

# Slashing victim urges students to change the rules in the future

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Wendy Carroll, the real estate agent whose throat was slashed while working in Mississauga last summer, was grilled about her attack last week.

She wasn't on the witness stand, though. Rather, she was a much anticipated guest speaker at St. Martin Secondary School for Ontario Law Day on Thursday.

About 100 of the Rosemary Dr. high school's OAC law, politics and social studies students heard Carroll speak about the need for reform of the justice system — from a victim's perspective.

Carroll announced she plans to appeal for the public's help in setting up a fund to offset her \$150,000 in legal costs and to finance a \$2.5 million lawsuit against Canada's corrections system.

Last July 2, Carroll, 32, was attacked by two men and left for dead in a house on Lakeview's Seventh St.

She was viciously beaten. One of her attackers used a 16-inch hunting knife to slash her throat.

Carroll managed to crawl out of the house to a neighbor's lawn where she begged a young boy to call 911. She'd lost 5-1/2 of the 7 litres of blood contained in the human body.

"What else would you do? It's your life. It's worth fighting for," said Carroll, who said she enjoyed fielding the students' probing questions such as, "What did you expect the police to do?"

Two convicted murderers, wanted at the time of the attack on Canada-wide warrants for parole violations, were apprehended in Toronto three days later by Peel Regional Police.

John Lyman Kehoe and Edward Samuel Schwartz face charges in connection with the attack.

Carroll still is undergoing physiotherapy. The attack left her with a droopy eye, a deformed pupil, tissue and nerve damage on her left arm, shoulder and hand.

The criminal case begins with a July 2 pre-trial — the anniversary of the attack. Meanwhile, her civil suit is lagging and Carroll said the expense could derail it.

Hence the legal fund.

"I want people to know I'm not doing it for the money, but to make change. I'm not just trying to get a big settlement from the government," Carroll said.

"(The school) phoned me about coming and I thought it would be a great opportunity to reach this generation. They'll be making the changes and I'm curious to get their reaction," said Carroll.

A real estate agent with a marketing background, Carroll has worked as a stunt actor and model. She arrived at the school armed with statistics from justice system sources on what she billed an "unacceptable number" of innocent Canadians attacked or killed by convicted offenders on parole.

"In our crusade for human rights, we



Staff photo by Rob Beintema

Wendy Carroll, the real estate agent whose throat was slashed while working in Mississauga last summer, visited St. Martin Secondary School last week on Ontario Law Day to give students a victim's perspective.

have erred," said Carroll.

Asked about capital punishment, Carroll said, "If I had a switch to pull, you bet, I'd be right there."

Carroll told students there was no obvious red flags in six weeks of dealing with a man about the Lakeview home she was selling.

Her company has since hosted general safety seminars for real estate agents.

Carroll said she and a business partner initially dealt with the prospective home-buyers as a team.

A second man appeared late in the deal as a home inspector, a common practice in real estate deals. Such a person doesn't need a permit or special credentials.

Carroll is angry that parole officials didn't track down the men charged with her attack before that fateful day.

"Maybe we should divide crime into violent and non-violent crime," said Carroll, pointing out that our jails are occupied by income tax evaders or dope smokers rather than repeat violent offenders.

Carroll was indignant in pointing out that jails provide inmates with a warm

bed, schooling, subsidized cigarettes, recreation opportunities and serve Grade A beef, all at the taxpayer's expense. Not bad considering Grade B beef is good enough for the Ontario Police College.

Carroll said corrections employees who earn up to \$100,000 annually should be accountable for criminals out on parole.

"In my job, I have to be accountable. How can people who are making a lot more than the average person say they aren't accountable. It doesn't make sense. Why aren't they? Because this is government?" said Carroll.

After fielding their tough questions, Carroll had clearly earned the support of the students.

OAC student Jason Pacheco, 19, offered her the \$5 in his pocket while others suggested fundraising efforts at their Catholic high school could help stockpile Carroll's legal bank account.

The fund is accessible through the Bank of Montreal. The account number 368-8041671. Cheques must be made payable to Cherie Myre and Janice McPherson, in trust.