

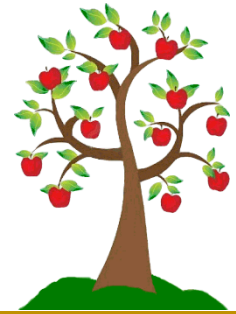


WINTER 2019

Wise Owl News

From The Tree Of Knowledge

BLACKHAWK UNIT 21 IRTA



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BLACKHAWK RETIRED TEACHERS MEETINGS

ARE HELD AT THE QUAD CITY BOTANICAL CENTER

2525 FOURTH AVENUE ROCK ISLAND

Board meeting 8:15 a.m.

Social hour 9:15 — Business Session 9:45

DECEMBER 11: "ROCK ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL CHAMBER SINGERS"

Scott Voigt, Director

Introduction by Anne Robinson

Greeters: Darla Walters & Ralph Walters

Servers: Kathy Killam & Ann Block

FEBRUARY 12 : "SCAM RECOGNITION AND AVOIDANCE"

"BE CAREFUL OF YOUR MONEY"

Speakers: Local Police Department Chiefs

Introduction by Doug Strand

Greeters: Mary Bartman & Connie Archer

Servers: Cathy Strafford & Julie (Adams) Shutt

**ATTENTION
SNOWBIRDS:
PLEASE LET US
KNOW ASAP IF
YOU ARE NOT
HERE LOCALLY SO
WE CAN SAVE ON
POSTAGE OF DI-
RECTORY.**

PRESIDENT— Annie Robinson

Fall is leaving, and winter is rapidly approaching. It is cold outside and more snow is on the way. IRTA snowbirds have probably already gone to Florida, Arizona or wherever it's relatively warm. Those of us who are left in Illinois will brace for the winter, find ways to keep warm, and enjoy the cold, snowy weather.

Thanksgiving is a time to be grateful. It is regarded as being the beginning of the fall-winter holiday season, along with Christmas and the New Year. Among many things, we are grateful to have a membership of 695 Blackhawk Unit 21 members. We are grateful to have John Flaherty as the first IRTA President-Elect from Blackhawk Unit 21; Mike Schmidt as IRTA Membership Chairman; Doug Strand as TRS Representative and Loryann Eis as a member of the IRTA Finance Committee. As you can see, we have much in which we should be grateful. We are also grateful to work with a winning team of Blackhawk Unit 21 Board Members. Thank you for your hard work!

Blackhawk Unit 21 was well-represented at the 2019 IRTA Convention. We were energized, motivated, and empowered to positively advance our association. The 2019-2020 theme of IRTA is: Our Light, Our House, Our Shield.

“Our Light” – shining brightly for sixty-four years, fulfilling the purpose and mission of our association, and serving the needs of interests of our members through advocacy, education, cooperation, and socialization

“Our House” – a stabilizing foundation and security for retirees

“Our Shield” – providing protection that maintains and improves benefits for annuitants of TRS

Some highlights of the convention involved a video recorded welcome by Governor Pritzker, the keynote address by Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Lloyd Karmeier and the acknowledgment of Unit Honorees. Phil Dennis was Blackhawk Unit 21 Honoree. Phil has worked tirelessly for the IRTA and he's not tired yet. I would like for all of us to remember his saying: “If we all did just one thing.” As advocates for IRTA let's do just one thing. Congratulations Phil Dennis! Special thanks to Jane Schmidt for preparing the very generous wine basket from our Unit in support of the 2019 IRTAPAC Silent Auction which netted \$215. Glenda Flaherty donated a beautiful handmade quilt in support of the 2019 IRTAPAC Silent Auction which netted \$210. Thank you so very much.

Thanks to Nancy Licko, our secretary, for setting up our website. We were recognized at the convention for this great accomplishment: <https://blackhawkirta21.weebly.com/>

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE IRTA BLACKHAWK UNIT 21, I WISH YOU HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

TREASURER'S REPORT - NANCY MCMANUS

We are in the process of collecting 2020 dues for the Blackhawk Unit. To guarantee inclusion in the 2020 directory please submit dues and data changes before December 31, 2019.

- 1) If you will be 90 or older in 2019-2020, notify Nancy McManus of your name and birthdate. At age 90, both local and state memberships will be designated as LIFE, with no further dues collected, but a birthdate must be sent to the state IRTA office.
- 2) We are asking you to be certain that we have an accurate email address and phone number for you. Our 2020 Blackhawk Unit Directory will be going to press in January and some information needs to be updated. If you would prefer we list the number of your cell phone, please notify Mike Daly or Nancy McManus.

ATTENTION SNOWBIRDS:

One of the Blackhawk Unit's biggest expenses is the printing and mailing of directories. This becomes even more expensive if the post office cannot deliver your 2020 directory in January because you are spending the winter away from the Quad - Cities. The post office will discard directories that are undeliverable - so in order for you to receive a directory, we need to pay "postage notice" and have another directory printed for you. Each year we try to do better, but we need your help to improve the process.

If you plan to be away for the months of January and/or February and want us to mail the directory to your temporary address, send that address to Mike Daly or Nancy McManus. We can hold your directory until you return – just notify us.

Mike Daly : 309-721-6005 or mjd@yahoo.com

Nancy McManus : 309-794-0490 or nancymcnus12@mediacombb.net

IN MEMORIAM - MEMBERS WE HAVE LOST



During the November 13, 2019 meeting of the Blackhawk Unit of the IRTA 18 members (active or inactive) who died during the period of November 2018 – October 2019 were remembered. In the ceremony a tribute poem, written by David Collins, was read and then candles were lit for each of the following. A larger candle was lit in the memory of those teachers who were not Blackhawk members but had given many years to the education profession.

Eleanor Conrad – November 2018

Victoria Jones – April 2019

Louis DiIulio – December 2018

Donna Harrell - April 2019

David Carlson – December 2018

Margaret Stroupe – April 2019

William Adams – January 2019

Wayne Malaise – May 2019

Mary Foster – February 2019

Sophia Cuchra – June 2019

Judy Tumbleson – February 2019

Nelson Peterson – June 2019

Anna Blackmon - February 2019

Lois Thoman – July 2019

Geraldine Turner- March 2019

Merton Messmore – July 2019

Joanne Dennis – March 2019

John Henriksen – October 2019

IRTA FOUNDATION - STEPHEN HAINES

2019 BLACKHAWK UNIT PLEDGES SURPASS LAST YEAR

Thirty-eight Blackhawk Unit members made pledges to John Deere Classic Birdies for Charity for a total of \$2,264.68 surpassing the 2018 total of 36 pledges for \$2,145.88. John Deere paid 7.25% of each of the 542 charities individual totals. Blackhawk Unit received \$164.16 to make the final 2019 Birdie total of \$2,357.99. The J.D.C. received 19,978 individual donations totaling \$13.82 million raised.

There were 2,091 birdies made and the unlikely winner was Steve Haines, Foundation Executive Director, with a guess of 2,049. Steve donated his winnings back to the Blackhawk Unit Foundation. Thank you to all who pledged.

A \$50 memorial for Blackhawk Foundation Founder, John Henriksen, was received. The checkbook balance as of 10/31/19 was \$4,942. If you have an organization that you wish to be considered for a 2020 grant award please submit it to Steve Haines prior to the new year.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - MICHAEL SCHMIDT

As of the November unit meeting the Blackhawk Unit has 696 members – we have welcomed the following 24 Blackhawk area retired teachers during 2019. We thank them for helping us to protect the benefits of retired Illinois educators.

Archer, Susan – Moline

Berry, Sue - Geneseo

Brown, Janet - Moline

Calvert-Austin, Darla - UTHS

Carmack, Bernie – R.I.

Ellis, Mary – R.I.

Escarza, Maria – E.M.

Finch, Elizabeth – Moline

Gilman, Andrea – R.I.

Holmes, Deborah – UTHS

Ickes, Sue – E.M.

Janoski, Nancy - Moline

Johnson, Rhonda – E.M.

Kerr, DeAnn – Moline

Knipe, Susan – R.I.

Loebach, Angela – R.I.

Maccabee, David – UTHS

Mercer, Jean – R.I.

Miller, Margo – E.M.

Nelson, Mary R. – Moline

Polito, Lisa - Moline

Ryan, Nan - Moline

Strafford, Cathy - Geneseo

Tracey, Mike - UTHS

IRTA WEBSITE - NANCY LICKO

We have a Website!! You can view it on your computer, tablet, and smart phone by going to <https://blackhawkirta21.weebly.com/> . The Home page provides information on meetings and you can contact the Unit 21 officers by clicking on their names and sending an email. The Membership page provides links to state and local membership information for a wide variety of membership options. The Contact page allows you to contact us with your concerns using the Questions or Comments form and includes a map to our regular meeting location. The Newsletter page offers a scribed version of the newsletter that allows you to scroll through all pages of the newsletter. A link on the page will allow you to download and print out a copy of the newsletter. The Important Links page offers direct links to state websites for IRTA, TRS Illinois, the Central Management Services Office, and AMBA (Associated Member Benefits Advisors). The Conference page features images, videos, and information about the IRTA Biennial Conference attended by fourteen Unit 21 members. You can view President-elect John Flaherty's acceptance speech. Please take a few moments to explore the site and then let us know what you would like to see on the site. Please send any suggestions you have to nlicko@gmail.com or to blackhawkirta21@gmail.com .

ROE SUPERINTENDENT - TAMMY MUERHOFF



Dear Retired Educators and Administrators,

I hope the upcoming holiday season finds you and your family in good health.

As many are aware, there is a substitute teacher shortage throughout not only Rock Island County, but throughout the state of Illinois. If you are interested in serving as a substitute, you may do so for 120 days or not more than 600 hours in a school year until June 30, 2020 with the passage of (40 ILCS 5/16-118). If you are interested in becoming a substitute teacher after retirement, please contact the Rock Island County Regional Office of Education to learn more.

Please contact Brandi Schwanke, Licensure Specialist, at 309-736-1111 or by email at brandi.schwanke@riroe.com if you have any questions regarding educator licensure.

Happy Holidays!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - JOHN FLAHERTY & ART YOUNG

The 2019 Veto session is over and our legislators are done for this year. Several legislators (Tom Cullerton, Martin Sandoval and Luis Arroyo) are under investigation by federal agencies and some have been indicted. The rumors are that the Feds are looking for a bigger fish and trying to find someone to testify against them.

The bill to consolidate the downstate police and fire pensions was passed. There are currently more than 640 of them. The interesting thing is that SB1300 included a fix for the Tier II pension for Police and Fire. They will get the full cost of living instead of only one-half. This shows that the state realizes that they will also need to fix Tier II for the five state retirement systems.

Our legislators will be back in session on January 22, 2020. Recreational cannabis sales and new gaming regulations take effect on January 1st. There will probably be bills introduced to correct problems with these issues as they arrive.

Expect to hear talk of how everyone needs to vote for the new "Fair Tax". We will vote on this next year. It will be interesting since it requires a change to our state Constitution. The IRTA Legislative Committee will be discussing whether we should take a stand on this issue.

As always, our IRTA lobbyists will keep us informed on and new bills that are filed.

Everyone have a great New Year and travel south this winter if you get the chance.

Governor: JB Pritzker

207 State House, Springfield IL 62706

Phone: 217-782-0244

Email: Governor@illinois.gov

Representative Michael Madigan

300 Capital Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706

Phone: 217-782-5350

Email: Mmadigan@hds.ilga.gov

Senator Neil Anderson

1523 47th Avenue - Suite 2, Moline, IL 61265

M103-D Capital Building, Springfield, IL 62076

Phone: 309-736-7084 / 217-782-5957

Email: Senatorneilanderson@gmail.com

Senator Tim Bivens

629 N. Galena Avenue, Dixon, IL 61021

M103-A Capitol Building, Springfield, IL 62076

Phone: 815-284-0045 / 217-782-0180

Email: Senatorbivens@grics.net

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9317B IL Rt. 84, Savanna, IL 61704

205A-N Stratton Office Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706

Phone: 815-632-7384 / 217-782-3992

Email: McCombie@ilhousegop.gov

Senator Dick Durbin

711 Hart Senate Bldg., Washington D.C. 20510

1504 3rd Avenue, Suite 227, Rock Island, IL 61201

Phone: 202-224-2152 / 309-786-5173

Senator Tammy Duckworth

104 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington DC 20510

1701 E. Woodfield Rd., Suite 704, Schaumburg, IL 60173

Phone: 202-225-3711 / 847-413-1957

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IRTA CONVENTION PHOTOS





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Rock Island, IL 61201

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Editor: Michael J. Daly

Committee Members: Ryan Daly, Nancy McManus, Virginia Shaffer, Annie Robinson & Sheree Rogers

Send your comments or notify us of any name, address or e-mail changes to

wiseowlnewsletter@gmail.com Thank you

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