



D.E.W. DROP IN

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

Downtown Eastside Women Do Drop In

January 2006

Free

Christmas 2005



INSIDE:

- Events in January
- Poetry and thoughts from the DTES
- News from Management Team
- Welcome to the new Board of Directors

Up Coming events:

Sunday January 1, 06

12:00-2:00

DEWC Pancake Breakfast

Monday January 2, 06

10:00 - 12:00

DEWC Hair cuts

Make sure you sign up at the front desk for this service.

Wednesday January 11, and 25, 06

2:00- 3:00

DEWC Book Club

This month we are reading *Monkey Beach* by Eden Robinson, come by Sara's office for a copy of the book .

Monday January 23, 06

5:00-7:30

DEWC Community Kitchen

This time we will learn to make home made quesadillas with home made salsa. Please sign up for this event since space is limited

Amazing Grace

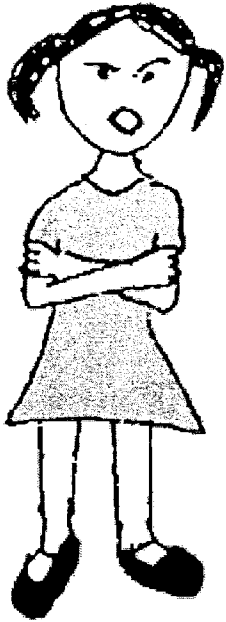
Now this is quite bizarre to say the least
Sitting here in Surrey afternoon at a gourmet feast.
Usually I'd be in a skid row bar.
Either sick , sad and sorry or playing the star.
We are all famous if we have money a pipe and some beer.
But once that's gone by no means do we CHEER
Thank you dear God for your supernatural powers
And one day at a time this will be my showers.
Shower me at love Dear Lord,
Amen

This was written by Yvonne M. Mark after coming very close to relapsing on crack and alcohol. I was 24 days clean and sober the night I wrote this poem and God willing I made it to day number 25 !

Gratitude is too mild an expression of my feelings as words could NEVER express how to feel.

Thank you all for your love and support and my prayers are with those still on the dark road.

Yvonne Mark

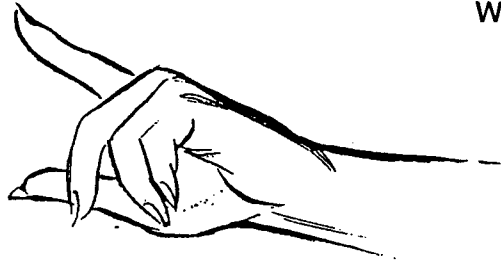


one angry girl

**THIS
SPACE IS
NOT
SAFE
FOR
WOMEN**



These are some of the images that we are using for our sticker campaign. We encourage women to pick up some stickers from the front desk and put them up wherever you have experienced intimidation, fear and violence – just because you are a woman!



Volunteer Corner

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AT DEWC

What is the Skills Development Project?

The Skills Development Project of the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre provides opportunities for women living or working in the Downtown Eastside to acquire skills, improve self-esteem and to garner hands-on experience in a variety of positions at the Centre.

Who joins the Project?

This project is for women who live or work in the Downtown Eastside and want to make positive change in their lives.

What do the Project participants do in the Centre?

The positions in the Centre include desk receptionists, kitchen prep cooks, kitchen servers, floor worker assistants, clothing room assistants, workshop facilitators, hair cutters, translators, and Computer Room Monitors. Volunteers are also essential components of all of the Centre's special events. The participants are placed in positions that best match their interests and abilities.

How do you get started as a Volunteer?

The best way to start is by attending a Volunteer Orientation, which are the first Sunday of every month at 3:30pm. You may also see Sara between Sunday and Wednesday to get started. We start by talking about the program and what your expectations are and from there we build a plan that suits each individual. Please feel free to come by and chat.

**THANK YOU ALL VOLUNTEERS FOR ALL
YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION!**

WELCOME TO THE INCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

Bernie Williams
Debbie Lincoln
Josephine Watson
Marlene Trick

Mebrat Beyene
Patty Iclvor
Selina Barton
Velma Pacquette

Most of the names are familiar with the membership because of their years in the neighbourhood and strong commitment to the community. This board is dedicated to the values of the Centre as stated in our mission and purpose statements.

Our mission is to provide for basic needs and to work towards positive change for women and children in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver.

Our purpose is to;

- Provide a comfortable, safe drop-in Centre
- Provide recreation and self-help programs
- Act as a source of information by assisting women with referrals concerning their needs
- Provide a social space and facilitate the opportunity for women of diverse backgrounds to interact and build community
- Educate the public and all levels of government about issues concerning women in the area

In the next year the goals are:

- Develop a financial strategy
- Establish a functional Board with as Elder rep. and a Volunteer rep.
- Maintain relationship with membership
- Take a leadership role in the "Lasting Memorial"
- Develop By-laws, policies & procedures
- Ongoing governance that ensures that the DEWC is responding to the needs of women in the community
- Prepare for our 30 year anniversary
- Resolve outstanding labour matters

All board members are held to a high level of accountability to the membership and to the organization, without personal gain. They are expected to follow and reinforce the guidelines of the Centre and practice the principles of anti-oppression, equality, feminism and social justice.

News from Management Team

It has been an amazing year and 2006 will be great for the Centre. This is planned;

Extended hours – we hope to increase the Drop In hours from 44 hours per week to 50 hours per week.

Cold Wet Weather – we would like to keep open all night when the temperature drops for women to stay.

Improving the food – Increasing the meals, bigger portions and more fresh food

Increase programming – we would like to have a variety of evening groups every week night, outings, arts and craft workshops, speakers, education and health information sharing

The Management Team has the best interest of the Centre in our hearts, we will make mistakes and we will learn. Changes are necessary to improve the Centre but it is also incredibly difficult. People are afraid that the changes will affect them negatively or that it may mean a reduction of services. This is not the case our goal is to be better, more effective, responsible and efficient.

There have been considerable concerns regarding the staffing changes at the Centre that will be happening in February. 6 staff members have been laid off due to the changes in their positions. The staff affected are; 2 full time floor workers, 2 full time cooks and 2 relief staff. The positions of floorworker and cook have been eliminated. Instead there will be 2 positions for Peer support/self help workers, 2 position for Kitchen Trainers and 2 relief positions. Under the Union collective agreement, current staff are entitled to apply for the new positions without loss of seniority or benefits.

These positions were created to better empower the women of the community. The responsibility of these positions is to work more closely with volunteers and centre members to share information, for skill development and support. These issues have been discussed over the past 18 months with staff, board, volunteers and members.

The goals are to;

- Better manage crisis and conflicts in the Centre
- Create a positive space for women and children that is safe and calming
- Focus on building self-esteem, skills and abilities of members and volunteers
- Provide positive role models to volunteers and members in the Centre and in the community
- Improve programs and in-centre activities

On Thursday December 29, 2005 we hosted a talking circle to address any concerns, questions and issues that people had regarding this change.

At the Talking Circle at the Centre, the hope was that women who had concerns about the staff lay offs would have an opportunity to speak. In all about 30 women attended and it was a good gathering. Women got to speak their hearts and their fears. Thank you to Reta who lead the Circle and to everyone who attended.

There is a genuine concern around changes, things have been going pretty good at the Centre and people are nervous that changes will be negative. The Management team would like to reassure the women that use the Centre that there will be NO changes in the programs here, in fact the changes are to improve how we treat women in the Centre and how we can support volunteers in the Centre. We will continue to open 7 days a week, lunch everyday and breakfast on Tuesday and Thursday. Groups, workshops and outings will also continue. More night groups will be added.

Over the past 18 months the management has worked very hard to address the debt that was created by the past administration and board of directors. At the same time we have been trying to bring back some of the programming that women depend on AND improve the food service at the Centre. We will continue to work towards financial independence but that does not mean that we should not improve on what we have now. We have been listening to the membership. One of the items that have been brought up is the lack of action to make changes for women here. WELL...

In February there is a new project starting, the Centre will be hiring a new staff member to coordinate this project called POW2W – Power of Women to Women. The idea is to support women in the downtown eastside organize around issues that are important to us. She will also be working closely with Sara, the Skills and Development Worker (Volunteer) to support Centre volunteers. Although this staff person will be based in the Centre she will also be working with Crabtree, Carnegie, DAMS and other organizations to plan and deliver workshops and learning opportunities. She will also facilitate a weekly evening group for women who are FED UP with what is happening in the community and want to do something about it. This could include issues like;

- Increase in welfare rates
- Violence against women
- Lack of safe housing for women
- Child apprehension
- And much more...

Funding for this one year project is provided by the Status of Women Canada, City of Vancouver, the Sharon Martin Fund, Kairos and the Provincial Employees Community Service Fund.

Sincerely, Alice Kendall and Cynthia Low

Poverty in the Promised Land

In the Fifties we scrounged the dump

for heavy glass

-Pop bottles-coca cola, orange

crush, 7UP

Patsy Murphy & I traded them for

penny candy:

Black Babies, Honeymoons, Coconut,

Buds,

-tiny cones full of honey+

brown sugar- delicious to us.

Also the blackberries by the train track

Near the dump, the abattoir &

Africaville; but

The biggest, juiciest grew near the

Graveyard...

We sold them for 50c a quart (remember quarts)

Now I cruise the lanes for good garbage

cans+ bottles for recycling

to buy bread & milk, maybe a little

meat

Oh Canada, our home + the Native's land

Glorious and free!

Freedom is a thin gruel

Human rights cold comfort in the mean

streets.

Wilhelmina

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.

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.

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

ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOP

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

Crafts every Monday- 10am.
Painting- with materials supplied- every Thursday - 2:00 pm.
Crochet with Anna & Freeda-Every Wednesday, 2:00pm.
Fabric Arts with Freeda- Every Tuesday morning, 10:00am.

EVENING PROGRAMMING

Music Jam- Sing and play instruments with Reta and Leona. Always a week before welfare day from 5-8:00

Community Kitchen- come and learn new recipes 'share your cooking expertise with everything supplied- Always a Monday before welfare day.

Women's Health Clinic-on going 59 West Pender

Batter Women Support Services- Support for women experiencing violence.

Taiko Drumming—Learn to play big drums and train to perform.

Healing Circle—Every Thursday except welfare week.

Just a reminder-there is no bus tickets or child care provided for groups.

SUNDAY 12:00-5:00*	MONDAY 10:00-5:00*	TUESDAY 10:00-5:00*	WEDNESDAY 11:00-5:00*	THURSDAY 10:00-5:00*	FRIDAY 10:00-5:00*	SATURDAY 12:00-5:00*
1 12:00-2:00 Pancake Breakfast	2 10:00 Hair Cuts 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga	3 10:00 Massage & Sewing 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00: Bingo 5:00 BWSS	4 2:00 Crochet	5 10:30 -4:00 IIG Math & English University Access Program 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle	6	7 2:00 Video
8 1:30: Resumes 2:00 Video 5:00 Taiko	9 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga	10 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00: Bingo 5:00 BWSS	11 12:00 Sweat Lodge 2:00 Crochet 2:00 Book Club	12 10:30 -4:00 IIG Math & English University Access Program 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle	13	14 2:00 Video
15 1:30: Resumes 2:00 Video	16 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga 5:00 Food Safe I	17 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00: Bingo 5:00 BWSS	18 12:00 Sweat Lodge 2:00 Crochet	19 10:30 -4:00 IIG Math & English University Access Program 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle	20	21 2:00 Video
22 1:30: Resumes 2:00 Video	23 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga 5:00 Community Kitchen	24 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Alcohol and Drug Counseling 2:00: Bingo 5:00 BWSS	25 12:00 Sweat Lodge 2:00 Crochet 2:00 Book Club	26 CENTRE CLOSED	27	28 2:00Video
29 1:30: Resumes 2:00 Video	30 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga	31 10 :00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas 2:00: Bingo 5:00 BWSS				

* PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CENTRE IS OPEN UNTIL 5:00 PM BUT DOORS WILL BE LOCKED AT 4:45

Dedicated to all the women who i miss so dearly and remember with fond memories.

I love you all.

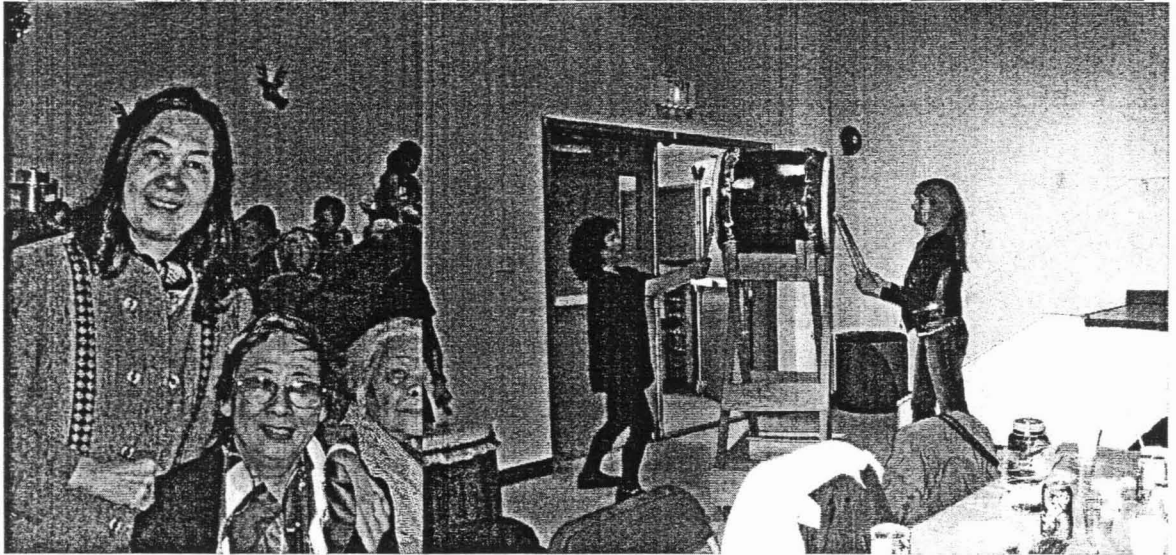
In tears I saw you sinking,
I watched you fade away,
You suffered, much in silence,
You fought so hard to stay,
You faced your task with courage,
Your spirit did not bend
And still you kept on fighting
Until the very end.

God say you getting tired,
When a cure was not to be,
So, he put his arms around you,
And whispered, "Come with me"
You didn't deserve what you went through,
And , so he gave you rest,
God's garden must be beautiful,
He only takes the best
So, when I saw you sleeping,
So peaceful, free from pain,
I could not wish you back,
To suffer that again.

To all the people who died from Aids/Hiv, i love you and miss you all. You left fond memories of yourself and it is held within my mind and felt in my heart. Til we meet again. Always a friend, Carol.











Music from the Chinese Seniors
Help from our volunteers
Love, Friendship and Peace

Over 700 women and children served.

Turkey Dinner with all the fixings.

Presents for ALL!

Even Santa was there.

Thanks to all the volunteers and staff for the wonderful day!



Christmas Day was just beautiful, pancake breakfast and 150 friends to celebrate together.

Presents for all and a great BINGO game.

DEWC CHRISTMAS PHOTOALBUM



The Rules

1. The female always makes the rules.
2. No male can possibly know the rules.
3. If the female suspects the male knows all the rules she must immediately change some of the rules
4. THE FEMALE IS NEVER WRONG
5. The female can change her mind at any point in time
6. The female has the right to be angry or upset at any time.
7. The male must remain calm at ALL times, unless the FEMALE wants him to be angry or upset.
8. The female must under no circumstances let the male know whether to be angry or upset.
9. If the female has PMS, all rules are NULL and VOID.
10. THE MALE CANNOT DIAGNOSE PMS.
11. The Man should always know what the female wants so she does not have to ask.
12. When unsure see rule #1.

The Curse

Save the ho
Don't you know
She is lost to the world
Of sin
If you must save
Her from her self
Understand she is on
The road to no win
She needs emancipation from
Sexual exploitation
Some sinner put her there
Lend a helping hand
Be a friend
Show her that you care
Share her heavy load
Put her on a higher road
And God bless you
Brother man

Erin