

# NEWS & NOTES

LIVING THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT THROUGH GFWC

News & Notes - December 21, 2017



## Warm Holiday Wishes from GFWC President Sheila E. Shea

As 2017 comes to a close, I would like to thank the GFWC clubwomen who embraced the spirit of the holidays by volunteering. While there is never a moment when you are not supporting your communities, you truly shine during the season of giving. From the **GFWC Lilburn Women's Club** (Alabama) which donated over \$6,000 to their local Cooperative to the **GFWC West Side Woman's Club** (Pennsylvania) which painted 26 holiday-themed window murals, it seems that every club found a unique way to improve the lives of others this season.

I am grateful to have been selected to represent such an extraordinary group of women. Your accomplishments during the last month and throughout 2017 were astounding. Over the last year, you have frequently been asked to aid both your communities and your fellow clubwomen. A call which you invariably answered with grace, heart, and determination. I

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

cannot wait to see how you will continue GFWC's proud tradition of advocacy and volunteer service in 2018!

I wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with joy and peace.

Forever *Living the Volunteer Spirit* through GFWC,

*Sheila*

Sheila E. Shea  
GFWC International President

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## GFWC Toy Drives

Many children spend weeks looking forward to Christmas morning so they can run to their trees and find presents they'll treasure. Unfortunately, not every family can afford to fulfill their child's wish list. Thankfully, GFWC clubs are generously making sure that children in their communities have the chance to unwrap gifts this year after all.

The **Woman's Club of Ste. Genevieve** (Missouri) presented more than 100 toys for the Sheriff's Toy Drive. They also surprised their deputy with a \$500 gift card for the Shop with a Cop program, where law enforcement partners with underprivileged children in the area to shop for gifts that will make their Christmas special.

This year the **Benson Junior Woman's Club** (Arizona) will be providing 112 children with three gifts each! They'll also be

Membership Services Manager Kate Garlick at [kgarlick@gfwc.org](mailto:kgarlick@gfwc.org) and you're all set!

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## Holiday Schedule

GFWC Headquarters will be closed from December 21, 2017 through January 2, 2018. As a result, the next edition of *News & Notes* will be published on January 11, 2018.

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## Cares & Concerns

We are greatly saddened to announce the loss of Past Wisconsin State President **Nancy Kehrberg** on December 15. Arrangements are being planned with Menomonie's Rhiel Funeral Home.

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## New on the GFWC Blog!

Christmas caroling is a cherished GFWC tradition that brings joy to clubwomen and their communities alike. Read the latest addition to the [GFWC Blog](#) to learn more about how clubwomen from

helping approximately 75 families by distributing gift cards to a grocery store so they may purchase holiday dinner. President Kristen Smith said, "We love seeing the families that are so grateful that they burst into tears. That makes all the hard work worth it."

For 10 years the **Woman's Club of Cotulla** (Texas) has participated in their county's Christmas gift drive. Club members both buy gifts and provide a monetary donation. Funds for the project are garnered through an Ugly Sweater contest at their December meeting. The gift drive benefits approximately 400 children who would otherwise go without presents.

We thank all of the GFWC clubwomen who started the giving season with toy drives so children, regardless of their circumstances, will have the happy holiday they deserve.

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## Holiday Tour of Homes

Most women enjoy decorating their home for a special occasion, but Christmas is the time of year when we truly outdo ourselves and make every sparkling light count. There are thousands of holiday decorating styles and we appreciate them all. To capitalize on the season's festive spirit and our love of decor, GFWC clubs across the country hosted Holiday Home Tours. Here are examples of just a few:

In early December, **GFWC Parkersburg Woman's Club** (West Virginia) held its 50th annual Holly Trail Tour of Homes. Club

the **Fuquay-Varina Junior Woman's Club** (North Carolina), the **Swartz Creek Women's Club** (Michigan), the **Women's Club of Farmingdale** (New York), the **Oconomowoc Junior Woman's Club** (Wisconsin), and the **Woman's Club of New Tampa** (Florida) are brightening the holidays through song.

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## Read the WHRC December Newsletter

The December edition of the *WHRC Newsletter* is now available! This month's newsletter highlights special holiday projects carried out by clubs across the country. If you don't already receive the *WHRC Newsletter* and would like to, please sign up by visiting [gfwc.org](http://gfwc.org). You can enroll by entering your email address in the designated area at the bottom of the homepage.

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## FUNDRAISING

**From Our Family to Yours**

President Jody Stewart described this year's tour as "the best of the best." The club estimates that 600 to 700 attendees from across their region took part. One of the guests remarked, "I wanted to check out how other people decorate for Christmas and their perspective on decorating."

The **GFWC Cameo Club of Mountain Home** (Arkansas) recently conducted their 38th Annual Holiday Tour of Homes. This tour was special because it included the Bufford School Museum's Grand Opening. All decked out for the season, the museum's 9-foot, old-fashioned Christmas tree twinkled with vintage ornaments and lights. The display also recalled the building's storied past by including a little red wagon and period toys. A portion of the tour's proceeds will fund improvements at the museum.

The **GFWC Crystal River Women's Club** (Florida) featured four homes in their annual Silver Bells Tour. The event is the club's largest fundraiser of the year and tickets were sold out well in advance. Lynn Marcum's bed-and-breakfast was a highlight of the event due to her nautical theme. Mermaids and reindeer were seen competing for space by the fireplace!

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## Legislative Corner

### Tax Reform Bill Dominates Rush to Holidays

In the final days of the 2017 legislative session, Congress completed action on the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1, H. Rept 115-466). Here are the following provisions affecting charitable giving:

- The bill maintains charitable deductions but increases standard deduction (\$12,000 for individuals; \$24,000 for joint filers), so it is anticipated that fewer taxpayers will itemize. Our concern is that research indicates that donors will not contribute as much if deductions are eliminated;
- The measure increases the cap on deductions, from 50 percent to as much as 60 percent of Adjusted Gross Income (AGI), which hopefully will incentivize high-income donors to give more to charity;

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## Thank You for Supporting GFWC!

We wish to thank the clubs and clubwomen who generously support GFWC at the close of each year. If you wish to have your tax-deductible donation counted in 2017, please remember to post your contribution by December 31. Checks may be sent to 1734 N Street, NW Washington, DC 20036.

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## In the News

On December 2, the **GFWC Plant City Junior Woman's Club** (Florida) held their inaugural Reindeer 5k Run. Over a hundred contestants, many wearing holiday-themed attire, participated in the race. Waiting at the finish line were

- The bill repeals the statutory charitable mileage rate of 14 cents per mile and provides instead that the standard mileage rate used for determining the charitable contribution deduction shall be a rate which takes into account the variable costs of operating an automobile. The IRS will set the new rate to be used when providing volunteer services; and
- The bill allows tax deductions for medical expenses, returning to the 7.5 percent threshold of Adjusted Gross Income for tax years 2017 and 2018. Afterwards the rate will return to 10 percent unless Congress acts.

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Track bills, contact your local representative, and take action on issues germane to GFWC Resolutions with the GFWC Legislative Action Center. [Click here](#) to utilize this powerful tool and to enroll to receive updates.

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## GFWC California Disaster Relief Fund

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, there have been 8,711 fires in the state which consumed 1.3 million acres, or about 2,000 square miles this year. That is an area larger than the state of Delaware! Thousands of structures have been destroyed including the homes of several GFWC clubwomen.

To help these members of our Federation family recover from their devastating loss, GFWC California has established a Donation Fund. Anyone who would like to offer assistance may send a contribution to the **GFWC California Disaster Fund** C/O Reggie Mattox, 2867 Banyon Tree Lane, Hemet, CA 92545.

GFWC California President-elect Dori Kelsi stated, "We thank all of the clubwomen who have been sending their cares, prayers, and loving thoughts. We do need them and are thankful that our sisters care for us."

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Santa, Little Miss Plant City, and her court who distributed gold medals to the racers. Proceeds from the run will benefit the club's Shoe Project, which provides new shoes and socks to more than 700 underprivileged students. To learn more about the Reindeer 5k Run, read the complete article in the [Plant City Observer](#).

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GFWC—Living the Volunteer Spirit



## Marketplace: *Living the Volunteer Spirit* Sticky Notes

*Living the Volunteer Spirit*

Sticky Notes are a must-have  
for every busy GFWC

clubwoman. These sticky notes are available in light blue and feature a white GFWC emblem watermark and the GFWC - *Living the Volunteer Spirit* tagline. Each pack contains 50 sheets of 3" x 4" sticky notes. Available for \$1.25 per pack at the [GFWC Marketplace](#).

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### Marketplace Shipping Notice

GFWC Headquarters will be closed for the holidays beginning December 21, 2017, and will re-open on Wednesday, January 3, 2018. Orders can be placed at the Marketplace during this time, however any orders placed after Monday, December 19, will not be shipped until January 3. We appreciate your understanding and hope you have a wonderful holiday season!

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### Our Contact Information

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