



HEALTH and WELLNESS HAPPENINGS

JANUARY is:

Thyroid Awareness Month

National Glaucoma
Awareness Month

National Birth Defect
Prevention Month

Cervical Health Awareness
Month

National Blood Donors Month

Radon Awareness Month

Maternal Health Awareness
Day
1/28

February is:

American Heart Month

Age Related Macular
Degeneration Month

National Cancer Prevention
Month

National Children's Dental
Health Month

Teen Dating Violence
Awareness Month

National Eating Disorder
Awareness Week
2/26-3/4

Wear Red Day 2/2
Give Kids a Smile Day 2/2
National Donor Day 2/14
Rare Disease Day 2/29

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*"Never underestimate the
power you have to take your
life in a new direction."*

~Germany Kent

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



I hope you all are enjoying a festive, healthy, and safe holiday season with family and friends. As we look forward to the new year consider making **realistic** health and heart-related New Year's resolutions.

Upgrade your dessert – craving something sweet after dinner? Have it! But dilute the sweet stuff with something like fruit, seeds, or nuts. Try chocolate-covered almonds, chocolate-dipped frozen banana bites, or chocolate chips tossed with popcorn or pistachios.

Sit differently Pretend you have a tail and don't want to sit on it. This can help untuck your pelvis and elongate your spine. Sit so your feet rest flat on the floor and your thighs are parallel to the ground.

Set a bedtime alarm – Many of us do not get the suggested 7 hours of sleep each night. Set an alarm 45 minutes **before** bedtime and start your wind-down routine. Turn off the TV, put down your phone, and close the laptop.

Walk everywhere within a mile or move your feet every time your phone is in your hand. March in place or step side to side.

Check in with yourself mid-meal – put your fork down, take a deep breath, and ask yourself how much more food you need to feel satisfied. Sip water between bites. Dieting can be unsustainable and restrictive so eat more mindfully.

Set a no-phone zone – remove phones from the dining table. Enjoy discussions with family or friends.

Eat veggies at breakfast – 91 % of us do not get enough vegetables. Spread mashed avocado on your toast or add baby spinach or grated sweet potato to your scrambled eggs. Grated zucchini or shredded carrots add nutrition to pancakes and oatmeal.

Exercise for a few minutes – Does the recommended 30 minutes per day, 5 days a week seem intimidating? Break it into 10-minute sessions. 13 minutes of weight training 3 days a week does build strength. Stretch or lift weights while watching TV.

Sit in a quiet place and breathe slowly for 5 minutes.

Remove the salt shaker from your table and avoid adding salt to your food.

Swap white bread or pasta for the whole-grain version.

Check your blood pressure regularly.

*National Wear Red Day
February 2, 2024*

American Heart Association.



NATIONAL BLOOD DONORS MONTH

Every 2 seconds someone in America needs a blood transfusion.

The need is great for a wide range of medical treatments, such as vehicle accidents, cancer therapies, cardiovascular and orthopedic surgeries, and organ and bone marrow transplants.

65% of the population is eligible to donate blood however only 3% does so.

It typically takes one hour to give blood. You should be in good health, 17 years of age, and weigh 110 pounds.

Questions? Want to find a collection site near you? Visit the American Red Cross website for answers.

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/how-to-donate/eligibility-requirements.html>

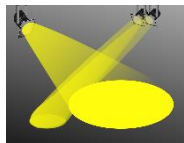
The Ladies Tourist Club, GFWC (MN) and the GFWC Century Club of Amsterdam NY) held blood drives for the Red Cross. In their respective communities, the clubs coordinated event space assisted with appointments, served as hostesses, and provided liquids and snacks.

National Donor Day 2/14

More than 100,000 people waiting for a transplant rely on the generosity of organ, eye, and tissue donors.

GFWC Nevada clubs support "Donate Life America" in recognition of State President, Cherie Williams-Dewitt's focus project.

<https://donatelife.net>



shot
@life

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

Shot@Life - Advocate to Vaccinate Spring Summit

A delegation from Shot@Life will be in Washington D.C. on February 26-28 at the Advocate to Vaccinate Spring Summit! Attendees will hear from inspiring global health speakers and participate in meetings with legislators on Capitol Hill. During the congressional meetings advocates will speak with their offices about why funding for global childhood immunization, including measles and polio, is so important. You can help this cause by responding to legislative alerts and actions they may promote.

[#GFWC](#) [#GFWC_HQ](#) [#shotatlife](#) [#IamGFWC](#) [#LivingTheVolunteerSpirit](#)



January is THYROID AWARENESS MONTH

<https://www.thyroid.org/thyroid-information/>

Our thyroid hormones regulate vital bodily functions such as heart rate, breathing, body temperature, weight, muscle strength, menstrual cycle, cholesterol levels, and nervous systems.

Two of the most common thyroid diseases are hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid) and hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid). Each presents itself displaying various symptoms.

HYPOTHYROIDISM

Drowsiness
Fatigue
Weight gain and water retention
Dry, itchy skin
Forgetfulness
Sore muscles
Constipation
Dry, brittle nails and hair

HYPERTHYROIDISM

Fast heart rate
Anxiety and irritability
Weight loss
Muscle weakness
Protrusion of the eyes
Accelerated loss of calcium in bones
Loss of scalp hair

Up to 60% of those with thyroid disease are unaware of their condition. 1 in 8 women will develop a thyroid disorder in their lifetime. Thyroid conditions are treatable with medication, or in some cases, surgery. Your medical history, a physical exam, and specialized blood tests are used to diagnose the disease.

Region Meeting Hands-on Projects

I hope many of you attended your Region Meeting and enjoyed the CSP presentation highlighting simple done-in-a-day hands-on projects. Based on the game CLUE, Mrs. Peacock, Colonel Mustard, Professor Plum, Mrs. Green, and Ms. Scarlet walked us through GFWC Headquarters and provided clues on successful projects. Kitty Toys, Puppy Picassos, Magic Yarn Wigs, and Bra-Ha-Ha Bras were a few of the projects shared. Keep your magnifying glass aimed on the Member Portal. The presentation will be available soon for you to use in your states, districts, and clubs.



Health and Wellness A - Z (or W)



This publication and future issues will highlight *Health and Wellness A-Z*, a list of project ideas from each state.

MINNESOTA – The Ladies Tourist Club provided funds to cover the cost of a surgery through Operation Smile. The GFWC Starbuck Club assembled thank-you bags for nursing home staff. Members of the Sleepy Eye WC provided transportation for seniors to doctor visits.

MISSISSIPPI – The Eupora New Century Club/Eupora Junioresettes collaborated in sponsoring a “Fancy Nancy” Tea Party for children, bringing wellness, education, and libraries together. The Junioresettes were dressed in character costumes as the Generals read books to the children. Healthy and colorful snacks were coordinated with the books that were being read. The GFWC-MFXE Ackerman 20th Century Club observed Health Awareness Months by wearing designated colors to meetings and by colored-based refreshments. Month-appropriate health tips were shared. The Quitman WC, in conjunction with the MS Dept. of Education, hosted a Zoom presentation to promote World Autism Day!

MISSOURI – The GFWC Sorosis Club of Springfield addressed the needs of individuals dealing with mental illness issues by stocking the pantry of a local center. Often clients arrive at the center needing something to eat so that their medication is in their system. The GFWC Achieving by Reading Club and the GFWC Nu-Era Study Club supported St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital by raising funds to purchase *little red wagons*.

MONTANA – The GFWC Fort Benton WC supported their State President’s Special Project: “Suicide Prevention through Educations.” Chapstick tubes imprinted with crisis hotline and contact info were donated to schools. The GFWC Helena WC provides much needed support to a community Personal Care Pantry. The members donate their time shopping, inventory products, and assist clients. They served 678 families and provided 12,249 personal hygiene products.

NEBRASKA – Ronald McDonald House is a pet project of the GFWC Papillion Junior Woman’s Club. Several times during the year members prepared dinner for the families being served by this organization. The GFWC Seward WC hosted a Quiz Bowl to raise funds for the building of a new wellness center in their community. This club also partnered with the Suicide Prevention Coalition, health center, and high school to sponsor a program on Teen Suicide Awareness.

NEVADA – The members of the GFWC Green Valley WC assisted with their local ACS Relay for Life. Monetary pledges were secured, members monitored participants’ waivers, and participated in the luminaries’ ceremony. The GFWC Lamoille WC partnered with the NE Nevada Regional Hospital Auxiliary to collect 55 pounds of aluminum pull tabs which were donated to Ronald McDonald House. This club also donated “port softies,” little pillows that relieve the stress of a seat belt on a patient’s IV port.

NEW HAMPSHIRE – The GFWC Dover Area WC partnered with their Chamber of Commerce and Twenty-One Senses to provide the Calm Space/Family Respite Area at their annual Apple Harvest Day Festival. For children and adults with sensory challenges. The Exeter Area GFWC had a club program and made a generous donation to Child Voice International-Project Thrive which provides menstrual kits and health and emotional wellness education to children and youth affected by war.

NEW JERSEY -The Stigma-free Initiative, a program to address the stigma of mental health and substance abuse was supported by the Franklin WC. The club assisted in creating and distributing a flyer including the 988 hotline.

NEW YORK – The Junior WC of Bellerose supported the GFWC Health and Wellness CCI by sponsoring four “Fun Run/5Ks to support four different organizations: county firefighter’s “Operation Wounded Warrior”, Tunnel to Towers Foundation, and Suicide Prevention, and “Pride for Youth” The Syracuse Federation of WC presented a “Medical Minute” at their monthly meetings. Various women’s health-related issues were discussed, material was distributed and information was included in their monthly newsletters. The Palatine Literary Society collected, prepped, and mailed 2,159 empty prescription bottles for the Matthew 25: Ministries.

Radon Awareness Month

Radon, chemical element Rn, is an odorless, invisible, radioactive gas naturally released from rocks, soil, and water. This gas can get into homes and buildings through small cracks and holes and build up in the air. Exposure to large levels of radon can cause lung cancer and radon poisoning.

Symptoms include: persistent cough, wheezing, weight loss, shortness of breath, hoarseness, coughing up blood, fatigue, loss of appetite, and frequent bouts with bronchitis or pneumonia.

According to the CDC, 1 in 15 homes in the U.S. has high levels of radon.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/protect-home-radon>

Radon Home Test Kits may be purchased online and at home improvement stores.

Donate kits or funds for distribution by fire departments or local health departments.

ALZHEIMER’S UPDATE

Congratulations!

Team *Diamond Daisies of GFWC* virtually raised \$2,000 for the Alzheimer’s Association. This coupled with the fundraising efforts of clubs across the nation certainly exhibits GFWC’s commitment to this cause. Thank you to everyone who donated to the team or participated in your own community/club walk.

Memory Cafes

Memory cafes are welcoming gathering places for individuals with Alzheimer’s disease, other forms of dementia, or brain disorders. Each Memory Café offers a unique experience or curriculum and is designed to include the caregiver. Some are activities-based incorporating music, dancing, crafts, or painting. While others may focus on education, informal conversation, creating friendships, or exercises that foster reminiscing.

Generally, they are facilitated by health care or social services professionals and may be hosted in churches, libraries, conference rooms, community centers, coffee houses, assisted living communities, or any warm inviting location.

Your club could provide refreshments, contribute activity supplies, or make a monetary donation. Not one in your area? Consider starting one. Visit the Memory Café website to see if there is an established cafe in your community.

<https://www.memorycafedirectory.com/>

Project Lifesaver

The primary mission of Project Lifesaver is to provide timely responses to save lives and reduce potential injury for “at-risk” individuals who are prone to the life-threatening behavior of wandering due to a cognitive condition. For more information and ideas how your club can help, visit:

<https://projectlifesaver.org/>

“The body is like a piano, and happiness is like music. It is needful to have the instrument in good order.”

~ Henry Ward Beecher

Germ Proof Your Home



During the winter months we tend to spend more time indoors and at holiday times welcome more guests into our homes. The perfect time to germ-proof your home. According to “Dr. Germ,” Charles Gerba, PhD the top five germiest spots in your home are the kitchen sponge, tabletops, kitchen sink, cutting board, and TV remote. Below is his advice on how to clean them.

Kitchen Sponge – put it in the dishwasher. This will kill more than 99% of the bacteria. No dishwasher? Soak the sponge in 1 tsp. of bleach diluted in two cups of water every four to five days.

Tabletops – wipe daily with a disinfectant wipe

Kitchen sink – “Dr. Germ” favors a scrub like Comet, but for those who wish to opt for a natural cleansing method, sprinkle salt on a sliced lemon half and scrub the sink.

Cutting Board – put it in the dishwasher or washing with a food-safe disinfectant. He also suggests using a separate cutting board for meat to avoid cross-contamination with bacteria in raw meat.

TV remote – remove the batteries then wipe it down with a cotton cloth dipped in rubbing alcohol.

NATIONAL CHILDREN’S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Children’s Dental Health states that early childhood tooth decay has become the most common chronic childhood illness, impacting more children than asthma. According to the ADA, 40% of children have tooth decay by the time they reach kindergarten. Kids with poor oral health are three times more likely to miss school due to dental pain.

Give Kids a Smile Day – February 2, 2024

The Give Kids a Smile Program, created by the American Dental Association hosts events to provide free oral health education, screening, and preventive and restorative treatment to underserved children.

How can you help? Talk to your dentist or oral hygienist about volunteering at a local GKAS program.

Read a book to kids about dental care. Or donate a book to a school library, doctor, or dentist’s office.

Some suggestions: *The Tooth Book*, by Dr. Seuss

Just Going to the Dentist, by Mercer Mayer

The Berenstain Bears Visit the Dentist, by Stan Berenstain



For resource materials such as posters, postcards, and children’s activity sheets, visit:

<https://www.ada.org/en/resources/community-initiatives/national-childrens-dental-health-month>