**Third Thursday Briefing – November 17, 2022**

The first Third Thursday Briefing featured the following information:

**Becoming a LEADS Candidate – Joan Beard, GFWC MO Leadership Chairman**

Joan shared information about how to apply to be the GFWC MO LEADS Candidate for 2023. The application is on our state website and needs to be submitted to Joan along with a photo and two letters of support from active GFWC members no later than February 1, 2023. The candidate that is chosen will be invited to attend LEADS in Louisville, KY, on June 9, 2023, the day before the GFWC International Convention begins.

LEADS content may include Public Speaking/Presentation Skills, Time Management, Conflict Resolution, Body Language, Parliamentary Procedure, and Protocol. The training is a full-day training and is designed to assist future leaders in gaining skills, confidence, and commitment to pursue and achieve higher leadership experiences.

Joan shared about her experience as a LEADS candidate in 2018 at the convention in St. Louis. She also explained some of the additional training opportunities for LEADS candidates through Zoom and Facebook that have been added in recent years.

If you have any questions, please contact Joan Beard at joan.beard2016@gmail.com.

**Member Retention – Sandie Neal, GFWC MO President-Elect and Membership Chairman**

Sandie shared ideas about how to retain members which is just as important as recruiting new members. Members who actively participate in their club activities are those who will continue to be members. The engagement of members is critical to help them develop a strong attachment to their club and keep them coming back. Here are some of the ideas to keep members engaged:

* Develop a formalized mentoring program for involved members to support less active or new members.
* Request regular feedback from members to make sure their needs are being met.
* Encourage members to serve on a committee that meets their skills and interests.
* Invite members to attend a district or state conference to understand GFWC at a different level than just within their club.
* Update members regularly on progress toward club goals.
* Communicate club successes.
* Send thank you notes to members who renew to recognize their commitment.
* Give members points when they participate in activities, like frequent flyer points.
* Send get-well wishes when members are sick, so they know they were missed.
* Keep an eye on attendance. If you notice a member hasn’t attended in a while, give them a call to let them know they have been missed.
* Start a Dine and Chat monthly outing to socialize and have fun.
* Make sure club members have access to resources to help them stay connected – News & Notes, Missouri Clubwoman, Club Meeting Minutes, etc.
* Change up meetings if they are not achieving your club goals or are not being well-attended.

Membership renewal is always a continuing process, regardless of how long someone has been a member. Membership retention presents a constant challenge for all GFWC clubs. Utilize the suggestions here to spark some new ideas to keep your members engaged.

**Public Relations Thoughts – Barb Phillips, GFWC MO Communications/Public Relations Co-Chair**

Public Relations means conveying to your community who your club is and what your club does. What can you do to raise awareness of GFWC and your club in your own community? Some simple but effective strategies may include the following:

* If no one in your club can or will maintain a club Facebook page, encourage all members on Facebook to regularly post something about your club. Or submit items to the GFWC Missouri Facebook page for possible dissemination.
* If you don’t want to tackle a fancy tri-fold brochure to give to prospective members and to put out at appropriate community locations, think about a bookmark with information about your club and GFWC or a sheet of paper with that information on one side and on the other a list of programs/speakers for the year and/or fundraisers and projects.
* If contacting a reporter is difficult, write a letter to the editor with concise information about your club or club activity, or perhaps your newspaper would accept a photo with a caption of one of your activities.
* If presenting a program to another organization about GFWC and your club is overwhelming or not feasible, have a club T-shirt. Wear the shirts when engaged in a community project and when running errands and spending time with friends. That can be a conversation starter and you can increase people’s understanding and awareness of GFWC a few people at a time. It might also provide another opportunity to pass out your bookmark/flyer/brochure or to invite someone to a club meeting.

**How to Write Award Entries – Susan Gettys, GFWC MO Parliamentary Advisor & GFWC Leadership Chairman**

Writing your Award Entries (formerly known as reports) is a great way to preserve the history of your club and can also be used for promotional purposes. Sending them to the state helps share with others what you have done and allows the state chairman to recognize projects at the state convention. Projects and statistics are reported to GFWC where they are used to write grants and lobby in Washington, DC, to support our resolutions.

Projects can only be submitted in one category. Determine the category where each project fits best. If an entry would fit well in more than one category, consider a category where you do not have another entry.

Clubs can submit more than one entry in a category. Make sure it is obvious that each project is separate and should be judged separately. You can number projects if you are submitting more than one project or submit them on separate pages.

Narratives cover projects from January 1 through December 31 and will be due on January 20, 2023. Don’t wait until the first of January to begin writing your narratives. Work on them throughout the year as each project is finished. Have a committee that works on the narratives to review them and decide which category to enter for each project. Stronger narratives will describe projects your club has completed. Programs, by themselves, don’t make for engaging award entries although they are sometimes necessary for your club and a good way to spark interest in different projects.

Include all statistics with each project – number of members participating (14/20 members), how many people were impacted by your project, how much money was donated, the total value of in-kind donations, and the total number of volunteer hours spent on the project. Strong projects also include collaboration with other clubs and community resources. Projects involving most of your club members make for the strongest projects.

**Thank you**

Thank you for joining us for Third Thursday Briefings. The next one will be December 15. If there are topics you would like for us to include, please contact Susan Gettys, agenda organizer, at susan.getts@att.net.