

Minutes - February 11

CLUB BUSINESS

President Gary Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 10 am, noting that the facility's microphone isn't working, so people will have to speak up. He asked if anyone had additions or corrections to the January minutes as included in the club newsletter and posted on the website. Hearing none, he called for motions to approve the minutes as is. **Ruth Anna** so moved; **Tanya Davis** seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved by acclamation.

President Gary acknowledged folks with February birthdays and thanked **Tanya** for the Valentine-themed treats; she in turn thanked hospitality committee members who contributed goodies -- **Alberta Husch, Jean Greenfield, Debbie DeRoo** and **Lynne Sommers**. Wonderful selection, ladies!

Treasurer Bill Gates reported that the club's checking account contains \$6,811.89 and generated \$0.50 interest, while the reserve account is sitting at \$5,431.18. He added that this time of year sees an accumulation of funds for the club as members pay their annual dues. This year, he said that accumulation is happening faster than is typical.

The membership committee's **Jean Greenfield** said that two visitors were in attendance - **Gisela Urieta** from Palm Springs, California, and **Rick Haas** from Morrison, Colorado. Rick Haas also joined the club today.

Karen Dreher, who conducts the We Care program, said that she has sent get-well cards to **Ellen Moore**, who had hip replacement surgery (with knee replacement planned for later); **Linda and Wayne Ash**, as Linda deals with memory issues, and to **Ila Fitzler**, who broke a bone in her foot. Karen sent a sympathy card to **Tanya Davis**, whose brother passed, and also will send one to **Lisa Seitz**, whose mother is in hospice care.

President Gary announced that nominations are now being accepted for three positions on the club's executive board -- president, second vice president and secretary. The three positions all involve two-year terms, starting with the April board meeting in two months. They are elected in even years, while the first vice president and treasurer are elected in odd years, to avoid having a board entirely consisting of new office-holders. Incumbents for the three positions -- Gary Fitzpatrick as president, Stacie Hawkins as second vice president and Lois Leach as secretary -- have agreed to continue in their respective roles, if no one else is interested in serving.

At the meeting's end, **Molly Fitzpatrick** and **Jessica Ipnar** conducted the monthly raffle. Molly encouraged members to donate items for the March raffle, since the supply is getting low.

CLUB EVENTS

Douglas Grodt, who leads easy hikes for senior Newcomers on Thursdays, said that the hike scheduled for tomorrow, February 12, has been cancelled since the weather forecast calls for rainfall -- which could lead to a muddy hiking path. Anyone interested in getting information about future hikes should email Douglas at newcomerhikers@gmail.com, to be added to his extensive email distribution list.

Ken Seitz said that the January wine tasting event was very popular, with 60 people attending. He said the next event will be Thursday, March 26, from 4-6 pm at the Art Center of Western Colorado and will feature wines from Portugal. For people who sign up, the payment deadline is one week prior, on March 19. Once that deadline has passed, there will be no opportunities for last-minute reservations; the headcount of paid attendees is immediately provided to Fisher's Liquor Barn for wine-ordering purposes. When making their payment, Ken reminded folks to make the check out to Newcomers Club of Grand Junction, not to him personally. Once payments have been received, **Lisa Seitz** will email folks to confirm the payment.

Bill Gates said that the next Tour and Lunch event, set for February 19 at the Ute Water treatment facility, requires a background check because a water treatment plant is part of

the nation's infrastructure. He advised anyone who signed up for the tour but is unsure if they completed their background information to talk to him right away, since he must provide a list of attendees to Ute Water. **Jean Greenfield** added that the March Tour and Lunch event will be Friday, March 20, at the new Hilltop office at 359 Main Street (site of the former downtown Wells Fargo Bank). The sign-up sheet was available at the meeting. Those who sign up will meet at the "Chrome on the Range" buffalo sculpture in front of Hilltop, tour the facility for about an hour and 15 minutes and eat lunch at the Rockslide Brewery afterward.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Susan Norton, who volunteers for The Art Center of Western Colorado, described the center's next two winter concerts. They both begin at 7:30 pm; tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door (if available). On Saturday, February 28, Jeneve Rose, a former American Idol contestant, will perform. She plays a wide array of instruments, covers multiple genres and tells jokes and stories to the audience. The final winter concert will take place on Saturday, April 11, and will feature the Marc Allen Band. The band played during the Art Center's 2024 Music in the Grapevines summer concert series. Susan also mentioned that the Valentines Day event, called Sing a Song of Valentines, will be a cabaret-style experience involving a collaboration with The Theatre Project. It runs from 7-9 pm.

On behalf of **Susan Fournier**, **Nile Leach** announced two Armchair Travel events in March. The Armchair Travel program is a partnership between Mesa County Libraries and Newcomers Club, involving local travelers sharing their experiences, in words and pictures. The events are free, open to the public and often well attended. On Thursday, March 5, **Susan Fournier** will present her trip to Greece at the Central Library, 443 N. 6th. Doors open at 6 pm; the presentation runs from 6:30-7:30. On Thursday, March 19, **Carla Sherrick** will share her multigenerational Italian trip at the Clifton branch library, 3270 D-1/2 Rd.

Stan Zygmunt, who volunteers with New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute, said the winter-spring session is in full swing. He noted that people can still sign up for winter-spring classes that have openings by going to www.newdimensionsgj.org and clicking on the "classes" icon. Also, on February 12, Midday with New Dimensions will offer a free one-

hour lecture called "The Great Chicago Fire of 1871" at the Mesa County Central Library. The presenter is Sheree Fukai, a retired engineer who lived most of her life in Chicago, leading to a deep interest in its unique history.

GUEST SPEAKER

Libby Collins, project manager for Colorado West Land Trust, described the trust's priorities -- conserving land, protecting and restoring water resources, supporting habitat resilience and connecting with the community. She said the trust has been around since 1980, when a group of peach growers banded together to ensure that agricultural land would continue to be used for agricultural purposes, not residential or commercial development. Since then, the trust has conserved 150,000 acres, including 18,000 irrigated acres and 2,500 specifically devoted to fruit production. It currently serves six counties -- Mesa, Delta, Montrose, Ouray, Gunnison and San Miguel. In addition to conserving land to grow food, the trust focuses on preserving wildlife habitats and scenic byways and providing open spaces for community members and tourists to enjoy. While some of the trust's funding comes from the Colorado lottery and limited federal funding, most of the operating dollars come from donations. "We realize that Western Colorado's population is growing, so we can't conserve all our land," she said. "We can't close the gate to growth." Instead, she said, the trust focuses on specific properties whose landowners want to keep the character of the area intact -- and "keep the West the West."

Lois Leach

Secretary