

PVREA Meeting Summary
November 7, 2012

President Guy Roggenkamp called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Following a formal presentation of the American flag, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Devon Hamner read the PVREA Statement of Purpose, followed by Guy's introduction of the officers and committee chairs: Guy Roggenkamp, president, Martha McGahan, vice-president, Mary Ann Niemoth, treasurer, and Linda Dahlstrom, secretary, Marianne Fitzgibbon, sunshine chair, Jim McGahan, tech media specialist, and Jan Barnason, NSEA-R representative.

There were 36 members and 11 guests present. Several members brought along a military veteran to honor during our annual Veteran's Day meeting.

Mary Ann reported the treasury's balance of \$3073.61, as of October 31, 2012.

President Guy introduced our guest speaker, Howard Urich, who presented a slide show about the Cornhusker Ordnance Army Plant, Grand Island, Nebraska during World War II. Both of Howard's parents worked there which gives him a great interest in its history. Later, Howard worked there himself during the Viet Nam War. Many photos were from Gene Budde's Hall County Historical Society's collection.

Ground was broken on April 1, 1942 and seven months later, it was completed, on October 31. At peak production, there were 4229 employees working to produce five million pounds of ammonium nitrate, then TNT for demolition and fragmentation bombs. Also, eleven million 105mm shells were made there. WOW (women ordnance workers) comprised 40% of the employees. Worker amenities included on and off-site housing, along with medical exams, child care, and recreational and social programs.

The plant workers had to wear special jumpsuits and headscarves. No street clothing was permitted because of possible sparks being produced from zippers. There was an unfortunate explosion in the early afternoon of May 26, 1945, when the three-story building #10 was completely leveled. Nine employees were killed, ages 19-64.

Howard's presentation inspired increased patriotism and made us think about the important role the citizen's of central Nebraska played in the winning of WW II.

President Guy reminds us to take time to vote in the NSEA election in February.

Today's refreshments were provided by Chuck and Devon Hamner, Arlene and John O'Neill, and Jan and Butch Barnason.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Dahlstrom, PVREA Secretary