

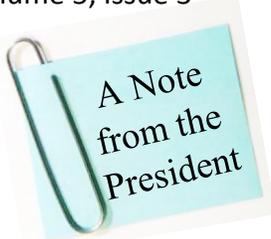


Shelby County Retired Teachers Newsletter



Shelby County Retired Teachers Association
September 2018
Volume 5, Issue 3

LaVonne Chaney, President
Nancy Wilhelm, Vice-President
Ione Elliott, Secretary
Kim Sparks, Treasurer



A new school year has begun for many of our friends, for those who are still active teachers or retirees who opt to work part time in our schools as well as those who choose to substitute teach. Wish them well and give them a great deal of encouragement. Our newest county retirees are Terry Prasun from Findlay and

Debbie Applegate from Moulton Middle School in Shelbyville. Debbie has decided to work part time as a Title I Math Teacher. If you see Terry or Debbie, congratulate them. If you know of anyone else who retired that SCRTA missed, please let either Nancy Wilhelm or me know. I hope to see all of you at the September 5th meeting and please remember that this is the meeting we collect school supplies for our elementary special education students in the Shelby County. Even if you are unable to attend, please drop off supplies or give them to someone who is attending. Please call a fellow retiree and invite them to attend.

Sincerely,

LaVonne Chaney

September Meeting

Date: Wednesday, September 5

Place: Cornerstone Community Fellowship Church

9:00 - Social Time with Juice, Coffee, & Snacks

9:15 - Program followed by Short Business Meeting



Just a Reminder -

Visit the SCRTA website for upcoming events and news that affects you.

www.shelbycountyretiredteachers.com

Our September Program

1) A representative from the Shelby County Probation Office will be with us to speak about the Drug Court program. Drug Court is an alternative to prison, which saves taxpayer money and helps the offender become a law-abiding citizen through a program of drug testing, addiction treatment, and counseling.

2) With Fall comes two important decisions for retired teachers:

- Whether to make a change in your TRAIL insurance during the open enrollment period
- Who to vote for in the November elections

We will take some time for members to share their experiences with their current or past providers. Hearing your stories may help others make a decision whether to change providers.

As you look into the candidates before entering the voting booth in November, you may want to check out endorsements made by the IRTA Political Action Committee. Have you ever wondered how they make their decisions? We'll learn a bit about that process.

School Supplies Needed

Please donate these supplies:

- Pencils (mechanical & lead)
- Pencil Grips
- Pencil Bags
- Highlighters
- Crayons
- Waterproof Markers
- Loose Leaf Paper
- Notebooks (wide ruled)
- Folders with pockets
- Erasers
- Ink Pens
- Sticky Notes
- Glue Sticks
- Rulers

Each year SCRTA provides school supplies for the elementary special education students in Shelby County. We are asking each member to bring a selection of school supplies to the September meeting. We give them to Central A&M in Moweaqua, Okaw Valley Middle School in Findlay, Shelbyville (2 schools), Windsor, Stew-Stras, and Cowden-Herrick. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can take school supplies to LaVonne Chaney or Nancy Wilhelm, or drop them by the church the morning of the 5th.

June Meeting

Three SCRTA Members – Ione Elliott, Bud Wilhelm, and Nancy Wilhelm - attended the Area V Conference in June at Effingham Junior High School. Besides enjoying a great lunch and raffle prizes, they heard speakers who addressed issues of importance to our members.

Our Area Representative Jim Barr (top right) opened the meeting with a new video which you can view on the website. President Roger Hampton (bottom right) then spoke about IRTA's vision for 2018-19. Following were IRTA Executive Director Jim Bachman giving a legislative update, Vice-President John Flaherty on IRTAPAC, and TRS Trustee Dan Winter on the state of the Teacher Retirement System. We also learned about new member benefits, the Foundation, and membership recruitment. During the Foundation presentation we saw a familiar face on one of the slides – Mary Lou Brehmer, a retired teacher who works part time at Main Street School in Shelbyville. She was the recipient of one of the Foundation grants this year.

If you have questions about information from the conference, we can discuss them at our September meeting.



Our November meeting is at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 7 at Cornerstone Community Fellowship.

Legislative NEWS

Contact information for Representative Brad Halbrook and Senator Chapin Rose can be found in your Unit Directory at our website www.shelbycountyretiredteachers.com (select LEGISLATION). Numbers do make a difference to legislators. Remember to contact them before important legislation as well as thank them afterward.

Good News for Retirees!

On August 21, 2018 Governor Rauner signed into law SB3046 (Public Act 100-1017). SB3046 was an initiative of IRTA's. The bill provides that on and after the effective date of this amendatory Act, eligible TRS benefit recipients and TRS dependent beneficiaries may elect to participate in TRIP (this includes participants in TRAIL) if they previously opted out of the program. The bill provides that the election must be made during the benefit recipient's annual open enrollment period, subject to specified conditions. SB3046 becomes effective immediately. Senator Manar and Representative Gordan-Booth were the main sponsors of this legislation. In addition there were several other representatives and senators that co-sponsored the legislation.

On June 29, 2018 the Governor signed into law HB5627. HB5627 was an IRTA initiative that increases the amount of employment as a teacher that a retired teacher may perform without impairing the retirement status; allows 120 paid days or 600 paid hours in a school year, but not more than 100 paid days in the same classroom. The law became effective July 1, 2018.

And remember, for a quick and easy way to contact your legislators, go to **Voter Voice** on the IRTAonline website. There you will find information on pending legislation. If you click on a bill, it will take you to a pre-written letter which you may change/personalize in any way you like. Then all you have to do is hit SEND.

NEWS FROM TRS

The long-range rate-of-return for the TRS investment portfolio was 8.3 percent for fiscal year 2018, which beat the System's assumed return of 7 percent. The TRS portfolio totals \$51.3 billion. Assets have increased 80 percent in 10 years.

Are you a member of the +\$100,000 Salary and Pension Club?

Issue: In recent weeks, a new website identifying 30,000 TRS members as a "\$100,000+ Salary & Pension Club" has been circulated via social media and several news sites.

Discussion: The website was created by the OpenTheBooks.com watchdog organization. In Forbes magazine, the group said that Illinois is home to "the most out-of-control" and "corrupted... education pay-and-pension systems..." However, a closer look at the numbers shows that membership in this "\$100 K Club" was the exception for Illinois teachers, not the rule. TRS provided the group with records through a Freedom of Information Act request. There were 30,492 active or retired TRS members in 2017 who either received a salary or a pension of \$100,000 or more. But here's what OpenTheBooks.com chose not to mention:

- There were a total of 268,608 active and retired TRS members in 2017. Therefore, the \$100 K Club comprised just 11.4 percent of these TRS members. In other words, 88.6 percent of active and retired teachers in Illinois were not members of the \$100 K Club.
- School districts throughout Illinois paid 18,760 teachers a salary of \$100,000 or more in 2017, out of a total of 160,488 active members.
- There were 11,732 retired members receiving a pension of \$100,000 or more in 2017 – out of a total of 108,120.
- The average active TRS member salary in 2017 was \$71,773. The average TRS pension in 2017 was \$54,180.

The website created by the OpenTheBooks.com enables anyone to search a map of Illinois and pinpoint all TRS members who received either a salary or a TRS pension of \$100,000 or more in 2017. TRS did not provide OpenTheBooks.com with any member addresses or other personally identifiable information, but was required by the FOIA law to sort member salary and pension information by the school districts where active members were employed and by the last districts that employed retired members.



IRTA / SCRTA News

Don't Forget. . .

- Check out irtaonline.org (AMBA link) for a full listing of your membership benefits.
- Ask any retired teachers that you know if they are a member of IRTA and SCRTA. Encourage them to join the organizations and attend our meetings.
- Check to see that your local dues are up to date. Contact Ginnie Hostetler if you need to pay dues.

Your membership in Shelby County Retired Teachers offers you:

- 4 meetings a year.
- 4 Newsletters a year.
- Regular Email updates on Legislative Issues that affect you.
- Discounts on things such as travel, Verizon service, insurance, computers & much more.
- Directory of Retired Teachers in the County.
- Membership in the only organization that works exclusively for you...a retired teacher.



When Elizabeth Hagemann from the Alzheimer's Association spoke to SCRTA last November, she encouraged our group to raise money for the Alzheimer's Association by forming a team to take part in the Walk to End Alzheimer's in Mattoon on September 29. I have decided to do just that.

I have a brother who had to retire early from teaching due to symptoms that led to a diagnosis of early onset Alzheimer's. It is in his honor that I will be collecting donations and walking on 9/29. I'm asking for your help in two ways. If you would also like to raise funds and walk, contact me for details on how to join the SCRTA team. If you would like to contribute, I have a fundraising web page where you can fill out a form to mail a check or contribute by credit card (http://act.alz.org/site/TR?fr_id=11198&pg=personal&px=15041782). Or you can just contact me to pick up your cash or check. Thanks so much for your help.

Nancy Wilhelm Call 774-4537, Text 460-2712, or Email njwilhelm@yahoo.com

IRTA Sponsored Trips

The IRTA has two upcoming trips you might be interested in - a 7 Night Eastern Caribbean & Bahamas cruise departing from Miami on January 5, 2019 and a trip to Portugal October 19-26, 2018. If you are interested, act fast.

TRAIL Insurance Fall Open Enrollment Period

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. The plan year begins 1/1/19 and is effective through 12/31/19. **If you are currently enrolled in one of the TRAIL Medicare Advantage plans, your enrollment will continue. You need not do anything unless you want to make a change to your current plan.** To make that change, follow the directions in the fall mailing from CMS.

