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Carnegie



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 15, 2003

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

Email: carnnews@vcn.bc.ca

lookin' at the time, lookin' at a face
lookin' for my bus, lookin' outta place



Photo: John Endo Greenaway

In the Heart of A City:
The Downtown Eastside
Community Play

Opens November 27th!!!

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

IN THE HEART OF A CITY

THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE COMMUNITY PLAY



The final event in Carnegie Centre's 100th anniversary year of arts celebrations is at hand – *In the Heart of a City, the Downtown Eastside Community Play*, a co-production of the Carnegie Community Centre and Vancouver Moving Theatre.

More than 600 people have participated in the community workshops leading up to the play. With its cast of nearly a hundred Downtown Eastside residents, ranging in age from 5 to 65+, and many more helping out in the costume and prop department, *In the Heart of a City: the Downtown Eastside Community Play* is a huge community endeavour. Based on oral histories and archival materials, the play portrays the stories and the people of this community from Aboriginal times to the present. It is a portrait of challenge, of loss, of success, and of determination. With humour, passion and sincerity it opens our eyes to the people and events that have shaped this community, and this city.

The Province newspaper lists *In the Heart of the City* as one of the 10 "musts" for Vancouverites to see this fall.

The show takes place at the Japanese Hall, 475 Alexander Street for eight performances from Thursday to Saturday November 27 – 29 and December 4 - 6 at 7:30pm, and matinees Sunday November 30 and December 7 at 2pm. A preshow fair with mini performances, food and craft sales starts ½ hour before show time.

Special Community-priced are available for people on low income. They go on sale for \$1 each at the Firehall Arts Theatre on November 17th. One ticket per person, cash only. The Firehall Administration office is open 10 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday. The Firehall is located at 280 East Cordova Street

For more information, call the community play office at 604-216-2767

Scenes from *In the Heart of A City*

from *The Great Fire and the Phoenix*

LEANNE: Minute by minute, hour by hour, in only 3 days, the tiny town rose from the fire like a phoenix. This happened more than a hundred years ago in a year they called 1886.

MICHAEL: What's a phoenix, mama?

LEANNE: A phoenix is the most beautiful bird in the world. It lives forever.

LEANNE: Whenever people chase it, to steal its glorious feathers, the phoenix flies to a distant land to sing in peace. When its wings grow heavy with age and death approaches, the phoenix builds itself a nest of sweet scented twigs ... There it sits on the nest and waits for the sun's rays to ignite into flame. Out of the flames emerges a beautiful young phoenix.

**Mayor Larry Campbell,
Libby Davies, Bill
Richardson, Jenny
Kwan and others will be
making special cameo
appearances.**

from *Crab Park*

OLD ONE: I remember a beautiful little girl, five-six years old, livin' by the sea. Clams real good 'cause the water's so cold n' fast. Salmon just jumpin' in the nets. That little girl wasn't so lucky. Plane came in, pulled her cryin' out of her grandma's arms and put her in one of them schools. They sent her home one time cause she got sick ... figured it was hopeless for her .. cause it's wet where this school was ... like here ... so many walk around water-clogged. But no tears fall – they just keep it all inside ...

NICOLE: Was her name Rita?

from *Dr. Wizard's Miracle Cure*

DR. WIZARD: When you're about to lose it and drown, turn to mother's little helper – the only comfort the poor can afford, and fun for the rich! It's a package of medicine and pleasure: Dr. Wizard's Pink Powder for... Pale People.

SHILL: For more than 4 years, I was troubled by bad nerves, headaches, insomnia and impotence. I could hardly move. Thought I was going crazy. At last I made up my mind to try Dr. Wizard's Pink Powder. Before I used up one bottle, I got a new lease on life. I have now started on my 4,937th bottle. I am entirely cured! It's a never failing remedy!

DR. WIZARD: Solar rays in a bottle! Happiness for a penny!



Cast at the first read through of *In the Heart of A City*.
Photo by John Endo Greenaway

Day Without Volunteers!

No, there is nothing to eat. Keep your tickets, the kitchen is closed. Yes I know the computers in the Learning Centre work fine, but you can't go in to use them. And the computer room is off limits to the public too. Free phones are temporarily unavailable. There will be no newsletter this week, and pottery class is cancelled. Please stay OUT of the senior's lounge until further notice, and leave the covers on the pool tables - absolutely no billiards allowed. The weight room is out of bounds due to a lack of adequate supervision. There will be no lunches included in today's seniors out trip.. you will have to fend for yourself at lunchtime, sorry. And there is no Tai Chi, Ballroom Dancing or Cultural Sharing Group. Please enjoy your visit!

Just took at the person next to you and chances are, at some point in their life, the person has given their time in a volunteer activity. Generosity is fundamental to the concept of volunteering; generosity of material resources, of time, knowledge, thought and physical support. In today's world we all commonly face the same issues. The increased pace of life, the significant challenges and competition individuals face in their personal lives, in caring for family and others, can make finding time to volunteer being increasingly difficult. And yet, volunteering is the ultimate exercise in optimism - a fundamental commitment to our future; an active form of good citizenship.

Fortunately, it is rare to ever see such announcements here at Carnegie, but it does happen from time to time. The simple fact is that without volunteers, there is no Carnegie Centre! Carnegie's volunteer community is diverse, ranging from dishwashers in the kitchen to art instructors to those who serve on the Board for the Carnegie Community Centre Association. All have very different tasks, yet work towards the common goal of making Carnegie Centre GREAT for the people who come here!

A day without volunteers would be very dark day indeed. Thank goodness we have our Centre's greatest asset: YOU! PLEASE honor your commitment to volunteer at Carnegie by showing up for assigned shifts, being prompt, and putting your best foot forward as a Carnegie Volunteer - there are a LOT of people depending on you!



ATTENTION!!!



ATTENTION!!!



ATTENTION!!!



VOLUNTEER and PATRON STARS

To all the Carnegie volunteers and members who worked as extras on the Vancouver movie made for television "On The Corner" and everyone else.

This movie has been a popular one at this year's Vancouver International Film Festival. It is a story of two aboriginal siblings who find themselves sucked into the vortex of the more destructive side of life on the DTES. It is being coined as one of the more emotionally demanding movies at this year's Festival; It asks the audience to watch two beautiful young people destroy themselves...and pushes the audience to care.

Nathaniel Geary (director) has very graciously agreed to show this movie in the Carnegie Theatre.

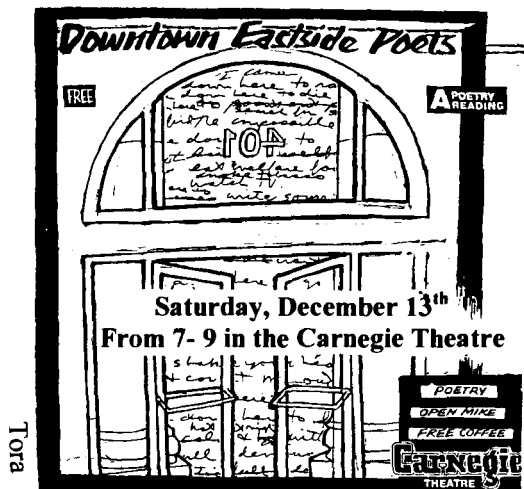
Date: Friday, November 28th, 2003

Time: 7pm-9pm

Place: Carnegie Theatre, 401 Main Street

Any questions, please call Colleen, Carnegie Volunteer Program office.

THE RETURN OF THE



I really enjoyed our "gig" at the Writers' Festival, the writers were Sandy Cameron, Sheila Baxter, Larry Loyie and myself, and the book PRT's *The Heart of the City: The Best of the Carnegie Newsletter*. Some one said to me after "it felt like a family". The last poem I read was written for Sereena, and people came up to me after with tears in their eyes. A punky little high school girl from the North Shore, accompanied by her friend, told me she'd had a similar background and wanted to write her story, and asked where to start? I asked if they had a school newspaper, or a writers' group. They answered "no" both times, then looked at each other and blurted out "WE'LL START ONE!" and said thank you to me, and left smiling with a bounce in their step.

Well, taking a tip from them, I asked if we could bring back the Downtown Eastside Poets, I was one, as were Anita, Sheila, Tom & Taum, Bud, Cuba, Margaret, P.J.Flaming, Tora...oh a whole bunch of us, I can't remember all the names! And the answer is YES, we have the theatre Saturday night December 13 from 7 - 9. Of course so many brilliant writers have sprouted up in this community, it's not going to be just the old-timers. Show up and I'll put your name on the list to read. I'll also be inviting "special guests" - a fancy way of saying all the brilliant poets who are friends of mine!

We will also be reading at the Central Library, a booklaunch for *Heart Of the Community* on December 18 at 7pm..

- Diane Wood

Every writer is, at heart, a frustrated politician who preferred beauty over power. The politician, in turn, is a failed artist who chose power over beauty. Gonzalo Arango (Medellin, Columbia) 5

It is a lie. It is not true that we have to take part in this lethal market.

It is not true that the only options are between different kinds of war.

It is not true that we must take sides with one or another stupidity.

It is not true that we must renounce intelligence and humanity.

It *is* possible to have another world, different than what the violent supermarket is selling us. It *is* possible to have another world where the choice is between war and peace, between memory and forgetting, between hope and resignation, between the gray tones and the rainbow. It *is* possible to have a world where many worlds fit. It *is* possible that from a "No!" will be born an imperfect, unfinished, and incomplete "Yes!" that gives back to humanity the hope of rebuilding, every day, the complex bridge that joins thought and feeling. Viva life! Death to death!

Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos





Address to City Council

Following the October 17th Workshop to Fight Homelessness and the April 1st cuts, the organizing committee is announcing the formation of the Woodward's Social Justice Council, whose mandate is to organize resistance to the provincial liberal cuts and support the efforts of others.

Today in this building we draw the proverbial line in the sand, and advise Gordon Campbell and his co-conspirators that we will not tolerate the efforts of an incompetent Liberal government to balance an out of control budget on the backs of the poor, the women and disabled persons of this province.

It is very clear that the neo-liberal experiment in slash and burn governance is a dismal failure. With every cut the Liberal government imposes the deficit grows. Our health care system is being dismembered in an effort to balance the budget, yet the province's coffers are getting more and more emaciated with every cut.

Since the Great Depression, British Columbian citizens have chosen a path which provides security for the poor, healthcare for the sick and support for the vulnerable. We have supported this system of compassionate social care in the understanding that when we become sick we will be cared for, when we become homeless we will be housed, and when we cannot support ourselves, the society which we have supported will support us. We have been betrayed. We have allowed the Liberals to decimate too much of this social fibre, and will not surrender another inch. We will engage in constant resistance to this assault upon our social net.

On a weekly basis we intend to escalate our actions against the immoral actions of this government.

Immediately following the Workshops we acted upon several of the recommendations. We have set up a clothing and blanket bank for the collection and distribution of these items to the homeless who live in the alleys and under the bridges in the Greater Vancouver area

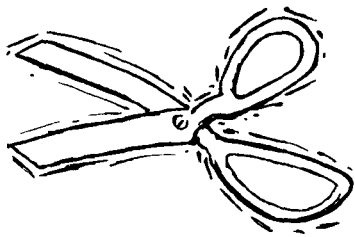
We have sent out a letter to all Health Authorities across the province asking them to declare the current homeless epidemic and its concurrent illnesses as a medical health emergency, and we have set up a petition which will be circulated throughout the province and ultimately presented to the provincial legislature calling for the cancellation of the April 1st cuts. We proudly support Councillor Ellen Woodsworth's resolution calling for the repeal of this Draconian legislation. Finally we have committed to seeking out and holding accountable all legislators who institute or support these cuts.

We call immediately upon the Federal government to stop these cuts by re-instating the Canada Assistance Plan so that British Columbia and all other provincial governments can be held accountable for where they spend Federal transfer funds.

If Mr. Martin hopes to hold onto seats in British Columbia in the next federal election he must immediately reinstate the Canada Assistance Plan, so that the systemic assault which has been inflicted upon the poor by the Campbell Liberals does not have the capacity to happen again.

For further info call Jim Leyden, Organizer Woodward's Social Housing Coalition

604-215-2287



MOTION on Reductions and Cutoffs of Income Assistance Benefits

MOVED BY: Councillor Woodsworth

Whereas it is the right and responsibility of City of Vancouver to advocate on behalf of its citizens to other levels of government;

And whereas unprecedented new provincial laws that limit the time people classified as employable can collect Income Assistance to two of every five years and reduce benefits for families with children by \$100 per month come into effect on Apr 1, 2004;

And Whereas the Province has failed to provide accurate numbers on Vancouver citizens who will be impacted, but it is estimated that it could be in the thousands;

And Whereas the people who will be impacted are among the poorest and most vulnerable in our society, and are already struggling to deal with the impacts of cuts to other federal and provincial programs and services;

And whereas non-profit housing societies, the owners of Single Room Accommodation hotels and other businesses have expressed serious concern about their ability to do business if many of their tenants lose their ability to pay rent or have it reduced as a result of these new laws;

And Whereas time limits effectively download provincial responsibility for people in need onto the City of Vancouver and other municipalities;

And Whereas time limits for Income Assistance conflict with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms assurance to equality and life, liberty and security of the person, and are inconsistent with provincial and federal obligations to fulfill the right to an adequate

standard of living, including food, clothing and shelter as provided in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to which Canada is a signatory; 7

And Whereas Vancouver's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stands at 8.4%;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Vancouver urges the provincial government to rescind the laws imposing Income Assistance time limits and reducing benefits;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Vancouver write to other BC municipalities through the UBCM, the LMMA and the GVRD urging them to call on the Province to rescind the changes to Income Assistance laws.

The coalition gathered together by ELP had put forward a stronger resolution as follows:

Therefore be it resolved that:

City Council actively and immediately lobby the province to rescind the law imposing welfare time limits, and provide Vancouver community groups with regular updates on their efforts;
City Council request numbers from the province about how many people will be affected by the time limits;
City Council determine the budget implications for the city of expanding affordable housing, shelters, food, health and community services to meet the growing need caused by time limits;
City Council send a letter to other municipal councils in BC outlining concerns and urging that other councils lobby the province to stop welfare time limits.

The latter resolutions were endorsed by End Legislated Poverty, Vancouver Status of Women, DERA, Anti-Poverty Committee, First United Church, Housing Action Committee, Franciscan Sisters of Atonement, Faithful public witness committee of Vancouver Presbytery of the United Church, Justice and Peace Unit of the Anglican Church, MultiFaith Social Justice Coalition, Faith and Society Committee of the Lutheran Church, Carnegie Community Centre Association, Social Planning and Research Council of BC, Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users, Organizers training group, Working Group on Poverty, and I've probably missed some.



John Laffin: "I want to stay away from the drug scene. In those hotels, you can wait for two hours while someone shoots up in the toilet..."

Homelessness is a terribly serious problem in Vancouver. A GVRD report done last July with statistics done before the provincial government cuts to welfare showed that over 600 people were homeless. Today we know that there are at least 1,200 people homeless. Since COPE was elected the city has built 400 units of housing and gotten agreement from the province to build 100 units of social housing in Woodward's and is trying for more. These are problems that have been created by the federal and provincial elimination of social housing programs and to drastic cuts to income assistance.

The City is working to open up hundreds more shelters spaces as quickly as possible in order to address the cold wet weather. City staff have also been able to help people at squats find housing, income assistance and medical help.

We know this is a serious problem and we are doing all we can to make sure everyone has shelter.

The other big problem is income. Last night I put forward a motion in City Council to recind the two year time limit on income assistance. After listening to four hours of speakers we passed the motion with only the NPA opposed. This motion will go to Union of BC Municipalities, GVRD and the Lower Mainland Municipal Association as well as to the Provincial government. I hope that we can get a movement of other municipalities working with us to support this. A big thank you to all of you who came to City Hall to speak. You were great.

These are some of the initiatives that we are taking at City Hall. I hope that we will continue to work together on other issues such as the earnings exemptions.

Councillor Ellen Woodsworth

ENOUGH VOICES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Amnesty International welcomes the decision September 25, 2003 by the *Sharia* Court of Appeal of Katsina State in Nigeria to acquit Amina Lawal, who had been sentenced to death by stoning. More than 1.2 million activists and viewers of the *Oprah Winfrey Show* logged onto AI USA's online human rights action centre to sign a petition opposing the sentence. The petition was then delivered to the Nigerian government.

The director for Amnesty International USA congratulated the millions of activists in Nigeria and around the world who voiced their opposition to such a cruel and unusual punishment. This verdict is a reaffirmation of the power of a grassroots movement. We will continue our work against the death penalty in Nigeria in the hopes that others will not have to endure such a harrowing ideal."

Amina Lawal, a Muslim woman, was found guilty by a court in March 2002 after bearing a child outside marriage. Under *Sharia* Penal Legislation which was introduced in several northern Nigerian states in 1999, this was sufficient for her to be convicted of the crime of adultery.

While Amina Lawal's conviction was quashed, an appeal of the death penalty sentence against Fatima Usman and Ahmadu Ibrahim on the charges of adultery is still pending at a *Sharia* Court of Appeal in Minna, Niger State. Amnesty International continues its campaign to abolish all discriminatory laws and opposes criminalization of consensual sexual activity between adults in private, as well as the imprisonment of anyone solely on that basis.

PROSECUTORS DROP DEATH PENALTY FOR SERIAL KILLER

In Seattle Wednesday, November 5, a former truck painter named Gary Ridgway confessed to murdering 48 women. Prosecutors spared him from a death sentence after he confessed to the Killings. He is believed the most prolific serial killer in American history. Some attorneys have criticized the agreement not to seek the death penalty because they say it will make it harder for prosecutors to seek the death penalty in other cases.

2003 BENEFIT CONCERT FOR END LEGISLATED POVERTY

WHERE: **Richards on Richards 1036 Richards St.**
WHEN: **Thursday November 20, 8 pm to 2 am**
COST: **\$15 per ticket (limited guestlist space
available for those on a low income –
(call 778-885-1399 or 604-879-1209)**

TIX Available at: ELP 211-456 W. Broadway
604-879-1209 or 778-885-1399
(bulk orders)

Zulu Records 1972 W. 4th Ave 604-738-3232
Highlife Records 1317 Comm. Dr. 604-251-6964
Red Cat Records 4307 Main St. 604-708-9422
Scratch Records 726 Richards St. 604-687-6355
Noize Sound 540 Seymour St. 604-681-7007
Some tickets will also be available at the door.

ABOUT ELP

End Legislated Poverty (ELP) is a non-profit organization struggling to stay alive since the BC government eliminated our provincial grant that helped fund community organizing and the *Long Haul*, a provincial anti-poverty newspaper with a circulation of 7,000.

ELP is a provincial coalition of 34 BC groups, including anti-poverty organizations, labour, and women's groups, all working together to ensure that governments reduce and end poverty. Because some of ELP's work is political in focus, we do not have registered charitable status and cannot issue tax receipts to their donors (unlike most charities). This makes fundraising somewhat challenging. For ELP, holding a benefit is one of the few viable options left in this age of disappearing grants.

ELP's objectives are to:

- 1) Organize low-income people;
- 2) To educate on the need to end poverty and create decent jobs;
- 3) To encourage unity and cooperation between unpaid and paid working people;
- 4) To develop joint campaigns with organizations representing unpaid and paid working people; and to involve people from further marginalized groups, which includes people from the Aboriginal, refugee and immigrant communities.

Proceeds from this concert will go towards fighting injustices imposed by BC Liberal policies. Some of the new harsh measures introduced include:

- 1) Cuts to welfare rates for single parents, people age 55 to 64, and families of three or more;
- 2) A two year time limit for welfare which will cut off "employable" singles and couples, and deliver further cuts of \$100 to \$200 to families with children who have been on assistance for 24 months as of April 1, 2004
- 3) A three week wait to apply for welfare;
- 4) Severe cuts to women's centres & shelters, child care subsidy, health services, legal aid, and more.

Over the past two years, ELP has taken a firm stand against draconian provincial budget cuts which have devastated low income people and rural communities while giving huge tax breaks to wealthy people and corporations. By supporting the benefit you will be helping ELP to continue the important work of holding this government accountable as well as continuing to support production of *The Long Haul*.



On April 1, 2004, the BC Liberals will be cuffing people off welfare if they've been receiving assistance for 2 years.

We believe that this is an outrageous violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Everyone has the right to life, liberty, security of the person, and equality under the law. But the Liberals don't care.

Join us Friday, November 14th at 3:00pm at the Carnegie (401 Main Street) to hear more. We will have guest speakers from:

- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- The Poverty and Human Rights Project
- End Legislated Poverty

These changes are unlawful and must be stopped!

Dia De Los Muertos

On November 1st, we celebrated *El Dia De Los Muertos* (or the Day of the Dead). It was a wonderful experience for a lot of people. We had many new people this year—the parade has been growing in numbers each year. The parade left Oppenheimer Park at 6:30 and proceeded to Pigeon Park and ended up at Carnegie Centre where there was a play.

The play was very well received by the audience. It was a great act, both funny and interesting. Following the play, we broke three piñatas, two for kids and once for big kids. After that, we enjoyed a really good Latin American meal. Our friend David was in charge of the *ayote con miel* while Larry, our other friend, was in charge of the *cosido con came*. I made the *orchata* drink and the hot chocolate. The food was so good that it was gone in minutes.

A big thanks to all the people involved including volunteers, the Carnegie Staff and the Park Staff, Kimiko, Anna and John. *Muchas Gracias!*

I can say that the whole *enchilada* was a success and we will see you all next year! Take care of yourself and everyone around you. Till next time. *Asta la vista!*

Your Amigo,
Monty Munoz

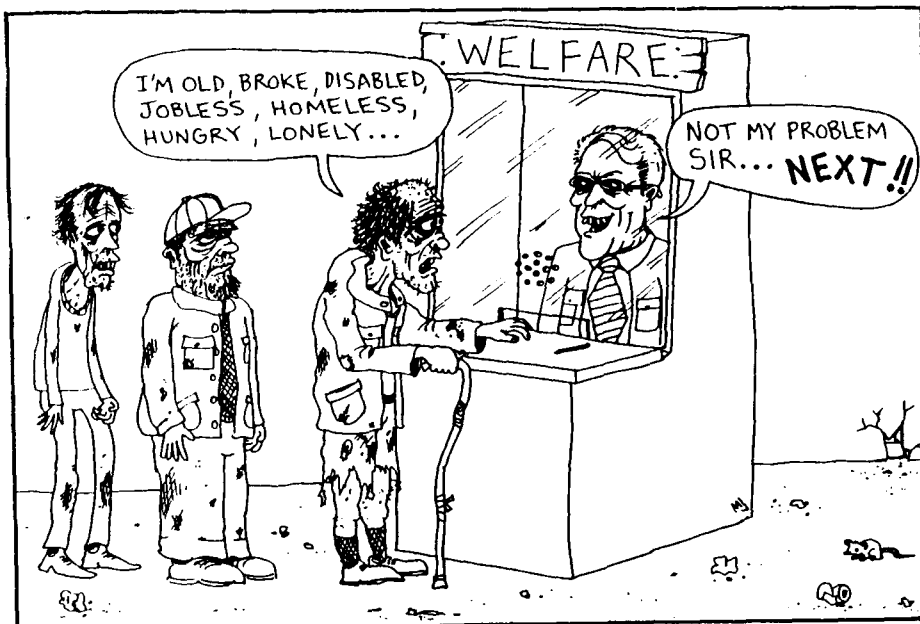


Find myself living downtown from lack of money rather than choice as get myself back into workforce. Not on welfare & just scraping by, finding services to assist in job search – Access Centre, Pathways, Dress for Success... Lunch once in awhile at Women's Centre. I'll make it but after being away I see the crack problem has worsened – taking people I never thought it would, so many from so many different backgrounds and walks of life are hooked now and I see them. This poem is for them

Hide & Seek

Your path is long and tough
When it's enough it's enough
You'll need your inner voice
'My life. My choice.'
To not pay the Man
Run away fast as you can
No cash & cannot go now?
Do other things anyhow.
Walk to ocean, see the tide
Read, write, eat, but hide
Close ears to its call
Put up a defensive wall
Go to another place
Where you feel sun on your face
Go to home you had before
Say to self 'Don't need no more.'
Hide for days, months or years
Cry, laugh, shed some tears
For things you had to do
Just to get through
Each day to buy the rock
Tell self not joining flock
Alone you are in your choice
You must fight not to hear its voice
As time goes by the urge will ease
You'll feel the sun, feel the breeze
Beware the rock, it's everywhere
Not just here but there
So hide yourself as best you can
Run away from the man
The rock is strong
Pull away easy... wrong
It clouds your mind
Reason is left behind
Once away you'll be free
So go now – you'll see
Fog lifted from mind & eyes
See the truth and all its lies
Once the fog is gone, months away
Eyes bright, come and say
"I was hooked but now I'm free."
Come on friend.. follow me.

D. Comber



Only Princess in the old Glass House

This morning the world is so damn beautiful
to think, know, I won't be here much longer
makes me unbearably sad
to think I'll have to leave you
without ever showing you
how much I really care

My days are numbered
I'll miss so much of this life
It's been a long, strange trip
and the ending has just begun

So I'm sorry if I hurt you, never my intent
I can't fix all I've ruined and it's too late to repent
Only hope one day it'll dawn on you
how much we both could've had
and never had the guts to reach out and try

This is my apology, my good-bye.

Al

Everyone interested in the ongoing tragedy of
women missing / murdered / _____ in and from
the Downtown Eastside will find support and infor-
mation at the following website:

Tupper Secondary, Prince Edward & 23rd Ave.
Saturday, Nov.22, 1-4pm

Discussion to select a city park to have artificial turf.
Residents of DE, Strathcona & Mt.Pleasant oppose
putting this turf at the Trillium site. Please attend.

When I am wearing
My black jacket and
Red winter toque
I must be a woodpecker
Slum landlords just
Can't see how walking
On cement floors for
Too long you could
Lose your legs and
With the smell of a
Dead man in a house
A person can lose their
Head even though two
Wrongs don't make a
Right; I think the moon
Must be made of cheese
All the anger in me like
A shriveled up pumpkin
Head sitting in the cold
Every dog has his day
That must be Halloween
My bicycle and me can
Do tricks for everyone
I paint my face green
And wear my black dress
To watch a hockey game
When you're young the
Doors fly right open and
When you get older you
Walk more cautiously:
Taken on a hallowed eve
With a big bite in the sky.

Daniel Rajala

Park Board Meetings:

-at Strathcona Community Centre

To bring decision making and procedures to the
neighbourhoods, the Vancouver Park Board's next
meeting will be held on Monday, November 17th at
7pm at Strathcona Community Centre. The public is
invited to join Park Board Commissioners and staff as
they discuss a variety of issues and policies that shape
our parks and recreation system.

Monday, November 17th at 7 P.M.
Strathcona Community Centre
601 Keefer Street

Making History!

It was a get-together that gave community a good name. This is the 100th Anniversary of the Carnegie building and events have happened throughout this year. What occurred in early November was the burying of a Time Capsule in a hole prepared for it on the newly constructed patio on the east side of our living room, with pictures, mementoes, a packet of seeds (for future gardeners), a bullet dug out of an outside wall (fired by a fleeing criminal at the corner) a budget for the year, and (the best for last) a copy of The Heart of the Community: The Best of the Carnegie Newsletter. All told there were 50 items

Recognised at the ceremony were many people with the Chinatown Revitalisation Committee, who presented a cheque for \$18,000 to support the Carnegie and the Community Arts Trust.. They did a tremendous exercise in good relations in raising funds and promoting the integral partnership of residents and businesses and the arts.

The Time Capsule is there for those who come after us to open in 100 years – to look at us as ordinary and extraordinary people thinking of them.

Following is an address made by Rick Lam of the Chinatown Revitalisation Committee:

Good morning everyone.

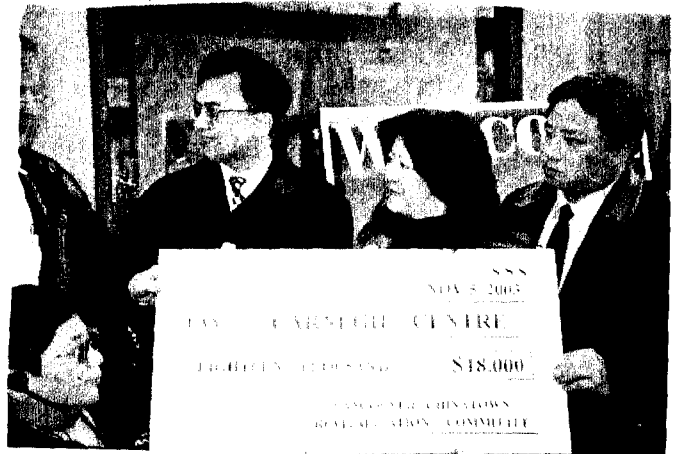
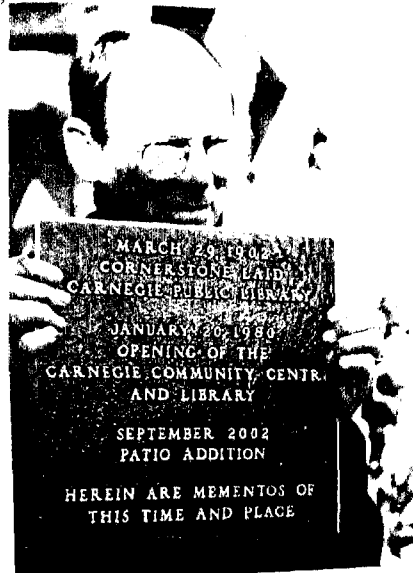
First of all I like to thank the many volunteers who helped out and especially those on the organizing committee: Agnes Wong from the Chinatown Revitalization Committee, George Hui from the City of Vancouver, Peter Fairchild & Cynthia Wong from the Carnegie Centre, and last but not least, our coordinator Wendy Jang.

When we came up with the theme “A Celebration of Community Spirit”, I thought it sounded pretty good but I didn’t appreciate what it really meant until the Carnegie parade in late April. While the parade didn’t have any fancy floats, there was plenty of energy and enthusiasm. I saw Henry from United We Can with bags of tin cans on his bike. I saw many creative costumes. What I saw most was the spirit of the community. I sensed the same community spirit at the May 16 dinner. The dinner was a great success. We had people and organizations from all over, both outside and within the Downtown Eastside. We raised some money for the Community Arts Trust, but more importantly we

brought the communities closer together.

I think one of the keys for the communities to work together is to understand each other. I like to quote from a poem by Anthony Dunne published in the *Carnegie Newsletter* in Sep/1999. The poem was titled Looking or Seeing. This last line says it all, “Look past the looks and see what you see.”

Carnegie is often referred to as the Heart of the Community. My dream and my goal is that with Chinatown, Carnegie, and all the communities in the area working together, some day, the whole downtown eastside will be referred to as the heart and soul of Vancouver. I think we can do it. United we can.”





Special thanks to Tony for volunteering his skill in masonry to cap that hole and set the plaque in it. The next great event is the long-awaited debut of *In the Heart of a City* – the community play. A must see!!

By PAULR TAYLOR



(from) **The Free Press (Fernie)**

Staff at B.C. Women's centres are bracing for hard hitting cuts that consist of their provincial core funding being completely eliminated by Mar.31, 2004.

It's a move by the B.C. government, say representatives of the B.C. Coalition of Women's Centres (BCCWC), that will force closure of many of the 37 centres mostly operating in small rural communities. They also say the cuts will leave women stranded, plus silence a group that speaks strongly to advance the status of women. B.C. Minister of State Lynn Stephens could not be reached for comment by press time, but in a recent meeting with Stephens, representatives from Coalition-Benita Bunjun of Vancouver Status of Women, Dodie Goldney of the Kamloops Women's Resource Centre and Debra Critchley of the Vernon and District Women's Centre-said they were told her "hands were tied" in terms of stopping the cuts.

They also said the rationale given to them for the cuts was that Women's Centres are not as important as transition houses and a lot of the difficulty is the centres do not want to lose their feminist-based service delivery model. The cuts are a reversal of what Stephens said on record to Coalition representatives when she was Liberal official opposition critic for the Ministry of Women's Equality prior to the last provincial election.

As well, in a May 13, 1999 letter Stephens wrote to the Port Alberni Women's Centre she stated, "A BC Liberal government will carry on the core funding for Women's Centres and the Ministry of Women's Equality will continue to exist, as a freestanding ministry." The provincial government dismantled the Ministry of Women's Equality and brought it under

the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.

BCCWC representatives said that during the recent meeting with Stephens, they "demanded" a meeting with Premier Gordon Campbell to talk further about the pending cuts. They also said their demand to speak with the Premier has so far not been granted and another request to speak with the Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, George Abbott, has been refused.

As the Minister of State, Stephens is the provincial Cabinet Minister dealing with the Coalition on behalf of the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. Currently, women's centres receive \$47,184.72 per centre in annual operational funding for a total of \$1.7 million for the entire province. That core funding, said Lynn Mace, representative from the Fernie Women's Resource Centre, is a life-line for most centres. "There are many women's centres in this province that will close; I would go so far to say most will close," Mace said. "It's going to impact women in this province and it's



going to impact those that need the support the most," Mace added. In general, the centres provide direct services to women and girls in communities as determined by local need.

In 2001, this included assistance to over 300,000, with the majority of requests from those experiencing violence and poverty. For these women, the centres provide referrals, advocacy and intervention measures. Mace said the 2001 service figures have increased substantially over the last two years with funding and service cutbacks to provincial govern-

ment programs.

"This is not just about cuts to women's centres. We have seen a drastic increase because of other cuts. Obviously, more women are seeking out our services, especially with the move of the Financial Assistance Centre from Sparwood, the virtual elimination of legal aid for family matters and the cuts to social services," she said. Mace added the Fernie centre will feel the cuts, with many services possibly being adjusted or eliminated, although the centre will not shut down. "The centre won't close because we own our building outright and we run other programs," Mace said. "But we believe in the value of the programs we have... the information, the referrals the peer support and this will have an impact. We will try and maintain the drop-in as best we can because it is really, really important." She also said the pending cuts will impact the centre's ability to advocate on behalf of women, both with one-on-one assistance for women having difficulties with social service agencies as well as the ability for the centres to be advocates for political, social and economic changes that advance the status of women. "If the only money we have coming in is for programs, it will affect the general advocacy," she said.

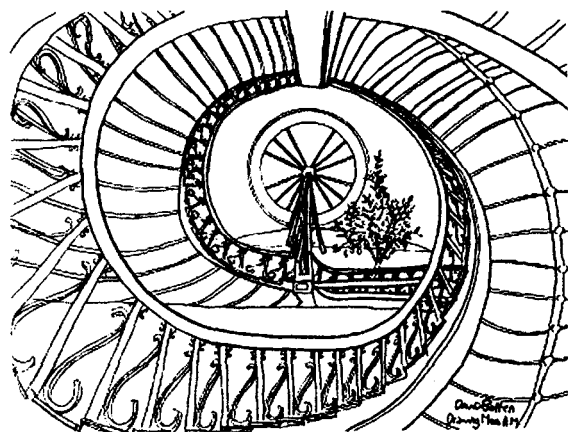
Facts about B.C.'s Women's Centres:

The two main focuses of Women's Centres are providing direct services to women in the community as determined by local needs and improving the status of women through political, social, economic and legal actions on a local, provincial, national and global scale.

In 2001, Women's Centres answered requests for help from 139,000 women by telephone, and 161,099 women in person for a total of 300,569. The 2001 statistics represent one out of every six women and girls in the province accessing Women's Centres for services - the majority of these requests were from women experiencing violence and/or poverty.

Women's Centres receive \$47,184.72 per year in operational funding from the B.C. Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, or \$1.7 million for the entire province. The total cost to the province is \$5.65 for each woman helped by Women's Centres, or \$0.91 for every woman and girl in the province.

*According to the B.C. government's own statistics, in their lifetimes, approximately one in two British



Columbia women are victims of sexual assault, one in three of wife assault, and one in five of other types of physical assault (Women Count, 1998). * *

*Violence against women in British Columbia, as estimated by the former Ministry of Women's Equality, costs taxpayers approximately \$385 million per year, including direct policing costs, transition houses, etc. This does not include the cost of items such as health costs, legal costs, or the cost of the intergenerational effects of violence.

* Funding to all Women's Centres in B.C., which provide the advocacy necessary to prevent and end violence against women, in addition to providing intervention in individual cases, represents less than 0.05 per cent (or one-twentieth of one per cent), of the above noted \$385 million.

*Options assessed by the B.C. Coalition of Women's Centres (BCCWC) include seeking new funding sources (i.e.: project funding); reducing operational expenses; changing priorities and focus; changing structures to access money (i.e.: moving away from being "Women's Centres"); changing strategies to build support; amalgamation with other women's serving organizations; shut down and operating with volunteers, and shutting down Centres completely

By BOBBIE SAGA



"All real living is meeting." Martin Buber

This quote is found at the beginning of a recent book by Norman Fischer, Taking Our Places: the Buddhist Path to Truly Growing Up. The book is about taking our places in the world as mature individuals. Fischer uses this quote to emphasize the importance of meeting. He says that when we truly meet, "beyond our defenses, beyond our preconceptions, beyond our needs and desires; and open ourselves to each other with the courage to step towards one another, then and only then can we be said to be completely alive." He is speaking of meeting in the sense of encountering. He concludes, "real maturity is always meeting what is in front of you in this way."

We are all growing up - maturing. Maybe developing is a better word because through living, though experience, we are becoming more of ourselves. We are developing.

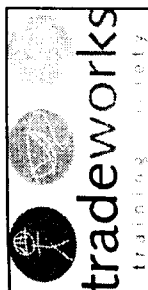
In previous articles, I have discussed various conditions that need to be in place for us to make the changes we want in our lives. Employment might be the path that will take some of us towards what we want in life. Some people wonder how to get on that path from where they are now. I remember the lyrics of a song, where the singer is confused and wondering which way to turn. The lyrics remind him to look down at his feet because "the steps you take are the path you make." In other words, we are all on a path. We make our path as we move through our lives.

What can we do to make sure that we end up where we want? Many would agree that hope opens us to possibilities, imagination helps us to see the various ways we can go, and trust in ourselves combined with persistence can take us there. However, most people live a day at a time. How do we keep moving along if we only have this day and a little trust in tomorrow? How do we balance being with doing?

Fischer suggests that on our journey, we will encounter many things-some outside, some within- and each meeting can help to take us further. He explains, "Our life is really nothing more than a series of moment-by-moment meetings. When we meditate, we can see this. Slowing down and focusing the mind, we meet what's inside us. Sitting quietly, paying close attention, we meet thoughts, we meet feelings. We meet our breath; we meet sensations in our body. We meet fear, memory, desire, aversion, and the oddly taken-for-granted experience of identity. Every moment brings a new opportunity for meeting; every moment is a challenge to remain awake enough, soft and persistent enough, to be present with what comes forth. As our practice continues we see how often we don't meet what's inside us, how much of our life remains hidden to us because we are not willing to let it in. But as we learn more and more that it is possible to be present, even with difficult meetings, our trust in life grows. We are willing to stop trying to control and shape what happens according to our desires. We are willing to meet what comes forth in our life as completely as we can on each occasion."

In the next issue, we will explore other pathways we take in life and on the journey to employment.

Larry Trunkey is the Program Manager of The Job Shop at Tradeworks Training Society. The Job Shop supports residents of the DTES in their return to work. Participants develop and broaden the skills they will need to get and keep a job. Federally funded by HRDC, The Job Shop starts new participants every week. Program information sessions are held Tuesdays, at 1 p.m. Call 604-253-9355 and ask for The Job Shop.



Need A Chance To Prove You're Ready, Willing & Able To Work?

Get the



you deserve!

**Find out what your next step needs to be.
Call to attend the Job Shop Info session. 604-253-9355**

Program funded by HRDC



Human Resources
Development Canada

Développement des
ressources humaines Canada

New Transgender Health Program

In June 2003, Vancouver Coastal Health launched a new Transgender Health Program. It can be hard for transgender people and loved ones to find health services. Health care providers often don't have experience or training in transgender medicine, aren't comfortable talking about transgender concerns, or don't approve of gender diversity. Sometimes service providers are willing to help and have good intentions, but don't know enough about transgender medicine to be able to provide good quality care. It can be hard to know what your options are.

The new program aims to address these barriers by:

- * Putting together a resource guide listing services that are trans-friendly;
- * Helping transgender people and family members understand how the health system works and what their options are for services;
- * Developing education materials and training programs so health care providers are better able to meet the health needs of transgender people and loved ones;
- * Offering peer counseling in person, by phone, and by email; and
- * Working with the Medical Services Plan to address coverage for gender transition services.

Anyone with a transgender health concern is welcome at the new program. This includes androgynous people, bi-gendered or multi-gendered people, crossdressers, drag kings/queens, genderqueers, transsexuals, and Two-Spirit people, as well as people who aren't sure where they fit in, are questioning their gender, or don't identify with any labels. Non-transgender family members, partners, friends, and service providers are also welcome.

This is an anonymous and confidential service. You don't have to give your name or have a CareCard.

For more information, contact:

Mail: Transgender Health Program, Three Bridges Community Health Centre, 1292 Hornby Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 1W2 (you can drop by on Thursdays from 4-7 PM, no appointment necessary)
Phone: 604-734-1514, or toll free 1-866-999-1514
Email: transhealth@vch.ca
Web: <http://www.vch.ca/transhealth>



POOL HALL POET

There is somethings in life I should have done
And somethings I should have not
I should have burnt the midnight oil
Instead of the midnight cloth.

Ben Caisey

inside, outside

around every turn is a certain surprise
try not to trip, it could be in disguise
have you ever loved darkness in the way that I do?
do you know the deep pleasure of being that cool?
If a bird fell from a tree would you catch it in midair
could you step on a flower and hear its soft cry?
pick up a brush and paint a picture with flair?
or fall asleep in an instant and dream that you fly.
I've reason to be positive 'n upbeat as I'll tell you
it's because of past nightmares inflicted upon me
I was roused and ravaged as a young one so blue
many years in hot tears sapped my emotions I plea
I try to forget things stolen from my body, my mind
Spirits will punish transgressors in time & in kind
travel on in a clean line, finding family and friends
be who you are and you'll bypass a bittersweet end

Robyn

The Barber of Seville (*figaro figaro figaro*)

A free preview and live Opera performance

Wed. Nov. 19, 2003 7:00 pm

Big Room (theatre) at Carnegie Centre

First 90 people will get a free ticket to the final dress rehearsal of this opera at Queen Elizabeth Theatre

ABSURD BUT TRUE

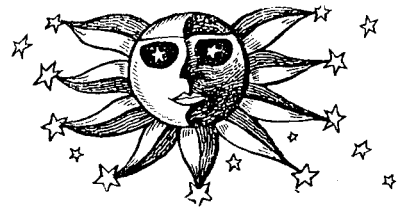
President George W. Bush
Governor Arnold Swartzenegger
More is better
Incredible wealth and widespread poverty
Freedom is choices
Choices are Freedom
Wars are fought over Freedom
We believe we are making progress
In the Wars we are fighting
For the Freedom To Choose
Among forty different brands of toothpaste
Feel free to take your pick!

Ken Morrison



The contest lasts for moments
Though the training's taken years
It wasn't the winning alone that
Was worth the work and the tears
The applause will be forgotten
The prize will be misplaced
But the long hard hours of practice
Will never be a waste.
For in trying to win you build a skill
You learn that winning depends on will
You never grow by how much you win
You only grow by how much you put in
So any new challenge you've just begun
Put forth your best and you've already won.

H.A. Glennan



Morning

at 6am, the light diffused in grey tones, I walk alone
thru Strathcona up by the projects a small figure pat-
ters down this sidewalk beneath my moccasins,
a Chinese woman, afraid, I can see by her posture –
of who? me? an old man?
so I say “Cho-sun” and watch her face
melt in recognition no longer frightened I spoke to
her in her own tongue – how could I be dangerous?
So much fear in this town.. a man needs his space
I’ve never been afraid walking th alleys and byways
of slums much worse than these quiet streets yet I
know to watch the shadows and unseen places I’ve
scars I’ve paid for dearly in my own private wars
Learned the key to disarm is a kind word spoken
softly to let the other know you’re not the Devil
come sneaking to take your life
If only you’d seen the brown wrinkles of her face
turn from stiff to pliant, the greeting like a welcome
cup of tea on a blistery winter’s day

R.Loewen

yet another generation
statesmen have failed
years of conflict
growing up in hatred
allowed to happen
entirely clear
not especially sophisticated
imagine the violence
angry revelations
emotionally charged
seemingly stymied
damaged relations
shattering desperate hopes
nobody's spared
crime is the punishment
no ifs,ands or buts
it's wrong
everybody knows it
society's convicted
increasing with severity

charles fortin

DECEMBER 8 WOMYN'S WALK OUT



Brought to you by:

Your Grandmother, Your Mother, Your Daughter,
Auntie, Niece, Wife, Girlfriend **The Womyn of BC**

In ancient Greece, when womyn became tired of having their babies killed in wars, they simply stopped having sex. On Turtle Island (North America), the Mohawk Grandmothers traditionally would not make the moccasins if they did not want the men to go to war, because the men could not function without protection for their tender feet or with the other comforts that womyn provided.

"Women, remember your power. Remember your responsibility. Every person has personal power. We must all use our power to do good. We must stop the war. We must maintain the Peace. We must hold back the moccasins."

The British Columbia government is waging a war against womyn, it's personal, life-threatening and we are fighting back. You may think that 'waging a war against womyn' is strong terminology. Please take a long hard look at these two reports:

UN CEDAW Report on Canada criticizing BC & Canada

British Columbia Moves Backwards on Women's Equality <www.povnet.org>

The government is waging a personal attack when womyn have to give up their children because of poverty and having their means to provide sustenance taken away.

We all must stop making the moccasins. Whether we are paid or not paid, our work is essential. Stop work! On Dec. 8 walk out at 10:30 am. Become sick and tired or just pissed. If you can't stop working, make your own "I Support the Womyn's Walkout" button and wear it. Or hand out Women's Walkout info, and remind people that they need your cheap or free labour. Also remind people that if all womyn's work stopped, humanity would end (no more babies!).

Why Dec. 8? To be close to Dec. 6 which is a National Day of Remembrance and Action to Stop Violence Against Women. This day came about because of the 14 women who were massacred in Montreal in 1989 by a man who killed them because they were training to enter a male dominated field. But we don't need to look to Montreal to see womyn's lives destroyed. We just need to look at what the government is doing here in BC.

Campbell's Casualty list: Cutting 28,000 single people off welfare in 2004; cutting benefits to single parents, cutting pay equity, daycare; housing, jails, legal aid, human rights, victim services, women's services, debtors assistance, poverty law, employment standards (a "self-help" kit even for those sexually harassed) cutting services in the Hurtlands, cutting unionized (mostly women) hospital workers and holding a racist \$9 Million referendum on aboriginal treaty rights and squandering millions on the Olympics.

Everyone will be affected by these cuts, directly or indirectly, so Why the WOMYN's Walkout action? Because it would hit the government in the pocket book. This is the only language they understand.

Men. Take action, do your own Walkout for Womyn!

What we want, the 3Rs:

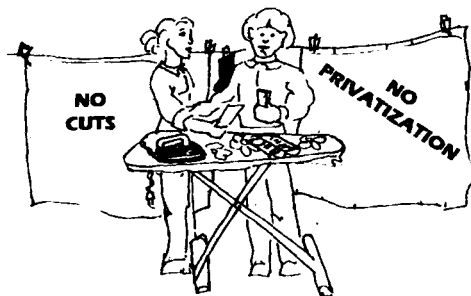
- REINSTATE! all that has been cut;
- = REPLACE! the punitive and starvation level welfare system with a Guaranteed Livable Income.
- All Liberal dictators who have lied and endangered the public must RESIGN

We invite you to join us in promoting the WOMYN'S WALKOUT on December 8, 2003 any way that you can think of; buttons, bumper stickers, billboards, posters, rallies... get those cashiers at your corner store to stop working for fifteen minutes, guerrilla theatre etc...

Do your own thing in your own community

We womyn all know how our work is valued, undervalued and devalued. Perhaps if we flex our collective muscle by withdrawing our support for a system that takes us and our work for granted we can focus the attention on getting our demands met. Let us know if you want us to mail you masters for the poster and leaflets. These explain why the walk-out was planned and why that date and a few other herstorical details about womyn's strikes. Or you may prefer to word your material differently.

Please email us swag@pacificcoast.net and womynwalkout@yahoo.com and let us know how your womyn's day of action and/or WOMYN'S WALKOUT turned out, participation, community reaction, media attention and whatever else you may want to share. The connections between and among women are the most feared and the most potentially transforming force on the planet.



No Fool like an Old Fool

To the passersby we must look like two old tramps, A man tramp and his bag lady pal.. poor old folks out enjoying the sunshine tramping thru Chinatown dodging and weaving thru traffic two old refugees from the 60s talkin' about everythin 'n nothin' at all In the same gush of conversation the dreams we trade, the simple companionship of friends, history in our used up fingers (bony, yes) but sometimes he leaves her with a gallant kiss

'Years ago we would have danced all night- these days we take comfort in warm hugs on rainy nights Old bud like wine, mellow, finer now than before "Words and only words to take your heart away!"

John Baker

Antipoverty activist comes to Nunavut to research

An antipoverty activist is in Nunavut this week doing research for a national web site. **Povnet** is a web site for people struggling with poverty and advocates and community groups who are trying to help them. Fiona Christenson has more on the story.

Penny Goldsmith is the coordinator of **povnet** and based in Vancouver. The web site provides information about welfare, housing, homelessness, and human rights issues. The resource is for antipoverty activists and those coping with poverty. And while it's mostly British Columbia based at the moment, Goldsmith says the web site is branching out across the country.

"We got some money from the federal government, from the Office of Learning Technologies for povnet to go across the country. And that's what I'm doing in Nunavut. I've been travelling in different parts of the country over the last three years and trying to find a way that povnet can be useful as a tool in other places as well."

Goldsmith is meeting this week with Nunavummiut who are concerned about the issue of poverty. Mary-Ellen Thomas (sp) is one of those people. She's the president of the Nunavut Area Council, a political action group for members of the Public Service Alliance. She says a web site like povnet helps make sure that people who need information about poverty can get their hands on it.

"There is a growing split, a growing distance, between the haves and have not. And anything that we can do to give people information to deal with their personal situations is a useful tool."

Penny Goldsmith admits that poor people are less likely to have a computer with which to access a site like povnet. She says for that reason she's also paying close attention to the public access sites available in Nunavut and across the country.

Fiona Christenson, CBC News, Iqaluit



NOVEMBER 9 GUATEMALAN ELECTION RESULTS

<http://chiapas.mediosindependientes.org>

JUSTICIA

A FAVOR EN CONTRA



Data offered by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal places the conservative GANA candidate Oscar Berger as the winner of Sunday's general election in Guatemala. He got 38.4% of the votes. His rival from the UNE Alvaro Colom came second with 27.6% of the votes. Several candidates from the UNE, URNG and the UN parties received death threats prior to the election. UNE candidate Rolando Morales was shot from a passing car the morning of the election as he left his house, and remains in critical condition. In third place was the FRG candidate General Efraín Ríos Montt with 16.9% of the vote. Montt managed to forcibly overturn an article in the Guatemalan constitution which prohibits ex-dictators from running for president. The remaining votes were split: PAN got 7%, UN 2.6%, DIA 2.5% and the URNG 1.9%. In Huehuetenango and el Quiché, two of the *departamentos* the hardest hit by institutional repression and genocide throughout the years, the FRG appears to have won several seats. This reaffirms that fear, silence and repression persist, perpetuated by impunity.

Author Kunti Shaw of *HIJOS Guatemala* writes; "It is obvious that electoral fraud is one of the oldest political traditions in Guatemala. It is presumed that 1,450,000 people who updated their voter registration do not appear on the voter registries, but that on the other hand, there are people who appear on the registries of up to 3 different voting centers and that people who have been dead for up to 10 years are also registered. For the past several weeks, the scent of fear and electoral farce has been sensed in Guatemala."

"People were arrested for trying to buy votes within the electoral centres. In Cuyotenago, 16 km from the capital with a population of 30,000, civil self-defense paramilitary groups (PAC) carried away the ballot boxes and burned the ballots after 158 people had voted. The community demands its right to vote."

"The civil population is asked to review their ballots in front of the election officials in order to assure that they are blank, as it appears that many ballots are already marked."

Two elderly indigenous women in el Quiché died from suffocation when more than 10,000 pushed their way to vote. Hundreds of people waited to vote in long lines for over 7 hours, to then be turned away when the polls closed at 6 pm. Many demanded the polls stay open until they could vote. In el Quetzal around 3000 frustrated people set fire to the ballot boxes. The National Police fired shots to disperse the crowd and two people were wounded.

The Centre for Legal Action in Human Rights has demanded that the Supreme Election Tribunal extend the time allowed for voting due to the grave errors which have been committed in the electoral process during the voting period.

Perhaps the most revealing example of public sentiment was a mock ballot printed in the national Guatemalan morning paper *Siglo Veintiuno* on election day, reading "JUSTICE" with the choices "IN FAVOUR OF" and "AGAINST".

I turn 50 in November, and
what a Glorious, Happy, Successful life it's been
Bullshit.

You won't believe me anyway; 20+ years celibate
because women think they have something to protect
their immaturity or repression, blessed by emasculated
myths & a man god

would I rather be Gilgamesh & Lilith...
oh the pain

Triumphant 50 years Unrecognized, Unpaid,
does that mean unloved?

Trauma in passing my tongue over crooked, broken
teeth, or pain spasms from cop assaults, or nervous
tears from drug laws' hateful spears

oh the pain

Cold radiates my body, skin sags, wrinkles, gray hair
either crowning touches of maturity or decrepit dis-
integration; Ambition thwarted by competition –
SOMEone sings of love more beautifully but I'm
still growing up, still learning life!

Marlow, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Chopin, Mozart,...
never made it to 50!

Did they cry less, laugh more; ignorance laughs like
a troll and sells out like Faust!

She could wrap her arms around me anytime – soft,
gentle, tender, warm, Happy Birthday Andy, 'I love
you so much!' dream lover, fresh as an oasis, kind,
sweet, cute, sexy, innocent as honey...

50 years today, 50 years of pain solaced by 50 years
of Art; I've found the Grail but this ain't no myth –
Desire + beauty is the elixir for which we strive

Ask any child: do you prefer sweet or sour?

Andy Kostynui

SURVIVAL

In life there's only one objective – Survival.

If you are weak, you will not strive

To keep the strength to stay alive

I know these streets called Main and Hastings

In latter years they've changed to Pain 'n Wasting

Human waste, decaying flesh

When not long ago they were young and fresh

These words are true, I can say in one breath

The answer is to be strong

Or the outcome will be death.

Ed Harris

McGuinty Moves Swiftly to Tackle Deficit Estimated at +\$5.6 billion

*(BC Should take note as the identical legacy will be
left by Campbell's "Liberals" when they're tossed)*

*Corporate tax reductions announced by the previ-
ous government will be rolled back generating an
estimated \$1.2 billion next year,

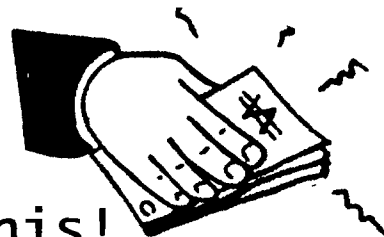
*Personal income tax rates reductions will be can-
celled, resulting in an additional \$900 million;

*The seniors' property tax credit will be eliminated,
restoring \$450 million in revenue to the provincial
treasury,

*The private school tax credit will also be elimi-
nated for a saving of \$195 million,

*Tobacco taxes will be increased to the national av-
erage bringing in another \$140 million per year.

The premier also said the government will make
efforts to collect taxes owed by corporations, insti-
tute a government-wide hiring freeze, reduce the use
of consultants, and eliminate "self-promotional gov-
ernment advertising".



Use This!

Good news that the Residential Tenancy Office
(RTO) has launched a one year pilot project in the
Downtown Eastside. Located in the Four Corners
Bank on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons Informa-
tion Officers will be available from 1 to 4 p.m. to
give information, do interventions, and take applica-
tions from parties who want to apply for arbitration.

They will take applications from those applying for
a FEE WAIVER ONLY. The project is called
Pathways and we should give this information to
Tenants' Rights Action Coalition's **Hotline** callers
(604-255-0546). Advocates representing parties can
also make applications for their clients as long as the
fee waiver applies.

I think we can show there is a demonstrated need,
maybe they will bring back a Vancouver office.

Linda Mix, Tenants' Rights

Ontario (BC) has its own 'Disappeared'

A system that's supposed to help the poor and disabled just encourages them to go away.

Geoff Langhorne

In Sudbury, Kimberly Rogers collected \$500 a month in welfare while receiving an Ontario student loan. She was convicted in 2001 of welfare fraud and banned from collecting welfare, denying her income and medication for her disability. The court also put her under house arrest. Eight months pregnant, she died of an overdose of prescription drugs.

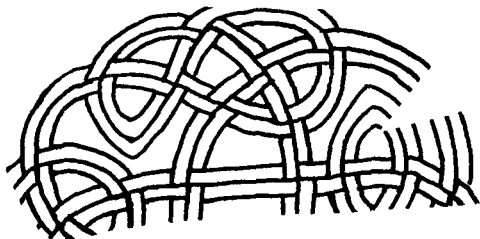
In Hamilton, Ethel Hinchcliff's case worker told her she shouldn't be able to pay her rent on her income, and demanded budgets. When Hinchcliff, disabled and depressed, could not comply, her Ontario Works cheques were simply stopped.

These two incidents illustrate eight years of punitive administration of Ontario's fixed-income system, now spread to our cities through provincial downloading.

Discouraged, Diverted and Disentitled, a 2002 report by Dean Herd and Andrew Mitchell of the University of Toronto's faculty of social work, found social assistance systematically denies eligible claimants. It identifies "excessive and inappropriate requests for information" as being part of "a structured attempt to reduce the number who can successfully negotiate the application process."

Their report says problems identified by participants "strongly suggest that it is the very design of the SDM (service delivery model) rather than its inconsistent operation, which is keeping the caseload low by restricting entry."

Denial By Design, a 2003 report by the Income Security Advocacy Centre, points to similar obstacles surrounding disability income. Herd and Mitchell's report identifies "cumbersome and complicated applications and appeals processes" as also restricting entry and denying income.



Herd and Mitchell also cite "deliberately confusing procedures and language" and identify "greatly restricted appeal times" in service of the province's goals to reduce caseloads and save money.

But administrative savings have not materialized. Toronto reports: "Overall, additional time was spent on eligibility screening and verification functions" and "Overall ... there was no evidence of cost-savings or time efficiencies generated through the new ... intake process." This process has crept from Ontario Works [and BC Benefits] into special needs for the vulnerable [the disability review for hard example/]

Government policies have poisoned Legal Aid, which issued certificates to one claimant this year to investigate fixed income. When a lawyer pursued the certificates, Legal Aid referred the client to clinics. At a clinic, the lawyer actually took instructions from adversaries, closing the client's hearing.

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) [PPMB & DB II in BC] gives no protection. The Ontario Human Rights Commission administers ODA, and takes years to make judgments for those cases it does not disqualify, while imposing tight response deadlines on clients, half of whom have disabilities, many having difficulty replying. The Ontario ombudsman's office imposes similar client deadlines while purporting to regulate the commission. [In BC Campbell's bunch just abolished the province's Human Rights Commission.]

As Canadians, we might look at the technique common in past decades in Central and South America, called the "disappearance." Political undesirables are taken in the night and never seen again. Canadians don't abduct those we are taught are socially undesirable. Instead we starve them, bankrupt them, evict them. According to Herd and Mitchell, "we simply know nothing about what happens to those who are refused assistance or discouraged ..."

The unspoken assumption of the government is that they didn't need help after all [you've heard officials say "It's their choice(!?)], but this is far from clear. Writer Scott Neigh notes that reports in Ottawa and Toronto in 1996 indicated fewer than 30 per cent of people who left the welfare rolls were finding jobs. There is an obscene link between people vanishing from welfare, and those appearing at food banks and shelters and on the street.

We need municipal representatives who will actively advocate for the disadvantaged of this city to the province, calling for reforms to programs that have become so corrosive to our community.

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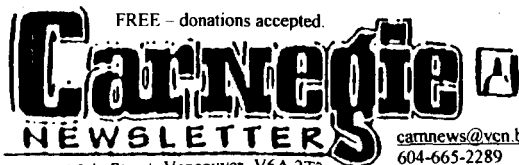
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