

A highly successful 3rd Reunion of ERDA

The 3rd reunion of ERDA took place at Maryland, USA, on 24th and 25th of July, 2010. Active members and supporters of the association from all over the US and Canada attended the meeting.

The secretary's brief welcome speech was followed by the president's detailed report on the activities and progress of the association. When he announces the completion of the construction of the Zerorha elementary school, which is the first project of the association, the audience exploded with joy and applause. "This is the beginning "he said" a thousand km journey starts with one step". His report was supported by a recent picture of the newly constructed class rooms and administrative block. He emphasized on the process and procedures undertaken to create a favorable condition for the implementation and completion of the project with a full support of the local community, the construction follow up committee, governmental and non-governmental bodies and concerned and dedicated individuals. He promised to keep this spirit of cooperation in the future development endeavors of the association too.

He also explained the oneness and difference of ERDA (Enderta Regional Development Association) and AYAA (Atse Yohannes Alumni Association), and the effort undertaken by ERDA's board of directors to bring a common understanding between the two sisterly associations. He said that ERDA and AYAA are one and at the same time two.

He also makes clear that the sole official website of the association is www.enderta.org which recently replaced www.Inderta.org. All other similar websites had nothing to do with the association and acknowledge that they are confusing and misleading potential members and the public at large.

The treasurer of the association resumed his presentation with a great sense of humor. He said that we did a great job with less cost than it was expected, because your money here and back home is at good hands. Each and every participant received a copy of financial report. The report included:-

- Income statement and cash flow prepared by the treasurer.
- summary and detailed income- expense statement (balance sheet) prepared by the Zerorha elementary school construction follow up committee which is organized back home to act on behalf of the association.

The question answer session was the most important part of the conference. Questions, opinions, constructive comments were entertained with a spirit of strengthening the association and overcoming its weakness. The openness and transparent policy of the association helped (contributed) to avoid the mistrust, confusion and misunderstanding by providing detail factual information on the issues raised by the audience.

Regarding membership, he said that any person who is abided by the bylaw and who pays his annual fee timely, irrespective of his political affiliation, race, gender, religion or age is welcomed by the association.

The performance of the board of directors to achieve the goal of the association and the policies adopted to bring all concerned bodies together was highly appreciated by the audience.

To sum up, the 3rd conference of ERDA was highly successful in:-

1. Bringing minds and hearts of all participants to the noble purpose of the association.
2. Avoiding the mistrust, confusion and misunderstanding.
3. Giving a clear picture on the oneness and difference between ERDA and AYAA and how far has been worked to bring mutual understanding among the two sisterly associations.
4. Informing the effort vested on bringing together the local community, governmental and nongovernmental bodies in the region to benefit the community and to complete the project with less cost and in short span of time “some succeeded because they are destined to, but most succeeded because they are determined to.”

In the evening the ERDA guests enjoyed a night filled with cultural singers, dancing and exquisite cuisine. The extraordinary joy and happiness of the members and supporters was the outcome of the morning session. During the fundraising event guests contributed about \$24440 in cash and pledge to the organizations developmental programs. We will do all our effort to collect the pledge on time. The class rooms and the administrative block will be furnished with chairs, desks, shelves and all necessary (important) materials before the beginning of the coming academic year. “The value of a man resides in what he gives and not in what he is capable of receiving “.

The following day ERDA guests were invited to a picnic in one of Maryland area beautiful parks. Hospitality was the order of the day. While enjoying the food, conversation on the association’s achievement and future plans was here and there. After the remarkable closing thoughts from the president of the association, the reunion successfully and colorfully came to an end.

We would like to thank heart fully for those who make generous contributions and for those who dedicated their time and energy for the noble vision of our association. We would also like to thank Radio Merhawit, Aiga Forum, Tigrai.net and Tigrai online for their air time and web pages dedicated to promote the association objectives and to advertise and report the colorful event. We appreciate the administration, office of education, the committee and the local community for the hard work and cooperation rendered to facilitate and complete the project.