



2024 Annual Report
AGM – June 19, 2025

“We will not rest until they can rest” was first used in the 2006 Toronto Statement that African and Canadian grandmothers jointly issued after the inaugural grandmothers gathering in August of that year. The Stephen Lewis Foundation considers the 2006 gathering the start of the *Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign*, although technically the intention to launch the Campaign was announced in March of 2006 at a press conference on International Women's Day. This phrase has since become a tagline for the campaign.

You can read the full Toronto Statement here:

https://grandmotherscampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/L3-1-Toronto_statement_2006.pdf





UJAMAA GRANDMAS

Vision:

An enduring and nurturing community, working to assist African grandmothers and children affected by HIV/AIDS, to improve their lives.

Mission:

To raise awareness and funds for the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, using the skills and talents of a vibrant volunteer community.

Values:

Solidarity: We commit to one another's well being.

Social Justice: "We won't rest until they can rest" so we can contribute to meeting the needs of grandmothers and 'grand others' (locally and in Africa).

Powered By Love: Meaningful relationships empower our collective efforts.

Simplicity: We strive for clarity, consistency, to make decisions quickly and pragmatically, focusing on what is essential.

Trust: Treat each other with respect, believe in one another and use positive communication to support each other.

Care: We act responsibly towards our members, contributors, society and our environment.

Strategic Priorities:

Nurturing

Build a strong, vibrant and nurturing community to ensure Ujamaa Grandmas is welcoming and sustains meaningful engagement for all members.

Awareness

Promote Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) and Ujamaa Grandmas at all events, with an element of education.

Raising Funds

Work to raise funds to celebrate and support the efforts of the SLF grassroots groups in Africa.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are walking hand in hand on this safe and bountiful land, which is Treaty Seven territory and part of the Bow River Watershed, traditional territory of the Blackfoot confederacy: the Piikani first nation, the Siksika First Nation, the Kainai First Nation, as well as the Stoney Nakoda First Nation and Tsuut'ina First Nation, and home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region Three, within the historical Northwest Métis homeland.

We give thanks to the Creator for this great gift and recognize our responsibility as treaty people to care for the land and waters that nourish us and give us strength. We also acknowledge that it is our duty to do more to learn about the rich history of this land to better understand our roles as residents, neighbours and caretakers.

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Reports from Board Members

Board Chair



**“Grandmothers are voices of the past and role models of the present.
Grandmothers open the doors to the future.”**

– Helen Ketchum

Throughout history, grandmothers have traditionally played vital roles in shaping human societies, contributing to family dynamics, and transferring cultural knowledge, values, beliefs and behaviors from one generation to the next. Our African sisters are, indeed, the personification of this as they care for and shape the lives of their grandchildren and others who need their help. When I meet and work alongside our Ujamaa Grandmas members and volunteers at gatherings and at fundraising events I often hear stories of traditions that have been passed down to them, directly from their grandmothers – their love of quilting, knitting, sewing, or other handcrafts, for example. It seems the traditional role of grandmothers is alive and well in our culture as well.

As I was growing up, I was fortunate to have the influence of two wonderful grandmothers in my life. Both were well-respected and strong leaders in their communities; both were active in helping and taking care of others. My maternal grandmother was known as a healer and gathered many plants with medicinal properties that she would hang to dry in the porch her house, for use in her healing practice. She planted and tended a large vegetable garden and shared produce with neighbors in need. I especially remember the wonderfully fluffy featherbeds she crafted to soften the mattresses on her beds. My paternal grandmother was a skilled ‘people organizer’ and was proficient at bringing people together in support of various causes. She was also an avid handcrafter, creating beautiful items for fundraising sales. I am proud to say that I have followed in their footsteps in many ways as their values, knowledge, and skills contributed to my life’s path. I am now conscious of my role in sharing my own values and knowledge with my own granddaughter.

Our sisterhood of grandmothers and 'grand others' is a group that I am honored to be part of. We work hard to fulfill our mission of raising funds and awareness for the Stephen Lewis Foundation's (SLF) Grandmothers to Grandmothers (G2G) Campaign, and we continue to be very successful in our endeavours. We motivate each other through our collective energy and untiring spirit. We face challenges together and work out how to overcome them. And we enjoy celebrating our successes together. Through our fundraising events and member gatherings, through our newsletter and social media accounts, we are increasing awareness of the SLF and the work they do. By the end of the year, because of our combined efforts, we were able to send a total of \$158,178 to the Foundation. 2024 has been a monumental year in that since the inception of Ujamaa Grandmas in 2004, we have surpassed a 2 million dollar grand total for donations that have been sent to the SLF. We should rightfully be very proud of this accomplishment!

In addition, 2024 was a year in which our camaraderie had an opportunity to extend beyond our Calgary-based group, with our participation in the Provincial Gathering of G2G groups. We were thrilled to play a role in welcoming such a joyful group of women to our city! A viewing of the Solidarity quilt, an enlightening program of speakers, great food and refreshments, and excellent entertainment rounded out the weekend, including the debut of founding member Ellen Monaghan's exceptionally creative garments designed and sewn to focus attention on the effects of climate change. A full account of the gathering can be found on page 21 of this report.

Our Board is made up of a very talented and committed group of volunteers who are active in handling the business of the organization. We meet monthly via Zoom to keep things on track. Members are always welcome to attend a meeting, should they be interested in what our meetings entail, or if they are potentially interested in joining the Board to support the organization in this manner. A key Board project during the Summer/Fall of 2024 was a revision of the Strategic Plan. A committee of 4 members was formed who reviewed, revised and added some components to guide our committees in measuring progress towards their goals. Each committee had an opportunity to review the plan and determine how best to use it to monitor their current activities and in the years forthcoming. We invite every member to review the revised Strategic Plan to fully understand the role they play in the success of our organization.

We are also extremely fortunate and thankful to have a dedicated group of volunteers who serve on our various committees and handle other aspects of the organization. Each of these committees has provided a report on their activities for you to review.

I can honestly say that I had absolutely no aspirations of stepping into the role of Chair after only a brief one year period of being on the Board, but when "life happens" to those who you care about, circumstances call for action on the part of those who are able. The saying "If you're not stepping outside of your comfort zone, then you're not growing" came to mind, and not wanting to ever stop growing, I hesitantly agreed to step up. It has truly been a growth experience, and I treasure all I've learned, the relationships I've developed, and the guidance, mentoring, and grace I've received as I learn the ropes of the role.

In late November I heard about the opportunity to apply for a spot in the 2025 SLF delegation from G2G groups across Canada to visit partner organizations in South Africa and Eswatini. Not knowing what to expect I completed the rigorous forms and waited with anticipation to hear back. I was excited to be invited, in early December, to join the delegation. I feel privileged to be representing Ujamaa Grandmas and anticipate having much to share with you upon my return.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlotte (Char) Holmlund



Communications

The Communications Coordinator reviews incoming email messages and circulates them to the appropriate people or committees, collects, organizes and edits articles for the monthly E-News, connects with the Webmaster to post the pertinent information onto the Ujamaa Grandmas (UG) website, and sends out notices and announcements to members and customers as requested.

At least two to three emails are received every day through ujamaagrandmas.com@gmail.com, with a greater number being received in the months leading up to the Fabric and Yarn Sale and the Bags, Babies and Beyond Sale. Inquiries range from members inquiring about organization matters, inquiries to do with SLF, outings and the Book Club, and meetings, nonmembers wondering about donating to the Fabric and Yarn sale, and other sister organizations providing news about their operations. There are many other miscellaneous inquiries as well.

Janice Lambert continues to help out Margaret Anne Knowles as needed in the Communication role, particularly as Margaret Anne needed to take a six week sick leave.

One of the many strengths of our organization is effective communications between the Board, committees and members. We rely on member participation, feedback and support. 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.

It continues to be rewarding working with the UG members, Board members and committee chairs as we exchange information and ideas.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Anne Knowles



Idah Mukuka Nambeya of the SLF with new G2G friend

Governance

We have an engaged Governance Committee, working together with our Board and our Committees to ensure that we have guidelines in the form of policies and procedures and Committee Terms of Reference (TOR). Our work ensures that our Board, Committees and volunteers can work knowledgeably within the scope of our bylaws and our Mission to raise awareness and funds for the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, using the skills and talents of a vibrant volunteer community. When changes are warranted or new policies are developed, we present the revised or new policy to the Board for final approval. In 2024 we reviewed our Bylaws and found them to be robust. We reviewed some existing policies including the Roles of Board and Committee leads and we consulted with the Committees whose TORs were due for review, working together to update several. We also instituted a "Policy of the Month" where we review a policy or TOR at every monthly Board meeting.

We also continue to participate in thoughtful conversations about proper governance processes to support the work of Ujamaa Grandmas including supporting the board orientation process.

With growth comes complexity and we are always aware that we must balance formal processes and bureaucracy with common sense and compassion. While organizations such as ours need structure, within the Ujamaa Grandmas' nurturing environment, this structure takes the form of guidelines that are reviewed every few years to help us remain current with the growth and changes our world and our volunteers bring to us.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Governance Committee (Jan Geggie, Liz Forseth, Judy Hansen, Sue Asquith, Phyllis McCord),

Phyllis McCord



Nominations

As Ujamaa Grandmas grows and changes, we seek to find members who are willing to lend their skills, interests, knowledge and expertise to the many committees, events, and sales that comprise the work of our organization.

Each year there are changes and new needs on our Board of Directors. Members who have served their terms or even longer may step down, leaving vacancies that need to be filled in order to continue functioning in our status as a non-profit in Alberta. Even in an organization as large as Ujamaa Grandmas, this is not always an easy task. We respect our member's need to blend their volunteer work with their personal responsibilities.

This year we needed a new chair, secretary, and communications coordinator as well as filling general director's positions. With some switching of roles and bringing on several new Board members, we were able to make this happen. The Board continued to function effectively and efficiently as we became a supportive team for each other in our work and that of all the Ujamaa Committees.

We are always alert for potential Board members, getting to know each other at our different events and relying on each other for recommendations. This is also a way of getting to know our membership, forming new teams, joining committees and working together. We know that Ujamaa Grandmas is a diverse and talented group and we strive to encourage each member to share those abilities with us to help Ujamaa function well. We appreciate the participation of all our members and admire their skills whenever we reflect on the successes of our sales, events and committee participation. And we thank all those who volunteer, advise, and support the work we do.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carla Lorfing, Vice Chair





Board members feeling festive

Reports from Committee Chairs and Coordinators

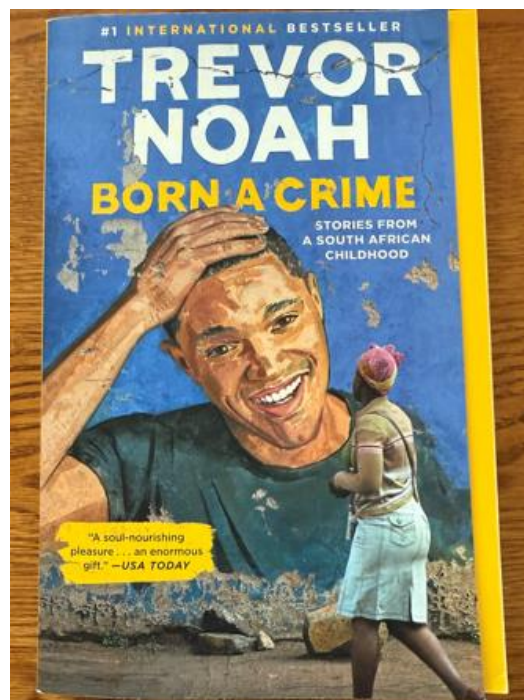
African Book Club

Our Book Club is now approaching the end of four years and continues to meet every six weeks via Zoom. The format works for us because we have been able to stay in touch with members who have moved – to Camrose, Ontario, and New Zealand - and also have members join us while away on holidays.

We continue to expand our knowledge of Africa through reading both fiction and non-fiction. Regular attendance ranges from 6 to 8, and new members are always welcome. Our group met 6 times in 2024. Highlights of the year included *Born a Crime* by comedian and TV personality Trevor Noah, about his experiences growing up as a mixed-race child in apartheid-era South Africa, and *History of Difficult Child* by Mihret Sibhat, a novel told from the perspective of a child during a period of civil war in Ethiopia. Through our reading this year, we learned much about South Africa, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Liberia.

Our book choices are posted on our website at <http://ujamaagrandmas.com/category/book-club/>. We hope that others besides our members will find there something to enjoy and learn from.

Submitted by Leslie Buckle



Archival Librarian

Hello! I'm Tina Huckabay, your Archival Librarian, and I'm delighted to take on the role of managing our Google Library of electronic documents. I've been working with the files for a while now and am excited to continue organizing and updating the library so we have a central, well-maintained location for all important documents related to our events and activities.

Traditionally, the UG Google Library has served as a repository for official organizational records such as bylaws, overall UG policies, board minutes, and board meeting packages. In addition to maintaining these core materials, I also archive committee documents for future reference.

There's room to expand the scope of our archive. Committees now have the opportunity to contribute relevant files at their discretion—this might include contact lists, sales materials, advertising content, or any documents that could be useful to other committees or helpful for future planning. For example, uploading copies of event posters or promotional materials could be beneficial for reference or reuse.

To help keep the library current and useful, I kindly ask all committees to forward any relevant documents to me as they are created or finalized. This will ensure the archive stays updated and continues to serve as a valuable resource for everyone.

The Google Library is available for all UG members to view. While editing access is restricted to maintain document integrity, I'm here to help! If you're ever looking for a specific document or need assistance with saving or submitting a file, feel free to reach out. My contact information can be found on the Key Contacts List.

I'm excited to work with our committees and board members to shape the library moving forward and ensure it remains a helpful, well-maintained resource for all.

Warm regards,
Tina Huckabay
Archival Librarian

BAGETTES

Nurturing:

1. BAGETTES continued to meet once a month via Zoom. Each BAGETTE-TOGETHER included a challenge to make our bag-making adventures more interesting.
2. In person get-togethers allowed members to show off projects, drop off and swap supplies, and to socialize. The private Facebook page—where BAGETTES communicates—continued to be populated with tips, links, recommendations, and photos of projects.

Raising awareness:

1. BAGETTES Payhip and ETSY stores, and every pdf pattern have a description of UJAMAA GRANDMAS (UG) and what we do for the Campaign. Also included are links to the UG website and the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign website.
2. Our Instagram page includes links to our shops and the homepages for UJAMAA GRANDMAS, Stephen Lewis Foundation and the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.
3. One of our strongest supporters continues to be Emmaline Bags of Spruce Grove, Alberta. Emmaline Bags have used their own communications network to help us to promote our patterns and our fundraising efforts.

Raising Funds:

1. We continue to maintain both our Payhip site and our ETSY shop. The ETSY shop outperforms the standalone Payhip shop primarily due to the ease of the ETSY search engine.
2. In 2024, Emmaline Bags continued selling our patterns on their website. All proceeds from these sales are donated directly to the Foundation, with credit given to UJAMAA GRANDMAS. In 2024 these donations totaled just over \$7400. We can't say enough nice things about this company and the owners.
3. No new patterns were released in 2024.
4. A good inventory of finished bags went to BB&B and very few remained after the sale. We'll be starting fresh in 2025.

Submitted by Patty Cucman for BAGETTES



Bake Sale

Ujamaa Grandmas once again participated in the Peace Market held on November 23, 2024, as part of the 2024 Calgary Justice Film Festival (CJFF). The Bake Sale Committee would like to report a surprisingly well-attended day, given the snowstorm that happened that day. There seemed to be more market tables which were fully staffed. There was a buzz in the air and everyone seemed to enjoy the vibe.

Given the difficulties people likely had in getting their baked goods to us, the diversity and amount were a bit limited. One member provided a dozen or so small apple pies which looked delicious and sold like hotcakes. The allergy-sensitive items were a huge hit as well.

Thank you to all who were able to drop off their baking in terrible conditions - you are heroes - and to all those that worked diligently to produce baking but couldn't get out to The Confluence - thank you, too. We missed you and your baking!

I know the CJFF organizers were very, very happy with the extremely busy foot traffic.

All in all, we loved the venue and the vibe and look forward to participating again next year.

Pamela Knox



Connections

Members: Marilyn Simmons & Lorraine Campbell co-leaders, Marion Shadlock, Diane Pea, Sandra Burgess

Meetings were mainly held on-line.

The Connection Teams' position and goals were discussed with a Strategic Plan Team representative in early 2025.

Due to the Ujamaa Grandmas busy schedule we find time to provide social events limited. The events we have held we feel have had good attendance.

Walks were planned weekly with very small numbers participating. We will consider publicizing these more in the coming year and decide if they will continue. In June a lunch and walk was organized at "Flavours" Restaurant (specializing in African food).

In July and August we organized two picnics which were also drop-off times for Handcraft projects for the Bags, Babies and Beyond Sale in October.

We were involved in the Provincial Gathering in September.

In late Sept. we organized a visit to the Whyte Museum in Banff to view a collection of J.E.H. MacDonald's Paintings with Patty Cucman as a guide.

The annual Christmas Dinner was held at Lake House in December and was enjoyed by all in attendance.

Submitted by Marilyn Simmons



Members enjoying a fun outing in Banff

Education and Awareness

The purpose of the Education and Awareness Committee is to educate Ujamaa Grandmas (UG) as well as the larger community about the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) and how Ujamaa Grandmas contributes to the work of SLF's Grandmothers to Grandmothers (G2G) Campaign. The Education and Awareness Committee highlights the variety of skills that members bring to the work of UG and encourages others to join in this worthwhile effort.

During 2024, the Committee was pleased to present information about the SLF, the G2G Campaign and Ujamaa Grandmas to three groups. On February 13th, Anne, Barb, and Susan shared information with the Rimón Needlework Group. We were enthusiastically introduced by Susan Podlog, a longtime member of Ujamaa Grandmas. On October 16, Anne and Susan shared information about the work of SLF and UG with the Quilt Guild at Heritage Park. Some members of this group have attended UG's sales events and were pleased to acquire additional information about Ujamaa Grandmas. On November 22, Anne and Susan attended a breakfast meeting of the Heritage Park Rotary Club. We were welcomed and introduced by the husband of another long-time member of Ujamaa Grandmas, Barb Skinner. This Rotary Club has supported the work of Ujamaa Grandmas by assisting to set up and take down the displays at both the Fabric and Yarn sale and Bags, Babies and Beyond sale.

In addition, the Committee displayed the Grandmothers to Grandmothers banners and set up an information table at both sales.

Anne and Susan assisted with setting up the display at the Fish Creek Library of the commemorative quilt in honour of the 20th anniversary of the G2G Campaign.

A committee member is a regular attendee at the monthly gatherings and shares information about the various projects that the Stephen Lewis Foundation supports. The committee shares updates on SLF projects and highlights Ujamaa Grandmas members in the monthly E-news.

In 2025, we plan to investigate sharing slides and/or videos at both monthly gatherings as well as the sales. Please reach out if you have things you would like to learn about.

The Education and Awareness Committee is always looking for new venues/groups to share information about the incredible work of the Stephen Lewis Foundation and Ujamaa Grandmas.

Barb Spear has decided to step away from the Education and Awareness Committee and we take this opportunity to thank Barb for her contributions.

Submitted by Anne Taylor and Susan Plesuk



Past Chair Yvonne Way with Regena Crowchild

Ann Rycroft - Grandmothers Advocacy Network

FABRIC & YARN Sale

First, I would like to thank all the Area Leads, the publicity people, the storage homes, the people who picked up donations and sorted many times throughout the year and all the volunteers who worked many hours at the pre-sale, the sale and the clean up to make it a success. Everyone contributed time and energy to make the sale successful.

We worked hard to support the Stephen Lewis Foundation and many local charities here in Calgary. We tried to be as eco-friendly as possible and recycled many bags of textile leftovers.

This was the second year at the Garrison Curling Club. The venue and the location are ideal for the sale. This will be the location for the 2025 sale as well. There was a soccer tournament on the Saturday at the field next to Garrison Curling Club that did make parking difficult. We need to be prepared for that next year as well.

In 2024 we purchased more supplies, rented more tables and invested in more trolleys and wagons. It is a long 10 day journey to prepare for the sale and we need the equipment and supplies to make it successful. Supplies, table rental, venue rental, U-Haul trucks for gathering donations, transaction fees and other general expenses totaled almost \$16,000. Net profit for the sale was \$128,791.76. That will help the SLF as they support various programs in sub Saharan Africa.

The Rotary Club again helped with donation pick up from storage homes to Garrison Curling Club. Various businesses in Calgary helped us with donations from their stores or served as a donation drop off spot. Along Came Quilting especially helped with collecting donations.

The sale of timed Eventbrite tickets helped control enthusiastic shoppers on Friday. Three donation drop off afternoons spread out the workload. Charity pick up on Sunday afternoon after the sale closed at 2:00 was very successful. Approximately 40 charity organizations from Basically Babies to Quilts of Valour and everything in between were very grateful for the fabrics, yarn and other supplies that they were able to take. One theatre group commented that this donation saved them approximately \$1000.00 that they would have had to spend on fabric for costumes. One high school teacher commented that the students loved the chance to shop in the "Fabric Cupboard" that she was able to set up both with fabrics purchased during the sale and fabrics available after the sale. We help many people here in Calgary.

Many customers made comments about how positive, happy and friendly all the volunteers were, even after 5 days of set up. On the Monday clean up morning we had arranged for World Serve and Wins to come with their trucks to pick up anything that was left over that was worthwhile. Those 2 big trucks solved the problem of any leftovers.

One thing we must remember is that our F&Y volunteers work year-round, not just the 10 days for the sale. During the year they are picking up and dropping off donations. They are looking through bags and boxes to find treasures. They are measuring fabric and

counting spools of thread. They are smiling and laughing and finding joy in what they do. They made the sale a success! Thank you.

Submitted by Dawn Bolger



Fabric & Yarn Sale volunteers May 2024 - ready for the action!

Handcrafts

The Handcrafts Committee provides inspiration, support, and management of the products created by Ujamaa Grandmas members for our annual fundraising event, BAGS, BABIES & BEYOND (BB&B). This event supports the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

To encourage our members to make things for themselves and for the BB&B, committee members lead and support Sew Days, a knitting and crochet group, and Ujamaa Makers YYC Facebook group.

Throughout the year, the committee meets monthly via Zoom to prepare for BB&B. UG members bring their handcrafts items to monthly gatherings where they are displayed and admired. Product Custodians collect, store, and price these items. During the summer months, the Handcraft Committee works with the Connections Team to host picnics at local parks. In September, the committee shared handcrafted items at the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Provincial Gathering held in Calgary. The event was an opportunity to share our members' handcrafts with participants from around Alberta and see the products that other groups sell. At the end of September, we hosted the final drop off of items for BB&B and had a great turnout.

BAGS, BABIES & BEYOND 2024 was held at Marda Loop Communities Association on October 25th and 26th. Customers were enthusiastic and showed their support by purchasing over \$40,000.00 worth of beautiful and useful products. This event continues to be well supported by our members and the community. The Product Custodians packed up the remaining items to be stored for next year or donated to local charities. The success of BB&B results from the collaborative effort of Handcrafts, Finance, Membership, Education, and Publicity committees with UG Board support. The Rotary Club continues to be an invaluable resource for this event. Rotarians transport props from storage to Marda Loop Communities Association for BB&B Friday morning, and return Saturday afternoon to return these items back to storage.

Sealed Bid Auction

The Sealed Bid Auction stayed online once again in 2024. This year there were six items in the auction. Auction item donors sometimes set a minimum bid target and this year two items failed to reach their target and the items were returned to the makers.

In addition, a late arriving item was offered as a sealed bid item during BB&B. The response was very satisfying.

The five items raised just shy of \$900.

Sew Days

Sew Days continues to be a source of support to individual UG members, as a sharing of ideas and projects for the BB&B sale and an intake avenue for new UG members. Almost

every Sew Day, we have one or two new members who would like to take an active role in UG.

Group projects in the last year have included mesh market bags, a [Christmas](#) projects day, a Notions pouch (already repeated in 2025!), a bun/bread tray, and rope bowl-making. In recognition that we don't generally want more than 8 or 10 of any one specific item, participants are very much encouraged to bring their own project being worked on for the BB&B sale. This proves to be a source of new project ideas!

Sew Days continues to be an anticipated event for a small core group, at very little expense to the UG. The venue accommodates a dozen sewers comfortably, so we are not looking to expand. We are very grateful to Along Came Quilting for providing this extremely comfortable work space at no cost.

Crocheters and Knitters Group

The UJAMAA Crocheters and Knitters meet monthly on the [first Tuesday](#) of the month from 1-3pm. There are currently 28 members on the email list and meeting attendance varies from 6-15.

The group is organized by Mary-Anna Louise Kovar (Accessories Custodian and Yarn Custodian) for the purpose of encouraging the making of items for the BB&B sale while having fun, making friends, sharing creative inspiration, and learning new skills. We meet at various branches of Calgary Public Library. Rooms can only be booked 30 days or less in advance of the meetings. Those on the mailing list receive a reminder and notice of the location a week before the meeting. Anyone wanting to join or visit can contact mary-annalouise@telus.net for meeting information.

Submitted by Margie Smale



A happy crew of volunteers at the Bags, Babies and Beyond Sale

Membership

Liz Leroux, Membership Coordinator and Susan Plesuk administered the membership information for 2024 with the very skilled help of Cheryl Kundert who joined the team this year. Cheryl has a lot of administrative experience, and we welcome her into this new role.

Ujamaa Grandmas December 2024 membership was 614 members and customers totaled 659.

We were very pleased to welcome **90 new Ujamaa Grandmas members** and **75 new customers** during 2024. As can be seen by these numbers our membership continues to increase and benefit our group and the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Visitors to our website (www.ujamaagrandmas.com) can become members of our group under the heading “**Making Connections**”. Data that is gathered as part of the registration questionnaire is maintained in our membership database and is used to search for members who have particular interests or talents and who might be interested in volunteering for specific activities or projects.

The Membership Committee contacts new members with a Welcome email to give them an opportunity to become familiar with the organization. This is followed by a phone call or email (if no phone number is provided) to provide a personal welcome, answer any questions a new member might have and to encourage participation in their areas of interest. Upon request, new members who indicate an interest in Handcrafts or any other areas are referred to Committee heads for a further discussion regarding future direct involvement.

Individuals can remove themselves from our membership list at any time by unsubscribing at the bottom of most of our Ujamaa Grandmas email messages.

Submitted by Liz Leroux, Susan Plesuk and Cheryl Kundert

Provincial Gathering

It gives me great pleasure to give you a report on the Alberta Gathering held in Calgary in September 2024.

Ujamaa Grandmas were not the hosts but as it was in our fair city we naturally took on more of the responsibility for the success of the event. And I am pleased to report it was indeed highly successful from start to finish!

The first item on the agenda on Friday September the 6th was to visit the Fish Creek Public Library to view the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) 20th Anniversary quilt which we had arranged to have on display during that time. It was a celebratory way to kick off the event as well as admire the incredible workmanship that went in to quilt.

The evening continued with a welcome address by Yvonne Way immediately followed by a delicious potluck dinner graciously prepared by some of our members. Mountain Grannies provided a beautiful selection of tasty desserts. The tables were decorated by a UG member with brightly coloured African inspired fabric, topped with arrangements of locally grown colour coordinating flowers. A program designed and printed by one of our members was at the place setting of each guest, it provided all the information needed for the event including the bios of the speakers and a map showing which countries the SLF supports. And finally, to top off the beautiful tables, were 'African Angels' with personalized tags, made by some of our members for each guest as gifts to take away with them as a reminder of our time together.

Ujamaa Grandmas also provided the evening's entertainment, and entertaining it was! Ellen Monaghan orchestrated her 'Fashion Show with a Twist' to rave reviews! The detail and workmanship in the 20 plus stunning originally designed and hand appliqued vests, all modelled by UG members (plus a daughter!), was greatly appreciated and admired by the guests, and of equal value and entertainment was the narrative that Ellen provided to describe the inspiration for each vest. Interesting stories regarding climate change and its devastating impact were of great interest to all in attendance. There were many positive comments following the show - it was a big hit!

Saturday the 7th began with a light breakfast provided by the Lethbridge group. Marilyn Wilson of the Mountain Grannies greeted everyone and introduced the first speaker, the Stephen Lewis Foundation - Meg French SLF Executive Director & Idah Mukuka Nambeya Senior Advisor to the Grandmothers Campaign. The organizers of the gathering were thrilled that the foundation sent Meg and Idah to speak with us, it meant a lot to be able to exchange ideas and thoughts in person. The day continued with Widow Pillaging by Dr. Annalee Coakley, Update on HIV/AIDS by Eliana Castillo, ending with GANG from Edmonton showing an excellent video they made a few years ago and SLF leading a group discussion. Each speaker was received with rapt attention and interest, they were excellent choices.

Throughout the event there were many door prizes drawn. UG members generously donated a wide variety of gift items for the lucky winners to choose from. The

grandmothers were excited to hear their name called, it added quite a bit of fun to the gathering.

Lunch was spectacular, there is no other way to describe it! Five of our members created a giant charcuterie board! 35 feet long! The 'Food Team' were at the venue very early that morning to allow time to put it all together and it was worth the effort! Everyone in attendance was thrilled to partake in the delicious spread! If they chose, they could even take a 'goodie bag' for the road!

A marketplace was set up on Saturday with tables of handcrafted items from any of the groups who were interested in participating. UG did very well selling a variety of the gorgeous Handcrafts Committee and Bagettes creations.

The day ended on a high note with everyone showing much appreciation for the time and energy needed by all the groups in Alberta to host such a successful event. It was really encouraging to meet the women involved in the other groups in our province, the gathering tied us together again and re-established our passion for the work we do. Most importantly the grandmothers and grand'others' headed for home feeling inspired and motivated to continue our work supporting the African Grandmothers through the SLF Grandmother's Campaign.

Submitted by: Yvonne Way



Publicity

Our primary role is to promote Ujamaa Grandmas events and news to our members, customers, and the public. In 2024, we executed a comprehensive publicity campaign for key events, including the Spring Fabric and Yarn Sale, Bags, Babies & Beyond (BB&B), and the Stride to Turn the Tide initiative via social media and other communication channels.

To ensure effective promotion, we collaborated closely with the event committees to develop strategic plans and messaging. These planning sessions allowed us to align our publicity efforts with each event's objectives, leveraging the creative input and visual materials provided by committee members to enhance our messaging.

A significant highlight of our campaign was securing a feature on CTV's morning show to promote the Fabric and Yarn Sale. Dawn Bolger and Cheryl Mills represented Ujamaa Grandmas with enthusiasm and professionalism, effectively conveying the event's significance. Notably, ticket sales tracked on the Eventbrite platform showed a substantial increase in the hours immediately following the broadcast, demonstrating the impact of this media exposure.

We extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to these publicity efforts. The success of our campaigns is a testament to the collective creativity, dedication, and teamwork of our members and committees. Thank you for your invaluable support! Big thanks to all who contributed!

Leslie Buckle and Valerie Hagens.



Quirky Climate Change Fashion Show

In September 2024, our newest project, A Quirky Climate Change Fashion Show, was introduced at the Alberta Grandmothers Gathering held here in Calgary. The aim of this show is to get people talking about Climate Change because, if they talk, then they might be inspired to act on this most critical issue in our world today.

The fashion show which consists of 31 garments with original graphics (many of them humorous) has an accompanying narrative telling some of the stories of climate change. The garments are not sold at the end of the Show and thus the show is being offered free of charge to any community group who might want to present it over the next few years. Five of the Alberta Grandmothers groups, including Ujamaa Grandmas, are already planning fundraisers around this Show.

Ellen Monaghan



A sample of beautiful garments created by Ellen Monaghan depicting issues caused by climate change

Sales and Finance

We are always looking for ways to streamline the cashier process. Working with the treasurer, we agreed a written receipt is redundant and has been eliminated resulting in cost saving initiatives. Financially, as we are not paying for receipt books (and looking for a place to store them). Time wise, we estimated saving 30 hours had we not been writing receipts for the almost 1700 transactions at the 2023 F&Y Sale. At the 2024 sale we processed 2175 transactions estimating a time savings of almost 40 hours. As payment is made by debit/credit the Moneris print out is the customer receipt with the treasurer tracking transactions through the Moneris website. This new process seemed to be well received by customers, if they even noticed.

With the removal of cash sales for purchases, cashiers are able to work independently. This makes better use of the cashier base and our working areas less crowded. The exception to this is when we're training a new cashier. They are paired with an experienced cashier to assist them the first couple of sales.

There is always interest in cashier positions and care is taken to ensure individual skill levels are a good fit for the position.

Surveys after the Fabric and Yarn sale, as well the Bags, Babies, and Beyond sale, showed cashiers are pleased to have their opinions asked for any changes and suggestions, and even more pleased when they are implemented. They have been quite excited about the processes that have been changed over the past couple of years which has shown a resurgence in their volunteering. Some of them refuse to leave prior to the end of their shift if sales have slowed! All cashiers were thrilled with the elimination of the written receipts.

With the insanity we experienced during the first few hours on the first day of the Fabric and Yarn sale in 2023, we took care to ensure a full complement of cashiers, twelve in fact, and backup. As noted above, removing the need to provide a written receipt was a huge time saver! So much in fact, some of the cashiers were asked to help in other areas and we were happy to accommodate the request. A tremendous **"thank you"** to the "tallies" whose adding of the tally sheets (and chatting with customers) kept people happy and the line moving! Other key factors like having a "cashier line-up traffic control" person kept the line moving smoothly. The Eventbrite half hourly entrance numbers were slightly reduced from the previous year and was a great decision by the F&Y committee.

Rachel Millard and I are currently a team of two, and we work well together. We continue to look for another one or two members. Many of the cashiers are willing to jump in and lend a hand as needed so this has not been a pressing matter.

I am attending the 2025 F&Y Planning Committee meetings representing the Sales Finance Committee and also as the Board of Directors Liaison.

Submitted by Cheryl Aitkens



Smiling cashiers ready for customers

Stride to Turn the Tide

What a magnificent STRIDE 2024 campaign our team of 10 produced! Thanks to Sandra Burgess, Judy Howe, Janice Lambert, Brigitte Launhardt, Carla Lorfing, Lee McNiven, Cheryl Mills, Paul Paetkau, and Marion Shadlock for their more than diligent contributions of time. Thanks also (posthumously) to Louise Breadner, our record keeper of activities, and Leslie Buckle and Valerie Hagens for posting photos on the UG Facebook page.

Our team logged an awesome total of 4,125 kms (remember each hour of activity equaled 5 kms, so that's 825 hours of many different activities) which more than double surpassed our goal of 2000 kms. The sponsorship we received from friends and family was \$6,083.36, which also surpassed our goal of \$6,000. Thanks everyone who contributed in any way to our UG Stride efforts.

As you may know, the Stride campaign directly supports the Stephen Lewis Foundation and our African grandmother sisters. What a contribution we've made! We'd be delighted if you joined us in June for STRIDE 2025.

Submitted by Jan Gergie



Resting after a Stride activity

Villages Report

Villages Calgary, part of the Global Village Crafts Society, has been a leader in promoting fair trade in Calgary for more than forty years. This non-profit society is dedicated to encouraging ethical consumption, supporting the livelihoods of artisans and farmers worldwide, and promoting fair compensation for their work. The shop carries coffee, jewellery and accessories, clothing, chocolate and many other wonderful items. Their offerings are not just products, but symbols of hope, empowerment, and fairness.

Each year in the November/December time frame, they offer opportunities for non-profit organizations to partner with them and at the end of the partnership period, donate a 10% of the sales back to the organization. This year our sales totalled \$922, therefore our earnings are \$92.29 which were directly transferred to SLF.

Respectfully submitted,
Brigitte Launhardt

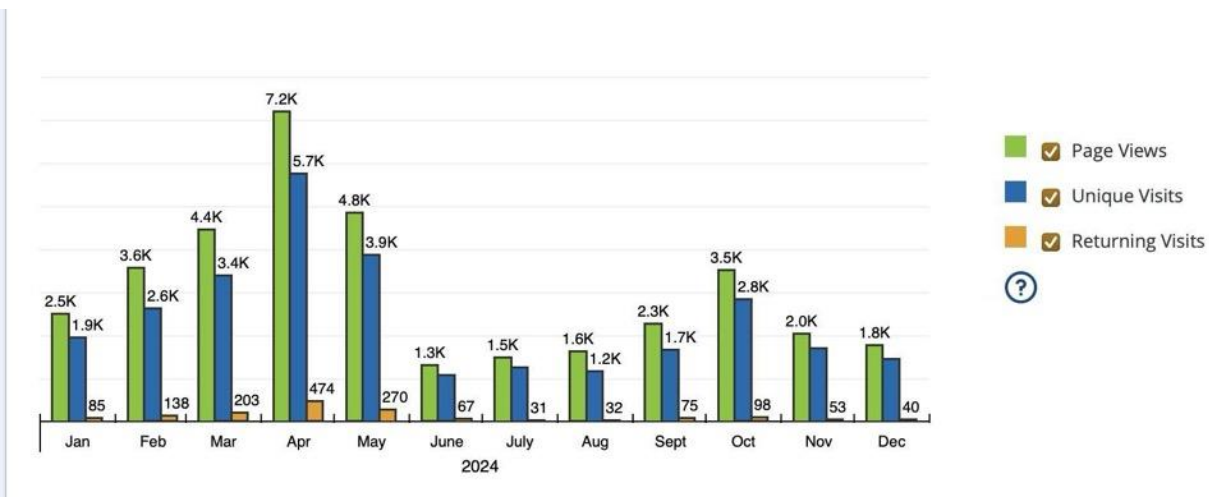


Webmaster

UJAMAA GRANDMAS continues to rely on 100sitehosting for web hosting, email hosting and domain registration.

The sort of boring stuff:

1. A unique site visit is a count of a single visitor navigating to our site. In 2024, unique site visits totalled 28,700 and averaged 2400 per month.
2. Unique page views is the count of individual pages opened by visitors to the site. In 2024, pages views totalled 36,500 and the monthly average page views was 3,000.
3. Unique site visits and page views are driven by the two big fundraisers.
 1. Site visits topped out at 3400, 5700 and 3900 in March, April and May respectively, driven by the FABRIC & YARN SALE. The next highest unique visit count—2800—occurred in October leading up to BB&B.
 2. Monthly page views reached 4400, 7200 and 4800 in March, April, and May respectively. In October, page views reached 3500. These two big events drive visitors to the site and while they are here, they browse other pages.



The more interesting stuff:

1. The calendar continues to note recurring events—GATHERINGS, Board Meetings, SEW DAY—for the entire year, with links to more information and maps when relevant. It is possible to view the events as a calendar or a list.

2. The WHAT'S NEW tab is updated monthly to include relevant items from the E-NEWS. If you have lost your E-NEWS, you can always go to the website to find out what you are missing.
3. There are dedicated pages for makers under the ENHANCING AND USING OUR CREATIVITY tab. Here makers can find information about the Handcrafts Committee and guidance for making items that we know will sell. This info is updated by the Handcrafts Committee custodians after each sale.
4. There is a dedicated place for book club members under the LEARNING ABOUT AFRICA AND RAISING AWARENESS tab where there are synopses of previous and upcoming books.
5. Members appear to be using the resources on the website and content is routinely updated.

If you haven't visited for while take a look. If you do come to visit and see any issues or have suggestions for improvement, be sure to forward these to either the main email at message@ujamaagrandmas.com or directly to the spider woman at webmaster@ujamaagrandmas.com.

Submitted by Patty Cucman



An adorable find at the Bags, Babies & Beyond Sale

Report from the Treasurer for 2024

The 2024 fiscal year marked another strong year of growth and impact for Ujamaa Grandmas. Total revenue rose to **\$178,000 (after tax)**, up from \$158,000 in 2023 — an increase of approximately **12.7%**, driven by the continued dedication of our volunteers and committees.

Revenue Breakdown (Pre-Tax vs. After-Tax)

The revenue figures traditionally reported to our membership are **pre-tax**. However, for accounting clarity, both **pre-tax** and **after-tax** numbers are presented below:

Revenue Source	Pre-Tax Amount	After-Tax Amount
Bagettes Etsy Sales	\$1,311	\$1,246
Bake Sale	\$813	\$773
Fabric & Yarn Sales	\$144,158	\$136,451
Handcrafts (BB&B)	\$41,684	\$39,700
Total Revenue	\$187,966	\$178,170

Donations

In 2024, Ujamaa Grandmas donated a total of **\$158,178** to the Stephen Lewis Foundation:

- \$145,000 directly from Ujamaa Grandmas
- \$13,178 from individual and monthly donations made on behalf of the organization

This is a decrease from 2023, when Ujamaa Grandmas made a larger strategic donation following a review of cash flow forecast. At that time, surplus funds were available and could be donated without impacting operations, allowing us to align our cash reserves with projected expenses.

In contrast, 2024’s donations were timed and sized based on current fundraising and projected expenses, maintaining a healthy balance between impact and responsible financial stewardship.

Financial Performance

In 2024, Ujamaa Grandmas recorded a **net income of \$12,859**. By comparison, 2023 showed a net loss which was a result due to the timing of when our 2022 donation was recorded.

Specifically, the donation to the Stephen Lewis Foundation from our **2022 Bags, Babies & Beyond Sale** was recorded in early 2023, though it related to the prior year's fundraising. The organization's financial position remained healthy across both years.

While Ujamaa Grandmas is not designed to generate profit, finishing the year with a modest surplus reflects strong financial stewardship. Our goal is to maintain appropriate reserves to support operations and program delivery without holding unnecessary idle funds.

In 2024, the alignment between donation timing and fiscal reporting contributed to a more accurate reflection of year-end results. This consistency supports clearer cash flow planning and strengthens financial oversight from our board.

Operational Enhancements

In 2024, Ujamaa Grandmas fully implemented its digital payment and record-keeping system, eliminating the use of carbon copy receipt books for our sales. This change led to significant gains in efficiency and volunteer capacity.

Across both the Fabric & Yarn and Bags, Babies & Beyond sales, the new system saved over 44 hours of volunteer time. It also allowed for faster customer processing — in the most recent Fabric & Yarn Sale, we saw an increase from just over 2,100 customers in 2023 to over 2,400 in 2024. While this growth is supported by incredible volunteer efforts, the streamlined system contributed to a noticeably smoother experience for both customers and volunteers.

Leadership Transition

As I reflect on my time as Treasurer, I feel grateful to have served an organization that balances creativity, purpose, and generosity so meaningfully. This role allowed me to challenge myself, grow alongside a committed group of volunteers, and contribute to a mission that truly matters.

The partnership with the **Stephen Lewis Foundation** continues to be a powerful reminder of what local action can achieve on a global scale. Knowing that the funds raised here in Calgary are helping African grandmothers care for and raise the next generation has been both humbling and inspiring.

With that, I'll be stepping down from my role and am pleased to welcome **Sherri Rau** as the new Treasurer. Sherri brings extensive financial experience and a strong commitment

to the work of Ujamaa Grandmas. I'm confident the organization is in excellent hands as it continues its journey.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Hoang
Ujamaa Grandmas Treasurer

UJAMAA GRANDMAS HELPING AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS SOCIETY
INDEX TO FINANCIAL INFORMATION
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

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COMPILATION ENGAGEMENT REPORT

To the Management of Ujamaa Grandmas Helping African Grandmothers Society

On the basis of information provided by management, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Ujamaa Grandmas Helping African Grandmothers Society as at December 31, 2024, and the statements of revenues and expenditures and changes in net assets for the year then ended, and Note 1, which describes the basis of accounting applied in the preparation of the compiled financial information and other explanatory information ("financial information").

Management is responsible for the accompanying financial information, including the accuracy and completeness of the underlying information used to compile it and the selection of the basis of accounting.

We performed this engagement in accordance with Canadian Standard on Related Services (CSRS) 4200, *Compilation Engagements*, which requires us to comply with relevant ethical requirements. Our responsibility is to assist management in the preparation of the financial information.

We did not perform an audit engagement or a review engagement, nor were we required to perform procedures to verify the accuracy or completeness of the information provided by management. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion, or provide any form of assurance on the financial information.

Readers are cautioned that the financial information may not be appropriate for their purposes.

Calgary, Alberta
April 4, 2025

Jeffery J O'Rourke Professional Corporation
Chartered Professional Accountants

UJAMAA GRANDMAS HELPING AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 39,022	\$ 25,861
Prepaid expenses	<u>665</u>	<u>2,028</u>
	<u>\$ 39,687</u>	<u>\$ 27,889</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 1,313	\$ 1,313
Goods and services tax payable	<u>714</u>	<u>1,775</u>
	<u>2,027</u>	<u>3,088</u>
Net assets	<u>37,660</u>	<u>24,801</u>
	<u>\$ 39,687</u>	<u>\$ 27,889</u>

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

Janet Hoang Director
Charlotte Holmlund Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial information

UJAMAA GRANDMAS HELPING AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
REVENUE		
Sales	\$ 178,170	\$ 157,640
Donations	2,778	1,882
Interest	25	26
Goods and services tax	1,671	1,408
	<u>182,644</u>	<u>160,956</u>
EXPENSES		
Advertising and promotion	406	324
Bank charges and interest	125	154
Donation to SLF	147,787	170,350
Fundraising expenses	17,681	13,413
Insurance, licences and dues	2,161	2,206
Office	337	218
Professional fees	1,250	1,250
Supplies	38	634
	<u>169,785</u>	<u>188,549</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ 12,859</u>	<u>\$ (27,593)</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial information

UJAMAA GRANDMAS HELPING AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 24,801	\$ 52,394
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	<u>12,859</u>	<u>(27,593)</u>
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 37,660</u>	<u>\$ 24,801</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial information

UJAMAA GRANDMAS HELPING AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS SOCIETY
NOTES TO FINANCIAL INFORMATION
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

1. BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The basis of accounting applied in the preparation of the statement of financial position of Ujamaa Grandmas Helping African Grandmothers Society as at December 31, 2024, and the statements of revenues and expenditures and changes in net assets for the year then ended is the historical cost basis and reflects cash transactions with the addition of:

- prepaid expenses
 - Accounts payable and accrued liabilities.
-