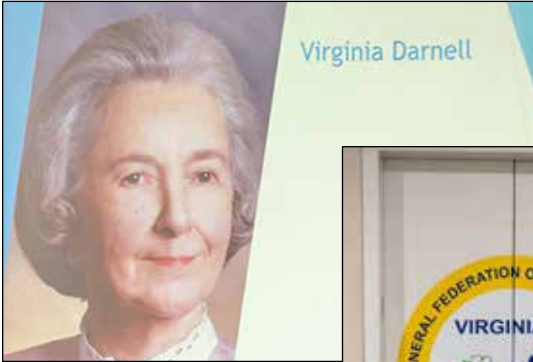


The Virginia Clubwoman



JUNE 2026



President's Message

Susie Mowry

president@gfwcvirginia.org

The President's Message—

I cannot believe that these two years have gone by so quickly. Just seemed like yesterday when Martha conducted that marvelous installation ceremony with the hot-air-balloon metaphors. Where has the time gone, and I can't believe it is over already.

It has been such an honor and privilege to represent you as the GFWC Virginia president. I have spent the past two years "experiencing" GFWC in a myriad of ways. Along with Joanne Dixon, we visited each of the most wonderful districts imaginable. We were treated like visiting royalty by all the district's clubwomen. We were gifted homemade salsas and jams, candies of every kind (more NERDS than a girl can count), embroidered tea towels, thought-provoking books, and so much more. I know I thanked you at the time, but please know I will remember and cherish each of those gifts and the memories they represent.

As I have often said, the districts take on the personalities of their presidents, which is quite interesting. Some were bigger than life, some were more understated, yet all were still very effective. Thank you for allowing me to come and experience the work of your districts. Each visit was informative, interesting, and, most importantly, fun!

I particularly want to thank you for how you embraced my state project. The work you did may not be seen immediately, but I promise you there will be young children all over Virginia who have been given a "hand-up" because of it. I wanted to pass on a very BIG thank you from the Peake Early Childhood Center. Dr. Jennifer Parrish, the Executive Director, asked me to thank each of you for the donations they have received during the two years of this administration. A total of \$7,580.20 was donated to the Peake Early Childhood Center by clubs across the state. To quote her, "these ladies will never know how much these donations mean to the success of the center."

Since many of our members could not attend the convention, I wanted to include my Farewell Remarks. I wanted each of you to know how special you have been in my journey as GFWC President.

"Thank you so much for being here tonight—and thank you to all of you in GFWC Virginia for the love, support, and encouragement you've shown me during my time as president. I truly feel honored.

I'll be honest: I'm emotional. Because when I think about these past two years, I don't just think about events on a calendar—I think about the people. I've met so many wonderful members across Virginia, and I've felt your kindness in a thousand little ways—checking in, jumping in, cheering each other on, and making sure no one felt alone in the work.

Serving as president has been one of the most meaningful things I've ever done. And yes—like all presidents—you quickly learn that "everything will be fine" is usually said right before someone realizes they've forgotten the one thing we absolutely need. 😊 So if you've



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The Virginia Clubwoman

Editor—Pat Jeffress
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Send articles, photos and newsletters

GFWC magazine assumes no responsibility for advertisements in this magazine unless they are published in conjunction with an official GFWC/GFWC Virginia program.

A minimum of 6 issues are published during the 2024-2026 administration.

ON THE COVER

Pictures from Convention

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ever had a last-minute “Wait... where is it?” moment, please know you are not alone. Some of our best wins have come from teamwork, flexibility, and that special GFWC talent for figuring it out—together.

Our clubs and members have done incredible service in our communities—showing up for the state project Early Childhood Education, community projects, civic engagement, and so many causes that really matter. And what I love most is how you do it: with heart, with respect, and with the kind of determination that makes a difference beyond the project itself. You have shown that we truly can rise by lifting others.

Website:
www.gfwc.org

I want to say a huge thank you to our officers, board members, and committee chairmen—the people who keep everything moving and make sure the details don't fall through the cracks. Thank you for your patience with me, your guidance, and for everything you do behind the scenes.

GFWC OFFICERS

President:
Suellen Brazil
GFWC Alabama

And to every member across Virginia—thank you. Thank you for your time, your energy, your volunteer spirit, and your friendship. This organization is strong because you are. GFWC isn't about one person—it's about all of us, together.

President-elect:
Wendy Carriker
GFWC North Carolina

Now, I'm excited for what's next. To our incoming administration - congratulations! You're stepping into a wonderful organization with an amazing group of women behind you. I know you'll continue building on the foundation you've been given—and bringing your own heart and energy to it.

First Vice President:
Jolie Frankfurt
GFWC Florida

As for me, I'm not going anywhere. I'll still be a member, still cheering you on, still showing up—and yes, still ready to help if someone needs a hand or is on a mission to find the “missing stuff.” 😊

Second Vice President:
Mary Beth Williams
GFWC Colorado

In closing, thank you for the privilege of serving you. Thank you for trusting me with this role. Thank you for the memories, the laughter, and the friendships. I will always be proud to have been president of GFWC Virginia—and I'll carry this experience with me. So to the journey we have had, please raise a glass and let's say “Cheers” to our safe landing.”

Secretary:
Dr. Susan Gettys
GFWC Missouri

Treasurer:
Juliette Casper
GFWC South Carolina

Again, from the bottom of my heart, I want to thank each of you for the joy you have given me over the past two years, and for allowing me to be your president.

Director of Junior Clubs:
Shannon Bailey
GFWC Florida

Susie

Joanne Dixon
GFWC Virginia Third Vice President
Director of Junior Clubs
directorofjuniors@gfwcvirginia.org

Serving as the GFWC Virginia Director of Junior Clubs for the past two years has been an incredible honor and one of the most rewarding experiences of my GFWC journey. As I reflect on my term, I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside so many dedicated and inspiring clubwomen throughout the Commonwealth.

One of the highlights of serving in this role was visiting all eight districts and witnessing

firsthand the amazing work our Clubs are accomplishing. From community service projects and fundraising efforts to leadership development and membership engagement, I saw countless examples of women making a positive impact in their communities. Every district visit provided the opportunity to meet outstanding club members, learn about their successes, and celebrate their commitment to service.

I am especially proud of the work we continued with our Advocates for Children projects. Club women across Virginia remained dedicated to supporting children and families through donations, volunteer service, educational initiatives, and community outreach. Your efforts have made a meaningful difference in the lives of countless children and demonstrated the compassion and commitment that define GFWC Virginia.

Over the past two years, I have been inspired by the creativity, enthusiasm, and generosity of our members. Whether attending district meetings, participating in service projects, or sharing ideas and best practices, I have been continually reminded of the strength and impact of our organization.

As my term comes to a close, I want to thank every member who welcomed me into their clubs and supported me along the way. The friendships I have formed and the experiences I have shared will remain some of my most treasured GFWC memories. It has been a privilege to serve as your Director of Junior Clubs, and I look forward to watching our Junior Clubs continue to grow, lead, and make a difference in communities across Virginia.

Cynthia Baroody

GFWC Virginia First Vice President/President-elect

firstvp@gfwcvirginia.org

Hello, GFWC Virginia Club Members!

As this administration draws to a close, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the GFWC Virginia Leadership Team. Inspired by our President's theme, "We rise by lifting others," we are grateful to be part of this outstanding federation during challenging times. We have seen so many of you grow into leadership roles at the club, district, and state levels, and we congratulate the clubs recognized at the GFWC Virginia Convention for their achievements. Your dedication reflects the true spirit of leadership—an action, not a position. A title alone does not make a good leader; empathy, compassion, attitude, and behavior do. The most effective leaders are those who listen with care, serve with humility, encourage others, and lead by example. They create an environment where every member feels valued, capable, and inspired to contribute. When people feel respected and supported, they are more willing to step forward, share ideas, and grow into leadership themselves.

One of the greatest responsibilities of leadership is to help others discover their own potential. We empower future leaders when we invite them to serve, mentor them with patience, and trust them with meaningful responsibilities. We empower others when we recognize their strengths and encourage them to chair a project, speak at a meeting, lead a committee, or take the next step in service. Leadership grows when experienced members share knowledge, offer guidance, and make room for new voices and fresh ideas. A kind word of encouragement, a sincere expression of confidence, or an opportunity to try something new can make all the difference in helping someone believe in their abilities.

As women in service and leadership, we have a special opportunity to lift one another up. Empowered women empower women by opening doors, extending invitations, sharing resources, and celebrating each other's successes. We lead best when we build others up rather than hold them back, and when we remember that leadership is not about status, but about service. By showing empathy, compassion, integrity, and encouragement, we help create a stronger future for our clubs, our communities, and our federation. Let us continue to lead in ways that inspire others to rise, serve, and become leaders – onward and upward for GFWC Virginia!

Carolyn Fellers

GFWC Virginia Second Vice President

secondvp@gfwcvirginia.org

Alaina Chaffee

GFWC Virginia Junior Membership Chairman

MembershipJr@gfwcvirginia.org

Thank you to all of the clubs for the work you do in your communities. Many of you have grown your membership over the past two years. New clubs have been formed, and membership grants have been given to several clubs to plan recruiting events and produce brochures to advertise their clubs.

We appreciate all who took the time to submit information about new recruits on our website, gfwcvirginia.org, and to send it via email and snail mail. When you do that and include the recruiter's name, we can record that information in our Star Recruiter database. Take time to review the star recruiter information at gfwc.org to learn more about how you can receive a star recruiter pin. The digital library is full of great resources to help you grow your membership and identify projects and programs that can benefit your club and community.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your Second Vice President/Membership Chairman over the past two years. I have learned a lot from each of you and greatly appreciate your support.

Continue to grow your clubs and help the people of your community. Be creative, there are many ways we can help each other.

In Federation Friendship,

Carolyn

Lynne Wherry

GFWC Virginia Treasurer

treasurer@gfwcvirginia.org

Jessica Thomas

GFWC Virginia Secretary/Treasurer

JRtreasurer@gfwcvirginia.org



It may be hard to believe, but the club year is ending. Hopefully, you've successfully completed your tenure as treasurer! As you wrap up the year, take a moment to reflect: How well did you perform in your role? Were members kept informed about the club or district's financial status? Do your bylaws require an annual review, and are your books organized and up to date? Now is the ideal time to address any outstanding issues and make improvements for the future. If your term is ending, be sure to prepare your records and materials for your successor. Meeting with the incoming treasurer to share best practices, lessons learned, and helpful advice from your experience can make a tremendous difference and provide valuable support during the transition.

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve as the 2024-2026 GFWC Virginia Treasurer and to wish those moving into the role the best of luck during their tenure. We wish you a wonderful and restful summer and look forward to seeing you at the GFWC Summer Conference in August at Natural Bridge!

Parliamentary Notes

Sarah Entsminger, PRP

parliamentarian@gfvcvirginia.org

Please, I beg of you, do not Google or use any form of generative AI to seek answers to parliamentary questions.

Currently, it is the road to perdition. You will not receive a correct answer. Let me tell you why. AI mimics the process of analyzing data, looking for patterns or the use of a specific word, which it can do at the speed of light or faster, but it cannot reason as people do in any number of instances. A recent article in the National Parliamentarian reviews research on parliamentary issues using AI and finds that AI lacks the materials, training, or knowledge to answer questions correctly. When AI was asked “why it made stuff up” it responded that when questions fall outside its training or knowledge, “it might provide speculative or incomplete answers”. Using speculative or incomplete answers is definitely not helpful when real parliamentary advice is needed. AI tends to give more weight to articles about Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (RONR) than it does to the actual text of RONR, largely because RONR is copyrighted work that is not published online, making it outside the training material for AI. Source information for AI parliamentary knowledge comes from a wide array of written opinions, blogs, videos using other parliamentary authorities, papers written by students, Facebook posts of meeting discussions, employment ads, workshop proposals, and so many other second and third-hand writings. This type of word-search function or data collection has no inherent ability to verify the accuracy or truthfulness of the information. In addition, the provisions in RONR build on each other and are interpreted in relation to the entire document, and cannot be looked at by a single line or word for a correct answer. Interpretation requires the correct text of RONR, extensive training by credentialed experts, real-life experience, adaptability, and emotional intelligence – none of which are within the current training for AI models. AI answers should not be taken as accurate and should be reviewed by an experienced, professionally trained parliamentarian, at least for now. If you have questions and do not have access to a credentialed parliamentarian, the Robert’s Rules of Order Website has a Q&A Forum, you can check the FAQs for previously answered questions from people, or you can submit a new question that will be answered by a credentialed parliamentarian (often a member of the Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised authorship team will be on answer duty).

This is the link to the forum: <https://robertsrules.com/qa-forum/>

As always, please let me know if you have any questions



Joyce Jolly

GFWC Signature Program Chairman

SignatureProgram@gfvcvirginia.org

I have reached the end of my tenure as the state chairman of the GFWC Signature Project. For this reason, I found it necessary to look back and evaluate our performance on a statewide basis.

A comparison of the data from 2024 with 2025 indicates that the clubs in GFWC Virginia engaged in more projects, spent more volunteer hours, donated more dollars, and donated more in-kind articles in 2025 than in the past. The greatest increase was in in-kind donations, which jumped from \$28,288 in 2024 to \$44,872 in 2025.

Additionally, the program for the International Day of Service, which supported the Forensic Nurse Examiner Programs throughout the state, was also a success. The results indicated that six out of eight districts participated, with twenty-nine clubs donating \$3,558 and in-kind donations of \$11,863.

To what or to whom do I credit this success? The credit definitely belongs to each of the District Chairmen who rallied their clubs, and to the members of those clubs who responded to the call. The importance of supporting the Signature Project cannot be overstated. The benefits to women and children are immeasurable.

The past two years as the state chairman have provided me with opportunities for personal growth, extended friendships, and enjoyment. I thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Amanda Paez

GFWC Juniors' Special Project Advocates For Children

advocatesforchildren@gfwcvirginia.org

As I reflect on the conclusion of my second term as Advocates for Children Chair for GFWC Virginia, I am filled with pride, gratitude, and optimism for what lies ahead. Our collective efforts have made a measurable impact across the Commonwealth, and nowhere was that more evident than at our recent Spring Convention.

One of the highlights of the convention was the remarkable book collection effort, which resulted in more than 900 books donated to two districts. These contributions will directly support community reading programs, stock Little Free Libraries, and provide essential resources to encourage literacy activities during the summer months, helping to combat the well-known “summer slide.” This initiative is a perfect example of how meaningful, hands-on service can create lasting benefits for children and families. A sincere thank you goes to the Tidewater and Southside Districts for their leadership in distributing these books where they are needed most.

Over the past two administrations, we have worked intentionally to strengthen collaboration with district contacts. By listening and learning more about the unique needs of each community, we have been better equipped to focus our efforts where they can have the greatest impact. This approach has allowed us to move beyond one-size-fits-all solutions and instead emphasize thoughtful, responsive advocacy for children and families. Whether through literacy initiatives, educational support, or outreach programs, Virginia Clubwomen have consistently risen to the challenge.



Our commitment has not gone unnoticed. GFWC Virginia has received multiple recognitions from GFWC International for its work in the Advocates for Children program. Reviewing and submitting those reports has been especially rewarding, as they reflect both the dedication and the creativity of our members. These honors highlight a renewed spirit of initiative, innovative programming, and an unwavering commitment to answering the call to serve. They also serve as a testament to the strength of our organization and the passion shared by clubwomen across the state.

While this chapter comes to a close, the work itself is far from finished. As we transition into the next administration, I encourage each of you to keep the momentum going. Let us continue to place children at the center of our efforts and remain attentive to the evolving needs within our communities. By doing so, we ensure that our advocacy remains relevant, impactful, and deeply rooted in service.

It has been an honor to serve in this role, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside so many dedicated and inspiring individuals. Together, we have made a difference, and together, we will continue to do so.

Terry Putnum

GFWC Virginia Affiliates Coordinator

affiliates@gfwcvirginia.org

OPERATION SMILE: A NEW SMILE, A NEW FUTURE

Since 1982, Operation Smile has provided surgical care at the highest level for its patients and families affected by cleft

lip and cleft palate. They strive to strengthen the surgical care system of the countries where their mission teams have worked. Bill and Kathy Magee began this global non-profit with the belief that access to safe surgery is a human right, not a privilege. They see children as a catalyst to understanding our world and its diverse cultures. Their motto is: "A smile is the beginning of love. If we enable people to smile with one another ...people will love each other in a more pure and gentle way." Since its founding, more than 500,000 life-changing surgeries have been performed. It is easy to see why GFWC has been a proud, longtime partner of this Affiliate. The words of the Magees speak to and are reflected in the hearts of the women of GFWC!

Operation Smile is the largest volunteer-based medical nonprofit in the world, boasting over 6,000 volunteers working in 37 countries. GFWC Virginia is fortunate to have the headquarters of this organization based in Virginia Beach. This allows many clubs to work closely with the group by volunteering hours, donating needed supplies, making hospital gowns and smile splints, and sending monetary contributions. In 2022, as the number of patients and countries served increased, the organization began to focus on updating its Service Project materials to ensure they were keeping up with needs in the field and sending the best possible items. This resulted in some changes to the items requested for Child Life supplies, Medical Record supplies, and Smile Bags. Conditioner, body wash, and lotion are no longer included in Smile Bags. At present, Op Smile has an abundance of Smile Dolls and mirrors, so it is not asking for these. Very specific lists are given for Medical Record and Child Life supplies. Pattern directions are available for hospital gowns, smile splints, and blankets or quilts. Clubs are encouraged to visit gfwc.org, log in, and search under Operation Smile and Affiliates to see the greatest needs of this organization as it continues to improve the health and lives of children worldwide. Clubs will also find general shipping instructions, the service project inventory form, and service project guides.

Lynn Osborne GFWC Virginia Communications and Public Relations Chairman

communications@gfwcvirginia.org

It has been a pleasure serving as your GFWC Virginia Communications and Public Relations Chairman this administration. I hope you have enjoyed the articles, and they were helpful in your planning. Thank you for the opportunity.

Below is some great information from the GFWC News & Notes: April 23, 2026.

By: Nancy Kaufman, GFWC Communications & Public Relations Committee Member

The Evolution of communication tools over the past 50 years allows us to connect faster, reach farther, and engage more meaningfully:

- **Speed and Timeliness:** Information that took days or weeks to share through mail or phone trees can now be sent instantly by email, text, or apps. This allows quicker responses and faster decisions.
- **Broader reach:** Communication is no longer limited to local communities. Organizations can now connect with people across the state, country, or even globally, making it easier to recruit volunteers and share their mission.
- **Two-way communication:** Instead of only receiving information, members can now respond, ask questions, and share ideas, creating stronger engagement and involvement.
- **Efficiency:** Tasks like tracking hours, sending newsletters, and managing events are now much easier with digital tools, freeing more time for service work.
- **Personalization:** Messages can be tailored to different groups or individuals, making communication more meaningful and increasing participation. Volunteers feel seen and valued.

Storytelling: Photos, videos, and social media allow organizations to share their impact in powerful, immediate ways, building awareness and support. You have increased community awareness and greater support from donors and partners.

Flexibility: People can now stay involved through in-person, virtual, or hybrid options, making participation easier for those with busy schedules or mobility challenges.

The way we communicate has changed a lot over the years, moving from slow, face-to-face and paper-based methods to today's quick digital tools. For our GFWC clubs, this change has been handled with care and flexibility, always keeping the needs of all members in mind—no matter when they were introduced to technology.

Jean Cobb

GFWC Virginia Community Impact Program Award

cipa@gfwcvirginia.org

Congratulations to GFWC Botetourt Town and Country Woman's Club of Daleville, VA (Blue Ridge District) for being the GFWC Virginia winner for 2024-2026. This club chose to support a high-quality early learning center [Education and Libraries]. For two years, they helped elementary school students whose first language was not English by providing individual attention in an after-school learning program. They concentrated on areas where the children were falling behind by helping with homework, completing art projects, using flash cards, and raising money to purchase books for them. They also assisted during the six-week summer program.

The only other club to submit an entry for their project was the Riparian Woman's Club, which partnered with another group to plant a flower garden at a local nursing home. They worked weekly, preparing the garden space, planting flowers and shrubs, watering and weeding, adding visual interest, and tidying the other areas of the courtyard to be a pleasing site for residents, visitors, and employees.

Hopefully,, your club will now start thinking about a Community Impact Project for 2026 – 2028!

Gloria Worrell

GFWC Virginia Endowment Chairman

endowment@gfwcvirginia.org

Summer is upon us, and I hope each of you has a fun, carefree season. Soon we will be meeting at the State Conference with a new administration, fresh ideas, and lots of enthusiasm. As my time as Endowment Chairman comes to a close, I would like to thank everyone who supported the Dogwood Society or gave a contribution to the Endowment! You kept me quite busy at the past State Convention, just the way I like it!. We had 3 members join the Diamond Level members at Convention. Our Dogwood Raffle was also a hit, selling \$1.000 tickets, and the winner went to two lucky members, who will each use \$500 toward their Dogwood Pins or help another Federation friend with their upgrades. I enjoyed getting to know you as you came to the table. I have made many Federation friends, whom I am blessed to have. I would be remiss not to recognize Heather Craven, who does all the preparation for each event, getting things ready for you!



Judy Gough
GFWC Virginia Headquarters Chairman
headquarterschairman@gfwcvirginia.org

*The time has come this clubwoman says
To speak of many things
Of thanks and praises to all who gave
The Headquarters fund to save
My thanks to you all – for the job that we shared and
The past two years we’ve had
But now is the time for me to say Thank You again
Since the two years has passed and my job is done
Another clubwoman will take my place – just Don’t forget this FUND....*

Linda Beatty
GFWC Virginia Historian
historian@gfwcvirginia.org

I am excited to report that all of the brief “history” reports that were made by me as Historian at each state meeting will be available on the state website. If you want to review them you can just click on each district to read what interesting facts I discovered when I dug into the resources at Headquarters and several history books. If you get a chance to visit Headquarters you will be amazed at what is right there at your fingertips if you need to research for an anniversary or just looking back over the years. Just remember, all the past state presidents will be looking over your shoulder from their prominent positions on the walls there.

Carol Outten
GFWC Virginia HOBY Coordinator
hoby@gfwcvirginia.org



Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership

Teaching students how to think, not what to think, since 1958.

Wow!! This year’s HOBY Virginia Seminar was O U T S T A N D I N G!! Held May 29th – May 31st on the campus of James Madison University, the event gave me the opportunity to witness the excitement and camaraderie displayed by the 168 Ambassadors in attendance. The theme of this year’s seminar was “Lights, Camera, LEAD. The Seminar’s Curriculum is based on HOBY’s vision of motivating and empowering future leaders in our global society. From the moment of arrival, ambassadors were immersed in teambuilding activities, leadership presentations, a service project, and motivational addresses from keynote speakers. This year, the Seminar Service Project supported “Still Meadows Enrichment Center and Camp”, a camp in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley supporting children and adults



Junior Staff volunteers prepare for arrival of Ambassadors.

with developmental or physical disabilities.

GFWC Virginia Clubs generously supported this year's Seminar with monetary

donations of \$5340.00 and over \$1500.00 in "in-kind" donations for the Seminar. Your donations of administrative materials, gift cards, stamps, poster board, craft materials, and, of course, the snacks were a huge hit with ambassadors and staff alike.

Since the first HOBY Virginia Seminar held in Richmond in 1977, almost 10,000 sophomores from throughout the Commonwealth have attended the Seminar. Nationwide, this year, over 8500 student ambassadors will attend one of 70 HOBY seminars throughout the United States. These events will be supported by over 3000 volunteers, many of whom are alumni of previous HOBY Seminars who continue to give back to the organization today.

It is wonderful to be affiliated with HOBY and to observe the enthusiasm of the ambassadors and the dedication of the alumni who volunteer each year to conduct the Seminars. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me for additional information. As always, HOBY Virginia is grateful to the ladies of GFWC Virginia for their generosity and support of the Leadership seminars and our ambassadors.



2026 Ambassadors, Junior, and Senior Staff Gather for a Picture

Thank you to the Ladies of GFWC Virginia for your generosity and support

SENDING HOBY HUGS!!!

Dale Fisher

GFWC Virginia Scholarship Program Chairman

scholarships@gfwcvirginia.org

Thank you all for your support of our scholarship program during the 2024-2026 administration. We awarded our three Phyllis V. Roberts Scholarships in 2025; however, no eligible applications were received for the Mary Macon McGuire Scholarship in 2025 or 2026.

After reviewing scholarship interest and financial stability, the committee recommended changes to the program. The delegates at our Annual Convention adopted amendments to the bylaws and standing rules governing our GFWC Scholarship Program. The Phyllis V. Roberts and Mary Macon McGuire scholarships have been "retired". The remaining funds in those two funds will be combined, and a new GFWC Legacy Scholarship will be created. This scholarship is in honor and memory of GFWC Virginia clubwomen who have served in the highest offices of GFWC - GFWC President and GFWC Director of Junior Clubs. Guidelines and application instructions will be included in the 2026-2028 GFWC Virginia Yearbook. Your continued support of our federation scholarship is appreciated.

This chairman would like to thank fellow committee members: Kathy Cain (N), Tabitha Nester (SW), Bonnie Rosemond (AK), and Ann Kay Walters (T) for their insight, knowledge, and dedication. It was a pleasure to work with them and our GFWC Virginia Executive Boards. We encourage clubs to continue to support

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” ~ Benjamin Franklin

Nancy Vadersen

GFWC Virginia 2024-2026 State Project Chairman

stateproject@gfwcvirginia.org

Your support of the GFWC Virginia State Project for this Administration, Early Childhood Education, has truly been amazing! Projects were innovative and inspiring! Clubwomen adopted preschool classes, provided supplies to preschool teachers, read to students, created activities that provided hands-on experiences with preschool concepts, gave new baby books and items to hospitals and Newborns in Need, and donated funds to support Early Childhood Education throughout their communities. With your generous donations, we were able to provide a non-profit organization in each district that focused on Early Childhood Education with over \$800 each to further their efforts!

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving as President Mowry’s State Project Chairman, and I hope that you will continue to support ECE in the future!

Check out the Raising Readers website, www.joinraisingreaders.com. This is a national, evidence-based early literacy program for children from birth to age 5, designed to build daily home reading routines. Happy reading!



Hope Royer

Women’s History and Resource Center

history@gfwcvirginia.org

Celebrate the nation’s 250th Anniversary and join GFWC in its continued support of the **Military Women’s Memorial**.



More than three million women have served in or alongside our nation’s military since the American Revolution. Each story is an important part of women’s history, military history, and America’s 250-year legacy. Honoring our longstanding commitment to veterans, GFWC members are invited to join the **Military Women’s Memorial National Registration Campaign** to preserve stories of women who served for generations to come.

The MWM currently preserves nearly 340,000 servicewomen’s stories in the national database, the Register. That’s a substantial number, but the story of women’s military service will never be complete until the Register includes all three million servicewomen. Every story matters, and every GFWC member’s support is essential to this effort.

To ensure every servicewoman, past or present, living or deceased, has her rightful and lasting place in America’s 250-year history, GFWC members are encouraged to visit womensmemorial.org, create an account, and register a servicewoman in your life (after confirming she is not already listed). Registration is free and easy, and GFWC will be credited for each entry by selecting “General Federation of Women’s Clubs” in the National Registration Campaign Partner dropdown menu.

Let’s help the Memorial – and the nation – ensure no servicewoman is lost to history or pushed to the sidelines of our national narrative. It’s important to America’s history. It’s important to women’s history.

Virginia as America: Navigating Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

Traveling Statewide with VMFA on the Road



This traveling art exhibition explores the American ideal that was first expressed in the Declaration of Independence. The evocative phrase “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” founded a nation on a promise of “inalienable” rights, a promise that has endured for 250 years.



Experience this free exhibition on our Artmobile, VMFA on the Road, which travels to all corners of Virginia.

Learn More and See Schedule/ Click Here

- 6/20 Juneteenth at Dorey Park, Henrico County
- 6/27 Village Art Days, Gloucester
- 7/ 4 Independence Day Celebration, Leesburg
- 7/10-11 Taubman Museum of Art Roanoke
- 7/30 The Center at Belvedere, Charlottesville
- 8/14-15 NASCAR Weekend, Richmond
- 8/21-23 Bedford County Fair, Bedford
- 8/29 Night at the Museums, Richmond



**Carol Williams-Mills and Florence Powell
GFWC Virginia Arts Contest Chairmen**

artsandcrafts@gfwcvirginia.org

Congratulations to the 2026 GFWC Virginia Arts Contests winners. At GFWC Virginia Convention, Overall Best in Show for all categories: Janet Micari, Clifton Community WC, Northern District -Crafts, Pottery. Best in Show for Art: Robin Clukey, GFWC Dominion WC, Northern District -Black & White Drawings, Charcoal. Best in Show for Crafts: Sue Adams, Clifton Community WC, Northern District -Paper, Other. Best in Show for Needlework: Nancy Sanders, GFWC Junto WC, Southside District -Crochet, Afghan.

GFWC Virginia Writing Contests winners: Student Short Story- Grade K-2: Shiphrah Gragg, Pembroke WC, Southwestern District. Grade 3-5: Samson Gragg, Pembroke WC, Southwestern District. Student Poetry: Grade K-2: Rose Hierman, Lexington WC, Shenandoah District. Grade 3-5: Fiona Jeffers, Pembroke WC, Southwestern District. Grade 6-8: Riley Potter, Lexington WC, Shenandoah District.

GFWC Virginia Photography Contest winners: The World in Pictures- Our World Up Close: Susanna Doyle, GFWC of Tidewater, Tidewater District. Natural Wonders: Rachel Lehner, Hampton WC, Tidewater. Reflections: Rachel Lehner, Hampton WC, Tidewater District. GFWC Living the Volunteer Spirit: Dianna Morris, Bent Mountain WC, Blue Ridge District.

We thank everyone who participated, organized, and assisted with all levels of these contests. The items were exquisite! We have a survey that was handed out at the Convention. Heather has promised to send it out to all club members via SurveyMonkey. As we revise the Rules and Instructions booklet, we want your suggestions. Review the 2026-2028 booklet for the Arts Contests in August. Begin planning for next year’s contests. We will be at GFWC Virginia Conference to answer questions. Please call or email us in the meantime.



Helen Hill

GFWC Virginia Arts and Culture Chairman

arts@gfwcvirginia.org

The Art of Quilting

First of all, why would you make a quilt? Quite often, it is a challenge – Can I do this? Or maybe you love material and all its colors, you love sewing clothes and other things, and perhaps you like puzzles. All of these are valid reasons, but really you make a quilt to keep Warm. That has always been the primary reason.

So, how do we make a quilt? Let's go step by step in the creative process. You have to have some idea of what you would like to create. So we go shopping!! In the door you walk, and everywhere there is material. Walk around and look at the material. Aha! There is this beautiful, small, floral material with nice soft colors. Then, where to go from here? Look for other pieces that will go with the floral. You want small flowers, small prints, or plaids in various colors, as found in the floral piece. How am I to make this quilt? You could make Jacob's Ladder, Carolina Lily, Virginia Star, Missouri Star, Hunter's Star, Log Cabin, or any number of designs. Confusing, isn't it? Oh, just pick up a quilting magazine from the newsstand. You should find one you like in a magazine. This is when you ask a friend for help. You want to select a quilt with instructions for cutting the pieces and sewing them together. That will also give you the yardage you need to buy and the colors for each piece.

So you have picked the Log Cabin design and want to make a lap robe. This is a small quilt, about 60 inches by 70 inches. It starts with a square, and another square is attached. Next is a piece; the length of these two squares is attached. Turn the piece slightly and attach another piece of the same length. Continue around the block, adding a piece on each side. You put 12 pieces together. The colors you have selected are dark prints sewn on two sides and light prints on the other. The interesting thing about the Log Cabin is that the finished blocks can be arranged in any pattern. Place the blocks with the dark side in a row opposite the light. Don't fret, just put the blocks in the order the pattern tells you. You can experiment on the next Log Cabin.

A number of things to remember about cutting and sewing the blocks: One, cut on the straight of grain and the size the instructions require, not the size of your sewn pieces. Two, sew a straight, scant ¼-in seam. These two things are important when you put the blocks together; they will match!

After the blocks are together, your pattern may suggest Borders for the quilt. These can be any size and any number. Usually, one or two will be added. Following the pattern will be the best thing to do now. You can change things around on your second or third quilt. Say the pattern suggests two borders, one 1 ½ inches and the second 5 inches. First,, cut pieces to the required width and long enough for four sides. Measure the attached blocks across the middle of the quilt both ways. Do not measure at the ends because they tend to stretch. Measure the border piece, mark the side lengths, and attach; trim to fit. Now measure and cut two lengths to match the top and bottom, then attach and trim. Add the second border the same way, measure, and cut. **YOU HAVE FINISHED THE TOP!!!!**

It is back to the quilt shop unless you purchased the backing and batting on the first trip. Again, the pattern will give the yardage needed for these. These two items will be cut to the size of the top plus 8 inches, four inches for the sides, top, and bottom.

You are ready to sandwich the pieces together. You can quilt by hand or with your sewing machine. Or you can gather everything up and take it to a long-arm quilter. She can quilt your finished quilt in just days. If you choose to quilt the piece yourself, there are patterns you can mark on the material and sew on. Or just wing it and meander all over the quilt.

A few random thoughts or suggestions:

* 1. Use cotton thread to match or blend with your material.

- * 2. In sewing your quilt, shorten your stitch length; the normal length is too long, and if pulled apart, the stitches will show.
- * 3. Match all seams where they come together.
- * 4. If seams do not match, then you will learn to pick out the seams. Do this very gently; the more times you take out the seams, the more the material will stretch.
- * 5. Press each seam as you go. The rule of thumb is to press to the dark side. That way, your seams will nestle together when matching seams.
- * 6. Press means to place the iron on the material. Do not iron where you move the iron across the fabric. To do this will stretch the fabric. (Do you get the feeling everything stretches the fabric? Don't worry, the fabric is not that soft.)

One final step is to bind the edges of your quilt. The recommended way is to cut strips of material the width of the fabric, about 2 ¼ or 2 ½ inches wide. Remember,, you have four sides of the quilt, so cut enough for that and add a few inches for the corners and seams. Sew the binding in one long length, fold in half, and press. Sew seams at an angle. Attach the binding to within ¼ inch of the end, back stitch to hold. Fold the binding straight up to form a right angle, then straight down along the edge. Stitch from the end and continue down the side to the next corner. Repeat this on the next three corners.

You will leave 4 or 5 inches of binding unattached in the beginning. After completing the sides, leave 4 or 5 inches unattached. That gives you 8 to 10 inches to sew the two ends together and complete the binding. You will now hand-sew the border to the back of the quilt, creating a triangle at each corner. Working on the binding is better explained through hands-on practice. Get a friend to show this to you or check in Fons & Porter's book *QUILTER'S COMPLETE GUIDE* by Marianne Fons and Lia Porter.

The final step is to create a label for your work of art. Include things like the name of the quilt, your names as you made the quilt, and, if someone quilted the quilt for you, add her name as the quilter. You can add anything you would like, such as the city or town and the year. If it is a gift for someone, then add that. There is no set rule for making a label.

If you enjoyed your accomplishment, then plan your next quilt. Good Luck and Happy Quilting!



Ilia Desjardins

GFWC Virginia Education and Libraries Chairman

education@gfwcvirginia.org

“Your small support could accomplish a big dream.” – Mohammad Rishad Sakhi

Scholarships! Did you know that club women in GFWC Virginia distributed over \$277,500 in scholarships in 2025. Not only is the total dollar amount amazing, but some clubs go above and beyond for their scholarship winners. Everyone loves to receive a check in the mail, but some clubs show up at the high schools to participate in activities or invite the winners to their club meetings. These are all great ways to support the young students, both financially and emotionally, as they transition from the school setting into the real world. They know they can rely on club women wherever they go, that they are supported in their educational journey, and that they may even become future club women themselves! Next time scholarship season comes around, consider inviting the winners and their parents to your meeting or luncheon. Show up to their concerts or piano recitals. Invite the winners to participate in your club's activities or fundraisers. This support, no matter how small, can turn into something big in the eyes of a young person.

How do I know this? I love to research history, I'm a clubwoman, and I run a network library for the blind!





ESO

Ilia Desjardins

eso@gfwcvirginia.org

ESO, or Epsilon Sigma Omicron, roughly translates from Greek to “Enlighten Your Own Pathway”. Established in 1928, ESO strives to provide clubwomen with a structured reading program that is educational and stimulates a desire for self-improvement. All club members are eligible to join but must complete a pledge application and pay the required dues of \$1.50. Pledges read books in various genres and work their way up through the levels, becoming a member and reaching star level, torch level, century level, and the diamond level- having read 1,000 books!

The next Book Club Discussion will be July 21 at 7:30 pm, and the book for discussion will be *A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story Of The American Spy Who Helped Win World War II* by Sonia Purnell.

All club women are welcome to join the discussion! The link will be emailed out to current ESO participants, but if you are interested in learning more, please send an email to ESO@GFWCVirginia.org



Emily Amick

GFWC Virginia Environment Chairman

environment@gfwcvirginia.org

Welcome summer! Time for beach days, exciting hikes, and maybe even a camping trip or two. (Summer camps count in this situation!!) School is out, vacation is in, and hot summer days are upon us. Many of us often forget what we can do for the environment during the summer months. It doesn't matter whether you are indoors or outdoors; taking care of nature should be part of it. I have a few simple ideas: Participate in beach clean-ups. A great way to soak in the sun and have some fun! Look in your local area to see where you can help. This is a terrific GFWC club idea. Bring reusable bags and gloves, dispose of trash properly, and bring plenty of drinking water! On a fun beach day, try using reef-safe sunscreen and sun lotion. Chemicals like oxybenzone can be harmful to our cute ocean critters. When packing snacks for this beach trip, I recommend using washable food containers, bottles, and cutlery. Bonus tip: If you are craving takeout (on or off the beach!), see if the restaurant allows you to use your own reusable container. You may get lucky! This chairman attended the GFWC Virginia Convention in Williamsburg. She enjoyed the junior suite, heard useful information on women in the Revolutionary War in partnership with VA250, and made new friends. I want to thank Susie Mowry for a wonderful administration. She knows what it takes to be a leader. She both rose and lifted others, including me. Thank you, Susie!



Maureen Mike

GFWC Virginia Legislation and Public Policy Chairman

legislation@gfwcvirginia.org

Another administration comes to an end, but our work as advocates *continues*.

Stay engaged. Speak out. Make your voice heard.

Continue to participate in the **GFWC Legislation Action Center** and encourage your members to join as well. Advocacy is strongest when many members respond and act, rather than relying on only one or two members to report back to the club.

Advocate within your own communities. Every call, email, letter, and conversation helps make a difference. Many important bills have passed because of the dedication and efforts of GFWC members across the commonwealth and the nation. *Together, our voices truly matter.*



Health & Wellness

Suzanne Williams, State Chairman

health@gfwcvirginia.org

Summer! We've been waiting for a while for warm, sunny weather. My yard and flowers have exploded with lush new growth and brilliant blossoms. OK, some are weeds, but after the past winter, even colorful weeds are welcome.

Our new state project calls for integrating the visual and musical arts into our programs. There are so many ways health and wellness projects can accomplish this. Music to move by! Whether out for a walk or dancing as though no one's watching, music gives us a pace and tempo. People respond to music in different ways — it can make us move, evoke emotions, and prompt us to pause and think. Using visual arts can be as simple as recording a particular scene in your yard or neighborhood over a year by taking a photo of that spot on a regular basis, every day or month. There will be subtle changes happening in that scene while we hurriedly go about our lives. Along with recording a scene, a journal can also serve as a record of the project — how it began, evolved, and where it's headed. These are just my random thoughts on how we can incorporate the state project into our Health and Wellness area. As you may recall, H&W also includes happiness and well-being. The arts are essential!

We will have an interesting year as we note how the arts are already part of our daily lives. The new effort is to bring them forward. I would like to hear your thoughts and questions about how you will incorporate this state focus into your projects. Please drop me a text (207.730.0060) or email (sfw4514@gmail.com).

District News

Alice Kyle District

Carol Pridgen, President

Colleen Barnes, Third Vice President Director of Junior Clubs

WOW! It's hard to believe that just two "short" years ago, we all joined President Mowry for a ride in a hot air balloon. With President Mowry's theme of "We Rise by Lifting Others", ladies of GFWC Virginia didn't stand a chance of being a land lover. Every member was willing to jump on board and soar through the skies to support projects in their community.

I am proud to report that, even though the Alice Kyle District is small, with only 4 General Clubs and 3 Junior Clubs, club members volunteered 6,029 hours in their communities, completed 204 projects, and donated \$28,316 for 2025.

I enjoyed working with all the members of the Executive Board for the GFWC Virginia 2024-2026 Administration. Until you are part of this board, you don't realize how much time and work our GFWC Virginia Officers spend keeping our organization going. I will always remember that I was dressed as a Purple Crayon for my 50th Wedding Anniversary. Not everyone can have a chance like that in their life.

I look forward to seeing the future of the Alice Kyle District with President Jamey Harris, a member of South Boston-Halifax Junior Woman's Club, and Vicki Irby, who is 3rd Vice President/Director of Junior Clubs. Vicki is also a member of South Boston-Halifax Junior Woman's Club.

Hope everyone enjoys their summer, and think of plenty of plans for projects to help in their communities for the new administration. I will be spending mine recuperating from a total hip replacement.

Take care and keep smiling, hope to see everyone in August.

Blue Ridge District

Camilla Cabaniss, President

The Blue Ridge District is filled with amazing clubwomen! I am so proud of all they have done in the past two years. Our Spring District meeting was a joyful and exciting day with members from every club in attendance. Our attendance at the GFWC-VA Convention had members from five of our seven clubs!

We have a strong and growing Blacksburg Junior Club. Two of these young ladies have taken responsibility for the positions of Junior Director, Kristen Wisda, and Assistant Junior Director, Amy Dempsey. Blue Ridge is delighted to have them in these positions.

The spring months have been filled with clubs presenting scholarships to graduating seniors. The Floyd, Bent Mountain, Blacksburg Juniors, Vinton, Botetourt Town and Country, and Bedford clubs worked hard all year to raise funds for these scholarships. Education is very important in Blue Ridge.

Mrs. Dorsey's Clothes Closet was supported by the Roanoke County club. The club was a major sponsor of the annual Mother's Day event.

Blue Ridge has a steadily growing membership. New and seasoned officers are working together to plan next year's activities. We are supporting members through difficult health issues and family crises. We are celebrating weddings, birthdays, and goals accomplished in our members' lives. We believe in each other!



"Helping Others, Help Others" continues throughout the Blue Ridge District!

Lee District

Kelly Lane, President

Danielle Basham, Third Vice President/Director of Junior Clubs

Clubs have been busy celebrating their May Banquets and performing installations. We hope you celebrated in your own special way. Many clubs have something fun planned over the summer, while others enjoy a break to spend time with families.

The Annual Meeting, held on March 21, 2026, welcomed 110 members from 17 clubs to celebrate awards, conduct some business, and install the 26-28 officers. We were all surprised when the decorated puzzle pieces over the administration were revealed as a completed puzzle, demonstrating how we all join as one cohesive district.

Both Kelly and Danielle enjoyed representing Lee District at the GFWC Virginia Convention in Williamsburg. We hope you enjoyed the district's baseball-themed skirts and hearing how different the eight districts throughout the state were represented.

Most clubs throughout the district are making plans for the GFWC Day of Service and supporting Domestic Violence causes. We have seen many club names as registered in the weekly News and Notes.



Northern District

Yvonne Sening, President

Jaclyn Francis, Third Vice-President/Director of Junior Clubs

By the time this issue of the Virginia Clubwoman reaches you, we will be in mid-June. June?! How is this possible? It seems like we just gathered for our ND annual meeting in Fredericksburg, followed quickly by the GFWC VA convention in Williamsburg. Both meetings were marked by celebrations of another GFWC year chocked full of inspiring, successful community projects and, of course, reunions of GFWC friendships, new and old. If you missed the convention, I am happy to report that ND's hard work was recognized, resulting in our District bringing home 22 awards, including the membership and extension cup!



Shenandoah District Officers 2026-2028. Pictured left to right: Wilma Ferguson, Jan Lowry, Debby Amick, Marolyn Cash, Shelley Undercoffer, Ilia Desjardins

ND is now 24 clubs strong, with 730 members. Congratulations ladies! Well done!

As we close out the 2024-2026 administration, I would be remiss not to take the opportunity to thank each of you for your support over the last two years. I am sincerely humbled by your embrace of the District's theme, Be Kind; Mental Health Matters, and your work to spread kindness and raise awareness of mental health. Going forward, I hope each of you will continue to make kindness a part of your daily life and remember how our actions, both kind and unkind, affect others' mental health.



Shenandoah District at 2026 Convention in Williamsburg. Left to right: Wilma Ferguson, Emily Amick, Debby Amick, Judy Gough, Ilia Desjardins, Suzanne Williams, Carolyn Withers, Marjorie Dyer, Jan Lowry, Lee Patterson, Marolyn Cash, and Shelley Undercoffer.

I hope many of you will take the opportunity to attend GFWC VA's summer conference in Natural Bridge, VA. The conference will be held August 8th-9th. Members attending will have the opportunity to celebrate the incoming officers as the 2026-2028 administration is installed and attend workshops to learn more about GFWC CSPs, advancement areas, special projects, and GFWC VA President Cynthia Barrody's new State project.

In closing, enjoy your summer! Celebrate all that you and your club members have accomplished over the past year! Then, after you are all rejuvenated, prepare yourselves for a wonderful 2026-2028 administration! It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your ND President the past two years!

Cheers!

Shenandoah District

Laura Coburn, President

The Shenandoah District held the Spring District Meeting on April 11. GFWC Woman's Club of Greene County

hosted the meeting in Ruckersville, with their usual warm and welcoming hospitality. Marolyn Cash, GFWC Virginia Past President, conducted the installation service for the 2026-2028 district officers: Ilia Desjardins, District President; Shelley Undercoffer, 1st Vice President; Debby Amick, 2nd Vice President; Jan Lowry, Secretary; and Wilma Ferguson, Treasurer. Congratulations to the new officers, and best wishes for a rewarding administration. The program was presented by the Foothills Child Advocacy Center regarding their work, and district members donated items for court comfort bags for children as they wait at court hearings. Statistics regarding children who are abused are staggering, and services are so vital.

The District Arts Contest was held, featuring both members' art and student writing. Twelve members won blue ribbons and will go on to the state contest. Reviving the district arts contest was a goal for the 2024-2026 administration, and we are proud that it was successful again for the second year. Many thanks to Cynthia Baroody and Emily Amick, co-chairs.

The Shenandoah district was well represented at the GFWC Virginia Convention in Williamsburg, April 25-27, with 12 members attending.

On to Natural Bridge in August for the GFWC Virginia Conference, where we will be ready to learn about new ideas and witness the installation of the 2026-2028 state officers!

Southside District

Julie Johnson, President

Mary Katherine Steed, Third Vice President/Director of Junior Clubs

Education has always been an important focus for Southside clubs. This year, they awarded 28 scholarships worth \$22,600 to graduating high school seniors. For Southside's portion of the funds raised for the 2024-2026 State Project, the board chose The Children's Center, with 7 locations in Western Tidewater: Courtland, Franklin, Suffolk, and Smithfield. Southside received half of the 940 children's books donated during the GFWC VA Spring Convention. Mary Katherine Steed and two other members delivered several boxes of books to preschools in the northwestern portion of our district. In late May, Michelle Clary, SSD President 2026-2028, and I delivered the majority of the books to the incoming and outgoing Executive Directors of The Children's Center at their headquarters in Franklin. They had received a check from GFWC VA a day earlier and were very interested in learning about GFWC. We told them all about GFWC, and they explained their many programs

and ways they serve children and families. Michelle and I came away believing Southside had indeed found the right recipient for the money and books.



Our 2024-2026 District Project focused on LifeNet Health Foundation and Community Outreach, an organization that advances education, research, and donor family programs to restore health and hope worldwide. In early June, SSD Treasurer Barbara Barnes and I delivered a check for \$2,331.50 to Will Discoll, Director. These funds were raised by gift-card basket

raffles at our past four district meetings and will be used to support donor family programs.

Southside is extremely proud of two of our Past District Presidents who were elected at GFWC VA Convention as officers for 2026-2028: Angela Paez, 2nd



VP, and Lori Chevalier, Treasurer. Southside will be led next term by Michelle Clary, President, and her new board: Thierry Boland, 2nd VP; Stephanie Griffin, 3rd VP and Jr. Dir.; Vickie Quick, Secretary; and Barbara Barnes, Treasurer. And by the way, Angela, Lori, and Michelle are all Juniors. Congratulations and best wishes for a successful term to all. Giving away books and money to two very worthwhile groups was a lovely way to end my term as president. I'm very grateful to have had the opportunity not only to serve but also to meet and get to know so many extraordinary GFWC women.

Southwestern District

Amy DeWilde, President

JoBeth Wampler, Third Vice President/Director of Junior Clubs

As I sit and think about what to write for The Virginia Club Woman magazine article. I look back over this past administration and think WOW! Time flies!! But at the same time, I have learned so much, had a lot of fun, and have gotten to know so many amazing club women. WE are all different, yet we all enjoy volunteering and have one major goal... To make our communities better!! When I became Southwestern District President, I didn't know what to expect. I questioned myself over and over. But I have enjoyed being part of every club in our district and getting to know more members. The GFWC Southwestern District has had an exciting and busy season, highlighted by strong participation, meaningful community service, and well-deserved recognition at the recent GFWC Convention in Williamsburg. Members from the district proudly represented their clubs at the convention, returning home with several awards that reflect the dedication, creativity, and hard work they have done.

District clubs have been busy installing new officers, ensuring a smooth transition of leadership and fresh energy for the coming year. Clubs throughout the Southwestern District have also taken time to recognize and celebrate important observances. National Library Week was marked with support for local libraries and literacy programs, highlighting the importance of knowledge in our communities. Dur-ing Nurses Week, members expressed appreciation for the dedication and compassion of healthcare pro-fessionals. Law Enforcement Week provided another opportunity to honor those who work tirelessly to keep our communities safe.

While our calendars remain full and our projects continue to grow, we are reminded that one of the most meaningful contributions we can make is simple kindness. In every project, partnership, and interaction, kindness remains at the heart of what we do.

As we move forward, the GFWC Southwestern District looks ahead with enthusiasm, pride, and a con-tinued commitment to service, leadership, and community impact.



Tidewater District

Jane May, President

Tidewater District GFWC Virginia clubwomen have been and continue to be busy. Their 2025 reports reflect a strong commitment and volunteer ethic to improve their communities and the lives of their neighbors. Clubs have not taken a break in the new year. They are busy planning spring festivals, card parties, spaghetti dinners, and fashion shows to raise funds. They continue to serve their communities as volunteers and, filling community needs.

At our Spring District meeting on March 21, 2026, we will recognize and celebrate those achievements. We will present

awards for 2025, outstanding club projects. Individual members will also be recognized for their achievements. Our Millie Brown Volunteer of the Year Award and the Recruiter of the Year awards will be presented as outstanding individual member achievements. Our meeting, will include a Memorial Service in remembrance of those we lost in 2025. This year, we are adding Women's History to our program. In recognition of Women's History Month, each district officer will select and present information on two GFWC women of history. We will also elect our 2026-2028 District Officers. Best of all – we will celebrate our Federation Friendship!

Club News

Wytheville club ladies teamed up with a local photographer to spread a little glamour at our local nursing home by doing a Luau photo shoot for the residents. The residents had their hair and makeup done, their pick of crowns, flowers, grass shirts, and sunglasses to use as props. We printed a 5x7 photo for each resident. Many beautiful smiles were made.



The club hosted an ice cream social for a local nursing home during Nursing Home Week. The residents enjoyed ice cream with assorted toppings, and they had brownies and cookies to go with it.

The RFTW is an annual motorcycle ride dedicated to honoring fallen veterans, supporting military families, and raising awareness of POW/MIA. The Wytheville Women's Club ladies recently had the honor to help welcome "Run for the Wall" riders to Wytheville. Club ladies handed out mini first-aid kits, hygiene items, sunblock, chapstick, handkerchiefs, eye drops, laundry soap, dog biscuits, and homemade cookies. One club member handed out Military coins to the riders as they visited our tent. The amount of hugs we receive during this event is priceless!!



The ladies are looking forward to hosting Free Craft of the Day for kids at our town's week-long annual Chautauqua Festival. The kids will be making airplanes and pinwheels this year. We are also building a float for this festival.



Convention

Memorial Resolution for Virginia Singleton Darnell

WHEREAS, Virginia Singleton Darnell was a dedicated member of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Virginia, volunteering countless hours at the club, district, state, and Southeastern Region levels, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell was born in Halifax County, Virginia on December 22, 1926, and passed away peacefully on November 10, 2025, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell began her lifelong love of serving others with the Pamunkey Woman’s Club, which she joined in 1967, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell elevated her service to the Virginia Federation of Women’s Clubs by serving as President of the Lee District from 1990 to 1992, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell served as President of the Virginia Federation of Women’s Clubs from 2002-2004, during which time the theme was “Unity in Diversity, Catch the Spirit, Pass It On” and the State Project celebrated the 20th Anniversary of Federation Lodge at Camp Easter Seals East, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell served as the Chaplain of the General Federation of Women’s Club’s Southeastern Region from 2006-2008, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell, served the American Cancer Society, the Hanover Historical Society, the Board of Directors of Prevent Child Abuse Virginia and as President of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Theological Seminary, and

WHEREAS, Virginia Darnell, faithfully served the mission of First Baptist Church Richmond as Deacon and as first woman to chair its Board of Deacons, and

WHEREAS, this convention assembled wishes to commemorate the life of Virginia Darnell and celebrate her leadership and inspiration to her fellow clubwomen during her more than 50 years of loyal service to the General Federation of Women’s Clubs and her community and therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Virginia adopt this memorial resolution in sincere appreciation of Virginia Singleton Darnell, her service to the General Federation of Women’s Clubs at all levels and to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and as an expression of sadness for the loss of such a devoted member and with deepest sympathy to her family and friends;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the family of Virginia Singleton Darnell, that it be included in the Minutes of the 2026 Annual Convention of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Virginia, and that it be published in The Virginia Clubwoman.

Hope Royer,
Lee District President 1998-2000
General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Virginia President 2010-2012

Kelly Lane,
Lee District President 2024-2026
General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Virginia President 2018-2020

CALL FOR THE ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE

General Federation of Women's Clubs of Virginia

(GFWC Virginia)

August 7-9, 2026

Natural Bridge Conference Center & Hotel, Natural Bridge, VA

CONFERENCE THEME: "Prelude – Creation"

Club Presidents are requested to read the Call to the members and elect delegates according to the bylaw of the GFWC Virginia, Article IX, Section 4. "Woman's Clubs and Junior Woman's Clubs shall be represented by the club President or her alternate, and one or more additional delegates as follows, these delegates are in addition to those entitled to representation by virtue of the position they hold as outlined further in this section of the Bylaws

- 1-10 members – Club President, or her alternate and 1 additional delegate;
- 11-20 members – Club President, or her alternate and 2 additional delegates;
- 21-30 members – Club President, or her alternate and 3 additional delegates;
- 31-40 members – Club President, or her alternate and 4 additional delegates;
- 41-50 members – Club President, or her alternate and 5 additional delegates;
- 51-60 members – Club President, or her alternate and 6 additional delegates;
- 61-70 members – Club President, or her alternate and 7 additional delegates;
- 71-80 members – Club President, or her alternate and 8 additional delegates;
- 81-90 members – Club President, or her alternate and 9 additional delegates;
- 91-100 members – Club President, or her alternate and 10 additional delegates;
- 101- and more members – Club President, or her alternate and 11 additional delegates;

Advance registration for meals and attendance shall be made using the online form linked in this publication. Properly completed Registration Forms are to be done online, which will transmit to the GFWC Virginia Credentials Chairman or Junior Chairman. Conference Registration fee is \$55. For registration after July 17, 2026, please add \$10 per attendee for a total registration fee of \$65. **Electronic registration with Zeffy.** Detailed instructions are at the end of the Call.

Club Presidents and other attendees, please share the information on the speakers and workshops and encourage members to attend. Please indicate on the registration form which members are attending their first state meeting so they can receive special recognition.

HOTEL INFORMATION

Hotel reservations may be made by individual call-in no later than **Monday, July 7, 2026**. After that date, any additional reservation requests will be honored on a rate and space available basis only. Use the link below to make on-line reservations or call the hotel directly at 540-291-2121 option 1 and ask for GFWC Virginia Conference room block. Directions to the hotel are available from the hotel website. Room rates are \$139 per day for single or double occupancy plus applicable taxes.

<https://naturalbridgeva.com/> use code 080526GFWCVA

Natural Bridge Hotel & Conference Center
15 Appledore Lane
Natural Bridge, VA 24578
540-291-2121



ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE

August 7-9, 2026

Natural Bridge Conference Center & Hotel, Natural Bridge, VA
“In the Beginning”



Friday – August 7, 2026 – Pre-Conference Meetings

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm GFWC Virginia Executive Board Meeting
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm GFWC Virginia Executive Board Dinner – Colonial Dining Room
9:00 pm - GFWC Virginia Junior Executive Board Meeting

Saturday – August 8, 2026

7:00 am – 9:30 am Full Breakfast Menu or Buffet – Colonial Dining Room (on your own)
8:00 am – 10:15 am Breakfast with GFWC Virginia Executive Board Meeting (Executive Suite)
8:30 am – 1:30 pm Registration Open

10:00 am – Musical Prelude

10:30 am – 12:00 pm – OPENING SESSION – JEFFERSON BALLROOM

Call to Order – Cynthia Baroody, President
Thought for the Day – Marolyn Cash, Chaplain
Opening Ceremonies
Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America - led by Gloria Worrell,
Civic Engagement Chairman
National Anthem
Introductions – Cynthia Baroody, President
Welcome – Carolyn Fellers, District 1st Vice President & Kristen Wisda,
Director of Junior Clubs Blue Ridge District
Preliminary Credentials Report – Danielle Basham, Credentials Chairman
Appointment of Committee to Approve Minutes – Cynthia Baroody, President
Officers Reports:
Treasurer – Lori Chevalier
Secretary – Joy Matkowsky
3rd Vice President/Director of Junior Clubs – Lynn Chapman
2nd Vice President – Angela Paez (first-time attendee recognition)
1st Vice President/President Elect – Lori Rocker
President – Cynthia Baroody
State Project – Create Inspire Give – Susie Mowry, Chairman
GFWC Awards received in Phoenix, AZ – Susie Mowry and Joanne Dixon
Reports:
Budget & Finance – Lynne Wherry, Chairman
Endowment – Kathryn Sowers, Chairman
Executive Secretary – Heather Craven
Scholarship – Carolyn Fellers, Chairman
Parliamentary Information – Sarah Entsminger, Parliamentarian
Speaker – Tara O’Neil, Licensed Massage Therapist

12:00 pm – 12:45pm Lunch – Box Lunch
Grace – Marolyn Cash, Chaplain

- 1:00 pm – 1:45 pm Speaker – Ginny Neil, Author & Illustrator
- 1:45 pm – 2:00 pm GFWC Virginia Chairman Introductions – Lori Rocker, First Vice President/President-Elect & Jessica Thomas, Assistant Director of Junior Clubs
- 2:00 – 3:00 pm **Community Service Program & Advancement Area Marketplace**
GFWC Junior Special Project - Advocates for Children
Arts & Culture – Cheryl Van Buren, Chairman
Civic Engagement and Outreach – Gloria Worrell, Chairman
Education and Libraries – Nancy Vadersen, Chairman
Environment – Emily Amick, Chairman
GFWC Signature Project - Domestic Violence Awareness – Jane May, Chairman
Health and Wellness – Suzanne Williams, Chairman
Women’s History & Resource Center (WHRC) – Hope Royer, Chairman
- 3:00 – 4:00 pm **PLATFORM WORKSHOP**
Leadership – Lori Rocker, Leadership Chairman & Jessica Thomas, Junior Leadership Chairman
- 6:00pm – 7:00 pm Cash Bar
- 6:30pm – 8:00 pm **INSTALLATION DINNER – Jefferson Ballroom – formal/semi-formal attire**
Grace – Marolyn Cash, Chaplain
50/50 Drawing conducted by Lori Chevalier, GFWC Virginia Treasurer
Installation Ceremony
Announcements/ Door Prizes – Julie Johnson, Meetings Committee
Dessert Reception

Sunday, August 9, 2026

- 7:30 am - 9:15 am Registration Open
- 8:00 am – 8:45 am Breakfast Buffet
Grace – Marolyn Cash, Chaplain
- 9:00am – 10:30am **PLATFORM WORKSHOPS**
Membership – Angela Paez, Chairman
Reporting Tips – Susie Mowry, Past GFWC Virginia President
- 10:30am – 11:30 am **Advancement Area & Virginia Appointments Marketplace**
Communications and Public Relations
Community Impact Program Award – Jean Cobb, Chairman
Legislation and Public Policy – Carol Preston, Chairman
Fundraising – Miranda Lester, Chairman
Arts Contests – Carol Guillian-Mills & Florence Powell, Co-Chairmen
ESO – Sue Doyle Coordinator & HOBY – Carol Outten, Coordinator
- 11:30 am **CLOSING SESSION**
Speaker – GFWC Virginia 2026 GFWC LEADS Participant, Jessica Thomas
Dogwood Opportunity Drawing – Kathryn Sowers, Endowment Chairman
Final Credentials Report – Danielle Basham, Credentials Chairman

Invitation to 2027 GFWC Virginia Convention – Michelle Clary, District President & Stephanie Griffin, Director of Junior Clubs, Southside District
Announcements/Door Prizes – Julie Johnson, Conference Meeting Committee
Junior Pledge – led by Stephanie Griffin
Collect – led by Emily Amick, Environment Chairman
Adjourn

Noon

CONFERENCE MENUS

Friday Dinner (pay at the dining room)

Choose from the full dinner menu in the Colonial Dining Room – please call the hotel dining room at 540-291-2121 to make a dining reservation. The Executive Board will also be dining in the Colonial Dining Room Friday evening and looks forward to seeing our members as Conference kicks off.

Saturday Breakfast (pay at the dining room)

Enjoy a Full Breakfast Buffet or order off the menu in the Colonial Dining Room (Hotel Restaurant) open from 7:00 am to 9:30am for breakfast.

Saturday Dinner \$46

Fresh Spinach Salad with strawberries, pecans & goat cheese
Sirloin of Beef with bordelaise sauce
Sautéed Seasonal Vegetables
Garlic Yukon Mashed Potatoes
Baked breads & butter
Regular & decaf coffee, herbal teas and iced teas
Dessert will be served after Installation

Saturday Lunch \$22

Choice of one

Roast Turkey Breast, Provolone Cheese, on Whole Wheat
Honey Smoked Ham, Swiss Cheese on Loaf Farm White
Hummus, Olives & Crunchy Vegetable Wrap
(please select your choice on the registration form)
Box Lunches include:
Pasta Salad, Chips, Fresh Baked Cookie
Pepsi Canned Beverage or Bottled Water

Sunday Breakfast Buffet \$22

Smoked bacon
Fresh whole fruit
Breakfast potatoes
Fresh scrambled eggs
Buttermilk biscuits
Water, orange juice, regular or decaf coffee and assorted teas

Registration using Zeffy

Use this link to register for Conference - <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/2026-conference-8>

You may select as many "ticket" options as you need if you are registering multiple members within a club. You will be asked to complete the registration information for each "ticket" you purchase to register each member attending. Please list the highest CURRENT position (GFWC, state, district or club) held by each person registered. Please ensure ALL names and club names are spelled correctly as this will be used for the name tags. What you type is what will be printed.

You may pay with credit card or checking account.

(Upon checkout, you may choose to make a donation to Zeffy to cover processing fees they incur or you may choose to select "OTHER" from the pull-down menu and change the amount to ZERO. Zeffy does not charge GFWC Virginia for processing payments, which is great! Their default donation % is set high, so BE SURE to change it to a lower or zero amount.)

If you need to register with a paper form, please email gfwcvirginia@verizon.net to request one.

Speaker Bios



Tara O'Neil is a dedicated and highly skilled licensed massage therapist with nearly two decades of experience, bringing a wealth of expertise and a deep commitment to holistic wellness to her practice. Her journey in understanding the human body began with a Bachelor's Degree in Art History and Anthropology from Ithaca College, where she developed a profound appreciation for the intricate connections between body, mind, and culture.

Tara's passion for exploring the mechanics of human movement and well-being has driven her to pursue extensive continuing education. She holds advanced training in myofascial release and mobilization, neuromuscular therapy, prenatal and postpartum massage, lymphatic drainage, craniosacral therapy, breathwork, visceral manipulation, neural manipulation, and somatoemotional release. During the pandemic, she furthered her expertise by earning a Master's degree in Applied Exercise Science, specializing in Human Movement Science, from Concordia University Chicago.

With professional experience as a massage therapist for elite organizations such as the New York Knicks and the US Open Tennis Association, Tara has honed her skills in high-performance environments. Over the past few years, her focus has shifted toward women's health, concentrating her practice on addressing the unique needs of women navigating perimenopause and menopause transitions.

Tara's approach is deeply informed by her understanding of the mind-body connection, which she considers central to her treatment philosophy. She continues to expand her knowledge through ongoing studies in nervous system regulation and cutting-edge research on the fascial system, ensuring her clients receive the most current and effective care.



Ginny Neil is happiest when she has paint under her fingernails or mud between her toes. Her creative mind has led to awards both in the classroom and as a picture book author/illustrator.

In addition to being lost in a cave, kicked by a cow, crawling through Chesapeake Bay pluff mud, and sitting on a yellow jacket's nest, her life experiences include being named a national finalist for the NEA Award for Teaching Excellence, running an Outdoor Learning Lab, teaching STEM, and living and working on a family farm with too many dogs, horses, cats, chickens, sheep, and cows to count.

Ginny's publishing credits include articles in *Highlights for Children*, *Nature Friend*, *Grit*, *Country*, and *Shenandoah Living* magazines. In addition, Ginny is a columnist/illustrator/contributing editor for *Blue Ridge Country Magazine* and a playwright for the Christian drama service, Skit Guys. She is also the author/illustrator of the Eureka Honor Award and Blueberry Honor Award winner: *The Glorious Forest That Fire Built* (Amicus Ink, August 2023) and author of *Salamander Song* (Tilbury House, March 2025.) Her next book, *A River of Wind*, releases Aug 11, 2026, and a fourth will be announced soon.

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