

FREE - donations accepted.

Carnegie

NEWSLETTER



JULY 1, 2000

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

One

“We love drug users and know there is a need for treatment and services. Any Resource Centre should be in a remote area.”

Mr. Cheung, claiming to speak for all Chinese residents of Strathcona.

For ...

“My husband and I provide rooms for reasonable people who will follow our rules. We are willing to work with anyone to get rid of drugs and users.”

Bridget Snyder, SRO owner

One

Again with the Resource Centre for drug users, slated to be a viable operation soon if residents and users and community workers and activists and business and property owners can follow the wish expressed by practically everyone – we have to work together on this.”

The idea for the resource centre began a couple of years ago, as more and more users were being denied access to community services. Meetings of users and the continuous struggle to get a place – any place – where the little necessities would be

Against

available in a safe and stable environment seemed to bring crumbs. All the idealism seemed safe as well, at least to the vested (monied) interests; and surveys and meetings with community groups went fairly well until the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board announced that they had picked a site and purchased the building on it.

The political machinations rose to the surface.

At meetings called by the Health Board, staff were subjected to screaming rage of those who see nothing but Strathcona, the neighbourhood adjacent to the site, being overrun and destroyed. The moves to address community concerns did little to assuage those most vehemently opposed.

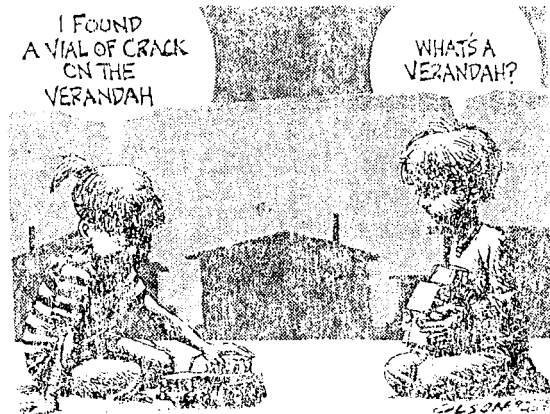
Voila – the formation of the Community of Strathcona Alliance (CSA). They have promoted little but condemnation, mostly in terms of rubbing particular woes together. They lost at the Development Permit Board because the reasons for were just more convincing. The seemingly endless repetition of “no consultation” and “wrong location” didn’t address anything but people with their noses out of joint.

Next step in the strategy of delay and more delay was to invite local politicians to special meetings which immediately became screaming fits.

Next step was to invite people who may or may not have been members of the organisations supposedly supporting the Alliance to a public Town Hall Forum. It was envisioned as a place to make opposition to the Resource Centre snowball to gargantuan proportions. The only minor point was that their claims or propaganda of unanimity in the community were just so much bullshit.

People showed up to the meeting at Strathcona School only to find that, despite so much ranting about the lack of democracy and consultation, only those opposed to the Resource Centre were going to be permitted to speak. Attempts to be civil wavered as those exuding moral superiority (like the hold-your-nose volunteer from Union Gospel) or running over with common \$en\$e (like the SRO owner) tried to give the bum’s rush to users, residents and activists.

“It’s *our* meeting!”



People responded loudly “It’s a public meeting!!” Signs, balloons, handouts and chants of “let them speak, let them speak” combined to force the organizers to do just that. However, the ad hoc plan became to have everyone opposed to the resource centre speak, then the riff-raff could rant about the so-called benefits to themselves. The Mr. Cheung quoted above spoke about how hard done by and poorly treated he had been in trying to get the politicians and the health Board and all levels of government to stop being idiots. When he said the resource centre had to be elsewhere – “some remote area”- it became apparent that he had also called for an island somewhere devoted to housing (incarcerating) all users. The next two speakers also condemned the idea- one for money (a hotel owner with boxes of protest letters and bemoaning having to get donations to pay legal fees*) and one for wanting a clean backyard.

The protest from the floor became “**One For – One Against**” as the mini-strategy of putting all the uninvited at the end became apparent as well.

The idea of ‘consultation’ was addressed – your opinion is not guaranteed to win the day. The face of a community alliance was eroded as the bona fides of groups listed on their flyers fell apart. A letter from Simon Fraser School of Contemporary Art expressed mild anger that their name appeared as part of the CSA. It became obvious that several of the groups listed would likewise be angry if they knew their names were attached to CSA.

*The legal fees: Jonathan Baker, labeled as a “scumbag” by an unidentified alley urchin for representing slumlords’ rights to make money off



the most rat-run, cockroach-infested dives on the east side, has been retained by CSA and has a lawsuit in the courts over the issuance of the said development permit. He is likely bleeding CSA for everything, the story goes, and of course those in the know are panhandling from seniors to line his pockets.

*Charles Lee, President of the Chinatown Merchants Association, was on the committee which, for 2 years, did the surveys and met with the groups and was constant in site selection. His political future got clarified as he chose to deny that he had, in fact, endorsed the site while claiming to speak for all Chinatown merchants and residents. He and one other are vying for the federal Liberal nomination to run against Libby Davies MP.

Libby spoke, bringing the issue of addiction and the health of both users and communities back to the centre. "This resource centre can be only part of the solution. Other essentials include treatment, detox, housing, safe injection sites, counselling, opportunities and hope. It can't be viewed as the problem. Whether it goes ahead or not, addiction

EVERY PARENT'S NIGHTMARE

It doesn't matter whether downtown eastside or uptown westside ...it's every parent's nightmare ...long past midnight and where are they now? ...No phone call...no door furtively opening...no creaking staircase... 'Should we check hospital? Police?...Neighbours?...friends? ...What about prayers?' Ah, yes...we did that toobut so long, long ago

Sam Roddan

remains the major health issue in our community."

Libby is virtually alone in speaking out in favour of harm reduction approaches to drugs. Politicians are almost unanimous in seeing no personal gain in supporting such an approach. Too bad.

The few points that most people agreed on included the need to increase treatment, detox, expansion of services and the inclusion of many other communities and neighbourhoods in their provision. One member of the Network of Drug Users voiced the usually ignored obvious: "We don't want to be addicts. We need help and we need a place to start."

By PAULR TAYLOR

Wouldn't They Like To Know

Landscapes changin'
Developers rearrangin'
They're takin' the lowest road
They lobby, cajole and goad
Corrupt politicians
Corporate morticians
Who are executing and embalming our dreams
Strangling us with reams of red tape
Crushing us under monolithic slabs
of shattered stone.. ancient fossils
Our political masters love to see us recoil and
cower, slithering like frightened snakes to the
suburban wilderness – stranded on dunes of sand
and heaps of disordered refuse....
Contrary to their wishes, however,
I predict we will remain and continue to reclaim
our turf and our territory!
- which rightly and morally belongs to us.
To dig in our heels and to stand our ground
to the bitter sweet end.....
are you with me on this crusade
brothers and sisters?
No, wait, you don't have to bother answering –
I already know what you'll say:
You're in it for the long haul.
How do I know?
Just because I feel each and every one of you
beating in a very special place in my heart.

Robyn Livingstone



Networks

Any woman who sews or knits, or weaves, blends colours in a tapestry or creates a patchwork of quilt, knows by the feel that a single thread is weak but the weaving, the blending, the intertwining with many others makes it strong.

Any woman alone, without friends, to sustain her, to nurture and support, to hold with loving arms, like a single thread, is weak. But the weaving, the loving, the nurturing of others, the networks of friendship make her strong.

The Sheep Skin Rug

*I feel the sorrow
while admiring
a sheep skin rug
on my wall*

*My thoughts concern
the sheep's death.
Did it die of old age?
Was it killed for its mutton?*

*The skinning of an animal
tears at my flesh.
The sheep skin rug
will be a reminder of atrocities
during WW II.*

*I think of Ilse Koch an SS-Aufsenherin
(overseer) in Buchenwald, a
concentration camp from 1937-1945,
115 miles south of Berlin
in East Germany who collected
tattooed, human flesh and had it
used for lamp-shades.*

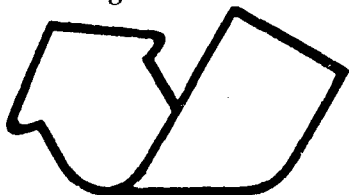
*I light my candles
in memorium
to the lambs of G-d.*

Anita Haviva Stevens



There was glass shinning
in the sand. Throw the glass back and let
Nature polish it. We won't disturb the crab
habitat; the beach was built
with \$4 million worth of
"clean" landfill.

The sun is insane - my skin is
already starting to feel hot again.
The next dive is oh so much better.
At 12 o'clock noon and I hear the
strains of "O Canada" and now know
what it's like to stand beside the 9 o'clock
gun!



Vision Quest 2000

100 hours of fasting

I survived those hours. I am a survivor from
residential school, survivor from the streets of
Vancouver - from Main & Powell, to Jackson. to
Union Street, Hastings to Carrall.. the Common
Gold café, the Blue Eagle café, the Lux Theatre
where all the action was. There were all the drugs
you could find. I was a user!

I am glad I had good, close friends who cared
and took me away from these streets. I am forever
grateful to those friends and all I can say is

Kleco Kleco [Thank You]

I did this Vision Quest fast for all our natives
who have suffered on these streets.. all the ones
who have since passed on, and for the poor and
homeless and addicted people, and for the fact
that racism is still in full bloom!

We must teach our children and grandchildren
that there are only four colours in our Circle: the
Black, the White, the Red and the Yellow. and
these are the colours of our people throughout the
world. We must teach all children, every one of
us, so they will learn to love all people. Learning
and knowledge of their culture especially so each

Women, Art & Spirituality

Explore your spirituality through
playing with art materials at

D.A.M.S. *

167 West Pender St.

Mondays, 12:30 to 3:30 pm

July 10th to August 14th

Light lunch included

Dean or Katrina - 687-5454

**Drug & Alcohol Meeting Support for Women*



can fight racism and have a better tomorrow.

In all I am glad I and my wife Betty survived this
100 hour fast, but am very disappointed at not
being acknowledged as one of the oldest there. I
survived and am 65 years old!

Still, we must all unite, and the circle we had
must grow each year so our children, grandchild-
ren and their grandchildren will have a better
future. Vision Quest 2000 - A Time For Change
time for a new approach
for a better tomorrow
for all peoples!

Austin

Vision Quest 2000 The First Nations' Fast

On Saturday June 17th at noon, ten Native people began a four-day fast at Victory Square. They wanted to draw attention to the horrific conditions for Aboriginals in the Downtown Eastside, and encourage a collective "vision" as a guide to begin the new millennium.

In 1998 five Elders had fasted in Pigeon Park and survived to inspire Vision Quest 2000.

At the opening ceremony, an elder led the small circle in a barefoot touching of Mother Earth. Then she sent the people to walk around the park (in their shoes) to cleanse the area. Street people sat on benches watching and smoking crack.

Saturday night it rained and Monday morning as well. By then there were several tents and lean-to shelters up. After walking through the sick-sweet stench of vomit billowing from filthy-looking plastic tubes, the clean, fresh aroma of burning sage was a relief. I sat with a few of the fasters who I know. Much as we tried to avoid it, the subject kept reverting to food. At one point a passer-by pulled a package of chocolate-covered popcorn out of his bag. There was much laughter as he promised to save it until Wednesday. Earlier two policemen had demanded to see the permit for the protest. My friend explained what the fast was about and told them there would be a feast at Oppenheimer after the four days. One of the officers said, "Oh, like a nice barbecue and everything." My friend joked, "No, we'll be standing in line for baloney sandwiches at the Sisters."

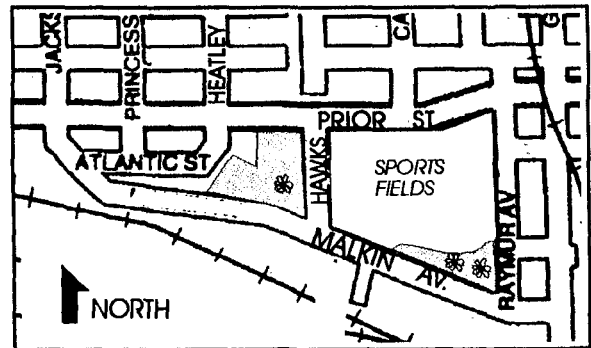
On Monday evening, my son and I were invited to join the talking circle. As non-natives, non-participating supporters, we tried to sit on the outside but one of the fasters insisted that we share her pillow and blanket. It was a privilege to listen to the wise, non-aggressive words spoken from the heart. Several people spoke of the need to make this world a better place for the children. The noise of the traffic muffled the words sometimes but the drumming after drowned out the blaring vehicles. I asked my 10-year-old son what he thought of the circle. He said, "A lot of people were crying so that was kind of sad, but it was

happy too."

On Tuesday media people came to interview, photograph and tape. Viola Thomas, president of United Native Nations, camped with the fasters for the last day and night. As usual her words to the press were clear, concise and absolutely "right on." Some of the fasters looked tired and flushed. One woman told me she had fasted before but it was much harder in the city. But spirits were high – they'd almost made it. A guy with a big bag walked by offering free pizza.

On Wednesday June 21st – Aboriginal Day – fasters and supporters walked and drummed and sang along Hastings Street to Oppenheimer Park. There was a long, thick line of people from the Totem pole area almost to the baseball diamond, waiting to eat. Like magic, individual volunteers and agencies had prepared tables full of burgers, smokies, salmon, potato salad and fruits. The fasters were served and then almost everyone got their fill of good food.

By LEITH HARRIS



✻ STRATHCONA COMMUNITY GARDENS
✻ COTTONWOOD COMMUNITY GARDEN

Strathcona Community Garden OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, July 9, 10am – 2pm

This is a good chance to meet friends, neighbours and tour both sites. There are fantastic deals at our annual Plant Sale. Come and see the ecologically sensitive Garden House, herb garden, espalier orchard, marsh area and more. Master gardeners from VanDusen will be answering questions...

ELECTRIC SUGAR

The brain hooked on chemical reactions
Unconnected neurons, unplugged dendrites.
You walk the filthy alleys staining your flower
power outfit with shit hues.

Then you think you have done enough and you
get back to your cozy world full of shattered
dreams.

Not before you smeared your mind with holed
bodies, holed lungs, holed hearts, holed brains,
holed spirits, and holed dreams.

And you think everybody is the same.

And you think that everybody pollutes your vital
space.

And you think because you have read some books
and seen some misery you know everything and
you seal your beliefs with recycled plastic, but
meanwhile people are still dying
and falling into endless abysses.

Your corrupted aura threatened by an ailing aura.
Some of god's children look for salvation on the

tip on the needle.

Salvation through poisonous fluids.

And you, little miss society, you look for salvation
in the indifferent walls of your void soul.

Oswaldo Perez Cabrera.



Living Well with HIV and AIDS 2nd Edition

Free Drinks for Ladies with Nuts, Delightfully
Mangled English from Around the World by Jane
O'Boyle.

My Traitor's Heart by Rian Milan. Memoir of an
Afrikaner crime reporter who returns to South
Africa during the final years of apartheid's bloody
collapse. As the Los Angeles Times Book Reviewer
wrote... "A passionate, blazingly honest testament..
Those who read it will never again see South Africa
in quite the same way."

Check out the display cases on the third floor for
more brand new books. Finally, at least half a
dozen new mysteries were recently processed and
placed on the shelves. I've read one already - The
Ghost. Good, imaginative story about a smart New
York woman undercover police officer.

Good Reading Everyone!

Ruth McGibbon, Library Committee Chair.

LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

For your summer reading some of the new books in
the library include:

Brother Twelve by John Oliphant. Brother Twelve
was a self-claimed religious prophet who set him-
self up on one of the gulf islands at the Aquarian
Foundation. His cult followers numbered in the
thousands. Eventually, his dream became a night-
mare as disciples became slaves to a spiritual tyrant
The eventual revolt against their leader led to one of
the most amazing court cases in Canadian history.

The Saga of the Volsungs translated by Jesse L.
Byock. Based on Viking Age poems.

Prisoners of Hate, The Cognitive basis of Anger,
Hostility, and Violence by Aaron T. Beck, M.D.

Beyond Anger a guide for men. *How to Free
Yourself from the Grip of Anger and Get More Out
of Life* by Thomas J. Harbin, Ph.D.

Charles Bukowski by Howard Sounes.

The Economic Horror – Jobs Are Disappearing

You want the truth? People don't go into business to create jobs. They go into business to make money. There aren't enough jobs in the labour market for those who want to work, and jobs are disappearing every day through corporate downsizing. Sophisticated technology has made many of the world's people superfluous in terms of production for the global market. According to the United Nations, one hundred million of the earth's people are on the move as refugees and immigrants. They are looking for a better life, looking for decent jobs. Those jobs, as work in the labour market, are gone, and they won't return. Machines can and have taken the place of people.

Yet those with wealth and power continue to perpetuate the myth that there are jobs for everyone. Canada's jobless rate is supposedly under 7 per cent. "Canada is a virtual job-creating machine," said David Rosenberg, an economist at Merrill Lynch Canada Inc. (1) This kind of propaganda is not helpful to a country with so many food banks, homeless people and panhandlers. It's not that the corporate spin doctors are lying; it's just that they're so ideologically blind that they can't see the human (and environmental) catastrophe that's staring them in the face.

Here's one way the unemployment figures are twisted to satisfy the business oligarchy. Statistics Canada will count you as employed if you have worked one hour of paid work in the week they do their employment survey. What would happen to the "official" unemployment rate if you weren't counted as fully employed unless you worked a minimum of forty hours per week?

To get a real idea of how many people are unemployed in Canada, we would have to count the discouraged workers who have stopped looking for work, the part-time workers who want fulltime work, the self-employed Canadians who would prefer fulltime, paid work, workers who can only find temporary jobs, women who would work at paid jobs if decent jobs and child care were available, and all the people on government training



programs because decent jobs aren't available. Canada's real unemployment rate is probably around 18 percent. (2)

Now consider the millions of unemployed people throughout the world. Transnational corporations pit one group of desperate workers against another in a downward spiral of competitive impoverishment. "If you don't accept lower wages, and if you don't give us lower taxes, we will move our factories elsewhere," they say. This strategy is called building business confidence, but it is really business blackmail.

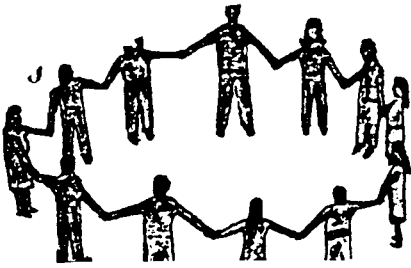
Those with power know that there aren't enough jobs and that there never will be enough jobs in the high-tech, predatory, global economy, yet they blame the jobless for being unemployed and force them to look for nonexistent jobs. The jobless often blame themselves as well, and feel ashamed and humiliated about being unemployed. Sometimes they turn their anger on those closest to them, or on minority groups less powerful than themselves.

Is it intelligent to demand that people be employed in the market when you know that the jobs are not there? Is it intelligent to insist that decent jobs be a necessary condition for full participation in society when you know that the jobs aren't there? How much longer will we allow ourselves to be bamboozled by the myth of abundant jobs? (3)

By Sandy Cameron
to be continued

References

- (1) "Jobless rate drops to 6.6%," by Bruce Little & Wendy Stueck, *Globe & Mail* June 10, 2000.
- (2) "Canada's real jobless rate could still be as high as 17.9% by David Robinson, *The CCPA Monitor*, June, 1999
- (3) *The Economic Horror* by Viviane Forrester, Polity Press. 1999, reprinted in 2000, pg 7



At 1:00 pm on Friday, June 23rd, an ad hoc group of residents and friends of the Downtown Eastside picked the Patricia Hotel, located at 403 East Hastings St. The picket was conducted because the Patricia's owner, Wayne Nelson, has initiated a campaign to divide the community. It was the first in a proposed series of actions designed to confront businesses in the Downtown Eastside and Strathcona that have signed on to Nelson's campaign.

Some people may remember Wayne Nelson as the landlord who evicted all his tenants in 1986 in order to house tourists for Expo '86. Among those evicted was Olaf Solheim, who had lived in the Patricia for 50 years. Solheim died within two weeks of the eviction.

Nelson is the founder of SAMS, the Strathcona Area Merchants Society, a group with the stated goals of excluding certain members of the community from its territory. These include using more police and private security to stop "the undesirable element from lower Hastings" from getting "in our business and residential district."

Nelson and SAMS also promote the goal of the "decentralization of services" that are necessary for the survival of a substantial portion of the local population. This is a code word for dispersion and displacement of low income residents.

Hypocritically, SAMS declares its "absolute refusal to allow any additional alcohol and drug facilities in our area." Currently, the only alcohol and drug facilities within the SAMS boundaries are bars, the owners of which will be part of the Business Improvement Association! In fact, Wayne Nelson, SAMS' main organizer, makes a good living off the Pat Pub, which advertises

Hypocritically, SAMS declares its "absolute refusal to allow any additional alcohol and drug facilities in our area." Currently, the only alcohol and drug facilities within the SAMS boundaries are bars...

"take-out beer."

Early this year, the City of Vancouver has conferred Business Improvement Society status on Nelson and SAMS. However, because of concerns over its stated objectives, BIA status was only conditionally approved. SAMS was instructed to:

"Participate in and abide by the outcome of facilitated, and if necessary, mediated, discussions through the Downtown Eastside Community Revitalization Program, with affected community groups, to resolve issues that may arise from any initiatives which may affect conditions on the street, including reducing the negative impacts of the illegal drug trade and street prostitution."

However, instead of working with local groups, SAMS is using its substantial budget - a quarter million dollars per year - to divide the community over the Health Board's Resource Centre for drug users, to be located on Powell St.

SAMS has put its financial and organizational muscle behind the most extreme NIMBY (*not in my back yard*) elements in the Strathcona neighbourhood, and has hired Jonathan Baker to mount a court challenge to the Resource Centre. Baker is famous for acting on behalf of some of our city's worst slumlords, including SRO hotel-owners in the Downtown Eastside and Strathcona.

With neighbours like SAMS, who needs enemies??

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

2000 DONATIONS Libby D.-\$55
 Sam R.-\$15 Nancy W.-\$20 Eve E.-\$20
 Margaret D.-\$30 Shyamala G.-\$18
 Joy T.-\$30 Val A.\$36 Wm B-\$20
 Thomas B.-\$41 Harold D.-\$7 Pam-\$22
 Relf A. \$45 Bruce J.-\$50 Beth L.-\$2
 Kettle -\$18 Sonya S.-\$140 BCTF-\$10
 Nancy H.-\$35 Bill G.-\$150 Wes K.-\$30
DEYAS-\$200 RayCam-\$25
 Wisconsin Historical Society -\$10
 Heather S.-\$18 John S-\$50
 Yukiko -\$10 VEDC -\$25
 Rockingguys -\$30

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Carnegie
NEWSLETTER
At the Downtown Eastside Community Centre

THE NEWSLETTER IS A PUBLICATION OF THE
 CARNEGIE COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION

Articles represent the views of contributors
 and not of the Association.

Submission Deadline
for next issue
Tuesday, July 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!

Panic Attack

They had (I had myself) in a
rubber room down at St Paul's
scared, just scared of everything
the guys in the ambulance looked like
werewolves the other medics looked like
nazis they took my clothes but
I stopped them when they wanted
my necklace and turquoise
those I fondled as I sat in their robes
and blankets waiting to calm down
rubbing my turtle almost chanting silently



HIDDEN AWAY

Some people are right in fashion
Their hair styled so marvelously
With all the golden streaks in it
They wear the right clothes and the
Best pair of Adidas running shoes
They almost seem to be invisible
Some men like to have that image
That is just so perfect that makes
It hard to get through to them
Yet when I get a really good look
At that face that is in front of me
There is a rare beauty there that's
Been hidden away in a lost garden
For almost a million years or so
With high walls built all around
And in the voice I hear something
Tender and gentle waiting for someone
To come along and ask them to come
Out and play and experience a much
Bigger world that two people can have
And ran a ring around the parking lot..

Daniel Rajala

this madness will pass once the drugs
take hold
in the middle of totally losing it
the world didn't crack or turn into
a Dali world – the world remained stable –
it was me, just me freaking the fuck out
all those years of acid and I never lost it
together
today I walk embarrassed 'cause the
whole world knows now for sure
I'm a nutbar; to a kind few
it doesn't seem to matter and
there's your miracle

R. Loewen



NO LIFE

When you spend a lot of your time
In the downtown core of the city
It is a circus thriving on sidewalks
People rushing around so blindly
Doing all of their shopping and
All those people wrecked on drugs
Living with this every day is no life
When you have to live in a cheap hotel
With neighbors keeping you up all night
A band of cockroaches crawling out of
Macaroni dinner left in the toaster oven
Mice darting across the floor at night
Like phantoms that can never be caught
Having to live with it then this is no life
Just like tomatoes left in the refrigerator
Left unnoticed for too long before you
Know it your whole life has gone bad
Back alleys are the place where people
Do not care much about what goes on
When you can spend some time with dad
And can't find something to laugh about
Then it seems to me this really is NO LIFE.

Daniel Rajala



tow away zone-

*just a little story to let you know how things
sometimes work in this crazy old world.*



In late April I wore the wrong shoes; they were a little tight and I hadn't worn cowboy boots for a couple of years. The result was a small blister, so small as to be unnoticeable to my great mind. As I have done all my life, I ignored it because it was so small and it didn't even hurt. **WHAT A FOOL I WAS!!!**

The blister got bigger and I began to limp. After a week or so I went to the doctor. My doctor wasn't there so one of his doctor partners took a look at my foot. She said, "I can't do anything for you. If it was up to me I would go to the hospital." It did not sound too urgent but I stopped at the Native Health Clinic. They said go to the hospital or lose your foot. Now it sounded *urgent* so I went to **EMERGENCY** at St. Paul's. They gave me some intravenous antibiotics. It took fifteen minutes. They also gave me a prescription for some oral antibiotics which I got filled right away and began to take as prescribed. I had also been told to come back each day until they decided that I was no longer infected. I agreed. The next day I came back at about the same time. There was a different nurse on and it took her an hour and a quarter to do the same job as was done the previous day.

I went home and felt a little ill. No problem. The next day I felt sick and decided to take a day off from the antibiotics - both oral and intravenous. I still felt sick the day after that so I decided to miss that day too. By the third day I was too sick to eat or use the bathroom. What an awful feeling. Every thing I ate I threw up. A day later I threw up a banana and that was all I had to eat the whole day. I was taking some ibuprofen that my doctor had

prescribed earlier and I was running low. By the end of the week I figured I'd better see my doc to get another prescription or suffer thru the weekend without any pain killers. I don't like taking any kind of pills but knew I would need some this weekend. My doc sent me back to the hospital even though I didn't want to go

At St. Paul's I told the doctor that the intravenous antibiotics were making me really sick. He asked me to explain the circumstances, then said that he didn't think it was the antibiotics that were making me sick. He would try the same thing one more time and would change it if I got sick. He also arranged for me to call a specialist about my foot. Well I got so sick that weekend that I promised myself that I wouldn't go back for any more of their iv antibiotics.

Monday morning I went to see the specialist and he informed me that I was going to lose my toe. He would do it himself and the sooner the better. I was kind of shocked and dumbfounded. I told him that I'd let him know in a couple of days. He said okay but don't leave it too long. I left the office and went outside. Still feeling kind of shocked I looked around and found myself standing in a tow away zone. What an omen. I knew right then that I would be losing my toe that week. On my way home I stopped and phoned the doctor's office and made an appointment to get my toe removed.

The toe is now gone and I'm happier for it because I still have my foot. By the way I'm a diabetic and have been one for about five years. If I learnt anything from this little episode it is "Take care of the little things and the big things will take care of themselves.

Strange Looking Men

7 o'clock
This wet summer morning
Off to the store
Some coffee I need

On the corner outside
The building I live in
The cop cars are parked
The road is blocked off

In the park crouch concealed
More cops at the ready
Cherry trees hide them
From eyes that would see

Their minds are all primed
They're ready to kill
One wrong move
And kill you they will

At the end of the block
More cop cars are parked
My friend Leah's house
In the circle of death

I wonder what's happening
So early in the day
Will the Grim Reaper
Come out to play?

Red house next to Leah's
The star attraction
Cops are all focused
Guns point the way

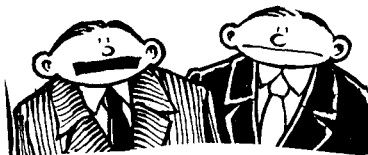
In a rush down the stairs
The cops drag two people
Cops are so many
The porch overflows

The SWAT team is there
With strange-looking guns
Bulletproof vests
Make them look big

The Prophet

a prophet spoke words
bubbling against my skin
word running trickling
down my spine
she said
beneath your hands
the world will come together
and then will fall apart
that's the way it always is
you must lose everything
to find anything
her words were hot and cleansing
like tequila on a wound

J. Lemay



I'm glad Leah's dog
Wasn't out in the yard
She would have attacked
These strange-looking men

More cops keep arriving
The sidewalk soon fills
An island of blue
In Leah's sea of green

Guns at their sides
All laughing and joking
Like their team just won
Some god damned game

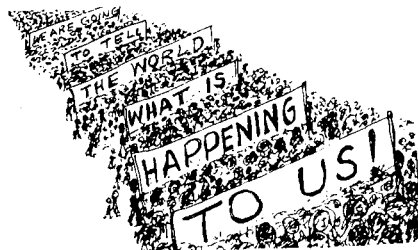
The victims are cuffed
Then taken away
No need for sirens
Jail's 3 blocks away

Paul Wright

M A D

I'm mad and proud
I love prevention
I hate euphoria
it's dangerous
There are toxic poisons
that cause psychosis
I See victims everyday
Poor bent scruffy users
..of psychomimetic compounds
..altered state explorers who
get extremely angry
if I confront them..
We should lock them up
Like we've locked up slaves,
prostitutes, environmentalists,
heretics, races, madmen,,,
But then that's me;
gosh, I vote Liberal:
let them take their chances.....

Andy K.



Tents
are an island
in the madness
and the pain
Sharon
is a lifeguard
on the ocean
of pain

Paul Wright



[gentle readers: This letter appears in the CUPE newsletter, by never smiling j.F.]

Too Much Testosterone

I'm concerned with the state of our union. The call for money from the membership for strike pay, the mud slinging and back biting that permeates the regular meetings and the Members' Voice, and the fact that we are way past due in having a full time paid president. Lots of stuff. So it was with these thoughts and others that I ventured out to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 26th.

Settling against that back wall, by the cookies and tea, I was prepared to hang in there to hear the debate from the substantial-sized gathering seated below; to carefully consider responses from the chair (President) and Secretary Treasurer who were seemingly prepared to try to make logical, thoughtful presentations to support the decisions of the Executive; to hear the voice of the regular members; and to perhaps offer some of my own views to the 200 or so brothers and sisters.

Then, I think I was on my third cookie, an

amazing thing happened.

During one of the debates a member, a sister, stepped to the floor microphone and, striking a kind of singer's pose, stated (confidently) ... "I'd like to call the question" ... All right. I thought, this debate isn't altering anyone's position, let's move along. (*Perhaps some aren't aware that to call the question means the member is asking for a vote to cease debate on a particular motion. The person calling the question is not allowed the opportunity to comment one way or the other, or to in any way enter the debate.*) Then turning her face up towards the congregation, she boldly offered "...this room has far too much testosterone in it!"

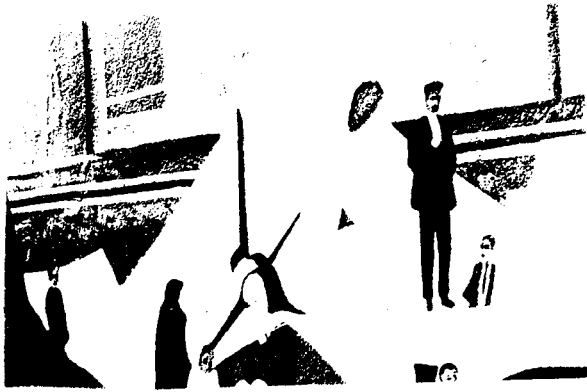
Well, that bit me like a ton of bricks (that's bricks). Like a Mike Tyson left hook. Like a Marty McSorley whack on the head. Of course! It was too obvious! Why didn't I see? Why didn't anyone else notice? The reason the Union is in such a (sad) state is testosterone!

It's not the overspending by the Executive, as has been suggested. It's not the unusual practice (to me) of a member of the Executive taking the floor to demand answers and accountability from the very Board he sits on. It's not flying everyone who wants to go to Ontario or Timbuktu for conventioning. It's not the bad attitude of the City managers toward all our members. It's not the CWW cancellation, and certainly not the tons of grievances going to money-sucking arbitrations, or the tons of dollars, time and energy spent battling stupid decision-making by the well paid middle (is that muddle) managers. None of that. It's too much testosterone!!!

Reeling from the effects of that pronouncement, I staggered from the noisy auditorium, flopped into my car and tried to come to grips with this amazing revelation. I drove slowly, or at least non-aggressively, and thought... ya know I did notice an aura, if not a smell in there tonight. Sort of familiar but more a sense than an odour. Not after shave. No perfume, but... but... wait: Yes, that's it! It wasn't testosterone at all. It was PHERAMONE!!!

I was home.

John Ferguson (Head of security, Carnegie)



Visiting Canada

I have lived in Vancouver for five months. I left Japan, where I have lived for a long time, to visit Canada. At first Vancouver didn't make a good impression on me. But "every bird thinks its own nest charming." It takes time to get used to a new place. I found the stores that sell Japanese food and now I feel more comfortable than I did when I first arrived.

Chinatown looks like China. When I walk on Robson Street, I wonder where I am because there are a lot of Japanese and Korean people walking there.

I work in a Japanese restaurant here. That's why I don't miss Japanese food but I do miss friends, family, and the culture at home. Before I travelled I took my country for granted. Now that I have seen other places, I am more aware of my own culture.

I am interested in culture, politics, economics and history, and I think rich countries have a responsibility to help poor countries. Friends of mine are taking a Japanese language course in Vancouver. Sometimes they ask me about Japanese grammar, but I can't explain it very well because I never liked grammar. As a native speaker in Japanese, I never thought much about grammar. Also, my friends ask me about traditional Japanese culture, but I don't know my own traditional culture very well.

I will keep studying English and I hope to learn more about Japanese culture as well. It's a good experience for me to live in Canada and I appreciate the tutors who help me with English at the Carnegie Learning Centre.

By Takako Hoshi

FOUR ESSENTIAL TASKS FOR A POET

FIRST TASK:

A poet must experience life to the maximum, exploring all its potentials as fully and as completely as possible – and when engaged in this task the word *excess* does not apply. He must cavort with demons, seduce libertines, and socialize with idiots. This is risky and not as easy as it seems. But it has its rewards.

SECOND TASK:

A poet requires heightened sensibilities, which demands that he continually readjust and fine-tune his sensory inputs. These transformations are the poet's *modus operandi*, permitting him to perpetrate his outrages upon a stupefied world with impunity, while he endures undetected, unapprehended, and unrepentant.

THIRD TASK:

A poet must be a ruthless killer of social orders, habits, conventions and morals. With fang and with claw, it is his duty to rend apart his natural prey: stupidity, vanity, and hypocrisy – and he must learn to devour this unsavory fare with gusto. Subsequently, a poet will shit wisdom and humor and insight – which is the only evidence he ever leaves behind him.

FOURTH TASK:

A poet should be a man of few words, constantly striving to achieve Silence and continually failing.

By Ken Morrison



Wasting & pain

Living off the corner of wasting & pain
Too many people playing their game
Share all their secrets esteem all in vain
Living off the corner of wasting & pain

Carl macdonald

Re: Drug Users Resource Centre

A Town Hall meeting on June 27th at Strathcona School was heated in more ways than temperature. If only that energy could be harnessed into helping current and potential drug addicts. As a parent, I was dismayed at the lack of compassion displayed toward young people in trouble. There seems to be a caste system developing with the untouchables, of course, being the street people.

What is the solution?



In the dumpster

Binner@vcn.bc.ca

I finally got my computer up and running (*thanks to phil chris and mike*). Now i can write to my public.

About 4 months ago a new store appeared at 95 e. Hastings at Abbott. The store once housed Fields Department Store. Now it is Sun Mart Market, a food store with western and Chinese fruit, meat and vegetables. They also have an excellent take out. The owner, Tommy, also has Prime Time Chicken and Sun Mart at Carrall & e. Cordova.

If you like art you might like to check out the display at Artco at 163 w. Pender. It is awesome.

Sunday i went to the Vancouver Unjazzy contest in gra\$\$town. Besides the fact they didn't know how to play any Pink Floyd or even any rap, the concession stands were selling 500ml. of bottled water for \$2.00 each. Rip off or what?

Summer brings sunburns as i found out at the learning centre year end picnic, use lots of sun screen. No! No! Not screen saver. Anyway, when i become the exulted supreme leader of the free world sunburns will be outlawed.

This year at the folk fest the Carnegie CD Project will be performing so check your calendar.

Have a good month and *hey!* Let's be careful out there.

By Mr. McBinner

Build more penal colonies? workhouses? handcuffs? Ship them to an island and shoot them?

Or build drug rehabilitation centres?

One mother, who seemed to be claiming that she was born on the Strathcona school grounds, spoke vehemently against the proposed Resource Centre. She said that her son had been a drug addict but she just got on the phone and got help for him. That boy was so lucky to have a strong advocate to care for him. I suspect she is a woman with strong connections as well. I have heard several addicts say that they want to get off the stuff but they haven't been able to get help. We need more advocates like that mother.

I have asked addicts whom I had known when they were straight, why they were taking such deadly drugs. They said things like:

"When I smoke that crack I forget everything."

"When I shoot that needle, I shut it all out."

"When I blow the stuff, the clouds blow away."

Many of us have times when we want to forget everything and many of our children have or will have those times. We need alternatives to deadly drugs and help for people when they feel like that.

I would much rather that our children didn't have to be exposed to the drug scene. I would rather it wasn't happening, but the reality is that it is. And kids all over the Lower Mainland know it. So it remains a possibility and no one seems to care.

How many more young girls will we see standing on corners or grovelling in the dirt with those sores on their faces?

How can our children grow up to be caring and cared for "good citizens" if we teach them to turn their backs on this obvious suffering?

I remember a young person's T-shirt that read:

You have created this world

In which we grow

We will grow

To hate you.

This Drug Users Resource Centre is just a small step but at least a beginning. Harm reduction is a long process, but proven to be much more effective than prisons.

By LEITH HARRIS