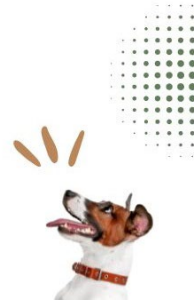




GOOD DOG NEWS
"Only Good News"

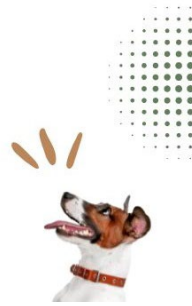


Volunteerism

My name is Bob Kaplan, and I serve as the Chairperson of the Leadership Development Committee with other volunteer members from across our state. Our committee consists of Gail Wright, Area 1; John Braglia, Area 2; Ray Kaufman, Area 3; Jean Sowers, Area 4; David Savage, Area 5; and Diane Kunkel from Area 6. We have all freely decided to give up our time and energy to help IRTA achieve its goals of advocating for our organization and continuing our fight for the quality of life for all our members. We realize that within our membership, there are many potential leaders with different skills and voices that can also shape the future of our organization.

We need strategic thinkers, team builders, and inspirational leaders who want to help keep IRTA as a leading voice protecting our pensions and benefits! Simply put, we need new volunteers to step up and lead, just like you have previously for your students and fellow colleagues! During the Area Conferences, our state officers all shared their personal histories on how they became leaders at the local (unit) level, then transitioned to either a committee or leadership opportunity in the region or area, and finally led them to a state position.

Like many new members, I really didn't know much about IRTA when I retired. However, I had finished my career as an Elementary School Principal. When I was active, I'd been a member of the Illinois Principals Association. I had very little time to get much out of my membership while I was working. However, I had been told that my membership in IPA was being continued with the IRTA. When I sent in my membership fees, my check was returned, stating my membership was already active. I don't know about you, but that is the only time anybody has sent me a dues membership back. Luckily, I joined my local group, which, like many of you, had many familiar faces in the room. Many of my own teachers belonged to my unit, and



others I'd seen over the years were also in our area. Very quickly, almost too quickly, I became the President of my local unit for six years. I was then encouraged to run for Area Representative and, of course, served on a couple of committees as well.

Our committee knows that there are individuals from each part of our state who have led in their classrooms or their communities in many wonderful ways. IRTA is no different; we need YOU! Whether you volunteer at the unit, area, or state level, please consider signing up to do something, from becoming a candidate for office to serving on a committee. It is our hope that the Leadership Development Committee can assist you in having a more rich and rewarding experience through your active participation in our great group of retired educators!

Please go to the IRTA website or call the office in Springfield and let them know you are willing to volunteer. We can also assist by connecting you with a unit active in your area of the state. Our next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17th. The committee will be reviewing goals and plans for our future leadership and training for prospective volunteers. IRTA can only get stronger and reach new heights with the energy of our growing membership.

Please contact me or any committee members if you have questions or suggestions on how you can become more informed, interested, and involved in our association!

Thanks!

Bob Kaplan
Leadership Development Chair