

Venice Nokomis Woman's Club, General Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 12, 2019
Venice Public Library Community Room

President, Jean Trammell, called the meeting to order at 1:20pm. Members collectively said the Pledge of Allegiance and read the "Collect for Club Women".

Jean introduced our program speaker, Sandy Davisson, the Director of Education and Outreach at the Venice Theatre. Sandy began by thanking the VNWC for our financial support of area nonprofits. She then shared highlights of her theater involvement which began when she was in the forth grade. Sandy ultimately earned her MFA in directing. She initially came to Venice Theatre for an internship while finishing her graduate degree and twenty years later, she is still with them. Sandy works in education and outreach, which include kindergarten age children through adults. Her focus is on the process as opposed to just performance art. Sandy shared the program catalog that lists their many classes and opportunities. One example is their Technical Theatre Apprenticeship Program, which is accredited by the Florida Department of Education. In regards to Outreach, her favorite Community Impact Programs are the Boys and Girls Clubs and the Loveland partnerships. Sandy sees students gaining many positive attributes after participating in their various programs, such as an increase in imagination. Also mastery of life skills such as problem solving, teamwork and the ability to present ideas and concepts are seen. This coincides with a recent study that notes students in fine art programs have an increase in writing/verbal skills, compassion and college aspirations and a decrease in behavior issues. Sandy also shared that the Venice Theatre has 668 children in their classes and their outreach serves 9,000 children and adults. They currently are doing a pilot program with Circus Sarasota. Their scholarship awards have been \$35,000 and a qualified applicant has never been denied. There are many volunteer opportunities for those interested and they range from sewing, painting, marketing, editing, ushering—all areas of the theatre. Sandy was asked about a VNWC group tour, which she says could be arranged.

Programs: Jean notes that each table has a copy of the proposed programs for 2019-2020. They include speakers from the local Civic organizations that we will be interested in.

Next month's program will be the Venice Children's Librarian, sharing some of the 'Creation Stations'. This will be a hand-on program. The creation stations were funded with a portion of our donation to the library.

Aimee Holmes asked if there was still interest in a paint night at the Art Center. At least 20 members are needed to schedule "Uncorked". As there seems to be interest, she will have details for this at October's meeting and a signup sheet.

Membership: Lorraine presented six new members to be inducted into the club, with Liz Mazzu administering the oath for new members. Each inductee introduced herself and gave members a bit of their background: Annette DiPietro, Pat O'Connor, Diane Krol, Irene Macchioeola, Lauren Mosolino-Muia and Sharyn

Lonsdale are our new members. Additionally, Sharyn shared that she has agreed to be our Communications chair. Two guests were in attendance, Kathleen (Kathy) Girstner and Kathy Couture. Kathleen had received information on our club from the VNWC table at the June Craft Show and Kathy C. came with member Linda O'Brien. Welcome everyone!

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Fundraising: Laura Hester, fundraising director, wasn't able to attend but gave Jean her report to read. Highlights were that the committee had worked over the summer and decided to plan one large money making event to support our civic recipient. This will be a "Dance Party for the Arts" to be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at the American Legion (Post #159) on Venice Avenue from 6-10pm. This is an all eras dance; guests are invited to wear costumes of their favorite era. There will be dance instruction (from the Gotta Dance studio) and exhibition dancing. There will be live music, 50/50 raffle, silent auctions and the wall of libations. Also, we will be raising funds by partnering with Fox Lea Farms at their Friday evening horse shows in late February 2020. Tricia Cook will be coordinating this. We will receive 50% of the gate fees and 50% of their 50/50 raffle earnings. Our club will provide about 20 volunteers to park cars, shuttle spectators and collect raffle money, Tricia will have more information at the October and November meetings.

Jean recognized the fundraising committee members and their tasks: Roxanne Smith, sponsors and donations; Lorraine Finizio and Kathy Price, decorations/raffle baskets; Kathy Eman, venue/entertainment and Tricia Cook, publicity. Please sign up to help with the various tasks as volunteers are needed.

Twig: Liz Mazzu discussed our liaison with TWIG "The Way to Inspire and Give", an upscale boutique for foster children. The children (ages birth to 21) are able to shop monthly for up to seven clothing items, socks, underwear and an age appropriate book. The store is at Venice Avenue and Pinebrook in the Angelos plaza. It is stocked with new and gently used articles of clothing and shoes. Liz shared some statistics on the large numbers of children served and the number of items given. A recent addition, funded by a grant, is their trailer of clothing that visits area group homes. To volunteer in the store, a training must be completed and the next one will be on Oct 3, 2019 at 6:30pm. Also on February 11, 2020 9-10:30am, we have opportunity help in their warehouse, getting items readied for the store, and no training is needed for this. Signup sheets are here for the warehouse and training events. Liz explained what a wonderful job this organization does to empower these children. She will take donated items from members; their wish list is on their web site, www.thetwigcares.com. This program has been featured on local and national news shows.

Salvation Army: Linda O'Brien explained the Christmas angel program. She is collecting names to get an idea of how many children to gift. Each child receives an outfit and gifts. A list will be provided with the child's sizes and gift wishes. Linda hopes to have all information for November's meeting.

President's Report: Jean thanked Debra Wright for planning our two successful summer lunches. Since they were so well received, there will be more throughout the membership year, enabling members to get to know one another better.

Jean shared that as we discussed last year, we will be putting our financial support towards a local civic organization. This is our way of 'getting back to our roots,' Civic involvement was the focus of the original VNWC. The board selected the Venice Theater (children's programs) to be this year's partner, financially supporting them with our fundraiser. This announcement was received with enthusiasm from members. Next spring, after hearing the various speakers from community partners, the general membership will select the following year's fundraising recipient.

Jean was asked by Aimee Holmes to explain our library donation for new members. Jean explained that the original VNWC started the Venice Library and managed it before turning it over to the Friends of the Library. Later Sarasota County took over its management. When the library was being rebuilt and started their capital campaign, we pledged \$100,000, which is now complete. Debra Wright noted that a bequeathal of \$30,000 from the estate of Carolyn Redlin was put in trust and later given to the Friends of the Library. Carolyn was a former VNWC member and past president.

Debra Wright shared our password for the VNWC website, members' section: VNWC1926. Members can access information such as treasurer's reports and minutes.

Treasurer: Joan Brinton shared that in July The Community Foundation of Sarasota wrote the \$50,000 check for our 2nd half of our \$100,000 library donation. Jean has the check and will organize the presentation to the library. Our federal tax returns, due in August, were filed. The May, June, July and August treasurers reports on our website. A motion was made by Tricia Cook and a 2nd by Paula Sylvester to approve the filing of the treasurer's reports of May-August. This was unanimously approved. Joan also shared that if members want to buy club shirts to see her or Bernie Noviki.

Minutes: Kathy Price said the May's minutes are available on the website. They were unanimously approved after a motion from Paula Sylvester and a 2nd from Lorrain Finizio.

50/50 Raffle: \$55 was collected and will be given as follows: \$15 for first draw and \$12 for the second. The winners were Kathy Price, 1st and Diane Krol, 2nd.

There being no other business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 2:35pm.

Kathy Price
Secretary