

# CHATHAM-KENT SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS CENTRE



RECOGNISING 25 YEARS OF  
SERVICE & ACTIVISM  
1985-2010



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The Ministry of the Attorney General

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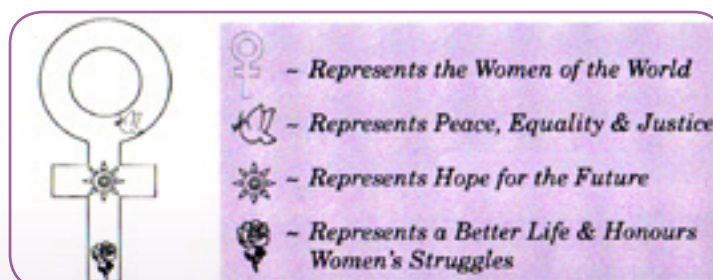
October 1, 2010

# Message from the CKSACC Board of Directors

As we mark this milestone anniversary and look back over the last twenty-five years it is safe to say that we are in a state of transition unlike any we have undergone before. Grounded in a grass-roots movement the CKSACC has been a very active, effective and autonomous centre overseen by a Board of Directors entrusted with its sound and fiscally responsible management. Our job has been made all the easier by having in place: a savvy Executive Director who has consistently represented the centre in a manner that has garnered respect in our community, provincially and at a national level; knowledgeable and caring staff who have made a positive difference in the lives of thousands of women through their delivery of important programs and services; dedicated volunteers who have assisted in reaching the goals of the centre and helping survivors through their generous collective contribution of nearly 190,000 volunteer hours; much needed and appreciated funding from the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General Victim Services Secretariat, the Canadian Women's Foundation, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, community supporters, and from 1985 until 2002, the United Way of Chatham-Kent. We are grateful to all of the parties who have provided financial and other support these twenty-five years. We commend those community groups, service agencies, politicians and individuals who have worked with us to improve the lives of women and their families. Although we do not know their names and faces, it is with special recognition that we thank those individuals who have placed their hope and trust in the CKSACC by accessing programs and services. Additionally, many of us have had an opportunity at annual meetings or community events to meet and speak with family members of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont. We are grateful to these families for their immeasurable courage and persistence to force legislative improvements for working women and others in Bill 168. We congratulate them on this great success which was fourteen years in coming. It is through their determination to ensure that the death of their loved ones would not be in vain that this reform took place. It was an honour for the CKSACC to work closely in partnership with them. Although the recent passage of Bill 168 has received a great deal of attention, the 2006 reform of the Human Rights Code and the legislated proclamation of Sexual Harassment Awareness Week are also praise-worthy and we extend congratulations for those measures as well.

At a time when grass-roots organisations like the CKSACC are under pressure to conform to more mainstream practices, this seems an appropriate time to acknowledge the unique contributions not only of the CKSACC but of the larger anti-rape movement. We are proud of the achievements that it has made and are glad to be a part of it.

Finally, we cannot end our message without thanking Michele Landsberg for agreeing to participate in our 25th anniversary celebration. We have long admired Ms. Landsberg's intelligent articulation of issues regarding women's equality and are thankful for her invaluable contributions to the cause.





# CKSACC Recognising 25 Years of Service & Activism: 1985-2010

“Our work is about equality, not victim services”. Those words spoken by Lee Lakeman, President of the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, resonate loudly for us at the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre. We have much to be proud of in carrying that philosophy forward into effective service delivery and meaningful action. It would require the production of several volumes to properly provide a full account of all the various initiatives, campaigns, activities and partnerships that the CKSACC has been involved in over the years to advance the work. We regret that it was not possible to highlight all of the unique collaborations and creative endeavours that we have had the privilege to take part in. Nonetheless, we believe that this short publication provides a fair reflection of the vision and mission of this grass-roots, equality-seeking organisation, and a clear picture of how we have moved forward over the last 25 years in upholding that vision and mission.

In reviewing the information contained on these pages one will easily appreciate the aspect of activism that we refer to. Less obvious is how that activism has been coupled with service. As an illustration we offer the example of workplace sexual harassment. While the CKSACC, with others, was involved in lobbying for an inquest into the 1996 workplace murder of Theresa Vince at the Sears store in Chatham, and then following the Theresa Vince inquest when we pressed for systemic change, important services were also being delivered:

♀ Support & Advocacy Workers provided information, individual peer / support counseling and practical support for victims of gendered workplace harassment / violence;

♀ Support & Advocacy Workers provided assistance, advocacy and accompaniment for womyn who wanted to report workplace sexual harassment to their employers / Human Rights Commission / etc.

♀ Crisis line callers received support, information, referral and assistance;

♀ In partnership with (then) Sanson & Hart Law Firm, the CKSACC provided a free Legal Clinic annually during the first week of June. The Legal Clinic was available for womyn who had experienced workplace or institutional sexual harassment.

♀ CKSACC provided public education about institutional / workplace sexual harassment through community displays, speaking engagements, creation and dissemination of printed material, workshops, special projects and joint initiatives with others.

While this is but one example, it is our hope that it will serve to demonstrate the possibilities that exist for providing support, advocacy and responsive services while also effecting meaningful change through activism. We hope that you will enjoy this brief overview of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre’s 25 years of service and activism.

To the CKSACC staff, volunteers and administration, past and present: Congratulations on this milestone anniversary! 25 years of dedicated and effective service and activism is indeed something to recognise with pride. In moving forward from here let us all continue to advocate for the end of sexist violence and press for true equality and justice.

*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.*

~ Anne Frank



## *Message from Mayor Hope*

On behalf of Council and the Citizens of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chatham Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre.

The Chatham Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, an anti-violence organization has provided confidential support, advocacy and information to women 16 years of age and older who have experienced the impact of sexual assault/abuse/harassment for the past 25 years. The crisis centre continues to work towards the eradication of sexual violence with programs and services including crisis intervention, a 24 hour crisis line; long and short term support counseling, assistance and advocacy; public education, speaking engagements and presentations.

The compassion and commitment you have provided to women in our community over the past 25 years is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy R. Hope'.

Randy R. Hope, Mayor /CEO  
Municipality of Chatham-Kent





**Pat Hoy, MPP**  
Chatham-Kent-Essex



**To: Staff and Supporters of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre**

As the Member of Provincial Parliament for Chatham-Kent-Essex, I am delighted to have this opportunity to recognise the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre's 25 years of service and activism.

For a quarter of a century, the CKSACC has worked to eradicate sexual violence and to provide essential, and often life saving, services to women.

In 1996, when our community lost Theresa Vince, a wife, mother and grandmother to a tragedy at the hands of her workplace supervisor, the CKSACC reached out to the Vince family and led the call for action. In Theresa's memory, the centre began advocating for changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The CKSACC brought these issues to my attention and I am very grateful to have had the honour and privilege to work with them to make Ontario a safer place for all women.

In April 2009, the Ontario government responded by introducing Bill 168 to protect workers from workplace violence and harassment. The first week in June has since been proclaimed as "Sexual Harassment Awareness Week" in Ontario. Our government has also made sweeping changes to strengthen the Ontario human rights system. This transformation in our province would not have happened without the leadership, determination and hard work of the CKSACC to unite and mobilise Ontario to end violence against women.

As the CKSACC celebrates this important anniversary, I would like to thank all the staff, the board, and volunteers, past and present who worked and continue to work vigorously for meaningful changes to protect women.

Sincerely,

Pat Hoy, MPP  
Chatham-Kent-Essex

**Constituency Office**

111 Heritage Road, Suite 100 • Chatham, ON N7M 5W7 • Tel: 519-351-0510 • Fax: 519-351-7714 • Toll-Free: 1-800-265-3992 • [phoy.mpp.co@liberal.ca](mailto:phoy.mpp.co@liberal.ca)



## MARIA VAN BOMMEL, MPP

Lambton - Kent - Middlesex

October 1, 2010

It is with sincere appreciation that I congratulate the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre on 25 years of service to our community.

Violence against women is a societal problem, and we all have a responsibility to eliminate it. The work being done here at the CKSACC and around the province on the issue of violence against women is very encouraging. Developing a coordinated and comprehensive response to address violence against women is central to moving forward.

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre provides information and support to survivors of sexual violence. Through your work you are responding to the needs identified by survivors as you continue to help many women in our community through difficult and challenging experiences. You have been providing support and advocacy to members of our community for the past twenty-five years and I commend you for your commitment and dedication.

Working in the area of violence against women is not easy work, and I admire each and every member of this Centre for the work you do on a daily basis to improve the lives of all women in our Region.

Thank you again for the services you provide everyday. Please accept my best wishes as you continue to serve our community.

Sincerely,

Maria Van Bommel, MPP  
Lambton Kent Middlesex  
Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues



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CHATHAM - KENT SEXUAL ASSAULT  
CRISIS CENTRE

APPLICATION FOR INCORPORATION OF A CORPORATION WITHOUT SHARE CAPITAL  
REQUÊTE EN CONSTITUTION D'UNE ASSOCIATION

1. The name of the corporation (Nom de l'association):  
CHATHAM - KENT SEXUAL ASSAULT  
CRISIS CENTRE

2. The address of the head office of the corporation (Adresse du siège social):  
Suite 1, 611 King Street West, P.O. Box 342,  
Chatham, Ontario

3. The head office of the corporation is situated in the (Le siège social se trouve / est situé) :  
CHATHAM, in the COUNTY OF KENT

4. Address of clubhouse or similar premises of (any) (s):  
not applicable

**ACTING PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

When I was asked to "come aboard" last summer, I could not have foreseen where our centre would be today, June 26th, 1992.

I became the seventh member of a board of directors of a three-room office above the Salvation Army on King Street. Several of the other board members had been with the centre since its inception in 1985 and had nurtured it and watched it grow.

In November of 1991, I became acting President to meet the ever-increasing needs of the community and the county, we needed to expand both our staff and our office space. After much investigation and discussion, the centre moved to its present location in the Riverview building, to more and larger offices to accommodate our growing staff and service opportunities. Because of the responsible spending practices of the previous board, we were placed in the very fortunate circumstance of having a budget surplus when we most needed it.

I am delighted to report that, though only one of the former members still acts as officer, the Board of Directors of the Chatham Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre now numbers eleven. More importantly, within that number are included representatives from fields of medicine, law and connections, education, community and social services, native Canadian, francophone, outlying areas of the county and also the physically challenged. With such diverse interests and backgrounds influencing our policymaking process, I feel confident that the decisions made by the Board regarding the future and services offered by the centre will reflect the needs and concerns of the vast majority of people in the Chatham-Kent area.

Working with our Executive Director has been an enjoyable and enlightening experience. Michelle Schryer is the centre's very capable and respected director and spokesperson, in whom I have the greatest confidence. Her hours are long and her challenges many. More notable have been her dedication to the success of the centre and her importance to me.

The board is currently discussing priorities and establishing committees for this fiscal year. Of course, the needs of the clients we serve are uppermost. Since so many of our directors are new volunteers to the centre, board development and education will be of benefit to all. We hope to investigate new funding sources and fundraising opportunities as well as to continue promoting community awareness and education.

It has been my pleasure to act as President for the past six months, with the continued support of the Ministry of the Solicitor General, the community, fellow Board members and Michelle, I am honoured to continue to serve the Chatham Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre.

Virginia Rawlinson  
Acting President 1991-1992.

## A Glimpse into Our Herstory

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

It has been an incredibly busy and exciting year for the CKSACC. Our expansion of programmes and services has met with great success in Chatham Kent. The year ahead promises new excitement as well as many challenges. In 1991 the CKSACC responded to 453 Crisis calls, more than 875 sexual assault survivors received ongoing support services including: support counselling, advocacy and accompaniment. It is expected, that number will increase in 1992-93 as CKSACC support counselling is now available in the communities of Glenora, Dresden, Eriau, Tilbury, Wallaceburg and soon, Ridgeway.

One of our most noteworthy accomplishments has been in the area of Public Education and Awareness. During 1991's last quarter alone, 77 presentations provided information and raised awareness for nearly 3,000 people in Chatham Kent, and, we are just beginning to reach out in this

As Executive Director, I am proud of our achievements over the last year. Such success in our growth would not have been possible without the hard work and diligence of many wonderful individuals including:

Staff Members whose knowledge and support are so vital to sexual assault survivors;  
Volunteer Crisis Workers who lovingly contributed more than 10,000 hours of personal time;  
Honourable Board Members, past and current, who have shared their time and vision.

The CKSACC would not be what it is today without financial support from the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

To eradicate sexual violence is everyone's responsibility. To maintain its efforts in this struggle, more importantly, to provide support, information and guidance to those who have experienced social injustice.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Michelle Schryer  
Executive Director.

# Current Programs & Services at the CKSACC

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre (CKSACC) is a grass-roots, anti-violence, equality-seeking organisation that offers a continuum of service for women 16 years of age or older who have experienced the impact of sexual assault / harassment / abuse. The CKSACC works to raise consciousness and awareness, and effect social, political, economic and cultural change toward the elimination of gendered violence.

## **CKSACC Programs & Services Include:**

24-Hour Crisis Intervention Including a 24-Hour Crisis Line – Support, assistance, information, referral and individualised response for survivors of sexual assault / harassment / abuse. Family members or friends who are in need of support or require information that will assist them in supporting their loved one are welcome to call the Crisis Line. CKSACC staff members or volunteer crisis-line workers will respond to crisis and support calls at 519-354-8688.

Support & Advocacy – Short or long term, individual support counselling, as well as information, advocacy and assistance with such matters as housing and basic needs, criminal injuries compensation, human rights concerns, community organisations and programs, social services, etc. are available. Survivors can schedule face-to-face appointments or telephone support by calling the CKSACC business line Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at 519-354-8908.

In addition to the services provided to individual women, CKSACC Support and Advocacy work also addresses issues that affect women collectively.

Outreach – Through co-operative efforts with community partners CKSACC support services are available at specific locations throughout the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. In addition, the CKSACC participates in the organisation and planning of joint endeavours with other equality-seeking social / justice community groups to promote respect and address issues of inequality and marginalisation.

Awareness and Prevention – CKSACC offers an array of public education and awareness opportunities aimed at increasing understanding and consciousness about systemic roots and causes of gendered violence and ending sexual assault / harassment / abuse. In addition to community displays, a lending library, special projects and events, dissemination of printed material, and when human resources allow, the CKSACC also accepts speaking engagements.

Information and Referral – Information and Referral are provided as required to meet individual needs and circumstances.

# Services at a Glance over 25 Years

Based on a twelve year average, staff of the CKSACC compiled an account of services delivered to individuals by the Centre since it opened in 1985:

In addition to 2,500 presentations / public education events that were delivered with the goal of preventing and ending sexual assault / harassment / abuse, the CKSACC also delivered direct services.

## Support Services for Women

CKSACC:

Responded to nearly 40,000 crisis calls;

Provided individual peer support / counseling for women 20,000 times;

Provided advocacy / accompaniment on more than 7,000 occasions;

Assisted with information and/or referral nearly 20,000 times.

## Support Services for Men

Beginning in 1985 the CKSACC provided support for male survivors of sexual abuse. Eventually the Support Services for Men Program was provided at a Satellite Office until it was transferred to Family Service Kent in the spring of 2002. In addition to providing services for survivors of sexual abuse, the CKSACC also provided short term support and information for men whose loved one had experienced sexual violence. Until the Program was transferred, the CKSACC responded to more than 900 crisis calls. In addition, peer support / counseling, accompaniment and / or advocacy, information and / or referral were also provided on more than 900 occasions.

## *Thank You!*

*Although the CKSACC currently lacks the necessary human and financial resources to provide the same level of Outreach services as we previously have throughout Chatham-Kent, we gratefully acknowledge the many wonderful community partners who joined with us to improve accessibility of CKSACC services in outlying communities. Their cooperation and partnership supported our work and provided a safe, confidential meeting space in the communities of:*

*Blenheim, Dresden, Erieau, Maraviantown, Pain Court, Ridgetown, Thamesville, Tilbury, Wallaceburg, and for a time, Walpole Island*

**Ministry of the Attorney General**

Crown Attorney  
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Court House  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 315  
425 Grand Avenue West  
Chatham ON N7M 6M9  
Tel. : 519 355-2240  
Fax : 519 355-2241

TTY: 416 456-1234

**Ministère du Procureur général**

Procureur de la Couronne  
Municipalité de Chatham-Kent

Palais de justice  
3<sup>e</sup> étage, bureau 315  
425, avenue Grand Ouest  
Chatham ON N7M 6M9  
Tél. : 519 355-2240  
Télec. : 519 355-2241  
ATS : 416 456-1234



September 8, 2010

Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre  
405 Riverview Drive, Unit #101  
R.R. #5  
Chatham, Ontario  
N7M 5J5

Attention: Ms. Michelle Schryer  
Executive Director

Dear Michelle:

I am delighted to have an opportunity to congratulate the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre (CKSACC) for having been a wonderful community partner to the office of the Chatham-Kent Crown Attorney for twenty-five years.

Throughout my tenure as Crown Attorney here since 1988 I have personally come to respect and admire the staff of the CKSACC for their commitment, insight, wisdom, determination and stamina. They have served a very real need for our community and have accomplished outstanding results. It is not an overstatement Michelle, to say that you and your staff have often made a world of difference to individuals who were suffering as victims.

Beyond your work with individual victims Michelle, you and your staff have been a gentle but firm hand which has guided your community partners and the community in general on a path of education and enlightenment. Your presence on numerous committees has served to remind us all of the importance of respectful process. Your participation in educational seminars has helped many of us more fully comprehend the difficulties which victims face when testifying in court.


While there are many examples of the community work which the CKSACC has performed, may I commend you in particular for two recent projects. The *From Isolation to Action Report* dealt with recommendations to deal with major prosecutions involving



victims of sexual abuse by the clergy. Your participation in this project was invaluable to the overall balance of the final Report. I would also like to commend you in particular for the work that you have done to promote the importance of *Activism in Ending Sexual Violence*. This presentation profoundly moved a number of the members of the community, and this is the germ from which social change often sprouts.

On behalf of my office and myself, let me congratulate you for a quarter century of important and outstanding work. Allow me also to commit my office to the cause of continued partnership with the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre in future.

Yours truly,



PAUL A. BAILEY  
Crown Attorney  
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

PAB:bb

*Following the 2006 prosecution of Catholic priest, Charles Sylvestre who was convicted of the indecent assault of 47 girls, all now adults, a unique and groundbreaking project: From Isolation to Action (FITA) was formed. Through a community projects grant program, funding for this co-operative initiative was secured from the Government of Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General, Ontario Victim Services Secretariat. FITA was additionally supported by funding from the Roman Catholic Diocese of London and a private donor. This unusual endeavour brought together representatives from government, the Catholic Church, community and survivors. There were a number of goals associated with the project with one common goal shared by all: the prevention of sexual abuse of children by clergy.*

# Chatham-Kent Police Service



**Dennis J. Poole**  
Chief of Police

P.O. Box 366, 24 Third Street, Chatham, ON N7M 5K5  
Telephone: 519-436-6600 • Fax: 519-436-6643  
[www.ckpolice.com](http://www.ckpolice.com)

October 1, 2010

Ms. Michelle Schryer,  
Executive Director,  
Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre,  
101-405 Riverview Dr.,  
Chatham, ON  
N7M 5J5

Dear Michelle:

On behalf of the members of the Chatham-Kent Police Service, I would like to extend our sincere congratulations to the Board, staff and the many volunteers, past and present, of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, on the occasion of your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service in our community!

I can certainly recall when the Centre was initially established and the incredible need that existed in our community for victims of sexual assault. In the face of many difficult challenges, the extraordinary efforts of the Centre over the years to assist and support victims has indeed been remarkable. Your tireless advocacy to identify issues of concern in the investigative process, the justice system, the training of police officers, public education and awareness, and the ongoing social development of our community have been and are very much appreciated.

We look forward to our continuing partnership with the Centre in the years to come and wish you every success for the future!

With Best Regards,

Dennis Poole,  
Chief of Police.

# CKSACC Memberships

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre is proud to be an active member of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) and the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC). We share in the vision and mission of these long-established womyn's organisations. As an autonomous, community-based centre we have committed ourselves to providing support for womyn individually and collectively, and advancing equality and justice for all.

## **Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC)**

As stated on the OCRCC website:

### **Mission Statement:**

*The Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) is an equality-seeking network of women from autonomous rape crisis/sexual assault centres committed to leading social transformation that prevents and eliminates sexual violence.*

### **Goals:**

- *To work for the prevention and eradication of sexual assault to promote legal, social and attitudinal changes regarding sexual assault.*
- *To organize the collective strengths of Ontario rape crisis centres in the anti-sexual assault movement to provide a mechanism of communication, education and mobilization to alleviate the political and geographical isolation of rape crisis centres in Ontario.*
- *To encourage, direct and generate research into sexual violence.*

### **Objectives:**

- *To work as a force for social change regarding sexual assault by:*
  1. *Determining policy on a provincial level on issues relevant to rape crisis centres;*
  2. *Educating and making recommendations on a provincial level on issues relevant to rape crisis centres;*
  3. *Participating in public education;*
  4. *Facilitating rape crisis centre communication;*
  5. *Working with the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres and other provincial and national groups on developing national policies; and,*
  6. *Liaising with other provincial organizations addressing similar issues.*

## Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC)

As stated on the CASAC Website:

### **Goals:**

1. a) *To work for the prevention and eradication of sexual assault*
  - b) *To promote legal, social and attitudinal change regarding sexual assault*
  - c) *To organise our collective strengths in the anti-sexual assault movement*
  - d) *To provide a mechanism for communication, education and mobilization to alleviate the political and geographical isolation of Sexual Assault Crisis Centres in Canada*
  - e) *To encourage, direct and generate research into sexual violence*
2. *To work as a force for social change regarding sexual assault by:*
  - a) *Determining policy on a national level on issues relevant to Sexual Assault Crisis Centres*
  - b) *Educating and making recommendations on a national level on issues relevant to Sexual Assault Crisis Centres*
  - c) *Public education on a national level*
  - d) *Facilitating communication between Sexual Assault Crisis Centres*

*This is difficult but hopeful work we do.*  
~ Marilyn Oladimeji ~ OCRCC

*Our work is about equality, not victim services.*  
~ Lee Lakeman ~ CASAC

*I leave you the will to fight; the desire to live;  
the right to anger, to love...  
to joy, to transform silence into language and action.  
I leave you a litany for survival.*  
~ Audre Lorde ~



# “Passing of the Ankh” – The Making of a New Tradition

In October 2004, the CKSACC hosted the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and womyn from all across the province gathered in our Chatham-Kent community. It was a marvelous opportunity to share with our sisters and raise awareness about the rich cultural history of Chatham-Kent.

Lee Lakeman, President of the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres attended the two day AGM and provided the keynote address. We were honoured to have Lee and several other sisters-in-the-struggle with us from Vancouver and they were duly impressed with our Chatham-Kent hospitality. In addition, the CKSACC introduced a fabulous new tradition that has been upheld by the OCRCC to this day: the “Passing of the Ankh”.

A remarkable young womin designed and crafted a beautiful wooden ankh especially for the CKSACC so that we could initiate this new tradition. Each year at the AGM, before womyn adjourn and head home to their respective communities, a member centre of the OCRCC volunteers to host the AGM for the following year. Beginning in 2004 the ankh, inscribed with the letters “OCRCC” was passed on from the CKSACC, host of the 2004 AGM, to the volunteer host for the 2005 AGM. May the tradition continue!



cy against violence against women

with fond  
memories of the  
your center  
and workers  
over the  
years

Agressions a Carattere Sexuel



## Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres

1515 Rebecca Street, Suite 227, Oakville ON, L6L 5G8

Tel: 905-825-3622 Fax: 905-825-3755

Website: [www.ocrcc.ca](http://www.ocrcc.ca) Email: [executivedirector@savisofhalton.org](mailto:executivedirector@savisofhalton.org)

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010

Michelle Schryer, Executive Director  
Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre  
405 Riverview Dr, Unit 101  
Chatham, ON N7M 5J4

### **RE: Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre Marks 25 Years of Service and Activism**

To the staff, volunteers and members of Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre,

The Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) would like to extend congratulations on the 25th anniversary of Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, and appreciation for their outstanding service to survivors of sexual violence.

OCRCC works toward the prevention and eradication of sexual assault. Our membership includes sexual assault centres from all across Ontario, offering counselling, information and support services to survivors of sexual violence, including childhood sexual abuse and incest. As you are aware, OCRCC was formed in the mid-1970s to act as a communication network for sexual assault centres across the province. Together, we work to promote legal, social and attitudinal changes regarding sexual violence. Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre has been a proud and active member of OCRCC for many years. **OCRCC now is writing to congratulate Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre on 25 years of service and activism in the anti-violence movement.**

So much can happen in 25 years! As anti-violence advocates, we know that legal, social and support services for survivors of sexual violence have seen many changes – and challenges – over this time. Ontario sexual assault centres, including Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, utilize an integrated feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppressive framework to address sexual violence in Canada<sup>1</sup>. This framework supports those affected or threatened by sexual violence by maintaining that “sexual violence against women and children is power-based, gender-based, [and] structurally supported”<sup>2</sup>.

At OCRCC and in sexual assault centres across Ontario, survivors of violence are at the centre of our work. This work includes activities and services facilitated by sexual assault centres, as well as larger lobbying action for legal and systemic changes that support survivors. Indeed, the important activities, services, knowledge and standards of Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre’s are all built on the experiences of women – and on “listening to women’s experiences...as members of a social change movement”<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Riggs, Joan. 2009. “Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) Strategic Plan”. Ottawa, 2

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Bonisteel, M. and Linda Green. “Implications of the Shrinking Space for Feminist Anti-violence Advocacy”. Presented at the 2005 Canadian Social Welfare Policy Conference, *Forging Social Futures*, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, 31



Since Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre's was established in 1985, women's advocates for survivors of sexual violence have seen:

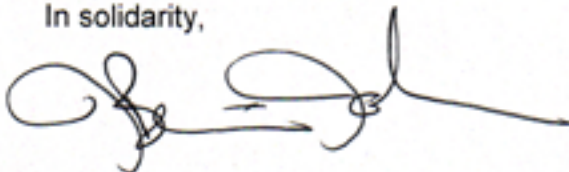
- Invitation from the Ontario Women's Directorate for OCRCC and its member sexual assault centres to participate on an advisory body for a province-wide media campaign addressing sexual assault (1987)
- A new anti-stalking law (Criminal Harassment) passed by the federal Canadian government (1993)
- Introduction of the Rape Shield Law, which aimed to prohibit the admission of sexual history evidence of the survivor in the context of a sexual assault criminal law case
- Active participation of sexual assault centres in "Women, Our Vote Counts!" (1999) and "Step It Up, Ontario!" (2008) campaigns, both of which voiced a message from women to the province of Ontario that we want better, faster government action to end violence against women
- The passing and implementation of Bill 168: *Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act* (2010). Bill 168 represents changes to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act, and strengthens protections for workers from workplace violence and workplace harassment
- Sexual assault centres' contribution to the Expert Review on workplace violence resources for Bill 168: *Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- The design and implementation of an Ontario Sexual Violence Action Plan (2010)

Many more accomplishments could be added to this list. Much of the gains in this anti-violence movement – amendments to Canadian family law, such as equal division of property; changes to sexual assault laws; and the development of women's shelters and safe houses – "have all been made with resolute perseverance, unrelenting lobbying...and demands for change"<sup>4</sup> by women's activists such as yourselves.

Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, you have been an important part of – indeed, an architect of – these changes. Thank you for the vital work that you have done in Ontario, and will continue to do.

The Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres has a 30-year history of working in Ontario and Canada to address and end sexual and other forms of violence in our communities. Together, we will make a difference.

In solidarity,



Jacqueline Benn-John, MEd.  
OCRCC President

c.c. The Honourable Chris Bentley, Ministry of the Attorney General  
Laurel Broten, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, Ontario Women's Directorate

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 20



# Herstory of the CKSACC

*When I dare to be powerful...to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.*

~ Audre Lorde

Formerly named the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Centre, this organisation first opened its doors on October 3, 1985. As the story was passed down, it all started prior to October of 1985 when members of the sexual assault centre in Sarnia began recruiting for volunteers in then Chatham and Kent County. Victims of sexual assault from the Chatham-Kent area had been contacting the Sarnia centre for assistance and the need for a local sexual assault centre was identified. A small group of volunteers from the community answered the call. One such volunteer was Linda Van Horne who opened her home as a meeting place and that is where the groundwork was laid for what would ultimately become the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre.

With a need for financial support the volunteer group approached the local United Way and funding for the Centre at 61 ½ King Street West was eventually provided as a Pilot Project. On October 3, 1985, the doors were opened and the rest as we say, is herstory! The Centre registered as a non-profit organisation on November 11, 1985 and was incorporated as the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre (CKSACC) on October 1, 1990. By that time, having accomplished what they had set out to, a number of the original volunteers including the Centre's founder, Linda Van Horne, had moved on, some out of the area.

With a small allocation from the United Way and modest government support, the King Street office operated until October 1, 1990 with one staffer and a number of volunteers. As well, the Centre's Board of Directors was hard-at-work planning for the long-term viability of the organisation. In that regard the Board of Directors developed job postings, formed a hiring committee, conducted lengthy interviews and hired two part-time staff, both of whom continue to serve the CKSACC today in full-time capacity.

Over the next couple of years programs and services grew, government funding increased significantly and rapid development of the CKSACC necessitated a move to a more spacious, brighter facility where stairs and other factors would not present barriers. The King Street office had served well to establish the organisation but it would not suffice for the long-term.

In many ways the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre led the community in developing services that promoted respect for diversity and addressed barriers that sometimes interfered with a survivor's ability to access services. The CKSACC eagerly shared resources with community partners whenever feasible. For example, the CKSACC was able to share meeting space with other community groups, particularly those who were marginalised, that needed a place to gather but lacked the ability to pay a rental fee.

As financial and human resources have been stretched over time we have unfortunately had to incorporate some of our unique early programs into those offered through regular Crisis Centre programming or do away with them altogether. It is ironic now, when there appears to be greater emphasis on promoting respect for diversity in the delivery of programs and services, the CKSACC is able to look back with pride on some of those first accomplishments but now lacks the necessary resources to offer the same level of responsive programming. There is no doubt none-the-less, that the CKSACC has played an important role in helping to lay groundwork that continues to promote respect and appreciation for diversity in the community of Chatham-Kent. For example:

In the early 1990's the CKSACC effectively addressed the issue of transportation as a barrier by developing, in partnership with others, an *Outreach Program* that ultimately provided satellite services in 10 outlying areas of Chatham-Kent including the Francophone community of Paincourt and the Delaware Nation of Moraviantown. The CKSACC considered it an honour and a testament to the success of the program when we received a request from Native Family Services at Walpole Island to expand our Native Support Services Program, *Wiichundaawatowak*, to provide on-site support services there one day a week. While we continue to serve womyn from First Nations communities, the formality of our Wiichundaawatowak Program is no longer evident; however, at this time of recognising our herstory of support and activism in the community, the former *Wiichundaawatowak Program* serves as a great example of some of our early work regarding the development of CKSACC programs and services:

Wiichundaawatowak (pronounced wee-chin-dow-a-toe-ik), translated into English means *We are supporting one another*. This unique and celebrated program came to fruition after nine months of thoughtful and deliberate planning. The program was developed by an advisory committee comprised of womyn from the Delaware Nation of Moraviantown who worked closely with a CKSACC staffer whose family ties were there and who continues to deliver services on behalf of the CKSACC.

The CKSACC was able to access one-time funding that allowed us to commission a talented local artist who created four fabulous sketches for the Advisory Committee to choose a logo from. In the process the Committee wished for a combination of two of the sketches and the artist kindly obliged. A beautiful, symbolic logo was created for the Wiichundaawatowak Program and the original sketch, though somewhat faded, continues to hang at the CKSACC.

Satellite services were offered at the Moraviantown Health Centre, or if womyn preferred, they attended the CKSACC office in Chatham or the satellite service offered as part of our Outreach Program in the community of Thamesville. Please note that due to inadequate financial and human resources to sustain the 10 satellite services once established by the CKSACC, the option of going to Thamesville for face-to face appointments is not currently available.



As the CKSACC looks back on 25 years of service and activism, the Wiichundaawatowak Program which is no longer available, is a very proud part of our herstory. We were equally proud to establish an excellent French Language Service (FLS) Program, also developed by an advisory committee. Members of the Chatham-Kent Francophone community worked alongside the FLS Coordinator who eventually became the Coordinator of Volunteer Services for the CKSACC. Presently, our counterpart: CARREFOUR DES FEMMES DU SUD-OUEST DE L'ONTARIO (CFSOO) is the provider of French Language Services for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent and we are pleased to work in partnership with them.

At a time when the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General has just announced \$2,000,000 in funding for men's services, it is interesting to note that the CKSACC formerly housed a Support Services For Men Program at a satellite office. The program was not offered to perpetrators but to male survivors of sexual abuse. Although womyn and children are at greatest risk of sexual violence the CKSACC has always believed that men who have experienced abuse of any kind deserve and require support and responsive services. It is ironic that historically girls were excluded from such activities as sports leaving boys most vulnerable to sexual abuse by coaches for example. Another painful example is the scourge of child sexual abuse by clergy. Again, girls in the Catholic church were historically excluded from serving on the altar or participating fully in other church activities. Altar boys in particular were easy prey for pedophiles as our Chatham-Kent community is all too aware. After a shortfall in the United Way fund-raising campaign for two years in a row, the CKSACC Support Services For Men Program was transferred to Family Service Kent in 2002.









# Messages from the CKSACC Staff of 2010

I started at the CKSACC as a volunteer. I can never be sure what drew me to the Centre except for the fact that I felt deep empathy for womyn who had experienced sexual violence. I never expected that it would turn into paid employment but on October 1, 1990 I was hired on with the Centre. Since then I have worn a lot of different hats and when I look back at how the Centre has developed in the 20 years plus that I have been a part of it, there is only one expression that comes to mind: You've come a long way, baby!

*Glenda Johnston*  
*Volunteer Services and Office Coordinator*

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I made a decision in 1991 that forever changed the direction of my life. I became a part of the CKSACC. I learned and unlearned, I gave with my heart and received with heart. I treasure every woman I have met throughout this journey.

The political and social actions that we, the CKSACC have poured our energy into have been rewarding, sometimes heartbreaking, but always worth our efforts.

I am so very proud to celebrate and to be a part of an organisation that has made this community stronger and more aware of sexual violence issues for 25 years.

*Angela Gamba*  
*Support & Advocacy Worker*

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What a privilege it has been to be a part of this centre and to work along side these brave women as they go through the healing process. This centre is guided by the kinds of feminist principles I believe are crucial to the empowerment of women. This centre also appreciates that laughter is an important component of the therapeutic journey. It's been a great three years and I hope to join you for the next 25, although I'll be 117 y/o.

*Lori Kennedy*  
*Support & Advocacy Worker*

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I first connected with Michelle Schryer and Janet Armstrong of CKSACC in 1992 at a workshop in Toronto. Although I worked at a sexual assault centre in a different community, we kept in touch, providing mutual support on issues faced by our respective centres. I eventually became the Financial Coordinator at CKSACC. I am constantly impressed by the impact that CKSACC has had - in the community, provincially, and nationally. Thanks to the leadership provided by Michelle Schryer and the efforts of CKSACC staff, the amount of advocacy done on behalf of women by CKSACC is phenomenal. I am proud to be associated with this small but mighty agent of change.

*Moir Johnston*  
*Financial Coordinator*

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# Special Messages

I am very grateful for the women's Sexual Assault Crisis Centre. When I call or even come to my appointments they listen to me and give me good positive guidance that I need in my life to help me daily. If there wasn't such a place as the Sexual Assault Crisis Centre I would have felt like I was lost, but now I have hope and faith that things do get better and have gotten better in my life. I just want to thank all of the ladies for helping me to take a stand in my life. Thank you very much.

*B*

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There were so many times when I wanted to just give up but then I would go and see Angela and she would get me back on track. Or sometimes I would call and she wouldn't be there but the lady with the soft voice talked to me and helped me. I am so glad that I have a place to go where I know I will be supported.

*Unsigned*

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Being a woman who has found her power, strength, and will to live through this, I think that people really need to understand how much the C-K Sexual Assault Crisis Centre works for us, and how the women in it, providing a listening ear, and help to deal with all the emotions, are honestly life savers. You have all truly changed my life.

*Martha*

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I often wonder how I ever got through the last 4 years and I know that I have the Sexual Assault Crisis Centre to thank for helping me make it. They have given me comfort and lifted me up to find strength to keep going on. I know that I can share my most intimate feelings and emotions and that I'm safe, that they really do care. I have security knowing that whenever I need to talk they are just a phone call away.

*Mary Ann*

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I believe this site has been an AMAZING support system to me. I could not have gone through my past without the mentors from here. There is such a family atmosphere here that I can finally TRUST which I have had no one to talk to before this. I continue to deal with my issues as of now but with my head held high & much stronger than before. Thank You!

*Sheila*

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Thank you. I didn't realize how much I needed you all, until I finally came here. A life line.

*Unsigned*

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The Women here are the Best in the World. Without them I wouldn't be the Woman I am today. I just love them.

*Jacqueline*





# Effecting Legislative Change

## Some of the Challenges and Accomplishments Towards Equality & Justice

### Rape Shield Law:

In 1991 the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the *Rape Shield Law* as unconstitutional on the basis that it restricted the ability of defence counsel to question sexual assault complainants, the vast majority being womyn, about their sexual history. This decision had a chilling affect on rape/sexual assault victims. Womyn were left feeling that they, and not the accused were actually the ones on trial as their personal histories of sexual relations were used as a means to discredit their good character. Old rape myths were used in court proceedings, effectively (re)victimizing complainants who had dared to report sexual assault.

Shortly after the repeal of the *Rape Shield Law* the country saw a new trend develop as defence lawyers seemed to routinely seek access to womyn's confidential records of health and healing from social workers, schools, physicians, institutions, psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists and others including sexual assault/rape crisis centres. Sexual assault victims, the vast majority being womyn, were more reluctant than ever to report the sexual violence against them. In 1995 when the Supreme Court handed down two decisions (O'Connor and Beharrell) that provided a means for defence counsel to access records, there is no doubt that many lost any semblance of faith in the justice system.

The tendency by defence counsel to subpoena the records of womyn was evident in the Chatham-Kent community. Certainly, the CKSACC received several subpoenas and this action was costly in many ways. For example:

- Victims of sexual violence who accessed CKSACC services were reluctant to trust that their confidentiality and anonymity would be respected and maintained;
- There was a wrong perception in the community that the CKSACC was breaking the law in order to prevent accused persons from gaining access to records for their defence;
- Legal fees accumulated as each time the CKSACC received a subpoena legal costs were incurred. At no time did the CKSACC ever "hand-over" a file without accessing every available avenue within the boundaries of the law;
- Use of CKSACC human resources to plan and organise fundraising activities in order to build a legal fund took time and attention away from the delivery of services including public education and prevention;
- At the conclusion of a court process where the CKSACC fought a subpoena, CKSACC was court-ordered to pay 2 accused \$1,000 each;
- The CKSACC office was often under-staffed due to the absence of the executive director and/or centre staff who attended legal appointments, court proceedings, justice consultations, etc.

Sexual assault/rape crisis centres across the county led the fight to defend and protect womyn's right to confidentiality. In the process, those centres and the womyn who worked in them were sometimes criminalized themselves.



## **Bill C-46: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code Regarding the Production of Records in Sexual Offence Proceedings:**

Bill C-46 was designed to balance the rights of the accused with the rights of the complainant.

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre was proud to be at the table in Ottawa in April 1995 as part of the national consultation with then Federal Minister of Justice, Allan Rock, regarding the issue of production of third party records in sexual assault cases before the courts. By the time this consultation was held the CKSACC had already incurred significant legal costs in an effort to defend the rights of womyn to privacy over their personal records. In addition, the CKSACC had angered a judge who felt that the court's time had been wasted by our attempt to protect a womyn's right to privacy over her records. Consequently, and despite the fact that the CKSACC had followed the letter of the law, the judge ordered the CKSACC to pay two alleged rapists \$1,000 each.

Lee Lakeman, President of the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Crisis Centres (CASAC) observed that steps taken to punish rape/sexual assault crisis centres for resisting defence subpoenas in an attempt to protect womyn's privacy rights was a move towards "decriminalizing sexual assault and criminalizing womyn's advocates".

One of the most rewarding aspects of our participation in the consultation with Justice Minister Rock was the opportunity to meet and network with many insightful, informed and dedicated womyn's advocates from across the nation, as well as knowledgeable, wise and accomplished feminist lawyers.

As we struggled through this most difficult issue, the CKSACC was fortunate indeed to retain a lawyer whose keen analysis, clear understanding of the issues and great skill made her a most suitable advisor and representative for our small organisation. With her guidance and representation, the CKSACC successfully challenged numerous subpoenas.

With our integrity well in tact, the CKSACC received hundreds of supportive letters, notes, phone calls and messages from across Ontario. Encouragement and support came from out-of-province as well. Individuals and unions made contributions to our legal fund and Justice Minister Rock ensured that the issue of court-ordered costs to third parties in sexual assault cases was effectively addressed in Bill C-46.

On May 12, 1997, Parliament passed Bill C-46: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code Regarding the Production of Records in Sexual Offence Proceedings.

As expected it wasn't long before court challenges were issued against the new legislation but in November of 1999 a unanimous decision came down from the Supreme Court of Canada. Bill C-46: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code Regarding the Production of Records in Sexual Offence Proceedings was upheld.

## The Drunk Defence:

In addition to the attack on womyn's personal records of health and healing, the '90's brought many creative scenarios to criminal court proceedings in what the anti-rape movement viewed as a backlash to advances made towards womyn's equality during the 1980's. For example, in cases of gender-based violence, defences like *honest but mistaken belief*, *rage*, *provocation* and even *drunkenness* were successfully used to exonerate men from allegations of sexual assault and "woman abuse". In one case a man pulled an elderly, disabled woman from her wheelchair and sexually assaulted her. Claiming a defence of *intoxication*, he was ultimately acquitted.



The notion that a woman could actually be made to be what many of us perceived as a legal target of alcohol-induced rape in Canada provoked a swift and angry response from rape/sexual assault crisis centres across the country. Locally the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre launched a petition calling for Parliamentary action to prevent such injustice from occurring in the law. More than 3,000 signatures were collected. In addition, the CKSACC and our sisters at Chatham Kent Women's Centre Inc. organised International Women's Day activities (March 8, 1995) to highlight issues of injustice and inequality that were present for womyn in the justice system. Events included a rally at the Chatham Court House and a candle-light march followed. More than 120 womyn and a large group of supportive men carried candles in beer bottles that were labeled with the scales of justice and the words, *No Excuse for Abuse*.

## Bill C-72: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (self-induced intoxication):

In February, 1995, then Minister of Justice Allan Rock tabled legislation to address the issue of intoxication as a defence. This action was preceded by consultations by the National Department of Justice which stated, "Results of these consultations contributed to the developments of the measures announced [on February 24, 1995]".

In May, 1995, our Member of Parliament for the riding of Kent rose in the Legislature, spoke to our petition and supported the passage of Bill C-72.

In June, 1995, Bill C-72 was passed in the Legislature of Canada. In the preamble to this legislation, the federal government specifically expressed concern about violence against womyn and children, appealing to concepts of equality.

## *For Your Trivial Information...*

*Desperate to raise necessary funds for legal expenses, the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre succeeded in gaining the support and co-operation of area bars in fund-raising endeavours!*

## Bill 107: An Act to amend the Human Rights Code:

Evidence given at the 1997 inquest into the workplace murder of Theresa Vince revealed that language in the Human Rights Code as it existed at the time of her murder did not ensure that a timely and effective remedy was available to workers like Theresa. In fact, it was stated that had Theresa reported the sexual harassment to the Human Rights Commission her murder would likely not have been prevented.

Geri Sanson, the Human Rights and Labour Lawyer who represented our small Coalition of women's and worker's advocates at the Theresa Vince inquest once again lent her insight and expertise regarding the proposed reform. Among many others, for and against the proposed Human Rights reform, Theresa's family and the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre attended the public hearings into the Bill and presented submissions to The Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

On December 5, 2006, Bill 107: An Act to amend the Human Rights Code was passed in the Ontario Legislature.

## Sexual Harassment Awareness Week:

The 1997 inquest into the workplace murder of Theresa Vince at the Sears store in Chatham proved that sexual harassment is a dangerous circumstance in the workplace that can, and has resulted in death. An annual proclamation of *Sexual Harassment Awareness Week the first week of June, in memory of Theresa Vince*, was one of the jury's recommendations. In Chatham-Kent *Sexual Harassment Awareness Week* was proclaimed by the Mayor and Council every year in the first week of June until a municipal bylaw was passed that prevented the passage of proclamations.

The bylaw change did not stop Theresa's family and the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, from issuing our own public declarations. In place of the municipal proclamation we organised media conferences and other events where proclamations were made in memory of Theresa Vince and others, and for all womyn who continued to live with sexual harassment.

In 2005 on the ninth anniversary of Theresa's murder, M.P.P. Pat Hoy introduced a Private Member's Bill: *An Act to proclaim Sexual Harassment Awareness Week* in the Ontario Legislature. He re-introduced the Bill in 2006 and the Bill passed 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. In 2007 Pat Hoy's Private Member's Bill was passed in the Legislature and now *Sexual Harassment Awareness Week* is recognised in Ontario during the first week of June.



## Bill 168: An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters:

On November 12, 2005, nearly ten years after the workplace murder of Theresa Vince and despite the tireless efforts of her family and others to effect legislative change towards the better protection of womyn in the workplace, Nurse Lori Dupont was killed on the job by a physician with whom she worked and with whom she had previously ended an intimate relationship.

An inquest into Lori's murder resulted in recommendations similar to those that had been handed down by the jury into the Theresa Vince inquest.

Lori's family, and in particular her mother Barbara, became another dynamic and powerful voice for legislative change.

When Bill 168: *An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters* was introduced by the current Minister of Labour, Peter Fonseca, the families of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont, along with the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre were in attendance at Queen's Park. During the public hearings that followed we were in Toronto again, along with others, making submissions to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

On December 15, 2009 Bill 168: *An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters*, received Royal Assent in the Ontario Legislature. It came into effect on June 15, 2010 fourteen years and thirteen days after the workplace murder of Theresa Vince at Sears in Chatham; four years, seven months and three days after the murder of Nurse Lori Dupont at Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital in Windsor.

## Sexual harassment is a crime — let's treat it like one

**T**HERESA VINCE might be alive today, delighting in a loving family life, if Ontario had had strong safeguards to protect women from sexual harassment on the job. But she was shot to death by her supervisor at Sears just days before she was to take early retirement at age 56. Vince had complained to Sears about the years of torment she had endured, but nothing was done.

She was not the first. Three other Ontario women had previously been murdered in the workplace after a history of harassment.

Sexual harassment is not a wink-wink, jekey little peccadillo; women are not "over-reacting" to harmless flirtation and, most important, despite the wide and erroneous impression that sexual harassment rules have "gone too far," there is virtually no law to stop women being sexually hounded and humiliated out of their jobs.

In 1995, the year before her obsessed stalker murdered Theresa Vince, the Harris government was elected. One of its early deeds was to repeal the employment equity law,

### MICHELE LANDSBERG



which had compelled employers to take active measures against workplace harassment. Ever since, the government has steadily whittled away at other remedies, protections and avenues of redress.

"I believe sexual harassment in the workplace is only there because the people at the top condone it and may be practise it themselves," said the still-grieving Jim Vince, at a recent Queen's Park press conference. (Sandi Thompson comes to mind. She was fired after revealing that she had been sexually harassed by her boss, Al McLean, then Tory Speaker of the

Legislature. She had to go to court before the Tories stopped defending their buddy and offered her a settlement.)

Jim Vince was at Queen's Park because his local MPP, Liberal Pat Hoy, has brought forward an anti-harassment bill in Theresa's memory, with the steady encouragement of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Centre, the local women's shelter and the Chatham-Kent Labour Council.

Hoy's bill to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act was drafted by lawyer Gert Samson, a noted human rights expert. He also consulted with the Chatham activists and the Vince family. This is a genuine, community-based effort to turn a grotesque crime into a springboard for better laws.

The bill puts the responsibility where it rightly belongs: in workplace legislation, not just in the more amorphous realm of human rights.

On the Tory watch, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has been "streamlined" into total ineffectiveness. Each year, a pitiful handful — between two and five — sexual har-

assment complaints actually make it to an OHRC hearing. That's less than 0.3 per cent of all the harassment complaints that are received. Worse, even when the harassment is so gross, persistent and outrageous that compensation of about \$50,000 is ordered (as in the case of Nicole Curling vs. Alexander Torimiro), the Commission does nothing to force a defiant harasser to pay up.

What's needed is a way to stop the harasser in his (or her) tracks. Hoy's bill would require an immediate investigation of a complaint and give the investigator the power to order a halt to the behaviour. A complainant would have the right to refuse work, without penalty, until the situation is resolved, and the employer would be compelled to take steps to remedy the offence.

The Harris government prides itself on a get-tough, law and order regime. But here's a crime that can result in unemployment, economic loss, depression, illness and even death — and there are no workable structures in place to protect the victims or hold the assailants accountable.

Studies show that between 40 and

70 per cent of women, and 5 per cent of men, suffer from sexual insult, aggression at work, usually from supervisors. Experts say that "talkin' over" with the harasser commonly calulates the intensity and hatefulness of harassment. Complain? Oh sure. A 17-year study of all such cases by the federal Human Rights Commission shows that 75 per cent of the women who complained were no longer in their jobs. No wonder that 10 per cent of the women who suffer the degradation, anxiety and sustained harassment actually seek formal redress or protection.

This crime is like a low-grade infection that poisons our places of work, occasionally erupting in harm and economic loss to all but the perpetrators.

If you'd like to see a wholesome change, write or call Chris Stocky, Minister of Labour ([chris\\_stocky@ontla.ola.org](mailto:chris_stocky@ontla.ola.org) or phone 416-326-7690) and urge him to adopt the

Michele Landsberg's column appears Saturday in Life and Sunday in the Section. E-mail: [mlandsb@thestar.ca](mailto:mlandsb@thestar.ca)

Toronto Star Saturday June 23/01



## **Chronology of Attempts to Reform the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act**

- June 2, 1996:** Theresa Vince was murdered at work by her supervisor who then killed himself. Theresa had reported sexual harassment by her supervisor nearly a year and a half earlier to upper management at Sears Canada.
- Spring, 1997:** Under the previous Conservative government a provincial *Review of the Occupational Health and Safety Act* was completed by the Ministry of Labour. One of the questions considered in the *Review* was whether or not sexual harassment should be included in the Act. (The previous Conservative government was voted out of office without having effected legislative change in this regard and there was never a reporting back to the people.)
- November 18, 1997:** At an inquest into the workplace murder of Theresa Vince, evidence was given regarding the Occupational Health and Safety Act as a vehicle for addressing workplace harassment.
- December 2, 1997:** The inquest jury that heard evidence into the workplace murder of Theresa Vince delivered twenty-four recommendations including one to the Ministry of Labour: *The ongoing study into the Health and Safety Act to include Sexual Harassment needs to be made a priority to get the results and answers required to make an informative decision about including Harassment and Sexual Harassment into the current system.*
- June 7, 2001:** Chatham-Kent-Essex M.P.P. Pat Hoy introduced a Private Member's Bill – *Bill 78, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect workers from sexual harassment in the workplace.* (Bill 78 died on the order paper.)
- May 26, 2003:** Private Member's Bill – *Bill 55, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect workers from sexual harassment in the workplace* was re-introduced in the Ontario Legislature by Chatham-Kent-Essex M.P.P. Pat Hoy (Bill 55 died on the order paper when an election was called.)
- October 14, 2004:** East York M.P.P. Marilyn Churley introduced a Private Member's Bill in the Ontario Legislature – *Bill 126, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect workers from harassment in the workplace.* (Bill 126 died on the order paper.)

- October 20, 2004:** Etobicoke-Lakeshore M.P.P. Laurel Broten introduced a Private Member's Bill in the Ontario Legislature – Bill 131, *An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to acts of workplace violence and workplace harassment*.  
(Bill 131 died on the order paper.)
- November 12, 2005:** Nurse Lori Dupont was killed on the job by a physician with whom she worked at Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital in Windsor, and with whom she had previously ended an intimate relationship. After he murdered Lori he killed himself.
- November 22, 2005:** East York M.P.P. Marilyn Churley re-introduced the Private Member's Bill that she had adapted from Chatham-Kent Essex M.P.P. Pat Hoy's Private Members Bills to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act. *Bill 35 – an Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect workers from harassment*. On November 30<sup>th</sup> Ms. Churley resigned her seat in the Ontario Legislature to run as a candidate in the federal election.
- December 6, 2005:** Hamilton Centre M.P.P. Andrea Horwath took up the work that former M.P.P. Marilyn Churley and Chatham-Kent Essex M.P.P. Pat Hoy had previously attempted to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Ms. Horwath introduced *Bill 45, the Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act to protect workers from harassment in the workplace*.  
(Bill 45 died on the order paper.)
- September 24, 2007 – December 11, 2007:** The Lori Dupont inquest jury arrived at 26 recommendations intended to prevent such future tragedies. Specifically Included in the recommendations was one directed to the Ontario Ministry of Labour: *It is recommended that there be a review of the Occupational Health and Safety Act to examine the feasibility of including domestic violence (from someone at the workplace), abuse and harassment factors warranting investigation and appropriate action by the Ministry of Labour when safety and well being of an employee is at issue. Specifically, the review should consider whether safety from emotional or psychological harm, rather than merely physical harm, ought to be part of the mandate of the Ministry. In this regard, the review should be directed to include an examination of the legislation and policies in place in other comparable jurisdictions, in Canada and elsewhere.*
- December 13, 2007:** Hamilton Centre M.P.P. Andrea Horwath introduced a Private Member's Bill: *Bill 29, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect workers from harassment and violence in the workplace*.
- January 10, 2008:** Barbara Dupont and others who advocate an end to gendered violence formed the *Inquest Action Group* as a strategy to advance jury recommendations.

- Spring, 2008:** The Inquest Action Group lobbied Members of Provincial Parliament and worked to gain public support for legislative change to the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- September 17, 2008:** The Ministry of Labour released *A Consultation Paper on Workplace Violence* and invited a written response from labour and employer stakeholders and the general public. The time-line for submissions was from September 17<sup>th</sup> to October 17, 2008.
- October 17, 2008:** Windsor West M.P.P. and Minister of International Trade and Investment, Sandra Pupatello, and newly appointed Minister of Labour, Peter Fonseca, met with Barbara and John Dupont, Lori Dupont's parents.
- April 20, 2009:** Ontario Minister of Labour, Peter Fonseca from the riding of Mississauga East-Cooksville, introduced *Bill 168 An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters*. Family members of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont were present in the Legislature for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading.
- Summer 2009:** The Ministry of Labour held consultation meetings with employer groups, labour, community and other stakeholders regarding Bill 168.
- October 20, 2009** Bill 168 passed 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading in the Ontario Legislature and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.
- November 17, 23, 24, 2009:** Public hearings on Bill 168 were held at Queen's Park in Toronto before the Standing Committee on Social Policy. Family members of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont were among those who presented submissions to the Committee.
- December 15, 2009:** Bill 168 - *An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters*, received Royal Assent in the Ontario Legislature. It came into effect on June 15, 2010 (14 years and 13 days after the workplace murder of Theresa Vince at Sears in Chatham; 4 years, 7 months and 3 days after the murder of Nurse Lori Dupont at Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital in Windsor.)

*For all womyn killed as a result of gendered violence... For womyn who live with violence and fear of violence for themselves and their loved ones... For our daughters and our sons... Work for Change.*

~ Michelle Schryer ~ CKSACC



### A purple ribbon protest

Rally calls for changes to stop sexual violence

### Women encouraged to vote

Voices can be heard in voting process

### Decision by Supreme Court

Will have local implications

### Holding file could cost crisis centre

City planning of any would be to the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

### Appeal launched by sexual assault crisis centre

City planning of any would be to the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

### There's no excuse for sexual assault

Crisis centre sends 'No means no' theme

### Crisis centre plans letter campaign

Men's sex assault program is saved

### Sexual assault centre plans to seek Supreme Court ruling on records

Similar cases involving keeping records

### Events for

June 2/3

## The Chatham Daily News

Thursday, December 3, 1998

### 'It feels as if we're being silenced'

Women can't give their voices update

### Centre turns down money, starts letter campaign

Local petition in hands of MPs

### Activists vow to step up war on harassment

Sexual assault crisis centre offers support

### Crisis centre has special focus

Local group working to rid violence against women

### Sexual assault centre plans to appeal ruling

Overruling Ontario's two and one-half year rule

### Schryer to address Ottawa convention

A local woman will speak to 300 women from across Canada about sexual violence

### Bill puts cork in drunkenness defence

Legal battle was necessary step

### Centre vows fight to protect clients' files

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre says it is willing to take on the courts again

### Crisis centre seeks to sex harassment

Protesters picket outside city hall

### Sexual assault centre continuing to expand

Centre offers

### Help just a phone call away for sexual assault

Awaiting Supreme Court ruling

### Assault centre will pay pair

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre will be paying legal fees to pursue and defend a case against a woman who was charged with sexual assault

### Lap dancing sparks protest

Protesters picket outside city hall

### Sexual assault centre continuing to expand

Centre offers

### Help just a phone call away for sexual assault

Awaiting Supreme Court ruling

### Assault centre will pay pair

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre will be paying legal fees to pursue and defend a case against a woman who was charged with sexual assault



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Pamela Cross is a feminist lawyer working as an advocate and activist for women's equality. In her blog Pamela explores women's equality, the law and public policy, and supports advocacy efforts across the country to increase women's equality in a substantive and meaningful way.

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October 1, 2010

To all the wonderful women at CKSACC:

Congratulations on your 25 years of service and activism on behalf of women who have experienced sexual violence!

You really have been and continue to be leaders in this work. In particular, you have been an inspiration to me in my work to protect the confidentiality of the records of women who have been sexually assaulted.

It is the work you did in the 1990s to insist that women have the right to keep their counselling and therapeutic records private that served as the underpinning of subsequent law reform that has done much to improve this situation. Your Centre showed enormous integrity and courage in taking the stands it did at that time, and all of us have benefitted as a result.

When I was a new lawyer representing sexual assault centres and women in these cases, it was the work done by CKSACC that I turned to for guidance and inspiration.

You have also led the way in demanding that abusers be held accountable both in the courts and in their communities, and for this I congratulate you.

I wish that there was no need for the wonderful work that you do, and that this could be your last anniversary, but sadly that is not the case. May you move into your next 25 years with as much strength, idealism, insight and dedication as has guided you for the past 25.

Sincerely,



Pamela Cross

KEN LEWENZA  
National President  
Président national

JEAN-PIERRE FORTIN  
Quebec Director  
Directeur québécois

PETER KENNEDY  
National Secretary-Treasurer  
Secrétaire-trésorier national

140 PINE VALLEY BLVD., LONDON, ONTARIO N6K 3X3  
TEL: (519) 649-2552 • FAX: (519) 649-7355  
1-800-265-1891

Greetings,

On behalf of the Canadian Auto Workers union I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Center on your 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. A milestone worth celebrating!

Your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary represents a significant achievement for the CKSACC and for the community of Chatham-Kent. A milestone that represents an organization born in struggle with a vision that a better world was possible. Your commitment over the last 25 years will not only be measured in years of service to your community, but also by the hundreds of women who have been validated and supported by your staff and volunteers - past and present.

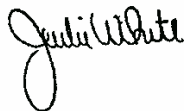
The CKSACC also recognized the importance of challenging the community to recognize and work towards systemic changes in society, with the goal of working towards the eradication of sexual violence.

The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Center efforts to raise public awareness about women's social, political and economic inequality pressured governments, individuals and broader society to make much-needed changes.

Your unfaltering commitment to women's rights and social equality over the last 25 years has created a better community for the many women who depend on the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Center as a lifeline to a better future.

In celebration of your 25th anniversary, the Canadian Auto Workers union joins with the Chatham-Kent community to congratulate the Staff and Volunteers for your dedication and commitment to creating healthier workplaces and safer communities.

Peace, Sisterhood & Solidarity



Julie White  
Director, Women's Programs  
CAW Canada

Md/cope343





# Successful Nomination by the CKSACC

## Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre – First Community-based Organisation to Place Nomination for Law Society Medal

Geri Sanson is an exceptional Human Rights and Labour lawyer who currently resides in Toronto but who was born and raised in Chatham Ontario. Despite her Chatham status, the CKSACC was unfamiliar with Geri until Diane Oleskiew, a former Criminal Counsel recently appointed to the Bench, and, who represented the CKSACC on numerous occasions in the 1990's when files were subpoenaed, suggested in 1996 that Geri would be a great resource for us. Truer words could not have been spoken!

In 1996 when Theresa Vince was killed at work by her boss who had sexually harassed her, a Coalition was formed by the Chatham-Kent: Sexual Assault Crisis Centre; Women's Centre Inc. and Labour Council to work in unison with Theresa's family towards uncovering the truth about her murder. It was our good fortune that Geri Sanson agreed to represent our small Coalition in making application for standing at the Theresa Vince Inquest, and when our application was granted at the inquest(s) that followed.

It is our fervent belief that had Geri Sanson not been at the inquest table, the full truth of Theresa's workplace experience would not have been told. It is amazing indeed that after the grueling and lengthy inquest process that did not end until December 1997, Geri went on to represent womyn's advocate groups at the inquests into the intimate femicides of Arlene May and Gillian Hadley.

To suggest that Geri Sanson was deserving of very special recognition for her tireless efforts and informed work to advance womyn's safety and equality would be an understatement, so in 2000 when there was a call for nominations for The Law Society Medal, the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre was at the ready! Wanting to surprise Geri with the nomination we had to rely on her partner for certain information and at the end of the process our efforts were rewarded when we learned that our candidate, Geri Sanson, had been selected to receive this prestigious award.

The fact that a community-based organisation had not previously nominated a candidate for The Law Society Medal did not stop the selection committee from considering our nominee and for that we were grateful.

Among Geri's guests at the Awards Ceremony held in September 2000 at Osgoode Hall in Toronto, were the executive directors of the Women's Centre and Sexual Assault Crisis Centre. Joy Lang and Michelle Schryer were honoured by Geri's invitation to share in the celebration of this momentous occasion in her professional life. Needless to say, neither Joy nor Michelle had ever expected to gain entry to Osgoode Hall through the "Benchers Entrance"! All of Geri's guests that evening were filled with pride in her accomplishments as we watched Geri receive the distinguished Law Society Medal. Geri was one of a small number of womyn ever to receive this honour. She was also the youngest lawyer to be awarded the Law Society Medal. It is hard to believe that ten years have passed since Geri received this well-deserved recognition and there is no doubt that we will all remember the experience for time to come.





# Long Time Coming

**Congratulations to the Vince and Dupont Families,  
and to all their Supporters.  
Thank you for your courage and tenacity!**

Since Theresa Vince was killed at work more than 14 years ago and Lori Dupont was killed at work nearly 5 years ago, the Province of Ontario has made sweeping changes to a number of laws that affect workers. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Vince and Dupont families. Their determination was the driving force behind the legislative change that has been accomplished. The changes were a long time coming, far too long. Increased awareness and legislative reform in Human Rights and Labour law now promise better protection for Ontario workers, particularly womyn. The changes offer hope for womyn's safety and equality.



# Special Message

My family's friendship with Michelle Schryer and the womyn of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre began fourteen years ago with the tragic workplace murder of my mother, Theresa Vince. The loss that we suffered was unimaginable but the universe saw fit to send us some earthly angels to support, nurture, champion and hold us up when it all seemed too overwhelming. With Michelle and Joy Lang, the womyn of the CKSACC provided tireless support and their activism on our behalf has been immeasurable. It is through their concerted efforts, along with many others, that this province has seen significant changes to legislation and that we now have a solid, comprehensive understanding of workplace violence and sexual harassment. Staff of this centre, past and present, were there through vigils in the rain and snow, stood by us through three inquests, lobbied for change, attended and organized press conferences, memorials, listened to our pain and frustration when the world seemed too hard and unbending and when I, for one, felt defeated. They have organized flag-raising ceremonies, delivered proclamations and challenged the status quo. These are but a few of the ways that the CKSACC has been invaluable to this community, to the province and to my family. Michelle and the womyn of the centre have been caring and compassionate. Their commitment is steadfast even in the face of adversity, and there is adversity. On behalf of my family I say thank you for all that the Centre has done and all it continues to do. A thousand thank you's hardly seems enough but it is with a very full heart that I offer it. Congratulations on 25 years!

*Catherine Kedziora*  
*Daughter of Theresa Vince*

## *The Songless Lark*

*Sun shines so brightly on the hill  
that I can see each day  
patches of snow that fell this spring  
before you went away.*

*And now that summer's near at hand  
below the meadow springs  
behind the trees at dawnlight  
a songless lark now sings.*

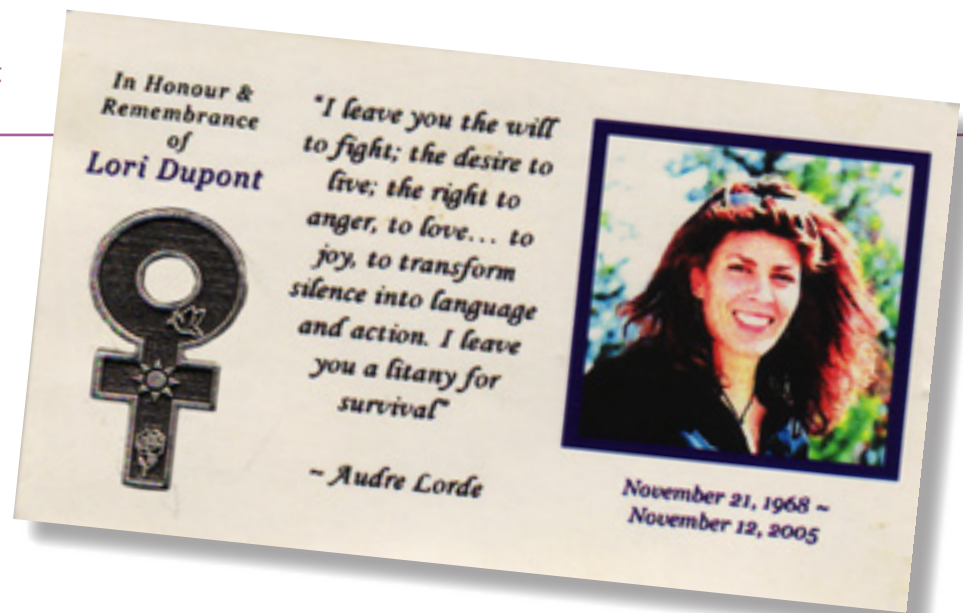
*~ Audre Lorde*



# Special Message

Years ago when I read about the terrible murder of Theresa Vince at Sears I thought how awful it was and my heart went out to her family. I never dreamed that one day it would be my daughter, my family. From the beginning the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre was there for us. I will never forget the first time that I met Michelle Schryer. We had talked on the phone many times but I had never seen her. I knew that she and Jim Vince attended my daughter's funeral and wished they had introduced themselves. Weeks later they came back to show support for Lori and our family at a December 6th memorial that the nurses had organized in Lori's name. Michelle had prepared a petition calling for an inquest and I knew that she and Jim planned to bring it that night but the weather had turned to freezing and I didn't think they made it. As I stood shivering in the crowd a voice suddenly took my attention. "Mrs. Dupont, I'm Michelle. I have the petitions". With the help of the Crisis Centre and the CAW more than 10,000 signatures were collected and an inquest was called. The Crisis Centre kept up their support by lending Michelle to us for the entire length of the inquest. As difficult as it was to go through such a public airing I am glad that the inquest happened. It provided answers to all of the questions I had and that I needed to have answered. Now almost five years after our tragedy, Ontario has Health and Safety legislation to deal with harassment and domestic violence in the workplace. My family has received a great deal of public support and we are grateful for all of it. On the 25th anniversary of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre I just want to say to all of you that you have, and you do make a difference.

*Barbara Dupont  
Mother of Lori Dupont*





# Gone but Not Forgotten

## ~ A Tribute to Virginia “Ginn” Rawlinson ~

Virginia Rawlinson was much more than a formidable ally and friend to the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre and her untimely passing was a great loss to the community of Chatham-Kent. Ginn last participated with the CKSACC when she spoke at our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on October 3, 2005 and it is fitting that we honour her warm and vivacious memory in this 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary book of commemoration.

Ginn joined the CKSACC Board of Directors in 1991 at a particularly challenging time in the centre’s herstory. She quickly proved herself to be a remarkable asset to the growth and development of the organisation and while her service to the centre was relatively short, her contributions were certainly long-standing. During her tenure with the Centre Ginn served in several capacities including Interim President of the Board, President and Secretary-Treasurer. Ginn made the best possible use of her time with and for the CKSACC. In a way her involvement with the Centre was a great stepping stone for even larger endeavours as Ginn moved on to become a household name in the community. As President of the local Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario, Ginn regularly contributed *Letters to the Editor*, challenged local parliamentarians, spoke out against injustice and continued in her pursuit of being a “life-long learner”.

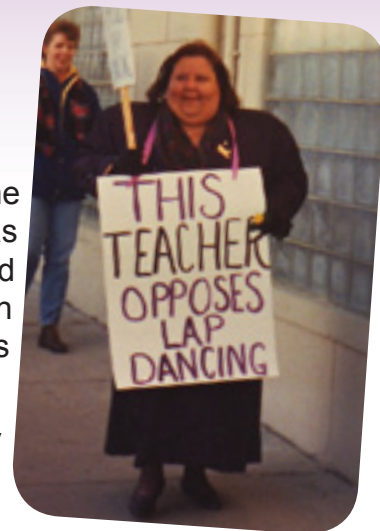
Ginn Rawlinson generously shared her positive, encouraging outlook; her vast knowledge; experience and talent; deep appreciation and respect for others to help make this a better world. Ginn may be gone but she is most definitely not forgotten. Her immeasurable contributions carry on.

In 1994 when Ginn made the difficult decision not to seek another term with the CKSACC a one-question poll was taken and the results were shared in the 1993-1994 Annual Report. In commemoration of Virginia Rawlinson who passed away on May 30, 2006 the CKSACC is once again releasing this brief and totally accurate survey!

~ How did people respond when asked for a one-word or short-phrase response to the words: “Ginn Rawlinson”? (Please note: No editing occurred!)

### Survey says:

- INTROSPECTIVE • UPBEAT • WHAT A WOMIN! • INTELLIGENT •
- NICE • CONFIDENT • FULL OF LIFE •
- SHE’S A WONDERFUL STORYTELLER • DYNAMIC •
- ABLE TO LEAP TALL BUILDINGS IN A SINGLE BOUND •
- GINN GINN SHE’S OUR MIN... IF SHE CAN’T DO IT NO ONE CIN •
- ASSERTIVE • PROFESSIONAL • SHE SHOULD WRITE A BOOK •
- WHAT’S THAT WORD THAT STARTS WITH A “C”? IT’S LIKE CONCILIATORY BUT IT’S NOT CONCILIATORY... IT’S BETTER •
- HUMOROUS • SHE HAS A SPECIAL KIND OF LOVE • FIGHTER •
- GENTLE • POWERHOUSE • WONDERFUL • INSPIRATIONAL •
- “I’M GOING TO WRITE A LETTER!” •





## ~ A Tribute to Linda Campbell ~

Remembering the life of Linda Campbell cannot help but bring a flood of memories to mind. Linda represented the CAW Local 127 Women's Committee for many years and her actions in that regard reflected well the ideals and commitment of her larger Union to work for equality and stand against social injustice. She was a tenacious and determined activist, particularly in the area of *violence against women*.

The CKSACC has always valued its relationship with Labour and we most certainly appreciated our partnership with Linda and the CAW Women's Committee. Needless to say, we worked together on many initiatives but there is no doubt that Linda's favourite event to plan for each and every year was International Women's Day! We very much miss her warm and wonderful enthusiasm, courage and strength of spirit. Those qualities served Linda well not only in organising for special events and all of her work to end violence against womyn, but in her personal life when she fought the good fight against breast cancer.



Linda was very clear about what she found to be right and what she found to be wrong and when she sensed "wrongness" she set about to fix it! For example, decades ago when Linda took up her space working in a factory she learned that the men working in that very same factory had a shower available to them so that they could clean-up at the end of their shift before heading out the door. The womyn did NOT have this enviable choice available to them. Linda took care of it! Her sense of injustice and responsibility to improve conditions for womyn did not stop there.

After her first surgery Linda attended the CKSACC office one day asking, "WHO DO I ADDRESS THIS LETTER TO?" Her tone of voice made it clear that she had serious business on her mind. Through health benefits that had been negotiated between the CAW and the company she worked for, Linda was able to get a prosthetic breast and she was outraged to learn that womyn who did not have access to such benefits were unlikely to afford a prosthetic. That was Linda, always looking out for her sisters.

The memories that we had the privilege to make with Linda will live on in us. She was always ready to volunteer a helping hand whether or not it was in the name of Labour. She was always quick to share ideas and eager to learn and teach and grow. Linda was even willing to step out of her comfort zone if she believed that it would benefit another. We remember her nervousness the first time she delivered a public address and the great job she did of it.

When Linda received news that she was losing her battle with cancer, a battle she had fought with amazing valour and dignity, she wanted to make sure that her death, like her life, made a difference towards ending *violence against women*. In planning her funeral Linda asked that both a brother and a sister-in-the-struggle deliver her eulogy and she decided who that would be. She insisted that her eulogy serve to raise awareness about the issue of gendered violence and she hoped that the message would be far-reaching.

Linda Campbell... What a Womin!

The wise encouragement that Linda gave to her sisters to "Keep on keepin' on" and the waves that she made during her time on this earth will continue to ripple for years to come. So long dear sister-in-the-struggle and thank you!

*Linda "fought the good fight" to end gendered violence, social, political and economic injustice until her death on July 26, 2007*



# Every Girl and Every Boy

FOR EVERY GIRL WHO IS TIRED OF ACTING WEAK WHEN SHE IS STRONG, THERE IS A BOY TIRED OF APPEARING STRONG WHEN HE FEELS VULNERABLE. FOR EVERY BOY WHO IS BURDENED WITH THE CONSTANT EXPECTATION OF KNOWING EVERYTHING, THERE IS A GIRL TIRED OF PEOPLE NOT TRUSTING HER INTELLIGENCE. FOR EVERY GIRL WHO IS TIRED OF BEING CALLED OVER-SENSITIVE, THERE IS A BOY WHO FEARS BEING GENTLE, TO WEEP. FOR EVERY BOY FOR WHOM COMPETITION IS THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE HIS MASCULINITY, THERE IS A GIRL WHO IS CALLED UNFEMININE WHEN SHE COMPETES. FOR EVERY GIRL WHO THROWS OUT HER E-Z BAKE OVEN, THERE IS A BOY WHO WISHES TO FIND ONE. FOR EVERY BOY STRUGGLING NOT TO LET ADVERTISING DICTATE HIS DESIRES, THERE IS A GIRL FACING THE AD INDUSTRY'S ATTACKS ON HER SELF-ESTEEM. FOR EVERY GIRL WHO TAKES A STEP TOWARD HER LIBERATION, THERE IS A BOY WHO FINDS THE WAY TO FREEDOM A LITTLE EASIER.

*Adapted from a poem by Nancy R. Smith*

# ANNUAL EVENTS

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IN CHATHAM-KENT

Until 1994 International Women's Day had never been celebrated in Chatham-Kent. The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre is pleased to have started this lasting tradition in our community. We took Clara Zetkin's idea of setting one day aside each year to highlight women's struggles and achievements and put her proposal into meaningful action! We are tremendously proud of our accomplishments in this regard and look back fondly on annual events, partnerships forged, relationships built, messages delivered and seeds planted.

It was at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of Socialist Women held in Copenhagen Denmark that Clara Zetkin, a socialist champion for the rights of womyn, put a resolution forward that a day be designated each year as International Women's Day. This happened two years after female garment workers, on March 8, 1907, in New York were met with hostility when they publicly protested their abhorrent working conditions and their demonstration was quashed by police. Ms. Zetkin's resolution was accepted but it was not until 1977 that the United Nations would formally proclaim the day.

International Women's Day is a time to remember womyn's struggles and advances all around the world. The CKSACC has endeavoured to honour that early vision of Clara Zetkin and the womyn who gathered at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of Socialist Women. We have been thankful to many community partners, far too numerous to name, who have joined with us to mark this important day through the years. For many years the partnership between the CKSACC, our shelter and labour sisters in particular made us unique in the province of Ontario and we were proud indeed of our collective IWD messages and activities. We would be remiss if we did not specifically acknowledge the CAW Local 127 Women's Committee. Not only did we have a valued community partner in Local 127 over several years, we also had the good fortune of being the beneficiary of their generous annual Social Justice Fund contribution. We are deeply saddened by the loss of good-paying jobs for CAW and other union members and recognise that such loss affects not only the workers, but all of our community. Labour has long supported both United Way member and non-member agencies in Chatham-Kent and has worked to address other urgent needs in our community. The CKSACC is grateful for the contributions that have been made by our Labour sisters and brothers and we hope, with you, for better days ahead.



# OVER THE YEARS...INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IN CHATHAM-KENT

## 1994

Chatham-Kent marked IWD for the first-time-ever by holding a demonstration against lap dancing. Placard-carrying womyn held a peaceful protest outside a local "gentlemen's" / strip club. Following the demonstration the womyn joined a small group of men who, in support of their rally, prepared a fabulous pasta dinner for them.

## 1995

In protest of the successfully used drunk defense and the attack on womyn's confidential records, a protest rally was held outside the Court House in Chatham and was followed by a candle-light march to a downtown restaurant where a dramatic skit and presentation highlighted important equality issues. After several rousing choruses of "Bread and Roses" the evening ended with a social gathering.

## 1996

A celebration of "W♀men in Solidarity" was held at a very special Soup and Bread Luncheon. A wall was created using the names of inspiring womyn who had made a difference in the lives of those who were in attendance at the event.

## 1997

Going back over 300 years, Ages and Faces of Women highlighted womyn's struggles and accomplishments through the ages. A re-enactment of the Women's Parliament performed by Nellie McClung and the Manitoba Political Equity League; a Home Economics Lesson teaching girls and young womyn "How to be a Good Wife"; "Who's on Trial? 'The Rape of Mr. C. Kent'", and "Waiting for Johnny Angel - a Passage of Time"; were just a few of the performances caught on tape at the Chatham Cultural Centre. After this powerful evening of skits, plays, narrations, poems, songs and other performances, the audience gathered in Studio 1 to enjoy artistic displays, camaraderie, home-baked goodies and more.

## 1998

An evening of celebration brought community members together to enjoy meaningful music, displays, tasty goodies, and most of all... rousing contests of "Women's Trivia"! A wall of shame provided those in attendance with the opportunity to test the effectiveness of advertisements that sexualize and objectify womyn.



## 1999

As part of a provincial campaign, “W♀men Our Votes Count!” encouraged womyn to: educate themselves about issues that impact everyone; vote; enter the political arena; assume leadership positions in their organisations / community, etc. Guest speakers shared personal experiences of their work and success in leadership / political life and an abundance of great information was handed out.

(Portrayal of) Suffragette Nellie McClung addressed the audience, sharing her insight and observations about how far the advancement of womyn’s equality had come by 1999 in terms of social, political and economic gains and loss’. Also back by popular demand, Nellie was joined by her sisters from the Manitoba Equity League as they re-enacted the mock Women’s Parliament first performed in Winnipeg in 1914 the day after Conservative Premier Rodmond Roblin refused to acknowledge womyn’s right to vote.

In addition, the audience paid close attention to the issues addressed in a mock caucus meeting where the mostly female caucus brain stormed over how to win the men’s vote!

## 2000

Community womyn entertained the audience with a wide range of performances followed by a social. “Voices of Women”, co-sponsored by the C-K Women’s Centre and the C-K Sexual Assault Crisis Centre combined International Women’s Day, the 20th anniversary year of the shelter and a special (surprise!) tribute to the shelter’s executive director who would be retiring after 20 years of dedicated service.

## 2001

International Women’s Day 2001 was celebrated with live music, skits, poems, camaraderie, refreshments, and tasty treats. Participants created and posted personal tributes to womyn who had made a difference in their own lives.

A Private Members Bill created to advance womyn’s equality in the workplace was announced publicly for the first time by Chatham-Kent-Essex M.P.P. Pat Hoy.

## 2002

“Going To My Sister’s” was a first ~ Dinner followed by an evening of entertainment and awareness raising. Singer-songwriter-activist Faith Nolan used music as her medium to tell the story of womyn’s experience through the ages. Artistic displays and the sharing of friendship made this a memorable event.

## 2003

The 10th annual observance of International Women’s Day in Chatham-Kent, “Women of the Times” brought back popular skits from past IWD events and added some new and interesting portrayals of womyn from time. An atmosphere of celebration was created by poster/art displays, beautifully set tables of home-baked goods, and characters from herstory brought to life! Information was available for the taking.

## 2004

In keeping with the international theme, SHE’S ON A ROLE was the theme for International Women’s Day celebrations in Chatham-Kent. As is our tradition, a beautiful collection of art-forms that speak to the spirit of womyn surrounded those who attended lunch-time and evening events. Information and community displays were also set up. Womyn and girls who hold non-traditional roles in society spoke about their experience, insights and dreams. Feature speaker – Farajnaz Nazir, a womyn’s rights advocate and political activist from Afghanistan, moved and inspired everyone in the audience.

## 2005

A full day of information sharing helped to raise awareness about issues that affect womyn's equality in Canada and around the globe. In keeping with the tradition we began many years ago, womyn enjoyed a rose to take home... symbolic of a better life, and a reminder of womyn's struggles and accomplishments.

## 2006

Womyn's roles and relationships were honoured and their accomplishments and ongoing struggles were recognised at a very special evening where participants created beautiful and lasting collages of womyn and girls who have inspired their personal lives. The guest speaker, Kathleen Kevany, raised community consciousness about political, social and economic issues that affect women around the globe.

## 2007

After being inundated with requests to hold an event similar to 2006, womyn and men once again created wonderful collages to honour womyn who have inspired their lives. In addition, a presentation was made about the provincial Step It Up! campaign and information was distributed.

## 2008

Actor Olivia Cheng, star of the docudrama *Iris Chang – The Rape of Nanking* (based on the book by Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*) provided several interviews and presentations to mark the 15th Annual International Women's Day observance in Chatham-Kent. On March 7th Ms. Cheng, accompanied by the Executive Director of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, was interviewed on the CFCO and CKSY Radio Morning Shows and was then interviewed by CTV. Olivia also gave an informative and riveting presentation to grade 11 and 12 students at Ursuline College High School, and those activities filled the morning. In the afternoon Ms. Cheng, members of the CAW Local 127 Women's Committee, members of the local Chinese Community and CKSACC staff were welcomed by Mayor Randy Hope at the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Civic Centre where special presentations were made.

On March 8th Olivia Cheng spoke at the IWD Luncheon where the audience heard, some for the first time, about the war horrors endured by womyn, children and men in Nanking during World War II. Chatham-Kent's local Chinese Community collected donations for the CKSACC and made a very special and generous presentation at the afternoon event. That evening Ms. Cheng spoke again to an audience after they viewed the docudrama she starred in. After the film the audience gathered at a reception where they could speak one-on-one with Olivia and others.

## 2009

Members of the CAW Local 127 Women's Committee and the CKSACC took International Women's Day on the road throughout Chatham-Kent! Women's Trivia, Bread and Roses and Sisterhood highlighted the day.

## 2010

A special International Women's Day display set up at the Downtown Chatham Centre gave shoppers and others an opportunity to talk about, learn about and celebrate IWD. Passers-by stopped to have a chat and to test their personal knowledge of "Women's Trivia". Prizes were given to all who tried! The day proved that even at 9:00 in the morning, some folks enjoy cake!





## C-K Barbee: Honourary Member of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

### International Women's Day ~ International No Diet Day ~ St. Clair College Health Fair: C-K Barbee Was There!



C-K Barbee, a life-sized mannequin created by the CKSACC, made her public debut at the 1997 International Women's Day: Ages and Faces of Women. Barbee was made to help increase consciousness about some of the cultural norms and attitudes that negatively affect womyn's ability to achieve true and full equality. The 5' 9" mannequin was with the CKSACC for several years and it is our hope that in that time "Barbee" was able to effectively challenge some of the ideas and societal values that serve to perpetuate inequality and sexual assault / harassment / abuse.

The womyn of the CKSACC first learned about International No Diet Day in 1997, five years after it was started in Britain as part of an anti-diet campaign led by activist Mary Evans Young who survived anorexia and authored the book, *Diet Breaking: Having it All Without Having to Diet*. Mary was moved to promote the notion of size-acceptance after viewing a television program where womyn were having their stomachs stapled and following the suicide of a 15 year old girl who, at size 14, committed suicide because she felt unable to cope with being fat. May 6th became the date of an annual one-day moratorium on weight-loss-dieting.

One Size Does Not Fit All... Beauty, Health and Fitness Come in All Sizes... A waist is a terrible thing to mind... These are just a few of the messages that C-K Barbee delivered on behalf of the CKSACC at community events in an effort to promote individual and societal change in attitude. Barbee played an important role in helping to host our annual International No Diet Day (INDD) events in Chatham-Kent, the first being a community display at the local downtown mall on May 6, 1997. It was ironic that only a few metres away from the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre INDD display, cases of a weight-loss beverage were stacked on display inside the door of a pharmacy!

Word of Barbee's activities spread and in March of 1998 we were encouraged and pleased to receive a unique proposal from the Bulimia Anorexia Nervosa Association (BANA) in Windsor. BANA was one of several Windsor area agencies invited to participate in a Health Fair at the St. Clair College Windsor Campus and they hoped that the CKSACC would agree to have Barbee join them at the day long event. Needless to say, we were eager to join in partnership with BANA. Barbee traveled from the CKSACC to St. Clair College in style and drew considerable attention as she stood for the entire trip with the upper half of her body poking out of the sky light of the stretch limousine that had come for her. By all accounts Barbee was instrumental in raising interest and awareness for BANA and we were glad to have her back in plenty of time to host a Healthy Breakfast With Barbee for INDD on May 6, 1998.

Barbee continued to attend annual celebrations for International Women's Day, International No Diet Day and the occasional social. In doing so many invaluable opportunities were presented for thought-provoking discussion regarding the sexualization and objectification of womyn's bodies, gender-based violence, what it means to achieve equality and so much more. We feel certain that Barbee planted some rich seeds for growth during her years with the CKSACC.





## Take Back The Night

Take Back The Night was started in Germany in 1973 as a pro-active response to a series of gender-based sexual assaults and murders. It is an annual tradition around the globe, usually held in September, where to this day *womyn unite to take back the night!*

In Canada Take Back The Night was initiated in 1980 and the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre brought it to our local community for the first time in 1997. That first year the CKSACC asked womyn to participate:

In memory of someone

As a grandmother ~ mother ~ daughter

As sisters ~ friends

As a statement

To celebrate

To end violence against womyn!

More than 200 womyn and children participated in our first *walk, run or roll*. After the walk men joined in for the rest of a full and amazing night where freelance journalist and author, Laura Robinson, delivered an outstanding presentation.

Since 1997 the CKSACC has been proud and pleased to sponsor Take Back The Night events and we have been fortunate to have some wonderful partners and supporters join us in the process including: our Labour sisters from the CAW, the Chatham Kent Women's Centre Inc., sisters of the Delaware Nation of Moraviantown, the Lambton-Kent Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario, the Sacred Circle Dancers, East Side Pride, AIDS Support Kent, Chatham-Kent Black Historical Society, Men Walking Against Violence Against Women and other supportive brothers. .

More recently Chatham-Kent has been without Take Back The Night. While it was a difficult decision for the CKSACC to stop holding this annual celebration, we are cognoscente of the fact that it is difficult for supporters to attend all of the many events and activities that are now held during the busy month of September. We are grateful for all of the community support that was shown.



## Remembrance, Hope and Action

Each year on December 6<sup>th</sup> communities throughout the country hold gatherings to commemorate the 14 womyn killed in the Montreal Massacre at Ecole Polytechnique University in 1989. The Engineering students were systematically murdered and the killer targeted them for no other reason except they were womyn. In Canada December 6<sup>th</sup> is recognised as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. In Chatham-Kent we have taken, and continue to take the call for remembrance and action very seriously as those who attended the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary events can attest.

December 6<sup>th</sup> is a day on which we believe memory and action both hold great importance. In Chatham-Kent we honour the memories of womyn murdered by men, through ceremony followed by action.

Many campaigns have been launched in our community on December 6<sup>th</sup> and there are two examples that serve particularly well to demonstrate the importance of activism in ending gendered violence:

- The community responded swiftly and loudly in 2000 when asked to participate in a letter-writing campaign to protest the at-home conditional sentence of a Chatham chiropractor convicted of sexually assaulting thirteen of his patients. A clear message was sent that sexual abuse by persons in positions of trust would not be tolerated. Ultimately the Ministry of the Attorney General reviewed and appealed the sentence and the practitioner was required to serve jail time.
- A petition calling for an inquest into the murder of Nurse Lori Dupont was launched in 2005. A week after her murder on November 12<sup>th</sup> the Coroner's office announced that this case would be designated to the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC). While the DVDRC had expertise in the area of domestic violence, the CKSACC and many others were concerned that the DVDRC may not have the expertise to critically examine the workplace aspects of Lori's murder. With the support of Lori's family the CKSACC developed a petition calling for a public inquest into Lori's murder. More than 10,000 signatures were collected. An inquest was held. Jury recommendations handed down mirrored many of the recommendations that had previously been made at the Theresa Vince inquest in 1997.

It would be impossible to name all those who have participated in the planning and organising of these meaningful, annual events over two decades but we would be remiss if we did not give particular recognition to:

- The Ursuline Sisters of the Chatham Union who, this year, are celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Chatham! The Ursuline Sisters provide generous support to womyn's services, other community organisations and so many more, particularly those who are marginalised. They have kindly opened their home for Remembrance, Hope and Action for December 6<sup>th</sup> gatherings. The CKSACC is most appreciative for the wonderful support of the Ursuline Sisters.
- Anne Coulter, who in a very real way, has provided a contemplative space for reflection, remembrance and hope. Anne supported the CKSACC in our efforts to find a public location for the *Monument of Remembrance and Hope* dedicated to the 14 womyn killed in the Montreal Massacre and all womyn whose lives have ended in acts of gendered violence. On December 6, 2006 the monument was placed in the Peace Garden Park, created in memory of Walter Coulter, at Maple Leaf Cemetery. The CKSACC is grateful to Anne and to everyone in the community who supported our fund-raising efforts for this beautiful monument.



*Monument of  
Remembrance and Hope  
Unveiled on  
December 6th, 2006*

## Activism Requires Unpaid Work!

As stated by Margaret Mead, “A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Those words truly do speak truth to action.

CKSACC programs and services were developed and have been provided for 25 years with the financial support of government and other sources. We are genuinely grateful to funders for making a wide continuum of service possible. Activists have pressed forward the bigger picture of equality and justice and it is, in large part, their conviction, commitment and willingness to perform unpaid work that achievements have been made in that regard. We offer just a few examples to demonstrate the point:

♀ Honourary CKSACC member, Barbee, is pictured on page 51 with Crisis Centre employees of 1997. This life-sized manikin was created in the home of a CKSACC staffer on a Monday night after the closing of “business” hours. Everyone agreed that the evening was a good investment of time as Barbee stayed with the CKSACC for a number of years and planted many seeds for growth towards equality along the way!

♀ With nothing more than the offer of pizza as an enticement, staff and volunteers never seemed to mind giving up an evening or a Saturday to: prepare for special campaigns; create amazing placards for Take Back the Night and other events; plan and prepare for rallies or protests; assist with fund-raising endeavours such as a direct mail campaign, get ready for any number of other activities.

♀ In preparation for a protest against the drunk defence, 125 labels were peeled from 125 beer bottles over the course of an entire Saturday by just one CKSACC employee. Several hours were necessary just to soak the labels for easier removal! With this tedious step out of the way, it was much quicker to replace the previous labels with new ones that were created to show the scales of justice and the words, *No Excuse for Abuse*. (See page 30 for a photograph.)

It is important to note that of the 190,000 volunteer hours that have been reported from 1985 to 2010, 100% of those hours were spent on service delivery. None of those hours constituted time spent in the area of activism. In retrospect, we wish that we had a tally of the unpaid hours that have gone towards the advancement of womyn’s safety, equality and justice. Needless to say, we are grateful to all CKSACC staff and volunteers, past and present, and others who have given countless hours and tireless energy to end sexual assault / harassment / abuse and all forms of gendered violence.

*Feminists are not aware of different things than other people. They are aware of the same things differently.*  
~ Sandra Lee Bartky



# We Will Remember

The community of Chatham-Kent has been rocked by tragedy time and again. Many of us easily remember the horrific, senseless murders of womyn and children whom we continue to hold close in heart: Danny Miller, Theresa Vince, Myles Neuts, Valerie Gutteridge, Lori Dupont, Angela Harkley and others. Theresa, Valerie, Lori and Angela were all killed as a result of male violence against women. They remind us of the important need to address the systemic roots and causes of sexist violence and continue in the struggle for equality, justice and respect for all. CKSACC has had the great privilege of working closely with some family members and we are honoured by their friendship and trust in our small organisation. We will remember, and with countless others, we will continue to work for meaningful change until violence has ended.



Theresa Vince  
killed on June 2, 1996



Lori Dupont  
killed on November 12, 2005



Angela Harkley  
killed September 14, 2006



# Imagine A Woman

Imagine a woman who believes it is right and good she is woman.  
A woman who honours her experience and tells her stories. Who  
refuses to carry the sins of others within her body and life.

Imagine a woman who believes she is good. A woman who trusts  
and respects herself. Who listens to her needs and desires and  
meets them with tenderness and grace.

Imagine a woman who has acknowledged the past influence  
on the present. A woman who has walked her past. Who has  
healed into the present.

Imagine a woman who names her own gods. A woman who  
exerts, initiates, and moves on her own behalf. Who refuses to  
surrender except to her truest self and to her wisest voice.

Imagine a woman in love with her own body. A woman who  
believes her body is enough, just as it is. Who celebrates her  
body and its rhythms and cycles as an exquisite resource.

Imagine a woman who honours the face of the Goddess in her  
changing face. A woman who celebrates the accumulation of  
her years and her wisdom. Who refuses to use precious energy  
disguising the changes in her body and life.

Imagine a woman who values the women in her life.  
A woman who sits in circles of women.  
Who is reminded of the truth about herself when she forgets.

**Imagine yourself as this woman.**

*Patricia Lynn Reilly*

# Message from the CKSACC Executive Director

When I was hired as the executive director of the CKSACC twenty years ago, I could not have anticipated everything that waited ahead for our small centre. Until October 1, 1990, the centre had one full-time employee. On that day two more of us were hired but only on a part-time basis. With a full-time equivalent of just two staff it was clear that we had our work cut out for us! Over the next couple of years the centre grew rapidly. Programs and services were developed and funds were available to support them. In January, 1992 the CKSACC moved from its former home on King Street to our current location. Core funding was provided through the Ministry of the Attorney General, United Way continued its support, annual grants were readily available to help with special projects such as May's annual *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*, time-limited funding supported specific projects and we boasted a paid core staff of 6 ½ full-time equivalents as well as a strong volunteer base. Additionally, grants allowed for the hiring of 1 full time staff to conduct a needs assessment and then later to develop French Language Services. We had overcome the challenges that we faced earlier on to establish the credibility we needed to gain community support and everyone's hard work had paid off! It seems to me that in some ways the CKSACC, as well as the work of the larger anti-rape movement has come full circle, but that is a subject for another time! Now is the time to recognise *25 Years of Service and Activism* and I am tremendously proud to be a part of that.

My 20 years at the CKSACC have been filled with indescribable experiences and relationships, challenges, failures and successes, heartaches and joys, disappointments and delights, laughter and tears and so much more. I have had the good fortune to meet and work with incredible womyn whose strength of spirit and determination to move forward in their lives inspires me. I have learned something from each of them and I value those lessons. I have worked with some wonderful men who support equality and justice and who work towards that end. I have been moved by men who were willing to share their feelings of pain and despair from child / youth sexual abuse and I wish each of them health and healing. I have also had the privilege of walking with families along a small part of their deeply personal journey of grief, pain and sadness and I will hold them in heart always. I will also remember their monumental strength, unstoppable determination, tenacity and resolve to prevent another family from knowing such depth of pain.

The last 20 years has also given me the opportunity to meet and work with various funders, community partners, sisters-in-the-struggle and many others. In particular I would like to acknowledge everyone that I have worked with past and present, at the CKSACC. As the executive director I have been fortunate to report to Boards of Directors who truly cared about upholding the centre's grass-roots vision and mission. They have been courageous and "gutsy" in their decision making and the results have proven beneficial for womyn not only in Chatham-Kent but provincially and nationally. I have also had the opportunity to learn from volunteers who brought diversity and personal experience that shaped their lives and who respectfully challenged me, helping me to grow. Last but not least, I have worked with numerous CKSACC employees over the years and each one, without exception, has given me a gift of sorts. It may have been a new insight, increased awareness or lesson learned. It may have been just one cherished memory, a listening ear or kind word spoken. It may have been a challenge that I learned to overcome or a test that helped to remind me of who I am and who I want to be. Whatever the gift, I value each and every one and hope to always use them well.

The last 20 years have been extraordinary and I am grateful for the experience!

Yours in the struggle for peace,  
equality and justice,

# Herstorical Events in Time

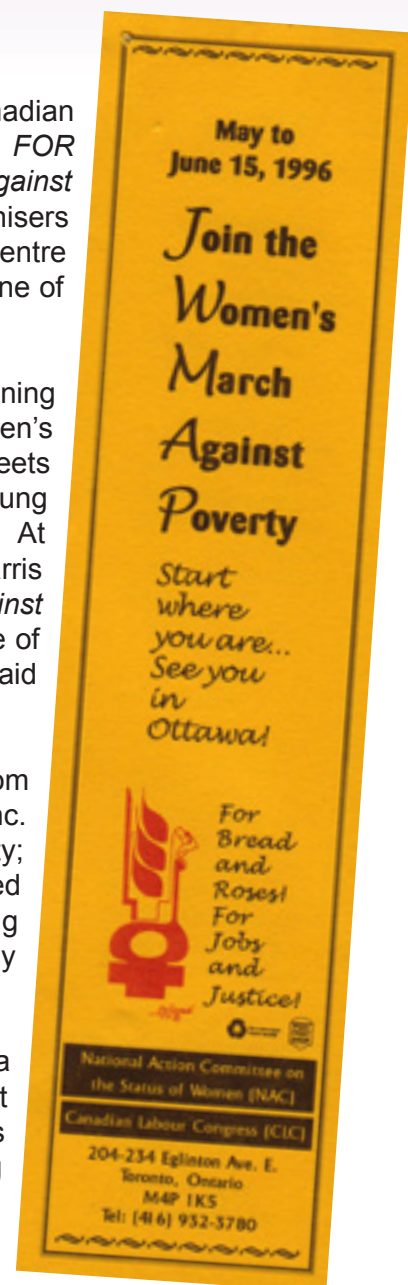
## Women's March Against Poverty

In 1996 the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Canadian Labour Congress organised a nation-wide campaign *FOR BREAD & ROSES FOR JOBS & JUSTICE*. During the months of May and June the *Women's March Against Poverty* traveled throughout Canada. After many conversations with national organisers and a bit of convincing on our part, the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre was delighted when campaign organisers agreed to include Chatham-Kent as one of their stops along the way!

With our sisters from the Chatham-Kent: Women's Centre Inc., Women's Training Centre and Labour, the CKSACC held a noon-time rally at the Chatham-Kent Women's Training Centre (ultimately shut down by the previous provincial government). Sheets filled with messages and visual representations from community womyn were hung along the fence-line that bordered the C-K Women's Training Centre parking lot. At that time the Women's Training Centre was under threat of closure by the Mike Harris government making it a most appropriate location for the *Women's March Against Poverty* rally. Prior to closure, the Women's Training Centre had a success rate of well over 90% where graduates of the program achieved full-time employment, paid taxes and were able to give back to the community.

At our local rally, a pick-up truck sufficed well as a sound stage where womyn from the campaign; the executive directors of the Chatham Kent Women's Centre Inc. and the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre; womyn affected by poverty; Women's Training Centre staff; Labour sisters and supportive brothers addressed the crowd. A symbolic rose was planted for presentation to the Women's Training Centre and it was even more meaningful when the rose was ceremoniously watered by a young child with a whole life ahead of her.

When the *Women's March Against Poverty* culminated on June 15, 1996 in Ottawa where thousands and thousands of womyn marched and rallied on Parliament Hill, the executive director of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre was there! It was an event never to be forgotten. The sheets that had earlier hung along the fence-line at the Chatham-Kent Women's Training Centre were hung with countless others in Ottawa. Fourteen years later womyn's poverty continues to be a social injustice in Canada.





## World March of Women

The World March of Women that was held in 2000 joined womyn all around the world in sisterhood and solidarity. This world-wide action provided a stage for womyn to address issues of poverty and marginalisation. In Canada the March culminated in Ottawa in October, 2000 and womyn from the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre were there. It was especially meaningful for those whose daughters had joined them for this herstorical event. They later attended the Women's Resistance Conference that was organised by the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres.







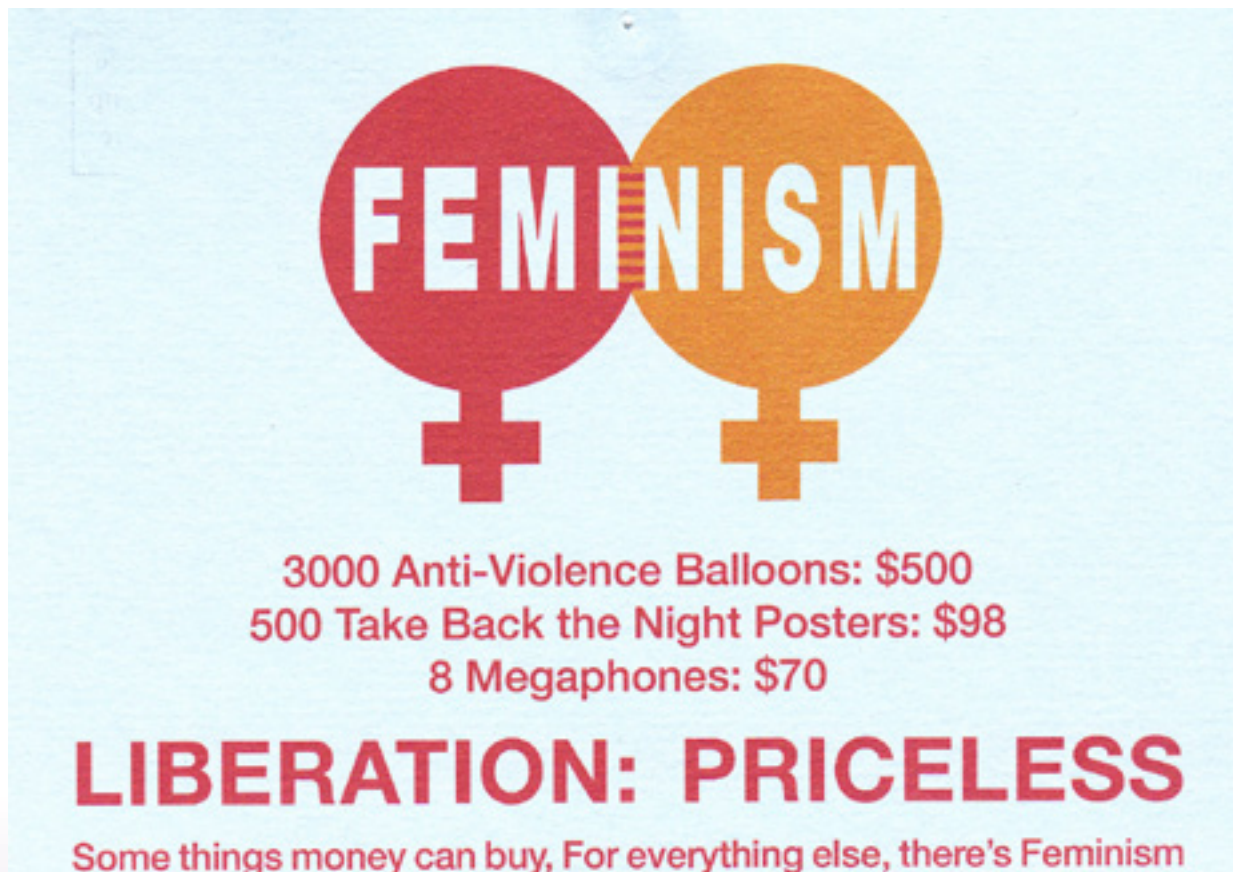


## Day of Feminist Dialogue

In April of 2005 the executive director of the CKSACC attended the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC) convention in Vancouver. Thoughtful debate and dialogue occurred over difficult issues and womyn were challenged to evaluate and re-evaluate their stance on a number of controversial and potentially divisive positions. Despite differences this phenomenal group of womyn, representing sexual assault / rape crisis centres from across Canada, came together in agreement on five resolutions all aimed at advancing womyn's equality, justice and safety.

As one would expect at an event organised by CASAC, there were a number of very intriguing and interesting displays and attractions at the convention. For Michelle Schryer, Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre Executive Director, the *Day of Feminist Dialogue* was one of the most profound meetings that she has had the privilege to participate in. Front-line anti-violence workers who make up CASAC and other feminists who were invited for the *Dialogue* listened intently to one another and spoke about issues that included: *Sexist Violence & Aboriginal Women; Racialized Sexist Violence; Criminalizing of Women; Gendered Poverty and Legalizing Sexist Violence*. Michelle was invited to give voice to Theresa Vince's experience of gendered workplace harassment and of the workplace murder that ended it.

The CASAC convention and the *Day of Feminist Dialogue* in particular was an unforgettable experience. Marilyn Oladimeji, the former President of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres stated in an address to the OCRCC membership, "This is difficult but hopeful work we do". This simple statement seems the perfect commentary for the 2005 CASAC convention and the *Day of Feminist Dialogue*.





# And the Work Continues!



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF  
SERVICE & ACTIVISM

