



Welcome To The Women's Committee Newsletter! November 2008

Cookbook

As many of you know, the Women's Committee is hoping to produce a Cookbook in time for the holiday season. It will be comprised of recipes submitted by our Members and all proceeds from the sale of the Cookbook will be donated to Hamilton FoodShare, which is an organization that supplies much needed food to area food banks. Once the Cookbook is ready for sale, all Members will receive an e-mail with details on how to purchase one.

CAW Women's Conference

Three of our Members attended the annual Women's Conference in August at the CAW Family Education Centre in Port Elgin.

*Food for thought from the 2008 CAW Women's Conference
Equality: Once and For All!*

Carol Phillips is an Executive Assistant to the President of our national union. At the Women's Conference, we had the opportunity to hear Carol speak about the inequalities women face on a daily basis. Carol focused on the idea that while women know they are equal, equality in our society has not been achieved.

What follows are some 'sound bytes' from Carol's speech, which can be found in its entirety on the CAW website at: <http://www.caw.ca/en/3058.htm>

On gender-based wage gaps:

"Most of us wake up every day knowing full well that we're equal to men. But then we go to work and we're paid, on average, 29.5% less than men. According to Statistics Canada, we do four times as much housework, childcare, and eldercare as men. We're more likely to be judged based on our appearance, than our ideas or intelligence. We're more likely to be poor, and more likely to be harassed."

"So let's repeat it again because it should make us very angry. On average, women working full-time, full-year earn 29.5% less than men. Women of colour earn only 64% and Aboriginal women an appalling 46% as much as men. Over 2/3 of minimum wage earners are women!"

On poverty:

"We live in one of the richest nations in the world. Tell me, then, why 2.4 million Canadian women (and more than a million children) live in poverty? Or why Canada, ranks 38th in the world on the gender pay gap – falling behind Switzerland, Cambodia, and Kenya? Sure, we know on the inside, that we're equal. But we also know that we're a far cry from equality."

On the oppressive power structure:

"We live in a country today, within a world today, where poverty has a woman's face. And power, has a man's."

On fighting for equality:

"As the former Prime Minister of Norway, a woman, once said, "Rights are never given, they are always taken"."

A full report from the 2008 Women's Conference will be in the next published CAW Local 555 Newsletter.

December 6th

The Anti Violence Network will be sponsoring a December 6th ceremony to remember the 14 women who were gunned down while attending classes at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal on December 6th, 1989. These women were shot by gunman Marc Lepine, who entered the school and opened fire. Lepine was "fighting feminism", and specifically targeted women. He injured 10 other women and 4 men before turning the gun on himself. Details of the event will be sent out via e-mail and ALL Members of our local are encouraged to attend.

Clothing Drive

Last Fall we held a clothing drive, with the clothing being donated to local Women's Shelters. In the spring, we held a prom dress/suit collection and a backpack/school supply collection, with the donations going to the Walk-In Closet program run by the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. We had a good response to both programs and the donations were much appreciated. Next year, we will be combining both of these drives into one, which will be held

in the spring, so please keep this in mind when you are going through your closets.

Violence in the Workplace Submission

The Ontario Ministry of Labour has released a consultation paper calling for discussion on the issue of workplace violence, with the possibility of amending the Occupational Health and Safety Act pertaining to violence prevention in the workplace. Workplace violence is not currently covered under the OHSA.

In November 2005, Lori Dupont, a nurse at Hotel Dieu Hospital in Windsor was murdered at work, by her ex-partner who worked in the same hospital. There was a Coroner's Inquest into her death, and this consultation process comes about after the release of the recommendations from that Inquest.

A 2004 Statistics Canada Study, "Criminal Victimization in the Workplace" showed that 20% of all incidents of violence victimization, including physical assault, sexual assault and robbery occurred while the victim was at work. One third of all workplace violence involved someone working in the social assistance and health care industry. There were also higher than average rates in the accommodation industry, food services, wholesale and retail trade and the education sector. The workers in many of these workplaces are predominately female.

Violence in the workplace needs to be included in the OHSA so that further workplace tragedy is prevented. If you have not visited the CAW's website at <http://petition.web.net/caw/node/1> please take a few minutes and sign the campaign petition in support of the CAW proposed changes to the OHSA.

Lunch and Learn

The Women's Committee would like to have some *Lunch and Learn* sessions. Some of the topics under consideration are: Violence in the Workplace, Women's Self Defense and Violence Against Women. We would like to hear from you about other topics that would be of interest to you.

Please keep in mind that that they will be held over the lunch hour, so there is approximately 50 minutes to work with. If you have any suggestions for topics, please email: karen.sutton@cawlocal555.ca

Worthwhile Links

We feel these links are worth checking out.

<http://www.basketeers.ca/>

<http://www.caw.ca/en/services-departments-women-program-course-descriptions.htm>

http://canadianlabour.ca/en/womens_economic_equa

<http://www.hamiltonfoodshare.org/>

<http://titles.mcmaster.ca/pink/>

Food for Thought

From the CLC website: The average earnings of university-educated young women fell between 1991 and 2001, from \$37,066 in 1991 to \$36,782 in 2001, while the average income for men rose from \$42,219 to \$45,054. Meanwhile, the gap between college and high school educated young women's wages and men stayed the same. Despite women's hard work to increase their educational qualifications, the wage gap persists.

It doesn't have to be this way.

