



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.



June 2026

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Successes that we can enjoy and celebrate

As we wind up for the summer let's think about the positives we have seen recently.

Zoran Mamdami, new mayor of New York, a loud and proud democratic socialist, joins the workers of New York to fill potholes, haul and shovel snow, collect garbage, ride with the fire department and visit childcare centres and schools in his first 100 days. He has worshipped with Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Hindus and Muslims and talks to New Yorkers about their lives. He has been transparent about how the city is being run and how tax dollars are spent. His message is one of hope that resonates in New York and beyond.

Victor Orban of Hungary was soundly defeated by Peter Magyar, a centre-right politician who plans to restore democratic standards and Hungary's place in the European Union. What Orban was doing in Hungary was studied by the architects of MAGA Project 2025 in the US, so seeing his regime topple so resoundingly is a hopeful sign on the world stage.

Canada's ties with allies, especially the European Union, continue to strengthen. We often look to European nations as excellent examples of democratic socialist ideals we would like to emulate here. For many of us on the left the election of Avi Lewis as the new federal NDP leader is also a hopeful sign, although there is lots of work to be done to rebuild a third party which is critical in our multiparty system

And the world watched as Artemis II made its historic journey to the far side of the moon. How could we not fall a little bit in love with those 4 diverse team members? The 'joy train' they shared with us in their many chats with us earthlings over their 10 days in space were so much fun to watch. We saw them laugh and cry together. We saw many examples of positive masculinity and the genuine support they offered one another as they did critical, technical, dangerous work in extremely close quarters. Women's voices figured in many aspects of this space mission. It was a triumph of what happens when diversity, equity and inclusion are truly integral to the work.

The sisterhood of AWH also does wonderful things. We work hard and we bring hope with what we do! We need to remember to celebrate ourselves and each other. We can be very grateful to be doing this work with each other, so often bravely going where others fear to tread. Have a wonderful summer –

Maureen Weinberger, AWH Co-Chair

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN HALTON PROUDLY PRESENTS

HALTON

MEIDAS CANADA NETWORK

A limited number of underwaged tickets are available

An evening with
CHARLIE ANGUS

Building Solidarity & Community

JUNE 17th
7 - 9 PM
Doors open 6 PM
Charlie speaks 7 pm

\$25 general admission

UNIFOR LOCAL 707
475 North Service Rd E
OAKVILLE

MEIDAS CANADA
RESISTANCE TOUR

June 17th Get your ticket to meet Charlie Angus

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/building-solidarity-community-w-charlie-angus-halton-tickets-1978659509858?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

JUNE is NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

It is a time to reflect on the stories, traditions, and resilience that have carried Indigenous Peoples forward for generations. We can do this with the help of our own [Grandmother's Voice](#). The month culminates with National Indigenous Peoples Day, Sunday June 21, 2026 with many local events.

We start this recognition in May with the acknowledgement of Red Dress Day, May 5th

Red Dress Day is a National Day of Awareness in Canada dedicated to honouring the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit+ people, and supporting survivors and their families. The day was inspired by Métis artist Jaime Black, who helped launch the Red Dress Movement, where red dresses are displayed in public spaces to symbolize the pain, loss, and ongoing advocacy for justice.



Elizabeth Rennie wrote: On May 5, we honour Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people. We are proud to partner with Grandmother's Voice in their work to amplify Indigenous voices and support safer, stronger communities.

This day is about more than awareness. It is about truth, reflection, and action

Indigenous women and girls continue to face disproportionate violence, rooted in systems that have not always protected or supported them.

Recognizing this day means acknowledging those realities and committing to change.

Today, we remember those who are missing and those whose lives were taken. We honour their families and communities.

And we commit to being part of a future where Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people are safe, seen, and supported.



Jodie Harbour of **Grandmothers Voice** wrote:

Today we honour all those whose lives have been cut short by the ongoing impacts of colonial violence not only by recognizing this day, but by listening, learning, and standing in solidarity every day with the Indigenous families and communities calling for justice for their loved ones.

This includes the MMIWG2S+ National Summit hosted by the MMIWG2S+ Urban Indigenous Action Group, an annual gathering we support to address this urgent and ongoing crisis with Indigenous leaders, frontline service providers, survivors, and many others. The summit is underway for the third year in a row, working to strengthen collaboration and advocacy to advance justice, safety, and equity for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities gather and advocate for MMIWG2S+ throughout the entirety of the year. This is about much more than today — it's an everyday commitment to show up in the ways we can with care, respect, and determination.

MAY HAPPENINGS



This community runs on kindness.

Hon. Karina Gould's 2026 Volunteer Appreciation Awards

Advancement of Women Halton was delighted to nominate Elizabeth Rennie for the Volunteer Appreciation Award.

In 2006 Elizabeth Rennie started the Ubuntu Grandwomen, the Burlington group supporting the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign for African grandmothers raising grandchildren orphaned by AIDS. She chaired meetings for many years, organized fund-raising events, and in 2010 she represented Canada with others at the Stephen Lewis Foundation First International Grandmothers Gathering in

Eswatini. Elizabeth organizes the annual Candlelight Vigil at Burlington Town Hall for the UN Orange the World Campaign.

Elizabeth was also past President, CFUW Burlington Elizabeth, started their Circle of Care for members as well as co-hosting AWH's first Democracy Café.

Congratulations to Elizabeth Rennie on receiving a Volunteer Award from Burlington MP Karina Gould. So well deserved!

COMING IN JUNE

June 6



On Saturday, June 6, from 11 am to 12:30, **Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet (GASP)**, in coordination with Seniors for Climate, will be hosting a pop up Environment Week event, **Earth Walk and Talk**, in Centennial Park (in front of Central Library) with speeches, songs, games and activities.

June 7



Join CCAH on **Sunday, June 7**, from **1:30 PM to 3:00 PM** at the QEPCCC Black Box Theatre for a vibrant spring concert celebrating Caribbean music from across the islands. Featuring professional artists Susan Grogan (Susan G.) and Roger Gibbs alongside the CCAH inhouse Steel Band and Caribbean Acoustic Community Ensemble, this lively showcase will include original pieces and beloved calypso favourites, with light refreshments served for a full afternoon in the Caribbean.

June 23



Burlington Ubuntu Grandwomen is in the midst of planning a celebration for the 20th Anniversary, to be held on June 23rd. We plan to hold a tea party; to view Meg French's video tribute in honour of Stephen Lewis, and a new video from Elizabeth Rennie, the founder of our the Burlington Ubuntu Grandwomen, talking about our work since inception in 2006, and a power point of photos of events held over the past 20 years. We will also have display boards with more information and posters, plus the albums from our archives.

June 27



Celebrate the World in One Place
Join us for our Multiculturalism Day!

Experience the beauty of diversity at the **HMC Multiculturalism Day**, a vibrant, family-friendly event open to the public and free! On Saturday, June 27, 2026, from 12 PM to 4 PM, visit Sherwood Forest Park in Burlington, 5270 Fairview St., Burlington, ON for an afternoon filled with culture, connection, and community spirit.

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN HALTON IN ACTION



Federal Budget Brief 2026

AWH along with many others responded to the consultations from the Federal Committee on Finance concerning the 2026 federal Budget.

Our recommendations were:

RECOMMENDATION #1 Recognize that the care and the care economy is the foundation and is what makes all other jobs possible.

RECOMMENDATION #2 Increase funding to the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) to ensure targets are met and the economy can prosper.

RECOMMENDATION #3 Support for paid and unpaid caregiving as stated in the [National Caregiving Strategy for Canada](#) with its pillars concerning support for the care workforce, for unpaid caregivers in work, education and for those no longer able to work, as well as financial support for care recipients.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Continue to fund, including with increases, resources necessary to cope with, and find solutions to, the epidemic of gender-based violence through the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.

RECOMMENDATION #5: Continue to fund, with stability, non-profit social service agencies including those funding by Women and Gender Equality Canada.



Follow up on the Sectoral Table on the Care Economy

In both of the Budget briefs AWH has commented on the Sectoral Table on the Care Economy. We were then wondering what had happened to it and reached out to colleagues.

Instead we found this:

Six [workforce alliances](#) are being formed. These alliances will focus on six priority areas, bringing together industry leaders, workers, unions and training institutions with the goal to build a skilled and adaptable workforce. The six priority areas are: advanced manufacturing, **care economy**, energy and electricity, housing and construction, mining and minerals, transportation and supply chains.

The care economy alliance will focus on the workforce needed to support Canada's caregiving sector by enhancing recruitment, improving retention and supporting necessary upskilling.

ISSUES & NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS and PARTNERS

Artificial Intelligence

Council of Canadians

On Friday May 22, they gathered—researchers, labour organizers, environmental groups, Indigenous leaders, tech workers, grassroots activists opposing data centres; about 270 individuals all together. The occasion was the Civil Society Summit on the AI Industry, convened by the Council of Canadians to confront the unprecedented convergence of money, political power and technological awe that a handful of techno-oligarchs control.

For the [recap and further information](#)

Child Care

Child Care Now

There are recent signals that the federal government may be stepping back from its commitment to \$10/day child care. Morna Ballantyne, Executive Director of Child Care Now, [explains why this would be a huge mistake](#).

Food Insecurity

Gayle Kabbash, an AWH member, writes: **Burlington Food Bank** is run by dedicated staff and volunteers. Our mission is to build food security in Burlington by providing access to fresh and nutritious food with dignity and kindness. We are grateful for the many donors, volunteers, and partners who support our mission. Without the commitment and passion of our community, we could not do this important work of putting food on our neighbours' tables.

Burlington Food Bank has extended services and support to many local Churches and other community groups to maximize our reach to those who need food support. We have also extended our hours of operation to include Saturdays from 9-12 pm to provide our neighbours with another day to access food. We not only provide food support but also connect our neighbours with other resources and programs in Burlington.

If you are interested in helping out with our community gardens, volunteering at Burlington Food Bank, or donating funds or food items, please visit our website at <https://burlingtonfoodbank.ca/>

Social Assistance



The most recent Community Data Watch with **Community Development Halton** reported on recent trends in [Social Assistance recipients in Halton Region](#).

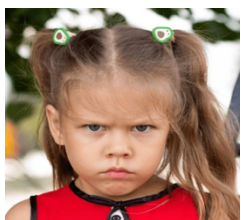
The news is eye-opening:

Between 2018 and 2023, the number of recipients in Halton showed notable shifts:

- Non-family persons, who make up the largest share of recipients, rose from 4,790 in 2018 to 5,640 in 2022 (+17.7%), before falling to 5,440 in 2023.
- Couple-parent families receiving social assistance rose from 3,960 in 2018 to 4,780 in 2023, an overall increase of approximately 20.7%.
- Lone-parent families increased modestly from 2,160 in 2018 to 2,350 in 2023, representing steady but slower growth (+8.8%).

For more information please see the report, [Social Assistance Recipients in Halton Region](#).

INFORMATION FROM ALLIES



Child Care

In the Globe and Mail, columnist Dave McGinn described the \$10-a-day national childcare plan as “very unruly 5 year old. “

Many of the goals that were supposed to have been reached by now have not been.

- There are fewer spaces than were promised and although fees have dropped significantly, they haven't hit \$10 a day in some of Canada's biggest provinces.
- There is also a severe shortage of early childhood educators across the country, with an estimated 10,000 needed in Ontario alone by the end of this year.
- There are fewer low income families accessing affordable care now than before the \$10 a day program was introduced. Solving these problems will require much more investment.

As the data shows, the average cost of child-care in Ontario is \$37 a day, and 0.1% of licensed day care centres in our province charge \$10 a day or less

Caregiving

Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence

2.25 million Canadian women over the age of 50 are caregivers. Our policy and government relations director, James Janeiro, gave evidence at the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women (FEWO) about the significant challenges these women face, including financial strain and insufficient support. It's time for the federal government to step up with meaningful financial support, starting with making the Canada Caregiver Credit refundable.

Civic Resilience

Equal Voice

On April 23, 2026, the Interim Executive Director, Lindsay Brumwell, appeared before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) to testify as part of its study on civic resilience in Canada.

Civic resilience comes down to a simple but urgent question: do Canadians believe our democratic institutions are worth participating in?

Lindsay called on the committee to act on three fronts:

- invest in public life leadership development,
- recognize online harassment as a genuine democratic barrier, and
- strengthen data collection on Canadian representation and participation trends.

Read Lindsay's statement [here](#).

Disability – without Poverty



A group of more than 90 disability and mental health organizations are calling on Parliament to permanently halt the planned expansion of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) scheduled to take effect on March 17, 2027.

The organizations are calling for the government to repeal the section of Canada's MAiD law that establishes a timeline for legalization, commonly referred to as the "sunset clause." Acting on this recommendation would result in a permanent exclusion of mental illness as a sole underlying condition for MAiD.

Their [letter](#)

Disability Tax Credit

Canada/Child Disability Benefit payments are now exempt from the income calculation under the Income Tax Act, and a one-time \$150 supplemental payment to offset the cost of applying for or renewing the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) has been authorized. [Read more](#)

DTC eligibility is the gateway to several other supports, including the CDB, the Child Disability Benefit, and the Registered Disability Savings Plan. The application process has long been a source of friction.

The proposed changes in the 2026 Spring Economic Update include streamlining the application process, reducing paperwork, and expanding eligibility. Also:

1. A streamlined path for certain long-lasting medical conditions.
2. A wider list of certifying practitioners.
3. Recognition of provincial and territorial public guardians and trustees.

This progress reflects the sustained advocacy from the disability and caregiving community to make the system simpler and more accessible.

[Read more](#)



**disability
without
poverty**

Deadline Extended: Review Panel on the Lack of Accessible Housing in Canada to June 22, 2026

DWP has submitted a brief to highlight the barriers disabled people face in accessing safe, affordable, and accessible housing. You can [find our submission](#) here on our website:

Health Care

Ontario Health Coalition

Thurs May 28 at 12 p.m. noon in Toronto: protesters gathered outside Union Station for a rally then marched up to Queen's Park for a giant protest and to make a show of strength that is commensurate to the threat of losing our public hospitals to privatization. Ontarians came in on trains from all over the province.

Housing and Homelessness

Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH)

Our federal budget submission calls for three urgent priorities:

- Renew the National Housing Strategy.
- Negotiate a Canada Housing Accord between federal and provincial/territorial governments.
- Build a stronger housing safety net to reduce homelessness.

Here's the full [pre-budget submission](#)

International

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Federal cuts to international aid signal the end of an era. Former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson’s vision was for Canada to be known as the “helpful fixer” on the global stage—but federal cuts threaten to dismantle that legacy by moving away from peacekeeping to focus on trade and defence, according to CCPA Senior Economist David Macdonald.

NEWS FROM LOCAL POLITICIANS and LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Municipal Elections

Elections will be held on October 26, 2026.

Please note Following the adoption of the *Better Regional Governance Act, 2026*, the Halton Regional Chair is now a Provincially appointed position and will not appear on the ballot.

For [more information](#)

From Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP Oakville – North Burlington



Advancing Awareness and Care for Rare Diseases

It was a pleasure to meet with Riham Badawy, CEO and Co-Founder of ALD Hope, to discuss the realities faced by individuals and families living with rare diseases.

Our 2026 Budget follows our government's plan to Protect Ontario. Some of the highlights are significant funding increases for healthcare, primary health, education and autism support, \$101.2 billion healthcare investment, not including a massive \$64 billion commitment over the next decade will support more than 50 hospital projects and add 3,000 new beds across the province and over \$55 billion of education investments (K-12 and post-secondary)

From Hon. Stephen Crawford MPP Oakville

Ontario Investing \$1.6 Billion to Build and Expand Schools Across Ontario that means 29,000 new student spaces, 1,900+ child care spaces and modern classrooms for growing communities

Primary Care Action Plan

More than 10,000 residents across Oakville, Halton Hills, and Milton who do not currently have a family doctor will soon have new opportunities to connect to primary care, following a \$4.1-million provincial investment in local, team-based health care.

The funding announced as part of Ontario's Primary Care Action Plan will support the expansion of Interprofessional Primary Care Teams (IPCTs) across the Halton community.

The initiative is being co-ordinated through the [Connected Care Halton Ontario Health Team](#) (CCHOHT) in partnership with local primary care and community organizations.



Pictured are Michele Sparling, chair of the Connected Care Halton Ontario Health Team's Patient, Family, Caregiver Advisory Committee, Thom Burger, OakMed Family Health Team, Gina Mannella, Prime Care Family Health Team, Milton MPP Zee Hamid, Oakville North-Burlington MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos, Oakville Mayor Rob Burton, CCHOHT ED Zoe Dawe, Michael Dickin, CEO Dorval Medical Associates Family Health Team, Dr. Kristianna Martiniuk, PCN clinical lead with CCHOHT, Heather McAlpine ED Halton Hills Family Health Team, Mateen Amjad, lead, integrated population health with CCHOHT, and Christina Jabalee, ED Support House.

FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The federal government recently announced a new \$6 billion plan to support training and apprentices for **skilled trades workers**. Jim Stanford discussed the program in a [one-hour feature on CBC Radio's Just Asking](#). He stressed the need for skilled trades apprentices and workers to be protected by union representation and strong labour standards, including through conditions attached to publicly-funded construction projects. And he reminded listeners that many other segments of the labour market face staff shortages, and also need support from training programs and better wages—including workers in the [child care sector](#).

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Spokes Autism Services Celebrates Mother's Day



Spokes Autism Services from Burlington brought together mothers of children with autism and developmental disabilities for a meaningful evening of connection, appreciation and recognition. These women demonstrate extraordinary strength, resilience and unwavering care every day.

From *The Walrus*

\$28,000 a year is what many senior women have to live on. You can find the shocking article [here](#)

And now for some good news!

Raj is 73. After a health diagnosis forced him to leave the job he held for more than 10 years, he lost his income and then his home. Today he has his own apartment, his own space and a key to the front door. Raj's story is one of many made possible by a new 52 unit supportive housing development in Halton Region.

Read the [full story here](#) – it really is quite inspiring!

OUR MEMBERS

grandmothers
Advocacy Network



**Community
Development
Halton**



SAVIS
of Halton



**Fair Representation
Vote équitabile
Canada au Canada**



THRIVE
counselling



Burlington



**THE COUNCIL
OF CANADIANS** PEOPLE.
PLANET.
DEMOCRACY.



ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN HALTON
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