

THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATIONISTS

Meeting of May 1, 2024 held at Chalet Landhaus, New Glarus

ARC President Laurel Steffes called the meeting to order at 12:55 pm.

42 people were in attendance. The cost of the meal was \$20.00 for plated weinerschnitzel and green beans, rosti and spatzlie served family style, along with house salad, rolls, beverages and ice cream sundae. The cost included tax, gratuity and a small contribution to ARC's treasury.

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

Financial Report:

Treasurer Dick Steffes reported a balance for Savings of \$44 and Checking of \$264. \$100 cash on hand. \$41 in the donation jar for this meeting, thanks for to everyone for keeping the Treasury afloat!

New Members:

Charles (Chuck) Horn was attending his second meeting and was introduced by Barb Wolf. Chuck began his LTE career for the DNR working for Parks at KMSF and as a deputy conservation warden, started full time in 1979 as a field warden before promoting to warden supervisor at Dodgeville. Chuck retired in 2010 but continued to work for several years as an LTE, giving him 40 years of service. Chuck was unanimously voted in. Welcome to the group!

Attending for the first time were Tom Meyer and James Robaidek.

Tom was introduced by Signe Holtz who said that Tom just retired in March after 37 years of service with the DNR in Central Office, Madison. He was the Program Administrator for State Natural Areas, and Signe noted that Tom was also known for his outstanding photography and production work on outdoor programming.

James is another very recent retiree with 36 years of service. He was a wildlife biologist in Shawano for many years, though over the course of his career, he wore a lot of hats in different DNR disciplines. (James elected to make his own introduction as he wasn't sure what fellow wildlifers in attendance might say about him!)

"Frank-n-Miller Report:"

Bob Schaefer reported that new annuity statements were sent, look for your update. Both Core and Variable funds had positive returns.

Reminder about registering for the Coalition of Annuitants annual meeting May 22 and 23, 9:30 a.m. Meeting is held via Zoom, but register so you get the link to join. Look for information on the easy sign-up process on ARC or COA website. Bios of the interesting and relevant speakers are there as well, and this is a unique experience in that you have a chance to ask questions directly of agency heads.

Old Business:

Laurel acknowledged the Chalet Landhaus for working with us on short notice when the April meeting was cancelled due to weather. Email messages or calls were made to everyone who had signed up to attend, though we did miss one person who made the drive to New Glarus that day. Her advice: if weather is so bad that schools are canceled and travel is ill advised, please check the ARC website for any notice of meeting cancellation. We continue to use the online sign-up for the monthly meetings, and walk-ins (who have not signed up), usually balance out with who can't attend because of unplanned conflicts. So far between that process and Linda Netzer's "spidey sense" the numbers have worked out for the guarantee. Our Treasury takes a hit if we go far below the guarantee! Thanks to everyone for responding to Rick's sign-up request.

New Business:

Marshall Ruegger talked a bit about Wisconsin's retiree pension system which we all enjoy, and the anniversary of its inception May 19, 1943. A great deal of credit has gone to Ingeborg Sidwell, who at age 78 was still working in physical labor as a "washerwoman" at the state capitol building. And here's some further information from AFSME webpages about Early Trial and Tribulations:

"Beginning as early as 1908, attempts were made to create a pension/retirement plan for state workers. Session after session, an attempt was made but failed either in the Assembly, the Senate, or in committee. In 1941, another attempt was made, sponsored by Local 1 to pass legislation for a retirement package for state workers. The bill passed the assembly with only 3 voting against it. However, due to procedure movement, the bill was not voted on by the Senate even though a majority of Senators were supporting it. In 1943, Roy Kubista, Executive Secretary of WSEA presented another draft of a retirement package. After heavy lobbying, the bill finally passed both the Assembly and the Senate. However, Governor Walter Goodland vetoed the bill. The Assembly overrode the veto.

While the Senate debated on overriding the veto, two ladies decided to visit the governor. These two ladies, who cleaned the State Capitol Building at night, took it upon themselves to have a little chit-chat with him. Ingeborg Sidwell and Katherine Conlin. Mrs. Sidwell at age 78 was still working in physical labor as a "washerwoman" at the state capitol building. Mrs. Conlin was 71. These women explained to the governor that they did scrimp to save but lost their money when a bank crashed. They told the governor that food and doctor care was expensive. Besides they told him that they were getting too old to continue scrubbing the capitol floors. Ingeborg referred to herself as a stubborn Norwegian but then mentioned to the governor that he was a Republican and that Republicans could always find some extra money in some corner for a worthy plan.

The governor looked over the numbers that night and the next morning called the Senate, informing them that he desired to recall his veto and sign the bill. The bill was voted on by the Senate and the governor's veto was overridden." Happily, Mrs. Sidwell lived long enough to receive her monthly pension of \$14.70.

Susan Sylvester complimented the DNR's current form of communications by posting information on a daily basis to the Nextdoor app. Topics range from Parks to fire danger to hunting seasons, including podcast links. She also thought quality of the NR Magazine was outstanding.

Diane Brinson said her inventive neighbor has perfected a new type of lure that is less likely to get hung up in weeds, the harpoon lure – harpoonlures.com. Anglers may want to check it out.

The June 5 meeting will be held at Maple Tree in McFarland. There will be speaker from Green Fire to talk about the controversy of wake boating. The prop wash from these boats can have a powerful effect on aquatic habitat and shorelines. Studies are on-going and rules proposed in some states.

Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Linda and Mike Netzer celebrated their joint birthdays and their 25th wedding anniversary in April.

Mary Ann and Brian Buenzow are also celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary, and are marking the occasion with a trip to the Galapagos Islands. Congrats!

Trips:

Dave Gjestson was in Kearney, Nebraska in late March for the Sandhill Crane migration. There are public viewing sites or you can hire contractors who take people to blinds in the areas of high concentrations where you might be surrounded by thousands of birds (or not!) Said it was a good trip and timing was right to experience the peak of migration.

Bruce Chevis traveled to Germany with the whole family, and afterward he and Patty visited Paris for sightseeing, and then toured, partly on motorcycle, the Normandy beaches.

Barb Wolf was in Boston for several days, hiking the Freedom Trail and enjoying the many Italian ristoranti in the Old North End.

Dan Fields enjoyed a cruise on the Danube River.

Tom Thoresen was in Washington D.C. at the perfect time to view the cherry trees blossoming. Beautiful!

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm.