

OPAWL



Emilia Sugiyama
President

Rain, snow, and more rain are in our future. Can you believe what a wet season we have been having? I was afraid of El Nino a few years ago but this winter takes the cake for how much rain has dumped on us. Places where it typically does not snow has seen white covered grounds. I fear that my beloved wine prices might increase from damage caused by the recent snowfall in Napa. Yikes! Locally, I do hope that no one has suffered any damage to your property. We still have almost 3 weeks to go before Spring so stay safe and dry.

Let's face it – it's been a tough few years that many of us are still recovering emotionally. A trend that is already starting to take hold is one that is all about helping people feel a part of something bigger – whether at your workplace, your home, your communities, or in the world. I want to believe that OPAWL is way ahead of any trend and that this organization has brought you some sort of emotional support and inclusion with the many activities that are being held. As we start our membership drive this year, please consider renewing your membership. As always, please visit our website for details on events and happenings. www.opawomen.org.



In This Issue

President's
Message

Spotlight on
Lois Widly

Section News
& Happenings

Birthdays

Upcoming
Events

*For newsletter contributions
send your content to
opawomen.org@gmail.com*



SPOTLIGHT ON LOIS WIDLY



Lois Widly is a force to be reckoned with, even at the young age of...well it's not nice to disclose a women's age. But many of us have had the pleasure of her company as a neighbor, a friend or as a past President of OPAWL. To know Lois is to understand where she gets her never ending energy and passion for OPA. So, I set out to interview her to find out how she came to live in OPA and how she became the past President of OPAWL, not just for 1 term but for 3 terms!

Earlier this month, my son and I knocked on her door and were quickly greeted and whisked inside by her husband, George, followed by the open arms of Lois. They adore my son and have known him from the day he was born, babysitting him at times. After our hugs we were ushered into the kitchen and sat at their table and promised appetizers and tea. The clacking of dishes occasionally disrupted the small talk we were having with George, forcing him to look up and let out a small laugh. "She has much more energy than me. She never sits down" he states. It is this energy that Lois possesses that has transcended into all she does.

They lived for a bit in Italy where their 3 kids where born, a daughter and two sons. At the time, Lois did not speak Italian but as George put it, "You may have noticed, Lois loves to talk. It took her all but a day and a half to learn Italian. Nothing was going to stop her from being able to talk to those people". Yes, that is Lois, especially being a Nurse, she loves people. When they moved back to the states from Italy because of a job offer George got in Anaheim, they were on the hunt for a home. While George worked in Anaheim, a real estate agent would drive Lois around with her 3 young children in the backseat, looking for their dream home. Lois didn't like the places in Orange that she was seeing and finally the real estate agent told her, "Well, I'll take you some place that is little bit different." "I didn't know what the heck he meant. So, he brings me out here to OPA and I thought, oh this is heaven. I love this place!", she states. There was a house on each end of what is now their street and several empty lots. So, they bought an empty lot and hired a builder because George had already drawn up plans while living in Italy. It took them 5 years to build their home, partly because George built 3 prototypes of their kitchen, living with the mock kitchen for 3-4 months and then George would break it down, rebuild a new model, and live with the new model for another 3-4 months. That is one patient women which George recognized.

As their children grew, Lois got busier and busier with them. She was even Goat Leader and very involved with 4-H and at one time they had 70 goats and 6 pigs. Wow! That was a lot of organization of scheduling for meals, milking and making cheese. Little did she know that those skills she was learning would come in handy in the future when she would become President of OPAWL.

Lois Widly (cont.)



Lois got involved with OPAWL when a neighbor down the street invited her to a progressive dinner. She was not very active in the beginning because she was very busy raising her children. But then one year, she rose to the challenge when no one else stepped up to be President, becoming a shaker and mover and making things happen. She was known for meeting a lady who recently moved into OPA and immediately inviting them to become a member. That is how I met her. Within weeks of moving into my home down the street from her, she knocked, introduced herself and invited me to a holiday party at her home. That was the start of our now almost 17-year friendship.

Under her leadership, much of the money raised in the fundraisers went to OPA for the trails and the white fencing. She directed garage sales, home tour fundraisers, Secret Santa for Camp Pendleton families, St Patty's Day fundraisers, and so much more. But her claim to fame is the monuments at the corner of Orange Park and Chapman were erected. This passion project was her last project as President of OPAWL and it was her persistence and connections that took the unsightly corner to what it is today, statuesque marquees with the OPA logo, bench for the bust stop, trails for pedestrians and horse riders and drought tolerance landscape. It is affectionally known today as the Pony Park because as residents and guests drive into OPA or drive out of OPA, they are waved to by children riding a pony.

When I asked her, what is it about OPA Women's League that made you stay and be involved for so long? Lois reflected and responded, "I really felt part of OPA and I love bringing people together and that is what we were doing...we were bringing the women of OPA together to know one another. I think it makes such a difference because if you don't know the women here outside of your next-door neighbor, I think that's such a shame because they are really missing the whole blessing of this community."

Written by Emilia Sugiyama



SECTION NEWS & HAPPENINGS

Bunco Babes

2023 OPAWL Bunco has officially started. Our first game was on Feb. 2nd at Kate Bonnaud's home. We had a full house and great fun was had by all. Gearing up now for another round of fun and laughter at Nancy Flathers' home, Thursday, March 2nd. An RSVP is required to attend.

For more info or to join in on the fun, contact Jamie Spence, jlpainospence@hotmail.com, (562) 708-9309 or Karen Ashford, (714) 496-6102, Klasa7506@gmail.com.



Entertaining In Pearls

For our first Entertaining in Pearls gathering of 2023, we will start off with a bang AND get a head start to all your entertaining events come this summer. Learn how to host a chic summer garden/backyard party without breaking a sweat or the bank. It will be fun and interactive. **This event has been rescheduled from its original Feb. date to March 4th, Saturday at 11:30am.** You must RSVP to attend. For more information about this activity or the section, contact leader Emilia Sugiyama, (310) 569-4662.



Pack Walkers



Julie Shaw reports: We have our time change coming up on March 12th. We'll gain an hour and the days will be getting longer. I will put feelers out to the group, see how the weather is, how the daylight is, and what you ladies wanna do about walking dogs again!! For more info, contact Julie Shaw, 714-329-3447.

SECTION NEWS *Cont.*

Literature Group

The current book is a memoir titled, Taste: My Life Through Food, by Stanley Tucci. —From award-winning actor and food obsessive Stanley Tucci comes an intimate and charming memoir of life in and out of the kitchen. Written with Stanley’s signature wry humor, he takes us beyond the savory recipes and into the compelling stories behind them.



You are invited to pick up the book and meet with the group for a lively discussion. They meet every 4th Tuesday, from 4:pm to 5:pm. For more info call leader Kathy Manulkin, (714) 639-8686.

Pickleball

The Pickleball Social was a great success this month! Meeting in person helped us to figure out which days and times to schedule for play. The group is still being polled but these days and times are looking popular:

- Tustin Hills Racquet Club - Wednesday mornings (9-10:30am) and Saturday mornings (time TBD)
- [Veteran's Sports Park](#) in Tustin - Tuesday evenings (after 5pm)

If you are NOT yet connected to GroupMe, the group communication, you can download a free app to join here: https://groupme.com/join_group/87073383/36huY0iJ



—> Pickleball is looking for a new section leader. Interested? Contact Tess Breen, (714) 200-3004.

Here are a few words from Tess: I regret to inform you that I need to step down as the Pickleball Section Leader for our group. I have struggled to find time to play myself, and I have accepted a new full-time job that is taking over ALL of my spare time! If anyone is interested in stepping into this role, please let me know! It’s been wonderful getting to know each of you and plan to stay involved with OPAWL so you will still see me around!

SECTION NEWS *Cont.*

Hot Trotters!

The rainy weather has the Hot Trotters off the trails and officially barn-stalled! So we are meeting at Debbie Mongan's Ridgeline home this Friday (3/3) at 7:00pm. We'll have a good time swapping stories about horses, mud, and the weather along with munchies and drinks. Debbie has a series of 4H educational talks and will be sharing an interesting visual presentation on horse colors and markings. Please RSVP to Julie, maurer@socal.rr.com, 714-742-1617. Thanks and see you on March 3rd !



When weather and dry trails permit, our Sunday rides will continue. We meet at 2:pm. RSVP for the meet up location. We'd love to have you join us for a relaxed ride out to the parks or around OPA. For more info on the section, contact co-leaders, Julie Maurer, (714) 742-1617, or Sarah Holtz, (714) 487-0155.

Homestead & Garden

Let's Jam Homestead Group! March 10th, 10:am to noon. Learn how to make jam and preserve it. Everyone will be able to take home a jar and the recipe. It's easier than you think! Please RSVP to participate.

Late in January, our group gathered for at Ruth Lundring's beautiful home for delicious finger foods and to learn about fiber arts. Pamela demonstrated the fascinating, step by step, process of how virgin sheep's wool is spun into fiber ready for knitting or other uses. Many of the ladies have formed a knitting group and you are welcome to join if interested.

For more information about knitting or to RSVP for Jam & Preserves, contact leader, Pamela Sapetto, (714) 815-7771.



SECTION LEADERS

Dear Members: Please reach out to the section leaders to join activities or for information. They are doing an amazing job of organizing events for us. Keep the sections alive by joining in often and be mindful to make RSVP's and cancelations in a timely manner. At times, a cost is associated with an event and a last-minute cancelation causes difficulties.--Thank you for being considerate of our hardworking organizers!

SECTION LEADERS

Bridge - Leader: Donna Aidekman, (714) 356-6545

Bunco Group – Co-Leaders: Jamie Spence, (562) 708-9309

Karen Ashford, (714) 496-6102

Entertaining In Pearls - Leader: Emilia Sugiyama, (310) 569-4662

Homestead & Garden - Leader: Pamela Sapetto, (714) 815-7771

Hot Trotters Group – Co-Leaders: Sarah Holtz, (714) 478-0155

Julie Maurer, (714) 742-1617

Literature Group - Leader: Kathy Manulkin, (714) 639-8686

Pack Walkers - Leader: Julie Shaw, (714) 329-3447

Pickleball - Leader: Tess Breen, (714) 200-3004

(This section is looking for a new leader. Are you interested?)



CELEBRATIONS & EVENTS

March Birthdays

- 3 Tina Dunneback
- 3 Olga Gonzales
- 5 Lisa Childs
- 5 Kelsey Hollenbeck
- 12 Sam Tibbetts



- 13 Kelley Chaplin
- 16 Lois Widly
- 19 Chris McKeen
- 23 Mary Carlson
- 31 Paula Fisher



- APRIL** OPA Family Fair - 4/29
- MAY** ▪ Cinco de Mayo Eve Membership Social - 5/4
- JUNE** ▪ 2023 Membership Year Begins
- JULY** ▪ OPA 4th of July Parade

