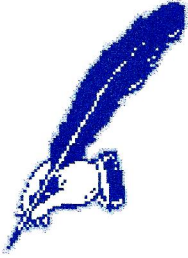
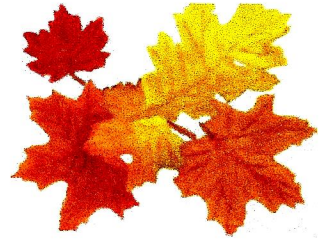


WCRTA

Fall, 2014



Oct. 20
St. Paul
Parish
Center
in J.C.

Dear Fellow Retiree,

WCRTA members and other Illinois retirees continue to cool their heels while the lawsuits filed by IRTA and others wend their way through the ponderously slow judicial process. Observers continue to contend that we stand an excellent chance of prevailing, especially since the July action by the Illinois Supreme Court known as the Kanerva decision reinforced the sanctity of the Pension Clause. Current status of our case is that it is still in the “fact-finding” phase and the litigants are preparing their arguments for possible presentation before the court. This phase will likely not be complete until after the fall election (Are you surprised at that?) and may even go well into 2015. Be assured that IRTA and legal counsel are monitoring the process.

Staying on top of the lawsuit means the expenditure of more monies from the Legal Defense Fund. Although IRTA has collected more than \$350,000 in contributions, chances are good that they will be exhausted by the end of the year—with much more legal maneuvering to be accomplished in early 2015. This means we need to continue to contribute to the IRTA Legal Defense Fund. Send yours to IRTA at 620 N. Walnut, Springfield, IL 62702. Designate Legal Defense Fund in the memo line of your check.

In a related matter, we need to expand the base of contributors to the fund. After you make another contribution yourself, tell your friends who are retired to follow your lead, even if they are not IRTA members. Better yet, encourage them to join you in IRTA and in Williamson County RTA Unit 86. There is strength in numbers and we need to reach the 60,000 retired educators who are not yet IRTA members. (WCRTA has a higher percentage of those eligible to be members who are in our local organization, but we are barely at 50% of our potential.) I hope I can count on you to join with me in supporting this cause and helping to increase our membership.

Our fall meeting will be Monday, October 20, at St. Paul Catholic Church Recreation Center on N. Washington Street in Johnston City. In addition to the great pies we always have at this meeting, we will be privileged to have fellow retiree Cynthia O’Neill of Nashville, IL as our speaker. Cynthia is one of two elected annuitants on the TRS Board and has represented us well for several years. She has announced that she will not run for reelection when her term ends in 2015, so this may be our final opportunity to hear her pertinent comments and extend our thanks for a job well done. Plan now to be at the 1:30 PM meeting to hear Cynthia and have a piece of that good pie!

Finally, I reiterate my usual plea to remain vigilant; become better informed; let our legislators know how we feel; join and support IRTA; sign up for and use IRTA’s Voter Voice; join IRTAPAC with a \$1 monthly payroll deduction from your TRS check; and, most importantly, **send a personal check to IRTA for the Legal Defense Fund.**

Bob Campbell
WCRTA President & IRTA
Region 18 Legislative Liaison

Re: Legislative Update

Fr: Anna Morris

Insurance

Watch your mail! For individuals and dependents covered by TRIP and state employees' insurance enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B on or prior to Sept. 30, 2014, or presently enrolled in the Medicare Advantage Program, an **open enrollment period will be held from October 15 to November 15**. The Department of Central Management Services will be sending you a packet of materials outlining your enrollment choices and application forms.

Coverage will begin January 1, 2015. Please be aware that unless you select coverage under one of these state-sponsored Medicare Advantage programs, your state-subsidized insurance will be dropped.

Presently the only eligible company for Williamson County is United Health Care. We do not know if additional choices (perhaps Health Alliance) will be available for Williamson County at this time. Other Medicare Advantage companies approved by CMS include Coventry Advantra HMO, Health Alliance MAPD HMO, and Humana Health. As noted, please check your mail.

Please note: CMS has scheduled an informational seminar on the 2015 program on October 31, 2014, at the Main Building of John A. Logan College in Carterville. Times are 9:30 a.m.-11.30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.-3.30 p.m. Same info will be provided at both morning and afternoon sessions.

You may also check the CMS website after October 6 for information about the 2015 Medicare Advantage program: <http://www2.illinois.gov/cms/employees/benefits/trail/Pages/default.aspx>

Pension Lawsuit

In a status conference held Sept. 4, 2014, Sangamon Co. Circuit Judge John Belz ruled that the Supreme Court's decision in the state employees' insurance case is a major factor in the pension lawsuit and thus it can be "fast tracked." Therefore, the lawsuit might be resolved by year's end.

Judge Belz gave the State until October 3, 2014, to respond to plaintiffs' motions asking the court to rule PA 98-599 unconstitutional without the necessity of a trial. Consequently, pre-trial activities such as taking depositions, obtaining expert witnesses, and so forth would not be necessary if he decides in the plaintiffs' favor.

Teacher retirees' and other plaintiffs' attorneys are cautiously optimistic that he will do so. The State would then appeal, thus sending the case to the Supreme Court for their consideration before the end of the year.

The next status hearing is scheduled on October 8, 2014.

The IRTA projects that our legal defense fund will be exhausted by the end of December and that additional donations are needed.

Educational Matters

Gubernatorial candidate Bruce Rauner has released his "Education Plan." Among its many items, the plan severely reduces teacher tenure, bases teacher advancement on student progress scores, calls for more charter schools, and reshapes public pension programs along the lines of 401-K programs.

For more information: Teachers Retirement System(TRS): 1.800.877.7896 <http://trs.illinois.gov/> Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA): 1.800.728.4782 www.irtaonline.org

To contact legislators: Rep. John Bradley: 997-9697/ (217) 782-1051 Sen. Gary Forby: (618) 439-2504/ (217) 782-5509

Williamson County Retired Teachers' Association Treasurer's Report

9/9/14

Beginning Balance		@2,687.95
Income (Dues)		\$195
Expenses		
IRTA Foundation	\$30	
Membership Meeting (Lions Club)	\$175	
		\$205
Ending Balance	9/9/14	\$2,677.95

Don Kragness, Treasurer

It is time to pay your 2014 Local and State Dues. A red "X" by your name on the mailing label means your Local dues for 2014 are NOT paid. Please make your \$5.00 Check to WCRTA. Mail to :

Don Kragness
14802 Poor Farm Road
Johnston City, IL 62951

IT IS IMPORTANT! DO IT TODAY.

New Benefit

United Health Care (as well as other insurances) offers the Silversneakers Fitness Program. One of its partners happens to be CURVES and free membership is available to ladies who are eligible. Check it out!

CURVES is a facility specially designed for women featuring a complete 30 minute workout that is fun, fast, and safe. Visit silversneakers.com, or call the number on the back of your insurance card, to find ou if your health plan offers the Silver Sneakers Fitness Program You may also bring your insurance card into CURVES and they will check it for you.



Williamson County Retired Teachers Association Board Meeting
Held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Marion, IL
September 10, 2014 1:30 P.M.

President Bob Campbell called the meeting to order, there being a quorum.

Minutes for the August 14, 2014, membership meeting were read by Secretary Marge Mangan. There was one correction. John Harland is **Director** of Region 18, not representative. Mary Lou Gander made a motion to accept the Minutes as corrected; Anna Morris seconded; motion passed.

Treasurer Don Kragness, in giving his report, stated that \$10 of the \$30 to the IRTA Foundation for a memorial for Marguerite Rodney who is, in fact, not deceased, was in error. The information that came from the state was incorrect. Our apologies to Marguerite Rodney and her family. Further in the Treasurer's Report showed the beginning balance as \$2,687.95; ending balance as \$2,677.95. Steve Maxwell moved to accept; Anna seconded. Motion carried.

President Bob Campbell gave his report. Regarding the building in Springfield, it is very convenient to the state building - only about 2 or 3 blocks South of the Capital. Our Legal Defense Fund balance is between \$100,000 and \$110,000. If legal action continues as we anticipate, we would need about three times what we have. The Legal Defense Fund needs contributions. We (WCRTA) are in a position that we could make a contribution of about \$200 or \$300. At the membership meeting on October 20, we would put it to the membership. Bob gave updates on the two lawsuits for which we are monitoring: Heaton v. Quinn and Kanerva V. Weems. Cynthia O'Neill, Trustee on the TRS Board, will be our speaker at the October 20 membership meeting which will be St. Paul Catholic Church, Johnston City, at the Family Life Center. Newsletter should be e-mailed or USPS by October 10.

Marge Mangan, Secretary

Your help is needed to improve our communication with our members.

We need correct email addresses, mailing addresses and/or phone numbers for the following members. If you know any of the correct information for these members, please share it with Membership Chair Steve Maxwell at emax_1@mchsi.com or 618-997-9607 or 1010 Oakwood Lane, Marion, IL 62959. If you don't know the information, but have contact with that person, please tell them to contact Steve. Thank you for whatever information you can provide for us.

Barb Arnold
Sandra Barra
John Clark
Faye Cronin
Alvin Cutsinger
Linda Deck
Nancy Elliott
John/ Carolyn Grant
Robert Greenwood
Sally Gross
Deon Hickey
Wanda Jackson
Nancy Johnson-Farris
Ray Kemp

Byron Kuehner
Judith Kuehner
Barbara McAlister
Jane Murphy
Donna/Leroy Newton
Christine Odum
Deborah Pass
Nancy Riffin
Wanda Riley
Sam Rowell
Marilyn Schild
Gary Schurz
Jan Starnes
Barbara Vaughn
Steve Wheeler

Help us find them?

