

Welcome to the Zonta Club of Kanata-Stittsville Newsletter!

In this newsletter you will find information on past events, projects currently underway and upcoming events:

- December meeting guest speaker, Melanie Winwood, OPS
- Christmas Sing-along in Stittsville
- Zonta Twinning Kick-off
- Women of Influence – Goulbourn Township Historical Society
- Women in the Skilled Trades (CFUW)
- IRPP – Addressing affordability and climate crises
- ZI Advocacy Webinar: A Closer Look at Zonta Says NOW
- Advocating Candidates during Ontario Election
- 16 Days of Activism “Orange Ladies”
- March meeting guest speaker, Kaite Burkholder-Harris, ATEHO
- International Women's Day
- CSW69 NY
- ZD2 Spring Workshop

Steps to support women
and reduce risk

Guest Speaker Melanie Winwood, 13 December hybrid club meeting

Club members were thrilled that Melanie Winwood, Senior Advisor, Violence Against Women at Ottawa Police Services, spoke at our in-person meeting. It was a great way to wrap of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign that ended on Human Rights Day on 10

December. We learned about the recent use of the term “Femicide” by OPS along with local statistics on reported offences, charges laid, victim demographics and steps to support women and reduce risk. We also learned of the difficulty in gathering statistics, often due to confidentiality while others need to be disaggregated. We had lots of questions for Melanie!

- Creation of Risk Navigator positions
- Implementation of new language interpretation app
- Allowing support persons into interviews
- Development of new risk assessment tool
- Victim Choice Reporting

Ottawa

 **POLICE**

Christmas Carol Sing-along hosted by Councillor Glen Gower

On Wednesday 18 December, Elspeth and I joined Glen, his office assistants and friends for a community sing-along in Stittsville at Hazeldean Gardens. We had a good group of singers out and fun singing carols.

It's coming a bit late, but the newsletter only comes out every three months!





Zonta Twinning Programme Kick-off – Tuesday 28 January

Idris and I attended the virtual Kick-off at 10:00 a.m. hoping that members of our twinned club in Taranto, Italy would be present. Members from other clubs in Italy were present but not from Taranto. I have emailed the club twice, once using another email provided by Raisa Valve who coordinates the programme with Shelley Schultz. So far, no response.

Women of Influence – Goulbourn Township Historical Society

On February 15th the Goulbourn Township Historical Society (GTHS) celebrated fifteen women who have influenced and contributed to the communities in our area from the 1800s to the present. Also recognised – The Women's Institute – instrumental in bringing local women together to problem-solve the many issues that the public faced. They were also the local history keepers through the Tweedsmuir Histories.

Photos of the distinguished women were displayed on the Art Space Wall at the Stittsville Branch of the Ottawa Public Library during February. The women being recognised are: Lillian Eva Hobbs; Hilda Moore; Sally Beaton; Marion Gullock; Maria Hill; Margaret Lindsey Hill Malloch; Louise Beggs; Jessie Mabel McDiarmid; Janet Stavinga; Henrietta Lewis Lyon Lauder; Grace Thompson; Dr. Lucy May Rabb; Doreen Bell; Christine Jean McEwen; and Betty Hill.



Thanks very much to Elspeth for dropping by at the Stittsville Library on the 15th!

Women in the Skilled Trades - Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

On Saturday 22 February, I attended virtually an excellent talk on Women in the Skilled Trades. CFUW provides scholarships for women in the skilled trades. Kathy Wosnick, CFUW Advocacy Chair, moderated the panel. Speakers were Stephanie Allen, Joni Jean and Dr. Amin Yazdani.

Stephanie Allen is the Program Manager of Skilled Trades at Women's Enterprise Skills Training (WEST) of Windsor, bringing 14 years of experience in program management, employment counseling and job development. Her work focuses on empowering women and newcomers to achieve their employment goals through education, training and tailored support. Programs deal with overcoming barriers for women, language training and finding sustainable work. WEST partners with St. Clair College for a pre-apprenticeship program. WEST is conducting a research project funded by the Ministry of Training and Colleges and also receives funding from the Ministry of Labour and

Skilled Trades Program. Stephanie finds that a lot of women have experienced GBV and provides training to address this problem with psychologists and speakers who address GBV and mental wellness. The program also builds confidence and financial literacy. #WhyNotHer. In addition, employers have to take a six-hour training before being accepted as an employer of a safe and inclusive workplace for women. Lots of acronyms: SMART for Women program federally funded; UNIFOR Canada when they host an entire week. wearetrades.ca



Testimonials

- "... The primary reason an individual fails to leave an abusive partnership is due to the financial control and the denial of your abuser that you have a right to your voice, safety and possessions... Gaining a career in the skilled trades offers guaranteed employment in a high demand field. It means personal independence... The impact of the West program provided a solid foundation which I now stand on to build a beautiful life. I am honoured and grateful to have been a part of the first group of women to take part in the Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship offered. Now, as a registered apprentice, I can confidently say that my journey with West was a success!"

#Stronger #Skilled #Empowered

Joni Jean is an Academic Chair at Conestoga College in the Schools of Engineering & Technology and Trades & Apprenticeship. Joni manages the precision machining, woodworking and aviation programs, and is the lead for the college's Engineering, Technology and Trades for Women (ETT4W) initiatives such as CAGIS Canadian Association of Girls in Skilled Trades, JILL of all Trades events such as a day for women, WIST Women in Skilled Trades, ConnectHER which is a partnership with Fanshawe Corporate Training. Connect HER is holding a parallel event at NGO CSW69 in NY.

Dr. Amin Yazdani is the founder and executive director of the [Canadian Institute for Safety, Wellness & Performance](#) (CISWP) at Conestoga College. His research focuses on developing innovative solutions to prevent workplace injuries and improve job accessibility for a diverse workforce. He employs an integrative approach that enhances the scientific understanding of injury risks in order to generate practical, evidence-based solutions to improve workplace safety, performance and productivity. We learned that women experience the majority of workplace injuries. These high levels are related to tools, machinery, etc. made for men that do not account for women's physical characteristics. He takes a psychophysical approach to technologies to reduce physical impact. WSIB funds the MOSAIC project.

Elspeth and Judith attended this event on Monday 24 February.

As a new U.S. administration issues repeated threats to impose punishing tariffs on Canadian exports, the IRPP hosted a panel discussion on how to address the intersecting affordability and climate crises.

Increasing costs from extreme weather events, uncertainty about energy and supply chains and added pressure on already inadequate infrastructure and housing mean new, comprehensive solutions are needed to keep Canadians safe. The panel focused on how to protect households from the rising cost of living, how to minimise the impacts of extreme weather events and how to keep affordable food on the table.



Hosted in partnership with the [Affordability Action Council](#), the panel featured (left to right) **Karen Restoule**, vice-president of Toronto-based Crestview Strategy and senior fellow at Macdonald-Laurier Institute, panel moderator IRPP president and CEO **Jennifer Ditchburn**, **Tyler Meredith**, former economic policy adviser to the Liberal government and **Kathleen Monk**, former director of communications to NDP leader Jack Layton.

ZI Advocacy Webinar Series: A Closer Look at Zonta Says NOW, Tuesday 25 February

This webinar was excellent! Helen Bowie, ZI Advocacy Chair and member of the Zonta Club of Wellington, NZ, hosted the event. Panelists were Carole Theobald, Zonta Says NOW Working Group Chair, and working group members Julie Trone, Karin Lange (research) and Pia Hultgren (social media). Zonta Says NOW to Gender-Equal Climate Action is a movement to focus on climate justice at international, national and local levels. The webinar provided an inside look at the campaign and how it aligns with Zonta International's Strategic Plan and biennial goals. Panelists from the Zonta Says NOW Working Group explained how the campaign strengthens Zonta International's efforts to build a better world for women and girls. Panelists provided some great ideas for advocacy and projects for clubs and districts:



- **Engage with local officials:** At our ZKS club meeting on Monday 3 March, our guest speaker, Kaite Burkholder-Harris, gave us some great tips on how to strategise our approach to local politicians.
- **Domestic Violence Shelters:** Learn how they provide safety.
- **Advocate policy makers:** For example, gender-responsive action and needs
- **Engage in conversation about climate justice**
- **Team up with schools:** Provide education awards

- **Create emergency backpacks:** Find out what shelters need, fill the backpacks and take to women's shelters

Take a look at [Zonta Says NOW](#) on the ZI Website for much more information.

Advocating Political Candidates during Ontario Election

Elspeth was instrumental in writing and sending this message to the following Liberal candidates in the recent Ontario provincial election:

Lorna Jean Edmonds, Brandon Bay (Carleton), Karen McCrimmon (Kanata-Carleton), Tyler Watt (Nepean), Thomas Simpson (Ottawa Centre), John Fraser (Ottawa South), Lucille Collard (Ottawa-Vanier), Brett Szmul (Ottawa West-Nepean) and Rob Rainer (Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston) — all in ridings that take in Ottawa west, south and centre or border Ottawa on the western edges.

A request to know [candidate name]'s position on GBV and IPV

The newly-formed Zonta Club of Kanata-Stittsville is writing to confirm your views and your party's policies toward gender-based violence (GBV) and intimate-partner violence (IPV).

Our club is a member of Zonta International (<https://zonta.org>) a world-wide human-rights organization striving to build a better world for women and girls. I am attaching press coverage of the celebration of our club's inauguration late last year. We are mainly centred in the western part of Ottawa but our members do include those from Brockville.

We strongly support the position taken by the Toronto YWCA in regard to the upcoming provincial election laid out in their campaign Vote to End Gender Based Violence reproduced below:

<https://www.ywcatoronto.org/takeaction/campaigns/vote-to-end-gender-based-violence>

This election, let's urge all political candidates to:

- Declare intimate partner violence an epidemic to acknowledge the public health and safety crisis.
- Establish an independent accountability mechanism to advance community-led long-term planning efforts to address and eradicate gender-based violence and to ensure leadership and accountability across parties and election cycles.
- Fund and sustain the solutions required to respond to and prevent gender-based violence.

We further support an open letter sent by the YWCA to the provincial government in December 2024, Open Letter from 150 Organizations Urging Ontario Legislature to Pass Bill 173, The Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic Act, 2024.

<https://www.ywcatoronto.org/takeaction/deputations/the-intimate-partner-violence-epidemic-act-2024>.

We wish to confirm that you support: efforts to reduce GBV and IPV, protect vulnerable populations, and decrease the calamitous consequences of GBV and IPV on women and families.

We also draw attention to the fact that, in view of recent shocking international developments, specifically the United States' aggressive move to level tariffs on Canadian exports to America, this issue is even more urgent. We know that tariffs will result in economic turbulence. Historically there is a strong and disturbing correlation between economic downturns and increases in domestic and gender-based violence. Consequently, with the benefit of foresight, we ask what additional early measures your party will introduce to avoid catastrophic consequences to the greatest extent possible for women, their families and vulnerable populations?

Zonta hits ground running with 11 members

New club
chartered
Nov. 2

BY NEVIL HUNT

"Welcome to the start of something powerful."

Lorraine Abess used those words to greet 11 people as they became the original, charter members of the new Zonta Club of Kanata-Stittsville.

The international organization envisions a world in which women's rights are

recognized as human rights and every woman is able to achieve her full potential.

The new club's charter ceremony took place on Nov. 2 at the Beaverbrook library branch with about 10 Zonta members online and a mixture of about 20 members and well-wishers in person.

There was an immediate reminder of Zonta's international character—member Souella Cumming appeared online from Wellington, New Zealand. She serves as Zonta International's liaison to district 2, within which the new

club operates.

"The word Zonta comes from a Lakota word that means 'honest and trustworthy,'" Cumming said.

Founded in 1919, in Buffalo, N.Y., this Nov. 8 will mark the organization's 105th anniversary. Cumming said the first club chartered outside the U.S. was established in Toronto in 1927.

"We are now in 64 countries, where there are more than 1,100 clubs and 25,000 members," she said.

Zonta partners with United Nations agencies, Cumming said, "and ending child marriage is just one example (of that partnership)."

"The club is helped by donations and contributions from members. Have fun and make a real difference."

GLOBAL SCOPE

The international tone continued as three Zonta members from New York state



Nevil Hunt photo

Three of the 11 charter members of the Zonta Club of Kanata-Stittsville, from left, Judith Ainsworth, Elspeth Nickle and Camelia Dubic. New members are welcome.

attended the ceremony in person and led the induction of new members.

Abess is the governor of

Zonta district 2 and lives in Glens Falls. Along with 19 American clubs, there are three Canadian clubs in

district 2: Montreal, Ottawa and now Kanata-Stittsville.

CONTINUED OPPOSITE

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NEWS

FROM OPPOSITE PAGE

"We are unique in some aspects because district 2 is located on both sides of the border," Abess said.

Despite the lines on the map, Abess said "our commonality is strong."

"You can add your voice and we can all stand up for equality. We advocate and make change to the status of women—meaningful change."

The club's first president is Judith Ainsworth, the vice-president is Camelia Dubic, the secretary-treasurer is Kathleen Smith, and the director is Kelly Laidlaw.

Abess said the new club is already displaying a healthy cross-section of the community. She said she was surprised at the number of men in attendance, even if only two are members of the club so far.

"We cannot expect the change we need without men joining us," she said.

Ainsworth said local Zonta members are already involved with Ottawa's Alliance to End Homelessness and ending child marriage in Canada, where the legal age to marry is

currently 16. The Kanata-Stittsville club has begun a petition to raise that age.

The local club will also work on 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, which begins on Nov. 25. February brings Human Trafficking Awareness Day, and there will also be local Zonta activities to boost climate action on Earth Day.

Ottawa Councillors Cathy Curry and Glen Gower both welcomed Zonta's new local club. Gower thanked members for volunteering.

'GET INVOLVED'

"The healthiest neighbourhoods are the ones where people get involved," he said.

Each Zonta club decides which projects are their priority, while the international organization sets overarching goals.

Zonta clubs worldwide work to influence government policies to achieve gender equality, promote women's education, end violence against women and outlaw child marriage.

For information on the Kanata-Stittsville club, visit zontadistrict2.org/kanata. The international Zonta website is at zonta.org.

nhunt@ottawavoice.ca

"We are unique in some aspects because district 2 is located on both sides of the border."

Zonta district 2 governor
Lorraine Abess

Surprise! Elspeth received replies!

Rob Rainer: I fully support "efforts to reduce GBV and IPV, protect vulnerable populations, and decrease the calamitous consequences of GBV and IPV on women and families." Fyi I am a co-founder and was the first Chair of the Lanark Basic Income Network. On April 24 Lanark Basic

Income Network (LBIN) hosts an event on IPV and basic income, at the Carleton Place Town Hall Auditorium and to feature Senator Kim Pate and Lanark County Interval House Executive Director Erin Lee. See the LBIN website for more information about this free event. Good luck with your ongoing efforts to raise awareness and advocate for combating GBV and IPV. If I am elected as the new MPP for Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, you can be sure of my steadfast support for such efforts.

Karen McCrimmon: I would agree that intimate partner violence is at epidemic levels. The Ontario Liberal caucus supported Bill 173. The Ford government's cynical sidelining of it in committee is deplorable. That he is concerned more with fighting auto theft than saving women's lives is testament to how little he values women and this issue. Gender-based violence is also unacceptable in a country that prides itself on its human rights record.

I support meaningful investments into violence prevention, early intervention, and survivor support services. It is terrifying the degree to which our rights are being taken away all around the world. During my service in the Royal Canadian Air Force I participated in a number of humanitarian missions. I have seen first-hand how much women and children suffer in conflict zones and under oppressive regimes.

Brandon Bay: If elected, I will fight to protect our communities in Ontario, which certainly must include a focus on reducing Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence. [...] I recognize that the implementation of these measures is more important than ever, in the face of economic and cultural turmoil exacerbated by Trump's tariffs. I will work to make sure that women in Ontario are adequately protected, and make this an immediate priority when elected.

Lucille Collard:

Good Afternoon,
Thank you for your email.

This is indeed an important conversation to be had with the candidates for your riding. To facilitate this, I have added below the contact information for each of the candidates' campaign offices.

To hear Ottawa-Vanier candidates' stances on provincial issues and policies, you can reach out to Lucille Collard (Liberal candidate) at lucille@lucillecollard.ca, Marilissa Gosselin (PC candidate) at Marilissa.Gosselin@ontario.ca / media@ontariopc.com, Myriam Djilane (NDP candidate) at info@ontariondp.ca, Christian Proulx (Green party) at christianproulx@gpo.ca and Coreen Corcoran (Libertarian candidate) at coreenc@gmail.com.

Following the election announcement made on Tuesday, January 28, Lucille Collard is no longer serving as MPP for Ottawa-Vanier. During this writ period, the constituency office is unable to respond to inquiries regarding government work or policy, positions on issues or anything that relates to the election campaign. We are currently open for constituent support with case work related issues that pertain to provincial ministries.

I hope this information helps.

Best regards,

Angie Allard

(They/Them/iel)

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Orange Ladies for 16 Days of Activism – 25 November-10 December 2025

Thanks to Carolyn and Elspeth, we are off to a great start on our “Orange Ladies” project! Carolyn and Elspeth went to Rona and Home Hardware in Stittsville and succeeded in getting the plywood and paint donated! And thanks to Councillor Gower’s office for connecting us with Damien Brown-Graham, Head of the Tech Department at Sacred Heart High School. On Wednesday 26 February, Rona delivered four sheets of plywood to Sacred Heart. The tech students are working on cutting out the ladies and Damien will let Carolyn know when the Orange Ladies are ready for delivery.

I want to personally thank Carolyn for researching the Orange Ladies and GBV and sending the information to Rona and Home Hardware store managers. She found this great picture of Orange Ladies with the Zonta Club of Airlie Beach in Australia. On my travels up the Queensland coast after Convention last year, I did not realise Airlie Beach had a club or I would have contacted them while I was there.

I am saving Carolyn’s great emails for future projects and outreach.

Next Step: Once the ladies have been cut out, we will need to paint them. Get ready to join the club for our “Orange Lady Painting Day” in Stittsville some time in mid to late summer. More information to come.



Guest Speaker Kaite Burkholder-Harris, Executive Director, Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, at Monday 3 March online meeting

Kaite gave us an informative and insightful presentation and advice on how to make our advocacy efforts more effective with elected officials. 1) We need to connect with their assistants. 2) If we are granted a meeting, have a one-pager ready to leave with the official. 3) Find out which elected officials would be willing to advocate for us at meetings with other officials. And much more!

International Women's Day Breakfast – Thursday 6 March

Elspeth attended Councillor Curry's breakfast with guest speaker, Kelly Daize, Executive Director of the Kanata North Business Association. Elspeth also met Councillor Glen Gower, Marianne Wilkinson, President, National Council of Women of Canada and Karen McCrimmon, MPP for Kanata-Carleton.



Webinar – Housing Security for Women Fleeing Violence: The Effectiveness of Transitional (Second-Stage) Shelters, Max Bell School of Public Policy, McGill U

Hot off the press! I just attended this webinar presented by the Collectif québécois pour la prévention de l'itinérance (CQPI)/Homelessness Prevention Policy Collaborative (QHPPC). The webinar discussed the results of a 2024 study in Quebec examining the role and effectiveness of second-stage shelters for victims of domestic and intimate partner violence as a strategy for preventing homelessness.

The poster features logos for CQPI, McGill, and the Max Bell School of Public Policy. It lists the date as March 21, Noon to 1:30 P.M., and the location as online. It identifies two speakers: Melissa Shemirani, BSc, MSc candidate, and Pearl Eliadis, Associate Professor (professional). It also lists three discussants: Melpa Kamateros, Hayfa Ben Miloud, and Claudine Thibaudeau. Logos for Mission Old Brewery, CRSH SSHRC, and McGill are at the bottom.

Speakers were Melissa Shemirani, BSc, MSc candidate, McBurney Fellow; Pearl Eliadis, Associate Professor (professional) Max Bell School of Public Policy, Co-chair of the Gender Research Stream of the QHPPC; Melpa Kamateros, Shield of Athena Family Services and Claudine Thibaudeau, SOS Violence Conjugale.

The effectiveness of transitional (second-step or second-stage) shelters for women fleeing violence is poorly understood and has been the subject of few comprehensive studies. Melissa researched first- and second-stage shelters to assess their relative effectiveness in helping women escape domestic violence and achieve stable housing. The research synthesises existing literature and incorporates input from a reference group of experts and survivors who

provide their experiences and real-time information about the functioning of shelters in Québec. Preliminary results point to key factors such as the overuse of primary shelters because of the deficit of second-stage shelters, as well as length of stay and services provided. The review highlights significant gaps in the current research, particularly regarding long-term outcomes after leaving second-stage shelters, and advocates for increased funding and capacity for second-stage housing.

Both first- and second-stage shelters are lumped in with social housing in Québec, meaning that funding standards do not comply with shelters' needs in terms of security and services. Shelter builds fall far behind the Quebec government's promises in 2021. Mme Thibaudeau told us that if you have a sister, cousin, aunt who needs to flee an abusive situation, no spaces are available in Montreal nor in surrounding suburbs such as Laval.

Since the discussion concerned Montréal and Québec, some speakers spoke in English and others in French, but interpretation was provided.

CSW/NY 69 – 10-21 March 2025, United Nations, New York City

Here is our team for our event *Zonta Says NOW to Cimate Solutions from the Heart* on Friday 14 March.

Back row l-r: Joan from Uganda, me, Karin from Berlin, Angela from Kansas, Carole from Perth, Australia; front row l-r: Inika Narayan (Indian) from Sydney, Australia and Alex with MenEngage from Denver. Inika is a Zonta Youth Observer at the UN.

I would be remiss if I didn't add a picture or two with Julie Trone who spearheaded the presentation and topic. Here we are at the Global Women in Music presented by the UN Symphony Orchestra on Thursday evening. The orchestra played music by women composers conducted by twin sisters from Mexico.



Did you know that only 5% of music played by symphony orchestras around the world is composed by women?



We are with another Zonta Youth Observer, Selin Tegethoff, at the symphony. You can listen to Inika and Selin chatting with ZI President Salla and read more about Inika and Selin and how passionate they are about women's rights in the Zonta International news email received on 19 March 2025.

Zonta District 2 Spring Workshop hosted by Upper Hudson Valley – 16-17 May

We received the registration and hotel booking information. Please consider attending and let us know if you would like to attend. I have signed up to help facilitate an activity. (It's a secret.)

Synchronised Skating

Kathleen's synchronised skating team has been competing in several competitions and competed in the Kanata competition 8-9 March at the Tony Graham Recreation Complex. Kathleen's team won gold! Can you find Kathleen?



Let's make a difference in the lives of women and children!

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events and let's plan to attend! They are fabulous ways to learn, be inspired, connect and reconnect to build a better world for women and girls!

**Zonta District 2 Spring Workshop
16-17 May 2025, Upper Hudson Valley, NY**

**Zonta North American Inter-District Meeting (NAIDM)
20-22 June 2025, Midland, Michigan, USA**

**Zonta District 2 Fall Conference
17-19 October 2025, Vernon Downs, Vernon, NY**

**Zonta International Convention 2026
11-14 July, Vancouver, BC, Canada**

We can't help everyone. But everyone can help someone.