# GFWC SOCAL VOLUNTEERS

Fall Issue
October - December 2026



*Where Families and Children Come First!*

# From the Desk of the President



Mona Rigoli, President
GFWC/CFWC SoCal Volunteers

With summer behind us, we welcome the beauty of fall and the excitement that comes with the season. It is a busy time for our club and families as we all settle in.

As students return to the classroom, families begin settling back into routines, setting new goals, organizing busy schedules, and finding ways to balance school, work, family time, and community involvement. These simple steps can help create a strong foundation for a positive and successful school year.

Fall is also a wonderful time to reconnect with one another and to remember how important community support can be. No family should ever feel that they have to navigate challenges alone. Our Women's Club is proud to be part of a community that cares deeply about children, youth, and families, and we encourage you to learn more about the resources, programs, partnerships, and opportunities available throughout our area.

In this issue, we invite you to explore stories, ideas, and resources created with families and children in mind. We hope you will discover something that inspires you, helps your family, introduces you to a new community resource, or encourages you to become involved.

Most importantly, we want to hear from you. If there is a need affecting children or families in our community, please share it with us. Perhaps there is a resource that is difficult to find, a challenge families are facing, or an opportunity where volunteers could make a difference. Sometimes the most meaningful club projects begin simply because someone spoke up and helped us see where support was needed.

Our Club is here not only to serve, but also to listen, connect, and help strengthen the community we all call home.

To every student now settling into the school year, every parent and caregiver supporting them along the way, and every teacher and educator already hard at work in the classroom, we wish you continued success, encouragement, and a safe, positive, and rewarding year ahead.

May this fall be filled with meaningful connections, and many reasons to celebrate our children, our families, and our community.

# GFWC SoCal Volunteers



# Build Something Creative With Us.

### OUR VISION

GFWC SoCal Volunteers mission is to create a bridge to resources that strengthen the family unit.

### ABOUT US

SoCal Volunteers was chartered in April 2024 to serve the Southern California Region, build partnerships, and seek out resources for families. SoCal Volunteers is part of an international Federation dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service.

Joining a service club can be one of the most rewarding choices you make — personally, socially, and even professionally. On the right are some strong reasons why people decide to get involved.

## WHY JOIN?

### COMMUNITY IMPACT

You will directly contribute to making our community better, whether through projects, fundraising, or advocacy.

### FRIENDSHIPS & SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

You will meet like-minded people who also care about giving back. Many lifelong friendships are formed through working side by side on meaningful projects.

### PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

You will develop leadership, public speaking, and organizational skills. It is a safe place to practice teamwork, problem-solving, and decision making.

**NETWORK * HAVE PURPOSE * HAVE FUN**

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Articles in these pages have been developed by club members, partners, local experts, and artificial intelligence as a resource for Parents because, to us, Families and Children Come First. It is our hope that you gain insight into Club happenings, but also find ways to engage as a family. We know that family life is about finding joy while winging it one snack, spill, and smile at a time.



# Family Life and Parenting

## Simple ways to protect family connection during the busiest season of the year.

Protecting time, budgets, and energy from October through December.

The final months of the year can be some of the most joyful—and busiest—months for families. School activities, sports, Halloween, Thanksgiving, holiday programs, shopping, parties, travel, volunteering, family gatherings, and year-end commitments can quickly fill every square on the calendar.

Before we know it, a season meant for connection can start to feel like a race to the finish line.

Setting boundaries doesn't mean saying no to the holidays. It means making room for the parts of the season your family values most.

**Decide What Matters Most**
Before the calendar fills up, ask a simple question: What do we want our family to remember about this season?

Maybe it is baking together, attending a favorite community event, visiting grandparents, volunteering, decorating the house, watching holiday movies, or simply having more evenings at home.

Choose a few priorities and protect them. Everything else becomes optional.
Children don't need a packed calendar to have a memorable holiday season. Often, the traditions they remember most are the simplest ones repeated year after year.

**You Don't Have to Attend Everything**
Invitations can pile up quickly during the fall and holiday season. School events, neighborhood gatherings, work parties, club activities, performances, and extended-family celebrations may all compete for the same limited time. It is okay to decline an invitation. Before saying yes, consider what the commitment will cost your family—not just financially, but in time and energy. Sometimes saying no to one activity means saying yes to dinner together, an early bedtime, or an afternoon with nothing scheduled.

**Give Your Holiday Budget a Boundary**
Holiday spending can quietly grow as gifts, decorations, food, travel, school activities, charitable giving, and special outings add up.
Decide what your family can comfortably spend before the season gets underway. Make choices within that amount rather than allowing every new invitation or sale to determine the budget.

Consider giving children an age-appropriate role in holiday planning. They can help choose gifts, compare prices, make homemade presents, or decide which family activities matter most.

It can turn holiday budgeting into a lesson about priorities, generosity, and thoughtful decision-making.



**Protect Some Ordinary Days**
Not every day between October and December needs to become a holiday event.
Keep some ordinary evenings ordinary.
Eat dinner together. Take a walk. Play a game. Read a book. Let the children play. Go to bed on time.

A quiet evening at home may not look exciting on a calendar, but it can provide exactly what a busy family needs.

**Watch for Signs of Overload**
Adults aren't the only ones who become overwhelmed by holiday schedules.

Children may show stress through irritability, trouble sleeping, emotional outbursts, difficulty concentrating, or simply saying, “I don't want to go.”

That doesn't necessarily mean every activity should be canceled, but it may be a sign that your family needs some breathing room.

Sometimes the healthiest choice is changing the plan.

**Don't Compare Your Holiday to Someone Else's**
Social media can make it seem as though everyone else has perfectly decorated homes, beautifully coordinated family photos, elaborate traditions, endless activities, and children enjoying every minute. Real family life is rarely that tidy.

Your holiday does not need to look like anyone else's.

A meaningful season isn't measured by how much you accomplish. It is measured by the moments your family shares.

**Leave Room for Connection**
One of the easiest ways to protect family connection is to intentionally leave white space on the calendar.

Try designating one evening each week as a family night or reserving an occasional weekend morning with no commitments.

You don't have to plan anything elaborate. Sometimes the best family time begins when nobody has anywhere else they need to be.

**Give Yourself Permission to Change Traditions**
Traditions should bring families together—not become obligations that everyone dreads.

As children grow, family circumstances change, and schedules evolve, traditions can change too.

Keep the ones your family loves. Adapt the ones that have become difficult. Let go of those that no longer bring joy.

And create new ones when the opportunity presents itself.

**Before You Say Yes...**
During this busy season, pause and ask:

- Do we have the time?
- Can we comfortably afford it?
- Do we actually want to do it?
- What will we have to give up to make room for it?
- Will this add connection—or just add another obligation?

There will always be one more event, one more gift, one more invitation, and one more thing we could do.

But childhood seasons pass quickly.

Protecting your family's time, energy, and resources isn't about creating fewer memories.

It's about making room for the ones that matter most.



# Family Life and Parenting



**Sheila Gutierrez, LMFT**
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Fall is a wonderful time for families to become healthier together. Cooler weather makes it easier to get outside, move our bodies, and enjoy time with the people we love. Healthy family activities do not need to be expensive or complicated. The goal is simply to move, connect, laugh, and spend time together.

Take a family walk after dinner. Even 15 to 20 minutes of walking can provide exercise while giving everyone a chance to talk about their day. On weekends, visit a park, walk a nature trail, ride bicycles, or take a “fall colors” walk and look for changing leaves.

Turn household chores into exercise. Raking leaves, gardening, washing the car, sweeping the patio, or decorating the house for fall all involve movement. Put on some music and make the work more enjoyable.

Indoor activities count, too. Have a family dance night, play active games, do simple stretching exercises, or create a short family exercise routine. Young children may enjoy pretending to be animals —walking like a bear, hopping like a rabbit, or stretching like a cat.

Fall is also a good time to exercise our emotional health. Have meals together when possible. Put phones aside for a while and ask each person to name one good thing that happened that day. Cook a healthy fall meal together or let children help choose fruits and vegetables at the market.
Most importantly, keep family exercise simple and fun. Healthy families grow stronger when they move together, talk together, and make time for one another.

A Simple Fall Family Challenge
For 7 days, spend at least 20 minutes doing something active together. If you have little kiddos put up a chart and let kids mark off the day. Walk, dance, rake leaves, ride bikes, play ball, sing together, or choose another activity everyone enjoys. Afterward, take five minutes to talk, laugh, and share one good thing about your day. Parents, heads up!! LISTEN to your kiddos while they talk. You want more conversations? Pay full attention to them -- no "back in the day" stories, no correcting grammar, no being on your own electronics or tv. Look at them, and really listen. I promise you will be glad for the time you spend. Happy Fall to all!

7 days + 20 minutes + time together = a healthier family!

Sheila

Sheila Garrett Gutierrez, M.S., LMFT is a Psychotherapist in Private Practice in Glendora, CA. She is a Family Law Mediator and was an Adjunct Professor at the University of LaVerne Graduate School of Psychology. Most importantly though, She is a Mom of 3 and a Grandmom of 8. She Gets It!



# Food & Nutrition

Good food, growing skills, and a little family time around the table.

Getting kids into the kitchen builds more than a meal—it builds confidence, independence, and family connection. When children help prepare food, they practice measuring, counting, following directions, making choices, and learning where their food comes from. They are also often more willing to taste foods they helped prepare. This fall, invite the kids into the kitchen for a simple meal the whole family can customize.

**Build Your Own Fall Harvest Quesadillas**
Makes: 8 quesadillas Prep Time: About 15 minutes Cook Time: 10–15 minutes

**Ingredients**

- 8 small flour or whole-wheat tortillas
- 2 cups shredded cheese
- 1 cup cooked chicken, turkey, or black beans
- ½ cup corn
- ½ cup finely chopped bell pepper
- ½ cup baby spinach, chopped
- ½ cup cooked sweet potato, cut into small pieces
- Salsa, guacamole, or plain Greek yogurt for dipping

You don't need every ingredient. Use what your family already has and let each child choose what goes inside. Fill half the tortilla, cover with other half and cook in skillet on Medium heat until golden brown.

**Make It a Family Challenge**
Give each family member a chance to invent their own combination and give it a name.
Maybe you'll create the Pumpkin Patch Quesadilla, After-School Special, Super Veggie, or Everything but the Kitchen Sink!

At the end of dinner, let everyone share which combination they would make again.

**Nutrition Doesn't Have to Be Complicated**
A balanced family meal doesn't require fancy ingredients. Try thinking about the plate in simple building blocks:
Protein — chicken, turkey, beans, eggs, or cheese
Vegetables or Fruit — fresh, frozen, or canned
Whole Grains — whole-wheat tortillas, brown rice, oats, or whole-grain bread
Something Kids Enjoy — because healthy eating should still be enjoyable!

And remember: introducing a new food doesn't mean a child has to love it the first time.
Seeing it, touching it, helping prepare it, and tasting even a small bite are all part of learning about food. The Best Ingredient? Time together.

A meal prepared by little hands may not look perfect—but the pride on a child's face when they announce, “I made dinner!” just might be.



# Food & Nutrition

Kid approved Easy, colorful bites kids will actually want to eat



Fall schedules can get busy fast, and hungry kids usually do not want to wait for a complicated snack. The good news is that simple can still be nutritious, fun, and seasonal.
Try a few of these kid-friendly ideas for after school, lunchboxes, weekend outings, or family movie nights.

**Apple Nachos**
Slice an apple into thin rounds or wedges and spread them across a plate. Drizzle with peanut butter or sunflower seed butter, then sprinkle with toppings such as Granola, Raisins or dried cranberries, Mini chocolate chips, Cinnamon, or Chopped nuts, if age-appropriate

**Pumpkin Yogurt Dip**
Mix plain or vanilla Greek yogurt with a spoonful of pumpkin puree and a sprinkle of cinnamon.
Serve with Apple slices, Pear slices, Graham crackers, or Pretzels. For a little extra sweetness, add a small drizzle of honey for children over age one.

**Turkey & Cheese Roll-Ups**
Lay out slices of turkey and cheese and let children roll them together. Add cucumber sticks, crackers, or grapes on the side for an easy snack plate. This is a great option when kids need something a little more filling after school.

**Harvest Trail Mix**
Set out a few ingredients and let kids create their own fall snack mix. Try Whole-grain cereal, Pretzels, Raisins, Dried cranberries, Pumpkin seeds, Mini crackers, or a few chocolate chips. For younger children, choose ingredients carefully to reduce choking risk and skip whole nuts.

**Cinnamon Pear Toast**
Toast a slice of whole-grain bread and spread it with cream cheese, ricotta, or nut butter.
Top with thin pear slices and a sprinkle of cinnamon. Simple, warm, and perfect for a cool fall afternoon.

**Banana “Pumpkins”**
Peel a small mandarin orange and place a tiny piece of celery in the center to create a mini pumpkin.
Pair it with banana slices, strawberries, or grapes for a playful fruit plate.

Make Snack Time Easier
One of the easiest ways to help children make better snack choices is to make those choices easy to see and reach. Try keeping a small section of the refrigerator or pantry stocked with ready-to-grab options such as washed fruit, cheese sticks, yogurt, cut vegetables, crackers, or portioned snack mixes. When possible, let children help choose and prepare the snacks.

Healthy eating can be nutritious, simple—and fun.



# Food & Nutrition

Where Good Food Meets Family Fun
in Southern California

Between school, work, homework, sports, and everything else on the family calendar, eating out can be more than just a night off from cooking. It can be a chance to slow down, talk, laugh, and enjoy time together. Here are three local spots that offer something a little different for your next family meal.




**Vince's Spaghetti**
For an old-fashioned family dinner, Vince's Spaghetti Ontario has been a longtime Ontario favorite. Known for generous portions, classic spaghetti dinners, soup, salad, and bread, it is the kind of casual place where families can settle in and share a comforting meal together.

Why families like it: Familiar foods, large portions, and a relaxed, traditional family-restaurant atmosphere.



**Rainforest Cafe**
For children who want dinner to feel like an adventure, Rainforest Cafe at Ontario Mills turns mealtime into an experience. The rainforest-themed setting includes animatronic animals, jungle scenery, and simulated tropical storms alongside a broad menu designed to appeal to families.

Why families like it: It combines dinner and entertainment, making an ordinary meal feel more like a family outing.



**The Original Graziano's Pizza Restaurant**
Pizza night is always an easy family choice, and The Original Graziano's Pizza Restaurant offers a casual setting with pizza, Italian favorites, televisions, and a game-room atmosphere.

Why families like it: Kids can enjoy pizza and games while parents get a relaxed meal—especially helpful for families with different ages and appetites.

**Make Dinner Part of the Memory**
Where you eat matters less than what happens around the table. Put the phones away for a little while, ask everyone about the best part of their day, and enjoy being together. Family dinner doesn't always have to happen at home to feel like family time.

# HIDDEN GEMS

**Fall Adventures: discover something unexpected**

**Fall Adventures**
Three places to make memories together this season.

Fall is a wonderful time to get out of the house, enjoy cooler weather, and make a few memories together. Whether your family loves pumpkins, apples, animals, or simply spending time outdoors, these three local adventures offer something special for children and adults alike.

**Cal Poly Pomona Pumpkin Festival**
A classic fall outing close to home, Pumpkin Fest offers families a chance to walk through a large pumpkin patch and enjoy seasonal activities on Cal Poly Pomona's working farm. The event traditionally includes pumpkins, farm experiences, photo opportunities, and family-friendly attractions.

**Family Tip:** Go earlier in the day when younger children have more energy, and leave time for plenty of pumpkin pictures.

**Willowbrook Apple Farm – Oak Glen**
For a true taste of fall, head to Oak Glen for an orchard experience. Willowbrook Apple Farm is known for hands-on activities including apple picking when available, cider pressing, and visits with farm animals. It is a smaller, rustic setting that gives children a chance to experience where food comes from while enjoying a beautiful fall day outdoors.

**Family Tip:** Apple availability can change throughout the season, so check before heading out.

**Snow-Line Orchard – Oak Glen**
Another Oak Glen favorite, Snow-Line Orchard is a relaxed place to enjoy fall scenery, browse the farm store, spend time at the picnic grounds, and sample seasonal treats. The orchard is especially well known for its warm mini apple-cider donuts and fresh cider.

**Family Tip:** Turn the visit into a simple family picnic and let everyone choose one favorite fall treat to share.

**Make the Day About More Than the Destination**
Children may remember the pumpkins, apples, and treats—but they are just as likely to remember singing in the car, taking silly pictures, sharing a snack, or simply having everyone's attention for the afternoon.

The best fall adventure may be the time you spend getting there together.

**GFWC SoCal Volunteers**

*All About Us Page*




# GFWC SoCal Volunteers: Where Families and Children Come First

**A Season of Community, Children & Connection**
This fall, we're taking our mission beyond the meeting room and into the community. Our club believes service means showing up where children, families, and neighbors need connection and support. This season gives us three wonderful opportunities to do just that.

**October 23 | Ghouls & Goblins Spooktacular**
We're partnering with Alicia Cortez Elementary School for an evening of games, trick-or-treating, costumes, prizes, food, and a family movie. It is a chance to create a safe, fun celebration where children can make memories and families can enjoy time together.

**November 21 | Open House & Toy Drive**
Our Open House invites friends, neighbors, and prospective members to stop by, meet local clubwomen, learn about our work, and discover ways to get involved. We will also be collecting toys for the CHP toy drive, helping bring a little extra joy to children this holiday season.

**December | Family Foster Youth Festival**
We'll close the year by supporting foster youth and families through a special festival focused on connection, celebration, and belonging. Sometimes one of the most meaningful things a community can say to a child is simply: You matter. You are seen. You belong here.

**Come Be Part of It**
Attend an event. Volunteer for an hour. Donate an item. Bring a friend. Share a community need. Or simply come meet us.

There is no single way to serve, and no contribution is too small. Come for an event. Stay for the friendships. Help us make a difference.



# DO GOOD. TOGETHER.

*Service. Friendship. Family. Community.*

Small ACTS. BIG IMPACT.

Looking for a meaningful way to give back, meet new people, and make a difference close to home? GFWC SoCal Volunteers invites you to join us. We are a family-friendly volunteer club where service comes first and everyone has a place at the table. Our members span generations because we believe you are never too young—or too old—to make a difference.

- No long, formal meetings.
- No complicated expectations.
- Just people coming together to serve, connect, and strengthen our community.

## OUR FOCUS

### Supporting Foster Youth

Providing resources, encouragement, and meaningful experiences for foster youth and families.

### Keeping Children Safe

Helping families address online predators, bullying, human trafficking, and other threats facing children today.

### Strengthening Families

Finding and creating resources that help families engage, bond, communicate, and thrive.

## THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU

Join us for an upcoming:

- ZOOM Business Meeting
- ZOOM Awareness Event
- Community Service Project

*Bring your ideas. Bring your talents. Bring your family.*

## MONTHLY ZOOM BUSINESS MEETING

- Third Thursday of Each Month
- 6:15–7:00 PM
- October through June
- Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/rqf-xb0SnaT9uHK7SievA

## FUN FACTS

**AGES 5–75**

- Our members range in age from 5 to 75.
- Our meetings and activities are family friendly.
- Business meetings are held online once a month, October through June.
- Everyone has a voice. Everyone can serve. Everyone can make an impact.

## READY TO GET INVOLVED?

Club Information: Federationlu@gmail.com
Membership Information: lmay0048@aol.com
Visit Us Online: www.socalvolunteers.org

**GFWC SoCal Volunteers**

*Come as you are. Bring the family. Find your place to serve.*



**Lisa Mayo**
Club Chair

*Notes from our Chairman*

# 10 Tips to Teach Your Kids How To Combat Bullying

**Effective strategies to combat bullying behaviors include teaching social and emotional skills to increase empathy. Strategies include:**

1. Talk to kids about **how their behavior impacts others** and **encourage kindness**.
2. Have **conversations about feelings** and teach **coping tools**, especially **related to conflict**.
3. Teach that a **bystander** is someone who witnesses bullying but doesn't say anything or take action to help. **An upstander takes action to support someone who is being bullied**.
4. If a child sees someone being bullied, they can ask their peer to **join their group or activity** so that they aren't alone.
5. Sometimes, just **walking the child being bullied over near an adult** is helpful. If there are **safety concerns**, they should tell an adult right away.
6. If it's safe, a child can tell the bully something like: "Please stop. This is bullying and that's not OK." **Speaking up creates a culture that does not accept unkind, bullying behaviors**.
7. If there are **no safety concerns**, a child can ignore the bully, making it less rewarding for the bully and less likely that they'll continue.
8. **Teach assertiveness skills** like speaking clearly, firmly and directly; confident body language; and making eye contact.
9. Encourage children to keep a peer or adult around them to **stop bullying attempts**.
10. **Contact school staff** to come up with a plan together. Talk with your child about a safe adult they can talk to and report bullying behavior when it happens.

Lisa Mayo is the club Chair for the Domestic & Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention area of focus. This area focuses primarily on Anti Bullying campaigns. Join us to learn more about our work.

# The Spark of Joy



Meet Joy — Club Youth Ambassador, Charter member, and published author of 3 books with her after school program. Joy developed the Military Recognition Program where she gets members of the community and club to write thank you notes to active duty members of the Armed Forces and attaches them to boxes of girl scout cookies. At the age of 3 years and 7 months she was inducted as a Princess in Waiting by California Federation of Women's Clubs Past President Toby Kahan because "you are never too young to volunteer".

**How To Deal With Bullies**
By Joy

Sometimes kids say things that are not nice. They may tease you, leave you out, call you names, or try to make you feel bad.

If that happens, remember: you do not have to deal with a bully by yourself.

One of the best things you can do is tell a trusted adult. That could be your teacher, parent, grandparent, caregiver, counselor, or another grown-up you trust.

And remember to trust your teachers. Teachers are there to help keep you safe. If something is happening at school, tell them what happened and how it made you feel.

If you can, stay calm and walk away. You do not have to argue, fight, or say something mean back.

You can also help when you see someone else being treated badly. Sit with them, be kind to them, invite them to join you, or help them tell an adult.

Sometimes being a good friend is one of the bravest things you can do.

**Joy's Reminder**
Be kind. Tell someone. And never be afraid to ask for help.

Love from your friend Joy

# KIDS CORNER

**LITTLE MOMENTS THAT MATTER**

Simple Ways to Connect with Your Children Ages 3-5

## Fall Fun & Brain Boosters

Play. Create. Think. Smile.

**Fall Scavenger Hunt -** See how many of these you can find:

- A red leaf
- A yellow leaf
- An acorn
- A pinecone
- A bird
- Something shaped like a circle
- Something that smells like fall
- Something orange
- A tiny bug
- Something that makes you smile

**Would You Rather?**

- Jump in a giant pile of leaves or pick the perfect pumpkin?
- Drink hot cocoa or apple cider?
- Visit a pumpkin patch or an apple orchard?
- Dress up for Halloween or decorate for fall?
- Read a book by a cozy fire or watch a family movie?

**Brain Teaser**

I have a face, but no eyes.
I can glow at night.
People carve me in the fall.
What am I?

**Finish the Story -** Write or draw what happens next:
One chilly fall afternoon, I found a tiny golden key hiding under a pile of leaves. I picked it up and suddenly...

# KIDS CORNER

**Fall Word Challenge**

How many words can you make from the letters in:
THANKSGIVING

Bonus: Can you find a word with 7 or more letters?

**Create your own Fall Code**
Use the code below to create your own secret message:
**A = 1 B = 2 C = 3 D = 4 E = 5 F = 6 G = 7 H = 8 I = 9 J = 10 K = 11 L = 12**

**M = 13 N = 14 O = 15 P = 16 Q = 17 R = 18 S = 19 T = 20 U = 21 V = 22**

**W = 23 X = 24 Y = 25 Z = 26**

For Practice: What does the code 2 – 5 11 – 9 – 14 – 4 say?

**Build Your Perfect Fall Day -** If you could plan the perfect fall day for your family, what would you choose?

**Kindness Mission -** Choose three to complete this week:
□ Include someone who is being left out
□ Give someone a sincere compliment
□ Help at home without being asked
□ Thank a teacher or school employee
□ Share something with a friend
□ Write a kind note to someone
□ Help a younger child
□ Do something kind without telling anyone

**Imagine This...**
You discover a tiny door at the bottom of a tree during a fall walk.
When you open it, you find...

# Parent Backpack Pages

## HOLIDAY CLEANING HACKS FOR BUSY FAMILIES

Simple ways to get your home holiday-ready without spending the whole season cleaning.

The holidays bring family, friends, food, decorations—and a whole lot more activity into the house. The good news? Your home does not have to be spotless to feel welcoming. Focus on the areas people actually use, get the whole family involved, and tackle small jobs before they become big ones.

**Start With the "Guest Zone"** - If company is coming, concentrate on the spaces they will see most:

- Entryway
- Living room
- Kitchen
- Guest bathroom
- Dining area

Close the doors to rooms that do not need attention and save those for another day.

**The 15-Minute Family Reset** - Set a timer for 15 minutes and give everyone one job.
One person gathers clutter. One wipes counters. One vacuums or sweeps. One straightens pillows and blankets. When everyone helps, a surprising amount can get done quickly.

**Keep a Cleaning Basket Ready** - Fill a small basket or caddy with your most-used supplies:
Microfiber cloths, All-purpose cleaner, Glass cleaner, Disinfecting wipes, Trash bags, and Paper towels.
Carry it from room to room instead of making repeated trips for supplies.

**Freshen the House Naturally -** A clean-smelling home feels inviting.
Try simmering orange peels, cinnamon sticks, and cloves in a small pot of water, or simply open the windows for a few minutes to bring in fresh air. *** Never leave simmering pots unattended.

**Make the Bathroom Guest-Ready -** You do not need a deep clean every time.
Quickly wipe the sink and mirror, replace the hand towel, empty the trash, check the toilet paper, and make sure soap is available. That small reset can make the whole room feel fresh.

**Give Clutter a Temporary Home -** When time is short, use a decorative basket or bin to collect stray items. After the gathering, sort and return everything where it belongs. Just remember: temporary storage works best when it actually gets emptied later!

**Clean the Kitchen as You Cook -** Holiday cooking creates mess quickly.
Fill the sink with warm soapy water before you begin. Place used measuring cups, utensils, and bowls directly into the water as you cook. Wipe counters while food is baking or simmering so cleanup does not pile up at the end.

Let the Kids Help - Children can Dust low surfaces, Match clean socks, Wipe cabinet doors, Straighten shoes, Put toys away, Set the table, Restock napkins, and Gather trash. It may not be perfect—but teaching children to contribute is more valuable than doing everything yourself.

The Holiday Rule: Clean enough to be comfortable. Then stop. Your guests are coming to spend time with you—not to inspect your baseboards. A welcoming home is not the one that looks perfect. It is the one where people feel comfortable enough to stay awhile.




## FROM THE CABINET MAKER: LET'S GET HOLIDAY READY

Simple ways to organize, protect, and make better use of the hardest-working room in the house.

As a cabinet maker, I spend a lot of time seeing how families really use their kitchens—not just how they look when they are brand new. During the holidays, those spaces work even harder. Cabinets are opened more often, drawers are packed a little fuller, and every inch of storage suddenly matters. A few simple checks and small changes before the busy season begins can make your kitchen easier to use, help protect your cabinets, and give your family more time to enjoy what really matters—being together.

**Kitchen Checklist**

- Clear the clutter before the holidays. Pull out items you rarely use and make room for the cookware, serving dishes, and ingredients you'll reach for most.
- Check hinges and drawer slides. Loose doors and sticky drawers usually become more noticeable when the kitchen is getting heavy use.
- Don't overload shelves. Heavy appliances, stacks of dishes, and canned goods can put unnecessary stress on shelving.
- Watch for moisture. Check under the sink and around plumbing for small leaks, swelling, or discoloration before they become bigger cabinet problems.
- Use vertical space. Shelf risers, dividers, pullouts, and organizers can often create more usable storage without replacing the cabinets.
- Protect cabinet finishes. Wipe spills promptly and avoid harsh cleaners or excessive water, especially around cabinet seams.
- Create a holiday work zone. Put baking supplies, serving pieces, or frequently used holiday items together so you aren't searching through every cabinet while cooking.
- Think before replacing. Sometimes cabinets that look tired only need adjustments, hardware updates, refinishing, or better organization rather than a complete replacement.

Remember, A well-built kitchen should work for your family, not make your family work around it.

As I like to say "Build it for the way your family really lives." Till next time...

-Moe

Moises Arredondo, or "Moe" as he is commonly called, is a 26-year professional cabinet installer. Moe often says that "most homes don't suffer from a lack of space — they suffer from a lack of systems". The right tips and tools can transform your cabinets into hard-working, stress-saving spaces for the whole family. You can contact Moe's Kitchen Consulting and Design, LLC at 626-820-2729 or via email at moisesarredondo@yahoo.com. Se habla espanol.

# The Inside Scoop on Houses & Happenings.



**Happy October from Michele Morris Realty!**

As the leaves change and temperatures drop, so too does the real estate market. The frenetic pace of summer is behind us, but that doesn't mean the market is hibernating. This is a unique time for both buyers and sellers, presenting opportunities that the spring and summer markets don't offer. In this issue, we'll give you a rundown on the latest fall market trends, from shifting home prices to mortgage rates. Plus, we've gathered some great tips to help you increase your home's value and build equity this fall. Happy reading!

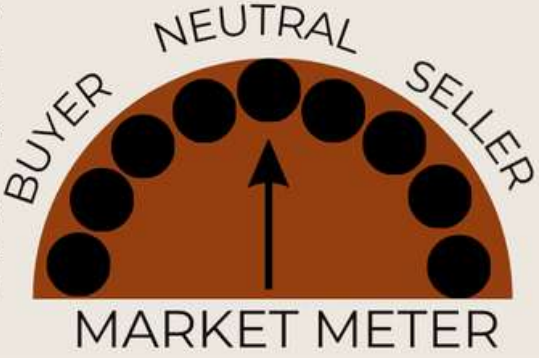
MERCEDEZ SANCHEZ
REALTOR® Broker



## OCTOBER REAL ESTATE TRENDS

October brings a new rhythm to the real estate market, and we're seeing some promising trends. While the scorching pace of summer has cooled slightly, the market remains active and healthy. Inventory levels are steadily increasing, which is great news for buyers, providing more options and a little more breathing room to find the perfect home.

For sellers, demand remains strong, and homes are still moving quickly when priced correctly. The fall market trends to attract highly motivated buyers, making this an ideal time to list your property. Whether you're thinking of buying or selling, this more balanced market presents a fantastic opportunity.




## DON'T LEAF YOUR MOVING PLANS TO CHANCE!

Mercedez Sanchez is a 27-year Real Estate Professional, operating since 1999. She has helped families across California with the sale and purchsae of their homes. Be sure to contact Mercy to subscribe to her monthly newsletter and stay in the know on the Real Estate Market or for a consultation. Se habla Espanol.

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POWER AGENT
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# SCARE UP SOME SERIOUS EQUITY WITH THESE HOME UPGADES.

Create a lasting impression this fall by adding cozy upgrades that buyers will fall in love with.



## "Leaf" Your Mark: Landscaping with a Fall Flair

Enhance curb appeal by tidying up your yard. Rake leaves, trim bushes, and plant some fall-friendly flowers like mums or pansies. A well-maintained exterior gives potential buyers a great first impression.

## "Gourd"-geous Kitchen Upgrades

The kitchen is the heart of the home, and small updates can make a big difference. Consider painting cabinets, updating hardware, or installing a new backsplash. These projects are relatively inexpensive but offer a high return on investment.

## "Pumkin"-Spice Up Your Living Room

Give your living room a cozy, inviting feel. Simple changes like painting the walls a warm, neutral color, adding new throw pillows or blankets, and arranging furniture to create a more open space can make the room feel larger and more welcoming.

## A "Hay"-venly Fresh Coat of Paint

A fresh coat of paint is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to increase your home's value. Neutral colors are always a safe bet, as they appeal to a wider range of tastes and make a room feel clean and updated.

## Don't Be a "Scare"-crook: Focus on Maintenance

Fall is the perfect time for crucial home maintenance. Get your furnace checked, clean your gutters, and inspect your roof for any damage. Addressing these issues now can prevent bigger problems down the line and show potential buyers that the home is well cared for.

# FIND THE FRESHEST LISTINGS OF FALL BELOW

Stronger Communities Happier Families Brighter Tomorrows

People Projects Purpose Together

Hosted by GFWC CFWC Foothill District

# COMMUNITY TOY DRIVE OPEN HOUSE

***Bring a Toy. Enjoy Refreshments. Help Brighten a Child's Holiday.***




**Saturday, November 21, 2026**
**9:00 AM – 11:00 AM**

**San Dimas Masonic Lodge**
220 N. Monte Vista Ave.
San Dimas, CA 91773

## YOU'RE INVITED!

The public is invited to stop by, drop off a new unwrapped toy, enjoy free refreshments, and support kids in need.

*Community Makes the Season Brighter*

## Toy Drive for Children in Need

**Please bring a new, unwrapped toy.**

All donations will help support children through the CHP toy drive.

## Prize Drawing!

Guests who bring a toy will have a chance to win a gas card or a Stater Bros. gift card.




*Give a Toy. Get a Chance to Win!*




## Open House & Fellowship

Come meet local women's clubs, enjoy light refreshments, and learn how service strengthens our community.

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**




*Community Women Change Lives*

## GFWC CFWC FOOTHILL DISTRICT

*Empowering Clubs • Inspiring Leaders • Strengthening Federation*

SERVICE ♥ FRIENDSHIP ♥ LEADERSHIP ♥ LASTING IMPACT

*A Kinder Brighter Stronger Tomorrow*



# Financial Fitness

Holiday Spending Without the Holiday Stress. More joy. Less debt. Better memories.

The holidays can bring joy, traditions, gatherings, travel, gifts, and family fun—but they can also bring financial pressure.

A little planning before the spending begins can help families enjoy the season without starting the new year overwhelmed by bills.

Begin by deciding what your family can comfortably spend for the entire holiday season. Remember to include more than gifts. Food, travel, school events, decorations, charitable giving, and holiday outings can all add up quickly.

Make a list before you shop and give each person or category a spending limit. This helps reduce impulse purchases and keeps several small expenses from quietly becoming one large total.

When possible, consider meaningful experiences instead of more things. A family movie night, baking day, park adventure, handmade gift, or afternoon together can create lasting memories without stretching the budget.

Be careful with “buy now, pay later” offers, too. Small payments may feel manageable, but several of them can quickly become another monthly burden.

And remember—children often remember the traditions, laughter, time together, and people who showed up far longer than they remember every gift under the tree.

A meaningful holiday does not have to be an expensive holiday.

**Holiday Money Check**

□ Set one total holiday budget

□ Include gifts, food, travel, decorations, events, and giving

□ Make a shopping list before you shop

□ Set a spending limit for each person

□ Compare prices before buying

□ Avoid impulse purchases

□ Track spending as you go

□ Consider homemade gifts or experiences

□ Let children help with age-appropriate budgeting

□ Use credit carefully

□ Review “buy now, pay later” commitments before adding another

□ Check January payment dates before December ends

□ Keep some money aside for unexpected expenses

**Before You Buy, Ask:**

- Is it in the budget?
- Is it meaningful?
- Will I still feel good about it in January?

**Holiday Goal:** Celebrate generously—without borrowing from your future.

GFWC SoCal Volunteers
1704 Varilla Drive
West Covina, CA 91791

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

# Why FEDERATION?

STRONGER WOMEN. BRIGHTER COMMUNITIES.

*Together We Make a Difference!*

### MAKE AN IMPACT
Join a network of women committed to service, leadership and positive change in our communities and beyond.

### BE PART OF HISTORY
GFWC has a proud legacy of breaking barriers and creating opportunities for over 130 years.

### ACCESS RESOURCES
Grants, tools, program ideas, leadership training and support to help your club thrive.

### GROW AS A LEADER
Develop new skills, build confidence and connect with mentors at the club, district, state and international levels.

### BUILD LASTING FRIENDSHIPS
Be part of a supportive sisterhood that inspires, encourages and celebrates your success.

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY
Work on meaningful projects that improve the lives of women, children, families and communities.

### BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER
Connect with clubs across the state, nation and world to amplify your impact.

### A VOICE THAT MATTERS
GFWC advocates for critical issues including education, women's rights, children, health and the environment.

### SERVICE MADE EASY
Ready-to-use programs, project ideas and best practices to help your club plan, promote and succeed.

### LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY
Together we create stronger communities today and brighter opportunities for future generations.

*Empowering Clubs. Inspiring Leaders. Strengthening Communities.*



GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

SERVICE • LEADERSHIP • FRIENDSHIP • OPPORTUNITY