

**ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
MADISON COUNTY UNIT III**

August 18, 2021

Good Evening Everyone,

The last time the Executive Board and I communicated with you was Christmas 2020 and a lot has happened during these past eight months. I hope and pray that you and your family are well and continue to remain well. As you may or may not remember, we cancelled all three 2020 general membership meetings and the March and June 2021 ones as well. The pandemic has certainly changed all of our lives and those around us. I thought it was about time to try to get back to some normality pertaining to IRTA and our local Madison County Unit III. The Executive Board and I met for the first time since 2020 on July 9, 2021. At that meeting we decided to hold a general meeting of our members on **October 8, 2021 at 8:45 a.m. at the Collinsville Senior Center**. Kim Johnson of Hospice of Southern Illinois will be our featured speaker.

IRTA is in the process of planning our organization's bi-annual Convention which will be held in Springfield on October 18 and 19, 2021. The Executive Board selected our Vice-President, Izetta Davis, to be our unit honoree. Izetta is certainly worthy of receiving this honor for her dedication, time and support of our local unit for these many years. Several of us on the Executive Board are planning to attend the convention and representing our unit.

When the FY 2022 state budget was proposed by Governor Pritzker it was a relief to see that the amounts for the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and the Insurance Program (TRIP) that were promised were contained in that budget. It was also a relief to see in our February pension check, the 3% COLA increase IRTA and you and I have fought for and won. There is definitely power in all of us joining together to protect what we worked so hard for before retiring.

I am also sending an invitation letter to the 2021 retirees. If you know any of them, please extend a warm welcome to them to join us at our October 8 meeting. We need to increase our membership so that we are that much stronger in protecting our pension and our benefits, and we need the younger retirees and their ideas to make our organization vital and representative of all retired teachers in Illinois. As of this past spring 2021, the IRTA membership has grown above 39,000 with a retention rate of 96%. Thank you for your continued support and membership. It means a lot for all of us in MCRTA and IRTA.

Finally, I hope and pray that all of us can continue to be safe and healthy in this present COVID environment. Please continue to be safe by following all of the precautions issued to us. This Virus and its Variance is not something to take for granted—it is a serious life and death situation.

On the back of this letter I have listed several important items for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the Executive Board if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to serve you to the best of our ability. Finally, if anything changes about our October 8 meeting, we will contact you as soon as possible and also post an announcement on our website (www.mcrtainit3.weebly.com). Continue to enjoy the rest of your summer and I look forward to seeing you in October.

Sincerely,

The Executive Board and Fred J. Bloss, Ph.D., President

President: Fred Bloss; Vice-President: Izetta Davis; Recording Secretary: Jane Soehike; Treasurer: Judy Williams; Corresponding Secretary: Margie Wright; Information Services: Bruce Dye; Member Benefits: Judy Kirkpatrick; Foundation: Beverly Imming; Legislative: Robert Sudhoff; Special Advisory Committee: Frank Simkard, Janice Shapiro (Webmaster); Website: www.mcrtainit3.weebly.com

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INFORMATION FOR ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS:

1. Lawmakers in the Illinois House and Senate approved a \$42.3 billion FY22 state budget. The budget meets the state's commitment to boost evidence-based k-12 funding for public schools. This is all good news for our Teachers Retirement System (TRS) and Teachers Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP) who will both be receiving the amounts proposed at Governor Pritzker's budget address. • **Teachers' Retirement System of Illinois: \$5,693,707,000** • **Teachers' Retirement Insurance Program: \$143,369,000.**
2. The IRTA bi-annual convention will be held October 18-19, 2021 in Springfield Illinois at the Crown Plaza Hotel. Our Unit can send 11 delegates. If anyone is interested in attending, please let Fred or Judy know soon.
3. Local dues for our Unit III are now due: \$20.00/year. Please send your check to: Mrs. Judy Williams, Treasurer, MCRTA UNIT 3, 820 W. Clay, Collinsville, IL 62234 *(Please make your check payable to Madison County Retired Teachers Association Unit 3).*
4. Mark your calendar **MADISON COUNTY UNIT III MEETING ON OCTOBER 8, 2021, 8:45 A.M. AT THE COLLINSVILLE SENIOR CENTER.**
5. If you have any suggestions for speakers, please let Izetta Davis know.
6. New TRS Director: R. Stanley Rupnik, an 18-year veteran of the TRS System.
7. Our Unit needs a Chairperson for MEMBERSHIP and IRTA FOUNDATION. Neither one of these positions requires a lot of time. If you are interested please contact Fred or any member of the Executive Board.
8. Treasurer's Report: 9/21/2020 – 7/9/2021: Checkbook Balance: \$727.84; Life Membership Fund Balance: \$6130.00; Savings Account: \$739.06, CD= \$1969.73, CD= \$4036.60; **Current Total Assets: \$7473.23 for Madison County Retired Teachers Association Unit III.**
9. **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS: IRTA= 800-728-4782; TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM= 800-877-7896; CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES= 800-258-7041; FRED BLOSS, MCRTA PRESIDENT= 618-887-4364; IZETTA DAVIS, MCRTA VICE-PRESIDENT= 618-235-2598; GAIL FRIZSCHE, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY= 618-931-7331; BRUCE DYE, INFORMATION SERVICES & PR= 618-973-4520; ROBERT SUDHOFF, LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION= 618-791-5063; FRANK SLINKARD, ADVISOR= 618-288-9502.**

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