



## *Margaret's Message* Submitted by President, Margaret Byl

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, I bring you greetings and well wishes. Every month, I like to do a Google search to look at Days of Holidays and Celebrations.

This month there are 82 days noted. For Christians, April 1<sup>st</sup> was Easter Monday. I want to thank Nancy Carubba and all of the volunteers including the Easter Bunny, that helped make our "10<sup>th</sup> Annual Easter at Addies" a success! Even though it was a bit chilly, hundreds of children and their parents visited the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead. The children enjoyed the egg hunt, Petting Zoo supplied by Pilkington's Farms,



Scavenger hunt, face painting, craft centre, a Food Truck, games and more. Special thanks to Settler's Supplies, Sharpe Farm Supplies, Royal LePage Realtor Chris Van Berkel, Fresh Strokes Painting as well as community members John and Cathy Smyth, Jeff Leader, Gwen Hunter, John McAlpine, Jenny Lynn Bisch, Susie Smyth, student volunteers and to the WI members who also lent a hand.

For those who celebrate the Muslim faith, April 9 is the last day of Ramadan. It commemorates the month during which Muslims believe the prophet Muhammed was given the first revelations of the Quran, the holy book of Islam. It ends in a festival called [Eid-al-Fitr](#). To our Muslim friends, neighbours and members, we wish you a Happy Ramadan.

On April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the United States, and Canada. In my neck of the woods, there is a state of emergency being called for the Niagara Region. We are being asked to prepare for fuel and food shortages in expectation of over a million people to visit Niagara Falls for the phenomenal one-day event. According to NASA, "a total solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun. The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk.

Safety is the number one priority when viewing a total solar eclipse. Be sure you're familiar with when you need to wear specialized eye protection designed for solar viewing by reviewing [these safety guidelines](#)."

Please visit <https://science.nasa.gov/eclipses/future-eclipses/eclipse-2024/>

Earth Day is on April 22, 2024, and this year FWIC will celebrate it with a Climate Event on April 29. FWIC will host a climate event on April 29 beginning at 7 pm ET. Topics will be Agriculture in the Classroom and Food Waste. FWIC will also acknowledge ACWW Day. To register email [registrations@fwic.ca](mailto:registrations@fwic.ca).

Tweedsmuir Competitions, Senator Carine Wilson Competition, and the Past Presidents' Competition 2024 are open for submissions. Details are in this issue of WI Connections. National Convention 2024: Reminder that the early-bird registration will end on April 30th. Forms and information are available on [www.fwic.ca](http://www.fwic.ca).

Our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to those effected by the ravages of war throughout the world.

Spring is officially here.

*"That is one good thing about this world... There are always sure to be more springs." - L.M. Montgomery*

May the flowers of spring bring joy to your heart and smile to your face.



Photos courtesy of Nancy Birss





# Addressing Food Waste

submitted by Marie Kenny, ACWW Area Canada President

## Take Ten: To Reduce, Re-Use and Re-Think Food Waste:

Did you know: Reading Food dates and understanding the facts behind them is a valuable way to eliminate food waste and help organize your food shopping and your pantry shelves.

Give this a try: Take Note of food labelling.

Here are 6 Key Facts to Help Consumers Make More Conscious Choices. Source: Earth.org (Solution for Food Waste)



1. “Sell by” date - this is the date the retailer should display the product until withdrawing it from the shelves. This date does not indicate that the food has spoiled, but merely specifies the day that it will be past its best quality. The food is still safe to consume.
2. “Best if used by (or before)” date - this date is for sellers and indicates when the food will be at its best quality to eat. It does not mean the food is inedible after this date, but merely informs the customer of when the best time to consume the food will be for its flavor and freshness etc.
3. “Guaranteed fresh” date - this date refers to the date when the item is at its optimal freshness. This is usually used for bakery items.
4. “Pack date” - this is usually the date on canned or packaged food. This date tells us when the product was packed. It does not indicate when it needs to be consumed by.
5. “Use By” date - this is the last date that the manufacturer guarantees the product to be at its maximum quality.
6. “Expires on” date - this date refers to the date that it is recommended that the product should be consumed by. If you decide to eat the food after the date, it is at your own risk.

*FWIC/WI Canada Presents... Agriculture in the Classroom and Food Waste  
Monday, April 29, 2024, at 7pm ET*

The FWIC/WI Canada's Climate Event will cover two topics. The first will be a look at agriculture in the classroom and the second will be on food waste. Pat Tonn, Executive Director of BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation as well as British Columbia's representative to the Board of Directors Agriculture in the Classroom Canada (<https://aitc-canada.ca/en-ca/>) will share insights on agriculture in the classroom.

*April 2024*

The second topic is Food Waste. As you are aware this was one of resolutions passed at the ACWW World Conference in May 2023 and is the focus for 2024 by Canada Area. ACWW Canada Area President Marie Kenny will share how we can help to reduce food waste in our homes. There will also be a second speaker will also share tips on how to reduce food waste.

To attend you can click the link below or email [registrations@fwic.ca](mailto:registrations@fwic.ca) and the link will be sent directly to your mailbox.

Topic: Agriculture in the Classroom and Food Waste

Time: Apr 29, 2024, 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89411116118?pwd=INQXM2ErI8Jj04vrtHYO8bc2XLMRcZ.1>

Meeting ID: 894 1111 6118

Passcode: 640679

Dial by your location

- +1 780 666 0144 Canada
- +1 204 272 7920 Canada
- +1 438 809 7799 Canada
- +1 587 328 1099 Canada

Any questions, please contact Lynn MacLean [president-elect@fwic.ca](mailto:president-elect@fwic.ca).



 **Climate & Food Waste Event**   
**April 29th, 2024**  
**registrations@fwic.ca 7pm EST**

**This year we will learn about Agriculture in the Classroom, with Pat Tonn; and Food Waste - a truly timely topic.**

# FWIC WI Canada Youtube Channel

Did you know that FWIC has a YouTube Channel? To access it, open YouTube on any device and in the search bar type in FWIC WI Canada. Scroll down until you find the FWIC crest (shown below). Click on the symbol and it will show the ten videos we have published over the last three years.



The most recent video is from FWIC WI Canada's celebration of WI Day on February 19, 2024.

This year members from across Canada shared excellent ideas and suggestions on how to attract new members. A summary of those ideas was published in the March issue of the WI Connections. For quick access to the latest video,

here is the link:

<https://youtu.be/QZOlmWfXK9I>.

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## Hogadone WI, Alberta, Submitted by Linda Mason



My Branch, Hogadone WI, is donating to the school in Trochu. In the pic. our President & the School Principal are holding the cheque & includes WI Members & some students. Photo of the donation to Trochu Valley School lunch/breakfast program.



The forgotten lunch and breakfast program benefits every student at their school, and offers students items such as bananas, oranges and apples, as well as some non perishable items that they keep in cupboards. Students in grades kindergarten through grade 12 utilize the program.

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## *International Women's Day*

Anne Innes (Ontario) Trustee and Board Lead on Knowledge Sharing and Local Activities for ACWW and Women's Institutes speaking for International Women's Day.



# Federated Women's Institutes of Canada



CONSTITUENT SOCIETY, ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

National Office:  
- - - - -

President:  
- - - - -



Highlights from the FWIC/WI Canada Board Meeting – March 25, 2024 FWIC WI Day (Feb 19):

The video of the FWIC WI Event is now available on the FWIC YouTube channel. It is a great resource for ideas on getting new members.

Climate Event April 29: FWIC will host a climate event on April 29 beginning at 7 pm ET. Topics will be Agriculture in the Classroom and Food Waste. FWIC will also acknowledge ACWW Day. To register email [registrations@fwic.ca](mailto:registrations@fwic.ca).

Tweedsmuir Competitions, Senator Carine Wilson Competition, and the Past Presidents' Competition 2024: Details are in the April issue of WI Connections. National Convention 2024: Reminder that the early-bird registration will end on April 30th. Forms and information are available on [www.fwic.ca](http://www.fwic.ca).

Resolutions: FWIC will distribute the resolutions that will be voted on at the national convention on April 15.

Reminders: Provincial Fees: Fees were due by February 1st. Thank you to the provinces that have sent in their reporting form and cheques. WI Connections: Reminder that submissions from branches and members are encouraged from each province. Please submit them by the 20th of each month. \*\*Next Meeting of the Board of Directors: Monday, April 22, 2024, at 7 pm ET





# Triennial Conference - Truro, Nova Scotia

## On the fence?

As you may recall, the 23rd Federated Women's Institutes of Canada National Convention will be held in Truro, Nova Scotia from September 17, 2024, to September 19, 2024.

The convention, the first national get-together since 2018, will be an opportunity to rekindle friendships and form new ones. There is nothing like an in-person meeting, but for those who cannot join in person, a virtual option is available.

Day registrations are also available.



The program is being finalized and will include a welcome dinner followed by the official opening ceremony, entertainment, and presentation of awards. Day 2 will open with business sessions including financial reports and resolutions as well as guest speakers. The evening of Day 2 will be an opportunity to meet new friends, have some fun, and learn something new. Day 3 will wrap up the business, as well as include the ACWW report, guest speakers, and installation of the new board, and conclude that evening with a banquet.

## Interested?

Remember that the early bird registration ends at midnight on April 30 th.

Early bird registration (Jan 1- April 30) of \$375

Full registration (May 1-July 17) \$425

Day registration Tues., Sept 17@ \$75 (opening ceremony & evening meal)

Day registration Wed., Sept 18 @ \$200 (meeting, lunch, dinner, afternoon tea)

Day registration Thurs., Sept 19 @ \$200 (meeting, lunch, afternoon tea, closing banquet)

Virtual Rate \$40.00 daily

For the registration forms and information package go to [www.fwic.ca](http://www.fwic.ca)  
Come and join us at Canada's Ocean Playground. You will be happy you did!

If you would like to attend and need a roommate,  
please contact Lynn MacLean, our President Elect

At... [registrations@fwic.ca](mailto:registrations@fwic.ca)

## Senator Cairine Wilson, submitted by Sheila Washburn, NBWI

You might be interested to know that the woman who created the Senator Cairine Wilson Competition for the Women's Institute of Canada, and her husband Norman Wilson, were among those who owned estates in the loyalist town of Saint Andrews, New Brunswick.

After a railway was built between St. Andrews and MacAdam and beyond, starting in the mid 1800's, the coastal town became a resort for "summer people" from "Upper and Lower Canada" and "the Boston States". This included CPR President, Sir William Van Horne, industrialist CD Howe and Senator Cairine Wilson, among many others. (In 1954 and 1955, when I went to Fredericton, I was still able to travel by train.)

In St. Andrews, after WWII, I managed to meet two of the children of Senator Cairine and Norman Wilson. The Senator's daughter "Cairine", was their third child. She was born in 1913 and her



brother Ralph, two years later. I met one on the golf course and one on the water. At the Algonquin Golf Course in Andrews, NB, children, both girls and boys, were allowed to carry clubs, getting paid \$0.75 for 9 holes or \$1.25 for 18 holes. Soon after 1950 the golf cart started to replace us caddies world-wide.

I may have carried a Cairine Wilson's golf clubs; I certainly knew her by sight. But she was likely the Senator's daughter Cairine, not the Senator herself. My senior Girl Guide group, called Sea Rangers, had access to, and sailed, a sailing dinghy. Some of St. Andrews's "summer people" also owned and sailed boats, when they weren't playing golf.

Senator Cairine Wilson's family had such a yacht which her son Ralph loved to sail. Once, some friends and I were invited on board by him. Ralph Wilson gave me a chance to briefly steer a yacht owned by a patron of the Women's Institute.

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## Ellen's Corner submitted by Dr. Ellen S. McLean

I have lived in my old (1832) farmhouse for more than seventy years. I was married to a wonderful "pack rat" and if I didn't have that gene before marriage, I caught it! And so there is a lot of "stuff" in boxes, drawers, filing cabinets and cupboards here, and I continue to try to keep the shredder going, but it is taking a long time to do it because I just can't manage to do that without the urge to read a lot of it. The result is memories that are happy, sad, interesting, frustrating, fun, - but always memories of a wonderful life.



And so it is that this past week came across a colourful, attractive brochure. It is printed on stiff blue paper, the front and back have sketches, outlined in yellow, of women in various poses. The brochure is

entitled

"Do you know...

### THE FEDERATED WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF CANADA?

The text is a series of questions and answers. Following are the questions and only part of the answers.

#### Do You Know the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada?

The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada is Canada's only national rural women's organization with a current voluntary membership of 50,000 women from coast to coast.

#### Do You Know What the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Accomplishes?

The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada prepares resolutions, briefs and submissions to government departments and other bodies, thereby proposing changes in legislation to benefit all Canadians. In addition, the organization researchs current issues and problems related to families and society.

#### Do You Know that the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Has World-Wide Connections?

The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada is a constituent society of the Associated Country Women of the World which has a membership of 9 million women in 66 countries.

#### Do You Know How the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Operates?

Each province has its own self-governing provincial unit composed of many branches. These are small groups in which members meet and where visitors are always welcome.

### Do You Know How Interested Women Can Join?

It is really very easy to become a member. Any woman may join or any group of eight women may form a branch where they live. Please telephone or write to any of the addresses on the back cover.

There is no date on this little bit of information. But there are several things mentioned that tells me it is back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century! The addresses on the back cover certainly indicate that. I wonder if any of you remember this. I also wonder how it was distributed? I am sure that the provincial units were responsible for that. An interesting public relations venture, and probably the success was never evaluated. An interesting look at FWIC's history.

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## *What is a Forensic Nurse?* Submitted by BCWI, Kim Coy

Forensic nurses help meet the physical, emotional, and legal needs of victims of violence. Critically, they also ensure that forensic evidence is properly collected and will offer to testify in court. These nurses understand the interlinking roles of forensic science, law enforcement, and the justice system. They are versed in the provincial and federal laws pertaining to trauma, crime, and violence. They care for both the victims and perpetrators-people who have been involved in sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, trauma, violence between adults, and sometimes death. The BCIT Forensic Health Science program draws in working nurses from across the province."

### **BCWI Resolution 2021**

"Be it resolved the BC Women's Institute request that every community in BC have either an established clinic staffed with forensic nurses and support workers that are accessible for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, elder abuse, child abuse, and human trafficking or have a forensic nurse accessible for victims via a mobile service in partnership with hospitals/urgent care centres in more rural communities."

**BCWI FORENSIC NURSING BURSARY FUND:** Women's Institutes began in Canada in 1897. We have been proud supporters of our local communities and have helped to build communities and establish programs , such as schools, community halls, and hospitals. Benefits of Membership: - Helping to make a positive change in your local community - Having a political voice in women's issues provincially, federally, and internationally - Be ready for crafting, laughter, and new friendships! BCWI Provincial Office P.O.Box 36 Barriere BC V0E 1E0 250-672-0259 "BCWI is now fundraising to offer a bursary to registered nurses! This bursary is for nurses that want to complete their education to become a forensic nurse examiner. This bursary is being collected and offered through the BCWI Provincial office. We have already awarded the Bursary to 16 nurses who have completed their forensic nursing training across BC, since the Bursary started in 2022! Let's keep supporting our nurses to get this much needed education and designation to become Forensic Nurses and better support our communities!

Currently FWIC is preparing distribution of a resolution for each province and branch to review regarding Forensic Nursing. Please watch for this important initiative.



The

Greater Fredericton Women's Institute members have been making quilts in St. Mary's Anglican Church and at home. We have made 10 so far. Our attached pictures show GFWI members Carol Egan, Jacquie Cleveland, Noreen Wetmore, and Colleen Hamilton at work. All of our quilts have been given to the Linus Blanket Project through a craft group in Saint Andrews, N.B.

It was this fledgling craft group that introduced Carol Egan and Sheila Washburn to the Linus Project when these two WI members volunteered to help them make quilts at Wesley United Church in the summer of 2023. There are 45 Linus chapters across Canada providing "much loved blankets full of hugs to children going through a crisis in their lives". We are grateful to Carol, an expert in sewing and quilting and other handicrafts, who discovered this interesting group.



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*Newfoundland and Labrador*

*Women's Institute*

*2024 International Women's Day Celebrations*



*Now  
this –  
is a cake....*





# Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) Update



Dear Society Members,

Welcome to spring, I hope this update find everyone well and enjoying these longer days. Thank you for the work you are doing in so many areas to improve the lives of women and girls, locally, nationally, and globally. Sharing knowledge and raising awareness are two very effective and powerful ways in which we can bring about systemic change.

I thank you for your encouragement and participation in addressing food waste. I know we can make a difference as individual consumers and as we share knowledge and awareness with others. I have been in contact with the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Honorable Minister MacAulay, to inform him of our concern on the issue and of the information program we have begun as an area.

April 29<sup>th</sup> is ACWW Day as well as the day we celebrate Women Walk the World. Every year since 2012, women worldwide gather around this date with friends and walk to raise funds and share information about work with their communities. This is a fantastic opportunity for women to mobilize within their own communities as leaders participating in awareness rising, strengthening friendship and building partnerships. All funds raised support the work of ACWW from development and empowerment projects to advocacy, education and awareness- raising. Funds raised are to be sent directly to Central Office, Thank you!

Be sure to check out the ACWW Website for information on the first Rural Women in Action project: Planting Seeds of Peace and the new podcast from UNESCO and ACWW: Leadership for Equality. This podcast was launched on International Women’s Day, this Episode: In 2024, why should we continue to argue for gender equality in leadership?

As always, I thank you for your support and for all the work you are doing in your areas. Please send me pictures of your Women Walk the World activities and ACWW Day celebrations. We are women supporting women! Until next time, stay safe, especially if you choose to watch the solar eclipse on April 8<sup>th</sup>, be mindful to wear protective eye wear and only watch for brief period of time.

Marie Kenny, ACWW Area Canada President, my contact: [Canada@acww.org.uk](mailto:Canada@acww.org.uk)

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# Tweedsmuir Competitions

April 2024

## HISTORY COMPETITION

**Project:** Share a story of a family member or friend that was involved in a war. This could be in the form of a poem, song, or short story.

### RULES:

- Length: 300 -- 1000 words
- May add up to 2 pictures.
- Needs to be typed and double spaced.
- Use the font ARIAL; size# 12.
- Spelling and grammar scored under general appearance.
- Follow the general rules.

### Scoring Points

Most inspiring: 50

General appearance: 20

Originality: 30

## CULTURAL COMPETITION

**Project:** "Your Memories of the Queen". This could be a short story of when the Queen visited your area.

### RULES:

- Length: maximum of 6 pages
- May include pictures.
- Needs to be typed and double spaced.
- Use the font ARIAL; size# 12.
- Spelling and grammar scored under general appearance.
- Follow the general rules.

### Scoring Points

Content: 60

General appearance: 20

Originality: 20

## HANDICRAFT COMPETITION

**Project:** Appliqué wall hanging. This can be in any medium.

### Rules:

- Size: maximum 30" (76.2cm) X 42" (106.68cm)
- Can be either hand-done or by machine.
- Must be completely finished and ready for hanging.
- Back must be visible.
- Follow the general rules.

### Scoring Points

General Appearance: 15

Presentation: 20

Design and colours: 20

Workmanship: 30

Back of the project: 15

## COMMUNITY COMPETITION

**Project:** Write an essay talking about a branch community project. This could be a one-time project or one that is ongoing.

### Rules:

- Length: 500-1000 words
- May include pictures.
- Needs to be typed and double spaced.
- Use the font ARIAL; size# 12.
- Spelling and grammar scored under general appearance.
- Follow the General Rules

### Scoring Points

Content: 60

General appearance: 20

Originality: 20

## GENERAL RULES

- There will be no limit to the number of entries submitted by Provincial members, however, only one entry per category per person will be considered.
- All submission must have name, Province, Branch, email address and phone number attached in a sealed envelope.
- Submissions that are **mailed** in must be received by **September 1, 2024**, at the following address (**not the FWIC office**): FWIC President-elect, Lynn MacLean; PO Box 493, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0.
- Otherwise, submissions must be brought in on the **first day of Convention, September 17, 2024**, to be judged. Late submissions will **not** be considered.
- All entries must be picked up at the end of the Convention or arrangements made to return the items at the expense of the submitter.
- FWIC/WI Canada will not be held responsible for lost or damaged submissions.
- Winners must give permission for the use of their photo, name, province, and branch by the FWIC/WI Canada on their website, social media pages, and newsletters.

- Photos of people in the competitions must have their permission for the use by FWIC/WI Canada
- Copyrights must be adhered to (Permissions in writing for copyright items must be provided).

- This could be an article in fabric, paint, sculpture etc., be artistic.
- Include a short description of the submission.
- Follow general rules.

### SENATOR CAIRINE WILSON COMPETITION (2021-2024)

**Topic:** Empowered Woman- describe an empowered woman or someone who has empowered others using an artistic medium.

### Scoring Points

General Appearance: 20

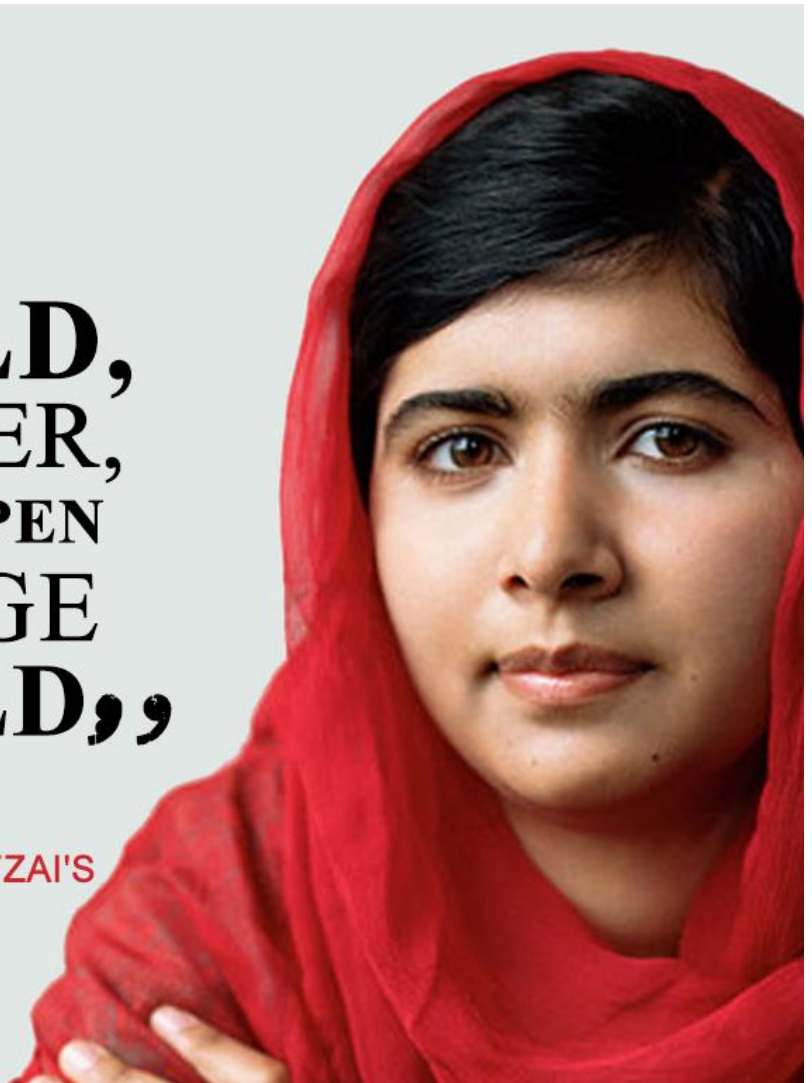
Workmanship: 30

Presentation: 20

Originality: 30

“  
**ONE CHILD,  
ONE TEACHER,  
ONE BOOK, ONE PEN  
CAN CHANGE  
THE WORLD,**”

- MALALA YOUSAFZAI'S





**2024 Quilt Raffle at Truro Convention**

Virginia Kreklevich

February 17, 1936 – October 5, 2021

SWI President 2002-2005

FWIC Board Member 2006 - 2009

SWI President 2018-2021

This quilt was the last one made by Virginia for FWIC.

It fits a double/queen size bed.



# Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1924-2024

Many WIs this year will celebrate their 100th Anniversary.

Attached is Harrowsmith WI outside of Kingston and a roaring 20's theme.



# The Homestead Report

April 2024

Submitted by: Nancy Carubba, Museum Manager



ADELAIDE  
HUNTER  
HOODLESS  
HOMESTEAD



March 3rd On behalf of AHHH Museum Nancy wrote an article on Adelaide Hunter Hoodless for the Russell Heights Newsletter. (The senior's residence in St. George)

March 5<sup>th</sup> met with Melinda Paletta about a summer workshop. Melinda has two cooking shows. One is da' Butchers daughter and the other is Basil and Sage. She will do a BBQ cooking demo and dinner here at the homestead for us and later will arrange to tape one of her shows here.

March 6<sup>th</sup> Nancy met with Kim DeJong of the Brantford Beacon and talked about Easter at Addies and other upcoming events. Kim is doing a story about it.

March 6<sup>th</sup>. Nancy was interviewed by the Hamilton Spectator – Topic Museum sustainability.

March 7<sup>th</sup> an application for a Community Improvement plan is drafted for submission to the County of Brant for funding for a wall mural for the side of a building in downtown St. George. The mural features Adelaide.

On the week of March 11<sup>th</sup>. Nancy met with two volunteers. Both with recent education and experience in the tourism sector. They would like to volunteer regularly, and we can really use their help.

March 12<sup>th</sup> Nancy was on Rogers TV to promote. Easter at Addies and the Murder Mystery fundraiser.

March 15<sup>th</sup> The Murder Mystery event sold out. 64 tickets.



# Past President's Competition for Triennial 2024

Submitted by Joan Holthe (2018-2021)

I decided to create a competition that would help fill the shelves at the Adelaide Hunter Homestead store, therefore, please be aware that your articles will not be returned (unless specified). There are no quantity limits established per person, every contribution is welcome, and it would be very helpful if provinces could designate a central location for collection and travel to Truro, NS by their delegates.

Entries if being delivered in person are to be handed in on September 17, 2024. If the items are to be mailed, they need to be received in Nova Scotia by September 1 st and sent to:

Lynn MacLean, 1365 Heathbell Road, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0

I would like this to be a friendly competition, where judging is done by viewers choice, during the triennial. The winners of the three categories will each win a prize of 100.00. It will be necessary for a small, folded piece of paper be taped or pinned to the article with the artist's name, address, and phone number on it.

The categories are:

1. Knitted or crocheted clothing attire, for child, under one year
2. Quilted table runner, length under 40 inches.
3. Christmas tree ornament, set of two.





Lyon's Brook and Area WI members and guests celebrated the 95th Anniversary of the Branch. Mr and Mrs Easter Bunny made a special early delivery of chocolate for all!  
Great displays and informative segments chronicling the branches history to present day, FWIC and ACWW, were presented as the program.

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*Cutter Bees*, Submitted by Shelly Simrose, Sinkut WI - Vanderhoof, BC

A few years ago while on a trip home from visiting family in Saskatchewan, we came across some blue hut type things in farmers fields. We had no idea what they were used for. We thought maybe "Calf shelters". I texted my son in-law and he said they were used for "Leaf Cutter Bees".



Above picture is housing for alfalfa leaf cutter bees used to pollinate alfalfa for seed production. They use wooden sheds, crates and empty buses used to house alfalfa leaf cutter bee nests. If you look inside you see that it does house leaf cutter bee nests. However, even though there were quite a few small vent holes and an open door, it was very hot inside. This yurt was molded and made of plastic. Inside this molded yurt, styrofoam nests were hung from the walls with baling wire. One sheet of styrofoam nests was strapped to another. In another yurt styrofoam nests were hung from the walls. The patterns drawn on the nest are orientation cues for returning bees.

*Megachile rotundata*, the alfalfa leaf cutting bee, is a European bee that has been introduced to various regions around the world. As a solitary bee species, it does not build colonies or store honey, but is a very efficient pollinator of alfalfa, carrots, other vegetables, and some fruits. Like the blue orchard bee, the alfalfa leaf cutting bee is a solitary bee in the family Megachilidae. This species was introduced to North America from Europe after a calamitous drop in alfalfa seed production in the middle of the last century. The drop in alfalfa seed production was related to a large increase in alfalfa acreage. Small fields, with a high quantity of edge habitat relative to their area, were well serviced by wild pollinators. In large fields, however, yields declined away from the field edges, until practically no seed was produced more than 75-100m from the surrounding natural habitat.

Honeybees were poor substitutes for alfalfa leaf cutting bees for alfalfa pollination because alfalfa flowers have a tripping mechanism that usually requires pollination by a large bee. Honeybees are reluctant pollinators of this crop because it appears they are averse to being struck forcefully under the head with the stamens when the flower is tripped. They usually learn to access the alfalfa nectar without tripping the flower, and therefore avoiding moving pollen. To compensate for a lack of wild alfalfa leaf cutting bees in large fields, producers place leaf cutting bee domiciles (which have gradually reached the size of truck trailers) in the alfalfa fields. This was the first, and to date the most successful, use of a cavity nesting solitary bee for managed pollination in North America. There is on-going study into their usefulness for other crops, including orchard fruit and berry crops.

Problems have emerged in the alfalfa leaf cutting bee industry due to the high density under which the bees work and are stored. Chalkbrood, a fungal infection similar to the disease of the same name that affects honeybees, is highly virulent to alfalfa leaf cutting bees. In addition, the parasitic wasp *Pteromalus venustus* parasitizes developing bees, killing them. Finding methods to control these parasites is difficult, and generally requires the use of the insecticide dichlorvos (Vapona®). Its use must be carefully timed so as to kill the parasite but not harm the bees. To make sure that commercially managed leaf cutting adults emerge at the right time for crop



bloom, the temperature of brood chambers can be manipulated. Cocoons are placed into domiciles and set in the field before the adults emerge. Females will return to where they emerged to lay their eggs, and the next generation of cocoons can be recovered and stored for use next season. Nest blocks that are full should be removed from the field, to protect them from insectivorous birds.

Alfalfa leaf cutting bee cells (cocoons) generally cost around \$100 per gallon bucket (i.e., approx. 10,000 healthy prepupae), although prices have increased over the last few years. Expect to use two gallons per acre (5 gallons per hectare) for alfalfa pollination, spaced appropriately throughout the field so that no part of the field is more than about 50m from a bee domicile.

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## *Federated Women's Institutes of Canada*

359 Blue Lake Road, P.O. Box 209  
St. George, ON, NOE 1N0 [info@fwic.ca](mailto:info@fwic.ca) 519.448.3873

