

The goal of this organization shall be to extend to newcomers of Greater Columbia assistance in beginning a social life in a new community and promoting interest in Greater Columbia and its civic and cultural affairs.

Serving the Greater Columbia Area -- www.newcomersofgreatercolumbia.com

PRESIDENTS' CORNER

COVID affected our lives in various ways, and some impacts remain with us. I assumed that Newcomers' Club activities would return to normal during the post-COVID period, but that didn't always happen. We no longer gather in members' homes as frequently as we did in the past for a variety of reasons. But, due to the ingenuity of our members, there are new places to gather. Some of our Special Interest Groups didn't survive, or were changed. New Special Interest Groups were formed and others revived. Some venues, where we have been meeting for years, were hard-hit by inflation and labor shortages, which led to more challenges. The Executive Board and our committees found ways to stretch the budget, as well as other efficiencies. Thank you to the members who supported us as the Club met these challenges. However, there might be more challenges in 2024. We need your help in meeting those and turning them into opportunities.

In September, the Board met at Gibson Pond Park. It was a gorgeous summer morning, and we were happy to see one another and catch up on the news of summer fun and travels. We also had serious business to discuss. The Nominating Committee reported on their efforts to find candidates to fill upcoming vacant positions. We are pleased that two members have agreed to join the board. Four board positions remain open (2 co-presidents, 1 2nd VP-membership, and 1 recording secretary), and despite their efforts, they heard a lot of "No's". That led to a discussion of what might happen if these positions are not filled by the end of 2023.

The Executive Board has 12 elected officers, but most positions are shared by two members. Length of service varies, but is usually one or two years. This ensures that responsibilities are shared, and there is consistent coverage. Board members rely on one another, because volunteers come to these positions with different knowledge and skills. Some Board members have been with the Club for only a year or two, and they bring a fresh way of looking at issues. Others have been Newcomers longer, and they are familiar with its history and traditions. Members lead busy lives, spending time with family and friends, travel etc, but we cover for one another during their absence. These dedicated members ensure that the Club continues to function.

We encourage members to join the Executive Board to provide continuity and ensure the success of the Newcomers Club. If you were asked to serve, and previously said "No", please reconsider. You were invited to join the Board, because they recognized that you have valuable skills and insights to offer. If you haven't yet been asked to volunteer, and you think you would enjoy being on the Board, please talk with someone on the Committee (see article on page 5 of this newsletter).

Your 2023 Co-Presidents,
Shirley & Janet

