

Changing Tides

*Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign
Campagne des grands-mères à grands-mères*

**Ottawa-Gatineau Region
Région d'Ottawa-Gatineau**

July 11, 2025

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Editor's Notes

This is the time that most of us are engaged with family on vacation or at the cottage - priorities that provide much-needed fun and relaxation wherever we are!

This issue has a celebratory framework with its wonderful stories by some of our hard-working grannies and friends who share upbeat ways to display innovative strategies with fundraisers. Among them are partnering with community members and other granny groups, adding new friends to their group, and looking at novel ways to spark time-honored events

within their communities. Enjoy the inspiring stories by Joan Turner, *Unitarian GoGos*, Hilda Young, *Petawawa and Area Grannies*, and Shelagh Jane Woods of the *One World Grannies* – each with their own creative style with lively photos to illustrate the success of collaborative ideas! Thank you for those marvelous tales of triumph!

Barb Nolen sent in a link to a highly resourceful and educational article on the reality of outcomes for many people with *HIV* or *AIDS* in Africa and the discovery of a new drug that is most

promising in fighting *HIV* and *AIDS* but currently lies in limbo of accessibility due to the funding withdrawal by the US administration! The article by Stephanie Nolen, health reporter with the *New York Times*, appears in our newsletter and is timely in raising awareness in our communities.

Continue to indulge your summer days with joyful occasions and downtime!

Mia Overduin, Editor

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GRANDMOTHERS BRIDGE CROSSING – What's it all about?

Strathcona Park – National Grandparents' Day

September 7 / Rain Date: Sept. 14



Check out some of the fun events on page 3 and spread the word about why this event is taking place. Find out how we can help to fill the gap left by the withdrawal of foreign aid funding.

GRL Updates – June 2025

It has been a busy fundraising season for all the grandmother groups in the region and we congratulate everyone who continued to support the Grandmothers Campaign through raising funds and raising awareness.

Sandi and Robin Scobie (member of the *VanGogos* who recently re-located to Ottawa) were participants in the trip to Eswatini and South Africa where they visited nine Partner Organizations along with 14 other grandmothers and grandothers and six of the *SLF* staff. Everywhere they went they were greeted with song, dance and hugs from grandmothers and partner staff. The energy and spirit of the African grandmothers and the dedication of partners was so inspiring and there are many stories to be told of incredible achievements and work remaining to be done. The experience has renewed enthusiasm for supporting the Grandmothers Campaign, especially when so little is so very much appreciated. The promise made years ago, “*we will not rest until they can rest*” has never seemed more meaningful. Sandi and Robin look forward to sharing their experiences with everyone in the region and welcome invitations from groups.

A small, but dedicated, group participated in a walk around Dow’s Lake on June 18th to raise awareness, and funds, for the ***SLF Emergency Fund*** during *Stride to Turn the Tide* month. While not attracting a lot of attention, the people who were approached were genuinely interested. Thanks to *Grammas to Ambuyas* for donating to the Emergency Fund. Next year we hope for a better turnout!

Groups in the region are invited to share in a sales table at the ***613 Flea Market*** sometime in the fall. The plan is to offer either hand-made crafts or vintage accessories, such as jewelry, purses, scarves, etc. Applications are now being accepted for the market on August 2nd. Groups will be kept informed of available dates in the fall. If your group is interested, please let Sandi or Sarah know.

Please plan to participate in the ***One World Grannies Bridge Crossing Event*** to be held on September 7th, with a rain date of September 14th, at the Strathcona Park end of the Adawe Pedestrian Bridge. More details in ***Changing Tides*** or by contacting Sarah.

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GRL Updates – June 2025 (.../cont'd)

And don't forget that we will be asking all regional groups to help sell tickets for the Gladstone Theatre's production of *Les Belles Soeurs* on November 20th. This is a unique fundraising opportunity that has been made available to us by the play's director, Lorraine Hopkins of *One World Grannies*. More details will be provided in the fall.

The GRLs will be taking a break for the summer and will meet next in early September. The next Campaign Call is scheduled for August 21st. Please mark your calendars. We wish you all a wonderful summer with lots of time for family and friends and we look forward to connecting with you again in the fall.

Yours in solidarity, Sandi and Sarah

GRANDMOTHERS' BRIDGE CROSSING EVENT

September 7, 2025, National Grandparents Day, Grandmothers and others in the Ottawa-Gatineau Region will participate in a **Bridge Crossing Event** at the Adawé Crossing Pedestrian Bridge at Strathcona Park (Range Road) in Ottawa.

The event is planned as an awareness-raising event, for families, grandparents, and friends to celebrate *National Grandparents Day*. Our participation will highlight the work and solidarity of the Grandmothers Campaign and the *Stephen Lewis Foundation* with Grandmothers and partner organizations in sub-Saharan Africa. Recently, the work of the organizations and their communities has been sorely tested by the withdrawal of US foreign assistance. As grandmothers of the G2G, our fundraisers have evolved around helping to fill the gap by directing our donations to the *SLF Emergency Fund*.

The event will feature a Grandmothers' Clothesline where people can write messages of support and solidarity to the Grandmothers in Africa. Materials and markers will be provided! As a token of our solemn support, the messages will be sent to the Grandmothers Campaign office and will be forwarded to African grandmothers.

Be a part of this unique opportunity of sharing, learning, and raising awareness of the harsh realities facing many people on the African Continent.

Note that more information and updates of the event will be posted in August at the *One World Grannies* website at www.oneworldgrannies.ca. As well, a poster of this event will be forwarded to granny group members in August. We ask you to share the poster with others.

Successful Fundraisers – Unitarian GoGos

Editor's Note: The following stories were sent in by individuals involved in highly successful fundraisers across the years. What is notable is that the events share aspects that contributed to the success of the innovative methods, such as partnership with people and businesses in the community, the sharing of tasks and camaraderie - celebrating these occasions. **Congratulations** to the groups and individuals involved!

GENEROSITY: A KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS – UNITARIAN GOGOS

Generosity has always been a key element in the success of the Unitarian GoGos Annual Plant Sale Fundraisers. This year was no exception. Plants, jewelry, and Home Baking were all donated to us for our Mother's Day weekend Sale. For 18 years our group has raised funds for the *Stephen Lewis Foundation* in this way. It is our biggest fundraiser.

This year, Sheila Green and Mia Overduin shared the leadership role to plan and organize the event. As before, potting of the plants by members of our Grannies group took place at Nicolle's, close to *First Unitarian Congregation*, 30 Cleary Ave., where the Plant Sale was held. Nicolle generously provided us with many healthy plants, rich soil, a potting station in her garage and water for the potted plants. She also pitched in to help us by labelling and watering plants and she enthusiastically promoted the Sale in her neighbourhood. As soon as plants were big enough to pot, members of the *Unitarian GoGos* potted at Nicolle's. Some of our members also dug plants at the homes of friends, family or members of the congregation.

Yes, it was manual work: for an important cause. We enjoyed working together. Some years ago, the *Unitarian GoGos* decided not to price our merchandise but to ask customers to pay by donation. Our observation is that most people are generous, giving us more, not less than the value of their purchase. Many thanks to our customers. For many years, the *Grassroots Grannies* have given us the plants that were left at the end of their sale on Saturday for us to sell until Sunday noon. We are grateful for their generosity. When our Plant Sale is over, we have always donated our left-over plants to another group. For the last

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Successful Fundraisers – Unitarian GoGos

3 years our plants have been given to *Ajashki*, a program located at *First Unitarian* that is for Indigenous youth. See the beautiful murals made by *Ajashki* students, with the guidance of artists, that are on the south and north walls of the church building.

When *USAid* was drastically cut earlier this year, the *Unitarian GoGos* added two more Bake Sales to our agenda for early 2025. Our intention was to help offset the damage done by the Trump administration. It did not seem that it was enough but we did what we could with the help of church members and friends who bake.

Writing this piece for ***Changing Tides***, I am reminded of the generosity of African grandmothers whom I met when I went to Africa in 2008 with the *Stephen Lewis Foundation*. In particular, I remember the young Ugandan women who on our first day of meeting with local people, invited me to hold their precious baby; and the woman in Swaziland who unexpectedly took my arm and led me very quickly up the hill to the location of a conference to establish rights for women, and in particular for grandmothers. We were not able to communicate with words but their warmth and generosity was evident.

On June 18th, the fundraiser '***Stories & Songs on a Summer Evening***' was in partnership with *One World Grannies* who have been doing this for many years and were the main contributors to both food and volunteers. My granddaughter Amy who designed the cover of our book, *Granny's Letters*, and my daughter Joy displayed and sold the book that I co-edited, with \$10 per book going to the *Stephen Lewis Foundation*. If you are interested in seeing or purchasing this book, please contact me.

Joan Turner
Unitarian GoGos member at joan@joejoan.ca

Successful Fundraisers – Petawawa and Area Grannies

Petawawa and Area Grannies Spring Fundraisers Successful with Support of Local Partners

The *Petawawa and Area Grannies* have continued to evolve as our members age. The core leadership has been successful in recruiting new members who are friends. One of our newer members, Peggy Hinch, knows how to partner with businesses to support the causes she espouses. One of Peggy's special connections is Vince Gould of **Looking Glass Toys** in Petawawa. He has supported us for three springs by allowing us to hold our plant sale in front of his business. Even though the weather was inclement we still made over \$800 with generous donations from supporters.



Participants in the event.

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Successful Fundraisers – Petawawa and Area Grannies

Vince and Peggy discussed other ways to raise money for the *Stephen Lewis Foundation*. Since Vince runs a successful toy store, he thought of supporting us by promoting a family night. He had recently attended a tradeshow that promoted speed puzzle nights from *Ravensburger* so the fundraiser was used as a trial event! It was great for our group, as the event sold out quickly! Vince sponsored the speed puzzle night on Thursday, June 5th, at the *Dog House Brewery* in beautiful downtown Petawawa. The *Dog House Brewery* is a local business which has moved to

a larger location. The *Brewery* has a pub set up in the front and merchandise for sale. There is a fireplace in the back and room for adjustable seating. Vince had promoted the idea on his website to fill 14 tables which were all presold at a cost of \$50 a table. The *Dog House* donated the location.

Our group also had a silent auction and provided snacks. Our final tally was just under \$1,000. By partnering with these two local businesses, we were able to raise money, raise awareness and build more support for the organization. The winning team of Susan Chalmers, Jeris Findley, Amanda Currie, Lesley Buckingham, were able to complete a 500-piece *Ravensburger* puzzle in 1 hour and 1 minute!

Hilda Young
Petawawa and Area Grannies



Vincent Gould of *Looking Glass Toys*

Successful Fundraisers – One World Grannies

A Memorable Storytelling Evening in 2025!

One World Grannies held their umpteenth storytelling evening on June 18, 2025, at the beautiful - but hot! - *Unitarian Congregation* on Cleary Avenue. This was the third year of a truly invaluable partnership with the *Unitarian GoGos*. Despite the heat, we sold over 90 tickets, and it's fair to say attendees went home in good spirits. They were entertained by a variety of storytellers and the *Unitarians' Three Rivers Choir*.

Storytellers included Nancy Edwards, who performed part of her one-woman play which re-examines her time as a young public health nurse in Sierra Leone, not long before the HIV/AIDS epidemic struck Africa. Nancy left us all with a lot to think about.



Sandi London and Robin Scobie of *OWG* presented a dialogue that summarized the high points of their recent trip to Eswatini and South Africa, organized by the *Stephen Lewis Foundation*. They met with some of the *SLF* partners, including many of the grandmothers who are supported by the *SLF* partners' programming. It was a lively dialogue, accompanied by outstanding photography from the trip.

The *Three Rivers Choir* performed a number of songs, including several of African origin. They had guests up dancing and singing along to their memorable music.

(Photo: Sandi London and Robin Scobie talking about their trip to Eswatini and South Africa.)

At the midpoint break, *OWG* and the *Unitarian GoGos* served delicious savoury and sweet treats to mingling guests, who also had the opportunity to pick up information material and buy copies of two books, and handcrafted soaps. Sheila Green of the *Unitarian GoGos* was the

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Successful Fundraisers – One World Grannies



master organizer of all the wonderful food. There were then draws for donated door prizes from the *National Gallery*, the *National Arts Centre*, the *Ottawa Storytellers*, and *Bridgehead* on Beechwood. The last storyteller per se was Kim Kilpatrick, a veteran with the *Ottawa Storytellers*. Kim entertained everyone with a sweet and funny story about a Christmas present gone wrong. To round out the performances, OWG's Peggy Edwards and Lorraine Cormier Hopkins,

who also directed the whole evening, told some "*Grandkids say the darndest things*" to the delight of the audience.

Some stirring words from OWG's Shailja Verma closed the evening, and everyone went home without having to run for cover from pelting rain as happened last year!

Thanks to all involved in planning and Putting on the ambitious production. And thanks to the many who bought tickets, made donations, and showed up!

Shelagh Jane Woods

PHOTOS: (Above) Some of the tellers and people from the audience. (Right) Audience at the *Unitarian Congregation* event!



NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE - STEPHANIE NOLAN

Editor's Note: This *New York Times* Gift Article called ***“Promise of Victory Over H.I.V. Fades as US Withdraws Support”*** by Stephanie Nolen appeared in *The New York Times*. Stephanie is the daughter of Barbara Nolen, *Grandmas AIDing Grandmas* says that *“she is a big supporter of the grandmother campaign.”* Stephanie's story is quoted directly from the *New York Times* (online website). The article hones in on the *“breakthrough preventive drug lenacapavir”* and how access to the drug is impeded by the withdrawal of *USAid* foreign life-saving funds. The poignant article emphasizes the dire effects of losing access to vital medication in the fight against *HIV* and *AIDS*.

Stephanie Nolen has covered H.I.V. for 25 years. She reported this story from South Africa and Eswatini. Published June 25, 2025 - Updated June 26, 2025.

This was supposed to be a breakthrough year in the 44-year-long struggle against H.I.V.

Decades of research and investment produced new approaches to vaccines that were going into their first significant clinical trials.

The hunt for a cure was homing in on key mechanisms to block the virus, which can lurk dormant and near-untraceable in the body for years.

Most critically, a breakthrough preventive drug, lenacapavir, a twice-yearly injection that [offers total protection from H.I.V.](#), was to be rapidly rolled out across eastern and southern Africa. The main target: young women. About 300,000 of them were newly infected with the virus last year — half of all new infections worldwide.

Every one of these plans has been derailed by the Trump administration's slashing of foreign assistance.

There is more potential than ever before to end the H.I.V. epidemic, scientists and public health experts say. But now, H.I.V. programs across Africa are scrambling to procure drugs that the United States once supplied, replace lost nurses and lab technicians, and restart shuttered programs to prevent new infections.

“We imagined we would be in a different world right now,” said Dr. Leila Mansoor, a senior research scientist at the Centre for the AIDS Program of Research in Durban, South Africa. She had planned to spend 2025 analyzing data from one H.I.V. prevention trial, preparing for another and tracking how lenacapavir was transforming the epidemic — alongside colleagues testing new vaccines and cure strategies.

“And instead we're moving backwards at warp speed,” she said.

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NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE - STEPHANIE NOLAN

Already, there are fears that H.I.V. infection rates are rising in the hardest-hit countries, but there is no clear way to measure the damage because data collection was mostly reliant on the terminated U.S. funding. Stocks of prevention drugs once supplied by the U.S. are running out across Africa.

In South Africa, which has led much of the H.I.V. work in close partnership with the United States, clinical trials of vaccines that had participants ready for their first shot have been canceled, the immunizations left in the back of lab refrigerators. Scientists leading cure studies have laid off their staffs and [turned out the lights in their departments](#).

The Trump administration says that too much foreign aid is wasted by corrupt governments and bloated programs. The president and his allies have repeatedly said that the United States has shouldered an unfair share of responsibility for global health support and that other countries must do more.

The United States has historically contributed about three-quarters of the global spending on H.I.V., about \$6 billion annually in recent years. This is a legacy of a commitment made by President George W. Bush more than two decades ago. Mr. Bush made ending the AIDS pandemic a U.S. priority, saying this was a wealthy nation's humanitarian obligation, and that it would also benefit American health and security, to bring the deadly virus in check.

Now, even as the Trump administration has dismantled numerous H.I.V. research and prevention programs, Secretary of State Marco Rubio has insisted that the United States will preserve its support for treatment programs.

The Evolution of Trump's Views on Foreign Aid

Among the prevention programs cut is U.S. support for an ambitious plan to distribute lenacapavir, which the U.S. Food and Drug Administration [approved this week](#). Rapid rollout of the new injection is seen by many public health experts as the best opportunity the world has yet had to stop the spread of H.I.V. in the United States and abroad.

Historically, it has taken years for H.I.V. treatments and prevention methods to reach Africa, where three-quarters of people with the virus live, even when those drugs and interventions were first tested on Africans.

Lenacapavir was supposed to be the product that showed that the world was finally doing things differently, said Dr. Linda-Gail Bekker, director of the Desmond Tutu H.I.V. Centre at the University of Cape Town, who was a principal investigator in the trial that proved the drug's extraordinary effectiveness.

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NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE - STEPHANIE NOLAN

The company that makes the drug, Gilead Sciences, applied for regulatory approval in African countries where it was tested at the same time as in the United States. The company also issued [a voluntary license to makers of generics](#), including companies in India and Egypt, so that an affordable product would be available in a few years.

To bridge the gap until that time, Gilead committed to producing enough of the drug to protect two million people over three years, to be sold at “a no-profit price.”

However, about half of those doses from Gilead were supposed to be purchased by the President’s Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief, known as PEPFAR. But the Trump administration has decided that PEPFAR should no longer support H.I.V. prevention for anyone except pregnant and breastfeeding women, and will most likely fund only a sliver of the planned Gilead purchase.

The other half of the doses were meant to be bought by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, a multilateral donor agency to which the United States has historically been the largest funder. But the Trump administration is also cutting deeply into its support to the Global Fund.

The third potential buyer for lenacapavir is the countries themselves. But many are already straining health budgets to patch gaping holes created by the reduced PEPFAR support and loss of other U.S. assistance.

“The promise of lenacapavir for prevention was — everybody thought this is the last stage to bring the H.I.V. epidemic down to its knees, and there was such enthusiasm for what we would see,” said Dr. Ntobeko Ntusi, the chief executive of the South African Medical Research Council. “That’s now all up in the air.”

Executives at Gilead Sciences say the company is producing the bridge doses now, and publicly say they are confident that the planned two million people will receive the drug.

“Gilead has not stopped or slowed down in our ambition to make sure we get lenacapavir to as many people as possible,” said Janet Dorling, senior vice president of global patient solutions at Gilead. “The changing landscape means we might have to do that differently. I would not tell you that everything is as we expected. But everyone’s working very hard to find a way to make this happen.”

Privately, however, the company is somewhere between anxious and panicked about who will pay for the product, according to people who have been part of negotiations

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NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE - STEPHANIE NOLAN

Gilead would not disclose what price it would charge for these initial doses for Africa, but H.I.V. program managers in several countries said they had been told the target price was about \$100 per patient per year.

That is roughly double what African countries pay for daily H.I.V. prevention pills, but ultimately cost-effective for public health services because it offers much greater protection, said Hasina Subedar, who oversees the design of H.I.V. prevention programs for South Africa's health ministry. Women who tested the injection said it worked better for them than pills because they didn't have to remember to do something every day, and they didn't have to worry about stigma associated with H.I.V.-related tablets that a parent or partner might see.

There is widespread hope in African countries that the Gates Foundation may step in to cover the lost U.S. government funding for the purchase — Bill Gates has often [expressed enthusiasm about the potential of lenacapavir to accelerate the end of AIDS](#) — but the foundation is resistant to buying the product from Gilead, the people familiar with the negotiations said, because its executives are reluctant to make a large payment to a major pharmaceutical company.

"We've been working on how quickly we can get the generic version activated," said Trevor Mundel, president of global health at the Gates Foundation. The foundation will guarantee large-volume purchases to encourage the generics makers to ramp up production, he said, in the hope that the low-cost version of lenacapavir is available by early 2027.

But prevention experts are concerned that generic drug makers will be reluctant to scale up production of lenacapavir if demand hasn't already been proven — potentially keeping supply limited for years. Mitchell Warren, executive director of the H.I.V. prevention organization AVAC, said a potential buyer like the foundation was best placed to negotiate the price down further in this complicated moment for Gilead. (The foundation is a major backer of the Global Fund and would contribute to a lenacapavir purchase in that way.)

Peter Sands, executive director of the Global Fund, has been lobbying politicians in Washington to support lenacapavir, hoping that some part of the U.S. funding pledge for the rollout might be restored.

"If you want countries to take on the responsibility for their H.I.V. responses, in terms of both leadership and funding, it's a very different thing to take on a problem that is still growing than a problem where you have made a significant dent in the numbers of new infections," he said. "And lenacapavir gives us that opportunity to dramatically reduce new infections."

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NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE - STEPHANIE NOLAN

The Children's Investment Fund Foundation, a British charity, has pledged \$150 million to the Global Fund to support the rollout of lenacapavir, and the fund is urgently seeking new philanthropic and private sector donors, Mr. Sands said, as well as urging recipient countries to rejigger their budgets where possible to help fast-track the introduction of lenacapavir.

The South African government, which now pays for the daily oral prevention drug, was counting on PEPFAR assistance to introduce the twice-yearly injection of lenacapavir as an additional, most likely more popular option. Ms. Subedar said South Africa hoped to use it fast and widely, interrupting viral transmission and swiftly pushing infection rates down.

She had envisioned getting lenacapavir to 800,000 young women in 2026, blitzing college dorms and minibuses. Now, she said, South Africans are once again stuck, knowing a revolutionary technology exists but unsure if and when they will have access to it.

In Eswatini, the country which once had the world's highest rate of H.I.V. infection, Sindy Matse, program manager of the Swazi National AIDS Program, said the rates of H.I.V. testing in the country had fallen precipitously since January. And from January to April, nearly 5,000 people who take H.I.V. treatment failed to pick up their medication, most likely because their clinics were closed or their outreach workers were fired, she said.

Ms. Matse worries that infected people aren't starting on treatment and that pregnant women may give birth to infected babies — but she doesn't know for sure what's happening because much of her program's data was collected and processed by clerks whose salaries were paid by PEPFAR and whom the government has yet to replace.

"We never got time to transition," Ms. Matse said. "Now we are expecting to see new infections, and drug resistance from people whose treatment is interrupted."

South Africa has also seen a sharp drop in the number of people taking pills to prevent infection. In Cape Town, Dr. Bekker fears that South Africa's hospitals will soon start to see a surge of people with tuberculosis — people whose H.I.V. treatment has been interrupted, or who have not been diagnosed. Clinicians will need a crash course in what AIDS-related infections look like, she said; young doctors will not have seen them because South Africa's H.I.V. program has been so effective over the past 15 years. Soon they will be back.

"The stars were aligning, with these new innovations, to really bring this thing to its knees," she said. "But this money was critical to get there. And now it's gone."

GRASSROOTS EVENTS CALENDAR

Editor's Note: Submissions for the monthly newsletter are due on the 23rd of the month.

DATE	GRANNY GROUP	EVENT/CONTACT	LOCATION/TIME/CONTACT
Sept. 7, 2025 (Rain Date Sept. 14, 2025)	<i>One World Grannies</i> REGIONAL EVENT	<i>Grandmothers Campaign – Bridge Crossing 2025</i> <i>Adawe Crossing Pedestrian Bridge, Strathcona Park</i> Information will be posted on the <i>One World Grannies Website</i> : www.oneworldgrannies.ca	STRATHCONA PARK (Range Road, Ottawa) 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Family Picnic; Grandmothers' Clothesline; Bridge crossing - Help to BRIDGE THE GAP; Raise awareness of the Funding Emergency facing grandmothers and their families in sub-Saharan Africa.

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- 2) Grannyfest Coordinators

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- 1) Changing Tides Newsletter

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