

Communications and Public Relations

OBJECTIVE: Assist members with outreach activities by providing tools that help create a positive image of women's clubs, and familiarize members with the Federation's history, mission, and current initiatives

ACTION PLAN

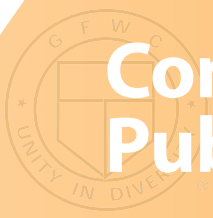
Recommendations for publicizing club projects are geared not only to increasing community awareness and attracting new members, but also to assisting GFWC's national public relations effort. Public relations is in everything you do, from the manner in which you respond to a telephone inquiry from a reporter or a prospective new member, to how you hold a press conference, and the appearance and content of your printed materials.

- o Appoint a public relations chairman for your club, district, and state federation.
- o Use 'GFWC' preceding your club, district, and state name, and remind states to require that all new clubs do the same.
- o Send concise and straightforward media advisories about club projects, highlighting the news value of what your GFWC club is doing in your community.
- o Be creative in finding ways to tell your story, such as:
 - Write letters to the editor and seek editorial support for a project.
 - Get your club president on local television, cable news, and talk shows.
 - Send story suggestions to newspaper columnists.
 - Prepare public service spots for radio stations.
 - Distribute fliers.
 - Co-sponsor events with other community groups.
 - Keep members of Congress and Chambers of Commerce informed of club's major projects.
- o Set up an information booth at college career fairs, community festivals, and other events.
- o Develop a media list of newspapers, wire services, radio, television, and cable stations. Include names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of specific reporters and editors whom you will want to contact from time to time. Call or e-mail reporters at least one week in advance and remind them to cover an event.
- o When working with a reporter on a local story, be sure to tell him/her that your club is part of an international organization, and suggest that the article might be broadened by calling GFWC Headquarters and interviewing the GFWC International President or Executive Director.
- o Use the GFWC membership DVD at club and community meetings.
- o Design a club website. Create a link between your website and the GFWC website.
- o Create a business card with your name and your club name on it, and give it to prospective members. Attach the card to your club brochure. (Printer-ready cards such as Avery 8371 are available at office supply stores). Or use the *We are GFWC* mini-trifold, available from the GFWC Marketplace and suitable for personalizing. Visit www.GFWC.org/Marketplace.



"IT WAS THE OPENING OF A DOOR, THE STEPPING INTO THE FREEDOM OF THE OUTER AIR, and the sense of fellowship with the whole universe that comes with liberty and light." GFWC Founder Jane Cunningham Croly, on the establishment of women's clubs.





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- o Celebrate Federation Day on April 24 and Volunteers in Action Week (during the week that includes April 24) with a publicity activity that will include new and prospective members as well as people from the local community.
- o Obtain a proclamation from a local elected official acknowledging the occasion. Use the *GFWC Federation Day Celebration Guide*, available from the GFWC Marketplace (www.GFWC.org/Marketplace).
- o Display the GFWC banner, flag, or emblem at clubhouse or meeting places and at all club events.
- o Develop a public relations display that includes photos of club projects and meetings, reprints of newspaper articles, and a calendar of club programs and projects for the year. Use this display at all events open to the public.
- o Use the GFWC emblem on all printed materials. You can download the emblem in a variety of formats from the GFWC website. Visit www.GFWC.org/Emblems.
- o Adopt a highway. Contact the Department of Transportation in your area to arrange adoption of a section of a highway. The Department will provide a sign with the name of your GFWC club, along with instructions on how to plan your clean-up events.
- o Develop or update existing club brochures and include information provided by GFWC Headquarters. You can use the GFWC brochure and include your club information on the insert sheet designed for that purpose. Visit the GFWC Marketplace (www.GFWC.org/Marketplace).
- o Order and use the GFWC PR Kit for Media from the GFWC Marketplace (www.GFWC.org/Marketplace).
- o Strengthen the role of GFWC on the local level by representing the Federation on the boards of other local organizations and associations.
- o Stay informed about what is happening throughout the Federation by reading *GFWC Clubwoman* magazine and visiting www.GFWC.org.
- o Read the public relations newsletter *PR TIPS* to get ideas about other clubs' outreach activities that may work for your club, and contribute ideas so that others can learn from you.
- o Wear GFWC emblematic apparel when working on community projects. Promote the sales of club t-shirts and sweatshirts to members.
- o When a local newspaper runs a major story on your club or state federation, send a copy to the GFWC Communications and Public Relations Director.

AWARDS

A \$50 award is given annually to one club in the nation to recognize creativity in implementing an effective Communications and Public Relations Program. The award is based on narrative reports. State GFWC Communications and Public Relations Chairmen should forward the winning state entry to the national GFWC Communications and Public Relations Chairman by March 15 of each year.

PUBLICITY BOOK CONTEST

Awards will be presented to clubs whose public relations outreach denotes a strong, creative effort as indicated in their publicity books. When reviewing these books, judges award points as follows:

- o Newspaper articles and evidence of TV and radio coverage: 50 percent





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- o Other kinds of publicity in the form of brochures, signs, fliers, paid advertisements, public service announcements, new member kits, membership cards and creative web pages (please include examples in a section following the clippings): 30 percent
- o Presentation and ease of handling: 20 percent

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

State GFWC Communications and Public Relations Chairmen should submit only one publicity book per state (the best in the state) to GFWC Headquarters.

- o Materials in the books should have been prepared and printed or aired between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2008, for the 2009 entry; and between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2009, for the 2010 entry.
- o Publicity books are a documentation of a club's outreach activity for the year.
- o Be sure to put the name of the publication and date the article appeared on EACH clipping.
- o Include all electronic media coverage. Video, audiocassettes, and CDs can be submitted, but do not put them in the book.
- o Although publicity books are judged mainly on content, it is important that material is presented in an organized fashion, with articles securely fastened to pages and key information highlighted.
- o The judges find it helpful if you provide one or two sentences (no more) explaining a project or program you have publicized.
- o On the front page of the book, please include the following: name of club, name of club contact, number of club members, the city in which club is located along with population figures, and local radio and television stations to which club news was sent.
- o Print the name of your club and the contest year on the outside cover of the book.
- o Entries should be in a lightweight, 8.5 x 11 inches binder or cover. (Points may be deducted if the book is oversized and/or difficult to handle). Do not put materials in more than one book.
- o Enclose a self-addressed stamped package of the necessary size with appropriate postage to ensure the return of the publicity book.
- o Only those entries that include a self-addressed stamped envelope will be returned.

DEADLINES

Club entries must be postmarked on or before March 1, 2009, and 2010, to the state GFWC Communications and Public Relations Chairman.

State entry must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2009, and 2010, to GFWC Headquarters, Attn: Publicity Book Contest, 1734 N ST NW Washington, DC 20036-2990. Be sure to include cover letter stating that the book is the first place state winner. When submitting the winning book to GFWC Headquarters, each state GFWC Communications and Public Relations Chairman should include a note detailing the number of entries she received from the clubs in her state.

- o 1st Place: \$150; 2nd Place: \$100; 3rd Place: \$75; Honorable Mentions: Certificate
- o 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winning entries will be on display at the GFWC Annual International Convention.

