



The Civic Courier

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

Volume XV- Issue 4
December 2025

"From the President's Desk"



I'm sure that many of you are in full **"Holiday Mode"** after kicking off this holiday season with one of our special events. It may have been attending the fabulous Kirby Holt Holiday Decorating Showcase, doing some Christmas shopping at our Arts and Crafts Festival, making smores or participating in the festive Home for Holidays event at Aaron Bessant. But one of the highlights of my Christmas Season is always our December luncheon where we get to hear from some of our grant recipients on how they will use the funds, that we all worked so hard to earn, to make PCB the best community for all. This year at the luncheon the WCC will be giving away \$25,000 to charities that work to feed the hungry, keep our community safe, and educate our children. On top of this, we will donate food for Christmas baskets to ensure that everyone is able to enjoy a holiday meal. Also, the community outreach will be donating to our 5 elementary schools and 1 middle school to assist in providing Christmas joy to needy students. All of this truly warms my heart and makes me fully aware of what wonderful members we have, members who care so much about others in our community that you are willing to donate your time and talents to our club.

My wish for all of you during this Christmas season is that you and your family will be blessed with many joys as you make precious memories. I wish safe travels for you or any family members that will be traveling this season. And I wish that your heart may be filled with peace, love, and the true spirit of Christmas.

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

Cheri Leistner

"November Luncheon at Pineapple Willy's"



Janet Tettemer, Roberta Bernhardt, Dan Rowe



Dan Rowe, President & CEO Visit Panama City Beach

Pineapple Willy's never fails to give us a great buffet with lots of choices. We were excited to get back there for one of our luncheon meetings. We had a great turnout of members and guests. Dan Rowe, President and CEO of Visit PC Beach and Executive Chair of the Tourist Development Council (TDC) was our guest speaker. Dan has been with the TDC for 18 years and has helped "look ahead" to the needs of the locals and the tourists. The TDC is funded by the tourist (heads in beds) tax and has partnered with several entities to develop and implement events on the beach to make this a year around destination and not just a Spring break destination. Some of the projects in the works included, taking over the Artificial Reef Association, building a facility at the Sports complex for indoor basketball and volleyball courts, and working on a digital beach flag warning system. Dan says the way to make any department work well is to hire a good team and that is what he has done. Dan ended his presentation with "Our Best Days are still in front of us." We are grateful to Dan, Visit PCB and the TDC for the many events they ask us to volunteer for since that is one of the many ways we make money for our PCB community.

At this luncheon something new was presented. When members came in to register, they were given a table number for seating. This arrangement was done so members would be seated with different members of the club to get to know each other. I feel this goal was accomplished and whether or not this will be done at future luncheon/business meetings I don't know, but I hope you will want to continue spreading your wonderful selves out and sit with members you don't know very well.

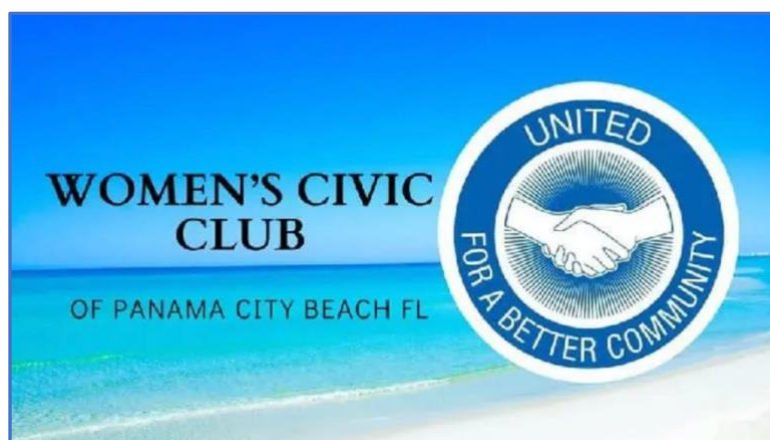
Also, the Community Outreach Committee gave each member a packet with 10 index cards and fall stickers in them. This was for members to write "inspirational" messages on them for Backpack Blessings. Every Thursday a BP Blessing volunteer puts an inspirational note in every pack that is made for each student, and that is over 400 packs each week. So, thanks to all our extended Community Outreach family who wrote messages on the cards.

Next month on December 4th we will hold our first Christmas luncheon at Harpoon Harry's Beach Front Restaurant. As many of you know we have held our fashion show there the last several years but this year we "mixed things up a bit". At our Christmas luncheon the Club distributes our Annual Donation checks. This year they go to 12 organizations. Please look in your yearbook under budget to see who the recipients are this year and the amount they will receive. This is one of our favorite luncheons; we give out money that we earned through our various fundraising events. We will be entertained by the energetic Patronis Elementary school choir led by Kenny Kirkland. As they say on the ship SEAS THE DAY and I will see you at Harpoon Harry's.

Gloria Turner, Chair Luncheon and Programs.

"Know Your Neighbor: The Women's Civic Club of Panama City Beach"

Published in PCB Life - October 27, 2025



By Michele Hardman

Did you know that the Women's Civic Club provided the nice bench at the handicapped beach access entrance on the east end of town? And those swim lessons that your kids have taken through the Boys and Girls Club—the Women's Civic Club helped make those possible too. So, how much do you know about this local non-profit organization? Current (and past) President, Cheri Leistner, and club member Patty Rocco, shared more info with me when we met in the Study Room at the library—which, by the way, has the club's name in large letters above the room, since they helped with funding when the library was built.



The Civic Club has been operating continuously since 1965. This speaks volumes about the dedication and passion that these ladies have had for the past 60 years. Currently, they have just under 100 members and continue to grow. They meet monthly at area restaurants from September to May, with attendees bringing in a donation for that month's cause. Most meetings have a guest speaker, covering a range of informative topics. They're very proud of the fact that last year they were able to donate \$50,000 back to the community, and that all money raised stays right here. What are some of the things they've been a part of? They pay for field trips for kids who can't afford to go. Provide school supplies. Regularly assist with the Backpack Blessings program that sends kids home with basic food staples for the weekend. Support our local Law Enforcement and Fire Departments with training and a K9 facility. Spend time at the area Senior Living Centers doing arts and crafts with residents. They were instrumental in the new Splash Park located at Frank Brown Park on PCB Parkway. And they also have two endowed scholarships at Gulf Coast State College. One is in General Studies and the other is in the Culinary Program. Around the end of November, Aaron Bessant Park gets transformed into a winter wonderland for Home For The Holidays, complete with free family movies, thousands of sparkling lights, fire pits, and more. And the 4,000 S'mores that get consumed there? You can thank the ladies from the Women's Civic Club for those scrumptious treats. You can also find them helping with several of the food truck events around town, in addition to the popular Beach Ball Drop on New Year's Eve. That's a LOT of stuff these ladies have a hand in! "We're not a social club", says President Leistner. "We're a working club".

So, where does all the money come from to make all of these things happen? Through several fundraisers the club hosts during the year. They have a juried arts and crafts show twice a year, with the Fall show scheduled for November 8 at Frank Brown Park. They've added a Literary Café to the event, giving visitors the opportunity to purchase books from local authors. This has proven to be a popular addition. But their biggest fundraiser of the year is their annual dinner, dance, and silent auction. The next one will be the Hearts & Hands Celebration on February 13, 2026, with special entertainment by Todd Herendeen. Mark your calendars.

After hearing about all of these amazing things, aren't you inspired to get involved in the Women's Civic Club yourself? I asked Cheri what the most rewarding thing was for her as part of the civic club, and she stated simply, "Seeing our money go into action." What does Patty enjoy about it? "It's been very fulfilling to see all the people get this money, and to see it all stay here in the community", she says. Membership is open to anyone with a Panama City Beach address. You can contact the club with any questions or to make a donation by visiting their website at wccpcb.org, and also follow them on Facebook.

"Welcome New Members"



Membership Chair Kelly Bertin, Barbara Allgood, Sponsor Sharon Williams, Sponsor Dena Roewe, Sylvia Ellington



Hello, my name is Barbara ALLGOOD and excited to be a part of the Women's Civic Club of PCB. I moved here from Atlanta Ga where I worked for over 35 years in Property Management. My daughter resides with her husband in Senoia Ga. and my Granddaughter is in her sophomore year at the University of Alabama. Roll Tide!

I look forward to working with all of you serving our community.

I have two children. My daughter lives in Austin with my three grandchildren (Beau, Elle and Hugh). My son lives here in PCB. I "share" my house with my 5.5 pound Chihuahua/terrier, Whiskers.

I recently retired from my 50+ year nursing career. The last 10 years in which I was fortunate to have the opportunity to do interim nurse leadership/consulting in hospitals across the country- I was so fortunate to have had some great experiences in great locations.

I love the beach and the sunshine. I spend free time volunteering, diamond art, reading, Netflix binging and "learning" to be retired!!!

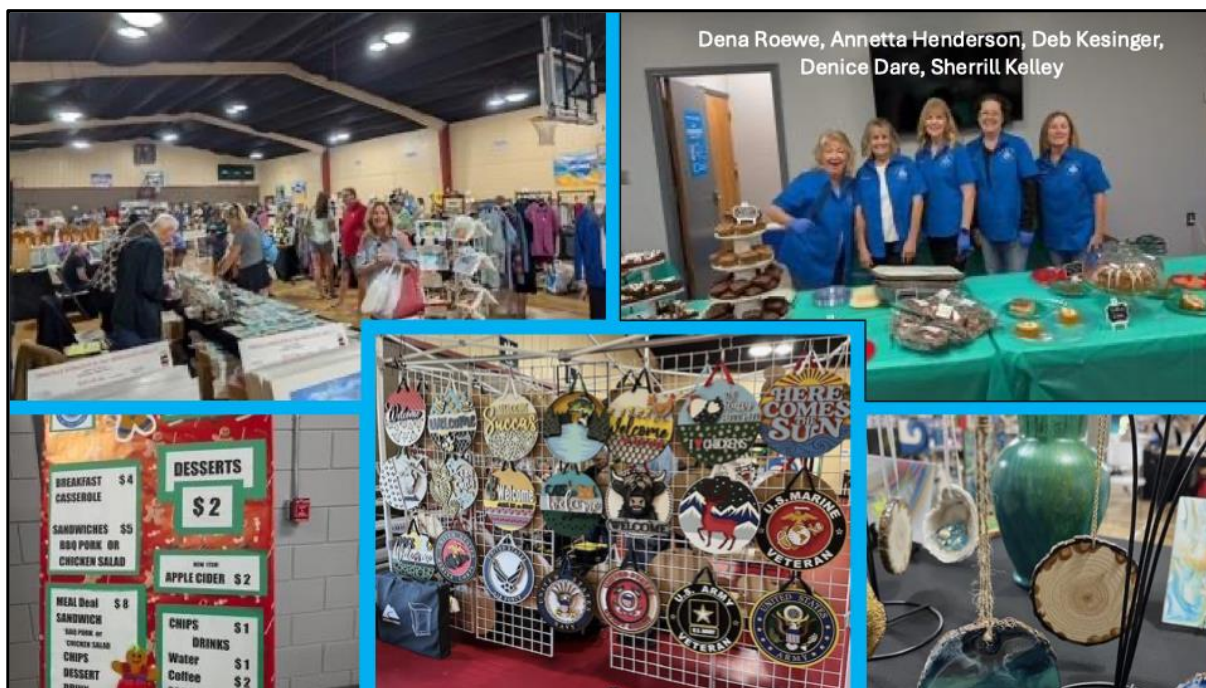


Sylvia Ellington

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

Raising Funds

Arts and Crafts Show



The Fall Fling Arts and Crafts Show on November 8th was a great success! There was good feedback from the authors, vendors, and customers.

Gloria Turner, Annetta Henderson and the kitchen crew did a great job with the menu and the services which received high marks from the vendors. All volunteers, coordinated by Jayn Collins, ensured the decorations, signs, entry table were set up and ready to go, as well as making sure vendors got the help they needed.

Sincerely,

Julie Sanders and Jayn Collins

Arts and Crafts Show Committee Chairs

Dance and Silent Auction

Meeting our goals:



	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Progress</u>
Dance Income Goal	\$50,000	\$ 8,250
Silent Auction Item Retail Value	\$40,000	\$ 1,344

The sponsor introduction letter, sponsorship opportunities, sponsorship form and tickets are available by contacting Rhonda Zartman or Julie Sanders. The sponsorship opportunities, sponsorship form and tickets are also available at wccpcb.org/events.

Merchant introduction letters and item donation information forms are available by contacting Kelly Bertin or Nancy Stovall. Thank you for helping the club to meet or exceed these goals.

Rhonda Zartman, Julie Sanders, Donna McElroy, Dance Chair and Co-Chairs
Nancy Stovall, Kelly Bertin, Silent Auction Chair and Co-Chair



The Hearts & Hands committee came together with other club members at an outdoor, centerpiece painting party, held on a beautiful autumn day. While painting was the object of the morning, there was an abundance of laughter and fun. In order for you to see the finished product, you'll need to purchase your tickets to the:

HEARTS & HANDS CELEBRATION
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026, 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
BOARDWALK BEACH HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER

- As the committee prepares for the club's biggest fundraiser of the year, they are compiling the DANCE playlist. Please see co-chairs Donna McElroy and Julie Sanders to add your favorite tune to the list.
- Be sure to grab your friends to sponsor a table that guarantees you'll have great seats together attending an extraordinary evening filled with an elegant dinner, dancing, silent & enthusiastic live auctions.
- Speaking of Entertainment, be sure to thank Todd Herendeen, Master of Ceremonies and Tim Summerow, Disc Jockey for their support at the upcoming Holiday Member luncheon.
- Then invite local professional businesses to partner with us and our **RED Sponsor, St Joseph Community Foundation** by becoming a Sponsor. All Sponsor packages available include Dinner, Table for 10, early admission to Silent Auction, 10 Drink Tickets, social media and website spotlights.
- YOU as a WCC Member are an essential part of our Mission: United for a Better Community.

There are many opportunities for Members to get involved, we need all WCC Members to share their talents and time to make this a successful event. We need everyone to help with the event – decorating, welcoming, registration, set up and the close down/clean up afterwards. We welcome the assistance of spouses and friends as well.

Dance Committee Chair & Co Chairs
Rhonda Zartman, Julie Sanders, Donna McElroy

Ironman



We had a great turnout for the Ironman event in October. The members made quick work of stuffing the packets for the athletes on Tuesday morning, as well as all the clothing bags. With all the good help, we were done in record time. Club members spent Wednesday, Thursday and Friday helping register almost 2,000 athletes from around the United States and the world for the full Ironman event on November 1st. We appreciate the strong support of the event from club members and we again received all positive comments from the staff at the event.

We are turning our attention now to staffing the Panama City Beach Marathon on Saturday, December 6th. Our club earns \$2,500 from this one morning event so it's an important one to continue to have a strong showing. We have two shifts available that morning with the first shift from 7:00AM to 10:00AM and the second shift from 9:45AM to 1:00PM. We are still looking for some help to fill slots and club members (and family and friends are welcome too!) and they can reach out to Kris Saddoris the chair at (515) 229-8098 or kksaddoris@gmail.com to volunteer.

Kris Saddoris, Ironman Chair

Special Beach Events





Home for the Holidays is our favorite way to kick off the holiday season! The event starts with s'mores kits assembly. Over 4,000 kits were assembled at Cheri Leistner's home while members enjoyed each other's company on November 21st. Then members, friends and family members worked to distribute the kits, hats, and serve hot cocoa on Friday, November 28th and Saturday, November 29th. This was our first year to provide two hot cocoa tents to meet demand. It is so rewarding to see the happy, excited smiles on little faces at this family-friendly event, as well as enjoy Santa, music, and the holiday décor.

Many thanks to our ladies, friends, and husbands that made the s'mores kits, hauled the supplies (gallons and gallons of water!), and provided excellent service to our customers. Thanks to Cheri for turning her home into a s'mores factory. A multi-day event like this takes a lot of prep, set up, and then staffing. We cannot express enough gratitude to ALL that worked this event and made everything possible and represented the club so well with your smiles and attitudes. We cannot wait to finalize the numbers to announce how much funds were raised for the community.

On the Special Beach Events horizon, the next event will be New Year's Eve where we will once again serve hot chocolate and distribute hats. More detail to follow as we get closer to the event, with opportunities to sign up and join together to ring in the new year and raise more funds!

Karen Demeester, Sue Jiles, Dena Roewe, Special Beach Events Co-Chairs

"Supporting the Community"

Community Outreach

What the Community Outreach Committee Does!

Read the story in the first comment below- don't you just hate to read that?

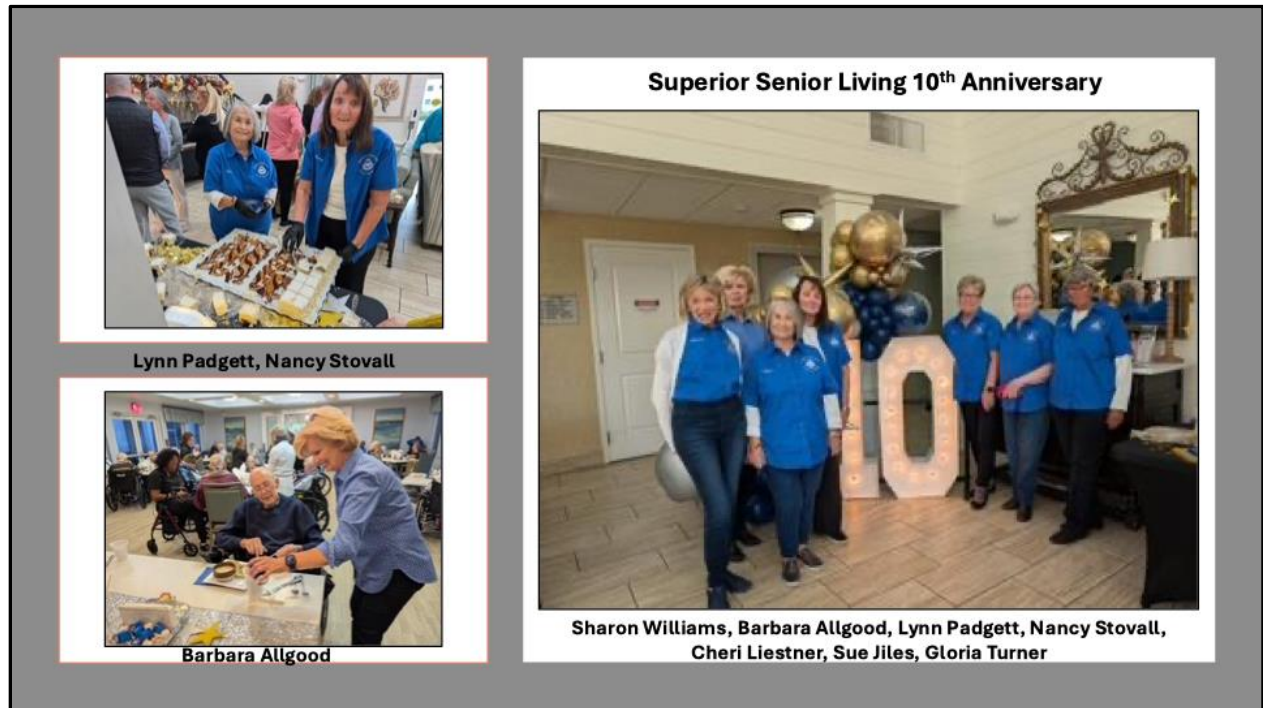
The committee members literally reach out to our beach community and see where the needs are and how we can assist. Each year the committee members select what they want to be involved with. This year we are continuing to volunteer at Backpack Blessings (BPB) twice a month. For those of you who were at the November lunch you helped write "cheery" messages on the index cards that go in each student's pack. Because of the volume of packs made each week, over 400, the BPB volunteers write and put in each pack an inspirational note. Committee members continue to go to Charter and Superior Senior living facilities once or twice a month to help with crafts or special meals. In December we will be getting together as a group and writing in over 175 Christmas cards seasonal thoughts for the residents at both facilities. Also, this year, 6 members have offered to "adopt" (for lack of better word) 3 residents' at each facility that have no or minimal visits from family.

This year the committee also wanted to do something for students in our area schools at Christmas. After contacting counselors at the schools, the "need" for assistance was overwhelming especially for the students whose parent did not have

transportation, or just financially could not afford to buy presents. All the schools indicated they get assistance from other organizations, but it was not enough. Our committee members elected to give six beach schools \$200 each specifically for Christmas assistance. One of the committee members matched the donation which resulted in \$400 for each school.

We will continue doing “good” for our community and in the new year we are planning crafts project for Girl’s Inc.

Gloria Turner and Sharon McDonald, Co-Chairs



Domestic Violence



Check Presentation to Gulfview United Methodist Church Domestic Violence Program

Pictured: Rhonda Zartman, Jenna Hall, Pastor Brad Zimanek, Gloria Turner, Sue Jiles, Monica Thomas

An estimated 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been physically abused by an intimate partner.

Every minute, about 20 people are physically abused by an intimate partner in the U.S.

About 15.5 million children witness domestic violence each year.

Food Pantry

December Luncheon Collections for Christmas Baskets

- Dried Potatoes
- Cranberry Sauce
- Boxed Stuffing
- Chicken Broth
- Canned Corn
- Canned Green Beans
- Gravy
- Canned Yams

Pamela Sanders, Food Pantry Liaison

November Luncheon Collections



"Spending Time Together"

Member to Member



Forty-one Women's Civic Club members attended the Kirby Holt Holiday Decoration Showcase on October 30th. A big thank you to all who purchased tickets at this very busy time of the year and to Kirby for his generous donation to our club.

A good time was had by all who attended the Pop Up Social at Maddies La Casita on November 20th. They loved us so much that we were invited to join them at other line dancing venues. Yee Haw!

Please mark your calendars for these important upcoming Member to Member dates:

March 23rd New Member Orientation - Senior Center - Monday 5:00 pm
New Members, Member to Member Committee Members, All Committee Chairs

April 19th Member Thank You Picnic - Camp Helen State Park - Sunday Afternoon
All Members invited

More info to come as we get closer to these dates - just a reminder to please put on your calendar.

Sony Edwards and Janet Tettemer, Member to Member Chairs

"Recognizing our Members"



Please remember to inform the Sunshine Committee of any members who are ill, had a loss, need surgery or any other concern. Feel free to call if you know someone who needs a card. We don't want to miss cheering up our fellow members.

Sony Edwards, Sunshine Committee Chair (678) 478-1955

Happy Birthday Wishes!!

December

03	Elaine Lichtenberger
03	Sharon McDonald
06	Kris Saddoris
07	Annetta Henderson
11	Faye Culpepper
11	El Moreland
14	Susan Curry
27	Carol Davis



*"Count not the candles . . .
see the lights they give!"*

'In Our Thoughts and Prayers'

Julie Sanders' husband, Herb, passed away on October 30th after a very short illness. Please keep Julie and their son, Douglas, in your thoughts and prayers. Your support and encouragement during this difficult time will be greatly appreciated.

"Upcoming Events"

December 4	Christmas Luncheon at Harpoon Harry's, 12627 Front Beach Rd., 11:00 AM
December 6	Panama City Beach Marathon
December 11	Backpack Blessings at 158 Griffin Blvd, 8:30AM
December 18	Backpack Blessings at 158 Griffin Blvd, 8:30AM
December 18	Board Meeting at Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 309 R Jackson, 10:00AM
December 31	New Year's Eve Beach Ball Drop at Pier Park and Aaron Bessant Park
January 9	Luncheon at Dee's Hangout, 529 N Richard Jackson Blvd, 11:00AM (Note Date/Day Change for Luncheon)
January 9	Winter Appreciation at Boardwalk, 9600 S. Thomas Dr., 8 - 10:30AM

January 29	Board Meeting at Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 309 R Jackson, 10:00AM
January 30-31	Mardi Gras and Music Festival, Pier Park and Aaron Bessant Park
February 13	Hearts & Hands Celebration, Boardwalk, 9600 S Thomas Dr.

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

Contact Information

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