



## Dates & Data

### ONTARIO COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES

**Saturday March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

YORKMINSTER PARK BAPTIST CHURCH  
1585 Yonge Street, at Heath St.

Some parking on North side of the church or Public Parking at Heath/Delisle lot  
or  
Take St. Clair car to Yonge St. or the Yonge subway to St. Clair Stop  
and walk 2 blocks north on Yonge

**Registration 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.**

**Meeting begins at 10:00 a.m. SHARP!**

Registration Form Enclosed

### MORNING PROGRAMME

**Topic:** *Transforming the Landscape:  
Improving the Experiences of Abused Women in Family Court*

**Speaker:** Pamela C. Cross, Well known women's equality lawyer/activist

#### **About the Topic:**

In light of the series of recent murders and violent sexual abuses of women in Eastern Ontario, no one needs to be reminded about the issue of violence against women. One of the most common areas for violence against women to occur is in the domestic area. In May 2009, the Report, *Transforming our Communities*, from the Domestic Violence Advisory Council for the Ontario Minister Responsible for Women's Issues was released by the Minister. Subsequently, in December 2009, the Ontario Attorney General announced a family court process reform initiative to improve access to justice in the interest of women and children. Because 79% of the domestic violence homicides occur at the point of actual or pending separation, the legal response recommendations of the Domestic Violence Advisory Council Report asked for the removal of barriers at the "front door services of the family court system". These barriers are encountered by all, but have particularly severe consequences for abused women. The December 2009 Ontario Attorney General's "Four Pillars" of family court process reforms address some

of these barriers. CFUW Ontario Council supported a brief to the Ontario Attorney General by the Luke's Place Support and Resource Centre asking for necessary further improvements to the reforms. Pam Cross who is a legal expert on (domestic) violence against women will explore and explain these issues, and how abused women, and all women for that matter, are treated currently in the family court system.

**About the speaker: Pamela Cross:**

Pam Cross is a frequent speaker on national radio and television and at provincial and national conferences on the topic of violence against women and the law. She developed the curriculum for Legal Aid Ontario's provincial domestic violence training initiative for family law lawyers and is part of the teaching team at the National Judicial Institute's domestic violence education seminar for provincial court judges.

She works as a consultant and trainer with a number of women's equality-seeking organizations on such topics as legal issues faced by survivors of male violence, sexual assault, record keeping, disclosure, duty to report, confidentiality and custody and access law. Ms. Cross also provides consultation services to a number of organizations with respect to policy development and has developed and delivered strategic planning to several women's organizations in Ontario.

At present, Ms. Cross is the *Legal Director* for *Luke's Place Support and Resource Centre Pro Bono Summary Advice Clinic*. This unique clinic brings together pro bono lawyers and Legal Support Workers (LSWs) to assist unrepresented abused women through the family court process. She is also the *Director of Strategic Planning, National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL)*

Pam Cross was a member of the recent *Domestic Violence Advisory Council to the Government of Ontario* where she was one of 13 experts appointed by Order in Council to provide advice to the Minister Responsible for Women with respect to improving the quality of services for abused women and their children.

In recent years, with her work with equality seeking women's organizations, Ms. Cross has been a member of the Management Committee of the *Family Law Education for Women Project (FLEW)*, as well as the *Director of Advocacy and Public Policy, YWCA Canada*.

For many years, Pam Cross was the *Legal Director for Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)*, and the *Ontario Women's Justice Network (OWJN)*. She has been a *Project Coordinator for the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, and also Family Law Reform Coordinator for NAWL*.

She has helped organizations through structural changes when *Transitional Executive Director, NAWL, and Transitional Executive Director, METRAC, Toronto, Ontario,*

For some years, Ms. Cross was a sole practitioner in her general law practice in Kingston, that focused on providing legal services to women in or leaving abusive relationships. This was primarily family law but also included criminal and child protection law. Ms. Cross has been a founding member of and is involved in several social justice organizations and campaigns. She has done pro bono legal work for sexual assault crisis centres, and non-profit housing projects in eastern Ontario. Pam has owned a street café, and was food editor at Harrowsmith Magazine, a school trustee, and a NDP candidate in the 1985 Provincial Election.

**EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**Afternoon Session**

The afternoon session will focus on updates in Aboriginal Education and Early Learning. As well, I would like to discuss the trend in mentoring and educating young moms returning to school, the challenges they face and how many of our CFUW clubs are helping them succeed.

Wendy Taylor, Committee Chair

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**LEGISLATION STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**Afternoon Session**

Watch [www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/legislation.html](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/legislation.html) for plans for the afternoon meeting

Myrtle Greve, Committee Chair

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**STATUS OF WOMEN STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**Afternoon Session**

The joint morning session with speaker Pam Cross, lawyer, woman's equality activist, will deal with violence against women and the legal avenues and resources women can or cannot draw on to stay safe and to secure a safe future for themselves and their children. In the afternoon session, the Committee will discuss the questions and information brought out in the morning session and related issues and look at action that may be taken by Clubs and individuals immediately and /or in the Fall to increase awareness of women's rights to access to the justice system that takes violence into account.

Happy International Women's Day!

There has been some progress, even in this very dark area of women's lives. Let's keep up the effort.

Edeltraud Neal, Committee Chair

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**OPEN LETTER FROM CFUW OAKVILLE**

February 24, 2010

To all Ontario CFUW Clubs:

TransCanada Energy is proposing to build a 900 megawatt (MW) power plant in Oakville on a site which is in very close to homes, schools, a major railway, and two major highways. Both the project itself and the way in which the site was selected are causing our club great concern. In addition to an army of alarmed residents, our Mayor, Town Council, MPP and MP are all opposed to the building of such a plant on the proposed site. We would like to ask for your backing in raising the profile of this very important and urgent issue.

This matter should be of grave concern to anyone living in Ontario because our province has

absolutely NO legislation in place to protect the population from some of the most harmful air pollutants generated by gas-fired power plants. Moreover, the environmental assessment process conducted according to the current Environmental Act to determine the effects of such plants is often lacking in independence and transparency. In this case, a “draft” assessment is to be submitted by TransCanada itself, not an independent agency – a case of putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank! Their assessment, quite naturally, states that there will be absolutely NO harm in the pollutant fallout that such a plant will incur; this flies in the face of scientific evidence.

The province has been talking about implementing better environmental safeguards for decades, but now we urgently need them in place to protect us. Without enforceable limits on pollutant levels, no community in Ontario is safe. I understand that a search is ongoing for additional sites because more such plants are being planned. Although there may be a genuine need for increased generating capacity in the future, we feel that the health and safety of our population should be the first consideration – and at the moment, it is not.

Worse, on February 7, 2010, an explosion at a similar but smaller (625 MW) power plant in Middletown, Connecticut killed five workers --- one of them was from Hamilton. Even though this plant was situated in 137 secluded acres of land, the windows of a hospital located three kilometres away were blown out while houses 50 kilometres away were shaken. What if that happened here? The 900 MW power plant proposed for Oakville is to be situated less than 400 meters from houses and schools. Many more homes and schools as well as our hospital are in a 3 Km radius: residents are understandably alarmed. Since the proposed location of this plant is also near a major rail artery and a major highway, there is an even wider concern.

This matter is so vital to everyone, and we are requesting your help. Since this is resolutions time for all CFUW clubs, we are asking that your club consider, when voting on the national roster, also voting on a local resolution/motion similar to the one below that the Oakville club has just passed:

**“Given that Ontario has no legal enforceable regulations on the important air toxin PM2.5, nor enforceable setbacks in place for gas-fired power plants, CFUW-Oakville urges the Ontario Provincial government to enforce a moratorium on the building of gas-fired power plants in Ontario until :**

- 1. enforceable regulations on PM2.5 and other air toxins are established in Ontario, and**
- 2. safe setbacks for gas-fired plants are established, and**
- 3. other options for power generation that are less harmful to human health and the environment have been thoroughly explored as alternatives, and**
- 4. the selection criteria and processes for determining sites of power generation facilities are made transparent to the public.”**

If CFUW clubs in Ontario make a concerted effort and inform the provincial government, we can wield significant political clout and get their attention. Politicians do not underestimate the wrath

of educated, intelligent and articulate women!

More information can be obtained by visiting the Town of Oakville's web site <http://www.oakville.ca/healthprotectionairquality.htm> or by visiting the web sites established by the Oakville Citizens for Clean Air residents' group <http://www.c4ca.org/>, and the Mississauga MIRANET residents' group: <http://miranet.ca/> .

Please consider this issue carefully and please act to help us. Together we will have a substantial voice and can take concrete steps to protect the health and safety of not only Oakville but of all Ontario communities.

Sincerely,

Maureen Ellis Rudzik

President ,CFUW Oakville

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## ANOTHER ENJOYABLE ONTARIO NORTH FALL GATHERING

*Women Can Do It* was the theme for the Ontario North Fall Gathering hosted by CFUW Haliburton-Highlands on October 24. Theme speakers Marg Risk, a health professional spoke on When Opportunity Knocks, Do We Take It and Roxanne Casey, the station coordinator for Canoe FM described her enthusiastic journey in volunteer radio.

Special CFUW guests, National President Patricia Du Val gave an excellent overview of CFUW and the important connection with IFUW. We work with 16 different agencies in the UN, and partner with other organizations where they have the same interests. Patricia said "...It is not the strongest that survives, or even the most intelligent, but the one that is the most adaptable to change in the world around us." Ardith Toogood, Coordinator of International Relations (CIR), informed us about the aspects of work of IFUW and the United

Nations. Through stories she highlighted successes, the importance of networking and of local club advocacy. Susan Russell, Executive Director, shared her experiences in advocacy and the need for club participation. Myra Willis, Ontario Council (OC) President and VP for Ontario spoke on the opportunities for growth through CFUW and the workings of Ontario Council. We can accomplish much Because We Can!

Attendees from all five Ontario North clubs enjoyed a delightful Friday evening reception at the home of Charlene Cooper. And Saturday provided additional opportunity to network, meet CFUW Board members and share in roundtable discussions on Membership, Advocacy and Fundraising.

Brenda Robertson  
Regional Director, Ontario North

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## NEWS FROM CFUW PERTH and DISTRICT

### A very successful House Tour

The CFUW Perth & District house tour committee was so very proud to announce that

over 1000 tickets were sold—and almost 100 volunteer tickets at \$10. So the total profit amount will be over to \$22000. Way to go!!!!!! The house captains did a superb job of managing

their respective homes – with their valiant crew of volunteers. Keeping One Thousand Visitors over a two-day period happy is a daunting task and These girls did it well.

The home owners reported that they would not have known anyone was through their home. This year they are all writing testimonials to help recruit next year's participants. They want everyone to know how easy it is. The community should also be proud of this project, as both churches involved sent over 400 people through their doors and back to their tour map with full tummies and the new Code's Mill Inn and Spa gave many a warm wrap-up to the day on Sunday with a cup of coffee, a little sweet treat and a roaring fire.

### **Ready 2 Read Program**

CFUW's *Ready 2 Read* Program was started September 2008 by some CFUW Perth and

District members and partially sponsored by the club to foster a love of books and reading. Once a month each child receives a free book package which includes a book, a newsletter which suggests family activities, simple writing and math activities and a treat. Last year we gave book packages to four year olds and in September '09 we added three year old children that feed into Glen Tay School. Our ultimate goal is to give the packages to all the children from birth to age 5 that feed into Glen Tay School. Indirectly, the Glen Tay School community will benefit as the children develop a good attitude towards reading and literacy in the community will be enhanced. Last year we received a grant from the Ottawa Citizen's Literary Foundation's *Raise a Reader* Project; we have applied for a similar grant this year and are awaiting a decision.

Helen Rutledge

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## **Save the Date! Mark Your Calendar!**

### **May 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

The CFUW Ontario Council Annual General Meeting 2010 will be held May 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> in St.Catharines. The Local arrangements Committee has brought together an exciting programme with the theme ***Accessibility: Creating Inclusive Communities.***

The keynote speaker will be **Rabia S. Khedir**, who will deal with the topic *Towards an Inclusive Society: Through Collective Leadership*. There will be four very interesting workshops, from which you can choose two. The titles are: *The Myths of Accessibility*, *The AODA and What it Means*, *Community Action*, *Language of Lobbying* and *Making a Business Case for Accessibility*. There will also be a panel addressing *What Barrier-free Living Means*. See [www.cfuwstcatharines.org](http://www.cfuwstcatharines.org) for details and registration form.

#### **DATES & DATA**

Also available on [www.cfuwontcouncil.ca](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca)

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