



Photo by Gail Paquette

Founder and spokesperson for Glass Office Tower Corporation, Veronica Hendrick-Lockyer and owner of DeJa Vu Boutique (left), and Kimberly MacDonald have partnered together to provide career clothing, shoes and accessories to woman who could not afford it, otherwise.

Women help others less fortunate with housing, mentorship and skills

By Gail Paquette

Being one of 'those women' is a huge motivator for Veronica Hendrick-Lockyer.

"I am a woman who has been through it, not as bad as some but worse than others," she says.

Founder and spokesperson of Glass Office Towers Corporation in 2010, Hendrick-Lockyer's goal is to help less fortunate women with housing, mentorship and life skills. Those were some of the things in her own life that were compromised when she became a single mother of four in 2004.

Recently she partnered with long-time friend, Kimberly MacDonald owner of Kimberly's Déjà Vu Boutique in Belleville to provide one most basic necessity, clothing.

The type of clothing they are looking for is what one would wear to a job in-

terview. Hendrick-Lockyer promises if they don't have it they will find it.

Déjà vu Boutique is a consignment shop just north of the 401 on Hwy 62 in Belleville. The shop has been there eight years and MacDonald said she has helped women make thousands of dollars from clothes in their closets.

The understanding for women taking their clothes into the boutique is that if the clothing doesn't sell it will be donated to charitable organizations.

That is where Hendrick-Lockyer came in to bridge the gap.

"I have known Kimberly for nine years and our friendship is ultimate. I asked her if I could have the clothes filtered though GTOC to help women who sometimes cannot afford it. Good quality work clothing is often overlooked if you cannot even afford a dol-

lar for a can of soup. It can be expensive."

Veronica, along with new business partner and daughter Cassie, package the clothing into sizes and outfits.

"I have a background in design and knew my talents could be utilized to put outfits together for women looking for and ultimately achieving jobs in various fields. Some women have never had a proper outfit."

The packages contain a variety of styles and a photograph is provided of the contents. The ensembles cost nothing.

GTOC is about giving her a hand up - not a hand out.

"It is not for all women, it is for those who cannot afford it. Kimberly's shop is not that expensive and if women can afford to buy clothing there, they should."

Henrick-Lockyer believes all of her ini-

tiatives will benefit the community and that the success of these projects depend on awareness and involvement.

"If you are lucky enough to have been able to attend school and have the education to be in a really good career then what better way to give back and help other women achieve success then to open the doors of your closet.

"Giving women the help they need to achieve economic independence will not only transform her life but those of her children. Each of us can help make a difference in a women's life and help end the cycle of poverty," said Hendrick-Lockyer.

"I am in the business to make woman look and feel beautiful," said MacDonald. "I am thrilled to be a part of this."

For more information Hendrick-Lockyer is available at 613-813-3956 or veronicagtoc@gmail.com.

Prom project helps those who need it

By Jennifer Robertson

As prom starts to draw closer for high school students, the second annual Prom Project has been launched.

The Prom Project takes in donations of gently used formal wear for students who can't afford to buy an outfit for their upcoming prom event, as well as any other graduation events for younger students. The project's campaign was launched on Feb. 11.

Six secondary schools in the Hastings and Prince Edward County areas are hosting Prom Project events to help get as many donations as possible. These schools are Bayside Secondary School, Moira Secondary School, North Hastings High, Prince Edward Collegiate Institute, Quinte Secondary School, and Trenton High School.

Maribeth deSnoo, from the Education Centre in Belleville, said that not only is the Prom Project looking for dress donations, but also any men's wear donations, such as suits are greatly appreciated.

"Certainly the focus is gently used formal wear including semi-formal and formal wear, but don't forget also the guy's wear. It's not just dresses. In fact, one of the biggest needs that we had over the past years has been dress pants and dress shirts in particular for the boys graduating from Grade 8," says deSnoo.

The Prom Project's first year, which took place in 2012, was successful and deSnoo believes this year will be successful as well.

"I think that we will equally successful, if not have more donations this year. Last year was our very first year, we had over 1,600 items donated."

Donated items can be dropped off in several locations including the Quinte Mall.



Instagram pic of the week

Congratulations to Steph Crosier (username @stephanc2990), winner of this weeks Pioneer's student Instagram pic of the week contest, with her photo of her backyard during the last Fridays snow-storm.

Be sure to follow us @LoyalistPioneer.

To see all the Instagram submissions, search #Pioneerpics with your Instagram app. Deadline is each Tuesday by 5 p.m.

Bell launches campaign to talk about mental health issues

By Jennifer Robertson

Bell launched its Let's Talk campaign on Feb. 12 to raise money, awareness and to get people talking about mental health.

Bell set up several ways for people to help raise money for their campaign. For each text message sent, Bell donated five

cents to help fund mental health initiatives across Canada. Long distance calls made, Twitter tweets and Facebook shares made more donations possible.

Bell announced on Twitter on Tuesday night that over 80 million calls, tweets, and texts were made in Canada, setting a new record for the Bell Let's Talk day.

The campaign was extremely successful in raising funds for donations.

According to the Canadian Institute of Health Research, one in five Canadians will experience a form of mental illness at some point in their lives. Forty-nine percent of Canadians said they would socialize with a friend who has a serious mental illness,

and twenty-seven percent of Canadians are afraid of being around people who suffer from serious mental illness. Bell posted several facts about mental health on its website for users to read and better understand

Sandie Sidsworth, Hastings and Prince Edward Canadian Mental Health Association executive director, had lots of posi-

tive comments to make on Bell's choice to host a campaign on mental health.

"This is such a great thing that Bell is doing," says Sidsworth, "It's also the anti-stigma campaign, it brings some dialogue into play where we can talk about mental illness."

Retreat offers support to people in need

By Benjamin Priebe

The Sexual Assault Centre of Quinte-Hastings County is opening a unique and innovative healing retreat on May 30, the first in Canada to provide therapy and support to both men and women affected by sexual violence.

The residential healing centre, known as the RHC, is a specialized program designed to give men and women from across Ontario a safe place to heal from the wounds of sexual violence. Officials say it is critical to the health of our community and is making revolutionary new steps in the way survivors are supported.

"The program is for survivors of sexual violence over the age of 16," says Gail Chipertzak, manager of the Sexual Assault Centre for Quinte District.

"We are open to anyone in Ontario and we believe we are the only program in Canada who helps both men and women. We have received awards and grants from the Ministry of Health for innovation."

Chipertzak and executive director Kim Charlebois are working to create a support and treatment network for Ontario's survivors based in Prince Edward County. The sexual assault centre has been running and developing the program for the past six years but has always used a rented temporary space. For the first time, they were able to purchase a property and expand.

"We are a non-profit organization and charity. We get money from private donors, funding from the provincial government and money from the United Way," says Chipertzak. "In order to purchase the RHC property, we did fundraising last year spearheaded by Kim Charlebois. We



Photo by Benjamin Priebe

Clockwise, from back left; Kim Charlebois, Elise Hineman, Stacey Trubridge Jan Austin and Gail Chipertzak are some of the staff at the Sexual Assault Centre for the Quinte-Hastings area.

received \$975,000 just from this county."

The program will take groups of 10 men or women to an isolated natural retreat and use group therapy, physical challenge and holistic methods to help them overcome past pain and unresolved issues stemming from sexual abuse.

"We have done 13 retreats with 10 survivors per retreat," says Chipertzak. "We are moving to a phase in which we help 120 per year in monthly retreats."

"Every day at the retreat focuses on 'the paths of courage' using group therapy, followed by a physical activity and then a workshop either education based or involving creative expression," says Chip-

ertzak.

"Everything is done as a group so there is lots of moral support, trust and togetherness."

The exact location of the RHC cannot be disclosed to protect privacy but it is a pleasant farmhouse on eight acres of land in Prince Edward County.

"When survivors are at the retreat, they will feel surrounded by nature and alone to deal with their issues without the stresses of the world," says Chipertzak.

The healing centre is located in a rural location chosen to give survivors feelings of privacy, comfort, safety, and closeness with nature. It has facilities used in therapeutic exercises such as a high rope

course, rock climbing wall, kayaks, and a system of hiking trails.

"In the program, we spend a lot of time outside, in the woods and on the water," says Chipertzak. "We also bring in facilitators so the survivors can partake in meditation, yoga, chakra therapy and drumming."

The objective of the program is that survivors can try out various methods of therapy to develop a healthy coping mechanism for their emotional pain. Charlebois explains that she hopes participants emerge with a happy and positive outlook on life and that they can move on and shed the scars given by abuse.

"I compare our program to Outward Bound. We use physical challenge to increase confidence so that people can trust the group and deal with their emotional pain," says Chipertzak.

"The group is involved through support and feedback. We facilitate a safe environment in which survivors can deal with their issues. It's fantastic."

The sexual assault centre does follow-ups on attendees one month, three months and one year after the retreat is completed. This is to ensure survivors are progressing in a positive manner and to further improve the healing centre methodology. Attendees often form lifelong relationships with those they work with and will drop by the sexual assault centre on Octavia Street to visit and con-

nect.

Before the healing centre was purchased, the office used to close for a week bi-annually during the retreat day but will now stay open because of extra staff and funding being acquired.

"An exciting thing is that we are going to develop and offer workshops for survivors where they can all come in to our Belleville office and work on topics such as shame, forgiveness and healing," says Charlebois. "I see us offering a lot more services to the clients that visit."

The sexual assault centre hopes to spread the word about its program and encourage survivors of sexual abuse from across Ontario to get in contact with them or a local service to set up a visit to the retreat.

"If survivors are interested in going on the retreat or receiving help, they just have to phone and let

us know. We will put them on a list and have them fill out a detailed application form," says Chipertzak.

"We screen applicants to make sure that they are physically and emotionally ready as it is a painful process with great reward and we only wish to help."

The Sexual Assault Centre of Quinte-Hastings County can be contacted for counseling services or a spot at the healing centre by phoning 613-967-6300 or by e-mail at sacqd@lks.net. Drop-ins are always welcome at the office at 41 Octavia St. in Belleville.

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Manager Gail Chipertzak