

**Henry County Retired Teachers Association
Secretary's Report
November 9, 2015**

The Henry County Retired Teachers Association meeting for November was called to order by President Charlotte Shrider. Following recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, new member Dave Follett was welcomed to the meeting. Guest John Kline was also introduced later in the meeting. A moment of silence was observed for the passing of member Don Flory and for Kathy Gubernath, a teacher from Napoleon known to many. President Shrider then asked volunteers from each table to hold signs displaying the names of various retail stores. These were then arranged in chronological order, as to when they first opened their doors, thus determining the order of dismissing to the serving table. Blessing was offered and a delicious meal of pork loin and trimmings was enjoyed by all.

Following the meal, the business meeting was called to order. The Secretary's report was accepted as written and the Treasurer's report was also accepted and filed for audit.

President Shrider passed around sign-up sheets, asking for volunteers to help with set up of tables and chairs at each meeting, as well as clean up. More hands make light work!

Committee Reports:

Courtesy: Sandy Honemann and Marlene Jones both reported sending greetings to various members. It was reported that Barb Schnabele is having medical issues and could use cheery greetings.

Dictionary Committee: Gene Grime reported that all of the books have been distributed. He had thank you letters from many of the students on hand for members to see.

Legislative: Becky Schindler reported on the Medicare pricing issue. Through the lobbying efforts of many groups, an anticipated 52% increase was reduced to a 14% increase. This is only one recent example of the need for constant vigilance of members on these types of issues and how important our input can be to avoid unreasonable changes. Steve Seagrave will post the details of this particular issue on the website for those who wish to know more.

Membership: Nan Bretz again welcomed new member Dave Follett. She and Steve Seagrave are working to update the membership list.

HCRT Foundation: Jerri Osborn reported that the committee will meet on January 5, 2016, to begin the process of selecting scholarship winners for next year. President Shrider noted that a photo of this past year's winners was included in the current issue of the ORTA Newsletter.

Old business:

Charlie Meyer thanked those who have volunteered to make cookies or lend train sets for the Symphony of Trees Children's program on November 22.

President Shrider then discussed the election of officers for the following year. The current slate of officers had been contacted and all had agreed to serve another term. Steve Seagrave moved, seconded by Charlie Meyer that the slate be elected. Motion passed.

New Business:

Discussion was held concerning our community project for next year. We can continue with Together We Can Make A Difference, or perhaps consider others, such as First Call for Help, Hope Services or Angels Sending Hope. As part of this discussion, President Shrider reported that ORTA is encouraging chapters to support Habitat for Humanity this year. Charlie Meyer volunteered to contact the Fulton Co. unit of Habitat to determine their needs, as Henry Co. does not have an active chapter of this group. Members were asked to consider all of these choices and/or offer others. At the next meeting, after hearing a report from Charlie on Habitat for Humanity, decisions may be made as to which groups to support. A suggestion was to possibly rotate the groups to support. The issue was tabled for further discussion.

The matter of choosing a caterer for the next year was then discussed. After comments from the floor, Rosemary Pfau moved, seconded by Jerri Osborn, to continue with the current caterer. Motion passed.

The question was raised as to whether the July meeting should be a potluck, as last year. Terry Witt moved, seconded by Nancy Hoover, that the meeting would be a potluck. A suggestion from the floor that this meeting could also include a White Elephant Sale as a fund raiser was also approved.

President Shrider announced that the next meeting's entertainment will be by the group Nostalgia, a quartet with our own Garry Cline as a member. It should be a very enjoyable addition to the holiday season.

Some community announcements were made:

The Community Band will have a Christmas Concert on December 7th at Emanuel Lutheran Church.

Members are invited to the Five Year Celebration of Together We Can Make A Difference on Sunday, Nov. 15, 2015, from 2-4 PM at their location on North Perry St.

Members are also invited to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Napoleon Elementary School on Dec. 15, 2015. President Shrider will be making remarks at this ceremony on behalf of the HCRTA.

Guest John Kline was the lucky winner of the 50/50 drawing.

After the meeting was adjourned, a very interesting program was presented by Steve Kryder and Chuck Thomas, concerning the preservation of Civil War era letters from the Kryder Family. Steve Kryder first explained how these letters came to be discovered in his family, how he became interested in preserving them, and how they are being used to inform new generations about that time in history. They are being used to stimulate curriculum activities in the Otsego Schools, with monetary support and period experts supplied by the Grand Rapids Historical Society. Chuck Thomas, President of the Historical Society, explained that the annual Applebutter Fest is a major fundraiser for the Society, allowing them to fund these activities. Northwest State Community College has been instrumental in helping to preserve the letters and they are in the process of digitalizing the information. This will make it possible to have the information available on their website for researchers interested in this period of history.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bev Wittes, HCRTA Secretary