

North Shore Women

Newsletter of the North Shore Women's Centre



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North Vancouver, B.C.
V7R 2P1

987-4822

Hours: Mon - Fri. 10:00 - 4:00

EMILY MURPHY HOUSE FOR BATTERED WOMEN - 987-3374

Editorial

Volume 7, Issue 5, February 1982

DOOM AND GLOOM by Barbara Low

The North Shore Women's Centre is in danger of closing its doors because funding for the Office Co-ordinator has stopped, and future funds may not materialize.

The Office Co-ordinator's salary was paid through a Community Services Project of Employment and Immigration Canada. The C.S.P. itself has not had its budget verified, and therefore it is not known if the project will continue.

The jobs that the co-ordinator has carried out over the past year must now be done by volunteers. Unfortunately, there is little interest in volunteerism - doing the mundane jobs of opening and distributing mail, typing

letters, and maintaining the files and library. Most of the old guard are burned out from volunteering, and feel that the newer and younger members must come forward to continue the centre's operation. As we enter our eighth year of existence on the North Shore, we are all faced with the dilemma of asking ourselves do we still need the centre, and are its functions necessary?

The executive feels that if not enough volunteers come forward, the centre will be closed during the day. If the centre cannot remain open for drop-ins and phone enquiries, then what is the point of maintaining it? Are we justified in accepting government grant money to pay for operating costs of the centre, if it is almost impossible to maintain a core of volunteers?

These questions lead to the main issue -- what is the purpose of the centre? In the beginning, the centre was the only place on the North Shore that had workshops on peer counseling, assertiveness training, and other subjects that professionals now deal with in university and college settings. Since its inception, the North Shore Women's Centre has operated as a focal point for North Shore feminists. It has been a disseminator of information on issues. Most importantly, the centre has been a place for women to gather socially at any time during the day, and for many women it has been the major place to go to in time of crisis.

The centre's uses includes a library and files for research, and a meeting place to discuss and create action on current women's issues. The very existence of the centre as an office has helped welcome new residents to the community who are personally involved, or whose philosophy concerns the movement. Although people holding different positions has changed annually, the centre itself has remained a point of continuity. Its mailing address and telephone number is known provincially and nationally.

The operation of the centre has changed over the years. Once we were asking for support and guidance, now other groups look to us for help. We may complain about the centre's poor location, but it is this place which has been the battle ground to fight causes such as daycare, abortion, changes in family and rape laws, and the founding of Emily Murphy House.

(con't P. 15)

REPORT ON PENSIONS CONFERENCE held in Calgary, Nov. 28 '81

by Nerys Blown

FACTS from Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women:

- 3 out of 4 single, widowed or divorced women over 70 had annual incomes under \$5,000 (1977)
- about 333,000 single, widowed or divorced women over 60 live in poverty - 3 times the number of men in the same circumstances (1977)
- women who become widowed after 65 suffer a sharp, sudden drop in income. The average income for women over 65 and on their own is just 1/4 of the average income for couples aged 45-64 (1977)
- women can expect to live to age 77

OLD AGE IS A WOMEN'S ISSUE! THINK ABOUT IT NOW!



Most of us are concerned about how to survive in the current inflationary crisis, and for some of us, the pension debate may be the last thing that interests us. However, we all must recognize that at some time we will be affected by pensions and now is the time to effect changes in the present system of regulations and attitudes.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women has been focussing on pension reform as one of its major public policy issues and has been instrumental in organizing several regional seminars across Canada to encourage women to become better informed. One of these seminars was held in Calgary on November 28, 1981. The one-day seminar included information on all aspects of pensions today and suggestions for reform of the present system.

Monica Townson from the Economic Council of Canada spoke on "The Great Pension Debate." The present regulations of the Canada Pension Plan are based on the stereotype of the male breadwinner and are no longer applicable. By the year 2000, more than 70% of all adult women will be in the labour force.

Four major problems in the pension debate are

- 1.) Coverage - 51% of working men have a private pension plan while only 34% of working women have one.
- 2.) Mobility - women change jobs more often than men.

Therefore vesting regulations in pension plans (whereby an employee usually has to work a set number of years, often 10, before receiving any of the employer's contributions) tend to discriminate against women.

- 3.) Different work patterns - time out of the labour force during childraising years and part-time employment tend to decrease women's contributions to pension plans.
- 4.) Receiving benefits - women receive lower pensions because of lower wages.

Ms. Townson is a strong advocate of an expanded public pension system to remedy the problems. The child drop-out clause which is presently part of the Quebec Pension Plan should also be included in the Canada Pension Plan. Ontario and B.C. are two provinces that are preventing this clause from becoming part of the CPP. The child drop-out clause in pensions allows a working woman who remains at home during the years her children are under 7 to "drop-out" those years when her pension is calculated over her potential working years.

The issue of pensions for homemakers with children over 7 is a controversial one in the women's movement. Many believe that women who stay at home with children are contributing a valuable service to society and therefore the loss of their pension contributions should be covered by the rest of society. However, women who remain at home with children over 7 are making a private choice and should not expect the state to support this. Those who do not support a pension system for homemakers believe that it would perpetuate women's dependency and stereotype roles.

Georgia Cordes, from the Winnipeg YWCA offered a historical view of work and supported the case of pensions for homemakers. She felt homemakers should be allowed to contribute to the CPP by linking their contributions to the married tax exemption.

Sheila O'Brien, Manager, Employee Relations, Pan Arctic Oil, spoke on provincial interests in pensions. Most provinces have "Top-up" or supplementary plans that increase the CPP. Provincial law also governs the splitting of private pensions on divorce. In B.C., private pension credits are considered a family asset.

Diane Bellemare from the Research Institute for Labour Issues said that the Labour Movement advocates the expansion of public pensions and the use of private pensions only as supplementary incomes. Only public plans can ensure that the living standard at the end of a career is adequate, by providing indexing against inflation. Public plans should be expanded through taxation.

Isabel Wegg from Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association explained that, to aid small businesses, Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association has designed a uniform pension plan that will enable many independent, owner-managed businesses to offer plans to its employees. Part time employees may also join on a voluntary basis. The private insurance industry feels that federal and provincial governments should require every employer to provide a minimum level of pension contributions.

The Federal Government is making pensions a priority issue for 1982 and will be publishing a Green Paper on Pension Reform. Now is the time to let them know what you want!

If you wish to read more about the pension issue, Louise Dulude's report, "Pension Reform with Women in Mind", sponsored by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, is available at the North Shore Women's Centre.

The B.C. Women's Liberal Commission is sponsoring a one day conference in Vancouver on January 30 from 9 - 4. It is open to everyone. Fee: \$20 including lunch. Judy Erola will be the keynote speaker.

On March 6, 1982, a Coalition of Women's Groups in Vancouver is inviting delegates from women's organizations in the lower mainland and from the island to attend a one day conference on Pensions at Hycroft. The North Shore Women's Centre will be sending a delegate to the conference. If you are interested, call the Centre before Feb. 15.

Member's Opinion

by Edna Thomson

I believe there are many feminists who feel it is long past the time for us to welcome feminist men to our organization - to all feminist groups. We surely must all know that we are not fighting a "war of the sexes"; we are fighting a philosophical war.

The philosophical basis of the Women's Movement has to do with the belief in the intellectual and human equality of women and men. It has to do with the belief that women have been discriminated against in all areas of human endeavor. It has to do with the belief that social conditioning has stereotyped life and occupation roles for females and males. It has to do with the belief that many social and economic injustices arise from a system that is profit oriented and not ordered according to human need.

These philosophic premises have been embraced by some men as well as by many women who identify with the Women's Movement. They have also been rejected in part or totally by some women, AND WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS THIS FACT.

One does not have to be a woman to understand what constitutes discriminatory prejudice and practices. Nor does one have to be a man to perpetuate such conditions and attitudes.

Question of the Month

Do you feel that men should be invited/allowed to become members of the North Shore Women's Centre?

Please write and let us know your thoughts on this matter. Letters received by February 15 will be published in the next newsletter.

Letter to the Editor

On December 31, 1981, on the CBC 6:00 PM News out of Vancouver and later on the National, we were subjected to the spectacle of a man leaning back in his chair watching another man's daughter strip. A Strip-O-Gram had been sent to the weather man from his colleagues.

I wonder how many women saw this and whether they had the same reaction as me? I felt both affronted and saddened, and as a taxpayer, furious. This was something thought up, set up, and filmed inside CBC studios, and so reflects the thinking of those in a position to manipulate what we see on television.

I phone CBC and learned that this "news item" had been authorized by the executive producer. After an interview with the man who runs the Strip-O-gram company (a young woman comes complete with bump and grind tape and proceeds to strip for the recipient) it was thought that it would be "amusing" to send a Strip-O-gram to one of their members, on camera. So it was that our broadcasting corporation joined to ranks of those who exploit women as sexual objects.

If you object to this write to the CBC, 700 Hamilton, Vancouver, B. C., or, Ron Huntington, MP for Capilano and Chuck Cook, MP for Burnaby-Seymour.

Some people are reluctant to believe that there is a connection between this type of exploitation and the horrifying abuse and rape of women and young girls. I question their reasoning.

Think about it.

Lucinda Taylor

EDITOR'S NOTE: Write also a complaint to: "CBC & Radio Canada (TV and radio, programs and ads)/ C/O Louise Imbeault - Coordinator - Portrayal of Women/ 1500 Bronson Avenue/ Ottawa, Ontario/ K1G 3J5



International Women's Day

The North Shore Women's Centre will celebrate International Women's Day a day earlier with a Sunday Brunch.

DATE: March 7, 1982

TIME: 11:00 A.M.

PLACE: Guppy's Restaurant
148 East 2nd Street, N. Van.

COST: \$8.00

A panel: "The B.C. Task Force For Immigrant Women."
A discussion of experiences by immigrant women.

Everyone is welcome, but please pre-register as seating is limited. Call the Centre before February 28, 1982 if you plan to attend.



The next Executive Meeting of the North Shore Women's Centre will be held at 7:30 on Thursday, February 11.

NORTH SHORE WOMEN'S CENTRE

Women's Night

PRESENTS

FRANCES ROSS BLAIR

Counselling Psychologist

"Families in Crisis"

*Coping with stress as a result of
divorce, separation, or a recent
birth*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

8 P.M. (Doors open 7:30 P.M.)

**PARK & TILFORD GARDENS MEETING
ROOM.**

**1200 Cotton Road
North Vancouver?**

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ACT

A British Columbia woman may have the legal right to sue a person who has sexually harassed her.

Rosemary Brown, M.L.A. for Burnaby-Edmonds plans to introduce to the B.C. Legislature a "Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act."

The Act defines "sexual harassment" as: "unsolicited, non-reciprocated behaviour of a male towards a female that asserts her role over her function as worker, tenant, student, client patient or person." If a woman is psychologically or emotionally hurt by a sexual advancement, she can claim sexual harassment. If the Act becomes law, women would have recourse against anyone who uses economic power and authority to restrict their "equal access to the work place, services or tenancy..."

The following is a list of activities defined as sexual harassment: unsolicited physical contact, persistent propositioning, coerced intercourse, gender based insults and taunting, physical assault, attempted rape, and rape.

More information on this Act can be obtained from Ms. Brown's office, 6340 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C., V5E 1C5, 437-9452.

PROTEST ELECTRONICALLY

If you're in a hurry to let your MP know how you feel about a current issue, you can now give him or her the message electronically.

CNCP Telecommunications and Canada Post have come up with a way of sending brief electronic mail messages to MPs and Senators at a reduced rate. For \$2.65, less than the cost of an average regular telegram or long distance call, you can get whatever is bothering you off your chest, provided you can do it in 15 words or less.

It will cost the same regardless of the sender's distance from Ottawa. You can pass along your message by calling any CNCP Public Message Office (681-4231).

(From Fall 1981 Status of Women News)

UPDATE ON THE EMILY MURPHY HOUSE

The Emily Murphy House was begun two years ago as a transition house for physically battered or emotionally abused women and their children, women in crisis over 19 years of age who do not require hospitalization, or women and their children who need emergency accomodation while making permanent arrangements.

EMH is maintained as a private home in a residential area close to hospital and police facilities in North Vancouver. Its address is kept confidential to protect those leaving violent or abusive households. Stays may be brief or up to thirty days, during which time five trained staff members and approximately 40 volunteers are available from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily to provide counselling, emotional support and help in life planning. During their stay residents are put in touch with community agencies for their financial aid, legal information, counselling, medical services and help with children.

A part of the North Shore Crisis Services Society, EMH has been funded in its first two years of operation by the Ministry of Human Resources, three North Shore municipalities, the North Shore Women's Centre, local service clubs, private donors and church groups, and by two federal grants to date.

Last year (January 1981 - December 1981) EMH housed 119 adults and 133 children. Its oldest resident was a 72 year old. Unfortunately, last year 140 families (347 individuals) had to be turned away due to lack of space.

What is most needed now is some type of second stage housing, such as the Monroe House which serves the city of Vancouver, where families may stay for up to six months until they are able to re-organize their lives and find other housing. This has become increasingly the major concern for women leaving their relationship. Rental accomodation on the North Shore is expensive and hard to find, especially as most rental units will not allow children.

If anyone has any ideas on how to facilitate house hunting or knows of any available accomodations, please let the EMH know.

The EMH continues to provide a valuable, vital service to women and children on the North Shore; hopefully this service can be expanded in the near future.

DECEMBER'S MULLED WINE

By Bev Schroeter, Women's Night Coordinator

Our annual December Mulled Wine Party was a wonderful success. This year we gathered with our energetic and supportive friend and member, Edna Thomson who opened her inviting home to our members.

The evening's entertainment was provided by another member, Anne Gloria Alexandria, whose nimble and talented fingers engulfed her captive audience with classic pieces by Massenet, Roger Williams, Cheminade, Bizet and Chopin.

Anne's music was so well enjoyed that I'm sure many would like to pick up her performances, and are encouraged to call the centre for her phone number to check on dates and times. Anne has also offered to give a fund raising benefit for our centre!

Not to go unmentioned was our annual mulled wine prepared by Lin Hay-Roe, and a tasty cheese plate chosen by Nerys Blow. Everyone enjoyed themselves so well, I'm sure they join me in giving our hearty thanks to the members mentioned, and special thanks to Anne and Edna.



WOMEN'S NIGHT REPORT -- JANUARY

By Nerys Blow

Although the snow and icy streets kept the attendance low, the speaker at the January meeting of the North Shore Women's Centre received an enthusiastic response from those who managed to brave the weather.

Jacinta Moylan from Investor's Syndicate Ltd. spoke on financial planning, investments and taxation. She emphasized the importance of keeping a record of one's personal financial worth -- listing all assets and liabilities -- which should be updated once a year. This record is also an invaluable aid to survivors in the event of death. Ms. Moylan explained the various types of investments available to individuals and, responding to a question on the amount of wealth necessary for investing, she maintained that everyone (an initial investment of \$1,000.00 with \$50/mo.) can benefit from a well balanced investment portfolio. A good balance consists of both debt investments (e.g. Canada Savings,

Term Deposits, G.I.S.) and equity investments (e.g. stocks, real estate, gold, silver, gems, paintings).

In response to questions on the present investment climate, Ms. Moylan feels that there will be an upswing in the market in late spring or summer and that now is the time to buy. Such forecasts are based on intuitive feelings as well as familiarity with and a knowledge of the economic scene. Ms. Moylan added that there is one sure thing in the investment business -- "the market will go up and down!"

ABORTION - THE BOROWSKI CHALLENGE

On December 1st, 1981, the Supreme Court of Canada made the decision to hear a challenge to the validity of our present abortion laws. This decision was based upon an action brought by Joe Borowski of Manitoba. The intent is to have the Canadian Bill of Rights apply to fetuses. Should the Court decide in his favour, all abortions and many types of contraception may be regarded as murder.

The very fact that the Supreme Court has decided to hear this case jeopardizes all that women have gained toward control of their bodies. Our best defense is to mobilize all supporters of our demands to join us in actions on May 8th and 9th.

Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion (CCCA) and the B.C. Federation of Women (BCFW), as co-sponsors of the May 8th and 9th actions, ask for your support in the struggle to maintain and improve the accessibility of abortion for women who need it.

On February 13, 1982, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Trout Lake Community Centre, Vancouver, there will be a planning meeting to decide which actions will be taken in the Lower Mainland.

In the way of further support, the CCCA and the BCFW ask people to endorse their aims and the May 8th and 9th Actions. For more information write: Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion, P.O. Box 24617, Station C, Vancouver, B.C. V5T 4E1.

PERSONAL INFORMATION CARDS

Orders are still being taken at the Women's Centre for personal information cards.

Name, address and telephone number are printed in italic handwriting on

the outside of a folded card. Inside is blank and is suitable for messages. Approximate size is 2 7/8" by 1 7/8". The cost is \$8.00 for 300 cards, prepaid. Please specify what you wish printed on your cards - they don't have to be identical to the sample above - and mail with a cheque to the Centre. These cards also make handy and original gifts.

Jane Doe
1234 Amy Street
North Vancouver, B.C.
VJP 2R1

903-1234

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE on the Status of Women - TENTH ANNUAL MEETING - to be held March 12 through March 15, 1982 at the Holiday Inn, 100 Kent Street, Ottawa. The North Shore Women's Centre usually sends two delegates. Travel assistance is available from NAC to cover the airfare and possibly some of the hotel expenses. If you are interested in going to Ottawa as the NSWC delegate, please write a note to the NSWC outlining briefly your present involvement with the Centre and your future commitments to the Centre. A committee from the Executive (not wishing to go) will choose the delegates.

WRITER NEEDED! The NSWC is completing a slide presentation of the Centre and its work. We need a woman with writing ability to work with Nerys Blown on a script for the the presentation.

We also need someone with a good NARRATING VOICE to narrate the script.

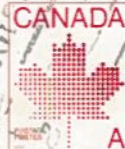
Please call 987-4822 if you can help - or know someone we might conscript to do either of these jobs.

Betty Cave, the past coordinator, was officially unemployed as of January 15, 1982. However, she is still keeping the centre open from Noon to 4:00 PM. But she is becoming tired, and new people need to take over and continue her work. If volunteers are not found, the daily office functions of the centre may be discontinued. The centre itself will remain as a meeting place to enable us to continue working on issues, but the day to day jobs that have made the North Shore Women's Centre well-known, may turn into part-time duties. This would mean the centre's doors would be open on a sporadic basis, unless the membership steps forward to give a voluntary hand.

Douglas College is beginning its new semester of Programs for Women. In addition to courses on re-entry, assertiveness and confidence building, the college also offers courses on the changing job market, journal writing, women's sexuality and "the wardrobe that works." There is a bursary fund to help women meet the fees for women's courses. To find out about it, call Margaretha Hoek at 521-4851. To register for courses beginning the first week of February, call 525-2075.

FESTIVAL '82: A Celebration of the Arts, by for and about women, will take place in Vancouver on July 5 - 18, 1982. The Festival will feature a juried art exhibition and will include workshops, lectures and performances in the areas of MUSIC, LITERATURE, DANCE, THEATRE, VIDEO, AND FILM. Artists interested in participating must submit their work by March 1. Women interested in helping organize Festival '82 should contact Carol Street, P.O. Box 1032, Stn. A, Vancouver, V6C 2P1. Phone: 681-8557.

THEATRE/WOMEN A study is being undertaken by the Status of Women Canada to assess the current status of women in the Canadian theatre. If you are a Canadian playwright, director, or involved in women's theatre, or if you have concerns as an audience member, please write Rina Fraticelli 96A Bellevue Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M5T 3N9.



VAN. B. C. VAN 121
171 H9A 3

Canadian Women's Studies,
P.O. Box 631, Station A,
Scarborough, Ont.
M1K 5E9

Membership time. Please renew your membership. We need your support.

Annual fee for renewal of membership or new membership is \$9.00.

NORTH SHORE WOMEN'S CENTRE MEMBERSHIP 1981-82

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PROVINCE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

New ()

TELEPHONE _____ Renewal ()

Mail to: North Shore Women's Centre
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North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 2P1