Minutes – August 14, 2024

Reminder – You don't have to wait for the next month's newsletter to read the minutes. They're posted on our website shortly after each meeting.

President Gary Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 10 a.m., noting that the agenda was a full one. **Ken Seitz** motioned to approve the minutes as posted; **Tanya Davis** and **Jerry Norton** seconded the motion, virtually simultaneously. The minutes were approved by acclamation.

Pres. Gary thanked **Tanya Davis** and her group for this month's baked goods, which echoed the club's new logo colors in frosting.

Treasurer Bill Gates reported that the club has $1400.24 in checking, $7733.24 in reserve accounts and earned $53.17 in interest. He added that it can take a while for checks written to the club to clear the Newcomers account, especially if they were sent via mail; no need for concern if a check doesn't clear for a month or so.

The group recognized nearly a dozen members with August birthdays. Happy birthday to all!

Linda Ash of We Care said that she sent a sympathy card to **Molly Fitzpatrick** on her brother's passing. She also sent a get well card to **Gary Fitzpatrick** during his recent hospital stay and will send cards to **Sharon Pearson**, who had foot surgery, and **Edie Marks**, who had pneumonia. Linda's husband **Wayne Ash** also will get a card for his shoulder surgery, just not in the mail. She noted that Meals on Wheels still desperately needs volunteer drivers.

The Membership Committee's **Larrayne Zygmunt** reported three visitors in attendance -- **Brett Verlen** from New York, who plans to join Newcomers; **Judy Keegan** from Florida; and **Peggy Ballard**, a long-time Grand Junction resident. All three received welcoming applause.

Ken Seitz offered two updates: 1) About 62 members have signed up for the Newcomers Labor Day picnic on September 2, so there's room at the Canyon View picnic site for 50 more. August 27 is the cutoff date for reservations. The sign-up form was in the newsletter and on the club's website. 2) Wine Club's next event is September 19 from 4-6 at the Art Center, featuring Spanish wines and appetizers. Cost is $25/person. After that, the next wine tasting will be in November.

Douglas Grodt of the Hiking Club said that, during summer months, the club normally hikes on the Grand Mesa to escape the heat. Because some hikers objected to the relatively long drive to the Mesa and because temperatures are moderating, he said he's scheduling upcoming hikes in the Grand Valley, beginning in August.

Bill Gates said that the Tour and Lunch committee, formed after Nile Leach stepped down, is planning a tour of Colorado National Monument on September 25 at 10. It will be headed by a U.S. Park Ranger. The tour sign-up sheet will be available at the September 11 coffee meeting. **Suzan Fournier** added that the committee plans a consistent schedule of tours/lunches on the fourth Wednesday of each month, with sign-up opportunity two weeks prior, at the second-Wednesday coffee meetings.

Tanya Davis said that registration for the 2024-2025 Dinner Club season will conclude on August 25, when the membership form and $25-per-couple check is due. The form was in the July newsletter and posted on the club website.

Ruth Anna, Mesa County Libraries Foundation Board President, asked fellow Newcomers to consider volunteering for one of several foundation committees that work to expand library programs and services. Among the programs: Summer Reading and the Adult Learning Center. She also said that she and

husband **Larry** have season tickets to Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra performances but can't use their October 13 matinee tickets. On that date, GJSO will be performing their second Classics Concert of the season at Asteria, the new Colorado Mesa University performing arts theatre. Anyone interested should call or email Ruth.
Stan Zygmunt, a New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute volunteer, noted that its fall semester is coming soon. The class catalog will be available online on September 4; registration will take place September 11-16 and classes will run between September 30 and November 15. About 80 classes are already on the roster and new ones are being added. For more information, go to www.newdimensionsgj.org. In addition, Stan said that Midday with New Dimensions is expanding its noon-time classes to Mesa County Public Library's Clifton branch. On September 10, water law expert **Mark Hermanstad** will present "Crisis on the Colorado River" in the Clifton branch Community Room.

Suzan Fournier reported on Armchair Travelers, a program created through a partnership between Newcomers Club and Mesa County Public Libraries. After taking a summer break, Armchair Travelers will resume on September 5 at 6:30 in the Central Public Library's Community Room. **Jenn Moore**, executive director of EUREKA! McConnell Math and Science Museum, will describe her recent Indonesian travels. Suzan also said that, during its upcoming season, the Armchair Travelers program is expanding beyond its Central Library location to include two events at the Clifton branch and two at the Fruita branch.

Susan Norton said that the August 13 Music in the Grapevines concert featuring Still House String Band was postponed due to rain. It has been rescheduled for August 26; anyone with tickets to the postponed performance can use them on the new date. Music in the Grapevines will conclude its summer 2024 season on September 4, with the ever-popular Stray Grass.

President Gary said that, as the number of people moving to the Grand Junction area continues to grow -- especially people moving here in retirement -- he wanted to make sure that Newcomers Club continues to fulfill its foundational mission. That mission, spelled out in the club bylaws, is to provide a welcoming resource for social contacts, friendships, activities and interests for recent arrivals. While many newcomers have found the club informally, through word of mouth, he wanted to make it easier for them to locate the club and connect with us, if they choose. He recruited Newcomer **Patty Perrin**, a marketing and communications professional, to develop a more formal, updated outreach program. Patty described the months-long project she spearheaded, working with the Newcomers Club executive board and with **Mike Avery**, the club's website manager. After reviewing multiple options, the board approved hiring experienced local graphic designer **Jorde Matthews**, creative director and owner of Be Someone Design Co. Jorde helped develop a distinctive brand identity, complete with a new logotype, to set Newcomers apart from other community organizations that new arrivals might encounter. It showcases the club's geographic location (featuring Mount Garfield's outline), plus its active, welcoming membership. The revamped website can still be accessed through www.gjnewcomers.org. It uses a consistent color palette and large, legible type fonts, plus streamlined organization that makes it easier to find what you're looking for -- whether you're a potential new member or an existing one. There's also more information about volunteer opportunities, both inside the club and in the community at large, as well as the monthly minutes. In the club business section, members can find the club directory which will be password protected. The password will be provided to members in an upcoming email. Patty also provided members with a club business card, featuring the new Newcomers logo and a QR code that links to the updated website. The cards are a tool for current members to hand to non-members when describing the Newcomers organization and its activities. Next steps in the project: producing a club brochure and putting it in the hands of local realtor groups who interact with new homebuyers and renters. She asked for volunteers to help with realtor outreach, as well as promotion through local news media.

Guest speakers were **Maeva Ward**, Artistic and Rehearsal Director for Colorado West Performing Arts Company (CWPAC), **and Katie Grace-Shamburek**, a dancer with the group. The company is a non-profit that cultivates high-level dance performance and makes it accessible to the public. It's the first professional ballet company on the Western Slope, hiring professional dancers from around the nation and the world for three full-length ballet performances per season. This season, performances will be *Alice's Wonderland* in October at the Avalon Theatre, *Nutcracker* in December at CMU's new Asteria theatre and *Coppelia* in March, also at CMU. CWPAC also performs shortened versions of ballets for D51

students during school field trips. Because the ballet performances are costly to produce -- $425,000 for last season alone -- the speakers invited Newcomers to attend performances and donate to support the company.

Lisa Seitz and **Ruth Anna** conducted the monthly raffle.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05.

-Lois Leach, Secretary