

*LIVINGSTON COUNTY  
RETIREED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER  
(Navana Ahrends, Editor)*

*MEETING DATE: Tuesday, April 16*

*LOCATION: ELKS COUNTRY CLUB*

*(459 Elks Club Rd. Pontiac, IL 61764)*

*8:30 Registration*

*9:00 - 9:30 Breakfast Buffet*

*9:30: Introductions & Opening Remarks*

*Program and Business Meeting to Follow*

*PROGRAM "On with the Show"  
Presented by Odell Grade School Students  
Under the Direction of Sandy Erickson*

*GUEST SPEAKERS*

*Doug Strand, endorsed TRS candidate*

*Introduced by John Flaherty, IRTA Vice President*

*Navana Ahrends, Area 1 Region 7 Director*

*AMBA Representative Lori Fairfield*

*Larry Newman, District Manager*

*PLAN NOW TO ATTEND*

*For Reservations Contact: Navana Ahrends 504 E. Columbus  
Pontiac, IL 61764 (815-842-0579)*

*PLEASE NOTE:*

**Reservation Sheet sent by separate email for those with email.  
Newsletters that are mailed will include a copy of the reservation sheet.**

## WELCOME TO THE FIRST MEETING OF THE 2019 UNIT YEAR

As you can see by the cover page a nice program is planned and the speakers will present very important information in a variety of ways. It is a good time to come out and renew acquaintances and enjoy getting out in nice spring weather (hopefully)!!

We encourage you to invite fellow retired teachers who may or may not be members of IRTA or the unit. The information to be given by Doug Strand and John Flaherty is very important to all of us who are retired teachers. We just ask that reservations be made.

Hope to see you there

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

As mentioned on the cover page some Odell Grade School students will present a musical program entitled "On with the Show". According to Sandy "we are borrowing from the opening number of a short musical we are doing on April 11. The premise is that we need more musicians for our show, and we are auditioning them."

It just so happens that Sandy is retiring this year, but she is already an IRTA member as a Pipeline member. She has already joined our LCRTA unit, too. Congratulations on her soon to be retirement, and we welcome her into our unit.

## IN MEMORIUM

The following members have passed away since our October meeting.

Roger Coventry	10/15/18	Patricia Johnson	12/15/18
Elaine Young	10/18/18	Joanne Mullen	12/19/18
Laura Bruer	10/21/18	Larry Exton	12/24/18
Russell Munch	11/15/18	Eileen Weller	01/03/19
Dorothy Attig	12/01/18	John Reis	02/15/19

A donation from LCRTA is sent to the IRTA Foundation in their memory. IRTA is notified and a card from our unit is sent to the family letting them know that a memorial is being given.

**A Helpful Note:** If you know of a member who has passed away, please let us know about that and the date. It is also helpful if you have an address for next of kin. Sue or I have access to The Leader or the Pantagraph, but not other news media so it is important that you let one of us know right away. Don't assume that we know.

### **YEARBOOK AND DIRECTORY FOR 2019**

These will be available for you to pick up at the April meeting. If you cannot be there, they will be mailed. We try to see that everyone gets a copy of the book. If you are overlooked, please contact Alberta Kinate or Cathy Montgomery.

If you notice any errors in the book, please let us know immediately so we can place the information on a list to correct next time. Every effort has been made to see that everything is up to date as of April 1, but sometimes something slips by us. For this contact Sue Schnell or Navana Ahrends.

Maggie Gibb deserves a big thank you for the work she has put into getting the book typed and ready to go to the printer, but also in getting the general membership list ready in alphabetical order. This took a lot of time and patience with corrections, additions, deletions, etc., sent to her quite often.

**THANKS, MAGGIE! YOU DID A GREAT JOB!**

### **LCRTA'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

In order to support this scholarship program we have a 50/50 raffle at each meeting in order to help raise funds for this. Remember that we give 2 - \$250 scholarships each year and possibly 3 if an additional one seems worthy.

If you don't choose to participate in the 50/50 raffle at the meeting, private donations are always accepted. Just make out your check to LCRTA and mark Scholarship in the memo line. The check can be turned in at the meeting or mailed to Navana Ahrends until further notice. Sue will be back, but she is in Arizona currently with her family there.

We do appreciate the donations.

### **LEGISLATIVE REPORT FROM DON GIBB**

To: IRTA Region 7 Unit Presidents and Legislative Chairpersons

From: Don Gibb, Region 7 Representative to the IRTA Legislative Committee

Re: IRTA Legislative Committee Report

I recently attended the IRTA Legislative Committee meeting in Springfield. Many of you may have received a report of that meeting. If you did not receive the report, you can find it in its entirety on the IRTA website. In this report I will summarize some of the information that was provided at the meeting and additional information that may be helpful in any report you provide to your unit members. The 2019 Legislative Committee Goals as determined by the committee members are as follows:

1. Coordinate in-district meetings of local IRTA members with their legislators to educate and inform their legislators on IRTA issues.
2. In each region, the regional chair shall attempt to annually attend one unit meeting in order to promote a greater understanding of the connection of IRTA to the local units.

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3. Maintain actuarial funding for TRS and oppose any change in funding law that adversely affects the financial health of TRS.

4. Maintain continuing appropriation funding for TRIP and oppose any change in funding law that adversely affects the financial health of TRIP.

5. Oppose any taxing of retirement income.

6. Work to repeal WEP(Windfall Elimination Provision)/GPO(Government Pension Offset).

I mentioned in a previous communication that I moved in November from Livingston Co. to Naperville. However, I was asked to complete my term as Region 7 Rep. to the ITRA Legislative Comm. I will do so and would be available to follow through with Goals 1 and 2. Please contact me if you wish me to coordinate any meetings with legislators or attend any unit meetings. I have attached a list of the current members of the Illinois General Assembly representing Region 7 units and their contact information. Only one change occurred in the fall election. Lance Yednock(D) defeated Jerry Long(R) in the 76th Representative District.

Regarding Goal 3, I refer you to the Feb. 21, 2019, IRTA Legislative Update on the IRTA website for a complete report on Governor Pritzker's recommendation in his budget address to reduce contributions to TRS by \$576 million. The Governor did propose the full funding for the Teachers' Health Insurance fund. I have attached a paper from the IRTA titled, "The State of Illinois is in financial trouble." I also refer you to an article that can be found on the Internet titled, "Illinois Turns Warily to Bonds to Plug \$134 Billion Pension Hole" written by Amanda Albright and Danielle Moran dated February 20.

The graduated income tax proposed by Gov. Pritzker does not include taxing retirement income tax. Despite this, the issue is not dead. There is an informative column by Mark Miller at Reuters dated Feb. 28 with the title, "Illinois budget debate raises key questions on taxing retirement income."

You probably received previously from IRTA details concerning attempts to repeal WEP/GPO. This is a federal issue which affects the personal and spousal Social Security benefits of retirees.

There have been numerous bills introduced in the Illinois General Assembly this current session that could potentially effect retirees. According to Andrew Bodewes, IRTA Contract Lobbyist, and Jim Bachman, IRTA Ex. Director, most of these will not move forward in this session. I will keep you informed about any significant legislation that does move forward this session. The legislature will be in recess from April 13th - 29th so legislators may be home in their district offices during this time. This would be a good opportunity to meet with legislators.

Again, if you have any questions or requests, please do not hesitate to contact me. Don Gibb 4019 Lobo Lane, Naperville, IL 60564 309-824-0578

## VOTING INFORMATION FOR TRS ANUITANT

### **DON'T FORGET TO VOTE**

**For whom?** Doug Strand

**Why?** He is an IRTA Member and Endorsed Candidate for TRS Annuitant Trustee.

**When?** Elections for TRS Trustee Annuitant will start April 1<sup>st</sup>. Electronic voting will be available April 1 through 10 a.m. on May 1.

**How?** Emails will be sent to those retirees that have an email address on file with TRS. Those that do not, will receive a mailed ballot. Please remind all your members to vote. Specific instructions are given when you receive your ballot.

**Importance of Voting?** It is very important that IRTA be represented on the TRS Board. **Every vote at that time is important.**

**Doug Strand** is the endorsed candidate for the IRTA. Here are some of the reasons you are encouraged to vote for Doug.

- He was endorsed by the IRTA so would keep their best interest alive in his voting.
- The IRTA is the only organization that totally deals with teacher retirement issues, including most of all our pensions and our health care issues (among other things).
- Doug was chosen from a field of nine members who were interviewed for the endorsement, including Cinda Klickna.

Further Explanation about Cinda: Because she did not receive the endorsement, Cinda circulated petitions on her own by contacting local retired teacher units asking them to support her for nomination as an Annuitant Trustee Candidate. Her name will be on the ballot.

Why is IRTA concerned? “**All retired educators should be extremely concerned** with Klickna’s position on our pension and health care issues, as exhibited during her years serving on the TRS Board. Giving just one example, under her leadership, IEA supported a bill that would have allowed a diminishment of retiree benefits. The proposed impairment of benefits was disguised as an advantageous choice between health insurance benefits and continuing to receive our “COLA”. This negotiated bill by the unions was not in the best interest of retired teachers.” (Constant Contact)

- It is important that we have IRTA representation on the TRS Board.

**Please keep in mind that all annuitants who receive money from the TRS are eligible to vote.**

Why is this important? Hopefully you will take the responsibility to inform your friends and fellow retirees about the situation so they can better understand what is going on and the importance of voting for the IRTA endorsed candidate, **Doug Strand.**

Taken from Constant Contact received April 2: **“If you are trying to vote for Doug Strand online and having difficulties, contact TRS at 1.877.927.5877.**

Please wait to speak with an operator and request to talk with Kathy Boehme: she will be able to assist you with the online voting process.”

**Thank you for your time and support! IRTA**

If you do not receive a ballot, contact TRS and they will send you one.

**EVERY VOTE COUNTS. EVERY VOTE FOR DOUG IS A VOTE FOR IRTA.**

### **BENEFIT CHOICE PERIOD FOR HEALTH INSURANCE**

**For TRIP participants May 1 through May 31**

(This is not for the participants currently enrolled in the State of Illinois Medicare Advantage Plan (TRAIL). Theirs will be in the fall.)

This is the time to make changes in TRIP coverage and to enroll yourself and eligible dependents.

A new law allows TRS members and their dependents who have preciously opted out of TRIP to re-enroll in the program only during the annual open enrollment period or for other qualifying enrollment opportunities.

The information about the Benefit Choice Period will be mailed to retirees currently enrolled in TRIP at the end of April.

**If you do not want to change your coverage, you do not have to do anything.** Your current coverage will continue.

(The above information is taken from the 2019 SPRING – TOPICS & REPORT NEWSLETTER)

Published date: Fri. March 29, 2019 Received by email April 4, 2019

### **AREA 1 LEADERSHIP TRAINING SESSIONS**

(Note these dates are later than in the past.)

June 18 -- IVCC, LaSalle/Peru, IL OR June 19 -- Holiday Inn Moline/Rock Island  
Registration Cost \$15 Our unit pays this for attendees.

We do not have a lot of information at this time, but we do know the format will be changed somewhat from what it has been. We will get information to you when we know more about the plans.

Keep in mind this training is open to all members, not just officers. It is a good opportunity to learn more about IRTA and meet the leadership team.

Please let Marjorie Ehrhardt know if you are interested in attending.

The registration date will certainly be before our next meeting so she needs to know probably no later than May 1.