

Wednesday, April 7 SCRTA Meeting

1:00 p.m / On Zoom

If you haven't tried the Zoom app yet, this is a good time to learn. Watch some video tutorials or have a friend or family member help you learn. Or get together with another IRTA member and join the meeting with them.

SCRTA Officers >>

President
James Sparks

Vice-President
Nancy Wilhelm

Secretary
Ione Elliott

Treasurer
Kim Sparks

Shelby County Retired Teachers Newsletter

April 2021

Volume 8
Number 1

Tower Hill, Illinois



Hello my dear fellow retired teachers. I want you all to know that your well-being is on the minds of all the officers of the Shelby County Retired Teachers Association. We recently met via Zoom to discuss this year's calendar. We had a great deal of personal conversation about the continuing pandemic. A good part of that discussion was about getting Covid-19 vaccines. Some have been fully vaccinated while others of us have gotten our first shot awaiting the second. We want you to know that we are all brothers & sisters in arms trying to take care of one another. Please feel free to reach out to us with a phone call, email, or message if we can help calm your fears.



*A Note from
the President*

We have set our first meeting date as April 7, 2021 @ 1pm to be held via Zoom. We would really love to see you join us, not only to see you, but to share any concerns you may have. If some of you have yet to try out Zoom please contact me or one of the other officers to do a one-on-one mini Zoom session with you to make you more comfortable using it in a meeting. It's really nice to be able to see everyone without leaving the safety of our homes. The agenda for this first meeting of 2021 will include a short Covid-19 discussion, the upcoming Region 13 meeting in June, the upcoming annual IRTA conference in Springfield in October, and a brief presentation by Mr. Paul Strid of AMBA. There will also be time for you to share what kind of topics you would like discussed in upcoming meetings. So please mark your calendars for April 7 @1pm to join us for the latest retired teacher information and some fine camaraderie. An email invitation will soon be appearing in your mailbox but remember that you can also join by phone. Please don't hesitate to reach out and let us set up a mini-Zoom session ahead of time to give you the confidence to join us. If you have family members that are comfortable with Zoom they are more than welcome to sit beside you during the meeting and help you with the technology too.

Thank you for being part of our group. Don't forget to check out our webpage <<https://www.shelbycountyretiredteachers.com/>> for the latest retired teacher information. Please remember to be safe and wear your masks when you are out and try to get that Covid-19 vaccine so that maybe before this year is over things might begin to return to normal. We are hoping to meet face-to-face in September!

Sincerely,

James A. Sparks
SCRTA President
(217) 259-2669

TRS News

A few updates on TRS during the COVID-19 challenges in 2020. TRS defensive investment strategies protected assets during the early months of 2020. All institutional investors like TRS lost money in the first quarter of 2020.

- TRS return: -9.95%
- NASDAQ: -17.8%
- S&P 500: -19.6%
- Dow Jones Industrial Average: -26.2%

TRS long-term investment results in FY 2020.

- 10 Year: 8.3%
- 20 Year: 5.8%
- 30 Year: 8.0%
- 40 Year: 9.0%

The current TRS assumed long-term rate of return is 7.0%.

TRS investment rebound during 2020:

- January 1, 2020 54.2 billion in assets
- March 31, 2020 48.5 billion in assets
- December 31, 2020 57.01 billion in assets

IRTA News

From the Spring 2021 Action Newsletter -



Convention

The IRTA Convention will be held on October 18-19, 2021, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, Illinois. Please be sure to save these dates on your calendar. More information will be forthcoming in the months to follow!

Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers Program

2020 IRTAF Grant Winners

This winter, the Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation (IRTAF) awarded \$36,500 in grant money to several public school educators from across the state. This grant money will allow these educators to enrich their instruction with materials not otherwise available to them. Their students are the real winners! A special thank you to the Illinois Principals Association for their assistance with the promotion of this program. Below, you will find the name of each winner listed, along with his/her school, and the IRTA Area. On the IRTA website (irtaonline.org), you can read a paragraph summary about each project in the winner's own words.

Stephanie Barding, Okaw Valley Elementary School, Bethany (5)

Shari Bruyn, Okaw Valley High School, Bethany (5)

The 2021 grant application is now available to Illinois public school educators (Pre-K through 12). Active teachers can download, complete, and submit the application online by visiting www.irtaonline.org and looking under the Foundation section. *All proposals must be submitted by June 1, 2021.*

Membership

You might have noted that in the most recent TRS update sent to annuitants it was stated that the number of unexpected retirements increased by about 42%. In fact, the number of those educators who had started the 2019-2020 school year planning to continue for at least the year after that, but then deciding to retire prior to the 2020-2021 year is quite large. In the months of July, August, September, and October there were 713 unexpected retirements, most probably because of the circumstances in the school districts due to COVID-19.

If you know anyone who retired last year or is planning to retire this year, please encourage them to join IRTA and their local unit. In his February budget proposal Governor Pritzker fully funded the Teacher Retirement System (\$5,693,707,000) and its insurance program (\$143,369,000), but with the financial problems that plague the state we can't depend on this forever. IRTA's prime purpose is defending the pensions and insurance of Illinois' retired teachers. The stronger IRTA is, the better our chances of holding on to our benefits. Please keep up your membership and encourage others to join too.

More SCRTA Meeting Info

Zoom

As Jim said in his message, we are committed in any way to helping members feel comfortable using Zoom. Both LaVonne and Jim use Zoom regularly and are quite familiar with it. Both have helped many first-time users in the past year. Either of them would answer your questions or even come to your home to help you if you have any concerns. Jim Sparks (217) 259-2669 LaVonne Chaney (217) 246-5049

Here is the link for the meeting: (Also on the webpage <https://www.shelbycountyretiredteachers.com/>)

Topic: Shelby County Retired Teachers Association

Time: Apr 7, 2021 01:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89241483991?pwd=UGhocStlTDgyRGlwM0JUUmZQV1lrQT09>

Meeting ID: 892 4148 3991

Passcode: 244043

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,89241483991#,,,,*244043# US (Chicago)

+19292056099,,89241483991#,,,,*244043# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89241483991?pwd=UGhocStlTDgyRGlwM0JUUmZQV1lrQT09>

Program

We will have a chance to catch up with each other since it has been a long time since we were all together. Some Covid-19 information from the Shelby County Health Department will be discussed. Paul Strid from AMBA will also be on hand to answer any questions about member benefits. We are attaching a summary of benefits with this newsletter for you to look over ahead of the meeting.

Please plan to join us!

In Memorium

We recognize these Shelby County teachers who have passed away.

A donation will be made to the IRTA Foundation in their honor.

Wanda June Bell died March 13, 2021. Wanda taught mainly physical ed in Neoga and Sullivan.

Norma Jean Carter died July 14, 2020. Norma taught 2nd grade for 35 years in Atwood.

Nadine Wilkey died June 20, 2020. Nadine taught at Decatur then retired to Windsor.

Carolyn "Suzy" Hart died February 7, 2021. Suzy taught in Shelbyville and for EIASE.

Andrew Cichalewski died November 30, 2020. Andy taught social studies in Shelbyville for 37 years.

We also acknowledge the over 200 TRS members who died in the past year from Covid-19 complications.