

# Lake of the Woods Lioness Lions LOWDOWN

Volume 41 | Number 8 February 2026



www.lowlioness.org

## President's Corner

By Heidi Brown, LOW Lioness Lions President

Happy New Year once again!! It seems like we haven't seen each other for quite some time. And I won't see you at the February dinner meeting. But I'll see you at our March dinner meeting.

Thank you for all of you who were able to attend the special meeting of the Board on 9 January. Your presence was noted by many, and I think it was important to show the Board and our new GM who we are. Mary Lou Ambrose, Kathy Merritt, and I zoomed in from Cozumel. I think we all were happy with the outcome that the Clubhouse will remain open, and we can still have our Thursday dinner meetings.

I'm writing this as I look at the coming weekend forecast—SNOW!! If we get as much as is predicted, I hope it is the last blast of the winter. Please stay safe and warm.

We are rapidly approaching our Shimmery Shamrock Gala 14 March. Sharla and Teresa are diligently working with their committee to make this a very special event. I think it's sold out or nearly sold out. Well done, Ladies!!

As I look out over the next several months, I know we usually have a yard sale in May. I'm not sure we'll do that this year as I don't have someone to head the committee. This is my way of asking someone to come forward to lead this for us. Volunteers, please?

Please stay warm and safe. And as always, thank you for all that you do serving this wonderful community.

Heidi

## What Shall I Bring to this Month's Meeting?

We need help with many items for our Shimmery Shamrock Gala, please.

Look on page 3 for more details. 😊



## What will I find inside this LOWDOWN?

Pg 1 - **President's Corner**

Pg 3 - **How Can I Serve?** – Upcoming Service Opportunities

Pg 5 - **Calendar of Events**

Pg 6 - **Did You Know?** – Miscellaneous Club News and other Information

Pg 7 - **Monthly Stuff (not service related...)** – Menu, Birthdays, etc.

**Look for a nice article from Donalda and Gloria about the establishment of the LOW Lioness Club and the BOD Meeting Minutes will close the document...**



Lake of the Woods Lioness Lions Present a

# Shimmery Shamrock Gala

**DATE** March 14, 2026

**TIME** 6:00pm – 11:00pm

**LOCATION** LOW Clubhouse

*Silent Auction*

*50/50  
Pie Raffle*

**Join us** for an elegant evening of dancing, dining, and gathering in support of our community while finding the perfect gift certificate bundle, wine or Irish whiskey basket, or other generous offering from local vendors in our silent auction.

We are also celebrating Pi Day (3.14) with a raffle to win gorgeous and delicious pies baked for us by pastry chefs.

## Reception and Dinner

- 🍀 **Cocktails and Charcuterie Tower**
- 🍀 Choose chicken, beef or vegetarian plated dinner – all served with emerald green salad and pie a la mode
  - 🍀 **Chicken O'Farrell** – colcannon mashed potatoes plus roasted vegetables
  - 🍀 **Guinness-Braised Beef Medallions** – colcannon mashed potatoes plus roasted vegetables
  - 🍀 **Vegetarian Shepherd's Pie** – vegetable lentil stew topped with potatoes

**Tickets** are \$85 per person paid to your Table Captain

**Dress** is cocktail/semi formal

*Dancing!  
The Reunion  
Band*

## HOW CAN I SERVE?

What Fundraising Events or Service Activities are Coming Up? How Can I Engage?



### The Shimmery Shamrock Gala!

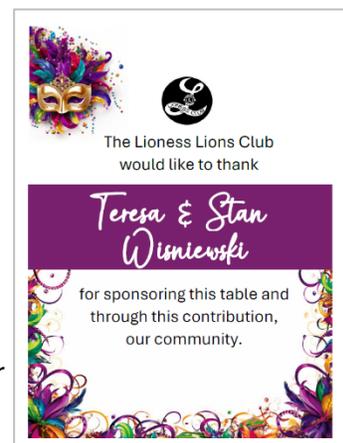
March 14 is right around the corner and we need your help! This is our Biggest Fundraiser of the year – and to help make it a success again – *here's how you can serve...*

**1** **Come Join Us! There are Six Tickets left.** It is such a fun night. You will not regret it! Contact Nicki Buell or Sheran Marks to secure your seats.

**2** **Become a Table Sponsor – Donate \$125** and we will put your name on a nice card on a table and in the program noting your contribution. This is a pic of what they looked like last year... this year they will have a fancy shamrock theme, of course! Bring your check to the dinner meeting in February and give it to Teresa Wisniewski. Thank you in advance!

**3** **Table Captains – Please bring your table sheets** with the first and last names of your guests **and the checks** made out to LOW Lioness Club with their meal selections to the dinner meeting in February and give them to Nicki Buell or Sheran Marks. Thank you so much for selling these tickets for us!

**4** **Basket/Bundle Items for Silent Auction**  
We were able to get many items from Darcy's basement 😊 (thank you, Darcy!) and from our soliciting efforts in Culpeper, Orange, Fredericksburg, and Locust Grove as well as our local wineries – and we are still working on getting more (this storm did NOT help!) We have identified **items we still need** for several baskets/bundles. Please give whatever you can to Teresa Wisniewski at the February dinner meeting:



- ☘ Bottled Guinness
- ☘ Bourbon
- ☘ Cigars
- ☘ Chocolates
- ☘ Nuts
- ☘ Shamrock novelty items
- ☘ Target \$15-20 Gift Card
- ☘ Cozy socks
- ☘ Lotion/hand cream
- ☘ Tea
- ☘ Seeds and Bulbs
- ☘ Plant Gift Card (Lowe's, Meadow Farms, Grass Roots)
- ☘ Wine -- because we are doing a wine raffle and charging a premium amount per ticket, please only bring wine that is \$20 a bottle or more.



## THE BOOK ROOM

The Book Room will reopen on February 28. We hope to see you there! The next sale will be on March 28. If anyone has questions, please contact Helene Burns, Sherri Lasover or Ann Walker, Book Room co-chairs.

## THE FOOD PANTRY

Fridays @ 9:30am

**The pantry will be open for four Fridays in February:**

February 6 (USDA), February 13 (Overstock), February 20 (USDA), February 27 (USDA)

**For info:** Nicki Buell 703-217-5615

## EYEGLOSS RECYCLING

Mondays @ 9:30am

When we meet, we wash, dry, and have good conversations. It's a great way to start the week, and we usually finish the morning with a trip to Fareways for lunch. Please join us when you can. Thanks!

**For info:** Marian Rood 540-412-0214

## LOWDOWN

Looking for a creative outlet and a way to serve? Creating the LOWDOWN is a fun way to get involved and ensure our membership stays informed. A team (Sharla Bailey and Julie Phend) works together to publish the LOWDOWN. Julie gathers the content and Sharla creates the actual document. Sharla will work with you over the next few months to show you the template to make the regular features straightforward – allowing you tons of license to do your own creative elements however you like! Please reach out to Sharla directly if you are interested. May is the first month you would be on your own - with Julie, as your partner, of course! 😊

### Have a Question, Suggestion or Concern?

[lionessclub@lowlioness.org](mailto:lionessclub@lowlioness.org)

Reach out via the email above or contact our president or secretary directly via phone, email or direct mail.

#### Heidi Brown

208 Limestone Ln  
Locust Grove, VA 22508  
(703) 402-8773

[hvbrown59@gmail.com](mailto:hvbrown59@gmail.com)

#### Gloria Bishop Oliveri

14612 Junction Court  
Fredericksburg, VA 22407  
(909) 772-2716

[gloria@cubicles-and-more.com](mailto:gloria@cubicles-and-more.com)

## 2025-2026 Board of Directors

**President** – Heidi Brown

**Secretary** – Gloria Bishop Oliveri

**Foundation Treasurer** – Loretta Lafley

**Administrative Treasurer** – Beth Newton

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President** – Mary Lou Ambrose

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President** – Teresa Wisniewski

**3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President** – Arlene Rich

**Immediate Past President** – Darcy Jennings

**Membership** – Pat Licata, Barbara Tomayko

**Tail Twister** – Nicole Pappas

#### Lioness Tamers:

- Nicki Buell
- Sharon Corner
- Ann Turner

#### Directors:

- Nicki Buell
- Caroline Collantes
- Claire Donohoe
- Emily Florence

## Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY 2026						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am				Pantry Open 9-10:30	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	RSVP for Dinner Mtg by Noon; Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am			Dinner Meeting	OVERSTOCK 9 till gone	Valentine's Day
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	President's Day Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am				Pantry Open 9-10:30	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am			BOD Meeting	Pantry Open 9-10:30	Book Room Reopens

MARCH 2026						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am				Pantry Open 9-10:30	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	RSVP for Dinner Mtg by Noon; Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am			Dinner Meeting	OVERSTOCK 9 till gone	Shimmery Shamrock Gala 6-11pm
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am				Pantry Open 9-10:30	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am			BOD Meeting	Pantry Open 9-10:30	Book Room Sale
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
	Eyeglass Recycling 9:30 – 11am					

## Did You Know?

Miscellaneous Club News & Information

### FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominations for next year's officers are coming up soon. Anyone interested, please contact Darcy Jennings at [2darcyj@gmail.com](mailto:2darcyj@gmail.com).

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

The Board of Directors meeting minutes have been made available on our Lioness webpage and will now be available, in full, at the end of the LOWDOWN.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LOW LIONESSE CLUB

Please look for an article at the end of this LOWDOWN about the establishment of our LOW Lioness Club authored by Gloria Bishop Oliveri.

### FROM THE EDITORS

**Editors:**      Sharla Bailey 703-989-5519 [skbailey1429@gmail.com](mailto:skbailey1429@gmail.com)  
                     Julie Phend 630-854-4126 [julie.phend@gmail.com](mailto:julie.phend@gmail.com)

Please submit information, articles and photos for the LOWDOWN to Julie Phend via email no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month before the first of the month when the newsletter comes out. Call Julie if you don't have access to email.

## Monthly Stuff (not service related)

Menu, Birthdays, etc.

### FROM THE TAMERS

Please let the Tamers know if you are unable to make the **February 12th dinner meeting**. As always, the deadline is noon on Monday, February 9.

Ann Turner                    [anntturner@gmail.com](mailto:anntturner@gmail.com) (don't forget there are two Ts)

Sharon Corner            [andiprayed@gmail.com](mailto:andiprayed@gmail.com)

Emily Florence            [emilyjflorence1@gmail.com](mailto:emilyjflorence1@gmail.com) (Tamer advisor)

### MENU

#### Comfort Food Classic

Garden salad with Ranch & Balsamic vinaigrette

Herb-Roasted Chicken Breast

Mashed Potatoes

Steamed Green Beans

Dinner Rolls

Apple Cobbler



### FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Nancy Bidus	2/3	Joan Litschert	2/23
Helene Burns	2/12	Sue Powers	2/23
Diane Wiard	2/13	Kathy Gillespie	2/25
Lynne Kovach	2/20		

### SHARE AND CARE

**Share and Care** is a way for us to let members know when someone is ill, in the hospital or has had a death in the family. Please call or email me so I can get a message out to let our members know right away. I will send a card signed by The Lioness Lions Club.

**Thank you for your help with this!**

Shellee Williams 571-277-8618 [bufsof@msn.com](mailto:bufsof@msn.com)

## TAIL TWISTER FEBRUARY 2026

We are fortunate and honored to belong to a club whose members, through their character and presence, bring joy and comfort to others. Their acts of kindness, generosity, and selflessness exemplify the true heart of a Lioness. Whether these acts are modest or far-reaching, each reflects a steadfast commitment to service and compassion, at a personal or community level. We invite you to reflect upon our circle of women, those to whom we turn in times of challenge and those who share in our moments of celebration. Their unwavering support reminds us that they are always there, and they merit our appreciation.

To nominate a **Mighty Lioness**, contact Nicole Pappas at 619-709-5163 or [pappasnm@gmail.com](mailto:pappasnm@gmail.com).

**If you forget your Name Badge when attending our monthly meeting, please drop \$1.00 in the basket at the check-in table, and write yourself a temporary name badge. We may remember your lovely face, but not always your name. Thank you!**

**Lake of the Woods  
Lioness Lions Club**

PO Box 811

Locust Grove, VA 22508



[lionessclub@lowlioness.org](mailto:lionessclub@lowlioness.org)



[www.lowlioness.org](http://www.lowlioness.org)



[LOW Lioness Lions Club](#)

# Establishment of the LOW Lioness Club

Research and Contributions

By Donalda Lovelace and Gloria Bishop Oliveri

In 1987, the LOW Lions made a significant decision to sponsor the formation of the LOW Lioness Club. The club launched with an impressive 72 Charter Members, reflecting a strong interest and commitment from the community.

## Charter Ceremonies

The charter ceremonies were held on January 16, 1988, marking a major milestone for the organization. This event drew a remarkable attendance of 190 people, underscoring the widespread support for the new club and its mission.

## Leadership and Early Milestones

**Lioness Barbara Story** was appointed as the first President of the LOW Lioness Club. Notably, she was married to Lion Warren Story, who was elected as the first District Governor. During this period, the Lions Clubs International did not permit women to join as members, which highlighted the importance and necessity of the Lioness Club for female participation.

## Changes in Membership and Ongoing Contributions

The policy regarding women's membership in Lions Clubs changed in 1988, opening new opportunities for female leaders. In 1989, following her presidency, Barbara Story joined the LOW Lions Club while maintaining her membership in the LOW Lioness Club. She continued to break new ground by becoming the first woman to serve as President of the LOW Lions during the 1997–1998 term. Her dedication and leadership were further recognized when she was appointed District Governor in 1999.

## Lioness Club Activities and Contributions

From the outset, members of the LOW Lioness Club became actively involved in the broader mission of Lionism. Their commitment was evident through their immediate participation in service initiatives, such as assisting with the annual sight screening conducted in local schools. This early engagement not only strengthened their connection to the community but also demonstrated the club's dedication to the Lions' ideals.

Many of the Lionesses were married to Lions, and this close association fostered a vibrant sense of camaraderie between the two clubs. They frequently celebrated together at joint Christmas parties and picnics, creating lasting memories and deepening their bonds. Additionally, both Lions and Lionesses traveled together to significant events, including District and State Conferences, the USA/Canada Leadership Forum, and International Conventions, further integrating their efforts and experiences. In 1992, a pivotal change occurred when Lions Clubs International encouraged all Lioness Clubs to transition into chartered Lions Clubs. This decision was accompanied by a vote to discontinue support for separate Lioness Clubs. Despite this organizational shift, the Lions of Virginia chose to continue supporting the LOW Lioness Club, even though it was no longer officially chartered, ensuring the club's ongoing presence and influence.

Throughout the years, the Lioness Club maintained its commitment to the larger Lions organization by paying dues to MD 24 and supporting the focus programs of Lions Clubs International. Their contributions included active involvement with Lions Leader Dog, Lions Service Dogs, the Lions Ram Project, and the

Lions Hearing Foundation, among others. These efforts highlighted their dedication to service and their alignment with the core missions of Lionism.

In recognition of their outstanding service, both the LOW Lions Club and the LOW Lioness Club were honored in 1995 with the “Governor’s Award of Excellence in Volunteerism,” presented by Virginia Governor George Allen. This prestigious award underscored the impact and value of their volunteer work within the community.

Continuing their tradition of service, in 1999, the LOW Lions purchased a 25-foot semi-trailer to establish the Lions Food Pantry for Eastern Orange County. Initially located outside the entrance to Lake of the Woods—though later relocated—this facility was operated by both Lions **and** Lionesses, demonstrating their ongoing partnership and shared commitment to serving the needs of the community.

2017 District 24 A Both LOW Lioness and LOW Lions in attendance



**In 2017, the LOW Lioness Club became a chartered official Lions Club, under the new name of LOW Lioness Lions Club. Today, the LOW Lions Club, with 140 members, is the largest Lions club in the state of Virginia, and the LOW Lioness Lions is the second largest with 91 members.**

**1996 24L Winter Conference, both LOW Lions and LOW Lionesses attended!**



**2026 24L Winter Conference, both LOW Lionesses and LOW Lions attended!**



Dick Unser, Lion and Barbara Tomayko, Lioness.



2024 RLLI in Charlottesville, VA



2025 102<sup>nd</sup> Lions of VA State Convention  
in Williamsburg, VA



2025 Visiting Culpeper Lions  
Mid Day Club



# Minutes for the Board of Directors Meeting Lake of the Woods Lioness Lions Club Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. Community Center, Room 2

BOD Meeting called to Order by President, Heidi Brown at: 5:33 p.m.

**Present:** **President**, Heidi Brown; **Secretary**, Gloria Bishop Oliveri; **Foundation Treasure**, Loretta Lafley; **Administrative Treasurer**, Beth Newton; **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**, Mary Lou Ambrose; **Tamers**: Sharon Corner and Ann Turner; **Temporary Tamer/Director**: Emily Florence; **Tail Twister**, Nicole Pappas; **Membership**: Pat Licata and Barbara Tomayko; **Immediate Past President**, Darcy Jennings

**Absent:** **Director/Tamer**, Nicki Buell; **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**: Teresa Wisniewski; **3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President**: Arlene Rich; **Directors**: Claire Donohoe; Caroline Collantes

**Guest speakers** Lynne Kovach and Deborah Raines provided a detailed walkthrough of the newly upgraded Lioness website. During their presentation, they highlighted several new tabs and described the changes and additions that have been implemented to improve user experience.

#### Key Features and Additions:

- 1) Integration of links to several helpful related sites, making it easier for members to access useful resources.
- 2) Introduction of a new calendar feature to keep members informed about upcoming events and activities.
- 3) Addition of a Shutterfly digital book allowing members to view and contribute to a shared collection of photos and memories.

#### Member Contributions:

Deborah Raines encouraged all members who have activity pictures or announcements to contact her directly. She will ensure that submitted content is posted on the Lioness website. The Board of Directors expresses its gratitude to Lynne Kovach and Deborah Raines for their hard work and dedication, and thanks them for their valuable service.

**Secretary's Report:** Gloria Bishop Oliveri

- 1) **Motion** to approve Minutes from the **December 18, 2025, BOD meeting**, which were previously submitted **Motion** made Darcy Jennings and seconded by Barbara Tomayko. **Motion passed.**
- 2) **Monthly Reports** from Committee Chairs for: **November 2025**  
PS= 3,766      L= 203      H= 674      \$= \$278.00  
\*Book Sale: \$278.00
- 3) **Monthly Reports** from Committee Chairs for: **December 2025**  
PS= 1767      L= 115      H= 685      \$= \$80.00  
\*Director's Wreath Making: \$80.00  
**NOTE:** Currently, this compilation of numbers and totals remains incomplete. I am still waiting for a few Committee Chairs to submit their report.
- 4) **New Members: Motion** to approve made by Nicole Pappas and seconded by Pat Licata for **Susan Haynes. Motion passed.** Susan is being sponsored by Julie Phend. Susan's formal induction will be on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at our dinner meeting. Susan has lived in Lake of the Woods since 2010.

5) **Resignations: Ellen Bearden** has moved out of our community and, as a result, has resigned effective December 31, 2025. Ellen was just recognized with a **Chevron Award** by Lions International for her 20 years of dedicated service and firm commitment to our community and our club. Ellen, you will be greatly missed, and we wish you nothing but the very best in your future endeavors!

**Motion** to approve Ellen's resignation made by Emily Florence and seconded by Barbara Tomayko. **Motion** passed.

6) **Old Business:**

- 1) Bylaws and Constitution update: Heidi will be meeting with our attorney, Walter Dierks, and will update us upon completion.
- 2) Lioness Service Chair: Heidi is still looking to appoint a Lioness to this position.
- 3) Last month Nicole Pappas requested our participation in subsidizing costs toward the high school DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America). This is an organization that mentors and prepares students for various fields. Loretta spoke with Carol Greeney and Carol would be thrilled to have the balance (\$800.00) of the money donated in Ray's name to be given to the DECA team. We are still waiting for more information from the school coordinators. Nicole will continue will to follow up.

**Foundation Treasurer, Loretta Lafley:**

**November 2025 Report:**

- 1) **Total Income:** \$0.00
- 2) **Total Expenses:** \$3,315.00
- 3) **Adjusted Bank Balance:** \$42,935.80
- 4) **CD Balance:** \$30,000.00

**December 2025 Report:**

- 5) **Total Income:** \$8,039.00
- 6) **Total Expenses:** \$1,886.89
- 7) **Adjusted Bank Balance:** \$49,087.91
- 8) **CD Balance:** \$30,173.09

**Administrative Treasurer, Beth Newton**

**November 2025 Report:**

- 1) **Total Income:** \$1,724.00
- 2) **Total Expenses:** \$3,410.90
- 3) **Cash Balance Checking:** \$12,182.05
- 4) **CD Balance:** \$10,000.00

**December 2025 Report:**

- 1) **Total Income:** \$2,904.00
- 2) **Total Expenses:** \$3,007.49
- 3) **Cash Balance Checking:** \$12,078.56
- 4) **CD Balance:** \$10,000.00

**President's Report:** Heidi Brown

- 1) Pricing for Dinner Meetings: The cost for meals at our dinner meetings will remain at \$30.00 per person. Heidi will share further details and information as soon as she receives it.
- 2) We still need volunteers for the Shimmery Shamrock Gala. Please contact Heidi for details.

- 3) We are currently seeking a Lioness who is willing to accept the position of Committee Chair for the upcoming **Spring Yard Sale**, which is scheduled to take place in April 2026. An official announcement regarding the Committee Chair position will be made at our February dinner meeting.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President's Report:** Teresa Wisniewski

- 1) Gala dance tickets are still on sale. We currently have six tickets remaining. We are continuing to offer them to Lionesses first, and then they will be released to the public. Please contact Nicki Buell at nbuell113@comcast.net. If you or friends want tickets.
- 2) We are still looking for table sponsors. A table sponsorship is \$125 and includes your name displayed with an attractive sign on a dinner table at the dance. Your name will also be listed in the Shimmery Shamrock Gala program.
- 3) Anyone interested in being a table sponsor, please give your check to Teresa. Checks should be made payable to LOW Lioness Lions Club, with "Shimmery Shamrock Gala" written in the memo line.

**Tail Twister:** Nicole Pappas

- 1) 2026 Winter Conference Report for District 24L: Emily Florence, Gloria Bishop Oliveri, and Nicole Pappas attended the Winter Conference held in Winchester, VA representing LOW Lionesses Lions Club. Nicole shared that this was a highly valuable experience. She found the event to be both very informative and exceptionally well organized. They had great speakers addressing Mental Health, Disaster Response and Hunger Awareness. She also recommends and encourages others to attend these functions in the future.
- 2) Nicole will continue to follow up with schools for DECA Program.

**Membership:** Pat Licata and Barbara Tomayko

- 1) Barbara had approved application for Susan Haynes. She has two additional applications in process and looking to induct all three in March 2026.
- 2) Pat gave a brief update on Scholarships for 2026. She will be in contact with Guidance Counselors. It was suggested we eliminate a specific mandatory GPA and instead request in the applicant to provide their individual GPA. This way we can have a higher number of applicants and thus include vocational applicants. Nicole Pappas made **Motion** to approve this change and seconded by Sharon Corner. **Motion** approved.

**Past President:** Darcy Jennings

- 1) BOD Nominations for next year. Darcy will put together a Nominating Committee and will begin the process to elect the new BOD for 2026-2027.

There being no further business to come before the LOW Lioness Lions Board of Directors at this time, the meeting was adjourned at: 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Gloria Bishop Oliveri*, LOW Lioness Lions Secretary

**Next BOD Meeting:** Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Center, Room 2