

Woman's Club of Douglaston
Established 1916



NEWSBYTES
- December 2019 -



Editor-in-Chief, Annette Aloisio

A MISSIVE FROM THE EDITOR: DECEMBER 2019

“’Tis the Season To Be Jolly”, or is it? In this hurried, busy season of shopping, cooking, decorating, planning, traveling, partying, etc., we find ourselves reflecting on people who are not as blessed as we. We find ourselves reflecting on those who have lost loved ones and struggle to deal with the pain of such loss. We reflect also on those who are caretakers for loved ones; who they themselves are ill and dealing with their own issues.

*We reflect on the elderly and infirm who cannot leave their homes. We reflect on our military; our protectors: police, firemen (women), our doctors, nurses, etc., these people whom we take for granted. **Let us reflect and remember and be grateful!** With all of this, we women of the WCD gladly embrace the magic of the season. While it may be difficult to be “jolly” at every given moment, we shall somehow find time in our busy lives to do it all. We shall shop; we shall decorate; we shall cater to the needs of others; we shall partake in the good times with family and friends. **We shall donate our time, energy and gifts to those in need, and we will find the time to rest, rejoice and give thanks wherever we worship.***

As 2019 comes to a close we remember the good times shared -- the informative and enjoyable programs; the memorable trips; the fun activities -- but most of all, the sharing of these experiences with each other and the friendships we forged.

We would like to thank our **President, Johanna Abramo**, for her tireless efforts in making this a truly memorable year — coming up with fresh ideas, finding ways we can become more connected to each other, increasing member involvement and participation and expanding club activities. As past presidents have, Johanna “stepped up to the plate” when we needed her. We commend her for her energy, enthusiasm and innovative ideas.

We would be remiss if we did not remember and thank our **hardworking, behind the scenes Board Members** who volunteer their services and perform their assignments diligently, timely and expertly, all to the benefit of our Woman’s Club of Douglaston.

In closing, whether we celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, or a multitude of other religions, we truly and most sincerely wish you every blessing the season has to offer. May all your dreams come true. As a young fellow of yesteryear once exclaimed -- *“God Bless Us Everyone”*.

Merry Christmas to all, Happy New Year to all, and to all a Good Night!

ANNOUNCEMENT
Mark Your Calendar!!!
NEXT MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Meet our Board...



MARILYN STONE – ANTIQUE TRIP CHAIRWOMAN

Anyone who has been a member of the Woman's Club for any length of time is a friend of Marilyn. **Marilyn is truly a "force to be reckoned with"**. If you look up that phrase in Webster's, it means someone who is strong and cannot be ignored — and that's our Marilyn! **She is a real lover of life** -- someone who has had 12 body parts removed, restored or replaced and she still keeps on ticking always to come back seemingly stronger and more energetic than ever while still maintaining her hearty laugh and infectious smile. She is feisty and determined and at the same time kind, empathetic and understanding. **And, well heck she is just plain fun to be around!**

Marilyn is always available for a chat; always the first to call if someone is not well, or in need of a “thinking of you”. She is definitely a “people person”. She is very adventurous. As **Antique Trip Chairwoman**, we have traveled far and wide with her as our fearless leader. Marilyn has taken us to places we do not believe we would have visited without her direction and suggestion. She is always so enthusiastic about the upcoming trips, at which she works tirelessly, that one cannot help but share the excitement. Without fail, **Marilyn always delivers: great excursions; beautiful venues; historical sites; gourmet restaurants; and always so well organized.**

Thank you Marilyn for your many, many years of service to the WCD. We look forward to even more years of you planning and directing our next trip(s). The Woman’s Club of Douglaston is enhanced by your dedication, hard work and knowledge.

We salute you!

Our Newbies...



Our Newbies:

Miriam Albert, Maria DiChiara, Aida Iaraci,
Diane Polland, Mary Taylor, Helene Schutz

At this time of the year wherein we give thanks for all things, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our “newest” (less than five years membership) women who have given of themselves enthusiastically and diligently. Not to say that all of my Board Members don’t give it their all, they certainly do, but these few ladies unhesitatingly jumped right in.

They became members and within a very short period of time, signed on to be on the Board. **This Club could not function without its members; and certainly not without its Board Chairwomen.** So, a shout out to (in alphabetical order):

Miriam Albert (Theater), **Maria DiChiara** (Corresponding Secretary/Co-Historian),
Aida Ieraci (Co-Membership/Co-Historian), **Diane Polland** (Potpourri), **Helene Schutz** (Programs), **Mary Taylor**, (Co-Historian/Co-Floral Arranger).

On behalf of the rest of the Board and the general membership, we thank you for your unstinting support and hard work. We are delighted to be working with and getting to know you all.

Our Charities. . . .

Imagine for a moment being a resident of [Ozanam Hall](#), and further imagine that you are without family nor friend. Imagine being elderly, ill and alone. Imagine the despair and fruitfulness of one’s existence. Then, suddenly and magically, along comes our **Charity Chairwoman, Dorothy Mulholland** (a/k/a Mrs. Claus) laden with droves of brightly wrapped packages to be handed out to the residents of Ozanam.

Imagine the aforesaid resident receiving his/her package offered by someone with a broad smile, a quick hug and a joyful “Merry Christmas”. This is what the **Woman’s Club of Douglaston** has been doing for quite some time. This is what the

Woman's Club of Douglaston represents. We hope to offer good cheer, good tidings, and a caring spirit to those in need.



*Dorothy Mulholland, WCD Charity Committee Chairwoman
Gail O'Donovan, Director of Development
Sister Madeleine Fasano, Assistant Administrator*

Ozanam Hall is one of the charities to which the WCD contributes annually. Ozanam Hall, which opened its doors in 1971, provides long and short term rehabilitative care, memory dementia care and of late Calvary Care/Hospice. The Carmelite Sisters are the Order whose mission is to bring dignity and quality of life to the care of our seniors. Ozanam does that and more.

So, women of the Woman's Club of Douglaston, feel proud and gratified in the knowledge that you made someone feel cared for and perhaps even happily childlike in their anticipation of opening a "present" --

perhaps, the most “significant and appreciated” present we purchased. *We did good!*



Each year, the [Woman's Club of Douglaston](#) donates approximately \$300.00 towards a little known charity: ["HourChildren"](#). Although we had heard about "Hour Children" for several years and had a minimal understanding of this particular charity, after a bit of research, we can only say we are in awe of their mission.

The meaning behind the "Hour Children" name is the key hours which impact the life of a child whose mother is incarcerated; the "hour" of her arrest; the "hour" of their visit with their mother and the "hour" of their reunification. Almost enough said, but not quite. More than 4,000 woman are incarcerated in New York State prisons, most of whom are mothers. "Hour Children" provides invaluable services to these women and children including housing to almost 200

families. They support the emotional and physical connection between mother and child. They provide mental health services, job training; they provide programs for children from nursery age through teenage years; they provide a food pantry and have several retail thrift shops, all of which are non-profit.

*The Founder/Angel of this worthy organization is **Sister Tessa Fitzgerald**. Once again, our Angel Chairperson, **Dorothy Mulholland**, has often spoken of Sister Tessa and her good works. Sister Tessa, through this charity, not only provides housing, she actually resides in a building which houses these mothers and their children. More than seventy families are housed in three apartment buildings offering day care, after school programs, job training, group home activities and a mentoring program. **Sister Tessa**, who is in the **Order of Sisters of St. Joseph**, explains: “**We are women helping women**”. Yes, women of the **Woman’s Club of Douglaston**, feel proud that you too are a woman helping “women”. Thank you **Dorothy Mulholland** for introducing us to “**Hour Children**” and for allowing us the opportunity of donating to the “**Hour Children**” mission.*

November 2019 Highlights:
A Night at the Opera - Wednesday,
November 20th
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's LE NOZZE DI FIGARO
Splendido! (Italian: wonderful, superb)



24 Members of the WCD took a bus trip into the “Big Apple”. To our delight and surprise, we arrived at the upscale Rosa Mexicana Restaurant, and when we walked in immediately facing us was an awesome 2-story iridescent blue tile water wall inspired by the cliff divers of Acapulco, designed by architect David Rockwell— **Spectacular!!**

We were soon warmly greeted and led to our table with a “*Welcome Woman’s Club of Douglaston*” card at each place setting. Down the middle of the table were several molcajete (*large mortar bowls made from volcanic stone used to prepare Mexican food*) brimming with freshly made guacamole, home-made corn chips and salsa followed by a fabulous family-style dinner prepared with authentic Mexican ingredients and their own special spices used to enhance the overall flavor of each dish - *mmm-mmm-mm-mm mm!* They treated us graciously and royally. ***But the best was still to come***

A quick walk across Columbus Avenue brought us to the magnificent fountain in front of The Met at Lincoln Center (*think "Moonstruck" and Cher!*).

To walk into **The Met** itself one is immediately awestruck by the ***gorgeous crystal Sputnik-like chandeliers*** in the lobby. These

stunning pieces are also replicated in the auditorium (21 in all) where to announce the beginning of the performance, right before the orchestra strikes its first chord, these magnificent glowing chandeliers dramatically and breathtakingly slowly rise to the ceiling. *Be still my heart!* The overture is played and **Le Nozze di Figaro** commences. (*Tidbit: Fran Bello's brother-in-law had a major role in the creation of these stunning crystal masterpieces*).

Some interesting facts: This was The Met's 495th performance of Figaro; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart wrote it at age 26 in 1782; it premiered in Vienna on May 1st, 1786!!!; the opera is referred to as an "opera buffa" – a comic opera, and so it was. (*How many 20 or so year olds do we know composing operas!?*).

True to its description, there were many laughs and an infusion of slapstick as the characters seduce, manipulate and ultimately learn a lesson in fidelity. The characters' voices were brilliant – at times robust and strong and then soulful and sweet, haunting and dramatic, delicate and smooth - taking us with them on a roller coaster of emotions. It was a great adventure and gratifying experience. *Thank you, Fran Bello, our talented Trip Chairwoman, for all your hard work. Another Trip to be added to the archives of the fabulous WCD.*

December 2019 Highlights



Our December 7th program took us on a **Holiday Music Timeline**. Emily Bader and Michael Goudket performed historically informed music on instruments of the past. **Their repertoire extended from the Middle Ages to the Victorian period.** There was a special charm listening to this music on handmade playable reproductions of antiques -- the music matching the period when these melodies were the latest popular hits. They introduced and explained to us these now extinct instruments while they recreated the sounds of the past. ***We were fascinated and delighted and at the end all joined in singing "White Christmas" as our performers accompanied us on flute and Celtic harp.***

THE DOUGLASTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORP. (DLDC)

The DLDC held their **3rd Annual Douglaston Winter Festival** on Saturday, December 14th, 2019 at our Douglaston Railroad Station. Although it was a bit of a rainy, misty day, the temperature was high in the 50's allowing patrons to stroll about this annual event with nary a thought as to what could have been frigid temperatures. While many local organizations and vendors were in attendance, the **Woman's Club of Douglaston** and its many member volunteers, under the supervision of **President Johanna Abramo**, joyfully participated in the event by selling "stocking stuffers" for little ones. There were stuffed love pups that hugged a child's wrist, fluffy and oozy colored "slime" that stretched and squished and glowed in the dark, Rudolph red nose lighted bouncing balls, delicious homemade chocolate Christmas tree lollipops and other fun items to entertain and enthrall the children.

The Woman's Club happily joined with much of the Little Neck/Douglaston Community in support of this Festival. **The Woman's Club is always happy to support our local community endeavors, and shall continue to do so in the future.**

Did you know that.....

'Tis the season to be...well-informed. We all love Christmas, but how much do any of us actually know about why Christmas is the way Christmas is?

Here are just a few interesting facts you might not know:

1. Christmas supposedly marks the birth of Jesus Christ on Dec. 25. But there is no mention of Dec. 25 in the Bible.
2. Dec. 25 was likely chosen because it coincided with the ancient pagan festival Saturnalia, which celebrated the agricultural god Saturn with partying, gambling and gift-giving.
3. Because of its roots in pagan festivals, Christmas was not immediately accepted by the religious. From 1659 to 1681, it was illegal to celebrate Christmas in Boston, of all places. You were fined if you were caught celebrating.
4. Santa Claus comes from St. Nicholas, a Christian bishop living in (what is now) Turkey in the fourth century A.D. St. Nicholas had inherited a great deal of wealth and was known for giving it away to help the needy. When sainted, he became the protector of children..
5. Rudolph almost didn't have a red nose: At the time, a red nose was a sign of chronic alcoholism and Montgomery Ward Dept. Store thought he would look like a drunkard.
6. The first batch of eggnog in America was crafted at Captain John Smith's Jamestown settlement in 1607, and the name eggnog comes from the word "grog," which refers to any drink made with rum

....and now you know.

Remember: "A good friend is a connection to life -- a tie to the past, a road to the future, the key to sanity in a totally insane world. More people are focusing on friendships later in life -- and research reveals the many health benefits".

**Stay socially connected at the Woman's Club of
Douglaston!**

**The Board of the WCD wishes our Members and
their Families all the Blessings of their Holiday
Season and a Happy and Healthy New Year.**

With best regards,

Johanna Abramo
President

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