

Annual Report

For the Year January 1 to December 31, 2016



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President's Report

The year of record sales. Looking back over the year in the life of Ujamaa Grandmas I see that we have as always had a very full, busy and successful 12 months. Our three main regular sales, the Fabric and Yarn Sale and the Bags Babies and Beyond Sale together with the Bake Sale continue to raise more money every year. In this time of economic downturn that wasn't to be expected but our results show that we are offering our customers excellent quality goods that continue to be in great demand. This was the second year we provided a team to help with the gown distribution for the SAIT convocation for which services we were generously rewarded,

The year of the million dollars. Over ten years ago co-founder of the group Ellen Monaghan was quoted as saying 'I believe we can raise a million dollars for the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF)". I think many who heard that thought it a quite unrealistic goal but of course just before Christmas we were able to announce we had done just that. Ellen was motivated by a passionate desire to help the African Grandmothers who were struggling to raise their orphaned grandchildren and keep their families alive in the midst of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that had sub-Saharan Africa in its grip. She was quickly joined by others who shared her vision and the seemingly unrealistic became an achievable reality. We are now looking forward to working away toward the next million. So much has been achieved by and for the grandmothers of Africa but the scourge of HIV/AIDS is still ravaging their communities and our partnership and support is still vitally important. To keep informed of the situation in Africa and the work of SLF I encourage you to sign up for and read the Grassroots magazine which comes quarterly and visit the website for SLF http://stephenlewisfoundation.org/ and for the Grandmothers Campaign.

The year of SLF 10th Anniversary. Thanks to a hardworking and creative Tenth Anniversary Committee Ujamaa Grandmas participated in many events. In their report you will read about the many ways we joined with the more than 240 Grandmothers' groups across the country to celebrate all SLF has achieved since their inception on 7th March 2006. Again I like to think that Ujamaa Grandmas will continue in their support and commitment to the work of the Foundation for the decade to come.

The year of record membership. At the very last count from the membership coordinator we had exactly 500 members which I believe makes us the largest group in the country. Such growth is remarkable and shows that what we are doing is so good that we are a very attractive group to join. The challenge I see here is, how do we maintain personal contact with each other and keep the caring supportive intimate feeling that is so important in a group? Also, we need to keep exploring ways that can involve and utilise the very varied skills of all our members. Although the majority of our activities are handcraft-based, there are many others who want to contribute in different ways.

Please take time to read the full reports from our committee heads and board members. It is inspiring how much has been planned and acted on during the year. My thanks go as always to all the energetic and productive women that make up our group and make things happen. The reports have been sent to all members and can also be seen on our website.

When I reflect on the talents, experience and wisdom that 500 Calgarian grandmothers and grand*others* can bring to the cause I have no doubt that our next million is indeed very achievable.

Submitted by Alison Longson

Handcraft Committee Report

2016 Committee Members: Joan Benedict, Rose Besler, Dawn Bolger, Leslie Buckle, Sandy Burgess, Patty Cucman, Barb Doll, Susan Johnston, Janice Meeking, Janice McDonald, Karen McManus, Donna Russell, Carol Spring, Glenda Sweetland and Mieke Van Dijk.

The Handcrafts Committee is the support group for UJAMAA GRANDMAS handcrafters. The primary responsibility of the committee is organization and execution of BAGS, BABIES & BEYOND Sale, which was held on October 14 and 15, 2016. The committee supports the efforts of the handcrafters and works to maximize the value of the products that are created for the sale. In order to do this, each year an evaluation is made of what sold in the last sale and what might be a best seller for the next sale. The 2016 sale had slightly less product than in previous years but included a wide diversity of products of exceptional quality. The Sealed Bid Auction was very successful with a good variety of items on offer: lap quilts, handbags and totes, needle felted figures and jewelry. The sale layout was altered this year and the new look provided shoppers and custodians with more room and better visibility of products. The sale was very well attended and very little product remained. Some categories were virtually sold out.

Thanks to the volunteers, handcrafters, and committee members, over \$40,000 was raised.

The committee is comprised of product, yarn and fabric custodians as well as admin roles. Because of the volume of inventory some product lines have multiple custodians. Each custodian team is responsible for the maintenance of an inventory, storing and pricing and post-sale management of the products under their care.

The committee supported members with a variety of workshops and demos. In 2016 a Demo Day was hosted that offered three sewing and three knitting demos. Handcrafters were celebrated and appreciation expressed through door prizes. There was an Art Trading Card exchange so there was an opportunity for every attendee to take something home. Demo Day will be an annual Handcrafts event. Workshops held included two-day handbag, two-day ceramic buttons and needle felting workshop. Demos outside the Demo Day included microwave bowls, and gift bags. In June, the group celebrated International Knit in Public Day at the Millican Ogden Community Centre anniversary celebration.

Fabric Open Houses continued to be popular providing members an opportunity to pick up fabric for sale items and for personal use at Fabric Sale Prices. Kits, fabric, patterns and ideas were available at the gatherings. The Fabric Custodian is the liaison between the Fabric Sale Committee and the Handcraft Committee.

Ten issues of the Handcrafts Monthly Newsletter were provided with product ideas, and committee information. "Sew What" and "Knit Notes" give information about what sells and ideas for products. The Handcrafts Monthly supplements the information on the HANDCRAFTS page of the web site.

Thank you to all the members of UJAMAA GRANDMAS for making 2016 so successful.

Submitted by Dawn Bolger and Patty Cucman.

Fabric and Yarn Sale Committee Report

The 2016 sale was organized by a steering committee that met once a month in Dec. 2015, Jan. 2016, Feb. 2016, Mar. 2016 and Apr. 2016.

While not all members of the steering committee could attend every meeting decisions were made based on the observations and experiences of the attending committee members. The Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign and all the children who are directly helped from the proceeds remain the focus and reason that so much time and effort is put into the organization of the annual sale - both are well worth it.

This was the 9th annual sale with gross proceeds of \$35,000.00.

This was the first year an online email account fabricsale@ujamaagrandmas.com was created for specific queries relating to the sale. It was a great benefit.

Storage of the pre-sale donations continued to be a concern and donors were encouraged to hold on to their donations until they could personally transport them to the church during the pre-sale setup days.

There were fewer donations from fabric business donors which helped with the home storage constraints. The decision to decline drapery sheers from this source was made again because sheers can be very difficult to manage and sell in the home decor department.

Because of the depressed economy Calgary corporate volunteers were limited. However, they remained a big part of the sale's success and have become some of the annual sale's biggest promoters.

The teen volunteers from Sir Winston Churchill and Youth Central are still an integral part of the sale.

The Cubs and Girl Scouts are the youngest volunteers and in the process of earning accreditation towards badges in volunteerism and home-making, they help out immensely. Their continued participation is encouraged.

Woodcliff United Church as always could not have been more generous. It is a venue that continues to fit the needs of the sale and holding the annual sale there is highly recommended.

A one-dollar entry fee donation was collected.

The tallies still need some improvement and the committee will consider changes that will make them more effective and efficient for the purpose they are designed for.

The steering committee complied with the Fire Marshall's requirement to limit the number of shoppers to the occupant code applicable to the space.

Electronic registration of volunteers for the sale worked well and it is a recommendation that this system be continued making changes to the format when required.

There were a significant number of lost items reported (including keys and credit cards). A central area for these items to be held safely until they can be properly identified by their owners will need to be created. The head cashier or the treasurer is best suited to this task.

Advertising for the sale in print, social media and TV promotions was a great help. The simple informative purse size poster still remains the best source of information for donors and buyers but being featured on the local TV newscast was a close second.

Paying a custodian to setup and take down the display tables is an enormous help. Providing janitorial services that leave the church clean and presentable for church services the following Sunday morning is priceless.

It is a recommendation that this be kept as an integral part of the sale.

The goal of recycling everything that does not sell is getting closer to achievement.

Corporate sponsors, the Kidney Foundation, took all the fabric that was discarded for various reasons and World Serve took everything else.

Their trucks and drivers were provided free of charge.

Each day volunteers took donations that did not meet the sale criteria to the closest Goodwill Distribution Centre for it to distribute among its stores throughout Calgary. Goodwill appreciates these donations.

Volunteers were asked to take a bag of garbage and a bag of recycling as they left the church at the end of each shift and everyone was very compliant with the request. This system declutters the church and adds to the health and safety of all the volunteers.

It is a recommendation to continue with the sale for as long as possible.

Volunteers enjoy the socialization, the handcraft committee has an excellent opportunity to access materials for projects for its sale and it gives the City of Calgary one of the best recycling projects imaginable.

Respectfully submitted,

Mona Jones, Chair 2016 Fabric and Yarn Sale Committee

November Bake Sale

Each year at the November Marda Loop Justice Film Festival, Ujamaa Grandmas has been invited to participate in the NGO Marketplace and we have used that space to raise funds and awareness with a bake sale. We have progressed from a relatively small table of baking to presently anchoring one end of the gym with 3 tables and being anticipated by the festival-goers who appreciate our wares. Sometimes they only come for the baking! As the sale is held in a church we have also made ourselves available to the after-church crowd in addition to being there Friday afternoon, Saturday and Sunday.

Because of the amazing participation of at least 30 members producing unprecedented amounts of baking plus the volunteer efforts of members who manned the tables, we raised a new record \$2400 in profits. Pretty good for a bake sale!! A big thankyou to all who rose to the challenge and made this possible.

Submitted by Louise Breadner and Anne Taylor

Ujamaa Walkers

SLF has over the years encouraged grandmother groups to participate in an annual group Stride in solidarity with our African sisters. A few of our Ujamaa Grandmas have chosen to join the annual Mountain Grannies walk in Canmore.

Our own Ujamaa Stride spin-off originated two and a half years ago - Walk In The Park. Since then rain, shine or snow, we gather in a Calgary park twice weekly for a one hour walk which includes the benefits of exercise, camaraderie, fresh air and occasional bird or toddler gazing. Inclement weather walking is at Market Mall.

Cost of each walk is a toonie which is donated to SLF and credited to our Ujamaa Grandmas group. To the end of 2016, we have collectively walked 3300 Km. and donated over \$1,900 to the Foundation.

We normally have 3-6 loyal walkers and welcome any and all members to join us! If interested please email us at message@ujamaagrandmas.com and you will be contacted with more details. Come on out!

Submitted by Louise Breadner

'Tenth Anniversary' Committee Report

In March 2016 a committee was formed to plan activities to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Stephen Lewis Foundations' Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

The 10th Anniversary committee has not only led the celebrations over the past year but also laid the foundation for some of these activities and events to go forward as annual ones. It has been a vehicle for bringing members together, invited and encouraged members to take on leadership roles and enticed long time members to join in the wide ranging activities we've undertaken. 10th Anniversary pins from the SLF were sold throughout the year.

Anniversary Cake

We launched the 10th Anniversary events at our south gathering in February of 2016. We were starting before the March- to-March span of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign Anniversary but it is never too early to celebrate. We had Ellen Monaghan and Leslie Buckle, our founding leaders, symbolically cut our homemade cake topped with large number 10 candles and enjoyed the opportunity to munch and chat.

Quiz

Members at a Spring Demo Day participated in a 10th Anniversary Quiz for a prize.

10th Anniversary Cheer

And what's a celebration without a cheer? Thank you to Joanne Underwood for her creative talents. Our rallying cry could be heard here and there during the year, and surprised customers waiting in line at the Fabric Sale responded most enthusiastically to our efforts.

So keep an eye out. You never know where we'll turn up next!

Ujamaa Grandmas have a ball, answering Stephen Lewis' call We knit, we sew, we take no fee, and battle harm of HIV Now it's been a great 10 years, so help us all as we give cheers. Goooooo, Grandmas!

Picnic

A Picnic was held in July at North Glenmore Park where between 20 and 30 members shared great food (including cupcakes made by Jane Katan) and fellowship on a lovely summer afternoon. Founding members were invited and some attended and some sent messages of best wishes.

Knit Me Bags

In our search for ways to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign one of our committee members initiated this fun-filled awareness project. If you've ever read Debbie Macomber's Blossom Street series that revolve around a knitting store, you might remember the knit me baskets that were a bit of a mystery in one of them. That was the premise for our project.

Mary Jo assembled yarn, needles, and a pattern for a scarf. On the opposite side of the pattern sheet was a description of Ujamaa Grandmas, our connection to and celebration of the Grandmothers Campaign and

the Stephen Lewis Foundation. Then we included our brochures and a donation envelope as well with our business card stapled to the outside of the colourful bags we used. Each bag had a bold label saying KNIT ME.

Our launch was done in conjunction with Knit in Public Day, June 18th of this year. Ujamaa Grandmas had a place at the Neighbors Day Celebration at one of the city's community associations where we were knitting in public to promote awareness of Ujamaa Grandmas. Our banner was there to define our group. People stopped by when they saw us knitting and this gave us the opportunity to talk about our work for the SLF. The bags hardly touched the table before they were taken by interested people passing by. We chatted, letting them know about our events and how we are working to reach a million dollars in donations to the SLF this year. Our publicity coordinator walked through the fair-like crowd and handed out bags as well.

During that week we had a display at one of the public libraries in Calgary where bags were available for interested knitters to take home. Some of our bags were dropped off at cafes; some went to a local college. The library was an enthusiastic supporter as they have a knitters group and the college asked to participate again. We also had a display and bag distribution at the Sheep River Library in Turner Valley. The project will have another component in September as that is a start-up time for people to get involved for the coming year. We hope to have another display and bag distribution then.

We should mention that we used our Facebook account and website to spread the word about our project and let members know via our monthly E-News.

This first-time-around project relied on donations of yarn and needles mostly from committee members with a few purchases of yarn. So there was a small start-up amount for some yarn, bags and bag labels. We sent out a request for needles and yarn to our membership and also gleaned some of the supplies from our fabric sale donations. We now have enough needles and yarn to do it again.

The consensus of our group is that this should be an annual awareness event around Knit in Public Day. And even though we didn't consider it a fundraiser, the inclusion of donation envelopes may lead to donations going to the Foundation in our name as each one had our foundation number on it. This was a really fun project for all of us involved.

Yarn Bombing

In Sept. 2016, we yarn bombed five trees in Tompkins Park (north side of 17th Ave. S.W. between 7th and 8th St.) to raise awareness of Ujamaa Grandmas and the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign's 10th Anniversary.

Carol Armes, Executive Assistant to Druh Farrell, Ward 7 Councillor, went out of her way to connect us with the right people at City Parks. Jeanette Wheeler, lead, Urban Forestry at City Parks approved the project and gave us permission to yarn bomb the five trees.

Many thanks to at least twenty-four UG members who worked tirelessly to knit and crochet the colourful and imaginative sleeves and sew them on the trees.

The yarn bombed trees were noticed, visited and admired. Many people took selfies by the trees. We even got publicity, http://calgaryherald.com/life/swerve/our-town-grandmas-get-political-by-yarn-bombing-17th-avenue in Swerve Magazine.

The tags that we attached to the trees provided info to the public about Ujamaa Grandmas and what we do and the SLF. As a result, donations of fabric and cash were made.

We all had a lot of fun planning and creating our designs for the tree sleeves.

The trees decorated Tomkins Park from Sept. 15th to Nov. 15th, 2016 and it was a sad day when we took our wonderful work down. We know we will do this again somewhere in Calgary in the near future. This proved to be a very worthwhile project as we got to know other members working on the project, raised awareness for UG and funds for SLF and gave a lot of people in Calgary a reason to smile.

Anniversary Tea

We are in the planning stages of a 10th Anniversary Tea which will be held in conjunction with our AGM March 12th at Christ Church.

We will be honouring our members who have contributed so much and celebrating reaching the one-million- dollar-mark in donations to the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

Respectfully submitted by Marilyn Simmons with the assistance of members of the committee

Education Committee Report

Activity of the Education Committee during 2016 focused on providing informational materials at the 3 sales (fabric, craft and baking) plus assisting board members with materials for monthly gatherings.

Louise Breadner gave a talk to both north and south Ujamaa gatherings on a presentation by Lee Waldorf at the Provincial Gathering on a new SLF Resiliency and Accountability Model for the projects in Africa. We hope to also show the Tribunal Film at these gatherings in the near future.

A presentation on Ujamaa Grandmas was made in January by Louise Breadner and Anne Taylor to about 30 members of a local quilting guild (Pieces for Peace). The group plans to donate some fabric pieces to our spring sale plus are interested in volunteering and shopping.

In February we have been asked to present a skit and lead classroom discussions at an Okotoks elementary school. Louise Breadner and Yvonne Way worked with this school several years ago on a similar presentation. We are happy to have been chosen as their focus group again and will also provide some small craft articles from our stock and the Foundation for sale at a school fair on Valentine's Day.

On the agenda as well for this term is a talk to residents of Amica retirement home and hopefully to the high school volunteer group from Winston Churchill who have helped at our sales.

We are always looking for other venues to spread the message of the Foundation and Ujamaa Grandmas so we ask members to contact our website if they have suggestions for future presentations.

Susan Plesuk and Anne Taylor are presently co-chairing this committee. Thanks to Louise Breadner and Yvonne Way for their active participation.

Membership Report

Our numbers have continued to grow over the past year. As of December 31st, 2016, we have 493 Ujamaa Grandma members and 323 Ujamaa Grandma customers. Hence, in the last year we have added 46 new members and 22 new customers.

Many new individuals signed up after some of our events such as the Bags, Babies and Beyond Sale and the Fabric and Yarn Sale.

Individuals wanting to become either a member or a customer are directed to our UG website. Once they have completed the appropriate registration form, their data is automatically entered into our Excel spreadsheet. They then receive a welcome email with information about Ujamaa Grandmas and the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

The membership coordinator checks the membership/customer database weekly and moves the new individual to the appropriate Google Group to receive our emails. Members and customers can choose to remove themselves from these Google Groups at any time. Data that members provide as part of the survey is maintained in the membership data base and is used to search for members that have particular interests or talents and who might be interested in volunteering for specific activities or projects. The membership coordinator strives to keep this membership list up to date but because individuals can remove themselves from the Google Group at any time there may be a slight discrepancy between the number of members listed in the Google Group and what appears in the membership data base.

Members receive the monthly Enews as well as other important updates, information and volunteering opportunities.

Customers received notifications about Ujamaa Grandmas upcoming events, such as the Bags, Babies and Beyond Sale, and the Fabric and Yarn Sale.

Submitted by Kelly Brittain

2016 Membership Coordinator

Fundraising Co-ordinator's Report

Ujamaa Grandmas have had another stellar year of fundraising, bringing the total funds raised for the Stephen Lewis Foundation to the \$1 million mark in the past 10 years of our organization's existence! This has occurred through the passion to assist our African Grandmothers and their families - and through the hard work and participation of hundreds of members over the years.

We thank those members who have been involved in any of our fundraising events during 2016. The Fabric Sale in April and the Bags, Babies and Beyond Sale in October were again our two major fundraising events. Several of our members have been creating 'tea cozies' which have been sold by the Banff Tea Company, resulting in another source of revenue. We also assisted in the spring and fall convocations at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, which gave those of us who are less handcraft-oriented an opportunity to participate in our fundraising efforts. Our Bake Sale at the Justice Film Festival in November, and the partnership Sunday in December with the Ten Thousand Villages store, plus revenues from our workshops, rounded out our year of fundraising. The total funds raised from all these was close to \$90,300; donations received at our sales (and miscellaneous donations) were almost \$3,000. What a wonderful achievement!

Respectfully submitted

Jan Geggie, Vice President and Interim Fundraising Director

Communication Report

The Communications Coordinator collects, organizes and edits articles for the monthly E-News, triages incoming email messages to the appropriate person or committee, and sends out notices to members and customers. It has been exciting to work with Board members and committee chairs as we endeavor to keep us all informed in an effective and timely manner. As always, members are encouraged to submit items of interest for consideration in the monthly newsletter.

In addition to regular updates and notices, 2016 offered a number of unique opportunities to communicate. The 10th anniversary of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign marks a huge milestone and we look forward to continuing to be part of the celebrations. And nothing could compare to the thrill when Ujamaa Grandmas reached that million-dollar goal!

None of this would have been possible without member participation, feedback and support. One of the many strengths of our organization is our inter-connectedness. Whether we are able to volunteer on committees, assist with special projects, serve on the board or cheer from the sidelines, communicating with one another is at the heart of everything we do.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Scott

Publicity Report

We had great media attention with our two main events of the year where Global TV brought their camera to the Fabric and Yarn Sale and CBC radio interviewed Vice President Jan Geggie the morning of the Bags, Babies and Beyond sale. A few patrons of the sale said they had heard the clip and came to the sale because they thought it was a worthy cause and would be perfect for shopping.

The main ways that events and activities are publicized is through our website, email, Facebook and word-of-mouth. Ujamaa Grandmas also became more active with our Twitter account to further promote the organization and to connect with other organizations.

We introduced two new exciting community outreach and awareness activities in 2016 that were a wonderful way to profile Ujamaa Grandmas. The Yarn Bomb on 17th Avenue SW was extremely effective at showcasing the organization with the colourful knitting that decorated the trees and drew positive attention. Although the media did not show up on the day the ladies skillfully sewed together the sleeves, we had fantastic coverage afterwards in both Swerve Magazine and the Calgary Herald.

Author Debbie Macomber's book, *Blossom Street Brides*, inspired the creation of 25 Knit Me bags as a way to engage with people and invite them to try knitting and learn about Ujamaa Grandmas. The bags were strategically placed in locations like U of C, Legal Guidance, the Signal Hill Library and the Millican Ogden Community Association celebration.

We look forward to continuing to promote Ujamaa Grandmas in creative ways in 2017.

Submitted by Renate Gepraegs

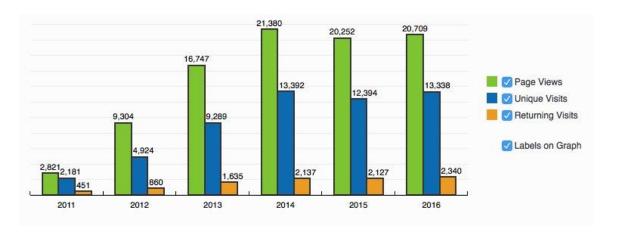
Webmaster's Report

The primary function of the web site is to provide regular communication to Members, online Membership registration and Workshop and Event sign up.

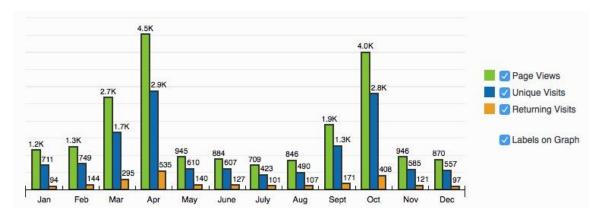
Hosting is provided by 100sitehosting and the cost of the web site continues to be a bargain at \$150.US per year. Domain registration is an additional \$50 per year. This provides us with unlimited storage, bandwidth and email addresses. In 2016 two additional email addresses were added to the hosting; fabricsale@ujamaagrandmas.com and handcrafts@ujamaagrandmas.com. This step removed a considerable amount of work from the Communications role. This also enabled these committees to manage their own sign up for events removing work from the Webmaster role.

No significant changes were made to the web site in 2016 other than addition of the additional email addresses. A site refresh is planned for 2017 and while the functionality and the content will remain the same the look will change. Members and visitors can rest assured that they will still recognize the site as belonging to UJAMAA GRANDMAS.

Web traffic continued to be steady over the last three years. In 2016 there were 13,338 unique visits to the website compared to about 12,300 in 2015, 13,400 in 2014. Total hits on the site since inception were over 55,000 at the end of 2016.



Month on month, traffic to the web site remains steady with an average of 1,112 unique visits per month including April and October. These months and the month prior experience exceptional traffic because of FABRIC & YARN SALE in April and BAGS, BABIES & BEYOND in October. SNEAK PEEK continues to be a popular page in the month just prior to the sale.



The top five pages by number of visits to the site are as follows:

- HOME, where Members can check the Calendar and Bulletin Board
- FUNDRAISING, where information on the various events and the funds raised and ways to donate can be accessed
- HANDCRAFTS, a resource for handcrafters providing feedback on what sells, links to patterns, past issues of Handcrafts Monthly and the Workshops Calendar
- ABOUT US, where visitors can learn more about our mission and our history,
- EDUCATION, a source of information on the Foundation and topics relevant to the Grandmother campaign.

Submitted by Patty Cucman