

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS

SEPTEMBER MEETING AT TRENTON HOUSE



FROM CCRTA PRESIDENT, DON OSTROM

Website: www.weebly.ccrta.com

August 10, 2022

Volume 7, Issue 3

CCRTA's next meeting: Thursday, September 1, 2022



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

September Meeting Will Be in Person at Trenton House, Trenton IL

The September 1 2022 meeting will be an in-person meeting at the Trenton House in Trenton, Illinois.

The start time of the meeting is 11:30 a.m.

I ask that if you are going to attend the meeting, **please call Mary Ann Kauling at 618-973-4373 and let her know you will be attending the meeting. Please call by August 29th.** This allows the restaurant time to set the room up properly for our meeting.

The program for this meeting will be the AMBA Representative, who will discuss programs and benefits of belonging to IRTA.

CCRTA Officers for 2022

President:

Donnie Ostrom

Vice President:

Pat Bringaze

Secretary:

Kay Ostrom

Treasurer:

Pehg Zeller

Membership Chair:

Mary Ann Kauling

Legislative Chair:

Kelley Kesterson

Foundation Chair:

TBD

Members Benefit Chair:

TBD

IRTA LAWSUIT AGAINST THE STATE

As you are aware the Illinois Retired Teachers Association filed a lawsuit against the State of Illinois, the leaders of the House and Senate, the Governor and CMS.

The suit was brought about by the lack of funding sought by Central Management Services and certified by TRS. The decrease in funding sought by CMS would allow lower payments by teachers and school districts to the Teacher Health Insurance Services Program (THIS).

The IRTA hired an actuary to review the THIS program funding and found that the program would be 750 million dollars in debt by 2027. This would result in loss of the TRIP and TRAIL program or a huge increase in what retirees are now paying for health insurance. If this loss occurred, the result would be that each retiree would be out in the market looking for insurance.

SAVE THE DATES

2022 Meeting Dates

1. March 3 2022 at Trenton House
2. June 2, 2022 Bretz's Winery
3. **Sept. 1, 2022 at Trenton House**
4. Dec. 1, 2022 at Bretz's Winery, Carlyle

All Meetings Begin at 11:30 am

2022 PROGRAMS

MARCH 3 2022
IRTA—LEGAL ISSUES & PROGRAMS FOR RETIRED

JUNE 2 2022
LES WINKELER AND NATIVE BIRDS OF ILLINOIS

SEPT. 1, 2022
AMBA REPRESENTATIVE

DEC. 1, 2022
TBA

CCRTA AND IRTA DUES FOR 2022, Please send to the Treasurer

CCRTA is accepting 2022 dues. The cost for a one year membership to CCRTA is \$10.00. The cost of a lifetime membership to CCRTA is \$100.00. Dues are payable at a meeting or you can send a check to our Treasurer, Pehg Zeller. Pehg's address is as follows:

Pehg Zeller
432 North Maple
Trenton, IL 62293

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 lifetime 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 are 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.

News From The IRTA Office in Springfield



UPDATING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION:

In order for members of IRTA and CCRTA to receive the IRTA ACTION newsletter, important notices and additional benefit information, the IRTA needs current addresses and e-mail addresses. If you have moved or changed your e-mail address, please call the IRTA Office or provide CCRTA President Donnie Ostrom with the new information.

IRTA SPECIAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION:

1. **Good Dog News**—Twice per month the IRTA office provides information through an e-mail newsletter. This newsletter provides legislative updates, information about staying healthy, special programs for retirees, tax information and investment information.
2. **Coffee With Jim** - Each month the IRTA Executive Director holds a zoom meeting which allows IRTA members to ask questions, seek information or simply have a conversation with Jim Bachman. You will find these discussions helpful and informative. Next meeting is August 11th.
3. **IRTAPAC**—The political arm of the IRTA is its Political Action Committee. It should be clear that the IRTA and its PAC do not support one party or another. The PAC supports candidates that support retired teachers' pensions and benefits. The PAC does provide funding to candidates from both political parties. A contact is made with the candidates and a questionnaire is sent to candidates of both parties running for a State office. These questionnaires are reviewed by the PAC Committee and the IRTA lobbyist Andrew Bodewes. The candidates are ranked and funding provided. It is important that CCRTA members provide PAC funding through a \$1 per month contribution from their retirement to protect their pension and benefits.
4. **The IRTA "HAPPY HOUR"** is held quarterly online. This Happy Hour provides an opportunity for members to meet other retirees from around the State of Illinois. These are social gatherings and provide for you to meet new people and have a laugh or two.

LATEST NEWS ON WEP AND GPO

JUL 15, 2022 —

Historic Day!

The repeal of the unfair provisions of WEP and GPO that rob teachers, police, firefighters, and public employee retirees of their Social Security benefits just took a giant step forward. This morning 291 Congress members have now signed on as co-sponsors of HR 82. Congressman Rodney Davis and Congressman Garrett Graves walked down a written request to the Clerk and filed to have HR 82 heard on the floor and voted on in Congress. The rules mandate a floor vote on any bill that has received 290 co-sponsors.

This will be the first time in history that a floor vote has been taken on any bill to repeal or modify WEP/GPO. The vote will likely be in September. Stay tuned.

Representative Mike Johnson reported we have reached 291 cosponsors and will have a vote in September. Now we need to get 20 more Senators to co-sponsor S.1302 let's do this!

Both Illinois Senators have signed on the Bill. It is important that the con-

POLITICS AND RETIRED TEACHERS PENSION AND BENEFITS

I have tried to keep politics out of the newsletter. I visited the Hamilton County IRTA and was faced with an issue that needed to be dealt with at the time. Senator Darin Bailey has been selected as the Republican candidate for governor. It is Senator Bailey's intention to do away with pensions and benefits in Illinois. I am including with the newsletter a copy of the Senator's **Joint Resolution For a Constitutional Amendment** to the Illinois Constitution. It is his intention to do away with the constitutional protection retirees have presently. It also allows the legislature to reduce or diminish pension and benefits at their will.

Attached to this newsletter is a copy of Senator Bailey's bill submitted 3/17/2021. It has been the basic goal of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association to protect your pension and benefits. It is the reason my wife and I joined the IRTA. If you have a question about this bill, please feel free to call me or we can discuss the contents of the Bill at our September meeting. I simply ask that we limit our political discussion to this bill and not other issues in the election. Every individual has a right to their opinion on political matters, but this issue affects our ability to receive what we are owed from our many years of work.

Thank you,
Donnie Ostrom

2022 CCRTA MEETING SCHEDULE

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS 2022

	<u>DATES</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
1.	March 3, 2022	Trenton House	Trenton, IL	TBA
2.	June 2, 2022	Bretz's Winery	Carlyle, IL	TBA
3.	Sept. 1, 2022	Trenton House	Trenton, IL	TBA
4.	Dec. 1, 2022	Bretz's Winery	Carlyle, IL	TBA

These dates and locations are subject to change by the group.

Please Support The IRTA Foundation by Giving in 2022:

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 as well as assistance to retired teachers.

HELP THIS GROW	2022	2021	2020
Fund Raising Donations	\$101,205	\$231,612.00	\$261,124.00
Total Donation From All Sources	\$137,551	\$327,397.00	\$292,758.00

PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING TO THE IRTA FOUNDATION—The latest request for donations was sent out to members of IRTA last month. Please be one of the members that makes a difference.

HELP A MEMBER WHO MAY NEED A RIDE TO A CCRTA MEETING

I have been asked if members were willing to pick-up another member who lives in their community that are no longer able to drive to a CCRTA meeting. If you are willing to provide a person with a ride, please let me know and I will make arrangements to put you in contact. For some members, this is the only contact they may have outside of their living arrangements.

Your assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Minutes of the Clinton County Retired Teachers Association

June 2, 2022 at Bretz's Winery

The meeting was called to order by President Don Ostrom at 11:36 am. After the Pledge of Allegiance, guests and new attendee, Elizabeth Pauk, were introduced. There were 18 members in attendance.

IRTA Treasurer Donnie Ostrom encouraged members to read the IRTA News Dog Letter which is sent each week via email. Jim Bachmann, IRTA Executive Director is available for questions each month during the on-line session "Coffee with Jim". Members can log in and hear questions and answers.

IRTA filed a lawsuit against the State of Illinois because the state budget reduced the amount the districts and employees pay into THIS for health insurance. The reduction starts in 2023 and will cause the fund to be in debt by 2027. IRTA employs a lobbyist who works for ITRA and TRS.

Ostrom announced that IRTA Foundation scholarships were awarded to Juniors and Seniors in college who are majoring in education. One scholarship went to Megan Kronk, granddaughter of CCRTA member, Margo Schaefer. Congratulations to a future teacher.

The Area VI IRTA Conference is June 30th via Zoom. Anyone can attend, but you must register. The agenda is online.

Old Business: Minutes from the March 2, 2022 meeting as printed in the newsletter were approved. Treasurer's report as printed in the newsletter was accepted. Dues for the 2022 year are \$10.00 and members can pay at a meeting or mail a check to: Pehg Zeller, 432 North Maple, Trenton, IL 62293

New Business: Pres. Ostrom asked if there were members who would be willing to offer a ride to another member who is unable to drive to the meetings. He asked all members to invite all retirees they know to the next meeting. He also thanked members who have brought new retirees to our CCRTA meetings

Sherry White circulated a card for members to sign for Don Koch, and Pehg Zeller had a card to send to Paula Williams.

Mary Ann Kauling, Membership Chair, thanked members for calling to let her know that they were attending the meeting. She had information on the benefits of belonging to IRTA and how to join IRTA using Dues Deduct.

Guest Speaker: **Les Winkeler** Les presented a wonderful program with numerous pictures of Southern Illinois Wildlife. Les grew up in Beckemeyer, IL and is a Mater Dei graduate. He is the outdoors writer at the Southern Illinoisan in Carbondale. He has been exploring the region's lakes, parks, and backroads for the past 31 years. He has received numerous awards for written and photographic coverage of the outdoors. He introduced us to local birds as we have never seen before, with descriptions and narrative.

With no other business, Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm. Next meeting September 1, 2022 at 11:30pm at Trenton House.

Respectfully submitted, Kay Ostrom, Secretary

Meet the CCRTA Officers



President
Donnie Ostrom



Treasurer
Pehg Zeller



Membership
MaryAnn Kauling



Vice-President
Pat Bringaze



Secretary
Kay Ostrom



Legislative Chair
Kelley Kesterson

CCRTA Financial Report: 8/10/2022



CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
Treasurer's Report

Checking Account

August 1, 2022 Current Balance \$711.14

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
Treasurer's Report

Savings Account

August 1, 2022 Balance \$3399.29

CCRTA PROGRAMS:

If you have an idea or would like to provide a program at CCRTA, please let one of the CCRTA Officers know or who to contact . Programs are an integral part of the CCRTA meeting and can provide the members with a wide variety of information and entertainment. Your suggestions and information makes our meetings worth attending.

It is imperative that the meetings have some substance and also provide individuals with the time to visit with friends. We are not a political organization. The foundations of IRTA and CCRTA are to provide protection and information about pensions and benefits. The CCRTA is here to provide information that will make decisions easier for its members.

I believe it is important to hear from our representatives in political office and those who control our pension and benefits. I have spoken with TRS and CMS and they do not send people to speak to individual Units. But, there are people who have the knowledge and capability to answer our questions. The IRTA Executive Director sits on the CMS insurance Board. So, if there are insurance questions, he can provide the answers to your questions.

CCRTA SEPTEMBER PROGRAM:

The September program will be provided by the AMBA Representative. He will provide an over view of the different programs that are provided by AMBA through the Illinois Retired Teachers Association. The programs provided are for insurance, travel, dinning, purchase of electronic equipment, investments, and many other services.

If there is some program or service you think should be provided, please feel free to ask the representative of AMBA to look into the possibility of them providing the service.

You can find a list of the services provided by AMBA on the IRTA website and there is a phone number to call the AMBA representative.

102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
State of Illinois
2021 and 2022
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
SC0010

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

Introduced 3/17/2021, by Sen. Darren Bailey

ILCON Art. XIII, Sec. 5

Proposes to amend the General Provisions Article of the Illinois Constitution. Removes language that provides that membership in any pension or retirement system of the State, any unit of local government or school district, or any agency or instrumentality thereof shall be an enforceable contractual relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired. Provides that nothing in the Illinois Constitution or in any law shall be construed to limit the power of the General Assembly to reduce or change pension benefits or other benefits of membership in any public pension or public retirement system, regardless of whether those benefits have accrued or have been earned and regardless of when those benefits were established. Effective upon being declared adopted.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that there shall be submitted to the electors of the State for adoption or rejection at the general election next occurring at least 6 months after the adoption of this resolution a proposition to amend Section 5 of Article XIII of the Illinois Constitution as follows:

ARTICLE XIII

GENERAL PROVISIONS

(ILCON Art. XIII, Sec. 5)

SECTION 5. PENSION AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS RIGHTS

Nothing in this Constitution or in any law shall be construed to limit the power of the General Assembly to reduce or change pension benefits or other benefits of membership in any public pension or public retirement system, regardless of whether those benefits have accrued or have been earned and regardless of when those benefits were established. ~~Membership in any pension or retirement system of the State, any unit of local government or school district, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, shall be an enforceable contractual~~

1	relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or
2	impaired.
3	(Source: Illinois Constitution.)
4	SCHEDULE
5	This Constitutional Amendment takes effect upon being
6	declared adopted in accordance with Section 7 of the Illinois
7	Constitutional Amendment Act.