



1129 Queens Avenue, Brandon, MB, Canada R7A 1L9

**Manitoba Women's Institute
2026 Registration Form
Annual General Meeting (AGM) & MWI Women's Day (Hybrid)
Friday, May 8th, 2026
Dugald Community Club
(544 Holland St, Dugald)**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

I am a WI member of _____.

I am a non member: (circle or check one) **Yes** **No**

I am attending for the first-time: (circle or check one) **Yes** **No**

I will be attending the event:

Virtually (via Zoom) **OR** In person at the Dugald Community Center

Registration fee: \$25.00 in person or \$10.00 virtually for the afternoon speakers

AGM Morning Refreshments and the MWI Women's Day Luncheon included

To register:

Mail registration form and registration fee to Manitoba Women's Institute, 1129 Queens Street, Brandon, MB R7B 1L9 **on or before Friday, April 24th, 2026.**

or **Phone** Mallory at **204-726-7135** to register and then pay at the door.

or **Email** your registration form to mbwi@mymts.net and e-transfer the registration fee to mwi.financial@gmail.com **Friday, April 24th, 2026.**

FOR OFFICE USE: Date received: _____ Fee Enclosed: _____

Manitoba Women's Institute

Office Administrator: Mallory Makinson
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Provincial Board 2024-2025

President: Debra Barrett

President—Elect: Marge Knutson

Regional Representatives:

Eastern: Vacant

Southwest/North: Liz Chongva

Wpg.-Interlake: Gisela Nolting

Manitoba Agriculture: Thelma Blahey

WI Canada/FWIC Provincial Representative: Debra Barrett

Manitoba Gov't Appointed Members: Michele Gurman

Acting UofM Home Ec.: Ann Mandziuk, PHEc



Mission Statement

“Manitoba Women’s Institute is an organization that focuses on personal development, family agriculture, rural development and community action... locally and globally.”

Vision Statement

Manitoba Women’s Institute strengthens women, families and communities.



Visit www.acww.org.uk for a new ACWW experience, updated resources, new presentations, more information, easy membership renewals.

Visit the FWIC website
<https://www.fwic.ca/>



President's Report

Hello everyone,
Hello and adios, is my comment of the day. This is officially my last president's report as my term will come to an end at our AGM.

I was asked the other day if my tenure as president was a "wild ride." I must admit there were about 4 times when I thumped my head against the wall in frustration. However, for the most part the job was an absolute pleasure. I truly enjoyed meeting the members from across Manitoba and learned many new skills and ideas from each and every one of you. Learning to be semi comfortable speaking at public events, for this introvert, was a new skill I will forever be grateful for.



To those of you who took the time to phone me when you had an idea or were frustrated, I thank you. It takes a lot of courage to phone someone you do not know and express your thoughts. Give yourself a pat on the back and please keep expressing your opinions to Marge as she dons the task of President.

As many of you know I am not a tiara person but rather a rubber boot type of gal. I love being involved in the day to day activities and working in the trenches to get new projects up and running. I hope to continue to dig deep in order to keep Women's Institute strong and thriving in Manitoba. However, I must admit that I will be glad to no longer be writing reports, agendas, or minutes at midnight. It never failed that my free time usually meant booting up the computer when most people were retiring for the night.

The MWI Board keeps reminding me that I am not leaving just taking on a different role as Past President. This job should be fun as I only have to problem solve when asked and not on a weekly basis. Do not worry Marge as I will not abandon you on an ice floe.

I was fortunate to always be surrounded by a board of intelligent, hardworking and creative women. They made the job interesting, fun and helped soften the challenges. A special THANK YOU to Liz Chongva who acted as my proofreader and sounding board over my years as President.

In addition, to the fun times MWI benefited from the gifts each Board member brought to the past and current board tables. To the current board, thank you to Ann for her creativity, leading the charge on our marketing & promotions committee and her superb job as our newsletter editor; Gisela for cutting through the chaff and always adding common sense to our discussions; Jacqueline for her ability to edit reports and acting as our thesaurus; Michele for her thoughtful comments and willingness to work at keeping committees strong; Thelma for her gift of being the diplomat of our group and offering different perspectives in a gentle manner especially when tough issues arose, and Marge for working hard to absorb new information and set a forward course for MWI. Lastly, a huge thank you to our current Office Administrator Mallory Makinson and former Executive Administrator Angela Pickett. These two women have kept me on top of the workload and getting my tasks completed mostly on time. I am sure there were many days they would have liked to pick up the phone and say, "I want that report/article now, not tomorrow" but instead they remained calm and politely reminded me of overdue duties.

In closing, I extend to all our institutes and individual members a sincere "well done" and my hope for your continued dedication to Women's Institute in Manitoba. Individually we can express our thoughts but as an organization with a united voice WE ARE POWERFUL.

Take care and all the best to each and every one of you for a healthy and happy future.
I raise my glass to you!

Take care!
Debra Barrett

OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Happy Spring to all MWI members! I'm hoping most of the snow has melted by the time the newsletter reaches you...fingers crossed!

Our Facebook and Instagram social media pages continue to have a far "reach" which means our pages are looked at by over 12,000 people from all over the world. Cheshire WI groups are an example of some of our most recent followers! Please send me any photos you may have that you would like to share, in the newsletter or for our social media pages.



The office is a busy place with our resolutions package mail-version in process. By now every member should have received a voting package. Each member should have received: letter from the President, a voting ballot as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope. For any reason you did NOT receive any of the documents, please contact the office by phone or email as soon as possible as it is important that you have the chance to vote! We can not reach members who have incorrect addresses or emails, and I try to keep the information as up to date as possible.

I hope you all have a lovely spring!

Warm regards,

Mallory Makinson
Office Administrator



The Board sends condolences to family of former MWI President **Marion McNabb**. She served as president for the 1982 term. She went on to serve on the board of FWIC.

She was a member of the **Basswood** Women's Institute. A full obituary is available on <https://www.whitesfh.ca/obituary/Marion-McNabb>



‘HOW TO KEEP ITEMS OUT OF THE LANDFILL?’



Fashion Revolution week is April 22 - 28, 2026, encouraging seven days of action to call for an ethical and safe fashion industry. Whether you are in the industry, an educator or a consumer, there are ways to be involved in [Fashion Revolution Week 2026](https://www.fashionrevolution.org/fashion-revolution-week-2026/). One is to participate in **Mend In Public Day on April 25th**. You could choose to host your own mending event or mend at home (or in public) and promote it online using [#MendInPublicDay](https://twitter.com/MendInPublicDay). Resources and information about the event and how to host your own can be found at [fashionrevolution.org/mend-in-public-day](https://www.fashionrevolution.org/mend-in-public-day) The website also has **videos on repairing clothing** by sewing on buttons, darning, fixing knits, and using sashiko techniques to repair jeans. There is also a **lesson plan for Loved Clothes Last**.



Woodmore WI

Sometimes life just gets ahead of us. Sometimes we tell each other, and ourselves, to take a day and just breathe. Take a moment and reflect. Or do something. WI Day should encompass some form of all of that- some thoughtfulness for each member and for the group as a whole. Some reflection on who we are as women, and as an integral group in the community.

The last entry that Woodmore WI submitted to the Newsletter was regarding the passing of two of our members, Hazel Carriere and Deb Melosky. Both had been integral and embedded in WI. But Deb Melosky was still actively involved and young when she passed. It hit us hard. That is an understatement- because she was also a close friend to many. Grief was felt on several levels. There was a heaviness in all of us at our meetings without her presence. It was an unspoken feeling of loss, and of being lost. It felt awkward and insecure. Our grieving was far from done-our acknowledgement of her incomplete-we needed more...



So-we decided to do what only a Women's organization COULD do...we held a potluck! It became a mix of WI Day, International Women's Day, and tribute to Deb. We held an intimate gathering at Janet Kroeker's home on March 16- we were greeted with goblets of wine and/or lemon water, a table set with tablecloth, candles, fresh flowers, and fine bone china. We ate like Queens! We updated each other on our lives, discussed issues of the day, and enjoyed each other's company. We passed a small stone from friend to friend, and each took a moment to reflect on the impact of Deb in our lives. We brought momentos of Deb to discuss their meaning to us. We laughed and we cried. We toasted her- her place in our lives, her contributions to WI, and her character. We did the dishes, tidied up, and went home feeling so very content. I wish that my words could convey how beautiful a day it was for us- so that you all could celebrate in the spirit of Deb, and of WI- they were kind of one in the same!

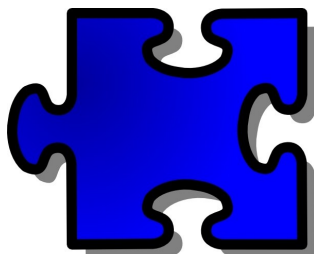
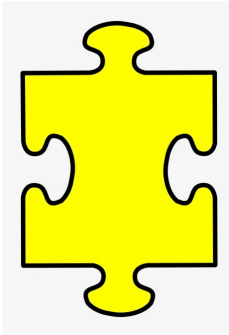
Shelagh Woods



Bits and Pieces



Do you have graduating students in your life? Could they use \$1,250 for secondary education? Check out the MWI scholarships on the Red River Ex Foundation website. The deadline is approaching for the MWI SCHOLARSHIPS—they need to be submitted by the second Friday in May.
<https://www.redriverex.com/scholarships-and-bursaries/>




Health Canada has updated its popular [Nutrition Labelling Online Course](#). This free and interactive course equips you with the latest nutrition labelling information, including engaging modules on the new front-of-package labelling, nutrition facts table, serving size, the % daily value, the list of ingredients and nutrition claims.

Growing Manitoba Ag
Inform. Influence. Inspire.

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/online-resources/signup-for-growing-manitoba-ag.html>
If you would like this newsletter, please go to the link to receive an email sent directly to your inbox.



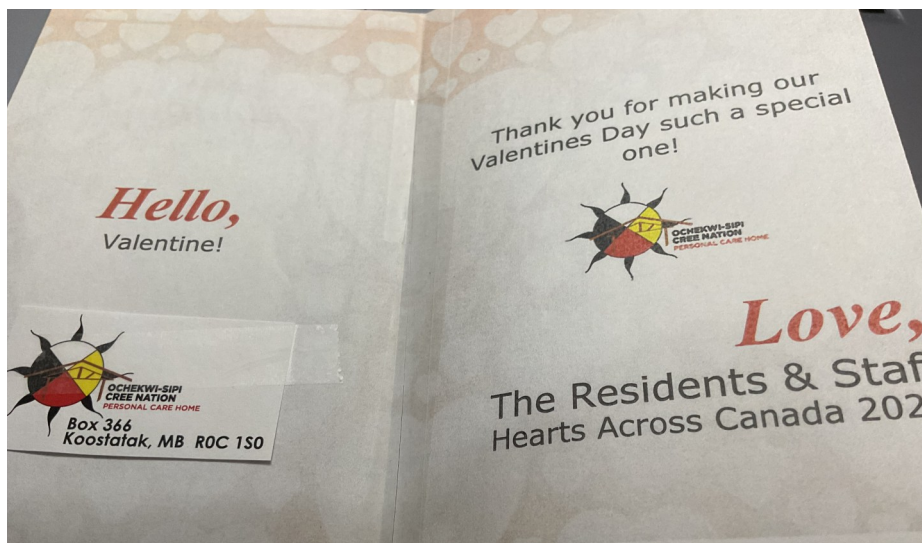
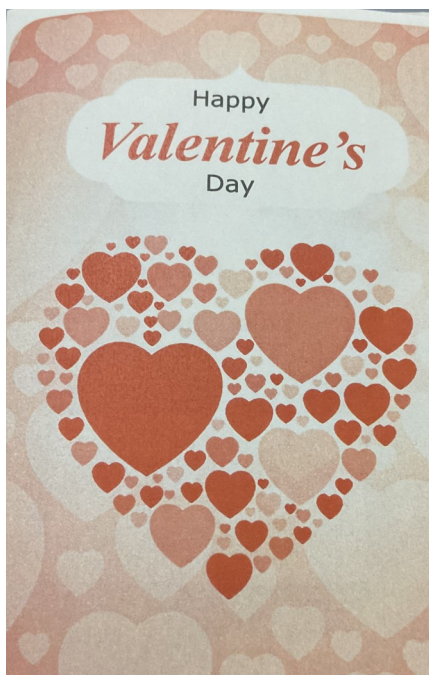
Happy Birthday to members celebrating in June and July.



Don't forget to share the activities of your local/branch with the MWI office so we can let others in the province know what is happening across the province either in our newsletter or in our social media posts.

The United Nations has declared 2026 the International Volunteer Year (IVY 2026) to recognize volunteerism as a key driver of sustainable development. IVY 2026 is a call to governments, organizations, and communities worldwide to champion volunteerism in all its forms—formal and informal, local and global—while fostering inclusive policies and ensuring volunteer contributions are recognized and measured. **Volunteer Canada** has resources to help promote this event and celebrate volunteers in Canada at <https://ivy26.ca/> **National Volunteer Week is April 19-25, 2026.** The theme for 2026 is *Ignite Volunteerism.*

MAHE News Digest March 25, 2026



In the last newsletter I mentioned seeing a request for Valentines cards for a personal care home. I sent several and received this card in response to the ones I sent.

DO WHAT YOU CAN

**Book Review** by Marge Knutson

Aspiring women are all around us, and aspiring ones motivate us to do more and work together “as one” to achieve goals and solutions on many fronts through creative ideas. *“Madge Watt and the Power of Women Working Together”*, by R. Fenner & H. Geissinger is a great book!

Madge Watt, better known as Mrs. Alfred Watt was both aspiring and inspiring. This book is a story of Margaret Rose Watt (Madge), and her roots in the BCWI, which she joined in 1909. She influenced the WIs in Britain when she was forced to move there in 1913. In 1915, WIs that she started in Wales spread through the villages quickly! The work of the UK WI’s and the Canadian WI’s has influenced and aided both countries. Through the persistence and dedication of Madge Watt, originally from Ontario, where she grew up and became involved in the writing of articles, journals, and poems. Her education on the system of the provincial and federal government models aided in which eventually became the impetus in the formation of the *“Associated Country Women of the World”* or ACWW in 1933. In these government models the principle of equality is recognized, meaning that no social rank, wealth or religion is privileged above any other. In addition, the principles of unity, freedom of assembly and laws for the good of the community are all recognized. Also, the government’s responsibility for international affairs and national defence while the provinces look after internal matters. In a parallel to this model, the ACWW was established with an Executive Committee and later, with a representative at the United Nations.

ACWW started with 24 countries that were a collaboration of rural women’s organizations, with over 7 million women members and a major voice for rural women at the UN. Along with other instrumental and inspiring women along Madge’s life journey where the first WIs in Ontario formed in 1897 with Adelaide Hoodless, where the motto “For Home and Country” formed and now is used nationwide. The book tells the history of not just Madge but the other hard working women who plowed the road to the organizations or the **Federated Women’s Institute** (FWIC), and the **Associated Country Women of the World** (ACWW), that are still active organizations. The aims and objectives of raising the standard of living by studying at their regular monthly meetings with vital topics such as: to improve conditions of rural life for women and the community by study of home economics, child welfare, prevention of disease, neighbourhood needs, industrial and social conditions and laws affecting women and their work. Women’s Institutes became a social and educational centre and a means of welcoming new settlers in a rural community to encourage one another.

Gisela Nolting, a member of the Grosse Isle WI, and also our ACWW Board Representative lent me this book that she bought at the ACWW Convention in 2025, but you can purchase it on Amazon and other websites too. I had to buy another book for myself! It’s a great read about the history of WIs and the great Organizations that have spawned from it.

The views contained in the book reviews provided to our newsletter are the thoughts/opinions of the writer and not Manitoba Women’s Institute.



Federated Women's Institutes of Canada



CONSTITUENT SOCIETY, ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

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Highlights from the FWIC/WI Canada Board Meeting – January 26, 2026

Theme: Together We Rise!

VISION STATEMENT	PURPOSE STATEMENT	OBJECTIVES
Fostering a future where every woman thrives and makes a meaningful impact	A national united voice of women promoting family, community, and personal development through learning and friendship	1. To provide a united national voice for all Women's Institutes of Canada 2. To initiate national programs and provide resource material. 3. To provide a medium of intercommunication among the units of the Federation

FWIC April Fundraiser: The Aloette Fundraiser is now available. Thank you to Sharon Hofman for providing a percentage of sales back to FWIC. Here is the link to view the catalogue <https://ziniy.com/aloette-catalogs/aloette-catalog-2024-english>. To place an order call or text Sharon at 519 998 9382 or email her at aloettewithsharon@gmail.com. She can also be reached through messenger.

Feb 19 WI Day: Thank you to all who participated in the WI Day on Feb 19. If you missed the event, you can enjoy hearing the "WI Stories that Shape Us" on the FWIC WI Canada YouTube Channel. Look for the FWIC crest.

Earth Day Recording of "The Circular Economy" will be aired on April 22, 2026: This year FWIC will share a video on The Circular Economy presented by Nova Scotia WI member, Monica Rivers. Monica is the founder and owner of Rooted Gatherings. Monica will share what a circular economy is, its importance to our communities and how we can be part of one.

FWIC AGM: The AGM will be held on **Tuesday, July 7 at 7pm ET**. There is no cost to attend, however, donations of \$25 or more will receive a charitable tax receipt. Reports are to be submitted by **June 16, 2026**. More details will be available in April.

FWIC Convention Pin Competition: The competition to design a pin for the 24th National Convention is now open. Details are available in the April WI Connections.

Nominating Committee for 2027: The nominating committee has been established to receive names of provincial representatives for 2027-2030 and for the position of president-elect. For those interested in the president-elect position individuals must have served as a FWIC board member in the preceding last two triennium (2018-2021 and 2021-2024).

Reminder: Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Canadian Woman of the Year 2026 and the Erland Lee Awards: This is a reminder that the Canadian Woman of the Year applications and the Erland Lee applications are due **March 31, 2026**. Details are on the website.

Next Meeting of the Board of Directors: Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6 pm ET.

**LET'S HAVE SOME
COLOURING FUN!**



UPCOMING Events

APRIL

- 21—Earth Day
- 19—25 National Volunteer Week (see page 9)
- 22—38 Fashion Revolution Week (see page 5)
- 26—May 1 ACWW Triennium, Ottawa
- 30—Deadline for newsletter articles/submissions

MAY

- 8—MWI AGM, Dugald
- 8—Deadline for MWI scholarships with the Red River Ex Foundation by 11:59 p.m.
- 31—Deadline for newsletter articles/submissions

JUNE

- 1—World Milk Day
- 21—National Indigenous Peoples Day

JULY

- 1—Canada Day
- 31—Deadline for newsletter articles/submissions



For the quilters and crafters among us!!

1. What potato was developed at the University of Guelph in 1980?
2. What sport was invented using an apple basket and a ball?
3. What dried fortified baby cereal was first sold in 1931?
4. What drink company was born in St. John, NB in 1894?
5. What year was the Maple Leaf flag introduced?
6. In 1910, a mother's idea of a diaper and a rope hung from a branch lead to the invention of what?

1. Yukon Gold
2. Basketball
3. Pabulum
4. Red Rose tea (only in Canada!)
5. 1965
6. Jolly Jumper

ADVERTISING RATES

Business Card Size	\$15 per issue
Quarter Page	\$40 per issue
Half Page	\$65 per issue
Full page	\$90 per issue

For further information please contact Mallory at mbwi@mymts.net

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