

**Below are the 15 most Creative projects, chosen by each department chairman for 2020**

**Feel free to contact the club for additional information**

**Arts and Culture**: Working Toward a Wonderful World

To show how anyone can take on a difficult situation and make the best of it, **The North Brunswick Woman’s Club** (NBWC) selected the GFWC’s **Working Toward a Wonderful World** challenge. The Club handcrafted a beautiful handmade quilt.

Using their own words and illustrations each crafter personally benefitted from the program while as a whole the club continued its longtime efforts by serving the community. Individual contributions were emailed to the project’s chairwoman who transferred the designs from paper to fabric and sewed them all into a single quilt.

Of the 20 squares, 16 depicted individual experiences of maintaining personal health, community service, and inspirational poem. Four squares depicted the many things the North Brunswick Woman’s Club does to provide support and recognition to their frontline workers, food banks, and veterans groups. All of these efforts had one goal in mind - working to maintain our wonderful world despite the COVID 19 difficulties.

**Arts Performing**: The Right is Ours

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment passage the **Woman’s Club of Arlington**, the **Junior Woman’s Club of Arlington,** and the **EMD Woman’s Club of Arlington** partnered with the West Hudson Arts and Theater Company and produced and held “The Right is Ours,” an original production.

The production included historical speeches, monologues, and scenes. Members dressed in vintage costumes and took various roles. Some individuals recorded presentations at a local American Legion Hall while others taped themselves reading portions of the preamble of the “Declarations of Sentiments” for advertising promos. Due to the pandemic, this was a virtual event.

**Civic Engagement and Outreach**: New Jersey Mission of Honor

Upon hearing about the New Jersey Mission of Honor, whose goal is to identify, honor, and inter unclaimed cremated veterans with the help of the Veterans Administration*,* the **Woman’s Club of Norwood/Northvale** contacted the organization for a club presentation.

Working with the Veterans Administration the New Jersey Mission of Honor contacts funeral homes, hospitals, and crematoriums to locate cremains that have not been buried. They comb these groups’ records to find the veterans and their family members. The cremains are placed in a beautiful wood urn with an insignia of the veteran's service branch of service.

**Environment**: Save the Koalas

To raise money for Australia’s Port Macquarie Koala Hospital the **GFWC Long Valley Juniorettes Club** created and sold glass bead bracelets. The Club was concerned about the rampaging Australian wildfires that killed and wounded much of the wildlife in the area especially the Koalas. Using previous project’s leftovers and purchasing Koala Charms from the internet they created these unique bracelets. Selling them at school, over the internet, and at the Long Valley Junior Women’s Club store, Racks the project raised $200. The donation helped injured Koalas recover from their burns and injuries.

**Education and Libraries:** Lending Library

Retooling their existing lending library projects and programs at local laundromats and renal care centers the **Woman's Club of Penn's Grove-Carney's Point** collected over 2,000 books. Members spent hours sorting, packing, cleaning, labeling and categorizing books.

These were donated to the lending library, housed in a former library now a church, and partnered with a private school that was closing. Others went to the Read Across America initiative and the balance will be placed in boxes at the Hispanic support center and county social services offices to encourage families to read.

**Health and Wellness**: Flow initiative

Honoring and celebrating his memory and deeds, the **Arlington Juniorettes** did their service project on Martin Luther King Day. They joined other Liberty clubs and the town’s Council in raising awareness of the lack of feminine hygiene products for girls. The groups worked with the Flow Initiative, an organization dedicated to ending period poverty.

The members created flyers, drafted press releases, and were in contact with the Kearny school nurse. Collection boxes were placed in local businesses to collect hygiene products. Over 500 packages were discretely packaged and placed in the local school, food pantries, and community centers for easy access. COVID-19 items were also collected and distributed through the local health department and food pantries.

**Advocates for Children**: Pillow Talk

The **Thursday Morning Club** arranged for CASA of Morris and Sussex Counties’ Executive Director to send speakers to three local elementary schools. Each has a Before and After School Care (BASC) program. In a child-friendly interactive presentation, she discussed and answered questions on CASA, its mission, and projects.

The Club supplied the students with plain white pillowcases and fabric markers. Fully enthused they designed personalized pillowcases that the CASA children would keep. Seventy-five pillowcases were decorated. Club members wrapped the decorated pillowcases while some club members used brightly colored material to make an additional 12 pillowcases. All pillowcases were given to the local CASA office for distribution.

The BASC Children went home with CASA literature to share with their families.

**Communications/Public Relations**: Farmer’s Market – In the Park

The **Woman’s Club of Wenonah** expanded its successful and Club managed Wenonah Farmer’s Market - In the Park. Starting in 2019, this community outreach program brings fresh locally sourced fruits, vegetables, and food to town and surrounding area residents. The market promotes healthy cooking and eating, supports nearby farms and small businesses, and allows the community to have a convenient outdoor shopping experience.

They created a broad-based social media program including a Farmers Market website featuring all vendors with available pre-orders, a Facebook page, and Instagram. Additionally, the club designed logos that were printed on shirts, aprons, reusable shopping bags, and signs.

As a means of getting healthy goods to the community throughout the pandemic in 2020, the market was expanded; running from May through October. This allowed small artisans and crafters a way to market while featuring volunteer musicians. They partnered with local community groups, allowing them a table to help them fundraise.

As part of the program, the Club worked with local businesses that featured vendor products at their establishments. The extra traffic from the Market brought in more customers and the businesses in kind promoted the Market.

With strict guidelines and safety measures including an entrance tent with a hand washing station and where greeters made sure all who entered maintained six feet and mask compliance, most transactions were hands-free and curbside orders were available.

This project gives them broad exposure in the community as they networked with other organizations.

**Fundraising**: Family Photography Event

The Holiday Family Photography Event was the first fundraising activity for the **West Orange Women’s Club, a newly established club**. The club and the West Orange High School Mentors Program worked with beginners to established photography students.

Mr. Zichella, a WOHS teacher overseeing the Mentors Program, solicited talented student photographers. In turn, the students received volunteer service hours. They were grateful for the experience and Mr. Zichella’s expertise and training. The event created a new partnership with the WOHS Mentor Program. All the organizations are committed to finding find ways to collaborate in the future.

Posted on local social media sites, the Family Photo Event was kept small to provide the families the highest quality product. The Women’s Club intends this to be an annual trademark event. Going forward the annual event will be two full weekends and run for the holidays and in the spring.

Nineteen families participated at $50 per session, were allocated a 15-minute time slot for one day only from 8 am to 4:30 pm. There was a choice of two locations, a natural foliage backdrop or a Victorian porch decorated in Holiday Décor. For the foliage shot, a local church allowed access to their facility, and their PR/Communications Board member lent her front porch. The locations were across the street from each other, helping organize check-in. All health and safety guidelines were strictly followed.

At a time when families were struggling with isolation from the pandemic, this was a wonderful boost to all the participating families, the Club, and students. A great feeling was in the air with families with newborns to young adults relaxing, enjoying, and glowing in awe of a personal photo session in the great outdoors.

This was a perfect way to kick off the Club’s fundraising efforts and establish its reputation of providing quality fundraising to the community. Following the event, the club donated funds to the Empowerment Zone, an organization within West Orange supporting young adults who have aged out of the foster care system and are pursuing a college degree.

**GFWC Signature Project -**

**Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention**: I Support the Girls

The **Hopatcong Woman’s Club** initiated contact with the I Support the Girls organization. This group works with homeless girls and women as well as domestic violence shelters, meeting their needs and encouraging them to enter a shelter while protecting them from sexual exploitation.

In this vein, this organization needs new or gently used bras and hygiene kits with personal feminine products. All bras are washed before being delivered to the collection site. The Club has a collection basket at the Wellness Center in Hopatcong to collect bras, new large and small-sized toiletry items. The bras and toiletry items are distributed to shelters by the I Support the Girls Organization.

The Hopatcong club brought awareness to all NJSFWC’s Clubs through the State Chairman who publicized information on the dire situation of these women and their collective needs and situations.

**Women’s History** - 19th Amendment 100th Anniversary - Yellow Ribbon Tribute to Suffragists

Using their time spent inside during the pandemic to further their education, the **Sparta Woman’s Club** created an online campaign - Yellow Ribbon Tribute to Suffragists. A list of Suffragists' names was emailed to all members, asking them to select a name, research her history, and submit it to be included in this project.

Embracing the challenge fifteen members picked a name, often someone they shared a similar interest; teacher, nurse, librarian, etc. When the biographies were submitted, each was shared on email or the club’s website. The members enjoyed learning about the strength and determination and the critical roles each played in the Suffrage Movement.

The General Federation of Women’s Club's significant role in women’s suffrage was discussed. There was great excitement and enthusiasm for the 100th Anniversary on August 26th.

Holding its general meeting outdoors in September the members jointly celebrated the 19th Amendment’s 100th anniversary while inducting the Co-Presidents. Embodying the celebration’s theme a co-president dressed as Alice Paul, wearing the colors of white, green, and purple, and the other co-president dressed as Susan B. Anthony wearing the colors red, black, and white. Several members crocheted yellow rose flowers which were distributed to those present.

Everyone was happy sharing their newly learned knowledge about the remarkable lives of the suffragists with family and friends. The history and importance of women obtaining the right to vote were realized on this past Election Day.

The completed Yellow Ribbon Tribute to Suffragists project was on display for all to see. The completed history was 89 pages, including 58 pictures using 26 research sources.

**Legislation/Resolutions** – Women’s Right to Vote

At the start of the year, the **Woman’s Club of West Deptford** initiated the Women’s Suffrage Program along with the Women’s Right to Vote Project. With secured permission from the high school principal, the Club began planning to host the program.

Besides educating students on these programs, one specific goal was to also register all voting-age students so they could vote in the next election. Club members contacted the Women’s League of Voters to be a part of the program by calling attention to the League’s work. The Alice Paul Museum and Institute was contacted and the organization provided the club with posters, pamphlets, and videos.

However, due to the past year’s challenges, the full program will be rolled out in 2021

**Membership** - Daffodil Garden

The **Woman’s Club of Caldwell** planted 50 daffodil bulbs in a town garden, adding to those planted previously in memory of members who have passed away. Maintenance of the garden provides an opportunity for members to talk to local women who stop by to admire the garden and thereby recruit possible new members. 25 bulbs are planted for each member who has died. Over 250 bulbs flower in the community as a reminder of club member’s service.

**Leadership** - Social Media

The **Junior Woman’s Club of Jefferson Township’s** world was shaken at the end of March when Covid-19 hit. Even though they had three months of Executive Committee (EC) and Board meetings the Club’s President accepted a huge task, keeping members engaged, getting past some initial trepidation, educating and teaching members how to further use technology. With her own style of leadership, she wanted members to know the Club’s core values; commitment to its community, and most importantly to each other would remain intact.

The President knew it was important to keep club members socially interacting during a time when they were facing challenges at home. First, with hands-on training and mentoring Zoom was taught to all members using the chat for questions. Once that was mastered, weekly Zoom get-togethers were started, just to keep in touch with each other, life stories to be traded and laughter and fun over a new medium.

Mindful of the clubwomen still working, those with small children, and everyone juggling their family’s at-home environment hour-long virtual EC and Board meetings were held. Little by little different technology was introduced and the training and education cycle began again. After Zoom, DropBox was introduced. Routinely the current and past meeting agenda and minutes were sent via this file-sharing software, along with folders where different event forms could be easily retrieved.

SignupGenius was added to the mix. This is an efficient way of keeping the club on track. Evite was added for different events. Even with the new technology the old-fashioned ways of keeping in touch, phone calls and personalized notes with members, were used when the President and the EC Board hadn’t heard from a particular member. They understood leadership is all about communicating, knowing your members, and reaching out when in doubt. The President credits the club’s continued success to everyone’s willingness to learn, educate, mentor, and reach out to each other.

**Special State Project** – Market Fair Holiday Tree

The **Princeton Area Junior Woman’s Club** Market Fair Holiday Tree committee approached and challenged their entire membership along with other community charitable organizations to decorate trees describing their organization. There would be a voting process where the winner would make $500 for their organization.

The committee believed it would be extra special to make it all about giving Operation Chillout some publicity. Operation Chillout, New Jersey’s oldest and still only, is an all-volunteer mobile outreach for homeless veterans. Operation Chillout is the NJSFWC’s Special State Project.

Several clubwomen decorated their tree by putting a red on top, white in the center, and blue along the bottom. Decorations included dog tags, ornaments with all the branches of the military, and a tree topper decorated with Operation Chillout’s 20th-anniversary star. Though they did not win the top prize, the winning committee awarded the participating clubwomen $100.

