cfuw fcfdu
BRANTFORD

Realizing potential for all women **October, 2026**

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Leadership Team

It was wonderful to welcome 42 members in person and 5 online to the first general meeting of the 2026-27 season. Everyone was keen to catch up with others after our summer hiatus and the new venue at Best Western certainly provides us with that opportunity. The meeting began soon after 7 pm and did not end until close to 9 pm as we had a full agenda. Afterwards, we all enjoyed the delicious treats provided by the social committee and many of us were happy to stay for conversation without worrying about the time. I wish, particularly thank to Diane Bradley for her technical skills in ensuring that our online attendees, using the "new to us" Microsoft Teams, had full access. There are always a few glitches using new software in a different venue, but Diane got the job done.

Jill Berridge, our guest speaker, gave us a very comprehensive and enlightening explanation of how our medical system works in reference to the role of Family Medicine. Like myself, I think most of us were shocked by the situation as it stands today for General Practitioners. Anyone wishing to become a family physician, as opposed to a specialist, must be stymied by the complicated process as well as the lower pay schedule. Another problem is that the "red tape" of government results in long delays for any increased funding in our health system. We could easily have asked many more questions of Jill, but time did not permit.

Club members were also informed of new ways to donate to our Nova Vita campaign and of developments in the area of Advocacy as well. It was a fine start to the year and I want to thank all members for the support they have given and continue to give to all our Presidents of the Month.

Catherine Sawyer,
President of the Month

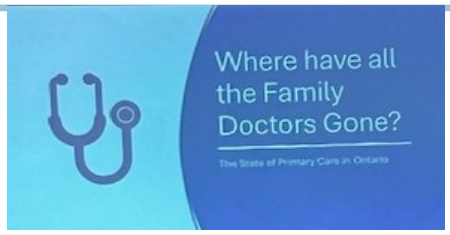
Fundraising

Here is the most recent thermometer.
We reached our goal!!! Mary P.

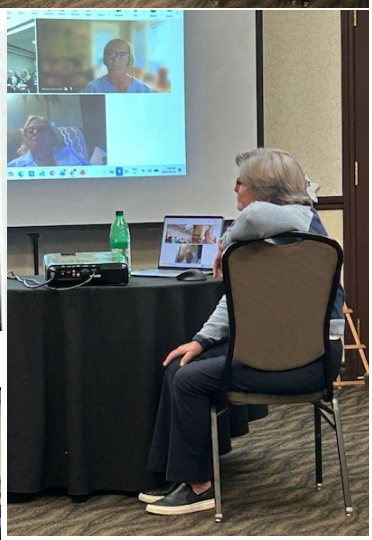
We have met our goal of $25,000 donated to the CFUW Scholarship fund. Presently we stand at $25,200. Thank you to all members contributing through our membership fees, for the additional membership donations and a big thank you to the Trivia Night Committee that worked so hard to provide a fun evening and contribute $2,635.68. We will continue accepting donations gratefully. Ticket sales for the High Tea have gone well and we are very close to selling out. Our Scholarship Committee appreciates all the support shown. Arlene C.

Don't miss out on your chance to attend the October 25th High Tea in support of CFUW Brantford Scholarships. We have 4 tickets left. Tickets can be purchased for $100/person through an e-transfer to cfuwbrantfordsch@gmail.com until Tuesday October 20th. After that please contact Arlene C. at cass.arlene@gmail.com

September General Meeting

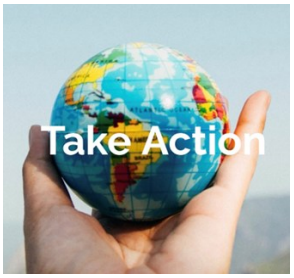


CFUW Brantford kicked off our Fall meeting with a full house at our new meeting location, Best Western Hotel on Holiday Drive.
Our guest speaker was Jill Berridge, an experienced healthcare leader, consultant, educator, and physiotherapist with more than 30 years of experience in interprofessional healthcare settings across Canada and internationally. She is recognized for her commitment to collaboration, innovation, and improving healthcare delivery.
Jill spoke on the current state of primary care and challenges facing family physicians in Ontario. She explained why it is so difficult for the 2 million people without a family doctor to find one. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that this number will double in 5 years. Fewer doctors are choosing Family Medicine and 52% of current Family Doctors will retire in 5 years. Jill explained in laypersons terms some of the funding structures that both help and hinder the challenges of our medical system - again with a focus on the Family Doctor as it relates to time restrictions per patient visit, remuneration, and more lucrative opportunities in hospitals or specialised fields. But, then she shared how new structures for medical clinics staffed with a broad spectrum of services, IT programs that relieve hours of paper work, and AI innovations (for the future) will create a more favourable climate to attract graduates into Family Medicine. In closing, she gave out two websites now dedicated to finding a Family Doctor: bbnoht.ca/services and Ontario.ca/healthcareconnect. It was evident by the applause, the Q and A, and the comments following the presentation that Jill had touched on an area of deep interest and concern for all present.
We are very grateful for this insightful and knowledgeable overview. Linda T.



ADVOCACY NEWS!

YOUR VOICE MATTERS: NOMINATE AN ORGANIZATION/CHARITY FOR OUR 2026-27 INTERNATIONAL DUES!



This is an opportunity for every member to have a voice in determining how our international dues will be allocated for 2026–27.

We are inviting members to nominate a **not-for-profit international, organization or charity** that you are particularly interested in supporting. Your nominated organization should have a demonstrated commitment to advancing the **rights, freedoms, and education of women and girls,** particularly in **war-torn, developing, or otherwise compromised countries.**

What to include in your submission
Please provide:

- **Name of the organization** you are nominating
- **Details about how the organization empowers women, and girls**
- **Your interest in or involvement with the organization**
- **Your name**

Please send your proposal to Teddy at teddybuzek@gmail.com no later than **Monday, October 26, 2026.**

The Advocacy Committee encourages all members to participate and make their voices heard and to determine where our international dues can have an impact. Teddy B.

Membership

We have a calligrapher in our midst! Leslie L has volunteered to personalize each new member's club name tag with her beautiful calligraphy instead of them being done on a printer. Here's Leslie, hard at work! Many thanks to Leslie for accepting the membership committee's request. Marsha S.

Did you know **The Brantford JC Homes project at 32 Bridge Street will soon be home to 24 women and women-led families?** The new building includes 24 safe, affordable housing units along with a Café, Laundromat, Social Enterprise and a Community Hub offering meeting space, computer stations and a community kitchen for residents and community organizations. This development is helping to address Brantford's need for safe, affordable housing while creating a welcoming community where women and families can build a stronger future. Linda H.

Women and Gender Equality Canada | Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

October is Women's History Month in Canada

Celebrate

This month is an opportunity to honour women and girls, past and present, who have who have built a more inclusive Canada, while also recognizing the work still needed to remove barriers so that everyone can participate fully in Canada's social, cultural, and economic life.

Discover the impact of remarkable Canadian women.

Inspire Future Generations

By showcasing role models, Women's History Month encourages girls and young women to see themselves as leaders and changemakers. Greater representation empowers individuals, fuels innovation, and drives economic growth.

Share the stories of women trailblazers you know or admire.

Continue to Make History

Women's History Month also shines a light on the inequalities women still face, such as wage gaps, underrepresentation in leadership, barriers to entering and advancing in the workforce, and the need to work together toward lasting change.

Take action to advance gender equality in your community.

Did you know?

Women's History Month coincides with Persons Day, the commemoration of the 1929 "Persons Case," when the Famous Five fought to have women legally recognized as persons under the British North America Act, securing the right to sit in the Senate.

Advocacy

The kickoff for this year's fundraising campaign for Nova Vita, Hope for the Holidays, was held at our general meeting in September. This year Nova Vita has introduced a new means of choosing and getting needed gift items sent directly to Nova Vita using Amazon's online ordering app. This will ensure the donations we make are in line with the needs of the residents. Should you need assistance in using Amazon for your donation, or if you prefer to continue selecting, buying and delivering your gifts as you have in past years, please contact Diane Bradley or Pat McGinnis who will be glad to help.
All donations will be recognized on our Giving Tree which will also be presented to Nova Vita.

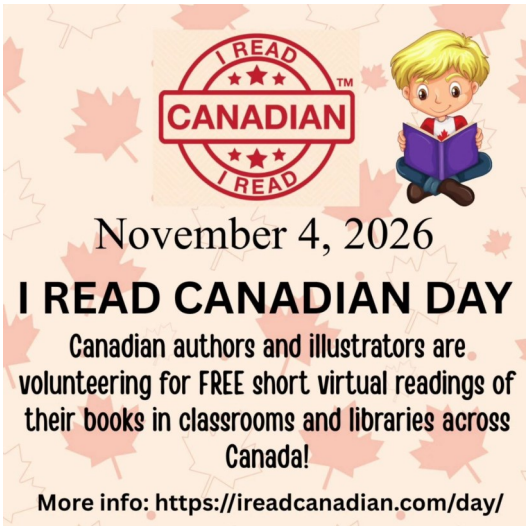
Giving Tree

Shelter wish List:
Arts and crafts sets
Hair styling tools and products l
Wellness gifts (bath bombs, face masks, journals, yoga mats)
Canned goods and pantry staples
Water Bottles and Coffee Tumblers
Please think of gifts that would suit mothers and teens.

The link below will take you to the Amazon Wish List Link

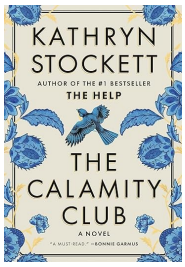
https://www.amazon.ca/hz/wishlist/ls/2SPHM0EMUVBYN?ref_=wl_fv_le

If you choose NOT to use Amazon please do take a look at the above list to see what Gifts are suggested for HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS.
Diane B.



Interest Groups

Monday Evening Book Group:



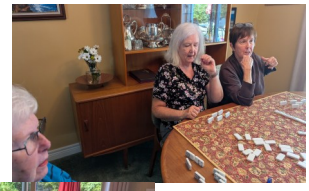
Our book club recently gathered to discuss Kathryn Stockett's much-anticipated second novel, The Calamity Club. A Mississippi native and author of The Help, Stockett spent nine years in New York publishing before her debut novel became a worldwide phenomenon and an Academy Award-winning film. Seventeen years later, she returned with a very different story, set in Oxford, Mississippi, in 1933 during the Great Depression. The novel brings together three unlikely women—eleven-year-old Meg, outspoken Birdie, and Charlie, a woman with little left to lose—whose lives intersect as they challenge the expectations and limitations placed on women of their time. Our discussion also considered the historical backdrop of poverty, Jim Crow segregation, women's limited social and economic opportunities, and the movement promoting selective human breeding that influenced some of the novel's darker themes. We explored what we loved, what surprised and troubled us, and the novel's central themes of friendship, resilience, power and finding the courage to take control of one's life. And, as a fun final note, Stockett's return has clearly been successful: as of September 3, 2026, The Calamity Club was #1 on the Publishers Weekly U.S. hardcover fiction bestseller list. Judy D.

Walking Group:

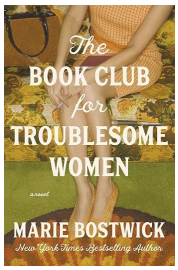
Hi all, It's Angela. We are all very grateful, Mieke, for your kindness and generosity in organizing yesterday's lovely event. Thanks to Marsha for taking and circulating the great photo! Thanks to all of you walkers for coming and giving me more wonderful memories of our group. It was a joy to be part of the team over the years as we spent time enjoying the beautiful trails in our area. I will be delighted to see you whenever you are needing a change of scenery! I'll give Mieke and Marsha my new address and email when they are available. Happy Hiking!

Walking Group: Nora's Olive accompanied us on yesterday's walk, and even though we encountered many dogs along the trail, she did not woof! A beautiful day for a walk!

Games Group: There were five of us at Barb's house riding the Mexican Train not the American one. Choo Choo! It's a form of Dominos and it was quite fun! Lotsa laughs. Norah O.



Thursday Evening Book Group: **<u>The Book Club for Troublesome Women</u>** by **<u>Marie Bostwick</u>**– A historical fiction novel (2025). By early 1960s standards, Margaret Ryan, Viv Buschetti, and Bitsy Cobb, suburban housewives living in a brand new "planned community" in Northern Virginia, appear to have it all, but having it "all" doesn't feel like enough. Things begin to change when they form a book club with Charlotte Gustafson, the eccentric and artsy "new neighbor" from Manhattan, and read Betty Friedan's just-released book, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). This controversial and groundbreaking book struck a chord with an entire generation of women, helping them realize that they weren't alone in their dissatisfactions, or their longings, lifting their eyes to new horizons of possibility and achievement. As the women, Margaret, Viv, Bitsy and Charlotte share secrets, cocktails, and their honest reactions to the books of the day, they begin to discover cracks in the American dream they've been sold, questioning the roles, expectations and limitations placed on them. Nicknaming themselves The Bettys, these 4 friends have no idea their impromptu club and the books they read together will become the glue that holds them fast through tears, triumphs, angst and arguments. The book is a humorous, thought-provoking and nostalgic romp through one pivotal tumultuous year, as well as an ode to self-discovery, persistence and the power of sisterhood. Our group of 12 members felt the book was a good read, leading to an evening of great discussions.



Submitted by Roma M.

2026-2027 EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT IN NAME:

•Barbara Melara

PAST PRESIDENT:

•Janet Kempster

ROTATING PRESIDENTIAL TEAM:

•Diane Bradley/Pat McGinnis—June to August

•Catherine Sawyer— 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:

Advocacy: Teddy Buzek

•**Communications:** Sandra Hughes

•**Interest Groups:** Roma Makkreel

•**Membership:** Marsha Skrypuch

•**Program:** Linda Tripp

•**Scholarship:** Karen Innes

•**Social:** Kate Gardiner/Karen Spada

Scholarship

The applications deadline for the Award B scholarships is Oct 31, 2026. Eligible applicants are female living in Brantford or Brant County and have been out of school for at least two years. Please encourage eligible candidates, whom you may know, to apply for this funding. Application forms are available by Email.

Karen I.

Angela H's husband, Johannes, has passed away. Sending sincere sympathy to Angela and her family on behalf of the group.

October General Meeting

Time: 6:30pm, October 28

Location: Best Western Hotel, Alexander Graham Bell Meeting Room or in your home, at your computer on a Teams call.

Program:

Rola Berger is a Senior Move Specialist with **Move With Compassion**, a company that helps seniors and their families through one of the most challenging parts of a transition: decluttering and letting go. For many seniors, decluttering isn't simply deciding what to keep and what to throw away. It can mean sorting through a lifetime of memories, photographs, and treasures that have deep meaning. Rola, a mother of six, understands that life can get busy and clutter quickly accumulates. She brings a compassionate, practical approach to helping people create spaces that feel lighter, more manageable and more enjoyable. In her presentation **"Decluttering Made Easy: Five Simple Steps"** Rola will share practical tips and encouragement to get you motivated, make decisions more easily, and create a home you enjoy. Please join her on October 28 to learn how to make life simpler and moving easier.

Collette W. for the Program Committee

Speaker for the High Tea

Chantal Saldanha is a Professional Engineer and serves as the Software and Cybersecurity Manager at GD Land Systems – Canada. She leads a dynamic team responsible for delivering software that enables the capabilities of Light Armoured Vehicles (LAVs) and developing cybersecurity features to protect and defend these vehicles.

Chantal grew up in the town of Simcoe in Norfolk County and attended elementary school there. She graduated from Assumption College High School in Brantford, excelling in STEM fields. She went on to earn an honours degree in Engineering, with a focus on Biomedical Engineering, from the University of Guelph.

In 2000, Chantal began her career at Honda of Canada Manufacturing as a plant ergonomist. In 2001, she transitioned to a Human Factors Engineering role at GD Land Systems – Canada. Over the years, she gained experience in Survivability Systems and Project Engineering. She briefly left engineering to implement a Software Management program for the Canadian family of military vehicles before returning as the leader of the Software and Cybersecurity team.

In 2021, Chantal co-founded the GD Land Systems Women's Employee Resource Group with two colleagues, creating a platform for mentorship, networking, and skill-building to support the career growth of women within the organization.

Arlene C.

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