



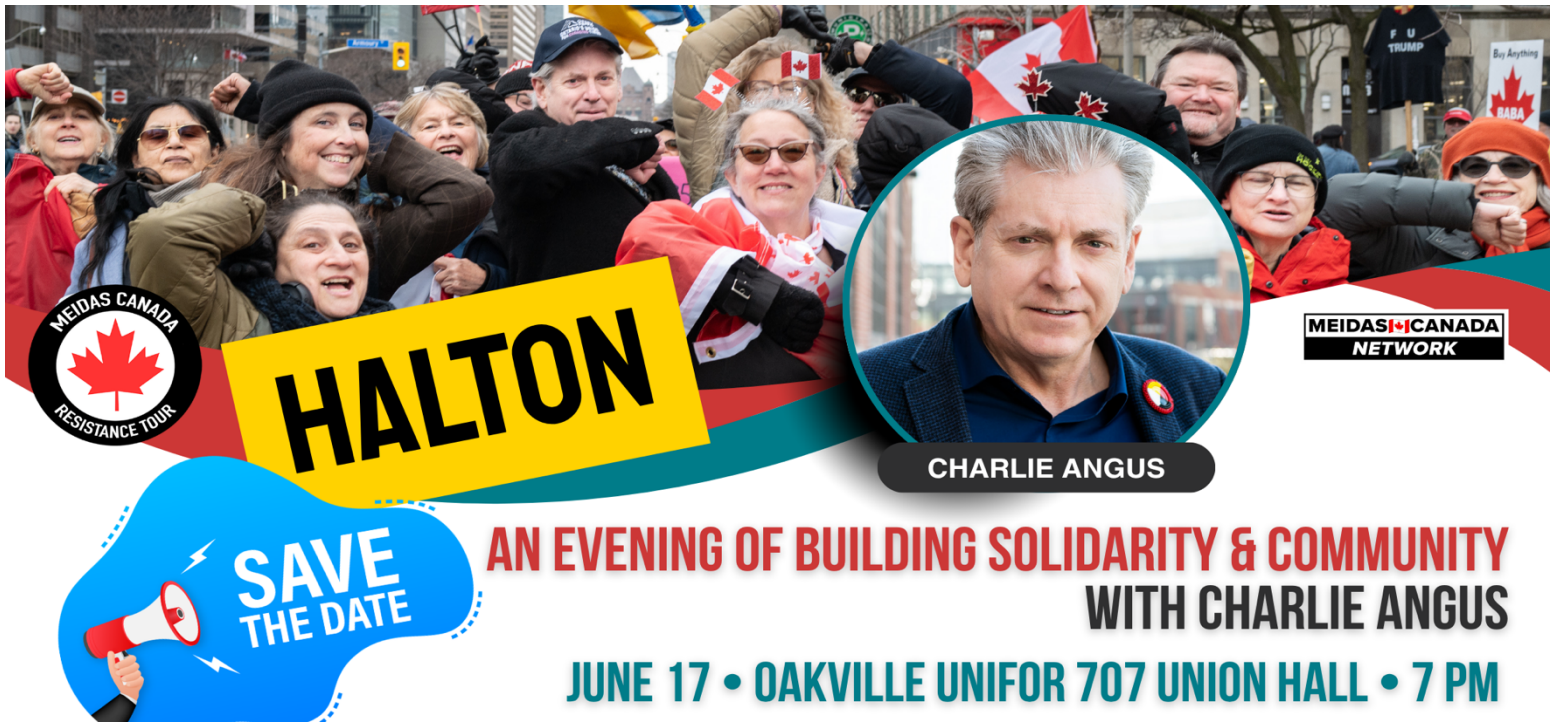
AWHsome

*Newsletter of Advancement of Women Halton*

*AWH is a collaborative of twenty women's groups and social agencies that advocate and amplify the voice of women. The monthly meetings give us an opportunity to hear about the activities and challenges of member organizations. This newsletter is another avenue for readers to learn about AWH member activities during the previous month.*



*May 2026*



Charles Joseph Angus is a Canadian author, journalist, broadcaster, musician and politician.

A member of the New Democratic Party (NDP), Angus served as the federal Member of Parliament for the riding of Timmins—James Bay from 2004 to 2025. Until his retirement from politics, he was the NDP critic for Ethics, FedNor, Indigenous Youth and Income Inequality and Affordability. He was also deputy critic for Labour.

After his retirement from politics, he founded Meidas Canada and in September 2025 he launched the Meidas Resistance Tour, an independent media resistance movement to combat disinformation and "gangster fascism".

[Advancement of Women Halton](#) along with Meidas Canada,  
present

Charlie Angus: THE RESISTANCE TOUR.  
Raw stories, real talk, and powerful vibes all night!

Get ready for an unforgettable night with Charlie Angus! Join us as he hits the stage bringing passion, energy, and powerful messages in a time when the world needs it most. Together, we aim to find some light in the dark times.

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Honouring  
**Stephen Lewis**

1937–2026

Sunday, April 26, 2026  
11 am ET  
Chrysalis Theatre  
Toronto Metropolitan University  
43 Gerrard St E, Toronto



On Sunday April 26 the Grandmothers Advocacy Network, Ubuntu and Oomama said goodbye to our co-founder Stephen Lewis at an emotional celebration of his life.

This gathering was an opportunity to honour his extraordinary life, reflect on the lives he touched, and reaffirm the shared purpose that continues to guide us. We heard from friends, colleagues and family. With notes thanks to Tina Agrell, Oomama.

Dr Muhamed Lachemi (President of TMU) All Africa knew and loved him. He said, “Improving the human condition and fighting for social justice are the most noble objectives of all”

Gerry Kaplan (Africa scholar, a former NDP national director and a regular panellist on CBC's Power & Politics.) He was the best opposition leader this province has ever seen . He fought to reveal the truth, grotesquely ugly though it was.

Theo Sowa (Interim director Graça Machel Trust) His was a compassion rooted in love, he spoke truth to power, used the genius of words as precursor to action. He believed “Change comes from the people”

Rosie Abella (Supreme Court jurist) Stephen wasn't a lawyer, but he was one of Canada's greatest justice gifts to the world. He was our democratic tribune for dignity and democracy, a human rights juggernaut, and the only Jewish saint I know.

Zev Lewis (Grandson) Read his poem, *Within Me*. “Within me there is always something stronger, something better, pushing back.”

Vuyiseka Dubula (the Global Fund and former general secretary Treatment Action Campaign for HIV). We mourn a fallen giant. He used his influence to kick down doors; to make forgotten people visible. We have a listening deficit in our world leadership. Stephen listened to us. He made violent use of language to confront violent injustice. His words could be like bullets. Raise your fist and say “Amanga!” That is your commitment to act. (*Amanga means liars in Isizulu.*)

JP Hornick (OPSEU President) Rest in power Stephen, we'll take it from here.

David Suzuki (Environmental activist) Stephen's fight for social justice must be the life core of every Canadian child's education. He ennobled all of Canada.

Wab Kinew. (Premier of Manitoba) I met him at Canada Reads and he challenged me to join his party and enter politics. He told me, “Go represent what is best in life”. In Manitoba we will establish a doctoral scholarship for HIV research in Stephen's honour.

Ilana, Avi and Jenny on Stephen Lewis as a dad. Palpable goodness, no more patriarchy, a candle in the dark, he paid as much income tax as he possibly could, keep telling the stories, never give up on improving the human condition.

The memorial <https://www.youtube.com/live/zW0wBA7T9K4?si=YhonDmjbZOPMK86v>

*Everyone at AWH could echo these sentiments*

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## APRIL HAPPENINGS



Caribbean Music & Cuisine | April 8th  
Lively Parang, Calypso, and Caribbean folk music, along with Caribbean-inspired refreshments that highlight the rich and diverse flavours of the region.

Multicultural Music Event | April 11th  
a unique collaboration between the Caribbean Acoustic Community Ensemble and SBE's Klezmer musicians, blending two distinct musical traditions through shared interpretations of popular songs in an interactive and engaging experience.



Equal Pay Day  
April 14, 2026

*At the Pillars of Justice, University Avenue, Toronto*

The gender pay gap persists across all regions and is larger when unpaid labor hours are accounted for. Excluding unpaid work, women earn only 61% of what men earn per working hour; when unpaid labor is included, this figure falls to just 32%. In every region, women work more hours than men when unpaid labor is accounted for. This year on Equal Pay Day focused on childcare workers. For [more information about the ongoing campaign](#).



GRAND(M)OTHERS ACT  
TO SAVE THE PLANET

On April 25 many members joined the Fight Ford protest outside Oakville MPP Stephen Crawford's office. Despite the cold and wet, there was much energy and many wonderful signs, urging Integrity, Transparency and Democracy.



COMING IN MAY



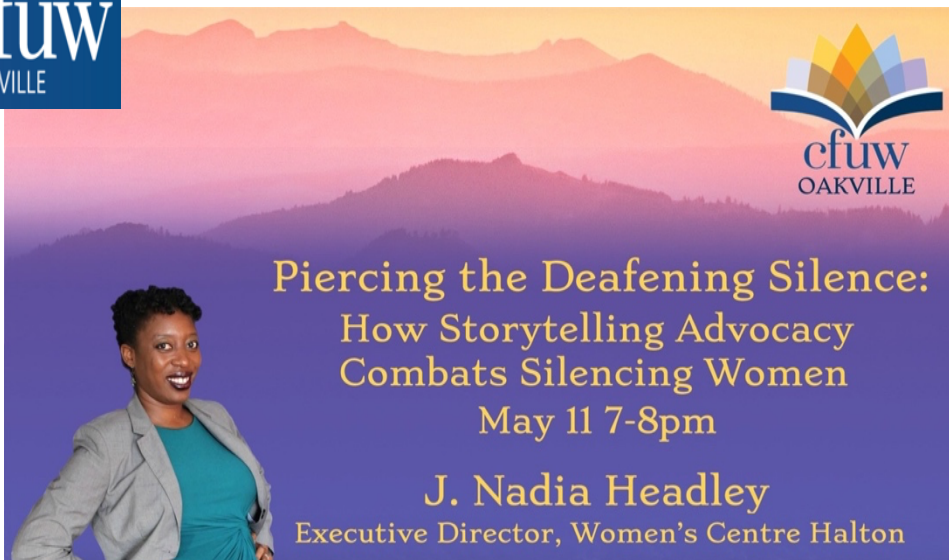
May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month in Canada, dedicated to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting mental well-being for all.

May 4 – 10.

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) hosts its national Mental Health Week during the first week of May, encouraging education and connection to fight stigma. The theme this year is Come Together Canada, and CMHA offers [toolkits](#) to help encourage connection, start thoughtful conversations and build empathy and belonging

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May 11



[For more Information](#)

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May 12, 2026



In March we learned that the City of Burlington Council had unanimously voted to support Indwell moving towards creating supportive affordable housing on city-owned properties at 1022-1030 Waterdown Road in Aldershot.

City of Burlington Planning staff will be bringing forward a **zoning by-law amendment** application to convert the use from “Mixed Use Corridor - Employment (MXE)” to “Mixed-Use Corridor - Transit Station Area (MXT).” This will permit the multi-residential use and facilitate the Indwell project. This is a critical point in Indwell’s development process; **without zoning approval, the project will not be able to proceed.**

Instructions for giving an oral delegation:

Visit this page and fill out the online form: <https://www.burlington.ca/en/council-and-city-administration/speak-at-a-meeting.aspx>

- Committee or Council Meeting you wish to attend: Committee of the Whole
- Date of Meeting: Tuesday, May 12, 2026
- Agenda Item or Report No.: 1022 Waterdown Rd
- Who are you representing as the delegate? Group/Organization, Self, Other (as applicable)
- Please state your position regarding the agenda topic.: In support
- Enter your contact information

Submission deadline:

- **Latest is Monday, May 11, 2026 at noon**

May 28

**GET ON BOARD**  
**Stop Doug Ford's hospital privatization train wreck**  
**MAY 28**  
VIA Rail & GO trains from  
Aldershot (Hamilton) - Barrie - Brampton - Guelph  
Kingston - Kitchener - London - Mississauga - Niagara  
Oakville - Oshawa - Ottawa - Windsor - Woodstock  
TORONTO 12 pm rally outside Union Station  
March to Queen's Park for giant protest  
**SIGN UP & SAVE THE DATE**

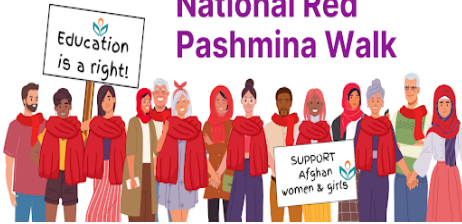
A red poster with white and black text. At the top, it says "GET ON BOARD" in white. Below that, "Stop Doug Ford's hospital privatization train wreck" in black. The date "MAY 28" is written in large, bold, black letters with a white outline, and a stylized train graphic is integrated behind the text. Below the date, it lists VIA Rail & GO train routes: Aldershot (Hamilton) - Barrie - Brampton - Guelph, Kingston - Kitchener - London - Mississauga - Niagara, Oakville - Oshawa - Ottawa - Windsor - Woodstock. It also mentions a "TORONTO 12 pm rally outside Union Station" and a "March to Queen's Park for giant protest". At the bottom, it says "SIGN UP & SAVE THE DATE" in white.

[For more information](#)

May 30



## National Red Pashmina Walk



On the May 30th weekend, join the 2nd annual National Red Pashmina Walk — a powerful coast-to-coast demonstration of support for the millions of Afghan women and girls who have been denied their right to education.

Supported by Right to Learn’s Chapters across Canada, hundreds of participants wear red scarves and walk through their cities with an important message: Let Afghan women

and girls learn.

Participants wear red and walk through their local communities while raising funds and awareness in support of the right to education.

[Read more and learn more on how to participate](#)

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### ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN HALTON IN ACTION

#### Child Care

AWH is continuing its campaign to support a universal, affordable, inclusive, high quality early learning and child care:

- By writing to the Prime Minister with our concerns, and receiving a response
- By meeting with the Hon. Karina Gould who sponsored the original legislation for the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC)
- By sponsoring a petition to the House of Commons:

To the House of Commons in Parliament assembled:

We, the undersigned residents of Canada, draw the attention of the House to affirm and provide consistent access to universal, affordable, inclusive, high quality early learning and child care. We request that all future budgets include adequate funding that keeps up with inflation and allows for the growth of the program. It is essential to the healthy development of children, to the economic value of women entering the labour force, and to alleviate the affordability crisis that is affecting the wellbeing of families and communities across Canada. This legacy project needs federal leadership to flourish.

## Health

A letter was sent to the MPPs concerning Alberta’s flawed private surgery clinic model, also asking about the new Community Access to Long Term Care.

AWH supports a focus on strong PUBLIC hospital services for all.

## Justice

A letter was sent to the Hon. Zee Hamid, MPP for Milton and Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform asking about the hiring and appropriate training of new officers especially for an improvement in the transition of those leaving custody, plus the continuing concerns of harsh treatments at Maplehurst Correctional Complex.

## Local governments

AWH is alarmed about the erosion of municipal democracy, with the introduction of the Bill 100, Better Regional Governance Act and the proposed appointment of Regional Chairs who will have “Strong Chair “powers.

A letter was sent to the Premier and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing concerning this Bill and supporting our Regional councillors who are unanimous in their rejection of this Bill.

## Sectoral Table on the Care Economy

Emails have been sent to partners to learn about more about the Sectoral Table which was established in March 2025 to advise on improving conditions for paid/unpaid workers, strengthening care systems (childcare, long-term care, disability), and financing the sector. It has now been described as ‘lapsed’. Is this true? What has it been doing?

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### ISSUES & NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS and PARTNERS



GRAND(M)OTHERS ACT  
TO SAVE THE PLANET

## Environment

Canada released a \$3.8-billion nature strategy [A Force of Nature: Canada’s Strategy to Protect Nature](#), laying out a path to nearly double the share of the country’s lands and waters under protection by the end of the decade, introducing measures across three pillars:

- “protecting nature” through new parks, marine protected areas and Indigenous-led conservation;
- “building Canada well” by integrating environmental data into infrastructure decision-making; and
- “valuing nature and mobilizing capital” through a new expert task force tasked with attracting private investment.



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## Housing and Homelessness

### CDH Halton Housing Action Network

Some great community updates:

- The Halton Faith Network will meet May 11th at Port Nelson Church discussing how church and community residents can be involved in using their properties for housing.
- On May 4th the Post Road (6th line) affordable housing project will go before council in Oakville
- The CDH Halton Housing Action Network will be crafting a set of questions for candidates on housing issues.
- We will look to partner with other groups hosting all candidates' meetings, offering support and a request for housing questions to be added to the list.
- The CDH Team is still looking for people to be part of the PSA spots with YourTV.
- There is a video on CDH website on how to get involved/share your opinion on municipal and regional issues.
- National Housing Day date is Friday, November 20, 2026.
- next meetings are Monday, May 25th at either 10 am and 6 pm.



**disability  
without  
poverty**

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### Accessible Housing Review Panel Has Launched

The National Housing Council has launched a review panel to examine the lack of accessible housing in Canada, following a request from the Federal Housing

Advocate.

The panel launched on March 26 and will run until June 5, with online and in-person hearings taking place throughout spring and summer 2026 to hear directly from people with lived experience and other experts.

[Learn more](#)



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An Overview of Halton Seniors' Housing, prepared by CFUW Oakville member and AWH chair of Health, Anne Douglas

The Three-Tiered Infrastructure: Halton senior care grid operates on a rigid continuum of care, dictated almost entirely by an individual's financial capital and medical acuity.

Tier 1: Private & Market-Rate Facilities

Tier 2: Subsidized Housing (The HATCH Halton Access to Community Housing Bottleneck)

Tier 3: Long-Term Care (LTC), 24/7 heavy-duty clinical and nursing environments operated directly by the Region

The current regional infrastructure relies heavily on the private sector to absorb the bulk of the aging population, while the municipal system acts as a tightly constrained safety net for the most vulnerable. The primary policy friction point remains the HATCH waitlist timeline and the sharp drop-off in options for seniors caught in the "missing middle"—those with too many assets to qualify for HATCH, but insufficient income to survive the private market.

[For much more information](#)

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## International



WASH: On track with GRAN's ongoing WASH campaign, we continue to look at the strong links between health and clean water.

WaterAid worked with the government of Tanzania and local partners to install a large underground water harvesting tank, connected to a solar pump, to provide tap water to the Nkome dispensary in the Geita region of Tanzania. Doctors and nurses can now treat patients with a reliable source of clean water, thus greatly reducing the risk of infections.

Tell world leaders its time to deliver water aid. Sign the petition

<https://www.wateraid.org/global/campaigns/time-to-deliver/petition>

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## Mental Health

The Walrus Talks Opioids

Editor in Chief Jennifer Hoilett introduced a stunning succession of speakers, including Burlington's own Mayor Marianne Meed-Ward and Suzanne Obiorah from the Board of CAMH

You can watch the event here [YouTube channel](#).



NEWS FROM LOCAL POLITICIANS and LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

A few thoughts from MPP Zee Hamid, Milton

“I had the privilege of hosting Halton Elected Representatives (HER) for their Elect Respect advocacy day at Queen's Park.

On International Womens Day, while I encouraged Milton to reflect on the achievements, obstacles and lives of women throughout our nation and province’s history on March 8<sup>th</sup>, promoting empowerment and solidarity is a 365-day responsibility. “

And from MPP Stephen Crawford, Oakville, Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement.

“This week, Ontario announced a historic \$8.8 billion partnership with the federal government to build critical infrastructure and new homes while supporting hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs for Ontario workers.”

And from Effie Triantafilopoulos MPP Oakville-North Burlington



“I was pleased to join Economic Development Minister Victor Fedeli and Minister Stephen Crawford for a tour of CHS, Canadian Hospital Specialties Limited’s Brighton facility in Oakville.

CHS is a homegrown leader in medical device manufacturing, with products supporting surgical and diagnostic care across Canada and around the world.

FROM THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

Ontario Increasing Access to Primary Care Across the Province

The government is taking the next step in its plan to connect every Ontarian to a family doctor or primary care provider by 2029.

Through a new 2024-28 Physician Services Agreement, Ontario is increasing physician compensation, introducing incentives to take on more patients, and expanding access to evening and weekend care.

These changes will help recruit and retain more doctors, support patients with complex needs, improve access in rural and northern communities, and reduce pressure on emergency departments.

Building on the province's \$3.4 billion Primary Care Action Plan, over 330,000 people have already been connected to primary care surpassing the province's target and keeping Ontario on track to deliver more convenient, connected care for families."

Learn more: [Ontario Increasing Access to Primary Care Across the Province](#)

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

**The Burlington Post and Oakville Beaver print newspapers are returning to the community.**

While Metroland Media maintains its regularly updated website at [InsideHalton.com](#), new, free print editions of the local newspapers are now available on a monthly basis.

[For more information and locations where the newspapers will be available.](#)



We highlighted **Maggie Helwig's *Encampment: Resistance, Grace, and an Unhoused Community*** in our February issue. Maggie was winner of the 2025 Toronto Book Award and has now just been awarded the prestigious Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing at the end of April.

## Soroptimists' Statement on the Defunding of Women's Rights at the United Nations.

Statements from the CEDAW Committee and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights confirm that the global system tasked with safeguarding the rights of all women and girls is being systematically weakened by chronic underfunding and delayed or unpaid Member State contributions.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights receives less than 5% of the UN's regular budget, so that many positions have been abolished or downgraded and the system is no longer equipped to meet its mandated responsibilities. In consequence there are fewer investigations, reduced field presence, and diminished support for the implementation of international obligations.

[For more information about concerns and demands](#)

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### FINAL WORD



**Christina Hammock Koch** , born January 29, 1979) is an American engineer and NASA astronaut. She flew to the International Space Station in 2019–2020 as part of Expeditions 59, 60, and 61, conducted the first all-female spacewalks, and set the record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman.

Koch worked at the Goddard Space Flight Center and was station chief for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's American Samoa Observatory.

On April 1, 2026, she launched on the Artemis II mission, becoming the first woman to travel beyond low Earth orbit and the first woman to journey around the Moon.

She is also, along with the other crew members of Artemis II, one of the four humans who has traveled the farthest from Earth.

(She also mended the space toilet.)

*Official crew portrait for Artemis II, from left:  
NASA Astronauts Christina Koch, Victor Glover,  
Reid Wiseman and  
Canadian Space Agency astronaut Jeremy Hansen*





SAVIS  
of Halton



grandmothers  
Advocacy Network



Community  
Development  
Halton



Fair Representation  
Vote équitabile  
Canada au Canada



THRIVE  
counselling



Burlington

cfuw  
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THE COUNCIL  
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