

The Lantern



Printed monthly for members and friends of the Sumter Junior Welfare League, Inc.

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Left to Right: **Hayes Jones, Jeanna Mahr, Anna Dilts, Molly Matthews, Mary Baird, and Missy Coulter**

Congratulations to Our New Sustaining Members!

By Lisa Andrews

The following ladies have served the Sumter community through the Sumter Junior Welfare League in many capacities for the past ten years. We thank them for their service, hard work, and dedication.

Mary Baird has served in various placements throughout her ten years in the League. Her placements have included: Food Committee for the Wishing Well, Lantern, Wishing Well Scheduler, Vice President, President, and Hospitality.

Mary's favorite placement was Wishing Well Scheduler. She was able to work on the schedule from home and on her own time. This was perfect for her because she was in nursing school at the time and this made it possible for her to juggle demanding school work while continuing to serve the League.

Mary has never felt that the League or League obligations interfered with her "free time". She will continue to do the things she's always enjoyed... she just won't be seeing everyone at FBC the 3rd Monday of every month.

Since Mary and her husband recently built a house, they had to start from scratch with the landscape. Over the past several weeks she has dug in the dirt a lot and planted shrubs and flowers. She never thought she would say this, "but yard work is good for the soul, a great stress reliever, and a killer work out. I just pray that I don't see any critters while working in the yard because that's a game changer."

A new hobby she would like to pursue is cooking. She admits that she "gets lost" in a kitchen. She is thankful her husband cooks otherwise their dinner options would include carry out, popcorn, or cereal.

Mary's advice to Provisionals is that, "Each of you are an important piece of a puzzle. The puzzle is not complete without you in it. No matter your shape, size or color...you are all important. Don't be afraid to try something new. It's easy to say "no" but you will regret it. The minute you say "yes" to something (even if out of your comfort zone) you will find that you will be a blessing to someone and you will be blessed in return."

She will never forget the year she served as President while planning her wedding (with the help of her amazing mom, Jackie Olsen--former SJWL president and sustainer representative that year). At the April Board meeting the Board members had a "shower" for her. They had petit fours and punch. They gave her 2 beautiful decorative pillows from Sumter Lighting and Home. Mary said, "I felt so loved. The by-laws don't address what to do "when the president is getting married", so these girls went out of their way to do something special for me because they wanted to! My point in this is, life-long friendships were made through the SJWL and that is something I will never forget."

Mary can't recall a funny moment in particular. However, she said, "I love to hear Whitney Dunlap give her report at the meetings. She is always so up-beat, witty, and makes me smile."

League Meeting:
Monday, May 21st ~ May Dinner
The O'Donnell House
Social Hour ~ 6:15 p.m.
Dinner ~ 7:00 p.m.

SJWL General Membership Meeting Minutes
April 16, 20168

Submitted by Sarah Smith

President Molly Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:00 and asked that everyone partake in the refreshments provided by the hospitality committee.

Tiffany Davis shared a devotion. She noted that all of the things we do right as women and as mothers is based on constant dialogue with God. She encouraged us to accept God's grace because His love for us is great. In the good times, we should thank Him, IN the bad times, we should call out to Him. She shared that a few bad moments in our day do not define us. She encouraged us to remember to live in the truth today that we are good women, loved by God.

Molly asked if everyone received their Lantern. Valerie motioned, and Day seconded the motion to approve the minutes.

Vice-President, Valerie James had no report

Secretary, Sarah Smith reminded all members to sign in for the meeting. Additionally, members who will not be attending the May Dinner should contact the Secretary in writing. Sarah also reminded all members who have had a change in contact information to contact her as soon as possible in order to include those changes in the next Directory.

Treasurer, Nancy Branham announced the account balances: Administrative Account: \$33,496.54; Community Trust: \$19,587.08. Nancy reminded everyone that May Dinner checks are due May 1 in the amount of \$35. Receipts for reimbursement are due May 15. Copies of the proposed budget are on all tables. The proposal was discussed and reviewed at the last meeting. Molly called for a vote. Valerie motioned to approve the budget, and Gretchen seconded the motion.

Assistant Secretary, Amy Jones announced that no birth notes were written in March and five condolence notes were written. Amy thanked Cheryl Landstrom for hosting the last board meeting and Heather Eldridge for providing refreshments.

Assistant Treasurer, Cindy Ardis announced that Palmetto Health is hosting a Men's Health Symposium. They contacted Cindy to share this invitation with the league and brochures were available for pick up. Cindy continues to receive dues and reminded the league that these must be to Cindy by April 30. She noted that 159 sustainers and most active members have paid their dues.

Admissions Chair, Darla Dean announced that the second meeting of the Admissions Committee was held in March and she looks forward to sharing the results at the May Dinner.

Community Research Chair, Cheryl Landstrom announces that all grant checks have been mailed.

Computer Chair, Day Caughman announced that it is the time of year where we update our database. She asked members to take a look at their Member Information Sheets and make changes as appropriate. Changes could include changes in directory information, birth of a child, status changes, etc.

Wishing Well, Whitney Dunlap had no report.

Hospitality Chair Mary Baird announced that the May Dinner will be May 21st at the O'Donnell House. She also announced the cost would be \$35 and we are collecting those checks. 6:15 is the social hour and 7 pm will be dinner.

Lantern Editor Kelly Mills had no report.

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Missy Coulter is also about to complete her final year as an active member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League. The placements Missy fulfilled during her SJWL years were: United Ministries B, Broadcast for the Blind Chair, Gift Co-Buyer, Guift Buyer, and United Ministries A Chair.

Her favorite placement was with United Ministries because of their great staff and she loves what they do for our community.

With the business of life, she will continue to have “no free time,” but she hopes to continue volunteering with United Ministries and their Medical Staff.

Missy’s advice to Provisionals is “enjoy your years in the League, it flies by!”

Anna Dilts has volunteered in many areas throughout the past 10 years. Her placements have included: Puppets, United Ministries, and Done in a Day. Her favorite placement was Done in a Day because she was able to volunteer with Sumter Senior Services which she enjoyed immensely.

With her so called “free time,” Anna looks forward to taking more trips to Columbia to visit with her children, spending some time relaxing with her husband, and hopefully exercising more often. A hobby she would like to pursue is stand-up paddle boarding.

Anna’s advice to Provisionals is, “Remember that being part of the League is truly an honor. As members we have a unique opportunity to make significant contributions that will improve the lives of people in our own community. Your compassion, work ethic, and leadership will not only help others, it will inspire them. So share your kindness, work diligently, and help lead others to success.”

She will never forget “messing up the register at the Wishing Well, dropping a Coke when I tried to carry too many drinks to restock the cooler, all the laughs we had behind the curtain during the puppet shows, and most of all I will never forget the lovely ladies I have worked beside and the beautiful people I have meet in the past 10 years that inspire me to be a better human being every day.”

A funny moment she remembers is when she “was at Sumter Senior Services for a couple of hours addressing postcards for a fundraiser. One of the seniors visiting the center sat in the break room the entire 2-3 hours I was there talking to me. She told me all about her family, her neighbors, and her neighbor’s families. I definitely felt like I knew things that I shouldn’t by the end of the afternoon. I think she enjoyed the company and I certainly got a kick out of the stories.”

Hayes Jones has volunteered her time through various placements the past ten years. Her placements have included: providing tours through the Sumter County Museum, Co-Editor and Editor of the Lantern, Wishing Well Scheduler, and United Ministries.

She enjoyed all of the placements for different reasons. The in-house League placements enabled her to get to know the inner workings of the League and meet fellow League members. The others gave her a glimpse into various parts of Sumter. Hayes’ favorite overall was working with United Ministries. She has volunteered for them “behind the scenes” by writing thank you notes and helping with the Angel Tree. Currently, as an In-taker, she interviews people from the community that are in a crisis need situation. Hayes shared that “it is a humbling experience to meet the clients, to help them through their need, and to show them the love of Christ through that help.”

Hayes plans to continue volunteering with United Ministries as an In-taker and will begin a part time job. She also looks forward to completing many minor projects around the house and yard. She love DIY projects and hopes to have more time for them.

Her advice to Provisionals it that “Ten years will fly by! Find placements that work with your life and work schedule. Everyone in the League wants to make your years here fun, enjoyable, and worthwhile. If you have questions or concerns about the League fitting into your life, ask! The League will bend over backwards to help. Find a placement that may be out of your comfort zone – it may just enrich your life!”

Hayes will never forget when “We were giving tours of the Sumter Museum to a very large and boisterous group of third graders. Their teachers couldn’t keep them in line. Usually we did a quick tour of the house then spent most of the time outside in the back country area. It was raining cats and dogs, so we had to keep all these children inside this historic house full of historic and priceless items for over 45 minutes without them breaking anything. It doesn’t sound like much, but all of our nerves were shot by the time they left!”

Jeanna Mahr is excited to complete her final year as an active member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League. Her many placements in the League have included: United Ministries, Wishing Well Food, Wishing Well Gifts, Puppets, United Ministries Chair, and United Ministries Medical Clinic.

Jeanna has enjoyed each of her placements but her heart has always been with United Ministries. She feels “it was a great opportunity to really help and make an impact on the community. I often found myself feeling blessed and grateful every time I left the building.”

Although the Sumter Pregnancy Center is not a “placement” with the League, Jeanna has volunteered there over the last 12 years. She looks forward to devoting more time at the Center. Jeanna also loves to be outdoors and is looking to start training again for sprint triathlons

Her advice to Provisionals is “to make the most out of your time volunteering. You never know what kind of impact you are making with every smile, helping hand, or extra help you give to the community. There are so many that need in our community and a little bit can go a long way.”

Jeanna will never forget when she was at United Ministries, helping a young man get his electric bill paid. He had lost his job and was worried about how to support his young family. He was grateful for the help. During their conversation, Jeanna realized the man was never taught how to budget or spend his money frugally. They had a long conversation about how to allocate his earnings and prioritize his spending. Jeanna felt that it was such a simple concept to her and yet it was like this man was hearing it for the first time. He seemed very hopeful for the first time. They discussed strategies on how to finance his life and save for his future. It was the first time Jeanna felt that her financial planning background was really put to good use.

Most of Jeanna’s funny moments with the league were during puppets. “It was not uncommon to hear the students say something funny about the show or a funny mishap would happen with one of our puppets. One time my puppets and got stuck in between the curtains, and I had to untangle him before he could pop up to speak his part. Needless to say the show still went on, but my puppet did not appear until almost half of his monologue was over.”

Molly Matthews has served in various placements throughout her ten years in the League. Her placements have included: Maizies Place, United Ministries, Wishing Well, Community Research, Assistant Secretary, Secretary, Vice President, and President.

Molly loved Community Research because she was given the opportunity to learn about many wonderful community groups and then had the privilege of giving grants on behalf of the League. The recipients were so appreciative and it made her understand more of the “good” the League does.

She is looking forward to a little more “margin” in her life during which she hopes to enrich relationships with her family, friends, and neighbors by hanging out more and sharing more meals together. Molly hopes to spend more time playing tennis, reading, and going to Bible study.

Molly would encourage the Provisionals “to make the League better. You are not here by mistake. Use your gifts to help figure out how our beloved Sumter Junior Welfare League can keep doing significant work and encouraging servant leadership in women. Also, take advantage of the relationships you build in the league. Enjoy the women in your placements and committees and make an effort to get to know one another. Linger around refreshments longer and don’t be in such a hurry.”

She will never forget when she was diagnosed with colon cancer and the president and board at the time were so good to her. “Everyone helped me figure out what to do with my status and took up slack on my placement so that I didn’t have to worry about anything. It was a real gift and show of support and love. I’ll never forget it.”

Molly says, “I have to laugh at myself because as president I have had a very hard time with correctly calling for motions and votes. During board meetings on several occasions I will fumble over my words and forget to get the “ayes” or ask if any are opposed. The board has been patient with me.”

We appreciate the time and commitment to service these ladies have provided for our community. The League benefits the Sumter Community in many ways, and it is because of the dedication of ladies like Mary, Missy, Anna, Hayes, Jeanna, and Molly that we can continue to serve. Thank you again for your dedication and time.

* *The Sumter Junior Welfare League would like to extend our deepest sympathies to* *
* *Tammy Amick, Sustainer, on the passing of her father-in-law, Vern Amick* *
* *Tiffany Davis, Active, on the passing of her grandmother, Mildred Ard Brown* *
* *Karen McCreight, Sustainer, on the passing of her father-in-law, Charles McCreight* *
* *Peggy McCreight, Sustainer, on the passing of her husband, Charles McCreight* *
* *Susan Simmons, Paid Worker, on the passing of her mother, Margaret Stroud* *

Presenting our newest members!

Cindy Ardis

There are occasions when an opportunity presents itself and casually you agree to whatever the task may be. Then, you start thinking "What have I gotten myself into?" That same scenario happened with me when I agreed to be co-chair (and then chair) for the provisional class. I had the good fortune of watching Rebecca Montague work with the provisional class last year.

This year, following the May Dinner in 2017, I met this new class of provisional members. We all remember that first League experience as scary and exciting at the same time! Then we didn't gather again until September. At this point, I started thinking "What have I gotten myself into? How will a group who doesn't know one another come to a consensus on a project? How can we form friendships meeting once a month?" What instantly made an impact on me was how quickly a project was chosen. There was consensus among 11 women with a single vote! Vicki Singleton, the provisional co-chair and I have had numerous conversations about the bond this group formed almost immediately. They were one in their voice on the project from September until its completion in March. We all consider our lemonade stand drop off to be a huge success. We collected paper towels, hand sanitizer, flip flops, clothing and gift cards totaling over \$2400 to benefit Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands.

The year ended with a wonderful dinner at Georgio's where we laughed, shared secrets, and enjoyed our time together (and of course, they had to take the dreaded League test!). I must confess I shed a few tears knowing the placement that once caused much anxiety had come to an end.

The Sumter Junior Welfare League will be a better organization because of these delightful, accomplished, loving young women!

And, if you ever have an opportunity to be chair for a provisional class, don't hesitate! It will be one of the most fulfilling placements you will have as a League member.

This provisional class includes: Lauren (Mrs. Richard Grant) Barkley, Katherine Brogdon, Jenna (Mrs. Matthew John) Brown, Cindy (Mrs. James Christos) Dimitriadis, Amber (Mrs. Van Eric) Frye, Leslie (Mrs. Christian Scott) Horton, Carrie Johnson, Sarah Kathryn (Mrs. Andrew Philip), Sterling (Mrs. Christopher Wayne) Mitchum, Mollie (Mrs. Hugh Johnson) McMillan, and Katie (Mrs. Mendel Burns) Shaw.



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Placement Council Chair Beth Poag asked that if you have a report that is due, please get it to Beth as soon as possible.

Provisional Chair, Cindy Ardis told us that the Lemonade Stand held on March 25th raised over \$2200.00. They will continue accepting donations. If you are unsure of what to donate, gift cards are an awesome donation as it allows the center to continue replacing clothing as needed.

Sustainer Representative, Heather Eldridge had no report.

New Business: Above and Beyond was awarded to Candi Payne for her donations to the league in support of the Crosswell Home and to Becky Altman for moving all of the puppets and puppet supplies to the Museum for storage. Placement Cards: Beth Poag explained how to fill out placement cards.

Wishing Well Cards: Bronwyn McElveen directed everyone on how to fill out their Wishing Well cards.

The last board meeting for the 2017-2018 year will be Monday, May 14 at the home of Molly Matthews, and dinner will be served.

Molly announced that our next meeting would be the May dinner on May 21st at the O'Donnell House. Social hour will begin at 6:15 and dinner will be served at 7 pm.

Molly adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM.



Stacy Montgomery and Kim Coker got to have their picture taken with Bob Eubanks . They worked at the Opera House the night that Mr. Eubanks hosted a show remembering his days of the Newlywed Game. It was a great time had by all with many laughs.

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