

THE CAVEAT REPORT

NEWS FROM HEAD OFFICE FOR OUR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

DECEMBER 1999

"A Love That Kills" goes National



Monica Drake



Her mother
Dawna Speers

By Gillian Judkins

On October 7, 1991, nineteen-year-old Monica Drake was brutally stabbed to death by her ex-boyfriend, Adam. Monica was a happy young girl who had a close relationship with her friends and family, especially her mother, Dawna Speers. That was until she met Adam. For two years, Monica dated Adam and eventually moved in with him. Adam began to isolate Monica from her friends and family and Dawna watched as her daughter quickly became quiet and subservient to Adam.

The warning signs of abuse became more evident when Adam and Monica moved in together.

Monica had to account for her whereabouts at all times and although Adam didn't work, he expected Monica to work full time, while catering to his every need. He would take her paycheque from her and give her an allowance, an obvious form of economic abuse.

Monica kept in close contact with her mother and often expressed concern over Adam's behaviour. Dawna would reassure her daughter that her concerns were well-founded and that in healthy relationships, partners don't treat each other that way. Monica eventually left Adam. On October 7th, he found and murdered her in her new apartment.

Dawna has presented Monica's story to thousands of high school students across Canada in order to try and teach young people about the dan-

gers of controlling relationships. She speaks candidly about Monica's situation and her attempt to help Monica see that the relationship was unhealthy. She explains that she kept the door open with Monica and that she never pressured Monica to leave Adam for fear of isolating her daughter even further.

On November 2nd of this year, the film, "A Love That Kills" was released by the National Film Board with the support of the Ontario Women's Directorate and CAVEAT. In the film actors portray Monica and Adam and the signs of abuse are presented to the audience in a dramatic, but comprehensible

manner. Dawna will be presenting this film on a cross Canada tour.

Dawna hopes that hearing Monica's Story will help other young people who are in abusive and controlling relationships. After her speaking engagements, Dawna often has young men and women come up to her and disclose that they themselves are in an abusive situation and need help. This is exactly what Dawna is hoping for. To be able to reach out to people like Monica who need assistance in getting out of abusive situations. She hopes that they will hear the message and speak up before it's too late for them.

"A Love That Kills" can be purchased through the National Film Board of Canada by calling 1-800-267-7710. Dawna can be booked for speaking engagements by contacting CAVEAT.

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Making Consecutive Sentencing a Reality

By Lillian Fuller

In the spring of 1999, MP Albina Guarnieri put forward a Private Members Bill (C-251) to impose Consecutive Sentencing in the cases of crimes involving violence. This Bill received 3rd reading in the House of Commons on June 8, 1999. This is phenomenal as most Private Members Bills are dropped at the first reading. The Bill has passed first reading in the Senate. This is the first step in having this Bill passed into law by Royal Assent. The Senate was in recess for the summer and this Bill will be brought before the Senate Justice Committee. If the Senate does not pass this Bill it will not become law and the status quo of concurrent sentencing will remain in place.

Consecutive Sentencing is a major first step for

truth in sentencing as the offender will serve all the time given for each offense. For example, if an offender has three charges and receives 7 years for each offense it will total 21 years in prison. Currently in Canada, an offender with three charges of 7 years each will only serve 7 years as the three charges are served together.

It is CAVEAT's stand that Consecutive Sentencing must be implemented. We are encouraging the public to make their views known to the Members of the Senate by writing to them. Many Canadians are unaware of the current system until it affects them directly. This is a great opportunity to correct a glaring flaw in the Criminal Justice System. Make your voice heard. Write to the Senators today.

By Gillian Judkins

We have had many inquiries recently about the status of our office in Alberta which is temporarily dormant. Our Alberta volunteers have been extremely dedicated, however, with the lack of financial assistance, it is often difficult to keep an office running solely on the steam of volunteers. We hope to have an Alberta office up and running again in the near future and we are actively working to see that this occurs as soon as possible.

CAVEAT Alberta chair,



Colette Mandin-Kossowan has worked diligently with CAVEAT since February of 1995 to bring attention to the issue of victims' rights in Alberta and across Canada.

In 1991 Colette's brother, Maurice and her sister-in-law, Susan, were murdered by their 5-year-old son. Also murdered were Colette's nieces, Islay, 12 and Janelle, 10. The journey Colette and her family took through the Criminal Justice system led them to launch letter writing campaigns to the media and politicians in order to have them address issues of youth crime.

The staff and volunteers at CAVEAT would personally like to extend our sincere appreciation to Colette for her extremely hard work over the years. Colette has come to be an important part of the CAVEAT family and we will miss her.

By Johanne Cyr-Wright

On October 3rd, 4th and 5th, more than 200 people from across Canada attended CAVEAT's National Crime Prevention Conference at the Hamilton Convention Centre. The "NO MORE FEAR" conference addressed two major themes, the Impact of Victimization and Future Trends in Violent Crime Prevention.

Confidence in CAVEAT and commitment to our goals was most evident from the support, both financial and in-kind, that we received from the business community and local organizations as well as from government agencies.

An unparalleled number of politicians chose the NO MORE FEAR conference as the forum for their announcements about crime prevention and victims' issues. The Honourable Ann McLellan, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, praised CAVEAT's "dedication to raising the awareness of the role of the victim in our justice system" and talked of the Government of Canada's investment of \$32 million per year on the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention as well as a Policy Centre for Victims Issues with-

in the Department of Justice that will examine legislation and policy with an eye to the victim's perspective.

The Honourable James Flaherty, Attorney General of Ontario appealed for stricter responses to youth crime and an appeal of Section 745 of the Criminal Code, which gives convicted murderers serving life sentences the right to apply for parole after 15 years. The Honourable Helen Johns, Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation announced two programs designed to protect children, seniors and vulnerable adults from abuse. The Ontario Screening Initiative will promote the adoption of safety practices for community groups to screen people in positions of trust. A similar program will target sport administrators, coaches and organizations to reduce the risk of sexual abuse. She also announced Ontario's re-introduction of Christopher's Law, legislation to establish a sexual offender registry.

"NO MORE FEAR" was heralded as a unique, important and essential step in the journey toward community safety and victims' rights.



The Hon. Anne McLellan speaks with members of the CAVEAT Youth Council



Delegates were addressed by a number of victims rights advocates



Some of the NO MORE FEAR Delegates Registering for two informative days



Dawna Speers has a chat with conference organizers Johanne and

Welcoming back a familiar face

By Dorothy Leonard

Although it has been 3 years since I left CAVEAT, I have always supported the organization as a volunteer, as a member, in their issues, and certainly in spirit. This past October, I was very pleased and proud to be part of the No More Fear Conference in a volunteer capacity.

I believe in CAVEAT, in all we have done, and all we have mapped out for the future. We started this organization to bring people together, to understand the issues, and fight for justice in a strong voice. The ultimate goal for all of us is to protect our families.

That need is still there. You know this too, which is why you have stood by us. I thank you for your support in the past, for understanding the many challenges we face and I ask for your continued support in the future.

Unfortunately the corporate fund raising ini-



tiatives were not as successful as we had hoped. The only reason that could be, is that they do not fully understand our goal. We will strive to communicate more effectively with the hopes of getting the corporations on board. I still believe, with all my heart, with all of us working together we will make the necessary changes to make our society a wonderful environment to raise our families.

I know with your support, we can take a strong CAVEAT into the millenium and continue to have a positive impact on Canadian society.

Please remember to pass this newsletter on to friends and family

who haven't had a chance to hear of the wonderful work CAVEAT does.

Have a great Christmas and all the best for the millenium!

Editor's Note: Dorothy Leonard will be acting as interim Executive Director for CAVEAT

Legal loophole to give convicted killer a new trial?

Seven years after the sexual assault and murder of 19 month old Samantha, her killer may be given a new trial

By Gillian Judkins

A legal loophole may give a man convicted of first degree murder the right to a new trial. In February of 1993, Fred Brooks was convicted of first degree murder in the brutal murder of 19 month old Samantha Johnings. Brooks had been living with Samantha, her mother and younger brother. On the morning of December 14, 1992, Samantha's mother found her daughter's lifeless body in her crib, covered in her own blood and vomit. She had been sexually assaulted while beaten about the head, dying as the result of acute brain injury. Unknown to Samantha's mother and family, Brooks had a long history of sexual and physical abuse on children, including his twin sisters.

During the summer of 1994, Samantha's family heard all the evidence presented against Brooks and was relieved to hear the judge pass a sentence 25 years with no possibility of parole. For the time being, Samantha's family felt they had some closure to the situation. In the fall of that same year,



Samantha Johnings
19 months old

Detective Sergeant Frank Harold contacted Samantha's mother to inform her that Brooks had tried to hire someone to kill her, not once but twice. Brooks was charged with conspiracy to commit murder only to have it plead down to uttering death threats.

And now, seven years after the brutal murder of Samantha, the family will find themselves in court once again. On October 3, 1997, Brooks was awarded a new trial on the grounds that Justice George Yates did not, in Brooks' original trial, caution the jury prior to hearing evidence presented by two jailhouse informants.

The Crown was given an automatic appeal and the family travelled to Ottawa on October 8, 1999 to fight to keep Brooks in jail. If the Supreme Court decides that Brooks' right to a fair trial was hindered by the original judge's failure to caution the jury, Brooks could receive a new trial and Samantha's family will once again have their lives turn upside down. We will update our members when the judge make his ruling.

Convicted murderer tries to take away family's rights



Loretta Postelnicu-Jacob
26 years of age, with her son

On August 14, 1996, Loretta Postelnicu-Jacob was murdered in Canmore, Alberta. She was 26 years old at the time. He husband, Jean Marc, pleaded guilty to second degree murder in May of 1997. Sole custody of Loretta and Jean Marc's son who was three when his mother was murdered, was given to Jean Marc's sister, Diane Loretta's family, the Valdman's were awarded generous access

In accordance with court appointed visitations, the Valdman's would travel ten hours from Port Colborne Ontario, to Diane's house in Quebec. The Valdman's, who are of Romanian descent, found communication extremely difficult with Diane who only speaks French. They were devastated to watch as Loretta's son began losing his ability to interact with them in English.

This past April, Jean Marc brought a motion to have the Valdman's access rights terminated. If he is successful, the Valdman's may never be able to see Loretta's son again. Loretta's son, at a very tender age, lost his mother. Now, three years later, he may lose all ties to the only people who can share with him stories of the mother he hardly knew.

Auction for Action a Success!



The two Vannas;
Anna and Lillian



CAVEAT BC's long time
supporter, Merv Duggan

By Lillian Fuller

After months of work and countless hours by volunteers, the 6th Evening with CAVEAT BC's Auction for Action Fund-raiser is considered a terrific success. The evening took place on Friday, October 22nd, 1999 at the Sunrise Banquet and Convention Centre in Surrey, BC.

The evening consisted of a dinner, live and silent auction and fabulous entertainment by Comedian Barry Kennedy. Though Barry calls Toronto home, he flew in specifically to entertain our 165 guests. On hand again, was auctioneer Extraordinaire Dean Fougere and his talented team.

CAVEAT BC Chairperson Chris Simmonds opened the evening with his remarks about the past year and described feature film entitled "A Love That Kills". "This is a film that should be shown in every High School in the province of BC and across Canada."

Lillian Fuller hosted the evening as Master of Ceremonies and also provided a few laughs with her antics as "Vanna White" during the live auction portion of the evenings program. Special thanks are given to Laura Lippucci and her sister Anna D'Amato who acted as her assistants.

Featured during the evening was a new promotional CAVEAT video produced by Ben Doyle and his brother John. The video, entitled, CAVEAT, Past, Present and Future was very well done and well received by the audience. In 9 minutes, Ben and John nailed exactly where CAVEAT began and where it is going into the new millennium.

The goal of the fund-raiser was to secure operating funds for the coming business year as well as various projects that the Board of Directors want to proceed upon.

It takes enormous time and effort to ensure an event of this type goes smoothly. CAVEAT BC would like to extend a huge thank you to the organizers and many volunteers who worked on this fund-raiser.

CAVEAT BC would also like to thank all our generous sponsors for their donations to make the evening a great success. And last but not the least, thank you to all who attended and made this years Auction for Action the most successful fund-raiser that CAVEAT BC has ever done.



Ben and Colleen
greeting attendees



Comedian Barry Kennedy
flew in from Toronto

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Remember to visit our web site at www.caveat.org

Please pass our newsletter on to a friend!

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

YES, I do want to help CAVEAT with its work to end violence.

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Cheques payable to CAVEAT can be mailed to:
Suite 3-164, 3350 Firview Street, Burlington, ON L7N 3L5

VISA MasterCard

Card #: _____ Expiry date: _____

Signature: _____

Amount: \$- _____

Tax Receipts will be issued for donations of \$10 or more