



President Raeanne Renner

We strive for...

Achieve-MINT

Encourage-MINT

Enjoy-MINT

Involve-MINT

What's New?

General Meeting:
April 8, 2026

GFWC raffle tickets are available for \$20 each for a 6-night stay at Boyne, Michigan, October 9-15, for up to 10 guests. Raeanne and Mina have the tickets. (Drawing is in April.)



For news and details of statewide GFWC activities - gfwcmi.com

Our Mission

*The General Federation of Women's Clubs Michigan is dedicated to enhancing the communities, the lives of its members and others through volunteer service.
"Living the Volunteer Spirit"*



GFWC-Gun Lake Area, Inc Honored as District Club of the Year



Congratulations! GFWC – Gun Lake Area, Inc. has proudly secured ****1st place**** in the GFWC MI Southwestern District for Category 3 for the reporting year 2025.

Margaret Sykes, the SWD President, shared her congratulations in the announcement, stating, "Gun Lake club women are truly talented and generous with their time and resources. I am immensely proud of your dedication, community service, and leadership."

Criteria for the District Club of the Year Honor:

- Demonstration of exceptional community service and outreach initiatives
- Engagement of members through innovative programs and activities
- Leadership in promoting GFWC's mission and values
- Achievement of significant membership growth and retention
- Effective collaboration with other organizations and clubs
- Maintenance of strong communication and transparency within the club

Congratulations! - Sandy Marcukaitis - GFWC-GLA 2025 Woman of Achievement



Congratulations to our 2025 Woman of Achievement, Sandy Marcukaitis. A club member since 2004, Sandy is a “behind the scenes” volunteer and isn’t fond of the spotlight, but her volunteerism is what made her a great choice as our honoree. If you have wondered what qualifies a person as a Woman of Achievement, Sandy’s life would be your answer. We are very proud to honor her this way.

Sandy was born and raised in Chicago, where she met her husband, Tony, and raised three children. The family relocated to the Gun Lake Area in 1988. Sandy was widowed in 2003 and continues to live in the house on the Centennial Farm her grandparents owned. Sandy has 6 grandchildren, four of whom are still in college. She spends her spare time enjoying farm life, nature, traveling, and visiting family and friends. She considers her Hereford cows a hobby, along with card-making, and she volunteers to make a difference wherever she can. Sandy attended Western Michigan University for her bachelor’s degree in nursing and worked in hospitals in Chicago and Michigan. Although retired, she keeps her license current. Her community involvement is impressive and includes serving on the ad hoc committee to create the Yankee Springs Township Park, where she has served as its chair for 19 years. Sandy has been an election inspector for 20 years and continues to work part-time for the Township Zoning Department.

An active club member, Sandy has been the editor of the club newsletter for 9 years, which is her way of “Keeping us Connected.” She has received 1st and 2nd place certificates from GF MI for her efforts. She participates in a variety of club fundraisers and events, like Adopt-a-Highway, Thanksgiving Baskets, Scholarship – golf outing, and co-chairs the Excursions Committee, taking members to areas around Michigan for a social (and sometimes educational) experience. She chairs the club's “First Responder’s Day” committee and has attended GF SWD meetings, GF MI State Conventions, and Bay Cliff Health Camp. Outside of her club, she has been a volunteer at Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids since 2017, is a life member of the VFW Auxiliary Post 7581, supports Barry County’s “Women’s Giving Circle,” and has nominated two recipients for the Barry County Volunteer Awards Program. Her club recognized her in 2020 with the Ms. Federation Honors.



April

Dates to Remember

- 4/2 Sewing Group 1-5 PM
 - 4/5 Easter
 - 4/6 Pinwheel Planting Project PM
 - 4/7 Hand2Hand 6 PM
 - 4/8 General Meeting 9:30-11:30 AM
 - 4/8 Convention Room Reservation due
 - 4/15 Cards & Games 1:00 PM
 - 4/16 Sewing Group 1-5 PM
 - 4/17 Outing to Jonkers Gardens
 - 4/18 Barry Roubiax Races
 - 4/20 Book Club 9:30 AM
 - 4/22 Walk for the Birds (YSP) 10:30 AM
 - 4/23-4/25 GFWCMI State Convention
 - 4/24 Flower Bed Clean-up 9:30 AM
 - 4/24 Golf Outing Planning Meeting 4 PM
 - 4/25 Road Clean Up Day 10 AM
 - 4/29 Board Meeting 9:00 AM
 - 4/30 Sewing Group 1-5 PM
 - 5/1 Tag the Tree Project (YSP) 10 AM
 - 5/13 General Meeting 9:30 AM
 - 5/19 Packing Boxes for Military *(note: new date change)*
 - 6/23 Pontoon Progressive
- Keep Collecting..
 - Aluminum Can Tabs
 - Old Eyeglasses
 - Used Batteries
 - Empty Pill Bottles
 - Ink Cartridges
 - Plastic Caps

Happy Birthday To You!

4-1 Rosy Chatterton
4-3 Cindy Healy
4-4 Marte Roach
4-8 Amy Conley
4-8 Joyce Irvine
4-10 Jerrie Fiala
4-11 Paula Geyer
4-13 Jose' Vogel
4-16 Linda Zoromsky
4-27 Chris Thomposon



Arts & Culture



Chair: Patricia Velie

Please share any information you hear through family or printed publications with me, and I will share it through the newsletter. The updated email is: Patvelie2566@gmail.com.

Thank you.

April is spring break month in all the local school districts, but there are a few events on the calendars.



April 17 - Murder Mystery Dinner 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM(Theme Coming Soon!)

presented by: improv.anonymous, Wayland Union Fine Arts Center - Grand Hall

Cost: \$30 (plus \$2.25 fee), Outer doors open 5:45p, Entry doors #12 (Wayland Union Fine Arts Center Main Entry).

Enjoy a 3 course meal. Costumes are not required, but certainly welcome.

Tickets available: wufactickets.ludus.com

April 18 - Art in the Garden - Silo from 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM, 401 Hubbard Street, Allegan

To purchase tickets: <https://alleganplayers.ludus.com/index.php>

April 23-25 - Thornapple Arts Council(TAC) - Jazz Fest

Downtown Hastings

Spend three days exploring Downtown Hastings and enjoying free performances by student groups, combos, and adult groups all around town. In the evenings, head to larger venues for featured headlining performances.

April 24, 7 PM, April 25, 3 pm & 7 PM - Disney Frozen Jr. by Caledonia Middle School

Players at Duncan Lake Middle School, Caledonia.

Tickets available at vancoevents.com/us/DQVV or at the door.

April 24, 7:30 PM - Edye Evans Hyde with the Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra

Thornapple Arts Council - Hastings Performing Arts Center (520 W. South Street, Hastings, MI 49058)



April 24 - Jazz Night Fundraiser, Wayland Union Fine Arts Center - Grand Hall

Cost: \$TBD, A night filled with Jazz performances & treats!

For more information call: 269 792 2181



April 30 - Wayland Union HS Choirs Spring Showcase

Time: 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM, Wayland Union Fine Arts Center - Auditorium, Cost: Free



Civic Engagement

Chair: Rosy Chatterton

Progressive Pontoon Event, Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 4 PM

We have just started planning the upcoming event and are seeking enthusiastic members to join us in the preparation.

Here's how you can contribute:

- Assist in planning the event
- Serve as a hostess or hostess helper
- Provide a pontoon for transportation

In previous years, we've enjoyed four stops on Gun Lake, and last year, we had five pontoons ferrying guests between locations. Typically, the stops include:

- First stop: Light appetizers and beverages
- Second stop: Fruits, veggies, and beverages
- Third stop: Meats, cheeses, and beverages
- Fourth stop: Desserts, beverages, and coffee

We had a sign-up sheet at our March meeting; however, if you missed it and would like to help, please reach out to Rosy Chatterton at 630-436-0136. Once we finalize these initial details, we will create sign-up sheets for ticket purchases. Members are welcome to bring their husbands or guests.

This event is not only a fun gathering but also serves as a fundraiser, with proceeds benefiting veterans, military personnel, and their families!



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



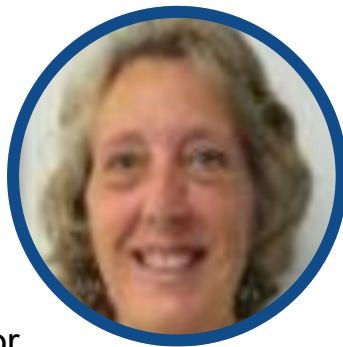
Join us on **April 6th at 1:00 PM** to plant Pinwheels, meeting at **Gun Lake Community Church at 12:45 PM**. We create pinwheel gardens in our community to raise awareness for Child Abuse Prevention. Each pinwheel symbolizes a child, a family, and a community choosing prevention over crisis.

April is the month for planting pinwheels, and during our April meeting, we will hold a "Jingle Jar Collection" for Family Support Services of Barry County, who assist us with the pinwheels.



Health & Wellness

Co-Chairs: Shelly Heijerman &
Marcia Heroux



We are excited to kick off our second quarter project, focusing on two important initiatives: collecting items for our grade school children and supporting The Shack, along with a greater emphasis on food for Hand2Hand!

Collection for Community Grade Schools

For the children in our four community grade schools, we are gathering ****underwear**** in all sizes for boys and girls (medium to XL), as well as ****new or gently used sweatpants**** (preferably in dark colors, sizes small to XL).

- A sign-up sheet will be available at our next meeting for anyone who wishes to contribute items for this project.

Support for The Shack

At The Shack in Delton, which provides a shopping space for new or slightly used clothing for those in need, we are also collecting ****socks**** for all ages to donate.

- A sign-up sheet will be provided for those who want to help with this initiative!

Focus on Food Donations

We will place a strong emphasis on collecting ****pre-packaged, shelf-stable foods**** to prepare weekend meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) for children in our community who face food insecurity when not in school.

Examples of food items include: Individually wrapped crackers, Cookies, Fun fruit snacks, Meat sticks, Chips or pretzels, or Granola bars

- A sign-up sheet will be available at the meeting. If you have any questions, please reach out to Nancy Molt!

Thank you so much in advance for your support! Please bring items to our upcoming meetings or drop them off at Marcia Heroux's home: 1785 Edwin Dr, Wayland, MI 49348. For any inquiries, feel free to contact Shelly Heijerman or Marcia Heroux.

hand2hand

We are winding down the 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR and would **appreciate pudding singles and/or single packs of chips or pretzels**. There will be a box under the table at the Club meeting to put donations.

- Packing dates the first Tuesday of the month at 6 PM
- April 7, May 5th
- Meet in the hand2hand room at Gun Lake Community Church
- Join in on one or all dates listed above
- Call Nancy Molt with any questions



Environment

Co-Chairs: Ruth Perion &
Joan Wire

Earth Day Celebration - Walk for the Birds



Join us on **April 22, Wednesday, at 10:30** for our “Walk for the Birds,” an Earth Day celebration where proceeds will benefit the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary.

Adopt - a - Highway



Road pick-up will be on **April 25th at 10:00 am**. Please, sign up at the April Meeting. We will meet in the Curley Cone parking lot. Bags and vests will be provided. It is suggested that participants bring a pair of gloves. Afterwards, we will meet up with the Township clean-up crew for a pizza lunch at 12:00 at the Fire House. Come and join us!



National Arbor Day, “Tag the Tree”



To celebrate National Arbor Day we will host a “Tag the Tree” on **Friday, May 1st**. We will kick off the tagging of trees in the Yankee Springs Park that we have donated, along with some additional ones. We aim to develop this initiative over time, serving as both an educational feature and a way to enhance recognition of the club's efforts in the park. The exact time will be determined later.

Barry Roubaix

Join us for one of our key fundraising events: the Barry Roubaix Races on **April 18, 2026**. Our club has proudly supported this event for many years, receiving compensation from the race organizers.

As club members, we assist at aid stations positioned along various race routes, where we set up and distribute energy drinks, water, and snacks to the racers.

For more details and to see plenty of photos, visit barry-roubaix.com.

If you're interested in volunteering, please reach out to DJ Madden for additional formation.





Chair: Katie Ambrose

Membership



Raise Right:

- Raise Right: March profit was \$49.55 after \$20.00 taken out for gift cards for the convention.
- Katie will be taking orders at the general meeting in April.

New Members:

Autumn Fiorillo
 3651 England Dr.
 Shelbyville MI 49344
 269-716-4315
 DOB 10/18
 fiorillo.autumn@gmail.com



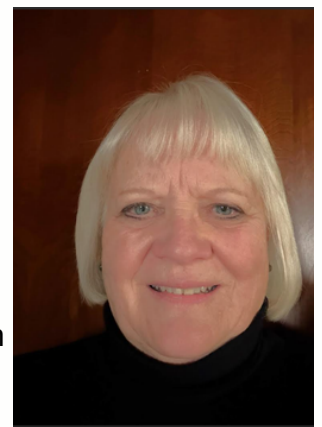
Vicky Molhoek
 5723 Fawn Lake Dr
 Shelbyville, MI 49344
 616-893-3144
 DOB 07/12
 vickymolhoek@gmail.com



Melanie Strawn
 145 Lakeview Dr
 Wayland MI 49348
 440-708-8926
 DOB 06/22
 littleshrimpythings@gmail.com

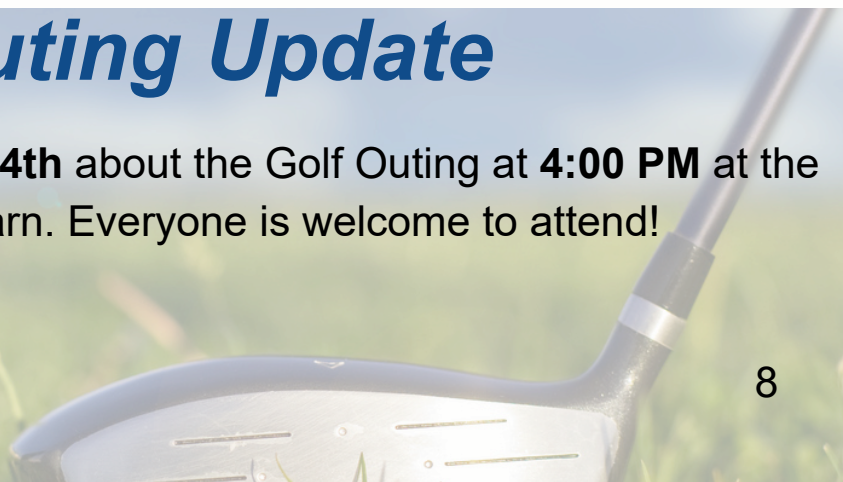


Diana VanDenBrink
 305 Frank Ct
 Wayland MI 49348
 616-915-7000
 DOB 02/27
 dmvandenb@gmail.com



Golf Outing Update

Join us for a meeting on **April 24th** about the Golf Outing at **4:00 PM** at the Yankee Springs Fire Barn. Everyone is welcome to attend!



2025 GFWCMI Arts & Craft Contest

Members, Whether or not you plan to attend the Michigan Convention in April, I encourage you to bring handmade items to our April meeting so they can be submitted on behalf of our club. Showcasing the creativity of our members is one of the highlights of this event, and we hope to share as many pieces as possible.

Criteria: Your item must be created in 2025.

Ideas for inspiration: knitting, cross-stitch, needlepoint, wood/glass/metal crafts, jewelry, drawing, pottery, dolls, quilting, etc.

WHO
AM I



Hi Ladies, my name is _____ I came from a family of 8 girls and 2 boys, 10 in all. I was number 7. We all grew up in Kalamazoo but later moved to Byron Center where I attend school and graduated. I am married with 2 children and 2 step children, 5 grandchildren and 8 step grandchildren. Needless to say, life is busy.

My friend Marilyn Martin invited me to join Woman's Club in 2024 and I have been involved ever since. I am very involved in the St. Martha Conference of St. Vincent dePaul and actually started the group in 2016. I also sit on the Yankee Springs Township Park Committee. I am a parishioner of SS Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church.

I have a BA in Family Life Education through Spring Arbor and retired from Project Hope as their Compassionate Care Director. I have always been a seamstress and do alterations in my home.

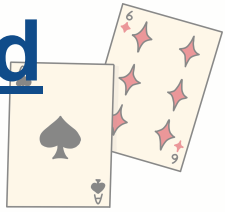
My spouse and I travel quite a bit. We have a daughter in Nashville, a son in Hong Kong and winter for at least a month in the South.

Someone I get inspiration from and look to as a role model is Mother Theresa, she so selflessly helped so many who were in need. My favorite quote/mantra is from Mother Therese herself. "Not all of us can do great things but we can do small things with great love"

Who am I?



Cards and Games

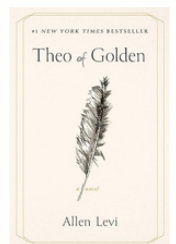
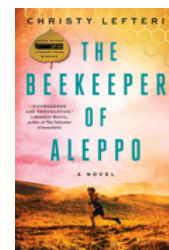
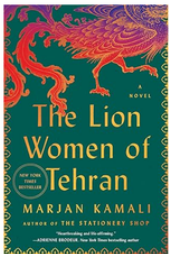


Sewing Group

- April 2, 16, & 30 from 1-5 PM at Diane Conley's home.
- Meets every other Thursday at Diane Conley's home
- Call Diane with questions

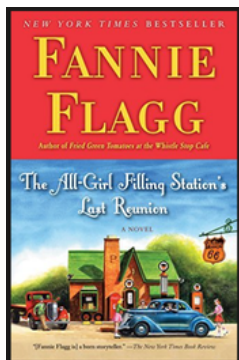
- April -15, 1 PM at Mary Helmer's home (limited parking, carpool please)
- Always meets the third Wednesday of the month at 1 PM
- All are invited, come join in the fun!
- Please, let Nancy Molt know if you are attending.

Book Club



- Meets April 20- 9:30 AM at Mary Helmer's home (limited parking, please carpool)
- Always meets the third Monday of the month at 9:30 AM
- Text Ruth Perino with questions.

- APRIL 20: THE LION WOMEN OF TEHRAN by Marjan Kamali
- MAY 18: THE RADIUM GIRLS by Kate Moore
- June 15: THE THIRTEENTH TALE by Diane Sutterfield
- July 20: THE HENNA ARTIST by Alka Joshi
- August 17: THE BEEKEEPER OF ALEPPO by Christy Lefferi
- September 21: THEO OF GOLDEN by Allen Levi



Book Club

Thank you to Judy Nelson for stepping up to host our book club. Great treats and hospitality.

Chris Boysen took us through a summary of THE ALL GIRL FILING STATION by Fannie Flag with personal connections and a focus on the local color, resultant humor, and then the fitting tribute to Women's History Month with a focus on the WASP's, female pilots in WWII that went without recognition until fairly recently. The author did a great job of working two stories together through the self-search of adoptee, Sookie, for her biological family. The humor delighted many and was off putting to some. All felt the book of value for highlighting the history of women pilots and the WWII setting of the sacrifices made by the country at a time when it seemed everyone was pulling together.

The book ended with a score of 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 5.



Kiva Update



Melenaite of Tonga

Petarah of Kenya

Our February Newsletter gave an update of our book club's KIVA donation history and told of an end of the year donation by Paula Geyer of \$50 which went to support Perline of Madagasa's need to buy pigs. Our 2026 year opened with another generous \$50 donation from Sue Carlson which went to fund Melenaite of Tonga who weaves tradition skirts for men and women for church and festival wear. And now, in March, Audrey Bartlett as joined the \$50 club and donated to Petarah of Kenya who grows vegetables and has opened a small grocery store. She needs a loan of \$775 to buy a motor bike to facilitate deliveries of her vegetables and some grains. While these loans are done through the book club, they belong to all of GFWC-GLA and many who do not attend book club have donated. Please know that while these mentioned are very generous, we started with a few dollars and a dollar or two adds up over time. We had a small return on payments which was partially used to pay a \$3 fee of processing on each loan. Pictures of the two latest loan recipients are above.

Club Outing to Jonkers Garden - April 17 9 AM!

Our first club outing of 2026 will be on **April 17th**.

We are excited because we hear great things about Jonkers Garden, located at 897 Lincoln Ave, Holland, MI 49423.



We will **meet at Gun Lake Community Church at 9:00 AM** and then carpool to their facility. After our scheduled tour we have a chance to purchase the merchandise they have available (which should be A LOT...because they host their open house on Saturday).

When we have completed our visit, we will drive the mile or so to the downtown area of Holland. Here you can peruse the stores of your choice and of course have a great lunch in one of the many restaurants. For those who signed up at the general meeting you will be notified a couple days before the outing. If you were not in attendance and would like to go with us, please contact Kaye Evans or Sandy Marcukaitis.

Anticipated return home is between 3 and 3:30.

PARK FLOWER BERMS - SPRING CLEAN UP APRIL 24, 2026 9:30 AM

Thirty high school students and their teacher from Middleville High School will be arriving to help do the arduous task of "spring clean-up" on the flower berms at the park.

The following ladies have volunteered: Dot Zoppa, Beth Pechumer, Deb Short, Vicky Molhoek, Gloria Blacquiere and Rose Visscher.

Thank you ladies for helping out.

Linda Rough (GWFC-GLA Flower Berm coordinator, 616-318-3417) got a nice comment from our township supervisor, Rob Heethuis, that our club members are doing a great job and the berms look beautiful.

The flower berms are a fund-raiser for GWFC-GLA .

Please, contact Linda Rough to assist with the continuing work that needs to be done throughout the summer and into the fall to maintain a beautiful park.

CONVENTION is April 23 – 25 at Troy. Sign-up sheets have been sent to you. This is a weekend to have fun, spend time with members, both from our club and others, and learn new things important to GFWC.

Hope you consider attending. Also, it's a time to honor Sandy Marcukaitis as 'Woman of Achievement' for 2025.

GFWCMI 131st State Convention, April 23-25, 2026

Somerset Inn, 2601 W. Big Beaver, Troy, MI 48084

Reserve Your Room Before April 8, 2026

Cost: \$139 Plus Taxes for up to 2 people, \$10 each additional person

WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY

Group Block Code: General Federation of Women's Clubs of Michigan

Call: 248-643-7800

Officers, CSP Chairs & Coordinators

2024-2026

- President: Raeanne Renner
- Vice President: DJ Madden
- Treasurer: Mina VanElderren
- Recording Secretary: Virginia Norton
- Correspondence Secretary: Ruth Perino
- Arts & Culture: Pat Veilie
- Civic Engagement: Rosy Chatterton
- Education & Libraries: Marte Roach
- Environment: Joan Wire & Ruth Perino
- Health & Wellness: Shelly Heijerman & Marcia Heroux
- Membership: Katie Ambrose
- Sunshine Committee: Rose Visscher & Mina VanElderren
- Public Relations: Marcia Heroux
- Newsletter: Lori Beebe
- Webmaster: Erin Rives
- Memory Book/Historian: Donna Podbevsek



**Raeanne Renner, GFWC-GLA
President**

3000 Beatrice

Middleville, Mi 49333

517-677-6974

Email: raeannefwc@gmail.com

Margaret Sykes, SWD President

67940 Black Runway

Constantine, Michigan 490427

248 -756-5274

Email: Merohm@gmail.com

**Rae Lynn Hicks, GFWC MI State
President**

8373 Miller road

Swartz Creek, MI 48473

840-869-7546

RaelynH99@gmail.com

Please remember to visit our club website (gfwcgunlake.org) for information on scholarships, fundraisers, club events and all things GFWC - Gun Lake Area!



All information intended for the May newsletter should be submitted to Lori at Loretta.Beebe@gmail.com by April 27, 2026.