

Minutes: August 13, 2025

CLUB BUSINESS

President Gary Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order, noting that it would be shorter than the club's typical hour-long meetings, since the planned speaker had cancelled with little notice. A couple of members who had meeting announcements claimed that Gary had asked them to speak very slowly to help fill the time, but that remains unconfirmed. He asked if there were changes or additions to the minutes for the July meeting, Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve the minutes as is. **Tanya Davis** so moved, **Ruth Anna** seconded and the minutes were approved by affirmation.

In the absence of **Treasurer Bill Gates**, **President Gary** delivered the club's financial report -- \$4,863.13 in checking, with \$0.38 in interest, and \$5,341.05 in reserves. He added that the club's account balances typically grow during the first half of the fiscal year, when annual membership dues are paid, but decline during the period when the bulk of the club's major annual expenditures are made -- for the Labor Day barbeque and the holiday party. "We're now entering that period," he advised.

President Gary also thanked **Tanya Davis** and her hospitality team for yet another array of meeting treats and congratulated members celebrating August birthdays -- a few of whom volunteered their ages.

Karen Dreher has taken over the club's We Care program, continuing the work done for years by **Linda Ash**. The program involves sending greeting cards to club members who are ill, have been hospitalized or have lost a loved one. It relies on tips from members who know someone who should receive a card. **Karen** has sent several cards recently, based on tips she received by phone, email or text message. She prefers texts sent to 303-475-5776, but also will receive calls and emails. In **Karen's** absence, **Jean Greenfield** announced that cards went to **Bob Brown**, who had gallbladder surgery; **Ruth Anna** and **Deane Drury**, who both had shoulder surgery; **Mike Avery**, who had knee surgery; **Caroline Ely**, who had surgery in Massachusetts; and **Ron Bladow** and **Linda Ash**, who both have been ill.

Larryne Zygmunt of the membership committee said that there were no new members or guests at the meeting.

Molly Fitzpatrick and **Stacie Hawkins** conducted the monthly raffle, which generated \$103 in proceeds to help support the monthly coffee and treats.

Because there was no speaker, the meeting adjourned early, allowing members to linger, socialize and enjoy more of the hospitality committee's masterpieces. While speakers are interesting and informative, Newcomers meetings didn't always have them — so the August meeting was a throw-back to earlier decades.

CLUB EVENTS

Douglas Grodt, who organizes and leads less strenuous local hikes, said that a planned hike on Thursday, August 14, needs more people to sign up in order to make it feasible. It involves a roughly two-hour hike on the east side of Crag Crest (sometimes called Craig Crest) on the Grand Mesa. The area is cooler and currently less smoky than the Grand Valley. Anyone who's interested should contact Douglas at newcomerhikers@gmail.com.

Lisa Seitz said that the clock is ticking for members to register for the September 1 Labor Day picnic at Canyon View Park. The sign-up deadline is August 26, with checks mailed to Ken Seitz, 2675 Autumn Brook Court by that date. Cost for members is \$14/person; \$18/person for non-members. Chicken, pulled pork, potato salad, coleslaw and a vegetarian option will be served, along with a cookie. Non-alcoholic beverages also will be provided. Anyone who wants to bring an alcoholic beverage can do so, as long as it's in a non-glass container. Lisa also said that the next Wine Club tasting event will be Thursday, November 13 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Art Center of Western Colorado. Wines from South Africa will be sampled. More details will follow, as the event gets closer.

Suzan Fournier announced that the monthly Tour and Lunch program will resume on September 18, with a tour of the Atomic Legacy Cabin, which showcases the history of uranium mining and processing on the Colorado Plateau, plus Grand Junction's unique contributions to the Manhattan Project and subsequent Cold War programs. The tour will begin at 11 a.m., followed by lunch at Dragon Treasure. Many folks had already signed up, but Suzan said several openings are still available. She also said that the Atomic Legacy Cabin tour replaces a Tour and Lunch day trip to the Meeker Classic Sheepdog Championships, originally planned for September 5. That trip was cancelled after fires in the Meeker area caused partial closure of Colorado Highway 13 between Rifle and Meeker. **President Gary** commented that the Lee Fire near Meeker has become the fifth largest in Colorado history, growing at the rate of 30,000 acres a day, with a 170-mile perimeter -- a size that's tough to envision.

Carolyn White pointed out that the influx of people to the area in the 1940s who worked on uranium-processing tasks led to the founding of the Grand Junction Newcomers Club. Because their work was highly sensitive and classified, the newcomers couldn't talk to their neighbors about it, so they created a group where they could socialize more freely.

Suzan also plugged the Newcomers knitting/crocheting club, which meets at 10:30 a.m. on the third Monday of each month. During the summer, the club has been meeting under shade trees at Sherwood Park; once temperatures cool, members take turns hosting at their homes.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Stan Zygmunt, Newcomers member who volunteers with New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute, said that the course catalog for the fall/winter term will be available for online viewing on September 3. Registration will take place September 10-17 and the classes themselves will run between September 29 and November 14. "We already have 89 classes ready to go, and we're hoping to add a few more during the next two weeks," he said. He also read a sampling of brand-new class titles on a wide variety of topics.

A free one-hour Midday with New Dimensions lecture titled "Butterfly Ecotourism in Central and South America" also will be offered at noon on Thursday, August 14, at the Mesa County Public Library's central branch. Claudette Moore, a retired aquatic ecologist, has traveled in Central and South America, witnessed the great diversity of tropical butterflies and photographed many of them. In addition, at noon on Thursday, September 4, a speaker from the Palisade Insectary will discuss the organization's evolving programs developed during its 80-year history. The presentation will be offered at the Clifton branch library.

Terri Ahern, Newcomers member and long-time Colorado National Monument volunteer, is planning to lead a hike on the Beard family sheep ranch for an upcoming New Dimensions class. "We're still working with the Bureau of Land Management to get the necessary permits," she said, "but we should be able to offer it as a fun little history hike." Terri also will display an extensive collection of "then and now" historical Colorado National Monument photos on Monday, August 25, from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the monument's visitors center. She originally organized the display to help celebrate the monument's 60th anniversary.

Susan Norton announced the final concert in the Music in the Grapevines summer series at Two Rivers Winery, featuring the Still House String Band, performing at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, September 3. The band was chosen as the 2024 winner in Telluride's blue grass festival band competition. Tickets are \$20 if purchased in advance — either online at artcenter.org or in person at the Art Center of Western Colorado's gift shop — or \$25 if purchased at the concert itself. All proceeds go to support the Art Center's programs.

Suzan Fournier reminded the group that, following a summer break, the Armchair Travelers monthly programs will resume in September. The programs are offered through a partnership between Grand Junction's Newcomers Club and Mesa County Public Libraries. The September-through-May season will kick off on Thursday, September 4 at 6:30 p.m., with a presentation on the Navajo Trail in Arizona and Nevada by Dr. Peter Booth, former executive director for the Museum of Western Colorado and current advancement director for the Art Center. Doors open at 6 p.m., and it's recommended to arrive early, since Peter Booth is a well-known and popular presenter.

— Lois Leach, Secretary