



# TouchLine

A Monthly Publication of The Women's Roundtable

May 2011

## 24th Annual Woman of the Year

### AWARDS BANQUET

Wednesday, May 18

6:00 p.m. Social/Cash Bar

7:00 p.m. Dinner/ Awards Presentation

Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel & Conference Center

2800 West 8th Street • Erie

\$45/Person

(Reservations w/ Payment by May 10)

The Women's Roundtable's 24th Annual Woman of the Year will be announced at this month's Awards Banquet on May 13th (and not before.) *Come celebrate with us!*



#### MARY GRAZIANO

Director, Dress for Success® Erie  
Mercy Center for Women

As the director of DFS® Erie, Mary lives and breathes her mission to promote the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support and career development tools. She is also instrumental in creating the highly successful Purse & Pearl Luncheon, which is in its fourth year. She not only provides women with a change in their appearance, but even more importantly, with a change in self-esteem and attitude.



#### SISTER MARY CLAIRE KENNEDY, SSJ

Social Justice Coordinator  
Sisters of St. Joseph

Early in life Sr. Mary Claire recognized the importance of higher education for women and earned an undergraduate degree in Chemistry at a time when few women were in the science fields. Among her great accomplishments is her long-time work on behalf of Erie DAWN where she has been completely devoted to assisting homeless, low-income women in accessing shelter, mentors and available community resources.



#### MARJORIE PODOLSKY

Teacher, Jefferson Educational Society;  
retired professor from Penn State, The  
Behrend College

While teaching at Penn State Behrend, Marjorie championed the cause of offering scholarships to adult women returning to college later in life. She also taught African American literature to students, some of whom had difficulty accepting a Caucasian teacher for this subject. In addition, she has served AAUW in various capacities for many years and currently advocates legislation relative to women's issues.



#### DEBRA STEINER

Director, Gannon University Small  
Business Development Center

As the director of Gannon SBDC for 10 years, Debra's goal has been to celebrate each day with inspiration and motivation for women entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship is a way of thinking: there are no problems ... only opportunities. She believes that all women can actualize this way of thinking whether they are stay-at-home moms or directors of an organization. Debra spearheaded the W.I.L.D. Conference in 2008 and ensures each event provides inspiration, motivation, networking and professional development for each attendee.



#### DEBRA A. THOMPSON

President  
Strategy Solutions

As the founder and president of Strategy Solutions, Debra's personal and professional mission is to create healthier communities. One of her major accomplishments in helping women is her work with Womanspace, a national project dedicated to ending domestic violence and changing social norms through education and advocacy. She continues to work tirelessly with many area social service organizations.

**RESERVATIONS w/ PREPAYMENT REQUIRED.** Tickets will not be available at the door. RSVP/Payment options available online at [www.wrterie.org](http://www.wrterie.org).

Please call or email Woman of the Year Chairperson Kim Stucke at 878-2170 or email her at [kmstucke@Stairwaysbh.org](mailto:kmstucke@Stairwaysbh.org).

*As a member in good standing, your membership entitles you to one complimentary ticket to the Woman of the Year Banquet.*

GROWTH

EXCELLENCE

MOTIVATION

STRENGTH

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

# A Message From The President

*"If ever there comes a times when the women of the world come together purely and simply for the benefit of humankind, it will be a force such as the world has never known."*

~Matthew Arnold~

**Mary Graziano, Sister Mary Claire Kennedy, Marjorie Podolsky, Debra Steiner and Debra A. Thompson**, our five Woman of the Year finalists, definitely exemplify the implementation of the above quote. These five women have, without a doubt, worked toward making our community so much stronger through motivating other women to realize their own ability to grow, to be empowered and to become stronger. All of this coincides with what the WRT is all about: GEMS – Growth, Empowerment, Motivation and Strength! How very proud I am, and each of you should be, to be involved in a sisterhood with this mission and one which recognizes the accomplishments of area women.

The WRT is one way that we can assure that women continue to prosper and reach their ultimate abilities and goals. I thank each and every one of you for the fine job that you are doing in this area. In fact, in my opinion, each and every one of the WRT members is a Woman of the Century and the WRT is certainly "a force such as the world has never known."

*Keep up the great work!*

Gay Marie Catania



## The Women's Roundtable 2010-2011 BOARD MEMBERS

President .....	Gay Marie Catania	440-2265
President-Elect .....	Diane DeLuca-Thompson	323-0400
Treasurer .....	Mary Sansone	746-2427
Secretary .....	Sue Hawley	323-0280
Immediate Past President .....	Susan Wendel	566-7632
Co-Directors of Programs .....	Bo Iole	864-3274
	Eileen Zinchiak	456-7217
Director of Membership .....	Theresa Power-Natale	833-4763
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Director of Hospitality .....	Diane Wilson	868-3816
Newsletter Editor .....	Diane DeLuca-Thompson	323-0400
Webmaster .....	Kristin Mooney	397-7973
Woman of the Year Chair .....	Kim Stucke	878-2170
Council of Women's Organizations .....	Maria Sundberg	897-3707

## Happy Birthday, Ladies!

Belated Birthday Wishes to:

Kimberly Lawrence	2/05
Maureen Dunn	3/06
Bonnie Conley	4/15

And Happy Birthday this month to:

Mary Ann Kupniewski	5/18
Debbie Pavlek	5/20
Valerie Weaver	5/31



## TidBits ...

**U.S. Magistrate Judge Susan Paradise Baxter and Erie County Judge Stephanie Domitrovich** were included in a group photo of new citizens in Erie County that appeared in the ETN Community Album. Stephanie was also featured in a March ETN article titled "No Glass Ceiling" about women in politics. She took the bench as the County's first female judge in 1990. Stephanie also recently served as a judge at the Guess That Tune Gala fundraiser for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

**Tabitha Bemiss** is featured in an Erie Business Center display ad in the Erie Times-News.

**Mary Ellen Dahlkemper** was pictured in the April issue of Lake Erie LifeStyle with the Erie Rotary Club at their Ethic Symposium.

**Mary Graziano** was recently featured in the ETN Community Album when she accepted a large donation of new wooden jewelry boxes from the Walmart Elm Street store.

**Mary Ann Kupniewski**, as a committee member, is heavily involved in the Catholic Charities 16th Anniversary Ball scheduled for May 13.

**Gera Ruhland** is featured in a television commercial for Dr. John Cassara, a local chiropractor. The ad is currently airing on WJET-TV.

**Robin Scheppler** had a great article in the ETN regarding her company, American Tinning & Galvanizing. She also recently had a half-hour segment on PCN Tours (Pennsylvania Cable Network), which highlights Pennsylvania manufacturers and museums.

**Peggy Schwab**, co-chair of the Erie Philharmonic Dine, Dance and Take a Chance event, put together a dynamite program for this year's dance which was in late April.

**Maria Sundberg** was shown presenting a check for \$5000 to the 2011 Tour de West County fundraiser on behalf of First Niagara and EmeryCare. First Niagara is a lead sponsor for the family-friendly bike tour that raises money to help those afflicted with cancer.

**Rebecca Styn** had a nice article in the April issue of Lake Erie LifeStyle on the nuances of Scotch Whisky and how to make intelligent selections. Rebecca is also running for a seat on Erie County Council.

**Valerie Weaver** was a contributing writer for the April issue of the ETN Her Times tabloid. Her article, Fashion Trenches, always shows some interesting concepts and combinations that you can bring to your wardrobe.

## WEBSITE ADVERTISING AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

WRT is offering its members the opportunity to place a business card-size ad on our website with a link to your website, if desired. The cost is only \$20/year. *You can't beat it!*

If you're interested, call or email Webmaster **Kristin Mooney** at 397-7973 or [KRM158@yahoo.com](mailto:KRM158@yahoo.com).

## Upcoming Women's Roundtable Events

JUNE 22

### ANNUAL MEETING

6:00 p.m. Cash Bar/Networking

6:30 p.m. Dinner/Program

Lawrence Park Golf Club

Members \$27 • Guests \$32

(RSVP & Prepayment Required by June 16)

Last Event  
of the  
Season!

Important  
Voting  
Required!



We are absolutely thrilled to announce that we have more Wonderful Women to introduce to you this month! *Welcome to the Club, ladies!*

**Karen Benson**, Certified Public Accountant, Personal Financial Specialist and Partner at McGill, Power, Bell & Associates. Karen volunteers on various non-profit advisory boards and PowerZone Children's Ministry. She enjoys sailing and skiing.

**Elizabeth Butler**, Chief Lending Officer at Erie General Electric FCU.

**Bonnie Conley**, Owner, Bonnie's Finishing Touches. She enjoys camping, scuba diving and motorcycle riding, as well as reading, pottery and arts/crafts.

**Christine Domster**, Business Banker, Assistant Vice President at PNC Bank. Christine enjoys volunteering with PNC's Grow Up Great program.

**Maureen Dunn**, Executive Director at Erie DAWN. Maureen volunteers with

Erie DAWN and enjoys golf in her spare time.

**Nancy Dusckas**, Owner/President at Dusckas Funeral Home. She volunteers with the Girl Scouts of NW PA and serves on the board of Methodist Alliance Missions. She enjoys golf and jet skiing.

**Marilyn Gallagher**, Business Management and Accounting Specialist. Marilyn volunteers at St. Peter's Cathedral and enjoys antiques, sewing, cooking and art hobbies, as well as walking and people watching.

**Melanie Ann Johnson**, Business Retention & Expansion Manager at Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership. Melanie volunteers as an executive board member of her PTA and enjoys yoga, crafts and baking.

**Rebecca Jones**, Insurance Consultant/Sales Executive with Wells Fargo Insurance Services USA. She volunteers with the Crime Victims Center, Erie City Mission and Together Erie, and enjoys hiking, camping and gardening.

**Anita Kuchcinski**, Business Banking Officer at First National Bank of Pennsylvania. Anita volunteers with Junior Achievement, American Cancer Society and Young Erie Professionals (YEP!). She enjoys dirt tract auto racing, making jewelry and canine rescue.

**Kimberly Lawrence**, Website Development & Marketing Specialist with Firefly Web Studios. Kimberly volunteers with Campbells Labels for Education and enjoys skiing, biking, gardening, baking and reading.

**Eva Misevski**, Case Manager with GECAC's Aging/Option Program. Eva enjoys traveling, as well as nature in general and her water gardens. Eva's husband, Christopher, operates the infamous Bill's Bakery in Erie.

**Deborah Pavlek**, CEO at Family to Family Home Health Care. Deborah volunteers with the MS Society, Rotary and Kiwanis, and enjoys jewelry making, gardening, golfing and reading.

**Arlene Piskor**, Sr. Talent Management Consultant at Erie Insurance Group. Arlene volunteers with Erie Ambassadors (Erie Chamber) and enjoys yoga, meditation, hiking and biking, as well as travel.

**Robin Scheppner**, Managing Owner/CEO at American Tinning & Galvanizing Company. Robin volunteers with the Erie City Mission and United Way of Erie County. Hobbies include golf, cooking and travel, and she enjoys art and camping.

**Mary Schmidt**, owner, Loft Acres Farms. She's also VP of the Crawford County Farm Bureau and volunteers with her church. She enjoys reading, crocheting and sewing, as well as working crossword puzzles.

**Lesia Stone**, Owner/Executive Coach at Keystone Katalyst, LLC. She volunteers with Women in Leadership Development (WILD/Gannon Small Business Development Center) and Gannon Student Government, and enjoys biking, reading and rollerblading.

**Demarie Thompson**, Personal Chef/Owner of Chef-n-Thyme. She volunteers with Jr. League of Erie and enjoys gardening, remodeling and cooking.

**Kathleen Turner**, secretary at Peter Hardner & Sons, Inc. She volunteers with her Church and enjoys baking, collecting beach glass and antiques.

**Marilyn Walker**, retired, Erie County Assistance Office. She volunteers with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and spends her leisure time gardening, biking, cross-country skiing and traveling. Marilyn is a former long-time member of WRT. *Welcome back, Marilyn!*

NOT  
JUST FOR WOMEN ...



## Third Annual Cinco de Mayo Celebration

May 5

Erie Yacht Club

5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

\$15/person

More than 20 birdhouses designed by local artists will be auctioned off at this fun event. Proceeds will be used in sustaining households for the families served by Erie DAWN, which provides transitional housing and supportive services to homeless women and their families.

Entertainment includes **Senor Jones** and a guest appearance by **Monica Lewis**. Please call 453-5921 for tickets or more information.

## Dash to end Homelessness

*A high-heeled shoe race!*

May 14

South Park Row near Perry Square

8:30 a.m. Registration

Proceeds benefit Community Shelter Services

This is a 50 yard individual dash and a 25 yard relay team dash. Cost is only \$15 Individual Racer (one race only); \$25 Individual Racer (one race entry + Stiletto T-Shirt); \$100 Team (co-ed relay team of 4 + Stiletto T-Shirt included).

Call 456-4607 for more information or register online at [ComunityShelter.org](http://ComunityShelter.org).

## Save the Date! 34th Annual Hamot Healthy Woman Seminar

September 29

DR. KEVIN LEMAN

Keynote Speaker

Ambassador Banquet & Conference Center

3:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

## Quote of The Month

*"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it."*

Margaret Fuller

## The Women's Roundtable Membership

Valerie Baltzer  
 The Honorable Susan Paradise Baxter ●  
 Tabitha Jones Bemiss  
 Brenda Bennett  
**Karen Benson** ◆  
 Pamela Biroshak  
 April Blum  
 Sheryl Bruinsma  
**Elizabeth Butler** ◆  
 Delores Catalde  
 Gay Marie Catania ❖☎  
 Dorothy Christoph ■  
**Bonnie Conley** ◆  
 Eileen Cullen, D.Ed.  
 Mary Ellen Dahlkemper  
 Diane DeLuca-Thompson ⌘○☎  
 Elsie Dickson  
 Janice DiLuzio  
 The Honorable Stephanie Domitrovich ●  
**Christine Domster** ◆  
**Maureen Dunn** ◆  
 Veronica Dunn  
**Nancy Dusckas** ◆  
 Haley Figurski  
 Audrey Gallagher  
**Marilyn Gallagher** ◆  
 Mary Graziano  
 Nadia Havard  
 Sue Hawley ☎  
 Kim Hersch  
 Bozena (Bo) Iole ☎

Rubye Jenkins-Husband ●  
**Melanie Ann Johnson** ◆  
**Rebecca Jones** ◆  
**Anita Kuchcinski** ◆  
 Marietta Kuehn  
 Mary Ann Kupniewski  
 Irene Lampros  
 Janet Laskowski  
**Kimberly Lawrence** ◆  
 Candace Littell  
 Marilyn Livosky, Ph.D. ○  
 Marsha MacKinnon ○☎  
**Mary-Ellen Madigan, Ph.D.** ◆  
**Robertta McCall** ◆  
 Jeanne Miller  
**Eva Misevski** ◆  
 Kristin Mooney ☎  
 Jeri Pascale  
**Deborah Pavlek** ◆  
 Tami Petrucelli  
**Arlene Piskor** ◆  
 Theresa Power-Natale ☎  
**Laurie Root** ◆  
**Gera Ruhland** ◆  
 Sue Sanders  
 Mary Sansone ☎  
**Robin Scheppner** ◆  
**Mary Schmidt** ◆  
 Peggy Schwab  
**Laurie Ann Scutella** ◆  
 Amber Shenk

Linda Stevenson ⌘  
**Lesia Stone** ◆  
 Kim Stucke ●☎  
 Rebecca Styn  
 Maria Sundberg ☎  
 D. Elaine Surma  
**Jean Tauber** ◆  
**Demarie Thompson** ◆  
 Chris Tombaugh  
 Debbie Trocki ○  
**Kathleen Turner** ◆  
 Dawn Van Scoter  
 Susan Vogelberger  
**Marilyn Walker** ◆  
 Valerie Weaver  
 Susan Weiner  
 Susan Wendel ○☎  
 Diane Wilson ☎  
 Ann Marie Yezzi-Shareef, Ph.D.  
 Eileen Zinchiak ○☎

### Legend:

- ◆ New Member!
- ⌘ 2010 Woman of the Year
- 1987 Woman of the Year
- Former Woman of the Year
- ☎ 2010-11 Board Member
- ❖ 2010-11 President
- Past President
- ⌘ Founding Member