

PUTNAM COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS

March 12, 2024

Thirteen retired teachers and one guest met at the Putnam Inn for lunch. Alan Zerkel welcomed us and Maureen Wagner introduced the speaker, Rissa Shepherd, Location Leader for the Isaiah 117 House that will soon be built in Putnam County to house county abused and neglected children who have just been removed from their homes while they await placement with kin or foster care. Lucy Wieland offered a grace before the meal. Rissa spoke to us while we ate. She informed us that fundraising will allow the house to be built fairly soon. When it is completed, volunteers will provide a caring atmosphere, clothing, toys, food, and shelter to reduce trauma for those children to be when they are first separated from their parents while welfare seeks a more permanent placement while their case is being adjudicated. Currently those already trained can provide support for DCS while they strive to provide placement for the children currently in need of emergency placement following the initial removal from their homes.

Following lunch Alan Zerkel called the meeting to order.

Terri McKee, treasurer, reported that at the beginning of the meeting there was a balance of \$2,768.68, \$135 of which needs to be paid to the state for a member's state dues paid in November.

Alan Zerkel submitted yearly total member volunteer hours in December. He did not have those statistics with him. He reported that Laura Penman and our lobbyist were able to get the state legislature to pass the 13th check initiative. He urged us to thank our legislators who worked to pass this. He praised the efforts of Laura and the IRTA for their efforts to improve the quality of life and seek COLA for Indiana retired teachers. They do not lobby for any education laws that affect the Indiana education or in service teachers, only those related to retired teachers.

Alan reminded members to spread the word about our scholarship to help county graduates who will enter their junior year of a college preparation program with an intention to teach. The scholarship will be awarded at the May meeting. Applications are on our local web site and need to be completed and submitted by April 1.

Eleanor Hauser is now living in an assisted living facility in Brazil, IN. She will undergo hip replacement surgery soon.

Pat Gottschalk, who in retirement has a Facebook business, Pat's Custom Cookies, made and decorated Easter cookies for those present.

Maureen Wagner said that the speaker for the next meeting on April 9 will be from Recovery Raw. Donations for the Putnam County Non Food Pantry were collected.

Sincerely,

Lucy Wieland, Recording Secretary