

# Connections

## WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 2 - Ad-Hoc Committee  
Page 3 - Membership & Care  
Page 4 & 5 - Our Latest Events  
Page 6-8 - Scholarship Updates  
Page 9: Our Next Special Event

## SMWL MISSION STATEMENT

To promote, strengthen and support women in our community through fellowship, education, service and mentor programs.

We are a dynamic group of women dedicated to helping each other grow and support our community through fund-raising, special events, volunteer efforts, shared experiences and more.

Serving Southern Maryland and its Communities.



## President's Message

Candice Kelly

Dear SMWL Members:

Port Tobacco Playhouse will never be the same again since SMWL members planted themselves in those PTP seats!! Our members brought a special excitement to the "Little Shop of Horrors!"

The pictures were amazing and I love that Andy's floral arrangement is on display at PTP for the duration of the show's run. I hope that everyone had fun, because that's what it is all about. It started with the craft night and carried through the show.

Again, special thanks to Andy, Becky, Pam, and Laura and to everyone who participated. Rona – great job – what a wonderful program idea!

Stay tuned for information about the "Spring Fling" on April 21st. Diana and her committee are planning a lovely event to welcome Spring and new beginnings! Please read the reports included in this newsletter so that you don't miss a thing.

### Special thanks to our Board of Directors and Committee Chairs:

- Vice President: Becky Hoffman, Membership Committee Chair
- Secretary: Brenda Lowe, Scholarship Committee & Ad Hoc Committee Chair
- Treasurer Foundation: Ruth Mudd
- Treasurer Corporation: Pam Frank
- Helen Heier: Reception Sub-Committee of Membership
- Tequilla House: Cheerleader in Chief!
- Rona Kelly: Program Committee Chair
- Natalie McKinney: Care Sub-committee of Membership

### Appointed Board Members:

- Laura Forbes, Grants Committee Chair
- Andy Sanford, Public Relations Committee Chair

Finally, I ask that you remember the citizens of Ukraine in your prayers. We may be small but we are mighty – our collective prayers are needed for peace and freedom.

## SMWL BOD 2022

**President:** Candice Kelly

**Vice President:** Becky Hoffman,  
Membership Committee Chair

**Secretary:** Brenda Lowe, Scholarship  
Committee and Ad Hoc Committee Chair

**Treasurer Foundation:** Ruth Mudd

**Treasurer Corporation:** Pam Frank

**Helen Heier:** Reception Sub-Committee  
of Membership

**Tequilla House:** Cheerleader in Chief!

**Rona Kelly:** Program Committee Chair

**Natalie McKinney:** Care Sub-committee  
of Membership

### Appointed Board Members:

**Laura Forbes:** Grants Committee Chair

**Andy Sanford:** Public Relations  
Committee Chair

## PAST PRESIDENTS

### League

2006-2007 Rona Kelley

2007-2008 Rona Kelley

2008-2009 Diana Rucci

2009-2010 Diane Rucci

2010-2011 Doris Folineo

2011-2012 Terry Davis

2012-2013 Laura Brown

2013-2014 Laura Brown

2014-2015 Brenda Lowe

2015-2016 Diana Rucci

2016-2017 Diana Rucci

2017-2018 Mia Allen-Anayanian

2018-2021 Suzanne Wible

### Foundation

2006-2007 Candice Kelly

2007-2008 Candice Kelly

2008-2009 Millie Gieseeman

## Ad-Hoc Fundraising Exploration Committee

Submitted by Brenda Lowe

Candice Kelly and the Board of Directors charged Brenda Lowe with the task to form an ad-hoc committee with the goal of exploring some alternatives for fund-raising for the Foundation... and to report back to the Board and the Club by June 30, 2022... the "sunshine date". Diana Rucci agreed to co-chair this ad-hoc committee with Brenda and they chose members: Candy Meyers, Lisa Wills, Darlene Breck, Cindy Bouet, Tracey Messick, Ruth Mudd, Laura Forbes, Andy Sanford and Candice Kelly who graciously agreed to help.

After coming up with some creative ideas for a fund-raising event and trying to choose dates, venues, etc. the group decided to put the breaks on this fund-raising event premise and take this time to really use this ad hoc committee in a bigger manner. Given that the initial objective from the Board was to have a 'solidified' idea by June 30th, they have decided to take a step back and regroup on researching/discovering where ALL of the sister members truly want to go with fund-raising and the Foundation and then work on the implementation of whatever the outcome of their research brings.

In order to find out what all of the sister members really want... The Ad-Hoc Committee will identify poignant questions that get to the heart of this major topic. Then each member on the ad hoc committee sets a call with a member of the club. The ad-hoc committee will break the calls up evenly. The Committee Member asks each club member the exact same 3 or 4 questions and take notes.

Once they have the entire membership's thoughts and desires on the subject, they will regroup and put it all together. It is important to have the members "all in" on fund-raising, money-raising for causes...so, they feel like this would be the best way to accomplish full participation.

**SMWL Sisters... be prepared to take a phone call from one of the ladies listed above... and please answer honestly! This is your chance to state your desires on preferred fund-raising options, the causes... etc. This will not take much of your time. However, your honest answers will help this group move forward. Thank you all!**



## Treasurers Reports

Submitted by Pam Frank (Corporation) and Ruth Mudd (Foundation)

**Corporate:** Balance as of March 31, 2022 is \$3,567.37

**Foundation:** Balance as of January 30, 2022 is \$8,239.86

**Community Foundation of Southern Maryland  
(charitable/endowed fund):**

Balance as of January 26, 2022 is \$49,879.22

**Certificate of Deposit:** Balance as of March 21, 2022 is \$33,492.61



## Networking Nook

Buy local and help support  
your small SMWL businesses

### RONA KELLEY

#### Tri County Hearth & Patio Center

2475 Old Washington Rd

Waldorf, Md. 20601

301-843-1771

[www.heatbyfire.com](http://www.heatbyfire.com)

*We are a store for all seasons.*

*Fall - think firepits & fireplaces*

*Winter - think more about*

*fireplaces and wood stoves*

*Spring - Start thinking about*

*outdoor patio furniture and new*

*barbeque grills.*

*Summer - Enjoy the outdoors -*

*maybe you need an umbrella or a*

*new Big Green Egg grill.*

### VICKIE JOHNSON

#### Celebration of Spirits

*Bar Catering, Full Bar Service*

*and Bartenders for all your*

*special occasions*

301-751-3235

[vjohnson7775@aol.com](mailto:vjohnson7775@aol.com)

[www.CelebrationOfSpirits.com](http://www.CelebrationOfSpirits.com)

### VICKIE JOHNSON - Realtor

#### Century 21/New Millennium

301-751-3235

[Vickie.Johnson@C21NM.com](mailto:Vickie.Johnson@C21NM.com)

9405 Chesapeake Street

La Plata, MD 20646

[www.C21NM.com](http://www.C21NM.com)

### KATIE PIERCE

#### Grille No. 13 and Sugar Lips Cakery

*Catering and Cakes for your*

*Holiday events!*

Grille No. 13

3016 Waldorf Market Place

Waldorf. 301-645-2983

[www.grille13.com](http://www.grille13.com)

[facebook.com/GrilleThirteen](https://facebook.com/GrilleThirteen)

## Membership Committee

Submitted by Becky Hoffman -

Committee Chair, Helen Heier,

Natalie McKenney and Pam Frank,

Committee Members.

The membership committee has been meeting monthly to stay up to date with new members and inquiries from our website. We have welcomed new members:

- **Cindy Breck Bouet**
- **Alyssa Cox**
- and past member, **Rebecca Cervino**, has rejoined.

Our membership stands at 40 at the present time.

We have had three inquiries from the website, and have communicated information about the SMWL and extended invitations for the ladies to join us at our next special meeting or events. We hope they will take up our invitation!

A new members class, AKA "Diva's Do's and Don'ts", will be scheduled in the spring or fall. Please feel free to invite friends/prospective members to one of our upcoming meetings or events.

Contact Becky Hoffman for additional information:

[bhoffman@growingwithgrace.org](mailto:bhoffman@growingwithgrace.org)

## Care Committee

Submitted by Natalie McKenney



Hello Beautiful SMWL Sisters!

Spring is coming! Soon we will see spring flowers, enjoy beautiful weather and maybe get something new. Let's get outside and have some long overdue fun. Also, keeping with the season, why not share a little spring-cleaning tip... be sure to move furniture and other objects away from walls when cleaning... dust bunnies love to hide in spaces we often overlook. So, look around and let the fresh air in. *Ahh!*

Well, things have slowed down a bit in the Care Committee, but there is always time to celebrate our awesome sisters celebrating a birthday in the month of April:

- **Natalie McKinney – April 6**
- **Suzanne Wible – April 14**
- **Kadie Moffitt – April 20**
- **Katie Pierce – April 23**
- **Lynne O'Meara – April 29**

As always, I would love for you to reach out to me if you know of a special event, a celebration or if a SMWL sister just needs a little "pick me up" so I can reach out to them.



To contact Natalie, please email [nsmckenney@verizon.net](mailto:nsmckenney@verizon.net)

## Networking Nook

Buy local and help support  
your small SMWL businesses

### LISA CASE

**Carousel Clothing, Inc.**

2939 Festival Way

Waldorf, MD 20601

301-645-4660, 301-843-8884

cell: 301-643-8888

### Holiday special for SMWL

**members:** 10% off any purchase,  
includes children's formal wear,  
medical and school uniforms and  
our custom embroidery services on  
gift items and company logos!  
Expires: 5/1/2022

### CANDICE Q. KELLY, Esquire

Announcing the opening of

The Law Office of Candice Q. Kelly

*No problem is too big or too small.*

204 Washington Avenue

La Plata | 301-848-8294

### Andrea Sanford Design

Logos, Newsletters, Social Media

Coaching and more! 301-399-0583



**GRACE LUTHERAN  
SCHOOL**

WE MAY LOOK DIFFERENT...  
BUT  
WE ARE BACK...AND  
WE ARE LEARNING!!



**Growing - Learning  
Succeeding**

**In our 46th Academic Year!**

1200 Charles Street La Plata, MD 20646  
www.growingwithgrace.org  
301 932-0963

## Our Latest Events | Submitted by Andrea Sanford



On Tuesday, March 1st we all gathered A/R Workshop in La Plata to  
make our very own...

## Craft to Die For



  
Southern Maryland  
**WOMEN'S LEAGUE**

Thank you to Laura for hosting us at your amazing  
A/R Workshop, and Committee members Becky, Pam,  
Candice, Kelly, and Andy for planning, shopping and  
creating such a unique event! The plant-based puns were  
sowing seeds as everyone worked hard to make their own  
Audrey II pin-on wrist Corsages and headbands.  
Rucci's charcuterie boards and the Apple Spice Junction  
sandwiches were delicious and the adorable monster plant  
cupcakes from *Pink Pastry* were simply fern-tastic!  
It was great to see a majority of the club participate and  
have an opportunity to come together for such a fun, and  
interactive event! Congratulations to our Gardening Basket  
Raffle winner, Helen Heier - *you grow, girl!*





*The fun continued on Friday, March 11th as we gathered at The Charles for a great dinner, and then made our way across the street to attend Port Tobacco Players, opening night performance of the...*

## Little Shop of Horrors

Rona Kelley loves the theater and it was her original idea for all of us to support our local theater and attend this fabulous show! She was able to reserve a block of 25 front row seats for all of us to watch the show together. We hope everyone enjoyed the opportunity to get dressed up, enjoy a few meals and cocktails, make some crazy crafts, and attend a fantastic show featuring amazing local talent!



## Networking Nook

Buy local and help support  
your small SMWL businesses

-----

### **Beverly Brown**

**Travel Advisor - Owner**

**Chesapeake Travel**

Independent Contractor for  
Travel Leaders

443-286-1519 mobile and

WhatsApp

301-863-0409 fax

Facebook -

[www.facebook.com/chesapeaketravel](http://www.facebook.com/chesapeaketravel)

Join My Group on Facebook for  
deals & specials "Chesapeake  
Travel Insider's"

Twitter - @chesapeaketravel

Instagram - Chesapeake Travel

[www.beachboundandbeyond.com](http://www.beachboundandbeyond.com)

## Scholarship Update | Submitted by Linda Cox

Recently, I ran into **Ray Swenton** and he asked me to share an update with everyone. You may remember, the SMWL gave awarded him a scholarship for two years at CSM.

Ray attended CSM from September 2016 to May 2019, where he earned a Transfer Certificate and an Associate Degree in Arts and Sciences. He had a GPA of 3.24 while working full-time.

Ray transferred to the University of Maryland, College Park, in September 2019 until his graduation in December 2021. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Information Science with GPA of 3.41. He was on the Dean's list Spring and Fall of both 2020 and 2021.

This past January, at the age of 40, he started his new career as a Junior Software Developer for Spalding Consulting, Inc., located in Lexington Park, Maryland.

Ray asked me to again thank the SMWL for helping him during his time at CSM. Without that support he would not have been able to finish a bachelor's degree in 5.5 years while working and raising a daughter. Ray said he is forever be grateful to the ladies of the SMWL.

## This is *your* SMWL Newsletter!

Please email us to share your news... including special family announcements, business information and SMWL specials, charitable organizations or drives that are near and dear to your heart, By-the-ways and more!

We'd love to include the information to share with our SMWL Sisters.

[asanford12@gmail.com](mailto:asanford12@gmail.com)  
[smwl@gmail.com](mailto:smwl@gmail.com)

## Congratulations – Welcome Little Aubrey!

Submitted by GiGi Brenda Lowe

Brenda is a GiGi again, and Paige welcomed *Aubrey Brooke Gillentine* on February 11, 2022. Everyone is healthy and happy!



## CSM Scholarship Committee Report

Submitted by Brenda Lowe, Chairperson, Linda Cox,  
Pam Frank and SMWL President as Ex-officio.

One of President Murphy's big initiatives is to award scholarships to as many of their returning students as possible to aid them in completing their studies. Therefore, CSM reviewed our recipients from last year and ALL six recipients were registered for Fall 2021 and had above a 3.0 GPA. Our MOU states, "The scholarship can be renewed for one consecutive academic year, providing the recipient remains in good academic standing."

The committee decided to waive the 'one' academic year for the four 2nd year students, returning for their third year... and agreed to award until they graduate. So, \$750.00 each was given to the four students who will be finishing in the 2021-2022 year; and for the two backups we had that received \$750.00 their first year, we also gave them \$750 for their second year. This was a unanimous decision.

The SMWL Scholarship Funds went to the following recipients:



- Alyssa Dorsey, 2020-21 2nd year recipient (1st year - \$1,375; 2nd year - \$750; 3rd year - \$750)
- Maren Eels, 2020-21 2nd year recipient (1st year - \$1,375; 2nd year - \$750; 3rd year-\$750)
- Laura Phillips, 2020-21 2nd year recipient (1st year - \$1,375; 2nd year - \$750; 3rd year - \$750)
- Courtney Romba, 2020-21 2nd year recipient (1st year - \$1,375; 2nd year-\$750; 3rd year-\$750)
- Lindsay Bradburn – 2020-21 1st year recipient (1st year - \$750; 2nd year - \$750)
- Michelle Metcalfe – 2020-21 1st year recipient (1st year - \$750; 2nd year - \$750)

The SMWL Foundation requested that our Community Foundation annual distribution be the source of funds for our annual CSM Scholarship donation of \$3,000. The Check from the Community Foundation was issued and sent directly to CSM Foundation on November 12, 2021.

On Giving Tuesday, November 30, 2021 the SMWL Foundation was advertised as a Matching Donor up to our \$3,000 Limit. This just gives people a little more incentive to give to our scholarship... if they know that their donation is being matched (or doubled). As a result, the total raised for the SMWL Scholarship was \$3,795.00. The additional \$795.00 was comprised of 12 other donors... six of them SMWL Members and six other donors.

Additionally, in June of 2021, SMWL Foundation donated \$1,400 to start a scholarship at CSM in Donna Ellis' name since she served on the Scholarship Committee for years. The \$1,000 was from the SMWL Foundation and \$400 of it was from some of Donna's family's friends who wanted to donate to one of her charities as their expression of sympathy...and they chose SMWL Foundation. On Giving Tuesday, the Donna J. Ellis Memorial Scholarship had four donors...all four were SMWL members...and a total of \$550.00 was raised for the scholarship.

Donna's scholarship had a total of \$3,600. \$2,000 was awarded to Rachel Williamson for her Fall 2021 Semester and her Spring 2022 Semester. There is \$1,600 toward next year's scholarship. Stromie Ellis has agreed to write a check for the rest to make it \$2,000.00 for the next school year. Please note, the photo of Rachel Williamson and her Thank You Letter on the next page.



**CSM  
PROUD**

Dear Family and Friends of Donna Ellis,

Words cannot describe how grateful I am for this scholarship that has been gifted to me. The Donna Ellis Memorial Scholarship will be able to take some financial weight off of my shoulders immensely. I will be able to put my focus on attending instead of taking time away from my studies to keep up with tuition. I feel very privileged to be able to receive this opportunity. Receiving your support means the world to me.

I am from Waldorf, Maryland and while attending high school I did not apply myself as much as I should have. Being able to have the chance to turn my life around and go to college has been the best decision I have made. I was working jobs that didn't require much of me and promoted zero growth. I realized I needed to invest in myself and buckle down because I could contribute so much more. Following my passion for reading and writing, I have steered towards pursuing communication and English. Currently, I am involved in an internship at an environmental company that is partnered with CSM. Also, I am participating in the national honors society (PTK). some hobbies I have taken up are learning the piano as well as studying Spanish.

I chose CSM because aside from the fact that it is 15 minutes from my home it houses some of the best university opportunities at a more affordable cost. My plans for the future include a lot of travel to Europe as well as writing an assortment of novels. As far as the short term I want to learn french and want to live a more sustainable lifestyle to better our planet. I have been blessed enough to be accepted in the MTAP (Maryland Transfer Advantage Program) and I will be transferring in the fall of 2022. While attending I want to pursue their communication program and start on those novels. Career-wise I would love to possibly work for a publishing firm or go into teaching literature at a college. The sky is the limit and I want to take advantage of every possible opportunity that is offered.

Considering all the huge goals I have listed, now you can get a better picture as to why this scholarship means so much to me. It brings me that much more closer to my dreams. CSM has fueled my growth and has made so many things possible I didn't think i could achieve but have. Thank you for believing in me.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Williamson



**Rachel Williamson**



*You're invited to a SMWL*



# Spring Fling

April 21st from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
Riverview Patio at Candice Kelly's Home  
8400 Old Stagecoach Road in La Plata



- \* Derby style Hat Contest
- \* Catering by Cream of the Crop
- \* Bar Catering by Celebration of Spirits
- \* Sunset Champagne Toast to Honor our Sisters passed
- \* \$50 per person Members and Guests
- \* RSVP by April 14th to Diana Rucci  
[drucci@WaterstoneMortgage.com](mailto:drucci@WaterstoneMortgage.com)

*New activity for Spouses/Significant Others...*

## Gentlemen's Gathering

Join Ed Kelly in his parlor and patio for a relaxed Sip & Smoke.

No need to stay home with the dog, come and enjoy the food and festivities. \$50 per person (Food and Bar)

