CLUB BUSINESS

First Vice President Tom Politzer opened the meeting at 10 am., explaining that **President Gary Fitzpatrick** is out of town -- and on safari. He called for a motion to approve the August meeting minutes, as published in the club newsletter and posted on the website. **Dale Gates** so motioned; **Ruth Anna** seconded and the minutes were approved by a voice vote of members.

Treasurer Bill Gates reported that the club has $8,310.41 in checking, with $.71 in interest, and $5,516.08 in reserves.

Vice President Tom thanked **Tanya Davis** and her Hospitality team -- **Dale Gates**, **Alberta Husch**, **Debbie DeRoo**, **Jean Greenfield** and **Lisa Seitz** -- for the delicious baked goods. He was particularly appreciative since Tanya had cataract surgery two days ago, but pulled the team's contributions together -- and attended the meeting -- nonetheless.

On behalf of the Membership Committee, Jean Greenfield announced that several people are first-time visitors to the club -- and all of them became members today. They are **Suzanne Hetts** and **Don Estep**, who previously lived in Arizona and various parts of Colorado; **Mary Jackson**, who moved here from Lawrence, Kansas; **Julie Montgomery**, who came from Texas; **Jeneve Hopkinson**, who came from Minneapolis; and **Deb and Doug Mueller**, who came from Kansas City. With the addition of these new members, the club's membership is 379 people.

Karen Dreher, who manages the We Care program, said that she sent only one card this month -- a sympathy card to **Debbie Rieger,** whose husband was in hospice care and then passed away. "With 379 members, you'd think there would be more occasions when a member could use a get-well card or a sympathy card," Karen said. "If you know of someone who falls into that category, just text me at 303-475-5776. You can also email me (niagaraway@comcast.net), although I prefer a text."

Stacie Hawkins and **Jean Greenfield** conducted the monthly raffle. Raffle items included two cream cheese-filled pound cakes.

CLUB EVENTS

Stacie Hawkins led the group in applauding **Ken and Lisa Seitz** and their team of helpers for pulling together the Labor Day barbeque. "It's a lot of work, and we appreciate it," Stacie said. "We had 72 people in attendance," Ken said. "Everyone seemed to have a good time -- at least I had a good time," he noted. He added that the Wine Club, which he and Lisa also organize, will have its next meeting in January. More details to come.

Lois Leach of the Tour and Lunch team said that the sign-up sheet for the September 17 tour of CareFlight of the Rockies' hangar is full. Anyone who wants to add their name to a waiting list can do so by emailing Lois at decsaj12948@gmail.com. If one of the Newcomers who signed up cancels during the next week, Lois will notify you.

In the absence of **Steve Likovich**, who organized the next tour, Lois added that it will take place on October 28 at 10 am. It will involve a tour of the HopeWest PACE program facility, 2754 Compass Drive. HopeWest PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) is a one-of-a-kind program in Mesa County that delivers all needed ongoing medical and support services to seniors so they can live in their own homes and remain independent as long as possible. For more information or to sign up, email Steve at stlikovich@gmailcom.

Douglas Grodt, who leads gentle hikes for Newcomers members, said the September 10 hike will be on the Audubon Trail near the Redlands. "For people who've been asking for level hiking surfaces, this trail is level, with either gravel or blacktop." Douglas maintains a large email distribution list of members interested in future hikes. If you'd like to be added to the list, contact him at newcomershikers@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Suzan Fournier represents Newcomers Club, along with **Esther Schneller,** in partnering with Mesa County Libraries to present the Armchair Travel program. From September through May, the program offers monthly presentations by people who have recently traveled. Suzan noted that Esther presented a "riveting account" of her extensive travels through North and South Dakota. The next presentation will be October 1 at the Central Branch Library, 443 North 6th Street, and features **Loraine Jensen**, founder and executive director of the American Association of Runic Studies. She will explain the search for and meanings of runes, an ancient writing system used by Germanic and Nordic tribes from the third to thirteenth centuries. Doors open at 6:00 pm and the presentation runs from 6:30-7:30.

Stan Zygmunt is a Newcomers member who volunteers for New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute. He said that registration for New Dimensions' fall-winter session opened today and will continue through September 16. Classes will take place during the window between September 28 and November 13. (Different classes are scheduled for different times and durations.) There are 113 volunteer-led classes on a wide variety of topics on the roster. Stan also mentioned that Midday with New Dimensions will offer a presentation on October 8 at the Mesa County Central Branch Library Featuring **Ken Mabery**, a long-time National Park Service ranger, discussing "National Monuments You've Never Heard of and Why You Should Know About Them."

GUEST SPEAKER

Curtis Englehart, executive director of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP), explained that the organization is a 501(c)3 non-profit whose mission is to: 1) help existing businesses in the Grand Valley expand and 2) attract new businesses -- those that are a strategic fit for the area. He said that the partnership helps qualifying businesses take advantage of federal or state-funded incentives, deal with regulatory processes and even find a suitable site for their operations. For example, by taking advantage of the Rural Jump-Start Program, a Colorado economic development initiative that provides tax relief and cash grants to new or relocating businesses, GJEP has helped more than 30 local rural businesses add more jobs to the economy, qualifying for an eight-year state tax holiday. When it comes to attracting businesses from other locations, Englehart said, “GJEP is very selective.” Every year GJEP leads a multi-day tour for professional site selectors -- location specialists with 100-plus clients in a wide swath of industries. The tour, dubbed the Site Selection Familiarization Tour, showcases the Grand Valley's business climate, economic potential and geographic strengths. "We don't have a 'Take all comers' attitude," he said. "We vet the businesses as much as they vet us as a location. We're not trying to grow into Denver; we have a smart-growth strategy."

Through its efforts, GJEP has helped increase the size of the Grand Valley civilian workforce to about 78,000 (an eight-year high), boost the number of local jobs paying more than the median wage (an average of $68,000/year versus a median of $57,000) and diversify the local economy. In 2025 alone, GJEP accounted for a $195,000,000 positive economic impact for the Grand Valley -- up from $10,500,000 in 2022. "For every $1 we get from investors, we generate $202 in positive economic impact."

Lois Leach, Secretary