

GFWC Montgomery County District Newsletter



Spring 2026

Message from the Co-Presidents



As we come to the close of an extraordinary two-year term, I find myself filled with gratitude and pride for all we have shared together.

What a wonderful ending to a truly spectacular journey. When Kendra and I began serving as your District Co-Presidents, we stepped into this role with enthusiasm, commitment, and perhaps a little uncertainty about what lay ahead. What guided us from the beginning, however, was clear: our love for Federation and our desire to serve our clubs and communities with purpose.

Drawing from our experiences as club presidents, we set out to ensure that our district remained connected to the mission of GFWC while supporting the unique interests and needs of each of our communities. It has been our privilege to work alongside such dedicated, creative, and generous women.

One of the greatest joys of these two years has been getting to know so many of you personally—visiting your meetings, witnessing your projects firsthand, celebrating your successes, and sharing in the meaningful work you do every day. We have loved being able to bring the spirit and magic of GFWC to you through our visits, our conversations, and yes—even through countless emails! Most of all, we have wanted each of you to feel proud of your contributions and to recognize the tremendous impact your involvement has on this remarkable organization.

I continue to encourage everyone, whenever possible, to visit our Headquarters in Washington, D.C. There is truly something special about walking through those doors. You feel the history, the purpose, and the heart of Federation all around you. It is a reminder of who we are and what we are part of together.

And we are especially fortunate this coming year as we witness the restoration of this beautiful historic building—a project that feels both symbolic and inspiring as we continue building on our Federation legacy while honoring the past.

Thank you for allowing us the honor of serving this district. It has been a meaningful and rewarding experience, and we are deeply grateful for your friendship, support, and dedication. The future of our district is bright because of each of you.

With appreciation and gratitude,
Lourdes Posada and Kendra Wells
GFWC MD/MCFWC District Co-Presidents

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Women's Club of Bethesda

Glynnis Mileikowsky

Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention (DVAP) Committee

The scope of the GFWC's designated Signature Program - Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention (DVAP) - is broad and inclusive. Its goal is to increase awareness and to support the prevention of physical and emotional abuse of women in the home, and in communities locally, nationally, and globally. Areas of focus include Intimate Partner Violence, Child Abuse, Teen Dating Violence, Campus Sexual Assault, Elder Abuse, Violence Against Native American Women, Military Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking.

The MC FWC DVAP Committee works to increase awareness and support prevention of violence against women and families in local communities. This year our committee implemented programs to support two previously unaddressed areas - child victims of domestic violence trauma and elder abuse (more details below).

The DVAP committee now partners with five Montgomery County organizations, meeting with each quarterly to assess needs and set priorities. We provide ongoing monthly support, including essential supplies, seasonal donations, and holiday assistance to these organizations.

The organizations are:

- Betty Ann Krahne Center (BAK)
- Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents (RICA)
- Interfaith Works Women's Shelter (Taft Court)
- Safe Passages
- ElderSAFE

Betty Anne Krahne Center (BAK)

Throughout the 2025-26 session we continued our ongoing support. This included the purchase and delivery of zippered tote bags filled with a month's supply of personal care items and bath towels. We also provided new twin sheet sets, activity items, books and toy for children, and Kids' Care Bags filled with personal care items, stuffed animals and toys. In April, we purchased and delivered storage equipment, chairs and an assortment of therapy for children traumatized by domestic violence. The Clinic Director at Betty Ann Krahne has provided an Amazon wish list of remaining items needed for the therapy room at BAK. These needs will be addressed as part of the International Day of Service on September 25, 2026.

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Safe Passage Program

This program provides a safe space for children to meet and interact with non-custodial parents in a monitored and positive environment. In January we instituted a program to purchase and provide books and bears for the Safe Passage Program. Related to the Safe Passage Program is the Family Discovery program, for which committee members have provided holiday gifts, and more recently, volunteer support.

Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents (RICA)

We continued our ongoing support by providing refreshments, meals and snacks for staff and student event throughout the school year. Back-to-school supplies were donated as well as items to support RICA's Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program. This program is designed to help students develop critical life skills. We helped equip a wellbeing room and provided stationery and other supplies. In May the committee also rented a hall for the RICA Prom Night (a great success). Thanks to MC FWC, each RICA graduate received a custom graduation mug to mark the year and a Chick-Fil-A gift card.

In April we became aware of the extent to which food insecurity impacts many RICA students and families. We subsequently met with RICA principal Dr. Penn to discuss possible ways to help address food insecurity affecting many students. This is a work in progress, so stay tuned.

Interfaith Works Women's Shelter

Monthly paint and sip events at the Interfaith Works women's shelter continued in April and May. It's heartwarming to witness in real time how women relax and become engrossed in their creativity. We also purchased paint by number kits to be taken intermittently to the Interfaith Works Crabbs Branch location.

ElderSAFE Center Support

Operated by Charles E. Smith Life Communities, the ElderSAFE Center provides safe, temporary shelter, confidential counseling, medical services, spiritual support, legal and community referrals, and safe discharge to seniors affected by abuse. The DVAP committee provided zippered tote bags filled with requested personal care items. If feasible, we may also start regular paint-and-sip events there.

Overall, we have accomplished a lot, and we feel enthusiastic about the 2026-27 season ahead. The MC FWC DVAP Committee is district-wide and we welcome members of our sister clubs to raise their hands if they're interested in volunteering their time, ideas, or suggestions. If that person is you, please contact glynnis@gmail.com.

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Woman's Club of Chevy Chase

Wilsonia Cherry and Diana Ditto, Co-Presidents

The official club year has come to an end, and with it, a new set of Executive Committee members has begun its work, planning fresh and exciting activities for the fall. That said, we at GFWC-WCCC can look back with pride and a great sense of accomplishment at our many activities that took place since our last newsletter offering.

Our Upscale Resale event has become a mainstay fundraiser as we seek to enrich the coffers for our scholarship program. This project engaged seasoned and new members in the two-day February event. Club members solicited, collected, polished, and otherwise prepared thousands of community-donated items--from clothing, to silver and crystal, to games and books. Contributors were given a chance to clean out their closets, attics, and basements, for this opportunity to support deserving scholarship awardees. Members provided many volunteer hours to gross over \$80,000.00 in funds raised for local college bound students. On the heels of this success, we hosted the GFWC-Maryland Board of Directors meeting, which featured a keynote by GFWC International President Suellen Brazille.

Our March 1 Cabaret fundraiser sold out, with proceeds from this music-filled event also going to the Club's scholarship program, as well as to Doctors without Borders. Our 50th Annual Art Show, which this year required more than 1200 volunteer hours to mount, took place on March 20-23. The art works were beautiful and proceeds from this event will support art scholarships at Montgomery College. Garnering a sold-out crowd, our Literature Section's fundraiser took place on May 14. It featured New York Times bestselling author, Lynne Olson discussing her 2023 book, *Empress of the Nile: The Daredevil Archeologist Who Saved Egypt's Ancient Temples from Destruction*, and benefitted the Glen Echo Partnership for Arts and Culture and the WCCC Scholarship Fund. And our Garden Section has used its net proceeds from its fundraiser to create a Monarch Butterfly Way Station; our official certificate from Monarch Watch will arrive soon and will mark the spot.

And our hard work and our camaraderie were well recognized at the GFWC-Maryland Annual Convention at the end of April. We received several first-place awards for Category 4--Clubs with 61 and more members--including, for example, one for our monthly discussions of current affairs by our International Affairs Section. We also received two "outstanding" Anchor of Hope Awards: one for our continuing engagement with Community Bridges, an empowering program for girls in our county, and one for our Membership Advancement Plan, which implemented the strategic plan for recruiting and retaining members that was developed by our Membership Focus Group. The nearly forty submissions from eight club members to the State Photography Contest yielded two first-place winners: "Reflections of Brunelleschi's Dome," taken by Penny Amir, and "Peace in Quarantine," a moving scene captured by Caren Danies. And our own Jane DeAngeli was named Maryland Outstanding Clubwoman of the Year for 2026.

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Our May 20th Annual Meeting was a lot of fun, too. Certificates for the State GFWC awards were handed out; all the Club's submitted photographs were on display; and our newly elected officers were installed—to great ceremony! We welcomed Jan Novotny and Marlene Kaplan as our new co-presidents, with other roles being filled by Mary Helen Foglia (first vice president), Gloria Crowley (second vice president), Carol Wilburn (third vice president), Helen Harwood (Recording Secretary), Betsy Sanford (Corresponding Secretary), Dana Lane (Assistant Secretary), and Allison McDonnell (Assistant Treasurer).

This new leadership team will, no doubt, join us periodically at our weekly “Bring Your Own Lunch” events, which will continue throughout the summer and beyond, as well as at our Annual Fourth of July Party in late June. And plans for on-going activities, such as Mah Jongg, game days and nights, Mystery Mansion Redux, our Artisan Craft Fair, and a new travel-tips discussion group, are well underway. Speaking of trips, our Immediate Past Co-President, Wilsonia Cherry, is already packing for a June trip to attend the GFWC International Convention in Scottsdale, where she will participate in the LEADS pre-convention workshop as the Maryland representative and from which she hopes to bring new club activity ideas to share with District members.

We invite you all to join us at the Club for the GFWC Summer Workshop, which will be held on August 1. At that time, you will be able to see our wonderful, refinished floors! 'Til we see each other again--at that time or at our Fall meeting--we wish all of you a wonderful, restful summer!



Gathering donations at the GFWC-Maryland Board of Directors meeting

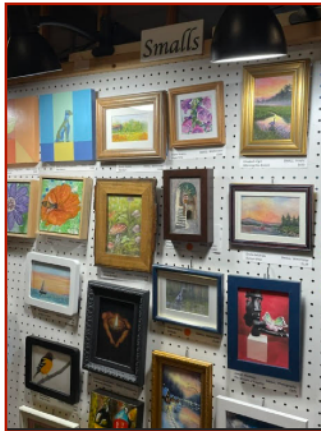


Co-Presidents Diana Ditto and Wilsonia Cherry are pictured here with former presidents, “The Ladies of the Gavel,” Phyllis Kokus, Kathy Ewell, Marilyn Sherman, Andrea Sherman, and Kitty Cash, poised to installing new officers.

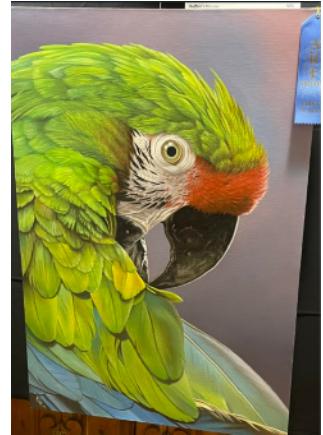
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GFWC-Maryland Board of Directors meeting:
International President Suellen Brazil with Southeastern Region President Reno Eitel, club President Dawn Walsh, and club Co-President Wilsonia Cherry



Here are some of the "Smalls" from the Art Show.



A First Place winner in the Art Show . . . It's not a photograph!



Author Lynne Olsen, who spoke at our sold-out Literature Fundraiser, is flanked by Literature Section Co-Chairs Maryanne Courtney and Henri Keller after her presentation.



Our Scholarship winners are going places!



GFWC-Maryland President Andrea Lilly with 2026 LEADS Candidate Wilsonia Cherry

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Women's Club of Laytonsville

Jennifer Rutherford

Annual Potluck Picnic and Officer Installation

The organization held its annual potluck picnic meeting yesterday, which also included the installation of new executive officers for the upcoming term. Members gathered to enjoy food, fellowship, and to mark the transition of leadership.

The newly installed executive board is as follows:

- Christina Pellegrino - President (returning)
- Jennifer Rutherford - Vice President (outgoing Vice President)
- Mary Burke - Secretary
- SueAnn Colella - Treasurer
- Jean Lejnar - Vice President

The group extends appreciation to all outgoing and continuing officers for their service and dedication, and looks forward to a successful year ahead under the new leadership team.



Our Town Parade

Laytonsville Town Parade is an annual event that gives our club the chance to showcase our work to the local community. Our banners, brooms and farm women costumes reflected the theme of the parade this year, which was “celebrating our agricultural roots”. We wore straw hats and aprons, while carrying food and flowers in baskets along with our banners decorated with dangling roots! We gave out animal stickers to kids along the route.



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St. Paul's Annual Yard Sale

Laytonsville Woman's Club had a booth at St. Paul's UMC annual yard sale. We sold our brooms, pictured here, and other items. We took a cue from the Juniors at the Maryland convention and sold mystery bags, popular with the children. It was cooler than expected, and sales were not exactly hot either, but it was fun and we all cleaned out some clutter.



The Musical SUFFs

Laytonsville club members Caroline Maurer, Jean Lejnar, and Jennifer Rutherford went to the Tony Award winning Musical SUFFs on May 27th at the Baltimore Hippodrome. We met up with members of the Frederick Civic Women's Club for a fun evening all about the struggles of the early Suffragists. It was excellent, and it made us so grateful for how far women have come and especially for those strong women who made it all possible. We dressed up in our versions of period attire, complete with sashes which Caroline Maurer sewed in the movement's colors; purple, white and yellow. Jen couldn't wear her hat in the theater, but it completed the look.



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Metropolitan Community Club

Lourdes Posada

Metropolitan Community Club - that's a Wrap

The first five months of the year were filled with meaningful service, community outreach, wellness initiatives, fundraising, and friendship for the Metropolitan Community Club. From supporting local schools and community organizations to gathering for wellness activities and social events, our club has continued its commitment to making a positive impact while strengthening the bonds among members.

Supporting Literacy in Our Community

One of the highlights of the spring was our annual Book Drive, made possible through the generosity of 16 club members. Through this effort, we were able to donate approximately 100 books each to Goshen Elementary School, Gaithersburg Elementary School, and Arcola Elementary School.

With many students in these schools coming from Hispanic families, special emphasis was placed on purchasing bilingual English-Spanish books to promote literacy at home and encourage family reading. The response from the school communities was overwhelmingly positive. During Goshen Elementary's Cultural Literacy Night, families were especially appreciative of seeing books that reflected their languages and experiences, helping children feel represented and included.

This project continues to be a meaningful way for our club to invest in education and support young readers throughout Montgomery County.

Scarf Bombing Project Expands Its Reach

Our second annual Scarf Bombing Project grew beyond its original vision and became another successful outreach effort this year. Club members donated 20 handmade knitted and crocheted items to The Personal Care Foundation, a Montgomery County organization that supports victims of domestic violence, their children, and others in need.

Donations included winter scarves in various sizes, a winter cowl, stocking caps, and handmade blankets suitable as lap robes or children's blankets. We also contributed toothbrushes to support personal care needs.

Each handmade item was lovingly labeled with a message reading:

"Warm wishes from The Metropolitan Community Club of Montgomery County, Inc."

These handmade gifts offered not only warmth but also comfort and encouragement to members of our community facing difficult circumstances.

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Promoting Health and Wellness

Health and wellness remained an important focus this spring. Club members participated in National Wear Red Day, wearing red to raise awareness for heart health and women's cardiovascular wellness. It was a simple but meaningful way to show support and spark conversations around preventive health.

We also shared information on women's heart health and the connection between menopause and cardiovascular disease. These conversations highlighted the importance of recognizing symptoms, advocating for ourselves in medical settings, and maintaining open dialogue with healthcare providers. It was an important reminder that awareness and education can play a powerful role in prevention.

Weekly Walking Group Continues Strong

Our Tuesday Walking Group remained a popular weekly gathering throughout the spring. Members met each Tuesday afternoon for exercise, fresh air, and conversation. Whether walking one loop or several, the group welcomed all paces and abilities.

The walking group continues to be a wonderful opportunity to stay active while enjoying fellowship and connection outdoors.

MCC Step Challenge Gets Members Moving

This spring, we also launched the MCC Step Challenge, a fun and friendly week-long activity encouraging members to stay active while supporting a charitable cause.

Participants tracked their steps throughout the week while contributing to a shared collection that will benefit a charity selected by the participant with the highest step count. The challenge combined movement, motivation, and giving back—bringing together fitness, friendly competition, and philanthropy in true MCC spirit.

Sweet Success: See's Candy Fundraiser

This spring, our club also held a See's Candy fundraiser in celebration of spring and Mother's Day. Proceeds from the fundraiser will help support one of our club scholarships established in honor of two former members.

The fundraiser was both successful and meaningful, allowing us to celebrate the season while continuing our commitment to supporting education and honoring the legacy of members who made lasting contributions to our club.

Spring Wellness Retreat on the Eastern Shore

In April, several club members gathered for a healthy yoga retreat on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The retreat offered a beautiful opportunity to relax, recharge, and connect in a peaceful waterfront setting.

Members enjoyed a restorative day of stretching, breathing exercises, wellness-focused conversation, and healthy food, all while taking in the spectacular views overlooking the water. It was a memorable day centered on mindfulness, wellness, and friendship.

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Friendship and Fun Through Social Events

Our social activities also brought members together in joyful ways this spring. A Rummikub game day gave members the chance to gather for an afternoon of laughter, friendly competition, and connection. The event was so well received that additional game days are already being discussed for the fall, with the possible return of Bingo as well.

These gatherings continue to remind us that friendship and fun are an important part of what makes our club special.

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on January through May, we can be proud of all we have accomplished together. Through service projects, educational outreach, wellness initiatives, fundraising, and social connection, the Metropolitan Community Club has continued to make a meaningful difference both in our community and among our membership.

Thank you to all club members who donated, volunteered, participated, and supported these efforts. Your generosity, creativity, and enthusiasm are what make our club thrive.

We look forward to all that the coming months will bring as we continue building community through service, friendship, and purpose.

In May, we installed four officers for the 2026-2028 term:

Vicki Dorman - President

Debbie Lyle - Vice President

Janet Maley - Treasurer

Karen Portner - Secretary

Our annual dinner celebration honored our 2024-2026 officers: Lourdes Posada, Vicki Dorman, Janet Maley & Karen Portner who served for two consecutive terms. Thank you for your leadership, community engagement and friendship.

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MCFWC District Officers 2026-2028

At the GFWC MD MCFWC District meeting on May 19th, the following individuals were elected to serve on the Executive Board for the District for the coming biennium.

Treasurer, Katherine Flaxman, Woman's Club of Chevy Chase
Corresponding Secretary, Deborah Johnson, Woman's Club of Laurel
Recording Secretary, Erin Goldstein, Woman's Club of Chevy Chase
Vice President, Andrea Sherman, Woman's Club of Chevy Chase
President, Jennifer Rutherford, Laytonsville Woman's Club

Congratulations to these women who willingly accepted leadership roles in the District!



Andrea Lilly, GFWC MD President 2024-2026 and Jeanne Pim, GFWC MD President 2026-2028 installed the newly elected GFWC MD MCFWC District Officers

Upcoming GFWC International, Regional, State, and District Dates

Don't miss these opportunities to connect with GFWC women this summer and fall!

June 27 - July 1, 2026 - GFWC International Convention, Scottsdale, Arizona

August 1, 2026 - GFWC MD Summer Workshop, Woman's Club of Chevy Chase

September 26, 2026 - GFWC National Day of Service (Registration Required)

September 22, 2026 - GFWC MD BOD Meeting, Holly Hills Country Club

October 2026 - GFWC MD MCFWC Fall Meeting, Date and Location TBD

October 15-17, 2026 - Southeastern Region Annual Meeting, Chattanooga, TN