

January 2026



Message from the President. . .

Happy New Year to everyone.

I hope that 2026 will bring a year of love, laughter and good health to each and every one of you.

I had a lovely albeit low key Christmas this year. The good news is that I am pretty much back to normal after surgery. Thank you so much for all your thoughts and prayers. They meant a lot to me. The great news is that I became a Grandma again with little Oliver born on December 14th. Baby, Mom and Dad are all doing fine. Bob and I were fortunate enough to spend lots of time with Oliver over the Christmas/New Years period. We missed the rest of our immediate family who spent Christmas and New Years together in Czechia, Germany and Austria, with 3 family members skiing for their first times. We've had lots of FaceTime with them but the trip for me was just a little too soon.

Enough about me. I'm really looking forward to our speakers for this next section of the year, as well as our Trivia Night on February 2nd. Trivia night will be held in the evening on the porch area of The Mansion. Please ask friends and neighbours to come and help make this a great event!

In friendship,

Louise S.



Next General Meeting

**Thursday,
January 8th, 2026**

**“Memoir Writing: Why
Telling the Stories of
Your Life Matters”**



Speaker:

Beth Kaplan,
Author

Meeting Location:

Pickering Rec Centre
(Chestnut Hill Rec Complex, Rm 2)
1867 Valley Farm Rd,
Pickering

Meeting Time: 7 p.m.

*Business meeting begins at 7 pm.,
followed by member social time
(time permitting).
Speaker begins at 7:50*

**Invite a friend & introduce
them to the fun and
friendship of CFUW!**

BYOMug

Dates and Data

CFUW Websites:

Main website: <http://www.cfuw.org>

Ontario Council Website: www.cfuwontcouncil.org

CFUW Event Calendar: [CFUW National Event Calendar](#)

CFUW on Facebook

CFUW has a Facebook group! If you are a Facebook user you can join the group by searching for Canadian Federation of University Women, or visit

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2232370205>

Ajax-Pickering CFUW on Facebook:

Our club now has its own Facebook page. You do not have to have a Facebook account to view this page. Simply Google Ajax-Pickering CFUW Facebook page or click on the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/CFUWAjaxPickering?ref=stream>

Ajax-Pickering on X (formerly Twitter): Use @CFUWajax

The Ontario Council newsletter, **Dates and Data**, is available on-line on the Ontario Council website.

The Communicator newsletter is available on-line on the main website.

Ontario Council Standing Committee Meetings

Ontario Council Standing Committees in Legislation, Education, and Status of Women and Human Rights were developed to keep members aware of current issues in Ontario. The Committees meet three times a year - in October, November, and February - for a day with speakers, workshops and discussion. All Club members are invited to attend these meetings. There is no cost to attend.

Next Standing Committee Meeting Date: **Saturday, February 21st, 2026, on Zoom**

Topic: Critical Thinking and Artificial Intelligence. How Artificial Intelligence impacts Education.

Speakers: TBD

Click here for more info and to register: <https://cfuwontcouncil.org/standing-committees/>

CFUW Event Calendar

Looking for something to do? Don't forget to check the new **CFUW Event Calendar**! There are lots of interesting CFUW events and activities listed by date, including upcoming CFUW study groups and meetings, webinars hosted by other clubs, Zoom meetings with interesting speakers, and club fundraising events. It's a hub for all things CFUW and it makes it easy to keep track of what's happening every month.

You can access the calendar at this link: <https://members.cfuw.org/calendar>

Minutes of General Meeting, Thursday, November 13th, 2025

Welcome to all. Land Acknowledgement. We would like to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabe Mississauga adjacent to the Mississaugas of Scugog Island first nation and in the territory covered by the Williams Treaty.

Accepting of the minutes from October's meeting as written in the newsletter- First adopter- Dorothy, Seconder- Gail

Thank you for Louise Z with bouquet. Thank you, Louise, for your many years of making our meetings look merry and bright. Louise always has gone above and beyond to organize various social events and all the food. She has retired from the social chair position but due to the fact that she fulfilled this role for many years we wanted to recognize her retirement from the position. Thanks to Helen for getting the flowers and also to Catherine G. for organizing and taking on the role.

Speaker series Saturday, November 29th at 10 am on Zoom. Speakers are arranged by our Ontario council and are very good and thought provoking. The Title is The Role of Patriarchy - Historical Perspectives and current issues. Please register via the QR code in the OC newsletter you received today.

Is anyone planning to attend the play? Donna and Claudette to arrange this outing.

Report of Officers

Membership - new members tea at Catherine G's home. Big thank you to Catherine for hosting this event. We had 4 new members - Allison, Lana, Joanne and Susan. Sorry to have missed Linda, Erin and Alpana.

Treasurer - Jane - Balance: \$9614.48. Book Club Sale: \$91.00 for scholarship. Thank you to Heather who had this idea. Vandermeers fundraiser: \$875.09 for scholarship. 33 members - 1 dual member.

Scholarship - Helen - No news but coupons and vouchers from Vandermeers to be handed out.

Advocacy - Their meeting is the first Wednesday of every month. Hoping to have a Christmas project directed towards the Pickering Youth. Gail gave a report on Girls Inc. which was started in 1984 as part of the Big Sisters movement, offering one-on-one mentoring to girls in need. Their mission is to inspire all girls to be strong, smart and bold through mentorship and empowerment programs. They serve girls ages 6-18 across Durham region including Ajax, Pickering, Whitby and Oshawa, helping them build confidence, resilience and leadership skills. In 2019, they won the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade award for best non-profit. They also won the Whitby Chamber of Commerce Non-for-Profit of the Year.

Fundraising - Kim - Vandermeers is finished. Next is Trivia night on Monday, February 2nd at The Mansion at Kingston Rd. and Liverpool. Please ask family and friends to attend. Please also save your yard sale items for May.

Communications – Sandy away.

Publicity and Social Media – Janet - Still posting meeting and speakers in a variety of places.

Social – Catherine - Thanks to those who brought snacks - Claudette and Shelley - a wonderful array of food.

Cindy A to host Christmas party.

Interest groups

Book club - Caroline will host The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue by V.E. Schwab.

Walk and Talk - Jane C. - weekly at 1 pm on Wednesdays.

Cards - 7:00 on Mondays - Cathy M.

Lunch Group - third Thursday of every month - Catherine G. - outing to Distillery District.

Travel group - Kim will be coming up with a new trip soon.

Craft Club - we will hopefully be painting in January with acrylic paints. Making signs for yard sale.

Golf - over for the year.

Speaker was introduced by Janet. Leah Wall, Manager of Youth Housing Solutions, Durham Youth Services.

Leah Wall, BA (Hons) is the Manager of Youth Housing Solutions at Durham Youth Services, where she leads

(minutes, cont'd on page 4)

(minutes, cont'd from page 3)

program development that helps youth achieve stable and sustainable housing. Drawing on both lived experience and professional expertise in crisis response, program development, and team leadership, Leah is passionate about creating opportunities for youth to thrive. She is committed to driving sustainable change through social innovation and building systems that support communities and the young people within them. Durham Youth Services (DYS) is a registered charity and non-profit organization committed to supporting vulnerable youth in Durham Region. Their programs focus on homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing, and housing stability. Over the past year, demand has surged: youth seeking shelter increased by 88% from 2022-2023, and another 144% in the first half of 2024. Research shows that 3 in 5 homeless youth are "hidden homeless," living in unsafe conditions, and are at higher risk of exploitation and abuse. Leah will share details about the work DHS is doing in Ajax, Whitby and across Durham, and about their Holiday Giving program and upcoming participation in the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) walk on Saturday, February 28, 2026. Funds raised in the Pickering Coldest Night of the Year Walk will support sustaining and growing their in-school housing support program. Leah's organization has 3-pronged approach. 1) Prevention of homelessness by supporting families 2) Shelter diversion - keeping new kids out of the shelter system 3) Stabilization. Human trafficking is a huge issue in Durham. 88% increase last year for young people in crisis. This year 100% increase. We're only as strong as how we treat our most vulnerable. Leah herself was homeless very early in her teens. She was homeless 3 times between the ages of 13-16. She only had 4 credits when she dropped out of high school in grade 10. Managed to graduate in her 20s and went on to achieve a 2-year college diploma. Then Leah bridged to university and earned a degree in criminology with a post grad in victimology. Leah has done lots of work on the streets in encampments and also with harm reduction with Durham Youth Services. Well done, Leah, for all your successes and your very important work. Thanked by Kim M with honorarium.

This Month's Speaker

Beth Kaplan: Memoir Writing - Why Telling the Stories of Your Life Matters



Beth Kaplan began her professional acting career in 1970 and worked for a decade as an actor and in 1980 received her MFA in creative writing. She is the author of a biography and two memoirs, *All My Loving*, and *Loose Woman*, and a finalist for the Whistler Independent Book Award. Beth's guide to creative writing, *True to Life*, is the textbook used for the courses she has taught for thirty years at two Toronto universities. Beth's new memoir-in-essays, *Midlife Solo: writing through chaos to find my way in the world*, was reviewed as "an extraordinary life, written with tremendous heart, insight, and humour." Having published many of her own personal memoirs, Beth will speak about her own experiences and her passion to encourage and teach others to do so as well.

Note: The meeting will be held as usual at the Pickering Rec Centre where we will enjoy the speaker's topic and socialize with fellow club members, however the speaker will be speaking to us over Zoom at the meeting. There is a possibility for members to join via Zoom as well, if unable to attend in person, however members are encouraged to attend the meeting as usual for social opportunities, and of course – delicious snacks!

Friendship Cards (New)

Support of fellow club members is a big part of our club. If you have news about a member (serious illness or injury/death of a club member, or death of a spouse or child), please contact Catherine G. Catherine will advise all members and send a card on behalf of the club.

What's Happening at CFUW Ajax-Pickering

Trivia Night Fundraiser!!

Our next fundraiser event is a trivia night. This event is open to members and their friends and family. Tickets are \$20.00 each and will be available for purchase at the January meeting. *Break up the winter and join us for an evening of warmth, fun and prizes!*



When: Monday, February 2nd

Where: Mansion Kitchen & Bar, 1294 Kingston Road in Pickering (at Liverpool). We will have the L-shaped porch area on the main floor, and it can hold up to 60 people.

Time: 7 pm

Teams can be up to 6 people. Maximum of 60 people. There will be door prizes and a prize for members of the winning team. Kim will have flyers and tickets ready for the January meeting.

Questions? Please contact Kim G.

Travel Club News

The Travel Club is going to be visiting France on a river cruise in November 2027. This is a wonderful itinerary starting in Paris and venturing to quaint locations along the Seine with a stop to see the beaches in Normandy. A special price has been negotiated for our group and is guaranteed until January 31st. Share this with your friends and join us on this incredible adventure. Contact Kim G for the details and to place your deposit.

IT'S TIME TO Travel

Paris & Normandy

The Seine leads you to Normandy's storybook harbors, Impressionist landmarks, and unforgettable historic sites.

France

CFUW AJAX PICKERING INVITES YOU TO JOIN THEM ON A RIVER CRUISE

AmaWaterways
November 4, 2027
7 Night Cruise – Paris Roundtrip
Paris & Normandy

Inclusions

- ✓ Spacious Staterooms
- ✓ Award-winning dining
- ✓ Excursions in each port
- ✓ Pre-paid gratuities & Wi-Fi

For more details [click here](https://bit.ly/3L95ZmT) or go to <https://bit.ly/3L95ZmT>

Contact Kim Gervais 416-697-6193 info@goexploretheworldtravel.com



"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the things you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

— Unknown

News from Other Clubs

Oshawa CFUW invites us to their January general meeting on **Wednesday, January 14th**. The topic is **Understanding Dementia**. All guests are welcome.

Jone Webster, Publicity



January General Meeting

UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA

with Carol O'Neil, Durham's Alzheimer Society

What is dementia and Alzheimer's disease?
The warning signs and progression of dementia
Communicating with people living with dementia
Living well with dementia

**JANUARY IS
ALZHEIMER'S
AWARENESS
MONTH**



Wednesday, January 14, 2026 - 7:00 PM
All Guests Welcome - Free Admission
St Mark's United Church 201 Centre St S, Whitby

cfuw.oshawa@gmail.com
<http://cfuw-oshawa-and-district.weebly.com>



Did you know. . .?

The Oshawa Club puts out an interesting and informative newsletter every month. To access their newsletters, click here: <https://cfuw-oshawa-and-district.weebly.com/newsletters.html>

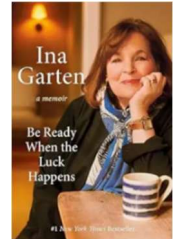
Interest Groups

Get involved—get connected!! Join an interest group!

Interest groups are a great way to get to know other club members, especially if you are new to the club. Joining one or several of these groups gives you the opportunity to spend time with members with similar interests. Feel free to join as many as you like (or start up a new one!) You are only limited by the amount of free time you have available!

Book Club

Book Club is open to all, and all are welcome! We meet on the 4th Thursday of every month. The January Book Club meeting will be held on **Thursday, January 22nd**, hosted by Donna. The book is ***Be Ready When the Luck Happens***, by Ina Garten. Please contact Donna to confirm attendance and meeting location.



Online Cards

We have a small active group of avid card players and anyone is welcome to join us. Games are played **online every Monday night at 7 pm**. Contact Cathy M. for more information.



CFUW Ajax-Pickering Walk and Talk

Our goal is to enjoy some fitness at local walking trails while connecting with other club members. Walk and Talk will continue throughout the year. We meet **every Wednesday**. The time may be adjusted depending on weather. Details will be confirmed via email the week of the walk.



Golf

Golf is finished for the year. This group will start up again in the spring as soon as the golf courses open. For more information, contact Cathy M.



Advocacy Group

We meet on the **first Wednesday of each month, at 7 pm**, usually by Zoom. New members are welcome!



Craft Club

Craft Club meets on the **second Tuesday of every month**. The January Craft Club will meet on **Tuesday, January 13th at 10 am** at Louise's house. We will be making signs for our fundraisers.



Ladies Lunch Group

We meet the **3rd Thursday of each month**. This month's outing will be on **Thursday, January 15th**. Watch for an email with more details on this month's activity.

Garden Club

For anyone interested in starting up this group, Vandermeers is running free seminars on Saturday mornings on a variety of garden topics. The first seminar in January is on **Saturday, January 10th at 11 am**. The topic is **"A Beginner's Guide to Houseplants"**. We could meet as a group and then wander the nursery enjoying the plants in the middle of this cold winter and maybe even enjoy a coffee from the coffee truck in the nursery area. There is no need to register, however it does get busy so it's good to arrive a little early in order to get a seat. Please contact Sandy if you're interested in attending. We would meet at the nursery for this event.

Newsletter Deadline

Information for the February newsletter should be submitted by **Friday, January 30th, 2026.** Submissions can be mailed, dropped off, or sent via e-mail (sbriell@bell.net). Contact Sandy at 905 428-0003 for further information.

Note from the Editor

The Grapevine is available in both electronic (Adobe PDF) and hardcopy formats, with electronic being the preferred, more cost-efficient format. **If you have recently changed your e-mail address or other contact information**, please let me know so I can update the club membership list and get the newsletter to the right place!

CLUB WEBSITE

<http://www.ajaxcfuw.ca/>

Suggestions for new content or design ideas for our website are always welcome! Please contact Sandy for more information.

Newsletters will be posted on the website so you will be able to access them online if needed.

Facebook/X (formerly Twitter)

We now send out meeting information via these social media platforms to encourage new members. Visit our new **Facebook page** (see page 2 for more info) or connect with us on **X** (@CFUWajax).

January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 Cards	6	7 Advocacy Mtg/ Walk & Talk	8 Club Meeting	9	10 Vandermeers Garden Seminar
11	12 Cards	13 Craft Group	14 Walk & Talk	15 Ladies Lunch Group	16	17
18	19 Cards	20	21 Walk & Talk	22 Book Club	23	24
25	26 Cards	27	28 Walk & Talk	29	30 Newsletter Deadline	31