



'Where the biggies leave off...'

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## Now 112 years young, Woman's Club invites us to celebrate Springtime in Paris at their annual gala on April 13

By Michael Wilson

If you assumed that women's clubs -- in particular, the Woman's Club of Minneapolis -- had sort of receded into history, you'd be ... well, missing out on a really good thing.

And on Saturday, April 13, the Woman's Club is hosting their largest annual fundraiser, the Gala for Giving. Planning Committee members promise that "this year's event will transport you and your guests to the magical sidewalks and parks of Paris, France as we celebrate the theme of 'I Love Paris in the Springtime.' Music, games, live and silent auctions, delicious food and great company promise to make it an evening to remember."

The Gala is open to the public -- everyone is invited to attend. Go to [womansclub.org](http://womansclub.org), click on "Public Events" and then on "April 13" in the "I Love Paris in the Springtime Gala" line to find out more and purchase tickets.

The Woman's Club is proud to be Minneapolis Community & Technical College's longest-running donor partner, and a portion of the Gala's proceeds will go towards scholarships for qualifying MCTC students. Gala proceeds will also help fund upgrades on the beautiful, historic Clubhouse at 410 Oak Grove in Loring Park, overlooking downtown Minneapolis.

"Far from simply being a social club, the Woman's Club of Minneapolis played an active role in the city's early twentieth-century social and cultural development," the city's Heritage Preservation Commission noted in 1998 as it designated the 1927 Clubhouse an historic building.

"From its creation in 1907, the Club provided an organization for upper- and middle-class women to follow in the tradition of the Progressive reformers in improving the city and supporting the arts," the citation continued. "Emerging at the time of the Women's Suffrage movement of the early twentieth century, the Club offered an opportunity for women to participate in community affairs and gain political influence."

### Restoration of 1848 Ard Godfrey House.

One of the Club's finest contributions to our community has been their ground-up restoration of the Ard Godfrey House, built in 1848 and now the oldest surviving frame house in the Twin Cities. Starting in 1976, the group invested time (10,000 hours!) and treasure to return the house to its 1850s character. Although the house, part of Chute Square in the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood, is owned by the Park



Woman's Club 2019 Gala co-chair Joy Martin and committee member Terri Starkey had a great time at the 2018 Gala. (Photo courtesy Woman's Club.)

Board, Woman's Club members continue as its conservators and provide free tours during warm

weather. Go to [womansclub.org/ard-godfrey-house](http://womansclub.org/ard-godfrey-house) to learn more.

Has the Woman's Club changed with the times? Absolutely! When the Club celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1982, it decided that its members would officially henceforth be known by their own first names, not their husbands'. And in 1990 the Woman's Club began accepting men as members too.

In 2018 the woman and men of the Club threw open their doors and invited the public in for lunch. And dinner, and for their famous Sunday brunch too. The Clubhouse dining room is magnificent and Le Cordon Bleu-trained head chef Michael Abelson runs one of the finest kitchens in town. (There's easy parking in the Club's adjacent lot.) Go to

[womansclub.org/public/public-events](http://womansclub.org/public/public-events) for details and to view the menus.

The women and men of the Woman's Club invite everyone to visit on Saturday and Sunday, May 18 and 19, when their beautiful Clubhouse will be one of the 100 Minneapolis buildings participating in the free Doors Open celebration. Go to

[doorsopenminneapolis.org](http://doorsopenminneapolis.org) for more information on this citywide event

But first, come celebrate Springtime in Paris at the Woman's Club on April 13!