

Minutes for AREA Meeting - - -March 9, 2022

Location: Green Ladle, Lewiston

Host: Crystal Ward assisted by Gina Fuller

Attendance: 38 members

>. The tables showcased copies of the agenda, the treasurer's report, the schedule for the May 5 convention and a St. Pat's Day word search puzzle courtesy of Crystal. These members took the "Wearing of the Green" seriously: Beth Bell, Gina Fuller, Pat McCluskey, Cindy Peters, Donna Sweetser, Adriann Tucker, Sue Tymoczko, and Crystal Ward.

>. Acting President, Rosita Friel, opened the meeting and everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

>. Linda DeSantis read the minutes for the November 10th meeting. Gina Fuller gave the treasurer's report. Beth Bell and Grace Keene moved and seconded the secretary's report and the treasurers report. Gina reported that there are approximately 100 members.

>. Carl and Joyce won the AARP Andrus community service award for organizing coffee klatches , attending legislative sessions on Tuesdays wearing red shirts representing AARP. (The award is named in honor of the founder Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus.) Also Carl was named AARP Maine volunteer President to serve two years as spokesperson for all AARP volunteers in the state of Maine.

>. Crystal Ward gave a legislative report. She explained that anyone whose pension is over \$23,000 is only getting a partial COLA because in 2011 Governor LePage pushed for a reduction in the base of the COLA is computed on and reduced the COLA cap from 4% to 3% in order to cut taxes. Crystal encouraged us to contact the appropriations committee to give retirees a full COLA and add it to the base amount used to compute future COLA increases. Our pensions are not keeping up with inflation driving more retirees into low income or poverty. Tell Legislature's they need to make and implement a plan to correct the terrible changes made in 2011.

>. Cindy Peters spread Sunshine through sending out 55 cards since September for a variety of occasions and support. She also continues to research the history of AREA. Sue Cornelius gave some assistance.

>. Sue Tymoczko gave an update on Alfreda Fournier. Cards may be sent to 33 Cherry Vale Circle, Auburn, ME 04210

- >. **Roger Fuller shared that AREA's Facebook page is very popular.**
- >. **Hugh Keene announced that Bruce LePage will be nominated for the Leadership Award.**
- >. **Beth Bell reminded us that news announcements need to be submitted at least two weeks ahead of time.>. Rosita reminded members to take advantage of Silver Sneakers.**
Donna Whelan and Barbara Jabaut shared their positive experiences.
- >. **Crystal who is now on the Health Committee gave an update. She alerted us that "vision" may be added to the health plan. Anyone who has problems with the New Advantage Plan should contact Crystal.**
- >. **Rosita explained that Jo Dupal will be organizing AREA's display table for the MEA-Retired Convention on May 5. She asked us to gather photos, articles, pamphlets and any memorabilia from from our teaching days and bring them in to our meeting in April. Rosita also announced that the next meeting will be on April 13 at the Highlands in Turner.**
- >. **Sue and Rubin Cornelius conducted the raffle.**
Winners of the \$5.00 gift cards to Dunkin Donuts were:
Marsha Graham, Crystal Ward, Cindy Peters, Charlie Douglas,
Donna Sweetser, Nancy Kilbride, Carolyn Robinson, Angie Jipson
- >. **Japheth Els, AARP Outreach Director, gave an informative and stimulating presentation.**

Respectfully submitted by
Linda DeSantis - Recording Secretary