

**LEAF
NEWSLETTER
E-Lines**
July 2009



In This Issue

LEAF's 25th Anniversary

LEAF Presents Submission to the Status of Women Committee

Mclvor Equality Rights Challenge to the Indian Act Upheld by BC Court of Appeal

LEAF Awards

LEAF Equality Day Celebrations

LEAF in Action - Keeping Equality Rights Real

LEAF Presents at OJEN forum

**LEAF's
25th Anniversary**

**Be a part of LEAF's 25th
Anniversary in 2010.**

***LEAF Presents its Submission on Pay
Equity to the House of Commons
Committee on the Status of Women***



Joanna Birenbaum
Director of Litigation

On the afternoon of June 5, 2009, LEAF presented its submission regarding Bill C-10, *The Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act*, to the House of Commons Committee on the Status of Women.

If you were a previous Board member, Staff or Committee member of LEAF, please [contact us](#) to help celebrate 25 years of equality gains.



25th Anniversary Committee Members

Top Row Left to Right: Marilou McPhedran, Pat Paradis, Audrey Johnson, Shireen Sondhi, Katherine Blake
Bottom Row Left to Right: Beth Symes, Nicole Curling, Lan Tuyet An
Missing: Pia Hundal

For more information, [click here](#).

Bill C-10, which was introduced by the federal government, was passed earlier this year. As it stands, the legislation terminates the right of women employed in the federal public sector to file pay equity complaints with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. The new legislation now confines pay equity to the collective bargaining process and provides no effective enforcement mechanism or remedy for women if pay equity is not achieved.

LEAF believes these changes unconstitutionally diminish the status of pay equity as a fundamental human right.

[Read full submission](#)

Mclvor Equality Rights Challenge to the Indian Act Upheld by British Columbia Court of Appeal

The British Columbia Court of Appeal has ruled that sections 6(1)(a) and 6(1)(c) of the Indian Act S.C. prior to 1985, unconstitutionally discriminate on the basis of sex.

The April 6, 2009, decision represents an important step in the two-decade long battle waged by Sharon Mclvor to challenge the discriminatory treatment of Indian women under the *Indian Act*. Mclvor's equality rights challenge was originally launched with the assistance and sponsorship of LEAF.

On June 4, 2009, Mclvor sought leave to appeal the case to the Supreme Court of Canada. Mclvor is reported in the *Globe and Mail* as saying that she is seeking leave to appeal because "The B.C. Court of Appeal narrowed the decision so much and gave the government license to add as few people as they possibly can... I won. My grandchildren will get status because that's what this was about, but you know, there are so many people out there that have been waiting and waiting and waiting and when the B.C. Court of Appeal made the decision and they narrowed it, it cut many of these people out. It's just not fair."

[Further details](#)

2009 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARDS

LEAF Lifetime Recognition Award recipient Betty Hopkins

LEAF congratulates this year's recipient of the Eloise Spitzer LEAF Lifetime Recognition Award, Betty Hopkins.

Manitoba-born Betty Hopkins has been a volunteer with LEAF for close to twenty years. Betty began her involvement with LEAF in 1990, and has been active at both the national and provincial Board levels.



As the chair of LEAF Winnipeg-Manitoba, Betty has literally devoted all of her time to LEAF. She is the heart, soul and brain of the organization. In her volunteer capacity, Betty acts as a full-time program developer/coordinator and administrator while ensuring that the branch's governance responsibilities are met. Betty's management philosophy has always been non-hierarchical, consultative, collaborative, collegial and consensus building. Not a day goes by that Betty is not answering phone calls, photocopying, educating, organizing or raising funds for LEAF. At the annual Persons Day breakfast in Winnipeg, Betty personally sells more than half of the thousand tickets sold each year.

[Further details](#)

LEAF Contribution Award Co-Recipients, Leslie Middaugh and Darlene Rites

Leslie Middaugh has been the Chair of LEAF Toronto since 2005. When she first took over the position of Chair, she was pregnant with her first child. Four years later, she has just given birth to her third child, and is the lynchpin of LEAF Toronto.

Leslie has worked hard to ensure that LEAF Toronto is well represented in the larger LEAF organization. She has initiated or supported a number of activities that have built LEAF Toronto's organizational capacity, and continues to advocate for a stronger role for those who do branch work in LEAF.

[Further details](#)

From an early age, Darlene has been interested in equality and women's rights issues. As head of the Women's Issues club in high school, Darlene had the opportunity to attend a LEAF's Person's Day Breakfast in Toronto, where she was inspired by the stories that were told and the victories that were being celebrated.

In 2008 Darlene started a new Chapter of LEAF in Windsor, Ontario. She has been also involved with Women in the Law at Windsor Law, a group that attempts to raise awareness of legal issues affecting women and other historically disadvantaged groups. Darlene believes that public education is the key to addressing inequality and hopes, through her participation in LEAF's *No Means No* program this program, to make a positive contribution to the lives of women and girls across Canada.



LEAF congratulates all its volunteer award recipients and thanks them on behalf of the entire LEAF family.

LEAF EQUALITY DAY CELEBRATIONS

Equality Day, April 17th, marks the coming into force of the equality provisions of Section 15 of the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, making it unconstitutional to discriminate against anyone because of gender, or other social or demographic characteristics. This constitutional guarantee is the foundation for LEAF's work to advance equality rights across Canada.

Toronto



(Left to Right)

Event Co-Chair Donna Dooher, LEAF Executive Director Audrey Johnson, Event Co-Chair Sonja Smits

In the golden era of chefs, the question for many is, "where are the women?" On April 15th, 2009, a few exceptional individuals in the field answered that question by displaying their culinary talents for an Equality Day event organized by LEAF. Mouth-watering hors d'oeuvres and organic beverages were served at George Brown Chef School to the more than 200 guests in attendance.

Special guest chefs included Amar Patel of the Indian Rice Factory, Heather Baker from the President's Choice Test Kitchen, Dinah Koo of Dinah's Soup Kitchen and Koo & Co. Catering, Susie Reading of the Calphalon Culinary Center, and the Art Gallery of Ontario's Anne Yarymowich. Event Co-chairs Donna Dooher, chef, author and owner of Mildred's Temple Kitchen, and Sonja Smit, Gemini-nominated actress and proprietor of Closson Chase Winery, capped the evening off with an interactive cooking and wine presentation.

Deborah Paskus (Closson Chase Vineyards), Ann Sperling (Southbrook Vineyards) and Sue-Ann Staff (Megalomaniac Winery) also gave talks throughout the evening and graced a captive audience with their inspiring stories of breaking the glass ceiling. Culinary students from George Brown Chef school provided additional catering and were treated to an evening of mentorship from some of Canada's top chefs.

Many thanks to presenting sponsor Carranza Barristers & Solicitors, and to Capital G Consulting Inc., McCarthy Tétraut, Board RX and Lenczner Slaght for their additional sponsorship of the event.



Manitoba

Manitoba held its annual Equality Day Event on April 16, 2009, at the Blackstone Lounge. The event attracted several supporters across the province who joined LEAF Manitoba members and volunteers in celebrating the 24th anniversary of LEAF and Section 15 of the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

LEAF in Action - Keeping Equality Rights Real

LEAF and the Ontario Bar Association hosted a Law Day education event on May 25th, 2009.

LEAF in Action was a one-day educational event that engaged high-school students in critical discussions about equality rights. The objective was to make legal rights meaningful in the day-to-day lives of the participants, providing them with tools, resources and necessary information to help them make informed decisions in respect to their legal rights.

The students each participated in two individual workshops. Following the workshops, they were given the opportunity to apply what they had learned through interactive role-play. Facilitators guided the students in developing theatrical motifs to demonstrate equality principles.



LEAF Presents at OJEN's Active Citizens Forum: Youth Engagement on Social Justice Issues

On April 16th, 2009, LEAF took part in OJEN's Active Citizens forum along with several distinguished speakers.

On hand to present to the more than 75 Grade 10 civics students were Nicole Curling, LEAF's Director of Communication and Branch Relations, Niki Popper, LEAF's Education Co-ordinator, and lawyer and longstanding LEAF Education Committee member Seema Shah.

Together the three women spoke about the importance of being involved in issues of social justice and the history and educational work of LEAF, highlighting the more than 150 legal interventions at the Supreme Court level that LEAF has been involved in as an intervener.

* * *

LEAF - the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund - is a national charitable organization that works toward ensuring the law guarantees substantive equality for all women in Canada.

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