

Androscoggin Retired Educator's Association

March 13, 2024 Meeting

Green Ladle in Lewison

Minutes

1. President David Wing convened the meeting at 10:36 am with the Pledge of Allegiance
2. Gary Cadman was recognized and thanked those present for their kindness on the occasion of his wife's passing.
3. Main Program: Dana Morell from Seniors Plus made a presentation concerning the services provided by her organization. She handed out a brochure detailing those services and answered questions from the audience. She ended by encouraging those present to take advantage of those services that apply to their circumstances. She also listed several volunteer opportunities. Several attendees attested to the satisfaction that is gained by volunteering for Seniors Plus.
4. Treasurer's Report: Gina Fuller presented the treasurer's report. Gina first recognized upcoming birthdays the group. She presented an update of the finances from the November meeting. They balances are essentially the same with an overall balance of **\$20,370.88** with **\$6,758.54** in the scholarship fund.
5. Meeting Venues: Dave Wing led a discussion about venues for our meetings. Most people like going to Sixth Street Congregational Church and the nice ladies who prepare the meal at a reasonable price of \$12. However, the street parking and the stairs in particular were mentioned as issues. The Green Ladle, while more expensive at \$19 per meal plus service fees, has great parking, handicapped accessibility, large rooms for presentations and dining plus great meals. Dave and others have checked various other venues in the Twin Cities and there are really no others that can accommodate us that are comparable. The group consensus was to hold all future meetings at the Green Ladle based on it's availability.
6. Community Service: Joyce Bucciantini reminded members to fill out the two surveys concerning community service hours and members physical activities so that they can be tabulated and sent on the the state organization.
7. Scholarship: Jean Roy reported that letters were went out to schools in Androscoggin County and a notice was place in the Lewiston Sun/Journal soliciting scholarship applications. To date two have been submitted. Also, last year's scholarship willer had to drop out of college due to health issues. She has entered for the spring semester and it has been decided to still award herthe scholarship on her completion of the spring semester and successful enrollment in next fall's semester. Members were also reminded that the scholarship amount is now \$2000.

8. Information Services: Roger Fuller asked members to contact him with any issues.
9. Legislative: Crystal Ward reported out on three bills before the Maine Legislature. LD70 that would raise the base for COLA increases from \$30,000 to \$40,000 for MAINEPERS pensions was vetoed by the governor last year. It is back as LD 457 this year. Two of our local Lewiston legislators are not aggressively supporting the bill. LD 1333 would raise the state's contribution to retirees health insurance coverage from 50-65%. Members were encouraged to contact their legislators to support these bills. We still have not recovered from the damage the 2011 LePage cuts did to public employees pensions. A question was asked about the Social Security Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision bill in the US Congress. Crystal reported that even though it has over 350 sponsors, the present congress will probably not bring it to the floor.
10. Ritter Grant: Mona Ervin reported that she has delivered 30 boxes of chocolates to those 85 years or older. There is a surplus of about \$150 in the account. Combined with this year's allocation of \$300, making the total \$454, she proposed to give the boxes next year to all those 80 and older. There is an overall balance over \$1000 in the account.
11. Necrology: Cindy Peters reported that, to the best of her knowledge, there were 60 educator deaths last year.
12. Sunshine: Cindy Peters noted several area retirees who had long years of educational service; Dwight Harris with 48 years of service in SAD 52 as a bus driver, Violette Lizette with 52 years of service in the Lewiston Business Office and Owen Donnell who spent his entire career since high school as a custodian in SAD 52. We also received a thank you letter from Grace Keene for the for the get-well card she received during her recent health issues. Cindy also sent out five cards to others who have health concerns. Cindy thanked Roger Fuller and Sue Tomoczko for their help.
13. Publicity: no report.
14. May Convention Table: Jo Dupal has the convention table is all set to go.
15. Raffle: Susan and Rueben Cornelius inducted the raffle.
16. Adjournment: the meeting was adjourned at 12:13 pm.