

AARTA Reader

Aurora Area Retired Teachers Association



Over 60 years of working for retired teachers in Kane County to . . .

- ★ use our influence for the passage of favorable legislation in Springfield, Illinois and Washington, D. C.
- ★ improve our communication channels for more effective member participation
- ★ keep our membership informed of current Teachers' Retirement System changes
- ★ present a positive image in the community through our outreach programs

President's Message



Happy New Year, 2021, to everyone! I hope that proverbial “light at the end of the tunnel” means that our lives will get back to some sense of normalcy within this new year. We can continue to hope and pray that will happen. Some of us will receive the vaccine soon, but it is coming to all of us within a few months.

If you weren't already aware, our two “Luncheons to Go” (October 6 and December 1) were highly successful. Through your generosity, we were able to present a \$1,300 check to the Aurora Interfaith Pantry, as well as the same amount to the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry. In December, Community in Schools received a \$1,200 check from us for their Coats for Kids campaign and \$1,200 was applied to our AARTA Scholarship Fund, through our Community Foundation endowment fund. A MEGA thank you goes out to George at the Gaslite Manor, our AARTA members who helped to distribute the luncheons, and all of our members who purchased meals and/or donated to these worthy causes. Your generosity in donations alone amounted to close to \$3,000. That is truly amazing, and it inspires all of us on the board to continue our efforts.

Special thanks goes to Linda Weiss and Marilyn Ruby for their generous holiday mask production in October as well as to Al Benson, who spread the word about our event in December. AARTA received coverage at FOX 32 News (Joani Lum) and WBBM 780 (Nancy Harty) as well as *The Daily Herald* and *The Voice*. Because of the coverage, we added two new members to AARTA! IRTA, our parent affiliation, was excited that we are continuing to be an active organization despite the confines of the COVID-19 restrictions. Bravo to everyone.

As teachers, we have always been willing to problem solve and to be creative when faced with adversity.

Facing circumstances never before seen in our world, we did not hesitate to take the risk of trying something new in place of our regular luncheon meetings. AARTA could not sit back and ignore the crisis that was occurring in our world, our state, our city, our communities, and our schools. Helping children has and will always be our focus. We do what we can and *we can do it* because of YOU! Once a teacher, always a teacher.

Please continue to recruit members with the message that AARTA is here to help out in our communities.

Regarding our outings and trips, we are still in a holding pattern, but in 2021, we anticipate opening up safely by following all CDC guidelines. Three dates have been secured for baseball games: June 6, White Sox in Chicago; July 25, White Sox in Milwaukee (yes, the White Sox!); and September 19, Cubs in Milwaukee. Of course, all are tentative dates at this time. The main question will be — are you willing to ride a bus by summer if the vaccine helps to turn the tide of the virus? Thoughts on that question? Feel free to email or call me, 630-921-1307 to talk about it. The Drury Lane date is October 7. See *The Reader* for more information.

Celebrate Groundhog Day on February 2 by attending another “Luncheon to Go” at the Gaslite Manor (see more info in *The Reader*). As with our other two luncheons, we encourage your support and participation at the Gaslite Manor.

Stay healthy, be safe, socially distance, and watch those wild parties. You could be a super spreader.

Dick Schindel

If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet, how important you can be to the people you may never even dream of.

Fred Rogers

aurorartdtchrs@outlook.com

*AARTA Board of Directors
and Committee Chairs*

President: Dick Schindel
Secretary: Linda Weiss
Treasurer: Meg Safarik
Immediate Past President: Meg Safarik
ASK: Concetta Baltz, Kathy Navota
Health Information & Protective Services: Fay Wilson
Legislative: Linda Allison, Jerry Lubshina
Member Benefits: Mary Ann Soszynski
Membership: Susan Schindel
Newsletter: Barb Zillgitt
Program: Arlene Hawks, Dick Schindel
Public Relations: Maureen Granger, Ron Nickerson
New Retiree Outreach: Pam Colwell, Yvonne Hollingsworth
Scholarship Liaison: Maureen Granger

Raffle: Jim Toynton
Reservations: Ann Luker, Cheri Sager
Sunshine: Jo Fredell Higgins
Warm Fuzzies: Eva Balek

Board meetings are held at 9:15 a.m. on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, September, and November. Meetings are being held at Luigi's, 732 Prairie St., Aurora. Members are welcome to attend board meetings.

General luncheon meetings are at 11:30 a.m. on the first Tuesday of February, April, June, October, and December at Gaslite Manor, 2485 Church Road, Aurora.

Newsletter items are due by the Monday before the Board meeting in January, March, May, September, and November. Send them to bzillgitt685@gmail.com.

AARTA Outreach



In December, ASK collected the following winter gear for students in the area: 82 hats, 66 pairs of gloves, 12 scarves, 95 pairs of socks, and 2 jackets. These items will be distributed by Communities in Schools.

In addition, \$1200 was given to Communities in Schools for their coat drive.

Our February donations will be used to support area food banks.



Delivering our check to Communities in Schools

Warm Fuzzies

Handmade items are made with love and have their own story.

This new year we will once again make 'Warm Fuzzie' lap blankets for those living in local nursing homes. Last year we collected 96 lap blankets during our drive-by luncheon in October. The very appreciated blankets were distributed to six nursing homes.

This year the promise of a vaccine gives me hope we will be able to collect blankets in June at our luncheon, but I know we are flexible and will adjust if we are still living with lifestyle restrictions due to Covid.

In the meantime, please keep in mind that a little progress each day adds up to big results. I like to call it craft-therapy.

Warmly,
Eva Balek



Thank you so much for your awesome \$1,300 donation. We greatly appreciate all your time & energy executing an outstanding fundraiser. We are grateful of your organization who gives back to so many of us in Aurora!

Thank you,
Diane Renner
Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry

Health Notes from Fay Wilson

In Remembrance

Maxine Pinnow, January 24, 1925 - October 29, 2020, taught business education in West Aurora.

Carolyn Woods, February 13, 1938 - November 24, 2020, taught grade school in West Aurora.

Ed Young, December 31, 1931 - November 29, 2020, taught in grade school in West Aurora and was one on our Sunshine Committee. He faithfully brought us the Thought for the Day at our luncheons.

Marcia Popolizio, December 19, 1942 - December 23, 2020, taught English and special ed in West Aurora.

If you know of the death of an AARTA member, please let us know.

AARTA remembers each of these members with a \$15 donation to the IRTA Foundation and with contributions to our scholarship fund with the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley.

OTHER AREA DEATHS

Michele Ridenour, November 1, 2020, taught at Freeman School in West Aurora.

Jennie Campbell, November 13, 2020, taught in East Aurora.

Del Dufrain, November 25, 2020, taught biology and was the head football and track coach for East Aurora.

Harlene Childress, December 9, 2020, taught home economics in Batavia.

John Hinck, December 18, 2020, was an assistant superintendent in East Aurora.

Donald Lapp, December 23, 2020, was a substitute teacher in East Aurora.

Carl Hacker, December 27, 2020, was a maintenance worker for East Aurora.

Doing Our Part

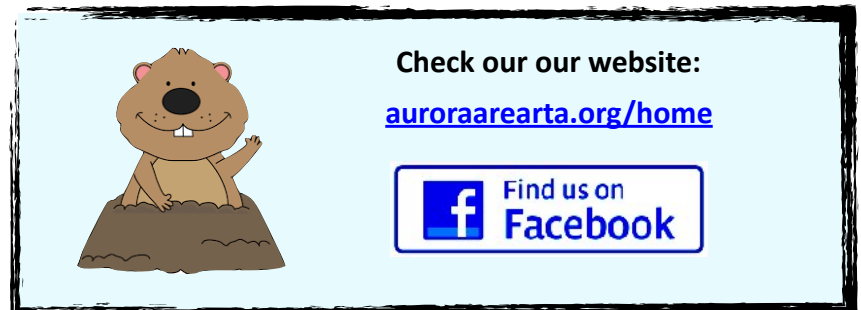
Happy, Happy 2021! There is much to look forward to. We must do our part. Hundreds of thousands of people are still being infected, and thousands are dying everyday. Until each of us is vaccinated, we need to do all we can to fight this disease and slow its spread. It is critical, especially since the more contagious strain has reached our country!!

In this promising new year, we absolutely must be vigilant in practicing personal protective measures: wear a mask, practice social distancing, and wash our hands. Adding to these measures, avoid crowds!

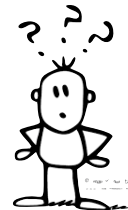
Another very important thing we can do is **Stay Healthy!** Our own immune systems are our own best defense! Eat a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Consider taking a multivitamin if you might not be getting sufficient doses of zinc and Vitamins C and D. These nutrients are vital to maintaining and boosting strong immune health! Exercise and get the proper amount of sleep. AND! . . .

Once again, be advised to get the seasonal flu shot. It can help keep us out of a precious hospital space during this ongoing pandemic. Keep **Being Wise, Being Safe** and, as we were in our school settings, keep **Being the Keeper** of our fellowman! The next time we can have lunch and see our AARTA faces across the table, we'll know we succeeded at "Doing Our Part"! Lv Ya's ♥

Sources: dupagehealth.org and ClevelandClinic.org



Random Thoughts . . .



The universe is a pretty big place. If it's just us, seems like an awful waste of space. Carl Sagan

Your mind is like a parachute: If it isn't open, it doesn't work. Buzz Aldrin

If you jumped off the bridge in Paris, you'd be in Seine.

You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending. C. S. Lewis

Why are goods sent by ship called CARGO, and those sent by truck called SHIPMENT?



Tentative Ball Game Dates

**June 6, White Sox in
Chicago**

**July 25, White Sox in
Milwaukee**

**September 19, Cubs in
Milwaukee**

More information to come!



AARTA is trying a new way to keep in touch with its members. After every scheduled lunch meeting, we will be emailing members a one page document which will include information about lunch activities, membership, our checking account, and things to look forward to. Longer articles will continue to appear in *The Reader*.

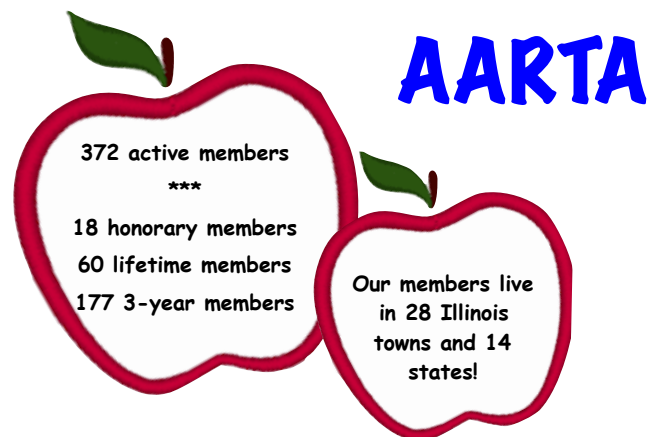
We are currently calling this new publication *News Briefs*, but we are looking for a catchier title. If you have something in mind, let one of the board members know.

Since this document will only be sent by email, be sure we have your correct email address. Watch your emails around February 6 for the next edition of *News Briefs* — or whatever its new name might be.

Directory Updates

Bailey, Miriam		630 290 9805
Benavides, Anne 810 Verity St. Aurora, IL 60506		
Brummel, Mary*	131	630 334 6411 PrK
29W121 Forest Ln Warrenville, IL 60555		
Chapman, Diane*	304	630 640 7657 MS/Soc.St.
428 N. Glengarry Dr. Geneva, IL 60134		
Copeland, Liz		630 306 5911
Hem, Jan		630 466 7642
Hudson, Elizabeth		918 617 2937
Jangelis, Diane 2222 Brookfield Greens Circle Sun City Center, FL 33573		
Lachowicz, Michael *	131	630 796 9867 Navy Junior ROTC
1504 Foxhill Rd. Naperville, IL 60563		
Smith, Judy	129	630 885 5082 Elem Ed
4N590 Pathfinder Dr. Elburn, IL 60119		
Nancy Dralle Smith		931 210 3988

*New member



372 active members

18 honorary members

60 lifetime members

177 3-year members

Our members live
in 28 Illinois
towns and 14
states!



Even though our next directory will not be published until 2022, it is **very** important that our records are kept up-to-date. If you have changed your address, phone number, email address, or want to change email/US mail preferences, notify us at aurorartdtchrs@outlook.com.

We'd also like to know if you are already, or will soon be, 90. Honorary AARTA membership is in your future!



We're hoping (fingers crossed) to be able to go to Drury Lane Oakbrook to see *Forever Plaid* October 7, 2021. Watch for details in future editions of *The Reader*.

BTW

On February 13, the Aurora Lions Club will be hosting a drive-through spaghetti dinner at Luigi's to benefit the Aurora food pantries.

Book Exchange



Many of you have taken part in the February book exchange the last couple years. Participants brought books they no longer needed, and diners had the opportunity to take books they thought would be interesting to read. Some wonderful trades took place, and the books remaining after the event were donated to the Big Rock Library.

Since it's impossible to predict the future, we are going to delay the book exchange until AARTA is able to resume meals in person. This will allow readers a choice of new materials and anytime is a good time for reading. However, If you are someone who has already weeded your bookshelves and is anxious to pass along your book donations, you're welcome to call librarian Mary Hauge at 630-556-3371 to arrange a convenient time for you to drop off your materials at the Big Rock Library.

Rob Winder at the local history room of Aurora Public Library is seeking Madonna High School yearbooks for their collection. He says the collections of other Aurora high schools are pretty much complete. If you know of a Madonna source, please reply to rwinder@aurorapubliclibrary.org to make arrangements.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

January

Margaret Hardy	2
Pam Hansen	3
Itsuko Martinez	3
Frank Babich	4
Kim Becker	5
Jay Pape	10
Fay Wilson	11
Patricia Carroll	14
Marilyn Hagler	14
Kathryn Hubbard	15
Mary Jane McFee	16
Marcia McBeath	21
Jane Butters	24
Barb Agnew	25
Gloria Goodin	25
Jan Reynolds	26
Kay Volkert	26
Earl Sidmore	27
M. C. Byrd	28
Laurel Haase	28
Dick Paul	29

February

Nancy Theesfeld	1
Sandy Funky	2
Jean O'Brien	2
Michael Crouch	3
Tim Johnson	4
Gloria Byrd	5
Kay Martinson	5
Paula Romanow	7
Anne Beatty	8
Archie Needam	8
Junella Chase	11
Kim Johnson	12
Dan Schmidt	12
Carolyn Woods	13
Carole Ruby	19
Chris Howells	21
Nora Gurnik	22
Jan Morcos	22
Joan D. Vilaro	22
Angie McGehee	23
Jerry Lubshina	24
Wilma Wolfe	25
Linda Porter	27

March

Margaret Nickerson	1
Susan Brennan-McGuire	8
Grayal Gilkey	8
Mary St. Jules	8
Wendell Jeffries	9
Ann Johnson	9
Velda Fisher	12
Ann Luker	12
Bobbi O'Meara	13
Cynthia Latimer	14
Doris Turley	17
Debbie Wojtak	17
Cheri Sager	19
Pauline Thomas-Brown	19
Linda Rohr	21
Judi Collette	22
Shirley McKnight	22
Sherilynn Oros	22
Bill Wallbaum	23
Kathy DeTolve	24
Page McCloud	24
Mary Ann Harkness	27
Cherie Esposito	28
Jean McKee	28
Anne Becker	29
Marilee Casazza	31
Mike Gaspari	31

If your birthday is missing or incorrect, contact Barb Zillgitt at bzillgitt685@gmail.com or 630-896-2451.

December Lunch



Our next luncheon date
is February 2, 2021.



AARTA February "To-Go" Luncheon Fundraiser at Gaslite Manor



Join us February 2, 2021, for our to-go lunch benefiting
the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry and
the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry.

ENTRÉES: ham, beef tips, or baked fish
SIDES: veggies, buttered noodles, and dessert

You may purchase any number of dinners to share with family, friends, or neighbors; or they may fill out forms for their own orders. This fundraiser is open to everyone. If you can't make the lunch, you can still help us with a donation for the Aurora area food pantries.

Pick up your lunches at Gaslite Manor between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., our regular luncheon time. Drive under the protective canopy by the front door. We'll bring your order out to you once you arrive.

Send in your orders now! Help us continue to keep AARTA a vibrant and thriving organization and make this to-go luncheon a huge success.

TO-GO LUNCHEON FUNDRAISER RESERVATIONS

Where: **Gaslite Manor, 2485 Church Road, Aurora**
When: **Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**
Price: **\$20.00***

Reservations must be received by Friday, January 22, 2021.



Estimated time of pick up: ____ 11:30 ____ 12:00 ____ 12:30

Number of Dinners:

____ Ham
____ Beef tips
____ Baked cod

I/we can't make the lunch, but here is my/
our donation to the Aurora food pantries.

Donation amount \$ _____

Total number of dinners _____ **@ \$20.00 each = \$** _____

Please make your check or money order payable to **AARTA** and send to:
Dick Schindel, 784 Morningside Ave., Aurora, IL 60505
Questions? 630-921-1307

Name _____ **Phone** _____

**A portion of the purchase price will go to
the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry and the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry
on behalf of AARTA and the Gaslite Manor.*