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# The Woman's Club of Washington University **NEWSLETTER**

SPRING 2024



## **A Message from the President**

I don't know about the rest of you, but I am so happy that Punxsutawney Phil predicted an early spring. I look forward to more sunlight, warmer days, emerging flowers and plants. I also look forward to continued activities of the Woman's Club. Each week, I see the vibrancy and diversity of this group as activities are scheduled and offered to our members. I hear of the influence and impact our members have when others remark on the caliber of speakers we attract for our luncheons. I see

## **Member Resources**

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how the Club networks within the Washington University community as we partner with the Woman's Society and Provost's office to co-sponsor lectures. Outreach efforts with the Clayton Chamber of Commerce bring new ideas and interest to our group. I listen to students who speak about the Club's generosity and assistance in helping them achieve their goals and know the scholarships the Club provides to the Brown School of Social Work and CAPs are worthwhile and have long-lasting positive implications for those who receive them. And, as always, we have our special interest groups who continue to meet on a regular basis, keeping our members engaged, loyal to the Club and the friendships members have developed along the way.

Of course, all this would not be possible without our Chairs, Executive Board members and those at University Advancement who tirelessly work to support the Woman's Club. I want to give a warm welcome to our newest support members, Emily Skelton, Senior Associate Director of Women's Affinity Engagement and our new Woman's Club coordinator, Elizabeth "Liz" Ojo; they will work to support the Woman's Club going forward. I would also like to thank Jena Schaumburg, Coordinator Event Communications, who helped put together this newsletter and a number of our Constant Contact emails. Thank you to Lauren Hayden, Associate Director Regional and Special Events, and Colleen Ryan, Senior Associate Director Academic Ceremonies and Celebrations, who were our interim coordinators keeping us going as staff transitioned. I want to thank Gina Tramelli, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Special Events and University Ceremonies, who has been sensitive and responsive to the needs of the Club and has allowed me to meet both Emily and Liz so that I could give them my perspective on where the Club is, efforts we still wish to pursue, and the type of support needed to achieve those goals.

Have a wonderful spring,



Sarah Fowler-Dixon

## Upcoming Events

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### **Faith Berger's Art Studio Visit**

**Friday, May 3, 11 a.m. 244 Carlyle Lake, Creve Coeur, MO 63141**

Join the Galleries and Sights interest group for a visit to Faith Berger's Art Studio.

The studio can accommodate 15-20 people.

Email [assimoaz@gmail.com](mailto:assimoaz@gmail.com) if you plan to come.

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## Assembly Series - Digital Transformation Increasing the Public's Access to Healthcare Turning Failure into Performance with Jennifer Pahlka

Monday, May 6, 6 p.m., Graham Chapel

You're welcome to attend the next Assemblies Series event as Jennifer Pahlka, founder of Code for America and the United States Digital Service and former US Deputy Chief Technology Officer and member of the Defense Innovation Board, discusses how the agency responsible for [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) not only recovered from a high-profile failure but transformed into a high-performing institution.

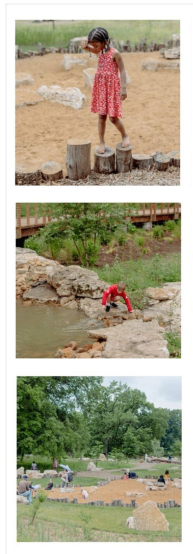
REGISTER



## The Big Dig!

Thursday, May 14, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. (Rain date: Wednesday, May 15)

Come help with our spring planting! We will meet at the Elizabeth Danforth Butterfly Garden to ready the garden for the season.



## Walking Tour of Anne O'C. Albrecht Nature Playscape

Wednesday, May 16, 10 a.m.

Please join us for a walking tour of the Anne O'C. Albrecht Nature Playscape in Forest Park as Jane Schaefer leads us on a walk through the nature playscape and talks about the native plants blooming in the gardens along the trail.

[Click here to find a map of the Nature Playscape.](#)

RSVP to [janeschaefer79@gmail.com](mailto:janeschaefer79@gmail.com) (Call 314-580-3972 with questions.)

Park on Carr Lane Drive near the intersection of McKinley Drive.

## Past Events

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### **Risa Zwerling Wrighton Scholarship Luncheon**

**January 26, 2024**

The Risa Zwerling Wrighton Scholarship Luncheon at the Ritz Carlton in Clayton was attended by 33 members and nine guests. Scholarship recipients Mark Derouin, Kate Leemon, Gray Wilde and Atlee Winingham were awarded their scholarship certificates, and messages from Jule Aschhoff and Risa Zwerling Wrighton were read. Dean Sean Armstrong of CAPS, Jodie Lloyd (Director of Business Development and School Initiatives) and Haley Dolosic (Data Analyst and Special Projects Manager) talked extensively about the future of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies in CAPS NOW!: Being in St. Louis, For St. Louis.

[RZW Luncheon Recording\\_Part 1](#)

[RZW Luncheon Recording\\_Part 2](#)

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### **Assembly Series Lecture: 'The Fate of the Earth' by Elizabeth Kolbert**

**February 12, 2024**

The Woman's Club co-sponsored this event with the provost's office who is now handling the Assembly Series for Washington University. This was the inaugural lecture since the series had been halted for a number of years and highlighted the founding of the Center for the Environment at Washington University. The lecture was followed by a private reception that was attended by

three Woman's Club members. Club members were allowed to sit in reserved pews at the front of the Chapel. The speaker publicly thanked the Club for its sponsorship of this event.

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## **Exploring Nature Interest Group Report: Orchid Show**

**February 19, 2024**

Nine members of the new Exploring Nature Interest Group met at the Missouri Botanical Garden Edison Conservatory and toured the Orchid Show with Missouri Botanical Garden docent Ginny, who taught them about orchids.

They learned how to identify orchids and also learned about the Wardian Case, Nathaniel Ward's 1929 invention that revolutionized how plants were shipped worldwide. The case helped extend the 1848 Victorian fern craze (pteridomania) as it enabled people to use it to grow ferns at home under glass.

After the tour, most of the women stayed for lunch at Sassafras Cafe.

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## **Risa Zwerling Wrighton Scholarship Endowment Fundraiser Game Day**

**March 6, 2024**

The RZW Scholarship Fundraiser, a.k.a. Game Day, was held on the 14th floor lounge in The Clarendale in Clayton. Ten members and guests played Bridge and Canasta and worked together to raise \$360 at this semi-annual fundraiser for the endowment.

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## Galleries and Sights *Matisse and the Sea* Tour

March 28, 2024

Curator Simon Kelly of the Saint Louis Art Museum led 28 members and guests of the Galleries and Sights interest group on a tour of the *Matisse and the Sea* exhibit. Seventeen tour participants then enjoyed lunch at the Panorama restaurant with Mr. Kelly. This free-of-charge event was thoroughly enjoyed, with many participants calling it "perfect."

## Member Spotlight

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### Lee Anne Quatrano

By Suzanne Doyle

At 76, Lee Anne Quatrano is a Gardener, tending and supporting life in the Elizabeth Danforth Butterfly Garden, in her almost twenty-year marriage to Ralph Quatrano, 81; within her blended family of five adult children, eleven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, including David Ralph Quatrano (pictured with Lee Anne in the photo); and in the St. Louis non-profit community beyond Washington University (central to her life with Ralph). Ralph and Lee Anne met after Ralph joined the WU faculty in 1999 and was appointed Chair of Biology and Dean of Engineering, with a stint as

interim Dean of Arts and Sciences. The two had been crisscrossing the US for decades in their careers and in previous marriages before settling in the Central West End of St. Louis as neighbors.

While Ralph was working at Colgate University in upstate New York, then at Oregon State and the University of North Carolina, honing his skills and becoming a leader in bioengineering, Lee Anne invested in the education of dyslexic children and those struggling with ADHD. From classroom to private practice as an Individualized Learning Specialist, she taught hundreds of young people essential learning skills and coached their teachers and administrators. For several years, beginning in 1996, Lee Anne provided leadership at MICDS, primarily in the Upper School, that enabled the school to reach full compliance with ADA standards, all the while working directly with students and guiding their teachers. After she retired from education in 2015, Lee Anne was free to devote herself more intensely to the Butterfly Garden, where she first volunteered in 2010; she has served as co-chair since 2013, first with Tedi Macias, then Elena Maksava.

A glance around the contemporary townhome Lee Anne and Ralph share makes clear the aesthetic she brings to the Garden: sunlit tranquility, sleek order punctuated by bright color and sculptural texture; most prominent in the living room is unsurprisingly a

large, stunning photo of a blooming flower's interior. Just outside that cozy and spacious room is a modest pergola on the patio, a structure reminiscent of the much larger pergola, built for Garden gatherings, made possible by a substantial, seeding donation from the Quatranos. (The low tables with their spare adornments were chosen, by the way, to be accessible to small children who color and build, but, Lee Ann, chuckled, the youngest, David, has still managed to collide with "every pointy edge.")

Lee Anne delights in the maturation of the Garden during her years of involvement. She joins a cadre of volunteers every Tuesday from early spring to around Halloween, planning and digging, planting and weeding; every May scores of volunteers participate in the Big Dig when most of the annuals are planted. (What can't be completed that day is finished by the WU facilities staff; Washington University now buys all the annuals—about 1400—and the increased perennials, almost all native, that together fill more than twenty beds.) As an educator and activist Lee Anne is also pleased that the Butterfly Garden has earned a place as a Monarch Watch Station and is part of the Monarch Tagging Program, observing changes in the threatened species migration; volunteers and students have also begun raising caterpillars to be released into the Garden.

When Ralph began phasing himself out from his duties at WU in 2015, Lee Anne joined him in their enthusiastic recruitment of scholarship recipients for the engineering school, and she has learned much more about the exciting applications of biotechnology. Together, too, the couple expanded and intensified their interests in fitness and the outdoors, hiking in state and national parks across the country, and running together in half marathons and long-distance relays. With Ralph's full retirement in 2019 they also delved deeper into their community concerns, such as the expansion of Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital's physical plant and the development of OZ (Optimization Zones) for play therapy, and Home Sweet Home, a non-profit providing both furnishings and the dignity of choice to unhoused families offered new homes.

In the past three years or so, however, Lee Anne has retreated from some of her many occupations to provide companionship oversight and care for her husband. Ralph has developed a brain condition that mimics Parkinsonism, jeopardizing his balance and sometimes compromising cognitive functioning. Lately, fortunately, the condition has been stabilized, enabling the two to travel to visit their far-flung children over long weekends. Lee Anne continues smiling radiantly, enlivening her world at home, within her extended family, among WU Woman's Club friends, and at the Garden, where seedlings are soon to sprout. Another year of beauty.

## Membership Report

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The current membership of the Woman's Club stands at 184 members and guests.

If you haven't yet, you can renew by credit card [online](#). Your information will be safely protected by Washington University's data processing protocols. If you prefer to pay via check, you may print out a [membership form](#) and mail the form and a check into the office (7425 Forsyth Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63105). You will also have an opportunity to renew at this year's [Spring Symposium](#).

If you have any questions regarding membership, please contact our Membership Chair, [Jane Schaefer](#).

## Tributes

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## Woman of Achievement: Phyllis Markus

Phyllis Markus, the Director of Finance for the Woman's Club, will be honored at the *2024 Women of Achievement Award Luncheon* on **Tuesday, May 14** for her work in Multicultural Advocacy. The St. Louis Women of Achievement Award is the oldest ongoing program in the area whose sole mission is to honor and recognize the volunteer efforts of women. We are amazed by Phyllis' efforts to positively impact and enhance the quality of life in our community. [Click here to learn more about this event.](#)

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## Obituaries



### Greta Camel

Greta passed away on May 26, 2023.



### Jean Davis

Jean passed away on June 18, 2023.



### Ellen Norris

Ellen passed away on November 19, 2023.



### Diane Wyse Jackson

Diane passed away on December 10, 2023.



### Diane Bohner

Diane passed away on March 15, 2024.



The Woman's Club directory for the 2023-2024 season is available online! You can access the directory online on the [membership page](#) of our website and clicking on the "Woman's Club Directory (PDF)" button in the green box. Feel free to print a copy at home.

The NEW password is: WCWU23-24

*\*Please note the password is case and space sensitive\**

## The Woman's Club Executive Committee

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**Sarah Fowler-Dixon**

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Vice President

**Iris Malone**

Director, Educational Programming

**Jane Schaefer**

Director, Membership

**Helen Wall**

Director, Communications

**Charlene Kass**

Director, Service to the  
University

**Elena Maksaeva**

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Luncheons

**Phyllis Markus**

Director of Finance

**Karen Johnson Fields**

Recording Secretary

**Lisa Schmidt**

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**Carmen S. Dence**

Immediate Past President

**Thank you for your support and dedication to our Woman's Club community!**

Woman's Club of Washington University - Founded 1910

Washington University in St. Louis, MSC 1228

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