

GFWC California Clubwoman Magazine



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
- 04 LEADERSHIP NOTES
- 06 EDITOR'S NOTE
- 07 AREA CONFERENCES
- 10 WOMEN IN HISTORY
- 16 THE GREAT AMERICAN
LIGHT FIGHT
- 18 CFWC WINTER BOARD
- 22 CLUB AND DISTRICT NEWS



FEATURE ARTICLES

- 08 THE TEEN YEARS
- 11 IMAGINING FEDERATION
- 12 READY, SET, PROTECT
- 14 RECONNECTING TO
FEDERATION
- 17 CALIFORNIA HOLIDAY

NOTE: GFWC CALIFORNIA CLUBWOMAN MAGAZINE IS NOW BEING PUBLISHED IN MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER AND DECEMBER, BEGINNING WITH THIS DECEMBER ISSUE.



Sonya Matthies CFWC
President 2024-2026



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

By cultivating a culture of volunteerism, the California Federation of Women's Clubs is dedicated to advancing community engagement across our clubs. A primary objective is membership growth, activated through innovative recruitment strategies and encouraging active participation among current members. CFWC's support for military personnel and veterans encompasses both enrichment programs and essential services. Members consistently provide leadership in key areas such as women's health, crime prevention, and disaster preparedness, while maintaining focus on combating hunger and reducing food insecurity.

CFWC recognizes and celebrates the contributions and achievements of our members. Uplifting the legacy and building upon the federation's longstanding history remain central values. On average, CFWC members contribute over one million service hours annually through more than 14,000 philanthropic initiatives, and millions of dollars are donated each year to nonprofit organizations and scholarship programs. Members actively participate in projects and legislative advocacy related to domestic and sexual violence prevention, child abuse prevention, education, and literacy.

The tradition of achievement underscores the federation's commitment to expansion and impact. Through collaborative efforts, members form the foundation of CFWC's ability to effect meaningful change within California and beyond.

Looking forward, increasing and retaining membership will continue to be a core priority across all levels of our federation. By providing professional development and leadership training opportunities, CFWC empowers our members to achieve personal and professional growth, thereby strengthening the organization as a whole. The federation remains dedicated to fostering inclusivity, diversity, and unity within global communities, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds to participate in service initiatives.

The California Federation of Women's Clubs continues to make a significant impact through collective service and advocacy. By prioritizing unity and diversity, the federation is positioned to accomplish considerable progress in the future, ensuring ongoing support for future generations as members before us have done. As I look to the future, I envision tremendous growth in membership that will include younger members, diversity in membership, and continued recognition of the wisdom and experiences of our long-standing members.

I am enthusiastic about the opportunities and challenges that await us and take great pride in CFWC, feeling deeply honored to serve this esteemed federation as the CFWC 68th President.

In Federation and Appreciation,
Sonya



Wendy Curran
1st Vice President &
President Elect

Hello members! This edition of our California Clubwoman imposes a unique theme: IMAGINING FEDERATION. Oh my goodness! So many things come to mind, inviting us to really think about the wonderful projects, acts of kindness, and all that we bring to help not just our own communities. Our member clubs here in California have a long history of supporting not just local communities. Member clubs have supported many projects, groups, and organizations throughout our world.

It is not just sharing our vision of a better tomorrow, or lending a helping hand up, we “imagine” how to bring hope, kindness, movement forward, and especially a better tomorrow. When we learn of a need, our imaginations go into overdrive – seeking a path to help and make a difference where we can.

So many parts go into “how” we imagine, how we can help and bring a positive outcome. Most often, just the thought of “how can we help?” shapes what develops. Each time we create a new way to bring hope, we are truly forever transformed.

As the close of another year approaches, we are grateful to share our ability to help when and where we can. And, my money is on our Clubs and their members - even as our year turns the page to a new year – to hope we have the ability and the grace to continue helping our communities, and maybe even beyond. Now that would be the best gift we could all hope to share.

Wishing Happy Holidays to all – and may all the “good tidings” abound.

Wendy



Cindy Sanders
2nd Vice President
Membership

The 2025 CFWC Area Conferences were unique, energizing, inspiring and informative. If the conferences were a reflection of our future in Federation, our future is bright!

The marathon of conferences, held on each of the four Saturdays in October was both challenging and rewarding. Our members want to attend CFWC events, but they also want to feel that their time is respected and well spent. They want to learn something, or multiple things, that they can take back to their Clubs and Districts. Presentations that are useful and include new ideas that can be shared are most appreciated. The Area VPs provided learning, laughter and useful information at the Area Conferences. Here is a recap of the four events held throughout our beautiful state.

Area D

Martha Pritchard and her team put together a great agenda with an engaging guest speaker who spoke about HOBY. Hugh O'Brien's widow also shared her late husband's vision for the successful leadership program. Several vendors provided a lovely shopping experience and lunch was delicious. A silly, fun, well-written skit about membership brought lots of laughter. 50 first-timers were among the approximate 160 attendees in Hemet..

Area A

Nancy Jo Banko hosted a smaller group of 63, many of the attendees being first timers! Attendees dressed like pirates and we played a rousing pirate treasure membership hunt game. Members learned about the importance of social media from guest speaker and CFWC's expert, Sonja Hults. Her Powerpoint presentation highlighted the how and why of using Social Media tools to be seen in our communities. It was a wonderful day filled with laughter and learning.

Area B

Ellen Ansok chose a location in the Sierra foothills that had not been used before, allowing for two clubs to attend that had not participated previously. One Club's entire membership joined us at the Chicken Ranch Casino! Of course, it was a chicken-themed day. Guest speakers shared their non-profit organization program, providing housing for aged-out foster youth. A fun game of membership jeopardy was a highlight of the day. 18 first-timers were in attendance.

Area C

Queen Snow White Sandy Tessier presided over a day of learning and laughter. The guest speakers were engaging, while the many vendors provided shopping to enjoy. A fun sock matching game provided the opportunity for members and guests to get to know each other. An auction of beautifully wrapped gifts was a creative fundraiser. With 45 first-timers in attendance, it was a great conference to complete the October marathon.

The Area VPs worked hard to provide conferences that gifted our members with learning, laughter and positive memories. Approximately \$4000 dollars was profited from the four Saturday events, but making money is not the goal of the conferences. Engaging members, both new and existing, was the ultimate objective and the Area VPs exceeded all expectations.

Yes, each conference was unique. Each successful conference provided laughter, learning and ideas for members to take back with them to their Clubs and Districts. There were many positive comments by attendees and the social media attention was huge with lots of great pictures.

As the year draws to a close, twinkling lights remind us of the warmth of connection, the beauty of reflection, and the power of purpose. December invites us to pause—to celebrate what we've accomplished together and to rekindle the spirit that drives our service forward.

Editor's Note



Luanne Arredondo
Editor-in-Chief

In Federation, every journey is unique. Some of us found our path through friendship, others through advocacy or creativity. Yet we are all united by a shared desire: to make a difference. Whether you've chaired a project, supported a fundraiser, mentored a new member, or simply shown up with a helping hand—you are part of the story of change.

As we look toward the new year, may we continue to forge ahead with courage and curiosity. Let's challenge ourselves to dream bigger, listen deeper, and lift one another higher. The path to progress isn't always straight, but it's illuminated by compassion, resilience, and the collective heartbeat of Federation.

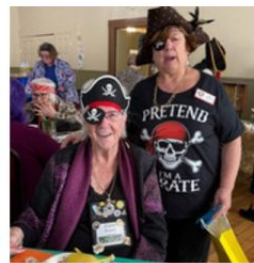
So as we celebrate the holidays and step boldly into a new season, let's carry this truth with us: Change begins with each of us—when we dare to find our path and walk it with purpose.

This issue is a reflection of the impact and change you have created this last quarter.

From our Federation family to yours, may your holidays be filled with peace, gratitude, and hope for the year ahead.

AREA CONFERENCES 2025

There were Pirates and Chickens, Ballerinas and Womb Mates, and everything in between at the CFWC Area Conferences, but, oh, how much fun there was.



THE TEEN YEARS

By Colleen Janssen

Being a teenager is like running through a minefield – blindfolded. Some days, you are on top of the world. Other days you contemplate disappearing from the face of the earth. You're not sure where you are going, or how to get there, but you are moving forward, nonetheless.

Friends are everything to a teen. They are your sanity-check when you are overwhelmed by school, parents, sports, and the demands of homework and dating. Friends provide fun all day at school and on weekends. They are the source of drama about relationships, and your soft place to land when the relationships fail. They are your best friend, and can be your worst enemy. In the end, they help balance the challenging steps teens take in the inevitable journey to adulthood.

Parents, on the other hand, can be the source of added stress. They constantly want to know where you are, where you are going, with whom you are spending your time, did you eat, did you shower, is your room clean, is your homework done, have you planned your science project for the fair, what time is your sports practice, what time is your game, and on, and on, and on. Grandparents can be the people you turn to when your parents are driving you crazy, or they can be one more adult telling you what to do. With luck, they find you charming and a wonderful human being.

Teachers are either a teen's favorite person, or, more likely, the person that adds to their stress. When the class subject is a favorite, the teen's opinion of the teacher often mirrors the happiness of learning about something interesting. When the subject is boring or too difficult, the teacher is someone to be tolerated.

School clubs and organizations make the days bearable. Teens get to try new skills and enlarge their friend base. Thus, clubs and organizations fall into the positive category for teens. Typically, teens vacillate between wanting to be treated as an adult, capable of making their own decisions, and being a child who needs comfort when the decisions don't work out well. The question is, which teen will you see today?

Parents are tested every day as they take a pulse on their teens' attitude when they are picked up from school or an activity, or when they arrive home through the front door.

If the teen is hungry, tired, bored, lonely, depressed, parents feel the brunt of their bad attitude. If the teen is happy or excited about something, it becomes the fleeting moment on which a parent clings, thinking all is well. But wait, a text on their phone can arrive and spoil everything. Parents can't win.

For parents, the birth of a baby is celebrated. Each milestone: first steps, first words, first time riding a bicycle, first time going to school, is a cause for celebration.

Parents watch as their children grow, find friends, learn new skills, and more. Each day, while challenging, is a memory stored in the parent's brain.

Then, slowly at first, little cracks begin to appear. Perhaps the child starts asking the parent to drop them off a block from school, so they can walk the rest of the way alone. Then, the parent's attendance at a school event is a source of embarrassment. Finally, parents are told to make themselves scarce when a friend comes over to study for an upcoming test.

Little by little, children push parents away, while keeping them on the side for support when things go wrong. Much of the teen's behavior is like a cat.

With cats, you are allowed to feed them, spend money on them, and even talk to them as they leave the room to avoid you. However, when the cat wants to be petted or snuggled, they appear without warning to demand what they want. You sit in your chair, soaking up the happiness of your cat wanting to spend time with you, as you stroke their back. Suddenly, the cat strikes out with their paw, clawing your hand and drawing blood. They are done with the petting session. The cat jumps up and demands to be let out into the back yard.

The same thing happens with teens. They will appear from their bedroom, sit and talk for a while, then blame you for something, and disappear back into their cave.

I think this is nature's way of weaning them from your control. You will have days when you love them, but would sell them for free to anyone willing to take them on. Once they finally move out of your house, they look forward to their freedom, while you turn around and notice the emptiness in your home.

In the meantime, know that their flight from home is a good thing. They are exerting their independence, and will show you that you did your job by teaching them what they need to know to survive. Oh, and don't worry, eventually, they'll be back for holiday meals.



Women In History



Learning where we came from and where we can go from here...

Annette Abbott Adams (1877–1956) was an American lawyer and judge. She was the first woman to be the Assistant Attorney General in the United States. Born Annette Grace Abbott in Prattville, California, Adams was educated at the Chico State Normal School and the University of California, Berkeley, where she obtained her undergraduate degree in 1904, and her law degree in 1912. She was a member of Delta Delta Delta. Before beginning her legal career, she taught grammar school and was one of the first female school principals in California, at Modoc County High School, in Alturas.

To read more about Annette Abbott Adams, scan the QR Code below.



Annette Abbott Adams
Prattville, CA
1877-1956

Imagining Federation

By Jennifer Nickel



One of the benefits of being part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, as opposed to an independent, individual club of women, is that you are linked to women all around the world. As indicated by the California Federation of Women's Clubs' motto, "Strength United Is Stronger," individually, women may indeed be strong, but joined together, we become a far greater force for the world to reckon. Joined together, we have the potential to be an unstoppable force to transform not only our communities and nation, but the world, for the better, creating better and brighter possibilities for our children and grandchildren.

Women are more than half of the world's population. We have often gone unheard in the shaping of events that transform the lives of not just those we love but even our own. By joining together so that our collective voices can no longer be ignored, we have the potential to shape the world and improve the lives of all.

As you imagine your role in Federation, take the time to imagine the world around you and changes that can be made to improve lives (quality, quantity, content, etc.). What do you think might help make the world a better place? Why not work toward that goal? Bring it to your club and ask your sisters in Federation to share your vision and join you in trying to achieve this aspiration. Think of creating a Resolution in order to ask other clubs to share your club's vision. Think of the steps that can be taken towards that goal and find projects that work towards achieving those ends.

How do you perceive your efforts and roles in Federation can best serve the goals you want to accomplish in being part of this organization? Know that you are not required to have some great grand plan in order to join Federation, but merely (hopefully) a willingness to support efforts to better the world that are shared by other members.

Shortages of those willing to be chief can be rare (but do occur), but the strength of an organization comes from the tribe/members. It is the band members rather than the drum major who determine its performance. While music is likely to exist when a person puts the effort into playing their band instrument, the best performances are accomplished when the drum major (leaders) is in sync with band members, all investing their talents together to create their best efforts. Drum majors need to be certain the band is behind them and that they are traveling in a direction the band wants to go, rather than toward a cliff they might not realize. But members and leaders alike should understand the purpose of the role they choose to play in order for the performance to be its best, providing enjoyment and satisfaction not only to the participants but to those they intend to benefit.

Federation presents infinite possibilities regarding the goals that can be achieved by its members and the benefits possible to them personally, as well as they choose to give to others. Be sure to take advantage of being a member of the benefits you receive as a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and imagine the world as you envision it and how Federation can help make your dream a reality.

READY, SET, PROTECT.....

LionHeart Safety NextSteps
By Lana Frisby, LionHeartSafety

A Call to Action from Lionheart Safety for GFWC Clubs

Recent articles in the GFWC Clubwoman Magazine have spurred interest, concern, and commitment among Federated Members around emergency preparedness and response. Lionheart Safety recognizes you want to find out how to get started, how to expand your emergency readiness, and how to assist your communities before, during, and after an emergency.

Where Clubs Can Begin

Any club can:

- Host a Courage Training: Hands-on, scenario-based workshops for families, schools, and communities.
- Ready-to-Go Kit: Provide a neighborhood childcare center, shelter, or organization with the needed emergency items.
- Develop a Safety Plan: Use Lionheart templates to create an easy-to-follow plan for your club, church, or community organization.

Why it Matters

Emergencies don't wait for perfect conditions. They hit at midnight, when your spouse is out of town, in the middle of a fundraiser. And when they do occur, the difference between chaos and courage will depend on preparation.

Ready to Act? Connect today with Lionheart Safety to: Organize a Courage Training for your community, order Ready-to-Go Kits, and establish a culture of readiness.



Lionheart Safety was built on the belief that preparedness is a shared responsibility—and that courage can be taught. With leaders like Nick Bello, who has over two decades of experience in emergency services—including his tenure as a Fire Captain with the City of San José, and Lana Frisby, who experienced exiting Paradise during the Camp Fire, we've created tools and trainings that meet people where they are and help them move forward with confidence.

Creating a Safety Network

GFWC clubs have deep roots in their communities. Lionheart Safety provides training, kits, and expertise. We can do it together:

- Customize regional readiness events
- Align organizations with best practices
- Make life-saving information and tools accessible to communities

“We can create courage—not chaos—when emergencies occur, together.”



Editors Note: Dear Reader, if you recall from our July Issue, we had a full spread about Fire Safety from LionHeart Safety. This is a follow-up article as we enter California Fire Season. Stay safe and connect.



At Lionheart Safety, we believe that preparedness is more than a checklist—it's a mindset. Our Lionheart Standard Training Catalog offers a curated selection of trauma-informed, bilingual trainings designed to equip childcare providers with the confidence, clarity, and consistency they need to respond effectively in any situation. Whether you're supporting infants, toddlers, or school-age children, each course reflects our commitment to developing courageous responders—professionals who lead with calm, act with purpose, and prioritize safety every step of the way.

- **Ready to Go Bag Training for Childcare Provider: Empowering Preparedness with Practical Tools and Emergency Simulations** -Learn how to use the Ready to Go Bag's key items in real-world emergency scenarios. Includes evacuation drills and debrief. **Fire Safety: Ready, Respond, Recovery: Building Confidence Through Preparedness, Action, and Recovery**- Covers fire preparedness, response protocols, and recovery strategies, including sheltering in place during a fire, in nature, or from a vehicle.
- **CO Poisoning Awareness: Risks, Symptoms, Prevention: Empowering Providers to Recognize and Prevent Toxic Exposure**- Learn how to identify poisoning risks, recognize symptoms, and implement prevention strategies in childcare environments.
- **Utility Control Overview: Gas, Water, Electrical Shut-Off Basics: Protecting Facilities Through Smart Utility Management**- Covers how to safely shut off utilities and properly document shut-off points on the LIC 999 Facility Sketch.
- **Understanding Required Forms and Emergency Regulations: Navigating Compliance with Confidence and Clarity**- Demystifies Community Care Licensing emergency forms—what they are, when to use them, and how to stay compliant after emergencies or unusual events. **Exiting Paradise: Real-Life Emergency Insight**: A firsthand account of evacuating Paradise, CA, during the Camp Fire. Includes practical takeaways and a facilitator reflection to inspire preparedness and urgency.
- **Fire Extinguisher Overview: Understanding Components, Fire Types, Licensing, and the PASS Method**- Learn the basics of fire extinguisher use, types of fires, licensing regulations, and how to operate using the PASS method.
- **Developmental Assessment Kit**: Learn to use the ASQs alongside the Preschool Learning Foundations to observe and support children ages 0–6. This training shows how to integrate formal screening tools with everyday interactions, helping providers confidently track developmental progress and plan responsive care.
- **Threat Zero: Understanding California's Workplace Violence Prevention Law (SB 553): Preparing Businesses to Assess, Track, and Prevent Workplace Violence**- Introduces SB 553 requirements for businesses with 10+ employees. Covers threat tracking systems and integration with facility safety plans.
- **How to Conduct an EDITH Drill: Essential Steps for Effective Fire Safety Drills**- Teaches how to plan and practice Exit Drills In The Home (EDITH), including floor plans, escape routes, and emergency simulations.
- **EMSA Pediatric CPR & First Aid (8 Hours): Life-Saving Skills for Childcare Providers** Fulfills the EMSA 8-hour requirement for CPR & First Aid. Includes hands-on instruction and certification valid for two years.
- **Preventive Health & Safety Training (8 Hours): Creating Safer Environments for Children in Care**- Meets the EMSA/CCL requirement for first-time licensees and new staff based on UCSF curriculum. Covers hygiene, injury prevention, nutrition, and emergency preparedness.

RECONNECTING WITH FEDERATION

By Colleen Jenssen

It is easy for clubs and club members to become laser-focused on supporting important causes in their local community, forgetting they are part of a larger picture. Each club is connected to a state and international organization.

When the first 63 clubs federated in 1890 to become the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), they set the standard for clubs to follow. You may ask why we are federated, rather than branches of the international organization. This is an important distinction. Being federated means each club runs itself the way that works best for its membership. GFWC provides an organized structure that most clubs follow. They also offer training and resources to help clubs in their quest to be more professional and provide the best service to their community and club members. One example of training and resources is the GFWC Club Manual. Hopefully, all club presidents have downloaded this huge document and use it in managing their club. The manual contains information on each of the seven community service program areas, contests, report writing, administration, and so much more. The document may be found on the gfwc.org website. You will need to set up a member account to be able to access the Member Portal. If you have difficulty finding the document, call GFWC at 1-202-347-3168 for assistance.

Additionally, our state organization, the California Federation of Women's Clubs (CFWC), provides a yearbook with similar resources. This document is on the cfwc.org website. Also, the officers and other board members are ready and willing to assist when asked. So, what can we do to help club members learn more about our connection to federation? One idea is to provide programs that reinforce federation. Ideas include having speakers and activities that demonstrate the seven community service program areas. These seven include: Advocates for Children, Arts & Culture, Civic Engagement & Outreach, Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention, Education & Libraries/ESO, Environment, and Health & Wellness. Additionally, you can include Legislation & Public Policy, Community Impact, Women's History & Resource Center, Membership, Leadership, and GFWC Affiliate Organizations.

A few ideas include having a speaker from the local foster care program(Advocates for Children); attending a performance at a theater (Arts & Culture); an information booth at the City's annual celebration (Civic Engagement & Outreach); printing stickers with information about the National Domestic Violence hotline to distribute to local businesses for their restrooms (Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention); have authors attend a meeting to talk about their books (Education & Libraries/ESO); have the local nursery offer a presentation on planting and garden maintenance (Environment); or bring in a cardiologist to share the latest information on heart disease prevention (Health & Wellness).



RECONNECTING WITH FEDERATION CONTINUED

Another great program is to share information and resources for all GFWC Affiliate organizations. During this program, share the importance of clubs supporting large organizations such as Shot@Life, Canine Companions, Operation Smile, Alzheimer's Association, and others. Each of the Affiliate organizations is listed on the GFWC website and in the GFWC Club Manual. Support for these GFWC-vetted organizations can help a club's donation go farther to help causes throughout the world.

What is important is that we look beyond the borders of our own communities and see how we can expand the difference we make in our world. Every day, GFWC works on legislative issues that affect us, our families, our communities, and our nation. From the earliest days, some of our members were suffragists. Through the years, and continuing today, we are a political force for good. We do not endorse candidates; we work on issues. Our Legislative Action Center (LAC) is found on the GFWC.org website. You can register to be notified whenever there is an issue that needs our support or opposition. Check it out today. Consider bringing a laptop to a club meeting and assisting members in registering for the LAC.

In the past, our clubs and members contributed their efforts with those of other clubs across the country and made a huge difference. We can still do that through our connections to CFWC and GFWC. These are a few of our past accomplishments:

- 1898: GFWC unanimously passed a resolution against child labor and started working on the improvement of child labor laws.
- 1899: GFWC supported the first-ever juvenile court law.
- 1906: GFWC spearheaded letter/telegram writing campaign for passage of the Pure Food & Drug Act.
- 1910s: GFWC supported legislation for the eight-hour workday, workplace safety and inspection, and workmen's compensation. We also supported prison reform legislation.
- 1917: White lines on the road thanks to Dr. June Hill Robertson McCarrol from a club in Indio.
- 1922: GFWC purchased 1734 N Street NW in Washington, D.C. as the international headquarters.
- 1930s: GFWC clubs were credited by the American Library Association with establishing 75% of our nation's libraries: 474 free public libraries and 4,655 traveling libraries.
- 1934: GFWC began a 10-year study reviewing the question of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), then adopted an ERA resolution in 1944.
- 1944: GFWC Buy a Bomber campaign during WWII, sold war bonds with more than \$154 thousand dollars, and purchased 431 planes.
- 1945: GFWC was one of five women's organizations that participated in the conference to form the United Nations.
- 1960: GFWC Brighten the Night nationwide campaign for streetlights to prevent crime and accidents.
- 1961: GFWC Women's Crusade for Seat Belts: installed 1 million in one year.
- 1984: GFWC Founded the Women's History & Resource Center.

Clubs and their members participated in these accomplishments. Banding together as a Federation, we are stronger together.... What should we do together today?

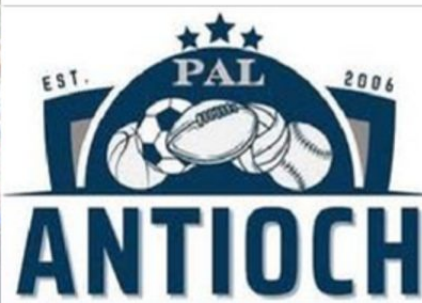




For 25 years now, the Vistalli family has decorated their home for the holidays with a special Disney theme. "It didn't start off this big," said Gary Vistalli, who is the mastermind behind the creation. "It just sort of evolved and every year - I add something to it. Every year a few more lights go up, or a new character shows up." The home now has 35,000+ lights and over 30 wood cutouts made by Gary of Disney characters, such as Mickey and Minnie, a variety of princesses and many other characters. Why Disney? The family says it's their passion. Gary Vistalli shared, "I fell in love with it as a kid," and "I knew that when I got my own house that someday I would start sharing my love for Disney."

Gary's love for Disney has grown into something his neighborhood loves to see each year. In 2022, Kristen battled breast cancer. Despite the struggles the family went through, they say they weren't going to let that stop them from putting up their annual Christmas display. "People are like oh you're still going to do it?" Kristen Vistalli said, "I am like, yes we are still going to do it, because I still want to give back because that is part of me, and that is how I feel connected to the community." Kristen shared that continuing to share the families love of Disney magic at Christmas was one of her strengths while she battled cancer. Each person that drives by and has a big smile on their face.... every time that happens, the family also receives fulfilled joy from it. In recent years, they started a toy drive with the Antioch Police Department and this year they are working with the Antioch Unified School District to help 140+ families in need. People drive by and donate items and money that brings cheer and assists families for the holiday. Gary stated that, "Being able to add to that enjoyment by presenting something for the families, is just wonderful."

This year the Vistalli home will be featured on an ABC/HULU National Broadcast, December 11, 2025, 7 pm PST. Kristen is also a member of GFWC Woman's Club of Antioch, their home will be featured with five other homes and three businesses in the club's 68th Annual Christmas Home Tour, raising funds for the club's philanthropic causes and local high school scholarships.



Antioch PAL is a non-profit 501(c) (3) youth activities program designed to reduce juvenile crime and victimization that utilizes educational, athletic, and recreational activities to create trust and understanding between police officers and youth.

A California Holiday: Where Sunshine Meets Sparkle

California has a way of doing the holidays like no place else — where golden sunsets replace snowy skylines and the spirit of celebration spans from the redwood forests to the warm desert sands. While other states bundle in parkas, Californians reach for sunglasses, light sweaters, and maybe a festive scarf... just for style.

From north to south, the season transforms our communities with a magical blend of cultural traditions, coastal charm, and a generosity that shines as brightly as our holiday lights.

A Coastline Wrapped in Light

Drive down Highway 1 in December and you'll find entire coastal towns twinkling. Fishing boats string up holiday lights, piers glow in soft colors, and families gather for everything from seaside tree-lightings to whale-watching "Elf Cruises." Only in California can you sip hot cocoa while watching the ocean sparkle back at you.

Celebrations as Diverse as Our State

California's holiday season is a tapestry of traditions — Hanukkah menorahs lighting up community centers, Las Posadas processions through neighborhood streets, Kwanzaa celebrations at local cultural centers, Christmas parades bursting with music and color, and winter festivals honoring Indigenous heritage and storytelling.

No matter the background, December here becomes one long invitation to learn from one another, celebrate together, and appreciate the richness of our shared home.

Warm Weather, Warm Hearts

Perhaps the most California thing of all is the way our residents give back. Women's clubs, service organizations, youth groups, churches, temples, and Rotary clubs come alive with holiday drives. The spirit of volunteerism deepens during this season — toy drives, food baskets, coat donations, handwritten cards for seniors, holiday meals for families in need, and kindness extended with open arms. The California ethos shines brightest when we come together.

Festive Fun From Every Corner of the State

- Northern California: tree-lighting ceremonies beneath historic town squares, holiday markets with handcrafted art, Victorian-style Christmas walks, and warm apple cider with fog rolling through the hills.
- Central Valley & Coast: winery festivities, holiday train rides through farmland, small-town parades, and beautiful displays in botanical gardens.
- Southern California: boat parades in Newport and Long Beach, dazzling theme-park celebrations, neighborhood light competitions, tamales steaming in kitchens statewide, and sunshine-filled afternoons perfect for holiday strolls.

A Season of Joy, Reflection, and Community

As Californians, we know that the holidays aren't defined by cold weather or snowfall — they're defined by connection. By coming together. By creating warmth wherever we are. This season, may we celebrate the unique holiday magic that only California can offer... a blend of sunshine, service, diversity, tradition, and pure West Coast joy.

From California Federation to you — **happy holidays, California!**

Source: ChatGPT and California Tourism



CFWC FEBRUARY EXECUTIVE BOARD CALL - *February 26-28, 2026*

DeltaHotel SantaClara Silicon Valley, 2151Laurelwood Road, Santa Clara, CA 95054

It is hard to believe that 2025 is coming to an end soon and 2026 is just around the corner. Before you get busy with holiday plans, club projects, and celebrations, please make your hotel reservation now using the link below (reservations can be cancelled on or before February 25, 2026):

Book your group rate for California Federation of Women's Club

The CALL won't be sent out until later in the year. Below is information you will need when making your hotel reservation.

This hotel offers a Suite with a separate parlor and sofa that converts to a queen bed at the same rate as the doubles.

No Parking charge and just a few miles from the San Jose Airport.

The Executive Committee meets on February 26th and Board Meeting begins on February 27th around 8am with Committee meetings.

Opening Session will be on February 27th around 11am. If you are not serving on a CFWC Committee you will not need to arrive until Opening Session.

The District LEAD Candidates will gather for a ***Meet & Greet*** on February 26th in the evening around 7pm. If you are your District's LEAD Candidate please arrive before Thursday evening so you can take part. Vicki Holden will be in touch with you once the CALL is sent out.

The Board Meeting will be scheduled to adjourn on Saturday, February 28th around 3pm so you can make plans to return home or stay another night.

Rooms are available at the same rate for arrival Wednesday, February 25th. If you wish to arrive Wednesday, please contact me so I can make that request for you.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Wishing you a very happy healthy holiday season and all the best in 2026!

Toby Kahan, CFWC Meeting Planner

MORAGA JUNIOR WOMENS CLUB

Honoring the Moraga Juniors' Commitment

The Moraga Juniors are celebrating 55 years of serving the community. And they were awarded the Non-Profit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Congratulations!

Moraga Juniors Provide Comfort

In October, the Moraga Juniors gathered for their long-standing tradition to make heart-shaped comfort pillows for breast cancer survivors to aid in their recovery after surgery.

Spring Festival on March 28, 2026 - Save the Date

Moraga Juniors will host their 43rd Annual Spring Festival at Moraga Commons park. Mark your calendars for the egg hunt, bounce houses, photos with the Easter Bunny, games, arts & crafts, and more! All are welcome, especially those near Moraga.

Supply Drives & Clothing Swap

Last fall, the Moraga Juniors hosted two supply drives to meet the needs of our community. The first was to collect back to school supplies to provide 20 back packs for youth in need. And the second was to collect undergarments for women and children in need.

They also hosted their first annual Clothing Swap. Members and the public brought dozens of bags of adult, kids, and baby clothes. Afterwards, all the leftover clothes were donated.

In February, they will host a supply drive to collect feminine products.

Learn more about Moraga Juniors and their work: moragajuniors.org



CLUB, DISTRICT AND MEMBER NEWS

STAND DOWN ON THE DELTA

"Stand Down on the Delta": September 12-15th, 2025. Words cannot begin to express how incredible this experience was. Our hearts were filled with emotion as we greeted the veterans, letting them pick a blanket and giving them a thank you note and a Star For Our Troops card. President Deborah Latasa's husband Gerry, volunteered, too, and she stated, "I could not have done what we did without his help and patience." 20 GFWC Mount Diablo District (MDD) volunteers representing 6 clubs in GFWC MDD participated and worked in the Stand Down. A big thank you to: Doris Bonham, Lynn Confetti-Ledbetter, Carolyn Dinelli, Deborah Griffin, Teresa Hernandez Cain, Mark Cain (Booster), Vicki Koc, Karen Kops, Deborah Latasa, Gerry Latasa (Booster), Bev Maciel, Allison Norris, Joy Pella Motl, Julie Petrini, Cindy Pocklington, Kay Porter, Logan Porter (Booster), Mary Rocha, Velma Wilson, and Stephanie Zichichi. We are grateful for the partnership with DVG Founder, and Army Veteran, J.R. Wilson, for including us and we thank him for his outstanding service!!! The final quilt count was 600. Yes, the goal of 500 quilts was surpassed. The veterans and families loved the quilts, many handmade by members. Those receiving a quilt were very appreciative and their gratefulness was tangible.

GFWC Martinez Women's Club member Doris Bonham and Allison Norris GFWC Woman's Club of Antioch member and Snug As A Bug Bags Founder did an outstanding job spearheading the making of quilts. Having the goal of gathering 500 quilts throughout the GFWC Mount Diablo District was a large goal and President Deborah extends her thanks to all the community, district helpers, fabric cutters, quilters, and sewers that contributed and helped us exceed the goal.



What is a "Stand Down?" *In Military origins* - A respite from combat: The term originated as a secure, temporary retreat for battle-weary soldiers to rest and recuperate. At these "Stand Down" locations, troops could receive hot meals, clean uniforms, medical care, and time to relax before returning to action.

"The Philosophy of a Stand Down is to give homeless veterans a hand up, not a handout."

Community "Stand Downs" for veterans - The concept has been adapted into grassroots events to help homeless veterans.

Multi-service events:

These events bring together a variety of community partners and government agencies to provide a range of services in one location for one to three days. Stand Downs typically include food, shelter, haircuts, clothing, health screenings, vision, hearing and dental care. Other benefits include mental health support, VA benefits, counseling, substance abuse counseling, employment assistance and legal services. The philosophy of a Stand Down is to give homeless veterans a hand up, not a hand out..

The Delta Veterans' Group (DVG) Stand Down offered everything afore-mentioned and more. The GFWC Mount Diablo District was honored to assist in this huge and worthy undertaking.



www.deltaveteransgroup.org



Kay Porter with Museum Co-Founder Suzanne Statler



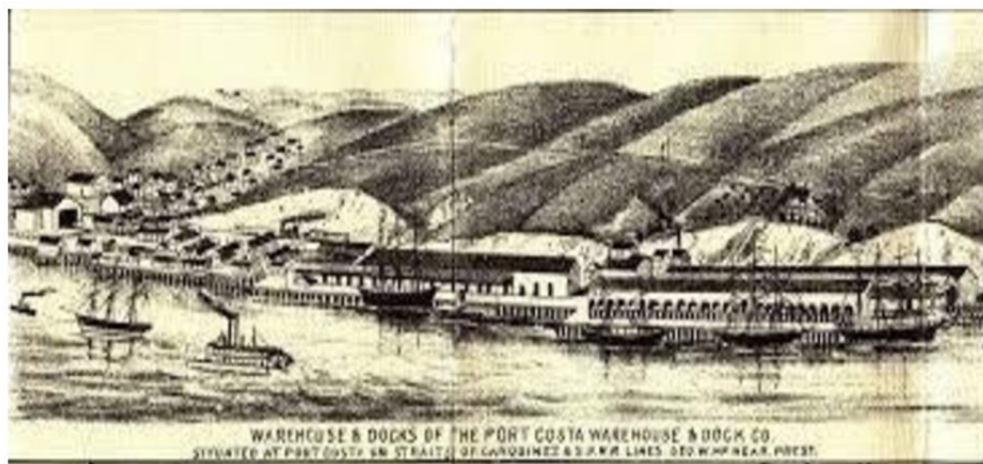
Back Row: Doris, Carol, Stephanie. Front Row: Kay, Kelly, Deborah and Diana



1933 Studebaker Fire Truck. Stephanie, Deborah, Doris, Diana, Carol, Kay & Kelly

<https://www.portcostaconservationssociety.org/>

GFWC Past Presidents' Assembly of Mount Diablo District's members enjoy discovering local California history. The Port Costa Museum tour was informative and educational. We learned about the grain industry, run by G.W. McNear, the Port Costa Brickworks, and the Southern Pacific Railroad's part of Port Costa's history. The town is surrounded on three sides by ranchland, non-profit owned and the East Bay Regional Park. The fourth side of the town is water. Port Costa school and museum is halfway between the towns of Crockett and Martinez. C & H Sugar Plant is a mainstay of Crockett. Martinez is the county seat. After the tour we had a short meeting and nice lunch with other members at the restaurant Mi Casita in Martinez, CA.



Known as the "Wheat King" - George Washington McNear (1837-1909) became a dominant force in the California grain trade, primarily shipping wheat internationally. He developed Port Costa, located on the Carquinez Straits, into the central port for his business in 1879, creating a major hub for international trade with connections to England, Europe, Australia, and Asia. McNear's influence is still visible in Port Costa, where his warehouse was built in 1886. This warehouse is the first fireproof building in Contra Costa County. It was built for the storage of wheat, hay, and potatoes. After his business declined following a shift in the grain market and the construction of a railroad bridge at Martinez in 1930, Port Costa's importance as a port waned. The McNear warehouse, once the center of a major global trade hub, eventually became a popular venue for entertainment, with the warehouse building itself housing businesses like the Warehouse Cafe and the Burlington Hotel.

<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=94253> -
<https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/static/ark:/13030/c8hm5974>
<https://www.maritimeheritage.org/vips/George-McNear.html>

CLUB AND DISTRICT NEWS

SAN CLEMENTE WOMAN'S CLUB



This year, SCWC was able to donate more than \$25,000 in grant funding to a total of 21 local non-profit organizations (in addition to \$9,000 in scholarships to graduating/college bound San Clemente High School seniors). *The photos show SCWC members with representatives of non-profit organization recipients of the 2025 grants.*



For the third time, San Clemente Woman's Club members volunteered for "Keeping Every Girl Free", a non-profit organization, by placing labels on 4,000 bars of soap with the National Human Trafficking Hotline number. The soap will be distributed to local motels and hotels. This effort was organized by SCWC's Human Trafficking/Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Committee.



EBELL CLUB OF IRVINE

Once a month, Ebells help sort and pack boxes of food for the poor at a local church where recipients pick them up. Members select items to place in children's backpacks for food-insecure children, identified by the school district, for use over the weekend. Leftover food is given to Families Forward in Irvine, a charity they have supported for many years.



Ebell members and friends help Free Wheelchair Mission at their major fundraising auction, held at Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa, acting as "runners" to get bid packets and numbers.

"STRENGTH UNITED IS STRONGER"

CLUB AND DISTRICT NEWS

WOMAN'S CLUB OF ORANGE

The Woman's Club of Orange participated in the Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday, November 8, 2025 at Bolsa Chica State Beach. The "Sweet Orange-ettes" raised over \$8,000 for this GFWC Affiliate Philanthropy.



COLTON WOMAN'S CLUB CELEBRATES ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

After a year of planning by the organizing committee, the Anniversary festivities included a luncheon at our clubhouse on Saturday October 25th, 2025. Attending were Club Officers, members, special guests and local dignitaries who presented Colton Woman's Club President, Delma Ledesma with certificates commemorating the achievements of the club. Joining the celebration were Councilmen Dr. G Luis Gonzalez and John Echeverria, Councilwoman Kelly Chastain, and I District Representative Daphne Lezo Duran who presented the Club with a California Senate Resolution signed by Senator Eloise Gomez Reyes. San Bernardino County Supervisor Joe Baca Jr. and Colton Mayor, Frank Navarro also sent their congratulatory messages, and Dr. G and MC Christina Gaitan presented Certificates on their behalf. The event included a "Through the Decades" fashion show with outfits and history of the 125 years of dedicated service, friendship and philanthropy. Models were all current Club members. Our sincere appreciation to local businesses and family and friends who also helped and provided assistance that made our event memorable.

CFWC TUSTIN AREA WOMAN'S CLUB



CFWC TUSTIN AREA WOMAN'S CLUB
GIFT WRAPPING INSUPPORT OF
ORANGE COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING
SMILE MAKERS HOLIDAY GIFT
PROGRAM



GFWC California Clubwoman Magazine
c/o Lu Arredondo, Editor
6280 Lee Ct
Chino CA 91710

Meet the Clubwoman Team



From left to right: Luanne Arredondo, Editor; **Judith Yoakum**, Managing Director; **Cathie Petithomme**, Senior Reporter; **Colleen Janssen**, Reporter; and **Jennifer A. Nickel**, Reporter

GFWC California Clubwoman is a magazine designed to inspire, educate, inform, and entertain individuals in the work of humanitarian service. It is a lifestyle magazine that features content about health, club life, culture, and community development. *** NOTE: The views and opinions expressed in the magazine in articles and Advertising are not the express views of the General Federation and should not be seen as endorsements.