

General Federation of Woman's Clubs (GFWC)

Understanding the "Family" of the General Federation of Women's Clubs

GFWC International - "Great Grand Grandmother"



- One of world's largest and oldest women's volunteer service organizations
- Founded in 1890 by Jane Cunningham Croly
- Nearly 80,000 members in 50 states, District of Columbia & 15 countries
- More information @ www.gfwc.org

GFWC Southeastern Region - "Great Grandmother"



- GFWC is divided into eight Regions
- GFWC Virginia is in the Southeastern Region
- Other Southeastern Federations: Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia & District of Columbia
- More information @ [Facebook: GFWC Southeastern Region](https://www.facebook.com/GFWC.SoutheasternRegion)

GFWC Virginia - "Grandmother"



- State level of GFWC
- Founded in 1907 in Lynchburg, VA. Celebrating 112th year of service!
- 146 Clubs: 112 General, 31 Junior & 3 Juniorette of nearly 4,000 members
- More information @ www.gfwcvirginia.org

Your District - "Mother"



- District level of GFWC Virginia
- Eight Districts in Virginia—clubs assigned based on geographic location
- Example: Northern District was organized in 1924. Comprised of 23 clubs.
- More information @ www.ndgfwcva.org

Your Club - "Daughter"



- Club level
- The mission of Dominion Woman's Club is to improve our community by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service.
- Founded in February 2007. Current membership is 60.
- More information @ <https://dominionwomansclub.org/>

Highlights & Accomplishments

FWC

- Multifaceted volunteer community service programs in the areas of Arts, Conservation, Education, Home Life, International Outreach, Public Issues, Advocates for Children, Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention
- Chartered by Congress in 1901
- 1933- 75% of libraries in the United States were founded by GFWC Clubs. Libraries continue to be a focus for GFWC Clubs.
- History of legislative action including: Pure Food and Drug Act, Child Labor Laws, Seatbelts, Streetlights, Equal Pay for Women
- A force in the creation of the National Park Service. Clubs created parks in each state.
- Women's History Resource Center established in 1984 to collect, preserve, and promote history of GFWC and women volunteers
- Purchased a fully equipped ambulance for the New York Fire Department following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks
- Annual scholarships for domestic violence survivors

GFWC Virginia

- Joined GFWC in 1910
- Motto is "Service, the Debt of Education." Significant contributions in area of education from industrial arts programs, vocational training, kindergartens, and scholarships for continuing education.
- Junior Clubs established in the state in 1924
- Partnership with Easter Seals Virginia (now Easter Seals UCP) established in 1950s and continues today through support for building funds, supply drives, and volunteers
- Purchase of equipment for multiple cancer centers throughout the state
- Canine Companions for Independence and Operation Smile programs adopted by GFWC were initiated in Virginia
- Purchased a fully equipped ambulance for the Virginia Tech Student Rescue Squad in 2010 in memory of the victims of the April 17, 2007, shootings
- Annual participants in the Virginia State Fair, supplying volunteers to assist with school programs during the fair
- Proud home of three GFWC International Past Presidents: Dorothea Buck (1947–1950), Phyllis Roberts (1986–1988) & Shelby Hamlett (2000–2002)

Northern District History

In November 1919, Mrs. Henry Parker, President, Virginia Federation of Woman's Clubs called a meeting for the Board of Directors as an aid to our organizational progress. From this meeting three Districts were formed: Southwestern, with 26 federated clubs; Southeastern with 41 federated clubs and Northern with 15 federated clubs.

In 1924 VFWC increased to six Districts. Originally referred to as the 4th District, Northern held its first meeting in Winchester. Mrs. Joseph Crupper of the Falls Church Club presided over the meeting in which 9 federated clubs and 17 counties were represented. Leaders were called Chairmen and served as Vice Presidents of VFWC until 1929 when they were made Presidents of Districts and Junior Directors of Districts were made 3rd Vice Presidents.

In 1930 a 7th District was formed and in 1952 the 8th District was formed and names were chosen for them. The 1st District became Southwestern; 2nd, Shenandoah; 3rd, Alice Kyle; 4th, Northern; 5th, Lee; 6th, Tidewater; 7th, Southside; and the 8th, Blue Ridge.

Encompassing the 14 northernmost counties of the state, there are currently 26 general clubs, 3 junior clubs and 1 Juniorette club with a paid membership of approximately 1,150.

The District Shield, designed by Jane Woodruff Kearns of the WC of Culpeper, was adopted in 1970. It signified the six GFWC departments: Arts, a palette and brushes; Conservation, a hand holding a dogwood blossom; Education, the lamp of knowledge; Home Life/Health, a spool of thread; International Outreach, a world globe; Public Issues, a gavel. The "N" is for Northern District the arrow always pointing North. The Blue signifies loyalty and truth while the gold is for generosity. The Latin inscription means "From Diversity, Strength." A banner with the Shield was made by the Junior Woman's Club of Manassas for use at District functions and in 2004, a professional banner was designed. During the 1976-78 administration of Mrs. Dorothy Burton, a contest was held to write lyrics for a District Song. Mrs. Marcy Morris (WC of King George) won the contest with her lyrics "You Gotta Have Pep" adapted to "Heart" from Damn Yankees.

Traditionally the District adopts a project each administration. Many times the District has adopted the State Project and in 1972 led all districts in contributions and support of the Mental Health Foundation. Other projects supported include a District scholarship, a transport van for the National Kidney Foundation, "60 trees by 60 clubs for 60 years" in celebration of Northern District's 60th anniversary in 1984, purchase of a robotic D.A.R.E. Bear, focus on women's health issues including "Life with Cancer," raise funds to purchase livestock through Heifer International, restore the garden at GFWC headquarters in 2005 (a project originally initiated in 1966) and most recently during the 2008-2010 administration supported the State Project to purchase an ambulance for the student EMT Unit of Virginia Tech University with the highest contributions (over \$18,000) of any district to that effort.

Northern District Juniors continue their support of the ongoing State Junior Projects as well as general club projects with donations of medical, recreational, and administrative efforts to many organizations.

In 2008, the GFWC Dominion Sisterhood Juniorette Club was chartered in Haymarket. This was the first student-oriented organization for Northern District.

Earning state awards in all departments and special programs is not uncommon for Northern District clubs. However, several clubs have received GFWC recognition for outstanding efforts in their

Northern District History (continued)

communities. In 1982, the WC of Fredericksburg won the 2nd place national award for their CIP entry "Stroke Club" in which they helped area residents adjust to life after a stroke. At the 2001 convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, the Oakton WC received an award for their "Libraries 2000" contribution, recognizing this club's efforts in bringing a library to the Oakton community. In 2009, the GFWC Dominion Woman's Club was awarded 1st place in the Special Projects category. Mrs. Lori Rocker, GFWC Virginia 3rd Vice President, Director of Junior Clubs was named Junior Director of the Year. At the 2012 GFWC Convention, seven Virginia clubs received Club Awards, and six of these clubs were from the Northern District.

The District hosted its first State Convention at the Sheraton Park Hotel (formerly known as the Wardman Park) in Washington, D. C. in 1941. Northern District at that time had no facility large enough to hold the convention. Since that time, the facilities in Northern have grown and the District now hosts the convention or conference every 4 years.

Prior to the formation of the numbered Districts, two club women from this area served as VFWC President: Mrs. Helen Norris Cummings, 1915-1917, who was a member of the Cameron Woman's Club, Alexandria, and Mrs. Henry Lockwood, 1921-1923, of the Clarendon Woman's Club. Since then, four Northern District members have served the Virginia Federation as President: Mrs. J. York Welborn (Grace) 1960-62; Mrs. James B. Roberts (Phyllis) 1970-1972; and Mrs. John O. Gregory (Angela) 1976-1978; and Mrs. Joseph A. Wintz III (Leigh) 2000-2002. Three District Junior Directors have served as 3rd Vice President, Director of Junior Clubs at the state level: Mrs. Donald Warren (Faye) 1972-74; Mrs. Joseph A. Wintz III (Leigh) 1982-84 and Mrs. Matt Rocker (Lori) 2008-2010.

Phyllis Roberts, Past President, Northern District, and Virginia Federation, served as the GFWC International President from 1986-1988. Mrs. Roberts is one of three ladies from Virginia to serve in this office in the 114 years of Federation history. The first to serve was Mrs. J. L. Blair Buck (Dorothea), who served from 1947-1950, and the most recent, Mrs. Leslie Hamlett (Shelby) 2000-2002.

Northern District continually strives to create ways to support members clubs and help new clubs to form and prosper. Our members continue to dedicate and volunteer their time and talents to promote the civic and cultural welfare of their communities while sharing Federation fellowship.