

Northern Fairfield County Retired Teachers' Association
Spring Luncheon
October 23, 2019

The spring luncheon of Northern Fairfield County Retired Teachers' Association was held at Anthony's Lake Club on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at 11:30 AM.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Rona Rothhouse at 11:35.

President's Remarks

Rona welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Ruth Piehler, Trauma Coordinator at Western Connecticut Health Network and Blair Balmforth, Regional EMS/Injury Prevention Coordinator.

Ruth's job is to collect data regarding traumas to determine what factors contribute to a fall and what can be done to prevent falls. She helps people to understand their risk factors.

Blair Balmforth, Prevention Coordinator, explained that it is necessary to make changes in our home to prevent falls. He distributed a safety check list and encouraged the members to go through it carefully and make the necessary changes.

He encouraged members to:

- Check with their doctor to make sure that the medications they are taking are still necessary. Some medicines can make you dizzy. Taking four or more medications increases your chances of falling exponentially.
- Get their eyes checked every year.
- Exercise - Tai Chi, yoga, anything that keeps you moving for 2-3 hours a week. Exercise helps to improve your balance and that is key to prevent falling. The hospital offers Tai Chi every third Thursday from 4:15 - 5:00 at the Goldstone Care Center.

- Check your shoes - slippers slip on easily and also slip off easily. Make sure that your shoes fit well.
- If you have a walker or cane make sure that you use it. Many people feel “old” using a walker or a cane, but they are important to keep you safe.

Adjournment

The meeting temporarily adjourned so that lunch could be served.

Resumption of Meeting

Membership Report:

Membership Chairperson, June Jones, reported that for 2019-2020 only 160 of over 300 on our roster have paid dues. Part of this may be attributed to less mailings as we have tried to economize by eliminating the Fall Luncheon mailing using email notifications instead.

Due to short staffing at the Teacher Retirement Board, they were very late in getting out the new retirees for 2019. She received the names of 55 retirees from the seven towns that NFCRTA covers. A welcome invitation to join will go out next week. They will also receive lunch gratis in the spring.

June announced that she is officially resigning her position as Membership Chair, effective January 1, 2020. She has held the position since 2006. She suggested that this position be co-chaired since the duties have expanded. She stated “if you are passionate about preserving our pension, health insurance and the plight of retired teachers this is the perfect position to make a difference”.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer, Libby Kasimer, reported that using email is very cost effective - saving between \$240 and \$340 per mailing.

Raffle

Libby collected \$290 from the 50/50 raffle. It was won by Joan Saplio. The remaining 50% goes to the scholarship fund.

President's Report

Rona talked about the importance of joining ARTC because of all the important work that they do for retired teachers. 278 people attended the ARTC luncheon. As a group NFCRTA has no power. The power lies with ARTC.

Kathleen Holt, of the Center for Medicare Advocacy was the speaker at the ARTC luncheon. She provided a great deal of information and there is a video of Kathleen Holt's presentation to the ARTC board of directors taken in March of this year. Ms. Holt is the go-to person in the event of issues you may have with Medicare. The information she provides is highly informative and you can go to artct.org/health-insurance to view the video.

At the ARTC luncheon Ms. Holt explained that 75% of the members are part of the Medicare Advantage Plan. The Medicare Supplemental Plan has 25% of the membership, but this plan may not be sustainable in the future due to the smaller number of members.

Spring date for NFCRTA luncheon Wednesday, June 3.

Rona introduced a fellow NFCRTA member, Robert Murphy, who addressed the members regarding the need for a union for retired teachers. He felt that Hartford did not take CEA seriously because it was not a union. He asked the members to think about it and would like to take the matter up in the spring.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Baker
Recording Secretary