

KENDALL RETIRED TEACHERS



NEWSLETTER



SERVING RETIRED TEACHERS OF KENDALL COUNTY

APRIL, 2013

April 11 Meeting

The April 11 meeting of KRTA will begin at 12:30 PM at Blackstone Bar and Grille, 600 East Veterans Parkway (Rt. 34), Yorkville, IL 60560. Turn in by the new Dairy Queen and go around the back. Cost is \$15. Program: "Big Band Memories" by Steve Cooper. An IRTA member benefits representative will also update us on current and new benefits.

Deadline is April 5, 2013. If you don't get a call by then, you can RSVP to Theda McMinn, 552-8156. Be sure to bring your money, as the 50/50 fundraiser. This money will go to the IRTA Foundation and be designated for retired teacher's assistance.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

MINUTES FOR THE KRTA FEBRUARY 2013 MEETING

The KRTA meeting and luncheon was called to order by President Jan Cairns at 12:30 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Lunch was served. A theater group from WCC presented a Valentine's Day program to the membership during dessert.



There were no minutes available from the December 2012 meeting.

Reports of Standing Committees:

✚ In the absence of legislative representative, Sid Simmons, Jan Cairns reported. Jan emphasized the importance for KRTA members to belong to IRTA. IRTA provides the vehicle for the united voice that has had strong influence in the state pension battle. Jan reported that there will be another pension hearing on February 22. Legal opinion on the constitutionality to end the pension clause and the legal defense against such will be presented by two legal firms hired by IRTA to prepare that defense if that comes to pass.

- ✚ Community Participation: Alimae Persons reported that \$100 was collected today. These contributions will be made to the Kendall County Special Olympics. The 50/50 collection was \$150.
- ✚ Membership: Linda Adkins reported that membership is at 208 members. New member Michele Wade was introduced.

Other business: The Hissongs are organizing the June 7th annual Cub's game trip. A promotional drawing was held in which Penny Jamison won a Cubs logo baseball.

Additional Comments: Area 2 District representative Marti Swanson reported that while retirees received the 2013 COLA this month, the same 2014 COLA is not assured. So, Marti asked the membership to please donate some monies to the Legal Defense Fund to help support any of the defenses of our pension plight which is ongoing. Send to the IRTA.

Next KRTA Membership meeting is April 11th at Blackstone Bar and Grille (Rte. 34) in Yorkville.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Johnson, Recording Secretary

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

On Monday, March 18th, Linda Adkins, Craig Weber and I attended the Area 2 Conference in West Dundee. There were several interesting speakers.

First we heard from a State Senator from the 22nd Senatorial District. He talked about the amendments and legislation that has been put forth by the Senate. He made comments that we all must make sacrifices and added that maybe the teachers should all get second jobs to help our finances. We all just couldn't believe he made such a comment, but it seems the legislatures just don't have a clue.

Next we heard Bob Pinkerton, VP of IRTA, and Jim Bachman, Executive Director of IRTA. Both of them discussed the legislation that has been pushed by Cullerton. The Bill, SB1, is divided into two parts. Part A is a reduction in benefits for all active and retired TRS members by capping pensionable salary and reducing the amount of yearly automatic annual increases while increasing the required employee contributions of active members. Part B states that all active and retired members have to make a choice between COLA and Insurance. The IRTA retained a law firm of Tabet, Divito & Rothstein to prepare an opinion letter analyzing the constitutionality of these two parts. Both parts were deemed to be unconstitutional. So, if they do pass the bill, the IRTA will take the law to court. I feel the IRTA is very knowledgeable of all the legislative actions in Springfield. I also feel confident that they will fight for our pension rights. Jim Bachman wants the legislators to pass a bill, and then we can all move off center. He says the legislators will not consider any alternatives to revenue relief until the bills have been brought to court and deemed unconstitutional. They will then look to alternatives to generate income to fund the pensions.

After lunch we heard from Dick Ingram, Executive Director of TRS and Bob Lyons, Annuitant Trustee of TRS. They talked about our portfolio which is doing well. We are now back to the plan asset levels we were in July, 2008, the beginning of the Great Recession. Bob Lyons answered many questions, one of which was "a year from now will retirees have the same benefits we have today." With some confidence, his answer was "yes." While our benefits will be the same that does not mean that the Illinois general assembly and Governor Quinn will not have finally passed and signed a bill into law to reform our pensions by reducing them. He also said that by the end of the regular session in May something will be put together and we will have to be prepared that it might get enough votes to reduce our benefits. At this point a combined group of teacher organizations will go to court for an immediate injunction to stop the law from going into effect until the matter can be resolved in the courts. A suit will then start to determine the constitutionality of the law. This process will probably take more than a year.

On another note, Pat Coleman, past President of KRTA, was hospitalized with a muscle problem in her legs and is now in rehab. She would love to hear from you all while she is recuperating. You can send cards to her home address. The KRTA sent her flowers when she was being hospitalized.

Jan Cairns, President

FROM OUR VENUE AND PROGRAM TEAM: In June we will be visiting Winding Creek Nursery after our luncheon and meeting at Hoover Forest Preserve. If you have any questions or concerns

about plants – drought resistant, native species, pruning tips, etc. please write them down and bring them to this April Luncheon. We will then get them to Winding Creek Nursery so that they can have your answers at the June Luncheon.

MEMBERSHIP

Kendall County Retired Teachers Unit 10 Membership: April, 2013

We welcome new member: Michele Wade
1126 East Arnold
Sandwich, IL 60548

IRTA Dues Bonus: Now is a good time to join the (state) IRTA--Illinois Retired Teachers Association. The IRTA is not IEA/NEA. When you choose to pay your IRTA membership by dues deduct (\$2 monthly), both you and IRTA will come out ahead. You will save \$11 a year (paying annually is \$35; Lifetime is \$400) and IRTA will save money on postage. When you are an IRTA member, you have access to these benefits: Dental Insurance and long term car—AMBA Company. For more information on long term care, call 1-800-258-7041. For more IRTA information call 1-800-728-4782 or check [http:// www.irtaonline.org](http://www.irtaonline.org). I have extra IRTA forms if needed. Current IRTA members who pay annually can switch over to dues deduct by calling the 800 number.

We, the membership committee are very pleased with how our members faithfully pay their dues either at meetings or by mail. We believe our loyal and growing membership validates the effectiveness of our organization's advocacy for teachers, both current and retired.

Your Membership Team: Linda Adkins and Craig Weber

IN MEMORIAM

*Helen Clayton – February 15, 2013—Age 94
Taught in the Oswego and Yorkville School Districts
First President of KRTA*

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Thank you for your donation of \$100 to Kendall County Special Olympics at the February meeting. This will be a great help to their organization.

We will be accepting donations for Kendall County Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). This organization trains volunteers to advocate for abused and neglected children who are in the court system. CASA receives no government funding.

Alimae Persons, Community Participation Chair

LEGISLATION

Pension Bills #1 and #35

Wednesday, March 20 the Illinois Senate voted on SB 35 and SB 1.

SB 35 (Biss), which mirrors HB 3411 (Cross and Nekritz) was **defeated** by the Senate, 30-23-3. SB 35 stated that ALL COLA's would apply only to the first \$25,000 of a retiree's pension, calculated from the member's original pension amount, not from the current pension amount. In other words, practically all retiree's COLA's

would be capped at \$750/year (3% of \$25,000). Also, members would not receive a COLA until age 67 or five years after they retire, whichever comes first. This would have applied to ALL retired members already receiving a COLA under the 'old rules.' Some members would have seen their COLA suspended for a period of time but would not lose any COLA's previously received.

SB 1 (Cullerton) combines two previous pension overhaul proposals from the 2012 legislative session. One previous proposal was sponsored by Sen. Cullerton and the other proposal by Rep. Cross and Rep. Nekritz. The bill creates an "either-or" situation between the Cullerton proposal and the Cross-Nekritz proposal. Part A of the bill (Cross-Nekritz) is very similar to the above SB 35 while Part B of the bill (Cullerton) requires active and retired members to make a choice: Either accept a reduced COLA adjustment and maintain access to TRIP or keep the COLA and lose access to the state supported health insurance in retirement. Sen. Cullerton believes that the "choice" provision of Part B does not violate the pension protection clause of the Illinois Constitution because members are part of the decision-making process. He believes that Part A violates the Constitution because it unilaterally lowers pension benefits.

Good news and bad news on SB 1. The bad news is that an **amended SB 1 passed** the Senate 30-22-2 but the good news is that SB 1 was amended to remove retired educators from the bill. SB 1 now goes to the House for consideration. **Retired teachers live to fight another day!**

I truly believe the **IEA** will challenge SB 1 (if it passes in the House) in court on behalf of active teachers because the bill changes the pension benefits of active teachers. This is in violation of the pension protection clause in the Illinois Constitution that prevents existing pension benefits from being "diminished or impaired."

Two other bills passed Thursday, March 14. HB 1166 includes an increase of up to 5 years in the number of years that many state workers will be required to work before claiming full pension benefits; and HB 1154 caps pension annuities at \$113,700 (social security maximum). They are now being debated in the Senate.

Sid Simmons, Legislative Chair

TREASURER'S REPORT

OPENING BALANCE – 1-10-2013			<u>\$3,680.52</u>
RECEIPTS	Meal Payments	\$1,035.00	
	Dues	\$200.00	
	Replace Change for Luncheon	\$200.00	
	50/50	\$56.00	
	Special Olympics	\$75.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS			<u>\$1,566.00</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS			\$5,246.52
EXPENSES	Change for Luncheon	\$200.00	
	LakeView Grille	\$1,050.00	
	Directories	\$237.00	
	Jim Hissong (Cub Game)	\$1,078.25	
	Kendall Co. Preserve Dep.	\$150.00	
	Timber Creek Deposit	\$250.00	
	Newsletter	\$94.19	
	IRTA Foundation	\$30.00	
	IRTA Convention (3/11)	\$45.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES			<u>\$3,134.44</u>
RECONCILED BALANCE 3/12/13			<u>\$2,112.08</u>
Kyle Price, Treasurer			

Happy Birthday!!

The following members are celebrating their birthdays this June. **Happy Birthday** to all of you--and may you have many more!

June



Valerie Henrich 6/1
 Judith VeZain 6/7
 Linda Adkins 6/12
 Mary Ann Doetschman 6/13
 Karel Thompson 6/18
 Joyce Conklin 6/21
 Mike Schnable 6/21
 Judith Farley 6/26
 Lynn Elko 6/26
 Elaine Miller 6/26
 Pat Clason 6/30



If you did not see your name in the birthday recognition and wish to be honored, please let Janet Reardon have your birth month and day by e-mail (janetreardon44@sbcglobal.net) or by phone (630-801-8928). Also, if you notice any errors, please let me know as well.

E-MAILS: I am happy to state that we currently have 115 e-mail members. If you would like to join us, please let me know. You may do so by e-mailing me, Janet Reardon, at janetreardon44@sbcglobal.net. After receiving your e-mail, I will gladly put you on our list. You will receive the newsletter in two formats: by Word 97 – 2003 and PDF file—choose the one that works for you. I look forward to putting your name on this list. This is a good way for all travelers to receive your newsletter while away from home.

From Our Directory Guru: Please change Fran Sauer's address to 310 E. Kendall Dr. #104; Yorkville, IL 60560 in your directory.



CUBS' TRIP **FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2013**

50 members and guests are needed to join us for a fun trip to see our loveable **Cubs** play the **Pittsburg Pirates**.

Cost, which is only \$39!!! Includes:

- ⇔ **Round trip chartered coach,**
- ⇔ **Game tickets,**
- ⇔ **Refreshments and prizes on the bus**

Sign up at our April meeting or call
 Jim Hissong at (630) 553-9153
 to reserve your spot.



Bus will leave from J. C. Penney parking lot on Route 34 Montgomery at 10 AM.