

Northern Fairfield County Retired Teachers' Association
Spring Luncheon
June 5, 2018

The spring luncheon of the Northern Fairfield County Retired Teachers' Association was held at Anthony's Lake Club on Tuesday, June 5, 2018 at 11:30 AM.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Rona Rothhouse at 11:30.

President's Remarks

Rona welcomed everyone to the meeting. She talked about the importance of joining ARTC because of all the important work that they do for retired teachers.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Libby Kasimir, reported there is \$21,000 in the scholarship fund. She explained that each membership mailing cost \$1000, therefore, it was decided that the spring and fall luncheon notifications would be sent out via e-mail. Joretta Kilcourse, Webmaster, asked for anyone who had not received notification of the luncheon by email to provide her with their email address. Any member who does not have email could ask for the information to be sent via the post.

Libby also gave details about a free concert honoring the memory of Benjamin DaSilva who was a dedicated and respected educator and a lover of the arts.

Membership Report:

Membership Chairperson, June Jones, reported that for the 2017-2018 calendar year there are 315 members on the roster. Of that 205 (64%) are current members with paid dues. It is hard to determine exactly how many of our members are also ARTC members. Some join using the NFCRTA membership card. Some join ARTC on their own and some are life members. June is trying to obtain the number of ARTC members from the seven towns that are part of our association.

She explained that as we head into the 2018-2019 calendar year teachers are faced with more serious obstacles in regard to pensions and health insurance. She emphasized the importance of being a member of ARTC which helps to place pressure on legislators so they will act on our behalf. She encouraged out of state members to maintain their membership so they can continue to be informed.

Scholarship Awards:

Two students from Brookfield High School were award scholarships by Kay Santuro, the Scholarship Chairperson. Erik Henke received the Mary Edgett Scholarship and Millie North received the Memorial Scholarship.

Kay shared that a former winner of the Mary Francis Edgett Scholarship was elected as a Full Bright Scholar.

Webmaster Report

Joretta Kilcourse, Webmaster, informed the members that the newly revised website contained information about insurance and legislative news that our members should be aware of. She is also sending out a newsletter so members who could not attend the luncheon had access to the important information that was discussed.

As a board member of the Danbury Museum, Joretta informed the members of student enrichment summer classes that will take place at the Danbury Museum and of the up and coming Prohibition exhibit.

Adjournment

The meeting temporarily adjourned so that lunch could be served.

Resumption of Meeting

Rona introduced both speakers and thank them for taking the time to talk with us about the many important issues that our members are facing.

Speakers

Bob Godfrey, Danbury's Democratic Representative for the 7th district, explained that there are political divisions across the country and across our state. Teachers across the country are marching on state capitols and that this is important push back against the anger and hatred that is being directed toward education. Educators need to defend themselves against Betsy DeVos who is not a friend to teachers.

Dave Arconti, Danbury's 105th district Democratic Representative, explained that the state has transferred 16.1 million from the reserve fund, into health insurance fund. This is a temporary fix for a long standing problem.

He further explained that the pension fund which is under funded by more than 13 billion dollars faces a "spike payment" of 6 billion due in 2022. He is working towards getting support from his colleagues to create a plan that will spread out payments and make it more manageable.

During the question and answer portion one member asked "How bleak is our future?"

Both legislators agreed that it depends on who gets elected. There are political forces in our state and the country that want to do away with pensions completely. They made the point that retired educators have the power to create change by electing legislators who make public education and retired teachers issues a priority. It is up to the individual retired teachers to make their voice heard and VOTE.

Raffle

Treasurer Libby Kasimir collected \$434 from the 50/50 raffle. It was won by Ruth Almond. The remaining 50% goes to the scholarship fund.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:04 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Baker
Recording Secretary