

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I wish you all a very happy and fulfilling 2015 and now that the holidays are over and we are getting back to our regular schedule... what next?

The first half of the year provided a time of learning; about ourselves and our organisation, about the focus on equality between women and men in Montreal, and about the issues facing native women in Canada. The second half of the year brings with it, some more interesting meetings – do look for information in the Bulletin regarding upcoming speakers.

The Woman of the Year event was a really special occasion where we honoured two Aboriginal women: **Michèle Audette** and **Nakuset**. For those of you who missed this event, it was a time of appreciation all around. Both honourees arrived with an entourage of native family, friends and colleagues with much joy in their hearts and appreciation for the honour. Part of the opening of the event and presentation was an invocation by an elder. Bonnie Stamos Destounis and her committee are to be congratulated for the excellent job they did in organising this event. A number of past Women of the Year were also present to add pomp to the ceremony!

It has also been a time of difficulty in the past few months and this has certainly given us pause. Between terrorist attacks and the sexism and harassment of women, we had a surfeit of these events and issues. On December 6, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ecole Polytechnique massacre we took the time to remember again the 14 women who lost their lives in a senseless manner and said this must not happen again.

The public response to the terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo was strong and wide with 3.7 million people gathered together in a massive rally against terrorism and in support of freedom of speech.

Is it not time for people to come together in a massive show of support against misogyny and of solidarity for women and women's rights? - *Chitra Chopra, President*

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMAN OF CANADA (NCWC) AGM MAY 21 - 24, 2015  
TO BE HELD IN MONTREAL, QUEBEC CANADA (More details to follow)**

**WOMAN OF THE YEAR 2014**

The Woman of the Year Award luncheon held on November 21, at the Omni Hotel, in Montreal was a huge success with over one hundred guests in attendance.

The criteria for the recipient of 2014 award focused on an Aboriginal Woman who had made an outstanding contribution to Aboriginal women's causes. MCW acknowledged that children and families are often affected by observing and experiencing violence. Both of these experiences often result in lifetime trauma. It is only with the input from within the Aboriginal communities that changes can be effective for healing and community education.

This year the WOTY selection committee recognized not one, but two outstanding and driven Aboriginal leaders, who are relentless in their work, addressing the tough  
*Continued on page 2*

**MCW FEBRUARY LUNCHEON MEETING**

The guest speaker for the MCW luncheon meeting on Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup> will be Dr. Charmaine Nelson, who is a Professor of Art History at McGill University. The Federate host will be the Coloured Women's Club of Montreal. Cost of the lunch per usual is \$10.00 per person, payable at the door. It will be appreciated if you will advise Frances Gregory (514) 935-1674, email: [frances.gregory@videotron.ca](mailto:frances.gregory@videotron.ca), if you plan to attend.

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issues pertinent to the Aboriginal population both locally and nationally. **Michele Taina Audette** and **Nakuset** are two accomplished women both strong advocates for Aboriginal rights. Michele is President of the 38th Annual General Assembly of the Native Women's Association of Canada and is an effective advocate of Aboriginal women's positions nationally and **Nakuset is the** Executive Director of the Women's Shelter in Montreal and is also a strong advocate for Aboriginal women.

MCW congratulates Michele Audette and Nukuset and wish them all the very best! – *B. Destounis*



WOTY PHOTOS  
MONIQUE DYKSTRA,  
STUDIOIRIS PHOTOGRAPHY





WOTY PHOTOS  
MONIQUE DYKSTRA  
STUDIOIRIS PHOTOGRAPHY



### “MEMORIES ... OF THE WAY WE WERE”

A time of togetherness, joy and happiness when life was beautiful and all seemed to be well and good incomprehensively shattered by separation and pain. We feel lost and try to make sense of it all while yearningly, helplessly remembering what was, the way we were. Is it even human to remain untouched by pain and grief, I ask myself and if it were remotely possible, would I want to be that kind of a person?

Grief seems to be an inseparable part of our lives. Our human experience appears incomplete and somehow unfinished without it. At no point in our physical existence are we immune to its painfully devastating presence.

Neither infancy and childhood nor adulthood and old age are any kind of barrier against it. Wealth and poverty, health and illness seem to lose their significance next to hopeless broken heartedness.

In extremely broad and general terms, we may say that there are two ways in which we are subjective captives of grief: personal and associative. A personal sense of grief may arise from one or many different conditions of our lives. It may be the death of a loved one, our apparently dysfunctional relationships with our nearest and dearest, our horribly dissatisfying jobs, our finances, problem gambling, ongoing addiction and substance abuse, a history of domestic violence and abuse, bullying or a painful breakup. Of course we grieve, how can we not?

Associative grief in general, has to do with the state of the world. Incidents of mass murders and worse in wars, act of terrorism and heinous crimes, widely and horribly destructive natural disasters, and other such incidents.

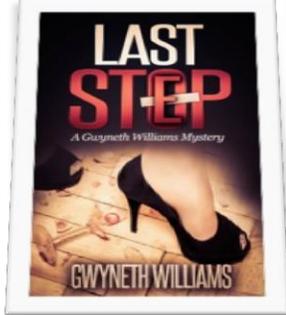
Just before the holidays and the New Year, we remembered the ongoing sacrifices of our armed forces and our veterans. We commemorated the 25th year anniversary of the Poly Technique murders. We watched the world, the national and the local news before and after the holidays and we grieved for and with others. How could we not?

Despite all this, our lives are not and should never be based on or ruled by pain and grief. If left unchecked and un-addressed, this emotion can and will stunt our physical health, progress and livelihood. Not only will it damage our own mental faculties but left unchallenged it can retard the normal experience and lives of our children.

The most important thing to remember is that grief is a process. It includes many other emotions. Examples are shock, denial, tears, anger, depression and guilt to name a few. Since these experiences are common to us all, we must not allow hopelessness or loneliness to set in. Coping mechanisms are readily and widely else, the stress alone will either devastate us and our family life or worse yet, make us do something wholly unwise. Perhaps not all of our Facebook friends can or should be trusted with our burden of confidences, but most of us are immensely sympathetic when faced with each other's suffering.

In Quebec the CLSC's, all the medical Walk-In Clinics, family doctors and social workers, to name a few, can and will provide competent referrals to psychologists and psychiatric doctors. Medication when combined with counselling has proven immensely helpful to hundreds of thousands of us normal people.

Home is a place where the light of love should shine unceasingly. Don't let it stay dim for long. *-Nadia Baraghi  
Health, Child and Family*



## MAÏR VERTHUY, C.M.

### MEMBER AND FORMER MCW PRESIDENT

MCW Member and former MCW President Mair Verthuy, who has also held positions as Honourary Vice-President and Secretary on the MCW Board has two more accomplishments to celebrate and add to her long list of impressive achievements.

In November 2014, Ms Verthuy published her first mystery novel entitled, "Last Stop." Written under her maiden name Gwyneth Williams, it is a murder mystery of international intrigue with a Paris-Montreal backdrop. On December 6<sup>th</sup>, at a movie screening held at Concordia University, the documentary entitled "Autour de Mair" traced the historical role of Concordia in the feminist movement, the teaching of literature in the feminine role, and highlighted the pioneering work of Professor Verthuy.

Born in Wales and coming from a family of activists Mair has been interested in politics since her childhood, and has always been a passionate advocate of women's rights both nationally and internationally. A long-time Montreal feminist, she graduated from London University (Middle Temple) and worked at Oxford University Press before immigrating to Canada in 1959. Hired in 1966 by Sir George Williams University, she was a literature Professor, in the University's French Studies department, where she taught for many years while researching women's literature, in French-speaking countries. The lone female voice in her department, she encouraged her colleagues to include works by French-speaking female writers in their reading lists. This was an uphill battle at that time, as women's studies were not yet established.

The merging of Sir George Williams University and Loyola College in 1974 provided the framework for the creation of a college dedicated to women's studies and the next few years, Verthuy and other feminist scholars worked on a blueprint for the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. The institute opened in 1978, their mission: "to stimulate the investigation, understanding and communication of the historical and contemporary roles of women in society and to encourage women to develop their full creative potential. Verthuy was the institute's first Director.

A major force in the evolution of the feminist movement Mair traveled to Copenhagen in 1980 and to Peking in 1995, as a member of the official Canadian delegation. She has been invited by UNESCO to a variety of conferences in the Arab world and in 1982 she organized a 10-day conference on women in research and education. She played significant roles in MCW, she has been involved in the Thérèse Casgrain Foundation and is a past member of Conseil des Montréalaises. She is the author of dozens of articles and books including a monograph on Jeanne Hyvrard, which earned Verthuy and co-author Jennifer Waelti-Walters the Prix de l'Association des professeur(e)s de français des universités et collèges canadiens (1986). It seems that Mair finally gave in to her passion for mysteries after having spent many years authoring either, short texts for journals and newsletters or longer and more numerous articles in the academic world.

Retired since 2003 as a distinguished professor emerita, Mair has been the recipient of numerous awards including the John O'Brien Award for Excellence in Teaching (1985), the YWCA's Women of Distinction Award (1997), the Governor General's Prize in honour of the Person's Affair (2008) and the Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012). She has been awarded the rank of Chevalier in France's Ordre des Palmes académiques (2001), granted the title of Distinguished Professor Emerita (2004) and invested into the Order of Canada (2012) for her contributions to the advancement of Francophone literature and of women, as a professor, researcher and activist. She is an Honorary Lifetime Fellow of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute and continues to give interviews and present papers on topics related to women's rights and French literature. – *S. Gyles*

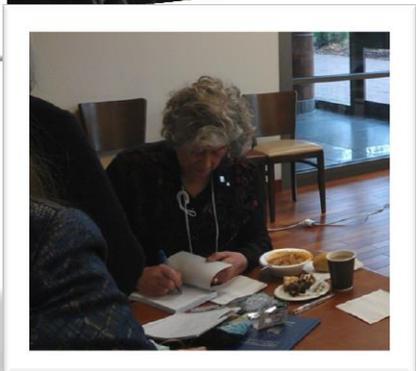
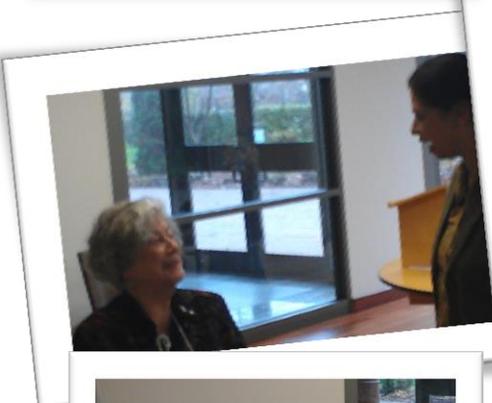
(Source: Concordia University, Internet)

To learn more about Mair Verthuy and read her work, visit her **website: [authorwilliams.com](http://authorwilliams.com), Facebook: Author Gwyneth Williams** and **Goodreads: Gwyneth Williams, Last Stop**. Her book is available in e-book format on Kindle, Kobo, and iBook. It is also available in paperback at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Ingram and Chapters/Indigo.



**MCW PROGRAM 2014-2015**

- **FEBRUARY 5, 2015 –**
- **Dr. CHARMAINE NELSON - BLACK HISTORY MONTH -** McGill Professor in Art history Communication
- **MARCH 6, 2015 - TBA -** INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S Day
- **APRIL 2, 2015 - DIDA BERKU -** ENVIRONMENT - Counselor in the City of Côte Saint-Luc, Quebec and an Attorney at Law -environment
- **MAY 14, 2015 - MCW AGM - DR. EPSTEIN** Professor Concordia - " GET THE STOLEN ART BACK" - WARTIME THEFTS



**MCW Article and Announcement Submissions**

The next issue of **The Bulletin** will be in February. Please submit your articles, announcements and photos by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of February via email to:  
[bulletin@montrealcouncilwomen.org](mailto:bulletin@montrealcouncilwomen.org)

# Delta Kappa Gamma

## Gamma Province, Quebec

Presents

### Dominique Trudeau



Head of Educational Programs at  
McCord Museum

Speaks on

### “McCord Museum: Sharing Our Memories and History”

We will also have the **McGill students** who applied for a **DKG World Fellowship** as our guests for the evening. This is an opportunity to meet with young women from foreign countries who are attending McGill.

Date: FEBRUARY 9, 2015

Place: E.M.S.B  
6000 Fielding Avenue

Time: 5:30 – 6: 30 **Light supper:**  
**McVicar Dining Room 4<sup>th</sup> floor**  
7:00 p.m. **Speaker**

COST: - for DKG members: 15.00\$  
- for non-members: 20.00\$

R.S.V.P: Erika Sebaldt - [erika.sebaldt@bell.net](mailto:erika.sebaldt@bell.net)  
or 514-489-2760 or - [renaentus@bell.net](mailto:renaentus@bell.net)

PLEASE JOIN US TO SUPPORT WOMEN &  
CHILDREN & OUR DKG EDUCATIONAL  
PROJECTS

# Delta Kappa Gamma

## Gamma Province, Quebec

Presents

### TARA WHEELER



EDUCATOR

Speaks on

### “The Role of the Resource Teacher”

Date: MARCH 17, 2015

Place: E.M.S.B  
6000 Fielding Avenue

Time: 5:30 – 6: 30 **light supper:**  
**McVicar Dining Room 4<sup>th</sup> floor**  
7:00 p.m. **Speaker**

COST: - for DKG members: 15.00\$  
- for non-members: 20.00\$

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