



# TouchLine

A Monthly Publication of The Women's Roundtable

February 2011

## FEBRUARY 9

Take Charge:

Basic Self-Defense Class  
Rachel Cheeseman, Instructor

**5:30 p.m. Social • 6:00 p.m. Program**

First Niagara Bank Community Room  
East 8th & State Streets  
(Enter off East 8th Street)

Members @ \$10.00 • Guests @ \$12.00

**RSVP by no later than February 4**



Building a “Command Presence” is the foundation of all self-defense training. Through proper breathing in a moment of uncertainty, posture awareness and vocal projection, a woman can launch a powerful, pre-emptive strike without any physical contact. If you haven’t mastered these basic skills, your physical skills will virtually be useless.

**Rachel Cheeseman**, owner and founder of Street Smart Self-Defense Academy, will provide us with hands-on techniques for basic self-defense. She learned the principles of “Model Mugging” from its creator Matthew Thomas in Los Angeles. She is a Black Belt in the art of Chinese Kung Fu Karate Self-Defense and has studied for the past 20 years. Street Smart Self-Defense Academy is a full-service self-defense organization that believes EMPOWERMENT is the road to personal safety.

This will be a hands-on interactive class, if you so desire. Be sure to wear comfortable clothing and shoes. If you’re coming directly from the office, a changing room will be available for your convenience.

This is an important meeting, ladies. You need to be armed with some of the techniques that could save your life!



### RESERVATIONS REQUIRED by FEBRUARY 4.

Payment must be made in advance. Go to [www.wrterie.org](http://www.wrterie.org) (News & Events tab) and choose your prepayment method (i.e., via PayPal or via check mailed to WRT, P.O. Box 3922, Erie, PA 16508). If you prefer to pay via check, you will need to fill out the RSVP Online form under the News & Events tab. If you have any questions, please call **Hospitality Director Diane Wilson** at 1-866-346-3122 (NOTE: You must dial the “1” first!) or email her at [wilsondiane@asburyliving.net](mailto:wilsondiane@asburyliving.net).

*Note: If you make a reservation, are unable to attend, and do not cancel within 48 hours of the event, you will be responsible for any costs incurred.*

GROWTH

EXCELLENCE

MOTIVATION

STRENGTH

Visit us online at  
[www.wrterie.org](http://www.wrterie.org)

# A Message From The President

“The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand,  
as in what direction we are moving.”

– Oliver Wendel Holmes

A mid-year review proves the WRT is moving in the right direction and our efforts are paying off! Kudos to **Theresa Power-Natale** for the great ideas she offered in membership incentives (net gain of 10 new members FYTD); **Eileen Zinchiak**, **Roberta Holdsworth** and **Bo Iole** for the great programs that have enticed more people to attend and join; and **Marsha MacKinnon** for spreading the word!

Speaking of great events, if you missed the Tiki Party, you missed a really great time! Congratulations to **Sheryl Bruinsma** who was crowned Ms. Tiki! She definitely had some tough competition and in reality everyone who participated won – fun and laughter on a cold winter’s night is the best prize of all! Special thanks to the vendors that helped pamper us, including members **Diane Wilson** and **April Blum**.

Behind all the fun and great networking and educational offerings is a very hard working Board. There has been a lot of focus this year on creating standard operating procedures for each Board position and committee, governing documents and related responsibilities, better promotion of the WRT and growing membership. Special thanks to **Sue Hawley** for offering to design and donate signage for our upcoming WILD exhibit and also to **Nadia Havard** for her review of the Bylaws.

There is great power in numbers and when those numbers encompass powerful, intelligent, hardworking women there is nothing we cannot accomplish! I am so very grateful to everyone whose unselfish involvement has helped us move in the right direction! *Thank you ALL!*

Gay Marie Catania

## Your Generosity was Appreciated

The staff and families of Erie DAWN would like to thank you for your kind and generous donations of toys, gifts cards, household items and clothing.

One of our graduates expressed our feelings best in a Christmas card she sent ... “I have been so blessed by your program. You give hope, support and lots of love.”



Your support made it easier for our participants, already on tight budgets, to have a worry-free Christmas and to bring smiles to their children’s faces on Christmas morning.

Again, we thank you for your generosity and wish to extend to you and your families a prosperous New Year.

Maureen Dunn, Executive Director  
Erie DAWN

## Happy Birthday, Ladies!

Belated Birthday Wishes to:

Ann Marie Yezzi-Shareef 1/28

And, Happy Birthday this month to:

Jerilyn Pascale 2/03

Veronica Dunn 2/23

Marsha MacKinnon 2/27



## The Art of Good Conversation

For many people, one of the things they find most intimidating about networking is making conversation with others. The idea of having to talk to strangers, ask and answer questions and find a way to connect can be a bit overwhelming.

An engaging and lively conversation can be the difference in whether an encounter turns into a new business relationship or stays a one-time meeting. Here are five ways to ensure that during a conversation you make the impression you want and gather the information you need:

**1) Have your personal tagline ready:** Your personal tagline is how you introduce yourself. It's important that your tag-line is clear, compelling and concise as it is your only chance to make a strong first impression. The key is to really think about the answer to the dreaded question "So, what do you do?" and compose an answer that is relevant yet original. Avoid industry jargon or long, overly technical explanations as you will lose people's attention. Focus on the value you bring – not the job title and company printed on your business card.

Once you have a tagline, you must rehearse it to the point that it flows naturally. Practice it with your spouse, friends or co-workers and get their feedback. Your goal is to deliver relevant information while capturing the interest of a new contact. It is the first step in starting a great conversation.

**2) Ask open-ended questions:** When in a conversation, your goal should be to draw the other person out, and to learn about them, their work and their life. Try to ask interesting – even provocative – questions that they haven't already been asked ten times during the event. Questions can be professional or personal as long as they are relevant and appropriate; business connections are often made when you find out your kids are the same age, or you went to the same college. It can be a challenge to come up with unique, engaging questions when you're actually in the middle of a conversation, so it's best to have a list of five or so "stock" questions that you have memorized.

**3) Pay attention:** Remember that conversation involves talking and listening. The truth is, many people don't really pay attention when engaging in conversation. They go on automatic pilot when talking about themselves and their business, and their mind wanders when the other person is talking. If you pay close attention, you will likely find common ground, and can then focus the conversation on a topic you are both interested in. THIS is where a true connection is made.

It is also important to watch their body language during your discussion. You'll be able to tell if they are interested in (or are bored by) the subject and if they want to continue to chat simply by how they look. Watch your own body language as well – you need to look as though the interaction is your priority. Be sure to maintain eye contact, don't fidget, and smile and nod at appropriate moments.

**4) Stay positive:** Especially in today's media environment of constant bad news, it can be very refreshing to interact with someone who is positive. This is a chance for you to make a terrific impression by being upbeat, regardless of your personal or professional situation. By bringing people up, instead of down, you are more likely to have longer, more meaningful conversations.

**5) Know when to say when:** Occasional awkward pauses will certainly occur in your conversations. The key to success is knowing how to handle these pauses, by taking control of the situation. If you have exhausted a particular topic either bring up a new subject with a good question, or use the opportunity to wrap up the encounter and move on. You can end a conversation by simply saying "It was so nice talking to you," and offering your business card and asking for theirs.

By utilizing these strategies, you'll find making conversation at future networking events to be much more comfortable – and more effective for building relationships.

Source: [w2wlink.com](http://w2wlink.com) ... *Women Working Smart, Living Well.*

## Newsletter Information

If you have any news or information you'd like to share with members and friends of WRT, forward to **D. DeLuca-Thompson**, via email at [agencyal@neo.rr.com](mailto:agencyal@neo.rr.com) or fax to 866-6911.

## Upcoming Women's Roundtable Events

**MARCH 10**

6:00 p.m.

Elder Law & Elder Care Issues  
James R. Steadman, Esquire  
Colony Pub & Grille  
2670 West 8th Street  
Erie

**MARCH 22**

6:30 p.m.

Celebrate Spring at Center City Arts  
Lee Steadman, Director  
Create a Fused-Glass Suncatcher  
138 East 26th Street  
Erie

**FEBRUARY 17**

An Insider's View:

Women of the Tall Ship Unicorn  
7:00 p.m.

Blasco Library/Hirt Auditorium  
No Charge - RSVP by February 14  
❖ A Community Event ❖



Ladies of the Unicorn, shown left to right: Beth Zimmer, Linda Stevenson, Valerie Weaver, Rachel DeSimone, Robin Scheppner, Claudia Thornburg.

This is one event you will definitely want to invite all your friends and family to, especially if they attended the 2010 Tall Ships Festival. This event is open to the public.

Two of our very own, **Linda Stevenson** and **Valerie Weaver**, were amongst six local women who had the privilege of sailing the Unicorn from Mackinaw City, Michigan, to Erie. These ladies will share their experience with us through a wonderful PowerPoint presentation.

Sailing the only female-crewed tall ship in the world means being part of something special. They were part of the Sisters Under Sail program, which is based on two components: the traditional sail training and leadership competencies. The ladies worked alongside the professional crew for five days – climbing the rigging, standing watch, swabbing the decks, etc. In essence, the program puts women and girls at the helm ... literally and figuratively.



We have four more new members to announce this month! A warm welcome to the Club, ladies!

**Valerie Baltzer**, realtor/assistant to the president, AEI Assessment Evaluation/Glowacki Management. She enjoys spending time with her family at Canadohta Lake and also volunteers with Kiwanis Club.

**April Blum**, owner, BeautiControl. April is involved with volunteering with St. Joseph's BOL/Youth Sports at Iroquois.

**Irene Lampros**, relationship banker, First Niagara Bank.

**Susan Vogelberger**, CEO, Healthcare Consulting & Coding Education, LLC. Susan enjoys traveling, reading and knitting, and volunteers with the Kiwanis Club, Red Cross and March of Dimes.

Be sure to invite a friend or colleague to join you at a WRT event. For membership information, call Membership Director **Theresa Power-Natale** at 833-4763 or visit our website at [www.wrterrie.org](http://www.wrterrie.org).

JUST FOR WOMEN ...

**WEAR RED HEART AWARENESS EXPO**

**Friday, February 4**

9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Bayfront Sheraton Hotel\*  
55 West Bay Drive • Erie



Why not make this a healthier, happier year by attending the fifth annual Wear Red Heart Awareness Expo.

It's your opportunity to show your support for the prevention and early detection of heart disease—the number one threat to women's health!

Free heart screenings, complimentary light refreshments, local vendor booths and a raffle will be available throughout the day, along with special presentations by Hamot physicians and heart experts.

Call 877-2045 for more information.

*\*Free parking in the hotel ramp.*

**WOMEN'S HISTORY DINNER**  
*Our History is Our Strength*

**Monday, March 7**

Erie Maennerchor Club  
5:30 p.m. Social/Networking  
6:30 p.m. Dinner/Program

Sponsored by the Council of Women's Organizations. Cost is \$25. Send payment made payable to CWO to Mary Anne Little, 5426 Lakeshore Drive, Erie, PA 16505. CWO is seeking sponsorships for the event, as well. For more information, call 833-9082.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Purse 'n Pearl Luncheon**

**Tuesday, May 24**

Bayfront Convention Center  
Jane Hight McMurry  
Keynote Speaker

*Quote of The Month*

*"A kiss is a lovely trick designed by nature to stop speech when words become superfluous."*

Ingrid Bergman

## The Women's Roundtable Membership

### Valerie Baltzer ♦

The Honorable Susan P. Baxter ●  
 Tabitha Jones Bemiss  
 Brenda Bennett  
 Pamela Biroshak

### April Blum ♦

### Sheryl Bruinsma ♦

Delores Catalde  
 Gay Marie Catania ❖☎  
 Dorothy Christoph ●  
 Eileen Cullen, D.Ed.  
 Mary Ellen Dahlkemper  
 Diane DeLuca-Thompson ⌘○☎  
 Elsie Dickson  
 Janice DiLuzio  
 Anita Marie DiVecchio  
 The Honorable Stephanie Domitrovich ●  
 Veronica Dunn  
 Haley Figurski  
 Audrey Gallagher  
 Mary Graziano  
 Linda Hackshaw  
 Nadia Havard  
 Sue Hawley ☎  
 Susan Hegel, Ph.D.

Kim Hersch  
 Roberta Holdsworth  
 Rubye Jenkins-Husband ●  
 Bozena (Bo) Iole ☎  
 Marietta Kuehn  
 Mary Ann Kupniewski

### Irene Lampros ♦

Janet Laskowski  
 Candace Littell  
 Marilyn Livosky, Ph.D. ○  
 Marsha MacKinnon ○☎  
 Jeanne Miller  
 Kristin Mooney ☎  
 Jeri Pascale  
 Tami Petrucelli  
 Theresa Power-Natale ☎  
 Sue Sanders  
 Mary Sansone ☎  
 Peggy Schwab  
 Amber Shenk  
 Linda Stevenson ⌘  
 Kim Stucke ●☎  
 Rebecca Styn  
 Maria Sundberg ☎

D. Elaine Surma  
 Chris Tombaugh  
 Rena Tran  
 Debbie Trocki ○

### Dawn Van Scoter ♦

### Susan Vogelberger ♦

Valerie Weaver  
 Susan Weiner  
 Susan Wendel ○☎  
 Diane Wilson ☎

### Ann Marie Yezzi-Shareef, Ph.D. ♦

Eileen Zinchiak ○☎

#### Legend:

- ♦ New Member!
- ⌘ 2010 Woman of the Year
- Former Woman of the Year
- ☎ 2010-11 Board Member
- ❖ 2010-11 President
- Past President
- ⌘ Founding Member