



BPW Bowmanville Bulletin

September 2026

Advocacy is the act of supporting, promoting or arguing in favour of a cause, policy, idea, or group. It's about using your voice — individually or collectively — to influence decisions, raise awareness, or create change. This is what BPW is all about! Let's continue our work and focus in 2026 to continue to make this world a better place for women, girls and their families!

June Social Meeting

BPW Bowmanville celebrated the end of the BPW year with a BBQ and delicious strawberry shortcake at Judy's house. We showed off our BPW swag and celebrated Val's upcoming retirement. A great start to the summer!



BPW Ontario Virtual Conference, June 25-27, 2026 **Report by Pamela Cooper**

The virtual conference went well with all resolutions passed. There was only one amendment and it was to our BPW Bowmanville resolution. We took out the reference to the municipal election in October as the provincial government is in recess until after the election. Timing is something to note for future – resolutions are crafted in February but do not go to the government until fall of that year.

Anne Harvey kept us moving through the morning agenda in a timely manner until we got to the presentation by Public Relations VP Cecilia Omole. Her presentation was phenomenal with lots of information and I encourage everyone to listen to the recording once it is available. Cecilia publishes a quarterly newsletter called “Equal Edit”, available on the BPW Ontario website. It is a news brief of curated insights on gender equality, governance and influence. Cecelia is also interested in hosting some public forum webinars helping us to follow up on resolutions – exactly what we discussed at our social! There was a lot of wonderful discussion from her presentation which took us to lunch.

After the break we heard from Chantel Fraser, who spoke about the “Safe Space Committee” for BPW Ontario. Chantel, along with Katheryn Munn and Toby Toth, will lead a conversation on September 15th with the goal of improving inclusivity within our clubs.

The guest speaker took us through some laughter yoga in which we all practised and enjoyed laughing. 🤔

Anne spoke passionately about wanting to connect with all members and so she will continue her monthly “Coffee with the President” in the fall. Her homework for us included:

1. Wanting to know why we joined BPW
2. Concerns about BPW for BPW’s attention
3. Wanting members to “dig deep” into the wealth of knowledge and community that BPW offers.
4. Know that every membership form is reviewed by her. She wants to know about our interests and strengths.
5. A reminder that membership is not just our local club. It is membership to provincial, national and international clubs. Use it!
6. Two clubs are trying a lower cost membership that allows women to come and participate and see what we’re all about without voting privileges. This is not an official BPW ruling but so far both clubs have had good success from it with most women becoming full members at the end. (I’m interested in Bowmanville’s thoughts.)

Report on BPW Canada National Convention in Regina, August 12-16

Report by Sheila Crook

WOW – What a Busy BPW Summer!
Following the BPW Ontario Virtual AGM and just before the NAC Regional Conference, I had the honour to represent BPW Bowmanville as your delegate at the 50th BPW Canada National Convention in Saskatchewan. Congratulations to BPW Bowmanville member Pat Keays for being elected as BPW Canada Treasurer for the 2026-2028 term.

From the opening reception at the Skye Café and Bistro, through to the business meetings, resolutions and by-law debate and discussion, the thought-



provoking speakers, celebratory Gala dinner and guided tours of Moose Jaw, attendees were immersed in a spectacular program to Connect! Celebrate! Advocate! Educate!

It was the opportunity to reconnect with longtime friends, meet many new women from across the country and connect with International Young BPW Representative, Izadora Letchacoski from Brazil. The convention made clear the relevance of BPW Canada in supporting members in clubs across our country working to improve the lives of women and their families today and for future generations.

Resolutions – Be the Voice... Be the Change...
Be the Difference

Eight Resolutions and two Commendations were presented and carried by the delegation.

The resolutions will be incorporated into a brief to be presented to the government of Canada and appropriate ministries. Clubs are also encouraged to meet and share it with their Members of Parliament. This intentional relationship-building across all political leaning is essential to advance our goal to see relevant legislation and policy development bring about meaningful outcomes in the following areas for all Canadians.



Resolutions:

- Closing Persistent Pay Gaps to Regulate Social Media Platforms
- Implementing Stronger Digital Laws to Regulate Social Media Platforms
- Closing the Gaps in Canada's Response to Image-Based Sexual Abuse
- Adding Non-state Torture to the Criminal Code of Canada
- Ending Human Trafficking in Canada: From Strategy to Accountability
- Ensuring Dignity and Choice Through Advance Requests for Medical Assistance in Dying
- Closing Gaps in Canada's Sexual Assault Response System
- Advancing Equitable Women's Health Through a National Framework for Women's Health Centres of Excellence

Two Commendations recognizing outstanding leadership and contributions to advancing opportunities for women:

- Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT)
- Louise Champoux-Paillé

I have shared a more extensive report on the Convention with BPW Bowmanville members that provides more information, including links to presentations and resources.

International NAC Regional Conference in Niagara Falls, August 23-26 Report by Pamela Cooper

The North America & Caribbean conference was attended by Pamela, Tina, and Val, while Sheila provided tech support and also stepped in at the last minute when one of the presenters had to cancel.



On Sunday afternoon, before the official conference began, we enjoyed an interactive symposium led by Young BPW member Deanza Walwyn-Bowrin. While we work-shopped typical BPW topics, one message stood out. “Youth are not the future – they are the present. The children in our elementary schools are the future.” Bringing together women of all ages and places allowed for rich discussions and gave us the opportunity to hear perspectives from our Young BPW members as well as valuable insight into different cultural perspectives. Sheila’s interactive and dynamic presentation revisited many of the concepts from our 75th anniversary theme focusing on present to future, and was very well received. Other guest speakers talked about their experiences being women in banking, in the Canadian military and as a female pilot. The conference had representatives from 17 countries in attendance and many members of the international executive were present, including representatives from Switzerland, Germany, Ireland, Brazil, Estonia, and Nepal. Each gave a short presentation about their international roles and shared how meaningful their involvement with BPW has been.

Meeting, connecting, and engaging with such a wide breadth of experience, knowledge, and culture was just as important as the formal presentations, if not more so. Our BPW Bowmanville members were personally invited to several countries to participate in upcoming events and made wonderful new friendships along the way. The commitment of those in attendance was truly impressive, especially considering that many had travelled a long way to be there for the three-day conference.

Of course, the event wasn't all work! There was plenty of time for great socializing as well. On the first evening, a gala featured delicious food and cultural presentations, including Norma's Canadian contribution of a couple of traditional folk songs. To the surprise of the Canadians, it seemed that the entire room knew "Alouette"! However, the Caribbean dancing from St. Kitts, and the "clowns", may have been the hit of the night.

On our final evening, we were bused along a scenic route past the Falls and along the Niagara River to Caroline Cellars Winery, where we tasted four wines (and perhaps purchased a few bottles!) and enjoyed an exceptional meal. Before we knew it, we were hugging and saying our goodbyes.



Although the conference had come to an end, our Bowmanville women were already looking forward to sharing the experience with the rest of the club. There may even have been a couple of hours spent on a patio over sangria, where some very productive brainstorming took place for an upcoming fundraiser and education night for our club. Stay tuned for details!

Member Spotlight: Pat Keays

I have been a member of BPW since 1994. I was originally a member of BPW Durham and now BPW Bowmanville. While a member of BPW Durham, I held the positions of: Young BPW, International, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Affairs, Vice President, President and Past President. I was also Treasurer for the Durham branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses while they were fundraising and lobbying to build a Hospice in Durham Region.



Outside of BPW, I have had a varied working career. Currently, I am a bookkeeper at Murphy & Chung Professional Corporation, a small Canadian accounting firm that supports small to medium-sized Canadian organizations, both profit and not-for-profit.

Thanks to BPW, I received the training, support and mentorship to pursue and obtain my Teaching and Training Adults Certification from Durham College. With that, I enjoyed a career as a corporate trainer working locally and abroad, teaching customer service, computer software and WSIB Certified Safety Training. My customer service experience ranges from flea markets to call centres to Home Depot, where I rented tools to consumers and contractors.

Outside of BPW, I enjoy gardening, photography, doing most of my own repairs and maintenance around the house and relaxing with my kitty Mochi. For the past 15 years, I've been a member of another group of amazing women – Forest Brook Blazing Paddles Dragon

Boat Team. We practice from the end of April to August and compete at three different regattas, often coming home with medals!

I live on my own and don't have kids, but I have a close and loving family. We actually enjoy spending time together! The bonus: my niece with her hubby and her 18-month-old baby (and another baby on the way) live directly across the street.

Over my 30-plus years as a BPW member, my life has changed in many ways. I've gone from being married to single, changed careers, and experienced many personal and professional milestones. Through it all, one thing has remained constant: the support, encouragement, and friendship I've received from my BPW sisters.

Upcoming BPW (and Other Important) Events

Coffee Chats with the BPW Ontario President, Anne Harvey

Second Saturday of the month, 9am to 10am, All BPW Ontario members welcome.

Next coffee chats are on **September 12** and **October 10**. Register once at: <https://us.list-manage.com/156nbFqxXhU?e=69d1347bd0&c2id=a8948d370b835c5f93e6dcd1a8dc33fd>

BPW Presentation “Growing your Club: Creating communities people want to be part of” by Erin Davis. Follow-up Zoom session on **Friday, October 16**, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83421271461?pwd=je5MlJQ3BHSCYfUxIl7GkXrthadMb.1>

Meeting chat link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/jc/83421271461>

Meeting ID: 834 2127 1461 – Pass code: 245753

Women and Money: Economic Security in Uncertain Times, led by Maryam Monsef, Founder & CEO of Onward. **Tuesday, September 22**, from 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. at the Market Hall Performing Arts Centre in Peterborough. Tickets are \$39.95 + HST and are available through [Eventbrite](#). The event will feature three engaging panels exploring Women and Housing, Women and Care, and Barriers to Accessing Capital, and a networking lunch.

Ontario Municipal Election

The next municipal election will be held **Monday, October 26, 2026**. Our local government makes decisions that affect us on a daily basis. Be sure to vote!

Our own BPW member Corinna Traill is running for re-election in Ward 3 in Clarington.

Our October Meeting

BPW Bowmanville's next meeting is on **Tuesday, October 27**, location yet to be determined. The September meeting was cancelled because many of our Executive are out of the country. Lots of travel news to be shared when we get together!

Bulletin Editor:

Mary-Anne Pietrusiak