



GFWC ENVIRONMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

SHARON OLIPHANT

Chairman 2024-2026

871 NW 251st Drive

Newberry, Florida 32669

727-424-3835

Solip561@aol.com

Welcome to the GFWC Environment Program. I am excited to serve as your chairman for the 2024-2026 Administration. My goal is to provide information for you to be able to pass on in your state and assist you in this area. Please feel free to share this newsletter with clubs in your state.

Community Connection Initiative

GFWC members are reminded that the environment is the sum of all living and non-living elements and their effects that influence human life. As caretakers of our most precious resources, our environment, there is much we can do as stewards of the earth by working to preserve the world's resources, protect wildlife and domesticated animals, live sustainably, beautify our communities and enjoy nature.

Understanding the Environment Community Service Program

Environment programs are highlighted and encouraged. Many areas are emphasized and identified; however, your projects and programs are most important in reaching out and preparing your community outreach and impact. You will make the difference. Keep close to nature's heart. Enjoy your surroundings. A nation that destroys its soils, destroys life. Enjoy the seasons of our outdoors and remember to look up and take in your surroundings.



www.GFWC.org



Safe Water Can't Wait



With the recent devastation in several of the Caribbean Islands, water is more valued than ever before. Hurricane Melissa has left millions at risk of waterborne disease. WaterStep is on the ground with partners to bring safe water and disinfectant-starting in Jamaica.

The process of clean water is not hard with the right tools, equipment and volunteers. Currently WaterStep is working alongside of the community and has established a training center to reach as many as 2.8 million people. Training relief workers allows more coverage of those effected. Teams have been formed to deliver clean water, disinfectant to this country and started working with Cuba and Haiti. This training of teams with the WaterStep process will allow a handoff to those that can assist in these countries.

WaterStep is based in Louisville, Kentucky and has been providing fresh, clean, sustainable water since 1995. WaterStep has developed simple tools, patented technology, and effective training to empower people and communities to solve their own water and sanitation needs. "We provide expert solutions for places where infrastructure is fragile and execution challenges are particularly difficult, especially in slums, rural villages, and in communities responding to natural and manmade disasters." WaterStep combines safe water and disinfectant technology, and health and hygiene education because safe water in a dirty cup is no longer safe, and dirty hands spread disease.



“Our technology offers scalable safe water and disinfectant access during disasters because no one should have to worry about whether their water is safe during an emergency. No other safe water NGO in the world does what we do.” Since 1995, WaterStep has served over 72 countries (including the United States) most recently the storms that hit the Carolinas.

WaterStep created and developed the WOW cart (Water on Wheels) that is a mobile water treatment that includes a Chlorine Generator and BleachMakers to provide a comprehensive solution for emergency response and long-term water access. The WOW cart can treat 38,000 gallons of water a day, and produce a gallon of disinfectant per hour.



\$1.00 invested in water and sanitation can yield as much as \$34.00 in economic and social benefits. Use this QR code to get more information and see how \$1.00 can make a difference.



I love history and find a few fun tips that make you think about what our fore sisters faced daily. Here is what I found in
The History of the General Federation of
Women's Clubs
by Mary I. Wood, 1918



Club Exhibits at the World's Fair

May 18, 1893, was the day of the Council Meeting, and thirty-one states, comprising of twenty-eight clubs with a membership of fully twenty thousand women, were represented by delegates and other members.

“The material exhibit, the first of its kind in club history, well deserved the attention which it received, not alone from visiting clubwomen, but from the public at large. There were pictures of club officers, club houses, club emblems and club flowers: some were the product of the photographer’s art, while others showed the artistic talent of the club members themselves. The club yearbooks were of the utmost interest. Here for the first time, it was possible to see the work which other clubs were undertaking: and many clubwomen went back to their home clubs with a new and strong determination to attempt better and more ambitious work than before, due to the fact that other courageous souls had left an unconscious imprint hidden between the covers of the manual which formed a part of this unique exhibit.”



***National Parks have been a part of the
General Federation of Women's Clubs for over 100 years.***

There are six National Parks that have noted history of the military. They include Appomattox Court House in Virginia, Civil War Defenses of Washington (DC, MD, VA), Cowpens in South Carolina, Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie in South Carolina, Lake Roosevelt in Washington, and Mill Springs Battlefield in Kentucky.

Serving. It is a gift. It is a sacrifice. It is a duty of many, taken up by few. National Parks and the Military have strong ties dating back to the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872. The US Cavalry watched and guarded the National Parks and did double duty until Forest Rangers were created 44 years later. In the World War II conflict, many of the National Parks were used as training sites and for the care of our military.



Did you know that Military Lifetime and Annual Passes are available? Gold Star Families are eligible as well. The National Parks work closely alongside of military families. Activities and wellness care is part of the experiences that can be coordinated and opportunities given. And, Operation Warfighter offers internships for injured, wounded and ill veterans that help them gain work experiences to assist with the reintegration to duty or the transformation to the work force, family life, or general basic knowledge needed to advance and encourage the military family or the veteran.

Check out osd.warriorcare@mail.mil for more information and services in the reference center.



UPCOMING DATES AND EVENTS November/December/January

November

International day for the Elimination of Violence against women November 25

National Cake Day November 26

Thanksgiving November 27

Black Friday November 28

Adopt a Senior Month

Epilepsy Awareness Month

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

National Children's Month.

December

National Pearl Harbor Rememberance Day December 7

Wreaths Across America December 13

December 14 Beginning of Hannakah

December 25 Christmas

December 26 First Day of Kwanzaa

December 31 New Year's Eve

January

National Blood Donor Month

Mental Wellness Month

National Bird Day January 5

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day January 11

Martin Luther King Day January 19

National Penguin Day January 20



Birds are a massive group under a particular threat. Many birds are under threat because of our environment. The environmental health of our world can be seen in many species of birds. Not just our backyard birds, but those that help us in the area of protection of our sustainability. Birds are keystone to species in our ecosystem's signifiers of health, and vitality. Food insecurity is not just in humans, but in birds as well. Pesticides, lack of trees, water, air pollution, lack of protection can hurt and damage the lifespans of birds.

National Bird Day is scheduled to coincide with the annual Christmas Bird Count, which lasts three weeks, and is the largest citizen science survey in the world, keeping track of America's wild birds. By counting as many birds as we can see, we get an accurate picture of bird numbers. On January 5, birders switch their focus to the care and wellbeing of the country's millions of captive birds.

Some facts you might not know about birds:

There are over 10,000 different species of birds.

Woodpeckers can hoard up to 50,000 acorns.

100 words is the minimum number of words an African Gray Parrot can learn.

43 mph the maximum speed of an Ostrich.

The number of eyes a duck keeps open when sleeping is 1.

And, did you know about the GFWC relationship with the Audubon Society?

The National Audubon Society launched in 1905, on the heels of American conservationism and a growing movement to protect birds. As with many efforts to conserve nature, women led the way: The first Audubon Society was organized by two Boston environmentalists, Harriet Hemenway and Minna B. Hall, in response to the widespread slaughter of waterbirds, the gorgeous feathers of which were used to make women's hats. The pair's efforts in Massachusetts soon helped inspire similar organizations across the country.

2021: Dr. Elizabeth Gray joins Audubon as the 11th Chief Executive Officer, the first female CEO in the organization's history.



I hope you get the chance to travel to Washington DC to see the beautiful holiday transformation. Our historic headquarters will be extra beautiful and full of festive foods and décor. It is always nice to see the way we can enhance, celebrate and show off our home. It is December 10, 2025. As a native Floridian, snow, cold and the change of seasons is a quite a treat!



I love to decorate and use vintage decorations. They each have a memory for me—I collect Spaghetti Santa Clauses; Nativity Sets and I have my Aunt Doris' silver pom-pom tree that I treasure (from the 1950's.) I have prepared my son and daughter that "these items" are to be kept and not put in the first garage sale, or on eBay! I have been cleaning out and selling, donating and gifting many items that I really am not attached to. But we all do have our favorites.





I do have a great memory of visiting Santa. The Jacksonville Zoo had a boat you could ride over to the Holiday Island and visit Santa. I did it every year until I turned 6. We moved away and I still remember that special time. Memories that matter.



Life has a way of going too fast. My wish for you this season, is peace. Give yourself GRACE. We all move from one place to another, one event to another, one day to another, and don't take time to take it in all in. Give GRACE to yourself, to others and for the moment. Because tomorrow, this day is gone. One day at a time is the way to look around and say, "it is ok."

I know you remember, I don't cook. I do have over 100 Woman's Club Cookbooks, I read the history and look at pictures. But, I don't cook. One of my friends makes great desserts! And it is simple.

Lemon Cream Squares

Kay O'Rourke

GFWC Woman's Club of Fernandina Beach, Florida

1 package Duncan Hines Lemon Cake

1 stick of butter, melted

1 egg, beaten

8 ounce cream cheese, softened

2 eggs, beaten

1 box powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix together cake mix, butter and one egg. Press in to a greased 9x13 pan to form a crust. In a separate bowl, add cream cheese, 2 eggs and powdered sugar; mix well.

Pour over crust and bake at 350 degree oven for 35-40 minutes. When almost cool, sprinkle additional powdered sugar (to your liking) over the top. Cut into squares when cool. Top with cool whip and a few chocolate chips! (I added that part!)





As our 2025 year comes to an end, your club activities, projects and programs should be recorded for the GFWC Award Entries. remember to use the member portal and each of the areas of reporting to assist you with the dates and forms.

Our members worked hard in many areas of recycling, National Parks, State Parks and Community Parks awareness, water conservation, planting trees, sowing seeds of kindness, building butterfly gardens, held rummage sales, had Earth parties, counted birds, became bee keepers, did quizzes on insects and wildlife, celebrated Smokey Bear birthday, sewed and donated reusable grocery bags, did water clean ups, recycled and more! I hope you remembered to bring a reusable cup to your meeting. Coffee cup, water cup or water bottle.

Your award entries are important for our community initiatives, other clubs, networking, legislation and public awareness.

Please look back at the information provided in this area, get out your highlighter and make suggestions to your members to do a project or program in each area.

Engage in Nature. Bees, Bats and Butterflies. Recycling, Water Conservation. Protect Wildlife and Domesticated Animals. Live Sustainably. Beautify Communities and Enjoy Nature.

If Not YOU, then WHO?



In the END. More HISTORY. Share it. Learn it.



As I stated before, I love history and have found that many publications on the Environment are interesting. From the book, Eleanor Roosevelt, Courageous Girl by Ann Well.

1945

President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, in Warm Springs, GA. When Vice President Truman came to the White House to see Eleanor, he could scarcely speak. "What can I do?" He asked.

"Tell us what we can do for you" she replied. "Is there any way we can help you? "

The months that followed her husband's death were very difficult for Eleanor. However, her first thought was always of what she could do for others.

The Roosevelt family gave the big house at Hyde Park to the United States Government. It became a national museum. Eleanor moved to a small cottage nearby. One day President Truman called Eleanor and asked her to be a United States Representative to the United Nations. When she agreed, he asked her to represent the United States at the Human Rights meeting in England. Eleanor and her husband were disappointed then the United States didn't join the League of Nations. Now she had the chance to work with this new organization for world peace and the betterment of all people.

During this meeting, an English woman said, "Eleanor Roosevelt cares first and always for people....her interest is human beings.....her every thought is for human beings.....every single thing she devotes herself to has to do with human beings of one sort or another.....the basis of all her strength is her interest in people."

Eleanor Roosevelt became chairman of the Human Rights Commissions. And, she was a clubwoman.

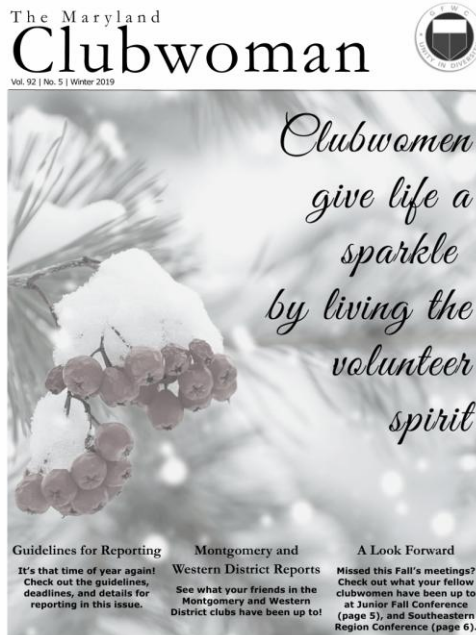
November 7, 1962 Mrs. Roosevelt passed away. The United States flag was flown at half-mast. It was the first time such an honor had been paid to the wife of a former President.



GFWC

est. 1890

GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS



Sharon Oliphant, GFWC Environment Community Service Program

2024-2026 Chairman

Solip561@aol.com

727-424-3835

36-year member of GFWC Florida Federation of Women's Clubs