



SUMMER 2023

Wise Owl News

from the Tree of Knowledge



ROCK ISLAND COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION
BLACKHAWK UNIT 21 IRTA

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BLACKHAWK UNIT 21 RETIRED TEACHERS MEETINGS

are held at the

QUAD CITY BOTANICAL CENTER
2525 Fourth Avenue, Rock Island IL

Board Meeting 8:15 AM
Social Hour 9:15 AM
Business Session 9:45 AM

Wednesday, JUNE 14:

Figge Art Museum Programs – Ms. Laura Wriedt - Education Outreach
and
State Senator Mike Halpin – Q & A Session

Introduction by Scott Turnipseed

Greeters: Sandy Stoit and Nancy Strohl
Servers: Alice Traylor and Joan Beck

REMINDER: NO General Membership Meetings are held in July and August

Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 13: Oakwood Country Club “Welcoming New Retirees to IRTA”

Speakers: Jim Bachman, John Flaherty, Doug Strand & Mike Schmidt

Introduction by Joe Vermeire

Greeters: Virginia Shaffer, Nancy Licko, Virginia Payton & Bobbi Lastrapes

ATTENTION MEMBERS:

Please join us
for our Blackhawk
Unit 21
New Retirees
Breakfast at
9:00 AM on
September 13th at
Oakwood Country
Club!

**THANK
YOU!!**

Newsletter	Articles Due	Mailing Date
Fall	8/14/23	8/21/23
Winter	11/13/23	11/20/23

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – JOE VERMEIRE

The Summer 2023 Wise Owl has arrived! And, I have enjoyed the time spent this past year as your Blackhawk Unit President. Being a part of an organization, any organization, but especially IRTA adds purpose to one's life. You know that the time that you spend working on committees, on projects, and with people is not only enjoyable but important in the whole scheme of things. I know that others in our local unit feel the same as I do. "If everyone puts in a small effort, the whole organization moves forward effortlessly." Phil Dennis told me that two years ago, and I stepped forward.

IRTA is important to our professional and personal lives. We all know our Pensions, Health Insurance and Benefits deserve protection. The State IRTA provides the BIG STICK in Springfield, but it's the 66 local organizations, like Blackhawk Unit 21, that "carry" the 40,000+ members who support the State and give it the CLOUT that's needed when TIMES GET TOUGH!

When I look at Blackhawk's list of 642 members, I see names and faces of teachers who have done excellent jobs in the classrooms. But I also recognize names and faces of you who have stepped forward in your professional organizations to protect what you believe in for your families and fellow teachers. Some of you need to do that again now. Volunteer for a committee, come to a meeting, reach out to an officer and ask, "How can I help?" I guarantee that you'll be glad you did... and so will I. Thank you for all that you have done and will do.

The remainder of our 2023 meetings are both exciting and informative; they're listed in front of the Directory. Our June meeting at the QC Botanical Center has Figge Art Museum's Laura Wriedt leading a program of upcoming events. As usual, we'll take a summer break for July and August. September 13th at 9:00 AM finds us out at Oakwood Country Club for our Welcoming New Retirees to IRTA Annual Breakfast. Jim Bachman, who is retiring as Executive Director, will be bringing us the latest news from Springfield. Delicious food and lively conversations continue to MOVE US FORWARD. Come and give a small effort!

God's Blessings, Joe

IRTA CONVENTION 2023

The biennial IRTA State Convention will be held **October 16-17, 2023**, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, Illinois. The last meeting was ZOOMED in 2021, but the in-person 2023 event is gaining a bit of a buzz with rare Constitutional amendments in the mix and the last presiding role for retiring Executive Director Jim Bachman.

Your local Blackhawk Unit will soon be receiving information about its number of designated delegates. If you are interested in serving as one of these delegates, please contact President Joe Vermeire at 309-269-2631 or any of the other officers listed in the Blackhawk Unit 21 Directory.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE – NANCY MCMANUS

As of May 15, 2023 the Blackhawk Unit membership is 642. Since the publishing of the Winter newsletter, the following members have died: Mary Bartman, Patti McNaught, Fred McGlaughlin, Bev Coder, Willie Newenham, Gordon Cornelius and Beulah Venable. In April, Janice Truelsen of UTHS became a member.

We will begin collecting **2024 dues of \$15.00** when we take reservations for the September 13, 2023 breakfast at Oakwood Country Club. Dues must be paid by December 31, 2023 to insure inclusion in the 2024 Directory. Checks made payable to **Blackhawk Unit – IRTA**, should be mailed to Nancy McManus, 3620 – 33rd Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois 61201. Please verify that your name, address and phone number as listed in the 2023 Directory are correct. If you have changed your email address, include the new one with your check. REMINDER: Members who have reached their 90th birthday are entitled to COMPLIMENTARY Life Membership in both state and local IRTA organizations. All you need to do is notify Nancy McManus of your birthdate.

DIRECTORY COMMITTEE – MICHAEL DALY

The 2023 Directory has been sent to all current members, either mailed to their home address or to their “snowbird” address. If you did not receive a 2023 Directory (pink cover), contact Mike Daly at 309-721-6005 or Nancy McManus at 309-794-0490.

BLACKHAWK UNIT IRTA FOUNDATION

Blackhawk Unit 21 members have two chances to win "Birdies For Charity" by guessing the correct total number of birdies in the John Deere Classic, July 5-9, 2023. The Grand Prize is a 2-year lease on a 2023 Lexus NX courtesy of Smart Lexus of the Quad Cities. And the Blackhawk Unit 21 IRTA Foundation will also award a check of \$50.00 to the closest guess by a member.

Funds raised by this event provide grants to local non-profit community organizations and high school districts that promote student achievement. A "Birdies For Charity" pledge form is on page 6. Please mail the completed form and a check (made out to "Birdies For Charity") to Michael J. Daly, Executive Director, 3324 37th Avenue Drive, Moline, IL 61265 by June 12, 2023.

ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

As the voice of Illinois's retired educators, the Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) defends pension and healthcare protection via its lobbying efforts, advocates for retirees, provides group rate dental and vision insurance among other benefits, and provides travel and entertainment options for its members.

Your 642 member Blackhawk Unit 21 is always looking for new members to keep informed and participate in its monthly meetings. Join your fellow retirees in educational, professional and enjoyable meetings at the QC Botanical Center. Donuts, coffee and smiles guaranteed! Call President Joe Vermeire for details at 309-269-2631.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH SERVICES EXPANSION

The Biden administration has approved a Pritzker administration proposal to expand the Illinois School-Based Health Services program which will bring in additional federal matching funds to provide covered services for Medicaid-enrolled students across the state, including critical youth mental health services. The approval means that the state will receive federal dollars for students who receive things like behavioral health services, preventive care, physical and occupational therapy, and other services covered by Medicaid. Previously, this reimbursement was limited to students who had an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The expansion is expected to bring tens of millions of additional federal Medicaid dollars to schools.

RELATED: Moline High School brings Health Clinic inside its walls. In total, the clinic can provide these services:

Well Child visits	School physicals	Sports physicals
Behavioral health	Mental health	Counseling referrals
Nutrition health education	Immunizations	Lead screenings
STD testing	Pregnancy testing	

The clinic is open to all Rock Island County youth and aims specifically to serve those whose health care needs might not be met. “Our goal is to provide a medical home for children in need,” School Health Link Board Chairperson, Scot Meskimen said. “We primarily serve patients who are uninsured, underinsured or on Medicaid, but we also take most insurances and will not deny care for services based on a family’s ability to pay. ... By entering the school, we increase the accessibility to care for hundreds of kids. Additionally, by increasing our presence in the schools, we will have the ability to be more proactive with our care,” Meskimen said.

“It just makes it far more accessible for the family,” Moline Superintendent Rachel Savage said. “Sometimes, it’s very hard to get an appointment with private medical providers, especially this time of year. So having an additional provider in the community helps those families get those appointments.”

School Health Link is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday, with 24-hour emergency care available through Trinity Emergency Rooms. Transportation to the clinic is available to all students through MetroLink buses, which are available for free to all students with a school ID.

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY RETIREES

Do you remember the last semester of your last year of school? The twenty-nine soon to be retired educators listed below may not know it yet but someday each of them will as well. If you remember any of them from your time before retirement, why not contact them? We could use their contact information, and they could use your invitation to join the Blackhawk Unit.

East Moline: Faith Adams, Kent Buckrop, Lise Burmahl, Sanchia Horst-Sommer, Jennifer Jacobs, Sheri Peacock, Jennifer Vyncke and Jennifer Densberger

Moline-Coal Valley: Dion Firch, Julie Laird, Danielle Lyon, David McDermot, Elizabeth Mosley, Cynthia Murphy, Karen Stoner, Jeffrey Weller and Kristen Young

Rock Island - Milan: Julie Bustard, Alicia Dasso, Lisa Maxwell, Susan Scudder and Robert Beckwith

United Township: Brad Burklund and Carla Golding

Silvis: Ellie Fry

Carbon Cliff: Patricia Headen and Barbara Moller

Riverdale: Myron Keppy

Rockridge: Lei Scarff

BHU IRTA APRIL MEETING Glenview Middle School Mariachi Band



WHAT MY MOTHER TAUGHT ME - Anonymous

1. My mother taught me **RELIGION**. "You'd better pray that will come out of the carpet."
2. My mother taught me **TIME TRAVEL**. "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"
3. My mother taught me **FORESIGHT**. "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."
4. My mother taught me **IRONY**. "Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about."
5. My mother taught me about **CONTORTIONISM**. "Will you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!"
6. My mother taught me about **WEATHER**. "This room of yours looks as if a tornado went through it."
7. My mother taught me about **ENVY**. "There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do."
8. My mother taught me about **ANTICIPATION**. "Just wait until we get home."
9. My mother taught me about **RECEIVING**. "You are going to get it when you get home!"
10. My mother taught me **HUMOR**. "When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."
11. My mother taught me **WISDOM**. "When you get to be my age, you'll understand."
12. My mother taught me about **JUSTICE**. "One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you".

Blackhawk IRTA

CHARITY SOLICITED FOR

1747

BIRD NUMBER

I PLEDGE TO DONATE:

\$ _____ to the charity noted above.
(one time, flat donation amount)

BIRDIES FOR CHARITY BONUS FUND

Yes, I would like to make an additional donation to the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund in the amount of \$ _____, to help provide the minimum 5% match to all participating charities.

GUESS THE BIRDIES TO WIN A TWO YEAR LEASE ON A 2023 LEXUS!

I guess that _____ birdies will be made.
Only one grand prize will be awarded. Void where prohibited by law.

BIRDIES SCORED BY YEAR

2,040 (2014)	1,918 (2017)	N/A (2020)
1,990 (2015)	2,355 (2018)	1,905 (2021)
1,982 (2016)	2,091 (2019)	2,041 (2022)

PLEDGE & DONOR INFORMATION (please print)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE AND/OR EMAIL _____

Please include payment & make checks payable to:
BIRDIES FOR CHARITY

Chip in for your chance to win

When you chip in to help area charities, you could win! But your favorite charity will be the real winner. That's because participating charities receive 100% of the donations pledged to them in this program, plus a bonus from the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund, which is a guaranteed 5% match.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

Simply make a one-time flat donation and mail with payment to the Birdies for Charity office at **15623 Coaltown Road, East Moline, IL 61244**

To enter the contest, guess the number of birdies that will actually be made by PGA TOUR Pros during the tournament, Wednesday through Sunday. A grand prize will be given to one person who guesses the correct number. In case of ties, winners will be randomly selected.



**GRAND PRIZE:
2 YEAR LEASE ON A 2023 LEXUS NX!**

One lucky supporter of the John Deere Classic's Birdies



SMART LEASE OF QUAD CITIES

for Charity program will win a 2 year lease on a 2023 Lexus NX, courtesy of Smart Lexus of Quad Cities.

CONTEST RULES

- Only 1 grand prize awarded. Ties determined by random drawing.
- All guesses must be on an official pledge card and received at the tournament office by June 16.
- Rules are available at www.birdiesforcharity.com
- No pledge or purchase required. Need not be present to win.
- Pledges submitted after the JDC may be applied the following year.

KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS AS YOUR RECEIPT

I pledged \$ _____ one-time donation.

I guessed _____ birdies would be made.

Payment was included with pledge.

YES \$ _____ NO

NAME (check one)

Please make checks payable to:
BIRDIES FOR CHARITY
15623 COALTOWN ROAD
EAST MOLINE, IL 61244

Quad Cities Golf Classic Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. EIN #30-032842. Along with the John Deere Classic & Birdies for Charity

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – JOHN FLAHERTY

There have been 2,581 Senate bills filed and 4,089 House bills filed. The IRTA staff is closely watching any bills that could affect our pensions or benefits. Our Executive Director, lobbyist and contract lobbyist are spending time with legislators to keep reminding them that retirees vote and are concerned that the state fund us as they are constitutionally required to do. The legislature is scheduled to finish on May 19th, but seldom meets the posted deadline. As soon as the budget bill is posted, our staff will check the numbers for funding this year’s pension and insurance payments. Budget bills can run 1,500 pages and every funding line needs to be scrutinized.

Keep an eye out for any emails that will alert you if a bill surfaces that could impact us. IRTA will send out a “Voter Voice” alert to every member that has an email address on file with them. You must open it, add any comments that you wish, and send it. It will automatically go to your state representative and senator. If you talk with any retired educators who are not IRTA members, point out that for \$2.50 a month they can help keep their pensions and insurance benefits funded.

Don’t forget our legislators did manage to squeeze in a bill to give themselves a 6.9% raise at the end of the last session. This makes their base salary about \$80,000. They met for 45 session days last year so that works out to \$1,778 dollars a day, not counting the per diem they received for 40 of those days.

Thank you for all that you do for Illinois schools!

John Flaherty
Past President, Illinois Retired Teachers Association

<p>Governor: JB Pritzker 207 State House, Springfield IL 62706 Phone: 217-782-6380 Email: Governor@illinois.gov</p>	<p>US 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</p>
<p>Representative Emanuel Chris Welch (Dist. 7) 300 Capital Building, Springfield, IL 62706 10055 W. Roosevelt Rd., Suite E, Westchester IL 60154 Phone: 217-782-5350 / 708-450-1000 Email: repwelch@emanuelchriswelch.com</p>	<p>US Senator Tammy Duckworth 104 Cannon House Bldg., Washington DC 20515 1701 E. Woodfield Rd., Ste. 704, Schaumburg, IL 60173 Phone: 202-225-3711 / 847-413-1957</p>
<p>State Senator Neil Anderson (Dist. 47) 208 Capital Building, Springfield, IL 62706 103 College Avenue, #201, Aledo, IL 61231 Phone: 217-782-5957 / 309-230-7584 Email: Senatorneilanderson@gmail.com</p>	<p>US Representative Eric Sorensen (Dist. 17) 1205 Longworth House Bldg., Washington DC 20515 2401 4th Avenue, Rock Island IL 61201 Phone: 202-225-5905 / 309-786-3406</p>
<p>State Senator Mike Halpin (Dist. 36) Sect. C - Office J, Stratton Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706 1504 3rd Avenue, Rock Island, IL 61201 Phone: 217-782-4307 / 309-558-3612 Email: senatormikehalpin@gmail.com</p>	<p>State Representative Gregg Johnson (Dist. 72) 258-W Stratton Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706 Phone: 217-782-5970 / Email: support@repgreggjohnson.com</p>
<p>State Representative Daniel Swanson (Dist. 74) 200-3N Stratton Office Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706 275 N. Division St., Box 173, Woodhull, IL 61490 Phone: 217-782-8032 / 309-344-7474 Email: swanson@ilhousegop.org</p>	<p>State Representative Norine Hammond (Dist. 94) 314 Capitol Building, Springfield, IL 62706 331. N. Lafayette St., Box 170, Macomb, IL 61455 Phone: 217-782-0416 / 309-836-2707 Email: rephammond@macomb.com</p>



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Scott Turnipseed & Joe Vermeire

Send your comments or notify us of any name, address or email changes to:
wiseowlnewsletter@gmail.com
Thank you

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