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Happy 2026



President of the Month

Welcome ladies to 2026. We have a lot of exciting things to look forward to this year. The program committee has many excellent speakers lined up for us. Trivia night is coming shortly and will be in March this year so we can take advantage of likely better weather so get your team together for this fun night.

A new event that is currently in the planning phase is our High Tea. There will be more about this event in next month's Newsletter but we are hoping to use this event to create significant awareness of our club and the fundraising efforts we have for scholarships for women in our community.

The membership continues to thrive with us getting new members every year so when you see new faces at the monthly meetings or at various interest groups please give them a warm welcome. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the monthly meetings being on Zoom for January and February and join us from the comfort of your home. In person meetings at McCleister will resume for March.

President of the Month for December and January
Maria Timmons



2026 TRIVIA NIGHT

Dear Trivia Lovers,

It's almost that time of year again and we are inviting you to participate in our upcoming Trivia Night!! As the major fundraiser for CFUW Brantford's Scholarship Program, so it would be great if everyone could get involved! **If you could sign up early, we would really appreciate it! The forms are on our website.**

Please note that the date has been changed from the second Wednesday in February to the second Wednesday in March. Hopefully, the weather cooperates this year..

If you have any items/gift certificates that can be used for Door Prizes, please drop them off at Lynn Haylock's (17 Chestnut Ave). We are not asking you to purchase anything but you might have some new items that you do not need.

Also, unless someone volunteers to take on the Book Sale, it will not be happening. We can certainly let you know what is involved.

Thanks and happy studying!

The Trivia Night Committee

TRIVIA Night

Wednesday, March 11, 2026
7:30 pm (please arrive by 7:15)

DUNSDON LEGION

9 Toll Gate Road, Brantford

\$100/team of four (pay in advance)
30 teams maximum so register EARLY!! No Walk-ins!
Invite friends, relatives, co-workers!!

FOOD!! PRIZES!! FUN!!

Proceeds to CFUW Brantford Scholarship Fund



CFUW Brantford offers members lots of opportunities to get involved and contribute to the growth and functioning of our club and its initiatives.

Why not invite a friend to come to one of our general meetings to hear an interesting speaker and meet new friends?

Why not volunteer to join an ad hoc committee to look at the resolutions proposed by CFUW National and make recommendations to the executive and general membership as to which resolutions we should support at the National AGM when the call is made at the general meeting?

Why not offer to lend your technical expertise to our communications efforts?

Why not contribute door prizes, books, or DVDs to the Trivia Night Committee to help raise funds for our Scholarship Awards?

Why not offer to help the Social Committee with their plans for the AGM and Banquet?

Why not contribute a short article or photos of the activities of one of your Interest Groups or information about a member who should be mentioned regarding a life event, an illness or an achievement in our newsletter, website, and/or Facebook page?

Why not offer to join the Nominations Committee for 2026-2027?



NOMINATIONS FOR OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR 2026-27

Don't be shy! You can make a contribution to our club by volunteering for next year's leadership team. Minimal time and experience required.

BUT FIRST - we need a Nominations Committee to develop a roster of candidates. Please contact Diane Bradley or Pat McGinnis or another member of the executive if you are able to dedicate a few hours of your time to the Nominations process in the next two months.

CFUW Brantford Interest Group Activities to the end of 2025

Interest Groups continue to be an important part of belonging to CFUW with many members belonging to more than one group. It is a wonderful way to socialize and get to know other members of the club. Groups tend to meet in person, though during inclement weather and winter months, many groups meet via Zoom. Members are welcome to join a group at any time, unless the group is already full, in which case, one would be put on a wait list.

Biking Group met weekly from May until October, meeting for a ride around the Grand River Loop or on various trails in and around Brantford including nearby communities. Rides are approximately 20 km, at a senior pace, with flexible dates and times.

Book Groups There are three book groups, all of which are popular. If someone is interested in being the organizer/contact for another book group, either a daytime or evening one, please let me know.

Monday Afternoon Book Group met on the 2nd Monday, in-person over a late lunch at Symposium Café. This group discussed a variety of books that they have read in the past month.

Monday (3rd Monday) and Thursday (1st Thursday) Evening Book Groups met at 7 p.m. with members taking turns either hosting in their homes or leading the discussion. Books are chosen by each group at the end of the previous year to allow everyone plenty of time to obtain and read the current month's selection. Books vary by genre and always spark interesting and dynamic discussions often veering off the actual book topic. A great time is had by all.

Bridge Group starts at 1 p.m., on the 1st Monday, unless it is a holiday. This year, members chose a combination of either playing in the homes of members who volunteer to host or online using Trickster bridge. With consultation, the "best fit" is decided upon. If there is no volunteer to host, then the games are played online.

Creative Cooking Group met on the 3rd Wednesday at 6 p.m. with each member taking a turn being the hostess of the month. The hostess plans the menu, over which she has complete creative control, which can range from a menu of appetizers to a full sit-down dinner, and anything in between. Each participant picks one item from the menu to make and bring to dinner. The evenings are chock full of wonderful food and engaging, enjoyable conversation.

Daytrippers On a snowy November day, the Daytrippers ventured to The School of Flowers in Cambridge where they were engaged in creative pursuits. While making wreaths of lavender and eucalyptus and Victorian nosegays they enjoyed charcuterie and sparkling wine. A December adventure was at the festively decorated Bell Homestead where members enjoyed a very interesting, informative tour, afternoon tea and instruction on making a Victorian tree ornament. A visit to the newly reopened Woodland Cultural Centre is in the works for January.

Dining Out Group enjoyed jaunts out of town to Langdon Hall, Pinecroft, and The French this fall. The group's holiday event was high tea at The Golden Teapot, complete with a surprise preview of the Christmas lights at Glenhyrst. During the winter month they will dine locally and hope the roads are ice free. One of the highlights will be to dine at the new location of Juniper in Paris. When the road conditions improve, they will venture farther afield. Dates and times of day for outings vary to ensure all the members can join in at least some of the time. On average 12 – 16 members take part, enjoying delicious food and conversation.

Food with Thought Group met on the 2nd Thursday from September through November, with December being cancelled due to Christmas-busy schedules. The members took turns hosting and sharing delicious potluck dinners and conversation, both serious and entertaining. While US politics sneaks in now and then, they have moved on to other topics and ideas that provided much fodder for conversation. A topic is not stated prior to the meal as current events, individual commentary, or some humorous event "pepper" the evening and results in serious reflection or hilarious story telling.

Games Group met twice monthly – 2nd Thursday and 4th Monday. They are currently meeting at members' homes but are looking for a new location that would/could accommodate them at little or no charge. They play some old favorite games and have been introduced to some new ones.

Golf Group did not meet this season as there was no one to act as contact and organizer. If this group is to continue to be offered, it is necessary to have someone volunteer to be the contact and organizer. Please let me know if you are willing to undertake that role.

Mahjong met monthly on the 1st & 3rd Friday with the group expanding to 15 members over the summer months. In their second year, players are gaining a lot more confidence and all members are experiencing wins. The wins are a bonus. A little Mahjong and some laughs with friends make for an enjoyable afternoon.

Memoir Writing met monthly on the 2nd and 4th Friday from 1-3 p.m. and often longer until 4 pm. As part of the process of this group, they often discussed deeply personal issues, done in an atmosphere of trust. As such, it is critical that prospective members realize this is not a casual drop-in type of group. New members are, of course welcomed, but need to attend and commit to the process in advance.

Walking Group met Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. weekly all year round, at a variety of trails, come rain or shine, with the Gretzky indoor track a backup as needed. Members often met after the walk for coffee.

World Awareness Group met on the 3rd Monday at 9:30 a.m. The group suggests topics to discuss. Since September, they have had discussions on the definition of consent and artificial intelligence. The discussions often go off on a totally different tangent but are always interesting. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn with and from your peers. The group expresses thanks to McCleister Funeral Home for supporting community groups and allowing them to meet in their facilities without charge.

Respectfully submitted by Roma Makkreel, Interest Groups Chair



Christmas at the Bell Homestead



The Daytrippers interest group enjoyed an afternoon at The Bell Homestead on Dec. 17, taking an informative tour, enjoying afternoon tea and making a Victorian Christmas tree ornament.

Colleen P.

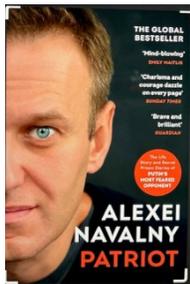


Thank you to Brian Wood and his team for an engaging experience!



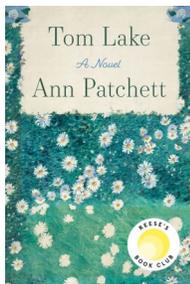
Interest Groups

Monday Evening Book Club: The book *Patriot: a Memoir* by Alexei Navalny was a powerful read. For those who have read Bill Browder's books *Freezing Order* and *Red Notice* this book tells the story of what happens to Russian citizens who criticize or expose the corruption of Russian oligarchs and political figures. The book is a combination of Navalny's writing for the book, his journals and Instagram posts written in prison. It was shocking to see what a dictator like Putin could do to the leader of the political opposition who chose to run for the office of president.



Thursday Book Group:

How did you spend your time during the pandemic? Was it a lonely time or were you able to spend much-needed time with your family? In the book **Tom Lake**, Ann Patchett crafts the story of one family as they survived the pandemic together on a cherry farm in northern Michigan. The family of three daughters hang on to their mother's every word as she recounts her time in the play *Our Town* with a famous actor Peter Duke at a summer theatre at Tom Lake. The book offers a poignant look at regret, contentment, and how the past shapes the present. These themes were explored by the Thursday evening book club at their January meeting as they discussed the book **Tom Lake**.



People's feelings about the book were mixed, some liking its quiet, nostalgic exploration of love, memory and family, causing them to reflect on their own lives. Others found it somewhat bland or boring with no dramatic plot. Ann Patchett is an award-winning author and has written eight other novels, as well as non-fiction and articles in publications.

Walking Group: A few of the group welcomed in the New Year



with delicious hot chocolate from William's. Norah O.

Brantford Film Group: The films for the winter have several dates that don't conflict with our Wednesday executive and general meetings. Dian K. The dates are as follows:

- Jan. 21—Blue Moon
- Feb.4—Sentimental Value
- Feb.18— The Colours of Time
- March 4—H is for Hawk
- April 8—Choral

For more information contact the group at: btfdfilmgroup@gmail.com or www.brantfordfilmgroup.com

Dining Out: The Dining Out Group ventured through the snow to Juniper's new location overlooking the Grand River in Paris. The winter view was breath taking as was the décor. Most of the appetizers, dinners and desserts were outstanding—notably the beef cheeks, seafood and the Crème Brûlée. There were a few requests that we return in summer to enjoy dining on the deck. Lin F.



Cambridge International Women's Day Breakfast: The breakfast which has been well attended by our members in previous years is set for March 7th. Contact Anne M. if you are interested this year.

CFUW BRANTFORD AFTERNOON TEA FUNDRAISER

The first scholarships were awarded in 1949. Every year since, CFUW Brantford has rewarded young ladies in pursuit of post secondary education with scholarships. A number of years ago CFUW Brantford started a unique scholarship for women who have returned to school or training to upgrade their education/skills. Our sources of funding over the years come from a portion of each member's annual dues, through the investment of the sales of our book "Significant Lives" and from the proceeds of our yearly Trivia Night. Education costs continue to rise as our scholarship funds/ investments dwindle. Help us continue our legacy of support to the women in our community by attending our

CFUW BRANTFORD AFTERNOON TEA SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

Sunday, October 25, 2026, 2pm –4pm
Sacred Heart Parish Centre, Paris ON
Catered by Devlin's Country Bistro
Personal and Corporate donations are welcome.
Tax receipts provided
Co-Chairs: Teddy Buzek and Arlene Cass

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

Tax Receipts

Tax receipts have been issued for 2025. They were distributed at the November General Meeting and at various events through November and December. Tax receipts will be sent as email attachments in the next 2 weeks for those who did not already receive a hard copy. Maria T.

Speaker Change for February General Meeting: Professor Graham White

Graham White is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Toronto. He has been writing about the politics and culture of Northern Canada since the late 1980's. He has written a number of books about the north, including **'We Are In Charge Here': Inuit Self-Government and the Nunatsiavut Assembly** (2023). He will help us to think about the future of this part of Canada.

PS Please note the change in the speaker.

January 22nd General Meeting

7:00 p.m., Zoom

Our Speaker for the January 28th General Meeting (Note: This Meeting is on Zoom)

We are pleased and honoured to have CFUW Brantford member, **Theresa McClenaghan**, speak to us at the next General Meeting on January 28. Theresa's topic for this meeting is the future of environmental laws in Canada. Theresa's expertise in environmental law comes from more than 35 years of experience as a lawyer working in the field of environmental health and environmental safety, both in private practice and for the Canadian Environmental Law Association, where she is currently the Executive Director. Theresa has been senior policy advisor to the Ontario Minister of the Environment where she oversaw the passage of the Clean Water Act, and was responsible for implementation of several Walkerton Inquiry recommendations. She has represented clients at the Supreme Court of Canada, at the Federal Court of Appeal and Trial Division, at provincial courts and at tribunals, as well as at the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, on topics such as pesticide by-laws, the Oncomouse Patent, environmental assessments and constitutional matters. At the 2025 Spring Convocation, Theresa was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the Lincoln Alexander School of Law at Toronto Metropolitan University. We look forward to hearing Theresa's insights on the important topic of the future of environmental laws in Canada.



Our condolences to the family of **Bea Cranston**, a long time member of CFUW Brantford, who passed peacefully at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre on January 5, 2026, in her 101st year, surrounded by her family.

A Celebration of Bea's Life will be held at the Brantford Golf and Country Club, 60 Ava Road, Brantford, on Sunday, February 8, 2026, from 2-4 p.m. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation or the Brant Community Healthcare System Foundation (Brantford General Hospital). Online condolences can be shared at www.tollfh.ca

Sending our deepest sympathy to Catherine Sawyer on the passing of her husband and to Dian Kuzyk, on the passing of her brother, **Denzil Sawyer**, at the age of 94, on Christmas Eve with his family around him.

Deepest sympathy to Leslie Leach on the passing of her mother, **Mary Leach**, at the age of 92, in Kingsville, Ontario.

