

GFWC Virginia Statistical Form – Annual Club Record – 2013

Activity Summary

The Woman's Club of Springfield continued in 2013 to serve the Springfield community with numerous projects and many donations. We had 34 community service projects in the areas of Domestic Violence, Home Life, Arts, Conservation, Education, Health, and Public Issues, for a total of 1588 volunteer hours. We donated \$9,720.00 to: Canine Partners for Life, The American Heart Association, Bethany House, local elementary schools and their families, the Avon 3-Day Breast Cancer Walk, All-Night Graduation Parties, The Raptor Conservancy of Virginia, Girl's State, a scholarship for a local graduate, GFWC Virginia, The Alzheimer's Association, Bike to the Beach for Autism, *Kind News* for two elementary schools, school supplies, clothing, Thanksgiving and Christmas food projects, and our Hospital layette program, using both in kind donations and monetary contributions. We held a Spring Faire to benefit Bethany House, a shelter for families of domestic violence, and contributed money, supplies, and Christmas gifts to Bethany House families. A new project this year was our support of the Springfield chapter of the VFW in their holiday programs for military families in the area. Also in support of the military we donated hand-made scarves and hats to Operation Gratitude, for soldiers deployed in harm's way.

We continued to strive for excellence in Leadership. One of our members served in the Northern District GFWC Virginia by serving as GFWC Virginia Communications and Identity Chairman and Northern District Social Chairman. Another member is Credentials Chairman for the Northern District, GFWC Virginia. On the club level we installed new officers last year, three serving in the leadership of the club for the first time. There have been new ideas for projects and new enthusiasm for our overall program. We continue to find ways to support the Springfield community in new ways.

All of the financial support for our community programs is made possible because of our largest work and time commitment – our signature project, The Pink Elephant Thrift Shop. Keeping such a business operating is a huge responsibility, one that offers great rewards and challenges. Some of our members have reached a time when they are no longer physically able to work (including cleaning) at the shop, so this means others have taken up the slack when needed. Some of our best workers are approaching the time when they will no longer be able to contribute, so increasing our membership is vital to our survival. Many of our members only belong to the club because they are dedicated to the shop and all that it allows us to contribute to the community, so keeping the shop going is crucial to the overall health and survival of our club. As always in life, hard work brings great rewards. The best friendships are forged when people work together, and our shop is foremost in our club's unique identity and purpose. In 2014 our club will celebrate its 60th anniversary, and the Pink Elephant its 50th. We are a fixture in the Springfield community, and are quite proud of our achievements. We raised \$16,093 at our shop in 2013. All of our charitable donations are made with Pink Elephant funds. All items in the shop not sold are donated to the Veterans of Foreign Wars or to other thrift shops.

We installed 9 new members this past year with our Membership efforts. We've tried several new ideas, using Meet-up.com to attract interest, and trying to have our programs be our focus at our meetings instead of taking time to rehash news that has already been printed in our newsletter causing long meeting times. We have new ideas to make new members feel included immediately. Because we are a large club, we have new name tags to wear at our meetings. This is helping the new members learn names faster – and we learn their names faster as well! The "First Friend" idea is helping new members get to know someone right away – having someone perhaps to ride with or sit by at meetings. Our Hospitality committee has had many activities for the members, fun events designed to explore new places in the area together.