

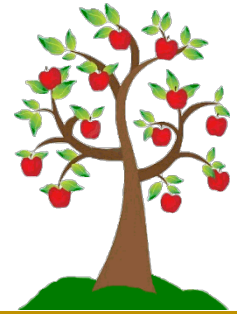


SPRING 2020

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

MARCH 11: "CMS - MEDICARE"

Gail Lumb - Presenter

Introduction by Loryann Eis

Greeters: Gloria Wisley & Jane Schmidt

Servers: Ione Hesch & Deb McCaw

APRIL 8: "TRS CHECK-UP — THE LATEST INFORMATION"

Doug Strand - TRS Representative

Introduction by Annie Robinson

Greeters: Georgia Steeber & Marie Timmer

Servers: Gloria Wisely & Teri Stickler

MAY 13: "STORYTELLING"

Jeff Adamson, Comedy Sports

Introduction by Phil Dennis

Greeters: Barb Parker & Paul Parker

Servers: Kathy Bekel & Nancy Luckenbill

**2020 DIRECTORIES
WERE MAILED AND
SOME HELD PER
MEMBER DIRECTION.
IF YOU NEED ONE
PLEASE CONTACT
MIKE DALY AT 309-
721-6005**

PRESIDENT— Annie Robinson

We have welcomed the year 2020 with anticipation of continuing to do great things for IRTA Blackhawk Unit 21 - Retired Teachers of Rock Island County. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome and needed to make this organization a viable and successful one. However, we need you to “get involved” and “stay involved.” With all of us working together, we can make our organization one of the most successful in the State of Illinois. Also, with John Flaherty as State President of IRTA, Mike Schmidt as State Membership Chairman, Loryann Eis as a member of the State Finance Committee, and Doug Strand as State TRS Representative, we can't lose, because we have winners on our team working for us at the Local and State levels. Thanks for all you do for us.

Our website is up and running, thanks to Nancy Licko, who is the secretary for our local Unit. She has done a wonderful job in managing and improving the website. If you would like to get involved in helping to maintain the website, please let me or Nancy know.

If there is anyone who is interested in taking an active role on the IRTA Political Action Committee, please contact Jo Anne Nelson, Area 1 Representative, or Gail Wright, Region 8 Representative. Also, the Area 1 Leadership Conference will be held June 23, 2020 at IVCC, Oglesby, IL, and June 24, 2020 at Sauk Valley Community College.

Mike Daly does a very good job with the Unit Directory and the Newsletter. Please take the time to make observations of both. Thanks for your hard work, Mike. We appreciate you, tremendously.

Spring is on the way! Let's all be grateful, as I am grateful for all the support and help that comes from all of you.

THOUGHTS FROM PHIL DENNIS

IF EVERYONE WOULD DO ONE THING

Several months ago at our regular monthly meeting, I had a chance to speak on how we can help our Blackhawk Unit become stronger and more interesting. A former President of the unit once said to me, “if everyone will just do one thing, we will grow.”

Yes, this is a usual problem for a unit which is functioning well. Why should I get involved? The answer is unless everyone does one thing the unit will decline in strength and interest. When something needs done, volunteer. When someone asks for help, serve. When a problem comes up, step up. When you are involved, our unit will grow. Do not wait, help today.

TREASURER'S REPORT - NANCY MCMANUS

The following members of the Blackhawk Unit finance committee (Michael Daly, Carlene Matern and Nancy McManus) met on January 3, 2020 to audit accounts for 2019 and to create a budget for 2020. Both reports were presented to the board and approved at the January 8, 2020 board meeting. The following budget was presented to the general membership on February 12, 2020 and approved.

Blackhawk Unit of IRTA - Budget					
	2018	2018	2019	2019	2020
	Budget	Spent	Budget	Spent	Budget
Hospitality Room	\$2,400.00	\$2,135.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,440.00	\$2,500.00
Hospitality Food	\$900.00	\$761.10	\$900.00	\$632.42	\$900.00
Program	\$750.00	\$650.00	\$750.00	\$650.00	\$650.00
Travel/ Convention	\$2,000.00	0	\$2,000.00	\$2,111.00	\$2,000.00
Directory	\$1,000.00	\$1,191.56	\$1,000.00	\$1,460.20	\$1,000.00
Newsletter	\$1,000.00	\$177.39	\$1,000.00	\$257.51	\$1,000.00
Office Expenses	\$250.00	\$309.53	\$300.00	\$121.97	\$300.00
Membership	\$300.00	\$190.96	\$300.00	\$144.55	\$300.00
Area 1 Confer- ence	\$250.00	\$60.00	\$250.00	\$180.00	\$250.00
Cheer/ Benevolence	\$100.00	\$40.50	\$100.00	\$32.00	\$100.00
IRTA Necrology	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
IRTA Scholarship	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
IRTA Foundation	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$500.00	\$300.00
Miscellaneous Exp.	\$50.00	0	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
Legal Defense Fund	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
RICRTA Founda- tion	\$900.00	\$900.00	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00
Total Expenses	\$11,500.00	\$8,016.04	\$11,450.00	\$9,629.65	\$10,450.00

MEMBERSHIP REPORT - MIKE SCHMIDT

As of February 17, 2020 the BlackHawk Unit has 677 members. Since January 1, 2020 we have gained two new members – William Keller and Roger Pohlman. The following have died since January 1, 2020: Elaine Matthews, Ron Pustelnik, Charlotte Grymonprez, Maxine Land, Helen Gehring and M. Louise Schmidt.

NOTE: If you will be 90 or older in 2020 and have not notified us, call Nancy McManus (309-794-0490) with your name and birth-date. At age 90, both local and state memberships will be designated as LIFE, with no further dues collected . However a birth-date must be sent to the state IRTA office.

DALY TO HEAD BLACKHAWK UNIT FOUNDATION

Mike Daly will succeed Steve Haines as Executive Director of the Rock Island County Retired Teachers Foundation. Haines has led the charitable arm of the Blackhawk Unit for the last three years and submitted his resignation at the January 2020 Annual Meeting.

Eighteen 2020 Grant Awards totaling \$3,050 were approved by the foundation's board of directors including giving \$200 to every public high school and Alleman for their academic awards program. The remaining 11 awards were \$150 to various community agencies and education programs. Below is a list of the 2020 Grant Award winners.

The checking account balance on January 31, 2020 was \$4,632.08.

2020 BLACKHAWK FOUNDATION WINNERS

Citizens to Preserve Black Hawk Park
Child Abuse Council
Salvation Army
Local Special Olympics (BHAEC)
College For Kids
Sports Unlimited @ Moline High School
Children's Therapy Center
River Bend Food Bank
Ilowa Boy Scout Council
Rock Island High School Resource Room (hygiene, clothing, etc.)
Junior Achievement of the Heartland
Moline Academic Achievement
Rock Island Academic Achievement
United Township Academic Achievement
Rockridge Academic Achievement
Sherrard Academic Achievement
Riverdale Academic Achievement
Alleman Academic Achievement

IRTA FOUNDATION

The Illinois Retired Teachers Foundation is offering a total of \$36,500 in grant money to public school educators (Pre-K through 12) for special classroom projects statewide. Please see the enclosed flyer for all the details on page six. This flyer will be included in the Illinois Principals Association's upcoming e-mail news publication. In order to apply for the grant, public school educators must download, complete, and submit the application online from the IRTA website (www.irtaonline.org). Applications must be submitted by June 1, 2020. Please encourage public school educators to apply for this grant money.

If you have any questions, please contact Tricia Klim, Member Services Coordinator, by phone at 1.800.728.4782 or by e-mail at tricia@irtaonline.org.

ROE SUPERINTENDENT - TAMMY MUERHOFF



Dear Retired Educators and Administrators,

Spring is nearly here! That means, it is almost time to renew your Professional Educator License (PEL). Beginning April 1, 2020, you will be able to renew your PEL if your current license expires as of June 30, 2020. As a reminder, if you have served as an educator or during your five-year licensure cycle, then you will be required to submit professional development hours in your Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS) account prior to renewal. ELIS will prorate the number of professional development hours that are required during your licensure cycle.

Indicate in your ELIS account the number of semesters that you have been retired by logging into your ELIS account, and selecting the yellow Profile box at the top right side of the page on, [Click Here to Update Your PD/Employment Status](#). This will allow you to select each semester in which you have been retired and not under contract utilizing your license. Click finish at the bottom of the page and the changes will become effective for your account.

If we can assist you as you move through the renewal of your PEL, please don't hesitate to give us a call at 309-736-1111.

2020 Excellence in Education Grants for Teachers

The Illinois Retired Teachers Foundation continues to work toward the future by offering \$36,500 in grant money to educators.

Being an educator, do you often think of this phrase — **Extra Funds Needed** — when it comes to planning special projects for your students? You may be finding that revenue sources are not available for such unique activities.

The Illinois Retired Teachers Foundation is making \$36,500 in grant money available to ALL counties in Illinois. This special grant will provide additional funds to public school educators (Pre-K through 12) so that their students will have the means to participate in special projects. The funds are not intended to provide regular curricular materials.

Please visit the IRTA website at www.irtaonline.org for further instructions. You can download, complete, and submit the application online from the IRTA website. Please submit your application to the Foundation online. All proposals must be submitted by June 1, 2020. A special committee will select the recipients of the grant money over the summer. Grant awards will be presented in the fall.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) Office by phone at 1.800.728.4782 or by e-mail at irta@irtaonline.org.

Illinois Retired Teachers Foundation, 828 S. Second St., 4th Floor, Springfield, IL 62704

* Chicago Public School employees are not eligible for this grant program.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - JOHN FLAHERTY

I am writing this before the Governor gives his budget address on February 19th. That is where he will tell us if there are plans to fully fund pensions for next year. Last year he stated that he would underfund them by about \$900,000,000, but magically found the money less than a week later.

Governor Pritzker has already given his State-of-the-State address and the underfunding of public pensions was not addressed. A few weeks ago it was announced that pension liability has grown to over 137 billion dollars. This year pension funding accounted for 22% of the budget.

Springfield has a lot of problems this year. There are legislators under indictment, legislators resigning, legislators moving from the House to the Senate to replace those who have left office and a new Senate President. There have been loads of changes and there are rumors that the federal investigators are not done yet.

Cannabis sales seem to be going well, but I have not heard how much revenue is actually being generated. Slot machines were increased in bars, restaurants and the many places that have opened almost on every corner. Those machines can now wager twice as much as before and payout double what was previously allowed. There is still no plan for the new mega-casino that Chicago is allowed to have.

One interesting development, when the consolidation of the down-state police and fire pensions was passed, is that the bill also corrected the Tier II police and firemen to increase their pension annual cost of living to be the same as Social Security. This shows that our legislators realize that they must provide a fix if they want to continue to avoid paying Social Security for that group. All the other state pension systems still have the Tier II pensioners staying with the one-half of what the federal government calculates for their cost-of-living index.

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

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

wiseowlnewsletter@gmail.com Thank you

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