

President's Message | Andy Sanford

Welcome, Ladies, to the Winter Edition of our *Connections Newsletter*! Reflecting on the past few months, seeing how much we've accomplished together is incredible.

I'm thrilled to share highlights of our recent events and give you a sneak peek at what's ahead for the Southern Maryland Women's League. Let's take a moment to celebrate our outstanding monthly programs:

- September kicked off with a bang at our **Annual Crab Feast** at Capt. John's, where delicious food and great conversations made for an unforgettable evening.
- Our inaugural **Monster Mash 5K Run & Walk** along the Indian Head Rail Trail took place on October 19. With 124 participants, the event was a success—and so much fun!
- In November, we turned back time with an **80s-themed Murder Mystery Dinner**. The fabulous costumes were matched only by the laughter (even if our detective skills could use some work!).
- Finally, December wrapped up the year with holiday cheer at our **Annual Holiday Party**, graciously hosted by Lisa Wills—a perfect way to celebrate friendship and community.



Check out the photos and recaps of these events in this issue, and click on the buttons within the articles for even more memories and information.

As this year ends, I sincerely thank our Board Members for their dedication and service. Balancing League responsibilities with personal and professional commitments is no small feat, and their contributions make everything we do possible.

To all our members, thank you for your passion, participation, and commitment to our mission. You are the heart of this League, and your involvement is key to our success.

Looking ahead, we're starting 2024 strong with one of our most beloved traditions: the January 8th **Re-Gift Exchange at Szechuan Gardens** in Waldorf. Don't forget to RSVP and bring a wrapped gift valued at \$30 to join the fun (and the infamous Reindeer Games!).

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President. Working with and representing such an inspiring group of women is an honor. If you have any questions, ideas, or feedback, please don't hesitate to contact me at 301-399-0583. *Here's to an exciting New Year!*



September: Annual Crab Feast

Members, Spouses, and Guests had a great time at our Annual Crab Feast at Capt. John's in Cobb Island. The crabs, seafood, and cocktails were fantastic! Everyone had a blast with the introductions and the opportunity to share something we didn't know about each other. Thank you to our Programs Committee for planning such a wonderful evening of fellowship and fun.

Happy Birthday to our Birthday Queens – Becky Hoffman and Michelle Kelly!



[See More Photos Here Now...](#)

SOUTHERN MARYLAND WOMEN'S LEAGUE...

We are a dynamic group of women dedicated to helping each other succeed through the exchange of services, information, mentoring, charitable actions, shared experiences, friendship and motivational support.

SMWL FOUNDATION

Over the past 18 years, our members have come together to raise and donate \$480,000+ in support of programs, scholarships, partner organizations, education, resources, and special events for women and children in need within our community.

IN APPRECIATION

We thank all members past and present and our generous sponsors for contributing to our success.

2024 FUN-RAISER: Monster Mash 5K Run/Walk

SMWL | DYNAMIC MEMBERS | FUN GATHERINGS | ANNUAL FUNDRAISER | GIVING BACK

We did it! With 124 runners, our VERY FIRST 5K Fun Run/Walk was a success!



Participants – dressed in a wide range of fun and creative costumes! We had momma and baby deer, swamp monsters, dalmatians, superheroes, cows, unicorns, Santas, and more.

The early morning of October started dark and cold, but the day warmed quickly, and everyone had a blast.

The first through fifth place winners were **Landen Hanan, Mathayo Okwiya, Tarik Smallhorne, Nathaniel Mudd, and Zaire House.**

Thanks to our members, family, friends, and generous sponsors, we raised over \$11,000!

[See More 5K Fun & Photos](#)



THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS: Diana Rucci – MOTTO Mortgage, Laura Forbes–Bryant and A|R Workshop, Katie Pierce and Grille No 13 & Sugar Lips Cakery, WesBanco (Brenda Lowe), College of Southern Maryland Foundation (Brenda Lowe), Shore United Bank (Cassie Grumbine) Robin Magoon & Family, The Shops at Waldorf Center (Natonya Thomas), Kathryn Batey SoMD Criminal Defense, ASanford Marketing, Evie Hungerford & Family, No Excuse Moms, Sharp's Contracting, Foster's Grille, **Sister's with Spirit:** Darlene Breck, Linda Cox, Becky Hoffman, Tequila House, Brenda Lowe, Kelly & Quinn, LLC, Candy Meyers, Ruth Mudd, Andrea Sanford, Lisa Wills. Best Furry Friends (BFF) Dog Training, Xcelleration Nation Track Club, Port Tobacco River Conservancy, Charles County Mobile Intensive Care Unit Co. 60, Wildes Spirit Printing, Sheriff's Department Community Outreach, Quality Printers, KNC Marketing T-Shirts, DJ Services, and Charlotte's Balloons. Please visit and hire these companies for your services – and tell them thank you from the SMWL!

Care Committee... Sending Virtual Hugs

Please join us in sharing well wishes to a few of our members navigating difficult times...

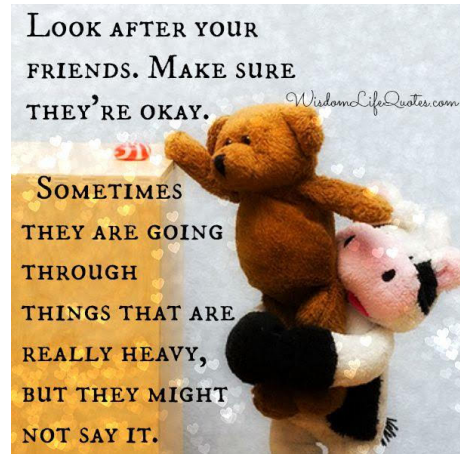
Pam Frank is recovering from Hip Replacement surgery. Although experiencing some pain, we look forward to seeing her dance, skip, and jump in a few months!

After a terrible fall, **Vickie Johnson** is recovering from a broken nose, whiplash, and an injured arm.

For **Michelle Kelly**, whose father-in-law, Michael Kelly, passed away on December 4th, and **Candy Meyers**, whose mother, Catherine Oden, passed away on December 6th, we hope that you both find comfort in your loving memories, strength in support of those who care and hope in each new day.

Ann Rees is recovering from her back surgery and may need additional surgery soon. Please keep her in your prayers.

If you hear of any member who needs encouragement, services, or virtual hugs, please share them with **Candice Kelly**, our Care Committee Coordinator, and me!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We are excited to announce that **Tabbie Caldwell** (left) and **Cassie Grumbine** (right) have been voted in as the newest members of the Southern Maryland Women's League!

Please welcome them both in person at the upcoming **Holiday Gift Exchange**, which will be held on



IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE... ANOTHER YEAR AROUND THE GLOBE!

Join us in wishing the following members best wishes on their upcoming December and January Birthdays:

- **Andrea Sanford** – Dec. 25
- **Lisa Wills** – December 27
- **Lisa Case** – January 31
- **Alyssa Cox** – January 27

Wednesday, January 8, at Szechuan Gardens in Waldorf!

Exciting Update: Cassie got MARRIED this past weekend, and now she's Cassie Stillwell!



Treasurers Report: Foundation

Current balance: \$7,740.24

Disbursements:

- Poiema (2-Year Grant Recipient) – \$11,500
- Jude House – Robin's Nest: \$1,000
- Charles County Literacy Council – \$250
- Alzheimer's Association – \$250

Certificate of Deposit: \$35,631.73

Community Foundation Trust*: \$49,879.00 **A charitable trust is an irrevocable legal entity that holds assets and distributes a portion to one or more tax-exempt philanthropic organizations. Depending on the structure, these trusts can also provide income, reduce taxes, and protect your assets, among other benefits.*

To view many of our past donations and support from our SMWL Foundation – visit our website [HERE](#).



When it comes to an 80s Murder Mystery, dressing up is just part of the fun...



November: 80s Murder Mystery Dinner

Off-the-shoulder oversized shirts, sequins, bows, and even bigger hair transported our members and guests back in time for our SMWL 80s Murder Mystery Dinner Party at the Lekki Events Center in Waldorf.

Suspects, victims, detectives, and even the murderer had a great time, and who knew that we had so many amazing actors in the group!

Thanks to the "*totally tubular*" Programs team for *excellently* planning the event and preparing the delicious food and decadent drinks!

Happy Birthday to our Birthday Queens -- Buffy Giddens, Chrisie Mulcahey, and Kelly Spears. We enjoyed helping you celebrate your special days!

[View more photos here...](#)



SMWL : Empowering Women through our support of continued education



Southern Maryland Women's League Foundation Sponsored Scholarships

Beginning with a 2024 balance of \$8,321, SMWL awarded three \$1,000 each to our previous year's scholarship recipients to help them towards graduation. The three scholarships were awarded to **Megan W.**, **Corrinne D.**, and **Briana R.**

With a remaining balance of \$5,321.00 plus an additional \$1,000 from the 2024 Giving Tuesday donations, the available scholarship funds were \$6,321.

The SMWL Scholarship Committee read and rated the submitted essays and voted to award \$1,000 each to the following six recipients.

- Nenghui E.
- Rebecca P.
- Kristin W.
- Sydney W-T.
- Sybil G.
- Tamia T.

HOT! READ THANK YOU NOTES FROM OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS HERE NOW!

Special thanks to the five SMWL Members and two friends/family who donated to the SMWL Scholarship during Giving Tuesday! Your generous donations were doubled, allowing us to provide additional educational support in 2025!

A CELEBRATED PARTNERSHIP IN SUCCESS

Since 2009, the Southern Maryland Women's League has donated \$56,000 to the College of Southern Maryland Foundation to support scholarships for students of single parents or students who are single parents themselves, and they demonstrate a financial need.



We wish you the best this holiday season and into the New Year!



December: SMWL Annual Christmas Party

It was a lovely night celebrating the holidays with our League Sisters, several spouses, and guests. Thank you to our fabulous host -- Lisa Wills, for sharing your beautifully decorated home -- and backyard Igloo. We also thank Rucci's Catering, Sugar Lips Cakery, Vickie Johnson and Celebration Spirits, Cakes for the interactive Karaoke, and the Programs Committee for your hard work planning and preparing for this special event.

[View more photos here...](#)



Southern Maryland
WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Post-Holiday Surprise Santa

GIFT & RE-GIFT EXCHANGE

One of the League favorite annual
events – this is the one place where it's
perfectly OKAY to RE-GIFT!

Wednesday, January 8, 2025
at Szechuan Garden in Waldorf

Check in begins at 5:30 pm.

Bring a WRAPPED GIFT and a FUN & COMPETITIVE SPIRIT!
Your gift should have a value of at least \$30!

Order your Drinks & Food from the Menu
Cost: \$5 Members, \$10 Guests.
Plus bring \$5 cash for the Heads & Tails Game.

 **RSVP to Katie:**
[**Grillethirteen@gmail.com**](mailto:Grillethirteen@gmail.com)

 **GET READY FOR
REINDEER GAMES!**

By The Ways: Celebrations, Announcements & Invitations



Congratulations to
Darlene Breck... her
granddaughter
Alayna Cox married



Andy Sanford's daughter
Becky, her husband Justin,
and big sister Ellie
welcomed little William



Say hello to
Darlene Breck's first
GREAT GRANDBABY,
Sadie Leigh is 7 months

SUBMITTED BY LISA CASE: Catholic Charities could use your help! The current number of Angel's Watch Shelter residents is 68 children and 34 parents. We seek donors to provide the meals at Angel's Watch family shelter. What an excellent bonding opportunity for some of our sisters to participate in. Catholic Charities is also looking for sponsors to cover the cost of a one-week stay of \$250., and is always in need of Welcome package items such as sheets, towels, pillows, and blankets. The Southern Maryland Food Bank, a distribution center to 40 other church pantries, needs food. If you could host a Food Drive, that would be amazing! Please check the website below or call Lisa Case at 301-643-8888 for more information.

<https://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/about-us/our-locations/our-locations-southern-maryland/>

This is YOUR SMWL Newsletter – Please share your special news, information, charitable projects, and any SMWL Member Specials for your business services and products!
We love supporting our Sister Businesses and Services!

Do you like this new Newsletter Format?



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