



Bits & Pieces

GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club

January 2025

Volume 16, Issue 1

Next Meeting: January 23, 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Lisa DeRitter
Fran Gialanella**

Happy New Year, ladies, and here's hoping that your holidays were joyous and relaxing as well.

As a newbie to this Woman's Club and as an officer, it is becoming clear that January will be a busy month, but also not so pleasant for those of us that have to work on those annual reports. However, there is also an understanding of the importance of doing them and being sure that our good work is properly recorded in the district and the state. With that in mind, we are also looking forward to our Day of Service event on January 20, which will take place for the entire district right here in our own club home at the Vernon Senior Center. A number of you have already volunteered to assist with coordination of donated items and making sure they are properly loaded onto trucks for delivery and for that we are grateful.

We are looking forward to our first meeting of 2025 on January 23 where it looks like we have another interesting program, in addition to formally acknowledging and welcoming our new members who joined in 2024. Hopefully, many of you will brave the cold winter weather and come out and support our club and enjoy the company of our members.

Keep reading this Newsletter to learn about volunteer and social opportunities and we will see you all soon.

Fran and Lisa

2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

- January 20 - NJSFWC Day of Service—VTWC hosting at Senior Center
- January 23 - VTWC Meeting—Program: ‘What is the Scenic Byway Project?’; Puzzle Exchange; New Member Installation
- 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; activity for Ginnie’s House
- 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).

**Warwick Area Farm Workers (WAFO)
ANNOUNCEMENT
MJ Palmer**



ANNOUNCEMENT

New WAFO and DULCE ESPERANZA Department Chair

I am happy to announce that starting this month Meg Gleason will be taking over as the Department Chair for WAFO and Dulce Esperanza. Meg and her family have been actively involved in WAFO projects for the last two years. Kindly show support for her and for WAFO when the Spring projects begin.

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	Arleen Hill, 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

January 23rd, 6:30 pm

**MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
Program Chair**

What is the Scenic Byway Project?



I recently did an online search for Vernon, New Jersey. One of the questions posed in the Google search is “Is Vernon, NJ a nice place to live?” The answer showing is “It’s a great area, beautiful scenery and wildlife. Situated near trails, ponds, rivers and mountain ranges, it doesn’t get any better for a rural town.”

Our speaker on January 23rd is someone who has, for a long time, promoted and protected Vernon and its beautiful, natural surroundings. She will enlighten us specifically about the Scenic Byway Project and answer any questions you might have about it. Mark your calendars for January 23rd.

MONTHLY MEETING

January 23rd, 6:30 pm

**MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
Program Chair**

NEW MEMBER INSTALLATION



We will also be installing new members at the meeting on January 23rd. These ladies are Barbara Speer, Jean Weir, Pat Berls, Deborah Fagnan, Fran Gialanella, Liane Grice, Carmen Heslin, Joan Kaye, Ellen Marion, Joanne Mathis, Vernoy Paolini and Judy Storms. Please plan to attend that night to give them a warm, in-person welcome. And, as an added enticement to attend, there will be cake.

PUZZLE EXCHANGE



It's time to clean out that puzzle closet! Bring any puzzles you want to exchange to the meeting on January 23rd. If you plan on getting some new puzzles for yourself, don't forget to bring a bag to take them home. At the end of the meeting, kindly retrieve any puzzles you bring that are not taken by other members.

MONTHLY MEETING

February 27th, 6:30 pm

**MJ Palmer, First Vice-President
Program Chair**

Annual Cookie Baking and Gifting



It's almost time for our sweetest activity of the year! 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.

I will be asking, at the January meeting, for a few volunteers to help with this project, buying bags, printing labels, delivering the cookies, etc. As always, your efforts are greatly appreciated.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

Our Civic Engagement and Outreach was very busy this past year!

Included under this department is anything having to do with alive or deceased veterans and active soldiers, food drives, WAFO projects for adults, Homestead projects (Birthday Bags, Earth Angels, Cookie Project), DASI, Benny's Bodega and our pen pal project.

A suggestion, if you are involved in any of our programs in addition to these, is to keep a running tally of your hours, dollars spent from the budget and donated dollars so when it comes time to report your activity at the end of the year, it just has to be added up and sent to the chairperson.

This year CE&O had 31 projects, over 2400 hours donated and over 7000 in-kind donations. This is AMAZING! Great job ladies!

Sincere thanks for all your dedication!

Deb Piccirillo

DASI
Lisa Murphy

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

Thank you,

Lisa

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

BIRTHDAY BAGS

Lisa Thomas and Judy Phillips

Lisa has been gracious enough to join in and partner with me in doing the Birthday Bags which she has helped with in the past.

For the months of February and March, we have only four birthday bag recipients and we will be getting those bags together soon. Lisa will deliver them to the Homestead Rehabilitation and Health Care Center sometime before the end of February.

As always, hot cocoa and soft cookies are among the residents' favorite items!

Thank you,
Judy

PROJECT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Marie Flores

Nothing right now, but just a heads up:

I will be starting to collect prom gowns and accessories in February for the Sister to Sister prom shop at PSS which happens in April.

Thank you,
Marie

Warwick Area Farm Workers (WAFO)
Volunteer Opportunities
MJ Palmer/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.

Many thanks to our members who donated items, organized donations and helped at the WAFO Christmas Store. 120 families were able to shop for new gifts at greatly reduced prices. It was a very Merry Christmas for these farm worker families!!

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	

Four (4) chemo blankets collected in November and December will be distributed to the Sparta Cancer Center in January.

Thank you,
Karen

OPERATION SMILE

Lisa Mills

Since 1982, Operation Smile has worked with communities around the world to offer free, life-saving cleft palate surgery to young children and has so far treated more than 400,000 patients. To kick off 2025, we donated 150 toys and stuffed animals to be included in the Smile Bag each child receives after surgery. The bags contain toys, personal hygiene items and, most importantly, a mirror to see their new smile!

Lisa

TASTE OF VERNON

Fran Janusko

SAVE THE DATE

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

I attended the first Taste of Vernon organizational meeting held on January 7, 2025 with Maria Dorsey, Kathy VanDerSluys and Chamber of Commerce representatives. VTWC will be receiving a batch of printed tickets for our members to purchase. Tickets will be \$55.00 each or two for \$100. More information to follow. The next meeting will be February 4, 2025.

Fran

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Linda Hibbert

4th Quarter 2024 Correspondence

In December, we received a Christmas card from The Homestead.

We also received a thank you note and in-kind donation form from Ginnie's House for beanie babies, bears and blankets donated at Christmas (Donna Maher, Chairperson).

Linda

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

Valerie Seufert

Scholarship Applications are being sent out this week to Vernon, Wallkill, Pope John and Sussex Tech. The applications are due back by April 25, 2025. If any member wants an application, please let me know.

The Girls Career Institute applications have not been put on the website yet. As soon as they are, I will send them to Vernon High School, hopefully this week. If you know of a girl in her junior year at Vernon High School that might be interested in applying, please have them contact their Guidance Department.

Thank you,
Valerie

APPAREL ORDERS

Elaine Kuntz

I will be taking shirt/sweatshirt orders at our January 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.

Thank you,
Elaine



FEDERATION SECRETARY

Maria Dorsey

HIGHLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING

On Wednesday, January 8, 2025, Elaine Hossfield and I had the privilege of attending the Highlands District Council meeting at the Brook Hollow Winery, hosted by the Blair Woman's Club. Karen Jeisi, our District Vice-President, conducted the meeting and proceeded to introduce our special guest, NJSFWC President, Barbara McCloskey, as well as speakers, Anne Lawless, Lois Preis White and Vivian Finn.

Highlighting this meeting were reports of Program Chairmen for Program Assistance Day. Since our Program Chair could not attend, I reported on our November program, by Detective Christopher Grogan and his intern, as being of special interest to our members.

Elaine spoke on the Highlands District Day of Service on January 20, benefiting Center for Family Services, which our Club will be hosting at the Senior Center.

Maria



FEDERATION SECRETARY

Maria Dorsey

HIGHLANDS DISTRICT PERFORMING ARTS DAY

START NOW!! It's time to think about how to share your talents with your Highlands Sisters for the **Highlands District Performing Arts Day**:

WHEN: Wednesday, March 12, 2025

WHERE: Thursday Morning Club's Madison Community House
25 Cook Avenue, Madison, New Jersey

WHY: Your chance to represent your Club with either a solo or group performance and win a chance at presenting it at the 2025 NJSFWC Convention in Atlantic City.

HOW: **DEE GARBARINO, VTWC Chair**, will have the information necessary to register all acts with the Performing Arts District Chair by the deadline of February 12, 2025. Just let her know what your act is (type: song, dance, skit, poetry reading, etc.) and the name(s) of those who will be participating and provide them to her before her deadline. Performances should be between 7-10 minutes and no longer.

Maria

ANNUAL REPORTS

Maria Dorsey

It's January—the start of a new calendar year—let's use those Project Reports now! Many of us are scrambling around (or have scrambled around) to gather information on what we did from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. It would be so much easier to keep track of our time as we go along throughout the year and know who you are reporting to.

The correct name of our Club to use on the report form is: GFWC Vernon Township Woman's Club. (Use smaller font if it does not fit.)

The number of members is 57, as of May 1, 2024, which was on the blue sheet filed by our Treasurer with NJSFWC.

If you took on your new position in June, you need to obtain the hours from January to June from your predecessor if they were not turned over to you when you took over.

All reports should be sent to Co-President, Fran Gialanella, for review before mailing to the respective State Chairperson.

If you are on a Committee, ask the Chair if they will be keeping track of your time. No need to keep track of your Heaven Hill hours during the Easter Eggstravaganza and Great Pumpkin Festival, as those hours are recorded on the final schedule which we submit to Heaven Hill for payment. Shopping time and travel time should also be included. The time you spend putting your Annual Report together should be included. Any monies you spend out-of-pocket should be listed as 'in kind donations'.

You can keep these forms yourself until the end-of-year reporting time or give them to the proper Chairperson as the year progresses.

Thank you,
Maria

VERNON STREET FAIR

Arleen Hill

It may seem early to be writing about an event that comes in early September, but I have some information and thoughts to share about this event.

I am not going to be able to head the committee for the 2025 Vernon Street Fair. I have done it for five years and I am ready to pass the baton to someone else. At this point in time, we finally have a good system in place for what needs to be done to make our booth successful. I will share all of the information and walk you 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 remember I will help you with the entire process.

Thank you,
Arleen

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

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Newsletter information due to Karen Breese by the 11th of each month.

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

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

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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.