

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

# Union Messenger

## "A Union of Professionals"

### WSTU/March Calendar

3/11—Deadline for 571 Officers' Election nominations  
 3/11—Deadline for Local 571 Convention Delegates Election  
 3/11—Student Debt Clinic (4:30 p.m.—Westmont)  
 3/11—ExBd Mtg. (6:30 p.m.—Westmont)  
 3/11—571 proposed 2019-20 budget presented to ExBd

### Union Messenger

Jane Russell, President  
 Rachel Esposito, Vice President  
 Sandra Erickson, Treasurer  
 Cathleen Pope, Secretary  
 Jonathan Pazol, Financial Secretary  
 Brett Blair, Legal Defense Secretary  
 Julie McShane, COPE/PAC Chairperson  
 Tom Smith, IFT Field Service Director  
 Arnavaz Mistry-Mujthaba, IFT Field Service Director  
 Julie Masterton, Office Secretary  
 Andrew Bendelow,  
 571 Web Administrator  
 Robin Hancock,  
 571 Union Messenger Editor



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### It's Good to Be President

No, not that president!

Rather, the president of West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571. I have had wonderful opportunities to represent you and IFT members at various events in the last two months.



I was chosen to participate in the new governor's Education Success Transition Committee in November, 2018. The education transition committee was one of ten transition committees. Two IFT members, John Miller from Local 4100, University Professionals of Illinois, and I, served on the education committee. The work was intense as there were three meetings, in late November and early December, with "homework" after the first and second meetings. The 37-member committee included union members, Illinois legislators, university, K-12 and early childhood administrators and educators as well as education policy experts. The final report from the Education Success Transition Committee will be released soon. I look forward to seeing over ten hours of work culled down into a four-page report with recommendations for improving student outcomes and success at every point in a child's development and education.

On January 9, 2019, at the University of Illinois-Springfield, in a stately and massive auditorium, I had balcony front row seats to witness the swearing-in of the 101st Illinois General Assembly. At the request of the Speaker of the Illinois House, union and labor leaders sat side by side to witness more than 40 new and reelected members be sworn in by Illinois Attorney General, Lisa Madigan. A luncheon sponsored by the Speaker after the swearing-in was held in downtown Springfield as the congratulatory parties began all over town. I was able to attend a gathering honoring newly sworn in Illinois Senators, all from the suburban area, Suzy Glowiak, Ann Gillespie (my new Illinois Senator) and Laura Ellman.

The Illinois inauguration for the new governor, lieutenant governor and state officers was held, again, in Springfield at the Bank of Springfield Center on Monday, January 14, 2019. Amidst music and fanfare, I witnessed JB Pritzker and Juliana Stratton take the oath of office and deliver moving and exciting addresses, "Inaugurating a New Century 2019."

## It's Good To Be President *cont'd from pg. 1*

Both discussed their anticipation and hope at the beginning of the next 100 years for the state. Kwame Raoul, Jesse White, Susana Mendoza and Mike Frerichs were sworn in as Attorney General, Secretary of State, Comptroller and Treasurer, respectively. It was wonderful to see them as the state officers since all had attended the Local 571 September 29, 2018 Legislative Breakfast when they were campaigning.

In mid-January, I traveled to Washington D.C. as an IFT member of the AFT Teacher Program and Policy Council (PPC). Leaders of large AFT locals throughout the United States attend two-day meetings held twice yearly. The AFT Teacher PPC is one of six councils representing all

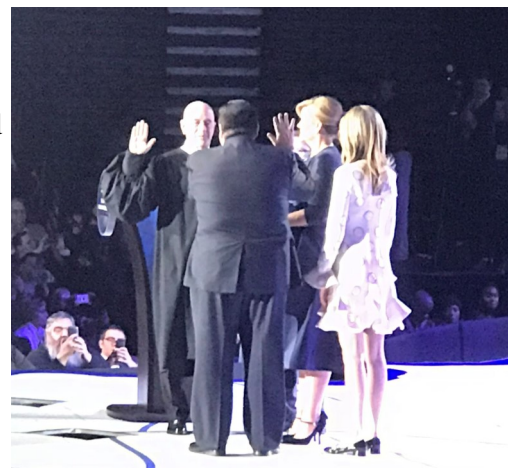


Greeting new Illinois Congressman Sean Casten, CD6 (center), were Teacher PPC members Pankaj Sharma (North Suburban Local 1274) and Jane Russell, and (right) IFT State Education Issues Coordinators Cathy Mannen, Monique Redeaux-Smith and Amy Alsop.



The entire 118 member Illinois General Assembly listens as Secretary of State Jesse White reads the proclamation prior to the swearing-in.

AFT constituent groups; PSRPs, Higher Education, State Employees, Nurses and Health Professionals and Retirees. Discussion topics at the PPC meeting included educator professionalism, professional learning and engagement, post-Janus victories, a revision of an AFT convention resolution on rejecting McTeacher Night's, the student debt crisis, the AFT Teacher Network, teacher pay/compensation and teacher evaluation and adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and how this negatively affects children's learning and lives. As you can see, many topics were explored with significant work yet to be done.



Honorable James E. Snyder gave the oath of office to JB Pritzker as J.B.'s wife, MK, held the Bible with their two children proudly looking on.

The AFT hosted an evening Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill at the Rayburn Building. About 40-50 members of Congress stopped by to say hello and be introduced to AFT PPC members. Five Illinois members of Congress attended: Danny Davis, Raja Krishnamoorthi, Jan Schakowsky, Mike Quigley and newly sworn in member, Sean Casten (my new Congressman). US. Senators Chuck Schumer (New York) and Dick Durbin (Illinois) had just left a meeting regarding the government shut-down. AFT President Randi Weingarten is a respected labor leader and educator as witnessed by the accolades and attendance of the Congress members.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you. It is with your support that I continue to work with many other labor leaders and legislators who value public education, our students and Union members. I look forward to continuing to work with you and for you in 2019.

In unity,

*Jane A. Russell*

Local 571 President

## The Albert Shanker Institute on the Social Side of Education Reform By Bonnie Saracco

AFT's Albert Shanker Institute is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering quality education and freedom of association in the public life of democracies. It commissions analyses, holds seminars, sponsors publications, and subsidizes projects. Its board of directors includes educators, labor leaders, public policy analysts, and business representatives.

The Institute's publication *The Social Side of Education Reform* was available at the most recent AFT TEACH conference in Washington, D.C. It contains thought-provoking articles that summarize the research on how human and social capital work in schools. **A major theme of these articles is that educational "reforms" based on individual teacher accountability are misguided and at odds with how schools actually improve.**

The modern workplace is becoming ever more intensely interdependent. *The Harvard Business Review* has reported that "Time spent by managers and employees in collaborative activities has ballooned by 50 percent or more." **It also concluded that, in many companies, "more than three quarters of an employee's day is spent communicating with colleagues."**

This is in direct opposition to the culture of schools, which has been aptly described by historian David Lortie and sociologist Dan Lorne as "egg crates" with very limited teacher interaction. Obviously, this outdated structure doesn't best serve the needs of teachers or students in today's world.

Although a growing body of research supports the theory that strong teamwork is crucial to improving schools, it is very difficult to accurately measure any individual teacher's contribution to the faculty team. *A New Focus on Social Capital in School Reform Efforts*, by Carrie R. Leana and Frits K. Pil from the business school of the University of Pittsburgh, conducted a study that followed 1000 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. **They found that when teachers need information or advice on how to be more effective, they turn, not to the principal or a consultant, but to other teachers.** This will hardly surprise any of us. But how do we support this reality to improve schools?



Research also shows that organizations seek to hire employees who are especially good at working with peers, but then fail to measure and reward their teamwork efforts. A study by Rob Cross, Reb Rebele, and Adam Grant of more than 300 organizations found that this results in the fact that excellent collaborators then feel "overwhelmed and overloaded as their good deeds go unnoticed." **They found that**

**20 to 35 percent of the value-added collaborations came from only 3 to 5 percent of employees.** Even worse, as these excellent collaborators contribute to more and more projects, their contributions become less and less noticed. The authors stated that "When we use network analysis to identify the strongest collaborators in organizations, leaders are typically surprised by at least half of the names on the list."

So it is important for systems to identify and support employees who perform excellently in teams as well as those who perform excellently as individuals. This fact has been completely ignored by the last two misguided decades of educational "reform." High performing school systems such as British Columbia, Shanghai, and Singapore appreciate this reality and provide extensive structures for teacher collaboration.

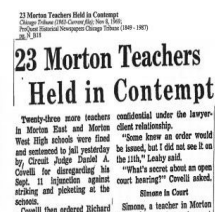
Research still has much to learn about the social capital in schools, but there is growing knowledge about it. We are starting to better understand how we can use social capital to improve our schools, and we will look at these studies in upcoming articles.



**Save The Date:**  
**Friday, Sept. 20, 2019**  
(4:30PM - 7:30PM)

WSTU, Local 571 - Union Activism Revisited

**Honoring the 50-Year Anniversary of the  
1969 Morton Council Strike**



Have strike memorabilia to  
share?

Contact:  
twhite0469@comcast.net



## **KNOW YOUR WEINGARTEN RIGHTS**

**by Tom Smith and Arnavaz Mistry-Mujthaba**

Periodically, employees may be required to meet with a representative of the Administration regarding disciplinary issues. Starting in the 1970s the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), Illinois Education Labor Relations Board (IELRB), and the U.S. Supreme Court have issued decisions supporting what is known as an employee's "Weingarten Rights." Any time you find yourself facing a meeting with any agent of the Administration and reasonably believe this meeting could result in disciplinary action against you, these rights apply. It is not necessary that the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) include these rights for you to be protected; however, the CBA may include broader rights than the statute provides, so it is important to know your CBA.

1. Any time you are called to a meeting with your Administration, you should know the nature of the meeting beforehand. If the person calling this meeting does not volunteer this information, ask.
2. If you reasonably believe the nature of the meeting is disciplinary, respectfully request that a Union representative be present. Interrupt this meeting, if necessary.
3. The Administration now faces three options:
  - a. Stop the questioning until the Union representative arrives,
  - b. Cancel the meeting, or
  - c. Give you the choice of ending the meeting or continuing without representation.
4. Do not continue the meeting without Union representation.
5. If the Administration insists that the meeting continue without representation, an unfair labor practice has been committed. You have the option of keeping silent or leaving the meeting. Inform the Union at once and memorialize in writing management's denial of your Weingarten rights.

**When you meet with the Administration and the Union representative, the Administration must afford you certain privileges.**

1. The Administration must inform the Union representative of the subject of the meeting.
2. The Union representative must be given adequate opportunity for the representative to take you aside for a consultation before the meeting.
3. During the meeting, the representative has the right to interrupt to clarify confusing questions or to end intimidation.
4. The Union may give you advice on how to answer any question.
5. The Union may add information at the end of the meeting to support your position.

The biggest mistake employees make is to meet without the Union being present. Your Union leadership will provide you with a Weingarten rights card. Please keep this card handy, take it with you into a meeting, refer to the back if necessary, and do not hesitate to contact a Union representative. Always remember that exercising these rights and securing appropriate Union representation rest solely with you. The Administration is under no obligation to read you your Weingarten Rights. You must initiate these rights to enjoy the protections which are yours by law.

## **YOUR RIGHTS AS A UNION MEMBER**

**As a Union member you are entitled to a number of benefits.** One such benefit is the right to have Union representation and/or assistance in resolving disputes that arise out of the work place. This benefit is summarized below.

- You have the right to legal assistance in controversies that arise from incidents occurring in conjunction with your job. The Union determines the level of legal support that will be provided.
- You have the right to file a grievance over violations of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) by your employer.
- You have the right to Union assistance in processing and resolving any grievance over a violation of the CBA.
- You have the right to appeal any denial of Union assistance in exercising the aforementioned rights to the Local 571 Executive Board.
- You have the right to appeal a denial of assistance by the 571 Executive Board to the Local 571 House of Representatives.

**If you have any concerns or questions regarding these rights or the implementation thereof, please call the Local 571 office at 630-468-4098.**

## Indian Springs Teachers Attend Art Advocacy Day

On Wednesday, November 28th, two of Indian Springs S.D. #109's art teachers, Elizabeth Farnesi (Wilkins Jr. High) and Heidi O'Hanley (Brodnicki Elementary) attended Art Advocacy Day in Springfield. The event was hosted by the *Illinois Art Education Association* and attended by art teachers, parents, and students from around the state. One of Wilkins Jr. High's student's artwork was selected to be displayed during the event, along with 45 other artworks from the State Student Art Show. The parents, students, and teachers in attendance spoke with representatives about the importance of visual art in education. Mrs. O'Hanley and Mrs. Farnesi met with Senator Steven Landek and Representative Michael Zalewski, as well as Representative Margo McDermid from their home district.



Heidi O'Hanley, Representative Margo McDermid and Elizabeth Farnesi



Members of IAEA (Illinois Art Education Association)



Senator Steven Landek, Elizabeth Farnesi and Heidi O'Hanley

## Retirees Corner

**Wharton School in the Argo-Summit district, was awarded a grant for \$20,000 this past fall from Enchanted Backpack which seeks to assist under-served schools in the Chicagoland area.** In the 2017-18 school year Wharton School received numerous school supplies, toys and coats for its students. This year Wharton was one of two schools in the Chicagoland area awarded a \$20,000 grant.

This financial assistance will be used to purchase I-Pads, a new sound system with cordless microphones, as well as a community partnership with local teaching artists from The Warehouse Project and Gallery. These supplies will allow staff to incorporate more technology, differentiation, arts and social-emotional learning to meet student needs.

My congratulations to the staff (Argo-Summit Council teachers) for their tireless efforts in providing for the needs of these students. They make me proud to be a retiree from that school!

*Dee Pospishil*

## Local 571 Officers' Election

Nominations are now being accepted for the following Local 571 Officers: a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Legal Defense Secretary, and a Financial Secretary. The term of office is two (2) years beginning July 1, 2019, 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 11, 2019. Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in each Council of the West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) and location(s) that voting will take place. Retirees' ballots will be mailed to 571 retiree members by U.S. Postal Service. Interested individuals may request further information about the duties of the office by contacting Local 571.

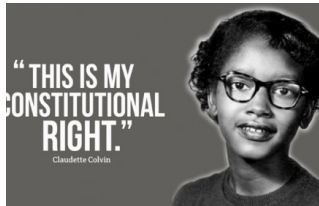
## Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) Local 571 Convention Delegates Election

Nominations are now being accepted for delegates to the Illinois Federation of Teachers Convention that will convene in Rosemont, Illinois, on October 18-20, 2019. 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 \$567/ delegate. Nominations must be printed or typed (name and Council) and received in the Local 571 office on or before March 11, 2019. Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in each Council of the West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) and location(s) that voting will take place. Retirees' ballots will be mailed to 571 retiree members via U.S. Postal Service.

## CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### Before there was Rosa Parks, there was Claudette Colvin

Most people think of Rosa Parks as the first person to refuse to give up their seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama. There were actually several women who came before her; one of whom was Claudette Colvin.



It was March 2, 1955, when the fifteen-year-old schoolgirl refused to move to the back of the bus, nine

months before Rosa Parks' stand that launched the Montgomery bus boycott. Claudette had been studying Black leaders like Harriet Tubman in her segregated school, those conversations had led to discussions around the current day Jim Crow laws they were all experiencing. When the bus driver ordered Claudette to get up, she refused, It felt like Sojourner Truth was on one side pushing me down, and Harriet Tubman was on the other side of me pushing me down. I couldn't get up."

Claudette Colvin's stand didn't stop there. Arrested and thrown in jail, she was one of four women who challenged the segregation law in court.

If *Browder v. Gayle* became the court case that successfully overturned bus segregation laws in both Montgomery and Alabama, why has Claudette's story been largely forgotten? At the time, the NAACP and other Black organizations felt Rosa Parks made a better icon for the movement than a teenager. As an adult with the right look, Rosa Parks was also the secretary of the NAACP, and was both well-known and respected – people would associate her with the middle class and that would attract support for the cause. But the struggle to end segregation was often fought by young people, more than half of whom were women.

<http://www.pbs.org/>

### Thursday– February 21 is International Mother Language Day



It is estimated that there are over 7,000 different languages spoken in the world, of which more than 50% are likely to die out within the next few generations. The most widely spoken languages in the world by native and non-native speakers are: **Mandarin, English and Spanish**. The five most difficult languages to learn for an English speaker are **Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese and Korean**.



## Student Debt Clinic (For Union Members Only)

- WHEN:** Monday, March 11, 2019
- TIME:** 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- WHERE:** Robert M. Healey Conference Center  
500 Oakmont Lane (Entrance E or D)  
Westmont, IL 60559
- COST:** Free to Union members
- R.S.V.P.:** If you wish to participate, contact Julie Masterton by phone at 630-468-4041 or e-mail at [jmasterton@ift-aft.org](mailto:jmasterton@ift-aft.org) by March 7th.
- OTHER:** A light dinner will be served.
- IMPORTANT:** Anyone who signs up to attend the workshop but finds that they are unable to attend, must notify Julie Masterton by 4:30 p.m. on March 7, or possibly be charged \$15 for the cost of the dinner.

Thursday  
February 14



Monday, February 18  
is President's Day



### 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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