

# The Communiqué



Les Dames d'Escoffier®

INTERNATIONAL

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

July 28, 2023

Dear SF Chapter Dames,

Summer is flying by, I hope you are making the most of this time of year. I always look forward to the end of summer and the excitement and anticipation of fall. We had one of our busiest event seasons in a long time in our chapter, with creative programming, intimate educational gatherings and convivial meetups. We are getting ready to welcome a large cohort of new members in September. I look forward to welcoming new ideas, energy and enthusiasm. You'll get a chance to meet them at our annual induction event September 18th.

We are in the heart of our membership renewal dues drive, the timing has shifted slightly due to requirements from LDEI-International. As I write this, we are 34% renewed so we need you to please pay your dues. **We are asking you to please renew by August 18<sup>th</sup> this year.** These dues are critical to our chapter and our national affiliation. It helps us bring all the great programming to you for less than \$16 a month. We are covering all bases by emailing you separately, but to make it easier, [here is the link](#) to renew. Please note this takes you to your profile where you click on the "Renew till Sunday September 1, 2024" button to renew. Dues are \$190 if paid by August 18th and will be \$200 after that date.

Often at the chapter level, we get a good sense of what Les Dames d'Escoffier represents, but seeing it on a national level via conference, it is truly inspiring to see women in leadership changing the conversations, innovating, and bringing originality and purpose to their work. This year's National Conference is in Louisville, Kentucky and [conference tickets](#) are now available. If you are an established member, you will need to log in to your profile on the national website to purchase the conference package. If you are a new member and have questions about creating a national membership profile, please contact AnneMarie Austin, our amazing chapter administrator at [lesdamessf@gmail.com](mailto:lesdamessf@gmail.com).

Pam Mazzola  
Chapter President LDEI-SF

## Events

### **Thursday July 20: A special Tequila Tasting at Joanne Weir's San Francisco home - A great success!**

Dame Beth Lee reports on this intimate event hosted by Dame Joanne Weir, cookbook author, PBS television personality and amazing instructor. A special thanks to Dame Joanne Weir for opening her beautiful Pacific Heights home for an evening of tastes, conversation, education and camaraderie as a fundraiser to support our chapter's philanthropic work. An intimate group of 12 enjoyed a tasting of Don Pilar tequilas, led by Juan Carlos Contreras, son of company founder Don Pilar. He shared his in-depth knowledge of their four top shelf tequilas: blanco, reposado, anejo and extra anejo. Two gorgeous cocktails were mixed by Paul Markowitz, the head bartender of Joanne's Sausalito restaurant, Copita. Paul explained the simple yet nuanced elegance behind their classic margarita and shared a newly created rose-infused tequila cocktail with the moniker, Call Me, Maybe. Copita's still warm and extra crunchy tortilla chips started the evening off, served with their spicy green and red salsas and creamy, chunky guacamole. Next Joanne served Copita's perfect grilled fish tacos topped with crunchy slaw served on homemade corn tortillas. Carnitas tacos followed topped by a hot and spicy oil and pickled vegetables with a big finish of an Extra Anejo-topped Oaxacan chocolate milkshake. Everyone left with a copy of Joanne's book *Tequila: A Guide to Types, Flights, Cocktails, and Bites*, some new friends, and lots of intimate

knowledge of the skill and technique used to create great tequilas, tequila drinks and the perfect food to accompany them.



Photo courtesy: Dame Kara Nielsen

**Monday July 31st 11 AM - 2 PM from the Les Dames Sonoma chapter - A Tour of Kathleen Thompson Hill Kitchen Memories Collection at Elizabeth Spencer Winery**

Don't forget to get your tickets to join fellow Dames for a guided tour with culinary historian Dame Kathleen Thompson Hill whose collection now resides at Elizabeth Spencer Winery. Guests will enjoy an introductory sip of wine as they gather in the garden before they tour the collection.

Included in the ticket will be lunch, wine tasting, tour and conversation with Kathleen and special guest Katie Pratt.

A portion of ticket sales will benefit Les Dames Sonoma.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kitchen-memories-collection-tour-lunch-tickets-667725624317>

Address: 1165 Rutherford Road, Rutherford, CA



Photo credit: Kathleen Hill

**Artisanal G & T Tasting with Dame Tara Jasper, SipSong Spirits - Sunday, August 27th 2-4 PM**

A reminder to register for this very special gathering led by Sonoma Dame Tara Jasper, Founder of SipSong Spirits. Tara will host SF Dames for a tasting of the most diverse of all spirits, gin on Sunday, August 27th from 2-4 pm. She'll share her path to becoming a distiller and we'll taste SipSong's gins and build two delicious gin and tonics. Gather with us at SipSong's Spirits Hangar near the Pacific Coast Air Museum for a perfect August afternoon sipping G & T's with 100% female-made gins accompanied by finger foods prepared by SF Dames Janet Fletcher and Peggy Fallon. Proceeds from the event will go to our Chapter's

General Fund. [Registration](#) is \$40 and limited to 20 people. Dames may bring a guest. We have 15 tickets left to sell, so jump on board!

*Also, enjoy a ride over Sonoma in Tara's XCub Backcountry plane and support our chapter!*

Dame Jasper, a pilot, is also offering two, one-hour flights over Sonoma in her XCub Backcountry plane at \$500 each as a fundraiser for our chapter. Flights can take place prior to the tasting on 8/27 or scheduled for a later date. Email Events Committee co-chair Nancy Light [nancyalight@gmail.com](mailto:nancyalight@gmail.com) if you are interested in this thrilling opportunity to enjoy a birds eye view of Sonoma while supporting our chapter.



Photo credit: SipSong Spirits

**New Member Induction Dinner** Monday September 18, 2023 Foreign Cinema  
5:30 PM reception followed by 6:30 PM dinner

The party's on for Induction 2023 when we'll be welcoming a record 15+ new dames from the greater Bay Area to LDEI-SF in style at a favorite location - Dame Gayle Pirie's Foreign Cinema. The evening begins at 5:30 with a sparkling wine and martini reception at Laszlo Bar right next door. During the reception, you can purchase tickets for great raffle prizes and support our chapter while making new friends and catching up with old ones. At 6:30, we'll dine at the adjacent Foreign Cinema for a seated, three-course dinner and our Induction program. Following dinner, we'll be celebrating the 2023 Fellowship Recipient, conducting our annual business meeting and learning about the new business grant program. Tickets are \$100/pp and space is limited so act quickly. Registration opens in early August.

### **Member Meetups**

We encourage you to take advantage of these fun opportunities to informally interact with fellow Dames in a casual setting, and perhaps even to court prospective members. For the time being, we have moved the Wapepah's Kitchen event originally slated for August to a Fall member meet up. The Events Committee will keep us apprised on next steps!

## *Membership*

We are still confirming all our new member nominees' membership dues, so we will not be publishing our press release on the 2023 cohort till that is settled. We are excited to share the good news with you, but have to cross the "t"s and dot the "i"s. Dues are key to membership, whether new or established.

## *Scholarship*

Good news! Two recipients have been chosen and more information will be shared in a future communique!

To demonstrate the power of our network and scholarship program, we are pleased to share this update from Dame Marcia Gagliardi of Tablehopper. Through Dame Barbara Haimes, who provided an email introduction, Marcia met Savannah Leone Bundy, a recipient of the Etoile d'Escoffier Scholarship in 2022, who was looking to expand her food writing horizons. She's now Tablehopper's new editorial assistant! Per Marcia, Savannah "has quite the culinary background, with a degree in pastry and years of home and professional cooking under her belt. An Oakland resident, Savannah is always looking for tables to hop on both sides of the Bay. Look for more upcoming pieces from her, plus some East Bay discoveries, and more. A warm welcome to Savannah!" Women helping women is our motto and M.O. at Les Dames!

## *Fellowship*

The Karola Saekel Craib Excellence in Food Journalism Fellowship will be awarded this fall at the annual meeting September 18th. The recognition comes with \$5,000 and is awarded to a promising Bay Area woman and/or nonbinary food /wine journalist (not a Les Dames member) each year. Questions and further information about our program can be answered by Fellowship Co-chairs Roberta Klugman [rklugman@robertaklugman.com](mailto:rklugman@robertaklugman.com) and Jennifer Newens [jennifernewens@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jennifernewens@sbcglobal.net).

## *Business Grant*

[Website link](#) is live!

Dame Mary Gassen reports that the LDEI-SF Female Entrepreneur Grant and Mentorship program aims to provide crucial support to female-owned businesses in the food, culinary and hospitality industry in the vibrant San Francisco Bay Area.

Through cash awards of \$5,000 this initiative seeks to empower and propel these businesses forward by facilitating expansion and the enhancement of their operations. To be eligible for this grant, applicants must identify as women, be non-members of Les Dames d'Escoffier, and fulfill specific criteria. These requirements include having commenced business operations on or before January 1, 2022, being a female-owned establishment serving or located within the San Francisco Bay Area, and maintaining an annual revenue of less than \$1 million. Furthermore, applicants are expected to submit profit and loss statements for both 2022 and the year-to-date of 2023. More information can be accessed at the newly updated website link [here](#). For more information on the grant and committee, please contact Emily Luchetti at [emily@emilyluchetti.com](mailto:emily@emilyluchetti.com).

## *Member News*

Join Tonya & Nikki's Gastronomic Burgundian Tour

August 9th - August 13th, 2023

Have the European Travel Bug ? Love Burgundy? Feeling Spontaneous?

Dame Tonya Pitts shares that she and her dear friend Nikki Wooldridge-Pinto are teaming up in Beaune, Burgundy for a Gastronomic tour. "It's \$4500 exclusive of train and airline fares. However, castle stay, all wine tastings, gourmet French meals, ground transportation, tours, activities are planned, included and mapped out for your pleasure & luxury. Nikki is a licensed import/exporter and certified sommelier. She has lived in Burgundy for ten years now. Whatever wines you taste on this adventure, you can order through us to be sent to your front doorstep.

We will be hitting places like Bouchard Père et Fils... However we want to keep it very exclusive and I can guarantee that you will be drinking wine from areas like Pulligny Montrachet, Beaune, Volnay, Monthelie, Clos Vougeot, Meursault, Savigny-lès-Beaune, Gevrey-Chambertin, Nuit St. Georges and Marsannay. This is an exclusive five star tour for the hedonistic wine drinker and foodie. The size of the tour is limited to six people given the luxury and intimacy of the experience. Please let me know if I can reserve a space for you or if you would like to hop on a



call to discuss the tour further. We hope you will join us. Learn more via [this video](#).



Photo: Wine-Searcher.com

### **Next Generation - Dame Denise St. Onge welcomes baby Arlo!**

Dame Denise St. Onge, executive chef at Sorella Restaurant, welcomed her son Arlo James Turiansky on July 13th. Weighing in at 6 pounds and 10 ounces! Please send her your well wishes. For more information about Denise, read about her achievements [here](#).



### **LDEI Quarterly**

The next deadline for the summer Quarterly is Tuesday, August 1st. If you're not familiar with how to access our National Quarterly, it is on the [ldei.org](http://ldei.org) website and available archivally in addition to print.

For any updates on Membership Milestones and Chapter Programs for the LDEI Quarterly, so please contact Dame Jodie Chase at [jodie@chase-ink.com](mailto:jodie@chase-ink.com). She will submit it to National if you make the deadline!

We await the deadlines for the 2024 publishing calendar.



We welcome you to submit any items for our biweekly communiqué to Communications Committee Chair Kimberly Noelle Charles at [kcharles@charlescomm.com](mailto:kcharles@charlescomm.com) by 12 pm on Wednesdays for biweekly publication on Fridays. 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](mailto:lesdamessf@gmail.com)

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