

## Robbie Weatherbee's nomination letter

January 23, 2003

### Recommending Jeanne Sarson and Linda MacDonald for Client/Public Advocacy Award

First I would like to say how happy I am to take part in nominating Jeanne and Linda for this award. The work they have been doing for the last 9-10 years to help stop violence and to make aware the horrific cruelty of ritual abuse in our society has been relentless. It is hard to be specific in telling how I have benefited from their work because it has helped me in so many ways. To help in your understanding, I would like to share a bit of my personal story and how it was affected by the work Jeanne and Linda are doing.

My childhood was abusive in many ways. My father was a rageful alcoholic. I was sexually abused by my grandfather and I had an emotionally neglectful mother. I was working thru these issues for several years and then about 4 years ago one of my siblings shared with me that they had experienced ritual abuse within the family. Although I do not have a client/therapist relationship with Jeanne and Linda I have known them for many years. Through their work it helped me to breakdown the myths around ritual abuse and gain a better understanding of how this happens within society. I have also learned to deal with the fear, my own and other peoples around this issue.

Linda and Jeanne are writing a book about ritual abuse titled "The Torturers Walk Among Us". My husband and I were interviewed for the book so other people could better understand how it affects families. Although I was not involved directly in the rituals the interviews shows the after effects of the abuse within my family of origin. Doing the interviews helped my husband and I to talk more openly together and, with our children, and put a face to our legacy.

Jeanne and Linda have helped me to see how important it is to speak out about ritual abuse or it will never be exposed just how prevalent it is in our world. They have given me the opportunity to speak at a few workshops that presented about violence and ritual abuse-torture. This helped me personally and also give it a face and voice for the people who cannot speak out because they have so much fear.

I know Jeanne and Linda will go on to do great things around these issues. I think this award would honor their work this far.

Robbie Weatherbee