



May 2012

# The Reader

Aurora Area Retired Teachers' Association

Over 50 years of working for retired teachers in Kane County to . . .

- \* use our influence for the passage of favorable legislation in Springfield, Illinois and Washington, D. C.
- \* improve our communication channels for more effective member participation
- \* keep our membership informed of current Teachers' Retirement System changes



**Remember to bring your lap blankets to the June lunch. They will be distributed to local senior centers.**

## Regarding Your Certificate

Just a reminder that effective August 26, 2011, all certificates not renewed or registered shall lapse after a period of six months from the expiration of the last year of registration. The certificate/s may be reinstated once you have demonstrated proficiency by completing nine semester hours of coursework from a regionally accredited institution of higher education in the content area that most closely aligns with your endorsement area/s.

## President's Message



Pension reform! Pension reform! Pension reform! It's enough to strike fear into the hearts of those of us who have worked hard over many years and now have to think of not having the benefits we were promised to actually be there. Because of a state that has not fulfilled its commitment during those same many years, and a few well publicized abuses, we are fearing for our futures. It seems that politicians and the public in general are casting ill winds toward our benefits and sources of income. We are put in a bad light due to circumstances not of our own making. We are fortunate to have IRTA representatives keeping a close eye on the developments in Springfield and speaking on the behalf of all of us. We must keep informed of the issues and do our best to let our thoughts and interests be known to those who have the power over our future. We must make them hear the human side of the story as they make their deliberations.

On the lighter side, I want to thank all of you who faithfully attend our luncheon meetings. Our April meeting received rave reviews! Many thanks to Dick, Arlene and our program committee. We hope to see all of you and have a good turnout for our June 5 meeting as we travel down Route 66.

*Ron Nickerson*

***Visit our website and  
make it one of your favorites!***

[www.auroraarearetiredteachersassociation.org](http://www.auroraarearetiredteachersassociation.org)



## Legislative Reports

Meeting with Illinois State Representative Michael Connelly

April 11, 2012

On Thursday, April 12, 2012 our AARTA Advocacy Team made up of Ellen Voda, Frank Babich, and me met with State Senator Linda Holmes in her office in Plainfield.

I opened by telling her my concern about our TRIP health insurance. Governor Quinn in his budget has allocated no money from the state. I explained my personal situation of having to pay over \$12,000 in premiums per year for my wife and me plus out of pocket expenses of over \$1200 for each of us and about \$1300 for Medicare part B. I explained that as it is, the state provided less than 25% of the cost of the insurance. I then gave a history of the state's underfunding of the pension.

Ellen explained that as a new retiree as of June 2011, she was very concerned about the pension. She said that she had no choice about putting in the 9.4% per year, and it would be remiss for the state to not honor its commitment. Frank asked what solutions could there be in the long run to stabilize the pension system. Senator Holmes agreed that promises made should be kept. She said she adheres to the Illinois Constitution's provision that protects our pensions. Senator Holmes would also back the restoration of the funding of the TRIP Health Insurance.

Respectfully submitted by  
*Gerald Lubshina,*  
AARTA Legislative Chairman

Representative Michael Connelly comes from a family of educators and is very familiar with our concerns.

▶ According to Rep. Connelly, a committee of state legislators will meet this summer at the Thompson Center in Chicago to detail a plan for dealing with the financial issues in Illinois. He thinks that the plan will be multifaceted targeting a number of areas. The end result he thinks will be a 40-year actuarial deal. He wants to see a two-part system of payments: 1. Payment is made or 2. Payment is not made but some punishment is incurred, i.e. previous payment amount, which would have been higher is required. He strongly believes that the way business has been conducted cannot be allowed to continue and new elected officials must abide by the plan.

▶ He stated that they would be going through the budget line by line looking for savings. As an example, he is introducing a law to change how the corrections system deals with prisoners needing to appear in courts. Currently, it takes a police car before and after the van carrying a prisoner. Using technology the appearance can be handled by Skype. Considerable savings!

▶ The plan developed during the summer would be presented for a vote requiring a super-majority in November. If it doesn't pass, it continues to the two weeks prior to new legislators being sworn in third week of January 2013. He is very concerned that if it heads to the third week in January and new officials, everything will begin again.

▶ In regards to the COLA, Rep. Connelly does believe that there would be changes and would like to see a means-tested approach whereby retirees whose pensions are under a specific amount, say \$40,000 would receive the 3% but those above that amount would receive an amount based on the cost of living index. If the cost of living is a minus number, as it is now, then a specific percent would be identified.

▶ I related what we heard from Representative Bob Pritchard from DeKalb at the conference, and Pritchard agreed with what Connelly said about health care costs increasing for retirees and a percentage sent back to the school districts. Since the main issue of giving large pensions to outgoing superintendents occurred in school districts north of I-80, the percentage would be assessed to those districts, not downstate. That would increase property taxes as the increase would be passed on to property owners. This plan would have a phase-in period.

▶ The \$5.1 billion that was passed by the House for the 2013 budget for the pension systems is currently in the Senate and Rep. Connelly believes that it has good bipartisan support.

▶ He thinks that there will be mergers of small districts into larger ones as a cost savings measure.

*Linda Allison, Legislative Team*

***Join IRTA for just \$2.00 a month.***

***Contact the IRTA at  
[www.irtaonline.org](http://www.irtaonline.org).***

## Legislative Contacts

Linda Chapa LaVia  
8 E. Galena, Suite 240  
Aurora, IL 60506

630.264.6855  
[chapa-laviali@ilga.gov](mailto:chapa-laviali@ilga.gov)

Tom Cross  
24047 W. Lockport St., Suite 213  
Plainfield, IL 60544

815.254.0000  
[tom@tomcross.com](mailto:tom@tomcross.com)

Kay Hatcher  
PO Box 1150  
Yorkville, IL 60560

630.553.3223  
[linfo@kayhatcher.us](mailto:linfo@kayhatcher.us)

Linda Holmes  
13242 S. Rt. 59 #200  
Plainfield, IL 60585

815.609.0071  
[senatorholmes42@gmail.com](mailto:senatorholmes42@gmail.com)

Chris Lauzen  
52 W. Downer Pl., Suite 201  
Aurora, IL 60506-6107

630.264.2334  
[chrislauzen@lauzen.com](mailto:chrislauzen@lauzen.com)

Tim Schmitz  
127 Hamilton St., Suite D  
Geneva, IL 60134

630.845.9590  
[www.timschmitz.org](http://www.timschmitz.org)

## Information obtained at the IEA Retired Teachers Conference in Oakbrook on April 28, 2012

The House has appropriated \$5.8 billion for the pension funds in 2012 ( \$2.7 billion would be for TRS). The aim of the Legislature is to pay bonds and pensions first.

The total state budget will be \$33 billion. The governor wants to cut Medicaid by \$2.7 billion. If this does not happen, cuts will be made in other areas (not pensions).

The IEA considers the governor's proposals for the pensions to be unconstitutional. One proposal is to allow active teachers to stay in Tier I, but the contribution would go up and the state would not pay for health insurance; or to go to Tier II and retire at 67 with health insurance. Under this plan the teacher would be paying for the pension and giving the state an extra 3.4%. Another proposal would shift the cost of the pensions to the local school districts or colleges.

The House passed a proposal (113-0) to place a constitutional amendment which would require any changes to the Pension Systems to be passed by three-fifths of the Legislature and anything in negotiations at the local level affecting the pension system by a three-fifths vote of the school boards on the November ballot. This will go to the Senate. The effect on the school districts would be to increase property taxes and to reduce the quality of education in the schools because of programs and personnel being cut. A coalition of unions would oppose this constitutional amendment

Submitted by *Jerry Lubshina*

AARTA Legislative Chairman

**You may donate to our scholarship fund online or through the mail. Envelopes will be available at our June lunch.**

## Rounding Up Retirees

Do you have any friends, neighbors, relatives, etc., who are retired teachers that are not members of AARTA? If so, please tell them about our organization. Encourage them to join and become a part of our group and a supporter of our efforts. We are the direct link to Springfield and do a great deal to help keep our TRS pension and benefits strong. We also welcome retired teachers from private and parochial schools. Send the names and addresses to Pam Colwell, 137 Ingleside Ave., Aurora 60506, or email the info to her at [osuchagirl@comcast.net](mailto:osuchagirl@comcast.net).

No one party can fool all of the people all of the time. That's why we have two parties.

*Bob Hope*

## HEALTH NOTES from FAY WILSON



### Lyme Disease

Because of our warmer than usual spring, ticks will be a bigger than usual problem this year. People who live or vacation in grassy or heavily wooded areas need to be vigilant and take common sense precautions. Grassy or heavily wooded areas are where the ticks carrying Lyme disease thrive. Wear long sleeves and pants and use insect repellants containing at least 10-30% DEET (or a natural product of oil of lemon eucalyptus). Also, after returning from an outdoor activity, check everyone, including the dog, for ticks. A nice, scrubbing bath is a good idea, too! IF you find a tick, remove it with tweezers, gently grasping near the head/mouth, pulling carefully and steadily. Never squeeze or crush it. Apply antiseptic.

#### Signs and Symptoms of Lyme Disease

- **Rash**—red and round or oval and is called erythema migrans. It may have the distinctive bull's eye appearance. Often the rash is uniformly red and more than 2 inches across and as large as 6-8 inches. It's often confused with a spider bite.
- **Flu-like symptoms**—fever, chills, fatigue, body aches, swollen glands, and a headache. In some cases these symptoms occur with no rash.
- **Neurological problems**—in some cases, inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain, temporary paralysis of one side of the face, numbness or weakness in limbs, and impaired muscle movement may occur weeks or months after an untreated Lyme disease infection. Other problems can occur months to years later and include difficulty with short-term memory, migraines, dizziness, "brain fog," poor sleep, lack of verbal fluency, confusion or disorientation, and decreased ability to concentrate.
- **Joint pain**—untreated, the infection may cause severe joint pain and swelling from weeks to months after infection.
- **Other symptoms**—some people experience irregular heartbeats, eye inflammation, hepatitis, shooting pains, and severe fatigue.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have been bitten by a tick and develop a rash and/or symptoms of Lyme disease contact your doctor immediately. The signs and/or symptoms of a tick bite usually appear in a few days to a week. Lyme disease can be a serious problem for those of us who love being out in a ripe environment for ticks. Just take precautions and enjoy every wonder outside the doorstep where you are this summer!!

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

### In Remembrance

**Marian Keeley Anderson,**  
February 1, 2012, taught at Smith  
School in West Aurora and at  
Beebe School in Naperville.

*If you know of the death of  
anyone who has ever been  
a member of AARTA,  
please contact Barb Zillgitt  
([barbzillgitt@earthlink.net](mailto:barbzillgitt@earthlink.net) or  
630-896-2451).*

*AARTA remembers each of these  
members with a \$15 donation  
to the IRTA Foundation and with  
contributions to our scholarship fund.*

### Directory Updates

Roberta Kay Carson  
222 Old Fayetteville Rd. Apt. D-205  
Carrboro, NC 27510

Mary Didos  
4 Hardwick Ct.  
Sugar Grove, IL 60554  
630-466-9540

Raymond Libner  
700 W. Fabyan Parkway #241 C  
Batavia, IL. 60510  
630-457-0094

Ron and Margaret Nickerson  
9 Birchwood Court  
Sugar Grove, IL. 60556

Mark Proctor  
737 Queens Gate Circle  
Sugar Grove, Il. 60554  
630 466 7674

Judy Stone  
508 Meade Blvd.  
North Aurora. IL 60542  
630 907 2075

Fay Wilson  
1039 E. Benton Ave.  
Naperville, IL 60540  
630-355-3695



### Vaughn Center Membership

If we can get together 21 or more AARTA members, we can get a group membership at the Vaughn Center. This would be about half the cost of regular membership. Contact Ron Nickerson, 630-466-9846, if you are interested.

Confidence is what you have before you understand the problem.

Woody Allen

\*\*\*\*\*

A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.



## Go-to People

If you need to contact someone from the AARTA to share information or solve a problem, here are the people that can help:

**Change of address:** Sue Fitzsimons, 630.896.7419

**Change of email address:** Meg Safarik, 630.896.7274

**Legislation:** Jerry Lubshina, 630.896.0029, or Linda Allison, 630.355.0690

**Lunch reservations:** Ann Luker, 630.466.4705, or Joanne Hughes, 630.292.4416

**Membership questions:** Sue Fitzsimons, 630.896.7419

For a **membership form**, contact Sue or go to our website:  
[www.auroraarearetiredteachersassociation.org](http://www.auroraarearetiredteachersassociation.org)

**Missing Readers:** email: Meg Safarik, 630.896.7274; US mail: Barb Zillgitt, 630-896-2451.

**Newsletter items, Warm Fuzzies, scholarship fund:** Barb Zillgitt, 630.896.2451; [barbzillgitt@earthlink.net](mailto:barbzillgitt@earthlink.net)

**Programs:** Arlene Hawks, 630.986.6001; Dick Schindel, 630.898.1307

You may also contact us by email at [aurorartdchrs@hotmail.com](mailto:aurorartdchrs@hotmail.com).

## April Lunch

### Recognize anyone?



*Casino Trip in October??*

*More info to follow.*

*Call Dick Schindel (630-921-1307)*

*with ideas.*

## Minutes from Our Last General Meeting

# 1201120183

Remember that every time you buy something or recycle ink cartridges at **Office Depot**, anywhere in the country, you can help lower printing costs for AARTA. Since September 2011, we have saved over \$300 in printing costs by using coupons and our reward cards.

Just let the clerk know our account number which is listed above. We will get money back—and it's all legal.

Thank you for your help.

*If you would like to have your birthday listed in The Reader, send your information to [aurorartdchrs@hotmail.com](mailto:aurorartdchrs@hotmail.com) or contact Barb Zillgitt at 630-896-2451.*

### May

Betty Lou Smith	8
Marlin Mittag	17
Joan Olson	21
Val Petkus	21
Clare Vignola	23
Bob Nelson	28

### June

Maribelle Neal	7
Sharon Waters	8
Donna Oleson	8
Virginia Albertino	10
Shirley Ellsworth	10
Ted Clauser	12
Diane Janglis	13
James Skelley	17
Esther Lindahl	21
Linda Allison	23
Barb Zillgitt	24
Arlene Hawks	27

### July

Jane Sweeney	1
Laura Eileen King	2
Kathy Gough-Bjorseth	4
Karen Hart	6
Marilyn Shoger	7
Bonnie Carey	10
Jan Martin	10
Mary Hauge	16
Clare Toynton	20
Judy Vargas	21
Judy Stone	23
Mary Hinterlong	25
Grace Hines	28
Carol Foster	29

### August

Nan Phillips	2
Marilyn Fortman	5
Bill Spence	10
Lois Freiheit	11
Connie Diederich	15
Meg Papadolias	16
Sue Fitzsimons	22
Willie Etta Wright	30

### September

Anne M. Paul	2
Joanne Hughes	3
Geraldine Nikula	4
Ernie Pouchigan	5
Gayle Robinson	6
Margie Engberg	7
Mary Ann White	8
Dorothy Ellis	9
Carolyn Kerkla	16
Mary Cassidy	17
Judy Rhoads	17
Judy Bianchetta	18
Roy Libner	18
Dotti Matson	20
Allene Champen	21
Sandy Young	22
Susan Davis	23
Ron Nickerson	25
Lesley Beary	26
Arlene Flynn	27
Dot Sullivan	27
Carol Hatcher	28

The AARTA luncheon meeting on April 3 was called to order at 11:35 A.M. by President Ron Nickerson. We were led in the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of “God Bless America.” The “Thought for the Day” was given by Dorothy Ellis. Special guests were introduced from the Illinois Retired Teachers’ Association and the DeKalb Retired Teachers’ Association.

Ron N. spoke about reduced membership fees for teachers at the Vaughn Athletic Center. The secretary’s report was accepted, and Meg Safarik reported that \$7,176 is in the treasury. She spoke about our current website and encouraged members to use it. The membership directories are now out, and extra directories are available.

Jerry Lubshina and Linda Allison gave an update on the current status of our pensions and health insurance. Arlene Hawks reported that *Singing in the Rain* at Drury Lane will be the next fall musical for us to attend. Dick Schindel gave an update on the White Sox and Cubs summer outings.

We enjoyed a delicious luncheon, and then Arlene gave some cowboy trivia. We enjoyed a wonderful program from the “Singing Cowboy.” Arlene reported that our next June 5 meeting will have a “Route 66” theme. We ended with the 50/50 drawings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Margaret Nickerson, Secretary

## AARTA Board of Directors and Committee Chairs

**President:** *Ron Nickerson*  
**Secretary:** *Margaret Nickerson*  
**Treasurer:** *Meg Safarik*  
**Immediate Past President:** *Maureen Granger*  
**Foundation Services & Welfare:** *Kirk Harding*  
**Health Information & Protective Services:**  
*Fay Wilson*  
**Legislative:** *Linda Allison, Jerry Lubshina*  
**Member Benefits:** *Marlin Mittag*

**Membership:** *Sue Fitzsimons, Tom Griffith*  
**Newsletter:** *Barb Zillgitt*  
**Program:** *Arlene Hawks, Dick Schindel*  
**Public Relations:** *Bill Spence*  
**Retirement Education:** *Yvonne Hollingsworth,*  
*Pamela Colwell*  
**Sunshine:** *Dorothy Ellis*  
**Directory:** *Dennis Erford, Tom Griffith*  
**Reservations:** *Ann Luker, Joanne Hughes*

### Lunch dates for 2012-13

October 2, 2012  
 December 4, 2012  
 February 5, 2013  
 April 2, 2013  
 June 4, 2013

*Board meetings are held at 9:00 a.m. on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, September and November at Jennings Terrace, 275 S. LaSalle, Aurora.*

*General luncheon meetings are at 11:30 on the first Tuesday of February, April, June, October and December at Gaslite Manor, 2485 Church Road, Aurora.*

*Newsletter items are due on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, September and November.*

## LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS



**Program:** **Route 66**  
**Where:** **Gaslite Manor, 2485 Church Road, Aurora**  
**When:** **Tuesday, June 5, 2012; 11:30**  
**Price:** **\$13.00**  
**Reservation due date:** **Friday, May 25, 2012**

Last name that begins with the letter A through L -

Send a check made out to AARTA to: **Joanne Hughes, 243 S. Randall Road, Aurora, IL 60506**

Last name that begins with M through Z -

Send a check made out to AARTA to: **Ann Luker, 1978 Fay's Lane, Sugar Grove, IL 60554**

Number of reservations _____	Number of VEGETARIAN MEALS _____
Name _____	\$ 13.00
Name _____	\$ _____
Total \$ _____	



## June Lunch

At our June lunch, we will have a program on Route 66 which went from Illinois to California. Did you know that it was 2448 miles long and was officially decommissioned in 1985? In addition, the lap blankets donated by our members for senior care centers will be on display. We are also hoping to have our 2012 scholarship winner with us.

Make your reservations now—and bring a guest—we're a friendly bunch!

Menu  
Diner Fare  
Salad  
Meat loaf  
Mashed potatoes  
Green beans  
Apple pie a la mode