



# ALMANAC



THE STATE NEWSLETTER

## New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs of GFWC

55 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick, N J 08901

### President's Message— Barbara McCloskey

#### Holiday Greetings!

As this message was written prior to our 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, I want to thank all of you who attended, and to thank all of our 6,000 members for what you have done to continue to make our Federation such a success.

We should all be proud of the accomplishments of our clubwomen over the past 130 years!

And, as we move into 2025, let's continue to make new history of our own.

Congratulations to State Fall Conference Chairman Tina Ree and her committee for a successful day, with 212 in attendance and 12 first time attendees. Thank you to all the State Chairmen who had displays and shared their materials.

Thank you to all the members and clubs that donated towards the Hurricane Relief funds for the GFWC States that were affected by hurricane Helene and Milton.

◆ By the time you read this, the holiday stockings would have been picked up by Operation Jersey Cares, and will be on their way to soldiers around the world. Thank you to all the clubs who participated. I am proud to announce that 2,706 stockings were donated, and \$6,317 for postage and donations.

- ◆ If you have not already donated towards Giving Tuesday, there is still time to make a donation through the NJSFWC website or sending a check to Headquarters.
- ◆ Remember, an anonymous donor has offered to match donations up to \$1,000.
- ◆ Plans for our Day of Service are continuing, and we hope to see many of you at your district locations on January 15, 2025.

As we enter this holiday season, we know club members are continuing to meet the needs in their communities, while preparing with their own family celebrations.

NJSFWC has the most generous and giving members, and this President is extremely proud and thankful of all the time, work and effort you devote to your clubs and your communities.

In Federation Friendship,

*Barbara*  
Together in Service  
United in Friendship

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- GCI Info and Form
- Leadership Workshop
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**Together in Service**  
**United in Friendship**



# Happy Holidays

## **Executive Committee**

Barbara McCloskey, President  
Susan A. Chambers, President-elect  
Chris Sienkielewski, First Vice President  
Patricia Dahl, Second Vice President  
Jean Revis, Recording Secretary  
Nancy Levy, Corresponding Secretary  
Linda B. Carbley, Treasurer  
Debbie Cibelli, Financial Secretary

## **District Vice Presidents**

Laurel A. Dobalo, College  
Mary E. Schneider, Garden  
Karen Jeisi, Highlands  
Janet E. Drogo, Palisades  
June Witty, Ramapo  
Karen J. Osborne, Shore  
Carole B. Speechley, Southern

## **Community Service Program Chairmen**

Kathleen Reddick, Arts & Culture  
Ann Ribinsky Brown, Arts Performing  
Dawn N. Pogosaew, Civic Engagement &  
Outreach  
Joan Murdock, Education & Libraries  
Dorothy L. Bernice, Environment  
Katie Chambers, Health & Wellness

## **Standing Committee Chairmen**

Marie DiMatties, Advocates for Children  
Susan E. Fosdick, Bylaws  
Shelley Rothstein, Communications  
Jean M. Battaglia, Community Impact Program  
Vivien S. Finn, Convention  
Rosemarie Saviello, Credentials & Registration  
Tina Ree, Fall Conference/Program Assistance  
Claire J. Hill, GFWC Signature Project: Sexual  
Violence Awareness & Prevention

## **Standing Committee Chairmen (continued)**

Ellen I. Lund, Girls' Career Institute Director  
Randi Quilici, Historian  
Kathleen G. Hunterton, Honors  
Jacqueline Wisner, Legislation/Resolutions  
April L. Shoemaker, Special State Project  
Denise Hosier, Webmaster

## **Special Committee Chairman**

Linda B. Hrycenko, Day of Service

## **Appointment**

Ann Quinn, Parliamentary Consultant to the  
Board

**NJSFWC PRESIDENT-ELECT****chambers@njsfwc.org****Susan Chambers**

In October, this Officer suggested that you conduct a membership survey to see what special skills, hobbies, employment history, etc. your members have. Last month we looked at several qualities of a good leader: passion, humility and listening to your members. Today let's look further into the role of communication.

Not every member attends every club meeting. How do you communicate with those members? There are several excellent ways available to leaders. Newsletters that detail your club's activities are a great way to let those members who may not be able to attend all meetings know what is happening in your club, district and around the state!

Remember, your club president does not have to do all the writing herself: presidents, delegate to your Community Service Program and Committee Chairmen and ask them to write about their area of interest. Templates for newsletters (many are free) can be found on-line by searching "newsletter templates." Constant Contact, Mailchimp, Canva, and Microsoft all offer templates. And be sure to upload photos.

Facebook and Instagram are two of the most popular social media sights that can show your club members, and your community, what your club is doing. And since they are both part of the company Meta, you can post on them simultaneously.

Be sure to share photos as well as words to make your posts interesting and colorful. And ask your members to hit that "share" button to increase exposure of your post. If you don't know where to begin, ask a fellow club or family member for help. And many middle, high and night schools and local libraries offer basic social media workshops.

Not into social media? A cheery email or phone call can let members who don't attend meetings feel included, up-to-date and valued.

And whatever form of communication you use, be sure to include activities from your District, NJSFWC and GFWC. Your monthly ALMANAC, and weekly eConnection, as well as NJSFWC and GFWC websites, give you the most current lowdown on what's happening in the world of Federation!

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**NJSFWC FIRST VICE PRESIDENT****sienkielewski@njsfwc.org****Chris Sienkielewski****REPORT WRITING**

By now, all club presidents have received their Report Writing Packets in the mail and all workshops have been completed. It is my hope that all clubs report the work they have done in ANY area of service, membership, and leadership. As a NJSFWC and GFWC Chairman I have read many reports and saw the outstanding work done by clubs with memberships from 6 to 160+. The support given to our communities, our state, our world is tremendous and the heart of our Federation. Each time I speak about NJSFWC and am asked why I am remaining a member; I talk about the impressive work our members do.

As you end 2024, every club should consider the work they did over the past year and report that work to our state Chairmen. This year we have tried to make reporting easier and more efficient. I am just a phone call or email away to answer any question, so feel free to contact me.

And as you begin 2025, you can utilize different project report forms to help streamline the process for next year and keep records of the many details of each project. Not only on these forms useful for writing your 2025 End-of-Year Report, they also are extremely helpful to keep a written history of your activities and you will be able to pass that information to your members who wish to do the same project or even take that project to a new level. These forms can be as short or as extensive as you want depending on the actual project. Within this ALMANAC there are two other Report Forms that can be used. Your club now has many options for collecting information. Use the one that is best for you. They will also be on the NJSFWC website.

NJSFWC's Board of Directors is determined to give clubs many resources to help them continue the great work they do – and to help them be a part of the much larger picture of that work.

**NJSFWC SECOND VICE PRESIDENT****dahl@njsfwc.org****Patricia Dahl**

New or Perspective Member Orientation

We all know that new members need to be taught about our club, NJSFWC and GFWC. They also need to get to know their members. Every club does different projects and fundraisers. We all had to start somewhere.

So, let's begin with what to do at an Orientation. The first of course is pick a date and place and don't forget refreshments! Maybe have a theme such as an Ice Cream Social, a Done in One or hands on project.

You might consider asking a State Board member to speak, if not, a long-time member of your club. You should really have more than one speaker with each one talking about different topics. Also have name tags. Consider appointing a mentor for each new or perspective member. This way they have one new person they know to answer questions.

You now have a place, date and speakers, the next step is to have an ice breaker so everyone attending can get to know each other. Something simple but fun!

Your speakers can then explain your club's history and the structure of your officers, your role in the community and Federation - NJSFWC and GFWC. Also have them go into a little detail about how they can get involved.

Tell them about your website, Facebook page, as well as NJSFWC's.

You decide how much information they can handle, don't give them too much. Consider having a handout for them to take home, and include information about your next meeting and any upcoming projects. Have a question-and-answer session. Give them a reason to want to come to the next meeting.

Included in this ALAMANC is a form to fill out for 25- and 50-year members of your club, as well as members who have brought in two or more members for 2024. These will be awarded at your District's Spring Conference.

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**NJSFWC TREASURER****carbley@njsfwc.org****Linda Carbley**

As the year comes to a close, it is a good time to review your procedures and practices to be make sure your Club is compliance with all paperwork.

Did you pay your Club Dues which were due on November 1, 2024? If not, please send your check to Federation Headquarters ASAP.

As Treasurer you might be asked for information from chairmen in your club to complete their yearly reports.

Reports are due February 1, 2025. Please contact me at [carbley@njsfwc.org](mailto:carbley@njsfwc.org) with any questions.

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**NJSFWC FINANCIAL SECRETARY****cibelli@njsfwc.org****Debbie Cibelli**

Happy Holidays! This Officer hopes you all had a bountiful Thanksgiving. Speaking of being thankful, she wants to thank all those who donated and attended the 130th Anniversary Luncheon on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

A fun afternoon was had by all as we heard some historical facts, listened, and watched the singing florist and raffled off some fabulous baskets all in the name of celebrating our sisterhood.

On another note, we are actively pursuing grants for GCI and the Headquarters Foundation. We have reached out to our bank TD Bank and Magyar Bank, our brokerage firm, and JP Morgan Chase. If you know of other foundations or grants, we can apply for, please let this Officer know at [cibelli@njsfwc.org](mailto:cibelli@njsfwc.org).

**NJSFWC FINANCIAL SECRETARY (continued)**

Also, for those of you who are still employed, check with your Human Resources Department, as your company may have a matching gift program. These programs allow you to donate to a charity like our Headquarters Foundation and the company will match all or a portion of the funds. For any questions, please email this officer at [cibelli@njsfwc.org](mailto:cibelli@njsfwc.org).

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**COLLEGE DISTRICT****dobalo@njsfwc.org****Laurel Dobalo**

Tis' the season to be jolly and the women of the College District are planning to celebrate the season with holiday parties and by giving back to the community.

**Woman's Literary Club of Bound Brook** will collect toys for Toys for Tots and have a holiday luncheon to celebrate the season.

**Cedar Wood Woman's Club** started their holiday season decorating the Christmas tree at Headquarters. They will have a holiday luncheon and discuss preparing their annual reports.

**Flemington Woman's Club** will be baking holiday cookies for Rolling Hills Healthcare and having singer entertainment at their holiday party.

**Franklin Woman's Club** will have a Holiday Food Basket project for local families and have an in-meeting baking contest.

**Friday Club of Hightstown** will have a day trip to the Christmas market in Bethlehem, PA and have a musical program at their monthly meeting.

**Greater Brunswick Area Woman's Club** will have a Christmas Party at Women Aware.

**Hightstown Woman's Club** will have Marisa Bozarth, Museum Curator at the Burlington County Division of Parks speak about Victorian Holiday Celebrations.

**Metuchen Edison Women's Club** will be collecting gently used coats for those in need in their community and donating gifts for Toys for Tots. They will also be celebrating with a catered dinner and holiday games.

**North Brunswick Woman's Club** is having a craft show fundraiser and participating in Wreaths Across America.

**Princeton Area Woman's Club** will have a Wish Tree program to benefit kids in DCS and hold a holiday gift wrapping fundraiser.

**Suburban Woman's Club of South Plainfield** is having a holiday luncheon with a grab bag gift exchange and a jewelry demonstration fundraiser.

**Woman's Club of Tewksbury Township** is having a Silver Tea Luncheon holiday celebration with the local middle school performing. Their Gourmet Club will also celebrate with a three-course luncheon prepared by its members.

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**GARDEN DISTRICT****schneider@njsfwc.org****Mary Schneider**

**Gloucester County Woman's Club** adopted 2 families with a total of 9 children for Christmas. Members volunteered at the Emmanuel Cancer Foundation's annual Christmas party for the families. The club donated 23 Holiday Stockings, and \$100 to the hurricane relief fund. Members will enjoy a catered holiday meal.

**The Haddon Fortnightly** continues "Reading Buddies" at a local school, donated 40 "To Go Bags" filled with sanitary items to nurses at 4 high schools, and dropped off 100 pounds of staples to the Cherry Hill Food Bank. An Elvis Tribute Artist rocked The Haddon Fortnightly in November to raise funds. A Greeting Card Cover Contest will be held with the local schools. Members will enjoy their annual holiday dinner.

**GARDEN DISTRICT (continued)**

**Marlton Woman's Club** donated 86 Holiday Stockings plus \$173 for shipping, and held a 5<sup>th</sup> grade essay contest to celebrate Veterans Day. The members will enjoy a holiday dinner and cookie swap.

**Woman's Club of Merchantville** collected Thanksgiving dinner items for local food banks and read for Veterans Day at a local pre-school.

**Woman's Club of Penns Grove/Carney's Point** donated 22 Holiday Stockings.

**Woman's Club of Pitman** will hold their Spirit of Christmas House Tour on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2:00-8:00 p.m. to benefit their scholarship fund.

**Woman's Club of Runnemede** filled 16 Stockings for the Troops and donated boxes of tissues to the Vineland Veteran's Home. The club had a speaker from the NJ Children's Alliance at their November meeting and donated 10 bags with the requested items.

**Woman's Club of West Deptford** delivered 50 Kids Bags to the Gloucester County Child Advocacy Center and toured the facility. They donated \$500 to the hurricane relief effort, and held Thanksgiving pie and Poinsettia sales. They look forward to a holiday dinner and cookie swap.

**Woman's Club of Woodstown** raised funds by doing a Road Clean-up. Members have signed Christmas Cards and collected gently used decorations for the Vineland Veterans' Home. Red mailboxes placed around town are for letters to Santa, and club members will answer each one.

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**HIGHLANDS DISTRICT**[jeisi@njsfwc.org](mailto:jeisi@njsfwc.org)**Karen Jeisi**

**Blair Woman's Club** held a successful fundraiser, a Silent Auction, at the Brook Hollow Winery in Columbia, NJ in November.

**The GFWC Woman's Club of Boonton** collected food items for NJ Children's Alliance and stockings for Operation Holiday Stocking. They will be distributing Holiday Wish Trees to local businesses in Boonton for the Wish Tree list from Boonton Social Services.

**GFWC Woman's Club of Denville-Rockaway** filled 25 large backpacks with warm winter clothing to be delivered to Operation Chillout. Collected food for a local food pantry. Will place Holiday Wish Trees throughout the community for gifts for children and families.

**Long Valley Woman's Club** held a festive 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon on October 17<sup>th</sup> with the Mayor presenting a Proclamation. Collecting quarters honoring women's accomplishments to donate toward purchasing children's books and to improve community awareness of women's contributions.

**Roxbury Woman's Club** collected food for the Roxbury Social Services Pantry and 30 stockings for Operation Holiday Stocking. Celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the October meeting. Will be caroling at the Merry Heart Health Center, placing a Giving Tree at the library to raise money for NJ Children's Alliance, and participating in the wreath laying for Wreaths Across America.

**Thursday Morning Club** hosted a Halloween carnival for children of EPOCH (Educational Programs of Children Handicapped) and held two fundraisers in November – Fabulous Fall Fundraiser Raffle and its annual La Bazar de Noel. They will be holding their Holiday Tea on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Vernon Township Woman's Club** at the November meeting, a speaker from the Sheriff's Office explained internet scams. Volunteered for the Warwick Area Farm Workers (WAFO) helped to deliver turkey dinners for farm workers. They are purchasing \$10 gift cards for the Project Self-Sufficiency's Season of Hope Toy Fair to purchase teen gifts.

**HIGHLANDS DISTRICT (continued)**

**Washington Woman's Club** is sponsoring a \$1,000 Fraser Fir Tree for the Rossi Festival of Trees fundraiser, benefitting Habitat for Humanities and Abilities of Northwest NJ. They are continuing to collect plastic to donate a NEXTREX Bench to the Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden. They donated eight stockings for the Operation Holiday Stocking.

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**LIBERTY DISTRICT****Susan Chambers, Interim DVP**

**The Woman's Club of Arlington** has filled stockings for Project Holiday Stocking and will celebrate their 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this month. Their **EMD** will fill out holiday cards that will include a scratch off lottery ticket this month for Meals on Wheels.

**The Woman's Club of Belleville** filled stockings for Project Holiday Stocking and will support a family in need from their town with food and gifts. This month they will host a talk regarding street drugs and how to recognize problems within our families.

**Berkeley Heights Woman's Club** collected new toys for St. Joseph Social Services in Elizabeth. They collected candy bags for residents of Autumn Lake Rehab for Halloween.

**Women's Club of Caldwell** will hold a pottery demonstration at their library on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Attendees can purchase handmade items.

**Montclair Women's Club** will host the WomanSONG chorus under the direction of member Fran DePalma-Iozzi at 8:00 p.m. on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Tickets for non-members are \$8 at the door, including light refreshments.

**Woman's Club of Upper Montclair** held a Holly Berry Craft and Gift Show fundraiser in November.

**The Woman's Club of Verona's** luminary's fundraiser will come to fruition on December 14<sup>th</sup> when about 450 residences will place their luminaries along their walks and club members will light about 500 luminaries in their town square symbolizing neighborhood unity.

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**PALISADES DISTRICT****drogo@njsfwc.org****Janet Drogo**

The **Palisades District Clubs** have been busy filling and delivering Operation Holiday Stockings for our military personnel servicing overseas and planning holiday parties.

**Book & Needle Club of Oradell** will put together and deliver jewelry gift bags to the Center for Hope and Safety so the children will have holiday gifts for the residents of the Veterans Home in Paramus.

**Cresskill Woman's Club** will be selling calendar raffle tickets through December. They will be putting together gift and food baskets for local residents and contributing to Cresskill Cares, a town food distribution center for the holiday.

**Greater Pascack Valley Woman's Club** is planning a Cookies and Cocoa with Santa in partnership with the Park Ridge Elks.

**Woman's Club of Leonia** will hold a holiday party with ethnic treats that are special to club members.

**Lyndhurst Woman's Club** is busy finalizing plans for the Annual Holiday Market Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> with 70 Vendors and Food Trucks.

**New Milford Woman's Club** will host their annual holiday party. They will be raffling an award-winning crocheted blanket donated by Judy Fremantle. Judy's blanket won Gold at the Palisades District Achievement Day, and First Place at the NJSFWC Convention.

**PALISADES DISTRICT (continued)**

**Woman's Club of Old Tappan** will hold the yearly Breakfast with Santa on December 7<sup>th</sup>. They made a monetary donation to Operation Holiday Stockings to help offset shipping costs.

**Woman's Club of Paramus** is planning a Bunco night.

**Woman's Club of Westwood** is having a Super 50/50 raffle with tickets at \$10.00 each. The winner will be announced at their April meeting where they will be celebrating their 105<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**RAMAPO DISTRICT****witty@njsfwc.org****June Witty**

**Allendale Woman's Club** had a trip to the Morgan Library in NYC; they have an active Book Club. Planning is underway for their Fashion Show and a speaker's series with local authors.

**Saddle Brook Woman's Club** will participate in the Town Tree lighting providing hot cocoa and cookies. In addition, they will assist with a food and toy drive for their local Food Pantry.

**Woman's Club of West Milford Township** will once again host Victorian Christmas at Skylands.

**Ridgewood Woman's Club** will have a Holiday Concert; in addition, this Club will be working with the Girl Scouts putting together gifts for a local shelter. This Club will hold their Scholarship Trust tea and will collect donations for the volunteer Fire Department plus assist them with a Beef Steak.

**Pompton Lakes Woman's Club** is planning for a Queen's Tea and Tricky Tray fundraiser, children's books were collected; for Fire Prevention, funds were raised to donate to the volunteer department. Personal care products for the Special State Project and items for Lighthouse Pregnancy Center collections are underway.

**Pine Lakes Woman's Club** will host a holiday lunch for its members.

**Suburban Woman's Club of Pompton Plains** made Turkey Leg Bags for the Food Pantry; they donated to Wreaths Across America, in which a wreath is placed on local Veterans' graves. Cookies are being donated to the Boonton Firemen's Home. They will hold a holiday party for members.

**Montville Township Woman's Club**, will assist with the Township Tree lighting, providing hot cocoa and cookies. A holiday dinner and Yankee Swap are planned for December.

**SHORE DISTRICT****osborne@njsfwc.org****Karen Osborne**

**The Woman's Club of Asbury Park** will be holding a covered dish holiday luncheon.

**Belmar Woman's Club** is celebrating their 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. They have begun evening meetings to increase accessibility for all members.

**Woman's Club of Brick Township** will lay wreaths at a local Cemetery and host Cookies and Crafts for a Santa event and hold a Holiday 50/50 Raffle.

**Woman's Club of Colts Neck** will be having a holiday luncheon for their December meeting and conducting their annual cheesecake fundraiser.

**Freehold Township Woman's Club** will be taking part in Christmas wrapping at Boscov's.

**Howell Woman's Club** will be adopting a family for the holidays and taking part in David's Cookie Fundraiser in conjunction with their cookie exchange.



**SHORE DISTRICT (continued)**

The **Jersey Coast Women's Club** will be helping Emmanuel Cancer Foundation with their Christmas party.

**Woman's Club of Lacey** has collected 67 filled Christmas stockings for Operation Holiday Stockings and will be developing plans for New Jersey Children's Alliance.

**Woman's Club of Little Silver** is continuing to sell 50/50 Raffle tickets for New Jersey Children's Alliance and joining the RaiseRight, fundraising program.

**Woman's Club of Matawan** has been busy filling Christmas stockings for soldiers.

**Woman's Club of Middletown** has been filling Christmas stockings for soldiers after putting requests on Facebook.

**Woman's Club of Point Pleasant** is taking part In Wreaths Across America and hosting a Holiday Bunco with an ugly sweater contest.

**Woman's Club of Spring Lake** is sponsoring a trip to Lambertville, New Hope, and Longwood Gardens for the Christmas lighting and holding a holiday dinner dance.

**Stafford Township Woman's Club** is filling stockings for the troops, making hospital gowns for Making Faces, and attending a performance of "Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street."

**SOUTHERN DISTRICT**

[speechley@njswc.org](mailto:speechley@njswc.org)

**Carole Speechley**

The **Woman's Club of Absecon** will enjoy a holiday dinner party at the Smithville Inn and exchange gifts as a holiday story is read. 2025 Calendars are being collected for area nursing homes. They'll get together to pack cookies for the residents of the ARC homes in their area.

The **Women's Community Club of Cape May** supplied refreshments for a Veteran's Day celebration at a nursing home. They'll participate in Wreaths Across America, purchasing 12 wreaths and placing wreaths on graves. They'll bring gloves and caps for local children to a holiday luncheon at the Lobster House.

The **Colony Club of Ocean City's** Fun for Us continues with a craft and cookie party. Their December meeting is a pizza party and grab bag. Members enjoy playing Mahjong Friday afternoons at the library – this has recruited new members.

The **Woman's Civic Club of Hammonton** will deliver Poinsettias to township shut-ins. A Breakfast with Santa fundraiser will be held with family time with Santa. \$800 in \$50 gift cards will be given to the high and middle school guidance departments for needy students. 10 needy families will receive complete holiday dinners, and toys.

The **Millville Woman's Club** will prepare "Sweets for Seniors" gift bags. Their "Tree of Remembrance" raises funds for scholarships. Their catered holiday luncheon includes a sing-a-long with their chorus. The Veteran Home residents are the recipients of "Undies Under the Tree".

The **Woman's Club of Vineland's** target collection in December is the Veteran's Memorial Home in Vineland. Residents receive home baked cookies during Operation Cookie-Candy. The residents enjoy receiving a new calendar every year from the club, and a monetary donation will be made to the Veteran's Home Wish List. They'll celebrate the holidays with lunch at a local restaurant.

## THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

reddick@njsfwc.org

Kathleen Reddick

### Get Crafty This Holiday Season. Your masterpiece is waiting to be born!

As the holiday season approaches, the stores are overstocked making it the perfect time to gather your craft supplies, ignite your imagination, and channel your creative spirit! It's not too early to start your Achievement Day projects. You'll be ready to showcase your talents and artistic flair.

**Unleash Your Creativity and Gather Inspiration:** From homemade ornaments to handcrafted cards and festive decor, each project is an opportunity to let your imagination run wild. Are you ready to try new techniques, experiment with different materials, mediums, or put a new spin on your unique vision and artistic style? Don't hesitate to search for inspiration online, in magazines, or even at local craft fairs. Pinterest can be your best friends when it comes to brainstorming ideas that capture the spirit of the season. Inspiration can come from everyday life, so keep your eyes open!

**Connect with Others:** Crafting has a magical way of bringing people together. Everyone is super busy this time of year, but an artistic project with friends, a few laughs, and a glass of wine may be just the stress reliever you need to drag you away from cooking, cleaning, shopping, and wrapping. Why not plan a project with new members who are craft enthusiasts (or want to learn) to share ideas and inspire one another? Are there members in your Club from other cultures? Allow them to show you cultural traditions that you can incorporate into your Holiday celebrations and artistic projects. The friendships formed will be more valuable than the creations themselves.

**Embrace the Spirit of Giving:** Consider how your craft can spread joy this holiday season. Handmade gifts are always cherished, and you might want to create something special for friends or family members. Transforming your craft into a thoughtful gift will add to the excitement of the season. This Officer recently visited my friend's new home in Florida, after she relocated from New Jersey. This Officer was so touched and flattered that she had packed and moved so many party favors, paintings, floral arrangements, and other décor that she had made *for* her and *with* her over the years. Seeing them in her NJ home had become invisible to me. But seeing them in her new digs was a walk down memory lane.

**A Challenge to Inspire Growth:** Taking on a new craft project can be both exhilarating and daunting. Embrace the challenge! Achievement Day serves as an inspiration to push your boundaries and experiment with unfamiliar techniques. Register in December for workshops in the New Year, when you'll be ready for new beginnings and can learn from more experienced crafters and expand your skills and elevate your confidence.

**What excites you the most?** Whether it's knitting, sewing, painting, jewelry-making, or DIY home decor, choose a craft that resonates with your passions. Focus on what brings you joy and inspires you.

**Set Your Goals to keep motivated:** Break your project into smaller, manageable tasks, and schedule yourself for some craft time, even though you are swamped with Holiday prep.

**Enjoy the Process:** Crafting is about the journey as much as the destination. Embrace the creative process, and don't be afraid of mistakes. Every "oops" can lead to unexpected breakthroughs and artistic discoveries! Have a Happy, Healthy, Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year.

## THE ARTS/PERFORMING COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

brown@njsfwc.org

Ann Ribinsky Brown

All members are encouraged to enter our Creative Writing Contest. Below are the essentials to know.

### Member Creative Writing Contest Categories:

Poetry	Minimum 8 lines, maximum 50 lines, any style
Haiku	17 syllables (5 – 7 – 5), 1 entry per person
Play/Skit	One act, 10-15 minutes
Short story	2000-word limit
Book Review	2000-word limit

**ARTS/PERFORMING (continued)****Member Creative Writing Contest Rules**

1. The NJSFWC Literature Division Chairman, Joyce Dreger, 1046 Lovell Place, North Brunswick, NJ 08902 must receive two copies of each entry no later than February 1<sup>st</sup>. DO NOT MAIL "REGISTERED" OR "CERTIFIED."
2. Entries must be written during the contest year.
3. Entries may not have been published prior to the competition and must be original works by the author.
4. Entries must be **typed, double-spaced, printed on one side only, with minimum margins of 1 inch on all four sides, on 8 ½ inch x 11-inch paper.**
5. **Entries must have the following in the top right-hand corner of each page:**
  - a. Author's name
  - b. Email address (if available)
  - c. Mailing address
  - d. Telephone number
  - e. Name of local club/state
  - f. category
  - g. Title of manuscript
  - h. Professional or amateur (earnings not to exceed \$500 annually) writer
6. Enclose a \$1.00 entry fee to cover all entries sent per person/per entry.
7. All entries are judged on content, organization, and form. decision of the judges is FINAL.
8. Manuscripts will not be returned. Authors should retain a copy.
9. First Place State Winners in Short Story and Poetry contests will be sent for judging in the GFWC Member Short Story and Poetry contests by the State Chairman. A release form must accompany the entry and the release form must be signed by the author.
10. Winners will be notified.

**Note:** By submitting the state winning entries in the Youth and Member Short Story and Poetry contests to GFWC, authors are providing GFWC with a royalty-free perpetual license to use, reproduce, post, display, create derivative works, sell, license, or sub-license the work in any media now known or later invented without limitation, for commercial or non-commercial purposes.

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**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM**  
**pogosaew@njsfwc.org****Dawn Pogosaew**

Sometimes, life throws us a few challenges that we are not expecting. Natural disasters, accidents, or our natural progression of aging can all become challenges for ourselves and our loved ones. One way to help prepare for any challenge we may face is to create a plan. Recently, GFWC CEO Chairman, Vicky Ann Trimmer created an outline for a "Family Emergency Notebook". The outline helps to create a binder that holds all information that may be needed during an emergency. Include sections for Personal, Financial, Insurance, Medical, Important Contacts, etc. Make sure to include important information with names, numbers, addresses, and account numbers. Include a section for wills, trusts, and legal documents. To keep your information secure, DO NOT include login or password information in your binder. Having this information at your fingertips during an emergency can really help to aid in your recovery and may help to alleviate some of the stress you or a loved one must face during this time.

As we celebrate this holiday season, consider giving a priceless gift by creating your own notebook for your family with your information or you can create a blank notebook to give as a gift to a friend. We never know when we will be faced with an emergency, but we can help make it a little easier to get through.

The outline for the "Family Emergency Notebook" will be available on NJSFWC Website or you can email me for a copy at [pogosaew@njsfwc.org](mailto:pogosaew@njsfwc.org).

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM**  
**murdock@njsfwc.org**

**Joan Murdock**

Happy Holidays to Everyone.... Need a gift idea?  
 Books are always something children and adults like to receive!

**Here are a few ideas for children: Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grades**

- *A Bad Case of Stripes* by David Shannon-- Camilla Cream worried A LOT about what people thought of her and her body reacted to her thoughts in the strangest way!
- *Energetic Evelyn and the Shiny Yellow Spots* by Yvonne Breiner – a good read about Tricky Treats, a bunny, who is different from the others and finds out it's better to be himself.
- *The Name Jar by Yangzook Choi*-- a young Korean girl builds confidence as she learns to take pride in her name and embrace her heritage.

**Adult Books that have been recommended to this Chairman are:**

- *Be Ready When the Luck Happens-A Memoir* by Ina Garten
- *The Briar Club (Historical-Fiction)* by Kate Quinn. About the power of female friendships in this 1950s tale of an unusual women's boarding house in McCarthy Era Washington DC.
- *The Spectacular* – a Novel by Fiona Davis. A thrilling story about love, sacrifice, and the pursuit of dreams, set amidst the glamour and glitz of Radio City Music Hall in its mid-century heyday.

**Monthly Book Review...**

Thank you to Jody Harris from the Woman's Club of West Deptford for sending our first Book Club Review for the ALMANAC.

The Women by Kirsten Hannah  
 (Genre: Historical Fiction)

"Women can be heroes", take Frankie (Frances) McGrath in this historical fiction novel by Kristen Hannah. She shares a realistic portrayal of war from Frankie's point of view. A young nurse landing in Vietnam, assigned to the operating room. We see the trials and tribulations in Frankie's personal life in a very believable first-person voice. Follow along as Frankie forges relationships during the war and after. The reception she receives at home was not quite what she had in mind. Remember, there were no women serving in Vietnam, or were there? Follow Frankie's story.

**Just to clarify:**

- \* Your Book Club can **join** ESO for \$2 as a group and submit their review to Patricia Sherwen, State ESO Chairman and receive credit OR...
- \* Your Book Club can submit a review to me for our monthly ALMANAC article.

**ENVIRONMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM**  
**bernice@njsfwc.org**

**Dorothy Bernice**

As you evaluate the many holiday decorations you have accumulated, think about recycling the ones you are not using and donating them to local food pantries, walk-in clinics, or Veterans Hospitals. You may even consider decorating a bulletin board in a nursing home. Putting up your own memories, will heighten memories you have. It will make you glad others are enjoying the items. Because while you are decorating, the people who live there will come out and tell their holiday stories.

## ENVIRONMENT (continued)

Here are 10 Sustainable Holiday Traditions

1. Participate in the annual Christmas Day Bird Count. Take a family nature Hike. Bring a garbage bag and collect litter you pass along the way.
2. Give gifts that encourages others to be more sustainable such as a cookbook for leftovers or a reusable carryout food container. 37% of garbage thrown out is food waste.
3. Wrap your gifts in reusable bags.
4. Use Energy Star qualified LED – they are 90% more efficient than traditional lights and LEDs last longer.
5. Skip tinsel on your tree and avoid buying plastic decorations.
6. Potted Christmas trees can be replanted after the holidays and reused for years to come as an outside decoration.
7. Avoid purchasing individually packaged food and drink products.
8. Serve guests on plates, cups, silverware, and utensils which can be washed and used time after time.
9. Provide reusable containers for guests to take leftovers home.
10. Box stores annually run light exchange programs. See if yours has such a program.

The holiday season is a time for having fun but also an opportunity to keep our world green and clean.

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## HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM chambers2@njfswc.org

**Katie Chambers**

The holidays are a time for memory-making and reminiscing with those we hold dear. In recognition of the value of memory, this Chairman wants to share a vital service offered by The Cognitive and Research Center of New Jersey, LLC (CRCNJ). You can call 973-850-4622 to schedule a no-cost memory screening with the organization in Springfield, NJ.

If you are 50 years or older, take charge of your brain health and find out if you are eligible for a research study. The CRCNJ is a select clinical trial site. It aims to provide diagnostic treatment and supportive resources to people affected by Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive disorders through clinical research opportunities.

Learn more at [www.thecrcnj.com](http://www.thecrcnj.com).

**December's exercise tip for Let's Get Moving:** On a lighter note, here are some holiday-themed exercise ideas that can add a festive twist to staying active:

**Reindeer Run Relay Race:** Organize a relay race where participants are divided into teams, each acting as "reindeer" pulling an imaginary sleigh. Add some holiday fun by wearing antler headbands or festive scarves. Make it a fundraiser for the Special State Project by sponsoring teams!

**12 Days of Fitness Challenge:** Create a workout routine inspired by the "12 Days of Christmas" song. Each day corresponds to a different exercise (e.g., 1-minute plank, 2 push-ups, 3 jumping jacks, etc.). Participants add a new exercise each day until they complete all 12.

**Holiday Dance Party:** Host a dance workout class featuring upbeat holiday music. Create a playlist with holiday hits and encourage participants to wear festive clothing like Santa hats or ugly Christmas sweaters for a fun, energizing session.

**"Elf on the Shelf" Stretching Game:** Use the Elf on the Shelf concept but add a fitness twist. Place an elf or small toy in a different location each day, with a note attached describing a short stretch or exercise to do whenever you find it.

**ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN****dimatties@njsfwc.org****Marie DiMatties**

With winter on its way, here are some projects your club might consider:

**Wish Trees/Warming Trees:** Put these in various locations during the holidays for the public to take a card or ornament with a child's gift wish. Returned gifts are distributed where needed. Put up a Warming Tree to collect new gloves, hats, and scarves at your local library.

Do you have members who enjoy knitting your crocheting? Here are some ideas as they cozy up inside their homes. OR you can form a knitting and/or crocheting group enjoying each other's company while members work on various projects.

- **Blanket Donations:** Knit, crochet, sew or quilt blankets to donate to children's organizations.
- **Project Linus** [www.projectlinus.org](http://www.projectlinus.org) provides new handmade blankets to children in need. knit, crochet, sew or quilt blankets. Check the website for patterns and to find a location near you.
- **Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey** - [www.preventchildabuse.nj.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.nj.org) promotes family wellness, positive parenting, healthy child development and nurturing communities. Knitted or crochet purple baby caps helps raise awareness of the Period of Purple Crying which strives to avoid shaken baby syndrome.

Can't knit or crochet? Collect mittens and beanies to deliver to Head Start and preschool children.

Whatever you choose to do, it will certainly brighten the Holidays for children in need and warm your heart as well.

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**BYLAWS****fosdick@njsfwc.org****Susan Fosdick**

Each year the NJSFWC Bylaws Committee reviews the Bylaws and makes recommendations for amendments. Clubs and members were asked to review the present Bylaws and submit any proposed Amendments to this Chairman by October 15<sup>th</sup>. The committee met, finalized the proposals, and submitted them to the Executive Committee for approval before they are submitted to the Board for approval, and presentation at the Convention in May.

When your club receives the NJSFWC Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws, please take some time at your club meetings to review the Amendments. Also, take some time to know what is in the present NJSFWC Bylaws which can be found in their entirety in the 2024-2025 Yearbook beginning on page 207. If there is something you don't understand, please ask.

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**COMMUNICATIONS****rothstein@njsfwc.org****Shelley Rothstein**

This month we will discuss Instagram and how to use photos to amplify your Club's message. Instagram is a free photo and video sharing platform. It is owned by the same company as Facebook and an account can be created and linked to your Club's existing Facebook account easily. You can post via your mobile device or computer. Your club's Facebook administrators can even schedule posts on both Facebook and Instagram at the same time through the "Meta Business Suite" under Platform tools.

Here are some tips to take that perfect photo

**PLAN YOUR PHOTO** so something is happening. People standing in a crowd or sitting at a table do not make interesting photos. Showcase your club members in action!

**POSITION THE SUBJECT** so their body is slightly angled with the head turned to face you. Be sure everyone's face is showing if photographing a group.

**CHECK YOUR BACKGROUND** for unwanted objects like exit signs, doorways, wall lighting and other people.

## COMMUNICATIONS (continued)

SMARTPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY – Hold your smartphone sideways to take pictures. Keep your camera lenses clean. Avoid using the zoom feature as it decreases photo quality, instead, learn to use your phone camera's crop feature to remove excess background. Use a selfie stick or tripod when no photographer is available and lastly, be mindful of photographing children- ask permission before including them.

A good photograph tells a great story and will grab the attention of your followers. Add an informative caption and you have all the ingredients for the perfect social media post.

## COMMUNITY IMPACT PROGRAM

[battaglia@njsfwc.org](mailto:battaglia@njsfwc.org)

Jean Battaglia

During the 2024-'26 administration GFWC is encouraging clubs to consider Community Connection projects under each of the Special Program Areas, submit the results in the year-end reporting for that area but also submit an entry for a Community Impact Award.

For example, if your club does Civic Engagement and Outreach projects, consider the Community Connection Initiative in that area, "Preparation Saves Lives," with a project that educates the community in life saving skills to make the community a safer place. The club might host CPR and first aid training classes, raise funds to offset the cost of classes for organizations that sponsor them, or partner with other organizations to reach out to the underserved so that parents, grandparents, and babysitters are trained. The club might create awards for groups whose members are 100% trained in life saving skills. Information on how to create a family emergency binder or on the benefits of being trained in life saving skills could be distributed in a variety of community venues.

If you club does Health and Wellness projects, consider the Community Connection Initiative, "Caregivers Circle," where programs to support the caregivers, who often overlook their own well-being, could be implemented. Bring speakers to your club meeting to talk about the challenges of being a caregiver. Take a caregiver to lunch, purchase a gift certificate for a massage, offer to do grocery shopping or to cook a meal.

A description of the contest and its rules can be found in the Community Impact Supplement on the NJSFWC website. The GFWC 2024-2026 Club Manual, pages 203-211, includes a full description of the contest, along with the entry form. Community Connection Initiatives with suggestions for projects can be found in the Manual under each of the Special Program Areas.

## CONVENTION

[finn@njsfwc.org](mailto:finn@njsfwc.org)

Vivien Finn

**CALLING ALL CLUBS!** Good News! The CONVENTION PROGRAM JOURNAL AD fees are the same as they were last year!!

### IT IS NOT TO EARLY TO THINK ABOUT PUTTING IN AN AD.

The Convention theme is "**Celebrate Good Times**"! Every club has something to brag about or to show appreciation to a member of their club by placing an ad!

The Ads must be sent digitally to [dee768nj@gmail.com](mailto:dee768nj@gmail.com) by **February 15<sup>th</sup> 2025**, as well as a paper copy mailed to Denise Hosier, 122 Sandpiper Lane, West Deptford, NJ 08086. All instructions are on the form which is included in this ALMANAC.

In addition to an Ad, you can be a "Friend of Convention". This form must be mailed to Joanne Mangels, NJSFWC Headquarters, 55 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. And is included in this ALMANAC. **The deadline date is February 28<sup>th</sup> 2025.**

**FALL CONFERENCE/PROGRAM ASSISTANCE**

ree@njsfwc.org

Tina Ree

**Program Information Sheet**

By now you all should have received your Annual Report Forms as well as your Program Information Sheet. This Chairman knows that many of you have such wonderful programs and speakers coming to your club. So please fill in the report with the programs and contact information, if a fee is required, and the length of the program.

Even if you had only one program this year, this Chairman would love to read all about it.

If there is not enough room on the sheet to describe the program, include the information on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the form.

At your January District Council meetings, you will be able to give a brief report on three of the programs your club had this year that were of interest to your members.

**GFWC SIGNATURE PROJECT:**

hill@njsfwc.org

Claire Hill

**DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**Human Trafficking Awareness Month

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The hotline is 1-888-373-7888. Your club members can take a quiz to learn how social media is used by traffickers. It can be found at [polarisproject.org/quiz-page](https://polarisproject.org/quiz-page). This would make a wonderful program at a club meeting. /

Elder Abuse

Every person, no matter how old, deserves to be safe from harm by those who live with them, care for them, or have daily contact with them. Yet, approximately one in 10 people aged 60 and older who live at home experience abuse, including mistreatment and exploitation, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

There is no single pattern of elder abuse. It's a complex problem that can stem from multiple causes, such as a history of violent interactions within the family, lifestyle adjustments, and tensions that can arise as a result of new living arrangements. Certain societal attitudes may also contribute to violence against older people and make it easier for abuse to continue without detection or intervention.

Your club can help to promote elder justice and help keep older adults safe from abuse and neglect. Preventing elder abuse can come in the form of delivering meals to homebound older adults, visiting an isolated older adult, advocating for long-term care residents, and building awareness about elder abuse in your community. Think about your skills, areas of interest, and the type of time commitment that would work well for you.

- Consider collecting new robes, socks, pajamas, and sweatpants to be donated to nursing homes or senior centers or veteran's homes.
- Send holiday cards to those in Nursing homes. Some never receive cards. Just sign them: "Your Friend" and the name of your club.
- Here are a few websites that can help you with information and other projects:  
National Center on Elder Abuse: [ncea.acl.gov](https://ncea.acl.gov)  
American Association of Retired Persons: [aarp.org](https://aarp.org)

**GIRLS' CAREER INSTITUTE**

lund@njsfwc.org

Ellen Lund

All the paperwork for GCI has been retyped and submitted to Webmaster, Dee Hosier to be placed on the NJSFWC website under Materials then under GCI.

When you read this, everything should be set up for GCI 2025.

A GCI budget was created for the 2025 program and fundraising ideas are needed to help support the GCI program so tuition per girl will not be raised.

Please check out the NJSFWC website for more information and our wish list. Feel free to contact me with any and all questions.



**HEADQUARTERS****fowler@njsfwc.org****Adrienne Fowler**

What is located at 55 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick? It is our state Headquarters! We are one of the few states to have a Headquarters. Our Headquarters is place where we can go to have meetings. Each club is allowed to use the Headquarters once per year for meetings or a non-fundraiser event. All you need to do is contact Headquarters at 732-249-5474 to get your club on the Headquarters calendar. Any questions, contact this Chairman, Adrienne R. Fowler at either [fowler@njsfwc.org](mailto:fowler@njsfwc.org) or 908-922-9293 (cell).

Headquarters is our home. It is where our members, almost 6,000, can come and meet and make new friends. Not just friends, but sisters. We are sisters in the fact that while we look at life differently, we are all willing to lend a helping hand. We do what we can and we do it with an open heart, with love.

We have helped show that mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of (NAMI-NJ), we have remembered our veterans (Operation Chillout) and now we [help children who have lived through abuse](#), ([New Jersey Children's Alliance](#)) our new special state project. We help out where we can because we are sisters.

As sisters we need to take care of our home, our Headquarters. We do this by attending functions like our Fall Conference in October and the 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary held in November. Every time we take a chance on the 50/25/25 we are helping our Headquarters.

It is estimated that in 1968 it cost approximately \$12,000 to maintain and run our Headquarters, and that was not including our lease. Can you imagine what it costs today? There are two ways to support our Headquarters.

One way is the 1894 Society which helps with the lease; the second way is by sending in donations earmarked for the Headquarters Maintenance Fund. Let us keep our Headquarters strong!

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**HISTORIAN****quilici@njsfwc.org****Randi Quilici**

**Our first President, Mrs. Margaret T. Yardley** was elected at the age of 50 on November 16, 1894. She was a member of the Woman's Club of Orange, the oldest club in NJ.

A Constitution and Bylaws had been written and adopted, and officers were elected. The first official gavel was presented to the Federation, by Margaret Yardley.

The New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs' purpose was "to bring the women's clubs of the state into communication for acquaintance and mutual helpfulness."

At the first meeting of the Board of Directors on December 4, 1894, it was decided that a badge should be made available to the clubwomen of the Federation. Mrs. Brooks of the Monday Afternoon Club of Passaic suggested a design based on the New Jersey State Coat of Arms with a shield-shaped background of light blue enamel with a plow to highlight the state's agriculture tradition, and a rising sun, with the word "Unity" and the letters NJSF. The colors of buff and blue were chosen by General George Washington in 1779 after he was headquartered in New Jersey during the Revolutionary War. These were the military colors used by the New Jersey troops. In February 1895 an emblem had been adopted and these little blue badges were owned by clubwomen, and this was the official pin of the Federation not to exceed sixty cents. Buff and Blue were chosen for Federation colors, and a badge was designed for use at the first annual meeting held in Newark on October 24 and 25<sup>th</sup>, 1895.

In 1895 the Lily-of-the-Valley was decided upon as the Federation flower when it received more votes from the clubs than the other suggested flower. This is why the silver bowl with the lily of the valley flowers is graced at the Executive table during Board meetings and Federation events. Dues were two dollars per club plus one dollar for each delegate to be sent to an annual meeting under consideration.

As we continue to celebrate the 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NJSFWC, these are some of the accomplishments of our first President **Mrs. Margaret T. Yardley**.

**HONORS****hunterton@njsfwc.org****Kathleen Hunterton**

Have you been exploring candidates for WOA (Woman of Achievement); Cecilia Gaines Holland Award; and/or placing a member on the NJSFWC Honor Roll; or placing an outstanding Honoree in the Order of the Lilies?

Now is your chance, the clock is ticking.

The Honor Roll is a way to publicly honor club members for the work they have done for your club. The Honor Roll tribute is read at Convention, and a brief tribute is inscribed in the Honor Roll Book, which is kept at Headquarters.

For any club member who is already been placed on the Honor Roll, the Order of the Lily is an additional way to further honor them for their continued service.

**LEGISLATION/RESOLUTIONS****wisner@njsfwc.org****Jacqueline Wisner**

This Chairman knows, you've heard about the *GFWC Legislative Action Center* many times before. And yes, it's been discussed more times than you can count. But, hear this Chairman out—it's our Anniversary! This isn't just another ordinary reminder, it's a call to action wrapped up in a celebration!

You see, this year marks a special milestone for our organization, and what better way to honor our legacy than by making sure that as a body we sign up to participate in the legislative process? (Cue the confetti!) 🎉

We've come a long way impacting the laws and awareness of society, and the *Legislative Action Center* is our **powerhouse**. It's where we make sure our voices are heard *loud and clear* on issues that matter. Think about it: you've spent time, energy, and passion advocating for the things you care about. Now, let's make sure our representatives, local and federal, know about it too! And all you have to do is use the very tool that's built for impact

Taking 30 seconds to register means you're standing up for everything from child protection and Alzheimer's research to domestic violence legislation and so much more.



It's simple: *sign up, stay informed, and take action*.  
*GFWC Legislative Action Center* registration or visit **gfwc.org/get-involved** to sign up and view current legislation supported by the GFWC.

Use this QR code which will take you to the

This Chairman leaves you with this thought: "Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean." Let's be that ocean, and flood the halls of Congress and our governing bodies with our voices, our passion, and our dedication. Jump in! ... and let's make this Anniversary one for the history books!

**SPECIAL STATE PROJECT****shoemaker@njsfwc.org****April Shoemaker**

At Fall Conference on October 21, 2024, the Executive Director, Debbie Riveros spoke about the New Jersey Children's Alliance. She expressed her gratefulness to NJSFWC members for their donation of over 750 backpacks. The backpacks were delivered to all 21 counties based on their need.

Also at Fall Conference, clubs donated small items for children, such as small stuffed animals, crayons, and pencils – enough to fill three carloads. NJCA will again distribute these items to all 21 counties. Thank you to all for their contributions and generosity. Once again, children will receive these items knowing that others care and support them.

Presently, there is an educational campaign from the NJCA entitled "New Jersey Shining" whose goal is to light a path to safe and healthy childhoods and support children and families by spreading awareness of child safety and the power of hope healing, and justice. Clubs are asked to take pictures utilizing this theme and highlighting NJCA information and place on their Facebook pages and their websites.

**SPECIAL STATE PROJECT (continued)**

In order for children in all New Jersey counties to receive items clubs collect, we ask that you contact this Chairman and not the Children's Alliance BEFORE any distribution of items collected. The Chairman will contact the Alliance and let them know to expect these items and receive instructions as to how a club can send them these materials. This includes Uber and Lyft gift certificates, and other items as outlined in the Supplement, which can be found on the website. In this way we can ensure that your items be placed with centers and partners who will accept them.

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**WEBMASTER****webmaster@njsfwc.org****Denise Hosier****What Is SEO?**

If you have a website, you should know that SEO is "Search Engine Optimization." It's the process of making changes to your website design and content to help it appear in search engines. This helps you get traffic from the "organic" (free) search results on search engines like Google, Yahoo, or Bing. In other words, an organic search is when someone searches for your specific town or woman's club. It's estimated that organic search delivers more than half of all website traffic.

If you want your site to be found, there are ways to add meta tags and keywords to help your site appear higher in search results. Most important is Google, because it is used in more than 90% of searches worldwide, so optimizing for Google is your best bet.

Unfortunately, there's no quick and easy answer for search engine optimization for your specific website. Each different platform treats SEO differently. For WordPress sites, you can use a plugin like Yoast SEO to improve your search engine visibility. If you use Wix, there's a section in the Dashboard, a subsection under one of the main links on the left side, where you can add meta tags and keywords. Your best bet is to do a (Google) search of SEO for your particular host or platform.

While SEO isn't simple, there are some simple things you can do to improve your website's ranking in Google searches.

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**PARLIAMENTARY CONSULTANT TO CLUBS dahl@njsfwc.org****Interim Patricia Dahl**

Here are a few parliamentary questions:

**QUESTION:** Does "appoint" ever mean the same as "elect"?

**ANSWER:** Appoint includes elect. Therefore, one who is elected may be said to be appointed to an office. But one who is appointed to an office by the president cannot be said to have been elected to the office.

**QUESTION:** Has a club member the right to nominate herself for an office?

**ANSWER:** She does have the right, but it is scarcely conceivable that a member would do such a thing. It implies that she has no friend or supporter who is willing to nominate her. This action will lessen her chances of election.