

# MCHENRY COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

## IRTA AREA 2, REGION 2, UNIT 13



[www.irtaonline.org](http://www.irtaonline.org) | [www.mcirta.org](http://www.mcirta.org)

### 2023 Meetings

June 21—31 North

July/August—no meetings

September 20—31 North

October 18—JB Moose

November 15—31 North

December 13—MCC

#### Upcoming Programs:

**June:** Nancy Cramer AMBA  
& Scholarship Winners

**Sept:** Bob Frenz  
Historic Schoolhouses

**Oct:** Martina Mathisen  
Living History

**Nov:** BeeKeeper Jerry

**Dec:** Woodstock Carolers

#### Suggestions for future venues or speakers are welcome.

Please contact Beth Miller  
[millerfam80@sbcglobal.net](mailto:millerfam80@sbcglobal.net)

#### June Menu—\$25

Homemade Bread and Butter  
Signature 31 North Salad  
Lemon Butter Chicken  
Rosemary Roasted Potatoes  
Trio of Vegetables  
Assorted Desserts

## President's Message

*Joann Jazak*

Wow!!! We had eighty people sign up for our meeting in May. This is the most we have had since before COVID. Thanks to everyone who is REACHING OUT to individuals and making this happen. At our meeting in June some of our scholarship winners and grant recipients will be attending. It would be great to have as many individuals as possible at our luncheon to show our support for these individuals.

Please continue to let us know of individuals who are not receiving the invite for the luncheon or the information for the newsletter. Many times it may just be a change in an email, which can be fixed easily. Also, remember to check you spam or junk folder to see if this is where this information showed up.

Again, if you have questions or concerns you can always use reply to a mailchimp email or submit your question on our website. Your question is always forwarded to the correct board member for the answer. Please let us know if there is anything that you need.

Enjoy the beautiful weather. Look forward to seeing you in June!!!!!!

## June Program

*Beth Miller*

Nancy Cramer—AMBA Member Benefits

Scholarship Winners introduced

## Steve Polep Memorial

Steve's memorial is planned on July 15 at Lippold Park in Crystal Lake from 6-9 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come play, have a snack and a hug. Hope to see you !!!!!!!



# Membership News

*Marlene Griffith and Linda Young*

Here comes summer... and teachers retiring. As always, I am trying to encourage non-members, especially new retirees, to join us. Some districts, however, are making it very difficult to get the names and addresses of those newly retired. If you happen to know someone who is retiring, please let that person know about us or send me the name and address so I can make contact. You can also tell them about our wonderful website: [MCRTA.org](http://MCRTA.org).

## BOARD MEMBERS

### Elected Members

President: Joann Jazak  
 Vice President: Linda Young  
 Board Secretary: April Shouse  
 Unit Secretary: Cathy Schiller  
 Treasurer: Dick Seaborn

### Appointed Members

Membership: Marlene Griffith  
 Programs/Venues: Beth Miller  
 Scholarship: Mary Noe  
 Member Benefits: Rose Turk  
 Information: Kathy Speaker  
 Legislative: Norb Wolter  
 Public Relations: Peggy Hart  
 Nominations: Olivia Santarelli  
 Constitution: Lois Shartiag  
 Finance: Olivia Santarelli  
 History: Robert Frenz  
 Budget: Nancy Tober

YOU CAN HELP US TO REMAIN A STRONG AND VITAL GROUP BY ENCOURAGING RETIRED EDUCATORS TO JOIN OUR LOCAL ORGANIZATION (MCRTA) AND OUR STATE ORGANIZATION (IRTA).

If you have any questions, please contact Marlene at [marlenegriffith@icloud.com](mailto:marlenegriffith@icloud.com) or call/text her at 815.385.3533.

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## Why Join?

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.

The **McHenry County Retired Teachers Association (MCRTA)** is your local connection to IRTA. The MCRTA board is active at the state level as we have members holding positions on their boards/committees. We add our local influence for the passage of favorable legislation in Springfield. We keep our membership informed of current Teachers' Retirement System changes. We also support current and future teachers by giving scholarships and grants.

We are always looking for entertaining/informative programs and fun activities for our members. You can help by bringing new members to our meetings and by bringing us your good ideas!

## Need to Cancel?

### Need to Cancel?

If you cannot show the day of the meeting, call Linda Young at 847-209-8047. We do need you to pay for your meal if you do not cancel with one week's notice.

**Reach us at:  
 PO Box 1776  
 Crystal Lake, IL 60039**



# Member Communications

*Kathy Speaker*

We are working very hard to fill this newsletter with information you can use. It is sent via the meeting notices each month and we have moved the link to the top.

We send out 3 meeting notices each month. The last one is just one day before the deadline to report the number of attendees to the venue. We know that it is too early for some of you to commit after the first one so we send a couple more to everyone. We do get people replying after each one. There is no need to reply more than once but it is not a problem if you can't remember if you sent it or not!

You will get a reply that we have received your meeting reservation. If you don't get a reply, definitely reach out to us again. We hope that these emails are not going to your spam/junk folder. Please check that regularly as some emails may slip through. All the big email platforms are constantly changing their algorithms to fight spam; so an email that may get through one time, may be filtered the next. It's just impossible to know what they are doing.

Finally reach out to us if you are having an issue. We found a couple old email addresses last month. You can also sign up for meeting on our webpage [www.mcrrta.org](http://www.mcrrta.org) or by emailing us at [mchenryrta@gmail.com](mailto:mchenryrta@gmail.com)

# Legislative News

*Norb Wolter*

Federal lawmakers seeking to repeal Social Security's Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) are giving it another try this year. U.S. Representatives Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) and Garrett Graves (R-LA) reintroduced the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 (H.R. 82) in January. A similar bill received widespread bipartisan support in 2022 but never made it to a floor vote. Bills that don't pass expire at the conclusion of each Congress.

The WEP and GPO, which are part of federal law, can reduce Social Security benefits for recipients of public pensions. Local Representatives Lauren Underwood (D-IL-14), Bill Foster (D-IL-11) and Bradley Schneider (D-IL-10) are co-sponsors of the bill.

Since this is a federal issue to be determined by Congress, we encourage members and retirees to contact their members of Congress to share their opinion about these provisions and how they affect them. We will continue to update members of any movement of this legislation.

# Member Benefits

*Rose Turk*

Before summer vacation starts, let's take a look at the discounts you can get with AMBA discounts. If you have not yet set up the discounts, go to [MCRTA.org](http://MCRTA.org) and click on Unit News. This will take you to the newsletters. Download the Newsletter 23 and follow the directions under Member Benefits. This has the instructions on how to get the discounts.

Go to [passportcorporate.com](http://passportcorporate.com) and put in your email address. Anytime you want AMBA discounts just go to this website. Up in the top of the page, put in the location you want. For now, put in McHenry, IL in the location area at the top. Then you can go to any of the portals for the discounts.

Click on the Dine tab. On the left side are the Filters & Tools. Click on the filters you want. Now you can look at all the websites for different restaurants in the Search Radius. Go to a restaurant website and see the discounts this restaurant offers.

Go back to Home on Passport. Now go to the portal that says Travel and click on it. Once again look at the left side and click on the Filters & Tools. Then look at all the offers you can choose from...hotels, limos, car rentals, etc.

Since you know how to get to AMBA discounts take a look at all the discounts and benefits you can get by being a member of IRTA.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

## TRS INFORMATION

**Sandra Bernhart**, the TRS speaker from last month, sent the following email to us so we could pass the information to you.

“Also, I did check with our insurance department about the prescription card “issue”. People commented, both at our table at lunch and in questions, that they wished Aetna could have a prescription card and separate phone number like United Health Care did. I had not recalled there was a separate card before but asked about it ... and it turns out that there was not a separate card for UHC either. For people on TRIP (under 65) there is a separate CVS card. That didn't mean they had to go to a CVS, just that they were the administrator of the prescription program. But once someone goes to a Medicare Advantage program which was UHC and is now Aetna, the one card they receive is for both medical and prescription drug. I wonder if the issue is that pharmacies may be more accustomed to UHC as a Medicare Advantage program but think of Aetna as just medical without prescription drug attached. At any rate, this particular issue should not represent a change for our members.”

She also shared her PowerPoint presentation. That link can be found on our Website (IRTA tab) or on the June meeting email.

## IRTA INFORMATION

**IRTA** is looking for people to join their leadership team. If you are inspired to embrace this opportunity, you can contact Bob Kaplan at [kaplanbob55@gmail.com](mailto:kaplanbob55@gmail.com). He will talk with you about the available positions at the state level.

**MCRTA** always welcomes more board members as well. We would love to expand our services to our members and to our community. You can talk with any of us about our current appointed committees or ones we would like to add in the future.

Five positions are elected every 2 years: President, Vice President, Board Secretary, Unit Secretary, and Treasurer. These elections take place in November with nominations in October.

## Scholarship Report

*Mary Noe*

### **Congratulations to our McHenry County Retired Teachers Association 2023 Scholarship Winners!**

We are so pleased to recognize our five 2023 MCRTA scholarship winners. They were outstanding high school students and we wish them continued success on their route to becoming future educators. They will be receiving their \$1500 scholarship checks after their first semester of college. Please get to know a little bit about them through quotes from their impressive applications. A big thank you to the 2023 selection committee members: Peggy Hart, Cathy Schiller, and April Shouse. Mary Noe, MCRTA Scholarship Chair.

**Lynette Alsot, a graduate of McHenry Upper Campus High School**, receives the Marcia Wright Memorial Scholarship. Her plans are to major in Special Education at Olivet Nazarene University. "The education profession, in my opinion, is something that will always be growing and adapting. With the advancement of new technology, educators will always be learning new things and continuing their love for learning as they are hoping to do for their students as well. Additionally, I believe that more than ever the need for qualified teachers and staff who want to be there is essential for the success of all the future students. I also think that being willing and able to work with students is necessary for their successes in their future endeavors." One of her letters of recommendation was from a former elementary superintendent who stated this. "When I think of top characteristics that I look for in highly effective teachers, Lynette naturally checks all of the boxes. These characteristics are collaboration, strong listening skills, effective communication skills, patience, empathy, and dedication."

**Jordan Brogdon, a graduate of Marengo Community High School**, is planning to attend Illinois State University with a major in Elementary Education. "I've always had the intrinsic calling to become a teacher, after all they were my biggest role models my entire life. I want to be a role model the kids both look up to and feel safe with. When I step into the classroom, I promise to create a loving and safe environment both culturally and emotionally. I practice this every day while I volunteer at the local preschool, and babysit children ages one to twelve whose parents are at ESL lessons." Her Pre-K teacher reports that Jordan has "demonstrated a strong work ethic and a love for being in the classroom. Her calm, kind and encouraging manner helps our Pre-K students feel more comfortable enough to take the necessary steps to develop and learn."

**Megan Christy, a Crystal Lake South High School** graduate, is receiving a Marcia Wright Memorial Scholarship. Her plans are to major in Secondary Education-Social Science at Illinois State University. "Most people my age don't always know what they want to do with the rest of their lives, making it difficult to identify a major. I, however, have known since 4th grade that I wanted to be a social science educator. With this scholarship, I will make it my goal to make a change in the classroom to produce productive members of society, just like my school did for me." A teacher recommendation states this. "She possesses remarkable self-awareness, is incredibly empathic, and has an exceptional level of fortitude. All of these personality traits combined with her diligent work ethic and genuine desire to make a positive impact on the world makes her someone special and definitely worthy of a scholarship."

**Mary Martin is a graduate of Woodstock North High School** and is planning to attend Eastern Illinois University with an Elementary Education major. "In my education at EIU, I hope to gain knowledge about innovative skills and differentiated practices to be an effective elementary education teacher. I want to learn how to best help my students succeed not only academically but also socially." One of her letter of recommendation is from the instructor where Mary is an aide in her preschool class. "I have had the pleasure of watching her grow into a kind, hardworking, spirited, and lovely young woman. As a continuation of her passion to help others, Mary worked with special needs students in our Best Buddies program as well as at the city of Woodstock's playground summer program. These experiences have helped her gain skills for her future where she hopes to continue giving back to her community and inspiring children's love of learning."

**Olivia Schramm, a Huntley High School** graduate, is our first recipient of the Stephen Polep Memorial Scholarship. Her plans are to attend Indiana University with an Elementary/Special Education major. "I cannot remember a time when I did not want to be a teacher. Even when I was little, I would force my sister to play school with me, so that I could grade her tests and explain to her why  $1 + 1$  is indeed not 11. I want to do something I love and something that will make me truly happy where I can watch educational and personal growth each day and where I can be the person that makes an imprint on a student's life forever, however big or small, and I believe that I could do so as an educator." A teacher wrote, "Olivia is extremely passionate about her education and it shows through the enthusiasm and positive attitude that she displays on a daily basis. She leads by example through her genuine personality, her consistent selfless behavior, and a passion for helping others."

# Membership Application Form

DID YOU FORGET TO PAY 2023 YOUR DUES?

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND YOU WOULD LIKE TO INVITE TO JOIN?

**MCRTA Dues --- You have three choices:**

**I choose to pay (CIRCLE ONE)**

- 1) Annual dues, \$10 for 2023
- 2) 3-year dues, \$25 for 2023-2025
- 3) LIFE membership for \$150

Annual Dues	\$10
3-Year Dues.	\$25
LIFE membership.	\$150

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**WRITE CHECK PAYABLE TO MCRTA. MAIL THIS FORM AND YOUR CHECK TO  
MCRTA  
PO BOX 1776  
CRYSTAL LAKE, IL 60039**