



Bits & Pieces

GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club

October 2025

Volume 16, Issue 8

Next Meeting: October 23, 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fran Gialanella

A big thank you to all of you who stepped up to fill in the gaps on our coverage of Heaven Hill. We truly appreciate the assistance and a couple of people even told me how much fun it was to be there. (It is!) Unfortunately, we had some weather issues but let's hope that, at the end of the day, we do well enough to provide the continued support we want to give to those organizations we support.

Our pot luck dinner was a big success with lots of great food and good company. We are very happy to have 4 new members who are eager to be a part of our group. We enjoyed hearing about how excited our representative was with the Girls' Career Institute so that was fun as well. This month, it's a little more serious with the Market Street Mission speaking to us about the work they do. This is a new organization for us so we are looking forward to hearing what they have to say.

I know that we mentioned the reporting requirements at the last meeting and, since we are in the last quarter of the year, I would ask that you all start thinking about your time and in-kind contributions to our many committees so that we can start the reporting process by providing information to the chairs who need to gather all that in January. I know that a lot of time and contributions go unreported, so please do the best you can to keep records of what you all do.

I wanted to mention the Women of Achievement nominations that are due by November 15. This is a way for the New Jersey State Federation to recognize extraordinary women and their impact on our state. If anyone would like to make a nomination, there is additional information and a nomination form on the state website which can be accessed by clicking on the link on our website.

Hope you enjoy what there is of the beautiful fall weather and colors. We will see you hopefully on October 23rd for our monthly meeting.

2025-2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

*** Contact Maria Dorsey, Federation Secretary, if interested in any of the NJSFWC or District events**

2025

- September 15- November 2 Heaven Hill Farm, Great Pumpkin Festival
- October 20 * - NJSFWC Fall Conference—Lobster Shanty, 80 Channel Drive, Point Pleasant Beach, NJ, \$60
- October 23 - VTWC Meeting—Speaker Jeff Lukawski from the Market Street Mission
- November 13 and November 15 * Headquarters Open House Celebration for 60th Anniversary
- November 20 - VTWC Meeting—Birth Haven Speaker and Baby Shower for Birth Haven
- December 4 - VTWC Holiday Celebration (strictly social)
- December 18 - VTWC Meeting and Installation of New Members

2026

- January 22 - VTWC Meeting—Speaker Lisa Valentino, NJ State Outreach Coordinator, CUE (Community United Effort) Center for Missing Persons
- February 26 - VTWC Meeting—Presentation related to Heart Health and Annual Cookie Baking and Gifting
- March 11 * - Highlands District Performing Arts Festival (snow date 3/18)
- March 26 - VTWC Meeting—Presentation related to Women’s History Month

2025-2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

*** Contact Maria Dorsey, Federation Secretary, if interested in any of the NJSFWC or District events**

2026

- April 8 * - Highlands District Spring Conference
- April 23 - VTWC Meeting—Speaker from Sussex County Sheriff’s Dept.
Topic TBD
- May 28 - VTWC Meeting—TBD
- June 10 * - Highlands District Council Meeting
- June 25 - VTWC Meeting—Summer Sendoff

2025-2026 VTWC Leadership

Executive Board

President	Fran Gialanella
First Vice President	MJ Palmer (Programs)
Second Vice President	Fran Janusko (Fundraising)
Treasurer	Judy Phillips (Ways & Means)
Recording Secretary	Donna Maher
Corresponding Secretary	Linda Hibbert
Federation Secretary	Maria Dorsey (traditionally outgoing President)

Committee Chairs

Communications	Maria Dorsey (Facebook and Media)
Internal Communications	Karen Breese (Newsletter “Bits & Pieces”)
Webmaster	Deborah Fagnan
Membership	Joan Danaher

Department Chairs

Advocates for Children	Fran Gialanella
Birth Haven	Rosetta Peterson
Dulce Esperanza	Meg Gleason
Ginnie’s House	Donna Maher
Arts Performing & Arts & Culture	Dee Garbarino
Civic Engagement & Outreach	Debra Piccirillo
Veterans & Military Support	Debra Piccirillo
International Affairs	Lisa Mills
Birthday Bags	Lisa Thomas, Judy Phillips
Benny’s Bodega	Lisa Murphy
DASI	Lisa Murphy
Market Street Mission	Pat Berls, Joanne Matthes
Project Self-Sufficiency	Joan Danaher, Dee Garbarino
WAFO (Warwick Area Farmworkers Organization)	Meg Gleason
Education & Libraries	Valerie Seufert
Environment & Conservation	Maria Dorsey
Health & Wellness	Karen Szepietowski
Blankets with Care	Karen Szepietowski
Comfort Pillows	Reba Burrell
Vial of Life	Rosemarie Guidice
Special State Project (The NJ Children’s Alliance)	Fran Gialanella
President’s Scrapbook	Nancy Speruta and Maryann DiCola

THIS MONTH'S MEETING TOPIC

**MARKET STREET MISSION
Pat Berls and Joanne Matthes**

**Come Join Us
October 23, 6:30 pm**

This month, we will be welcoming Jeff Lukawski as our guest speaker. Jeff is the Site Manager at Market Street Mission's Newton location. He will share with us Market Street Mission's ongoing work in Sussex County and their vision for the future.

If you are able to make a donation to the Mission, we invite you to bring it along to our October meeting. Donations may be placed on the donation table and should be labeled as "Market Street".

For a list of needs, please access our website at www.VTWC.org. Click on the menu and scroll to What's Happening Now.

Thank you for your support,
Joanne and Pat

FUNDRAISING
Fran Janusko
Second Vice-President

Thank you to all our members who volunteered for the Heaven Hill Pumpkin Festival. There is an opening for Saturday, October 25th from 2-6 still available. I have been in touch with Kathy at Heaven Hill regarding the November 1 and November 2 dates. She will get back to me whether the farm will need our help on those dates. Perhaps we can fill those dates in the event that they do need our help.

I have received positive feedback from new members who have volunteered saying that they had a great time.

50/50 will be available at our meeting.

Fran

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Linda Hibbert

To all our wonderful members:

Just a friendly reminder... If you receive a thank you letter personally from one of our organizations for our donations and help, please give the original to me so I can pass it on to our scrapbook ladies, Maryann and Nancy!

If you wish to share it with our members at a meeting or in the Newsletter, that would be welcomed or, when you give it to me, I will.

See you all at our October meeting!

Sincerely,
Linda

**ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN
(for November Donations)**

**BIRTH HAVEN
Rosetta Peterson**

I am still collecting anything for babies as well as for the moms. I reached out to Melissa from Birth Haven just to re-confirm that she or another staff member will be coming to our November meeting to talk about the organization for the new members. I will be picking up things from Walmart for babies prior to our November meeting. Once the November date is re-confirmed with Birth Haven, we will be sure to include a list of donation items in the November newsletter for the baby shower.

Rosetta

**GINNIE'S HOUSE
Donna Maher**

Calling all teddy bears and children's blankets!

Ginnie's House Annual Children's Christmas Party is approaching. Each child is given a teddy bear and blanket. Your kind donations toward this cause will be needed no later than the November meeting.

Thank you in advance for your kindness!

Donna



ARTS & CULTURE

ART CONTEST VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Dee Garbarino

We have some volunteers for the Bicentennial+50 years Art Contest for next year. The project is an Art Contest for July 4, 2026 for the children of Vernon.

This will be based on the 250th anniversary of our country.

Please let me know if you would like to help out. It should be fun!

Thank you,

Dee



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BIRTHDAY BAGS

Lisa Thomas and Judy Phillips

This month, Lisa and I prepared eight birthday bags with the help of Ellen Marion for the residents of the Homestead Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. The most requested items were hot chocolate and soft cookies. Lisa will deliver the gift bags later this month to celebrate the residents with October and November birthdays.

Judy

WAFO

Warwick Area Farmworker Organization

Meg Gleason

One of the programs WAFO sponsors is the Tuesday Afternoon Homework Club. The program follows the Warwick school calendar and is held at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 70 Little York Avenue, Warwick, New York from 4:30—5:30 p.m. Tutors work one-on-one with students to complete homework, read together and wrap up the hour with a fun game.

If you are interested in volunteering your time, please contact Kathy Brieger at [***kbrieger@sunriver.org***](mailto:kbrieger@sunriver.org).

Thank you.
Meg

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

DASI

Lisa Murphy

JUST FOR YOU BAGS

Ongoing collections for DASI's Just for You Bags consist of items requested for DASI clients who come into one of the DASI programs and/or for DASI clients who transition out of the program. The ongoing collection requests are:

Bath Towel	Hand Towel
Blanket (Twin)	Kitchen Towel
Body Lotion	Oven Mitt
Body Wash	Pillow Case (Twin)
Brush	Pillows
Chapstick	Potholder
Comb	Shampoo
Conditioner	Sheet Set (Twin)
Dawn	Soap
Deodorant	Socks
Dish Towel	Sponge
Emory Board	Toothbrush
Face Cloth	Toothpaste
Hand Cream	

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

EARTH ANGELS

Valerie Seufert

Hi All: Friendly reminder to save any calendars you receive for 2026 for the Earth Angels project along with greeting cards that homebound seniors can use throughout the year. All types of greeting cards, except Christmas cards, are requested.

You can also purchase calendars or cards at Dollar General for \$1.00. Last year, with donations and what I purchased myself, we provided 55 calendars to go in the holiday bags for homebound and nursing home seniors. Earth Angels puts together at least 100 bags for seniors at the holidays.

Thank you!
Valerie



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BAGS FOR BUDDIES

Becky Saggau

Pictured here is Edward Schmick with backpacks our Club collected for his project “Bags for Buddies” (described in his words below):

“ ‘Bags for Buddies’ is an initiative I founded to support children in the foster care system by providing personalized duffel bags filled with comfort items and some essentials. The goal is to replace trash bags often used during transitions and remind every child that they are valued, seen and cared for.”

Each backpack carries hope, a chance and a reminder of what shaped me.

Surrounded by them, I can’t help but smile at how far we’ve come and what we’re building. Thank you to the Vernon Woman’s Club for pouring love into Bags for Buddies.



ENVIRONMENT

VERNON CLEAN COMMUNITIES ROAD CLEANUP PROJECT

Maria Dorsey

I would like to thank the following 7 members: Rosemarie Guidice, Joan Dana-her, Fran Janusko, Dee Garbarino, Linda Stengel, Lisa Thomas and Judy Storms, our road cleanup crew, who braved the rain back on May 6, 2025 while attempting to work on the Vernon Clean Communities Road Cleanup Project. We just received a check for the 2.5 hours we worked that day and earned \$375 for our club.

Although we did not get to work on September 6th, the rescheduled date, we will plan on another day in the Spring. Let's hope we get more members to help out and raise more money!

Maria



HEALTH & WELLNESS

BLANKETS WITH CARE
Karen Szepietowski

Below are the measurements for the blankets we donate to local organizations:

- Chemo & Dialysis 28 wide by 45 long (maximum 30 wide by 50 long)
- DASI 36 wide by 60 long (for beds)
- Lap Robes 26 wide by 26 long
- Baby Blankets 29 wide by 29 long
- Rectangles 7 inches by 9 inches

Hi All:

Just a reminder: Since I haven't delivered any blankets to the Karen Ann Quinlan Hospice yet this calendar year, I am hoping to get a few more together before I make a trip there. They appreciate all the blankets our club donates to them no matter the color. They especially love the red, white and blue blankets that can be given to their patients that are veterans. The blankets provided to hospice patients are the same size as the Chemo/Dialysis blankets, 28 inches wide by 45 inches long (maximum 30 inches wide by 50 inches long).

Thank you.

Karen Szepietowski
Health & Wellness Chair

Margaret Conti

Margaret is our special friend and likes to receive cards and small “gifts” from us. Any time you would like, send her a card to say “HI”.

Margaret Conti
PafaCom, Inc.
543 East Garden Road
Vineland, NJ 08360

**Reminder: The cost for Margaret’s cards, gifts, etc. each month is the responsibility of the “friend” member. Our budget does not have any monies allocated to reimburse for postage, etc.

I am planning to send a package of Halloween treats to our club’s special friend, Margaret Conti. I will have a small Halloween bag set up on the dump table at our October meeting for anyone who would like to contribute “a small treat” such as a candy bar or a small bag of chips, pretzels, etc. No need for anyone to bring a full bag of any one type of treat; just one of whatever you plan to hand out to the trick-or-treaters at your house will be fine.

Thank you.

Karen Szepietowski



Ongoing Collections

We have an ongoing collection for pop tabs found on soda cans, pet food, soup cans, etc. We also have an ongoing collection for children's DVDs for DASI.

Note, two of the ongoing collections are highlighted in this newsletter: DASI Just for You Bags (page 10) and Earth Angels (page 11).

Friendly Reminder

If you haven't already done so, please be sure to review the NJSFWC Website at your leisure (information below).

NJSFWC Website

**The New Jersey State
Federation of Woman's Clubs'
website**

is packed full of information.

www.njsfwc.org

No log in is necessary.