

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
LOS ANGELES BRANCH OF THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA
Saturday, March 16, 2024, 2:00pm

PRESENT: Brenda Barnetson, Bari Borsky, Jean Brousseau, John Brousseau, Christine Burke, Linda Connell, Stefano Di Concetto, Lori Daub, Samuel Glaze, Dan Hartjes, Matthew Kenyon, Eloise Krivosheia, Philip Mees, Christopher Quintanar, Anne Saldo, Margaret Shipman, Jeramy Shirley

OPENING: *AMERICA VERSE*. Composed by Rudolf Steiner; spoken by Jean Brousseau

May our feeling penetrate
Into the center of our heart,
And seek, in love, to unite itself
With human beings seeking the same goal,
With spirit beings who, bearing grace,
Strengthening us from realms of light
And illumining our love,
Are gazing down upon
Our earnest, heartfelt striving.

HONORING THOSE WHO CROSSED THE THRESHOLD

Michael Son. Matt Kenyon identified Michael as the sole Branch Member who had passed the threshold within the past year. Philip Mees delivered a brief biography. Michael was born in Burbank and lived there his entire life, other than when he attended Emerson College in the UK to study Biodynamic Agriculture. Michael's jobs included gardening, working in a home with handicapped children, and serving for 12 years as attendant to Branch Member Paul van Schilfgaarde, deceased 2022. Michael had been married but later divorced. Philip remembered that when they met, Michael was already in his seventies. After Michael contracted Lyme Disease and needed to use a walker, his life became more difficult. Philip visited Michael weekly and read lectures to him. Margaret Shipman stated that Michael had been a pillar of the Christian Community, serving for years. She recalled an occasion when the priest could not be present at a scheduled event and asked her to fill the time by playing music. When Margaret arrived at the sanctuary, she found Michael quietly sitting alone with a candle lit.

Alexander Houghton was a Branch Friend who recently passed after a long-term illness. Jean Brousseau expressed gratitude for the many years of working with Alex as co-director of the Waldorf Institute of Southern California (WISC) teacher training program. Jean acknowledged Alex's numerous contributions to WISC and emphasized his love for people, stating that relationship was his favorite word.

ELECTIONS

Nominations for Anthroposophical Foundation of California Trustees. President Sam Glaze announced that he, Lori Daub, and Dottie Zold – as the Nomination Committee – had spoken with nominees and were happy to submit for consideration to the Branch Members that:

- Christine Burke, Linda Connell, Matthew Kenyon, and Eloise Krivosheia be re-elected to serve two-year Foundation Trustee terms; and
- Aileen Leijten and Christopher Quintanar be newly elected to serve two-year Foundation Trustee terms.

Chris told the Members about his experience with Anthroposophy and at the Los Angeles Branch and expressed his interest in serving as a Foundation Trustee. Because she was representing WISC at an Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) event in Santa Barbara, Aileen was unable to attend the AGM.

Nominations for Branch Chair. Sam acknowledged that it had been challenging for the past five years to identify willing, enthusiastic, and available individuals to fill this position. He recounted how the last few Branch Chairs had been unable to continue in the role due to health challenges and family duties. Sam explained that the Foundation was incorporated to serve the Branch in holding its assets (building and bank accounts) but that the Members were charged to fill the building with activities. He invited Members to discuss how they would want to do that this coming year.

Discussion of Branch Programs. In brief, Members expressed the following thoughts: Once in the past, Members decided not to have a Branch Chair but a Programs group – and that worked. At another time, two members successfully rotated in and out for multiple years as Branch Chair. The Branch Chair represents the Anthroposophical Society in general and the Los Angeles Branch specifically. It is important that the Branch Chair be regularly present at events and meetings. Let's not drag anyone into the role. We all need to be willing to pitch in. Members can bring individual passions, backgrounds, and skills to work together. Programs need a go-to person or coordinator for final answers or things may fall by the wayside; examples of past issues were given. Consider a rewrite of the Bylaws to reframe the Foundation/Programs relationship. Commit to a strategic plan motivated by the spirit of three-folding. Perhaps form Programs sub-committees to complete necessary tasks. Intertwining of Foundation Trustees and Programs Committee Members is not necessarily an issue. There is the need for a regularly published calendar, with events organized and publicized at least a season ahead. Seasonal festivals and Member meetings could provide a Programs foundational structure. In person events are preferable; hybrid meetings are also practical these days.

Sam deduced that there was an impulse for a group to take the lead on Programs and suggested that it be comprised of a mix of generations – including individuals who may not be Branch Members. He recalled that, as John Brousseau often said, "There is a lot of room at the top for volunteers." Sam asked who would be willing to meet together to produce programs. Holding up hands were Matt, Christine, Stefano, Bari, Jeramy, Linda, Anne, and Dan. Sam asked them to meet during the 15-minute meeting break to determine how they might proceed and then report back to the rest of the Members prior to elections.

BREAK

Program Planning Team Proposal. Matt Kenyon offered that the group, consisting of members noted above, could begin on March 20 to meet weekly in order to – first – follow through on events already scheduled by Dottie Zold. They would also continue with the planning and presentation of meaningful program activities at the Rudolf Steiner Community Center during the coming year. By show of hands, Branch Members accepted this proposal.

Election of Anthroposophical Foundation of California Trustees. Foundation President Sam Glaze distributed blank ballots to the Members where they could write in their votes for the nominated Foundation Trustee positions. After the ballots had been completed and counted, Sam announced:

- Christine Burke, Linda Connell, Matthew Kenyon, and Eloise Krivosheia were re-elected to serve two-year Foundation Trustee terms; and
- Aileen Leijten and Christopher Quintanar were newly elected to serve two-year Foundation Trustee terms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dottie Zold. Sam began by personally expressing his appreciation for all the hard work and dedication to duty Dottie put in as Branch Chair. Both Sam and the Foundation Trustees were very appreciative of her contributions. Lori Daub passed around a card for Members to sign. With a gift, the card will be sent to Dottie.

Bari Borsky. Sam recalled seeing Bari at the Branch building dedication and events prior. He learned from her that colleagues could disagree and still be friends. Sam especially appreciated Bari's warmth and clear vision. She could envision the Branch home in an old garage building. Lori Daub added that Bari had a particular talent for writing fundraising letters. Bari replied that the Branch home envisioning was one of the greatest experiences of her life. It was done for the community, and she thanked everyone for the opportunity.

REPORTS

Approval of Minutes. Minutes of the 3/26/23 AGM were approved as submitted.

Branch Chair. Although Branch Chair Dottie Zold was unable to attend this meeting due to caring for her parents in New Jersey, she submitted a written Branch/Program Chair Report 2023-2024, and it is filed with the minutes.

Anthroposophical Foundation of California. President Sam Glaze reviewed the Board's purpose, history, and previous year's tasks. His written report is filed with these minutes.

Membership. Chair Matt Kenyon reported that there were approximately 100 active Branch members who had paid dues within the past 3 years, including 6 new members. He expressed concern that there is a descending trend in membership and plans to send out both a membership reminder email and follow-up letter later this year. His written report is filed with these minutes.

Programs. Dottie Zold forwarded a roster of Upcoming Events she has scheduled at the Rudolf Steiner Community Center from March 2024 through March 2025. It is filed with these minutes.

Waldorf Institute of Southern California. Jean Brousseau shared that WISC is currently on hiatus and there are no classes this semester. They are in a re-imagining phase: how to best offer what is needed to prepare Waldorf School teachers. A turn-around committee is reaching out to various groups to learn what the teaching is asking. Things have changed. Enrollment was down because most of their students were already working in schools and could not in addition study three full Saturdays each month. The hiatus was Board mandated. WISC was in a financial deficit and needed a continuing financial base. WISC hopes to resume to some extent in the fall and meanwhile is encouraging students to form study groups for pedagogical lectures.

Finances and Branch Building. Foundation Treasurer Eloise Krivosheia was delighted to announce that the Branch Building is in good shape and its current market value is \$3.4-4.4 million. She reviewed the Foundation's financial statement for calendar year 2023 and recounted major repairs done to the building during that time. Eloise noted that 2023 was the first year in many during which the roof did not leak. The Foundation is now paying more for what was once work done by volunteers. However, the new handyman holds an exceptional love for the building and has completed a variety of wonderful repairs. Reserve account funds were increased in 2023 and Programs were given \$15,500 of support. Tenant Sofa-U-Love contributed 72% of last year's income; the Foundation is dependent upon them for financial wellbeing. Donations – both member and non-member – comprised 12% of income, and the last 16% of income arrived from an unanticipated new endowment source – the Richard Alan Shapiro Trust. Although Mr. Shapiro was never a Branch member, in a conversation with the

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trust manager Maynard Rosen, Eloise learned that Mr. Shapiro had visited the Branch Library several times and very much enjoyed Anthroposophy.

Rudolf Steiner Library and Bookshop. Chris Quintanar reported that the collection is continually expanding through new inventory of books and periodicals. Borrowing is active, with 23 new Library members this year. Book sales are robust, especially during in-house events; the used book section remains popular. Many of the walk-in visitors are young people. Aileen Leijten is in the Library several days during the week; Eloise Krivosheia, Dan Hartjes, and Chris are there on Saturday afternoons. Volunteers are always welcome to assist with assorted interesting tasks and projects.

Sacred Speech. Christine Burke reviewed workshops she had given at the Branch this past year. She indicated that she would be willing to continue, and mentioned one possible event may be in conjunction with the Bay Area Eurythmy Ensemble which has expressed interest in performing here around Michaelmas.

Oberufer Shepherds Play. Jeramy Shirley read a statement from Gail McManus regarding this year's annual production of the beloved Christmas play. A copy of Gail's statement is filed with these minutes.

Eurythmy. Although Andrew Dzedulionis was unable to attend the meeting due to work commitments on the East Coast, he submitted a report on his eurythmy classes given at the Branch within the last year. His written communication is included with these minutes.

Study Groups. Study Group leaders indicated that active studies in Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties now include Goethean Science, Forgiveness, selected works of Rudolf Steiner, the Gospels, and Geology. A full listing of Study Groups is available on the Branch website.

Website: anthroposophyla.org. Anne Saldo noted that the Study Groups web page was refreshed in August 2023 and January 2024. A list of newly acquired Library books had just been uploaded; review and renewal of Related Initiatives will follow later this year. Through ongoing website improvements, it is easy to subscribe to email announcements and become a Branch member, as well as to securely make payments and donations, and to peruse upcoming events. Because technology is only as good as the humans behind it, Anne gratefully acknowledged Chris Quintanar for website oversight, Sieg Heep for meeting technical support, and Dottie Zold for Branch Facebook page management.

CLOSING

Samuel Glaze recited the verse *Morning Call of Michael* verse by Rudolf Steiner. The meeting adjourned at 4:55pm. The date for the next Annual General Meeting will be determined at a later time.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Saldo
Secretary, Anthroposophical Foundation of California