



Minutes May 14, 2025

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.

CLUB BUSINESS

President Gary Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order promptly at 10 am and asked for a motion to approve the April minutes. **Susan Norton** so moved and **Dale Gates** seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer Bill Gates reported that the club is "still solvent," with \$5,097.65 in checking and \$5,296.33 in a CD. He drily noted that he's "thrilled" that the checking account earned 40 cents in interest.

Tanya Davis was recognized for producing a wonderful array of treats for the coffee meeting --- this month, all by herself.

President Gary asked if there were any May birthdays. It took a few minutes, but gradually several people raised their hands. Despite their hesitancy, they were recognized with applause.

Linda Ash, who sends greeting cards to Newcomers members who have been hospitalized or lost a loved one, said she sent one card during the past month - to **Cecelia Spangler**, who had a stroke. Linda said she didn't have additional information about how Cecilia is doing but would update the group if she learned more.

The membership committee's **Jean Greenfield** reported we had several new members and 14 first-time visitors in attendance at the meeting -- a record number for a single coffee meeting. New members are **Michele Schaal** from Delta, **Candis Anhalt** from

Virginia, **Penny Polowchena** from Glenwood Springs and **Lisa Arata** from Greeley. Visitors are **Lana Nelson** from Norman, Okla.; **Andrea Lee** and **Doug Shanklin** from North Carolina; **Nancy Reinhold** from Brighton, Colo.; **Teena Jaramillo** from Price, Utah; **Lynn and Steve Kubik** from Charleston, W. Va.; **Debbie Lehmkuhl** from Leawood, Kansas; **Eugenie Camdon** from Huntsville, Ala. and **Patty Wischnowski** from Chicago. **Pres. Gary** welcomed the new members and said he hoped the visitors would join also because they'll "see that the club offers a lot to love".

First Vice President Tom Politzer, who organizes the club's Happy Hour events, reminded the group that any member who isn't getting the emails he regularly sends about upcoming Happy Hours should email him at tpolitzer1856@gmail.com. He will add you to the email distribution list.

Speaking of emails, **Pres. Gary** noted that several members have received fake emails, supposedly from him, asking for money or sensitive information. He emphasized that such emails are fraudulent, since he would never request money from members. If anyone receives a suspicious email, please check with Gary to check on its legitimacy.

Stacie Hawkins and **Molly Fitzpatrick** conducted the meeting raffle. Stacie reminded folks to bring in items for future raffles.

CLUB EVENTS

Ann Repka announced that the next Tour and Lunch Club activity will be Wednesday, May 21 at 10:30. It will feature a tour of KAFM Radio, Grand Junction's community radio station at 1310 Ute Avenue. The station broadcasts community news and public service announcements for local non-profits, as well as local volunteer disc jockeys. The tour also will include The Radio Room, an 80-seat entertainment venue that 's home to a concert series showcasing a mix of concerts from local GJ favorite musicians, plus national touring acts. Following the tour, lunch will be held at a yet-to-be-determined location.

Douglas Grodt, who organizes less strenuous hikes suited to the club's membership, described a May 15 hike planned for the Devils Canyon area. It should be scenic, he said, since the hike will come at the peak of wildflower season. He added that he sends detailed information on hikes to a large email distribution list of members. Anyone who wants to be added to the list should contact Douglas at jdgrodt@yahoo.com

Lisa Seitz said that the May 15 Wine Club tasting of Tuscan wines has reached its 50-person capacity. She also reminded the group to save Tuesday, September 1, for the Newcomers Club's Labor Day barbecue -- one of two annual club-wide events. The barbecue will begin at 5 pm, will be at the same location as in years past (Grand Pavilion at Canyon View Park), and will feature the same caterer as in previous years (Have Cooker Will Travel) and the same menu (chicken, pulled pork, potato salad, coleslaw and a vegetarian option). More details to follow.

Pres. Gary said that **Terie Frutney** and **Barb Hofecker** will take over managing this year's holiday party, the other annual club-wide event. Since no one except **Tanya Davis** stepped up to make table centerpieces for the 2024 holiday party, Terie and Barb will host a centerpiece-making gathering before the party. A sign-up sheet will be available as the date gets closer.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Terri Ahern, Newcomers member who volunteers with Colorado National Monument, will help commemorate the monument's 114th birthday with a May 24 presentation of historical photos -- most from the 1930s-1960s -- plus accompanying behind-the-scenes stories. She will be at the monument's Saddlehorn Visitor Center, 11 Rim Rock Drive, from 9:30 am - 4:30 pm on May 24 to share her extensive knowledge of the monument area. Terri has served as a volunteer monument Trail Ambassador since 2008 and helps with special projects in the Cultural and Natural Resources Division. She also leads hikes for active adults and seniors through New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute.

Stan Zygmunt, who volunteers with New Dimensions, told the group that work is currently underway on developing fall term classes. The course catalog will be available to view online beginning September 3; classes will run between September 29 and November 14. As usual, Stan said, a wide variety of subjects will be covered. In the meantime, free one-hour Midday with New Dimensions lectures will be held at noon in June and August at the Mesa County Public Library's central library and in September at the Clifton branch library. On June 12, Jon Larsen will discuss "Culture of Central Asia," based on his decade-long role as a public diplomatic officer in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

Susan Norton, who volunteers with the Art Center of Western Colorado, said that the 2025 Music in the Grapevines Concert Series will officially begin on May 20 with Stray Grass, a popular favorite band that usually sells out. There will be four other concerts from June through September -- all at Two Rivers Winery, with all proceeds going to support the Art Center's programs. Tickets are \$20 if purchased in advance, \$25 if purchased at the concert. They can be purchased using a credit card at artcenterguild.org. Physical tickets bought with cash or check are available at the Art Center gift shop. Susan noted that two tickets for the next upcoming concert will be included in summer Newcomers coffee meeting raffles.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Instead of the usual single speaker, the club heard from three -- all involved in development of the Confluence Center at Dos Rios Park near the confluence of the Gunnison and Colorado Rivers. **Rebecca Frank**, head of the Confluence Center leadership team, described the long-term vision of revitalizing the riverfront area -- once a wasteland of junk cars and broken concrete chunks -- into a vibrant, usable space and learning environment for the community. **Rusty Lloyd**, executive director of RiversEdge West and president of the Confluence Center's board, said that the ultimate vision for the Dos Rios Park is a diverse development, including residential and commercial space, plus a shared facility for six local non-profit organizations to collaborate on improving the community's land and water resources through education. The non-profits involved in the project are RiversEdge West, Eureka! McConnell Science Center, Colorado National Monument Association, One River Front, Colorado Canyon Association and Colorado West Land Trust. The first tangible step involves construction of a \$7.5 million Confluence Center building with collaborative and co-working office space for the non-profits, an interactive lobby, a land and water resource hub, plus a STREAM preschool and childcare center. **Jenn Moore**, Eureka's executive director, explained how the preschool will add 45 openings for kids between 3-5 -- an age group that's greatly under-served locally. It will feature a professionally-developed STREAM (science, technology, river engineering, art and math) curriculum meeting national accreditation standards. The goal, she said, is to "develop the next generation of hydrologists and geologists and economists." Confluence Center ground-breaking took place in February; completion is projected for mid-2026.

In response to members' questions, Rusty Lloyd said that the Confluence Center will allow the six non-profits to expand and better coordinate their volunteer programs. "There are already plenty of volunteer opportunities involving ecological restoration projects," he said. Some involve restoring riverside habitats, others preserving national conservation lands. For more information on some of these projects, go to riversedgewest.org/education-stewardship/volunteer program.

--Lois Leach, Secretary