In the Loop

Winter 2026

Sharing our stories and staying connected



In this newsletter

- President's Message
- Sisters By Choice: Remembering Hazel
- Green Talk
- Upcoming Events

Welcome to Our New Members

Christine R.

Anita S.

A Message From Our President



Welcome to 2026! I hope that this year will be a healthy, happy one for all of you.

We were all shocked and saddened when our long-time, well-loved member Hazel died on November 24. Wende C. has written a beautiful piece about her long-time friend in this newsletter.

To honour Hazel, the Scholarship Trust has set up the Hazel Pompey Scholarship Award in her memory. It will go to a young woman from West Carleton High School, where Hazel taught. Hazel was also the chair of the Scholarship Trust Awards Committee and a keen advocate for education. If you would like to make a donation in Hazel's memory please go to donate@cfuwkanata.ca and mention that the donation is in Hazel's memory.

The Holiday party silent auction raised an impressive $2,116 for the Scholarship Trust Fund. Many thanks to organizers Heather P. and Margaret S. and all of the donors and helpers. As well the 50/50 draw raised $187. Ann S. was the winner and generously donated her winnings to the Scholarship fund. In addition, 53 party-goers gave their $8 rebate for the cost of the meal to the Scholarship Trust (total $424). So the party raised $2,722 in total. (I had negotiated an $8 discount on the original cost of the meal.)

We had a wonderful Holiday party, thanks to all the hard work that Cathie F. put into it. It was a lovely location which was beautifully set up. We had a quiz, a great musical entertainer, good fun and great company. Sadly, as you know, the aftermath was not so great since many of us became ill within a few days. I reported the illness to Ottawa Public Health and they were diligent in following up. A letter was sent to everyone via eblast outlining their findings.

President's Message

Cont'd from pg 1

Thank you to Carol F. for organizing the Kanata Food Cupboard Holiday Hamper Fundraiser. We raised $2,850.

New member Barbs J. has been busy updating our website. Take a look and let us know what you think. It's easier to find the important things that our club does. Thanks so much, Barbs. And many thanks to Mary D. for all the work she has done on the website for many years and for helping Barbs get up to speed.

Theresa P. has been busy with environmental advocacy for us, focusing on waste management issues. Wende C. plans to start on writing letters to politicians soon, advocating for the CFUW resolutions that were passed into policy at the CFUW AGM last summer. Advocacy is an important part of our mission. Our Mission Statement

As you can see, it takes many people to make our club run smoothly and to fulfill our mission. I would encourage you all to consider becoming part of the Executive, or offer to help in some other way. Any help is welcome.

This will be my final year as President. The Executive has been a wonderful group to work with! Please let Elena P. or me know if you would like to find out more or if you would like to put your name forward. Jobs can be shared.

Jill J.



Past president Elena P. and current president Jill J.



Judy W., Judy T., Anne B., Jill J.



Kathy B.



Cathie!



Ann S., Janet P., Rita L.



Anne B.

2025 Holiday Celebration

The annual Holiday Celebration Party was held on Wed Dec.10, 2025 at The Bradley Retirement Living. Many members coordinated the planning of this party under the supervision of Cathie F. and Shelby J. at The Bradley. Fifty-six people participated in this lovely event. The room was very festive, the Agenda was well planned, musician Derek F. entertained everyone and the hot turkey dinner was excellent. Members went home with lovely door prizes and beautiful centerpieces made by Cathy S. The Silent Auction was a huge success, managed by Heather P. and Margaret S. raising $2,116.00 for our Scholarship Trust Fund. A good time was had by all.

Cathie F.



Holly G. and Joy F.



Janice S., Cathie F., Margaret S., Heather P.

TWISTED SISTERS BOOK CLUB (TSBC)

TSBC welcomes new members to join our unique book club. We meet monthly usually on the first Wed. of the month at 10am via Zoom sharing fascinating books. We have monthly themes and members choose their own books to read, review and recommend, as well as share their perspectives of the chosen topic. A reference chart is made of all titles from each meeting.

For example, the January 2026 theme was "Environment"; a diverse array of books were shared. Some titles included: "Fire Weather, A True Story from a Hotter World" by John Vaillant; "Love Letter to the Earth" by Zen Buddhist Monk Thich Nhat Hanh; "Most Delicious Poison, the Story of Nature's Toxins" by Noah Whiteman; "The Human Planet Earth at the Dawn of the Anthropocene" by George Steinmetz; "Thoreau and the Language of the Trees" by Richard Higgins and "Under a White Sky, The Nature of the Future" by Elizabeth Kolbert. A lively discussion was held about each book.

Come join us on Wed Feb. 11, 2026 to learn about books under the theme "Lifestyle" or Wed. March 4, 2026 for the topic "Biography". Please contact Cathie F. (rufus01012012@gmail.com) for more details. TSBC is a very welcoming group of avid readers.



The History Group Interest Group

New members are welcome to join the History Group, which meets on the third Wed. of the month. Presentations are held at the Bradley Retirement Living between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. The 2026 program has some great speakers lined up. Contact Cathie F. for more details.

Wed. Feb. 18, 2026 at 1 p.m. on Zoom We welcome author Sheila White describing her new memoir about her biracial parents' life experiences in Halifax, N.S. during the 1940's.

Wed. March 18, 2026 The Music Art Director from "Music & Beyond Ottawa" will discuss the history of classical music concerts in Ottawa over the past 35 years.

Wed. April 15, 2026 Tricia Carran will talk about the history of the Balkans.

Wed. May 20, 2026 Lawrence Wall, retired CBC Journalist, will speak about the history of CBC Radio.

Cathie F.

Prose and Cons Book club, holds meetings the third Tuesday of each month. Our next book is "The Spoon Stealer" by Leslie Crewe.

SISTERS BY CHOICE

By Wende C.



Writing this I realize how sweet and slippery is the word "sister" – big enough to stretch beyond biology and across time; flexible enough to define soul mates and virtual strangers; precise enough to embrace me and my daughters, and all the sisterhoods in between.
– Letty Cottin Pogrebin

I've been thinking about Hazel's and my friendship this last little while – how it evolved; memories we collected over the years; secrets we shared; the moments of laughter and sometimes of tears. We spent 27 years growing our friendship, and I'm grateful for all of it, and will miss her for the remaining years of my life.

Fondly, I remember our first meeting at West Carleton Secondary School, in September of 1998. I was rushing to the office to get my attendance in on time – a ritual for every teacher at the end of the day. Hazel was strolling towards me from the opposite way – in her relaxed, swaying type of gait, as if she was a model on a runway. She looked at me directly, a welcoming smile spreading across her face, seeming to know right away that I was a 'new hire' to the school. Or perhaps it was because she noticed before me that we were both wearing the same dress! My own smile widened in recognition; we had the same good taste in clothes! We both laughed, knowing immediately that we liked each other, and so our friendship began.

Hazel was born November 29, 1945, in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in the Caribbean. She was the middle child of five born to Charles and Gwendolyn Thompson. Hazel's parents stressed the importance of a good education and Hazel lived up to their expectations. She excelled and did her post-secondary degrees at McGill and Concordia Universities, finally earning a Master's Degree in Education. All the while, she supported herself by working at SunLife, in Montreal. After completing her studies, she taught English and Moral and Religious Education. It was also there that she met Rudy Pompey, whom she eventually married and where the pride of their lives was born – their daughter, Yolande. Rudy was hired by the federal government and the family moved to Ottawa.

Since Special Education was identified as a growing area, Hazel also added a Special Education qualification from the University of Ottawa. This enabled her to secure contracts to teach simultaneously at the Earl of March Secondary School (EOM – an urban school) and West Carleton Secondary School (WCSS – a rural school), with a 25- minute drive separating them. The family, by then, had bought a house in Katimavik, in the former City of Kanata, so the short commute meant Hazel was able to work near her home and, most importantly, a short way from Yolande, while in school.

Eventually, Hazel obtained a full-time contract at WCSS where she taught English and worked with Special Needs students. There, Hazel would remain until she retired from teaching, eventually purchasing a condominium in the Beaverbrook area of Kanata.

As couples during these early years, Ralph and I regularly got together with Hazel and Rudy for dinners and parties in each other's homes, as well as at WCSS staff events at WCSS. Our friendship deepened and began to flourish as we shared more and more experiences. One such occasion left a strong imprint on Ralph, my mother and me, when Hazel and Rudy invited us to a New Year's Eve party at their home. We'd enjoyed meeting Hazel's brother, Frank and his wife, Penny, at smaller dinner parties at Hazel and Rudy's, so we were looking forward to seeing them again, as well as meeting some of Hazel and Rudy's other guests. We were surprised, however, when we went downstairs where everyone was partying, only to discover that we were the only white people at the party; everyone else was black! We had a great time; especially my mom who had the uncanny ability, like Hazel, to attract other people. The experience of that party, though, took me from appreciating diversity to understanding the courage it can take for people of colour to live in a sea of white day-to-day. Later, when Hazel and I talked about it, I learned how Hazel "felt" at WCSS, where, at the time, there were only two black students plus Hazel in a population of nearly 1000 students! She told me that part of her motivation in working at the school was to change perception and celebrate simply being alike - human.







Hazel's actions spoke volumes about her integrity and her own courage and values. Perhaps this is the major reason why she earned the Ottawa Builders' Award in 2015, for her work with the St. Vincent's and Grenadines Association of Ottawa (SVGAO) of which she was a member, too. As Suzette Small-Weekes, the current president of this group said in her tribute to Hazel earlier in January:



> Hazel was steadfast and resolute. A woman of wisdom, principle and unshakable character. She carried her love for community with grace and purpose. Her strength, her generosity, and her fierce commitment to service touched everyone fortunate enough to know her.

Hazel would also leave her mark on CFUW/Kanata. She joined the club in the fall of 2014, because of her interest in global affairs, women's issues and because she enjoyed meeting other women and playing bridge. As well, she liked the fact that the club was involved in presenting scholarships to high school students; presentations she witnessed at graduation ceremonies when she was teaching.

Finally, she wanted to 'spread the message' to others and within a year, she had also introduced me to the Club, where our friendship included working together as Co-Presidents of the Club.

Our history would now include decision-making, teaching, leadership, sharing common interests, friendship, family life and then 'sisters'! For a long time, I had been researching my colonial heritage, with the plan to write the history of my family's migration to North America. In the course of learning my genetic history, I discovered that an ancestor of mine was originally of West Bantu-Cameroon ancestry, five generations back! Well, I was so excited I phoned Hazel right away with the news! That was when she started calling me "Sister" – we laughed then, but over time, it became a title that meant even more to us! What we were feeling in our hearts had deepened to the point that we were not only colour- blind but like sisters (each of us having other sisters to draw comparisons from).

Like sisters, we loved each other but we also clashed on occasion. We were both strong women with definite ideas and opinions. The clashes especially occurred when we were on the phone and couldn't see each other's eyes or body language and needed to convince the other of our opinion or idea. However, we'd always know when a disagreement had reached its limit – one or the other's voice would briefly become inaudible and you'd know it was because the earphone on the other line was being shaken vigorously in frustration! That would be the time when the 'other' would decide to 'let it go' and say the powerful words, "Okay, we agree to disagree". And that would be the end of it! We both cherished each other more than the argument – right or wrong; just as sisters do.

At the end of our tenure, Hazel stayed on as Past President, establishing and maintaining the Club's Facebook page – providing information about the club or items of interest that Hazel had gathered from a variety of sources. It was here that Hazel demonstrated her desire to teach and continually learn new information and/or revise her thinking about a subject. An example of this was when we were discussing Canadian history – a passion of mine.

Hazel's knowledge about black history in Canada before the 1900s did not include the fact that there were original black settlers to Canada, especially after the War of 1812. As a history teacher, I knew black settlements had sprung up as early as the 1700s and early 1800s, not only in Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario but as far away as Amber Valley, Alberta, just as it was becoming a province in 1905. This information was a complete surprise to Hazel! From that point on, she gathered information, analyzed it and turned it and the people she learned about into Facebook articles on the subject or in newsletters during Black History Month – ever the teacher providing a learning opportunity for herself and for others like herself.

In the last few years of Hazel's life, she took on a new role as a member of the Scholarship Trust Awards Committee. There, she helped select scholarship winners and arrange presenters for graduation ceremonies. In her final CFUW/Kanata leadership role, she was the Scholarship Trust Awards Chair – creating a warm, cohesive group of women to work on that committee.
Hazel also recognized after years of volunteer work that it was time to look after herself and she mastered the word, "No" to any commitments that were "work". Instead, she focused on her health, holidays to South Africa (which she loved), going to Newfoundland where she was "screeched in", as well as lots of visits to see family in Montreal and Toronto. Most importantly, Hazel got to spend more time with Yolande and her beloved grandchildren in Turks and Caicos. Her last major holiday, however, was in the Spring of 2025, when she travelled with Joy and several other CFUW/Kanata Club members, along the Danube between Prague and Budapest.

By this time, Hazel was not feeling well. As I look back on my texts with Hazel then, we both had a sense that something was wrong despite Hazel's efforts to live a healthy lifestyle. In the summer, I suggested she make an appointment with her doctor. By October, before Ralph and I left on our cruise, I knew Hazel's doctor wanted to do more tests but she nor I expected the results of those tests – both of us thinking there was still lots of time to deal with a health issue! That was not to be the case. In mid-October, Hazel found out she had pancreatic cancer and it was spreading. She didn't want to spoil my holiday with that news, so waited until I got back a week later. Her text on the day I returned was..."My news is not good. When you're ready you can call sometime this afternoon.💕"

A month later, on November 24th, just before her 80th birthday, my dear sister by choice, our dear friend, died peacefully. Yolande's Obituary said what I and so many others knew to be true...

"Hazel was a dedicated educator who touched countless lives through her passion for teaching. She was a generous volunteer, always willing to lend a helping hand, and she cared deeply for the well-being of others. A lover of life, Hazel brought joy, encouragement, and wisdom to everyone she encountered."

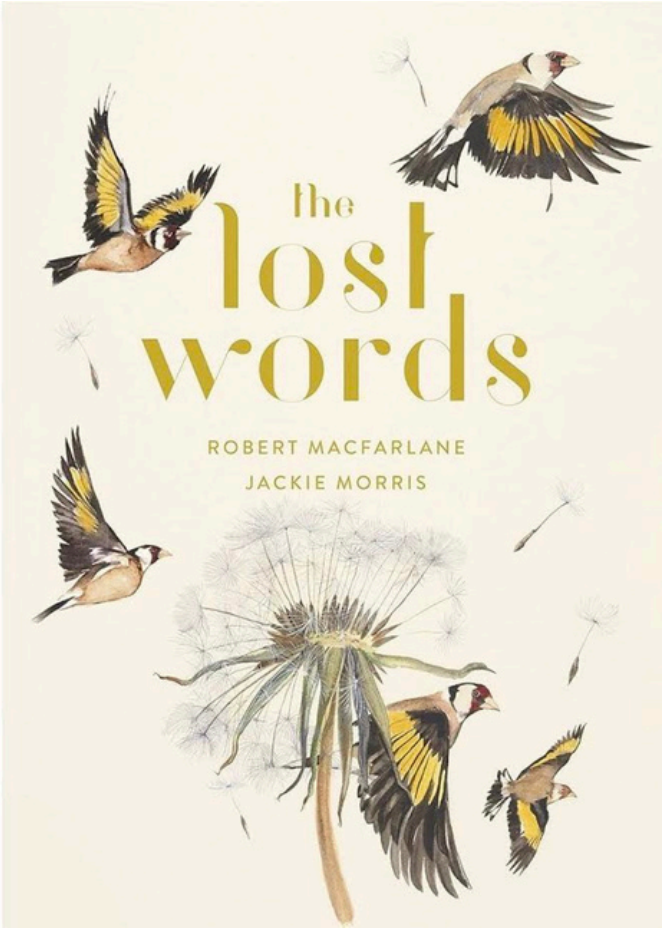


Environment Matters

A Book for Everyone...

In 2007, a new edition of the Oxford Junior Dictionary was published. It is widely used in schools around the world. Then, a sharp-eyed reader noticed that around forty common words concerning nature had been dropped.
Apparently, these words were no longer being used enough by children to merit their place in the dictionary. The list of these “lost words” included acorn, adder, bluebell, dandelion, fern, heron, kingfisher, newt, otter, and willow.
Among the words taking their place were attachment, blog, broadband, bullet-point, cut-and-paste, and voice-mail.
The news of these substitutions — the outdoor and natural being displaced by the indoor and virtual — were seen by many as a powerful sign of the growing gulf between childhood and the natural world.

Ten years later, Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris set out to make a “spell book” to conjure back twenty of the lost words, and the beings they name, from acorn to wren. Using the magic of word and paint, they sought to summon these words again into the voices, stories, and dreams of children and adults alike, and to celebrate the wonder and importance of everyday nature. The Lost Words is that book - a work that contains twenty poetic reflections of twenty of those lost words illustrated by twenty glorious water colours as they appear in nature.



The Lost Words by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris

This beautiful book has cast an extraordinary spell on hundreds of thousands of people and begun a grass-roots movement to re-wild childhood across Britain, Europe, and North America.

Mary D.



Environment Matters

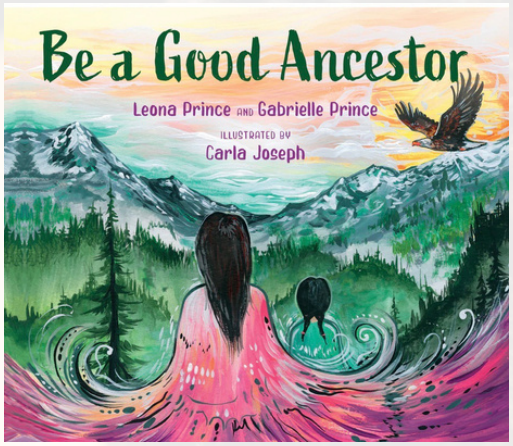
Acorn

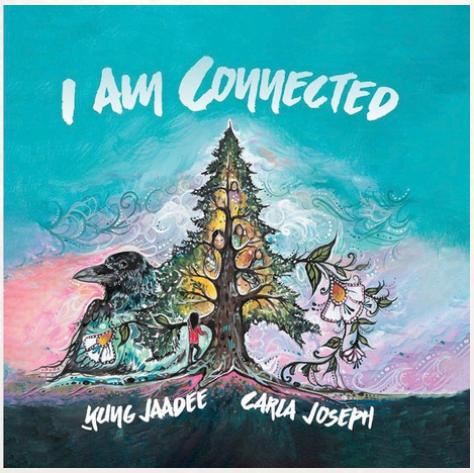


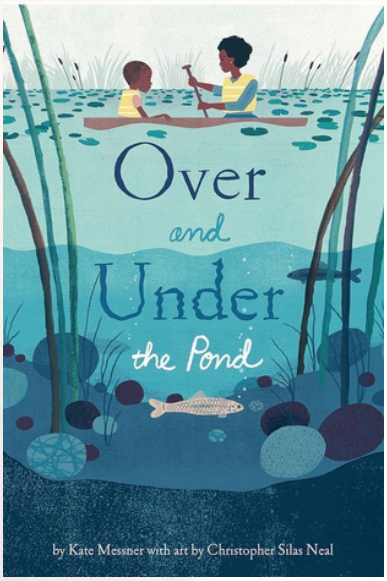
As flake is to Blizzard, as
Curve is to sphere, as knot is to net, as
One is to many, as coin is to money, as bird is to flock, as
Rock is to mountain, as drop is to fountain, as spring is to river, as glint is to glitter, as
Near is to far, as wind is to weather, as feather is to flight, as light is to star, as kindness is to good, so acorn is to wood.

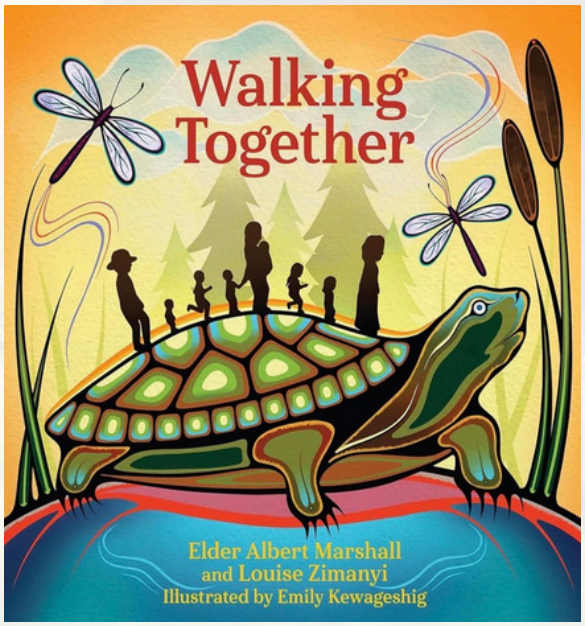
From: The Lost Words by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris

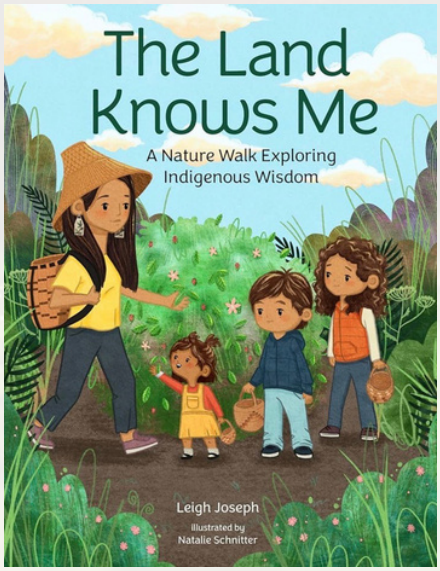
More wonderful books for your grandchildren to connect them with nature.

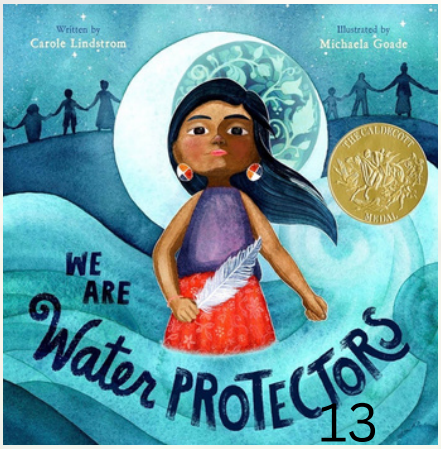














We Need a Circular Economy

By Theresa P.

Waste not, want not

We have seen incredible changes in our lifetimes. Technology transformation, globalization, dramatic increases in life expectancy and population – but also more pollution, changing climate, and loss of biodiversity. What awaits our young people?

Right now, the future looks grim, especially for our natural environment, on which we all depend to live and thrive.

We humans are currently consuming natural resources annually at a rate of approximately 1.8 Earths; that is, using 80% more resources than the planet's ecosystems can regenerate in one year.

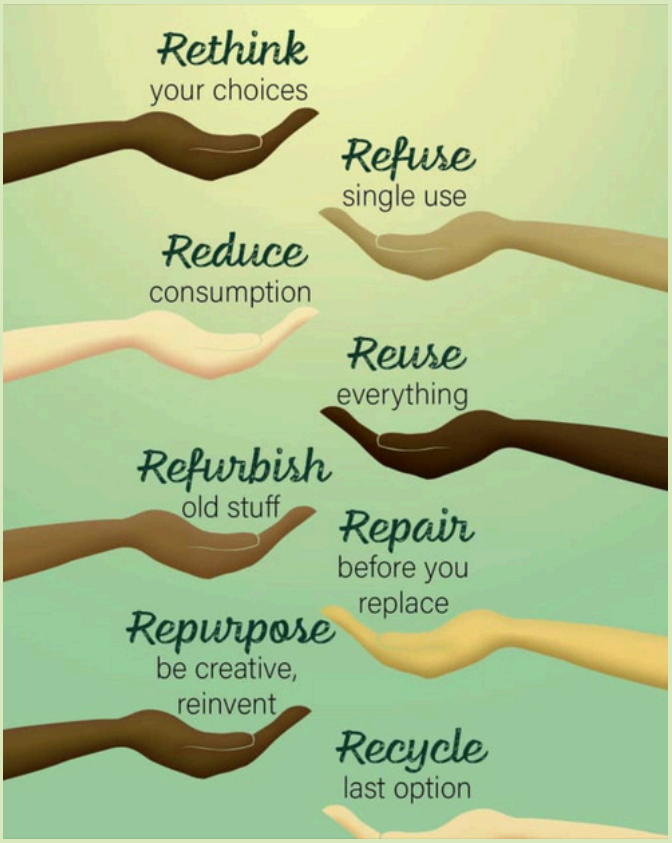
That's because our consumption is geared to a linear economy, where resources are extracted, processed, used, and then discarded, creating a one-way flow that depletes natural resources and generates pollution.

We need to replace this with a circular economy, a model of production and consumption in which we refuse (buy only what's needed), reduce what we use, re-use, repair, refurbish, and as a last resort, recycle what we've used, to extend the life cycle of these products.

Why is recycling a last resort? Modern recycling, started in the 1970s as a green-washing tactic to shift the onus for managing waste to the consumer, is an expensive, toxic process that handles only the most profitable plastics.

According to StatsCan, in 2021 Canada generated roughly 5,000,000 tonnes of plastic waste (about 130 kg per person). Packaging made up 40% of the total. (See https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2025033-eng.htm .)

Of the 99% of waste that is supposedly recycled, less than 10% is actually recycled. The rest is burned in incinerators, landfilled, ends up in the environment as litter, or is shipped abroad, which far too often results in our waste polluting other countries.



Less waste means a healthier environment

Implementing a circular economy will decrease the use of natural resources, reduce damage to our forests, fields, waterways, and mountains, lessen biodiversity loss, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

We can then use our valuable resources wisely, treating waste as a resource instead of a cost, and find innovative ways to better the environment and the economy.
Like Quebec, Ontario needs to pass Right-to-Repair legislation, thereby eliminating planned obsolescence, which forces consumers to replace shoddily made products with more of the same.

Let's get to work!
The City of Ottawa has begun to address this concern with its Solid Waste Management program. You'll note on this site: https://engage.ottawa.ca/solid-waste-master-plan , some programs you can help with, such as increasing participation by multi-residential properties in the City's Green Bin Program with the new Waste Reduction Champion Program; the Love Food Hate Waste Campaign to reduce food waste, Repair Cafés, the Ottawa Tool Library, and more.

In our daily lives, we can:
Refuse and Reduce: Say no to extra packaging and single-use plastics; restrict buying to what's on our shopping lists; buy in bulk; go digital; minimize food waste; share, lease and borrow where possible; conserve water and electricity;

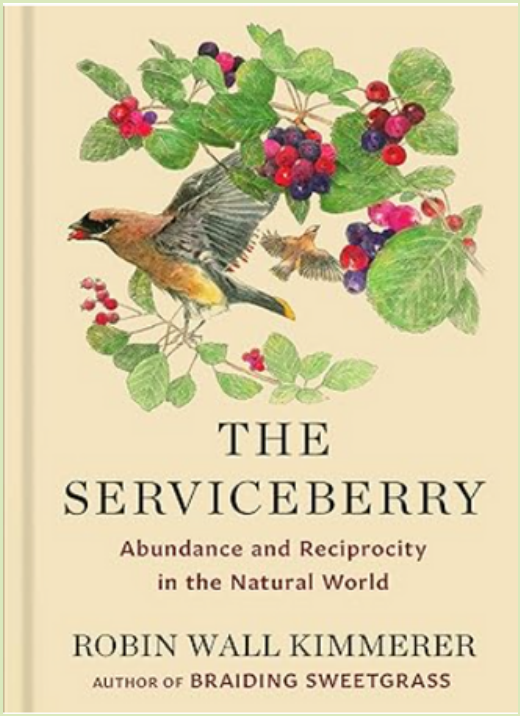
Reuse: Carry reusable water bottles, cups and bags; use washable cloths instead of paper towels; repurpose old jars; use Take-It-Back and container deposit programs.

Repair: Fix, instead of replacing, broken items and clothes; buy good-quality, durable goods that can be repaired.
Let's incorporate more of these habits into our daily lives, remembering that: "We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children".

“We are living on this planet as if we had another one to go to.”

–Terry Swearingen, 1997 Goldman
Environmental Prize winner





In her book, The Serviceberry, Robin Wall Kimmerer uses the Serviceberry tree as a model to challenge modern, consumption-driven economies. She presents a “gift economy” rooted in Indigenous wisdom, where reciprocity, shared abundance , and interconnectedness replace hoarding and scarcity. She contrasts the extractive nature of capitalism with the restorative, circular model of the natural world. “Like the tree that shares its fruit with the ecosystem, human societies can flourish by valuing a relationship-based exchange over commodification.”

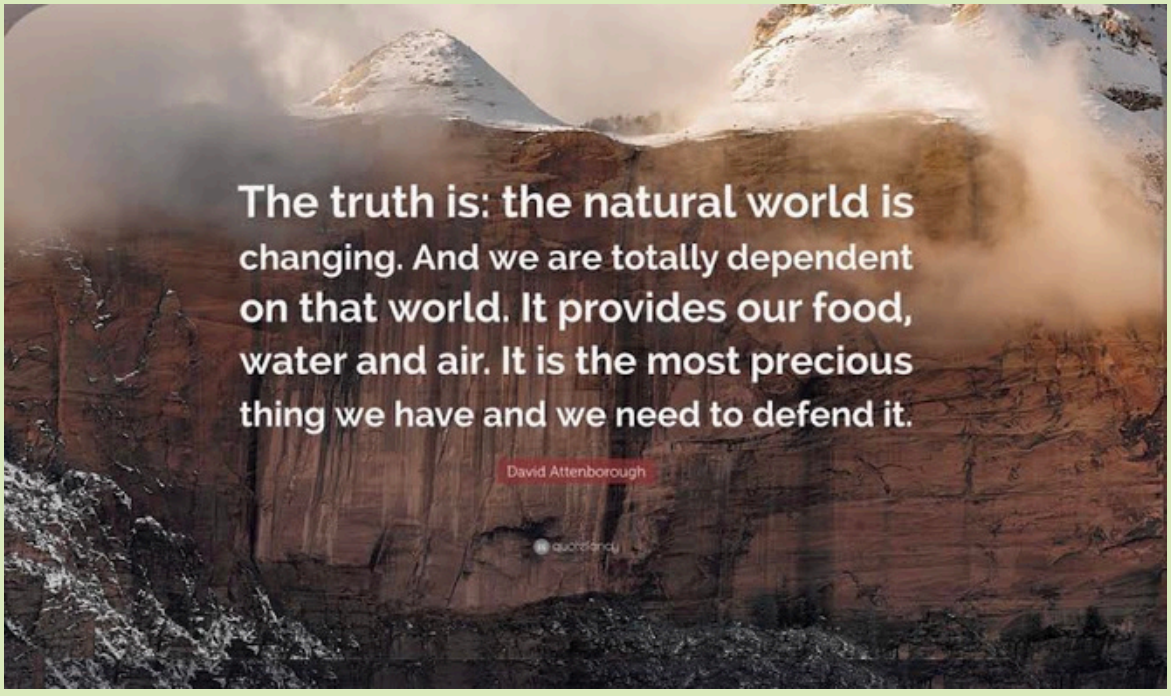
Net Zero by 2050 Presentation

Below is the link to the recording of architect Marina Huissoon of CFUW Milton & Districtwho gave her presentation on 'Net-Zero by 2050: Building for a Fossil-Fuel free Future'.

Thanks to Marina for her thorough and thoughtful preparation for this event, and the calm, professional manner in which she informed everyone on this very topical subject.

Net Zero by 2050

Passcode: Mk@Yg$8C



Important Dates

Water Wisdom: Lessons from Mzuzu and Ottawa, by Dr. Kwaku Kusi-Appiah, President & CEO, Environment Stewardship Solutions (ESS)
11 Feb. 2026, 12:45 p.m. (EST) • Royal Canadian Legion 70 Hines Road, Kanata

International Women's Day
08 Mar. 2026, 12:01 a.m. (EST)

CFUW Nepean Players Present: The Life and Times of Emily Murphy
11 Mar. 2026, 12:45 p.m. (EDT) • Royal Canadian Legion, 70 Hines Road, Kanata

CFUW Kanata Resolutions Meeting and Pot Luck Lunch
08 April 2026, 12:45 p.m. (EDT)

Metis Author, Tim Yearington
16 April, 2026, 10:30a.m. Beaverbrook Public Library
This event is hosted by our club

Annual General Meeting
13 May 2026, 12:45p.m. (EDT) • Royal Canadian Legion, 70 Hines Road, Kanata

Thank you for reading! If you have any articles or photos you would like to share in the next newsletter, please contact Cathy Smart. Special thanks to Theresa Peluso, Contributor and Copy Editor.

CFUW Kanata honours the peoples and land of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation. We honour all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and their valuable past and present contributions to this land, known as Turtle Island.