



October 2025



GFWC

CALIFORNIA CLUBWOMAN MAGAZINE

Published by the GFWC California Federation of Womens clubs
Member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs



Enduring Spirit, Endless Possibilities ~ Federation

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110TH YEAR OF SERVICE



“A woman is like a tea bag – you can’t tell how
strong she is until you put her in hot water.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt



Sonya Matthies
CFWC President 2024-2026



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends,

Fall represents change and renewal, both in nature and within ourselves. The season's visual changes, like colorful leaves and letting go, prompt reflection and new beginnings. Just as autumn marks natural transformation, it encourages us to start fresh—whether beginning projects or setting new goals. This period reminds us that adapting to change is a positive process.

Clubs must remain open to new ideas, embrace flexibility, and invest in learning and technology. Cultivating collaboration and positivity helps clubs stay resilient during challenges.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs strengthens organizations with strategic planning, leadership development, community initiatives, and member resources, helping clubs adapt and thrive.

Clubs build community resilience by connecting people, providing volunteer opportunities, and developing skills. Strong social ties help communities withstand adversity. It's important for clubs to be inclusive and welcome everyone, valuing diversity for its problem-solving potential and community impact.

During crises, clubs and volunteers are often first responders, filling service gaps and leveraging members' skills. Building strong networks and civic participation increases overall resilience.

Resilience means adapting and growing after hardship, using strategies and inner strength to overcome stress. Communities need comprehensive strategies to build resilience, focusing on infrastructure, social cohesion, and governance.

Club and community resilience depend on social connections and shared goals, though they differ in scope. Clubs respond quickly to challenges, while communities face broader issues. Their strengths support each other—resilient clubs strengthen communities, and robust communities bolster their clubs. Active participation boosts resilience for everyone involved.

People engaged in their local area recover from crises more effectively than those who are isolated; encouraging participation improves recovery.

I am honored to serve as your President and strive to represent our Federation positively.

Yours in Federation and Love,

Sonya



Wendy Curran
1st Vice President &
President Elect

As we move into the change of seasons, let's pause for a moment to honor how each of us makes a difference in our communities, our clubs and districts, along with helping our California Federation to continue to thrive.

Yes, it is not always easy. However, for the most part, when we join together in our clubs and communities, something of great importance ensues. How many times have our club members risen to the needs both locally and globally? And, when we take action something good happens. That "something good" comes in many different ways – as we all know. As we join our efforts in various causes, we give hope, help in a difficult time, a brighter future, and sometimes, with our members working to share throughout our beautiful state and beyond, the opportunity for a better tomorrow.

Soon many of us will join with family and friends as we share Thanksgiving and the Christmas season. And, I know there will be many who are in need of some good tidings. Thank goodness for the wonderful spirit of giving that we share in our communities and beyond. Wishing everyone a joyous holiday season. And a heartfelt "THANK YOU, MEMBERS" for your generosity, kindness, and spirit to bring hope to those in need.

Wendy



Cindy Sanders
2nd Vice President, Membership

Ahoy mateys! The CFWC Membership Crew has an exciting challenge for your Clubs and Districts! At the Area Conferences coming up this month, we will be sharing the details of the 2025-2026 Membership "ARRRGH" Incentive Program. But we are so excited about this challenge that we want to give you a sneak peak so that you can get started.

Start date is now. Completion date is April 1, 2026.

Program Title: "ARRRGH" Membership Recruitment, Recognition, and Retention

A challenge to Clubs and Districts to share what they are doing to promote the three R's.

Submit 3 photos taken during the contest dates showing Recruitment, recognition, and retention. One photo of each category. Send photos along with a brief description to the CFWC 2nd Vice President Cindy Sanders' at CindysCFWC@gmail.com.

So start taking those wonderful pictures highlighting the great ways that you are recruiting, recognizing and retaining your members. We are looking forward to celebrating your success! Flyers and additional information will be provided soon. And remember, to err is human, to ARRRGH is pirate, savvy?

Cindy





FROM THE EDITOR
Enduring Spirit, Endless Possibilities

Luanne Arredondo

As we bring you this issue, I am reminded of how resilience lives quietly within us all. It is in the way our communities come together after challenges, the way members adapt with courage, and push forward, fueled by hope and determination.

When first thinking about the word Resilience, we tend to think of our ability to overcome, but it is so much more than just surviving—it is about thriving, about seeing what is possible when we act with courage, integrity, and unity.

In these pages, you'll find stories that celebrate strength in its many forms: members uplifting one another, innovators finding solutions, and traditions that remind us of our Federation roots while guiding us toward the future.

As members of the California Federation of Women's Clubs, your efforts have created a legacy for those that follow. In this last quarter of 2025, our team hopes that you find encouragement, inspiration, and perhaps a reminder of your own personal enduring spirit.

Together, we will create the future - stronger than before.

With gratitude, hope, and love.

We'll beat any written quote by 10%

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Sandra Cabral
Advocates for Children

excerpt from GFWC.ORG



As GFWC women across the nation are preparing to return to meetings and jump back into action let's not forget the children!



Here are some standout project ideas that club women can implement to advocate for children in their communities:

Fall Fun with Purpose

- **Pumpkin Patch Pop-Ups:** Organize mini pumpkin giveaways at local farmers markets or host your own and include educational games and child safety tips.
- **Costume Closet Drive:** Collect gently used Halloween costumes and distribute to shelters or foster care children so every child can participate in fall festivities.
- **Harvest of Hope Festival:** Host a fall-themed event with hayrides, crafts, and booths offering child advocacy information. Ask your local pumpkin farm if you can host a booth during their festivities.
- **Hold an Art Contest:** Have children voice their wants and needs through art. Display the artwork in public spaces to raise awareness and celebrate youth voices. Partner with local businesses to display on their store fronts.

Warm Hearts, Warm Hands, Happy Communities

- **Coat & Sock Drive:** Collect warm clothing for children as temperatures drop, ensuring no child goes cold this season.
- **Fall Family Resource Fair:** Partner with local agencies to provide information on food assistance, healthcare, and education support.
- **Safe Spaces:** Work with local officials to improve playgrounds, parks, and community centers, ensuring they are safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all children.

Literacy and Libraries

- **Create Mini Libraries:** filled with age-appropriate books. These "take one, leave one" stations promote reading and literacy while encouraging community engagement.
- **Create mentorship programs:** that connect club women with children and teens for guidance, tutoring, and emotional support. These relationships can be life-changing for both mentors and mentees.
- **Storytime with Seniors:** Bridge generations by organizing story time events where seniors read to children, either at libraries or local book stores.

Children's Advocacy Workshops

- **Host Workshops:** that educate parents and caregivers on children's rights, mental health awareness, and navigating local support systems.
- **Healthy Kids Campaign:** Partner with local health professionals to offer free wellness checks, nutrition education, and fitness activities.

Advocacy Through Legislation

- **Encourage Club Members:** to write letters, attend town halls, and meet with lawmakers along with joining our legislative action center to support policies that protect and uplift children.

Remember to always proudly display the GFWC logo and your Club name. By combining creativity with compassion, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of children, one project at a time.

Women In History



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

Sarah Ingersoll Cooper (1835 – 1896) was an American educator, author, evangelist, and civic activist. Mrs. Cooper was a philanthropist and devoted all her time to benevolent work. She is remembered as both a religious teacher and for her efforts to increase interest in kindergarten. During her lifetime, Sarah served as president of numerous organizations: the National Kindergarten Union; the Woman's Press Association; the Woman's Suffrage Association; and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She was a member of San Francisco's Century Club of California, of the recently formed General Federation of Woman's Clubs. .

To read more about Sarah Ingersoll Cooper scan the QR Code below.



Sarah Ingersoll Cooper
Cazenovia, New York
1835-1896

“Mindfulness is the ability to pay attention on purpose in the present moment, non-judgmentally,”

Resilience following Adversity

By Colleen Janssen

There are people who seem to walk through life managing their emotions in the face of adversity, tragedy, trauma, loss, and move forward. Then, there are those who, when faced with adversity, get stuck, unable to find a path through to the other side. Many people fall somewhere between the two. They find ways to cope, but still suffer, sometimes silently.



What makes someone resilient?

This question was posed to Ken Cunningham, a licensed professional clinical counselor who works with adults at the Anxiety and OCD Therapy Center, www.aocdtherapy.com, based in Irvine, CA. He meets his patients both in-office and online, specializing in providing help for patients with anxiety and OCD.

Resilience is how well one adapts to adversity, how you bounce back from something that's very challenging, whether it's trauma, or tragedy, or even Covid," said Cunningham. "There are many, many factors that influence why someone is more or less resilient, but broadly speaking, there's nature and nurture. I wouldn't say it's nature vs nurture, it's both. Genetics is a big part of it. Someone might be more sensitive, or energetic. It could be with personality traits, with some people who are a bit more optimistic. Optimism helps with resiliency."

He shared that, "Things like prenatal stress- if the mother when she was pregnant, went through something very traumatic, or something very stressful, that's probably going to affect the newborn. Then, there's the nurture side of things, something that happens in the environment, what kind of relationship did you have with your parents, were they loving, were they nurturing? Were they super-protective? That's not always healthy, either."

Cunningham continued, "Even as a young child, maybe you encountered a small problem; were you able to try to solve it on your own, but the parent was nearby kind of supervising, or

were you always neglected? Were you severely bullied in school? That probably doesn't help your self-esteem."

He was encouraging, "Some people bounce back. They were bullied, but it seems they're not super-affected. Again, maybe genetics play a role, but maybe they have some innate skills. Maybe they are smart, or good at problem solving, or maybe their self-esteem is high, and they can use that as a protective factor."

Cunningham feels that, if people have the ability to make meaning in their life, that can help. He recommends a book by Viktor E. Frankl called *Man's Search for Meaning*. Frankl was an Austrian Psychologist who survived the Holocaust, who lived through horrendous circumstances, and found meaning in the suffering.

Additionally, Cunningham feels, "Social support, it really matters how you are connecting with others. It helps you cope vs you're isolated. It's really hard to go-it alone after a tough time. I think with Covid, people got isolated, and some people got stuck. If they had social anxiety, it was really hard to adjust back to society, or if they had health anxiety or OCD, that amplified it." Some people turned to drugs and alcohol, which might feel like it helps in the moment, but the problems are waiting for you to return.

So, how can someone who is experiencing an inability to get past a death, trauma, the pandemic, tragedy or adversity? Short-term, or long-term therapy, of course, can be a tremendous help in getting unstuck. Let's say someone is having a situation where they are struggling with negative thoughts, are feeling

Resilience following Adversity continued

overwhelmed, and need a short-term method to get grounded.

Cunningham shared the 5,4,3,2,1 method. A person can do this themselves, or have another person help guide them. Focus all your thoughts on the following items: Think of five things you can see, four things you can feel touching your body, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.

“Mindfulness is the ability to pay attention on purpose in the present moment, non-judgmentally,” said Cunningham. “The 5,4,3,2,1 method is a very good way to be present.”

Cunningham said, “I like to focus on three main components of mindfulness. The first component of mindfulness is to be present; the second component is awareness of your thoughts, emotions or urges; and the third component is acceptance and letting go. We’re always resisting anything unpleasant, and sometimes that keeps you stuck. Accepting even unpleasant things - that helps you move forward.”

Deep breathing exercises, yoga, and meditation are helpful. There are apps that can help guide a person through the challenges of anxiety, helping a person focus on being present. Even simple daily activities of being present while brushing your teeth, doing dishes, taking a shower, each can help you focus. Some apps he suggested include Headspace, Calm, and Happier Meditation.

Good ways to help yourself or another person cope include healthy habits like sleep, exercise, eating healthy, and socializing. It is important to avoid taking drugs, alcohol, and other maladaptive behaviors. Model good behavior through a positive attitude saying, “I can cope no matter what happens.” Having daily gratitude can make a difference, too.

“It’s not game-over due to genetics,” said Cunningham. Some people may need therapy to

help cope, but it doesn’t have to be for years. Typically, therapy involves meeting more often in the beginning, helping a person to gain skills. Then, it moves on to meeting less frequently, transitioning to check-ins, as needed.

In the end, some people are better equipped to show resilience during adversity, while others need assistance. If you or someone you know is struggling to get back on track after adversity, it’s important to ask for help.

Ken Cunningham may be reached at:
Anxiety and OCD Therapy Center
www.aocdtherapy.com
email:ken@aocdtherapy.com
949-236-6710

A WHIMSICAL LOOK AT THE CFWC FALL BOARD MEETING

By Judith Yoakum

Once upon a late summer's afternoon, on August 28th, the halls of Ontario filled with familiar laughter and the sight of members welcoming each other. Behind closed doors, committees whispered and plotted—Membership, Finance, and the Executive Committee weaving their careful plans. For the rest of us, it was a day of warm embraces, new handshakes, and the kind of visiting that feels like coming home.

The very next morning, August 29th, the real adventure began. At dawn's light, choices sprouted like branches on a tree: fundraising, parliamentary facts, resolutions, and communications. Being new to the Communications Committee, I found myself wide-eyed, as though I'd stumbled into a treasure chest of knowledge. By midmorning, our captain—President Sonya Matthies—took the helm, only to hand the stage to Mayor Paul Leon, of Ontario, CA., whose humor rolled through the room like a ship caught in happy waves. We laughed until our sides ached while the mayor regaled in his own humor.

But the day was far from over! Reports turned into pirate skits, parrots perched proudly, and aye—pirate lingo echoed through the halls. Following recess, members proceeded to their prospective Area Meetings followed by a CFWC Convention Meeting attended by Areas C and D. By evening, a full mutiny had broken out at the hotel. Pirates in plumes, wenches in lace, and even parrots on shoulders paraded around the dining room twice. Prizes were awarded to Margo Flores, 2nd V.P from Sutter District, as best dressed, for her great pirate outfit and her "attitude" while most original outfit was awarded to Lynn Godwin, 1st V.P. from Sutter District. Following dinner, Colleen Janssen, a reporter for GFWC California Clubwoman Magazine was presented with a memorial plaque in honor of the 2025 Jane Cunningham Croly Award for Excellence in Journalism she won at the GFWC Convention for her article on "Child Brides". This was the first time a reporter from GFWC California Clubwoman Magazine has been honored with this award. The night sparkled with fellowship, recognition, and Area B's famously festive reception.



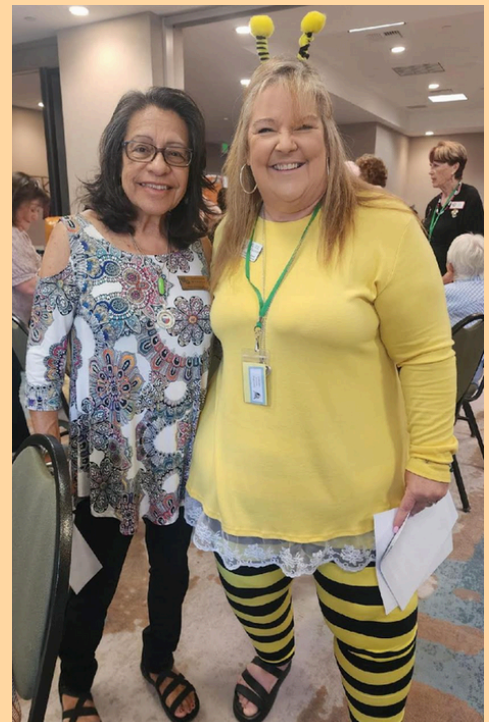
A WHIMSICAL LOOK AT THE CFWC FALL BOARD MEETING CONTINUED

On the third day, August 30th, the pirates gave way to bees! Buzzing in striped black and yellow leggings, the Social Media Team tempted us with scavenger hunts and the sweet honey of connection. Workshops buzzed with wisdom from President, Sonya Matthies who met with District Presidents about preparing those who follow us in moving forward. A “Structured Transition Process” was presented, while Marcia Willet spoke to us about changes to be made to the CFWC Yearbook. What fun we had at the workshop with CFWC Leadership Chair, Vicki Holden. A rap with District Presidents where we could throw out any topic and discuss it as a group. How refreshing it was.

Then came the keynote: Heidi Matthies Dodd, daughter of our president, who lit sparks in our hearts with her story of HOBY, the impact it had on her life and the power of igniting young leaders.

By afternoon, top hats, capes, and wands revealed the magic to come at our 2026 Convention. A “pass the hat” moment gathered \$750 in kindness for military families, proving once again that generosity is the Federation’s true treasure. With our Collect recited and “Let There Be Peace on Earth” sung, we closed the book on this chapter.

And so, the CFWC Fall Board ended not with goodbyes, but with the glow of sisterhood, laughter in our memories, and the certainty that in Federation, we are as one.



A mutiny in Ontario California, Pirates took over the CFWC Fall Board Meeting. Shiver me timbers, a motely crew they was. Their parrots sat on the shoulders of some as they gave their reports,. AYE, a frightening event it were.





CELEBRATING DIVERSITY AT THE 107TH ANNUAL GFWC WESTERN STATES REGION CONFERENCE

By Judith Yoakum



From the moment attendees arrived, the conference buzzed with enthusiasm and connection. The 107th Annual GFWC Western States Region Conference in Long Beach, California, began with a Processional of Officers and State Presidents.



The GFWC Western States Region, one of eight regions in the U.S., is comprised of ten States: Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.



WSR President, Pam Briggs presided over this diverse gathering where we were welcomed to California by Sonya Matthies, GFWC California State President, with an expression of thanks presented by Wendy Curran, CFWC California 1st VP/President-Elect. Following dinner, we were greeted by Suellen Brazil, GFWC International President, Wendy Carriker, GFWC President-Elect and Mary Beth Williams, GFWC 2nd Vice President.



We listened to speakers who brought insight and information. Kyp Hughes, 11th Marine Expedition Unit Deployment Readiness Coordinator, gave an inspirational talk about the needs of Military families. To show our support for these families, 30 diaper cakes were created and decorated with toys, and items for babies. The “cakes” will be provided to local military families together with additional boxes of diapers and baby supplies.



The speaker from Habitat for Humanity informed us of their ongoing role in helping to rebuild following the devastating fires in Southern California. With the help of Home Depot, they prebuild walls and store them for later use. Their Home Preservation Program provided washers and dryers for each home being renovated and the Women Build Program brought in women to learn new skills and help in rebuilding.

Dr. Mary Norman, from the Alzheimer's Association showed a PowerPoint presentation featuring Alzheimer's awareness. She emphasized the importance of exercising the brain together with a list of ten “Healthy Habits for Your Brain.” Workshops ranged from Leadership & LEADS, a GFWC Legislation and Public Policy Workshop, a Communications Workshop and an “All About Chocolate” workshop that taught us that there is even diversity in chocolate.

This conference brought approximately 200 sisters in Federation together to grow and learn, to vote on the future and to lend their voices to issues. Watching women from different backgrounds unite for a common cause reminded me of why I joined this wonderful organization. Although we came from different backgrounds, we came together in knowing, “That in the big things of life we are at one”.

Hope to see you next year in Park City, Utah, September 11 – 13, 2026



CONTINUING *the discussion* ON AI

By Lu Arredondo

At the recent CFWC Board Meeting we had a brief description of Artificial Intelligence, its history, and how best to engage with it as club men, and women. During the discussion we asked Chatgpt how it would describe the General Federation of Women's Clubs to a prospective member. It was suggested that we post the response in Clubwoman.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs: A Place for Everyone Who Wants to Serve
The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), founded in 1890, is one of the world's oldest and largest volunteer service organizations. With clubs across the U.S. and internationally, GFWC empowers individuals to create positive change in their communities and beyond.

Though its name reflects its history, today's Federation welcomes both men and women. Members come together to support education, veterans, families, health initiatives, literacy, environmental protection, and more—proving that service has no gender.

Why Join?

- **Impact:** Be part of projects that change lives locally and globally.
- **Leadership:** Develop skills and take on roles that grow confidence and influence.
- **Advocacy:** Add your voice to issues that matter, from community wellness to conservation.
- **Connection:** Build lasting friendships with people who share your passion for service.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs is more than an organization—it's a movement of people united in purpose. Together, we do more, reach further, and build a brighter tomorrow.

As mentioned in the meeting, artificial intelligence is a powerful tool, it is best understood as a personal assistant—not a replacement for people. AI can help organize club tasks, streamline processes, and provide quick information, but it lacks the heart, intuition, and lived experience that our club men and women bring. Our true resilience comes from the ability to adapt, to create, and to care for one another. Our progress is achieved when technology supports our work, freeing us to focus on creativity, compassion, leadership, and connection—the qualities that no machine can replace.

“LET US FORGET NOT TO BE KIND.”

By Jennifer Nickel

When learning the theme of this issue is “Resilience,” my mind immediately turned to the things I had just finished studying in completing the series of degrees in Social Justice at my local community college and the struggles of Americans who aspired to give life to the ideals held in our nation’s Declaration of Independence which states: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.” Sadly, the notion of human equality remains as illusive today as they were when George III retained control; these ideals were not achieved with the Rebels success over the British Army. Human equality is a battle that continues to be fought daily today both on a societal and individual level. To me, this stands out when considering “resilience,” since often times resilience is best seen when remembering that the “big” things/concepts/ideas/etc. are rarely “one and done” or “done in a day” struggles, but often occur over time, extending beyond a life span, so that a new generation builds towards this goal on the foundation laid by predecessors. This has been so in most fields. The existence of this organization is based on this idea. We stand on the shoulders of the members who came before us. We take pride in celebrating all the changes they brought into this world (most built on foundations laid by those who came before them), just as the next generation can hopefully build on the work we leave behind and take pride in our work. Nelson Henderson is attributed as saying “The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” Similarly, Warren Buffet has said “Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.”

In his time, Declaration of Independence scribe Thomas Jefferson said, “Too old to plant trees for my own gratification, I shall do it for my posterity.”

Whether as a society, or as an individual, the struggle for human equality can seem a universal battle that may never end, as the marginalization of communities, as well as individuals, can almost appear to be innately integral to human existence. Generally, those who are advantaged are often completely unaware of the “privileges” from which they benefit since their life experience determines their norm and it can be difficult for many to step outside their life experience to see the world from the perspective of those being marginalized by practices, beliefs, and attitudes that comprise the norms of the society in which they live, or understand how denial of the privileges they take for granted works to disadvantage in any way those denied the same privilege they enjoy. Thus, being able to go someplace and be assured there will be others there such as yourself (for example, your gender, race, religion, etc.) is typically an exceptionally large and overlooked societal privilege. While structural power hierarchies seem to operate as independent life forces with their own instinct for survival, perpetuation, and domination, separate and apart from the individuals who comprise these hierarchies, the battle for human equality appears often at best to be “won” only by “resilience.”

Two hundred and fifty years ago, our nation’s founding fathers drafted our Constitution’s citizen protections and were urged by Abigail Adams and others of the need to “remember the ladies.” While the Constitution declared that enslaved Black people were less than human, valued at only 2/3 of the lives of the enslavers holding their families captive, it omits any mention of rights held by women.



"LET US FORGET NOT TO BE KIND." CONTINUED

Seventy-five years later, while formerly enslaved Black men were legally recognized (at least on paper) as fully human in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendment, Jim Crow laws continued to perpetuate the denial of human equality. At this time, society debated whether women should receive public education or even own property absent her husband's control and consent. Women seeking their equality were disparaged as trying to unravel civilization itself.

Even independent of any concept of membership in a socially marginalized group, the struggle for human equality is a battle often waged by individuals in a context that embraces a hierarchical construct. We can wage our own battles for self-esteem and self-worth, especially when interacting with others in organizations such as this. People can often feel as if there is a need to jockey to maintain or hopefully elevate personal status. Girls are socialized to look externally for affirmation, looking to a group for reference while boys are socialized to place greater emphasis on independence, so that often the same behavior that would be looked on favorably if demonstrated by one sex is viewed with disfavor if exhibited by the other sex. While competition is inherently embraced and encouraged to occur openly among males, this tends to be a more recent phenomena with females, often seen most frequently as Title IX gave females greater rights to participate in athletics.

How many can say they have never witnessed well qualified people reluctant to seek leadership or denigration of those who do and are (or are not) successful? The notion of social "risk" comes into play, along with the same notions of hierarchy. As a fourth generation member, I remember one of my grandmothers (who attended club with my great grandmother) consistently refusing all those trying to get her to accept a leadership position. She simply saw no benefit available to

be gained that would off set a notion of risk to her secure social standing. My mother joined the same club and accepted some positions since she recognized jobs need doing if the club wanted to exist, but refused other positions since other candidates were willing to serve.

The resilience of our organization depends on the respect and friendship we give to one another. Even now, as our organization calls for gender equality and calls for membership growth, we have to remember not to discourage men who are willing to join.

So, in the context of "Resilience," achieving big goals taking more than a lifetime, human equality, this organization, the importance of kindness, and the earlier quotes on trees, allow me to impart these final bits.

President John F Kennedy is quoted as stating "The great French Marshall Lyautey once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow growing and wouldn't reach maturity for 100 years. Then Marshall replied, 'In that case, there is no time to lose; plant it this afternoon!'"

Victorian author Mary Ann Evans who wrote under the pen name "George Eliot" said "It will never rain roses: when we want to have more roses we must plant more trees."

My hope for us all is that we never lose sight that the kindness we show today is itself significant and helps build on the work of those who came before us to bring into being the big things in the world, many of which we may never see but can imagine, as well as untold benefits we may not even yet imagine.

Kindness and the resilience it enables are key. "Let us forget not to be kind."



Realizing Hope: the promise of love in action

by S.D. Shanti, DDS, MPH, PhD, Founder, World Love Forum

Do you feel uneasy about the future?

News headlines filled with violence, economic strain, and rapid advances in artificial intelligence can leave us wondering what kind of world our children and grandchildren will inherit.

And yet, amid the noise, there is something important to remember: hope is realizable.

It isn't wishful thinking. It's a practice rooted in agency, namely that what we do matters. It is also rooted in the power of collective action, i.e. when enough of us work together to promote love and other positive aspects of life, change becomes inevitable.

“TO HEAL THE WORLD WE MUST LEARN TO SEE THROUGH THE EYES OF OUR HEART”

The Trio of Hope

Over years of work in dentistry, public health, and psychology, I've found that hope flourishes through three elements that reinforce one another. I call them the Trio of Hope.

1. Self-Regulation as Mental Hygiene to “Brush Your Mind”

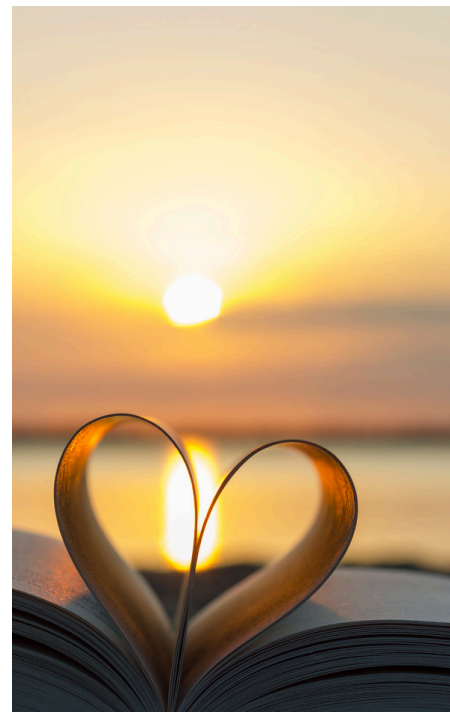
Just as we brush our teeth for oral hygiene, we can practice daily “mental hygiene” to stay emotionally strong and effectively manage negative emotions that are a normal part of life. Self-regulation helps us manage stress, better tolerate life's irritations and frustrations, and meet challenges with grace and calm.

2. Love in Action

Love is more than a feeling—it is caring actions that are done to reduce the suffering of another and to promote their wellbeing. Love is not restricted to romance. Love for our fellow humans can be expressed in homes, schools, workplaces, media, and even public policy. Love unites us across differences, strengthens relationships, and helps heal the wounds of loss, isolation, and life's hardships.

3. Violence Prevention through Skills Training

Research shows we can prevent violence by teaching skills for empathy, managing our negative emotions and healthy communication. These skills promote genuine connections between people; and the connection in turn promotes resilience and reduces the likelihood of despair and violence.



Realizing Hope: the promise of love in action - Continued

Together, these practices create a positive feedback loop: mental hygiene reduces stress and allows us to love one another more fully; it also reduces the chances of negative emotions spiraling out of control into violence: love by virtue of soothing, calming and uplifting us, promotes our mental health and prevents violence; and violence prevention promotes mental health by enabling safer environments, and in so doing, helps people have happier family lives.

These are not lofty ideals. These are practical skills in the same way we all learn about handwashing before eating or after going to the bathroom, or brushing our teeth regularly.

From Personal Insight to Collective Action

My journey toward this framework began in 1997, when the World Health Organization published data that documented depression as a major global health problem. At the time, I was a newly minted psychologist, but I already had prior experience as a pediatric dentist and public health specialist. So for me prevention was already one of the guiding stars of my professional life.

So I asked myself: How do we advance prevention at scale? Shortly thereafter, because of the high rates of violence and its impact on mental health, I expanded to include violence prevention and this has been my path for the last twenty plus years.

The Trio of Hope comes out of this body of work and it is embedded within The Blueprint for Hope – a research-based violence prevention framework that has been reviewed by leading scientists at the Violence Prevention Alliance of the World Health Organization and elsewhere.

Scaling Hope

Imagine a world where millions of people are equipped with psychological skill such that these skills are as universal as brushing one's teeth and hand washing.

I've set an early goal of teaching one million people the Trio of Hope and the Blueprint for Hope and then growing that number to teach two hundred million people. In this way, we can inform, equip and empower millions of people across the United States and beyond to take specific actions that will make transform hope from a wish to reality. And this is how we can build a violence free future.

How You Can Join

- Start with yourself. Enroll in the upcoming prevention course A Blueprint for Hope – How to end the epidemic of violence and live a more love-filled life. This course will teach you how to put the Trio of Hope into practice in your daily life and in your community.
- Invite your friends to join. Share these practices with your friends and invite them to enroll in the Blueprint for Hope course and tap into the positive power of collective action.
- Support the cause. If this vision speaks to you, join the movement to share A Blueprint for Hope: How to End the Epidemic of Violence and Live a More Love-Filled Life widely. What matters most is not the amount of money you give but the love in your heart. Your participation and helping to get the word out is the most critical ingredient for success. And if you are inspired to support through monetary contributions, or volunteer to help spread the word, that would also be appreciated.

Realizing Hope: the promise of love in action - Continued

This is how we transform worry into agency and fear into action. Together, we can act out of love for our children and grandchildren and create a world where they inherit a society marked by compassion and safety.

Violence may be a long-standing part of who we are as humans. But when we act out of love to increase love in the world, we are tapping into another part of who we are as humans. Love, care and compassion are what has allowed us to survive for millennia, and we can tap into that part of all of us to make hope contagious.

Together we can build a peaceful nation and world that is anchored in love and healthy emotions. I look forward to hearing from you and working with you to build the world you wish – for yourself, your children and grandchildren.

For more information, visit worldloveforum.org or you can also write to me at: DrSDShanti@gmail.com.



COMING SOON

TO: CFWC District Presidents
FROM: CFWC Convention Committee
DATE: August, 2026

CONVENTION WILL BE HERE BEFORE WE KNOW IT! The theme this year will be: IGNITE THE MAGIC OF FEDRATION

GENERAL INFORMATION:

HOTEL: Ontario Airport Hotel & Conference Center, 700 N. Haven Ave., Ontario
DATES: May 14-16, 2026
ROOM RATE: \$149.00 PER NIGHT + taxes
PARKING: Complimentary
SHUTTLE: ???

THEME BASKETS

We are asking ALL of the districts to donate a theme basket for an opportunity drawing at Convention. While we understand it is difficult for those traveling by plane, hopefully you can find a theme that would be easy to carry (such as money). Approximate Value \$50. Please turn in at registration upon your arrival.

GIFT CARD & SPONSORSHIP

The donation of Gift Cards in any denomination for drawing was very successful last year so we would like to continue this in place of the 50/50 drawing. Please send your gift cards (please make sure they can be used throughout California) to Kathi McGraw, 4584 Sherington Ct., Cypress, CA 90630 by **APRIL 1, 2026**

This year we will also be selling Convention Sponsorships. The Theme of the Convention encourages us to also recognize the many level of leadership so sponsorships will reflect magical items

Deck of Cards	\$25.00
Rabbit	\$50.00
Magic Wand	\$75.00
Magician Hat	\$100.00

Check should be made payable to CFWC Convention Fund and sent to Mary Sprague, 5924 Arno Crescent, Anaheim 92807 by **APRIL 1, 2026**

PROGRAM ADVERTISING:

The cost for ads in the convention program will be as follows:

Full page	\$60	Size 7 ½ x 10
Half page	\$40	Size 4 ½ x 7 ½

Ads will be printed black and white and will be reduced so please make ad simple as some small details may be lost. **ALL ADS MUST BE CAMERA READY AND SENT ELECTRONICALLY.** Check should be made payable to the CFWC Convention Fund and sent to, Mary Sprague: MLSPRAGUE@SBCGLOBAL.NET by **FEBRUARY 2026 CFWC BOARD MEETING**

The success of the convention depends upon you.

Mary Sprague & Kathi McGraw, Convention Co-Chairmen

Aronos Research Club Preserving Heritage, Inspiring Action

Submitted by: Cathie Petithomme



Founded in 1915, the Aronos Research Club in Sonora, California, has long been a cornerstone of civic engagement and community service. Originally a women's club, it now welcomes both men and women who share a passion for volunteerism, education, and the preservation of local history.

One of the club's most impactful recent initiatives focused on the preservation of the historic Sonora Dome. Built in 1909 as Sonora Elementary School, the Dome has stood vacant and in disrepair since 2018. After learning about its decline through a presentation by Allan Zimmerly of the Historic Dome Preservation Group, club members sprang into action. They launched a letter-writing campaign urging the Sonora Union High School District Board of Trustees to revisit the Dome's future. The response was immediate—every letter was acknowledged, and the Dome returned as a priority item on the school board's agenda.

This grassroots civic effort earned the Aronos Research Club statewide recognition. The

California Federation of Women's Clubs honored the club with the Legislative & Public Policy Award for medium-sized clubs, as well as a Creativity Award for innovative civic engagement. Their project has now advanced to national competition with the General Federation of Women's Clubs, bringing Sonora's preservation story to a broader stage.

Beyond preservation, the Aronos Research Club continues to expand its impact. Recently, it became a Blue Zones Participating Organization, partnering with local health and wellness initiatives in Tuolumne County. This new collaboration demonstrates the club's ongoing commitment to blending history, civic action, and community well-being.

As it moves into its second century of service, the Aronos Research Club remains a vibrant force for civic pride and community connection—proving that dedicated citizens can make history come alive while building a stronger future.



Pictures left to right: Friend of Aronos Corey and his garden outside the front door of the clubhouse that he maintains, President Shelly Stewart ready for a recent Spring Tea scholarship fundraiser, Member Jim DeGlopper sharing about gold mining



Pictured on the left are: Friends of Aronos maintaining the clubhouse grounds and Members of the building committee assessing the situation.



The Ladies of the **Maywood Woman's Club** had a fabulous outing in September when they visited the New Clairvaux Winery and Abbey in Vina, CA.



Santa Fe Springs Woman's Club hosted a membership drive in September yielding 6 new prospects!

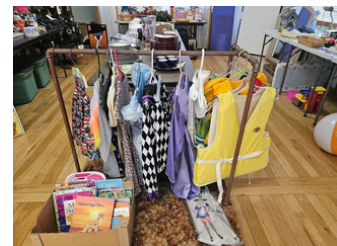
Club and District News



At a recent meeting, **Shafter Woman's Club members** gathered to plan upcoming events and empower one another around this important cause. Immediately after, they brought awareness to our community by tying white ribbons throughout downtown Shafter—a symbol of hope, strength, and prevention. While decorating, members also connected with business owners and community members, inviting them to take the pledge:
 “Never to commit, excuse, or stay silent about sexual harassment, sexual assault, or domestic violence against others.”



Park Study Club of Lake County held an indoor yard sale in August as a summer fundraiser for their philanthropies.





Club and District News

During the Western States Conference, the **CFWC West Valley Federated Women's Club of San Jose**, California, made a remarkable gesture by presenting a check for \$50,000 to GFWC International President, Suellen B. Brazil. This generous donation will help fund and establish the first monument on the National Mall dedicated to women's history. The monument will honor the suffragists who secured women's right to vote and sparked transformative changes in our society. This moment was truly inspiring, demonstrating how a club of just ten members chose to help make a longstanding dream a reality.



The Corralitos Woman's Club selected the Grateful Garments Project as the beneficiary of their 2025 National Day of Service. The Grateful Garment Project provides victims of sexual violence the clothing and other resources they need to reclaim their dignity and begin the healing process.



Redwood City Woman's Club is known for its service and volunteerism in the community.



The Lakewood Women's Club held their third annual Ice Cream Social Membership Recruitment Event in August. We enjoyed ice cream cones and root beer floats along with engaging conversations with one another. The Club had 35 members in attendance and 10 guests - one of the guests joined the LWC that day. Among our guests in attendance were Lakewood City Council Member David Arellano and Andre White who is running for Sheriff of LA County. The Ice Cream Social is a fun event for Club members, as well as a great way to meet potential new members.

Club and District News



Pictured above, the **Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Woman's Club** participated in the local 49r Days Parade and event. This event and parade celebrated their 75th anniversary. However, this is not for the 49r miners it was a birthday party for a local that has been a fundraiser for our local Community Center since then. Our members rode on a float with a local myth lake monster "Lizzie" who we made an honorary club member. The ladies were clad in bikini shirts to join in at our lake with Lizzie. We won a first-place ribbon too!!!



Aronos Research Club receiving Blue Ribbon Recognition



GFWC Peninsula Hills Women's Club celebrated their traditional "end of club year" with a dinner at Mazra Restaurant in Redwood City

San Joaquin Valley District Cruisin' News

Summer 2025



Message from the Bridge

San Joaquin Valley District invites all CFWC Federated Sisters, their family, and friends to join in the celebration of our 2024-2026 term of service. Enjoy the adventure, share stories, ideas, laugh, make new friends, relax and have fun.

Princess Cruise Lines
Ship: Royal Princess
Mexican Riviera Cruise - 7 nights
Ports of Call: Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Sail Dates: Saturday, April 11 - Saturday, 18, 2026
Port of Departure: Los Angeles, Ca.

Start booking your cabin now with:
Princess Cruise Consultant: Shelia Mars
Contact: 1-800-901-1172 ext: 21727
1-661-753-0303 ext: 21727
Cruise Booking Name: S.S. Fun Time Group TN2



Anchors Away
Captain Deb
San Joaquin Valley District



Members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the California Federation of Women's Clubs



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.