

Dear W.I. Secretaries – Please ensure you pass this to all your members,

Today the majority of Trustees attended the monthly Board meeting via 'Zoom Conferencing', as we are committed to ensure our Federation emerges from this pandemic in the healthiest position possible. We will continue to hold these meetings using this technology and would encourage others to do the same. It is good to see each other again and has many benefits, time, no travelling, and the ability to mute attendees!

Autumn Council 2020 and Spring Council 2021 rescheduled dates: The Majestic hotel have said they would honour our booking that had to be cancelled in March this year until 2022. To date we have been unable to contact Tennants in Leyburn which was to have been the venue for this year's Autumn Lunch. Whether or not an Autumn event this year is feasible is yet to be determined. Whatever happens we hope that booking arrangements for the Autumn event might be notified to WI Secretaries in July.

Federation Choir: We are looking into venues, to be ready for the relaunch of the Federation Choir when we come out of lockdown, and we will keep Choir members updated on progress. We have decided not to refund fees for the Choir, as instead we will credit these against the first term once we are able to start up again. The feel-good factor, that we all experience as being a part of the Choir, will be welcomed by us all by the time we get to the end of this situation.

Virtual Monthly Meetings: More and more WIs are holding their WI meetings (and Committee meetings). Several ladies have had support to get started, so if help is needed do contact Michelle at the office or Jackie Williams on jackiewilliamsmeden@gmail.com

Keeping busy and Lockdown tales: Do let us know your own stories by sending them to: NYWFnews@gmail.com If anyone needs any help of any sort, do please contact the office on nywfw@btconnect.com so we can try to help, and if you need inspiration to keep busy, don't forget that the NFWI website has good crafts and baking sections on MyWI.

Refunds Progress: Processing of refunds is now underway for events up to the middle of July that cannot now take place as planned, with all of them due to be sent out to WI Treasurers by the end of April. Denman trip deposits have now been returned by the College so individual members' refunds are also to be done as soon as possible.

Federation Losses due to Coronavirus: As many of you will appreciate, with the cancellation of GYS 2020 and a significant chunk of our events programme cancelled or postponed to 2021 due to Coronavirus, there will be a huge hole in the Federation finances for this year, likely to amount to several thousands of pounds because of the loss of our fundraising capability. We have, however, been successful in being approved for a grant from Harrogate Borough Council which is gratefully received. We are also taking action to access any support that might be available to us from other funds, as well as steps to reduce our running costs during the crisis where we can.

So, it was welcome news recently when some of our members contacted the office and asked that the refund sums due to them should be donated to Federation funds at this time. Thank you, ladies, your support is valued and appreciated.

How can we help: Knitted Red Hearts: Harrogate hospital are very grateful to receive your knitted hearts. This idea has developed into a project to involve every patient that is admitted into the hospital, including Covid 19 patients.

Our hearts will be placed in presentation boxes-in pairs and will be offered on admission, one heart will stay with the patient throughout their time in hospital, the other heart will stay with their relative. The presentation box will include the message - "This heart is one of a pair that has been lovingly made by your local community. The other is with your loved one providing comfort and support until you are able to do so."

The knitted/crocheted or sewn hearts are to be placed in new and sealed food bags clearly labelled with the date of sealing and delivered to the hospital or collected by Fiona (who is a volunteer) Email her on Fionsryan2812@hotmail.co.uk She can also provide the address for posting.

Protective Clothing: We have also been approached by a Nursing Home for WI members to make coveralls for carers in Nursing homes. They have gloves, aprons, masks and eye shields but they have a desperate need for long sleeved smocks to give them some more protection. They are happy for these to be made from cotton sheeting and duvet covers, (pattern attached separately.)

Do you have WI members who could help make these and/or provide cotton duvets, sheets and pillowcases? If you can help or know of a nursing home that needs these smocks, please contact Judith Stansfield judstass@gmail.com or 07990572365 to arrange for collection.

Request for Uniform Bags for Airedale Hospital, Skipton District: Airedale Hospital are desperate for these bags and wondered if we could help.

They are made from fabric which can be washed at 60 Degrees, approx. size 20"x 25" with a draw string. Chris has been making them out of pillowcases - cutting 6" off the top making a channel at the top to hold a draw string. Need more help contact: christine.keane7@yahoo.co.uk who is willing to arrange collection and delivery to the hospital.

Campaigns: Honeybees Campaign could take on a new lease of life with members trying to plant a honey bee area in their garden, small or large. Some garden centres are willing to deliver, e.g. Tates from Ripon and Hoe plants at South Stanley are doing a click and collect and you can pay over the phone.

Violence Against Women: the lock down is causing many problems even among families which we would never believe had problems. If you think there are any people you know who may be vulnerable find a way to reach out and try to make suggestions to help.

Recycle your sustainable toothbrushes: Swap your conventional toothbrush for a bamboo one and when it is finished its life cut off the bristles and use the bamboo base as a plant marker.

Thank you for your Feedback: As issues 1 and 2 of our weekly communication have been circulated out to members, we are getting lots of positive feedback. But if there is something that you feel more information is needed on, do please email the office and we will try and include an update in the following week's update.

Julie