

WOW Meeting Minutes
2/1/2024

Location - Folkmoot, Room A12

Present – Sam Edwards, Ginger Galati, Jessi Stone, Mary Ann Lawrence, Alice Adams (note taker), Cheryl Beatty, Melissa Benhart, Whitney Burton, Solita Garcia, Melissa Helmer, Joy Johnson, Robin Lax, Shirley McKinney, Savanna Rickman, Cathy Sanders, Pam Schiavo, Jennifer Spillane, Katie Vanderpool, Virginia Wall.

Alice read the WOW Mission.

Whitney spoke about her position as a recruiter for foster families for Lutheran Services.

- There are 133 children in DSS care in Haywood County with only 30 housed. They must refer some to Asheville, Raleigh, Charlotte, which creates a distance between the child and family
- Need to pass state guidelines to be certified. There is a 40-hour class covering therapeutic care and then 20 hours of training per year which must be completed
- Monthly stipend is issued per child
- Goal is always to reunify the child and family, but they also facilitate adoption
- They are building a coalition of churches, etc., to support foster families

Whitney asked if any member knows of any resources that might be available that she can reach out to. Also, she would like WOW to consider holding a fundraiser.

Jessi and Ginger reported on their visit to Babies Need Bottoms in Asheville. They have a waiting list of entities wanting to partner with them in Haywood County. Question – Does WOW want to pursue partnering with them? Jessi can store diapers at her workplace. BNB buys diapers in bulk from a place in California, the biggest need is wipes and bigger size pull-ups. Even if we do not partner with them, a fundraiser would be good to support them – provided we are assured that the funds raised will be used in Haywood County. Discussed the possibility of a fundraiser at The Gem. Ginger mentioned that September is Diaper Awareness Month, maybe we would want to have a fundraiser then?

Ginger provided an update on Mrs. B., whom we are sponsoring this year for Meals on Wheels. Mrs. B. thanks us all and says she has seen an improvement in her overall health. Is having issues with heat, she has a kerosene heater this year but had no heat the past two years. Ginger suggested she complete a Stealth application, Meals on Wheels will help her complete it. She apparently lives with a son, which we were not aware of.

AutoBell cards are still available for purchase for \$20, \$10 of which goes to WOW.

The Folkmoot Groundhog Day Open House is tomorrow (2/2). Numerous members have signed up to represent WOW, Ginger is bringing items (calendars, swag, etc.). Calendars will be on sale for \$20.

Galentine's Day Social is on 2/7 from 6-9pm at Bosu's. An event has been created on FB, all can invite a friend. Please RSVP online so we have an accurate number for snacks and desserts. A donation (any amount) is asked for any friends invited and a small donation from members would be appreciated. Drinks can be purchased and there will be a non-alcoholic option.

WOW is sponsoring the Haywood Waterways Association Polar Plunge on 2/10 at Lake Junaluska Pool from 11am-1pm. Virginia, Alice and Melissa H. said they would take the plunge for WOW.

Mardi Gras Ball on 2/24. There are no candidates this year, they're celebrating their 15th anniversary. Former candidates/queens have been asked to perform. Jessi and Celeste (former WOW member and queen) will be performing "9 to 5" and are asking any members who want to join them to do so. They will have on Dolly Parton wigs and encourage any others to do the same (but not required). WOW has sponsored one table and due to interest by members to attend, Jessi was able to secure a second table. Both tables total 16 seats. It was agreed that anyone who wants a seat will pay \$50, with priority going to the performers. An email and FB message will be sent out to sign up as a performer or if you just want a seat.

Big Brothers Big Sisters bowling event is 3/16. WOW has one team of five members (\$250 for sponsorship) and members voted to have a second team, making it a \$500 sponsorship. An email and message will be sent out to sign up for this.

Pathways Empty Bowls fundraiser is on 3/21, the same night as a WOW meeting. WOW has sponsored a table this year but was not asked to volunteer. Members may go and use the WOW table but are asked to do so from 4:30-5:30pm to also attend our meeting.

Member Announcements

Cheryl reported that work has already started with Feeding the Multitude on Bowdy's Wonderland for 2024. Melissa H. thanked everyone who helped out this past Christmas, no matter how much time was volunteered, it made a difference. The event literally would not have been a success without the support WOW provided.

Jessi reminded us tax season is here. If your income is under \$60,000, you can have your taxes done at Pisgah Legal Services.

Shirley let us know that Violet, her (adorable) granddaughter is a Girl Scout and is selling cookies, if anyone wants to buy any.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. (Thank you to Melissa H. for making the delicious heart waffles and to any member who brought a topping, etc.)

