

REASONS TIHAA IS DOWNSIZING

Let us elaborate on why the TI Houston Alumni Association (TIHAA), aka TI Retiree Club, is downsizing into just a monthly social luncheon.

1) The COVID-19 pandemic instilled a fear of social gatherings (of all kinds) due to virus spread. Before the vaccine, the spread and deaths were in the news every day, so the TIHAA board wisely shut down all activities in early 2020 hoping the virus would die out. But the virus mutated (variants) over two plus years, causing hesitancy to start up meetings until all were vaccinated/boosted. COVID is not going away anytime soon.

2) Our longtime luncheon meeting place, America Buffet in Stafford, closed in 2020 due to poor 'pandemic' attendance. A brief reopening also failed. The building is now being remodeled internally. A buffet close by, the China Bear, also shut down in 2020 and later became the New China Restaurant, sushi/seafood variety. Luckily, Luby's Cafeteria (10575 West Airport at Murphy, near former TI site) remained open and it was chosen as our preferred social gathering place, 11:30 am, 3rd Tuesday, monthly. They have a wide variety of salads, entrees and desserts. Our first meeting in July had about 40 *happy* members show up.

3) The TIHAA board, 10 members most serving between 7-17 years, rotating from one duty to another (or holding 2 duties), would like someone new to serve so as to gracefully transition out, but no volunteers stepped up. Thus, we had a unanimous vote to downsize into a 'social only' luncheon club except for a (condensed) website, maintained for the near future to help ease communication.

4) As the club members age (and die) and quit driving (especially at night), they no longer regularly attend anything offered. Attendance at each event has dwindled considerably, including the monthly luncheons around nine not counting the board. The downsized TI [employees] transferred to the Sugar Land building has not provided any 'retiree' recruits to join the club in recent times. Natural attrition is taking its toll in many ways.

5) TI support for the club, e.g., the TI-BBQ held at Stafford Centre in the past, has evaporated, unfortunately. Usually, 6 or more new members (plus many renewals) came out of each BBQ. Internal contacts within TI have been laid off or retired, making arrangements difficult. Many members prefer a paper vigor, mailed rather than e-mail. Printing the vigors within TI is no longer feasible.

- by Daryl Moss