THE FOOTHILL GAZETTE

GFWC CFWC Foothill District

Building Stronger Communities - Together



June 2026
Issue 18

Executive Committee
Luanne Arredondo, President
Federationlu@gmail.com

Dr. Linda Vallejo, 1st VP Dean
Vallejo48@me.com

Pat Huffman, 2nd VP Membership
pat@edmarkgraphicsinc.com

Pat Borchard, Recording Secretary
peb1956@verizon.net

Tamara Miller, Treasurer
club1270deventer@yahoo.com

Toby Kahan, Parliamentarian
tkcfwc@gmail.com

Editor: Lu Arredondo
FederationLu@gmail.com

www.foothilldistrict.org



Luanne Arredondo
President

Welcome to a new year of leadership, service, and opportunity across the Foothill District.

This year, we are reimagining our district newsletter. Your Club Presidents said they want something more useful, practical, and empowering for every club. So, rather than filling pages with reports and updates, our goal is to provide resources you can immediately take back to your club and put into action.

Each month you will find:

- Leadership tips
- Ready-to-use tools
- Club success ideas
- Meeting resources
- Membership strategies
- Communication support
- Event planning guidance

Whether you are a Club President, committee chair, new member, or active volunteer, this newsletter is designed to help your club thrive. Most importantly, it will continue to evolve based on your feedback.

This month's focus is simple: **Start Strong.**

Strong clubs are built through communication, engagement, planning, and teamwork. Small intentional actions early in the year create momentum that lasts all year long.

On June 27, individuals from your clubs will come together to help the district continue to evolve with tools, resources, and structure that support your needs. You are the key to Federation Success.

Thank you for all you do to serve your communities and strengthen our district. Together, we are building clubs that are welcoming, active, visible, and impactful.

QuickTips

QuickTips provides quick, actionable insights for busy club leaders and members. From social media ideas and membership strategies to meeting tips and project inspiration, this section delivers easy-to-implement tools that help you stay active, organized, and impactful.



Dr. Linda Vallejo
1st Vice President, Dean

Follow Through after the meeting, the 7th element of the HIGH-IMPACT MEETING

I recently read an article in the June/July 2026 ARRP magazine, titled The Visionary Gardener (page 67). The last sentence caught my eye, spoke to my heart, and helped me understand a little more about myself. The article is about Jennifer Coburn, in 1991, she invented a new kind of topiary that got Disney's attention. Jennifer shared "I still feel inspired to create …We all need to have something we care deeply about" It's where one's soul lives.

When I saw the image, "The Seven Elements of a High-Impact Meeting created by Luanne Arredondo, I immediately started thinking of ways to present the elements 1-7; Here's my first draft of items # 7. Image on next page.

Note taking follows the 40/20/40 rule which suggests dedicating 40% of your effort to pre-meeting preparation, 20% to the meeting itself, and 40% to post-meeting follow-up and action items. Implementing the 40/20/40 note taking rule helps reduce monthly meeting overload.

The process of taking notes is jotting down notes that focus on action items/activities/decisions made during a meeting, the name of who is responsible for completing the activity and includes due date of when the activity is to be completed.

The note taker should be a member of the club who is detailed oriented.The note taker concentrates on 4 elements: "decisions, owners, deadlines, and open questions. Remember the note taker is not performing the club secretary's meeting minute duties. Meeting notes are not meeting minutes, the notes focus on the work before and after … the meeting itself. (electronically retrieved from Breeze, 06-06-2026).

References:
https://www.breeze.pm/blog/6-tips-on-how-to-take-meeting-notes

As told to Gregg Segal, AARP Magazine June/July 2026 Page 67

THE SEVEN ELEMENTS OF A HIGH-IMPACT MEETING

Plan with purpose. Lead with intention. Leave with action.



LEADERSHIP REFLECTION

Before every meeting ask:

- Why are we meeting?
- Who needs to be there?
- What information should be shared beforehand?
- What decisions must be made?
- How will participation be encouraged?
- What actions will result?
- How will we measure success?

Every meeting should *strengthen relationships*, *advance goals*, and *inspire action*.

EMPOWERING CHAIRS • INSPIRING PARTICIPANTS • STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONS

© 2026 Luanne Arredondo. All Rights Reserved.

Developed from over 30 years of professional experience, education, and research in organizational leadership, strategic planning, mergers and acquisitions, governance, and change management.



2nd Vice President Membership
Pat Huffman

RETENTION

Retaining club members during the summer can mean shifting from regular monthly, indoor meetings to flexible, low-commitment social events. Maintain connection with casual outdoor meet-ups (like park picnics or local winery tours), hosting informal committee planning, and checking in personally with members.

Summer is famous for disrupting routines with vacations and other time away, making it the perfect time to schedule fun events. Ways to keep your members active and connected include:

Embrace the Outdoors: Host evening socials, "Mimosas and Mingle" on a local patio, or plan gentle group walks at nearby nature spots or a summer potluck theme combined with a game night.

- **Offer Casual Alternatives:** Since summer is usually when clubs "go dark" from formal meetings, keep the momentum going with optional, low-pressure events like book clubs, potlucks, or DIY workshops at a member's home (if you don't have a clubhouse).
- **Prioritize Flexibility:** Make it clear that the summer activities are "optional" and that members don't feel guilty if unable to attend. Consider "summer pause" options so members can easily resume in the fall. Make them so fun that they won't want to skip.
- **Rethink Philanthropy:** Service doesn't have to stop for the summer. Organize a lightweight, project, such as assembling care packages or a weekend bake sale or collection of needed items for a charity.
- **Leverage Mentorship:** Assign "buddies" or mentors to check in on members who haven't attended in a few weeks. A quick phone call, email, or text can make them feel deeply valued.

MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE: Even if "buddies" have not been assigned, check in with a member you don't usually contact and let them know you are thinking of them and hope to see them at the club's next activity.



Recording Secretary
Pat Borchard

Welcome to your position of Recording Secretary. Here are some helpful tips as you begin your journey as your club's Recording Secretary.

- Refer to your club's bylaws which should list what your job duties are as Recording Secretary.
- Stay organized by keeping a notebook or digital document for meeting notes.
- Familiarize yourself with the agenda prior to a meeting.
- Use clear and concise language when taking minutes to ensure accuracy.
- Record decisions, action items(motions), and deadlines.
- Review and distribute the minutes promptly. Reference your club's bylaws which may indicate a timeframe in which the minutes have to be distributed. Some clubs attach the minutes from the meeting to their monthly newsletter for members to review prior to the meeting.
- Keep hard copies of minutes in a notebook and be prepared to hand them over to your successor.
- Remember that if corrections are made to the minutes, it is not a personal attack.



Treasurer
Tamara Miller

Two questions to ask yourself:

1. Why do we have meetings? Some clubs meet because the bylaws require so many meetings per year. The best reasons for group meetings are for decision making, problem solving, planning and evaluation. Meetings will run more smoothly, more inclusive, and will be more productive if members have responsibilities. While it is not the members job to produce the agenda, it is the members responsibility to be on time, review the agenda, pay attention , no whispering during the meeting. Avoid walking around the room while the meeting is in session. Stand when addressing the group and the chair.

2. Why do we go to the meetings? What happens before the opening gavel strikes can be as important as what happens during the meeting. There is a difference between discussing an issue and adopting an issue. This is where you come into play. What is your opinion? Do you have any questions? This is your Club. We need to know what you are thinking, and your opinion. Is the issue a good one or do you care? Don't leave all the decisions to the Executive Committee. They want to hear from you or there wouldn't be a meeting with members.

You are the decision maker. Be part of the Club. Hope to see at your next Club Meeting.

Club Toolbox

The Club Toolbox equips clubs with plug-and-play resources that save time, spark ideas, and strengthen leadership. Whether you are planning events, growing membership, improving communication, or building projects, this section offers tools you can immediately put into action.



Leadership

5 Ways to Start Your Club Year Strong

- Set Your Calendar Early - Members are more engaged when they can plan ahead. Publish meeting dates, major projects, socials, fundraisers, conferences, deadlines. Pro Tip: Create a simple one-page annual calendar members can save to their phone.
- Personally Contact Members - Do not rely only on email. A quick text or phone call saying: "We're excited to see you this year" can dramatically improve participation.
- Create Small Ways to Volunteer - Not every member can chair a committee. Offer: one-day projects, setup teams, social media help, greeting members, photography, hospitality. Small jobs create future leaders.
- Start Meetings on Time - Respecting time builds professionalism and trust. Members are more likely to attend consistently when meetings: begin on time, stay organized, feel purposeful, end on time
- Celebrate Often - Recognition builds culture. Celebrate: birthdays, years of service, project successes, first-time volunteers, member milestones. People stay where they feel appreciated.

Ready to Use Resource

Monthly Meeting Planning Checklist

Before Your Meeting:

□ Agenda completed
□ Speaker confirmed
□ Treasurer report prepared
□ Room/Zoom confirmed
□ Greeter assigned
□ Social media reminder posted
□ Member birthdays recognized
□ Guest welcome plan ready

After Your Meeting:

□ Thank speaker
□ Post photos online
□ Send follow-up reminders
□ Record attendance
□ Celebrate successes

CLUB TOOLBOX

Advocates for Children

Summer Reading Adventures



Summer is a wonderful opportunity for clubs to support children while creating meaningful community impact. Research shows that children who continue reading during the summer months return to school more confident and better prepared to learn.

The best part? A reading project can be simple, affordable, and fun.

EASY WAYS TO GET STARTED

- **Collect and donate** new or gently used children's books.
- Host a **"Read in the Park"** story hour.
- **Create summer reading bags** with books, bookmarks, and crayons.
- **Partner** with a local library, daycare, school, or youth organization.
- **Donate books** to shelters, foster youth programs, hospitals, or family resource centers.

WHY IT MATTERS

Every book opens a door to imagination, learning, and opportunity. A child who discovers a love of reading gains more than literacy skills—they gain confidence, curiosity, and the ability to dream beyond their current circumstances.

As advocates for children, we have the opportunity to place those dreams within reach.

MEMBERSHIP BONUS

Reading projects are family-friendly, highly visible, and easy for prospective members to participate in.

Consider inviting guests, friends, and community partners to join your project and experience your club's impact firsthand.



CLUB CHALLENGE

This summer, collect, donate, or distribute **25** children's books in your community.

Take photos, share your story, and inspire another club to do the same.



Small acts today can help create lifelong readers tomorrow.

Steal This Idea

Steal This Idea will highlight successful projects, programs, and creative solutions from clubs across the district and across Federation. Each feature shares practical ideas that other clubs can easily adapt, replicate, and bring into their own communities.



Health and Wellness

“Community Kindness Cards” — Inspired by the Woman’s Club of Colorado Springs, Colorado

The Colorado Club wanted to create a simple project that could involve members of all ages while spreading positivity throughout their community.

What They Did

The club created handwritten “Kindness Cards” with uplifting messages, encouraging notes, and simple words of appreciation. Members decorated the cards and distributed them to:

- nursing homes
- hospitals
- first responders
- teachers
- library staff
- grocery workers

Some cards were tucked into donated food bags and care packages.

Why It Worked

The project was:

- inexpensive
- easy to organize
- family friendly
- perfect for all ages
- highly personal and meaningful

Most importantly, it reminded people that small acts of kindness matter.

How Your Club Can Replicate It

1. Gather cardstock, markers, stickers, and supplies
2. Host a card-making meeting or service day
3. Choose local organizations to receive the cards
4. Include encouraging and positive messages
5. Deliver monthly or during special holidays/events

Simple words can have a lasting impact.

Member Spotlight

Celebrating Service - This month we recognize the countless members working quietly behind the scenes to set up meetings.

Behind every successful meeting is a volunteer whose work often goes unnoticed. From arranging tables and preparing materials to setting up technology, decorations, refreshments, and welcome spaces, these members help create an environment where connection, leadership, and service can thrive. Their dedication may happen quietly behind the scenes, but their efforts set the tone for the entire meeting experience. We honor and appreciate the volunteers whose steady support helps our clubs run smoothly week after week. **THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**

Entre Nous



Arts, Culture & Entre Nous Chairman
Bryan Arredondo

Entre Nous brings together fellowship, arts, culture, and community through shared experiences that encourage connection and conversation beyond traditional meetings. Through gatherings at local restaurants and cultural destinations, members have the opportunity to build friendships, celebrate diversity, explore the traditions and creativity that shape our communities, and strengthen the spirit of Federation.

Each experience reminds us that service begins with relationships, understanding grows through cultural appreciation, and community is strengthened when people gather together.



Looking Ahead

This section highlights upcoming district meetings, important dates, future newsletter topics, and key reminders clubs should be preparing for in the months ahead. From leadership planning and project deadlines to events and seasonal opportunities, Looking Ahead helps us stay informed, organized, and ready for what's next.

NEXT MONTH'S THEME - Membership & Engagement

Coming next issue:

- How to attract younger members
- Creative meeting ideas
- Volunteer retention tips
- Social media strategies
- Plug-and-play membership tools

UPCOMING DISTRICT ACTION ITEMS - Clubs Should Be Preparing For:

July

- Club officer transitions and leadership planning meetings
- Summer district executive board and committee meetings
- Membership recruitment and club kickoff events
- Entre Nous Fellowship & Cultural Gatherings begin
- Preparation for fall service projects and community outreach

August

- Club membership drives and community visibility events
- Fall program and fundraising planning
- Back-to-school community service projects

UPCOMING CFWC and GFWC Events

July

- GFWC Legislative Action Center advocacy opportunities continue throughout the summer

August

- Nothing posted on the calendars.

Visit the CFWC Calendar & Resources and GFWC Official Website for updated meetings, programs, publications, and leadership resources.