



CFUW
ONTARIO
COUNCIL

CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

Step Into Your Power



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*Report of the Treasurer in the Business and Finance Booklet

Message from the President

The year has been marked by the continuation of the pandemic since our first lockdown in March, 2020. We have since experienced rolling lockdowns, exposed the long term health care crisis, witnessed the loss of jobs and felt the increase of mental health struggles. We have seen the loss of women's rights and the increase of violence against them. But despite these very altered circumstances and resulting consequences, I have hope. Hope coming with vaccinations and reaching herd immunity. Hope we can eventually meet face to face. Hope that our hard work will make a significant difference.

This Annual Report presents how the Ontario Board of Directors and our 49 member clubs have risen to the continuing challenges of making lives better for women and girls and to society...in the hopes of a better future.

###

Report of the President

Sandra Thomson

Report of the President

Background

Ontario Council serves the following purposes:

1. Advocates for the advancement of the status of women, human rights and the common good.
2. Promotes cooperation, communication, networking, support and understanding among women.
3. Promotes high standards of education, lifelong learning and advanced study and research by women.
4. Encourages and enables women to apply their knowledge and skills in leadership and decision-making in all aspects of their lives.

For the 2020-2021 term, and in keeping with our purpose, the Ontario Council Board has strived to support all of our 49 Clubs during this global pandemic, as we “stepped into our power” -- the theme of this Ontario Council Annual General Meeting (AGM). I am very proud of the CFUW Orillia ladies who picked up the gauntlet two years ago to host this year’s AGM. They had to quickly ‘pivot’ from a face to face event to a virtual platform. They have been creating, developing and strategizing with precision and energy. The Ontario Council Board is indebted to them as we “step into our power” for the 2021-2022 term!

Despite the COVID restrictions and associated health risks, we have seen Ontario Council Clubs rise to the unique challenges. These restrictions, as opposed to deterring us, actually spurred us on to more **education, action** and **advocacy!**

Ontario Council First: Virtual AGM 2020

Following our very first virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May, 2020, the Ontario Council Board spring boarded into action! A special meeting was scheduled for August to finish our business agenda, highlighted by the elections for the 2020-2022 Board of Directors.

Over the course of the summer, three “Crossover” Training sessions were held for those nominated during the nomination process period and those individuals who expressed an interest in serving on the Board. Preliminary discussions focused on our tagline of Education-Action-Advocacy, with confirmation of the theme “Women Helping Women,” for which we later added, For a Better Future – especially after this unprecedented year!

Once the elections were held in August, the Board set our own priorities, concentrating on: Advocacy, Committees, Education, Membership, and Communications.

ADVOCACY

To advocate for women and girls, and the common good, the Ontario Council Board made several submissions to government officials, and we noted many, many advocacy events held by the Ontario Council Clubs. In hopes of giving the attention our collective advocacy deserves, we have created a Special Edition this year: **CFUW Ontario Council *Advocacy *Awards *Accolades**. Please take the time to peruse the edition and read about the tremendous efforts and successes of Ontario Council and our Clubs' advocacy actions!

However, just to highlight two significant and firsts this term:

Our First Highlight:

We are so proud of our four Ontario Clubs – Markham/Unionville, Oakville, Ottawa and Stratford – who saw their resolutions passed at the National AGM. An **Ontario Council Clubs Resolutions Meeting** was held with the principal writers of these resolutions on September 2, 2020 to discuss how Ontario Council could advance their resolutions provincially. Long Term Care (LTC) was a leading priority as the engulfing pandemic exposed the serious issues present in our nursing care facilities. We were proud to sponsor a LTC Campaign, initiated by CFUW Stratford with involvement from CFUW Windsor, CFUW Kitchener-Waterloo and CFUW Oakville. This campaign featured a short survey with a good representative response from the Clubs and networks throughout the province.

The resulting survey and action included a very definitive letter of our “asks” sent to the provincial government, in time for Elders Day, May 4.

Our Second Highlight:

Human Trafficking remains a serious problem in our province. At the time of writing this report, the Ontario Council Board is counting on the membership to support this 2021 Ontario resolution, proposed by CFUW St. Catharines, and actively participate in the action plan! We sent a letter to the government addressed to the Attorney General, D. Downey, on the reinvestment of 2.5 million dollars cash and proceeds from criminals to help fight Human Trafficking in communities across the province.

A meeting was held with Associate Minister of Women and Children, J. Dunlop, to discuss how Ontario Council can continue to support the government in fighting this crime — a crime involving predominantly young women and youth (with the average age of 13) being trafficked.

ONTARIO COUNCIL COMMITTEES



The goal of Ontario Council was to fortify our standing committees. We published a call for policy advisors and individual members for our Advocacy Committee. Ontario Council is very fortunate to have expert policy advisors - Dr.

Shelley Ball, environment; Sheila Lacroix, housing; Myrtle Greve, poverty; and Margaret McGovern, early learning and child care – answer the call as well as individual Club members - Helen Penfold, CFUW North Toronto and Marina Huissoon, CFUW Milton - respond.

The mandate of this Committee is to advocate for the advancement of the status of women, human rights and the common good for Ontario. Committee projects/initiatives are expected to be aligned with the biennium theme approved by the OC Board. Some of the issues discussed or responded to included: Long Term Care, Human Trafficking, Housing/Universal Design,

Environment/Conservation Authorities Act; Early Learning and Child Care; Climate Change; Social Assistance Rates.

Our Education Committee, under the Chair of Wendy Taylor, responded to a number of issues with submissions to the government, notably concerns with the Child Care and Early Years Act of 2014.

Sandra Shaw, Chair, Status of Women and Human Rights Committee, literally a one woman show, produced a plethora of resources on a number of issues regarding women and human rights. Please visit the Status of Women and Human Rights page on the OC website www.cfuwontcouncil.org under Advocacy.

Lisa Long, another new member to the Board, chairs the Legislation Committee and was instrumental in connecting and working with CFUW St. Catharines on their resolution.

The Articles and Bylaws Committee, chaired by Lori Ker, met on a number of occasions to review our governance document (an annual exercise). We are presenting a correction to the bylaws, and, in addition, proposing “Membership” as a standing committee. New application forms were developed for virtual, corporate and affiliate memberships

<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/about/membership/>.

Our Governance Committee, also under the leadership of Lori Ker, created an Orientation slide program, a Leadership Succession framework and, in development, is our Policies and Guidelines Manual. Lori has also been available to Clubs to assist with constitution and bylaws updates and revisions.

Our Finance Committee has proposed a new budget, inclusive of covering Regional Director travel and accommodation expenses. To assist the Clubs financially, the committee also presented a motion to reduce dues for a year, and totally revamped our incentive financial application forms for Clubs.

<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/resources/>.

(The Ontario Council Board was very mindful of how the altered circumstances has affected Clubs' abilities to fundraise and because of our careful managing and prudent care of the finances, we were able to reduce the dues for one year and offer more monies in the incentives program).

LIFELONG LEARNING

During the summer, the Advocacy Committee met to discuss the popular Ontario Council Speakers Series program and Workshop program. Given we are conducting all meetings and programs virtually, a panel discussion was the agreed upon format.

- Our first program in October was *Elder Care – Protect the Vulnerable*. Three experts in the fields of long-term care planning, home care and alternative living accommodations for seniors enlightened approximately 150 attendees via Zoom.
- The second program featured three distinctive speakers to the theme of *Women in a COVID Economy*.” Highlighted were the topics of child care, the rise of gender based violence and women in the labour market.
- Our third program - *Mental Health: Prevention to Wellness* - was featured February 27 in a well-attended session. Lived experiences from our speakers brought to the forefront how the pandemic has affected them and society....a sobering outlook.
- A virtual platform reaches far more members to fulfill our purpose of lifelong learning and promoting advocacy efforts.

MEMBERSHIP

Six Regional Directors (RD) cover 49 Ontario Clubs. Though Ontario Council has seen a drop in our individual membership numbers, the Ontario Council Board applauds the efforts put forth by our Clubs to engage and keep their members connected. Nearly every Club has a Zoom account (or avail themselves of the National account) and have been conducting activities virtually.

The Ontario Council Board is proud of all the Clubs and their ability to adapt to online connections. Clubs have found creative means of “meeting” for example, in playing bridge, hosting online cooking classes, book discussions, meet and greets, etc.

This pandemic was not going to deter us from getting together!

Ontario Council applauds the creativity and ingenuity of the Clubs. Social media presence is highly visible and more newsletters keep the individual members well informed of activities. Regional Clubs have partnered together to host speakers’ nights or invite other Ontario Clubs to their speakers’ program and/or webinars. This has been the advantage of virtual connections!

Fundraising for scholarship funds has been another challenge for the Clubs. Several have reverted from physical to online: auctions, book sales, house tours, raffles, selling of cards, etc. with great success. To help Clubs during these altered circumstances, the Ontario Council Board voted to **reduce** their dues for the 2021-2022 dues year by half.

The Regional Directors have remained in constant contact with their Clubs by hosting virtual meetings and attending Clubs’ virtual speakers’ programs, webinars, etc. The RDs serve to promote their Clubs’ activities and provide information and guidance. They keep the regional Clubs connected too! They were responsible for assembling the “President’s Package” of information for incoming presidents and/or executive leaders for the Clubs.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ontario Council’s goal has been to increase social media presence. The website has been updated, with new pages for the Education, Legislation, and Status of Women and Human Rights Standing Committees. In addition to Facebook and Twitter, an Instagram account has been added to our communications channels. The Ontario Council newsletter (OC News) is produced monthly, sharing and informing our members of Club events, current issues, and general information. Our subscription listing has increased.

As President, I continued to receive Clubs' newsletters and what a pleasure to read! So many of the Clubs offered interesting virtual programs, with a variety of topics and speakers, a number of book selections for discussion, online coffee clutches, parties and fundraisers!

OTHER PRESIDENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As ex-officio of all the standing committees, I have been very active with the following: Governance, Constitution and Bylaws, Finance, and Resolutions. I am proud of the work we accomplished this year and especially pleased that we looked at our membership possibilities with e-clubs and affiliations for the future. Reviewing policies and procedures on a yearly basis is critical in order for Ontario Council to stay relevant, dynamic and be "in the know and in the now". I believe we are focused on these aspects as we continue our important work.

With respect to communications, I work closely with Ingrid Sproxton and respective members of the communications committee – Teri Shaw and Lori Ker. We are pleased with our social media and continue to improve in this sector. Preparing the OC Newsletter is a pleasure and creating relevant and timely messaging in this fast pace world is important.

This has been an unprecedented year. I was in close contact with our insurance carrier regarding our coverage and responding to Clubs regarding personal liability, for example, in Club activities. We engaged our law firm to ensure we were giving clear direction to our Clubs.

Staying connecting with the Clubs and individual members is important! I was able to 'visit' several of the Ontario Council Clubs this term and it was a pleasure to see the clubs thriving! In addition to attending and chairing at least one meeting of my home club, CFUW Kincardine, as well as being present at the CFUW Oakville meetings (my dual Club), I was pleased to see the collaborative effort of several Clubs in ON South who came together

to present a program to Ontario Council Clubs! Great example of collaboration and club engagement!

I have been working with our Local Arrangements Committee to host the AGM. This has been a very unique year as we are hosting a virtual reception and program, along with the business meeting. The CFUW Orillia ladies are amazing and kudos to RD Roline Maconachie as the liaison. I am also looking forward to collaborating with CFUW Kitchener-Waterloo as they will host the 2022 AGM! I am also responsible for crafting the Business and Finance Booklet along with the Annual Report. And I am indebted to Teri Shaw, Sandra Shaw, Teresa Habs and our accountant, Judy Nettleton for all the help!

I am passionate about supporting our Clubs and determining how Ontario Council can meet their needs. I rely on the Regional Directors to bring these issues forward and I have responded to individual requests with respect to resolution guidance, advocacy letters, human resources topics and actions, etc.

Not unlike Club presidents, I also prepare the agendas and proofread the minutes from our monthly meetings. One could say that is the easiest part of the job – I would disagree! Keeping track of the issues and being flexible are key components of any chair! Of course I rely on my secretary, Teri Shaw, to keep me on the path!

I am very proud of the fact that 14 Ontario Council women attended the virtual Commission of Status of Women (CSW) as delegates. This is a golden opportunity to understand the global issues affecting women and girls. The delegates were: Teri Shaw, OC secretary; Sandra Shaw, OC Chair, Status of Women and Human Rights; Roberta Balmer, Lynda Moore, Kathy McCarty, Dani Bartlett, Brenda Robinson, Marianne Singh-Waraich, Isobel Boyle, Manu Ramkumar, Shelagh Stevens, Kathy Wosnick, and Kathryn Wilkinson, National President. My full report can be read here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dju5xagde810vod/UN%20Report.pdf?dl=0>

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

I serve on the National Charitable Trust Fellowship Committee in adjudicating applications for the CT scholarships.

SUMMARY

I continue to be humbled by the members of the Ontario Council Board- we engage collaboratively for the good of our 49 Clubs. To the members of the Board and the Clubs: It is an honour to work with such talented, dedicated women, who understand the value of networking, advocacy, lifelong learning and stretching oneself to be the best. Thank you for this opportunity.

###

Report of the Secretary

Teri Shaw

Report of the Secretary

The specific work of the Secretary for Ontario Council involves three areas: that which is required by the Ontario Corporations Act (1990) for Ontario incorporated non-profits, other secretarial assistance as needed, and the organization of the Speaker Series vis-à-vis the location and catering. As the latter has not happened in person for 2020-2021, there has been time to offer more assistance.

Minutes have been prepared for:

- Special General meeting, Aug.15, 2020
- Board meetings, August 2020 through April 2021 with Action Logs
- Standing Committees: Advocacy, Education and Resolutions

- Other Board group meetings: Advocacy Board group and Regional Directors

Other Ontario Council work:

- Member of the Ontario Council Governance Committee
- Assisted with advocacy projects: Government of Ontario Pre-Budget submission, the proposed resolution on human trafficking, the social media campaign on the 16 Days of Activism, the presentation to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs concerning Bill 229, Schedule 6 & 8 concerning the Conservation Authorities and the wetlands protection, and Crown Forest Sustainability Act
- Assisted with the preparation of some Club resources now available on the website
- Ontario Council representative for Rising Together, Women for a Just Economy (a project of two of our partners – Equal Pay Coalition and CRIAW [Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women])

Other work:

- Member of the CFUW Standing Committee on Advocacy
- Member of the Policy Book Review Sub-Committee, which has updated the national CFUW Policy Book, prepared the Advocacy Action document (a 21page summary of the CFUW Policy Book), prepared and had CFUW Board adoption of a policy to rescind out-of-date policies. These are currently under discussion.

###

Report of the Communications Chair

Ingrid Sproxton

Report of the Communications Chair



This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health restrictions, we have not been able to meet in-person and so our various communication channels have become critically

important to keep members informed. The Communications portfolio includes:

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

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

OC Website

Between April 14, 2020 and April 13, 2021, we had 4,757 users visit the website 8,086 times, and spend an average of 2.52 minutes on the website each visit. Statistics for the same time period in 2019-2020 were 3,700 users visiting the website 6,200 times, and spending an average of 2.5 minutes on the website each visit. Year over year, the number of users and visits were up 28.6% and 30.4%, respectively. 75.7% of visitors access the website from their computer, 14.5% from their mobile device and 9.9% from their tablet device. 95% of the sessions originate from Canada, 1.5% originate from the U.S. and the remainder are from other countries including Japan, Nigeria and India. Most visited pages are:

Page	# of views	% of total page views
CFUW Ontario Council home page	5,112	24.6
Speakers Series/Standing Committees page	1,571	7.6
OC AGM page	908	4.4
Board of Directors & Elections	901	4.3

Page	# of views	% of total page views
Ontario Council Policy & Resolutions	653	3.1
Advocacy > Long Term Care	578	2.8
CFUW Ontario Council News	564	2.7
CFUW Ontario Council About	562	2.7
Upcoming Events	559	2.7
Advocacy > Take Action!	539	2.6
Advocacy Tools	531	2.6
CFUW Ontario Council Advocacy	499	2.4
Advocacy > What are the Issues?	453	2.2
Contact Us	359	1.7

Constant Contact for OC News & OC Communications

We currently have 1,496 active contacts (up from 1,393 last year), all of whom receive OC News. We also have contact lists for Club Presidents, and for Club Presidents & Executive Members. Please continue to encourage members to subscribe to the newsletter and other OC communications by e-mailing the Newsletter Editor at communications@cfuwontcouncil.org. The open rates for OC News are over 50%, and generally 15% or more of readers click on at least one link from the newsletter.

Communication	Date Sent	Open Rate	Click Rate
OC News	June 14, 2020	55%	23%
OC News	September 16, 2020	56%	18%
OC News	October 26, 2020	58%	23%
OC News	December 10, 2020	52%	9%
OC Advocacy News	January 16, 2021	59%	17%

Communication	Date Sent	Open Rate	Click Rate
OC News	February 12, 2021	58%	22%
OC News	March 1, 2021	56%	15%
OC News	March 26, 2021	62%	19%

Social Media

This year, CFUW Ontario Council developed a social media policy which is posted on the OC website under Club Resources <https://cfuwontcouncil.org/resources/>. OC ran a social media campaign for the 16 Days of Activism, with daily posts from November 25 to December 10, 2020. OC promoted a social media campaign developed by CFUW Stratford that included a survey, to take action on the issues revealed by the Covid tragedy that occurred in Ontario long term care homes. The #LTCjustice campaign ran from March 10 to April 10, 2021; 1,272 survey responses were submitted.

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CFUWOntarioCouncil/>
 CFUW Ontario Council has 271 followers, up from 184 in 2020 and 157 in 2019. The top two Facebook posts reached 489 and 682 people, respectively.

- December 9, 2020 – #16Days of Activism Day 15 – VAW – Violence Against Pets (reached 489)
- March 14, 2021 – A call for change in seniors’ care (reached 682)

Twitter <https://twitter.com/CFUWOntCouncil>
 CFUW Ontario Council has 149 followers, up from 115 in 2020 and 93 in 2019.

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/cfuwoncouncil/>
 This year, CFUW Ontario Council opened an Instagram account which currently has 112 followers.

###

Report of the Advocacy Chair

Judy Gay

Report of the Advocacy Chair

The Committee has met three times and plans to meet a fourth time after the National AGM. At the first meeting, in early fall, the members agreed that a round-table format would serve as the best model for our Zoom meetings. We introduced ourselves and the Committee Chairs described their Advocacy plans. Of special interest were the Speakers' Series events and the Sixteen Days of Action. All were very successful.



The second meeting, in January, examined and assessed the success of the fall events. Zoom technology and its easy access increased members' participation. Long-term Care remained an urgent issue.

The third round-table discussion, mid-February, explored the differences between pro-active advocacy (pre-planned) and re-active advocacy (immediate, a reaction to a crisis). The President advised that Ontario Council Advocacy must always be flexible in order to meet crises that occur without warning and can stretch our capabilities to limits. The consensus of the group was that Ontario Council in its Advocacy role needs both types.

Under the Advocacy banner in the OC Newsletter, a new addition, *Notable Women, do you remember?* has been introduced. The first woman honoured was June Callwood. This addition will be vetted as to whether or not it should continue.

The Chair is planning to call a fourth meeting, immediately following the National AGM. The group will examine the Resolutions that will become policy. As well, the Committee will remind Clubs of two upcoming elections in 2022, a provincial Election, June 2nd, 2022 and the Municipal Elections, Oct. 24th,

2022. We will encourage Clubs to hold All-Candidates Meetings and encourage women to run for public office.

Report of the Chair, Education Standing Committee

Wendy Taylor

Report of the Chair, Education Standing Committee

The year of 2020/2021 has been a remarkably busy year as we continue to push through the covid pandemic.

Many challenges have confronted childcare, public education, and the serious situation at one of Ontario's Northern Universities, Laurentian.

This year, with the Education Committee, represented by Valerie Sterling, Roma Mehta, Susan Weston, and Janette Johnston, we have focused on the challenges and issues that have arisen in education and childcare.

In January, Ontario Council, Education Standing Committee submitted a response to the Ministry of Education concerning the revisions to the Education Act. It is titled **2020-2021 Education Funding Guide**, dated January 15th, 2021.

In November, Ontario Council Education Standing Committee submitted a response to the Ministry of Education in response to the proposed regulatory amendments under the **Child Care and Early Learning Years Act, 2014**, dated November 16, 2020.

All documents are on the Ontario Council web site.



The Education Committee met by Zoom, twice this year. One of the key areas we focused on was mental health in our young children and youth. This pandemic has brought this issue forward. Early prevention of mental health was identified as a significant factor. The committee felt that healthy body image and self esteem in

elementary schools should be taught as part of the elementary school curriculum. This is on-going and we hope to further discuss in 2021-2022.

The February 27th, 2021 Speakers Series was hosted by the Standing Education Committee. Our topic for the session was, **Mental Health: From Prevention to Wellness**. Our guest speakers included, Kendra Fisher, a goalie recruited for the Canadian National Team, Lori Spadorcia, Chief Strategy Officer at CAMH, and Jennifer Pereira-Ashawasegai, an Anishinabek citizen from Henvey Inlet First Nation in Ontario.

This was an informative and educational session on how mental health influences life and brought forth the mental health barriers that are part of our society despite better awareness and support.

The Ministry of Education, while being in the depths of the covid pandemic, are attempting to pass legislation and change the Education Act to include mandatory on-line education starting in the 2021-2022 school year. Ontario Council submitted a letter in April 2021, outlining the concerns we have considering parents and children are experiencing the negative effects of this pandemic. The letter to Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce, is on the Ontario Council web site.

This year has certainly held its challenges. We will continue to monitor education in Ontario in 2021-2022.

###

[Report of the Chair, Legislation Standing Committee](#)

Lisa Long

Report of the Chair, Legislation Standing Committee

As I complete my first year serving as Chair of the Legislation Committee with CFUW Ontario Council I would like to acknowledge the passionate and dedicated women I sit at the table with. This year has been a year of learning, growth, trying new ways of doing things and moving forward amid a global health crisis. It has been

an honour to work amongst such strong and powerful women in these times and I am stronger and wiser for the opportunity.

One of the first orders of business as Chair of the Legislation Committee was to work with the general executive to plan and execute our 2020-21 Speakers Series. This Series which took place over 3 Saturdays in October, November and February and was of course completely virtual which allowed for the hundreds of women across Ontario to participate. These high numbers were remarkable as it gave opportunity for many women who had never attended a Speakers Series event the easiest option possible to gather.

Our October theme focused on Aging and Long-Term Care, our November theme was Women, the Economy and Covid and our final event in February centered on Mental Health. Each speaker from each event was stellar, providing a plethora of insight in a powerful and engaging way. Wrapping up each event the participants were given a chance to contribute through a Q & A with the panelists which further added to the dynamic excellence of our series.

From November 25th to December 10th, we orchestrated a social media campaign modeled from the UN's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence under the 2020 global theme: "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!" This was of particular significance as we saw the world retreat inside homes due to the lockdown measures introduced to curb the COVID-19 pandemic which ultimately showed through reports an alarming increase in the already existing pandemic of violence against women. This social media campaign was a means of educating our members and followers as well as offering a platform to engage in dialogue about Gender-Based Violence and how the global pandemic was affecting this issue.

And finally, as overseeing the Resolutions Committee I was able to participate from the ground up in the Resolutions process. CFUW St. Catharines has proposed a resolution to Ontario Council, concerning Human Trafficking Awareness, Prevention and Detection which will of course be presented at our upcoming AGM.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve in this capacity. I look forward to continuing to grow in this position as CFUW Ontario Council, our local Clubs and our membership participate in life-long learning, improve public policy and advocate for gender equality.

###

Report of the Chair, SWHR Committee

Sandra Shaw

Report of the Chair, Committee for the Status of Women and Human Rights (SWHR) Standing Committee

Strategic Plan

Before the work of Ontario Council for 2020/2021 began in earnest, a strategic plan was developed for the SWHR Committee. However, the continued impact of COVID-19 has momentarily shelved some of the work until a more suitable time. The Strategic Plan can be seen on the website under the SWHR Committee page.

Speakers Series 2020/2021

As a result of the late adoption of the executive slate at the special AGM meeting held in August, 2020, work for this committee did not start until early September at which time preparation for the October Speakers Series (2020) moved into high gear. Due to COVID-19, lockdowns and concern for Members' health, the entire 2020/2021 Speakers Series was moved to a virtual format (Zoom). A surprising effect of this move was increased attendance at all of the Speakers Series events as Members became familiar with the Zoom platform and those normally too geographically distanced to attend the events in person in Downtown Toronto opted to participate. Due to the potential for fatigue, it was decided that there would not be breakout rooms for workshops and a Q&A session, with Members able to post questions, was used to involve participants further.

Our first event, Elder Care – Protect the Vulnerable, for which SWHR was the Lead, was a timely exposition of the challenges faced in Long Term Care (Karen Henderson), Community Care (Michele Harding) and Legislative Issues in Elder Care (Dan Levitt) which served not only to inform Members but also acted as an impetus for action in some Clubs.

Participation in the remaining Speakers Series events (November 2020 – Women in the COVID Economy; February 2021 – Mental Health: From Prevention to Wellness) by SWHR involved recruiting one member of the speaker panel in concert with the other Chairs, Education and Legislation.

SWHR designed and disseminated a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Virtual Speakers Series events.

Reports/Communications

A SWHR report is submitted to all members of the Executive for the monthly executive meeting (excluding March 2021), identifying the activities of the committee as well as events/articles affecting women's or human rights. Most material concentrates on Ontario but there are shifts in public opinion, governments and policy both in Canada and globally which have an impact on SWHR in Ontario and which are reported, too.

At the request of the Chair, reports of the SWHR are being posted on a new SWHR section of the website.

Aid was provided when requested to Clubs developing resolutions for Ontario Council. This included phone discussions as well as providing research information and written material. Continued follow up is maintained when articles of interest and pertinent information comes to the attention of the Chair who then passes it on.

Précis of the contents of the SWHR-recruited speaker's presentation for each of the Speakers Series Events for posting on the website is

also a responsibility of the Chair and can be found on the website under past Speakers Series.

Hyperlinks to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People's (UNDRIP) can be found in the SWHR section of the Ontario Council website.

Contributions were also made to OC's Respectful Treatment Policy and the planning for next year's Speakers Series.

Meetings

The Chair of the SWHR Committee attends all monthly executive meetings, can call her own committee meetings and is a member of the Advocacy Committee which convenes as is deemed necessary by the Advocacy Coordinator. Additionally, meetings are held with the other Chairs regarding the Speakers Series. For 2020/2021, all meetings have been held virtually.

Because I was a delegate for UNCSW65, I attended virtual orientation meetings held by National. Additionally, I was a team leader with six members. Immediately before and during UNCSW65, the team met by Zoom to discuss tactics and the proceedings, and had a post Commission meeting to debrief. Because of the issues we all familiarized ourselves with during the Commission, we will be holding monthly Zoom discussions on the last Friday of the month for the next few months.

###

Report of the Regional Director, ON Central

Judith Pownall

Report of the Regional Director--Ontario Central

This year has been a year of great change as we could not imagine how much our daily lives have been altered as a result of the pandemic. As a new Regional Director, I have found that, thanks to Zoom, I have been able to visit all 12 Clubs in the region, gaining a new appreciation for both the things that unite and distinguish us.



The overwhelming quality that the Central Region demonstrated was innovation. Whether in holding meetings or virtual fundraising events, Clubs have risen to the challenge of doing things differently but still getting things done.

Virtual fundraising was central to many Clubs maintaining their ability to support their projects. Etobicoke held a very successful virtual breakfast in February to benefit Women's Habitat while Leaside-East York took the opportunity to expand its successful Breaking Bread for Afghan Women dinner to all Club members by harnessing the power of Zoom. Book related fundraisers were held by Northumberland and Aurora-Newmarket which also collected bottles.

Member engagement was key to retaining members through this challenging period. Clubs recruited incredible speakers to educate and entertain members and guests. Toronto explored Western Democracy with Dr. Lucan Way, Oshawa listened to Dr. Juveeria Zaheer speak on Women's Mental Health, while North Toronto gained an insight into the role of women in media with Beverly Thomson. Markham-Unionville was host to the Giraffe Lady herself, Dr. Anne Dagg, who not only shared her incredible story **about** the giraffes but also the problems she faced as a woman scientist. Barrie hosted its first webinar on International Women's Day.

The six Toronto Clubs often work collaboratively on advocacy initiatives affecting residents of the City of Toronto. A long standing initiative has been the CFUW Toronto Housing Group which focuses on homelessness as a critical issue in women’s lives. The North York Club invited Toronto Councillor Ana Bailao to speak on housing in Toronto. By working collectively on matters of common interest, the power of women working together is magnified.

While each Club has its own advocacy interests, there have been two areas that have garnered public interest: the environment and human trafficking. Ajax-Pickering has galvanized interest in the plight of the wetlands in Pickering which were threatened by destruction for a large distribution centre. Working with other Clubs, it has urged action to draw public attention to this environmental destruction. Scarborough directed its efforts to the causes of human trafficking that exploits the most vulnerable women and Indigenous women into the sex trade. Barrie has submitted a resolution on human trafficking for consideration.

The longstanding issue of GWI stimulated great discussion. Toronto voted to withdraw from CFUW National in November but remains an active member of Ontario Council. The remaining eleven Clubs in the Central Region voted to opt out of the GWI per capita calculation.

It would be impossible for me to describe the many highlights of the twelve diverse Clubs. It has been my privilege to visit each of the Clubs and share in one or more of their meetings. Everywhere I have been impressed by the commitment of women to improve the lives of girls and women around the globe and around the corner.

Club	Key Advocacy Areas
Ajax-Pickering	Environment, Long Term Care
Aurora Newmarket	Long Term Care

Club	Key Advocacy Areas
Barrie and District	Long Term Care, Human Trafficking
Etobicoke	Long Term Care, Early Learning and Child Care, Domestic Violence
Leaside-East York	Housing, Long Term Care
Markham-Unionville	Resolutions, Racism
North Toronto	Long Term Care, Housing, Homelessness
Northumberland	Environment
Oshawa and District	Scholarships, Luke's Place (domestic violence)
Scarborough	Child Care, Human Trafficking
North York	Gender based violence, Long Term Care
Toronto	Affordable Housing, Homelessness, Women and Girls on the margins

###

Report of the Regional Director, ON East

Anne Cordon

Report of the Regional Director – Ontario East

Working with the nine Clubs in my region this year has been an honour and pleasure. Because we could not travel to have the typical in person meetings due to pandemic health concerns, we have needed to be resourceful; the outcome is we have actually “seen” each other more, albeit electronically. Through our monthly meetings we have shared more, and got to know each other better than previous models of meeting perhaps once a year in person. In addition to my Club presidents’ meetings, I have also met monthly with the OC Board and almost as frequently with our VP Ontario and CFUW National and I have attended many CFUW related townhalls and discussion groups.

My personal philosophy is to be the “guide on the side” not the “sage on the stage”. I see my role as RD to be a conduit of information from OC and National to the Clubs and between Clubs, and facilitator of discussion on issues/ideas. I feel the frequent zoom meetings were a perfect vehicle even in these unusual times. To that end I wanted my Clubs to be heard in this report of how they have faced these times and their clubs have managed, so I asked them to send me their thoughts on the “best and worst/most challenging” rather than me tell you what they did.

The themes that come out from all Clubs is the importance to connect with members, be heard locally and afar on heartfelt advocacy issues and to continue fundraising to allow them to maintain their scholarships and advocacy.

Belleville and District. Best: Our **local LTC advocacy** through interaction with politicians, media and LTC homes; educational Zoom presentations with educators, LTC personal, new care models, along with membership in the national study group. Because of our advocacy we have attracted new members. Our fabulous **virtual Christmas party** (cookies made and delivered to

EACH individual member) then costumes, songs, contests, stories and breakout room visiting. **Worst:** lack of face-to-face contact. about only half our 100 members will use Zoom to stay connected. A number of interest groups have struggled to find a way to keep going and some have just shut down. Fund raising (Garden Tour) has been compromised. **Most interesting or challenging:** using Zoom - need to think outside the box to get things done virtually. We have had access to speakers that are from everywhere on a wide range of subjects, interest groups that can use Zoom are doing it, regular casual member coffee get togethers, being able to connect easily with national and provincial members. Ease of getting together in winter.

Cornwall and District. Best As brand new Co-Presidents and relatively new members of CFUW, we started our term in Summer 2020 with a great deal of anxiety. We weren't sure what our members would expect from the Club during a global pandemic. During the summer of 2020 we **telephoned all members** to try to get to know everyone a bit better, and to try to re-connect the Club. The telephone calls were so well received that since then the Club executive has divided up the membership, and we each call several "sisters" every few weeks or so. This has given everyone a good sense of connection. **Challenge:** Learning the technology around doing everything on-line has been our biggest challenge. As well, we initiated a new Club newsletter, The Dispatch, which required learning about desktop publishing. The best part of the on-line pandemic year has been getting to know one another much better. At a time when distance from others has been emphasized, our Club members have been able to remain connected.

Kanata. Best: CFUW Kanata - Our biggest success was shifting to online meetings and learning to use virtual formats effectively to run monthly meetings. We were able to adapt many Interest groups to virtual formats. Thanks to a small group of tech-savvy members, the Club had volunteers to mentor others until they felt confident using the new programs on iPads and computers. It was upbeat to

invite guests to our meetings and, in return, enjoyable receiving invites from other Clubs in return. One **challenge** was finding new ways to do fundraising and in the end we did well, although not at the same level as previous years.

Kingston. We are a very small Club with an aging membership, but we have still connected to each other and via Zoom to other Clubs in the region to share rich program offerings

Nepean. Best Inspired by the resilience of Club members to adapt. Our membership did not drop although we did lose some members but gained others for a net 0 impact. Club will probably adopt a hybrid model during next Club year with winter activities being primarily over Zoom and in-person activities in the spring and fall. Active advocacy group including proposing resolution on single use plastics and letter writing campaign on gun control and LTC.

Challenge 1. Try to make the Club experience as meaningful as possible and keeping members engaged: instigated a popular Friday coffee chat and offered a Wednesday evening monthly speaker series. 2. Raise funds for our scholarships through: \$30 per member donation to honour our 30th anniversary; Valentine Trivia evening at \$5/person; Book & Puzzle Sale; Bottle drive; and Bridge and Book Club donations (usually done each year)

Ottawa. Best Little did we think last March that we would have much of a program to offer our Club for this 2020-2021 season. Thanks to Zoom and especially the hard work of our dedicated Club members...WOW! What a program we had and still have! From our CFUW-GWI Partnership, 'Walk to Kabul', our monthly Speakers' Series, and International Women's Day, speakers from around the world presenting to our Study and Interest Groups, and outreach to people joining our Zoom across the country and around the world. Yes, we have made an impact this season and hope to continue making an impact next season.

Challenge The downside to all this of course is giving new members a proper welcome. We are hosting a newcomers Zoom next month.

They have the option of attending one of two nights and we hope to put them into small rooms with a board member to discuss their experiences and how we can improve with COVID still in the picture

Perth & District. Best Due to COVID-19, CFUW Perth & District cancelled its' popular House Tour. Instead, the Club came together for a successful Staycation raffle. Not only was it a significant financial boost to the Club in this unprecedented year, it was also very successful in fostering Club spirit. Everyone chipped in and felt part of the success. Not incidentally, it also highlighted and reinforced our excellent reputation in the community. Virtual technology platforms have given us the opportunity to continue to meet as a Club, it gave us exposure to other Clubs and the opportunity to hear speaker presentations that we would otherwise have been unaware of. For some members, it exposed them to technology, and having National absorb the cost was appreciated as well. **Challenge:** We are a social Club; keeping the spirit alive while unable to meet in person is a challenge.



Peterborough. Best staying connected with our members in new and inventive ways, interest groups are thriving (an additional 3 this year including an Issues group focusing on the LTC crisis, biweekly craft group and a weekly Koffee Klub just for fun), our general meetings have had great attendance our membership has increased; we even had a curator from the Toronto Aga Khan Museum as one of our remote speakers. **Challenge** was to show members we care for others and each other, so during December our secret Ms. Claus and her CFUW elves hand delivered special goodies to each of our members. Our executive has gone above and beyond to try and make this year as dynamic and fun as it could be.

Renfrew. We are a small Club with an older demographic in a small community, but we have still been able to stay connected with a number of Zoom meetings. Although we have not been able to hold

our annual Book Fair to provide high school awards, we will be able to provide several scholarships this June summer due to a generous family donation and other donations after the sudden passing of a member. We received correspondence from the Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Natural Resources, regarding our letter of concern over the Near-Surface Disposal Facility at Chalk River Laboratories.

###

Report of the Regional Director, ON Huron

Lori Ker

Report of the Regional Director, Ontario Huron

Regional and Club Activities

- All Huron Clubs have been successful with their Zoom speaker programs and interest group meetings. All Clubs have used intentional outreach to check on members and increase engagement. Many programs open to public to maintain their profile.



- All Clubs have maintained their scholarship programs despite significantly reduced opportunity for fundraising. Orangeville expanding their program with the Building Bridges BIPOC awards.

- Club meeting Topics have balanced general interest and advocacy topics: Indigenous Day Schools, Dec. 6 Remembrance, Ontario Health Teams, Long Term Care issues, Mental Health, Public Health, Equal Representation, Human Trafficking, Tattoo Project, Travel, Cooking classes, Travel programs
- Monthly Zoom meetings with RD and Club Presidents and others, sharing challenges, information, answering Club questions regarding OC and National; sharing of Club Zoom programs and Club meeting strategies
- Investigating a virtual Fall Gathering for Huron Region

Club Issues

- Membership levels essentially maintained in all Clubs except for Orangeville which is down 30%. Orangeville has focussed efforts on retention and growth. Southport has worked hard to educate members on virtual technology.
- Leadership succession continues to be a challenge and a topic we discuss at President's meetings. Strategies include early identification of possible successors, shared governance models.
- All four Huron Clubs have voted to Opt-out of GWI fee payment. Prior to that three Clubs passed motions regarding withholding GWI dues and at least one was looking to leave CFUW National. All four are currently members of OC and National.

Information and Communication

- Promotion of the work that the OC Board has completed, the important advocacy work and evolving governance structures. Virtual OC Speakers Series sessions are popular among the Huron region leading to increased involvement from more distant Clubs.
- Regular communication with Huron Clubs on other items of provincial or national interest, reminders, and requests from OC.

- Promotion of the virtual meetings that CFUW is promoting regarding Succession Planning, GWI Dues Dialogue Sessions and other townhalls.

Other Director Activities

- OC Finance Committee member – policy and budget review
- Chair, OC Constitution & Bylaws Committee; Chair, OC Governance Committee
- Attended 2020-2021 OC Board Meetings monthly and Speaker's Series events
- CFUW National Articles & Bylaws Committee Member: Article 4 proposal, budget and dues proposals, Board Member voting rights – all proposals not approved by National Board.
- National Regional Director Committee Meetings – clarification of role

Governance Committee – Lori Ker, Chair

- Activities
 - OC Membership and OC Affiliation applications and procedures developed and approved by board for use. Recommendation to create a standing committee for managing Membership activities.
 - Recommended RD expense for Club travel and connection be part of OC budget instead of National – help relieve National financial pressures
 - OC corporate membership for record keeping, clarified. Record keeping policy in development.
 - OC Board governance orientation slides developed and delivered.
 - OC Governance Policies and Guidelines Document: Governance Framework and Board Committees sections completed and under review including: Board Charter, director accountability, code of conduct, conflict of interest, confidentiality, and risk management. Sections for board effectiveness and ensuring financial strength in development.
 - OC Board leadership succession framework development

Constitution & Bylaws Committee – Lori Ker, Chair

- Activities
 - Annual review leading to two committee proposed and board approved amendments for 20-21 AGM. Correction to the use of ‘accountant’ vs. ‘auditor’.
 - Published the annual amendment process for OC members; none submitted
 - Shared sample bylaws for unincorporated associations for CFUW member Clubs and provided advice and recommendations to several Ontario Clubs revising bylaws.

###

Report of the Regional Director, ON North

Roline Maconachie

Report of the Regional Director-Ontario North

The year 2020-2021 has been a challenging and learning year for the Clubs of Ontario North due to COVID 19. There are six northern Clubs and every Club has stepped up to embrace new technology in order to support the members and their



commitments. Zoom has become a common method of communication for meetings, special events and speakers. All presidents or their representatives attended and contributed to our monthly Zoom meetings.

As Regional Director:

- Stayed in touch with all Clubs on a regular basis, guiding them and encouraging them particularly during the first months of the “new normal”

- Held monthly Presidents' Meetings which were very beneficial in forming alliances among Club presidents, discussing mutual issues, sharing information and ideas, and sharing programs.
- Initiated a Program Sharing format that has been very successful and has allowed everyone in our Clubs an opportunity to attend programs hosted by other Clubs.
- Attended all RD and OC meetings as well as other Special Meetings and passed on all pertinent information to my Clubs.
- Attended many events/meetings of Ontario North Clubs
- Shared Orillia governance model with several Canadian Clubs
- Ex-officio member and liaison between OC and CFUW Orillia re AGM planning
- Promoted Advocacy, Succession Planning, Membership, Education, Fundraising, and other CFUW goals.

Haliburton Highlands

- Had a significant increase in membership - 11 new members
- Held all meetings and most interest groups virtually
- Participated in the "Walk to Kabul"
- Kept members involved with small group events and phone chats
- Working on a Land Acknowledgement
- Very active in Community Work, i.e. raised funds for local Women's Shelter
- Honoured their Scholarship commitment
- Sent letters of support for LTC reform to local MPP
- Participated in Program Sharing with other northern Clubs

Muskoka

- Adapted quickly and efficiently to virtual meetings and programs
- Kept interest groups going virtually and reached out to members on a regular basis
- Advocacy focus on area poverty and extensive research and work to promote affordable housing and basic income

- Hosted Kathleen Wynne as a shared program speaker
- Participated in the “Walk to Kabul” initiative
- Continued with Speaker Series in partnership with Lakehead University
- Developing a Land Acknowledgement
- Fundraising for Charitable Trust by donations from attendees of a shared speaker

North Bay

- Adapted to virtual events and meetings
- Celebrating 80th Anniversary and extensive planning of events in conjunction with the community to recognize impact of 80 years - an exhibit in October at the museum highlighting information from their Archives
- Creative Local Advocacy - support local businesses by alternating suggested restaurants, etc.
- Fundraising done in very small groups doing creative work, i.e. urn making, painting, and members donate - raised \$ to satisfy their commitments
- Interest groups flourishing virtually
- Participated in and promoted “Walk to Kabul” to other Clubs
- Participated in Program Sharing initiative

Orillia

- Adapted quickly and efficiently to virtual meetings and events and tech savvy members helped train other northern Clubs
- Kept interest groups going virtually
- Developed a very comprehensive system for engaging, checking on, and retaining members
- Held Holiday event and several others virtually
- Celebrated IWD virtually with Club members with a very comprehensive program and will repeat annually
- Developed a Land Acknowledgment
- Planning and hosting the Friday night reception for the Ontario AGM virtually

- Participated in Program Sharing initiative
- Advocacy focused on Indigenous relations and issues collaborating with the Chippewas of Rama First Nation; amended several Resolutions; work on Human Trafficking
- Held CNOY virtually and raised more funds than any other CFUW Club in Canada and were #1 in Orillia
- Fundraising- for Scholarship commitment - holding a virtual Homes Tour on June 6 which can be attended by anyone, anywhere

Sudbury

- Adapted well to virtual meetings and engaged vacationing members
- Celebrate Women held virtually - Mary Lawson - raised funds for Scholarships
- Participated in Program Sharing
- Interest Groups carried on virtually where possible
- CNOY fundraising - 2 groups snowshoed at French River
- Participated in “Walk to Kabul”
- Tech Talk - interest group to teach older members internet skills

Thunder Bay

- Were able to connect Executive via Zoom and stay in touch with other members via phone
- Zoom group of 14 exchanged ideas on books and self-care as well as other topics of interest.
- Hiking group continued in person and bridge online



- Distributed all OC/National/and GWI Newsletters

- Initiated in conjunction with National a possible meeting with Patty Hajdu, Federal Minister of Health re LTC

###

Report of the Regional Director, ON South

Joyce See

Report of the Regional Director – Ontario South

Ontario South is made up of ten Clubs with over 1000 members. While the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges, it also was seen by most CFUW Clubs in Ontario as an opportunity for finding creative ways for clubs to work together. Although most Clubs saw a small decline in membership, those losses were far fewer than most had anticipated. Zoom has become the vehicle for clubs to get together with their members. Many Clubs reporting better attendance at their monthly meetings than had been the norm for face-to-face meetings.

Zoom also made it possible for the presidents of Clubs in Ontario South to get together every month or two to share successes and challenges. I know that we all look forward to a time when we can meet together in person but I know some of what we have experienced and learned through 2020-2021 will be incorporated into our way of operating as we move forward.

Brantford

CFUW Brantford conducted all meetings this year on Zoom and saw attendance at meetings rise substantially. At each meeting there was a focus on highlighting members with a "Guess Who?" agenda item using PowerPoint presentations. In addition, there was a focus on one 'long-time' member at each meeting through an in depth presentation. These presentations allowed members to get to know each other much better. The members reported having thoroughly enjoyed getting to know each other better.

The Club's Long Term Care (LTC) Committee worked to make our members aware of the issues regarding LTC and advocating with the local MPP, the Premier, and Cabinet Minister.

Many of the celebrations for the Club's 75th Anniversary (1945-1946 was the Club's first year), were put on hold because of the pandemic. However, plans are underway for a celebratory dinner in September. In recognition of the Club's 75th Anniversary, Brantford Parks and Recreation Horticultural Department is planting a flower bed to honour the Club. Members are looking forward to seeing the garden in bloom this Spring.

Burlington

Through the challenges of the Pandemic, CFUW Burlington has worked hard to stay in touch, offer support and social connections through Zoom meetings and phone calls to members. The Club linked with other Halton Clubs to plan joint webinars with uplifting guest presenters. Along the way, members learned to take advantage of Zoom features like use of polls, voting, breakout rooms and screen sharing. New Interest groups formed to add to those already in place, i.e. Friends of the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), Photography Walks, Uncrafty Crafters, Healthy Living and Eating and Social Media Mavens. A successful virtual tea was held in February, to bring some optimism to members and to highlight local history. General meetings continued through the year with several informative and timely speakers i.e. Women and Co-Parenting, the Opioid epidemic, etc.

The Club was active in work to support the Burlington community. Members organized a very successful fundraising project, raising over \$3000 to help the local women's shelter (Halton Women's Place) with grocery gift cards that were presented to women in original, handmade, practical purse pouches. The craft interest group helped "Knitted Knockers of Canada" by knitting about 100 breast prostheses for breast cancer survivors.

The interest groups adapted to lockdowns with virtual travel tours and saw members learning to use technology to showcase their former travels. Other interest groups found creative ways to continue to meet, share and learn from each other.

The Club's Advocacy committee met with our MP and MPP on Zoom. The advocacy focused on LTC, the "she" recession and child care. That group also led the Club members through a process to review resolutions from National and Ontario Council.

Members were very busy on International Women's Day (IWD), including breakfast with Paddy Torsney (MP) and a photo opportunity with members holding signs to support the women of Afghanistan on the City's landmark pier. Over 30 members participated in support of the "Walk to Kabul" project by walking, skiing and cycling.

Scholarships of \$1000 were awarded to young women from each local high school. were given out as per the Club's our annual tradition.

Georgetown

The time of pandemic for CFUW Georgetown is highlighted by what didn't happen and what did! What **didn't** happen was the Club's annual Book Sale to raise scholarship funds and the annual gala Spring Dinner. Thankfully, a local charity donated money to the scholarship fund and four high school students headed for post-secondary learning were helped.

What **did** happen was:

- learning to Zoom and laugh about it, e.g. "You're muted!"; "Move your screen; we can only see the top of your head." "Who's eating?"
- stepping up member contact, both in frequency (weekly fun bulletin for the summer months) and in focus (individual call

campaign and Zoom training sessions that morphed into Techies Interest Group).

- strengthening program partnership with the local Library in providing several speakers for Zoom presentations open to the public.
- partnering with local (Halton) CFUW Clubs to provide joint extra value Zoom programming to members and friends.
- recognizing important dates, such as Dec. 6th & IWD Mar. 8th by orchestrating Zoom screen shots of members (with hand raised in Choose to Challenge, dressed in purple) to post on Club and members' social media pages.
- Club members participating in the Walk to Kabul.
- fundraising in December for a local women's shelter.

Club members are particularly active in environmental and climate change issues. *Halton Hills Climate Action* is independent of CFUW Georgetown but is the creation of two active members. A core of Club members can be counted on to support climate action rallies, such as the Shoe Strike, Global Days of Action and Stop the #413. A GTA West/#413 Study Group, however, is a Club initiative. Members have just completed a success public forum entitled "Is the #413 the Answer?" In addition, letters have been sent to local government, provincial and federal representatives informing them of the Club's position on the issue.

Finally, 2021 is the 50th Anniversary for CFUW Georgetown. In recognition of the event, members have committed to 50 acts of public service in 2021. The speakers, advocacy work and recent public forum have already been added to the tally.

Grimsby

CFUW Grimsby is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. Membership at the Grimsby Club has increased with one new member bringing the total to 25. The Club is currently exploring expanding their social media presence in the hopes of attracting new and younger members.

The pandemic has derailed the social nature of the Club as dinner meetings have been cancelled, as well as our annual trip to the Shaw Festival with lunch in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The Book Club has continued to meet virtually and a Virtual Christmas party was a hit with those in attendance. The Club was not able to run their two Fundraisers: the annual Lobster dinner and annual book sale. Club finances were healthy enough to allow for the awarding of scholarships to local girls/women nonetheless.

Meetings have taken place over Zoom, and continue to start off with a speaker on various topics of interest. Attendance is down at the meetings, but the Zoom format has enabled us to discuss matters in more depth.

Hamilton

CFUW Hamilton has found using Zoom for general meetings to be working well. There is usually a guest speaker followed by a business meeting. For the most part there are the same, if not more members attending as previously were at an in-person meeting. A volunteer has taken member submitted photographs, based on a theme, and turned them into videos that are then shown at meetings. The most recent was called *Oh the places we've been*. Next up, identifying members from their baby pictures!

All looks well with nominations for the slate of the executive for next year. Some members are leaving or moving to new positions and there are a couple of new additions to the executive which is great. The only spot left to fill is vice-president. The Club now has a parliamentarian on the executive which has been very helpful navigating the GWI situation.

CFUW Hamilton awarded a total of \$7,000 in scholarships this year to local universities, colleges and The Children's Aid Society. The Club's Advocacy Committee is very active in studying the provincial and federal resolutions and presenting them in a general meeting where all members could vote on them. Members have also conducted two drives for a local woman's shelter, Inasmuch House.

Milton & District

Like other Clubs, CFUW Milton & District has become accustomed to Zooming, but have concluded they prefer to meet in person for our general meetings (and look forward to returning to those asap!). However, they acknowledge that committee meetings on Zoom certainly are convenient noting it is nice not having to go out in the dark and cold on a winter's night. Those with family activities going on in the background are able to participate without calling the babysitter!

The Club's speaker series was a combination of lighthearted and fun; including travel stories, real life cybercrime forensics, as well as more serious issues of diversity, food insecurity, and preparing for the possibility of long term care as we age.



The Club's Advocacy committee really knocked it out of the park this year. In spite of the constraints imposed by not meeting and gathering in person, the Club had two very successful social media campaigns: the first around the 16 Days of Action in December, and the second, an 8-day social media campaign leading up to International Women's Day. The Club is now building their team to tackle the LTC issue, and expect to work on that during the coming year.

Mississauga

For CFUW Mississauga, the year has been one to come together and to pull together. The Club's Member Care group did a wonderful job of keeping in touch with members via telephone calls, emails and birthday cards. After each Zoom General Meeting, those attending divide into chat groups, creating an opportunity to meet old and new members. More recently, the Executive has sent out messages to members letting them know where they can go for their COVID-19 vaccinations.

Interest groups have continued over Zoom and include Book Clubs, Bridge Groups, a Travel Club and International Affairs. Even with a decreasing membership, Zoom General Meetings are better attended than in-person meetings had been.

Oakville

Like other Clubs in Ontario South, CFUW Oakville successfully migrated to a virtual platform for all Club activities, with mentoring provided to members so that the Club averaged 100 members per general meeting. Excellent speakers were accessible to members as well with other CFUW Clubs joining for some programs. Almost all of the Club's interest groups continued to meet virtually, and four new groups formed during this year.

As part of an ongoing campaign to support members during COVID-19, in mid-December 170 people from a variety of Clubs linked into a special Zoom program with noted psychologist David Posen providing guidance on how to "Bring Light to this Holiday Season".

The University Women's Club of Oakville Scholarship fund is on track to award nine University/College entrance awards, one Alternate Education Award and eight named awards. In addition, two special awards were created to honour Ginny Boelhower, former president of CFUW Oakville who passed away last year.

St Catharines

CFUW St. Catharines is celebrating their 100th Anniversary and have had several initiatives to acknowledge that amazing milestone. First, working with a local winery a red and a white wine were each labeled in honour of the Club's anniversary. The bottles of wine were then exchanged for a donation to the Club's Scholarship fund. Second, a rose bush was specially developed and sold for CFUW St. Catharines. Third, a time capsule was created to be housed at Brock University which will include hand-written messages by members about what CFUW means to them. Finally, there will be a

giant floral garden planted in a local park by the City of St. Catharine's in May to celebrate the Club's 100th anniversary.

A Virtual Garden Tour fundraiser is being planned to replace the Club's Annual House Tour until in person activities are safe. The Garden Tour will include 7 award-winning gardens filmed by Niagara College students and streamed on the Club's YouTube platform from June 19-July 11.

Welland and District

The members of CFUW Welland and District have experienced a most successful year on many levels. Most importantly none of the Club's members or their families have been ill as a result of the Coronavirus. We are most grateful for this blessing. This year, which sees the Club celebrating its' 80th anniversary, has been busy primarily due to the success of presentations using Zoom. From guest speakers who covered topics such as seniors on the move, the story of tea, women in historical fiction, and our local children's centre, to presentations prepared for and delivered by our own members on genealogy, flowers, and travel, members have had numerous opportunities to remain connected to each other and Club activities.



It has been very encouraging that in these times of lockdown and Coronavirus we have added two new members to our Club bringing our total to 47 members.

The Club's work during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence and the spin offs of that work kept members very busy in November and December. The lighting of the bridge in orange in downtown Welland brought out a number of members and guests to mark the event. Hanging red dresses and the provision of information boards in parks in Welland and Port Colborne to support missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada highlighted the need for continued focus on this issue. Kayla Mayer, Program Lead from the Anti Human Trafficking Program at the YWCA in St. Catharines made a compelling presentation on Zoom to not only members but also the general public.

###

Report of the Regional Director, ON West

Elana Freeman

Report of the Regional Director – Ontario West

This year, 2020-2021, has been unprecedented as we had to find ways to continue our mission in the midst of a global pandemic. As a first time Regional Director (RD), I spent the year becoming familiar with my role, the function of the RD at the national level, within Ontario Council (OC), and within the Ontario West region. All of my duties were performed virtually.

CFUW Public Profile

At the beginning of the year social media was one of the areas I wanted to develop in Ontario West. Some highlights of the region's accomplishments:

- CFUW London joins Facebook
- CFUW K-W launches a new website

- ON West Clubs participate in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence social media blitz lead by the Ontario Council
- CFUW K-W is on Instagram
- CFUW Stratford boosts their Facebook posts to increase the reach of their LTC survey
- CFUW Windsor creates a Social Media manager role
- CFUW Windsor is on Instagram
- Reddit is used to increase the reach of the CFUW Stratford LTC survey

Advocacy

Long term care (LTC) was a focus of many Clubs this year. As described below, CFUW Stratford led a survey campaign and worked with other Clubs like CFUW K-W, CFUW Windsor and CFUW Oakville to achieve their goal. Individual Clubs also worked on some of the projects highlighted below.

Cambridge

Cambridge Poppy Project. CFUW Cambridge submitted this project for consideration to the CFUW Creative Arts Award. This project is a community art project of Remembrance that will be created using 10,000 hand-made Veterans. The be displayed on the of the libraries in and Hespeler. The rich patriotic history Waterloo Region and importance of the area's heritage. Women came to the area to work in the textile mills to produce fabrics used by the military. This project supports CFUW values in pursuit of knowledge, promotion of education and improving status of women.



poppies to honour knitted poppies will interior and exterior Cambridge, Preston project highlights the of Cambridge and highlights the textile industry in the

Guelph

Her Story: Women Trailblazers of Guelph-Wellington County. CFUW Guelph submitted this project for consideration to the CFUW OC Recognition Awards. This project celebrates women who have led the way towards a diverse and gender inclusive community. The project aimed to share the stories of cisgender women, trans women, two-spirit, and gender non-conforming people. This project recognized the historical barriers faced by all women; it acknowledged that Black, Indigenous and People of Colour and LGBTQ2IA+ women have faced and continue to face even greater barriers. The featured trailblazers are activists, artists, caregivers, health care workers, mothers, politicians, scientists, and writers, as well as women-led organizations.

Kitchener-Waterloo

CFUW K-W has an Advocacy Environmental Working Group. This year they focused on the following issues:

1. Monitoring Ministerial Zoning (MZO) Orders
2. Promoting green development in our region by planting trees.
3. Monitoring the sale of Nestlé and the impact on local wells.
4. Supporting the ban of single use plastics which are the 2nd biggest polluter worldwide in shoreline cleanup

London

CFUW London has opened some of its monthly meetings to the public, including other CFUW Clubs, as they featured speakers during Black History Month, and Equal Pay Day.

St. Thomas

The Advocacy Club worked on the following issues:

- The review of the Sexual Assault Policy for the St. Thomas Police

- Lack of local rape kits available to STEGH
- 11th Annual Shine the Light on Women Abuse Awareness Campaign – Nov 1-30th, 2020
- Bill 13, Time to Care Act (Long Term Care Act (Long Term Care Homes Amendment, Minimum Standard of Daily Care), 2020
- Speech from the Throne promise of a Canada-wide early learning and childcare system, including a commitment to affordable, inclusive and quality childcare.

Stratford

Survey: Long Term Care in Ontario was a project that CFUW Stratford submitted for consideration to the CFUW OC Recognition Awards. CFUW Stratford devised a 5-question survey that was distributed throughout Ontario to CFUW Clubs, CFUW friends and family and other interested organizations with the goal of using the results to lobby Premier Ford to recruit, train, and properly pay full time Personal Support Workers in 2021 and to put people before profit in Long Term Care. The survey results were turned into a 19-page report of findings.

Windsor

Ward 7 By-Election Candidates Meeting was a project that CFUW Windsor submitted for consideration to the CFUW OC Recognition Awards. CFUW Windsor wanted to ensure that the issues in Ward 7 were well known and publicized and that the by-election itself received the appropriate attention given the pandemic and the postponement of the original event. In addition, CFUW Windsor has a goal to ensure that the Windsor/Essex electorate is well informed by holding candidates' meetings and/or issues meetings in advance of elections. The event was very well publicized by CFUW Windsor (via social media) and was also picked up by local media because it was the first virtual candidates debate in the area and the only debate/meeting where all of the candidates were invited. A Press Release was issued to assist in publicizing the event. This

event certainly raised CFUW Windsor's profile in the media and in Ward 7.

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