

D.E.W. DROP IN

Downtown Eastside Women Do Drop In

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

June 2004

Free



INSIDE:

- National Aboriginal Day
- Street Nurse at DEWC
- DEWC Volunteer of the Month
- Tradeworks—Looking for Job Training?
- Exercise your Right to Vote
- Who are Canada's Working Poor?
- Poetry from the DTES
- Change of Address for Mail

National Aboriginal Day

June 21 is National Aboriginal Day! This date corresponds to the summer solstice, the longest day of the year, and for generations, many Aboriginal groups have celebrated their culture and heritage at this time of year.

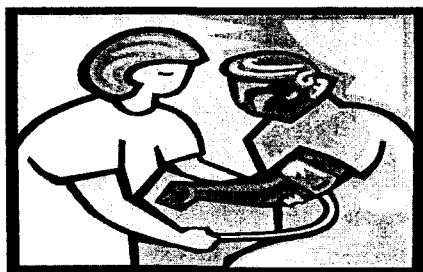


WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY?

On June 21, join thousands of Canadians across the country as we celebrate National Aboriginal Day, a special day to celebrate the unique heritage, cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada.

Look for posters in the Centre for community events!

★ ★



STREET NURSE AT DEWC

Has had a change of day & time
To THURSDAYS from 12NOON - 2PM

Drop-in and sign-up at the front desk to see Christina
about any health concerns you may have.

*Congratulations to
Irene Thomas*



*(Irene didn't want a photo taken,
but her lovely smile and pleasant demeanour can be found at the Centre!)*

May's
Volunteer of the Month
With sincere thanks for her contributions to the
Women's Centre.

Knock,  knock.

Are you 19 or older and looking for work? Opportunity awaits at The Job Shop.

If you're out of work, and need help finding a job, then here's your opportunity. The Job Shop is a free program that will support you in a quick return to work. With the support of one-on-one coaching, you'll get connected, gain confidence, and learn from others – all with a view to finding meaningful employment. It really does work. Call 604-253-9355 now to attend the next Job Shop info session. The Job Shop is brought to you by Tradeworks Training Society.



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 **Government of Canada** **Gouvernement du Canada**

Make Your Vote Count

In the last election, fewer Canadians than ever before exercised their right to vote. Voter turnout reached a record-low of 61 per cent, not including the one million voters who weren't even registered. The Canadian electoral system doesn't reflect the will of the people, distorting electoral outcomes so that a minority makes decisions for a majority. In the last election, the Liberals received 41 per cent of the popular vote, but walked away with 172 seats. That's 57 per cent of the 301 seats in the House of Commons - and control of the legislative agenda.

What this means is that a large number of voices in Canada are not being heard. It means that the legislative agenda of the House of Commons is not a proper translation of what the public wants. An MP can be elected without the support of the majority of the population in his or her riding. A government may be elected without the confidence of the majority of the people it is supposed to represent.

The Facts:

- In the last election, the Liberals received 41 per cent of the popular vote but received 57 per cent of the seats.
- In 2000, only 61 per cent of eligible voters turned out to vote. Over the past 35 years, voter turnout has fallen from just under 80 per cent to 61 per cent.

Voter Qualifications:

- must be a Canadian citizen;
- must be 18 years of age or older on General Voting Day for the election;
- must be a resident of the electoral district;
- must have been a resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months immediately preceding General Voting Day for the election;
- must be registered as a voter for the electoral district

Register to Vote:

ON ELECTION DAY—Monday June 28, 2004

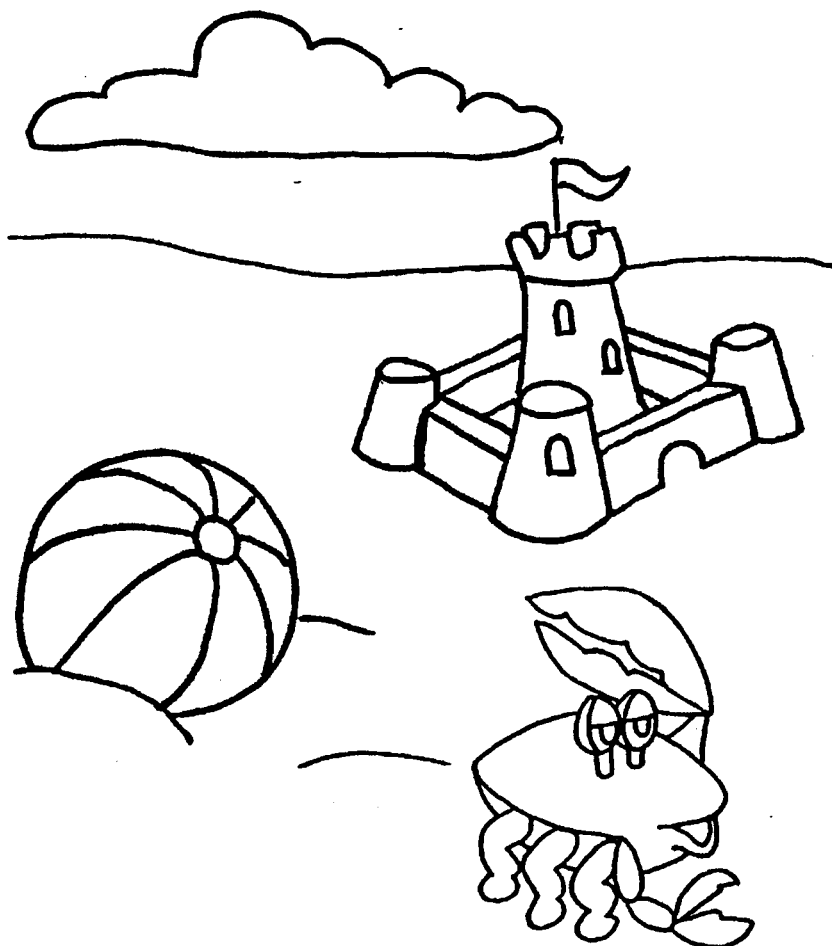
YOU CAN REGISTER TO VOTE—Bring two pieces of ID with your name, address and signature.

Look for posters for polling sites in Vancouver East in the Centre.

ANY QUESTIONS CALL: 1 800 463 6868

Ways to Vote:

Electors will be able to vote on election day, June 28, 2004, or at the advance polls on Friday, June 18, 2004, Saturday, June 19, 2004, and Monday, June 21, 2004. An elector who does not wish to go to a polling station may apply to vote by special ballot by contacting the office of the returning officer or Elections Canada. The deadline for applications to vote by special ballot is 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 22, 2004. An elector may return the completed special ballot to the office of the returning officer for his or her electoral district before the polls close on election day, or mail it to Elections Canada for receipt before 6:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on election day, as directed in the voting kit.



MAIN: WHO ARE THE WORKING POOR? –

According to the 2001 census data, the average income for a Canadian working all year at a full-time job is \$43,231. According to that same data there are 1.4 million Canadians working **full-time jobs** who make less than \$20,000 a year.

Of those Canadians, 271,000 lived in Saskatchewan - the highest proportion of full-time employees who worked for less than \$20,000 in 2000.

A report by Statistics Canada says many people in low-paying jobs can't find better work. The study found about half of those paid the minimum wage or less in 1996 were faring no better five years later. For those under 25, getting that first job is a big step.

According to a study released March 26, 2004, by Statistics Canada, less than one half of Canadian workers who had a low-paying job in 1996 had managed to climb out of it by 2001.

The study, which used data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, showed that in December 1996, nearly one-third of Canadian workers, or about 1.7 million people, were in low-paying jobs.

"The 53 per cent of workers (around 900,000) who remained 'trapped' in low-paid work in 2001 tended to be older women and those who had only high school education or less. Such individuals were more likely to be working part time for small, non-unionized organizations."

- Taken from Low-paid Employment and "Moving Up."

Care workers are often in casual work situations, especially those in a live-in caregiver situation.

Recent immigrants to Canada make up a large proportion of in-home caregivers, nannies and often make far below the minimum wage for the area they work in.

The gender gap for income has been closing for the last 20 years, with women earning 64 cents for every dollar men make.

But women accounted for almost two-thirds of minimum wage workers in 2003.

Statistics Canada does not publish what we might call a "poverty line" or the minimum level of income necessary to meet basic needs. Instead, StatsCan uses something called Low Income Cutoffs or LICOs.

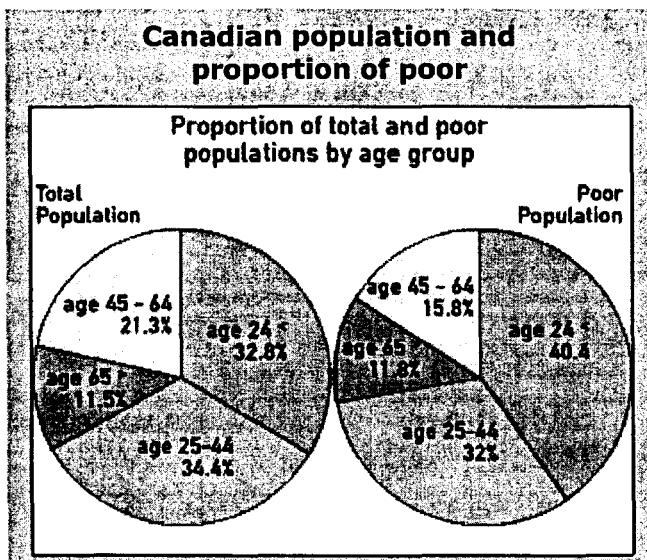
The LICOs are calculated by taking a look at how much an average family spends on the three basics: food, shelter and clothing. If a certain percentage of the family's annual income is spent on the "the big three" then they are identified as low income.

So for example, as of 2003, a family of four who earned less than \$31,424 and lived in an urban area (population over 500,000) was considered low income.

This is actually a simplification of the process since Statistics Canada also takes into account factors such as size of family, geographical location, ect. but that is the general idea.

Other countries such as the U.S. actually put forth an annual poverty line through their Department of Labor, and they also publish an annual "Profile of the Working Poor."

- In 2001, the U.S. Department of Labor identified 32.9 million people, or 11.7 per cent of the American population as living below the poverty level.



Source: 1996 Census data Statistics Canada

See PovNet for more information.

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

LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30-1:45

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

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.

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

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 Thursday between 12noon-2pm 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 Anna & 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 10 Sewing & Massage 2 Resumes & Bingo 5:00 BWSS	2 2:00 Crochet & Raffle & Writing Group	3 12-2 Street Nurse 5:00 DAMS Alcohol & Drug Support Group	4	5 2:00 Video
6 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling 3 Volunteer Orientation	7 10:00 CWS 1:30 Piano & Voice 2:30 Literacy	8 10 Sewing & Massage 2 Resumes & Bingo 5:00 BWSS	9 2:00 Crochet & Raffle	10 12-2 Street Nurse	11	12 2:00 Video
13 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling	14 10:00 CWS & Beading 2:30 Literacy	15 10 Sewing & Massage 2 Resumes & Bingo 5:00 BWSS	16 2:00 Crochet & Raffle	17 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 WOMEN'S VOICE 5:00 DAMS Alcohol & Drug Support Group	18 5:00 Music Jam	19 2:00 Video
20 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling	21 10:00 CWS 1:30 Piano & Voice & Beading 2:30 Literacy National Aboriginal	22 10 Sewing & Massage 2 Resumes & Raffle 5:00 BWSS	23 2:00 Crochet & Bingo	24 CENTRE CLOSED	25	26 2:00 Video
27 1:30 Library Literacy 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video 2-4 Hairstyling	28 10:00 CWS 1:30 Beading 2:30 Literacy	29 10 Sew & Massage 2 Resumes & Raffle 5:00 BWSS	30 2:00 Crochet & Writing Group			

Aries

The 1st isn't a good day, but the 2nd is better. You're in touch with your potential on the 3rd, only to have it wrenched from your grasp on the 5th. How you handle these ups and downs goes a long way in determining their importance. Late on the 6th, you're pleased to revisit your comfort zone. Make yourself at home here through the 18th, while the power of positive thinking unfolds around you. Friends rally around to support your efforts. Reputation affects results on the 9th and 10th. The 11th through 13th is your fantasy weekend when the stars let you get away with anything. You're still writing your own ticket on the 17th, although by now you should understand that your signature is binding. Father's Day weekend brings up unexpected feelings about authority as you recognize that there are some ways in which you still haven't grown up. When summer begins on the 22nd, it's a subdued experience this year. Maybe you're busy preparing for the tricky issues that you have to wrestle between the 24th and 29th. The universe can still throw you a surprise or two, but by the 30th you discover that some of them are good ones.

Taurus

You're in a quandary from the 1st through 4th. Things are going well, but somehow you want more. The fulfillment and satisfaction of the 5th are only temporary. As evening falls on the 6th, you know exactly how you missed the boat. All seems lost until the night of the 8th, when you finally accept some good advice. When the 9th invites you to mend your ways, grab whatever tools are necessary and get to work. You have until the 20th to make something of yourself. Along the way you'll make loved ones proud, especially when you turn selfish straw into community gold between the 14th and 16th. What's good for you is good for them while there's enough to go around. Make plans and promises on the 17th. A loving weekend on the 19th and 20th shields you from the harsh elements in play from the 21st through 23rd. Spend your resources judiciously, and you'll escape the worst of it. The 24th is the last day in June when you can be absolutely certain of anything.

Gemini

The first six days of June are interesting. Desire and imagination try to run away with you, but you can still control them. Yes, there's the road not taken, but you don't want to go there. Instead, seek the book or conversation could change your life on the 7th or 8th. Even as you look ahead, inescapable forces creep up behind you on the 9th and mess with you through the 10th. Clearly you had to learn this lesson. Free will and unintended consequences are a piece of cake between the 11th and 23rd. You're close to what makes you happy, and the rest is up to you. Show off with pride from the 16th to 18th. Self-made people are at the height of invention under cosmic conditions where all things are possible. Your instincts are unfailing between the 19th and 22nd. But on the 24th you have to accept someone else's special qualities, and maybe give him or her your place in line. Reward yourself amply on the weekend of the 26th. After that, it's back to work. You're older and wiser if not richer.

Cancer

On June 1st and 2nd everyone accepts you for who you are. This means that they're expecting great things from you. Between the 3rd and 8th, you feel the pressure of living up to your potential. It's stimulating and maybe not immediately rewarding, but you're taking the longer view. On the 9th and 10th, work with your gut instead of your preconceived notions. The stars line up some good allies for your amusement. Then the weekend of the 12th sticks you with housekeeping when you'd rather be community building or truth seeking. Starting on the 14th, you find your groove and can ride it with no worries as far as the 25th. Demands quickly turn to rewards. You're the master of endless possibilities on the 17th, sampling whatever pops up around you. It's your world between the 19th and 22nd, a manifestation of cozy inner reality that leaks into your surroundings and makes others eager to be part of your vision. At least your inhibitions are gone on the 28th and 29th, when you come out swinging, ready for another round.

Leo

If you must be angry on the 1st, break with the past by the 2nd. You have a long list to address before bedtime on the 4th, and bad feelings are wasted time. Big accomplishments level out between the 5th and 8th. It seems less special when everyone is copying you. But if you yield to distractions, the ghost of what truly got away will haunt you on the 9th or 10th. Luckily, you can buy anything on the weekend of the 12th, including happiness. This is a one-time offer, though. Take on passengers, trainees and tenants after the 17th. You don't intend to have all this fun alone. Male energy gets its due on Father's Day, and you get three warm, generous days from the 21st through 23rd wherever you stand in the family hierarchy. Starting on the 25th, a healthy urgency reminds you that it's not all about fun and games. The stars save you from self-indulgence and failure on the 28th and 29th. Be sure to give credit where credit is due.

Virgo

You were on top of the world in the last week of May, but you crash land by June 3rd. You see how far you've strayed from the original plan. You're real friends are still with you on the weekend of the 5th, and that's something. The 7th to 13th might be one confusing week. Between the 14th and 16th you get some of your own back if you can determine just what that is. The cycle is starting over, and values are being reassigned. This time, however, you're positioned to benefit. From the 19th through 29th, you can flex your muscles, exercise your rights and rock your world. There's no such thing as bragging when all your qualities are true and worth advertising. You're a fountain of invention and regeneration between the 22nd and 25th. The summer is yours if you want it. And if somebody tries to play games with your heart on the 30th, you're ready for him or her.

Libra

You're hopeful, practical and lucky from the 1st through 4th. The leftovers from your recent goal still retain some of their magical charge. Cut your losses on the 5th and pocket the last of your spoils on the 6th. Your slate is now clean while more committed players still wrestle with their knotty problems. Freedom brings panic by the 10th. Don't be that way. This week is a gift of extra time. Learn a different system or language. Instead of just making necessary repairs, dare to upgrade or even redesign. By the 17th, you're already filling up your void long before the window closes. Set these considerations aside and be good as gold on the 19th and 20th. The 21st and 22nd are a heady blend of power and gentleness. The 25th brings any props and bona fides that you still require. It doesn't get any better than the weekend of the 26th. After all, what can you do when the world falls at your feet in admiration and worship?

Scorpio

There's absolutely no one like you on June 1st or 2nd, and all attempts to imitate you fall laughably short through the 6th. It's your time to be larger than life with a nod toward the perfectionism that others always say you lack. Your fuse is short on the 7th and 8th, although you knew your critics would eventually get the upper hand. You can change the rules and turn the tables on the 9th and 10th, but this leads to a memory intensive week, which may be too much work. At least your war of nerves is over by the 14th. Beware of judgment errors around the 17th, because you must buy whatever you break. You're a good sport and a lover of beauty between the 19th and 22nd. Just don't come here under false pretenses, because some stains on your reputation could take a long time to come out. Your troubles are over after the 24th. You wake up feeling healthy and justified. As of the 28th, you can get away with strange and wonderful things again.

Sagittarius

You're full of yourself between the 2nd and 4th, but there are good reasons. Certain dreams are coming true through careful planning and good luck. Who wouldn't celebrate? The mix remains perfect, although by the 8th you're wondering what can possibly follow this. The stars catch you off guard on the 9th and 10th, pushing someone ahead of you. Observe and learn. The weekend of the 12th proves that you still have friends and a message, although if anything, your process was in doubt. Priorities realign between the 14th and 20th. Familiar faces drift back into your life, some welcome and others a little painful to behold. Watch out for tempting shortcuts around the 17th. Trying out a new move might cost you a lot of extra work. Be generous on the 21st and 22nd even though you want the lion's share. You'll get it on the 23rd if you can prove to other people's satisfaction that you deserve it. After the 25th you won't have to kowtow to your obvious inferiors any more. This month's final obstacles step politely out of your way. By the 30th you're back in the realm of miracles. Clearly this is where you belong.

Capricorn

Your sense of purpose is strong all month, thanks in part to the optimistic trend that buoys your spirits from the 1st through 10th. On the 3rd you find that growth actually means flowering, while on the 5th and 6th you are whatever you engineer. By the 11th you should be recording all that you've done and practiced, because time has a way of distorting rosy memories. Do practical things on the weekend of the 12th instead of letting the desire for adventure sidetrack you. The 14th and 15th sweep you along in happy urgency, although you'd do well to keep an eye on your spending. If you're not careful, the 17th will stick you with a closed budget and a captive crew of freeloaders. Be kind to these people at least through the 22nd. You might be operating at cross-purposes, but they're not trying to be mean or inconvenient. Resist the scattering impulse that you might feel on the weekend of the 26th. You're back in control on the 28th, and that's where you'll stay.

Aquarius

Whether you're an early bird or a night owl, afternoon can be a strange place. But you learn to love this time of day on the 2nd, when it shows how your world is changing for the better. The magic runs without a hitch through the 13th. During this phase you're a joiner, not a loner. You're most inspired and irresponsible from the 6th to 8th, and everyone loves you for it. Priorities shift on the 10th, reshaping certain goals for the next five months. Even if you're just passing the buck, it's a weight off your shoulders. Then the 14th forces you to admit that maybe you don't know it all. It's hard at first, but you change your attitude when seductive doors of learning open between the 16th and 18th. So what are you playing now, 'Let's Make a Deal' or 'The Lady or the Tiger?' Traditional roles and standard uses are called into question from the 19th through 25th. Put these games behind you on the 26th. By the 29th you're back on the threshold of your temporarily lost paradise.

Pisces

The first few days of June are challenging. You're positioned to have fun and nothing but fun, yet you keep coming back to the list of things that you should be doing instead. Compromise just a little on the weekend of the 5th. Give yourself credit for trying, and then give yourself permission to go off the deep end. Play turns serious from the 8th to 11th, but in a good way. Your personal rules are intense and consistent enough to govern reality. You blend seamlessly into your surroundings, not because you're hiding, but because you're such a natural fit. Your mystique runs strong until fading out on the 16th. Rivals see through you with disturbing clarity. There's still no reason to be ashamed of your goals. Life gets interesting on the weekend of the 19th when everyone steps out of his or her disguise. This gives you the advantage of knowing whose bluff to call through the beginning of summer on the 22nd. Protect your own interests, too, because by then there's no going back. Starting on the 28th, the power of love is your biggest potential ally. Use this velvet edge in any way possible.

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Looking for a real job? Then take *this* number down: 604-253-9355.

If you're out of work, and need help finding a job, then here's your opportunity. The Job Shop is a free program that will support you in a quick return to work. With the support of one-on-one coaching, you'll get connected, gain confidence, and learn from others – all with a view to finding meaningful employment. It really does work. Call **604-253-9355** now to attend the next Job Shop info session. The Job Shop is brought to you by Tradeworks Training Society.



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What is Empowerment?



- 1) Empowerment is based on love, not fear.
- 2) Empowerment is a holistic approach to a problem.
- 3) Empowerment works toward healthy change and transformation.
- 4) Empowerment is about choice.
- 5) Empowerment means living with complexity and shades of grey.
- 6) Empowerment supports flexibility and change.
- 7) Empowerment encourages and celebrates creativity.
- 8) Empowerment takes us beyond labels.
- 9) Empowerment teaches us to trust our own inner wisdom.
- 10) Healing is a community effort of unconditional support and love.

WOMEN'S WORDS
POETRY AND PROSE FROM THE DTES

Loneliness to my walk back 2-me!
April 26, 2003

When the loneliness starts to ache
& your Image comes back 2-me
The tears come down like rain
Then the Rage like Thunder
And I wonder why u done this 2-me
Again & here I sit by myself.
Women whisper, point at my face
Other's assume I asked 4-it
It happened before, she knew
She could of left...
When the loneliness start's aching
I think-2-myself, Thankful I'm alive.
Despite what other's think
Their not me, I live my life
I don't judge.
I'm happy I can laugh still
& find humor and still walk
in this sunshine. I'm a survivor!
My wounds, stitches, will fade away
But not my courage to change
Or face what comes my way!
When the loneliness comes back to me.
I'll remember that I love me
& not the man or whatever less-of-a-man
who hurt me more ways then one. I love me!

L. M. Jo

The Invitation
By Oriah Mountain Dreamer

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dream, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals or have become shrivelled and closed from fear of further pain! I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide it or fade it, or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own, if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, to be realistic, to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself; if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul; if you can be faithless and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see beauty even when it's not pretty, every day, and if you can source your own life from its presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand on the edge of the lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up, after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done to feed the children.

It doesn't interest me who you know or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you, from the inside, when all else falls away.

I want to know if you can be alone with yourself and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.



PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE
FILL OUT HOWEVER MANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORMS YOU
NEED IF YOUR MAIL IS BEING SENT TO THE CENTRE!!!

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

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