

NEWS & NOTES

LIVING THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT THROUGH GFWC

News & Notes - May 18, 2017

MENTAL
HEALTH
Awareness Month



Mental Health Awareness Month Aims to Change Attitudes

MYTH: Personality weakness or character flaws cause mental health problems. People with mental health issues can snap out of it if they try hard enough.*

This is just a single example of the many myths Mental Health Awareness Month aims to dispel. Since its establishment in 1949, Mental Health Awareness Month campaigns have taught that mental health problems have nothing to do with weakness of character and most people require assistance to improve. Many factors contribute to mental health issues including: biological elements, life experiences, and a family history of mental health disorders. While sixty-eight years have passed since the first awareness month, providing information that separates fact from fiction and reduces the stigma attached to mental illness remains the primary objective.

The best means to reduce the negative connotations associated with mental disorders is to educate the public on



GFWC — an international women's organization dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service

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the realities of mental illness. For example, speak of mental illness as a treatable health condition where the majority of people who are provided care get better and have an improved quality of life. Also, remember that mental disorders are not rare. In fact, statistics show one in five U.S. adults will suffer from a mental health issue during their lifetime. Given the prevalence of mental health conditions, almost everyone will be impacted either personally or through their relationships with friends and family.

This month do your part to reduce the stigma attached to mental illness by sharing resources from the [National Alliance on Mental Illness' "Into Mental Health: Inspired, Informed, Involved"](#) campaign. Available resources include informational graphics, fact sheets, and sample social media messages.

* <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/myths-facts/index.html>



Military Parents Send Good Night Wishes

There are undoubtedly many times when the children of active duty military personnel simply want to be tucked in at night and read a story by their missing parent. Thanks to a partnership between United Through Reading and the United Service Organization (USO), deployed parents are able to remain connected to their children through story time. The program allows service members to pick a children's book and record themselves reading the book aloud. Once complete, the

Garlick at kgarlick@gfwc.org and you're all set!

Cast Your Ballot in the GFWC Video Contest

In the spirit of coming together to recognize our dynamic past and exciting future, GFWC is hosting a video contest. Each of the three finalist submitted a video answering the question, "What does being a GFWC clubwoman mean to you?" Now, clubwomen across the nation are invited to vote for their favorite entry. View the efforts of **GFWC Connecticut**, **GFWC Melbourne Woman's Club** (Florida), and the **Nevada Mesquite Club**, before casting your ballot by [clicking here](#). Voting will take place from May 15 to May 31. Contest rules allow for a maximum of one vote per person, per day.

USO ships both the book and the recording to children back home.

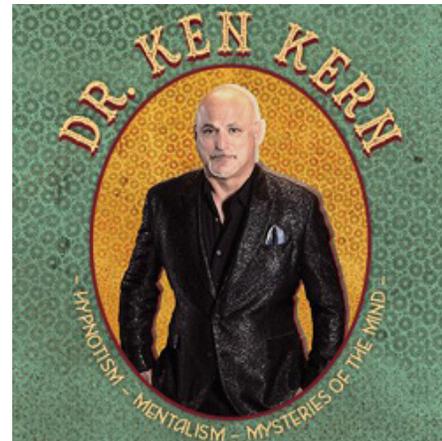
We thank the **Woman's Club of Orange** (California) for supporting the program during their May General Meeting and bringing it to the attention of GFWC Headquarters through their monthly newsletter. If your club is interested in supporting the initiative, [click here](#) to learn more.

Sharing Our Passion, One Step at a Time

GFWC South Carolina President Janet Prince has chosen not one but three Special Projects for her administration. The emblem representing the three projects is a turtle accompanied by the words "Sharing our Passion, One Step at a Time." President Prince elected to include a turtle because each of the constituencies GFWC South Carolina is trying to aid – cancer patients, children with dyslexia, and domestic violence survivors – must, like turtles, exhibit "longevity, endurance, and persistence to keep moving forward despite the odds."

President Prince's efforts to support cancer patients and raise funds for medical research began with her own breast cancer diagnosis and her mother's battle with peritoneal cancer fourteen years ago. Dealing with the situations concurrently granted President Prince the ability to relate to both cancer survivors and caretakers who have lost beloved family members. During her struggles, friends and members of the local woman's club rallied around President Prince. Now, the entire state of South Carolina is learning from President Prince's experience and uniting in support of her cause.

President Prince's campaign to raise awareness of dyslexia also stems from personal experience. Her daughter, Genna, was found to be dyslexic in the first grade. Dyslexia is a learning disorder characterized by difficulty reading due to an inability to identify speech sounds and comprehend how they relate to letters and words. Thankfully, South Carolina has several schools to aid children with learning disabilities and help ensure their bright future. Clubwomen are working to provide



2017 GFWC Annual Convention Speaker Dr. Ken Kern

Attendees at the 2017 GFWC Annual Convention in Palm Springs, California are in for a treat. Dr. Ken Kern will be presenting his Comedy Hypnosis Show. The show is dedicated to bringing happiness, laughter, and fun to audiences. The show's content is family-rated, musically based, and seeks to bring out the natural creativity in each of the hypnotized volunteers on stage.

Don't forget to [register for Convention](#) by June 1 to join in the fun!

monetary donations to one of these specialized schools, Sandhills, in Columbia. Their contributions will allow economically disadvantaged students the opportunity to attend the school's Summer Skills Camp.

The final project receiving the attention of South Carolina's clubwomen was chosen by the members in an online poll. Domestic Violence Awareness was their overwhelming choice. In support of the project they are redoubling their advocacy efforts and providing tangible assistance in the form of in-kind donations to shelters.

The success of GFWC South Carolina's projects will be a reflection of not only the passion of one extraordinary leader, but the willingness of the state's clubwomen to unite behind their Federation Sisters and make every woman's passions their own.



Partner Spotlight: Operation Smile

Since June 2016, hundreds of GFWC clubs have been working diligently to raise funds for the **Campaign for Children's Smiles** – a medical mission funded by GFWC clubwomen with the opportunity to join a mission in 2018. As fundraising continues, Operation Smile wanted to remind you of a very important question: Why do we all work so hard to take care of the children who need us? At Operation Smile, the answer is simple – What if this was your child? From the fathers, mothers, grandparents, and siblings of our patients, thank you for continuing to help us provide free, safe surgical care to so



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Rosies Kept America Running during World War II

Are you a Rosie? Rosies worked in factories and shipyards during WWII to make sure soldiers on the front lines were never short of vital warfighting equipment. Munitions, planes, tanks, and ships by the score were manufactured by American women. If you count yourself among these heroes, GFWC Headquarters would like to hear from you. We are in the process of writing a feature article for *GFWC Clubwoman Magazine* that will recognize your

many in need around our world. To learn more about Operation Smile and start working towards changing a child's life, please get in touch with Vicki Rusu-Ebert at victoria.ebert@operationsmile.org.

Red Nose Day

Is your club participating in [Red Nose Day](#) on May 25? Red Nose Day works to end child poverty – one Red Nose at a time. Money raised through purchasing a Red Nose at your local Walgreens or Duane Reade store supports programs that ensure children in need are safe, healthy, and well educated. Half of all funds donated will be spent in the United States on projects close to home. The other half will be allocated to some of the most disadvantaged communities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

If your club chooses to participate, send a photo to the Communications and Public Relations staff at pr@gfwc.org. We will post the collected images to the GFWC Facebook page next week.



Marketplace: GFWC Member Pin

The accessory no GFWC clubwoman should be without! Wear it proudly to proclaim your membership and promote our organization when asked, "What's that beautiful pin?" Pins are one-inch in diameter. Available for \$5 each at the [GFWC Marketplace](#).

invaluable contribution to the war effort. Please email pr@gfwc.org or call 202-347-3168 to tell us your story.

Apply for the Easterseals Shelby P. Hamlett Award

GFWC clubs and states across the country are participating in Easterseals' campaign to provide services for children and adults with disabilities. To recognize the clubs' efforts from January to December 2016, the General Federation of Women's Clubs and Easterseals will bestow awards at the 2017 GFWC Annual Convention in three categories: Enhancement of Awareness of EasterSeals Services, Fundraising Efforts for Easterseals, and Volunteer Service for Easterseals.

[Click here](#) to learn more and download the application. The deadline to apply is **May 19, 2017**.

In The News

[Learn about GFWC Texas](#) and the **San Antonio Women's Federation** by reading the *San Antonio Express News*. In a recent article, GFWC Texas President-elect Carol Habgood not only acknowledges past contributions by local clubwomen but speaks of the club's current activities including: the provision of several scholarships; donation of handcrafted pillows for patients at a Cancer Center; and fundraising for GFWC partner organizations.

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