

Fourth Reunion of Enderta Regional Development Association (ERDA)

The fourth reunion of ERDA was held in Seattle Washington on July 2nd and 3rd 2011. Members and supporters from all over the United States and Canada were welcomed with open arms by the Seattle Chapter with a fantastic evening gala and second day boat tour reception. \$41,000 in cash was raised over the two day event.

Prior to the event day, board members met and evaluated accomplishments and lessons learned from the past year. The following points were discussed.

- Based on a proposal from committee members in Mekele and the one year evaluation, three sites were nominated for the second ERDA project.
- Financial report was presented and a budget for the next project was proposed.
- Administrative and clerical responsibilities: The need for organization's letter head, receipts, website maintenance and upgrade were discussed.

After an agreement was reached on the above points, the board then voted for the next project. Out of the three sites that were nominated, Hidmo Elementary School in Hintallo Woreda was selected by an overwhelming number of votes to be the next project. The agenda for the general assembly meeting was then set and the board of directors concluded their meeting.

The general assembly meeting started on time at Tigray Community Center on the morning of July 2, 2011. The president welcomed all members and guests and announced the next project. He presented in detail how Hidmo Elementary School was selected. The assembly accepted the news with great enthusiasm. The treasurer then gave the annual financial report and handouts to the general public. After all questions were answered and suggestions were noted, the assembly selected the electoral committee and they took the stage. Members nominated candidates who replaced the seven outgoing board members. The following 5 new and 2 re-elected board members, as well as 3 compliance committees were elected.

Board Members

- Kassa Taddess President (re-elected)
- Teklu Mirutse Vice President
- Zemeda Ainekulu Secretary
- Belay Niguesse Vice Treasurer
- Isaiah Aynekulu Public Relations (re-elected)
- Manna Heshe
- Hagos Welesi

Compliance Committee Members

- Tenagnework Akililu
- Abreha Alemseged
- Mengistu Hadera

The new and re-elected board members took an oath to faithfully execute their duties and responsibilities and the assembly was concluded.

The fundraising festival was held at Garfield Community Center in Seattle Washington. The venue, with its large reception area and big hall perfectly accommodated everyone for the event. Upon entering the hall, ushers dressed in all white greeted guests and escorted them to their seats. The food was amazing, and people were in a great spirit, hugging and greeting each other. Seattle's chapter Chairman Mr. Teklu Mirutse welcomed everyone and gave the stage to the Master of the Ceremony Mr. Bahru G/Egzaibher who led the program all night. Mr. G/Egaziher introduced the newly elected board members. After the elected president's brief update on the upcoming project, the music started signaling it was time for the first dance.

The first dance painted a picture of what a fantastic night guests were going to have. ladies and other stage, looking traditional Enderta were in awe of ladies; so elegant!



The Seattle Chapter members took the flawless in their Garments. Guests watching the From the style of their hair to the graceful way they wore the dresses and jewelries. It was a fantastic display of one of the many Ethiopian cultures.

After the first dance, everyone was on the dance floor and enjoyed the live music. During an intermission, a video was shared with everyone to show the gratitude from back home to members and supporters in the States for completing Zeroruha Elementary School. Before the night was over, the ladies wearing colorful dresses brought everyone to their feet cheering with “Ashenda”, one of the unique Tigrayan traditional festivals for girls and young ladies.

The next day, guests were treated to a harbor boat tour to enjoy the colorful waterfront, spectacular Seattle’s city skyline, and beautiful mountain scenery. While on the boat, guests had time to relax and enjoy each other’s company, as well as dance while the DJ spun everyone’s favorite tune. After the cruise, the night wasn’t over. Guests were invited back to the hall for another night of dancing and celebration, before the fourth reunion came to an end.

The Seattle Chapter did a fantastic job of organizing the event to make it successful. Their creativity effectively raised \$41, 000 in cash while making sure all guest had a fabulous time. They accomplished two of the hardest jobs in fundraising and made it look effortless. Hats off to you all for a superb job! You have set the highest standard for all of us to follow.

On behalf of all of us and the local communities, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all of you who made generous contributions with your precious time and money to make the event a success. With your support, we are eager to start the next project. We will share the progress with all of you on the website in the near future. We welcome all your feedback and suggestions so please don’t hesitate sending them our way. We hope to see you all in Boston next year for the fifth reunion.

Thank you

ERDA Board Members