

Rape topic of discussion at Mental Health Centre

What would you do if you were threatened by a rapist? How would you react? What would you do to prevent it? Would you report it to the police? What could you expect in the courts if you did?

These were some of the questions dealt with in a film and panel discussion held by the Affirmative Action Committee at the Metungishene Mental Health Centre last Thursday night.

The film, entitled "Not a Pretty Picture", is an American film, made in 1975 by Martha Coledge, herself a rape victim. The film is a film within a film, which showed a reenactment of a rape, and the reactions of the director and her actors and actresses to rape and

to the rape portrayed in the film.

The panel which led the discussion after the film consisted of Mrs. Ann Parker, who organized the panel, Constable Chuck Coulson, of the Ontario Provincial Police, Midland Detachment, Pat Finlay, of the Rape Crisis Centre in Toronto, Barbara Betcherman and Daphne Montagnes, lawyers from Toronto, and Dr. Barry Boyd, the medical director of the Mental Health Centre.

Coulson started the discussion with a definition of rape, according to the Canadian Criminal Code. He said a man commits rape when he has sexual intercourse with a woman, who is not

his wife, without her consent, or with her consent, if the consent is obtained by threats, if the consent is obtained by impersonating her husband, or if the consent is obtained by fraudulent means.

With respect to what a woman should do if she is threatened by a rapist, Coulson said, "You can only do what it is within your character to do." He pointed out that if the woman struggles, she is liable to get overpowered and hurt, and suggested, "you have to change his perception of you and of him."

"You have to open up a line...to communicate," he said.

He then listed five steps to take when confronted

- 1) You have to regain emotional stability.
- 2) You have to treat him like a human being.
- 3) You must get his confidence and make him think you're not a threat to him.
- 4) You should go along with him until you can safely react.
- 5) Use your imagination.

Coulson recommended that a rape victim should only report the crime if she feels she can handle it. He suggested that the victim talk to someone, such as a friend, a minister or a doctor, and have them accompany her to the police station if she decides to report the rape.

He cautioned that a victim who washes or changes her clothes before going to the police destroys most of the evidence. Coulson said reporting a rape in no way insures that a conviction will follow, but he added that the suspect would then be under suspicion even if he were not convicted, and he may be apprehended and convicted the next time he tries it.

Finlay told the audience she disagreed with just about everything Coulson said, and pointed out that the true nature of rape is not based on sex at all. A rape is committed, she said, in any past relationship degrade and humiliate either that woman in particular or women in general. She said the cases studied by the Rape Crisis Centre showed that women are chosen

because they are "easy targets", and she recommended that women should make it clear that they are not easy targets. "We women can stand up for ourselves and we can fight," she said.

Studies have shown, she said, that 60 per cent of all rape attempts were repelled by a loud noise. "You have a few seconds...You have to mobilize your anger and resist instantly. Most sexual assailants don't want any hassles," she said.

Montagnes and Betcherman presented differing points of view on the rules of evidence with respect to rape cases in court. Montagnes defended the right of the defense counsel to cross-examine the rape victim regarding her past sexual experiences, in order to determine her reliability. She said the crown in a rape case must prove that the defendant is not married to the complainant, that intercourse took place, and that there was no consent. The last point, she said, is very hard to prove, and the defense counsel must be allowed the right to fully cross-examine the victim in order to establish her credibility with regard to the issue of consent.

Betcherman replied that she could see that any past relationship between the victim and the accused was relevant, but she could not see that the victim's past sexual experience was in any way relevant. She pointed out that she knew of no

study which showed that virgins told the truth more often than non-virgins.

"Our law feels some kinds of women can't be raped," she said. "I feel if you can prove there's a coercive situation, then we should stop hassling the victim."

Dr. Boyd contributed some insight into the psychological make-up of a rapist. He said he feels safe sending killers out onto the streets from Oak Ridge, but he isn't so sure about rapists.

The treatment at Oak Ridge, he said, consists of trying to find out why the rapist wants to degrade women. He said they had

found that many rapists lacked social skills, and that many are "woefully ignorant" about the facts of sex. At Oak Ridge, classes in the social skills and the facts of life are given to the patients.

In the discussion which followed the presentations by the panel, Betcherman summed up one of the major problems associated with rape, when she pointed out that many women are ashamed of having been raped, and feel that in some way it must have been their fault. She said there is no shame in being raped. "We don't get raped," she said. "They rape us!"

Club des quilleurs

par Mme. Bernard Marchand

Samedi, 30 avril, les membres du club de quilles de Lafontaine se sont réunis, cette fois autour d'une table à la sucrerie de M. Anatole Charlebois, pour y

secrétariat-trésorier depuis sept ans. Meme Rose Dupuis assumera la charge à la reprise des activités.

Le groupe se rendit ensuite à la salle paroissiale pour y danser

paroissiale de Lafontaine à ceux qui auront préparé durant cette année les plus beaux parterres et les plus belles fleurs. Ces prix seront offerts surtout pour les efforts en vue d'embellir le devant des maisons - ce qui est vu par les passants. Plus de détails seront fournis bientôt. Mais en attendant, qu'on profite des beaux jours pour se frorganiser en vue d'une s'rangelle compétition. Ainsi Lafontaine et sa campagne offriront cet été un coup d'oeil ravissant à ceux qui l'habitent et à ceux qui y seront de passage.

Nouvelles de Lafontaine

déguster ensemble un délicieux souper. Ensuite M. Gérard Maurice jr. président et Mme Elsie Robitaille secrétaire, firent la proclamation des étoiles de la saison en leur remettant de magnifiques trophées.

Equipe gagnante de la saison, celle de Ken Quesnel, capitaine et ses joueurs, Mmes Marie Paulin, Rose Dupuis, Pauline Maurice et MM. Bernard Marchand et Paul Maurice.

Equipe gagnante de la joute finale (play-off), celle de M. Gérard Maurice jr. et ses joueurs, Mmes Jeanne Belcourt, Cecile Robitaille, Mme Emery Lesperance et MM. Roland Desroches et Cléo Moreau.

Plus haute moyenne, chez les hommes, Norbert Desroches chez les femmes, Mme Rose Dupuis.

Plus haut simple, chez les hommes, Paul Maurice chez les femmes, Mme Elsie Robitaille.

Plus haut triple, chez les hommes, Gérard Maurice jr. chez les femmes, Mme Jeanne Belcourt.

Au nom des joueurs, Paul Maurice remit à Mme Elsie Robitaille un nécessaire à thé et un bouquet comme gage de reconnaissance au service du club dont elle a été

avec leurs invités aux accords de l'orchestre de Marcel Maurice.

Une série de prix sera offerte par le comité

Camp Manitomono gets use of city land

by Wilma Pavlik

About 200 young people will be taken for a ride this summer, thanks to Simcoe County Council. Rev. Robert Little of Knox Presbyterian Church in Midland has been asking the county since last year for permission to use reforestation property south of the Church's Camp Manitomono...for pony trails. Last month he approached the county again requesting use of another piece of reforestation land adjacent to the camp for a pony corral.

The county had delayed decision on the first request until an inspection of the property could be made by the Ministry of Natural Resources in the spring. Now that the inspection has been completed, the county without hesitation hollered "saddle up".

The use of both pieces of property will be subject to the signing of a one-

year agreement with provision for annual renewal.

The county fathers have probably made a lot of young people very happy indeed.

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- Election of officers
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