



Diverse, Dedicated,
Determined

AFTerthoughts

A publication of the Southwest Suburban
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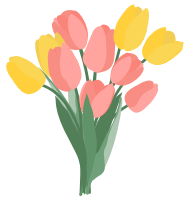
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AFT Local 943 has over 600 members who are residents of Chicago. We are excited to have a former teacher become the Mayor of Chicago and we wish Mayor-Elect Brandon Johnson all the best!

CONGRATULATIONS!

MAYOR-ELECT BRANDON JOHNSON



Dear members,

It is truly an historic day for Chicago! For the first time, a public school teacher and union organizer has been elected to lead our proud, working class city. Voters recognized that Brandon Johnson was the clear choice, and every Chicagoan will be better off with him at the helm.

I am so proud of you, our IFT members in Chicago and across the state, who worked hard to help get Brandon to the fifth floor. Mayor Johnson's work to uplift the students, schools, workers, and businesses in Chicago will positively impact our entire state. I thank all our members who donated their time and energy to Brandon's campaign.

We look forward to working with our union brother Mayor-elect Brandon Johnson to help make his inspiring vision for Chicago a reality for us all.

-IFT President Dan Montgomery

Mark Your Calendar:

2023

April

Autism Awareness,
Poetry,
& School Library
Month

April 21

Secretary's Day

April 22

Earth Day.

May

Asian Pacific
American Heritage,
Mental Health
Awareness, &
Women's Health
Care Month

May 5

Cinco de Mayo

May 14

Mother's Day

share my lesson
HIGHLIGHTS
-Mental Health
-Autism Awareness
Month
-Poetry Month
-Stress Solutions for
Educators





[View the IFT latest issue of Union Link](#)

President's Message

By: Elaine Barlos, AFT Local 943 President



Surviving Spring Fever!

Spring fever is REAL! It's the time of year when educators and school staff dig deep into their energy reserves to overcome their own burnout in order to keep lessons compelling enough to keep students engaged and motivated. Therefore, I wanted remind you that your Local 943 officers are here to assist and support your efforts. I also thought it might help to share some pointers from a "Share My Lesson" blog post that I recently read from Julia Thompson, titled "How to Survive Spring Fever in School. Ms. Thompson has been a teacher in the public schools of Virginia, Arizona, and North Carolina for more than thirty-five years. For the full blog post please click on the following link: <https://sharemylesson.com/blog/how-survive-spring-fever-school/>.



AFT Local 943 Executive Officers Who Support YOU!
Pictured from left to right: Katrina Niven, Andrew Weber, Bob Goldsbury, Brian Jurinek, Elaine Bartos, Alfreida Jamison

- **Review expectations.** Take a few minutes to review positive behaviors you observe and providing frequent quick reminders of what you expect from your students.
- **Be calm and focused on instruction.** When things go wrong (and they will), handle problems calmly and with a matter-of-fact approach to minimize lost instruction time. Remind students that the purpose of their good behavior is not just to comply, but to learn.
- **Patience is key.** Try to be understanding and patient with your students. The more patient you can be as you redirect student focus from the beautiful weather outside, the less stressful your school day will be.
- **Be careful about holding class outdoors.** Be sure to carefully plan any outdoor excursions. If you are a new teacher, be sure to clear your plan with an administrator just in case students have allergies to pollen or insects. If you do go out, leave a note on the door so that anyone who is looking for you or your students can find you quickly.
- **Use routines to minimize disruptions.** Having predictable routines for the beginning and end of class will make it easier for you and your students.
- **Personalize instruction when you can.** Personalize and differentiate instruction as often as you can to increase engagement. Because you are familiar with your students by this time of the year, it should be fairly easy to design instruction that incorporates their interests as well as meets their learning needs.
- **Increase engagement.** Allow more opportunities for them to move around, work together and complete hands-on activities that can engage their attention fully.

Elaine Barlos

At the February AFT Teacher's Program and Policy Council meeting in Washington, DC, members gathered to discuss the issues facing educators across the nation. One of the biggest issues generating a significant amount of discussion was the school staff shortage. PPC members collaborated around what their districts and states were doing to retain and recruit school staff. The collaboration resulted in a multitude of ideas including: established teacher pipeline programs improved negotiated compensation and benefits and working conditions, and programs to increase diversity in the workforce.

Here Today, Gone Tomorrow (Above) highlights the areas that must change to solve the teacher shortage and revitalize the education profession.

—Elaine Bernal, AFT Special Education Program/Policy Committee



Teachers and school staff are exhausted and fed up, yes—by the conditions they work under, not the kids they teach and work with. What we have seen in survey data and conversations with members across the country is, if conditions change, they will stay. That's because every day, they see it as their mission to come to nurture, love and teach our kids. Briefly, we don't have a shortage of people who want to teach and support students, our nation has a shortage of respect, working conditions and compensation for the people who do this work.

[Report in Brief](#) (6 pgs.) [Full Report](#) (56 pgs.)



Illinois State Board of Education

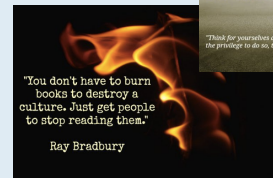
www.isbe.net
for current ISBE updates



Don't ban books.

Teach your children how to self-censor.

"Think for yourselves and let others enjoy the privilege to do so, too."
—Voltaire



Where We Stand:

Winning the Race Between Fear and Hope

While extremists want to defund public schools, we are fighting for the essentials kids need, says @rweingarten. Read more in [#AmericanEducator/Apr 18](#)



The American Federation of Teachers' Reading Opens the World initiative focuses on:

- Giving teachers and school staff the tools and professional development that translate the science of reading into usable resources to help students read and read well.
- Giving parents and caregivers fun and research-based tips and tools to support literacy.
- Building on and forging new connections among families, communities, educators and schools to be partners in students' literacy.
- Giving children and young people free books to read, love and keep, because ... Reading Opens the World!



Local 943 Educational and Professional Development Opportunities



THANKS

To all of our Local 943 TEACH instructors for an inspiring and educational year of classes available to our members!

AFT's 2023 Together Educating America's Children (TEACH) Conference

July 21-23 in Washington, D.C.

AFT TEACH provides an unforgettable experience filled with inspiration and ideas to bring back to school for the year ahead. Each professional development workshop is custom-developed for TEACH by AFT members and other experts to directly focus on tools and strategies to support educators and their efforts to help kids and communities succeed.

GREAT LAKES UNION LEADERSHIP

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 26-30, 2023 LAKE DELEVAN WISCONSIN

IFT's ULI program has been designed to meet the needs of both new and experienced local leaders and activists in all IFT constituency groups. ULI provides participants with hands-on learning of union skills, professional development opportunities, and a chance to network with other IFT members from throughout the state.

The following four courses will be offered:

- Effective Grievance Administration and Organizing
- Introduction to Negotiations and Contract Campaigns
- Organizing with Parents and Communities
- Union Leadership Skills to Build a Strong Union

Please submit your [AFT Local 943 Application](#) before the May 9th Senate meeting.

[IFT Professional Development Opportunities](#)



Registration is open now through May 10, 2023 for the 2023 Illinois National Board Candidate Fee Subsidy for teachers and school counselors pursuing National Board Certification.

More information can be found [here](#).

Why do attendees love AFT TEACH?

Because the conference offers:

- Engaging and energizing sessions to inspire for the year to come;
- New strategies to improve teaching and learning; and
- Time to meet and collaborate with educators from across the country.

Complete Conference information [HERE](#) & Apply for Local 943 reimbursement before the May 9th Senate meeting [HERE](#)

Registration is now open

- Save \$200 before June 1st

TEACH Session Presenters from Local 943 include: Pia Conte, Brian Jurinek, and Donna Rehm

Good Luck!



Please check the [IFT Professional Development page](#) regularly for upcoming course descriptions and registration information.

For more information and to [register for classes](#) email Brian Jurinek at brianjurinek@gmail.com



TEACHING FOR CHANGE

Building Social Justice Starting in the Classroom



Legislative Update

By Andrew Weber

Election Update

There is no doubt that elections matter and that Union interests are at stake during each election cycle. Although voter turnout was low in some of our areas, it is apparent that our city and suburban races became a fight for Union values and ideals over anti-union rhetoric. At the conclusion of the April 4th elections, IFT President Dan Montgomery communicated this statement:

“A few words come to mind about all these races and our collective effort: historic, monumental, hard-fought, joyful. But I just want to thank everyone in the IFT—our members, local leaders, VPs, and of course all our amazing staff, the professional and support folks who devoted not only their “work time” but a lot of personal hours to making sure we won these critical elections. There is no question that we do not achieve this level of success without the tremendous expertise and dedication of our top-flight staff and administrative team.”

Congrats to our membership and the efforts they put in to ensure our movement is massive, transformative and strong! Some highlighted wins by 943 endorsed and supported candidates for our area:

Orland 135 School Board - Alan Kastrengren, Linda Peckham-Dodge

Orland Referendum Vote - “YES” to retain the current managerial form of government

Oak Lawn - Hometown 123 School Board -

Jennfier Forteir, Adriana Sebek

Oak Lawn Library Trustee - 943 member Heather McCarthy

Mayor for the City of Chicago - IFT VP Brandon Johnson



The Orland Council of Educators would like to thank the volunteers who helped with our recent School Board election. We passed out palm cards at Orland Park Library events, the train stations and on polling day. We canvassed three weekends and hosted a phone bank. They say actions speak louder than words; I would agree. Our efforts paid off with Alan Kastrengren and Linda Peckham-Dodge getting elected to our School Board. Thanks to everyone who gave their time to help.

The Orland Council appreciates you. The Union is yoU!

Eve Bukowski - Orland Council of Education D135 Council President



IFT President
Dan Montgomery's
"Dan's Desk"



Delegates at the Illinois Education Association (IEA) 169th Representative Assembly have elected a high school teacher from Dolton as the next president of the organization. Al Llorens, who is serving his second term as IEA vice president, won the election. See full article from the IEA [HERE](#)



Spring Legislative Session Updates

Full April Legislative Update

[Click Here](#)

Governor Pritzker's Budget Proposal

[Click Here](#)

Check out our website!
www.aft943.org



AFT President
Randy Weingarten
"Randy's Corner"

Did you miss our Fannie May Spring Candy Gift Card Sale?

NO WORRIES!

We have a limited supply of gift cards at a **25% DISCOUNT** available to you at the AFT Local 943 Office.

The gift cards are available in the retail value of \$10, \$20, or \$50 and may be redeemed either at a Fannie May retail or outlet store or on the web at www.fanniemay.com.

If you are interested in purchasing gift cards, please contact Judy Spirakes at (708) 633-0943

OPENDOOR



UNION PLUS

Share Your Joy!

Is there something exciting happening at your school/district?

We would love to hear from you!

Email Local 943 @ kodea@ift-aft.org

Welcome Union members. Limited time offer!
SAVE 30% on all bouquets!

LOCAL Events Around 943



LETTER CARRIERS' FOOD DRIVE

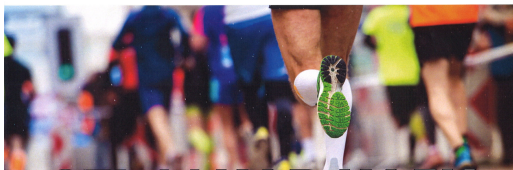
Saturday, May 13, 2023

PUT YOUR NON-PERISHABLE DONATION IN A BAG BY YOUR MAILBOX. WE'LL DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK.



Congratulations

on your agreement to a fair contract!



CFL MAY DAY 5K RUN & WALK

ABOUT THE EVENT

Join the Chicago Federation of Labor for the May Day 5K Run and Walk along Chicago's iconic Lakefront Trail on Sunday, April 30!

All ages and fitness levels are encouraged to participate and will receive commemorative T-shirts!

REGISTER NOW!

SCAN THE QR-CODE BELOW TO SIGN UP!



Sunday, April 30, 2023 - 8:00 a.m.

MCCORMICK PLACE LAKESIDE CENTER



CHICAGO.LABOR.ORG



Chicago Federation of Labor May Day 5K Run and Walk Sponsorship Form

Race Date: Sunday, April 30, 2023, at 8:00 A.M.

Starting Line: McCormick Place Lakeside Center (2301 S. Jean Baptiste Point DuSable Lake Shore Drive, Chicago)

More race information can be found at www.chicagolabor.org/mayday5k

Contact: Gus Fugitt at (312) 906-2434 or gufugitt@chicagolabor.org

Organization Name: _____
 Contact Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Phone: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 City, State and ZIP: _____

Sponsorship Tiers

- Podium Sponsor - \$10,000
 - o 12 race entries
 - o Organization logo on race registration webpage
 - o Organization logo on back of race t-shirt
 - o Organization logo on event signage
- Finisher Sponsor - \$5,000
 - o 5 race entries
 - o Organization logo on race registration webpage
 - o Organization logo on back of race t-shirt
- Starting Line Sponsor - \$1,000
 - o 2 race entries
 - o Organization name on race registration webpage

Sponsorship requests must be submitted by Tuesday April 4, 2023, to meet printing deadlines.

Please mail response card and payment to:

Chicago Federation of Labor May Day 5K

180 N. Stetson Ave, Suite 1529 Chicago, IL 60601

Make checks payable to: Chicago Federation of Labor

Submit high-resolution logos in PDF or JPG by April 4, 2023, to gufugitt@chicagolabor.org



Retiring

THIS YEAR?!

Join the IFT/Local 943 Retirees Council/Northern Illinois Retiree Action Committee.

The Retirees Council provides:

- o Informational workshops and presentations
- o Group rates at Drury Lane musicals
- o Continued Union membership
- o IFT/AFT membership benefits and discounts
- o Local 943 AFTerthoughts and IFT publications
- o Legislative/Pension updates
- o Low \$20 annual fee

Membership term: Sept. 1, 2023-August 31, 2024

Questions? Call Judy Spirakes at 708.633.0943 x225

Send below information w/\$20 check payable to:

AFT Local 943
15521 S. 70th Court
Orland Park, IL 60462

Join our Retiree Council

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Current School District: _____

Phone #: _____

Personal email address for future notices:



Retiree's Corner

Please be sure to update your address and email information. Most correspondence from Local 943 and the retirees council will be by email. Send updates to Kathy Setlak at RetireeCouncil943@yahoo.com

AFTerthoughts

Official Publication of the Southwest Suburban Federation of Teachers AFT Local 943

Executive Board

Elaine Barlos, President
Alfreida Jamison, Treasurer
Catrina Niven, Secretary
Bob Goldsbury, VP of Communications/Public Relations
Andrew Weber, VP of Political Activities/COPE
Brian Jurinek, VP of Educational and Professional Issues/TEACH Coordinator

IFT Next Generation Constituency Council

Kate Kosner and Andrew Weber

IFT Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel (PSRP) Constituency Council

Angelita Alvarez, Lourdes Angel Para and Valerie Wilhoite

IFT PreK-12 Constituency Council

Jill Decker-Doom

IFT Racial and Social Justice Constituency Council

Elaine Barlos and Amber Jackson

IFT Retirees Constituency Council

Elaine Barlos, Donna Rehm and Judy Spirakes

IFT Special Education Constituency Council

Elaine Bernal and Ashley Isherwood

IFT Union Leadership Development Constituency Council

Jill Decker-Doom

Local 943 Defense Committee

Alfreida Jamison, Chairperson
Elaine Barlos, Sue Benigni, Tina Thauer, and Elaine Bernal

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