



The Civic Courier

The Women's Civic Club
of Panama City Beach,
Inc.

Volume XII- Issue 4
December 2022



Diane Vitale

From the President's Desk

Dear Members:

We are looking at celebrating Thanksgiving next week and in preparing for that I'd like to share some of the thoughts that come to mind. As it pertains to our Club, and in no particular order, I notice members wearing their name tags at our functions and committee meetings making it easier for me to remember names. I notice chairs and co-chairs organizing their committee meetings and tasks in a timely manner resulting in accomplishing their respective goals. I'm relegated to being part of and breathing which I can do well.

A new milestone being accomplished is over 5,000 s'mores kits; graham crackers, marshmallows and chocolate; kitted by our team. Looking forward to handing them out and spreading the joy of "Home for the Holidays".

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the "merriest" time at our Christmas luncheon, listening to the Patronis choir and disbursing funds to our charities.

My quote in keeping with the Thanksgiving spirit " Gratitude will shift you to a higher frequency and you will attract many wonderful things" Rhonda Byrne.

*Respectfully,
Diane, President*

"Foundations of the Club"

The December edition of The Civic Courier, "Foundations of the Club" is highlighting Ginny Schmertmann and focusing on one of our charities, Gulf Beach Presbyterian Church Food Pantry.



Ginny Schmertmann

Ginny Schmertmann was born in St. Louis, Missouri and grew up in Illinois. After graduating from high school, she received a scholarship and attended St. Joseph School of Nursing. In her senior year, she married Bernie, and on November 26, 2022 they celebrated their 62th wedding anniversary. Bernie's job took them to Iowa where they raised five children, four boys and one girl. Ginny worked mainly on the surgical floor, two nights a week when her children were small and fulltime after they were in middle school. Bernie and Ginny enjoy their family including ten grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Family vacations were usually spent in Wisconsin but with the variability of the weather they decided to try a warmer location. Based on a recommendation from Ginny's brother, they started vacationing at the Sandman Apartments on the west end of Panama City Beach. When Bernie decided to semi-retire in the 90's and the owners of the apartments want to sell, Bernie and Ginny became property owners and managers. Their goal was to stay for ten years, sell and move back to Iowa. In 2001 they did sell, however they decided to stay in Panama City Beach.

Ginny was and still is a member of the Garden Club where she met Nan VandenBerg who encouraged her to get involved in the Women's Civic Club. Enjoying the opportunities to get involved, she was installed as a member April 2005. One of her favorite committees is the Kitchen Committee although she says it is hard work. She also enjoys going to the schools and working Ironman where there are opportunities to meet other volunteers and the athletes. Ginny is also involved with "Kids for Cancer", which was started by Bernie as part of the Optimist Club.

When asked if she would like to share with other members, Ginny said "The club is a neat group of people and with the different committees there is a large selection of volunteer opportunities and the ability to meet other people".

Gulf Beach Presbyterian Church Food Pantry

The Women's Civic Club supports Gulf Beach Presbyterian Church Food Pantry with an annual monetary donation and food and toiletry items collected at selected luncheons. The Club liaison to the Food Pantry is Gloria Turner.

In the mid 1970's Gulf Beach Presbyterian Church had many requests for assistance. The Church decided to establish vouchers with a local restaurant and gas station to provide a hot meal and gasoline and bill the church. Many times, these vouchers were not turned in to the church but considered a donation. Also, at this time they granted use of the church facilities to the Bay County Council on Aging for a congregate site for a food distribution program "Meals on Wheels". After this program was discontinued in the mid 1980's, the Gulf Beach Presbyterian Church decided to start its own Food Pantry to help the needy in the community.

By 1991, under the guidance of Rev. Dr. Ken Churchill, the food pantry was expanded and established regular hours of Monday – Friday 9am – 12 noon and was staffed by church volunteers. At that time a local business closed and offered to donate shelves which were used to convert a Sunday School room into a Food Bank. They also opened a Clothes Closet stocked with donated men's, women's and children's clothes, including baby items. That first year they gave out thousands of meals thru the Food Pantry.

In 2000, Rev. Churchill and the mission committee chair were invited to speak about the Food Pantry on Gulf Coast Community College Talk Radio. This invitation resulted in many great News Herald articles.

The Pantry is an ecumenical endeavor that is supported by many area churches and local community groups making it possible to continue the mission of meeting the needs of the community's less fortunate without interruption, even during COVID and hurricanes. The Pantry is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9-12:00. They offer 3-day emergency food assistance to individuals and families in need.

"Members and Guests Enjoy the November Luncheon"



Tammy Haight, Darlene Dial

Women's Civic Club Members and Guests enjoyed a buffet luncheon at Pineapple Willy's. Drew Whitman, Panama City Beach City Manager, who administers the day-to-day operations for the city was the guest speaker.

"New Member Installation"

- * **Monica Thomas (Sponsor)**
- * **Jayn Collins (New Member)**
- * **Gloria Turner (Sponsor)**
- * **Carol Davis (New Member)**
- * **Nancy Stovall (Membership Chair)**
- * **Karen Demeester (Sponsor)**
- * **Carole Ohlemueller (New Member)**
- * **Dacia Smith (New Member)**
- * **Carol Metaxas (Sponsor)**



"Welcome New Members"



Carol Davis

I am excited to have moved to Panama City Beach and been given the opportunity to join the Women's Civic Club. I've been married for 49 years and have previously lived in upstate New York where I was a teacher before retiring, moving to Virginia and then relocating to Florida. My husband and I have 2 daughters and 5 grandchildren, ranging in ages from 9 to 21 years old. My interests include being active and volunteering at my church, traveling and experiencing different cultures, arts and crafts, and exercising (albeit reluctantly). I am honored to be a member of the Women's Civic Club and look forward to actively serving our community of Panama City Beach.

I was born in Huntsville, Alabama and lived most of my life in Macon, Georgia. I have two sons, Dustin in Douglasville, Georgia and Joshua in Clemmons, North Carolina. Both are taking their time about marriage and children so I haven't been blessed with grandchildren, hopefully someday. I owned and operated a marketing/printing company in Macon Georgia for over 35 years. It was sold in 2004 when our family relocated to Winston Salem, NC. When my youngest son went off to college in 2016 I moved to Panama City Beach to help care for my father. After moving here I've become active serving through Woodlawn Church in Women's Ministries, teaching Bible studies and facilitating a card ministry. We send out over 150 cards each month to shut-ins and meals on wheels participants in the Panama City Beach area. I also teach card classes in my home and have developed so many wonderful friendships since moving here. I'm looking forward to serving our community through the Women's Civic Club and the many opportunities available.



Dacia Smith

After teaching for thirty-seven years, I retired in 2020 and moved to Panama City Beach in August 2022. I have two children, Nicholas who lives in Oklahoma City and works at Tinker Air Force Base and Sarah Grace, who lives with me.

My education includes a Bachelor of Music degree and Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education degree from Mississippi University for Women and a Masters of Art in Administration from California State University.

I enjoy scrapbooking, crafts, traveling, pickleball, board games, bridge and bunco.



Jayn Collin



Carole Ohlemueller

I am excited to be part of the club and to share my experience as a photographer, project manager and experience in e-commerce.

"Fulfilling Our Mission of Improving Life in Panama City Beach Community"

Raising Funds

Ironman



Doris Bayliss and Patty Rocco



"The WCC Team"



**Tom & Donna McElroy,
Carol Metaxas**



**Vicki Brogan, Nancy Stovall, Kelly
Bertin, Corinne Crowley, Monica Thomas**



Dena Roewe



**Jayn Collins, Carole & Bill Ohlemueller,
Jeanette & Ron Poland**



**Cherie Lagace, Gloria
Turner**



**Bobbie Griggs, Soula Dortch, Sharon
Williams, Lynn Padgett**

THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!

Ironman FLORIDA 2022 was a huge success because of you! We had over 80 volunteer positions filled over the 3 days of volunteering by WCC members and their families and friends! I can't thank you enough for being so enthusiastic and positive for the athletes and Ironman staff. It was a great event which would not be possible without you.

I enjoyed seeing many of you at the volunteer thank you reception. It was a nice treat to show the appreciation of our hard work. Gloria even won a nice door prize and several of us received other goodies!

Thank you for being a wonderful committee that shines brightly!

Many thanks!

Monica Thomas
Ironman Chair

Special Beach Events

"Beach Home for the Holidays"

The holiday season was celebrated in Style with "Beach Home for the Holidays" on November 25th and 26th. Aaron Bessant Park was transformed into a holiday paradise with snowflakes, lights, carolers, Santa's Village and more. The event featured the official Christmas Tree Lighting, two concerts, fireworks, Santa Claus, holiday movies, campfires and of course S'mores! 5,000 plus S'mores packages were prepared with enthusiasm and handed out by the Women's Civic Club.

"One piece of chocolate, two graham crackers, two marshmallows, seal in bag!"



**Carol Lynn, Karen Falson,
Gloria Turner**



**Jamie Holliday, Tammy Haight,
Annetta Henderson**



**Ginny Schmertmann, Gail
Claffey**



"2017" Diane Vitale, Nancy Stovall, Carol Lynn



**Carol Lynn
Diane Vitale
Roberta Bernhardt
Arlene Klaas
Nancy Stovall
Cheri Leistner
Deb Kesinger
Dave Demeester
Karen Demeester
Barry Roewe
Dena Roewe**

**Carol Metaxas
Tammy Haight
Patty Rocco
Sharon Williams
Nancy Stovall
Lynn Padgett
Gail Claffey
Joyce Kippes**



**Carol Lynn, Deb Kesinger, Diane Vitale,
Barry and Dena Roewe**

"Supporting the Community"

Boys and Girls November Luncheon Collections



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
GREAT SUPPORT!!!**

CHERI LEISTNER

Food Pantry

During September and October, the Food Pantry served 400 clients, which equates to 3,600 meals. So far the fall numbers are decreasing compared to the summer months, however we still see new clients registering every week. In October we collected, at our business luncheon, food and cash for the pantry's Thanksgiving baskets. This year they will be putting together 18 baskets to give out. The dry and can goods our club provided goes into those baskets and the meat and any refrigerated items are bought by the pantry from donated money. At the December business luncheon, we will be again collecting for the Food Pantry and this time it will be for their Christmas baskets. As a sub volunteer for the food pantry and the liaison for the Women's Club, I am always so proud and thankful for our member's generosity to those less fortunate.

- Cans of Chicken Broth
- Cans of Cranberry Sauce
- Cans of Sweet Corn
- Cans of Green Beans
- Large Cans of Sweet Potatoes
- Boxes of Mashed Potatoes
- Boxes of Stuffing Mix

The Food Pantry at Gulf Beach Presbyterian Church is in need of a volunteer for their Wednesday shift from 9 am-12noon. The Food Pantry hands out food for 3 meals for 3 days to needy individuals, families and the homeless. There are always two volunteers at the pantry. You are not obligated to work every Wednesday of the year, there is a list of substitute volunteers that are willing to fill in when needed. There is an orientation, one or two days, where you would be working with the volunteers there to get used to where things are located, filling out new clients cards, or checking their existing card, etc. There is no heavy lifting involved. If interested in this opportunity to help the food pantry, please contact Sandy Young, at 678-522-6481 or email her at: young30135@bellsouth.net

If you have any questions about the pantry itself or the work there, please contact me.

Gloria Turner
WCC Food Pantry Liaison
828 280 1727

School Projects

The school projects committee will be collecting for our local elementary schools again at our January meeting!

The biggest need right now seems to be clothing for their clothes closets.

We will be collecting for girls and boys:

- Long sleeve t-shirts - sizes 5-14
- Long athletic pants with an elastic waistband - sizes 5-14
- Underwear - sizes 5-8
- Socks - sizes 1 and up
- Cash donations will also be accepted at the meeting.

The January meeting will come up quickly after the busy holiday season so please think of our schools when you're out Christmas shopping!

Thank you for your support!

Jeanette Poland and Carol Metaxas

"Recognizing our Members"

Happy Birthday Wishes !!

December

| | |
|----|----------------------|
| 01 | Tina Dufresne |
| 03 | Elaine Lichtenberger |
| 03 | Sharon McDonald |
| 07 | Annetta Henderson |
| 09 | Jean Cooney |
| 09 | Luciann Jacobs |
| 14 | Susan Curry |
| 27 | Carol Davis |
| 30 | Gayle Oberst |



*"Your age is merely the number
of years the work has been
enjoying you!"*

"Save the Date"

We know it is hard to wait, so save the date for the upcoming dance and silent auction. Watch for ticket information and other details coming soon.



Now is the time to begin soliciting donations for the Silent Auction. Letters and donation description sheets are available for anyone who has not gotten theirs yet. Extra forms will be available at the December luncheon. *Tammy Haight*

"Upcoming Events"

- December 1 Christmas Program and Luncheon at Edgewater Beach Resort Conference Center, 11AM
- December 5 Kitchen Committee Meeting at 334 Basin Bayou Drive, 12PM
- December 29 Board of Directors Meeting at Chamber of Commerce, 309 Richard Jackson Blvd, 10AM
- January 5 Luncheon at Diego's Burrito Factory, Thomas Drive, 11 AM
- January 28 Bunco at Taylor's, 1114 Thomas Dr, 10AM
- February 4 Beach Boogie Dance and Silent Auction, Lyndell Center
- March 4 Spring Fling Arts and Craft Show, Frank Brown Park

"The Women's Civic Club of Panama City Beach, Inc"

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This newsletter is the product of a collaborative effort

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