

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

Union Messenger

"A Union of Professionals"

WSTU January Calendar

1/14-571 EB Mtg. - Westmont - 5:30 p.m.
1/14-571 HOR Mtg.-Westmont - 6:45p.m.

Union Messenger

Jane Russell, President
Alice Kautsky, Vice President
Sandra Erickson, Treasurer
Cathleen Pope, Secretary
Jonathan Pazol, Financial Secretary
Ed Hohman, Legal Defense
Secretary & COPE Chairperson
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IFT Field Service Director
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Moving On? by Jane Russell

"The election is over. It's time to move on. "This was a sentiment often heard following the November 6, 2012, election. So what exactly does "moving on" mean? Robert Fulghum, a Unitarian minister, wrote a statement to share with his congregation. A U.S. Senator happened to be in the audience, was moved by the speech, and had it read into the Congressional Record. The credo Fulghum wrote about evolved into a popular book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, first published in 1986. These are a few of the things Fulghum learned in his kindergarten class (probably thanks to his kindergarten teacher).

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned—the biggest word of all—LOOK.

These simple life lessons learned in kindergarten can be applied to our families, work, government, or the world. Should our government, all governments, be asked to put things back where they found them and clean up their own messes? And no matter where you go, isn't it best to stick together?

We all remember what we learned in kindergarten, about how to live and what to do. The problem is, do we want to live what we have learned? May I suggest when you speak to your family members, students, friends, your colleagues, or even legislators, you remind them about what they learned in kindergarten. Look them in the eye and ask if they choose to abide by what they learned. If there is confusion, don't pass up the teaching moment. Since the election is over, we all need to work together to make a difference for our kids, students, schools, and families. It's time to move on.

In every election, there are winners and losers. We applaud those who we endorsed because their issues were our issues, whether they are taking an oath of office as a legislator or just returning full time to the work force. We look forward to working with all those elected into office, both U.S. or state.

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Moving On? by Jane Russell

Continued from page 1

The IFT was fortunate to help elect five of six endorsed new Illinois Congressional candidates. The suburban candidates were Tammy Duckworth (8th CD), Dan Schneider (10th CD), and Bill Foster (11th CD). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is overdue to be renewed. We will be working with these newly elected members of Congress and others to rework the ESEA and remove the punitive rules that create the stigma of failing schools and the over testing of our students.

The problem with pension funding and the state's high debt may well be taken up in the January 2013 legislative sessions. We implore our legislative leaders to have all the stakeholders together at the table to produce an agreed-upon, long-term solution. We expect that the legislature should play fair, not hit, stick together, and clean up their own messes.

No election is won without the work of many, especially the volunteers, in a campaign. Hundreds and probably thousands of IFT members worked in campaigns by phone

banking; canvassing in neighborhoods; putting up yard signs; delivering candidate literature; stuffing envelopes; talking to family, friends, and neighbors about voting or writing letters to the editor on behalf of their candidates. At Local 571, a group of our members worked tirelessly for over one and one-half months to make phone calls to Illinois union members on behalf of endorsed candidates. Collectively, labor showed that ordinary middle-class citizens can make a big difference; we can beat the assumed big and powerful, the corporations with the money or the one percent who worked to weaken the middle class. Thanks to all members who participated in the election process, especially with your vote. We understand about holding hands and sticking together. Now as we move into a new year, let's help others to do the same, to work together and move on.

In unity,

Jane A. Russell

Local 571 President

Retirees Corner



Both the present and past IARA secretaries, Jane Russell and Bea Lumpkin, share a moment at the October 9, 2012, IARA Senior Power Lunch. The 92-year-old Beatrice, who belongs to seven unions, was honored with the Jerry Prete Award for labor & retiree activism.

Below: WSTU retirees enjoyed the IL Alliance for Retired Americans (IARA) 2012 Senior Power Lunch in Des Plaines. (L to R) Bonnie Saracco, Phyllis Meade-WSTU Retiree Council President, Dee Pospishil-WSTU Retiree Council Secretary-Treasurer and Marietta Miller-IFT Field Staff, heard from Karen Lewis, CTU President, who presented the award to Bea Lumpkin, also a CTU member.



West Suburban Teachers Union Legislative Breakfast

by Bonnie Saracco

Local 571 President Jane Russell welcomed our members to our seventh annual Legislative Breakfast on September 29 at the Doubletree Hotel in Oak Brook. Jane reminded us that “The IFT is us.” We spent the morning listening to labor leaders, legislators, officials, and candidates.



Pictured above: Toby Trimmer

Toby Trimmer, IFT Director of Political Activities, was master of ceremonies. He said that he is passionate about his work, making sure that “the good guys are around when moms and dads go

to work.” He characterized these times as a “weird place” with a “spooky economy.” He pointed out that while it is unfair that teachers are being portrayed as the bad guys, our communities are not against us. He said that our place at the table should be “a seat and not on the menu.”

IFT President Dan Montgomery stressed the importance of the upcoming election. He said that, although Illinois is not a swing state in the 2012 presidential election, we should still be working for President Obama’s re-election by calling those we know in other states, urging everyone to vote for Obama. He also told us to strongly support IFT-endorsed congressional candidates because it is crucial that we re-take the Congress.



IFT President Dan Montgomery

He said that the recent Chicago Teachers Union strike was the result of 20 years of “neglect and denigration of public employees,” and that the self-defined reformers’ efforts through SB7 to block teachers’ right to strike has bolstered our solidarity. What is needed is for us to talk to legislators about what good schools look like

from pre-K to 20, and for them to address the “persistent gross inequalities” in school funding in Illinois.

Montgomery also said that we need to change the debate about pension and revenue because it should take the whole social context into account. This discussion should focus not on the false premise that benefits are too high, but rather on the fact that the Illinois legislature has failed to properly fund our pensions for decades.

Robert Reiter, Chicago Federation of Labor Secretary/Treasurer, reminded us that Chicago is the hometown of the American labor movement, and that people like us still “stand up to protect

wages and pensions.” He urged us to put the *Proud Union Family* signs, provided by the Chicago Federation of Labor, in our front yards to show that we are members of the labor community.

Stacy Davis-Gates, Legislative Director of the Chicago Teachers Union, spoke representing Chicago Teachers Union President Karen Lewis, who was unable to attend. Davis-Gates continued on the theme of a re-energized labor movement, relating the “amazing experience of 50,000 people shutting down downtown for three days.” Chicago’s next battles are to fight against a 100 to 200 school shutdown, and to fight to democratize Chicago public education by having an elected school board.

Illinois Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon made the analogy that an election should not be like going to church, where you follow a prescribed set of beliefs, but rather like going to the barber, where you state what you personally want. Simon, a former university law school teacher, also said that if Illinois decides to consolidate school districts, she is working to see that it is done smartly, giving us the benefits of consolidation without destroying local school districts. She is also fighting to give community colleges the resources they need.

Darlene Ruscitti, Regional Superintendent of Schools, also attended, but her schedule did not permit her to speak.

We heard from three candidates for the U.S. Congress.

Tammy Duckworth, Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Democratic congressional candidate for the 8th District, gave a strong endorsement of teachers and public education, speaking knowledgeably about the unfair vilification of teachers, charter school issues, unfunded mandates, poor school funding, and the need for infrastructure rebuilding. Also, her status as a decorated war hero in Iraq gives her the credibility to suggest smart defense cuts.

Bill Foster, a scientist who is the Democratic congressional candidate for the 11th District, is proud of his record and commitment to never vote for unfunded mandates and always seek long-term fixes. He said that Illinois needs to stop being one of the top “donor states,” which sends significantly more money to the federal government than they receive in return. He also talked about appropriate cuts in defense spending.

Pictured Below: Tammy Duckworth



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IFT PSRP/Public Employees Conference 2012



Above: Ruby Newbold (image courtesy of Google Images)

The IFT PSRP/Public Employee Conference was held this year at the Doubletree Hotel in Oak Brook on October 19-20, 2012. The keynote speaker for the evening was Ruby Newbold, President of the Detroit Association of Educational Office Employees. Newbold encouraged union members to make sure their voices are heard at the ballot box in what was the upcoming November presidential election and emphasized the need for continued solidarity amongst union members. She continued by saying what happens on one side of the lake can also happen on the other side, so union members must stay aware of changes that may happen for everyone. Also, IFT President Dan Montgomery brought a message that underscored the significance of "Vote No!" on the constitutional amendment that was on the ballot for the same election. "When

you vote, be sure to First, Vote No!" stated Dan Montgomery. Reiterating that changes to the Illinois constitution could have drastic consequences for PSRP's, teachers, and public employees. Union PSRP's and public employees attended meetings that covered the state of Illinois's politics, including the political climate and why elections matter. Other meetings covered the importance of unions and how to make union meetings matter for members.



IFT President Dan Montgomery

Illinois Art Education Names State Award Winner

The Illinois Art Education Association (IAEA) has named Heidi O'Hanley of Indian Springs School District 109 in Justice, Illinois, the 2012 Illinois Early Professional Art Educator of the Year. This award recognizes the exemplary contributions, service, and achievements of one outstanding IAEA member annually. The award was presented at the IAEA conference in Lisle, Illinois, on November 2, 2012. Mrs. O'Hanley is a resident of Mokena, Illinois.

Mrs. O'Hanley was selected on the basis of her outstanding commitment to visual art education in her field, as well as her wider contributions in the Northeastern Illinois region. She has taught art for six years in the Indian Springs School District at George T. Wilkins Elementary and Robina Lyle Elementary Schools.



Heidi O' Hanley, Art Education Award Winner

Heidi O'Hanley has served as part of National Art Education Association Student Chapter Presidential Team from 2007-2010. In September 2009 and again in 2011, Mrs. O'Hanley was asked to guest author the National Art Education Association (NAEA) "Monthly Mentor" blog. As a result of these experiences, Mrs. O'Hanley started "Tales from the Travelling Art Teacher" (<http://talesfromthetravellingartteacher.blogspot.com>), a blog sharing ideas for others who are also challenged with teaching from a cart. She has also been a very active presenter and volunteer at both IAEA and NAEA conferences. Heidi has played an important role of arts advocate on the NAEA Next! Committee and participated on several NAEA educator panels.



She is loved by her students as evidenced by her Teacher of the Year nomination in 2012. Mrs. O'Hanley also exhibits her own artwork locally in Illinois and online as an active member of the non-profit World Artist Network. In 2011, Mrs. O'Hanley earned her National Board Certification.

West Suburban Teachers Union Legislative Breakfast

by Bonnie Saracco

Continued from page 3

Leslie Coolidge, congressional Democratic candidate for the 6th District, is a Harvard-educated CPA and former partner in the consulting firm KPMG. She will bring all of that expertise to work on budgetary problems. Her newly-drawn district places her in a race against an incumbent Tea Partier whose voting record is one of the most extreme in Congress.

We heard from two members of the Illinois Senate. Senator Dan Kotowski (D-28th District) is the first Democrat to be elected in his district since 1860. He told us about his respect for the work of his father, who is an 81-year-old, newly retired community college teacher, and he also talked about the unfair common misperceptions about the pension crisis, noting that teachers did not create this problem, and that any solution must be fair. Senator Don Harmon (D-39th District) also stated his support for maintaining the retirement security that we have been promised and appreciates our continuing support.

We heard from five members of the Illinois House.

Two of these representatives are Democrats. Representative Elizabeth Hernandez (D-24th District) spoke of her dedication to teachers, working families, and after-school and bilingual programs. Representative Michelle Mussman (D-56th District) said that she is proud that her conservative budgeting ideas have helped to make sure that the state's pension obligations have been paid in full for the last two years.

We also heard from three Republican representatives. Representative Dennis Reboletti (R-45th District) is the Illinois House Republican floor leader. He is pro-union and believes that the pension problem can be solved through a collaborative process and compromise. He said that must be solved because otherwise new business will be scared away from Illinois. Representative Angelo (Skip) Saviano (R- 77th District) stated his support for us in a very straightforward manner.



Above: Angelo "Skip" Saviano

He told us that we must keep in mind that the interests of big money control the strongly anti-union editorial board of the *Chicago Tribune*. Saviano proposes a long-term fix that will be implemented gradually, with us having a strong say at the table. Representative

Jim Durkin (R-82nd District) said that a pension solution needs to be bipartisan and fair to both teachers and taxpayers. He derided the previous "mischief" which has happened in lame-duck sessions and said that this must not happen again.

Toby Trimmer concluded the breakfast by reminding us that although it is often said that a particular election is critical, this one is truly "the most important election of your life. It will impact our wallet, our voice, and our retirement security." Finally, he stated the absolute necessity for us to vote NO on the amendment to the Illinois state constitution which will appear at the top of the ballot, which would require a 3/5 vote for any pension improvements. It sets the dangerous precedent of dealing with the pension problem by amending the Illinois state constitution and supports the false notion that benefits, rather than lack of funding, has caused this problem.

The gift card raffle netted over \$1300 for both 571 scholarships and COPE. Thanks to all of those councils who provided gift cards and for those who purchased raffle tickets. We appreciate the support.

As always, the Local 571 Legislative Breakfast Committee worked selflessly to produce a successful, empowering event. We are already looking forward to our 2013 Legislative Breakfast.



Very best wishes from the officers and staff of the West Suburban Teachers Union for joyous holidays shared with family and friends. We hope you anticipate the new year with great expectations and renewed efforts to help make improvements in the lives of our students, our families, and our schools.



Conversion from Certificates to Licenses Right Around the Corner

Arnavaz U. Mistry-Mujthaba/Tom Smith

A new licensure system is scheduled to take effect June 1, 2013. Every educator who currently holds a valid Illinois teacher, administrator, social worker, or substitute certificate, or an NCLB paraprofessional approval will receive the appropriate educator license in the exchange.



All current certificates will convert to one of three types of licenses that will be received online during the exchange from certification to licensure: Professional Educator License, Educator License with Stipulations, or Substitute License.

For updates regarding the transition to the Licensure System (also known as the Educator Licensure Information System or ELIS) check: 1) the Illinois State Board of Education/current Education Certification System (ECS) regularly, 2) Regional Offices of Education or Intermediate Service Centers, and 3) the Local 571 web page regularly. Your school district should also provide updates as they occur.

Update and enter your professional development activities in the current ECS online system and print out a copy for your records. You should also consider printing out every portion of your current and past credentials for your files in the event there are any glitches in the conversion from certificates to licenses. These would be good activities to complete during the winter break since some transitions from the ECS to ELIS may occur as soon as February 1, 2013.

If your renewal cycle ends June 30, 2013, submit your Statement of Assurance and register your certificate(s) using ECS. The ISBE suggests you do this prior to June 1, 2013, if possible; however, it is not a requirement.

Beginning June 2013, your certificates will be exchanged for equivalent licenses and endorsements, and you need not do anything. In June 2013, log in to the new ELIS and update your information. Make sure an updated e-mail address is always on file. Become familiar with the new requirements for renewing your license(s) and contact your regional office of education if you have any questions.

Boycott of American Crystal Sugar



Photo Courtesy of Google Images

There is no sweet ending in sight for the Boycott of American Crystal Sugar. According to the Chicago Federation of Labor's (CFL) website: The CFL has joined the AFL-CIO in endorsing the consumer boycott of American Crystal Sugar products in response to Crystal Sugar's 14-month lockout of its workers. The boycott will be called off if the management of Crystal Sugar, which has denied its workers the opportunity to do their jobs, returns to the bargaining table in good faith and concludes a contract.

American Crystal Sugar management has blocked 1300 workers, belonging to the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers, and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM), for over a year, denying them incomes and healthcare benefits. The national labor movement endorses boycotts cautiously and only in instances of grave injustice. The lockout comes amid Crystal Sugar's CEO rewarding himself with a 50 percent pay increase for his union workers' increased productivity. To sign the petition visit: <http://act.aflcio.org>.



Workers' Compensation Tips Just For You

Tip 1

Am I covered? Most people in the State of Illinois are covered under the Workers' Compensation Act. If you were hired in Illinois or your main employment is in Illinois you are probably covered by the Illinois Act, even if the place of the accident was outside of the state.

Tip 2

Do I have a case? Generally, if you are injured on the job, you are entitled to the benefits under the act. Also, if you catch a work-related disease, you may be covered under the Occupational Diseases Act.

Tip 3

Always report accidents as soon as possible after they happen, and if possible, fill out an accident report. When you are filling out the report, try to be broad and general in describing the accident rather than specific. The more specific the report, the more likely the injured worker will forget something that may be material.



Tip 4

Workers' Compensation procedural changes have become effective this year. Get informed of these changes. Don't lose out on benefits you are entitled to by not knowing the rules.

Tip 5

When in doubt, call a lawyer. Calling a lawyer does not cost anything. Proceeding unadvised may cost you your right to receive Workers' Compensation benefits and jeopardize your livelihood. Don't sign anything until your lawyer reviews it.

Workers' Compensation Tips
By Charles Haskins & David B. Menchetti

Cullen, Haskins, Nicholson & Menchetti,
P.C.

Leading Lawyers in
Workers' Compensation
www.chnm-law.com
312-332-2545

Vacancy in Local 571 Area Trustee Position

The West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 has a vacancy due to the resignation of a 571 Area Trustee, with the unexpired term ending June 30, 2014. This Area Trustee position is one of the local officers, chairs the Local 571 Nomination and Elections Committee, and attends regular local and officer/staff meetings and events.

Financial compensation is based on attendance at local and officer/staff meetings, being paid at the conclusion of each calendar quarter.

Any Local 571 member wishing to be considered should submit a resume of his/her Council/571/IFT/AFT activities which is due no later than January 9, 2013, to WSTU Local 571. The WSTU Executive Board will choose the acting Area Trustee at the January 14, 2013, meeting. For further information, contact Local 571 President Jane Russell at 630-468-4043 or jrussell@ift-aft.org.

We're on the
Web!!!
www.wstu571.org

AFT MEMBERS
**keep it together
for less.**

**+ GET MORE FROM
MEMBERSHIP**

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Your car and your home are likely the two biggest purchases you will make in a lifetime. To help you protect these valuable assets, the AFT has joined with MetLife to provide discounted group auto and home insurance.

+ for more information about this and other savings, go to:
aft.org/members



A Union of Professionals

AFT +
Member Benefits

MetLife Auto & Home is a brand of Metropolitan Property and Casualty Insurance Company and its affiliates: Metropolitan Casualty Insurance Company, Metropolitan Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Metropolitan General Insurance Company, Metropolitan Group Property and Casualty Insurance Company, and Metropolitan Lloyds Insurance Company of Texas, all with administrative home offices in Warwick, R.I. Coverage, rates, and discounts are available in most states to those who qualify. Met P&C®, MetCasSM, and MetGenSM are licensed in state of Minnesota.

AFT + is your advocate. For information on all **AFT +** programs, call 800-238-1133, ext. 8643, or e-mail aftplus@aft.org. The AFT has an expense reimbursement and/or endorsement arrangement for marketing this program. For more information, please contact AFT Financial Services at 800-238-1133, ext. 4493; send an e-mail to disclosureinfo@aft.org; or visit www.aft.org/benefits/disclosure.

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Do you want to earn 30 CPDUs or 30 PTPs?

Do you want to earn two undergraduate or graduate credit hours?

Do you want to gain a better understanding of the ELA Common Core Standards and learn research-based activities to use in the classroom?

Do you want to gain valuable information about how these professional development courses are tied to the domains of the Danielson Model for teacher growth and evaluation?

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, YOU WILL WANT TO SIGN UP FOR ONE OF THE.....



Local 571 Professional Development Classes for Winter 2013

For course descriptions and a registration form, go to www.wstu571.org or contact Judy Jennings by phone at 630-468-4098 or e-mail at jjennings@ift-aft.org.

Dates: Jan. 17, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 21; and March 7, 14, 21, 2013 (8 Sessions)
4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Registration Deadline: Friday, Jan. 4, 2013

Location: 500 Oakmont Lane
Westmont, IL 60559

Two classes will be held:

*Reading Comprehension
Instruction*

and

*Foundations of Effective
Teaching I: Organizing the
Classroom Environment for Teaching and
Learning*

Cost: \$50/course for members
\$100/course for non-members

Cost includes materials and a light supper each day.

(For an additional cost, participants can earn two Governors State University graduate credit hours or two Prairie State Community College undergraduate credit hours.)