

# ACTION

MANITOBA ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER

November 1993

Vol. 20 No. 8



Photo: Pamela Harris, "The Raging Grannies" from Faces of Feminism

**Surprise...No Feminist Government Yet!  
Find Your Inner Granny and Rage On!!!**

**Inside: NAC's Brilliant Sunera Thobani  
Eco-Feminist Vandana Shiva  
Average Good-Looking Billboard**



## About MACSW

The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women is a volunteer-based, non-profit feminist organization working through political action, public education and personal growth in order to improve attitudes, raise issues and remove inequalities affecting women today.

MACSW was formed in 1971 by a group of women who presented a brief to the federal Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1967. MACSW has branches in Brandon, Dauphin, Thompson and Winnipeg.

## About ACTION

*ACTION* is published 9 times a year by the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, with the assistance of the Secretary of State Women's Program. The purpose of *ACTION* is to inform MACSW members about MACSW initiatives, to encourage members to take action on a personal and political level, and to serve as a forum to discuss all issues affecting the changing status of women. Articles express the views of individual writers and do not necessarily reflect MACSW policy.

## About ACTION Articles

News and feature-style articles, profiles, reviews, essays, letters to the editor, illustrations, cartoons and photographs are all welcome! Written submissions should be double-spaced and typed (2 pages max.) Material may be edited. Sorry, submissions will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Deadline for the next issue is the 15th of the month.**



The Tillet Mask (or Face Glove) in position to be worn.

TO BE WORN THREE TIMES IN THE WEEK

Send stuff to:  
*ACTION* Newsletter  
MACSW  
Winnipeg Branch  
702-70 Arthur Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1G7  
Telephone: 948-5049

**This issue:** MACSW staff, Kelly Logan, Pat Sadowy, Marion Foster, Doreen "have hutzpah will travel" Wuckert, Allison Dewar, Pam "ever-vigilant" Jakubec, Marjorie Turton, Tanja Hutter, Christie Harris, Clare Thomas, Charlene "mucho fotos" Ball, Laurie Ankenman, NAC, & Newsletter Coordinator Fiona Muldrew. Cover photo by Pamela Harris, see p.12.

## Thank you New & Renewed Members!

C.U.P.E. Local 2348  
Gerry Pearson  
Deborah Stienstra  
Julia Leefe  
Peggy Catcheway  
Alexis Sokal  
Elizabeth Fry Society  
Marion Alexander

Monika Beatty  
Clare Thomas  
Ravinder Manku  
Susan Prentice  
Rachel Jamieson  
Homo Heaven  
Tracy Fehr  
Canda'ce Cross

Shannon McKenty  
Gerrie Prymak  
Valerie Unwin  
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Johanna Denesiuk  
Kim Spence

Tuula Heinonen  
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C.A.W. Local 3003, Women's  
Committee  
ReVISIONS, Wpg. Women's  
Film & Video Festival  
New College Library, UofT

### Advertise in ACTION!

New advertising rates as of Sept., 1993: 1/4 page ad--\$30/\$25 for non-profit groups / MACSW members.  
1/8 page ad (business card)--\$20/\$15 for non-profit groups / MACSW members. For info ph. 946-5049.



## Sunera Thobani: Sharing the Feminist Pie

Fiona Muldrew

Sunera Thobani, President of the Nation Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), was in Winnipeg, Sept. 30 to Oct. 2 for three gruelling days of pre-election speeches. MACSW sponsored the Sept. 30 event where Sunera spoke on "The Women's Movement in the Nineties" to about 150 people at the University of Winnipeg. Before her speech, numerous community groups and women's groups set up display tables and 30 women's groups and several individual women participated in a Networking Circle. MACSW is planning to keep in touch with these women for future networking and lobbying efforts. Sunera also spoke that day at a luncheon at the Aboriginal Centre with women from 16 Aboriginal groups and she attended a reception at the Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba. The next day she rushed from media interviews to speeches at both the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg. On Oct. 2, she gave the luncheon address on NAC's Election Strategy and responded to a candidates forum at the CHOICES conference on the deficit myth "Is the Sky Really Falling?" Amidst this hectic schedule she found time and energy to take a personal interest in the lives of many women, bringing us hope and encouragement.

In her presentations, Sunera stressed that equality is the bottom line for all women's struggles. She pointed out that the Tory agenda is defending inequality by slashing social programs in the name of deficit reduction. In order to fight cuts to social programs that put more of the burden on women we need unity and strength in the women's movement. We must include all women in our decision-making so that all oppressed women's voices are heard. Racism needs to be addressed at both the interpersonal level as well as the institutional level of systemic racism. Instead of being defensive about racism in the women's movement, we need to realize that North American society is based on 500 years of colonization and racism. We need to find ways to stop the perpetuation of racism and homophobia in all our organizations, so we can not be pitted against each other. Sunera gave several examples of how we can show our commitment to uniting struggles for social justice. When Kim Campbell's Human Rights Amendment didn't allow spousal benefits for same sex partners we must speak out against her government's action or we are complicit in their homophobia. When Campbell's government placed part of the Immigration department in the Ministry of Public Security, we must

Photo: Charlene Ball



*Fiona Muldrew and Sunera Thobani share some "pie"*

speak out against this insulting act which treats immigrants as a public security threat.

Sunera has had to face many racist attacks as NAC President. Tory M.P. John McDougall called her an illegal immigrant, which was not true, but it showed how the Conservatives have become more vicious in their attacks on NAC as the women's movement becomes more powerful. Others have said that Sunera comes from a "culture that is backwards so how can she represent Canadian women?" Sunera pointed out that women everywhere have always stood up for their rights but feminism has been defined in the West as just a European/North American phenomenon. In Canada, we need to redefine feminism to acknowledge the herstory of women of colour and make sure we address the issues of the many women of colour in Canada. Sunera stated that many non-white cultures are described as "pre-modern" or more accepting of the oppression of women (as if North American "culture" is a haven for women's equality and safety!). Sunera told the story of Vancouver police who dropped the charges against a South Asian man who murdered his wife because they wanted to be "culturally sensitive." They said "violence against women is a part of their culture." Too often, non-white cultures are defined in patriarchal ways. The women in these cultures are not allowed to define themselves. Racism and sexism are to blame for not giving these women a voice. To point out the disparity, Sunera mentioned that the Dec. 6 Massacre of 14 white women in Montreal would never be excused as part of "Canadian culture."

Sunera sees the Tory attacks on equality-seeking groups and their attempts to blame the disadvantaged in our society as justification for further inequality. Sunera





Photo: Charlene Ball

**Charlene Ball, Rosemary Miguez, Sunera Thobani, Jean Altemeyer, Fiona Muldrew & Allison Dewar at CHOICES deficit conference, "Is the Sky Really Falling."**

noted that there are more food banks in Canada than McDonald outlets yet the Tory government justifies this level of poverty by lowering the poverty line to make it appear like the poor are scam artists and shouldn't be called poor.

Sunera mentioned some shocking statistics from the NAC Report on the Status of Women:

- one out of four women make only \$9,000 per year and many are single mothers.
- women's participation in the workforce is now declining due to lack of jobs & childcare.
- the rate of unemployment for women is 20%. Women are being pushed into lower paying part-time positions with no security or benefits.
- in the 10 top-paying occupations, only 20% are women, whereas women make up 72% of the 10 lowest-paying occupations.

As social programs are eroded, women in violent situations have their lifeline taken away from them. The \$10 million Panel on Violence recommended seeing violence as a health issue, thus co-opting the gains front-line anti-violence workers have made in defining violence as an equality issue. While cutting back funding for women's centres that address inequality and violence, the government seems to want to cure violence by treating the symptoms of violence--give women therapy and doctors, while promoting inequality, the root of the problem.

Sunera's main message was about women's empowerment. She explained that the feminist pie is very different from the competitive pie of self-interest. "If you get a little piece of the feminist pie, I won't lose my piece. If someone gets power, we're all empowered." She reminded us to seek empowerment and equality for everyone in our society so we will be strong and united in our fight to have real control over our lives.

## NAC Report: Women's Issues Ignored

Hari Dimitrakopoulou, NAC-Manitoba Rep.

After ensuring women's issues were front and centre in last year's constitutional race, it was frustrating to see so little attention paid to women's issues in the recent election.

Despite, or perhaps because of, having two women as leaders of the main parties, women's issues received scant attention. Even when the panoted that there ares did speak out on women's issues the media all but ignored them.

Not having a leaders' debate on women's issues was a major oversight in the election debates but it was not for lack of trying. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women asked the leaders of the main parties to attend but Kim Campbell refused.

NAC also released its Voters' Guide and tried repeatedly to raise women's issues. Once again the media paid little attention.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the campaign was the vicious anti-woman and anti-feminist rhetoric of many in the Reform Party. One Reform Party candidate talked about "Femi-nazis" and told another Reform supporter at a debate on violence to hit an NDP female candidate. It is interesting to note this candidate was not asked to withdraw by Preston Manning.

It is clear we are fighting against forces that would roll back the clock in terms of women and women's issues. Now more than ever we need NAC's strong voice on women's issues.

**Quote of the Election: "Preston Manning makes John Crosbie look like Gloria Steinem". Judy Rebick**

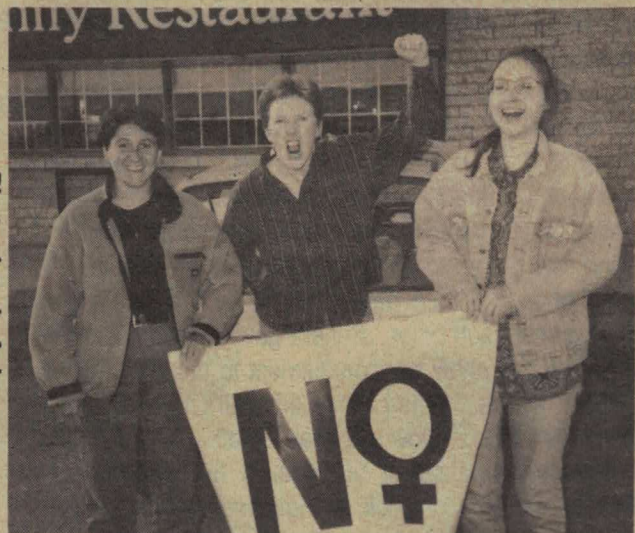


Photo: Laurie Ankenman

**Uppity Women Wanted for Political Action, see p. 7**



## NAC Demands for Federal Action on Violence Against Women

1. Provide adequate core funding to all women's groups currently funded under the Women's Program, Ministry of Human Resources, & not apply further cuts to this Program; commit to a federal contribution to the equality-seeking work of rape crisis centres, transition homes, and women's centres;
2. Conduct an en bloc review and release of women incarcerated for the death of abusive partners;
3. Amend the Immigration Act as it affects foreign domestic workers by: granting permanent resident status to domestic workers entering Canada under the Live-In caregiver program and making living-in an option rather than a requirement of the program;
4. Amend the Immigration Act to include gender persecution as grounds for claiming refugee status and to include as gender persecution domestic violence in cases where the country of origin is unwilling or unable to protect the women; amend the Immigration Act to include persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation as grounds for claiming refugee status;
5. Institute mandatory gender and race sensitivity training as well as training on other issues of bias for judges and crown prosecutors; change the judicial review council to include lay people, institute progressive discipline, and make its hearings public; significantly increase the number of women and racial minorities on the Federal Bench.
6. Decriminalize prostitution
7. Ensure that doctors and other helping professionals cannot maintain their credentials simply by moving from one province to another after being accused by women of mistreatment.

## Echoes of Helen Betty Osborne??

Fiona Muldrew

Norman Andrushuk, of 170 Dobrinsky Drive in the Maples, has been charged with attempted murder for the stabbing of a young Aboriginal woman, Kimberly Flett, which took place on January 31, 1993. Andrushuk is 20 years old and is currently a Faculty of Arts student at the University of Manitoba. He is out on bail because he didn't have a criminal record and was not considered a threat to public security at his bail hearing.

Ms. Flett, aged 24, was left disabled and mute as a result of 12 stab wounds to her head, upper body and buttocks. She suffered a stroke and is unable to communicate about the incident and is therefore unable to testify. MACSW has been in touch with her family and is seeking volunteers to help with legal/emotional support.

MACSW reps went to the preliminary trial for Andrushuk along with representatives from the Aboriginal community, on Oct. 6. Judge John Guy ruled that Andrushuk would face charges of attempted murder, even though the defense lawyer asked for a lesser charge of aggravated assault. Andrushuk's trial date will be set on Dec. 8, 9:30 a.m., in the Law Courts Bldg, Rm. 210. The trial will probably not begin until the spring of 1994.

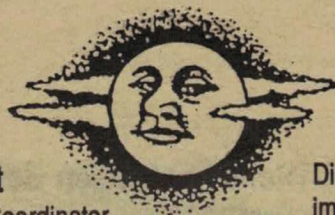
This case raises many questions:

- How is public safety ensured when those accused of violent crimes are out on bail?
- Why do people charged with violent crimes get out on bail so easily, with few and inadequate restrictions?
- Why does the court system take 14-16 months to bring someone charged with attempted murder to trial, yet Clayoquot Sound clearcutting protesters are jailed within a few months?
- How is justice served if the victim can't testify?
- What are governments doing with the Gender Equality in the Justice System report, besides watching it collect dust?
- Why do some media reports not mention the accused's name while naming and endangering the lives of the victim and her supporters? (The Free Press listed my name, as spokesMAN for MACSW, as well as the name of a UofM student concerned about her safety!! They failed to print Andrushuk's name yet they print the names of others who are accused but not yet convicted. The Manitoban (the UofM paper) printed Andrushuk's name & picture.

For more info on this case or to help out in any way please phone Fiona at 946-5049.







## Parkland Branch Report

Heather Dootoff, Administrative Coordinator

September wound up with a very intense Provincial Coordinating Committee meeting. Thanks to Esther Fyk for starting the meeting off by re-introducing the idea of an "opening ritual," something obviously lost through changes in membership. Funding/fundraising was a dominant theme in the meeting as was evidenced by the enclosure in last month's ACTION. As usual, the Saturday evening potluck was the highlight of the weekend. Thanks to Marilyn Roe for organizing the entertainment. Parkland Status of Women is particularly fortunate to have a multi-talented young woman in our midst; thanks to Carri Shangreux for sharing your song and your music. Much appreciation to all who brought food to the potluck and meeting and to Virginia Jamieson, Kathleen Baleja and Carri for organizing food for the entire weekend.

A sexual abuse survivors' group has started up in Dauphin. This is a women-only group and anyone interested in more info please call the office. I have had an inquiry about the possibility of a men's group for sexual abuse survivors and have agreed to forward names if anyone is interested in this group.

Ann Justice, a Dauphin woman who won the right to charge her stepfather with sexual abuse after the statute of limitations had expired, is wondering if she will ever see justice! Due to cost-cutting measures, the province is refusing to call a witness who now resides in Australia. This person is a psychiatrist who treated the family when the abuse was first reported, probably the most essential witness, next to Ann's own testimony. The department of justice has previously taken a stand on violence against women, ZERO TOLERANCE. However, more than words are needed; policies and actions which back up the message of ZERO TOLERANCE are the essentials. When someone asks, "why is there no justice?", is the answer "we can't afford it?" **We can't afford not to have justice!**

## Zero Tolerance Ignored!

Fiona Muldrew

Remember the woman who robbed the bank to get money for counselling for her abusive husband? Well, Ambrose Strowbridge is out of jail and has breached his probation conditions ordering him to seek counselling for sexual abuse and anger management and to have no contact with his wife or children. Despite breaking these conditions on many occasions over the past year the

Director of Prosecutions, Bruce Miller, has failed to implement the Zero Tolerance Policy by not arresting Ambrose, who is a great threat to his wife and children. **Please phone the new Minister of Justice, Rosemary Vodrey, at 945-3728**, to put pressure on the Director of Prosecutions to arrest Ambrose immediately for the breaches of his probation order.

## Brandon Branch Report

Jennifer Howard

Here goes--due to the impending election, this will be the no-frills, economy version of the branch report. Straightforward and to the point...unlike some political parties I could name...

The Summary Report of the Rural Tour has been completed. The main issues that we heard were social programs, justice, employment, agriculture and government. Surprisingly the deficit was rarely mentioned, and when it was, the context was that of using the deficit to justify cuts to social programs.

The two constant concerns we heard were that Canada was losing control of its democracy and particularly women's voices were being ignored. Canadian values such as compassion, collectivism and community were being eroded. Many women called this an Americanization of Canada, perhaps brought on by Free Trade.

The findings of the Women for Equality report and the results of our interviews with five of the federal candidates were released in a press conference on Persons' Day.

An "Adults Only" Video Store, part of a chain that sells pornography, recently opened in Brandon. The last store in Brandon was forced to close when much of its stock was seized by the RCMP for obscenity. If anyone wants to do some political action on this, please call the office at 725-2955. For those of you who favour a more direct approach, the address of the "Adults Only" store is 360 Rosser Avenue, across from the Mohawk gas station.

Work continues with the City of Brandon Employment Equity Committee and the Planned Parenthood Western MB Advisory Committee. Anyone interested should call me.

**VOLUNTEER ALERT!** Planning for the December 6 Vigil and the Provincial Coordinating Committee (PCC) Meeting (November 27 & 28) is underway. If you can help with PCC by providing billets, food, entertainment, child care, etc. or want to help with December 6, please, please, PLEASE call me at 725-2955.

There is, of course, a lot more going on, so much in fact I don't have time to write about it, so drop in the office.



## Thompson Branch Report

Hari Dimitrakopoulou

Greetings from the North. It has been a busy month for Northern feminists. At the beginning of the month Margi and I travelled to Winnipeg to meet with NAC President Sunera Thobani and other NAC members in Manitoba. Sunera outlined how NAC works as well as its efforts to raise women's issues in the federal election. The meeting was a good opportunity for Manitoba members of NAC to meet with our dynamic new president. Although some Northern Manitoba NAC members were unable to travel to Winnipeg, Margi and I informed them of the meetings and NAC's message. We hope to be able to bring Sunera to the North when she visits Manitoba next time.

In Thompson TACSW has been active with many activities. We were a part of promoting AIDS Awareness Week. AIDS is increasingly becoming something women must be aware of, in the North as elsewhere—for many women it has become a matter of life or death. If you are interested in forming an AIDS Support and Awareness Group, please give us a call at 778-8549.

Election activities were very much a part of our agenda in October. We organized and co-sponsored a "Plugging into Politics" luncheon on Person's Day. There was an overwhelming crowd of 50 women. It allowed women to get together to network with politically active women. Guest speakers were TACSW member Leah Passler on Person's Day and Marg Pronyk, Churchill Riding Returning Officer, on voting procedures. We also widely distributed NAC's Voters' Guide.

As was mentioned in our October report, we surveyed the federal candidates on the issue of violence against women and their position on the recommendations of the federal report of the Panel on Violence as part of our "Take Back the Night" action. The information was released to the media and to women in the North.

At our monthly meeting we had a good discussion on planning and fundraising in the age of government cutbacks. We are working on creative ways to keep our message alive. It was decided monthly meetings would take place the first Wednesday of the month. The next monthly meeting will deal with further planning and the TACSW budget for the year in order to have it ready for the November Provincial Coordinating Committee meeting in Brandon. One of the plans for the new year is to organize and deliver a series of workshops on Gender and Peace. If you would like to participate please contact the Thompson Action Committee.

Women's Herstory Week was a great success. Thanks to our members and in particular to Debra who helped organize it over the last year. TACSW also hosted the NFB video "Women in the Shadows" and helped advertise the Nellie McClung Theatre Group whose performance concluded the week.

We are still working on establishing a Community Kitchen in Thompson. Contact us if you would like to participate.

The Northern Women's Development Network (NWDN) has also resumed meetings and TACSW as a member has been actively promoting NWDN's report on Women and Sustainable Economic Development in Northern Manitoba to the public as well as to municipal governments in the North. We have also put forward an Action Plan for NWDN. If you are interested in economic development and women please let us know.

TACSW also took part in the White Ribbon Against Pornography Campaign. This time we also got involved with campaigning against the new MTS 900 number which might be offering a pornography line.

Proving its versatility, TACSW also got involved in the entertainment business in October. We helped publicize the performance of the up-and-coming Welfare \$tarlets in Thompson. As well we co-sponsored a reception for them. The performance was much appreciated by women in Thompson. It was also particularly significant for former TACSW Administrative Coordinator and MACSW Provincial Coordinator Jenny Robinson, one of the Welfare \$tarlets. It was a fitting homecoming for Jenny, who grew up in Thompson. Jenny and the Welfare \$tarlets have a CD out, a video on Much Music and are clearly destined for big things. Right on sisters!

Photo: Charlene Ball



Welfare \$tarlets at MACSW Open House in Winnipeg



## Winnipeg Branch Report

Susan Banks, Administrative Coordinator

In late September, we were busy organizing for Sunera Thobani's visit to Winnipeg. On September 30 we held a Networking Circle at the University of Winnipeg - about 30 community and women's organizations came and shared information about their activities and upcoming events. Following the Networking Circle, Sunera Thobani gave an inspiring speech about inclusion in the women's movement and the need for more focus on women's issues in the federal election campaign. Thanks to Clare Thomas, MACSW staff, Ashley Villeneuve, Danishka Esterhazy, Kristine Barr and many volunteers from the UofW Women's Centre for helping out with that event.

At our October Branch Meeting, women expressed interest in starting up a **Political Action Sub-committee**. This would allow us to better address both requests that we get from the community and political issues that MACSW identifies as important to act on. The first meeting will be Nov. 18 (see back page). Ph. 946-5049 for info.

Childcare was also discussed at the Branch meeting and we decided we would pay teenagers to babysit children at all our Branch meetings (first Thursday of the month, see back page). We will also provide professional childcare at all our public events and pay \$10/hour. Please register in advance for childcare at any event by calling 946-5049. To offset costs of childcare we will ask for donations at public events. Also Jean Snow has volunteered to give 20% of all profits made from her sales of "Discovery Toys" (educational, non-sexist, non-racist, non-violent toys) towards MACSW childcare costs. The toys are appropriate for all ages (birth-adult). If you're buying toys this season or would like to sell toys for MACSW, phone Jean, 261-9154 or MACSW, 956-5049 (catalogues available).

Thanks to everyone who helped out with our Open House on October 9! - Clare Thomas, France Legault, Norma Gray and Tracy Fehr for displaying their art (**all artwork is still on display in our office, so come and visit**), Laura Solomon, Angele Courchaine, Nancy Naismith, Barbara Abramchuk, Kelly Logan, and Rachel Jamieson for volunteering; the staff of Ragpickers and the Underground Cafe; MACSW staff and the evening performers: Lisa Serofin, Alison Walden, Ceridwen Collins-West, The Welfare Starlets and the Women's Drumming Group. Thanks to Carol deHedervary for being a charming MC at the coffee house which was packed with great people, great food and great entertainment. Also, 10 new members signed up at the Open House!!



Photo: Charlene Ball

**Laura Solomon & Kristen Andrews (Empress picker) at Open House Sale at Ragpickers Anti-Fashion Emporium**

On October 14, Winnipeg staff met with Susan Prentice, Margaret Laurence Chair of Women's Studies for the UofW and the UofM, to see how we could work together. Susan has volunteered to be a Winnipeg member on our Provincial Coordinating Committee. Her expertise and involvement in women's collectives will no doubt prove to be very useful. We welcome Susan to Winnipeg and to MACSW! Also, Carol deHedervary, MACSW's Provincial Fundraiser, is now on the Margaret Laurence Chair Advisory Board.

**Over \$1000 was raised at our Fundraising Dinner on October 16!** With the amount of interest that was shown, we may be able to turn this into an annual event. Thanks to everyone: those who came and supported us; to the excellent performers who donated their talents free of charge - Dem McLeod, Nellie McClung Theatre, Deborah Romeyn and Rachel Wall; to all who donated prizes for the silent auction - Debra Doerksen, Janice Froese, Richard Shirray, Sandra Somerville, Turnstone Press, HarperCollins, Tanya Lester, Marion Muldrew, Leslie Prizeman, MACSW, Herizons, City Magazine, Ross Dobson, Maya Lords Restaurant, Merk's Restaurant, Creative Celebrations, Co-op Books, and Grant Wuckert; to MACSW staff; to volunteers - Ravinder Manku and Allison Dewar; and to Merk's for providing the location. A special thanks to Doreen Wuckert for doing a wonderful job as MC for the evening and to Fiona Muldrew for doing sound.

Another round of thanks goes to valiant volunteers who helped us in the office during October: Carol Popiel, Elaine Typliski, Gini Griffith, Kate Tate and Nancy Naismith.





## Volunteer Update--MACSW Winnipeg

- Volunteers are needed for a **NEW & FORTIFIED Political Action Sub-Committee**. Practice or learn valuable skills in lobbying politicians on women's rights, getting media attention, getting action on your concerns. If interested phone Susan at 946-5049.

- We are looking for teenagers or people interested in doing childcare for branch meetings for a nominal fee (\$3/hour). (First Thursday of the month, 6 p.m. to about 9 p.m.)

- Please send in your membership updates so we know about your interests/skills.

- Volunteers needed for Community Poverty Awareness Committee planning a week of events in January.

## Public Education Update--MACSW Winnipeg

Chris Kolba

During the month of October, MACSW held a series of events focused on the election, with the Women's Empowerment through Political Process workshops held at three locations. A week later there was an almost all-party Candidates Forum which focused on issues of importance to women. We have a video-tape of this forum at the MACSW Wpg. office available for loan. The aim of the empowerment workshops was to encourage women to become involved in the political process, by making it more accessible and less intimidating to the average woman. The turnout for these events was disappointingly low but the following important points were raised:

- in order to reach more women than the usual already involved crowd you have to go to where they are. For example, Debbie Spence, a North end activist, went to the Salvation Army and downtown hotels to get that population onto the voters list, and also succeeded in getting a mobile polling booth to come to the Salvation Army's core area centre.
- government has been and continues to be defined by men, therefore it doesn't draw women in as much as it could. Various points and strategies were discussed such as an all women's party!

- campaigning is very survival oriented and truth often gets buried in the desire to win more votes... thus further alienating an already sceptical public, and those who might become more involved.

- NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) was generally recognized as being EVIL and while almost every individual you speak to will agree that it is a bad deal, for some reason the media fails to capture this, which led to the question of what motivates and who controls the media.

- racism (anti-immigrant sentiment) is being exploited and fuelled by right wing parties to win votes. Vanaja Dhruvarajan and Michelle Forrest mentioned that reducing immigration into Canada would provide a ready source of more desperate people to work in "developing" countries (for low wages and with poor working conditions of course) as NAFTA and other unfair trade deals are cemented.

The overall tone of these meetings was that women (lots of them) do need to get involved, that their collective voice could make a difference, and that politics needs to be brought to women (physically and ideologically) not vice versa. To that end, I hope to come up with some public education strategies for the upcoming provincial election. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped with the workshops: Ravinder Manku, Zanna Joyce, and Judith Weidman. Thanks also to Wanda Grift and Lee Jakubec for helping us get free use of the community centres. Special thanks to the workshop facilitators: Bev Peters, Bev Suek, Vanaja Dhruvarajan, Michelle Forrest, Irene Haigh and Debbie Spence. Thanks also to Susan Prentice, Margaret Laurence Chair of Women's Studies, who was an excellent moderator for the Candidates Forum.

### Upcoming Events:

WOMANWRITE: five 2-hour workshops on Nov. 18, 25, 29, Dec. 2 & 6 developed and facilitated by **Ceridwen Collins-West** to teach women how to write and express themselves by overcoming patriarchal messages and methods of suppression. Cost: \$40 or what you can afford.

Other ideas in the works are workshops on:

- **What Is Feminism?**
- **Women and the Media...**who controls it? What motivates the media? How do women get into it?
- **Women and Music...**What motivates big time industry reps or small festival reps? and the same old story...how do women GET IN THERE???

For more information or to volunteer either through your very physical participation (much needed), or with constructive criticism or suggestions, call Chris at 946-5049.



## Vandana Shiva: Tree-Hugger with 40 Arms

Fiona Muldrew

When Vandana Shiva was introduced at the University of Manitoba on Sept. 23 as Eco-Feminist, International Development Advocate, Chipko Activist, Writer, etc., she was asked in which order she likes to be introduced. She replied that she doesn't choose an order because she is a combination of all aspects of her life. She spoke of the important symbolism of the Goddess Shakti to women in India. Shakti has 40 arms which represent different identities and multiple talents in every woman as well as the ability to see the multiple identities of the patriarchy at various levels: eg. in the home, the community, government and the World Bank.

Vandana spoke of Indian women as the experts in the "in-between zones," making the important linkages between agriculture, forestry and livestock. "Development experts" are usually male foreigners unaware of the big picture. They see most aspects of the environment in isolation. For example, they bring in Jersey cows, solely for their milk, to replace what they call "inferior breeds" which are adapted to the cool mountain temperatures and use local feed efficiently. Vandana joked about the often horrendous results of this "expert" advice: "the Jersey cows died because they didn't have jerseys."

The development experts, from Canada and other countries, often ignore the original expertise of women in self-reliance, protecting the environment and making decisions locally to provide for their children. The World Bank has pressured governments in many countries to shift agricultural production to crops that rely heavily on patented seeds, fertilizers and more equipment, with loans given to the men in the community who are given the control to sell the crop in the marketplace. Traditionally, women had more decision-making power and communities produced food for their own consumption with little exchange of crops or money. With the shift in decisionmaking to the men and increased cash flow, there have been increased problems with men spending the money on alcohol. Women have quickly seen the negative effects of alcohol sales on their communities. In Andhra Pradesh state, women came out in the thousands day after day, in a grassroots effort to tear down the liquor stores until the government cancelled its involvement with liquor sales. Madeline Waring's book, *If Women Counted: Feminist Economics*, describes present capitalist "logic": if you produce what you consume, you're not producing. You're penalized for being self-reliant and rewarded if you're a parasite (eg. middlemen). Vandana

Photo: Charlene Ball



*Vandana Shiva with Sandra Somerville at the UofM*

described the Intellectual Property Rights movement of multinational companies, to control the patents and seed varieties that farmers use worldwide, as "Intellectual Piracy Rights." She stated that women have spent centuries selecting and adapting seeds but their work is ignored. When a seed is brought into a lab or packaged differently, then it is a product worthy of a patent. The creativity of Third World women is seen as reproduction not production.

Worldwide, women are seen as "nature" (exploitable) and men as "culture" (sellable, valuable). Vandana believes this undervaluing of women's creativity and knowledge comes from a deep patriarchal fear of birth--the ability to create life. Male academics have devalued creation from nature or sources of life and have switched value onto creation from the mind or disembodied thought leading to what Vandana calls post-modern piracy: free trade and other patriarchal structures which destroy life processes. Vandana states, "you can only understand the rape of women and nature by realizing that patriarchal aggression is aimed at everything that dares to be alive."

The results of this maldevelopment are:

1. **severe marginalization of women;**
2. **environmental degradation; and**
3. **demographic instability**

Population growth has always resulted from poverty caused by the hoarding or enclosure of some people's resources. When people have their land taken from them, sometimes the only resource they have left is their children. It makes good economic sense for dispossessed people to have big families, because of poor health facilities (therefore high mortality rates); the need for more hands to help the



family survive, and for security in their old age. Sadly, many environmentalists and development experts see Third World people (read women) as the major threat to world resources even though the richest 20% of the world consumes 80% of the world's resources. Many population control programs in Third World countries may be seen by the West as offering choices to women but Third World women know that the choices are only how to do violence to yourself in different ways. Many contraceptives and drugs which are banned in North America are pushed widely in the South regardless of harmful side effects.

When asked what guides or inspires her, Vandana replied: "Think of the person who is least privileged and try to judge your actions by how they will affect that person. Look at how the poor do so much with so little. I went to a meeting with some steelworkers in a remote part of India. We talked all day. I was exhausted and they danced all night and talked all the next day. I save a lot of time and energy by not taking myself too seriously."

Vandana has written a book entitled Staying Alive and is working on a film "The One Creative Seed." The film title is taken from the following poem by a Palestinian woman:

**"You can destroy my history  
You can destroy my villages  
You can destroy my poetry  
But I'm not afraid of your destruction.  
I have the one creative seed  
and out of it I will create the future."**



Barbara Thomas & Susan McKenzie from Red Roots Theatre act out a piece of the painful 501 years of colonization for Aboriginal people, The Forks, Winnipeg.

### Funds Needed for Aboriginal Actresses:

Women from Red Roots Theatre are seeking financial support to help them pay for child care and transportation so they can continue to add women's voices to the powerful plays of Red Roots Theatre. Phone Susan, 589-0304.

### Success for Susan O'Soup!!

Fiona Muldrew

For almost a year Susan O'Soup was battling for the right to see her 11 year old son she raised from birth. The father, John VanDale, a wealthy white man, abducted the boy for 5 days but was not charged. In response to threats from John, Susan fled the province with her son and was charged with abduction and denied custody. After months of dealing with several unhelpful Legal Aid lawyers, Susan decided to find financial support for the legal services of Hersh Wolch, and within weeks the abduction charges were dropped. Cynthia Devine, a feminist articling lawyer, with Wolch, Pinx, Tapper & Scurfield was a great help with Susan's case. MACSW supported Susan by going to court cases, writing letters of support and appealing to Legal Aid for a different lawyer. Along with the Original Women's Network, Anishnaabe Oway-Ishi, the Aboriginal Council of Wpg. and the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, we saw how Aboriginal women are disadvantaged in the court system and we believe that our combined support made a difference for Susan. Our congratulations to Susan for enduring a long difficult struggle.

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## gays & lesbians. your family.

### Average Good Looks Goes Above the Surface

Tanja Hütter

Last month Noreen Stevens was getting quite a few phone calls and not all of them were from admirers. In fact, some of them were threatening violence. What was the offence? Billboards. Billboards which displayed ten portraits of people in couple or single situations. Most people as they drove by wouldn't have given them a second thought, but the caption underneath made their significance clearer: "Gays and Lesbians--Our Family, Your Family."

Noreen is spokesperson for Average Good Looks, a collaboration of visual artists based in Winnipeg. This group's agenda is to promote thought and discussion about gays and lesbians. The group's motivation stems from the fact that little information about the gay and lesbian community comes from gays and/or lesbians. The purpose of the latest effort, "Our Family, Your Family," was to point out that homosexuals come from families and that they form families as well. This message was their fourth in the past few months and it was displayed across the prairie provinces. Every billboard, with the exception of the third one, included a phone number for people to call in case they had questions or comments. The reactions to the billboards have been pretty much the same. Threats have been left on the answering machine, or else callers have expressed their outrage at being subjected to that kind of "filth."

In spite of the opposition to Average Good Looks' goal, the billboards will continue to be periodically exhibited. They are the best medium for their purpose, as galleries and magazines are only able to reach a limited segment of society. As well, there have also been some positive

reactions which keep the visual artists encouraged. Some callers have expressed their gratitude, believing that the billboards are a good way to spark a conversation with their kids on a subject which is difficult to bring up.

### Letter to ACTION

Dear ACTION:

We are writing in response to Kristine Barr's report on pornography in the September issue of ACTION in which she calls for letters of concern over the Subculture magazine (Vol. 1 Summer 1993) to be sent to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) - Public Participation Program, identified as a funder of this magazine.

MCIC's Small Projects Fund is a fund provided by the Public Participation Program of CIDA to support community based initiatives for international development education. As we wrote in a letter to Ms. Barr dated August 23, 1993, the Small Projects Fund provided funding for the first edition of Subculture as it focused on issues concerning international development.

The issue of Subculture focusing on pornography, which Ms. Barr objects to, was not funded by either the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation nor the Canadian International Development Agency.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,

Karen Hamilton, Program Officer, MCIC





## Announcements

Oct. 29-Nov. 7, **ReVISIONS: Wpg. Women's Film & Video Festival**, Cinematheque, 100 Arthur St., Wpg., ph. 942-2776, **Tickets:** \$5/\$4 for students/\$3.50 for members, seniors, & unemployed. \$35 for a Festival Pass.

Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m., Women's battles against traditional perceptions & expectations: **Tessa; Skinned; Battle of the Bulge; Traces; Body Hair & And We Knew How to Dance.**

9:30 p.m. **Out & Proud** - lesbian lives & identities: **Bare; Long Time Comin'** by Dionne Brand; & **Thank God I'm a Lesbian.**

Nov. 4, 7:30 p.m. Manitoba's most celebrated directors: **The Performer** by Norma Bailey, **Dance to Remember** by Nancy Trites, **Dog Stories** by Shereen Jerrett, **The Mayor of Odessa** by Elise Swerhone, & **Nose and Tina** by Norma Bailey.

9:30 p.m. Real Life Stories - tales of abuse and survival: **Visions, Aleythia; Open Letter: Grasp the Bird's Tail; Locked In-Locked Out; Cuentos de mi Ninez (Tales from my Childhood); The Lost Years; Jaws; Seven Lucky Charms & Did You do the Napkin Tops**

Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m. **Aerlyn Weissman Retrospective: A Winter Tan**

9:30 p.m. Animation: **Beauty and the Yeast; The Bath; Hair Piece - A Film for Nappy Headed People; Uncanny; The Swan; Edge of Extinction; A Small Smidge, A Large Smear; My Left Cyst; Pearl's Diner; & All the Great Operas.**

Nov. 6, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. **Guest Director Workshop with Aerlyn Weissman** - discussion on the artist's trials, tribulations and successes.

7:30 p.m. **Winnipeg Film Group Night** - short films of new and rarely screened works from Film Group members.

9:30 p.m. **Last Call at Maud's**, a documentary about the longest running lesbian bar ever.

Midnight. **Five Feminist Minutes**, a collaborative film celebrating independent filmmaking from a feminist perspective.

Nov. 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. **Workshop with Aerlyn Weissman:** critique of participants' work, exchange of ideas. 2 p.m. **Can't Keep Them Down on the Farm** - Filmmakers meet farmers: **Murmuration; Poulet, Poulet; A Brief Life; & The Last Harvest.**

7:30 & 9:30 p.m. **Closing Night: Special Feature Premiere, Orlando** - Manitoba premiere of feature film by British Director Sally Potter.

Nov. 3-4, **Words on Stage, Prairie Fire** Launch with writers Barbara Schott, Marg Meikle, Lesley Peterson, Mirth Rosser, Kerry Desrochers, David Arnason, & more, 8 p.m., Wed.-FREE/Thurs.-\$8/\$6, ph. 783-6918.

Nov. 5, 5:30 p.m., greet the **Clayoquot Express**...coming from the sea without fish, going to the forest without trees, going through the prairies without ducks. Make the connections! Local environmentalists and members of the Clayoquot Caravan will speak at the **VIA Rail Station** including **Elizabeth May**, prominent eco-feminist. Join the Caravan. The train costs \$169 one way. One-way return air-fare, Nov. 12, costs \$239. Help support MACSW member **Carol Poplel** get to this historic protest against clearcutting in Clayoquot Sound, BC, by making a donation. For info ph. Carol at 654-3570 or Hendrik, Defenders of Nopiming, 261-3764.

Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m., **What is Wild Worth?**, Panel Discussion with Christine Singh, Coalition to Save the Elm Trees, Jean Friesen, MLA, Marc Gaboury, Dept. of Natural Resources, Karen Fox, MB Outdoor & Environmental Educ'n Assoc'n and Cheryl Nielson, City Naturalist. Organized by Friends of the LaSalle at the St. Norbert Arts & Cultural Centre, St. Norbert, ph. 475-2876.

Nov. 5, 6, 12 & 13, **Dessert Theatre** with 2 plays: **Old Moore's Almanac & Our Time of Life**, sponsored by St. Matthew's Maryland & West Broadway Community Ministry & Interesting Theatre, 7:30 p.m., at Crossways in Common, 222 Furby, \$10/\$8(12 & under), ph. 774-3957.

Nov. 5-7, **Damsels in Distress Conference: Strategies for Empowering Young Women in Manitoba**, sponsored by the Mb. Women's Advisory Council, The Junior League of Wpg. and the Mb. Women's Institute. Call 945-6281.

Nov. 5-7, **Dream Quest - Vision of Tomorrow, Festival of Aboriginal Art**, Nov. 5, 7-11 p.m., Benefit Night with singers, dancers, viewing of new NFB film **"For Angela"** & **Red Roots Theatre**, \$15-\$40; Cost for Nov. 6 & 7 - \$2/day. Nov. 6, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m., art exhibit, storytelling, puppetry, music, dance, crafts, 4 p.m. - **reading by Lee Maracle.**

Nov. 7, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., dance, readings, music, art exhibit, & puppetry; 11 a.m. - storytelling by **Freda Ahenakew**; 7:15 p.m. - one-woman play "Child" by **Joy Keeper**; 7:30 p.m. - **"What ever Happened to the AJI"** by **Red Roots Theatre**, All events at the new Aboriginal Centre, 181 Higgins at Main St., CP Station, Wpg., for details ph. 956-5898.



## Even More Announcements

Nov. 5-7, **Focusing, Health & Healing** with Mary Armstrong, inner healing workshop for therapists, survivors and counsellors, ph. Learning Networks at 786-1971

Nov. 9, International Day of **Solidarity against Neo-Nazism**, Commemoration of Kristallnacht (start of Nazi hate campaign in WWII), Rally at the Legislature, 5:30 p.m., March to Holocaust Memorial, Osborne & Assiniboine, ph. MB Coalition Against Racism & Apartheid, 775-9170

Nov. 9, **Community Meeting on the Survival of Bold Print**, Manitoba's only feminist bookstore, which is **FOR SALE**. Women are invited to discuss future options, 7:30 p.m., 478 River Ave., Wpg., ph. 452-9682.

Nov. 14, **Rachel Wall** (great feminist songs for a great price!), Tom Penner & Graham Leathers, 8 p.m., West End Cultural Centre, Wpg., \$3.

Nov. 18-20, 25-27, **Testing Ground**, a different play every night by the Popular Theatre Alliance, Venue VIII, above Mother Tucker's Restaurant, Wpg., ph. 589-8408.

Nov. 20, **NHL Hockey in Wpg. - Viability & Priorities**, a workshop with panel discussion, speakers, & community input sponsored by CENTRE ICE (Community to ENSure The RESponsible Investment in Community Enterprise), 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., location TBA, ph. Rosemary at 453-4649.

Nov. 20, **Brandon Folk Music & Art Society** present folk-singer/social commentator **Cathy Miller** & blues artist **Jennifer Gibson**, 8 p.m., Park Community Centre, 15th St. & Louise Ave., Brandon, \$7/\$6 for members.

Nov. 26, **Marilyn Lerner** with Gilles Fournier & Friends in concert, 8 p.m., West End Cultural Centre, Wpg., \$10.

Nov. 27, **Gifts that Go on Giving**, gift items from non-profit groups & others that don't cost the earth, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Broadway Community Centre, 185 Young St., Wpg., ph. 488-8547.

Dec. 5, 2 p.m., Celebrate with **DI Brandt** & University of Manitoba Press the Book Launch of **Wild Mother Dancing: Maternal Narrative in Canadian Literature**, Bold Print Bookstore, 478 River Ave., Wpg., 452-9682.

Dec. 6, 1:30-3:30 p.m., **Drop-in for Women Age 45+**, Coffee & relaxation on the first Monday of the month, 104-3100 Pembina Hwy., Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, ph. Glenda, 269-6836.

**On the Wings of Change**, a courageous, empowering play about women growing old but not feeling old, will be launched the end of **January, 1994** and will be available for community bookings until the end of June 1994. This production is a collaborative effort between playwright Rosemary DeGraff and Goldenrods, a troupe of women who have set out to "ferment a little change in society's perception of older women." Phone the Popular Theatre Alliance for more info at 589-8408.

**Forbidden Love: The Unashamed Stories of Lesbian Lives**, NFB production now available on video (\$19.95 plus taxes), ph. (514) 496-2573.

**We're Still a Family**, a new book by Frances Arnold, written from the point of view of a child who becomes part of a single parent family. Artist: Lori Broadfoot. For ages 3-8, Order from Jem Books, ph. 783-6318.

Cover Photo taken from **Faces of Feminism: Portraits of Women Across Canada**, by Pamela Harris, a beautiful display of the diversity of the feminist movement with write-ups by the women photographed, chock-full of local heroines, 174 pages, Second Story Press, hard & soft-cover, available at a classy book store near you.

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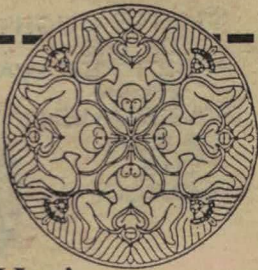
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# MACSW MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Please indicate if you want to receive the MACSW newsletter in a plain envelope without the MACSW identifier. \_\_\_\_\_

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**ORGANIZATIONS - \$50**

*Please sign up, even if you can't afford the membership fee. Your membership includes a subscription to the ACTION Newsletter, published 9 times a year.*

Make cheques payable to MACSW and send this form to:

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Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1G7

I'm interested in getting involved with the following issues: (please check)

## ISSUES

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## ACTIVITIES

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## Calendar of Events - NOVEMBER

THERE OUGHT  
TO BE  
A BETTER WAY  
THAN  
GOVERNMENT  
TO RUN  
THE  
WORLD.



- 3 **TACSW Monthly Meeting**, 7 p.m., Thompson office, ph. 778-8549
- 4 **Winnipeg Branch Meeting**, 6 p.m., Univ. of Wpg., check Women's Centre on 4th floor, Centennial Hall for location, phone 946-5049 to pre-register for child care. Everyone welcome!
- 5 **Lee Maracle**, author of Bobbi Lee, Indian Rebel, reading from her new books Raven's Song and Sun Dog, 7:30 p.m., Bold Print, 478 River Ave., Wpg., ph. 452-9682.
- 5-7 **Woman Healing for Change Fall Week-End Retreat**, Jessie Saulteaux Centre (near Beausejour) Sharing circles, workshops, individual work, bonfire: drumming/singing, pot-luck meals. To register ph. Debra 477-1505 or Gela 786-3292.
- 9 **Northern Women's Development Network Meeting**, 12-1 p.m., YWCA, Thompson.
- 11 **Parkland Status of Women Regular Meeting**, 5:30 p.m. Bring plates and cutlery for potluck. Phoners will contact members for food, Dauphin, ph. 638-3599.
- 12 **December 6 Coordinating Committee Meeting**, Thompson, ph. 778-8549
- 12-14 **Women in the Media** conference, Hotel Fort Garry, Wpg., Sunday brunch with Sunera Thobani \$20. Workshops on Women, Media & the Law; How the Media covers Sex Crimes, & more, ph.(613)788-7424 for info or contact MACSW-Wpg. for registration forms.
- 16 **Brandon Branch Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. at the office (202-107 7th Street)
- 17 **Community Kitchen Committee Meeting**, Thompson, ph. 778-8549
- 18 **MACSW's Brand New Political Action Committee**, noon, MACSW Wpg. office, ph. 946-5049 for info. Tell us if daytime meetings are inconvenient for you. If you're angry and you know it, **Agitate!**
- 18 **MACSW Pornography Committee Mtg.**, 6 p.m., UofW Women's Ctr., 4th fl., Centennial Hall, UofW, ph. Kristine, 786-9788.
- 18 **Building Healthy Communities**: a workshop with Marcia Nozick, eco-feminist, community activist, author & coordinator of Wpg. Healthy Communities Project. Find out how you can build a healthy Brandon! 8 p.m., Park Community Centre, 15th St. & Louise Ave. FREE, childcare available, ph. Janet Smith at 725-1568.
- 20 **The Mystique of Midlife Conference**: Women and Midlife, Facing our Fears, Celebrating the Changes, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Marlborough Inn, Wpg., \$35(includes lunch). For info ph. Women's Health Clinic at 947-1517.
- 23 **TACSW Discussion Group** on "The Partnership Way" Workshops, ph. 778-8549.
- 25 **Brandon University Women's Organization Mtg.**, 7:30 p.m., Arts Faculty Lounge, Original Bldg., Brandon Univ., Krista Loughton will present on her recent work with Indonesian women. Ph. Mary, 728-8496.
- 27&28 **MACSW Provincial Coordinating Committee Meeting** in Brandon, ph. your Branch if you want to go, billeting provided, transportation and food paid by MACSW.

