E-Town Epicurean Club is your place to gather, socialize and share your favorite novelty wines, drinks and foods. Our monthly newsletter provides info about upcoming events and notifications. Please "like" and follow us on our Facebook page Epicurean Club Etown to share your favorite recipes, tips, gourmet wine, spirits, special events and announcements.

Epicurean Club Officers

Melissa Schwartz - President
Kim Kasin - Vice President
Karen Goldstein - Treasurer
Kathy Grimes - Secretary

January Birthdays

Wendy Balacki
Tom Fontana
Les Perry
Mike Vitale
Laura Weiners

January Anniversaries

Jacqueline & John Olmo
Geeta & Pramod Wasudev

New Members

Jackie Manning
Beth Lewis
Audrey Schlau
Angie Veno
Mike Veno



THE GRAPEVINE

Inspire, Discover and Appreciate Fine Wines, Spirits, Food and Friends

January 2026

Volume 4, Issue 1

January Social Theme: the Cuisine of Florida!

6 to 9:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 15,
at Del Webb eTown Gallery Ballroom
Sign-Up Here

Since its founding several years ago, the Epicurean Club's monthly socials have featured a diverse mix of the foods of many other countries and every region of the United States.

This month we are staying close to home, as we enjoy the native cuisine of the Sunshine State!

Here in northeast Florida, we routinely have access to some great local menu items -- but perhaps many of us have only scratched the surface. Florida is the 22nd largest state, covering about 65,758 square miles.

Florida's cuisine varies by region, blending Southern, Caribbean, Latin, and fresh seafood influences.

Some of the state's iconic dishes include:

- **fresh Grouper/Stone Crabs/Shrimp** (Coastal),
- **Conch Fritters** (Keys/Coastal),
- **Key Lime Pie** (Keys),
- **Cuban Sandwiches** (South/Miami),
- **Shrimp & Grits** (North/Panhandle),
- **Gator Tail** (Everglades/Central), and
- **Greek-inspired seafood** in Tarpon Springs.

Key Lime Pie is the official state pie, and the orange is the state fruit.

Epicurean Club Committees:

Special Events
Melissa Schwartz, Deb McKemey, Karen Gee, Louise Santana

Food & Beverage
John Lemis, Sue Price, Patty Boyce, John Logue, Kate Richardson, Joyce Cooper

Decorating & Display Case
Lydia Dudzik, Kathy Grimes, Laura Wieners, Alison Henderson, Sara Banks, Beth Lewis, Angie Veno

Newsletter
John Lemis, Mark Bagley, Rebecca Steinen (Facebook), Victor Boyce (Photography).

Nominating
Kim Kasin, JanAnn Salvati, Gail Winslow

Merchandising
Rebecca Steinin, ***Needs more members***

Welcome
Jean Ward, Karen Goldstein, Kim Kasin, Cynthia Coulliette, Laura Wieners, Sally Pari, Kate Richardson, Louise Santana

Finance
Maryellen Bagley

Committee Chairs are underlined

Upcoming Monthly Socials to Feature:

Feb. 19: Thailand
March 19: New York
April 16: Brunch for Dinner

Officer Changes for 2026

And Thanks to a Great Group of Volunteer Leaders!

By Melissa Schwartz

A big "Thank You" to **John Lemis** and **Wendy Balacki** as they leave our Epicurean board and a big "Welcome Aboard" to our newest members Kim Kasin and Kathy Grimes.

As a founding member to our Epicurean Club John served four years as the President and was instrumental in shaping our club into the fun, informative and welcoming organization that we all enjoy.

Wendy was the first member who stepped up to join the board at a challenging time in April 2024 as the Club was down two board members, Vice President and Treasurer. Along with Karen Goldstein who volunteered to fill the vacant Treasurer's position, Wendy jumped in with energy and enthusiasm and took the lead developing our committee communications, reviewing our bylaws and organizing our Socials. I am personally very thankful for her assistance in organizing our cupboards in between Socials and helping to keep our supplies current and interesting!

Kim Kasin has joined the board as our newest Vice President replacing Wendy, and **Kathy Grimes** will replace me as our next Secretary. A big thank you to these ladies for volunteering their time and energies to the continuation of our Club.

Karen Goldstein will continue on as our Treasurer -- thank goodness! -- since most of you know I don't do debits and credits well.

And I will spend my last eligible year on the board as your President. As you all learned this past fall, our bylaws only allow for three full years on the board in any capacity which I believe is a sound rule. Any club is only as good as the involvement of its members. Our term limits make it necessary for the group to keep regenerating and involving the membership to continue to exist.

Reminder: 2026 Annual Dues

If you have not already made payment, your Epicurean Club annual dues submission of **$85 per person** is now (over)due!

You can pay your dues via Zelle to: DWETepicurean@gmail.com, or by placing a check made payable to the Epicurean Club in the Club binder in the Gallery.

Club Committees to Meet on Jan. 31

An All-Committee Meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 31, in the Ballroom. We are asking that each committee lead or delegate join the board to better plan for our year to come.

Anyone interested in joining a committee or learning more about getting involved in one is also welcome to join us. A sign-up will be sent out in the next few weeks to let us know who will be attending.

Jumbo Shrimp Baseball Outing!

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 6. The Club has reserved group tickets for the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp baseball game.

Sign-up information and payment details will follow. Payment will be due in early May, so this is just a "hold the date" notification.

Team Work makes the Dream Work!!!

Committees are Energy that Drives our Club!!!

Club committees are essential for ensuring a club operates smoothly and achieves its goals. Whether organizing events, managing membership, set-up or clean-up, committees provide the structure, collaboration, and efficiency needed for success. If you're looking to get more involved in your club, joining or even leading a committee can be a great opportunity to develop leadership skills and make a meaningful impact. OUR COMMITTEES ROCK!!!!



Scenes from the December Social

BIG Thank you to our Mixologists

Gwen Goodrich, Monte Ables, Skip Gwinn, John Logue, & Holly McNally (Holly's Perfect Pour)

