

Williamson County Retired Teachers Association
General Meeting -- August 8, 2012. 1:30 P.M.
Held at Western Sizzlin Restaurant, Marion, IL.

Following lunch, President Dee Ozment, called the meeting to order and welcomed all present, about 55 members, with 9 newly retired teachers being here for their first meeting. All present were encouraged to join and sign up for notices, with the Newsletter in the PDF format.

The Treasurer's report shows a balance of \$4337.99. Report was moved, seconded, and approved. Minutes of Retirees' meeting, moved, seconded and approved with the correct spelling of John and Judi Harlands last name. Steve Maxwell, Membership Chair, is working on a web site with weebly.com. to help reduce expenses from the Franklin-Williamson Regional Office of Education.

Matt Donkin, Regional Superintendent of Schools spoke on issues his office deals with, such as: certifying and licensing teachers. Also there will be a re-organization on July 1, 2015. Currently there are 44 regional offices, with about 35 in the future.

Representative John Bradley joined our meeting. (He was on his way to Carbondale Hospital to see his dad who was having a heart procedure.) (The Congressman also mentioned that both of his parents are retired teachers.) He stated there is "Nothing for sure" regarding the pension system. There could be action taken in Springfield on August 17. Bradley said he would look at it, listen to people, then try to make a responsible vote that is sustainable. Nothing has been decided. Gov. Quinn does not have a plan. Madigan has not made a decision either. Everything is up in the air. He stressed that until he understands what the plan is, he will not act on it. There will be reform at some point, but we don't know what the pieces are.

He continued saying not sure if there will be a vote on the 17th. Quinn called this special session, but he has no plan. There will be reform -- just not sure what the pieces are. There are ways of reform that are constitutional. There is no bill." Bradley's phone number is 618-997-9697. He said for us to call his office with specifics. Let him know -- be specific - what are the pieces we are against. Bradley left the meeting, heading to Carbondale.

Anna Morris, Legislative, encouraged everyone to ^Google the Governor's ^{name}.

Bob Campbell introduced Bill Funkhauser, Region 6 Representative on the IRTA Board. Mr. Funkhauser gave interesting information and statistics. If a teacher wants to reinstate their certificate, the lapsed certificate deadline is September 1, 2012; the average annual Illinois Teacher Pension is \$46,500; the average Williamson County teacher pension is \$37,417; that average is well below the state average; there are 735 retired teachers in Williamson County; average age of retired teachers in Williamson County is 70.

Mr. Funkhauser continued: Quinn has called for reform of Medicaid and pension system; Madigan wants to shift normal cost of pension from the state to the school district.

Continuing, if IRTA has to go to Court, there will be an establishment of legal defense fund. Asking for each person to contribute \$10 towards this fund. As of now there is a balance of \$18,000 in this fund. (Many people present gave Bill a donation of \$10.00.

VOTER VOICE is used by IRTA to notify members of informal notices or action notices.

Anna urged those present to contact representatives this next week. For health insurance, if anyone has Medicare, it is a simple choice. If anyone does not have Medicare, it is more complicated.

Mr. Campbell handed out "Dirty Dozen" Facts About Our Retirement System. This is adapted from information shared by TRS Trustee Cynthia O'Neill. At the bottom of the handout, there are ways to help.

Mr. Ozment encouraged all to do something. "We make a difference. Our voice counts."

President Ozment thanked all for coming. He gave a closing prayer and mentioned Ed Bradley (John's dad).

The next meeting will be held at St. Paul's Parish Center in Johnston City on October 29, 2012. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 P.M.

Marge Mangon
Secretary