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Voices Focus

GEORGIA FEDERATION OF REPUBLICAN WOMEN

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MISSION

Educating and Empowering Women for Better Government

GFRW Members Come Together to Work, Learn and Play

Another Georgia Federation of Republican Women's Red Coat Day at the state's capitol, educational workshops, and Winter Board Meeting are "in the books" for another year. By coming together for two days of planned activities and meetings, members and special guests modeled the organization's theme for this year: Let's Do It -- Together!

Red Coat Day

With almost 90 GFRW members and guests in attendance for the annual Red Coat Day on Feb. 5, red jackets were plentiful in the halls of the state's capitol. Participants had the opportunity to hear from and talk to a number of elected officials, have a group photo taken, receive a guided tour of the capitol, and enjoy a delicious catered lunch.

Attorney General Sam Olens and Sen. Mike Crane (R-District 28) welcomed the group to the capitol upon its arrival. Rep. Ed Setzler (R-Acworth, District 35) then provided a very informative, hour-long tour of the governor's office, house judiciary committee room, and the House chambers in the Legislature. Michael McNeely, 1st vice chair of the state's GOP, also welcomed Red Coat Day participants.

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Georgia Federation of Republican Women

Mission: Educating and Empowering Women for Better Government

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Photos by — Mary Lou Berghel, John Delves and Judy True

This online newsletter, containing GFRW and club news, is published three times per year. The newsletter committee invites you to submit your ideas for topics and club news to include in upcoming editions. Please send items to FOCUS editor at cindy.theiler1@gmail.com. This is YOUR publication; we welcome your suggestions and input!

Disclaimer: Bylined articles represent the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of GFRW, VOICES Publications, or that of the FOCUS staff.

President's Message

By Barbara Hickey

Like most Republicans, I love history. I love traditions and the history of not only families, cities or towns, but organizations such as our Georgia Federation of Republican Women.

I love the tradition of going to the Gold Dome to celebrate Red Coat Day. The sight of 50 or 60 women proud to be Republicans wearing their red coats can be very touching. We can see them sharing the pride they feel for not only living in the great state of Georgia, but also the fact that it is a **Republican** state.

It is wonderful to meet the public officials at Red Coat Day who share our values as Republicans. We are so fortunate to be able to express our thoughts, opinions, and hopes for a great legislative session each year and know that we got their attention and "planted a seed."

Many years ago I read, "Back to Basics for the Republican Party," written by Michael Zak, and I was mesmerized by how we came to be a "force." I want to share that story with you great Republican women.

It began on March 20, 1854, in a little school in Ripon, Wisc., when 53 activist American men and women met to protest slavery and called themselves "Republicans" for the first time.

Whether we call ourselves Conservatives, Tea Party members, or just plain Republicans, we share many principles that are tied to a legacy that brought **freedom** to many.

Republicans, with great opposition, argued to pass the 13th Amendment outlawing slavery, with great wisdom offered the 14th Amendment with four principles that offered protections to all citizens; and, making sure that their work would not be in vain, proposed the 15th Amendment to ensure that African-Americans had the right to vote. These three amendments are referred to as the "Reconstruction Amendments."

In 1896, Republicans were the first Party to champion the rights of women to vote. It took the "Grand Old Party" 24 years to pass the 19th Amendment. That tenacity resulted in the first woman, a Republican from Montana, to be elected to Congress — Jeanette Rankin.

No matter how divided we appear to be with our various factions, let us not forget our roots and those brave Republicans who came before us, and join forces. Our children and their children **deserve no less**.

Red Coat Day for GFRW

Photos by John Delves

GFRW Members: Working, Learning and Playing

Continued from page 1

From there, the group walked across the street to the Georgia Department of Agriculture's office building for a catered buffet lunch by Mother's Finest of Mableton.

Sen. Larry Walker (R-District 20) and Rep. Bubber Epps (R-District 144), both from middle Georgia, also welcomed the group. Lisa Kinnemore, vice chair of the state's board of education, asked GFRW members and others to help the state by reviewing K-12 curriculum standards for social studies and science that are currently under review by the state.

Workshops

Upon returning to the Atlanta Marriott Hotel at Perimeter Center, members had their choice of participating in several different workshops. These included leadership development taught by Johnell Woody of Cobb County Republican Women's Club; grassroots training taught by Sue Everhart, former Georgia GOP chair; and, president/district director training taught by Natalie (Tali) Olmi, former GFRW district director, and Barbara Hickey, former CCRWC president and current GFRW president.

Participants also had the opportunity to mingle with and view costumed attendees of the Seishun Con, Atlanta's Winter Anime Convention, which was also being held at the hotel.

Reagan Club reception

(Please see separate article about this event on page 11)

Winter Board Meeting

GFRW President Hickey kicked off the meeting by dedicating it to two very active GFRW members: Marjean Birt and Reva Jennings -- who died during the past year.

GFRW board members and other guests were welcomed to Dunwoody by Denis Shortal, Dunwoody mayor; Georgia Sen. Fran Millar, (R-District 40); and Nancy Jester, DeKalb County commissioner (District 1). In addition, the group heard from Meagan Hanson, past president of the Georgia Young Republicans, who is a candidate for House District 80.

Two keynote speakers also addressed the group during the board meeting. Linda Herren, who is serving in her 12th and final year as national committeewoman, updated GFRW members about the Republican Party's efforts to update technology and its organizational database. A long-time member of GFRW and Central DeKalb Republican Women, she also served on the committee that was responsible for selecting the site for this year's Republican National Convention and shared how Cleveland was selected.

In addition, U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson discussed why this is such an important election year. "Republican women will be the difference between whether we do or don't (win the presidential election)," he said. Isakson also discussed recent accomplishments, including changes being made with the Veterans Administration and then answered numerous questions from the group.

Other items from the meeting:

- Ruby Robinson, GFRW's past president, presented club achievement certificates (bronze awards) to members of two GFRW clubs that she received on their behalf from the National Federation of Republican Women last fall at the organization's national convention. Wanda Duffie, newly-elected president of Central Savannah River Area Republican Women's Club, accepted the certificate on behalf of Alice Frye, the club's president last year.

Suzanne Holland, president of the South Fulton Republican Women's Club, also received her club's award.

- GFRW board members approved an amended proposed budget for 2016.
- Mark Fritz, a partner with Brooks, McGinnis & Co., provided an update on the financial review of GFRW's financial records for 2012-2013. He said work is still in progress, but that work is expected to be completed within four weeks.
- GFRW Treasurer Billie Dendy reported GFRW had 23 clubs and 392 members paid to date.

Hickey adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.
A board of directors' luncheon followed featuring Scott Pederson, founder, president and CEO of Celebrate Positive.com, an integrated marketing and communications organization, focused on the theme of positivity. Rob Lee, president of Georgia's Young Republicans, also spoke briefly to the group.

Article contributed by Cindy Theiler

Luncheon speaker Scott Pederson

Pictured L/R: Louise Little, sister of Reva Jennings and president of North Georgia Republican Women's Club, and Rae Jennings, Reva's daughter.

Left to right: Top row — Attorney General Sam Olens, Sen. Mike Crane, Rep. Ed Setzler, GAGOP Vice Chair Michael McNeely, Sen. Larry Walker, Rep. Bubber Epps, Past GAGOP Chair Sue Everhart. Bottom row — Past District Director Natalie Olmi, GFRW Leadership Chair Johnell Woody, Dunwoody Mayor Denis Shortal, DeKalb County Commissioner Nancy Jester, Mark Fritz of Brooks. McGinnis & Co., Sen. Fran Millar, Past President GAYR's Meagan Hanson.

Leading Together

A GFRW Leadership Development Workshop

Leadership is a curious concept because there are many definitions of leadership. There are also many leadership theories and types of leadership. More importantly, there are multiple levels of leadership. To complicate matters even more, there is overlap between leadership and management.

A large part of leading together is building sound, functional teams. Teambuilding requires a leader who has and can share a vision — a leader who can build relationships and trust — then, let go.

Leading together is a challenge. There is a common misconception that leadership is about being in charge, giving orders, and expecting followers to follow blindly. Leading together requires knowledge of self, acknowledging the skills and strengths of self and of others, and especially knowing how to accept and admit weaknesses.

The first in a series of leadership development workshops was held during GFRW's Winter Board Meeting. The material explored the definitions of leadership, taking a glimpse at the evolution of leadership theories and leadership styles. Participants briefly reviewed personality types, communication styles, and leadership styles — with a more in-depth look into the five levels of leadership.

Leadership development workshops will be offered at each Board of Directors meeting in 2016 and 2017. Participants completing the Leadership Academy Series courses will receive a Certificate of Achievement during the 2017 GFRW Convention. Additional information regarding the Leadership Academy Series may be obtained by contacting Johnell Woody at 770-331-0016 or jwoody1111@aol.com.

Article Contributed by Johnell Woody,
Chair, GFRW Leadership Development

Installation of Club Officers

Georgia Federation of Republican Women

GFRW officers were officially sworn into office on Dec. 15 in Atlanta by Georgia's Attorney General Sam Olens. Officers (L to R) are Barbara Hickey, president; Joyce Hinton, 2nd vice president; Cindy Theiler, 3rd vice president; Varie Rustin, secretary; Billie Dendy, treasurer; Denise Ognio, assistant treasurer; and Rose Wing, parliamentarian. Sara (Sally) Snyder, 1st vice president, and Ruby Robinson, immediate past president, were absent.

Central DeKalb Republican Women. Officers were inducted on Dec. 3 by Barbara Hickey, GFRW's president for 2016. They are (L to R) Bobbie Frantz, president; Helen von Waldner, 1st vice president; Sarah Looper, 2nd vice president; Judy Newell, corresponding secretary; Ullainee Stokes, recording secretary; Jean Ballentine, treasurer; and Cheryl Swartz, immediate past president and 4th district director.

Central Savannah River Area Republican Women's Club officers were inducted. Pictured with Congressman Rick Allen (center) are (L to R) Jannene Olson, treasurer; Alice Frye, past president; Congressman Rick Allen; Nita Boeglen, vice president; and Wanda Duffie, president. Not pictured is Susie Welsh, secretary.

Greater Columbia County Republican Women were inducted by Georgia Attorney General Sam Olens. They are (L to R): Maria Shoemaker, treasurer; Carolyn Schneider, secretary; Pam Lightsey, 2nd vice president; YeSun Wiltse, president; and Priscilla Bence, 1st vice president.

The **Greater Fayette Republican Women's Club** inducted its new officers on Nov. 12. They are (L to R) Mary Kay Rudd, president; Deborah Dickinson, vice president; Cathy McMullen, secretary; and Judy Todd, treasurer.

The **Republican Women of Hall** officers were inducted by GFRW President-elect Barbara Hickey at the club's annual Christmas Brunch on Dec. 5 at Luna's Restaurant in Gainesville. Installed were (L to R) Martha Zoller, immediate past president; Bettye Chambers, communications secretary; Theresa Webb, assistant treasurer; Rebecca Yardley, treasurer; Traci McBride, corresponding secretary; Lauren Bell, president; and Barbara Hickey. Theresa Rawlinson, vice president, was absent.

Haralson County Republican Women's officers were inducted by State Rep. Kevin Cooke (R) on Jan. 21. They are (L to R): Victoria Gunther, president; Sherri Mobley, secretary; and Rosanna Birky, treasurer. Not pictured: Aletha Smith, vice president.

South Fulton Republican Women's Club's officers (L to R) are Suzanne Holland, president; Rosemarie Wilson, vice president; Louise Younger, secretary; and Donna Prather, treasurer. Emma Hinesley, past GFRW president, installed the officers on Jan. 14.

Caring . . . and Sharing

See what some of our clubs have been up to! Please share your club news so we all can learn from each other. Please send your items to cindy.theiler1@gmail.com.

Central DeKalb Republican Women and North DeKalb Republican Women.

Contributed by Bobbie Frantz

The two DeKalb Clubs planned an open house at its monthly meeting on Feb. 13. The North DeKalb Republican Women is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. A meet and greet with refreshments and a presidential candidate representative forum were scheduled for the meeting to be held at the DeKalb Republican Party headquarters in Decatur.

Coastal Republican Women's Club

Contributed by Reba Reyna

The club celebrated the 2015 holiday season with a Christmas party on Dec. 10 at the Brunswick Country Club. President **Reba Reyna** and **Jill Holmes**, vice president, entertained the group with several Christmas songs. Club members contributed food and supplies to Glynn County Animal Services' animal rescue, the club's chosen charity.

South Fulton Republican Women's Club.

Contributed by Suzanne Holband

The Feb. 4 meeting of the South Fulton Republican Women's club included information about the SEC Primary. Club members sent postcard reminders to vote in the primary and volunteered to call to remind people to go to the polls to vote on March 1.

South Fulton Republican Women's Club, the Greater Fayette Republican Women's Club and the Coweta Republican Women's Club

Contributed by Mary Chase

The South Fulton and Greater Fayette clubs shared in the installation ceremony of the **Coweta Republican Women's Club** on Jan. 21. Participants attending heard Loretta Lepore, principal of Lepore and Associates, speak about the importance of women running for and being elected to office. Georgia Rep. Lynn Smith and Sen. Mike Crane also participated. Coweta RWC is donating five children's books to the Arbor Spring Elementary School's library in honor of past president, Frances Mitchell. The club has also scheduled a presidential roundtable event for its next meeting on Feb. 18.

Savannah Area Republican Women

Contributed by Gussie Gammon

The topic for this month's meeting was "Immigration: the problems, the answers." The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), a non-profit, non-partisan organization of concerned individuals who believe that immigration laws must be reformed to better serve the needs of current and future generations, presented the information. In addition, several club members — billed as "designing women" — will share their talents in decorating cookies, jewelry making, and floral arranging with other members. Special get-togethers are planned for each of these activities.

The American Cancer Society recently honored Babe Atkins-Byrne, membership chair of the 2015 Cobb County Republican Women's Club. She was awarded the Cancer Society's Lifetime Achievement Award for her 25-plus years of service to ACS.

Rosan Hall, immediate past president of the Cobb County Republican Women's Club, was named East Cobb Citizen of the Year by the East Cobb Council of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce for 2015.

State Rep. Kevin Cooke and GFRW President Barbara Hickey helped bestow Resolutions of Appreciation upon Betty Rae Stried, who founded the Haralson County Republican Women in 2011 and served as president for the past four years.

The November Spotlight is on Federation Leader

Mary Lou Berghel

By Cindy Theiler

Before relocating to Georgia from Nebraska in early 1961, Mary Lou Berghel and her husband, Bob, were active Republicans in a very Republican state. It didn't take long upon arrival here before Republicans quickly contacted her husband for assistance in our not-so-Republican state at that time.

"When my husband got a call from someone in the Party to help out, he quickly volunteered me to help make phone calls. I got my start surveying precincts," she said.

That was just the beginning for Mary Lou's political involvement in Georgia. Since that time, she has been and continues to be active in a variety of ways. She has served as chairman of Matt Towery for lieutenant governor (1990), vice chairman of the 5th Congressional District, chairman of the Habersham County Republican Party, and treasurer of the 10th Congressional District. Her 1834 historic home, which she and her husband restored (1992-1995), has been the site of numerous Republican fundraisers, including Nancy Schaefer for state senate, Kathy Cox for state school superintendent, and Paul Broun and Doug Collins for Congress. She has been active in Republican women's clubs for many years and served on the Georgia Federation of Republican Women's (GFRW) board of directors as its photographer. Her photographs enhanced both the 40th and 50th anniversaries of GFRW. She has twice been an alternate delegate to the Republican National Convention (1992 and 2008).

Most recently, Mary Lou chaired the steering committee to re-start the Republican Women Federated of Habersham County. Since starting up again in February 2014, the 35-member club is doing well. While it took more than a year to get its charter, according to Mary Lou, she said she is proud of the club and all it has done.

Two of the initiatives she said she is most proud of are a fundraiser tea and the Constitution Day initiative. In December 2014 as its first fundraiser, the club held a Silver Tea at her home and raised $1,500 for the Habersham Homeless. Gov. Nathan Deal's wife, Sandra, also attended the event. In addition, last fall, the Republican Women Federated of Habersham County, led by Marsha James, raised money to purchase and deliver 600 Constitutions to civics classes throughout the county in support of Constitution Day.

Mary Lou said she gives a lot of credit to the club's hard-working steering committee, which included Barbara Magley, Lynn Pollack, Faye Gibbs, and Andrea Harper. She said these women helped out financially the first two years to get the club started.

Club members are also involved in other activities in Habersham County, including serving as representatives at the club booth at the Georgia Mountain Fair, annual 4th of July celebration, Mountain Laurel Festival, and Big Red Apple Celebration.

Mary Lou said one of the secrets for having a successful club is printing meeting invitations with names of the speakers and meeting agendas.

When Mary Lou is not involved in Republican-related activities, you can find her serving as the organist at the Grace Lutheran Church and volunteering with Friends of the Clarkesville Library. She said she also stays very busy with her many hobbies, including making needlepoint gifts for family members, traveling, and photography.

FOCUS Newsletter salutes Mary Lou Berghel for her many contributions to the Republican Party, Republican Women Federated of Habersham County, and GFRW.

Tribute to Reva Jennings

By Molly Cooper
President, Republican Women of Forsyth County

[Editor's note: Reva Jennings, former GFRW president (1987-1988) and long-time Republican activist from Forsyth County, died unexpectedly in an automobile accident on Dec. 12. The Republican Women of Forsyth County celebrated her life on Jan. 29. In her memory, Molly Cooper, president of the RWFC, has written this tribute about Jennings. She will be missed!]

Celebrate the life of Reva Jennings
The Republican Women of Forsyth County held a get-together to celebrate the life of our beloved Reva Jennings. As many of you know, Reva served as president of GFRW.

Congressman Rob Woodall gave tribute to Reva on the floor of the U.S. Congress. Reva founded the Republican Party in her community of Forsyth County. She was a guest — not once but twice — for lunch in the Rose Garden at the White House. These life accomplishments are more than impressive. Yet, there is more.

Reva was a devoted mother. She single-handedly raised her three children, Reva Rae Jennings, Bruce E. Jennings III, and Brent Sanford Jennings after the untimely death of her husband, Dr. Bruce Jennings.

She made it quite clear her love for Bruce did not die with him. Her family took precedence over all. She juggled her career as a successful real estate agent (second only to her family) with her productive involvement with the Republican Party.

Reva tagged herself as being Republican before it was cool. As an icon of the Republican party, Reva attended more conventions, fundraisers, campaign speeches, luncheons, and dinners, and worked more campaigns than can be counted.

She was a dynamo — a mover and shaker to which there is no comparison. At the local level, Reva would not be deterred from taking action — relentless action — until the right thing was done.

Reva *persuaded* the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners and the county engineering department to consider, reconsider, and ultimately give in to the installation of a much-needed stop sign. She knew traffic was dangerously heavy at a school bus stop where children had to cross the street during morning and afternoon rush hours.

Reva was having none of it. Every time she spoke with her county commissioner — make that every county commissioner — which was often, she brought up the need for the stop sign. That stop sign is still there and no one would dare question its importance.

This may sound like a small matter in comparison to all of Reva's big accomplishments, but it personifies her to a tee. Do the right thing and never give up until the right thing is done.

I could go on with wonderful memories and stories of Reva Jennings. We shared so many at our RWFC get-together. We laughed, and belly laughed, and we cried. We miss her so much it hurts, but we know we are blessed and thankful she was ours for a little while.

(Pictures provided by Molly Cooper and Judy True)

News and Notes

Legislative Committee — Federal

The House and the Senate have just gotten back into session for the second year of this legislative cycle. There will be a focus on fiscal issues this year and a desire to clean up some of the initiatives left over from last year. The Omnibus bill was passed at the end of the year and funds the government through the end of this fiscal year. The Georgia delegation voted for the measure with the exception of Rep. Jody Hice of the 10th District. Overall, Georgians had their water rights protected in this bill. While it continues the operating outside of regular budget order, some progress was made.

Overall spending in the discretionary part of the budget was down compared to 2008, but there is still the necessity for real reform of the entire budget. For this committee, that is the number one focus.

Since this is an election year, there will be more and longer recesses, which means a shorter window in which to get things done.

Contributed by Martha Zoller
Chair, Legislative Committee—Federal

Survey results

Thank you to all of our GFRW members who recently completed our organization's survey. Results of this survey will be compiled and communicated soon. The purpose of the survey, which was developed by Jeanne Billa, GFRW's public relations chair and Cindy Theiler, 3rd vice president, is to help GFRW better serve its clubs and members. The survey included questions about communications, board meetings, membership, and committees. We sincerely appreciate all feedback we received!

Save the date

GFRW will turn 60 next February! Circle that month on your calendar now. GFRW is planning a celebration at its meeting that month in Atlanta. You will receive more information about the event in the near future!

On your mark, get set, VOTE!

Registered voters in Georgia can begin voting for this year's presidential primary, scheduled for March 1.

Georgia law allows no-fault absentee voting so voters can request a mail-in absentee ballot from their local election office for any reason up to 45 days ahead of a federal election date.

Advance in-person voting began Feb. 8. This includes Saturday voting in all counties on Feb. 20. Polls are open for advance in-person voting in every Georgia county during normal business hours.

Election Day polling is March 1 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. This year Georgia is a part of the SEC primary with seven Southern states, including Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

Celebrate 2016!

That's NFRW's theme for soliciting personal donations of $20.16 to help celebrate 2016 by taking back the White House. NFRW would like you to donate $20.16 to "help the NFRW motivate and mobilize Republican women in this crucial election year." To donate, click on http://www.nfrw.org/celebrate-2016 .

NFRW Calendar of Events

March 17
Legislative Day at the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

March 17-19
Spring board of directors meeting, Arlington, VA.

May 1
Second quarter membership dues and club service charge due at NFRW's national headquarters

June 1
National Pathfinder and Betty Rendel scholarship applications due to state presidents. Contact membership@nfrw.org for more information.

June 15
State nominees for National Pathfinder and Betty Rendel scholarships due at NFRW's national headquarters. Contact membership@nfrw.org for more information.

REAGAN CLUB 2016

Want to be a Reagan Club member for 2016? Annual dues are $100. In addition, your local club can join the Reagan Club. Enjoy extra benefits of GFRW when you become a Reagan Club member. Membership dues support GFRW's efforts to advance the participation of Republican women in all areas of politics and to promote Republican candidates and philosophy. If you want to learn more about Reagan Club, please contact Rosan Hall at rhall2@aol.com.

2016 Members

Individuals

- JoAnn Birrell
- Bobbie Frantz
- Lydia Hallmark
- Jim Hall
- Rosan Hall
- Barbara Hickey
- Jim Hickey
- Toria Morgan
- Millie Rogers
- Varie Rustin
- Sara (Sally) Snyder
- Ullainee Stokes
- Cindy Theiler
- Judy True
- Linda Williams
- Rose Wing

Clubs

- Gwinnett Republican Women
- Republican Women of Henry County

Reagan Club is on its way to making 2016 a very good year. We held a reception at GFRW's Winter Board Meeting on Friday evening, Feb. 5, for *all* GFRW members in attendance. Participants were treated to a bountiful buffet and thoroughly entertained by a DJ while attendees made good use of the dance floor. It was jokingly suggested by several of our very active members that we consider taking dance lessons before our next meeting.

The Reagan Club was started by Emma Hinesley, a GFRW past president. Over the years, it has been a fundraising arm of GFRW. Without the contributions of GFRW members and their spouses, GFRW clubs, and other Republicans, we would not be able to provide the support for candidates across Georgia. Thank you to those who have joined since the first of 2016 and I hope we can count on many more to participate.

— Contributed by Rosan Hall, Reagan Club chair