

# WI Connections



## *Margaret's Message*, Submitted by President, Margaret Byl

Greetings and best wishes on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada!

In many parts of the country, people enjoyed a white Christmas, but in my little part of the world, it was 9° C and alas no snow for the holidays. As I look out the window of my office, I see another day of fog and misty rain. We are expecting some snow just in time for New Year's Eve celebrations. I trust that you will stay safe in your part of the nation.



No matter what religion or how you celebrate the holidays, I hope that you had the opportunity to spend them with family, friends and loved ones. I am grateful that most of my family came together in person. Those that could not, joined the family gathering via zoom from Calgary, Germany, and Mississippi. We also received digital greetings from Austria and England. Lane and I felt blessed with so many Holiday Greetings and Christmas Cards. Thank you all for your best wishes and kindness.

My thoughts have wandered to a Christmas Eve past. In the time of the Great War, World War I. It was 119 years ago, when a Christmas miracle occurred. Thousands of soldiers stepped out of their cold and wet trenches to lay down their rifles and mingle with their enemies along the Western front. It has been said that Silent Night was sung by both sides in a moment of peace and goodwill. I would ask that you remember the families that have and are still suffering from the senseless acts of War playing out in Europe, the Middle East, and other places around the world in strife. I pray for World Peace in the New Year.

As we step into 2024, a new year, a new slate to fill. We can only take it one step at a time. May you have a dry path, wind at your back and sunshine along the way. From Coast to Coast to Coast, wishing you a safe and Happy New Year!

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*End-of-Year Message from the Governor General*

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon,  
Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada

December 29, 2023

Photo Credit-

Sgt Johanie Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG-BSGG, 2021

December is always a very contemplative time. A time for us to consider the challenges and accomplishments of this past year as it comes to an end. A time to remind ourselves of what binds us as a nation.

Together, we have faced the ravages of wildfires, floods and the escalating consequences of climate change. We have stood in solidarity with communities suffering losses and tragedies.

Together, we are grappling with the effects of global conflict and the pressures of living in these complex times.

And yet, together, we have also witnessed important strides in reconciliation, celebrated new chapters in history with the coronation of a new king, and taken steps towards shining a light into the dark corners of online toxicity towards women and girls.



Amid these momentous events, I have had the privilege of connecting with Canadians and communities to learn about and celebrate the countless unsung heroes who are turning challenges into opportunities, and adapting to change with creativity, resilience and, above all, kindness.

I cannot forget the bakery offering solace through donated meals; the knitting clubs weaving warmth for those seeking refuge; the school rallying for a student in the throes of a health crisis; the northern organization salvaging food for those in need; and food banks across the country finding new ways to help their communities.

Their stories are poignant examples of the Canadian spirit, and show us that we can each embody *ajunnata*, which, in Inuktitut, means perseverance. Never giving up. Committing ourselves to action, no matter how daunting the situation may be. In this way, kindness—far from being an accidental act—emerges as a powerful and purposeful choice in the face of adversity.

As we look to 2024, let us rekindle our connections to one another, and face challenges, change and progress with a renewed sense of unity. May this forthcoming year serve as a testament to the profound significance of *ajunnata*, and to our commitment to making this country a better—and kinder—place.

Happy New Year, Canada. - Mary Simon

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'Sailing Into The Future With ...  
A Recipe For Success'  
2024  
FWIC National Triennial Conference  
Truro, Nova Scotia: September 17-19, 2024

Early Bird registration will be \$375 and will open on January 1st, 2024  
May 1st to July 15th inclusive the registration will be \$425.  
Rooms have been blocked at the  
Inn on Prince, Truro, NS.  
Room rates begin at \$164 plus  
15% tax and include breakfast.  
A \$50 charge will be taken on check-in for incidentals.







## February – WI Month

As you are aware, on February 19, 1897, the first Women's Institute (WI) was formed in Stoney Creek, Ontario through the efforts of Adelaide Hoodless and Erland and Janet Lee.

FWIC WI Canada will celebrate the 127<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of WI on February 19 with a virtual event. This year we will hear from branches that are attracting new members by inviting those branches to share what is working for them. This will be an opportunity to learn new ideas and learn from their success.

If your branch would like to share your ideas, please contact Lynn at [president-elect@fwic.ca](mailto:president-elect@fwic.ca) before Feb. 1, 2024

To register for the national WI event on Feb 19, email [registrations@fwic.ca](mailto:registrations@fwic.ca). The link for the event will be sent out on Feb 18.

In addition, how is your branch, district, province planning to celebrate? Why not share your plans, take pictures, and send them to FWIC so they can be included in the March issue of the *WI Connections*. Please send photos to [angela.beth.scott@fwic.ca](mailto:angela.beth.scott@fwic.ca).





## #WI Cares and Celebrating WI Month



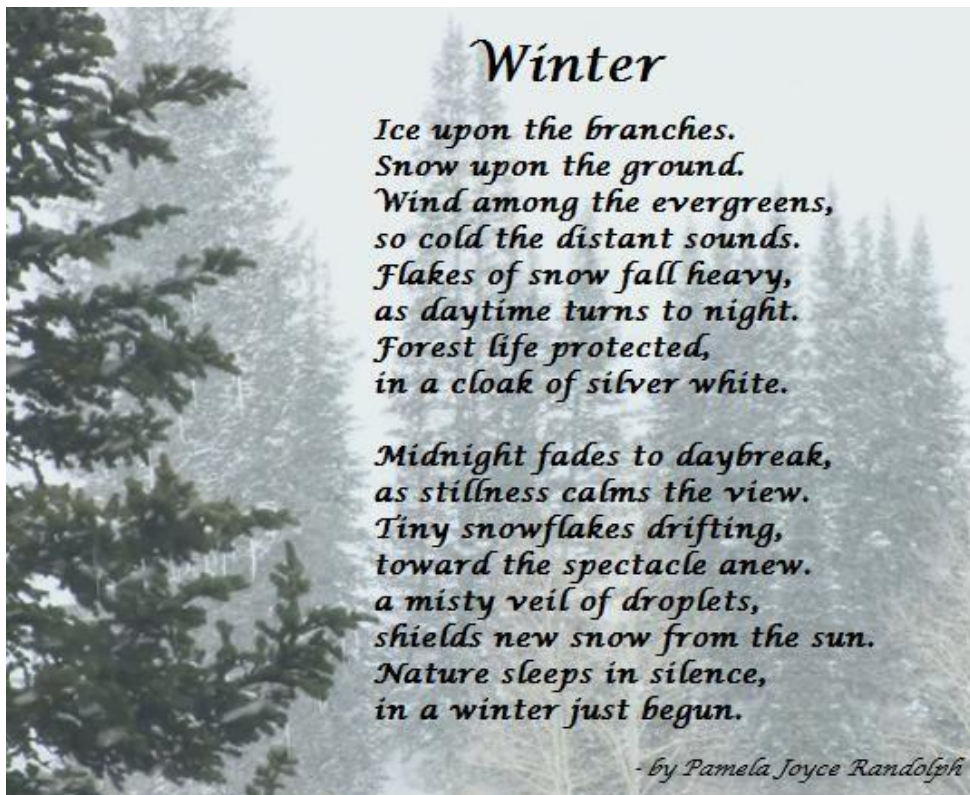
How does your branch/district celebrate WI month and WI day on February 19?

If you want an idea, why not support your local schools? Many of you do help schools throughout the year, but to do it in conjunction with WI Month would be a tangible way to show that we care about the young people in our communities.

We would invite you to contact your local middle/high school to see what support they need. It might be items for their breakfast program or backpack program, snacks, toiletries, socks, hats, etc. Each school is unique so checking with them shows how much you really want to help.

If you and/or branch/district do collect items, please take a picture and send a short note sharing how you helped your local school. It is suggested that these items be shared on or about February 19, WI's birthday. What a better gift than to show our youth that WI Cares?

Please send pictures to the editor of WI Connections at [angela.beth.scott@gmail.com](mailto:angela.beth.scott@gmail.com).





The Lyon's Brook and Area WI had their PJ Potluck meeting. Members enjoyed a glass of cheer before having a delicious meal. Donations of sleepwear were collected for Tearman House women's shelter.





# Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) Update

January 2024



Area Canada President - Marie Kenny

Greetings Everyone,

As I write this the month of December is coming to an end, winter has officially arrived in Canada and it is with great anticipation I look forward to 2024 and all that it will hold.

Beginning a new year is like an early morning ski on newly fallen snow, it all is fresh and new. The start of a new year is like that as well fresh and new just waiting to be explored and lived to the fullest. What a wonderful way to look at 2024 with anticipation. The road to the future is winding it brings endless possibilities to create a new path. I believe if we can encourage one individual, share an act of kindness to one person, offer a bit of hope than the journey will all be worth it in the end.

I am very excited to share some wonderful, encouraging news with you.

ACWW's Women's Empowerment Summit in Mongolia has been awarded the Incredible Impacts Award by the International Conference and Convention and Association (ICCA) and Best Cities, This recognises the immediate and sustainable impacts for over 300 indigenous herds women and their communities in Mongolia, building on the project tackling domestic and gender based violence against women and girls. (Information about the Summit is on the ACWW website).

The prize was awarded after ACWW-CEO Tish Collins attended the grand finals in Bangkok (sponsored by ICCA) in November. There Tish had the fantastic opportunity to talk about ACWW to over 1000 people, which resulted in getting their support. This opportunity certainly brings ACWW into the forefront showing what we can achieve as an organization. The award also gives ACWW US \$20,000 to continue its crucial work

The work of ACWW gives fresh hope; it gives both immediate and sustainable impacts for rural women and their communities. From its very beginning in 1929 the heart of ACWW has been to bring together rural women and their organizations all over the world to address the challenges they face. Our work is rooted in the fundamental principle of human rights that all humanity has the right to a decent life. Together may this year bring us one step closer to achieving this goal.

As we begin 2024, I wish you all the very best, may we journey this year stronger together.

Thank you for sending me your newsletters and updates, I enjoy reading each one. If I can be of assistance at any time please contact me at [Canada@acww.org.uk](mailto:Canada@acww.org.uk)

Happy New Year Everyone! Tomorrow is a fresh start. Make the most of it.

Until next time! Marie Kenny, Area Canada President ([canada@acww.org.uk](mailto:canada@acww.org.uk))

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*And the winner is...*



WINS fundraising drive raised around \$1500.00 and it was drawn for on November 13th at Delhaven & District meeting with Jacqueline Melvin Provincial President and Janice MacBride Branch President.

These ladies made and quilted this quilt for the provincial to use as a fundraiser.

Jennifer Stewart from Waverly, NS was the lucky winner and the draw was done by our guest Hope Corkum.

Jacqueline Melvin President WINS





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*Last words...* submitted by Angela Scott, NBWI

Thank-you all for your monthly submissions to WI Connections. This January 2024 Issue is not as extensive as we are used to, but following the busy holidays, we look forward to lots more submissions from Branches, Provinces, and individuals for the rest of the year.

This is the perfect time to make a book suggestion.

*Recipe for a Good Life*, by author Lesley Crewe was a Christmas gift for me, and I heartily suggest everyone read it in preparation for our 2024 Triennial Conference in Truro Nova Scotia. Delightfully - author Lesley Crewe will be a keynote speaker at the Conference, and to begin to enjoy the 'flavour' of life in Nova Scotia, you will love the book, and it's references to WI. Please let us know your thoughts, and suggestions for any other books. Have a Happy January and see you in February!

## Official Photos

I contacted the Lt Governor's office about a new photo of the monarch. No official photo is available yet. She advised checking on the website monthly. It will ultimately be available in pdf format. Once available you will be able to print it or have it printed. For the WI (we will discuss best options), we will likely send the pdf to someplace like Staples to be printed on quality picture paper in the size we want. Then frame it according to our needs.

Hopefully, this is helpful to others. June, Elgin WI



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Watch for Triennial Conference Registration coming next month.

*...See you next month!*