

Meeting Minutes:
Highland County Retired Teachers Association
02-05-24

Opening:

The February 5, 2024 HCRTA General Meeting was called to order by President Jim Faust at 12:01 PM. In attendance were 27 members and 4 guests.

In his opening remarks, President Faust acknowledged guest speakers Natalie Massie and Brenda Thacker. The membership recited the "Pledge of Allegiance," sang "God Bless America," offered a moment of silence in memory of friends and family members who have recently passed. Mr. Faust then directed members to the buffet line for a meal provided by Donita Everetts, Darlene Mihalik and other members of the Hillsboro Church of Christ. The meal included three soup options, ham sliders, vegetables, drinks, and a choice of delicious desserts.

Program:

Following the meal President Faust introduced speakers Natalie Massie and Brenda Thacker from with AAA. Ms. Massie discussed the benefits of a AAA membership including ProtectMyID, discounts & rewards on goods and services with partner businesses, life, home, and auto insurance, and of course roadside assistance and travel planning. It was noted that AAA goes with the individual, not the vehicle, so no matter what vehicle you are driving, you are covered. It was also noted that children ages 16-18 are covered free under the parents' membership.

Following Ms. Massie's comments, Ms. Thacker discussed travel options with AAA. Ms. Thacker noted that with 120-year history, AAA is the most trusted travel agency in the country. AAA offers options for travel and tourism by car, motorcoach, boat, rail, and air to destinations around the globe. Trips and travel can be booked individually, for a group, or joining an existing, pre-planned tour. AAA can adapt trips to your particular travel, mobility, and dietary needs and can be booked on-line, in-person, or through video calls. Several publications were provided to attendees highlighting popular upcoming group travel opportunities throughout the world.

At the end of the presentation there was an active Q & A session. Questions raised included those about destinations, senior accommodations, insurance vendors, and roadside assistance. During this time there was one question about the advantages of booking through AAA as opposed to the on-line travel booking sites. AAA advantages included the fact that with many of the booking sites you get the less desirable rooms or travel seats and it is difficult if not impossible to speak to live support for problem resolution.

After the AAA presentation, Dr. Dukes spoke briefly about his experience with Crosley tours. His comments included positive remarks about the proximity of the departure point (Williamsburg) and the quality of the experience and accommodations. Crosley was also invited to present but was reticent to come without the specific prospect of a booking.

Business Meeting:

Committee Reports:

Secretary and Treasurer: There were no additions or corrections to the November 13, 2023 HCRTA Meeting Minutes as distributed in the January Newsletter. Motion to approve was proposed by Larry Dukes and seconded by Joyce Baker. As acting Treasurer, Kevin Black stated that in addition to the Treasurer's Report distributed with the January newsletter, we have since collected \$383 for meals and venue, \$50 in local dues, \$30 for ORTA dues, \$278 for the HCRTA Scholarship, and \$256 for the Southern Ohio Pregnancy Center service project. Motion to approve the report was made by Joan Winner and seconded by Doris Pulse. Both reports were approved with unanimous votes.

After the Treasurer's report, Megan Apgar, Hillsboro Church of Christ Children's Pastor, spoke to the membership about how the church is using the money from our meals and venue donation. Ms. Apgar stated that the ingredients for our meals are donated by the ladies who prepare our food and that all the money that we pay to the church is used for the benefit of the youth. In addition to Back-Pack Club which provides after school programming and homework help for Hillsboro youth, the church has also used the money to help send children to the Christ in Youth "Super Star" convention later this year. With our help the church has been able to register 24 children to attend the convention including hotel accommodations, convention admission, and a trampoline park visit. Kudos to the ladies of the church for donating their time and resources to provide great meals for us and in the process enriching the youth of Hillsboro!

Pre-retirement: Pat Gall stated that no plans are in place yet for the 2024 pre-retirement meeting.

Necrology: Joan Winner reported the passing of the following individuals:

- Wayne Devilbliss, Bright Local Schools
- Frances Larkin, School of Public Health, University of Michigan and inductee of the Highland County Women's Hall of Fame
- Eleanor Snodgrass, GEV
- Alfred "Al" Martellotti, HCS
- Melinda Partridge, Lynchburg-Clay, Bright Local, and HCS
- Hollis Stevenson, HCS
- Mary Lou Acton, GEVS Librarian
- John Newman, GEVS bus driver
- Edith Tolle, Fairfield Local Janitor

Card showers were suggested for Peggy Lucas and Juanita Kelley.

Legislative: Dr. Lawrence Dukes reported that he now has contacts at the STRS governmental office.

Scholarship: Mary Black reported on communications from scholarship recipient Christopher Ford who is currently student teaching at Reynoldsburg High School, and recipient Kalei Sanderson, who has completed her first quarter at Shawnee State University taking 18 credit hours (she was also able to transfer 75 post-secondary hours from Southern State Community College, giving her Senior status based on credit hours.) Kalei reports that in a few semesters she will have her Middle-Childhood Licensure in Science and Math, and hopes to student teach in 2025. Mrs. Black reminded the members that there is still one scholarship available for the 203-24 school year.

Calling Chain: Mr. Faust complimented Donna Armstrong, Doris Pulse, and Diana ElCook on the job done calling and promoting the meetings.

Highland County Historical Society: Kathy Levo related that, with the addition of the Hodson House, the Historical Society now has extra space and has decided to create a bridal exhibit starting in June. The society is looking for loans of vintage gowns, invites, guest list, photos, hats, flower girl outfits, or bridesmaid outfits and other wedding accoutrements from the 1950's and earlier.

Kathy also spoke to the group about a \$100 gift benefit from Aetna Medicare that many of us are not aware.

Joan Winner also advised the group to be aware that when undergoing medical procedures, despite the fact that the facility you are using is an "in-network provider", it is possible for a specific doctor or service at that facility to be out-of-network, and as such you could receive bills higher than you might have expected with an "in-network" provider. This fact is often tucked in the fine-print of your paper work, and the bill often comes as a surprise to us!

Before adjournment, President Faust reminded those present to keep monitoring the news from ORTA and STRS, regarding STRS Board candidates, the suspension of Bill Neville as Executive Director, and the (at the time) still pending court case regard STRS board member Wade Steen. He also reminded the members that the next HCRTA Executive Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 8th at Frisch's in Hillsboro. The next HCRTA General Meeting will be Monday, May 6th at the Hillsboro Church of Christ. We were also reminder that in the fall, our general meeting will be held Monday October 28th rather than the first Monday in November as is the custom.

Meeting adjourned, 2:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Kevin E. Black