

## MONTHLY WORKSHOPS

Ladue Chapel—Fireside Room  
2:00 to 4:00 pm  
unless otherwise noted  
Guests always welcome!

### May 10

Suzanne and Paul Lagomarcino will talk about their 5 month educational trip around the world with Semester at Sea.

### September 13

Basic Technology for Women.  
Speaker to be announced.

### November 15

St. Luke's Hospital presentation.  
Topic to be announced.

## OTHER DATES/EVENTS

### October 13

Annual Women of Worth dinner at the Missouri Athletic Club.

### October 6 through Nov 3

Financial Education Series

### December 13

Holiday fashion show and lunch.

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# OWL Newsletter

May 2011

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

It has been a busy time for OWL. Much is happening on the political front, and we are trying to keep our members and friends updated on issues that they need to know about so that they can take action. It is really important that we all let our congressmen and women know how we feel about any changes that are being considered.

We have had some excellent programs at our OWL meetings. Thanks to Sally Eaton for all her work in securing interesting speakers. There is one more program before we take a break for the summer. Do plan to join us on May 10 at Ladue Chapel for this special program presented by past Executive Director of OWL St. Louis, Suzanne Lagomarcino, and her husband, Paul. See additional information in the Coming Events section of this newsletter.

OWL is gearing up for the 2011 Women of Worth event. It will be held on Thursday, October 13 at the downtown Missouri Athletic Club. Nominations are now open, and the nomination form is available on-line at the OWL website [www.owlstlouis.com](http://www.owlstlouis.com). If you do not have computer access call the office at 314-989-0977 and we will mail you a nomination form. St. Louis is home to many women who should be recognized for their special contributions to the community. If you know someone that should receive this recognition NOMINATE her! There is much to be done to get ready for this event, and we would welcome anyone who wants to help to join the WOW committee. The first meeting is on May 2 at 1:00 pm at the Gatesworth in the third floor card room.

Plans are also underway for the Financial Education Series for Women. The dates for this five week series is on Thursday evenings October 6 through November 3. These classes are very informative and are a great way to learn about all aspects of financial management and gain confidence in your own decisions about money and insurance. The enrollment application will be on the OWL website in a month or so (call the office if you want an application mailed to you).

We always welcome new members. If you would like to join OWL complete the form on the last page of this newsletter and mail it to the OWL office. We look forward to seeing all of you at our programs throughout the year. Have a wonderful Spring!

Barbara McQuitty  
Executive Director



TRIBUTES, GIFTS  
MEMORIALS

**Gifts**

Lucy Lopata  
Edna Dell Weinel  
Helena Prophete  
Ruth Smith  
Divorce Support Group

**Memorial Gifts**

Dinorah Bommarito  
In Memory of :  
Amelia H. Aberastury

WELCOME TO OUR  
NEW OWL MEMBERS

Connie Kelly  
Betty Marver  
Debbie Irvin  
Sandy Anderson  
Malva Williams  
Carol Weir  
Hillary Friedman  
June Brown  
Geri Redden  
Sonja DiPaolo  
De Kaplan  
Stellie Siteman  
Lucy Lopata  
Amanda Murphy



## NATIONAL OWL ADVOCACY

### SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

As everyone knows Social Security and Medicare are under attack again as the national budget is being put together for passage. Without these programs millions of Americans, and especially older women, will live in poverty and without access to healthcare.

OWL encourages women of all age to participate in the budget debate taking shape in Congress. Particularly onerous are parts of GOP Congressman Paul Ryan of Wisconsin proposals.

The GOP budget resolution lays out a fast-track process which would force action on Social Security if there is a predicted shortfall in the funding within 75 years. There is no need to have a fast-track process for a problem that is so far in the future. We should deal with the funding problem, but in a deliberate manner.

GOP/ Ryan Social Security Proposal:

- Raises the retirement age gradually to 70, which is actually a benefit cut. For example, under the new proposal beneficiaries currently entitled to \$200/month at age 66 would get \$184/month if they retired at age 66.
- Cuts future Social Security benefits for everyone who earned more than \$27,000 a year.
- Rejects raising the cap on taxable earnings of workers earning more than \$106,800. By raising the cap Social Security's fiscal solvency can be extended without requiring benefit cuts.
- Allows workers under age 55 to divert some of their payroll tax to a private account. This proposal is similar to President Bush's attempt to privatize Social Security. Private accounts shift the risks of investing and longevity onto the individual, leaving our oldest citizens poorer than they are today.

GOP/Ryan Medicare Proposal:

- Privatizes Medicare for those currently 55 years of age and younger.
- Requires seniors to buy their own insurance with premium help from the government.
- Shifts the cost of increases in health care to individuals to save the government money.
- The proposal would leave older individuals and their families responsible for figuring out what plan is best, creating confusion and uncertainty.

*The GOP/Ryan proposals eliminate the security Medicare and Social Security have provided generations of older women and men. Congressman Ryan would replace them with programs that offer "help" but no assurances. As more of us live into our 90's and 100's and have fewer children to care for us, it is bad policy to leave the most vulnerable without a base they can count on.*

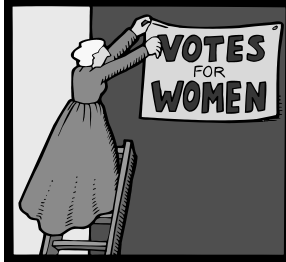
(The above article was provided by the National OWL organization)

## OWL DUES NOTICE

If you are an OWL member you may have received a letter a month or so ago notifying you of your dues owed for the remainder of this year. The amount could have been unusual as we are pro-rating dues to make them all come due in January 2012. It will make the whole organization run more smoothly as we will go through the dues process only once during the year. We have only a few members whose dues are still outstanding for 2011. If you are one of these we hope to hear from you soon. We are striving to grow our membership, and provide quality programs for all.

## PORTRAITS OF COURAGEOUS WOMEN

An informational service offered to the public by OWL is the presentation of skits about courageous women performed by appropriately costumed members of our organization. In recent years we have not done many of these presentations because we lack actors. In 2010 we did quite a nice presentation to a women's church group, where Bea Renna portrayed a Modern Woman, I played Mother Jones (the first U.S. female labor organizer and strike leader), and two other OWL members played Bella Abzug (attorney, congresswoman, founder of the Women's Political Caucus) and Eleanor Roosevelt (First Lady, representative to the UN). It was very entertaining and informative.



Each actor incorporates the character's "herstory" into a personalized message. Some of the people are well-known; others aren't, but should be. The focus is to remind us of past struggles that have paved the way for today's opportunities.

What an entertaining way to learn about brave women who accomplished much against great odds. We need to listen to the voices from the past lest we forget that the fight for women's equality has not yet been won.

We need both Caucasian and African-American women for these roles. Please help us out by calling Barb at the OWL office.

Ernie Edelmann

President of OWL, Gateway Chapter

Now we need more of you involved in this activity.

## SOCIAL SECURITY FACTS:

1. Social Security keeps 20 Million Americans out of poverty.
2. Social Security benefits cannot be **found** on the private market.
3. The Social Security program is solvent until 2037.
4. Social Security offers a guaranteed benefit - unaffected by the ups and downs of the stock market.
5. 88% of Americans say Social Security is more important than ever as a result of today's economic crisis.
6. Three quarters of Americans say it is critical to preserve Social Security even if it means that working Americans have to pay higher taxes to do it.
7. 90% of American want Congress to act within the next two years to preserve Social Security
8. Nearly half of current Social Security beneficiaries polled said that they wouldn't be able to afford the basics (food, clothing and shelter) without Social Security.
9. 48% of Americans 65 and older live at or below the 200% federal poverty level.
10. 45% of women living alone who are 65 or older are poor
11. The average Social Security benefit is \$13,800 a year. Women on average receive \$2000 less.
12. Half of couples 65 and older have no pension income to rely on.
13. Two thirds of singles 65 and older have no pension.

## OWL NEWSLETTER E-MAIL OPTION

We are now offering the option of receiving your OWL Newsletter via e-mail. Newsletters will still be mailed to those who don't use email. But, please seriously consider the email option as we will be able to save a lot of money on printing and postage. The ability to use color and not having to limit the number of articles and photos are other advantages of email newsletters.

If are able to receive your newsletter via email please send your email address to

**[v1014@sbcglobal.net](mailto:v1014@sbcglobal.net)**. Please use the following subject line with your email: **OWL NEWSLETTER EMAIL.**

## GATEWAY 180 INFORMATION

Dr. Martin Rafanan, Executive Director of Gateway 180 Homelessness Reversed, spoke to the OWL Board at their March meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways the St. Louis Chapter of OWL might partner with Gateway 180, which is the largest 24 hour emergency shelter for women and children in the state of Missouri. The shelter primarily serves families headed by young, single women and single women without children. On occasion, the shelter also accommodates single fathers and married couples. It is the only shelter that doesn't split up homeless families. On average, 95% of the adults are female and 60% of the total clients are children under the age of eleven.

More than 92% of homeless mothers have been abused sexually and/or physically during their lifetimes. Nearly half of all homeless mothers experienced sexual abuse as children. More than half were victims of physical violence as children. 44% of mothers lived outside their homes at some point during childhood. Of these women, 20% were placed in foster care. Foster care placement has been identified as a childhood risk factor that predicts family homelessness during adulthood.

Of homeless children, 74% worry they will have no place to live, 58% worry they will have no place to sleep and 87% worry something bad will happen to their family.

School age children work very hard to keep their homelessness a secret from their classmates so they will not be made fun of or ostracized.

The Gateway 180 staff works to empower their clients to create a "180" turnaround for their families. Their goal is to assist families in preparing the 12 documents that are needed to apply for transitional or permanent homes and to secure these homes in 30 days or less. The average length of stay for a family is 25 days. In 2010 approximately 400 women and children were placed into housing from Gateway 180's shelter. They work with a consortium of social service organizations in St. Louis to ensure their clients are prepared to live independently in the community when they move into their new homes.

On the third Friday of each month, Gateway 180 welcomes the community to the shelter for an educational luncheon and tour of the facility. Luncheons begin at 11:50 am and end promptly at 1 pm. Gateway 180 is located at 1000 North 19<sup>th</sup>, a few blocks north of Union Station. After meeting with Dr. Rafanan, several board members expressed an interest in attending a luncheon. If you are interested please contact Barb McQuitty at the OWL office and we will arrange a time convenient with everyone. Please plan to bring a friend or spouse with you.

## DIVORCE SUPPORT GROUP ENDS AFTER 20 YEARS

The OWL-sponsored Divorce Support Group was discontinued by its peer leadership team effective April 3, 2011. After twenty years of providing support to women facing separation or divorce after long-term marriages, the group experienced dwindling attendance as well as an insufficient number of new peer leaders to make it possible to continue Sunday meetings. We are proud to have been a resource and support for hundreds of women, and we wish to express our appreciation to the OWL Board and staff members who gave us significant support and assistance over the years.

## JOHN WEBER - Long-time Friend of OWL Passed Away

John Weber, husband of Past President Gloria Weber, passed away on March 26, 2011. Gloria and John's generosity contributed much to the growth and success of the Gateway Chapter of OWL in its early years.

In 1990, John provided the OWL organization space in his company office for meetings. Later, as need presented itself, Gloria offered the organization use of her home office and her personal secretary.

Gloria was offered a grant for the chapter that required OWL to have an Executive Director. She proposed a switch from her current position as President to Executive Director, and the Membership Chairperson completed Gloria's term as President. Gloria continued to volunteer for OWL until she decided to run for the Missouri Legislature as a State Representative. She campaigned, and was elected to that position.

The Gateway OWL Chapter went on to be recognized by the National OWL organization as the largest, most active and fastest growing chapter in the country. Much of the credit for the organizational growth is due to the early support and work of Gloria and her husband, John. He will be missed.

Bea Renna

## CELEBRATING WOMEN – Reinventing Ourselves After 50

OWL was a participant at the annual Celebrating Women event at the University of Missouri St. Louis. This event is a full day of information and fun for St. Louis women who are 50 plus. Many organizations had booths with information about their organizations and programs. In addition, vendors showcased clothes, jewelry and other products designed to pamper women.

Throughout the day, there were presentations on many topics, such as Long Term Care, Dealing with Depression, and a senior theatre group, ETC production. If you missed the event this year make a note on your calendar to watch for the dates of the 2012 event and plan to attend. Celebrating Woman is an informative and enjoyable event, and it is totally free, except for lunch, thanks to a grant from the Zonta Club of St. Louis.



## NEW OWL MEMBER STARS IN LOCAL PRODUCTION

Max and Louie Productions presents *The Lady With All the Answers* by David Rambo, drawn from the life and letters of Ann Landers with the cooperation of Margo Howard. This production stars **Stellie Siteman** as Ann Landers and is directed by Sydnie Grosberg Ronga. The play opens on Thursday, May 12th at the COCA Black Box Theater.

## 2011 WORKSHOP RECAP

- January: Geri Redden's presentation on Happy and Healthy Aging. Geri explained how exercise, rest and relaxation, nutrition, loving relationships, a life purpose, fun and laughter, and attitude all contribute to our health and happiness as we grow older.
- February: Dana Vouga of Vouga Elder Law, LLC presented eye-opening information about the difficulties than can occur if people do not properly take care of their legal and financial affairs as they grow older.
- March: Bob Lee from St. Louis County Workforce presented information on the "50 Plus Job Search."
- April: Lisa Shepley of Home Sweet Home conducted a workshop on Declutter and Downsize: How the Professionals Do It.

## HEALTHY SALAD RECIPE

### Black bean salad with lime cumin dressing:

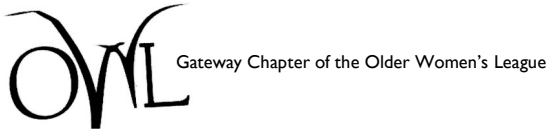
1 cup thinly sliced celery  
 ½ cup sliced red onion  
 2 15 oz cans black beans (rinsed and drained)

### Dressing:

¼ cup fresh lime juice  
 1 tablespoon sugar  
 1 tablespoon olive oil  
 ¼ teaspoon ground pepper  
 Cumin to taste

If you have an unusual or favorite recipe you would like to share email it to:

**v1014@sbcglobal.net with subject line: OWL Recipe**



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OWL's Mission: To address the special concerns of mid-life and older women through advocacy, education and empowerment.

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is the only grassroots organization dedicated entirely  
to addressing the concerns of mid-life and older women.

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2418 Northline Industrial Dr, Maryland Heights, MO 63043  
Or email: owlstlouis@sbcglobal.net Or call: 314-989-0977

- Enclosed is \$45.00 for my local and national membership dues.
- Enclosed is an additional contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

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