
Tamarack

The Newsletter of the Terrace Women's Centre

September 1997

**Terrace Women's Resource
Centre Society**

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m.

*Guest speaker will be
Caroline Daniels
speaking on the subject of
*Matrilineal Kinships**

All members are invited to attend. Come out and help set direction for the next year.

The Terrace Women's Resource Centre Society is a non-profit, charitable organization incorporated in 1979. Run collectively, it is a feminist grassroots operation that welcomes all women. Our Centre provides a safe environment which supports women, encourages women to explore and reach their full potential and validates individual strengths and experiences.

Responding to need, we continually strive to ensure that issues of concern to women in our community and the northwest are addressed. Direction for the year is set annually, and revisited semi-annually by the Collective.

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held September 16. A short business meeting will include goals and direction setting for the upcoming year. Our guest speaker, Caroline Daniels, will speak after a short break. Please, join us.

Whew, is it over yet?

September, a busy month. Somehow it always takes the world by storm. I'm not sure why that happens considering we do know it's coming every year but happen it does. This September will be no different, particularly at the Centre.

We've got our AGM, Take Back the Night March & Rally, a legal workshop, Internet lessons, staff training, new staff starting, new staff visiting, the debut of our volunteer opportunity wall along with our regular daily activities.

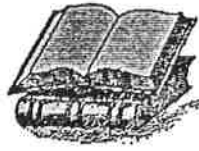
Summer wasn't the sleepy summer it could have been; it wasn't insane but it was enough to add a few things to the fall's 'to do' pile. We have the fallout from the people who are intolerant of (among other things) doves and of other people who do not seem to be as tolerant as they could be about skin colour, the question about the fate of our lease and a (hopefully) misunderstanding with a funding agency over a very needed parenting program.

You've got to wonder - do people take breaks in the summer to take a breather from stuff that has already happened or so they are able to face what's coming up? One thing for sure - it's never boring around here!

Quote for the Day:

We are the women men warned us about.

Take 5 and READ



September 8 is International Literacy Day. From Literacy BC: **At NOON on this special day stop what you are doing, pick up a book, community newspaper, anything, and READ!**

If you need something to read, our library here at the Centre has seen some recent editions.

Positively Women: Living With AIDS, a book edited by Sue O'Sullivan & Katie Thomson gives us personal accounts of what it is like to be a woman living with AIDS.

All the Ways Home, published in 1995 is a collection of short fiction on parenting and children in the lesbian and gay communities.

Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present, written by Neil Miller and published in 1995. It's brand new to our library and looks to be a good read.

History of Women For Children and the History of Women in Science for Young People, both written and illustrated by Vivian Sheldon Epstein.

Lesbomania: Humor, Commentary and New Evidence That We Are Everywhere, by Jorjet Harper isn't that new to our library but the last borrower wasn't as prompt at returning books as she could have been.

Breast Health Handbook, compiled by Caryn Franklin and Georgina Goodman and published in 1996 has everything you need to know about taking care of your breasts.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Janet Harris whose empowerment dolls have been accepted as part of an exhibit in Prince George this fall. Way to go Janet.

WHAT'S UP

September 8 **International Literacy Day**

September 10 12:15 **A Xena Lunch**. Bring your lunch and see and discuss Xena: Warrior Princess.

September 16 7:00 p.m. **The Annual General Meeting** of the Terrace Women's Resource Centre Society.

September 27 7:00 p.m. at the Carpenter's Hall. **Take Back the Night March & Rally**.

September 26/7 **4th Annual Child Care Conference**.

September 30 7:00 p.m. **Women and Criminal Law** with Holly Grueger.

October 18 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **Impact of Separation and Divorce on Children**. For further info call the Family Place 638-1863.

Yes, I would like to become/continue as a member. Enclosed is my \$10 membership fee for the Terrace Women's Resource Centre Society.

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____ Phone _____

Mail or drop off to:

Terrace Women's Resource Centre Society
4542 Park Avenue
Terrace, B.C. V8G 1V4



Anid

Empowerment
Dolls



Yduj

Life in Central America . . .

by Brie Birdsell

My name is Brie and I was born and raised in Terrace. Then four years ago we moved to Central America because my mom wanted to learn their ways of natural healing. At first I was against the idea of going because it meant leaving behind everything I knew as home. All my friends were here. My life was here. However, after living there a while, I saw that it actually was fun and interesting, and that I could learn a whole lot from living in another part of the world.

While we were in Central America, we lived in two places: Chirilagua, a village near the pacific coast in El Salvador and Esteli, a city in the mountainous area of northern Nicaragua. Chirilagua was a very old place. Its name, in an ancient aboriginal dialect, means 'place of three stars'. The people there were very friendly and they made us feel very welcome.

We didn't go to a language school to learn Spanish. We were taught by our neighbours simply living in the language. Lidia, who lived next door to us, helped us with that and much more; like making tortillas from scratch, toasting and grinding the coffee beans, making and trying all the different Central American dishes and finding which house sold what (there was no supermarket).

In Chirilagua we came to appreciate much more the things that here we usually take for granted; like the time the water pump for the region broke down and we were without running water for five weeks. At our house we had a big water reservoir, but our neighbours had to walk 2 km down the uneven rocky roads and carry jugs of water back on their heads. On a regular day we had to wait until 10:00 p.m. to get our water: we



lived up a hill and until everyone else turned off their taps we wouldn't get any water.

A question I'm often asked is 'Did you have electricity?' The answer is yes, but like with the water we were at the end of the line (we lived at the edge of the village), so it was very dim.

It was a good place to enter the Central American culture. My sister, Kara, and I went to the local schools in Chirilagua and in Esteli. That helped us to work constantly on our Spanish until we spoke almost exactly like the locals, accent and everything, and to meet people our age and make more friends. Like at most other schools down there, we had to wear a uniform to school. It wasn't that great looking, but it made the difference between rich and poor show itself less in the classrooms. It also solved the problem of deciding what to wear in the morning.

In Esteli, we went to a school run by an order of nuns from Spain. They were strict, but the education was excellent. The people there were more easy going. They took more time to enjoy life, always putting family, friends, housework (for the women) and field work (for the men) before deadlines. Because of the heat, there was always a 'siesta' (nap) in the early afternoon.

Since we drove there and back we got to see and experience many other things, too. We visited other parts of Canada, the States, Mexico, Guatemala and other countries in Central America, learning more about them. Now we're back home, and I'd just like to say that it was truly a wonderful experience, from which I learnt a lot.

Thank you mom for taking me!

Welcome home Brie. Brie and her mother will be at the Women's Centre's AGM on the 16; come out and say hi and welcome them home.

Xena!!

Everyone will remember Xena: Warrior Princess (of the action figure fame) from a past newsletter. Although television stations in Terrace do not carry Xena we have arranged a preview copy. So - Wednesday, September 10 we are having a special XENA LUNCH! It's a BYOBB (bring your own brown bag) event, be sure to bring something befitting. The action will start at 12:15.



The Volunteer 'Board'



Volunteers are something that make an organization thrive; they bring energy, enthusiasm and smiles. As much as we know all that we find some days we are so

busy keeping up with the day to day activities of the Centre that when a woman walks in to volunteer we haven't the time we should to discuss what she'd like to do. It's not a good way to encourage participation. So... we've decided to take a pro-active stance and are in the process of constructing a volunteer 'board'. It will be a section on our bulletin board, with things that need doing posted in a fashion that someone who wants to volunteer her time can see exactly what is needed to complete the task. A woman can walk in, see what subject interests her and we can go from there.

Now all we need is input. We need ideas, events - things you've always wanted to see at the Centre. We know everyone has ideas, it's time to put them into motion so that everyone benefits. Think about things you've always wanted to see at the Centre - films, speakers, workshops, chocolate cake, a flower garden, whatever - write them down with a bit of a job description and bring them in. We'll try and come up with a complete task list and pin it on our 'board'.

She's here

Or she will be soon. Sarah de Leeuw, our new staff person will be starting in mid September. I'll let Sarah introduce herself in the next Tamarack but I will say I was privileged to sit in on the interviews and have been describing Sarah as a combination of me (Carol), Karla, Char and Melissa. All in one young and energetic person! Watch out Terrace!



Our thanks to the hiring committee - they had quite the job. There was a huge number of quality applicants, it was a tough decision. We've always known what a great place it is to work, obviously the word is out.

They're there!



Kitimat Women's Centre - the Bread and Roses Women's Centre - also has new staff. I'm mentioning this because they think we are terrific. Terrific enough that they want to come and spend some time in our shoes. They're going to come and hang around for a week in September, we'll learn from each other. One hope of ours is that we'll come up with some coordination between centres - we have enough to do without inventing new wheels. I am certain that by the end of the week we will have solved all the problems in the Northwest. Well, maybe not all, but we'll have a good start.

Legal Workshops

Holly Grueger, a local attorney has generously agreed to facilitate two workshops for us this fall. Focussing on women and the law, one will cover criminal issues and the other, civil. Like all our workshops, both are free - the first is September 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Take Back the Night

DID YOU KNOW?

- 1 in 4 women in Canada will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime.
- 1 in 2 Canadian women will experience at least one incident of male violence.
- 1 in 3 girls will experience some form of unwanted sexual contact before age 18.
- 40% of women worry being home alone at nights.
- 60% of women worry about walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark.

Take Back The Night is a symbolic evening, intending to bring awareness to the violence issues women and girls face on a daily basis. It's one evening where men are pointedly asked to stay home -- to support us in mind, but not in body. It can be a time to get angry, to wonder why we need to gather together to feel safe to walk down the street at night. It can be a somber time, for the violence that has happened and for the knowledge of the violence that will happen. It can be a time of solidarity. A time to stand together. To Take Back The Night.

This year we are coordinating the Take Back The Night March and Rally. Going through material from past years we found most of the organizing work has already been done, it's been easy filling in the blanks. The coordinating committee has met a couple of times and the next meeting scheduled for the beginning of September should finalize everything. It is truly a community effort with many terrific women lending their help.

The evening will take the format of last year - meet at the Carpenter's Hall at 7:00 p.m. then march down Sparks to Lakelse Avenue, down Eby and back to the hall. Speakers at the hall will include Elizabeth Snyder and Kathy Wesley-

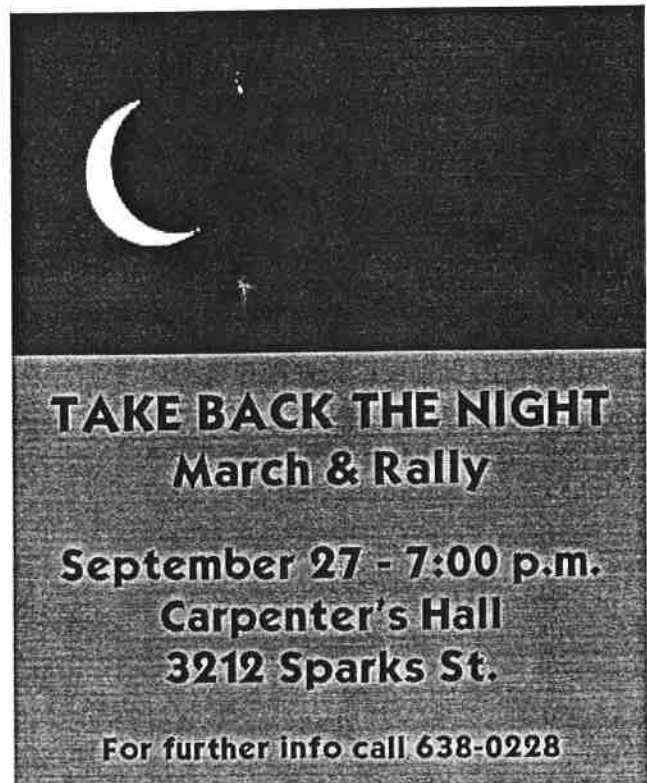
Scott. Entertainment by Just Us, Magpie and the duo of Greer Kaiser and Friend will follow. Frances Birdsell has agreed to close the evening.

CALL FOR POEMS, STORIES, ARTWORK

The Take Back The Night committee is requesting any poems, art work, stories or whatever you may wish to share in keeping with the evening, for display at the hall.

Traditionally Take Back The Night has been observed the third Friday in September. This year the majority of events in Canada will take place on Saturday the 27th. We are joining our sisters across the country to make our voices heard on that night.

Vancouver Rape Relief has set the number as 5000 as the number of women they are hoping to take to the streets in the Province this year. There is power in numbers - please, join us on our streets.



TAKE BACK THE NIGHT
March & Rally

September 27 - 7:00 p.m.
Carpenter's Hall
3212 Sparks St.

For further info call 638-0228

CENTRE HAPPENINGS

Tolerance in Schools

The rise of the righteous right was demonstrated in town this summer with a private rally held at the arena. Ironically it turned out they did us a favour. In considering our response to this latest attack on basic human rights we were made aware of just how much support we do have in the community. With that knowledge we felt positive about planning a counter rally. About a hundred people turned up at a 'pro tolerance' rally we held at the Health Unit Auditorium to hear speakers speak from their hearts, not their platforms. People attending our gathering were invited to 'speak' from their hearts as well and write a personal message on one of hundreds of origami doves that we would deliver to those less tolerant. It had been decided previously that we did not want to interrupt the congregation at the arena so we walked in silence, single file and left our messages outside the arena doors. We learned how truly 'open' those inside were to hearing other views when each and every one of our doves were swept into the garbage.



One of their organizers called us afterwards - 'did we have any trouble, any problem with any of their people?' 'Only the disappointment those attending our rally felt when they learned their words (doves) were tossed into the garbage.' "Oh well" were his words. So much for their willingness to listen.

Weird Science



The summer project is over - twenty girls participated in two week long day 'Weird Science Camps'. From bottle rockets to lawn heads to learning to love a lemon they had fun while they

learned girls *can* do science. Kenna Miskelly, our summer student did a terrific job, researching and devising a myriad of experiments in a variety of sciences. The response for this program was phenomenal - it's certain there is an interest! Kenna has compiled a booklet of all the experiments they did, it's available here at the Centre.

Colouring the Lines

Sonya Dhami has been busy, and as she heads into the last few weeks of the project things are coming together. The potluck dinner 'Dine Against Racism' was a very successful awareness event, the positive ring of such an evening was needed at this point in the project. All has not been coming up roses. Are we surprised corporate Terrace does not want to hear there may be racial discrimination in their establishments? Sonya is planning a week of education and awareness activities and is looking to the community to join in and participate.



Internet



The Internet is up and running and women are connecting to the world. Public access is from 10:00 a.m. to noon, Monday through Fridays - women can book surfing times in hour slots. We have the 'Web Activists' links bookmarked so it's easy to find sites on all sorts of interesting subjects. Internet training has been ongoing on a casual basis; quite a few women have learned the art of e-mail already. Now that summer is over we hope to be doing something a little more formal before long.