

Winter 2010

# Activities Update

## PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women

### Isabelle Christian, Chairperson's Message



International Women's Day (IWD) observances create opportunities for reflection about the notion of equality, about where we have been and where we are going.

Just as equality issues have been identified and put on the political agenda, fought for and won, IWD has also evolved. Whereas IWD began as a way to focus on demands for improvements to pay, working conditions, and voting rights, a calendar of International 2010 events runs the gamut from serious to celebratory. Themes vary too. The United Nations has identified *Women and Men United to End Violence Against Women and Girls*, while Canada has focused on leadership: *Strong Leadership, Strong Women, Strong World*.

Referring again to where we have been and where we are going, the IWD website



internationalwomensday.com states that "many from a younger generation feel that 'all the battles have been won for women' while many feminists from the 1970's know only too well the longevity and ingrained complexity of patriarchy." My feeling is there are still plenty of issues and problems that demand the attention of women, including those for which the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women regularly seek remedies - violence in intimate relationships; lack of affordability and availability of child care; under-representation of women in decision-making positions; need for a gender lens on policy analysis; and fair employment practices.

Since the millennium, the Council and its partners have celebrated through *Equality Recognition Awards* and the series *Women in Courage: Leaders Among Us*. We have marked the achievements of our sisters as activists, artists, union leaders, politicians, volunteers, environmentalists, and more. We need to set

aside time to celebrate, to take a break from the tough issues in which progress can be miniscule, and is always fragile.

I hope that women of Prince Edward Island will gather at the Guild on March 6th 2010, for music by Ruth Mathiang, and trivia game fun on all things female. Let's not forget our history of *Bread and Roses*, and then also have fun. Happy IWD! ~ Isabelle Christian

### Council Members

Isabelle Christian, Chairperson, Stratford  
Andie Bulman, Vice-Chair, Charlottetown  
Sadie MacKenzie, Treasurer, Montague  
Sister Norma Gallant, Wellington  
Pauline Thomson, Canoe Cove  
Gwyn Davies, Gairloch  
Roseanne Sark, Summerside  
Sue Connolly, Breadalbane  
Marcia Enman, Wellington

### Staff

Lisa Murphy, Executive Director  
Jane Ledwell, Research/Policy (on leave)  
Becky Tramley, Office Administrator (p/t)  
Sandy Kowalik, Events/Projects/Leaves (p/t)

### Location

Sherwood Business Centre  
161 St. Peter's Road

### Contact

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### Congratulations to:

- Heather Moyle of Summerside for bringing home Olympic gold!
- Yogi Fell (and co-workers) for challenging UPEI's forced retirement policy resulting in the PEI Human Rights Commission's recent ruling that such policy discriminates on the basis of age.



*Thank you Valerie!*

The members and staff of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women met in Charlottetown Feb. 23 to discuss current issues that affect Island women and their families.

Council made a special presentation of appreciation to outgoing Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Valerie Docherty. The Council looks forward to meeting with and providing an orientation to the issues for the new Minister Responsible, Hon. Janice Sherry.

Council members also had the opportunity to serve as a focus group for Kathleen Flanagan, who is guiding the writing of an Early Childhood Development framework for the Province. Key informant interviews, focus groups, written submissions and an on-line survey will inform the development of the framework. The final report is expected in April 2010.



Kathleen Flanagan (right) listens to input on early childhood care and education from Council members and special guest three-month-old Sam.

**New Publications!** This year for PEI's Family Violence Prevention Week, the PEI Status of Women produced special resources to mark the 20 years after the Montreal Massacre. These include an overview of violence prevention activities on PEI in the past 20 years and profiles of the eight women who have been murdered in the province since 1989. View the featured video to find out more, click [gov.pe.ca/acsw](http://gov.pe.ca/acsw)