

December 2017 Newsletter

Photos from December 6th Meeting



President's Message

Hello, all!

I hope your holiday season was and continues to be more joyful than stressful.

The close of one year and the beginning of another seems to cause most people to contemplate how the waning year went and consider what they want from the one to come.

I know a lot of people make resolutions for the New Year. I'm not one of them. I believe every single day offers us the chance to change what we are trying to improve about ourselves. It's a lot less disappointing if I miss the mark one day because I know I can try again tomorrow. If I fail, I try to remember that we learn more from our failures than our successes. I try to find the lesson in the challenge and try to do better the next day.

As a club, we have the opportunity to help people who are making enormous changes in their lives, striving for improvement under very challenging circumstances. The women of Harmony House leave most everything behind to make better lives for themselves and their children. Our scholarship recipients enter a whole new world in higher education.

So, in addition to your personal reflection this season, I ask you to remember that we're all one family--the human family--and as you look toward the changes you want to make for your future, please continue to join our club in making it possible for others to do the same. They say a rising tide raises all ships. I look at the Women of the Western Communities as a group of people who do a lot to lift the tide for ourselves and others with our eyes toward making the world a better place together.

I'm so proud to be part of this group. Your dedication to our missions fills me with hope and joy, and I hope you feel the same. There's still time to bring friends who also want to change the world. Please invite them to our meeting this month and next so they can see how much fun we have making the world a brighter place.

I look forward to seeing you January 4 and meeting the friends you bring!

All the best to all,
Cheryl





MEETING REMINDERS

Happy Hour / Meet and Mingle
Starts at 6:00 pm. Arrive then,
and have a glass of wine or a
cocktail and unwind!

Please arrive no later than
6:30 pm to check in and
be seated.

Please RSVP to Lynda Chicano
for the January meeting
no later than Saturday,
December 29th!

MONTHLY DONATION

Non-perishable food for
Harmony House. Please check
expiration dates! Clean out
your cabinets and ask your
friends to do it too!

The guest fee to attend a WWC
meeting is \$30, and includes
a delicious dinner and the
monthly program.

INVITE A FRIEND OR 3!!

Our guest speaker for the
January 4th meeting is
Donna Carbone, a local crime
novelist and author.

Don't miss this meeting!



Allison Samiljan

Allison Samiljan was born on September 1st, in Milford, Connecticut, but lived there for only a short time before moving to Florida. Allison attended Pine Crest Preparatory School, in Fort Lauderdale, and earned her B.A. in English at Rollins College, and the University of Florida, where she was a member of the Pi Beta Phi sorority.

Allison married her husband, Steve, 45 years ago this past June, and has two sons - Adam, who is 34 and works in music management, and Chad, who is 29. He works for Marriott, and was recently married to Katherine, an American Airlines flight attendant. Allison and Steve have lived in the Meadow Wood neighborhood since January 29, 1986 (the day after the space shuttle Challenger exploded), and hold the distinction of being the first residents of the Meadow Wood area. Steve is a local attorney.

In addition, the family also has four rescued cats: Sissy, a Siamese mix; William, a stunning tuxedo; Rama Lama Ding Dong (!), a gray and white beauty; and Russell, a brown and rust tabby. Allison believes that having four cats puts her in the category of "crazy cat lady"! Obviously, she has a lot of love to give!

This busy lady worked as a litigation paralegal for many years, until Adam was born. She returned to the work force 9 years ago, handling communications and special events for the YWCA of Palm Beach County. Many of you know that Allison is our liaison for the YWCA and Harmony House, and she transports our monthly donations, which the WWC truly appreciates!

Allison is well known for her proof reading talents, and loves to read. She has belonged to a reading group for 28 years! She loves crossword puzzles, trivia games, crafts, attending movies, playing Words with Friends, and Mexican Train dominoes. She collects pigs, and even has a small Christmas tree with all pig ornaments. Some of her pigs were her mother's when she was a child, so they are special keepsakes for Allyson.

One thing you would not expect from Allyson is that she is a big fan of alternative music, and she loves punk rock! She attends live shows when she can (her son being in the music industry certainly helps!).

Allison has been a member of the Women of The Western Communities since 1986, and is one of our longest standing members. She has served as a Past President, and has held many board positions. She loves the fact that the WWC has supported Harmony House since before she joined our group (when Harmony House was known as a "Domestic Assault Shelter"). She is happy and proud that the WWC helps deserving local students attend college. The Women of the Western Communities is happy and proud that Allison Samiljan is a fantastic member, and has been part of the solid foundation of our group!




Happy New Year

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Anne Gerwig

Anne Gerwig was born on December 4th, in Warsaw, Indiana, and has lived in Palm Beach County since 1969. She attended North Shore High School, and North Technical Education Center (Dual) and earned a certificate in Architectural Drafting.

Anne has been married to her husband Alan for 27 years, and they have 3 children: Jessica Chusid, 26 (recently married to Jordan); Dane, who is 23; and Luke, who is 20 years old. Alan is a civil engineer with a masters degree in structures, and bridge design and seawalls are his forte. They have lived in Wellington for 27 years.

The family also has interesting pets, which include their dog, Holly, a bunny named Bessie, and a Cuban Knight Anole named Megatron.

Anne works as the Director of Client Communications for Alan Gerwig and Associates, Inc. Prior to 1998, when her husband started their company, she worked as a draftsman and a CADD technician, and assisted land planners and landscape architects. As many of you know, Anne also proudly serves as the Mayor of the Village of Wellington, a position she has held since 2016, after serving on the Village Council since 2010.

She has been a volunteer at her childrens' schools, and was instrumental in forming the Keely Spinelli Education Grant, named after a beloved local teacher whose short life impacted so many, and continues to do so. Anne has also been involved in many service projects, which include area playgrounds, and the Safe Neighborhoods Initiative.

In her spare time, which must be rare, Anne enjoys scrapbooking, quilting, tennis, and water skiing. She has barefoot water skied, and even jumped out of an airplane at 14,000 feet with the Golden Knights! She and Alan rcently took a safari to Africa, which she truly relished. Somehow, she claims to not care so much for travel and adventure! Anne also collects Wheaties – the old style pennies with the wheat on the back, which were minted from 1909 to 1958. If you find some, hang on to them for her!

When Anne was a junior in high school, she won first place in Florida, and fifth place nationally, for the architectural design of a commercial building, all in 5 hours. This was a precursor for things to come for this very active woman! A fun fact: she cuts her own hair, since she has been too busy to make an appointment.

Anne has been a member of the Women of the Western Communities for about 3 years. She was interested in meeting more women in this area, as most of her professional contact is with men. Anne has been a terrific member, and has brought many other ladies to our group. Our group is so joyful that she spends her personal time with us!



MEETING SCHEDULE:

Thursday, September 6, 2017
Meeting cancelled

Thursday, October 5, 2017
Monthly Donation: cleaning supplies

Thursday, November 2, 2017
Monthly Donation: Thanksgiving food
Ticket Auction donations

Wednesday, December 6, 2017
Monthly Donation: Holiday gifts for Moms
and Children at Harmony House

Thursday, January 4, 2018
**Monthly Donation: Non-perishable
food for Harmony House**

Thursday, February 1, 2018
Monthly Donation: PJs and slippers for
Moms and children at Harmony House

Thursday, March 1, 2018
Monthly Donation: Health and beauty aids /
feminine products

**** Sunday, April 8, 2018**
Annual Spring Fundraiser and Brunch

Thursday, May 3, 2018
Monthly Donation: Mother's Day gifts /
gently used purses with useful items inside

***** Thursday, June 7, 2018**
Monthly Donation: Summer activities for
children

+ Thursday, July 12, 2018
Monthly Donation: To Be Announced

* Indicates Winter Fundraiser meeting

** Indicates Spring Fundraiser Sunday Brunch

*** Indicates Scholarship Awards / Officer
Installation

+ Indicates meeting for September cancellation



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 4 – Anne Gerwig

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

January 24 – Mimi Barnhart

