

FREE - donations accepted

Carnegie

APRIL 1, 2000

NEWSLETTER

401 Main Street, Vancouver V6A 2T7 (604) 665-2289



ON THE STREET

There's agony and joy on our streets.. innocence and ugliness, pain and much grief, darkness, risk, betrayals, terrible hurts, bitter sadness and yet often too, for those with eyes to see, surprise, an amazing goodness.

Sam Roddan

Breaking The Silence

Launch their spring campaign
“Empowering Women as Organizers”

April 6 & 13 Banner Making *with Karenza & Krista*. Come and make a banner for the campaign and for yourself 3 - 5 pm 509 E. Hastings

April 20 Fay Blaney from AWAN speaks on How to Organize for Aboriginal Women's Rights 10 - 11 am 42 E. Cordova, basement

April 27 Learn to make powerful public speeches 3 - 5 pm 509 E. Hastings

May events - RSVP to 682-3269 ext. 8319 if you're interested in a 3 day drum-making workshop with Aline LaFlamme



Notes from the Reading Room

Our biggest news, of course, is of the visit we had from Her Excellency Adrienne Clarkson, the Governor General, on March 10th. We found her very charming and were delighted both by the feeling that she was truly listening to what we were saying and by the fact that she is genuinely concerned about what we do here. Of course, we presented her with a Carnegie Card and took her on a bit of tour of the Reading Room, and, then, she was on her way to the rest of the Centre.

The Reading Club is, now, reading its second title, Rudy Wiebe's The Temptations of Big Bear. Our next meeting will be on April 3 at 3:00pm in the art gallery on the 3rd floor. Any of you who want to join us are welcome.

Our plans for increasing the Spanish language section are coming along. New Spanish material is trickling in from Acquisitions at the Central Branch. If you're interested in books in Spanish, please come in and have a look. If you have some suggestions, we'd love to hear them. Along with the new books, I'm going to try to get a subscription to a weekly magazine from Latin America.

We have heard muttered complaints from the

lovers of Westerns among you, and, so, we are doing something about it. In the last 2 weeks we've received nearly 3 dozen new Western paperbacks. We will make sure we have a constant supply of new Westerns coming in because the complaint we heard was about people who'd read everything we had.. and we can't have that.

At a recent Library Committee Meeting it was suggested that we give appropriate recognition and credit to those people who have found Reading Room books around the community and who have helped us by returning them. This is an excellent idea. In future at Library Committee Meetings these people will get their names in the minutes and, as a result, they will be mentioned at the next Carnegie Board meeting. We realize, also, that some people may wish to remain anonymous, and we will respect that as well. We want everyone who helps us find our missing books to realize just how truly thankful we are.

I have purchased a new copy of The Canadian Encyclopedia. As soon as we can get the cover laminated and returned to us, we will put the encyclopedia behind the circulation desk as a reference item (which requires giving ID for use).

Dick Turner, Acting Branch Head
Carnegie Reading Room

THE DOWNTOWN CORE

- as we live in fear -

Written for *Community Directions* by A.O.
RayCam Ward Program Youth Participant

The time to save the Downtown Eastside from homelessness could be no better than now. The focus remains strong from the communities all around to put a stop to the conversion and demolition of already half the residential hotel units since 1970. There has been a great deal of trouble from business producing only for tourism in the Downtown Core. People have been taken from their homes and have had their rights to tenancy taken from them. Low-income housing in the SROs hasn't met the needs of the people. Cooking facilities, like their own kitchen, are not ensured. Many people have been turned away from emergency shelters. There is little public space for parks among the low-income residences.

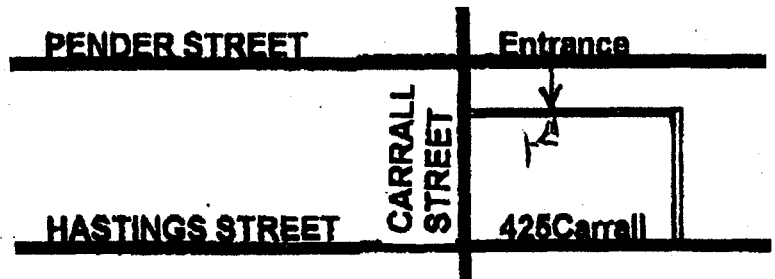
The youth of the present and the future need to be given the commitment that residential housing will be kept in place or they will only be left on waiting lists after all their efforts to find a decent affordable place that can offer a vacancy. The

year-long waiting lists for social housing and 3. waiting lists even for places found unlivable has also brought attention to the fact that many places are too expensive for low-income residents. Our city hotels are being demolished to help set aside space for condominiums. The residents have been evicted with little notice. I even heard of a person who was living in a building where his roof caved in. He was evicted without replacement housing for almost an entire month with no compensation.

The living space for a hotel residence must have minimum standards and be affordable for a low-income resident. The people of the Downtown Core need a Housing Preservation Program to help the renovation of SRO's for residential needs. Many days go by with homeless people having no place to go. They wake up next to a water sprinkler or the police who ask them to move along. Then, with no resources other than to borrow change as a means of personal wealth, they find they are only bothered again by more police. The days of winter go by with people still having no place to go and some more people frost bitten on the cold streets.

By A.O.

*main
hastings*



Main & Hastings Housing Society will have a new housing development for adults at 40 East Hastings Street, Vancouver. The estimated move-in date is Summer 2000

The building has 84 bachelor apartments. There is one wheelchair accessible suite. The rent will be BC Benefits Shelter Allowance or 30% of gross household income.

We are accepting applications now. Filling out an application is not a promise of housing.

You can get an application on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 1pm & 4pm at our main office. Go to the rear of 425 Carrall as shown, through the parking lot. Buzz #1111, use the elevator and go to the 1st floor.

Grandchildren

(to Au and Warren)

Anyone interested in learning or creating materials in

Thompson, Shuswap, Cree, or other native languages,

please come to a discussion on Tuesday, April 11th at 9:30 a.m. in Carnegie's Learning Centre.

Grandchildren graciously give you a second chance

To be the person you meant to be.

Their generous love absolves your mistakes;
Forgives your omissions.

Time, too, is finally on your side;

For all that former rush and fret of work and travel
And family day to day

Stole some joy from the knowing

Of your children's unique ideas and imagination.

Now I have the time and the perspective to listen and to play.

Wilhelmina Miles

The Eagle and the Persons Who I honour

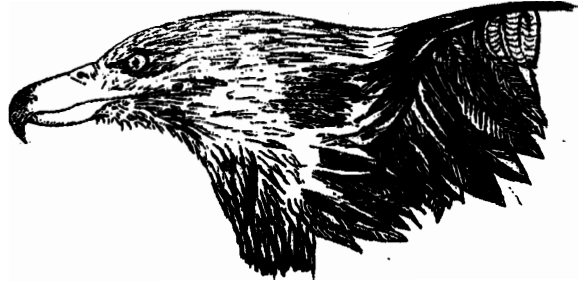
The eagle is very sacred in our tradition and has been for many years. It brings good faith and good wisdom and is the most powerful messenger. From our great spirit and our departed loved ones I honoured the eagle as I walked my daily routine. I was blessed as he stood there on a nearby tree watching me. He sent me a good message from my grandpa, Sam Hall, who was a medicine man in his journey of life. He recently passed away to join his wife, Jennie Hall, my mama Clara Dominic, uncle Leonard Dominic and his son, Teddy Hall. Grandpa lived a long happy life raising his family. As a young man grandpa Sam played baseball and hockey. He had many friends on the team. They competed with other rez.

Grandpa was well known as a strong young man, a good hunter and a trapper. He was a kind, caring medicine man and a father and grandpa. He went out of his way helping people as they came to him for a cure. Papa would always make sure he had food on the table for his family. I remember in our early childhood my sis Brenda and I would get up early in the morning. Papa would make us a great big peanut and homemade jelly sandwich. Alt that was very good.

I miss you grandpa Sam. I'll carry and cherish you deep in my heart forever. Grandpa Sam. was gifted from our higher power as a good medicine man. He was well respected for his gift. He would help people as they came to him for a cure. Papa was always a cheerful, happy, jokeable, humorous person. Everybody loved him. He left his humor-ous jokes to his sons and daughters Grandpa left behind numerous grandchildren and great grand children. The lord has called my dear grandpa Sam. back who I honoured and looked up to. . I'll miss you very much. I will always remember you and mama Clara. There is a big space deep in my heart missing but now I know that mama Clara and you grandma are all happy where gods put you so until we meet again rest in peace.

Your grand daughters Virginia, Dominique, Brenda

Your great-grandchildren Jennifer, Darren, Megan, Dominique



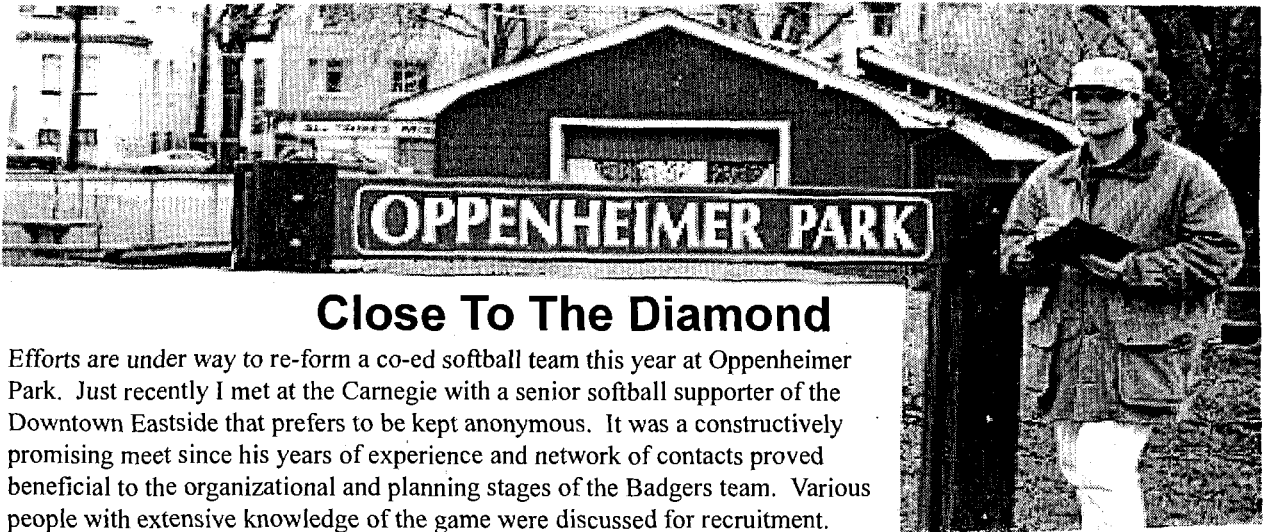


Super Bowl

Found out this day the new way
 That was not made by any man
 Got tired of the old way where
 It was me that invented the world
 Always putting myself on the cross
 Taking on jobs that are too big
 And all that I had to do was ask
 That this cup of bitterness and pain
 Be taken away from out of my hands
 There is the room to move around

Freedom the size of the Super bowl
 There is a wealth that I heard about
 When the time is found to make
 Life a little different for others
 Doing just those every day things
 When some note is reached that
 Is higher than all of the rest it is
 Caught up in that timeless universe
 These are the riches stored in heaven
 And eternally in the minds of men.

Daniel Rajala



Close To The Diamond

Efforts are under way to re-form a co-ed softball team this year at Oppenheimer Park. Just recently I met at the Carnegie with a senior softball supporter of the Downtown Eastside that prefers to be kept anonymous. It was a constructively promising meet since his years of experience and network of contacts proved beneficial to the organizational and planning stages of the Badgers team. Various people with extensive knowledge of the game were discussed for recruitment.

There's a lot of leg work that goes into the formation of a formidable team, and promotional fundraising activities are only small, but important aspects of the magical ingredients that it takes to win. Simply put, it will take all kinds of support and dedication to make this thing fly.

"Donations from the private and corporate sectors would heighten player incentive, as we don't have uniforms or enough equipment," a confidential source insists. "We need something in the treasury because we don't want our bare asses hanging out. But it's also important that all players attend practices and games. It's not just the uniforms; it's not the equipment; and it's not the rain. Their attendance, their performance and their attitude - that's what will make it or break it for the Oppenheimer Badgers."

Thank you for your continued support in the new millennium - whether it's moral or financial - and hopefully we'll be seeing you close to the diamond this year. Enquiries can be made by calling the Westcoast Aboriginal Network On Disabilities Cultural Development Society at 251-1471, or you can call me at 258-9650

This submission is respectfully dedicated to the memory of my late team-mate, Michael MacEntyre. He was a gracefully agile and true sportsman who snapped this photo with his position in the background before leaving behind a remarkable legacy that is unlikely to be paralleled.

Russel Crossley



Careers and Peer Counselling is what I remember as the name of the course, but that's not exactly it. The idea is for students at the Charles London high school in Richmond to learn about social issues, to talk to each other about the direction of their lives, and to respond.

I went there as a guest speaker to talk about poverty and homelessness, topics that had come up repeatedly in media and left questions.

"I'm assuming that most of these kids are from middle to upper-middleclass income families." The teacher, a young woman in her 20s, said, "That's a safe assumption."

I had gotten an ELPkit from End Legislated Poverty. It had identified and responded to several myths about poverty that are widely circulated.. that the affluent latch onto to as easily believed and obvious – until you actually think about them.

"Poverty is a lack of money."

Again, I assumed that these kids, being well-to-do, would think of poverty in the abstract.. something that they would never, ever experience personally. Some of these myths:

* "Child poverty" is where all programs and government help should go.

- Children are by definition part of families, and poverty is the condition that many parents are in due to lack of decent wages and jobs. Saying that children are poor blames the parents for not

passing on their money and not providing all the amenities of life.

* "All these [poor] people have to do is get off their asses and get jobs. If you work hard you can make it."

- There is a real unemployment rate of over 10% for adults and over 25% for youth. Poor people are generally receiving welfare to survive and then there are thousands of working poor. Many poor people don't have the skills or opportunity to compete for limited work. Jobs are not available for picking and choosing and any net wage under \$12/hr leaves the working person poor.

*"People on welfare are bums/cheaters/deadbeats. If you're on EI you're a freeloader."

- Welfare fraud is statistically 3%. Over 90,400 corporations paid no income tax last year on net profits of \$17.5 billion. Subsidies, write-offs and deferred taxes are the norm. Income tax fraud is estimated at over 25%.

Other myths put down economic refugees, hold poor people to blame for their poverty, see the social safety net as quite adequate and express wonder at people crying poverty in one of the richest countries in the world.

There was polite silence.

Concepts of globalisation, international trade deals, competitive impoverishment, death squads in Latin American countries, the tax system...

they listened. Homelessness and SROs and conversion of residential hotels into tourist traps and hostels.

Social justice and the struggle for fairness are 'advanced' concepts; first you have to realize that there is a problem.

The questions - 'How many poor people are in downtown Vancouver?' A: 50-60,000 ..& 'What can we do?' A: Question everything; learn, speak out, lobby. - were polite.

I finished with the concept of "overprivileged" and that sparked the three teachers present. They were all young adults and had been outside the seeming cocoons that their students were still in. Small discussion groups were formed to talk about this word, about whether drugs should be legalized (or decriminalized), about whether a 2-tier health care system was good for everyone.

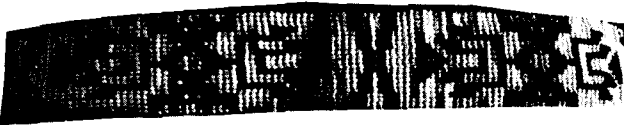
The time constraints got responses from one group of teenage boys on "overprivileged". "We have a right to be overprivileged. You get to keep whatever you get; anyone can get a job even if you have to start at McDonald's." Another girl said 2-tier health care was good because "those who can pay would shorten waitlists and leave the free stuff for those who can't pay."

The assumption that it was an academic discussion was too easy to jump to. Kids need to think for



themselves and to go beyond the pap fed to them by well-to-do parents and the media of Conrad Black et al. The teacher mentioned that a smaller group would come downtown to see and walk; yes, please, but leave the 'going to the circus' attitudes and be open. Learning is like being born. It's just the beginning.

By PAULR TAYLOR



Letting Go of the Past

It is frightening to let go of the past. It is like letting go of something that is precious, including the feeling for everything that has been, and also, for what before was a solid identity built on deprivation.

Letting go of the past must be done gradually and with special care; one old belief at a time and only one fear.

Letting go requires



a fair exchange for whatever else is precious. Each fear replaced with the absence of fear like space being cleared for some future happiness to fall into place.

It is a rare occasion though to get a chance to tap into the world of wonder where fear is not the only game in town.

Even if precious, the familiarity of fear must be replaced with unfamiliar comforts. Literally, one human being at a time.

Richard Tylman
tvbnan@vcn. hc cci

Health and fitness on Tuesdays @6:00

April 4: Steve Mattina from the Running Room and ADIDAS Canada is back again to talk about race strategy for the Vancouver Sun Run, and answer any other questions you might have about running.

April 11: **Movie -RUNNING BRAVE-** with Robbie Benson. Hopefully this time we'll get to see the whole thing.

Health and fitness @6 is taking the summer off and will start up again in September.

The running club will continue to meet daily at 8am at Andy Livingston field. Have a great summer and hope to see you on the road.

run for your life'
682-3269 #9126



Making our Neighbourhood a Safe Haven: THE SAFEHAVEN PROJECT

You may have noticed some new signs in windows in the Downtown Eastside and along the Hastings corridor. The businesses and community agencies displaying these signs are part of the Safe Haven project - a voluntary, community-based network of reliable safe places modeled after the Block Parent program. Safe Haven differs in that its focus is on businesses and community agencies rather than private homes, and it is not just limited to protecting children. Safe Haven is open to any residents, particularly children and the elderly, who find themselves in a frightening or emergency situation.

When our residents, especially our most vulnerable residents, are walking in our neighbourhood, they need to know that they can find Safe Haven. If you are being bullied, harassed, are lost or frightened or are being threatened, businesses and agencies displaying the Safe Haven sign can help by calling 911. We know the horrible impact of fear and crime on individuals, community groups

and businesses. By participating in Safe Haven community agencies and businesses are making a statement that our neighbourhood is actively involved in crime prevention and is becoming a safer place to live, work and do business.

Currently the Safe Haven project has a total of 33 participants (18 of which are in the training process) with another 38 businesses and community groups interested in becoming part of the project. Participants receive orientation and training and undergo a criminal record check, all administered by the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Safety Office. The project has been a huge success in our neighbourhood. By increasing the mutual support and involvement of community organizations, businesses and Community Police, we are building a stronger community.

If you want to know more about the Safe Haven project or would like to become a participant please call **Kate** at the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Safety Office at 687-1772.



MAYWORKS

12TH ANNUAL MAYWORKS

FESTIVAL OF WORKING CLASS CULTURE & POLITICS

Vancouver • April 28—May 31, 2000

Mayworks is a do-it-yourself community festival produced by lots of people like you!

Weekly meetings every Thursday evening from 6-8pm (*early start time!*) at La Quena Coffeehouse, 1111 Commercial Dr.

Mayworks lasts for the whole month of May, beginning with May Day celebrations. It's different than any other festival that takes place in Vancouver. Come to a meeting and find out how to get involved!

Mayworks is like an umbrella, with lots of events and projects produced by many different groups and individuals. Mayworks is envisioned as a banner under which our communities can organize cultural productions, education, mobilizations, and direct actions to celebrate and empower working class people. Through collaboration, Mayworks provides an opportunity to share in outreach, propaganda, alliance-building and fundraising.

We're aiming to reclaim May Day as a day to recognize the ongoing struggle of workers for their rights, decent wages and working conditions—and for working class power. We see the historical red (*socialist/communist*), black (*anarchist*), and green (*environmentalist*) traditions of May Day as an opportunity to unite left communities.

Culture—in the many ways it is expressed—is the life blood which nurtures and sustains our struggles. Mayworks also aims to mobilize and present cultural workers in Vancouver who are resisting the commodification of their work.

Mayworks is inspired by world-wide efforts against injustice and oppression, and for a celebration of working class solidarity. Mayworks joins with MayDay2K Global Day of Action Against Capitalism, (*endorsed by People's Global Action*) in the follow-up to Seattle's anti-WTO protests.

www.tao.ca/mayworks
info-line 683-7123 mayworks@tao.ca



LAST MARCH

March 21, 1999, first day of Spring

1.

across the alley
the March Queens
quarrel loudly about a broken promise
nobody loves anybody very much
this winter we cough virus back into outer space
from which they've come
the viruses love us
"SLOW DOWN," they tell us
"LIE DOWN."

2.

thru the courtyard
glides Margaret in her wheelchair
Margaret Prevost, who has been fighting
against the holocaust of salted rice wine
sold very cheap in local grocery stores to the
totally poor

her uncle and nephews died from rice wine, her
brother with the same cute egyptian smile as her
has recently died from rice wine

she looks up at the early clematis flowers
falling in showers
glides quietly by the child practising
basket-ball shots

the child is getting hot in the sun
takes off a sweater

maxine gadd

They Came For Me

They came for me and I was gone
They came for you and you were too
The streets were bare the sky was blue
This was the day the new ones shone

They came and got us and took us home
They left the others in their heartless dome
They lived in a bubble of deceit and hate
Their hearts were cold and it was too late

The children laughed as they ran and played
The babies of the future were already made
The earth made new as the Elders know
The people's faces now all aglow

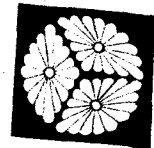
Shining on us as we came back
Are the spirits of strength without a lack
The earth the way it was meant to be
A paradise with plenty for all to see

The innocence of children made it new
Their faith and goodness in all we do
The colours of the rainbow within us all
This is your future if you just call

The Great Spirit is with us when we do
She is the Goddess who made it new
The Earth Mother is always on our side
Even when she heaved and cried.

Beth B.

[Downtown Eastside survivor]



reality is fantasy

Tip-toeing through the mist on free-flowing fields
The maiden strolls on an ancient path
Pounded down over the ages by medieval armies,
I sight her as she pauses to drink at a cool pond
She is on her way to where no one knows
This morning maiden is lost to me, maybe forever

Into the all-encompassing horizon.
She will be forever a vivid painting

in my mind's eye.

[from a longer, more elaborate work by Robyn Livingstone]

Gil Puder is dead. He died at the age of 40, reportedly because of a sudden and lethal advanced cancer. Gil was a constable with the Vancouver Police Department. He gave public talks, attended conferences and was highly regarded by activists and scholars alike as an incredibly intelligent and aware individual. His views and well-researched opinions on drugs and their use/place in society and his response to them as a police officer left him ostracized and resented by his fellow officers. He was subjected to threats, condemnation, put under intense scrutiny and even recorded by delegates of his superiors on the force. His sudden death at such a 'young' age is just a coincidence.

Gil Puder spoke at a Fraser Institute function in 1998. The presentation is extremely relevant to the work of this community in the 'four pillar' approach to dealing with drug use – prevention, treatment, harm reduction and enforcement. In the next several issues, the Carnegie Newsletter will present Gil's paper.

Sensible Solutions to the Urban Drug Problem

Paper #10 Recovering Our Honour: Why Policing Must Reject The "War On Drugs"

INTRODUCTION

To limit the questions that one asks and the answers that one ventures to those sanctioned by officialdom is to forsake our moral and intellectual obligations to both our profession and our society.

Ethan Nadelman

My belief that the war on drugs must end arises from the damage being done to both policing and the society it serves. The tactics, weaponry, and propaganda of our 20th Century narcotic prohibition have been borrowed from a Western military model, yet in their misguided application have generated nothing other than systemic conflict that has overwhelmed our justice and health care systems. Being a frontline police officer, I am deeply troubled by any example of counterproductive law enforcement. Talented officers diligently perform what many honestly believe to be their duty, placing themselves and others in harm's way to intervene in matters of personal choice. Unwittingly, however, this merely raises the stakes in a game where criminal cartels meet the demand that our forefathers rather arbitrarily declared to be illegitimate.(1) And while we attempt the impossible with increasingly limited resources, elected officials abdicate responsibility for legislation needed to reduce the harm to society. In a pointless civil war at the turn of the millennium, we need to, "*unlearn the habits we have taught ourselves, or we shall not survive.*"(2) Rather than assigning victory or defeat, Canadians must fundamentally change the strategies of several interwoven social institutions, policing being the keystone among them.

I faithfully subscribe to Sir Robert Peel's admonition to, "*maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police.*" While strongly believing in devotion to duty, I subordinate the unique requirements of my profession to responsibilities as a human being, parent, and Canadian citizen, who has no desire to raise his children in a country torn by needless criminality. My commitment cannot be fulfilled in a military context, applying the law in a punitive manner to people unfairly labeled as amoral losers. Harsh, reactionary criminal justice has proven woefully miscast as a control mechanism for drug use. A truly comprehensive strategy is now required, including a legalized, controlled drug supply, coupling enforceable and decriminalized regulation with health, education, and economic programs. The challenge for policing is to measure traditional drug war practices against the integrity of truly ethical conduct, and where our performance is less than exemplary, take a leadership role in identifying overdue legislative change.

1. TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

Despite all my rage, I am still just a rat in a cage.

*"Bullet with Butterfly Wings"
The Smashing Pumpkins*

Decades of drug war have led us to abandon of one of Peel's fundamental principles, "to recognize always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them." By this criterion drug enforcement has failed utterly, with no evidence more damning than agencies repeatedly inviting the media to view "trophy busts", exemplified by marijuana growing operations and imported cocaine or heroin seizures. If police enforcing criminal prohibition were the appropriate substance control mechanism, then our drug-free communities should render such events a curious rarity. Showcasing these raids as examples of success, however, only proves the failure of criminal drug policies.

Changing our approach, however, means addressing an entrenched police culture that rewards traditional performance measures, such as arrests, rather than citizen satisfaction and neighbourhood livability. Careers and reputations are too often built upon a demonstrated willingness to intervene strictly, often forcefully, without circumspection or remorse. Research long ago identified aggressive enforcement and a game-like atmosphere as features of drug policing, which make it an attractive field of endeavour.(3) In the many agencies fielding drug squads as specialized assignments, there is no shortage of officers waiting to enlist. Today, some officers may still use this type of work to burnish their "Blue Knight" image, discarding discretion in favour of statistics and macho storytelling.

Make no mistake, drug-related arrests can be *very* easy, with hundreds of available, identifiable targets on city streets. Contrary to the Hollywood image, we rarely catch wealthy black marketeers living in mansions and driving expensive automobiles. Reality finds bikers and other high-level gangsters using their profits for lawyers and accountants, effectively layering themselves from the transaction process.(4) Arrests usually involve poor, hungry people on street corners or in rooming houses and filth-strewn alleyways. Driven by various needs to obtain a drug or the money to effect its purchase, many users need simply be watched for a period of time before some criminal offence occurs, often a small drug sale or break-in to home or vehicle. This enforcement strategy flies in the face of the fact that there will always be too many users, and never enough police. Moreover, our courts now recognize most street level arrests as either consenting adults or people who have an underlying disorder, and are consequently reluctant to impose sanctions.

Progress, however, is thwarted by a system that rewards such a "cherry-picking" approach. Administrative requirements for drug arrests are simplified without the burden of witness or victim interviews and statements. Officers can get out of the office and back "on the street" that much faster, and trafficking or possession busts seldom require follow-up work assigned by Crown Counsel. Like most professional people, we promote peer approval towards a demonstrated work ethic, and what better way to build your image than with a "bad guy" in jail, and drug exhibits or some recovered property as your visible evidence of success? Furthermore, commendations and promotion are often the result of high arrest statistics. Finally, court cases can earn officers large amounts of publicly funded overtime pay, the lesson being quickly learned that maximizing arrests maximizes earning power.

Over and above rewards for the status quo, there are three major obstacles to modernizing law enforcement attitudes. Firstly, people persistently and wrongly identify drugs, rather than prohibition, as the cause of related criminal activity'. Many of my peers are unaware of the physiological effects of various controlled substances, and our insular professional culture discourages police from accessing up-to-date information. The drug war is also a turf war, resulting in medical and criminological research being regularly ignored or discredited. Some officers would be embarrassed to admit that they don't understand research findings, while



Newsletter of the Carnegie **COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT**

March 1st, 2000

For more information, call 689-0397 or drop by our office, Carnegie 2nd floor

**Gotta Pay Guest
Fees Anytime of
the Day?**

Got Bugs?

**Got a Crappy
Mattress?
Got Holes in the
Walls?**

THEN THE NEXT TWO (2) MEETINGS ARE IMPORTANT

**#1 The Standards of
Maintenance By-Lay and the
role of City Property Use
Inspectors**

**Special Guests:
Barb Windsor, Deputy Chief Licences
Inspector, City of Vancouver**

**Roxane Vachon, Residential Tenancy
Lawyor**

APRIL 12TH, 7PM

**#2 The Environmental Health
Act and the role of the City
Health Inspector**

**Special Guests:
Virginia Jorgenson, Environmental
Health Officer, Vancouver/Richmond
Health Board**

**Angelo Kourist, Pest Specialist,
Vancouver/Richmond Health Board**

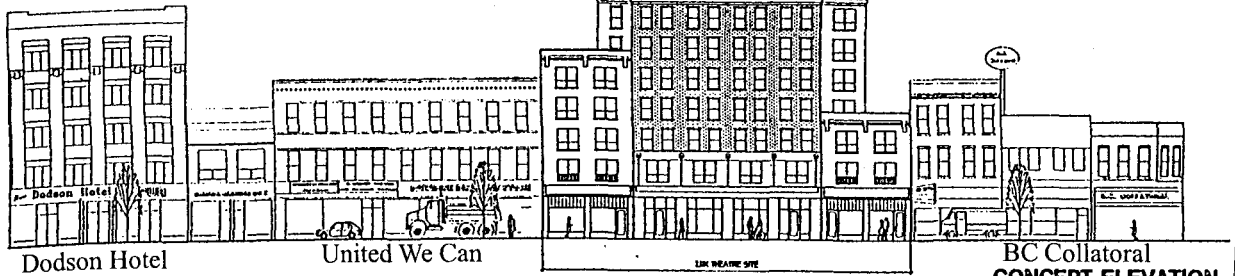
APRIL 19TH, 7PM

Both Meetings at Columbia Hotel 305 Columbia St. (room next to bar)

Organized by the Community Directions Housing Working Group

Housing approved for the

Lux Theatre Site



Dodson Hotel

United We Can

Lux theatre site

BC Collatoral
CONCEPT ELEVATION

SCALE: 1:125 (METRIC)

55 - 67 E. Hastings St.

Fortunately, Councilor Kennedy motion turned down

In February City Council approved a rezoning of the Lux Theatre site. According to the city report, the rezoning will allow the development of a nine storey mixed use development with 98 non-market units, three commercial units at grade, and 19 underground parking spaces. The rezoning is required to increase the site's allowable residential density.

The City happens to be both the owner of the land and the developer of the building. They'll also be the operator once the building is open.

The proposed units range in size from 320 to 474 sq/ft, are self-contained, including kitchens and bathrooms. Eight of the units on the second floor are designed to be fully wheelchair accessible and include easy access to an outside terrace and garden areas. The architect is Gomberoff Policzer Bell Lyon Architects.



Lynne Kennedy

"You have to earn the right to live here." Councilor Kennedy

CCAP was present at the rezoning, where the misplaced morality of Councilor Lynne Kennedy reared its ugly head again when she suggested that the building be alcohol and drug free. In her words, "You have to earn the right to live here." Does Kennedy have wine with dinner or drink alcohol at social functions? Because if she does her urine test would test positive and we would have to evict her from her house.

Councilor Kennedy kept mentioning Portland, Oregon as an example of the usefulness of alcohol and drug free (dry) housing. In a recent article in the *Courier* (March 5/00), Kennedy says that Portland's Central City Concern housing organization

runs 1,200 dry housing units. In fact, they only have 353 units and they're SRO style housing. As well, these dry units are part of treatment regime that starts with a sobering and detox center. The Lux housing development isn't part of any treatment regime like at Harbour Light or Union Gospel, so for Kennedy to suggest dry housing is completely misguided and punitive. Fortunately, Council as a whole did not agree with her.

By the way, this is the same councilor who vehemently supported the spare change meters. Go figure.

The Dugout becomes trendy

We all know that the Gastown Business Improvement Society (GBIS) and the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee (GHAPC) have for years been trying to kick the Dugout out of Gastown. If they become successful they'll end up ruining the marketing potential that the Dugout has become.

According to a *Vancouver Sun* article (Feb. 2000), which profiles a new condo in Gastown at 55 Alexander St., the Dugout is now an attractive marketing piece used to sell condos. Here's what they say about the area

"There's a grittiness about it," says John Kucharchuk, vice president of development and marketing for builder Cressey Development.

People who are buying into the area like the activity, he says.

Even the soup kitchen [the Dugout] that serves the needy at 7 o'clock each morning is seen as



**Spare
Change
Meters:**

**New
Heights
In
Misguided
Morality**

part of the rich fabric of city life rather than an annoyance. (Vancouver Sun, Feb./00)

Now isn't this ironic

Open House, Sunrise Hotel

Monday, April 3rd

5pm to 6pm

Sunrise Hotel, 101 East Hastings

(Columbia St. entrance)

Check out the plans for the first floor, including new studio space for Co-op Radio, a cafe with internet access, a stage area, and a laundromat. A dental clinic with three chairs and a doctors office will also be located on the ground floor.

Community Directions

Next Meeting, Thursday, April 6th,
3-5pm at Jenny Pentland Place, 540
E. Hastings St.

Community Directions is a coalition of residents and community groups and their allies which are pledged to work for improvements on behalf of low-income residents.

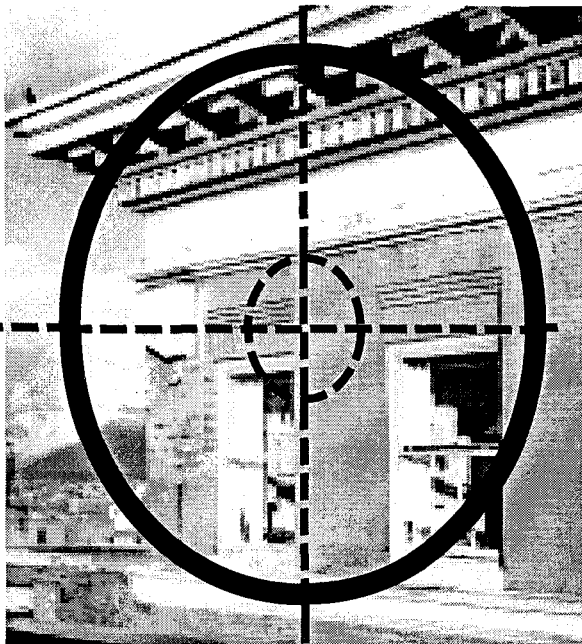
Working Groups have been formed around 5 key issues: 1) Community Economic Development 2) Housing 3) Child/Youth/Family 4) Safety and Well Being 5) Alcohol and Drug.

For info on all of the working groups contact the Community Direction Organizer, Marg Green @ 760-7859.

There is also a **Community Assets Inventory** currently underway, which is being headed by Heady Mason. Heady can be reached at 713-4465.

For those interested in Community Economic Development, City Council recently approved a **Lease Subsidy Program** as an start-up incentive for community-based business ventures. **Common Concerns** and their laundromat Clothes Encounters is likely to be the first business supported under the program.

CCAP is playing a key role in the **Housing Working Group**. If interested be sure to make the two meetings planned for April (see front page).~



Author of CCTV police report gets new job

Constable Grant Fredericks, author of *CCTV A Community Policing Option for the Downtown Eastside*, 1999, is quitting the force for a new job with a U.S. company known for its digital editing technology. They'll pay almost four times his police salary of \$60,000.

The proposition for public surveillance in the Downtown Eastside is not dead. We can expect to hear about it again sometime this spring or summer. Mr. Fredericks will be remaining in the Lower Mainland, so he may still be involved.

Make sure you pick up a copy of CCAP's study on the efficacy of CCTVs

CCAP, Carnegie's Community Action Project is supported by the

 VANCOUVER
FOUNDATION

others seem threatened by a potential change to their traditional way of doing business. We're continually bombarded by self-proclaimed police "drug experts", who speak to schoolchildren and make media releases on behalf of their agencies, readily contradicting scholarly analyses with smear tactics and conjecture.⁶ It's commonplace to find examples⁷ of police promoting dogma that all drugs should be treated equally, including the groundless myth that drug use inevitably results in criminal conduct. Our self-imposed ignorance causes us to blame drug symptoms, rather than prohibition money, as the impetus for most property and some violent crime.

Such willful blindness results in agencies painting themselves into a corner with wrongheaded public statements and questionable conduct. No one should then be surprised when closing ranks in denial is the standard response to an overwhelming body of empirically proven evidence; does anyone know a cop or politician who admitted they were wrong recently? Shortly after I publicly questioned Canada's illicit narcotic policies, a drug squad officer proclaimed the necessity of "dope work," as a prerequisite to understanding the issue of illicit narcotics. I observed that he was relaxing over a beer and a cigarette, however, and couldn't cite one piece of published research. Considering that tobacco and alcohol have more damaging physiological effects than marijuana⁸, certain professional measures of success appear inconsistent with natural justice. Particularly when many police confess at the application stage of their career to marijuana use as teens, we can be painfully sensitive to appearances of institutionalized hypocrisy.

Lastly, labeling drug users conveniently removes any need for introspection about using government power to remove a person's rights and freedoms. Marginalized people simply require less respect. At the end of every shift, one hears officers extolling the virtues of apprehending a "hype", "junkie", or "druggie." Since these tools for financial benefit, career advancement, and peer status are no longer valued as people, officers need not trouble themselves with ethical questions. Police are far from unique in this regard, and are merely reflecting attitudes offering little sympathy for drug users. I often hear someone in social conversation opine that "junkies should be shot," and yet, having had to shoot an addicted bank robber myself, I can safely say that most people would be unable to fulfill their "final solution".

Turning sick people into monsters is useful for drug warriors, since it impedes serious consideration of enforcement alternatives. This perversion of morality enables politicians to crowd the drug war bandwagon to cultivate a "tough guy" image, yet the toughest fights they will ever face are in taxpayer-funded conferences and luncheons, far from the gutter reality of death on the streets they claim to represent. Most officers have no desire to use their policing skills as an enforcement arm of the prevailing political or bureaucratic interests. Communities are fed up with criminality, and inappropriate uses of our criminal justice system produces frustrated police, who make predictable mistakes. Abusive enforcement is symptomatic of our failure to reduce drug-related crime, yet such behaviour merely worsens a world we can't escape.

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- (7) *See* Rintoul, Cst. S., ROMP, News Hour (BOW, 98.02.17)
- (8) Hall, W., Room, R., and Bondry, S., A Comparative Appraisal of the Health and Psychological Consequences of Alcohol, Cannabis, Nicotine and Opiate Use. *publication pending in* William Corrigan et al., eds., Marijuana and Health (Toronto: Addiction Research Foundation, 1998).



Carnegie Community Action Project
a project of the
Carnegie Community Association
401 Main St. Vancouver, B.C.
V6A 2T7

March 29, 2000

Terry Blythe
Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department

Re: Vancouver Coalition for Crime Prevention & Drug Treatment, Continuum of Care Forum Series

Dear Mr. Blythe

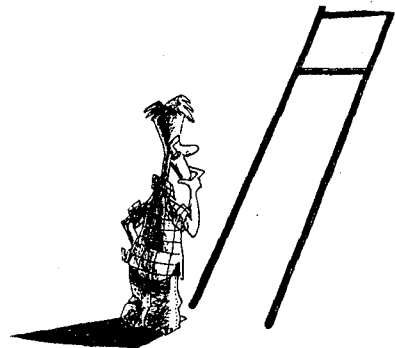
The Carnegie Community Action Project just hosted the first forum out of five planned by the Vancouver Coalition under its Continuum of Care Series. We called the lunchtime conference *Comprehensive Solutions to Drugs, Crime and Addiction in the Inner City*. Our theatre was filled to capacity (approx. 150 people) and everyone was eager to hear the comments of each of the four presenters under the 'four pillar approach' to crime prevention and drug treatment. The Mayor, City Manager, a number of City Councilors and other noted guests attended the conference.

Under the pillar of enforcement, Sergeant Ken Frail spoke of the Vancouver Police Department's role in bringing solutions to this very difficult issue. However, the role of the VPD in the four-pillar approach must come from you, especially in these early stages when we are dealing with enforcement in the context of implementing more harm reduction strategies. If the Mayor and other very busy officials can make time for these very important forums, surely you can make the effort as well. If we are to be at all successful in following through with this four-pillar strategy the support of the VPD is critical. It's your leadership that is needed. It's too late for the Carnegie forum, but there are four forums left where you can make a difference.

Sincerely

Tom Laviolette
Coordinator, Carnegie Community Action Project, 689-0397

c.c. Mayor Philip Owen, Vancouver Coalition



When Will Tolerance Begin

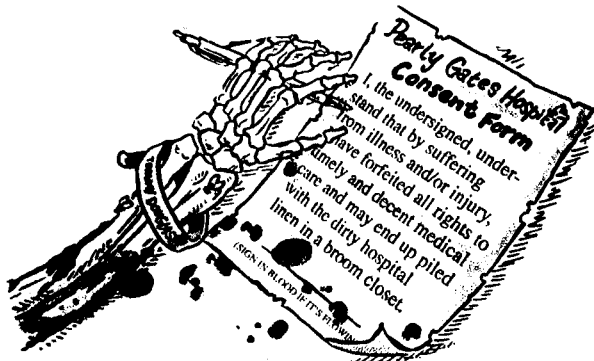
I found the March 27th Community Forum on Alcohol and Drug Use/Abuse informative but disturbing. The speakers – the Mayor, a Rave youth worker, a police officer, a representative of the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board and a Portland Hotel worker, as well as the Downtown Eastside panelist, made valid clear points. There was much talk of how the community must work together, of how decisions wouldn't work from the "top-down" and how the people involved in the street scene must be listened to with tolerance. The film clips were touchingly beautiful. The film's message of the need for tolerance, understanding and love was strong.

But the Forum felt "top-down." There was no acknowledgement that the meeting was being held on First Nations' land. There was no representative speakers from the Downtown Eastside's very multicultural street scene. Raves are not so much an issue here as are poverty, disgustingly squalid hotel rooms, back alleys and police brutality.

When the local people finally got to the mike, I didn't find that they were listened to with tolerance at all. Their concerns were brushed off, hurried and silenced. Could the meeting not have been extended fifteen minutes to hear a few more community voices?

I was relieved that the former street-working woman was allowed the final word. she announced The Vigil of Honour, whose theme is Addiction Treatment On Demand.

By Leith Harris



THE CIRCLE OF HOPE

ADDICTION TREATMENT ON DEMAND

The Year 2000

VIGIL OF HONOR

May 6 9:30 am to 9:00 pm

May 7 noon to 5:30 pm

Britannia Centre – Commercial Dr. & Napier

We are looking for community partners to help us plan, organize and hold the Vigil of Honour. In a spirit of inclusion we invite all community groups and individuals to join us in this exciting project.

Planned Events

- First Nations Drum Groups, dancers and speakers
- Multicultural entertainers and speakers
- Seminars: Youth in Recovery; Women in Recovery; Addiction in the Workplace; The Medical Nature of Addiction.
- Bridging Circle (community and addictions)
- Interdenominational religious services.
- Grief counselors on site. Food. Community Services and Addictions Information Booths

Walk of Honour Treatment-on-Demand Rally

Candlelight Vigil

Call 215-2287 for info or to offer support.



Caretakers from Mars

We are the caretakers from Mars
In a world where everything
Is the same, everyday
When nothing ever changes
People, slaves to the dollar
Trying to start new wars
There are all the walking dead
Coming from a place that's really
Two hundred miles below earth
Don't care about the environment
Soon nothing will be green
We are the caretakers from Mars
Putting on a dress and clown hair

When we go to read poetry
Paint blue hearts on our bodies
For the Valentines Radio Show
Santa hat and beard at Christmas
To go streaking through malls
Dress up like Saint Patrick with
The green beard and clover leafs
Painted on our bodies on his day
Causing a scene wherever we go
We just want people to be happy
We are the caretakers from Mars
And soon this age, will pass away.

By Daniel Rajala



Community Directions

Disability Issues of the Downtown Eastside

What does this strategy mean for Aboriginal people with disabilities who live in the Main and Hastings area – also known as Skid Row? We have seen many strategies developed for this area, plans that are meant to alleviate some of the crime and violence, and at the same time to provide more affordable housing. Most important is a plan of economic development that will revitalize the community, for disadvantaged as well as the general population. In my opinion, the Aboriginal people with disabilities are the most disadvantaged. They must form a core group to advise on the development of economic strategies for the Main and Hastings area.

In an area where the population is at least 50% Aboriginal, why isn't there an Aboriginal Committee attached to the development process? The plain fact is that there is no Chief or Council representing First Nations people in the Downtown Eastside. As President of W.A.N.D. (West Coast Aboriginal Network on Disabilities Society) I support the idea that the Federal, Provincial, and Municipal governments should take a serious look at what has already been tried, and what plans have been effective in alleviating the stress that comes from living in this area.

A strong group of sober elders is needed from this area, not only to represent grass roots Aboriginal people, but also to help develop an inclusive strategy that will help other groups understand that only a traditional healing approach is going to work here. In particular, a traditional healing approach is needed in the area of substance abuse issues.

They Think

They think they know what's best for us

They really think they are right.

We think the plans they make for us

Are kind of out of sight.

For years they went ahead

And made up plans to help

Maybe we let them think that they can think for us,

All people can be involved

But we don't have to agree with everything they say.

Fred Arrance

Carnegie Seniors Volunteer Dinner

to be held in the Theatre

APRIL 15 at 4:00 pm

Tickets are available from Sandy

Limbo

(for Wilhelmina)

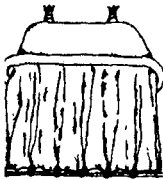
Love's emotions rise and fall from cloud to cactus
falling, twisting, turning, piercing,
distant melodies calling, warning
O! Do not haunt me! Let me live!

Far-off countires lull my soul soothing malignant
fires within the very heart of love and sin.

Llamas, buddhas urge my departure from
this land of grief and sorrow.

Not today.....maybe tomorrow.

Anita Stevens



Dumpster diving, binning or whatever you call it,
is a great way to recycle the many good items
tossed out daily by so many.

I found some expensive hiking boots the other
day, only to see that "The Slasher" had done his
dirty deed with a razor knife. Yeah, there are
those who pro-actively fight against anyone doing
well with something that could be used again by
others. 'Lock up that bin', call the cops, pour
bleach on saveable food products, kick those who
work to save what otherwise goes to waste.

It's not all negative at the dumpster. Some
"cans" are regular gold mines as far as free items
go, and I always find something to recycle.

The poor are mightily abused in the world every
day. Evil men and women wait like vultures for

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool,
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental
To reach out for another is to risk involvement
To show feeling is to risk exposing your true self

To place your ideas, your dreams
before the crowd is to risk their loss
To love is to risk not being loved in return

To live is to risk dying

To hope is to risk despair

To try is to risk failure

But risk must be taken because
the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing
The person who risks nothing does nothing,
has nothing and is nothing.

They may avoid suffering and sorrow, but they
simply cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love, live
Chained by their certitudes, they are slaves;
they have forfeited freedom.

Only a person who risks is free.



the poor to buckle, to give in to their demands. It
seems that those who *have* desire to see others in
servitude and to be kept poor. I remember seeing a
killer on TV saying that he loved the power he'd
feel when pointing a gun at someone before he
took their lives. I recognize this evil yet I do not
hate.

I am not on welfare, yet I live on \$2500 a year.
Many working poor would do better if the
governments would recognize the limitations that
very low incomes impose. Transit passes would
help; a below-poverty line certification would
enable the holder of it access to housing and food
stores. Society could easily verify one's poverty.

This idea may not be perfect, but something like
it would help low-income people live beter on
less. A few dollars come to me each day; I work; I
have a roof, food and some freedom. Thank God!

By MIKE BOHNERT

My life as a volunteer

Part 3

"Don't be surprised. Things like that happen here all the time. You can't let it bother you." I was shocked when a volunteer I had previously interviewed said this to me. In fact, I was extremely bothered about the numerous mix-ups with my submissions to the March 1, 2000 edition of the Carnegie newsletter. I felt slighted by the men I had entrusted my piece to and responsible to those volunteers whose comments had been so skewed in publication.

I took it personally and looked around for someone to blame. This was hard to do when the editor immediately and graciously apologized, and publicly too in the next newsletter. I hope people had the chance to read the corrected version. Volunteers I'd interviewed were satisfied. Self-destructive and pointless for me to remain angry and no reason to walk away in a huff, as, sadly, so many seem to.

"Just be surprised it never happened to you before," said another, and others repeated this. Here I was writing about life as a volunteer, and mine was not going too well. "You can't change anything," one person concluded after a long commitment of trying to make some improvements in his area. "At first you are encouraged. Then you are blocked. I had to fight to be creative. I felt I had something good to offer, but it was seen as challenging to the system." I thought this ex-volunteer might have been over-reacting as he described the process of his disenchantment. Getting the impression that his time and contributing were not valued, he began to feel dishonoured as a person, and frustrated by the attitude of the staff. "At first it was kind of slight," he recalls, but incidents would occur that he felt demonstrated a real lack of trust on the part of the staff. "It seems that initiative is not appreciated and volunteers are treated like children." When he spoke of feeling almost sabotaged, I felt he must be describing an extreme experience. Now I was feeling much the same way.

"We have to learn to tolerate a certain amount of frustration and be motivated to do something about



it." is the conclusion of another veteran who found his niche 13 years ago and has been expanding on it ever since. Whether it's dissatisfaction with some part of the system (or lack of system) or a perceived power struggle with an individual or group, "if you're really fragile and feeling vulnerable, conflict can have a devastating effect," he notes. "With so many different interests and skill levels there's going to be interpersonal challenge." He believes that there has never been a grievance committee because nobody's ever been able to figure out a system pleasing to everybody.

It would be useful if a forum was there," the ex-volunteer has observed. "Not just to vent. As it is, you can complain to the powers that be. They do respond," he allowed. "But there is no system in place to facilitate communication. If it gets really bad, you can always call security." This tend to make every incident a security incident, worries Kai, who thinks that this is unfortunate.

Kai has been attending a VCC course in Coordinating Volunteer Programs which has given him fresh insight into how to approach delicate matters such as personality conflicts and mental

health issues. "There are volunteers who have difficulty relating to others," he knows. "We have a lot of very stable volunteers who know what to do and how to do it. Some not....Some people require more support. It's not quite the same for staff."

Kai doesn't deny that sometimes it's staff causing the problems. One vocal woman volunteer stated, "Carnegie has a rung system. Volunteers are not on top."

Kai stresses the fact that all complaints are dealt with, and points out that there is a crucial difference in the level of responsibility assumed by staff and volunteers. "Ideally," he says, "volunteers and staff are co-workers to a common goal. " Staff are paid to show up every day for a full day's work and are held legally accountable. They are hired for their skills. Volunteers are not really screened. "We take anyone willing and able," says Kai. When he indicated to the March Volunteer Committee meeting that this might need to change, the meeting indicated some strong opposition.

At this, my first volunteer committee meeting, I was pleased to note how freely and strongly people were willing to speak up and, for the most part, to



RICE WINE -THE SEQUEL

After barely 3 months of relief from widespread distribution and exploitation of local residents by the sellers of this lethal product, it has begun to return to the shelves of some local stores and empty bottles are once again appearing at various places throughout the Downtown Eastside. While the law was recently amended to prohibit the sale of rice wine except through liquor stores, a loophole was left for merchants and distributors to abuse and the abuse cycle has begun again. The newest batch is at an alcohol level of 9.9%. The law allows general sale of the product at a level under 10%. It remains to be seen whether the newest version of rice wine will be as destructive

listen. Kai, in his position as one of two volunteer co-ordinators, has great ambitions for updating the old volunteer handbook and for perhaps introducing a contract and evaluation system. This might be the beginning of a new era.

In my own case, having been a volunteer for less than a year, still fairly bright-eyed and naive about things, I have found most of the staff I have dealt with very friendly and helpful. In fact, amongst the now familiar faces at Carnegie, I am still not entirely certain just who is staff, volunteer, or patron. For the longest time I was under the impression that the men who worked such long hours so diligently and with such authority on the newsletter must be paid staff. It certainly seemed as if there was no one to whom I could take my concerns when I felt they were being careless with my work.

It seems that misunderstandings can be worked through if all parties are willing. IF is the big word in that last sentence. Conflict cannot be avoided when people are unclear on each others' intentions. Next issue I will explore this subject a little further. Please contact the newsletter if you have something to add or would like to be interviewed.

A volunteer



as the former 38% product, but if people start consuming it in larger quantities to get the same effect, the intake of salt (approx. 2 tablespoons per bottle) will be doubly harmful. We will continue to monitor the sales and availability of this new brand and assess what actions need to be taken. We hope that rice wine consumers will find it an unsuitable substitute for what was previously available and will leave it on the shelves. If the abuse of the product continues to escalate we are more than willing to re-engage the Attorney General's office and have them take further action to include this new item under it's control.

Stay tuned.

By Ian MacRae

(Reprinted from the DERA Newsletter)



TO REMEMBER ME

The day will come when my body will lie upon a white sheet neatly tucked under four corners of a mattress located in a hospital busily occupied with the living and the dying. At a certain moment a doctor will determine that my brain has ceased to function and that, for all intents and purposes, my life has stopped.

When that happens, do not attempt to instil artificial life into my body by the use of a machine. And don't call this my death-bed. Let it be called the Bed of Life, and let my body be taken from it to help others lead fuller lives.

Give my sight to the man who has never seen a sunrise, a baby's face, or love in the eyes of a woman. Give my heart to a person whose own heart has caused nothing but endless days of pain. Give my blood to the teenager who was pulled from the wreckage of his car, so that he might live to see his grandchildren play. Give my kidneys to one who depends on a machine to exist. Take my bones, every muscle, every fiber and nerve in my body and find a way to make a crippled child walk.

Explore every corner of my brain. Take my cells, if necessary, and let them grow so that someday, a speechless boy will shout at the crack of a bat and a deaf girl will hear the sound of rain against her window.

Burn what is left of me and scatter the ashes to the winds to help the flowers grow.

If you must bury something, let it be my faults, my weaknesses and all prejudice against my fellow man.

If, by chance, you wish to remember me, do it with a kind deed or word to someone who needs you. If you do all I have asked, I will live forever.

SUBMITTED BY GRAM

You Want To Make The Streets Safer?



If you want to make the streets safer in our cities and towns, you can't have the ridiculously wide gap between the rich and the poor that we have right now. The richest 10% of Canadians own 51.3% of Canada's wealth while the poorest 20% own minus -0.3% of wealth. (1) In 1973 the richest 105 of families (with children under 18 years) made 21 times more than the poorest 10% of Canadian families. In 1996, the richest 10% of families made 314 times more than the poorest 10% of families. (2) Between 1990 and 1995, workers in the 15 to 24 age group experienced a 20% drop in earnings. Non-permanent jobs are now, by far, the norm for paid workers under 25. At the rich end of the scale, Ken Thomson, owner of the Thomson communications empire that includes *The Globe & Mail*, has more personal wealth than the collective wealth of the bottom third of Canadian households. (3)

The more a society is unequal, the greater the number of people who are prevented from living a full, satisfying life. Unlived life leads to despair, violence and crime. In Canada, "we have a generation of young people, many of whom believe they have no stake in either the economic or social fabric of the nation." (4) This situation is so unjust that every citizen ought to be crying out in protest. How can we allow such inequality to exist in a democratic country?

Fair taxation is one way to redistribute income and wealth in a just way, and we do not have fair taxation. In 1995, 90,415 corporations in Canada paid no income tax at all, in spite of having combined profits of over \$18.5 billion dollars. (5) The tax system could be made fairer by

eliminating corporate tax loopholes, ensuring that corporations pay a minimum level of tax on profits, and by charging interest on deferred taxes. This would be a start on progressive tax reform.

The welfare rates must be raised. Single people on income assistance in B.C. in 1980 received \$191 per month for support. Today the support part of income assistance for single people is \$175 per month, \$16 less than in 1980. But the cost of living has gone up over 100% from 1980 to 1999. Statistics Canada tells us that if people today were to receive the equivalent of the \$191 they received in 1980 for support, they would be receiving \$427. That means single people on income assistance have lost \$252 per month in support money from 1980 to 1999. You may have to think about this statement for a while before its horrible reality sinks in. This is legislated poverty with a vengeance. No wonder there has been an increase in panhandling.

Raise minimum wage to \$10 an hour to keep up with the cost of living.

Bring back the unemployment insurance program we had in Canada before it was destroyed by the ruling business oligarchy.

Strengthen local communities by creating decent local jobs at decent wages. This will require the help of all levels of government plus organized labour with a social conscience and business people who can see further than short term profit.

Building an equitable society with citizens who know they have an important stake in their community is a major way to ensure safe streets.

By SANDY CAMERON
to be continued

References

(1) Statistics Canada, June, 1987. These figures are old, but the federal government won't release up to date figures. The gap between rich and poor has become much wider in the past ten years.

(2) The Growing Gap — A report on growing inequality between the rich and poor in Canada, by Armine Yalnizyan, Centre For Social Justice. Toronto, October, 1998 — p.X.

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DOWNTOWN
EASTSIDE
YOUTH
ACTIVITIES
SOCIETY

STD CLINIC - 219 Main; Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
NEEDLE EXCHANGE - 221 Main; 8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m. every day
NEEDLE EXCHANGE VAN - 3 Routes
City - 6:45 p.m. - 11:45 p.m.
Overnight - 12:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
Downtown Eastside - 5:30 p.m. 1:30 a.m.

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Carnegie

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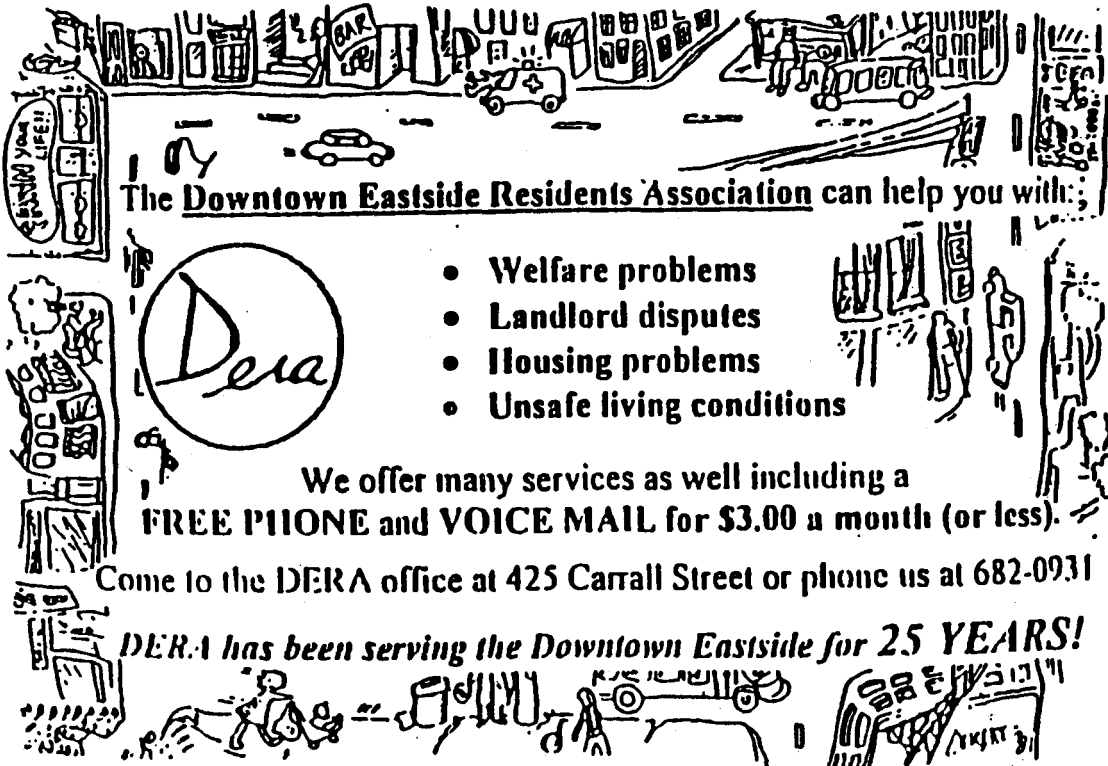
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**Submission Deadline
for next issue
Tuesday, April 11**

carnews@direct.ca



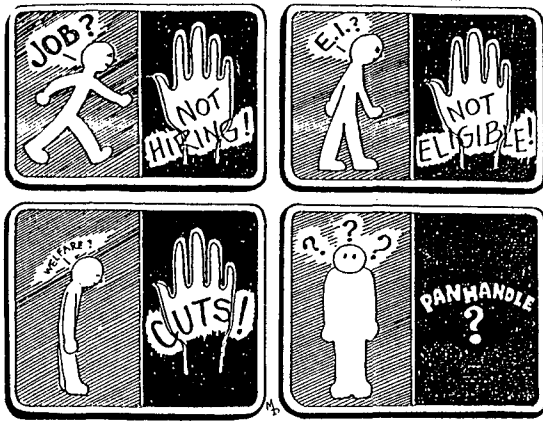
The Downtown Eastside Residents Association can help you with:

- Welfare problems
- Landlord disputes
- Housing problems
- Unsafe living conditions

We offer many services as well including a
FREE PHONE and VOICE MAIL for \$3.00 a month (or less).

Come to the DERA office at 425 Carrall Street or phone us at 682-0931

DERA has been serving the Downtown Eastside for 25 YEARS!



BC Benefits / BC Loses

It's been a couple of years, but to frontline advocates it's like a never-ending nightmare. Welfare is a right under our system, for people who are unable to support themselves for whatever reason. The GAIN Act was replaced with BC Benefits.

Advocates at DERA, First United Church, at every agency or group, have been swamped with bureaucracy and the multiplication of hoops and non-discretionary decisions of financial workers and Ministry staff.

DERA, at its monthly General Meeting in March, shared information with people and reps from many groups, and seeks to publicize the hurt and suffering that have been augmented by changes to regulations. This fightback has to happen, despite the crushing workloads of all advocates.

Lilly Loncar, a frontline worker at DERA, listed many of these changes:

- three-month residency requirement to collect welfare (defeated in march '97) *The Canada Assistance Plan had enshrined the right to income assistance anywhere in the country for those in need. It was destroyed by the feds, but the social principle is alive.*

- \$46 cut to single employables. Existing on \$500 a month with at least \$325 for shelter, support is now \$175/month. In 1981 it was \$192, but in terms of purchasing power, \$192 in 1981 dollars is \$434 today.

- \$96 cut to childless couples and 'elimination' of thousands of unemployables by eliminating the category.

- Youth Works—training for welfare Those 19-25 must engage in full time job search. This costs \$4 a day; welfare is \$6 a day. They must take any job must take job prep courses must do subsidized jobs just to collect assistance. This is a corporate strategy to get subsidized workers and blame the unemployed for the lack of decent jobs.

- cuts to crisis grants and asking for more than 3 in a year leads to being administered.

- cuts to allowable asset levels

- denial of benefits to students while banks revel in student loan business upsurge

- elimination of flat-rate earnings exemption (repealed in January 2000) which deducted any extra income dollar-for-dollar

- Family Bonus lump sum payments deducted from assistance

- reduced medical coverage

- mandatory repayment if an appeal fails, discouraging recipients from challenging Ministry decisions

- forced early change to Canada Pension, even though it reduces long-term assistance by 30%
- an increase in focus on fraud investigation, even though statistics show it is only 3%

- mandatory signing of consent forms that violate individual privacy

The issues of 5-week months (usually it's 4 weeks between cheques but often the calendar requires one to stretch inadequate assistance over 5 weeks) and the additional bureaucracy involved in appeal were all so obvious. The focus of the meeting was and is to channel our anger and frustration into demanding change that is positive, not punishing.



Why we need a decent welfare system:

People have an unequivocal human right to shelter and income when in need. Having a decent system with no forced work or training:

- helps make workers' wages truly living-wages
- makes it possible for women (and children) to leave abusive family situations
- allows immigrants and refugees to leave situations of economic and political violence
- is one of the human rights for Aboriginal communities because of the impact of colonialism
- provides people with disabilities an adequate financial support to ensure access to transportation, health and medical needs, and independence
- means Youth and children can live with safety, security, good health and education because they are our future
- ensures that all people can receive adequate purchasing power for the 5 fundamental factors: food, clothing, shelter, medical aid and education

All present recognized that success in the war on poverty is a "long haul" but the current government must make changes. The NDP has long had, and with good reason, the support of poor people. If it continues to ignore these very real assaults on our well-being, it will quickly become apparent as the necessity of going to the voters gets closer.

By PAUL R. TAYLOR

[With much help from the ELPkit and DERA]



To Friends

Volunteering is a time-honoured tradition in Canada, and the Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers, recognizes the tremendous contributions of volunteers in this province.

As you may know, National Volunteer Week will take place April 9 to 15 this year. I, as the new Minister, want to celebrate this week and thank you for your hard-work and dedication.

As we look forward to 2001, declared International Year of Volunteers, by the United Nations, I would like to honour the efforts of the over one million volunteers in British Columbia and congratulate you for your commitment to a vital and more compassionate society.

You provide a vital service to this province, and your initiative, determination and concern for others enhance all of our lives and spirits.

Thank you once again for your contributions.

Sincerely, Jenny Kwan
Minister