



ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Northwest Suburban - Unit 90

<http://www.irta-unit90.org>

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

November 4, 2009

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Make your plans now to attend the Holiday Luncheon on Thursday, December 3, 2009 at the MERIDIAN BANQUET & CONFERENCE CENTER at 1701 Algonquin Road in Rolling Meadows. Take this opportunity to celebrate the upcoming holiday season with you fellow Unit 90 members. See the flyer for specific details. 'Tis the season to be jolly; so see you there!

[Click here for flyer](#)

UNIT 90 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

The meetings of the Unit 90 Executive Board are open to ALL interested members. The meeting schedule for 2010 is as follows : January 6th, February 9th, March 9th, April 7th, May 5th, June 2nd, August 4th, September 8th, October 6th, and November 3rd. Please join us at the Arlington Heights Senior Center at 10:00 a.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Tutors are needed in many of our local school districts to assist at-risk students. Wheeling Elementary District #21 needs tutors for an after-school enrichment program; schedules vary from school to school but generally students meet from 3:30 – 4:30 two or three days per week. DesPlaines Elementary District #62 is looking for tutors during the school day to work with one or two students in reading and math. MacArthur Middle School in District #23 needs tutors on Wed. afternoons from 3:00 – 4:00 to help with homework in all subjects. Students from many of the area high schools attend GWAYO (Greater Wheeling Area Youth Outreach). Students are bused from their school to either GWAYO at the corner of Palatine and Milwaukee or Algonquin Rd. in Arlington Heights. Students commit to attending five days per week. Tutors are needed from 3:15 – 4:30 or (for Elk Grove students) from 4:00 – 6:00 in Arlington Heights. Coordinators need tutors to commit to a regular schedule and come once a week (or more often, if you wish). Some local districts have their own volunteer coordinators.

If you are interested in any of the above programs, contact Jackie Kelly at 847-228-1006 or e-mail her at schoolresources@volunteerinfo.net. She will connect you with the appropriate person in each program.

TRS Report – November 2009

By Bob Lyons, elected annuitant, Illinois Teachers' Retirement System Board

For those who read my reports only in this newsletter, I would encourage you to go online to our website, or to give us an email address, so that you can receive my monthly reports which are more timely and have more content than we have room for here.

There was a time when more than half of the workforce of America had some sort of pension plan, but today less than 20%, and most of those public employees, enjoy the protection of a defined benefit plan. The average pension for retired educators last year was \$41,532 and for fiscal year 2010 it is up to \$43,227. In mid-September the Sun-Times ran a series on the "fat public pensions" of state and local government workers, including teachers. While the article used accurate numbers, it also left out facts and figures that did not help what ultimately became their argument for a two-tiered pension system to be established for new teachers and state employees. The Sun-Times articles focused on public employees with the largest pensions and never really looked at what was more typical.

The TRS study of the benefits for retired educators as of August 2009 showed that 62% of annuitants have a pension under \$50,000 per year and 1632 annuitants, less than 2%, have a pension of \$100,000 or more, and only thirteen of those have an annual benefit above \$200,000. No mention is made of older teachers who taught for more than thirty years and with no certainty of the added benefit of social security, receive just over \$12,000 a year as their pension. But even sharing these average numbers may not help. A retirement income of more than \$43,000 is beyond what most people can count on these days and, while it is far from the \$200,000 per year pensions earned by only a few at the top, it is still a strong source of pension envy for those in the business world that see their current plans as being unable to allow them to ever retire.

Certain politicians and editorial writers say that the "bloated, overly generous pensions" enjoyed by educators and other state retirees are going to break the system and that new hires must be put into a new inferior pension plan in order to reduce the size of government contributions going forward. What they seem incapable of understanding, or just refuse to recognize, is that **the problem faced by the Illinois state government is not the result of the size of the benefits that we receive, but the size of the debt that the state owes us.** If the state had only paid into our fund and the other funds the amount that the actuaries told them was necessary to meet their annual obligations, than the payments today would be easy and a non-issue. But they chose to "save" millions over the years, and thus they owe billions now and for years to come.

And sadly, if they would go ahead with their plans for new hires to work years longer and to receive much smaller benefits, that would not reduce the size of the state's annual required payments until many years from now, and would actually add to their obligations. Current active teachers pay 9.4% of what they make into the pension fund making up a portion of the monthly benefit for those of us who are retired just as our contributions helped to pay for those who had gone before us. New hires, because their pensions will be worth much less, would make correspondingly smaller payments into the system and it would be the state of Illinois that would be required to make up the difference to move us toward the funding target of 90% that they need to achieve by 2045. One can only wonder if reality will stop them from doing something which they think would be politically popular, even if it was wrong.

Unit 90 WEBSITE: www.irta-unit90.org

If you have not done so yet, please check out the Unit 90 website, which includes current information on the following topics: Executive Board members and meeting minutes, IRTA communications, 2009 IRTA Foundation Scholarship information, TRS reports and pension concerns, and Unit 90 events with photos!

If you want an up-to-date 2009-10 electronic directory (pdf file) just e-mail your request to Reinhard Taylor at: irta-unit90rtaylor@comcast.net.

Thanks to the Webmaster, Reinhard Taylor.

COMMUNICATION: E-MAIL UPDATES/NEWSLETTERS

If you are not currently receiving e-mail updates and want to receive them, please send your name and e-mail address to Bill McCauley at wcmirta@comcast.net with the subject IRTA UPDATES.

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN – UNIT 90 EXECUTIVE BOARD – 2009

OFFICERS:

President: Leonard Kortekaas (lmkortekaas@yahoo.com)

Vice President: Liz White

Secretary: Frank Compton

Treasurer: Robert Ferguson

CHAIRS:

Membership: Roberta Reinhardt

Communications: William McCauley

Webmaster: Reinhard Taylor

Legislative: Robert Lyons and Jesse Macro

Foundation: Doris Haack

Program Coordinators: Rich Chierico, Carolyn White, Denise Florczak

Information Services: Richard Chierico

Member Benefits: Mary Lou Tansey

Health I&P: Mary Hurd

Volunteer Services: Carolyn White

Ambassador: Roger Steingraber

UNIT 90 of the Illinois Retired Teachers' Association
Invites you and your guests to attend our annual
Holiday Luncheon 2009

Location: Meridian Banquet & Conference Center
1701 Algonquin Road (at the intersection of Rtes 58 and 62)
Rolling Meadows, Illinois 60008
(847) 952-8181

Date: Thursday, December 3, 2009

Time: Social Hour 11:00am
Luncheon Noon
Program Following luncheon

Menu: Choice of one:
Petite Filet (7 ounce); all prepared medium rare
or,
Chicken Marsala
Sautéed Chicken Breast with Marsala
Wine sauce and Mushrooms
or,
Fresh Broiled Norwegian Salmon
with Béarnaise Sauce

Each entrée will be served with:
Minestrone
House Salad
Green Beans Almandine
Whipped Potatoes
Crème de Menthe Sundae dessert



Price: \$24.00 per person, inclusive

For questions, please call Liz White at (847) 397-1678; or at: ebenish@sbcglobal.net

R.S.V.P. by November 21, 2009 to:
Liz White; 5805 Prairie Lane; Palatine, Illinois 60067-7357

Name _____ Telephone number _____

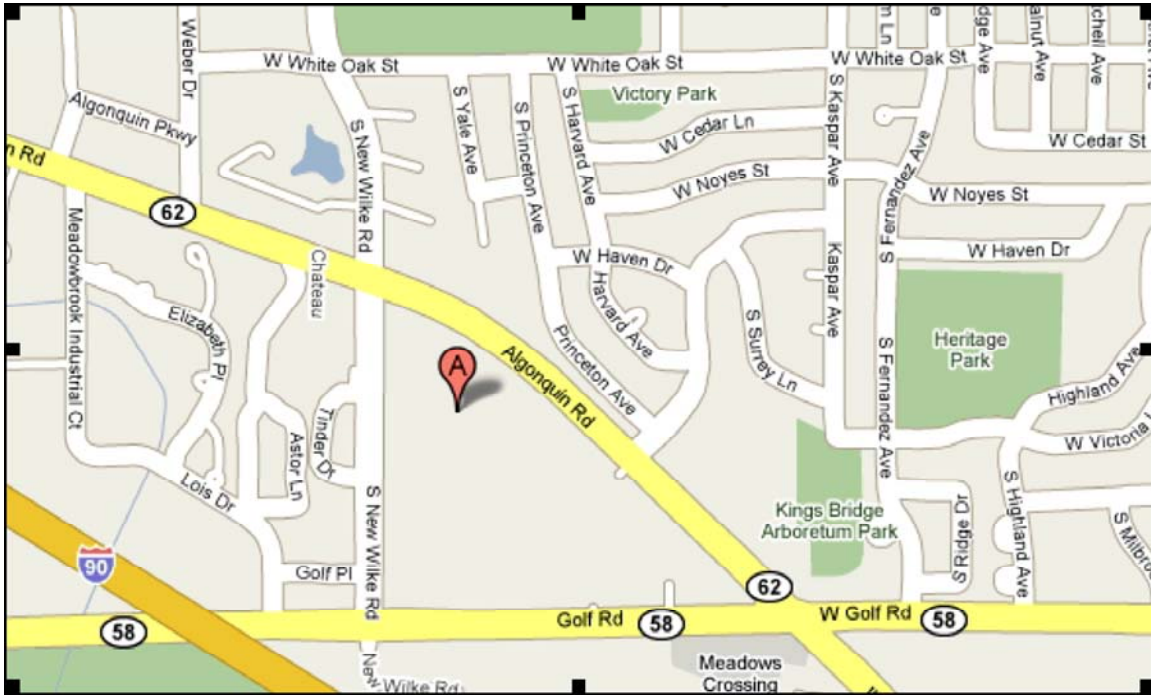
Email address: _____

Meal Selection: Filet _____ Chicken Marsala _____ Salmon _____

Name of Guest _____

Meal Selection: Filet _____ Chicken Marsala _____ Salmon _____

Please make checks payable to Northwest Suburban IRTA Unit 90



Meridian Banquets
1701 Algonquin Road
Rolling Meadows

Northwest Suburban IRTA Unit 90
21 Tall Grass Court
Streamwood, IL 60107-1277
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED