

Ottawa Regional Women's Committee Report **April – August 2015**

Many women from the ORWC attended the PSAC Triennial Convention in Quebec City at the end of April, where they were able to network with women from across the country and discuss matters relevant to women today. Current priorities include defeating the Harper government, child care, violence against women and women's leadership.

A week of action on childcare was held across the country from May 10-16; activities in Ottawa included "Chalk it up for Childcare", a Pop Up Playgroup, and a discussion at City Hall on why affordable childcare matters.

In June the ORWC was asked to participate in a focus group organized by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. It proved to be a very interesting evening, with emphasis on how women have coped with the changing public service.

We enjoyed a screening of *Café Justicia*, which is a documentary that describes the life of coffee farmers in Guatemala and how their situation has been greatly improved with the help of Education in Action, a group supported by the PSAC Social Justice Fund. Following my trip to Guatemala in March, I have been fundraising to help the efforts of Education in Action, which directly affects the quality of life for women in this country. To date \$300 has been raised 😊

I attended the "Voices for Women's Health" event, which is an annual two day event put on by AIDS Ottawa. It was an interesting forum that included discussions on topics such as the barriers faced by women living with AIDS, issues faced by women in conflict with the law, transgender issues and Native and youth sexual health concerns.

At our June meeting we had a guest speaker from Chrysalis House come and speak to us. Chrysalis House is an Ottawa shelter for women fleeing abusive relationships. We hope to do some fundraising in the future to help support this important initiative.

I was also invited to visit with Anita Vandenberg, who is the Liberal MP candidate for Ottawa-West-Nepean. Anita was very interested in issues that concern women who work for the public service and I was more than happy to enlighten her!

Moving forward, we plan to focus on the election of course as well as events around Women's History Month in October and December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

The ORWC meets the fourth Thursday of the month and we are actively recruiting; please come out and join us and help make a difference to women in the NCR!

In solidarity,

Linda Koenders
Chair, ORWC