

# NEWS & NOTES

LIVING THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT THROUGH GFWC

News & Notes - April 6, 2017



## GFWC Recognizes Autism Awareness Month

Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are general terms for a group of complex abnormalities of brain development. Individuals with autism are often misunderstood. Autism Awareness Month gives us the opportunity to spread knowledge and foster an understanding of the disorder, celebrate the unique talents of people with autism, and bring attention to the autistic community's needs.

Individuals with autism do not necessarily look different from others but may be impaired in their speech, behavior, learning, and perceptions of the world around them. It is important to remember that all people, including those on the autism spectrum, have a variety of intellectual strengths and weaknesses.

There are many myths surrounding autism. One of the most common myths is that every autistic person is identical. In fact, it is impossible to find two autistic

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

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## Subscribe to News & Notes

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.

Simply provide your name, mailing address, email, and club name to GFWC Membership Services Manager Kate Garlick at [kgarlick@gfwc.org](mailto:kgarlick@gfwc.org) and you're all set!

individuals who are the same. As Valerie Lentz of Easterseals' says, "They are unique individuals with abilities, quirks, and preferences that may or may not have anything to do with having autism. Understanding the symptoms that define autism is very important, and understanding that autism does not define the person is equally important."

**Learn more about autism by reading Valerie's blog on [gfwc.org](http://gfwc.org).** As the Medical Diagnostic and Autism Program Coordinator for Easterseals Joliet Region, she has invaluable advice to offer on the diagnosis and treatment of autism.



## Simple Ways to Celebrate GFWC Federation Day

Every year on April 24, we celebrate Federation Day to mark the moment 63 clubs came together to form GFWC in 1890. Today, with over 3,000 GFWC clubs across the country and around the world, there's so much to be proud of this Federation Day.

Do you know the story behind the founding of GFWC? It all started in 1868 when Jane Cunningham Croly, a journalist who went by the name Jennie June, was denied entrance to a lecture featuring Charles Dickens simply because she was a woman. This led Croly to form her own women's club—Soros. Many other clubs began to form around the country, and on April 24, 1890, they came together in New York City to form the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

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## Help Us Reach 10,000 Facebook Likes

There's no denying the power of numbers!  
GFWC's Facebook page is quickly growing,

Since that day in 1890, clubwomen have advocated for pure food and drug laws, helped establish the eight hour workday, started 75% of our nation's public libraries, and much more. Let's honor the legacy of our founders and these incredible achievements by *Living the Volunteer Spirit* even more profoundly than normal throughout April, especially on Federation Day and during Volunteers in Action week from April 23-29. Although Federation Day falls on a Monday this year, we encourage you to celebrate all month long. From visiting GFWC Headquarters in Washington, D.C. to changing your cover photo on Facebook, there are many easy ways for you and your club to celebrate Federation Day.

Visit <http://www.gfwc.org/celebrate-federation-day-2017/> for an article featuring nine ideas for celebrating. Be sure to share the blog post with your fellow clubwomen to spread the Federation spirit!

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## Envision, Embrace, Empower

GFWC Michigan President Donna Brown selected "Envision, Embrace, Empower" as the theme of her administration. This theme will encompass initiatives in three areas of concern: Conservation, Human Trafficking, and Leadership.

The Flint Water Crisis began in 2014 when the Flint River became the drinking water source for the city of Flint, Michigan. Due to insufficient water treatment, over 100,000 residents were potentially exposed to dangerously high levels of lead in their drinking water. Improving the water quality and dealing with repercussions of the crisis will take years. This tragedy has brought to the forefront the need for citizens across Michigan to monitor the quality of their water supply. President Brown is encouraging clubwomen to obtain copies of the annual Michigan Water Quality Report, to invite government officials to discuss the report's findings during club meetings, and to conduct tests of their own drinking water. Other conservation activities include: working to protect the Great Lakes area from invasive species; advocating for laws to regulate commercial use of

and we are proud to have over 9,300 likes. We think we can reach 10,000 likes by the kickoff of the 2017 GFWC Convention in Palm Springs, but we need your help. From now until June 24, we encourage you to invite your friends to like GFWC's Facebook page. Simply visit <https://www.facebook.com/GFWCMembers/> and click on "Invite friends to like this page" on the column in the right hand corner.

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## Interested in Advertising in the 2017 GFWC Annual Convention Program?

The Convention Program will be distributed to each clubwoman when they register in Palm Springs, California. The program contains meeting schedules, maps of the convention center, a complete agenda, exhibitor profiles, and information on local attractions. The program also provides an excellent opportunity to recognize the achievements of your Federation sisters.

[Click here](#) to find advertising rates, artwork specifications, submission deadlines, and the commitment form.

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the Great Lakes; and supporting or commencing recycling programs.

You might be surprised to learn that in 2014 Michigan was named one of the top five states for human trafficking. Given the prevalence of the problem, it is essential that residents are trained to recognize the signs of human trafficking. President Brown is empowering clubwomen to help end human trafficking through educational programs and activities associated with GFWC Michigan's Legislative Day.

Due to her 16 years of membership and seven years participation on the GFWC Michigan Board, President Brown recognizes the importance of leadership skills development. GFWC Michigan has created a two-year plan aimed at "Bridging the Leadership Gap" through training sessions at district and state meetings. The sessions will focus on goal setting, problem solving, effective delegation, proper meeting management, and mentoring members to assume leadership roles.

President Brown has set an ambitious agenda for her term. We are certain GFWC Michigan clubwomen will exceed her expectations on all fronts.



## Submit Your Pinwheel Garden Information

National Child Abuse Prevention Month has begun, and that means it's time for pinwheel gardens! We are creating an interactive map to share the location of GFWC-sponsored pinwheel gardens throughout the country. Send information about your pinwheel gardens to [pr@gfwc.org](mailto:pr@gfwc.org), and we will include it on our interactive map. [Click here](#) to learn more about Prevent Child Abuse America's Pinwheels for Prevention campaign.

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## Attend the First Ever International Women's Summit from the Creators of the Celebrate Your Life Event

**May 4-7, 2017 • Phoenix, AZ**

Featuring female visionaries and leaders, including author of *Eat, Pray, Love* Elizabeth Gilbert, *New York Times* best-selling author Marianne Williamson, former MSNBC host Melissa Harris-Perry, former president of OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network Sheri Salata, and many more.

You will discover what it means to live a courageous, empowered and authentic life,



## Partner Spotlight: USO

The USO strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home, and country

throughout their service to the nation. We are the Force Behind the Forces.

For more than 76 years, the [USO](#), a private, nonprofit organization, has served the men and women of the U.S. military and their families throughout their service – from the moment they join, through their deployments, and as they transition back to their communities.

Today's service members need the care, comfort, connection, and support that can only be provided by an organization that is with them at every point of their military journey, wherever they serve. The USO is continuously adapting to the needs of our men and women in uniform and their families, so they can focus on their very important mission. We are a family of volunteers, sustained by the charitable contributions of millions of generous Americans and united in our commitment to support America's service members by keeping them connected to the very things they've sworn to defend – home and family.



## Marketplace: 2016-2018 Administration Pin

Looking for a great way to celebrate the new administration? Why not do so with our *Living the Volunteer Spirit* 2016-2018 Administration pin! This magnetic-backed pin features raised surfaces, vibrant colors, and includes the new Living the Volunteer Spirit logo. Pins are \$5.00 each. Get yours today at the [GFWC Marketplace](#).

while connecting with women from around the world.

Let nothing stop you from living the greatness that you are meant to be!

[www.celebrateyourlife.org](http://www.celebrateyourlife.org)

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## In The News

**The Woman's Club of Chatman** (New Jersey) is looking to attract younger members by adding an evening section for women who work during the day and are unable to attend afternoon meetings. The club hopes this will add more members so the club can continue to stay active past its centennial next year. [Click here](#) to read the *Chatham Courier* article about the club's efforts to increase membership.

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### Our Contact Information

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