

Connections
Membership Meeting – Zoom
January 19, 2021
Attendees: 51

Donna reported that after February 1 **only members who have paid dues** will be able to attend *Connections* activities. She will send revised member lists to all activity chairs reflecting the new membership after that date. Approximately 35% of the 2020 members have decided not to join for 2021.

Mah jongg is starting up again on Friday afternoons, online currently. Contact Margie if you want to play. Brenda Brunelle is offering a refresher session on January 29 at 3 pm. If interested contact Brenda.

There are three socials this month: Tea (January 14, past); Coffee (January 22, 10-11) and Happy Hour (January 28, 5-6). For the two socials in the future contact Linda Bakian to join.

Carolyn Seibel reported that 16 people have signed up for the **Pinot's Palette Zoom painting "party"** on February 5, from 2-4 pm. Members can still sign up by calling Carolyn. (Carolyn gave out her telephone number.)

Lee Atieh gave the **Treasurer's report**. There are currently 135 paid members, and a balance of \$9,105 in *Connections* accounts.

Margie Battaglia introduced **two new members:** Emily Baglieri and Audrey Ruhlman.

Melanie Hazim was the guest speaker for the meeting. Ms. Hazim is the Director of Outreach in the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs in the Attorney General's Office. Her remarks focused on scam and fraud awareness. The main priority of the Division is market protection. They license and register businesses, accept complaints from consumers and investigate businesses that receive complaints. The office also handles regulation of commercial weights and measures for the state. To avoid scams she reviewed best practices for answering the phone and reviewed the types of calls you may receive that are fraudulent. She reviewed email scams basically instructing members to not respond to email that asks you to take immediate action or asks you to buy gift cards and read the card numbers to them over the phone. She gave hints on how to recognize a phony email. Ms. Hazim will send Consumer Affairs publications and links to other information to Janet to post on the *Connections* web site. She also recommends the AARP website for complete information on scams.