CFUW Nepean News BYTES Vol 26 No 4 Feb 2026

UPCOMING GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday February 3, 2026 on ZOOM
Guest Speaker Gord Larose on Pros and Cons of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

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Upcoming Events

Feb 21, 2026 10AM – noon CFUW Ontario Council Women Leading Change Speaker Series AI: Artificial Intelligence and Education

March 3, 2026 1-3PM CFUW Nepean General Meeting
(location to be confirmed on **Zoom** or in person)
Guest Speaker James Powell on the Legacy of the First Woman Senator, Cairine Mackay Wilson

April 7, 2026 1-3pm CFUW Nepean General Meeting
Bells Corners United Church
Guest Speaker Rosemary Doyle-Marier on her book *The Spanish Note*, and her challenges to get it published

May 5, 2026 11:30 AM- 3PM - CFUW Annual General Meeting & 35th Anniversary Celebration, River Lounge, 2259 Prince of Wales Drive

President's Message February 2026

-Carole Baker

Anne Sinclair

Special Announcement – New Vice President
We are delighted to share some wonderful news! Anne Sinclair has graciously agreed to take on the role of Vice President, assuming Betty Bertrand's position beginning in February 2026. Anne is looking forward to becoming more involved with CFUW Nepean, and we know she will be warmly welcomed and well supported as she steps into this role.

Celebrating a "Trusty Thrifter"
Congratulations to Teresa McCrory, our very own "Trusty Thrifter"! Through her dedication and creativity, Teresa has single-handedly raised nearly $1,500 for our Scholarship Trust, the equivalent of one full scholarship for a deserving Algonquin College student.

Teresa sources items from thrift shops and online at reduced prices and resells them at a modest profit, with all proceeds benefiting our scholarships. Teresa, along with Kathy Greiner, Chair of the Scholarship Trust, and myself, were featured in an Ottawa Citizen article on December 31st, which highlighted Teresa's generosity and her future plans. These include raffling her beautiful handmade "Canadian Pride" quilt, with proceeds again supporting the Scholarship Trust. The raffle draw will take place on May 5th at our 35th Anniversary Celebration and AGM.We are truly fortunate to have a new member like Teresa, who so generously shares her time, talent, and energy.

Treasurer's Budget Update
Our Treasurer, Lynne Crocker, has provided an update on our budget. In January, we paid $165.44 to GWI as the top-up required to complete our annual dues. To date for 2025 - 2026, we have paid $1,620.00 plus $165.00, for a total of $1,785.00 to GWI International. As these fees continue to increase each year, it will be necessary to increase our own membership fees this coming fall.

(photo credit B. Junkins)

Coldest Night of the Year Walk
Betty Bertrand will once again coordinate our participation in the Coldest Night of the Year Walk this February. The walk will take place on February 28, and Betty has set a fundraising goal of $750 from our club. Your support will help make this event a success—thank you in advance for contributing!

Grant Award for Our Anniversary Celebration
We are very pleased to announce that our club has been awarded a $400.00 grant to help offset expenses for our 35th Anniversary Celebration and AGM on May 5th, 2026. A dedicated planning team is already hard at work to ensure this will be a truly memorable event for all.

Members Corner

Trusty Thrifter

When Teresa McCrory wrote her bio as a new member for the CFUW Nepean Newsletter in Oct, 2024 she said: 'I believe we should be kind to people and help others'

There is no question that she has been putting that belief into action!

Teresa has taken her love of quilting and created a beautiful 'Canadian Pride' quilt that will be raffled off at our May AGM. All proceeds will go to the Scholarship Trust (see page 10)

She has now taken her passion for thrifting and found another way to 'help others' at the same time! Scouring thrift shops for treasures, she takes her finds and sells them on - proceeds go to the Scholarship Trust again. Teresa has been able to donate over $1500 to the Trust.

She calls herself the 'trusty thrifter'; reflecting her love for thrifting and the scholarship trust that benefits.

Her story was covered in the Ottawa Citizen online edition and then repeated January 22, 2026 in the paper copy (A7 if you still have it on hand).
https://ottawacitizen.com/news/ottawas-trusty-thrifter-womens-education

The article gave profile to the CFUW goals, the work of the Scholarship Trust, the importance of womens education – and the need to help each other.

Inspired by her own experience receiving a bursury, Teresa knows the difference a helping hand can make. Not only does the Trust gain, but Teresa helps repurpose items – gives them a second chance.

Inspiring 'out-of the box' thinking!! Maybe a new interest group???

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

Passings

Ruby Elver December 2, 2025

Long time member of CFUW Nepean and CFUW Ottawa

https://colefuneralservices.com/tribute/details/10027/Ruby-Elver-Nee-Little/obituary.html

Nora Patsouris December 30, 2025

Avid bridge player and member of the CFUW Nepean Bridge Group

https://www.tubmanfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/neeltje-nora-patsouris-nee-wijnsema

History of Black Women in Canada's Civil Rights Movement

-Grace Brown

During Black History Month, the significant yet frequently unacknowledged contributions of Canadian Black women to civil rights and social justice are recognized across Canada. Often operating at the grassroots level and away from public attention, these individuals actively confronted discrimination, strengthened communities, and contributed to the development of a more equitable society.

This article profiles three Black Canadian women leaders who together played a pivotal role in advancing civil rights, equality, and social justice across the nation.

Mary Ann Shadd (1823-1893)

Mary Ann Shadd was a pioneering Black civil rights leader, journalist, educator, and abolitionist whose work shaped early Black activism in Canada. Born in the United States, she moved with her family to Canada West (Ontario) in the 1850s to escape the Fugitive Slave Act. In Canada she became a strong advocate for Black self-reliance, integration, and equal access to education.

In 1853, she made history as the first Black woman in North America to publish and edit a newspaper *The Provincial Freeman*, an anti-slavery newspaper promoting Canada West (Ontario) as a place where Black people could settle. Through her writing, she challenged racism, supported the abolition of slavery, and promoted political engagement and women's rights.

She also opened integrated schools to encourage literacy as a pathway to freedom. Later she returned to the United States where she earned a law degree and continued advocacy for women's suffrage. Her leadership laid an early foundation for the civil rights movement in Canada and the United States.

Carrie Best (1903-2001)

Carrie Best was born in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. Living during an era of widespread discrimination, she both witnessed and personally faced racial barriers in Canadian society. Motivated by these experiences, she became a committed human rights advocate, journalist, and champion for Nova Scotia's Black community.

In 1941, Best learned that several Black high school girls were forced out of the "white only" section at the Roseland Theatre in New Glasgow after they refused to relocate. She confronted the theatre owner about his discriminatory practices, both directly and through written communication, but her protests were ignored.

Soon after, despite having tickets for the balcony where Black patrons were permitted to sit, Best and her son intentionally sat in the main floor seats, reserved for white patrons. Both were arrested and forcibly ejected. She contested the trespassing charges in court in hopes of challenging the segregation policy. Their legal challenge failed, and they were ordered to pay damages to the theatre owners.

Undeterred, in 1946, Best and her son launched *The Clarion*, Nova Scotia's first Black-owned and Black-published newspaper. The publication aimed to highlight instances of racial injustice and promote equity and social justice for Black Nova Scotians.

Through her work as a journalist and advocate, she fostered education, civic participation, and unity within the community. Carrie Best was recognized as a Member of the Order of Canada in 1974, and Canada Post honored her with a commemorative stamp released on February 1, 2011.

Viola Desmond (1914-1965)

Viola Desmond was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and grew up aware of the racial barriers facing Black Canadians and was determined to build opportunities where none existed.

She trained as a beautician in Montreal and the United States before returning home. An astute businesswoman, she established her own beauty school and hair salon when she realized none of these establishments accepted Black women as students, technicians, or customers.

She expanded her business, the Desmond School of Beauty Culture across the province and became a mentor for young Black women in Nova Scotia.

She is best known for her quiet act of defiance which became an iconic fight for civil rights. In 1946, five years after Carrie Best faced the same discrimination in the same theatre, Desmond challenged racial segregation when she refused to move from a whites-only section of the Roseland Theatre in North Glascow to the balcony where Black patrons were expected to sit. She was arrested, jailed overnight, and fined not for segregation itself, but on a charge of tax evasion for one cent, the price difference between a main floor and a balcony seat.

Although her subsequent appeals failed and she was ordered to pay a $20 fine and $6 in court fines, her story sparked public discussions about the fight against racial injustice in Canada.

Carrie Best supported Desmond's defiance by publishing details about the theatre's continuing segregation policies. and the civil proceedings in her newspaper *The Clarion* hoping a broader audience would hear about the story and spur them on to continue the fight in their communities.

In 2010, Desmond was posthumously pardoned for the injustice she faced. In 2018, she was selected to appear on Canada's $10 bill to honour her courageous stand against racial segregation and her lasting impact on civil rights in Canada.

(Photo Credit B. Junkins)

The legacy of these notable Black Canadian civil rights pioneers, along with many lesser-known women who fought for racial justice, is defined by courage and persistence. Their efforts challenged segregation and discrimination, expanded rights, and paved the way for new generations of Black women to lead and pursue.

Graduate Women International

-Beth Junkins

GWI was created with the vision to create a global network of women that would build understanding and peace through education. More than a century after its founding, GWI stands firm in the belief that access to education is critical to advance women's rights, equality and peace.

As an 'opt in' member Club CFUW Nepean directly funds this mission – some of the work of the GWI is in policy at international tables – like UN. Other work affects individual women and girls directly through projects and grants

Here are some highlights of the work of GWI in 2025–

(Figures reproduced with permission, GWI Year at a Glance)

GWI at the United Nations (UN)

GWI actively participated in **three** Human Rights Councils (Geneva), Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Economic and Social Council, High-Level Political Forum, Commission for Social Development, Sustainable Development Goal Summit, UNICEF (New York); Conference on NGOs and UNESCO (Paris); Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Vienna), and more.

- Submitted **five written statements** to the UN and its mechanisms presented in a publication for UN Day
- Actively participated in **CSW69**, submitting **a written statement** garnering **15 cosponsors**, co-sponsored five and organized **three CSW69 parallel events.**
- Submitted **four comprehensive recommendations** for GWI affiliates under review by the CEDAW*
- Represented GWI at the **Business and Human Rights** session and **Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** session at the UN
- Some **22 reports** covering UN attendances submitted by GWI UN Representatives in Geneva, New York, Paris and Vienna.
- GWI continued serving as **President, NGO Committee on Human Rights** and **Senior Advisor to the NGO CSW Geneva Bureau.**

GWI thanks UN representatives in Geneva (Elena Bauchiero and Stacy Dry Lara), New York (Maureen Byrne and Maryella Hannum), Vienna (Elisabeth Francis and Reinhild Strauss) and Paris (Dominique Ciavatti and Eliane Didier) for their contributions.

GWI Projects and Grants

Teacher for Rural Futures
Sponsored six female students with GWI scholarships, including two graduating, two continuing, and two new students. Released "Rise and Lead", a song celebrating project students.

Bina Roy Partners in Development (BRPID)
Funded **six projects:** Egypt, El Salvador, Nepal, Senegal, Turkey, and Uganda addressing women's health and hygiene, environmental action, digital and financial literacy, and community education. The project summary can be find **HERE.**

Hegg Hoffett Grants for Displaced Women
Hegg Hoffet Committee reviewed some **30** applications and awarded **six grants to recipients** for English lessons, project management and medical certifications.

Rose Sidgwick Triennial Fellowships
At the GA, **six** awardees from Ghana, the UK, Peru, the US, and China were selected from 80 applications, enrolled in PhD programs in 50 universities worldwide.

Heritage Fundraising Wall
This project, created for GWI's 105th anniversary, **raised about $15,000 USD.** The purchase of a brick further supports GWI missions and dismantles barriers to education. Click **HERE** to donate.

GWI is helping to change the lives of women and girls around the world.

**You can read the full 'Year at a glance' here .

(Photo Credit B. Junkins)

Answers to Quiz on page 9 (b), (a), (b) –

CFUW Ontario Council

Women Leading Change
Speaker Series Feb 21, 2026
AI: Artificial Intelligence and Education

(From CFUW Ontario Website
Reproduced with Permission
https://cfuwontcouncil.org/standing-committees/)

Saturday, February 21st, 2026
10 AM to 12 Noon
on Zoom
.
REGISTER HERE
Our guest speakers:

Dr. Janette Hughes is Professor in Digital Literacies and Canada Research Chair, Technology and Pedagogy, in the Faculty of Education at Ontario Tech University. Her presentation on February 21st is entitled **Women and AI: Leading in a Brave New Digital World.**

We stand at the threshold of a digital revolution where Artificial Intelligence is not just a tool—it is a force redefining how we learn, teach, and live. In this brave new world, the question is clear: Will women simply adapt to change, or will we lead it?

This talk is a call to action. AI offers unprecedented opportunities to amplify voices, democratize knowledge, and solve global challenges—but only if diverse perspectives shape its future. Women bring unique insights, ethical frameworks, and collaborative strengths that the AI ecosystem desperately needs. Yet, the risks are real: algorithmic bias, inequitable access, and the automation of roles disproportionately impacting women.

In this talk, we will explore how women can rise as architects of this digital era—championing fairness, inclusivity, and human-centered innovation. This is not about surviving disruption; it is about owning the narrative, influencing policy, and creating technologies that reflect the richness of humanity. The future of AI is being written now. Let's ensure women's voices are not just included—they are leading the chorus.

Dr. Laura Morrison EdD, OCT is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at Ontario Tech University. Her presentation on February 21st is entitled **Criticality, Creativity and AI Ethics: What Does it Mean to Think, Create and Learn in the Age of Generative AI?**

This talk examines the role of generative artificial intelligence in education, focusing on both its potential to support creativity and critical thinking, as well as the ethical considerations that need to be addressed in the process.

Drawing on educational research, the presentation offers examples of how generative AI can facilitate creativity and critical thinking without replacing human agency. It then examines key ethical concerns associated with an uncritical acceptance of generative AI, including issues of authorship, bias, and responsibility (amongst others). The talk introduces an ethical framework developed by Dr Morrison and colleagues and argues for the explicit integration of critical AI literacy within K-16 curricula. Ultimately, the presentation positions ethical judgment, creativity, and critical thinking as essential educational priorities in a generative AI–infused world.

CFUW Nepean Trust
Bequest from Mary Kathryn Mowat

Kathy Greiner

I am pleased to announce that the Scholarship Trust has received a $1000 donation to honour the legacy of Mary Kathryn Mowat.

Mary Kathryn was the founding president of CFUW Nepean whose enthusiasm, dedication, hard work, and support of women never wavered. Mary Kathryn was the embodiment of the highest ideals of CFUW with its focus on girls and women and education.

With the growth of the suburbs, there was interest in starting new clubs; Mary Kathryn spearheaded the establishment of CFUW Nepean A lifelong supporter of CFUW and its mission, she believed in the power of women to help each other and imbued the new chapter with this philosophy.

She personally recruited ten members of CFUW Ottawa to establish the new CFUW Nepean (ten members were required to have a club). Mary Kathryn served as our president for several years and I was lucky to work with her on the first executive as her enthusiasm was contagious.

Meeting in her home at the beginning, Mary Kathryn used her experience as a past president of CFUW Ottawa and her friendship with Susan Russell, (who was Vice President Ontario and later Executive Director of CFUW) to work out the details for the club; she took charge of writing a constitution and bylaws for the club, planned and organized meetings, drove club membership and our advocacy efforts as well as helping CFUW National establish their first permanent office in Ottawa.

As a single mother, Mary Kathryn was an ardent believer in the power of education as a vehicle for independence for women and she pushed for the establishment of the Scholarship Trust.

(Photo Credit – CFUW Nepean Newsletter 2016)

We feel privileged that we have been given the honour of being able to remember Mary Kathryn's legacy through this Scholarship Trust donation.

Want to donate to the Trust??

Did you know …

…that the Scholarship Trust accepts E-Transfers? The transfers can be made to: cfuwnepeantrust@gmail.com

… that your next trip can raise money for the Trust. If you are booking with Senior Discovery Tours, the scholarship fund will receive 4% of the price of your tour!! Contact Pat Coroy for more details.

CFUW Nepean 35th anniversary

1991 and all that….

*Women's shoulder pads were on the way out.
**Roseanne, Murphy Brown, Cheers and Home Improvement* dominated our TV sets.
*Operation Desert Storm began.

Take a moment to think about where you were in 1991 and what you were doing the year CFUW Nepean was founded. What do you remember?

Q1 Canada's population in 1991 was about
(a) 25 million (b) 27 million (c) 30 million

Q2 Who was Prime Minister in Feb 1991?-
(a)Brian Mulrooney (b) Kim Campbell (c) Jean Chretien

Q3 Who was Governor General of Canada in Feb 1991?
(a)Romeo Le Blanc (b)Ray Hnatyshyn, (c) Jeanne Sauve,

More next month!! (Answers on page 6)

35th Anniversary Party & AGM

May 5, 2026
River Lounge
2259 Prince of Wales drive
May 5th 2026 11:30AM to 3:00PM

-Carole Baker

We're excited to share that plans are well underway for our 35th Anniversary Celebration and AGM on May 5, 2026!

Thanks to Sue Carter, we have secured a wonderful venue at the River Lounge on Prince of Wales Drive. The space is under new management, and Clem, who oversees event planning, has been incredibly generous with our group. There will be no charge for the microphone, podium, screen, projector, or room rental — a big win for us!

Sue recently visited the River Lounge at 2259 Prince of Wales Drive and was delighted with what she saw. The venue is beautiful, featuring elegant white tables and chairs with crisp white linen tablecloths and napkins. The Riverview Room truly shines with its natural stone design, cozy fireplace, and stunning views of the Rideau River.

(Photo Credit River Lounge / One Plate used with permission)

Weather permitting, we'll also have access to their lovely riverfront patio, which is perfect for enjoying drinks before the luncheon.

Accessibility note: There are three steps from the main level to the dining room, with a sturdy banister available. If stairs are a concern, guests can also enter from the patio at the back.

The River Lounge will be offering a delicious plated meal, including salad, a chicken Florentine entrée with a vegetarian option, roast potatoes, vegetables, a variety of desserts, and tea and coffee — all for $50 per person, including tax and gratuity.

They have also offered to provide a couple of tables should we wish to collect items for Cornerstone.

CFUW Nepean 35th anniversary (cont'd)

Heads up Keep an eye out for a survey that we will sending out to you in February to find out how many will be attending. Also the cost of the event needs to be collected ahead of time – stay tuned for instructions on how we will be doing this.

A dedicated planning team is coming together to make this event a joyful and memorable celebration. We're looking forward to marking this special milestone with you — it's going to be a lot of fun!

Anniversary Party Quilt Raffle

One of the events on May 5 will be a draw for a spectacular quilt called 'Canadian Pride' created and donated by CFUW Nepean member Teresa McCrory

Measuring 60"X70" the quilt was designed and pieced by Teresa, and machine quilted by Jacqueline Whitehead.

(Photo credit T. McCrory)

So start thinking about all the people who would be interested in buying a raffle ticket for this beautiful quilt!!

Go Betty Go!!
Coldest Night of the Year –

Since 2011, the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) initiative has been raising funds for charities that help the most vulnerable in our communities: those facing homelessness, those driven from homes by violence, those facing uncertainty in housing. This year, the official walk will be held **Saturday, February 28, 2025**

Over the past two years, Betty Bertrand has raised over $1200 for Cornerstone Housing for Women on behalf of CFUW Nepean.

Betty is on the move again this year – she hopes to raise $750. You can support Betty this year by going to the website: CNOY.org select donate and type in 'Betty Bertrand' in the search area.

OR you can think about joining Betty and register yourself to walk and raise funds for Cornerstone. You can walk at any location, at anytime during February that works for you. Registering is quick and easy at the same website.

Join us and help our neighbours come in from the cold!

(Photo Credit B. Junkins)

CFUW Nepean Activities
Dec 2 Christmas party

-Carole Baker

In keeping with our annual tradition, we gathered on December 2nd for a festive holiday luncheon at the Waterford Grand Retirement Residence in Barrhaven. Sue Carter once again organized a delightful event for 35 attendees, and it proved to be a wonderful success.

Guests were warmly welcomed at the entrance of the spacious, well-appointed theatre by Teresa McCrory and Ellen Strike, joined by Betty Ann Grainger. Betty Ann promoted a special draw featuring a beautifully quilted bridge tablecloth and matching napkins, generously donated by former CFUW Nepean member Pat Amundrud. Sue Carter added several attractive wreaths for the draw. The lucky winner of the tablecloth was Mary Scrim - fittingly, a bridge enthusiast herself!

Marlene Sylvester delighted the audience with her humorous poems, while Marcia Armstrong shared that her Rotary calendar sales had raised $500. Adding to the success, Betty Ann Grainger announced that the tablecloth draw contributed another $75 to the Scholarship Trust.

Meanwhile, Oliver Cargill, the recreation coordinator at the Residence, kept everyone entertained with Christmas Trivia and a lively round of *Name That Tune*. The grand prize went to Jennifer Robinson, who proudly took home one of the beautiful wreaths.

(Photo Credit Grace Brown)

Marlene reported that our members were very generous with the Christmas Drive for women and their children in various shelters around the city - Cornerstone (5 facilities), Interval House, Minwaashin (Aboriginal women and children), and Elizabeth Fry.

Hopefully women will know that they are not forgotten at Christmas and that we care about them. Marlene and Caroline Wilson will sort the gifts and divide everything among the four facilities.

(Photo Credit Grace Brown)

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Dolores Dufresne and Marlene will deliver the gifts within the next few days. Thank you to everyone for your donations.

Joan Conrod offered her words on thankfulness before we went in to the Panache Dining Room to enjoy our luncheon:

"When Carole asked me to offer thankfulness, I sat down to write a list of things I am thankful for, but quickly realized I had neither the time nor the space to list everything, so, knowing that you are hungry, I am limiting myself to three things.

(Photo Credit Grace Brown)

First, I am thankful for the food we are about to eat and for the fellowship we share as we meet and eat. I do value our fellowship.

I am extremely thankful for where we live. Canada, every year, is voted by the UN as one of the best countries in the in which to live. Canadians vote Ottawa as one of the best cities in Canada in which to live. How fortunate we are!

CFUW Nepean Activities
Dec 2 Christmas party (cont'd)

Finally, I am thankful for the women who came before us who worked to make lives better for women, women who are the subject of Marlene Sylvester's plays, women who got us the right to vote, to hold positions of influence and power, the right to own property in our own name.

Now, I wish you a good meal, a happy holiday season, and a 2026 so full of things to be thankful for that, like me, you have neither the space nor the time to write them all down!"

We gathered in the beautifully decorated Panache Dining Room for our Christmas luncheon, enjoying a festive turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Each year, we are fortunate to celebrate in the lovely surroundings of the Waterford Grand, where the stunning decorations and unmatched Christmas Village display create a truly magical atmosphere. Gentle piano music filled the background, adding to the warmth of the occasion, and a full-size Santa greeted us from his chair by the front door.

As Joan so graciously reminded us, we truly have much to be thankful for.

(Photo Credit Wendy Allen)

(Photo Credit Grace Brown)

(Photo Credit Grace Brown)

(Photo Credit Grace Brown)

CFUW Nepean Activities

Jan 6 General Meeting

Inuit Life

Guest Speaker Franco Buscemi

-Grace Brown

Franco Shetiapik Buscemi, originally from Iqaluit, Nunavut, is fluent in Inuktitut and has collaborated with Inuit organizations and businesses throughout Canada's four Inuit land claim regions and all Nunavut communities.

(Photo Credit Franco Buscemi – used with Permission)

Now based in Ottawa, he is the Inuit Community Liaison Officer at Carleton University, supporting student enrolment and retention by building partnerships with Inuit groups. He also serves on Adventure Canada's expedition team through Nalunaiqsijiit training where he is now a Zodiac driver, bear monitor, and Inuit cultural educator. He co-hosts "Inuit Voices" on CKCU 93.1 FM and supported establishment of Uvagut TV, the first national channel exclusively devoted to Inuktitut language programming.

The speaker, identifying as a map enthusiast, provided an overview of Inuit demographics. He observed that the global population of 160,000 Inuit live in four countries: Canada, Greenland, Denmark, and the United States of which approximately 70,00 live in Canada. Over two thirds of Inuit live in one of the four regions comprising Inuit Nunangat (Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region).

He provided an overview of the forced migration of Inuit families in the 1950s noting that today Inuit people migrate to urban centres such as Yellowknife, Winnipeg, and Toronto to access healthcare, education, and employment opportunities.

However, the speaker noted that many of the Inuit youth he works with are expressing an interest in returning to Nunangat where air transportation, education, and employment opportunities as well as accessible health services have expanded. For example, Nunavut Arctic College founded in 2019, offers culturally relevant programs and the advancement of digital connectivity, with Starlink, provides internet access within Nunangat and the rest of Canada. The speaker observed that while digital connectivity is seen as beneficial, "tech creep" raises concerns about mental health and retention of traditional activities.

On his frequent trips home, the speaker commented he continues to observe a parallel universe. Specifically, North American children are provided with technical devices, video games and hours of television daily which heighten reliance on stay-at-home passive activities compared to the Inuit culture which encourages children and adults to "go out on the land" and enjoy traditional games. He believes this philosophy strengthens creativity, imagination, and love for the environment, as opposed to the city of Ottawa considering bylaws which would forbid children from playing street hockey.

In addition to his personal insight on the culture, traditional practices, and contemporary challenges faced by Inuit communities, the speaker recommended resources and books that provide additional insight into Inuit experiences, including topics such as government tagging, residential schools, and cultural changes. He highlighted the works of authors like Abraham Okpik, John Amagoalik, Peter Pitsilak, and Minnie Aodla Freeman, emphasizing their contributions

CFUW Nepean Activities
Jan 6, 2026 Meeting (cont'd)

to understanding Inuit history and the impact of cultural shifts.

(Photo Credit Franco Buscemi – used with Permission)

In closing, the speaker acknowledged that Inuit communities continue to face challenges such as climate change, housing shortages, food insecurity, and the lasting effects of colonialism. He believes a stronger future depends on supporting Inuit leadership, protecting the land, and strengthening culture and language for future generations.

Jan 15, 2026 Zoom Presentation

Tom's Story My 16-Year Friendship with a Homeless Man
Guest Speaker Jo-Ann Oosterman
-Grace Brown

Jo-Ann Oosterman is a Canadian author and advocate who uses storytelling to connect with communities. With a BA in psychology and experience in graphic design and yoga instruction, she has spent years working in outreach roles such as HIV counseling. Her work supports people facing homelessness, addiction, mental health struggles, and poverty.

The author's bestselling book, "Tom's Story: My 16-Year Friendship with a Homeless Man" (Pottersfield Press NS, 2023), details her long friendship with Tom Hogan, an Ojibway man (later discovered to be Metis) from Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

The memoir illustrates the trust and respect that grew after their meeting at The Ottawa Mission in Ottawa's Lowertown and explores Tom's experiences as an Aboriginal man facing child abuse trauma, homelessness, addiction, and mental illness. The author shared her hope that readers will see her book as more than a memoir and will appreciate Tom's immense creativity and talent while emphasizing the role of friendship and art in healing and human dignity.

The author recounted how she met Tom Hogan in 1998 when she volunteered to co-ordinate an art group for people struggling with poverty, homelessness, mental illness, and addiction. She said Tom attended the first class. He had a large gash on his forehead, and one eye was bruised and swollen shut. He looked around the room at the canvases and brushes and then left.

From then on, he regularly attended the classes where the author discovered Tom was a talented artist working in the Woodlands style (a vibrant Indigenous art tradition popularized by artists like Norval Morrisseau). We were shown examples of Tom's work which reflect bright or sombre colours depending on his mood at the time, animal images in outline, and cultural storytelling.

(Photo credit JA Oosterman, used with permission)

CFUW Nepean Activities
Jan 15 2026 Zoom Presentation (cont'd)

Unfortunately, Tom would bring his paintings with him and sell them on the street for the price of a bottle of alcohol. The author relayed a promise she made Tom that if he gave her his paintings to safeguard and he tried his best to stay with his rehabilitation program, she would arrange to exhibit his work. Several years later, she kept her promise and Tom's paintings were displayed at the Sweetgrass Aboriginal Bistro on Murray Street in Ottawa.

The paintings sold like wildfire with Tom, friends, and staff from the mission in attendance. The author proudly recalled how she and Tom shared a beer at the reception and at dinner afterward because after the art sale, joking they could afford to dine in the restaurant tonight.

The author says she never viewed Tom as a project. They built a genuine friendship through shared time, attentive listening, and mutual respect. She grew to appreciate his personality, intelligence, and artistic talents, shaped by hardship but at times peace and resilience.

With Tom's permission she began writing down their countless chats usually sitting on a park bench or as the author describes drinking watered-down coffee in a greasy spoon diner near the Mission
. (Photo Credit Claire Lacelle)

Details in the book of Tom's recovery struggles, relapses, moments of hope, moments of despair and searches for housing and medical care are honest and raw.

Despite the challenges, the author said she values their connection and believes his art brought him dignity and healing. Toward the end of his life, she expressed her gratitude that Tom was no longer homeless. He lived at The Oaks, a resident treatment centre established by the Shepherds of Good Hope.

He passed away in 2014 at the Mission Hospice with the author by his side. In closing, the author hopes her book helps to shift public attitudes toward greater acceptance and support for people facing homelessness.

(Photo credit JA Oosterman, used with permission)

Two Worlds Painting by Tom Hogan The painting hangs at "The Oaks" where Tom lived in the managed alcohol program (MAP) run by The Shepherds of Good Hope in Ottawa.

CFUW Nepean Activities
Interest Groups

Armchair Travel
-Marlene Sylvester

On Tuesday, January 20th Joan Conrod and Marcia Armstrong presented a wonderful travelogue on their one-day trip to Churchill, Manitoba. Great pictures and interesting facts were given and well received by members. Thank you very much.

On February 17 Pat Corey will present her travelogue on Winter in Norway at her home. She has some interesting details to tell us as well as terrific pictures.

Book Club
-Rachel Plouffe

Important Update: Jo-Ann Oosterman, the Ottawa author who wrote *Tom's Story, My 16 year Friendship with a Homeless Man* has agreed to participate in our Book Club, scheduled for **Tuesday, April 28 at 1 pm** on Zoom. Members of CFUW Nepean who might have missed Jo-Ann's presentation in January will be invited to attend this meeting. This book is a must read.

Our amended schedule:
February 23 - *The Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams
March 23 - *Dream Count* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
April 28 - *Tom's Story, My 16 year Friendship with a Homeless Man* by Jo-Ann Oosterman
May 25 *On Isabella Street* by Genevieve Graham

Interested in Something?
Start a new interest group!

Write up your idea for a new interest group, how often you would want to meet, what would be involved and submit it to the Club's Interest Group Convenor at marcia.armstrong@bell.net
It would be good to be able to offer this new group in the new Club year.

Art Tours
-Marlene Patrick & Anne Sinclair

On Wednesday, February 26th, the Art Gallery Tour group will be visiting The National Gallery of Canada. We will be having a guided tour of the exhibit *Winter Count: Embracing the Cold*.

The tours last approximately one hour and portable stools are available which we use when discussing individual pictures.

A notice providing more information will be sent out soon to all those who have expressed an interest. If anyone wishes to have their name added to the list, please contact Anne Sinclair .

CFUW Nepean Activities
Interest Groups

Bridge
-Dolores Dufresne

The Bridge group meets Monday afternoons. We usually have one or two tables playing in person and/or one or two tables playing on-line – on a program called Bridge Base.

We are always looking for new players. Please let me know if you would like to join us – either as a regular player or as a spare.

Friday Exercise/Chat Group
-Marcia Armstrong

Come join our Friday exercise group. We follow a video of an expert doing chair yoga exercises for about half an hour. Then comes the fun part where we chat together about a variety of topics from books to movies to travel to safety in the home to favourite hobbies to whatever really.

This group starts at **10 a.m. on Fridays, over Zoom** and it happens weekly. If you are interested in participating, let me know and I will add you to the distribution list.

Come join the fun!

Environmental Action Group
-Beth Junkins

In January, the EAG members were encouraged to join the CFUW Environment and Climate Change Sub Committee Webinar Net-*Zero by 2050 – Building for a Fossil-Fuel Free Future.*

Architect Marina Huissoon from the Milton Club gave one of the best presentations you may ever hear on the issue of housing, construction and how we absolutely can reduce their greenhouse contributions.

With decades of experience in the area, Marina takes us through the issues clearly, in a way that is understandable and comprehensive. Canada is lagging behind in the reductions in CO2 needed to meet the Net Zero commitment in 2050. In this presentation we learn that there are things that can be done!

You can watch the recording of the presentation at https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/h6f_GxIoeDGvngHahORFNN2ZOj2m2PNWStbDHERuCzHu_mmu4jQ1EhGIAbapP46T.DdYMV3CyDOW90HSn?startTime=1769117389000
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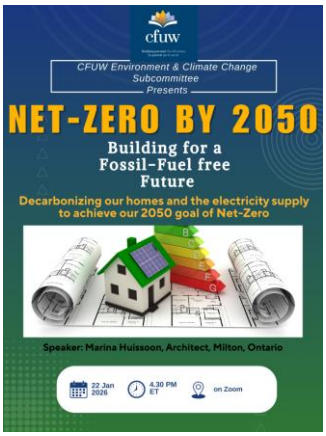


CFUW Nepean Activities
Interest Groups

Lunching Out
-Sharon Carew

On Wednesday the 21st of January we had our monthly Lunching Out and as usual there was a very nice turn out. The Mexican food was tasty and great for a cold winter day.

We will have our next Lunching Out on Wednesday, **February 18th at 12 noon** at the *Mandarin Restaurant* on Hunt Club. Chinese New Year is during this month so it will be nice to celebrate in a Chinese Restaurant. Kung Hei Fat Choi is the traditional saying in Cantonese and it is translated as,“ Congratulations and Best Wishes for a prosperous New Year”.

I am hoping to have Lunching Out in April at *Vittoria Trattoria Restaurant* on Prince of Wales on the **third Wednesday of March**. Hopefully we will have good weather for our February and March Lunching Out

Outreach
-Marlene Sylvester

Thanks to all the members for all the Xmas donations to the various shelters- Interval House, Cornerstone, Elizabeth Fry, Minwaashin. We received very nice thank you cards from the shelters.

Since House to Home has closed and no one has stepped up to open a facility we will be working with Matthew House in Centre Pointe and Minnwaasin, a Shelter for Indigenous women and their children.

If you have coats, winter boots etc or household goods you can drop off articles at my home.

If you have furniture, items will go to the Matthew House in Kanata . There is a cost for the pick up and transport for this.

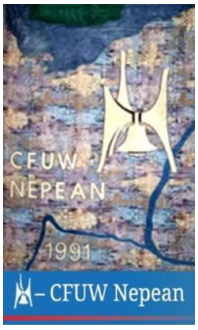
Thank for your great support over the last few years.

Movie Matinee Group
-Judy Glass

The December movie outing closing 2025 was cancelled due to snowy weather.

2026 kicked off in January with the fast paced, unpredictable comedy-drama of **Marty Supreme,** loosely based on a real hustling ping-pong player.

Thank you to Jennifer Robinson who will be organizing the February movie showing on Friday February 20th. Hope you will be able to join her.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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