**St. Bernard Retired Teachers’ Association Meeting**

**11:00 a.m. --- September 23, 2022**

**Docville**

**Meraux, LA**

The meeting was called to order by the president Paul Grethel at 12:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by June Truitt.

Cindy Kooke gave the invocation.

The business meeting paused while the luncheon took place.

After the luncheon, the meeting resumed.

The minutes of the last meeting were read by Recording Secretary Mickey Lux.

Rosemary Gioia read the treasurer’s report.

President Paul Grethel told the membership that he spoke to Doris Voitier about a few of us going to the schools during the in-service to speak about our organization, but she said there was not enough time. We will have to go back to just visiting schools when we can.

President Paul Grethel reported that as the result of a motion that was made by member Milton Boackle at the June meeting, the president and the other officers of SBRTA went to the August school board meeting and presented a beautiful, large, self-standing etched plaque to Doris Voitier and the board. Doris was commended for her constant work, especially during Katrina, Covid, and other stressful events. The school board and the teachers and other school personnel were also commended for their hard and consistent work during these times. They were very appreciative of the presentation.

President Paul Grethel told the membership that he was very impressed with one of the nominees for the school board in Slidell named Lee Barrios and asked any members in her district to consider voting for her. He would like to get her as a speaker at one of our meetings.

Paul Grethel brought up the situation concerning the H.R.82 bill which would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) of Social Security. It would be up to the full House for consideration. He said the House could introduce amendments for a partial repeal that will increase the bill’s likelihood for passage if they decide to introduce the bill. He said there is still hope.

Dr. Taylor, who won his election was supposed to come to our meeting today, but he called to say he was running a fever and could not make it in person. He asked to be called by phone and put on speaker so he could thank the membership for his reelection. Paul Grethel called him and put him on speaker so that he could thank the membership for their votes. He was very appreciative and said that we won the reelection for him.

Retired Colonel David Couvillion, the CEO of Office of Group Benefits, spoke to the membership. He told us that October 1 will be the start of the annual enrollment and will end on October 15. He said we took a break from in-person meetings in Covid, but we are getting back to in-person this year. The membership was told to go to info.groupbenefits.org. to find out where and when these meetings would be. If a member would still want the same plan and feels like it fits their lives, they don’t have to do anything. He told the membership that Pelican and Magnolia plans will increase their premiums by 4.5 %. He said that on January 1, we will be getting a new PBM (Pharmacy Benefit Manager). It is presently Express Scripts. As of January 1, the PBM will be CVS. He said that we will start getting information from CVS and for us to make sure we read the information. We can still use whatever pharmacy we wish as our preferred pharmacy. We will be getting a new Blue Cross card with our copays and CVS information on it prior to Jan 1. He asked how many were eligible for Social Security. He said that if anyone is eligible for Social Security, that person must contact the Social Security office to let them know their decision about Medicare and Social Security. Colonel Couvillion cautioned us to be careful not to leave OGB for any reason because we wouldn’t be able to come back, and besides the premiums of OGB are much better than others. He encouraged us to use Catapult. He said that we not only save $10.00 a month on our premiums but also can learn what new physical conditions we might have of which we were not aware. He also spoke about Omada, which is a wellness and medical management to help you keep up with your pharmaceuticals. They contact you to address your health needs such as weight control, diabetes, and COPD. They will contact us. Colonel Couvillion then fielded many questions from the membership.

Paul Grethel pulled tickets for the door prizes and reminded members to buy their 50/50 tickets.

The president then introduced Glenn Clark of AMBA. He turned it over to Sam Pailet who spoke about AMBA entertainment. It offers vision, dental insurance, and MASA among others. It has lots of benefits and offers apps to give us access to free movies, restaurants, and other forms of entertainment. He gave out cards which the membership filled out. Two of these cards were pulled toward the end of the meeting for prizes.

Paul Grethel announced that the next meeting will be the Christmas meeting and will be at Vera’s Seafood Restaurant, which is in Slidell. It will be on Sunday December 4.

He said that he and the officers will be going to needy schools in St. Bernard Parish in January to deliver school supplies, so we can continue to bring in supplies or monetary donations to the Christmas luncheon.

The 50/50 tickets were pulled. Rosemary Gioia said that the total money was $301.00, so the winner would get $151.00. The winner was Kathy Guaraggi.

The AMBA cards were pulled, and the winners of the Amazon gift cards were Kathy Farrell and Betty Loughlin.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

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Michaele A. “Mickey” Lux