



"Women are stronger together!"

March 2026 Newsletter

SURVEY COMING!

As mentioned last month, the Executive Committee is looking to update Impact 100 St. Lucie's strategic plan as we look forward to the next three to five years. We cannot do that without the help of our members; it is, after all, your organization. With the help of Teresa Bishop, a former member, the Executive Committee and ChatGPT, we have created a survey of six questions that will be sent out later this week. Please take the time to read and respond to the survey. We can't know what you want in your membership unless you tell us. Signing your name is optional but, if you want feedback or are looking for ways you can help (question #3), please sign your name. Thank you in advance for your help.

IMPACT 100 ST. LUCIE'S WISH LIST

Impact 100 St. Lucie is still looking for a social media person to promote us online and hopefully take us to the next level. If you have any expertise in this area and might be willing to help, please contact Janet Maffucci to discuss what this might entail.

AN UNEXPECTED INVITATION

Thanks to the suggestion of two of Impact 100 St. Lucie's good friends, Eden Wood and Lisa Crawford, we were invited to be the non-profit of the month for Peacock Liquors' monthly wine tasting event. Each participant was required to pay

\$5 for admission with the money directly going to Impact 100 St. Lucie. It is evidently a very popular event. Over sixty attendees showed up, some with their own wine glasses, and Impact 100 St. Lucie collected \$315 to add to their operating fund. Our thanks go to Manny and his wife, the owners of Peacock Liquors in St. Lucie West, for this opportunity.

SAVE THE DATES!

- March 13th, 2026-Breakfast at Lucie Seward's home with Dr. Lorene Sousa speaking on Women's Health
- April 29th, 2026-Potluck dinner at Heathcote Botanical Gardens
- July 30th, 2026-"Christmas in July" at Dave and Buster's
- October 24, 2026-2026 Award Celebration and Annual Meeting. Please put that date on your calendar now!
- December 4th, 2026-Holiday luncheon at Casa Pasta

GIVE BACK SATURDAYS

We had a full house show up at Heathcote Botanical Gardens on Saturday, February 7th, to help with various projects. Some of our members bravely decided to work outside to rake and clear some of the walking paths in the gardens. This was tiring work but Susan, Merilee, Diane Leary, Emily, Renuka and Diane Stark-Kennedy decided to enjoy the lovely weather outdoors and get some exercise. The rest of us worked in the house preparing fundraising mailers and sorting files and pictures in an effort to organize forty years of history. Our thanks to Susie Hall, Renuka Korlipara, Diane Leary, Merilee Landrigan, Vicki Hoyos, Emily Flowers-Yahn, Ellen Contreras, Judy Salmon, Becky Fisher, Terri McLean, Susan Roberto-Lausen, Lisa Derryberry, Diane Stark-Kennedy, Ruth Stromak, Olivia Hoyos and Janet Maffucci for their help. It was much appreciated.



On February 13th, fourteen fantastic members and friends of Impact 100 St. Lucie showed up at the Fenn Center to be buddies to fourteen of the night's guests at the Treasure Coast Night to Shine, a prom for special needs teens and adults. It was definitely a special night, not only for the guests but for the fourteen of us who tagged along. Many thanks go to Linda Hart, PattiAnn Gullusci, Diane Stark-Kennedy, Lorraine Ruvio, Susie Smith, Sally Mullins, Terri McLean, Veronica Montoya, Cheri Johnson, Margaret Hurley, Val Hellriegel, Janet Maffucci, Becky Fisher and Sam Fisher (not pictured) for supporting this wonderful and fun event. See you next year!



Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

- March 7th-Food Bank
- April 18th-Mustard Seed (Please note change of date.)
- May 9th-The UP Center

WILL YOU BE OUR AMBASSADOR?

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, Impact 100 St. Lucie would like to start an Ambassador program to help new members feel comfortable and welcomed to our organization. Ambassadors would be assigned a couple of new members. Responsibilities would be to make an initial contact with the new member and then check in with the member once a month, encouraging them to attend our events, noting if there are any circumstances that prevent that from happening and discovering if there is anything that can be done to overcome that. If you are interested in becoming an ambassador, please reach out to Veronica Montoya at veronica.vicspicksrealty@gmail.com. We hope to be inundated with requests to become an ambassador.

OPPORTUNITY FOR VETERANS

While meeting at IRSC recently, the Executive Committee was made aware of an upcoming event there for veterans. If you are a veteran or know someone who is, please spread the word about this Hobby/Volunteerism Fair. The event is this coming Saturday.



MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



Doretha Hair Truesdell

by

Janet Maffucci

Meeting Doretha Hair Truesdell is like walking into an aura of quiet elegance. That is the impression that exudes from her immediately. Despite multiple tragedies in her life, Doretha demonstrates an air of resilience, strength, purpose and joy! Born in South Carolina, she grew up in West Virginia as the fifth of twelve children. Tragedy struck the family when Doretha was sixteen and her father killed her mother. In one quick minute, the children lost both parents. One of her sisters lived in Fort Pierce with an aunt who quickly agreed to take the children in. Her aunt and uncle went to West Virginia to pick up the children but, since there wasn't enough room in the car, Doretha and one sister made their way to Fort Pierce by bus.

Life in Fort Pierce was very different. Doretha recalls that she was used to creeks and streams and "outdoor toys" in West Virginia but found sand and palm trees and "so much water" here in Florida. However, she said that Florida grew on her and now it is home.

In 1959, she met a handsome young man named Alfred Hair and they began dating. Doretha had already graduated from high school and she laughingly says that, if she had known that Alfred was only in the eleventh grade, she never would have dated him. Alfred introduced her to art, a passion that continues to this day. She worked during the day at the Greyhound Bus Station in Fort Pierce to help support her younger siblings. During that time, when on breaks, she would go to "Beanie" Backus's house/studio where he was mentoring Alfred and watch Backus

and Alfred bring a blank canvas to life. After she and Alfred married, she painted the backgrounds in some of Alfred's paintings, later becoming an artist in her own right.

Alfred insisted that Doretha go to college. She completed junior college and then went to Tallahassee to complete her education at Florida A & M before returning to Fort Pierce. According to Doretha, Alfred "had a big heart" and was very generous with his paintings. He had become very successful and they were supposed to be moving to Hollywood, Florida where his father lived when he was tragically killed in August 1970, leaving Doretha a single mom with four children to care for.

Doretha taught elementary school for about thirteen years but, in 1980, she married John Truesdell and moved to New Jersey. She gave up teaching and had a 22-year career working as a customer service manager for FedEx.

In 2010, Doretha and John decided to return home to Fort Pierce. They still owned the family home and the relative who was living there was having financial difficulties. They saved the home and continue to live there to this day.

Although Doretha had started painting when she was with Alfred, she stopped when he died. Returning to Fort Pierce relit her desire to paint and she continues to do so. However, the primary focus of her life for the many years has been the creation of a Highwaymen Museum. The idea had been percolating for years but funding remained a major obstacle. In 2015, Doretha became president of Original Florida Hall of Fame Highwaymen Inc. and increased her efforts to fund and open this museum. In partnership with the City of Fort Pierce, on February 20th of this year, her dream became a reality with the official opening of the Highwaymen Museum on Avenue D in Fort Pierce.

When asked what drew her to Impact 100 St. Lucie, Doretha stated that she had been invited by Delores Hogan Johnson to a luncheon hosted by Impact 100 St. Lucie and witnessed the impact the women had on the lives of the people of St. Lucie County. She wanted to be part of that but time passed and every year she would say that she wanted to join, but it would remain on the back burner. Invited again to a luncheon in 2025 by Impact 100 St. Lucie president Janet Maffucci, she accepted the invitation and went to the luncheon prepared to join. Now, Doretha states that she is proud to be one of those exceptional women, in a small

way working to help the people of our community. You are definitely an exceptional woman, Doretha, and Impact 100 St. Lucie is delighted that you are one of us.

Be sure to visit our website (www.impact100SL.org) and our Facebook page.

Impact 100 St. Lucie Executive Committee Members

Cris Adams, Secretary
Gwen Cunningham, Treasurer
Canieria Gardner, Vice President
Marsha Jones
Janet Maffucci, President ♦mrsjfooch@gmail.com ♦914-424-6728
Veronica Montoya
Kavitha Rao
Judy Salmon
Diane Stark-Kennedy
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