**ENVIRONMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM**

**Keeping Waterways Clean**

GFWC North Pinellas Woman’s Club (FL) partnered with “Keep Pinellas Beautiful,” which has initiated a new program in conjunction with the University of Florida to collect, filter, and microscopically identify the presence of microplastics in their local waters. Nine of their members are being trained to test waters and identify microplastics. Microplastics are plastic particles that are less than .2 inches long and pose a danger to our oceanic wildlife and the food chain.

**Repurposing Plastic Bags**

GFWC Hastings Women’s Club (MI) made sleeping mats from plastic bags. They collected more than 600 bags, cut them into strips known as plaryn, rolled them into a ball, and crocheted them into mats. They then put a Zoom presentation together on how to make the mats from beginning to end. The presentation was nearly two hours long with step-by-step instructions from three club members. Eighteen members across the state attended this Zoom presentation.

**Mason Bee Revolution**

Hartwell Woman’s Club (GA) watched a PBS show called *Growing a Greener World*, which included a segment on the “mason bee revolution.” According to the segment, mason bees are 30 to 60 times more effective at pollinating than honeybees – one female mason bee is like having 100 honeybees – and they are non-aggressive and safe for children to observe. They ordered mason bees, built a stand, and set up their hut in the “Sun Perennial Garden” in the Hart County Botanical Garden.

**Environmental Education**

GFWC Woman’s Club of Tidewater (VA) supported Lynnhaven River NOW to spread awareness about the importance of healthy waterways. They joined with teachers to create a take-home lesson kit for preschool students. Members helped plant 400 trees to combat coastal flooding and climate change. They continue to work to educate residents, businesses, and schools about ways to clean-up and protect water resources.

**Reducing Pollution**

GFWC Women’s Civic League of Cheyenne (WY) partnered with the Laramie County Conservation District, the Cheyenne Rotary Clubs, and the Casper, Wyoming-based Frog Creek Partners to help improve the water quality of Crow Creek. Water filtration units called gutter bins, with removable and recyclable filters known as mundus bags, were installed around downtown Cheyenne to reduce the pollution that washes into Crow Creek each year. The club purchased the mundus bags for the gutter bins.

**Protecting Pets**

GFWC Hudson Women’s Club (NH) held a rabies vaccination clinic at the Hudson Police Department complex. Members were responsible for directing traffic and filling out paperwork. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they wore masks outdoors with clipboards that were handed to each incoming car. A veterinary assistant took each animal into the shelter for their shots, so the animal parents never had to leave their cars. In addition, the club brought needed supplies to the shelter.

**Reducing Plastic Waste**

GFWC Village Improvement Association of Rehoboth Beach (DE) collected 500 pounds of unwanted plastic bags, which is approximately 40,500 plastic bags. They signed up with the TREX Recycling Challenge and sorted, weighed, and dropped off the bags at a participating grocery store recycle bin. They were awarded a bench valued at $299. The bench was placed in the Memorial Garden at their clubhouse. TREX uses plastic film in their composite decking.

**Collecting Corks**

GFWC Greensboro Woman’s Club (NC) held a program to recycle corks through the Cork Club, a sustainability initiative funded by Widget Co., Inc. This organization donates up to two cents for each natural wine cork received toward forest and ocean conservation. Shipments to Cork Club must be a minimum of 500 corks. They collected from restaurants, bars, and family, and shipped more than 33,864 corks or 338 pounds of cork.

**State-Wide Recycle**

GFWC Illinois held a state-wide project to partner with Terracycle to recycle laundry detergent and fabric softener bottles. They contacted Terracycle, chose a recycle program, set up a collection site, and sent the items to Terracycle. Terracycle sent a free shipping label to be used on their donation shipment.

**Clean Sweep**

GFWC Florentine Club (MS) participated in Pearl River’s “Clean Sweep” at Belhaven Beach along the Pearl River. This river cleanup event removed 4,000 pounds of trash, including 36 tires.