



# Bouclier Express

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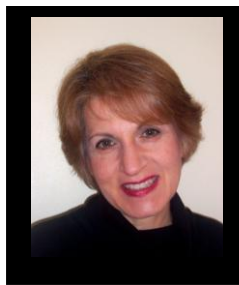
**WEEKLY VOLUNTEER**  
Elvira Sigunis

April 2011, volume IX

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Established in 1991, *The Shield of Athena Family Services* is a non-profit community organization for victims of family violence. We have developed into a network of services that includes 2 centers, 1 in Montreal & 1 in Laval, a shelter and a community outreach department. Our support, intervention and prevention services are culturally and linguistically adapted to meet the needs of many of Montreal's ethno-cultural communities.

**Our services are available in the following 17 languages: Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Creole, English, Farsi, French, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Punjabi, Rumanian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Urdu.**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Happy 20<sup>th</sup> 'birthday', March 31, to the Shield of Athena!** The Shield has grown from the idea 'to help Greek women break the cycle of violence' to an effectively structured organization that today serves over **15** ethnic communities through our Montreal and Laval offices and Shelter, Athena's House. In 2010 over **484** women and children received our external services, while **98** were taken care of in our emergency shelter. Without the donations of money, clothing, toys, food, items of basic necessities, and most importantly, the countless hours of volunteer work, we could not have helped these women and children rebuild their lives.

I invite you to browse this year's newsletter and to visit our website frequently to stay in touch with our activities and make your donation. Mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, November 20, 2011, on your calendar. It promises to be an exciting evening celebrating our twenty years of triumphs and heroes.

I extend my deepest gratitude for your unwavering support. Unfortunately, violence has not stopped, and we need you so that we can continue to provide leadership in our communities and break the cycle of violence, one family at a time!

**Jennie Constantinides**



## THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Over the course of the past twenty years the organization has developed from a small grass roots group comprised of a few women to an organization that has helped thousands of women in abusive relationships.

We presently have 9 social workers, 6 Cultural Intermediaries and a total staff of 26 workers who help women victims and communities resolve the issue of family violence. The organization is headed by a Board of Directors made up of 15 dynamic women who assist in the strategic planning and fundraising. Our dedicated and loyal staff as well as our 300 volunteers are also an integral part of who we are at the Shield. It is this implication of all, in the minutest and largest fashion, that has helped the Shield survive and grow.

Bravo to all and to the next 20 years of success for the Shield of Athena!

**Melpa Kamateros**

## CALENDRIER 2011-2012

**April 15 :** Easter activity for Shield's clients

**May, 9 :** Martini & Make-Over Soirée

**June, 1:** 2011-2012 Membership campaign launch at Bâton Rouge Restaurant

**June, 15:** Annual General Assembly

**June 16 :** Annual Public Assembly

**September:** Volunteer Training

**November, 20 : Shield of Athena 20th Anniversary Gala**

**December: Christmas activity for Shield's clients**

For more details regarding our activities :  
Please consult our website at :  
[www.shieldofathena.com](http://www.shieldofathena.com)



## MESSAGE OF DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

Twenty years ago, the Shield began providing support and follow-up services to women and children experiencing violence. Initially, services were offered in English, French and Greek but have expanded to include multilingual, specialized services given by our multicultural staff and cultural intermediaries.

We presently have support groups in Spanish, Romanian and Urdu as well as for women experiencing sexual abuse in intimate partner relationships and a group on parenting. Children's services have also become a priority and presently include individual consultations, support groups and art or drama therapy.

What remains unchanged over the past twenty years are the emotions that a woman experiences when she reaches out for assistance, finds herself in a shelter or makes a conscious decision to change her life. Our clients come to us during times of crisis and great turmoil, when change requires much strength and courage. Children must be prepared to let go of formers surrounding and deal with the absence of what was once familiar to them. During this time of transition, we provide encouragement so as to empower women, make them feel confident with their decisions and help them move forward.

The organization is constantly evolving in order to meet client needs. We pride ourselves in having worked with 582 clients this year alone, within our network. Over the past 20 years, we have serviced thousands of women and 446 women and children have stayed at our shelter from when it opened in 2004. We will continue to move forward and continue expanding to reach women and children in need.

Betty Petropoulos , tsp

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN VICTIMS OF CONJUGAL / FAMILY VIOLENCE

### SERVICES AT OUR MONTREAL AND LAVAL OFFICES

- Support group for female victims of conjugal violence;
- Support group for women victims of marital sexual abuse;
- Support group for children victims/witnesses of violence, for children ages 6–12 yrs old and adolescents;
- Parenting groups for mothers whose children were exposed to violence.

### OUR OTHER SPECIALIZED SERVICES INCLUDE:

Accompaniments for advocacy and support to court, welfare, home visits, referrals, crisis intervention, economic assistance, legal clinic and follow up.

**SOCIAL WORKERS ARE AVAILABLE AT BOTH OFFICES BY APPOINTMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS.**

### **New service at the Montreal Center**

**ART THERAPY:** is a new service that enables clients to communicate their feelings visually and metaphorically in a supportive environment. Art therapy also offers a chance for clients to improve self esteem, confidence, relax and learn alternate ways of coping with the stresses inherent to their experience in this case conjugal violence.



### SERVICES AT ATHENA'S HOUSE

#### For women victims of conjugal violence

- Individual Services: consultations, legal clinic, advocacy, accompaniment, economic assistance;
- Workshops and Information sessions to recognize/understand conjugal violence and to learn to heal;
- Information sessions on effective parenting for mothers whose children have been exposed to violence.

#### For children victims/witnesses of family violence

- Information sessions on family violence and safety strategies; Creative activities such as puppet theatre, story telling, painting etc.

DRAMA THERAPY is given to women and children residents of our shelter by a Concordia student. Drama therapy allows an active exploration of each client's unique story using role play, storytelling, psycho-dramatic techniques and projection.

MONTREAL & LAVAL DAYCARE - PLAY ACTIVITIES : Only for the clients who use our services and who have no place to leave their children while they go to accompaniments, courts or welfare. Children do art & drama activities.

### FREE FRENCH COURSES AT THE MONTREAL CENTER

Organized by the Shield of Athena Family Services for the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés Culturelles for immigrants. **FOR INFORMATION: 514-274-8117**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Once again, I am very proud to have been part of a monumental year for the **Shield of Athena**. Our social workers provided support and intervention services to over 500 women and children, helping them at a very difficult time in their lives. Our **cultural intermediaries** pilot project assisted women victims of conjugal violence who were faced with severe linguistic and cultural barriers to access services and resources. Our multilingual outreach team provided communities with information on family violence. Through these sessions 469 people were informed on the police procedure and the resources for victims....almost 50% more than last year!

Last but not least, I would like to say that the highlight of our year was definitely our new "**Do you have a secret?**" campaign on sexual violence. I am confident that this multilingual and one of a kind campaign will help break taboos about sexual violence in intimate partner relationships and give victims the choice of accessing help.

This past year, we have also had the opportunity to meet a very lovely lady who has supported many of our events.....Sophie Grégoire Trudeau. We are honored that she believes in the Shield and its goal and is this year's chairperson for our 2010-2011 membership campaign.

All of the vital information that the Shield passes on to communities and all of the life changing services given to women and children would not be possible without your support.

Please give generously and we assure you that we will continue to give 200%

Sincerely,  
Pearl Eliadis, President

## **MESSAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

For yet another year, I have been privileged to be the Executive Director of a monumental organization. Such an organization however, is only as good as its components.

The Board, staff and volunteers, form the heart and soul of the Shield. Without them we could not continue to fund and support our services for so many women and children.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Board members and particularly, Pearl Eliadis, our outgoing President for their belief and commitment to our organization. I would also like to welcome Jennie Constantinides our incoming President and wish her well in her new responsibilities

In this newsletter we hail our volunteers who make everything possible. They range from high school students to senior citizens. **Elvira Sigunis** is a shining example of volunteerism. She has been with the organization from 1994 as a member and President and continues to dedicate two to three days to our centers and our shelter.

Elvira you are invaluable and we need you forever! We hail you and all of our volunteers who are so important to us!

Melpa Kamateros  
Executive Director

## **CALENDER OF EVENTS**

### April:

Easter activity for shield's clients

### June, 2:

2010-2011 Membership campaign launch at Bâton Rouge

### June:

General Assembly, June 17.

### September:

Volunteer Training

### November 7:

17th Annual Art Auction

### December:

Christmas activity for Shield's Clients



**Art Auction 2009**

The Shield of Athena must be one of the luckiest organizations when it comes to having people donate their time for its cause. We have close to **200 volunteers** annually that lend a helping hand. I would like to give special thanks this year to the students of **Lower Canada College** who worked very hard and for many hours at our Art Auction.

One volunteer in particular needs to be singled out for her contributions to the Shield of Athena over the years. **Elvira Sigunis**, past board member and president is still very present in all aspects of the work that we do. We can count on her for translations, banking, accompaniments to meetings, cooking for our client parties, doing client's taxes, transportation, helping at fundraisers and even repairing windows and chairs around the office..... Her contributions are countless and endless. We want her to know how much we appreciate her and that she's like a ray of sunshine to us every time she walks through our door.

**Thank you for everything Elvira!**

**Please support those  
who support us !  
SPONSORS 2010**

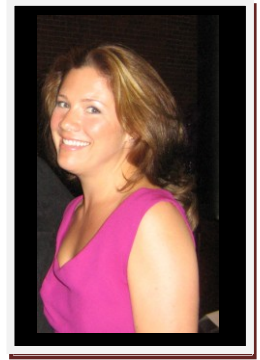
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Air Canada Kid's Horizon  
Tom & Gwen Nacos  
Planète Mobile  
Chaussures Brown  
Madisons New York  
Grill & Bar  
Honda Ste-Rose  
Kounadis Perreault  
Marjorie Bronfman  
Me Pearl Eliadis  
Stratton D. Stevens C.M  
Suzy Shier  
Omnitrans  
Philhobar  
Philoptochos Chapters  
Restaurant Bâton rouge de la  
Montagne  
Restaurant Elounda  
Sir Winston Churchill Pub  
Complex  
Spiegel Sohmer  
Stratton D. Stevens  
Syndicat des professeurs de  
l'UQAM  
Tzanet Odyssey  
Urgel Bourgie  
Victoria Park Medispa  
Ville de Montréal  
Alouettes de Montréal  
Canadiens de Montréal  
Bijouterie Laura Aline  
Birks  
Centre Rockland  
Estiatorio Milos Montréal  
Le Bateau Mouche  
Marie-Perle  
Eramelinda Boquer,  
Radio/ TV Host



**FUNDRAISING**

The members of our fundraising committee are the best volunteers ! Their creativity and generosity enable us to create fundraising events that are fun and beautiful and at the same time raise awareness about family violence.

**Special thanks: to Sophie Grégoire Trudeau;**  
chairperson of last year's events.



**17<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Auction:** We would like to thank the supporters and **400 guests** that attended last year's art auction on **November 7, 2010 at Marché Bonsecours** who helped us raise **\$84 000.**

**Thank you:** to our auctioneers **Demetrius Manolakos** and **Eramelinda Boquer**, the recipients of our **Recognition Award, John and Linda Ciolfi**, from **Suzy Shier** and all our **participating artists, sponsors and silent auction donors.**



**BOUCLIER D'ATHENA**



**2010-2011 Membership campaign launch:** \$25,000 was raised on June 2, 2010 where over 200 guests participated at the Bâton Rouge on de la Montagne. **Thank you:** to **Kids' Horizons** for the wonderful prize of 2 **Air Canada** Tickets and the hilarious **Angelo Tsarouchas** for some very funny entertainment. Of course, this beautiful event would not be possible without the generosity of loyal supporter and friend, **Chris Ann Nakis**; owner of Baton Rouge.



Athena's House in conjunction with Silver Butler's Comedy Nest continues to organize humorous comedy nights where all proceeds go to our shelter



**SAVE THE DATE!!!**

**Please join us in celebrating this monumental  
20th anniversary gala,  
Sunday November 20, 2011**

**A special tribute will be made to the 20 most influential  
people throughout the Shield's history**

**For ticket inquiries & Sponsorship options please email us at  
bouclierdathena@bellnet.ca**

**For more information please check our website at  
www.shieldofathena.com**

*We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for supporting us throughout the years.  
We could not have made it this far without you!*