

GFWC Virginia Statistical Form – Annual Club Record – 2014

Activity Summary

2014 was a banner year for the Woman's Club of Springfield. We celebrated our 60th Anniversary of affiliation at a luncheon at the Springfield Country Club, with members and guests from GFWC Virginia and the Springfield community. We displayed pictures and memorabilia from all of our 60 years, and awarded the special Janet Crupper club service award to Susan Edson. A musical trio performed for all of us to make the event even more memorable. We are proud to have served the Springfield community for so many years! This year we also celebrated the 50th anniversary of owning and operating our thrift shop, The Pink Elephant. What an accomplishment!

In connection with the GFWC signature project, Domestic Violence and Abuse, we continued our support of Bethany House of Northern Virginia, a shelter for families seeking an escape from violence. We held a Spring Faire to raise money to donate to Bethany House and were able to give \$800 to their mission. In December we collected gifts donated by club members to give to the women at Bethany House as Christmas gifts. The value of these in kind gifts was over \$900, a tribute to the generosity of club members.

Our Arts committee kept us busy all year with 11 workshops for crafts and knitting/crochet classes. Our projects were to make items for Ways and Means to use in fundraising and to make blankets, hats and scarves which are donated for our layettes and Operation Gratitude projects of the Home Life Committee. We helped at the needlework show at Woodlawn and began a new relationship with Arts on the Horizon, a community theater group for young people with whom we are planning future events. The Arts Extravaganza, our art contest in February, was a huge hit with the membership!

To promote conservation in our community we sponsored a double assembly at Crestwood Elementary School presented by the Raptor Conservancy of Virginia – an effort to support the Conservancy and educate our children about birds of prey. We began a new effort in International Outreach with a \$200 donation to UNICEF, a GFWC Partnership project. Our Public Issues group brought us community information, encouraged political involvement, funded a student's participation in the Virginia program for Girl's State, and donated 10 wreaths to Wreaths Across America which we helped place at Arlington Cemetery for the holidays.

The Home Life committee decided on projects supporting families in our school district by contributing holiday foods, Christmas clothing, and donating \$500 to the Trails for Youth biking program at elementary schools. The Home Life ladies organized member and club donations of layettes to our local hospitals and purchased requested "Pack N Play" beds for Fairfax Hospital. We continued our support for Canine Partners for Life. Our interest in and support of soldiers and their families are reflected in our donations to Fisher House and to the VFW military family holiday programs by "adopting" a family. We made and sent 44 scarves to deployed military members for Operation Gratitude. In the Health category we donated to the Heart Association, the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer, the Ride to Conquer Cancer, and to Autism Research. The Club donated over \$4300 toward these Home Life and Health projects.

The Education Committee supported the local library's book donations to local teachers, gave detergent, snacks, and winter break foods to Garfield school families, and collected Box Tops for education for the school. Girls on the Run, a club at Crestwood School, is a worthy group earning our support in 2014. We donated to the all night grad parties at two high schools, to the Madrigal singers at W. Springfield, and gave a \$3000 scholarship to a graduating senior. Our donations topped \$4500!

Communications are important to any organization. We continued our membership news, naming our monthly newsletter, *The Elephant's Ear*, and publishing our Yearbook with essential addresses and scheduling. To keep up with our club "happenings" we have a website with current pictures and calendars, and now are on Facebook with club information. We publish news in community papers and newsletters. Our public interaction helps keep our name in the community and attracts new members. Our hospitality committee planned 11 events to promote interest and camaraderie in our club. We installed 4 new members this year and hope to increase membership with all of these efforts.

The Woman's Club of Springfield has excellent leadership, including the GFWC state treasurer, and 4 ladies serving in positions in the Northern District as Social, Credentials, and Arts Chairmen, and one a member of the auditing committee. Our club officers are active in the District, supporting their activities and sharing ideas about programs with other clubs.

Funding for our club activities and GFWC donations comes from our dues and Ways and Means fundraisers. At our meetings we had vendors, 50/50 raffles, a silent auction, and held a separate fashion show. All of the charitable donations made by our club are possible because of our thrift shop, The Pink Elephant. This was a challenging year at the shop. Unexpected expenses (more than \$8000) and a drop in business with the renovation of the shopping center where the shop is located cut into our profits. Since we had reserve funds from previous years we still were able to increase our donations in 2014, giving away more than we earned at the shop! Staffing the shop 5 days a week year round is quite a commitment, one we have been able to sustain, with some strains, for 50 years. We look forward to continuing this commitment to our community and to GFWC as we work and have fun together in 2015!