

History of North Mecklenburg Woman's Club

1914 – 1920's

- Organized in 1914 as the Huntersville Woman's Club
- Primary purpose was creating social opportunities and doing civic work in Huntersville, N. C.
- Average of 30 members
- Projects included beautification of lawns & gardens; created handicrafts; exchanged recipes; and encouraged music appreciation.

1920's

- Partnered with local schools on grounds improvement, donating books and helping with fund raising.
- Sponsored our first Boy and Girl Scout troops.
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1930's

- Big emphasis was on helping the war effort: Red Cross work and selling war bonds.
- Helped fight growing health issues by assisting with fund raising for polio and heart programs, and providing supplies for cancer patients.

1940's

- Helped establish the first branch library in the county: A small brick building furnished with shelves, draperies, tables and chairs. Our members helped to rebind and catalogue books and for a while helped to staff the branch.

1950's

- We did clean up, fix up, paint drives, planted trees and shrubs, held garden tours and sponsored health programs and fashion shows.
- Quilts were made for the patients at Huntersville Sanatorium.
- To raise money we held bazaars, bake sales, antique displays and a Christmas home decoration contest.
- In 1953, we joined the General Federation of Woman's Clubs. & grown to 44 members—2 from the original 1914 membership. We established our department structure: American Home, Education, Fine Arts and International Relations.
- In 1956 we partnered with North Mecklenburg High School and the American Field Service Exchange to bring in the first foreign exchange student. We were also the official hosts for the opening of a new branch library.

1960's

- Helped to plant over 50 crabapple trees along Hwy 115 in downtown Huntersville.
- We collected clothes for the schools clothes closet

- Provided financial aid for students to attend a summer recreation program.
- For Easter Seals, members addressed 5,000 envelopes for donations.

1970's

- Raised money for donations to create Holbrook Park and its tennis courts.
- Established a fund to build a Community Center for Huntersville
- Gave financial support to the Boys & Girls Home, Huntersville Hospital Operation—Home Bound, and to Western Carolina Center.
- Awarded the Community Improvement Program Award in 1973 for financial support of the North Mecklenburg Medical Development Association.
- In 1979, club member Sarah McAuley was elected at Huntersville's first female mayor.

1980's

- In 1980, members helped provide a bus for the Huntersville Hospital called the —Funshine Express.
- 1981
 - The North Mecklenburg Junior Woman's Club was formed and sponsored by the Huntersville Woman's Club, the Charter President was Dawn Bradford, who is still a member today. These ladies were between the ages of 18 – 35
 - Girls Haven received \$2,200 from the club in support of their swimming pool and gym.
- 1982
 - Gave \$4,700 and helped complete a two year community program to restore the Hugh Torrance House and Store
 - A Fit Trail received a financial boost of \$1,000 from our group
 - Members fought against the Reames Road Landfill.
- 1983 - We sponsored our first \$1,000 scholarship to a student at North Mecklenburg High School.
- 1986 - Members began meeting in Huntersville Presbyterian Fellowship Hall. Dues were only \$20.00 and lunches were prepared by some of the 66 members.
- 1988
 - Financial donations were made to Huntersville Oaks Nursing Home
 - The official seal was approved. It is a white dogwood bloom on a green background with Huntersville Woman's Club, organized in 1914.

1990's

- 1991
 - The Lake Norman Juniorettes were formed by Denise Carter, a member of the North Mecklenburg Junior Woman's Club and a past president of NMWC and an active member today.
 - Erica Whelan was the Charter President.
- 1992
 - Member's stood strong to keep the library in Huntersville while the library at North Cross was being discussed.

- Bingo was held at Brookwood Retirement Home
- Stamps were collected for World Countries
- 1994 – A tree was planted at Cornelius Elementary.
- 1996
 - Brookwood Woman’s Club was formed. It was known as the “club within a club”. The Huntersville Woman’s Club paid the dues of these women, but held monthly meetings for them with guest speakers.
 - The dream of building the Huntersville Civic Association Building was dropped by the members.
- 1997 – The North Mecklenburg Junior Woman’s Club disbanded.
- 1998
 - Our general meetings were moved from Huntersville Presbyterian Church
 - to the Peninsula Country Club with members paying for their lunch instead of the hostess committee cooking it.
 - Bibs were made for Huntersville Oaks residents.
- 1999
 - With membership at only 38, Special Interest Groups were formed in the hopes of encouraging new members. These groups included a book club, lunch bunch, and “make a project”.
 - The tradition of planting an historical tree at North Mecklenburg High School for the Horticultural Department was begun.
- We ended the decade with 40 members paying \$25 for dues.

2000’s The New Millennium

- 2000 - We decided to focus scholarship money on women returning to school to further their careers and the first award was made.
- 2001
 - Made a large donation to the NC Aquarium.
 - Double Harvest was brought to our attention through Vickie Van Wingerden (an active member today) and we began supporting it through International Affairs.
 - One hundred bibs were made for patients at Huntersville Oaks Nursing Home.
 - Members held a Bridge Benefit at the Huntersville Aquatic Center
 - First Red, White, & Green Auction was established as the December program.
 - The donations of \$5,000 made to the Civic Center were returned to the HWC because it wasn’t going to be built and we donated it to the Huntersville Aquatic Center.
- 2002
 - We held our first plant sale.
 - A donation of \$2,500 was made to a student at NMHS who broke his neck in a diving accident. The money went towards the purchase of a lift for the family van.
- 2004
 - Renamed our organization the North Mecklenburg Woman’s Club

- (NMWC) to reflect the growing diversity of our membership
 - We also changed our logo from the Dogwood flower to a branch – branching out to the community.
 - Members were given tote bags with the new name and logo on it.
 - Held the first fashion show as a fundraiser
- 2005
 - We withdrew from the General Federation of Woman's Club so we could ensure that more of our funds stayed in the local communities and give us more independence.
 - Butter Braids were sold for the first time as a fundraiser.
 - Supported the Opening of Hope House.
- 2007
 - We helped open Lake Norman Free Clinic
 - Decorated a bedroom at Hope House
 - Donated \$5,000 in scholarships.
- 2009
 - Membership reached an all time high of 135 members
 - Scholarships were given only to women going back to school, no high school students
 - We sponsored the Over the Tabletop gala fund raiser for the first time.

2010's

- 2010
 - We realigned our organization by adding a Communications Vice President and having all committee chairs report to one of the now three Vice Presidents
- 2012 - 2013
 - Over The Tabletop raised \$13,000 that went to ANSWER
 - Red, White, and Green raised \$8,000 that went to Ada Jenkins Center
 - Fashion show raised \$12,000
 - Total of \$30,000 that helped Purple Heart Homes, Hope House, Caterpillar Ministries and many other charities in the area
 - 146 members participated in the Soup and Chowder event for Susan G. Koman, Education, International Affairs, and Community Affairs projects
 - Butter Braids were sold to give members a boost for the Blood Drive that was held at the fall meeting.
- 2013 - 2014
 - The beginning of our celebration of 100 years in the community
 - Each committee was asked to donate items by the 100's: 100 blankets, 100 cupcakes, 100 notes of kindness, 100 items for the Animal Shelter, 100 toiletry items, 100 books for the library, 100 cans of food, etc
 - Butter Braids, Over the Table Top, and Casino Night raised money for the many charities we support
 - Dress for Success was also supported by our ladies as we held a members brunch and collected items that were needed for job interviews

- Donated a full kitchen and laundry room to a local resident whose house burnt down, Build Betty A House
- Supported the opening of Serenity House by furnishing and tidying up their front porch to welcome visitors.

- 2014 – 2015
 - 180 members strong contributed to Butter Braids, Over the Tabletop (\$10,000)
 - Red, White, and Green (\$14,344)
 - Casino Night “Saddles and Spurs” (\$9,860)
 - International Affairs was dropped
 - Community for a Cause was added for crisis in the area that needed immediate help
 - Legendary Leading Ladies was added to membership recognizing members with 25 years of service to the club.

- 2015 – 2016
 - Supported 5 main charities, ANSWER, Caterpillar Ministries, Hope House, Purple Heart Homes, and Serenity House which received up to 80% of our fundraising monies this year
 - Raised \$66000 for our charities
 - 13 other charities were supported through hands on work and smaller sums of contributions
 - Established an Appropriations Committee and developed a Request for Funding process to help club learn about charities in the Lake Norman area as well as formalize the process of how our charities are chosen

- 2016 – 2017
 - Reached 200 members – a first for the club
 - Red, White and Green, a favorite among our members raised \$15,500
 - Casino Night “Denim and Diamonds” reaching an all time high of \$40,000
 - A new fundraiser called Make It Grow was held throughout the year with members participating in any way they liked by having luncheons, parties, psychics, game nights, etc. raising \$12,000
 - Raised \$74,600 for our charities. ANSWER, Hope House, and Caterpillar Ministries received up to 80% of our fundraising monies. 16 other charities were supported through hands and smaller sums of contributions
 - New website was developed through GoDaddy
 - Box tops were collected for Education that put 2 students in summer camp,
 - 300 pairs of shoes donated to Double Harvest
 - Thousands of cookies, donuts and cupcakes delivered to care givers and first responders in February.

2017-18

- Prepared brown bag lunches over the summer for Angels & Sparrows

- Collected and packed schools supplies and back packs for children at Caterpillar Ministries.
- Continued to prepare meals, serve them and clean up two days a month at Angels & Sparrows (3rd Monday and 4th Thursday). Many members work there in addition to our club days.
- Collected toiletries for Caterpillar Ministries Middle School students. Several members packed them into draw string back packs.
- Prepared and served meals for the residents of Hope House twice during October.
- Held a holiday party for residents at Hunter Village. A retirement home for financially challenged patients. Served snacks and played bingo.
- We made fleece blankets for first responders to use when needed with children.
- Members selected a child from an Angel tree in November for gifts for Caterpillar Ministries and Hope House children. Gifts were delivered in December.
- We collected coats for Hope House residents and for Caterpillar Ministries clients in January.
- In February, we had a Valentine party and made cards with residents of Hinds Feet Farm,
- For Valentine's Day week, we made and delivered cupcakes or others sweets to police and fire departments in North Mecklenburg.
- Members joined in small groups to prepare and deliver meals each week in April for the families of patients at Levine Hospice House.
- For Mother's Day, we collected new and gently used jewelry and accessories and displayed them so children at Caterpillar Ministries could "shop" for their Mothers and Grandmothers.

2018-19

- We joined with teens from Caterpillar to make over 100 blankets for first responders to use when helping children.
- We prepared lunch and snacks for our two partner school teachers. This year's schools are Hornet's Next Elementary and Blythe Elementary. Both served economically challenged students.
- We raised and donated more than \$77,000 to charities in the North Mecklenburg Community and beyond.
- We helped Caterpillar Ministries kids make Valentine cards for their parents.
- Our members learned self-defense, wreath making and more. They also enjoyed Canasta, wine and dine and other fun activities together.
- Our team made and served lunch 24 days this year at Angels and Sparrows Soup Kitchen in Huntersville. That's at least 2400 people fed by our hands.
- Our team made summer bag lunches for children who get free lunch at school. More than 100 lunches were prepared each day we worked.

- We filled and delivered more than 120 Christmas stockings for the residents of Hunter Village. We also hosted a Halloween party for them.
- At our meetings each month, we collected donations from our members for at least one local charity including: underwear for Lydia's Loft; towels for Caterpillar Ministries summer camp; cash donations for Haiti and more.
- \$900 was donated to our partner schools for end of the year trips and needed supplies for children who could not afford to participate otherwise.
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2019-20

- Kicked off the year with an information fair for members showcasing our committees and volunteer opportunities. We played a Monopoly-like" game created by some of our members. Questions & Answers and locations were all based on our work to serve the North Mecklenburg committees. The theme of the game was "Step Up".
- Participated in the Huntersville Veterans Day Parade wearing costumes depicting each century of our history.
- Created a new board position for Public Relations. The position was designed to guide efforts to encourage new membership and community awareness. A brochure and redesigned logo were initial outcomes. Public Relations also coordinated our participation in the Veterans' Day parade.
- Changed our donation structure to ensure rotation of charities and encourage new organizations to participate. Held multiple information sessions with community groups.
- Provided snacks, meals and door prizes to teachers at each of our partner schools – Blythe Leggett and Hornet's Nest Elementary. Collected supplies for teachers in Feb 2020 from pencil sharpeners to hand sanitizer.
- Filled and donated Christmas season stockings to the more than 100 residents of Hunter Village. A retirement home for financially challenged patients.
- We continued taken sweets to first responders.
- Our annual March gala was cancelled due to Covid-19. We held a online Facebook live event just to see each other. We also held an online only auction with the items planned for the auction at the gala. Our members and other guests donated their ticket prices and more so we were still able to donate \$88,000 to North Mecklenburg and beyond charities.
- Monthly donations were held to help with local needs. Our members helped with underwear for Lydia's Loft, snacks for the Levine Hospice Center in Huntersville, books for Bright Blessings birthday bags and more..
- We collected and packed gift bags for Bright Blessings. They give the bags to children who are homeless or otherwise financially challenged so they can have a birthday celebration at school.
- We package Bags of Hope so that school children who are on free or reduced lunch have food for the weekends.
- We donated household furniture and goods for Caterpillar Ministries Coming On Home first house. The trailer, named Corey's House, will be a home for two

homeless women. We also decorated the living area and filled the kitchen cabinets.

- Through our continuing educational outreach, six of our members or their spouses tutored Caterpillar Ministries' children. Several of our members read every week to the pre-school children at La Escuelita to help them learn English.
- Meetings also ended after the March one due to Covid-19 so the board met and began efforts to be sure our members were okay and to stay connected. Activities included: phone calls to every member; follow up notes and calls; Zoom meetings and happy hours. The newsletter featured articles keeping members up to date on how our charities were handling the crisis; suggestions on ways to help our charities help families; member profiles and more.
- We established an "emergency fund" with the help of a very generous member and began distributing money to individuals who had immediate needs like rent or food.
- The club purchased a new technology service called Wild Apricot to improve our membership tracking and outreach.

2020-21

- In August, we collected and donated 24 back packs filled with school supplies for ANSWER and 6 back packs and supplies for Hope House. We also collected 220 dispensers of scotch tape, 170 one subject notebooks 115 three subject and 5 subject notebooks, 180 mesh pencil packs and more for Caterpillar Ministries.
- We kicked off the year with an outdoor meeting, we think the first ever. Due to Covid-19, we actually held three sessions, required face masks and kept our distance. Approximately 75 members attended. Raised just over \$1500 in donations.
- Post cards were hand addressed and mailed by board members to every club member in August.
- We continued the emergency fund and were able to help an additional family at the August board meeting.
- We have determined that we will not be able to have our annual gala due to Covid-19 so were we are undertaking other ways to raise money for our charities including direct requests, additional Make Money Grow events and a Marketplace where members donate items for sale.
- Implementation of Wild Apricot for membership began with our member directory and donation/sponsorship tracking.
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