

Linda's Notes

GFWC of Tennessee

12/31/2016

[Edition 1, Volume 5]

State Updates

As 2016 comes to a close, we have much to be grateful for and much to look forward to. While the past year has been filled with heartache, loss, and challenges, it was also filled with joy, beginnings, and accomplishments. I have seen so many people on Facebook exclaim: Enough of 2016, I'll be glad when it is over!



Yet it is the events of 2016 that shape who we are. 2016 was also a year when our lives and hearts expanded – I know my life was turned upside down when my first grandchild came into my world!

I am so incredibly grateful for our GFWC of Tennessee family that has marked off so many accomplishments this past

year. We have held the Spring Convention, a Summer Board, a LEADS training, and a Fall Conference. We have put ourselves on the country's radar with our "Where in the World is GFWC of Tennessee?" and our Famous Book Tree! But, the one thing I am most proud of, as we end the year, is how much our state has reached out to help pick up the pieces of those less fortunate, including our own members. The Crisis Outreach Team has done an incredible job under Barbara Powell's leadership. Since she took over this new endeavor, she has had four major events that she has been required to spearhead:

- Flooding in West Virginia and Louisiana and wildfires in California. A collection was taken up at the Fall Conference and a check for \$325 was



"We can't all be heroes because somebody has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by."

Will Rogers

You survived what you thought would break you. Now straighten that crown and move forward like the

Attitude to Inspiration



Queen you are!

sent to GFWC Disaster Relief-Library Replenishment Fund in their honor. Barbara sent each state president a letter informing them of the donation with a beautiful poem written by Susan Burkey.

- Hurricane damage in North and South Carolina. A collection was taken up at SER from the GFWC of Tennessee members attending and \$120 was sent to GFWC Disaster Relief-Library Replenishment Fund in their honor. Barbara sent each state president a letter informing them of the donation and Susan Burkey's poem.
- The Woodmore Elementary bus crash in Chattanooga. Through efforts from Barbara's group and others, \$390 in gift cards were donated to Children's Hospital personnel and first responders and \$573 in funds were donated to the Woodmore Fund. GFWC of Valamont President Susan Martin

coordinated the efforts including delivery of 32 fleece blankets that were made with the ladies at the Silverdale Correctional Facility. Food for the school feeder program was also donated.

- And, finally, the devastating fires in Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg. As of this writing, GFWC of Tennessee clubs have contributed \$4,469 in gift cards, to the Red Cross, to First Tennessee for matching funds, and to the Dolly Parton Foundation. In addition, Karen Holmes and Rachel Collins from the GFWC Women's Club of Hendersonville delivered much needed supplies to the First Responders during the event.

This really should not be a surprise that GFWC of Tennessee clubwomen responded like this. I have been doing research on our state's past presidents and one of the things I have been interested in is their themes. Here are just a few:

- Mable Westbrook '82-84: "Community Improvement through Volunteer Efforts."
- Angeline Yarbro: '84-86 "TFWC Volunteers: Extending Our Reach."
- Margaret England '86-88: "Tennessee Volunteers Caring and Sharing."
- Dorothy Thomas '88-90 "Tennessee Volunteers Accept the Challenge."
- And Lana Robinson 2002-04: "Hearts in Unity – Beating for others."

With these themes running through our history, it explains our Volunteer Spirit!!! I want to personally thank each of you for your time and generosity this past year – I am hoping that 2017 will give Barbara and her committee a rest!

Finally, in closing, I want to wish each and every one of you a prosperous new year filled with much happiness and best wishes!

~ Linda ~



The Collect

“May we put away all pretense ...”

Sometimes, when we say things over and over like The Collect or The Pledge of Allegiance, we don't really stop to think about the words we are saying and what they really mean. May we put away all pretense? I wasn't sure what “pretense” meant, so I looked it up. I thought it had a simple little meaning. The Online Free Dictionary says it is: The act of pretending; a false display or affection; a claim, especially a false one to a right, title or distinction; make-believe or feigning; a false claim or allegation; a less common word for pretension. Wow, that is a lot deeper than simply pretending! Then I looked up some quotes on pretense. Marty Rubin wrote, *“First one tells a lie; then one believes it; then one becomes it.”* Patrick Rothfuss wrote, *“We understand how dangerous a mask can be. We all become what we pretend to be.”*

And Alan Moore wrote, *“You wear a mask for so long, you forget who you were beneath it.”*



I have to admit, this part of The Collect has a lot more meaning to it than I ever imagined!

But, there is a fine line between pretense and confidence. We tell new leaders to put on a mask and “pretend” you are speaking to one person in the back so that you don't get nervous. I know that I read somewhere that before you go into a meeting, you should stand like Super Woman -- hands on your hips, head held high, steel glint in your eye -- for two minutes and you will perform like Super Woman. (Now you know what I am doing out in the

hall two minutes before I start a business meeting!) I don't know about you, but I am totally baffled. Am I supposed to pretend I'm Super Woman and speak with confidence or not pretend and be the nervous speaker I truly am?



I think we all have put on masks for different circumstances. I know that I certainly never showed my children my own doubts and concern as I told them everything would be alright, whether we were at the emergency room or in a severe thunderstorm. I know that during this past election cycle I rarely took off my mask to reveal my inner thoughts on the candidates – only close friends really know how I felt about all that. And I also think we HAVE to wear masks sometimes just for

civility. Jody Gehrman wrote, *"I despise the rituals of fake friendship. I wish we could just claw each other's eyes out and call it a day; instead we put on huge radiant smiles and spout compliments until our teeth hurt from the saccharine sweetness of it all."*

My goodness, that would make for an interesting club meeting and we would certainly NEVER get anything good accomplished!



I think the trick is being able to make sure we recognize the mask for what it is, be able to take it off, like what is underneath, and be ready to work together. What I do hope for GFWC of Tennessee is that when we do take off our masks we find that underneath is the genuine love for our association, our mission, and the work that we are doing to help our communities. I look at what our Crisis Outreach Team has done and all I see from around the state is the caring and sharing.

When I was working at the Memorial Auditorium for a

graduation, I asked the man who was in charge of the stage crew how long he had been there. He was such a kind, unassuming guy, the kind of fellow you would like to just talk to. He told me almost 50 years.

I asked who his favorite and least favorite performers had been and why. He laughed and said his least favorite were the new talent who had their "people" come in with demands of what would be in the dressing rooms and shielded the performer from all "outside" people. His favorites had been Red Skelton and Pearl Bailey

(Younger members will have to look them up on YouTube).



He said Red Skelton had pulled him into a skit once without his prior knowledge and then after the show apologized and asked his forgiveness.

He said when Pearl Bailey appeared, several city officials and important

people wanted to take her out to dinner but she declined all invitations, preferring instead to eat and play cards with the stage hands.



Here is an example of two people who were able to wear the mask of performers yet were comfortable with whom they were and were able to take off the mask.

So, in conclusion, you may still see me in the Wonder Woman stance, because I need to put on that mask of confidence, but I will work equally as hard to let you see who the real me is behind the mask and put away all pretense! Will you do the same?



Next month: "... and meet each other face to face ..."

REPORTING DATES TO KEEP IN MIND!!!!

(It's that time again!!!)

Please use all forms found in the new GFWC of Tennessee handbook at gfwctennessee.com. The password (please share **only** with other club members) is volunteer1416.

January 15, 2017 Dues must be paid. Forms may be found on page 44-45 of the GFWC of TN handbook

February 1, 2017 Forms including Award Entries (a/k/a narratives), Statistical Form (Pages 40-42) and Club Rating Guide (Page 47-49) must be postmarked to Janice Hixson, 108 Suffolk Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922-3511. Reporting Guidelines begin on Page 39 of the handbook. ***Please note, even if your club does not turn in award entries to compete, please, please fill out the Club Rating Guide and send in. This is to help me, as your president, fill out my forms and lets Tennessee get full credit for all the hard work we do.***

February 1, 2017 GFWC LEADS. If you are interested in representing GFWC of Tennessee at the next GFWC convention in California, the information packet is in the GFWC of Tennessee handbook on Pages 55-59 and due to Linda Hershey.

February 15, 2017 The Fundraising Form found on page 61 of the handbook is due to Sandy Lindeman.

ESO Report Forms can be found on Page 64 of the handbook and due to Robin Hodge.

Linda's Notes – December 2016

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