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Randy Fontaine, Hope-Net Ministries

Randy Fontaine is the Executive Director of Hope-Net Ministries in Council Bluffs. He grew up in San Francisco, moved to Arkansas at age 14, graduated from Bible College, managed a truck stop, planned a 21st century truck stop which landed his picture on the cover of Phillips Oil Co. magazine, and eventually developed Transport for Christ, a truck stop chapel ministry all over the US and internationally. He saw a need for drivers who were stressed who would be driving 2-3 weeks at a time.



Fontaine has a heart for finding a need and filling it. His wife, Nadine, and four boys do as well. A need presented itself in the 2006 aftermath of Hurricane Katrina when families were brought to CB to be helped. Next he became aware of the need to help women coming out of incarceration. Women released from incarceration face homelessness, addiction, abuse, and poverty.

Jean Stephens, a full time Hope-Net employee, builds relationships with women in prison and is there when they are released to help them successfully transition back into society. With no place to go and only the clothes they came in with, ex-offenders are 10 times more likely to be homeless after incarceration. It is likely they will get involved with drugs and human trafficking. A woman who goes back into prison costs taxpayers \$70,000.

Fontaine stated that September 2021 saw the launch of the new homeless Resource Center in the Sequels on Broadway. They have seen nearly 400 visits a month from those living on the streets or couch surfing. They provide a safe space, especially for homeless women, to get out of the elements, grab a bite to eat, lockers to store their items, and a meeting room to attend

support groups, meet with other agencies, or just to get away.

Randy has been a part of the Human Trafficking Coalition in Las Vegas. He stated that there is a huge human trafficking network in the Omaha metro area. During the College World Series there are 2000 sex workers brought in every year. The authorities are working with motels to detect this problem. One thing being done at motels is to provide soap with wrappers that indicate where victims can get help.

Besides Jean Stephens, there are three other part time paid employees. There are 2-3 dozen volunteers. There is a need for more volunteers to help in many different ways. Randy is not paid, as he is a missionary for Christ for the City International, and he raises his own support, but he works 40-60 hours for Hope-Net.

There are two Sequels thrift stores in CB which raise 70% of the funding. It is also a place that people drop off gently used clothing and household items. Hope-Net gives away \$6-7000/yr. in vouchers to the needy for shopping at Sequels. The thrift stores are also used for job training.

When asked about helping people along the highway asking for money, Randy stated he always carries bags of stuff in the car with hats, gloves, socks, high protein snack bars, bottled water and has offered to bring a meal to them. He does not recommend giving cash as it could be feeding a drug habit.

Hope-Net has just opened a new agency fund with Pottawattamie County Community Foundation. Gifts of money as well as prayers, volunteer time, and provision of food, hats and gloves, as well as donation of items to Sequels are needed. Check out www.hopenetministries.org for more information.

Next week's speaker will be Tasha Jones, Connections Area Agency on Aging.

The public is invited to attend all meetings. The coffee is always on. Gary Funkhouser coins our club as "The best informed club in Treynor!"

“Whether you think you can or think you can’t, you’re right.”

Henry Ford

Meeting Minutes

Dale Willenborg, President, called the meeting to order. Present were 18 members plus one guest, Randy Fontaine.

Dale Willenborg led the Pledge of Allegiance and Jordan Campbell gave the opening prayer. Dale Willenborg, Gary Gutttau, Keith Denton, Bill Vorthmann, and Judy Gutttau provided humor.

50/50 was won by Dale Willenborg and Ken Graham won the Attendance Drawing.

Birthdays/Anniversaries:

Bragging Rights: (\$ are used for youth activities)

- John Klein donated because his old gray car with 323,562 miles served a long time. It blew an engine this week in the driveway.
- Phil Waggoner is excited about the growth in numbers of wrestling athletes. When his son was in school, there were 7 wrestlers. Today there are 30 out for wrestling.
- Jordan Campbell shared that he is now back to refereeing after a 4 year absence.
- Judy Gutttau announced that an open house was held this week to honor Gene Young who is retiring at the end of the year with 42 years of service to TS Bank.

COMMUNITY:

BUSINESS:

John Klein, Gary Gutttau, Gary Funkhouser and Chad Gutttau helped with the Can Kennel sorting for the cheerleaders this week. This coming Wed., Dec. 8 will another sorting at 2 PM for the cheerleaders.

John Klein stated that he and Gary Funkhouser assessed possible needs for the East Park Playground. A new swing set has been installed this week by the city. John stated that most items

can be fixed without a lot of money – some need maintenance and some need to be fixed.

A collection was taken last week amounting to \$296 for Shop with a Sheriff. The hat was passed this week as well.

A board meeting is being held today.

The meeting was adjourned with members reciting the Optimist Creed.

Board Meeting: Dale Willenborg presided. John Klein, Jordan Campbell, Gary Gutttau, Bill Vorthmann, and Judy Gutttau were present. Can Kennel applications were reviewed and assigned a slot in 2022. Dale will post these on the website.

Also discussed was hosting a Community event to recognize volunteers on Sat., March 19 at the Community Building. More details are to be worked out.

Various ideas were discussed about sponsoring a kite making/flying day in the spring with students.

HUMOR

What do you call a bankrupt Santa? Saint Nickel-less!

Calendar

Events

Dec 8	Can Kennel Sorting – 2 PM
Feb12	Optimist Day. District Conference – Cedar Rapids (Note this is a corrected date!)
Feb 28	Club Youth essays due

Birthdays

Dec 16	Kevin Underwood
Dec 23	Chuck Nielsen

Anniversaries

Dec 27	Dee and Gary Gutttau
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Programs

Dec	Linda Danker (first two) Mick Gutttau (last two)
Jan	Kirk Vorthmann and Doug Dillivan

Speakers

Dec 11	Tasha Jones, Connections Area Agency on Aging
Dec 18	TBA
Dec 25	No meeting- Merry Christmas
Jan 1	No meeting- Happy New Year

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Dues/Donations/Flag Money: Mail to Optimist Club of Treynor, PO Box 354, Treynor, IA 51575