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## Citizens for Peace Minutes 1-12-10

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CITIZENS FOR PEACE  
Minutes  
**January 12, 2010**

The meeting opened at 7:10 pm with a welcome by President, Colleen Mills. She introduced our visitors and thanked them for coming tonight. Our Inner Peace Director, Caroline Trout, is in Florida, so Colleen thanked member Kathy Henning, who has practiced meditation for over thirty years, for opening our meeting with a special meditation.

**Special Presentation:**

Members, Rosemary Doyle, and Jerry Mehler shared their involvement with Nonviolent Communication and Restorative Practices (RP), which has been successfully used in schools to reduce violence.

Jerry presented the concepts and philosophy of RP:

- RP is a method of communication and problem solving used to improve behavior, instruction, discipline and form community.
- RP is an alternative to traditional disciplinary actions in school (suspensions – which are pathways to prison) and judiciary systems - that offer high control and little support.
- RP takes the traditional disciplinary demand to stop doing something to an affective questioning approach to explore feelings and motivations.

Rosemary facilitated a Peace Circle Demonstration, in which CFP members played a part.

Chairs were assembled in a circle. Those taking part took a seat. The procedure included:

- Introduction/Bonding exercise – So all feel included
- A Talking stick was passed around – Each answered the question: What do you look for in a friend?
- The Giraffe was selected as a mascot and placed in the middle – it has the largest heart of any animal and it is not an attack animal.
- The American Flag was placed in the circle – to symbolize Patriotism.

A reading started off the exercise involving two students who fought in school, resulting in damage to the school. All impacted were invited to discuss what occurred. Each person shared from his/her perspective. Then, after all involved shared their concerns, each was asked how to restore the harm. The suggestions that came out of the Peace Circle would then be documented and followed-up on. Then, there was a closing reading.

Rosemary stated that studies have shown that investing in this process increases learning time and reduces crime. Comments from the members ensued, with a thank you to Rosemary and Jerry.

After the presentation, a video titled, “Burning Bridges” was shown. It was a documentary of the senseless burning of the historic Mood’s Bridge in Buck’s County, PA. It depicts an actual Peace Circle using Restorative Practices that helped a community heal and move forward.

**Business Meeting:**

The following Officers were up for election: President – Colleen Mills, Vice President – Tada Gunter, Secretary – Linda Lieder, and Treasurer – Rick Abdo. A motion was made by Dotti Ochala and seconded by Jerry Mehler. The members unanimously elected the officers. Colleen thanked them for their efforts and also thanked Gloria Gonek for volunteering to be our Political Action Director, replacing Clara Lawrence.

**Announcements:**

- The schedule for this year’s meetings has been published, be sure to get one.
- Treasurer’s report shared with the members
- Colleen distributed a handout – Actions to help create a Culture of Peace in 2010.

Colleen thanked all in attendance for coming tonight. The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.