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Cedar Key Woman's Club celebrates its 31st Annual (wonderful) Spaghetti Dinner



CKWC First Vice President Eileen Senecal serves a plate with spaghetti and sauce.

Story and Photos By Jeff M. Hardison © Feb. 12, 2017 at 9:07 p.m.

CEDAR KEY -- Every seat was filled (and refilled) Saturday night (Feb. 11) during the two hours when the Cedar Key Woman's Club (CKCW) celebrated its 31st Annual Spaghetti Dinner at the Cedar Key Community Center.

An elite squad of talented, thoughtful, talented, polite, efficient members of the CKWC again banded together as volunteers in this fundraising effort, which delighted all of the club's patrons and guests.

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Part of the CKWC Dynamic Dessert Detail work on and present the delectable choices on tables. Seen here are Cindy Leiner (left) and Judy Treharne.



Stars of the night from among the 25 to 30 members who prepared meals for up to 250 guests

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included President Jane Moore, First Vice President Eileen Senecal, Second Vice President Chris Black, Treasurer Susan Hollandsworth, Janet Ramsay, Gini Barrs, Judy Treharne, Cindy Leiner, Susan Rosenthal, Joan Selby, Nancy Reed, Robin Jocelyn, Rose Malinowski, Paula Wescott, Karen Decker and Kathy Freidenfelds.



Paula Wescott pours tea as one of her colleagues at the drink station stands ready to serve as well.

While every morsel was extraordinarily delicious, the sauce was the centerpiece of the meal. Once again, Rosenthal, a past president, was the creator of that sauce – for the fifth consecutive year.

She had some help with the sauce preparation, and there were duties for all of the volunteers. There was the pasta creation crew, the dessert coordinators and prep ladies, and several other jobs to make this event as great as it was again this year.

The CKWC, which is part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in Florida, know how to conduct the perfect spaghetti dinner fundraiser.

And Vicki Crumpley knows how to take photos for the CKWC too. Speaking of photos, the calendars are pretty well sold out now. It was great year for this relatively new tradition too.

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Homemade desserts await diners.

Another noteworthy member on the Spaghetti Squad is Ramsay. She is one of the creators of the Fisher Quilt. This quilt is being raffled to raise money for the club to donate to the Fisher House in Gainesville.

The Fisher House program is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need.

There may be a "first this" and "then that" formula to these ladies' perfect dine-in or take out dinner of wonderful homemade spaghetti, however it probably is just the big dose of community spirit and love for people that puts this event up beyond the highest notch for excellence.



The first of hundreds of patrons are seen here at the start of the event.

Certainly the salads, Italian bread, an extraordinary selection of homemade desserts and iced

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tea or coffee are key ingredients, which added to the spaghetti sauce and pasta to please the patrons' palates.

The ambiance was divine for the in-house diners as well. Authentic Italian-themed music, like Volare and Santa Lucia, played gently in the background. Some part of the CKWC membership decorated each of the 13 tables, where each table could seat 10 individuals.

The CKWC assured each tabletop was adorned by artifacts of a festive motif, which was reflexive of Italy. They thoughtfully placed everything from tablecloths to wine bottles with melted candle wax to add to the décor of the Community Center to make it into a “bistro” for the night.

The salad crew created perfectly tossed salads with traditional ingredients. Even the freshly baked bread was also freshly buttered by a set of club volunteers.

There must have been many CKWC donors to create the impressively vast array of homemade desserts.

Angel food cake, brownies, carrot cake, cheesecake with cherries, and German chocolate cake, and lemon meringue pie are just a very few of the many, many different desserts. Two long tables were filled from end-to-end with the several assorted desserts, and there was a round table acting as the main dispensary area for these treats.

And from the front door as a patron entered to the front door as a patron departed, every person was made to feel at home by the friendly CKWC members.

And with about 30 members participating, there are those many other unnamed individuals who gallantly put forth the effort and yet remain in the hallowed halls of anonymity.

There really is a point beyond the food and ambiance for this spaghetti dinner. There is the camaraderie among the members that extends to their hundreds of guests as well. And table partners who may have started the evening as strangers left the dinner as newfound friends, or at least as fundraising acquaintances.

Surely the buffet-style meal service might cause some old soldiers to harken back to chow halls, but while this style of delivery becomes mechanical for some troops, the grace and style shown by the female servers on Saturday evening makes any machinery concept disappear.



Within minutes every seat in the Community Center was taken. There were take-out dinners heading out the door, and as some diners finished new ones arrived. Please notice the attention to detail and the ambiance created by the club members.

Each guest enjoyed that certain je ne sais quoi from each hostess to make the whole evening a spectacular event.

With 10 seats at each table, Bill and Holly Burgess of Cleveland lucked into a good set of empty seats when they brought seven people at one time near the start of the evening. Holly, a retired English teacher, and Bill, a retired print company owner, have spent several Januarys and Februarys in Cedar Key.

A good time was had by all.

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FASHION SHOW

The next big fundraiser for the Cedar Key Woman's Club is the relatively famous Annual Fashion Show and Luncheon -- on March 23 at the Cedar Key Community Center.

Doors open at 1:30 p.m.

There will be many community artisans selling their items. The "Afternoon Delight" theme of this Fashion Show happens, starting at 3 p.m. Like the Spaghetti Dinner, this is anticipated to be a sell-out event. It is recommended to get a ticket very soon.

Tickets for the Annual Fashion Show and Luncheon cost \$15 and are available from any Cedar Key Woman's Club member or from the Cedar Key Chamber Of Commerce at its Welcome Center on Second Street in downtown Cedar Key.

The Cedar Key Woman's Club was formed in 1960, and members volunteer at various community events, with proceeds from fundraising that helps to support Cedar Key at places like the Cedar Key School, the Cedar Key Public Library, the Food Pantry, Another Way, and the Cedar Key Volunteer Fire Department. This club is also active in Support for Troops, and in raising funds for Fisher House.