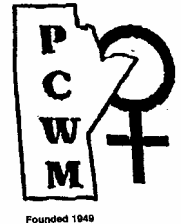


# Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, Inc.

## NEWSLETTER

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*Empowering women to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and society*

*Honourary Patroness - Her Honour Ms Lenore Berscheid*

## President's Message

**By Mary Scott**

It has been a busy Fall for many of our Federates, and members of Provincial Council. This newsletter is full of interesting articles and updates. Note especially the article by Diane Malley and Jennifer Lukovitch on *Lake Winnipeg: Responses to a Lake Under Stress*. This is an excellent follow up to our 2006 Annual Meeting, and identifies the continuing pressures on the Lake, plus actions and events that will hopefully lead to improving the health of Canada's sixth great lake. There is a real need for all the players to come to the table and work together on making changes that will result in a healthier Lake Winnipeg.

Recent news about changes at the Federal level to funding and program criteria will affect many of our Federates and their work. We must monitor what that impact will be for women, their children, families and the community. Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba sent a letter to Prime Minister Harper, noted in this newsletter, that urged the Federal Government to support Status of Women Canada (SWC) in terms of budget and mandate. We are concerned about recent changes, for example, that have eliminated the Court Challenges program, eliminated literacy funding, reduced administration support funding to SWC by almost 40%, and changed the criteria of SWC to no longer fund women's groups that do advocacy, lobbying or general research. Along with the President of the Council of Women of Winnipeg, we will be meeting with Joy Smith, MP, to document our concerns, and the particular impact on Manitoba and what, if any, new opportunities might be available. Joy Smith is the vice chair of the Parliamentary Committee on the Status of Women and may be able to enlighten us as to the rationale and the work plan that the committee is considering.

We will also welcome Dr. Shannon Sampert to our Semi Annual Meeting on November 25<sup>th</sup>, as our luncheon speaker. Shannon is an Assistant Professor, Department of Politics, University of Winnipeg, and has written recently about the major issues facing women as a result of the Harper government budget and program changes.

We will have an opportunity to share, network and strategize.

The Semi Annual this year will feature a panel on the theme of **Human Trafficking** – something that some of our Federates have been working on for some time. We will also hear from Muriel Smith and Dr. Mary Pankiw, two delegates from Manitoba who attended the International Council of Women meeting in Kiev, Ukraine. Her Honour Lenore Berscheid will be joining us, and will tell us a bit more about the project "mino ayawin", a place to be peaceful and happy. Please note the list in the newsletter of articles that you can bring to the Semi Annual meeting to donate to this special project for children. Also note that there are 2 proposed Resolutions put forward by the joint CWW/PCWM Resolutions Committee, so do plan now on attending – our meetings are open to the public. Invite friends and colleagues to what is always an interesting day. I look forward to seeing you then!

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*Empowering women to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and society*

## International News

### **To Kiev and Back** By Muriel Smith

Every three years, women from more than 40 countries get together in the capital city of one of the International Council of Women's (ICW) National Councils (NC) for a six day meeting. The days were chock full of business, elections, seminars, resolutions and celebrations. September 4-10 was when this happened in Kiev, capital of newly independent Ukraine.

The NC of Kiev, a long time ICW member, and reviving after moribund years spent behind the Iron Curtain, hosted with great aplomb, led by their President Iryna Golubeva and supported by more than 200 volunteers. A "country in transition", Ukraine has lived through tremendous political, economic and military upheavals and losses. The most recent was the nosedive taken by their economy in the years following the 1991 liberation when their defense industry tied to Moscow disappeared, unemployment hit 40% and inflation 10,000%. A decade later, they are on the road to recovery, but still in ferment. They are coping with the cross-currents of their drive to join the EU, the challenge of bringing their social and economic norms more closely into line with UN norms, and the explosion of national pride and religious and cultural expression. For a few short days, we were privileged to be a part of that process.

The ICW meeting, with its clarion calls for women's equality, political freedom, and greater economic and social justice, was clearly noted by the Ukrainian public. Speakers from the national, state and city governments appeared throughout our program, and we were feted at receptions at city hall, in government buildings and, in 10 separate busloads, in each of the 10 oblasts or city districts.

Canada was represented by the president, 4 delegates and four observers, three of whom spoke Ukrainian.. Dr. Mary Pankiw and I were there from Manitoba. Business sessions were cheerily and vigourously conducted by ICW President Anamah Tan and her Board. Highlights were:

- approval of an increase in fees, hotly debated but eventually seen as necessary to support a very lean international office in Paris;
- reports from standing committees;
- reports from the five volunteer UN representatives in Vienna (drugs, crime, disarmament, corruption), Geneva (human rights, WHO, ILO), Paris (UNESCO, culture of peace, bioethics), New York (Peace and Security, Commission on Status of Women), and from a distance Nairobi (sustainable development,

human settlements) who work for us day in and day out to advance equality for women at UN meetings held in their city;

- reports from National Councils (I have copies available on request);
- elections that ran throughout the sessions (I have the new names – no Canadians)
- seminars by Ukrainian women politicians, bureaucrats, and local activists; and
- guest speakers: President of Ukraine Viktor Yushenko, Prime Minister Victor Yanukovych, Minister Yuriy Pavlenko of Family and Youth Affairs, Pnina Herzog first memorial lecture on women, gender and health by Claudia Garcia-Moreno and read by Cosima Schenck, Anna Zanen from LELAF (one of ICW's two Lady Aberdeen funds targeted at helping new or troubled NCs).

The Ukrainian women's seminars were most impressive. In the morning seminar, politicians and bureaucrats spoke of their efforts to develop a *Strategy of Gender Transformations in Ukraine*, and their efforts to get more women elected. Women hold 8% of the seats in their Parliament (RADA), 4 of these being NC members; no seats in Cabinet as yet, but they are determined to do better in the next election. In general, their perspective focused a lot on the traditional family and culture of Ukraine. In the afternoon seminar, local activists and politicians brought the perspectives of creative work being done at the local level to meet women's needs, particularly those of young women, in upgrading, recreation and building awareness around issues like trafficking. With the disappearance of child care centers, a declining population due to out-migration and the falling birthrate, and economic hardships, the younger women were looking at life in new ways.

We all managed a fair bit of sightseeing in the rare moments between scheduled events, and I think all came away not only feeling the global women's movement, if not yet triumphant, was certainly alive and well in Ukraine, and very heartened by the irrepressible, cultured and well educated women we met. Spoken language was a barrier, helped by excellent translators, but the language of the heart came through loud and clear.

## Resolutions Committee - Update

The following resolutions will be voted on at the upcoming Semi-Annual Meeting. These resolutions are still draft documents. The Resolutions Committee will be providing the finalized resolutions at the Semi-Annual Meeting.

**October. 20 2006 (DRAFT)**

### Title: Resourcing Women's Archives

**Whereas** the development of women's history is an important strand in Manitoba's cultural record that has not until recently been given much attention;

**Whereas** the Provincial Archives are a prime source of research materials for the recording of women's history;

**Whereas** there are currently insufficient resources committed to the acquisition, cataloguing and archiving of women's history, particularly that of Manitoba women's organizations, at Manitoba Archives;

**Whereas** physical and human resources at Manitoba Archives are said to be in limited supply;

**Resolved** that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba agrees that the archiving of women's history, including that of Manitoba women's organizations, should be given higher priority;

**Resolved** that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba ask the Government of Manitoba to increase the human and physical resources allocated to the acquisition, cataloguing and archiving of women's history, including that of Manitoba women's organizations.

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**Oct. 18 2006 (DRAFT)**

### Title: Increasing the Number of Women Apprentices in Non-Traditional Trades in Manitoba

**Whereas** trades which have been non-traditional for women and accessed only through apprenticeship lead to better paid and relatively more secure jobs;

**Whereas** there is a growing shortage of trained trades people in Manitoba;

**Whereas** female high school students have often been ignorant of apprenticeship in non-traditional trades as a career option;

**Whereas** even young female students interested in non-traditional trades may have been discouraged by reports of the work environment in these trades being inhospitable for women;

**Whereas** placements with journey persons for women who wish to enter non-traditional trades apprenticeships have been difficult to obtain;

**Whereas** women who have received appropriate pre-trades training, and have been able to secure apprenticeship with journey-persons have succeeded in non-traditional trades;

**Resolved** that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba adopt as policy support for vigorous action to increase the numbers of women entering and completing apprenticeship programs in non-traditional trades; and be it further

**Resolved** that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba ask the Government of Manitoba through the appropriate Departments to do all they can to increase the numbers of women in non-traditional trades apprenticeship programs by:

1. preparing brochures and audio-visual aids for high school guidance counselors to use in presenting apprenticeship as attractive and well remunerated career options to young women;
2. offering pre-trades training to women interested in pursuing apprenticeship careers;
3. mandating colleges that provide apprenticeship academic programs to develop special supports for women entering non-traditional apprenticeship programs, and to reach out to journeypersons to take on women apprentices;
4. working with employers and unions to ensure receptivity to women workers, members and colleagues; and by
5. tracking progress made in attracting more women into apprenticeship programs, evaluating program strengths and weaknesses, and gradually adapting programs to the particular needs of women.

## Lake Winnipeg: Responses to a Lake Under Stress

**By Diane F. Malley and Jennifer V. Lukovich**

Called Canada's sixth Great Lake, Lake Winnipeg is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest freshwater lake in the world. Unexpectedly to most Manitobans, Lake Winnipeg is severely ecologically stressed. A report prepared by the Lake Winnipeg Implementation Committee in fall 2005, "Restoring the Health of Lake Winnipeg", available at [http://www.redriverbasincommission.org/lake\\_wpg\\_final.pdf](http://www.redriverbasincommission.org/lake_wpg_final.pdf), documents that several human influences co-occur to allow the north basin of the lake to develop massive blooms of filamentous, non-beneficial blue-green algae that are large enough to be seen from space. Satellite photos over the past decade show marked increases in the area of the lake covered by these blooms with time (see <http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/%7Egmccullo/LWsat.htm>). Excess supply of phosphorus to the lake from the watershed, the second largest in North America, is a major factor.

The good news is that the lake is finally receiving the multi-disciplinary, on-going scientific attention that has been lacking since it first received serious ecological study in 1929. Since the formation of the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium (LWRC) <http://www.lakewinnipegresearch.org/> in 1998 and their acquisition of the Motor Vessel Namao, the lake has been subject to routine lake-wide surveys in all but one year until the present. Dr. Al Kristofferson, LWRC Co-ordinator reports that the Consortium successfully carried out three whole-lake surveys in 2006. These cruises play a role in education as well as research. In 2006, a number of university and high school classes came on board for short periods. Dr. Kristofferson is cautiously optimistic that funding will be on-going for the lake-wide programs. Several partners have made multi-year commitments of funding. LWRC Science Coordinator, Alex Salki, reports that there has been a significant and welcome increase in participation in the research programs by researchers from other agencies, particularly Environment Canada, that is now the lead federal agency for both watershed and in-lake water quality research issues. The University of Regina, the International Water Institute at the University of North Dakota, and Algal-Tox International are other collaborators. A group of 40 Canadian scientists has submitted a 5-year National Large Lake research proposal that includes lakes Winnipeg, Ontario and Erie, which if successful, will substantially improve our understanding of complex Lake Winnipeg. Several scientific societies and water associations are holding meetings in Winnipeg focused on Lake Winnipeg during 2006 and 2007.

The ecological news for the lake is not so positive. For the first time, in 2006 the blue-green algal blooms were highly visible in the south basin extending at one point up to 10 miles offshore from Gimli. This newly-observed development is believed to be related to climate-related reduced sediment-bearing inflows from the Red River. This allowed the south basin to be more transparent this year, favouring increased algal growth. Less obvious to users of the lake, but important ecologically, was the increased presence of an exotic microscopic crustacean, *Eubosmina coregoni*, in the south basin.

Public awareness on the critical state of the lake is rising rapidly and people from all walks of life are coming together to become informed and take action. The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba held a public panel on May 13, 2006 in Gimli on challenges to the quantity and quality of water in Manitoba, with emphasis on Lake Winnipeg.

In March 2006, a Lake Winnipeg Environmental Forum, "Saving Lake Winnipeg", was hosted by Dr. Jon Gerrard and the Manitoba Liberal Party, with 50 participants, for the purposes of establishing a comprehensive action plan for Lake Winnipeg. The full report is available at <http://www.manitobaliberals.ca/documents/Saving-Lake-Winnipeg-Report.pdf>. The objectives of the forum were to become informed on recent research findings on Lake Winnipeg, identify scientific indicators to monitor the health of the lake, examine best management practices (BMPs) and land use initiatives to address nutrient loading to the lake, and seek solutions by building on existing recommendations to develop an action plan for the Lake Winnipeg watershed basin. Stakeholders from agriculture, industry, government, academia, interested citizens and activists came together to highlight priority areas requiring immediate attention as well as long-term initiatives designed to reduce nutrient loading to the Lake. These included the establishment of threshold levels for P in both the Canadian and Manitoba Water Quality guidelines, the need for federal involvement in establishing an action plan for the Lake Winnipeg watershed, legislation that requires companies to ban phosphates in dishwashing detergents, an initiative that will be presented by Dr. Gerrard in the next Manitoba legislative session, legislation that bans the cosmetic use of fertilizers, and ongoing research on BMPs. It was also suggested that an all-party task force be established with the intent of garnering federal and provincial support for the Healthy Lake Winnipeg Charter, as outlined in the "Restoring the Health of Lake Winnipeg" report.

### ***Lake Winnipeg: Responses to a Lake Under Stress, continued from Page 4***

Much more is happening in the lake and on this international watershed than can be described here. Fortunately, the intentions of a number of agencies, organizations, and citizens are being directed towards changing practices in the watershed to those promoting a healthy lake. Actions are following intentions but the lake that is integrating processes across such a massive watershed, like a giant ship, will take some time to return to its ecologically-healthy course.

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*Dr. Diane F. Malley is President of PDK Projects, Inc. and was the lead technical writer for the report "Restoring the Health of Lake Winnipeg". Dr. Jennifer V. Lukovich holds a post-doctoral position in the Center for Earth Observation Science, Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources, University of Manitoba and was Co-Chair of the Lake Winnipeg Environmental Forum "Saving Lake Winnipeg".*

### ***Report from the Ad-Hoc Committee on Mental Health***

**By Beverly Goodwin, Chair**

The Ad-hoc Committee is nearing completion of a Discussion Paper from the perspective of families and clients within the current mental health system in Manitoba.

Through the study of inquest reports, legislation and personal stories this study identifies serious systemic flaws which impede the progress of mental health renewal.

The Discussion Paper should be ready for review by Federate Members by the end of the year and available to the public in the New Year.

### ***For Your Information***

NASHI, an organization of volunteers working to divert children in Ukraine from sex trade through job development and public awareness. They are having a Western Canadian Conference on Human Trafficking in Saskatoon Friday, May 11 & Saturday, May 12 called Youth In Peril: the Realities of Human Trafficking. Victor Malarek is the keynote speaker at their banquet on May 11. The program is not finalized for the rest of the conference but will include the RCMP on Internet and Trafficking; Testimonies and Life Experiences; Building Networks, Doing Something. For more info contact: Nashi a [info@nashi.ca](mailto:info@nashi.ca) or [www.nashi.ca](http://www.nashi.ca) Phone 306 653-4646

### ***Report from the Poverty Committee***

**By Marilyn McGonigal, Chair**

The Poverty Committee will meet Wednesday, November 8 at 7 p.m. at Marilyn McGonigal's home 3104-55 Nassau St. N.

A lot is happening in the city regarding poverty issues and PCWM is connected to several poverty related initiatives including the Poverty Symposium Working Group and the Just Income Coalition.

The Poverty Symposium, Women's Health Clinic, Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence and Social Planning Council are hosting a Forum on **Strategies to Reduce Poverty and Promote Inclusion in Manitoba: Focus on People with Disabilities**, November 16 from 9:00 to 4:00 at Maranatha Evangelical Free Church, 910 Sturgeon Road. **Keynote Speaker is Michael Mendelson of the Caledon Institute of Social Policy**. Register by November 6 with Tara at Social Planning Council, 943-2561.

The Employment Standards legislation was delayed until further consultations regarding Agricultural and Domestic Workers could be arranged after the harvest. Legislation may be considered in this session opening on November 15 or may be delayed until spring.

In the recent civic election, **Marianne Cerilli** was the only mayoral candidate who made an issue of the minimum wage. She said as mayor she would require the provision that employees would be paid a living wage in contracts with the City. She and several other candidates including our own **Arlene Jones** (candidate for council in Mynarski) signed the **Just Income Charter** prepared by the Just Income Coalition which listed nine rights including the right to a living wage. Living Wage Campaigns have been very successful in the U.S. where several states have Minimum Wage hikes before the electorate in their mid-term elections in November.

I was good to see these and other qualified women in the races for Mayor, City Council and School Trustees (such as Sonia Prevost-Derbecker, elected Winnipeg School Division, Ward 3) who have agenda's that reflect women's perspectives in politics.

Submitted by Marilyn McGonigal  
Chair of Poverty Committee

## ***Possible Changes to Status of Women Canada (SWC)***

### ***Letter by Mary Scott, President of PCWM***

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

September 22, 2006

Mr. Prime Minister:

Re: Possible Changes to Status of Women Canada (SWC)

It is with some concern that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba writes to you today with our fears for what might be proposed for changes to the structure, and funding for Status of Women Canada. It is extremely important that communication from both yourself, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, and the department, be clear about the future direction of SWC, its budget expectations, and where the responsibility to uphold the SWC mandate lies.

The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, Inc. was formed in 1949, and includes some 31 Federate organizations as members. There is diversity in our membership, immigrant and aboriginal women; entrepreneurial women; senior women; young women; women with disabilities, many women (and men) who care about the quality of life in their communities. Federates, where there are men as members, belong to Council, but we ask that a woman represent the organization. We are a volunteer organization, and have never received (nor requested) a grant from Status of Women Canada. We are however, extremely conscious of the benefits of programs and projects funded by the Women's Programs. We have used extensively the research funded through Status of Women Canada.

There certainly have been opportunities for the Government of Canada, and the department in particular, to consult with Canadians, with interested groups and organizations, with the Parliamentary Committee, established to provide guidance to Parliament and the department on policies, programs and services for all Canadian women. I actually attended such a meeting in Regina last year, and the recommendation was to look at increasing the budget of the Women's Programs by quite a significant amount. It is noted in the response to the Parliamentary Committee that at one consultation only 24% stated that there should be an increase to the Women's Programs' budget. At the one I attended, 100% recommended an increase.

It is noted that there has been a recent response from the Government of Canada on the recommendations by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, namely "*Increasing Funding to Equality Seeking-Organizations*" and "*Funding Through the Women's Program: Women's Groups Speak Out*", which we have reviewed. The response by your government to these two reports was totally inadequate, and not reassuring to the pressing needs of many Canadian women.

Further, although the funding for FAFIA (Feminist Alliance for International Action) and NAWL (National Association of Women and the Law) has continued, as announced today, (several months overdue), it is apparent there is a backlog of outstanding applications for which there is yet to be news. In the Government's response to the Parliamentary Committee, there appears to be a refusal to do anything on pay equity, maternity benefits, and women-focused analysis of government policies (GBA). We would recommend that there be a concerted effort to deal with the lack of gender disaggregated data in order to make decisions which affect all Canadians.

We support the letter recently sent by the President of National Council of Women of Canada, which outlines six major reasons why it is impossible to cut funding to Status of Women Canada. We would urge you to recognize the very serious international commitments that Canada has made and that must be honoured, not just in word, but in deed (ie an adequate budget to do the job). In particular, we note the 39 concluding observations of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Canada's third periodic report, which highlights the concern by the committee with the poverty that many experience, especially women and aboriginal peoples. The CEDAW's Concluding Comments in 2003 reinforced this fact and pointed out that cuts to social programs by Canada are hurting women.

We therefore urge you Mr. Prime Minister to lead with a vision of equality for all, to keep open the dialogue with Canadians to achieve equality, and to fund adequately the department that is tasked with supporting gender equality both within government, and for Canadian society.

Please keep us informed as to the changes for this department and where we might be able to assist in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Mary Scott  
President.

c.c. Bev Oda, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Canada  
Manitoba MPs  
Manitoba Senators  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Province of Manitoba

## Matrimonial Real Property

**By Marilyn McGonigal**

The present Federal Government has initiated consultations across Canada with Aboriginal women on the issue of the division of matrimonial real property on reserves. The department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Native Women's Association of Canada with the help and guidance of Wendy Grant-John are in the process of meeting the government's goal of having legislation prepared by the spring of 2007. Wendy Grant-John is organizing the consultations and "will make sure a legislative solution to this issue is presented to the minister when the process ends."

Family laws including matrimonial real property laws do not apply to First Nation reserve land, often leaving separated women without legal remedy and at the mercy of the person who has been assigned the right of possession of the matrimonial home and/or the Band Council, which has authority over allocation of homes and land on reserve. Many women have suffered tremendously as a result. Some have had to take the children to an uncertain and impoverished future away from the reserve; others have been forced to leave the reserve without their children. Relationship violence issues have not been adequately addressed on reserves forcing abused women to abandon homes on reserves for their own safety.

The issues raised by the gap in law to protect women and children caught up in separation and divorce on reserves are extremely complex and entangled in the provisions of the Indian Act, the history of male dominance in governance of reserves – a creation of the Indian Act – and the policy of working toward Aboriginal self-governance adopted by Provincial Governments including Manitoba.

Under discussion in the Consultation Document are three options which are in reality three variations of one solution; as follows:

1. Apply Provincial/Territorial law on reserves.
2. Provincial/Territorial law to apply in the interim while bands develop their own.
3. Legislate substantive Federal law on MRP to set out rules for all, with a "mechanism granting authority to First Nations to exercise jurisdiction over MRP."

Elizabeth Fleming and I were invited by the organizers and attended parts of the weekend consultations in Winnipeg October 14 and 15, and the public consultation on Monday October 16, 2006. We were honoured to participate as observers and contributors in an informal process and found ourselves among several friends we have made over the past few years through our work

involving Aboriginal women's issues.

In September, 2003 Elizabeth had presented PCWM's Brief to the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights *Re: On-Reserve Matrimonial Real Property on Breakdown of a marriage or Common Law Relationship and the Policy Context in which they are Situated*. We shared that Brief to be put on the Web site as it raises concerns that remain current.

It seems there are always concerns about a rushed process where the apparent solution is to simply import what others have already enacted and tried in entirely different cultural circumstances and historical experience. For example a concern I have is that the consultation addresses only matrimonial real property issues whereas the problems identified and solutions anticipated for many women are those that apply by virtue of the provincial Family Law not Real Property Law. A sole occupancy order that allows the mother and children to occupy the marital home even if owned by the non-custodial parent is a product of circumstance (custody of children) and not a right to share property equally. A no-contact order is a consequence of one partner's violent behaviour, not equality rights. These are exceptional circumstances where the law interferes with property rights to deal with issues of safety and the best interests of children.

Considerable expertise is required to determine how provincial Matrimonial Real Property law can be effectively applied to communally owned property that is allotted to band members by the Band Councils. The fact that it is difficult to determine the best way to bring equality and justice to women on reserves who have been neglected for so long should not serve to encourage simplistic solutions that create more problems than they solve.

I sincerely hope the Native Women's Association of Canada and the affected Aboriginal women on reserves have a constructive and effective consultation that results in satisfactory legislation.

### A Calendar for All Seasons

The Herstory Calendars for 2007 are now available from Provincial Council for \$15.00 each. These wonderful calendars make special gifts and include a number of stories and pictures of special Canadian Women. Get one for your daughter, your friends, and yourself. Sales of the books generate a \$5.00 donation to PCWM.

You can pick yours up at the semi-annual meeting, or by calling the office at 992 2751.

## Matrimonial Real Property, continued



**By Rita Lynn Emerson, Executive Director  
Mother of Red Nations Women's Council of Manitoba Inc.**

Matrimonial Real Property (MRP) is an issue that is of critical importance to Aboriginal women and has long reaching impacts. MRP is one of a collective of inequalities that have been thrust upon Aboriginal women because of outdated government policies. Aboriginal women suffer from inequalities related to their social, economic, cultural, political and civil rights that breed violence, such as post-colonial structural inequalities, racialized, sexualized violence, poverty, lack of access to justice, low education and employment rates, low health status, little or no political participation as well as a lack of adequate access to matrimonial property rights. High rates of violence against Aboriginal women have negative impacts on children and youth. Gendered racism leads to the devaluation of Aboriginal women, allowing violence to be tolerated both within and outside our communities. An understanding of this marginalization of Aboriginal women is critical to finding adequate solutions to matrimonial property rights on reserve lands.

Mother of Red Nation's Women's Council of Manitoba (MORN) is holding consultations on the issue of Matrimonial Real Property as part of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) consultation process. The goal of these consultations is to find solutions to the inequitable access to matrimonial property rights that currently exists for First Nations women and men. The Workshops will take place in **Thompson, MB on November 18- 20, 2006.**

Consultation participation will be made by invitation. Invited participants will include Aboriginal women who have lost their home on reserve after their relationship or marriage ended or women who stay in a relationship for fear of losing their home. They will be provided with time to tell their stories and to develop solutions in an intimate and safe environment provided by MORN. Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered for invited participants.

This feedback will be summarized and MORN will forward a written summary to all participants and post it on our website. The summary will also be forwarded to the Native Women's Association of Canada for consideration in formalizing a position paper and making recommendations regarding solutions.

Following these sessions, MORN will also be holding **Public Consultations on November 20, 2006 in Thompson, MB.** The public consultations are being held

to provide an opportunity for individuals, First Nations communities, Friendship Centres, Education Centres, Shelters, Urban Native Housing organizations, Women's organizations and all other Aboriginal organizations an opportunity to present their solutions to the Native Women's Association of Canada in a public environment.

Please contact MORN at 942-6676 for more information or to make arrangements to attend the Consultations.

**Mother of Red Nations Women's Council of Manitoba, Inc.**

### 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2006

9:00 to 5:00 p.m. at

Ramada Marlborough, 331 Smith Street, Winnipeg, MB

All MORN members can attend the meeting. MORN will provide either full or partial subsidies for delegates who are traveling to attend the meeting. Subsidies are limited and will be determined on a "first-come-first-served" basis for each region.

If you wish to attend, please contact the MORN office at **942-6676** or toll free at **1-866-258-6726** for a registration form no later than November 30, 2006.

## News from Other Councils

The Local Council of Women Halifax would like to invite you to the 3rd Annual Agnes Dennis Lecture and Reception to be held at 7pm, Wednesday, 25th of October - at the Sobeys Building on the Saint Mary's Campus off Robie Street. We are again pleased to be hosting this event with the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and we are very pleased that St. Mary's University has partnered with us.

The Ottawa Council of Women will celebrate PERSONS DAY by holding a silent vigil at the Monument to the Famous Five at 12:45 on Wednesday October 18th . Designed to raise awareness around the cuts announced earlier this month to Status of Women Canada, deletion of any reference to "equality" in the mandate of the department and changes to rules to disallow women's groups from doing advocacy with federal funds all of which will effectively silence the voices of women.

## Words from Her Honour Leonore Berscheid, Honorary Patroness of PCWM

I hope everyone has had a good fall, as winter seems to be upon us. We had some Halloween decorations up in Government House, a skeleton in a Value Village Suit and plenty of cobwebs with spiders. When we hosted the volunteers from the Rehabilitation Centre for Children a few days before Halloween we even had a hand crawling around the buffet table. You have to choose your audience for this sort of mischief, but I knew these volunteers would enjoy it and they did. When I was in the schools, some of my clients with special needs were served by the wonderful people at Children's Rehab. You know, too, the kind of humour you develop when you work with children, especially children who have to struggle harder than average bears.

In December I will be starting to visit parent support groups for children with autism spectrum and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. I will be talking about alternative quiet spaces for children who become overwhelmed. I will explain how I can help, and how many supporters I have in the wings, to help me help their children. The formation of quiet alternative spaces in schools is a project His Honour and I embarked on two years ago. As 2006 draws to a close, I know I have many helpers scouring their basements and the basements of friends to find needed materials for these quiet spaces.

The concept of a quiet space, at home or in school, has been given a Cree name by one of my committee members: mino ayawin. It means 'a place to be peaceful and happy'. Doesn't it sound like a space everyone could use now and then? When a school develops a mino ayawin, it can represent a whole shift in thinking about the acting out or shutting down student. The student no longer has to be framed as 'bad' or 'wilful' or 'out of control'. No longer does the principal's office, or the nurse's room seem to fit. The student is suddenly seen as unable to regulate him/herself, as overwhelmed, as defensive. What is needed – and what works best, as I know professionally from experience – is a quieter space with room for sensual stimulation that helps the child get back that lost self regulation.

The materials used to help children in this way are listed below. Children are different, but there are patterns. Some can self calm with dim lights and gentle music. Some use body relaxation exercises. For others, manipulating soft things. Looking at

calming repetitive patterns in fibre optic lights or bubble machines, or pretend aquariums with bubbles and plastic fish can be helpful. Sometimes darkness, with glow in the dark stars. And always, always, a kind grownup who can talk to a child who is not bad but overwhelmed, giving hope and coaching in self control.

If you know of available materials on this list, please e mail me at [leonoreberscheid@yahoo.ca](mailto:leonoreberscheid@yahoo.ca) or leave a message for me at the office, 945-3377. Materials can be taken directly to Thomas Sill Foundation care of Milton McLean. If you have material but need help delivering it, let's talk.

I continue to be proud of and impressed by the wonderful women of the council each time I read the newsletter. I feel exhausted afterward. Manitobans are so lucky to have you. My little project is not as grand as the societal changes that you are about, but I think the paradigm shift about the children is quite important. Thanks for helping.  
Lenore Berscheid

*For the Donation List, please see Page 10*

### 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada

Upon their return from Kyiv, Ukraine, after the conclusion of the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the International Council of Women's General Assembly, NCWC President Carla Kozak and Manitoba's delegate, Dr. Mary Pankiw, from the CWW, were keynote speakers at a banquet celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (UWAC) at St. Andrew's College, at the University of Manitoba campus, Saturday October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

A bouquet of thanks and appreciation is extended to Helen (Olena) Garrity, Manitoba Provincial President, for organizing this convention and to the committee of wonderful women who helped make it a success.

### Congratulations June Menzies!

Congratulations to June Menzies for receiving one of eight Manitoba Council on Aging (MCA) Recognition Awards for her outstanding contributions to seniors and their communities. June has been a strong leader of Provincial Council and is currently an active member of the Mental Health Committee and the Chair of the Life Members. You are an inspiration to all of us  
June.

## ***Donation List for A Place to be Peaceful and Happy***

From September, 2006 call 947-3782 for times you can deliver to  
The Thomas Sill Foundation, 115 Plymouth Street, Winnipeg,  
For the school project of His Honour Lieutenant Governor John  
Harvard

All items must be clean, in good repair, complete, useable,  
contained in box or bag.

1. **Bean bag chairs.** (no tears, and clean please. No container needed for these)
2. **Items that can be touched or stroked for calming or stimulation.** (Not stuffed animals) textured things, odd things, funny things, vibrating things like massage tubes, kaleidoscopes, - light balls, stress balls, brushes, sponges, plastic animals, fish, people, furniture, rain sticks, new/lightly used fuzzy slippers, bubble liquid
3. **Things to hide in:** pup tent with all pieces necessary, crawl tunnels
4. **Things to look at:** glow in the dark stuff, strings of lights that work, lava lamps, black lights, fibre optic stuff like strings or balls or figures, framed mirrors including full length mirrors, bead curtains, bubble lights, disco balls, pretend aquariums, adapted wave rave
5. **Things to smell:** bottles of natural oils or extracts. Please Ziplock bag these bottles.
6. **Toys for solitary imaginative play:** castle, doll house, toy tent, big Rubbermaid type container with lid to hold water or sand, figurines for these toys...sets of people, animals, knights and horses, cars and other vehicles, road signs, sand box toys. These can not be flimsy like popcorn prizes they have to stand up to a lot of wear. Must have all parts and not be broken or cracked
7. **Toys for construction by one child or interactive play:** blocks, Brio, lego large and small, marble works, sets of dishes/cups/measuring spoons, gears, pipes, tinker toys and such, (some of these sets are still useable even if missing pieces. Use judgement please), complete jigsaw puzzles, 50 piece to 500 piece
8. **Early learning manipulatives,** lite brite, -mazes, -pegboards, -shape puzzles with all pieces, -rapper snappers,
9. **Costume items:** capes, hats, little kids props for costumes, non harmful, jewellery
10. **Movement activity props:** wall mountable toy basketball net, velcro dart board, children's lawn games
11. **Music:** children's CD's or cassettes, sound effect CD's or cassettes (loon, running water)

**WE WILL NOT COLLECT BOOKS** BUT ENCOURAGE YOU TO GIVE THOSE TO YOUR CLOSEST SCHOOL LIBRARY OR AGENCY FOR NEW CANADIANS.

**WE WILL NOT COLLECT MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS,** BUT PLEASE APPROACH YOUR CLOSEST SCHOOL OR CALL THE SCHOOL DIVISION.

NO FURNITURE EXCEPT BEANBAG CHAIRS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

I would be happy to hear from you by e mail at [lenoreberscheid@yahoo.ca](mailto:lenoreberscheid@yahoo.ca) when you have located items to be donated in September. I will answer you right away, and I will be happy to know what you have in store.

## ***Right to Know in Manitoba – PCWM Report on “Right to Know Week”***

**By Elizabeth Fleming**

In 1977, National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) passed Resolution 77.3, "Right of the Canadian Public in Information Concerning the Public Business".

After a number of events that focussed on the public's right to access to information, PCWM approved a "Freedom of Information" resolution, November 20, 1999.

September 25-29, 2006 was designated International Right to Know Week. September 28 was International Right to Know Day. The Office of the Manitoba Ombudsman brought together an advisory group to plan an event to educate the public on its Right to Know. The result was a successful panel discussion hosted by the Ombudsman's office on September 22 in Portage Place. The panel comprised the Ombudsman, Irene Hamilton; a journalist who has experience using the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; the executive director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation; and a civil servant who specializes in access to health information. All four spoke and took questions from the audience in a lively exchange.

Offices of the Ombudsman across the country are to be congratulated for promoting Right to Know week and educating the public on access to information. PCWM and others are also urging governments to increase their routine disclosure of information. On the evening of Right to Know day, PCWM and seven other sponsors hosted a political panel, Government Secrecy vs. The Public's Right to Know. It was held at the Winnipeg Press Club and billed as a bear-pit. The Premier of the Province was represented by senior cabinet minister, Gord Macintosh, Hugh McFadyen (leader of the Progressive Conservative Party) and Jon Gerrard, (leader of the Liberal Party of Manitoba) were peppered with questions from the audience and moderator, Janet Stewart, Anchor of CTV News. Turn-out was strong thanks to the networking of the sponsoring groups and the Winnipeg Free Press which ran large advertisements on the Friday and Saturday before the event.

The event triggered a press release from the NDP Government of Manitoba with indications of possible future openness. The opposition parties also sent out news releases calling on the government to be more forthcoming with information.

As a result of the bear-pit, several columns and op-ed pieces were published in the newspaper plus an excellent letter to the editor.

**Right to Know in Manitoba, continued from Page 10**

The informal Manitoba Access to Information Network (MATIN) now has two more organizations. The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Patient Safety Advisory has the philosophy that patient health is better when patients are aware of their own health status. The Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties has rejoined. MATIN members have indicated they should remain vigilant. If there is an election call or new legislation is introduced, we should be ready to act together.

- All future MOUs and voluntary agreements should comply with Environment Canada's 2001 Policy Framework for Environmental Performance Agreements.

The report sets minimums for such agreements including clear targets with timelines, meaningful performance measures, clear roles and responsibilities of the parties, senior level commitment, periodic public reporting, credible verification and regular evaluation to determine progress and options for corrective action. Measures to ensure that emission reductions achieved by Large Final Emitters are real and that the emissions trading system and its components address serious issues of concern. The proposed emissions trading system "has potentially serious financial implications for the Canadian taxpayer." The risk could range from 0 to \$1 billion. This is because industry was promised a price cap of \$15 per tonne.

**Canada Wants Action on Climate Change**

**By Maria Neil, National Council of Women of Canada**

Johanne Gélinas, Canada's Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development released her annual report 28 September/2006. Climate change is a primary focus of the report.

**Canadians Right to Know**

The Commissioner, as part of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, reports to Parliament. Her mandate is to audit and report on how well federal departments and agencies implement government policies on environmental and sustainable development issues. The speaker of the House tables the report which is then referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. We'll be hearing more from them. In the meantime their sessions can be seen on CPAC at various times.

**Overview of Recommendations**

The Commissioner recommends that:

- The government develop a "credible, realistic and clear plan with short- and long-term goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions."
- Adapting to climate change should be part of the plan. Climate change is happening and Canadians need to be able to cope with the consequences.
- Previous programs have laid the foundation on which to build.
- This government needs to make a commitment to specific actions with timeframes.
- The government must get its own house in order, coordinating efforts of departments and agencies, tracking spending and results to agreed upon targets, publically reporting and regularly. Canadians have a right to know.
- The results from memorandum of understanding with the automotive industry of 2005 should be independently verified and reported to the public.

The government has not demonstrated governance and accountability for managing climate change activities. Promised public reports have not been produced.

Although \$6.3 billion have been announced to fund climate change projects since 1997, about \$1.6 billion was said to have been spent according to the Treasury Board Secretariat although the reporting system was not structured in a way the Commissioner could confirm. Sustainable Development Technology Canada SDTC is praised by the report for its role in advancing technologies for greenhouse gas reduction. SDTC is probably overestimating the amount of projected greenhouse gas emissions in its funded projects and should report on actual reductions once the technologies have entered the market. SDTC agreed to adjust its estimates to reflect delays and their potential effects on projected greenhouse gas emissions and agrees to report on actual emission reductions.

**Government Response**

When government departments such as Environment Canada respond to the Commissioner's report, they tend to make few commitments to implementing the recommendations but say rather that the recommendation "will be considered in developing the agenda." Essentially the Government makes no commitments to be accountable to do the right things. No promises about that much vaunted accountability made as the frontispiece of the Conservative Election 2006 platform. In the Commissioner's view, accountability requires taking "real, measurable and verifiable" action, in a way "transparent to parliamentarians and the public and in a timely manner" and identifying "the uncertainties and risks associated with the system and implement actions to address them."

## Coming Events

**November is Domestic Violence Prevention Month.**  
**For a calendar of events related to the prevention of domestic violence, please contact the Manitoba women's Advisory Council at 945-6281.**

**November 10, 2006**

**A Musical Event with Heather Bishop**

*To support the Centre for Christian Studies*

Muriel Richardson Auditorium

Winnipeg Art Gallery

300 Memorial Boulevard, Winnipeg

7:30 pm.

Tickets Available: McNally-Robinson Booksellers, Prairie Sky Books, Hull's Family Bookstore or Festival Music Store.

Information and Tickets: 783-4490

**November 14, 2006**

**Brown Bag Lunch Series – Manitoba Association of Family Violence Workers**

Klinic Community Health Centre

B-10, Basement, 870 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg MB

11:30 – 12:45 pm

Speakers: Ken Fleury, Spirit of Peace Program,

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata and Elaine Bergen,

Klinic Community Health Centre

**November 15, 2006**

**The Long Dark Hallway: Snapshots from Winnipeg's Fringe Hotels and Rooming Houses – Prof. Jino Distaslo**

Distaslo

Wednesday Lecture Series

Carol Shields Auditorium

Millennium Library

251 Donald Street

12:10 – 12:50 pm

**November 15, 2006**

**General Meeting**

Council of Women of Winnipeg

Paddlewheel Restaurant

The Bay Downtown, Winnipeg

Starts at 11:45 am

Everyone is welcome!

Form more information, contact Pat: 261-0937

**December 1, 2006**

**World Aids Day**

**December 1, 2006**

**Gender and HIV/AIDS: The Global is Local – Margaret Haworth-Brockman**

Manitoba Women's Advisory Council Lunch and Learn Series

Concourse Level

155 Carlton Street

11:30 – 1:00 pm

**December 6, 2006**

**National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Violence Against Women**

**December 6, 2006**

**Sunrise Memorial - Manitoba Women's Advisory Council**

Legislative Building

7:30 am

RSVP – 945-6281

*To commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada.*

### PCWM Calendar of Meetings and Events

- November 9<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting 5:30 start (Note – change from earlier calendar)
- November 25<sup>th</sup> Semi Annual (A Saturday. Program and Meeting from 9:30 to 2:30)
- January 4<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting 5:30 start
- January 15<sup>th</sup> NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- January 25<sup>th</sup> General Meeting 7:00 start
- February 1<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting 5:30 start
- February 16<sup>th</sup> Round Table (A Friday, from 11:00am to 2:00 pm)
- March 1<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting 5:30 start
- March 22<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting (Resolutions)
- April 5<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting 5:30 start NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- May 5<sup>th</sup> or May 11<sup>th</sup> - Annual Meeting. This is a Saturday, and could be changed to a lunch/dinner as it likely will be in Winnipeg.

**Please note, all Board meetings are held at Aikins House, General Meetings in the Common Room of Balmoral Hall School.**

**Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect or represent the views of the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, its members or federates.

**Editor**

Karen Sharma

Deadline for submission for next issue: January 15, 2007

Articles may be e-mailed to the editor at [ksharma@mts.net](mailto:ksharma@mts.net)

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*Empowering women to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and society*