

Annual Report for Newcomers Club

January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

Presented on January 14, 2021

Table of Contents:

1. Members of the Board
2. Board Report
3. Year in review
4. General meetings and special events
5. Finance
6. Membership
7. Special Interest Groups

1 - Members of the Board

President	Annette Howell
Vice-President	Kashmira Mehta
Secretary	Rosamaria Pedreros/Karen Deitrick
Treasury	Kathleen Inman
Membership	Kathleen Inman
Advertising	Open position (Annette, Audrey covering)
Social Events Coordinator	Burcu Karhan
Special Interest Group Coordinator	Roasamaria Pedreros
Publicity	Open position (Annette, Audrey covering)
Hospitality	Keiko Hirooka, Mami Kawanami
Editorial	Komal Sitaram/Audrey Ruel
Ways and Means/Board support	Miriam Portaluppi

2 - Board report

Columbus Newcomers Club is an all-inclusive group of people in Columbus, Indiana. We host events that feature speakers from local businesses and non-profit organizations to keep our members informed about everything that Columbus has to offer. There are many activities throughout each month, with a variety of topics, so there is something for everyone to participate in.

Our group helps welcome and integrate new people, from around the world, to Columbus. However, you don't need to be new to the area in order to join. All Columbus residents are welcome!

The members are changing constantly as people move back to their original countries, find a job in the US, start to study, or feel they have established the network they need etc. We have a general meeting once a month and some special events for all members, but most activities are carried out in our Special interest groups. Some members are active in several groups and come to general meetings, but some may only participate in one group activity.

3 - Year in review

2020 was an incredibly challenging year. The Covid-19 pandemic changed all of our lives drastically as well as the activities for the Newcomers Club.

Throughout the entire year our board members worked to come up with ideas to keep our members engaged and connected. We kept all members on our mailing list, even if fees had not been kept up to date. We also waived fees for new members. The thought was that we wanted to provide a space for communication and staying connected during a time that was difficult for many.

Due to the adjustments that had to be made, it was difficult to keep all the groups active. Bunco and the Cooking Club have taken a break while we work through this challenging time.

Book Club, English and Spanish Conversation Groups met virtually, and we are very grateful for the members leading these groups that keep these activities going.

General meetings were mostly virtual with the addition of an evening time to accommodate more members that may have daytime conflicts.

With the help of Swell Design donating time and 2 of our board members providing their talent we created a new updated website for Columbus Newcomers Club. Along with other changes we added a page to thank our supporters such as FFY, YES Cinema, SIHO Insurance, Brainstorm Print, Pixie Dreams Photography, Swell Design and Midwest Language Services.

The Bylaws for the club were also updated and revised this year and distributed to all board members. They are available to anyone that is interested by requesting a copy on our website.

As board members, we were incredibly proud to be involved in 5 community support projects:

Donation of craft supplies for Just Friends

Monetary donation to Turning Point

Yard Signs to support front line workers and YES Cinema

Donation of items for Beloved

Providing free meals to hospital staff

4 - General Meeting and Special Events

General meetings typically take place once a month except July and always on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the premises of FFY. We were able to maintain this schedule for 2020 and only adjusted dates when conflicts presented challenges, or a different day presented a better fit for the event.

- In the beginning of the year, we started as we do every January with a fun event – the White Elephant gift exchange. About 20 of our members met in the basement of the Viewpoint bookstore to kick off the year 2020.
- For February we planned a pancake breakfast prepared and served by our board members. We had a great turnout at our regular meeting space at the FFY building with about 22 people in attendance, many of them new guests. **Bunco members collected and donated craft supplies to Just Friends.**
- On March 6th we hosted an event at The Commons to celebrate International Women’s Day. We invited a City Council Woman as guest speaker and had live music. Members presented cultural items and crafts from all over the world in this event that was open to the public. Advertising with radio, newspaper and sharing information with many local organizations via Facebook and email helped to make this a successful event with an estimated 100 guests in attendance. **We were also able to collect and contribute \$500 to Turning Point.**

One week later a state-wide lock-down went into effect to slow the spread of Covid-19 and on March 15th all in-person meetings were suspended. While the lock-down was lifted, the pandemic remained, and our meetings stayed virtual with the exception of 2 outdoor meetings/events (see September and October)

- We hosted the first ZOOM general meeting in April and offered an AM and PM option to accommodate as many members as possible. **The Newcomers Club also partnered with YES Cinema and helped with yard-sign distribution to show support for all local front-line workers.**
- In May and June we had “generic” ZOOM general meetings (AM and PM)
- In August we added a painting activity to our ZOOM general meeting (AM and PM)
- The September general meeting was in-person at the Library Plaza outdoors with very little interest from members.
- For October, a Scavenger Hunt was planned and very well received. We choose a Sunday for the date and members attended in groups with family and friends. We adhered to all the safety guidelines that were recommended during Covid-19. **Members collected items to be donated to Beloved.**
- In November we modified our typical Pampering Day with offering a Zoom presentation with free product samples from a beauty consultant (AM and PM)
- With the anticipation of not being able to host the White Elephant in Jan of 2021 (due to the pandemic) we hosted a Secret Santa event on ZOOM in December that was attended by 29 people and enjoyed by all. **Our members participated in a meal-train providing meals for 30 workers of the 2nd shift at Columbus Regional Hospital.**

5 - Membership

In the beginning of 2020, 52 members paid dues. Some members did not pay dues in 2020 and we decided not to pursue late payments or new member dues until after the shutdown.

There were 52 members total last year in 2019. We had 68 members by the end of 2020.

The membership fee for a year was \$25.

Reading the membership forms, the members have expressed interest in the following areas:

Gardening, Walking, Jazz, Music, Theatre, Kids, Cooking, Hiking, Art, Bicycling, Traveling, Wine tasting, Reading, Friends and Family, Knitting, Sewing, Photography, Dancing, Community Service, Nature, Roller derby, Horses, Socializing, Exercise, Baking, Languages, Literature, Games, Cinema, Tennis, Aromatherapy, Dogs, Swimming, Jewelry Making, Decorating and Golf.

6 - Special Interest Groups/Club

The special groups typically meet once a month, mostly via Zoom.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Bunco	Annette
Book club	Brooke
Spanish Conversation	Elisa and Jael (Maricela started the year before moving away)
English Conversation Club	Tanya

Book Club

Members on the Facebook page: 41

Number of meetings: 13

Number of members who have been participating in one or more events: About 20

The books read, reviewed and discussed this year were "Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens Small Great Things" by Jodi Picoult "Let's Pretend This Never Happened" by Jenny Lawson "Finding Chika" by Mitch Albom "Your Second Life Begins When You Realize You Only Have One" by Raphelle Giordano "The Great Alone" by Kristin Hannah "The Husband's Secret" by Laine Moriarty "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett "Snobs" by Julian Fellowes "Orphan Train" by Kristina Hannah "Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine" by Gail Honeyman "An American Marriage" by Tayari Jones "Untamed" by Glennon Doyle.

Number of members who have participated in one or more events: 6

Number of attendees were ranging from 5-10 people with an average of 7.

Spanish Conversation:

Members on the Facebook page: 39

Number of meetings: 11

Number of members who have been participating in one or more events: About 5

Number of attendees were ranging from 3-5 people with an average of 4.

English Conversation:

Members on the Facebook page: 19

Number of meetings: 5

Number of members who have been participating in one or more events: about 10

Number of attendees were ranging from 3-6 people with an average of 5.

Bunco Game Night:

This group has been on hold since March due to the Covid-19 virus.

Info below is from Jan/Feb 2020 only

Members on the Facebook page: 55

Number of meetings: 2

Number of attendees were ranging from 16 - 24