



Bits & Pieces

GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club

May 2026

Volume 17 Issue 5

Next Meeting: May 28, 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fran Gialanella

Greetings to all:

I hope you will plan to attend our next meeting where, in addition to a meaningful speaker on mental health, we also need to present our budget and nominations for next year's Board, both of which are very important to the continuation of all the great things that our club does. I am pleased to hear that a couple of people have already stepped up to serve next year. If not yet, we can take nominations from the floor so, anyone who's considering it, put up your hands. Our By-Laws have been amended (awaiting State approval) so that we can now vote more easily at our meetings since only 1/3 is required for a quorum. In addition, I can say that, as a new president two years ago, our club members are always so helpful to us when questions arise.

We are working to get our raffle together in time for sales at the next Highlands District meeting which our club is hosting on Thursday, June 11. We are hoping this will be a successful fundraiser for us with the drawing to be held at our first meeting in September. Also, it would be great to see as many as possible at the June 11 meeting. Let's show the rest of the District how we come together for events such as this.

Fran

2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

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

May 28	VTWC Meeting—Speaker, Cindy Armstrong, Sussex County OFR Coordinator in Behavioral Health Services
June 1-4 *	Girls' Career Institute, Douglass Residential College at Rutgers University
June 11 *	Highlands District Council Meeting—Hosted by Vernon Township Woman's Club, 21 Church Street, Vernon, NJ
June 25	VTWC Meeting—Summer Sendoff
June 27	Vernon Clean Communities—Street Cleanup Fundraiser
August 1	VTWC—New Member Tea, Dorothy Henry Library, Vernon, NJ
August 6 *	NJSFWC Summer Luncheon & Basket Raffle 11:30 am—3:30 pm, Battleground Country Club, Manalapan, NJ
September 14 *	NJSFWC AI Workshop 10:30 am—12:00 pm
September 19	12th annual Vernon Street Fair, 11:00 am—3:00 pm
September 24	VTWC Meeting—Pot Luck Dinner and Program presented by GCI candidate; 2026 50/50 raffle drawing
October 14 *	NJSFWC Canva Workshop
October 19 *	NJSFWC State Fall Conference, Harbor Point, Point Pleasant (formerly Lobster Shanty)
October 22	VTWC Meeting—USA 250 Years Anniversary Celebration
October 27 *	NJSFWC Report Writing Workshop 10:30 am—12:00 pm
November 12 *	NJSFWC Headquarters Open House; meet and greet your NJSFWC Executive Committee
November 18 *	NJSFWC Report Writing Workshop 10:30 am—12:00 pm
November 19 ?	VTWC Meeting—Program TBD
December 17 ?	VTWC Meeting—Program TBD

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
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

MAY MEETING
May 28, 2026 6:30 p.m.
MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
County of Sussex
Department of Health & Human Services
May is Mental Health Awareness Month



May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month in the United States, an annual observance since 1949. The focus aims to reduce stigma, educate the public, provide support resources and highlight the importance of mental well-being for everyone.

Key Goals and Focus Areas:

- Reducing Stigma:** Open conversations to normalize seeking help.
- Education & Resources:** Sharing information on mental health conditions.
- Support & Community:** Highlighting tools like 988 and community support.
- Mental Well-Being:** Encouraging self care, exercise and social connection.

Cindy Armstrong, Sussex County OFR Coordinator in Behavioral Health Services, will be our guest speaker. She will inform us about access to care and help us learn to promote understanding of mental health as an essential part of overall health.

UPCOMING JUNE MEETING
June 25, 2026 6:30 p.m.
MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
SUMMER SENDOFF



Our June meeting will blend **business and fun**. Committee leads should be prepared to share brief highlights about their committees and the projects or programs they support:

- ⇒ **Describe** your projects/programs
- ⇒ **Briefly explain** how VTWC members support them today
- ⇒ **Report on** ways members can help now...or soon.

These presentations will help new members understand the projects VTWC supports and give current members ideas for getting involved in additional or different initiatives. We will also **install our new slate of officers for 2026-2028**.

Now for the fun part: **Wear** your favorite summer outfit—shorts, flip flops, sun visors and more. **Bring** a great summer read to swap with other members.

Feel free to bring **summer treats to share**—cut-up watermelon, strawberries, lemonade, bar cookies, pudding pies or chips. We will enjoy them during the meeting.

This June meeting is one you will not want to miss! I look forward to seeing you there.

NEW MEMBER TEA
Joan Danaher

SAVE THE DATE!

Hi All:

The annual New Member Tea is scheduled for Saturday, August 1, 2026 at the Dorothy Henry Library in Vernon, New Jersey. We have reserved the room at the Library for the hours of 9:00 am—2:00 pm. We will need members to set up; clean up and provide refreshments for the Tea. I will discuss further at the Club's upcoming meeting in May.

Thank you!
Joan

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Linda Hibbert

We received a thank you note from DASI for the pantry items and our home-made cookies which they really enjoyed! Also, Barbara Wylie from the Newton Medical Center Auxiliary sent a thank you to Reba Burrell for the beautiful pillows that Reba continues to donate.

On another note, a reminder to all our members to let me know of anyone in the club or their family members, who are sick or had surgery, so I can send a get well card. Also, if anyone donates to the club, a thank you card!

Thank you,
Linda Hibbert
Corresponding Secretary

FUNDRAISING
Fran Janusko
Second Vice-President

Thank you to all the members who attended the Taste of Vernon event on April 27. Your support for this event benefits our organization as well as provides an enjoyable evening for all.

As my term ends, I would like to acknowledge all those who helped me fulfill my duties as VP of Fundraising. I would particularly like to thank Linda Hibbert, Barbara Fimia, Maria Dorsey and Kathy VanDerSluys.

Kudos to all our members who volunteer to make Heaven Hill and our monthly 50/50 raffle successful.

Thank

You

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

BIRTH HAVEN

Rosetta Peterson

I am still collecting anything for babies as well as for the moms. For those of you not familiar with Birth Haven, the program operates a transitional living facility in Newton, New Jersey for up to nine pregnant women and their babies at any given time. You can read more about the organization at <https://birthhaven.org/services/>.

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 welcome. Additional information can be found at:

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

Some of the programs offered include:

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

ARTS & CULTURE

BICENTENNIAL+50 YEARS ART CONTEST

Dee Garbarino

Hi All:

A committee is formed, a date has been set and more information will be communicated at our May meeting.

If any other members would like to volunteer, please let me know. My email address is garbarino.dee@gmail.com.

Please be sure to stay tuned!

Thank you,
Dee



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BIRTHDAY BAGS

Lisa Thomas and Judy Phillips

I will be reaching out to the Homestead in the beginning of June to find out the birthday recipients for June and July.

We are in need of crocheted lap blankets to put in the birthday bags.

As always, we thank you for your donations in making the bags special for the residents.

Lisa and Judy

WAFO

Warwick Area Farmworker Organization
Meg Gleason

FOOD PANTRY

The WAFO Food Pantry is in need of donations. Items needed include:

Canned cactus
Canned jalapeno peppers
Chicken
Corn tortillas
Masa Harina
Vegetable Oil (SMALL BOTTLES)

Thank you,
Meg

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

**Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault
Intervention Services (DASI)**

Lisa Murphy and Maureen Blandino

Maureen Blandino hosted preparation of Mother's Day gift boxes for residents of the Safe House in Newton, New Jersey. Seven gift boxes were prepared for six females and one male. Barbara Speer, Elaine Cochran, Karen Szepietowski and Karen Breese made up the team that assisted Maureen. Thank you all for your participation.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

**Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault
Intervention Services (DASI)**

Lisa Murphy

Hi All:

You will recall in last month's newsletter, we communicated that the Safe House in Newton, New Jersey had a water leak and lost a lot of items due to water damage. We mentioned a list will be provided in this newsletter once cleanup and inventory were completed. Kim Prentiss of DASI has submitted this list of items:

Plates (Glass or Ceramic) for kitchen

Utensils

Kids serving items such as plastic plates, sippy cups. plastic drinking cups

Food storage containers for leftovers i.e. Rubbermaid or other brands

Food storage bags—quart and gallon size

As always, thank you for your donations. They are truly appreciated.

Lisa

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

NEWS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Valerie Seufert

NEWS

Recently, Anne Whitty and I visited the Dorothy Henry Library in Vernon to present the club's donation of \$150 for the purchase of books for the youth section of the library, where needed. At that time, we also learned that Molly received a promotion and will be reassigned to the Main Library. The new supervisor for the Dorothy Henry Library was not in place at the time. We look forward to meeting the new supervisor next time. On behalf of ourselves and the club, we wished Molly every success in her new position and she assured us we can reach out to her at any time, if needed.

SCHOLARSHIPS

We received 18 applications for our Community Service Scholarship this year from three schools—Vernon, Wallkill and Pope John. Each one was a pleasure to read and see all the activities and events these students are involved in at school and the community and how they volunteer their time to help others. A committee of Lisa Murphy, Anne Whitty and myself read all the applications and decided to award 6 scholarships this year, two at \$1,000 and four at \$500. These will be presented by us during the award ceremonies at the schools held in June.

ENVIRONMENT

VERNON CLEAN COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Maria Dorsey

Much to our disappointment, our attempt at street cleaning on Saturday, May 9, was rained out once again! We have been rescheduled for Saturday, June 27. (The Township is booked up until that date). I hope all who signed up to help can be available at that time. If anyone else would like to volunteer, please contact me at (201) 400-4671 or at mariapls@aol.com.

On a happy note, this group photograph I submitted at the Highlands District Spring Conference on April 8 in the “VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION” category, came in **FIRST PLACE** and went on to the NJSFWC State Convention. I am also happy to report that it came in First Place at Convention too!

Thank you ladies!



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	

- 9 Lap Blankets were given to Judy Phillips to be included in future Birthday Bags;
- A reminder to all club members, especially new members, that Joan Dana-her usually has a nice supply of donated yarn at her house for use in club knitting and crocheting projects;
- Please keep track of time and money spent on your knitting and crocheting projects in order for this information to be included in the 2026 year-end report to the state;
- Please continue to keep track of all exercise hours throughout the year to be included in the “Let’s Get Moving” Challenge for 2026.

Thank you,
Karen Szepietowski
Health & Wellness Chair

APPAREL ORDERS
Elaine Kuntz

I will be taking shirt/sweatshirt orders at our May meeting. Each order needs to be accompanied with payment. These shirts/sweatshirts are special order and cannot be returned. They do run large.

Please make checks payable to Rooster Tees LLC. Cash or checks only.

Short Sleeve T-Shirt	S-XL \$20.00	XXL \$23.00
Long Sleeve T-Shirt	S-XL \$23.00	XXL \$25.00
Crewneck Sweatshirt	S-XL \$25.00	XXL \$28.00
Hooded Sweatshirt	S-XL \$30.00	XXL \$33.00
Zipper Hooded Sweatshirt	S-XL \$34.00	XXL \$38.00

Note: Zippered Hooded Sweatshirt has back print only.

Please see me at the May meeting if you would like to purchase any of these items. Bring your payment in form of cash or check with you.

There is an order form attached to this newsletter (Page 19) for your convenience.

Thank you,
Elaine

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.



Friendly Reminder

If you haven’t already done so, please be sure to review the NJSFWC Website at your leisure (information below). The Vernon Township Woman’s Club Website is now available. Please review at your leisure.

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.

VTWC Website

The Vernon Township Woman’s Club website is here for you.

www.vtwc.org

No log in is necessary.

PLEASE KEEP SAVING

Ongoing Collections

POP TABS—*found on soda cans, pet food, soup cans, etc.*

CHILDREN'S DVDs FOR DASI

GREETING CARDS—*Valerie Seufert volunteers for the Senior Earth Angels in Sussex County. Each December, Valerie and her team put together packages of assorted greeting cards (except Christmas), puzzle books, calendars and note pads for each homebound senior for them to use throughout the year. We often get cards and note pads in the mail from organizations—these are great.*

JUST FOR YOU BAGS—*Items are needed for clients who come into one of the DASI programs and for clients who transition out of the programs. Some items requested are bath towel; body lotion; body wash; brush; ChapStick; comb; shampoo/conditioner; deodorant; face cloth; hand/kitchen towel; oven mitt; pillow case; pillows; potholder; sheet set (twin); soap; socks; sponge; toothbrush/toothpaste.*


Donations are collected through the year. These projects are ongoing.

Thank you all for your donations to these ongoing collections.


VERNON WOMAN'S CLUB

*For any product questions feel free to email us at RoosterTeesLLC@gmail.com


* Manufacturer substitutions may be made due to stock shortages

	Port & Co. PC55
	50%Cot/50% Poly Short Sleeve
	Lime
	S-XL is \$20.00 XXL is \$23.00


S	M	L	XL	XXL

	Port & Co. PC55LS
	100% Cotton Long Sleeve
	Lime
	S-XL is \$23.00 XXL is \$25.00


S	M	L	XL	XXL

	Port & Co. PC78
	Crewneck Sweatshirt
	Lime
	S-XL IS \$25.00 XXL is \$28.00

S	M	L	XL	XXL

	Port & Co. PC78H
	Hooded Sweatshirt
	Lime
	S-XL IS \$30.00 XXL is \$33.00

S	M	L	XL	XXL

	Port & Co. PC78ZH
	Zippered Hooded Sweatshirt
	Lime
	S-XL IS \$34.00 XXL is \$38.00 *Back Print ONLY*

S	M	L	XL	XXL

Name:

Phone #:

Please make checks payable to Rooster Tees LLC

Amount Paid:

Cash Check



THE 1894 SOCIETY

The NJSFWC Headquarters Building, built with trading stamps, is located on land leased from Rutgers University. The Federation's lease with Rutgers sets the rental amount at a percentage of the value of the land. The value of land has increased.

The 1894 Society was initiated in 2002 in an effort to build a fund that will enable the NJSFWC to fund the land rental

To Donate by Credit Card:

- 1) Go to: njsfwc.org
- 2) Click on: **DONATE** (yellow button top of page)
- 3) Insert the dollar amount you are paying (where it shows \$0)
- 4) Select: **Donate with "Credit Card or Debit Card"**
- 5) In the **Write A Note** put **"1894 Society"**
(*You do not need to complete the By Check Form Below*)
- 6) Complete your Credit Card information
 - a. Billing Address,
 - b. Email address,
 - c. Phone number.
- 7) Select **DONATE NOW**
- 8) An email confirming your donation is sent to your email and to njsfwc.hq@gmail.com.



To Donate by QR Code:

Scan the QR Code above to donate using your credit card on our PayPal Account.

Complete the information as outlined by Credit Card

To Donate by Check:

Please enroll me/our club in the 1894 Society for the 2026-2027 club year (April 1, 2026-March 31, 2027). Place "X" in box indicating whether Individual or Club donation.
Enclosed is my/our donation of:

___ \$18.94 ___ \$20.00 ___ \$189.40 ___ \$1,894.00 \$ ___ Other

Name of Individual _____ District _____
(If Individual donation please note Club you belong to but do not Check box next to Club Name)

Club _____ District _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email* _____

Make checks payable to "NJSFWC", earmarked "1894 Society". Mail check and donation form to:
NJSFWC Headquarters, 55 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

* All e-mail addresses will automatically be added to the NJSFWC eConnection distribution list. The NJSFWC eConnection brings current Federation news to your e-mail box. All information is confidential. All donations are tax deductible.



NJSFWC

Summer Luncheon & Basket Raffle

JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF FRIENDSHIP AND FUN!
GREAT FOOD, BASKETS GALORE,
50/50 and SILENT AUCTION

AUGUST 6, 2026 11:30 AM – 3:30 PM
BATTLEGROUNDS COUNTRY CLUB MANALAPAN, NJ

Benefits NJSFWC Headquarters

**Luncheon Includes: Salad, Choice of Entree,
Dessert, Coffee/Tea \$70 Per Person**

Deadline for Reservations: July 27th or UNTIL SOLD OUT
Open to the public

Raffle Prizes needed: Baskets, Gift Cards, etc.

Questions? Contact Laurel Dobalo (732) 742-6946 (dobalo@njsfwc.org)

.....Detach here.....

Checks payable to NJSFWC, Memo section of check write: Summer Fun
Mail check & form to
Laurel Dobalo
NJSFWC Headquarters
55 Labor Way
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Name of Person Making Reservation: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Club: _____ District: _____

Entrée Choices: Filet Mignon ___ Chicken Francaise ___ Pasta Primavera (vegetarian) ___

Number of Registrations _____ Amount of Check enclosed: \$ _____

*List additional names and lunch choices on back of form **

PARTNER WITH EMBRELLA!

We are excited to partner with the **NJSFWC** as your chosen **State Special Project 2026-2028**.

THE BAG PROJECT



- **Collect and Donate** back to school items July-August or other items year round. A list of current needs can be provided.
- **Volunteer** at one of our scheduled volunteer days with The Bag Project or set up a group event!



GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS

- **Raise funds** for our Dreamers & Believers program crowdfunder in July or online year round.
- **Donate to a private scholarship** for youth attending college.



HOLIDAY GIFT DRIVE



- **Collect and Donate Gifts** from October through early December. A list of current needs can be provided.
- **Volunteer** at the Holiday Gift Drive and Shops in December.



FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- **Attend or Volunteer** at the upcoming Otter Wears Prada event or future fundraising events.
- **Donate** items to future Tricky Tray or Designer Bag Bingo Events.



RAISE AWARENESS

- Like and share our social media posts.
- Sign up for our newsletter to stay informed.
- Partner with us to host a local event in your area.
- Consider applying to join our Board of Directors.



Search "embrella" on LinkedIn



facebook.com /embrella.nj



instagram.com /embrella.nj



YouTube bit.ly/embrellavids

