

## MONTREAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN – LE CONSEIL DES FEMMES DE MONTRÉAL

## INTERIM PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring, this year, begins with the vernal equinox on March 20 at 12:57 p.m. Hopefully, our cold weather will have disappeared by March 20th. We are anxiously awaiting the season that escalates daylight, warm temperatures and the rebirth of foliage and vegetation, bestowing glittering bright colours for us all to relish.

Thanks are extended to Nadia Baraghi, MCW program convener, who organized an excellent program in conjunction with Heart /Health month. MCW had the privilege of being addressed by, Cardiologist, Dr. Colin Rose, who presented an overview of the importance of health as related to cardiovascular disease, hence cardiac problems. One of the most important indicators for cardiac and cardiovascular health is that your waistline must be equal to half of your height! Dr. Rose's presentation and the question-and-answer period lasted for over an hour, a true sign of audience appreciation. Sincere thanks are extended to Dr. Rose for taking time from his busy schedule.

In 1977, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling on member states to proclaim a day for women's rights and international peace. Following the United Nations' lead, Canada chose March 8 as International Women's Day. Canadians celebrate progress towards equality for women and their full participation, reflect on the challenges and barriers that remain, and consider future steps to achieving equality for all women, in all aspects of their lives. It is a time to honour the contributions that women are making, both in Canada and around the world.

On March 6, MCW is honoured to have **Ms. Barbara Kay**, as the guest speaker. Ms. Kay is a writer and **National Post** columnist, who along with **Ms. Aruna Papp**, has co-written a book that tells of untold stories of oppression, injustices and acts of violence against women. Aruna recounts personal experiences in this riveting memoir entitled, *"Unworthy Creature: A Punjabi Daughter's Memoir of Honour, Shame and Love."*

Harmful acts in the name of honor are happening, right under our noses. A prime example is the honor-motivated killing in Ontario, where three teenage girls from Montreal, along with their father's first wife, were found dead in a canal in eastern Ontario. The motive, according to prosecutors, was that the women, by their modest bids for social autonomy, had defiled the family's honour. In the book Papp relives the enduring fear of her childhood, even from earliest youth. "I knew that my life was expendable," she writes, "if I did not meet the Draconian standards for chastity that would ensure my marriageable status, because marriage and motherhood, hopefully of sons,

was all I was good for." This program is not to be missed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a member of the MCW, Verna Peris, who for several years has been responsible to send copies of the Bulletin to our many members who require a hard copy. Due to personal circumstances she can no longer continue this task. We wish Verna all the best and thank her so very much for her contribution to MCW.

MCW is now preparing for the AGM which will be held on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014. This is the time when the Directors of the MCW Board are elected. If you are interested in joining the MCW Board or any of the committees please submit your name and telephone number in writing to one of our members of the Board.

We look forward to seeing you on March 6, 2014.

*-Bonnie Stamos-Destounis, Interim President*

We believe that human rights transcend boundaries and must prevail over state sovereignty. - **José Ramos-Horta**

**UPCOMING GENERAL MEETING**

Come join us on Thursday, March 6, 2014 for MCW's monthly general meeting at Les Jardins du Canal, 2700 Rufus Rockhead (opposite the Atwater Market, metro Lionel Groulx, bus 108).

Federate and individual members are also encouraged to attend a resolutions/board meeting to be held in the morning of that same date, at 10:00 am.

Writer and **National Post** columnist, **Ms. Linda Kay** will be our afternoon's guest speaker.

As per usual, a light lunch (\$10 per person) will be served at 12:00 noon and our program will begin at 1:00 pm. Please contact our hostess Convenor, Ms. Frances Gregory email: [frances.gregory@videotron.ca](mailto:frances.gregory@videotron.ca) or Tel. (514) 935-1674 should you be attending our luncheon.

**Resolutions for Study, Amendment and Debate at the  
NCWC- AGM:**

1. **Access to Mifepristone (RU486): for use in Medical Abortions**
2. **Employment Insurance, Reform Regarding Tips**
3. **Global Farmland Rush**
4. **Banning the use of Neonicotinoid Pesticides to Protect Food**
5. **One-Third Reduction of Sugar Content in Processed Food, Soft Drinks and Juices.**

**NCWC 2014 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS**

The following draft resolutions were submitted for consideration at the NCWC AGM in June 2014. We will be discussing, and voting on these resolutions on March 6, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. and forwarding our suggested amendments, if any, as well as the result of our vote to NCWC by the end of March. For the complete background please consult the attached document. We hope that you will join us in this discussion.

**1. ACCESS TO MIFEPRISTONE (RU486): FOR USE IN MEDICAL ABORTIONS - Proposed by Ottawa Council of Women**

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada adopt as policy availability of, and access to, use of Mifepristone (RU486) by women requiring a medical abortion of short-term pregnancy; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that the National Council of Women of Canada encourage Health Canada to approve Mifepristone (RU486) when an application for a New Drug Submission is received; and be it further

**Resolved #3** that the National Council of Women of Canada urge its provincial counterparts to include Mifepristone (RU486) in the formulary for provincial health care.

**2. EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REFORM REGARDING TIPS - Proposed by Ottawa Council of Women**

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy the reform of the Employment Insurance (EI) Act and regulations to eliminate the discrimination against workers who receive a portion of their income as direct tips; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that the NCWC urge the Government of

Canada to modify the EI Act and regulations to include all declared tips as insurable earnings for the purposes of calculating EI premiums.

**3. GLOBAL FARMLAND RUSH - Proposed by St. Catharines & District Council of Women**

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that any land takeover by a foreign country not be detrimental to the indigenous farmer or the local food supply; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:

- a. urge the World Bank to design its investments in large scale land acquisitions to ensure a more equitable benefit to local farmers;
- b. promote land investments that are collaborative such as joint venture or outgrower schemes;
- c. encourage Canadian investors to conduct impact assessments on their activities to avoid adverse effects on local farmers; and be it further

**Resolved #3** that NCWC urge the International Council of Women to urge its national members to:

- a. urge the World Bank to design its investments in large scale land acquisitions to ensure a more equitable benefit to local farmers;
- b. promote land investments that are collaborative such as joint venture or outgrower schemes;
- c. encourage their investors to conduct impact assessments on their activities to avoid adverse effects on local farmers; where applicable urge their governments to enact laws to protect local farmers from being relocated.

**4. BANNING THE USE OF NEONICOTINOID PESTICIDES TO PROTECT FOOD - Proposed by St. Catharines & District Council of Women**

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that neonicotinoid pesticides not be used on farm crops; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to ban the use of neonicotinoid pesticides for use on farm crops.

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continuation from page 1)

## 5. ONE-THIRD REDUCTION IN SUGAR CONTENT IN PROCESSED FOOD, SOFT DRINKS AND JUICES

-Toronto and Area Council of Women

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that

sugar, fructose and sweeteners in all processed food, soft drinks and juices be reduced by one-third; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to pass legislation to reduce by one-third, the amount of sugar, fructose and other sweeteners in all processed food, soft drinks and juices

---

## SACRED TERRITORIES OF THE HEART

Some years ago I read a book called 'the China Study'. It had a huge impact on me as I began a journey of 100% vegetarianism with the help of my family doctor. I made a few mistakes along the way, but change after change, I kept going. Today, those changes appear to have caused a number of significantly positive differences in the lives of those around me. I remember telling my father about 'Diseases of Affluence', which is where and how, Dr. Colin Rose our guest speaker this month began his presentation.

The reasons why so many illnesses are categorized so, he said, is based on 'Epi Genetics' where our environment causes changes in our bodies at a cellular level that then impact our DNA blueprint where certain pre-set dispositions to disease can be triggered on or off. He went on to say that 90 % of these diseases are preventable. This is why the way we live is so very important. Everything we do, he said, changes our DNA blueprint to health or disease.

He reminded us of a time where the heart was considered sacred territory, the seat of our human emotions. Today, cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of mortality in Canada. While failure and malfunctions of tissue and blood vessels of the heart organ can certainly play a role in some heart disease cases reported annually, the wrong lifestyles, habits, and choices remain the contributive cause of metabolic heart disease for far too many of us.

He talked at some length about contributive factors to formation of sediment and the hardening of arteries. Conditions such as blood pressure are not age related but it can be positively affected and indeed reversed through dietary choices and proper exercise. Prescription medication, he went on to say, should not be taken as permission to go on making same poor choices as ever.

I can tell you that according to the Canadian Health and Stroke foundation, those of us who made it to a hospital

suffering from a heart attack or a stroke survived 90 % and 80 % respectively however we did not make the follow up lifestyles changes recommended by our physicians.

Health Canada limits salt intake to 1500mg daily for adults but remains silent on the issue of daily recommended sugar intake. The average Canadian consumes about 26 tsp sugar daily. That is about 40kg of sugar per year or the equivalent of 20 bags of sugar. The American Heart Association limits daily sugar intake to 6 tsp for women and 9 tsp for men. Each tsp is about 4.2 gram of sugar.

We need to make certain decisions that have to do with our future health and wellbeing. We can make more rigorous legislative changes where food labeling is concerned. But by practicing smart consumerism and making healthier choices when grocery shopping, we can make a far greater impact on our society, companies and markets that seem impervious to our needs.

According to a Chinese proverb 'Women hold up half the sky', so let's do this because we matter.

*Nadia Baraghi, Convener, Health, Child and Family*

---

## CANADIANS HEALTH CONCERNS

As NCWC Health Convener, I have asked Council Health Conveners from across Canada to relate to me important health issues that are not being addressed. If you have any health concerns you would like address could you convey them to the MCW Health Convener, Nadia Baraghi.

We are often reminded of the importance of the development of strategies to help Canadians make wiser lifestyle choices to curb the obesity epidemic and its related diseases. These are a major cause of lower national productivity, death and escalating medical costs. Because of the obesity epidemic for the first time in history parents might outlive their children!

One of the questions this begs is how far the government should go in influencing food policies and lifestyles? Should they wage an all-out campaign like they did for cigarettes?

When there is ample evidence to show lifestyle, not drugs, is the best course, how can physicians be convinced of the advantages of prescribing healthy lifestyles, rather than medications? The monies saved from the escalating health costs resulting from poor lifestyle choices could be used for other pressing areas of health care.

There are so many important health issues that are not being addressed. Let our MCW Health, Child and Family Convener, Nadia Baraghi, know your concerns.

*Sandra Cohen-Rose, Past President, MCW  
Convener of Standing Study Committee on Health, NCWC*

## QUEBEC LANGUAGE LAWS RATHER ODD AND CONFLICTING

In the Gazette some weeks ago, January 31, 2014, to be exact, I came across two articles dealing with language issues in Quebec. One article Entitled “Odd new rules limit teaching of French”, written by Paul Donovan and Sidney Benudiz outline some odd new rules that limit the teaching of French in Quebec by way of the Quebec government purposely limiting the amount of French that English-language independent (read private) schools can teach. Donovan is the Principal of Loyola High School and Chair of the Quebec Association of Independent Schools and Benudiz is the Executive Director at QAIS. According to the authors, since the adoption of Bill 101, in the 1970s, Quebec society has evolved significantly, particularly among English speaking Quebecers. One major change is that English-language schools, including CEGEPs are committed to ensuring that their students are bilingual. The result is that these schools, both public and private offer extensive French- immersion and expanded French-language programs. The student’s parents are also very supportive of their children’s being able upon completion of school to be able to live and work in French.

Both the Quebec Court of Appeal in 2007 and the Supreme Court of Canada in 2009 declared the previous Quebec legis-lation as unconstitutional (the previous Quebec legislation limiting access to English-language, non-subsidized inde-pendent schools) concluding that the law must respect the legitimate right of parents to choose a clear and committed educational pathway for their children, be it in an English-language school or a French language one. And in response, the government implemented a new law featuring a Kafkaesque point system apparently designed to make it as difficult as possible to attend an English-language, non-subsidized independent school and to frustrate any legitimate choice of educational pathway by parents. The shocking aspect of the regulation is that it penalizes unsubsidized English language schools for teaching too much French. (*Most private English – language private schools in Quebec are unsubsidized.*)

The regulation classifies independent English-language schools as being in three categories (A, B and C). A primary school can be considered a Category A school in one of two ways: the first one requires the school to have a dominant majority (60 per cent) of the students in the first three years of primary to already have eligibility certificates (i.e., to have inherited that status from their parents, and whose parents have made the effort to obtain an eligibility certificate for English high school before beginning primary school). The second test, perversely, requires the school to teach 70 per cent of its program in English. In other words, having a bilingual and/or very rich French program for elementary students can result in the school losing its ‘A’ status. This point system is having the perverse effect of significantly impairing unsubsidized schools’ ability to

society.

Restricting our capacity to teach French is a major step backward for our schools, and not in the best interest of either Quebec society or the protection and development of French in North America.

Keeping French-language and English-language schools in neatly isolated silos is harmful to both the English-speaking minority and to Quebec society as a whole. If they were alive today, the original drafters of the Charter of the French Language would have been ecstatic if established English-language schools taught up to 70 per cent of their curriculum in French. Unfortunately the current legislation point system penalizes schools anxious to promote both strong English-language and French-language language skills. Under the point system, unsubsidized schools are being significantly impaired to produce fluently bilingual students who possess the French – language skills required in Quebec society.

The second article from the Gazette, “Quebec Putting Red Tape Between Military Families and English Schools: complaint, deals with the red tape making it harder for soldiers kids to attend English schools.

It is a fact of military life that personnel can be deployed or moved elsewhere at any time. For their kids to qualify for English school, military parents must be temporary, not permanent residents of the province. But these days, according to the Quebec English School Board Association, the Education Department is making families jump through hoops to prove their resident status. According to Association President David D’Aoust, parents must obtain affidavits from the Department of National defence attesting that they’re not here permanently and they must also fill out forms stating why they came to Quebec and when they expect to move again and explain why they selected English schooling over French. The school association, which represents Quebec’s nine English-language school boards and 100,000 students, believe that this is an unreasonable request.

According to the Department of Education, they are merely following a recent suggestion by the Quebec Administration Tribunal that it re-examine what “temporary residence” means. ‘It’s all very well and good to want to ask about temporary stays in Quebec. But the tribunal’s decision (should) not take precedence over the law.’

“‘New parents who get assigned to Quebec may just say, ‘Well, it’s too hot an issue, I’m not applying for a certificate, I’ll just send my kids to French school.’” “But if they don’t get their temporary stays renewed,” said D’Aoust, “a number of those 750 kids in our school system now may have to go to French school” in 2014-2015.

(Continued on page 5)

*(Continued from page 4)*

Last year, the tribunal ruled in the case of former Valcartier soldier David Robert, a francophone who wanted to keep his sons in English school after he left the military. The boys were forced to switch to French school.

**(Courtesy Montreal Gazette, January 31, 2014)**

*-Florence Holt, MCW Board Member*

## Zonta

invites you to the

### Annual International Women's Day Luncheon

on

Saturday, March 15, 2014  
from 12 Noon to 1 PM (Cash Bar)

at

Restaurant LeChambertin  
9 Place Frontenac, Pointe Claire  
(corner Brunswick, bus 200, 202)

SPECIAL GUEST: Dr Johanne Heald  
Canadian Space Agency  
Women in the Space Agency

Tickets: \$50.00 (meal & glass of wine),  
free parking and door prizes

Contacts:

Mickey Wernecke: 514-630-0138

[hbwernecke@aol.com](mailto:hbwernecke@aol.com)

Yvonne Quintyn: 514-683-4213

[yquintyn@bell.net](mailto:yquintyn@bell.net)

***Please contact us for tickets by Tuesday,  
March 11, 2014.***



### Anglican Church Women Diocese of Montreal

**Lenten Day of Reflection  
Thursday March 13, 2014**

**Theme: God's Love Through Our Hands**

Led by: **The Rev. Shirley Smith**

**FULFORD HALL**

1444 Union St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (*opposite Union metro*)

Registration: 09:30am with  
Eucharist: 10:00am

Light lunch will be provided.  
All welcome for a day of reflection.



**TOUS EST BIENVENU!  
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

### Article and Announcement Submissions

The next issue of **The Bulletin** will be in March 2014. Please submit your articles, announcements and photos by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month via email to:

[bulletin@montrealcouncilwomen.org](mailto:bulletin@montrealcouncilwomen.org)