

D.E.W. DROP IN

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN DO DROP IN

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

MARCH 1998

FREE

WALLS OF CHANGE

Walls of change is a series of murals to be created and installed throughout the Spring of 1998 in the community of the DE. These murals will be developed through a collaborative process with 14 community service groups, agencies and centres with their clients, patrons and volunteers working directly with experienced artists/coordinators.

The murals will make a visual statement of the uniqueness of each of the organizations. ten of the murals will be on canvas, and will be suspended from buildings throughout the DE. Construction hoarding and boarded up storefronts will provide the location for the rest of the murals.

Finally, a sidewalk mural will be painted in the laneway behind the Carnegie Centre.

Upon completion of the murals, there will be a weekend event planned for May of 1998. The event will include a walking tour of the sites. There will be music, poetry, dance, stories and plenty of entertainment. The event will

take place at a number of locations throughout the neighborhood, such as Pigeon Park, the parking lot of the former Lux Theatre, the Carnegie Centre and Oppenheimer Park.

The following organizations will be participating in the creation of the murals; Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, Downtown Eastside Senior's Centre, Tonari Gumi, Watari/Youth Detox, Carnegie Centre, Oppenheimer Park, the Portland Hotel, Four-Sisters Housing, Y.A.C., The Living Room, U.Y.A. and S.O.S.

For further information concerning the Walls of Change mural project please contact Sharon Kravitz or Richard Tetrault at 665-2220.

EVERY TUESDAY

1:30 - 4:30

**Downtown Eastside
Women's Centre**

Creating our own images



NEWS FROM THE ADVOCATES

Alice Kendall

First, I would like to say that it is wonderful to be back at the Women's Centre - I felt very welcomed which I have really appreciated.

I am taking over Christine Hutchinson's position as Mental Health Advocate. Christine has moved on to HIV Outreach Worker. I can provide assistance in the following areas:

- Problems with Welfare
- Completing Disability applications
- Help finding housing or dealing with problems with landlords
- Crises counseling
- Providing information about available help in the community
- Etc.

I will also be co-facilitating the A & D Group on Wednesday night.

The issue for this month has been the new Consent to Release Information form, which was sent out to people receiving welfare by the Ministry of Human Resources. The form has been used since April 1997, but has only been signed by people who are just applying for welfare or for those who have had an annual review. The Ministry mailed the form to every one who had not signed it, (approximately 75,000) and stated that if you do not sign and return it you may be cut off welfare.

The consent form gives permission for your worker (or other Ministry of Human Resource workers), to collect information about you from just about anyone including landlords; past, present, and future employers; family members; credit bureaus; .. the list goes on.

This form is another example of how the government continues to "poor-bash". It takes away your right to privacy just because you survive on welfare, not because you have done anything that might justify this invasion into your life.

There is some good news -- the protest from the community - especially the Downtown Eastside - has caused the government to re-look at this form. While they are looking at it, you are NOT required to sign it and will NOT be cut off welfare if you don't. If you have already signed the form and returned it to you worker you could go and ask for it back and tell them you will return it if it becomes required.

If you have any problems, getting cut off welfare for not signing or your worker refusing to give the form back, you can should see an advocate right away.



EILEEN LAFFERTY B.S.W.

Hi Ladies.

I will be replacing Maureen Bourke until she returns in the near future. I will be available Monday to Friday during center hours.

As the mental health advocate I will be providing basic one -to -one counseling , crisis intervention, and support for women with mental health issues.

As well as providing accompaniment and advocacy for women to : Doctors, clinics, and other medical needs, I can also assist with courts, tribunals, police, lawyers, legal aid , welfare, and landlords or in other situations where you may require my help.

Feel free to call me at the center at 681-4786 or drop into the center to see me.

I'm the short women with the unusual glasses who always wears black.!

P.S. I look forward to working and helping women in the downtown eastside.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!!

Hello, from Drew and Alix. Just a quick up-date to let you know what we've been up to.....

As you know government funding continues to be stretched and so it is important for us to look to other sources of support within the larger community. **We are pleased this month to be able to acknowledge some special supporters.....**

Some of you might have been in the Centre when Labatt's stopped by. We would like to send a big thank you to **Labatt Breweries of British Columbia for their generous contribution of \$10,000.00.** This very special gift will assist with this year's Food Program. The cost of serving nutritious meals at the Centre has increased dramatically. We continue to provide this essential service with the assistance of Labatt Breweries. Also, a big thank you to the **Molson Companies Donations Fund** for their donation to the Women's Centre. These corporations are committed to assisting with community organizations and we appreciate their support.

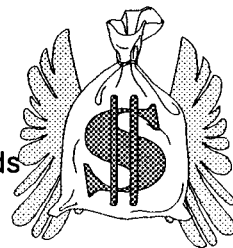
You all have heard about the Van - some of you may have even had a ride in it by now! We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the gals from the **Soroptimist International of Downtown Vancouver.** The women of the Soroptimist group have worked very hard over the past two years

to fundraise on our behalf and we think they're fantastic! Thanks once again! For anyone who is interested, the Vancouver Richmond Health Board is conducting a **focus group for women who are either HIV+ or at risk to talk about their food experiences.** The focus group will look at where women in the Downtown Eastside can get food, how often, what days of the week, etc. There will be an honorarium of **\$10.00 for those women who participate and also a meal will be provided.** The focus group will take about 1 hour of your time and is scheduled for **Thursday, March 5th at 3:30 pm.** Women who are interested should meet at the Centre at that time. We will be moving next door to Central Residence for the actual meeting. *Please sign the sign-up sheet posted in the Centre if you would like to attend.*

Alix and I are happy to have been able to meet a lot of you over the past couple of months. If we haven't met *you* yet, please stop us the next time you see us and say hello. Don't worry if you call us by the wrong name - we're used to it by now.

Take Care!

Drew and Alix
- the Financial Wizards
February 19, 1998



A note from Margareth
of AIDS Vancouver

As you may know, I've been coming to
The Women's Centre for about 3
years now to connect with the ladies
here about health, HIV/AIDS, and
information about different resources.

I am very happy to see that Christine
is the new HIV outreach worker here,
joined by Lesley at DAMS. This
means there will be two women
working full-time in the Downtown
Eastside who can give information to
women about HIV positive women and
other health issues as well as provide
good practical support - not just for
HIV positive women, but for all
women, for many health issues.

Because there are now two full-time
outreach workers for women, and
because my job is now pulling me in
new directions, I will no longer be
coming to the Women's Centre on a
regular schedule. I'll still be at WISH
on Thursday nights, and I'll still be on
the Hiring and Evaluation Committee
here (which means I can still visit!).

I want to thank everyone here who
made me feel so welcome. I have
many good times here, and felt
honored to get to know many women
here. Many good wishes to you all,
and look forward to seeing you when
I'm back and the Centre!



HOPE

Little by little
I saw it
with my own eyes
like a little candle light
like a little sunrise,
little by little
you my sweetheart
stood up...
went to the other end
to the top
to the edge
right in it
nothing could stop you
no way
right there
right now
right then\go on...
little by little
is feeling up
you my sweetheart
have got it, don't let go
It's happening
like a storm, thunder a hurricane
have got it! go on!
You are wrapped with it
It's yours, it's you!
Little by little

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

44 East Cordova St., Vancouver

681 - 8480

MARCH 1998

**LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30**

SUN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
1 CENTRE OPEN 10:30 1:00 Video	2 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	3 1:00 Internet 1:30 Walls of Change 5:00 Battered Women Support Services	4 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:00 Community Nurse - Diabetes 1:00 Fort Langley 5:00 Alcohol and Drug Support Group	5 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Tile painting 5:00 Women Surviving Together	6 10:30 Sewing and Alterations 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 3:30 Stretch and walk	7 International Women's Day 10:00 Breaky 12:00 March
8 CENTRE OPEN 10:30 1:00 Video 5:00 Vol. meeting	9 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	10 1:00 Internet 1:30 Walls of Change 2:30 Volunteers only meeting 5:00 BWSS	11 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:00 Community Nurse 1:30 Anger Management Workshop 5:00 A + D Group 7:00 Theatre Outing - Fear Not	12 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Make stuff out of clay 5:00 WST	13 10:30 S + A 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 3:30 Stretch and walk 5:00 Anti-violence discussion Grp.	14 11:00 Very,very Basic Computers for everyone
15 CENTRE OPEN 10:30 1:00 Video	16 10:00 New Volunteer Orientation 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:30 Beading	17 1:00 Internet 1:30 Walls of Change 5:00 BWSS	18 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:00 Community Nurse - TB Information 2:00 Science World + Omnimax 5:00 A + D Group	19 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Ceramic Painting 5:00 WST	20 10:30 S + A 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 3:30 Stretch and walk	21 11:00 Very,very Basic Computers for everyone
22 CENTRE OPEN 10:30 1:00 Video 5:00 Vol. meeting	23 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	24 1:00 Internet 1:30 Walls of Change 2:00 Bowling 5:00 BWSS	25 CHEQUE DAY Centre Closed for Self-evaluation SORRY	26 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Ceramic Painting 5:00 WST	27 10:30 S + A 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 3:30 Stretch and walk 5:00 Anti-violence discussion Grp	28
29 CENTRE OPEN 10:30 1:00 Video	30 10:30 Stretch and walk 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	31 1:00 Internet 1:30 Walls of Change 5:00 BWSS	CENTRE HOURS Mon. 10:30-5 Thrs. 10:30-5 Tues. 11:30-5 Fri. 10:30-5 Weds. 10:30-5 Sun. 10:30 - 5			

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

Learning Group - Every Monday, doors close at 5:15. Exploring different ways of Learning.

Internet - Every Tuesday from 1:00 - 3:00 for women to learn to surf the net or access to the net for experienced surfers.

Battered Women Support Services on Tuesday nights from 5 - 8:30, support for women affected by violence in their lives.

The Nurse Community Nurse - is in every Wednesday from 1:00. Watch out for health tips and information.

Alcohol and Drug Support Group - Wednesday from 5:00 - 8:00, do you have or had a drug and/or alcohol problem. This may be the place to get some support, no preaching or guilt trips.

Law Student - PLEASE CHECK THE SCHEDULE.

Women's Voice - Thurs. 1:30. Let us know what you think about the Centre. Your opinions and ideas are needed.

Women Surviving Together - Thurs. 5:00 - 8:00 Healing Circle and support group for women.

Raffles - Fridays at 1:30 or 2:00. Items which are not clothing items that have been donated to the Centre are raffled.

Anti-Violence Discussion Group - Every other Friday night. Gathering to share stories and strategies to keep ourselves safe.

CRAFTY WORKSHOPS - Materials provided.

Beading with Leona - Every Monday, 1:30 pm. Learn how to bead, expand your skills or just share ideas.

Walls of Change - Tuesday from 1:030 - 4:30. A community project to design and paint murals to represent our neighborhood.

Ceramic and Tile Painting - Every Thursday, 2:00. Make something that you can use everyday or give to a friend.

Fabric Arts with Freeda - Every Friday morning, 10:30. Learn to do your own sewing and alterations and also to knit and crochet.

OUTINGS - Watch the Outing Board for RUSH tickets.

Wed. Mar. 4 at 1:00 - A visit to the historic city of Fort Langely one of the oldest townships in the Valley.

Wed. Mar. 11 at 7:00 - Arts Club Revue Stage for a presentation of Fear Not.

Wed. Mar. 18 at 2:00 - Another visit to Science World and The Ominimax to see a movie about Mount Everest.

Tues. Mar. 24 at 2:00 - Bowling at the Commodore Lanes on Granville, there are pool tables there too.

Sign up sheets are put up at the beginning of the month, even though there is a waiting list chances are there will be space available.

NOTE: Sometimes things get canceled or set up on another day make sure to check "Update sheet" on the front chalk board. The Activities Board will also have information on other events.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Volunteer Meeting

Jan. 31, 1998

Beverly N., Megan R., Dawn C., Ilona F., Helen G., Candace S., Nancy M., Karen A., Bunsy J., Sheila B., Mable C., Freeda E., Leona R., Lorenda M., Cynthia L.

Regarding the Volunteer Store. Dawn expressed some concerns, she has been entrusted to take care of the responsibility and she feels that she is being undermined by the Volunteer Coordinator and other volunteers. The incident happened on Thurs. Jan. 29 when Cynthia took it upon herself to count up the hours and administer the Volunteer Store. It was agreed that hours will be counted only on the 15th of the month and the end of the month, regardless of what day the month ends on. We have to adhere to these rules or else it will all fall apart. In this situation Dawn was compromised in her ability to do her job and it appeared as if she was not informed of the situation. Cynthia apologized for the mistake, she will be more vigilant in following the guidelines. Volunteers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the rules and not ask for special privileges, plan for the future. The store hours are **ABSOLUTELY** - Monday and Thursday from 2 - 5. Hours are tallied on the 15th or the end of the month. Be strong Cynthia say NO. New volunteer hours recording procedure. There are new forms to fill for each volunteer doing volunteer work. Volunteers are asked to complete these forms, the guidelines are available at the

front desk. The forms are also available at the front desk. This is very important your hours will not be recorded if you do not fill one of these forms. This applies for kitchen volunteers too. If you have any questions please speak to Cynthia. Ooh, we miss our Friday nights, even though not very many women attended those who did really depended on it.

Women are still talking about it. Could we have something like that back, it would be great. Possibly Sunday nights, twice a month.

Some women are very upset at ALL the changes happening at the Centre, positive change is good but sometimes it feels like it is moving too fast. There is lack of communication. Would it be possible for the changes to be posted at the front desk and included in the newsletter?

The numbers system for the Raffle seems to work very well, one person hands out the numbers and women have to get their numbers before the Raffle starts, no numbers given out after the Raffle starts. Staff really need to help volunteers out to make sure everyone is seated and volunteers have been called down for trying to operate the Raffle in an organized manner.



Some volunteers are upset about being signed up for their hours on a regular day every week. Some volunteers really like this and it helps the Coordinator if she knows that a reliable volunteer is coming in, women who have consistently miss their shifts are asked not to sign up in advance. Volunteers should be consulted before they are signed up for any regular days.

There are laundry and shower procedural changes, please post the rules in the Centre and include the new rules in the Centre Guidelines. Kitchen staff should complete their laundry by 10:30. And would it be possible to have a half door going back into that area as sometimes there are so many women back there it gets chaotic.

There have been reports of volunteers arguing among themselves about who is working when. Some volunteers on Incentive Programs do not do their hours until the end of the month and then there may not be many hours available. To not bully or intimidate volunteers who have signed on for shifts. Communicate respectfully and you may get what you want. If you really need hours speak to the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers who bully and argue are not welcome here. We should put up a sign daily to list who is coming in for that day, the floorworker or volunteer coordinator should pass this information to the volunteers working that day. NO FIXING or DRUGGING in the washrooms, the volunteer doing the laundry and showers should keep an eye on those using the Centre for that stuff and inform a staff member. Also for

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women who use the bathroom for more than 5 minutes. And washroom should be kept clean and supplied with soap and towelettes.

The clothing room is particularly frustrating. Women just do not want to follow the rules even though they are aware of them. They are constantly asking where they are on the list, asking other women to pass them stuff and harassing the volunteer. Women are even complaining about other women. One woman is particularly disruptive, she even tries to steal raffle stuff. She should be warned and if her behavior persists she should be barred from the clothing room. The Chinese women need to sit down and wait for their names to be called. Would it be possible to have big numbers? Women are given one number and the corresponding number will be displayed on the wall so women will know what numbers are up and won't ask anymore. Could Wendy translate the clothing room policy in Chinese so that they will be informed too.

Cynthia informed the volunteer group that she is requesting a leave of absence from the Centre starting April 1st.





The minutes from the meeting on Friday, Mar. 6 volunteers only meeting is not available and the minutes from the meeting on Tuesday, Mar. 17 is available at the front desk - too long to include.

Recently I have met informally with individual Centre members and Staff members to inquire about personal thoughts on the volunteer program. All of the staff I spoke to told me that the Centre would not be able to operate fully without volunteers. All of the staff really depend on the volunteers for support. It

would be impossible for them to do their jobs helping women without the volunteers. Women of the Centre had issues with individual volunteers but in general the feeling is that volunteers work very hard. One woman in particular expressed how much volunteers had helped her in times of emotional crisis just being here at the Centre. The volunteers have been very helpful and welcoming. Most of the women really respect and trust the volunteers.

It was great to hear. I am very proud of you volunteers. Keep up the good work.

This month there will be two meetings with the coordinator, meals included. There is one meeting for volunteers only on Tuesday, Mar. 10 at 2:30. Also do not forget about the computer workshops.

VOLUNTEER DATES TO REMEMBER	
Tues. Mar. 10	2:30
Meeting of volunteers - We will meet at the Centre at 2:30	
Sat. Mar. 14	11:00
Basic Computer workshop	
Sat. Mar 14	3:00
Volunteer meeting and meal with Coordinator	
Sun. Mar 15	10:00
New Volunteer Orientation	
Sat. Mar. 21	11:00
Basic Computer workshop	
Sun. Mar. 22	5:00
Volunteer meeting and meal with Coordinator	

Life is Beautiful

When I'm happy
everything seems colourful,
yet when I'm sad
everything seems dull,
For that I do things
that will make me happy,
and deal with the right people.
Life is beautiful.



T.G.

Friends for a lifetime

A lifetime of love
in a hug and a smile
A reason to visit and stay awhile
The strength of a bond that's destined
to last
The joys of a present
The warmth of the past
These are treasures a fortunate few
are lucky to cherish
All their lives through
These are the blessings
on which we depend
For these are the gifts
of a very best friend

I feel like a little wilted flower ,
whose life has been trampled on and
lost it's power...

I need nourishment to grow,
Like sunshine from friends who keep
my heart aglow.

I also need to absorb my past
experiences, thoughts, of now and
then,

And hopefully I don't have to go
through these relapses,
once, twice, trice...again

I guess that's the reason why I'm sorta
falling apart,
oh well.

But, most of all I want to bloom out the
goodness of my heart.

So, will you pick me up and give me
some loving care?

Because if you feel like I do, I think
We'll make a damn good pair.

Doris Big John

Does anyone care?



NEW TO THE CENTRE

Updates on workshops, policy and procedures.

VERY, VERY BASIC COMPUTERS

SATURDAY, MAR. 14 + 21

11:00 - 2:00

Snacks and refreshments
included

Penny Goldsmith an experienced public educator and computer trainer has committed her time and energy to develop a computer training program for the Centre. These are self contained workshops where women can learn from the very beginning. She will be assisted by volunteers who will be helping women to overcome the fears of using technology.

The purpose of these workshops is for women to develop confidence and competence on the computer so that they may go on to taking more advance classes offered through out the city.

These classes are open to everyone, even if you have some computer skill and would like to practise and build on those skills

COMPUTERS ARE OUR FRIENDS

WALK AND STRECH WITH EILEEN

Mon. and Wed.

at 10:30

Friday at 3:30

Weather permitting

We will be meeting here at the Centre. There will be some basic stretching and relaxation excercises to prepare for our walk. There are actually some very nice areas in our neighbourhood which we will visit, such as, Crab Park and The Chinese Gardens. During the walks we will stop to do other excercises.

This is a way to relax and improve our health.

