



Bits & Pieces

GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club

March 2025

Volume 16, Issue 3

Next Meeting: March 27, 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Page 1 of 2)

Fran Gialanella

Lisa DeRitter

As I sit here today to write this President's message, I think this would be a great opportunity to share my little story of today which strengthens my belief in the general goodness of people and our greater NJ Woman's Clubs. In February, I ordered 2 lanterns for our Club to support the state project, the New Jersey Children's Alliance. I received an email in mid-February from our Highlands VP stating that they were available to pick up at the Headquarters Building in New Brunswick,

Today was the day I decided to take the 1 1/2 hour, 70 mile trip to HQ and, when I got there, I was informed that we were on a waiting list and more lanterns were on order; therefore, none of the lanterns there now were earmarked for me. The woman told me that an email had gone out to all those who were on the waiting list, but I let her know I never received such a communication. I told her that I understood this was a clerical error and not her fault but that I was not happy to have come all the way there to leave empty-handed. We both expressed our regrets and I left.

Five minutes later, as I was in the car on my way home, my phone rang. The woman asked me if I was still close by and if I could come back. They would give me the lanterns anyway and figure it all out later. Needless to say, I went back immediately and was so grateful for the kindness. I know my family thinks of me as a "Pollyanna" but I refuse to believe that people are not good on some level and I know that my fellow Woman's Club members certainly are.

~~ continued ~~



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Fran Gialanella

Lisa DeRitter

Unfortunately, I will not be able to be at the meeting this month as my son is having back surgery and I need to travel to Virginia to help him out, but I am hopeful that as many of you as possible can come out for our meeting on the 27th for Women's History Month.

Finally, I want to mention that the payment and reporting methodology for our annual dues has changed this year so that the money is now due to the State by May 1. Please pay your dues at the March meeting or at your earliest convenience. Thanks for all you do.

See you soon,
Fran

2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

- March 27 - VTWC Meeting—Presentation by Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)
- April 1 - 10:00 am—Pinwheel Planting at Vernon Town Hall, PAL and Maple Grange Park
- April 7 - 3:45 pm—Pinwheel Planting with Girl Scout Daisy Troop 99014 at Cedar Mountain School, Vernon
- April 9 - Highlands District Spring Conference and Achievement Day, Hanover Manor, East Hanover, NJ (registration deadline April 2)
- April 11 - Deadline to donate silent auction items for Taste of Vernon
- April 24 - VTWC Meeting—A speaker attached to the SSP NJ Children's Alliance; Recognition of members who have been in the VTWC for 25 years and members who have been in the VTWC for 50 years
- April 26 - NJSFWC Spring Canva Workshop at Headquarters, New Brunswick
- April 28 - TASTE OF VERNON—Red Tail Lodge, Mountain Creek
- May 4-7 - NJSFWC 131st Annual Convention—Hard Rock Hotel, Atlantic City, NJ
- May 17 - 10:00 am—Vernon Clean Communities Program road cleanup; meet at Vernon DPW office
- May 22 - VTWC Meeting—Activity Fair in support of any of our charities
- June 6-9 - GFWC Convention—Atlanta, GA
- June 11 - Highlands District Council Meeting
- June 26 - VTWC Meeting—Summer Sendoff and New Member Installation (members who have joined since January 2025).

2025-2026 VTWC Leadership

Executive Board

Co-Presidents	Lisa DeRitter, 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”)
Membership	Joan Danaher, Marie Flores

Department Chairs

Advocates for Children	
Birth Haven	Rosetta Patterson
Dulce Esperanza	Meg Gleason
Ginnie’s House	Donna Maher
St. Jude’s Ranch for Children	Dee Garbarino
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 DeRitter
Project Self-Sufficiency	Marie Flores
WAFO (Warwick Area	
Farmworkers Organization)	Meg Gleason
Domestic Abuse & Prevention	Lisa Murphy
Education & Libraries	Valerie Seufert
Environment & Conservation	Vacant
Health & Wellness	
Blankets with Care	Karen Szepietowski
Comfort Pillows	Reba Burrell
Vial of Life	Rosemarie Guidice
Special State Project	Fran Gialanella
(The NJ Children’s Alliance)	
President’s Scrapbook	Nancy Speruta and Maryann DiCola

MONTHLY MEETING
March 27th, 6:30 pm
Women's History Month
MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
Program Chair

MARCH—IN LIKE A LION OUT LIKE A LAMB



In recognition of Women's History Month, Valerie Seufert, who is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), will enlighten us about this national, non-profit group dedicated to promoting education and patriotism.

If you have any stories about women in your family or friend group who have distinguished themselves in their work or in their communities and you would like to share these stories with our attendees at this meeting, feel free to bring them that night.

MJ

MONTHLY MEETING

March 27th, 6:30 pm

Message from Valerie Seufert

MARCH MEETING

This month is Women in History Month, so as part of the program, I will be speaking about an organization I belong to 'Daughters of the American Revolution'. In addition to this, I will talk about women in my life that I feel did something special in their lives and I would like to recognize.

I invite every member to think of the special women you know or have known. It can be a family member, friend or even someone you read or heard about. Share this wonderful information with our fellow members. Even consider sharing with us something that you have done during your life.

I look forward to seeing all of you on the 27th, hearing about all the wonderful women we know and learning a little about each other.

Valerie

TREASURER'S NOTES

Judy Phillips

DUES ARE DUE!

I will be collecting dues at the March meeting.

Please bring your check (or cash) for **\$40** made payable to **VTWC**.

If you prefer to pay with **VENMO**, the club user's name is:

@VernonTownship-WomansClub

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please mail your check to the following address:

Judy Phillips

128 Lake Pochung Road

Sussex, NJ 07461

Thank you for your attention!

Judy

MONTHLY MEETING

April 24th, 6:30 pm

Special State Project-NJ Children's Alliance

MJ Palmer, First Vice-President

Program Chair



The Special State Project we are supporting for 2025-26 is the NJ Children's Alliance. Many of you have already helped Donna Maher with projects related to the NJ Children's Alliance when you helped with any projects for Ginnie's House.

At our April meeting, we will hear from a speaker about all the work the Alliance does related to advocacy for children. The members of the Alliance power a national movement to keep children safe at centers called CACs. These centers provide a coordinated, evidence-based response to children experiencing abuse in all 50 states.

I hope to see you in April. Happy Easter. Happy Spring!!

MJ

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

DASI

Lisa Murphy

For March, food donations will go to DASI. The club will alternate months between DASI and Benny Bodega.

In addition to food donations, Kim Prentiss of DASI has specifically requested slippers (in all sizes) and pajamas for adults S-XL. Since there are a few men, neutral colors are preferred. We will be preparing and distributing Easter baskets to DASI residents. In the last month, there have been 12 adults, 3 teens and 5 school age children. In addition to candy, some ideas for the baskets may be:

Adults:

Personal items for bath, shower or fragrance

Children:

Age-appropriate activity, game or craft

If you would like to donate items for the Easter baskets or for the immediate need, pajamas and slippers, please bring the items to the March meeting.

Thank you,
Lisa

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BIRTHDAY BAGS

Lisa Thomas and Judy Phillips

Shortly, Lisa will be reaching out to the Homestead Rehabilitation and Health Care Center requesting the birthday names for the months of April and May.

Once we hear back from the Director of Recreation, we will work on shopping and wrapping the “gifts” for the residents. Some of the items included in their birthday bags are donated by many of you of whom we are very thankful for and other items are purchased with the money from our budget. Once filled, they are delivered before the end of the month when they all open their gifts together.

Thank you,
Judy and Lisa

PROJECT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Marie Flores

I am still collecting dresses/gowns, shoes and accessories for the PSS Sister to Sister Prom Shop. I will collect through our March 27th meeting. So, if you have anything to donate, bring it to the meeting. Remember, all gowns/dresses MUST be clean and on hangers. Joan Danaher and I will deliver everything to Project Self-Sufficiency on Friday, March 28th.

Also, as many of you know, I am moving and would love for someone to take over PSS. It's very easy and they do wonderful work. So, think about it and please get in touch with me.

Thanks,
Marie

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

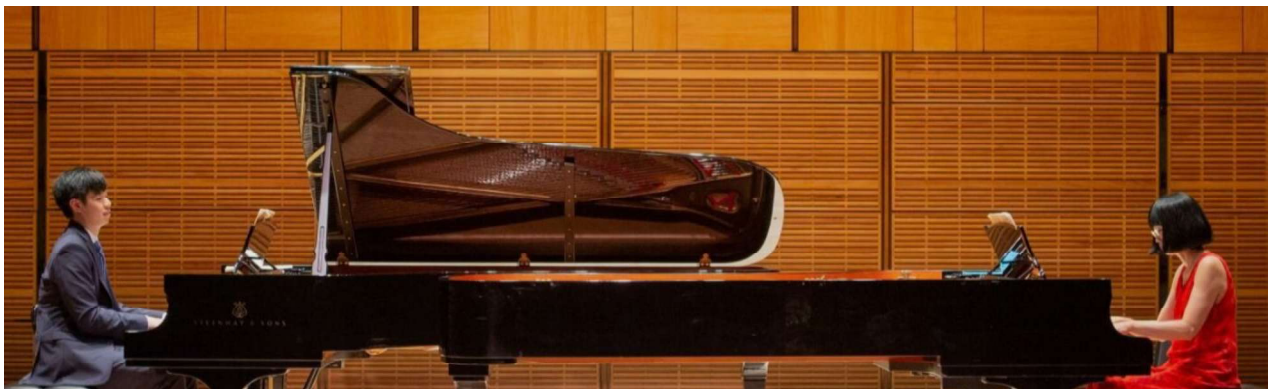
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Lisa Mills

For almost a year, some VTWC members have enjoyed being international pen pals with women in the town of Chervonohrad, Ukraine, and have learned about the horrors of the war with Russia. On March 15, the Friends of Chervonohrad (FoC) hosted a fundraising concert in Morristown, NJ to support their hometown and raise money for reconstructive eye surgeries for soldiers and training for surgeons and front-line psychologists. FoC has already donated \$150,000 in supplies to the town since the war began three years ago.

The wonderful concert was performed by Two Piano Journey, a mother and son pianist team, who have helped raise more than \$3 million for nonprofits in the hunger relief, education and social service sectors. I attended the concert and made a \$100 donation on behalf of our club, helping the event raise more than \$52,000 for FoC.

Lisa



Warwick Area Farm Workers (WAFO)
Volunteer Opportunities
Meg Gleason



Volunteers are needed at the **WAFO Food Pantry**, especially someone who can help input member visits to the food pantry database as they come in. This type of volunteer is needed for any food pantry day, **Tuesdays 4-7pm, Thursdays 4-7pm, and Sundays 10:30am-2:30pm**. If you do not feel comfortable with computers and just want to help with the food distribu-

tion, you can volunteer on Tuesdays and Sundays.

The food pantry activities take place at The Alamo Community Health Center, 888 Pulaski Highway, Goshen NY. If you can help with the food pantry, please contact Jobeth Leon, Outreach Coordinator, Sun River Health jleon@sunriver.org.



Jobeth is still in need of tutors for the **Homework Club**. The tutors need to commit to as many weeks as possible from now until June 2025. Homework help is on Tuesdays from 4:30-5:30pm at the St Peter's Lutheran Church in Pine Island. The club follows the academic calendar. If you are interested in helping, please contact Jobeth. The location of the Homework Club is St. Peter's Church, 70 Little York Road, Warwick, New York.

NEW INFO: WAFO is also looking for volunteers to help with preparing a hot lunch and cleaning up afterwards over the next several Sundays during their afternoon programs. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact Kathy Brieger at (914) 355-6242 x78739 or kbrieger@sunriver.org.

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

DULCE ESPERANZA
Meg Gleason

Dulce Esperanza is a summer program for children of the farm workers in Pine Island and surrounding areas. It provides tutoring and enrichment programs. If you have a skill or talent you would like to share, volunteers are welcomed. Additional information can be found at:

<https://wafarmworkers.org/wamc-summer-enrichment-program/>

Some of the programs offered include:

Art
Writer's Workshop
Reading
Music
Horticulture
Sports
Computers and Robotics
Pottery
Mindfulness
Yoga

Thank you, Meg

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

BIRTH HAVEN
Rosetta Patterson

I am accepting donations for infants: diapers (newborn to 2T), blankets, baby clothes, hats and bibs and for the moms: pajamas and panties (all sizes). I will be collecting through the end of the summer.

** Sorry, I forgot who gave me the two baby pajamas last meeting, but in the bag was a woman's pink material that is being made into something. I would like to return this material to the owner. Please contact me at ptown@warwick.net should you be the owner and I can arrange to return it to you.

Thank you,
Rosetta

**ST. JUDE'S RANCH
FOR CHILDREN**
Dee Garbarino

On behalf of our club, 600 card fronts were sent to St. Jude's Ranch for Children on February 24, 2025. I am still collecting card fronts for future shipping.

Thank you all who have supported this effort!

Dee

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION Maria Dorsey

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and each year it is our tradition to “plant” three pinwheel gardens at Vernon Town Hall, Vernon PAL and the entrance of Maple Grange Park.

We will meet on Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 10:00 am at the Vernon Town Hall. Mayor Rossi has been invited to join us for a photo op. Please wear your T-shirts or sweatshirts.

After planting there, we will proceed to the other two locations. Planting is usually completed within two hours. When we are finished, we meet for a casual lunch at the Crystal Café where members can enjoy socializing with each other.

In addition, this year we were contacted by Girl Scout Daisy Troop 99014, who is interested in joining us in one of our community projects. Since our planting occurs during school hours, we have arranged for a separate planting at Cedar Mountain School on April 7 at 3:45 pm (after school on their regular meeting date).

If you are interested in volunteering for either of these projects, please email me at mariapls@aol.com.

Thank you,
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:

In March, 4 blankets were distributed to the Dialysis Center.

Thank you,
Karen



FUNDRAISING
2nd VICE-PRESIDENT
Fran Janusko

On March 4th, I joined Maria Dorsey, Lisa DeRitter, Linda Hibbert, Kathy VanDerSluys and the Vernon Coalition for our monthly **TASTE OF VERNON** meeting. The event will be held on Monday, April 28th. Tickets should be available for sale at the March meeting of the Woman's Club for \$55 per person or \$100 for two. If anyone would like to attend and is unable to make the March meeting, please call Maria Dorsey or me for tickets. The Coalition is holding 40 tickets for our organization.

The Woman's Club has been asked to work for Heaven Hill at the 2025 Easter Eggstravaganza. They have asked for help on April 5, 6, 13, 18 and 19. The hours are the same as the Pumpkin Festival—10:00 am—2:00 pm and 2:00 pm—5:00 pm. Maria Dorsey will provide an online schedule for signups.

Of course, our monthly 50/50 will be available at the March meeting as well.

Fran

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Linda Hibbert

FEBRUARY 2025 CORRESPONDENCE

- 02/07/2025: Thank you note from DASI for the Afghans, holiday gift bags and pajamas.
- 02/07/2025: Thank you note from DASI for the gingerbread kits, pantry items and Afghans.
- 02/10/2025: Thank you letter from NJ State Federation of Women's Clubs for our donation of \$189.40.

Linda

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES
Valerie Seufert
GIRLS CAREER INSTITUTE

This year we will be sending two girls as delegates to Douglass College at Rutgers University from June 1st to June 4th to have a mini-college experience. They will sleep in the dorms, eat in the cafeteria and interact with over 150 girls from New Jersey completing their Junior year of high school. They will have the opportunity to sign up for sessions with women in various career paths.

We also have designated two alternates who would take their place if a delegate is unable to attend. The alternates will also have an opportunity to receive a scholarship to GCI when they attend the orientation.

Our Delegates are Ashley Gallego Giraldo and Alexandra Monson

Our Alternates are Samantha Kimkowski and Julie Evanick

The delegates will each be receiving \$25 from our club for spending money at the end of May.

Thanks to Anne Whitty for her help with this project.

Valerie

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES
Valerie Seufert
SCHOLARSHIPS

All completed applications are due back to the high school guidance counselors by April 25th, after which a committee will review the applications and select our recipients. The scholarships are based on Community Service and open to graduating seniors from Vernon, Hamburg, Hardyston, Franklin and Ogdensburg.

Valerie

ENVIRONMENT

Maria Dorsey

Good News! The Township of Vernon **CLEAN COMMUNITIES PROGRAM** has received their funding, which will enable our Club to participate in this fundraising project.

Barbara McCloskey, our State President's Grand Initiative is for our clubs to complete a total of 130 Arbor Day or Earth Day Projects. To that end, we will take part in the road cleanup through the Vernon Clean Communities Program. We will meet on Saturday, May 17, 2025, at 10:00 am in front of the Vernon DPW office (across the street from Town Hall). The road we have chosen is Lounsberry Hollow/Sammis Roads.

There is a container outside with the equipment we will need (pickers, safety vests, gloves and a first aid kit). We are expected to return all equipment to the bin neatly after we are finished with our project. Any broken equipment should be reported to me and I will notify Jane Tutolo of the DPW via email, text or phone call as well as any cancellation due to inclement weather.

All collected garbage is to be left at the site to be picked up on Monday by DPW workers.

Paperwork will be submitted by me to the Town after our project is completed and it will be processed by the Finance Department who will determine the amount of money we receive (up to \$750).

Please wear your T-shirt or sweatshirt any time we do an outside Club project.

If you are interested in participating in this project, please email me at mariapls@aol.com.

Thank you,
Maria

**VERNON STREET FAIR
September 2025**

For the past couple of months, at the request of Arleen Hill, we have been looking for a member who is willing to head the committee for the 2025 Vernon Street Fair. There is a good system in place for what needs to be done to make our booth successful. Arleen is ready to pass the baton to someone else (after five years) and is willing to share all the information and walk the new head of the committee through the entire process.

It's a fun day and a great way to reach out to the community and let them see all the good things our club does.

Please give this some thought and let a member of the Board know of your interest. Your participation is much appreciated.

Thank you,

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.

Some Gentle Reminders

Newsletter information due to Karen Breese by the 13th of each month.

At each monthly meeting, we will be selling 50/50 tickets to our members at 8 for \$5.00

At each monthly meeting, please remember to push your chairs back to their original spots under the tables before leaving.

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.

PLEASE KEEP SAVING

(Ongoing collections)



Pop Tabs

They are found on soda cans, pet food, soup cans, etc.



Greeting Card Fronts

Please save the fronts of your recycled/used cards. This recycled card program is an ongoing program that provides teens with life and work skills.

Children's
DVDs
For DASI



Just for You Bags

Some items needed: Towel sets, pillows and pillow protectors, full sized toiletries and specialty feminine hygiene items and dish towels.



Greeting Cards



Valerie Seufert volunteers for the Senior **Earth Angels** in Sussex County. One of the projects she works on involves putting together packages of assorted greeting cards for each homebound senior for them to use throughout the year. All types of greeting cards are needed **except for Christmas**. We often get cards in the mail from organizations — these are great. Also, the Dollar Store has 2 cards for \$1.00 and packages of cards can also be purchased there. Any donations are appreciated!

This is an ongoing project.