

THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATIONISTS

Meeting of April 5, 2017 held at Imperial Garden, 2039 Allen Blvd, Madison

ARC Vice President Laurel Steffes called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

60 people were in attendance. Menu was a Chinese Buffet served family style: 5 main dishes with rice, egg rolls and tea. The cost of the meal was \$15.00 (included tax, gratuity and a \$1 contribution to ARC treasury.)

A moment of silence was observed for friends and family who have passed, and for our troops who are serving in harm's way.

The March minutes were read and approved.

Financial Report for April

Opening balance on April 1 for Savings is \$223.81 and Checking is \$723.47.

Activity on Savings account - dividend \$.02.

Activity on Checking account:

DEPOSITS: \$944.00 - total includes proceeds from lunch, \$29 donations, and \$15 dues for new member.

EXPENDITURES: \$840.00 to **Imperial Garden** for meals, tax, gratuity; \$200 to "**rsw productions**" (Rick Wojciak) balance of invoice for 2017 webmaster services

Balance on May 1 for Savings is \$223.83 and Checking \$627.47.

New Members

Kurt Welke and Martin Henert were attending a second meeting and both were unanimously approved for membership. Welcome, Kurt and Marty!

Guests

- *Roy Pedretti* was introduced by Linda Netzer. Roy retired August 2015 after 26 years of state service. He began his state employment with Dept. of Employee Trust Funds, transferred to DNR in 1992, and retired as Payroll and Benefits Program Officer.
- *Tom Thrall* was introduced by Bill Horns and Scot Stewart. Tom was a state biologist working with wetlands restoration, wetland rules, and leadership for the federal farm bill program. He retired in 2004 after 32 years with Natural Resource Conservation Service (part of USDA.) Ed Frank added that historically, lots of members from the old SCS, now NRCS were ARC members, and they had a close working relationship with DNR staff.

"Frank-n-Miller Report"

Ed Frank said final adjustments were announced – 2.0% for Core and 4.0% for Variable. Market up YTD.

Budget item for health insurance – Ed related that if budget passes, domestic partners will not be covered for new employees. The Coalition of Annuitants continues to comment that they do not think it's a good idea to change to self-insurance.

Old Business

Conservation Lobby Day sponsored by WLCV at the Capitol was March 29. Tom Thoresen reported that they focused on water issues primarily. Tom called attention to reporter Dee Hall's investigation concluding that Wisconsin has serious problems with lead in drinking water. At Lobby Day, they also

talked about CAFOs, funding for State Parks and the need to restore County Conservationists who have lost state funding. There is a hearing in Joint Finance on Friday on the budget.

In federal budget news, Roger Larson said that funding for Great Lakes research has disappeared from federal budget. Mother Jones News obtained an internal document from EPA that indicated staff layoffs up to 25% would be required.

Laurel Steffes encouraged retirees to sign up for the "Green Fire" speakers bureau.

New Business

Youth Expo at MacKenzie Environmental Center is May 17 and 18. Volunteers are always need to staff interactive displays for students who come from around the state. You can get information on the Friends website - <http://www.friendsofmackenzie.org/event/midwest-outdoor-heritage-education-expo-mohee/>

Brenda Hagman reminded everyone that the cost of a National Park Service Senior Pass will go up in October, from \$10 to \$80. So if you don't already have a Senior Pass, you might want to buy yours this summer. Available to those age 62 and over, it's a lifetime pass to National Parks and Recreation Areas and covers entrance fees and a variety of discounts on camping, launch fees, etc.

Conservation Congress Spring Hearing is next Monday.

Deaths and Illnesses

Ted Pyrek is undergoing chemo for pancreatic cancer.

Marshal Ruegger's wife Pat at is at UW Hospital today.

Bob Schaefer passed along that Ollie Williams, retired water Division administrator, is currently in the Madison VA Hospital dealing with complications of congestive heart failure. He is happy to have visitors. Ollie's wife Mickey passed away in March in Arizona. A memorial service to be scheduled later in Madison.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

The Nigl's celebrated their 58th anniversary, Kernens their 32nd anniversary. Pat and Bob Launder were married 65 years ago on April 8.

Trips

Chuck Pils, Dennis Schenborn, Lee and Janet Kernens were in Cuba for 10 days with a group of 16. Toured Camaguey to the eastern end of the country. Lee shared some of the details of the trip including the fact

Ron Poff and Kurt Welke shared jokes.

Bill Horns was asked for an encore telling of his joke from last month's meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.