



Women's League Bulletin

Website: www.aud.edu.lb/women_league

WL Mission Statement

The WL is an organization of women from different nationalities. Its purpose is to promote a broad acquaintance, to socialize, learn and support one another, and establish social network. Its goal is to secure a yearly scholarship fund for a disabled student

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"The society of women is the foundation of good manners".

Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

Spring has come and with it the nice weather after a heavy winter with storms and heavy rainfalls where the city was in a flooded state several times this winter. But the mountains will soon be blooming with flowers in all shades and colours, the sky will be so clear and it's time to cheer.

On Monday March 19th, we celebrated Mother's day during a luncheon where many members of the Women's League and their friends were present. To many members, the League's greatest value is the opportunity it gives for broad acquaintance among women of all nationalities. May this trend continue and may it result in many new friendships and understanding by our many varied programs. The programs are devoted to a variety of subjects of general interest both local and international. Members are welcome, at all times, to bring guests to our monthly meetings.

Women interested in the aims of the League and able to understand English are invited to join it.

At the end of each year the money left over is donated to AUB for a worthy cause. For the past ten years the League has given scholarships to disabled students in the American University of Beirut.

Now the Women's League looks forward to a bright future with a variety of activities and many more members.

I wish each one of you a Very Happy Easter.

*Salwa Damiani
President*

Mrs. Afifi Dirani Arsanios; speaker for the Women's League General Meeting for Monday March 5, 2012

Before introducing Mrs. Afifi Dirani Arsanios let me quote what Mrs. Arsanios said at our first contact upon inviting her to be the Women's League speaker for the general meeting in March.

"I accept this invitation with a great joy for many reasons not the least of which is my nostalgia to very precious formative years of my youth on the campus of this wonderful University which equipped me with knowledge and sensitivity to diversity and humanism."

And now may I introduce her to you:

Upon her graduation from AUB in 1967 Mrs. Afifi Dirani Arsanios was one of the first women to join the Lebanese Diplomatic Corps. Her first post was as Cultural Counsellor at the Lebanese Embassy in Washington DC. Then she was a member of the Lebanese Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York, and later she joined the World Bank in Washington, DC. In 1993 she took the post of Public Information Officer at the United Nations Development Programme UNDP. In 1999, she became an Advisor to the Minister of Culture when Beirut was selected as Cultural Capital. Since 2002 she is the President of the Board of Directors of SOS Children's Villages, Lebanon and member of SOS International Senate representing the Middle East and North Africa Regions.

She is married to attorney Mr. Boutros Arsanios and the couple have three children.

As a tribute to Motherhood, Mrs. Arsanios will be speaking about a special brand of mothers that exists only at SOS Children's Villages.

Here below are some highlights of Mrs. Arsanios's speech:

SOS Children's Villages is an international organization first established in Austria in 1949.

There now are national associations in 134 countries worldwide. SOS provides family based care for children without parental care until they achieve self-reliance as adults, i.e. around the age of 18. SOS prevents child abandonment through family strengthening programmes, which empower at risk families to achieve economic stability and independence.

We now have four villages in Lebanon; the first village was established in Bhersaf (Metn) in 1969 which was followed by Sferai (South Lebanon) in 1981, Kfarhay (North Lebanon) in 1995, and Ksarnaba (Bekaa) in 2006. Ksarnaba also has its own kindergarten school and mother and child health care unit, both of which are open to the public.

We have eight youth facilities for girls and boys in Abra and Ksarnaba, for boys in Jbeil and in Jal-el-Dib, for girls in Sehaile and Jita. We have two social centres in Beirut and Ksarnaba which maintain the family strengthening programmes. The social centre in Beirut also maintains an arts and crafts workshop for women heads of families.

Mrs. Afifi Arsanios said that being an SOS Mother is a profession with special duties and particular challenges which requires a clear definition of what the job entails and what skills are needed for it. The women who decide to take up the profession of an SOS mother are carefully selected and undergo two years of vocational training before becoming mothers, so as to create a community of well-informed and capable mothers for our villagers. Mrs. Arsanios concluded her speech by saying that the SOS Mother must work on the children's pasts and remain in contact with their biological parents. Her efforts will enable her children to have respect for those from different cultures and backgrounds regardless of colour, race ethnic group, tribe and creed. Some SOS Mothers have seen several generations of their adopted children graduating from high school or university, married and beginning families of their own – and thus many SOS Mothers are now SOS Grand Mothers.

Rihab Ouri, Program Chair Person



Salwa Damiani, Mrs. Afifi Arsanios, and Rihab Ouri

Mother's Day Lunch at Gefinor Rotana Hotel

At 1:00 p.m. on Monday 19 March 2012 the Grand Ballroom at Gefinor Rotana Hotel gathered some one hundred ladies for lunch to celebrate Mother's Day. The singer Mr. Elie Wehbeh entertained the ladies with songs in Arabic and English. The buffet lunch was rich and had great variety. There also was a lottery with some good prizes. Everyone truly enjoyed the event which was well organized.

A. Choukassizian, Editor



The executive board of the Women's League at the Gefinor Rotana Hotel

Her Excellency Mrs. Raana Rahim, Ambassador of Pakistan, had invited the members of the executive board of the Women's League to the reception held between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m. at the Coral Beach Hotel on Friday 23 March 2012 to celebrate Pakistan National Day. The open buffet included both Pakistani and Lebanese dishes.

The following poem by C. W. Bardeen (1847-1924) gives the spirit of Spring

The Birds' Ball

*Soon they came from bush and tree,
Singing their song of glee,
Each one fresh from its cozy nest,
Each one dressed in its Sunday best.*

*Cuckoo and wren, they danc'd for life,
The raven danced with the yellowbird's wife;
The awkward owl and the bashful jay,
Wished each other "a very good day."*

*The woodpecker came from his hole in the tree,
And brought his bill to the company.
For the cherries ripe and the berries red,
'Twas a very long bill, so the birdies said.*

*They danced all day till the sun was low,
Till the mother birds prepared to go;
Then one and all, both great and small
Flew to their nest from the birdies' ball.*

Dates to remember:

General meeting in West Hall at 3:30 p.m. on Monday May 7, 2012.

The annual garden party in Marquand House at 5:30 p.m. on Monday June 4, 2012.