

Our Theme this year:

Strong Women - Making a Difference

June 2024

Leadership Circle Members:

President Mary Ellen Campbell president@cfuwpq.ca

Vice President Christine Pagan vp@cfuwpq.ca

Treasurer Bonnie Stableford treasurer@cfuwpq.ca

Club Address: Box 113 Qualicum Beach, BC, V9K 1S7 See: <https://cfuwpq.ca>

Meeting: Monday, June 10 7PM by Zoom

Program: AGM

Speaker: members

What To Look For:

President's Message

Current Reminders: June dinner, AGM, membership fees

Annual Reports: President; Vice President: Advocacy, Social Media; Program;
Treasurer; Membership; Scholarship & Bursary Trust (interim); Global Outreach;

Archivist; Baskets

Book Box Pickup Schedule

Thoughts and Smiles

Book Clubs

Book Review

President's Message



This month's newsletter is BIG! Thank you to our editor, Barbara Bond, for working her magic and fitting everything in – annual reports, snippets of fun and reminders of stuff left to do – it's all here!

My term as President is almost done 😊. I have thoroughly enjoyed 'playing' this role again and of course with the significant change in my personal life, I have needed this role to provide stability and focus.

I'm excited about VP Christine becoming President and bringing her creativity, enthusiasm, willingness and organizational strengths to the table. In my considerable absence this year, Christine has been the President and we were able to get a glimpse of what the next two years will be like – it's going to be fun, it's going to be busy and it's going to involve spreadsheets!

I thank EVERYONE – every member for assuming a role in the life of our club. Based on our life experiences, some of us can offer vast amount of time to the club; others can only offer minimal input. Everyone makes a difference!

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the growth of this club over the past two years.

(Contributed by Mary Ellen Campbell.)

Year End Dinner Celebration!

5pm, Monday, June 3rd at Ricky's Restaurant in Parksville

We will be ordering off the menu. A room has been booked so no need to RSVP – come and enjoy!
Car pooling available

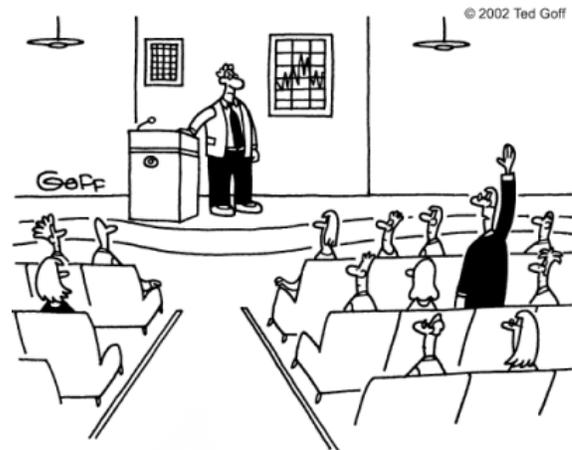
email Mary Ellen for info president@cfuwpq.ca



(Contributed by Mary Ellen Campbell.)

AGM Notification

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 7pm, Monday, June 10th via Zoom. The AGM package and zoom link will be emailed to all members. The annual reports are included in this newsletter.



"Could we extend the annual meeting? I still have a lot of complaining to do!"

(Contributed by Mary Ellen Campbell.)

Membership Message

The new fiscal year for CFUW PQ begins July 1, 2024. If you are paying by cheque, please bring it to the Dinner on June 3 at Ricky's or send it to me (Sheila Reed) or drop it off. If paying by e-transfer, please send in July.

Dues: Full - \$120.00 (breakdown: \$55.00 National + \$3.00 BC Council + \$62.00 Local Club).
Dual - \$45.00 Student - \$35.00

I cannot make a completed list of returning members until the dues are paid. I would like to have this wrapped up by the end of July to pass it on to the new Membership Chair.

(Contributed by Sheila Reed.)

President's Annual Report

I thought last year was the year that the 'sky was the limit'; I was wrong! It's this year. Membership grew from 55 to 67. I cannot prove it but I have to believe that the personality of our membership chair is instrumental in creating that growth. Not only do we have many new members, it seems the entire group also agreed to join the book sale team - co-chaired by the membership chair☺ Naysayers might believe that new members do not want to take on responsibilities in their first year of joining a club....that is not true for this group.

With a newly revitalized book sale team, our 38th annual book sale brought in more money than we have realized before. It seems if we had the capacity to take money electronically, we might have made even more money. With this team in control, we have purchased a square and will be accepting credit and debit cards.

The book sale team and the club has embraced the new branding provided by CFUW National. Our book box located outside of Save On is flashing the new colours as well as our signage.

In November, we held our Tenth Annual Red Dress Campaign, coinciding with the 16 days of awareness of gender violence.

In December, 26 of our members celebrated the Christmas season with a festive lunch. Meals are expensive now and restaurant meals even more so. With a lower turn out than usual attending the luncheon, it may be that we outpriced ourselves. The joy of this particular club is that we don't give up – we try again with another solution.

Our club's involvement in Coldest Night of the Year was phenomenal this year. Our 'Ramblers' showed up in number and in donations. One can only imagine how BIG our involvement will be next year.

Based on revenue and expenses, our club decided that we would host an International Women's Day event for members only then alternate the following year with an IWD event open to everyone. This year was a 'members only' event. We hosted a potluck and invited three extraordinary women to be our guest speakers. Our guests were born and educated within one of the largest refugee camps in Africa. They were successful in receiving World University Service of Canada (WUSC) scholarships and came to Nanaimo to attend VIU. Two of these women are now married, employed and juggling family life with the third woman single, happy and studying. Our lives are always enriched when we walk the journey with others.

Also in March, Gord Johns, our local NDP MP, and Jagmeet Singh, the leader of the Federal NDP invited local women to meet with them and reflect on local issues during the week of IWD. Eight women from CFUW PQ were amongst the thirty or so women from various local community organizations, as well as interested individuals from across the constituency.

Our Scholarship and Bursary Trust continues to flourish. An all-time high of \$51,500 awarded amongst 18 recipients this past year.

Our knitting, Indigenous Issues group and book clubs continue.

Last year one of our members wrote in their annual report that our club is made up of women with the privilege to make a difference. That statement has stayed with me. I believe it aptly describes us; our capacity to make a difference in our own lives, our members lives, our community, our country and internationally. Not everyone has that privilege; not everyone with the privilege wants to make a difference, putting the two together – privilege + desire to make a difference is powerful.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide leadership within the club.

(Contributed by Mary Ellen Campbell.)

VP/Advocacy Committee – Annual Report

Committee Members:

Christine Pagan (VP), in concert with many many other club members

Activity Overview: in addition to club-endorsed advocacy activities, many member-inspired advocacy activities were undertaken, whereby members announce activities that they are involved in at general meetings, and invite club members to participate, if they desire. These are not officially endorsed by CFUW PQ (usually due time constraints preventing club motions to be presented). Some examples are the mid-island adult literacy campaign, a letter-writing campaign in support of a local rehabilitation centre, a silent vigil at the PV Cenotaph, a letter writing campaign in support of a wild bird sanctuary, and many others. This informal initiative has proven to be a success, and will continue in the 2024-25 club year.

These member-inspired advocacy activities are too numerous to mention, and are detailed in newsletters and in Leadership Circle (LC) Reports in the Member Only Area on the website. Only club-endorsed activities will be detailed here.

Missing Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) Red Dress Hanging: November 25 - December 10

To coincide with the UN International 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, the members of our Talking Circle on Indigenous Issues organised public displays where empty red dresses were hung in Parksville and Qualicum city and town halls respectively.

The displays were accompanied by an informative poster inviting members of the public to ponder the meaning of the empty dresses, and take time to reflect on the impact of gender-based violence. Our Facebook site ran a parallel public awareness campaign over the same time period to mirror and reinforce the broader iniquities of gender-based violence, and provide supportive resources (phone numbers, weblinks).

Coldest Night of The Year (CNOY): February 24

The CFUW PQ Ramblers joined forces to raise funds for Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS). 1

- 9 members (and friends), supported by 89 sponsors walked 2km on February 24, together to raise \$5615.00 in support of ICCS Oceanside
- In Oceanside - 39 teams, 294 walkers, 65 volunteers, raised \$119,599.00 raised (118% of the goal of \$101,000)
- CFUW PQ Ramblers placed 4th in Oceanside (out of 39 teams), and 4th Nationally (out of 26 teams)

Fireside Chat invitation to meet with Gord Johns and Jagmeet Singh: March 06

Gord Johns, our local MP, has long been a supporter of CFUW PQ, and particularly our IWD event, and invited club members to meet with him and the Federal NDP Leader to a non-partisan mid-island (Oceanside/Port Alberni) event to discuss and engage in an evening of wide-ranging discussions regarding mostly local issues, and those pertinent to women and children.

International Women's Day - March 08

We chose to have a private club event this year, and celebrated IWD with a pot-luck luncheon in Knox United Church's lovely fireside lounge. All members pitched-in to cater, set-up and clean-up, contributing to the success of the event.

- We had 47 diners, including 5 guests; 2 from our sister club in CFUW Nanaimo, and 3 young women: Mano Maow, Wardo Mahamed, and Rahma Mahamed originally from Somalia, via Kenya.
 - Hearing the personal stories from these young women, coming to Vancouver Island to study from a refugee camp in Kenya was especially humbling, and we were grateful to them for sharing their experiences with us so openly and candidly.
 - Our CFUW Nanaimo guests, Kathy Torhjelm and Karen Skarpnes had us in stitches with their compelling presentation

...and as an apt end to the event, we all enjoyed a delightful and impromptu rendition of Bread and Roses, the rallying anthem for international women.

Resolutions

9 Proposed Resolutions (PR) were presented by CFUW National (none from BC Council), and three study groups were formed to review and suggest amendments for 5 of the PRs.

- 4 Proposed Archiving Resolutions were approved by the club with no discussion
- The remaining 5 PRs selected for study were presented, with amendments where applicable, and all were approved as presented

Pieces for Peace: UN International Day Of Peace (*ongoing*)

September 21st is the UN International Day of Peace and all CFUW members are invited to participate in Pieces for Peace. CFUW Sherbrook and District, and CFUW Nepean are organising the display on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The 'pieces' are squares/blocks of fabric with sewn, appliqued, or drawn messages and symbols of peace

- Clubs and members from across Canada are invited to make and send blocks, to be included in the display
 - Current VP will organise/co-ordinate the activity over the coming months

Financial Summary

2023-24 budget

- No budget was allocated for advocacy in 2023-24 budget however, monies were found for the ad hoc activities that arose:
 - Red Dress: posters and supplies: \$139.03
 - IWD: \$532.00 (travel expenses and Knox Church Rental)
 - Pieces For Peace: ~\$100.00 (postage/courier)

2024-25 budget

- Red Dress event: \$500.00 (advertising from club-level budget)
- IWD: \$1850.00 (including \$500.00 advertising from club-level budget)
- Resolutions: \$100.00

Looking Ahead:

- President, past-President and any interested members will continue to seek and advance additional advocacy initiatives that arise
 - This includes any *ad hoc* member-inspired activities

(Contributed by Christine Pagan.)

Social Media Committee – Annual Report

Committee Members:

Tammy Exner, Christine Pagan

Activity Overview

Our priorities for the period July 2023 to June 2024 were:

- Refresh the website to align with CFUW National rebranding
- Create additional materials to align with rebrand
- Create cloud-based storage system for digital materials archive
- Support Facebook and any other online activities

All activities were delivered on time and close to budget, thanks to volunteer time.

Financial Summary

2023-24 budget

- Total website & social media budget: 2023-24: \$430.00
 - Spend to date: ~\$781.05 >> Overspend of funds: \$351.05
 1. unbudgeted purchase of Zoom Licence of \$240.69
 2. unanticipated increased costs of Site Hosting (by \$110.36)
- Rebranding was not anticipated at budget time, but \$3000.00 was subsequently allocated for club-wide process (website, book sale posters, business cards etc.)
 - To date ~\$1405.11 has been spent
 - ~\$1595.00 remaining - club-level, not restricted to social media

2024-25 budget

- Website budget: \$581.00 (annual hosting fee, domain renewal fee, 3rd party site maintenance - site security, software updates, etc.)
- Social Media budget: \$250.00 Zoom licence renewal

Activities:

Rebranding

- Rebrand for website, assisted by “Websites Made With Love” (WMWL)
 - Ongoing updates and maintenance
- created new materials, such as Business Cards, graphics for Membership

Day-to-Day

- Facebook: post engaging content, ensure synchronicity of website and FB links
- Hosting Nation: email monitoring for spam, auto-forwarding, and maintenance
- assistance with Microsoft and similar office applications as required

Looking Ahead, the Committee will:

- Hand over responsibilities to new committee, provide training as requested
- Liaise with WMWL to ensure website integrity is maintained (e.g. Site security software updates, etc)
- Ensure that all public-facing media conforms with CFUW National Branding guidelines

(Contributed by Christine Pagan.)

Program Annual Report

Theme: Strong Women – Making a Difference

September 11, Norma Cameron, Storyteller. The opening meeting for the season at QBCC., Warning us to beware of the Selkies, seal-folk.

October 16, Selena Pope, Winter Gardening with Bees, Butterflies and Birds. A gardener extraordinaire with words of wisdom.

November 6, Andrea Blakeman, Affordable Housing, Answer for The Housing Crisis. A good insight into supported housing in Mid Island.

December 3, Traditional Lunch at the Bayside enjoyed by 40 plus members.

January 8, Nancy Randall, Linda Fullalove, Climate Actions for All. Snow disrupted this meeting however informative, with much discussion at new venue the Parksville CC.

February 12, Silva Mangué, Vancouver Island Black History. Zoom

March 8, International Women’s Day, Pot luck lunch at Knox United church, 3 international students, graduated from VIU telling their stories with a bounty of food.

April 8, Resolutions and Budget. Parksville CC

May 13, Marnie Branfireun VIU Deep Bay Marine Centre, Aquaculture research and marine education Coast. Parksville CC

(Contributed by Val Gunn.)

Treasurer's Year-End Report

The Club's finances are in good shape.



Several factors have created this happy situation:

- **Membership increased dramatically** this year, from 50 members last year to 67 this year. This added just over \$1,000 to the Club's net revenue.
- **Surpluses from past years**, especially the 2 COVID-curtailed years, have funded planned increases, such as using a new venue in Parksville for some meetings. It also covered higher website maintenance costs (over and above rebranding) and some unplanned costs for the members-only March 2023 IWD event.
- **A highly successful Book Sale in Fall 2023!**
After expenses, the sale generated \$11,535 for the Club, surpassing the budget plan of \$6,450. This permitted:
 - Increasing the Scholarship & Bursary Trust grant by \$2,000
 - Increasing Global Outreach by \$250. CHES required an additional \$50 and both Developments in Literacy (Pakistan) and Aldea Maya in Guatemala received an extra \$100. This is the first increase in almost 10 years.
 - Incorporating the new CFUW branding on the Club website, letterhead, business cards and signage. Costs to date are just over \$1,400. Using the surplus allowed rebranding to happen quickly, without curtailing any normal Club activities.

The 2023-24 fiscal year will likely have a surplus of about \$1,000 or slightly more. This is a projection only, based on known upcoming costs but this could change by June 30th. **The Club's Contingency fund totals \$7,535.** Of this, \$3,525 is held as cash in a savings account and \$4,200 is held as a 1-year non-refundable GIC that will mature in March 2025.

The past 4 years have seen some notable changes in how the Club's finances are structured.

- Membership revenue is now reported as net revenue, showing that the Club only retains \$62 from each \$120 membership. The balance is paid to BC Council and to CFUW.
- Similarly, each year's Book Sale revenue is now reported as "after costs".
- Seed money for the next year's Book Sale is now set aside as part of the current year's Book Sale budget. Some expenses, such as the venue rental deposit and event insurance, must be prepaid well before the sale occurs.
- A special fund has been created to cover about 1 year of basic operating costs. Born of concerns about the Club's long-term future during Covid, this fund would allow the Club to continue its most basic functions for 1 year if it became necessary to close.
- The Club has returned to holding part of the Contingency funds as an investment. The "one year safety fund" described above is now held as a \$4,200 one-year GIC.
- Some Contingency funds are now designated for specific purposes, such as "Book Sale rental deposit" or "Rebranding". This helps track spending for specific projects. It also avoids inadvertently spending the same dollar twice!
- E-transfer has been set up to allow members to pay for annual dues or event costs more easily, such as the Christmas dinner.
- A Square terminal (point-of-sale device) was purchased on the recommendation of the Book Sale team. This will allow both debit and credit card purchasing at the Oct. 2024 Book Sale.
- A second, separate chequing account has been set up to track payments from Square.

My thanks to Noreen Ballantyne, Vicky Burton, Christine Pagan and Lisa Marshall for their hard work and wise advice in preparing the 2024-25 budget.

And a special thank you to the Club for allowing me the privilege of serving as Treasurer for the past 4 years. Your always excellent questions and comments, plus your ongoing support, is something I value.

(Respectfully submitted, Bonnie Stableford – Treasurer.)

Membership Annual Report

Five-year summary of our membership

Year	Net Total Members	New Members	Returning Members	Did not renew	Dual
2023 - 24	67 - 1 student	15	52	3	2
2022-2023	55	7	5	6	5
2021- 2022	49	10		28	5
2020 – 2021	52	2		17	-
2019 – 2020	68	6		8	-

We welcomed 15 new members. Our website's generic email address – membership@cfuwpq.ca contributed to our increase in members as well as present members introducing their friends to cfuw pq. We distributed approximately 350 business cards at the book sale. We also made a presentation in September to the Newcomers QB. We WELCOME all of you!

The new members made connections through the meetings, book clubs, Coldest Night of the Year, interest groups and working at the book sale and the book sale storage unit.

The new Members' Tea was held on January 21,2024. The feedback was positive.

2024 – 2025

- The Fireplace Meeting Room at Knox has been booked for Sunday, January 19, 2025 from 1:30 to 4:30 to hold the New Members Tea which will include all members. Food suggestions from our experience this year:
40 cups decaffeinated coffee – regular coffee in the small pot, herbal and regular tea.
Order cookies from a local bake shop. One litre of coffee cream needed. Provide condiments as well as a pitcher of water.
- We have business cards with the new branding to direct the public to our website which gives a comprehensive overview of cfuw pq and all our events.

(Contributed by Sheila Reed, Membership Chair.)

Interim Report of Scholarship and Bursary Trust

1. The Scholarship and Bursary Trust (SBT) for 2023-24 consisted of Janet Farooq, Chair; Christine Pagan, Secretary; June Arnett, Treasurer; Val Gunn, Corresponding Secretary; Jackie Worboys, Publicity; Val Tutti, Secondary School Coordinator; Sonya Felix, Assistant Corresponding Secretary and Wendy Reimer (August through April) Vivien Sears (May through August), Assistant Treasurer. The group worked together very cooperatively and the issues we agreed to address seem to be all or mostly resolved.
2. We revised the applications forms to be more generic and simpler for us and the applicants.

3. We converted the Apprenticeship Trade Award, for which we had had no applicants for 2 years, into a VIU award with all female apprentices going into second year eligible with preference to females from SD 69. There are very few female apprentices in Trades at VIU and none at the moment from SD 69. VIU is now administering this award. These changes were welcomed by the donor behind this award.
4. We have a new donor, The ELM Foundation, with the grant having no restrictions on its use.
5. We revised our poster using the new Club logo and it is brighter, more colourful and eye catching. Several club members helped up put up posters throughout SD 69.
6. We faced a problem in that some of the secondary schools refused to provide us with the emails of all candidates for the award at that school on privacy grounds. We use these to alert students finishing first year post-secondary to apply for our Memorial Scholarships. This is an important pool of potential candidates for us. After some negotiation, we are trying a request on the application form to the applicant to send her personal email to the Corresponding Secretary. We will see how successful this is this year.
7. We now have dedicated generic email addresses for Chair, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary (who receives all the applications). We are also starting to change the application storage to cloud storage but with strict controls on who can access them. Again this is ongoing.
8. The Trust has unanimously chosen Val Gunn as the Chair for next year and Bonita Stableford and Pat Morrison-Wheeler as the two new members. These appointments require confirmation from the AGM as does the selection of Vivien Sears to fill Wendy Reimer's position.

(Submitted by Janet Farooq, Chair SBT)

Global Outreach Annual Report

The budget in 2023/4 was bringing our committee's participation up to where it was before the era of COVID.

Sept. 15, 2023

CHES student	\$650 00*
Aldea Maya student	\$300.00
<u>DIL</u>	<u>\$300.00</u>
	\$1250

* CHES asked for an increase of \$50 for the first time in many years.

In the Spring of 2024 the committee planned to ask the club for

CHES	\$650.00
Maya	\$400.00
<u>DIL</u>	<u>\$400.00</u>
Total	\$1450.00

Our Guatemalan student nurse's courses are costing more as she advances. Aldea Maya, in Guatemala, supports a school and village. We continue to support our high school CHES girl in

Tanzania, East Africa. We also continue to publish articles from the CHES newsletter for the interest of club members.

We continue to support DIL (Developments in Literacy, Pakistan) as they recover from flooding last year. We have a personal link in each project so that we can keep track of the progress of 'our' students.

We invite our members to write to our CHES girl, Magdalena David.

Our CFUW club women are privileged to be able to assist women in developing countries to gain a greater place in the world.

(Prepared by Co-Chairs Catherine Khan and Wendy Reimer.)

Archivists' Annual Report

During the summer and early fall of 2023, we completed the assessment of the Club's archival records which had been transferred from the Parksville Museum. With the continued assistance of Lorna Miller we reviewed, culled and organized all the documents. We were quite rigorous in our evaluation of the collection and were able to reduce the contents to essential records and artefacts. We transferred the resulting collection to the Qualicum Beach Museum & Archives in August 2023. The collection, which includes photos and documents, has now been accessioned there and forms part of the QB Archives. It is available, by appointment, for anyone doing research on the Club's history.

(Respectfully submitted by Noreen Ballantyne and Maggie Hawes, Co-Historians)

Basket Annual Report

Our gift basket Community Outreach and support continued through 2023-2024. Oceanside Hospice has received 3 baskets to give out at their Volunteer Appreciation events. The majority of our baskets have gone to Forward House, 7 for a man and 7 for a woman and 1 for their fundraiser. Three thank you baskets were prepared for our guests at the IWD luncheon. Two baskets were paid for and prepared for the Book Sale to thank our Storage Company and Arrowsmith assistance at the sale venue. Several small baskets were given away at Club meetings.

The Leadership Circle has endorsed the continuation of our Community Outreach efforts and cancelled any further baskets at club meetings.

Finally, a major thank you to club members who have donated items that have gone into baskets as the opportunity arises.

(Contributed by Lorna Miller.)

Book Box Pickup Schedule and News Updates

Plans for this year's book sale, scheduled for Tuesday, October 1 to Sunday, October 6, are moving forward well.

The Drop Box at Save-on has been cleaned and repaired, with new stickers with the CFUW rebranding attached to the box.

See pick up schedule below.

The book sale team would appreciate your help with any donations of the following: 1. black plastic bedding plant trays 21" x 11". We need as many as possible. Please wash. Thanks. 2. banker boxes for packing books at the storage locker. 3. fiction books.

(Contributed by Erin Holmes.)

APRIL 2024		MAY 2024		JUNE 2024	
Storage Coordinators	Sheila Jane	Storage Coordinators	Susan Deb	Storage Coordinators	Erin Claire
April 1 -7	Jacqueline R	May 6 -12	Janice	June 3 - 9	Christine
April 8 - 14	Barbara B	May 13 - 19	Liz	June 10- 16	Lisa
April 15 - 21	Dianne A	May 20- 26	Pat	June 17 - 23	Erin /Claire
April 22 - 28	Vicki S	May 27 - June 2	Valerie Tutti	June 30 -July 7	Valerie Tutti
April 29 -May 5	Shelley J				

2024		2024		2024	
JULY		AUGUST		SEPTEMBER	
Storage Coordinators	Brenda Sheila	Storage Coordinators	Vicky J Vicki S	Storage Coordinators	Book Team
July 7 - 14	Mimi	August 5 - 11	Vicky/Vicki	Sept. 2 - 8	Carolyn R
July 15 -21	Val G	August 12- 18	Janice	Sept. 9 -15	Mary Ellen
July 22 - 28	Sheila/Brenda	August 19 - 25	Jackie W	Sept. 16 - 22	Book Team
July 28 - Aug	Jackie W	Aug 26-Sept.1	Sheri	Sept. 23 -29	Book Team

4					
				Sept. 30- Oct 6	Book Team

2024		2024		2024	
OCTOBER		NOVEMBER		DECEMBER	
Storage Coordinator	Sheila Vicky J	Storage Coordinator	Erin Deb	Storage Coordinator	Susan Erin, Sheila
Oct. 7 - 13	Jennifer M	Nov. 4 - 10	Deirdre	Dec. 2 - 8	Maureen W
Oct. 14 - 20	June	Nov. 11 - 17	Jennifer	Dec. 9 - 15	Susan
Oct. 21 - 27	Nora	Nov. 18 - 24	Nora	Dec. 16 - 25	Erin
Oct. 28 - Nov. 3	Bonnie	Nov.25 - Dec.1	Bonnie	Dec. 26- Jan. 5	Sheila

Thoughts and Smiles





They also sell books!



Book Clubs, Book Review

Quality Foods Parksville Book Lovers

SEPTEMBER 14 *Ragged Company* by Richard Wagamese
OCTOBER 12 *Permanent Astonishment* by Tomson Highway
NOVEMBER 9 *Freshwater for Flowers* by Valerie Perrin
DECEMBER 14 *Educated* by Tara Westover
JANUARY 11 *Women Talking* by Miriam Toews
FEBRUARY 8 *The Phone Booth at the Edge of the World* by Laura Imai Messina
MARCH 14 *This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein
APRIL 11 *The Family Chao* by Lan Samantha Chang
 Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus
MAY 9 *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See

Shrinking Violet Book Club Tuesday April 30, 2024

Theme: Banned Books

WARNING: the following books may contain scenes of violence, coarse language and nudity. Reader discretion is advised.

Parnell, Peter, & Justin Richardson, 2005. *And Tango Makes Three* (New York, Simon & Schuster Childrens' Publishing)

- At the penguin house at the Central Park Zoo, two penguins named Roy and Silo were a little bit different from the others. But their desire for a family was the same. And with the help of a kindly zookeeper, Roy and Silo got the chance to welcome a baby penguin of their very own. Based on a true story, *And Tango Makes Three* has been mentioned in numerous [censorship](#) and [culture war](#) debates on [same-sex marriage](#), [adoption](#), and [homosexuality in animals](#). The [American Library Association](#) (ALA) reports that *And Tango Makes Three* was the most frequently [challenged](#) book from 2006 to 2010, and the second most frequently challenged in 2009. Ultimately, it became the fourth-most challenged book between 2000 and 2009, as well as the sixth-most challenged book between 2010 and 2019.
- *And Tango Makes Three* has also won multiple awards, including the ALA Notable Children's Book Nominee in 2006, the ASPCA Henry Bergh Book Award in 2005, and was named one of the Bank Street Best Books of the Year in 2006.^[7]
- Scholars of children's literature and education believe *And Tango Makes Three* is a good way to introduce the idea of diverse families to children. The book does not take a stance on same-sex marriage, but rather the validity of same-sex families.

Ellis, Deborah 2004. *Three Wishes - Palestinian and Israel Children Speak* (Ottawa, Groundwood Books Ltd.)

- In a rehabilitation center for disabled children, twelve-year-old Nora says she loves the color pink and chewing gum and explains that the wheels of her wheelchair are like her legs. Eleven-year-old Mohammad describes how his house was demolished by soldiers. And we meet twelve-year-old Salam, whose older sister walked into a store in Jerusalem and blew herself up, killing herself and two people, and injuring twenty others. All these children live both ordinary and extraordinary lives. They argue with their siblings. They dream about their wishes for the future. They have also seen their homes destroyed, their families killed, and they live in the midst of constant upheaval and violence.
- In 2006 in Ontario, Canada, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) urged public school boards to deny access to this children's non-fiction book about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to students in the elementary grades. The CJC said that Ellis had provided a flawed historical introduction to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that some of the children in the book portrayed Israeli soldiers as brutal, expressed ethnic hatred and glorified suicide bombing. The effect on young student readers, the CJC said, was "toxic."

Munroe, Alice, 1971. *Lives of Girls and Women* (Ottawa, McGraw-Hill Ryerson)

- Although described and marketed as a novel, in form it resembles a collection of interlinked short stories, with discrete chapters narrated by the main character, Del Jordan. The novel is a coming of age story for Del Jordan growing up first on the outskirts, and later in the centre of the small, southern Ontario town of Jubilee. Del is portrayed as something of an outsider, unsatisfied with small-town life though unwilling to acknowledge the similarities between herself and her mother who also seeks to expand her mind beyond the limited experiences of Jubilee.
- The novel is often cited as concerning many feminist ideas and it is in this context that the text deals primarily with female characters, with only a few male figures playing important roles.
- In 1976, a High School principal in Peterborough, Ontario, removed the novel from the Grade 13 reading list. He questioned its suitability because of the explicit language and descriptions of sex scenes.

Angelou, Maya, 1969. *I know Why The Caged Bird Sings* (New York, Random House)

- a 1969 [autobiography](#) describing the young and early years of American writer and poet [Maya Angelou](#). The first in a seven-volume series, it is a [coming-of-age story](#) that illustrates how strength of character and a love of literature can help overcome [racism](#) and [trauma](#). The book begins when three-year-old Maya and her older brother are sent to [Stamps, Arkansas](#), to live with their grandmother and ends when Maya becomes a mother at the age of 16. In the course of *Caged Bird*, Maya transforms from a victim of

racism with an [inferiority complex](#) into a self-possessed, dignified young woman capable of responding to prejudice.

- *Caged Bird* was nominated for a [National Book Award](#) in 1970 and remained on [The New York Times paperback bestseller list](#) for two years. It has been used in educational settings from high schools to universities, and the book has been celebrated for creating new literary avenues for the American memoir. However, the book's graphic depiction of childhood rape, racism, and sexuality has caused it to be challenged or banned in some schools and libraries.

Morrison, Toni, 1970. *The Bluest Eyes* (New York, [Holt, Rinehart and Winston](#))

- the first novel written by [Toni Morrison](#). The novel takes place in [Lorain, Ohio](#) (Morrison's hometown), and tells the story of a young African-American girl named Pecola who grew up following the [Great Depression](#). Set in 1941, the story is about how she is consistently regarded as "ugly" due to her mannerisms and dark skin. As a result, she develops an [inferiority complex](#), which fuels her desire for the [blue eyes](#) she equates with "[whiteness](#)".
- The novel is told mostly from Claudia MacTeer's point of view. Claudia is the daughter of Pecola's temporary foster parents. There is also some omniscient [third-person](#) narration. The book's controversial topics of [racism](#), [incest](#), and [child molestation](#) have led to numerous attempts to [ban the novel](#) from schools and libraries in the United States.

Laurence, Margaret, 1969. *A Jest Of God* (Toronto, McLelland and Stewart)

- first published in 1966. The novel follows schoolteacher Rachel Cameron through a summer affair and its consequences on her life. Although Rachel is in her 30s, the book serves to document a second adolescence as she comes to recognize herself as the adult to her aging mother.
- It won the 1966 [Governor General's Award for English-language fiction](#), and was made into the 1968 Paul Newman/Joanne Woodward film [Rachel, Rachel](#).
- This novel was ahead of its time in 1966 which speaks to the reason that it is on many banned books lists, such as 1978, when a school trustee in Etobicoke, Ont., tried but failed to remove this novel from high school English classes. The trustee objected to the portrayal of teachers "who had sexual intercourse time and time again, out of wedlock." He said the novel would diminish the authority of teachers in students' eyes.

Thomas, Angie, 2017. *The Hate U Give* (New York, Balzer & Bray)

- [young adult novel](#) by [Angie Thomas](#). It is Thomas's [debut novel](#), expanded from a short story she wrote in college in reaction to the [police shooting of Oscar Grant](#). The book is [narrated](#) by Starr Carter, a 16-year-old African-American girl from a poor neighborhood who attends an elite private school in a predominantly white, affluent part of the city. Starr becomes entangled in a national news story after she witnesses a white police officer shoot and

kill her childhood friend, Khalil. She speaks up about the shooting in increasingly public ways, and social tensions culminate in a riot after a grand jury decides not to indict the police officer for the shooting.

- The book was a commercial success, debuting at number one on [The New York Times](#) young adult [best-seller list](#), where it remained for 50 weeks. It won several awards and received critical praise for Thomas's writing and timely subject matter. In writing the novel, Thomas attempted to expand readers' understanding of the [Black Lives Matter](#) movement as well as difficulties faced by black Americans who employ [code switching](#). These themes, as well as the vulgar language, attracted some controversy and caused the book to be one of the most challenged books of 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2021 according to the [American Library Association](#).

Bannerman, Helen, 1899. *Little Black Sambo* (London, Grant Richards)

- a children's book written and illustrated by Scottish author [Helen Bannerman](#) and published by [Grant Richards](#) in October 1899. As one in a series of small-format books called [The Dumpy Books for Children](#), the story was popular for more than half a century.
- Contemporary critics observed that Bannerman presented one of the first black heroes in children's literature and regarded the book as positively portraying black characters in both the text and pictures, especially in comparison to books of that era that depicted black people as simple and uncivilised. However, it became an object of allegations of racism in the mid-20th century due to the names of the characters being [racial slurs](#) for dark-skinned people, and the fact that the illustrations were, as [Langston Hughes](#) expressed it, in the [pickaninny](#) style. In more recent editions, both text and illustrations have undergone considerable revision.

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Speigelman, Art, 1991. *Maus* (New York, Pantheon Books)

- a [graphic novel](#) by American cartoonist [Art Spiegelman](#), serialized from 1980 to 1991. It depicts Spiegelman interviewing his father about his experiences as a [Polish Jew](#) and [Holocaust](#) survivor. The work employs [postmodern](#) techniques, and represents Jews as mice and other Germans and Poles as cats and pigs respectively. Critics have classified *Maus* as memoir, biography, history, fiction, autobiography, or a mix of genres. In 1992 it became the first graphic novel to win a [Pulitzer Prize](#).
- In the [frame-tale](#) timeline in the narrative present that begins in 1978 in New York City, Spiegelman talks with his father Vladek about his Holocaust experiences, gathering material and information for the *Maus* project he is preparing. In the narrative past, Spiegelman depicts these experiences, from the years leading up to [World War II](#) to his parents' liberation from the [Nazi concentration camps](#). Much of the story revolves around Spiegelman's troubled relationship with his father and the absence of his mother, who died by suicide when Spiegelman was 20. Her grief-stricken husband destroyed her written accounts of [Auschwitz](#). The book uses a minimalist drawing style and displays innovation in its pacing, structure, and page layouts.

- [Maus was banned](#) from an eighth-grade English-language-arts curriculum by the McMinn County, Tennessee, school board. The ban became a global news story; *Maus* sold out on Amazon.

(Contributed by Christine Pagan.)

Book Review of the Month

The Garden of Evening Mists by Tan Twan Eng (2012)

I bring this author to your attention because I find his work beautiful and absorbing. One reviewer said that his work was imbued with “effortless elegance.” Another cited his “breath-catching poise and grace.” That one also admires his “linguistic refinement and searching intelligence.” Tan’s earlier book was *The Gift of Rain*. Despite its mastery, there was a scene in that book which took place during the Japanese Occupation of Malaysia and that particular scene haunts me still. Much of this book takes place after the Second World War in Malaysia before its independence but during what was called the Emergency, as Communist insurgents pursued a vicious and vigorous guerrilla war. After my experience, I was cautious but this one did not have that lasting effect on me. No story that includes a Japanese prison camp will be without violence and cruelty, but the ‘horrible edge’ was not there for me. One woman I know sensed that such a scene was approaching and, knowing herself, turned over a few pages and avoided it. You know your own tolerance for such scenes. I find his writing vivid. When he writes about a tropical rainforest, I feel the density and humidity. And, his newest book (*The House of Doors*) is out now!

This story is narrated by Teoh Yun Ling, who had been in Kuala Lumpur post-war prosecuting war criminals. She went to the Cameron Highlands to fulfil a promise made to herself to create a Japanese garden in memory of her sister (who died in their prison camp) and visit family friends at the Majuba tea plantation. She went to the only Japanese garden in Malaya, Yugiri, and asked Nakamura Aritomo, the master gardener (who was once the gardener for the emperor), to design her garden for her. He declined, but accepted her as an apprentice. The time spent with him transformed her life and improved her mental and emotional state, as well as improving her physical strength. Now, thirty-five years later, she returns after a distinguished career as a judge. The doubled timelines are disconcerting at first, but since she has been diagnosed with a progressive degenerative neurological condition that will cause her complete disability, I accepted it until I understood more. The experiences are fresh for her, so both timelines feel current as she attempts to write her memoir before her memories disappear.

The book is a triumph on many levels. Her sister’s death and her own survival was something she once struggled to reconcile. Malaysia had a mixed population, without mutual trust and with many languages. She is ethnically Chinese, but works with the Malay population, the

British colonialists, and is friends with the Boer who owns Majuba and his family. She has had to reconcile her relationship with Aritomo with her experiences in the prison camp. In addition to being a master gardener, he was a noted woodblock artist and a master of *horitomo*, a traditional Japanese tattoo art. From him, she learned a great deal about *kyūdō* (a bow and arrow discipline), aesthetics, and philosophy. He is an enigma and she later finds out that he may have been a spy and may have identified valuable cultural items for later looting. The book includes much of beauty and some of horror (that feels both past and present). Managing all of the competing loyalties and a timeline that is complicated (including the present and the past, as well as back into her war experiences) requires a writer fully in control of his art. The violence and atrocities extended beyond the Japanese surrender and yet, violence is not the overall effect. The book has both memory and forgetting, admiration and repulsion. It is a worthwhile investment of your time, in my opinion. And, there is lots to learn!

P. S. The author' family name is Tan, but you will likely find his books filed with the Es.