

Pope/Hardin RTA Unit 85 Bulletin Board

2022 Spring Edition

President's Note:

It is my sincere hope, after our long, cold winter, that all of you are doing well and are ready for sunny skies, warmer weather, and our upcoming retired teachers' meeting! February is swiftly flying by, and our first meeting of 2022 also quickly approaches. Pope-Hardin Retired Teachers will be meeting at noon on Wednesday, March 2nd at the Elizabethtown Golden Circle. Our speaker will be John Harland, our Area 6 Representative. I am looking forward to our gathering together once again. Stay safe and healthy!

Kathy Brickhaus Unit# 85 President

December 1, 2021 Minutes: President Kathy Brickhaus brought the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 12:05. There were five members in attendance. Gary Threw read the September 1, 2021 minutes. Motion to approve the minutes as read was made by Freida Seiner, seconded by Karen Turner and approved. Kathy Brickhaus reported that the balance in the Treasury was \$712.02. Kathy then gave a report on the actions taken at the October IRTA Convention. Gary Threw opened the gift he received as Unit #85 Honoree and thanked the membership for the recognition. The motion was made by Freida Seiner and seconded by Karen Turner to reappoint the current officers for the next two-year term. Motion approved. Kathy Brickhaus will be retained as President, Mildred Littrell as Vice-president, Ruthanne Bowman as Treasurer, and Gary Threw as Secretary. The meeting dates for 2022 were set for March 2 and September 7 at the Elizabethtown Golden Circle and on June 1 and December 7 at the Golconda Golden Circle. The meeting starting time will remain at noon. Karen Turner made the motion to donate \$50 to each of the sites. Seconded by Freida Seiner and approved. Midge Littrell made the motion to make a donation to the IRTA Foundation in memory of Kathy Walters, Marjorie Sue Mahoney, Ellen Hise, and Carolyn Anderson. Seconded by Karen Turner and approved. After a discussion on ways to expand the membership, the meeting was adjourned at 1 PM by President Brickhaus.

February 1st should have made you feel good because you received a 3% boost to your retirement benefits. Over 20 years ago, the IRTA filed a lawsuit to prevent the State of Illinois from taking away that compounded raise. The raise had been revoked and if it were not for the IRTA, your Feb 1 check would not be what it is. Reason enough for supporting the IRTA? Read on.

What is THIS? It is the Teacher Health Insurance Security Fund which provides for retired teachers health and drug insurance programs and is facing insolvency. The Department of Central Management Services reduced the contribution rates to the retirement healthcare fund from active employees and the State from 1.3% to .9% in FY2023. This decreases the funding to the teachers' health insurance fund by \$45.6M. Since the State of Illinois's contribution is a matching amount, this automatically reduces the State's contribution. For FY2023, the employer's percentage is reduced from .9% to .67%, which will represent a deficit of millions more being paid into the teachers' health insurance fund. According to an independent actuarial review conducted by the IRTA, the negative cash flows to the fund will result in a total depletion of the Fund's assets at some point during fiscal year 2023. To prevent this the Illinois Retired Teachers Association filed a lawsuit seeking to correct the unconstitutional move by the State of Illinois which will dramatically reduce contributions made to the Teacher Health Insurance Security Fund. That move would worsen the financial footing of the fund, which is already on the verge of default, and places the health benefits of retired teachers in dire jeopardy. This is what our organization does to protect our benefits.

Local Dues can be paid at the meeting or a \$10 check to Pope/Hardin RTA can be sent to Ruthanne Bowman – PO Box 158 – Golconda, IL 62938. Those over age 85 are exempt.

The IRTA Foundation provides financial assistance to retired educators who are living in times of acute financial stress. If you or anyone you know is having difficulties meeting financial obligations contact the Illinois Retired Teachers Association, 828 S. 2nd Street, Springfield, IL 62704.

Attend the meeting on March 2 to find out what is happening at the State level. Bring a friend and come before 11:30 to enjoy lunch.