



HEALTH and WELLNESS HAPPENINGS

APRIL is:

National Parkinson's Awareness Month

National Autism Acceptance Month

Donate Life Month

Minority Health Month

National Stress Awareness Month

Women's Eye Health and Safety Month

Alcohol Awareness Month

Humor Month

National Public Health Week
4/3 -4/9

World Health Day
4/7

National Infertility Awareness Week
4/23 -4/29

World Immunization Week
4/24-4/30

Health Care Decisions Day
4/16

MAY is:

Maternal Mental Health Awareness Month

National Physical Fitness & Sports Month

Mental Health Awareness Month

National Stroke Awareness Month

Hepatitis Awareness Month

Older American Month

National Osteoporosis Awareness Month

National Melanoma & Skin Cancer Awareness Month

National Nurses Week
5/6-5/12



Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.

Albert Einstein

WELCOME SPRING!

This chairman looks forward to reading our State Award Entries and Club Creativity Award Entries. Ideas gleaned from these reports will be shared in future Health and Wellness Happenings issues.

A big THANK YOU for all you have done to bring awareness to Health & Wellness issues.



In This Issue

National Autism Acceptance Month	P.1
National Cancer Prevention Month	P.1
Shot@Life -World Immunization Week	P.2
National Parkinson's Awareness Month	P.2
GFWC Learning Gateway	P.2
National Osteoporosis Awareness Month	P.3
National Maternal Mental Health Month	P.3
National Humor Month	P.3
National Physical Fitness & Sports Month	P.4

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April and May are full of health observances, as you will note on the calendar at left. This publication will focus on some of these topics, but please take the time to research others of interest and promote activity within your clubs.

NATIONAL AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

Autism, a complex developmental condition affects 1 in every 54 children in the United States. There are not one, but many subtypes of Autism that affect the patient's ability to interact, communicate, and progress.



The following words are shared by JoBeth W., parent, and GFWC Virginia member.

"While we were blessed with supportive friends and family when our son was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), we frequently avoid things we used to love. Festivals, movies, birthday parties... At times, autism can be quite lonely. But it does not have to be.

By offering events and activities geared specifically toward individuals on the spectrum, your club can help ease the isolation that often comes with an autism diagnosis. Host a sensory-friendly movie night in the park or at your community theater. Sponsor a local [Night to Shine](#) event – a prom experience for individuals with disabilities. And since large public events can be stressful for autism families, set up a booth to give away a bag of inexpensive distractions – balloons, stretchy toys, and spinners. Parents of very young children will thank you, too!

But that's not all. Spread awareness – help parents spot ASD sooner by sharing the early signs of autism, such as lack of eye contact. Advocate – the [Autistic Self Advocacy Network](#) (ASAN) and the [Autism Society](#) are fantastic resources with legislative action centers very similar to GFWC's, where you can sign up for alerts. Educate yourself – learn more about ASD from the myriad of self-advocates out there today, like [Temple Grandin](#)."



March is Parkinson's Awareness Month

Nearly one million people in the U.S. are living with Parkinson's disease, with approximately 90,000 diagnoses each year. This is the second-most common neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer's. Men are 1.5 times more likely to have it than women. According to the Parkinson's Foundation, the cause of the disease remains unknown however scientists believe a combination of genes and environmental factors is the cause.

Many of us are familiar with the outward physical symptoms of tremors, balance and gait issues, and limb stiffness or rigidity. However, many patients are more impacted by non-motor symptoms such as depression, hallucinations, anxiety, sleep disorders, and cognitive impairments.

Chronic disease like Parkinson's can be isolating and lonely.

How can we help?

~Offer to take them to dinner or a movie.

~Help with chores

~Listen

~Sponsor dance classes. Exercise is good, improving strength, balance, and mental attitude.

~Help them feel normal. Engage in conversation about a hobby, sports, or book.

"I often say now I don't have any choice whether or not I have Parkinson's but surrounding that non-choice is a million other choices I can make."

~ Michael J. Fox

Spotlight on our Affiliate

Shot@Life



World Immunization Week April 24 – April 30

Global Vaccinations is one of GFWC's Federal Legislative Priorities.

Read the full text at: <https://www.gfwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/GFWC-2022-2024-Legislative-Priorities-July-December-2022.pdf>

Updates on the "Vax Scene"

Shot@Life is a U.S. grassroots advocacy campaign of the United Nations Foundation whose goal is to give more of the world's people access to lifesaving vaccinations. GFWC has established a strong working relationship with Shot@Life, by participating in advocacy, education, and fundraising projects. The March 9 issue of News & Notes highlights the presence of GFWC at the Shot@Life Summit in Washington DC.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and global conflict have caused a staggering drop in childhood immunization coverage around the world. 25 million children missed out on routine immunizations in 2021 – the single largest decline in 30 years. Did you know that 1 in 5 children in the world does not have access to lifesaving immunizations (UNICEF)? And, around the world, a child dies every 20 seconds from a disease that can be prevented with a vaccine (CDC). This is unfortunate because vaccines are one of the safest and most cost-effective ways to save lives, improve health and ensure long-term economic prosperity. In fact, every \$1 invested in immunizations produces approximately \$50 in economic savings in health care costs, lost wages, and productivity due to illness.

Measles, Polio, Pneumonia, and Diarrheal Disease are the top priority diseases addressed in their programs. Vaccines for these diseases save more than 4 million lives each year.

We need your help in regaining previous progress and reaching more children.

World Immunization Week is April 24 – 30. Ask members to participate by signing the Shot@Life petition (<https://act.shotatlife.org/a/petition-shotatlife>) and by writing letters to the editors of your local newspapers. Make this a Federation Day (April 24) project. Serve refreshments in shot glasses, challenge members to "take a shot" (basketball hoops), or have a photo contest (snapshot) using kids as the subject. Utilize social media to educate your community and garner support for a club fundraiser for the cause.

Smallpox has been eradicated and polio is very close to being eradicated. Help us, join the call. Vaccines for All! #vaccinesforall.

"The biggest threat is complacency, not disease."

~Ambassador John Lange (retired), Senior Fellow, Global Health, Diplomacy UN Foundation

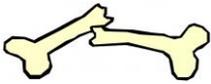
GFWC will be offering a series of remote webinars – **The GFWC Learning Gateway** that will give members the opportunity to gain knowledge from our GFWC Honorary Chairmen. These 45-minute interactive webinars will introduce us to these talented and insightful individuals and provide time for discussion and questions. Dr. Nagi Kumar, GFWC Health and Wellness Honorary Chairman is looking forward to participating in this series on April 18. Her presentation is entitled "**The Power of Personal Behaviors.**"

Watch for more information on all topics in upcoming issues of *News & Notes* and *The GFWC Clubwoman*. Please join us on April 18. For registration, visit the GFWC Member Portal (www.GFWC.org). Select "Helpful Links" tab, in the dropdown choose "Webinars," and select the date(s) you want to participate.

March is Women's History Month – A focus on a woman medical pioneer.

Virginia Apgar, MD 1909-1974

The Apgar score, the gold standard for determining the health of a newborn was developed by Virginia Apgar in 1953. Being discouraged by a mentor to pursue a surgical career, she switched her focus to anesthesiology and studied the effects of anesthesia labor, and delivery on a newborn's health. A second career in public health led her to her work at the March of Dimes.



May is:
National Osteoporosis Awareness Month

Osteoporosis means “porous bones”. This is a disease that occurs when the body loses bone mass, makes too little bone, or both. As a result, bones become weak and fractures may easily happen from a break, or in serious cases, even from a sneeze or minor bump.

A few facts from the *Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation*:

- ~ Osteoporosis is responsible for an estimated two million broken bones each year, yet nearly 80 percent of older Americans who suffer bone breaks are not tested or treated for osteoporosis.
- ~ Eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly can help slow or stop the loss of bone mass and help prevent fractures.
- ~ A woman’s risk of fracture is equal to her **combined** risk of breast, uterine, and ovarian cancer.
- ~ A man is more likely to break a bone due to osteoporosis than he is to get prostate cancer.

Calcium is essential for bone health and the best way to get calcium is through the foods you eat. As we know, dairy products are a great source of calcium however if you are lactose intolerant, vegan, or just don’t like dairy products here are several non-dairy items rich in calcium. Let’s see if you can rate them for their source value.

Kale, calcium-fortified fruit juices, almonds, white beans, tofu, salmon, and Cheerios.

See page 4 for answers.

Visit the links below from the [Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation](https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org) for info and handouts.

25 Important Facts

https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/wp-content/uploads/25Tips_Facts-About-Osteoporosis.pdf

25 Tips to Improve Bone Health

https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/wp-content/uploads/25Tips_Improve-Bone-Health.pdf

25 Tips to Prevent Falls

https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/wp-content/uploads/25Tips_Prevent-Falls.pdf

From *HopkinsMedicine.org* - “If you are a woman 65 or older, a bone density test is recommended, with a repeat test generally performed **two years after the initial test**, although this interval may change depending upon any treatments being administered.”

May is **MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

One in five women experience maternal anxiety and depression, the most common complications of childbirth. The good news is the risk can be reduced and sometimes prevented and with treatment, women can recover.

In the words of my good friend’s daughters - Kimmie B.

As someone who’s navigated a diagnosed anxiety disorder for over 15 years, I knew there was a strong possibility that I would eventually navigate postpartum depression (PDD) after the birth of my son. Though I didn’t expect a pandemic would be a part of his birth story; of course, this only intensified my mental health hurdles (he was born in May 2020). The first two weeks home with him, I felt “normal” new parent anxiety and fears; however, that quickly turned into much more. I found myself crying 90% of my day, googling my fears for hours on end instead of sleeping when I had the opportunity, and fearing being alone with my son for any amount of time. Although I felt hungry, I didn’t have an appetite and stopped eating. At the same time, I was surrounded by my helpful husband, loving parents, and supportive friends during these weeks, so how could I have PDD? My usual anxiety coping tools were not working, which is when I realized I needed to seek professional help. Luckily, I have a lot of practice advocating for myself in regard to mental health, otherwise, I don’t think I would have made the decision on my own to call my doctor. “I don’t think I’m okay,” I said to the nurse, and they were able to see me that day. Navigating my first child during the pandemic also meant there were no support groups I could attend, and virtual meetings were not yet typical 4 months into quarantine. I was able to start medication and within 2 weeks, I felt more like myself.; it felt like a miracle. I knew I still had a lot of work to do, so I continued asking for help from friends, family, and medical professionals when I needed it. My son will be 3 soon, and I continue to feel proud that I am a survivor of PPD.

How can we help? Distribute awareness materials and hang posters. Host a diaper drive. Work with your local government to proclaim May as Maternal Mental Health Awareness Month.

For more information visit: <https://www.thebluedotproject.org/raise-awareness>

National Stress Awareness Month

Sometimes it whispers, sometimes it shouts, but stress has only one “skill”: nagging at you about worries and what-ifs. And once you see stress for what it is – negative noise! – it gets easier and easier to turn down the volume. Aah! What a relief!

Woman’s World

Aug. 15, 2022, Edition



gg84236039 GoGraph.com

NATIONAL HUMOR MONTH

We have all heard the saying “Laughter is the Best Medicine.” Well, there is some truth to it. Laughter and joy lead to improved well-being, boost morale, increase communication skills, and relieve stress and burnout.

Sponsor an arts & crafts workshop at a nursing home or library. Have the residents decorate and embellish a Smiley Face with their own creative expression...artistic, whimsical, symbolic, whatever. Paper plates, stickers, and washable markers are all you need.

Encourage them to hang it on their door or refrigerator.

<http://www.humormonth.com/dasp.html>

Have club members wear something funny (i.e., Groucho Marx glasses) to the April meeting. Tell some jokes or funny stories.

The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.

— e.e. cummings





Community Connection Initiative



I love the quote on page 1 from Albert Einstein, but I'd like to insert my two cents. "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, **both mentally and physically**, you must keep moving." As we know, physical fitness is good for the mind and the body.

May is: **National Physical Fitness and Sports Month and Mental Health Awareness Month**

What a perfect time to address the benefits of physical fitness!

As has been touted in *Health and Wellness Happenings* since July 2022, physical activity combats stress, lowers blood pressure, controls weight, and staves off some diseases.

Promote the importance of 60 minutes of physical activity for children each day and 30 minutes a day for adults. According to Danine Fruge, M.D., Medical Director at Pritikin Longevity Center in Miami, "The more often we move, the less fat we store. If you work out more often, you'll enjoy more health benefits and sustainable weight loss." We can even walk indoors no matter the weather. Take mini walks during TV commercials, when you're brushing your teeth or waiting for the coffee to brew. 5 minute hourly mini walks can be as effective as one long sweat session. Check for "indoor walks" on YouTube.

Consider the college student. Many find the freedom of campus life exciting and liberating after years of parental supervision however the reality may be quite different. We have all heard of the "Freshman 15". In fact, 70% of college students gain weight during college. 50% of students report their mental health to be below average, and 64% of students stopped pursuing higher education due to poor mental health. (from CampusRec magazine). Outdoor exercise to the rescue. Activity in nature improves mental clarity. We tend to exercise longer outside, thus burning more calories, and sun exposure provides a natural source of Vitamin D which can improve health issues like depression.

Utilize opportunities to celebrate this month in your local schools, senior centers, at club meetings, and at home. Sponsor a walk-a-thon to raise money for physical fitness equipment, challenge your children to run in place or hold a plank during a TV commercial or promote National Bike to School Day. For more fun ideas visit -

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/celebrate-national-physical-fitness-sports-month>

The most important thing is to keep active - whether through a group exercise class, an organized sports team, or an individual workout. #MoveInMay Your Way

For fact sheets, posters, and ideas for Move In May activities visit:

<https://health.gov/news/202105/move-may-and-celebrate-national-physical-fitness-sports-month>

Has your club considered a Community Connection Initiative Project in this CSP? Sponsor dance classes for those facing Parkinson's, be a sponsor for Special or Senior Olympics, or build a sensory playground for autistic children.

<https://playworld.com/sensory> Do you live in a college town? Advocate for outdoor exercise space and equipment. There are many websites with examples of outdoor fitness circuits that your club could sponsor on a campus. What a great way to introduce GFWC to a college.

"What is the difference between Illness and Wellness? Illness begins with 'I'; Wellness begins with 'We.'"

*~Bob Kuhn,
World Parkinson's Council 2013 Ambassador*

Answers to quiz on page 3

Salmon – 6-ounce serving - 340 mg.

Calcium-fortified fruit juices – 6-ounce serving. - 200 – 345 mg.

Tofu – ½ cup fried tofu – 186 mg.

White Beans - ½ cup serving - 95.5 mg.

Kale – 8-ounce serving - 95 mg.

Cheerios – 1 ½ cups serving - 130 mg.

Almonds – 23 nuts – 76 mg.