



**Minutes**  
**GFWC/CT 128<sup>th</sup> May Convention**  
**May 3, 2025 at the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elks Lodge 2308**

**Call to Order:** Kathy Barnes, State President, called the 128<sup>th</sup> GFWC/CT Annual Convention “Run for the Roses!” to order at 10:30 AM. She welcomed everyone to the May 2025 Conference.

**Inspiration:** Carin Mancini, Suburban Woman’s Club of New Britain, and Civic Engagement and Outreach Chairman, gave the Inspiration of the Day.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pat Mahoney, GFWC Newington / Wethersfield, led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

**Collect for Clubwomen:** Chylene Pender, GFWC Newington / Wethersfield President, led the Club Collect.

**Preliminary Credentials Report and Presentation of Meeting Rule:** Joanne Sullivan, Windsor Woman’s Club, and Meeting Chairman, read the Preliminary Credentials. They were: Past State Presidents – 4; Club Presidents and Co-Presidents – 13; State Board Members – 32; Voting Delegates – 16; Total Voting Delegates – 46; Total Non-Voting Delegates – 2; Registered Guests – 2; Total Attendees – 50. District with the Largest Attendance – North Central; Club with the Largest Attendance – Newington / Wethersfield. She then read the Rules of the Convention found in the back of the convention program.

**Introduction of Officers and Guests:** With a quorum declared, Kathy Barnes introduced the Past State Presidents in attendance: **Jeanne Waseleski** - 2006-2008; **Joann Calnen** – 2010-2012; **Debbie Fiore** -2020-2022; and **Kathy DeBurra** – 2022-2024. Kathy then introduced the head table: **Pam Lerner** – GFWC CT Asst. Treasurer; **Jeanne Kehoe** – GFWC CT Treasurer; **Joann Hohensee** – GFWC CT Recording Secretary; **Nicole Karalli** – GFWC CT 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; and **Wendy Clery** – GFWC CT 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Kathy then asked everyone to stand and welcome guest speaker, MaryBeth Williams, GFWC Second Vice President.

**Memorial Service:** The 2025 Memorial Honoring the Passing of Club Sisters was led by Maddy Marzullo, Co-President, GFWC The Harwinton Woman’s Club, and GFWC CT Veteran’s Chairman. A member from each club came forward to light a candle in their club sister’s memory:

East Hartford Woman’s Club: **Shirley Leonard, Donna Stickles, Ruth Sheehan, Muriel White.**

The Woman’s Club of Enfield: **Sylvia Stanio, Gertrude “Trudy” Fleck.**

GFWC The Harwinton Woman’s Club: **Patti Kwashnak.**

Killingworth Women’s Organization: **Kelly Allard Leach.**



Women's Club of Madison: **Mary "Diffy" Smith, Diane Buckley.**

GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club: **Virginia "Ginny" Barber.**

Newtown Woman's Club: **Susan Sullivan, Rosemary Zanfini, Dorothy "Dottie" O'Byrne.**

GFWC Northeastern CT Woman's Club: **Marjorie "Marj" Roach.**

State President Kathy Barnes honored the three Past State Presidents who passed in 2024-2025:

Ridgefield Woman's Club (no longer exists): **Ann Nickerson.**

Plainville Woman's Club (no longer exists): **Grace Matyskiela Lindsay.**

GFWC The Harwinton Woman's Club: **Naoma Morgenstein.**

**Guest Speaker, Mary Beth Williams, GFWC Second Vice President:**

1<sup>st</sup> VP Wendy Clery, introduced our keynote speaker, Mary Beth Williams, who opened with greetings from Washington, D.C. GFWC Colorado was proud to support Mary Beth as the GFWC Second Vice President. She was GFWC Colorado President for the years 2014-2016. She spoke of her family connections to Connecticut and Western Massachusetts. Mary Beth recognized Kathy DeBurra, Kathy Barnes and Debbie Fiore for serving on the GFWC Board. Mary Beth will speak later again in the afternoon.

**Officer's Reports:**

President Kathy Barnes announced two regrets. Mischa Campbell, **Member-at-Large**, is attending a Special Olympics function. Sara Newell, **3rd Vice President**, is recovering from emergency surgery on Sunday night. Cards for Sara were available at the Past Presidents table for members to sign.

Pam Lerner, **Assistant Treasurer**, asked clubs that when they receive the request for updated rosters for your clubs, to please send them in to her as promptly as possible and in EXCEL format. It makes it much easier for her to work with that program. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact her, and if she can't provide a suitable answer, she will pass it along and see if she can get an answer for you.

Jeanne Kehoe, **Treasurer**, reported all our accounts are up to date and all invoices have been paid or in process. Expenses are within budget. The biggest expenditure since our last meeting was the dues payment to GFWC. The Holiday Board Meeting attendance was down, but did break even. District Days have all occurred with each District making a profit for their charity that will be paid next year. **North Central:** \$510.30. **Southeast:** \$1,007.30. **Northwest:** \$564.00 and **Southwest:** \$1,039.00.

Joann Hohensee, **Recording Secretary**, reported that for the 2024-2025 club year, she had recorded four in-person state meetings, and those minutes are posted on our website. She also



recorded four Executive Committee meetings on Zoom. Three people have volunteered to read today's meeting minutes: Jeanne Kehoe, Nicole Karalli, and Eileen Driscoll.

Nicole Karalli, **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**, reported on the various significant events she attended.

Among those were: the GFWC annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois; the New England Regional conference in Maine; she delivered a speech about the founding of women's clubs to the Woman's Club of Enfield; toured the Manchester History Center with the GFWC Manchester Woman's Club; attended a vigil honoring the victims of domestic violence who lost their lives in 2024; and toured the Prudence Crandall House. In addition, she assisted clubs in completing their annual reports including creating a guideline booklet; assisted in delivering a speech on domestic violence at a state board meeting; conducted one-on-one mentorship for newly elected officers and attended District Day events for all four districts.

Sara Newell, **3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President**. Joann Hohensee was asked to give the Membership report for Sara in her absence. Sara reported that as the 3<sup>rd</sup> VP she is responsible for Membership in the state and has joined the GFWC Taskforce for Membership and attends meetings via Zoom. She additionally aids each of the four Districts in Conn. preparing for their District Days. Sara wrote "The CT clubs have been focused on the three R's: Recruitment, Retention, and Rejoicing (Motivating). *Recruitment* – CT clubs have actively been recruiting new members in a variety of way from opening their General Meetings to the general public in their town, to joining in community-wide events and joining their local Chamber of Commerce in an effort to get the word out about GFWC and their Club. They also use technology through Facebook, websites, and newsletter to reach their members and local communities. *Retention*: CT clubs offer programs to members and the community. They offer events highlighting the values of community wellness and community support. In addition, we support organizations world-wide such as Shot@Life, World Central Kitchen, and Heifer International. Many clubs offer mentoring programs for new members to help with acclimation. *Rejoice and Motivate*: One way our CT clubs rejoice is through pinning ceremonies. The members of these clubs receive GFWC pins showing their years of service from new members receiving Unity in Diversity pins up to and including 50-year pins. One club took photos of this celebration with members dressed in red, the GFWC color, and posted it on their Facebook page. Our CT clubs worked hard this year to be caring community members both locally and internationally."

Wendy Clery, **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**, began her report with a quick reminder that she is available for help with your club's application to the CIP award program. This is one of the few ways you can win some additional funding for your project. *Leadership Library*: Books borrowed from the library today will be due back at the July meeting. If you can't make that meeting, let her know and she can either extend the time or figure out another way to return it. Wendy thanked Geri Harvey from the Windsor Woman's Club for her recent donation of "The Let Them Theory" by



Mel Robbins to our Leadership Library. *LEADS Workshop*: next session will be held in late fall this year. *GFWC Convention*: Wendy will be attending the international convention in Atlanta, Georgia and is looking forward to learning more to bring back to share with everyone in CT and to begin training for state leadership as well. *Reporting Recap*: "I am so proud of all the leadership efforts you reported. You made it very difficult to choose winners. Great leadership programs are a win for us all. Thank you for your hard work." *NERC Raffle*: Tickets are \$10 each and the prize is a one-night stay at the hotel for New England Region Conference, October 31 – November 2, 2025. It will be held in New Hampshire. See Wendy if you're interested. Also, Wendy is taking donations for the NER Service Project, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Anything collected today will go toward the \$10K goal, which is currently over \$8K!

### **State President's Report:**

President Kathy Barnes reported on the comprehensive communication plan her administration has developed to keep our clubs informed. They include: a Members-Only Facebook group, The Nest, to share all club-related information and communications from GFWC and GFWC CT. A publicly accessible GFWC CT page showcasing activities and events from GFWC, GFWC CT and our clubs. A state newsletter is distributed quarterly. Social media and email keep the Executive Board informed between newsletters. She actively engaged with club and district leaders and participated with more than half of the clubs in the State. She was involved in the installation ceremonies for seven clubs within just five weeks. Discussions are underway to develop a State Federation Strategic Plan. A Leadership Little Free Library provides books and resources for club members to borrow or lend. Over this past year, the First Vice President has also conducted both Leadership Labs and state LEADS seminars, focusing on the internal development of new leaders. GFWC/CT supported the Connecticut ambassador to HOBY International, who spoke to the Executive Board in December.

Our membership did increase in 2024, another increase will be reflected in March 2025. The Membership Chair is a member of the GFWC Membership Task Force and brings valuable insights and resources to share with all the clubs. A Governor's Proclamation recognizing Advocates for Children Week was presented to our members. A group was organized to help the Conn. State Library digitize the Club archives housed there. In honor of the WHRC 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the WHRC Chairman and her committee finished a booklet highlighting GFWC/CT history during the last 25 years. Materials from GFWC Affiliate Programs were shared at state meetings. We are particularly proud of participating with Canine Companions to get a proclamation of National Service Dog Month during September. Although the National Coast Guard Museum is not an official Affiliate, GFWC/CT has attended events which are raising awareness, had a presentation for our December meeting, and has donated a paver to keep our



name in public at our in-state Museum. This President has participated in both remote and in-person meetings as a member of the GFWC Executive Board, attended State President meetings led by GFWC First Vice President Jolie Frankfurth, the GFWC Annual Convention in Chicago, and the 2024 NER Conference. GFWC/CT Second Vice President led an entertaining presentation of reporting best practices, resulting in all reports being submitted on time, highlighting the wonderful work done by GFWC/CT Clubwomen. Successes of this Administration include the return of former members, increased involvement of past leaders in mentorship, and a strong focus on preparing future leaders through mentorship and transition planning. We are actively collaborating with other women's organizations, inviting them to join our Federation. We have found more affordable venues for meetings, such as using college facilities and spaces from fraternal organizations. District Days are thriving, but increasing attendance at State meetings has been a challenge. One of our state meeting dates clashed with long-standing traditional events held by several clubs. The Executive Committee voted to change the meeting date for the second year of the administration, replacing the Holiday Executive Board meeting with GFWC CT Galantines Day. Looking ahead to 2025-26, our key goals include completing a Strategic Plan to provide a roadmap for the future, supporting clubs of all sizes, and initiating the process of establishing a new club.

**Introduction of GFWC/CT 2025 LEADS Candidate:** President Kathy Barnes announced that **Lynne Sarro**, Vice President of the Women's Club of Madison, is the GFWC/CT 2025 LEADS candidate. Lynne will attend the LEADS Seminar at the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) annual national convention in Atlanta in June. Since its inception the GFWC LEADS (Leadership Education and Development Seminar) has helped focus Club Women on leadership roles in our club. Kathy asked all the LEADS graduates present to stand up. Congratulations, Lynne!

**Proposed By-laws and Standing Rules Changes:** Eileen Driscoll, East Hartford Woman's Club and Chairman of the Bylaws Committee, introduced the Committee members: Eileen Brunner, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Wendy Clery, Patricia Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Nicole Karalli, and Chylene Pender. Eileen Driscoll, Chairman, is recommending the following changes to the GFWC/CT Bylaws: **Motion 1: I move to Change Executive Board (EB) to Board of Directors (BOD).** This motion comes from committee and does not need a second. There was no discussion. All in favor. Motion carried. The second motion was read by the Chair:

**Motion 2: I move that all instances of Executive Board be changed to Board of Directors in the GFWC CT Bylaws and Standing Rules.** This motion comes from committee and does not need a second. There was no discussion. All in favor. Motion carried. The third motion was read by



the Chair: **Motion 3. I move that ARTICLE VIII Board of Directors Section A be amended to read: The Officers, District Presidents, Assistant District Presidents, Community Service Program, Advancement Plan, GFWC Special Projects and Standing Committee Chairmen, Standing Committee Members, past State Presidents and one Club President from each member club shall constitute the Board of Directors.** This motion comes from committee and does not need a second. There was no discussion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

**Scholarships:** Beverly Regan, Woman’s Club of Danbury/New Fairfield, and Scholarship Chairman, announced the GFWC Memorial Scholarships. “All of the candidates are highly qualified with outstanding academic records and have future plans that are dedicated to the support of helping others.” The six recipients are:

**Kaitlin Segreti** is sponsored by the Bethel Woman’s Club for the Woman’s Club of Danbury/New Fairfield. Kaitlin has been awarded a \$1,000 Phipps Scholarship.

**Claudia Paykula** is sponsored by the Newington/Wethersfield Woman’s Club. Claudia has been awarded a Phipps scholarship of \$1,500.

**Ashley Hamel** is sponsored by the GFWC Harwinton Woman’s Club. Ashley has been awarded a \$1,500 Phipps scholarship.

**Riley Minus** is sponsored by the Northford-North Branford Woman’s Club. Riley has been awarded a Phipps scholarship of \$2,000.

**Skylar Bartush** is sponsored by the Woman’s Club of Danbury/New Fairfield. Skylar was awarded a \$1,000 Phipps scholarship and \$2,000 Schoetzel scholarship.

**Katrina Engelhardt** is sponsored by the Woman’s Club of Madison. Kathrina has been awarded a \$3,000 Phipps scholarship.

Beverly continued, “On behalf of the Federated Women’s Clubs of CT, we want to thank the clubs that participated this year in bringing these outstanding young women to our attention and enabling us to help them fulfill their goals.”

**Community Service Programs and Special Project Awards:** Nicole Karalli, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, presented the following awards:

**Signature Project—Domestic Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention:**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **The Women’s Club of Madison**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women’s Organization, Inc**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Bethel WC GFWC**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Somers WC**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **Suburban WC of Greater New Britain**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Women’s Club of North Haven**



## **CONNECTICUT**

### **Advocates for Children**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **The Women's Club of Madison**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Windsor WC of CT & GFWC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **GFWC Newington/Wethersfield WC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC WC of North Haven**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Terryville WC**

### **Arts and Culture**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Woman's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield, Inc**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Windsor WC of CT and GFWC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Northford-North Branford WC GFWC**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Newtown WC, GFWC, Inc.**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **Suburban WC of Greater New Britain**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Harwinton WC**

### **Civic Engagement and Outreach**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women's Organization**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Manchester WC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Northford-North Branford WC GFWC**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Somers WC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Women's Club of North Haven**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Terryville WC**

### **Veterans**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Manchester WC**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield, Inc.**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Hamden WC**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Bethel WC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Woman's Club of North Haven**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Northeastern CT WC**

### **Education and Libraries**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women's Organization**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield, Inc.**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Mystic WC**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **East Hartford WC**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Women's Club of North Haven**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Northeastern CT WC**

### **Environment**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield, Inc.**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women's Organization**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Somers WC**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Newtown Woman's Club GFWC, Inc.**



1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Harwinton WC**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Suburban Woman's Club of Greater New Britain**  
**Health and Wellness**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women's Organization, Inc.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **The Women's Club of Madison**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Northford-North Branford WC**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Bethel WC**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **Suburban Woman's Club of Greater New Britain**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Women's Club of North Haven**

The meeting was recessed at 12:30 pm for friendship time, fundraising and exhibits.

**Expression of Thanks:** Donna Recknagel, Newington Wethersfield WC and Advocates for Children Chairman, came forward to give the expression of thanks.

Following lunch, the meeting reconvened at 1:30 pm.

**Keynote Speaker: Mary Beth Williams, GFWC Second Vice President,** was introduced by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Wendy Clery. Mary Beth spoke about the power of one voice. She talked about the roots of GFWC going back to one person, one voice: Jane Cunningham Croly, whose goal it was to organize a club for women only, that women deserved the same as men. Formed in 1890, the name chosen for this new club for women was Sorosis. Mary Beth highlighted a few of projects over the years, such as improving child labor laws in 1898, and establishing public libraries in the 1930s, seat belts program in 1961, leading up to the present time with "Safe Surfing", which allows questionable photos on the internet to be removed. She spoke of the importance of the Legislative Action Center and urged us all to sign up and to get involved with legislative alerts on proposed bills. In wrapping up her talk, Mary Beth recognized her hostess, Kathy DeBurra and thanked her for the gracious hospitality shown to her on her weekend in Connecticut.

**Advancement Plan Awards:** Nicole Karalli, GFWC CT 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, presented the following awards:

**Communications and Public Relations**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women's Organization**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield Inc.**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Mystic Woman's Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **GFWC of Windsor Locks Connecticut**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **Terryville Woman's Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Milford Women's Club**

**Leadership**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Windsor Woman's Club of CT and GFWC**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Killingworth Women's Organization**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Northford-North Branford Woman's Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **Newtown Woman's Club, GFWC Inc.**



## **CONNECTICUT**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Woman's Club of North Haven**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Suburban Woman's Club of Greater New Britain**

### **Legislation and Public Policy**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **The Women's Club of Madison**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Northeastern CT Woman's Club**

### **Membership**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield, Inc.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Madison Woman's Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **GFWC Woman's Club of Greater New Milford**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place medium Club: **Somers Woman's Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **GFWC Woman's Club of North Haven**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Suburban Woman's Club of Greater New Britain**

### **Fundraising**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield Inc.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Madison Woman's Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Bethel Women's Club, GFWC**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **The Woman's Club of Greater New Milford**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Small Club: **The GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Small Club: **Terryville WC**

### **Women's History Resource Center**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Large Club: **The Women's Club of Madison**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Large Club: **Windsor Woman's Club of CT GFWC**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Medium Club: **Mystic Woman's Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medium Club: **GFWC Northeastern CT Woman's Club**

**Photography awards:** Wendy Clery and Kathy Aiello presented the 2025 GFWC Photography Contest awards.

### **OUR WORLD UP CLOSE:**

1st Place "Green Bees" by **Holly Martin, Harwinton Woman's Club (NW)**

2nd place "Nature's Beauty Beneath Our Feet" by **Alison Clark, Woman's Club of Enfield (NC)**

### **NATURAL WONDERS:**

1st place "Northern Lights" by **Kathy Aiello, Bethel Women's Club GFWC (SW)**

2nd place "The Grotto" by **Destiny Vince, Harwinton Woman's Club (NW)**

### **REFLECTIONS:**

1st place "Remembering Our Fallen Soldiers" by **Maureen LaVallee, Suburban Woman's' Club of Greater New Britain (NC)**

2nd place "Seeing Double" by **Donna Addressi, Woman's Club of Danbury/New Fairfield (SW)**



### **GFWC LIVING THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT:**

1st place "Say Her Name" by **Michelle Eifes, Harwinton Woman's Club (NW)**

2nd place "Memorial Day Parade-Bethel, Connecticut" by **Kathy Aiello, Bethel Women's Club GFWC (SW)**

**Run For the Roses:** A workshop to learn how GFWC Advancement Plans can bring your club to the front was conducted by the GFWC CT Advancement Plan Chairmen and Officers. The workshop reflects the theme of this year's convention, Run for the Roses. The 1897 Club of GFWC CT was introduced: Kathy Barnes: Communications and Public Relations; Debbie Fiore: Legislative Action & Public Policy; Wendy Clery: Leadership; Nicole Karalli: Membership; Jeanne Kehoe: Fundraising. Attendees were split into four other clubs: The Quiet Corner Club, the Western Highlands Club, the Seashell Club, and the Great River Club. Each member of the 1897 Club spoke about her advancement plan and how it is the MOST important thing for the club and why. The four "clubs" were given their assignment to plan a project for International Day of Service using the GFWC Advancement Plans. (This information was found in their folder.) A spokesperson from each "club" came forward to present their project, how it would be implemented, and how it would be advertised to the community. Roses were handed out to the four clubs after their presentation.

**GFWC Affiliates: Canine Companions.** Pam Lerner, introduced Officer Jameson Ball and K9 Clifton, Community Services, Simsbury Police Dept. Some interesting facts we learned were it costs \$50,000 to sponsor a comfort/facility dog. Vet bills, food, etc. are covered by the officer. There is up to a 2-year wait to obtain a dog. Clifton is four-years old and has been with Officer Jameson for three years. He is the 13<sup>th</sup> facility dog in Connecticut. Each year they meet with Clifton's trainer when he was a puppy. Fourteen towns in Conn. have facility dogs. Clifton helps crime victims feel comfortable coming to the police and opening up to them, to tell them their story. Clifton knows over 40 commands and has had 10,000 hours of socialization. He can open doors, pick his leash up, remove mittens, to mention a few of his skills. If a student is experiencing anxiety in school, Clifton can "visit" the child who is having an issue and put his head on the child's lap to ease the situation. If he's told to "cover" a child in the hospital, Clifton will jump up on the hospital bed and lay across the child to comfort him. When Clifton has his service vest on, he knows it's time to work. When the vest comes off, he becomes a goofy dog! Clifton and Officer Jameson are a team. He has turned the Simsbury PD upside down! President Kathy presented Officer Jameson and Clifton with a small gift bag. A donation will be made to Canine Companions in their honor.

**Approval of Nominating Committee for the 2026-2028 Administration:** Wendy Clery and Kathy Aiello made a motion that Debbie Fiore, Kathy DeBurra, JoAnn Sullivan, Kathy Aiello, Jeanne Wasileski serve as the Nominating Committee for the 2026-2028 Administration, with Madeline Gross and Lynne Sarro serving as alternates. All in favor. Motion passed.



**Approval of Debbie Fiore as Treasurer of the New England Region GFWC for the 2026-2028**

**Administration:** President Kathy Barnes, on behalf of the Executive Committee, made a motion to endorse Debbie Fiore as Treasurer of the New England Region GFWC for the 2026-2028 Administration. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Special Recognition and Awards:** The following Membership gavels and awards were presented by Kathy Barnes, GFWC CT President.

The Pettis Gavel: **GFWC Windsor Locks Woman's Club**

The Sutton Gavel: **GFWC Woman's Club of Greater New Milford**

Plummer Gavel: **Women's Club of Danbury-New Fairfield**

The Ursula Kolb Casioppa Federation Awareness Gavel: **The Killingworth Women's Organization**

The Eileen Russell Memorial Spirit Award: **Gerri Harvey, Windsor Women's Club of GFWC**

The LaFontaine Volunteers in Progress Award: **Christine Stanlonis, Suburban Woman's Club of Greater New Britain**

**Donations:** GFWC/CT Treasurer Jeanne Kehoe announced the following donations will be made: 1) Canine Companions, \$200. Donated in honor of Clifton, Simsbury Police Dept. Facilities Dog. 2) Kelly Allard Leach Foundation, \$200. President's project area, Kelly was a member of the Killingworth Women's Organization. This Foundation provides assistance for children with spinal cord injuries. 3) GFWC Capital Campaign, \$200. Donated in honor of Mary Beth Williams and targeted to the façade restoration at GFWC headquarters in Washington, D.C.

**Raffles:** The 50/50 resulted in \$245, with \$122.50 going to the lucky winner. The raffle basket raised \$135.00.

**Announcements:** President Kathy Barnes announced that the Bylaws state that at the end of the May Convention of odd numbered years, the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President becomes the President Elect. Wendy Clery of the Woman's Club of Danbury/New Fairfield was asked to stand and be recognized as the GFWC/CT President Elect.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm.

Joann Hohensee  
GFWC/CT Recording Secretary  
2024-2026 Administration