

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS

JUNE MEETING AT BRETZ'S WINERY



FROM CCRTA PRESIDENT, DON OSTROM

Website: www.weebly.ccrta.com

May 5, 2022

Volume 7, Issue 2

CCRTA's next meeting: Thursday, June 2, 2022



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

June Meeting Will Be in Person at Bretz's Winery in Carlyle, IL

The June 2, 2022 meeting will be an in-person meeting at Bretz's Winery in Carlyle, Illinois. The start time is 11:30 a.m.

The question of wearing a mask has been asked by several members. Mask wearing will be optional at the meeting. There are those members for whom it is necessary to mask due to illness. Please bring a mask if you are going to be at the same table.

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 May 30** This allows the restaurant time to set the room up properly for our meeting.

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
TBA

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.
3. **The Area 6 Conference** (our area) will be held on June 30, 2022. This conference will be held online and you must register through the IRTA Office in Springfield or online at the IRTA website irtaonline.org. The conference is open to all members. There are four \$50 gift cards that will be given to attendees.
4. **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.
5. **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

We are making a difference—3 new cosponsors!

We are making a difference, please keep up the effort in contacting the Representatives and Senators and asking where they stand on voting issues that matter on social media. Please follow my example on Congressional Caucuses groups, make up your own post or participate in other WEP & GPO Groups' legislation campaigns.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/261424602509432/permalink/391735489478342/?sfnsn=mo&ref=share>

https://ballotpedia.org/List_of_caucuses_in_the_United_States_Congress

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE REPEAL

Honoring our 3 new cosponsors for full repeal bill HR 82: Congresswoman Debbie Lesko of Arizona, Congressman Mike Lee of Pennsylvania and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas!

We now stand at 272 cosponsors with only 18 remaining to reach our goal of 290.

Thank you Congresswoman Lesko, Congressman Lee & Congresswoman Jackson Lee!

THE FOLLOWING TWO MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM ILLINOIS HAVE NOT SIGNED ON TO THE BILL TO REPEAL WEP AND GPO.

Illinois

<https://marymiller.house.gov/>

<https://lahood.house.gov/about>

The Bill before Congress does not impact every retired teacher in Illinois, but there are a good number of retired teachers who need this bill to pass in order to receive in retirement what they deserve and what will help them survive in retirement.

Please take the time to notify your U.S. Representative of your support for this bill.

PROGRAM FOR JUNE 2ND MEETING - Les Winkeler

Les will present a short program with lots of pictures of wildlife in Southern Illinois. Les grew up in Beckemeyer and thanks to geographical oddities, he had a Carlyle address, and a Breese phone number. He attended St. Anthony's in Beckemeyer and is a 1972 Mater Dei graduate.

He attended SIU-Carbondale and received a B.S. in journalism. After graduation, he worked at the Breese Journal, Carlyle Union Banner, the Carbondale Star and the Southern Illinoisan. He served as the outdoors writer at the Southern for his entire tenure and sports editor for the last 19 years. He retired in December 2019.

When serving as the outdoors writer it was vital that he learned to use a camera. It didn't take long until photographing outdoors stories was the favorite part of his job. In retirement, he started a new business, Winkeler's Wings and Wildlife. Basically, people hire him to put birds, animals and flowers in front of them. It's a grueling gig, but someone has to do it!

We welcome Les to our June meeting. He is excited to see his former teachers.



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		\$231,612.00	\$261,124.00
Total Donation From All Sources		\$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

March 3, 2022 at Trenton House Restaurant, Trenton, IL

The meeting was called to order by President Don Ostrom at 11:36 am. After the Pledge of Allegiance guests and new attendees were introduced. Brenda Hellige, Janey McKillip and JoAnn Horenkamp were introduced.

IRTA Treasurer Donnie Ostrom reminded members that TRAIL Insurance enrollment is closed. President Ostrom informed members that the IRTA building in Springfield has a new renter and one new floor is occupied. IRTA has online committee meetings. Members are encouraged to read the IRTA News Dog Letter which is sent every other-week via email. Jim Bachmann, IRTA Executive Director is available for questions each month during the online 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 IRTA and TRS. Treasurer Ostrom reminded members that IRTA scholarships and teacher grants are available. CCRTA members are encouraged to "spread the word" to students who are juniors or seniors in college majoring in education to apply for the scholarships and teachers who would like a grant to supplement a classroom project to apply on the IRTA website.

Old Business: Minutes from the December 2, 2021 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

Guest Speaker: Assistant Regional Superintendent John Consolino reported on Teacher and Principal mentor programs where 1st and 2nd year teachers are paired with teachers with 25 years of experience to help and assist new teachers. The mentors are not necessarily from the same district as the beginning teachers. The administration mentor program was implemented because there have been 35 changes just this year in administrators within the region.

The regional office has developed a School Board Member training program to help school boards develop curriculum for board processes and procedures. This is a 3-hour training that the ROE will provide to local districts.

On March 8 - 10 the ROE will sponsor a Brain Games competition for grades 5-8 and High School. Several schools from Clinton County have signed up to participate. March 21-24, there will be a county spelling bee. There will be scholar bowl teams from Clinton County participating in regional scholar bowl tournaments.

Legislation affecting teachers: HB 2778 would allow teachers and support staff to use administrative leave for COVID, but this was vetoed. HB 4742 would allow mental health days for students. This was passed. SB3201 would increase sub days from 120 to 140 for teachers collecting TRS.

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.

Mary Ann Kauling thanked members for calling to let her know that they were attending the meeting.

With no other business, Meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm. Next meeting June 2, 2022 at 11:30pm at Bretz Wildlife Lodge in Carlyle, IL.

Respectfully submitted, Kay Ostrom, Secretary

Meet the CCRTA Officers



President
Donnie Ostrom



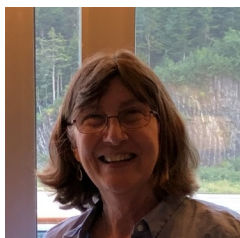
Treasurer
Pehg Zeller



Membership
MaryAnn Kauling



Vice-President
Pat Bringaze



Secretary
Kay Ostrom



Legislative Chair
Kelley Kesterson

CCRTA Financial Report: 11/1/ 2021



CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION Treasurer's Report

Checking Account

March 5, 2022	Beginning Balance	\$581.14
March 5, 2022	Deposit 9 memberships	90.00
March 5, 2022	Deposit 1 membership	10.00
March 19, 2022	Deposit 1 membership	<u>10.00</u>
April 26, 2022	Current Balance	\$691.14

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Treasurer's Report

Savings Account

March 5, 2022 Beginning balance \$3397.60

No activity as of this date

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.

Meet our newest members



Janey McKillip



Brenda Hellige



JoAnn Horrenkamp and long time member Marie Bair