

OPAWL NEWSLETTER



Emilia Sugiyama

President

We all need more fun in our lives...you've looked after your kids, parents, friends, pets and now it's your turn. It's time that you give back to yourself and we are here for it! We recently held our Membership Social at the Santiago Estate + Vineyard and it was a success! You ladies brought excitement, energy, and beauty to the event. All I am going to say is that we designed it with YOU in mind. Keep reading because our Membership Chair, Carolyn, has a lot more to say about that fun night. Ok, I will say one more thing....I have really enjoyed reading the text messages and emails that we have been flooded with, letting us know how much fun you all had. It was long overdue, and it won't be the last of our socials.

With so many new faces that came through the door, it was important to provide a clearer message of who OPAWL is, what OPAWL has done but also provide a vision of where OPAWL will be going. As previously mentioned, with the ever-changing landscape of OPA, we need to pivot our focus and embrace the changes and the diversity of the women that are moving into OPA. This is an organization of women and I want to be able to honor each woman. We must have pride in our past and confidence in our future. But keeping in mind our mission: Friendship, Philanthropy and Community. With these 3 ingredients, we hope that everyone can find a place in our organization. If not, call me, I'll find one for you! ☺

We are already cooking up ideas for our next gathering and it appears it might be Champagne and Brunch!!! Stay tuned.

In other news, OPA Association has some great events planned. First, in the month of June, there is a Family Picnic and Fair Fundraiser on June 4th. It promises to be a good time for the entire family. Secondly, in the month of July, OPA Association holds the annual 4th of July Parade, and it would be great to represent OPAWL and enter a float. I am working on getting the theme for this year's event.

(cont.)

Spring 2022



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The OPA Women's  
League Has Come  
Roaring Back!

Join Us On All Our  
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Activities & Events.

### Find Us Here

[www.opawomen.org](http://www.opawomen.org)  
[opawomen.org@gmail.com](mailto:opawomen.org@gmail.com)  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)  
[www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com)

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *cont.*

Here is how you can help as we get closer to the date:

Donate bags of wrapped candy. We need lots and lots of it!

- Volunteer to help decorate the float and ideas would be helpful
- Volunteer to ride on the float

Just send us an email at [opawomen.org@gmail.com](mailto:opawomen.org@gmail.com) and let us know you can help with any of the above. It is greatly appreciated.

I also want to ask you a question. How many of you have teenage girls? The reason I ask, is that we are hoping to plan a future event and invite mentors to speak to our youth. If this is something that might be of interest to you, whether you want to mentor/speak or have teenagers that might be interested in attending, please feel free to contact us Drop us a line and let us know.

Lastly, our sections are now live and active. If you signed up for a section at the membership social event or at the time of paying your membership dues, you should have already received information from the Section leader. Lots of fun stuff being planned and I look forward to seeing you at these events.

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## ATHENA'S LIST

Business Owner  
Vendor/Goods/Services  
Registration

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As promised, the League will start promoting members who are amazing women in business. If you provide goods or services, we offer you an opportunity to be published on our vendor/goods/services list.

Our list is named.....Athena's List. Why Athena as the name?

Athena is the ancient Greek goddess of wisdom and good counsel, war, the defense of towns, heroic endeavor, weaving, pottery and various other crafts. It is only befitting that we associate this goddess to the incredible women in business. Afterall, we are all goddesses in our own way.

If you are a current OPACL member and interested in being published, fill out the registration form by clicking on the "Register Here" button below.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



# SPRING MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL

*Report by Carolyn Aliotta*



I couldn't be happier with the success of our OPA Women's League Membership Social which was held on April 28th. After a 2-year hiatus, it was nothing short of an amazing evening.

When Emilia and I first sat down to plan this event, we were hoping maybe 50 people would show up. We ended up with over 75 guests attending! And we are so thrilled many new members were brought as guests to this event. But it was also a joy seeing familiar faces as our renewing members made their entrance.

As you drove down the windy path of the Vineyard Estate, guests



were greeted by some handsome hubbies that volunteered to help with parking. Thank you to Bryan Harpole, Scott Chaplin and Darren Sugiyama.



Guests then walked into the Santiago Estate Guest House that had sky high ceilings, French doors that opened out to a sparkling blue pool with five 20-foot-high waterfalls cascading into the pool, and panoramic views of Santiago Canyon. The vista of East Orange was a spectacular view from the pool area and a great spot for selfies! Once in, guests were greeted with soft background music and laughter as the ladies mingled. Jennifer Holland Harpole and Judy Denton manned the reception table to greet guests as they checked in. Sharon

Butterfield and I were at the membership table. We also had signup sheets at three tables explaining the special activity sections that our members could sign up for. Emilia and Andrea made an incredible pink balloon arch that immediately greeted our guests.



Lois Widly

As the evening got started, the ladies enjoyed red or white wine and lavender lemonade until our president, Emilia, gave her wonderful speech. Emilia, who was originally invited by Lois Widly to become a member over 15 years ago, implored people to be the next Lois Widly in someone's life. We are pleased to report that Lois, age 86, is still an active member and still inviting women in our community to become involved. The main living area of the house was filled with round tables decorated in white, pink, pale yellow and sage green. The floral arrangement was enveloped in a pale pink mesh fabric and flanked with votive candles

Each place setting had a metal garden pick reading, "Say Hello to my little Friend" with a butterfly adorning the corner. This was the gift from OPAWL that each guest got to take home.

Our top-notch planning/decorating committee for the Social was Emilia Sugiyama (President OPAWL), Kate Bonnaud Spain, Julie Shaw, Sandy Forkert, Andrea Blasco, Julie Maurer, Lisa Shuss and me. All these ladies made the event that much extra special. And a thank you goes out to

## SPRING MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL *cont.*

Kelley Chaplin for lending us her table linens. Our top-notch planning/decorating committee for the Social was Emilia Sugiyama (President OPAWL), Kate Bonnaud Spain, Julie Shaw, Sandy Forkert, Andrea Blasco, Julie Maurer, Lisa Shuss and me. All these ladies made the event that much extra special. And a thank you goes out to Kelley Chaplin for lending us her table linens.

The delicious food was catered by Chef Abdul from [Chef's Catering & Events](#), located right here in Orange. To this day people are raving about the food. The buffet menu consisted of Tuscan chicken, Italian stuffed shells, mango & berry salad, steamed vegetable medley, dinner rolls, and yummy Tiramisu for dessert. He was so helpful and overjoyed to help us out that he gave us a significant discount due to our non-profit status. So, if you are looking to cater your next event, we highly recommend trying out our new friend, Abdul. The food was incredible!



Kate & Parisa Horning

Right after dinner, Donna Aidekman and Emily Neubert ran a 50/50 fundraiser and the lucky winner took home over \$600!! The beautiful floral arrangements were won by someone at each table. At the end, every guest was entered into a \$100 Visa card raffle provided by Jennifer Holland-Harpole. Kathy Manulkin was surprised as the lucky winner.

We are happy to report that our event brought in 28 brand new members. So far this year, the total membership count is 103 and represents a wonderful mix of new and existing members! Thank you to everyone on the planning, decorating, and clean up team for making this event so successful!

Lastly, we could not have had such a successful event without the generous donation of Chuck & Parisa Horning, who provided us the use of their spectacular home. To them, we give a BIG THANK YOU!

Stay tuned for our next event: Champagne Brunch!





# OPA FAMILY PICNIC & FAIR



*Come One! Come All! Come To The Fair!*



**What A Grand Day Is Planned For Adults & Kids!**

**Barbecue Lunch  
Kettle Corn, Cakewalk  
Cotton Candy!**

**Family Games, Fun Races,  
Bouncy Houses, & Kid Crafts**

**Local Community Groups  
Sponsoring Cake Walk, Petting  
Zoo, Jewelry Making  
& More**

**Vendors Selling Their Wares**

**Photo Opportunity  
To Take Home Memories**

*-And The List Keeps Growing  
As New Booths Join In The Fun.*

## OPAWL CAKEWALK June 4th

The League is sponsoring an old-fashioned carnival Cake Walk at the OPA picnic and fair.

Here's a quick description if you don't know what it is. Someone stands on a number then marches around the circle until the music stops. A number is drawn, and the lucky winner gets a cake! It's simple family fun at its best!

We will send out a separate message requesting the help we need. Watch for it soon. Here is a short list as we begin our planning. We'll need cakes and cookies, of course! We will need many helping hands to plan how we want to do the booth, as well as help with setting up, manning the booth, and taking it down. Needed are decorations, a banner "OPAWL CAKEWALK ~ GET YOUR CAKES HERE!", and other things that are to be decided. We hope you'll help. OPA is making this one of their big events and everyone will come. It will definitely be a fun time for everyone.



# PRESENTING THE OPAWL BOARD



Pictured from left to right, Kate Bonnaud Spain, OPA Board Liaison, Jennifer Holland Harpole, First Vice President, Julie Maurer, VP Communications, Donna Aidekman, Treasurer, Carolyn Aliotta, VP Membership, Sharon Butterfield, Secretary, Lisa Shuss, Sections Leader, and last, but not least, Emilia Sugiyama, President.

April 2<sup>nd</sup> Lauri Triggs  
 April 2<sup>nd</sup> Debra Welch  
 April 2<sup>nd</sup> Lynn Canton  
 April 7<sup>th</sup> Julie Maurer  
 April 7<sup>th</sup> Linda Mazzara  
 April 8<sup>th</sup> Rose Rock  
 April 9<sup>th</sup> Ann Webb  
 April 10<sup>th</sup> Kathy Manulkin  
 April 10<sup>th</sup> Bebe Russo  
 April 11<sup>th</sup> Andrea Furr  
 April 20<sup>th</sup> Lynda Stewart  
 April 26<sup>th</sup> Kirsten Murphy  
 April 27<sup>th</sup> Kristi Sambrano  
 April 29<sup>th</sup> Andrea Wood

May 3<sup>rd</sup> Sandy Forkert  
 May 7<sup>th</sup> Carolyn Aliotta  
 May 12<sup>th</sup> Cindy Nelson  
 May 19<sup>th</sup> Dona Mah  
 May 27<sup>th</sup> Jan Diaz  
 June 4<sup>th</sup> Sheree Haavik  
 June 9<sup>th</sup> Marion Levitt  
 June 10<sup>th</sup> Susie Nolen  
 June 14<sup>th</sup> Stephanie Stringer  
 June 27<sup>th</sup> Marcie Dial  
 June 27<sup>th</sup> Faith Grimm



*Spring Birthdays!*

# Section Spotlight ~ Bridge

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Donna Aidekman is the section leader and long-time member of the Bridge Section. She is warm and softspoken and puts you at ease right away. Bridge has been one of her passions for quite some time. She told me that, "Bridge is the game of generals." I was curious about that statement, so I did what we all do when we are curious, and I Googled it. I found this, "Bridge, the most popular card game in the world (played by an estimated 60+ million players) teaches you more about strategy and war than any other game can; even more than Chess. Bridge is considered more of a

strategic game than chess because unlike chess, Bridge is a team game and depends considerably on the subtleties of communication [and skillful deception]."

I visited the group at their last session in April. They meet every 3rd Monday of the month between 11:am to 3:pm at Moreno's Mexican Restaurant on Chapman, in Orange. When I arrived at their Monday meeting, I found two tables of four players contemplating their cards. To my surprise, there were several gentlemen included as substitutes. When I asked about that Donna threw up her hands and said, "We need more people!"



So if you are up for learning something new or are an experienced player looking to brush up skills, contact Donna at (714) 714-356-6545 or [djaidekman@aol.com](mailto:djaidekman@aol.com). She would love to talk to you. The group is dark this month but will start up again in June.

What I took away from my visit besides a tasty Mexican lunch, was that bridge is social, mentally challenging and skillfully deceitful. If you are ambitious and want to get started learning right away, check out the Tustin Senior Center for classes. I understand that for \$5 you get a beginner's book and a lifetime of classes!

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## Sections & Leaders

### **Bunco: *Looking For A Leader***

**Homestead & Garden: Pam Sapetto, (714) 815-7771**

**Literature: Kathy Manulkin, (714) 639-8686**

**Pickleball: Tess Breen, (714) 744-9269**

**Walkers & Dog Pack Walkers: Julie Shaw, (714)**

**Entertaining in Pearls: Emilia Sugiyama, (310) 569-4662**

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

**Hot Trotters: Sarah Nzala, (714) 478-0155**



# Remembering Sherrie Rouse

1960 ~ 2022

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Many in the League knew Sherrie for her quick smile and generous ways. She was always helping and joining in—a little powerhouse of energy in a petite body. She especially enjoyed outings and activities with the ladies in the Foodies, Gad-Abouts, and Bunco sections.

The world lost a lot at the passing of our “Little Bits.” Sherrie Rouse, a dear daughter, mother, sister, aunt and friend, passed into glory suddenly on March 18. Nicknamed “Little Bits” by her father, the late James Paino, she was a giant person in a tiny package. She is survived by her mother Shirley Paino; her children, James, Alex and Destiny; her two grandchildren, Dimitri and Riley; sister Jamie Paino Spence (Ron); brother Robert Paino (Leslie); sister, Julie Paino Montez (Steve); her entire in-law Rouse Family on the East Coast, as well as many loving nieces, nephews and wonderful friends.

She married the love of her life John Rouse, and moved to Sturbridge, Massachusetts, where she pursued her career, became a mom, and enjoyed living on their farm. At the passing of her beloved John, Sherrie and Destiny returned to Orange, where they settled into the community with involvement in the Orange Acres Backbreakers 4-H Club and Orange-Villa Park National Charity League. After Destiny went away to college, Sherrie enjoyed being a member of the Sunshine Gals, Santa Ana Elks Emblem Club, and was the Ronald McDonald House Chair for Tustin Lions Club. Most recently, Sherrie worked as a COVID screener at the Dialysis Center at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange.

Sherrie was a person with a strong faith, a winsome character and a giving nature. She had a silly laugh, an electric smile and a vibrant personality. What she lacked in height, she achieved in impact, as she showed care to anyone and everyone she met. She leaves behind an example of a person who did what she could, with what she had, and with a heart for those in need.

Sadly, our time with her was only for a Little Bit, as she passed at the age 61. With broken hearts, we say goodbye with a gratitude that comes from having embraced such a rare and precious treasure who lived unafraid to try to make her world a better place. We are all better for having loved her and are all challenged to live the kind of love she shared with everyone she met.

Sherrie’s memorial service [was] April 4 at 11 a.m. at Santa Clara de Asis Catholic Church. [...] In lieu of flowers, the family has asked donations to be made to World Central Kitchen, currently providing food to the refugees of Ukraine. Donations can be made online, [donate.wck.org](https://donate.wck.org) A “Little Bit” can go a long way!

#ChefsForUkraineInMemoryofSherrie.

– Article edited from the Foothills Sentry Newspaper





## Backstage With The Event Crew

*by Julie Maurer*

I have some entertaining stories to tell you. Stories that only those behind the scenes could know. They are created through comradery and laughter, making the best lasting memories. These are the times when friendships are made, and lives are enriched.

I can't recommend enough, how rewarding it is to volunteer your time and energy for a worthy cause and the Women's League fits that endeavor in every way. It takes very little to jump right in and your efforts, large or small, are prized and valued. So please take my words to heart and volunteer whenever you can. You won't be disappointed in the rewards you gain and the bonds you make. I can attest to that. I hope to see many of you--*Backstage at the next event!*



My hat is off to Emilia, Carolyn, and Andrea, creators of the table flowers. They were great. Were you totally fooled like I was to discover that they were made almost entirely of faux flowers?! I really wanted one, but alas, I wasn't of the chosen few to take one home. When I talked to the ladies crafting the florals, they wanted me to share one important insight. Freshly manicured nails are not a good idea when making floral arrangements, especially, when you have to cut chicken wire! If it wasn't for the champagne, they may have quit the project all together. Nice save, Emilia!

Kate shared that she had gone to the venue to check things out during the planning stages when she ran into the estate owner, Parisa Horning. Kate found her to be gracious and down to earth and was immediately put at ease. Then to her delight, the visit was made special when she was invited into the main house for an amazing grand tour. Kate also wanted to add, how impressed she was by the teamwork of the event crew. Everyone showed up on time, pulled their weight, and answered the call when extra help was needed. It was this can-do attitude along with enough helping hands that made things turn out so nice and run smoothly.

When I arrived at the hall to help with set up the morning of the event, the place was a bustle with activities. As anyone well knows who has helped with an event of this size, glitches are bound to happen. Directing the many tasks, Emilia and Carolyn were able to pivot expertly and find ways to smooth things out.



## BACKSTAGE *cont.*

I learned some very valuable things through the flurry of set up. When the little challenges happen, it's important to have a good attitude and most



importantly the right tools. I speak of Carolyn's masterful prep basket of glue, tape, and scissors, along with donuts, wine opener, Tylenol, and a good iron.

I have to share that we did have a few heart attack moments. While Lisa and Julie S., were busy filling what looked like hundreds of pink balloons, they would pop!! Mind you, they didn't sound like a normal balloon popping. Nope, not even close. Because the grand hall has high ceilings with stone walls and floors, they sounded more like gunshots. Some of us jumped at each startling explosion and others thought of diving under tables. It was a PTSD nightmare. I don't know how many balloons bit the dust, but it seemed like at least half. With the surviving balloons, Andrea and Emilia made a picture-perfect balloon arch at the entrance. It served as a wonderful photo opportunity, showcasing smiling guests as they entered.



We were making splendid headway with the setup, all the while, throwing jokes and laughter at each other--and even a donut or two. Julie S. and Carolyn set the tables, shuffling plates and chargers as expertly as dealers in a casino. Sharon and I manned the gift assembly line, making the cute little garden signs. I can't tell you how very glad I was to see Carolyn and Sandy setting up the most

crucial element of the entire social--the wine station.

I'd like to take a moment to shine a light on Carolyn and John Aliotta for generously donating cases of wine to help us enjoy the evening.



## Backstage, cont.



When all was prepped, we left for home to nap in exhaustion, followed by a little primping and preening. How Emilia pulled off her amazing transformation into the regal-gowned queen of the Social so quickly, I will never know. The woman is truly amazing!

With only minutes until showtime, we arrived back at the hall. It was Kate's job to set up the cold non-alcoholic beverages. We all crowded around in awe as she magically changed plain old lemonade into a thing of magical beauty using a secret ingredient. She called it lavender lemonade. It sounds lyrical, doesn't it? When Julie S. asked if it was going to turn everyone's mouth purple, we all laughed out loud visualizing that one.

During the meal I helped to replenish the cold drink bar. As I grabbed extra ice from the freezer, I was dismayed to find it had melted into a solid block. Oh, geez... What to do? Find an ice pick, of course! As I riffled through the drawers, a knife appeared. —cue, Alfred Hitchcock's Psycho music— Now, picture in your head how the scene played out. There was me, an empty wine glass, a slippery block of ice, and a deadly blade. Julie S. took



the picture just to confirm that I survived unscathed. . I was comforted later to realize that being a nurse, she might have been able to stitch me up.

You may have noticed me, bouncing around taking lots of photos. I was pretending to be the professional event photographer. My opinion is that everyone likes seeing themselves in photos. --Am I, right? And I wasn't going to disappoint. I had lots of fun clicking away, pursuing the perfect shot.



# PHOTOS ~ PHOTOS ~ PHOTOS!

To view all the event photos and download your favorites, you can visit our OPAWL Facebook page. Click on this link to take you there and don't forget to **Like** our page when you visit.



[Facebook Photo Album](#)

