

Ottawa Regional Women's Committee Report

January - March 2015

In January the ORWC held their popular annual potluck which was well-attended by members, alumni members and allies from the community. Besides sharing the delicious food, we held a conversation café where we talked about individual and collective goals for the coming year and how we could work together to ensure success for all.

At our February meeting we welcomed Toni Matthews and Stephanie Penwarden from the Aboriginal Action Circle. They showed us how to make traditional faceless dolls which will be displayed in the Pat McGrath Boardroom as a tribute to our missing and murdered Aboriginal sisters.

For International Women's Day, I had the privilege of participating in a march in Guatemala City with thousands of sisters from many different walks of life. It was a very inspiring and emotional experience! Back in Ottawa, sisters chose from a variety of organized events to celebrate the day. Activities included a dance and craft evening, storey-telling from women who do precarious work and the very popular Feminist Party.

At our March meeting, we had Shelly Bird from CUPE join us to talk about "Spring Into Action", an initiative to raise awareness around childcare issues and ensure that they are made a priority for the upcoming federal election. A subsequent brainstorming session was organized and details regarding events to be held throughout the region the week of May 10-17 are being finalized. Note that we are encouraging everyone to visit the "Up for Debate" website, which is a campaign to engage federal election candidates in a debate over women's concerns.

Many PSAC NCR women will be travelling to Québec City at the end of April to participate in the PSAC National Triennial Convention, where they will be proudly representing all PSAC members from our region.

The ORWC is pleased to have our alternate chair, Behiye Cinkilic, participating in the OFL Women's Leadership Summit, to be held May 1 - 3 at the UNIFOR Family Education Centre in Port Credit. This will be a wonderful learning and networking experience for Sister Behiye and we look forward to her sharing same with us. Many

thanks to Behiye for filling in for me while I was in Guatemala and on a few other occasions where I was double-booked!

At this time I would like to say a huge thank you on behalf of the committee to Madeline Bachand, our amazing PSAC Staffer , who is leaving us to enjoy her well-deserved retirement. We will miss her passion and commitment to women's issues. Best of luck Mado! We look forward to working with her interim replacement, Tish Johnson, who brings much experience and enthusiasm to the table.

The ORWC is currently recruiting new members, please spread the word!

In solidarity,

Linda Koenders
Chair, ORWC