



## Next Meeting

Aug. 13

1:30 pm

St. Paul's  
Catholic  
Church  
Johnston  
City

I hope everyone is having a good summer. Someone said that we had about 5 days of spring this year before the heat arrived! I would agree. I have made two trips to Augusta, GA since the last newsletter to see my daughter and son-in-law and 3 grandsons. Currently I am in Buffalo, NY visiting the same people since they moved here about 3 weeks ago. My wife and I hope to see Niagara Falls again, since the last time we saw it was in 1981.

Some good news on the legislative front is that the bill to allow retired teachers to work more days (120) without penalty has passed and been signed into law. It went into effect July 1, 2018. Also a bill to allow retired teachers to opt back into the insurance program has passed both houses.

The next meeting of WCIRTA will be Monday, August 13, 2018 at St. Paul's Parrish Center in Johnston City. This is our annual "pie meeting". The speaker will be Jennifer Badiu from the SIH Cancer Institute. This should be an informative program about this new facility.

Try to stay cool. I hope to see you all August 3rd for some tasty pie.

Kent Carrell

President WCIRTA

## WCIRTA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

WCIRTA membership has a total of 170 members who have paid their 2018 dues. Tamie Rix, Nancy Farris, Kathy Zoanetti and Brenda Mathis are new members since March of 2018. We continue to encourage non-member retirees to join WCIRTA thru calls, emails and thru our newsletter.

IRTA's Susan Goetz sends Don Kragness and me monthly updates to our membership. This past few months several retirees have updated their addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. Updates have also come from our WCIRTA Board who have made personal contact with many retirees.

The IRTA sent notice that these retirees have passed. Those members Linda Banks, Carol Cross, Maxine Drum, Don Grisham, Clarence DeMattei, David Lohmeier, and Diane Arnold are missed by all.

Our WCIRTA website at: <http://williamsoncountyrta.weebly.com/> is updated monthly and contains our officers, meetings dates, membership information, and more. Our newsletters, membership and BOD meeting reports can be found under the "More" tab.

Our next General Membership meeting is scheduled for August 13, at the St Paul's Catholic Church in Johnston City. The meeting starts at 1:30 is known as our annual "Pie" meeting. You're invited to come, enjoy talking with your fellow retirees and enjoy fresh home-made pie.

You're invited to make any suggestions and recommendations to me Steve Maxwell via email @ [emax\\_1@mchsi.com](mailto:emax_1@mchsi.com) .

Steve Maxwell WCIRTA Membership

In this newsletter and in others to follow, I will write a brief description of each of our board members as a way of introducing them to you. This newsletter will include our two newest board members: Betsy Murphy and Ed Tresnak.

**Betsy Murphy**, Born in Jacksonville, Illinois. Lived in Anna, Illinois 1958-1960 and then Elgin, Illinois from 1960-1973. Moved to Marion, Illinois to teach at the School for Hearing Impaired in 1973.

Education: Elementary School: K-1-Jacksonville, IL; 2-3 Davies School-Anna, IL,  
4-8 St. Laurence School-Elgin, IL.  
9-12 St. Edward Central Catholic High School, Graduated 1969  
B.A. in Deaf Education, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, IL 1973  
M.S. in Special Education Administration, SIU-C 1986

Education Career: Williamson County Special Education District (WCSED)  
Primary Deaf/Hard of Hearing Teacher at School for Hearing Impaired 1973-1984  
High School Special Needs Deaf/Hard of Hearing Teacher at Marion High School 1984-1995  
WCSED Coordinator 1995-2006  
WCSED Assistant Director 2006-2009  
Taught Continuing Education classes in sign language at John A. Logan College and SIU-C  
1976-1985

Retired June 2009 but continued to work part time until 2017 - entire professional career at Williamson County Special Education District for a total of 44 years involvement with the district.

**Ed Tresnak**, grew up in the suburbs (Cicero & Clarendon Hills) of Chicago.

Education: 1-8 Goodwin Elementary School, Graduated 1950  
9 J. Sterling Morton HS, Cicero, IL  
10-12 Hinsdale Twp. HS Graduated 1954  
BS Ed in Biology, NIU, 1958  
MS in Biology, NIU, 1963  
Ed D in Educational Administration, NIU 1973

Educational Career: 7th & 8th grade general Science Herrick Jr. HS, Downers Grove, IL, 1958-1963  
Biology DeKalb HS, DeKalb, IL 1963-1974  
Principal Union HS Biggsville, IL 1974-1975  
Principal Herrin High school 1975-1995  
Retired June, 30, 1995

**TRS INVESTMENTS:** TRS investments continue to generate steady across-the-board returns, a trend that reinforces the direction of the System's diversified investment strategy.

On March 31, TRS investment returns for the fiscal year were a positive 7.22 percent, net of fees, and the size of the portfolio stood at \$51.4 billion. That's a 4.1 percent increase in assets during the first nine months of the fiscal year. On June 30, 2017, total TRS assets were \$49.4 billion.

On a calendar year basis, during 2017 TRS investments recorded a positive 15.3 percent return. In fiscal year 2017, TRS returns were a positive 12.6 percent.

For TRS members, the most important measurement is the long-term 30-year rate-of-return. Currently, the TRS 30-year return is a positive 8.1 percent, which exceeds the System's assumed investment rate of return, which currently is set at 7 percent. Most members have relationships with TRS that last decades. Steady, positive returns over 30 years are more important to people with a long-term stake in the System than short-term measurements. The TRS returns are a product of an investment strategy carefully designed over time by the System's trustees and investment staff.

Despite the good news that TRS will receive its entire fiscal year 2018 contribution from state government, the \$4.09 billion falls \$2.9 billion short of a contribution that the TRS actuaries would label as "full funding." State government has underfunded TRS annually for more than 75 years. In fiscal year 2018, the state contribution should be \$6.99 billion. In the last five years, state government has underfunded TRS by more than \$6.8 billion. This chronic underfunding is the cause of TRS's \$73.4 billion unfunded liability.

**TOTAL RETIREE ADVANTAGE ILLINOIS OPEN ENROLLMENT:** If you are eligible for the Total Retiree Advantage Illinois (TRAIL) open enrollment this fall, you will receive information from the Illinois Department of Central Management Services.

To be eligible for coverage under a TRAIL plan, you and your eligible dependents must live in the United States or the U.S. territories and be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B due to age or disability with an effective date on or before Sept. 30, 2018.

The plan year begins Jan. 1 and is effective through Dec. 31, 2019.

If you are currently enrolled in one of the TRAIL Medicare Advantage plans, your enrollment will continue – you do not need to do anything unless you want to make a change. If you want to make a change to your current Medicare Advantage health plan or dependent coverage, please follow the directions provided with your fall information.

**CYBERSECURITY:** Cybersecurity is a top priority at TRS.

At TRS, the Board of Trustees and staff understand that it is imperative for the System to keep the private information of 412,000 men, women, their families and their employers as safe and secure as possible and to implement practices and systems that guard against these growing threats.

TRS receives thousands of emails daily and uses tested technology to filter as much of the unwanted spam and potential malware before it ever reaches TRS employees.

Many avenues of danger exist with a connected world and the internet. TRS follows industry "best practices" for cybersecurity to help reduce our potential exposure to a damaging "cyber incident."

Loren Taylor, Information Services

**Re: Legislative Update**

**Fr: Anna Morris**

**Buyouts:** A maximum of one billion dollars in bonds will be issued over a 3-year period to fund a buyout program projected to save \$381.9 million dollars. **Two voluntary programs are planned:** [A] Tier one persons who are vested in a pension but are not active members in one of the pension systems will be offered 60% of their present value. [B ] Those eligible to retire and receive a 3% annual increment can receive 70% of their future pension value calculated with a 1.5% annual increment.

**Pension Spiking:** The cap on “end of career” raises is reduced from 6% to 3%. The employer is required to pay all increases over 3%. This is estimated to save 22 million dollars.

**Labor Ruling:** In the case of “Janus vs. AFSCME” the U. S. Supreme Court has ruled in favor of the plaintiff. This is a major blow to public worker unions. It means that workers cannot be forced to pay dues to unions that represent them in **collective bargaining**. In a 5 to 4 ruling, the court agreed with Janus that mandating “fair share” contributions violates the First Amendment, the right of free speech. The case was shaped by Gov. Rauner with the hope that it would significantly weaken the power of unions in the political process. Of significance is the ability of the unions to **protect health care benefits**.

Thanks to Andy Manar, the original sponsor of the bill, a new law addressing Illinois’ teacher shortage problem takes effect with the 2018-2019 school year. Retired TRS members can teach 120 days or 600 hours without affecting their pensions. Before July 1, 2018, the limits were 100 days or 500 hours.

**Very Important – Something we have tried to get done for several years:** Also sponsored by Andy Manar, this bill will allow TRS annuitants who have opted out of the Teachers Retirement Insurance Program [TRIP] **to opt back in during the benefits choice period.** “Eligible members can leave TRIP-- or return to TRIP--only once a year during the annual Benefit Choice Period.” This bill went to the governor on June 28 for his signature. He has 60 days to sign or veto the bill. If no action is taken, it will automatically become law. **[Be sure this bill becomes law before you choose to opt out of TRIP. The Gov. could veto it.]**

Another bill for the governor’s consideration is one that requires TRS to set up an optional defined contribution plan which would work in conjunction with the current defined benefit plan. The defined contribution plan would not be a replacement for the defined benefit plan. Of note, the defined benefit plan is the one that retirees now are fortunate to have and provides security for long-range retirement planning.

**And another bill for the governor’s action:** Over four years this bill would raise the minimum salary for an Illinois public school teacher to \$40,000. Setting a minimum salary would affect the calculation of TRS liabilities. The mandated increases would begin during the 2019-2020 school year when the minimum salary would be set at \$32,076.

### **Treasurer's Report 6/5/2018**

<b>Beginning balance</b>	<b>\$2268.23</b>
<b>Receipts</b>	<b>590.00</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>293.86</b>
<b>Ending balance</b>	<b>\$2564.37</b>

**Local dues are now \$10 per year. Please make checks payable to WCIRTA. Mail to Don Kragness, Treasurer, 14802 Poor Farm Road, Johnston City, IL 62951**

**It is Important! Do it TODAY!**