



MIWC UPDATE

January 2021

Volume 54 Issue 5



In This Issue

-Due to the current Covid-19 Situation-

January in-person Members' Luncheon:
CANCELED - A Zoom meeting will be held instead. Details on page 2

In-Person Members' Luncheons canceled for the months of February, March and April, 2021.

-News and Features-

How your "Lunch Money" Can Help

-Regular Features-

Special Interest Club News
Kudos & Thanks to these Incredible Members
And on a Personal Note

Click for
[Club Website](#)

Important Club Event Update !

The Marco Island Woman's Club Luncheon and Fashion Show originally scheduled for January 19, 2021, and rescheduled for Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at Hideaway Beach Club has been canceled. Please see letter from Club President Debbie Rago on page 3 of this newsletter

The Board believes this decision is in the best interest of our members' health and safety.

President's Message

*Giving is not just about making a donation
It's about making a difference*

During this holiday season, I find myself reflecting on the past year, a year that was full of challenges for organizations like ours. Through it all, I have tried to keep you informed and included, and you have helped to shape our commitment to this community and the needs around us.

I hope you are having a wonderful holiday season and I would like to thank all of you for your continued support of our Lunch Money Campaign. Since October we have donated to Our Daily Bread, the Shelter for Abused Women and Children and the Greater Naples Fire Foundation. Our next organization will be the Marco Island Charter Middle School "Feed the Children" campaign. Your generosity has made a difference!

Your Board of Directors met and voted to cancel our monthly luncheons at the Marco Island Yacht Club through April, 2021. However we hope many of you will join our January 6th Zoom meeting with Diane Shagott from Hats to Di for. If you haven't requested your zoom invitation, there is still time to email me at miwcel@gmail.com to do so. There is no charge to attend, but if you wish to participate in the raffle, please donate to the Lunch Money Campaign to get your raffle number for 20 chances to win. The drawing will take place at the end of the meeting. We are looking forward to connecting with our members at this event.

In times like none we've ever known, I would like to wish you the happiest of holidays and every blessing 2021 has to offer.

Debbie Rago, MIWC President



Join us for a special Zoom Meeting on
Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 11:00

Millner Diane Shagott, the creative force behind Hats to Di For, will describe how she works with her clients to design the perfect hat for their person and for their occasion. You can check out [Diane's website](#) to get a preview.

To attend, please email [your RSVP to miwcel@gmail.com](#) and a Zoom invite will be sent to you. There is no charge to attend the Zoom meeting. If you are unsure of how to attend a Zoom meeting, please call Debbie Rago for assistance. 860-798-0270

For added fun, if you donate to the January ["Lunch Money" campaign](#), you will receive 20 raffle tickets. There will be a special raffle at the end of the meeting. You will receive a Thank You letter acknowledging your donation that will include your raffle numbers for the tickets placed in the basket. Good Luck!

Raffle Prize



\$125 Value: Wine rack, two bottles of wine, rabbit set opener, 2 wine glasses, & cheese board

2021 Membership Dues

Payable beginning January 1, 2021
\$50 for Active / \$55 for Associate Members

Pay via check to: MIWC and mail to:

P.O. Box 604

Marco Island, FL 34146

Or

Pay via credit card on [Club Website](#)

(Includes \$2 finance fee)

Questions?

[Contact Leesa Carls](#): 239-315-2802

Our members are our greatest asset. It is time to renew your membership. Our Club has been in existence for 54 years and we depend on your support to continue our mission of giving back to the Marco community. We will email the renewal with an important form for you to fill out so that we can update your contact information and keep track of your interests.

Need a Gift Idea?

Why not give a donation to the Woman's Club in some special person's memory or honor? Your honoree (or his/her family) will receive acknowledgement along with a description of the Marco Island Woman's Club history and mission of giving back to our community.

Checks should be addressed to Marco Island Woman's Club and mailed to P.O. Box 604 Marco Island, FL 34146. [You may also pay via credit card on our website. \(click here\)](#)

Be sure to include the name and address of your honoree and any special instructions

Questions: [Debbie Rago, Club President](#)

Important Club Event Update !

To Our Members:

The Marco Island Woman's Club regretfully announces the cancellation of our Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show fundraiser on March 2, 2021.

We offer a heartfelt thanks to our membership for their continued support of this event. We are all disappointed, but during this time of the pandemic, our Club has been very mindful of our member's health. Nevertheless, we have not lost sight of those in need. Your monthly generosity has helped us continue to make a difference. It has allowed us to Give Back to our community by assisting such organizations as Our Daily Bread, The Women's Shelter of Naples, and The Greater Naples Fire Foundation - Toy Drive which includes toys for MI children.

Should you wish to support our mission monthly or to make a one-time donation, please send a tax-deductible contribution to: Marco Island Woman's Club Charitable Foundation, PO Box 604 Marco Island, Florida 34146 or donate on the [MIWC website](#).

With Much Appreciation!

Debbie Rago
MIWC President

MIWC Board of Directors



Volunteers Needed

When in-Person Monthly Luncheons Resume - We Could Sure Use Your Help!

Love flowers? Have an artistic flair? We will be seeking volunteers to help design and prepare table décor for the monthly luncheons. You only need to volunteer for 1 luncheon. We also will need hostesses – This is a great way to meet new members without too much of a demand on your busy schedule

Tending to the MIWC Memorial Garden in the Marco Island Cemetery

The garden is small but looms large in our hearts. It needs a little TLC beyond what the Cemetery's Groundkeeper can provide. Are you willing to visit and pull a few weeds/water once a week or so? It's a nice destination for a walk or a bike ride and not a big time commitment.

If interested, contact: Austine Frawley (781) 545-1155 or [email Austine](#)

How Your “Lunch Money” Can Help

For safety reasons, MIWC has canceled our scheduled luncheons for October through April. Please join those of us who plan to donate the money that we would normally spend on the luncheons to benefit others.

If you would like to contribute, just as for the luncheons, there are two ways you can do this: Electronically with your credit card or via check and snail mail.

For added fun, if you donate to the January “Lunch Money” campaign, you will receive 20 raffle tickets. There will be a special raffle drawing at the end of our Wednesday, January 6 Zoom meeting. See page 2 of this newsletter for details. You will receive a Thank You letter acknowledging your donation that will include your raffle numbers for the tickets placed in the basket. Good Luck !

To contribute by credit card:

[Click Here](#)

To Contribute by check:

Checks should be written to: MIWC Charitable Foundation

And mailed to: Marco Island Woman’s Club, P.O. Box 604, Marco Island, FL 34146

Treasurer's Report

As of December 15, 2020

Club Balance: \$8,937.24

MIWC Charitable Foundation, Inc. Balance: \$1,847.79

Future Events

[\(Click here for link to Club Calendar\)](#)

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Annual Holiday Party at the Island Country Club : **CANCELED due to Covid-19 situation**

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Special Zoom Meeting & Raffle: “Hats to Di For” 11:00 a.m. **DON'T MISS IT !!!!!**

Tuesday, January 19, 2021

Annual Luncheon/Fashion Show **CANCELED due to Covid-19 situation**

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Annual Cards & Games Party – **CANCELED due to Covid-19 situation**

Home Tour – **CANCELED due to Covid-19 situation**

Kudos & Thanks

We have some pretty incredible ladies in our Club, so we have added a section to the Newsletter to recognize their contributions and to express our appreciation for all they do.

If you would like to recognize a Club member here, contact
Lenore Yale 203-506-5075 or email

Shirley Thayer

Not to take away an ounce of credit or praise for all the presidents and officers of our Club through the years. Not to diminish for one second their leadership, clever ideas and hard work, but let's be honest. Who do you think of when you think of the Woman's Club?

The faces of the presidents come and go with their terms. But who, month after month, luncheon after luncheon, year after year, greets us when we check in for those luncheons? Shirley Thayer and her sidekick Vini Just.

Who leads us in singing "God Bless America" and the pledge of allegiance at every luncheon – month after month, year after year? Shirley Thayer.

How long has she been doing this? Some might say "always" – it's such a natural fit!

Check-in time at the luncheons can see any number of issues. From lost or forgotten payments to members who simply show up thinking they had responded when they hadn't, Shirley finds a way to make it all work out so that everyone can be included and feel welcome.

Luncheons must be simple compared to handling the reservations for the Club's annual fashion show. Not only does Shirley track payments and reservations, she must manage different categories of attendee: patron, sponsor, general and arrange seating accordingly. Members and guests sign up together for seating together, sign up separately and then decide to sit together, change their mind on who they want to sit with, request an addition to an already-full table, ask to sell their reservations last minute. The list goes on. Shirley handles it.

Member since 1994, Shirley is a perennial member of the Woman's Club Board contributing her experience and expertise toward the issues of the day. In addition, she is one of the "Monterrey Ladies" that wonderful group of Monterrey/MIWC women who seem always available to lend a hand when help is needed.

We understand that Shirley also shares her beautiful voice with the San Marco Catholic Church Choir where she has been a member for many years.

So, on behalf of the MIWC and the Marco Island Community, Kudos and Thanks Shirley. We appreciate you.

Special Interest Club News

Book Club

The Book Club has continued meeting monthly via Zoom. The books selected for January and February are "Anxious People," by Fredrick Backman, and "Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine, and the Murder of a President," by Candice Millard.

Given the current uncertainties, the club will continue conducting Zoom meetings and limiting acceptance of new members. Questions: Contact Cristina Leske (239) 394-1088 / [Cristina's Club email](#)

Stitch Makers

Women who like to crochet and knit, you may have your work donated. Using your own yarn, proceed at your leisure or at the monthly "Stitch Session". Stitch Makers sessions are canceled until further notice for the protection of our members. Please continue to work on your projects (blankets and hats) in the comfort and safety of your home. As always, thinking of you all. Please be safe and healthy! Please contact Anne Marchetti: 201-321-0801 or [Anne's email](#)

Theater-Goers

Artis-Naples Broadway series has been canceled. All money from ticket sales for previous two plays canceled and subscribers for 2020-2021 season has been refunded. Thank you to all who participated. Best regards, Sharyn

Travel Group

This group was just about to get started when Covid-19 began its rampage. All planning and activities are on hold pending safer times. Chair Elisabeth Rehtin has traveled extensively and also has worked professionally in the industry. Anyone interested in joining this group should contact Elisabeth at: (239) 389-1456 or [email Elisabeth](#)

Club Motto

Why you were born and why you are living
depends on what you are getting out of this world
and what you are giving



Got Any Good Photos?

If you take pictures at any of our events, or with our Special Interest Groups, please email them to:

Austine Frawley at: miwcel@gmail.com

Be sure to include captions including the events and names of people in the photos.

..... *And on a Personal Note*

“*And on a Personal Note*” is a new section to the UPDATE Newsletter, added in recognition that many of us would appreciate being updated with important happenings in other members’ lives. Events could include births, weddings, special anniversaries, honors, awards, etc. If you have something to include in this section contact:

Lenore Yale, editor of UPDATE. 203-506-5075

- Condolences to the family and friends of Lorraine Rodgers, member since 1998 and Club President 2001-2002
 - Our thanks to Austine Frawley who donated a holiday wreath, in honor of our veterans, for the MIWC Memorial Garden in the Marco Island Cemetery.
 - Our appreciation to Penny Weidner for her donation in memory of Kay Ziegler.
- Please keep in mind: If you know of any member who is ill or could use a card of support, notify Jill DiZio, Club Corresponding Secretary

Stay Safe



Stay Well

Once Again This Year
The Marco Island Woman's Club
Participated in



"The Festival of Trees"

For those of you unfamiliar with this event, the Center for the Arts invites members of the community to create beautiful holiday trees that are put on display for the enjoyment of all. Visitors to this free exhibit are able to vote for their favorite tree. The trees then find a home via a silent auction.

*A Big Thank You to Pam Spring and her Decorative Design Committee,
Arlene Soldano, Caitlin Robinson and Dina Johnson*

For volunteering,

*The tree sold for \$75. Half the proceeds go to the Art Center.
Half the proceeds will go towards another MIWC good cause.*

“Many people think that libraries are built by the county or the state;
but they aren’t. They are built by people”

Janet Pettit, MIWC member and Marco Island’s first volunteer Librarian from 1968-1974

This statement was never more-true than for the fledgling community of Marco Island in 1967.

Marco Island Library
Branch of the Collier County Free Public Library



Originally Deltona’s Welcome Hut, this 14x16 foot shack became Marco Island’s first library

The founding of the Marco Island Public Library is one of the Marco Island Woman’s Club’s earliest and proudest accomplishments.

The Mackle Brothers officially opened Marco Island in January 1965. The first inhabitants of modern Marco moved into their homes in April and it was a little more than a year and a half later that 16 women banded together to form the Marco Island Woman’s Club (October 24, 1966).

These women were organized and they were on a mission! By the Club’s second year, President Aimee Horton was overseeing a growing membership, several committees including

the Community Improvement Committee (later the Community Affairs Committee) and the Education Committee.

By 1968 the population of Marco Island had grown to approximately 1,000 people. Development of the Island was progressing but much remained to be done. One glaring omission to date: a library. The only available library at the time was in Naples, 28 miles away over the swing bridge. Hardly convenient.

The women were passionate about the need for a library and agreed to take on the establishment of a Marco Island Library as their main project.

Now what? What do you need for a library? Books, a physical place (a library), librarians, money, know-how.

The Marco Island Woman's Club got to work.

The original thought was to house the library in a room at the Volunteer Fire Station. Fortunately, the Marco Island Development Corporation came to the rescue and donated what was once their Welcome Hut, a Polynesian Style shack of 14 x 16 feet. The hut was moved from its original site on SR41 to the corner of Collier Blvd and San Marco Rd.

The ladies turned to the community, the Friends of the Library of Collier County and the librarian at the Collier County Library, Naples. The Club bought materials for shelving; carpenters and painters volunteered their time and skills. Lemon and avocado were chosen for the color scheme and shortly after the library opened, draperies, wallpaper, and other touches were added.

While some members concentrated on readying the physical space there were many practical details still to be managed. How would we get our supply of books? Who would staff the library? How would they be paid?

The MIWC Board met with the librarian of the Collier County Library, Naples. She outlined the plans by which her institution could help the new Marco Library get started.

The original stock of books, mostly donated and purchased, numbered about 350 volumes. In the first month 110 books circulated. The Naples library agreed to add to the 350 an initial allotment of 400-500 books to be regularly rotated. A year later, in 1969, the County agreed to give the little library an allowance of \$1200 per year.

Personnel. There was no available funding for salaried positions. This was going to have to be a volunteer endeavor. Who was going to do the work? It was agreed that the Marco Island Woman's Club would supply the woman-power to run the library. The Naples librarian would

provide a crash course in how to set up and run a library. Once operational, the MIWC Community Improvement and Education Committees would provide oversight.

Woman's Club President Aimee Horton named Club member Janet Pettit as head librarian. Janet's only qualification for the job was a love of books and, as it turns out, incredible energy and dedication. Janet asked sister Club member Petey Karr to serve as assistant librarian and to take responsibility for training and scheduling the Woman's Club members who volunteered for duty.

During the 5 ½ years of volunteer staffing, Petey had to work around the schedules of initially 15 and then 30 volunteers. Sometimes there was a mad dash to arrange coverage when a scheduled volunteer called in sick, had an emergency, went on vacation or just plain forgot. Only once in 5 ½ years did the library not open because a volunteer had to rush home to take care of a leaky house.

Head Librarian Janet Pettit was tireless. Each month, after studying trends and reviews of new books, Janet would take her selections for new books to the Naples Library for processing. One of the beautiful things about a small library in a small community is the personal connection that forms. The librarians knew their reader's tastes and preferences when choosing books to stock the shelves. Very often a librarian might make a call to advise when a book of potential interest arrived. Janet Pettit was known to personally deliver books to the homes of people who were too ill or unable to get to the library.

Janet also wrote a bi-weekly newspaper column where she documented current additions to the library and commented on coming new releases or various library functions.

In its earliest days the little library was only open 2 days a week for 3 hours each day: 9:00-12 noon on Saturdays and 2:00-5:00 on Tuesdays. Later, the library was also opened on Thursdays during January, February and March. Library cards were free to Island residents. Visitors were asked for a returnable deposit of \$5.

In the 5 ½ years Janet Pettit managed the Marco Island library monthly circulation expanded from 110 in its first month to nearly 1,000 books per month. It is estimated that 65,000 volumes were circulated during those 5 ½ years. Days and hours of operation expanded accordingly to four 3-hour sessions per week.

The library started with 350 books and grew to 3,500 volumes by 1973. Most likely 3,000 of those books were transported from Naples to Marco in the trunk of Janet Pettit's car and placed on the shelves by Janet herself!

By 1973 it was clear The Marco Island Woman's Club "library project" had been an outstanding success. But it was also clear that the much loved and much used little library was bursting at

the seams and ready for its next stage of development. Janet Pettit and Co-Chairman John Winder along with various members of the community began a building fund drive for a new library 12 times the size of the original. Deltona Corporation donated the building site on Winterberry Drive and provided, without fee, the architectural sketches and detailed drawing of the proposed building.

After five years, nine months and two weeks, “the little library that could” closed its doors for the last time.

With the Club’s continued financial and volunteer support, the library was moved to Winterberry Drive (now the Collier County Tax Collector’s Office). Once again, the library building became too small for the Island’s growing population and once again a move was required. In 1988, the present library was constructed on Heathwood Drive, at twice the size, under a \$1.6 million county project. [Click here to visit the library’s website.](#)

Modern Marco Milestones

1965-1969

- New post office
- Emerald Beach – first high-rise
- Population tops 600
- Marco Eagle first newspaper
- Woman’s Club – first library
- Marco Island Art League
- Marco River Toll-Bridge

1970-1974

- First Bank of Marco Island
- Marco Youth Center
- Marco Cinemas – first movie theater

1975-1979

- Goodland Bridge
- Chamber of Commerce incorporated
- Marco Bridge tolls end

Photo of a display in the “Modern Marco” section of the Marco Island Historical Museum

Wishing you the happiest of holidays
and every blessing 2021 has to offer

