



THE CHATTERBOX

GFWC SUN CITY CENTER WOMAN'S CLUB

JANUARY 2026

EDITOR, CELESTE FENTON

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Caroline D'Antonio

Happy New Year—and welcome to 2026!

Dear Members,

This year is especially meaningful as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States, a wonderful reminder of community, service, and shared history.

Our January meeting will be full of creativity and fun. Members will be exhibiting their arts and crafts for judging, with winning entries advancing to the District 8 meeting in February. Our speaker will be club member, Maria Hodge, who will demonstrate how to make an appealing charcuterie board.

The Health and Wellness Committee will be collecting Christmas cards to be repurposed and sent to service members overseas—such a thoughtful way to spread cheer beyond the holidays.

A big, heartfelt thank you to Diane Alty, our volunteer for the month. Diane's incredible talent shone through in the many hours devoted to creating the beautiful gingerbread house for the Community Association Christmas Project. Those who attended our December meeting were fortunate to see it firsthand—complete with lights! It was truly a labor of love and a special gift to our community.

Please note that our January Birthday Lunch will be held on January 8 at the Sunset Grill. In honor of Elvis Presley's 90th birthday, we've been asked to wear pink—so have fun with it!

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Diane Alty, Volunteer of the Month, with Caroline D'Antonio, President

We were also deeply honored this December to receive a very generous \$5,000 gift from the Community Foundation Tampa Bay, recognizing the important work our club does in Sun City Center and the surrounding community.

Another big thank-you goes to Shawna Wainright, our Fundraising Chair, and her dedicated committee. Thanks to their hard work this past year and additional donations, our club was able to award 18 grants in May, helping so many individuals and organizations in need.

As 2025 comes to a close and 2026 begins, I want to thank each of you for your time, talent, and service. Our GFWC Sun City Center Woman's Club is truly a service club, and it is a blessing to know and work alongside such caring, generous members.

Here's to a new year filled with good health, fun times, and grateful hearts.

Warmly,
Caroline D'Antonio

**JANUARY 15, 2026
MEETING AGENDA
SCC COMMUNITY HALL**

Sign-in and Social 11:00
Opening/Business Meeting 11:30
Luncheon 12:00
Program 12:45

Maria Hodge, SCC Woman's Club member and professional chef will demonstrate creativity with color and textures in designing a charcuterie board for home and parties.

**Meeting
Reservations
Required
see page 16 for
details.**



MEETING RECAP- DECEMBER 2025

December's general meeting featured an engaging and entertaining presentation by Lee Stevens, director of the Carnival World Museum in the Gibsonton/Riverview area.

Mr. Stevens shared stories from his lifelong connection to the carnival world, offering members a fascinating glimpse into an industry rich with history, tradition, and larger-than-life personalities. He spoke candidly about growing up immersed in carnival life, the lessons learned along the way, and how those experiences eventually led him to his role preserving carnival history through the museum.

He also touched on his connection to Sun City Center, weaving personal anecdotes with humor and insight that kept the audience fully engaged. His enthusiasm for the subject—and his obvious affection for the people and stories behind the spectacle—made the presentation both informative and highly entertaining.

Members thoroughly enjoyed Mr. Stevens' lively storytelling and unique perspective, and his talk was a wonderful way to round out our December meeting.

Lee Stevens is widely respected within the circus and carnival community as a longtime showman, historian, and preservationist of American carnival culture. He spent many years touring with traveling shows, including animal acts, gaining firsthand experience of life on the road and the traditions that defined classic carnivals and circuses. Mr. Stevens held leadership roles in the industry, working to preserve the history and legacy, and supports local projects within the community. Presently, he serves as director of the Carnival World Museum, located at 6938 Riverview Dr.



Lee Stevens with President Caroline D'Antonio, and Program Director, Shawna Wainright

Angel Tree Hope Fund

Every child deserves a gift at Christmas. And the SCC Woman's Club enjoyed giving from their hearts to migrant children in Wimauma through the HOPE Fund Angel Tree. Christmas gifts totaled \$2,600 and children were overjoyed to receive their gifts.



Joyful Residents at Belvedere Commons receive Christmas gifts

The SCC Woman's Club members shopped and collected 50 gifts for 50 lonely senior residents in facilities throughout Sun City Center. The total of their gift giving was \$2,200.



SCC Woman's Club Warming Hearts and Bodies



The GFWC SCC Woman's Club collected and delivered 500 items to United Methodist Church of SCC for their Bare Essentials Ministry which helps the underserved community in our area with their daily needs. The value of the items was around \$800. Items including handmade pillows, handmade blankets, all sorts of toiletries items, wash cloths, and 50 pairs of Bomba socks donated by the Kiwanis Club of South Shore. "Giving to others during the winter months warms our hearts," said Shawna Wainright, Health and Wellness Chair.

GFWC SCC Woman's Club Helps DAV

Jim Taylor from Sun City Center DAV organization accepts 60 pairs of Bombas socks and 10 handmade lap blankets from the SCC Woman's Club members. These items will be donated to patients at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa.



Director at Large

Virginia Kimball

Hello Ladies,

Happy New Year! Can you believe it?! It's 2026! Did you make a New Year's Resolution? You know, the same one you made last year and broke.

For 2026 the Sun City Center Womans Club is looking forward to many great programs, service projects, a spring and fall fundraiser, and recruiting new members to join in on the fun and volunteering to help in the community.

I encourage you to invite a friend to come with you to one of our general meetings, luncheons, bunco, birthday lunches, and committee meetings such as Arts and Culture activities or Environmental.

We work with the Hope Fund and Inspira by mentoring, reading, and tutoring children. We help C.A.H.T. by making pillows, blankets, and collecting items for their backpacks. We started Meals on Wheels for Sun City Center 54 years ago and are still lining up churches and organizations to make deliveries every day of the year.

If you have any questions fill free to ask your Board members.
May 2026 be a Happy year for all and peace on earth.

Yours truly,
Virginia Kimball Director-at-Large.

“What is GFWC” Our Mission Statement

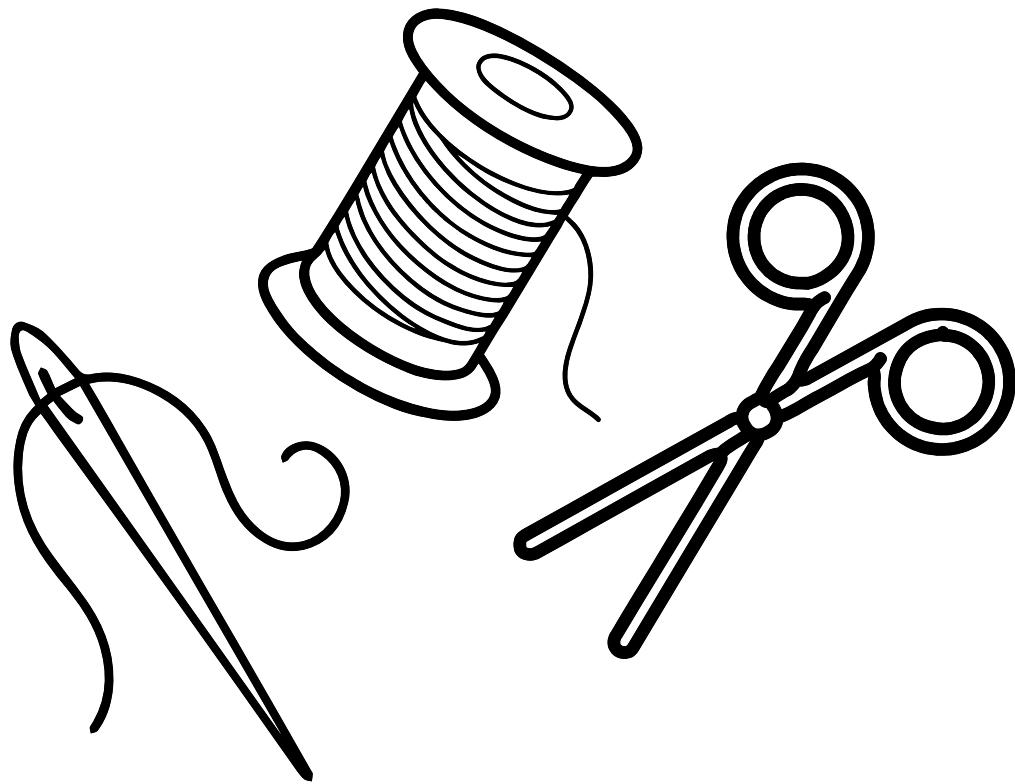
With more than 60,000 members in affiliated clubs in every state, the District of Columbia and more than a dozen countries. GFWC members work in their own communities to support the arts, preserve natural resources, advance education, promote healthy lifestyles, encourage civic involvement, and work toward world peace and understanding.



*Virginia
Kimball*

Next Meeting: January 22nd Room 3,
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Lets plan the next 5 months.
Bring thread, needles and scissors.



Diane
Alty



Karen
Begg

SENIORS IN SERVICE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

2026 Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic Expo needs 15 volunteers for Saturday, February 21st from 10am-3pm. Volunteers would be handing out Numbers and T-shirts. Volunteers will receive a t-shirt to wear.

We need to let them know ASAP. If we get a group to go, Diane Alty will volunteer to drive some of the volunteers. **If you are interested, please contact her at littlealty@aol.com by January 10th.**

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR SCHOOL PANTRY

Children will be back to school in January and the school's pantry will be pretty empty. There is so much giving at the holidays and then it drops off.

Food needed: Non-sugary cereals, breakfast bars, protein bars, bottles of vegetable oil, pinto and black beans, rice, Maseca flour for corn tortillas, tuna fish, mayonaise, Moderna pasta (.50 a bag), tomato sauce, canned sweet corn, sugar, salt, all purpose flour, and cookies.

Hygiene products: pads (no tampons), diapers, wipes, toothpaste and toothbrushes (from your dentist), soap, shampoo, detergent, clorox, etc.

When you place items on the table, please write down on the list that will be there the type of donation and total paid as the Club needs to keep track of "donations in kind." No need for your name. Thank you so much! Please be on the lookout for BOGOs and also just regular sale items.

1000 PAIRS OF SOCKS TO WIMAUMA ELEMENTARY

We delivered approximately 1,000 pairs of Bomba socks to the Wimauma Elementary School and The Lord's Lighthouse. Some were also donated to the Disabled American Veterans. Thanks to Kiwanis for donating the socks to us that they received from Bomba. Also a BIG thanks to Patsie Ginley for arranging for the donation from Kiwanis! Saved us having to buy socks and freed up our charity giving for other projects.



Leanna
Maurer

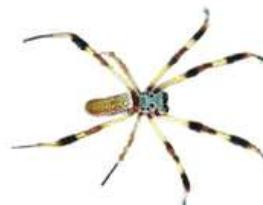
Most of us are not fond of spiders but they help to balance our ecosystem. In addition, spiders benefit our wildlife by creating a complex food chain. For one thing spiders help control insect populations. For example, the Garden ORB Weavers are spiders known for being skilled at producing webs that will keep certain insect populations from getting too high. These non-aggressive spiders can be found in your garden. Then there is the Spiney-backed Orb Weaver that keeps mosquito populations down by catching them in their webs. A bite from the spider is not known to cause serious harm to humans. The Golden Silk Orb Weaver also controls insect populations. This is one of the largest spiders in the U.S. that creates a beautiful golden web.



Garden ORB Weaver



Spiney-back Orb Weaver



Golden Silk Orb Weaver

In addition, spiders benefit our wildlife by creating a complex food chain. They are preyed upon by birds, lizards, frogs, and even larger insects. This is how they are an important connector to the food chain. Energy and nutrients are transferred between different levels.

What would happen if all spiders were to disappear? Insect populations would flourish which would cause damage to our crops, forests, and human health. Without spiders as a food source, the animal population would decline. The overall stability and diversity of ecosystems would be compromised.



How can we help? Avoid using pesticides. Leave some areas in your garden undisturbed so spiders have a place to build their webs and can hide.



*Shawna
Wainright*

FUNDRAISING MEETING

Monday, Jan. 12

**Security Patrol Social Room
1225 N. Pebble Beach Blvd.**

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Let's continue to have fun in 2026 and share ideas for our next event on Sunday, Mar. 22



Shawna
Wainright

HEALTH AND WELLNESS TEAM COLLECTING:

Used Christmas cards.

Just cut off the cover of cards and bring them to our next meeting. We will be recycling and repurposing them for service members overseas next November.



"Mats that Matter"

We will be helping the homeless by collecting your gently used yoga mats. We will freshen them up and donate them so that they can have a better night's sleep.



Karen
Oglesby

Thanks to the many club members who have volunteered to deliver meals in Sun City Center and Kings Point in December. Things are going very smoothly and every time that I personally deliver meals, I am struck by the fact that dedicated volunteers collect meals from the hospital and deliver them to our neighbors 365 days a year. What a great community we live in!

As you know, a different club, church or organization coordinates meal delivery each month. **Thanks to St. John the Divine Church, who delivered 524 meals in November.**

Temple Beth Israel has all of their volunteers set for January and Daughters of American Revolution will be delivering in February.

Fun Facts About Meals on Wheels

- It's been around since the 1950s. The program began in the U.K. after World War II and quickly spread to the U.S., where it's now a nationwide lifeline for seniors.
- More than a meal. For many seniors, the delivery volunteer may be the only person they see that day—making Meals on Wheels just as much about connection as nutrition.
- Millions served—daily. Across the U.S., Meals on Wheels programs deliver over 2 million meals every day to seniors in need.
- Safety check included. That friendly knock doubles as a wellness check. Volunteers are often the first to notice if something's wrong and can alert help.
- Local menus, local love. Meals are tailored to local tastes and dietary needs—low sodium, diabetic-friendly, heart-healthy, and culturally familiar.
- It saves money and lives. Studies show Meals on Wheels helps seniors stay healthier at home longer, reducing hospital visits and nursing home placements.
- Rain, shine... and hurricanes. Many programs deliver before storms so seniors won't go hungry during emergencies.



Sun City Center Woman's Club Group Cruise

**JOIN THE GFWC Sun City Center Woman's Club Group Cruise on the
Royal Caribbean - Radiance of the Seas – for a Western Caribbean Cruise.**

Sailing Date: September 21, 2026
Departs from the Tampa Port Terminal
Itinerary: 5-Night Western Caribbean Cruise

Starting Pricing (Per Person) is Mid-ship, Double Occupancy.
Connecting rooms available per request

Balcony: \$868.87

Ocean view window: \$625.87

Inside cabin: \$580.87

Deposit: Fully refundable \$50 per person

Due between Jan. 5 - February 5

Final payment due: June 23rd, 2026

For more details - contact
shawna.wainright@gmail.com

OR

Matthew Gordon – Cruise Planners Coordinator
at Venture Out Vacation
matthew.gordon@cruiseplanners.com
717-856-2646 (cell)



january BIRTHDAYS!

Polly Schafer – Jan. 9

Marge Hartig-Specht – Jan. 12

Vivian Boyd – Jan. 13

Rosalie Rochford – Jan. 17

Jeanne Naish – Jan. 19

Patricia (Patsie) Ginley – Jan. 28

Monthly Birthday Lunch

January 8, 2026

Sunset Grill

602 Bahia Del Sol Dr. - Ruskin

Noon to ...

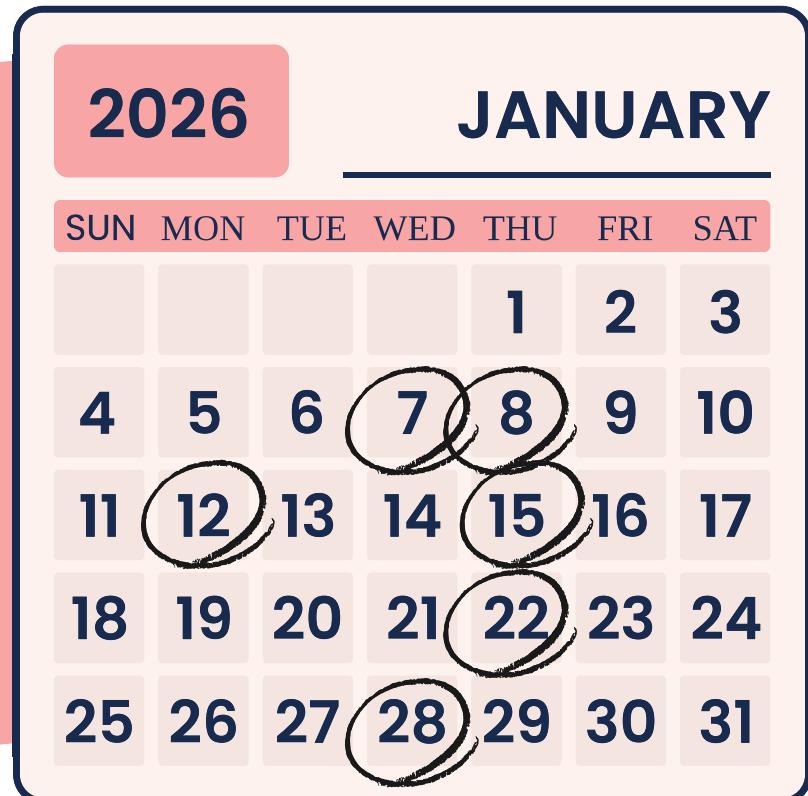
Wear pink and black In honor of Elvis' 90th birthday!

Club members meet once a month at various local restaurants to celebrate birthdays. You don't need to be a member of the SCC Woman's Club or be celebrating a birthday to join us—everyone is welcome!

To attend, please make a reservation with Valesca Lopez-Brown by texting or calling (909) 499-9885.

The luncheon takes place on the 1st Thursday of each month. You'll order from the restaurant's menu and pay for your own meal at the time. Cancellations are accepted at any time, but advance notice is appreciated since we make restaurant reservations. This is a great chance to introduce the Woman's Club to your friends!

Stay
up-to-date
on
GFWC
SCC
activities



Jan. 7 Environmental Meeting

Jan. 8 Board Meeting

Jan. 8 Birthday Luncheon

Jan. 12 Fundraising Meeting

Jan. 15 General Meeting and Lunch

Jan. 22 Arts and Culture Meeting
(9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. in Community
Hall Room 3)

Jan. 28 Bunco
(9:30 am, Sandpiper Room)

LUNCHEON RESERVATION POLICY

MEETING RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

- Reservations for members and guest(s) MUST be made in advance - this applies whether you are eating, not eating, or bringing your own lunch.
- Reservation must be made no later than Sunday night by midnight before the Thursday General Meeting.
- If you need to cancel your reservation, you must cancel by the Sunday before the Thursday meeting.
- **For reservations or cancellations:**
Email: suncitywomansclub@gmail.com
- All reservation requests will be confirmed. If you do not get a response by the cutoff date, you do not have a reservation.
- Standing reservations can be made by calling the Hospitality Director, Lucille Flatt (973) 288-4136
- **No-Show Policy:** reservations are considered a binding agreement between the Club and the Caterer. A member who makes a reservation for herself and/or a guest and does not cancel by the deadline stated above, will be required to reimburse the Club for the cost incurred within 30 days or no further monthly meal reservations will be accepted until payment is received. A member in arrears may not renew her membership until payment is received.
- **COST:** \$20 for buffet, dessert and gratuity included. Entrees will be announced each month in the Club newsletter.
- **Payment:** Checks are the preferred method of payment. If you pay cash, please provide the correct amount. If you pay by credit card, a 3% service fee will be added to the payment.
- If you come with no reservation, you will not be able to partake of the lunch buffet. However, you are welcome to bring your own lunch and utensils, and stay and enjoy the program.