

The CIVIC Citizen

The Council for International Visitors to Iowa Cities

Two Long Serving Board Members Say Farewell



Two board members who have served the board in countless ways over the years were honored at the Annual Meeting. The editors asked both Jo Jones and Doris Houser to summarize their service to CIVIC, and their beliefs about the council. Jo sent hers in writing and Doris chose to be interviewed.

Doris Houser

Doris Houser has been an active board member since 2000, involving herself in every aspect of CIVIC from programming to hosting families/retreats and serving as Board secretary. Her interest in international affairs dates back many years to when she was active in the Council for International Programs (CIP), hosting professionals from other countries for several months.

She was first approached by Les Batterman to join CIVIC, and subsequently by Marianne Weiss to host visitors for dinner. Later Jean Cadoret and Marianne encouraged her to join the Board of Directors. Doris found that serving on the board was a good learning experience. She enjoyed working with the staff and the leadership team. As a board member she attended two national conferences, one in Pittsburgh and the other in Washington, D.C. She found the conventions an educational and stimulating experience, enhancing her understanding of the national and international network of the CIVIC organization.

As a CIVIC member, she enjoyed working with the JFDP (Junior Faculty Development Program) visitors, helping them get settled into housing and oriented to the Iowa City community for their extended stays. Doris finds the many opportunities for establishing individual relationships with people from other countries delightful. She also feels a sense of pride when visitors leave surprised at how much they love Iowa, and the wonderful people in Iowa.

Doris believes that CIVIC is a "wonderful organization" because its mission of one-to-one citizen diplomacy is so important for our country, especially now. She will continue to be involved with CIVIC activities, and encourages other members to get involved also.



Doris Jo

Jo Jones

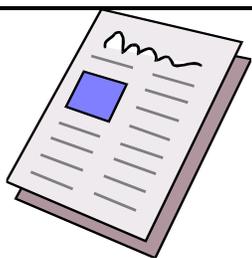
I joined the CIVIC board in 1993. When I joined the Board, I knew of CIVIC and had some idea as to what the

organization did. Mary Ellen Comly, Tom Baldrige and other CIVIC volunteers would frequently bring international visitors to the Museum of Art, especially visitors coming from African nations.

From 1994-1996, I served as Secretary and Chair of the Programming Committee; from 2001-2006, I served as Vice President.

I probably enjoyed most the opportunity to meet new people, those from other countries as well as the very generous individuals in the Iowa City and surrounding communities. Experiencing the generosity of Iowans and the appreciation of the international visitors was rewarding and encouraging. I think the time on the CIVIC board helped me to better understand and appreciate the importance of citizen diplomacy. It really is about building friendships one handshake at a time!

Recent staff changes at the Museum have made it difficult for me to participate at the level that I would wish. However, I do intend to remain active with CIVIC to the extent that my schedule allows.



NEWSLETTER SEEKS TO EXPAND READERSHIP

The CIVIC CITIZEN wants to keep all of you informed of our many activities, and hopefully encourage you to pitch in when you can. We invite you to e-mail us any items of interest or photos of your activities with our visitors. Also, to increase awareness and visibility of CIVIC and its important work, The CIVIC board has agreed to distribute the CIVIC CITIZEN more widely. If you know of individuals or organizations that might benefit from receiving this newsletter, please contact the CIVIC office or the newsletters editors by e-mail: marianne-weiss@uiowa.edu or patricia-kelley@uiowa.edu.

From the President's desk ~ ~

When Kenn Hubel asked me to consider the presidency of CIVIC, I didn't have to think very long. I have always loved meeting people from other cultures and I strongly believe in "citizen diplomacy." During the last two years, I got involved in arranging schedules for international visitors to eastern Iowa. This proved to be a fascinating experience: hosting journalists and city officials from the Middle East and North Africa, a public health professional from Hong Kong, a Member of the Catalan Parliament, four young politicians from northern Europe, and many others.

Not only did I meet people from other parts of the world and learn something about their culture; I also met people and learned things about our own community that I didn't know before. The professionals – local elected officials, department heads, university leaders, professors and students, business leaders, political experts, environmentalists, as well as home hospitality volunteers were invariably gracious and helpful. The visitors were always amazed at how beautiful Iowa is and how warm and friendly the people are.

This reaction is a result of the management skills of Executive Director Tom Baldrige and Office Coordinator Marianne Weiss, the many contributions of our members, and the vast network of volunteers, who have helped make the visitor's experience a good one. I want to thank all of you who have shared your knowledge and expertise, given tours of your plants, businesses and museums, hosted meals, made airport and appointment runs, and contributed financially and in other ways. We thank you for your participation, and hope you will continue to serve as Citizen Ambassadors during the coming year.

Citizen diplomacy is the concept that, in a vibrant democracy, the individual citizen has the right – even the responsibility – to help shape U.S. foreign relations.

Jean Lloyd-Jones



If you have not paid your 2007 Membership Dues

... this is ...

A GENTLE REMINDER

Dues are:

\$25.00 for individual

\$50.00 for family

We encourage you to also make a donation. . .

We cannot continue our many activities without support in dues and donations from people like you.

Our many thanks in advance.



Kenn Hubel says "CIVIC makes it possible"

The days our visitors spend with us in and around Iowa City are rarely routine; as noted when we welcomed 13 visitors from Egypt, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Morocco and Tunisia interested in local government, religious communities and interactions of government and communications media.

One morning we visited with Amish Bishop Vernon Yoder and his wife Inez on their farm west of Kalona, toured the Amish-Mennonite Museum nearby and were served lunch at the Iowa Mennonite School. Five or six students and a couple of teachers sat among us and were introduced by the principal, Wilbur Yoder. Each of them told something about the school and their activities in a light-hearted informative way and I was surprised to see at least one pierced nose among students. (Travel is educational.) Most of our visitors were men in their 30s and 40s and the tone established by the two prior appointments was respectful though somewhat somber. Within 30 minutes the IMS kids and their teachers shifted the key from minor to major. As we left the lunch table and our visitors mingled and chatted, other students noisily passed the door to the cafeteria, signaling that the rehearsal of the student chorus had ended.



Principal Yoder explained the fuss and asked if we would like to hear a couple of the songs they were rehearsing. He corralled them, explained our visit and asked their director to present part of the program they were to give in another few days. As they sang, the smiles of the visitors broadened and the sense of delight increased. No one could miss the

warmth of the moment magnified by the spontaneity with which it arose. The visitors then reciprocated, singing traditional songs to the IMS choir in Arabic.

CIVIC Fundraiser Nets \$1,853.93

CIVIC's annual fundraiser was held August 28th at the Brown Deer Golf Club in Coralville. Dr. Sherry L. Mueller, president of the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV) from Washington, DC. Spoke on "The Power of Citizen Diplomacy".



Attending this event as our honored guests were 30 participants of the 2006 International Writing Program. In the past we have had a welcoming potluck picnic for writers. This year's format provided more opportunity for CIVIC members and friends to make connections with the writers who were seated at different tables. Guests had the option of choosing their table by the country of the writer.

It proved very successful thanks to the many attending the event and due to the generous donor who under-wrote the writer's dinners. In addition to raising money, we raised good will and exposure in the community . . . An entertaining and educational evening was enjoyed by all.

Farewell to Lois Gray,



Director of External Relations for International Programs. After 11 years she is leaving to take a position at the

University News Service. She has been invaluable to CIVIC for getting information about us into the news. Fortunately her new position will allow her to keep in contact with us on a frequent basis. Our best wishes and congratulations to Lois on her new job.

The interim Communications Coordinator will be Joe Nugent, an experienced journalist. We look forward to working with him.

Successful Annual Meeting: Video Premiered & New Board Chosen

CIVIC's annual meeting was held on November 2nd at the International Program's Commons. In addition to the board of directors, CIVIC members, and community citizens who attended, our special guests



were the Iowa City Mayor, Ross Wilburn and two groups of international visitors. Ms. CAI Yonglian, Ms. GU Huirong, Mr. WU Youzhang from China and Ms. Agnes Chang, a U.S. Interpreter, who were in town to form a better understanding of U.S. policy on intellectual property rights. Also two Chinese journalists, Mr. ZHANG Xiantang and Mr. GUO Yukuan with Dr.

Jay Sailey their Mandarin Chinese Interpreter who were here to understand the relationship between the U.S. media, politicians and the government.

An 18 minute video featuring Mayor Ross Wilburn welcoming CIVIC visitors from Middle East and North African countries was premiered by Jean Lloyd-Jones. It was developed to educate the public about CIVIC's mission and activities, and was subsequently shown on Public Access television, and will be available for public speaking engagements.

Outgoing President, Kenn Hubel welcomed people, and summarized the year's activities. There was a motion to honor and thank Dr. Hubel for his years of service on the board and as president. He will continue on the board as past president in charge of programming. The board members then honored and thanked out going board members Jeanne Cadoret, past president; Jo Jones, Vice President; and Doris Houser.

The nominating committee presented nominations for 3 new board members: Edward Saunders, Dean Moore, and Joe AOssey. There were no nominations from the floor and the slate was unanimously accepted.

2007 Board of Directors

President
Jean Lloyd-Jones

Vice President
Newman Abuissa

Secretary
Suzanne Kirchner

Treasurer
Joe AOssey

Past President
Kenneth Hubel

Members
Ken(dall) Atkinson
Richard "Dick" Braverman
Muriel Hartz
Tricia Knox
Dongwang Liu
Pat Kelley
Dean Moore

Ex officio members
Diana Davies,
Director of Int'l Programs

Thomas Baldrige,
Executive Director

Marianne Weiss,
Office Coordinator

It was noted that Mr. Aossey is from Cedar Rapids, which is appropriate as CIVIC serves Eastern Iowa and we wish to strengthen our ties with that city.

Citizen Diplomacy in Action

Executive Director Thomas Baldrige, in the year-end report, noted that CIVIC hosted 69 visitors (21 programs) from the National Council of Visitors funded by the US Department of State and 61 other visitors (4 programs), for a total of 130 international visitors and 25 programs.



Visitors included 5 visitors from different countries in South America interested in Rural Agricultural Development; 3 educators from Kazakhstan; 15 students from Tokyo studying English as a Second Language; a Serbian Mycologist; 16 Nursing Exchange students from Canada and Mexico; a Pakistani Attorney; 16 visitors from Mid East and North Africa interested in state and local government; 5 Ukrainians (Agricultural Futures Markets); 4 Belarusians (Agricultural Business); 5 Bahraini Clerics (Interfaith dialogue); 5 Kyrgyz journalists; a Hong Kong health professional; a political official from Hong Kong; 5 Belarusian youth leaders; a Lady from Spain (Farming and the Food Industry); 2 Kyrgyz women (Islam in Midwestern settings); an Indonesian educator, (US Muslim community); a French political advisor; 28 international writers from 23 countries; 4 Serbian Officials (US political process); 4 Japanese (US Judicial System and Food Safety); 5 Ukrainians (Food Safety); and a Venezuelan journalist.

Staff, board members and a host of community volunteers assisted these visitors in meeting their learning objectives and in extending warm Midwestern hospitality.

An Iowa City surprise for Dr. Saltanat Mursuralieva, a physician, and Ms. Gulkhavas Ubaeva, a lawyer, engaged in work to promote the education, professional, social, and spiritual well being of Moslem women in the Kyrgyz Republic (formerly Kyrgyzstan) during their visit. Dr Mursuralieva is particularly interested in HIV/AIDS, and is President of Progressive Public Union of Women. Ms Ubaeva is focused on Islamic Law, and is on the faculty at Islamic University, Bishkek.

They were especially interested in the Islamic community from the perspective of women, and participated in a number of professional visits and dialogues; a visit to the Cedar Rapids mosque, University Hospitals, faculty of Religious Studies at the University and a discussion with women of the Islamic faith.

One of the highlights of their visit to Iowa City was an evening meal with Christian and Moslem women at the home of Doris Houser. During the evening of fellowship, all of the women shared their own story related to their faith and interfaith activities. They summed up their feelings by remarking, "When I came to the United States, I never thought I would see Christian and Moslem women in the same room, much less eating together and enjoying each other."

A memorable experience for them to take back to the Kyrgyz Republic.

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CIVIC

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Friends of CIVIC

YOU make the difference