



NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE
EMPOWERING WOMEN BY PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT TO EXPLORE THEIR NEEDS

feminist DISPATCH



The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre is a non-profit, community-based feminist organization in Thunder Bay, Ontario. We work with self-identified women to increase their access to knowledge, skills and resources so they can make informed choices.



If you're new to the Dispatch, or missed a few issues, past issues are archived on our [website](#).

February is Black History Month

In Canada, we celebrate **Black History Month** each February because Jean Augustine, the first African Canadian woman elected to Parliament, made a motion in 1995 that passed unanimously. At the Women's Centre, we are committed to accountable anti-racism, to listening and learning from people who are the experts of their own experiences, and to directing our privilege and power toward an equitable future.

This year's theme, "**30 Years of Black History Month: Honouring Black Brilliance Across Generations — From Nation Builders to Tomorrow's Visionaries**", celebrates three decades

of Black History Month in Canada and recognizes the enduring legacy of Black Canadians, whose leadership, creativity, innovation and resilience have shaped our past, continue to influence our present, and will inspire future generations.

Some of the history of Black Women’s activism and advocacy in Canada:

- [Black Women in the Women’s Movement](#) (*RiseUp Feminist Archive*)
- [Black Feminist Activism in the 20th Century](#) (*Heritage Toronto, 2024*)
- [The legacy and impact of Black Canadian women’s organizations](#) (*Canadian Heritage, 2023*)

Articles, Essays, Films, Podcasts & Interviews

- [Being Black in Canada](#), a CBC project of stories about the experiences of Black Canadians - from anti-Black racism to success stories within the Black community (*CBC Canada, 2026*)
- [Black History Month: How to Make February Matter](#) (*Dr. Cheryl Thompson, 2024*)
- [Celebrating Black Joy Through Storytelling](#) (*The Agenda with Steve Paikin, February 15, 2022*)
- [Writing Myself into Existence: An Essay on the Erasure of Black Indigenous Identity in Canadian Education](#) (*Etanda Arden, The Yellowhead Institute, January 28, 2021*)
- [Q&A: Author Robyn Maynard on Anti-Black Racism, Misogyny, and Policing in Canada](#) (*Canadian Women's Foundation, 2018*)



Roots & Routes: Black History Month Fundraising Dinner & Gala

The [Sisters for Canadian Black Community](#) & [Northwest Black Collective](#) present **Roots & Routes: Black History Month Fundraising Dinner & Gala 2026** on Saturday, February 21st at 5pm at the Moose Hall (434 Fort William Road). Prepare for a delicious dinner featuring African and Caribbean staples, performances throughout the evening, an homage to Black history in Thunder Bay, a keynote address, and a dance afterparty with DJ Supa!

[Get your tickets today!](#)

Sisters for Canadian Black Community is a charitable organization whose mission is to work with community members to improve, encourage, and enrich the lives of people with African heritage through cultural activities. They also help new immigrants to Thunder Bay with

housing, medical care, legal assistance, development of language and communication skills, citizenship and sponsorship of family members, and welfare concerns.

Norwest Black Collective is a Black-led, Black-focused organization with a mission to join communities as partners in strengthening the long-term sustainability and enrichment of the Black community and diaspora in Northwestern Ontario.

— “ —

There is no such thing as a
single-issue struggle because
we do not live single-issue lives.

Audre Lorde, “Learning from the 60s” (1982)

— ” —

“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives”

Read the full speech delivered by Audre Lorde at Harvard in 1982: [“Learning from the 60s”](#)

Events & Programming updates from NOWC

Career Opportunity at the NOWC

Northwestern Ontario Women’s Centre is currently seeking applicants for a 12 month, full-time contract in the position of Gender Based Violence Navigation Advocate

Northwestern Ontario Women’s Centre provides frontline advocacy, support and information to local and regional self identified women experiencing violence, poverty, human rights concerns or problems with access to justice, legal or administrative systems.

The GBV Navigator ‘s role includes the coordination of our cross sectoral High Risk Protocol for women who face imminent harm from intimate partners. This community-based advocate will work with women, in collaboration with legal and social sectors to ensure they have appropriate support, referrals, and ongoing, cross sectoral risk assessment and effective safety planning that is trauma informed, considers sociocultural factors and is culturally safe.

A full job description is available on our [‘Careers’ page](#) of our website - [Deadline to apply is February 9th.](#)

To Apply: please send resume and cover letter (applications without a dedicated cover letter will not be considered) to **Hiring Committee at ed@nwowc.org.**



International Women's Day

Save the Date: IWD Flag Raising

Join us at City Hall on **Thursday, March 5th** to raise the flag! Opening remarks at 10am (speaker TBD). Flag will be raised around 10:30am. Please feel welcome to stay for light refreshments following the flag raising.



At the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, we believe survivors of sexual violence.

We are partnering with Faye Peterson House to offer a 6-part sexual violence education series. Sessions are open to self-identified women and girls (ages 18+) and will take place once a month from **6:30-8 pm at the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre (278 Bay St, Suite #201).**

Join us on **Wednesday, February 4th** for our next monthly sexual violence education session: Intimate Partner Sexual Violence, where we will discuss and unpack coercive sex and sexual violence in intimate relationships. We are excited to have guest speaker Carolynne Kreuger, Domestic Violence Crown Attorney with MAG join us.

With guest speaker:

**Carolynne Kreuger,
Domestic Violence Crown Attorney
with the Ministry of Attorney General**

Attendance at all sessions is not required.
Bus tickets and light refreshments provided. To register, please
contact Gwen O'Reilly - ed@nwowc.org / 807-345-7802



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UPCOMING SESSIONS THIS NEW YEAR:

- **February 4, 2026 - Intimate Partner Sexual Violence** - Unpacking coercive sex and sexual violence in intimate relationships
- **March 4, 2026 - Trauma in your body** - Exploring mindful movement to foster acceptance and growth

Attendance at all sessions is not required. Bus tickets and light refreshments provided.

To register, please contact Gwen at ed@nwowc.org



Become a NOWC Sustaining Donor

For 2026, the NOWC has a goal of securing 10 new monthly donors! The first ten new monthly donors will receive a beautiful pin hand-crafted by local artisan Feral Wife (featured in the photo!)

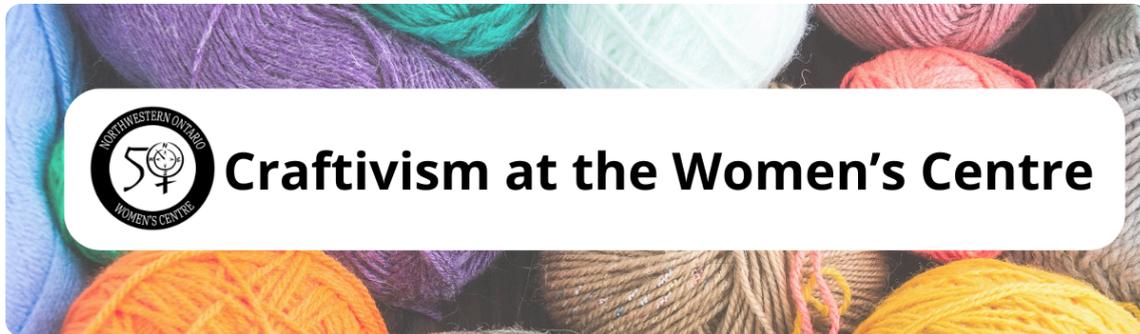
Become a Sustaining Donor today!

Why consider becoming a monthly or sustaining donor?

By giving a small amount each month, you help create a consistent source of revenue that allows us to respond quickly to requests from women using the Centre, such as hygiene supplies, water bottles,

bus passes, grocery cards, Good Food Coupons, winter gloves/hats. Monthly support also allows us to meet our increased rent expense and other costs associated with moving, plan specific programs, keep our resource centre updated, and build our LU Bursary fund.

For more information on how to set up a monthly Donation through Canada Helps or by PAD through your financial institution, visit our ['Donate' page](#) or contact Lori at admin@nwowc.org to arrange

A poster for a 'Work on the WIPs Gathering'. The central text is surrounded by a decorative border of various craft-related icons such as scissors, yarn, fabric, and sewing tools. At the top center of the poster is the NOWC logo and the text 'NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE' and 'EMPOWERING WOMEN BY PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT TO EXPLORE THEIR NEEDS'. Below this, the main title 'WORK ON THE WIPs GATHERING!' is written in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. Underneath the title, the event details are provided: 'Join us Feb 5th from 1-4pm at the NOWC (278 Bay St, Suite 201)'. A line of text encourages attendees to bring their work in progress: 'Bring any WIP (work in progress) project you are currently working on for this Craft-ernoon!'. At the bottom, it says 'Drop in or contact Lori to RSVP admin@nwowc.org'.

Working on the WIPs: Come craft together!

Join us for a WORK ON THE WIPs Craftivism Gathering on **Thursday, February 5th from 1-4pm at the at the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre (278 Bay St, Suite 201 – please note we have moved!)** You are welcome to bring any WIP (work in progress) project you are currently working on.

Refreshments, snacks, and good company provided! Please note we are not providing supplies for projects, just a space to work in community :) If you are interested in joining virtually, please touch base with Lori for Zoom details!

For information on this crafting event and more, contact Lori at admin@nwowc.org or by phone at 807-935-8043



February Orders

ORDER your GFB from your host site by **February 9th**
 PICK UP from your host site on **February 18th**

Order Online

With a new year, we have a the 2026 GFB Order schedule available!

Get your 2026 Order schedule

2026 Order Schedule		FIND US ONLINE!	
<p>Website: www.goodfoodbox.org Facebook: www.facebook.com/goodfoodbox Contact Us: info@goodfoodbox.org Call 802-542-7675 or email: info@goodfoodbox.org</p>			
<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by Jan 12th to pick up your box on the 1st</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>Order by Feb 9th to pick up your box on the 18th</p>	<p>JULY</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by July 6th to pick up your box on the 15th</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by Aug 16th to pick up your box on the 16th</p>
<p>MARCH</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by Mar 6th to pick up your box on the 16th</p>	<p>APRIL</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Order by Apr 6th to pick up your box on the 15th</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Order by Sept 7th to pick up your box on the 16th</p>	<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by Oct 15th to pick up your box on the 25th</p>
<p>MAY</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by May 11th to pick up your box on the 20th</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Order by June 8th to pick up your box on the 17th</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Order by Nov 6th to pick up your box on the 16th</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Order by Dec 7th to pick up your box on the 16th</p>



Treat Yourself: Valentine's Gift Box FEBRUARY FUNDRAISER

February means that it's time to kick off our local box fundraising season with our **TREAT YOURSELF: VALENTINE'S GIFT BOX FEBRUARY FUNDRAISER**. This fundraising box features a combination of locally-sourced tasty treats and handmade goods, made by our favourite local makers, producers, and artists!

This year's FEBRUARY Fundraising Box features:

- an essential oil lavender-scented candle from local lavender grower, [Shades of Lavender](#)
- an assortment of decadent cookies & chocolates from [Petite Marie](#)
- cold-pressed soap, lip balm and shower scrubbie from [3 Trees Soap & Body](#).
- a bag of beets from [Sleepy G Farm](#) plus some fan-favourite recipes
- ...plus a few other surprises inside!

Order your February Fundraiser Box today!

ONLY A FEW BOXES LEFT! BOXES ARE \$62.00 (this price includes a \$20 charitable donation to the Good Food Box Program and a \$2 online processing fee).

Treat yourself, gift it to your valentine, or share it with your friends!

Community Events & Resources

19th Annual Valentine's Day Memorial Walk MMIWGMB2S

FEBRUARY 14TH
12 – 1pm
SOUTHSIDE THRIFT & GIFT
(formerly The Hub Bazaar)
507 VICTORIA AVE. E.



WE WALK TO REMEMBER

For 19 years, this walk has honoured and remembered Sandra Johnson, *who's murder is still unsolved*, along with other **MURDERED & MISSING INDIGENOUS WOMEN & GIRLS, MEN & BOYS, LGBTQ2S**

Please join us as we gather to remember and honour those we have lost.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

CALLING ALL
HAND
DRUMMERS

**AFTER THE GATHERING WE ASK THAT YOU WALK
IN YOUR OWN TIME & SPACE:**

- Walk alone or with others
- Walk anywhere that feels meaningful
- Carry Sandra's name, a loved one's name, a sign, heart, or ribbon

Share YOUR photos, posters, or reflections on the FB event page!

By walking — *even quietly, even briefly* — we keep Sandra's and others' memory present and affirm that they are not forgotten.

This is an act of remembrance and honouring.

The 19th annual Valentine's Day MMIWGB2S+ Memorial Walk is being held on **Saturday, February 14th from 12 - 1pm at Southside Thrift & Gift (formerly The Hub Bazaar) at 507 Victoria Ave E.** Organizers encourage folks to take time to walk together or on their own, to honour the memories of those lost.

Sharon Johnson started the commemorative walk 18 years ago and has been a longtime advocate for the Missing and Murdered, and their families. February 13th marks the anniversary of the death and unsolved murder of Sandra Johnson, 18, fancy shall dancer, who was found on the Neebing McIntyre floodway in 1992.

Community Events

- **February 13th** | Join the Thunder Bay Public Library's **Indigenous Author Series** for a reading with author Quill Christie-Peters from 2-4pm at Brodie Library. Christie-Peters will read from her new book, "On Wholeness: Anishinaabe Pathways to Embodiment and Collective Liberation". **Register today** to join

- **February 14th** | 19th Annual Valentine's Day Memorial Walk MMIWGBM2S (see poster above) from 12-1pm
- **February 21st** | Roots & Routes: Black History Month Fundraising Dinner & Gala 2026 at 5pm in the Moose Hall (ticket info and details shared above)
- **Family Art Days** at the **Thunder Bay Art Gallery**: join on the **first Sunday of each month from 1-4pm** for a FREE fun and creative family art day at the gallery. All Ages and everyone is welcome, and no experience is needed—just bring your imagination and enjoy an inspiring day!
- **Drop-In Beading** at the **Thunder Bay Public Library**: **every 2nd Friday from 1-4pm at Brodie branch** and **every 2nd Tuesday 5:30-7:30pm at the Waverly branch**. Join an inclusive drop-in beading program celebrating Indigenous artistry! All skill levels welcome. Learn, share, and create beautiful beadwork rooted in tradition. All materials provided. No experience needed!

Resources

- **Extended hours are in effect!** The **Care Bus** will be operating from **9:30AM – 9:30PM throughout January & February**. The bus is free for anyone that needs a safe place to stay warm and get around town. You can get in touch with an Outreach Worker during operating hours by calling 807-632-9732.
- **P.A.C.E. Warming Centre** is now open every day: **weekdays from 8am - 8:30pm and weekends from 9am - 8:30pm**.
- Join the **Learning Network's 2026 Virtual Form, "AI and GBV - Harms, Impacts, and Emerging Practices in Prevention and Response"** on **Feb 3rd and 4th from 1-4pm EST**. **Register today** to join practitioners, researchers, and advocates to examine how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is both contributing to gender-based violence (GBV) and reshaping practice across the GBV and allied sectors.
- Join **Chanterelle Alliance** and **Can't Buy my Silence** for a webinar, **"Bill S-232, Cant Buy Silence Act"** on February 18th for 2-3pm EST. **Register today**
- **CLEO Connect** is offering a free online training on building legal help skills for community workers on **Thursday, February 12th from 9:30am to 12pm EST**. **Register today!** Registration is limited to the first 120 registrants. If registration is full, you will be added to the waiting list
- **Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses** reviews mainstream media reports of femicides and shares a snapshot of their research monthly. Their **2024-2025 Mainstream Media Analysis** is now available, additional insights can be found on their [website](#)

Gender Based Violence: We Can Help

Our Gender Based Violence Navigation Advocate provides support for women who are experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) physical and/or sexual violence or coercive control by a partner, family member or acquaintance. Women navigating various court systems may also access court advocacy.

We can help by:

- Ensuring that women who are experiencing or at high risk of gender-based violence have access to ongoing and appropriate support and referrals
- Coordinating with Violence Against Women service providers to ensure that critical information is shared
- Assisting with preparing for court

- Ensuring coordination between legal sectors (criminal, family, immigration etc.)
- Providing court accompaniment and emotional support

This service is intended to enhance the effectiveness of the existing VAW response, not duplicate or replace it. For more information or to make a referral, contact Gwen at ed@nwowc.org or by phone (807) 345-7802.

Sexual Violence Program: Supporting Survivors

To help meet the needs of survivors since the Thunder Bay Sexual Abuse Centre closed, Faye Peterson House has developed a Sexual Violence Program. There are three Sexual Violence Counsellors offering a 20-week individual counselling program.

To access counselling for any kind of sexual violence (recent or past), you can call Faye Peterson House's 24/7 Crisis Line: (807) 345-0450. You do not need to reside at the shelter to access support from Faye Peterson House.



Sexual Violence Program

Our Sexual Violence Program supports self-identified women aged 16+ who have experienced any form of sexual violence in person or online: sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, stalking or sex trafficking.

We aim to provide survivors with:

- a space to be heard, believed, and supported
- legal and systems advocacy, when appropriate
- free supportive counselling and other resources to rebuild their lives from the negative impacts of sexual violence

www.fayepeterson.org



SVP supports available at no cost:

- 24/7 crisis line: (807) 345-0450
- 10-week support groups
- Accompaniments (hospital, police, court), where appropriate
- Advocacy
- Referrals
- Public education
- 20-week individual counselling offered at two locations:
 - Faye Peterson House (807) 345-0450
 - Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre (807) 620-9156

Our SVP is designed to serve the diverse experiences of members of our communities, including, but not limited to, Indigenous/Metis/Inuit, 2-Spirited, non-binary, LGBTQ, Black/racialized, disabled, sex workers, and sex trafficking survivors.



For more details about all of our programs and services, please visit:

www.fayepeterson.org



In partnership with:
Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

www.nwowomenscentre.org



NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE
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Mutual Aid Opportunity

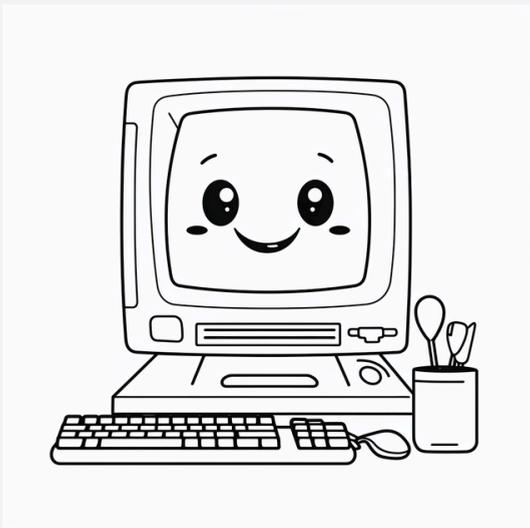


While we continue to advocate for changes to policies and practices that make women disproportionately vulnerable to violence and poverty, we know that access to some basic material items can still be helpful. We also recognize the importance of taking care of one another, and we know that many NOWC supporters might appreciate an opportunity to extend support to women in our community in other ways. Informed by our conversations with women who visit the Centre, these items would be especially helpful lately:

- Bus tickets, such as a **10 Ride Multipass**
- new socks
- Fresh Co. or Tim Hortons gift cards
- mini first aid kits (or packs of Band-Aids)
- toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, lip balm
- menstrual pads (light or regular)
- Poise pads (for incontinence)

If you'd like to donate any of these items, please drop by the Women's Centre (M-Th between 9:30am and 5pm) or get in touch with Steph to make alternate arrangements: communications@nwowc.org.

Computer Resources Available



Women can access a computer or video conferencing at the Women's Centre for:

- Printing forms
- Job Interviews
- Virtual Legal Clinic
- Lawyer's Appointments
- Virtual Court Matters

To book an appointment, please contact Gwen at ed@nwowc.org

Contribute to the Feminist Dispatch!

Submit a photo of your original artwork, a short piece of writing, a helpful resource, or a link to a community event that aligns with our **mission!** All newsletter-related inquiries and submissions can be directed to communications@nwowc.org.

Helping Women Find Their Way Since 1973!

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre relies on government funding and private donations to continue our work. We gratefully acknowledge the support of volunteers, donors, and the Investing in Women's Future Program of the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada, Canadian Women's Foundation, and the Johnson Scholarship Foundation.

Support Our Work

[AAGBV](#) [Advocacy](#) [Good Food Box](#) [Public Education](#) [What's New](#)



Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

278 Bay Street, Suite #201, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1R8

(807) 345-7802 | ed@nwowc.org

www.nwowomenscentre.org



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 Women and Gender Equality Canada / Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada







