

The Jogger

Serving Retired Teachers of Districts 300, 301, 303 and U-46

June 17th General Meeting Villa Olivia Country Club, Bartlett Social Hour - Luncheon - Business & Information - Program

News from the Gavel: A synopsis and comment by Mick Williams

Our Jogger Takes a Vacation and Returns in September *In the mean time we must remain vigilant.*



Summer comes and teachers “rest”. Retirees are resting all the time, aren’t they? Well, maybe not. Since few of the retirees I know rest very much, I guess they are creatures of habit. Habits built up from years of summer school, family vacations (often to summer school), and let us not forget those summer jobs (working construction, truck driving, waiting tables, tending bar and the iconic “temp” job).

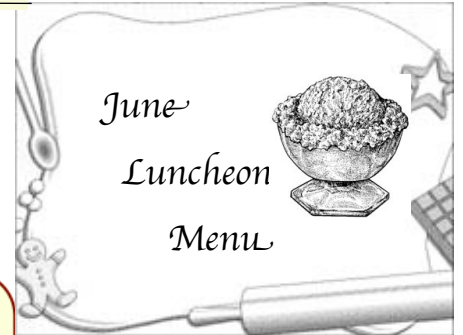
This summer EARTA and IRTA have some home work for you. First, for some of you, you need to find a link to the electronic world. You don’t need to become a “computer geek”, you just need to try to stay in touch with what is happening. Recruit a friend, a child, or grandchild to help out. Maybe, set up a phone chain to pass on information and respond when the need arises. Secondly, all of you need to encourage your family and friends currently in education to do their part. Lastly, hold fast to the hope that the future will mean more warm and sunny days than it will mean checking on holders of the public trust. Enjoy what you can, but do what you must and you will all get A’s on your homework.

(News from the Gavel Continues on page 3)

April 28th: We held a Pre-retirement Reception at Hickory Stick for area 2011 retirees. Of the 110 invited retirees over 30 attended the program that included representatives from Social Security and TRS. Retirees received vital information about their benefits from both groups with special emphasis placed on deadlines for enrollment in TRS and the TRIP insurance program. Numerous questions from audience members yielded very useful details from our guests. Cliff Olson gave a comprehensive overview of the benefits of IRTA and EARTA membership. A number of attendees joined both the local and state groups and we are looking forward to welcoming them and many more to EARTA.

Supper Club: Meeting on the second Monday each month at Hooper’s Bar & Grill on N. McLean in Elgin at 5:30p.m. for dinner and conversation. We last met on May 9th and our small but friendly group looks forward to seeing many more of you at our next evening on June 13th. No reservation required. It’s “DutchTreat” and FUN. *****

June Program: Come listen to “Bandjo” Jazzy Jeff, an entertainer who enjoys performing different styles of music on his Tenor Banjo. His performance will range from Bluegrass, Dixieland to Ragtime. What sets his banjo act apart is his ability to “Stroll” around the area with this portable sound system. You won’t want to miss this entertaining program.



Social hour will begin at 11:30 with a cash bar and good company. Luncheon will be served at 12:00.

Your menu choices will be:

1. Soup DuJour and a Triple Treat Salad (Tuna, Chicken, Potato) [OR]
2. Soup DuJour Baked Ham with Hawaiian sauce Candied Sweet Potatoes Green Beans Almondine

Both Entrees served with Hot Rolls, Coffee, or Ice Tea. Dessert: Rainbow Sherbert

Reservations & Choice of Entree are due by June 10th.

Send your checks for \$16.00 per person which includes tax and gratuity payable to EARTA to :

Marilyn Hendry,
1009 Meadow Lane
Elgin Illinois 60123
Phone: 847-695-2926

MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE April 15th GENERAL MEETING

11:30 am – Social 12:00 pm – Lunch

President Mick Williams welcomed the group at 12:00. Mick also welcomed Bob Lyons, TRS Annuitant Trustee, and Rich Frankenfeld, TRS Director of Outreach. Mick encouraged all of us to visit the EARTA website: www.earta.org. Lunch was served following the invocation by Duly Dulabaum.

Call to Order: Mick called the business meeting to order at 12:50 pm.

Officers' Reports:

Secretary – Irene Wedemeyer. A motion to accept the February 11, 2011, General Meeting Minutes (taken by Kay Lincicome) as printed in The Jogger was made by Cliff Olson and seconded by David Brown. Motioned passed.

Treasurer – Jean Jederman. Checking Account Balance: \$625.81. Savings Account Balance: \$11,456.48.

Committee Reports:

Corresponding Secretary – Kay Lincicome. A reminder was given to send Kay names of any members who may be in need of a card (illnesses, hospitalizations, etc.).

Social/Charity – Coral Reinert. Coral reported that the "Aida" trip to Drury Lane was a great experience for about 30 of our members.

The Supper Club will meet on May 9th at Hooper's at 5:30 pm: all are welcome to attend.

Community Participation/Blood

Drive – Cindy Lange. Cindy distributed the sign-up sheet for two drives: St. Edwards on April 26th and Larkin High School on May 3rd.

Legislation – Cliff Olson. Cliff passed out a printed report (report on file). He discussed the new reform bill supported by IEA, IFT and CTU. A few of the positive

CHARITY INFORMATION: The Charity Committee met on May 4, 2011 to choose the organizations which should be the recipients of our donations. It was decided to give \$300 to the I.R.T.A. Scholarship Fund to aid deserving students planning a career in education and \$200 to the Gail Borden Public Library Foundation to purchase books, furniture or whatever was needed for the Children's Department. *****

Supper Club: The "Group" met on Monday, May 9th, at Hooper's Bar and Grill for an evening of good food and companionship. The next get-together is scheduled for June 13th. All EARTA members and friends are invited. Mark your calendars and join us at 5:30 p.m..

highlights include retention of the right to collective bargain, tenure being portable between districts, and the stipulation that an individual teacher can request an outside evaluator.

Membership – David Brown. No report.

Nominations – Adrienne Berna. No report.

Old Business/Discussion: None.

New Business: Mick encouraged members to use the new post office box address when needed:

EARTA, PO Box 5515, Elgin, IL 60121.

Mick encouraged members to check emails often for information about TRS reform and other current education political issues, as action/support is often needed in a very short turn-around time.

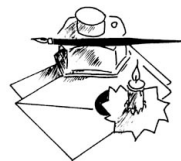
The next General Membership Meeting & Luncheon is June 17th at Villa Olivia in Bartlett (11:30-social, 12:00-lunch, 1:00-program).

Adjournment: Seeing no other business, Mick adjourned the meeting at 1:08 pm.

Program – Rich Frankenfeld, TRS Director of Outreach, walked us through a packet regarding TRS (packet on file). The information was well presented and very informative, and the time flew by quickly. Bob Lyons, TRS Annuitant Trustee, followed up with more information. Both guests then answered questions from the group.

Reminder: The EARTA Pre-Retirement Reception is planned for April 28th from 4:00-6:00 pm at the Hickory Stick in Elgin. Please, invite any friends and/or former colleagues who are about to retire.

Respectively submitted,
Irene Wedemeyer
Secretary



Updates from the EARTA Board 05/20/11

Minutes of the March 18th Board meeting were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report from Jean Jederman: The checking account balance as of May 1st was \$1,424.99 and the savings balance was \$10,531.48. *****

***** **EARTA Volunteers:**

EARTA continues to support Heartland blood drives at our local high schools. When possible, two volunteers work a three hour shift. The blood drives are usually 8:30 - 1:30/2:00p.m.. There was a drive at Elgin High School in January and 2 drives in February, at Larkin and St. Ed's High Schools. This spring there was one at St. Ed's High School in April and the last one was at Larkin High School in May. Thank you to the fourteen individuals who volunteered to hand out snacks and juice to the donors. Cindy Lange 4/22/11

Annual Pre-Retirement Reception at the Hickory Stick featuring Social Security Rep, Jim Bushman & TRS Rep., Steve Rollins was held April 28th. Thirty retirees attended plus several EARTA Bd. members. Thanks to Barb McGee, Jane Alderson and their helpers for another successful reception. *****

Forgotten to renew your annual membership in EARTA? Send your check for \$15.00 to Jean Jederman, 865 Wing St., Elgin, IL 60123. RENEW NOW

See www.earta.org for life membership details.

IRTA Regional 5 Director Marilyn Foster and Coral Reinert attended IRTA Area II meeting at Randall Oaks March 28th; the Kendall local lunch on April 6th, the IRTA Board of Directors meeting in Springfield April 26 & 27. They will go to Aurora June 7th and to next fall's IRTA State Convention October 17 & 18 followed by the IRTA-PAC luncheon at the Governor's mansion. Marilyn will be re-appointed as our Region 5 Director for another 2 years.

NOTE: Please continue to let Kay Lincicome (Corresponding Secretary), Page 31, know when there is an illness or death among our membership.

NOTE: It has come to our attention that Joan Arbuckle, IRTA & EARTA life member has passed away.

**2011 IRTA State Convention Springfield Hilton
October 17 & 18th**

EARTA will be allocated a number of delegates based on our reported membership in IRTA. EARTA members interested in being a delegate need to submit a request to EARTA Board President Mick Williams by July 15th. The Board of directors will determine the assignment of delegate status should the requests exceed the number allowed by IRTA. Members who are not delegates may attend but will not have voting privileges.

FY 2012 Managed Care Contracts – At this time, a final decision regarding the managed care contracts for FY 2012 has not been made. As a result, vendor names, coverage areas and rates are not available. In order to allow members sufficient time to make an informed decision, the Benefit Choice Period will be extended. Information will be posted to this website as soon as it is available.

Once the managed care plans are identified, members will be advised of the extended Benefit Choice end date by which they must make a decision regarding their coverage choices for FY 2012. Contrary to the information in the Benefit Choice letter recently mailed, no one will be defaulted into the Teachers' Choice Health Plan until after the revised Benefit Choice Period end date has passed.

Rich Frankenfeld
Director of Outreach

Direct from IRTA 5/25/2011

The Executive Ethics Commission ruling has been released. The managed care plans that will be in effect for the FY2012 Benefit Choice Period will be HMO Illinois, Healthlink OAP, Personal Care OAP and Blue Advantage. Members will have until June 17, 2011, to choose a new health plan. Links for the health plan administrator contact information, the managed care plan map, the FY2012 rates and FAQs regarding the FY2012 Benefit Choice are all available on the IRTA website or Central Management Services' website.



**Bob Lyons >>
Teacher Representative
to the TRS Board of
Directors**

Answered audience questions in April

**< Richard Frankenfeld
TRS Director of
Outreach
Presented our April
Luncheon Program**



New Tour: Cubs vs. Cincinnati at Wrigley Field August 7th, 2011. Let's cheer the home team to a win. Sit back and enjoy the ride, the game, the stadium and the scenery. The cost will be \$89.00. Call 847-742-4330 or send your check made out to EARTA to Coral Reinert 801 N. McLean Blvd. Unit 254 Elgin, IL 60123 by June 17th.

From the Gavel (con. from p.1) ***"We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."***
July, 1776 Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)



Many of you may have watched the wedding of this century as William and Kate endeared themselves to the world. But do we really want to go back to the days of "King and Country"? The British do it well, but it is not for us or U.S.. The "Tea Party" says we have lost our basic freedoms to big government, and yet Wisconsin and some Illinois legislators would have us believe that collective activities by any group is some sort of threat. Should one man or party hold the power of the purse and by ignoring years of fiscally irresponsible behavior place the blame on all collective bargaining for the poor judgement and greed of Wall Street and corporate planners? Are we ready to create a class war between aging retirees and a generation trying to break into a job market that is already hostile to expertise, experience, and paying a living wage? We must answer NO!

How do we respond? We organize! Not a revolution, but a collective voice for reason, common sense and total commitment to educating all of America, starting with our fellow retirees. First we assure each other that we have the high ground in this fight. Be assured we do! Next, we draft our newest retirees to join us and bring with them their connections to the working educators and thus to the next generations of voters that they touch everyday in our schools. In the past we have backed away from this intertwined social fabric. We have left it to chance that we have taught them to think for themselves and to make good choices. Yet, when put to the test, they are failing to follow through. The elections of 2008 looked like we did a good job and then in 2010 they failed to show mastery of their resolve and failed to prevent the war on public employees. Finally, we must begin again and start all over to build an educated public that takes back our country from the brink of an unknown future. We do that by declaring our dedication to one another. We join together; we join IRTA.

At the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Ben Franklin realized that the threat was not only to the signers of the document but to everyone. The threats today are no less widely dealt nor will the consequences of inaction be any less felt.

We must join together or ?????

THE JOGGER / EARTA
P.O. Box 5515
Elgin, Illinois 60121

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DATED MATERIAL

20 May 2011: Legislative Report EARTA Board Meeting

A Voter Voice was activated requesting a NO vote on SB512 or any unconstitutional legislation which reduces pension benefits or increases contributions of current teachers

On May 11th, the "We Are One Illinois Coalition" sent a letter to the Illinois legislative leaders suggesting there be at least a seven-day period for pension legislation before it was heard in committee or voted on. The 12-hour "rush" one year ago to cut pensions resulted in unintended consequences: According to a TRS consultant, "The TRS second-tier plan will no longer meet the requirements for FICA (Social Security) tax exemption"!! The public interest is not served well by a lack of deliberative, transparent consideration.

The Coalition represents over one million public service employees in Illinois: Illinois AFL-CIO, IEA, IFT, Associated Fire Fighters of Illinois, AFSCME Council 31, Illinois Police Benevolent and Protective Association, Illinois Fraternal Order of Police, SEIU, Laborers International Union-Midwest, Illinois Public Pension Fund Association. They have been running TV announcements stating "The Truth About Public Pensions". A leader has appeared on TV talk shows to counter the pension critics and doomsayers. The "bullet" facts include: **We provide essential public service--*Politicians caused pension debt--*Public employees pay 8% to 9% to pension fund--*Most are ineligible for Social Security--*Pensions are modest ---*Average benefit is \$32,000--*Pensions are protected by the Illinois Constitution.*

Some interesting pension figures from the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago were provided by AFSCME: The chair, Miles D. White will draw on two defined-benefit pensions worth a combined \$20 million. He believes in shared sacrifice. His salary declined 8% to \$20.2 million last year. W. James Farrell, ITW --- pension annually is \$1.4 million. John Madigan's pension is \$220,000+ and Richard L Thomas has a \$600,000 pension. R. Eden Martin sits on two company boards earning \$330,000 and retirement benefits from the law firm. (Oddly enough for this champion of accountability and transparency the information is not publicly available.) I wonder if the shareholders complain about the sizes of these pensions!!!!

This state has decided to drop Health Alliance HMO and wishes to switch to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois. Health Alliance has protested and plans to challenge in Sangamon County Circuit Court. A decision is weeks away.

Please read your CMS information on benefit choices carefully as there is an automatic default if you fail to make an election by the deadline BUT the final decision on FY 2012 Managed Care Contracts has not been made therefore the Benefit Choice Period will be extended and will be posted to the website: www.benefitschoice.il.gov If you have any questions contact TRS at 800.877.7896.

The IRTA Legislative Committee meets May 18th in Springfield. IRTAPAC Committee Meeting will follow.

Recruit new members! Use Voter Voice! Get on the phone and write letters to your legislators. Be counted! Sign up for the IRTA-PAC. It's only \$1.00 per month and helps to keep up the sorely needed political battles. Always, there is more information available from the EARTA, IRTA and TRS websites.

Respectfully submitted,
Cliff Olson, EARTA Legislative Chair; IRTA Legislative Comm.