



**GFWC**  
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**GENERAL FEDERATION  
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**



## GFWC MN NEWS In A Nutshell

2025 - 2026 Vol 2. No. 3

President's Article:



The lists get longer, the hours get shorter, the hopes get greater. It's the most wonderful time of the year! We're used to it, right? We're old enough that we've been through this many a time before, but the anticipation is still there! Here's hoping your Holiday Season is all that you've hoped for this past year. May your joys and blessings be great for 2026!

Hopefully, we've been thinking about our Volunteer Hours and accomplishments for 2025. We are such a giving group of volunteers, make sure each of you reports what you've done. Help your Club President make an impact by writing beautiful stories about what you've accomplished in your community. The deadline is approaching very soon.

I was delighted to see the beautiful video of the 2025 GFWC Holiday Open House: The Miracle on N Street. Suellen Brazil, GFWC International President and the support staff at headquarters excelled in their presentation of the colors of the holidays. Last year we presented a beautiful gold and white sparkling Christmas tree ornament that I've been watching for in the branches of the trees but there were so many lovely ornaments that it was hard to pick out our GFWC Minnesota contribution.

It's just been announced that the GFWC Learning Academy, which includes training tools for use in our clubs and individually, will be launched in January. Be sure to look for weekly updates in the upcoming GFWC News & Notes. In the December 4, 2025, issue of the GFWC News & Notes, there was an article entitled, "Start with why: finding clarity and purpose in what you do." What is your "why" for being a volunteer with GFWC MN? My "why" is to bring more children the necessities to be strong leaders in the future. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were the three important words in my growing up years but now we also see "STEM" at the forefront. Please consider doing your utmost to teach the children to excel but also relay the importance of common sense they will need to make good decisions.



Thank you for all you do for GFWC. You are all important to me, to us as an organization. All that we do in our communities, in our counties, in our state shows the world that as a women's organization, we have the power to make changes. "We are one voice for change with GFWC" Is my motto.

Diane Hannah, President  
GFWC MN



**There is still time to submit club dues for the year.  
Send \$20 per member with a list of names to: Pat Stevermer,  
GFWC of Minnesota Treasurer, 720 3rd Ave SW, Sleepy Eye MN 56085**



**NEW DATE! January 22, 2026** : All clubs - Please send your Year End Reports to Minette by 1-22-26. It will be MOST appreciated! The absolute deadline? January 24, 2025, for getting club Year End Reports to Minette Stalheim Johnson, [msjohnson.officemail@gmail.com](mailto:msjohnson.officemail@gmail.com) 320-334-1865

All clubs received the forms in a separate email. This deadline is later than last year!

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Hello Minnesota clubs:

Please take time to help children in your community to read in your choice of ways. Try forming or joining a "Friends of the Library" group; contact your local library to see if they need help with buying books, setting up programs or story hours; check with your local elementary school or pre-schools to see if there are opportunities there; or learn about literacy programs in your area. Please take a few minutes each month to participate in this project for "Education & Libraries" which coincides with President Diane Hannah's theme of "Read a Book, the World Awaits."

Beth Cornish, GFWC-MN Education and Libraries Chair



From Ann Landis, GFWC Leadership Chairman (Fall 2025 V1, Issue 4): **Pointers for: Public Speaking**  
Every clubwoman has a message worth sharing. These helpful hints will guide you in crafting confident, engaging presentations that inform, inspire, elevate and educate. Step forward, speak boldly, and let your leadership shine. Use your voice to strengthen your club and community!

### **1. Hook, not BIO**

No polite warm-up, bio, or "Excited to be here"  
Start with a relevant question, bold claim, or short story

### **2. Start Still**

Walk out, plant your feet, pause for two seconds, then speak  
Let the room settle before you speak

### **3. Group in Threes**

Break points into 3s - easy to follow and remember  
"Three things you'll learn today" ...is magic

### **4. Short Stories**

Keep stories under 90 seconds  
Use: Setting, conflict, payoff - and then cut the rest

### **5. Edit Actively**

Replace passive voice and vague verbs (AI can help)  
"It was launched" "We launched it"

### **6. Speak to 1 Person**

Hold eye contact with 1 person per thought  
Then shift to another in a different area, don't scan constantly

### **7. Mark your Pauses**

Add slashes (/) in your script where you want to pause  
Don't just fill the space - silence can emphasize

### **8. Put Audience First**

Cut "I want to talk about..."  
Replace with "You'll want away with..."

### **9. Move on Transitions**

Step or gesture when changing topics not mid-point  
Stillness = power, movement = shift

### **10. Rehearse Aloud**

Practice standing, with voice at full volume  
Record yourself and watch for filler words, pacing, and fidgeting

### **11. Memorize Bookends**

Know your first and last 3 lines cold  
Everything else can be spoken from notes

### **12. Circle Back**

Echo your opening idea or line at the end  
It gives the audience closure and recall

...for further information on the National Suffrage Monument, go to the website: [womensmonument.org](http://womensmonument.org)



## Why We're Building a Monument

Of the 40 monuments, memorials, and statues that currently exist on the National Mall - the most visited National Park in the United States - NONE are dedicated to the great women of American history. It is time to tell their stories.

Percentage of National Parks that commemorate some aspect of American women's history: 2.3%

Annual visitors to the National Mall (more than Yosemite, Yellowstone, and the Grand Canyon combined): 36M

Number of commemorative works on the National Mall dedicated to singular men: 22

**Monuments on the National Mall dedicated to women's history: 0**

## Women's Suffrage National Monument Foundation Finalizes Permanent, Prominent, and Poetic Home on the National Mall

WASHINGTON, D.C. — December 4, 2025 — The Women's Suffrage National Monument Foundation (WSNMF) today announced that it has received final and unanimous approval from the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for a permanent two and a half acre site on the National Mall in Constitution Gardens. This approval marks the final step in the comprehensive site selection process and pinpoints the exact location—at the intersection of 19th St. and Constitution Avenue NW—where the Women's Suffrage National Monument will stand on the National Mall, securing its presence among America's greatest civic tributes.

“This monument will be a permanent, prominent, and poetic tribute within Constitution Gardens, a place that embodies the core ideals of our nation and a setting that will inspire all who visit,” said Anna Laymon, President and CEO of the Women's Suffrage National Monument Foundation. “It is profoundly fitting that this monument to the women who fought for suffrage and expanded our democracy will now stand in the most visited National Park in the United States.”

“We are incredibly grateful for the diligent review and expertise provided by the National Capital Planning Commission,” Laymon continued. “This milestone marks the start of a monumental new chapter.”

Next Step ..... Raise the Funds! Construction will begin after the funds have been raised (estimated need: \$100 Million) and a final design is chosen.

GFWC is contributing to this effort. GFWC members are continuing to raise funds.

Thank you to all who continue to contribute to this National Monument!



Minnesota State Capitol with the golden quadriga over the South Portico. Built in 1905. The sculpture of the 4 horses (quadriga) is titled: “Progress of the State”.

*IF any club is planning a visit to the capitol - here are good points to consider!*

**How to Plan a Successful GFWC Day at the Capitol:** Barbara Harvey, President, GFWC Texas

After a 20-year absence from the Texas Capitol, GFWC Texas returned in 2025 with purpose, passion, and a plan. This guide shares how the state federation organized a successful Day at the Capitol. Packets were also distributed to key committee members who consider bills related to human trafficking, ensuring GFWC Texas’s voice was heard in the most relevant and influential spaces.

**1. Align with GFWC Goals and a Clear Advocacy Focus**

Planning began with the 2024–2026 GFWC TX President’s Special Project, human trafficking for sexual exploitation. By aligning advocacy with GFWC mission areas and state-specific needs, the event carried both emotional weight and strategic focus. An important key is early planning.

**2. Secure a Legislative Sponsor**

A state senator agreed to sponsor the Capitol Day visit after contact from a past state leader. His support enabled formal recognition on the Senate floor and helped navigate official procedures and paperwork.

**3. To focus your visit, develop and adopt a State Resolution**

The GFWC TX Resolutions Chairman prepared a resolution addressing human trafficking. It was adopted by delegates at the GFWC Texas Spring Convention and became a central element of the advocacy materials delivered to legislators.

**4. Train Members to Advocate Effectively**

To help members feel confident in meetings with legislators, prepare talking points. Practice what members will say in the actual meeting. Why is this issue important enough for you to take time out of your legislator’s day? If you are visiting to ask for support or opposition to pending legislation, know the number and title of the bill.

**5. Create Comprehensive Leave-Behind Packets**

Legislators and their staff received professional packets that included:

- GFWC and GFWC Texas brochures
- The adopted resolution
- Texas-specific trafficking statistics from Hope for Justice, GFWC affiliate organization
- A letter from the GFWC Texas President

These materials reinforced the Federation’s message and left a lasting impression.

**6. Make a Visible and Strategic Impact**

Members visited their own elected officials, delivered advocacy packets, and spoke directly with legislators and staff about the importance of stronger protections against human trafficking. In addition, packets were delivered to key committee members who handle bills related to human trafficking during the legislative session—ensuring the message reached those in positions to act.

**7. Ensure Legislative Recognition**

GFWC Texas was recognized from the floor of the Texas House of Representatives, followed by recognition in the Texas Senate. A resolution was read aloud in both chambers, acknowledging the Federation’s advocacy and long-standing service to communities across the state. Members took group photos with legislators and celebrated the formal acknowledgment of their presence and cause.

**8. Celebrate and Reflect**

A group lunch gave members time to regroup before final visits. By 2:00 p.m., the group returned to the hotel, tired but energized by the experience and eager to continue their advocacy work. In reflection: GFWC states are encouraged to include legislative visits as part of their advocacy strategy to show up, speak up, and stand up for those who cannot. Takeaway: With a clear cause, a committed team, and a strong plan, your GFWC club or state federation can make a powerful impact at your state Capitol. GFWC Texas demonstrated that legislative advocacy is both achievable and inspiring—and that the Federation’s voice truly matters.