



A Summer Check-up for Our GFWC Clubs

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We know that summer is hot and, in the words of George Gershwin's *Summertime*, "the living is easy." Many pro-active individuals don't follow that philosophy and find it the perfect time to do routine check-ups, make adjustments, and perform needed maintenance with their cars, homes, and even their own personal health. Why not join those forward-thinking individuals and make this the time to conduct check-ups, perform needed maintenance, and make future plans for your own GFWC Club?

HOW? Here are some ideas from state membership chairmen and individual clubs on examples of what GFWC clubs are doing for their summer check-ups:

✓ **Check how your club stays connected.**

GFWC Foothills Woman's Club of South Carolina, like many other clubs, does not meet during the summer. To keep in touch they hold mini-meetings and adjourn early to go out to dinner together. In support of the GFWC-SC President's Special Project—Girlfriends Who Care: Take Care of Yourself, the club exercises together after work as a way to get in shape.

Many clubs find that socials are a way to keep members connected. Try a game night, pot luck night, hiking, out to breakfast, tour of historic venue, pool party, ice cream social, or coffee shop gathering.

✓ **Check how you thank and involve family members.**

GFWC Woman's Club of Duquesne of Pennsylvania held a Family Night to thank family members for supporting club members. A catered dinner, entertainment, and gifts for children were part of the evening. Clubs also hosted summer family picnics and ice cream socials. This is a GREAT way to not only keep members connected but to introduce family members to the reasons their loved one has such a passion for GFWC.

✓ **Check how your club retention members.**

Involve: **Jan Moore of GFWC Kansas** says "I would strongly suggest that keeping your membership active in all aspects of your club's work - setting up programs, working with the community on projects, reporting, etc., is a fine way to put women to work. Don't let any member sit on the sidelines and not do anything - even if they are infirm or not able to get around (financially or otherwise), they still have mental skills that can make them invaluable assets to a club. We have lost "new members" in the past because no one gave them anything to do. Women who join service clubs want work!"

Appreciate: "We need to work at keeping current members as much as we need to work to get new members," says **GFWC Minnesota Membership Chairman Kay James**. Current members are valuable. They know GFWC and the great work clubs do. Thank them for being a valuable part of your club, and give them a special invitation to continue their membership.

Recognize: GFWC Iowa state officers visit clubs to recognize 50-year members in Iowa. “We encourage club presidents to honor a member in their club with 50 years of membership and invite a state officer to present the pin. We celebrate these members, and it’s a happy reason to visit clubs and make a connection.” State officers **Carma Bisinger, Karen Martinek, and Kay Basham** individually visited six clubs in one week presenting pins, thanking members for their service, and encouraging clubs---and that’s just one week! At State Convention, 25 and 50 year members were recognized. Clubs were recognized with 75, 100, 105 and 110 year anniversaries. Clubs earning “Seasons of Recruitment” awards and clubs with new members also were recognized.

✓ **Check how to conduct a Federation Refresher.**

During one of your social gatherings you can conduct Federation Refreshers by playing games and performing skits. Members that are knowledgeable will be more active and will feel a sense of ownership.

✓ **Check for Leadership Training.**

Summer is a good time to check that club officers know the duties and responsibilities of their offices. Many district or state Federations offer summer leadership training. A club can also hold its own training where each officer runs through an officer checklist offered through GFWC materials. Officers who are well-prepared and who know GFWC’s history can enthusiastically lead their club for the coming club year.

✓ **Check for Recruiting New Members.**

Recruitment for **GFWC Junior Woman’s Club of Columbia, South Carolina**, began with a summer social at a local clubhouse. After a welcome to the club, guests were given a “passport” for four areas of information: membership, community service projects, Palmetto Place (club special project which is a shelter for children), and fundraising. The stations were staffed by the club project chairmen. After the informational session, the prospective new member put their “passport” in a raffle and each guest received a prize. All guests received a pamphlet about the club, membership application, orientation dates, and gift of a beverage insulator emblazoned with the club name and the club president’s symbol, the peacock.

Don’t prejudge their answers: “The thing that worked best for us was to make a list of people we could ask, went through the phone book, listed people we knew,” writes **GFWC Nebraska Membership Chairman Nancy Galaway**, as she explains how their **GFWC Fairmont Woman’s Club** reached a membership of 24 members in a small town of 600 residents. “I suggested inviting our city clerk to join, but the girls said she works,” Nancy continued. “I called anyway, and she said she would love to join but had to first get the okay from city council to attend. They gave her permission, and she’s now a member. So, don’t judge first who might or could join, just ask them!”

Invite newly-retired individuals: **GFWC Iowa** encourages clubs to watch the local newspapers in their small towns for the listing of retiring teachers and to send these teachers a written invitation to a club meeting.

One state initiated “**a decade younger campaign**” and asked members to invite guests ten years younger than their own age. The next year these new members invited guests ten years younger. The goal is to rejuvenate clubs who need younger members.

✓ **Check Out Celebrating Your Successes.**

Let your state membership chairman and GFWC Headquarters know of your membership successes. Use the new “A Time For GFWC Membership” form to report new members. Provide photographs and narratives of events for inclusion in *GFWC Clubwoman Magazine* and the GFWC e-newsletter *News & Notes*. Celebrate and share your club’s successes!