

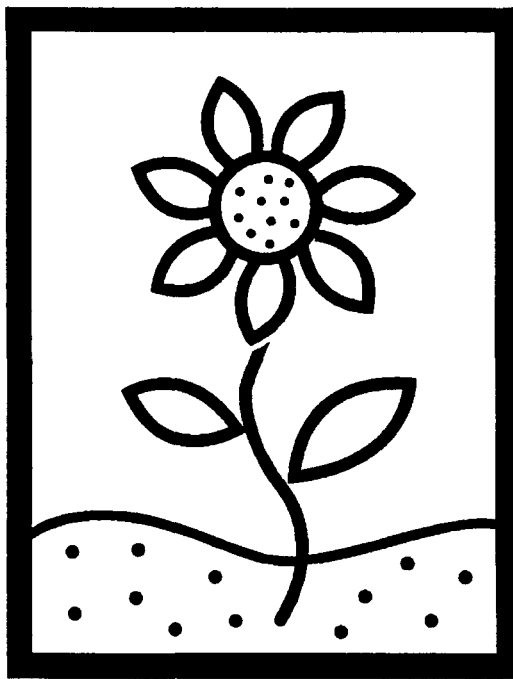
D.E.W. DROP IN

Downtown Eastside Women Do Drop In

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

April 2005

Free



INSIDE:

- Calendar of Events
- April 22 Earth Day
- Art from DEWC
- Stuff Happening
- Welcome to Our New Staff and Volunteers
- Your Rights if You Are a Victim of Crime
- Facts about HIV

DEWC WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW STAFF THIS MONTH

Floor: Tania & Tracy
Kitchen: Karen & Lenora
Mental Health Advocate: Krista James

Hello Everyone.

I will be working here as a mental health advocate until mid August. For now I am at the Centre Tuesday and Wednesday. Starting April 15 I will be here full time Monday to Thursday.

Many of you may recognize me because I volunteered here for 3 years when I was a law student and used to be on the Steering Committee. I am very happy to be back at the Centre for the summer.

I can help with problems related to welfare, disability benefits, child apprehension and housing. I can also answer questions about criminal charges and victim assistance, employment rights, human rights and debt problems. I can help you deal with your lawyer, social worker or Employment and Assistance Worker.

I am really happy to be back at the Centre. I look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting new volunteers and members. Please sign up for an appointment at the front desk if you have any advocacy issues or introduce yourself if you see me around the Centre.

Peace

Krista

Stuff Happening at DEWC

CLOTHING ROOM COMMITTEE MEETING

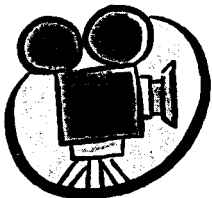
ON APRIL 11, 2005 from 2:00-4:00 p.m., there will be a meeting to form a new Clothing Room Committee.

The purpose of this committee is to bring new ideas and guidelines of how to make the clothing room work better.

The Clothing Room Committee will meet for two hours. Then present a finished proposal to the coordinators of the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.

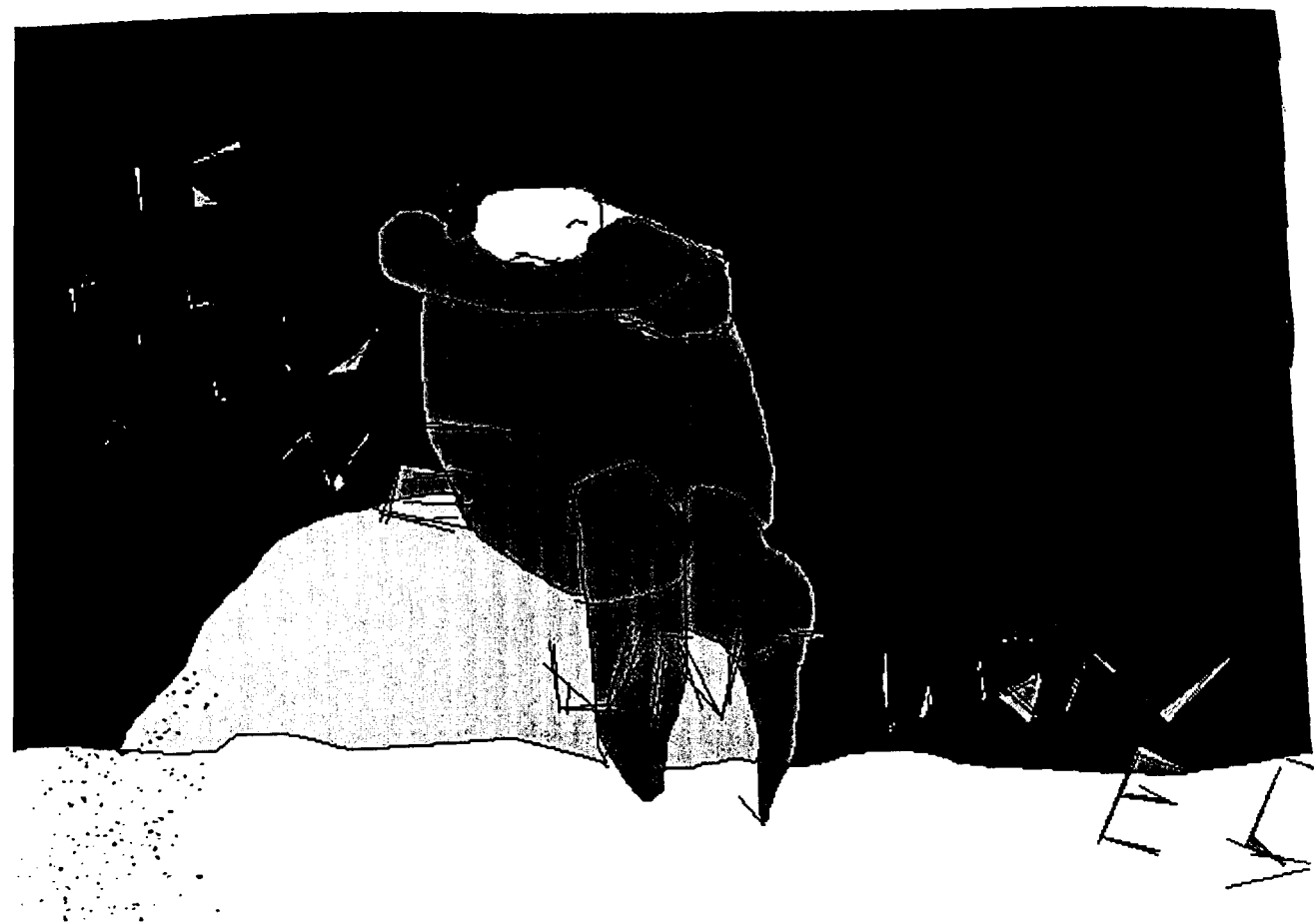
We invite all past clothing room volunteers and anyone else who is interested in the operation of the clothing room to come to the meeting.

Movies:



Women, the DEWC is going to buy movies for our weekly movie time. Please give us your suggestions. Just remember, they must be non-violent, non-sexist, non-racist. Submit your suggestions at the Front Desk Signed-up Sheet.

Art From The Downtown Eastside



IN THE DEWC COMPUTER ROOM



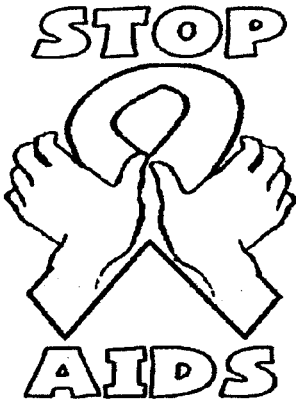
A Note from Barbara our new Computer Room Assistant

I want to say hi to all the volunteers and staff. I've been away for a while and it's a pleasure to come back and be a part of the Volunteer Program at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre. You can find me in the computer room on **Tuesdays and Fridays from 2:00 til 4:30 p.m.** If you need help with simple applications to Web sites; want to set up an e-mail address; learning some of the basics of computer use (trust me, I'm not a 'puter techie either!!!); writing your story and saving it on disk; it's a friendly atmosphere and I look forward to helping out where I can. Oh yes, and if you need your income tax done, I can help with that too.

I've noticed a wonderful difference in the Centre since the fiasco of the previous years. It's been hard work over the last eight months, but the changes are worth noting. The advocates that stuck around and supported us are still here and fighting the good fight for the women. The kitchen staff and volunteers are producing very tasty and nutritious meals, and everybody gets served. What a delight. And I am so grateful. I know others out there have noticed and feel the same way. Maybe next time, say a kind word to those hard working staff and volunteers; they need our support too. My thanks to those who stuck it out and gave us back our Centre and our dignity.

I am also a member of the Elders Council and would welcome any woman of the Centre to introduce themselves and if you have any ideas or suggestions what the Elders Council can do for you and how we can support you, i.e.: mentoring or just listening.

Barbara



HIV/AIDS: FACT OR FICTION: LIE OR TRUTH!

Many women are afraid of the stuff associated with **HIV** and **AIDS**. Here are some facts on **HIV** short for **Human Immunodeficiency Virus**. **HIV** is the virus that causes **AIDS**, short for **Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome**.

You cannot get **HIV** from a toilet seat (**BECAUSE HIV DIES VERY QUICKLY ONCE OUTSIDE THE BODY**), but a wet toilet seat is not well liked in the DEWC.

You cannot get **HIV** from touching an infected person (**SAME REASON AS ABOVE**), but inappropriate touching is not encouraged in the DEWC.

You cannot get **HIV** from being sneezed on (**SAME REASON AS ABOVE**), but rudeness is not acceptable in the DEWC.

You cannot get **HIV** from being coughed on (**SAME REASON AS ABOVE**), another example of rudeness, which is also not acceptable in the DEWC.

You cannot get **HIV** from being spit on (**SAME REASON AS ABOVE**), but even ruder than the two above examples, you may be asked to leave the DEWC.

You cannot get **HIV** from kissing (**TO GET HIV FROM KISSING, YOU WOULD HAVE TO IMBIBE 32 LITERS OF SALIVA; ENOUGH SALIVE TO FILL THE GASOLINE**

HIV/AIDS continue.....

TANK OF A VERY BIG TRUK; AND IN ONE KISSING SESSION), but random kissing in the DEWC can be deemed invasive so please refrain from it.

You cannot get **HIV** from a mosquito, flea, or tick bite (BECAUSE UNLIKE MALARIA, **HIV DOES NOT MULTIPLY IN THE INSECT'S CELLS, NOR CAN IT PASS FROM THE INSECT'S GUT INTO ITS SALIVA**), but the itch is still irritating even in the DEWC.

You cannot get **HIV** from sharing food with an infected person (SAME REASON AS ABOVE), sharing is encouraged in the DEWC, but not from another woman's plate.

You cannot get **HIV** from hugging an infected person (SAME REASON AS ABOVE), but random hugging is unfortunately not acceptable in the DEWC.

Some of the fiction and lies are made larger and scarier because we as women of the DEWC do not have all the information.

HIV/ AIDS is spread by:

- Direct intimate contact with body fluids, such as blood, vaginal secretions or semen
- An **HIV** – infected mother to her baby during pregnancy and breast feeding
- Having sexual intercourse without a latex or plastic condom with an HIV- positive partner
- Sharing contaminated needles (Drugs or steroids)
- Getting a tattoo or poked with a dirty needle
- By transfusions, blood products, or organ transplants

Harm reduction is the new buzzword and I have many harm reduction applications in my office. There are clean syringes, mouthpieces, alcohol swabs, sterile water, condoms, both female and male (lubricated or not), lubricants for mouthpieces or syringes, cotton filters and latex ties.

If you have any questions about HIV/ AIDS please contact the Outreach Worker, **Myrna Cranmer.**

Hospital Visits

Please be reminded that the Outreach Worker is still looking for women from the DEWC that will volunteer to visit women in St. Paul's Hospital and other hospitals. If you have a cold or the flu it is strongly suggested that you do not volunteer for that day but come back when you are healthier. While the women in the hospital cannot transmit germs to you, you are more likely to transfer your germs to them.

March 13th, 2005 Escape to UBC

Full Circle: First Nations Performance and the International Arts in association with the Chan Centre at UBC were pleased to donate 20 tickets to the DEWC. The seats were in a prime area where my friends and I paid \$60 a piece.

Margo Kane emceed the show and performed making everyone laugh. The women also witnessed Buffy Saint-Marie, Ulali (3 women), Sandy Scofield, Kinnie Starr and a very funny aboriginal woman who gave comic relief with her brother. It was a treat to see women from the DEWC enjoy a show away from the downtown area of Vancouver. It was even more of a joy to see them get out of their comfort zone and appreciate some of the outside world's entertainment.

The show focussed on aboriginal women performers spanning many years, many ages and was greatly appreciated by the women who had tickets. There was transportation there and back. The show was quite long because of so many entertainers but it was worth it. Thank you Margo Kane and the organization called the Talking Stick for the tickets.

New Staff, Familiar Faces at the Centre

I would like to welcome some new staff members to the Centre. As you all know we have been in the process of hiring new relief staff to ensure that the Centre can operate as smoothly as possible. The Hiring Committee comprised of Phillipa Ryan (Elders Advisory Committee representative), Carol Martin (Representing Management due to illness), Mable Nipshank (Board of Directors representative) and Reta Blind (Staff representative) recommended 4 people out of a total of 30 plus applications. This recommendation was accepted by the Management Team.

It was a very difficult decision for the committee because many qualified and committed individuals were interviewed for the position but unfortunately we could only hire 4 people. The final selections were based on reliability, experience, training, ability to handle conflicts and stressful situations, diplomacy, commitment to the Centre and availability for work. All those involved in the hiring wished that there was sufficient resources and positions available for everyone because all those interviewed would have all be great for the Centre.

I am confident that the four women that were hired will do an exceptional job for everyone in the Centre. They are hard working volunteers who are very committed to the Centre, they believe in the purpose of the Centre and feel very passionately about supporting all the women and children who use the Centre. They have never spoken ill of the Centre despite the many challenges and difficulties the Centre has encountered. As volunteers they always have a smile and a helping hand for Centre members. I am thrilled to welcome Lenora Wright, Tracy Morrison, Karen Matticks and Tannia Granados to the DEWC staff team and I look forward to working with them through thick and thin.

Regards,

Cynthia Low
Administrative Coordinator

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

LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30-1:45

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 1:30 Resumes	2 2:00 Video
3 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video	4 10:00 Arts & Crafts 10:00 CWS 10:30 YOGA 1:30 Beading 3-4:30 Carnegie Crafts	5 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00 Bingo 5:00 BWSS	6 11-12 Computer Class 11:30 Sweat Lodge 11-3:00 BWSS LEGAL ADVOCACY 2:00 Crochet & Raffle	7 10:30-4:00 IIG Math & English-University Access Program 11-12 Book Club	8 1:30 Resumes	9 2:00 Video
10 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video	11 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 10:30 YOGA 1:30 Beading 3-4:30 Carnegie Crafts	12 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00 Bingo 5:00 BWSS	13 11-12 Computer Class 11:30 Sweat Lodge 11-3:00 BWSS LEGAL ADVOCACY 1:00 RESUMES 2:00 Crochet & Raffle	14 10:30-4:00 IIG Math & English-University Access Program 11-12 Book Club	15 1:30 Resumes	16 2:00 Video
17 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video Spring Begins	18 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 10:30 YOGA 1:30 Beading 3-4:30 Carnegie Crafts	19 10 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00 Raffle 5:00 BWSS	20 11-12 Computer Class 11:30 Sweat Lodge 11-3:00 BWSS LEGAL ADVOCACY 1:00 RESUMES 2:00 Crochet & Raffle	21 10:30-4:00 IIG Math & English-University Access Program 11-12 Book Club	22 1:30 Resumes	23 2:00 Video
24 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video	25 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 10:30 YOGA 1:30 Beading 3-4:30 Carnegie Crafts	26 10 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00 Bingo 5:00 BWSS	27 11-12 Computer Class 11:30 Sweat Lodge 11-3:00 BWSS LEGAL ADVOCACY 2:00 Crochet & Raffle	28 CENTRE CLOSED	29 1:30 Resumes Taiko	30 Video

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.

Carnegie Crafts—Arts and crafts each week with new themes all the time, all women welcome, everything supplied.

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

Massage—Pamper yourself courtesy of Anita and Rosemary!

Resume Workshop – Create your own Resume with the help of Eemina.

The **Street Nurse, Christina**, comes by every Tuesday between 12noon-2pm to give you information on all kinds of health issues.

BWSS Legal Advocate, Olatz comes by every Wednesday from 11-3, if you need help with legal issues, child protection, custody &access or general legal information.

Yoga— with Janet All women welcome, wear comfortable clothing, practice breathing and stretching exercises, good for the body and mind.

Sweat Lodge – Reta will be taking women every Wednesday meet at the Centre at 11:30

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. Tuesday on rotating schedule from 5-8:30

Taiko Night-Drum with Cynthia and the Taiko Group.

Women's Health Clinic-on going 59 West Pender

NEW CENTRE DONATIONS POLICY

As of April 1, 2005 the DEWC **will not** be accepting donations of furniture, appliances, knick knacks, toys, etc.

As of April 1, 2005 the DEWC **will only** accept specific kinds donations at the front door, these are;

1. MONEY and Cheques!
2. Clothing
3. Cutlery – Spoons and forks
4. Bowls

All other donations will be redirected to either My Sister's Closet (Commercial Drive), First United or St. James.

Donations continue to be a source of problems of Centre staff, volunteers and members of DEWC. In reviewing the mandate of the Centre the management has decided that we can no longer accommodate the distribution of random donations. Because of;

- Complaints caused as a result of perceived unequal distribution of donations and accusations of favoritism
- Lack of space to store large donations
- Accusations of theft made against staff and volunteers
- Arguments and conflicts between members as a result of donations
- Many items from the donations through raffle or Bingo end up left at the Centre for a number of days sometimes weeks
- Time taken up by volunteers and staff, moving, storing, sorting, cleaning and mediating arguments, just for the donations is not a good use of staff time and resources

If there are any concerns or complaints please speak to Cynthia Low.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

Your rights if you are a Victim of Crime

Under the British Columbia's Victims of Crime Act, Justice system personnel must treat victims of crime with courtesy and respect. If you are a victim of crime, the Act also gives you the right to receive information about:

- **victim services available to you**
- **compensation under the Criminal Injury Compensation Act**
- **how the criminal justice system works, the status of the police investigation and the court case.**
- **the administration of the offender's sentence**
- **your rights to privacy under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

Victims of Crime Act: What do i need to know if i am a victim of Crime?

When crime touches you

When crime touches you or your family, you may need to know how to get information and support during the days following the crime.

Under the Victims of Crime Act, you have the right to be given information about victim services and how the criminal justice system works.

The act also refers to other legislation that provides privacy rights, and rights of access to information and compensation.

The victim of Crime Act gives you the right to receive information, including

- **status of the police investigation**
- **status of the prosecution**
- **status of the court case**
- **administration of the offender's sentence**

Victim Services

Over 100 communities in B.C. have victim services offices. They can provide various services to you depending upon:

- where you live
- type of crime
- impact on you
- stage the investigation or prosecution has reached

These programs are staffed by people trained to help victims, and are free of charge. Some of the services they may provide are:

- Helping you to cope with the effects of a crime
- providing you with emotional support
- helping you to apply for criminal injury compensation, if you are eligible.
- referring you to the other agencies for further assistance
- informing you about the status of the police investigation and the court case
- explaining what happens in court and preparing for the trial.
- helping you to prepare a victim impact statement (forms available from Crown Counsel offices)

To find the victim services office nearest you call: 1 800 - 563 - 0808.

What if I am Injured?

If you are injured as a result of a crime, or if you are an immediate family member of a person killed because of a crime, you may be eligible for compensation under the Criminal Injury Compensation Act.

You have the right to apply for benefits to cover cost such as:

- loss of income or wages
- counselling expenses
- medical expenses not covered by your medical plan

After the crime has been reported to the police, you have one year to make an application for compensation. You may apply, or someone else may apply on your behalf, even if no one has been convicted of the crime.

Victim services offices can help you fill out an application form. For further information on Criminal Injury compensation, you can call toll free at 1 - 900 - 643 - 2000, in the lower mainland call 604 - 244 - 6400.

How does the Criminal Justice System Work?

The act permits you to describe to the court, in your own words, the effect of the crime on you. Crown counsel may give you a Victim Impact Statement form. You may ask crown counsel's office or a victim services office for help completing the form.

Courts

The provincial court system has three levels: Provincial Court, Supreme Court and Court of Appeal for B.C. Most criminal cases start in the Criminal Division of Provincial Court.

In cases of murder and a few other offences, the accused is tried in Supreme Court or to Provincial Court. If the choice is Supreme Court, the accused may choose to be tried by a judge alone, or by a judge and jury. If the accused selects Supreme Court, a preliminary hearing will be held in Provincial Court before the trial takes place.

As a victim, you may have to testify both at the preliminary hearing in Provincial Court, and at the later hearing in Supreme Court. If the accused decides to have the trial in Provincial Court, you may have to testify only once.

Before the trial is held, you may request a guided tour of the court by someone from a victim services office. This will help you feel more at ease with the court process when the trial begins.

Disclosure of Personal Information

The defense lawyer may ask your medical doctor or counsellor for information that police and crown counsel do not already have. If you do not want the information to be released, you may want your position to be represented by your own lawyer.

Role of the Judge

Judges are responsible for making impartial, fair decisions according to law.

If the accused person admits responsibility for the crime by pleading guilty, or if the accused is convicted at a trial, the judge will be presented with information by crown counsel and the defence to help with sentencing.

The sentence imposed by the judge may include;

- warrants for the arrest of the accused
- bail orders
- probation orders

The original documents are kept in the files at the court registry of the courthouse where the trial of the accused person is taking place.

Corrections

The criminal justice system has four main parts: police, crown counsel, courts and corrections.

As the case proceeds through the criminal justice system, the Victims of Crime Act gives you the right to be told:

- **the name of the accused**
- **the specific counts with which the accused is charged or for which the offender is convicted**
- **the reasons a decision was made respecting charges**
- **the date, location, purpose and result of each court appearance that is likely to affect the final outcome, sentence or bail status of the accused**

Police

The police is responsible for investigating any crime that is reported to them. They gather evidence to establish the details of the crime, as well as the identity of the offender.

In some cases, investigations may take months. In others, the offender may never be identified, and no one will be charged with the crime.

If the police are able to identify the suspect and gather sufficient evidence about the crime, they recommend criminal charges to crown counsel.

Crown Counsel

The crown counsel is a lawyer who:

- **reviews the recommendation from the police**
- **decides what charges will be laid against the suspect**
- **prosecutes the case on behalf of the Crown (not the victim)**
- **attends all court appearances**
- **provides information and argument to the judge on bail hearings and on sentence hearings**

An offender sentenced to probation must report to a probation officer. Probation officers are responsible for:

- **supervising accused persons who are released on bail prior to trial**
- **supervising offenders if they are given probation as a sentence or part of a sentence**
- **preparing reports for the judge on bail and sentencing matters**
- **recommending to the B.C. Parole Board whether an offender is appropriate for parole supervision**

Probation officers may contact you concerning bail or sentencing issues, and you can choose to tell them your concerns about bail, sentencing and early release of the offender.

Under certain circumstances, particularly if you believe your safety is at risk, you may be given further information if your interest outweigh the privacy rights of the offender.

If the judge imposes a jail sentence of less than two years, the offender goes to a provincial prison managed by the corrections branch of the provincial ministry of Attorney General. IF there is a sentence of two years or more, the offender goes to a federal penitentiary managed by the correctional service of Canada.

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&
Associates
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May 17 is Election Day

The next provincial general election is on Tuesday May 17, 2005.

How can I register to vote?

You can if you are:

- 18 years of age or older, or will be 18 on general election day;
- a Canadian Citizen;
- a Resident of BC for the past six month

How do I Register, update or confirm my voter Registration?

1. on line at www.elections.bc.ca
2. contact elections BC toll-free at 1-800-661-8683
3. Visit your local Service BC Government Agent

**April 12 and 19 From 10- 2
Provincial Enumeration @ The Centre
Please come and register.**



INCOME TAX CLINIC

FOR LOW INCOME IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

Location:

#501-333 Terminal Avenue Vancouver
The Immigrant Services Society of BC
(Telephone #: 604-684-2561 ext. 233, 261)

Dates:

March 1– April 30, 2005

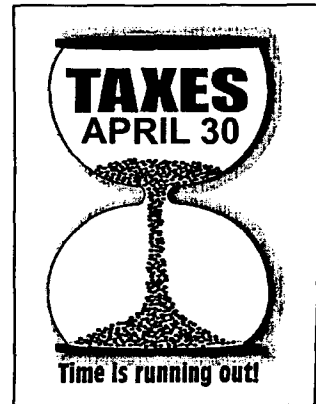
Days:

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Time:

4:00PM-8:00PM

(last appointment @ 7:30PM)



FOR LOW INCOME IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

- ◆ appointment is necessary!)
- ◆ Please bring all necessary documentation, including T4 or T5 slips for 2003, a copy of last year's income tax return, (if possible), Medical receipts, tuition or school receipts and Immigration papers and SIN
- ◆ number/ cards for both spouses.
- ◆ Please inform our office at time of booking appointment if you (or your clients) have a language preference.
- ◆ The clinic is free of charge (donations are appreciated)

SERVICE AVAILABLE IN MANY LANGUAGES

(English, Spanish, French, Punjabi (Hindi), Mandarin, Contonese, Farsi, Tagalog, Korean)



April 22 is Earth Day

Celebrated every April 22, Earth Day is the largest, most celebrated environmental event worldwide.

More than 6 million Canadians join 500 million people in over 180 countries in staging events and projects to address local environmental issues. Nearly every school child in Canada takes part in an Earth Day activity.

Environmental crises abound as our daily actions pollute and degrade the fragile environment that humans and wildlife depend on to survive.

