

Artists 'Still Beautiful' tattoos raise funds for FTP



By Mike Pickford

A Shelburne tattoo artist is encouraging local residents to get inked, all in an attempt to help make a difference in the community. Since the beginning of September, Missie Powers has inscribed the words 'Still Beautiful' on 33 individuals as part of an initiative she hopes will remind women that they're beautiful, no matter what they've been through.

'I guess the goal is to bring spirits up and really just try to promote that we could be building each other up and helping each other out rather than trying to tear each other down,' Missie told the Citizen. 'Support is an important thing. A lot of the time that's the difference some women need to turn their life around.'

With that in mind, Missie has partnered up with Family Transition Place on the initiative, committing 50 percent of all proceeds raised to the local women's shelter. 'I know people who have had to use the services at Family Transition Place and, since launching 'Still Beautiful', I've met even more. A lot of them have come in to get their own tattoo,' Missie noted.

Kelly Lee, Events and Community Relations Coordinator with FTP, was on hand at Missie Ink in downtown Shelburne to accept a donation of \$1,000 on Tuesday. She wanted to thank Missie (real name Melissa), for all of her support over the past few months.

'The actual idea behind 'Still Beautiful' is so meaningful to a lot of people. We've been involved in a lot (of programs and initiatives), but this is definitely unique,' Kelly said. 'We couldn't do what we do without all of our fantastic community sponsors and partners. To see this level of community support, and see people thinking of the work we do and the programs we offer is truly special. We sincerely appreciate all the support.'

Most of the money will likely go towards supporting FTP's Youth Education Program in Dufferin-Caledon. Since its introduction back in 2001, the program has reached more than 50,000 students from more than 40 schools in the region.

'This program is completely unfunded, so it's vital to have fundraisers like this and people like Missie ready to step up and lend a helping hand,' Kelly added. 'We believe the best way to end the cycle of violence is through our youth, making sure we're educating them early on. This program is very, very important to us at FTP.'

While 'Still Beautiful' was originally intended to be a two-month venture, Missie says she's already extended it into November due to the sheer demand for her services. With several people already booked in and others waiting to schedule a time, she expects the total number of participants in the initiative to reach 50 once all is said and done.

'The response has been great. The number of people who have reached out, asking to have this done is great. I did five of these things in one day a few weeks back. I still haven't had chance to do my own yet because I haven't had the chance,' Missie said. 'And it's not just women, either. I've had one guy come in and have this done, which is definitely cool.'

Any and all funds generated through future 'Still Beautiful' tattoos will be donated to FTP. The tattoos cost \$60 and are approximately four inches in length. To contact Missie, send an email to missieink@hotmail.com.

National Day of Remembrance

This Saturday (Nov. 25) marks the International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women and kicks off the global initiative 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. The event runs until Dec. 10.

Here in Dufferin, Family Transition Place will hold two events in commemoration of Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The Orangeville Vigil will take place on Dec. 6 at Family Transition Place in Orangeville (located at 20 Bredin Parkway). The ceremony will be held outside between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. The Caledon Vigil will also take

place on Dec. 6, running from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Caledon Public Library, Albion-Bolton Branch.
For more information, visit familytransitionplace.ca.