



GFWC of North Carolina Federation Facts

1. In 1868 Jane Cunningham Croly, New York journalist who wrote under the pen name of Jennie June, attempted to attend a dinner at an all-male press club honoring Charles Dickens. Croly was denied admittance based upon her gender, and, in response, formed a club for women.
2. Jane Cunningham Croly chose the name Sorosis, for her woman's club. It is a Greek word meaning "an aggregation; a sweet flavor of many fruits."
3. Jane Croly extended an invitation to women's clubs throughout the US to attend a ratification convention in New York City. Sixty-three clubs attended and on April 24th, 1890, the General Federation of Women's Clubs was founded.
4. Upon its founding in 1890, the moto for the Federation became "Unity in Diversity".
5. Julia Ward Howe, who wrote the lyrics of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," was one of the authors of GFWC's Constitution.
6. In 1896 North Carolina Sorosis, the oldest North Carolina Federated club, was chartered in Wilmington.
7. In 1898 GFWC unanimously passed a resolution against child labor. With the help of clubwoman Jane Addams, child labor became a major area of concern for the Federation.
8. In 1899 the Goldsboro Woman's Club was founded with the mission to organize the town's women to identify and address their community's needs.
9. In 1901 the 56th Congress of the United States chartered GFWC and designated that the Federation be headquartered in Washington, DC.
10. In 1902 Mrs. Lucy Bramlette Patterson, president of the Embroidery Club of Winston-Salem, invited representatives of known women's clubs in North Carolina to come together for the purpose of organizing a federation of clubs.
11. The following clubs were present at the 1902 organizational meeting of the N.C. Federation of Women's Clubs: Sorosis of Winston-Salem, Round Table of Winston-Salem, Embroidery Club of Winston-Salem, NC Sorosis of Wilmington, the Goldsboro Woman's Club, the Circulating Book Club of Salisbury, and the Alpha Club of Statesville.
12. In 1902, a group originally organized in 1899 as the Study Club for Mothers, became the Charlotte Woman's Club.
13. In October of 1902, the first annual meeting of the NCFWC was held in Winston-Salem, with 17 clubs and 27 delegates in attendance.
14. The second Convention of the NCFWC was held in Concord in October 1903. Three new clubs had joined, including the large Charlotte Woman's Club, making a total membership of 440.

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15. In 1904 Elvira Evelyn Worth Moffitt formed a woman's club in Raleigh. The meeting was held in the State Capital Library Reading Room. There were 141 charter members and in 1906 the club was chartered as the Woman's Club of Raleigh.
16. In the early 1900s the NCFWC donated 96 traveling libraries in cases to the State Library. These circulated among communities without libraries. The cases contained 35-40 volumes of fiction and non-fiction.
17. In 1905 NCFWC adopted federation colors of blue and white. The pinecone was selected as part of the Federation pin design with a sprig of green pine for an emblem.
18. The New Bern Woman's Club was founded in 1905 with the mission to "provide educational opportunities outside the home for adult women" in an era when education was not readily accessible for women.
19. In 1906 GFWC member Alice Lakey spearheaded a letter and telegram writing campaign, which was essential to the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act.
20. In 1907 the Woman's Club of Raleigh purchased the first club-owned clubhouse in North Carolina.
21. The 1909 Convention of the NCFWC was held in the NC Hall of Legislation, now House of Representatives. The official reception was held at the Executive Mansion.
22. The first North Carolina Federation group picture was taken on the steps of the N.C. State Capitol in 1909.
23. The Greensboro Woman's Club was organized in 1909 with 157 charter members dedicated to promoting "community betterment and cultural improvement."
24. In 1910 The Clubwoman's Hymn by Mrs. R.P. Cotten and Mrs. E.C. Duncan was adopted. Midyear meetings of the Board of Directors began.
25. In 1910 competition in the Arts was begun as a Fine Arts evening at the annual NCFWC convention.
26. In the 1910s GFWC supported legislation for the eight-hour workday, workplace safety and inspections, workers' compensation, and prison reform.
27. The 1911 Convention of the NCFWC was held in Asheville and plans began for the organization of the state's clubs into eight districts.
28. Sallie Southall Cotten served as president of the NCFWC from 1911 to 1913. During this time a permanent loan fund, named for Sallie Southall Cotton, was established to benefit girls seeking higher education.
29. An initiative of Sallie Southall Cotten's presidency was having North Carolina women permitted to serve on local school boards. She was rebuffed by both the Attorney General and the Governor. After much work and cooperation with the Teachers' Assembly, a law was passed by the NC Legislature permitting women to serve on school boards.
30. In 1913 the NCFWC was issued a charter by the state of North Carolina.

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31. In 1913 “The Union of All for the Good of All” was chosen as the NCFWC moto and seal.
32. In 1913 The Board of Trustees for the NCFWC was established.
33. In 1916 GFWC worked with the Children's Bureau to promote National Baby Week. Over 2,000 clubs participated by focusing on infant and maternal mortality, birth registration, and public health facilities. The Federation's efforts resulted in the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act which advanced maternal education.
34. In 1916 Mary Belle King Sherman (Colo.), chair of GFWC's Conservation Department, helped create the National Park Service and six new national parks.
35. Kate Burr Johnson was known as the “World War I President” of the NCFWC, serving from 1917 to 1919. Her administration stressed the service of clubwomen in all war time activities.
36. In 1917 the NCFWC was actively engaged in pressing for the establishment of a reformatory for girls and women. This resulted in the establishment of the State Home and Industrial School for Girls and Women, known as Samarcand Manor.
37. In 1918, the NCFWC approved a resolution endorsing passage of the 19th Amendment—the Woman’s Suffrage Bill. Approval was telegraphed to the NC Senators urging their support.
38. During the 1919 convention of the NCFWC, clubwomen received word from Washington that the Suffrage Bill had passed Congress.
39. In 1919 under the direction of the YMCA, GFWC created the Overseas Service Unit and sent 100 young women to Europe to assist wounded soldiers in the aftermath of World War I.
40. In 1921 GFWC created the Indian Welfare Committee, which worked to improve education and health facilities on reservations, and to preserve Native American culture.
41. In 1922 the General Federation of Women’s Clubs purchased 1734 N Street, NW in Washington, DC to serve as the Federation's International Headquarters.
42. In 1923 the NCFWC convention was held in Winston-Salem with 285 delegates registered with 51 new clubs reported.
43. In 1923 the State Federation Home Demonstration Clubs was admitted to the NCFWC as an affiliated organization, with the purpose being to unite urban and rural women for the betterment of homes throughout NC.
44. During the administration of Cornelia Petty Jerman (1923-1925) the Federation BULLETIN became the NCFWC’s official publication.
45. In 1925 NC Federation president Cornelia Patty Jerman recommended the establishment of a permanent State Headquarters and \$350 was appropriated for the Headquarters Fund.

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46. In 1925 the Sallie Southall Cotten Scholarship Fund, established in 1913, reached its \$12,000 goal.
47. In 1925 the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs was aligned into 16 districts.
48. In 1925 GFWC initiated a nationwide Federation survey of the American home, which placed a spotlight on the status of technology in the home. The survey led to the inclusion of homemaker as an occupation on the 1930 United States Census.
49. In 1926 the NCFWC adopted a plan for organization of a Junior Department for women ages 16-25.
50. NCFWC opened the first Federation Headquarters in Raleigh at the Sir Walter Hotel in 1926.
51. In 1926 the NCFWC celebrated its 25th anniversary and Mother Cotten's *History of the North Carolina Federation 1902-1925* was published.
52. In 1927 the State Headquarters was established in Raleigh, and an Executive Secretary was hired.
53. In the 1930s, having founded over 474 free public libraries and 4,655 traveling libraries, women's clubs were credited by the American Library Association with establishing 75 percent of America's public libraries.
54. In 1932 GFWC established the Junior Department in response to an increasing number of younger women participating in volunteer community service.
55. In 1934 at the 30th NCFWC Convention, a motion to form a State Junior Department for those aged 16 through 25 was approved.
56. Convention pages were utilized for the first time at the 1934 NCFWC Convention.
57. In 1934 the state's magazine name was changed from the Federation Bulletin to the NC Clubwoman.
58. In 1934 GFWC began a 10-year study to review the question of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).
59. In 1940 GFWC celebrated its Golden Jubilee commemorating 50 years of Federation work.
60. In 1944, through the GFWC Buy a Bomber campaign during World War II, state federations sold war bonds worth \$154,459,132—enough money to purchase 431 planes.
61. In 1944, GFWC adopted a resolution in support of the ERA, which the Federation continues to support today.
62. In 1945 GFWC was one of five women's organizations chosen to participate in the conference to form the United Nations. GFWC representatives supported the ratification of the United Nations Charter.
63. In 1946 the position of Third Vice President/Director of Juniors of the NCFWC was established.
64. In 1950 GFWC began its relationship with the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE). The organizations jointly distributed relief shipments to Korea.

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65. In 1951 the NCFWC Headquarters building was purchased in Raleigh for \$40,000. Two staff members were hired.
66. In 1953 a one-year NCFWC administration occurred in order to conform to GFWC. The first president from the Junior ranks was elected.
67. In 1954 GFWC began the Community Improvement Program with \$60,000 in prizes.
68. The Woman's Club of Raleigh was the first state winner of a GFWC Community Improvement Program prize in 1954.
69. The NCFWC membership peaked with over 18,000 members in 1954.
70. In 1955 GFWC established the Community Achievement Program, recognizing clubs that best improved the quality of life in their communities. Now called the Community Impact Award, it remains one of GFWC's longest running and most important efforts.
71. In 1956 a permanent NCFWC scholarship fund was established.
72. In 1956, the Woman's Club of Raleigh was chosen for an article in the December edition of *Life Magazine*. The Club was featured as the "typical Woman's Club in the Nation -757 lively conscientious women."
73. In 1958 the NCFWC organized an ESO chapter.
74. In 1960 "Brighten the Night" was a nationwide Federation campaign for street lighting to prevent crime and accidents.
75. In 1961 GFWC's Women's Crusade for Seat Belts program resulted in the installation of more than one million seat belts over the course of one year.
76. In 1963 its charter was revised, and the NCFWC was incorporated as a non-profit corporation. Sub-Juniors were accepted into the organization.
77. In 1965 GFWC was awarded a stamp by the United States Post Office in honor of its 75th anniversary.
78. In 1967 Arts Festivals were held in all sixteen districts of the NCFWC.
79. In 1973 the NCFWC State Arts Festival was held at Salem College in Winston-Salem for the first time.
80. In 1967 the NCFWC celebrated its 75th anniversary. The Katie Rankin Art Fund Endowment was established.
81. In 1967 NCFWC Honorary Life Memberships were presented for the first time.
82. In 1978 The term "Sub-Junior" was changed to "Juniorette."
83. In 1982 Juanita Bryant was installed as International President of GF

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84. WC, the first North Carolinian to hold this office
85. In 1982 the first Juniorette Jamboree was held at Peace College in Raleigh.
86. In 1984 a computer system was installed at the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs Headquarters.
87. In 1984 GFWC founded the Women's History and Resource Center (WHRC) to collect, preserve, interpret, and promote information on GFWC and women in volunteerism.
88. In 1985 NCFWC established the Mary K. Paul Whitener Piano Scholarship.
89. In 1986 GFWC instituted programs to protect and preserve endangered species.
90. In 1989 the NCFWC Arts Festival included the Artfest Program to recognize the art created by mentally and physically challenged individuals.
91. In 1990 the Centennial of GFWC was observed.
92. The first federated collegiate club in the country was established at Meredith College in Raleigh in 1990.
93. In 1990 GFWC supported the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
94. In 1993 GFWC supported passage of the Family Medical Leave Act.
95. In 1994 GFWC supported the passage of the Violence Against Women Act.
96. In 1994 GFWC founder Jane Cunningham Croly was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York.
97. In 1997 GFWC renewed its commitment to libraries with the *Libraries 2000 Project*. Over a five-year period, GFWC clubwomen raised and donated \$13.5 million to public libraries and public-school libraries across the nation.
98. In 1998 the NCFWC name was changed to GFWC of North Carolina, or GFWC-NC.
99. In 1999 the Junior age was changed to 45 so long as the club member held dual membership in a Junior and a General club.
100. In the 2000s GFWC members contributed \$180,000 for a fully equipped ambulance for use by the New York Fire Department in response to the loss of equipment suffered during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001
101. In response to the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, the GFWC-NC raised \$15,400 for disaster relief in New York and New Jersey.

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102. In 2002 the GFWC-NC Lucy Bramlette Patterson Creative Writing Scholarship was established.
103. In 2002 the GFWC-NC Centennial was celebrated with a NC Historical Highway Marker placed near Salem College. A time capsule was created, and the State President's Pin was retired and replaced.
104. GFWC-NC President for 2000-2002 was Teresa Shaver Lee. Her Special Project was the North Carolina Aquarium. Over \$90,000 was given to the aquarium with the Oceans Classroom at the Fort Fisher Aquarium named in honor of the GFWC-NC.
105. In 2002 the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the GFWC-NC was celebrated with the Centennial Convention in Winston-Salem.
106. In 2002 a highway marker commemorating the founding of GFWC-NC was unveiled and a reenactment of the organizational meeting of the Federation at the actual site of that meeting took place.
107. During the 2002-2004 administration of President Pat Davis, GFWC-NC clubs reported donating nearly \$2.5 million and volunteering nearly 500,000 hours in over 8,200 community improvement and global service projects.
108. Helping the Hungry, the Homeless, and Persons with Disabilities was the GFWC-NC President's/Junior Director's Special Project during the 2004-2006 administration (Ann Vipperman/Lori Seiler). Over two million dollars and thousands of clubwoman hours were volunteered.
109. The 2006-2008 President's Special Project was "Parks as Classrooms." Under President Sandy Jahn \$70,000 was donated for the construction of a major portion of a pavilion near Linville Falls to be used as a classroom to help children learn about the natural world.
110. In 2009 GFWC supported passage of the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.
111. The 2008-2010 President's/Junior Director's Special Project (Beverly Lassiter/ Georgann Athanaelos Sapp) was Girls on the Run with clubwomen raising over \$59,000 for this organization's mission "To Educate and Prepare Girls for a Lifetime of Self Respect and Healthy Living."
112. In 2011 GFWC introduced the *Success for Survivors Scholarship*, created as part of an effort to highlight the importance of rebuilding one's life after experiencing intimate partner violence. Each year, GFWC awards \$2,500 scholarships to help intimate partner survivors obtain a post-secondary education that will offer them the chance to reshape their future by securing employment and gaining personal independence.
113. As part of the 2010-2012 President's/Junior Director's Special Project: *Literacy, the Adventure of a Lifetime*, (Sharon Greeson/Andie Johnson) the Greeson/Johnson Teaching Scholarship was established to be given to a student training to become a teacher.
114. The 2012-14 President's/Junior Director's Special Project (Wendy Carriker/Crystal O'Neal) was *Feed the Future* with focus on childhood hunger. The administration accomplished its goal of feeding 500,000 children in two years.
115. The 2014-16 President's/Junior Director's Special Project (Gay Warren/Jennifer Jobe) was *Unlocking a Brighter Tomorrow*. By working with Communities In Schools of N.C. and encouraging support of STEM

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education. North Carolina clubs accomplished 844 projects for 34,055 volunteer hours, with \$152,808 donated, and \$88,318 in in-kind donations.

116. The 2016-18 President/Junior Director (Dottie Jennings/ Heather Bolick) theme was *Focus on Federation...Building our Legacy*. This became an administration of transition. A significant goal was achieved for the GFWC-NC Legacy Fund. The Corporate Champions for Women & Children Event was inaugurated. Efforts to streamline GFWC-NC were accomplished, including bylaws revisions and a significant increase in dues to achieve a balanced budget.
117. The 2018-2020 President/Junior Director (Ann Landis/LeAndra “Nikki” Radliff) was *Healthy Women... Thriving Children*, with emphasis on taking care of ourselves so we can take care of others. 131 projects were performed with 11,882 volunteer hours. Members reported 585,679 miles walked during the 2018-2020 administration, enough to walk to the moon and back to earth. The GFWC-NC Arts Festival in March 2020 was cancelled due to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.
118. In 2019 GFWC International President Mary Ellen Brock attended and delivered a speech during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial in Lorton, Virginia. The memorial honors the millions of suffragists who fought to win the vote for women for more than seven decades.
119. In March of 2020, the coronavirus pandemic impacted both GFWC and GFWC-NC. The in-person 2020 GFWC-NC Convention was replaced with a virtual event. Incoming president Crystal O’Neil held a summer meeting at the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum, following all the CDC and North Carolina pandemic protocols. She introduced her 2020-2022 focus in the following areas: Impact NC, Sunflowers for Suffrage, Elevating Women and Girls and GFWC Signature Programs and provided a virtual roll out as well. Most clubs found ways to safely support their communities, and many turned to virtual meetings. The 2021 District and State arts festivals were held virtually, as well as the 2021 GFWC-NC Convention.
120. The Violence Against Women Act was reauthorized by Congress in March 2022 with GFWC International President Marian St. Clair present at the commemoration. The GFWC Legislative Action Center, under the direction of the GFWC Legislation/Public Policy Committee, enabled GFWC members to contact their Members of Congress multiple times throughout the legislative process.
121. On April 1st, 2022, GFWC celebrated the 100th anniversary of GFWC Headquarters at 1734 N St. NW, Washington, DC.

This Federation Facts hand out contains facts spanning the 120 years of the General Federation of Women's Clubs of North Carolina (GFWC-NC), formerly known as the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs (NCFWC), as well as important facts related to the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC.) They come from the Federation Facts Booklet compiled by Vanessa Lowder, GFWC-NC Historian (2020-2022) for distribution at the GFWC-NC 120th Annual Convention.