

ANNUAL MEETING

December 18, 2014

President Todd Thalblum called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Members present (12):

Rodney Bluml, Ashok Chawla, Charles Crawley, Brian Daugherty, Allen Fisher, Alan Fletcher, Susan Liddell, Cedric Lofdahl, Brenda Mitchell, Hassan Selim, Todd Thalblum, Jen Yukl

Guests (7):

Erin Broich, Liz Lockhart, Ted Lockhart, Michael Metz, Meredith Mitchell, Libby Slappy, Nathan Williams

INSPIRATION

Inner & Outer Meaning – shared by Ashok Chawla

Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952) came to the US in 1920 and introduced Kriya Yoga to the people of this country. He is known for his book, Autobiography of a Yogi.

Quotes from one his articles:

Long ago in India I met a Persian poet who told me that the poetry of Persia often has two meanings, one inner and one outer.

One day as I was deeply concentrated on the pages of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat, I suddenly beheld the walls of its outer meaning crumble away, and the vast inner fortress of golden spiritual treasures stood open to my gaze.

I have felt that this dream-castle of truth would be a haven for many shelter-seeking souls invaded by enemy armies of ignorance. Profound spiritual treatise, by some mysterious divine law, does not disappear from the earth even after centuries of misunderstanding.

In Sufism, the wine is the joy of the spirit, and the love is the rapturous devotion to God. Omar's real dream-wine was the joyously intoxicating wine of divine love. This Divine Love is what Omar advises as a panacea for all human woes and questioning.

Yogananda used Edward FitzGerald's first edition of his translation of the original Rubaiyat to English.

Selection from the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*:

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To fly – and Lo! The Bird is on the Wing.

Spiritual Interpretation:

In the warm spring of newly arrived spiritual enthusiasm, fling off the icy garment of soul-bliss-freezing regret and repentance, created by unfulfilled material desires and disillusioning sense of indulgences. Fill the cup of your consciousness with the warming wine of God's wisdom and bliss.

Waste not a precious moment, for the bird of life soars but a little while in the skies of your present existence. Behold in your mind's eye that day, how soon! It will fly away. While you have it within your power, teach this bird to sing God's all protecting name. Guide its flight toward His shore of immortality. Let us not sweep onward into the caverns of dark death, whither it is fast winging now without a conscious aim.

MINUTES of Previous Meetings

- 2013 Annual Meeting Minutes (December 19, 2013):
Motion by Brenda Mitchell to approve as submitted – Second by Allen Fisher – Carried
- Minutes of the October 16, 2014 Board of Directors Meeting:
Motion by Charles Crawley to approve as submitted – Second by Ashok Chawla – Carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Alan Fletcher, Treasurer/Chair

1. **2014 Financial Report:** Receipts & Disbursements – 1/1 thru 12/18 – reviewed.
 Cash balance as of 12/18/14: \$15,722.35 [Checking = \$104.09 / Money Market = \$15, 618.26]
 Alan noted that disbursements in excess of receipts for 2014 are primarily due to payments for 2013 of \$1,932.42 and non-recurring items like website renewal and brochure design.
 Motion made by Jen Yukl to approve 2014 financial report – Second by Allen Fisher – Carried.

**Receipts and Disbursements
 January 1, 2014 thru December 18, 2014**

	October 16 thru December 18	Year to Date 2014
Receipts		
January		\$ 575.00
February		539.40
March		465.00
April		90.00
May-August		512.49
September		830.00
October		500.00
Community of Christ	250.00	
Thanksgiving Service collection *	462.00	
Subtotal		712.00
Interest income	2.60	13.69
Total receipts	714.60	4,237.58
Disbursements		
Linn Community Food Bank	462.00	1,286.36
Cook Design - brochure		300.00
State Farm Insurance	72.50	362.50
Adcraft Printing - envelopes/brochure		392.69
Go Daddy - web site renewal 3 years		449.18
Ascott Transcription Service	666.63	2,776.80
Ecumenical Center - rent	200.00	1,400.00
Matthew 25 - donation	200.00	200.00
Jennifer Yukl - reimburse office supplies	60.91	60.91
U.S. Postmaster - postage	50.00	259.20
Total disbursements	1,712.04	7,487.64
Receipts less disbursements	\$ (997.44)	(3,250.06)
Cash balance, 1/1/2014		18,972.41
Cash balance, 12/18/2014		\$ 15,722.35
Cash in Bank:		
Checking account		\$ 104.09
Money Market account		15,618.26
		\$ 15,722.35
General Fund		\$ 14,177.35
Memorial Fund		1,545.00
		\$ 15,722.35

* represents cash portion; also collected checks payable to Linn Community Food Bank totaling \$719, so total offering received was \$1,181.

2. **Need for order of IRC brochures:**
 Charles Crawley noted that we are running low on brochures and requested approval of another order. Discussion led to a motion, made by Charles Crawley, to approve the order of 500 brochures (with the removal of the phone number) through Adcraft Printing – Second by Allen Fisher – Carried.

3. **2015 Proposed Budget:**

This was reviewed and a few questions were clarified. The \$200 in the “Donations” line was explained; in 2014, this was the amount of the honorarium given to the speaker for the Thanksgiving service. Alan Fletcher also directed us to explanation notes listed at the end of the budget. He reported that we are in good financial shape and have sufficient funds to cover a potential \$500 disbursement excess, as is given in this proposed budget – in the “Receipts less disbursements” line. Motion was made by Cedric Lofdahl to approve the 2015 budget – Second by Allen Fisher – Carried.

Proposed Budget for 2015

	Actual 2014 thru December 18	Proposed for 2015	
Receipts			
Dues and donations	\$ 3,274.40	\$ 3,275.00	
Thanksgiving offering	462.00	-	(a)
GCRC Foundation income	487.49	485.00	
Interest income	13.69	15.00	
Total receipts	<u>4,237.58</u>	<u>3,775.00</u>	
Disbursements			
Linn Community Food Bank	1,286.36	-	(a) (b)
Brochure design	300.00	-	(c)
Insurance	362.50	300.00	(d)
Printing	392.69	200.00	(e)
Web site renewal	449.18	-	(f)
Transcription services	2,776.80	2,000.00	(g)
Office rent	1,400.00	1,200.00	(h)
Donations	200.00	200.00	
Office supplies	60.91	75.00	
Postage	259.20	300.00	
Total disbursements	<u>7,487.64</u>	<u>4,275.00</u>	
Receipts less disbursements	\$ (3,250.06)	\$ (500.00)	(x)
Cash balance, beginning of year	<u>18,972.41</u>	<u>15,722.35</u>	
Cash balance, end of year	\$ 15,722.35	\$ 15,222.35	

Notes:

- (a) expect receipts to be fully disbursed; amount unpredictable, so used zero for both
- (b) 2014 includes \$824.36 collected in 2013 and \$462.00 collected in 2014
- (c) do not expect need for brochure design in 2015
- (d) 2014 represents 15 months premium (Nov 2013 - Feb 2015)
- (e) 2014 was for envelopes and brochures; 2015 estimate is for printing a few more
- (f) 2014 represents payment for 3 years, so none required in 2015
- (g) 2014 includes \$908.06 for 2013
- (h) 2014 includes \$200.00 for 2013
- (x) disbursements in excess of receipts for 2014 are primarily due to payments for 2013 of \$1,932.42 (listed above) and non-recurring items like web site renewal and brochure design

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE – Brian Daugherty, Chair

1. **Children of Abraham:**

Brian Daugherty summarized the programs offered in 2014. This programming is in three categories:

- a. **Among the Traditions** – Three of these programs offered in 2014.
 - “How Each Religion Sees the Other” was on May 5 at Temple Judah
 - “Schools of Thought: Differences Within Each Tradition” was Aug. 24 at the Mother Mosque
 - “Concepts of God” was November 9 at St. George Eastern Orthodox Church

Speakers were Fred Shaheen, Taha Tawil, and Todd Thalblum

- b. **Between the Traditions** – One program offered in 2014.
 - “Hearing the Prophetic Voice” – Reading the Book of Isaiah through Time & Traditions – was June 8 at Coe College (Kesler Aud., Hickok Hall) – Chris Seeman of Walsh Univ.
- c. **Within the Traditions** – One program offered in 2014.
 - “Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran: What Makes Us Different?” was Nov. 13 at Mt. Mercy Univ. Panel: William Mulcahey, former Director of Campus Ministries at Mt. Mercy; Father Fred Shaheen, St. George Eastern Orthodox Church; and Rev. Cedric Lofdahl, retired Lutheran pastor.

2. **University of Religion:**

Brian Daugherty reported that the last University of Religion course was held Jan/Feb 2013 on the Formation of the Christian Faith. The next course will be held in February 2015.

Course on Buddhism – The Life, Teachings, and Legacy of the Buddha

Saturday afternoons – February 7, 14, 21, and 28 – 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Presenter: Zuiko Redding of Cedar Rapids Zen Center Cost: \$20 for entire course

Location: Mt. Mercy University, Flaherty Community Room in Basile Hall

3. **Ethical Perspectives on the News / Sundays, 11 am on KCRG, Ch. 9:**

Cedric Lofdahl gave the following 2014 annual report and program schedule:

2014 Annual Report for EPON – December 18, 2014

Total number of programs aired in 2014: 49 (35 new and 14 reruns).

EPON was bumped by ABC-TV programming on three Sundays during the year.

Programs aired from 4/11/1999 through 12/28/2014: 791

Moderators and (number) of programs during 2014: Peter Welch (9), Tom Capo (4), Scott Samuelson (6), Martha Rogers (6), Lynda Waddington (3), Karl Cassell (5), Heather Hayes (1), Leon Tabak (1). We are thankful for the moderators’ faithful and committed service over the years.

Producers: Cedric Lofdahl, Executive Producer, was assisted by Associate Producers Terry Boyden and Joe Stutler.

Closed captioning: Thanks to the efforts of Charles Crawley a grant of \$500 for closed caption was received from Rockwell Collins. The average cost for closed captioning is \$61.00 per program. The program is in need of closed captioning sponsors.

YouTube: To date, 51 programs have been uploaded to YouTube. As of 12-17-14 they have had a total of 1,315 views.

Recording studios, personnel, equipment, and free air time were contributed by KCRG-TV.

Since its inception, almost a 1,000 people from the community and surrounding areas have participated as panelists in Ethical Perspectives on the News.

EPON program schedule (Jan. 4 through Feb. 8)

Death with Dignity (1/4); The Torture Dilemma (1/11); What’s Big about Iowa BIG? (1/18); News Reporting Standards (1/25); The Cost of Denying Death (2/1); Are We Overselling STEM? (2/8)

EVENT COMMITTEE – Charles Crawley and Allen Fisher, Co-chairs

1. **Holocaust Commemoration – April 12-13, 2015**

Todd Thalblum announced that the speaker will be Renata Laxova. She was born in Czechoslovakia and survived the Holocaust by inclusion in the Kindertransport.

- Sunday, April 12: Mt. Mercy University chapel
- Monday, April 13: twice at Coe College / Schools will be busing student to these presentations.
[Further scheduling details will be available soon.]

2. **Thanksgiving Service – review of 2014 service and thoughts for 2015**

Al Fisher thanked all who participated in the Nov. 24th service at Unity Center. Discussion followed about format and content of this year’s service being different from past years – inclusion of a guest speaker and omission of reflections from each faith tradition. Though people enjoyed the interfaith message given by Clint Twedt-Ball, some feedback was that diversity of expression was missing.

EVENT COMMITTEE continued / Thanksgiving Service feedback...

Susan Liddell received comments that the music was “very Christian”. Charles Crawley proposed that we consider having the 2015 Thanksgiving service at the Islamic Center, where we would not have any music. Chanting was mentioned as an option to our normal musical selections. The lack of a Native American representation on our council was noted, as well as the possibility that a former IRC member from this tradition, may be able to return.

3. **Annual Meeting:** Thank you given to members of Islamic Center for hosting tonight’s dinner.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE – Brenda Mitchell and Jen Yukl, Co-chairs

Jen Yukl gave the following report and thanked members of the committee for their work this year.

1. **Newsletter:**

Only two newsletters were published in 2014, one in June and the other in September. This has been a year of transition with new members learning this task. The plan is to have three newsletters go out next year. The first of these will be mailed in early January 2015. Thank you to Tom Capo, Michael Metz, and Charles Crawley for writing articles. In 2015, we hope to begin using Publisher. For years, the newsletter has been formatted with PowerPoint.

2. **Membership letter and donation form:**

This goes out at the beginning of each year. The current president writes the letter.

3. **Website:**

Our website was not active for quite awhile. Stuart Williams, from Community of Christ, redesigned www.irclc.org – and last spring, it went live. Since then, Jen Yukl has been working on format and content. It was up to date with events in October; plan is to update again in last week of December. Hassan has offered to assist with some of the posting. We need pictures from IRC events and other community interfaith events to make the site more appealing.

Feedback regarding pictures for website: Libby Slappy took pictures during the fellowship time after the Thanksgiving service, and she thought that someone from Unity Center took pictures during the service. Todd suggested that someone take on the role of “official IRC photographer”.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **President’s Report:** Todd Thalblum gave a brief review of 2014, thanking all who have worked to plan and present a variety of programs. Todd also noted a unique event in which we participated as a co-sponsor. This was the housing summit – Building Inclusive Communities, One Neighborhood at a Time – organized by the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission. Two of our council members, Rodney Bluml and Tom Capo, led a workshop at this summit.
2. **Nominations and vote on new IRC council members:** Todd explained that the election of our officers (two-year terms) is to be staggered, with the president and treasurer being elected during odd numbered year and the vice-president and secretary elected during even numbered years. This staggering is off. To remedy this, it was proposed that our current president and treasurer, be elected now to serve the two-year term of 2015-2016. Regarding the nomination of other council members for three-year terms, three current members have agreed to serve another term and two new members will be joining us.

Motion made by Brenda Mitchell to approve the following slate of directors:

Officers (2015-2016): Todd Thalblum, President / Alan Fletcher, Treasurer

Directors returning (2015, 2016, 2107): Brian Daugherty, Taha Tawil, and Joan Thaler

Directors joining (2015, 2016, 2017): Erin Broich, Nathan Williams

Second given by Charles Crawley – Carried.

3. **Committee service:** Todd explained that all directors are expected to serve on one of our committees. Plan was made to decide on committee membership at January meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS continued...

4. **Honorarium of \$200 payable to Matthew 25:** The email discussion and vote which took place 11/13 through 11/16 was in favor of this \$200 honorarium, as a thank you to Clint Twedt-Ball for speaking at the Thanksgiving service. The vote was ratified at this meeting.
5. **Inspiration for next meeting:** Brenda Mitchell volunteered.
6. **Meeting night question:** Tawa Tawil asked if it is possible for us to meet on the third Tuesday. Cedric Lofdahl noted that Tuesday is recording night for EPON. Other nights were considered, but will not work. Therefore, we will continue meeting on the third Thursday.
7. **Armenian genocide of 1915:** Charles Crawley suggested that the Events Committee plan a commemoration event in April 2015. It was also suggested that an EPON program could be aired on this topic.
8. **IRC stand on recent events in Ferguson, MO and other communities:** Nathan Williams brought up the question: "Where do our religious faith communities stand in light of recent events in Ferguson, MO and elsewhere in our country?" Discussion followed as to whether we should hold a special event/service on this topic. Cedric noted that an EPON program titled *Lessons from Ferguson* aired on 10/5/14. Decision was made to begin with writing a resolution concerning racial tension that will eventually be presented to the Cedar Rapids community. Nathan will work on this and present a draft at January's meeting. It was also suggested that we ask someone from the African American community to speak to us at one of our meetings.
9. **5-10 minute presentations by representatives of community organizations at IRC meetings:**
Reminder: Contact Todd if you know of anyone who would like share about involvement in a community organization or a specific project their community of faith is working on.

ANNOUNCEMENTS of other events in the Cedar Rapids area

1. **Native American flute concert – Friday, Dec. 19 (6:30pm) at Prairiewoods**
2. **Matthew 25 Christmas Potluck – Tuesday, Dec. 23 at Noon – 201 Third Ave. SW**
Bring a dish to share and get ready for some fun. Bring a wacky "white elephant" to exchange.
3. **Intersections – next civil dialogue & luncheon – Friday, February 6 (11:45 am to 1:00 pm)**
Note that there will be no meeting in January. Location: First Presbyterian Church, 310 Fifth St. SE
See <http://interfaithallianceiowa.org/events/intersections/> for details about registering and next topic.
4. **Judaism 101 series with Rabbi Todd Thalblum – Sundays in January (Noon to 1:30 pm)**
Location: Christ Episcopal, 220 40th St. NE
RSVP to Charles Crawley at crcrawley@gmail.com or 319-899-8716.
5. **Spiritual Awareness Day – Saturday, January 24 (11:00 am to 4:00 pm)**
Location: Illuminations Healing Arts Center, 329 10th Ave. SE, Suite 115 Freewill Donation
Flyers are available at www.illuminationshealingarts.com and on the IRC website. The flyer lists the timeslots for each presentation, as well as a second page with a bit of information about the speakers.

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, January 15 (7:00 pm) at the Ecumenical Community Center

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Motion to adjourn was made by Brian Daugherty – Second by Allen Fisher – Carried.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Yukl, Secretary