

NEWS & NOTES

LIVING THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT THROUGH GFWC

News & Notes - December 22, 2016



Warm Holiday Wishes from GFWC President Sheila E. Shea

Dear GFWC Members,

Greetings from GFWC Headquarters! It really is lovely here this time of year. The tree, lights, and holiday décor add even more beauty to this majestic building. 1734 N Street is a great place to live, especially in December. Those of you who came by for the 2016 Holiday Open House on December 7 can attest to the special beauty that Headquarters has during this season.

Special thanks to the 2016-2018 President's Assistants for decorating and making the house look stunning for the Holiday Open House.

It is amazing to think about all of the celebrations that have taken place at 1734 N Street throughout the years. Thanks to you, the members, every gathering is more festive than the last. I am sincere when I say that GFWC has been one of the greatest gifts in my life, and so this holiday season, my heart is



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

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If you haven't yet subscribed to *News & Notes*, the best source for all things GFWC, what are you waiting for? Signing up is easy and gives you access to timely news items from around Headquarters, our partners, and our work on a national and local scale.

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full of joy because I have been given the opportunity to serve you as President.

As you rush to finish up last-minute holiday preparations, remember to keep *Living the Volunteer Spirit*. Whether that means donating items to a food bank, caroling at a retirement home, or simply calling a neighbor or friend, let's show the world how great a gift it is to be a GFWC clubwoman.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with laughter and happiness. I hope to see you in 2017 as we embark on another fulfilling year of volunteer service.

Forever *Living the Volunteer Spirit* Through GFWC,

Sheila



Clubwomen Honor Fallen Heroes at Wreaths Across America

Icy wintry weather didn't stop GFWC President Sheila Shea, clubwomen, and staff from traveling to Arlington National Cemetery for Wreaths Across America. Bundled up in ponchos, hats and gloves, the group joined approximately 44,000 volunteers to place 245,000 wreaths at every grave site. Clubwomen were proud to honor those who sacrificed so much for our freedom and braved the cold weather in order to "Say Their Names," the theme of this year's event that encourages volunteers to read the name of the veteran after placing a wreath on the grave. 2016 was the 25th year of Wreaths

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

Cares and Concerns

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of [Gloria Malasky](#), New Jersey State President (1982-1984) and Past Mid-Atlantic Region President, on December 13. An active member of GFWC New Jersey for over 55 years, Gloria will be greatly missed by her Federation family.

News & Notes - Holiday Break

There will not be an issue of *News & Notes* on Thursday, December 29, due to the holiday break. Thank you for your understanding, and we hope you enjoy your holiday season.

Apply for the Croly Award

The Jane Cunningham Croly Award for Excellence in Journalism Covering Issues of Concern to Women, or simply the Croly Award, recognizes journalists who best capture the courage, vision, and spirit of Jane Cunningham Croly. The Croly Award winner will demonstrate concern for the rights and advancement of women in our society; an awareness of women's strength and bravery; and/or an attempt to counteract existing sexism.

Across America at Arlington National Cemetery, and clubwomen came from several states to join President Shea in this special event.

Many of those who couldn't make it to Arlington participated in local wreath-laying ceremonies. If your club attended a Wreaths Across America event in your community, please share photos with the GFWC Communications and PR email account by emailing pr@gfwc.org. We'll post these photos to the [Wreaths Across America board](#) on [GFWC's Pinterest page](#).



Letters from Santa

Imagine how exciting it is for a child to get a letter that proves Santa knows them personally by mentioning their best friend, favorite activity, or who is proud of them and why. This is the idea behind **GFWC Sedley Woman's Club** (Virginia) successful "Letters from Santa" project.

The project began ten years ago, when GFWC Sedley was looking for a means of endowing their annual scholarship for a local high school senior. Based on information supplied by purchasers, club members create personalized letters for each child complete with Santa's signature and a Santa Clause Lane, North Pole postmark.

Robin Johnson, who has been working on the project since 2009, says that her favorite letter every Christmas is for a child who lost a sibling. Each year, his mother lists the sibling as an angel in heaven. It is one way the family remembers the child

We encourage all clubs, clubwomen, and partners to spread the word to any print, broadcast, or digital publication that may be interested in submitting an entry for this prestigious award. [Click here](#) to download the entry form and guidelines for the 2017 Croly Award.

All applications must be received by March 15, 2017.

Democracy Day Reception

Celebrate the spirit of democracy and the inauguration of the 45th President of the United States by attending GFWC's Democracy Reception on January 19. If you are planning on being in Washington, D.C., please stop by GFWC Headquarters for a patriotic celebration from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information and to RSVP, please email GFWC Events Coordinator Grace Soriano at gsoriano@gfwc.org. Learn more about the 2017 Presidential Inauguration by visiting <https://www.usa.gov/inauguration-2017>.

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while celebrating the season. Of course, she has also written her fair share of silly letters for pets, husbands (Santa was proud of him for picking up his dirty clothing off the floor!), and elderly family members.

Through "Letters from Santa" GFWC Sedley brings the magic of the holidays into the lives of local children and provides tangible assistance to students. Congratulations on this creative and successful project!

Making Dreams Come True for Montana Children

For 13 years prior to becoming Montana State President, Joyce Hooper volunteered with a therapy dog program. Witnessing the difference the program could make to children fighting to overcome emotional and physical trauma was a powerful and rewarding experience. To continue her efforts to help alleviate the suffering of children, President Hooper selected Montana Hope Project as the special project for her administration.

Montana Hope Project began in 1984 when a group of state highway patrol officers used their own resources to take three children with life-threatening illnesses and their families on a trip to Glacier National Park. Over the last 30 years that original act of kindness has grown into an established non-profit which grants wishes to Montana children facing difficult circumstances. While the most frequently requested wish is a trip to Walt Disney World, one little boy recently requested the opportunity to see a Cleveland Cavaliers game, and another asked for a wheelchair accessible van. The charity is staffed by active and retired highway patrol troopers and their spouses, and greatly relies on community support including that of our GFWC Montana clubwomen.

President Hooper set a goal of raising \$10,000 for the Hope Project. Thanks to the efforts of fundraisers such as the Chili, Cornbread, and Cookie Supper held by the Deer Lodge Women's Club, silent auctions, and the stewardship of Chairman Sandi Lane, President Hooper has already raised more than a third of her goal.

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Calling All Juniorette Club Sponsors

GFWC Juniorettes are learning leadership skills, bonding with like-minded friends, and improving communities around the country. However, they are rarely featured in GFWC publications. We would like to change this and give our amazing Juniorette members the attention they deserve. To make this happen, we need the assistance of you -- our Juniorette club sponsors. Please share social media pages, websites, and newsletters created by your clubs. The more information we get, the better! You may send your submissions to pr@gfwc.org. If we hear from enough clubs, we would like to create publications and a social media site specifically for Juniorettes. So let us hear from you!



Homes for the Holidays

GFWC clubs across the country host holiday celebrations to welcome their neighbors, exhibit Federation spirit, and raise funds to support a multitude of charities. One of the most popular events is the Holiday Open House. Here are examples of just a few clubs opening their doors this year.

GFWC Women's Civic League of Cheyenne (Wyoming) has opened their Christmas House for past 47 years. As the club's only fundraiser, all 200 members work throughout the year planning the event and crafting holiday decorations for a selected home. The Christmas House event in Cheyenne has earned more than \$1.5 million over its long history.

GFWC Seward Woman's Club (Nebraska) partnered with the Seward County Historical Society to decorate the Eberspacher House, a Victorian home, for Christmas. A traditionally festooned tree was placed in the music parlor, and the remainder of the first floor was filled with crafts, holiday themed items, and baked goods sold by the club.

The **Wake Forest Woman's Club** (North Carolina) worked with the Wake Forest Historical Preservation Commission to present their biennial Christmas Historic House Tour. The tour is self-guided and features several area homes and other properties decorated for the season. Tickets were limited to 2,000 to ensure the best possible experience for everyone.

The **Woman's Club of Odessa** (Delaware) held "Christmas in Odessa" for the 52nd year. This holiday tour featured notable homes and public centers, as well as the Historic Odessa Foundation buildings. Each home had a theme. Some of the

In The News

The **GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club** (Connecticut) was featured in an article in the New Britain Herald for making over 1,223 blankets for babies in the Connecticut Children's Medical Center's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit over the last ten years. The blankets provide comfort for both the baby and parents, who are very appreciative of these donations. [Click here](#) to read more about the club's efforts to give parents a thoughtful gift during a very stressful time.

most memorable were "Nutcracker and Mouse King" and "Story Book Trees." Profits from the event allowed the club to award more than 100 scholarships.

Read about additional clubs hosting Open House events in the January/February issue of *Clubwoman Magazine*.

Junioresses Support The Nature Generation

The **Alpine High School Junioresses** (Texas) demonstrated their commitment to protecting the environment by conducting their first Read Green Project. Members donated books from the [Green Earth Book Award Winning List](#) provided by GFWC Conservation Partner The Nature Generation to the local library. Students at local schools were encouraged to read these books and create a poster or write a review and develop a plan outlining ways that we can save the planet. The creative entries were displayed at the 8th Annual Go Texas Festival hosted by the Alpine High School Junioresses. Those at the festival voted for the best entry from each grade level as well as Best of Show and Award of Merit. Thanks to this group of Junioresses, our nation's youth are learning the importance of being environmental stewards.

Mary Vongsavath, the group's advisor, said the purpose of the project was to "encourage our youth to read and learn to think of ways to save our planet." According to Mary, the participants took the project very seriously. Some of the winning projects included an entry titled "Recycle Topia" that encouraged people to "Keep Calm and Always Recycle" and a review for the book "A Place for Frogs."

Interested in conducting club projects that support The Nature Generation? [Click here](#) to view a list of ideas. From creating butterfly gardens to hosting a Green Earth Book Award Winning author, there's so much you can do to encourage the next generation of environmental stewards.



Marketplace: GFWC Sweatshirt

The new GFWC 1/4-zip pullover sweatshirt is versatile enough to be worn alone or as a layering piece. The open hem and set-in sleeves keep them feeling unrestricted. The

gently contoured cut and flatlock stitching details create a sleek feminine silhouette. Features GFWC logo embroidered in white on left chest. Available in sizes S-4XL for \$30 each. [Click here](#) to order yours at the GFWC Marketplace.

GFWC Headquarters will be closed for the holidays beginning December 22, 2016, and will re-open on Tuesday, January 3, 2017. Orders can be placed at the Marketplace during this time, however any orders placed after Tuesday, December 20, will not be shipped until January 3. We appreciate your understanding and hope you have a wonderful holiday season!

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