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Canada

Women at work... and at play



Chiaki Sadanaga / The Brunswickan

by Chiaki Sadanaga

On October 21-22, Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) members celebrated The Fredericton Club's 60th anniversary at the Fredericton Inn. The members are from several provinces across Canada, such as New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, and Ontario.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Margaret Conrad - Canada Research Chair in Atlantic Canada Studies at UNB - emphasized that "more women should be involved in political processes." The partici-

pants hung on Conrad's words and showed their eagerness to promote an intelligent interest in the political field by qualified women.

Conrad pointed out how clearly Canada lacks political ambition, stating that, "for a so-called developed and democratic country, Canada comes surprisingly low on the female political participation list."

According to Conrad, Canada ranks 43rd internationally in the election of women to the its lower house of government, wedged between Ethiopia and Latvia. This

see women page 5

by Josh O'Kane

Sometimes all it takes to get your mind off something is to take a weekend off. Now picture if women from all across New Brunswick got together and planned a great weekend that they all could enjoy. Well, there's no need to just picture it anymore: That's exactly what the 16th annual Women's Nurturing Conference had to offer.

Denise Hanson knows that this was exactly what she needed when she first went six years ago. "I went to the tenth conference, and loved it," she said. "I joined the planning committee, and became the chair two years after that."

As chair, she makes sure that the conference gives women exactly what they deserve - a weekend off where they can sit and enjoy themselves. Working with the College of Extended Learning and the faculty of Nursing, the conference began as a UNB project, but quickly expanded.

"It started out as a university project, and then it went over to the community. [Now] community members organize it and plan it, but the university is still involved," said Hanson.

With 28 workshops to offer attendees, 15 exhibitors, and 30 presenters, the conference offers services, advice, and events to make those who attend feel great.

As for overall attendance, Hanson explained, "the conference has had up to 600 women depending on the keynote speakers, but now we're running on about 300 women a year."

So what exactly does the nurturing conference have to nurture women?

"We try to focus on women's needs, women's wants, how to nurture yourself - so you can take everything you've learned here, take it home and use it in your everyday life."

"Whether it's parenting tips, personal growth, health issues, or just simple things like knitting we have this year, we always have a physical activity as well." The variety is interesting, as can be seen in the very original choice for physical activity.

"This year it's pole dancing." About 35 women attended that

workshop session. It, however, was not the most popular choice. Hanson said, "this year's most popular workshop is Qigong, which is ancient Chinese healing movements; for most of us, we never heard tell of it, but it hit a positive note for most of us."

The community involvement in the conference is astonishing. According to Hanson, "all the women that are planning it are from the community, from all different interests." Most work, but some stay home with their children.

"This is their creative outlet," she said. Allison Brewer was the second of two keynote speakers to attend the conference. A member of the committee and former fundraising chair, she has received the Governor General's award, and has even visited the UN advocating for women's rights.

She recently announced her candidacy for the leader of the NDP in New Brunswick, and is now the leader of the party for the province.

She offered this to say: "For 16 years, this [conference] has brought women together from all across the province to Fredericton for a weekend of women's things. Women talking with women, talking about things of common interest, and of things that empower women."

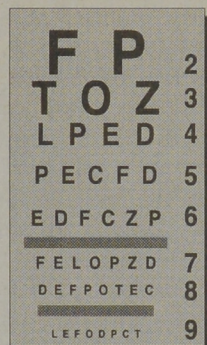
It is Brewer's belief that all New Brunswick women should make it out to this conference, and to experience the power of relaxation and unity it brings.

"If there are any women out there that haven't been to the conference, I recommend that they think about it for next year," she said, "it's really an experience."

Happy Halloween from The Brunswickan



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