

Connections

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President's Message

Becky Hoffman



Greetings! I hope this newsletter finds you well with fond memories of a wonderful holiday season and anticipation of a prosperous and blessed New Year! Take time to tell your friends and family how much they are loved... for tomorrow is never promised.

This is an amazing newsletter! Read it! Stay connected! And know what it means to be a member of the Southern Maryland Women's League. There is a lot going on and we hope to use the first 15 to 20 minutes of each membership meeting/event to keep you up to date.

I always want to remember to thank you for being a member of SMWL, for your commitment to our organization. Remember, we are a dynamic group of women, from all walks of life, who are dedicated to helping each other succeed through the exchange of information, services, mentoring, charitable actions, shared experiences, friendship and motivational support.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming **General Membership Meeting, on Wednesday, March 6th** where we will discuss and vote for the 2-year grant project (please attend as your vote is important), and to brainstorm together for this year's "fun"draiser.

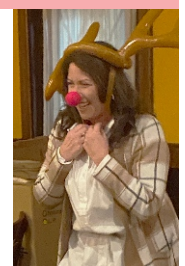
Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I blessed to serve as your president, and I'm always ready to listen. 301-751-1167

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.



CHECK OUT THE EVENT PHOTOS INSIDE! SEE MORE AT WWW.SMLW.ORG

SMWL BOD 2023/2024

OFFICERS

President: Becky Hoffman

Vice President: Andrea Sanford
Chair: Programs, Communications,
and Membership

Treasurer: Corporation: Pam Frank

Treasurer: Foundation: Ruth Mudd

Secretary: Brenda Lowe. Chair -
Scholarships Committee

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

Chair, Grants Committee: Laura Bryant

Care: Candice Kelly

Membership: Helen Heier

Programs: Tequila House

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-Ananyan
2018-2021 Suzanne Wible
2021-2023 Candice Kelly

Foundation

2006-2007 Candice Kelly
2007-2008 Candice Kelly
2008-2009 Millie Gieseman



Next Meeting - Special Date Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Join us for a very important SMWL General Meeting

...we'll have fun, discuss business & enjoy time together!

1) We'll review the 2-YEAR GRANT PROJECT.
Come learn, support and Vote to share funds!
We need your input and a Quorum to Vote!

2) "Fun"raiser Brainstorming,
We'll review all suggestions, discuss
and select a 2024 Fundraiser!

\$25 Members: Food & Light Refreshments
RSVP to asanford12@gmail.com
Let us know if you ARE or ARE NOT coming!

Visit the
www.SMWL.org
to learn more
About Us:
Foundation
and
We Support:
SMWL Two
Year Grant
Project!



Southern Maryland Business Center, White Plains
10665 Stanhaven Place, Suite 300A

JANUARY EVENT

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

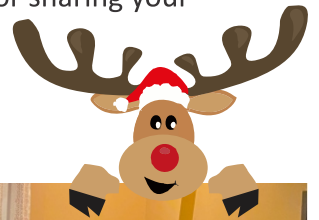
Gift & Re-Gift Exchange

HUNAN STAR, LA PLATA

If you thought your holiday parties were fun, this after holiday special event was spectacular! The Annual Gift & Re-Gift Exchange is one of the most popular League events, and with 34 members and guests in attendance, this year proved to be the same!

From opening the wrapped gifts filled with bling, candles, wine, jewelry, massagers, and even cock-cuteries -- to the "ruthless" stealing desired gifts from each other, or taking on the Reindeer Challenge to try and win it back, there was a lot of shared laughter, great food and sisterhood for all!

Thank you to the Programs Committee for planning another amazing event. Special thanks to Tequila House for sharing your tablecloths, chair covers and silver rhinestones accents to help make the room and venue look and feel like a SMWL special party!





MEMBERS ARE INVITED BY MEMBERS.

After attending 3 Meetings, prospective members may submit an Application and Bio to their Sponsor. The Sponsor will share with the Membership Committee for review and a full membership vote.

Once/if approved by the membership the prospective member will be notified. Membership materials will be shared once membership fees are complete.

Over the past 14 years, the Southern Maryland Women's League has donated over \$335,000 in support of programs to benefit women and children within our community. It is through our annual fundraisers, special events, and activities that we are able to raise these funds. We encourage local business owners, residents, and other women of impact to join us in our mission and support the SMWL by participating in these events and through direct donations to our SMWL Foundation. We thank you in advance for your support.

CARE COMMITTEE | Submitted by Candice Kelly

Happy Birthday to our many SMWL sisters that have celebrated their birthdays in January, and February, and for those with upcoming special days in March.

- Tequila House - January 26
- Alyssa Cox - January 27
- Lisa Case - January 31
- Terry Davis - February 12

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

- Marla Wuster - March 5
- Brenda Lowe - March 20
- Pam Frank - March 27



Care Committee News: We're here, because we care... and it's up to you, if you'd like to share. If you have a special celebration (anniversary, grandchild, promotion, etc.) or are having any difficulties, have experienced a loss, have special circumstances, or needs, please reach out to our Care Committee Chair, Candice Kelly via email: candiceqk@gmail.com

Prayers and well wishes are sent to:

- Becky Hoffman and her beloved Sister who is once again fighting cancer.
- Lisa Case for a swift recovery from her eye-surgery.
- Christina Underwood for a complete recovery for her mother-in-law.



New Grand Babies!

Welcome to Becky Hoffman's New Grandson, Owen Marshall Knudsen

SEND YOUR PHOTOS
TO ASANFORD12@GMAIL.COM



FEBRUARY EVENT



Wednesday, February 7, 2024

AXE THROWING PARTY

BAD AXE, WALDORF



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2024 | Who knew that we were such a fantastic group of bad axe ladies? Twenty three members and guests came together to enjoy a Galantines celebration with pizza, wings, salad, decadent desserts and cocktails before forging ahead to the evening's main event of axe throwing! We heard so many fun and positive comments throughout the night including, my favorite from Chrisie Mulcahey, *"It's already pretty empowering to throw an axe, then if you get close to the bull's eye, you feel like a total rock star!"*

Thank you to our Programs Committee for planning such a great event, and thank you to Natonya Thomas for suggesting the venue. If you are having fun at our monthly meetings, please consider joining Andy and Katie in planning and hosting an upcoming program/meeting/event. We could really use your help!

To view all of the event photos, please visit the website and Facebook page! www.smwl.org





TREASURERS REPORT

Submitted by Ruth Mudd (Foundation), and Pam Frank (League)

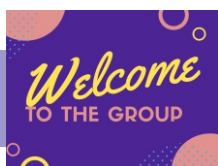
Foundation Balance:

As of 12/31/23: \$13,202.49

Endowment Fund: \$43,383.87

League Balance:

As of 1/31/24: \$5,858.11



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Submitted by Andrea Sanford

Welcome new SMWL Members, **Christina Underwood**, sponsored by Tequila House and **Patricia Sommers** sponsored by Brenda Lowe. We are so excited to welcome the both of you to the League.

As of today, we have 37 SMWL Members, and we are ready to keep growing the League.

Watch your emails, as we have two additional guests who are ready to share their bio's, and for your review and membership consideration!

We love that so many of you are inviting your friends to join us at our events, and in turn, applying for membership! Thank you!



SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Submitted by Brenda Lowe

The Southern Maryland Women's League is an organization of women dedicated to promoting, strengthening, and supporting women and issues of importance through fellowship, education, service, and mentoring programs. The SMWL Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, the funds raised by our annual event sponsors grants, scholarships, and programs in support of women and children within our community.

The SMWL CSM Scholarship Committee reviewed student applicants' essays at the end of July. The committee met virtually to review each person's choices and all scores were in by 7/31/23.

The Committee voted in favor of issuing the following scholarships for the School year that began September 2023:

- Corinne D. - \$1,000
- Megan W. - \$1,000
- Briana R. - \$1,000
- Anela Y. - \$1,000

(There was a balance of \$4,015.59 available to award for the SMWL Scholarship for the 2023-24 academic year...from the \$3,000 MOU and contributions from Giving Tuesday).

Donna J Ellis Scholarship:

Brenda passed ten Donna J Ellis Scholarship applicants' essays along to Dana Ellis Bellofatto (Donna's Daughter) for review and scoring. Dana chose the recipient:

- Kristi B. who was awarded \$2,200 for the 2023-2024 academic year.

GRANTS ISSUED: Voted upon and issued by the BOD

- \$500 for the Donna Ellis Scholarship
- \$500 for Hospice House

Over the past 13 years, our members have come together to raise and donate over \$335,000 in support of programs, scholarships, organizations, education, resources, and special events in support of women and children within our community. We thank all members past and present and sponsors for contributing to this success.

2023/2024 SMWL CALENDAR of EVENTS

RSVP

We cannot express how important it is to RSVP to our event invitations in a timely fashion! In order for us to hold these special events we must sign contracts, shop for food and drinks, make the personalized gifts, and so much more.

**Please reply with a
Yes - I am coming or
NO - I cannot make it
as soon as you can
after receiving
the invitation!**

PROGRAMS: Typically held on the *SECOND* Wednesday of each month (unless a special event is planned*)

2023

- NOVEMBER 15, Wednesday: MYSTERY TRIP
- DECEMBER: Holiday Party at Laura & Vic's
-

2024

- JANUARY 10: After-Holiday Gift Exchange, Location: Hunan Star
- FEBRUARY 7*: Axe Throwing (Date may change due to Valentines Day)
- **MARCH 6*: General Meeting at Southern Maryland Business Center, White Plains**
- **APRIL 10: Minute-2-Win-It Games, Location TBD**
- **MAY 8: Rooftop Yoga & Cocktails w/Fran, La Plata**
- **JUNE 12: Membership Appreciation Meeting & Board Elections, Location TBD**
- **JULY 10: Join the programs committee to help plan this!**

BOARD MEETINGS: *THIRD* Tuesday of every other month (unless a special meeting is planned).

- JULY 12: A/R Workshop
- SEPTEMBER 19: A/R Workshop
- NOVEMBER 21: ZOOM Meeting
- JANUARY 16: A/R Workshop
- **MARCH 19: A/R Workshop**
- **MAY 21: A/R Workshop**
- **JULY 16: A/R Workshop**

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHING: Alternate months of Board Meetings. *Please send in your submissions one week prior.*

- August 23*
- November 20*
- **February 20**
- **April 20**
- **June 20**
- **July 20**



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL'S ANNUAL

Wine & Cheese Social

Sat. April 27 3-7 PM

VIP/Sponsor Admission 2-7 PM

Bliss in the Barn

11770 Charles St, La Plata

Catering By:

The Blue Dog Restaurant

Featuring: Local Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries
with Entertainment and Silent Auction

Tickets: General Admission \$55 / Designated Driver \$25

Purchase Tickets at <http://gls.booktix.net/>

VIP Sponsorship Opportunities Available

Details at www.growingwithgrace.org or contact Becky Hoffman

bhoffman@growingwithgrace.org, 301-932-0963 ext. 112

PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT:

Grace Lutheran School's
Scholarship Fund



Bliss in the Barn's Veterans
Bloom/ Leashes of Valor

