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Leadership Team

Happy September CFUW Brantford. I hope you are all ready for another exciting year of speakers, activities, friendship and laughter. Also, a little birdy told me the Advocacy Committee has some initiatives for us to become involved in. I cannot wait. Fall is my favourite time of year. I love the sounds of fall, the colours of fall and the cool mornings and evenings of fall. As someone who always enjoyed school, I feel a sense of anticipation and wonder in the fall even though it has been a long time since I actually went to school. I suppose the start of our CFUW year, after our summer hiatus, shall take the place of the first day of school (unfortunately without new outfits, new shoes and all those lovely school supplies). So welcome to you all to our 2025/2026 CFUW year.

Elizabeth Capitano for Barbara Melara, President in Name

Presidents' Report for Summer 2025

From Diane Bradley:

It seems odd that as a new member of the group I am sitting here writing a report for the newsletter as a member of the executive team. I guess I am just one of those people who jump right in when called to "duty." Following that theme, Pat McGinnis and I have joined up twice in 2025, teaming up on the Nominations Committee and as Presidents of the Month for June, July and August. Pat likes to jump in as well!

It was a thoroughly uneventful summer for me. Pat and I made a few forays into the world of "thrift" and "consignment" stores in our area, reaching out as far as Waterford. We discovered we a shared guilty pleasure at our Executive Meeting in June and executed upon it.

As I was thinking about what to write in this message, I happened to meet up with a few of the CFUW ladies at a local coffee shop and it became so clear to me what I would want to

reflect upon – new and interesting friendships that I have gained as a member of CFUW Brantford. My brief time in the CFUW organization has graced me with a large number of new friends. In a world where we are constantly stressed by the news, world affairs and looming fears of what aging will look like for us, it is so wonderful to have friends to surround you. This friendship is the true core of the group and I am grateful.

From Pat McGinnis:

May saw our AGM held (again) at the Walter Gretzky Golf Club and Learning Centre. This event was well attended, and the room and meal were lovely. Thank you to the Social Committee and all those involved in the planning and execution of this wonderful, annual event, this year celebrating your 80th Anniversary! Hard to tell which part was most exciting! Teddy Buzek did an exceptional job with her lovely flowers and the historical materials displayed. The overview of CFUW Brantford's past 80 years was also greatly appreciated. Carol Kent's speech was just so good! You will find a copy in the June 2025 Newsletter.

The evening was capped off by Elizabeth Renzetti. I heard many comments about how good she was.

P.S. Becca McGinnis tells me she would like to join the club as our official Therapy Dog.





SPRING 2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The scholarship committee had just over a dozen applications this year. All the young ladies were very accomplished with exceptional marks, extensive school and community leadership, and solid commitment to further education in their chosen field of study. The committee decided to give five Award A scholarships. Each recipient received \$1,000. **Sherin Dedo** from PDHS is enrolled at Brock University in Concurrent Education for a BA in Child and Youth Studies. **Ashleigh Durand** from Assumption College is in the nursing program at McMaster University. **Hanna Gyorki** graduated from BCI and is attending Waterloo University. She is studying in the architectural engineering program. **Abby Sawkins**, also from BCI, is enrolled at the University of Guelph. Abby is studying in Bio Resource Management in Co-op Major Environmental Management. **Julia Wegrzyn** graduated from Assumption College. Julia is attending Queens University in the Health Sciences program and her goal is to become a doctor. The CFUW Scholarship Committee, as well as the entire club, wish these remarkable young ladies all the best as they continue their education in their chosen fields of study.



I would like to thank the members who donated above the \$15 mandatory amount to our Scholarship fund. I would like to encourage anyone who would like to increase their donation to \$20.00 or more and have it included in their 2025 tax receipt to e-transfer their donation to cfuwbrantfordsch@gmail.com or bring a cheque to an upcoming general meeting. Cheques should be payable to CFUW Brantford Scholarship.

Maria T.

Scholarship Thanks

Thank you to the committee members who helped with the Award A scholarships – application updates, school contacts, applicant evaluation, pictures, and personal distribution of cheques and certificates. A special thank you to Janet R. who produced the logo certificates complete with unique folders.

Karen I.

The Program Committee is pleased to announce a great line-up of speakers and topics for CFUW Brantford's General Meetings, 2025/26

September - Erin Byron: Tools for Reducing Stress and Enhancing Well-Being

October - Paulette Breau: Life as a Member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Force

November – Kari Astles: The Role of Volunteers in the Brant Community Health System

January – Theresa McClenaghan: The Future of Environmental Protection in Canada

February – Jill Berridge: Issues and Challenges Facing Family Doctors Today

March – Laurie Macintyre: 32 Bridge Street: A Housing Project for Women and Children Escaping Violence and Homelessness

April – Brian Wood: Curator of the Bell Homestead: The History of Telephones and the Bell Homestead

Colette W.



Advocacy Committee 2025 –26

The five members on the 2025 –26 Advocacy Committee are Betsy C., Carol K., Brenda M., Pat M., and Teddy B. We met during the summer to map out both short and long term plans as we attempt to advocate for the status of women for human rights and for the common good locally, nationally and internationally. We are motivated and look forward to sharing our direction/projects with CFUW Brantford members.

Stay Tuned!!
The Advocacy Committee



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR ALLOCATION OF OUR INTERNATIONAL DUES FOR 2025 - 26 PLEASE RESPOND! DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 20, 2025

Did you know that \$21.52 of your annual \$121.00 dues is allocated for international endeavors? Each year, we choose where to allocate this money as follows:

1. ALL members are invited to nominate a not-for-profit international organization/charity outside of CFUW that they are actively engaged with that supports the rights, freedoms and education of women and girls, particularly in third world, war-torn or otherwise compromised countries.
2. ALL submissions - **MUST be E-mailed to Teddy B., Advocacy Chair** at teddybuzek@gmail.com
- **No later than Monday, October 20, 2025**
- **Include**
 - Your name
 - Organization you are nominating
 - Details as to how this not-for-profit charity empowers women and girls internationally in countries that are either third world, war-torn or suffering from natural disasters
 - What your involvement is in said charity
3. The submissions will be summarized and published in the November newsletter and sent out to the membership by e-mail prior to the November 26, 2025 General Meeting.
4. A motion will be made at the November 26th General Meeting as follows:

“The not-for-profit international organizations nominated by the membership be approved to receive the portion of our 2025 –26 membership dues allocated for international endeavors.”

This is your money and your opportunity to share with the membership why you support your charity of choice and why you see it as a viable choice for our support!

We look forward to your emails,
The Advocacy Committee

Interest Groups

Interest Groups – September 2025

By the time you receive this newsletter, most Interest Groups will have already had their first meeting or will very shortly. During the spring and summer, the Biking Group met on a regular basis and will continue until late fall, as long as the weather holds out. The Games and Walking Groups continue all year round with the Games Group moving indoors as weather cools. Mahjongg continued all summer with a few new members joining to learn the game. As Mahjongg is still a relatively new group with most members still “learning”, it is now capped so if you wish to join, you will be placed on a wait list. Memoir Writing, a new group started this past spring meets regularly as decided by the group.

Interest Groups are an excellent way to meet and socialize with members in smaller groups - have fun, interesting conversations and basically get to know one another. If you are not part of an Interest Group, I encourage you to look at the listing to see what might twig your interest. Please contact me for further information or to sign up for a group and do let me know if you join a group in order that I keep the records up to date.

Roma M. (Interest Group co-ordinator)

Thursday Book Group: The *Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters
Amanda Peters is a Canadian writer of Mi'kmaq and settler ancestry. She is an Associate Professor of English and theatre at Acadia University. This book is her first novel. It follows the lives and family of two people – Joe and Norma

A four year old girl, Ruthie, goes missing in July 1962 from a blueberry field in Maine where her family are harvesting blueberries. She is last seen sitting on a rock by the road by her 6 year old brother Joe. Her loss is devastating to Joe and it ripples through his life for the years to come. The tragic mystery goes unsolved for nearly 50 years.

In Maine, a girl named Norma grows up as an only child in an affluent family. Her father is emotionally distant while her mother is overprotective and very controlling. As she grows older, Norma senses that there is something that her parents are not telling her. She pursues the family's secrets for decades. The book is a story about loss, grief, anger, racism and the search for truth. Recommended by the members of the book club. Rhynda B.

Daytrippers Group: The Daytrippers Group explores events and activities (creative, gastronomic and historical etc.) during the day or in the evening in Brantford or further afield. Our first scheduled event is at The School of Flowers in Cambridge on Sunday Nov. 9 where we will enjoy lunch and create a beautiful arrangement. New members are always welcome.
Colleen P.



Dining Out Group: The Dining Out Group kicked off its 2025-26 season with a visit to Langdon Hall, a 5-Diamond, Michelin-recommended restaurant, named 15th best in 2025 and Best Destination Restaurant in 2024. The grand old Ontario estate is nestled in a Carolinian forest. We dined in the main dining room overlooking the gardens, and enjoyed every morsel of the award-winning cuisine, exquisitely prepared by one of Canada's most celebrated chefs.

In October, our group will venture to Aylmer to enjoy the Pincroft Inn,



nestled in a forest, and known for its farm-to-table cuisine and on site pottery store. Lin F.

Walking Group: We had spectacular weather for walking today: no humidity, no mosquitoes, nice shade and great conversations. Plus we made a new friend. Here they are, hitch-hiking on Wendy B's hat!



Biking Group: Despite the hot summer, the Biking Group have been out riding since May. Brantford has wonderful tree lined trails, providing a canopy from the sun. The group is riding on Friday mornings and expecting good weather well into the fall. Mount Pleasant and Waterford remain favourite destinations for coffee and treats either during or after the ride.



Memoir Writing Group: A committed and enthusiastic group of writers have met and developed a friendly network of mutual support throughout the summer. With Lucie H.'s support and encouragement there will be some interesting and satisfying results. More information to come in October's newsletter.

Monday Book Group: Our first meeting will be at Lynne's home on Monday September 15th at 7pm. We will be discussing *By Any Other Name* by Jodi Picoult. A reminder to everyone that we will continue with our new meeting format and will not have a discussion leader. Instead, we will be asking a member to provide a brief introduction to the book and author each month and discussion will flow from there. Karen S.

2025–2026 EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT IN NAME:

- Barbara Melara

PAST PRESIDENT:

- Janet Kempster

ROTATING PRESIDENTIAL TEAM:

- Diane Bradley/Pat McGinnis—June to August
- Lucie Costin-Hall— September
- Betsy Capitano—October
- Wendy Bethune—November
- Maria Timmons—December, January
- Catherine Sawyer- February
- Linda Tripp—March
- Dian Kuzyk—April
- Barbara Melara—May

SECRETARY:

Arlene Cass

TREASURER: Maria Timmons

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

- Communications:** Sandra Hughes
- Interest Groups:** Roma Makkreel
- Membership:** Marsha Skrypuch
- Program:** Colette Wilson
- Scholarship:** Karen Innes
- Social:** Lynne Duncombe
- Advocacy:** Teddy Buzek

September General Meeting

Our First Speaker of the New Season: Erin Byron



Some members of CFUW Brantford may know Erin Byron from her years of operating Welkin Wellness Yoga Studio in Brantford, or from her books related to yoga therapy. Erin is a registered psycho-therapist who, over twenty years, has helped many clinicians, business professionals and others enhance their personal health and wellness, and improve their corporate cultures. Erin will explore the building blocks of wellness and, through a variety of activities and science-backed data, will give us some tools to feel less stressed, be more present in our lives, and enjoy a greater sense of well-being. Erin's three books: Yoga for the Creative Soul (\$20), Safety in the Body (\$20), and Yoga Therapy for Arthritis (\$30), will be available for purchase at our general meeting on September 24. **Please arrive early if you are planning to purchase a book as books will be available during the social period from 6:30 to 7:00.**

Colette W. for the CFUW Brantford Program Committee

Social Committee:

After what seems like an impossibly short summer, the Social Committee members are gearing up for the 2025-2026 CFUW in-person meetings.

Socializing with members of our club is an important part of CFUW and we endeavour to make that part of the meeting as enjoyable as possible.

We are fortunate to have so many members who gladly offer to bring tasty treats to enjoy with a cup of tea at our in person meetings in September, October, November, March and April. Thank you for your delicious contributions.

The two main functions that the Social Committee organizes are the Holiday Get Together and the AGM Banquet. Both of these occasions were well attended in December 2024 and May 2025. These events are successful because of the enthusiasm of our members who attend and offer to help whenever. We look forward to welcoming you back on **September 24th at McCleister Funeral Home at 6:30 pm.**

Please remember to bring your name tag, a donation to the Food Bank and if you would like to bring your own cup for tea or water it would be much appreciated.

Social Committee Members for 2025-2026:
Jeanne C. Marla M. Lynne D.



So Sorry for Your Loss

We have sad news about Tish's husband Hank to share. After a long decline in health Hank passed away at the John Noble Long Term Care Home on July 25th. We wish Tish all the best !

Reminder to Members

If you have an article, an interest group report or information about a member that you would like in next month's newsletter, please email it to Sandra H. by the **first Friday of the month, October 3rd!** If you have an attachment to send for the newsletter, website or Facebook page please send it as a jpg file if it's a picture or as a Word file or as text in the body of an email if it is in text. Thanks, Your Communications Team

