

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS

MARCH MEETING CANCELLED



FROM CCRTA PRESIDENT, DON OSTROM

Volume 6, Issue 1

Website: www.weebly.ccrta.com

February 1, 2021

CCRTA's next meeting: Thursday, March 3, 2021 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

March Meeting Is Cancelled?

I know many count on these CCRTA meetings to see friends and discuss family, but it is not possible with the present department of health rules and the rise in cases of COVID-19 in Clinton County. I hope and pray that the vaccine will be available to us all very soon. You should check with your County Health Dept. for information about when and where the vaccine will be available for you.

We have had a few members that have acquired the virus and I hear that they are doing okay. One was hospitalized for a couple of weeks and still has a cough. I wish you all the best and keep safe by following the CDC guidance policy.

Hopefully, we will be able to meet sometime in 2021. I am hoping for June.

A ZOOM MEETING WAS HELD IN DECEMBER. WILL WE HOLD ONE IN MARCH?

Fifteen members of CCRTA took advantage of the December ZOOM Meeting. We did have a good time and discussed what each was doing during this unprecedented time.

Most stay at home reading, sewing, gardening or working on their homes. It was good to hear their voices and hear how they were spending their time. All wished this would come to an end soon.

Since we are unable to meet in March, I will again arrange a ZOOM Meeting. If you do not know how to use ZOOM, I have attached a set of directions to the newsletter. If you require assistance please call me and I will walk you through the installation.

SAVE THE DATES

2021 Meeting Dates

1. March 4, 2021 at Trenton House is Cancelled
2. June 3, 2021
Highway 50 Café
3. Sept. 2, 2021 at Trenton House
4. Dec. 2, 2020 at
Bretz's Winery, Carlyle

All Meetings Begin at
11:30 am

2021 PROGRAMS

MARCH 4, 2021
MEETING CANCELLED
ZOOM MTG.

JUNE 3, 2021

SEPT. 2, 2021

DEC. 2, 2021

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

CCRTA is accepting 2021 dues. 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 a 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 on-

line 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.

News From The IRTA Office in Springfield



2021 IRTA Area Conferences and Fall Convention:

The Illinois Retired Teachers Association Governing Board has decided to hold all **Area Conferences** on-line this year. After discussions with the Illinois Department of Public Health and IRTA Area Directors, the Board decided it would hold conferences on-line. The Board determined in order to meet the health and safety needs of its members that they would use an on-line meeting platform. The on-line Area Conferences will be held in June. The date will be determined later. More information will be sent to each member.

2021 IRTA Biennial Convention in October:

The Board has moved forward with having an in-person convention in October of 2021. It is hoped by then the COVID-19 Virus will be under control and that most things will be back to near normal. The Convention Committee is meeting and planning all the activities for the fall convention scheduled for October 18th and 19th. I will again be running for the Office of Treasurer of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association. Our former Area 6 Director and now Vice-President of IRTA, Bill Funkhauser, will be running for the office of President of IRTA.

TRS Representatives and IRTA Board Have Met and Discussed Information Sharing:

The two entities had a ZOOM Meeting to discuss how the two organizations can work together and share information. TRS has determined that IRTA can help in providing information about TRS activities to the members of IRTA. I will be adding to the newsletter the information garnered from the meeting. I have the presentation in a format that can be sent to any CCRTA member. If you are interested in the information shared by TRS, please let me know.

The IRTA Executive Board is Looking at Changing the Officer Election Process:

The IRTA Executive Board is reviewing the Election process for its Board of Directors. Presently officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) are elected by delegates at the Biennial Convention. The discussion has been to open the election process so that each member of IRTA would have one vote instead of delegates from each Unit.. This discussion is in the early stages and is being reviewed by the Board of Directors. As the discussions go forward, if you have an opinion, please let me know.

BOND COUNTY RTA CLOSES:

The Bond County Unit decided to close its door. According to its President, they were not finding people to become officers and although the younger retirees joined the unit, they did not attend the meetings. I have invited the members of Bond County to join Clinton County Retired Teachers Association. The IRTA Executive Board is seeing several Units across the state looking to close their doors due to the same factors. This should come as a warning to all that if we don't support our local Units, the possibility exists that the legislators will take that as a sign they can change pension and benefits. Please encourage the new retirees to join and remind teachers that we are supporting them with grants, scholarships, and with the legislators.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH BIDEN SUPPORTS ENDING WEP AND GPO:

The Biden/Harris administration has notified the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate that they would support ending the W.E.P. (Windfall Elimination Provision) and G.P.O. (Government Pension Offset) during their tenure in office. What does this mean for retired teachers? The only Bill that was submitted last year was submitted by Rodney Davis (R) of Illinois and Adam Schiff (D) of California. This Bill would only allow individuals who retired after 2021 to be able to collect full Social Security benefits. If the same bill is resubmitted those who are already retired would not be affected and would still be unable to collect full Social Security benefits.

If you collect a public retirement under these rules, you cannot collect full Social Security benefits. If your spouse dies and you are collecting a Public Pension, you cannot collect any of their Social Security benefits. Many of the teachers whose husbands farmed or owned a business and paid full Social Security are not entitled to collect any of their spouses' benefits.

The Illinois Retired Teachers Association has, several times over the years, attempted to work with Illinois' congressional delegations to have these laws repealed. We are one of fourteen States that has this issue under Federal Law. We are hoping that during this administration a repeal can take place. It is still a big hurdle to get over. There are several states that are pushing their Representatives to sign-on and promote the repeal of WEP and GPO. As information becomes available, I will keep you informed. Please let your U.S. Congressman know that you would like to see this happen.



THE COVID-19 VACCINE FOR CLINTON COUNTY

I have spoken with Clinton County Superintendents who have told me their staff has been given their first vaccine shot and sometime in February will be given their second vaccine shot.

I spoke with the Clinton County Health Department and they have a sign-up form on their website. You will need to fill out the on-line form in order to receive the vaccine through the Health Department. They also said that some of the communities are establishing lists of those who would like the vaccine. I saw on the St. Rose School website that they are taking the names of those over 65, who live in St. Rose, and they will be giving out vaccine shots in the next few weeks at the St. Rose Development Club. Please check in your community to see if they are setting up vaccine sites.

If you do not have access to a computer, please call the Clinton County Health Department and they should put you on their list.

2021 CCRTA MEETING SCHEDULE

CLINTON COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (CCRTA) MEETINGS 2021

	<u>DATES</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
1.	March 4, 2021	Trenton House	Trenton, IL	CANCELLED
2.	June 3, 2021	Route 50 Café	Carlyle, IL	TBA
3.	Sept. 2, 2021	Trenton House	Trenton, IL	Election of Officers & Life Time Educator Award
4.	Dec. 2, 2021	Bretz's Winery	Carlyle, IL	TBA

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

Thank You For 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 as well as assistance to retired teachers.

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

	2020 12/30/2020	2019	2018
Fund Raising Donations	\$261,124.00	\$196,741.00	\$226,615.00
Total Donation From All Sources	\$360,837.00	\$292,758.00	\$320,312.00

Minutes of the Clinton County Retired Teachers Association

December 3, 2020 - Virtual Zoom meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Don Ostrom at 11:46 am. Ten CCRTA members attended the meeting via Zoom and one member attended via phone.

Old Business: There was no old business to discuss since CCRTA has not had a meeting since March 2020. Minutes of the March meeting were published in the Newsletter.

New Business: Donnie Ostrom reminded members that there will be a TRS election and current board member, Larry Pfeffer, is running again. He is endorsed by IRTA. TRS has added new easy links on their website, including a link to print tax documents. Members can call TRS at 877-927-5877 if they have questions.

The TRAIL Insurance has no notice of premium change.

Treasurer Paula Williams is collecting CCRTA dues for 2021. Members can mail checks to Paula. Kelley Kesterson reported that he would try to set up online payments through the CCRTA website.

Kelley Kesterson, Legislative committee member of IRTA, reported no new information as far as new legislation that would affect our members. Kelley requested that a meeting agenda be sent to members before the next meeting.

Membership report: Mary Ann Kauling reported that Cynthia O'Neil has moved to Colorado, and our oldest member, Verena, passed away.

As no other business was reported, President Ostrom asked members to talk about what they have been doing since we have not had a meeting since March.

Kelley Kesterson is teaching and supervising student teachers. He teaches classes using Zoom. He asked whether CCRTA members who do not have access to a computer receive the newsletter. Kay Ostrom, Secretary, reported that the newsletter is printed and mailed to 8 members each time the newsletter is published.

Pat Bringaze has subbed this fall when the students went back to school.

Rosemary Huelsmann is catching up on filing and paperwork and she takes drives to "get out of the house".

Janet Wilsey was very happy to "see" everyone. She is not able to drive so Zoom is a wonderful way to see people.

Pehg Zeller reports that she is teaching her grandson who is in 3rd grade. She reported that the technology does not always go smoothly which causes her some stress. She and husband John take drives to see the Christmas lights.

Mary Ann Kauling enjoys living with her sister, Rosemary, during the shutdown and also enjoys drives to see the Christmas lights. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and safe and healthy New Year.

Connie Bethel had trouble with Zoom and used her phone to attend the meeting. She is missing "Masked Singer", one of her favorite shows.

Jan Rittenhouse is building a new house in Kentucky. It is a fun project. She plans to travel back and forth and still social distance.

Paula Williams is spending time at doctors and hospital and is feeling OK, in spite of chemotherapy. She wants all to know that she is dedicated to her job as treasurer of CCRTA.

Donnie Ostrom installed lights in the crawl space. Kay Ostrom is still making masks – many people need new masks because their masks are worn out.

President Ostrom asked whether members are interested in another Zoom meeting and received all positive comments. He will send out notice for a Zoom meeting in January along with information about how to attend a Zoom meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm. Motion by Janet Wilsey, second by Mary Ann Kauling.

Respectfully submitted, Kay Ostrom, Secretary





CCRTA Financial Report: 12/24/ 2021

Checking Account Balance: \$411.14

Saving Account Balance: \$3,393.33

Several CCRTA members have mailed a check for 2021 dues.

Please mail your check today to Paula Williams.



LETS ZOOM, ITS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

Dear CCRTA members,

I am in the process of setting up a ZOOM Meeting for CCRTA members who are interested in a short meeting on March 3, 2021. I do not know what will happen with the virus that is keeping us at home and socially distanced. I therefore am trying to gauge the interest of the members in holding a ZOOM Meeting. This is how the IRTA Board and all IRTA committees are now meeting to conduct business.

I would like CCRTA members to let me know if they are interested. Simply e-mail or phone me with your answer. I am attaching to this missive, instructions on how to install Zoom on your computer or cell phone to be able to be part of a CCRTA Zoom meeting. ZOOM is free to the users. You need to download this program and follow the instructions on the attached sheets. I bought ZOOM Pro for my home computer which will allow me to set up meetings of more than 40 participants.

Should you feel uncomfortable installing the zoom program, please feel free to call me (618) 604-9544 and I will help you download the program to your computer or phone. My wife says, that if I can do it, anyone can. We should be able to conduct a regular CCRTA meeting. I promise that these meeting will last no longer than 30 minutes to an hour.

This method of holding meetings and talking with family, I am afraid, will be with us for a while. Please review the following two pages on "How to Set Up Zoom Meeting on Your Computer, Tablet, and/or smart Phone". I guarantee if it was easy for me, it will be easy for you.

Donnie C. Ostrom
CCRTA President

A Step-by-Step Guide to a Zoom Meeting

6/29/2020 | By Seniors Guide Staff

If you haven't already received an email inviting you to a Zoom meeting, you probably will soon. In this age of social distancing, many groups are choosing to meet virtually, and Zoom is one of the most popular ways to do this. It might be your book club, your volunteer group, or your Sunday school class, but chances are you're going to be part of a Zoom meeting.



Zoom is a computer program used to hold online virtual meetings. You can use Zoom on a smartphone, a tablet, a laptop, or a desktop computer (as long as you have a camera, speakers, and a microphone). It uses your computer's or phone's camera to show live video of all attendees (if you don't want to be on camera, that's fine, too. You can just display your name). Zoom uses your computer's or phone's microphone to let you talk to other meeting participants. If you do not have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone, you can use a phone to dial into a meeting.

This article only covers joining and participating in a Zoom meeting that you've been invited to. If you want to know more about more advanced Zoom features like changing your background, raising your hand in a meeting, sharing your screen, and hosting your own meeting go to Zoom's Support Center support.zoom.us/hc/en-us

DOWNLOAD ZOOM

Zoom is a program that runs on your computer, phone, or tablet. You must download this program from the Zoom website. The free version of Zoom should meet all of your needs.

If you've received an email invitation to a Zoom meeting, click the link that says, "Join Zoom Meeting." If this is the first time you've used Zoom, this link will take you to a website where you can download the Zoom program or app, depending on what device you're using.

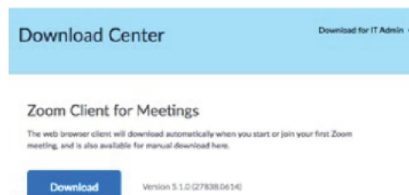
On an iPhone or iPad: Go to the Apple App Store and search for "ZOOM Cloud Meetings." Click "Get" to download and install the Zoom app.



The Zoom app in the App Store

On an Android phone or tablet: Go to the Google Play App Store and search for "Zoom Cloud Meetings." Click "Install."

On a computer: On the Download Center website zoom.us/download, click "Download" in the "Zoom Client for Meetings" section.

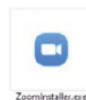


Click the blue Download button to download Zoom from the website zoom.us/download

After Zoom is downloaded, you must install it onto your computer.

If you have an Apple computer, like a MacBook: Double-click the file called *Zoom.pkg*, which is typically saved to your Downloads folder. The installer program opens and guides you through the process.

If you have a PC: Double-click the file called *ZoomInstaller.exe* file to install the program.



Double-click *ZoomInstaller.exe* to install Zoom on your PC.

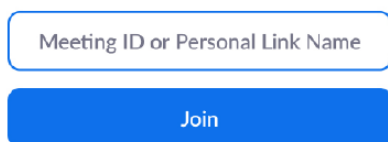
JOIN A MEETING

After you install Zoom, there are a few different ways to join a Zoom meeting. You can click the link in your invitation email, go to the Zoom website and enter the meeting ID, or dial into the meeting on a phone.

Click the link in an invitation email: If you have an email invitation, click “Join Zoom Meeting” in that email. This takes you to the Zoom website.

Go to the Zoom website: Go to zoom.us/join, and enter the 9-digit meeting ID from your invitation email. If the meeting requires a password, that will be in your email, too.

Join a Meeting



When you are on the Zoom website, if you are asked if you want to open Zoom, click “Open zoom.us.” Zoom opens, showing you a preview of your camera image. Then click either “Join with Video” or “Join without Video.” If you use video, other people in the meeting will see you. If not, they will just see your name. Next, Zoom asks about audio. Click “Join with Computer Audio” so you can hear and be heard in the meeting.

Dial into the meeting on a phone: If you don’t have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone, you can use a phone to dial into the meeting. The phone number to use will be in your invitation email, or you can find the number to use in the Zoom International Dial-in Numbers list zoom.us/zoomconference.

PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING

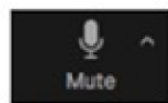
Once you’ve joined the meeting, you can see and hear other participants. Each participant is represented by a square that displays their face (*if they’ve chosen to join with video*) or just their name.

If you’re in a large meeting, make sure your microphone is muted. Your computer microphone is pretty sensitive, and if you’re unmuted, it can pick up a lot of background noise. The mute button, which looks like a microphone, is in the bottom left corner of the Zoom screen. If the microphone has a red line through it, you’re muted, and no one in the meeting can hear you.



If the microphone has a red line through it, you are muted.

Click the button again to unmute yourself if you want to talk in the meeting.



If the microphone has no red line through it, you can be heard in the meeting.

Only one person in the meeting can talk at a time. Zoom indicates who is speaking by highlighting their image with a yellow square.

There is also a chat feature in Zoom, where you can type messages to other participants. Participants can send messages to everyone in the meeting, or just certain participants. However, after the meeting, the host can view the transcript of all chats, so it’s not entirely private. If there is a message for you in the chat, a notification appears on the Chat button, which looks like a speech bubble. Click that button to open the chat window.

LEAVE A ZOOM MEETING

Click “Leave Meeting” on the bottom right corner to leave the meeting.