



Ossoli Circle

Knoxville, Tennessee



"The oldest Federated Women's Club in the South"
Founded November 20, 1885
Chartered April 11, 1932

February, 2020
Newsletter

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Ossoli Sisters,

This picture says it all! I have never been as proud as I was on Presidents' Day. It was an honor and a privilege to stand with my fellow Past Presidents and continue the GFWC Ossoli Circle legacy. Thank you for this opportunity. Over the past years your support has meant the world to me. These friendships will always reside in a special place in my heart.

We have accomplished much in 2019 and will continue our momentum in 2020. Thanks to all members for your enthusiasm in every initiative we have been involved in. From Soles4Souls to Mission of Hope to the Unicorn Fund Shoebox Christmas Project, we have bonded and connected with our community in many special ways. We have gained much recognition through blogs, tweets, newspaper articles and even through Nashville Public Television. We have the attention of Sister Chapters throughout the Smoky Mountain District as well as our Tennessee Federation and National Federation. Our enthusiasm for GFWC Ossoli Circle is contagious!

I look forward to many more fun adventures with all of you.

In Federation,

Janie Bitner, GFWC Ossoli Circle President



FOUNDER'S DAY

NOVEMBER 18, 2019

Lou McNutt, Chair of the Day, presents President Janie Bitner a GFWC Women's History Resource Center Calendar.



A VISIT TO UT UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB

When the UT University Women's Club asked me to do a program on Ginseng in the Smoky Mountains, I thought why not premier the Suffrage Movement and GFWC Ossoli Circle? I asked our very own a Robin Goddard to present "The War of The Roses" and our founder Lizzie Crozier French. These ladies were so interested in the significance of the yellow rose in "The War of The Roses". It was a wonderful networking event.



OSSOLI IN ACTION BENEFIT PARTY BENEFITTING KNOX HERITAGE AND HISTORIC WESTWOOD

Mark your calendars Ladies! LOVE IS IN THE AIR! Our annual Ossoli In Action Benefit Party for our President's Project: Knox Heritage and Historic Westwood and Ossoli In Action will be held on February 10, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Chair of The Day Renee Hamilton promises a taste of romance this year! Pasta & meat bar with bread assortment and dessert assortment to say oh-la-la!

Grab a table for 4 to play bridge!

Door prizes, a drawing for a fabulous basket, a bake sale and fun to be had by all!

Tickets are only \$25! Renee Hamilton is selling tickets each Monday at the GFWC Ossoli Circle Clubhouse!

Donations are welcome.

SOLES4SOULS

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

GFWC Ossoli Circle member Nancy Carmon traveled to the Dominican Republic with Soles4Souls and eleven other GFWC of Tennessee members on January 5-9 to distribute over 200 pairs of new shoes to children. Mostly Haitian children living in the DR do not live well (but live better than they would in Haiti), and their schools, since they are illegals and have no papers, have been organized by church pastors and meet only half a day. Needless to say, their schools are bare bones! Our contact person, Romano, also has a soccer ministry. We met with his group one evening, distributed soccer cleats, socks, and sweat towels, and gave them a small pizza party!

The new shoes come from manufacturers in partnership with S4S and go to distributions in developing countries and in the US after disasters. The used shoes that we have donated go to support micro businesses for women in developing countries. GFWC of Tennessee has donated more than 28,000 shoes. That impact will provide one year of food, education and shelter for 40 families! We keep these shoes out of our landfills and make a significant difference in the lives of women and children. Keep bringing in your unwanted, too big or too little, "it was just too cheap", worn-out shoes, boots, flip-flops, and high heels. We are truly "Living the Volunteer Spirit"!



PRESIDENTS' DAY

DECEMBER 16, 2019

Following the Presentation of Colors by the Tennessee Veterans Honor Guard, Mrs. Robin Goddard held the Presentation of Presidents. Our 2019 Presidents' Day promised a beautiful program of inspirational music. Mrs. Sarah Searle, Chair of the Day, was accompanied by Ms. Linda Williams. Mr. Mark Pace played the piano, and Mr. Nathan Pace played the violin. Acknowledgements:

Courtesy, Mrs. Janet Oakes; Decorations, Mrs. Suzann Emery and Mrs. Barbara Watkins; House: Ms. Cheri Perry; Fete Day, Mrs. Betty McKeehan and Mrs. Janet Oakes. Committee Members included Mrs. Mary Cole, Mrs. Robin Goddard, Mrs. Peggy Sood, Mrs. Barbara Watkins, and Ms. Linda William.



left to right: 1st row: Nancy Carmon, Jo Webb, Janie Bitner, Mary Carmichael; 2nd row: Susie Kelley, Janet Oakes, Roberta Pedigo; 3rd row: Janice Hixson, Lee Patton, Lexa Hooten, Peggy Sood

GFWC'S PREMIER PUBLICATION

Join more than 10,000 clubwomen and subscribe to GFWC's premier publication, GFWC Clubwoman magazine, your source for the latest club news, program updates, valuable resources, in-depth features, and helpful tips.

GFWC Ossoli Circle President-Elect will assist you. Please make your check for \$12.00 for a one-year subscription payable to GFWC Ossoli Circle.

FOUNDER'S RECOGNITION DAY

NOVEMBER 18, 2019

GFWC Ossoli Circle held their annual Founders' Recognition Day on Monday, November 18, 2019. In preparation for the program, President Janie Bitner gathered 100th Anniversary Suffrage items from the local Suffrage Coalition Director Wanda Sobieski, Suffrage Coalition Board members, and artist Mary Ruden. Members used the suffrage items to decorate the tree in the foyer of the clubhouse, and GFWC Ossoli Circle plans to leave this festive tree up through August 26, 2020. Member Lou McNutt's program focused on the founder of GFWC Ossoli Circle, Lizzie Crozier French. She was a self-described suffragist. Member Renee Hamilton presented a PowerPoint, "Women's Suffrage Movement 1780'2-1020". This was a great way to celebrate the wonderful history in the struggle for the right to vote and the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.



VETERAN'S DAY PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 11, 2019

Our first Veteran's Day program was presented by Captain April McCroskey, Army National Guard Judge Advocate General Corps (JAG). Her program was titled "For Family and Country, A Woman's Journey". President Bitner presented April with a Certificate of Appreciation for her Service and Sacrifice.



Renee Hamilton, GFWC Ossoli Circle member and a Veteran conducted a Missing Man Ceremony. Renee was also presented a Certificate of Appreciation for her Service and Sacrifice.



MARY NELLE ROBBINS

95TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Mary Nelle Robbins celebrated her 95th birthday Sunday, January 19 with friends and family at her new home. Her nieces, who live in Atlanta, had a snowflake party theme with all the trimmings. If you would like to send her a birthday card, her new address is: Mary Nelle Robbins, 770 Broome Road Apt. 254, Knoxville, Tennessee 37909



Patriotic Music Presentation with Cindy Robertson. Our second Veteran's Day presenter was Honorary Tennessee State President for Colonial Dames XVII Century. Her topic was "A History of Patriotic Music in America". President Bitner presented a Certificate of Appreciation.



LEADERSHIP DAY

JANUARY 20, 2020

GFWC Ossoli Circle's Leadership Day was a perfect celebration of the original suffrage ladies who fought for the adoption of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. Wanda Sobieski, Attorney and Suffrage Coalition President, shared the history of the suffrage movement in Europe and then in the United States. "The Woman's Hour, The Great Fight To Win The Vote", by Elaine Weiss is a must read!



Pat Clendenen kicked off GFWC Ossoli Circle's Leadership Day and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with an inspirational and uplifting invocation. The tone was set for a beautiful program and induction of new members.

New members joining GFWC Ossoli Circle on Leadership Day from left to right are: April McCroskey, Jerilynn Price, Katie Hankins, President Janie Bitner (presiding) Diana Walker and Membership Chair Tona Turpin.

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on GFWC Ossoli Circle Leadership Day marked the 25th anniversary of the day of service that celebrates the Civil Rights leader's life and legacy. Observed each year on the third Monday in January as "a day on, not a day off," MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities. The Corporation for National and Community service has been charged to lead this effort for the last quarter century. Our club was committed to lead our community in an equally great way.

Our ladies honored this national day of service by volunteering to improve our community. As GFWC Ossoli Circle members, our service project was that each member bring 2 or more cans of food from mid-

December until January 20, 2020. We provided boxes in the back of the auditorium for the canned goods. A team of our members then delivered the food items to Second Harvest Food Bank.

Second Harvest Food Bank is one of GFWC Ossoli Circle's Community Service Projects for 2019-2020.



All were thanked by President Bitner for their willingness to serve our wonderful club and GFWC.

APPALACHIAN ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE UNICORN FUND LUNCH

Our GFWC Ossoli Circle Appalachian Assistance Committee encouraged all members to attend the Unicorn Fund Lunch on Sunday, December 1, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 185 Woodland Street, Huntsville, TN 37756. This festive event always promises delicious food and it gives us an opportunity to meet the leaders of the Unicorn Fund, our scholarship recipients and their families, and for us to spread holiday cheer. Attending from GFWC Ossoli Circle were Susie and Lynn Kelley, President Janie Bitner and Recording Secretary Nancy Christmas.



APPALACHIAN ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE UNICORN FUND SHOEBOXES AND TOYS

Appalachian Assistance Committee Member Janice Hixson organizes the shoeboxes and toys for the Unicorn folks in Wartburg to pick up at our GFWC Ossoli Circle clubhouse on Monday, December 9, 2019. Whew! All of those shoeboxes filled by all of our wonderful members just barely fit in the Unicorn van! Many thanks to Janice for her dedication to this worthwhile project year after year!

Mission of Hope toys donated by members for this very special GFWC Ossoli Circle Community Service Project were delivered to the Mission of Hope warehouse by President Janie Bitner and President-Elect Wanda Taylor.

What a wonderful way to brighten corners for those that are less fortunate!



FEMALE VETERANS' HONOR AIR

"WELCOME HOME" PROJECT



We are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War and why not honor our female Veterans with a "WELCOME HOME" at McGhee Tyson Airport on April 15, 2020. Greeting our Veterans with goody bags and participating in writing letters and signing cards that will be handed out to them at "mail call" while in flight will be our way of thanking them for their distinguished service and sacrifice for our country and our freedom.

More to come on the goody bags, letters and cards. Thank you for all YOU do to make GFWC Ossoli Circle the great club that it is!

The Honor Air flight on April 15, 2020 will honor East Tennessee women veterans. The itinerary will be changed to include the Women in Military Service for America Memorial in Washington DC built to honor their service. The Women's Memorial is the only major national memorial honoring all women who have defended America throughout history since the Revolutionary War.

According to Eddie Mannis, Chairman of HonorAir, "This will be our 30th flight. I wanted to focus on women veterans as 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment that guaranteed and protected women's constitutional rights and gave them the right to vote.." The flight will also honor Avonia B. Thress of Hamblen County whose estate made a significant contribution to HonorAir.

A prohibition on women serving in combat was in effect during the Vietnam War and

beyond. It was not until 2015 that all combat positions were open to them. Consequently, the flight is open to women veterans with priority given to those serving their country through 1992 .

NEW MEMBERS

Katie Hankins



Katie is an Army veteran serving in the communications core. She was born in Minnesota but grew up in Florida. Hankins moved to Knoxville in 2002 after visiting many places and decided Knoxville would be the place called home. Katie spins wool into yarn. She has a collie named Ava, a not so distant relative of the TV star Lassie. Katie is also writing a book!

April McCroskey



April is a Knoxville native graduating from Bearden High School and Maryville College. April and her husband Lee have 2 children, an eight-year-old son, Liam and a six-year-old daughter, Lila. McCroskey is an avid runner. She is on active duty in the Army National Guard and serves as a JAG officer.

Jerilynn Price



Jerilynn Price is originally from Des Moines, Iowa. Price is retired from the Speech Department in Knox County Schools. She and her husband have two grown children. Daughter Pamela Sui and husband Rex live in Johnson City with their two children. Rex is a medical student. Her other daughter, Leann and her husband Jeremy live in Cincinnati, Ohio. Jerilynn is rediscovering what she would like to do in retirement but enjoys cooking and reading.

Diana Walker



Diana is the mother of five children, three boys and two girls along with four grandchildren, two boys and two girls. She is originally from East St. Louis, Illinois. Walker is an associate minister for St. Paul Missionary Church in Knoxville. She loves to sing and is a member of the church Praise Team and the choir. Diana is also a licensed beautician.

Diane Gardner



Diane was born in Buffalo, New York. Her family moved to Bristol, TN when she was 7. She has lived in Knoxville, since 1972. Gardner retired from the University of Tennessee, where she managed a National grant and was the Associate Director of the Center of Literacy Studies. She has 3 children and loves to quilt and travel.

DEATH OF MEMBERS

“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.”
- Pericles

“If you’re going to live, leave a legacy. Make a mark on the work that can’t be erased.”
- Maya Angelou

Marion Burchfield

Deceased September 23, 2019