

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPLEMENT 2024-2026

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GFWC Club Connection Initiative – Communications and Public Relations Toolkit

- Find information in the Member Portal Digital Library, in the “Toolkit” folder. The contents can be used to improve communication and public relations skills, help clubs better communicate with their members, or as a club program. GFWC encourages clubs to utilize one of the tips and post a picture on social media using the tool and tag #GFWCCPRTOOLKIT. A shout out in the Advancement Forum Facebook group will recognize clubs taking advantage of the Toolkit and sharing on social media. Using the rebranded GFWC Emblem could result in extra focus.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Create/update club profile. Use the template in the NSFWC Manual for Club Presidents to customize one suitable for your club to include meeting time and place, contact phone number, club e-mail address or website address, brief club history; emphasize current projects and fundraisers, and the tangible benefits of membership. Send your completed profile to the Communications Chairperson at the email above.
- Create/update a club business card. Include a contact phone number, e-mail address, and web address. Include on back of business card 3-5 key club projects. Include a place for individual members to write their name and contact information. Include the NJSFWC and GFWC logos which are available at www.njsfwc.org under ‘Materials.’
- Distribute NJSFWC and GFWC profiles (available through their respective Headquarters) along with club profiles to local businesses, library, town hall, and other organizations.
- Develop a club display board formatted with club photos of projects, newspaper articles, and contact information to be displayed at the library, public buildings, and at community or club events.
- Use the NJSFWC Online Press Releases available at www.njsfwc.org under ‘Materials.’
- Send press releases of all club meetings, activities, and events to printed publications, online outlets, television, radio, and online community and newspaper calendars. Send a copy of your press/new releases to the Communications Chairperson at the email above.
- Write a monthly club Newsletter. Enter this in the Statewide Competition. (See contest guidelines.)
- Compile a Scrapbook/History Book of projects and activities during the club year. Enter this book in the Statewide Competition. (See contest guidelines.)
- Compile a club Press/Public Relations Book of your club history and records. Enter this book in the Statewide Competition. (See contest guidelines.)
- Subscribe and submit club project information and photographs to GFWC CLUBWOMAN Magazine at www.GFWC.org . Send a photo and a short story to pr@gfwc.org, include the words “Volunteers in Action” in your subject line. Please copy the Communications Chairperson at rothstein@njsfwc.org.
- Be visible by participating in town parades, sidewalk sales, community clean-up days; staff an informational booth at a community event. Promote the sale of and wear T-shirts, clothing, with club name/logo displayed.
- Ask to be recognized by your city council. Utilize proclamations commending your club for supporting a cause or the work you do on behalf of your community.
- Consider adding funds into your club budget for Communications expenses.
- Create and continuously update a media list with contact information, telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Include the NJSFWC logo and GFWC logo and boilerplate description and URL on all news releases and documents to the media. Logos and sample boilerplate statements may be found on the NJSFWC website, under Materials.
- Establish or maintain a good rapport with media staff by personally meeting with them and/or contacting them by telephone. Determine the name of the reporter covering the local news. Ascertain criteria for types of news releases, format and deadlines. Adhere to these rules and always send a follow-up “thank you” note for publicity printed or aired.
- Send press releases about an event at least two weeks before the event is to take. Follow up one week

later with a personal note to confirm it was received and answer any questions. Depending on the nature of your event, you can send an additional release summarizing the event's success (i.e. how much money raised, items donated, etc.), including images and quotes, to help increase club exposure.

- Invite reporters to attend special events or club meetings. Note that if it is a paid event, ideally you should offer to cover their fee to attend.
- Network and partner with other community/civic organizations, including schools, religious communities, or scouting groups. Invite them to your meetings or ask to speak at theirs.
- Present your story in various ways with letters to the editor seeking community support for a new project, call talk shows, and inform town officials, the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and other community groups about your club's major projects.
- Create and maintain a club Facebook page. Use it to keep the public informed of club activities and events. Post frequently and include photos and description of event/activities.
 - Have 1-2 club members join local/town Facebook groups where they can share your club's events and connect with potential new members and supporters.
 - Consider using paid Facebook posts to boost upcoming event/fundraiser posts
- In addition to a website and Facebook, use X (Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, and Pinterest to share your programs and projects.
- Utilize community and online bulletin boards and websites such as TAP Into.
- Ask to leave flyers at local businesses and libraries to publicize events and fundraisers.
- Put your club's name in the hands of the public with pens, notepads, tote bags, etc. Websites such as Vistaprint, National Pen, or 4imprint can print these for you.
- Display the NJSFWC logo on all flyers, printed materials. Logo can be downloaded from the NJSFWC website.
- Be visible by participating in town parades, sidewalk sales, community clean-up days; staff an informational booth at a community event. Promote the sale of and wear T-shirts, clothing, etc. with club name/logo displayed.

PRESS/NEWS RELEASE PREPARATION FOR MEDIA

- Type releases on 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Include NJSFWC and GFWC logos and club name at the top of the release. The club press contact name, telephone number and email address at the end of the release, after three-pound signs (# # #) followed by two blank lines.
- Before the articles, note either "For Immediate Release" or if the announcement cannot be posted until a certain date, note "Embargo Until" and then that date.
- Begin the first paragraph with your town and the date, then a hyphen, such as:
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ – May 10, 2022 – Article begins
- Effective articles address the five "W's"
 1. WHO: Your club's name prefaced by GFWC and a member of the NJSFWC
 2. WHAT: A brief description of the event.
 3. WHEN: Date and time of the event
 4. WHERE: Place event will be held, including how and where to buy tickets, the cost, and how the public can contact the club for more info (names, email, phone, etc.).
 5. WHY: The purposes of the program such as charity or service, benefits to be gained. If the program is for the Special State Project, describe the project using language from NJSFWC.
- The lead paragraph must communicate these essential key points.
- Be brief, clear and make it easy to read.
- It is helpful to include 1-2 quotes in the release. These could be from a club leader, when appropriate, the NJSFWC President or other representatives. The quote can state why the event is meaningful and garner enthusiasm. Here is a sample for formatting:
"The Club Name Here is thrilled to host our Bunco night fundraiser at Event Location! We hope to see the town come out in full force to enjoy a fun evening and raise money for a great cause that benefits the children of our community," said Club President "Name Here."
- Denote end of release by typing several pound signs with spaces in between (# # #) on bottom of last page. The club press contact info should follow a few lines below.
- Include very clear, non-posed, action photos with few people and identify people in the photo (from left to right.)

- Email press release and photos or submit via a publication's online form when applicable. If sending via email, journalists prefer that the press release be pasted into the body of an email rather than sent as an attachment. It is also best to put a personal 1-2 line note at the top thanking the journalist for their consideration and noting the press release below.

Bulletin Boards (Federation Headquarters)

- Share your club's accomplishments, events, programs, press articles, or other items of interest for display on the bulletin boards at Federation Headquarters. Email your items to the Communication Chairperson at rothstein@njsfwc.org. Items may also be sent by regular mail to the address above. Materials can be submitted in a PDF format, images (i.e. jpeg) or Word.
- Your submission should clearly identify the club, dates of events or programs, the people or places in images and, if not apparent, a brief description of your submission.

Club Communications

- Create effective ways to communicate within your club by determining how your members like to receive information. Most likely, a mix of print and electronic methods will be preferred.
- Create a Club Newsletter in a format which can be both mailed and emailed.
- Create a Telephone Chain to reach members who do not use email so they can be notified of last-minute additions, changes and cancellations of club events
- Consider using group texting or a texting app such as WhatsApp to communicate to members. This can be especially useful when a select group of members are attending an event and specific information needs to be shared. Remember, not all members will be comfortable with this technology so be sure to send information by other means as well.

For information on various communications tools, refer to the Communications and Public Relations section of the 2024-2026 GFWC Club Manual at www.GFWC.org

COMMUNICATIONS CONTEST RULES

I. REQUIREMENTS FOR NEWSLETTERS- This is a Statewide Competition

NEWSLETTERS Competition Classifications:

- Class A.....1 – 2 printed pages
- Class B.....3 – 4 printed pages
- Class C.....over 4 printed pages

Awards will be given for First, Second and Third Place in each class, if merited. Certificates will not be issued at the District level. This is a Statewide Competition with certificates presented at Convention.

NEWSLETTER Rules for Submission and Judging:

- a. Maximum size: 11" x 14" sized paper.
- b. Newsletters submitted must have been published and distributed to membership during the previous calendar year.
- c. **Club name, District, NJSWFC of GFWC, Club President, contact information and date MUST appear on front page.**
- d. The club must send official entry form and two copies of one issue of the newsletter to the NJSFWC Communications Chairman, postmarked no later than February 1st
- e. Failure to adhere to rules will result in disqualification.
- f. To enter the GFWC Contest for newsletters, the official GFWC logo must be prominently displayed on the front page and membership as a GFWC Club must also be mentioned.

NEWSLETTER: Judging-based on the following criteria:

- 1. Presentation
- 2. Format
- 3. Federation Information
- 4. Useful and Pertinent Information for Club Members

- Each item is judged on its own merit.
- Scoring will not be provided.
- Comments should be provided by the judges for each entry.
 - Judges' comments, when available, may be forwarded to the club, after Convention upon request.

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR SCRAPBOOKS- This is a Statewide Competition

NOTE: History Books and Scrapbooks have been combined. Please review NEW Rules

Competition Classifications for **SCRAPBOOKS**

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|---------------|-------------|
| Class A | 1-12 Pages |
| Class B | 13-24 Pages |
| Class C..... | 25–30 Pages |

NOTE: EMD entries will follow the same rules and classifications as the clubs. Awards will be given in each class, if merited.

AWARDS

- Gold Ribbon Awards will be given in each class based on the criteria stated in this Supplement. The winning entries will be decided by the judges and their decision is final. Scoring will not be provided. All entries should receive written comments from the judges.
- All Gold Ribbon winners will be on display at the NJSFWC Annual Convention, and must be retrieved, and signed for, on Tuesday afternoon of convention. Specific times will be listed in the Convention Program. No items may be removed before this.
- Entries will be handled with care, but they are entered at the owners' risk.

SCRAPBOOK CONTEST RULES

ALL CLUBS – NO MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1. Maximum cover size (15" x 15"). The club name must appear on the cover.
2. Information typed on white 8 ½" x 11" sized paper and pasted on the first page to include:
 - a. Club name, District, and year
 - b. Name, address and telephone number of Club Communications Chairman and Club President and signature of each. Preparer's name may be listed. No signature required.
 - c. *If APPLICABLE* - Radio, TV stations and/or internet sites used. Include names and addresses.
 - d. *If APPLICABLE* - Newspapers used, including names and addresses; note if daily, weekly or bi-weekly.
3. All books will be judged at the State Level. Books must be pre-registered with the official entry form to the Communications Chairman no later than **February 1st**
4. Books are to be delivered to Headquarters no later than March 15th.
5. Include articles, material, and pictures in chronological order from January 1st to December 31st of the previous club year
6. Book contents should include Photos, Programs, Place Cards, Name Tags, Club and District Newsletters (when Club name is mentioned), and other "souvenirs" of club activities.
7. Contents may include material from newspapers, magazines, TV and radio releases, and web pages.
 - a. To validate television and/or radio coverage there must be a note on club letterhead, signed by the Club President or Club Communications Chairman, stating that the coverage was seen or heard. This validation must be pasted on the second page of the book.
8. Other criteria that must be followed:
 - a. All material must be neatly clipped and pasted. Clipped name of newspaper or magazine and date published to be placed above printed matter.

- b. Neatly underline in **RED** the club name, NJSFWC and GFWC.
- 9. Paid advertisements are permitted. However, no political endorsements are permitted.
- 10. Book contents should be attractively presented and securely assembled using both sides of each page.
- 11. Plastic or cellophane pages may be used.
- 12. Maximum pages are 30 (both sides).
- 13. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in a deduction of points
- 14. Decisions of the judges are FINAL.

SCRAPBOOK: Judging based on the following criteria:

- First Page
- Theme
- Subject Matter
- Photographs
- Appearance
- Neatness
- Creativity
- Diversity of publicity

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESS / PUBLIC RELATIONS BOOKS ONE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

Awards

- The winning entries will be decided by the judges and their decision is final. Scoring will not be provided. All entries should receive written comments from the judges.
- All Gold Ribbon winners will be on display at the NJSFWC Annual Convention, and must be retrieved, and signed for, on Tuesday afternoon of convention. Specific times will be listed in the Convention Program. No items may be removed before this.
- Entries will be handled with care, but they are entered at the owners' risk.
- The Chairman reserves the right to determine, based on number of entries, if submissions will be issued awards or certificates of participation.

PRESS / PUBLIC RELATIONS BOOK CONTEST RULES

- 1) Maximum cover size (15" x 15"). The club's name must appear on the cover.
- 2) Information typed on white 8 ½" x 11" sized paper and must be pasted on the first page and must include all of the following:
 - a) Club name, District, and club year.
 - b) Radio and/or TV Stations used. Include names and addresses.
 - c) Newspapers and publications used, including names and addresses; note if daily, weekly or bi-weekly.
 - d) Name, address and telephone number of Club Communications Chairman and Club President and signature of each. Preparer's name may be listed. No signature required.
- 3) All books will be judged at the State level. Books must be pre-registered with the official entry form to the Communications Chairman no later than **February 1st**
- 4) Books are to be delivered to Headquarters no later than March 15th.
- 5) In chronological order, include original articles and pictures printed between January 1st and December 31st of the previous club year, including newspapers, magazines, TV and radio releases and web pages.
- 6) Only published/printed photographs are to be included in Press Books, not the actual photographs, may be included.
- 7) Other Public Relations items, such as Profiles, Brochures, Flyers, Business cards, Bookmarks, etc., should be included.
- 8) All material must be neatly clipped and pasted.
 - a) Clipped name of newspaper or magazine and date published to be placed above printed matter.
 - b) Neatly underline, in **RED**, club name, NJSFWC and GFWC.
- 9) Paid advertisements are permitted. However, no political endorsements are permitted.

- 10) Plastic or Cellophane pages may be used in Press Books.
- 11) Use both sides of the page. If an article will not fit or cannot be completed on one page, it may be continued on the following page, if necessary. Type "continued" where necessary. Do not leave blank pages.
- 12) **The Chairman reserves the right to determine, based on number of entries, if submissions will be issued awards or certificates of participation.**

PRESS BOOK: Judging based on the following criteria

- First Page
- Diversity of Articles
- Variety of Materials
- Promotions of Programs
- Editorials and Feature Stories
- Validated Radio & TV coverage
- Printed internet site coverage
- Articles dealing with the club and/or club activities printed in other organization's papers
- Appearance & Neatness

GFWC COMMUNICATIONS CONTEST

NEWSLETTER CONTEST

Award

A first, second, and third place certificate awarded annually at the GFWC Convention to three clubs in the nation.

Contest Rules

- Only one newsletter issue per club.
- Newsletter must have been printed and clearly dated during the contest year (January 1-December 31).
- Front page of the newsletter must prominently display the official GFWC emblem and mention membership in GFWC. (Refer to the GFWC Stylebook for GFWC Trademark use policies at www.GFWC.org)
- Newsletter entry must include contact information for at least one member, defined as e-mail address, telephone number, and/or mailing address.
- All entries must be printed and sent via postal mail, postmarked no later than March 15th to address in the Club Manual on the GFWC Members Portal or call 800-443-GFWC.
- The envelope must be clearly marked GFWC Newsletter Contest.
- Your entry must include a cover letter containing:
 1. Club President's name and contact information
 2. Name and contact information of person submitting the entry
 3. Number of club members
 4. Approximate circulation
 5. 250-word essay describing the club's approach to utilizing its newsletter
 6. Clubs with an electronic newsletter must follow the same entry rules. Printed copies of electronic newsletters are required.