

West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571, IFT, AFT, AFL-CIO

# Union Messenger

## "A Union of Professionals"

### WSTU Jan-Feb Calendar

1/10— Ex.Bd Mtg. (5:30 p.m. —Westmont)  
 2/5-6—IFT ULI (Westmont)  
 2/7—HOR Mtg. (5:30 p.m. —Westmont)  
 2/7—Deadline for AFT Convention  
 Delegate Nomination

### Union Messenger

Rachel Esposito, President  
 Kyle Stern, Vice President  
 Sandra Erickson, Treasurer  
 Cathleen Pope, Secretary  
 Eugene Poull, Financial Secretary  
 Brett Blair, Legal Defense Secretary  
 Shavonne Henry, COPE/PAC  
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 Tom Smith, IFT Field Service Director  
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 Service Director  
 Julie Masterton, Membership Secretary  
 Patty Clancy, Office Secretary  
 Andrew Bendelow,  
 571 Web Administrator  
 Robin Hancock,  
 571 Union Messenger Editor



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### Take Time for Yourself

As we approach the holiday and winter season, we are reminded how important it is to take care of ourselves. Burn-out affects all of us at different times, but it seems many of us are feeling this earlier this year than in the past. We are seeing people who we feel normally "have it together" showing signs of fatigue. We are overworked because of staff



shortages. We are struggling to sustain a normal pace of work during abnormal times. It is taking a toll on us all.

We have all heard the expression: If you do not care for yourself, you cannot care for others properly. Avoiding stress and burn-out seems like an impossible task. Some symptoms of burn-out may include fatigue and sleep issues, forgetfulness, trouble concentrating, appetite/weight issues, depression, and anxiety. Ask yourself: How often are you stopping in your day to assess your feelings? Assessing how you are feeling emotionally and physically and developing a plan to address concerns is imperative during this time.

As educators and staff working in schools, we are often expected to be selfless, and our focus is always on others. This is a dangerous pattern of behavior that can create feelings of guilt and worry. This year, it is time to set clear boundaries for our own self-care. How can we fight against burn-out? One thing you can do is keep your weekends for yourself. It is ok to spend the day watching TV or hanging with friends and family or getting back to your favorite hobbies. Do something for yourself before you do something for work. If you have sick days, use them if you need a mental health day. It may be time to practice the word "no" more often than you usually do. You do not have to sign up for every committee or after school function especially if it is happening at the expense of your happiness. This is going to be difficult for many of us to do but making even a small change can make a big difference. During this holiday break, take some time for yourself and enjoy your loved ones.

Rachel Esposito  
 President  
 West Suburban Teachers Union



## Sixteenth Annual Legislative Breakfast



On October 2, West Suburban Teachers Union held its' **Sixteenth Annual Legislative Breakfast** in Oak Brook. It was wonderful seeing people in person for this event. It gave us time to catch up and reflect on our successes and struggles in legislation. **Stacy Davis Gates** started our event with a beautiful tribute to **Jane Russell** to celebrate Jane's dedication to Local 571 and her accomplishments throughout the years. Because of her devotion to fighting for public education, Local 571 named an award in her honor called the "Defender of Public Education Award" to be given to people who go over and beyond to help protect public education. Jane Russell was humbled by the recognition and gladly accepted the award in her honor.

Jane Russell gave the first award to **Jesus "Chuy" Garcia** for his efforts assisting several of our councils in securing safe plans to return to school over the last year. We had two dynamic panels that helped give us insight into the current state of affairs in Illinois. **Cynthia Riseman Lund, IFT Director of Political Activities**, was our moderator for our panels. One panel consisted of legislators and the other panel were members who have earned a seat on their local school boards. The legislative panel consisted of **Rep. Maura Hirschauer, Senator Meg Loughran, and Rep. Janet Yang Rohr**. They all expressed how they are working on legislation to help with the inconsistencies and needs exposed by the pandemic. They made it clear that they do not have all the answers but are willing to meet and discuss with anyone who may have ideas on how to resolve lingering issues.

Our members expressed the need to protect sick leave especially during this time as well as the need for funding and less testing statewide. Our school board panelists were **Lori Parthimos** and **Luz Rangel**. They shared their experiences being a public education employee and how they use that perspective on their local school boards. They gave us wonderful insight into how school boards run and the struggles they feel being a school board member. Their honesty and perspective were much appreciated by our members.

We raffled off over 35 prizes and raised over \$1100 for our Local 571 Scholarship Program and COPE/PAC. We are so happy we were able to hold this event in person and we look forward to next year's event.



Stacy Davis Gates



Jane Russell



Jesus "Chuy" Garcia



Rep. Janet Yang Rohr, Senator Meg Loughran and Rep. Maura Hirschauer



Lori Parthimos and Luz Rangel



Cynthia Riseman Lund





# Sixteenth Annual Legislative Breakfast



Gia Esposito, Alice Kautsky and Kyle Stern



Legislative Breakfast Attendees



Brett Blair



Jane Russell and Rachel Esposito



Jane Russell, Rachel Esposito, Kyle Stern, Sandy Erickson and Cynthia Riseman Lund



Jane Russell and Patty Garcia



Rachel Esposito



Cicero Council Members Legislative Breakfast Attendees



## Retiree Corner....

What a difference a year or two make in our lives. Thanksgiving Holiday 🦃 seemed somewhat “normal” again! I hope you were able to share with family and friends in some way that worked for you. I found my nephew’s dinner invite to first say.... “everyone that’s coming will be vaccinated and/or boosted” .... then he added... “bring an appetizer.” 😊

I guess you realized our November “Crafty” Meeting” didn’t happen this year but I’ll keep it on the list for next year. Flipped to that December calendar and Yikes...only 24 days until another holiday!

IFT NIRAC Retirees (includes #571) are going to Drury Lane to see...Holiday Inn. 🌲 We are totally sold out; I will send a note to those that sent in their reservations and let you know about your ticket. Don’t forget to bring an unwrapped “new” scarf, hat, gloves, mittens, etc. to the play...we will be sending these items to a women’s shelter in Cook/DuPage.

If you get a chance, visit the Morton Arboretum for their holiday light show and/or the Brookfield Zoo Lights, both require walking, and you will need tickets. I’m sure there are lots of other things out there to do, so it’s important to get out and enjoy if possible.

Reminder....we will NOT be meeting in January, but I will send out Events/Dates for February. Have an enjoyable December with friends and family. 🥂 🎆

Alice Kautsky—Retiree President

## Members Engaged

### ARGO TEACHERS UNITY THROUGH COMMUNITY



In their continued campaign for Unity Through Community, the Argo Teachers took a larger-than-life group picture of nearly all members in their unit. The teachers also showed unity by participating in Argo’s Homecoming Parade.

### KICK –OFF EVENT

**Representative Maura Hirschauer’s campaign kick-off event included legislators and labor leaders.**



Back row: (l->r) Rep. Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz--HD 17, Jane Russell--IFT, Jeanne Cameron--AFSCME Council 31, Sen. Karina Villa--SD 25

Front row: (l->r), Rep. Anna Moeller--HD 4, Rep. Maura Hirschauer-- HD 49, Clint Black--UFCW 881, Beth Penesis—Painters District Council 30



## West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 Scholarship Opportunities



- ♦ ♦ **Mary Wheeler Scholarship**—Six \$3,100 one-time awards will be given to high school seniors graduating in 2022 whose parents or guardians are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571. Applicants must plan to continue their education full time in the Fall of 2022. Applications will be available at [www.wstu571.org](http://www.wstu571.org), Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. *All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2022.*
- ♦ ♦ **Jo Ann Horowitz Scholarship**—Two \$1,550 one-time awards will be given in 2022 to current PSRPs who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571 and pursuing a BA/BS or MA/MS in an education-related field. Applications will be available at [www.wstu571.org](http://www.wstu571.org), Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. *All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2022.*
- ♦ ♦ **Julienne Phillips Scholarship**—Two \$1,550 one-time awards will be given in 2022 to current licensed, practicing educators (teacher, social worker, counselor, psychologist, speech pathologist, librarian, nurse, or instructional coach) who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571, and pursuing a masters degree in an education-related field. Applications will be available at [www.wstu571.org](http://www.wstu571.org), Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. *All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2022.*
- ♦ ♦ **Maryann Karlovsky Scholarship**—Two \$1,550 one-time awards will be given in 2022 to current licensed, practicing educators (teacher, social worker, counselor, psychologist, speech pathologist, librarian, nurse, or instructional coach) who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571 and pursuing a certificate or endorsement in an education-related field. Applications will be available at [www.wstu571.org](http://www.wstu571.org), Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. *All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2022.*

## New AFT benefit

AFT is proud to announce a new benefit provided through **AFT+ Member \_\_\_\_ Benefits:**

<https://www.aft.org/member-benefits/aft-legal-and-financial-services/identity-theft-protection>

### **Free Identity Theft Protection**

This new benefit is available to all active and retired members and includes features such as:

- • **Breach Search Tool** - Instantly verify whether your email address has been associated with a security incident.
- • **Assisted Restoration** - Our Fraud Resolution Specialists guide you through restoring your financial reputation.
- • **\$10,000 ID Theft Insurance\*** - Zero deductible for expense reimbursement that is related to identity recovery.
- • **Safe Wallet** - Secure online storage for your credit/debit cards, driver's license number and more.
- • **ID Threat Score** - See how at-risk you are to identity fraud threats with our real-time analysis.\*\*

**Premium Protection** - Upgrade to include full restoration with monitoring services and \$1,000,000 insurance. \*

**Register online today at [aft.clcidprotect.net](http://aft.clcidprotect.net).**



## American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Convention Delegates

Nominations are now being accepted for delegates to the American Federation of Teachers Convention that will convene in Boston, MA, on July 14-17, 2022. All Local 571 members are eligible to be nominated as delegates to this convention. There can be up to forty-seven (47) delegates, including the ten (10) Officers which include Area Trustees, who became delegates by virtue of being elected to office. Ballots will be counted, and candidates will be ranked by the number of ballots received. Allowing for the ten (10) Officers, the thirty-seven (37) candidates with the most votes will be declared delegates. The remaining candidates will be declared alternate delegates; and should any delegate(s) notify the Local of an inability to fulfill the duties of delegate, these alternate delegates will be selected in rank order of votes received to serve in place of the delegate who is unable to serve. Delegates who attend the convention will be reimbursed for expenses up to \$1,442/delegate. ***Nominations must be printed or typed (name and Council) and received in the Local 571 office on or before February 7, 2022 by end of business day.*** Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in April 2022 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) that voting will take place. Retired members' ballots will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service to their homes.

## Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) Convention Delegates



Nominations are now being accepted for delegates to the Illinois Federation of Teachers Convention that will convene in St. Louis, MO on October 21-23, 2022. All Local 571 members are eligible to be nominated as delegates to this convention. Including the ten (10) Officers and Area Trustees of Local 571 who became delegates by virtue of being elected to office, the number of delegates to be elected to this convention will be up to fifty-five (55). Ballots will be counted, and candidates will be ranked by the number of ballots received. Allowing for the ten (10) Officers and Area Trustees, the forty-five (45) candidates with the most votes will be declared delegates. The remaining candidates will be declared alternate delegates; and should any delegate(s) notify the Local of an inability to fulfill the duties of delegate, these alternate delegates will be selected in rank order of votes received to serve in place of the delegate who is unable to serve. Delegates who attend the convention will be reimbursed for expenses up to \$680/delegate. ***Nominations must be printed or typed (name and Council) and received in the Local 571 office on or before March 14, 2022 by end of business day.*** Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in May 2022 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) that voting will take place. Retirees' ballots will be mailed to 571 retiree members via U.S. Postal Service.





## Legislative Director Report

November/December 2021 Union Messenger

Nicole Burr

It's that time of year when I reflect on the past year and look forward to what is to come in the new one. As I sit and reflect, I am amazed by all that our membership has not only endured, but found a way to survive and in so many cases, thrive! It truly is a testament to the grit and determination our membership shows every day, and I am proud to work with and for all of you.

At this time I want to focus your attention on a couple of important things happening in our state, and as always please feel free to share your thoughts using the Google Form [here](#). It's so helpful to hear what you have to say, so I can pass it along to our legislators.

### COVID Wage and Benefit Protections Bill for School Employees

[HB 2778](#) (Rep. Yang Rohr, D-Naperville/Sen. Belt, D-East St Louis) HB 2778 has now passed both the house and the senate, and is on Governor Pritzker's desk. Please take a moment to [email](#) Governor J.B. Pritzker and urge him to sign the bill into law!

### Teach Not Test

The Illinois State Board of Education is still considering replacing the end of the year IAR math and reading test for 3-8th grades with 3 interim tests given in the Fall, Winter, and Spring of each year while also expanding testing to K-2nd graders. Stakeholder feedback sessions are happening now and the Board is scheduled to consider the findings from those sessions in December. Please call your state legislators to tell them you oppose the proposal and urge them to ask ISBE to work with assessment experts, the IFT, and all stakeholders to find a more balanced system of assessments.

## Local 571 Executive Board Area Trustees Nominations



Nominations are now being accepted for Local 571 Executive Board Area Trustees. The Executive Board of Local 571 shall consist of the Officers of Local 571 which include four (4) Area Trustees, at least one of whom is a PSRP member, and the Local 571 Council Presidents who serve as Trustees. All Local 571 members are eligible to be nominated as Local 571 Area Trustees. The term of office is two (2) years beginning July 1, 2022, and by virtue of their election, they shall be elected also as delegates to the AFT and IFT Conventions. ***Nominations must be printed or typed (name and Council) and received in the Local 571 office on or before March 14, 2022 by end of business day.*** Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in May 2022 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) that voting will take place. Interested individuals may request further information about the duties of the office by contacting Local 571. Retired members' ballots will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service to their homes.



## Winter Safety Tips



<b>Keep Pipes from Freezing</b> - Wrap them in insulation or layers of newspaper, covering the newspaper with plastic to keep out moisture	<b>Socks on the Go!</b> - Pack an extra pair of socks in your car's glove compartment. Then if you need to get out and shovel, or if you step into a puddle, you'll have dry socks to change into. And put those orphaned or mismatched socks to use: use them as wiper blade covers!
<b>Enlist the Help of Your Ceiling Fan</b> - Ceiling fans are not just for summer! Flip the switch to reverse the spin of the fan and turn on the lowest speed to blow warm air down from the ceiling.	<b>Prevent Food Spoilage in A Power Outage</b> - If you lose power from a winter storm, don't let food spoil in the fridge. While it will be safe for about 24 hours, pack it in coolers and move it outdoors (provided it's 30 degrees F or colder) if your outage is any longer than that. Use the charcoal grill to cook up anything that won't last.
<b>De-Ice with A Potato</b> - The night before freezing temperatures, rub half a potato over your car's windshield. The sugar from the potato creates a barrier over the window and prevents ice from forming, so you'll come out in the morning and won't have to scrape! Simply rinse and wipe with your wipers when you get on the road	<b>Gas up!</b> - During cold weather months, it's a good practice to keep at least a half a tank of gasoline in your vehicle at all times. Not only does it prevent you from being stranded, but it prevents any water in the tank from freezing, which can damage the fuel pump.
<b>Keep Side Mirrors Frost-Free</b> - Place plastic bags over your car mirrors at night and they'll be frost-free in the morning. Reuse them over and over.	<b>Get Instant Traction with Your Car's Floor Mats</b> - Your car's floor mats can help you get un-stuck from snowy or muddy conditions in a pinch. Place your front floor mats under the spinning tire to give you some traction. Just don't forget to retrieve them after you get moving!
<b>Unfreeze Locks with Hand Sanitizer</b> - Squirt a little hand sanitizer on them. The isopropyl alcohol that kills germs also lowers the freezing point of water and can melt the ice inside the lock within seconds.	<b>Easy Ice Scraper</b> - A plastic card, such as an old gift card or loyalty card, from your wallet, works in a pinch. (Don't use credit cards as you can damage them).
<b>Keep A Roll of Duct Tape in The Car</b> - Not only does it fix everything, but you can use it as a fire starter – duct tape is very flammable and is a great tool to get a fire going in an emergency.	<b>De-Ice Walkways with Used Coffee Grounds</b> - Sprinkle leftover coffee grounds on your freshly shoveled walk or driveway to help melt the ice—it's a natural and environmentally friendly way to add more traction underfoot. Just wipe your feet as usual before entering the house.



### Union Leadership Institute

**WINTER: FEBRUARY 5-6** (virtual)

IFT's ULI program has been designed to meet the needs of both new and experienced local leaders and activists in all IFT constituency groups. ULI provides participants with hands-on learning of union skills, professional development opportunities, and a chance to network with other IFT members from throughout the state.

<https://www.ift-aft.org/professionaldevelopment>



As this memorable year draws to a close, the officers and staff of Local 571 wish you a holiday season filled with warmth, peace, health, and happiness. And hope for a better 2022.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR  
2022!**

### What's Missing from the Messenger?

Is there something innovative or exciting happening at your school? If so, we want to hear from you!

Email your news to Robin Hancock at: [571editor@gmail.com](mailto:571editor@gmail.com)

We Want To Hear From You



We're on the Web!!!  
[www.wstu571.org](http://www.wstu571.org)

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