

EARTA GENERAL MEETING
JUNE 21, 2024
ELGIN COUNTRY CLUB

EARTA LUNCHEON AND GENERAL MEETING was held at Elgin Country Club. Lucy Niemeier, president, called the meeting to order at 12:00. Lucy welcomed the members to the meeting. She introduced the General Meeting Program speakers, Ruth Peterson, Elgin Crisis Center representative, and Wendy Wieggers, IRTA Area 2 Representative. The menu was garden salad, rolls, chicken piccata, rice pilaf, and a large, hot chocolate chip cookie. Mick Williams gave a very meaningful invocation before the meal.

OFFICER REPORTS

PRESIDENT – LUCY NIEMEIER called the meeting to order at 1:20. She reported that there were 72 members and guests at the meeting. She introduced Dawn Weltzien, Freddy Royse, and Nancy Cox as guests. Terri Scibetta was introduced as our newest member and welcomed with a card and applause.

VICE-PRESIDENT – BARB MCGEE thanked the members and guests for coming to the EARTA General Meeting. She reported that there is an increase of members attending general meetings.

TREASURER – DAVID WEDEMEYER David was unable to attend the meeting, but sent in the treasurer report. The figures are:

- \$2,812.76 in checking
- \$3,027.18 in savings
- \$4,055.80 in certificate of deposit
- \$9,895.74 in total assets

LEGISLATION – MICK WILLIAMS presented the Legislative reports: At the Area II online conference on 6/20/24, IRTA Lobbyist Andrew Bordewes reported on some of the legislative actions as well as lack of action as the State Legislature has adjourned for the election cycle. They will return on November after the election.

Some of Andrew's observations were optimistic in that both parties appear to be committed to protecting the State's pension funds. The time lines differ, but the way ahead is promising. The Governor has committed to working toward reducing the pension deficits and looking to created legislation that would see TRS 90% funded by 2040, and 100% by 2048. Still work to do on that front.

Turning to the political reality in Illinois. IRTAPAC has a need for more funding. It seems that the \$1 deduction from TRS has declined significantly over the past 4 years. Members need to be certain that they are up to date with TRS. Direct contributions can be made to IRTAPAC through IRTA web site. IRTAPAC will be providing endorsements of local and State candidates from all parties in the early fall- hopefully before our September luncheon.

Federally: both Parties in Congress have endorsed legislation to end the penalty that keeps teachers who also qualify for Social Security benefits from receiving those benefits. However, nothing has been finalized on that front.

Sometime in late summer or early fall, IRTA will be providing details of a new benefit for members with the TRAIL Insurance program. Dental and Vision coverage is expected to be included in the plan as of January 1, 2025. Details are still sketchy and a small increase in premiums may happen. Look for details later.

The bill to end road tests for elderly drivers is still alive as the Legislature looks to the veto session after the November elections.

MEMBERSHIP – KAREN PATTERSON There are 316 EARTA members. The \$25 dues can still be paid now. The Epicurean Adventure will be held in September. On November30, there will also be an Epicurean Adventure. Please contact Karen for information and/or reservations.

DOOR PRIZE DRAWINGS There was a drawing held for 3 door prize baskets. Two baskets held various auto care and cleaning supplies; the grand prize included the auto care items and cleaning supplies, as well as a car vacuum.

At the end of the meeting, every EARTA member received a classic car cutout with cookies as “cargo”. They also received a classic car key ring with the message “Go with EARTA” on it.

ADJOURNMENT

Lucy adjourned the business meeting, and introduced the speakers for the program.

ELGIN CRISIS CENTER – RUTH PETERSON

Ruth shared many facts and stories about the Elgin Crisis Center. The Center is 49 years old. Its main emphasis is for domestic violence shelter for women and men.

The need for shelter is 2% higher for men than women. Obtaining order for protection is one of the main services. The Center is staffed 24 hours a day. There are other programs offered, including handling sexual assault and guidance that it is not “your fault”. Emphasis is on education and on how to handle situations. The Crisis Center helps the unsheltered population with food, clothing, coats, diapers, and transportation to work. There are funds if needed. The Crisis Center also has an abuser program.

People are encouraged to drop off clothes to Goodwill who has an agreement to deliver said goods.

Some programs are set up for 8 weeks to help clients to move on. There are also family plans. The web site (CC.org.) has suggestions for volunteer help and donations.

There was a basket on the entrance table for members to contribute to the Crisis Center.

IRTA AREA 2 – WENDY WIEGERS

Wendy started by sharing that Elgin was recently named the safest and most affordable city in the United States. She also shared a report about Vanta Chavez Medena. She was selected as Area 2’s College Scholarship recipient. Vanta came to Illinois from Mexico as a child when she was 3 years old. Wendy shared Vanta’s story about receiving a \$2000 College Scholarship of which she was very honored and grateful.

Wendy shared that we are in IRTA Area 2. Area 2 is in charge of 1/6 of the state of Illinois of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association. We are region 5 of the United States. Wendy shared that there are scholarships for teachers in Area 2. There are grants available for classrooms for up to \$4000. She highlighted ECC. Wendy stressed how important the \$1.00 contribution to IRTA is to the organization.

Respectively submitted,
Kay EARTA Recording Secretary Lincicome