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THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND, INC.

*The Joy of  
Giving*



VOLUME 66, NUMBER 2

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# TUMBLEWEED

WINTER 2020

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# LETTER FROM ASSISTANT EDITOR



## *The League of Extraordinary Women*

2020, a year of challenges, but more importantly, a year of strength, determination, and will to push beyond our limits to take care of our family and our community. I have been in awe of the dedication and the love our Junior League has for those connections built within the Midland area and beyond. When facing a global pandemic, most of us have never seen one in our lifetime or have only watched it in the movies; the easy choice is to give up, be selfish, and focus on oneself. The Junior League of Midland is made up of women who are driven to help others, even with insurmountable odds. If this year has taught us anything about how the world has changed, it has taught us that we will prevail and simultaneously

help others as we continue to build our community and keep them strong through the toughest of times. Bring it on, 2021 (don't worry, I am knocking on wood).

Last year, it was incredible working as a mentor through Face The Race. My goal of helping these young girls gain confidence and grow was accomplished. Over the course of several weeks, I saw our small group of girls develop incredible friendships and gain a sense of mentorship. At the end of the program, I felt that these girls had the confidence to find another trusted adult if needed and knew they were never alone. Sometimes we see the changes instantly after volunteering, and most of the time, we probably don't realize that the little acts of kindness we do as a representative of the League lives on through the lives we've touched. If you ever feel like you are not making a difference through this pandemic, please think again. Supporting this group of extraordinary women is supporting the legacy of the League that continues to grow. We are making this community and world a better place for others and the next generation of Junior League of Midland members.

This year, my goal as your Assistant Editor of *Tumbleweed* is to bring a sense of calm, comfort, and support through the topic of mental health. The articles may not always impact you personally, but they may help someone you know who needs the advice or suggestions from the experts I interview.

The biggest thing I've learned through the pandemic is that it's essential to give yourself a little grace during these times. Self-care should be a number one priority for you and each member of your family. Some weeks can be more challenging than others, but trust in yourself because there is an entire group of women who are here for you no matter what. This League is family, a sisterhood, and a group of leaders I am proud to serve my community with. I want you all to know that you are never alone and that if you need anything, please reach out.

I am always open to suggestions for mental health article topics; this month's article is focused on the holiday season. "The year of paper plates and red solo cups" has never been more true. A year to focus on the importance of family and less on the production of the holidays. I hope you enjoy the article. I treasure your friendship and support. I hope you all have a wonderful Thanksgiving and holiday season! Please stay safe, and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Best Wishes,

AMANDA MASON

**TUMBLEWEED ASSISTANT EDITOR  
THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND, INC.**

Amanda Mason is a morning anchor, reporter, and producer at ABC Big 2 News. Amanda has been a Junior League member for three years, joining the Junior League of Bakersfield, California, before transferring to this League. A native Texan, Amanda is happy to be back in her home state. She is a dedicated volunteer and last year served as a mentor for Face The Race and is an advocate for the American Heart Association, Veterans Assistance Organizations, and Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

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The Junior League of Midland, Inc. is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

## VISION STATEMENT

Hand in Hand, We Build a Better Midland

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## ON THE COVER

"The Joy of Giving" embodies the joy one receives when finding the perfect gift for your loved ones. This year we invite you to think outside of the proverbial gift box and consider small and local businesses. Extend the idea further by considering a donation to Junior League of Midland through The Joy of Giving program. This donation in a loved one's honor will not only support the vital community projects of the League, but further the idea and importance of giving during this time of year.

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# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



*Heather Martin is serving as Executive Vice President for the 2020-2021 League year. Heather is an 8<sup>th</sup> year Active and has the unique opportunity of being on both the Board and the Management Team. This dual position bridges the relationship between League's leadership and operations teams. Heather's commitment to the League is evident in the success of our League's ability to continue to serve Midland and develop new outreach opportunities, like a partnership with Educate Midland during this year's pandemic and the ever-changing obstacles that have come with it.*

As we continue to navigate the Coronavirus pandemic and recommendations continue to evolve, The Junior League of Midland, Inc. remains focused on members, community partners, staff, and the local community.

The pandemic has shaken communities around the world. It has become cliché, but we have found ourselves navigating unprecedented circumstances and uncharted territory. Our lives, and League, look much different than they did seven months ago. Our world has changed, and our League has been forced to follow in its footsteps.

The Management Team has taken many steps to support and encourage our members and community as we adapt to the challenges we currently face. We have diligently worked to develop contingency plans to safely serve program participants and support League partners and volunteers.

As a nonprofit that prides itself in mentoring women and children, we've shifted many of our programs to a virtual format. This has proved quite challenging as mentoring virtually is a difficult task. Through it all, our community programs have continued to thrive.

Face the Race, our mentoring program designed to increase self-esteem and confidence in junior high girls, and I.M.P.A.C.T., our mentoring program designed to empower at-risk freshmen girls to graduate high school with their peers, have shifted from in-person mentoring to Facebook Live. A challenging yet rewarding change that has allowed our League to reach both young girls and adult women outside the walls of the four Midland Independent School District junior highs. The Facebook Live feeds have given the League a platform to connect with anyone within reach of our page.

Suits with Skills, our mentoring program designed to help domestic abuse survivors break free from repression to lead self-sufficient and healthy lives, has shifted to a hybrid program to reach additional participants. Our committee continues to offer in-person sessions at our Junior League Headquarters, while also providing a Zoom option to those unable to attend in-person.

Reading Olympics, our mentoring program designed to instill a love of reading in elementary-aged students, has also been modified. The program is utilizing a Zoom format, encouraging a fun atmosphere of reading, and providing popular children's books to participants on a weekly basis.

Pink Pantry, our program designed to make basic hygiene supplies available to students in need at MISD secondary schools, has continued to distribute supplies to local campuses while also expanding our reach and offering supply bags through MISD food distribution sites.

Volunteers in Midland, our program designed to provide volunteers to local nonprofits, continues to offer a wide variety of volunteer opportunities, both in-person and virtual, to accommodate member needs and preferences in addition to supporting the Midland community.

Our spring fundraiser, Farm to Table(aux) has shifted to a hybrid event offering sponsors, donors, League members, and the community an opportunity to support the fundraising event virtually while gathering among small groups of friends or family. Virtual tables will allow groups of 10 to gather at a home of their choice, and the League will provide the group with food, beverages, décor, and gift bags.

All these modifications of our programs and fundraisers may seem alarming. Change is hard! But I view the change as an opportunity for the League to branch out, furthering our influence and mission. It has allowed us to reach members of the community beyond our partners and outside the county lines. We have been introduced to a broader community, and that has allowed us to have conversations with those that genuinely need our services and support. It opened the eyes of our League to see a bigger picture, and we recognize the additional needs we can meet as an organization of women.

So much has changed, but through adversity, we have found the simple truth that we are all in this together. Determination, generosity, and the spirit of voluntarism are needed more than ever as we walk through these challenging times. Despite the pandemic, I am confident that by continuing to be positive in the face of uncertainty, we will have a successful and meaningful year.

As a League and community, it is important for us to be patient and flexible. Offer grace. Encourage each other, and above all, "Keep Going, Keep Growing."

*Heather Martin*

HEATHER MARTIN

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND, INC.



# LEARN CREATIVELY

You can choose from a variety of Schools of Choice based on your child's specific needs — from theatre and dance at Bowie Fine Arts Academy to hands-on STEM at the Young Women's Leadership Academy. Learn more at [midlandisd.net/apply](http://midlandisd.net/apply).



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## Making a Greater I.M.P.A.C.T

For the first time ever, I.M.P.A.C.T. has gone entirely virtual!

I.M.P.A.C.T (Inspiring Mindful Progress in Academics & Community Together) is the League’s mentoring program designed to empower at-risk freshmen girls to graduate high school with their peers. Originally offered at Midland Freshman, the program expanded to the Lee Freshman campus, and is now being offered virtually via Facebook Live to accommodate Midland Independent School District’s (MISD) COVID-19 restrictions for campus visitors.

Committee members were quick to adapt to the current challenges in place due to COVID-19, and crafted a plan that has, in turn, allowed for more young women within our community to benefit from this mentoring program.

Each week mentoring sessions are broadcast live through the Junior League of Midland’s official Facebook page. A special guest speaker joins committee members to discuss various topics specific to the growth and wellbeing of the young women in our community. Guest speakers have included League members, as well as working women outside of our League.

Brittany Everett, Chairman for I.M.P.A.C.T. Lee Freshman, said, “As Chairman of I.M.P.A.C.T. Lee Freshman, I’ve been thrilled to see how quickly we could adapt to these changes while making the best of the situation at hand. Leading the way with the first virtual I.M.P.A.C.T., I’m proud to get to be a part of implementing an adjusted program so that the next placement can start strong using the format we created. My Assistant Chairman, Mona Keller, has been tackling these challenges head-on with me and we’ve had amazing support from Management throughout the entire process.” Everett continued, “We are looking forward to working with the Communities in Schools of the Permian Basin (CISPB) rep and school counselors to identify the girls most in need at Lee and Midland Freshman.”



I.M.P.A.C.T Lee Freshman Chairman Brittany Everett and I.M.P.A.C.T. committee member and guest speaker Gwendolyn Taylor lead a Facebook Live session for program participants.

All sessions are recorded and available to view through the Junior League of Midland’s I.M.P.A.C.T. event page found on Junior League of Midland’s official Facebook page under Events.

Topics discussed this fall and their corresponding dates were:

September 22  
COVID-19/Health

October 20  
Careers

September 29  
Pink Pantry

November 3  
Healthy Habits

October 6  
Women’s Health

November 10  
College

October 13  
Domestic Violence and  
Healthy Relationships

November 17  
Human Trafficking



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what your impact looks like,  
and sometimes, it's easy.

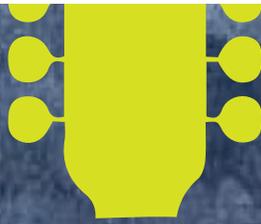


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# Farm to Table(auX)<sup>®</sup>

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LIVE BROADCAST



By Mary Susan Hunter

# FARM TO TABLE(AUX)

## Rockin' and Rollin' into the New Year - Farm to Table(aux) Takes the JLM Annual Fundraiser up to 11

The Farm to Table(aux) Committee has been working hard to adjust the newest Junior League of Midland fundraising event to a hybrid experience.

Scheduled for March 20, 2021, the event will focus on bringing art to life and bringing the community together, two things that are definitely more challenging in these times but needed more than ever.

Instead of sponsoring tables as one would for an in-person event, participants are encouraged to have smaller house parties with groups of ten or so to come together to eat, drink, and view the online event broadcast. Local restaurants will create food and drink packages that will be delivered to each house-party. The packages will include activities to go along with the broadcast creating an interactive event from home.

Jennifer Steadman, Farm to Table(aux) Chairman, said, "We are definitely looking forward to the art auction, which will feature Texas artists, and the Mystère Box raffle. The raffle prize is a surprise that will be revealed during the live broadcast and will be valued between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

"There will only be 100 raffle tickets, and each will be \$100. Be sure to get a ticket early before they sell out!

"The art auction preview and tickets will be on sale starting March 10th. In addition to the art auction, there will be another online auction with various items ranging from gift baskets to trips.

"Rock and Roll" is the theme this year, and all participants are encouraged to dress up and come together to eat, drink, and dance during this new fundraising virtual event!"

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## The Year of the Paper Plates and Red Solo Cups



The holidays are fast approaching, and this year everything might look different.

"It doesn't have to be the Hallmark Christmas. It can be paper plates or red solo cups that you throw away," Executive Director and therapist at the Centers for Children and Families, Kristi Edwards said. "This year, it's going to be about, if we can be together, we are going to enjoy each other as much as we can and not put on a production."

Centers for Children and Families is a non-profit focused on making families strong and healthy since 1957.

Edwards, like many other families, understands that these times are incredibly challenging. This holiday, there may be fewer presents because of unemployment, or grandparents won't make it for dinner because of travel and safety concerns. Many families this year may also struggle with putting food on the table for a large meal.

THERE ARE THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAKE THIS YEAR SIMPLE, FUN, AND ENJOYABLE:

### PLAN

Have a plan for this year's changes

### DELEGATE

Give everyone a job

### FOCUS

On the importance of family

## PLAN

Start making a plan now for COVID interruptions. "Don't assume that the veil will lift, and COVID will be over," said Edwards. Plan as if there are still going to be safety protocols and restrictions. If the family can't be together this year, plan to connect on Zoom, FaceTime, or through a phone call. Edwards suggests to plan to cook turkeys simultaneously over Zoom or ask each family member over Zoom to share what they are grateful for.

"Maybe this year Grandma and Grandpa say the blessing for everyone over Zoom," said Edwards.

"Be as prepared as possible and don't leave much up to chance, that way there is not that huge crushing disappointment. My Mom is 85 and my Dad is 90, and of course they are hungry to see someone right now, but I don't want to hold out hope until the week before Thanksgiving that it's going to look like it does every year. I have to prepare them so that it might not look the same, but we are not just going to ignore Thanksgiving."

KRISTI EDWARDS

If you are tight on cash this year, plan your budget or ways to reach out for help.

"I always tell parents, don't be too proud. Several places make sure kiddos get Christmas, so reach out to United Way and churches. Just say, 'this is affecting everyone and for this year I am going to be grateful to live in the Permian Basin where we take care of our own' and let your kids get a gift or two," said Edwards.

## DELEGATE

This year put the fine china and crystal glasses away - keep it simple. One way to do that is to give everyone a job so you can enjoy the holidays. Edwards said, "If you are hosting the dinner, don't be a martyr, delegate a task to each person."

"Everybody has that dish that they bring. My Mom always makes the turkey and the dressing because that's her strong suit - so nobody is overwhelmed with anything. You just bring it and put it on the table, and we eat it, and you take home the leftovers, or everyone goes home with something, and then the clean-up is done," said Edwards.

If you have children of all ages, put the older children to work by creating games outside, or you could have them watch over the little ones.

## FOCUS

This is the year to focus on your family getting together. "So, at my house for every gathering, I put a little chalkboard by the door that says 'In this house, at this time, we will not discuss: politics, religion or other people's children,'" said Edwards.

"We don't have to be a Norman Rockwell painting. Hopefully, by this time, we realized the human connection and the love that we have as families is more important than putting on a show."

KRISTI EDWARDS

Having simple rules upfront helps you divert uncomfortable or stressful conversations that may come up over dinner. There's always that one crazy uncle who wants to push your buttons, but Edwards says it's essential not to give in and politely say those topics are off-limits.

We hope you have a beautiful holiday and know that the Junior League of Midland is here for you and so is Centers for Children and Families. Centers is now extending their free services and offering free counseling to veterans, their families, first-responders, and essential workers. Never be afraid to reach out for help.

If you are ever feeling overwhelmed, you can always contact the

Emergency Crisis Hotline that is available 24/7 at

(844) 420-3964.

## Educate Midland

### Current Volunteer Opportunities for JLM Members

#### EDUCATE MIDLAND

Volunteers are needed to help tutor junior high students virtually in reading and math.

*Tuesdays from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.*

#### JUBILEE CENTER

A client choice food pantry servicing approximately 1300 people per month.

*Opportunities are available for shelf-stocking on Fridays and assisting clients with shopping on Saturdays.*

#### KIDS FIRST

A supervised visitation program that provides a safe and conflict-free space for children to build and maintain a bond with their non-custodial parents.

*Thursdays 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.*

#### MISSION AGAPE

Services include delivering food to area schools for students who do not have access to meals on the weekends.

*Thursdays from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.*

#### THE RECORDING LIBRARY OF WEST TEXAS

Dedicated to improving the lives of people who cannot access the printed word, the Recording Library offers audio versions of various media to the visually impaired. In addition to aiding the visually impaired, the Recording Library also offers services for dyslexic individuals and others with learning disabilities or mental and physical impairments.

*Mondays from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.*

COVID-19 has changed the way we live our daily lives. From Zoom calls, to at-home workstations, to virtual learning, Midland has adapted to life during the pandemic along with the rest of the nation. While some new routines and adaptations may go by the wayside once the pandemic is under control, undoubtedly, some diamonds in the rough will emerge and prove to be long-lasting improvements for our community.

Perhaps one of these success stories will be Educate Midland's 1 to 1 Focused Learning tutoring program. At the outset of the pandemic, virtual classes provided a mechanism for learning when physically attending school was no longer an option. But for students who depended on one-on-one instruction, this shift left a considerable gap. While students are returning to the classroom, volunteers are still not permitted on campuses.



Educate Midland's mission is to "empower and align the whole community by connecting people, ideas, and resources to create opportunities for all students to achieve their highest educational potential." Earlier this year, JLM Sustainer, Christine Foreman, accepted a board position with the organization and has used her experience advocating for students. She has also used her combined knowledge of community resources to help them think outside the box with their existing programs. Initially started by a parent, a volunteer, and an Educate Midland Board Member, Laurie Boldrick, 1 to 1 has become a successful mentoring and tutoring program and become a valued part of multiple secondary MISD campuses. Adaptation and flexibility will help move the 1 to 1 program to a virtual format.



Tutors with the Educate Midland program can now support students via Google Classroom. Volunteers are trained on the platform prior to their first session and easily log in for face-to-face interaction with the students. In addition, Educate Midland is working with several retired teachers to find success with this similar model, tutoring, and reading to elementary students who need extra help.

In discussing the benefits of the new platform, Foreman noted, "This virtual 1 to 1 model offers a solution to students in need of help now and an array of benefits for the long-term. Most importantly, it opens the door to many more willing volunteers who perhaps could not previously make the travel and time commitments to participate. It provides a model that is easily replicated at numerous campuses. And for the tutors, more prep time will be afforded to them as lessons can be uploaded to the platform before the session."



**LEFT**  
Tammy Brewer helped VIM deliver candy for Midland County Library's drive-thru Trunk or Treat on October 25. Candy was donated by League members to support this event.

**RIGHT**  
Alexis Leggett and Ellecia Randle volunteer with Mission Agape through the VIM community project. Mission Agape distributes kid-friendly food bags through MISD to children who are identified as food vulnerable to assist through the weekend and summer.



# Holiday Traditions

By Andra Lancaster Jones

JLM MEMBERS SHARED A FEW OF THEIR FAVORITE HOLIDAY TRADITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PASSED DOWN AND CONTINUED TODAY.

## Brittany Crowley

Active and *Tumbleweed* Assistant Editor

"In my family, my mom, aunt, and I run/walk the Houston Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning. We've been doing this for years and up until I moved to Midland in 2016, we did the big holiday races: Independence Day Race, Turkey Trot for Thanksgiving, and a "Santa Hustle" in December."



## Candice Kendrick

President

"Our tradition on Christmas Eve is to attend church services, look at Christmas lights, read the story in the Bible about the birth of Jesus, make cookies for Santa, and sprinkle reindeer food out on our lawn."



## Andra Lancaster Jones

Active and *Tumbleweed* Reporter

"Our family celebrates with the German tradition of finding the "Christmas Pickle" ornament hidden in the Christmas Tree. The person who finds it gets a special present and it symbolizes good luck for the following year."



## Jaimie Sloan Warren

Active and *Tumbleweed* Editor

"I really enjoy listening to A Charlie Brown Christmas by Vince Guaraldi in the car with my children. It's so peaceful and heartwarming during a time when life can be hectic. I can actually listen to this album all year long!"



## Hailey Buckles

Active and Nominating Committee Member

"For Thanksgiving every year, instead of preparing a traditional turkey, we grill homegrown steaks. At Christmastime, our family always hosts a big holiday party for friends and family. Santa comes and delivers presents to the kids!"



## *Holiday Hosting and Decorating with Kristi Leeper*

Upon meeting Kristi Leeper over four years ago, I found an instant friend. She is warm, hospitable, and a true hostess with the mostest. She is the type of person you spend one evening with and you feel like she has been in your life for years. She and I connected through our work with the students of Midland Independent School District. Leeper is an instructional coach at Midland Freshman High School. She shows her love daily through this position that allows her to impact and advocate for students and educators.

Kristi's warm personality is evident in her other passions. She is a trained florist, baker, and decorator. In recent years, her handiwork in holiday decorating started popping up on my social media feed. In preparation for the holiday season, I chatted with Leeper about tips and tricks her business as a holiday decorator has taught her.

---

### ***How long have you been decorating for others?***

Eighteen years, I actually started as a means to pay my way through college and found not only did I love it, but it came naturally to me.

### ***Do you mix the fall/Christmas or are you a strict-Christmas after Thanksgiving decorator in your own home?***

I never mix - I am a strict after Thanksgiving Christmas decorator. Fall is really my favorite season and the colors. Personally, I'm all red and green for Christmas, so mixing the two-color palettes would be off-putting.

### ***What time of year do you start decorating for others?***

By the second week of November, I'm working. I calendar out according to the desire of the client. I also schedule takedown at the same time, as most clients want me to pack and reorganize from year to year.

### ***How do you find time to decorate for others and be an educator?***

Weekends and evenings mainly, but I've been known to take a planned personal day depending on need.

### ***I notice some clean/minimalist holiday styles and then some styles that have so many decorations you hardly see the Christmas Tree. What is your personal style?***

I have a lot of ornaments, but my tree is not themed, nor does it have the bows and other elaborate trimmings I do for others. My ornaments are all memories of places, family, vacations, gifts, etc. Kind of a lovely hodgepodge of fantastic remembrances.

### ***Do you notice that clients stick more to themes based on color, objects (Santa/snowmen), or a mix?***

It is really a personal preference. With some clients I use their existing items, we might add to or refresh, but they mainly don't have the time to get everything up. I'm the laborer. Others I work with want full service: sourcing the items and planning decorations based on their colors/themes in their house or a specific room. My job is to cater to the wants and needs of my clients.

### ***What personal touches do you add to your designs that sets you apart from other decorators?***

I pride myself on really listening and finding ways to use beloved holiday decorations in new ways. Whether that means making your grandmother's bird ornaments into a fanciful wreath or nestling in that old Santa into a gorgeous tablescape. I want to help showcase what you love.

### ***Where do you search for inspiration (blogs, social media, designers)?***

I look at magazines and of course, watch web trends. Plus, it helps to get to know my client's personality and style so I can research that and spin it for the holidays.

### ***About how long do you spend on each of your jobs with clients? Is it indoor, outdoor, a mix?***

Usually, a day or two actually decorating, but there is a lot of prep time prior to that. I do outside doorways and large urns too for all seasons. Once again as in all things, flexibility is key.

### ***What is your advice on buying decor? Should one focus on quality, quantity, or building a collection year after year?***

On buying decor, buy what you love or that moves you. While I love a quality, sturdy tree, and amazing ribbons, you can make a beautiful tree out of anything. I love a collection of things and I've found the best time to do that is after Christmas during sales.

### ***Do you have a holiday theme/collection in your own personal decor that you follow?***

I collect scooter ornaments since I own an old school blue scooter. I have a plethora of cross ornaments and tiny nativities and I'm more whimsical in my design aesthetic. If I could give any decorating advice it is - details are where it is. I make sure a tree is perfectly shaped before I decorate. If I'm lighting a tree, I work the lights in an up and down fashion on the branches so there are no visible cords and every tiny sticker on the light cords must be removed. If an ornament does not hang right, wind the hanging cord to adjust the position. God is in the details and many times I think these little things make a difference between professional and non-professional results.



**K Leep Decorating**

Kristi Leeper, Owner  
(325) 716-9402





By Jaimey Sloan Warren

Stacy Grosse and Claire Ramirez, the owners of Pop Spot, Midland's premier pop-up shopping event company, shared their curated selection of vendors to check off those hard to shop for loved ones on your shopping list!

Pop Spot was first launched in 2016 by Stacy, who saw an opportunity to bring one-of-a-kind brands to Midland as a monthly trunk show and needing a creative outlet while being a new mom. This launched a brand that is now a shopping destination. The brand was further developed with Claire's partnership in 2018 where she was able to utilize her years of corporate, political, and retail event planning experience to expand their presence in the community. They have developed their original vision of a unique and elevated shopping experience to their hometown into a thriving not-to-be-missed event!

While both are experts at shopping and pros at throwing parties, Stacy and Claire, longtime friends who met while attending Midland Classical, have really leaned into their Midland community. They are continuously encouraged by the support the community has provided them since their first event.

The first Midland Pop Spot event showcased five vendors and was set up on the ground floor of The Midland Tower building and has rapidly grown to include over 100 vendors at their most recent November event held at the Bush Convention Center in downtown Midland. "Our growth is due to the amazing support of both the Midland and Odessa communities," said Claire. "We want to give back to the community that has been so generous to us."

Outside of their personal contributions to the Junior League, both Stacy and Claire have expanded their connection with the community through Pop Spot by donating a portion of their profits to various non-profits and community organizations including Habitat for Humanity, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Midland Children's Rehabilitation Center, Midland Police Department, and the West Texas Food Bank.

As business partners and friends, Stacy and Claire have learned that communication is key in working both together, with vendors, and with sponsors. "Our relationship has evolved and with it we have grown, which is key to the Pop Spot brand," said Stacy. "We love working together and have the same common goals for Pop Spot – promoting small businesses while creating a unique experience for our customers."

@MIDLANDPOPSHOT



## PopSpot Holiday Vendors!

**POP SPOT OWNERS STACY GROSSE AND CLAIRE RAMIREZ HAVE SELECTED SOME OF THEIR FAVORITE VENDORS TO HIGHLIGHT DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON.**

### **IN-LAWS** *"The Host and Hostess"*



#### **CUSTOM TEA TOWELS**

Elegant in design, Mockingbird Sewing not only offers custom embroidery services, but also operates as a certified sewing machine service, maintenance and repair company.

@MOCKINGBIRDSEWING

#### **ONE-OF-A-KIND ORNAMENT**

Outside of their line of textiles and oushak rugs, these ornaments give a creative light to your home and tree.



@MILAGROCOLLECTIVE



## KIDS "The Young Adventurer"

### TEXAS THEMED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Showcasing Texas trailblazer and legends in a colorful way; these books are engaging for all young and old.



@BABYBYDESIGN



### I-SPY BLOCKS

These unique, handcrafted sensory toys provide hours of learning and fun.

@HAPPI\_CRAFTS



## HUSBAND "THE SPORTSMAN"

### HOMETOWN HATS

Each Hometown Hat design is meant to showcase the nature in and around each hometown; represent your town with these unique hats.



@HOMETOWNHATSCO



### CUSTOM BOOTJACKS

Customized metal bootjacks made to last a lifetime.

@CUSTOMMETALBOOTJACKS



## BOSS "THE CONNOISSEUR"

### MADE-TO-ORDER LEMON BARS

Delivered HOT! This unique gift can satisfy the biggest of sweet-tooths while giving a warm home cooked feel.



@BIRDIESBITESMIDLAND



## BFF "The Woman that has Everything"

### CUSTOM COASTERS

Tart pours their love into creating unique resin coasters and trays. Their standard pieces are showstoppers as well, blending pop art and decor.



@TART\_BYTAYLOR



### TEQUILA

Flecha Azul Tequila, an ultra-premium tequila, is dedicated to celebrating centuries of history, tradition and craftsmanship authentically from Jalisco, Mexico.

@FLECHATEQUILA



### MINI-CANVAS ORIGINAL ARTWORK

Tulsa artist Samantha Jezek offers colorful one-of-a-kind pieces of art for your one of a kind friend.

@SJEZEKARTULSA



# The Joy of Giving

Looking for a unique last-minute holiday gift? Why not donate to The Junior League of Midland, Inc. in honor of your best friend, loved one, or co-worker! Your donation can be directed to the community project of your choice or to the Annual Fund helping us further our influence and mission!

For each donation, your gift will be acknowledged with a holiday card and sent to the recipient of your choice - no wrapping or shipping required!

## FACE THE RACE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND

A mentoring program designed to increase self-esteem and confidence in junior high girls, with a fundamental focus on physical health and well-being. This program ends with a 5K race in which participants, mentors, and community come together.

## I.M.P.A.C.T. JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND

A mentoring program designed to empower at-risk freshmen girls to graduate high school with their peers through engaging relationships with JLM mentors.



**READING OLYMPICS**  
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND

An after school mentoring program designed to instill a love of reading in elementary-aged students. Through this program, we are able to provide participants free books to take home and share with their families.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND  
**SUITS with SKILLS**

A job-skills mentoring program designed to help domestic abuse survivors and other under-served women develop skills that will lead to a self-sufficient and healthy life.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND  
**PINK PANTRY**

A needs-based program designed to provide free, basic hygiene supplies to students at MISD secondary schools. By providing students with these essential items, attendance and confidence have increased for those needing assistance.

**VOLUNTEERS IN MIDLAND**  
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND

A community-focused program designed to provide JLM volunteers to local nonprofits supporting the Midland community including Kids First, the Jubilee Center, Mission Agape, Teen Court, and the Recording Library of West Texas.



## To Donate

Access the "Donate" button on the JLM web page:

[www.jlmidland.org](http://www.jlmidland.org)

Contact Jamie Goodgame at The Junior League of Midland, Inc. main office:

432-682-4732  
[office@jlmidland.org](mailto:office@jlmidland.org)



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# Junior League of Midland Gift Guide

Many of our Active members are entrepreneurs who have grown their retail or service-based brand through the growth and development opportunities provided during their service in the Junior League of Midland. Please consider buying JLM this holiday season!

By Jaimey Sloan Warren

## For the Beauty Enthusiast



**Color Me Beautiful Airbrush Tans by Mandy Gregg**



Give the gift of glow with a gift certificate from Color Me Beautiful Airbrush Tans! Mandy Gregg, a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Active and owner, said, "I want to make ALL women feel like the best versions of themselves with a healthy glow!" Color Me Beautiful Airbrush Tans specializes in crafting a beautiful, natural glow within a 15 minute session. From a one time tan for an event or party to a weekly tan package deal, Color Me Beautiful Airbrush Tans has you covered!

@CMBTANS COLOR ME BEAUTIFUL AIRBRUSH TANS

## For the Home Designer



**Milagro Collective Modern and Vintage Oushak Rugs Bridget Green**



After purchasing their first home, Bridget Green, a 4<sup>th</sup> year Active, found herself buying new rugs every two or three months, but found they would fall apart or fade quickly. When Bridget started looking into quality, handmade rugs, all the options out there were insanely expensive! That prompted the search and Bridget started contacting hundreds of vendors overseas to purchase rugs directly, rather than paying a wholesale markup within the U.S. A few roue Western Union wire transfers later and Milagro Collective was formed. "I love being able to bring affordable, high end pieces to our community and want my customers to feel like they got an amazing deal on a quality product," Bridget said.

@MILAGROCOLLECTIVE MILAGROCOLLECTIVE.COM

## For the Bauble Collector with a Purpose



**Taylor Made in MTX**

**Taylor Shorb, Jewelry**



Taylor Made in MTX is a line of bracelets made with a purpose. Started as a hobby by 6<sup>th</sup> year Active, Taylor Shorb, making bracelets for herself while working from home at the beginning of the COVID19 pandemic, Taylor has turned this into a thriving business. "When everything shut down, I decided I would try to sell them to friends and family with the purpose of donating the proceeds to the YMCA of Midland, which was only operating a childcare program for essential workers at the time, many of whom couldn't afford the tuition," Taylor said, "Within a month I was able to donate \$1,000 and decided to run with the success and make it a real business!"

@TAYLORMADEINMTX TAYLOR MADE IN MTX

## For the Money-Minded



**Edward Jones Investments**

**Keri Vaught, Financial Gifts**



Keri Vaught, a financial advisor with Edward Jones Investments, suggests a financial gift or 529s as a great seed gift this holiday season to grow a bright financial future! Keri is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Active who has been integral in member trainings focused on financial literacy. Keri said, "I love being able to help educate League members in empowering themselves and their families to build confidence in their financial plan."

(432) 684-3955  
EDWARDJONES.COM/KERI-VAUGHT

## For the One that has Everything

**McDarling Boutique, LLC**

**Maggie McDaniel, Customized Gifts**



McDarling Boutique LLC is a custom design boutique – if you can dream it, we can make it! Offering both McDarling Boutique original designs as well as digitizing custom designs, the possibilities are endless including embroidery, ornaments, stamps, cutting board engraving, and marble etching. Owned by 2<sup>nd</sup> year Active and current *Tumbleweed* reporter, Maggie McDaniel, she and her husband developed the business after having so much fun picking custom designs while planning their wedding. With the extra time at home this year, Maggie and her husband started making

customized gifts for friends and loved the joy it brought the recipient; they decided to develop this interest into a business.

"The Junior League of Midland has taught me the closeness of the Midland community. People are very supportive of small businesses and enjoy having the personal touch of working with people they personally know," said Maggie.

@MCDARLINGBOUTIQUE MCDARLINGBOUTIQUE.COM





## Lobster Linguine

Submitted by Anita Gamertsfelder, Sustainer

### Family Recipe

This is my family's favorite Christmas lunch, and they request it each year. I love it because it only uses two pans, and it comes together quickly after a morning opening presents. The lobster makes everyone feel special and it makes for a memorable meal – and it is even red and green! I buy the pack of (3-4) lobster tails that HEB has ready to go for the holidays – no need to get the live ones for this recipe. This dish, with a bottle of champagne, is a great way for all to be merry at Christmas!

### INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1/2 teaspoon salt	1 cup baby arugula, roughly chopped
2 slices bacon, chopped	2 cups tomato puree	1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, roughly chopped
2 shallots, minced	1/4 cup cream	1/4 cup fresh tarragon leaves, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped	1 pound linguine	1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes	1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan	3-4 lobster tails with the shell

### STEP 1

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the lobster tails in the water until cooked through. Set aside until cool enough to handle.

### STEP 2

Heat a large straight-sided skillet over medium heat. Add the olive oil and bacon and cook until the bacon is beginning to crisp for 8 minutes. Add the shallots, garlic, and red pepper flakes and cook for an additional 3 minutes, until fragrant. Add the salt, tomato puree, and cream; stir to combine. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes.

### STEP 3

Remove lobster meat from the shells and rough chop.

### STEP 4

Cook the linguine for 1 minute less than the package instructions, about 10 minutes. Using tongs, remove the pasta from the water and add it directly to the pan with the sauce.

### STEP 5

Sprinkle the cheese directly on the naked pasta and toss to coat in sauce. Add up to 1 cup of the pasta water to loosen the sauce as needed. Stir in the arugula, basil, tarragon, peas, and lobster meat; simmer until everything is heated through, 1 minute.

### STEP 6

Serve with additional Parmesan if desired.



## Sweet Potato Waffles

Submitted by Karen Rucker, Sustainer

### Topside Inn - Boothbay Harbor, Maine

This recipe was shared with me by the owners of a wonderful bed and breakfast, The Topside Inn, in Boothbay Harbor, Maine... one of our favorite vacation destinations. The waffles are wonderful!

### INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups roasted & mashed sweet potatoes (a few chunks are ok)	1/2 teaspoon salt	1/4 cup butter, melted
2 cups of all-purpose flour	6 egg whites, at room temperature	1 tablespoon grated orange rind
1 tablespoon baking powder	1 cup milk	Vegetable oil spray (for waffle iron)
	1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar	

### STEP 1

Preheat waffle iron. Roast & mash sweet potatoes – this can be done the day before.

### STEP 2

In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

### STEP 3

In a separate bowl, combine sweet potatoes, milk, brown sugar, melted butter and orange zest.

### STEP 4

Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and combine thoroughly.

### STEP 5

In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until fluffy and stiff peaks form. Fold egg whites into batter, 1/2 at a time (batter will be thick).

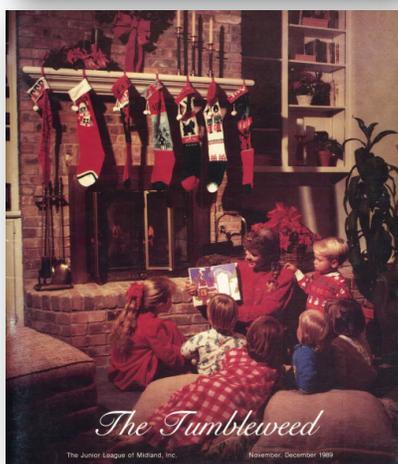
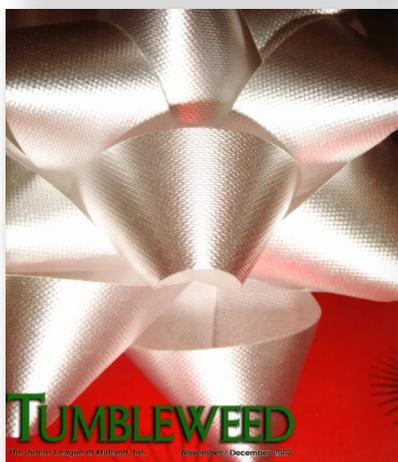
### STEP 5

Spoon batter into wells of waffle iron & cook until lightly browned, about 5 minutes.

## Celebrating the Season of Giving



The Tumbleweed | November/December 2000  
THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIDLAND, INC.



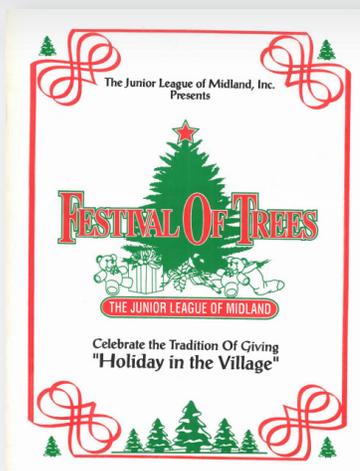
As we head into the upcoming holiday season, we may begin to reflect on the festivities and celebrations of years past. Memories of road trips to grandma's house, enjoying the company of loved ones around a roaring fire, volunteering at a local soup kitchen, or whipping up a batch of Christmas cookies may come to mind. However we have chosen to celebrate during this season of giving, this year will likely look much different. So, in the spirit of the season, let's take a trip down memory lane to reflect on how the Junior League of Midland has spread cheer and joy in our community during the most wonderful time of the year.

In the 1970s, the Junior League of Midland offered many community projects to assist in the wellbeing of community members throughout the holiday season. One such project was Christmas in October. Initiated by Park Center Y, this community project aimed at making more habitable homes for the elderly, disabled, and low-income residents in east and south Midland. League members provided sack lunches to volunteers assisting on this project, and the successful coordination of the preparation and delivery of the lunches was provided by the Public Affairs Committee.

During the 1980s, *Tumbleweed* provided gift-giving ideas for Junior League members. Most issues provided a list of the most popular items for the year, as well as a detailed list of offerings from several advertisers of the magazine. *Tumbleweed* also provided popular recipes from members to help make planning the holiday dinner easier.

In addition to the 1980s and into the 1990s, the Next-to-New Christmas shop hosted an annual Christmas boutique. The boutique's main offerings were toys and holiday decorations but also included visits with Santa Claus, sugarless candy canes, and door prizes. The Christmas boutique helped the community by offering reasonably-priced holiday gift items and decor, as well as served as a fundraiser for the League.

In recent years, the Junior League of Midland has hosted several League events with local businesses, such as Miss Cayce's Wonderland. These events have allowed members of the League to shop for the holidays at locally-owned businesses while also giving back to the League they serve. ❖



# MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

## *What Does it Mean to “Keep Going, Keep Growing”?*



**Heather Martin**  
**Executive Vice President**  
8<sup>th</sup> Year Active

The individual who chooses to “Keep Going, Keep Growing” recognizes that challenges allow for growth. They make the most of what they are given and capitalize on their strengths and talents regardless of the circumstance. We are often placed in situations that make us uncomfortable. It is important to remember

that when we are challenged, and choose to persevere, we will be presented with the opportunity to grow and thrive.



**Evelyn Foro**  
**Executive Vice President-Elect**  
4<sup>th</sup> Year Active

“Keep Going, Keep Growing” has never been more prevalent than now! This year has already brought about unique challenges and situations that we have had to adapt to. It does not mean giving up and not fulfilling our commitments to our community partners or members. It means adapting

and forging ahead. I think this epitomizes what our theme means this year! Now more than ever, we “Keep Going, Keep Growing!”



**Mandy Gregg**  
**Public Relations Vice President**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year Active

When I think about the Junior League of Midland’s theme “Keep Going, Keep Growing,” I can’t help but think about the struggle 2020 has been. While it is hard to see the upside, I am choosing to see it as a diamond in the rough. At first glance, it’s ordinary or even ugly, but after some cutting and polishing the

true gem appears. We will keep going and keep polishing to find that gem, and we will grow stronger as people and as a League. Keep going, and keep growing JLM! We will come out of this stronger and better than before!



**Samantha Voss**  
**Public Relations Vice President-Elect**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Year Active

I think this year’s theme is especially poignant with everything 2020 has brought into our lives. “Keep Going, Keep Growing” is a reminder that adversity is simply an opportunity to show perseverance and strength of character. As a League, it is a

chance for us to display to the Midland community our resilience and ability to grow regardless of circumstance – the very same characteristics that have kept the Junior League of Midland viable for the last 70 years.



**Angie Underwood**  
**Finance Vice President-Elect**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year Active

Candice’s very timely theme “Keep Going, Keep Growing” reminds me to be hopeful. This league year, the Leadership Team has had to be flexible, innovative, and sensitive to the needs of the participants and clients in our community projects. I am hopeful

that our projects and fundraisers will be executed successfully via virtual/hybrid platforms. I am also hopeful that we will return to normal, or create a new normal, for our League members and community partners soon.



**Leslie Whitehead**  
**Membership Vice President**  
5<sup>th</sup> Year Active

“Keep Going, Keep Growing” instills in me a sense of perseverance. I’ve been so inspired watching our community chairmen persevere and pivot to continue to meet with the women and children we serve, even as the “meeting” looks differently. I’ve been encouraged by watching our Farm to Table(aux) team take

an entirely new fundraiser and turn it into a virtual happening while still creating a unique and exciting experience for our donors. Our Management Team has had to make some tough decisions and complex plans, and we have been led by the best of the best to do so. If anything, this year has shown us how resilient, creative, and unstoppable the Junior League of Midland can be!



**Elisabeth Christensen**  
**Fund Development Vice President**  
7<sup>th</sup> Year Active

Even though the world had to pause for a while, the League was still in operation. "Keep Going, Keep Growing" reminds us that our work as League members doesn't stop; that we are still needed in Midland. Our job this year is to continue to provide life-changing programs to the best of our ability.



**Katie Presley**  
**Fund Development Vice President-Elect**  
7<sup>th</sup> Year Active

I believe that this year's theme, "Keep Going, Keep Growing" is such a wonderful reminder that we need to continue adapting to the current circumstances in our community with positive attitudes in our personal life and our League experiences.



**Brianna Aylesworth**  
**Management Member-at-Large**  
4<sup>th</sup> Year Active

My goal in Junior League this year is to quote the great Josh Groban, "You raise me up so I can stand on mountains. You raise me up to walk on stormy seas. I am stronger when I am on your shoulders. You raise me up to more than I can be." I want to help assist my team this year to make them better than when we

started out and we all look back on 2020-2021 and think of how innovative we have become and the relationships we have created while navigating these stormy waters, or for Midland dust storms carrying COVID-19.



**Suzy Prucka**  
**Management Member-at-Large**  
12<sup>th</sup> Year Active

Life has seasons. We are all facing the same season right now - pandemic mitigation, low oil prices, as well as a new reality for work, home life, and volunteer pursuits. We have to keep going because there is no other option. Our loved ones depend on it at home. Our customers and clients depend on it at work.

Our fellow League members and the women and children we serve in our projects are counting on us. We thrive and keep growing by leaning on our support network and provide the same to our friends and loved ones. Because...together, anything is possible.



**Alison Rigney**  
**Membership Vice President-Elect**  
7<sup>th</sup> Year Active

There's much potential for this League year; potential to adapt and try new things, new ways of thinking socially, the potential for personal growth, and the potential to reach the needs of our community in tough times.

The only way to maximize our potential is to

keep growing! Don't give up, keep reaching for more!



## Management Team



(L to R) Angie Underwood, Mandy Gregg, Leslie Whitehead, Suzy Prucka, Evelyn Foro, Heather Martin, Brianna Aylesworth, Alison Rigney, Samantha Voss, Elisabeth Christensen; Not pictured: Maxlynn Futch and Katie Presley



**Maxlynn Futch**  
**Community Vice President**  
6<sup>th</sup> Year Active

What keeps me going and growing is seeing the impact our community placements have in helping to make Midland a better place.



## Team Sunflower

*"Team Sunflower is such a go-getter team, the members are working hard and easily meeting all of their requirements. I am so proud of all of the ladies and can't wait to see all of their accomplishments within the League." – Carla Pearson, Provisional Trainer*

### JESSICA EDINGTON



**HOMETOWN**

Norman, Oklahoma

**COLLEGE**

University of Oklahoma, Bachelor of Science in Public Relations and Master's degree in Strategic Communication

**OCCUPATION**

Hancock Advertising Group

**FUN FACT**

Edington's wedding was held on New Year's Eve 2018 in Jamaica.

### ALEXA-RAE GIST



**HOMETOWN**

Lubbock, Texas

**COLLEGE**

Hardin-Simmons University, B.B.S. in Political Science with a minor in Leadership and Texas Tech University, Juris Doctorate

**OCCUPATION**

Business and Corporate Attorney, Cotton, Bledsoe, Tighe & Dawson P.C.

**FUN FACT**

Gist is a member of the Board of Young Associates for Hardin-Simmons.

### STEPHANIE GRIFFIN



**HOMETOWN**

St. Louis, Missouri

**COLLEGE**

University of Missouri, Bachelor of Science and Webster University, Master of Business Administration

**OCCUPATION**

Raising her 7-year-old

**FUN FACT**

Griffin has lived in four different countries, including Australia, China, Indonesia, and the United States.

### REBEKAH HAYNES



**HOMETOWN**

Abilene, Texas

**COLLEGE**

Texas A&M, Bachelor of Business in Finance

**OCCUPATION**

Owner of NEAT Method Midland, Haynes organizes people's homes and lives.

**FUN FACT**

Haynes is a West Texas girl through and through, and you can catch her on the tennis court or taking a spin class.

### DANETTE MURPHY



**HOMETOWN**

Memphis, Tennessee

**COLLEGE**

University of Texas of the Permian Basin, Bachelor of Science in Geology, Master's of Science in Geology with an emphasis in Petroleum

**OCCUPATION**

Teaching, raising her two boys, and volunteering

**FUN FACT**

Murphy boomeranged Midland-she was born here, left shortly after, and then ended up coming back after meeting her husband in Midland.

### GINNY VAN DOREN



**HOMETOWN**

Wichita, Kansas

**COLLEGE**

New Mexico State University, Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing and Advertising and a Master's in Communication Studies

**OCCUPATION**

Marketing Director, Wagner Noël Performing Arts Center

**FUN FACT**

Van Doren lived in Tokyo, Japan for five years.

### KELSEY WILLIAMS



**HOMETOWN**

Midland, Texas

**COLLEGE**

Arizona State University, Bachelor of Science in Special Education and STEM Education, University of Texas Permian Basin, Master's Degree in Special Education

**OCCUPATION**

Science and Bible teacher, Midland Christian School and earning her Ed.D. in Curriculum and Inspection

**FUN FACT**

Williams enjoys running with her Sheepadoodle, named Leo.



**CARLA PEARSON**  
PROVISIONAL TRAINER





# Team Peony

*"Team Peony has been extremely enthusiastic in getting involved, learning about all committee opportunities, and meeting League members!" – Emily Humphries, Provisional Trainer*

## CASSIE BREEDING



**HOMETOWN**  
Cedar Park, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Abilene Christian University, Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing and Management  
**OCCUPATION**  
Executive Assistant, Blue Quail Energy Services, LLC  
**FUN FACT**  
Breeding and her husband welcomed their first child in early October.

## CLAIRE FIORENZI



**HOMETOWN**  
Woodlands, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Texas A&M University, Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering  
**OCCUPATION**  
Operations Engineer, Pioneer Resources  
**FUN FACT**  
Fiorenzi loves baking and cheering on the Aggies.

## VICTORIA JORDAN



**HOMETOWN**  
Midland, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Texas Tech University, Bachelor of Business Administration in Energy Commerce  
**OCCUPATION**  
Land Representative, Chevron  
**FUN FACT**  
Jordan has two Shetland Sheep dogs named Bonnie & Brigitte.

## LESLIE PHILLIPS



**HOMETOWN**  
Fort Worth, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Texas Tech University, Bachelor of Science in Human Sciences; University of Texas Health Sciences Center at San Antonio School of Dentistry, Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene  
**OCCUPATION**  
Dental Hygienist, Phillips Orthodontics  
**FUN FACT**  
Phillips and her husband met during dental education and opened their own orthodontics business.



**EMILY HUMPHRIES**  
PROVISIONAL TRAINER



## NATALIE DELUMPA-ALEXANDER



**HOMETOWN**  
Virginia Beach, Virginia  
**COLLEGE**  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering  
**OCCUPATION**  
Chemical Engineer, Pioneer Resources  
**FUN FACT**  
Delumpa-Alexander interned at the NASA Langley Research Center during college.

## MARY GURLEY



**HOMETOWN**  
Laplace, Louisiana  
**COLLEGE**  
Louisiana State University, Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering  
**OCCUPATION**  
Engineer, TRC Services of Texas  
**FUN FACT**  
Gurley is a CrossFit enthusiast.

## KRIZELLE MORALES



**HOMETOWN**  
Midland, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Midland College, General Studies  
**OCCUPATION**  
Real Estate Agent, Keller Williams Realty  
**FUN FACT**  
Morales was born in the Philippines and loves photography.

## SAVANNAH ROSS



**HOMETOWN**  
Midland, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Texas State University, Bachelor of Science in Advertising  
**OCCUPATION**  
Senior Account Manager, Hancock Group  
**FUN FACT**  
Art and design are some of Ross's biggest passions and she paints in her free time.

## RACHEL WALKER



**HOMETOWN**  
Brownwood, Texas  
**COLLEGE**  
Texas A&M, Bachelor of Science in Communications and Journalism  
**OCCUPATION**  
Public Affairs, CrownQuest Operating  
**FUN FACT**  
Walker moved to DC after college to work for various political and public policy organizations before moving back to Texas to marry her high school sweetheart.

# SPOTLIGHT ON OUR VETERANS

By Ellecia Randle

*In honor of Veteran's Day, we would like to also celebrate those who have served in the League either actively or as the family in support of a career in the military. Thank you for your service both in the League and to our country!*

## LEAH ROBERTSON SUSTAINER



Leah Robertson, Sustainer, and current 385<sup>th</sup> District Court Judge, enlisted in the U.S. Army with the support of her family at the early age of 17. "Many members of my family served and I saw serving as an opportunity to attend college and open doors to future possibilities," said Robertson. While serving in the Army, Robertson was an avionics mechanic and specialized in aircraft navigation, communication, and survivability for UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and was stationed stateside as well as abroad. "My experience meeting people from other countries and more importantly other backgrounds at such a young age developed my ability to be open-minded and respect others as your equal no matter their path."

This worldliness has translated to both Robertson's service in the League including her favorite placements, Rays of Hope and Suits with Skills, but also in Robertson's judgeship. Currently, as the Judge of the 385<sup>th</sup> District Court Robertson oversees the Veterans Treatment Court designed to help veterans who have been placed on probation and provide them the support to be successful on probation as well as in life.



"Life has come full circle for me - I am able to use my background in the military and my current position to guide fellow veterans to a better path," Robertson continued, "Being a resource for them is very important for me."

## REBECCA YOUNG 7<sup>TH</sup> YEAR ACTIVE



Inspired by her father's service in the Navy, Rebecca Young joined ROTC while in college. The structure that Young found and thrived upon participating in ROTC encouraged her to continue to the Marines. Young was stationed in Quantico, Virginia for Officer Candidate School, but unfortunately suffered a hip stress fracture one week prior to her commission date.

While in the Marines, Young believed strongly in finding the best person for each job by delegating tasks - even if that person was not her. Young also learned to identify the strengths of other people to then help empower themselves.

Young has really enjoyed applying the skills she learned in the Marines to serve as a Provisional Trainer this past year. "Seeing how the Provisionals grew throughout the year and how they used their individual skills to serve the League was extremely rewarding!" said Young.

## ANGELA HUNT 2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR ACTIVE



Angela Hunt's husband, Bryant, served in the Army for four years before retiring in 2009. Angela and her husband were previously stationed in Oklahoma and Georgia during his active service. Originally from Odessa, Hunt now resides in Midland with her husband and daughter, Samantha.

Hunt currently works as a clinical social worker in the local Veterans Affairs behavioral health department providing psychotherapy services to our veterans. While in graduate school, Hunt's internship at the VA, as well as having military members in her family, inspired her to work at the VA and serve our country. "The veterans in which I work have taught me a lot about perseverance, working hard and showing up - always push through when the times are hard." said Hunt.

This is Hunt's second active year in the League, and she has first-hand seen how the League serves our community, especially our veterans. As a clinician, she has made numerous anonymous referrals to Safe Place, Suits with Skills, and The Jubilee Center. Hunt takes pride in knowing the League helps veterans with such great programs in our community and she hopes everyone thinks about our veterans, male and female, on Veteran's Day.

## In Celebration – Jean Donnelly



On September 29th, 2020, we lost a pillar of Junior League of Midland's community and advocate, Jean C. Donnelly, at the age of 99. Active in League events until this past year, Jean's commitment and service to the League spans over 60 years where her mark on the League is still seen today.

Born on November 12th, 1920 in Dallas, Texas, Jean spent her early years in Fort Worth on Eagle Mountain Lake with her aunt and uncle who

owned Marion Herring Boat Works, a boating repair shop and store. While in high school, her family moved to California from Fort Worth. Upon graduation in 1938, she returned to Eagle Mountain Lake to help run her family's boating shop and met her husband, George Arthur Donnelly, Jr. while working there. Their courtship began and they were married on November 1, 1941 in Stockton, California, where Jean became the wife of a University of Texas and Harvard educated WWII Army Air Corp Captain. During their time in the service, George and Jean started a family while stationed in various cities including Taft, California, Kingman, Arizona, and Lincoln, Nebraska. As a celebrated training pilot in the Army, George was able to serve during the war stateside and accumulated an astonishing 10,000 flight hours and retired as a B-29 aircraft commander ranked as a major.

After the war, Jean and George originally moved to Monahans where their family began establishing their West Texas roots with George joining his family's multigenerational oil and gas company at the time, the Eastland Drilling Company. The family moved to Odessa in 1946, where Jean became incredibly involved with the Odessa Junior Service League, the precursor to the Junior League. At this time, Jean and George began to involve themselves more in their West Texas community by hosting social gatherings and involving themselves with many civic and philanthropic organizations.

Now a family of five, George and Jean moved with their children, George Arthur Donnelly III (Art or Donny), Jan Donnelly O'Neil and Robert "Robin" Donnelly, to Midland in 1959. Jean quickly transferred as an active member to Junior League of Midland. Her service in the League included volunteering at many community initiatives that are now staples in the Midland community including the Museum of the Southwest and the Act IX program, now the Midland Community Theatre. After Jean became a Sustainer in Junior League of Midland, she continued to advocate for the League and attended regular Second Tuesday Club meetings even as recently as within the last year.

Jean's service in the League also inspired multiple generations of League members within her family. Her daughter, Jan Donnelly O'Neil, her daughter-in-law, Jeannine Donnelly, her granddaughter, Kiersten Donnelly Kita, and her granddaughter-in-law, Julie Donnelly, have all served in the League either in Midland or Fort Worth and are currently Sustainers. "In the

Donnelly family, it is never a question of if you will join the League, it is a question of when," says Julie Donnelly. "My daughter, Abigail, already talks about what she will do when she is in the League!"

Being a League member was important to Jean and her fellow League members. "That generation of women really established many of Midland's community and social programs – there was an idea that if you wanted big city experiences in Midland you had to dig in and build it including arts and social programs," said Jeannine Donnelly. "From Suits with Skills to what is now the Midland Community Theater, League members of Jean's generation created those opportunities."

While the League has always benefitted the community, it has also developed skill sets for women who may not have worked outside of the home. "Especially at that time when my mother served and even now, the League develops business and leadership skills that are easily translated into the work environment including resume building skills like running a meeting, taking notes, and balancing a budget. The community knows members in the League have developed these skills and that makes us sought after by other organizations to serve even as Board members," Jan Donnelly O'Neil said.

Jean enjoyed not only serving the League but enjoyed the social aspect of being a member, known for her impeccable dress and her beautiful smile, George and Jean always danced the night away at the League's annual Charity Balls. Jean made lifetime friends in the League as well and continued to play bridge, her favorite pastime, with Wanda Campbell, also a League member, well into her nineties!



Outside of the League service, Jean volunteered for the Children's Service League and was active in establishing the Lee High School Youth Center. Jean's interests translated to her involvement and volunteer hours in many organizations – as an avid music lover, she was a member of the Midland/Odessa Symphony Guild, she enjoyed dancing the night away with The Minuet Club, and volunteered often at the Midland Community Theater box office.

Jean and her friends, many also League members, created the MRS Investment Club and the Rake and Spade Garden Club to further develop their interests and share them with the community. "League members like Jean, with the support of their husbands and families, helped to create many programs that the city enjoys today – families like the Campbells, the Hardies, the Herds, the Ortloffs, supported the League and helped establish this ideal of giving back to the community that has provided so much for them," Jan continued.

We would like to thank Jean and the Donnelly's for their continued support and service in the League and commitment to the community of Midland.



CAPT. AND MRS. GEORGE A. DONNELLY JR. and son, GEORGE A. III, have returned to Lufkin, Tex., after visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Donnelly, 2001 6th Ave., and Mr. and Mrs. Marion Herring. (Field Photo)

# HALLOWEEN

By Jaimey Sloan Warren



(TOP ROW, L TO R)

Active Sydney Perry's daughter, Kennedy, was the sweetest chocolate sprinkle donut while her daughter, Lincoln, was the cutest lobster you ever did see!

Provisional Stephanie Griffin's son, Micah, and dog, Costello, celebrated as Cuphead and a hotdog.

(BOTTOM ROW, L TO R)

Active Laura Sonnenburg's son, Jackson, celebrating his first Halloween as a bear.

Active Krishna Vasquez's daughter, Kendall, celebrating as a Texas Tech cheerleader.

Active Madison Dobbs's son, Graham, is the cutest lil' pumpkin.

Active Thuy Baumstimler's daughter, Xaun, practices her moon walk as an astronaut.



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In Honor of  
*Adoption Awareness Month*

Keri Vaught and her husband, Tyler, were licensed to the Foster to Adopt program in September and have since received their first placement of a sweet little girl.



Jaimey Sloan Warren celebrated the 16<sup>th</sup> birthday of her first child, Harper Sloan. Harper passed her driving test with flying colors and officially is a fully licensed driver on the road – much to the horror and delight of her mother.



Laura Sonnenburg and her husband, Shane, welcomed their son Jackson Andrew on July 22. He weighed 7 lbs, 11 oz, and measured 21.5 inches long.



Simone Elices and her husband, Jack, were married on September 29 in an intimate wedding in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with immediate family after their original wedding date in April was canceled due to COVID-19.



Sydney Perry and her husband, Matthew, welcomed their second beautiful daughter, Lincoln Grace on August 1, joining big sister Kennedy. She weighed 8 lb 7 oz and measured 20 inches long.



Madison Dobbs and her husband, Collin, welcomed their quarantine baby, Graham Charles, on May 20. Graham weighed 6 lbs 7 oz and measured 19.75 inches long.



Cassandra Breeding and her husband, Landon, welcomed their sweet baby boy Weston on October 7. He weighed 8 lb 7 oz and measured 21.5 inches long.



Mallory Marcoux and her husband, Clint, welcomed their second daughter Hattie Frances on September 1, joining her big sister Kirksey. She weighed 6 lb 13 oz.

This fall, the Management Members-at-Large (MMAL) has offered many unique training opportunities. These trainings have been a combination of sources from within and outside of the League. The participation has been the greatest for the intra-League training, and the most popular was the Mentorship Training.

Suzy Prucka, a Management Member-at-Large, is enthusiastic about these opportunities and has said, "If the exposure of these training reaches and aids even just one member, it is worth the time and effort. We will keep seeking learning opportunities in different areas."

Training offered to date are self-care studies, gender studies, breast cancer care, non-profit organizations, and women's health. Many members are hesitant to meet in person due to COVID-19 risks but are dedicating time to better educating themselves via these online trainings. Prucka has said that the training has allowed for more flexibility and diversity of opportunities on many different topics. This highlights that change can create new opportunities, although our League members do reminisce on the days when all events were in person. Members



can also look forward to lunch seminars with Volunteers in Midland (VIM). Each lunch will feature one of the different organizations and the virtual attendees will learn more about the charity. Suzy encourages anyone who seeks specific trainings or has an idea for a training, to please contact her.

MMAL has given a sneak peek as to the events coming up this winter. In-person Growth Groups are scheduled in November and December. Jenny Cudd will lead a holiday centerpiece creating class at Becky's Flowers. This will be a great opportunity to learn some decorating skills in preparation for entertaining during the holiday season.

Additionally, there will be several "Favorite Things Swaps" in December. Each participant brings three items under \$10 and everyone gets to take home three new items. Any members who are hesitant to meet in person can look forward to a virtual cooking class. Chef Daniel Millerhouse from



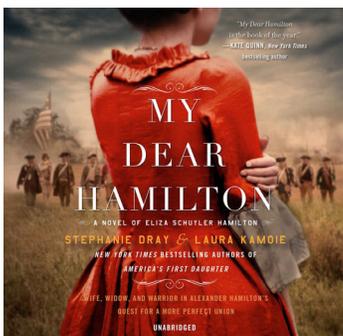
Heirloom Catering & Events in Houston is teaching a four-course meal and cocktail pairing.

Let us get ready for the holidays with these fun events!

## BOOK REVIEW

By Maggie McDaniel

### *My Dear Hamilton* by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie



*My Dear Hamilton* was the featured book of JLM's Book Club for the month of October. The topic of Alexander Hamilton, as a founding father of the United States, has piqued the interest of historians, live theater fans, and pop culture lovers in the past few years with the popularity of *Hamilton: An American Musical*. *Hamilton* is a hip-hop musical about the founding fathers and was received with sold-out performances and record-breaking 16 Tony Award nominations in 2016<sup>1</sup> (McGuire). Disney+ featured *Hamilton* on its entertainment platform and showed a 72.4% increase in app downloads and the show was viewed by 2.7 million households in the first week it was released<sup>2</sup> ("*Mulan vs. Hamilton*"). *Hamilton* as a topic is hot, hot, hot.

*My Dear Hamilton* has the unique perspective of Eliza Schuyler Hamilton. She had a major role in the founding of America and was the wife of Alexander Hamilton. Dray and Kamoie studied thousands of letters between the Hamiltons and added color to the complexity of their relationship. The book describes Eliza coming of age during the uncertain times of the Revolutionary War. She was born into a wealthy, influential family and was a socialite in New York. Eliza's courtship and marriage started as a contrast to their era, as Alexander was poor and not from

a well-known family. The book shows Eliza's strength and dedication to Alexander. Eliza had many roles in politics, as a mother, and a philanthropist. Additionally, the betrayal of Eliza Hamilton at the center of the nation's first public sex scandal is described in *My Dear Hamilton*. The book is historical fiction but does provide a more personal touch to our fascination with the Hamiltons.

The authors of *My Dear Hamilton* were asked what they wanted their readers to take away from reading the book. Dray and Kamoie's responses were, "We'd like readers to understand that the American Revolution wasn't fought only by marbled men in powdered wigs, but also by women, enslaved persons, native Americans and many other people in society—that it was a struggle that required risks and sacrifices that most of us cannot imagine. And we'd like readers to realize that our Founding Mothers contributed in ways that often made their more famous husbands' or fathers' contributions possible and that these women created legacies of their own."

The book surely broached great conversation within the League's book club, and it would make a refreshing addition to anyone's book list even if they missed the book club discussion.

<sup>1</sup> "Hamilton Makes History With 16 Tony Nominations" by Michael Paulson: <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/04/theater/hamilton-tony-nominations-record.html>

<sup>2</sup> "*Mulan vs. Hamilton*" by Kay McGuire: <https://screenrant.com/mulan-hamilton-disney-plus-release-success-comparison-reveals/>

By Brittany Crowley



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