

Henry County Retired Teachers Association
Secretary's Report
March 13, 2017

The Henry County Retired Teachers Association meeting for March was called to order by President Charlotte Shrider. Following recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, new member LeAnn Kraft and guest/prospective new member Diane Meyer were recognized.

With March Madness in mind, names of basketball teams from the Big Ten were found on the tables and helped determine the order for dismissal to the buffet table. Prior to the meal prayer, a moment of silence was observed in memory of Bonnie Eddy, who passed away since our last meeting. Following an Irish prayer given by Nan Bretz, all enjoyed a meal fit for a leprechaun, consisting of corn beef and cabbage, various sides and appropriately green decorated cupcakes.

Nancy Helmke then spoke to us about Orphan Grain Train. The organization was started by a minister from Nebraska after a trip to Latvia and Russia. They have helped people in more than 40 countries. Volunteers gather clothing, household goods, furniture, cleaning supplies, books and many other donated items to be given to victims of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes or tornadoes. They also supply these items and more to poverty stricken populations in several locations, many not that far away from Northwest Ohio. They work in tandem with the Red Cross and other agencies to determine need and to help with the distribution of the items. Donations are welcome, as Nancy indicated that they are collecting 365 days a year. Donations are tax deductible. Anyone with time to donate was encouraged to contact Nancy and she will gladly put you to work!

The business meeting was then called to order. The secretary's report was approved as amended (name correction) and the treasurer's report was approved as presented. President Charlotte reported that the books had been audited by Marv Barlow and all was found to be in good order.

Committee Reports:

Courtesy: Marlene Jones and Sandy Honemann were both present to catch us up with concern for members. Cards were sent to Bonnie Eddy when she was ill and sympathy was subsequently extended to her family upon her passing. Jackie Sautter has a new room at Fairlawn in Wauseon and would love visitors. Cards were sent to Doris Ruby to celebrate her recent 95th birthday. A Thinking of You card was sent to Rosemary Pfau and she responded with a phone call to say she appreciated the thoughtfulness.

Legislative: Becky Schindler relayed information provided by Dennis Leone concerning COLA. Members were urged to pick up copies of the information and to study the impact of past changes and proposed changes to the COLA benefit.

Membership: Nan Bretz again welcomed new member LeAnn Kraft and guest today, Diane Meyer.

Retirement Planning: At the February Executive meeting, a discussion was held concerning whether there is further need for this committee, since active teachers seem to have more information about retirement planning already and are not showing interest in attending meetings on the subject. As discussion continued, it was decided that perhaps a study be made of all committees, to perhaps make changes. Greg Merrill and Steve Seagrave had volunteered already to take on this task, to study the changes that would be necessary in the constitution if committees are to change or be dropped. President Charlotte asked for other volunteers and Jan Schlade was added to this group.

Community Service: Tom Jenny again had slips on each table for members to fill out volunteer hours.

Education Foundation: Terri Witt presented the annual report of the HCRT Foundation. Sandy Honemann was proposed as a new member of the board. A motion to accept her appointment was made by Rosalie Ashenfelter, seconded by Greg Merrill. Motion passed. Terri outlined the business of the Foundation during the past year and had handouts available with details on the meetings held, as well as information sheets describing the grants available. She reported that she had made personal contact with school guidance counselors and hopes that this will increase the interest in grant applications. Gene Grime went over the finances of the Foundation, with handouts also available for members with the information.

Old business: President Charlotte reported that due to not having a meeting in December, she had to make some decisions for the group concerning the caterer and the location of meetings. The executive board discussed these items as well. We will continue with Marc Matheny as caterer. The price for the meals was raised to \$11, so at the Executive meeting, it was decided to raise the fee for each meeting to \$13, with the extra two dollars going toward rent of the building and other group expenses. We will continue to meet at Oberhaus Park. We will also continue with Together We Can Make A Difference as our charity. Habitat for Humanity was a one year project and contributions will not be continued this year.

At the Executive meeting, it was also decided to try “tip jars” on each meal table as an additional way to raise funds for the group. It is hoped to establish a speaker’s fund.

President Charlotte reminded all members that once a meal reservation has been made, it must be paid, even if you are subsequently unable to attend. The group must pay the caterer for meals ordered, so unless you have a cancellation before the number is turned in to the caterer, you are obligated for that cost. If you arrange for someone to take your place ahead of time, that will be accepted, but in fairness to all we will no longer accept substitutions on the day of the meeting.

A sign-up sheet was passed around for volunteers for set-up and host/hostess committees.

New Business: Steve Seagrave had a few extra directories available for sale. The price is to cover the cost of printing and binding. Steve was thanked for his work on the directories and the newsletter.

Throughout the meeting, President Charlotte drew names for door prizes of lottery tickets. The winners were Becky Chamberlin, Larry Vocke, Greg Merrill, Gene Grime and Diane Meyer. Hope they all hit it big!

Nancy Hoover was the winner of the 50/50 drawing.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bev Wittes, HCRTA Secretary