

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS

SEPTEMBER MEETING CANCELLED



FROM CCRTA PRESIDENT, DON OSTROM

Volume 5, Issue 3

Website: www.weebly.ccrta.com

August 4, 2020

CCRTA's next meeting: Thursday, Sept. 3, 2020 CANCELLED



**Teachers' Retirement System
of the State of Illinois**
2815 W. Washington Street
Springfield, IL 62702
www.trsil.org

CCRTA Officers for 2019

President:

Donnie Ostrom

Vice President:

????????????

Secretary:

Kay Ostrom

Treasurer:

Paula Williams

Membership Chair:

Mary Ann Kauling

Legislative Chair:

Kelley Kesterson

Foundation Chair:

Cynthia O'Neill

Members Benefit Chair:

Leon Luber

September Meeting Cancelled

I sent an e-mail to all CCRTA members with e-mail addresses. I had 29 say they would not attend and 8 who said they would attend a CCRTA meeting. After due consideration, I therefore decided to cancel the September meeting of CCRTA. This pandemic has forced many members to stay home or to not go where many are not wearing a mask. I was hoping that people would take this pandemic seriously, but there are not enough who do. Kay has made almost 500 masks for health care workers, businesses, family, and friends. She and I wear a mask whenever we leave home to go to the grocery store. I do not tell others what to do, but I take this pandemic seriously. Please stay well.

THE DECEMBER CCRTA MEETING

I hope we can have a December CCRTA meeting. I pray each day that a vaccine is developed that will allow us to return to a somewhat normal life.

I will keep members informed of where we stand in terms of members feeling comfortable to return to our regular CCRTA meeting schedule. If you know of someone from our organization that needs our cards or prayer, please let me know.

I hear regularly from members of CCRTA and find most are staying at home and living a quiet existence. Please take the time to call your friends and let them know that you are thinking of them and if there is something they need we can as CCRTA members, help them.

Please stay safe and if you need anything, please call me.

SAVE THE DATES

2020 Meeting Dates

1. March 5, 2020 at Trenton House
2. June 4, 2020 CANCELED
3. **Sept. 3, 2020 at CANCELLED**
4. Dec. 3, 2020 at Bretz's Winery, Carlyle

All Meetings Begin at 11:30 am

2020 PROGRAMS

JULIE OSTROM, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW: TOPIC WILLS, TRUSTS, POWER OF ATTORNEY, DIRECTIVES
3/5/2020

**6/4/2020
CANCELLED**

**CCRTA MEETING
CANCELLED
9/3/2020**

CARLYLE HIGH SCHOOL
BAND
12/3/2020

CCRTA AND IRTA DUES FOR 2021, Please send to the Treasurer

CCRTA will accept 2021 dues at the December meeting. The cost for a one year membership to CCRTA is \$10.00. The cost of a life time membership to CCRTA is \$100.00. Dues are payable at the meeting or you can send a check to our Treasurer, Paula Williams.

Paula's address is as follows:

Paula Williams
14400 Baumann Road
Highland, IL 62249

Please make checks payable to the CCRTA.

I recommend that you also join the Illinois Retired Teachers Association in Springfield. You may go online for information at www.irtaonline.org. The cost is

\$2.50 a month and is deducted from your pension check. You can become a life time member with a one-time payment of \$400.00. Members who joined IRTA prior to 2018 can write a \$40 check each year to maintain membership. Since 2019, all new members were required to use **Dues Deduct** from their monthly pension check. Your membership in IRTA has many benefits. It is the State Association that protects your pension and benefits. A member has access to group plans that sell dental and vision insurance, life insurance, and discounts on travel and hotels. These are only a few of the benefits offered by IRTA to its members.

IRTA HAS A NEW LOGO



There is a new sign at the IRTA Office in Springfield, IL. The new sign is located at the front of the building located at 828 South 2nd Street in Springfield, IL. Any time you are in Springfield, please stop by the office and talk with the IRTA Staff. The office is open and if you have a question, please call 1-800-728-4782.

REPORT ON CADIDATES FOR THE 2020 NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION:

The IRTAPAC supports candidates for the Illinois House and Senate based on a questionnaire sent to candidates from both parties running for office. The form has five questions with a comment section. Candidates must return the form and the IRTAPAC committee reviews and selects candidates to endorse. The person from Region 16 on the committee is Steve Launias. The IRTA Executive Board reviews recommendations, with the help of our legislative liaison, Courtney Hayes.

This year thirty-eight House Democrats and nine house Republicans were endorsed based on their return questionnaires. Also, seven Senators were endorsed by the IRTAPAC for election; four Democrats and three Republicans. I have been asked several times why more Democrats were endorsed than Republicans. Fewer Republicans returned the questionnaire and support the agenda of IRTA. The questions asked: 1) Do you oppose amending the Constitution's clause on pensions? 2) Do you oppose legislative changes that would allow taxation of pensions? 3) Do you oppose any effort to reduce current health insurance benefits or access to those benefits by retired teachers? 4) Do you support the state's appropriation for TRIP (TRAIL)? 5) Do you support maintaining State Funding for TRS as required by PA 90-528?

No Clinton County candidate or incumbent for office returned the questionnaire.

IRTA Teacher Grants:

Due to Covid-19 and the closing of schools, the deadline for the “Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers” Program has been extended to October 1st. During the Fall months, applications will be judged and grants will be awarded thereafter.

Here is the grant application link for those teachers wanting to apply! <https://www.irtaonline.org/index.php/foundation/Grants>. Please let teachers in your area know of the extension.

HOW TO VOTE BY MAIL-IN-BALLOT FOR THE NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION AND STAY SAFE FROM COVID-19:



According to the County Clerks this is a safe way to vote.

By now, you may have already received a Vote By Mail application in the mail from your local election authority. If not, and you would like to Vote By Mail on Nov. 3, you have a couple of options. If you are comfortable on a computer, simply go to www.clintonco.illinois.gov, scroll down under “Voting & Elections” and click on the “Vote By Mail & Voter Online Portal.” After entering your name and other information, you’ll find personalized voting information and the ability to request a Vote By Mail application. The Voter Portal will also allow you to track your ballot to confirm when it is sent out by the County Clerk’s Office and when it is received in the office. If you do not have access to a computer (or choose not to request via the website), simply call the Clinton County Clerk’s Office at 618-594-6620. The County Clerk’s staff will confirm your address in its voter registration program and send you the application. Please note that the actual ballots will not be mailed out until Sept. 24, 2020.

Vicky Albers
County Clerk and Recorder
Clinton County
850 Fairfax St., PO Box 308
Carlyle, IL 62231
(618) 594-6620



I WOULD LIKE TO THANK VICKIE ALBERS FOR PROVIDING ME WITH THIS INFORMATION FOR THE CCRTA NEWSLETTER. If you live in a different county, simply call your County Clerk for information on how to receive a mail-in ballot.

If you live in one of these counties, please call the number below:

Madison County Clerk’s Phone Number — 618-692-6290
Washington County Clerk’s Phone Number — 618-327-4800

NEWS FROM THE IRTA OFFICE IN SPRINGFIELD

TRIP's TRAIL INSURANCE Program:

Those who are over 65, qualify for Medicare and buy their health Insurance through the State of Illinois are required under State of Illinois rules to have TRAIL Insurance. The sign up period usually runs from **October 15th through November 15th**. If you presently have TRAIL you should receive notice in the mail by mid-September. If you turned 65 before September 1st of 2020 and qualify for Medicare you must sign-up for TRAIL during this period. **If you have questions**, please call Donnie Ostrom (618-604-9544). Don't wait!!!!

As in the past, if you already are in TRAIL and wish to keep things the way they are, you do nothing and you are automatically re-enrolled. If you wish to make a change, take a different program or carrier, add or subtract a person, or drop the insurance, you must fill-out the paperwork and notify CMS through mybenefits.com on-line or call the number 844-251-1777.

RETIRED TEACHERS TUTORING PROGRAM DURING PANDEMIC:

Almost 550 retired IRTA members joined the Tutoring Program. The office has received thanks from parents and other educators for their support and assistance during the months schools in Illinois were closed. I know many other retired teachers used this time to help their grandchildren and neighbor's children make their way through the on-line learning program.

ACTION NEWSLETTER:

Two times a year, you should receive the **IRTA ACTION NEWSLETTER** by mail. If you are not receiving it, please let me know. I will have the office check your address.

Supporting The IRTA Foundation

In 1985, after identifying a large number of former educators who were experiencing financial difficulties because of low pensions and rising inflation, the Illinois Retired Teachers Association established the Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation, Inc. The initial purpose of the Foundation was to build an endowment to provide assistance to retired educators. It now provides scholarships and grants to Teachers.

You should have recently received a second letter from the IRTA Foundation asking for a donation. Please donate. The money for the IRTA Foundation comes from fund raising and donations from IRTA members and Units. Please contribute today to the IRTA Foundation.

Your support is much appreciated AND NEEDED.

	2020 6/30/2020	2019	2018
Fund Raising Donations	\$157,937.00	\$278,468.00	\$226,615.00
	So far this year		

First letter mailed 4/17/2020
Second letter mailed 6/18/2020

CCRTA Financial Report: August 1, 2020

Checking Account Balance: \$346.14

Saving Account Balance: \$3,392.28

HAPPY 90th BIRTHDAY LEON LUBER!

On July 9th Leon Luber celebrated his 90th birthday. His four daughters planned a surprise drive-by celebration. His daughters, their husbands and his grandchildren set up a tent, made signs and distributed treats to those that came to wish him Happy Birthday. We hope he has many more birthdays.



Please thank your family for letting us be a part of your 90th birthday celebration. Those were great cookies handed out at your celebration.



Thank you Leon for all that you have done to educate the youth of this country and for what you do to make CCRTA an important organization for retired teachers of Clinton County.



We all hope we look as good as you do at 90.

We wish you many more birthdays.

BALLOT ISSUE: Should Illinois Allow a Graduated Income Tax?

IRTA is not taking a position on the Amendment to the Illinois Constitution, but wanted to provide information to our members so they would be informed when making a decision. This Constitutional Amendment, whether it passes or fails, does not affect the State of Illinois' taxation of your retirement income.

The IRTA has sent out an e-mail with a break down of the facts concerning this amendment changing question. The break down talks about the changes it could bring to Illinois and how it compares to other states. Please take the time to review the document sent by e-mail to IRTA members that have an e-mail address on record.

If you did not receive the e-mail or have no e-mail address, please let me know and I will send you by mail a copy of the e-mail. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Donnie Ostrom at 618-604-9544 or call the IRTA office at 1-800-728-4782.

HELP REPEAL GPO AND WEP:

Important INFORMATION

The Coalition To Repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) NOW!!

National Call In Days August 10 - 14, 2020
Call your Congressperson at 1-855-626-6011
tell him or her to support H. R. 141

The Alliance for Retired Americans has brought together a coalition of organizations and individuals that support the repeal of the GPO and WEP immediately and urge all who are appalled by this injustice to join the fight. The bill this Congressional Session is H.R. 141

Ask that he/she WORK to get the repeal of GPO/WEP passed in Congress THIS YEAR.
Be sure to tell him/her why it is important to you.
(if you have called before, ask what he/she is doing to move the bill, and how we can help)

Thank the Congressperson who have co-sponsored H.R. 141,
OR Ask those who have not to sign on as a co-sponsor.

[Click Here To See If Your Congressperson Has Co-Sponsored H. R. 141](#)