespo |
| Brenda Wilson | Laura Wisinski | Beth Zika | | |



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

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

- Local Unit Dues**
- First Year Free

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

(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
PHONE ()	E-MAIL	UNIT West Lake Shore	SCHOOL DISTRICT RETIRED FROM

Please mail to IRTA.

Tips for a Healthy Heart

A number of interesting articles about heart health appeared in both print and online media during February, American Heart Month. In an article by Melissa Hollander in the Daily Herald, she states that “an estimated 82 million Americans suffer from some form of cardiovascular disease. One in four Americans have heart-related problems.”

Robert Gordon, a cardiologist at Northshore University Health System, gives the following heart health tips:

1. Get on a regular exercise plan. Even slight exercise is better than none. (Always check with your medical professional before starting an exercise plan.)
2. Eat healthier. Eat more fruits and vegetables and fewer processed foods. My Plate guidelines suggest that half your plate should be fruits and vegetables.
3. Rest. 7-8 hours of sleep per night will help reduce stress in your life.
4. Maintain a healthy weight.
5. Move more. In addition to regular exercise other movement throughout the day reduces risk for heart disease.
6. Laugh. Did you know that laughing dilates blood vessels, increasing blood flow and reducing blood pressure?
7. Companionship. Marriage, pets, and socialization with others shows positive benefits such as lower blood pressure numbers and less stress. Barbara Grabowski, FYI Committee

"Knowledge is Power" -- A few reliable websites on Health and Aging

1. NIH Senior Health, nihseniorhealth.gov contains health and wellness information for older adults from the National Institute of Health.

2. MedlinePlus offers comprehensive information on health conditions, wellness issues and more in easy to read language.

3. Next AvenuePBS, www.nextavenue.org. Is public media's first and only national service for America's booming 50+ population.

4. Rush Generations is a free comprehensive health and aging membership program designed to help older adults and family caregivers achieve health and well-being. 888 352 7874

5. Mayo Clinic, www.mayoclinic.org, Clinical experts provide current medical information and news on health topics. Maureen Lyons FYI Committee

Giving Back...Adopt a School...School Partnership

I was unsure of a specific title for this article, and so I used more than one, all of which describe this project and hopefully, at least one, that will catch your interest so you continue reading.

Last year WLSU started, what we hope will be a new tradition, of assisting a school within our unit's borders by helping it with needed school supplies. In 2015 we assisted Walker Elementary School in Bedford Park, donating numerous items from backpacks to zippered pencil cases. This project was a huge success, and so this year we once again put out a letter to district superintendents asking for their interest in partnering with us. We had a number of responses, up from the one we had had in 2015, and chose to work with the first school that replied which happened to be Westchester School District 92-5. The superintendent, Michael Dziallo, stated that the district uses inquiry-based strategies through project-based learning, and consequently, was always in need of various supplies. He shared that he was certain teachers often purchased needed supplies with their own money. The teachers would be most appreciative of any assistance they could receive with supplies, thus making their jobs just a bit easier.

Here are a list of needed supplies:

Scissors	Glue Sticks	Play Dough 5 oz. can	Toothpicks	Meter Sticks	Balloons
Rulers	Straws	Dry Erase Markers	Pencils	Plastic Wrap	Paper Clips
Rubber Bands		Zip Lock Bags—gallon & sandwich			

Let's continue our new tradition, help active teachers and students, and build good-will with our active colleagues. Feel free to drop off donation at any WLSU function or at 427 North Waiola, La Grange Park.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project. Julie Jeter

IRTAPAC

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.

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. That questionnaire has been sent out to legislators, asking them to fill it out and return it by July 5 if they would like to be considered for endorsement by IRTA. If you are interested in viewing the questionnaire, please contact IRTA legislative member for WLSU, Vic Corder at 773-857-2161 or vcorder@rcn.com. There is currently \$110,000 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 the pension check. Look for the form on the website www.irtaonline.org.

WLSU Fall Luncheon

Tuesday, September 13, 2016, at Ashton Place

341 75th St, Willowbrook, IL 60527

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 August 26, 2016. No telephone reservations. Make Checks payable to **West Lake Shore Unit**.

Member Name (s) _____

Guest Name (s) _____

email address _____

Phone _____ Total \$ _____

Entree Choices:

Filet of Chicken Breast with Lemon Herb Sauce

Herb Crusted Tilapia

Peppercorn Crusted Sirloin

NO ENTRÉE SUBSTITUTIONS AT THE LUNCHEON!!!

If you want confirmation of receipt of your reservation, please include your email.

WLSU Fall Luncheon

Tuesday, September 13, 2016, 11:15-2:15

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

Program:

Jeff Mishur, an art historian who holds both an MA and BA in the History of Art from Northern Illinois University, will be presenting "The Monuments Men."

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

Ashton Place is located on SW corner of 75th St and Clarendon Hills Rd. Enter from Clarendon Hills Rd.

Meet Your IRTA—October 12

Plan to attend a membership meeting at William Tell, Holiday Inn, 6201 Joliet Rd., Countryside. Enter the parking lot from Joliet Road. We will be in the Veranda Room right off the parking lot. Guest speakers will be Jim Bachman, Executive Director of IRTA, and Dave Davison, IRTA President, who will bring us up to date on what is or is not happening in Springfield and what we may be able to expect in the future. Larry Neuman from AMBA will also highlight IRTA benefits to which your membership entitles you. Time: 10-11:30 a.m.

THE NEW PROCESS:

STEP 1

When it is time to renew your driver's license or if you are a new driver in Illinois, visit a Secretary of State Driver Services facility.



STEP 2

Take the vision, written and road tests (if necessary).



STEP 3

Take your photo at the facility.



STEP 4

Receive your temporary, secure paper driver's license at the facility and your old driver's license/ID card will be returned to you.



STEP 5

After fraud checks have been conducted, your new permanent driver's license/ID card will be mailed to you within 15 business days.

New Process for Distributing Illinois Driver's Licenses

Beginning this May, the Secretary of State's office will begin implementing a new process for distributing Illinois driver's licenses and ID cards.

Under this new practice, called "Central Issuance," Driver Services facilities will no longer be issuing a permanent driver's license or ID card onsite.

Instead, an applicant's information will be sent away for fraud checks, and Driver Services facilities will issue the applicant a temporary, paper copy of their driver's license or ID card, which is valid for 45 days.

After fraud checks have been conducted, a permanent, more secure and newly redesigned license or ID card will be issued and mailed to the recipient within 15 days.

The new license or ID card has upgraded security features to help better protect against fraud and identity theft.

Residents with a valid driver's license or ID card are NOT required to obtain a new, redesigned card until their current card expires. License and card fees will NOT be affected by the redesigns.

For more information on these changes, check out [this brochure provided](#) by the Secretary of State's office, visit cyberdriveillinois.com, or call the Secretary of State's office at **217-782-7044**.

Source of information: Senator Michael Connelly email 5/26/16

Emissions Test Reminders—The Secretary of State has reinstated the mailing of reminders for drivers to get emission tests on their vehicles.



West Lake Shore Unit *Direct Line* Newsletter

Marjorie Sucansky, President
2942 Crabtree Avenue
Woodridge, Illinois 60517

Direct Line mailer: Moira Dowell

September Luncheon Coupon on P. 7 -The Monuments Men
Meet Your IRTA—October 12

DIRECT LINE

"Investing in the FUTURE of retired teachers"