



# **CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

*Annual General Meeting  
May 13, 2023*

*CFUW Women Sharing Their Passions:  
Support for Higher Education  
Lifelong Learning  
Advocacy  
Fellowship*

## Table of Contents

Message from the President.....	3
Report of the President – Teresa Habs.....	4
Report of the Secretary – Heather Conlin.....	5
Report of the Regional Director, ON Central – Susan Freeman.....	6
Report of the Regional Director, ON Huron – Elisabeth Sachs.....	8
Report of the Regional Director, ON East – Anne Cordon.....	10
Report of the Regional Director, ON West – Elana Freeman.....	13
Report of the Regional Director, ON North – Wendy Taylor.....	15
Report of the Regional Director, ON South – Joyce See.....	17
Report of the Chair, Communications – Ingrid Sproxtton.....	25
Report of the Chair, Advocacy – Sandra Shaw.....	27
Report of the Chair, Education – Judith Pownall.....	31
Report of the Chair, Legislation - Niki Carlan.....	32
Report of the Chair, Status of Women/Human Rights – Helen Robb.....	33

### Standing Committee Reports

Report of the Chair, Advocacy – Sandra Shaw.....	34
Report of the Chair, Bylaws, Governance – Teresa Habs.....	35
Report of the Chair, Finance* - Anne Groulx* .....	35
Report of the Chair, Resolutions – Isobel Boyle.....	36

\*See Treasurer's Report in the Business and Finance Booklet

## Message from the President

During my first year as OC President I was so thankful for the great work done by the former OC Board and our Immediate Past President, Sandra Thomson. It's true that we move forward and achieve more because of the foundation created for us by those leaders who did the job before us. We build on their strengths and are motivated by their efforts.

We've come through some of the hardest times most of us have ever known, including a pandemic and the review of our world-wide affiliation as a federation.

We knew it was time to concentrate on the future, our strengths, and be guided by the aims and objectives of CFUW and the sisterhood we as members have created with and for each other.

This past year was our springboard to the future - the beginnings of the E-Club, the re-invigoration, retention and growth of our membership in the traditional club settings. 2023 began with the introduction of the new members of the National Office staff and the CFUW Board of Directors and continues with their seminal work on rebranding CFUW.

Your support for advocacy, for education and lifelong learning, the friendships we have forged and the fun we have together – it's all part of why we value CFUW!

Results of the survey OC conducted late 2022 told us most OC members wanted our annual conference and AGM to remain virtual for another year.

Great news! We are pleased to have a special guest speaker at the virtual meeting, CFUW President Joy Hurst.

Along with many of you, I am hopeful we will be able to gather and celebrate in person in 2024!

Again, thank you for all you do!

Teresa Habs.

President

## Report of the President – Teresa Habs

### “BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS”

#### ADVOCACY: OUR STRENGTH

OC encourages members to bring about change, especially in those areas affecting women by providing the tools, resources and framework for clubs to do so using Ontario Advocacy Guidelines.

OC provides members with an ‘advocacy framework’ built on the 2019 Ontario Council Advocacy Survey which indicated the top provincial issues of concern. Although there has been progress in some areas, these remain the today: Care & Caring, Long Term Care; Early Learning and Affordable Childcare, Education and Good Mental Health for Students, Economic Prosperity and Pay Equity, the Environment, Violence Against Women, the Empowerment of Women as Leaders and Decision-makers.

OC encourages members to raise the profile of CFUW through local initiatives within their communities utilizing CFUW policy, aims and objectives.

#### COMMUNICATIONS: OUR STRENGTH

OC promotes online communications such as OC News and the CFUW Club Action Newsletter providing members with the knowledge and resources needed to stay connected and engaged with CFUW at all levels of the organization.

OC profiles club newsletters in OC News thereby providing a forum for clubs to inspire and learn from each other.

OC uses social media platforms to promote our profile when those platforms are complementary to CFUW aims and objectives. OC recently discontinued any involvement with Twitter.

#### PROFILE: OUR STRENGTH

OC advocates at the provincial government level with policy statements, briefs and submissions that profile CFUW aims and objectives and hold the government to account, even when this is considered difficult.

OC utilizes the strength of our 49 clubs across the province to promote CFUW thereby encouraging members to ‘be seen’ in their communities, to speak with their local and provincial governments.

## FRIENDSHIP: OUR STRENGTH

To quote our Immediate Past President Sandra Thomson:

OC clubs invite women to come together - in matters which matter the most. Whether it is to raise money for scholarships, walk together in the coldest night of the year for a just cause, peacefully protest the issues in long term care, or simply to discuss a book or play bridge – this has been and continues to be our added strength. We serve to help others. We bond for a communal cause. We take on leadership roles to create an environment for change. We work and play together for our own physical, spiritual, and mental health.”

## MEMBERSHIP: OUR CHALLENGE

OC continues to build on efforts to grow and diversify membership by financially supporting local initiatives with grants to improve social media outreach, update needed technical support, and hold events that profile CFUW in the community.

OC provides financial support for our Speaker Series held three times a year and other Gatherings, whether in person or virtually. OC brings members together and provides a province-wide forum for life-long learning and awareness of issues that affect women.

## SUSTAINABILITY: OUR FUTURE

OC supports CFUW Canada, keeping our federation strong by valuing the connections we have with CFUW and GWI.

OC prizes the fact that we are partners in an amazing 100+ year old national organization - part of a global network of women making a difference through leadership and action.

## OC MEMBERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS – OUR BIGGEST STRENGTHS!

Thank you for everything you do and for supporting Ontario Council!!

## Report of the Secretary - Heather Conlin

This was my first full year as Secretary of CFUW Ontario Council.

The specific work of the Secretary for Ontario Council involves three areas: that which is required by the Ontario Not for Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) for Ontario incorporated non-profits, other secretarial assistance as needed, and the organization of the Speaker Series vis-à-vis the location and catering. The latter has not happened in person once again for the 2022/2023 year.

Minutes have been prepared for: Board meetings (2022/2023 with Action Logs) through to and including the Annual General Meeting May 13, 2023.

As secretary, I am involved in the planning of the AGM each year.

Besides responsibilities as CFUW Ontario Council Secretary, I have remained active with my club, CFUW Southport.

- attend membership meetings and continued as a member of the Executive
- act as liaison to CFUW Southport Executive. The goal is to connect and inform executive of CFUW Ontario Council and CFUW matters
- on committee reviewing and updating our Standard Operating Procedures
- member of the December 6 Vigil Planning Team
- participated in transitioning the new president during Fall of 2022
- co organized and co facilitated CFUW Southport's All Candidates Meeting for municipal election in the Fall of 2022
- participated as a table facilitator at the April 13 2023 Saugeen Environmental Alliance Symposium (SEA)
- organize a team to participate in the Huron Shores Rotary Run to raise money for the Saugeen Memorial Hospital Foundation. CFUW Southport has raised the most money of any team for the past several years!

## Report of the Regional Director, ON Central – Susan Freeman

Ontario Central Clubs: Ajax/Pickering, Aurora/Newmarket, Barrie and District, Etobicoke, Leaside/East York, Markham/Unionville, Mississauga, North Toronto, Northumberland, Oshawa and District, Scarborough, North York, Toronto

Communications:

I have had 4 Zoom meetings with the presidents of Central Ontario. The first was just to get to know each other a bit and share a Zoom coffee together. It was held over two evenings so that all could attend one session or the other.

I have spoken via telephone to all of the presidents, some more frequently than others. We also keep in touch via regular e-mails with club news, newsletters and the exchange of news, events, dates and information. I have also attended Zoom meetings with CFUW Etobicoke, CFUW Oshawa and District, UWC North York and UWC Toronto and CFUW North Toronto in person. I will attend various AGMs and anniversary celebrations in May and June.

In Person Meeting: November 5, 2022

We met in person at the beginning of November to discuss the topics that came up in our conversation and to discuss items that needed to be addressed. We hope to have another in person meeting in June.

At this meeting we had a presentation on the Human Rights Code, Equity and Inclusion presented by Marg Esau and Cathy McCarty of Markham-Unionville complete with power-point and handouts. We discussed the need to accept the changes and that a person who identifies as female is considered female. This has some effect on our membership policies and our awarding of scholarships. It was felt that the use of the word 'person' was most judicious.

We also discussed the use of the word 'university' in our titles and most clubs already have a proviso which encourages inclusion of women/ persons who share our goals.

It was truly wonderful to meet each other in person and to share ideas. The enthusiasm generated in an in-person meeting is so rewarding.

Concerns:

Throughout our Zoom meetings the following topics continue to come up and we try to give each other suggestions. We are concerned about recruiting and retaining membership, encouraging members to take an executive position and in particular, attracting younger and more ethnically diverse members. Many clubs have various ideas and share their success. I circulated to all presidents the report of the Ontario Council Ad Hoc Committee on Membership, 2022.

Requests for Assistance:

1. We request help from all levels of CFUW to address the membership issue. There should be a national, provincial and local coordinated campaign for new members. People should know who we are and what we do and how proud we are to be members of CFUW. It is shocking how the national membership numbers have diminished. Hopefully this issue is being considered very seriously. We need to attract younger members to enliven the clubs and then to take the executive positions in which we all have already served. We also need ethnic diversity to reflect the

country we live in. The issue of attracting and retaining members is not a local issue. The problem needs to be addressed nationally.

2. We would also appreciate help from CFUW on the creation of attractive, modern, colourful and current websites. It would be very helpful to have some young programmers address various groups, perhaps from a local community college or university, even as part of a speakers' series. Clubs which are attracting the most new members are those with an up-to-date and colourful, interesting website. The new generation lives on sound bites and short messages.
3. It is also a unanimous request that Speaker Series, AGMs come back to being in person as soon as time, money, climate and health allow. The exchange of ideas, the renewal or beginnings of friendships and the joy of being together cannot, as we know, be duplicated on Zoom.

#### Conclusions:

Some of the clubs in Ontario Central are thriving: UWC Toronto, CFUW Northumberland, CFUW Aurora-Newmarket, CFUW Markham-Unionville. Some are holding their own: CFUW Ajax-Pickering, CFUW Oshawa and District, (both of these I consider small and mighty) CFUW Etobicoke, CFUW Barrie, CFUW Scarborough, CFUW Leaside/East York. These clubs are soldiering on hoping for new members and are optimistic.

Some need some help: CFUW North Toronto (difficulties in finding an executive) I have volunteered to be part of their new interim management team. UWC North York (significant decrease in membership)

The clubs are active and have excellent interest groups, speakers and many are very active in their advocacy.

## Report of the Regional Director, ON Huron – Elisabeth Sachs

### Ontario Huron Clubs: Kincardine, Headwaters, Owen Sound and Area, Southport

This year was my 1<sup>st</sup> as RD for the 4 Huron Region Clubs. My thanks to past RD, Lori Ker, and club Presidents for their support.

The clubs were very active with general and special meetings, advocacy committees and interest groups.

### Regional and Club Activities



- All clubs were successful in their virtual and in-person programs and interest group meetings. All clubs use various outreach approaches to keep members engaged and increase participation in interest groups. Many meeting programs were open to the public, or co-sponsored with other groups, to raise CFUW's community profile.
- Clubs continued or expanded their scholarship grants/programs; in-person fundraising events increased with the lifting of most provincial health restrictions.
- Club meeting topics were an eclectic mix of general interest [plus fun] and advocacy: Persons' and International Women's Day commemorations; all candidates municipal election debates; *electHER* initiatives; December 6 Remembrance events; climate change and environmental protection; long term care; journalism and politics; food security; housing and elder care options; Resolutions review and debate; Will, and estate financial giving/planning and protection; pets and wellness; dance; hosting local authors; and refugee support among others.
- Regular communications took place among RD and club Presidents and advocacy chairs to share challenges, programs, meeting strategies, and information; answer club questions on OC and National communications, resources and approaches to similar issues.
- Clubs engaged in letter writing campaigns to MPPs and MPs on health, environmental and land development issues.

### **Club Issues**

- All four clubs previously opted out of the GWI and remain members of OC and National. The returned funds were used to support scholarships and advocacy initiatives
- Club membership stayed firm or grew in the last year. All held successful membership drives and kept one another informed by sharing newsletters, holding both virtual and in-person events to which all members and the public were invited. Some clubs preferred virtual meetings only during the winter months [or a break between December to March] and all favoured a virtual 2023 OC AGM.
- Leadership succession is a critical issue for clubs; regular communications took place on strategies to revitalize the Executives and attract successors. Southport and Headwaters are particularly challenged with several long-term Executive members resigning their positions. Alternative governance models are being studied.
- Clubs are concerned about the roll-out of National's rebranding initiative and inclusivity concerns. Southport engaged in a new logo campaign. Website updates and social media [excluding Twitter] campaigns are taking place.
- All clubs held annual or bi-annual fundraising events and participated in various charitable initiatives [i.e. Coldest Night of the Year; local women's shelters/food bank donations; Big Brothers Big Sisters anniversary; Afghan Women's programme and Medical Mercy in Ukraine] and through

local and/or international projects. In addition to several one-time awards Headwaters is in the process of creating a permanent endowment fund through Dufferin Community Foundation.

### **Information and Communication**

- Attend regular meetings of RDs provincially and nation-wide under the leadership of Anne Cordon and report to Presidents.
- Regular communication with club Presidents continues on contacts at OC and National for finance and other information/questions; provincial or national interest items, reminders, and requests for information.
- Promotion of OC's functions and benefits [i.e. insurance] continued. The OC Speakers Series virtual sessions are popular among the region's clubs given the otherwise lengthy travel [and residual COVID concerns] resulting in greater overall participation.
- Promotion of the virtual meetings that CFUW hosts/promotes such as Meet 'N Greet of the National Board, membership workshops and other town halls.

## **Report of the Regional Director, ON East – Anne Cordon**

Ontario East Clubs: Belleville and District, Cornwall and District, Kanata, Kingston, Nepean, Ottawa, Perth and District, Peterborough, Renfrew and District

We had an inspiring in person Fall Gathering hosted by Perth and District in September—a first in three years for us and the first of two for OC this year after at least two years of no in person large gatherings. All nine clubs sent representatives to participate in FELLOWSHIP, FRIENDSHIP, & RECONNECTING.

I continued to facilitate monthly meetings with presidents from September – May. The purpose of these regular meetings was to build connections within our region and share information for the region, OC, and National CFUW. This year each meeting had a focus with invited guests from the clubs as well as OC and National. The focal topics included building our membership, leadership, partnerships, and advocacy.

Other CFUW meetings I attended included OC Board, OC RDs, National RDs and the National Board meetings as well as my own club CFUW- Peterborough for which I am Executive Director.

I am now the National Chair of RDs which allows me to connect coast to coast to share ideas and issues. I have attended many CFUW related town halls, webinars, etc.

As in the past, I asked my clubs to send me their club highlights for this year. The themes that come out from all clubs is the importance to attract new members and to strengthen connections with existing members, build a strong executive board, the desire to be involved locally and afar on heartfelt advocacy issues, and the need and creativity to raise funds to support their scholarships and advocacy.

### **CFUW Belleville and District—Mary Miller and Margaret Gilbey**

The 2022-23 year for CFUW Belleville has been a ‘steady as she goes’ year. Nine new members joined us, mostly women retiring to our area and seeking out new friends and activities. We also worked on a strategic plan. It has three elements, each of which we think is important and that members seem to be supporting. These include:

1. Attracting & retaining members

After all, later baby boomers are now retiring in significant numbers & many are wanting to engage in a new life, often in a new location where they don’t have a built-in set of friends & interests. And of course, early baby boomer members are, well, aging.

2. Promoting stronger community engagement/ advocacy work

3. Fostering interest & action in national & international affairs

Why? Because we are finding there is interest in these areas on the part of some of our members and of course these align with who CFUW is and has always been.

Lastly, we spoke to our local library who have agreed to take on the role of both physical & digital archivist for our club. We are delighted!

### **Cornwall and District – Jo Sheppard**

*Advocacy:* Continued with our ‘New Beginnings’ initiative where we fill laundry baskets with essential household items to donate to women who transition from our local women’s shelter to independent living. Our annual Holiday Auction combined both an on-line format with an in-person celebration, raising a record high amount in 2022. Funds raised by this auction are split evenly between our scholarships (see below) and a local charity, which this year was Naomi’s Family Resource Centre in Winchester.

*Scholarship:* Donated 12 X \$800.00 bursaries to local women to help them pursue post-secondary education. Most recipients agreed to have a large sign placed on their lawn indicating that they had received an award from CFUW. *Special use of fees previously for GWI:* our annual fees have remained the same. Many residents in our area receive less than a “livable wage” so this year’s recipient was local. Specific recipients of these funds will be determined each year.

*Social Media:* Our club launched a 'public' Instagram Account to promote our club and raise awareness of our Advocacy priorities. Our club website has been enhanced and is regularly updated with club information. We started planning for our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025!

### **CFUW Kanata—Elena Petrcich**

1. We resumed Interest Group gatherings in person. Some large groups split in 2 - half gathered in person, half remained on Zoom
2. We had an in- person Christmas lunch gathering, with games, some prizes, singing Xmas Carols.
3. Always a full slate for our program speakers
4. We had job sharing secretary roles.
5. We supported the Kanata Food cupboard at Christmas time and Chrystalis House in the spring.
6. Spring Challenge: Our fundraising for the Scholarship Trust - for the month of April - get out and exercise and exercise your hand by writing out a cheque.
7. Active Discussion and proposals on making executive positions more acceptable- by spreading the workload to the Interest Groups

### **Ottawa—Elizabeth (Lizz) Sleith Wilfert**

The CFUW-Ottawa Club has enjoyed a successful season not only increasing our membership but working collaboratively with other community groups. Our affiliates are E Fry Society, for whom we collect Christmas gifts for the women and their young children. We also support the Ontario Council of Women. Our STF Awards Night in March, saw 2 HOPE Scholarships for Refugee Women presented, one to a Carleton University and one to a University of Ottawa student. We award a HOPE Bursary for Refugee Women to an Algonquin College student.

We continue to raise awareness for Afghan women and fight for their rights. We co-hosted a GWI Webinar on the topic with CFUW-Belleville Club. We have co-hosted several rallies and marches for Afghan women with Canadian Women for Women of Afghanistan (CW4WA). We worked with HOMSA (Heads of Mission Spouses Assoc) and ICO (International Club of Ottawa)

### **CFUW Perth & District — Carrey Duncan and Marlene Starkman**

Our club has returned to our pre-Covid membership number of 141, including 34 new members, with 6 joining in January.

We launched a new website, [cfuwperth.org](http://cfuwperth.org) in July; added 5 new interest groups, held during the day or on the weekend including golf, board games, drumming, Spanish, Sunday dinner and Sunday hiking bringing our total number of groups to 35.

We introduced three new fun, fundraisers—Bridge, Bowling and Bingo, geared to meeting other members and included partners, plus held a Members Makers Market in November.

We have balanced our social get togethers with our club's strong emphasis on community and advocacy. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, we organized Lanark's CNOY campaign to raise funds for Cornerstone Landing, with both groups exceeding their donation goal. Also, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, we submitted a resolution (#5) pursuing a goal of fair treatment for chronic Lyme Disease sufferers. Our February speaker on Period Poverty launched a very successful period product drive, collecting 160 pounds of menstrual hygiene supplies that were donated to our community food bank.

Our commitment to the community also includes promoting education, and with Covid restrictions lifted, we are back in our local schools offering one-on-one tutoring and art enrichment. We offer a warm and welcoming space for all.

### **Peterborough—Anne Heffernan**

Our two main focuses this year were Membership and Advocacy

*Membership recruitment & retention* -13 new members!

- invited guests to all meetings

- Special events with invited guests included our 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner in September with iOC President, Teresa Habs and an open house for the October general meeting "all about CFUW" with invited guest National VP Membership, Marcia Armstrong

- Interest group conveners invited new members to special events, dinners, lunches

- Publicity – increased monthly notices in local paper the Peterborough Examiner

*Advocacy committee:*

- letters to local paper and politicians on elder care, Afghanistan women and girls,

- article in paper featuring one of our CFUW members on difficulty getting family doctor

- power point presentation at general membership summarizing the work of the advocacy committee (elder care and senior rights)

### **Renfrew—Barbara Moogk**

Our club is happy to be back into the regular routine of speakers at in-person meetings held monthly.

We did not meet in October as we conducted our usual four-year municipal "All Candidates' Night."

After a three-year hiatus for COVID we will have our annual Book Fair Friday and Saturday April 28-29 with proceeds going to our Scholarship fund which will go to two local high schools and two adult high schools.

It is with great sadness that we have lost our last Charter member Dorothy Cooke and a long-standing member Betty Lou Miller. We continue to have our walking group and have started a 'Lunch Bunch'.

## Report of the Regional Director, ON West – Elana Freeman

Ontario West Clubs: Cambridge, Guelph, Kitchener/Waterloo, London, St. Thomas, Stratford, Windsor

This year, 2022-23 was my 1<sup>st</sup> year in my 2<sup>nd</sup> term as RD. I would like to offer my congratulations to the clubs in Ontario West for all the great work they do in the areas of fundraising that support their scholarships and other donations they make to their communities, and the advocacy work they do to advance the lives of women and girls.

### **CFUW Public Profile**

CFUW clubs in Ontario West continue to use social media to amplify their events and their message. Some highlights of the region's accomplishments:

- CFWU London posts its meetings on Facebook.
- ON West clubs participate in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence social media blitz.
- CFUW K-W uses social media, Facebook and Twitter, to promote their club activities, amplifies partner activities and highlights their message.
- CFUW Stratford is active on Facebook. They provide speaker biographies, highlight events happening in Stratford, and used this same platform to thank their IWD breakfast sponsors
- CFUW Windsor is also active on Facebook and Instagram and Twitter. They highlight activities happening in their community, amplify the message of partner organizations, and advertise their meetings on these platforms.
- CFUW Windsor livestreamed its Mayoral Debate on Instagram in partnership with local political bloggers.
- CFUW St. Thomas uses social media to highlight their meetings, including speaker bios and Zoom information.
- CFUW Guelph uses Facebook to advertise its meeting, and to advocate for women and girls
- CFUW Cambridge uses Facebook to advertise its events and to provide club updates.

### **Year in Review**

The clubs in Ontario West held a lot of great events this year. We learned to live with the "new normal" of pandemic life and moved to mostly in person events this year. Some highlights of club events and activities follows.

### **CFUW Cambridge**

Cambridge held its 11th annual International Women's Day Breakfast in person. The speakers for this event were Alex Mustakas and David Connelly of

Drayton Entertainment. Proceeds and donations from this event went to CFUW Cambridge's Scholarship Fund.

### **CFUW Guelph**

CFUW Guelph continued with its community outreach. This year the club funded Bridges Out of Poverty and the 2022 Guelph Women's Campaign School.

### **CFUW Kitchener-Waterloo**

CFUW K-W had a very busy year. In December they held their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary luncheon. In April - Evening with Lisa Laflamme, with proceeds going to their Charitable Foundation. Also, in April their Giant Used Book Sale is back.

### **CFUW London**

CFUW London was mostly back in person with some of its meetings held via Zoom. They had meetings this year on Technology Tips and Tricks and celebrated Women's History month with Georgina Gifford from Western University.

### **CFUW St. Thomas**

In April, CFUW St. Thomas will once again hosted its Dessert, Bridge and Euchre fundraiser in person. Proceeds go to its Community Engagement fund which supports club scholarships as well as donations to community organizations.

### **CFUW Stratford**

CFUW Stratford was also busy this year. They hosted a successful Ontario West Fall Gathering in October. And, this year, they hosted their first IWD breakfast and panel. They raised enough money to fund their scholarships for the year.

### **CFUW Windsor**

CFUW Windsor continued its advocacy on educating the electorate by holding a Mayoral All candidates meeting in October in advance of the municipal election. CFUW Windsor celebrated Black History Month by hosting a University of Windsor history student working on a project about local Black History.

## **Report of the Regional Director, ON North – Wendy Taylor**

**Ontario North Clubs: Haliburton Highlands, Muskoka, North Bay, Orillia, Sudbury, Thunder Bay**

As most of the clubs have gone back to in person meetings, I was pleased to start the year with a visit to CFUW Muskoka in September and CFUW Haliburton in October. I was most intrigued to observe how each club conducted their meetings and have adapted to the increasing difficulties in replacing President's and Executive positions plus meeting back in person. It is evident that members were happy to be back amongst their friends.

All the North clubs have struggled with membership and succession planning. All the clubs are active and pursuing CFUW goals and raising funds for scholarships.

CFUW Muskoka has a very active club with a variety of social clubs. They meet once a month at different locations. My visit was at the Muskoka Airport in Gravenhurst. A very insightful tour and meeting followed. Muskoka has no formal President. The monthly meetings are conducted by past Presidents. Their advocacy work consists of work within the community, with an emphasis on homelessness. This year Muskoka has taken on the initiative of “warming centres” in their region. The club has reached out to other Northern clubs for input. A possible Ontario Council resolution may come next year.

CFUW Haliburton is a vibrant club with great enthusiasm for the homeless as well in their region. Several of the members work at the Heat Bank in Haliburton. Cooking meals and helping raise funding for rural heating initiatives. They do not meet every month. They have had difficulties filling the President’s role, so they have cut back on meetings. They do not consider themselves an “advocacy” club, but they are very concerned with the high cost of heating in rural areas and are investigating the possibility of a National resolution on high heating for rural areas across Canada.

CFUW North Bay will be my September 2023 visit. They have also started meeting in person again with monthly speakers. North Bay has Co-Chair Presidents and very active interest groups. Like the other North clubs, they also prepare hampers particularly at Christmas for vulnerable citizens.

CFUW Sudbury is a very active club with a variety of interest groups and monthly guest speakers. Sudbury as well has had issues with succession planning. With perseverance and learning opportunities they have formed a committee to reorganize how the executive works and to stimulate new membership and appeal to younger members. They are holding information meetings to get feedback from members and build support. They are hoping to have this all resolved by the AGM in May.

CFUW Orillia is my home club. Orillia is once again meeting in person with Zoom meetings during the winter months. Monthly speakers are very engaging. Membership in Orillia continues to grow with several recruitment opportunities. Several active interest groups are in place. Orillia has a very active Advocacy Committee. This past year the committee took up the resolution from 2022 that University Club of North York put forth. **“Strengthening Bail Laws to Protect Victims of Intimate Partner Violence”** With the support of Simcoe North MP, Adam Chambers a petition was read in Parliament in early February. Orillia also hosted a very successful recruitment event for IWD. Orillia has a yearly Homes Tour for Scholarships and has recently formed a Scholarship Board.



As a member of CFUW Orillia, I am active in the Advocacy Committee, Book Club, Dinner Club, Breakfast Group.

AS RD North I have held President's meetings every two months. They have been very productive in attempting to help with issues arising in the different clubs to help with succession planning. Our meetings have been very productive in advocacy and sharing ideas about possible resolutions. Advocacy Chair, Sandra Shaw was one of our presenters.

I have been available to club members for meetings on succession planning and creating stronger clubs. As issues arise, I have attempted to find solutions for them.

As part of my work on Ontario Council, I have attended RD National meetings. It is interesting to meet with RD's across Canada and share our experiences. Succession planning appears to be a big issue across the country. Building strong clubs with committed members is a priority.

I am also part of the National Resolution Committee. This has been a very rewarding experience. The clubs who put a resolution forth are to be commended for the interest and research that goes into each resolution. I look forward to next year as my goal is to visit each club in my region.

## Report of the Regional Director, ON South – Joyce See

Ontario South Clubs: Brantford, Burlington, Georgetown, Grimsby, Hamilton, Milton and District, Mississauga, Oakville, St. Catharines, Welland and District

This has been my third year as Regional Director for Ontario South. Ontario South is made up of ten clubs in the western GTA and Niagara Peninsula. I have enjoyed continuing to get to know the club presidents and the advocacy and scholarship leads. They never fail to impress me with their creativity, energy and the positive attitude they bring to our conversations.

Clubs in Ontario South have continued to balance the challenges presented by Covid-19 restrictions with the need of their members for opportunities for fellowship. What follows is the club president's reflections and highlights regarding their organization. In the interest of space, I have had to summarize some of the information submitted. My apologies for any significant omissions.

### **CFUW Brantford – Submitted by Betsy Capitano, President**

This has been a wonderful year for the Brantford club as we slowly return to the "new" normal. CFUW Brantford has welcomed new members, has been able to enjoy in person events and attend hybrid General Meetings. Our club is now 77 years young and going strong.

This past year brought back many of our in-person celebrations --- the Blue Lake Picnic, the Seasonal Celebration and our annual meeting where we were wonderfully entertained with music. We saw a move to hybrid general meetings which allowed those unable to attend in person to enjoy our meetings and the wonderful speakers we have heard this year. Hybrid meetings have been very handy when inclement weather has struck as we can simply move the meeting to Zoom instead of cancelling.

The executive meets by zoom and this is working very well. As a club we are continuing with the President of the Month System which seems to be working very well.

Interest Groups are meeting again, and where in-person has not been possible, again Zoom has allowed members to keep connected with those in their respective interest groups.

This year, once again, saw our club members generously donating to our local women's shelter and the long-awaited return of our Trivia Night Fundraiser for the Scholarship fund was a great success.

### **CFUW Burlington – Submitted by Ruth Levkoe, Past President**

Our Club continues to find ways to grow, attract more diverse and younger members, while keeping our current members engaged and active. Although we were able to add a few new faces to our Executive team, several members still had to reluctantly agree to remain in their unfilled positions and several positions were still left vacant.

Executive meetings remained virtual and were held every other month, with the Program Committee planning and organizing our monthly General meetings. Our new Communication Chair became more active on various Social Media platforms, and we hope to publicize our events and attract new members rather than rely on our underused website. We encouraged members at large to assume leadership positions for single events and help chair and organize one or two General meetings, with help from our Executive mentors.

Our Advocacy Committee struggled to engage members this year, yet still managed to meet with our MP and MPP to let them know our priorities and positions. Our Resolutions meeting was held in April this year with a small committee examining the Resolutions.

We focused more on Social events in this post-Covid lockdown year, responding to our members' requests, yet still managed to have some interesting and relevant presenters for our Speaker Series. We alternated between in-person and virtual meetings and reduced our meetings to 7 this year. Our speakers ranged from a brilliant Cancer researcher, to two exceptional young Canadian filmmakers. We had a speaker from our municipal

government, encouraging us to get involved in local politics and two professors from U of T presented a hands-on workshop on “Strategies to Prevent Dementia”. Our November Social included great food contributed by members as well as a presentation by Food4Kids. Our generous members donated boxes of food and backpack items for children to this local organization. In February, we continued our tradition of “Beating the Blues” with a Chef Event, creating the Perfect Party Platter.

On May 3 we are holding our Fundraiser for our Scholarship Foundation with author Elizabeth Hay at St. Christopher’s Church. We hope to sell at least 250 tickets for the in-person event, as well as livestream tickets for members who live in other cities. We will hold our AGM on May 24 with well-known Canadian singer and activist Sarah Harmer as our keynote speaker.

Our many Interest Groups continued to thrive and meet regularly. We introduced some new groups to our regular roster of Book Clubs, Art and Music Appreciation, Travel presentations, Hiking and Walking, Bridge, Education and French groups. Our new groups included Snowshoe Shufflers, Jetsetters (who planned a trip to Washington DC in April), and Weekenders.

Our total numbers remained stable and several new members replaced those who moved or withdrew from the Club. We continued with a shared Leadership model to replace the typical President, Vice President model and hope new members will step up to Leadership positions for our next year.

### **CFUW Grimsby – Submitted by Marilyn Slater, President**

It is interesting that last year I reported Membership at the Grimsby Club had decreased from 25 to 19 while this year I report it has increased from 19 to 25!

In-person meetings resumed in September 2022 with our tried and true format of a business meeting, followed by dinner in a local restaurant and that followed by a Speaker. We tried to do a hybrid meeting, but no one came via Zoom, so we have not pursued this. Attendance at meetings is usually around 20 members, so the dinner meetings continue to prove to be very popular.

We were able to re-establish our annual book sale in April, after a two-year hiatus due to Covid. Sales were low as rental of the facility could not be established until near the date and it seems members of the community were not aware of the book sale or chose to forego attending.

Our annual Lobster Dinner went ahead in February after a two-year hiatus, and was a resounding success, raising sufficient funds to allow us to continue awarding scholarships to local girls.

A Facebook page has been launched, allowing us another avenue in social media to advertise our group, and our activities in a timely manner. We re-

established an old activity that the Club had set aside years ago: Goof Off Days. A member organizes a social activity that is not related to Club business. Three examples are a trip to The Gleaners (who rescue food that is not saleable, dehydrate it and send it those in need globally), a trip to the movies, a visit to a local brewery on International Women's Day, where funds were being raised for our local women's shelter.

There is a new climate in the Club which is enabling us to begin Advocacy work again. It is just baby steps at this point, but it is an encouraging feeling.

### **CFUW Georgetown – Submitted by Diane McDermott, Past President**

**Meetings:** Hybrid zoom/in person for Fall and Spring General Meetings, with virtual-only in winter months. Zoom is favoured for Executive meetings. The virtual aspect is likely to continue as it is allowing those now house-bound or living distantly to participate.

**Membership:** Total down slightly and stands at 58 but succeeded in attracting 4 new members who were welcomed with a High Tea. Still losing members at a rate faster than we are gaining.

**Leadership:** The struggle to fill the President's Job has led to rotating Acting Presidents drawn from the Executive and Committee heads, which viewed positively is an apprenticeship for future leadership roles.

**Programs:** Customary mixture of monthly public lectures offered, often in partnership with the public library's Speakers Series, that address both issues and local colour. And although membership numbers are down, that is not reflected in our Interest Group offerings, many now conducted enthusiastically in person.

**Scholarship:** A total of \$7500 will be awarded from our Scholarship Trust Fund for post-secondary education, divided among the three area high schools. We have for a long time removed gender from the criteria for recipients and this year we are additionally expanding the definition of "post-secondary" beyond university and college to include Trade and Special Ed programs.

### **Advocacy:**

1. We continue to support climate action and environmental issues. Locally, that means drawing attention to urban planning and impacts on farmland loss and promoting alternatives to the creation of another superhighway known as the #413 by attending local demonstrations and putting out lawn signs in support of Halton Hills Climate Action, a group founded by two long time members.
2. Organized and promoted local March/Walk for March 8<sup>th</sup> in recognition of International Women's Day IWD and invited local press coverage. This our fourth year.

3. Organized and hosted a full slate Mayoral All Candidates Debate in October seating 200 people, a full house, continuing the club's long tradition of community service to local elections.
4. Participated in Vigil with local Women's shelter representatives to mark Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> by providing 14 Ecole Polytechnique "named" roses for ceremonial placing on a local Purple Bench, an initiative that draws awareness to intimate partner violence (IPV).
5. Sent CFUW Resolutions to local MP & MPP to inform them of concerns of those in their ridings; they in turn forwarded them on to related dept/ministries. Amplification.
6. Letters of Support written to mayor to encourage lighting Town Hall orange for 16 Days of Action, in support of public library's Reading Buddies grant application, and to Town in support of amendment to zoning to facilitate the establishment of a local hospice.

### **CFUW Hamilton – Submitted by Deborah Welland, President**

CFUW Hamilton has had a reasonably successful year. We have maintained our membership numbers even though we lost a few long-time members who just aren't able to take an active part anymore.

We held our September, October, and November general meetings in person. However, January, February, and March were once again on Zoom. April is in person and for the first time since 2019 our May luncheon is in a local church.

Under the leadership of Vice President Cathy McPherson we prepared and submitted a proposed resolution on Maternal Deaths in Canada for consideration.

### **CFUW Milton & District – Submitted by Cindy Lunau, President**

**Meetings** – Our club reopened to traditional meetings in April and now continue with Hybrid Meetings. This has allowed participation from members who cannot attend in person or who live at a distance but choose to remain members...even from overseas.

We celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in June 2022 with a 'Grooviest Dinner Party' featuring fashions from the 60's. New & newish members were introduced & made to feel welcome through Mixer Games at the February meeting. Our March meeting was particularly unique. Our speaker – a professor at the U of Guelph – lectured on 'Cooking with Critters' – a challenge she presented to her students during the pandemic. They actually produced a cookbook (and she brought Cricket Cookies). It was a wonderfully enlightening and entertaining vision of the future **Membership** continues to be strong.

**Special Interest Groups** remain strong and re-opened with in-person participation during the year. One of the Groups (Globetrotters) must now meet via ZOOM to accommodate growing interest & participation. These groups are a 'glue' that binds members and encourages new friendships. You must be a CFUW member to participate.

**Advocacy** is the backbone of our club. In response to concerns, we formed a new group this year – **Caregiver/Elder Care**. Indigenous issues remain a key focus. A Committee met and our own **Land Acknowledgement** statement now opens each meeting. In addition, every month we feature Three Challenges to broaden our understanding of Indigenous issues as we work for reconciliation. These range from reading a book, attending an event/business/lecture, solving puzzles, or personal reflections. The Club received a **Special Project Award** from National for our work towards Truth and Reconciliation., We would be happy to share particulars with other clubs. **2022 Resolutions** were unanimously supported. CFUW Milton continues as an **Opt-In club for GWI**.

**International Women's Day** - We raised the flag (with the mayor) and our March on Main (Street) returned! Over 150 marchers participated from our club, community groups and students from two high school (including many young men!). A huge success! Our many years of work on IWD received an **International Certificate of Merit** for the many successful years of marches – an example for other clubs to follow. Happy to share the 'play book' with dozens of details & suggestions.

**Fundraising:** Our only Fundraising Activity is our **Annual Book Sale** which is held in April. This massive two-day event at our local mall supports scholarships for local female high school graduates. Last year's event raised nearly \$9,000.

**Scholarships.** This year an additional scholarship will be awarded In Memoriam of Margaret Gray, a founding & life-time member. Five scholarships totaling \$9,000 will be awarded this year The **Scholarship Committee's** process is intense – but a format is in place that makes it run smoothly. A separate **Scholarship Trust** holds funds In Trust allocating funds each year. Giving Tuesday also directs funds to this trust.



**Club Activities: Coldest Night of the Year** – CFUW Milton supports this annual event for Milton Transitional Housing. (Ex Dir is our own Donna Danielli.) Club members volunteered at the event and the CFUW Milton team raised over \$8,000 – the 5<sup>th</sup> highest of over 50 teams.

**Members in the News: Marina Huissoon** (Past President CFUW Milton & Chair of the Advocacy Committee) was recognized by the Milton Chamber of Commerce on IWD. Marina spent IWD in New York as one of just 15 Canadian Delegates to the United Nations Commission of the Status of Women. The Women's Executive Network named **Indira Naidoo-Harris** (CFUW Member, former MPP, & U of Guelph AVP) one of Canada's Most Powerful Women for 2022.

#### **CFUW Mississauga – Submitted by Diane McCullough, Advocacy Lead**

Things began to get back to normal as we reinstated in person monthly meetings. Most of our Interest Groups were back to meeting in person as well. Our monthly meetings were held in the afternoon which was new for us and we also changed location. After analyzing a survey that just went out to all members, it was determined that these changes were successful and will carry on next year.

Our membership slowly rose over the year to a present 115. Scholarship was once again able to hold their card and game afternoon which is a fundraiser for them.

The Issues and Advocacy group continued with A Moment for Advocacy at each General Membership Meeting. Last year the focus was on Long-Term Care and then expanded this year to consider aging in general. We will conclude the year with our Picnic Lunch, which is now becoming an annual event, on May 29<sup>th</sup>.

Our speakers were varied and provided in-depth knowledge on a variety of topics. Our latest speaker was Dr. Wendy Tamminen, PhD in immunology, who

provided some background information before going on to explain the value of vaccines.

**CFUW Oakville – Submitted by Janice May, Co-President on behalf of her Co-Presidents Marlene Bristol and Deborah May**

With the return to in-person meetings, we made the decision to also offer virtual participation via Zoom. The hybrid meetings have been very well attended and the small investment in the technology will allow our “snowbirds” to continue to participate year around going forward. We are very encouraging of our members to come back in person and hope that this will become the norm for most of our members by the fall.

Our interest groups are meeting both in person and on Zoom, and with the additional of a few new ones we are running just over thirty-five groups. Our membership has remained steady, and we were delighted to welcome 16 new members this year.

We experienced a very productive advocacy year, building on the work of our resolution on Violence Against Women in Politics, as well as a focus on Health Care and Environmental Actions Matters. Many of our wonderful speakers addressed topics related to our advocacy efforts, and we look forward to two special presentations on Collaborative Aging and Engendering Politics: Violence Against Women in Politics with Dr. Barbara Perry.

Listening is the intention of our Truth and Reconciliation Group, who have participated in several educational and cultural activities, listening, and learning while building new relationships in the community.

We are very proud of the efforts of our members which has transitioned our website to a reliable resource on topics of interest. Please look us up, and you will likely find excellent information to support your advocacy efforts. Our newsletters have also grown with contributions of many members and are playing an essential role in keeping us connected with one another.

Our holiday dinner meeting was very well attended, and we will have our second dinner meeting of the year on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**CFUW St Catharines – Submitted by Anne-Marie Stockwell, President**



2022-2023 has been a busy year for us. We started meeting in person in September with a large turnout of members. Having 15 new members join our group brings our numbers up to 222 members. Being in person was a joy for all of us. Our first meeting was greeting, meeting, and reacquainting. The hall was packed with chatting and joy. Typically, our meetings have an exciting speaker and a meeting that was shortened considerably to allow more mingling time. At our December meeting, we held a Silent Auction at a dinner, and in March, we had a Maker's Market at which members made samples of their hobbies for sale. Our third fundraiser, Cobs Bread, was also highly successful.



We were delighted to welcome three members from the Welland CFUW Club to our Maker's Market and plan to visit them in the coming year. Grimsby will also be invited in the coming year. We look forward to joining them at their club in the coming year.

Our monthly Newsletter and individual letters are used to keep our members informed and updated as needed. Over 100 of our members are actively involved on the executive, committees, and various activities held throughout the year. Others participate as called upon at our Annual House and Garden tour held annually in May.



Our Advocacy committee has been communicating with MPPs, Regional Council Chairs, and School Boards pertaining to the trafficking of young women and girls, public awareness, and implementation of Policy 166 locally on school boards, including educating staff to recognize and act as required. Communications have been extended to include Facebook and Instagram. Our Charitable Fund is changing this year to endow our scholarships to Brock University and establish a scholarship for an indigenous female student. This is a three-year plan to update our current plan.

Our Spring Fling will be our final meeting for this year and will be celebrated on May 9 with a lovely dinner, speaker, and get-together.

### **CFUW Welland and District – Submitted by Kathy Shaw, President**

We have 45 members, 2 are life members. Our meetings had been held virtually until March 2023 when we had our first hybrid meeting. Going forward we hope to continue having hybrid meetings.

Our monthly speakers have covered a wide range of topics including: Building Canada's Olympic Team; An Immigrant's Journey as a Newcomer; and Wainfleet - WWII POW Camp.

The Advocacy Committee's REDress display during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign received positive recognition from the public, as well as, the encouragement of Metis artist Jaime Black who started the REDress Project in Canada.

The club's book sale, our only scholarship fundraiser, has been permanently discontinued in its current format. There is a possibility that it may return in a pared down format. We are able to continue awarding annual scholarships to the eight local high schools.

## Report of the Chair, Communications – Ingrid Sproxton

The Communications portfolio includes:

- The OC website ([www.cfuwontcouncil.org](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.org));
- Social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter);
- OC News newsletters;
- OC communications, e.g. CFUW Ontario Advocacy News, notices for AGMs and other events, messages from the President, etc.; and
- Dropbox (associated with Ontario Council website).

Our website is hosted on the Host Papa platform. Our two major software platforms are WordPress for the website and Constant Contact for newsletters and other OC communications.

This year, the OC Board made a decision in February to cease further posting on the Twitter platform, due to its return to allowing 'free speech' following its purchase by Elon Musk. 60,000 accounts, which had been banned for breaking Twitter rules regarding posts, were reinstated upon the purchase which, in our opinion, will promote hatred and misogyny.

Also, this year, Carol Sproule from CFUW Peterborough joined the Communications Committee and is assisting with maintenance of the OC website and managing e-mail communications through Constant Contact. Posting to Facebook is managed by Sandy Thomson, Teresa Habs and Ingrid Sproxton; posting to Instagram is managed by Lori Ker; posting to LinkedIn is managed by Sandy Thomson; posting to Twitter was managed by Teri Shaw.

### **OC Website**

Between April 1, 2022 and April 1, 2023, we had 5,731 users visit the website 11,035 times, and spend an average of 1.5 minutes on the website each visit. 64.4% of visitors

accessed the website from their computer, 34.0% from their mobile device and 1.6% from their tablet device.

Time Period (April to April)	# of Visitors	% Change Year Over Year	# of Visits	% Change Year Over Year
2019 - 2020	3,700	NA	6,200	NA
2020 - 2021	4,757	+28.6%	8,086	+30.4%
2021 - 2022	4,842	+1.8%	7,769	-3.9%
2022 – 2023	5,731	+18.4%	11,035	+42.0%

Top 10 most visited website pages are:

Page	# of views	% of total page views
CFUW Ontario Council home page	8,156	63.6%
Speakers Series/Standing Committees page	1,163	9.1%
CFUW Ontario Council News	631	4.9%
OC Club Listing	584	4.6%
Board of Directors & Elections	447	3.5%
CFUW Ontario Council About	433	3.4%
OC Club Events page	414	3.2%
Events calendar	396	3.1%
OC AGM page	372	2.9%
Advocacy > What Are The Issues?	220	1.7%

### Constant Contact for OC News & OC Communications

We currently have 1,488 active contacts (up from 1,461 last year), all of whom receive OC News. We also have contact lists for the 2022-23 Club Presidents and for the 2020-2022 OC Board. Please continue to encourage members to subscribe to the newsletter and other OC communications by e-mailing the Newsletter Editor at [communications@cfuwontcouncil.org](mailto:communications@cfuwontcouncil.org). The open rates for OC News are about 65%, and generally 6% of readers click on at least one link from the newsletter.

Communication	Date Sent	Open Rate	Click Rate
OC News	June 10, 2022	62%	5%
OC News	September 9, 2022	65%	7%
OC News	November 11, 2022	64%	9%
OC News	December 9, 2022	65%	5%
OC Advocacy News	February 2, 2023	67%	8%
OC News	February 13, 2023	66%	5%
OC News	March 17, 2023	65%	5%

### Social Media

The CFUW Ontario Council social media policy is posted on the OC website under Club Resources <https://cfuwontcouncil.org/resources/>. OC ran a Facebook campaign for the 16 Days of Activism, with posts on November 25, December 6 and December 10, 2022.

# of Followers	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Facebook	405	374	271	184	157
Instagram	192	162	112		

LinkedIn	60				
Twitter*	188	181	149	115	93

\* Will expect the number of followers to dwindle as we no longer post to Twitter

- **Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/CFUWOntarioCouncil/>
- **Instagram** <https://www.instagram.com/cfuwoncouncil/>
- **LinkedIn** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cfuw-ontario-council/>
- **Twitter** <https://twitter.com/CFUWOntCouncil>

## Report of the Chair, Advocacy – Sandra Shaw

### Speakers Series

The Advocacy year started off with Ontario Council's Speakers Series, the events being organized for October and November of 2022 and February 2023. Each of the Chairs of the Standing Committees (Education, Legislation, Status of Women and Human Rights) is responsible for developing the theme, recruiting speakers for and running one of the Speakers Series, with support from the other Standing Committee Chairs, Advocacy, and Communications.

The Speakers Series from the last three years, which moved to Zoom during Covid-19 in 2020 from in person meetings, is proving to be an excellent forum to engage members from a wider geographical area in Ontario. Participants have been pleased with the format, the themes and especially the calibre of the speakers, finding the events educational and opening new avenues for advocacy. Congratulations to Judith Pownall, Niki Carlan and Helen Robb for their hard work and creativity with this year's series. Please see their individual notes on each event, which follow.

The Speakers Series are recorded (the recordings can be obtained by contacting: [communications@cfuwontcouOctncil.org](mailto:communications@cfuwontcouOctncil.org)). When developing topic driven advocacy programs, it is worth listening to the associated Speakers Series again.

Please note that a standard operating procedure (SOP) exists for these events. If you or your club is interested in hosting a Speakers Series-type event and don't know where to start, contact the Advocacy Chair for a copy (no need to reinvent the wheel!).

### Interaction with the Ontario Government

Advocating for policy change and against specific legislation with a majority government is a difficult task. Guidelines/suggestions have been written by the Advocacy Chair and posted on the website (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/take-action/>) for just this situation. Check it out for ideas regarding how to get through to provincial politicians and, more importantly, how to keep advocacy moving forward when it looks like nothing can be done.

Letter writing and interaction with both the current government and the opposition critics have continued to take place this year. Many thanks to CFUW Ottawa for

our first correspondence this year which Ontario Council used as a template, a letter to Premier Doug Ford and Minister Steve Clark requesting **Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster** be rescinded (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/rescind-bill-23-letters/>). The main issues related to our concern for the ramifications of this Bill were succinctly outlined by CFUW Ottawa:

- create a process for selling off conservation lands without oversight;
- remove Conservation Authority powers protecting woodlands, wetlands and endangered wildlife habitats, listing many of these areas as fit for development;
- encourage urban sprawl and associated infrastructure that pollutes the environment;
- cancel municipal green building standards and seriously detract from the City of Ottawa's New Official Plan for the next 25 years;
- undo municipal design standards that prevent bird-window collisions;
- compromise precious farmland and hence future food security for all Ontario citizens;
- do very little to build more affordable homes where they are actually needed;
- limit the protection of heritage buildings as well as natural heritage properties.

Following this was Ontario Council's objections to **Bill 60, Your Health Act, 2023**. Advocacy at Ontario Council prepared a written submission (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/position-paper-re-bill-60/>) which has been entered into public record for the government's public consultation on the Bill. A copy of this submission was sent to EVERY sitting MPP and the Opposition Critics in ridings covered by CFUW Ontario Council Clubs. A copy was also sent to every OC Club President to use as a basis for further advocacy and to generate potential meetings with MPPs and Opposition Critics. The outcome of this consultation is yet to be decided at the time of writing.

### **Support to Clubs**

As always, the Advocacy Chair and Committee act as a resource for Ontario Council Clubs for their advocacy activities. Kudos to all the Clubs for their continued drive to advocate for issues of concern for which we have policy (through Ontario Council and National). This year, a presentation was developed and delivered by the Advocacy Chair on what CFUW Ontario Council Advocacy is (entitled Women Helping Women - <https://cfuwontcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Women-Helping-Women.pdf>). The presentation may be found on the website (see above) and can be used by any Club or their Advocacy/Social Justice committee to educate their members around issues of Advocacy.

Similarly, a presentation was developed and delivered to select Clubs regarding how to develop a resolution (which can also be found on the website - Submitting a Presentation to Ontario Council <https://cfuwontcouncil.org/wp->



[content/uploads/2023/04/Submitting-A-Resolution.pdf](https://cfuwontcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Submitting-A-Resolution.pdf)). Resolutions, the basis for our policy and thus advocacy, are a key component of our advocacy efforts. Congratulations to CFUW Perth and District (Fair Treatment for Canadians Suffering from Chronic Lyme Disease and Other Tick-borne Diseases) and CFUW Hamilton (A Comprehensive Maternal Death Prevention Strategy) for their extensive work on new resolutions for National consideration at the 2022/2023 AGM.

### **The Advocacy Corner** (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/?s=advocacy+corner>)

Over the last year, several OC Clubs have mentioned that it would be valuable to know what other Clubs are advocating on and how. These comments spurred us to create the **Advocacy Corner**, a page on our website where Clubs can indicate what advocacy projects and initiatives they are involved in so that they may be contacted by other OC Clubs for advice and to share and compare notes. Currently, the Regional Directors have helped us populate the document and it is hoped that each year Club Presidents and/or the Advocacy Committee of the Club will provide the necessary information. Check it out at:

### **Advocacy Communications**

An **Advocacy Newsletter** was prepared and sent to Ontario Clubs in January of this year (<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/CFUW-Ontario-Advocacy-News---January-2023.html?soid=1107531849301&aid=4hg60FXZ9Ps>). The Advocacy Chair and Standing Committee Chairs (Education, Legislation, Status of Women and Human Rights) provided the content for this well received document. The Advocacy Committee also provided content to each OC News edition. Special resources on **Ontario's Greenbelt** (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/The-Greenbelt.pdf>) and **About Healthcare Privatization of Healthcare in Ontario** (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Healthcare-Privatization-in-Ontario.pdf>) have also been prepared by Advocacy this year.

Social media also provides a forum for Ontario Council Advocacy (many thanks to Ingrid Sproxtton, Communications Chair and Teri Shaw). Content was prepared on select days for the UN's **16 Days of Activism** (against violence against women), November 25<sup>th</sup> to December 10<sup>th</sup>. Of particular importance in this period is December 6<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre, for which a special social media blast is prepared by OC Advocacy each year.

Municipal elections were taking place last Fall and updates were made to the standard operating procedure for holding All Candidates Meetings. This is available on the OC website (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/organizing-an-all-candidates-meeting/>).

We also communicated with the Ontario Health Coalition and some of their information was used as the basis for the submission to the Ontario Government on **Bill 60, Your Health Act, 2023**.

Social media is a main source of connection to OC Clubs and individual members. This year Ontario Council took a hard look at **Twitter** and decided,

after much research by the Advocacy Chair and after consultation with Club Presidents by the regional Directors, to suspend activity on this forum. A change in ownership of this platform resulted in rescinded policies governing, amongst others, inflammatory antifeminism rhetoric. The Council felt it could not continue communications through a platform tacitly promoting misogynistic antifeminist views and white supremacy.

### **United Nations Commission on the Status of Women 67**

- **Priority theme:** Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
- **Review theme:** Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls (agreed conclusions of the sixty-second session)

I was not able to attend UNCSW 67 (March 6 – 17) as a delegate this year due to conflicting priorities. However, at the time of writing we are in consultation with all Ontario CFUW members who attended as delegates discussing the provision of short reports to be sent out with OC News as a special Advocacy Report. Stay tuned for this communication.

### **Year End Projects**

In my role as Chair of Advocacy Ontario Council, I have partnered with the National Advocacy Standing Committee Chair, Heather Oxman, and the National office staff member responsible for Advocacy, Paige Inglis, to develop a short video to be used by Club Presidents and/or Club Advocacy Chairs to review with their members what CFUW Advocacy is and does for women internationally, nationally, provincially and locally and how Clubs can move their advocacy efforts to a higher plane. The video will be produced during the summer of 2023 and be ready for Clubs to present at their orientation meetings in late summer/early fall.

At my request, this working group is also considering the preparation of a video regarding the history of resolutions at CFUW and the steps necessary to develop a resolution for advocacy by our Clubs. A late summer release for this video is hoped for.

As a personal project to provide the Advocacy Committee with a more organized approach to the year, I have prepared a workplan model, establishing project/activity and their dates. If you are interested in using this for your own committees or Clubs, please contact me directly.

### **Many Thanks ...**

For all the help provided by my colleagues at Ontario Council and for their wise counsel. A special thank you goes to Teri Shaw, my predecessor, for her invaluable time and aid as she held my hand and guided me through uncharted waters during this past year.

## Report of the Chair, Education – Judith Pownall

The impact of Covid 19 continues to be felt in the education environment. While students have continued to return to full time in-class studies, there remains a great need for mental health support for not just students but educational workers.

The October 15, 2022 Speakers Series was entitled 'Education Beyond the School' with three segments looking at yoga as a way of reducing stress, the educational programs at Windreach Farms, and the challenges of identifying as a member of the LGBTQIA2S+ community.

Kendra Mullings, owner of Kendra Yoga, spoke about the value of yoga as a way of improving coping strategies, managing stress, and helping self-regulation. Her talk gave us insight into how yoga can help in nourishing the body, mind, and spirit, a timely message given that so many are having difficulty with mental health.

Kelly Taylor, Volunteer and Operations Manager of Windreach Farm, introduced us to the wide variety of programs at Windreach such as Learning-4-Life and the Community Participation Program, that enrich the lives of people of all ages with disabilities and/or special needs.

## Report of the Chair, Legislation – Niki Carlan

In November 2022 the OC Speaker Series asked the question that many of us had not even considered, despite the huge impact: *IS THE ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM WORKING FOR THE PEOPLE OF ONTARIO?*

We were gratified to see the number of members who attended and the feedback! We all learned a lot!

The Administrative Justice system affects many more citizens than the Criminal system, but it rarely gets the same attention. Adjudicative tribunals do work that would otherwise be done by the Courts. Major adjudicative tribunals in Ontario include the Human Rights Tribunal, the Labour Relations Board, the Landlord and Tenant Board, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Tribunal, the Social Benefits Tribunal, and the Automobile Accident Benefits Service.

In theory, the burden on the Courts is relieved when cases dealing with specific rights and obligations are dealt with by tribunals with specialized expertise. In reality, today the administrative justice system is faced with multi-year backlogs resulting in unacceptably large delays. "Justice delayed is justice denied."



This session, with an emphasis on women's issues, examined on going issues with tribunals like the Landlord Tenant Board and the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, and explored some remedial actions to resolve issues.

In addition to their extensive experience in the administrative justice sector, both speakers—Kathy Laird and Brian Cook—are also members of [Tribunal Watch Ontario](#), a public interest organization with a mission to monitor Ontario's adjudicative tribunal system, to advocate for adjudicative independence, and to promote access to justice for all Ontarians. They introduced Tribunal Watch's recommendation for a Judicial Council to limit political interference in the administrative justice process and to ensure competent adjudicators are appointed.

[Human Rights Protection in Ontario](#) – Kathy Laird - spoke about the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, from its formation in 2008 to the current situation, with a backlog of over 9,000 applications.

[The Ontario Adjudicative Tribunal System](#) – Brian Cook spoke about the adjudicative tribunal system in Ontario overall, the work and recommendations of Tribunal Watch Ontario.

A very thought-provoking session!

## Report of the Chair, Status of Women and Human Rights – Helen Robb

### Committee

Because of the lingering effects of the pandemic, there has been no formal sub-committee for Status of Women and Human Rights. The Advocacy Committee of CFUW Barrie and District provided assistance and advice for the February 25<sup>th</sup> session of the Speakers Series

### Meetings

Meetings of the Advocacy Committee and of the CFUW Ontario Council Board of Directors have all been held via Zoom. Informal, oral reports were made at the Advocacy Committee. More formal written reports have been made upon request for the CFUW Ontario Council Board of Directors.

### Speakers Series on February 25: The Affordable Housing Crisis: Two Working Solutions

Housing is deemed to be affordable if its costs, including taxes, do not exceed 30% of gross income. Safe, decent, and affordable housing has become unattainable

by lower and middles income families, single parent families – usually led by females, and Black and Indigenous families.

All three levels of government in Ontario have touted solutions to this problem, but have, for the most part, offered few workable solutions. Relying on developers to provide a percentage of their developments for affordable housing has not worked well. Even redefining the green belt is likely not to work as the houses built in those areas will not meet the criterion for affordable housing.

Cooperative housing used to be a solution but has fallen out of favour. No such units have been approved in years. Life leases may be a solution for older individuals. Tiny houses defined as houses ranging from 96 to 260 square feet are not approved in all municipalities. They are often limited to use on private property for the accommodation of in-laws.

In Barrie, there are two working solutions to the crisis in the provision of affordable housing: Habitat for Humanity Huronia and Barrie Housing.

On February 25, the Robert Cikoja, the Chief Executive Officer of Habitat for Humanity Huronia outlined the growing success of Huronia's provision of safe, decent, affordable houses for home ownership. Melissa Stewart, Operations and Development Manager outlined the success and limitations of affordable rental accommodation provided by Barrie Municipal Non-Profit Housing Corporation.

This session helped the attendees to understand the two solutions and made suggestions for ways in which to support other such organizations in their own communities.

### Membership

The CFUW National Office is currently reviewing the terminology used in the policy on Gender Identity adopted in 2014. Therefore, I will recommend to the CFUW Ontario Council Board of Directors that membership in CFUW be limited to those individuals who self-identify as women and that such limitation be conveyed to all affiliates. The simple restriction avoids the use of any unacceptable terminology.

## Standing Committee Reports

### Report of the Chair, Advocacy – Sandra Shaw

#### **Committee Participation**

In addition to attending OC Executive meetings, the Advocacy Chair holds monthly meetings with the other Advocacy Committee members, that is, the Standing Committee Chairs from Education, Legislation, and Status of Women

and Human Rights. Topics of discussion range from the Speakers Series to content for the newsletters to the potential for **submission of a national resolution for 2023/2024 on taming the high cost of medical devices to consumers.**

The Advocacy Chair is also a member of the CFUW Standing Committee on Advocacy (National) and the CFUW Sub-committee for the Status of Women and Human Rights (National) and attends all meetings of these two committees, contributing to National advocacy efforts with an Ontario lens.

On behalf of Ontario Council, the Chair of Advocacy attended monthly meetings of the Equal Pay Coalition (EPC) of which Ontario Council is a member (culminating in Equal Pay Day (April 4<sup>th</sup>) activities). This year a short video was produced by members of the Coalition for Equal Pay Day on the theme of 'Privatization Hurts Women' which can be seen on our website. Advocacy pushed out EPC information on our social media. For International Women's Day, Ontario Council also pushed out EPC activities and videos through our social media.

### **Awards**

The Advocacy Chair is responsible for setting up and reviewing applications for Advocacy and Environment awards. This year, Wendy Taylor, Niki Carlan and Judith Pownall, along with me, reviewed applications and selected the awardees.

Thank you to all who submit applications showcasing your activities. There were difficult choices, indeed. Congratulations to our winner of this year's Carolyn Day Award, the Membership Retention Award and Membership Increase Award and to all the honorable mentions.

## **Report of the Chair, Bylaws and Chair, Governance**

From President Teresa Habs:

No bylaw amendments were proposed for AGM 2023.

In early 2023, Lori Ker resigned as Chair, Bylaws, and Chair, Governance. Lori was our board's outstanding star in our efforts to move CFUW Ontario Council into the necessary world of new legislation concerning not-for profit organizations such as ours.

You will certainly be familiar with Lori's work in outlining those Bylaw amendments at AGM 2022 that accomplished our goal.

Lori also completed the May 2022 edition of CFUW Ontario Council Bylaws available on our website.

In matters of Governance Lori provided the advice our board needed to come to a successful decision. The document 'OC Governance Policies and Guidelines four sections (Governance Framework, Board Effectiveness, Financial Strength and Board Committees) were completed, and board approved.

I thank Lori for her dedication and hard work on behalf of Ontario Council! As President, I have asked Helen Robb, our current Chair, Status of Women and Human Rights, to take on the Chair, Bylaws and Chair, Governance for the remainder of the term. Helen has a wealth of experience in both areas due to her role as an Ontario Secondary Schools Federation negotiator before her retirement, and policy writer as Chair of the Board of Habitat for Humanity – Huronia in Barrie.

## Report of the Chair, Finance\* - Anne Groulx

- The Committee was chaired by the OC Treasurer.
- The Committee met twice over Zoom.
- The Committee reviewed and discussed the following:
  - The Financial Results to February 20, 2023 in comparison to the budget.
  - Budget proposed for the 2023-24 fiscal year including assumptions regarding membership and in-person events.
  - OC Grants to Clubs for Non-Revenue Generating Events/Projects – change in wording to Financial Policies and Application Form for Grant.
  - OC Financial Policies were updated as of March 2023.
- Thanks to Donna Wright and Margaret Blanchet, Treasurers of Aurora Newmarket who volunteered to serve on the Committee.

\*See Treasurer's Report in the Business and Finance booklet

## Report of the Chair, Resolutions – Isobel Boyle

This year we received no resolutions for submission at Ontario Council AGM.

There was an inquiry as to whether the Resolution *Fair Treatment for Canadians Suffering from Chronic Lyme Disease and Other Tick-Borne Diseases* should be a National or Provincial resolution. Given the prevalence of these diseases throughout the country, it was recommended that this should be a National Resolution.

There has been some discussion regarding the dates for submission of intent for a resolution and then the resolution be moved. However, this is troublesome in terms of circulating the resolution to clubs, receiving amendments and revising resolution in a timeframe to allow final circulation prior to OC AGM.

More effort will be made to advertise the deadline for submission of intent for a resolution through RDs and the OC Newsletter.