

1. WCREA General Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2010

The WCREA Winter Meeting was called to order by the President, Patricia Kollar, on Tuesday, December 7, 2010, at 10:30 AM, at Flynn's On the Hill.

The flag salute and patriotic song were led by Barbara Esposito. In lieu of the Thought for the Day, Mrs. Kollar encouraged us to be thankful for all the little blessings that we have. Mrs. Kollar also announced that Doug Morris, our vice-president, has been hospitalized for a heart condition.

The minutes of the Fall Meeting were read by the Secretary, Lucy Gustitus. One correction was made by Vicki Rhinehart: the price of the luncheons was increased to cover tips only. The WCREA has a tax exempt number. Therefore luncheon tax is not an issue, as stated in the minutes. Annette Shriver made a motion to accept the corrected minutes. Denya Pantuso seconded it. The motion was accepted.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Vicki Rhinehart. It showed a balance in the General Account of \$2,342.63 and a balance in the Activity Fund of \$1231.24.

Mrs. Rhinehart then presented the Membership Committee Report. The WCREA now has 202 members.

Mrs. Rhinehart also presented the Scholarship Committee Report. The following students must send a report of their first semester grades to Mrs. Rhinehart in order to receive the scholarship award:

Hackettstown High School: Margaret Osburn, Montclair University, Special Education

North Warren High School: Rebecca Ault, Boston University, ESL

Warren County Technical School: Katelyn Morgan, Kean College, English

Phillipsburg High School: Shannon Logan, Kean College, History

Belvidere High School: James Yount

Warren Hills High School: Kyle Baggerly, University of Pennsylvania

The Corresponding Secretary, Patricia Gibbs, acknowledged a note from NORWESCAP, thanking the association for their support at the last meeting.

Sandy Beck announced that there are only 15 seats still available for the Spring Theater Trip on March 2nd. The play we will be attending is "Memphis".

OLD BUSINESS

The President, Mrs. Kollar, reported on the following issues:

In the recent fall elections, 90% of the candidates endorsed by NJEA were elected.

At the NJEA Convention in Atlantic City, the Delegate Council voted to approve Unification. It will officially begin on September 1, 2011. The details such as dues, grandfathering, etc. are still being worked out.

The "purely social" meeting of the WCREA held in November was a success and will be continued next year.

The results of the written poll concerning sites for next year's business meetings were as follows: 56 voted for Hawke Point for all meetings, and 4 voted to use Bella Giorno for 1 meeting. Starting in September, 2011, all Business meetings of the WCREA will be held at Hawke Point.

Lois Walters, a winner of last month's 50-50 drawing donated her entire winnings to the food bank.

NEW BUSINESS

Government Relations Committee chairperson, Carol Mertz, reported on Governor Christie's Town Meeting recently held in Hackettstown, NJ. She said that he makes a very good physical and emotional impression and can understand why people are swayed by him. His message was that educators are the cause of the state's financial problems because there are just so many of them, and they are "greedy". He said that teacher's pensions make up an inordinate amount of expenditures. He also reiterated that he opposes Collective Bargaining and Tenure. Instead, he endorses Merit Pay. When challenged about the negative remarks he has made about teachers, he claimed he was misquoted, but he had to put these ideas out there.

Mrs. Mertz then went on to report on 3 of Christie's issues that could definitely prove dangerous. First of all, Christie wants his "Educational Tool Kit" passed. Mrs. Metz explained that if it passes, our pensions could be recalculated. The members were encouraged to contact their legislators urging them to vote against it.

Secondly, he advocates that anyone home schooling their children or sending them to a private school should not have to pay school taxes.

Finally, he is considering a change in our Health Insurance Plan which could replace our current coverage with an HMO.

The President, Mrs. Kollar, responded to this report by mentioning a TV show based in Philadelphia which exposed Christie as a "bully" and claiming that he is "destroying education in NJ". She also mentioned that, for the first time in history, Gov. Christie refused to allow his Commissioner of Education to attend the NJEA Convention, effectively destroying all avenues of communication.

Mrs. Kollar also spoke about the health care insurance changes which will take effect on January 1, 2011.

Barbara Esposito, The Retired Delegate to the Response Team, reported that so far nothing has been done. The team will become active as some of the aforementioned issues become evident, probably after the beginning of the year.

Mrs. Rhinehart made an announcement that the Warren County Habitat for Humanity is looking for volunteers to help assess homes for improvement. If anyone is interested, they should contact Darlene Schott.

Mrs. Kollar reinforced the idea of writing letters to legislators rather than just calling or e-mailing. Letters must be opened and recorded, so there is more of impact.

Mrs. Kollar mentioned that scholarships are available for NJREA members' children and grandchildren. No one has ever approached her, but she does have the forms if anyone is interested.

Mrs. Kollar also reminded members that the next Business Meeting to be held at Bella Giorno will be a buffet, and the NJREA Spring Meeting will be held at the Nottingham Ballroom on April 28, 2011.

Mary Alice Bachman proposed a "moment of silence" in remembrance of the victims of Pearl Harbor Day.

With no other new business suggested, Mrs. Kollar called for a motion to adjourn. It was made by Shirley Stout and seconded by Patricia Gibbs. It was accepted and the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 AM.

Following adjournment, the Fifth & Sixth Grade Chorus from Lopatcong Twp. School presented an enjoyable Holiday Concert and sing-along.

The 50-50 drawing was held during the luncheon that followed. The winners were: Sue Brooks and Betty Bevins, \$40, and Ruthann McLaughlin, \$75. Mrs. McLaughlin donated \$25 to the scholarship fund.

Respectfully submitted
by Lucy Ann Gustitus,
Recording Secretary