

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

Union Messenger

"A Union of Professionals"

April Calendar

4/1—AFT Convention Election deadline (if required)
 4/8—ExBd Mtg. (5:30 p.m.—Westmont)
 4/8—HOR Mtg. (6:45 p.m.—Westmont)
 4/8—571 proposed budget presented to HOR
 4/19—Registration deadline for TRS Seminar
 4/19-21—AFT PSRP (Spring) INVITATION ONLY
 4/20-4/21—IFT Spring ULI (Westmont)
 4/23—TRS Seminar (5:00 p.m. VIRTUAL)
 4/29—571 Area Trustee Election deadline (if required)

Union Messenger

Kyle Stern, President
 April Giannosa, Vice-President
 Sandra Erickson, Treasurer
 Cathleen Pope, Secretary
 Eugene Poull, Financial Secretary
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 Renee Wagner, IFT Field Service Director
 Carolyn Wilson, Membership Support Staff
 Patty Clancy, Office Support Staff
 Andrew Bendelow,
 571 Web Administrator
 Robin Hancock,
 571 Union Messenger Editor



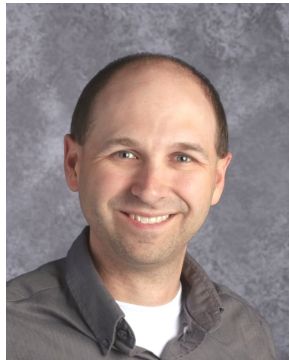
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As Good As I Once Was

Dear Union Siblings,

One of the unusual features of being a Local President is writing a monthly article. I had meandering thoughts of this article for April's Union Messenger after I had finished my miniseries on finding ways to get along with people with whom you disagree. Then Toby Keith died and so this article seemed like it should be written for this month's Union Messenger not April's. As the saying goes, "We plan, God laughs." However, in a way, it all makes sense. You see I don't think I'd agree with Mr. Keith's politics, but I still think there are things we can learn from his music. So, without further adieu, here is my March Message.



In March, I turn 45. I'm middle aged, bald, and carrying a bit more weight than I care to admit. Don't judge. Shortly before Toby Keith's death, I heard the song, "As Good as I Once Was" on the radio while out with some friends and I got to thinking about his progression of songs. In his younger days, he played these machismo songs like "[Should Have Been a Cowboy](#)" or "[Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue](#)." He sang songs you could sing along with like, "[I Love this Bar](#)" or "[Red Solo Cup](#)" but I'm in the "[As Good as I Once Was](#)" stage of my life. I think of the key refrain,

*"I ain't as good as I once was,
 I got a few years on me now.
 But there was a time,
 Back in my prime,
 When I could really lay it down."*

Our bodies may remind us of the passage of time, but our hearts still echo with the fervor of our youth. We remember the days of our youth, the late nights grading papers (or partying), the impassioned discussions with administration, and the unwavering commitment to our students and Union. We may not move as swiftly, but our resolve remains unyielding.

*"I still hang out with my best friend Dave
 I've known him since we were kids at school
 Last night he had a few shots, got in a tight spot
 Hustlin' a game of pool
 With a couple of redneck boys
 One great big fat biker man
 I heard David yell across the room
 "Hey buddy, how 'bout a helpin' hand"
 I said "Dave..."
 I ain't as good as I once was..."*

Continued from page 1

As Good As I Once Was

David mirrors our Union siblings. We've faced our share of challenges together—the budget cuts, the policy shifts, and the ever-evolving landscape of education. Yet, when David needs help, we extend a helping hand. We advocate for fair wages, safer classrooms, and the well-being of our colleagues. Our resilience lies not only in our ability to weather storms but also in our determination to lift others up. We might not be as good as we once were, but we are as good once as we ever were.

*"I used to be hell on wheels,
Back when I was a younger man.
Now my body says, 'Oh, you can't do this, boy,'
But my pride says, 'Oh yes, you can.'"*

Our pride—the fire that still burns within us—fuels our advocacy. We may not sprint, but we march. We may not shout, but we speak. Our battle scars are badges of honor, reminders that we've weathered storms and emerged stronger. Once again, we may not be as good as we once were, but damn it, we're as good once as we ever were.

In 2022, Toby Keith announced he had stomach cancer. At the 2023 People's Choice Country Awards, he sang his last big hit, "[Don't Let the Old Man In](#)."

*Don't let the old man in
I wanna leave this alone
Can't leave it up to him
He's knocking on my door
And I knew all of my life
That someday it would end
Get up and go outside
Don't let the old man in
Many moons I have lived
My body's weathered and worn
Ask yourself how would you be
If you didn't know the day you were born
Try to love on your wife
And stay close to your friends
Toast each sundown with wine
Don't let the old man in
Many moons I have lived
My body's weathered and worn
Ask yourself how would you be
If you didn't know the day you were born
When he rides up on his horse
And you feel that cold bitter wind
Look out your window and smile
Don't let the old man in
Look out your window and smile
Don't let the old man in*

The way time is flying, I know that time will eventually come for me. It comes for all of us. I have seen it happen to family members. Some of you may be battling this stage. Continue to find hope, to fight, to help others. Enjoy those sunsets, your friends, and significant other, if you are lucky enough to have or still have one. Your Union is here for you.

As the president of Local 571, I stand alongside you—the educators, the support staff, the unsung heroes of our schools. Let us embrace our imperfections, celebrate our resilience, and continue to make a difference. For in the chorus of life, we harmonize with the echoes of our past and the promise of our future.

*"May not be good as I once was,
But I'm as good once, as I ever was."*

And that, my friends, is more than enough.

In Unity,

Kyle Stern

IFT 2024 Primary Election Endorsements



Bold- incumbent

*- union member

U.S. House 1st –

Jonathan Jackson (D)
 2nd – Robin Kelly (D)
 3rd – Delia Ramirez (D)
 4th – Jesus “Chuy” Garcia (D)
 5th – Mike Quigley (D)
 6th – Sean Casten (D)
 8th – Raja Krishnamoorthi (D)
 9th – Jan Schakowsky (D)*
 10th – Brad Schneider (D) 11th
 – Bill Foster (D)
 13th – Nikki Budzinski (D)
 14th – Lauren Underwood (D)
 17th – Eric Sorensen (D)

State Senate 4th –

Kimberly Lightford (D)
 5th – Lakesia Collins (D)
 7th – Mike Simmons (D)
 10th – Robert Martwick (D)
 13th – Robert Peters (D)
 16th – Willie Preston (D)
 19th – Michael Hastings (D)
 20th – Graciela Guzman (D)
 22nd – Cristina Castro (D)
 25th – Karina Villa (D)
 28th – Laura Murphy (D)
 31st – Mary Edly-Allen (D)* 34th
 – Steve Stadelman (D)
 40th – Patrick Joyce (D)
 43rd – Rachel Ventura (D)
 46th – Dave Koehler (D)
 49th – Meg Loughran Cappel (D)*
 52nd – Paul Faraci (D)
 58th – Terri Bryant (R)

State House

1st – Aaron Ortiz (D)*
 3rd – Eva-Dina Delgado (D)
 4th – Lilian Jimenez (D)
 5th – Kimberly Neely du Buclet (D)
 6th – Sonya Harper (D)
 7th – Chris Welch (D)
 8th – La Shawn Ford (D)
 9th – Yolanda Morris (D)

10th – Jawaharial Omar Williams (D)*
 11th – Ann Williams (D)
 13th – Hoan Huynh (D)
 14th – Kelly Cassidy (D)
 15th – Michael Kelly (D)
 17th – Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz (D)
 18th – Robyn Gabel (D)
 19th – Lindsey LaPointe (D)
 21st – Abdelnasser Rashid (D)
 23rd – Edgar Gonzalez, Jr. (D)
 24th – Theresa Mah (D) 26th
 – Kam Buckner (D)
 27th – Justin Slaughter (D)
 28th – Bob Rita (D)
 30th – Will Davis (D)
 32nd – Lisa Davis (D)
 33rd – Marcus Evans, Jr. (D)
 34th – Nick Smith (D)
 35th – Mary Gill (D)
 38th – Debbie Meyers-Martin (D)
 39th – Will Guzzardi (D)
 40th – Jaime Andrade, Jr. (D)
 41st – Janet Yang Rohr (D)
 42nd – Terra Costa Howard (D)
 43rd – Anna Moeller (D)
 44th – Fred Crespo (D)
 45th – Dennis Reboletti (R)
 46th – Diane Blair-Sherlock (D)
 47th – Jackie Williamson (D)
 48th – Maria Vessey (D)
 49th – Maura Hirschauer (D)
 50th – Barbara Hernandez (D)
 51st – Nabeela Syed (D)
 52nd – Maria Peterson (D)
 53rd – Mark Walker (D)
 54th – Mary Beth Canty (D)
 56th – Michelle Mussman (D)
 57th – Tracy Katz Muhl (D)
 58th – Bob Morgan (D)
 59th – Daniel Didech (D)
 60th – Rita Mayfield (D)
 61st – Joyce Mason (D)
 62nd – Laura Faver Dias (D)
 63rd – Mary Mahady (D)
 65th – Linda Robertson (D) 66th
 – Suzanne Ness (D)
 67th – Maurice West II (D)
 68th – Dave Vella (D)
 69th – Peter Janko (D)
 70th – Randi Olson (D)
 72nd – Gregg Johnson (D)
 75th – Heidi Henry (D)
 77th – Norma Hernandez (D)

78th – Camille Lilly (D)
 79th – William “Billy” Morgan (D)
 80th – Anthony DeLuca (D)
 81st – Anne Stava-Murray (D)
 82nd – Suzanne Akhras (D)
 83rd – Matt Hanson (D)
 84th – Stephanie Kifowit (D)
 85th – Dagmara “Dee” Avelar (D)*
 86th – Larry Walsh, Jr. (D)*
 91st – Sharon Chung (D)
 92nd – Jehan Gordon-Booth (D)
 94th – Norine Hammond (R)
 95th – Kristen Chiaro (D)
 96th – Sue Scherer (D)
 97th – Harry Benton (D)
 98th – Natalie Manley (D)
 102nd – Jim Acklin (R)
 103rd – Carol Ammons (D)
 105th – Morgan Phillips (D)
 110th – Matthew T. Hall (R)
 111th – Nick Raftopoulos (D)
 112th – Katie Stuart (D)
 113th – Jay Hoffman (D)*
 114th – LaToya Greenwood (D)
 116th – Dave Severin (R)

Judicial

1st Supreme – Joy Virginia Cunningham (D)
 1st Appellate – Mary Lane Mikva (D)
 1st Appellate – Cynthia Cobbs (D)
 1st Appellate – Celia Louise Gamrath (D)
 1st Appellate – Carl Anthony Walker (D)
 3rd Appellate – John Anderson (D)
 3rd Appellate – Linda Davenport (D)
 3rd Appellate – Lance Peterson (D)

(As of January 27th, 2024)

The Illinois Teachers Retirement System (TRS) Seminar
Sponsored by the West Suburban Teachers Union
Local 571

- WHEN:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024
5:00 p.m.—6:30 p.m.
- FOR:** Local 571 members (teachers) close to retirement
- WHAT:** A presentation by a representative of the Illinois Teachers Retirement System
- WHERE:** **Presentation will be virtual. Link will be provided via email**
- R.S.V.P.:** If you plan to attend, please contact Patty Clancy **by Friday, April 19th** at 630-468-4083 or pclancy@ift-aft.org
- OTHER:** Once you have signed up, if you are unable to attend, please contact Patty Clancy via email at pclancy@ift-aft.org

I.M.R.F. SEMINAR


Retirement Information for Local 571 Support Staff Union Members

*A speaker from the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) will present information and answer questions for **PSRP (support staff)** Union members of the West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571.*


- WHEN:** Tuesday, May 14, 2024
- TIME:** 5:00 p.m.-Light Dinner
5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.- Presentation
- WHERE:** Robert M. Healey Conference Center
500 Oakmont Lane
Westmont, IL 60559
(Entrance D or E)
- R.S.V.P.:** If you plan to attend, contact Patty Clancy via e-mail at pclancy@ift-aft.org or by phone at 630-468-4083 by Friday May 10, 2024.

Anyone who signs up to attend this seminar and finds that they cannot attend must notify the local 571 office by 5:00 on May 10th, or they may be charged \$15 for the cost of the dinner.





<https://unionplus.org/benefits/shopping-discounts>

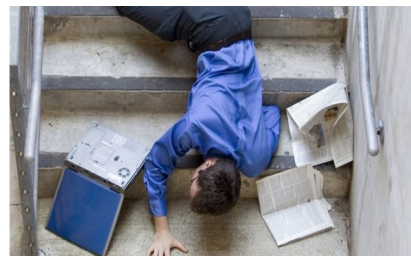
 Car Rental

We're name-dropping, so you can save.

Union members get exclusive discounts of up to 35%* off car rentals from the biggest names in the biz. Choose from Avis, Budget, Hertz, Enterprise, Payless, National, Alamo, Dollar and Thrifty!

WHAT DO I DO IF I GET HURT AT WORK?

By Attorney James B. Hardy, Partner
Taxman, Pollock, Murray & Bekkerman, LLC



If you are injured at work, we are here to help. As you know, workplace injuries are an inevitable part of a Union workplace, regardless of how safe you may be. It is absolutely essential to know your rights and responsibilities under Illinois law during the critical period immediately after an accidental work injury. What you do during the early stages of a work comp claim can literally make or break your case. In this newsletter, we will focus on the "notice" requirement under Illinois law for accidental work injuries. If you are injured at work, it is important to immediately give notice to a supervisor. Illinois law allows the notice to be written or verbal, but it must be given to someone in a supervisory position above you in the workplace, not just a coworker. Although legally you have 45 days to give notice, any delay may jeopardize your right to benefits, including a work comp check if you are unable to work. The notice must provide a detailed description of when and how you got hurt and what body parts were injured. If you get hurt, say so by giving proper notice, as soon as possible. If you end up not needing medical treatment, fine, no harm, no foul. However, if you fail to give notice before the end of the shift, and then end up needing medical treatment, the insurance company will use that against you by saying if you really got hurt at work, you would have said so, and will argue you got hurt outside of work. Don't give the insurance company any ammunition to deny your claim! Always give proper notice of a work injury ASAP or, at the very least, before the end of your shift. It is all about protecting your rights as an injured worker and making it hard for the insurance company to deny or dispute your claim. If you get hurt at work, call us, especially during that critical period immediately after an injury.

Taxman, Pollock, Murray & Bekkerman is one of the largest and fastest growing Plaintiffs personal injury and workers compensation law firms in Illinois. Our twenty-one dedicated and hard-working lawyers have represented union members for over 100 combined years of practice. We are proud to help union members navigate the challenges that come with workplace injuries and families of labor with all their personal injury and medical malpractice questions. Consultations are always free.

312-586-1700
www.tpmblegal.com

2024 Equality Illinois Gala

Equality Illinois is the state’s largest LGBTQ civil rights advocacy organization. They continuously fight for building a better Illinois by advancing equal treatment and social justice through education, advocacy, and protection of the rights of the LGBTQ community since 1991. This year they continued with their annual gala at the Chicago Hilton.

IFT was in attendance at the 2024 Equality Illinois Gala on February 3rd along with hundreds of other supporters. This gala is the largest LGBTQ+ celebration of its kind in the Midwest. Several notable dignitaries, including Governor Pritzker, spoke at the event.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Precious Brady-Davis was a recipient of the Equality Illinois Spotlight Award for her tireless advocacy of human rights and public health, along with being a nationally respected social justice advocate, author, and leader within the LGBTQ+ and environmental communities.

Equality Texas was a recipient of the 2024 Equality Illinois Organization Award for their commitment to fighting for the civil rights and personal freedoms of all LGBTQ+ people and their families in Texas.

In attending the 2024 Equality Illinois Gala, IFT reaffirmed its commitment to supporting inclusivity, diversity, and equality in our schools and communities. By standing alongside organizations like Equality Illinois, we demonstrate our unwavering dedication to fostering environments where all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, feel safe, respected, and empowered to thrive. Our presence at this event underscores our belief that every person deserves equal rights and opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom.

As educators, we recognize the profound impact of advocacy and activism in creating a more just and equitable society, and we will continue to stand in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community in pursuit of a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

~April Giannosa~



Spring Equinox—Tuesday March 19—10:06 pm CDT

The first day of spring also known as the equinox, is the moment the sun crosses the celestial equator—an imaginary line in the sky above Earth’s equator—from south to north.

AFT Leadership Conference

Over the weekend of February 2-4, the AFT Leaders Conference brought together Local 571 leaders Markeshia Jones, Jane Russell, Heather Siegel-Hickman, and me. The conference served as a platform for fostering unity, discussing key issues, and empowering attendees with the knowledge and strategies needed to advocate for the rights of educators, support staff, Higher Ed and Nurses.

One of the highlights of the conference was IFT President Dan Montgomery's insightful overview of the history of vouchers, specifically the "Invest in Kids" initiative in Illinois. Attendees gained valuable insights into the successful efforts to defeat this measure and the importance of remaining vigilant in the face of challenges to public education.

Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) President Stacy Davis Gates delivered a compelling message on the significance of elections. Emphasizing the importance of grassroots efforts, she urged attendees to mobilize and engage with the community to address issues that matter. Gates acknowledged the disappointments of electoral losses but underscored that such setbacks provide opportunities for learning and rallying members around specific issues.

In a candid moment, Gates likened Donald Trump to a "scab" for union members, emphasizing the need for solidarity in the face of challenges to workers' rights. This perspective resonated with the audience, reinforcing the importance of standing together as a united front.

AFT President Randi Weingarten and other AFT representatives discussed the upcoming election and the crucial role leaders play in effectively communicating the victories achieved in the White House since Joe Biden's election. Attendees left the conference with a renewed sense of purpose, ready to engage in informed discussions and highlight the positive impact of educational policies under the current administration. As Randi said, "They ban books, and we give books away."

Workshops covered a range of topics, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the PSRP Bill of Rights. The latter is particularly noteworthy, as it offers a blueprint for securing essential rights for education support staff. Attendees were encouraged to examine and support this bill, with an emphasis on fostering dialogue and garnering support from elected representatives.

Looking ahead, the conference inspired a commitment to strategic planning and one-on-one conversations with both members and elected officials. The goal is to not only advocate for the PSRP Bill of Rights at the federal level but I believe also to explore avenues for its passage within the state of Illinois. By fostering collaborative approach and leveraging the collective strength of educators, there is confidence that positive change can be achieved, supporting the rights and well-being of all education professionals.

~Kyle Stern~



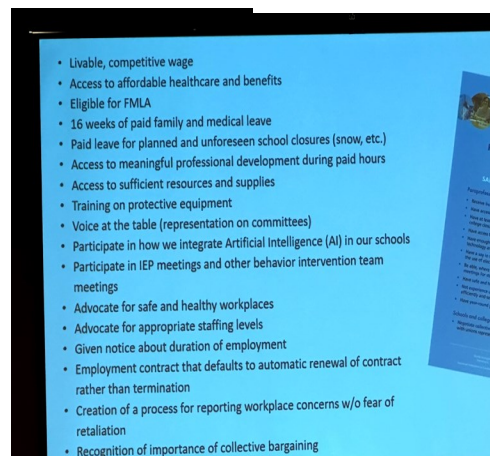
Kyle Stern with AFT President Randi Weingarten



Kyle Stern, Jane Russell, and Markeshia Jones



Kyle Stern with AFT Secretary/Treasurer Fedrick Ingram



A slide about the PSRP Bill of Rights

Illinois Federation of Teachers Reacts to Governor's Proposed Budget

Feb 21

WESTMONT – Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) President **Dan Montgomery** issued this statement today following Governor Pritzker's annual budget address.

“With the budget proposal he detailed today, Governor Pritzker is again demonstrating that he places the education of our children and the needs of Illinois families above all else. The governor's plan will keep Illinois on the path to full funding for public education and fiscal health for our state.

“We appreciate the governor's commitment to our state's PreK-12 public schools and efforts to fund the Evidence-Based Model (EBM) established in 2017. However, without increases beyond the annual \$350 million, our schools won't be fully funded until 2042. We urge the governor and lawmakers to make an increase beyond the required minimum, so another generation of students is not forced to attend underfunded schools.

“With the tightening budget, we also urge the governor and lawmakers to soundly reject any calls to renew a voucher program that would use tax dollars to fund private schools.

"We are glad to see the governor is continuing to put a high priority on early childhood education funding and the Smart Start Illinois Plan, which seeks to provide universal preschool access to every three and four-year old by 2027. Illinois still has a long way to go to achieve education equity, but the Smart Start plan can play a critical role in reaching that important goal.

“We agree with the governor that our state must make higher education more accessible and affordable. To do so, it is essential that we make up for decades of severe higher education underfunding that have resulted in program and staffing cuts, low enrollment, and high tuition at many state colleges and universities. We believe a higher education funding formula, much like the K-12 Evidence-Based Model, should be given serious consideration. While we appreciate the governor's proposed \$30 million increase for higher education funding during tight fiscal times, we call on him and lawmakers to do more.

"Though he did not mention it today, we also urge Governor Pritzker and lawmakers to fix the unfair, inadequate Tier 2 public pension system. Only by ensuring that everyone who dedicates their life to public service can retire with dignity and financial security will Illinois address our dire teacher and worker shortage. We know that the governor is committed to funding public pensions and keeping the state's economy on a sound, steady path. Improving Tier 2 is also an issue of economic fairness for many educators, staff, and public employees.

“This legislative session, our union of 103,000 members looks forward to working with Governor Pritzker and lawmakers to advocate for the needs of Illinois' students and the communities in which we live and serve."

<https://www.ift-aft.org/post/illinois-federation-of-teachers-reacts-to-governor-s-proposed-budget>

Members Engaged



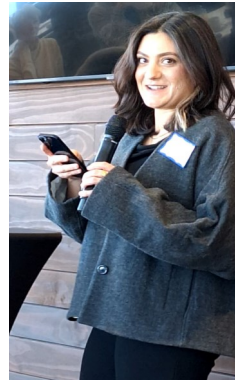
Local 571 Executive Board working on a vision statement



Legislative Director Monique Manuel with Former Senator Carol Moseley Braun



Kyle Stern and Representative Justin Slaughter



Jessica Genova of the Democratic Party of Illinois speaking at the Democratic Women of DuPage County Annual Breakfast



CTU President Stacy Davis Gates, Kyle Stern and Argo Council President Heather Siegel-Hickman



Kyle Stern and Jane Russell at the Democratic Women of DuPage County annual breakfast



Representative Kimberly Du Buclet and Grace Drobny



Kyle Stern and Commissioner Precious Brady-Davis



Kyle Stern and Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle



Kyle Stern and Representative Kim Du Buclet



Judge John Anderson addressing our House of Representatives



Representative Hoan Huynh, Grace Drobny, Alderwoman Manna, Representative Mah, and Representative Evans



Kyle Stern, Justice Linda Davenport and Monique Manuel



Attorney James Hardy addressing our House of Representatives

Meet-a-Member

Local 571 is a 5900+ member union of teachers, paraprofessionals, school-related personnel (PSRPs) and retirees, employed (currently or formerly) in school districts in western Cook and DuPage Counties. We have many interesting and talented members among us! This column spotlights our members and gives a glimpse into what makes us exceptional. This month, I'd like you to meet...Marge Wunschel; member of Local 571's Retiree Council!

Q: What position were you in when you retired?

A: When I retired in 2011 (can't believe it's been that long!) I had taught in the Cicero School District for 36 years; 35 years at Burnham School, 34 years as the kindergarten teacher.

Q: Why did you decide to become a teacher?

A: My desire to become a teacher was sparked by a love of being around young children. I did a lot of babysitting in my neighborhood for 3-7 year-olds. Although my parents had aspirations of a career in the medical field, that was not my calling.

Q: What advice do you have for new teachers?

A: The best advice I'd have for a new teacher is to collaborate with fellow teachers. There was a time when we had grade level meetings throughout the school year - time well spent! As a retired substitute teacher, I discovered some great classroom strategies and incentives...wish I had done that in my classroom!

Q: What has been your most memorable moment as a teacher?

A: My most memorable moments would be when I would run into a former student as an adult, who remembered me and excitedly called me by name. I always enjoyed hearing about what was going on in their life. There were numerous years when a former student had a child in my classroom.

Q: What do you miss most about your job?

A: I miss the wonderful experiences with my young students. I should have kept a journal - it would have been filled with unique, funny, and inspiring stories to look back on and cherish.

Q: What top three things have you been enjoying during retirement?

A: I have enjoyed travel, travel and more travel! My husband and I have made trips across the U.S., Mexico, and Canada, as well as road trips in the Midwest. The bucket list is still pretty full. And the option to travel other than school breaks is a plus! I now have opportunities to socialize (and travel) with the many friends I've gained throughout my career. Whether with a group of friends or one-on-one, I enjoy keeping in touch in person rather than social media.

If you would like to nominate yourself, or another member you know, to be interviewed for the Meet-a-Member column, reach out to April at agiannosa@wstu571.org.



In Memoriam 

Irene Keleminic
February 17, 1952 – February 15, 2024

Irene Keleminic was a dedicated Union member for the past 45 years. Irene and I lived two houses over from each other when we were in college. She would refer to me as the “big kid on the corner” and she was “the much younger one” ...forgetting we were only a couple of years apart.

Irene spent her teaching career in District 99, Cicero Elementary School District. She taught regular education, special education and finally, probably her favorite, she became the district’s first computer teacher. It was her passion.

Irene served as a Building Representative and Local 571 House of Representative and attended numerous 571 Conventions, IFT and AFT Conventions. Her number sense was most useful when we were negotiating contracts. I would look over to her or scribble an amount on a paper and she would quickly figure out how to get us there. Irene was involved with the beginnings of the Legislative Breakfast. And was always the one to figure out who would win that centerpiece!



As she would tell you, she never volunteered...Alice will just volunteer me!
 I will certainly feel a loss when I need her to “volunteer” for that next union project.

~Alice Kautsky~

Retiree Corner

Local 571 Retirees and IFT Retirees enjoyed a Luncheon/Play at Drury Lane. Those attending our December event were asked to bring a new, unwrapped gift that would eventually be donated to a DuPage County Woman’s Shelter and to the People’s Resource Center in Westmont.

Hope you’ll consider joining us at our next Drury Lane Luncheon/Play...Wednesday, May 22, 2024, for “Guys and Dolls”.



Actor portraying Louella Parsons



Retiree January Meeting—Presentation about Louella Parsons

Retiree Corner



On Tuesday, December 12th, the Retirees Council sponsored an informational event for the members. “Identity Theft Scams” was presented by Ed Konstanty, retired Willowbrook police chief. He addressed us not as seniors, rather as “seasoned citizens.”

Mr. Konstanty advised proactive steps to safeguard against fraud and scams. For internet protection, change your email address, even by one letter or number. Be cautious with inbox messages which could be from a questionable sender offering a fraudulent deal. Phone solicitors may use scare tactics. You should ask questions to be on the offensive or hang up. The IRS does NOT call. TV and radio promotions may sound great but could be fake products with large shipping/ handling charges. Even family, friends, and professionals, such as financial advisors, clergy and caregivers have been known to take advantage of seniors. Safeguard cash, credit cards, checkbooks, wills and other valuables when visitors are in your home. Additional proactive steps are to check credit reports, change passwords, shred documents, and freeze credit. Do not be reluctant to report incidents of fraud to local adult services agencies or the BBB (Better Business Bureau). For more information, check out the EJI, (Elder Justice Institute) at <https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice>.



Mr. Konstanty concluded by pointing out one of the more dangerous crimes affecting all – carjacking. He strongly advised to give up the car, do not fight, walk away. We appreciated Mr. Konstanty’s valuable insight and advice. The retirees’ council will continue to plan presentations which are both informative and entertaining. Notices for upcoming events will be sent via email or US mail.

~Marge Wunschel~

WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

In 1924, Vivian Gordon Harsh became the first African American librarian in the Chicago Public Library system and a significant contributor to Chicago’s Black Renaissance.

In 1932 she was appointed head librarian of the George Cleveland Hall Branch, the city’s first library built in an African American community. During her career, Harsh developed a black history collection that would become a world-renowned resource for residents and scholars.

Through her involvement with The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History founded by Carter G. Woodson, Harsh recognized the need for library services on Chicago’s south side, the heart of the city’s African American community. Funding from philanthropist Julius Rosenwald allowed Harsh to visit African American collections in other U.S. cities, providing the basis for the George C. Hall branch that opened in the Bronzeville neighborhood in 1932 with Harsh as its director.

In 1958, after a serious illness, Harsh retired from the Chicago Public Library. She died two years later at the age of 70. In 2005, a city park near Harsh’s childhood home was named in her honor.



Vivian Gordon Harsh (May 27, 1890 – August 17, 1960)

What’s Missing from the Messenger?

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