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**GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**
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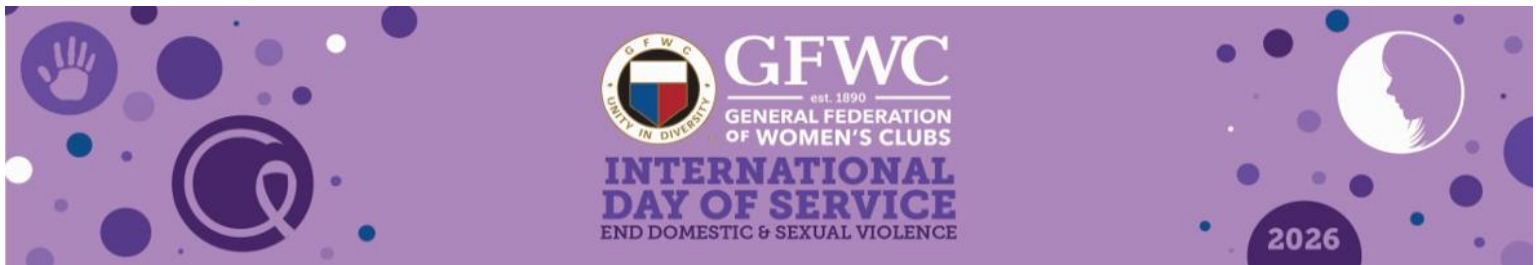


Summer 2026

Volume XV Issue I

Ripples of Lights

News from GFWC Mississippi
Lighting the Way Through Volunteer Service



Registration for the 2026 International Day of Service is now open. Join with club members around the world as we work together to make a real difference in our communities on September 26th! Be the Light for the survivors of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking.

Click on the links for suggestions and register your club or district today.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Founded on May 25, 1898 and a member of the General Federation
of Women's Clubs Since 1904.



GFWC Convention Highlights

What an amazing week we had in Arizona! Our International President, Wendy Carriker, has chosen **"Unity in Diversity"** as her theme for the 2026–2028 administration. To support this vision, GFWC has developed **Unity Projects** for each GFWC Program, Community Service Program, and Advancement Area.

One of the greatest highlights of the week was celebrating the installation of our own **Dr. Tammie McCoy** as the **2026–2028 GFWC Southern Region President**.

We also brought home several outstanding awards:

- Communication and Public Relations Award
- St. Jude Fundraising Award
- Special Membership Award for adding five new federated clubs
- Six Juniorette Participation Awards

Congratulations, Mississippi! I am so proud of each of you!

Frances H. Brown, President



Madame President Frances Brown accepted the GFWC St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Fundraising Award Category 3 for 2025-2026



Mississippi Clubwomen were honored to have our photo with GFWC International President Suellen Brazil and GFWC Director of Junior Clubs Shannon Bailey.



GFWC Southern Region President Tammie McCoy. Parliamentarian Cynthia Geis. Treasurer Sharon Oliphant. Secretary Roberta Atkinson. Vice President Shari Carter.

Summer Institute Highlights 2026

If you missed the 2026 Summer Institute, you truly missed a wonderful day of learning and fellowship. Set against the beautiful backdrop of **Lake Tiak-O'Khata** in Louisville, members learned about affiliate organizations, GFWC Unity Projects, MFWC scholarships, and Mississippi's special emphasis areas.

We were inspired by Sharon Oliphant's presentation on Operation Smile and an outstanding program by Joy Jones, Executive Director of the Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence. All members present signed the **GFWC Pledge to Stand with Survivors** and participated in a meaningful hands-on service project.

Partnering with **I Support the Girls**, GFWC Mississippi assembled more than 100 purple bags filled with toiletries, personal care items, and notes of encouragement. These care bags were distributed to domestic violence shelters across Mississippi, providing comfort and hope to survivors.

The day concluded with Vice President Lisa A. Harris and Parliamentarian Judy Thomas Martin introducing the new Award Entry Guidelines (formally known as reports) and sharing practical tips to help clubs prepare stronger, more successful award submissions.

Lighting the Path for a Successful Club Year

From the Desk of the President

GFWC Unity Projects are club-led initiatives designed to develop leadership skills, encourage member engagement, and promote community service through creative programs and projects. This newsletter contains information about each project. As you begin planning for the year ahead, consider incorporating the new **GFWC Unity Projects** into your club's plans, and make an even greater impact in your community. With streamlined reporting requirements and updated guidance, members will be ready to showcase the outstanding work being accomplished in their communities.

Remember, the number of projects completed doesn't measure the most successful club year - it's measured by the lives touched, the friendships strengthened, and the difference we make together. As we embrace **Unity in Diversity**, let's continue to **Be the Light** in our communities, serving with purpose, compassion, and unity. **Be the Light** by welcoming every member and making each person feel valued. Every member has unique talents; when we encourage one another to shine, our clubs become stronger.

GFWC Unity Projects

The **2026–2028 GFWC Unity Projects** are designed to help clubs strengthen leadership, engage in civic action, and deliver meaningful community service. Each project area offers specific goals, resources, and examples to guide planning. **Tip:** Use the GFWC Digital Library and Member Portal for forms, checklists, and recognition certificates. Submit annual reports to your State/District Chairman to qualify for recognition. These Unity Projects provide a framework for clubs to choose one or more areas, adapt them to local needs, and create lasting community impact.

GFWC Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is GFWC PLEDGE TO STAND WITH SURVIVORS. STAND UP. SPEAK UP. SHOW UP.

The goal of the program is to increase awareness and help prevent domestic and sexual violence. What members can do:

- ✿ Take the GFWC PLEDGE TO STAND WITH SURVIVORS: STAND UP. SPEAK UP. SHOW UP.
- ✿ Download or print the pledge. (found in the Member Portal Digital Library or click the [link](#))
- ✿ Write your name on the pledge. (digitally or by hand)
- ✿ Take a photo of yourself holding your signed pledge.
- ✿ Post it to your social media using the hashtags: #GFWCforSurvivors and #GFWCStandSpeakShowUp
- ✿ Add your club hashtags
- ✿ Encourage friends and community leaders to do the same and post.

For more information, click the [link](#).



GFWC-MFWC Clubwoman take the GFWC Pledge to Stand with Survivors at the 2026 Summer Institute held on July 18, 2026.

Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children

2026-2028 UNITY PROJECT is BEING A UNIFIED FORCE FOR CHILDREN.

During Advocates for Children Week, October 25-31, 2026, clubs and members are encouraged to contact their local child care facilities to identify their needs for children or families during the holiday season.

Examples include:

- ⊗ Clubs could collect canned foods or toys for a holiday drive.
- ⊗ Partner with your local child-care facilities to sponsor a St. Jude for Trike-A-Thon.
- ⊗ Contact our newest affiliate, the Safe Surfin' Foundation, for free materials to support internet safety education for children and families.
- ⊗ Organize a workshop for online safety or hold a parent tech safety night support facility in your area where you.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Arts and Culture

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is THE OCTOPUS CHALLENGE, STRETCH YOUR REACH.

GFWC encourages clubs and State/District of Columbia Federations to participate in a challenge encompassing all areas of the Arts & Culture service project area. The Octopus Challenge invites clubs and federations to stretch their reach throughout all areas of Arts and Culture by **completing 2 projects in each of these 4 areas:**

- ⊗ **ART**
- ⊗ **MUSIC**
- ⊗ **DANCE/THEATER**
- ⊗ **CULTURE**

But our Octopus isn't finished yet! For ambitious federations looking to expand their reach a little further, there is a bonus challenge. After all, an octopus may only have 8 arms, but we know she can grow another when needed. **For bonus credit and special recognition, complete 2 additional projects celebrating each of these special areas:**

- ⊗ Affiliate Organizations
- ⊗ Lesser-known cultural traditions such as Lei Day, Diwali, Dia de Los Muertos, Juneteenth, and more.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Civic Engagement and Outreach

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is SAVE THE BEAT! LEARN. ACT. SAVE.

For the 2026-2028 administration, we are challenged with UNITY PROJECTS that reflect our members interacting with our communities and other community organizations to have a notable impact.

Conduct a CPR training session at each club and State/District of Columbia Federation! And don't stop there —

- ⊗ **EACH YEAR, try to certify at least 100 community members in CPR between July 1, 2026, and March 15, 2028!**
- ⊗ Annually submit these efforts via email to the chairman using the fillable form found in the Digital Library on the Member Portal by March 15 to receive a certificate of recognition for club websites and social media.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Education and Libraries

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is UNITY THROUGH READING: EVERY STORY MATTERS.

The goal of Unity Through Reading is to unite communities by increasing book access, supporting inclusive learning environments, and celebrating the stories and traditions that make every community unique. GFWC clubs are encouraged to collaborate with schools, libraries, cultural organizations, and community advocates to promote reading for all ages. Programs may support early readers, English-language learners, multigenerational storytelling, and individuals facing barriers to literacy and education, while also ensuring that women's contributions and leadership are fully represented in the stories available to all.

For more information, click this [link](#).

Environment

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is THE RIGHT PLANT IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

Clubs are asked to partner with other organizations on projects dedicated to the restoration of habitat, with an emphasis on protecting native plants and pollinators.

Some examples are:

- ⊗ Work with state or county Departments of Natural Resources to harvest local plants from construction sites or add native plants to parks and recreation areas.
- ⊗ Partner with youth troops to earn badges or special awards.
- ⊗ Host an event with Master Gardeners or Master Recyclers/Composters to educate the community on the importance of native plants and recycling correctly.

- ⦿ More examples are listed on the Environment Unity Project page.

The possibilities are limited only by your imagination!

For more information, click the [link](#).

Health and Wellness

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is MOVE FOR A HEALTHIER YOU.

Regular physical activity can help prevent disease, disability, injury, cognitive decline, and premature death. Experts recommend adults get 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week, and moderate physical activity, such as walking, is generally safe for most people. Every minute counts and activity can be spread over several short periods of time. Encourage physical activity in your club and within the community.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Communications and Public Relations

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is GFWC MEDIA MAKERS PROJECTS: “CREATING, CAPTURING, AND COMMUNICATING THE POWER OF GFWC.”

The GFWC Media Makers Project is a two-year international Unity Project that unifies clubs through the creation of meaningful media that showcases GFWC’s global impact. Clubs build a shared GFWC Media Library of photos, videos, stories, graphics, and templates.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Leadership

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM: DEVELOPING MEMBERS TO LEADERS.

LEADERSHIP OBJECTIVE: For clubs to build and implement a Leadership Training Program for its members. This can be a Mini GFWC Leadership, Education, and Development Seminar (LEADS) Program or designing a training program that fits within your club.

The Unity Project challenges all clubs to be creative in growing their members.

- ⦿ Developing Members to Leaders: GFWC offers several resources to its members to develop and strengthen their leadership skills while fostering a growth-oriented mindset through the effective utilization of these available leadership development and training resources.
- ⦿ Leadership Resources include: The Digital Library on the Member Portal, Leadership Toolkit, GFWC Learning Academy, Webinars, and the Junior Club Leadership Certification Training Program.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Legislation/Public Policy

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is **LEGISLATIVE BINGO**.

During the 2026-2028 Administration, GFWC clubs and individual members are invited to participate in GFWC Legislative Bingo. **Players may complete a “Bingo” either across, up and down, or diagonally.** Certificates will be awarded to clubs and individual members who report proof of the required activity to complete the “Bingo.”

Recognition will take place during the 2027 and 2028 GFWC Annual Conventions, with special recognition to those completing a “blackout/coverall” by **March 15, 2028**. The Legislative Bingo card may be found at the end of this section and in the Digital Library on the Member Portal.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Membership

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is **GFWC UNITY MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE**.

What is the Challenge? It is your club’s invitation to dream big, connect deeply, and celebrate what makes GFWC shine — our members! This challenge is all about building unity through purpose and service, one bright idea at a time.

The **GFWC Unity Membership Challenge** is designed to strengthen our clubs by encouraging connection, creativity, and community impact — all while growing and retaining members. Each “STAR point” represents a key area of club vitality: **Shine, Tell, Activate, Recruit, and Spark**. Together, these five challenges guide our clubs through a well-rounded approach to building membership, visibility, and unity.

Together, these five challenges inspire clubs to reach out, lift up, and shine brightly as one united GFWC. The GFWC Unity Membership Challenge celebrates not only numbers but relationships — the friendships, partnerships, and shared purpose that make GFWC shine. Each activity is designed to help members connect more deeply with one another and with the communities they serve.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Fundraising

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is **VOICES OF SERVICE**.

Voices of Service is a community talent showcase project that can translate to GFWC clubs of all sizes through a fun, collaborative, and meaningful community event. Work collaboratively to identify the cause and strengthen the bonds between GFWC and a partner organization. The goal of your event is to maximize the impact and visibility

of each organization. Partnership opportunities may include co-branding your event, sharing proceeds, or partner participation, such as judges, emcees, volunteers, or venue donation.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Women's History and Resource Center

The 2026-2028 Unity Project is "HER" STORIES SHAPE OUR FUTURE.

Observe Women's History Month in March by collaborating with your local library, museum, school, and/or other civic organizations to sponsor an event. Consider one that honors a community leader or club past and/ or present members who exhibit outstanding service and exemplify the qualities set forth in Mary Stewart's Collect for Clubwomen. Perhaps you could organize one that celebrates several women, such as an educator, a community servant (firefighter, librarian), a business leader, and a volunteer. Utilize print and social media throughout the month to promote your project.

For more information, click the [link](#).

Affiliate Spotlight

The Safe Surfin' Foundation officially became a GFWC Affiliate organization during the 2026 GFWC Convention. It is a non-profit cyber safety educational initiative, created in 1998, and dedicated to protecting youth from those who would do them harm, and educating them in the safe and responsible use of today's ever-changing technology. Together, we're improving and saving lives. They are a welcome resource for us.

Best News Ever! Award Entries Just Got Easier!

- ⊗ Documentation is no longer required.
- ⊗ Submit a narrative for the top 10 projects only in each Community Service Program and Advancement Plan area.
- ⊗ Continue to report ALL volunteer hours and monetary donations on the Award Entry Cover Sheet.
- ⊗ The Awards Committee is updating the rubric to make the process even easier for preparing and evaluating entries.

These changes are designed to reduce paperwork and stress while allowing your club's outstanding service and impact to shine. **Stay tuned for additional details and the updated rubric.**

GFWC MISSISSIPPI Epsilon Sigma Omicron

“Books That Open Eyes and Change Lives”

Becky C. Wright, ESO Co-Chairman

Through ESO, clubwomen are given directions in planned reading for self-enrichment and personal growth. Awards, certificates, and pins provide incentives to the individual clubwoman, but did you know that many clubs combine club programming with ESO-related activities such as reading awareness and book promotion? Interested? Did you know that your club could use ESO programming to support our 2026-2028 President's Special Project?

In collaboration with Education and Libraries Chairman Sheila Worley, Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention/PSP Chairman Cindy Thompson, and our local libraries throughout Mississippi, we have a call to action. We are challenging clubs to participate in “Books That Open Eyes and Change Lives”, a project designed to bring awareness not only to our members, but to the community as well.

“Books That Open Eyes and Change Lives” encourages clubs to participate in ESO by reading a book about one (or more) of the areas related to the PSP and fostering collaboration with their local library. Clubs are encouraged to create a bulletin board or display to bring awareness to domestic violence, human trafficking, and child abuse. The display could feature books from our suggested reading list, statistics and hotline information on where to go for help, as well as informational brochures on GFWC-MFWC and ESO. Ideally, clubs would display books and information during either (or all) October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month), January (Human Trafficking Awareness Month), and/or April (Child Abuse Prevention Month).

Here are some of the most respected and impactful titles:

Domestic Violence Awareness

Why Does He Do That?

No Visible Bruises

Crazy Love

Human Trafficking Awareness

The Slave Next Door

Girls Like Us

The Natashas

Child Abuse Prevention

The Body Keeps the Score

A Child Called 'It'

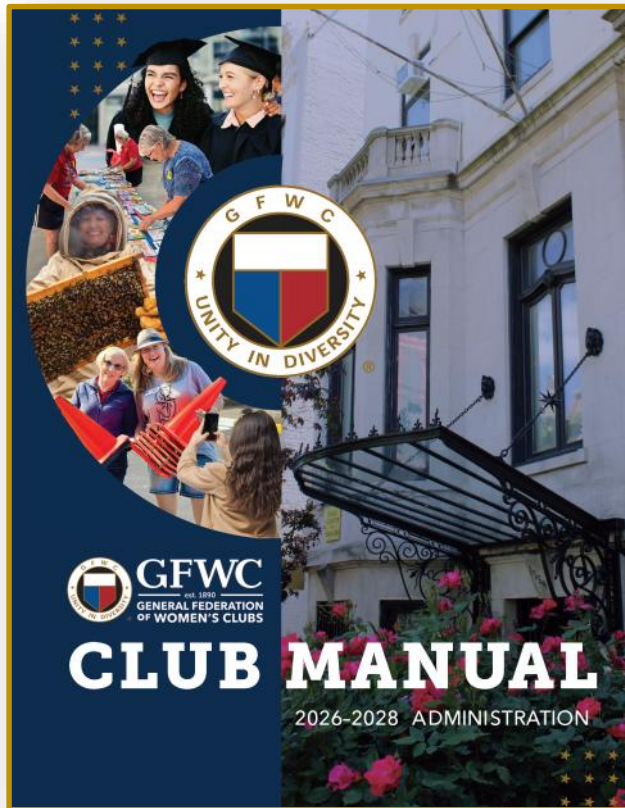
The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog

Clubs should contact their libraries early to begin planning and consider donating books to their local library, if necessary, that educate, inspire advocacy, or provide insight into these issues. If you're looking for one book that ties these themes together, *Be the One* focuses on recognizing and responding to child abuse and exploitation through community action and prevention. *Will you Be the Light* and join us in opening eyes and changing lives? For more information, contact ESO Co-Chairmen Becky C. Wright or Tina Hall.

News and Updates from GFWC

Are you missing out on GFWC News and Events? If yes, then you can sign up for the following publications by visiting the GFWC website and clicking the News tab.

- A. Press Room
- B. News & Notes. All issues from 2022 to present are located under the News & Notes tab on the GFWC website. To have it delivered to your email inbox on a weekly basis, sign up through the [Member's Portal](#).
- C. Volunteers in Action Blog
- D. Clubwoman Magazine
- E. GFWC News



Download your copy today.

New to the GFWC Members Portal

Go to the GFWC website, click “Member Login” in the upper right corner, click Register here, and follow the instructions.

Returning to the GFWC Members Portal

Go to the GFWC website, click “Member Login” in the upper right corner, click Login in the blue box or at the top right corner of the page, then fill in your email and password, click Login, then click Digital Library, then enter Club Manual in the keyword box and click Search.



The General Federation of Women's Clubs is a unifying force, bringing together local women's clubs, with members dedicated to strengthening their communities and enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. With more than 60,000 members in affiliated clubs in every state and more than 20 countries, GFWC members are community leaders who work locally to create global change by advocating for women, children, and families on issues such as domestic violence and sexual assault, food insecurity/hunger, and promoting healthy lifestyles. GFWC also supports the arts, works to preserve natural resources, advances education, encourages civic involvement, and works toward world peace and understanding.