

Southeasterners CMS Energy Forerunners J.R. Whiting Plant, Erie, Michigan



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May 1, 2023 Meeting

Attendees: Tony and Linda Homolka, Harry Redford, Doug Petee, Dave Harvey, Brian Watters, Ed Weaver, Tom and Evelyn Cooper, Steve Marshall, Tom St. Bernard, Jim and Pat Lammers, Jeff and Kellie Zenz, Bill Conner, Gherin Johnston, Tom Ciacelli, Mike Costello, Jim Pearch, John Stone and Tim Kolb,

Our 50/50 winner today was Harry Redford!



Treasurer's report: \$131.00.

Jim Pearch and Tom Ciacelli paid their dues to the Forerunners today. Their membership forms will be mailed in.

Our guest speaker today was Angela Bodell, benefits specialist for CMS Energy. She took many questions from the group and clarified some misunderstandings regarding health insurance and pensions. A couple of points:

- The pension program is well-funded to carry out its commitment to retirees.
- When the decision is being made next fall for your insurance needs, be sure to compare and ask questions, even though it can be confusing.
- When changing insurance carriers, you may need to set up auto reimbursement again. It does not always transfer over.
- Keep in mind that premiums can increase yearly. Ev Cooper reported that her Medical Mutual premiums increased 2 times throughout the year with no notification.

- If you do not like the dental or drug insurance that is offered through VIA, you can purchase these programs outside of VIA and still get reimbursed.
- You **must**, however, arrange your medical insurance through VIA or you will not receive the HRA (health reimbursement arrangement)
- There were several complaints about the VIA website and customer service. The website is not as user-friendly as we wish. When we call VIA, we often must restate all of our identifying information with every person we are connected to. It gets very frustrating.
- Everyone does agree that we are grateful to have the HRA, of course. Angela was willing to listen to individual problems and get answers to those people.
- We thank Angela for taking time to visit us and being patient with our questions and comments!

Our next meeting will be **Monday, June 5, 2023 at 9:00 AM**, Monroe Bar and Grill. See you then. Have a great Memorial Day!

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Homolka