

MINUTES - FRIENDSHIP FORCE CEDAR RAPIDS - IOWA CITY GENERAL MEETING

JANUARY 26, 2020 - HIAWATHA LIBRARY

1. 2:00—Mary Ann Nelson, Co-President, called the meeting to order and welcomed all members.
2. **Secretary's Report** — Larry Nelson gave a short report of the minutes and copies were on the table. There was discussion as to who was at the Annual Meeting, because the minutes indicated "In attendance" with only 11 names. Judy Minor motioned to amend the minutes to include "34 present". It was seconded and passed.
3. **Treasurer's Report** — Joanne Smith reported a beginning balance of \$9,471.74, and an ending balance of \$11,212.19 with \$1,470 income from dues and \$0.45 interest.
4. **LEO** — Let's Eat Out: 1) Mary Stull reported that the next LEO is scheduled for Saturday, February 8, 11:30, at the Lucky Penny Restaurant on Boysen Road. There is a sign-up sheet on the table plus an evite email will go out. 2) Mary Carson reported on the Thursday, May 14, 5:30 LEO at Grand Living at Indian Creek on Collins Road. There will be a \$15 charge to include all food, beverage, and tip. 3) Jerry Burke is the contact for the mid-June LEO in Manchester. 4) Early August LEO - no plans, any volunteer to lead? 5) Early October LEO contact is Darlene Peterson with plans for the Tin Roost in North Liberty.
5. **Justice for Our Neighbor** — February 18, 5:00-7:00. Margaret Nelson and Jean Thomas are the contacts. Margaret shared the background of the program—volunteers give legal advice to immigrants on issues such as citizenship, education, and advocacy. It had been scheduled for the fall. They prepare for 25. Volunteers are needed to help with the dinner as well as prepare and drop off food. There was a sign-up sheet on the table.
6. **Prospective Member Win ad Cheese Evening** — Judy Miner is the contact, and she reported that they had one last fall. Please give Judy any possible members' names, or let her know you're attending also and bringing the guests. There was a sign-up sheet on the table.

7. **General Meeting** — March 1, 3:00, International Friendship Day — Judy Miner is the contact, and she and her committee are planning for the Pot Luck at Salem Methodist Church, 3715 22rd Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids. Foreign Exchange students from all the local high schools, colleges, and community college will be the guests. Any ideas for a speaker, contact Judy.
8. **Future General Meeting** — May 3, Coralville Library. Darlene Peterson is the contact.
9. **Mix and Mingle** — March 25, Wednesday, from 6-8. Stephanie Schulte, Trudy Johansen, and Marian Wetjen are contacts. The purpose of this evening is to mix up the members as guests in various homes to enjoy a dinner, social time, and conversation. A sign-up sheet was passed around. After sign-ups are complete the committee will meet to organize the host/hostesses and guests. Then everyone will be notified of their destination and host/hostess.
10. **Journeys** — Connie Williams is the coordinator.
 - Albuquerque — April 19-26 — Outgoing. Jean Thomas is Journey Coordinator. Hand in medical releases to Jean. She reported there are 14 going.
 - Road Scholar Extension — April 26-May 1. This is on your own. See Jean Thomas
 - Kaohsiung, Taiwan — September 9-16 — Incoming. Connie Williams gave the report. The latest count is 12. The committee is just evolving, so you can volunteer!
 - Budapest, Hungary, and Pristina, Kosovo — October 15-30 — Outgoing. Connie gave the report. She gave the itinerary. There are 15 going, and it is full, but you can go on a “wait” list.
 - Open World — December 2, 2020 — Steve Williams is the contact. *Engagement of Youth in Volunteerism* is the title. The theme is: How to get young people involved in volunteering in a country with high unemployment?
11. **Freedom Festival Parade** — June 27. Jerry Burke is the contact and please volunteer to help.
12. **All Iowa Picnic** — July 27 at Crown Point in Johnston, IA. Need a Lead!!
13. **Regional Super Conference** — September 18-20 in Minneapolis.
14. **Dues** — Please pay dues of \$35 to Joanne Smith if you have not.

15. **Treats** — Brought to you by members and coordinated by Shirley Rosencrans.

Thanks, Shirley!

16. **Speaker — Eva Ross — Her Life in Poland, Escaping, and Living in USA**

Mary Ann introduced her dear friend, Eva. She very quickly captured our minds and hearts as she told about her life. She was born in Poland in 1968 in a 700 year old town. She talked about her family business, her dad — an artist — who left her mother and her to come to the US. With communism, spare food, a robbery, and tanks rolling in, she(13) and her mother decided it was time to flee to Austria and took a train bribing the conductor. They had no idea what they were getting themselves into and spent 15 months in Austrian camps. They waited and waited and waited. Finally, on February 8, 1983, they got tickets to go to Baltimore, Maryland, where they were met by Catholic nuns and deposited in an apartment with 2 other Polish women and \$111. They knew no English. She was 14 and a “novelty” in school, but had few friends. She talked of her schooling, graduating with her ESL in 1 year, having a son at 17, becoming a US citizen in 1991, and her various moves before now residing in Cedar Rapids since 2013. She is the Human Resources Director for Unity Point’s Rehab Facility. She has returned to Poland a number of times and reflected upon its changes as well as her feelings about the return. FF members asked a number of great questions at the conclusion. When a gentleman asked her what does she want our Take Away to be from her presentation, she responded, “ Be Tolerant, Be Curious, and Be Open.” A GREAT PROGRAM!!!

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Johansen

Recording Secretary