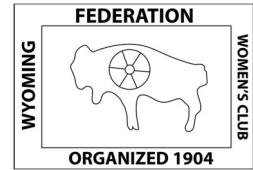


# NEWSBLAST

TIMELESS STRENGTH & RESILIENCE OF  
WOMEN

THE INNOCENCE & POTENTIAL OF CHILDREN



## Send a Card and Make Someone's Day Spread Holiday Cheer to St Jude Children's Hospital patients!

Between now and January 7, you can send a free holiday e-card with a personalized message. It's quick and easy—just click the links below to choose your card and share your warm wishes:

[Spread holiday cheer: Cards for hospitalized kids - St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#)

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### STATE OFFICERS

#### MESSAGES

Messages from your officers for inspiration and seasons greetings for all to enjoy.

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### CLUB PRESIDENTS

Updates on coming events and notices for events in the new year.

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### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Thanks for the donations to the Scholarship Fund and information on Children's Advocacy.  
Also updates from Legislation and new Bingos from the ESO group.



## Messages from your Executive Officers

### PRESIDENT

*Karen Bard*

Where has the year gone! I so enjoyed going to the Yoder Women's Pheasant Dinner fundraiser. Luckily it was lovely weather for the trip up and back. It was the first time I have been able to make it and it was so nice to see so many students helping at the event. It was wonderful to be greeted by them and to talk to them as they came around to clear tables. Congratulations to the Yoder Women for a great fundraiser.

I am looking forward to making it to both the Women's Civic League of Cheyenne's and the Women's Club of Sweetwater County's Holiday fundraisers, weather permitting. I think I will make it to Cheyenne on Saturday but I have a conflict with Wreaths Across America obligations on the Sunday to make it to Rock Springs but I am going to try and squeeze both in.

My mind is already busy planning not only for next year and the end of this administration but already hard at work for the next administration's work. It all comes rushing up and work needs to be done so that we are ready.

As we arrive at this beautiful season of reflection and celebration, my heart is filled with gratitude for each of you. This year, you have shown—again and again—what it means to serve with purpose, to lead with kindness, and to uplift your communities with unwavering dedication. Wyoming may be wide and windswept, but because of you, it is also warm, connected, and full of light.

Every project you've carried forward, every smile you've shared, every hour you've given—these seemingly small acts weave together into something extraordinary. They create hope where it's needed, comfort where it matters, and strength where it makes the greatest difference. You embody the true spirit of GFWC: women working together to build a better world.

During this season, let us pause to appreciate not only the service we offer, but the fellowship we cherish. Our clubs are more than organizations—they are circles of friendship, encouragement, and inspiration. I am continually moved by the creativity and heart you bring to your communities and to one another.

As we look toward a new year, may we carry forward this spirit of unity and generosity. There is so much to look forward to—new initiatives, renewed momentum, and fresh opportunities to shine our light across the state. I am excited for the future we're building together and honored to serve alongside you.

May your holidays be filled with peace, joy, and the quiet moments that remind you how deeply you are appreciated. Thank you for all you do, and for all you are.

With warmest holiday wishes

### PRESIDENT ELECT

*Karen Kent*

**Mother (Saint) Teresa of Calcutta**

Mary Teresa Bojaxhiu was born on August 26, 1910 in what today is Albania. Her father was a political activist in Ottoman Macedonia and was more than likely poisoned by Serbian agents when she was only eight years old.

Mary Teresa was very young when she became fascinated by stories of the lives of missionaries and their service in [Bengal](#); by age 12, she was convinced that she should commit herself to religious life. She left home at age 18 to join the [Sisters of Loreto](#) at [Loreto Abbey](#) in [Rathfarnham](#), Ireland, to learn English with the intent of becoming a missionary.

During the communist rule in Albania at the time, Sister Teresa was considered to be a dangerous threat to the Vatican. She was denied permission to return to Albanian and consequently never saw her mother or sister again.

In 1929, at the age of 19 she began her religious journey in India. She was a teacher at the Loreto convent school in eastern Calcutta, taking the style of 'Mother' as part of Loreto custom. She served there for nearly twenty years and was appointed its headmistress in 1944. Mother Teresa became increasingly disturbed by the conditions of extreme poverty that surrounded her. She was granted permission to leave the school and in 1950 she founded the Missionaries of Charity.

This religious order would care for "the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone". By 2007, the Missionaries of Charity numbered about 450 brothers and 5,000 sisters worldwide, operating 600 missions, schools and shelters in 120 countries.

Mother Teresa received numerous awards and accolades during her service to the poor and

destitute of the world, primarily in Calcutta, India. In 1979, Mother Teresa received the [Nobel Peace Prize](#) "for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress. She died in abject poverty at the age of 87. She was canonized a saint in the Catholic church by Pope Francis on 4 September 2016.

## VICE PRESIDENT/MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

### *Katherine Van Dell*

The house smells absolutely delightful! Those smells are from the turkey baking, fresh pies out of the oven, dinner rolls, and some many side dishes. Family members at the door coming to be together with family and friends. Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren beginning at 6 years of age on up to grandma. College grandchildren arriving with friends who were unable to go home for the holiday being welcomed. After the meal, it's time for games, laughter, teasing, etc. A glorious time to be grateful and thankful as love abounds.

The day after Thanksgiving is just as exciting as the days prior to the holiday and its preparations. Why? Well, for many it's Black Friday and the shopping excursions are in full gear. Cannot miss out on the many bargains available for the Christmas shopping now, can we.

Now for the GFWCW club women, it is also time to prepare for any Christmas fundraisers the clubs hold each year. Being a member of Women's Civic League of Cheyenne, it's now the final rush time preparing for Christmas House. This is always a huge project that members of the community and elsewhere look forward to attending. The Woman's Club of Sweetwater County are also busy preparing for their Christmas House. We are all busy sewing, glueing, painting, with glitter everywhere, and very importantly baking wonderful and delicious delectables. Busy, busy, busy!!

It is also an opportunity to acquaint prospective members. Invite them to workshops, give them a ticket to attend the event, explain where the funds raised go and how it helps the community. It is no surprise really that all the funds raised from the Christmas fundraisers go back into the community. It makes me so proud to see our endeavors helping out in so many ways.

January 1 begins a new year for us all. The club members are looking at completing the many reports they can do outlining the many projects and achievements that have been accomplished. It is also time to “toot our horns.” Be sure to share all that your club women accomplish throughout the year and to invite prospective women to join in. Visit with your family members, neighbors, church members, work members, etc. Invite them to enjoy the feelings of achievements that help out their community. We can be very proud of those accomplishments.

This officer wishes that each of you have a wonderful holiday season. I am proud to be a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and to call you my federated sisters.

## **Messages from your Club Presidents**

### ***Marcia Volner – Women's Club of Sweetwater County***

We are very busy getting ready for our holiday house coming up on December 5 and 6. We have a beautiful home with a hostess that loves gnomes. We have many raffle items from members and businesses.

We have gotten 2 more members in the last month and are excited to welcome them to our group.



Our pancake fundraiser went well and we hope to work with Applebee's to do another one in the Spring.

### ***Karen Kent – Meadowlarks***

The Meadowlarks are excited to welcome 2 new members to their “nest”; Michala Gleim and Suzanne Robbins.

The Meadowlarks held their final meeting of the 2025 club year on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>. The lady Larks met for dinner at Uncle Charlies to review their projects for the year and the outcome and future plans for their annual Meadowlark Market. This year's Market was once again a resounding success with the majority of the vendors indicating a wish to return again next year. Even though this was our last official meeting, the Larks have some additional projects in the works to take us into the new year. The new year will also see a change in leadership of the Meadowlarks. Our new officers will be Nancy Kaufman as President, Starla Sexton and Vice President, Flo Beville as Secretary and Julie Gleim will remain as Treasurer. These women will assume their new roles in January.

## ***Patty Benskin – XJWC***

XJWC just completed their second fundraiser – lunch at Texas Roadhouse. It was a fun time, and we raised some money for the Children's Museum. Some of our guests ate in, and others had their meals delivered to their businesses. Members served food and bussed tables. Husbands volunteered for delivery duty!

The membership meeting on December 2 found members enjoying the music of Bob Mathews and his family. Members participated in a fun gift exchange with lots of laughter.

In January we will be honoring some of our long-time members and starting a new year of service. The club will also participate in a book drive for the Cheyenne Children's Museum.

In April we will have the annual Bunco Party fundraiser.

May will bring the state convention at the Red Lion Inn on May 1 and May 2. Members are being encouraged to participate. This is a great opportunity to attend a state convention and meet clubwomen from around the state.

## ***Kristin Riley – Women's Civic League of Cheyenne***

It's hard to believe that tomorrow marks the first day of December, it feels like our club year just began! We hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving filled with family, friends, and gratitude.

While November was a month of celebration, it was also a month of incredible productivity for the Women's Civic League. Our members have been busy hosting crafting and baking workshops in preparation for our beloved annual fundraiser, Christmas House. If you'll be in the Cheyenne area this coming weekend, December 5–6, we warmly invite you to stop by and experience the magic of Christmas House. This year marks our 57th celebration,

graciously hosted by Richard and Sonja Gage at their beautiful home, 5002 Horizon Loop, Cheyenne.

Beyond the festive preparations, our members have been hard at work supporting the community. Item drives have been underway to fill Christmas stockings for homebound veterans, as well as to collect toys and books for local youth. These efforts directly benefit Toys for Tots and Safe Harbor, ensuring that the joy of the season reaches those who need it most.

What makes this time of year especially inspiring is that, despite the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations, family commitments, and work obligations, our members continue to live out our mission of service. Their dedication to giving back exemplifies the true spirit of the season and the heart of our League.

Here's to a joyful December ahead, filled with community, compassion, and celebration!

## ***Trish Peoples – GFWC Wyoming Past Presidents' Club***

The GFWC Wyoming Past Presidents' Club held its annual meeting in October. We discussed where to send our residual dues, and we were excited to send our dues plus some significant added donations to the Wyoming First Lady's Hunger Initiative, for a total of \$250. Take a look at this worthwhile nonprofit at <https://www.nohungerwyo.org>.

## **Messages from your Committee Chairs**

### **ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN**

#### ***Marcia Volner***

With the holidays upon us it is unfortunately a time when some people do not have enough food.

Donating to food banks, soup kitchens and other places collecting food is helpful this time of year.

Many places have trees of giving this time of year. Our Sweetwater Family Services has a tree that you can pick children off of to make their holidays brighter. Check in your area to see if you have the same. This doesn't fall under children, but many nursing homes have trees as well. It is truly tragic how many of our senior citizens are forgotten over the holidays.

Our Child Developmental Centers across the state have been shorted on the amount of money they are supposed to receive from the state for the last few years. Writing a letter to your state legislators would help the legislators realize how much we value this program and that we want it fully funded. We need these centers to help children get off on a good start in life. The center here provides OT, PT and speech therapy along with other specialists to help with a variety of disabilities. Please



consider helping them to receive their full funding.

## LEGISLATION & PUBLIC POLICY

### *Trish Peoples*

As you know, 2025's Day of Service was dedicated to GFWC's Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention. We Wyoming Clubwomen did great things for our Signature Program in September. There is more to do though. As part of GFWC's efforts, we advocate for bi-partisan legislation supporting our Signature Program through our Legislative Action Center.

Remember, it is not only important to sign up for our LAC alerts, but also to RESPOND to those alerts and send those messages to your Representatives and Senators. Every member can sign up for the LAC at GFWC.org under Advocacy and Get Involved.

Our 3 key 2025 legislative priorities related to our Signature Program are:

Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA)

Appropriations – this funding provides safety, access to services, and justice for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, including shelters, rape crisis response centers, legal aid, and counseling.

Anti-trafficking Legislation – the Trafficking Survivors Relief Act would provide federal criminal relief to survivors of human trafficking who committed a non-violent offense as a direct result of having been a victim of trafficking. Many trafficking survivors face arrest, conviction, and incarceration – often without recognition of their victim status.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) – The Crime Victims Fund is funded with criminal fines and penalties from convictions in federal court. Taxpayer dollars do not finance the fund. The Office of Victims of Crime disburses money from this fund to states and other entities to support victims' compensation and aid programs, including domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, child advocacy centers, and other child sexual abuse treatment programs. Specifically, to address the current shortfall, the proposed Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act would redirect unobligated resources collected through the False Claim Act to the Crime Victims Act for five years, while keeping critical protection and compensation for whistleblowers.

## LEADERSHIP

### *Kristin Riley*

Public speaking is a powerful skill for every leader, and you don't need to be a professional speaker to make a meaningful impact. Effective public speaking goes beyond simply standing before an audience—it's about capturing

attention, sparking thoughtful engagement, and inspiring action. Each opportunity to speak is a chance to share ideas, motivate others, and unite your audience around a common goal. Your voice is your most valuable tool. Whether you're explaining a project, encouraging participation in club events, or expressing gratitude to community partners, clear and confident communication is essential. Thanks to the GFWC Leadership Committee, you now have access to a helpful guide and hints designed to help you excel at your next public speaking opportunity. Let's use our voices to inspire, connect, and make a difference together!

See page 10 for wonderful tips on how to crush your next speech or presentation!

**REMINDER!!** Each club may submit one nominee to the Leadership Committee. The committee will select the one candidate who will represent GFWC Wyoming at the **LEADS Workshop** during the **GFWC International 2026 Annual Convention**, held in **Scottsdale, Arizona, June 26–29, 2026**.

**Application Deadline:** All LEADS applications must be submitted by **February 1, 2026**, to: Kristin Riley 3800 Dillon Ave Cheyenne, WY 82001

If you have questions or need help locating the application on the GFWC Wyoming website, please contact me at **(307) 287-6848** or via email at **krissydee@bresnan.net**.

## ESO

### *Leslie Jo Gatti*

#### November Reading

**Marcia** – Book Set in Another Country, Historical Fiction, Free, Travel Book, Biography, Book by a Foreign Author (**BINGO on 4th line down**) – 2nd Bingo!!! **Congratulations!!!**

**Leslie Jo** – Book by a New-To-Me Author (Patricia Guiver), Book about a Holiday (Halloween), Book about a Hobby, Nonfiction (**BINGO on the bottom line**) – **Congratulations!!!**

**Marianne** – Book with a Black Cover, Book by a Foreign Author, FREE

#### December Reading

**Marianne** – Book about a Holiday (Christmas), Mystery or Thriller (**Bingo on left vertical line**) – 2nd Bingo!!! **Congratulations!!!** Nonfiction, Book from your Bookshelf (**Bingo Diagonal top to bottom**) – 3rd Bingo. **Congratulations!!!** Book published in 2025, Science Fiction.

**Marcia** - Book about a Holiday, Book about Women (**Bingo Diagonal bottom to top**) - 3rd Bingo – **Congratulations!!!** Science Fiction (**Bingo top horizontal line**) 4th Bingo – **Congratulations!!!** Book about a Hobby, Book Containing a Map (**Bingo on Middle Horizontal & Far Right Vertical**) 5th and 6th Bingos – **Congratulations!!!** 7th Bingo – (from left) 4th Vertical – **Congratulations!!!**

**Leslie Jo** – FREE, Book published in 2025 (**Bingo on left vertical line**) – 2nd Bingo!!! **Congratulations!!!** Mystery or Thriller

**See Page 9 for the Bingo Sheet that you can print and use.**

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### *Trish Peoples*

Many thanks to all the clubs that donated a total of \$960 to our three GFWC Scholarship.



The money from GFWC Women's Civic League of Cheyenne, GFWC Meadowlarks, GFWC X-JWC, GFWC Laramie Woman's Club, GFWC

Yoder Woman's Club, and GFWC Women's Club of Sweetwater County will go to increasing our corpus.

# Event Calendar

## December, 2025

**Woman's Club of Sweetwater County –  
Holiday House, December 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Women's Civic League of Cheyenne –  
Christmas House, December 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>**

## April, 2026

**GFWC Federation Day April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

## May, 2026

**GFWC Wyoming State Conference in  
Cheyenne, May 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026**

## June, 2026

**GFWC International Conference,  
Scottsdale Arizona, June 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>**

If your club has an important event, fundraiser etc. Please send the information in so that it can be included in this list.

## ESO Book Bingo

<b>Book with a Black Cover</b>	<b>Historical Fiction</b>	<b>Science Fiction</b>	<b>Biography</b>	<b>Romance</b>
Book Published in '24, '25, '26	Mystery or Thriller	Classic	Book About Women	Book About a Holiday
Nonfiction	Book of Poetry	Free – Any Book	Graphic Novel	Book Containing a Map
Book Checked out from the Library	Travel Book	Book Set in Another Country	Book from Your Book Shelf	Book by a Foreign Author
Book less than 150 pages	Book by a Wyoming Author	Book about Food	Book by New-to-You Author	Book about a Hobby

The reading includes books finished in August, 2025 or later.

1. A book may only count for one (1) square.
2. Readers must tell me in which category the book fits so I don't have to decide.
3. Titles will ONLY be accepted through March 31, 2026.
4. Only books – NO periodicals. Audio and e-books are acceptable.
5. I can be contacted by email ([pc\\_ljgatti@hotmail.com](mailto:pc_ljgatti@hotmail.com)), phone (307-350-0709), via snail mail (912 Peachwood Drive, Rock Springs, WY 82901), or in person (please, give me a list because I will NOT remember). You may give me titles before a Bingo is completed, if you want to.
6. Everyone who participates will be mentioned in the News Blast.

Goal for a Bingo is:

1. Straight line, either vertical or horizontal (5 titles). Multiple lines are encouraged.
2. Either 1 or both diagonal lines of five (5) titles.
3. Total blackout (all 25 squares) will receive a special prize.

# THUMBS UP THURSDAY

## CRUSH YOUR NEXT SPEECH OR PRESENTATION



- 1. HOOK NOT BIO**
  - No polite warm-up, bio, or "Excited to be here"
  - Start with a relevant question, bold claim, or short story
- 2. START STILL**
  - Walk out, plant your feet, pause for two seconds, then speak
  - Let the room settle before you begin
- 3. GROUP IN THREES**
  - Break points into 3s - easy to follow and remember
  - "Three things you'll learn today..." is magic
- 4. SHORT STORIES**
  - Keep stories under 90 seconds
  - Use: Setting, conflict, payoff - and then cut the rest
- 5. EDIT ACTIVELY**
  - Replace passive voice and vague verbs (AI can help!)
  - "it was launched!" "We launched it"
- 6. SPEAK TO 1 PERSON**
  - Hold eye contact with 1 person per thought
  - Then shift to another in a different area don't scan constantly
- 7. MARK YOUR PAUSES**
  - Add slashes (/) in your script where you want to pause.
  - Don't just fill the space - silence can emphasize
- 8. PUT AUDIENCE FIRST**
  - Cut "I want to talk about..."
  - Replace with "You'll walk away with..."
- 9. MOVE ON TRANSITIONS**
  - Step or gesture when changing topics not mid-point
  - Stillness = power, movement = shift
- 10. REHEARSE ALOUD**
  - Practice standing, with voice at full volume
  - Record yourself and watch for filler words, pacing, and fidgeting
- 11. MEMORIZE BOOKENDS**
  - Know your first and last 3 lines cold
  - Everything else can be spoken from notes
- 12. CIRCLE BACK**
  - Echo your opening idea or line at the end
  - It gives the audience closure and recall