



OWN E-LETTER – March 2017, Vol. 4, Issue 1



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Chair's Report

by Marilyn Schafer



Happy International Women's week to all! **Visit our website for events.**

OWN has begun its Winter semester with many new members and an active program. The Housing Committee continues to work on its priorities; the Writer's Groups and La Vie en Rose, our French conversation group, have started to meet again after the holiday

hiatus.

Planned Programs

Look for these events in the future and check our website and Facebook page for exact dates.

- ✓ We have a 30th Anniversary Committee formed to plan a celebration that will likely occur in the autumn of 2017.
- ✓ We continue to support the Public Health Series at the St. Lawrence branch of the Toronto Public Library and the Toronto Reference Library.
- ✓ We are proudly supporting and showcasing the UN Women, CRIAW, and FAFIA
- ✓ In May, probably the 14th look for the '**End of Life Dialogue**' at OWN.
- ✓ The Housing Committee will be following up its successful presentation in November 2016 for builders and developers with another 'Living in Place' presentation at Queen's Park for MPPs in April.

Membership and Governance

We are looking for a member with good organizational skills to head the Communications Committee and others to work on the website, the e-letter, and Facebook. We are also particularly looking to attract to OWN Aboriginal members, as well as members in the LGBTQ community in order to increase diversity in the organization.

Many thanks go to Elsie Dollecamp for her continued support on such a large scale to OWN. She is an example to all of us who value OWN and its principles.

Reminder

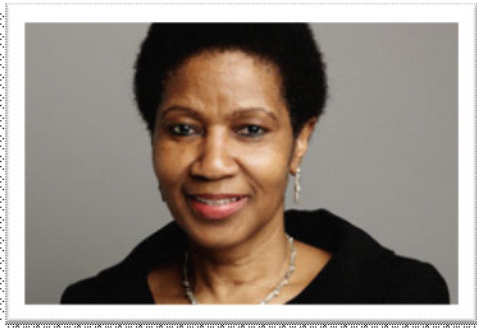
**Check out our Facebook page and website to keep track of our events and others that we support.

Activism *and* Systems Advocacy



The **UN Observance of International Women's Day 2017** will take place on Wednesday, March 8, from 10:00am to 12:30pm at the Trusteeship Council Chamber in the UN Secretariat, New York. The event will feature diverse voices, including António Guterres, UN Secretary-General; Amina Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General; Peter Thomson, President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly; Lana Nusseibeh, President of the UN Women Executive Board; Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director; Anne Hathaway, UN Women Goodwill Ambassador and American award-winning actor; Casar Jacobson, Disability activist and Youth Champion, and representatives from Member States. [Read media advisory»](#)

[Message by UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka on International Women's Day](#)



Across the world, too many women and girls spend too many hours on household responsibilities—typically more than double the time spent by men and boys. They look after younger siblings, older family members, deal with illness in the family and manage the house. In many cases this unequal division of labour is at the expense of women's and girls' learning, of paid work, sports, or engagement in civic or community leadership. For the whole message, please click on this link:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/2/statement-ed-phumzile-iwd-2017>

Why I am a Feminist

by Marie-Lynn Hammond

Canadian folk singer-songwriter, broadcaster, playwright and editor

www.marielynnhammond.com

We still need feminism and I am a feminist. Why?

Because my mother was a battered wife.

Because when she finally got the courage to leave my alcoholic father, she was not able to access any of his air force pension, even though she'd put up with over twenty years of abuse, not to mention shepherding the family through 16 moves.

Because I and my two sisters were disappointments to our father, who wanted sons, the moment we came out of the womb.

Because countless times on the street, in the library, on the subway, strange men have groped me or tried to grope me, spoken sexist and obscene things to me, or exposed themselves to me.

Because when I started in the music business, radio stations would never play two songs by women in a row, since apparently women all sounded the same. But they'd play endless male artists and bands one after the other.

Because even in the folky/roots music world, I put up with my share of men coming on to me or attempting to coerce me into sex.

Because when I started out as a solo act with my own band, I was called wishy-washy by a male musician when I wasn't being decisive enough for his liking, and then when I became decisive, that same man called me a "ball-breaker". And this kind of thing happened all the time to other women musicians I knew.

Because I was nearly raped twice, once by a stranger and once by a supposed friend, and only escaped because I finally found my voice and screamed, though for the first terrifying minutes it was frozen in my throat.

Because all these reasons (and others I could list) seem to pale in comparison with what other women put up with all over the world, every minute of every day. Think female infanticide, honour killings, genital mutilation, stoning to death for supposed adultery, abduction and enslavement, murder at the hands of their spouses, and rape rape rape rape.

Because -- and call me sexist if you want to for saying this -- but we have yet to see the female equivalent of the Koch brothers, Osama bin Laden, or Donald Trump.

And finally, since (mostly) male leaders have made a mess of our poor planet, surely it's time to let women have more say in how we run things, because we can't possibly make it any worse.



**Canadian Research Institute or the Advancement
of Women (CRIAW/ICREF)**

by Jacqueline Neapole

[Facebook.com/criaw.icref](https://www.facebook.com/criaw.icref)

www.criaw-icref.ca

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW-ICREF) has been researching and documenting the economic and social situation of women in Canada for over 40 years. CRIAW-ICREF's overarching goal is to provide tools and information to help advocacy and equity-seeking organizations to take action to advance social justice and equality for all women.

CRIAW-ICREF was created by feminists from academia, community members, and activists, to respond to the lack of existing research on women and women's experiences. CRIAW-ICREF continues this important work today. Over the past 40 years, we have seen some advancement for women, yet, here we are in 2017, and women's experiences are often either othered or erased, and in other cases we see our hard fought rights being directly and openly attacked.

CRIAW-ICREF is the research arm of the women's movement, our plain language, accessible research is a vital tool in the fight for women's equality. Using an intersectional, gender-based analysis in the work we do, we can identify and examine the different ways in which diverse women experience inequality and discrimination in Canada.

One of the current issues that CRIAW-ICREF has been researching are the cuts to public services and the impacts on women. Using an intersectional approach our Changing Public Services project has been looking at how cuts to public services, privatization and public sector restructuring have had a very definite impact on women, both as users of public services and as workers in the public sector. We know that the impacts of austerity measures and cuts to public services are not gender-neutral. We are currently in the final months of this important project.

You can find out more about this project and our other projects at www.criaw-icref.ca . We invite you to check out our research and publications and share as widely as possible!



The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is reviewing Canada next week in Geneva.

FAFIA has submitted four reports to the CEDAW Committee for their review.

The FAFIA Coalition report focuses more widely on women's structural inequality in Canada and identifies where Canada is not fulfilling its human rights obligations to Canadian women as set out in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

[FAFIA Coalition submission - Because its 2016! A National Gender Equality Plan!](#)

50th Anniversary of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty years ago, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women exposed widespread discrimination against women and set forth a clear plan to promote women's rights.

The Commission led to the establishment of Status of Women Canada, and the appointment of a Status of Women Minister. Most importantly, it empowered a new generation of strong feminists and activists.

Today, we stand with Canadian women celebrating progress on gender equality, and calling for real action.

Over the past 50 years, women's rights violations have continued. Canada has fallen from first to 25th on the United Nations Gender Equality Index.

Unfortunately, successive Liberal and Conservative governments have ignored the Commission's recommendations and cut social programs exacerbating inequality for women.

It is more important than ever that we stand together for this common cause. The progress towards equality was made possible because women and allies spoke up, marched, and fought for the rights of future generations

OWN believes the federal government has a crucial role to play in advancing gender equality through strong social programs.



Long Term Care Planning: What Is It and Why Should I Care?

By Karen Henderson

We all take delight in planning for vacations and holiday celebrations, but when it comes to planning for old age, we literally run the other way. Aging and death only happen to other people, and therefore we don't need to talk about it – at least not yet. Why is this?

- Canadians have an attitude of entitlement; I am a taxpayer and therefore the government is responsible for caring for me in my old age
- It won't happen to me
- My spouse will look after me
- The kids will look after me

The reasons we should care about aging are obvious:

- 1000+ people turn 65 every day
- By 2038, over 1,125,200,000 Canadians will have Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia unless a cure is found before then

These realities make it abundantly clear that we all need to plan for old age – and not just financially. We need to understand the health care system where we live, plan where we wish to age and live out our lives, and communicate our wishes to family members and health care providers.

The bottom line: Long term care planning needs to be a part of every financial and/or retirement plan written today.

Here's how to begin:

Step one: Understand and accept the need to plan for your aging care needs

Step two: Understand the health care system and care settings and services where you plan to live as you age

Step three: Know whom you can count on for care and support, both from your family and from health care professionals

Step four: Understand your family history and what chronic conditions you have or may face

Step five: Talk with your family about what you want – hold a family meeting so others can be involved to help and support you

Step six: Establish clear legal directions. Complete a Will, Powers of Attorney and make copies available to those who need them

Step seven: Establish a funding source for long term care; this may be a special savings account, help from family or long term care insurance

Set eight: Gather all critical personal, health, legal and financial information and store it in **one** place for easy access

Step nine: Make a care plan that covers the 'what ifs'

Step ten: Communicate the plan to your family and update it every year

Creating a long term care plan will take time and effort, but once it is completed, you will have accomplished two very important goals:

1. You will have added the missing piece to your financial/retirement plan
2. You will have removed a huge burden from your family; over time you all will be thankful that you took the initiative to plan ahead

As the saying goes: Just do it!

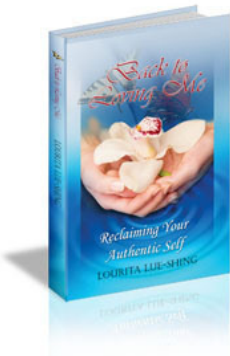
Karen Henderson, Founder/CEO of the Long Term Care Planning Network, is an independent aging and long term care planning educator, speaker and consultant who works with Canadians to help them understand and plan for the effects of long term care on their personal, professional and financial well-being. You can reach Karen at 416-526-1090 or at karenh@lrcplanningnetwork.com.

The following 4 reports were not available at the time of printing:

1. Toronto Seniors Forum
2. Toronto Seniors Strategy Accountability Table
3. Ontario Seniors Secretariat
4. SPACE Coalition

Ending Gender-based Violence

OWN and the Alfreda Mordas Reading Room recommends this vital resource book - *Back to Loving Me* by Lourita Lue-Shing



This resource is currently being used in women's organizations across Canada in resource rooms, group programs, staff training, outreach, book clubs and more.

The book was also reviewed and recommended by the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

<https://www.pinterest.com/nnedv/educational-books-about-dv/>

About the book:

Back to Loving Me introduces a new model: the Self-Empowerment Wheel. Its eight principles are outlines in the book: personal responsibility, positive self-image, self-love, inner peace, self-reliance, community, healthy boundaries, and assertiveness. Included are reference materials and over 40 personal growth exercises that can help facilitate individual and group learning. It is an easy to read self-help book for adults of any gender, race, or religion.

More information can be found at: www.backtolovingme.com



OWN HOUSING COMMITTEE

Breaking news from the OWN Housing Committee:

The OWN Housing Committee is working with a Toronto developer, beginning planning for **barrier-free condo**, with priority for OWN members. Watch this newsletter for updates as we progress.

If you haven't already filled out our brief survey for women able to buy a **condo**, please do so now. This will not only help us demonstrate that there is demand for barrier-free housing, but also will enable us to notify you when sales begin.

Also, we hope for a future non-profit barrier-free **rental** building. You can help us by suggesting suitable sites. And if you prefer to rent, be sure to fill out our new survey for people looking for **rental** apartments.

Both surveys are on the [OWN website](#) under Housing.

Peterborough News

Summary of 2016 Seniors' Summit Designing Healthy Housing & Innovative Communities

Trent Centre for Aging and Society Senior's Summit in Peterborough
<https://www.trentu.ca/aging/events/seniors-summit>



Showcasing Retirement and LT Care in Toronto

[Vermont Square - Long Term Care Home](http://www.vermontsquare.ca/)

www.vermontsquare.ca/

Centrally located at 914 Bathurst Street (just north of the Bathurst subway station) in lovely Seaton Village, Vermont Square is a beautiful long term care home.

[O'Connor House - WoodGreen Community Services](http://www.woodgreen.com/ServiceDetail.aspx?id=265)

www.woodgreen.com/ServiceDetail.aspx?id=265

Contact Info: 570 O'Connor Drive Toronto, Ontario

Phone (416) 572-3575

Fax (416) 469-2947

Email: cccentralintake@woodgreen.org

Contact OWN if you have any suggestions for long term care, retirement, nursing, or rehab facilities.

OWN Members in the Community

Please visit our website for the link to OWN member Audrey Danaher's blog.

<https://fromheretothere2016.wordpress.com/2017/02/20/continuing-the-revolution/>

If you have an interesting blog and wish for us to showcase it, please email the link.

Anam Cara

Anam Cara is a Gaelic term for soul mate. Soul mates share a bond that transcends time and place. OWN has a commemorative record book which honours individuals or a group. A donation to OWN purchases a page in the book with a message concerning the honoree, a photo, or any other tribute desired. This book is on permanent display at the OWN office. It is a great way to celebrate a life. If you would like to take advantage of this, please contact the OWN office and we will send you an application form.

Recent OWN members honoured are **Marie O'Connor, Sylvia Grimson at 100 years old, Olympia Heber Adams and Jazzmin Lausanne.**

Check our website, facebook page and new Twitter feed for more info on OWN activities and news.

<http://olderwomensnetwork.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/OlderWomensNetwork/>

Twitter: @OWN_Ont

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the following articles are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Older Women's Network.