



Bits & Pieces

GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club

February 2025

Volume 16, Issue 2

Next Meeting: February 27, 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Fran Gialanella
Lisa DeRitter**

Happy February and Happy Heart Month! Although we will be packing cookies at our meeting this month, if those of you attending could wear something red to signify heart health, it would be meaningful and appreciated. I am guessing that most of us, whether personally or through loved ones, have been touched on some level by heart disease.

I cannot let this monthly message go without another note of appreciation. As I completed and/or reviewed all the project reports for 2024, I must say that I am in total awe of this group of women and the dedication to our club itself and the many, many projects we continue to support. I know for a fact that we did not even report all the hours that you all have given just in the last 12 months, but what we did report was **7491 hours (!!)** and that is a fantastic accomplishment. Congratulations and a 'heartfelt' thanks to all of you.

See you soon,

Fran and Lisa

2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

- February 22 - Highlands District Spelling Bee, Rockaway
- February 27 - VTWC Meeting—Annual Cookie Baking and gifting project for The Homestead Nursing Home
- March 12 - Highlands District Performing Arts Festival, Madison Community House—Deadline to register: February 12
- March 27 - VTWC Meeting—DAR presentation in observance of Women's History Month
- April 9 - Highlands District Spring Conference and Achievement Day, Hanover Manor
- 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 28 - Taste of Vernon—Red Tail Lodge, Mountain Creek
- May 4-7 - NJSFWC 131st Annual Convention—Hard Rock Hotel, Atlantic City, NJ
- 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
February 27th, 6:30 pm
MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
Program Chair

Annual Cookie Baking and Gifting



February is our Cookie Project month when we bake thousands of homemade cookies just to give them away! So... pick out the recipe for your favorite nut-free cookies, bake six (6) dozen cookies and bring them to the meeting on February 27th. Sugar-free cookies are also an option to bring. Although store-bought cookies can be delicious, for this project, we only bake and deliver homemade cookies.

We'll spend time together at the meeting packaging them in Ziploc bags with labels identifying our club. Our members will deliver them to The Homestead in Newton and to DASI. Feel free to bring a few extras to share at the meeting.

MJ



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

**SPECIAL STATE PROJECT
NJ Children's Alliance
Fran Gialanella**

Our 2024-2026 Special State Project is NJ Children's Alliance which is specifically geared toward helping victims of child abuse. Most counties in NJ have a local Child Advocacy Center supported by the Alliance and ours is Ginnie's House. We already provided some support to Ginnie's House as a Club through the efforts of Donna Maher.

In December, 6 volunteers from our Club met to discuss some ideas in which we can provide additional support for the State Project. I have purchased 2 lanterns in support of the project and will try and work with the Vernon Library to set up some kind of display in April to support Child Abuse Awareness Month. In addition, I would like to have someone from the State come and speak to our group that month.

Other future projects under consideration include working on some kind of craft to help Ginnie's House residents as a Club, increasing our donations to Ginnie's House and possible participation in National Night Out in August.

Thanks to all who are helping support this effort.

Fran Gialanella
Chairperson



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

Benny's Bodega
Lisa DeRitter

For February, food donations will go to Benny's Bodega. Specific requests for this month include dry goods like rice, mashed potatoes and canned vegetables. Generally, side dishes that go with meals that are non-perishable.

DASI
Lisa Murphy

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

In addition, I have reached out to Kim Prentiss at DASI with thoughts on preparing and distributing Easter baskets to DASI residents. Currently, there are 12 adults, 3 teens and 5 school age children. In addition to candy, some ideas are:

Adults:
Personal items for bath, shower or fragrance
Children:
Age-appropriate activity, game or craft

I will discuss in detail at our February meeting.

Thank you,
Lisa

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BIRTHDAY BAGS

Lisa Thomas and Judy Phillips

For the months of February and March, Lisa and I assembled and delivered 4 birthday gift bags for the residents at the Homestead Rehabilitation and Health Care Center in Newton. The bags were filled with travel-sized toiletries, calendars, crocheted blankets, puzzle books, hot chocolate (their favorite), soft cozy socks, hairbands, gloves, decks of cards and other items all individually wrapped. Some of these items are donated by club members and some are purchased with our budget. We thank all members for their generosity!

Thank you,
Judy and Lisa

PROJECT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Marie Flores

I will be collecting prom gowns in both February and March for Project Self-Sufficiency. After speaking with them, I know now that I am also collecting wedding gowns and mother-of-the-bride gowns. All gowns **MUST** be clean and on hangers. In addition to gowns, shoes, purses and accessories that are appropriate for formal wear are also needed.

PSS has a shop open to all girls and women in the county to shop for a gown and accessories for their prom or wedding free of charge regardless of income. It is a wonderful program.

Thank you in advance,
Marie

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.

In addition to the Food Pantry and Homework Club mentioned above, the Woman's Club also supports WAFO in the following ways: contributing to their safety backpacks program, Easter basket collections, back to school supplies, Thanksgiving turkeys and their Christmas store.

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

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	

As the Chairwoman of our club's Health & Wellness Committee, I would like to share a few of the items reported in the 2024 report filed with the state.

A total of 109 blankets of various sizes were distributed to 7 recipient organizations. Our club members devoted a total of 1,119 hours of their time and \$243.00 of in-kind donations to make our Blankets with Care program a wonderful success.

For the "Let's Get Moving Challenge", a total of 2,501 hours were spent between exercise and physical therapy as reported by 12 of our members.

Great job, Ladies!

Thanks!
Karen

FUNDRAISING
2nd VICE-PRESIDENT
Fran Janusko

TASTE OF VERNON will be held on April 28, 2025 at the Red Tail Lodge, Mountain Creek.

I attended a meeting on Tuesday February 4th, with Maria Dorsey and Linda Hibbert for Taste of Vernon. Tickets go on sale on March 1, 2025 at \$55 per person or two tickets for \$100. Please see Maria Dorsey, Linda Hibbert or myself for more information.

Please get your calendars ready for the weekends in April in the event that we are called upon by Heaven Hill to work for the Eggstravaganza. Information will be provided in the coming weeks.

Fran

YARN AVAILABILITY
Joan Danaher
Membership

To all of our blanket makers:

I have tons of yarn and am running out of space to store it all. I can bring supplies to the meeting or deliver or pick up at my house. If you would like yarn, please contact me so we can make arrangements to get the yarn to you! My email address is [**franked@ptd.net**](mailto:franked@ptd.net) or stop by at our next meeting.

Many thanks!
Joan

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

Valerie Seufert

Hi all:

Just a reminder: If you know of anyone in their senior year at Vernon, Wallkill, Pope John or Sussex Tech, please let them know of our scholarship based on Community Service. Applications are available in each of the schools mentioned. You can also contact me, if you have any questions, at seufertvalerie@gmail.com or [973-874-8671](tel:973-874-8671).

Thank you,
Valerie

TREASURER'S COMMENTS

Judy Phillips

It will be that time of year again when **DUES WILL BE DUE!**

Dues are payable to the State in April, therefore, I will be collecting dues at the March meeting.

I will not be at the February meeting. If you are not going to be at the meeting in March, you can mail me a check payable to: **VTWC for \$40.00**.

My mailing address is:

Judy Phillips
128 Lake Pochung Road
Sussex, NJ 07461

Our club also accepts Venmo: **@VernonTownship-WomansClub**.

Thank you for your cooperation!
Judy

DAY OF SERVICE

Elaine Hossfield

Maria Dorsey

As published in the The Advertiser—North Edition:
THE VERNON TOWNSHIP WOMAN'S CLUB HOSTS
THE HIGHLANDS DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY
NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

On Monday, January 20, 2025, Martin Luther King Day, members of the Vernon Township Woman's Club hosted volunteers from clubs throughout the Highlands District of New Jersey. These ladies braved the evening snowfall and worked together to participate in the **National Day of Service**.

Items were collected by Clubs throughout the District for the benefit of the Center for Family Services in Newton. These items consisted of newborn and baby essentials, welcome baskets filled with household products for their domestic violence program and backpack care kits for teens and young adults who are currently couch-surfing or living on the streets and need a safe place to live. We are very proud to say that our Highlands District collected and donated 1,806 items valued at approximately \$5,794.09 to families in need.



**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 11th 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.