

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Shauntay Grant reflects on grandmothers when she thinks International Women's Day

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The Antigonish Women's Resource Centre kicked off its International Women's Week activities by hosting writer and spoken word performer Shauntay Grant, Monday night.

Grant performed a number of her poems and songs which reminisce on her mother and grandmothers who have influenced her life as a strong woman.

"I'm keeping with the theme of the week which is voices plus solidarity plus action," Grant said before her performance. "So tonight I thought I would honour some of the voices and the women who have inspired me to speak and influenced the words I write and speak.

"I'll be paying tribute to them and I guess giving thanks to them."

Grant said growing up she had five grandmother figures,

and much of her writing - both poems and songs - reflect growing up with their advice, their friendship, and even their cooking.

"I think without them, well, I don't know what I'd do or where I'd be," she said. "They've played a huge role in my career choices and giving me that courage to go out and do what I want."

Grant also had one of her great grandmother's quilts with her. A burn spot from the family home burning down in North Preston was still visible on one of the patchwork blocks.

But Grant said it's also important to inspire others to think of the women in their lives as she shares her stories.

"Tonight is about reflection and I want to encourage that in others," she said. "As I reminisce on what's happened in my life, I want others to think of what they take from life and to honour and share that.

"That's what this is really about: the sharing of women's works and the sharing of their

spirit, energy and love."

Other International Women's Week activities in Antigonish include a film screening ("Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai") on Thursday at 6:30 at the People's Place Library, and a Women Building Communities Breakfast at the Prissy Pig Café and Deli at 7:30 a.m. on Friday (tickets at 863-6221).

The week's events will wrap up on International Women's Day with a Kids' Sing Along at the library at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, and a *Documenting First Wave Feminisms* book launch at the library at 3 p.m.

The Antigonish Women's Resource Centre are also hosting a Bringing in the Bystander workshop on Saturday. Those interested can register by email: x2011bao@stfx.ca.

Saturday will wrap up with a Feminist Cabaret and Variety Show at the Split Crow from 8 to 10 p.m. and the 2014 Mawio'mi - Honouring Our Women event will be held Sunday at the Bloomfield Centre (MacKay Room) at 11 a.m.



Shauntay Grant, writer and spoken word poet, performed at the Coady International Institute's Dennis Hall Monday night at the kick off International Women's Week, hosted by the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre. Grant shared stories of her mother and grandmothers to show the importance of strong women in life.
PHOTO: Laura Hubbard

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