

the TORCH

January 2017 Vol. 55, No.1

January Meeting

Date: Saturday Jan. 21, 2017
Gathering: 11:30 AM
Lunch: 12:00 PM
Place: The Landings Yacht, Golf & Tennis Club

Luncheon Menu:

Choice 1:

Strawberry Spinach Salad with grilled Chicken, Fresh Strawberries, Mandarin Oranges, Gorgonzola Cheese and Candied Pecans. Topped with Grilled Chicken, Drizzled with Zinfandel Vinaigrette.

Choice 2:

Turkey Club Wrap: Sliced Smoked Turkey, Spinach, Vine Ripe Tomatoes, Apple Wood Bacon and Mayonnaise. Wrapped in a Flour Tortilla, served with Fresh Fruit.

With: Warm Rolls & Butter

Dessert: Chef's Choice

or

Fruit Cup

(which must be ordered when placing reservation.)

Beverages from the bar are available.
Wait staff will accept charge cards.

Reservations:

Tina Hoegler will be taking reservations.
Please contact her at 941-505-8483 or c_hoegler@msn.com
no later than Mon., Sept. 12, Cancellations must be made
no later than Tues., Sept.13. Otherwise payment is
expected. Price of the luncheon is \$20.

Our Speaker: JoAnn Elardo

In November of 1990, JoAnn Elardo watched the Berlin Wall come down and traveled to Warsaw, Poland, to explore business opportunities. In June of 1991, she opened AmerSport S.P., which started as a sporting goods retail shop in Warsaw, Poland. Between 1993 and 1996, the operation expanded to seven Eastern Europe countries and over 30 locations throughout Poland, the Czech Republic

and Ukraine. The company was so successful that in 1996, Elardo won Distributor of the Year and Converse's Licensee of the Year. In 2004 Elardo received the Award for Best Distributor CAT Shoes & Apparel. Soul Shops S.P.z.o.o was also formed in 2004 and quickly expanded into several countries with about 60 retail locations. At the peak of AmerSport & Soul Shops success they had approximately 200 employees and had offices in several countries.

In 2008, she sold AmerSport S.P. and Soul Shops to large multimedia firm, Empik Media & Fashion.

JoAnn, and her husband, Robert Elardo, moved to Cape Coral full time in 2008. She has a passion for charity work and is a founding Board Member of Toast for Hope, an annual fundraiser for Hope Hospice in Cape Coral. From 2009-2010, she chaired several events for the Animal Refuge Center in North Fort Myers and Gulf Coast Humane Society in Fort Myers. JoAnn also formed a great working relationship with Fr. Ignace Loleke a Catholic priest working in the U.S. from the Congo. The two paired up and worked to build a school in the Congo which was finished in 2009.

In 2010 they also started on a new project to build the area's first hospital which was completed in 2015. This is an ongoing project to bring education & basic medical treatment to this small village of 5000.

In 2010, while reading about the Florida sugar industry, JoAnn Elardo started thinking about manufacturing a Florida product, using Florida ingredients. She wanted to create something that would be distributed and sold in Florida, then expand to other states, and to bring people to Southwest Florida—so began Wicked Dolphin Rum Distillery.

In 2012, she purchased a 7,200-square-foot, foreclosed building in Cape Coral, and renovated it into a working distillery. Wicked Dolphin Rum uses 100% Florida Sugar, local ingredients and is handcrafted in small batches using an American copper pot still, the largest in South Florida. The family run distillery produces seven award winning rums available throughout Florida and the Southeastern United States. Free tours are given weekly at the Distillery's Cape Coral location.

In 2015, land was purchased south of the Distillery for expansion in 2018.

In 2016 JoAnn formed the Cape Coral Animal Shelter a 501 3-c that is working to build Cape Coral's first Animal Shelter. Elardo met with Cape Coral City Manager John Szerlag at City Hall. In that meeting she spoke about the benefits of having a shelter for the residents of Cape Coral and the city was interested. The City Council recently approved a long-term lease for a four-acre location in mid Cape Coral. Elardo has also chaired and hosted quite a few fundraising efforts for the shelter. She was voted in as the 1st President of the Cape Coral Animal Shelter.

In 2016 JoAnn and her husband Robert started the First Brewery / Restaurant in Cape Coral, FL. - Big Blue Brewing which is located in the South Cape. It features a gastropub with meals made from scratch and Beers & Ales brewed at the facility.

Big Blue also offers tours and does offsite catering.

AAUW Fort Myers/Lee Co Branch

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Fort Myers, FL



President's Message...

Welcome to 2017!

Hoping that everyone had a glorious holiday with friends and family and are ready for a new year of AAUW programs and activities.

Thanks, again, to Peggy Drennan-Cihi and Kathy Jones for chairing our 23rd. annual fashion show, Growing in Style; likewise, a big salute to the numerous members who contributed their time, effort and expertise in this most worthwhile endeavor. A good time was had by all and I am most grateful and appreciative.

During this difficult time of uncertainty and social unrest, it is more important than ever that women's organizations remain strong and united. We are always encouraging our friends, associates and new residents in our communities to join AAUW and support us in our continuous vision and mission of addressing women's concerns, education and issues.

We have wonderful programs planned for the remaining months and am confident that many of our members will bring guests and potential new colleagues. Phyllis Wayco has done a super job of committing speakers who are engaging, pertinent and enlightening.

Congratulations go to Annette Trossbach, founder and artistic director of the community-conscious Laboratory Theater of Florida. Annette is one of five winners of the WGPU Makers Award. The award goes to women who are impacting the arts, business, education, environment, health/wellness, politics and/or social justice. Annette is one of our newest members and she spoke at our November meeting. We are very proud of Annette and also proud to have her for as a member of our great organization. In Annette's words "Theater is entertainment, but it's also thought-provoking eye-opening and healing."

You can reach Annette at director@laboratorytheaterflorida.com or 239-218-0481.

Financial Report -----

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| Cash on Hand December 18, 2016 | \$16,213 |
| Restricted Donations: Starbright | (736) |
| Available Cash | \$15,477 |

