

May 2025

Monthly Newsletter for Federated Women's Institutes of Canada



Happy Mother's Day 2025



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From the President's desk...

Reflecting on the month of May, I am reminded of the words from Thomas Dekker's poem:

"O the month of May, the merry month of May, so frolic, so gay, and so green, so green, so green!" The beginning of May, particularly May 1, celebrates the return of spring as it marks the halfway point between the spring equinox and the summer solstice.

As with many early holidays, May Day is rooted in agriculture. Springtime festivities filled with song and dance celebrated the sown fields beginning to sprout. Cattle were driven to pasture, special bonfires were lit, and the doors of houses and livestock were adorned with yellow May flowers. In the Middle Ages, the Gaelic people celebrated the festival of "Day of Fire. "

People created large bonfires and danced at night to commemorate the occasion. Many of these traditions are still celebrated in Europe and England, but they did not make it to North America, as the Puritan settlers considered them pagan.

For the Women's Institute organization, May often marks the beginning of district meetings, area conventions, AGMs, and more. It is an ideal time to reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges and plan for the future. Key questions include: What should our priorities be? How can we foster enthusiasm and engagement when doing so seems hopeless?

There are positive developments to share on many fronts, and branches are successfully attracting new members. What draws these individuals to WI varies widely. Some seek to contribute to the community and view WI as an organization that excels in this regard. Others value the opportunity to acquire new skills and explore topics with like-minded individuals. Many appreciate the camaraderie that comes from learning and engaging in enjoyable activities together. Some members are interested in working on resolutions and advocating for issues that improve the quality of life for all. Regardless of their reasons, it is essential to highlight your branch's activities.

Social media provides an effective platform to share these achievements and communicate our message. If you are uncertain about what to post, consider following and sharing FWIC's Facebook page, which features questions, answers, and other content ideas. This will get you started, and soon you will have your own following and prospective new members.

And, last, but not least, Happy Mother's Day, to all who are mothers or fill the role of mother! I hope you have a day as special as each of you are.

Till next time, Lynn



Sustainable Style: Let's Talk Natural Fabrics, Submitted by Brenda Devauld, BCWI

Natural fabrics, which are all biodegradable, are derived from renewable natural sources such as plants or animals. Some common examples of natural fabrics include cotton, linen, bamboo, hemp, and wool.

Some Fun Facts:

- From Plant Stems, we get flax (linen), jute, hemp
- From Plant Seeds, we get cotton

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- From Plant Grass, we get bamboo
- Natural fabrics have been used for thousands of years
- There is evidence of flax and wool being used for textiles over 30,000 years ago
- Cotton emerged in Egypt about 3000 BC, while silk was being used in China about 2500 BC

Cotton

Both conventional and organic cotton types use large amounts of water, although organic cotton farming practices generally lead to more efficient and sustainable water use. Conventional cotton farming uses heavy amounts of pesticides and insecticides, while organic cotton is grown without harmful chemicals.

Linen

Linen is derived from the flax plant and is a smooth, strong cloth. While it is more expensive than other textiles, it is durable, sturdy, cool to wear, and breathable.

Bamboo

Bamboo clothing is known for keeping you dry, cool, and odour-free. It is widely used in active wear.

Hemp

Hemp is a plant from the cannabis species known for its fast growth rate and diverse applications. It is considered a low-impact, sustainable crop and, compared to cotton, requires little water and pesticides. Hemp clothing is breathable, durable, long-lasting, and hypoallergenic.

Wool

Wool is a type of product derived from animal hair, which, once harvested, is spun into yarn. Wool is naturally odour, stain, flame, and wrinkle resistant, has a very long lifetime, and can keep you warm even when wet. One disadvantage is that some wearers find it itchy, although this does tend to be the lower-quality types of wool.

Natural clothing does tend to be more expensive than synthetic materials, but it is all durable and long-lasting. Going forward, I hope we can make choices based on our knowledge of what we are buying, keeping in mind the idea of sustainability and the environmental impact of fabrics.

2027 Tweedsmuir & Senator Wilson Competitions

Tweedsmuir Competitions

Tweedsmuir Handicraft Competition

- Make a throw 45 x 60 inches
- Using recycled materials and trims.
- Throws will be donated to homeless shelters or food banks in the location where the 2027 Convention is held.

Tweedsmuir History Competition

- History of a garment
- Written story with photos.

Tweedsmuir Community Competition

- Clothing Swap or Secondhand Boutique/ Rummage Sale
- Held at a WI Branch.

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- Write up on the roles and responsibilities of WI workers, where the clothing came from, and what types of clothing were available.
- Include individual stories and pictures of successful shoppers.

Tweedsmuir Cultural Competition

- Pictorial and narrative documentation of a Fashion Show featuring remade, repurposed, or vintage selections of clothing
- Clothing can be worn at various stages in women's lives, such as school, workplace, wedding, maternity, casual, or workout garments.

Senator Cairine Wilson Empowered Women Competition

Branch Competition: All you can create "Repurpose & Reuse" Project.

- Create as many useful items as possible from a minimum of three or more different, pre-owned garments.
- Include a write-up describing how the women in the branch felt empowered to create the designs,
- Include photos outlining the group participation, design, creation, uniqueness, and finishing steps
- Photos should show all stages of the project, from start to finish.
- Completed items will be brought to the convention to be judged
- Judged items will be donated to the Convention sales table, and whatever remains will go to the AHH Homestead Gift Shop.

All About Pollination...submitted by Shelly Simrose, BCWI

What is pollination?

Pollination is an essential part of plant reproduction. Pollen from a flower's anthers (the male part of the plant) rubs or drops onto a pollinator. The pollinator then takes this pollen to another flower, where the pollen sticks to the stigma (the female part). The fertilized flower later yields fruit and seeds.

Do you know why some bees buzz? Some plants, like tomatoes and blueberries, release their pollen through two tiny pores on each flower. Bees bite the anthers, hold tight, and buzz to shake the pollen out of the flowers. Bumblebees are living tuning forks, using a middle C tone to propel thousands of pollen grains from a flower in under a second.

When does pollination happen?

Successful pollination requires year-round efforts. Plants evolved with differing flowering times that decreased competition among pollinators. Continuous blooms throughout the growing season provide pollinators with a constant food supply.

Spring: Pollinators need early blooming plants to provide food after hibernation or northern migration. Bulbs, spring ephemerals, and spring-blooming fruit trees are visited during this time.

Summer: Our gardens achieve their peak bloom when many pollinators reach peak populations. The long days of summer provide pollinators with the maximum time to forage for nectar.

Fall: Late blooming plants provide many pollinators with fuel needed before hibernation or for the southern migration of pollinators like monarchs and hummingbirds.

Winter: Even when there appears to be little to no activity, pollinators are in the garden. Leave decaying plants alone; they may be sheltering pollinating insects as they overwinter.

Did you know some butterflies travel thousands of miles? At the beginning of each spring, monarch butterflies migrate north from Mexico, following the growth of milkweed. They travel up to 30 miles daily, returning to Mexico in the fall.



Provincial Focus

WI



Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia – Margie Taylor, President

Number of Members: 245 Number of Branches: 22

2025 AGM Location: Museum of Industry in Stellarton, NS

2025 AGM Theme: "Women in Action"

When is your next change in provincial executive? August 21, 2025

What is your province most proud of this year? We passed a resolution to request that the Nova Scotia government provide shingles vaccines free of charge, and this will be happening for those over age 65.



Warden Robert Parker, Christine MacKenzie, Sheila Reynolds, Ruth Wortman, Eleanor Lilley, Margie Taylor, Lynn Langille, Lynn MacLean, Florence van Veen, and June Hill. WI Week Proclamation 2025

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How does your province communicate with members and branches?

- WINS *Home and Country* newsletter, emailed to branch contacts to circulate, plus postings on social media for upcoming events.

How does your province deal with resolutions once they have been passed at the AGM?

- The WINS office and each branch/district send standardized letters to government officials.



Dr. Ellen McLean, Debbie White

What is your chief goal for the year (2025)?

To create more awareness about WINS throughout the province in order to increase membership.

What learning projects will your province engage in during 2025?

Ensure branches are aware of funding opportunities available from community health boards in the province.

Make bags of items to distribute to unhoused individuals.

Provide monthly tips for "Helping to Create a Healthier Planet".

What community projects will your members and branches focus on for 2025?

A "Lady Parts" project, creating bookmarks to provide awareness about uterine and ovarian cancer.

- Donate towels and face cloths to the SPCA.
- Participate in the "Dress a Girl" project.
- Make quilts and baby blankets to be distributed throughout the local communities.
- Make mastectomy bags for the local hospitals.
- Support local shelters by donating toiletry items and monetary donations.
- Providing comfort shawls for wheelchair patients.



Ruth Blenkhorn

Does your province have a fundraising committee?

No, the WINS board takes care of this.

What types of fundraisers do you do?

Quilt ticket raffles, Cookbook sales, Calendars, and sales of WINS merchandise.

And we would be remiss in not mentioning that WINS served as hostesses to our 2024 National Convention

Bravo Nova Scotia!

Ann Munro - Garden of Eden Branch - WINS



Resolutions Committee Report, Submitted by Linda Janes, Quebec Women's Institute

The Resolution Committee has held three meetings since the start of the new Triennial, and I would like to give you a brief update. We have been working on the resolutions that were passed at the Triennial meeting in Truro.

Kim Coy sent out a questionnaire about Forensic Nursing in the Provinces, but unfortunately, we didn't get much of a response. We have, however, decided on an action item: We can ask all provincial WI boards if they are willing and able to start a bursary fund within their province for Forensic Nurse training. B.C. is currently doing this and is willing to share how their program works.

Our next item was the resolutions regarding the licensing of doctors. Kim Coy then prepared letters for each resolution, giving our support to the Canadian Medical Association in their efforts to get the Provincial governments to sign on with the Pan-Canadian Licensure. (For more information about the Pan-Canadian Licensure, visit <https://www.cma.ca/our-focus/pan-canadian-licensure>.) All of these letters have been translated so they can be used in all provinces.

We discussed the emergency resolution that was presented regarding needle use in Federal prisons, but decided that we need to find out more information and background before going further with this resolution.

I would like to add that we are looking for suggestions for new resolutions that we can work on. I would also like to thank the committee for all their work to date.

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Socially Speaking, Submitted by Eleanor Lilley-Morning, Facebook Co-Ordinator for FWIC

Sharing Posts

Sharing posts from our page can increase awareness, build credibility, and engagement by reaching a wider audience through your personal network.

Sharing the post content is essential to growing our online presence and reach. When you share, you are increasing the likelihood that people will see it and engage with it.

The more eyes on our posts, the more opportunities we need to engage others. It will increase awareness and could potentially bring membership growth.

Contacts

To contact the FWIC president, email Lynn MacLean at president@fwic.ca or call her cell at 902 759 4755.
Lynn lives in Nova Scotia.

To contact the president-elect, email Angela at president-elect@fwic.ca, 506-277-6340
Angela lives in New Brunswick.

WI Connections Contributions

All contributions are welcome.

Please send to wiconnections@fwic.ca jpeg and png photos are ideal, along with Word documents or emailed messages. Sorry, PDF documents do not format well. Please avoid formatting such as indenting, formatted numbers, and bulleting. Thank you for your interest in telling about WI in your 'neck of the woods.'



The Easter Bunnies (aka Colleen and Donna) delivered lots of smiles and chocolate around, sponsored by Lyon's Brook and Area WI, Nova Scotia



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 to show the videos we have published.



Pen Pals and WI, Submitted by Wendy MacDougal & Judy Parks

A letter arriving at my door is always a time for celebration. My local postmistress in Hartland, N.B., tells me that they service 1500 homes, but she thinks that I send and receive more personal letters than anyone. In 2024, I had the distinct pleasure of having my pen pal from B.C. come to visit. What a privilege to meet in person after writing for 24 years!

I have written letters since I was a young girl, and I have enjoyed pen pals on every continent—yes, including Antarctica. So, you can imagine how excited I was to participate in the Women's Institute's pen pal programme. I now have five WI pen pals from around the world.

Having a pen pal is like touching down in a new country, while never leaving your armchair. We have shared about our families, our work, and our homes. We have exchanged craft ideas and recipes, photos, and stories. In this hectic world, taking the time to write a letter might seem as if it is a sacrifice. But I assure you that it is worth it, because you can never have too many friends. Every letter with a foreign stamp fills my heart with excitement! In times of difficulty, we have supported one another; in times of joy, we have doubled the happiness by sharing.

Yes, it is an old-fashioned activity but let me assure you that it works to send emails if that is your preference. That was especially true during Canada's postal strike. I have taught my great-niece and great-nephew, Brynn and Bennett Prosser, to write letters. We have written to King Charles, to the scientists in Antarctica, and to Canada's new astronauts. And yes, they all wrote back!

Are you interested? Let me tell you: you are in luck. Our pen pal coordinator is Judy Parks, and she may have a match for you. In the interests of confidentiality, she will ask a few questions to make the best choice. And it is not always necessary to be a WI member to participate. If you want to know more, you can reach Judy at pals@fwic.ca

A new friend awaits!



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Crafting Style, Submitted by Ann Mandziuk, Manitoba WI

For many, May is a time to escape the house and head to the yard to get things ready for planting and cleaning up after winter. I thought I would share this 'craft' story with you. It was posted by the Nearly New Thrift Shop in Brandon, Manitoba. The Hospital Auxiliary runs it, and funds are used to purchase equipment for the hospital in Brandon (it serves as a regional hospital for the western part of Manitoba). They receive donations from a large geographic area, use Facebook to promote their shop, and share what happens to some of their donations. Penny Dixon shared the story with the shop staff.

My friend and I were browsing around when she spotted the quilt. She loves vintage items so was drawn to it right away and decided to buy it...for \$5! As I was reading the names embroidered on it from 1946, some of them seemed to be familiar names from the Kenton area. (I live in Hamiota). So I sent on the picture to a Kenton friend, who in turn, passed it on to her mom. This led to more research and we were told that the quilt was made as a fundraiser for Verity School (located southwest of Kenton) to raise money to buy library books! The names embroidered would have belonged to those who purchased raffle tickets on the quilt and one of them would have been the lucky winner! We wonder how many hands this quilt may have been passed through and how it ended up in your shop! The quilt is now happily displayed in my friend's character home built in 1910. 😊



"Let's Chat ..."

A Conversation between ACWW Canada Area President Marie Kenny and Dr. Ellen McLean.

Unfortunately, we were unable to complete this article this month, but we will resume in June 2025. Thank you for your continued interest.



2027 FWIC National Convention - Call for Interest to Host

Dear Provincial Representatives and Presidents...

As you know, FWIC hosts a National Convention every three years, and our next event will be in 2027. This is a call for interest to host and an invitation to ask questions/discuss options, and ideas with the leadership team of FWIC. To support the conversation, we have prepared some key points that might support your province's interest in this opportunity. Over the years, each convention has been successful at sharing the 'flavour' of the province, and we would not want it any other way.

- To comply with the bylaws, the convention must be held between July 1st, 2027, and September 30th, 2027.
- Proximity to a national airline (one hour or less is ideal).

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- The number of delegates and attendees is usually about 150 people.
 - Traditionally, the convention is composed of an opening ceremony and reception, and two days of business meetings.
 - A one-day tour is a fun and popular aspect of the national convention.
 - The facilities best suited for the triennium convention will accommodate individuals who may have mobility challenges, thereby making walking requirements and stairs essential considerations.
- Please do not hesitate to contact President Lynn MacLean for a confidential conversation.

P.E.I. Women's Institute celebrates diverse flavours of the province

Tell Your Food Story 2025 Cooking Contest Finalists



The [P.E.I. Women's Institute](#) (WI) is celebrating the diverse flavours of P.E.I. with its Tell Your Food Story 2025 Contest, which showcases local ingredients from the Island.

In partnership with the Department of Agriculture, the WI is presenting the finalists, including their favourite recipe and the reason why their dish is special and meaningful.

Each culinary creation includes at least three ingredients sourced from P.E.I.'s agriculture or fishery: fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, eggs, beef, pork, poultry, fish, or shellfish.

Please visit the website address listed below to see the entire series.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/community/tell-your-island-food-story-1.7496548>

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Homestead Report from Nancy, Submitted by Nancy Carubba

On April 6th, the AHH Homestead held a **Voices from the Past** afternoon.

How lucky are we to have a Sunday afternoon with Brenda Byers and Michael Williams artfully conveying the voices of our past?



On April 10th, the Paris W.I. Group celebrated its 10th birthday with an event at the Homestead.



Linda Zelem-FWIO Rep to FWIC Board, Tricia Henderson-Women Inspiring Women WI, Paris Ontario, and Nancy Carubba-Homestead Manager

The evening included a business meeting, a birthday cake, and a special tour. Volunteer tour guides were dressed in period costume and narrated what life would be like in the 1800s - attendees had a list of questions about the homestead and the artifacts it holds - there was a prize for the most questions answered correctly. It was fun to work together to plan this event. 42 people attended.



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On April 11th, the AHHH Museum hosted a 10-student school tour from a Christian private school in Copetown. They had a full heritage site and historical museum tour, and then Michael Williams told stories of historic Canadian women. The girls, who are 11 years old, brought their lunch. They are learning about women and history.

On April 14th, the mayor's office (David Bailey) sent an Invitation to The Honourable Edith Dumont, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, to visit the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Museum in Brant County. The Lieutenant Governor was given several dates in June for her potential visit. She has not yet responded. Nancy has been working with the County Mayor's office to plan the proposed visit. More will come once she accepts the invitation.



On April 18th, the AHHH had their 11th annual Good Friday Easter @ Addie's. Despite the overcast day and predictions of rain, over 300 people attended. The event included:

A performance from the world record holder for stilt walking. Doug Hunt

There was a petting zoo (Pilkington Farms)

An Easter art station in the pavilion

A hot chocolate station (Linda Zelem makes the best hot chocolate)

A food truck and of course An egg-cellent easter egg hunt with bags of candy. Have a look!

Recipe A Month, Submitted by Debra Barrett, Manitoba WI



Kids are Hungry Gardening Day Pizza Muffin Lunch

Ingredients:

English muffins cut in half. Allow 2 to 4 per person.

Eggs 2 per person

Herbs – choose from basil, parsley, cilantro

Salt & pepper

Toppings:

Crumbled bacon

Pepperoni

Ham

Cooked Italian sausage

Bell peppers – red, yellow, orange, or green

Mushrooms

Onions

Tomatoes

Cheese – cheddar and mozzarella

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Directions:

Preheat oven to 375F (190C)

- 1- Break eggs in a bowl and add your choice of herbs into the eggs. (suggested herbs - basil, parsley, cilantro). Add salt and pepper to taste.
- 2- Pour the egg and herb mixture into a frying pan with a bit of butter and scramble the eggs.
- 3- Prepare a baking sheet with parchment paper lightly greased to prevent sticking.
- 4- Place halved English muffins cut side up on the baking sheet and brush with pizza sauce.
- 5- Spoon the scrambled eggs evenly on the muffins.
- 6- Top with shredded cheese. Cheddar gives a rich flavour while mozzarella gives a gooey yummy texture.
- 7- Add toppings to the muffin halves - such as crumbled bacon, pepperoni, ham, diced bell peppers, mushrooms, diced tomatoes, and onions.
- 8- Sprinkle extra mozzarella on top and a little dried oregano for flavour.
- 9- Place in the oven or toaster oven for 10 to 12 minutes until the cheese is melted and the muffin edges are lightly golden, and the toppings are heated through.

Substitutions: instead of English muffins, bagels or tortillas can be used.

To give a spicy kick add hot red pepper flakes to the eggs prior to scrambling.

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This & That, Submitted by Elizabeth Rushton, Alberta Women's Institute

Louise McKinney

"What, after all, is the purpose of a woman's life? The purpose of a woman's life is just the same as the purpose of a man's life – that she may make the best possible contribution to the generation in which she is living "Canadian Home Journal 1919.

These are some of the resolutions from the first Women's Christian Temperance Union Convention ever held in Alberta in 1904:

Resolution #2: That as an organization we urge that men and women everywhere shall practice and encourage total abstinence from alcoholic drinks and in view of the fact that the liquor traffic is morally wrong and therefore can never be made legally right, we stand for the entire prohibition of its manufacture, sale and use.

Resolution #4: That we guard our Lord's Day and that we cooperate with the Lord's Day Alliance in endeavoring to secure better observance of the same. That we do our best to assist trainmen in obtaining Sabbath rest by discouraging Sunday travelling, and that we discourage Saturday night shopping and all other work which tends to prevent proper observance of the Sabbath Day.

Resolution #6: That we earnestly entreat the members of the WCTU to discourage by their example the use of bird plumage for millinery purposes, and that we encourage the formation of humane societies and bands of mercy.

Louise Crummy was born on October 22, 1868, in Frankville, Ontario (between Brockville and Smith's Falls) to Richard and Esther Crummy, the seventh child of ten. She attended Normal School in Ottawa and planned to be a



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doctor, but ended up teaching instead, first in the Frankville area and later in North Dakota for a year. However, even while she was still at school, she joined a WCTU youth group and became a staunch supporter of the WCTU – in fact, one story says she never doubted for a moment that ridding the world of liquor was her life's work.

As an aside, some dubbed the initials to mean 'Women Continually Tormenting Us', perhaps giving some idea of how dedicated the members were to further their cause with speeches, petitions, and so forth. In 1896, she married James McKinney, who felt as she did about the evils of alcohol, and they moved to Claresholm, Alberta, in 1903 with their son Willard. While James concentrated on building a church, Louise became more and more involved with the WCTU, travelling far and wide to form new chapters, and within a year, 20 of them were up and going. Of course, the WCTU's finest hour was when prohibition was voted in in Alberta in 1915, but, of course, they were devastated when that was defeated in 1923.

Although she never gave up her involvement with the WCTU, becoming a national vice president and attending many national and international conferences, in 1917 she also ran for the Alberta legislature as a non-partisan candidate and, along with Roberta McAdam, they were elected as the first women to sit in a provincial legislature in the British Empire. As Roberta was still overseas as a nursing sister, Louise was the first woman to 'sit' and she continued to fight for women's rights as she had all along, combining that cause with her dedication to the aims of the WCTU. She ran again in 1921 but was defeated because of her rigid non-drinking and non-smoking platform. After that, she turned her attention to church union, with the Methodist, Congregationalist, and some Presbyterian Churches becoming the United Church of Canada. She was the only Western woman to sign the Basis of Union in 1925.

When Emily Murphy approached her in 1927 to sign the petition to the Privy Council in England, she didn't hesitate to add her name. At the time, she is quoted as saying that she felt a bit of a humbug because Emily was doing all the work, but she did support the cause.

In June 1931, two weeks after returning from a national WCTU conference in Toronto where, as acting president of the Canadian WCTU, she had chaired many sessions and where she was named first Vice-President of the WCTU, she collapsed and died at the age of 63. She was survived by her husband, her son, and his wife and their two children, and was buried in Claresholm, Alberta. In 1939, she was named a Person of National Historic Significance, and an Honorary Senator in 2009.

Finding Voice, Submitted by Angela Scott, President-Elect

Have you seen signs of your Branch burning out?
What would it look like?

Often, following an active 2-3 months, members may pull back from activities a bit to 'take a break'. This is quite common, and depending on what is going on in members' lives, it can lead to dropouts or even closures of WIs.

Recently, in our branch, we had a full day of physical set-up in the hall, a full day and evening of looking after an event, and then a clean-up. This all followed two months of preparation. There was no real fun involved, but it took about 18 hours of work on a precious weekend in September. Is it worth it...if members get sick and out of commission? My question is, how do we care for each other?

How do we care for each other?

That's the question we need to ask. Just because we have gone above and beyond for years, is it sustainable? Burnout is real in any of our branches, so how could we prepare to avoid member and branch burnout?



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Things to consider...

How long is an event or get-together...including prep, setup, the function itself, and clean-up?

Do at least 50% of members participate? If not, why not?

This is not the time to point fingers. It is time to ask why. What would make it an 85% rate (since there will always be someone with prior commitments)? Sometimes, the roles and responsibilities are not made known ahead of time. Sometimes, members show up, and there is nothing to do because one or two people do everything. For a busy person, showing up to watch other people work and feel not needed is a recipe for disaster. They will not return.

Likewise, assuming everyone will find a role when you come together is not a great scenario either.

The 'we all work together' approach is fine, but women today are used to working with more prep and organization ahead of time. They need to know beforehand how their contribution to the cause makes a difference, and they need to do it in less than two hours. Ambiguity or lack of planning for volunteers and members can be an 'iffy' practice.

What do participants want?

To feel needed, to get in and out in 2 hours, to feel that everyone has equal roles and responsibilities, to make modest personal resource donations, to receive appreciation and recognition of participation, and to have some refreshments and fun. When I think of the last large event we accomplished in our branch, it sure didn't look like that.

So...what can we do differently to create a positive environment for all volunteers/members? How can we create an environment that will avoid Member and Branch burnout?

Plan ahead, plan differently, talk about it with everyone, commit to change, and commit to respecting each other. The days of being the 'stoic' volunteer are over. No one is comfortable in those situations, and they will not continue to participate. We don't want to see volunteers or members get sick or have a 'spell'. Early identification and self-care must be part of our new reality. I wonder if someone assigned to a wellness role to support everyone would help. If you have examples of how your branch has solved this problem, please share with us. We all learn together!

Marie Kenny, ACWW Canada Area President

Greetings Everyone,



I hope this finds you well. I am writing this update following my final summary of all details for the Canada Area Conference in Langford, BC. I am so thankful for the excellent Hostess Committee under Chairperson Donna Jack. It has been a privilege to work with them to make this Conference happen.

Registrations have come in steadily, and I know it will be a wonderful Conference with lots of opportunities for sharing and learning. If your society is interested in hosting the next ACWW Canada Area Conference, please let me know, and I will pass the information along. Area Conferences are a fantastic opportunity to learn about the work of

ACWW, network with other societies across Canada, rekindle old friendships, and make new ones.

The Board of ACWW continues to work together on many aspects of our mandate. As the Membership Working Group, we have received, investigated, and recommended for board approval another six new societies for ACWW this month. These societies are from Kenya, Trinidad and Tobago, South Sudan, the DRC (Democratic Rep of



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Congo), Uganda, and Tanzania. It is exciting to witness the continued growth and outreach of ACWW around the world. In a time of so much uncertainty, ACWW continues to unite Rural Women's voices and elevate them to policymakers and legislators. Advocacy has been and continues to be a powerful part of what we do as an organization.

Project(s) are certainly another significant part of our work. I encourage you to read about the current Rural Women in Action projects on the ACWW website. ACWW's work is divided into three areas of focus:

- Climate-smart Agriculture,
- Rural Women's Health, and
- Education and Community Development.

Development Projects funded in these areas improve rural communities and contribute to effective and informed lobbying and advocacy.

Since the 1970s, ACWW has provided grants to support women's groups and grassroots development organisations. The grants are awarded to organisations and members in developing countries, as disadvantaged women and women's support groups or organisations struggle to access funding resources. While ACWW is proud to be a global network of women's organisations, it is important to clarify that the *projects* we fund through the Rural Women in Action Fund are part of our international development work and are generally aimed at addressing systemic challenges in the Global South and, in some cases, Eastern Europe, usually where there is a clear need and the project aligns closely with ACWW's development goals. These projects respond to the needs of rural women in areas where development resources and infrastructure are limited, and where we can support grassroots organisations to drive sustainable change in rural communities.

Thank you for supporting the Rural Women in Action Fund. Your contribution is vital to ACWW's work. Please send all donations directly to the Central Office.

The details of the ACWW Triennial World Conference, Ottawa, are almost complete. The early bird registration will now open in mid-May 2025. This will be a complete package with registration, accommodation, and meals included. There will also be companion tours available. Thank you for your understanding.

Fun fact: Did you know that of the 17 total World Presidents of ACWW, the first was a Canadian woman, Madge Watt, who was president from 1933 to 1947. The second was Dr Ellen McLean, OC, who was president from 1983 to 1989.

Canada has hosted the ACWW Triennial Conference three times in its history; 1953 in Toronto, 1983 in Vancouver, and 2001 in Hamilton. The next Triennial Conference will be held in Ottawa in 2026!

ACWW members in the 1930s worked together to exchange helpful ideas and experiences, send friendly greetings, sympathize with one another's troubles, and rejoice in successes. Cross-continental friendship was seen by Canadian members from British Columbia visiting the United Irishwomen's Summer School.

ACWW's membership spans 82 countries, and since 1947, we have passed more than 180 policy resolutions by popular vote. The key concept behind each of these is the empowerment of rural women in all their diversity. This continues to be our diving priority. We value you, the grassroots members. Your voice, your input, and your contribution are imperative. Thank you for your support and for all the work you are doing locally, nationally, and globally.

Family is vital. Whether it is immediate family, extended family, or global family, women play a significant role. Be assured that together, we are making a difference in the life of a woman or girl you may never have the opportunity to meet, but your contribution gave them hope.

I wish all women a very happy, and healthy Mother's Day.



I LOVE YOU, MOM