

SEPTEMBER 2026



GFWC BLUE UMBRELLA CLUB NEWSLETTER



**Fall Board Orlando September 18-20th
Board Meeting: Sunday, October 4th 6:30 pm
Southern Region October 23rd - 25th**

gfwcblueumbrella.org



President's Message

*BY: KATHY MAMMENG*A

Fall is my favorite time of year! I am excited for cooler weather and the change in seasons. I can plant new vegetables and herbs in my garden, crochet a blanket without overheating from so much yarn on my lap, pull out and wear my decorative scarves, sew handbags because they are so fun to make, delve into paper crafting outside in my lanai, add pumpkin to my baking and cooking, roast the root vegetables that are in season, and so much more. It is a season of fun activities and change for me.

The energy shift as fall nears is electric. The anticipation of Fall Board adds to the excitement. It is an opportunity for some of us to travel across the state and spend time together. What a wonderful time to reconnect with friends, learn something new, and celebrate with each other!

This year, we will have a booth at Fall Board. Please stop by to see the fun things we have to share. We plan to offer a simple activity in which everyone can participate, share the news about Blue Umbrella with attendees, sell our remaining merchandise to make room for more, and build new connections. Bring your cup of coffee, stop by for good conversations, meet fellow members, and share your ideas. It will be exciting, and we would love to see everyone there!

The booth will also feature information about the committees we would like to form. To grow and better serve our members, we are looking to expand and streamline a few areas. To do so, we are forming committees. If you are interested in a particular area and would like to help shape our direction, please consider joining a committee. The more minds and hands we have, the less time and work each person will need to contribute. We are also always open to new members. If you know anyone who would like to help in her community, connect with an amazing group of women, or find connections and ideas for how she can help, please send her our way. Maybe she is interested in serving on a committee.

I cannot wait to see many of you at Fall Board, but our Blue Umbrella spirit reaches far beyond one event! If you are unable to attend, there are still plenty of ways to connect, contribute, and join the fun. Every idea, helping hand, and encouraging word makes us stronger, so let's welcome this new season with enthusiasm and continue making a difference together. Through every act of service, large or small, each of you helps make your community a better place. You are amazing, and you make Blue Umbrella what it is!



Member Spotlight

MIMI FREEZA

BY: KAREN GRIGGSBY

With fall just around the corner, we're reminded that change is always surrounding us.

Few people embody the spirit of positive change quite like Mimi Freeza. Born and raised in upstate New York, Mimi attended Troy State University in Alabama, where she majored in marketing. Before retiring, she spent 15 years working in elementary special education, a career that reflected her lifelong passion for helping others. She and her husband, Dave, have been married for 34 years and are proud parents of three grown children, two young adult grandsons, and a new baby granddaughter.

For Mimi, volunteerism began in childhood. She remembers visiting nursing homes with her mother, babysitting children with special needs in high school, and regularly helping a nursing home resident write letters. In college, she served as Kappa Delta's Head of Philanthropy and volunteered with the Special Olympics. Service continued as a family tradition, as Mimi and Dave involved their children in church service, nursing home visits, neighborhood food pantry collections, and other community projects.

Mimi joined GFWC North Pinellas Woman's Club in 2018 and quickly became involved. Over the years, she has served in numerous club, district, and state leadership roles, including Club President, District Registrar and Treasurer, GFWC Florida Registration Committee member, and now, GFWC Florida Newsletter Editor. She became a charter member of the GFWC Blue Umbrella Club because she wanted to help continue the legacy of Love, Respect, and Kindness that is the hallmark of the club created by her friend and mentor, Dianne Foerster. To Mimi, Blue Umbrella is a wonderful example of women supporting one another while making a difference in their communities.

Mimi believes the key to attracting and retaining members, especially younger women, is to show them what GFWC is all about, the impact we make, the friendships we build, and the fun we have along the way.

One of the things Mimi values most about GFWC is that others may help you see your potential, encourage you to step outside your comfort zone to try something new, and discover what you are capable of. As you grow, you have the opportunity to do the same for others, encouraging and supporting the next generation of GFWC leaders. Through GFWC, she has had the privilege of meeting wonderful women across Florida and throughout the country. These connections, built through service and shared experiences, have become friendships she truly treasures.

Mimi, thank you for sharing your story and for reminding us that a lifetime of service can begin with something as simple as a visit, a helping hand, or a willingness to say yes. You are an inspiration to so many, and we are grateful to have you as part of the GFWC family!



KAREN GRIGGSBY

History

September 12, 1910: A NEW KIND OF OFFICER REPORTS FOR DUTY

Alice Stebbins Wells joined the Los Angeles Police Department, becoming one of the nation's first regularly appointed policewomen with arrest authority.

She believed women officers were especially needed to assist women and children involved in difficult situations.



Her appointment **challenged the belief** that policing was strictly a man's profession.

Wells later advocated for policewomen across the country and helped organize the **International Association of Policewomen**.



*Breaking barriers.
Making a difference.*



Florida Fall

Florida Fall, Who Knew?



Fall officially arrives before the cool weather does!

The autumnal equinox occurs around **September 22 or 23**, bringing nearly equal hours of daylight and darkness. Sweater weather may have to wait, but pumpkin season is officially open!



Monarch butterflies pass through our state.

Florida provides nectar and resting places for monarchs during their fall travels. A few native flowers in the garden can help make their journey a little easier.



Florida is for the birds, in the best possible way!

Fall migration brings warblers, hawks, shorebirds, and other fascinating visitors. Whether you explore a local park or watch from your porch, keep your eyes and ears open for something new.



Florida Fall

FLORIDA IN September A CRITICAL STOP ON THE MONARCH JOURNEY

September marks the beginning of fall migration for monarch butterflies—and Florida plays an important role.



THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Monarchs from eastern North America start migrating south in late summer. Many begin passing through Florida in September.



FLORIDA: A VITAL PIT STOP

Our flowers provide nectar and energy that help monarchs refuel for the long trip ahead.



WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Look for monarchs feeding on blooming wildflowers like goldenrod, blazing star, mistflower and more—especially along Florida's Gulf Coast and Panhandle.



A HOME ALL YEAR

Thanks to Florida's warm climate, some monarchs live here year-round, so both migratory and resident monarchs may be present.



You Can Help!



Plant native
nectar flowers.



Grow native
milkweed.



Avoid pesticides
and herbicides.

*Every flower makes
a difference.*

♥ Plant for monarchs. Protect their journey. Preserve our future. ♥



On Their Way to Winter

Eastern monarchs migrate thousands of miles to overwinter in the forests of central Mexico.



Florida:
A key stop
on the way
south!

My September

Used a
Refillable
Bottle

Shopped
Local

Read a
book to a
child

Used a
reusable
shopping
bag

Turned Off
Unused
Lights

Donated
unused
towels to a
pet rescue

Wrote
thank-you
cards to
teachers

Used a
Metal Straw

Wrote
uplifting
cards to
nursing home
residents

Visited a
homebound
neighbor

Planted
pollinator
friendly
flowers

Donated
books to a
little free
library

Created a
care package
for someone
in need

Invited
someone new
for coffee or
conversation

Borrowed
Book from
Library

Donated
Clothes



Fall Flights & Blue Umbrellas

A	R	T	P	L	E	R	U	T	N	E	V	D	A
C	S	S	S	E	N	D	N	I	K	A	Y	R	R
U	M	B	R	E	L	L	A	G	U	L	R	N	T
G	N	K	H	H	N	C	P	U	R	P	O	S	E
E	O	T	J	E	C	N	E	I	R	E	P	X	E
N	I	H	U	O	R	E	T	H	G	U	A	L	C
E	S	R	N	P	Y	R	F	L	O	R	I	D	A
R	S	S	S	S	I	S	T	E	R	H	O	O	D
O	A	P	I	H	S	R	E	D	A	E	L	V	O
S	P	O	R	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y	E
I	M	E	P	N	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	T	N
T	O	P	O	R	E	E	T	N	U	L	O	V	I
Y	C	O	N	O	I	T	C	E	N	N	O	C	N
M	E	V	P	I	H	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	D

Adventure
Community
Compassion
Connection
Experience
Florida
Friendship
Generosity
Joy
Kindness
Laughter
Leadership
Purpose
Service
Sisterhood
Umbrella
Volunteer

Florida Woman's History and Beyond

From SEMINARY to WOMEN'S COLLEGE to FSU

A Legacy of Learning. A Future of Leadership.



1851

THE VISION



The Florida Legislature authorized the creation of two state seminaries, one east and one west of the Suwannee River.

1857

WEST FLORIDA SEMINARY



The western seminary was established in Tallahassee and began operating as the West Florida Seminary.

1858

WOMEN JOIN THE STORY



The seminary incorporated the **Tallahassee Female Academy**, helping create an early path to publicly supported education for women in Florida.

1905

A NEW CHAPTER

The Buckman Act of 1905 reorganized Florida's public colleges.

FLORIDA FEMALE COLLEGE

opened its first academic year under that name on

SEPTEMBER 26, 1905



1909

A NAME THAT HONORS HER

FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

The college was renamed Florida State College for Women in 1909.



1947

NEW HORIZONS



For more than four decades, the college educated women who became teachers, scientists, artists, writers, public servants and community leaders. In 1947, the school became coeducational and was renamed **Florida State University**.

*Different names. One mission.
Empowering Women. Strengthening Florida. Building Futures.*

While National Women's History Month is officially celebrated in March, September marks several major milestones and historical anniversaries for women's achievements and rights.

September features several pivotal moments across politics, sports, and civil rights:

Electoral & Civil Rights: New Zealand granted women the right to vote on September 19, 1893, while feminist activists staged a prominent protest at the Miss America Pageant on September 7, 1968.

Firsts and Leadership: Alice Stebbins Wells became America's first female police officer with arrest powers on September 12, 1910, Sandra Day O'Connor was sworn in as the first female Supreme Court Justice on September 25, 1981, and Shirley Chisholm announced her presidential run on September 26, 1971.

Sports & Achievement: Billie Jean King won the "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match on September 20, 1973, and Stacy Allison became the first American woman to summit Mount Everest on September 29, 1988.

Workforce: American Business Women's Day is observed on September 22 to honor businesswomen and the 1949 founding of the ABWA.

Join a Committee



**SHARE YOUR
TALENTS**

**STRENGTHEN OUR
CLUB**

Newsletter

Help write
articles

Merchandise

Develop new
ideas. Coordinate
orders and
deliveries. Track
sales.

A Little Help Goes a Long Way!

As we expand, we need assistance. We are looking for volunteers to join a few important committees. If you have some time, we would love your help on a committee to keep our club vibrant, connected, and growing.

Membership

Assist the
2nd VP with
membership

*Here's the secret. The
more people who pitch in,
the lighter the load and
the more fun we have!*

Please contact
president@gfwcblueumbrella.org

Facebook

Post and
approve
posts

A Simple Signal That Could Make a Difference

International Day of Service

Sometimes service means collecting donations, volunteering our time, or raising money. And sometimes, service can be as simple as sharing information that could help someone get out of an unsafe situation.

As GFWC Blue Umbrella Club prepares to participate in the GFWC International Day of Service on September 26, we are helping spread awareness about [Angel Shots](#), a discreet way someone in a bar or restaurant may be able to signal to staff that they feel unsafe or need assistance.

A person may be on a date that suddenly feels threatening, realize someone has been following them, or simply find themselves in a situation where openly asking for help could put them at greater risk. Knowing there is a discreet way to communicate with restaurant or bar staff can provide another option for getting help.

Our project will provide Angel Shot informational posters for restrooms and reference cards for bar and restaurant staff explaining the commonly used signals and what assistance may be requested. This is where our Blue Umbrella members can help!

Members will be able to print the materials and take them to local restaurants, bars, and other appropriate establishments in their own communities. Ask the business if they would be willing to display the restroom poster and provide the information to their staff.

One conversation. One poster. One informed employee. It may seem small, but to someone who needs help, it could make a big difference.

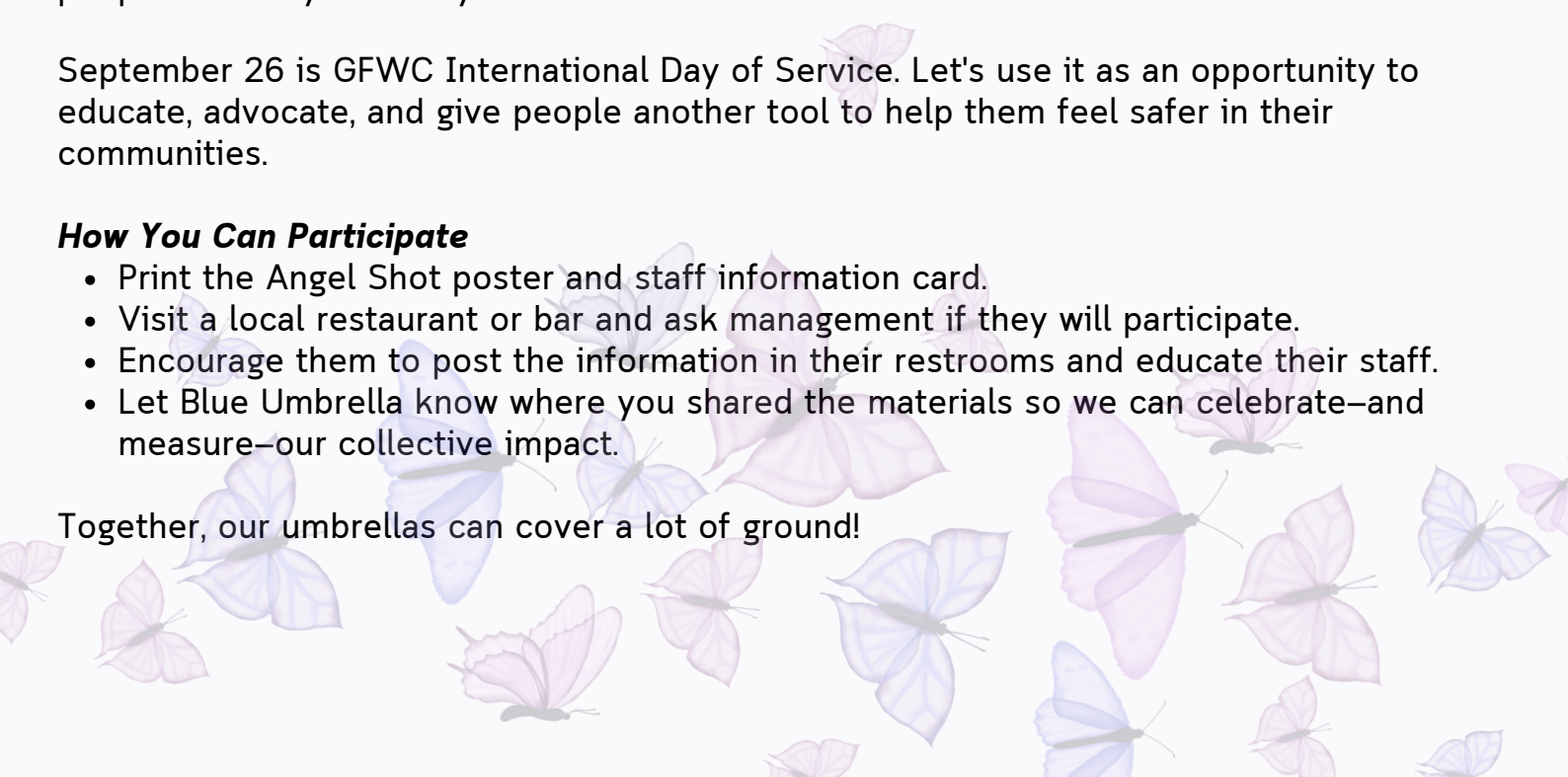
This project also gives our Blue Umbrella Club members an opportunity to expand the impact of International Day of Service far beyond one community. Wherever our members live and serve, we can help put this information into the hands of businesses and the people who may someday need it.

September 26 is GFWC International Day of Service. Let's use it as an opportunity to educate, advocate, and give people another tool to help them feel safer in their communities.

How You Can Participate

- Print the Angel Shot poster and staff information card.
- Visit a local restaurant or bar and ask management if they will participate.
- Encourage them to post the information in their restrooms and educate their staff.
- Let Blue Umbrella know where you shared the materials so we can celebrate—and measure—our collective impact.

Together, our umbrellas can cover a lot of ground!



International Day of Service



Join Us! ♥

— INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE —

September 25, 2026

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER!

**DOMESTIC &
SEXUAL VIOLENCE**
AWARENESS & PREVENTION

*Awareness
Compassion
Action* ♥

*A simple
code can
make a big
difference!*



The Blue Umbrella Club is proud to support Domestic & Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention through our 2026 International Day of Service.

Angel Shot



ARE YOU ON A DATE AND NEED HELP?

What is an Angel Shot? An Angel Shot is not actually a shot or a drink, but rather a code that signals a bartender or restaurant staff that you feel unsafe and need help.

ASK FOR AN ANGEL SHOT:



Straight Up or Neat =
Please escort me
to my car.



On Ice or On the Rocks =
Quietly call me
a cab or uber.



With Lemon/Lime or Twisted =
I am in danger,
please call the police.



If you are in immediate danger,
please call 911. Don't wait.



Add your club name here!

*Display these materials
in your community!*



WHEN ASKED FOR AN ANGEL SHOT:



An Angel Shot is not actually a shot or a drink, but rather a code that signals a bartender or restaurant staff that you feel unsafe and need help.



Straight Up or Neat =
Please escort me
to my car.



On Ice or On the Rocks =
Quietly call me
a cab or uber.



Lemon/Lime or Twisted =
I am in danger,
please call the police.

Please help prevent domestic & sexual violence.

Add your club name here!

IT'S EASY TO GET INVOLVED!



DOWNLOAD

Visit our website to download the poster, bartender card, and display instructions.



PRINT

Print the materials and add your club name to the poster and bartender card.



SHARE

Deliver the poster, bartender card, and instructions to local businesses.

SCAN HERE
FOR RESOURCES



Scan me!



VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.gfwcblueumbrella.org

Every poster displayed could help save a life.

Let's make a difference together! ♥

LOVE • RESPECT • KINDNESS

GFWC FLORIDA PRESIDENTS PROJECT



🔥 What is your club doing to support the GFWC Florida President's Project? 🔥

We would love to hear how your club is supporting your local firefighters! Are you providing meals, donating teddy bears for children, collecting needed supplies, or planning another special service project?

We also want to hear your fundraising ideas! How is your club raising money to support the Florida Firefighters Academy and help offset tuition and supply costs for firefighters attending the academy?

Share your projects, fundraising ideas, photos (in photocircle), and successes! Please email me at: communications@gfwcblueumbrella.org. Your idea may be exactly the spark another club needs! 🚒💖🔥



GFWC FL JUNIOR DIRECTOR PROJECT



Royally Served

NEIGHBORHOOD FRIDGE Food & Hygiene Drive

Nourishing Bodies ♡ Restoring Dignity ♡ Serving with Love

Help us stock neighborhood refrigerators and pantries with essential food and hygiene items for our neighbors in need.



MOST NEEDED ITEMS



PANTRY STAPLES

- ♡ Rice
- ♡ Beans
- ♡ Pasta & Pasta Sauce
- ♡ Canned Vegetables
- ♡ Canned Fruit
- ♡ Canned Tuna & Chicken
- ♡ Peanut Butter
- ♡ Oatmeal
- ♡ Cereal
- ♡ Shelf-Stable Milk
- ♡ Cooking Oil
- ♡ Low-Sodium Soups
- ♡ Shelf-Stable Protein Shakes
- ♡ Individually Packaged Snacks



HYGIENE ESSENTIALS

- ♡ Toothbrushes & Toothpaste
- ♡ Soap
- ♡ Shampoo & Conditioner
- ♡ Deodorant
- ♡ Menstrual Products
- ♡ Diapers & Baby Wipes
- ♡ Toilet Paper
- ♡ Tissues
- ♡ Laundry Detergent
- ♡ Incontinence Products



ESPECIALLY HELPFUL FOR OUR UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS

- ♡ Ready-to-Eat Meals
- ♡ Protein Bars
- ♡ Trail Mix
- ♡ Crackers
- ♡ Fruit Cups
- ♡ Applesauce Pouches
- ♡ Electrolyte Packets
- ♡ Bottled Water
- ♡ New Socks
- ♡ Sunscreen
- ♡ Travel-Size Hygiene Items



DROP-OFF LOCATION:
Junior Fundraising Table

Donations benefit:
**NEIGHBORHOOD
FRIDGE**
neighborhoodfridge.org

♡ Thank you! ♡
for your generosity
and support!

EVERY DONATION HELPS PROVIDE NOURISHMENT,
DIGNITY, AND HOPE TO OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED.

SAVE THE DATE



**Join GFWC Florida
at the 2026
Fall Board of Directors Meeting**



as we participate in the
**GFWC International Day of Service Project
United to End Domestic and Sexual Violence**

- ♥ **Friday evening** after the Board of Directors Meeting, we will assemble cosmetic bags filled with encouraging and uplifting items.
- ♥ Districts will take completed bags home for distribution to clubs.
- ♥ Clubs will deliver the bags to local domestic violence shelters and safe houses.



Support Survivors • Inspire Confidence • Share Compassion

♥ Please bring one new lipstick or lip gloss to include in a cosmetic bag.

Additional donations are greatly appreciated.
Any color is welcome.



Join us for the GFWC Southern Region Conference in Jacksonville, FL, on Oct. 23-25! Come experience the unique Jacksonville culture, reconnect with friends, participate in meaningful service, and discover fresh inspiration. The Call and all of the details will be out in late August!



Save the Date!

JOIN US IN
**JACKSONVILLE,
Florida!**

OCT. 23-25, 2026

Join us for the GFWC Southern Region Conference in Jacksonville, FL, on Oct. 23-25! Come experience the unique Jacksonville culture, reconnect with friends, participate in meaningful service, and discover fresh inspiration.

- Experience the unique Jacksonville culture
- Reconnect with friends old and new
- Participate in meaningful service
- Discover fresh inspiration and new ideas

We can't wait to see you there!

THE CALL AND ALL OF THE DETAILS WILL BE out in late August!

Save the Date

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



Check out the GFWC Learning Academy today:

The General Federation of Women's Clubs continues its mission of supporting women through education, leadership, and community impact. The GFWC Learning Academy offers free online training in leadership, membership, technology, and more—helping members grow and succeed in their club journey.

<https://memberportal.gfwc.org/pages/learning-academy>

BLUE UMBRELLA MERCHANDISE

Do you need a Blue Umbrella Club T-shirt? These fitted tees come in a stunning turquoise blue and are available in sizes Small through 4XL. Please order at least one size up—these shirts are fitted and may shrink slightly in the wash.

T-Shirt Pricing (tax included):

 Small-XL: \$27

 2XL-4XL: \$29

 Add \$5 shipping per order

 Jewelry Collection:

✨ Bracelets: \$15

(more pictures on the website)

✨ Earrings: \$10

✨ Pins: \$10

 Shipping additional

 NEW! Blue Umbrella Totes \$5
Perfect for meetings, errands, or
gifting—grab one (or more)!

NEW!! Blue Umbrella Lanyard \$5

To Order:

Email Paula Juvinall at"

merchblueumbrella@gmail.com

with your order and shipping info.

Payment Options:

✓ Use any of the payment links on our website

✓ Or mail a check



Use the QR code for online payment, or mail a check to the address listed below.

QR Code - put a checkmark in the box labeled "Other". Note t-shirt size or jewelry details in the box below that

Check - in memo line, write t-shirt size or jewelry details
questions or orders can also be sent to: merchandise@gfwcblueumbrella.org



Please download the PhotoCircle App and begin uploading your BUC photos directly to the Blue Umbrella Club PhotoCircle (scan the QR code below to join).

It makes creating the newsletter and gathering historical memories so much easier!



GFWC Blue Umbrella Club, Inc.
PO Box 371
Mango, FL 33550-0371

 2026 Blue Umbrella Club
Join my circle by scanning
the QR Code above

CLUB OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Kathy Mammenga	president@gfwcblueumbrella.org
1st Vice President	Dana Monteneri	firstvp@gfwcblueumbrella.org
2nd Vice President	Harriet Hankerson	secondvp@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Recording Secretary	Nancy Crawford	recordingsec@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Treasurer	Margie Harper	treasurer@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Corresponding Secretary	Lisa Klatt	correspondingsec@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Communications Chairman	Amber Treat	communications@gfwcblueumbrella.org
History Chairman	Rachelle Warmouth	historian@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Merchandise Chairman		merchandise@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Technology Chairman	Lisa Klatt	technology@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Parliamentarian	Sallie Milner	parliamentarian@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Social Media Chairman	Sharon Grace	socialmedia@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Advisor	Julie Babcock	advisorbabcock@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Advisor	Dianne Foerster	advisorfoerester@gfwcblueumbrella.org
Advisor	Laura Connelly	advisorconnelly@gfwcblueumbrella.org

Mission Statement

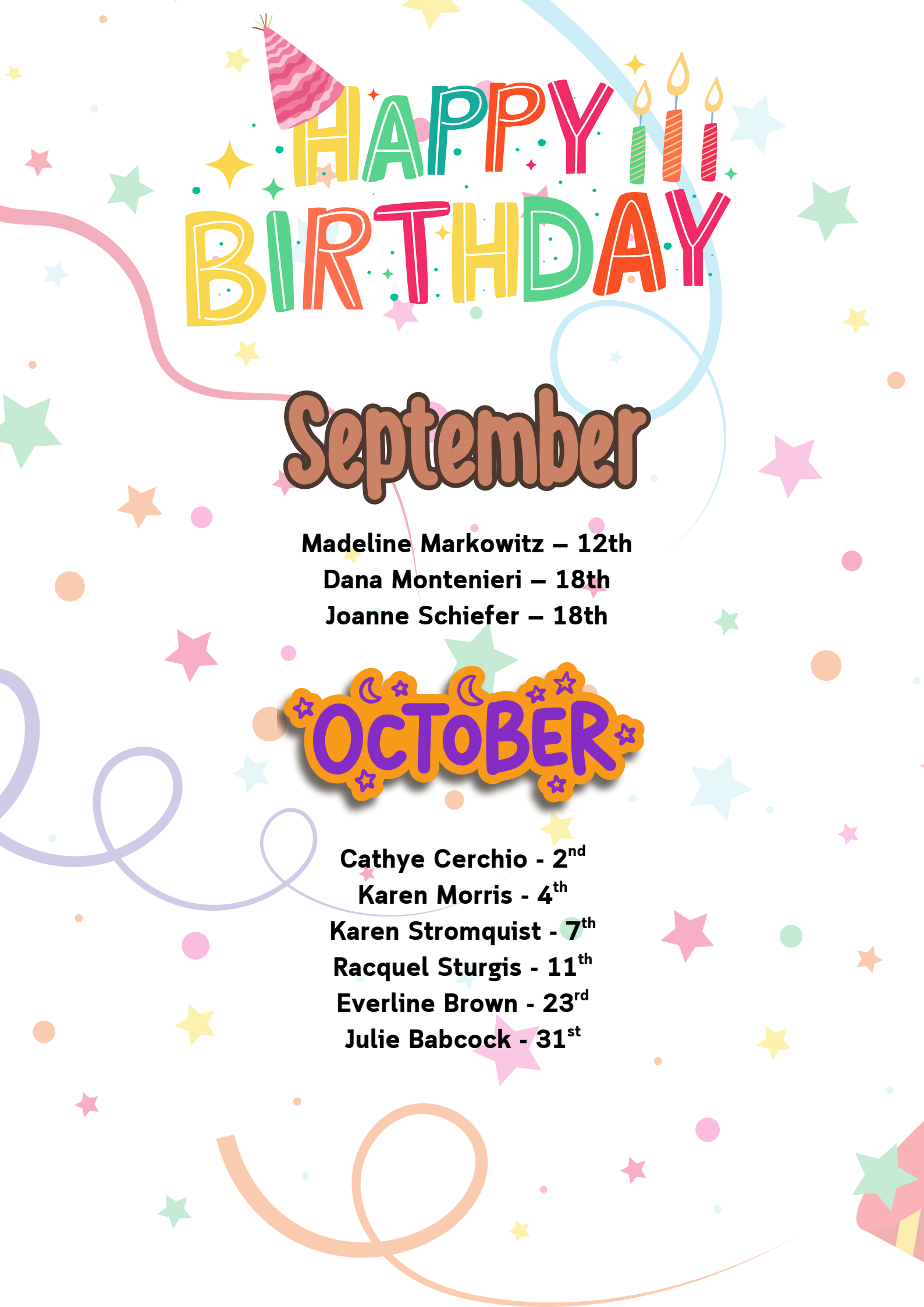
This Club is organized to encourage an ongoing, positive opportunity for volunteerism based on incorporating the attributes of love, respect, and kindness through all aspects of life. The mission will encompass support for existing clubs and projects at local levels.

A COLLECT FOR CLUBWOMEN

Keep us, oh God, from pettiness;
Let us be large in thought, in word, in 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 judgement
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 forget not
To be kind!

Mary Stewart, 1904



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

September

Madeline Markowitz – 12th

Dana Montenieri – 18th

Joanne Schiefer – 18th

OCTOBER

Cathye Cerchio - 2nd

Karen Morris - 4th

Karen Stromquist - 7th

Racquel Sturgis - 11th

Everline Brown - 23rd

Julie Babcock - 31st