

**INTERFAITH ROUNDTABLE OF KAUAI**  
**May 29, 2015**  
**Lihue Hongwanji, 3-3530 Kuhio Hwy, Lihue**  
**Minutes submitted by Al Albergate**

**Present:** Al Albergate, Sister Deborah Burnham, Jeffrey Pears, Sharon West, Joanne Watanabe, Jennie Yukimura, Ishaq Mohammed, Deborah Duda.

**Opening Prayer:** Offered by Ishaq Mohammed.

**Welcoming and Call to order, Introductions:** Jeffrey Pears.

**Minutes from Last Meeting:** Approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** In the absence of Treasurer Vel Alahan, Jeffrey reported our treasury has a balance of \$1,273.80. This includes \$660.00 from the eleven persons who have signed up so far for the retreat July 9-11. Jeffrey checked with the Bank of Hawaii to find out why they have not set up our electronic (by computer) access to our account to make access easier. A bank Vice President is expected to respond to Jeffrey. We will be able to transfer donations made to IROK via PayPal from our website to our bank account electronically.

**Message from Chairperson:** Jeffrey opened with a quote from Napoleon Hill to the effect that having goals and a major purpose helps us to focus our time, money and energy. He summarized the Roundtable's goals as Live, Share, Learn and Serve. Live our faith, Share our faith, Learn from others and Serve our community.

**Committee Reports:**

- a) **Membership:** John Moore was absent. Jeffrey said our membership statistics are the same as was reported at the March meeting. Our email list includes about 200 names on Kaua'i, while IROK's active membership is about 20-30. Approximately 76 persons attended the National Day of Prayer event sponsored by IROK on May 7th at the County Rotunda Building.
- b) **Public Relations:** Al Albergate reported that at least seven articles about the National Day of Prayer appeared in The Garden Island newspaper before and after the event. Although news releases were also sent out to several radio stations, Al said he had no sure way to track whether they made the announcements, complicated by the fact that he was off-island. Jeffrey suggested that for the next public event we encourage our members to listen to the local radio stations for news/promotions of our event.
- c) **Programming:** The special program presenter, Rev. Michael Christiansen, pastor of the Hanapepe United Church of Christ, was absent due to illness. Monthly presenters for the remainder of the year are Rev. Rita Andriello-Feren and Rev. Patrick Feren, spiritual directors of the Center for Spiritual Living, Will.i.am Garavito, Christian mystic and shaman, Deborah Duda (Sufi), Ishaq Mohammed (Islam); with the addition possibly of Carol Reichert who would present a film on Thomas Merton.
- d) **National Day of Prayer Committee:** Jeffrey read the various responses to a multi-question survey regarding the National Day of Prayer sent out after the event.

\*\*\*\*\*During either this portion of the meeting or during the public relations report, or both, there

was a spirited and lengthy discussion about the current scheduling of two separate services, back-to-back within the National Day of Prayer event at the same location. Our event finished at 11 a.m., and was followed by the prayer service sponsored by the Kauai Island Ministries (KIM), which represent Christian churches. It was noted that of the at least seven newspaper articles and letters to the editor (two more letters to the editor have appeared since our meeting on May 29) most questioned why people of religion avoid offering prayers together in the same event. While some IROK members felt that this was just business as usual with the news media trying to play up the most controversial aspect of a story, there was also the opinion that this is a real issue that is being reflected by the media as well as citizens in the community. Jeffrey explained that he and the leadership of KIM cooperated in preparations for the event, including the mention of the KIM service in our news release and flyer. Also, KIM provided the tent, chairs and podium for both events. Jeffrey said he accepts the current tradition of two separate back-to-back events for National Day of Prayer. Some disagreed, expressing the view that the situation results from a prejudice against non-Christian religions which should be addressed through dialogue. Jeffrey stated he is open and accepting of future harmony with KIM at this and other events.

- e) **Website:** A motion was approved to upload the news articles concerning the National Day of Prayer to our website along with a position statement by our Roundtable. Jeffrey said he will also post on the site photos of the National Day of Prayer service taken by Ron Stover, as well as photos from the annual retreat. And later this year Jeffrey will present an overview of the website.
- f) **Annual Retreat:** Discussion was postponed until the special meeting to be held immediately after today's regular meeting.

**Monthly Donation:** It was voted on and agreed that the \$80 donated by those in attendance this month will go toward helping the Eleele Elementary School recover from a recent incident of arson.

**New Business:** Jeffrey will invite Carol Reichert to show the film on Thomas Merton.

**Old Business:** Jeffrey reported having spoken with Brian Azuka's law firm to help us apply for formal non-profit status, known as 501(c)3. Azuka provided a proposal and IROK is considering it. There are two questions we need to ask ourselves before going forward. First, do we anticipate attracting enough donations to make it worth the cost of applying for non-profit status, which would give a tax write-off to donors and protect IROK from paying taxes? Second question is do we need to apply for grants from organizations that only give money to official tax-exempt, non-profit institutions? Jeffrey said he would like to schedule a special business planning meeting, open to all IROK members, to discuss further the question of filing for non-profit status.

On another topic, it was discussed that Al Albergate is our interim secretary and thus, there is a need for an IROK member who enjoys administrative volunteering to step up and serve on the IROK board as secretary.

**Program:** There was no presentation at today's meeting.

**Next meeting:** Friday, June 19, 2015 (This next meeting is a week earlier because the chairperson and co-chairperson will not be available on the fourth Friday in June, our regular meeting date).

**Closing Prayer:** Jeffrey.

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned.