

D.E.W. DROP IN

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN DO DROP IN

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

JULY 2000

FREE

WELCOME TO THE NEW

2000 - 2001 Board of Directors

CYNTHIA LOW

DAISY KLER

LAUREN HOWES

JO-ANNE ROSS

JESSE (JAN) ABEL

VIOLA THOMAS

MARIE BAKER

SUSAN DUGGAN

GINA GASONGI SIMON

CARA MOODY

BENITA BUNJUN

JENNIFER ENGLAND

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

LEARNING GROUP

-MONDAY, 5PM

EXPLORING DIFFERENT WAYS OF LEARNING WITH FIRST NATIONS ELDER.

BATTERED WOMEN SUPPORT SERVICES

-TUESDAY, 5PM

SUPPORT FOR WOMEN AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE.

BWSS resumes AUG 25

SHIATSU MESSAGES AND REFLEXOLOGY

-TUESDAY, 11AM

FIRST COME FIRST MASSAGED. GET PAMPERED AND FEEL ENERGIZED.

POPULAR EDUCATION GROUP – WEDNESDAY, 5PM

WOMEN'S VOICE

-THURSDAY, 1:30 PM

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE CENTRE. YOUR OPINIONS AND IDEAS ARE NEEDED.

WOMEN SURVIVING TOGETHER

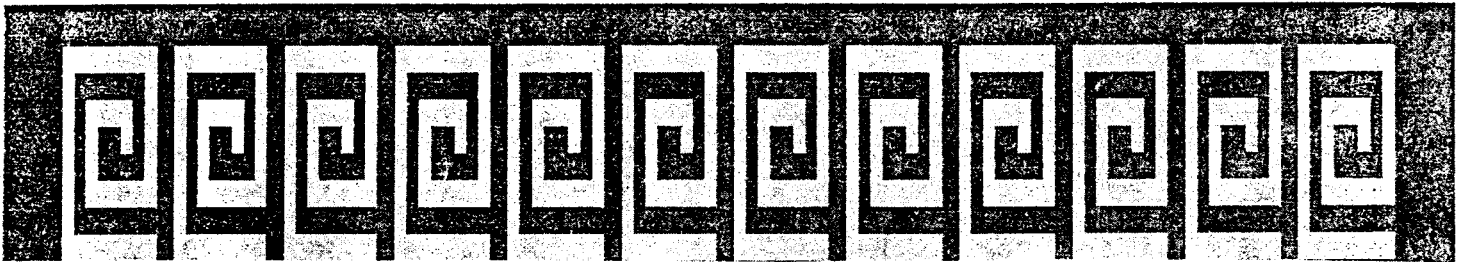
-THURSDAY, 5PM

HEALING CIRCLE AND SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN. LED BY ELDER.

ANTI-VIOLENCE DISCUSSION GROUP

-FRIDAY, 5PM

GATHERING TO SHARE STORIES AND STRATEGIES TO KEEP OURSELVES SAFE.



CRAFTY WORKSHOPS

BEADING WITH LEONA

-MONDAY, 1:30 PM.

LEARN HOW TO BEAD, EXPAND YOUR SKILLS OR JUST SHARE IDEAS.

FABRIC ARTS WITH FREEDA

-FRIDAY, 10:30 AM.

LEARN TO DO YOUR OWN SEWING AND ALTERATIONS.

DREAMCATCHERS THURSDAY week of cheque day - Wednesday

LEARN DIFFERENT STYLES OR WORK ON YOUR OWN PROJECTS.

OUTINGS

-TUES, LEAVE AT DIFFERENT TIMES DEPENDING ON THE OUTING. SIGN UP SHEETS ARE POSTED ON 1ST OF EACH MONTH. EVEN THOUGH THERE IS A WAITING LIST CHANCES ARE THERE WILL BE SPACE AVAILABLE.

Life

Words Spoken
hearts broken

A tear flows
life grows

You came in
Life will begin

written by:

Marie Keyes Papamataho

OH GREAT SPIRIT

Oh Great Spirit,
These four things
I ask of thee

First take away my eyes,
So that I can't see
Those evil looks they give me.

Second take away my ears
So I can't hear
All those nasty things they say to me.

Thirdly take away my voice,
So I can't say nasty things back,
When they make me angry,
As they do.....

Author , Bryan Walter Squires

July 6 , 1949
May 14 , 2000

This man was beaten and cast out of his community because
His choice of mates wasn't the same as those in his hometown.
The sad truth is he would still be alive if he hid the fact that his
Choice of mates were the same as those around him.
If the creator meant for us to stay with the same as everyone else
Then we would all be one color , one set of beliefs , and so boring.
This poem is unfinished because this man chose to end his life
Rather than face the community members that beat him wherever
And whenever they saw him. He knew at an early age that his choice
Was not the same as everyone around him. Still he tried to get

Along with those around him and be accepted for the person that
He was. I say was because on May 14,2000 his final choice was to
End his life with a bullet.
Such a sad way to exist in a world that has gone through so much
Change for the better. Yet still , those that prefer their own sex
Are no accepted as normal because there are people out there
Who think they are superior to others because they are "normal".
I'd rather walk beside a person to give them strength than stand
Beside a person who thinks the world should be run his way and
No other way. More power to choice, because my choice is friendship .

Women, Art & Spirituality

Explore your spirituality through
playing with art materials at

D.A.M.S.

167 West Pender St.

*Mondays, 12:30 to 3:30 pm
July 10th to August 14th*

Light lunch included

For more information

Call Dean or Katrina

at 687-5454

Women's Centre BBQ – did not go as we expected and we wanted to explain. When we initially organized the BBQ for June 21 (National Aboriginal Day) we talked about doing it in conjunction with the Elders who would be breaking the fast that day as we did not want it to happen at the same time. We were told that they would be breaking the fast at the Aboriginal Friendship Centre at 4:00pm so we thought we would just go ahead with our BBQ at Crab Park. On the day of the BBQ we got a phone asking us why we were having the BBQ at the same time as the Elders were breaking their fast. As we did not want that to happen we agreed to move our BBQ over the Oppenheimer Park and join with the breaking of the fast. Apparently, the plans with the Aboriginal Friendship Centre had changed but we did not find out about that.

This, unfortunately, did not work out too well. There was a huge amount of people, and lots of women were not able to be served food. As well, none of the activities we had planned happened as all energy went to feeding approximately eight hundred people. Although we were happy to contribute to the breaking of the fast we realize women did not get the BBQ that they expected. We will then, be organizing another Summer BBQ with food and activities for women and children later in the summer.

Women's Centre Outings – I have had the opportunity to take women on various outings which I really like to do. It is nice to get out of the Centre with women in a more relaxed environment. However, it becomes tiring and difficult to be complained at about small details such as what food is or is not available,

what time we leave or where we go. The Women's Centre is really fortunate to have a van available so outings become part of the regular schedule. However, the outings are not going to be exactly what each woman wants. They are a chance to get out of the Downtown Eastside for an enjoyable, relaxed afternoon. If women have ideas or suggestions or want to assist in planning the outings to reflect more of what they want they are more than welcome to do so – come speak to me. If not, I am asking women to be less critical of the details and just enjoy the afternoon so everyone can have a good time.

CREATIVE WOMEN

Metis performer and playwright Marie Clements is interested in having a creative writing group on Thursday evenings here at the Women's Centre. Marie will be coming to the centre on Thursday July 6, 2000 at 6:00 PM to offer her talents to women interested in creative writing. If there is a creative writer hiding within you, please plan to attend. If there is enough interest this could be a regularly scheduled evening group.

Advocacy News
From Alice

Welfare Updates

Outstanding Warrants – the welfare rule that required you to waive in outstanding warrants (and thus plead guilty) or you could not get welfare has been struck down by the BC Supreme Court. The Court ruled that the regulation was not authorized by the Act; that the regulation involved a value judgement about who is “deserving or undeserving” of welfare instead of being based on who is “in need”.

It is too early to know what the government will do now. They may accept the decision, they may appeal the decision or they may change the Act to make persons with outstanding warrants ineligible (which of course, could then be challenged in Court).

If you are in the process of dealing with waived in charges you still have to attend criminal court as ordered. If you do not, a warrant could be issued. You do have the option of telling the court that you do not intend to plead guilty in which case the charge would be sent back to the province it came from. (This could impact welfare eligibility in the future if the decision is appealed or the Act changed) Be sure to talk with a criminal lawyer first. (information taken from the Long Haul)

HEP C Compensation – welfare has included the (Hepatitis C Settlement Agreement) Compensation to individuals infected with the Hepatitis C Virus to the list of exempt income. This means that if you receive compensation under this agreement it will not be deducted from your welfare payments;

except any payments for loss of earned income or loss of support payments to dependants.

Rate Increases - welfare rates will increase by 2% effective August 1, 2000. You will see the increase on the cheque you receive at the end of July. The increase is totally insufficient and does not even bring welfare rates back to where they were before being reduced. A single employable will only see a \$10.00 increase. The government has stated that this is an increase to support allowance, not shelter. Look out for landlords increasing rents by \$10.00 per month. In order for a landlord to increase rents they must give 3 months written notice to each tenant. If the tenant disputes the increase the landlord must supply a second form to explain the reason for the increase. If you have been told that your rent is going to be increased, talk to an advocate right away. (Information taken from DERA)

FOR ALL WOMEN

As the Volunteer Coordinator, I receive complaints about volunteers regularly and complaints about Asian women using the Centre. It is time to clear up some of these issues.

"The Asian women are taking all the free food!"

Let me clarify this situation. It is true that there are one or two Asian women who have been taking a lot of bread that was put out on the tables. I have approached the two Asian women and asked them not to do that again. But it is NOT TRUE that ALL Asian women do that. This kind of stereotyping would not be tolerated in the Women's Centre.

"There are too many Asian women who come to Christmas dinners or Harvest dinners. They never use the Centre before. Why are they coming to our dinners?"

First of all, there is a population of elderly Asian women in the Downtown Eastside. Most of them live by themselves in rooms above the grocery stores in Chinatown. A lot of them are in their seventies, eighties or even nineties! They are the elders in the Chinese community. I think we need to ask ourselves what kind of services do the Women's Centre offer to these women before we say they don't use our services. We do not have any language interpreters and as a matter of fact, I think when I am eighty, I would love to have congee (a kind of rice broth that is common in

China). We always have enough food at the big dinners. Maybe we can try harder to understand each other and have respect for the elders.

"There is too much gossiping among volunteers about women in the Centre and about other volunteers."

I have addressed this issue with volunteers at different Volunteer Meetings. I explained to them the importance of working as a team and not to "badmouth" women. We try very hard to focus on giving each other basic respect, in the work we do and the people we are. At the same time, I also know that I am not always there when the gossiping happens. I would appreciate that you come directly to me and tell me exactly what happens.

"Some volunteers get all the shifts!"

I have heard that a certain volunteer always seems to get shifts. Allow me to explain how shifts are scheduled. Shifts are signed up at last month's Volunteer Meeting. For example, July's shifts are signed up at the June Volunteer Meeting. All volunteers can sign up a maximum of two shifts per week. There is a grace period of 15 minutes for volunteers to show up for their shifts. If a volunteer does not show up, the shift is up for grabs. I usually prefer giving it to a volunteer who needs the hours. But I am not in on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, so I rely on the volunteers themselves to be fair players on the volunteer team. It might look like that some volunteers always get the shifts, but

the reality is sometimes they are the only ones who are around. I hope the members would understand our situation.

"What happened to the Clothing Room?"

Since the women asked for a more private space for counseling, the Clothing Room became Reta's office. We are currently in the process of hiring a Stopping the Violence Counselor. She will also share Reta's office. That is why the Clothing Room got moved next to the Women's Washroom. I know this is not the best system but we have to work with what we've got. Hopefully, when we move to the new building, we'll have a better system.

"Why do the volunteers have first dips into the donations?"

Clothing Room Volunteers can get 10 items (just like everyone else) since they are the ones who sort the clothing items. I truly believe that is the least we can give them as volunteers of the Centre. The same goes with Kitchen Volunteers. They can get food donations. But bear in mind that volunteers who are not on shift are not supposed to put stuff aside for themselves. So, if it happens, you need to let me know, verbally or drop me a note in my folder. Volunteers work very hard to keep the Centre open and your meals cooked. If you would like the goodies, you can apply to become a volunteer as well.

"Laundry is confusing! "

Laundry days for members are on Tuesdays (11 am - 3 pm), Wednesdays & Fridays (10 am - 3 pm) and Saturdays (12 noon - 4 pm). There is no laundry from 2 pm to 3 pm because the Kitchen Volunteers & Staff needs to clean the pots & pans after your yummy meals.

"Why are some evening groups closed for only a small group of women?"

Some evening groups are closed for the safety of the group participants. What I mean by that, is that some groups are held in way that they work on stuff they were already doing the week before. It is really difficult to repeat to newcomers at every meeting what the rest of the group have been doing in the past few weeks. It also stops the group from ever going forward with their issues. For groups that deal with issues on violence, can you imagine a survivor explaining her situation over and over again? This is why some groups are closed and some are not.

I hope I cleared up some of the questions you might have about the daily operation of the Centre. I am open to hearing more about what you have to say about the Centre. You can attend our weekly Women's Voice on every Thursday at 1:30 pm. Or you can drop off your comments in my folder, marked Denise, on Office E or #5 door. Thank you for reading this.

FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS

A few thoughts from the Volunteer Coordinator:.....

Summer is here and we are whining about it. Why is that so? Hmm..... I will be away from August 7 to 19. I will be in San Francisco for a week visiting 2 grandparents, 2 aunts, 7 cousins and 5 FRIENDS!!! Then I'll be back on a Sunday the 20 with black hair and skin so tanned that she fades into the night. Hee...hee...hee...

Anyway, most of us know about the Skills Development Project by now. Did you sign up for the interview? Here are a few things to remind of what it is all about.

Who is this project for?

- For those who believe in "giving back to the community."
- For those who feel that they are ready to "move forward" in their lives in whichever way that this means to them.

Explain the difference between the Volunteer Program and the Skills Development Project.

The Volunteer Program is usually the first step for women who wants to contribute to the Women's Centre and to get away from the drugs and drinking that go on outside the Women's Centre. The Skills Development Project is the next step for volunteers who want to learn more

skills, so that there are more chances for them to get employment. Volunteers will then become Participants of the project.

The Process

Each participant will take part in a half-hour to 45 minutes interview. An action plan will be developed between the Peer Interviewer/the Volunteer Coordinator and the participant. There will be regular evaluations of the plan and the participant's progress.

Responsibilities from the participant:

- Commitment to follow through with the action plan.
- Commitment to communicate with the Volunteer Coordinator on issues that comes up.

Responsibilities from the Volunteer Coordinator:

- To provide the participant with ongoing support and be a good listener.
- To connect the participant with appropriate resources so that the participant can achieve her goals outlined in the action plan.

Volunteer Meeting Dates.

July 12 (Wed)Volunteers-Only
Meeting at the Tellier Tower
(next to Portland
Hotel, Carrel &
Hastings)

July 23 (Sun) Volunteer
Meeting at the Centre

Summer Outings!

Please check Denise's door & the
Front Desk for updates! You need to
sign-up with Denise for all the events.

July 5 (Wed) Going to the movies at
Silvercity Metropolis, be here at 2
pm.

July 14 - 16 (Fri - Sun) Folk Festival
depending on the passes we get.

July 19 (Wed) Volunteer BBQ at
Trout Lake Park, be here at 10:30 am.

Aug 2 (Wed) Canoeing at Buntzen
Lake.

Aug 5 (Sat) Powell Street Festival - a
celebration of Japanese Canadian
heritage, be here at 1 pm.

Aug 6 (Sun) Pride Parade - a
celebration of gay, lesbian, bisexual
and transgendered communities in the
West End, be here at 10:30 am.

Aug 30 (Wed) More canoeing or a
walk?

The Volunteer Store will be open on
Tuesdays (11am - 2 pm) when there
are outings on Wednesdays.

Denise will be away from August 7 -
19.....

I would like to thank the DEWC for allowing
me the opportunity to experience working
here at the Centre. My last day of work for
the DEWC is July 2, 2000. It was agreed
that my obligation to obtain a Class 4
driver's licence was not met, therefore, not
only do I feel that I have let myself down but
the Centre's staff, volunteers & members as
well.

It has certainly been a pleasure to work with
the Centre's staff, volunteers & members.
And, as a result this experience, working for
the DEWC, has led me to have a high
regard for all front line workers even though
I have worked for a various number of other
centres. Thanks again. Julia

JM

July 01, 2000 / 10:18 AM

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE
44 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1K2
Front Desk: 681-8480 Women's Line: 681-7458

LUNCH SERVED DAILY
AT 12:30
JULY 2000

SUNDAY 12 – 5 pm	MONDAY 10 am – 5 pm	TUESDAY 11 am – 5 pm	WEDNESDAY 10 am – 5 pm	THURSDAY 10 am – 5 pm	FRIDAY 10 am – 5 pm	SATURDAY 12 – 5 pm
						1 1:30 Video
2 1:00 Video	3 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	4 11:00 Shiatsu Massage 11:00 Reflexology 2:00 Outing	5 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education Group	6 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 6:00 Creative Writing	7 10:30 S + A 5:00 A –V Group	8 1:30 Video
9 1:00 Video	10 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	11 11:00 Shiatsu Massage 11:00 Reflexology 2:00 Outing	12 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education Group *Volunteer's only meeting	13 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 5:00 WST Group	14 10:30 S + A 5:00 A –V Group	15 1:30 Video
16 1:00 Video	17 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	18 11:00 Shiatsu Massage 11:00 Reflexology 2:00 Outing	19 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education Group	20 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 5:00 WST Group	21 10:30 S + A 5:00 A –V Group	22 1:30 Video
23 1:00 Video *Volunteer's meeting	24 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	25 11:00 Shiatsu 11:00 Reflexology 2:00 Outing	26 CHEQUE DAY 1:30 Dreamcatchers 5:00 Popular Education Group	27 CENTRE CLOSED 5:00 WST Group	28 HOT MEAL 5:00 A –V Group	29 10:30 S+A 1:30 Video
30 1:00 Video	31 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group					

* Refer to volunteer meeting dates (on the reverse side) for locations.