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VOLUME XV - JANUARY 2024

GFWC Blue Umbrella Club Inc.
General Federation of Women's Clubs



From Dianne's Desk:

Happy New Year, Blue Umbrella members!

How exciting to begin a brand new year with so many wonderful possibilities ahead of us! You should have recently received an email from me and a zoom link plus a copy of the proposed bylaws as well as a short interest survey from Communications Manager Lisa Klatt. I hope you will read and respond to the survey, and most importantly, save the date and plan to attend the Blue Umbrella Zoom Meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. Since we will be voting on bylaws, we do need a quorum. We will do that business first, so that anyone who needs to sign off can do so. But I hope you stay with us and contribute as we make plans for 2024 where your voices and ideas are wanted and needed!

Last month, I mentioned a wonderful outreach project sponsored by Pam Graves, a GFWC Florida District 4 member and Past District 4 Junior District Director. The project is in Uganda. Further along in this newsletter you will find an article about the Sonrisa School of Culinary Arts & Bakery, along with a picture of Pam and some of the people the program helps. Please read the article and see if you or your home club can help. Possibly a group of Blue Umbrella members could come together to sponsor a young woman and give her a chance to change her life.

Don't forget that the Belize trip is coming up shortly. I know some of our members will be attending and hopefully those of us who can't make the trip

have already read the Amazon "wish list" and either made a purchase or sent a donation. The "wish list" is again attached, but time is getting short. For those of you attending, please say hello to Emily Carrillo, Shanice Joseph and Tricia Pelayo from us!

I read on Facebook this week that one of our GFWC Florida members from Greater West Palm Beach had the opportunity to visit the GFWC Woman's Club of Aruba members and share a lunch! If you have travel plans, check to see if there is a GFWC International Club in the area. Our International members love to meet their GFWC sisters and brothers. I have also been sharing postings on Facebook from Ukraine so that we can see what is happening and how they are dealing with the chaos in their lives with such a positive attitude. Please keep them in your prayers.

The GFWC Blue Umbrella Club is once again attempting to secure at least one vendor table at the 2024 Florida Annual Convention. Our venture was very successful at Fall Board, where we highlighted various GFWC and GFWC Florida projects such as receiving food donations for the GFWC National Day of Service; working with District 12 on the sale of handmade beautifully decorated Ukrainian eggs to benefit Ukraine; District 11 Plastics-Free Initiative (PFI), a project embraced by GFWC Florida; the Blue Umbrella "Save Our Monarchs" project; the sale and signing of a GFWC Florida member's newly published children's book advocating for accepting differences and more.

We were approached by members from other districts who wanted to be included the next time. The Blue Umbrella Club paid \$300 to sponsor our one designated space, which is direct income for GFWC Florida. We were very happy to do that. Depending on how many districts want to participate, we could possibly consider expanding. If you are interested, please contact your District Director and Kathryn Gallagher, Blue Umbrella Projects Manager, as soon as possible for details. Remember that our goal is always to help and to work cooperatively with other groups with LOVE, RESPECT, and KINDNESS in all that we do.

See you on zoom on January 21 at 6:30 pm.

Hugs,

Dianne

Dianne Foerster
President
GFWC Blue Umbrella Inc.
dlynnfoerster@gmail.com



**GFWC BLUE UMBRELLA CLUB
NEWS AND UPDATES!**





**BLUE UMBRELLA MEMBERS
DON'T FORGET!
ZOOM MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 6:30 PM**



Bylaws



REPORTS ARE DUE FEBRUARY 1

**LET GFWC KNOW THE WONDERFUL WORK YOUR CLUB DOES
FOR YOUR COMMUNITY!**

**THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BRAG ABOUT
ALL YOUR INCREDIBLE PROJECTS**

THESE REPORTS ARE YOUR LEGACY!



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

NOMINATIONS DUE
FEBRUARY 1
TO YOUR DISTRICT
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN



LEADS

is almost here!

We are excited to host the one day seminar and promote BLAST with our GFWC Florida.

For Information & Application



PLEASE, offer this opportunity to a member of your club!

Event date: March 2, 2024
Lakeland, Florida
Application Deadline: February 12, 2024



Send One Sister

We Need you at
GFWC Florida Convention

GFWC Florida will award \$100 to 14 First Time Attendees. One attendee per District. This money will be used to off set meal cost of the member selected to attend.

Contact your District Director or Junior District Director for more details.

Deadline is
February 1, 2024

For more information contact:
Candi Aublin
GFWC Florida Treasurer
916-608-9107
treasurer@gfwcflorida.org



District Membership Challenge!

Our MEMBERS are the heartbeat of GFWC!



October 1, 2023-March 31, 2024



GFWC Florida Interaction Awards

- **Dianne Foerster** -two or more woman's clubs
- **Judy Lutz** - woman and junior club
- **Joyce Johnston** - junior and juniorette club
- **Teddy Hulse** - two or more junior clubs
- **Marcia Bright** - woman and juniorette club

**INSPIRE A VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR
EMPOWER A LEADS CANDIDATE**

HELP A SISTER ATTEND CONVENTION FOR THE FIRST TIME
REPORT ABOUT YOUR NEW MEMBERS
RECOGNIZE YOUR INTERACTION WITH OTHER CLUBS
SO MANY CHANCES TO EXCEL AT WHAT WE DO!



GFWC Florida Arts and Crafts competition

GFWC Florida

Arts and Crafts
Competition

2022-2024



All 14 GFWC Florida Districts will be participating in this wonderful contest.

Encourage the unsung artists of your clubs to participate! Contact your District Directors and Arts Chairs for information.

Show everyone your creative genius!!

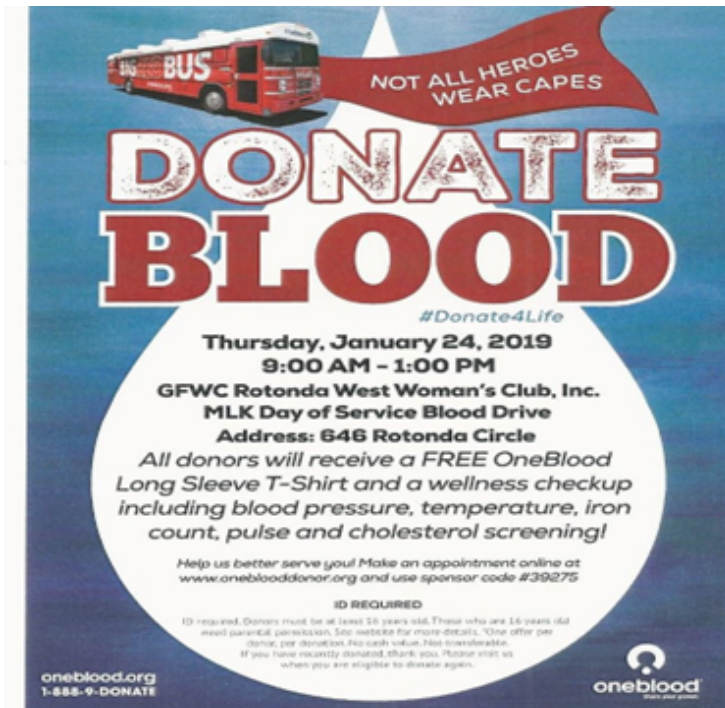
CELEBRATING MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR'S DAY OF SERVICE AROUND THE COMMUNITY



On January 15, 2024, the GFWC Woman's Club of Historical Overtown Village Inc. together with the GFWC North East Woman's Club, celebrated by giving water and juice to those attending the MLK Jr Parade in Overtown.



The Woman's Club of Coconut Grove participated with the Coconut Grove Ecumenical Network celebrating MLK Jr Day on Sunday, January 14, 2024. Two members of the club who were present are part of the CG Ecumenical Network. They also had a chance to get together with members from the Coconut Grove Negro Woman's Club.



GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.

In late 2018, GFWC International recommended that clubs around the country consider sponsoring a Blood Drive as a Day of Service on Martin Luther King Day in January 2019. GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club had only just begun sponsoring OneBlood Drives in their community in 2018; one in April and one in July. OneBlood responded that they would be happy to bring the Big Red Bus in

January to Rotonda West for Martin Luther King Day. This January, 2024, the club celebrates their 5th Anniversary of MLK Day of Service OneBlood Drives. What better way to serve every community – Saving Lives!



GFWC International Clubs Update

On January 17 the members of the GFWC International Liaison Committee started their day early and finished it late with two zoom calls with our GFWC clubs around the world! This is a continuing project of the committee and a fantastic way to see and really get to know our sisters. On our morning zoom we had several of our friends from Taiwan, Taipei, the Philippines and two new clubs, one from Uganda and one from Austria! The program that chairman Kathryn Sowers had scheduled included a visit to our GFWC headquarters in Washington DC where International President Deb Strahanoski showed us the many updates that had recently occurred. We got to see the Archives, the Iron Gates at the doors and windows, the marquee (or canopy), and the restored solarium. Our GFWC headquarters is a nationally designated Historical Site and like any of our homes needs constant upkeep. The major funding was through donations from GFWC members raised over several years. There was a short video that any club could download and share with their members. Our evening zoom was attended by the clubs from Canada and Brazil, who also enjoyed meeting and chatting with President Deb and visually touring headquarters.

It was an exciting and informative day. On both calls, members of the International clubs shared the projects they are involved with, which actually are very similar to the projects that our clubs here in the states are involved with. At both the morning and the evening zooms there was great interest from our international clubs about the upcoming GFWC Convention to be held in Chicago from June 28-July 2. Hopefully that interest will evolve into a large International attendance!

Dianne

BELIZE

**GFWC Belize City Women's Club
GFWC Belmopan Women's Club
GFWC Belmopan Juniores**



Two GFWC groups will be traveling to Belize in February to join with the GFWC clubs there for four days of shared service projects, fellowship and fun. Between the two groups, sixteen club women and boosters will join two Belize women's clubs and a Juniores club to visit elementary schools where they will

conduct hygiene classes and make beaded bracelets with the students. They will also hold clothing giveaways in impoverished neighborhoods, play some GFWC trivia during officer installation, and enjoy a meal together. If you would like to help with items the team is collecting to donate in Belize, there are a few items remaining on their wish list. Please be sure items will be delivered by Jan. 31. Cash donations are also appreciated, and will be used to purchase items to support the Belize clubs and community. Contact Laura Connelly with questions, lauraconnelly43@gmail.com. Thank you for your generosity!

Belize Wish List



Sonrisa School of Culinary Arts & Bakery ***Jinja, Uganda***

Contact: Pam Graves
Sonrisa School and Bakery
Email: aibeachmomof3@gmail.com Phone: 904-206-9588

GFWC District 4 Member
Starts Nonprofit in Uganda



In 2015, Mary Apio was working as a cook in a guesthouse in Jinja, Uganda when she met a visiting American family doing nonprofit work and a friendship began. A friendship that would be life changing not only for them, but for many living in Uganda. Enter Pam Graves, graduate of Jacksonville University, former baker, restaurateur and owner of a national granola company, turned Florida Realtor. (If you guessed that Pam was a part of the family that met Mary years later in the guesthouse in Jinja, you'd be right!). It was a trip that would change Pam and after hearing Mary's story of being sold into marriage

at the age of 14, and many months of communication, they realized they shared a love of preparing food for others.

Thus, the **Sonrisa School of Culinary Arts & Bakery** was founded by Pam Graves & Mary Apio, (by this time a well-known restaurateur in Jinja). The friends agreed to create the cooking school with a farm-to-table concept and in 2021 the school opened its doors to all adult students. Helping them learn how to grow and prepare food. Then return to their own towns & villages to share their knowledge of farming and food preparation. But the friends weren't done - soon the students were learning how to make Challah Bread and donating loaves every week to local families in need. Ultimately "Our Blessing Bread" ministry was born and now donates to over 20 families in the surrounding villages. Pam knew that this humanitarian effort would only stay alive by educating others. Education is one of the primary needs in the region and has created a 501C3 educational sponsorship ministry allowing sponsors to pay for students to attend the school full time. By God's grace - they have now graduated 35 students, which has been life-changing for those that used to be the last to be considered worthy of an education. The ministry expanded into the outlying villages, where the **Sonrisa** team identifies highly at risk young girls for early marriage. The team then meets with the families to plead with them to allow us to find scholarships to be able to keep the girls in school instead becoming a child bride. We currently have a waiting list of students.

Please join Pam in supporting this life changing ministry.

Send your gift to Stirring Hope, Inc to 2804 Island Plantation Dr, Fernandina Beach FL 32034, Venmo @stirringhopeinc, or through the website, www.sonrisaschoolandbakery.com





JOIN US IN SPREADING LOVE!

"The  project"

"LOVE ISN'T LOVE UNTIL YOU GIVE IT AWAY!"

A Quote from GFWC Florida President Pat Keel, as her theme for 2006-2008
Blue Umbrella Club -- let's take up that wonderful theme!

It's almost February, which means Valentine's Day, Hearts, Flowers, and Loving Greetings that must be shared. Let's call it **"The Heart Project"**
Continuing with our motto of Love, Respect and Kindness, wouldn't it be wonderful if we share **"The Heart Project"** throughout the year and not just Valentine's Day?

Here's a thought. Propose to your home club the idea of creating Valentine's Day Cards to be distributed to one or more Retirement Communities, Memory Care Facilities, Domestic Violence Shelters, Veterans Hospitals, send to Veterans who go on Honor Flights, and more.

Perhaps your Arts & Culture CSP would like to lead the project; possibly your Health & Wellness CSP; or maybe you have a Sunshine Committee that would like to provide Valentine's Day Cards for your community. If they feel that they are on overload, maybe the Blue Umbrella Club member could recruit a few home club members to make the cards, call the facilities to introduce the

project and to find out the total number of residents so that each receives a card, then make the delivery. How about working with your Junior or Juniorette clubs?

Share this idea with your home club and report it for GFWC in 2024!

The Blue Umbrella Club does not report, but we love to share ideas that you can take to your clubs! It's a win-win for everyone.

One sheet of 8 1/2" x 11" card stock can be cut in half horizontally then folded in half to provide two cards per sheet. Invitation envelopes in the 4 3/8" x 5 3/4" are available in a box of 100 from Amazon. You can also get heart shaped doilies which would also make a beautiful card. So many ideas, let your creativity soar!

You can download Valentine designs on-line, or hand make fun designs for the front and ask members to write greetings on the inside and sign the card with their first name.

Be creative to your **"Hearts"** content! This would also be a wonderful project to do with your children or grandchildren...and remember, it does not only have to be a Valentine's Day project, we should spread love throughout the year!

Please take pictures of your projects, write a description of your work, so that we can post it in the newsletter. You can also post your creative initiative on our Facebook page. We love to highlight your work and share where you are sending these thoughts of love!

So, join us in spreading Love, Respect and Kindness. It is what the Blue Umbrella does!

Please send your work to vayermoli@hotmail.com to be published in the newsletter. Thank you!

CAMP BOGGY CREEK needs VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Assignment Details

- Event Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024
7:30am - 2:30pm (estimated)
- Location: Alford Inn - 300 E New England Ave,
Winter Park, FL 32789

For more details:

<https://www.boggycreek.org/hofvolunteer>



The Power of You: State Federations and the LAC

The final webinar of *The Power of You: An Advocacy Webinar Series*, a seven-part series on advocating, will be offered on January 29, 2024, at 7 p.m. This webinar will focus on utilizing the GFWC Legislative Action Center to bring about change at the state level. You will hear how one club member reading an article in a local paper led to a state federation's support of two pending bills on domestic violence reform. We hope you are inspired to utilize the LAC for your own state's legislation, not only on issues of domestic violence and awareness but also on other issues related to GFWC Resolutions. GFWC has a long history of advocacy on the federal level and recognizes the need for similar action on the state level.

[Webinar Registration Link](#)



Advocacy and GFWC

According to the GFWC Standing Rules, "Member clubs shall be responsible for carrying out the intent of the resolutions." Clubs and clubwomen are the local advocates for

GFWC's legislative agenda. It is through the national network of grassroots advocates that the Federation gains its political influence.

When advocating on behalf of the Federation, it is critical to remember:

When speaking on behalf of the Federation, members may not oppose the GFWC resolutions.

GFWC is a nonpartisan, nondenominational organization. Clubwomen are allowed to advocate for policies or legislation, but NOT allowed by law to endorse candidates or engage in partisan politics. GFWC members must separate personal political activities from official club or state federation work.

Minority opinions may be expressed as follows: A member organization (club or state federation) holding a minority opinion and wishing to support its stand further may do so provided it states that its action represents the minority vote of GFWC.

Legislative Action Center

Take Action: Use Our Legislative Alerts

Sign up for the Legislative Action Center, a powerful tool to alert you to GFWC's public issues and advocacy efforts. Track bills, contact your local representative and [take action](#) on issues germane to GFWC Resolutions.

Sign up for the GFWC Legislative Action Center



2023 Legislative Action Alerts

April:

Debbie Smith Act (funding to process rape kits)

Shot@Life

VAWA Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations

May:

EARN IT Act (Kids Online Safety)

September:

Food Insecurity

October:

Family Violence Prevention

VAWA (Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization)

Vaccines

Protect Children Online (EARN IT Act bundled with several others on same topic)

Descriptions of some of these bills:

- Food Insecurity includes funding for Meals on Wheels and reauthorization in the Farm Bill for nutrition programs serving women, children, and students.
- Shot@Life urges funding for global vaccines.

- Violence Against Women programs and the VOCA Crime Victims Fund provide funds for domestic violence and sexual assault services and survivors. For example, the Crime Victims Fund helps domestic violence survivors cover abuse-related costs like medical bills, lost wages, and temporary housing.
 - Kids Online Safety addresses child sexual exploitation material and human trafficking utilizing various platforms on the Internet.
-

Advocacy in Action

In accordance with the resolutions adopted by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, GFWC often joins other national organizations to urge congressional or federal agency action on a particular matter. These letters, in addition to individual clubwomen contacting their members of Congress directly through the Legislative Action Center, result in a national network of grassroots advocates working together to improve the lives of club members, their communities, our nation, and the global community.

To promote the interests of the Federation and its members, GFWC may provide additional information including bill summaries, congressional conference reports, and research findings germane to GFWC advocacy efforts. We also encourage clubwomen to engage in face-to-face meetings with members of Congress and their professional staff. These meetings may be on Capitol Hill or in-district. To assist you in your legislative visits, GFWC provides talking points and leave-behinds for our core issues as well as for other timely matters.

This is GFWC advocacy in action!



If you would like to order Blue Umbrella T-shirts and/or jewelry

please contact Paula Juvinall

pjuvinall@gmail.com

727-401-1328

You can also **Link to our online payment page:**

<https://secure.affinipay.com/pages/gfwcblueumbrella/payments>

OR

QR Code for our online payment page:



Thank you, Kathy Mammenga,
Blue Umbrella Club Treasurer,
for making this process easy for everyone!



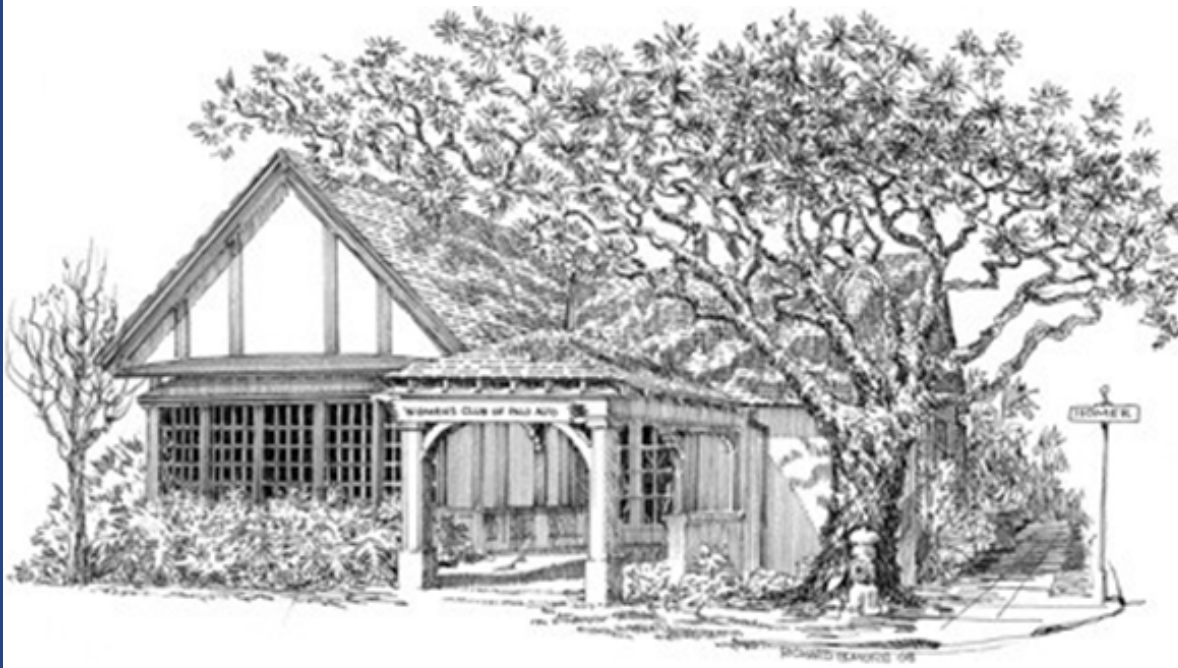
GFWC Blue Umbrella Club Inc.

General Federation of Women's Clubs



Our Mission Statement

This Club is organized to encourage an ongoing, positive opportunity for volunteerism based on incorporating the attributes of love, of respect and of kindness through all aspects of life. The mission will also encompass support for existing clubs and projects at local levels.



A Collect for Club Women
Mary Stewart

Keep us oh God from pettiness;
Let us be large in thought, in word, and deed.
Let us be done with fault-finding and leave off self-seeking.
May we put away all pretense and meet each other face to face,
without self-pity and without prejudice.
May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous.
Let us take time for all things.
Make us to grow calm, serene, gentle.
Teach us to put into action our better impulses, straightforward and unafraid.
Grant that we may realize it is the little things that create differences,
That in the big things of life we are at one.
And may we strive to touch and to know
the great common human heart of us all.
And oh Lord God, let us not forget to be kind!

In 1904, Mary Stewart (1876 – 1943), wrote a “Collect for Club Women” which our club recites at meetings, as do club women throughout the world. Stewart stated that the Collect was written “...as a prayer for the day. I called it a Collect for Club Women because I felt that women working together with wide interests for large ends was a new thing under the sun and that, perhaps, they had need for a special petition and meditation of their own.”



gfwc.org gfwcflorida.org



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