

# D.E.W. DROP IN

## Downtown Eastside Women Do Drop In

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

May 2004

Free

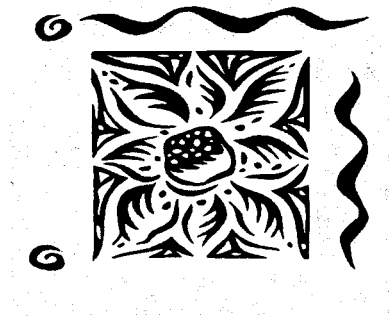


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## **MOTHER'S DAY PICNIC**

*Celebrating Mothers, Grandmothers, Elders,  
Aunties, Sisters and & Friends*



**Please join us for a DEWC Mother's Day Picnic.**

**Sunday, May 9, 2004  
Trout Lake Park**

**Please meet at the Centre at 12 noon,  
we will go together by bus.**

**Limited transportation available for  
Elders and women with limited mobility.**

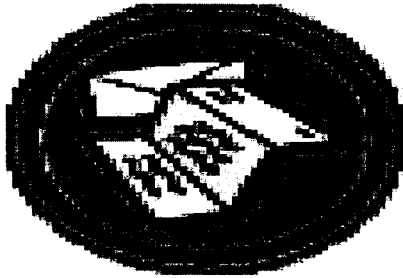
**All women welcome.**

**\*\*\***

**Also, tickets will be available for the 2004 Children's Festival.**

**Sign-up sheets will be at the front desk as soon  
as the Centre receives tickets. Keep a look out!**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FOR WOMEN'S MAIL  
DELIVERED TO THE CENTRE



WE ARE CHANGING OUR MAILBOX  
ADDRESS FOR WOMEN'S MAIL.

IF YOUR MAIL IS ADDRESSED TO THE CENTRE, PLEASE  
CHANGE THE ADDRESS FROM 302 COLUMBIA TO

**150-100 EAST CORDOVA  
VANCOUVER, BC  
V6A 1K9**

TO NOTIFY SENDERS FILL OUT ADDRESS CHANGE CARDS AT  
FRONT DESK AND STAFF WILL PROVIDE STAMPS TO MAIL IN.

## CASH OVERTAKES COERCION IN QUEBEC WELFARE SYSTEM

By RHÉAL SÉGUIN, Globe and Mail  
Saturday, April 3, 2004 - Page A9

[Online version of this story is here](#)

QUEBEC -- In what it calls a revolution in the way it deals with poverty, the Quebec government will start offering cash incentives rather than coercion to get welfare recipients into the work force.

The Liberal government's anti-poverty strategy unveiled yesterday ensures a minimum annual guaranteed income that will take effect April 1, 2005 -- fully indexed for those who are incapable of working, and indexed at 50 per cent for those who can but refuse to work.

It will also be fully indexed for welfare recipients who show a desire to reintegrate into the job market. In addition, they will receive a \$150-a-month bonus -- instead of the current \$130 a month -- for participating in job-training programs, including volunteer work.

"We have some real progressive measures that deal with the specific reality of Quebec," said Claude Béchar, Minister of Employment, Family and Social Solidarity. "It is a new kind of philosophy, a revolution in our social-security program."

The strategy could serve as a test case for other provinces and inspire the federal government to help finance a nationwide anti-poverty plan, Mr. Béchar said.

"This is the first anti-poverty plan in Canada," he said. "I talked with [federal Social Development Minister] Liza Frulla and she is very interested in this plan and maybe they [Ottawa] could offer some kind of help."

The anti-poverty plan will cost the Quebec government \$2.5-billion over the next five years.

The impact of the new measures will vary considerably among recipients. For instance, a single person on welfare who now receives \$6,893 a year will get \$36 more a year in 2005. A single parent with two children who now receives \$15,603 a year will get \$1,186 more.

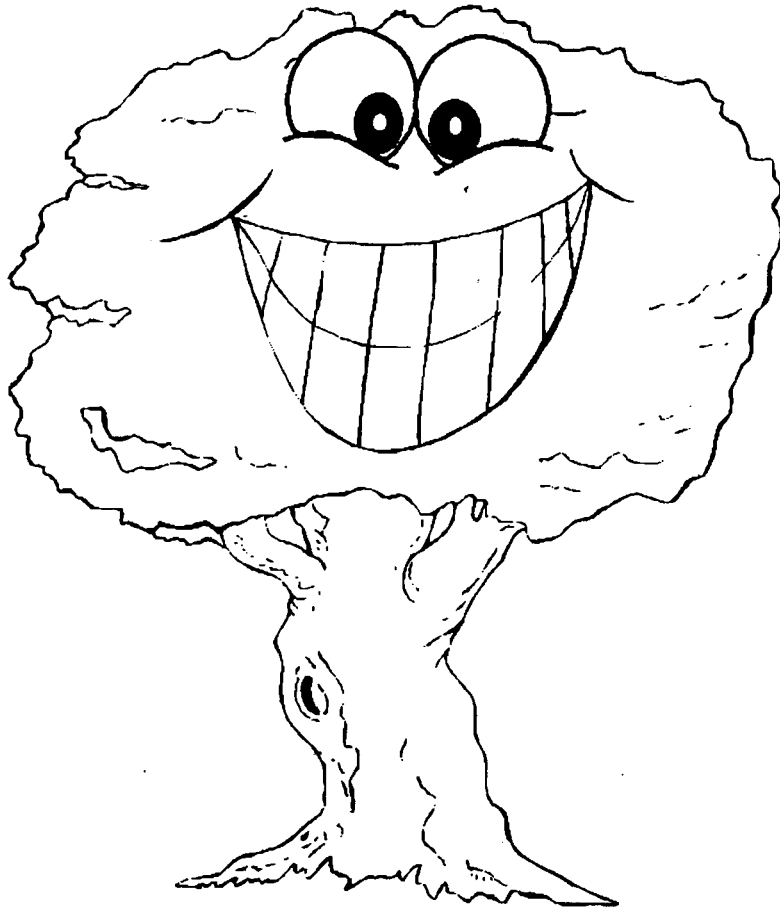
Coercive measures that require welfare recipients to either find work or face penalties will be abolished. Only those found guilty of fraud or who are required to reimburse the government for overpayments will be penalized.

Quebec will also increase its minimum wage from \$7.30 to \$7.45 an hour on May 1, and to \$7.60 an hour one year later.

The province's anti-poverty coalition applauded the approach.

"It is unique, unlike anything else in Canada. It is an important step forward," said Vivian Labrie, the head of the coalition. "But there are still no assurances that people will have enough money to pay for all the essential services under this plan . . . There is just no way that persons earning \$503 a month can cover all their bills."

# KIDS CORNER!!!



## Trees by Harry Behn

Trees are the kindest thing I know,  
They do no harm, they simply grow  
And spread a shade for sleepy cows,  
And gather birds among their bows.

They give us fruit in leaves above,  
And wood to make our houses of,  
And leaves to burn on Halloween  
And in the Spring new buds of green.

They are first when day's begun  
To touch the beams of morning sun,  
They are the last to hold the light  
When evening changes into night.

And when a moon floats on the sky  
They hum a drowsy lullaby  
Of sleepy children long ago  
Trees are the kindest things I know

New rules coming for those at risk

## **WELFARE | Addicts and the mentally ill will have to draft 'employment plans'**

Jim Beatty

Vancouver Sun

Saturday, April 17, 2004

**VICTORIA** Thousands of British Columbians suffering from mental illness, alcoholism or drug addiction will soon be forced to draft "employment plans" in order to continue receiving welfare.

Changes approved by cabinet, revealed Friday, will impose new regulations on thousands of vulnerable provincial residents in what the government calls a continued effort to make income recipients more self-reliant.

"We don't want to give up on people simply because they've got some barriers to employment," said government spokesman Richard Chambers.

Although the government did not announce the changes, cabinet has agreed to a series of reforms which will affect nearly 20 000 residents.

Under the new rules people who suffer from alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness or temporary medical conditions such as broken bones must draft and follow employment plans in order to collect welfare.

They won't be forced into the workplace, but they must follow the individual plans.

"As part of their employment plan, they could be working on their resume, developing contacts, networking on the telephone. These could be called employment-related obligations that they could be doing while they are recovering from their medical condition."

Those people continue to be exempt from the two-year time limit on welfare.

"But we expect them to do some employment-related obligations. That does not mean finding a job by knocking on doors. It means doing job preparatory work, job research."

In addition, the government has changed the rules facing new refugees, people who have no identification, and those who have no income but may own homes or vehicles.

At present, those people receive income assistance that is known as hardship allowances.

- The government is now going to impose a three-month cut-off period on them.
- That means more than 5 800 British Columbians will be forced to sell their assets, produce identification, receive landed immigrant status, or face the prospect that their welfare may be cut off.

At present, there is no cut off period for those receiving hardship benefits.

The Sun was unable to reach anti-poverty advocates Friday to discuss changes.

The changes come as hundreds of other welfare recipients are about to learn they have been cut off.

Next Wednesday more than 300 British Columbians who have collected income assistance for two years won't be receiving their normal cheque.

The BC government adopted a plan which limits welfare benefits to able-bodied British Columbians to 24 consecutive months.

Earlier this year, when it was thought that tens of thousands of British Columbians would lose their benefits, the province adopted a sweeping exemption and announced that only 339 people were expected to lose all or part of their benefits.

- The time-limit rule became effective April 1. That means Wednesday will be the first day cheques won't be available for those 339 British Columbians who have collected welfare for two years but have failed to seek employment.

**ADVOCATES ARE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST WITH WELFARE RELATED ISSUES  
HERE AT THE CENTRE MONDAY TO FRIDAY. PLEASE SEE AN ADVOCATE IF  
YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY WITH WELFARE RIGHTS OR YOU ARE  
UNSURE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WILL BE AFFECTED.**

**DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
**302 Columbia Street, Vancouver**  
**604.681.8480**

**LUNCH SERVED**  
**DAILY AT 12:30-1:45**

#### REGULAR PROGRAMMING

**ACCESS**—Math, English & Study Skills taught by Institute of Indigenous Government, all women welcome.

**Chinese Women's Group (CWS)** -Open to women whose first language is Chinese. The group will focus on cultural awareness, advocacy, and social events.

**Creative Writing Group**—Read and write poems and prose.

**Hairstyling**—Get a haircut or learn some new styling.

**Library Literacy** – Readings, crafts, literacy activities, and preparing the new library.

**Literacy Workshop** – Working with books, themes and word puzzles. Learn while having fun!

**French Speaking Group** – Open to women whose first language is French. The group will focus on advocacy and social activities.

**Massage**—Pamper yourself courtesy of Anita and Rosemary!

**Piano & Voice**—Come on out to learn something new or practice what you know with music instructors!

**Resume Workshop** – Create your own Resume with the help of Eemina. The **Street Nurse, Christina**, comes by every Tuesday between 11am-1pm to give you information on all kinds of health issues.

**Women's Voice** – Meets to give feedback about the Centre. Your opinions and ideas are needed!

#### ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOPS with materials supplied

**Beading with Denny** - Every Monday, 1:30 pm.

**Crochet with Freeda**—Every Wednesday, 2:00pm.

**Fabric Arts with Freeda**—Every Tuesday morning, 10:00am.

**Dreamcatchers with Denny**—Every Sunday at 1:30pm.

#### EVENING PROGRAMMING

**Battered Women Support Services**—Support for women experiencing violence. Tuesdays on rotating schedule from 5-8:30pm.

**Alcohol and Drug Support Group**—A harm reduction focus. Takes place every second Wednesday from 5-8:30pm. Everyone welcome.

**Music Jam**—Sing and play instruments with special guests.

**Women's Health Clinic**—Ongoing—59 West Pender.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 2:00 Video
2 1:30 Library Literacy 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling 3:30 Volunteer Orientation	3 10:00 CWS 1:30 Piano & Voice 2:30 Literacy	4 10 Sewing & Massage & ACCESS (Math, English, Study Skills) 11-1 Nurse 2 Resumes & Bingo 5:00 BWSS	5 1:30 French Group 2:00 Crochet & Raffle & Writing Group	6  <b>5:00 DAMS</b> Alcohol & Drug Support Group	7	8  2:00 Video
9 1:30 Library Literacy 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling MOTHER'S DAY!	10 10:00 CWS 1:30 Piano & Voice & Beading 2:30 Literacy	11 10 Sewing & Massage & ACCESS 11-1 Nurse 2 Resumes & Bingo 5:00 BWSS	12 1:30 French Group 2:00 Crochet & Raffle & Writing Group	13	14	15  2:00 Video
16 1:30 Library Literacy 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling	17 10:00 CWS 1:30 Piano & Voice & Beading 2:30 Literacy	18 10 Sew & Massage & ACCESS 11-1 Nurse 2 Resumes & Bingo 5:00 BWSS	19 1:30 French Group 2:00 Crochet & Raffle & Writing Group	20 1:30 Women's Voice <b>5:00 DAMS</b> Alcohol & Drug Support Group	21  <b>5:00 Music Jam</b>	22  2:00 Video
23 & 30 1:30 Library Literacy 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling	24 & 31 10:00 CWS 1:30 Piano & Voice & Beading 2:30 Literacy	25 10 Sew & Massage & ACCESS 11-1 Nurse 2 Resumes & Raffle 5:00 BWSS	26 2:00 Crochet & Writing Group	27  <b>CENTRE CLOSED</b>	28	29



**ARIES:**

Errors in judgment, due to personal prejudices or emotion, are apt to occur. Your mood very much colors your thinking right now. You can have fruitful discussions with your close friends or family members, however. Withdrawing from emotional social contact is favored now, for even when you are with others you are likely to feel separate and alone. Sadness and disappointments in your personal life are also probable now. Inadequacies and flaws in your friends or lovers are particularly bothersome to you now, and you may feel that you have nearly exhausted your patience for dealing with these problems. It is a time to be quiet and to look objectively at how your relationships are going. Though not a pleasurable time, this can be a fruitful period in which to learn more about love and what you truly value.

**Taurus:**

This is a time to take in information which can be of real practical assistance to you in reaching a significant long-range goal. Some news may reach you which will create some minor distress and compel you to re-examine or reassess a position you have taken regarding your career or work in the world. Don't try to force issues or come to any definite conclusions now and don't sign any contracts which require too much compromise on your part. Simply gather information and, if necessary, delay direct negotiations. Your plans and ideas are subject to radical revisions, significant changes, and forced adjustments. Something you had counted on may suddenly disappear. You are also apt to hear a totally unsuspected side about someone or something. While possibly distressing, this news nevertheless puts pieces together for you which were missing before. Also, you may be dealing with behind-the-scene matters, subtle political maneuvers, or Machiavellian tactics.

**Gemini:**

This is a time for withdrawing your energy, attention, and efforts from the outside world and external goals in order to replenish yourself. Quiet reflection and attention to your inner world, your family, and the foundation that supports all of your outside activities is called for. This is a time to "lie low". You may have to work quietly or without much outside recognition at this time. This is an excellent time to eliminate whatever is unnecessary and outworn in your life from clutter and disorder in your environment to an unhealthy relationship or even a long-held attitude or belief which keeps you from going after what you really want in life.

**Cancer:**

You will be alert and on your toes now. The pace is likely to be fast, even hectic. You are restless and eager to meet others halfway, to converse, exchange information, and make connections. Nervousness or irritability due to aggravations and the stress of increased demands at work is possible. You experience a burst of energy and are more vigorous, bold, assertive, and impatient at this time. You feel ambitious and capable of doing a lot and meeting challenges successfully. However, if your will is blocked, you become quite angry now. You are less willing to accommodate others and meet people halfway. Your ego-drive and competitiveness are very strong.

**Leo:**

This is a good time for relaxing recreation, a time to refresh and rejuvenate yourself and do the things you most enjoy doing. Good humor and optimism prevail now, and you are able to get a larger perspective on your life. This is also a good time to approach someone who is in a position to benefit you spiritually, intellectually, or materially. Your perceptions of others are rather fuzzy now. You tend to see just what you want to see or to fantasize a bit too much about another person. Your empathy increases also and you feel "soft" at this time.

**Virgo:**

You are more prone to vexation and aggravation right now, especially in traffic or in some area of your life that you are trying to get ahead in. Accidents due to trying to force a situation, ignoring safety precautions, hurrying, or anger need to be guarded against. You are apt to feel that you have no outlets or means of expressing your anger or aggressive impulses, and right now that is probably true. Standing your ground and insisting upon your rights or your position only leads to unnecessary friction and bad blood, with no clear winner or loser emerging. Either transcending or letting go of your frustration is really the only way out at this time.

**Libra:**

This can be a time when you are forced to confront and deal with something which is no longer working - from old, outworn possessions to an unhealthy relationship or a deeply ingrained, self-defeating attitude. It is impossible for you to be content with superficial answers now, and you are impatient with people who avoid looking candidly and honestly at root causes and hidden reasons for any problem or situation. You tend to force your views on other people now. Also, you can become obsessed with an idea or problem until you have figured it out.

**Scorpio:**

You are less rigid in your attitudes to others now. Various stereotypes or prejudices that you have are chipped away during this time period. You are likely to have interactions with people of various political persuasions, religious faiths, or life styles that show you that your rigid categories and classifications are not always appropriate. Now is the time when you can become more responsive to actual situations and conditions rather than to your rigid image of them. You are better able to see some good even in the worst people and, on the other hand, to see some bad in people that you idolize. Even if you consider yourself to be a very liberal, unbiased person, you will probably still react negatively to certain classes of people, such as those with opposing political affiliations, conservatives, for example. Now is the time to break down these crystallized attitudes and ideas.

**Sagittarius:**

Self-discipline, training, persevering through a dry or slow period, and working quietly or in meager circumstances are themes in this time period. You have the ability and stamina to concentrate, to work carefully and thoroughly, and to accomplish something modest, yet of real practical value and substance now. You are in harmony with the people in your immediate environment. There is a sense of ease and of flowing with, rather than fighting against or resisting, what is going on around you. Therefore, you have more energy and more fun at this time. Now is a good time to make a presentation, go for an interview, or meet the public in some way; the response is positive.

**Capricorn:**

This is a busy time; communicating and getting in touch with others is very likely. Numerous phone calls, letters, meetings, errands, or discussions bring you into contact with others. This is a good time to brainstorm with others, share ideas, and come to a group consensus. You have a low tolerance for boredom and following rules today and you make some creative changes and discoveries, experiment with new possibilities, or invent a new way of doing things. You don't want to follow anybody else's lead at this time, but fortunately you are able find ways to be yourself and even be a little "crazy" without offending or upsetting others. This is a dynamic and exciting period. Take advantage of any unusual offers or opportunities.

**Aquarius:**

You have a very realistic and no-nonsense attitude at this time and are rather critical, skeptical, or at the very least, cautious about new ideas. Deep, quiet study and solitary reflection is favored. You are more taciturn and uncommunicative than usual and don't feel very social. If you are with others, you are likely to turn the discussions into something heavy and serious. Frivolity holds no appeal for you now. You are serious and disinclined to frivolous or inconsequential activity. It's a time best spent working alone, structuring and organizing your life in some way, and focusing on whatever tasks (however distasteful or tedious) that you really need to do. You feel like withdrawing from people and find social situations unfulfilling or wasteful. Your vitality and your spirits are somewhat dampened.

**Pisces:**

This is likely to be a time of considerable frustration and discouragement for you. You are unusually sensitive to criticism of your efforts and to the limitations and restraints that your responsibilities entail. Fighting with authority figures or lashing out at others who restrict you in any way is a strong possibility. A sense of struggle or of being overwhelmed by obstacles and blockages is likely to characterize this period. Be patient and don't demand too much of yourself at this time. Work quietly and steadily and rely only on your own resources. Friendships and cooperative endeavors flourish now. You achieve a harmonious balance of giving and receiving and of talking and listening, and any social or joint activity will benefit.

## Welcome to RISE

RISE is a 10-week Employment Assistance Service offered at PEERS Vancouver,  
held Monday-Friday from 10am to 3pm.

In RISE, you will:

- Learn basic computer skills
- Participate in skills enhancement classes
- Have access to an Employment Counsellor and Peer Support offered by all staff
- Have lunch, snacks and transportation provided
- Participate in weekly community outings

### ACCEPTING NEW PARTICIPANTS NOW...

For more information or to schedule a confidential intake meeting, call our Employment Counsellor,

Billie, RISE Facilitator  
604.681.3092

PEERS Vancouver is an organization staffed largely by former sex workers and, as such, we provide  
confidential and non-judgmental services.

We have a clear understanding of the skills acquired through sex work and how to transfer these  
skills into the mainstream workforce.

**Need A Chance To Prove You're Ready, Willing & Able To Work?**

Get the



you deserve!

**Find out what your next step needs to be.**

**Call to attend the Job Shop Info session. 604-253-9355, Ext.234**

Program funded by HRDC



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada



## **YWCA In FOCUS Pre-Employment Program**

"This program is one of the best things that happened to me. The path I now follow is positive and will guide me to goal I have chosen - that goal is success. I have transformed into a strong, assertive, powerful woman and am still, and always will be, in the process of change." Sarah, Graduate of the In FOCUS program.

**YWCA In FOCUS** assists parenting women to prepare for, and access, further education and vocational training, or to obtain suitable employment. The next two groups starts are April 19, 2004 and May 31, 2004.

### **Program Design**

The 15 week program provides:

GED and academic upgrading

Personal management

Career decision making

Work experience

Computer orientation

Health and wellness activities

Support - parenting information, assistance in finding child care, access to community resources and peer support

### **Program Outcomes**

Upon completion of the program, participants will:

Have a defined career plan

Be registered in further education or a training program

### **Applicant Profile**

The In FOCUS Pre-employment Program is designed for parenting women on Employment Assistance.

### **Application Process**

Applicants attend an information session held every Monday at 1:15 P.M.

Phone 604 688 4666 to register for the next available session. Selection and

Eligibility are determined through an intake interview and are subject to the approval of the Ministry of Human Resources.

In FOCUS is funded by the BC Ministry of Human Resources. Operated by the YWCA of Vancouver in partnership with the Vancouver School Board.

### **YWCA In FOCUS**

602 - 1281 West Georgia Street

Vancouver, BC V6E 3J7

604 688 4666

[www.ywcavan.org](http://www.ywcavan.org)

**WOMEN'S WORDS**  
**POETRY AND PROSE FROM THE DTES**

**The Little Girl Inside**

Sharon Butterworth, May 1992

The little girl inside of me, once laughed and cried and dreamed. She skipped through dark and cloudy days and brushed away the tears. From broken dreams and empty arms, she stands an adult now. The little doll, the skipping rope lay forlorn along life's road. Pathetic, for, almost forgotten, symbols of the promises of what might have been.

She glances back with wistful sigh as she longs to hold her doll, skip once more with hope and joy; the sunlight on her face. As she sits alone now, parents gone, siblings afar, romances passed, children too busy, little dog now dead.

It is the "little girl" in her that causes her to carry on. That urges her to stand up tall and smile when she wants to cry. That gets her going each day and still believes there's HOPE for a better tomorrow for everyone.

She will not give in to the bruises of life, will not act as if she is old. She will not become bitter and sit idly waiting for death. This "little girl" is too full of life, enjoying the beauty still left in the world.

Through the smog and fog, horror and garbage. There are still little gems of joy to be found in the strangest places you know, if you look with eyes of a child.



### **It Can Be**

Sharon Butterworth, September 1995

Life is peaceful and serene,  
Considering the places I have been.  
Tis been such a rocky, painful road.  
At times much more than a heavy load  
Cold and desolate, empty places.

How can it be! How can it be?  
Lonely nights and dreary days.  
A bottomless pit through a misty haze.

This battered ship finally found the shore.  
To suffer and weep and flounder no more,

How can it be! How can it be?  
I dusted me off, and put out my hand  
And was accepted right there as a friend.  
They held me upright til I could stand.  
Then showed me the way I could mend.  
How can it be! How can it be?

Their gentle love and sweet acceptance  
Showed me where to find the good  
No more painful searching.  
It was right there where I stood.  
Now I can see! Now I can see.

### **Letting Go**

Sharon Butterworth, July 1993

I hear Her breathing  
In the whispering breezes,  
See Her strength  
In the blue grey mountains,  
Admire Her beauty  
In the smiling flowers,  
Touch Hear dearness  
In the intimacy of my thoughts  
Know Her value  
By the measure of my own  
Sense her nearness  
By the nudging of my soul.  
I will keep forever  
The precious memories we have made.  
She was only borrowed.  
Never owned.

WOMEN'S WORDS  
POETRY AND PROSE FROM THE DTES

"i am grateful"...  
-lesandra simpson  
february/march 2004

"i am grateful..."

for all the things,  
i know, not yet the  
words to explain.

for i am great;  
as my heart is  
full, with each  
day i will remain.