PENNSYLVANIA CLUBWOMAN

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General Federation of Women's Clubs Pennsylvania
Member GFWC

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President's Message:











GFWC PA President's Project: High Five – Help Kids Thrive!

Cathy Wink, Chairman

President's Project District Chairman:
Northeastern District: Marie Warren South Central District: Melinda McDonald Southeastern District: Janey Gifford Northwestern District: Norma McClay North Central District: Susan Kling Southwestern

District: Cheryl Brooks

Objective: GFWC Pennsylvania will work with child care and early learning platforms and partners to educate our members on the needs of children birth through age 5 and their families.
Pennsylvania Head Start has partnered with parents living in poverty, children in foster care, children experiencing homelessness, and children with disabilities to prepare them for success in school and life. Some Statistics: 30,286 children and pregnant women are enrolled in PA. 15,545 families received nutrition education; 3,728 housing assistance; and 15,711 oral and preventive health. Despite PA Head Start's record of success, Head Start only reaches in 1 in 3 eligible children.
We are asking that you contact your local PA Head Start and find out what help they need from our women's clubs. It could be to volunteer hours and most likely donations of items like school supplies, paint supplies, paper products, backpacks, snacks, etc. Each local Head Start location has different needs, so please contact them to see how we might be able to help. If you cannot find one in your area, please contact this chairman at 724-846-1931 and I will help you find a location near you. The President's Project can be supported with projects under the Arts & Culture, Environment, Civic Engagement, Education & Libraries, Health & Wellness and Juniors Special Project: Advocates for Children. REMEMBER: the President's Project is the only place where you can report the same project twice: once under one of the programs or committees and once under the President's Project. I will have report forms on the district tour or you can check out our website at gfwcpennsylvania.org under the President's Project.

Summer Leadership Conference

The 2026 GFWC PA Summer Leadership conference (held in Lancaster) was a wonderful event. Many early arrivals enjoyed a great meal and fellowship at Jack's Family Tavern in Millersville Thursday evening. Friday and Saturday were packed with interesting workshops and speakers, many talking about the President's Project "High Five – Help Kids Thrive." We learned about PA Project Head Start and all that they do for families, saw how the PA Dairy Princesses support our state's dairy industry and got lots of tips and topics to take back to our clubs. We ate ice cream, played games to support Heifer International, and had the best basket raffle ever! The conference is a fantastic way to share information, ideas and friendship. Next year's event should be epic!



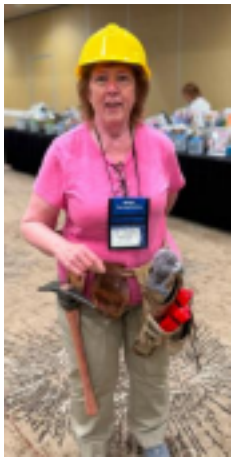

Disney
Winnie the Pooh
DoubleTree



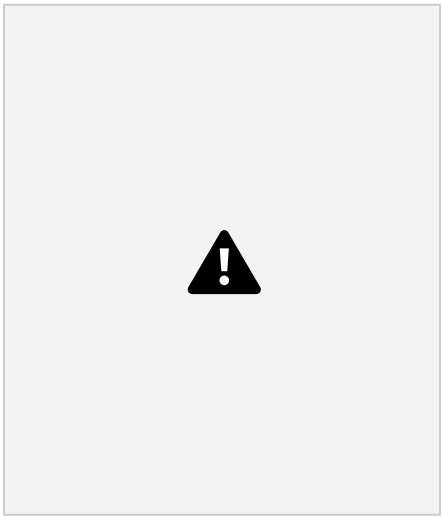
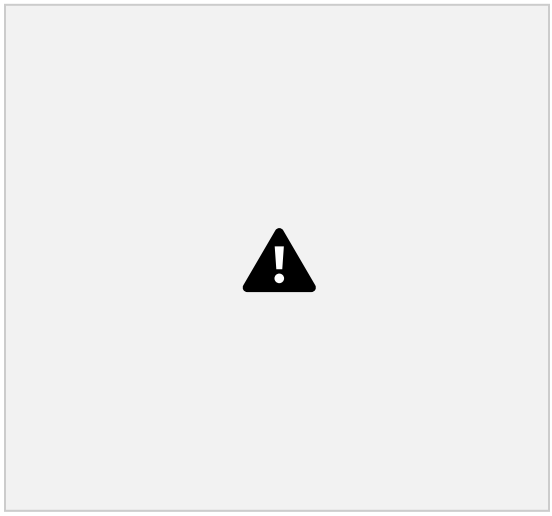
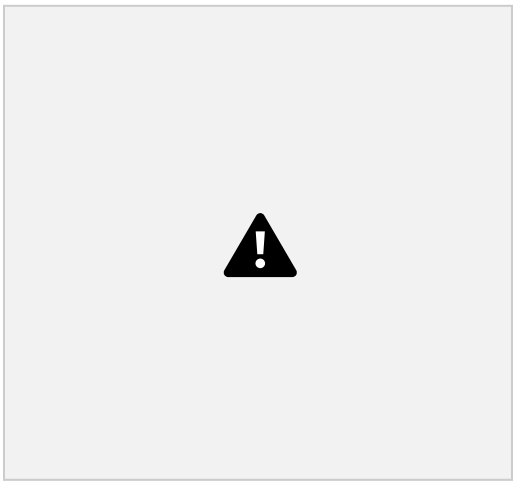
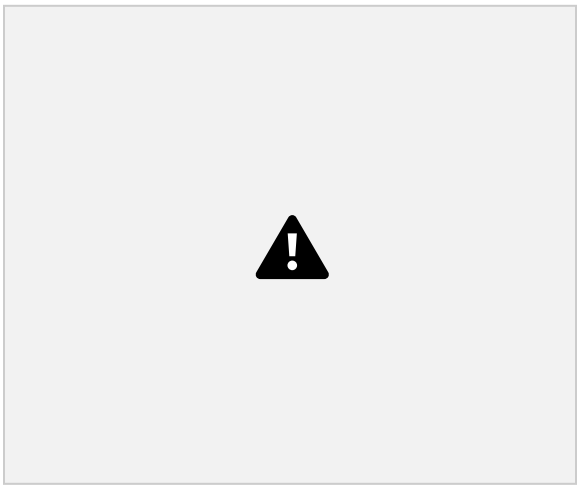

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2026 International GFWC Convention – Arizona

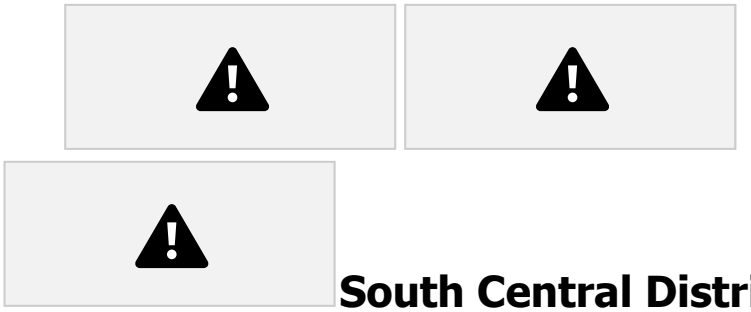
Southwestern District

Sue Morrow, District Director

sjmorrow7@gmail.com

It’s time to start a new year and a new term for the Southwestern District and I’m very happy to be able to serve as its new Director. Our District has many dedicated GFWC clubwomen who have a history of working tirelessly together for our many clubs. The 2027 GFWC Pennsylvania 130th Annual Business meeting/Convention will take place next spring in Cranberry Township and the committee is already forming and thinking about how to make this a memorable event for all.

Please plan to attend our Fall District meeting on Saturday October 3, 2026 at the Butler Country Club. We'll share many exciting ideas about the coming two years and our state administration. Keep an eye out for the CALL to the meeting coming later this summer.
I've chosen "A Bridge" as the symbol of my administration and plan to build strong relationships with our members connecting the past and the future. We will use hope and kindness and commitment to strengthen GFWC in Southwestern PA.



South Central District

Pam Fleck – South Central District Director

All positions for this district have been filled by incredible volunteers: secretary, treasurer, President's Project Chairman, Arts Chairman, Leadership Chairman, Membership Chairman!

The fall meeting for the South Central District is scheduled for October 15. 2026 at Tequila Willie's, a centrally located restaurant in Lemoyne with a semi-private space, lots of parking and a gorgeous view of the Susquehanna River! Lots of goodies are in the planning stage!

The Spring Arts Day is scheduled for March 13, 2027, at the Monroe Township Building, 1220 Boiling Springs Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. This venue is free to us. This allows the registration fee to be low, so we are looking forward to having a good attendance! A continental breakfast will be available offering the opportunity to mingle while enjoying some fare! In addition to the state crafts categories, SCD will also offer a "sweet" bread contest which will be part of the breakfast!

This director has been in contact with all of the club presidents in her district. An effort is being made to encourage them to attend the GFWC SCD meetings and the GFWC Pennsylvania meetings. Participation is key to engaging with our members!



GFWC Pennsylvania Southeastern District

Kathleen Lackey-Painter, Southeastern District Director

The Southeastern District is preparing for a thrilling year in GFWC PA. Our Clubs are putting together their yearly plan for meetings, fundraisers, and many other exciting meetings. The President's Project — "High Five — Help Kids Thrive" — is proving to be an exciting endeavor for many of our Clubs.

The GFWC The New Century Club of West Chester has already asked our State President, Sara Ruppel, to speak at their December meeting. Club members are being asked to bring crayons, coloring books, individual snacks, etc., to that meeting to assist Sara with that project.

Although the Southeastern District is still in the process of planning the 2026-2027 Club year, we expect significant input will be forthcoming from our corner of the State in the future.

MEMBERSHIP Jane Prutzman japrutzman@gmail.com
Mary Fenstermacher m80fenstermacher@gmail.com

HIGH FIVE – HELP YOUR MEMBERSHIP THRIVE! Growing Together Across Pennsylvania

Our 2026–2028 focus is simple and powerful: strengthen club membership statewide. With a shared goal of welcoming **76 new members**, every club plays a vital role in building a stronger Pennsylvania Federation and increasing GFWC's visibility nationally and internationally.

Potential members are all around us — friends, relatives, neighbors, co-workers, and former members ready to reconnect. Invite them in, introduce them proudly, and share what makes your club special. When a guest shows interest, pair her with a mentor who can guide her journey.

Show your PRIDE in your club. Pride creates momentum, momentum builds membership, and membership strengthens our mission. Keep members engaged with creative ideas like a weekly **Motivational Day**, celebrating someone who has done something remarkable.

Together, let's grow, shine, and smile as we welcome new faces into our Federation family.

LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC POLICY

Denise Tovlin, chairman

Midterm elections are upon us. Are you registered to vote? Have you applied for a mail-in ballot if necessary? Do you have a plan to vote in person? Let's do our due diligence and get out and vote!
This would be a great time to try to do a voting activity with children to mimic what their parents will be doing in November.

Just a bit of information prior to the election. GFWC reminds us that as clubs…

You May You May Not

*Advocate for action on a specific issue *Endorse or oppose a specific candidate or for a specific piece of legislation or political party

*Contact your national, state, and local *Use club fund, facilities, in-kind donations, elected officials directly either in person or publications, or events to promote a via email candidate or political party. *Hold nonpartisan forums to educate the *Ask candidates to sign a pledge on any public about one or more specific issues. issue.

*Sponsor candidate forums, ensuring that candidates receive a formal invitation to participate. *Support legislation that conflicts with a GFWC Resolution unless the GFWC guidelines are followed. *Offer opinions about an incumbent or all candidate. *Give only facts when referring to or speaking about a specific candidate or minority opinion incumbent.
*Educate candidates about GFWC's resolutions and legislative priorities.
*Use the GFWC logo when advocating on a GFWC-endorsed issue.



GFWC Community Service Program: Education and Libraries - Dawn Himler, Chairman dhimler@comcast.net

The main goal for this administration is to place as many books in the hands of children, that we can. One way to do this is by compiling a ***Magical Adventure Station***. This can be done by filling a brightly decorated banker box with books from prekindergarten through sixth grade. The number of books can be 25 to 75. The books can range from board books, beginning readers, story books and chapter books. The ***Station*** can be placed in laundromats, food banks, domestic violence shelters, youth service offices, cultural centers or any community spaces where children can be found. Periodically check the ***Station*** to replenish the books needed. Place a sign near the ***Station*** to let the parents know the books are free. The ***Magical Adventure Station*** will give children the power to dream, imagine and explore people and places through READING!
Here are more holidays for purchasing books for your library, holding a story hour, or doing a craft class. ***October*** (2) World Farm Day, (6) Mad Hatter Day, (8) World Octopus Day, (25) World Pasta Day; ***Novembe***r (3) World Jellyfish Day, (10) Sesame Street Day, (18) Mickey Mouse Day; ***December*** (21) Crossword Puzzle Day, (25) Christmas, (27) Snowflake Day. Remember to think outside the box - the children will love it!



ESO – Epsilon Sigma Omicron

Karen French , Chairman

kfrenchgfwcpa@yahoo.com

Missy Kimball is our new GFWC Education & Libraries Chairman and is excited to kick off a new administration with all of us.

She believes books connect us—to different people, places, experiences, and ideas. Every story has something to offer, and every reader brings something different to the conversation.
Sign up on Facebook: GFWC ESO Book Club for further information about ESO

We are hoping this page will be a fun place to share what we're reading and recommend the books we can't stop talking about.

Our Summer leadership conference was a success for GFWC PA ESO. We shared 88 books that were donated to our

book swap. In addition 5 new members signed Pledge forms to join ESO.

The pledge form to join ESO is on the state website (GFWCPA) under education and libraries.

Please contact me with questions and I look forward to receiving your reading lists.



Health and Wellness Jean Pieczynski jpie5@verizon.net

Staying healthy during autumn requires transitioning your wellness routine to match the cooler weather and shorter days. Focus on **boosting your immune system**, **eating seasonal foods**, and **maintaining consistent lifestyle habits**. Here is a practical guide to staying healthy this fall:

Nourish with Seasonal Foods:

- **Root vegetables**: Incorporate sweet potatoes, squash, carrots, and pumpkin which are rich in Vitamin A and fiber.
- **Autumn fruits**: Enjoy apples, pears, and cranberries for an extra dose of Vitamin C and antioxidants.
- **Warming soups**: Prepare hearty stews and broths using garlic, ginger, and cumin to support digestion and immunity.
- **Healthy breakfast**: Try comforting dishes like baked apple oatmeal to lower cholesterol and support gut health.

Prioritize Preventive Care & Immunity:

- **Schedule vaccines**: Stay up to date on your routine respiratory virus shots and annual flu shot.
- **Wash hands frequently**: Use soap and water often to eliminate germs, or keep hand sanitizer nearby.
- **Consider supplements**: Speak with a doctor about adding Vitamin D, Vitamin C, or zinc to compensate for less sun exposure.
- **Stay hydrated**: Drink plenty of water or herbal teas (like ginger or chamomile) even if you do not feel as thirsty as you do in summer.

Move and Rest Mindfully: Shorter daylight hours significantly impact your sleep and energy patterns.

- **Gentle warm-ups**: Keep your muscles loose and flexible with low-impact stretching or dedicated warm-up routines before physical activity.
- **Accessible exercise**: Practice gentle movements like chair yoga or Tai Chi to stay active indoors while promoting relaxation and balance.
- **Outdoor active leisure**: Take advantage of the crisp air with nature walks, gardening, or visiting local food markets.
- **Restorative sleep**: Get 7 to 9 hours of high-quality sleep.
- **Stress management**: Guard your mental health against seasonal changes by keeping a journal, limiting screen time, or practicing daily gratitude.*Banner Health, and

www.heart.org

GFWC PA Woman's History and Resource:

Find Your Jennie June Challenge

As we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the US, let's also look back on the history of our own clubs.

Jane Cunningham Croly (AKA Jennie June) was an American author and journalist. After being denied admission to a dinner honoring Charles Dickens, she founded the Sorosis club for women in New York in 1868 and in 1889 expanded it nationwide to the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The Challenge from this Chairman is to get an individual, or preferably a group of members to research the woman/women who started **your** club. Using club archives (minutes, newsletters, yearbooks, etc.) if you have them, local newspapers, your local library and online genealogy resources, find your founding members. Perhaps you can find the causes that were important to them and do a related project across the current Community Service Programs in their honor. If you are celebrating a significant Anniversary, this can be a part of your celebration.

There will be statewide zoom workshops encouraging members to learn how to do genealogy research. Club, or District zoom trainings can be arranged. This could be for this challenge or for personal use. Details will follow. Have fun finding your Club's History!

The Women's Suffrage National Monument

The Women's Suffrage National Monument was approved to be built on the National Mall on January 4, 2025. Fundraising is underway. GFWC is a sponsor of the monument. Their website www.https://womensmonument.org has all of the current information about the progress being made on the monument. Currently they are soliciting ideas for the monument so please send them your ideas!

Below are some pictures of already dedicated monuments to the suffrage movement in the US:

Tennessee Women's Suffrage Monument – Nashville – Anne Dallas Dudley, Abby Crawford Milton, Frankie Pierce, Sue Shelton White, Carrie Chapman Catt - dedicated in 2020

Women's Rights Pioneer Monument – Central Park NYC – Sojourner Truth, Susan B Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton – dedicated in 2020



Arts & Culture – Let Your Creativity Shine!

Diane Guadagna - Chairman
Marie Warren – Literature Chairman

I am so excited to embark upon this new year as your Arts & Culture Chairman, along with my partner in crime, Marie Warren, our Literature Chairman.
I hope you have all had an opportunity to look through the Arts & Culture Booklet and have begun making plans to implement many of the exciting projects with your clubs. Crafts have returned, and there truly is something for everyone! Be sure to pay special attention to the judging process, as most of the judging will be done virtually. Photography has a new twist and there are also new judging parameters for Student Literature. But perhaps the most exciting contest is Tablescape Design! We all have a favorite childhood storybook – now you can bring that story to life! This is a wonderful chance for your club to work together on a creative and fun design project. I would love to see several designs from each club, but if that isn't possible, one group design would be fantastic!
Remember to participate in the arts whenever you can. See a show, visit a museum, take a child to experience art, or introduce someone to the beauty of culture. These experiences can make a lasting impact and help bring creativity into our everyday lives.
And don't forget about the 2026-2028 Unity Project: Octopus Challenge/Stretch Your Reach! Be sure to read all about it in the GFWC Manual, page 48. What a wonderful opportunity to get creative while making a difference!
So, get out there, spread your wings, and let the artist in you celebrate! Marie and I can't wait to see what you have all planned. You might even see me pop into a club meeting to see what you have going on! There is an artist in all of us! Let her-or him-out. Don't be afraid to "Color Outside the Lines!"



GFWC Pennsylvania – Civic Engagement CSP

Lois A. Richards, Chairman lrichards208@outlook.com

The Civic Engagement and Outreach Community Service Program encompasses a wide variety of community concerns. GFWC Pennsylvania members are responsible for undertaking actions to create a better quality of life and foster a sense of community. This CSP highlights and encourages citizenship, crime prevention, safety, and disaster preparedness, the needy, hungry, and homeless, and our military/veterans, as well as celebrating America250.

Categories in which clubs can pursue projects are State President's Project, America250, Crime Prevention, Safety, and Disaster Preparedness, Citizenship, The Needy, Hungry, and Homeless, Military/Veterans/Women Veterans, as well as projects with the ten affiliate organizations. See the Summer Leadership handout or the GFWC Club Manual for project ideas.





GFWC Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children

Jayne McHugh, Chairman
mchugh.jayne@comcast.net

This year our focus for clubs will be two GFWC affiliate organizations: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Shot@Life.

Children receive cutting edge treatment at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and while that progress is remarkable, the children who go there want just one thing ... .to live!

St. Jude needs friends like us, Pennsylvania Clubwomen. (We can make an impact on precious children). Some ideas were shared at Summer Leadership: Red Wagon, creating encouraging cards, Waiting Room Fun Bags. Measles cases are up 34-fold in America. Measles is a highly contagious virus that remains in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours even after the contagious person leaves the area. As clubwomen, we need to ensure children have access to lifesaving vaccines. Ideas that were shared were save that Starbucks money for a month, hold a themed meeting "Shot Meeting" or, at your community street fair, set up an Exploration Station for kiddos. (Pull kiddos to your table…parents will follow). At Summer Leadership, plastic "Shot@Life" cups were put out. The attendees were asked to "dump" their change! We collected $140.97!!! Thank You!! What a great way to start this campaign.

Let's team up to make every kiddos world a little brighter.

(If you need a deeper explanation of any ideas, please reach out to me)




ENVIRONMENT

Elaine Linamen, Chairman elinamen49@gmail.com

As you work on environmental projects during the next two years remember the Lorax's message- "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." As the season changes, autumn is the perfect time to answer the Lorax's call to care for our world. Embrace the harvest by shopping at local farmers' markets. Eating in- season produce helps reduce the demand for long-distance transportation of food. When treating yourself to a hot drink in the colder months, don't forget to use your reusable glass. You don't need to rake all your leaves, instead use a lawn mower and create leaf mulch. Spread the mulch around plants to protect them in the winter and spread some in your garden to return essential nutrients to the soil. Fall is a great time to clean bird feeders, bird baths, and birdhouses so to prevent the spread of fatal avian diseases. Plant tulips, daffodils, and crocuses bulbs now so that you can enjoy them in the spring. If you have the space, sprinkle some wildflower seeds. This will encourage pollinators next spring.

Autumn provides many opportunities to introduce young children to environmental stewardship. Engage preschoolers with hands on fall activities by taking them on a short nature walk to collect leaves, pinecones, and acorns and then have them sort them by size or shape. Let them gather twigs and leaves and create a nature collage on recycled cardboard.

Autumn reminds us that every ending is also a beginning. This autumn "by caring "a whole lot" you can begin some new habits and make a difference that will leave a legacy of stewardship for the environment that will continue long after the last autumn leaf has fallen.

GFWC Town and Country

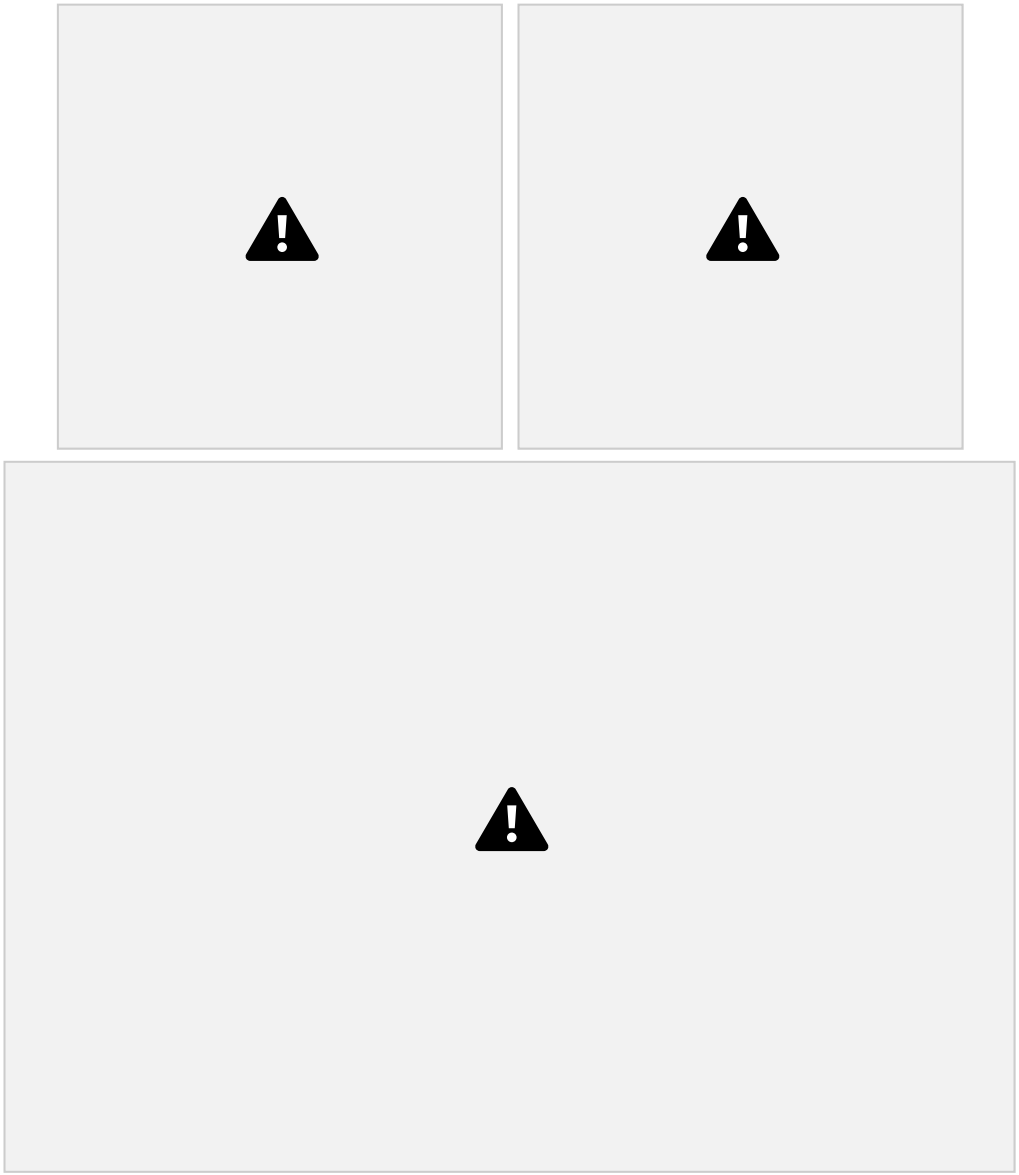
On Saturday August 22 the GFWC Town and Country Club (Dawn Himmler, President) held a party to celebrate the 106th Anniversary of the Passing of the 19th Amendment at the Greensburg Hempfield Area Library in Greensburg PA. In attendance were GFWC PA President Sara Ruppel, 2nd Vice President Dr. Carrie Wood, former GFWC President Donna Malone and many other wonderful ladies. Everyone was presented with a yellow rose corsage and many wore their "Votes for Women" sashes, with Dawn being in full suffragette gear. There was food, door prizes, and a talk from Laura Brunyard, Education Director of the Westmoreland County Historical Society, who spoke about the women of Westmoreland County organizing to win women the vote. Special Guest Becky Durbin, Hempfield Township Supervisor, spoke about the challenges of being the only woman supervisor in that large Township. A good time was had by all.

GFWC West Side Women's Club, Northeastern District, participates in SHINE Stem Olympiad

Shine is more than just an after school program. It is an approach to education that supports a student's success through the connection of schools, homes, and communities.

The Luzerne County Shine Stem Olympiad wrapped up the school year, complete with an Olympic Parade of Torches by the various schools, educational games, and challenges focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. This day was a celebration of the hard work the students have done over this past school year.

More than 175 first through eighth grade students participated in this event, which took place on May 30th, 2026 at Wilkes University, and was made possible by community donations and sponsorships. Members of GFWC West Side Women's Club proudly supported the event with a Bronze Sponsorship of $250, and several members volunteered to assist students with their fun Stem experiments. GFWC West Side looks forward to future projects with the SHINE After School Program.



Shown are club members, from left:
Eileen Gallagher; Mary Ladish; Missy Parry; Bonnie MacDonald; Karen French; Colleen Sperduto; Heide Cebrick; Marie Warren; Alice Sawchak; Irene Mackiewicz; Patty Bernoski, and Betty Bauman.



Newsletter Editor's Note:

Happy Fall everyone!

I am thrilled to present the first newsletter of the 2026 – 2028 administration. We have all been very busy since our new President Sara Ruppel took office, and some of the events are shown in this newsletter.

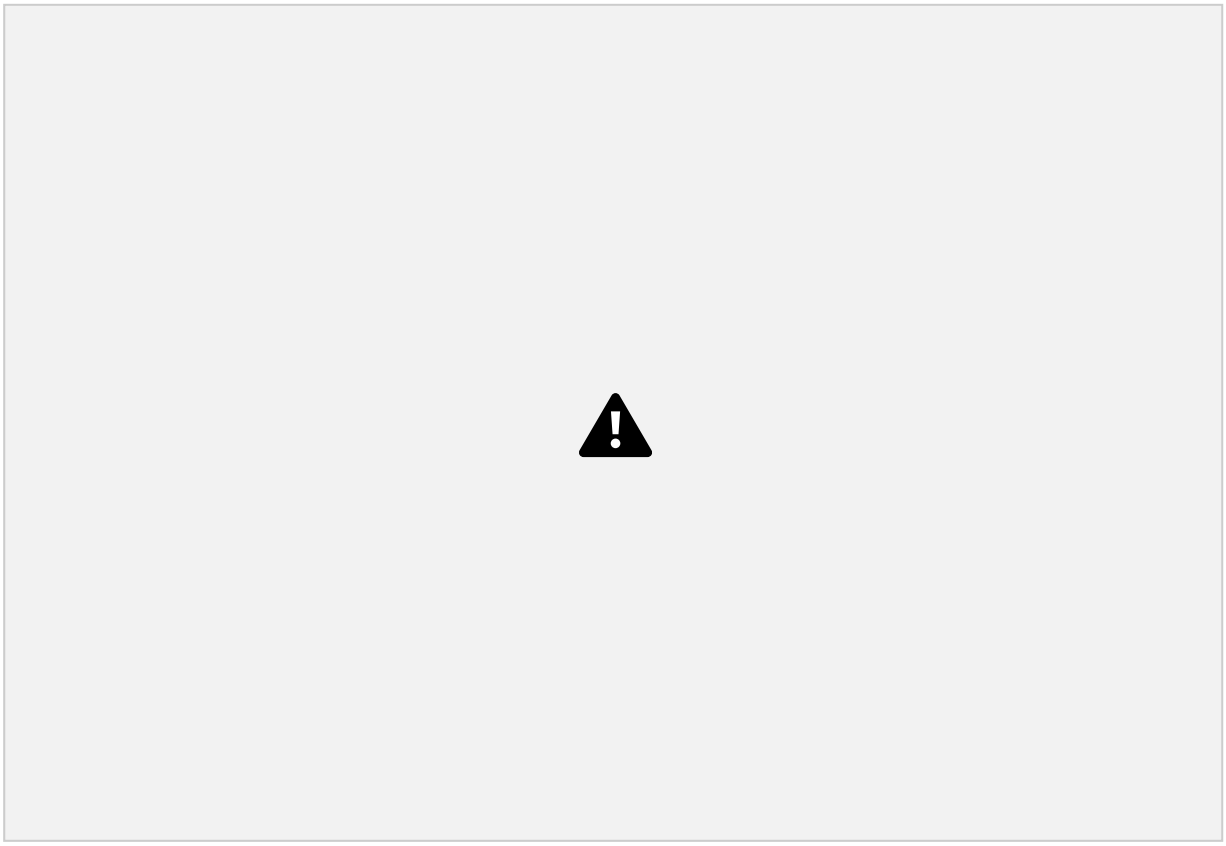
I love hearing what Clubs are doing, so please send me articles and pictures of your events. My info is listed on the

last page. I will edit your submissions for length, spelling and grammar. I am not (however) the grammar police! I will strive to make you all look good.

I am not too good with placing names with faces, so if you can please tell me who is in the pictures, that'd be helpful. I want to recognize you for your deeds!

Thank you for reading this and please let me know what you think!

Maureen



2026 – 2027 GFWC PENNSYLVANIA MEETING AND EVENT CALENDAR

September 26 - GFWC International Day of Service
North Central Fall District Meeting
October 2 - Northwest Fall District Meeting
October 3 - Southwest Fall District Meeting
October 9 – 11 - Middle Atlantic Region Meeting – New York
October 15 - South Central Fall District Meeting
October 16 - Southeast Fall District Meeting
October 17 - Northeast Fall District Meeting
November 7 - Board Meeting – Altoona
December 1 - Dues are Due
Feb. 1, 2027 - Reports are Due
March (TBA) - District Arts Meetings
April 30 – May 2 - GFWC Pennsylvania Convention – Cranberry (Pittsburgh)