

**Minutes GFWC/CT Board Meeting in Rocky Hill, CT
Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elks Lodge
Saturday, July 13, 2024**

Call to Order: Kathleen Barnes; GFWC/CT State President, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am at the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elks Lodge. She welcomed everyone to the 1st Executive Board meeting of the GFWC/CT 2024-2026 administration.

Inspiration: Beverly Leone; East Hartford Woman's Club gave the Inspiration.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America: Linda Chamberlain; Co-President of East Hartford Woman's Club led the Club in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Collect for Club Women: Cynthia Messikian; East Hartford Woman's Club, led the Collect.

Credentials: Joanne Sullivan; Meeting Chair, Windsor Woman's Club, reported the following Credentials: Past State Presidents - 3; Club Presidents - 10; State Officers – 8; Executive Board, 28; Total Attendees – 38. District with the Largest Attendance – North Central. Club with the largest attendance: East Hartford Woman's Club.

President Kathy Barnes declared the meeting had a quorum and she was pleased to note that we had nearly half of the Executive Board present. She thanked the women of the East Hartford Woman's Club for their support and participation in this event.

Introductions of Past Presidents: President Kathy Barnes introduced Past State Presidents: JoAnn Calnen, 2010-2012; Debbie Fiore 2020-2022, and Kathy DeBurra 2022-2024. JoAnn has agreed to serve as the Parliamentary Advisor; Debbie will be serving as the Legislation/Public Policy Chair as well as the Resolutions Committee Chair and on the GFWC Membership Committee; Kathy will serve on the Finance Committee and GFWC Credentials Committee.

Reports of GFWC/CT Officers:

President Kathy Barnes introduced Mischa Campbell, Member at-Large and shared some information about her background. She and her husband Dave are local coordinators for Special Olympics, she volunteers with CASA advocating for those who cannot. She has served as Advocates for Children Chairman and as Club President. Due to her recent appointment, Mischa did not report at this meeting.

Jean Keating, Corresponding Secretary. Jean shared a letter she received from Katherine DeBurra, Past State President, GFWC/CT 2022-2024.

“Dear Treasured GFWC/CT Members: I wish to thank the Connecticut Federation for all that they accomplished in the 2022-2024 Administration. The amazing work in the lives of others is admired by me and so many others! I thank you for placing your confidence in me and sharing the incredible generosity to me personally throughout my entire 2 years. I look forward to the 2024-2026 Administration and if there is anything I can help anyone with- please ask! Yours in Federation, Katherine DeBurra”

Regrets received from those unable to attend: Nicole Figueiredo, Sally Johnson, Nancy Kalyan, Kathy Matusiak, Sara Newell, and Jeanne Wasileski.

She requested that Club Presidents forward her rosters which indicate the club officers. As Corresponding Secretary, Jean will assist in putting together the State Federation History for this administration. She has started to prepare the Year Book to be archived. If clubs have any pertinent information, especially photographs, to be included in the Year Book, please let her know.

Joann Hohensee, Recording Secretary. She asked that anyone reporting today to leave a copy of their report at the podium, and email a copy to her also at jhohensee246@charter.net. She asked for 3 people to read today's minutes, and the following members volunteered: Beverly Leone, East Hartford WC; Donna Farrell; WC of Madison; and Nicole Karalli, Terryville WC.

Pam Lerner, Assistant Treasurer. Pam reported a copy of the rosters for each club from last year are now being sent out and you should receive yours soon. Please update it with any changes since last time and return it to her as soon as possible. She will need the full name, address, email address and a phone number (home and cell if available) for each member. This will be used in the directories which are being put together. She also requested listing your club officers at the bottom of the roster if there is no room in a column. Phone numbers are necessary so she can be in immediate contact with members if necessary. These rosters will be used to send out dues invoices for the year. GFWC/CT dues are \$20 per member.

Jean Kehoe, Treasurer. The transition from one administration to the new administration is taking place. Bills are being paid. Work is being done on a new expense form. Please present any invoices you have to Jean as soon as possible. Her email is gfwc.ct.treasurer@gmail.com. The Finance Committee will be meeting soon to review and approve the budget for this coming year.

Nicole Karalli, 2nd Vice President and Dean of Reporting; Besides 2nd VP, Nicole is also the new GFWC/CT Dean of Reporting. She thanked Maddy Marzullo for convincing her to be part of the EC Board and Reporting Chair. Nicole will be contacting Club and District presidents soon. Please email her with your contact information. A reporting class for each district will be scheduled for October and November. She encouraged club presidents to invite her to their meetings where she can get to know everyone.

Sara Newell, 3rd Vice President. Sara sent her regrets for not being able to attend today's meeting due to a family event, and her report was read by President Kathy Barnes:

"I congratulate our four new District President's and four new Assistant District President's. Southwest District: District President, Marlene Patren, and Assistant District President, Jeanne Braude-Magi; Southeast District: District President, Lynne Sarro, and Assistant District President, Mary Ellen Corlett; Northwest District: District President Michele Brescia, and Assistant District President, Judy Michael; and North Central District: District President, Sandy Barry and Assistant District President, Karen Allies. Currently, North Central District will be holding their District Day on Sat., April 12, 2025. I am waiting for confirmation from the rest of the districts as to when they will be meeting. It is never too early to start looking for and booking a location to hold your District Day. I am available to you all for any help you may need in planning for your District Days." Sara's email is sdn0104@gmail.com

Wendy Clery, 1st Vice President and Leadership Chair. Wendy recognized club presidents and co-presidents in attendance. She told them, "You are all serving in leadership and it is so appreciated." Those attending were Bethel Women's Club GFWC, Kathy Aiello; East Hartford Woman's Club, Linda Chamberlain and Cynthia Messikian; Woman's Club of Enfield, Sue Michaud; GFWC The Harwinton Woman's Club, Maddy Marzullo; Newington/Wethersfield Women's Club GFWC, Chylene Pender; Windsor Woman's Club, Geri Harvey; GFWC Woman's Club of North Haven, Pam Lerner and Suburban Woman's Club of Greater New Britain, M.J. McCarthy. She was so glad to be able to attend GFWC convention this year, so she could take workshops, meet with members from around the country, and get reinvigorated to come back to you all and serve as leadership chairman. Meeting with almost one thousand of our club sisters is definitely a good way to get inspired and learn new things! She also got a chance to see how all of our work adds up together and just how important even our small contributions can be

across the organization. Across GFWC in 2023, there were 3,603 projects; 548,502 hours volunteered; \$616,780 donated; \$824,430 in-kind donations for our Signature Project alone. For all of the CSPs and Advancements, there were 88,107 projects; 5,450,450 hours volunteered; \$13,380,128 donated; \$8,568,988 in kind donations.

Wendy reported we are holding our own here in CT and even average more monetary donations per member than the national average. We are a bit lower on volunteer hours, we may be under-reporting there. She was so proud to represent CT with the other officers at convention and was rooting for CT every time they announced awards because she knows how hard you all work.

She will be emailing the new GFWC CT archive project committee after this meeting to set up training and schedules where they are needed. If members been thinking about joining the committee, please do and let her know. She will be starting a traveling leadership library for our members that will go to different state meetings, or any meetings, to offer books to members that are helpful in learning leadership roles, skills, and techniques. She passed out folders which included a list of books and mentioned that donated books are welcome. This will be our legacy of supporting education and libraries through this project.

Finally, the First Vice President oversees the GFWC Community Improvement Project challenge. This is an exciting opportunity and one of the few ways that a club can win monetary awards from GFWC towards your projects for its work. CIP is a two-year challenge so awards are given every other year, but this is also something that can be reported in another area so it's not exclusive to this particular award. For example, if you were doing a project for your library, you could report it in your library is an education report each year and still include it as an entry for the CIP awards.

Kathleen Barnes, President GFWC/CT. reported that, over the last few months, she has learned that the planned becomes unraveled, and the unplanned can often be more rewarding! She thanked Jean Kehoe, Joanne Sullivan, Maddy Marzullo and Heather Spencer for jumping in when things did not go as planned for this meeting. She referred to herself as a joiner. While in Chicago at the GFWC International Convention, she ended up joining another club. It is a national club and its name is the Legacy Club. Members are all related to at least one other GFWC member – current or past. She joined to find out how a club which is not meeting in a place can function. The club has two primary areas of interest – supporting the WHRC Women's History and Resource Center in its 40th year, and participating in the National Day of Service. It was decided that each of member would do a project, perhaps to benefit an organization affiliated with Feeding America on National Day of Service. Most of the club communication will be through social media and they will share their projects there. Perhaps a similar format may be helpful to members who are not in the area full time and for those whose clubs are no longer active. Through this year there will be a lot of discussion about membership. She mentioned an organization she belongs to is now recognizing those units (they call them regions) who have sustained their membership. That is one key part of growing the size of our organization. 15 new members and 17 members who do not renew is not growth and we want to help GFWC grow in CT. One approach may be to reach out to prior members – those who might have left because they felt they could not make the commitment to club time. While clubs are working to keep their membership engaged, it is important for the Executive Board to offer opportunities for members to grow too.

Kathy is going to work on meeting more members of clubs by participating in not just meetings but activities in which those clubs participate. Since May 1, she has taken part in 7 club installations. In the process, met people and learned about how the clubs operate. While

meeting people, she shared how much attending state meetings benefits her. She asked everyone attending to go back to their club and invite another member to join them next time they come.

The sites for the remaining meetings of this administration are coming together. Our Fall Conference will be held at Connecticut State College in Manchester formerly known as Manchester Community College. During that meeting we will have an opportunity to see the art which is on display.

Kathy has been working with Maggie Hannon who handles our insurance. The policy is in and she is working on the bills for each club. If clubs are participants in this program – they must make payment before September 1 and she urged us to do so. Otherwise, the State policy and the policy of every other club is in jeopardy of default. Many clubs have signed up to participate in the National Day of Service and she would ask that they email a couple photos or short videos of members doing their project. We would like to have that available at the Fall Conference.

GFWC International Convention: Kathy DeBurra, Past State President 2022-2024, spoke about National Convention. GFWC recognizes change of administration at the International Convention. The awards presented in Chicago were earned during the 2022-2024 administration. She passed around programs from the convention. Twelve CT Members attended. She was delighted to accept awards on behalf of GFWC/CT.

1. For the second year in a row, we received the Arts & Culture Award! Congratulations to Chairman Patty Meglio.
2. Holly Martin, who won in the photography category of Natural Wonders. She also received a cash prize.
3. Our state received the top fundraising award for Shot@Life. The organization is launching a Measles Mission Program this year and they are encouraging Clubs to consider supporting this effort. During the pandemic a measles surge began and Shot@Life would like to focus on getting everyone vaccinated. The vaccines are less than \$5 and can be lifesaving.
4. GFWC/T received an outstanding participation award for the Scavenger Hunt from the Legislation & Public Policy Area. We had 163 submissions of Proclamations-photos-email support to our Legislators and outstanding advocacy for our causes. 163 was about the highest number!
5. At the convention, Kathy received the Charlotte Emerson Brown Award for Leadership. She said *“This President clearly found out that “Individually We Are a Wave but Together We Are an Ocean”. I would not be honored with this award if not for your dedication, and I truly express my heartfelt appreciation for your support, and it was due to you doing so much in the lives of others and placing your confidence in me!”*

Following the awards report, President Kathy Barnes reported that the GFWC Manual, is available from the GFWC.org website. Each of the community service programs lists Community Connection Initiatives which can be used to support the area and engage other organizations as well as our members. Clubs are encouraged to use the Manual in their planning. Our Affiliate organizations are connected to each of our community service programs, and projects are suggested. Those affiliates are: Canine Companions; Heifer International, Shot@Life, St. Jude’s Research Hospital, March of Dimes, Operation Smile; UNICEF USA, and a new initiative, Hope for Justice, which addresses fighting human trafficking.

The Advancement Plans: Leadership, Membership, Legislation/Public Policy, and Communications/Public Relations, have Club Connection Initiatives. All of the Manual is organized to educate, engage, and empower us as club members. This is the banner of GFWC President Suellen Brazil's administration. She is looking forward to how we use this in our clubs to expand our membership to women outside our clubs – perhaps asking former members to rejoin. They may be looking for an organization to do something that makes a difference in the world.

Speaker: Danielle Drazen Dutcher, educator and advocate, was scheduled to be with us today to speak about the work she does in the field of education, specifically adapting education to the student, not adapting the student to education. President Kathy Barnes shared an article that Danielle has written which spoke to lack inclusive education for neurodivergent students.

Women's History & Resource Center – JoAnn Bruno, Newtown Woman's Club.

JoAnn shared 2022 - 2024 WHRC reporting statistics. She suggested clubs "Preserve the Past" by updating their websites, partnering with libraries/museums & maintain club archives. Also, celebrate special events: Women's History Month, Black History Month & Women's Equality Day. "Inspiring the Future" by creating scrapbooks of meetings, special events & club celebrations. Also, in honor of the 40th Anniversary of GFWC / Women's History Resource Center, JoAnn has been working since last year updating GFWC/CT Past State Presidents' Histories from 1999 to 2024. It is almost completed. Now to find funds to underwrite the printing.

Expression of Thanks was presented by Joan Olenick, East Harford Woman's Club.

Meeting reconvenes at 12:30 pm.

Leadership Workshop. Wendy Clery presented a workshop on Smart Goals and GFWC Clubs. There are so many things that we may feel need our attention and issues that may seem overwhelming, it's a good idea to have a place that helps you get started as well as helping you to keep moving forward. Using SMART goals are a great way to do this. SMART is an acronym for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime Bound. Linda Chamberlain, East Hartford WC, explained using an acronym she taught her students: A-B-C-D-E which stands for **A**sk Questions, **B**rainstorm ideas, **C**hoose, **D**o it, and, **E**valuate. Packets given out contained a survey and a sheet of leadership tips and ideas from JoAnn Calnen. One of the most important tips is listening to your members. She asked participants to fill out the survey and return it to her.

Community Service Programs. Nicole Karalli. As 2nd Vice President, Nicole told the members she is looking forward to reading about everything they have done, and are going to do, during this administration. She introduced the CSP and our Advancement Plan Chairmen:

Arts and Culture, Patty Meglio; Civic Engagement: Carin Mancini; Veterans Chair: Maddy Marzullo; Education and Libraries: Andrea Freibauer; Environment: Ashley Waseleski; Health and Wellness: Ginny Chulkovs; Bylaws Chairman: Eileen Driscoll. Communications & Public Relations: Georgeann Kishhner; Advocates for Children, Juniors Special Project Chair: Advocates for Children: Donna Recknagel; Leadership: Wendy Clery; Legislation/Public Policy Chair: Debbie Fiore; Membership: Sara Newell; Resolutions Chair: Debbie Fiore; Signature Program Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention: Christine Stanlonis; Women's History and Resource Center: JoAnn Bruno; Community Improvement Program: Wendy Clery;

Jenny Award chair: Jeanne Waseleski; Photography Contest Chairman: Kathy Aiello. At the time of the meeting there were no appointed chairs for Writing Contest, Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO) or Fundraising.

Nicole mentioned an acronym learned early on in her military career: CASE. Copy and Steal Everything. With that she encourages clubs to learn and copy from each other. Copies of top ten projects were distributed to each table. During this administration she will add to CASE, Continuous Improvement including after action reviews for team building and process review. This reporting period, she challenges clubs to include improvements in their reports instead of submitting the same report year after year. She handed out wallet size cards with the five CSPs and five Advancement Plans on one side, National and State Signature programs, along with some important dates on the other.

HOBY (Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership) an initiative of GFWC. Debbie Fiore spoke about her granddaughter Olivia Nuccio, who has been selected as one of two high school students from CT to represent our state at a leadership convention in Chicago this summer. Wendy Clery made a motion that **GFWC/CT donate \$500 to HOBY in order to support Olivia Nuccio in the CT student program.** Seconded by Kathy Aiello. Motion carried.

New England Region Conference – President Kathy Barnes reported that the NERC will be in Portland, Maine at the Doubletree Hotel, September 13-15, 2024. At the convention in Chicago, the 2024-2026 officers for New England Region were installed. Tina Smith from New Hampshire is President and Debbie Fiore will represent Connecticut as the Secretary. Wendy Clery will be Fundraising Chairman. Tina has chosen St. Jude Research Hospital as her project. More information will be coming but she asked that each State President ask their clubs to consider St. Jude's when planning their donation programs.

Announcements – Mark your calendars!

Sept. 12th – 15th: New England Region in Portland, Maine

Sept. 28th: National Day of Service

Oct. 12th: GFWC CT Fall Conference at the Manchester CC

Drawings for 2 baskets plus a 50/50 raffle were held.

Adjournment at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Hohensee, Recording Secretary, 2024-2026 Administration