MINUTES - AUGUST 12, 2026

CLUB BUSINESS

President Gary Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 10 am by calling for changes to the July meeting minutes. Hearing none, **Tanya Davis** moved to approve the minutes as is and **Bruce Williams** seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer Bill Gates reported that the club's checking account has $8,414.34, with $.71 in interest. The reserve account has $5,516.08. He also mentioned that Newcomers is now offering Zelle, a digital payment methodology that members can use when making payments to Newcomers -- for club events or membership fees. Zelle offers an alternative way to writing and mailing a check. It's available by enrolling with most banks and credit unions, Treasurer Bill said. Information on using Zelle is posted on the Newcomers website. **President Gary** added that Zelle transfers money directly between U.S. bank accounts, so it's exceptionally secure, and there's no fee for sending or receiving money.

President Gary thanked **Tanya Davis** for the array of pre-meeting goodies served. "As always, it's terrific," he said. He also wished happy birthday to a handful of Newcomers in attendance who celebrate August birthdays.

In **Karen Dreher's** absence, **Jean Greenfield** announced cards sent to members through the We Care program. Karen sent a sympathy card to **John Neste**, on the loss of his wife **Judy**, who died following three years of treatment for ovarian cancer. John and Judy were the founders of Newcomers' Movie Club, a group that has been meeting to discuss movies for more than a decade.

In her role on the Membership Committee, **Jean Greenfield** welcomed four visitors to the meeting -- **Martha Gregg** from Wichita, Kansas; **DeAnn Baker** from Annapolis, Maryland; **Susan DeHart** from Kernersville, North Carolina and **Ruth Martin** from Denver. A warm welcome to you all!

President Gary made a final plea for one or more volunteers to organize this year's Newcomers Holiday Party. "It's always a fun event and people who have organized it in the past are available to offer information and advice," he said. "If no one steps up by our September meeting, we will have to go without a party this year." **Jane Nakkache** said she would co-chair the party if someone else also volunteered to work with her. President Gary said he knew of a possible co-chair, who is currently out of town. He added that, while in recent years the Holiday Party has been held in the dining room at the Masonic Lodge/Grand Valley Event Center, other venues could also be considered by the organizers.

Stacie Hawkins noted that the monthly raffle was suspended over the summer but will resume in September. She reminded members to bring in donations -- new or used items that others might

appreciate. Raffle proceeds, she said, pay for the materials and ingredients **Tanya** and her Hospitality Committee use to create the monthly meeting treats.

CLUB EVENTS

Douglas Grodt, who leads hikes for Newcomers members, said the next hike will be Thursday, August 13 -- provided that two more people sign up. If they do, the hike will be on the Grand Mesa's Water Dog trail, where the temperatures are forecast to be in the 60-degree range. If not enough people show interest, he said this week's hike will be cancelled.

Ken and Lisa Seitz reported that the next wine-tasting event also will take place on August 13 and will feature Greek wines. Since the event is imminent, the deadline for reservations has passed. August 13 also will be the final wine-tasting event of the year. "Tentatively, we will resume in January," Ken said. "We'll keep you posted."

Ken Seitz also noted that the Labor Day BBQ will take place on Monday, September 7, from 5-8 pm at Canyon View Park's Grand Shelter. It will cost $13 per person for members and $20 per person for non-members. In addition to barbeque food, water will be provided. Those who wish can also bring their own adult beverage as long as it's in a non-glass container.

Lois Leach, part of the Tour and Lunch team, said that tours will resume in September, beginning with a tour of the CareFlight of the Rockies hangar near Grand Junction Regional Airport. It will take place on Thursday, September 17, at 10:30 am. CareFlight of the Rockies is a non-profit critical care medical transport organization that serves western Colorado, including Intermountain Health/St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. The tour will be conducted by CareFlight medical personnel and will include fixed-wing aircraft used to transport patients longer distances. A sign-up sheet will be available at the September 9 coffee meeting.

Stacie Hawkins said that people wishing to join or rejoin Newcomers Dinner Club can make their payments electronically, using Zelle, as soon as the system goes live on Friday, August 14. Current Dinner Club members will receive an email with instructions on making Zelle payments. Paying by check also will be available. The cut-off for final Dinner Club sign-up will be September 1.

Ruth Anna thanked folks for bringing in empty egg cartons and reminded them why it's important to continue: The Community Food Bank needs egg cartons to store eggs, which arrive at the food bank in huge containers and need to be sorted into family-size distributions. After each monthly Newcomers meeting, **Larry Anna** loads the donated cartons into his vehicle and takes them to the food bank -- a contribution that's greatly appreciated. **Ruth** also said that she and Larry have tickets for the Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra's symphonic concert "Spirited Away" at the Avalon Theater at 3 pm on October 4. Anyone interested should contact them.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Susan Fournier is the Newcomers Club representative who works with Mesa County Public Libraries on the Armchair Travel program, a partnership that brings free presentations from domestic and international travelers from September-May. She said that the first presentation of the fall-winter season will take place on Thursday, September 3, at the Mesa County Central Library. Doors open at 6 pm and the presentation runs from 6:30-7:30. **Esther Schneller**, a Newcomers member, will share her experiences exploring "The Dakotas" -- both North and South Dakota. The presentations are free and open to the public. "We often have a full house," Susan said, "so it's good to arrive early."

Susan Norton, who volunteers with the Art Center of Western Colorado, announced that the next concert in the Music in the Grapevines summer concert series will take place on Tuesday, August 18, from 7-9 pm at Two Rivers Winery. The Feeding Giants band will perform, featuring the same lead singer who performs with the Queen Bees group. "Feeding Giants was new with us last year, and we got lots of positive feedback," Susan said. Tickets are $20 in advance -- available online at www.artcenterguild.org or at the Art Center gift shop -- or $25 at the concert. All proceeds go to support the Art Center's programs.

Stan Zygmunt, who volunteers for New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute, said the fall session is "just around the corner." So far, 111 classes on a wide variety of topics are planned. Classes will be listed online on September 2; registration will run from September 9-16, and classes will begin September 28. In the meantime, Midday with New Dimensions will offer a September 9 presentation by Mesa County Clerk Bobbie Gross at the Clifton Branch Library. She will present a virtual tour of the Election Department and voting process.

GUEST SPEAKER

Emilee Powell, Executive Director-Housing Resources of Western Colorado, described the goals of the 50-year-old Housing Resources non-profit. "Whenever we approach the complicated issue of housing and housing programs, we first have to define our target audiences," she said. "Who are we trying to help -- and how?" She said the organization's programs are organized around three key target groups -- existing homeowners, people looking to buy a home, and renters. For those who already own a home, Housing Resources can offer help in fixing their property, making it more energy-efficient and perhaps gaining access to mortgage loan assistance. Specific services for homeowners are available in six Western Colorado counties, including Mesa County. For people who want to purchase a home, there's counseling on how to approach the process, a Savings Booster program, and even assistance in acquiring renewable housing. For renters, actual rental units are available in growing numbers, all at below-market rates. Housing Resources also works directly with other non-profit organizations that try to find solutions

to the housing crisis -- often while constantly trying to get and keep grant money. "It's definitely a big challenge," she said, "but not a hopeless one."

Lois Leach

Secretary