



EDUCATE YOURSELF - INFORM OTHERS – CREATE CHANGE

“Make a difference in the lives of individuals, families and your community.”

GFWC Home Life Community Service Programs touch the lives of people in a very profound and personal way. Our challenge is to identify the needs of others and ourselves to insure a better quality of life. GFWC members enjoy a rich history of solving problems affecting our homes and our communities; our goal is to continue our efforts to affect the well being of individuals, families and our communities through volunteer work. We are concerned about the wellness of women, children and the elderly. We are concerned with hunger and homelessness. We monitor our personal finances and strive to protect ourselves from identity theft. We are also concerned about our own personal health and well being and endeavor to improve our personal lives. We have addressed the challenges through partnership with established organizations at the national and international level and we “*got creative*”, designing a response to an identified need in our own unique way. This creative and local level of response is the **Collaboration** segment of the Home Life Service Program. Your continued imagination in effecting the necessary change to make a difference in the well being of ourselves and others is an exciting challenge.

In the past, GFWC members have been very creative in funding the implementation of their programs. We have learned that programs need not be expensive to be effective. When the controversial subject of vaccinating young girls with the drug, Gardasil, to protect them against HPV (human papilloma virus) arose, the Cedar Key Woman’s Club wanted to be sure that correct information on this subject was available to their community. Cedar Key members petitioned for a small grant to fund their needs. After receiving a \$50.00 grant, they purchased a video and pamphlets on the subject from the Center for Disease Control, placing these materials in the Cedar Key Community Library. This was very successful service program with very little money. Although there will be two \$50.00 Awards to a club in the nation for both the Collaboration and the Partnership Programs. (See the Contests section of the GFWC Club Manual for details) there are no grants currently offered by GFWC at this time. I suggest you continue to monitor the availability of grants by subscribing to *News and Notes* at www.GFWC.org. I look forward to reading your reports to learn of the many creative ways you funded your Home Life Service Programs.

Many clubs address the needs of their community by donating goods and services directly from their club monies and their personal pocketbooks. We have walked to earn money through sponsorship from friends and the community at large, cleaned out our closets and pantries and made heavenly hats. Some items are simply a throw-away item, yet with diligence, we collect hundreds of pounds of tab tops from soda cans to benefit the Ronald McDonald House. After learning that there are over 3,000 homeless school age children in their community, GFWC Greater Ocala Woman's Club donated money to help fill backpacks with canned goods for these homeless children to take home on the weekends when school breakfasts and lunches were not available to them. Each year the backpack program has grown and now includes grocery store debit cards for these children and their families to use in the summer when school is out and school lunch programs are not available.

Helping children has always touched our hearts in a special way, and I hope you will continue to support ROCK Camp, Adopt a Family and Special Olympics, etc.. And while we adore the little children, let us continue to address the needs of adults. Adult Day Care is a special need of many communities particularly in light of the current economic situation. More and more, family caregivers are not available because they must seek employment outside the home. Meals on Wheels is another worthwhile organization assisting the elderly and the infirm. Will you and your club discover a clever way to continue your support for these worthwhile programs? How will you go about accomplishing your goal?

Information on human illness and treatment changes, it seems, on a daily basis. Alzheimer's, breast and ovarian cancers, strokes and heart disease have touched all our lives. We have struggled with it personally, within our families or with a close friend. How will you and your club continue to educate yourselves to stay informed on the latest available resources? What will you do to aide your community in addressing these problems? How will you effect change? Will you partner with a local hospital to present a stroke outreach program? Will you wear red outfits in February for Heart Health? Will your club sponsor a woman for a mammogram?

Personal finances continue to challenge us; even the most financially prepared must be vigilant in caring for our money resources. While many of us are already on social security, there are many who are still building their nest eggs and need to learn of the resources available to prepare for a secure retirement. We must protect our money and our financial security. Learn about "Phishing" and ways to prevent identity theft. And while we work hard to raise money to help worthwhile organizations, are we giving wisely?

Before we can take care of others, we must first look after ourselves. Be sure to attend the Home Life Fall Board Workshop at 1:30p.m. on Saturday, September 18th, because we are going to get **PHYSICAL** ! Yes, Joyce Johnston, Home Life Partnership Co-Chairman, and I are joining forces to insure that you, the GFWC Florida Federation, will be **Fit & Fabulous**. Come learn about our new program and competition. See you there!