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For Immediate Release

MUSKOKA PRIDE MOURNS LIVES LOST ON TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

BRACEBRIDGE, ONTARIO – November 20th , 2017 – At a time when violence against trans people globally is reaching an all-time high, community members in Muskoka commemorated Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR) at the BMLSS Library.

In 2017, there were 326 trans and gender-diverse people who were reported murdered in the last year around the world, victims of anti-transgender (transphobic) violence.

During the event, hosted by Muskoka Pride, over 20 participants engaged in conversations and learning around the transgender experience. Led by filmmaker and activist, Michelle Emson, the group watched several videos which helped frame the evening – Trans terminology, Questions not to ask, and Being a trans ally.

For Emson the event is especially significant, as she came out as transgender in 2011. She says, "If we can come to accept our own uniqueness, then perhaps we could come to respect and accept the uniqueness of others." She is an LGBTQ Human Rights advocate and has given many presentations on the subject across Ontario and throughout Muskoka.

She says that TDoR is critically important for the LGBTQ community. "It's an opportunity for us to mourn and grieve the loss of those whose lives have been taken in the name of transphobia. It's also an opportunity for us to stand up and take action, both as allies as well as members of the trans community."

November 14th to 20th was Trans Awareness Week. It is a week to help raise the visibility of transgender and gender-diverse people and address the issues these communities face.

The local TDoR event included screening the names of the 326 trans and gender-diverse people who were victims of transphobic violence in the past year.

Since 2008 (when records started being kept) a total of 2,609 deaths have been reported worldwide in 68 countries.

For further information on this and other Muskoka Pride events, go to www.muskokapride.com or visit the Muskoka Pride Facebook Page www.facebook.com/muskokapride

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About the Trans Day of Remembrance – The Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR) has been recognized on November 20th since 1999. It recognizes those trans and gender-diverse people who have been victims of homicide each year. TDoR raises public awareness of hate crimes against trans and gender-diverse people, provides a space for public mourning, and honours the lives of those who might otherwise be forgotten. Started in the USA, TDoR is now held in many parts of the world.

About Muskoka Pride - The Muskoka Pride Community is a volunteer group that formed in 2009, whose purpose is to increase awareness of the LGBT community of Muskoka and to create opportunities for inclusivity within Muskoka that overcome heterosexism and homo/bi/trans-phobia, providing a safe community for LGBT people. The Muskoka Pride Community hosts the annual Muskoka Pride Picnic on the Sunday before the Civic Holiday weekend and Pride Festival activities throughout Muskoka.