**RRTA Meeting**

**December 7, 2017**

**Attendance:** D. Altobelli, Z. Artson-Crichlow, M. Barnum, C. Bonsignore-Kitchen, P. Brody, B. Buckingham, C. Dean, K. Fager, M. Ferenchak, W. Humphrey, B. Jones, L. Rapkin, E. Robinson, K. Schultz, G. Shakes, S. Silvio, A. Smith, G. Sweeney, D. Voellinger, Y. Wooten, M. Zimmer

**Absent:**  R. Allen, K. Barkley, L. Bonanni, K. Evans, K. Huey, J. Ivanick, M. Jenkins-Cox, M. Keating, F. Macek, M. McCarron, D. Sullivan, B. Swan, F. Valente,

**Also in attendance**: S. Raymond, MJ Whalen

The meeting was called to order at 10:06.

1. A moment of silence was observed for teachers who have passed away in the past month: Sandra Fink. A $25 donation is made to Books for Kids in memory of any RRTA member. We also observed a moment of silence for those who died at Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

2. The November minutes were approved as written.

3. December 16 from 8 am to 1 pm there will be a get together at the RTA office to prepare the food boxes for needy families. Two boxes for each school that registered will be prepared. All are welcome to help.

4. **Holiday Party** — The RRTA reps thanked Karen Huey and her committee for all the work they put in to organize the Holiday Party. There were 73 attendees, the largest number in years. The food was incredible, the restaurant was very pleasurable to be in, and the wait staff were very accommodating. The Dress a Girl/Savvy Sewers had great success at the luncheon with their Chinese auction and silent auction. Also a large amount of canned goods was brought to the restaurant in lieu of exchange gifts and David Altobelli delivered them to Ibero American League who had put out a plea for donations to help with those who have arrived from Puerto Rico after the Hurricane.

5. **Medical Update** — Charlie Dean explained a paper he handed out with 2018 pricing for Part B and D Medicare costs which are usually taken out of Social Security. There is a new step added in the middle income area that was a MAGI of $107,00 to $160,000. If you have the EPO plan (with RCSD), you are not charged the Part D premium. If you have any questions call Charlie Dean.

6. **Vote Cope** — Dave Altobelli reported that the group raised $10 million last year statewide. The Rochester region had increased its contribution by 5.24%. There were 658,176 Vote Cope contributors last year in NYS.

The plan against Janus discussed at the recent Vote Cope meeting in Albany is for NYSUT to create structures and work sites, be more visible in schools for teachers to see the importance in being a member of a union, and develop more union leaders in buildings.

Suggestions were given to prepare teachers of why they should remain in the union, i.e. info cards like ConCon; send out a blurb on union history or facts on what your union has done for you as a teacher sending out one a week online.

7. **Dress A Girl** — Gaya Shakes said that the group is now being called Dress A Girl/Savvy Sewers because they are making more than just dresses for 3rd world countries. They recently met and made 26 dresses, instabeds and 24 dolls. They sent 65 pairs of socks and toiletries to St. Joseph’s, a local charity. The group made $692 as the fund raiser at the holiday party. They meet on the 4th Monday of the month at the RTA office and all are welcome to volunteer. They will have an article about the group and their new vision in the January RRTA newsletter.

8. **Books for Kids** — Mary Jo Whalen said that the group will be visiting two classes in School 10 on December 15.

9. **RRTA Newspaper** — Mary Barnum shared the articles she has for the January newspaper. There is a new method for sending newspapers through the post office that makes more work but the price is less. M. Barnum thanked those who helped with the November newspaper.

Nominations will be taken for the one vacant RRTA position in the January newspaper.

Gaya suggested that an article be in the newspaper about why to belong to a union, even for retirees. However, because this and the April newspaper only goes to members, it was suggested that it be in the August newspaper.

10. **Calendar** — Added to the calendar will be the April 12 RRTA meeting which will be held the second week of the month because the first week is spring break.

June 8 is the Red Wing baseball game.

September or October will be a trip to an apple farm that Carol Bonsignore Kitchen will organize.

11. Ken Schultz thanked all those who worked on the ConCon committee and for getting out to vote.

12. Al Smith said that his **Lions Club** is in its 23rd year of collecting toys. This year they are taking them to School 22 on the Franklin campus. They are also distributing 50,000 meals to children who do not have enough to eat. If they reach a goal of raising $7,500 NYS will give them $5,000. Contact Al Smith if you would like to help them reach their goal.

13. Katherine Barkley, an RRTA rep, had a knee replacement recently. If you know her, send her some holiday cheer.

14. **Rochester Labor Council** — They will be meeting with NYSUT rep, Paul Hipolite will be speaking to them about Janus and union issues.

The meeting adjourned at 11:18.

Mary Zimmer

RRTA secretary