



GFWC Massachusetts Federation TOPICS

A Newsletter for Clubwomen



GFWCMA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS



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GFWC Massachusetts Executive Committee members enjoy sunshine

On beautiful day in August on the grounds of GFWCMA Headquarters, First Vice President, Jen Nowak; Second Vice President, Terry Rouvalis; Corresponding Secretary, Bernadette Bennett; and Director of Junior Membership, Marisa Jablanski joined President T Jablanski for the August Executive Committee meeting. Officers are pictured above sporting their daisy sunglasses! Missing from photo are Treasurer, Katie Robey and Recording Secretary, Alicia Sheridan.



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT T JABLANSKI



Happy Almost Autumn. It is one of my favorite seasons and I so look forward to traveling around our beautiful commonwealth with all its color changing glory. There is nothing like kayaking in fall, the fresh air, the still waters, and the mind and soul soothing sounds of nature. I just drink it in.



*Autumn shows us how beautiful
it is to let things go!*

This is also the time of year when I as your 63rd president along with your new officers, *Jen Nowak*, 1st Vice President,

Terry Rouvalis, 2nd Vice President, *Alicia Sheridan*, Recording Secretary, *Bernadette Bennett*, Corresponding Secretary and Director of Junior Clubs, *Marisa Jablanski* have been preparing and planning for this new administration.

As I have shared in your club manuals my focus area will be Mental Health. The upcoming state meeting programs and projects are sure to help clubs with information that they can share and use in their communities.

The new legislative bill, that was passed recently, Mental Health Addressing Barriers to Care (ABC) is a great first step here in Massachusetts, but there is still a lot to be done. I would encourage you to go to the [Massachusetts law about mental health issues](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-law-about-mental-health-issues) | [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) and learn more about what you can do. We all deserve to have access to mental health care when we need it.

Monies raised from the sales in our Pearls & Petals shop at the October 29, 2022, Fall Meeting will go towards Mental Health Grants for clubs. *Mary Ann Pierce* our phenomenal fundraising chairman has an awesome array of beautiful items for you to purchase to help support our grant giving opportunities. Be sure to check out the shop.

I am excited to have you join us for an autumn day in Sturbridge. The grounds of the Publick House and Historic Inn are wonderfully decorated for the season. There is a bakery, and a gift shop, Sadie Greens on the grounds, and the town common directly across the street. A perfect setting for our state meeting.

Safe travels and see you all soon!

Know Your Worth

T



KNOW YOUR WORTH

"I hope I can be the Autumn leaf, who looked at the sky and lived. And when it was time to leave, gracefully it knew life was a gift!" Dodinsky

FROM THE DESK OF DIRECTOR OF JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP, MARISA JABLANSKI



In a recent GFWC newsletter I received, the fine print at the bottom of the page caught my eye. It's a spin on the elevator speech we're all used to giving when we meet someone new and they ask about GFWC. This one is a bit longer, but I feel it more accurately describes our organization:

*"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 nearly 80,000 members in affiliated clubs in every state and more than a dozen countries, GFWC members are community leaders who work locally to create global change by supporting the arts, preserving national resources, advancing education, promoting healthy lifestyles, encouraging civic involvement, and working toward world peace and understanding."*

When put that way, our organization sounds pretty impressive as a whole. And we are an impressive organization as a state. During the last administration, and continuing forward in this administration, GFWC MA Women's Clubs and Junior Clubs are coming together as a **unifying force** to create change and improve communities. Our state meetings will continue to show that. We will come together as two parts of one organization to work on a combined goal of improving our communities. Gone are the days of "us versus them" or "they only want us at a meeting to make a quorum". We are a **unifying force** that WILL make change, that WILL serve our communities, and that WILL improve the lives of others through volunteerism. Both the GFWC MA Board of Directors and the Junior Executive Board serve as the business end of the organization, providing support, information, guidance, and encouragement to all clubs. Our local clubs are the members on the ground making the difference and changing lives. I encourage every one of you to take a look at the CALL to Fall Meeting located in this issue of TOPICS and commit to attending. Come to our state Fall Meeting and see how you can see and feel the **unifying force** that is GFWC Massachusetts. And I hope you will Stand Tall and Proud with GFWC with me. I am proud of our organization, proud of my work within it, and proud to be serving alongside every single one of you.



PUBLIC RELATIONS DONNA SHIBLEY, CHAIRMAN

Everything You Do Has A Public Relations Component: How would YOU describe your club? Dynamic? A powerful force in your community? Works to affect change? It is extremely important to get the word out; how else will other women in the community know you exist? Communications and Public Relations is tremendously important to the work of your club.

Public relations is not just publicity; it is the interrelationships between GFWC, your club and its members, the general public, and other entities, including the government. Your communication with the public should also let others know that you are part of a vibrant global organization. Pictures tell a story! Publicizing your club's projects lets your community know you exist and that you are doing important work. It also can attract new members!

As the GFWC MA **Communications and Public Relations** Chairman, I am inviting you to make sure you are staying connecting with GFWC and GFWC Massachusetts.

There are many ways in which you can do this.

Join GFWC in the Member Portal

So much information at your fingertips

<https://gfwc.users.membersuite.com/home>

Like and Save as a Favorite the GFWC MA FaceBook page

You will find daily postings of interest to Massachusetts clubwoman

<https://www.facebook.com/GFWCMA>

Join the GFWC Advancements and Programs FaceBook Forum

Loads of pertinent information

You will be asked to answer a few simple questions about your GFWC Affiliation (name of club, state) before you are accepted to join

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/892214227854217>

Visit the GFWC MA website

Everything you need and more about GFWC, GFWC MA and how to run a successful club

www.gfwcma.org

I am proud to report that the GFWC Massachusetts website earned recognition in 2020 and 2021 for best website, Category III.

And shout out to Darlene Coutu, editor of TOPICS, for the recognition GFWC Massachusetts won in 2021 for best state newsletter, Category III.

WEBSITE:

Please send any club happenings to dmsibley@gmail.com for addition to the state website. We are always looking to help YOU publicize your club event, programs, and projects. We can even feature your event on our GFWC MA FaceBook page. Send a flier to me and I can do the rest.

HELP needed?

Do you need help in learning how to navigate the state website? Please feel free to reach out to me and I will set up time to help you. There is **so** much information there that you can access with just a click.

Social media is the way to communicate in 2022. Do you need help in getting your club's name out on FaceBook? Do you need help setting up your club event on FaceBook? Please reach out and I will be happy to assist you.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

PENELOPE OLSON, CHAIRMAN

Health and wellness – we hear those words all the time, coupled as partners. And, are they really the same? According to the GFWC club manual, health is the goal, while wellness encompasses the actions taken to achieve it. It further states that we cannot always choose the state of our health, however, we can choose to take action toward wellness.

On The Way to Wellness

Most often, the path to wellness requires change. It might be a shift in behavior, lifestyle, or attitude. Sometimes, it requires changing our stories of the past, being grateful for the present, and looking forward to what's possible in the future.

In any case, the road to wellness requires a transition, a change. And, with change comes stress and anxiety. Our reactions to change can be messy because as we enter uncharted territory, we wish to look good and be perfect in every way.

We get sad and angry about the past and worry about the future. We retain our people pleasing tendencies, looking to be the solution for everyone and everything. Dancing through change with grace requires that we move with intention. How do we do this?

Introducing the Change Matrix

The Change Matrix is a six-step process to assist you in working with change. Using CHANGE as an acronym reminds us of the shifts that, when mindfully applied, support your journey toward wellness.

C	Commit to the change. This is the first critical step in successfully making a change, as perseverance is the key to any transition.
H	Hunt for solutions. Begin your research by creating a series of actions that will keep you committed to making the change. Once you've set your intention, answers will start appearing.
A	Adjust your attitude. Check your attitude whenever you find yourself complaining, blaming, or falling into self-deprecating ways. Remember, you have the power to change your thoughts.
N	Nurture yourself. Take the time to engage in activities that bring you joy. It might be dancing, reading, visiting friends, painting, or anything you enjoy. The ultimate goal is to nurture your soul.
G	Give gratitude. Be grateful for all the areas of your life that are working. Particularly pay attention to successes around your committed change.
E	Enjoy the process. It's essential to smile and celebrate when you make choices that keep you on track.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

The list above may seem linear. However, it is really a matrix. To work with this matrix takes time and check in with your thoughts and feelings throughout the day. It will give you an indication of which part of the matrix you are in at that moment.

Let's suppose you are feeling grumpy and heading down the rabbit hole into negative thinking, or your body is starting to experience some pain and discomfort. Go into the matrix and choose what would be the most beneficial action for you at that moment. If you are feeling stiff, moving to music might be an excellent option to release energy and feel good.

Keep in mind that our needs are not static. An hour later, everything might change, and now you may need a different tool to continue your wellness journey. Repeating this process will take you from where you are – to where you wish to be – gently putting you back on the track of your desired intention with kindness, respect, and love for yourself. Wellness is the journey to health.



LEADERSHIP CORNER ALICIA SHERIDAN, CHAIRMAN

Leadership is Easy as 1...2...3!

What makes Leadership easy? **Passion, teamwork, and social skills!**

1. **PASSION:** Don't command, inspire. Persuade others to follow you because you inspire them through your passion to volunteer or your passion for a project. Remember you all want to achieve the same goal!
2. **TEAMWORK:** Share the wealth and recognize your team's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders have strengths and weaknesses too! Remember you can't lead if you are a one woman show! Rely on the strengths of your team to achieve a higher goal. The strengths should compliment the weaknesses so everyone works together.
3. **SOCIAL SKILLS:** Don't be bossy, MOTIVATE! Be humble and focus on your members or the team you're working with. Inspire them to care about the club or project by focusing on their strengths and giving them credit for the work. Remember leaders, we are constantly improving ourselves because we are not perfect, nor are we expected to be perfect. Trust is HUGE when working with members or a team; admit your mistakes and build humility! Active listening = making members feel important, safe, and valued. If they feel valued, they will help with whatever you ask of them.

When a leader can get everyone to work together and see the big picture, magic happens!

FUNDRAISING MESSAGE FROM JEN NOWAK, 1ST VP AND FINANCE CHAIRMAN

I need you to go from this



to this



Why? Because it's time for another fundraiser!

GFWC Massachusetts is asking ALL clubwomen to help us raise funds for the upkeep and maintenance of our clubhouse and property at 245 Dutton Road. We have listened to the common complaints. Too expensive – don't have the time – allergic to nuts – I have a black thumb - I don't like . . . Fashion Shows, Tea Parties, or Magazines. We have worked hard to find the perfect FUNDRAISER that will make it easy for members, family, friends, and co-workers to participate.

Here are a few highlights:

Won't cost you any money

Don't have to dress up and drive anywhere.

Maximum time commitment is 2 ½ hours – over a 30-day span.

You can pick your schedule.

Requirements: Live in the USA, have an email account, must be at least 18 years old

Sounding pretty good? More information to come at Fall Meeting, on October 29th at the Publick House.

Need more information sooner: Contact Jen Nowak, Finance Chairman ~ jwnowak@charter.net.



August Board of Directors Meeting

General Federation of Women's Clubs, Inc.

National Event



Why GFWC Friendsgiving?

Friendsgiving is the blend of the words *Friends* and *Thanksgiving*, and it refers to a large meal shared with friends either near or on Thanksgiving. But why should we make this concept of a meal with friends just for Thanksgiving time?

The **GFWC National Event: GFWC Friendsgiving** will help build the GFWC brand in your community: gather and thank leaders, individuals, and businesses who have participated in some way in club projects by their donations of items, time, gift cards, and/or sponsorship; and enlighten potential members to the vast reach of club philanthropy and grassroots volunteer dedication.

Reach out to organizations that have benefited from your hands-on community service and/or In-kind donations and invite them. Think of your local organization contacts your club works with, such as the humane society, domestic violence shelters, after-school programs, food kitchens and pantries, and the list goes on.

Who else to invite? Town/city leaders, local business owners, past club members, co-workers, friends, members from other social groups you belong to, ladies who have attended club events or meetings but never joined, and even the micro-volunteers who assisted your club over the past few years. Pretty much, *EVERYONE* your club members are in contact with could be invited.

The goal is to get together for fun and fellowship. It can be scheduled around any holiday, such as:

- GFWC Friendsgiving* – Ringing in the New Year with Friends (New Year’s)
- GFWC Friendsgiving* – Show the Love (Valentine’s Day)
- GFWC Friendsgiving* – Join us for a “Hoppy” Celebration (Easter)
- GFWC Friendsgiving* - It’s A Federation Day Friendsgiving
- GFWC Friendsgiving* - Let the Summer warm Your Heart (summer months)

The possibilities are endless. GFWC clubs are creative – we encourage you to create your own **GFWC Friendsgiving** event.

All the facets needed to plan a successful event are located in the *GFWC Friendsgiving ~ Box of Gems* located in the Club Manual subfolder of the “F” Resources Folder in the Member Portal Digital Library.

GFWC Friendsgiving ~ a wonderful opportunity to be *Thankful* for the community’s support and to BRAG about the good GFWC grassroots volunteering your members participate in while gaining a few new members in the process!

MEMORIAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FOR GRADUATE STUDIES LYNNE STADER, CHAIRMAN

The new Memorial Education Committee met during the summer to determine fields of study for the 2023 graduate scholarships and update application materials. Sandy Krafzig (GFWC Northboro Junior Women's Club) and Maureen Crowley (Braintree Women's Club) serve on the committee this administration along with Treasurer Katie Robey and President Jablanski.



Educational Leadership and **Nurse Practitioner** are the two fields of study selected for 2023 Memorial Education scholarships. Educational Leadership, chosen by Past State President Donna Shibley, can include school administration or department head and policy leadership such as working with government or a non-profit. The Memorial Education Scholarships for Graduate Studies award amounts of at least \$3,000 to finalists selected following an interview process.

Be sure to share this information in your club newsletter and on your club website and promote GFWC MA scholarships on your club Facebook page. Don't forget to include the following link to the updated Application Form which provides complete information on eligibility and requirements. Application deadline is March 1, 2023.
[Memorial Edu Ap \(gfwcma.org\)](http://Memorial Edu Ap (gfwcma.org))



2022 Do WE have NEWS For YOU - Club Leaders' Day

GFWC ANNUAL CONVENTION NEW ORLEANS, LA



ANNUAL CONVENTION

GFWC Massachusetts Members enjoy the International Convention



ANNUAL CONVENTION



Mardi Gras Museum



Nathaniel Bennett helps
with USO Project

GFWC HEADQUARTERS



White House Tour Group



Oops! Isn't this a federal offense?



White House steps



Suffragist Memorial Tour

GFWC SISTERHOOD HAS NO BORDERS

BY KATHRYN SOWERS, 2022-2024 GFWC INTERNATIONAL
LIAISONS CHAIRMAN



Recently, GFWC clubwomen “reached across the world” during a remote meeting with Lora Pavlenko, President of GFWC Woman’s Club of Ukraine, who was recently in the United States with her daughter and granddaughter. The Zoom meeting was attended by Sue Babcock, from Woman’s Club of Taipei, Taiwan; the 2020-2022 and 2022-2024 GFWC International Liaisons, members of the GFWC Florida District 4 clubs, and GFWC Officers. Lora and her family were using a travel Visa to visit her sister who lives in Florida. GFWC Florida Clubs provided housing during the visit. The opportunity allowed everyone to speak with Lora and her daughter who served as interpreter, hearing about their terrifying struggle to survive and continue to help others during and after the evacuation in Ukraine.

The 15 members of the GFWC Ukraine Woman’s Club have fled to different countries, along with almost all women and children of Ukraine. The members continue to stay in touch via Zoom and social media as they continue to assist others in finding resources such as schools, medicine, shelter, and more.

Currently, Lora is living in Switzerland along with approximately 13,000 other refugees. Switzerland allows refugees to stay for one year, so if they cannot return to Ukraine by next April, they will need to try to move to another country. Lora’s husband is still in Kyiv and is using a scooter to help about 3,000 people get medicine, clothes, and food to those still in the area. Lora’s hope is to return to Kyiv and open a rehab center. Lora asked her fellow members for prayers for safety and a return to her country.

GFWC MA Past President Lynne Stader who served as a GFWC International Liaison was able to join the recent Zoom meeting with Lora. Lynne shared her experiences as a liaison in a presentation to the Ousamequin Club in May and is scheduled to speak to the Braintree Women’s Club. If your club is interested in hearing more about GFWC’s international clubs you can contact Lynne at Lynne@stader.org

19th Annual Craft Fair

The Woman's Club of Newton Highlands will be having its 19th Annual Craft Fair on Saturday, November 12, 2022 from 10:00 AM to 4 PM at the Hyde Center, 90 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands, MA 02461. Some of the items **Knitted, Textile, Home Decor, Pottery, Jewelry, Bags, Cards, Candles, Art Works and Boxes, plus a lot more...**

They have 46 spaces. They still have spaces available for vendors/crafters please email bennett@bu.edu for more information.



Hopkinton Women's Club

Members of the Hopkinton Women's Club/Hopkinton High School Women's Studies Book Club met on July 15th to discuss the book, Secrets of the Sprakkar Iceland's Extraordinary Women and How They are Changing the World by Eliza Reid, the First Lady of Iceland. Initiated in January 2022 by a Hopkinton High School student, the Book Club meets monthly to discuss issues facing women of all ages. Previous book selections were A Woman of No Importance by Sonia Purnell and Invisible Women - Data Bias in a World Designed for Men by Caroline Criado Perez.



Submitted by Doris Early, President



New England Region Officers

From left to right are Treasurer, Beverley Pallmarine from Vermont; Secretary, Mary Ann Pierce representing Massachusetts; Vice President, Tina Smith of New Hampshire; and President, Libby Wiers of Maine.



Julia Ward Howe



Julia Ward Howe was the founder of the GFWC Massachusetts Federation. She served as the first President 1893 to 1898. Among her many contributions to American society is her famous "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and was co-editor and writer for *The Woman's Journal*, which lobbied for suffrage and human rights. Julia traveled the world promoting Women's Rights, Peace, Prison and Education Reform as a preacher, lecturer, and dignitary. She was seen as a bridge between Society and Reform and used her celebrity and social status to further her ideology.

Show your support of GFWC Massachusetts by joining the 1898 Society. Members are dedicated to the financial well-being of our state organization, all funds raised contribute to the welfare of this Federation and help to maintain our property and headquarters building. GFWC Massachusetts is a 501(c) organization.

We encourage all members to join each administration and we will celebrate together at the Members Only reception which is held at Annual Convention.

Membership Levels

- **Bronze Membership for \$18.98** - includes attendance to the Members Only Reception in May 2024
- **Silver Membership for \$50** - includes the above plus Raffle Ticket at BoD & State Meetings
- **Gold Membership for \$100** - includes all the above plus GFWC Stainless Wine Tumbler
- **Platinum Membership for \$250** - includes all the above plus GFWC Embroidered Blanket
- **Platinum Plus Membership for \$500** - includes all the above plus a Brick with your Name as a Member of the 1898 Society for the Unity Walkway

Name _____ Level _____

Address _____

Email _____ Date _____

Club Name _____ Amount _____ Venmo or Ck # _____

Venmo or Check payable to **GFWC MA** with 1898 Society in the memo line. Contact Jen Nowak with questions.

Your contribution to the *1898 Society* is Greatly Appreciated

**General Federation of Women's Clubs &
Junior Membership of Massachusetts**



The CALL

to FALL Meeting

Saturday, October 29, 2022

Publick House, Historic Inn

277 Main St Sturbridge

9:30 – 3:00 - Registration opens at 8:30



*“It’s Sweater
Weather”*

What’s Happening!

- Registration, Raffles and Shopping
- Reports & Recognitions
- Why Me – Parent Testimonial
- **Pearls & Petals Pumpkin Parade**
- Lifting Spirits Service Project
- NAMI 101 Presentation
- GFWC Initiatives
- Advocates for Children Week
- Wings for Wellness Speaker
- Top Secret Presentation

Friday Night Festivities



Staying Friday night before Fall Meeting? If so, please reach out to Director of Junior Clubs, Marisa Jablanski, Director@fwcma.org ASAP

Limited 5:30pm tickets for an evening at Old Sturbridge Village for the *Phantoms by Firelight* program. Dinner to follow.

Overnight Accommodations

**Southbridge Hotel Conference Center
14 Mechanic Street, Southbridge 01550**

508-765-8000 – Block: GFWC MA

Room rates: \$159.00 per night plus all taxes

Date: October 28, 2022

Cutoff date: September 28, 2022

Reserved: 10 Rooms (5 double queen, 5 king)



KNOW YOUR WORTH

What to Bring?



Gift Cards, Gas or Grocery for WHY ME



Garden Bulbs – HQ Spring reveal



Lifting Spirits, Where Hope Meets Healing:

writing journals, colored pens, underwear, pajamas, socks, hairbrushes, combs, toothbrushes, soaps

Each Club is asked to decorate a Pumpkin (fresh or artificial) for our **Pumpkin Parade**. Using pearls and petals, make it pretty, practical, positive, or purposeful, let your imagination go wild!!

50/50 to support:

- \$ Mental Health Counseling
- \$ Ricky Gomes Scholarships

Clubs are encouraged to provide a Basket Donation Themes

- Autumn Harvest
- Delightfully Fall
- Comfortable, Cozy, Cuddly...Sweater Weather
- In The Pumpkin Patch
- Apples, Pumpkins, Cider & Donuts, OH MY!

Fill a basket, a box, a hat, a pumpkin, a truck, a blanket? **THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

President T Jablanski and Director of Junior Clubs, Marisa Jablanski have planned and prepared a great Saturday meeting and are looking forward to welcoming you to Fall Meeting in beautiful Sturbridge Massachusetts.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Sept 23-25 New England Region Conference, Rhode Island
- Oct Executive Committee Meeting (Date TBD)
- Oct 12 Junior Executive Board Meeting
- Oct 23-29 GFWC Advocates for Children Week
- Oct 29 Fall Meeting, Publick House, Sturbridge
- Nov Executive Committee Meeting (Date TBD)
- Nov 9 Junior Executive Board Meeting
- Nov 19 Board of Directors Meeting & Holiday Party
- Dec 7 GFWC Holiday Reception - GFWC Headquarters, Washington, DC
- Dec 31 Club Dues are due
- Dec 31 End of Year Contributions are due

