

NEWS FROM OC

**[Links to and updates on our Ontario Council website
www.cfuwontcouncil.ca](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca) & some other notes of interest**

By the time that you get this, the web links (URLs) might be dead. If so, please copy and paste the URL into your web browser.

Presidents, please pass this along to others who might be interested, especially your executive and your Issues Committee.

April 4, 2011

Hello everyone,

The reports of the Standing Committees meetings held March 19th are either below or attached to this email.

Also below is a link to the **Ontario Council AGM being hosted by CFUW Oakville**. We would love to see you all there – evening reception with Advocacy Awards, AGM business meeting with our own resolution, and an afternoon with terrific, knowledgeable speakers discussing the very important topic of poverty.

All the best,

Myra Willis
President, Ontario Council
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Standing Committees Report

JOINT MORNING SESSION, March 19, 2011

Topic: Financial Literacy
Speaker: Greg Pollack, Task Force

Speaker Greg Pollock, former teacher, former CEO of the Catholic Teachers Organization, presently director of an umbrella organization of financial planners, was one of 13 members of an expert panel assembled in 2009 by Finance Minister Flaherty to advise on a plan of action to promote

financial literacy in Canada. Financial Literacy is defined as “having the knowledge, skills and confidence to make responsible financial decisions.”

The need for such a program is demonstrated by a number of factors;

- Increase in household debt (the average family debt in Canada has increased from \$5800 in 1990 to over \$100,000 today, and is greater than that in the U.S.)
- The need to make financial decisions at an earlier age (use of credit cards, phone plans, etc.)
- Ramifications of the shift from Defined Benefit to Defined Contribution pension plans
- The increasing need for Canadians to fully participate in financial matters
- Only 60% of Canadians contribute to an RRSP
- Only 38% of Canadians feel their financial circumstances will improve in the next year.

The panel’s mandate was to deliver a national strategy, and to determine how to marshal the resources to implement the strategy. It identified five priorities:

- **Shared responsibility** among public and private sector, labour, volunteer sector, financial services etc.
- **Leadership and collaboration:** a leader is required, who will pull together all relevant ministries and other elements.
- **Delivery and Promotion** by websites, awareness campaigns, self-assessment tools, clear language on tax forms, credit card applications, mortgages, etc.
- **Accountability:** constant monitoring of progress.
- **Lifelong Learning:** foundation should be built in school (Ontario is proposing adding Financial Literacy to its grade 4 to 12 curriculum), but should be continued in the workplace, market place, financial services industry, and government programs.

Mr. Pollock admitted that hurdles exist in the way of any financial literacy program’s solving individual financial woes:

- People behave irrationally and make bad financial decisions despite having knowledge.
- People do not take advantage of programs already available to them (160,000 eligible seniors do not get OAS, 150,00 do not get CPP, most do not take full advantage of RRSPs.)

The panel’s report was delivered to the government in February 2011, and the government has not yet decided on whether to implement its recommendations. Mr. Pollock believes that if they are implemented, success of the operation will result in a better quality of life for Canadians, resilient households in good times and bad, and are a more competitive Canada.

Peggy Pinkerton
CFUW Etobicoke

The reports of the afternoon meetings of Education, Legislation and Status of Women are attached.

What Ontario Council has been doing

March 10 & 11, 2011 Rhea Pretsell, Chair, Status of Women & Human Rights and Teri Shaw, Advocacy Coordinator attended the Equal Voice 10th anniversary conference, **Leveraging Women's Leadership for the 21st Century: Changing the Game.**

- The report can be found at <http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/issues.html> on the **Issues** page click on **Women and Elections** under **Elections**.

What Ontario Council is working on

During the spring, Ontario Council will be concentrating on preparations for the **Ontario Election** to be held October 6th.

We will also be joining others in studying the newly published Ontario Sexual Violence Action Plan, *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives* http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/owd/english/women/svapdoc_2011.shtml

Club Events:

Links will be found at

<http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/club%20events.html>

CFUW Belleville & District Spring Forum presents "Everyone's Sister", with author Stevie Cameron

Date: Saturday, April 2, 2011, 9:30 a.m.

Location: Empire Theatre, 321 Front St., Belleville.

Featuring: Stevie Cameron, the award-winning journalist and Charles Taylor Prize nominee, author of *On the Farm: Robert William Pickton and the Tragic Story of Vancouver's Missing Women*, will examine a community's response to the disappearance of marginalized women.

Tickets: only \$5.00, available at the door, or in advance at Greenley's Bookstore, Downtown Belleville, The Body Shop, Quinte Mall, Inova Opticians, Loyalist Plaza and The Alzheimer's Society of Belleville, Bay View Mall.

All welcome.

CFUW Haliburton Highlands is having a Card Party

When: April 28th, 2011 at 12 noon

Where: The Haliburton Curling Club

Tickets are \$20.00 and include lunch.

Get together a table and plan for a fun afternoon. Everyone is welcome.

University Women's Club of North York presents *Toronto in the 21st Century*

Date: Wed. May 4, 2011, 7:30 PM

Location: Don Mills Public Library Auditorium, 888 Lawrence Ave. East

Featuring: the Hon. David Crombie

Information: 416-447-7727

Upcoming meetings:

Annual General Meeting, May 13 & 14, Oakville

- <http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/agm.html>
- <http://ocagm.cfuwoakville.ca/>

Taking Off The Blinders: The Four Pillars Of Poverty

Keynote speaker:

Dr. Joey Edwardh

Executive Director, Community Development Halton

Workshop leaders and panel members:

Income Security

Michelynn Laflèche, Greater Toronto CivicAction

Alliance, Program Director: Greater Toronto Summit 2011

Mental Health

Kevin Flynn, MPP Oakville, Chair, Ontario Legislature Select
Committee on Mental Health and Addictions

Food Security

Nick Saul, Executive Director, The Stop Community Food Centre
(invited)

Affordable Housing

Renee Wetselaar, Social Planner, Social Planning & Research
Council of Hamilton

Let's come together to take the blinders off, recognizing poverty and its causes in our own communities, and learning and talking about what's happening in our neighbourhoods.

Hosted by
CFUW OAKVILLE
Holiday Inn
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