

coastalcolumns

A PUBLICATION BY THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH



spring/summer 2018

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JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH

info

Coastal Columns Editor
Dana Schuller Smith

For advertising inquiries,
please contact our Newsletter Editor at
JLSCoastalColumns@gmail.com

For assistance with our website,
please contact:

Headquarters
(912) 790-1002

or headquarters@jrleaguesav.org

Physical Address

502 E. Broughton Street
Savannah, Georgia 31401
{M-TH 9am-2pm; F-S CLOSED}

Mailing Address

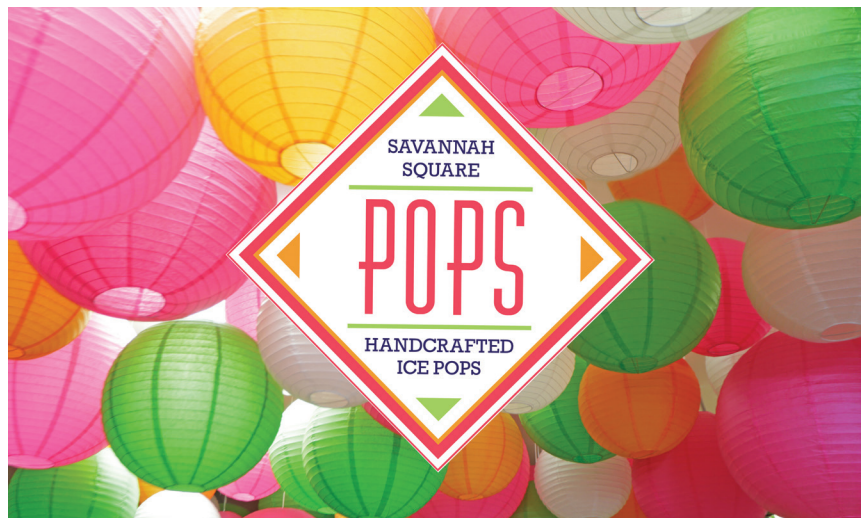
P.O. Box 23545
Savannah, Georgia 31401

our mission

The Junior League of Savannah is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

Cover photo taken by League member Katie Joyner





message from Dana Schuller Smith

Editor

We have all heard the maxim “do one thing and do it well” and the phrase “Jack of all trades, master of none”. Which better describes you?

Maybe you have a green thumb for gardening, or do you capture breathtaking photos, bake mouthwatering goodies, or sing like an angel? You might even have a particular charisma with people, maybe with a knack for speech writing or public speaking? Or do you dabble in a bit of this and a bit of that, forever trying new crafts and wondering if they will stick as hobbies or better yet, uncover in you some latent skill?

Joining the Junior League provides women the opportunity both to hone their skill sets and to test new waters. In these ways, members not only participate in, but can truly immerse themselves in community activism. Have you found your League home this past year or will you keep trying out new roles? If you are still looking, you should strongly consider trying your hand at leadership.

These longer spring days herald that we are full steam ahead into summer (pardon the pun!) Summer for the Junior League means a time of change. Come the first GMM, there will be new friends to meet, new memories to make, and new opportunities to seize. Though our May GMM marks the end of the League year, the work never stops. Various committees meet throughout summer to plan 2018-2019 events for Thrift Sale, Auction, Fit Kids Fest, and others, to ensure their continued success.

As we approach summer, be you expert or Renaissance woman, this League transition presents the opportunity to test a new skill and get involved to improve our community together. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your 2017-2018 Coastal Columns Editor. I may not have found my niche yet, but will surely try, try again!

Dana Schuller Smith



State-of-the-League Address by Melissa Jackson

President

I am amazed that the end of the year is upon us. It seems like just yesterday we were moving items into the Civic Center for Thrift Sale and now we are preparing for the annual meeting. With the constant flurry of activity, it is easy to lose sight of your core reason for joining the League.

Over the past year, I have been interviewed by various local news reporters and one of the main questions I receive is “What does the Junior League do”? Upon receiving this question, I always launch into the mission of the Junior League and the various projects and organizations we support. A couple of weeks ago, I was interviewed about the Little Black Dress Initiative and as expected, the reporter asked, “What does the Junior League do?” She went one step beyond though and asked, “Why is this campaign important to you?” That question made it a little more personal.

After the interview, that question, with a slight variation, stuck with me. Why is this campaign important to me? Why am I a member of the League? Why do I continue to give of my time and resources? Well, as I shared at a recent general membership meeting, the answer is simple...I serve because I was a child who needed an organization like this. I grew up with two very loving parents who happened to have very little money. So, I know what it is like to only have two pairs of shoes for the entire year, to receive free breakfast and lunch at school, to not participate in afterschool activities because of the added expense, and to be counted out or dismissed because my family didn’t have a lot of money. Fortunately for me, my hard-working parents encouraged me and stressed the importance of education and I was able to change the trajectory of my life. I am a member of the Junior League because my personal mission is to help others have a better life outcome than expected...to give the proverbial hand up.

I ask you to reflect on your time with the League and consider why membership is important to you. Perhaps you joined because you were new to Savannah and you wanted to make new friends. Maybe you joined because important women in your life were members and you wanted to continue the legacy. You might have become a member because you wanted the opportunity to share your amazing leadership skills or maybe you joined to hone your skill sets through the various placements the League provides. Perhaps you joined because you want to serve and improve our community. Whatever the reason, it is important, and it matters.

Over the past year, I have watched new relationships blossom and old relationships strengthen as committees worked together to pull off amazing events like the Thrift Sale, Masquerade Gala, and Fit Kids Fest. I have witnessed women who joined the League with fantastic skill sets that have helped our social media footprint grow, improve our existing community projects, and introduce a new transfer of knowledge structure. I saw members who participated in trainings provided by the League and used the knowledge gained to introduce a new budget format and oversee the overhaul of our bylaws and policies. I saw members, amid all the activities, doing what is important to them and in many cases, doing what is necessary for the League to ensure we remain strong, relevant, and viable.

I challenge you to keep your personal mission at the forefront and remember why you joined the League. Seek out the opportunities that will help you, our community, and the League continue to soar to new heights.

Melissa Jackson

2016-2017

Communications Council Update

SHANNON BUCK, 2017-2018 COMMUNICATIONS VP

HOPE GRUVER, 2017-2018 PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

DANA SMITH, 2017-2018 COASTAL COLUMNS EDITOR

This year, our small but mighty three-member council has met monthly to achieve several goals. We have been working to increase the League’s digital presence through social media, even offering incentives for members “liking” various posts on Facebook in order for widespread engagement. We also facilitated information sharing among various councils, committees, and membership with the use of social media and weekly e-blasts. Our council’s latest advanced technology move has been to offer live-streaming for all future GMMs, again with the focus on reaching broader membership.

As for the newsletter, we continued to build on our overall theme for membership engagement. The pages are generally membership-themed with a highlighted focus on League community involvement and activity. We worked diligently to find sponsorship to offset the costs of printing and distribution.



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Community

2017-2018 PROJECTS & UPDATES



MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

AMERICA'S SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK: BACK PACK BUDDIES

The women of JLS proudly dedicate themselves to providing healthy meals to dozens of children every weekend. America's Second Harvest Back Pack Buddies (BKB) Program provides nutritious meals to children identified as living in extreme poverty, thus significantly at risk to go hungry over the weekends when they are not receiving school-provided meals. JLS includes special items such as snacks, inspiring notes, games, and seasonally themed items along with the nine meals – all in one bag the child carries home each Friday afternoon. This vital program promotes our League's mission of impacting K-12 academic performance, as they truly need healthy meals to thrive at school.

So far this year, the JLS BKB have had a great time packing in the new volunteer center. The spacious quarters have been a welcome change from the days of packing at the cozy, but confining, former JLS Headquarters! Though JLS began the year packing bags for only 50 children, they now provide for 73 children. The volunteers feel such fulfillment in providing the less fortunate students of Garden City Elementary with reliable and consistent weekend sustenance.

The League members from the Golden Isles have begun participating in their own weekly BKB program, supporting the America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia in Brunswick. Thanks to an anonymous donation, they are packing 40 bags a week and are hope to do more once they can secure additional funding!

Jennifer Morrow, Projects Chair for the Golden Isles members, updated that their group's JLS members coordinated their winter DIAD at their local Second Harvest. During this January event, they packed bags of food to distribute to those less fortunate in their community.

Contact Caroline Jackovich, 2017-2018 Back Pack Buddies Chair for more information (jackovich.caroline@gmail.com).



*Ryan Hammer of the Golden Isles
delivers food packages to Glynn Middle school*



*League members and others packing bags
at Second Harvest's new center*

DIVA Program

Build a Bridge Foundation of Georgia Update



The DIVA's committee continued mentoring to girls aged 12 to 17 years. As a JLS community partner, Build-A-Bridge's DIVA girls are inspired to excel in academics and create an action plan for higher education. Through sponsorship funded by JLS, DIVA ladies participate in a variety of programs geared toward fulfilling these academic and professional goals.

JLS has had a full calendar of events with DIVA already this year. In January, JLS members attended the Build A Bridge Gala at the Mighty Eighth Air Museum. This special occasion celebrated the DIVA's class of 2018 graduating seniors. In the same month, the DIVAs also participated in Career Day at DBC Radio where they learned about careers in broadcasting, law, teaching and entrepreneurship. At this event, they created résumés, learned about best professional practices from an HR professional, and learned about dressing for success in the workplace.

In February, the DIVAs attended the MegaGenesis College Fair where they talked with admissions representatives from statewide colleges and universities. The ladies also attended panel discussions about preparing for and funding their college education.

In March, the DIVAs participated in Beauty Day, an event dedicated to best self-care practices, with skin and hair care classes and products provided by Mary Kay and Savannah State University's Curly in College Program.

Please check for updates on future events by contacting DIVA Chair Mia Mance (mia.amini@gmail.com) or Kimberly Smith (smittywife2005@gmail.com).



Above: These young ladies enjoying Career Day at DBC Radio

Below: DIVAs alongside JLS members during their glamorous Build-A-Bridge Gala

Done in a Day

UPDATE

The volunteers on the Done in a Day committee have been hard at work planning and completing several projects this year. Besides pouring both monetary and sweat equity into these community-centered projects, they have had a blast in the process.

So far this year the DIAD volunteers spent time on land, near water, and even at school! At the Telfair Art Fair JLS volunteers helped with visiting children with several art activities and had a great time making sculptures, paintings, and crafts.

During Marine Science Day at the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, JLS volunteers played oceanographers for a day, helping children build their model plankton to participate in the Plankton Sink-Off, a race to see which child's plankton was last to reach the bottom of the tank.

In early March, volunteers spent the day at Coastal Middle School doing bathroom makeovers. The restrooms were given fresh coats of paint as well as inspirational quotes. Acknowledging that the middle school years can be a difficult time for tweens, JLS members hoped to cover the walls in positive messages.

Additional scheduled DIAD projects that have not occurred by press time for this issue include a local elementary school garden construction, the Girls on the Run Celebration 5k on April 28, and the Oatland Island Fairy and Gnome Festival on May 5.

Jennifer Morrow, Projects Chair for the Golden Isles members, updated that their group's JLS members coordinated their winter DIAD at their local Second Harvest. During this January event, they packed bags of food to distribute to those less fortunate in their community.

For more information on involvement, contact
Amber Johnson, 2017-2018 Done in a Day Chair (ambernjohnson2@gmail.com).



The Golden Isles ladies working at America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia

Public Affairs

UPDATE

Last fall, each of the Junior Leagues of Georgia adopted our State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) Public Stand to determine which issues were of most concern to the Junior League members across the state. Per the Public Stand, these areas of importance included the following:

- The aid and protection of women, children, families and vulnerable populations
- Responsible programs that provide quality education critical for Georgia students to become college and/or career ready
- Access to improved healthcare for women, children and vulnerable populations.

In January, the 2018 Georgia legislative session opened and SPAC members reviewed and determined which bills best fit within the framework of our Public Stand. On February 7th, SPAC hosted Capitol Day for members of SPAC and for the Junior Leagues of Georgia to meet with legislators and hear from the sponsors of these bills. JLS member Adele Stewart presented on HB 731 - Sales Tax Exemption for Feminine Products along with the bill's lead sponsor Rep. Debbie Buckner. Adele has led a grassroots effort on this issue and shared her research during Capitol Day. She also spoke in favor of the bill before the House Ways and Means subcommittee the following week.

Though other states recently passed legislation specifically exempting feminine products from taxation, HB 731 did not move forward in Georgia. Nevertheless, many of the other bills that SPAC supported this legislative session did become law. SPAC and Adele thank all of our League members for their support and look forward to continued support during the next legislative session!

For more information on which bills the Junior League supports and to get involved during the next session, contact Gennie Long, 2017-2018 Public Affairs Chair (gennie.long@gmail.com).



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Fit Kids Fest

FIT MINDS. FIT BODIES. FIT KIDS.

a JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH event

The mission of Fit Kids Fest is to promote fit minds and bodies of K-12 children through interactive education and healthy lifestyle resources through partnership with local organizations for a free annual community event. The JLS 6th Annual FKF was held on Saturday, March 3 at Savannah State University, our newest League sponsor. Kids and parents enjoyed a day of fun with local vendors and volunteers who worked together to make this a successful event. This festival aims to teach the children of our community the importance of healthy eating, education, and physical activity.

Some of the offerings this year included bounce houses, yard games, a life size chess set, a make-your-own trail mix station, and a chance to meet Pete the Cat! The stage portion showcased the League's own Mia Mance as emcee with performances by the Savannah State cheerleaders and steppers, Irish dancers, and the Boys & Girls Club who performed a Peruvian dance. Raffle prizes included two bikes with helmets and numerous soccer balls and basketballs. Each participant also received a free FKF shirt. The event was super fun and many are already looking forward to next year's event!

The Fit Kids Fest committee would like to thank the sponsors, the exhibitors, and the JLS volunteers who helped to deliver this free event to the community. The team members worked hard for months to plan and execute such a successful event. The dedication and hard work put forth by its members is very revealing of the types of women JLS has in the League. Each member brings a unique perspective and set of experiences to the entire group.

In addition to thanking all of the League volunteers who assisted during FK 2018, special thanks to Jennifer Grafton and Kathy Ledvina for their tireless efforts.

Please contact FKF chair Melinda McNett for more details (melinda.mcnett@gmail.com).





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design in a nutshell



Spring in the Kitchen

In December the League featured incredible cookbooks on the VeryVera Show. With your help, our League won the VeryVera Show Facebook Challenge. Vera is donating backpacks to students who participate in our Back Pack Buddies program. As a treat, here is the featured recipe from the *On the Squares Savannah Style* cookbook.

Molasses Spice Cookies



RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

1 cup Sugar
8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, softened
1/4 cup shortening
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
2 - 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon cinnamon

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Beat the sugar, butter and shortening in a bowl until creamy. Add the egg and molasses and mix well. Combine the flour, salt, baking powder, cloves, ginger and cinnamon in another bowl and mix well. Add to the butter mixture gradually, beating until well combined. Roll the dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in sugar to coat. Arrange on a baking sheet and bake for 8 to 10 minutes until the tops begin cracking.

NOTE: To measure the molasses or other sticky ingredients cleanly, spray the measuring cup with nonstick cooking spray before pouring the molasses.

Don't have one of our cookbooks? Contact us at cookbook@jrleaguesav.org or call (912)790-1002. Visit the website www.jrleaguesav.org for additional information.



Masquerade

SILENT & LIVE AUCTION
a JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH event

THE 2018 ANNUAL JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH MASQUERADE BALL WAS A SMASHING SUCCESS!

Savannah Station was the picture-perfect backdrop for the February 3rd event. Masked guests sashayed into the historic venue donning their finest evening gowns, tuxedos, and Spanx®! Guests enjoyed the photo booth sponsored by realtor and JLS member Jenny Rutherford. Strutting into the stunning ballroom, guests heard the lively tunes of the Main Street Band. As the room filled, folks found their way to the Kendra Scott jewelry pull, stock-the-bar raffle, wine pull, and the Giving Wall. Erica Davis Catering provided outstanding service and a delectable menu true to Savannah's Lowcountry roots. Those craving a sweet treat approached a tower of mini macarons donated by Marché de Macarons. As guests mingled throughout the ballroom, the abundant auction items quickly grabbed their attention and the bidding began. The bidding got more exciting when professional auctioneer Alex Grovenstein began his auction chant. League member, Mia Mance, once again donated her time and talent as the best emcee in town. When the evening ended guests left toting their late night popcorn snack along with a smile.

Thanks to the enormous help and community support of the 2018 Masquerade Ball, JLS doubled ticket sales from last year's event and raised a great deal to financially support the League's mission. It is critical to JLS that women and children are empowered through quality opportunities to help them thrive and become contributing members of our community. The Masquerade Ball seems well on its way to becoming a signature event for our community as one of the most significant fundraisers for JLS!

Special appreciation goes out to the hard working Masquerade committee, Masquerade sponsors, finance council, board of directors, local businesses, and community leaders, with particular attention paid to Iris Stein, Theresa Reed, Dawn Poe, Patty Henke, Abby Foster, Laura McKenzie, Melissa Jackson, Jen McKenzie, Jessica Thomas, Jennifer Wise, Kasey Thexton, Hope Gruver, Jennifer Grafton, Nikkie Swain, Tawana Garrett, Mechelle Beacham, Brooke Lozier, Bernadette Bryant, Melissa Peters, Corey Brooks, and Bunny Ware.

Mark your calendars NOW for the 2019 Annual Junior League of Savannah Masquerade Ball on Saturday, February 2, 2019, at Savannah Station!



The 71st Annual JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH THRIFT SALE



This year the Junior League of Savannah will host their 71st annual Thrift Sale. Reflecting on the women who started this event, the current chair Dawn Poe believes the original founders “would be very proud and excited” to learn the fundraiser they began almost three-quarters of a century ago is still going strong today! JLS Thrift Sale is made possible when all the members work together toward a common goal, remembering all the hard work and dedication of those who laid the foundation for this League. Membership has been making this event possible for 71 years and Dawn excitedly adds her name to the growing list of chairs.

The Thrift Sale committee is one of largest committees of the League, and they meet once a month to work toward making each year’s event even better than that of the previous year. With that in mind, there are some excited changes to Thrift Sale for 2018. The League agrees that these changes are necessary to move forward and keep this sale fresh and exciting - and most importantly for the community - a hugely successful fundraiser!

THE OFFICIAL SALE DATE IS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2018

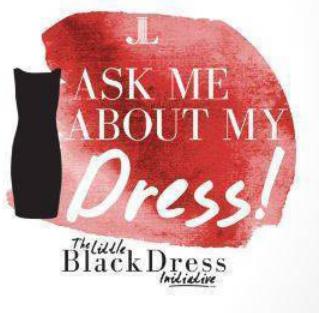
Thrift sale is moving to the National Guard Armory on Eisenhower Drive in midtown Savannah. Though an ideal location for ease of parking and overall proximity to many of our shoppers, there is still a bus route nearby for those downtown who have unreliable transportation.

Preview Sale is Friday, October 12, 2018, and promises to be even more fun than last year’s. It will offer more raffle prizes, more food and drinks, and even some entertaining surprises....

The committee is currently reworking the pricing guide with the intent of simplification in order to make it as straightforward as possible. It will become members’ “how to” guide for itemizing their thrift! Dawn and her dedicated committee are energized about the new date and location, and welcome your input and ideas at the monthly Thrift Sale meetings. They wish you a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you in the fall for their favorite time of year: Thrift Sale!

For more information on how to get involved,
contact Dawn Poe, 2018-2019 Thrift Sale Chair (dpoekincaid@hotmail.com).

Annual & Endowment Fund RECAP



LITTLE BLACK DRESS INITIATIVE

Submitted by Misty Thompson, 2017-2018 Annual and Endowment Fund Chair

The Little Black Dress Initiative (LBDI) was launched by the Junior League of London in 2014 as a week-long, social media driven fundraising campaign to raise awareness about poverty and its effects on women in society. Participants of this campaign wear the same black outfit for five consecutive days and use social media to drive donations to help fund the mission of the Junior League.

JLS launched their 3rd annual Little Black Dress Initiative the first week of April. In their first year, 50 participants wore their little black dresses solely as a campaign to raise awareness about the impacts of poverty on women and children in Savannah. In their 2nd year participating (2017) the number increased to 65 women raising nearly \$13,000 to support the Annual Fund! These donations enabled JLS to fund various community projects, as well as train and develop membership.

As they enter this 3rd year of the LBDI, their goal is to exceed last year's fundraising total by raising more than \$17,000 to support our mission. We employ social media to raise awareness about the impacts of poverty and how it affects children and families in our community. Together, we can make a difference!

Please contact Misty Thompson, 2017-2018 Annual and Endowment Fund Chair, for more details (thompson.mistyc@gmail.com).



Membership

WELCOME 2017-2018 TRANSFERS!

So far this year, the Junior League of Savannah welcomed several transfers from other Leagues. New transfers were welcomed with a brief social before their first GMM. New transfers are valuable to JLS, as they bring with them their volunteer and leadership experience as well as worthy ideas from other Leagues around the U.S.

SAVANNAH ACTIVES

Daymia D'Alto | Atlanta, GA
 Courtney Bonney | Columbus, GA
 Megan Gudan | Saint Louis, MO
 Laura Twedt | Richmond, VA
 Adrienne Rembert | Daytona Beach, FL

GOLDEN ISLES ACTIVES

Mandy Miller | Macon, GA
 Lisa Higgins | Atlanta, GA

SAVANNAH SUSTAINERS

Betsey Andersen | Portland, ME
 Erin Herring | Tulsa, OK

GOLDEN ISLES SUSTAINERS

Janice Auffenberg | Tulsa, OK
 Carol Bufkin | Atlanta, GA
 Zena Martin | London, England
 Lucy Richardson | Macon, GA

SOUTH CAROLINA LOWCOUNTRY SUSTAINERS

Mary Howe | Atlanta, GA
 Susan Kampfer | Star County, OH
 Deborah Manning | Dallas, TX
 Barbara Mantilia | New Haven, CT
 Tory Robertson-Susac | Richmond, VA
 Allison Waitley | Evanston-North Shore, IL
 Sarah Walker | Milwaukee, WI

Provisionals

Each active member or sustainer of the JLS began her journey as a provisional member. Membership requires each candidate be at least 21 years of age and possess an interest in volunteerism, community service, and developing potential as a community volunteer or leader. In addition to the qualities sought in League members, they must also attend a minimum number of general membership and training meetings specifically designed for their year as a provisional member, which runs from August through May graduation. Lastly required is participation in fundraising at various League events throughout the year.

Our League is fortunate to have 56 eager provisionals this year. Of those, 28 are in Savannah, 5 are in the South Carolina Lowcountry/Hilton Head, and 23 are in the Golden Isles. They are divided into 7 smaller groups. This year's theme for the provisional class is Superheros with their small groups' names as follows: Storm, Super Woman, Wonder Woman, Black Widow, Captain Marvel, Bionic Woman and Batwoman. Though the provisional year is a lot of work, it also can be especially fun and engaging!

Altogether, the 56 provisionals donated almost \$15k of quota required for thrift sale! This year, these women have learned about Communications Council, Community Council, Finance Council, Membership Council, Nominating, Cookbook and Thrift Sale. In addition, the Savannah ladies packed 288 boxes of food for Backpack Buddies at Second Harvest of the Coastal Empire in just over an hour and the Golden Isles ladies packed 192 bags of food for Backpack Buddies!

Each member also participates in a provisional project her first year. The Savannah ladies are working on Project WASH (Women Assisting with Sanitary Hygiene). They are collecting personal toiletry items to be given out at a distribution event to 3rd-5th grade girls at Otis Brock Elementary in May. The Golden Isles ladies are working on an Athletic Shoe Drive to benefit Glynn County School. Their aim in collecting new or gently used athletic shoes is to provide pre-K through high school aged children appropriate footwear to take part in extra-curricular and physical education activities in which they may not otherwise participate. Lastly, the South Carolina Lowcountry ladies are holding a book drive with the goal of collecting 500 books to be donated to a school in the SC Lowcountry.

Please contact Leslie E. Dunn, 2017-2018 Provisional Chair, for more information (ldunn9515@gmail.com).



Above: Savannah provisionals getting acquainted throughout the year

Below: Golden Isles provisionals collected loads of athletic shoes for students of Glynn County Schools

Savannah SUSTAINERS

Submitted by: Melanie Finnegan,
2017-2018 Sustainer Activities Chair

THIS HAS BEEN A BUSY, YET FULFILLING, YEAR FOR THE SAVANNAH AREA SUSTAINERS IN JLS.

Over this League year, these dedicated women have volunteered at the Tybee Fresh Air Home, enjoyed a champagne toast in their honor at the Thrift Sale Preview Party, volunteered as floor cashiers during 2017 Thrift Sale, and learned to make delicious cocktails at the American Prohibition Museum. They wrapped up the 2017-2018 League year with the Annual Luncheon at the Savannah Golf Club in January. They had a full volunteer and social calendar with every event offering a chance to renew their longstanding JLS friendships.

Co-chair Melanie Finnegan feels gratified that her Sustainer Activities Committee has been able to arrange "so many worthwhile events" for the sustainers this year. On behalf of the committee, she and her co-chair Penny Rafferty thank everyone who attended these events.



Fresh Air Home sustainer, Savannah sustainer luncheon

South Carolina Lowcountry SUSTAINERS

Submitted by Mona Ridge, 2017-2018
SC-IC Sustainer President

The JLS South Carolina Lowcountry sustainers enjoyed fantastic fall and winter events so far this year. At their December holiday party, sustainer Sharon Bell entertained them with holiday piano music while Marilyn Rawlings led them in exercises, all while in song! As part of the holiday festivities, they continued the charitable tradition of collecting gift cards for both Deep Well and Bluffton Self-Help. Sustainers donated over \$5000 in gift cards for both groups!

In January, sustainer Maria McClune presented "A Guide to the Night Sky," guiding the women through the winter constellations. Speakers in February discussed volunteers in medicine and the impact of medical care on those who cannot afford proper coverage. In March, they learned about charitable contributions of the RBC Heritage Foundation and its positive impact on the community. Exciting spring events included a trip to the Charleston Tea Plantation in April followed by a May celebration of their 30th Anniversary on Hilton Head and Bluffton.

It has been an exhilarating year and the SC-Lowcountry sustainers look forward to continuing to support their Lowcountry organizations!



Past Chairmen by numbered year, l to r: Martha Mewbourne (29th), Betsy Reed (1st), Martha Lewey (2nd), Marilyn Rawlings (9th), Sara Hall (12th)



Past Chairmen, l to r: Gail Kaess (27th), Vicki Baumann (17th), Melissa Beaver (serving on board), Willa Theiss (24th), Lucia Mueller (20th), Mary-Stuart Alderman (25th)

Golden Isles

SUSTAINERS

The Golden Isles sustainers have been busy at a number of social and volunteer events throughout the year. They have a book club that meets at different members' homes to discuss their entertaining reads each month. Here is a sampling of recent volumes they have discussed and recommend: *A Gentleman in Moscow* (Towles), *The Perfect Horse: The Daring U.S. Mission to Rescue the Priceless Stallions and Kidnapped by the Nazis* (Letts), *Same Kind of Different as Me: A Modern-Day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman Who Bound Them Together* (Hall, Moore, & Vincent), *Before We Were Yours* (Wingate), *Code Girls*, the untold story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II (Mundy), *Little Fires Everywhere* and *Everything I Never Told You* (Ng).

In November, the GI sustainers gathered for a beautiful luncheon at the Ocean Forest Golf Club. They had 60 ladies in attendance and were happy to have JLS President, Melissa Jackson join them. The chef prepared a special menu which included butternut squash soup, grilled salmon with a salad of crispy Brussels sprouts with apples, finished with an indulgent chocolate crème brulee. Several of the women are still ruminating on the memorable afternoon!

In December, they kicked off the holiday season with a festive Open House at the home of Gail Ledbetter. Other hostesses included Reg Bridges, Carolyn Hearn, Lucy Richardson and Victoria Simms. Many were in attendance for this afternoon event. There were a bevy of sweet treats along with savory nibbles in Gail's beautifully-decorated home. Many found inspiration to run home and deck their own halls upon saying their good-byes.

Their annual outreach program continued as the GI sustainers collected gift items for the women from The Amity House, a shelter for abused women and their children. Unwrapped holiday gifts such as slippers, scarves, gloves, soaps, scented candles, and nail kits were used in the Christmas Shop that allows the children to choose gifts (i.e., "shop") for their mothers.

Plans are in the works for their spring luncheon. Though the Ocean Forest Golf Club has been closed for the last several months undergoing a complete renovation, the GI sustainers remain hopeful to have their gathering there, citing, "it really is one of our favorite gathering spots because they spoil us with their inspired menus and gracious hospitality."



membership

SPOTLIGHT

JAN'S JOURNEY: 34 YEARS WITH JLS

By Jan Johnson and her daughter, Abby, collectively accounting for nearly 5 decades of active service in the League!



IF YOU'VE EVER HEARD THE WORDS, "LONGEST ACTIVE LEAGUE MEMBER IN THE WORLD," THEN YOU'VE LIKELY MET JAN JOHNSON.

Jan reminisces on the beginning of her longstanding journey with the Junior League of Savannah:

"I threw the mail on the counter as I always did and started dinner since my in-laws were coming. When they got there my mother-in-law noticed the mail and was so surprised that I hadn't opened it yet. I didn't really pay much attention and said 'What is an invitation to join the Junior League?' Now, mind you, I knew what it was because she was in the League herself, with her own mother being one of the founders. She was so excited, 'You have to RSVP right away!'"

But there were a couple of conditions for opening and accepting the offer within this embossed invitation. Jan would need to secure three members' signatures as well as undergo an interview at another member's residence. As she entered the stately Ardsley Park home, several women were sitting in the parlor while she anxiously scanned the room for a familiar face. When asked why she wished to join the League, Jan unabashedly replied, "my mother-in-law made me." The truth was that Jan was no stranger to volunteer work and community advocacy. Jan's youngest brother, Scottie, was born with a severe mental disability and Down syndrome. Jan had witnessed firsthand how persons with disabilities were treated in institutions even if her brother did have a resilient family support system himself. Jan saw the need for those without an advocate to have one, which Jan refers to as the squeaky wheel effect – i.e., eventually, someone will get tired of the annoying squeaking (i.e., Jan!) and do something to fix it. Jan felt her family advocated for Scottie, but many others like him were not so fortunate to have insistent supporters. Jan believes what she found in joining the League was more opportunity to "squeak" and she steadfastly determined to become a member and join the throngs of squeaky wheels advocating for change where it was needed most. In doing so, Jan found her second family.

Jan reflects on her provisional year placement: *The first experience I had as a provisional was Thrift Sale*



and I really liked it. Of course, it was at the fairgrounds right after the cattle judging 4H club contest. My very first job, on my very first shift, was to clean the bathrooms at the fairgrounds. It looked and smelled like the cattle used it, but it shined when I was through. I loved it. Hot as hell. One of the thermometers registered at 111°. There was a two-day sale, and a two-week set up. Throughout the two weeks, the members would find treasures and sometimes a microphone so that on Thrift Sale eve, the husbands would stand up on a cooler or other sturdy box and auction off these treasures we had found. This was not organized, no food, B.Y.O.B., but it was a blast. Hot, but a blast!”

Jan explains her unexpected role of becoming Thrift Sale chair a year early: After my fourth year in the League I was asked to be Thrift Sale chair-elect about a month before the sale. I thought that they meant the following year. Nope. Beechie Robinson, my friend and Thrift Sale co-chair, had died the night before. I still can't believe she was standing on my porch that evening delivering posters for Thrift Sale. Shock was an understatement. Thrift Sale was always the first weekend in October and in 1989, when I was chair with a new baby and halfway through set up, Savannah was in the direct path of Hurricane Hugo. Here comes Hugo and half of the barn's roof where we were set up was full of more holes than lace! On the September 28, Hugo made a little wiggle North and whacked Charleston.

Over the years Jan had very fulfilling placements from victim witness to women's rights. A favorite position of hers was membership engagement, partly because of her knack for making people feel comfortable and turning even the most serious subject matter humorous. She considered herself the “Godfather” in that members who had grievances with their placement or fellow committee members could seek her guidance if they didn't feel comfortable confronting the issue or members directly, Jan stating she would “take care of it.” She completed the role in Mafioso dress with black suit, fedora, and glued-on mustache, all of which she admitted made her look more like a super Mario brother than Marlon Brando! But to her credit, she succeeded with bringing together members through humor.

Jan's recollections of her support system within the League: *Every four years we spent just over a month with a New York Broadway director to organize a variety show called the*



Junior League Follies. Everybody had a part. Singers sang and dancers danced, but if you didn't want to be on stage (I personally can't imagine that!), you solicited for advertising to pay for the Follies' costs. In participating, we all got to know each other as well as spouses. The community loved it and looked forward to it every four years. Two days after I chaired my first Follies in 1998, my husband was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Life was a blur in the months that followed. My house was a wreck, but somehow little fairies (Junior League members) came to my house and cleaned, washed clothes, and even organized my son's 9th birthday party. It was amazing. They were amazing. Nothing in our lives would ever be as dependable as the Junior League. We had one more Follies in 2002 and then it was no more. They said it was simply too much work raising money in such a struggling economy.

Why don't you become a sustainer? Well, back in the day there used to be an age limit of 40 years old and you had to get out. When I turned 40, the age limit was extended to 45, then 50. Now there is no age limit and I feel that as long as I remain active in the League, other "experienced" members will feel encouragement to remain or join.

Have you reached your leadership potential? Not until I've fulfilled my dream of being the first JLS President over the age of 65, and at this rate, it looks like I may be the first president over 70!

Thank you for your musings, Jan! Any final words of wisdom? It's not always easy to work together, but we need to remember we have a common mission. You don't have to like each other, but it sure does help! If your heart is not in it, then you're just going through the motions. The passion for helping our community is contagious. Be passionate and amazing things will happen.





We would love to share some exciting news!

The JLS won the

**2018 MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT
AND RECRUITMENT AWARD**

at the 96th Annual AJLI Conference!

2017-2018

community**advisory**board

We extend sincere appreciation for the following persons who selflessly give their time to advise the JLS on various matters.



JOSEPH A. BUCK, III, ED.D.

> Savannah Graduates

Dr. Joe Buck served at Armstrong State University for 39 years and during that time he served as the director of student affairs, dean of student affairs, vice president for student affairs and retired as vice president for student affairs emeritus. He has earned a number of prestigious awards including being named Rotarian of the Year for the Savannah district, received the United Way Spirit of Volunteerism Award, is a Junior Achievement/Savannah Business Hall of Fame inductee, and was the recipient of the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce's elite General James Oglethorpe Leadership Award. Dr. Buck has volunteered as a Sunday school teacher at Isle of Hope United Methodist Church, former chair of the Administrative Board and Council on Ministries, president of Leadership Savannah, past trustee of the Georgia Public Education Foundation, past president of the Rotary Club of Savannah East and past chair of the board of directors and general campaign chairman for the United Way of the Coastal Empire. He is also president and chairman of the board of directors and former member of the board of directors for Leadership Savannah.



RICHARD A. COOMER

> Partner, Coomer and Coomer Ex officio JLS accountant

Richard A. Coomer serves as the certified public accountant for the JLS. Mr. Coomer is excited to witness the Junior League of Savannah grow and continue to move in the right direction in their many public endeavors.



J. CRAIG GORDON

> CEO Statewide Healthcare

J. Craig Gordon, was born, raised and educated in Savannah. He attended Armstrong State University. Representative Gordon entered his 12th Legislative Session in January 2018 and remains excited and humbled to serve the people of Savannah, GA. Through economic development and quality access to healthcare for all, job creation continues to be a priority on his agenda as well as any progressive legislation that can uplift Georgia. He is a member of the 100 Black Men of Savannah and the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus. He is CEO of Statewide Healthcare Inc., the largest minority health provider in Georgia, of which his goals are to grow statewide healthcare to a new level and build quality affordable homes in Savannah and the surrounding areas. Mr. Gordon believes strongly in the League he supports with his statement, "I am definitely honored by and appreciate the great work and advocacy Junior League of Savannah and Junior League nationwide does. Through their great work of fundraising, building partnerships and inspiring solutions to community and social issues, they have helped and supported countless individuals."



KATHY HORNE

> Partner, Bouhan Falligant, LLP

Kathy Horne is a practicing attorney in Savannah. She has been named one of the "Top 50 Women Attorneys" in the State of Georgia by Atlanta magazine, a Georgia "Super Lawyer" and has been called one of Georgia Trend magazine's "Legal Elite." She received the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers Achievement Award and was named the Business and Professional Women's Club Woman of Achievement and the Judge Frank Cheatham Professionalism Award by the Savannah Bar Association. Kathy received both her B.A. and J.D. degrees, cum laude, from the University of Georgia. She remarked, "One of the things that impressed me most when I was a member of the unior League was the degree of organization, talent and energy exhibited by its members, and by the officers and committee chairs in particular. From my current vantage point, it appears that the Junior League is more successful now than every before. It is an honor to serve on the Community Advisory Board for an organization so committed to our community and its citizens."



MICHAEL F. KEMP

> Senior Vice President/Regional Manager, Synovus Trust Company

In addition to his position as senior vice president with Synovus Trust Company, Mike Kemp is active in our community with positions on the boards of Armstrong Atlantic State University Foundation, Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition, and as assistant treasurer for the Savannah Community Foundation. He has previously served on Savannah's Anti-Poverty Initiative (Step Up) and MedBank boards along with several others. Mr. Kemp earned his J.D. from Mercer University School of Law and is a member of the Georgia Bar Association.

DR. M. ANN LEVETT

> Superintendent, Savannah-Chatham Public Schools

Dr. Ann Levett, superintendent of the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools and a Savannah native, is no stranger to school herself! Dr. Levett received her B.S. degree from Armstrong State University, M.A. in special education, M.A. in public administration, and as educational specialist degree in educational administration from Georgia Southern University, and finally her PhD in educational administration from the University of Georgia. She has been a professional educator for over 40 years. Dr. Levett has been active in a leadership capacity with Junior Achievement, Girl Scouts USA, Boy Scouts USA, National Business and Professional Women, Delta Sigma Theta sorority, Phi Delta Kappa, Zonta International, Education's Leadership Georgia, and Leadership Savannah. She has participated in leadership development programs at Harvard University, Vanderbilt University, the University of Delaware, the University of California at San Diego, and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



JULIA L. MIKELL M.D.

> Director of System Quality Performance, St. Joseph's/Candler Health System

Prior to accepting her current position as Director of Quality Performance at St. Joseph's/Candler, Dr. Julia Mikell was a practicing neurologist and has been on the SJC medical staff for more than 30 years. Her leadership roles have included serving on the SJC bylaws committee, bio-ethics committee, Candler Hospital board of trustees member, Foundations board member, credentials committee chair, and Candler Hospital Chief of Staff. She received her M.D. from the Medical College of Georgia, completed an internal medicine internship at the Medical University of South Carolina, and neurology residency at the Mayo Clinic. She reminisces, "the Junior League was critical in my early formation as a Savannahian. I met so many talented individuals and important organizations that do such good work in the community. I was able to try out lots of volunteer experiences. I hope I can be helpful on the advisory council by demonstrating to women that combining family, career, and volunteering is do-able and tremendously awarding."



THE REVEREND HELEN S. WHITE

> Assistant for Children and Family Ministries, Christ Church Episcopal

The Rev. Helen White serves as the Assistant for Children and Family Ministries at Christ Church Episcopal. Prior to serving at Christ Church, Rev. White served as All Saint's on Tybee Island, St. George's Episcopal in Savannah, and as a chaplain at Armstrong State University. She is a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary (M.Div.), Georgia Southern University (M.Ed.) and Furman University (BA in Religion). She remarked, "I am so impressed with the energetic commitment to service demonstrated by the members of the Junior League. It is inspiring to see such talented, diverse women mobilizing for the betterment of our community and in support of one another. I hope to offer community connection, ideas, and most of all, encouragement by saying, 'Keep doing what you are doing!'"



REID WILLIAMSON, ESQ.

> Partner, Hunter, Maclean, Exley & Dunn, Ex officio JLS attorney

Reid Williamson has been a practicing attorney for more than 30 years and is a native to Savannah. He received his BA degree, magna cum laude, from Tufts University, and his J.D. degree, cum laude, from the University of Georgia School of Law. Williamson is a graduate of Leadership Savannah and has served as the chairman of the Chatham County Board of Jury Commissioners, past president of the Savannah Estate Planning Council, and is a member of the Georgia Bar Association and the Savannah Bar Association. He admires that, "the League is the best local organization I know of that promotes positive, lifelong membership experiences for women and opportunities for their meaningful involvement in the community."



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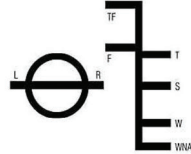
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