

GFWC Federation Refresher

Updated August 13, 2019

A **GFWC Federation Refresher** should be held each club year. It is a positive program of continuing education on the benefits of belonging to GFWC and can help with the overall retention of members, while educating new members and creating excitement and pride in your club. GFWC has many programs established to keep its seasoned as well as new members engaged and connected. One of the most important topics that should be included in the GFWC Federation Refresher Course is why our motto is **Unity in Diversity** and why it is as important today as when it was adopted at the first GFWC Convention.

A GFWC Federation Refresher at the beginning of the club year allows club leaders to share any new information received at the GFWC Annual Convention held each June. It is a great time to remind your members about the information tools offered through GFWC like the GFWC Clubwoman, GFWC News and Notes, GFWC Blog, the Women's History and Resource Center, and most importantly the GFWC Club Manual.

Another way to educate our members on GFWC is to review the GFWC Bylaws and GFWC Resolutions that guide our organization. These reinforce the reasons why we do the things the way we do and support the issues we support.

A fun way to incorporate a GFWC Federation Refresher is to develop a **FUN** GFWC, state, or club facts and federation quizzes or puzzles. Or go a step further and have a "Dear Jenny" box that members can deposit questions they have regarding federation. Incorporate time on your clubs agenda to answer these questions.

Invite a district or state leader to your meeting when you are conducting your GFWC Refresher Program, that way the members can address the leaders with questions and learn from their experiences within federation.

Share who our GFWC Partners are and information and projects related to each.



Share FEDERATION FACTS:

General Federation of Women's Clubs

FEDERATION FACTS

In the Know

Founded in 1890, GFWC's roots can be traced back to 1868 when Jane Cunningham Croly, a professional journalist, attempted to attend a dinner at an all-male press club honoring British novelist Charles Dickens. Croly was denied admittance based upon her gender, and in response, formed a woman's club—Sorosis. In celebration of Sorosis' 21st anniversary in 1889, Jane Croly invited women's clubs throughout the United States to pursue the cause of federation by attending a convention in New York City. On April 24, 1890, 63 clubs officially formed the General Federation of Women's Club by ratifying the GFWC constitution.

- ✓ Sorosis is the name of the club to which GFWC founder Jane Cunningham Croly belonged. Its name is a botanical term which means “an aggregation; a sweet flavor of many fruits, as in the pineapple.”
- ✓ Ellen Demorest, co-founder of Sorosis, was the inventor of mass-produced paper sewing patterns. They were included in her magazine, Mme. Demorest's Mirror of Fashions. Jane Croly was the chief staff writer for the magazine.
- ✓ In 1906, GFWC secured the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act.
- ✓ In 1916, GFWC suggested that special naturalization services be made part of Independence Day celebrations. It is still a tradition today.
- ✓ During World War I, GFWC raised \$4,880,000 in Liberty Bonds, \$90,000 for the Red Cross, \$55,106 for camp libraries, and \$89,788 for the YMCA.
- ✓ Jane Addams (founder of Hull House in Chicago), Julia Ward Howe (author of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic) and Eleanor Roosevelt were all clubwomen.
- ✓ GFWC was an important force in founding America's first national park and supported the creation of the National Park Service. Each federation established a park within their state. Many, such as Everglades National Park, were handed over to the National Park Service and now are enjoyed by millions.
- ✓ GFWC began a campaign to name official state birds and flowers in the 1920's.
- ✓ By 1933, GFWC had founded 75% of America's public libraries, as well as pioneered the idea of bookmobiles.
- ✓ Mrs. Roberta Campbell Lawson (GFWC President, 1935-1938) was half Delaware Indian. She published books on Native American music, as well as transcribed Lakota chants. When she died, her vast collection of Native American artifacts was donated to the Philbrook Museum in Oklahoma.



- ✓ During World War II, GFWC raised \$101,617,750 to buy bombers, \$154,459,132 to buy planes, and \$90,794,182 to Victory Loans. State federations provided \$234,834 in scholarships and \$46,601 in loans to train nurses. The Federation recruited over 6,000 young women for the Cadet Nurse Corps. Over 4,500 Juniors enlisted in the various services established for women.
- ✓ Many modern safety measures were early GFWC programs. The Federation had campaigns for seatbelts in all cars, streetlights on neighborhood streets and accurate labeling of food and medications.
- ✓ In 1994: GFWC founder Jane Cunningham Croly was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York.
- ✓ In 1997: GFWC renewed its commitment to libraries with the Libraries 2000 project. Over a five-year period, GFWC clubwomen raised and donated \$13.5 million to public libraries and public-school libraries across the nation.
- ✓ During the 2000s, GFWC members contributed \$180,000 for a fully-equipped ambulance for use by the New York Fire Department in response to the loss of equipment suffered during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.
- ✓ In 2011, GFWC introduced the *Success For Survivors Scholarship*, created as part of our efforts to highlight the importance of rebuilding one's life after experiencing intimate partner violence. Each year, GFWC awards \$2,500 scholarships to help intimate partner survivors obtain a post-secondary education that will offer them the chance to reshape their future by securing employment and gaining personal independence.
- ✓ In 2015, GFWC Celebrated its 125th Anniversary in Baltimore, Maryland.



Share the Benefits of Belonging to GFWC

Benefits of Belonging
General Federation of Women's Clubs
“Living the Volunteer Spirit”

Membership in GFWC is first and foremost about volunteerism. In all 50 states and more than 15 countries, our members work together to create global change. GFWC clubwomen are mothers, wives, daughters, doctors, teachers, and community leaders who are dedicated to enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service.

The greatest benefit of membership is being part of a world-wide volunteer movement of women working to better the lives of countless men, women, and children all over the world. The collective impact of GFWC clubwomen working together to assist those in need demonstrates the true power of Federation.

Individual Rewards

- Free tours of GFWC's Historic Headquarters
- GFWC.org Website
- GFWC Club Manual
- Subscription to weekly E-Newsletter “News & Notes”
- GFWC Clubwoman Magazine
- GFWC on Face Book, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram
- GFWC Blog updated weekly
- GFWC Annual Convention
- GFWC Legislative Action Center
- GFWC Membership Discounts
 - Veterinary Pet Insurance – VPI
 - Travel
 - Avis
 - Budget
 - Collette Guided Tours
 - Cruises Only
 - Motel 6
 - Orlando Vacations
 - Red Roof Inn
 - TNT Vacations
 - Wyndham Hotel
 - American Hearing Benefits
 - Office Depot



Club Rewards

- **GFWC Club Manual**
- **Partner with Nationally Recognized Community Service Projects**
 - Prevent Child Abuse America
 - March of Dimes
 - St. Jude Children' Research Hospital
 - Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership
 - Canine Companions for Independence
 - Easter Seals
 - Heifer International
 - Operation Smile
 - United Nations Foundation Shot@Life
 - ⊖ U.S. Fund for UNICEF
 - USO
- **Group Tax-Exemption Status**
- **Professional assistance with Club History Projects**
 - Through our Women's History and Resource Center
- **Programming Support through the GFWC Community Service Program Chairmen**
- **Access to Liability Coverage**
- **GFWC Resolutions**
- **GFWC Bylaws**
- **Eligibility for GFWC Awards, Contests and Grants**
- **LEADS Training**
- **Endorsed Fundraisers**
 - Terri Lynn
- **GFWC Marketplace**
- **GFWC Mentors**

The most significant benefit of belonging to GFWC is the support, encouragement, comfort, enthusiasm, creativity, and friendship shared by members from all walks of life, with varied perspectives, diverse backgrounds and different experiences.

