



# GFWC OSSOLI CIRCLE

## NEWSLETTER

### APRIL 2025



#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It certainly has been busy and fun this year with many activities, programs and projects. For my President's project, the *Wesley House Community Center*; three members purchased tables at the Wesley House Tablescapes fundraiser on February 22. *Wesley House Community Center's* vision is for the Beaumont, Lonsdale, and Mechanicsville communities to be equipped with the spiritual, emotional, and educational resources needed to thrive.

On March 14 we hosted a group of senior citizens (the Grannies) from Wesley House for lunch and bingo. They loved the field trip to our clubhouse, a delicious lunch, bingo games, prizes and singing. We also sent lots of toys, games and children's furniture back with them. All 25 attendees said they couldn't wait to come back.

Another highlight of the year was having Joan Cronan for Leadership Day. We had to work with Joan on a day she could attend, but it was so worth the wait to hear this amazing lady talk about her life journey, University of Tennessee leadership, and college athletics.

There have been so many interesting programs on history, opera, theater, music; even tips on preparation for disasters. We enjoyed many special projects to benefit our charities, such as handbags for hope, encouraging cards for victims of human trafficking, and our children's projects. We journeyed on an Ossoli safari and dressed up for the white linen luncheon in hats we created.

Even a field trip to see the beautiful tulips at the Oakes Farm in Corryton was really fun.

Ahead are a few more weeks of interesting programs and projects. On April 28, there will be a memorial service for our members who have passed this club year. Also, Michael Bobo will show us his beautiful handmade specialty lamps. We will also work on a project for the Friends of the Smokies Barn Party. On May 5, the Appalachian Assistance program will present the Unicorn Fund Scholarships. We will have the last business meeting of this year where members will be presented with anniversary pins. Installation Day will celebrate and welcome the new Ossoli Circle leaders of 2025-2026. As I am looking at my yearbook calendar, it is hard to believe that my presidential year is coming to an end. It has been challenging, surprising, and fulfilling. Together we can be proud of all we have accomplished and enjoy the memories. Thanks to all my Ossoli Stars – it has been a wonderful ride.

Sherry Hillis  
Ossoli President 2024-25

#### UPDATE ON CLUBHOUSE REPAIRS AND KITCHEN REMODEL

Our clubhouse looks stunning at night after repairs to the exterior lighting were completed. New wiring, a new fixture and bulbs were installed.

There are big plans in place for this summer's remodel of the Ossoli Circle kitchen. The damaged subfloor will be replaced / repaired and new flooring will be installed. The cabinets will be refinished, painted, and the hardware repaired. The drywall will be repaired, and lighting updated. New stainless-steel countertops will be installed, and these will be donated by a generous member.



New microwave / convection ovens will be installed, donated by a generous member, and open shelving will be added. The stove and hood will be cleaned and will remain in its current location.

### **GFWC OF TENNESSEE SPRING MEETINGS**



**L to R: Nancy Carmon, Janet Amber-Harpe, Janie Bitner, Sherry Hillis, Jan Coley, Wanda Taylor, Kim Overman, Janice Hixson, and Nancy Christmas. Not pictured, Barb Ellerbrock**

Ossoli Circle members were well represented at the Smoky Mountain District Meeting and the Spring Convention of GFWC of Tennessee. Eleven Ossoli members attended the Smoky Mountain District meeting hosted by GFWC of Tennessee Valamont Woman's Club in Chattanooga. Ossoli Circle member, Barbara Ellerbrock serves as President of our district.

The 128<sup>th</sup> GFWC of TN Convention was held in Greenville, TN. Ossoli Circle had ten members present who enjoyed a weekend of great speakers and wonderful meals. President Kendra Walker Patty presided over the convention. Ossoli Circle was honored to receive first place in Civic Engagement, GFWC Signature Program, Junior

Special Projects, Communication, and 100% contribution to the Endowment Fund plus many second-place recognition awards.

Congratulations for blue ribbons to Susie Kelley for a beautiful watercolor painting (from her time in our watercolor class) of her cat and a book for children she wrote and illustrated. Pamela Schwartz also won 2 blue ribbons in the photography contest and these two entries will be entered in the National GFWC Photography Contest.



**L to R: Jan Coley, President-Elect, Lexa Hooten, GFWC of TN 2025 Tribute of Honor Winner, and Sherry Hillis, President.**

### **OPERATION SMILE PROJECT**



**L to R: Elaine Ralston, Linda Pardue, and Katie Logan**

Operation Smile gives "smile bags" to children after life-changing corrective surgery for cleft lip or palate. The small goodie bags filled with personal care and fun items give comfort and a sense of normalcy as the children recover from surgery. Ossoli Circle members filled 30 bags with donated items and additional items purchased by funds contributed by the Ossoli in Action Committee including the shipping costs.

## LEADERSHIP DAY SPEAKER



Joan Cronan, UT Women's Athletics Director, Emeritus, shared her thoughts on her leadership roles and life. She told stories of how she came to UT and what it was like to work with Pat Summit to make the Lady Vols a nationally recognized name.

## OSSOLI'S FOCUS ON CHILDREN



Last month, Ossoli Circle's Nancy Carmon gave a program to share information with our members about many club projects and programs that support children. Speakers shared information about some GFWC Affiliate Partners and other local non-profit organizations that serve children. These included: UNICEF, Heifer International, Operation Smile, East Tennessee Children's Hospital Fantasy of Trees, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, March of Dimes, Shot@Life, and Childhelp. All were asked to take a bag of pinwheel supplies to support Child Abuse Awareness and to plant a pinwheel garden in their yard.

## DUES AND YEARBOOKS

It is time to pay your dues for the 2025-2026 club year at Ossoli Circle. You may bring your check (made out to GFWC Ossoli Circle) for \$150.00 to any meeting or mail to Ossoli Circle, P.O. Box

10892, Knoxville, TN 37939-0892. Add an extra \$5.00 if you want your yearbook insert mailed to you. Please support our club.

## INTRODUCING OUR NEW MEMBERS

Three new Ossoli Circle members will be introduced at the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. **Mitzi Good**, a retired school counselor, who enjoys painting and community involvement, such as KARM and Serenity House. **Debbie Coyle**, a retired nurse, loves to garden and enjoys ancestry research. **Nancy Farris** retired after 42 years teaching at Carson Newman University. She likes to travel and enjoys reading. Please welcome these amazing ladies to Ossoli Circle

## IN MEMORY



Arline Blier  
Feb. 2, 2025  
Ossoli Member 2005-2025  
Honorary Associate



Monica Harrison-Maples  
Feb. 22, 2025  
Ossoli Member 2016-2025  
Honorary Associate



Lee Patton  
Feb. 6, 2025  
Ossoli Member 1987-2025  
President 1996-1997



Carolyn Ferguson  
April 8, 2025  
Ossoli Member 1994-2025  
Honorary Associate

## IMPORTANT DATES AHEAD

Student Scholarships	May 5
Appalachian Assistance	
Business Meeting	May 5
Installation Day - Fete Day	May 12
GFWC Annual Convention	June 7-9
Atlanta, GA	