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VOLUME XVI - FEBRUARY, 2024

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



From Dianne's Desk:

Happy Valentine's Day, Blue Umbrella Members!

I realize that by the time you get this newsletter, Valentine's Day will have passed, but I am writing this message on February 14 and I am enjoying all the emphasis on love today! It makes me feel wonderful to know that our members try to make the celebration of love an everyday occurrence. Your positive attitude and determination to spread Love, Respect, and Kindness in all areas of your life really can make a difference. It certainly puts a smile on your face and in your heart!

It has been a busy 2024 so far and that promises to continue. Thank you to all who were able to attend the zoom meeting in January. We did have a quorum and were able to vote to accept all of the proposed Bylaws and Standing Rules changes. There will be a link further along in the newsletter for you to review the most current Bylaws and Standing Rules. The business was followed by a member brainstorming forum to help define our direction. It was exciting! You will start to see some of the results right away. First and foremost, we recognize that with 90+ members, there are many of you who can actively help. Your Board is asking you for your support, suggestions, and participation. Please contact me at dlynnfoerster@gmail.com or reach out to any of the Board members with your ideas or to volunteer. You can find the complete list of Board members on the last page of the Bylaws.

Because we are a large cyber club with members not only across Florida, but also in other states and possibly countries, we are going to institute a membership program in several ways. First, we will be asking you to update your information form to

include your birthday (day and month). As soon as that form is ready, there will be a link in the newsletter. We will have the forms available at the GFWC Florida Annual Convention in April. We will also be establishing a Care and Concern Committee to allow us to respond to situations and needs of our members. To help us get to know each better, there will be a different Blue Umbrella member highlighted each month in an article in the newsletter written by Karen Griggsby. All of these ideas are good ways for any club to build strong relationships between members, but they are particularly important for a cyber club. We already share a common philosophy, now it is time to grow even closer and know each other.

The GFWC Florida Annual Convention will be held, from April 12-15 at the Rosen Plaza in Orlando. There will be elections, awards, and celebrations. There will also be a **Blue Umbrella Hospitality Suite!** It will be on the second floor. We don't have a room number yet, but there will be a very identifiable sign on the door. Blue Umbrella Project Manager Kathryn Gallagher is coordinating displays from districts, special GFWC Florida projects, and GFWC projects. You can contact Kathryn at: kathryngal@yahoo.com. There will be free tickets for a door prize, fun photo opportunities, light snacks, and information about the GFWC Blue Umbrella Club, but mostly there will be great ideas to share! The room will be open during posted vendor hours. We request your help and attendance. Kathryn can answer any questions.

There is lots going on! Keep the Love, Respect, and Kindness flowing!

Hugs,

Dianne

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



You can find our Bylaws,
Standing Rules and the
complete list of Board Members,
here:

[BUC Bylaws - Revised 12124.docx](#)



We hope you will join us for the 2024 GFWC Florida Annual Convention. Deadline for early registration is March 29. Details including costs of registration, meals, hotel registration and tentative schedule can be found [here](#):

Call to GFWC Florida Annual Convention



GFWC BLUE UMBRELLA CLUB NEWS AND UPDATES!



Article by our member Lavette Moore celebrating Black History Month

In 2024, during Black History Month, I'm thrilled to honor the community that shaped me – the place where I was born, raised, educated, and now, where I work and serve. Nestled in the heart of Miami, Florida, lies a neighborhood with a rich history and a vibrant past. Originally known as Overton, this area is now called Overtown, but its legacy lives on in my heart and the hearts of its residents.

Overtown's history is a tapestry of resilience and culture, deeply intertwined with the growth and development of Miami. In the early 20th century, it stood as a cultural beacon for African Americans, offering a sense of community and belonging in a segregated society. The neighborhood thrived with a bustling business district, drawing people from all walks of life with its shops, restaurants, and nightclubs.

One of Overtown's most iconic landmarks was the Lyric Theater, a cultural mecca that hosted performances by legendary artists such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Ella Fitzgerald. The theater wasn't just a venue; it was a symbol of pride and creativity for our community.

My childhood in Overton was a blend of laughter, play, and deep-rooted traditions. I fondly recall running around barefoot with my friends, enjoying the freedom of youth. School days at Paul Lawrence Dunbar Elementary, Robert E Lee Middle School, and Booker T. Washington Middle School were not just about education; they were about building the pillars of our community.

Our tight-knit community, predominantly black, was enriched by the presence of neighborhood women affectionately called Bigmamas. They were the backbone of our community, offering wisdom, care, and the best Southern dishes like collard greens, cornbread, black-eyed peas, fried chicken, barbecue chicken, and stew beef that filled our tables with warmth and flavor.

Southern African American traditions were a vibrant part of our lives. Celebrations like Juneteenth were marked with cookouts, music, and gatherings to honor the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Weddings were special with "jumping the broom" ceremonies, a tradition from slavery times symbolizing the start of a new life together.

Easter Sundays were a spectacle of elegance, with families dressed in their finest attire, heading to church. The women donned pastels and wide-brim hats, while the men wore sharp suits. As a little girl, I cherished my beautiful fluffy dresses and ruffle socks or stockings, while the boys looked dapper in their suits.

Christmas in Overton was pure magic. The streets came alive with the sound of Christmas blues, played enthusiastically by neighbors. The air was filled with the aroma of baked goods and the sparkle of Christmas lights, creating a joyous atmosphere of togetherness and community spirit.

As we step into 2024, Overtown is undergoing a revitalization, with renewed efforts to preserve its history and culture. Through events, festivals, and community initiatives, we ensure that the legacy of Overtown lives on, cherished and honored by future generations.

Ms. Lavette Moore
President/Executive Director
The Woman's Club of Historic Overtown Village Inc

For more information about the rich history of Overtown please click here:

[History of Overtown.docx](#)



Thank you for spreading the LOVE!



Cards and Chocolate Hearts were delivered to the Memory Care Center at Heritage Oaks.

Our former District Director, Charlotte Arcadia, who lives in the Assisted Living Center and I were able to visit Memory Care for a few moments with the cards and chocolates. They aren't very favorable to having photos taken with the patients, so the only photo I have is the beautiful Valentine Tree that they have there.

They were also celebrating Mardi Gras and Donut Day!

Kathryn S. Gallagher
GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club
GFWC FL District 12 Director

WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF A WOMAN'S HEART

— THE POWER TO LOVE, THE STRENGTH TO FIGHT —
AND THE WILL TO OVERCOME.

BUT THERE IS A FORCE THAT THREATENS OUR HEARTS
AND IS KILLING OUR MOTHERS, SISTERS, DAUGHTERS, AND FRIENDS.

— **THE TIME IS NOW** —
**TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST HEART DISEASE
AND FIGHT SIDE BY SIDE FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES.**

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

WHO ARE ROCKED BY A DIAGNOSIS AND STRUGGLING THROUGH
TREATMENT, SO THEY MAY EMERGE VICTORIOUS TO EMBRACE LIFE.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

WHO TOUCHED SO MANY LIVES BEFORE THEY LOST THEIR OWN.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

TO SPEAK UP FOR MORE RESEARCH AND SWIFTER
ACTION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

BECAUSE IT'S TIME TO PUT OUR HEALTH FIRST.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD FIGHT ALONE. FOR EACH OTHER, WE
ARE A HAND TO HOLD, A SHOULDER TO CRY ON, A BACKBONE THAT ALWAYS STAYS STRONG.



WHEN WE GO RED FOR WOMEN, WE STEP UP WHENEVER AND WHEREVER SO THAT
EVERY WOMAN MAY LIVE. AND WE WILL NEVER STOP UNTIL THIS FIGHT IS WON.

**BECAUSE THE POWER OF A WOMAN'S HEART IS
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE.**

TOGETHER WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

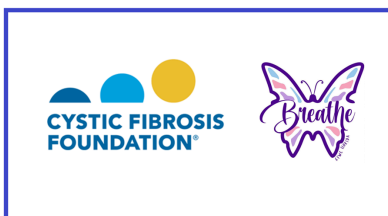


Join the
fight against
heart
disease!

Wear red and spread awareness.



Blue Umbrella Club members in Pasco County held a voter registration day with our supervisor of elections in our community. One of the biggest questions was, "How do I get a mail-in ballot?" The short answer is to contact your county's supervisor of elections office and request one. What was interesting was the new way that they register people for mail-in ballots in Florida. You must register for a mail-in ballot every election cycle. So, if you voted by mail last year, you have to re-register this year.



BREATHE is GFWC Florida Junior Director Christa Nuckols' project. Help fundraise for this important mission by forming a team and joining the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation through their Great Strides walk to find a cure for this debilitating disease.

Click here for more information on how to register, form a team and where to run:

How to Register for a Great Strides Walk for Cystic Fibrosis



Cystic Fibrosis Great Strides Walks - Why We Stride

Great Strides, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's largest national fundraising event offers hope to those living with cystic fibrosis. Each year, approximately 125,000 people participate in nearly 300 walks across the country to support the Foundation's mission. For more details, and to create your team, visit cff.org/events. **Be sure to include GFWC in your team's name.**

Miami-Dade County, Saturday, April 6, 2024

Location: Zoo Miami, Miami, FL

Check In: 7:00 AM Walk: 8:30 AM Distance: 3 Miles

Naples/Ft. Myers, Saturday, April 13, 2024

Location: Freedom Park, Naples, FL

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM Distance: 3 Miles

Broward County, Sunday, April 21, 2024

Location: Las Olas Oceanside Park, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM Distance: 3 Miles

Gainesville, FL, Saturday, April 27, 2024

Location: Westside Albert Ray Massey Park

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM Distance: 3 Miles

Central Florida, Saturday, May 4, 2024

Location: Brevard Zoo, Melbourne, FL

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM

Jacksonville, FL, Saturday, May 18, 2024

Location: Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM Distance: 1 Mile

Tampa Bay, Saturday, May 18, 2024

Location: Zoo Tampa, Tampa, FL

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM Distance: 3 Miles

Treasure Coast and Palm Beach County, Sunday, May 19, 2024

Location: Cox Science Center and Aquarium at Dreher Park, West Palm Beach, FL

Check In: 8:00 AM Walk: 9:00 AM Distance: 2 Miles



BELIZE

Two eight-person GFWC teams just returned from Belize, where they partnered with the GFWC Belmopan Women's Club, GFWC Belize City Woman's Club and GFWC Belize City Junioresettes on service projects, held officer installations, shared meals and played GFWC trivia! One of the highlights of the trip was the formation of a new club, GFWC Suga City Junioresettes in Orange Walk, northern Belize, and preparations to form a woman's club in Orange Walk. A heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed, donated, and sent positive thoughts during our trip. We are grateful for all of you!

Many of the Belizean club women want to try to come to Chicago for GFWC Convention. If you would like to help, please contact Laura Connelly, lauraconnelly43@gmail.com. Donations are being accepted to help cover their registration and meals, and if you will be in Chicago and can turn your double hotel room into a triple, that would be so very appreciated! The ladies are currently fundraising to cover the costs of their airfare and obtaining a US visa for their trip.





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.

Sign up for the GFWC Legislative Action Center

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:

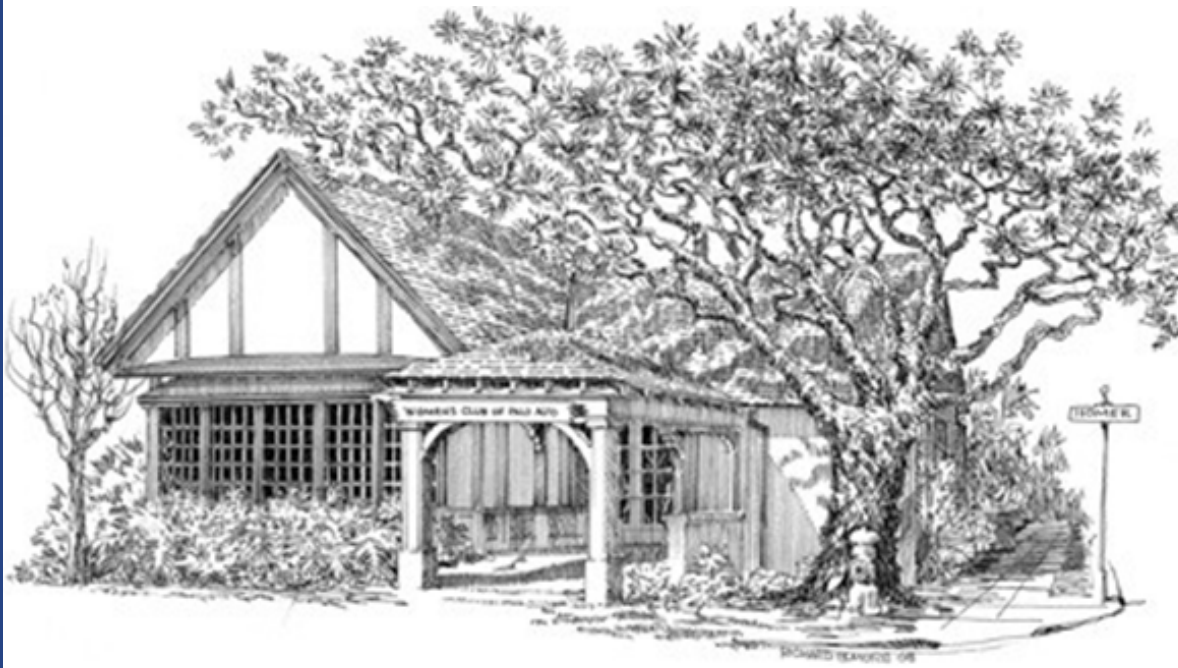


Thank you, Kathy Mammenga,
Blue Umbrella Club Treasurer,
for making this process easy for everyone!



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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