

SCRTA Newsletter



Shelby County Retired Teachers Association
November 2021
Volume 8, Issue 3

James Sparks - President
Nancy Wilhelm - Vice-President
Ione Elliott - Secretary
Kim Sparks - Treasurer

President's Note



Happy Fall Shelby County Retired Teachers Association members,

The dedicated SCRTA officers have met repeatedly to try our best to entice you to join us at our four quarterly meetings on the first Wednesday in April, June, September, and November. Recently it was suggested that we try to include more general interest topics in our meetings.

With that in mind, I am happy to report that we are meeting at the newly renovated Chautauqua building in Forest Park, Shelbyville for the November 3, 2021 meeting. We have three presenters, of which only one will be connected to the IRTA. We hope you will come out to see the glorious restored historic Chautauqua and learn a little about the work that was done to save it. I've been informed a 91-year-old gentleman that went to Shelbyville High School will also be joining us to share some memories.

On October 19, 2021, Nancy Wilhelm, LaVonne Chaney & I participated in the virtual biennial Illinois Retired Teachers Convention on the Zoom platform. Nancy & I were voting delegates that acted on proposed constitutional changes. Many of the proposals focused on a reduction in standing committee members which we opposed due to lack of representation of many areas in the state which would have resulted. We understand that the IRTA is having a difficult time getting volunteers to serve on the committees and quorums not being met for scheduled meetings. Hopefully as we continue to reduce the threat of Covid-19 and its variants, people will feel safe enough to engage in worthy IRTA causes.

Finally, I hope that each of you have been comfortable in your safe havens and that you and your families are feeling well. If there is anything that we can do to assist you please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of the officers. We also ask that you reach out however you can (phone, email, text message, letter) to make contact with us to let us know what ideas you have for our meetings. We are certainly willing to entertain any genius thoughts you might have such as a special meeting locations or presentations you'd love to see. Hope to see you soon.

Jim Sparks
jsparks7914@gmail.com
(217) 259-2669

November Meeting

Wednesday, November 3

Chautauqua Auditorium

Forest Park

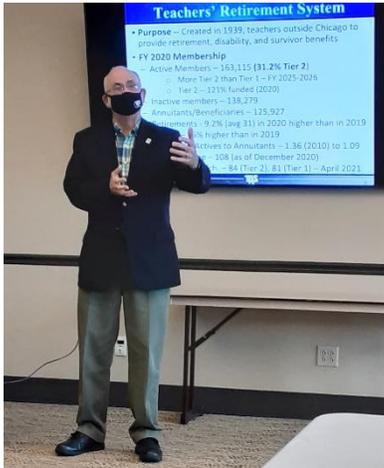
9:00 a.m.

Our program will feature
three outstanding speakers

Details on Page 2

SCRТА Meetings

In September we met at the Lake Shelbyville Visitor Center - our first in-person meeting in two years. We kept safe by practicing social distancing and wearing masks. Our speaker was Rich Frankenfeld, Director of Outreach for the Teacher Retirement System of Illinois. He presented an overview of TRS covering investment returns, retiree health insurance, and legislative updates.



We will meet **November 3** at the **Chautauqua Building** in Forest Park at 9:00 a.m. Bring along your drink of choice. We will provide some light snacks. Our November meeting will feature three speakers.

Bundle up for the November SCRТА meeting. Park Commissioner **Mark Shanks** will be giving us a tour of the Chautauqua Building, filling us in on its history and showing us the improvements that have recently been made.



Come out on Wednesday to meet a man who might be doing more for retired teachers than anyone else in the state. **Larry Pfeiffer** is a **member of the TRS Board of Trustees**, one of two trustees elected by TRS annuitants on the 15-member board. He was elected to his second 4-year term this summer.

Larry retired six years ago, becoming president of the Macoupin County RTA three months later. Among his many positions were ag teacher in Carlinville, Principal of ROE#40 Regional Safe School, Regional Superintendent of ROE#40 for 13 years (serving 11 of those as the Legislative Chair of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents), and Adjunct Professor, Blackburn College Education Department.

Last week Larry added another job to his busy schedule when he was elected **Vice President of the IRTA**.

(And to top all of this off, he is a local boy. His first year at Shelbyville High School was my first year as a teacher there.)

We are honored to have him speak to us on November 3.



Olivia Koester

Director of Development
and External Relations

okkoester@eiu.edu

Olivia Koester is coming from Eastern Illinois University to speak about changes in the College of Education as well as community resources available for alumni.

The IRTA biennial convention was held on October 19, not in person as originally planned but by Zoom. It consisted primarily of committee reports, the election of officers who will serve for the next two years, voting on four proposed constitutional amendments, and the acknowledgement of local unit honorees. Shelby County's honoree was a very-deserving LaVonne Chaney.



During the convention IRTA Executive Director Jim Bachman announced that he would be retiring in two years. In the incoming president's acceptance speech, Bill Funkhouser spoke of the many challenges/opportunities that we will face in the coming years. He noted that the greatest of those would be the replacement of Bachman.

If you are interested in learning more about the convention, here are links to the minutes and to some videos.

<https://www.irtaonline.org/view/download.php/members-only/downloads/publications/2021-delegate-assembly>

IRTA Virtual Convention recording from October 19, 2021 – Running time is around an hour and a half

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wh9MU9Dp9IA>

Committee reports

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNanSjPHF84>

Membership 2:47

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdEKqxMWIZk>

Member Benefits 2:36

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6zwJFbkd-E>

Financial Report 5:22

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AoYhGGEQbs>

Information Services 2:51

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY05wkBMe6c>

Legislative 2:07

And here is the link for the Area 5 Conference from June 22, 2021 – Running time is an hour and 15 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBiUY8sXXiM>



R. Stanley Rupnik, an 18-year veteran of TRS, was appointed June 25 as the new TRS Executive Director and Chief Investment Officer (CIO) by the System's Board of Trustees. Rupnik has served as acting executive director since August of 2020 while retaining his previous role as CIO. He joined TRS in April 2003 as director of investments and was named CIO in November of 2004. He previously served TRS as acting executive director between 2009 and 2011.

You may have received an email concerning improper activities by certain employees at Teachers' Retirement System that occurred between late 2018 and 2020. More information can be found at <https://www.irtaonline.org/view/download.php/members-only/downloads/publications/trs-news---sept-20-2021>

The following link is to an 8-minute video TRS Annuitant Convention Report featuring Doug Strand and Larry Pfeiffer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wh9MU9Dp9IA>



Visit the website at MyBenefits.illinois.gov on your computer, smartphone or tablet. (The website was updated in September for easier navigation and new features.) AVA, the interactive digital assistant is available 24/7. Or contact MyBenefits Service Center (toll-free) 844-251-1777, or 844-251-1778 (TDD/TTY) with inquiries. Representatives are available Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM CT.

By now you should have received your TRAIL Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug (MAPD) Program Decision Guide through the mail.

The Open Enrollment period is October 15 through November 15

It covers the plan year January 1 through December 31, 2022

If you do not wish to change your coverage, you do not need to do anything.

The Decision Guide includes the contribution rates and a description of benefits offered by each plan for the TRAIL MAPD Program, a map of plan availability by Illinois county, and how to enroll through the MyBenefits website at MyBenefits.illinois.gov

During Your TRAIL MAPD Enrollment Period you may:

- Elect to cancel your coverage. Note: If you cancel your TRIP TRAIL MAPD coverage, medical and prescription drug coverage for you and your enrolled dependents will end. Re-enrollment is allowed for TRIP members throughout the plan year with coverage effective the first of the month following your enrollment request or during your annual TRAIL MAPD Enrollment Period.
- Elect to re-enroll in medical/prescription drug coverage if you previously canceled coverage.
- Add or drop dependent coverage. **IMPORTANT:** You must contact the MyBenefits Service Center (toll-free) 844-251-1777 if you want to add a dependent who is not enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B.
- Change to a new TRAIL MAPD plan if you are currently enrolled in TRAIL MAPD.

Remember:

- You must keep Medicare Parts A and B and continue to pay the applicable Medicare premiums.
- You can only be in one Medicare Advantage or Medicare Part D (prescription drug) plan at a time. Enrollment in the TRAIL MAPD plan provides you with Medicare Advantage coverage as well as Medicare Part D coverage. Therefore, **enrollment in a different Medicare Advantage or Medicare Part D plan will automatically cause your TRAIL MAPD coverage to end**, which will include termination of your TRIP medical and prescription drug coverage.



The Salvation Army is looking for volunteer bell ringers for their red kettle campaign to raise money for Shelby County families in need. The shifts are only one hour and there are several locations throughout the county. Contact Nancy Wilhelm at 774-4537 if you are interested.

- Many IRTA members are not members of SCRTA. If you would like to join or if you are unsure if you have paid 2021 local dues, please contact Treasurer Ginnie Hostetler at gh1610@yahoo.com. Members may pay \$5 for one year or pay \$100 for a lifetime SCRTA membership.

- If you are getting this newsletter through USPS mail delivery and would be willing to switch to email delivery, contact Nancy Wilhelm (njwilhelm@yahoo.com)

- Thanks to former student Diana Winson for providing fall photographs.