

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

Union Messenger

"A Union of Professionals"

DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE

WSTU November Calendar

11/2—ExBd Mtg. (5:30 p.m.—Westmont)
 11/7-8—IFT ULI (Virtual)
 11/15—Deadline for filing IRS forms for
 Councils that closed their books in June

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, Membership Secretary
 Patty Clancy, Office Secretary
 Andrew Bendelow,
 571 Web Administrator
 Robin Hancock,
 571 Union Messenger Editor



After cajoling my friends and family for several months about making sure they were registered to vote and applied to vote by mail, I found out I had not applied for the ballot, much to my surprise.



I thought I had done so as of August 15. And then the mail-vote letter from the IL Secretary of State's office arrived telling me I still had time to submit an application for vote by mail. There was a *Sun-Times* story about the confusion caused by the reminder letter sent from Jesse White's office. Apparently, there was a time difference significant enough between the Secretary of State's office and County Clerks' office data, that the reminder letter was also sent to those who had already submitted their application.

I thought I should check to make sure I had applied for a vote by mail ballot and went to the Cook County Clerks' website. I wondered why I had received several applications in the mail in the last couple of months. I decided to apply online and hoped that I would be told if I had already applied through the mail. I completed the online application and immediately received via e-mail my confirmation number. Wow! That was easy. Now the County Clerk's office will send me an e-mail both when my ballot is in the mail and another e-mail when my voted ballot is received.

There's still time to apply for a vote by mail ballot although I will miss going to the early voting polling place. The pandemic has changed so many things.

The first item on the ballot is the Fair Tax amendment. Please vote YES to continue funding our schools and vital services, for our students and our families. To view a short video in one minute explaining the Fair Tax, go to the link below. Be sure to share the video with your colleagues, friends, and family.

<https://youtu.be/GvC-zlkgNQY>

Do your part; vote by mail, early vote or vote on election day, November 3, which is a holiday this year in Illinois. Vote for the IFT endorsed candidates (listed in the September *Union Messenger*) as well as for the Fair Tax. "Your Vote Counts."

In unity,

Jane A. Russell

Local 571 President

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I SUPPORT
 A
fair tax
 DO YOU?

*** learn more at ***
ift-aft.org/fairtax

AFT Announces Newly Elected Officers

Although the AFT Convention was held July 28-30, 2020, the election for the three AFT officers and 43 AFT vice presidents occurred after the convention via mail ballot. On September 1, 2020, the results were released. The convention delegates cast their ballots overwhelmingly, for Randi Weingarten, re-elected as AFT President, elected Evelyn DeJesus to her first full term as Executive Vice President and elected Fedrick Ingram as the new Secretary-Treasurer. DeJesus was a United Federation of Teachers, New York Local 2, vice president and Fedrick Ingram is the outgoing president of the Florida Education Association.



Why Vote YES for Karina Villa

Representative Karina Villa is a candidate to serve the 25th Illinois Senate District. The IFT and Local 571 have endorsed her campaign. Workers across the state in all areas of employment should be very thankful that Representative Villa has been their advocate in the Illinois House during the pandemic.



She knew that many employers were not sufficiently motivated to protect their workers. Her advocacy helped to pass HB 2455, which established that first responders and any individuals employed in essential

operations (schools included) can be assumed to be at risk of contracting COVID-19, arising out of and in the course of their employment. To avoid automatic financial liability in the workers' compensation system, employers must show enforcement of health and safety practices aligned with IDPH guidance.

This was a vital piece of legislation since it put employee safety at the forefront of the workplace. This was necessary to signal to employers in manufacturing, retail, and public service sectors that employees will be watching to ensure compliance with safety requirements.

This type of pro-worker legislation shows the kind of leadership we need in Springfield, and we encourage members of Local 571 to support Karina Villa.

Max Schoenberg
Legislative Director, Local 571
DuPage/Kane region

Why Vote YES for Celina Villanueva

Illinois State Senator Celina Villanueva proudly serves the 11th District. She lives in Chicago, where she was born and raised, with her mother, who is at -risk of Covid-19, as is much of the community that she serves. She knows and fights for her community, the people that are on the frontlines and essential workers, even if it means showing up outside of laundromats with Pop-Up Covid Testing Spots, because she knows that it's where her constituents will be. However, she is not running unopposed, and she needs to raise money for her campaign if she is going to keep her seat come November. The IFT and Local 571 have endorsed her campaign; please remember to endorse her as well.



Nicole Burr
Legislative Director, Local 571
Cook city/suburban region



Retirees Corner

By Alice Kautsky

Local 571's Retiree Council had its new member retiree luncheon Tuesday, September 22. UNFORTUNATELY, it was held virtually but went smoothly. Everyone did miss the camaraderie and our delicious food.

We welcomed our newly retired members, introduced our newly elected officers and thanked our former officers for all their dedication. Background was given on the types of things the Retiree Council has done and hopes to do. Jane Russell provided a short presentation on the importance of passing the Fair Tax.

The meeting concluded with our Split the Pot raffle with winner need not be present 😊. Half the monies would go to 571's Scholarship/COPE funds and the other half to the winner! We collected \$636.00....WOW! Irene Keleminic won \$312.00....Congratulations 🎉🎉. Congratulations to our Scholarship/COPE funds that are \$312.00 richer 🎉🎉!

Our next meeting will probably be virtual on Tuesday, October 20th, 2020.



New Retiree Council officers (l->r): Marge Wunschel (Secretary-Treasurer), Alice Kautsky (President), Irene Keleminic (House of Representatives Delegate)



Press Release
Friday, September 25, 2020

AFT President Randi Weingarten Says President Trump's One-Time Prescription Drug Stunt Isn't Real Help for Older Americans

WASHINGTON—American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten issued the following statement in response to President Trump announcing his plan to mail older Americans a one-time \$200 discount card for prescription drugs, draining the Medicare Trust Fund and skirting his responsibility to solve the real crisis over drug prices:

“Donald Trump has once again chosen the empty, symbolic, sweeping gesture to pretend he is solving a problem that he is actually making worse. Trump promised four years ago to lower drug prices and stand up for older people, but he failed to do so. Congressional Democrats passed legislation, but Trump has refused to negotiate with them. Now,

he's proposing a one-time prescription drug discount card for older Americans that is funded by defunding Medicare. That's not lowering drug prices. And it's not holding Big Pharma accountable. But the proof is in the actions behind the stunts: Donald Trump has given trillions in tax cuts to the rich that directly benefit pharmaceutical companies. He's looking out for them, not older people.

“The reality: We need to be negotiating to reduce drug prices. But raiding the Medicare and Social Security trusts for a shallow coupon gimmick sends a message that defunding our social safety net for a one-time savings ploy is OK. Americans know better.”

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The AFT represents 1.7 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators.

**October is
Breast
Cancer
Awareness Month**



It is alarming to know that 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

Dear Postal Customer,

If you vote by mail, we're committed to providing you a secure, effective way to deliver your ballot. Use this checklist to prepare:

- ☐ Start today. Give yourself and your election officials ample time to complete the process.
- ☐ Rules and dates vary by state, so contact your election board to confirm. Find links at usps.com/votinginfo.
- ☐ Request your mail-in ballot (often called "absentee" ballot) at least 15 days before Election Day.
- ☐ Once received, follow the instructions. Add postage to the return envelope if needed.
- ☐ We recommend you mail your ballot at least 7 days before Election Day.

We're ready to deliver for you. Make sure you're ready, too.

Your United States Postal Service

Dia de los Muertos

Despite the common misconception, **Dia de los Muertos** is not an offshoot of Halloween. While the two holidays often happen simultaneously, Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a Mexican holiday that originated with the indigenous people of Central America, including the Aztec and Mayan civilizations. Each year, they gathered and gave offerings to their dead. When the Spaniards came to Mexico, they fused the indigenous celebrations with their traditions of All Saints' Day (Nov. 1) and All Souls' Day (Nov. 2). Día de los Muertos 2020 starts on Saturday, October 31, 2020 and ends Monday, November 2nd 2020.



Halloween is on Saturday, October 31.



Pick up your yard sign(s) at the Local 571 office in Westmont. Please call (630-468-4083 or e-mail Patty Clancy (pclancy@ift-aft.org) to make arrangements for pick-up.



Member Benefit Reminder Reduced Admission Movie Tickets

For Union Members only.
Available for
AMC and Marcus Theaters
Theater location and movie ticket
order forms
available at www.wstu571.org



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

We Want To Hear
From You



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

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