



GFWC

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**GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**

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Member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs www.gfwc.org

December 2025

Notable News:

-GFWC CT Local

CT LEADS 2026

-This year's International Conference will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona. Please consider nominating a club member for the LEADS program to represent Connecticut. GFWC CT does grant money to the LEADS candidate to attend the conference.

The GFWC Leadership, Education, and Development Seminar identifies GFWC members at the local level who have the potential and desire to assume leadership positions in their State Federations and/or GFWC on the national level. Each State Federation and International Affiliate may select one LEADS attendee annually. Candidates should return this form, along with 2 letters of support from active GFWC members, to your STATE FEDERATION by their application deadline. The deadline for GFWC CT application is February 15. Please send to President Kathy Barnes. <https://memberportal.gfwc.org/resources/convention/173/2025-leads-application-fillable> Or [LEADS Application on GFWC CT](#)

GFWC CT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP: Each application will need a sponsoring Club and only one applicant/application may be sponsored by each Club. Clubs may ask other Clubs to sponsor an applicant for a Club who has more than one worthy candidate.

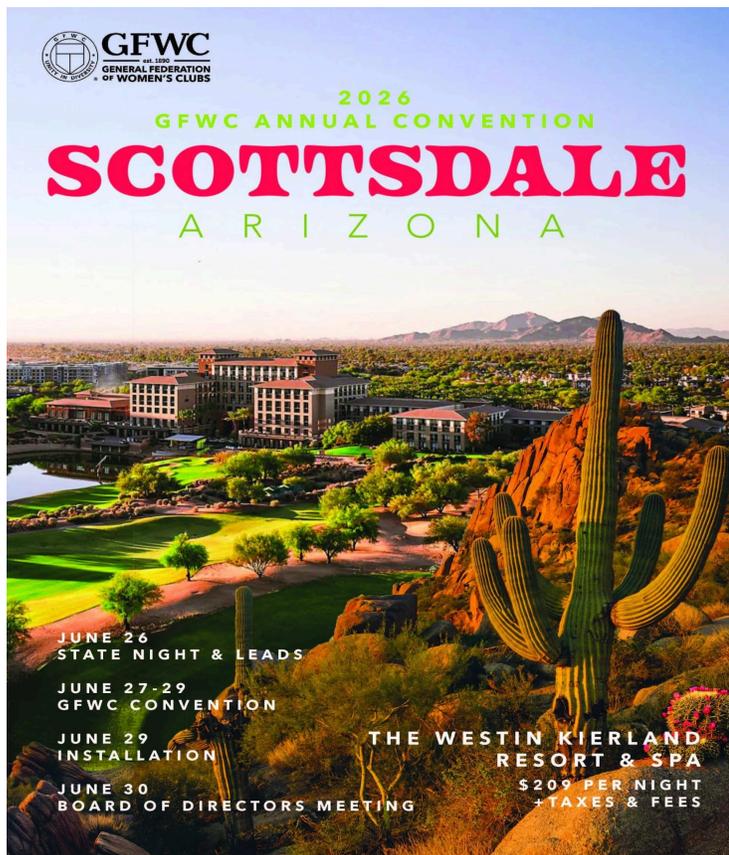
<chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.gfwcct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/PS-Application-2023.pdf>

Clubwoman Magazine: The Fall issue of Clubwoman can be downloaded here: <https://www.gfwc.org/clubwoman-magazine/>
Please share this with all members.

Strategic Plan: You can access the GFWC CT Strategic Plan on our state website www.GFWCct.org in the Members Only section. If you are interested in becoming involved with the Strategic Planning Committee – please contact GFWC CT President Kathy Barnes at gfwc.kathybarnes@gmail.com .

Arts and Crafts/Photography 2026: Please encourage your club members to participate in the Arts and Culture program. Photos, art and crafts will first be judged at the local level in individual clubs. First place winners of the photography contest will be forwarded to District level and then to the State level for judging with first in each category to move to the International level in June. Clubs will hold their local competition in February or March 2026. Link will be attached in January Newsletter

-GFWC International **SAVE THE DATE**



After a spectacular 2025 GFWC Annual Convention in Atlanta you will not want to miss the 2026 event!

GFWC cordially invites you to the **2026 GFWC Annual Convention, June 26-29, in Scottsdale, Arizona**. Please block out these dates on your calendars.

Reminder that 2026 is an Installation Year, meaning all those in attendance will take part in the ceremonial proceedings for the transfer of leadership from President Suellen B. Brazil to President-elect Wendy Carriker.

Next year, GFWC celebrates two Administrations in one event. Join your GFWC sisters in thanking the 2024-2026 Administration for their

leadership and welcome the 2026-2028 Administration.

This is definitely the must-attend event of the year! Registration will begin in early 2026. The hotel room block opens in December 2025. Please check back for updates...



Clubs are challenged to annually “step up” to EDUCATE, ENGAGE, EMPOWER through the steps of the Legislative Ladder. Consider taking a first step by signing up more members on the Legislative Action Center. A club can earn 25 points simply by increasing enrollment in the Legislative Action Center by 10% this past year and/or completing some of the seven additional steps to gain from 5 to 15 points each. Steps do not have to be completed sequentially. As a reminder, clubs that complete a minimum of 35 points on the Legislative Ladder will be recognized during the 2026 GFWC Annual Convention.

Please submit your club’s entry no later than March 15, 2026, to Legislation/Public Policy Chairman Mary Pat Marcello at njsfwcmariypat@aol.com. The Ladder may be found in the GFWC Club Manual on page 172 or under “Legislation & Public Policy” on the GFWC Member Portal Digital Library.

Executive Committee Reports:

From GFWC CT President-elect Wendy Clery:

Community Impact Program

Do you hear what I hear? It's time for CIP reports! What have you been working on, making an impact in your community? I know you all do so many things. If you're not sure what to enter, make sure to get in touch with me and we can go over what you have together. Right now we're focusing on reports to go in for this year, but if you want to get a head start for the next two years I'll happily answer questions for you on that as well.

CIP is the only report where the forms can be found in the GFWC club manual on GFWC.org under the Member portal. Second VP Nicole Karalli has been sharing about getting into the member portal in her reporting webinars if you need assistance with that, though I can of course help there as well. Please reach out to me at wendyGFWClady@gmail.com with any questions or with your report. I can't wait to share with GFWC how your clubs have been making an impact!

Leadership Note

From *Leading with Let Them* by Mel Robbins and David Gerbitz: "In 2012, Google launched Project Aristotle, a groundbreaking internal study to uncover what makes teams effective. Their conclusion? The #1 factor wasn't talent, resources, or strategy – it was psychological safety. This concept, developed by Harvard professor Amy Edmondson, is the belief that you can take risks, share ideas, and make mistakes without fear of judgement, punishment, or ridicule."

Fear of being honest with leaders is common. We put pressure on ourselves to meet expectations that we THINK we're supposed to meet, but if we felt comfortable asking questions and making things clear we could relieve that. As the leader, it's ok not to have all the answers and model authenticity and vulnerability. Ask for feedback and make sure your requests for help are clear. Courage is contagious. Creating a place in your club for building trust, encouraging creativity, and where mistakes aren't the end of the world will lead to a better team and projects.

Next Administration Chairmen

We've been reaching out for volunteers to be chairmen and for special projects for the next administration. Thank you so much to those of you who have already committed to serve in a position. For those of you considering, I'm making up a calendar for chairmen to have a speaker or do a presentation at one of our meetings over the two years, you'll receive updates from GFWC international chairmen to pass along to our clubs, and you will judge our club's reports in your category each year. There are also a few special projects we might be working on, depending on the Strategic Committee. Advancements may have more presentations, so I'm encouraging our advancement chairmen to create committees so that we might have an opportunity to get more done in our short time together. I'll be reaching out again to those of you considering positions and looking to fill the remaining ones as well. I'm looking forward to making a difference together.

Dear GFWC-CT Members.

I want to extend my warmest wishes to you and your families, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

This also serves as a gentle reminder that reports covering the period from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025 are due by January 15, 2025. Please send your reports to me at nicole.karalli@att.net and cc our President, Kathy Barnes.

I have scheduled two workshops to guide you through the process and answer any queries. These will take place via zoom on December 29, 2025, and January 5, 2026, both at 6:30 p.m. Whether you are new to reporting or simply wish to refine your skills, these workshops are a great opportunity to gain insights and ensure your reports are complete and accurate.

If you wish to participate in these workshops or have any questions regarding the reporting process, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I am here to help and support you.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

**Nicole Karalli
Second Vice President, GFWC-CT**

Supporting our Communities

During this season of high activity for our clubs I was able to visit several clubs and enjoy learning how GFWC makes a difference in all their communities.

One event I have looked forward to visiting is the Woodbury Women's Club House Tour. Every year several homes in the community are opened for the tour. The tour starts in the middle of town, where the club offers refreshment, holiday ornaments and more for sale. Clubwomen volunteer in each of the homes, sharing information and history about each. The homes were beautiful and the hosts so gracious. President Elect Wendy Clery and I had such a wonderful day.



Marisa Calvi -Rogers, Woodbury Woman's Club Assistant Treasurer, Wendy Clery, GFWC CT President Elect, Kathy Barnes, Mary Sergi, GFWC Woodbury Woman's Club President.



I was able to join the GFWC Newington Wethersfield Woman's Club for a presentation by Kevin Daly of PATH CT. PATH provides support for families of people with disabilities. GFWC Newington Wethersfield President Chylene Pender presented a donation to PATH CT.



Chylene Pender GFWC Newington Wethersfield President, Kevin Daly, PPATH, Kathy Barnes

GFWC Northford North Branford Woman's Club held a Dutch Auction which brought in the community to bid on items donated by members. It was a fun evening and the club raised money for their community service programs.



Fundraisers are Membership OpportunitiesThe first weekend of December was busy for all of us. The Woman's Club of Enfield held the Treemendous Event to raise money with the Enfield Food Shelf. The Somers Woman's Club sold baskets and candy dishes at a local church fair. Both clubs offered information about themselves, their activities and membership opportunities.



Above – Enfield, below Somers



Wreaths Across America

So many of our clubs participate in Wreaths Across America – I wanted to share information from Maddy Marzullo GFWC CT Veterans Chair, from the WAA News: [This year's Wreaths Across America program reached an extraordinary milestone. Together, we served 5,598 participating locations, sponsored more than 3.1 million veterans' wreaths, and mobilized millions of volunteers, nearly a third of them children, across all 50 states and abroad.](#)

Save the Date: December 19, 2026

Manchester CT Woman's Club had just 2 members participating the first year – look at them now!



On December 10, Joanne Sullivan, GFWC CT Meetings Chair, Jeanne Kehoe, GFWC CT Treasurer and I traveled to the Miracle on N Street - the holiday open house at GFWC Headquarters, Washington DC. – our home. Here is a link to GFWC International President Suellen Brazil's holiday message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7CvLaM71vM>



Jeanne Kehoe, GFWC Director of Junior Clubs Shannon Bailey, GFWC International President Suellen Brazil, Kathy Barnes, Joanne Sullivan

I would love to visit your club for a meeting, for a fundraiser, for a community event. Please reach out to me and let me know when I might do that.

gfwc.kathybarnes@gmail.com or 860.841.5083

Here's to the New Year and Cheers to our Members!

Kind hearts, Brave minds, Fierce Spirits - Our members make a difference.

Kathy Barnes
GFWC CT President
2024-2026

GFWC CT CALENDAR - updated

2026

January 15 Club Reports due to Second Vice President

January 25-31 Memorial Scholarship Week

February 7 GFWC CT Board of Directors' Meeting – GFWC Galentine's Day Celebration Madison, CT – all members welcome!

February 15 LEADS applications due

February 15 Chairmen's reports due to Second Vice President

April 1 Memorial Scholarship Applications Due to Sponsor Club

March-April GFWC CT District Meetings: North Central 3/28, Southeast 4/11, Southwest 4/14, Northwest 4/25

April 19-25 GFWC Volunteers in Action Week

April 24 GFWC Federation Day

May 15-16 GFWC CT May Convention Hilton Garden Inn, Windsor

June 26–29 GFWC 2026 Annual Convention Westin Kierland Resort & Spa, Scottsdale, Arizona

December Highlights in US Women's History

- **December 1, 1955** – Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a bus to a white person; her arrest sparks the modern civil rights movement in the US
- **December 5, 1935** – Mary McLeod Bethune creates the National Council of Negro Women
- **December 7, 1941** – Capt. Annie Fox receives the first Purple Heart awarded to a woman for her service while under attack at Pearl Harbor
- **December 9, 2002** – Award-winning ABC News journalist, Michele Norris, becomes the first African American female regular co-host of National Public Radio's news magazine, *All Things Considered*, she stepped down in 2012
- **December 10, 1869** – Wyoming is the first territory to give women the right to vote
- **December 10, 1938** – Pearl S. Buck receives the Nobel Prize for Literature for *The Good Earth*
- **December 13, 1993** – Susan A. Maxman becomes first woman president of the American Institute of Architects in its 135 year history
- **December 14, 1961** – President's Commission on the Status of Women is established to examine discrimination against women and ways to eliminate it
- **December 14, 1985** – Wilma Mankiller is sworn in as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma – the first woman in modern history to lead a major Native American tribe
- **December 17, 1993** – Judith Rodin is named president of Univ. of Pennsylvania, the first woman to head an Ivy League institution
- **December 28, 1967** – Muriel Siebert becomes the first woman to own a seat on the N.Y. Stock Exchange