



HEALTH and WELLNESS HAPPENINGS

NOVEMBER is:

Lung Cancer Awareness
Month

American Diabetes Month

National Family Caregivers
Month

National Alzheimer's Disease
Awareness Month

National Healthy Skin Month

National Pancreatic Cancer
Awareness Month

Stomach Cancer Awareness
Month

Prematurity Awareness
Month

National Epilepsy Awareness
Month

November 16
Great American Smokeout

November 23
National Family Health
History Month

DECEMBER is:

National Safe Toys and Gifts
Month

December 4-8
National Handwashing
Awareness Week

National Influenza
Vaccination Week

December 1
World AIDS Day

December 3
International Day of Persons
with Disabilities

Happy Healthy Holidays!

Avoid the trap of "holiday thinking". Special occasions come and go, but good health stays with you forever.

~ Sarah Forgrave



National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life, while Alzheimer's is a specific disease where brain cell connections and the cells themselves degenerate and die eventually destroying memory and other important mental functions. Alzheimer's Assoc.

- *1 in 3 seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another dementia. It kills more than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined.
- *Over 11 million Americans provide unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementia.
- *In 2022, unpaid caregivers provided an estimated 18 billion hours of care valued at \$339.5 Billion.
- *The lifetime risk for Alzheimer's at age 45 is 1 in 5 for women and 1 in 10 for men.

If a loved one or friend begins to act differently, has difficulty performing simple tasks, exhibits signs of memory loss that impact daily life, or has confusion with time or place, seek support services, plan for the future, and access treatment.

The Alzheimer's Association has a series of educational videos that provide - information on the disease, guidance for caregivers, and reinforcement for those living with Alzheimer's.

<https://www.alz.org/help-support/resources/care-education-resources>

The Westford WC (MA) members made 41 decorative fabric pumpkins delivered to a memory care assisted living community for Alzheimer's and dementia clients. Valmont WC (TN) and Granbury WC (TX) made fidget quilts and aprons (sensory stimulants) for dementia and Alzheimer's patients.

Put an End to Alzheimer's! **Join the Walk.** Want to support the mission but don't have a team in your community? Donate to the **Diamond Daisies of GFWC.** This chairman aims to raise \$5,000, but we can do more! Click on the QR code or link below.

https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2023/DC-NationalCapitalArea?team_id=831180&pg=team&fr_id=16447



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AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH

One in 10 Americans have diabetes. Another 84 million are at risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes.

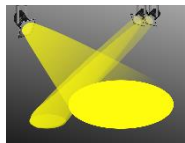
A proportioned diet of non-starchy vegetables, lean protein, and carb foods is essential in the control of diabetes. Visit the CDC for a Diabetes Meal Plan.

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/eat-well/meal-plan-method.html>

The GFWC Moultrie Federated Guild (GA) prepared Diabetes Crash Kits for schools. School nurses respond to students who have a diabetes alert situation. Due to a lack of funding, nurses supply items out of their own pocket. The donations of juice boxes, peanut butter crackers, granola bars, and gummy snacks were warmly accepted.

NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH HISTORY MONTH

GFWC/Iowa Lake City Monday Club and the Roxbury Woman's Club (NJ) promoted Files of Life, a form which lists medication and other health information for individuals in households. A magnetic clear plastic sheath is supplied to post this vital information on a refrigerator. Working with emergency and hospital personnel, the clubs distributed forms to Meals-on-Wheels clients, neighbors, and friends.



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS



March of Dimes: Prematurity Awareness Month

Each year, one woman dies every 12 hours from pregnancy-related causes, and 1 in 10 babies is born too soon. GFWC has worked alongside the March of Dime since 1938.

Many clubs have assembled personal care kits for parents whose preemies are being treated in the NICU.

Refer to the Affiliate Guide in the GFWC Member Portal for project ideas and patterns. <https://gfwc.users.membersuite.com> Digital Library>Resources>A>Affiliates.

The WC of (WVA) pledged \$10,000 to the local NICU to improve the aesthetics of the NICU to make it a warmer and more welcoming environment for the families. Quester Members of Hutchison(KS) crocheted numerous hats for the March of Dimes Purple Hat Project.



In Recognition of:

International Day for People with Disabilities

Founded in 1975, Canine Companions, the largest provider of service dogs in the world, aims to enhance independence for children, adults, and veterans with physical disabilities.



Live near a regional training center? Arrange a tour or provide meals when team training is in session.



Arrange for a puppy raiser, staff member, or graduate team to speak at a club meeting.



Redecorate a dorm room.



Raise funds to sponsor a dog.



Participate in a local DogFest. canine.org/dogfest.

November is National Family Caregivers Month

Over 53 million Americans are unpaid caregivers to family, friends, and neighbors. During November we are encouraged to recognize the selfless contributions they make and to provide support and tools they need.

Are you a caregiver? Seek support from other caregivers, take care of yourself, accept offers of help and suggest how others can help you, learn how to communicate effectively with doctors, take respite breaks, organize medical and legal documents, and watch out for signs of depression. <https://www.caregiveraction.org>



Health and Wellness A - Z (or W)



This publication and future issues will highlight *Health and Wellness A-Z*, a list of project ideas from each state.

ILLINOIS – The Lisle Woman’s Club supported The Peyton Hearts Project to help raise global awareness of suicide and bullying. Members crocheted 10,916 hearts and attached messages such as “You are truly beautiful” or “Your journey will be worth it”. The hearts are placed in public places around the world for people to find them. The Downers Grove Junior Woman’s Club planted produce and maintained beds in the gardens of the local food pantry. This allows for fresh nutritious offerings.

INDIANA – The GFWC North West Indiana WC made wheelchair lap blankets for senior residential facilities. This club also made Port Pillow and Comfort Pillow for cancer patients. The Muster JWC of the NW District prepared and delivered meals to a fellow member battling cancer. Following her passing, the club continued to provide meals for her husband and children. The GFWC Fayette County ESO Club donated greeting card “fronts” to be used for crafts at the St. Jude Ranch for Children.

IOWA – The GFWC Iowa Yorel Study Club focused on Health & Wellness programs for their meetings. Topics included: Bedside Manners, a practical guide to visit the ill, Narcotics Anonymous: Decrease sodium without losing flavor, coping with holiday depression, and Girlfriend Wisdom- be calm and carry on. The GFWC/Iowa Bancroft History Assembly sponsored a booth at their local Farmer’s Market focused on Organ Donation. Information was available, sign-up forms were provided, and pins, bracelets, and pens were distributed.

KANSAS- The GFWC Athena Club made cheery bibs for the clients in a rehab facility. The Waterville Shakespeare ladies held a luncheon recognizing National Pharmacist Day featuring a local female pharmacist. Members of Classics of Lawrence provided transportation for Seniors to medical and dental appointments.

KENTUCKY – Members of the Jackson WC and Barbourville WC promoted programs to educate their members and the community on substance misuse and prevention. Jackson Club members attended Narcan training. The Okolona WC assisted in a Valentine’s Day project for Norton’s Children’s Hospital to lift the spirits of their patients.

LOUISIANA- The GFWC Houma JWC participated in the National Teal Pumpkin Project which brings awareness to food allergies. The DeQuincy Study Club received a substantial donation of disinfecting supplies from Global Citizen USA. The club distributed them at farmer’s markets, churches restaurants, elderly housing, schools, and a union hall. Their mantra- a happy community is a healthy community.

MAINE – Members of the GFWC Skowhegan Woman’s Club toured the Somerset Sports & Fitness facility which is connected to the local hospital. Members were educated on their offerings and fitness philosophy. The Patawa Club partnered with the Brewer Rec Center 5th graders to plant a Yellow Tulip Project garden; a program designed to destigmatize mental health.

MARYLAND – The GFWC Civic Club of Oakland participated in the Annual Warm the Children Program. Members shopped for children of 81 families.

MASSACHUSETTS- The GFWC Taunton and Raynham Juniors filled gym bags with hygiene products, socks, and blankets for Morton Hospital to be used by staff in treating the homeless and those in need. The Westborough WC participated in their town’s Kindness Week. The club hosted 2 activity stations-gratitude cards and a paper quilt.

MICHIGAN- Reed City GFWC donated 30 \$25 gas cards to the local VA Medical Center to help offset the expense veterans incur attending appointments. The GFWC Rochester JWC and the GFWC Charlotte, along with other clubs educate members monthly on various health topics via newsletter articles and meeting flyers. Personal stories of members’ health challenges are included.

The GFWC Menominee WC created the Prevent Bullying Laundry Project to serve the needs of Laundry-challenged students. Laundry Soap Sheets were creatively packaged and provided to the guidance office.

International Day for People with Disabilities

December 3



This day aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

***Of the one billion population with disabilities, 80% live in developing countries.**

***One in 5 women is likely to experience a disability in her life.**

***One in every 10 children is a child with a disability.**

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-of-persons-with-disabilities>

The GFWC Oviedo WC (FL) provided a festive Christmas Party with gifts for the clients of Helpers in Heels, an organization that provides life and job skill training and opportunities for people with disabilities.

The Greater Keller WC (TX) provided a generous grant to the Neuro-Assistance Foundation for treatments for individuals with spinal cord injuries or birth defects.

The GFWC Heritage League of Lincoln (NE) provided generous funds to the Lincoln Community Playhouse to build a wheelchair ramp so disabled children can perform on stage.

National Epilepsy Awareness Month

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that can affect anyone regardless of race, age, or gender.

1 in 10 people will have a seizure.
1 in 26 will develop epilepsy.

Advocate for “Seizure Safe Schools”, legislation that requires school personnel to have training. Post a seizure first-aid poster at work or school.

<https://www.epilepsy.com/volunteer/spreading-awareness/national-epilepsy-awareness-month>



THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT- How to Help Someone Quit Smoking

Do respect the person who is trying to quit. It is their lifestyle, not yours.

Do help the person get what they need – hard candy, straw to suck on, fresh veggies cut up in the fridge.

Do make your home smoke-free. Remove ashtrays, matches/lighters.

Do celebrate progress along the way and thank them for not exposing others.

Don’t nag or preach

Don’t take grumpiness personally

Don’t assume they will start smoking again if there is a slip.

For more Dos and Don’ts <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco/helping-a-smoker-quit.html>



Community Connection Initiative



As we age, we find that there are many benefits to regular physical activity. It helps us enjoy day-to-day life and maintain our independence. It is still not too late to develop a Community Connection Initiative. Why not focus on the senior citizen population? Underwrite a calendar of monthly dance classes at the senior center. Each month could focus on another type of dancing, i.e., line dancing, square dancing, salsa, low-impact clogging, ballroom, or swing. Sponsor a bowling or beanbag baseball team. Purchase a Corn Hole game set for a local assisted living facility and visit monthly for friendly competition and interaction. Support local Senior Olympic participants.

Contact your local senior citizen center, recreation center, or assisted living facilities. Join in the Fun!

Holiday Self-Care Tips



Make space for messy feelings like grief.



Learn to say no without feeling guilty.

Create your own holiday traditions.



Keep your stress levels in check. It's okay to step back or delegate.



Set realistic expectations for yourself and the holiday.



Make a plan and try to stick to it. Organization is key.

Keep your self-care routine or begin a new one.



Give yourself permission to let it be a normal day.



BlessingManifesting

Eat well to maintain your focus and energy through the demanding holiday season. Fun Fact: Our brains consume a full 20% of the body's total energy. A crucial factor in maximizing mental processing is to keep blood sugar on an even keel. Here are 5 snacks your way to improved mental clarity and defeat the dreaded 3 p.m. crash.

Hard-boiled egg, Clementine, and Green tea.

Blueberries and Cheese

Nuts and dried Fruit

Hummus with celery and red peppers

Dark Chocolate with nuts.

National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

As the holidays approach many clubs are organizing events or projects to brighten the lives of needy or at-risk children in their community. Everyone must be mindful that the gifts we give, suit the age and abilities of the child, especially those under the age of 3. Provide safety tips to those participating in your toy collection.



- Inspect all toys for points and sharp edges. Avoid projection toys.
- Consider gifting safety gear along with sports equipment (helmet with a skateboard).
- Purchasing toys for children with special needs? Choose those that appeal to different senses, such as sound, texture, and movement. Think about the size of the toy and the position the child will need to be in to play with it.

For more tips visit the American Public Health Association

<https://www.apha.org/events-and-meetings/apha-calendar/2019/safe-toys-and-gifts-month-2019#:~:text=Description,Toys%20and%20Gifts%20Awareness%20Month.>

Guest Writer's Corner

The Change Matrix™

Penelope Olson, Health and Wellness Chairman, Massachusetts

Health and wellness – we hear those words all the time, coupled as partners. And, are they really the same? According to the GFWC club manual, health is the goal, while wellness encompasses the actions taken to achieve it. It further states that we cannot always choose the state of our health, however, we can choose to take action toward wellness.

On The Way to Wellness

Most often, the path to wellness requires change. It might be a shift in behavior, lifestyle, or attitude. Sometimes, it requires changing our stories of the past, being grateful for the present, and looking forward to what's possible in the future.

In any case, the road to wellness requires a transition, a change. And, with change comes stress and anxiety. Our reactions to change can be messy because we enter uncharted territory.

We get sad and angry about the past and worry about the future. We retain our people-pleasing tendencies, looking to be the solution for everyone and everything. Dancing through change with less anxiety, and even grace, requires that we move with intention. How do we do this?

Introducing the Change Matrix

The Change Matrix is a 6-step process to assist you in working with change. Using CHANGE as an acronym reminds us of the shifts that, when mindfully applied, support your journey toward wellness.

C	Commit to the change. This is the first critical step in successfully making a change, as perseverance is key to any transition.
H	Hunt for solutions. Begin your research by creating a series of actions that will keep you committed to making the change. Once you've set your intention, answers will start appearing.
A	Adjust your attitude. Check your attitude whenever you find yourself complaining, blaming, or falling into self-deprecating ways. Remember, you have the power to change your thoughts.
N	Nurture yourself. Take the time to engage in activities that bring you joy. It might be dancing, reading, visiting friends, painting, or anything you enjoy. The ultimate goal is to nurture your soul.
G	Give gratitude. Be grateful for all the areas of your life that are working. Particularly pay attention to successes around your committed change. And, be grateful for lessons learned.
E	Enjoy the process. It's essential to smile and celebrate when you make choices that keep you on track.

The list above may seem linear. However, it is really a matrix. To work with this matrix takes time as you check in with your thoughts and feelings throughout the day. Listening to those answers can give you an indication of which part of the matrix you are in at that moment.

Let's suppose you are feeling grumpy and heading down a rabbit hole into negative thinking, or maybe your body is starting to experience some pain and discomfort. Go into the Change Matrix and choose what would be the most beneficial action for you at that moment. If, for example, you're feeling stiff, moving to music might be an excellent option to release energy and feel good.

Keep in mind that our needs are dynamic, not static. An hour later, everything might change, and now you may need a different tool to continue your wellness journey. Repeating this process will take you from where you are – to where you wish to be – gently putting you back on the track of your desired intention with kindness, respect, and love for yourself. Wellness is a *journey* to health.