

The Communiqué



Les Dames d'Escoffier®

INTERNATIONAL

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

April 11, 2024

Dear Dames,

The Communiqué welcome note has traditionally been written by our chapter president, however your board decided to switch things up a bit so now you will be greeted by different board members each month. As your treasurer, I have the honor of beginning this new tradition!

For most people April means grinding through personal and business financials in preparation for (that evil) Tax Day. The IRS has an alternate filing schedule for non-profits; our chapter's return is not due until May 15th (pew!) In the meantime, I have the pleasure to report that our chapter's finances are in good shape. Thanks to a handful of generous dames and their associated businesses, our chapter has recently received thousands of dollars in donations, which will support our three philanthropic initiatives, Culinary Scholarship, Food Journalism Fellowship, and the new Business Grant; as well as provide a safety net for our chapter's administrative expenses into the foreseeable future.

And speaking of the Fellowship, I am eagerly looking forward to the Celebration planned for Sunday May 19th at Wente Vineyards to meet our 2023 honoree Teresa Cotsirilos (in conversation with Dame Margo True), as well as to catch up

with several of the past Fellowship recipients. More details on this exciting program are below.

I'll wrap up with a question: did you know that our chapter's financial statements are available to all members?

Let me know if you would like to receive a copy, and I'd be happy to answer any of your questions about our chapter's financial health.

Happy April!

Nancy Ash
LDEI-SF Treasurer

Events

Save-the-Date:

**Celebrate The Karola Saekel Craib Excellence in Food Journalism Fellowship - Sunday, May 19th at Wente Vineyards in Livermore Valley
11:30 am - 2:30 pm**

Toast our Fellows and savor a delicious spring luncheon buffet served with Wente Vineyards' award-winning wines as our chapter honors our Fellows and 14 years of supporting Bay Area women journalists.

The program, details to come, will feature 2023 Fellowship recipient Teresa Cotsirilos of the [Food and Environment Reporting Network](#) in conversation with SF Dame Margo True, editorial director of [Civil Eats](#). 2016 Fellow Lisa Morehouse of [California Foodways](#) will provide an introduction.

This event is open to Dames, guests, and the public. Tickets are \$100*.

Look for the invitation coming soon -- the first 25 to register will receive a copy of *Gather: Casual Cooking from Wine Country Gardens* by Dame Janet Fletcher.

A special thank you to Grande Dame Carolyn Wente for her generous support of this program and donation of the books.

**Tickets are nonrefundable but may be transferred.*



[Wente Vineyards](#), Cresta Blanca

Save the Date! May 1st will be our next Member Meetup!

LDEI-SF is announcing our next Member Meetup! May 1st at 6 pm we'll be at Doctorbird in Pittsburg, CA to sip wine, eat cheese, and have fun. Doctorbird Market is a family-run retail shop featuring small-production wine, craft beer, and specialty foods, owned and operated by Dame Danielle Fiala. This gorgeous shop features many products made by SF and Sonoma dames, so this is a great way to support Danielle and to purchase Dame-produced wines, olive oils, and cheeses all in one place.

Registration to follow soon, so be on the lookout! There is no registration fee for this event and Dames will cover their own food & drink costs.

LDEI-SF Raffle: Promote Your Business + Support Our Chapter

We all appreciate learning about and enjoying the talents of our chapter Dames. Donating a raffle item that represents your business, product or service is a great way to spread the word and support the cost of running our chapter. Right now, we're curating items for spring and fall in-person events. We'd love to feature your latest book, delicious product, a gift certificate for your class or retail business, a consultation for your service, and more in our event communications and on-site at the event. Please contact Events Committee Co-Chair Nancy Light (nancyalight@gmail.com) about contributing a raffle item.

Event Recap: THE WEIGHT OF OZEMPIC: What happens when we no longer care about food?

How will the wildly successful new weight-loss drugs affect food professionals in the future? Over 60 Dames and attendees joined a lively Table Talk conversation on March 26, “The Weight of Ozempic: What Happens When We No Longer Care About Food?”, featuring three speakers with different perspectives on the benefits and potential threats of these appetite-suppressing treatments.

New York Grande Dame **Marion Nestle**, emerita Professor at New York University; journalist Laura Reiley, whose *Washington Post* article inspired the event; and Shaun Chavis, a food journalist who has dropped 135 pounds with weight-loss medication and bariatric surgery explored the impact of these life-changing drugs. Dame **Kara Nielsen** moderated.

Panelists raised concerns about affordability and access and speculated about how the widespread usage of these medications might affect shared meals and holiday traditions. Food manufacturers and food service providers will have to please a growing audience of diners who want smaller portions and need more lean protein to conserve muscle mass.

“This provocative subject brought in a large audience from across the country,” says Dame **Roberta Klugman**, who programmed the event. “The robust chat-room comments and questions speak to the value of timely programs that help us sort through challenging issues.”

Save the Date: Thursday, July 11, 4-5 pm on Zoom

Dames Talk: How to Make Food Sound Good...Literally

A conversation with NPR’s Resident Chef Kathy Gunst and SF Dame Linda Carucci

Enter the fascinating world of Kathy Gunst, Resident Chef for 20-plus years of NPR’s Here and Now program, broadcast on more than 550 public radio stations nationwide. Kathy travels around the country in search of compelling stories for the show’s 5.5 million listeners, reporting on seasonal foods, culinary trends, and gardening topics—all without the benefit of a single visual image. A James Beard award-winning food journalist, Kathy is the author of 16 books including *Rage Baking: The Transformative Power of Flour, Fury, and Women’s Voices*. She divides her time between a small town in Maine and Los Angeles and is presently working on a memoir. Kathy teaches food writing classes in Italy, which is where SF Dame Linda Carucci met her last fall. You won’t want to miss what’s sure to be a lively conversation.

Sweet Home Chicago Dames 5 day/4 night trip June 12-16

The Chicago chapter of Les Dames is organizing a getaway to Chicago for a gastronomic and culinary immersion in this vibrant city. Organized for a group of 20-24, you will stay at the Chicago Athletic Association Hotel by Hyatt on Michigan Avenue with a view of the Navy Pier. A sample itinerary includes:

- Private lunch at Virtue, Chef Erick Williams' James Beard award-winning restaurant serving elevated soul and Southern food
- Choose either a pizza tour with America's foremost pizza expert, Steve Dolinsky, or a food tour of Chicago's most colorful Mexican neighborhood, Pilsen
- Awe-inspiring architecture cruise along the Chicago River
- Private guided tour of the Art Institute of Chicago, highlighting the portrayal of food in art
- A hands-on craft cocktail class at The Violet Hour, named one of America's best bars by Food & Wine magazine
- And so much more!

Pricing and further details are [here](#). Cost includes hotel, eight meals and the tour. For more details contact Claudia Rayston at crayston@globalgourmands.com.



Trip to Greece September 25- October 6, 2024 with Dame Lisa Stavropoulos

There are still a few spots remaining for a trip organized by Dame Lisa Stavropoulos of the Sonoma chapter to join fellow Northern California dames for an immersive culinary wine and food tour of Greece this fall. A full itinerary is [here](#), along with details on the travel and pricing. A portion of each ticket cost will benefit

the chapter from which the Dame who travels, originates. For more information, contact Lisa at lisa@greekgrapewinetours.com or 415-412-4524.

Save the date - 2024 National LDEI Conference, October 17-20 at beautiful Wigwam Resort

Hosted by the Phoenix LDEI Chapter

The Wigwam Resort first opened its doors in 1929 as a guest ranch. Today the original building still stands and this property still has a very intimate atmosphere with up to date amenities such as fitness center, pools, golf, tennis, pickleball and bike rentals.

Conference begins Thursday with optional activities such as an Arizona Wine seminar or lunch and learn about cooking with indigenous ingredients. Oakland's own Chef Crystal Wahpepah will be a keynote speaker at Friday mornings breakfast. She is a James Beard Award finalist, has received the Indigenous Artist Activist Award and she was the first Native American Chef to compete in the Food Network's show, Chopped. Conference workshop topics include Foraging in the Desert, Making History: Women in Beer, Giving Back led by Chef Charlene Badman, award winning James Beard Best Chef Southwest talking about Blue Watermelon Project, Farming in the Southwest.

The Phoenix Chapter Annual Fundraiser will take place under the full moon at the Phoenician raising funds for C-CAP and food stations with culinary students paired with chefs. This is a not to be missed night! Other additional offerings include a morning tethered hot air balloon ride and champagne breakfast or a jeep tour to Sedona with winery tastings.

Feel free to reach out to San Francisco Dame Eileen Spitalny as she is originally from Phoenix. She will be moderating a workshop with other Phoenix Dames titled Building a Brand that Lasts. Her contact is eileen@brownies.com



Photo Credit - Wigwamarizona.com

Membership

We are excited that several potential new members have been reaching out to us in this period of Application for Membership 2024. As a reminder to all our current members, the best way to promote the process is through you and your contacts. Potential members can now nominate themselves, but each application must be accompanied by a Letter of Recommendation from an existing member. If an applicant does not know any existing members, we are happy to connect them.

In these days of social media, a great way of publicizing that we are looking for great new members is through your social media contacts. We are making it easy for you! Here is a link to our Instagram post that you can use to repost so your contacts know about this.

To be considered for membership, nominations are now being taken to fill ten new member openings. We hope to both expand and diversify our membership. If your contacts have an interest in applying, they can learn more about us by reviewing our Chapter's profile and criteria.

We are accepting applications through May. New members will be inducted in September.

If you know some potentially great new members, please let them know personally. Your role will be to write an accompanying Letter of Recommendation and to serve as the new member's mentor for the first year, answering any questions or concerns, taking them out to coffee or a glass of wine, accompanying them to a chapter event and introducing them to other Dames.

Help us expand our membership with women who show leadership in their fields, women who want to get actively involved in an organization that supports other women in these industries, women who may be younger and can grow with the organization, women who can help us achieve diversity, equity and inclusion in our membership.



Fellowship

Dame Robert Klugman reports: This winter, the Karola Saekel Craib Excellence in Food Journalism Fellowship received another generous donation from Karola's daughter, Anne Craib, which was matched by her employer, Visa. We'd like to extend our sincere gratitude to Anne for her continued support of the program. Because of her efforts, as well as the generosity of our membership and others, the Fellowship has a balance of over \$20,000. We will once again award \$5,000 to this year's recipient.

The Karola Saekel Craib Excellence in Food Journalism Fellowship is awarded to a promising Bay Area woman food journalist (not a Les Dames member) each year. We are actively seeking confidential nominations.

Please visit <https://lesdamesf.org/Fellowship> for the criteria, bios of our past recipients, and background information.

Send any nominations to Fellowship Co-chairs Roberta Klugman rklugman@robertaklugman.com and Jennifer Newens jennifernewens@sbcglobal.net.

Business Grant

The 2025 LDEI-SF Female Entrepreneur Grant and Mentorship will accept grant applications for this year's award starting August 19th, 2024. The deadline for submitting an application is October 1, 2024. So, please think about deserving female food business owners who should know about this award. Details and applications will be available on our website <https://lesdamesf.org/FemaleEntrepreneurGrantandMentorship>.

Scholarship

The 2024 Etoile d'Escoffier Scholarship applications close April 15th!

While the application period for our 2024 Etoile d'Escoffier Scholarship is coming to a close, we are still accepting applications! Please share our Scholarship site with anyone who may be interested for the application and all eligibility requirements!

The scholarship, created in 2019, supports outstanding female students and recent graduates to achieve their professional aspirations and become the next leaders of our industry. Scholarship money to be used for tuition, registration fees, books, uniforms, tools, housing, transportation expenses, or any other education or work-related expenses.

LDEI Quarterly

The most [recent issue](#) of the Quarterly is online [here](#). We still await 2024 deadlines for the LDEI Quarterly. For any updates on Membership Milestones and Chapter Programs, please contact Dame Jodie Chase at jodie@chase-ink.com. She will submit it to National.



We welcome you to submit any items for our monthly communiqué to AnneMarie Austin at lesdamessf@gmail.com by 12:00 pm on the Tuesday before the first Friday of the month for our monthly publication. Please consider the categories of Events,

Announcements, or Opportunities for Networking and Volunteering. Also, note that it is rare we would publicize fundraising events outside our own needs, but if a major, national, or significant event is happening with several Bay Area Dames, we want to know about it!



Email: lesdamessf@gmail.com

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