

## Rage Against Violence reading coming to Opera House Nov. 13

By Constance Scrafield

The victims of the violence described in *Rage Against Violence* are the overwhelming numbers of women who are suffering from abuse.

Scheduled for Nov. 13 as a 2 p.m. matinee at Town Hall Opera House in Orangeville, *Rage Against Violence* was written by Gary Kirkham and Dwight Storry and is being performed as a reading, when the actors simply read from scripts on music stands before them.

An interesting and unusual line-up of 'actors' will be on stage for this production, including local politicians, Orangeville Police Chief Wayne Kalinski, leaders in the community, actors, singers, well-known community members. Together they are presenting the difficult, but necessary to hear dramatic and traumatic stories of violence and abuse.

In a telephone interview, Stacey Tarrant, manager of development and community relations at Family Transition Place (FTP), provided a great deal more about the upcoming event and the reasons why it is important to attend it.

'These stories are based on real life,' she said. 'It's difficult to watch in points but it educates and communicates those stories.' Education is the key; where ignorance rules the roost and respect and love are lost, violence may well follow. Although FTP is best known as an emergency shelter, open always to women and their children running from violence in their homes or elsewhere, the organization also focusses on education and presenting information.

Two educators from the FTP staff for the last 13 years go into the schools to run classes about healthy relationships for students in Grade 5 and up.

'The kids love the classes because they can ask questions they couldn't ask anywhere else,' Tarrant said. 'This gives them chance to learn what is a healthy relationship. The schools see the benefit too (as these subjects are not necessarily part of their curriculum).'

The performance is also a fundraiser for FTP, about which we have now learned its value as a shelter and a source of school room education. Much further than that, though, is the mentoring with individuals and in groups.

'There is abuse counselling to help a woman in her journey of being able to cope with getting out of it,' Tarrant explained. 'There is counselling about sexual abuse for men and women.'

She went on to talk about the problems at the front line, as it were

'Our shelter's always been full for years ' to capacity. We see a trend, now Christmas is coming, there are tensions over money.' What can be done about it all, as individuals, how can we contribute to the solution?

'We really want the focus to be, by showing up (at the performance of *Rage Against Violence*), that is something,' she said.

'Although the conversation might be difficult to have, I think that having the conversation can make people more aware.'

To some extent, legal advice is also available, keeping in mind there are no lawyers on the FTP staff, but there is knowledge of how things work within the law and assistance can begin with that.

Mentoring as groups and volunteering in any way are important to the successful running of Family Transition Place. 'For a mentors' group, volunteer men started a committee as an education,' Tarrant said.

Taking the message of this performance home is the beginning of 'doing something about it.' Parents can teach their children even about all the little hints of sexist remarks that lead to a whole attitude that permits abuse. It can begin with the jokes that any way denigrate either gender.

'The more we talk and think about the problem, the better we see resolution,' she remarked. 'I am a parent with an eight-year-old boy. I'm always appropriate with him ' I don't repeat stupid jokes ' they're not okay. The solution ' we need to change our conversation with our children.'

*Rage Against Violence* is on at the Town Hall Opera House Nov. 13. For tickets, call the Box Office at 519 942-3423; or go on line at [www.orangevilletix.ca](http://www.orangevilletix.ca)