

ink



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
DENVER

Summer Issue
Volume 2021 — Issue 3

A publication of The Junior League of Denver. A 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization.



Thank You for a Wonderful Year, JLD Members!

Grow:

to increase in size, number or degree.



*Melanie Lewis
Dickerson*

Message from the President

Dear Members,

As our 2020–21 League year came to a close, I reflected on how grateful I am for the opportunity to serve as your President and for how each of you committed to developing your civic leadership this past year. Regardless of what new challenge arose, you met each moment with creativity, resilience and grace. Throughout the year, we discovered new ways to **give** back to our Denver community, **grow** together and **get connected**, despite physical distance. We also learned more about how JLD should continue to adapt and transform in order to thrive beyond our 102nd year.

When we started the year, we set out to advance three key strategic priorities across the League. I'm proud of what we've accomplished together while also elevating our existing programming and operations.

- We worked to center the conversation on **diversity, equity and inclusion** across the organization, exploring how to embed this lens into everything we do. After two years of discovery work by our DEI Committee, our Board of Directors recently endorsed the addition of DEI-specific priorities to our Strategic Plan that will shape our efforts moving forward. This is an exciting moment for JLD and one that will help ensure all women can engage in our Mission.
- Our membership also endorsed the **expansion of our focus area** to ensure we continue to meet our community's greatest needs. Moving forward, we will expand our impact to be inclusive of women and families facing systemic poverty. We know that through the leadership of our trained volunteers, we can help disrupt this cycle and achieve better outcomes for the Denver community. In the months and years ahead, we'll work across the organization to implement new programs, training, and advocacy opportunities and to ensure all of our members feel connected to this impact area.
- Finally, we continued laying a foundation to **build a culture of using data for improvement** throughout the organization to measure our achievements, inform our planning and tell the story of our impact. We rolled out a measurement strategy connected to our Strategic Plan and collected key data points from all areas of the League. I can't wait to see how we enhance these efforts over time using both quantitative and qualitative data.

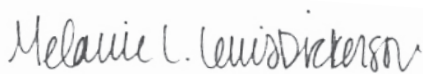
Over the last year, as we all navigated the COVID-19 pandemic in our personal and professional lives, we also worked together to ensure that our League activities were nimble and could meet the needs of our members and community. Our goal was to bring as much normalcy to this year as possible, while ensuring the safety and experience of our members. Through a mix of activities that included socially-distanced, hybrid and virtual events, our impact has continued.

- Through the leadership of our **Community Council**, our members have served nearly 36,000 people in the Denver metro area this year.
- The **Training** and **Public Policy Councils** provided meaningful training and growth opportunities that reached more members than ever before.
- The **Membership** and **Sustainer Councils** engaged both new and longtime members with opportunities to stay connected throughout the year.
- The **Fundraising Council** creatively built a culture of philanthropy by adapting signature events and finding new ways for our members to give back.
- And the **Communications** and **Finance & Operations Councils** were a backbone to all of our efforts, ensuring the long-term health of our organization.

I have discovered so much this year about who I am as a leader, friend, professional, wife and mother. I learned how to navigate uncertain, high-stakes situations with many variables. I'm confident that I will be a more impactful community advocate and volunteer because of my time in the Junior League of Denver and I know I'm not alone. It's been amazing to watch each of you rise to the occasion, time and again.

We are dynamic professionals, transformative volunteers and powerful civic leaders. Together, we have furthered the legacy of the Junior League of Denver and together we will continue that impact in the years to come. Thank you for being a part of it.

In Partnership,



Melanie Lewis Dickerson
2020–2021 JLD President
president@jld.org

Give:

to present voluntarily and without expecting compensation.



*Fast and Fresh
Guacamole*

Easy Guacamole for your Summer Gathering

The days are warming up, and we are all looking forward to safely gathering during the Summer months! Please see below for a quick and easy guacamole recipe to serve to your family and friends.

FAST AND FRESH GUACAMOLE

Colorado Classique, page 21

Prep: Less than 10 minutes

2 ripe avocados

½ tomato, diced

¼ medium red onion, finely diced

1 clove garlic, crushed or finely chopped

1 tablespoon cumin

½ teaspoon kosher salt, or to taste

1 tablespoon lime juice

½ tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro

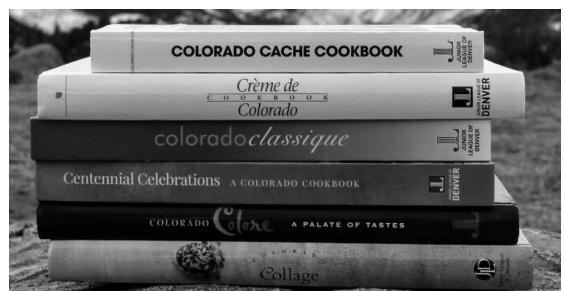
2–6 dashes Tabasco sauce, depending on taste

To easily remove the avocado flesh from the peel and pit, hold the avocado gently in one hand. Carefully cut the avocado lengthwise around the seed with a sharp knife. Open the 2 halves to expose the pit. Remove the pit with your fingers, or if necessary, pry it out with a spoon. Spoon the avocado flesh into a medium bowl; it should be easily removed from the peel. Using a hand-held potato masher or a fork, mash the avocado flesh to desired texture.

Mix avocado with all remaining ingredients and stir to combine. Guacamole will turn slightly brown as it ages so it's best to prepare only an hour or so in advance. Serve with your favorite chips and enjoy.

Members receive special pricing for the JLD's six award-winning cookbooks.

Please call 303.692.0270 (press zero) or email info@jld.org if you would like to place an order and arrange a curbside or after hours pick-up at the office. *Colorado Cache* is \$15 and the other five books are \$20. Prices include tax.



Partner Projects Committee Hosts Successful JLD Garden Tour

The League hosted its first-ever JLD Garden Tour on Saturday, May 22 at Denver Botanic Gardens. Due to the pandemic, the League's annual JLD Kitchen Tour was shifted to a Garden Tour for the safety of members and friends. Nearly 200 attendees enjoyed wine, cocktails, food and socializing before touring the gardens. The event also included a Silent Auction, and more than \$5,000 was raised between ticket sales and auction proceeds.

Everyone had a wonderful time at the event! Thank you to Suzanne Smolik, 2020-2021 Partner Projects Chair, as well as Stephanie McLaughlin and Whitney Wolfe, Partner Projects Step-Up Chairs, for planning and coordinating such an incredible in-person event.



*Caryne Mesquita and Lindsey Talafuse, 2021-2022
President and President-Elect*



Members enjoyed spending time together in-person!

Save the Dates! Upcoming JLD Events

July 1-31:
Member Recruitment
Period

July 19:
Drive for Change Golf
Tournament

September 18:
Fifth Annual JLD L.U.V.S.
day of service



*2020-2021 President
Melanie Lewis
Dickerson with
daughter Carter*

Get connected:

join together to provide access and exchange.



*Carol Tierney
Griesemer*



*Carol and her
husband Jim*

If you would like to honor Carolyn, her family has requested contributions can be made to Denver Botanic Gardens or the Denver Public Library Friends Foundation.

Honoring the Life of JLD Past President Carol Tierney Griesemer

Carol Tierney Griesemer passed away on March 15, 2021 after a long fight with breast cancer. She was diagnosed in 2013, and the cancer recurred in late 2020. Her husband Jim and her sons were at her side until the end.

Before serving as JLD President in 1985–1986, she held placements on the Fundraising, Community and Finance Councils in a wide variety of different roles. She was on the *Colorado Cache* Committee, Holiday Mart, Community Assistance Fund, Diabetes Coalition and many others. More recently, she was a member of the JLD Garden Club, where she had many longtime friendships.

Her fellow Past Presidents had this to say about Carol:

“ As a JLD leader, Carol ranked among the best for her clear thinking, graciousness and commitment. Her sharp wit and laugh were unforgettable. She was all the League aspires us to become.

—Bonnie Downing
JLD Past President 1981–82

“ When I was President of the JLD, Carol was my Education VP, in charge of finding speakers for General Meetings and other educational events. Carol was amazing. She started the downtown Volunteer Fair for nonprofits to talk about their organizations and recruit volunteers. It was a huge undertaking and success. Every meeting she planned had interesting speakers AND her finale was arranging for Barbara Bush (wife of the then Vice President) to come and speak about literacy, which both she and the League were passionate about. The meeting filled the Paramount Theater with League members, spouses and friends. Carol was smart, dedicated and fun to be with. I miss her.

—Ellen Fisher
JLD Past President 1982–83

“ One of Carol’s primary jobs during the time she was my Executive VP in 1983–84 was to be the level head, the one who thought things through and was logical. Besides being a critical voice in the conversation, she was responsible for keeping me from driving off a cliff. We used to laugh about it because we both understood it. I listened to her and depended on her. We averted most cliffs.

—Kay Johnson
JLD Past President 1983–84



Fun Club participates in The Blanket Project

JLD Fun Club Adapts and Flourishes During Pandemic

By: Wendy Labbett, 2020-2021 JLD Fun Club Chair

As a Transfer from the Junior League of Toronto, I was welcomed into the Fun Club in 2015 by that year's Hospitality & Transfer Chair, Cindy Bauer. "What's Fun Club?," I asked.

Founded in 1969 by newcomers, its purpose was to "have fun." Cindy introduced me not only to fun but to the city of Denver with its abundance of cultural, educational, outdoor and friendship possibilities. I learned that not all Junior Leagues have a Fun Club for Sustainer Transfers. Lucky us!

Pre-pandemic, the Fun Club assembled often. Luncheons, social events, book clubs, bridge and Sampling Denver (longtime club event program) were springboards to instant connections. These events created opportunities for friendships for those of us who had come from somewhere else and were in the throes of learning about the JLD and how to find our feet in a new city.

Fun Club is still like this – for the most part. This past year, unique in many ways, washed across JLD programs in general, leaving opportunities in its wake for creative and imaginative thinking. The overall purpose was to keep the community-focused goals of the organization at optimum strength. Zoom became our friend. Because of the pandemic, a heightened awareness of mounting community needs stared us in the face, and one of Fun Club's main purposes, to keep people connected and involved and a part of the greater whole, loomed large. How could we stay together?

Fun Club adapted by starting a monthly newsletter to help group members stay connected. Our newest Transfers, under the dedicated care of our Transfer Chair, got involved through small, masked groups for city tours, Zoom happy hours and more. More active participation on the Sustainer Council was encouraged to support the League's expanded focus to be inclusive of women and families experiencing systemic poverty, through drives and volunteering. Fun Club responded by creating The Blanket Project, dreamed up by two thoughtful members, offering donations of fleecy hand-knotted blankets to WeeCycle to provide comfort for mothers and babies.

As we look forward to more in-person events this Summer, and to this year where we will hopefully see more of what we knew as "normal life," we carry with us indelible memories of what we are learning from this devastating pandemic and the pain and hardship it has brought to so many. Ralph Waldo Emerson is generally credited with the maxim: "Life is a journey, not a destination." As we journey forward together, we will take to heart what we've seen, heard and learned this year.

If you're a Sustainer Transfer and are interested in learning more about Fun Club, please email 2021-2022 JLD Fun Club Chair Cheryl Ryan at razryan98@yahoo.com.



ink Committee

Shannon LaBay, Editor

Lisa Mehlbrech, Assistant Editor

JLD Staff

Karen Mayo, *Finance & Operations Director, ext. 109*

Vanessa Banker, *Communications Director, ext. 114*

Celeste Sims, *Business Support Specialist, ext. 100*

Ellen Spangler, *Development Director, ext. 102*

JLD Headquarters

Junior League of Denver

1140 Delaware Street, Denver, CO 80204

phone: 303.692.0270

email: info@jld.org

web: JLD.org

hours: Monday—Friday 9 am–4 pm

Mission

Junior League of Denver, Incorporated, founded in 1918, is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Our purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
DENVER

1140 Delaware Street
Denver, CO 80204



@juniorleaguedenver



@jldenver



@juniorleaguedenver

#JLD

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Denver, Colorado
Permit No. 134