

**GFWC Civic Engagement and Outreach Newsletter January 2021**

 **Hello to All of Our State CEAO Chairmen. Thank You for sending me information about your many successful projects and for including me on your state chairmen newsletters. Clubs across our country are researching needs, organizing and delivering food to food banks and pantries, both large and small. I can imagine the relief of so many moms as they received nutritious food to feed their families. Your generosity is overwhelming. The Pandemic and social distancing may have altered our protocols and delivery systems, but our clubwomen have continued to demonstrate the “great, common, human heart of us all.”**

 **“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?” From the sermon in Montgomery, Ala, 1957, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

 **CITIZENSHIP**

**WHAT CAN A CITIZEN DO? A book written by Dave Eggers for little ones ( a sample of text from the book)**

**“We’re part of a society, one full of joy and pain. A land of latticed people. None of us the same.**

**And if we help just one, help one lonely soul, we open doors, we bring in light. We bind us all and make us whole.**

**So forget yourself a second. Grab a shovel or a pen. Do something for another. Don’t you dare doubt that you can!**

**Everything makes an impact on a bigger big than you. And it all starts with a question: What can a citizen do?”**

**Our presidential election and the Inauguration of the 46th President of the United States, Joseph Biden, and Vice-president Kamala Harris have successfully taken place. However, another occasion to vote is always around the corner and it will soon be time for town and school elections. Even with Covid restrictions, clubs will still be able to assist with elections.**

 **One Vote, Two Votes, I Vote, You Vote, written by Bonnie Worth “Voting is something we do every day. It’s a way we can choose that gives us our own say.”**

**The beginning of an imaginative way to teach children about voting. The Cat in the Hat’s Learning Library, introducing beginning readers to nonfiction.**

**Candidates Night ~ Candidates Forum -Work with town officials to get a list of potential candidates and set a date and place. -Send a letter to each candidate asking them if they would be willing to participate in a forum in which each candidate will have a specific time to present qualifications and platform. -Zoom meetings enable questions and answers, but candidates may also be filmed to broadcast on local television channels. -Some towns may allow social distancing assembly. -Club members are perfect moderators. -A club member may also be responsible for the technology. -Some towns allow citizens to count written ballots and recalibrate with machine votes. - -Check to see if this can be done by club members in your town, perhaps in a large room, socially distanced while wearing masks.**

**Voting requires citizenship. Find out if your community has a class to assist those who wish to become American citizens and take the citizenship test. Volunteer to mentor.**

**National Voter Registration Day- Fall 2020, one club filed all paperwork to become a National Voter Registration Day 2020 partner. This event took place on September 22. The club set up a table with signage in the parking lot of the town library and registered prospective voters. Many first-time voters registered, including a high school senior and a newly naturalized citizen! Check out when the next Voter Registration Day will occur.**

**Purchase and distribute copies of the U.S. Constitution. These may be for refugees - newly arrived in the United States, newly sworn-in citizens, school children, or even club members. 100 copies may be ordered for $40.00 at Freedomfactor.org 800 388-4512. September 17th of each year has been designated by Congress as Constitution Day to commemorate the September 17, 1787 signing of the Constitution of the United States. The U.S. Constitution Quiz Deck of Knowledge Cards can be purchased from the Library of Congress. “This deck of 48 cards explores the Constitution in a lively Q&A format.” Fun for a club meeting – Find out what you DO or DON’T know!**

**The United States flag is a symbol of our country. Learn to correctly fold our flag, then share this knowledge with others: schools, perhaps either at an assembly or in classrooms, scout groups or even houses of worship. The following directions are beautifully illustrated and clear to understand. https:www.legion.org/flag/folding Check with your local scout groups, nonprofits such as Girls and Boys Clubs, Girls, Inc. to see if they have a flag – or need one. They may also need resources to learn about the history of our flag, the meaning of its colors, stripes and stars, the men and women who accompanied the flag throughout its journey as an indelible part of our country, such as Frances Scott Key and the story of the Star Spangled banner.**

**GovTract.us This is an amazing website that can take you to many aspects of our U.S. Congress. It is a non-partisan, independent website tracking the status of legislation in the United States Congress. It’s the leading non-governmental source of legislative information and statistics. You can easily find your representatives and senators. Find legislation that affects you: All Bills (/congress/bills/#bystatus), Get Alerts (/congress/bills/#get-alerts), Search (/congress/bills/browse), Votes (/congress/votes).**

**Under GovTrack.us is a section titled: Bills and Resolutions. It’s truly fascinating! It lists all legislation now trending.** [**https://govtrack.us/congress/bills/**](https://govtrack.us/congress/bills/) **gets you right there. It lists bills trending in the House including topics that fall under Civic Engagement and Outreach such as firearms safety, criminal justice and amendments to the Constitution. You may find a bill that you would like to follow and send a letter of support to your Representative – or one that you oppose and want to let your representative know! If a bill aligns with a GFWC Resolution, you may put the strength of our organization within your comments to your legislator.**

 **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service ~**

**January celebrates the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a truly good man who worked to better the lives of all citizens of the United States, but especially those of our nation’s Black citizens. He fought against inequality with its relation - poverty and hunger, a goal that sadly remains with us. He believed that eradicating hunger was essential to enable all citizens to progress. Our GFWC clubs continue to fight hunger in their communities.**

**Dr. King stated, “Why should there be hunger and privation in any land, in any city, at any table when man has the resources and scientific know-how to provide all mankind with the basic necessities of life.”**

 **MLK Day of Service January 14, 2020, the Hudson Women’s Club, Hudson, NH, volunteered at the local food pantry. A group of members worked downstairs sorting canned and packaged food items. Another group worked upstairs sorting donations. A list of families with the age of their children was available. Members each took a list and piled toys and clothes into a large garbage bag for each child. Bags for each family were tied together. These bags were intended for Easter giving…getting an early start! It was a day of socializing, fun and service.**

**MLK Day of Service January 2021 ~ Pandemic and Social Distancing ~ Covid 19 has not stopped the Hudson Women’s Club members’ desire to celebrate with service. Members donated/brought cleaning items, food items, personal hygiene items to one member’s home. These were then delivered to Janice’s House, a residence for survivors of domestic violence. Service without the socializing, but service none the less.**

**\*\*Please let me know what projects your club has completed that celebrate Dr. King’s Day of Service. I will gather and send a list back out to you.**

**February is Black History Month.**

**This is a time to highlight the history of the Civil Rights Movement and the many Black Americans who have contributed to the achievements and culture of the United States.**

**A huge array of historic fiction and nonfiction books are available for our students, both young and old. Check with your school libraries, public libraries or local nonprofits that offer after-school programs. Do they have a nice assortment of books that celebrate the history of Black Americans, their significant struggles and successes? Do they have specific books they would like to have? Your club and members could help fill in the holes in their collections.**

**A popular project that has been cheered by a public library in NH involves donations by club members, in addition to funds donated from the club, to assemble a “book bag” (They often need a large tub) of books of a specific topic generated by either the librarians or club. Each book bag includes both historic fiction, nonfiction, related puzzles and games, posters and any fun or informative ephemera. These bags are kept in the Children’s Room and are lent out as a whole. Topics include Suffrage and the Women’s Right to Vote, the Revolutionary War, and The One Room Schoolhouse. The Civil Rights Movement is next!**

**Here are a few wonderful books that I have read and highly recommend: Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters, written by Andrea Pinkney Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of the Young John Lewis, by Jabari Asim March On: The Day My Brother Changed the World, by Christine Kind Farris Story of John Lewis, written by Tonya Leslie Rosa Parks, written by Eloise Greenfield These Hands, written by Margaret Maron Goin’ Someplace Special, written by Patricia McKissack Martin’s Big Words, written by Doreen Rappaport**

**\*Doverpublication.org/blackhistorymonth has paper dolls and coloring books with informative captions:**

**I know you are all working on your reports. They are such a magical history of all of the hours and effort and items that you have donated to enhance the lives of others. I am looking forward to reading them!**

**Sincerely, Nancy Greenberg, 2020-2022 GFWC Civic Engagement and Outreach Chairman** **ngreenberggfwc@comcast.net** **603 537-1756**