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**ATTENDEES:**  Suzanne "Sam" Martinez, John Croneigh, Nancy Shepherdson, Subbarao Mandavilli, Doug Ahlgrim, Joe Janicki, Ted Huelsman, George Young, Appaji Valavala, Dale Perrin, and Barbara Barker.

**GUESTS:** Mark Gibson, Norb Liebland and Frank Bravato.

**MEETING MINUTES:**

Tonight's meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. by Suzanne "Sam" Martinez, President. This is a special meeting that includes a presentation on KidPower, India. Due to the time difference, the meeting was held later to reflect early morning in Visakhapatnam. John Croneigh and George Young arranged for the presentation to be conducted today.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:**

Nancy Shepherdson informed the committee that the book giveaway literacy program would resume this month at St. Vincent de Paul on 135 Buesching Road, Lake Zurich. The first book distribution will take place on Thursday, August 26th from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. The book giveaway will take place on the fourth Thursday of each month. There will not be a distribution in December. This program is held in conjunction with the food pantry. A sign-up genius will be sent out for volunteer participation.

**PRESENTATION:**

**KIDPOWER, INDIA**

John Croneigh has been working with Praveen Vempadapu, the Director of Kidpower, India to provide an update to their program. Manasu Girl Children Home started in 2007 and provides a safe and secure place for orphans and highly vulnerable girls. The children that stay in the home go to different schools and some even attend college. There are currently 35 girls in Manasu Girl Children Home.

Manasu means "heart" in Telugu. The main aim is to empower children and teenagers against all forms of exploitation or abuse and to protect child rights and basic rights guaranteed under Indian constitution and various laws. Kidpower's main activities include child safely trainings, girl scholarships, slum adaptation program and Manasu girl children home.

John presented a Powerpoint presentation. Some statistics of note are:

\* 5000 children have been trained since 2013.

\* 500 gifts provided scholarships in 2020.

\* 280 families have been supported.

The role our club would be to consider sponsoring a girl(s) at a cost of $300/year. This covers their educational needs. We could support three girls at various ages at $900. We could provide more money through corporate sponsorships and international Rotary grants. This program passes the Rotary 4-Way test.

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John included a slide on various ways we could do fundraising. Subbarao stated his company, Northern Trust is considering sponsorship. Interact can also help with fundraising activities. Subbarao's mother-in-law has visited the home and verified that the money that has been sent to the school is being used appropriately and that the children are well cared for. Support would go through Kidpower, India.

The program was turned over to Praveen Vempadapu, the Director. He spoke of the various activities including healthy food and sports as an important part of their lives. They have picnics, festivals and fun activities. "Assisted bond and a belief they are a family," is the glue that keeps the girls together. There is a good infrastructure with three buildings and a committed staff. A social worker is also on staff to provide counseling services.

The $300 covers education of a child per year. Each child has a mentor. Praveen said that raising funds for education is a challenge, especially since COVID 19 hit India last year. Only 3-5 children receive sponsorship and support till college. The ages of the girls ranges from 10-21 years. Most students are sent to local private schools. The majority of the girls that are admitted to Manasu are referred from welfare and other government agencies. The child could be a runaway or from a high risk home.

After Praveen's presentation, the girls regaled us with a lively program of dancing and singing. The girls put a lot of effort into their program and should be very proud of their accomplishments. They wowed our committee with their dance moves and spinning. They are truly a talented group of young girls. A big thank you goes out to them for their awesome entertainment.

After the presentation was over, our Club had a discussion on how we wanted to proceed.

**MOTION:** John Croneigh made a motion to provide funding for three students at a cost of $900. George Young seconded. All in favor. *Motion carried.*

Sam Martinez may also have a corporate sponsor and Subbarao is pursuing his company for sponsorship. Donation is made through their website. American money is converted to Indian currency. John Croneigh was requested to contact Praveen Vempadapu to coordinate the process, provide information on the selection process and the best time to submit the funds. John will keep the committee informed via email and at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held at Lake Zurich Family Martial Arts on September 13th at 6:30 p.m. **MOTION:** Nancy Shepherdson made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Subbarao Mandavilla. All in favor. *Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Y. Barker

Secretary