

Changing Tides

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

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

January 28, 2026
Volume 14, Issue 1

Editor's Notes

As we brave winter's icy chills and mounting snowbanks, our thoughts warm up to what 2026 promises to hold with exhilarating celebrations in May and September – *Grannyfest 2026* in May and the *20th Anniversary Gathering of the Stephen Lewis Foundation* in September. Note that the September date is still to be confirmed.

If you have ever taken part in a *Grandmothers Gathering*, you know what a memorable and heartwarming connection it brings with our African sisters who teach

us more than we'll ever know, not to mention the enduring sharing of older women who hold the secrets to life's abiding caring, nurturing support – who step into the fray when no one dares to act! These are the grandmothers to whom we have pledged our solidarity with our admiration and deepest awe!

We look greatly forward to work with Sarah and with the hope that someone will join her in the inspiring ventures of the G2G Campaign! While Sandi has finished her five-year stellar term, she will continue to help out.

To all our grandmother groups who continue their boundless and diverse fundraisers and awareness in our communities, tell us of this year's ventures.

We hope to see you at our gatherings and multiple events.

We are always eager to hear your ideas and your experiences! Happy wintry season 2026!

Mia Overduin, Editor

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REGIONAL/NATIONAL EVENTS 2026

Available by Request

Thursday, May 21, 2026

Note: September 22, 23, 24, 2026 Dates To Be Reconsidered (August or early October 2026)!

Presentations re. *Africa Trip 2025* with Sandi and Robin

Regional Grannyfest 2026 – If you are interested in joining the Planning Committee which starts preparations in January 2026, let Sarah know.

20th Anniversary Gathering - Stephen Lewis Foundation – Ottawa, Ontario – Participate in celebration, march on Parliament Hill, host **all** our grandmother friends from across the country and Africa. More details to come! Looking for a suitable venue – let Sarah know! Billeting for people from out-of-town/ country.

GRL Updates – January 2026

Happy New Year and welcome to 2026, the **20th Anniversary of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign**. This will be a year of celebration, starting with our regional *Grannyfest* on May 21st and culminating in an international Gathering in Ottawa in the fall. It will be a busy and exciting year.

GRANNYFEST

A regional Zoom meeting was held on January 16th and a Steering Committee struck to develop a theme, review potential speakers and create an overall program for *Grannyfest*. We hope that members from the Kingston and Hudson, Quebec areas might join us as we celebrate the achievements of *O-GRGN* over the past 20 years. In addition to guest speakers and personal stories from our region there will be a silent auction and we are exploring ideas for accessories with a regional logo. If you would like to join the Steering Committee in any capacity, please let Sarah know. Volunteers are needed for registration, food and beverages and advertising. Please mark the date and plan to attend!

613 FLEA MARKET

We finally secured a booth at the *613 Flea Market* only to have Mother Nature interfere. Due to the extreme cold forecast for Saturday, January 24th, the market was cancelled. We may apply again for a date sometime in February or March. Thank you to all of those who worked hard to prepare items for sale.

OTTAWA LITTLE THEATRE

Thanks to Dianne Breton, *One World Grannies*, for facilitating a connection with the *Ottawa Little Theatre*. We have partnered with them for the preview performance of *Jane Eyre*, scheduled for Sunday, October 25th. This arrangement is similar to our very successful partnership with the *Phoenix Players* at the *Gladstone Theatre* although this time we will have 320 seats to fill! Please keep this date in mind and more details on ticket sales will be forthcoming early in September.

20th ANNIVERSARY GATHERING

A meeting was held on January 21st to discuss plans for the 20th Anniversary Gathering. In spite of our best efforts to secure a venue for **September 22-24**, it appears that Ottawa is booked for that timeframe! The *SLF* staff are now considering dates in August (the 2006 meeting was held August 11-13) or early October. In the interim, working groups have been established to develop a program, secure speakers, plan special ceremonies, develop communications and marketing plans, organize a marketplace and volunteer recruitment.

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GRL Updates – January 2026

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Unfortunately, the *SLF* survey that was circulated before Christmas was unable to identify individual responses so if you indicated your interest in participating in the organization of the Gathering, please let Sarah know and she will connect you with the appropriate working group.

BEDS WITHOUT BREAKFAST

Thank you to everyone who responded to our regional request to provide billeting for visiting grandmothers. If you would like to learn more about the **Beds Without Breakfast** program and would like to host a visiting grandmother, please contact Sarah. It's a wonderful opportunity to get to know other grandmothers from across the country and from Africa. And the more home-based accommodations we can offer, the more members might consider coming to the Gathering.

GRANDMOTHER REGIONAL LIAISON

Finally, as Sandi has stepped back from her role as *GRL*, another regional representative is needed to work with Sarah. It's a marvelous experience and enhances understanding of the Campaign, the roles and responsibilities of *SLF* staff and opportunities to meet and benefit from other *GRLs* from across the country. The position is primarily one of communication and easy to manage when shared between two representatives. Please contact **Sarah**, or **Sandi**, for information.

We wish you all health and happiness in this exciting year of celebration!

Yours in solidarity,
Sarah (with support from Sandi)

Sarah (sjaakafelix@icloud.com) / **Sandi** (sandilondon01@gmail.com)

Editor's Note re. Beds WithOut Breakfast: If you like to be part of the network of G2G members across the country who offer their home for the *SLF's Beds WithOut Breakfast* program, there is a lovely write-up on the G2G Campaign website at <https://grandmotherscampaign.org/bedswithoutbreakfast>.

AFRICA BOOK NOOK

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Our most recent book discussion on ***We, The Kindling***, by Otoniya J. Okot Bilek, was facilitated by Robin Scobie, *One World Grannies*. The discussions are most engaging and our members bring their thoughtful perspective and questions. Robin had also provided a most intriguing link to an interview with the author and a reading of one of the chapters – these provide precious learning and viewpoints of the author. Anyone who wishes to join the Group is most welcome. We take turns recommending a book and facilitating the sessions, providing wholesome sharing.



Our next book session is on **Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 7:00 pm**, and the book's title is ***We Inherit the Fire***, by Kagiso Lesogo Molope. The story evolves around the relationship between an emotionally distant mother who had been an imprisoned freedom fighter and her daughter, set in South Africa at the end of *Apartheid*. Dianne Breton will facilitate the discussion. The sessions are via Zoom. To join contact Diane Woods at drandallwoods@gmail.com or Mia Overduin at miawboverduin@gmail.com.

Honouring 20 years together

“Spontaneously in Canada, a number of grandmothers groups have sprung up – in Kamloops and Nanaimo and Saskatoon and Montreal. Grandmothers groups who almost intuitively understand that they want to show solidarity with the grandmothers of Africa. We should launch a campaign, Grandmothers to Grandmothers. I hope that we will have grandmothers groups in every jurisdiction across the country, and we also expect to raise significant resources so that we can respond to the immediate needs.”

– Stephen Lewis, at a press conference on International Women's Day 2006

We're excited to dedicate 2026 to celebrating 20 years of solidarity. Campaign members and regional liaisons have shared that a national event would be a meaningful way to celebrate together.

(Excerpt from *Granny Bulletin*, December 2025)

SMART AGING WORKSHOPS – January to March 2026

*One World Grannies and Grammas to Ambuyas Partnership with the **Council on Aging** – SMART AGING WORKSHOPS – January to March 2026*

This learning together program was facilitated by *The Council on Aging* who provided a marvelous opportunity to us. The *Council on Aging of Ottawa (COA)* has developed several stand-alone *Smart Aging* Workshops facilitated by their expert volunteers

Trudy Medcalf, a member of *One World Grannies*, *The Council on Aging* and an expert in older adult learning played a key role in designing the workshops. *“We know that older adults have a lot of knowledge and expertise. We wanted to draw on that, and enable participants to learn from and teach each other.”*

- 1) **Tuesday, January 20, 2026 (10 a.m. to noon): *Nurturing Mental Wellness & Resiliency*** – Increase your knowledge related to mental wellness as you age. Useful tools and ideas to create tangible and concrete plans will be shared.
- 2) **Tuesday, February 3, 2026 (10 am to noon): *Aging in Place with Home Modifications*** – Explore what is involved practically, emotionally and financially in considering whether to stay in your current home and which modifications could allow you to age in place longer.
- 3) **Tuesday, February 17, 2026 (10 am to noon): *Thriving Solo*** – Some 40% of Canadians over 65 are single. This workshop will consider the benefits, challenges, joys and concerns of navigating life as a single older adult. We will also explore the importance of developing purpose and meaning in your life and creating opportunities to thrive.
- 4) **Tuesday, March 10, 2026 (10 am to noon): *Aging in Place with Services & Support*** – Participants will explore what’s involved practically, emotionally and financially in continuing to live independently with services and supports. This will include an overview of common needs, available options and financial considerations.

A big thank you to **Dianne Breton** who was instrumental in working with *The Council on Aging* to present this informative and educational opportunity to us.

Note: Each workshop lasts two hours and takes place at the **COA** at 815 St. Laurent Blvd. The workshops are designed for people in their 60’s, 70’s, 80’s and beyond. They provide up-to-date information on each workshop subject and benefit participants with interaction, personal reflection and discussion within the group. Cost: \$40 for the four series.

GRASSROOTS EVENTS CALENDAR

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

DATE	GRANNY GROUP	EVENT	LOCATION/TIME/CONTACT
Feb. 10, 2026	Sarah Archer and Steering Committee	<i>Grannyfest</i> Steering Committee Meeting on Zoom	10:00 a.m. Sarah Archer at sjaak
May 21, 2026	<i>Grandmothers Groups</i>	REGIONAL GRANNYFEST 2026	If you would like to participate on the Planning Committee, let Sandi and Sarah know
Sept. 22, 23 and 24, 2026 (Dates To Be Reviewed)	<i>Groups from Across Canada and Grandmothers from Africa</i>	20th Anniversary Gathering – Stephen Lewis Foundation Participation in celebration, march on Parliament Hill, host all our grandmother friends from across the country and Africa.	Ottawa, Ontario More details to come!

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