



GFWC ILLINOIS

Volume 95, Fall 2019

CLUBWOMAN

A PUBLICATION OF THE GFWC ILLINOIS FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY GFWC ILLINOIS!

BY PHYLLIS SKUBIC, GFWC ILLINOIS PRESIDENT 2016-2018
AND GFWC ILLINOIS 125th ANNIVERSARY CHAIRMAN

We ROCKED our 125th Anniversary Gala Celebration on May 3rd in Rock Island! I hope you enjoyed the evening as much as I did. We had it all – a wonderful display of historical items from GFWC Illinois Headquarters, beautiful centerpieces, birthday cake, a champagne toast, a program highlighting the achievements of those who came before us, and even a visit from Isabella Candee! Thank you for being a part of our celebration.

was sent to each club President in the “Connections” newsletter and can be found on the www.gfwcillinois.org website under “Events.”



Chairman’s Note: The Peoria Woman’s Club building is as old as we are – 125 years and is NOT handicapped accessible from the street level. There are two steps to gain access to the entrance and main floor. Once inside, everything is on one level...unless you want to see the theatre on the second floor. Stairs - no elevator. My sincere apologies for not considering this aspect last year. This building is an integral part of our history. The very first ‘GFWC Illinois Annual Meeting’ was held within its walls in October 1894.

Relax – Reminisce – Renew Federation Friendships

If your schedule allows, please join members from across the state on Friday evening, October 11th, for dinner and conversation. We will meet at the Two25 Restaurant inside the Mark Twain Hotel at 7:00 p.m. and will order from the menu. Please RSVP to Carol Rich (815) 674-6951 by October 1, 2019, if you would like to join us. We want to ensure our reservation includes everyone. No agenda. No timetable. Just an opportunity to catch up with dear GFWC Illinois friends.

Parking for Saturday: Members can park on Fayette Street, which is a one-way street. Parking is available on both sides of the street. There is also a city parking lot just north of the building on Madison Street for those willing and able to walk a little farther. Before you park, drive past the building’s entrance on Fayette Street and we will give you an ‘Orange Parking Pass’ courtesy of the Peoria Woman’s Club. They have an arrangement with the Peoria Police Department that if you display this orange pass on your dashboard you won’t need to ‘feed the meter.’ ■



■ GFWC International President Mary Ellen Brock takes part in the 125th Anniversary Gala at the GFWC Illinois Convention in May. Photo at right: Pat Heitman (left) narrated the tale of the formation of GFWC Illinois as Martha Bein (right) acted as Isabella Candee for the evening.



Please join us one last time to celebrate 125 years of volunteer service on Saturday, October 12th. This party will take place at the Peoria Woman’s Club building – 301 NE Madison, Peoria 61630.

Social time will start at 10:30 a.m. with lunch and program to follow at noon. Registration is \$25 and the deadline is September 15, 2019 (please contact Phyllis if you need to register after that date). We hope these times will allow members the opportunity to attend without the additional expense of an overnight hotel stay. The registration form

More GFWC Illinois 125th Anniversary news and events on page 12!





CONNECTING WITH SHELLI

BY SHELLI FEHR, GFWC ILLINOIS PRESIDENT 2018-2020

“**R**each Out...Connect” is the theme of the 2018-2020 administration. This has been my personal mission for the past year. I have done my best to reach out to members and clubs with visits and communications but there is still a lot of connecting to do. Why does it matter whether a club connects to GFWC? Five words—credibility, legitimacy, support, networking and expertise.

As a member of a GFWC club, you gain instant credibility by belonging to one of the world’s oldest and largest women’s volunteer organizations. GFWC has a long history of charitable and legislative work. **Credibility** gives clubs the privilege to ask for and donate money. **Credibility** tells the public that the club is a **legitimate** organization with **legitimate** causes to support. In today’s “scam” environment, it is necessary to be affiliated with a national or international organization such as GFWC. **Credibility** and **legitimacy** come with that membership.

GFWC helps people and the environment. Its members **support** fellow members, men, women, children, families, the needy, and the environment. Members of GFWC

support CLUB goals and CLUB needs and introduce a **network** of other individuals with common values and ideals to members.

GFWC clubs are located in all 50 states and in over a dozen countries. As such, the GFWC headquarters in Washington, D.C., employs a paid staff of professionals with **expertise** in various areas of club work. These experts develop timely and effective materials to help clubs achieve success as well as answer member questions. This **expertise** is available to only GFWC members and it’s **FREE**. GFWC does not charge consulting fees that clubs would have to pay without GFWC membership.

Five simple words can carry a powerful punch for clubs who belong to the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. GFWC values each and every member and club. I value every member and club and will continue reaching out to connect with each and every one. The first year was just the beginning! “Reach Out...Connect!” ■



THE THREE R’s... READ, WRITE & REPORT!

BY TERESA SANFORD-SHIPPLETT, GFWC IL PRESIDENT ELECT & DEAN OF CHAIRMAN

Kudos to all of you and your clubs who submitted club activities for 2018 award entries!

You have “Done Us Proud” with all your projects and programs during the past reporting year. The awards GFWC Illinois received at the GFWC International Convention in Austin in June were awesome! The credit goes to what you have done in your communities to reach out and connect by living the volunteer spirit enriching the lives of others.

The majority of our members applauded the new awards format at our annual state convention in May. We will continue to give one overall award in each membership category, the top ten projects, and a creative project winner in each area. The only change will be four membership categories instead of three. Chairmen will continue to select the “Top 10” projects in each area, which include: Arts, Conservation, Education, Home Life, International Outreach, Public Issues, Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention, Prevent Child Abuse, Advocates for Children, Communications and Public Relations, Leadership, Membership, Fundraising, Legislation/Public Policy and Women’s History and Resources. You might even win more than once in a particular area. This awards format follows



the GFWC International awards procedure. A reminder, check the www.gfwc.org website for the GFWC International Top 10 project winners awarded in each area. There are some great ideas to be shared!

Keeping in mind that the focus is more on individual projects and programs, when you prepare your narratives, select specific projects that your club feels are the most significant. This does not negate other programs or projects, so please continue to include these in your statistics as well. As committee chairmen select overall membership category winners, it is important to share all you have accomplished. Remember to include your goals, how much the project cost, how many members were involved, other people/organizations that helped, etc. Another tip: check your club’s membership count in the state yearbook to make sure you enter under the correct membership category. Updated statistics forms for this 2019 year will be out later this fall. Please use the new form when it is available prior to the February deadline. ■

Teresa Sanford-Shipplett
President Elect/Dean of Chairmen
(309) 368-6722 | sanford@abingdon.net

NEWS FROM THE LILY PAD

BY CHERIE SIEGER, GFWC ILLINOIS DIRECTOR OF JR. CLUBS 2018-2020



Hello to fall! I hope everyone had a great summer! With fall approaching, it means a new club year for most of the clubs in GFWC Illinois! I hope you are leaping at the chance to start anew!

Fall also means new members coming into your club. There are quite a few Junior Clubs that hold Membership Mingles, Member Blast-Off or Meet & Greets. Whatever your club calls it, I hope it was a success and that you have many women ready to join and do their part in helping your community.

With fall, we are also collecting our dues for Illinois. So with new members comes the question, "What do I get for my dues?" Are you ready to answer that question? I am going to give you some pointers on how to answer. The General Federation of Women's Clubs is ready with the answer.

To get this information, I referenced the GFWC website. I cannot say it any better than what they have written:

"Membership in GFWC is first and foremost about volunteerism. In all 50 states and more than a dozen countries, our members work locally to create global change. GFWC clubwomen are mothers, wives, daughters, doctors, teachers, and community leaders who are dedicated to enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service.

The greatest benefit of membership is being a part of a worldwide volunteer movement of women working to better the lives of countless men, women, and children all over the world. The collective impact of GFWC clubwomen working together to assist those in need demonstrates the true power of Federation.

GFWC is distinguished from other service organizations by the breadth of our outreach. Community service programs

span all areas of the lives of our members, their families, and communities: arts, conservation, education, home life, international outreach, and public issues. Our members work each day to continue this legacy and to reshape their communities."

From membership you get the satisfaction of local pride as the club works to make their **community** a better place to live. You also get a feeling of self-pride when the club helps organizations outside of the community make the **world** a better place to live.

GFWC Illinois provides all of this plus the opportunity to grow — grow as a person and grow within the organization. There are leadership opportunities, leadership training and the opportunity to meet women from all over the state.

My invitation to you is to attend a Junior Celebration on October 26th, to be held at Easterseals in Joliet. Please join us as we have fun while learning skills, observe a Junior Board meeting, and celebrate being a member of the GFWC Illinois Junior Organization. Ask your Club President or your District Director of Junior Clubs for information they received about this fun and exciting day! We will celebrate clubs old and new (we have TWO new Junior clubs!).

Giving new members the opportunity to grow from a tadpole to a full-grown frog is an unFROGettable experience. I want you to experience this!!! Invite your friends to meetings or to your projects to see what your club is all about and let's make this fall season a ribbiting fun time for all of GFWC Illinois! ■



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS GFWC?



■ **Terri Tatroe (Junior Treasurer) and Renee Super (GFWC Illinois Executive Secretary) from GFWC Illinois Coal City Junior Woman's Club place a plant at the base of the 9/11 Memorial at the Coal City Fire Department. Those are actual pieces of steel from the Twin Towers behind them.**

GFWC ILLINOIS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Shelli Fehr
Director of Junior Clubs: Cherie Sieger
President Elect: Teresa Sanford-Shipplett
VP Northern Region: Karyn Charvat
VP Central Region: Barb Potter
VP Southern Region: Helen Crause
Secretary: Karen Meyer
Treasurer: Annette Andretich-Gross
Parliamentarian: Jackie Pierce, RP

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Editor in Chief: Shelli Fehr
Managing Editor/Graphic Designer: Jodi Hanson
Contributing Editor: Carol Jablonski

Please send stories, photos and comments to: gfwcillcommunications@gmail.com

GREAT PROJECTS FROM AROUND THE STATE

MEMBERSHIP | **Java with Juniors and More!**

**By Lauren Tetrick, President
GFWC Illinois Homer Glen
Junior Woman's Club, District 11**



GFWC Illinois Homer Glen Junior Woman's Club is only as strong as its membership, which is why we put a lot of focus on it each and every year. As our membership grows, so do our talents, our strengths and our ambitions. We look forward to using this growth and momentum to make waves in our community for years to come!



In the Fall, we hold our Java with Juniors Recruitment Event at our local Starbucks. This is an informal, drop-in style event where our existing members can make a direct one-on-one connection with those women who are interested in joining

us. We advertise primarily through Facebook, and encourage current members to invite their friends. We gained eight new members through this event in 2017 and seven new members in 2018!

After our formal new member installation ceremony at one of our general meetings, we have our New Member Social. This varies in theme, but the content remains the same. We invite boardwomen and chairwomen to mingle with our new members as we introduce them to GFWC as a larger organization. This event also encourages those with strong ties to the club to further their friendships with the new members.

To add some extra fun to our general meetings, we have icebreakers. Popular icebreakers have included our annual rock-paper-scissors competition and a paper airplane competition. The competition is fierce and fabulous!

Outside of our general meetings, we hold three large social events throughout the year. We have a Welcome Back Bonfire in the fall, where spouses are encouraged to join. We have a Winter Social, which features a gift exchange. And finally we round out every year with our banquet, where we celebrate the hard work of our clubwomen with dinner and awards.

What are you doing this year to build and retain your new members? If you have any questions or would like to brainstorm together, please reach out to Lauren Tetrick at tetrick.lauren@gmail.com. ■

THE HONOR FLIGHT EXPERIENCE

**By Teresa Sanford-Shipplett,
GFWC Illinois President Elect**



"Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid, they have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices".

— President Harry Truman

How, I thought, can I ever show my gratitude to those who sacrificed so much? Bob, my hubby, suggested we both sign up to be guardians for the Honor Flight of Quad Cities. We signed up about a year ago and were called this past September to serve.

I cannot begin to express the excitement, the sense of adventure and the pride of being a "guardian" to two veterans that day. Almost everywhere we went there was a welcome committee with school kids of all ages and adults as well, ready to shake their hands, give a hug or a card expressing thanks for their service to our country.

Our veterans visited the Air and Space Center, the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial, the Nurses Memorial, the Korean Memorial, the Women's Memorial, the WWII Memorial, changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery, the Air Force Memorial, and saw sights in between. We came, we saw and we conquered Washington, D.C., all in one long day! Maybe the best was the welcome home from family and friends at the airport. We met as strangers and parted as friends. Would I do it again? You bet! I encourage others to sign up and, more importantly, the veterans, for a once in a lifetime experience. ■



OPERATION SMILE MISSION TRIP



By Barb Potter, GFWC IL Central Region Vice President

Three GFWC members volunteered for the Operation Smile mission trip to the Pediatric Hospital in Guatemala City, Guatemala, last September. Past GFWC International President Sheila Shea, Helen Longo of Florida, and myself joined volunteers from around the world on this trip. Local adults and high school students volunteered to help translate since almost everybody spoke Spanish, including in the operating room.

The first day we worked 12 hours to screen 115 children. The patients were escorted by GFWC and other volunteers from station to station for medical exams. A full work-up was done first. Then came vital signs and a surgeon's assessment, along with meetings with an anesthesiologist, speech pathologist, dentist, and child health educator.



■ **Operation Smile volunteers, from left, Barb Potter, GFWC Illinois Central Region V.P., Helen Longo from Florida and Sheila Shea, Past GFWC International President.**

The management team analyzed each file to determine who would receive surgery and in what order. Parents were contacted the next day and given a surgery time or told their child did not qualify. A total of 81 children qualified and were scheduled for surgery, even though the mission was to complete 75

surgeries (25 each day). Six patients were backups in case someone canceled or became sick. Patients and parents who live out of town are provided with housing and meals in a shelter, with the only expense being travel to the city and home again. Those who receive surgery stay for a week.

The second day was devoted to setting up the operating, recovery, pre-op and post-op rooms, as well as unpacking and organizing supplies. Patients reported to the hospital the night before their surgery so that the nursing staff

could keep an eye on them and prevent them from eating before surgery.

We three GFWC volunteers were in charge of the pre-op center. This room was devoted to educating the parents and children. We had five operating tables so five patients reported to this area at a time. The child health educator explained everything that was going to happen to the parents while we educated the children on the equipment used during surgery such as the face mask, breathing mask, IVs, shots, stethoscope, etc. We had toy doctor kits to accomplish this. Bubbles and balloons were great distracters.

Lip surgeries ideally are done when the child is 6 months old and take between 45–90 minutes each. Palate surgeries are done when the child is at least 18 months old and take 2–3 hours. As soon as the patient woke up in the recovery room the parent was brought in. One of our jobs was to push the wheelchair with the parent holding their child from recovery to the post-op area.

The lip repair patients were able to leave that evening and return to the shelter. The palate repair patients stayed overnight because of possible complications. A total of 24 surgeries were completed the first day, 26 on the second and 25 on the third. Each day surgery started at 6 a.m. and ended at 9 p.m.

We were encouraged to watch a surgery and I went into surgery three times. They suggested that we stand next to the surgeon after the patient is under anesthesia in order to understand the procedure. Deformities can be caused by a trauma involving the expectant mother early in the pregnancy. Operation Smile is studying heredity to determine if the deformity can be inherited.

After the last surgery day, the room was packed up and cleaned. The extra supplies were boxed and prepared for shipment back to Operation Smile or donated to the hospital.

I must say that all the volunteers, medical and non-medical, were very caring and understanding of the patients. What a great experience! Want to go with me next time? ■

PCA IL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 17 & 18, 2019

DoubleTree by Hilton, Lisle, Illinois

RAFFLE BASKETS / VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

As part of our partnership with Prevent Child Abuse Illinois (PCA IL), GFWC Illinois sponsors a raffle at their annual conference with proceeds going to PCA Illinois. **Donations of raffle baskets would be greatly appreciated.** Volunteers are also needed to help sell tickets at the Conference. Contact Mary Jo Murphy at (630) 253-1070, or mjmurphy@gmail.com to donate your treasures or time for this great organization.



■ **Our Promise... A Safe Place for Every Child** Chairman Mary Jo Murphy (left) and GFWC Illinois President Shelli Fehr (center) present PCA Illinois Office Manager Tammy Queen with a check for \$11,205.12 at the 2019 GFWC Illinois Convention in Rock Island on May 3, 2019.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL KENYA TRIP



**By Sandy Cristofanelli,
GFWC Illinois International Outreach Chairman**

On July 21, 2019, I embarked on the journey of a lifetime. I applied for and was invited by Heifer International to go on a Heifer field visit to Kenya, Africa, to see the work firsthand that Heifer International accomplishes every day in the countries they support.

Our group consisted of two staff people from Heifer International's corporate office in Little Rock, Arkansas – Jen Girten, Manager of Education Program Development, and Devin Foster, Planned Giving Specialist with the Heifer Foundation. There were ten volunteers from across the United States who were a part of the trip. Our trip started with a visit to the Heifer Nairobi offices, where an overview of the week's itinerary was presented. Several



■ **One of the Heifer-donated heifers.**

values drive Heifer toward lasting change. The first, Passing on The Gift, is the one we are all most familiar with. When a heifer is given to a farmer, the firstborn calf is then gifted to another village farmer so that the wealth is shared in the village. Other cornerstones are Improved Animal Management, Gender and Family Focus, and Training and Education, to name a few.

The most important thing I learned on this trip is that Heifer International is not just giving a cow to someone for Christmas, or our club writing a \$500 check to Heifer for an animal. It is so much more! I only knew they helped distribute livestock to people in need as a way of improving their lives. Cows provide milk and meat and a hide – I could see how that could help a poor family eat or even create a business. But it's so much more than that! Heifer's goal is to actually end poverty and hunger worldwide. Not just lessen it. Not just help with it. End it. That means that they are doing a whole lot more than just distributing a goat or cow to a person in a third-world country. They are helping people think through business strategies. They are educating people on best farming practices. They are counseling people to give them the hope and motivation to believe that they can do things. They are empowering people to better their own lives. I have heard several people talk about not just giving people a hand out, but a hand up. They want to go in and provide resources that will last. They want to equip people to make it on their own long after Heifer leaves that country. Heifer's main strategy to help people do this has to do with the 'value chain'. Don't know what that

is? Neither did I. Heifer's value chain has to do with the gap between the wage that, for example, a farmer gets and the wage they could be getting if they were better trained and had more access to resources.

Seeing this firsthand, we visited the Muthira Dairy Cooperative and the Katheri Dairy Cooperative. We saw how the milk comes in from the farms in stainless steel milk jugs, on the back of a motorcycle, no less. They have a network of drivers who are dispatched to the farms to pick up milk. The drivers deliver the milk to the cooperative where it is tested for viability – milk is viable for only two hours before it is no longer usable. It is strained, then goes in to be pasteurized, then into the chiller, then processed – either to drinking milk, or to make yogurt. And the yogurt was YUMMY! Strawberry and vanilla.

Out on the farms, in Chuka and Meru, Kenya, we met both experienced farmers with more than ten heifers, and less experienced farmers with two or three animals. One thing of note is that 70% of the farmers that Heifer supports are women. All the farmers grow some of their own feed, and chop it by hand or with a fodder-making machine. Many farmers grow crops for not only family consumption, but also to sell in the village.

Kenya

Susan is a farmer who supplies 65 liters of milk a day to the cooperative. She earns a monthly income of \$624, which is well above the local living income of \$428 a month. Susan's annual income is also well above the average annual income for the area of \$5,200. She has supplemental income to send her children to school, buy supplies for school, purchase clothes and shoes for her family and buy more food for her family. Susan is also a peer farmer trainer, teaching others how to be better farmers. The cooperative teaches and trains farmers on modern dairy farming trends, milk handling, clean milk production, making fodder and fodder preservation, diseases and pest control. Many are also using artificial insemination as a means of improving breeding and to boost production.

If any of you GFWC Illinois ladies get the opportunity to take this journey with Heifer International, do it! You will be amazed. It's a real eye-opener! ■



■ **Testing recently delivered milk for viability. After two hours it is no longer usable.**



■ **Making fodder from maize, banana leaves and other grasses – this is what the heifers eat.**

CONGRATULATIONS 25- & 50-YEAR MEMBERS!

25-YEAR MEMBERS

DISTRICT 5

Darien Woman's Club

Patricia Coutre

Glendale Heights Junior Woman's Club

Jeanette T. Wells

DISTRICT 10

Wauconda Woman's Club

Martha Sjorslev

DISTRICT 12

GFWC IL Coal City Junior Woman's Club

Marsha Vaughn

GFWC IL Prairie State Woman's Club

Brenda Hatch

Gerri Eck

Amanda Price

GFWC Illinois Somonauk Junior Woman's Club

Donna Reiss

DISTRICT 16

GFWC Femmes Unir Women's Club of Bartonville

Barb Becker

DISTRICT 18

GFWC Fithian Woman's Club

Colleen Lambert

DISTRICT 19

GFWC Decatur Woman's Club

Sandra Hunter

Mary Jane Babb

Polly Bilyeu

Brenda Peter

DISTRICT 23

Newton Junior Woman's Club

Shirley Hoffeditz

50-YEAR MEMBERS

DISTRICT 10

GFWC IL Libertyville Woman's Club

Delores Banderowicz

LaVerne McKanna

Wauconda Woman's Club

Brenda Conley

Bernadette Stendebach

Jackie Victor

DISTRICT 13

GFWC IL Thomson Woman's Club

Donna Diephuis

DISTRICT 16

GFWC East Peoria Woman's Club

Darlene Dicken

Doris Doughty

GFWC Femmes Unir Women's Club of Bartonville

Betty Lyons

DISTRICT 17

GFWC Pontiac Junior Woman's Club

Carol Rich

DISTRICT 19

GFWC Cerro Gordo Woman's Club

Suzanne Shambaugh

GFWC Woman's Club of Champaign-Urbana

Doris Lain

Rosalie Taylor

GFWC Decatur Woman's Club

Darla D. Weltmer

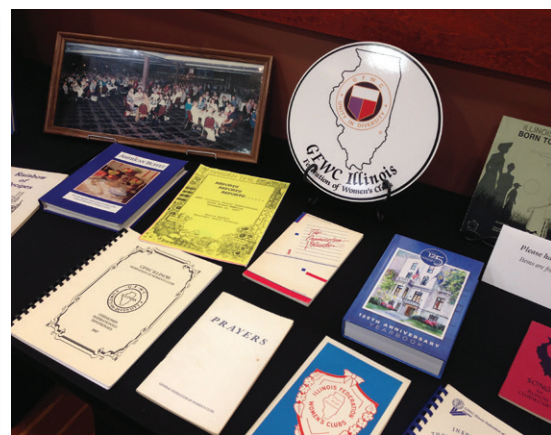
Alice Wiedrich

DISTRICT 22

GFWC Fairview Heights Woman's Club

Ruth Ogles

Please Note: These names were reported to GFWC Illinois by the April 1, 2019, deadline for inclusion in the annual "Recognition" booklet at the 2019 Convention.



Photos from the GFWC IL 125th Anniversary Gala at the 2019 Convention in Rock Island, Illinois

APHRODITE OF GEDNEY ISLAND

by **Lauren Tetrick**
Homer Glen Junior Woman's Club

Congratulations to 2018 GFWC Short Story Contest winner, Lauren Tetrick, president of the Homer Glen Junior Woman's Club! Lauren transports us to a remote island in the Pacific Northwest in this tale of love and loss – as Lena, Jax and the entire world face a very uncertain future. Enjoy!



After

The constellations are out in full force again tonight; it's been two weeks of clear skies and calm seas. There are more stars now, in the after; and the night sky is overwhelming. Cassiopeia twinkles, and Lena imagines the goddess laughing. From the deck of the Elusive Destiny, Lena pretends for a moment, that the world hasn't changed. Perhaps if she wills it strongly enough, humanity could return.

The water is absolutely still for a moment, which puts Lena on edge—her new life includes a reassuring rocking provided by the water. The stillness reminds her of when everything started going to Hades.

Before

Lena poked her head out of the second story window. She wanted to see for herself what kind of mood Gedney Island and the Pacific Northwest were in today. The bright day matched her own mood perfectly. The contents of her fridge, however, did not. Lena was long overdue for a trip to the mainland for a grocery and supply run. After a quick breakfast of orange juice and a fried egg, Lena was on her way, outfitted in work jeans and rubber boots. She wandered towards the docks, waved to a few of the local eagles perched nearby, and breathed in the energy of the island. The population in the summer time was ten times that of the winter, and you could feel the liveliness on the breeze.

Jax met her on the back of his boat, the Elusive Destiny, with a quick kiss. They'd developed an odd semi-relationship over the years. A few nights a month they'd see each other, get their fill of human contact, and then Jax would disappear to his Pacific route along Puget Sound and on up the coast. Lena had accompanied him a few times, but they both had solitary personalities and didn't like too much time together.

She took a cooler full of Jax's crabs and started her delivery route. Along the way, she readied and tidied a few of the island's rental cabins along the way, as the weekenders would be arriving tomorrow. On a small island, one survived off of a series of small jobs, and Lena enjoyed the quiet monotony of hers. It was only 2PM and Lena had run out of tasks and so opted for a chapter from her latest post-apocalyptic novel and an afternoon nap.

When she woke the light was draining from the sky, in an ugly way—an odd scene for this picturesque little island. Lena showered, popped on some makeup and fussed with her hair for a bit, before wandering down towards the nearly empty docks. She boarded the Elusive Destiny with an attention-seeking whistle and was rewarded with the vision of Jax for the second time that day: hair unkempt, unshaven

and smiling—exactly how she liked to picture him. They sat on the dock in two old camping chairs and dined on fruit, fresh steamed crab loaded with butter and too much wine.

Jax recounted his last couple of weeks. He described people in a way that left Lena wanting to meet each one, while in reality she didn't care much to be around others at all. Jax was the first person she'd encountered that she always enjoyed being around. She contemplated what a life full of Jax would be like, as she pointed out constellations and recounted mythology for him. On this night, she told him the myths of the arrows of Apollon and Artemis, the bringers of plague and sickness.

Their evening ended as it always did, lying below together in his cabin, sticky and tangled in salted sheets, the sweet sway of Jax's ship rocking them to sleep.

Lena awoke to an empty bed and an unsettling stillness on the water. There was something annoying and repetitive blaring from Jax's onboard radio on the deck above. Jax returned with a weak cup of coffee and a warning on his face.

"They evacuatin' the island and advisin' boats to anchor. A lot of strong earthquakes out near Asia and Australia. Could mean a series of tsunamis headed towards the coast."

"Better safe than sorry sort of thing, though, right? Usually they level off before they hit here." Lena hated the idea of being among the general population on the mainland almost more than the thought of her little home underwater.

"Here's hopin', but it sounds like it could get serious—lots of eight or nine mag earthquakes. Cities out west don't seem to be there anymore."

Jax had Lena's attention. "What do you mean? Where will you go?"

"I need to radio around and figure that out. Down with his ship and all that. I'll meet you here next week to check in?" She could tell in his tone that he was swallowing some kind of emotion with his question but couldn't tell if it was worry for Lena or fear for his boat. She settled on both and kissed him goodbye.

Lena headed home. A neighbor wandered by with the news again: the island ferry would be departing within the hour to take residents to the mainland, save for a few who had a serious flu that some of the weekenders had brought over. Lena plugged in her little emergency radio: Jakarta, Manila, Osaka, and Tokyo, in short, all ceased to exist. Smaller rumblings had also begun in Los Angeles and San Francisco and along less active fault lines in Tennessee and New York. Even the experts didn't elaborate much on what this series of violent tectonic activity could mean. Lena suspected these experts didn't want to send the remaining world into a chaos from which it couldn't recover.



It was hard for Lena to wrap her head around the idea of a hugely populated city like Tokyo wiped out. She glanced down at the post apocalyptic novel on her bedside table and goosebumps ran up the back of her arms.

Lena packed a bag full of practical items: snacks, clean clothes, extra underwear, a toothbrush and a few other standard toiletries. She left the house, but a feeling in her stomach made her come back in to grab an old family photo album, a few favorite novels, her journal and a framed picture of herself and Jax on the back of his boat. She was afraid that by grabbing the nostalgic items, she was setting the world up to end.

She headed over to the docks and sat in her car for a few minutes while the islanders boarded the ferry. She looked at herself in the rearview, sighed and put her car in reverse to head back towards her house. She'd rather be on the island, if something bad was going to happen. Down with my ship and all that, she thought.

At home she unpacked and plugged in the emergency radio, learning that the tsunamis were scheduled to hit the West Coast in about four more hours. There was also a serious flu spreading among some major cities, and those that were ill were advised to stay in their homes, to hydrate as much as possible and to limit their interactions with others. Lena turned off the radio and climbed into bed. It was quiet outside—the familiar sounds of sea birds were gone, and the rhythmic sounds of the ocean were absent. She hid under her covers like she was a girl again, hiding from two angry parents who liked to scream and fight. She poked a little tunnel through the covers near her mouth, to let some cool air in. The coping mechanism she'd learned in her youth was at work now, and Lena fell asleep.

When she finally awoke, the sounds of the birds chattering and some angry waves seemed promising. Her clock said 4PM—long after a tsunami should have hit. She wandered outside, and while there was clear evidence that the tide had risen significantly, there wasn't much damage. The island birds were in a feeding frenzy with all of the sea life that had washed ashore.

Lena immediately turned on the radio. The tsunamis had hit and were devastating, from South America up through San Francisco. And there'd been other global tsunamis, too. The death counts that were coming in from the earthquakes, in combination with the devastating waves, were hard for Lena to process. Guesstimates ranged from several hundred million to nearly a billion people, as so many large coastal cities had been affected. On the liberal end that was about one in seven people. Lena wasn't ready to think about what this meant, not yet. She was in shock and denial.

And the disasters weren't stopping. The flu was spreading quicker than the government agencies could keep up with, especially with so many people in relocation centers and emergency camps. Even more worrisome, this strain of flu was resulting in death, and not in just the young or elderly. Everyone seemed to be at risk.

She couldn't listen to the radio by herself anymore so she ran down towards the docks. She was relieved to find Jax's boat still anchored there. She found him below deck. He was feverish, disoriented and covered in vomit. Cleaning him up wasn't easy or pleasant, but she did her best and encouraged him to drink as much water as he could. There

was no way she could lift him to get him back to her house. In a moment of clarity, Jax ordered her off the boat. After a brief negotiation, Lena left him in bed with two liters of water and a promise to return in the morning.

She ran with big sobbing gasps, back to her house where she climbed into a cold shower, shivering and alone. Lena had always treasured her solitude in a world full of so much noise and so many people, but she never wanted to actually be all alone in it all. She couldn't bare the thought of a world without Jax's smiles and his descriptions of all the lovely people in it. Cold and wet, Lena climbed under a mountain of covers, and tried to ignore the image of the frail and fading Jax she saw when she closed her eyes.



After

It has been months since the last radio report, which came with the devastating news of the flu murdering everyone it touched. The rumblings in the Earth that Lena had felt on and off for weeks in the beginning have subsided.

Instead of imagining what the world outside of Gedney Island looks like, Lena is focusing all of her energy on the eagle constellation of Aquila, imagining the powerful bird transforming back into Aphrodite. She imagines the goddess transforming each of the stars into human forms and repopulating the Earth. Lena's meditation is interrupted by a pod of whales surfacing out at sea, but Lena can't quite make them out, even under the brilliant stars.

In addition to the magnificent night sky, unobstructed by man's light pollution, there are other noticeable changes since the natural disasters took back the planet from humankind. Lena is still in awe at how quickly the Earth recovered without the interference of people. Gedney Island looks even more beautiful with no one here to groom it, and the wildlife numbers have soared.

One of the changes is subtler: a tiny, rhythmic flutter in Lena's belly, which seems to wave in time with the sea, a gift from Aphrodite. Lena rubs at the small movement and marvels at the little bit of peace this baby's new life provides. There's a creak on the deck behind her, and Lena glances back to see Jax, hair unruly and smiling. His stubble has since grown into a beard, and she pulls on it for a kiss. They are both fairly certain that somewhere in the world there are others left. But, for now, it's just the two of them, much as it's always been.



GREAT LAKES REGION CONFERENCE 2019

**By Jodi Hanson,
GFWC Illinois Clubwoman Managing Editor**

The Great Lakes Region Conference was held this year on September 5-8 at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Grand Rapids, Michigan. GFWC Great Lakes Region President Paula Schlice from Wisconsin presided, with GFWC International President Mary Ellen Brock, GFWC President Elect Marian St. Clair and GFWC First Vice President Deb Strahanoski in attendance.

Highlights of the weekend included a tour of the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, a skit contest won by none other than Illinois' very own Teresa Sanford-Shipplett and Amy Vicioso doing "The Great White North," a cheer competition, a Michigan-style welcome party, many terrific presentations given by Illinois clubwomen as well as clubwomen from other states, Donna Cross was introduced as Illinois' Jennie Award nominee, there was lots of good food and great times with our Great Lakes Region friends!

Thank you to Communications & PR Chairman Carol Jablonski for the photos used in this story. Professional photography from the Conference provided by Penny's from Heaven at www.pennysfromheavenLLC.com. Go to View Proofs tab, and click on Great Lakes GFWC.

See you at next year's Great Lakes Region Conference in Cleveland, Ohio!





2019 GFWC CONVENTION | AWARD WINNERS

GFWC Illinois won the following awards in Category 1:

- **Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention**, Karel Volpert, Chairman
- **Prevent Child Abuse America** – 2019 Partner in Prevention State Award, Jackie Haddad, Fundraising Chairman
- **Canine Companions for Independence** – Top Dog Supporter
- **Shot@Life** – Bronze Level for 2018
- **Public Issues**, Committee: Gerri Eck, Chairman, Cathy Marsoun & Lucia Rossi Nichols
- **Communications & Public Relations**, Committee: Carol Jablonski, Chairman, Jodi Hanson & Sherena Smith
- **Newsletter Contest**, Jodi Hanson, Managing Editor/Graphic Designer
- **Women's History and Resource Center**, Committee: Wanda Burklow, Chairman, Phyllis Skubic, 125th Anniversary Chairman & Jeanette T. Wells
- **St. Jude Children's Research Hospital**, Allison Hale, Advocates for Children/CRF Chairman

GFWC Illinois clubs won the following awards:

- Signature Program Club Creativity Award Honorable Mention – **GFWC IL Morgan Park Junior Woman's Club, District 3**
- Canine Companions for Independence Leader of the Pack Supporter – **Naperville Woman's Club, District 5**
- Home Life Club Creativity Award – **Centralia Junior Woman's Club, District 23**
- Club Website Contest Winner – **Palos Heights Woman's Club, District 3**
- Outstanding Achievement in Juniorette Participation to:
GFWC IL Lemont Juniorette Club
GFWC IL Naperville Juniorettes
GFWC Illinois Plainfield Juniorette Club
GFWC Illinois Tuscola Juniorette Club

GFWC Illinois members won:

- Photography Contest – A Year in Pictures to **Janet Anderson, Mt. Carmel Woman's Club, District 23**
- Millie Crom Award for Excellence in Junior State Leadership, Silver Level, to **GFWC Illinois Director of Junior Clubs Cherie Sieger**





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HAPPY BIRTHDAY GFWC IL!

BY PHYLLIS SKUBIC, GFWC ILLINOIS PRESIDENT 2016–2018
 AND GFWC ILLINOIS 125th ANNIVERSARY CHAIRMAN



CELEBRATE YOUR CLUB'S MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN OCTOBER

We hope your club has plans to hold your own Birthday Party in October. Use this excuse to party and celebrate:

- Your history of volunteer community service
- Your members
- Your accomplishments
- The start of a new club year

Invite your community's elected officials, members and leaders from other community service organizations, the community partners you work with each club year. PARTY LIKE IT'S 1894!!!

Blow up social media with photos of your party!!!



POSSIBLE BUS TRIP TO SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST — MARCH 20-21, 2020

Would you be interested in joining your GFWC Illinois Sisters on a bus trip to Shawnee National Forest? Jeanette T. Wells and I are working on organizing a trip next spring, but only if enough members are interested. We would have designated pick-up spots in both Northern and Central Regions. A charter bus usually holds 55–60 people so that's our goal. If you are interested (and didn't already sign up at Summer Seminar) please contact either Jeanette or me before the end of September.

Thank you to each and every member and club who donated \$1.25 for Shawnee National Forest. We collected over \$1,900 — more than enough for a commemorative plaque, recycled plastic benches and trees! ■

| 125YEARS | 125YEARS | 125YEARS | 125 YEARS | 125 YEARS | 125 YEARS | 125 YEARS |