

D.E.W. DROP IN

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN DO DROP IN

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
October 1999 Free



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT **Launching our Skills Development Project!**

Why are we changing our Volunteer Program to a Skills Development Project? As women participate regularly as a volunteer in the Centre, they gain experience and skills in different volunteer positions. They become important contributors to their community. They attend First Aid and FoodSafe trainings, Communications and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention workshops. Gradually, they become less socially isolated and develop greater self-esteem. So why not call it a Skills Development Project when the volunteers do way more than volunteering in the Centre! Look for exciting changes as we begin to move towards the direction of a Skills Development Project.

Program Volunteer HOT NEWS

Thank you to the following volunteers for helping us out with this issue:
Arlene, Betty, Bonnie, Candace, Corrine, Selina, Sharon and Wendy

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Congratulations to Rose Grose, Sabine Turo, Louise Lagimodiere, Debra Leo, Mary Saxie, Vera Bernard and Louise McMillan for getting their FoodSafe Level 1 certificates. Way to go!!!

If you are making crafts and artwork, keep in mind the crafts fair coming up in November. You can sell your crafts at these fairs. More information will be coming.

October 12 Tuesday at 2pm	Volunteers Only meeting at Central Residence
October 17 Sunday at 5pm	Volunteer Orientation
October 24 Sunday at 5pm	Volunteer Meeting

A Brief Chat with Bonnie, Corrine and Sharon.

Bonnie, who is famous for her bannock and perogies has been volunteering in the Women's Centre for years. She even managed to persuade her daughter, Corrine and her granddaughter, Sharon to be part of the Volunteer Team.

When I ask Bonnie why she works here, this is what she said,

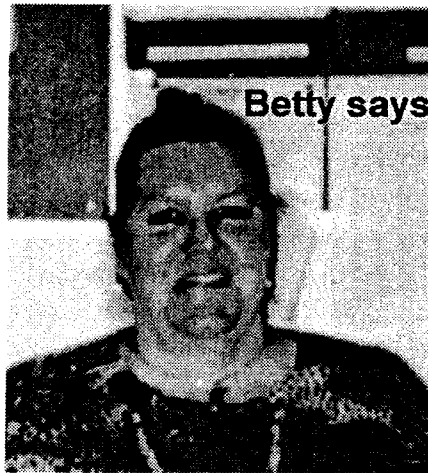
"I used to work her before. I like to help other woman. Working here keeps me away from drinking. I also like it because my daughter and granddaughter are here and we like working together. I like the staff as well." Corrine added, "It keeps me away from the bars, keeps a smile on my face. The Centre stays clean when we all volunteer here." Sharon has similar feelings about volunteering in the Centre, "It's like visiting with my family when I work here."

During the week, you can always see Bonnie helping women in the Clothing Room, Corrine keeping our Centre clean as a Floorworker and Sharon as our friendly and approachable Front Desk Receptionist.

**WHAT'S UP FOR
VOLUNTEERS**

What does Betty has to say about being a Volunteer?

I like helping women. Being a volunteer helps me from being depressed. It gives me something to do so that I don't go into depression.



Value
Others
Love
Understanding
Nurturing
Teaching
Each other
Everyday
Right On

Words from Selina Barton

Volunteering has been quite the experience, not only do we get to meet women from all walks of life, but also to learn new and different skills. Interacting on a daily basis develops communication skills in many levels. There are the situations that require sensitivity and understanding. It is very challenging. Some days may be busier than others and we have to work under a lot of pressure and keep the energy positive. What we need is to maintain good morale.



Wendy Chew is one of our dedicated Bingo Volunteers and on some days you can see her training as a Front Desk Receptionist. She also translates our monthly calendar in the newsletter into Chinese for the Chinese elderly women in the Centre. One morning, she talked to a few Chinese women about why they come to the Centre and they told her that the atmosphere of the Women's Centre brings them joy and happiness. They also come to meet their friends and have a bite to eat. You can see the Chinese elderly women helping the Kitchen staff with wrapping forks and knives, as well as passing the
3 cutlery out during busy lunch hours.

NEWS ABOUT THE GOVERNMENTS PLAN FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

On September 21, Alix and I went to a meeting at SFU, Harbour Center where several representatives from the provincial government presented the DRAFT VANCOUVER AGREEMENT. This is a five-year agreement between the Federal, Provincial and City governments to "promote and support sustainable economic, social and community development". It is modelled on a similar agreement in Winnipeg, and will focus first on the Downtown Eastside. Copies of the DRAFT VANCOUVER AGREEMENT are available at the Carnegie Center. The agreement described priorities that the governments want to focus on in the neighbourhood. These are Community Health and Safety, Economic and Social Development, and Community Capacity Building-there is some description of what these government representatives mean by these terms, but there are few specifics.

A number of questions and concerns came up about the DRAFT agreement:



-why was this meeting not held in the Downtown Eastside?

-why were only community workers invited and not community residents?

-who will be invited to participate in the community consultation process that these governments are planning?

-why were no community residents involved in drafting the agreement with these three levels of government

-why are there no community residents included in this process at the decision-making level?

-why is there no specific funding attached to this agreement?

-why, when community residents and workers already have specific ideas about how to address the problems on the Downtown Eastside, i.e. a women's holistic healing center, is this idea not included in the agreement?

-why is there no specific mention of Aboriginal issues in the agreement, when the large proportion of residents on the Downtown Eastside are Aboriginal?

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The government representatives that are responsible for the DRAFT VANCOUVER AGREEMENT are the following:

Hedy Fry (Federal MP & Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women)
666-0135

Jenny Kwan (Minister of Women's Equality)
253-7905

Philip Owen (Mayor)
873-7621



mad as hell
and won't take
it anymore

If you have questions, comments or would like to see a copy of the DRAFT VANCOUVER AGREEMENT, please speak to Marg Scott. It is important to speak out sequences of decisions that you had no part of, later.

DEWC HARVEST DINNER

Friday October 15th

Tickets will be available as of Wednesday October 6th

There will be 3 seatings

12:00, 1:00 and 2:00

You do not need a ticket to join us for a meal but you may have to wait until those with tickets have been seated.

Let's celebrate together!

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE
44 East Cordova St., Vancouver
681 - 8480
OCTOBER 1999

LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30

SUN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">CENTRE HOURS</div> Sun. 12 - 5 Mon. 10 - 5 Tues. 11 - 5					1 10:30 Sewing and Alterations 2:00 Video 5:00 Anti-violence discussion Group	2 1:30 Dreamcatchers
3 1:00 Video 4:00 Pie Making please sign up	4 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	5 2:00 Swimming 5:00 Battered Women Support Services	6 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Ed.	7 10:30 Street Nurse 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Ceramics 5:00 WST	8 10:30 S + A 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 5:00 A-V Group	9 1:30 Dreamcatchers
10 1:00 Video	11 Stat Holiday Centre Open 12:00 - 4:30	12 1:00 Light House Park 5:00 BWSS	13 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Ed.	14 10:30 Street Nurse 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Ceramic Painting 5:00 WST	15 Harvest Dinner 12:00 tickets available Oct 1st - 10th	16 1:30 Dreamcatchers
17 1:00 Video	18 1:30 Beading 5:00 Aboriginal Women's Health	19 2:00 Aquarium 5:00 BWSS	20 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Ed.	21 10:30 Street Nurse 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Ceramic Painting 5:00 WST	22 10:30 S + A 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 5:00 A-V Group	23 1:30 Dreamcatchers
24 1:00 Video	25 1:00 Centre Meeting 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	26 1:00 Walk in Burns Bog 5:00 BWSS	27 Cheque Day Centre Closed	28 10:30 Street Nurse 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Ceramic Painting 5:00 WST	29 10:30 S + A 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Video 5:00 A-V Group	30 1:30 Dreamcatchers 5:00 Halloween Party
31 1:00 Video						

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

Learning Group - Every Monday, doors close at 5:15. Exploring different ways of Learning with elder, Bernice Hammersmith.
Battered Women Support Services on Tuesday nights from 5 - 8:30, support for women affected by violence in their lives.
The Street Nurse is here every Wednesday from 10:30 - 12:00 to give you information on all kinds of health issues.
Popular Education Group - Wednesday from 5:00 - 8:00, Share skills and strategies to make changes for yourself. Work on concrete projects for social change.
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 - Every other Fridays at 1:30 or 2:00 depending on availability, 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.
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.
Dreamcatchers with Beverly or Mable, every Saturday at 1:30. Expand your skills and share stories with other women.

OUTINGS - Watch the Outing Board for RUSH tickets

October 5th at 2:00 swimming at the Eileen Daly Pool in Burnaby a beautiful warm water pool with a giant slide.
 October 12th at 1:00 a walking trip to Light House Park, there are lots of trails or you can just sit by the water to enjoy the scenery.
 October 19th at 2:00 another trip to the Aquarium to catch those exhibits that you missed last time, like the whale show and Cynthia promises not to forget to pick you up this time.
 October 26th at 1:00, experience the healing qualities of walking on the bogs. We will be going to the Burns Bog located on Marine Dr.

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

NEWS FROM THE ADVOCATES

Fees to replace a lost/stolen Disability Bus Pass have increased:

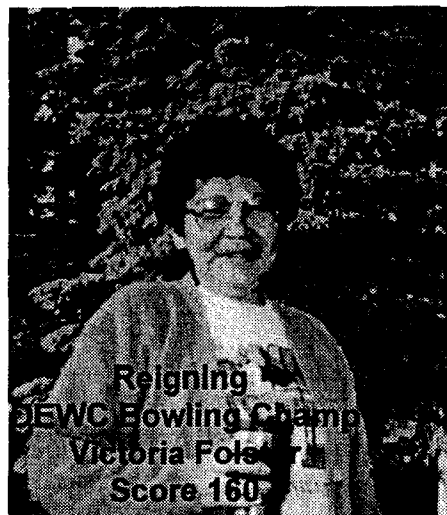
When you receive disability benefits, Level II (or CPP) you can apply for a yearly bus pass which costs \$45.00. The fee to replace a lost or stolen bus pass has increased from \$5.00 to \$10.00 for the first time replacement, \$20 for the second time replacement and \$50.00 for replacement for a third time or more.

Parents Advocacy Program:

A Parents Advocacy Program is now available to help you deal with your child's school. Trained parent advocates can assist you in defining your concerns, access information and resources, and communicating with your child's school. To speak with a parent advocate call 713-6000 and leave a message in the voice mailbox number 2090.

Popular Education Group:

The Pop Education group which runs on Wednesday night has been busy developing lots of ideas including : organizing a monthly group grocery shop and delivery; organizing a Halloween Party for women and children; and organizing an event to recognize Women's History Month. If you would like to be involved in organizing these events or have ideas of your own – check out the Popular Education Group on Wednesday evenings.



What would YOU like to hear about?

If you have ideas or suggestions on what you would like the advocates to write about in this section – let us know by dropping us a note in our files or speaking directly to Alice or Christine - your helpful advocates.

UPDATE OF THE 'BARRIERS' RESEARCH

A partnership with LDBCVC and UBC

The Information Session for the Identifying Barriers to Women's Participation Research Project, held on September 7th at DEWC, was a great success. Over 25 women attended, Centre members and

community members gathered to find out more about the project and to provide support for the goals of the project. There was some confusion about the intent of the project. Here is some clarification;

The project received \$5,000 from UBC to hire 2 researchers, one from the DTES and one from UBC, to conduct the inquiries. Four women volunteered their time and energy to be on the Advisory Committee, they are Faye, Tomorrow, Mable and Donna. The Advisory Committee, 4 from DEWC, 2 from UBC and 2 from the Learning Disabilities of BC Vancouver Chapter met on September to identify some of the issues and begin the first step by defining the criteria for hiring the researchers. The Advisory Committee will be guiding the principles of the project. The coordinators, Deborah Butler, Sandra Geaphardt and Cynthia Low will be working in partnership on this project.

This project is an inquiry into how to design programs for women in the DTES. There are no courses, programs or money offered for classes at this time. The information gathered would be used to create structures and programs that would better serve women in the DTES.

On September the 22nd there was a meeting of the Advisory Committee. Joanne and Tomorrow from the Centre attended the meeting in addition to the coordinators and 6 other women from

community groups interested in helping with this project. We discussed the role of the Advisory Committee, being one of guidance and a resource base for the project. The terms of reference were reviewed

and the business of the hiring of the co-investigators was initiated. They should be in place by the end of the month, once that is finalized the project will take 4-6 months. Everyone is excited about the project and believes that this will lead to positive changes for women in the area. Stay tuned for more information. There will be a file in the Centre with the information about the project, located on the door of Office E. If you have concerns, comments or would like to get more information please speak to Cynthia or Tomorrow or leave a note for the Advisory Committee. Please let your friends know about the project and ask them to get involved. It is so important that women's needs are heard.

Volunteers Scrapbook



A QUESTION FOR ALL MEMBERS.

The Centre will be co-sponsoring a Classical music concert with the UBC Chan Centre. La Pieta, women's Chamber Ensemble from Montreal would like to give a performance for women in the DTES. The question is would the DEWC members like to invite the community to join us or to have it as a women's only event. This would be an opportunity to play host to our friends and family in the neighbourhood.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS DISCUSSION PLEASE COME TO MEETING ON MONDAY OCTOBER 25TH AT LUNCH TIME.

When we ask the women to help us with saying thanks to the Vancouver Foundation for giving us funding to open the Centre during weekends, our Volunteer, Candace Szmedli, gave us an absolutely beautifully-written open letter to the Vancouver Foundation. Here is a paragraph from the letter:

The women at the Centre, including both Staff and Volunteers would like to extend our deepest and the women and men at Foundation for your helping to keep and continue, once again a women, who obviously we say about a Society, humanity-itself, if such Since when does assault, mental abuse, homelessness, drug addiction and its only occur at defined the Week! As many of unfortunately, they can you once again, for helping to keep the weekends open. Sincerely, Candace.



sincerest thanks to both the Vancouver benevolent funding in maintain, run and safe-haven, for those need it! For what could or for that matter, places, did not exist! trauma, rape, physical disease and illness, starvation, cleanliness, associated problems, times, such as during us well know, occur at anytime! Thank

L O G O C O N T E S T

Vancouver Aboriginal Restorative Justice Program

Seeking out all Northwest Coast style artists to enter our Logo Contest. The logo should represent a healing and a community approach to justice which our program represents.

\$400 PRIZE

Deadline October 25, 1999
For more information call 251-4844

WHAT DO VOLUNTEERS DO IN THE CENTRE?

KITCHEN HELPERS

Food preparation, cleaning up the Kitchen area and serving food, assists Kitchen staff in daily operations of the Kitchen.

CLOTHING ROOM ATTENDANT

Sorting out donations, keeping the Clothing room clean and handing out clothes for women. Keeping peace and order in the clothing room.

RAFFLE ORGANIZER

Sorting out donations and organizing the Raffle. Conducting the raffle and dealing with issues related to the Raffle.

FLOORWORKER

Cleaning up the Floor area and washrooms, helps the Staff Floorworker with crisis intervention and conflict resolution.

FRONT DESK RECEPTIONIST

Greeting women when they first come in, answering the phones, taking down messages, handing out rolling papers and pads.

BINGO VOLUNTEER

Attends weekly shift at Planet Bingo, verifying cash and stock, doing payouts and cleaning the ashtrays.

SPECIAL EVENT VOLUNTEER

Helping out at Christmas Dinner and special events, fund-raising, public promotion of events, camping and programming.

WORKSHOP VOLUNTEER

Serves dinner for evening groups and general clean-up. Offers workshops and services for women in the Center.

These are the basic job descriptions for our volunteers, in reality volunteers do much much more than just what they are expected to in their volunteer work. Of course there may be some problems, but that is all the process of learning and growing - I hope. Staff depend on volunteers for many things, they are the eyes and the ears of the Centre. We are often too busy to be able to notice small details, volunteers bring issues to the attention of the staff which helps strengthen the organization. As the programmer, I feel grateful and honored to work with the volunteers, without them I would not be able to do my job very well and the Centre would not have the quality and quantity of programs we currently offer. From the bottom of my heart thank you and keep up the great work.

Cynthia Low