

HOMETOWN Civitan Newsletter

April 2022



President's Corner

Where does the time go? Here it is Spring again and the weather is warming up, even here in Central Florida! We are enjoying Spring's colorful foliage & critters we love seeing, getting out to do more activities we love to do, and to travel more often. Most importantly, we get to enjoy the company of our family and friends now that we are freer to gather again.

Of course, Hometown's sisters always enjoy being together serving our tri-county communities and have fun doing social activities!

Congratulations to us this year for winning Honor Club of Excellence from Civitan International... way to go ladies! Thank you so much to Laura McLaughlin, Judi Higbee and her husband John for their hard work in achieving our recognition!

Many thanks too goes to our wonderful hard-working membership for their involvement to obtain this award!

As usual, Hometown has been a very active club. Fundraising has been our recent focus both by supporting our charities and also for Hometown. Most notably, we supported and attended our member Rebecca Randall's charity Hand n' Hand/Ruth House of her unbelievably successful fundraiser and fun annual "Purses for a Purpose" Tea. We even won "Most Elegant Table" thanks to Tory Palivado & Penny Badolato (our charity Director)! A local women's business Evelyn & Arthur is supporting Hometown by raising money for us through the percentage of their sales and collecting much needed necessities for Hand n' Hand/Ruth House. Our famous Adopt-A- Precinct has started for the midterm elections this year. Laura McLaughlin and Sue Ann Baker are leading this important Hometown fundraiser endeavor. We are very proud that this is our most successful fundraising program involving both our members and spouses; but also, we are so grateful to obtain our community's volunteers again in their support for our patriotic project endeavor! Notably, we were very happy to host Civitan's Florida Governor Bonnie Ruth who attended our March monthly meeting with whom we had speakers from the Sumter County Board of Elections where she learned and was impressed with our program. Finally, we again had our fun Bunco Party at The Villages Eisenhower recreation center where we raised profitable money just short of \$1,000! Karen Schwering and Arlene Kaplan did a fabulous job heading this fun evening with yummy food and monetary winnings of which a few attendees most generously donated their winnings back to our club! We will continue to fuel our agendas in the coming months with more of our interesting and important programs, projects, and social functions.

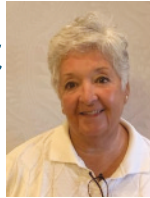
Until next time,

Mary

Next Meeting: Tuesday April 5.



Member Spotlight Diane Seymour



2

I grew up in the north Chicago suburbs. I loved drawing, working with my Dad building things and making cookies with my Mom. My father died suddenly when I was 14, shaking our world. My Mom worked so hard to support us after that.

Graduated from Northern Illinois University with a degree in Elementary Education, with minors in art and zoology. Having taught 1st grade for 4 years, I left teaching as I kept getting in trouble with the custodian as I taught all the first grade science for 5 first grades. From there I went into sales. (It seems I don't know what I want to be when I grow up!) I sold high tech medical equipment- starting with surgical stapling instruments, which required I scrub in the OR and work with the surgeons. It was fun! I also sold monitoring equipment in ICU, SICU, NICU and the,OR.

After about 25 years in the medical field, I switched to owning my own business- Chipper by the Dozen Cookie Company. We made gift baskets and custom tins for corporations. We also had a line of biscotti that we sold to coffee shops.

During that time I was also selling homes for Del Webb and Kimball Hill. When the housing market tanked, I went back to school and got my certification as a hearing specialist. See.... Still don't know what I want to be when I grow up!

I've been married to my husband, Gary for 45 years, and along with him came 2 stepdaughters.

We rented in the villages for 7 years then were able to purchase in 2019 after my mom passed. We enjoy the Villages and all it has to offer. I'm glad Karen Goodman convinced me to join Civitans. Currently I produce the newsletter with the help of the many contributors.

Penny Does it Again!

Penny Badolato and friend Annette Hanopole finished the 5K run in support of the Villages Charter school! Way to go!

Monthly Guest Speaker

March- Sumter County Elections



The March 1, 2022, general meeting of Hometown featured two staff members from the Sumter County Supervisor of Elections office—Traci Oliver, assistant to Supervisor Bill Keen, and Kaley Howard, Deputy Clerk.

Both ladies addressed the membership and more importantly answered questions regarding the upcoming primary election in August of this year. Hometown considers staffing one of the early voting sites a major community service endeavor as well as a major fundraiser.

Additionally, another guest was with us, Bonnie Ruth from St. Petersburg, Florida. Bonnie currently is the Florida District Governor and included our club in her schedule of visits around the state. We discussed the possibility of holding the next Florida convention here in The Villages.





“ **BUNCO!**” she cried as her dice showed all 2’s “That’s BUNCO! he called out when he rolled three 6’s. “I rolled another BUNCO!” she called out when the dice showed three 5’s. Cries of “BUNCO” were heard throughout the card room on the evening of January 17th when 80 Hometown Civitan members and their guests came together at the Eisenhower Rec Center. They were there to enjoy an evening of good food, good friends, and good game-playing. The game of BUNCO was the star of the show that evening.

The doors opened at 5:30 pm and our many players came in to select a lucky seat. They also visited the 50/50 table where they purchased tickets for the drawing that took place at the end of the evening. Next, they filled their plates with lots of good food.

Our food tables were filled with sandwiches of ham, turkey or roast beef. Platters of cheese and crackers, spinach dip, and fresh vegetables were also available. And five varieties of fresh-baked cookies tempted our players to go back for another.

At 6 pm Karen Schwering, party organizer, welcomed everyone and led them in saying The Pledge of Allegiance. Next, Betty Rohan, founder of our Hometown Civitan Club, gave the group a bit of the history on how we got started. And finally, Arlene Kaplan reviewed the rules of the game and its scoring. Then, with the ring of a bell, we began to play!

Each table of four players rolled the dice, recorded their points, high-fived their partners, laughed at each other’s jokes, and moved on to their next spot when the bell rang. We played 18 games and the time just flew by! Everyone really enjoyed themselves. At 8:15, it was time to add up our scores. We paid out \$100 for each of four categories: Most Baby Buncos, Most Buncos, Most Losses, and Most Wins.

And our winners were: (Drum roll please)

MOST BABY BUNCOS: Anne Clark

MOST BUNCOS:??????

MOST LOSSES: Betty Rohan

MOST WINS: Sue Mangano and Robert Pistilli tied and split the money



The evening ended when Hometown Civitan President, Mary Anderson, drew the winning 50/50 ticket. The winner was: (Another drum roll please): Penny Badolato. We had collected \$300 for the drawing and awarded \$150 to charter member and past president Penny. She was all smiles as she was awarded the prize money. Penny was also most generous with her winnings and donated \$50 back to the club. Thank you, Penny! (From all of your Civitan sisters.) We had several platters of food left over at the end of the evening and took them to our Villages firehouse down the street. Our firefighters were delighted with the food and thanked us again and again. Party organizer Karen has heard from many of our members and guests saying they had a great time and they hoped we would have another BUNCO party next year. “It’s a deal!” said Karen. “As long as we have a year to prepare for the next one, we can do it! My Civitan sisters LOVE to party!” Submitted by Karen Schwering

February 18, 2022

4

Dear Civitans:

The Civitan International Board of Directors met earlier this week for a strategic planning meeting. These are not uncommon, as the group meets to develop goals and determine direction of several efforts. The focus of this year's strategic planning meetings continues to be what we can do to ensure that the Civitan organization is around for many years to come. Like most of the other civic organizations, our membership continues to decline each year. Unfortunately, we have less than 10,000 members, while there are 550,000 Kiwanis members, and around 1.4 million in the Rotary organization as well as 1.4 million in the Lions Club. As you can imagine, we are having to take some drastic measures to ensure we are still around for future generations. The feedback regarding structure change, both positive and negative, was brought up during our recent discussions. The direction that was proposed by the board during the October 2021 meeting is being strengthened to ensure success as well as provide several survival options for the organization. There will be a formal Civitan International Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, March 19. Guests are always welcome to attend these meetings, as governors and governors-elect as well as Past International Presidents always receive an invitation. During this meeting, there will be discussion about items that will be put before the membership for ratification during this year's convention. The details behind these items will consider much of the feedback received over the last few weeks. We hope this addresses many concerns for now and hopefully, we can all figure out a way to help grow our organization. We all must go into this with an open mind and understanding that something has to change if we want to grow our membership.

As always, you are welcome to submit your thoughts on any topic facing our Civitan organization. The board and I especially appreciate ideas and suggestions as to how to grow, recruit and evolve to be the most relevant and impactful we can be together. If you would like to be a guest at the board meeting, please email scarlet@civitan.org. If you have any questions before then, please let me or any of the other international board members know and we'll do our best to answer those questions.

Regards,

Civitan International Board of Directors

Dan Brown, President

Denise Phelps, Region 4 Director

JoAnn O'Toole, President Elect

Pat McKinney, Region 5 Director

Frank Kelley, Immediate Past Pres.

Michael Morgan, Senior Director and Region 6 Director

Joel Hallman, Region 1 Director

Marcia Dechand, Region 7 Director

Bill Tolleson, Region 2 Director

Lynda Wheeler, Region 8 Director

John Sofley, Region 3 Director

Sheana Hafner, European Director

Scarlet Thompson, Executive Vice President



APRIL

8th Tory Palivoda

10th Shirley Stauffer

22nd Carole Savage

29th Debbie Abbott

MAY

10th Karen Chlebek

21st Chickie Holtzman

24th Pat Rusk

31st Paula Goldstein

JUNE

6th Judi Higbee

12th Diane Seymour

19th Rebecca Randall

27th Sue Ann Baker

Social Committee Trip ...Baker House in Leesburg

5

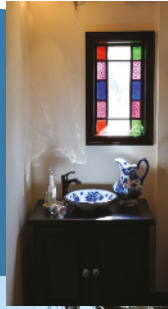
A special thanks to Lana and Doris, the Social committee of Hometown Civitan for a private tour of the Baker House in Leesburg. The Baker House was built in 1890 by Senator David H. Baker. He originally was from Kentucky but came to Florida to grow oranges and eventually went on to serve in the Florida legislature. The home had been in the family since then, except for a short time after Mr. Baker and one of his sons died.

The home consists of a two story main house with porches on both floors and a separate two story kitchen house with servant rooms above the kitchen. Think of the hot summers with no air conditioning and also above the kitchen!

In 2012, the property was sold to the Villages, but the remaining great-grandchildren, decided to give the city of Wildwood five acres and the home. The home was badly in need of renovation and with a dedicated staff of volunteers, the home is being preserved. Much of the furnishings have been donated since little was left of the original furniture. However, the main house is still original, from the wood floors to a four seasons stained glass window on the second floor landing.

A large camellia bush on the east side was planted by the Senator's wife from a cutting of a bush in Kentucky. To this day, the Baker women still use camellias in their bridal bouquets.

After the tour we had lunch at Belle Glade CC. A good time was had by all! Submitted by Ilene Hyams



Social Committee Next Trip:

Luna Sea Alpaca Farm Clermont, FL-
Tuesday, April 26th 10:30 am

Tea anyone?

Recently 10 of our Hometown Civitan sisters attended High Tea to support Hand in Hand / Ruth House. With Tory Palivoda's creative table decorating we took the coveted "Most Elegant" table award. There were live and silent purse auctions and raffles, a great guest speaker and of course tea and goodies. We all had a great time and Hand in Hand / Ruth House raised approximately \$51,000.