



GFWC Kentucky Clubwoman Publication

May 2025



Romanza Johnson

GFWC KY President 1990-1992

December 1, 1939—May 7, 2025



GFWC
est. 1890
**GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**
KENTUCKY

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Romanza O. Johnson

GFWC KY President 1990-1992

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“Light the Way in Kentucky with KFWC”

A few of the highlights of Romanza’s term as President:

- ♦ During Romanza’s term as State President of what was then named KFWC (Kentucky Federation of Woman’s Club), Kentucky chartered 4 new clubs bringing the total clubs in Kentucky to 178 with 7,900 members.
- ♦ Also during Romanza’s term, Hospice was only just forming in very county in Kentucky. KFWC donated over \$7000 to promote publicity for Hospice and also sold note cards to raise money for Hospice services. Many of us know of the good work Hospice (now Hosparus) does for families and is well known by everyone.
- ♦ Over 80 clubs participated in the Adopt-a-Highway project and the clubs helped keep the highways clean.
- ♦ 53 clubs participated in educating the public about a health condition that was relatively new to most at that time - they sponsored AIDS education and workshops.
- ♦ 120 clubs took on the project of Nutrition with 248 projects, 856 hours and raised over \$17,000.00
- ♦ KFWC was a strong supporter of HOBY Youth Leadership at that time. 39 of the clubs sponsored a HOBY student.
- ♦ Clubs in Kentucky donated over \$75,000.00 in scholarships.
- ♦ Club members were involved with the Home Life Department of KFWC and donated 82,152 of volunteer work, \$99,555.49 in 1652 projects.
- ♦ The President’s State Project was asking every club woman to get a mammogram.
- ♦ The Public Affairs project was working on the seat belt law in Kentucky. Child abuse and prevention was also a topic for most clubs as well.
- ♦ Romanza was on the KET Advisory Board so many clubwoman helped with the KET Telethon
- ♦ The 1991 April Convention was held at the Galt House while the 1992 April Convention was held at the Executive West.

“Volunteers shine like beacons and illuminate the world.”

Romanza O. Johnson

According to the WKU Alumni Association, Romanza O. Johnson received the Distinguished Medal of Community and Public Service Award in 2023 for her exceptional volunteer service. After a successful career as a teacher and Home Economist of Bowling Green Municipal Utilities, her commitment to service earned her numerous accolades on local, regional and international platforms. Having led 27 organizations in various capacities, including President and *committee Chair*, *Johnson's legacy of service is inspirational. Notably, she played a pivotal role in founding organizations that include the Dream Factory of Bowling Green, Houchens Center for Women, Hospice of Southern Kentucky and the Rape Crisis Center, while also devoting her efforts to institutions like the American Heart Association, Kentucky March of Dimes and Kentucky friends of 4-H.*

According to Warren County Government, Johnson and her husband, Ralph, donated 2.62 acres of property on Trammell Fork Creek to Warren County Fiscal Court to be developed as a nature park, now known as Romanza Johnson Park. Development of the park began in 1997 and is now a local favorite for canoers and kayakers.

Romanza Johnson was honored by the Salvation Army last fall at its "Champions of Hope" luncheon for being a key figure in constructing the Center of Hope shelter and leading the Angel Tree Program.

City of Bowling Green

"Bowling Green lost a very distinguished member of the community with the passing of Romanza Johnson. She dedicated her life to public service and leaves behind a tremendous legacy. Among her many achievements, she assisted in founding of the Houchens Center for Women, the Rape Crisis Center, and Hospice of Southern Kentucky. She served on multiple boards, taught Sunday School classes, and touched hundreds lives here through her volunteerism and philanthropy. She was a respected beacon of service and will be greatly missed."

Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce

"We want to take a moment to honor Romanza Johnson, a lifelong advocate for education, community service, and civic engagement. She taught Home Economics before joining the faculty at WKU. After a decade of shaping young minds, she made history as the first Home Economist at Bowling Green Municipal Utilities, pioneering a role blending public service with community outreach.

For over 50 years, Romanza has been an unwavering presence in our community. A charter member of the Chamber's Ambassadors Club, she has served in nearly every leadership role, including three terms as chair and over a decade as secretary. Her contributions have shaped key Chamber initiatives, including her leadership of the Arts and Agriculture Committees and the Retention Committee.

Romanza was the very first recipient of the prestigious ATHENA Award, a symbol of her trailblazing leadership. Her creative efforts for the Chamber's Farm City Week campaign earned both state and national honors, and she has received the Ambassadors Volunteer Award an impressive four times.

Romanza Johnson exemplifies what it means to live a life of purpose, passion, and service. Her legacy enriches us all, and we are grateful for the countless ways she has helped make our community a better place."

– Ron Bunch, President & CEO of the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce



Dear Club Members:

It is hard to believe that we are already halfway through our administration. The journey thus far has been both exciting and rewarding. We've celebrated our 130th State Convention, hosted Federation Day, and are now preparing for the International Convention in Atlanta. Following that, we look forward to Summer Summit 2.0 on July 18th and 19th.

Over the past year, your unwavering commitment to your communities has been truly inspiring. Your dedication and service exemplify the adage: "Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer." Your generous hearts and tireless efforts do not go unnoticed.

I am especially grateful for the enthusiastic support you've shown for my special project on Mental Health. Your embrace of this initiative has been both overwhelming and encouraging. A passage from one of my favorite books, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse* by Charlie Mackesy, resonates deeply:

"What is the bravest thing you've ever said?" asked the boy. "Help," said the horse. "When have you been at your strongest?" asked the boy. "When I have dared to show my weakness." "Asking for help isn't giving up," said the horse. "It's refusing to give up."

I highly recommend reading this book; its messages are both profound and uplifting.

Please be on the lookout at the end of the month for the official call to Summer Summit 2.0. Remember, seeking help is not a sign of surrender but a testament to our resilience. Together, we are stronger.

Sincerely,

Amy Mason
GFWC Kentucky State President

GF WC KENTUCKY DIRECTOR OF JUNIOR CLUBS



CHRISSI CUEL

GF WC KENTUCKY DIRECTOR
OF JUNIOR CLUBS

Contact:

chrisshinklecuel@gmail.com

109 Pleasant Ridge Lane,

Woodbine, KY 40771

606-515-3009

Dear GF WC Kentucky Members,

It is with heartfelt gratitude and pride that I share this update as your Director of Junior Clubs. The energy, creativity, and commitment you've brought to our projects and events this year have truly made a lasting impact. I'm so proud of the work we've accomplished together.

Thank you for submitting such thoughtful reports on my special projects—MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), Childhood ADHD Awareness, and Kentucky Youth Assembly (KYA). Your involvement in raising awareness and supporting these causes has been incredible.

I'm excited to report that we raised over \$650 to support KYA Day at the Capitol sponsorships! This effort helps give Kentucky's youth a platform to grow as informed, active citizens and future leaders.

We also had an absolute blast during our Lip Sync Contest, raising over \$600 for the Matthew Wood Scholarship Fund! With eight entertaining acts, from Dolly Parton to the Soggy Bottom Boys, the evening was full of fun and fellowship. A huge congratulations to the Benton Women's Club for winning the Golden Mic!

A very special highlight of our State Convention was welcoming Shannon Bailey, GF WC Director of Junior Clubs, as our honored guest. Shannon brought so much joy, knowledge, and encouragement. On Thursday, she led a fun Tenzi game night that had everyone laughing and connecting. Earlier that day, she conducted an insightful workshop on Parliamentary Procedures, helping us all grow stronger in our understanding of proper meeting conduct. Her message during general session reminded us of all that GF WC has to offer and emphasized that we are truly stronger together.

Thank you all for your dedication to service, sisterhood, and the future of our Federation. Let's continue building momentum as we serve our communities with passion and purpose.

In Federation Spirit,

Chrissi Cuel

Chrissi Cuel

Director of Junior Clubs, GF WC Kentucky



GFWC KENTUCKY **SUMMER SUMMIT 2.0** BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER

JULY 18th & 19th

Clarion Hotel
1950 Newtown Pike
Lexington, KY



The official Call to Summer Summit 2.0 will be emailed to you soon. Be on the lookout! You do not want to miss these 2 days of connecting with club women, brainstorming, hands on learning, fun, and lots of laughs.



104 Society Membership

Maintaining our Headquarters in Frankfort is an ongoing job. It is much better to take care of everyday maintenance than to wait until a catastrophe occurs. **That is the purpose of the 104 Society.** The convention gives us an opportunity to support this project.

Donation levels are:

\$10.40
\$104.00
\$1040.00

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FRANKFORT, KY 40602



Diane Mitchell Junioresettes Chartered at State Convention

A historic and heartwarming moment took place at the GFWC Kentucky State Convention as the Diane Mitchell Junioresettes were officially chartered. Sponsored by the Ossoli Club of Corbin, this vibrant new club of young leaders is named in honor of longtime member and beloved mentor, Diane Mitchell, whose dedication to service has inspired generations.

The chartering ceremony was filled with pride and excitement as the Junioresettes pledged to uphold the values of GFWC and make a positive impact in their community. With the guidance of their sponsoring club, the Ossoli Club of Corbin, these young women are already showing great promise and enthusiasm for volunteerism.

We look forward to watching the Diane Mitchell Junioresettes grow in leadership, service, and sisterhood as they embark on this meaningful journey with GFWC Kentucky.

Barbourville Jr. Woman's Study Club



The GFWC Kentucky Barbourville Jr. Woman's Study Club got a history & environmental presentation from Keith Bowling II, dressed up in period costume as Dr. Thomas Walker at the Thomas Walker



Historical site on April 29th, 2025. Dr. Thomas Walker was the first white man to build a house in the state of Kentucky in 1750, 19 years before Daniel Boone. He named the Cumberland River after the Duke of Cumberland and was also the first to discover and use coal in the state of Kentucky. Although Daniel Boone gained more acclaim, a lesser-known explorer, Dr. Thomas Walker, preceded the famed frontiersman. We even found out that our past Kentucky President, Teresa Schmidt is a direct descendant of Dr. Thomas Walker through her grandfather David Keith Walker. Our President Jimberly Watts presented a \$250.00 in kind donation of Girl Scout Cookies to their Summer Camp for children. Club members then



toured the Education Center and learned about the wildlife in Kentucky, including several friendly snakes such as a king snake, a python and a red tailed boa. Our club invited members of the Barbourville Woman's Study Club to join us at the summer picnic which was such a fun & educational event.



Sarah Emily Pedersen

Advocacy for Children



During the 2025 GFWC-KY state convention, club women worked together to fill over 50 bags with art supplies as a service project for Advocacy for Children. These bags will be given out to kids with ADHD for the summer. Bags contained paint, markers, crayons, pencils, notepads, fidget toys, books and other misc. art items. At the end of



convention, clubs were encouraged to take a few bags with them to give out in their community. When we all work together, we can make a difference!



Ann Banfield

Advocacy for Children Chairman



Okolona Woman's Club

Okolona Woman's Club is excited to announce that we will be celebrating our 70th Anniversary on **Sunday, June 22nd** with an open house at our club house, **9017 Preston Highway, Louisville, Kentucky 40219**, from **1-4pm**. There will be a ceremony at 2pm. We extend an invitation to all of our sister clubwoman to attend the festivities.

Kim Thull, President

Arts and Culture

As the weather outside is getting more inviting, take time to get your creative juices flowing. There could be an outdoor concert or performance that you could attend. Take a craft class and learn a new skill. You could even just take your journal out on the porch with your morning coffee (or evening cocktail) and write or draw to start (or end) the day on a fresh creative note. Try to embrace your creativity in new ways in the sunshine.

Kim Thull
Arts and Culture Chairman
2024-2026



Williamstown Woman's Club

New Parent Bags

Through grants and a generous annual donation from the **Williamstown Woman's Club**, GCPL is excited to announce that our New Parent Bags is now a permanent program!

New Parent Bags are available to all Grant County residents who have welcomed a child into the world within the last 12 months. Patrons must have a library card that is currently valid. Limit one per household for each child born within the last 12 months.



Rita Snow

Civic Engagement

Susan Harley, Civic Engagement Chair

So great seeing so many of you at our State Convention. It was an honor to read all of your Civic Engagement Reports and see all that you have done for your communities. I just want to remind you that my Special Project is Disaster Awareness and Preparedness. I would love to see each club work on and report on this project. Not only is Disaster Awareness and Preparedness close to my heart with all that has been happening in our state and around the country it seems necessary for all of us.

The month of May has several Civic Engagement areas that could be of interest to your club. National EMS Week - 3rd week of May, Police Appreciation week - May 11-17, Armed Forces Appreciation - May 17, Memorial Day - 4th Monday in May, Peace Officers Day - May 15 especially to remember Officers who have died or been disabled in the line of duty - many people wear blue.

Here is some GFWC Trivia:

Did you know: In 1919, under the direction of the YWCA, GFWC created the Overseas Service Unit and sent 100 young women to Europe to assist wounded soldiers in the aftermath of World War I.

Hoping you all have a beautiful May.



“Being the Queen is not all about singing, and being a diva is not all about singing. It has much to do with your service to people. And your social contributions to your community and your civic contributions as well.” – Aretha Franklin

Pikeville Woman's Club - Busy in April

The Pikeville Woman's Club (PWC) had a busy month in April supporting children and families in the community. Club members visited Judi's Place for Kids to donate items for Busy Bags, including journals, pens, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, books, and toys.



While at the center, members also placed blue and silver pinwheels on the lawn—symbols nationally recognized for Child Abuse Prevention Month. Additional pinwheels were placed at the Appalachian Pregnancy Care Center and the Pikeville City Police Station.



Two PWC members volunteered at the annual 5K Run for Judi's Place for Kids, further showing their support for the center's mission.

Heather Harrison of Judi's Place for Kids was the guest speaker at the PWC meeting on April 22, 2025. She introduced Leslee, a facility dog at the center's Advocacy Center. Leslee was specially bred and trained by Canine Companions for Independence and knows more than 40 commands. Calm and patient, he provides emotional support to children throughout the court process.



To conclude the month, PWC President Loretta Winstead and Third Vice President Pat Saros represented the club at Federation Day on April 24, 2025.

Pat Saros
Pikeville Woman's Club



Morehead Woman's Club Honored

The GFWC Morehead Woman's Club was recognized by the Morehead/Rowan County Chamber of Commerce's first LeadHERship Roundtable. Over 100 participants spent the day together in workshops and roundtables dealing with taking care of yourself and handling home and the workplace. The club was recognized as the oldest community service organization in the city or county and for the achievements many did not know the club were responsible for. Pictured accepting the award are Tammy Collins-Bonney, President; Susette Redwine, Vice President and Lois Knoll.



Bettie Carter Morgan
Woman's Club of Erlanger,
KY is hosting a **Bunco Bash**
on **July 26** starting at 1:00.
Doors open at 12:30. Tickets
are **\$20**. Contact Sherry
Decker at 853-653-4654 or
sherryd1018@gmail.com for
more information.



Fern Creek Woman's Club



The Fern Creek Women's Club took a gamble and it paid off!

For XX years the Club, located in suburban Louisville, KY, has held a card party fundraiser. Guests paid an admission fee and played cards and games for several hours while having access to a bake sale, raffles, silent auction, and more. The fundraiser was held twice a year and provided the Club with most of its philanthropic budget.



Until this year. Club President Lois Obert had the great idea to change from the cards/ games format to Bingo. Guests enjoyed free admission and purchased Bingo cards and daubers. There was a sloppy joe/ tuna salad sandwich luncheon offered, along with chips and soft drinks.

Plus the silent auction, raffles, bake sale and more.

Doors opened at 11:00 and folks were already there at 10:45! By 11:30 the Club had to find more chairs and tables, as the room was full. By noon it was packed. There was a lot of energy in the room and everyone was there to have fun...and win at Bingo!



Guests played four Bingo games, with an intermission before the final three games. Raffle drawings were held during intermission. The event lasted until 3pm.

Nearly half of the Club's membership helped make the event happen. Members did everything from donate cans of tuna and Manwich sauce to calling the Bingo games.

There was a huge bake sale offering, again donated by members. Nearly 40 community members and businesses donated raffle and silent auction items. The Club purchased paper Bingo card packets and daubers. Members donated the soft drinks, chips, tuna and Manwich cans. Members also donated gift cards, which served as prizes for the Bingo games. Everyone pitched in!



The gamble of changing from a tried-and-true event to Bingo paid off! The Club netted just over \$1,000 more than it made at the card party! Members look forward to implementing things learned at this event at the next Bingo fundraiser to be held in October.

Judy Miller

The Demographics of Domestic Violence And Some Common Signs of Abusive Behavior

Tracy Smith,
State Chairman of the Domestic and Sexual Violence

Domestic violence can happen to anyone including any gender, race, ethnicity, age and sexual orientation. However, some groups experience domestic violence at a higher rate than others. In the United States, more than 10 million people experience domestic violence in a given year. This is a very alarming number of victims to me.

Women experience domestic violence at a higher rate than men do. According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 29% of women and 10% of men experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by a partner.

People of color experience domestic violence at higher rates than their white counterparts. Black individuals experience at a rate of around 9.2%, Hispanic individuals 8.6%, American Indian/Alaska Native 8.2% and non-Hispanic whites 5.7%. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Younger individuals aged 18-24 have the highest incidences of domestic violence. Out of the total number of domestic violence survivors, 38.6% of women and 47.1% of men first experienced intimate partner violence while in that age range. (DomesticShelters.org)

Lesbian women are significantly more likely to experience abuse than their heterosexual counterparts. Over 40% of lesbian women and over 60% of bisexual women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking. For men, 26% of gay men and just over 37% of bisexual men experienced abuse. (The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence)

Common Signs of Abusive Behavior

- Telling you that you never do anything right
- Showing extreme jealousy of your friends or time spent away from them
- Preventing or discouraging you from spending time with others, particularly friends, family members or peers
- Insulting, demeaning, or shaming you especially in front of other people
- Preventing you from making your own decisions, including about working or attending school

Continued next page.....

- Controlling finances in the household without discussion, such as taking your money or refusing to provide money for necessary expenses.
- Pressuring you to have sex or perform sexual acts you're not comfortable with
- Pressuring you to use drugs or alcohol
- Intimidating you through threatening looks or actions
- Insulting your parenting or threatening to harm or take away your children or pets
- Intimidating you with weapons like guns, knives, bats or mace
- Destroying your belongings or your home

These are some warnings signs of abuse that everyone should look for especially when starting a new relationship. It is not always easy to tell when starting a new relationship if someone will later become abusive. The warnings signs of abuse don't always appear overnight and may emerge and intensify as the relationship grows.

Every relationship is different and domestic violence doesn't always look the same. However, one shared feature shared by most abusive relationships is that the abusive partner tries to establish or gain power and control.

Quasquicentennial Moments



Here are some fun facts found in our history of 130 years.

In the early 1920's, KFWC supported "The Farm for Delinquent Girls." We cannot find any documentation about the farm and if this was Jewel Manor in Louisville that KFWC supported. However, at the June 1920 Convention, each club was asked to send a "peg lamb calf or a few fowls."

Mrs. H.G. Reynolds, Treasurer, reported that for the first time in four years, KFWC had money in the treasury and the books balanced. She also encouraged all members to pay their dues by November 1 of 1920.

As a delegate to the 1920 State Convention, you were encouraged to bring a writing tablet to take notes on. You were then encouraged to take these notes home to your clubwomen and share what you learned. If you did this, you were a good clubwoman.

(Information gathered from the first KFWC Record, June 1920.)

Susette Redwine

Perennial Garden



Here is an opportunity to assist with the upkeep and beautification of our Headquarters Building. We will be putting in a perennial garden across the front of our building where some old scrubs were. This garden will consist of but not limited to Butterfly bushes and other perennials that will not require a lot of maintenance.

You or your club can donate to this project in memory or in honor of someone.....or you can just donate.

The plants will all be purchased by our project manager Dee Biebighauser. This way purchasing them all at the same time will prove beneficial in having everything ready when the time is right.

Please accept this donation towards the placement of a perennial in GFWC KY Headquarters Perennial Garden.

\$_____

In Honor of

In Memory of

Club Name:

Address:

Please make check payable to: GFWC KENTUCKY
Mail to: GFWC KY, P O Box 1587, Frankfort, KY 40602

GFWC KENTUCKY CLUBWOMAN PUBLICATION ADVERTISEMENT

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GFWC Kentucky

Kentucky Clubwoman

Please submit stories and photos for the newsletter for your club, district, and/or state

Email items to:
cheryl410@twc.com

or
mail to

Cheryl Harrington
17423 Curry Branch Road
Louisville KY 40245

Our Past to Present
Kentucky Federation of Women's Club (KFWC) was founded in July 1894 and was the fourth state to federate with General Federation of Women's Club (GFWC). In Spring of 2012 KFWC voted to change their name to GFWC Kentucky. Our state headquarters is located at 104 Lakeview Court in Frankfort KY.

Mailing address:
PO Box 1587
Frankfort KY 40602

Submit money for Ads to

GFWC KY
at the PO Box address
c/o Treasurer

We are on the web
GFWCKY.org



**2025
dates
to
mark**



June 6th – 9th International Convention in Atlanta, GA

July 18th – 19th Summer Summit 2.0 in Lexington, KY

Sept 6th Western Waterways District Conference

Sept 13th Cumberland District Conference

Sept 20th Gateway through the Bluegrass District Conference

Oct 4th Midwest District Conference

Oct 11th Golden Fillies District Conference

Oct 18th Mountain District Conference

Oct 23rd – 26th SER in Roanoke, VA