



Bits & Pieces

GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club

December 2025

Volume 16, Issue 10

Next Meeting: January 22, 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fran Gialanella

Happy December. I hope everyone is keeping warm. As many of you already know, we will not be having a regular meeting in December and will reconvene in the New Year on January 22nd. I know that some of you were at the holiday party on December 4 and I hope that all those that attended were able to socialize and enjoy the company of our other members.

I have already received a couple of year-end reports and that is great. If anyone needs assistance with the reporting process, please reach out to me. As I mentioned at the November meeting, I will need to have all reports to me by **no later than January 16th** which means the various chairs will need individual reports earlier than that (probably no later than the first week of January). On the state website, which can be accessed through our website, are report forms.

Please take care during this holiday season and reach out to those in need in any way you can. Lastly, I want to express the sincere sympathy of the entire Woman's Club membership to our immediate Past-President, Maria Dorsey, on the loss of her dear husband, Barry. I know many knew him and of his kind and joyful heart, which will be sorely missed.

Fran

2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

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

- January 14 * Highlands District Council, Thursday Morning Club, Madison, New Jersey
- January 22 VTWC Meeting—Speaker Lisa Valentino, NJ State Outreach Coordinator, CUE (Community United Effort) Center for Missing Persons; Installation of New Members
- February 26 VTWC Meeting—Heart Warming Presentation—Soothing Paws Therapy Dogs and Annual Cookie Baking and Gifting
- March 5 * Civic Engagement and Outreach Day
- March 11 * Highlands District Performing Arts Festival (snow date 3/18)
- March 26 VTWC Meeting—Presentation related to Women’s History Month
- April 8 * Highlands District Spring Conference
- April 23 VTWC Meeting—Speaker from Sussex County Sheriff’s Dept. Topic TBD
- May 28 VTWC Meeting—TBD (tentative—new officers for 2026-2028)
- June 11 * Highlands District Council Meeting—Vernon Township Woman’s Club, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey
- 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

NEXT MEETING

January 22, 2026 6:30 p.m.

MJ Palmer, First Vice-President

Programs

CUE Center for Missing Persons

Installation of New Members



**On January 22, 2026, our speaker will be Lisa Valentino,
NJ State Outreach Coordinator for CUE.**

CUE (Community United Effort) Center for Missing Persons is a non-profit organization serving missing persons nationwide. Since 1994, CUE has provided advocacy for missing children and adults, free professionally trained search personnel and victim support service. To date, the CUE Center has helped more than 12,000 families in what is often the most confusing and desperate times of their lives.

We will also have the Installation of New Members

Eileen Donovan
Marilyn Frandfors
Kim Higgins
Amanda Philippe
Lorren Renninger
Barbara Tesa
Linda Vaccarella
Michelle Woolley

UPCOMING MEETING
February 26, 2026 6:30 p.m.
MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
Programs
Soothing Paws Therapy Dogs
Annual Cookie Baking and Gifting



On February 26, 2026, in addition to our annual cookie baking and gifting, we will feature a heartwarming presentation from Soothing Paws Therapy Dogs. Carrie Plantamura, the Soothing Paws Program Manager, will be speaking to us about this beloved animal-assisted therapy program featuring trained dogs and volunteers who provide comfort, reduce stress and improve well-being for patients, families and staff across Atlantic Health System's hospitals. If you are willing, there will be an opportunity for some hands on, unconditional love from the dogs Carrie will be bringing that night.

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

GINNIE'S HOUSE
Donna Maher

THANK YOU... THANK YOU... THANK YOU!!!

Because of your kindness and generosity, I was able to deliver:

66 teddy bears;
43 blankets;
113 beanie babies;
2 squishmallows

Their annual Christmas Party was held on December 15th. 50 children have been blessed with our Club's kindness.

Merry Christmas and Happy Healthy New Year! Much love, Donna



ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

BIRTH HAVEN
Rosetta Peterson

Many thanks to the overwhelming response to our 'Baby Shower' for Birth Haven at the November meeting. All donations were happily delivered and greatly appreciated.

I will continue to collect items for babies and moms that will be delivered to Birth Haven in the New Year.

Rosetta



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BIRTHDAY BAGS

Lisa Thomas and Judy Phillips

We have 5 birthdays for December and 7 birthdays for January for the Homestead Birthday Bags. The Birthday Bags will be delivered in the middle of December to the Homestead.

As always, thank you for your continued support and contributions.

Lisa

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Lisa Mills

The International Affairs Committee made a \$100 donation to Heifer International, a non-profit organization working to end poverty by supporting families and farmers in underdeveloped nations. At our November meeting, the club voted to earmark the money to purchase biogas stoves for two families, enabling them to create hot meals without having to collect wood and build a fire. Biogas stoves run on methane gas from organic waste (such as readily available animal manure and food scraps), providing clean, efficient and sustainable energy and creating a healthier environment by reducing smoke.

What's even better? Not only will our generous contribution help families feed their children, but the biogas stove is a 'Matched Product' at Heifer, which means another donor has pledged to match our \$100 donation to create an even bigger impact!

Lisa

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

MARKET STREET MISSION

Pat Berls and Joanne Matthes



As we wind down 2025, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks for your generous donations to Market Street Mission. Your incredible response has truly overwhelmed us and we are deeply grateful for your continued support.

Thanks to your kindness, we were able to donate five frozen lasagna meals and five \$10 gift cards for QuickChek to the shelter this December. Your generosity is making a meaningful difference for those in need.

We would also like to extend our warmest wishes for a happy, healthy and joy-filled holiday season to you and your families.

See you next year!

Joanne and Pat

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

EARTH ANGELS

Valerie Seufert

A BIG THANK YOU to all the club members who donated all occasion greeting cards during the year, calendars and puzzle books recently. I also want to thank Anne Whitty for helping to sort the cards by type during the year and the members who met at the library this month to assemble the card packets for the seniors. We were able to provide 114 packets of assorted greeting cards, with about 15 occasion and blank cards and 5 Christmas cards for the Earth Angels Christmas packages. That equals 2284 cards donated. We also donated 56 calendars and 27 puzzle books to the project. My husband and I delivered 7 shopping bags full of these items that will be appreciated by the seniors who receive them with the Christmas gifts provided by Earth Angels.

Now, starting with the January meeting I will be collecting cards again. I also ask that if you would like to purchase puzzle books, especially Word Search, Sudoku and Crossword, large print preferred, during the year, bring them in and I will save them for next year's project. You can find these books at the dollar stores for \$1.00 or \$1.50.

Again, thank you to everyone who helped with this project. It is going to make 114 seniors very happy when they receive the packets.

Merry Christmas!
Valerie

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR PHOTOS!

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

EARTH ANGELS CARD PACKETS FOR SENIORS 2025 PHOTOS Valerie Seufert



Valerie and Ken dropping off card packets, calendars and puzzle books to Alice Prendergast at PSS.

Club members who gathered at the Library to assemble the card packets for the seniors.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

**WAFO
Warwick Area Farmworker Organization
Meg Gleason**

THANKSGIVING TURKEY DINNERS

**THANK YOU to all the members who made donations and helped with the delivery of the WAFO Thanksgiving dinners.
Your time and generosity is greatly appreciated!**



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

WAFO
Warwick Area Farmworker Organization
Meg Gleason

THE CHRISTMAS STORE

The Christmas Store for WAFO is underway! For those who are not familiar with the event, it is a significant undertaking for WAFO. Over 100 families shop for holiday gifts in the store that is filled with new donated items. In the past, VTWC members have helped with many of the tasks related to the store including the pricing and sorting of gifts, store set-up and assistance during shopping hours. Children's activities are done in the lower level of the church while parents shop during their appointed time. On the last day of the program, help is needed for clean-up. Below is a chart with the dates and times for each activity. The location is St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 70 Little York Avenue, Warwick, New York.

If you have not yet volunteered and would like to, please use the Sign-Up Genius link below.

DATE	HOURS	ACTIVITY	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
12/17	5:30—8:00 pm	P/SG & room setup	10
12/18	5:30—8:00 pm	P/SG & room setup	10
12/19	5:00—8:00 pm	Christmas Store	10
12/20	10:00 am—4:00 pm	Christmas Store	10
12/21	1:00—5:00 pm	Christmas Store and Final Clean Up	10

If you would like to donate to the Christmas store and need assistance with delivering the items, please let me know and I will pick them up from you.

Please remember to complete a Project Report for any WAFO projects you worked on in 2025 and submit to me as soon as possible.

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050C4FA9A729A0FF2-59978361-wafo#/
/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050C4FA9A729A0FF2-59978361-wafo#/)

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

WAFO
Warwick Area Farmworker Organization
Meg Gleason

HOMEWORK CLUB

The Homework Club is underway! This program takes place on Tuesday afternoons at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 70 Little York Avenue, Warwick, New York from 4:30—5:30. Tutors work one-on-one with students to complete homework, read together and then wrap up the hour with a board game or puzzle. If you are interested in volunteering your time to this program, please contact Kathy Brieger at kbrieger@sunriver.org or JoBeth Leon at jleon@sunriver.org. You can also reach out to me for more information. You can email me at mmgleason98@yahoo.com or call/text me at 201-906-9814.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

BLANKETS WITH CARE:

To all the knitters and crocheters, please remember that I will be needing a Project Report from each one of you detailing the amount of hours involved and the cost of yarn spent by you during calendar year 2025. If you bought yarn, list the amount paid as ‘in-kind’. If you used donated yarn, indicate that as well.

LET’S GET MOVING CHALLENGE:

To any members who participated in any exercise activities or physical therapy during the calendar year, please report the type of activity (i.e. walking, biking, yoga, exercise classes, etc.) and the number of hours you spent doing each activity on a Project Report.

COMFORT PILLOWS:

Attention: Reba Burrell—I will need a report from you concerning this project.

OPERATION SMILE:

Attention: Lisa Mills—I will need a report from you concerning this project.

VIAL OF LIFE:

Attention: Rosemarie Guidice—I will need a report from you concerning this project.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ALL PROJECT REPORTS FOR THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES BY JANUARY 7, 2025.

THERE WILL BE A COPY OF THE PROJECT REPORT FORM FOR YOUR USE ATTACHED TO THE NEWSLETTER EMAIL.

Thank you in advance for your attention to the above-mentioned matters.

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.



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.

Thank you all for your donations to these ongoing collections.

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.**