

December 2025

Monthly Newsletter for Federated Women's Institutes of Canada

WJ Connections



Homestead Donations...

Vittoria WI **\$250.00**

Hamilton Area WIs **\$300.00**



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From the President's desk...

2025 is on its last legs as we approach the holiday season. For many, it is a time of excitement and anticipation, while, unfortunately, for many others, it is a time of loneliness, sadness, and worry. Be kind to those in your circle and beyond because you may not know what circumstances they are facing.

Recently, FWIC WI Canada endorsed a three-part series titled "Uprooting Trafficking." If you missed it, it is now available on the Uprooting Trafficking website (see the link below). The series offers various perspectives, from victims to law enforcement and agencies that work with survivors. It provides an excellent overview and raises awareness of this very serious issue in our communities.

Early December also marks the midpoint of ACWW's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Sadly, this problem remains common in our society, no matter where we live. As WI members, we continue to advocate for victims' rights and support organizations that help those impacted by abuse. Feeling safe is a human right. Are there actions we should consider? Send your ideas to info@fwic.ca.

Switching to a positive note, President-elect Angela is collecting 100 WI stories from members nationwide and sharing them on Facebook. Have you shared yours? On February 19, we will celebrate WI by sharing stories from members across Canada. If you're interested in contributing your story, please let Angela or me know.

Finally, to our incredible members: thank you for your continued support and dedication to WI this year. May this season bring you joy, peace, and renewal. We look forward to continuing our work together in the new year.

Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah and Happy Holidays

Lynn



FWIC WI Canada endorsed the three-part series on Uprooting Human Trafficking. Unfortunately, Human trafficking is a multibillion-dollar global industry, and it is thriving overseas and right here in our own communities. Survivors are often overlooked and misunderstood, and prevention falls short of providing the support they need. The series will help to open your eyes to the problem, raise awareness, and identify ways each of us can take meaningful action.

To view the series and the available resources, check out their website at

<https://uprootingtrafficking.com>.



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Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario submitted by Cheryl Sullivan, President of FWIO

Number of Members: 1,600



Number of Branches: 184

2025 AGM Location: Via Zoom

2025 AGM Theme: Focus on the Impact of Women's Advocacy (Speaker TBD)

When was or is your next change in Provincial Executive?

The Provincial Executive changes yearly. The President and President-Elect each serve two-year terms (ideally not beginning in the same year), and Board Directors serve three-year terms. This structure ensures that two or three new members join the Board each year, maintaining continuity and fresh perspectives.

What is your province most proud of this year?

We are especially proud of the Erland Lee Museum and the dedicated work of the Erland Lee Museum Committee. They have successfully hosted numerous tours, participated in Open Doors Hamilton, held historical reenactments, organized a tea event, and facilitated various educational workshops.

How does your province communicate with members and branches?

Through the Home and Country Newsletter, which is distributed monthly. Updates on FWIC, ACWW, and other initiatives are also shared by email to keep members informed and connected.

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

Resolutions are reviewed and discussed at the Provincial Board level. The Board ensures that actions are taken as needed, such as implementing by-law changes or following up on specific advocacy issues.

What is your main goal for the coming year (2026)?

To carry on the legacy of our predecessors while expanding existing programs and continuing to advocate for issues that impact women, families, and communities across Ontario.

What learning projects or programs will your province engage in during 2025/2026?

We will continue to advocate and raise awareness for:

- Lyme Disease awareness
- Human Trafficking prevention
- Intimate Partner Violence awareness and prevention

We are also exploring the creation of Forensic Nursing Bursaries.

Additional initiatives include promoting food waste awareness and maintaining our long-standing scholarship program.



What community projects will your members and branches focus on for 2025/2026?

Through our ROSE (Reaching Ontario Sharing Education) programs, branches will continue to host:

- Workshops on fraud/scam awareness
- Meal planning and needlework sessions
- "Lunch and Learn" information events
- Fashion shows, teas, and craft sales

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- Presentations by local authors and historians

Does your province have a fundraising committee?

No, we do not currently have a dedicated fundraising committee.

What types of fundraisers do you do? Most successful ones?

Our most successful fundraisers include "Shop the Gift Card Way" and, this year, an Enjo fundraiser.



Our Recycle Project at

HR Grace, NLWI,

submitted by Patricia Mullins, NLWI

Aprons are made from souvenir tea towels

and one from a pair of jeans.



Sustainable Style with Mindful Consumption **submitted by Brenda Devauld, BCWI**

We hear a lot about mindful consumption, but what is it really? And how do we start practicing mindfulness in our shopping habits? As the Holiday season approaches, this would be a great time to rethink our approach to our buying habits. Let's take a look at how we can do this.

Definition of Mindful Consumption: This is the practice of being intentional and aware of your purchasing decisions, considering their impact on your personal well-being, society, and the environment. It is a shift away from impulse buying, prioritizing quality and needs over wants, and recognizing the triggers that prompt you to buy.

Mindful holiday shopping can be a fun and thoughtful process. We are not just buying out of duty or to get it off our list; we are buying because we want to, because we care about the people we are buying for. It helps to foster a sense of gratitude for the people in our lives and connections.

1. Make a List

Making a list of those we want to give gifts to makes us think about what we are giving. We are less likely to impulse buy or buy inappropriate gifts. We can buy more intentional gifts that reflect on the likes and needs of each person.

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2. Set A Budget

Try not to buy now and pay later. Too often, we tend to think that somehow spending a lot of money shows that we care, when actually putting thought and intention into our gift giving is the best form of caring. The impact of a well-thought-out gift far outweighs its monetary value.

3. Support Local Businesses

Try to shop at craft events or local stores. Browse the Secondhand stores; they hold untold treasures! Often, our local stores and markets have unique and artistic items that cannot be found anywhere else.

4. Experiences

Gifts don't have to be physical, and oftentimes the best gifts are those that create memories. They can be dinner reservations, theatre or concert tickets, hobby classes, or simply a day out together. Give the gift of "helping out". At times, the best gift we can give others is to be there for them, take them to appointments, or help around their homes. By really thinking about the people we are giving gifts to, we become more aware of those around us.

5. Go Ethical

If you are buying gifts such as clothing, go ethical. This helps to make your buying based on mindful and responsible thinking. Look for those brands that promote sustainability and ethical practices, such as fair-trade and made from recycled materials.

6. Personalize Your Gifts

Make your own gifts! Sewing, cooking, painting, knitting, all hobbies make wonderful gifts. These types of gifts are made with thoughtfulness and caring and isn't that what gift giving is all about?

7. Practice Gratitude

Lastly, try to practice gratitude for all we have and reflect on what we want to share, Mindful shopping does require planning and reflection. When we focus on sustainability and the connections we have with others, we can make our holiday shopping mindful, intentional, and joyful.

**“It is not how much we give,
but how much love we put into giving”**—Mother Theresa

Homestead Report submitted by Veronica Boone, Interim Museum Manager



On this past Remembrance Day, November 11th, 2025, the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead had the honour of joining our local community at the St. George cenotaph, placing a wreath to remember all those who served, and those who gave their lives to protect our peace, security, and freedom here in Canada, and around the globe. Thank you to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 605 for inviting us to be a part of this special service.

December 7th (4:00 pm) Christmas Planter Workshop (\$10.00 registration)
Step back in time and celebrate the season at the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead during a festive Christmas Planter Workshop. Create your own fresh evergreen planter using traditional materials while enjoying the cozy charm of the historic farmhouse. Guided by our instructor, you'll craft a beautiful holiday arrangement and learn how early



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settlers decorated their homes for winter. A perfect way to welcome the season—and bring a touch of heritage to your doorstep.

The Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead Presents...

HOLIDAY PLANTER

Workshop

Come and create your own fresh evergreen planter using traditional materials while enjoying the cozy charm of the historic farmhouse!

Guided by our instructor, Amy, you'll craft a beautiful winter arrangement, and learn how Victorians decorated their homes for the holidays. A perfect way to welcome the season—and bring a touch of heritage to your doorstep. (Don't forget to bring your own pot!)

DATE & TIME: Sunday, December 7th, 4:00pm
LOCATION: 359 Blue Lake Rd. St. George, ON
REGISTRATION: \$10.00/planter (all greenery & decorative supplies besides pot included)

To register your spot please contact the homestead!
info@adelaidehoodless.ca (519) 448-3873

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December 12th (12:00 – 2:00 pm) Holiday High Tea (\$20.00 registration)

You are invited to celebrate the season in timeless elegance at our Holiday High Tea, held in the warmly decorated rooms of our 1800s homestead museum. Guests are invited to enjoy a leisurely afternoon surrounded by the charm of the past. Enjoy a beautifully curated selection of traditional teas, freshly baked scones, seasonal pastries, and savory bites. Throughout the afternoon, staff will share stories of 19th-century holiday traditions, offering a rare glimpse into how families of the era celebrated wintertime gatherings.

December 19th (1:00 – 2:00 pm) Victorian Christmas Cards: Paper Quilling (\$10.00 registration)

Create a heartfelt holiday keepsake and step into the creative world of the 19th century at our Victorian Christmas Card Workshop! Inspired by the delicate handcrafted greetings of the Victorian era, this workshop guides guests through the enchanting art of paper quilling—a centuries-old technique that curls and shapes thin strips of paper into ornate designs. Participants will learn traditional quilling methods and craft their own beautifully embellished Christmas cards, complete with elegant flourishes and festive motifs. Enjoy light snacks and refreshments courtesy of the homestead. All materials are provided, and no prior experience is needed.

Join the Global Generosity Movement this Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 2nd, 2025, is Giving Tuesday

Giving Tuesday is a Global Day of Giving. As the world's largest generosity movement, it is considered by many as the opening day of the giving season. If you are considering ways to support your community on this special day, there are a variety of ways you can create impact.

One way you can support Giving Tuesday is to use this day to start a recurring donation. Monthly donations are a fantastic way for donors to achieve their philanthropic goals. Donors can make a gift each month to their established funds or a new fund they have been considering. These monthly donations add up to a generous donation each year. All funds assist in maintaining the Homestead.

While Black Friday and Cyber Monday are the biggest shopping days of the year, Giving Tuesday marks something greater. It's a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good, to put aside consumerism and give back to those in need and build stronger communities through generosity. The idea caught on and has grown around the world, inspiring hundreds of millions of people and organizations to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

There are so many ways to express generosity.

Why not consider the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead? Donations can be sent to info@fwic.ca.

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Help Us Keep the Homestead Alive...



To keep the *Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead* open and to honor the birthplace and life of Adelaide Hunter Hoodless, we urgently need your support. While grants have been invaluable in helping to fund the physical upkeep of this national historic site, they rarely cover the ongoing operational costs essential to daily management, programming, and promotion.

We are deeply grateful to our volunteers for their dedication. Still, to ensure long-term stability, we must secure funding for professional staff who can work closely with FWIC's leadership team.

As stewards of this nationally registered historic site, we invite you to join us in sustaining Adelaide's legacy and fulfilling our mission:

"To enhance the lives of individuals, their families, and their communities by promoting the ideals of Adelaide Hunter Hoodless through learning and experiential opportunities."

Your personal support will help the Homestead thrive. FWIC offers flexible giving options — monthly, quarterly, or annual donations — all with charitable tax receipts. Donors will also receive semi-annual reports detailing visitor engagement, programs, updates on the historic collection, and financial progress.

Please consider contributing to this critical work. To learn more about our campaign to keep Adelaide's legacy alive, contact Lynn MacLean or Angela Scott today.

"Together — Let's Save the Homestead, Save Our Story"

Interim Museum Manager Fund \$14,000 10 additional hours per week, 1 year, including contributions, etc.	Yearly Promotional Fund (new) \$10,000 ...\$2500 per quarter	Yearly Programming Fund (new) \$13,000 ...\$250 per week	Administrative Assistant Fund (new) \$15,000 15 hours per week, 1 year, including contributions, etc.
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Donations can be made to the - Federated Women's Institute of Canada,

Address: PO Box 209, 359 Blue Lake Road, St. George, ON NOE 1NO

E-transfers to info@fwic.ca and cheques made out to FWIC are appreciated.

Coffee Tuesdays



You are invited...
To a cozy online gathering
for conversation and connection



Come as you are, from wherever you are

Tuesday, December 9th - 7pm EST

Open to all – members, newcomers, and anyone curious about WI.

A relaxed virtual Christmas Open House Free on **Zoom**

Register early... president-elect@fwic.ca



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Recipe submitted by Debra Barrett, Manitoba Women's Institute

Janet Day's Mini Caprese Skewers: The Bite-Sized Party Hero

Servings – 12 servings

Prep time – 10 minutes

Cooking time – no cooking time

Calories – 50 kcal



Ingredients

12 cherry tomatoes (the plump ones)

12 fresh mozzarella balls (aka bocconcini)

12 fresh basil leaves (no dried, dried basil won't cut it)

2 tbsp balsamic glaze (or reduce balsamic vinegar yourself if you're feeling extra energetic)

1 tbsp olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

12 small skewers or toothpicks

Step-by-Step Instructions

1- **Wash and dry** the cherry tomatoes and basil leaves. Nobody likes watery skewers.

2- **Thread the ingredients** onto each skewer in this order: tomato, mozzarella ball, basil leaf. Repeat if you're making double-deckers.

3- **Arrange the skewers** on a serving plate. Pretend you're an artist and this is your masterpiece.

4- **Drizzle** with olive oil and balsamic glaze. Don't drown them—subtlety is key.

5- **Sprinkle** with salt and pepper. Taste one. Congrats, you're done.

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

And now for something completely different ...

Normally, an article for the month of December might include Christmas stories, ideas, recipes, and so forth, but I decided instead to share with you some of the topics that come up on my computer screen when I head there to check something out on the internet.

To be honest, I followed up on very few of the headlines and often just rolled my eyes (how does one roll one's eyes anyway?) or made up an answer for myself. Maybe some of you might do the same, even at a WI or family gathering during the coming month, and have some fun. So here goes, in no particular order and I did not make up any of them. And finally... I do wish everyone all the blessings of the Christmas season.

- Here's why your washing machine is lying to you about how long a cycle is. (Thank goodness my washing machine never speaks to me and even after 41 years)
- Things to consider before getting a ferret.
- Woman sues Sea World after errant duck hits her in the face and knocked her out while on a roller coaster
- Here's what the colours of kitchen sponges really mean – pink, orange, yellow, green and blue.

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- What it's like to travel in a country that doesn't exist.
 - Why putting your suitcase in the bathroom while travelling changes everything.
 - Why you should always pack contact lens cases in your luggage even if you don't wear them.
 - Scientists have just discovered when humans started eating meat.
 - New study discovers a human body part evolved from fish.
 - Your thumb could be a hidden indicator of your mental abilities, study finds.
 - Do you want to know what the "T" in T-shirt stands for?
 - This is how often you're supposed to wash your pajamas/sheets according to experts.
 - How to waterproof your shoes with a candle and a hairdryer.
 - I've stayed in every top five-star hotel in London, and these are the best.
 - You're running your bath wrong. Scientists reveal the mistakes that cause a lack of bubbles.
 - 20 truly awful sandwiches that should stay in the past.
 - 15 things you can't legally do in an RV anymore in Canada or the US, but probably still try.
 - I've been a bridesmaid over 125 times, and here are 10 common mistakes I see
 - What happens if you stop cleaning your home?
 - And here's one for your imaginations, ladies – man discovers he's wearing dissolving shorts mid-dip.
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Environment submitted by Margie Taylor, President, WINS

As a child growing up, my dad always used to say 'If you need it, then get it,' and lots of times my wants would turn into needs, but did I really need it? As a consumer in today's society, I feel we need to realize the difference between need versus want in order to make a profound impact on our environment, in a good way.

Consumerism drives excessive purchasing, resulting in significant waste, and of course, we know that the higher the demand for goods leads to overexploitation of natural resources, which in turn affects water, land, and energy usage. Plus, the production and transportation of goods generate emissions and pollution contributing to climate change and harming ecosystems.

So, what does this mean to a person who loves to shop during the holidays but wants to make better choices for the environment? By choosing better sustainable products and reducing waste via overconsumption, we can diminish our environmental impact and promote a more sustainable future for our planet. Shopping sustainably requires adopting new habits, like buying fewer items and focusing on quality rather than quantity. Choosing to make a conscious effort in our shopping habits during the holidays will make us feel better about our purchases and help the environment at the same time; not to mention the less we buy, the easier it is on the wallet.

WI Connections Contributions

All contributions are welcome.

Please send JPEG and PNG photos (ideally) to wiconnections@fwic.ca, 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.'

To contact the FWIC president, please 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.

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Marie Kenny, ACWW Canada Area President



As I write this brief update, snow is softly falling here in Brackley, PEI. This is a stark reminder of what is to come. As Canadians we know this is a time to get our snow tires on and shovels ready. I am one Canadian who loves winter, but for some, this can be a very isolating and lonely time of year.

As I receive and read societies newsletters from across our nation, I am truly inspired at the generosity of Canadians as many of you support the less fortunate and lonely in your communities in numerous ways. Thank you for all you are doing to make a difference. One random act of kindness can ripple outward in ways you may not see but is always makes the world a little brighter.

As a member of a global organization, often we can feel distant and set apart, but the heart of women supporting women is ongoing from small remote villages to large urban centers. Every act of kindness, no matter how great or how small, makes a difference in someone's life. YOU are making a difference.

ACWW has been campaigning for rural women's rights for almost 100 years, bringing rural women together and supporting them in building stronger communities. But we need your help to continue this work, please continue to donate to the Rural Women in Action Fund. Your funds help support projects like: Project 1042 Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Project based in the Madurai District of Tamil Nadu in Southern India, this project, implemented by the PACHE Trust (People's Association for Community Health Education), empowered adolescent girls and young women through sexual and reproductive health and rights education.

This is PACHE Trust's eighth ACWW-funded project as a long-time member. Established in 1987, the key mission of PACHE Trust is to inspire and mobilize the poorest groups in society towards their own emancipation and empowerment. PACHE Trust's work prioritizes children, women, and the environment and focuses on education, health, and HIV/AIDS awareness. This project aimed to provide education and help empower women and girls at risk of sexual abuse, violence, and exploitation. Through education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, PACHE Trust facilitated sessions with 118 young men focused on reproductive and sexual health and rights, as well as interpersonal relationship skills such as communication, decision-making, and equal partnership. • Training sessions were held for 68 young women and adolescent girls as an opportunity to develop communication skills, assertiveness, and exercise their rights around family and marital matters.

This activity was aimed at challenging the traditional male-dominant role in families and relationships, encouraging women to stake a claim in the decision-making processes that involve them. • An extensive education session was facilitated on the topic of sexual exploitation, abuse, and consent with over 90 women and young girls in attendance. This session was particularly thorough in order to give the participants a clear and full understanding of consent and abusive behaviors. As a result of this session, Women's Health Groups were formed to allow for peer support.

As a result of this project, PACHE Trust has seen positive changes in the attitudes, values, and behaviors of not only the young women and girls involved in this project, but also the young men in the local community. The Women's Self-help Groups established will enable the positive impact of this project to continue for future groups of young women across the area. 75 volunteers trained in Sexual and Reproductive health education, 68 young women given training in assertiveness and communication, 118 men trained in sexual health and rights, and taught about equal partnership and consent, 90 young women trained to recognize signs of exploitation and abuse, 95 girls taught about menstrual health and safer sex.

16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence is November 25 to December 10th. The 16 Days international campaign is aimed at raising awareness and calling for the Elimination of Violence against women and girls. It starts on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and concludes on International Human Rights Day, linking gender-based violence to human rights. The campaign encourages collective action through public events, advocacy, and supporting organizations that work to prevent violence, challenge harmful social norms, and support survivors. On the ACWW website, you will find lots of free resources to help you promote the campaign in your area.

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The Triennial World Conference Competition Guidelines are on the ACWW Website. The competition centers on three items you can make and enter. Apron Size: Style: Adult, any style, but should include a bib top and at least one good-sized pocket. Bed-Socks Size: Style: Adult, any style, but should be knitted on 4 double-pointed needles and include a turned heel. Yarn and Pattern: The bed socks may be made from any weight and type of yarn, and any pattern, provided it conforms to the requirements of "style" as above. Judges will be looking for even stitches and neat finishing. Seams should be flat, not bulky. The prettier the better! Thirdly, a Beaded Hanging Ornament Size: Style: Should be less than 12cm (under 5 inches), not including the hanging cord. The ornament should be either flat or more three-dimensional and made from threaded small beads of any shape.

Charity Drive for the Triennial World Conference is sanitary supplies for women; again, the complete list of items is on the ACWW website. You do not need to be attending the conference do enter the Competitions or support the charity drive; your items can be sent with your societies voting delegates.

There will also be an Artisans Market at the Triennial World Conference; this is an opportunity for society's members to support the conference by donating craft items to be sold in the Market. Please include a suggested price for your donation.

Until next time I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year! May your home be filled with joy and your hearts with a peace that surpasses human understanding!

This will be a stay-closed-to-home holiday season for us as Cecil continues to recover from his fall. Thank you to the many members who sent cards and get-well wishes. Your kindness and prayers have been greatly appreciated. You are a blessing! All the very best, Marie Kenny, ACWW Canada Area President.

Marie's Family Favourite

Christmas traditions remind us of where we come from and connect us to the people we love most. They turn simple moments into lasting memories and help bind generations together.

As Christmas approaches, I share one of our favourite family recipes. I'm reminded that the heart of the season is found in these cherished rituals and the joy of gathering around the table.

This Plum Pudding recipe was one my mother made every Christmas, and I continue the tradition with my family. Whether they are near or far, this delicious treat is there to be shared around the Christmas Table. I hope you enjoy it as well!

Christmas Plum Pudding

3 eggs, 1 cup brown sugar, 1 cup molasses, 1 cup whipping cream, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, 1tsp.baking soda, 1tsp cream of tartar, 1 tbsp. Cinnamon, 1 tsp all spice, 1 tsp. Salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cloves, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp nutmeg, 1 lb, seeded raisins, 1 lb. seedless raisins, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. currants, 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour. (1 lb =2 cups)

Mix in order given (will be a very thick batter), drop by spoon into greased coffee cans, cover with foil, and secure with an elastic band. Steam for 3 hours.

This recipe makes three delicious Christmas Puddings. Enjoy topped with brown sugar sauce, or whipping cream, or my personal favourite, "both!"

Merry Christmas from our Home to Yours,

Marie Kenny

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Agriculture in Canada submitted by Susan Hoszouski, BCWI

2026 International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF)

The United Nations has declared 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer. The main goal for the coming year is to promote and highlight the importance and the essential roles women play in the agricultural sector around the world.

Women play a huge role across agrifood systems, from food production to trade, and their role often goes unrecognized. Women farmers are key to food security, nutrition, and poverty eradication. This year is a time to raise awareness and promote actions to close gender gaps and improve women's livelihoods around the world.

Women farmers are any and all women who work in the agrifood system, in many different capacities across all areas of the value chain. This includes women farmers, producers, peasants, family and smallholder farmers, labourers and seasonal labourers, fishers, fish workers, beekeepers, pastoralists, foresters, processors, traders, traditional knowledge holders, women in agricultural sciences, and rural entrepreneurs. Women who are younger or older, Indigenous, women with disabilities, refugee and displaced women, women in your communities, and others.

The IYWF is inclusive of all women whose contributions are formal or informal and regardless of land ownership or employment status. IYWF reflects the many diverse and essential roles all women perform in sustaining agrifood systems, through leadership roles, care and domestic work, supporting food security, contributing to economic prosperity, and improving nutrition and livelihoods for their families and communities. Almost 40% of all workers in agrifood systems are women. In wage employment in agriculture, women earn 82 cents per dollar that men earn.

When you take the time to reflect on these definitions of the Woman Farmer, we are all women farmers. We are gardeners, planters, supporters, traders (giving away our extra produce), caretakers, and nutritionists, and we provide the best for our families and have our communities' best interests at heart.

Merry Christmas, Season's Greetings, Happy Holidays to each and everyone and a very Happy and Prosperous New Year too.

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Real-Life Stories to Inspire and Connect Women

submitted by Moranda van Geest, Elgin WI, NB

Real-life stories can teach us so much. You might recognize yourself in them — the challenges, the laughter, or the quiet moments of courage. By sharing experiences, we can learn from each other and, perhaps, feel a little less alone. Sometimes another woman's story gives us the push we need to take action or simply reminds us that someone else has faced the same struggles we have.

Why Women Need Time for Themselves

Women are often the worst at doing something fun for themselves. We think of others first — partners, children, friends, aging parents — and put our own needs last. Yet the old saying is true: "If you are not good to yourself, you are no good to anybody else." Taking time for yourself isn't selfish; it's essential. We need to keep our minds and bodies healthy, to recharge and reconnect with what brings us joy.

Discovering What You Enjoy

So, what is it that you enjoy? For me, it's being outdoors. That love of nature led me to a wonderful group in our area called WOW — Women of the Wilderness. It started as a small idea and has now grown to over 2,000 followers on Facebook.



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How WOW Works

WOW is simple but powerful. Say you're looking for someone to walk your dog with — you post when and where you'll be walking, and others might join. Or you can create an event, like a hike, bike ride, or kayak outing. Members can mark whether they're "going," "interested," or "can't go." There are always new activities posted, and many are free.

It's all about getting together, sharing time outdoors, and having fun. Socializing is good for the mind; hiking and fresh air are good for the body.

Adventure and Friendship

Our hikes range from 3 to 10 kilometers, and we keep things creative. This spring, a friend and I biked for three days on Prince Edward Island. It was such a fantastic experience that we decided to make it a WOW event. By September, five women — who hadn't met before — joined us for another three-day biking trip on PEI's beautiful, flat trail system.

Next year, we're planning to go for a week. Friendships have grown, confidence has bloomed, and the joy of adventure continues to ripple outward — all because a few women said yes to doing something good for themselves.

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PEIWI Happenings submitted by Ellen MacPhail

PEIWI: Agriculture Scholarship Winners Named

The provincial PEI Women's Institute Board names scholarship winners and, in the heart of the holiday season, ensures contributions impact communities across the province while encouraging members of the public to join in gift giving in their favorite areas.

The PEIWI Scholarship committee recently announced three winners, two of whom were for agricultural studies, and the third was for education in healthcare. The Famous Five PEIWI Agriculture scholarship went to recent Colonel Gray High School graduate Gabriella Visser. The \$1,000 scholarship will be applied to her Bachelor of Agriculture in International Food Business at Dalhousie's Truro Campus in Nova Scotia. With proceeds from a recent book, WI: Untold Stories, a second scholarship in agricultural education went to Vance Lawless of Kinkora studying Agricultural Business Degree at Dalhousie Agricultural Campus. Jacey Baglole of Dunstaffnage was the recipient of the Dr. Helen Herring Scholarship in her studies relating to health skills necessary for the welfare of families in their homes and communities.

For the remainder of the month, WI is involved in various holiday giving projects at both provincial and branch levels with the following being Island-wide initiatives.

The PEI Women's Institute has again teamed up with organizers of Kits of Kindness to provide essentials for elementary school-aged children up to grade 6. WI members have been asked to knit, sew, or provide mittens to be placed in children's backpacks to ensure warm hands this season. Mitts can be dropped off at the WI Office.

Another favorite WI project includes making Christmas stockings for hospitals. For a number of years members have been busily making small festive stockings for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) and associated hospitals for use on Christmas Day. Stockings can be dropped off at the Volunteer Services Desk at the QEH by mid-December.

The board and its membership have a vast array of favorite places to send support, and one of the constant areas of contribution includes the White Cross Christmas Gift Campaign. This initiative of the Canadian Mental Health Association of PEI is for those who may be alone and are experiencing mental health or emotional strains.

Monetary gifts are accepted until Christmas Eve in person, by mail, online, e-transfer or by calling 902-566-3034.

For information visit <http://pei.cmha.ca/>

December 2025

For last minute gift giving, the PEIWI offers a selection of cookbooks, fun and insightful reads and a recently published book *WI: The Untold Stories* on how WI had made positive impacts on communities. WI has been involved for over 110 years on PEI through world wars, pandemics, challenges and many triumphs and the assortment of books reflect their community involvement.

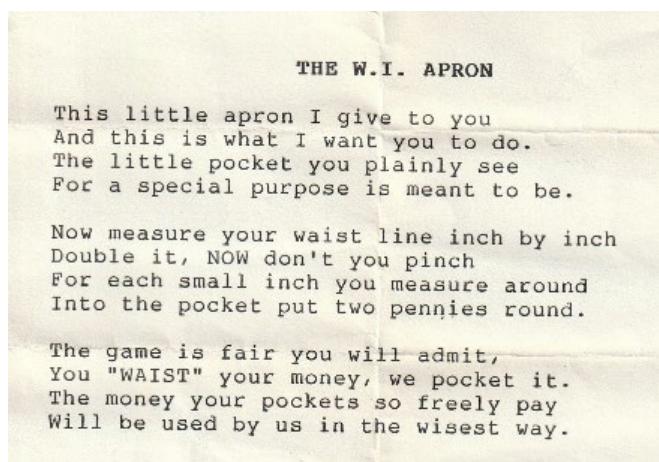
With an eye on the new year, PEIWI is looking at a Founder's Day event with presentations on Farmer's Talk assisting those with challenges in the agricultural field, and a session on home cooking and recycling textiles. More information will be available in the New Year. In the meantime, the PEIWI Board, branch members, and staff wish you a joyous, healthy, and safe holiday season.

Sheila Washburn, One of the Coronation Girls, Member from NBWI

Sheila was recognized by His Majesty, King Charles, for her two trips to England 70 years apart, one of which was for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth.



Poem submitted by Ann Munro, WINS



Call for WI Stories ...



We're gathering 100 Voices from across Canada for our
WI Day Online Celebration - Feb 19/26

We need storytellers from each province to share a short WI story
a memory, experience, or reflection that captures what WI means to you.

To volunteer or learn more, email president-elect@fwic.ca
Deadline is January 6, 2026

100 Voices: The Stories That Shape Us

