



Tamarack

Terrace Women's Resource Centre Newsletter

Early Spring 2004

You're Invited!

to Terrace Women's Resource Centre Society's
International Women's Day (IWD) Potluck, March 8
at KIVA (Recreation centre at Northwest Community College, - Trades Building).

Doors open from 5:30pm to 9pm.

Bring your own mug, plate, bowl, and cutlery.

If you can be generous with the food you bring, please do so. If you can't bring much, come anyway! The purpose of the potluck is to:

celebrate women.

If you'd like to bring some entertainment, contact Darlene or Brenda at the Women's Centre at 638-0228 or fax 638-1141 or email twrc@telus.net.

AMA House - A Transition House For Women Age 55 And Over.

Ama (Burmese for older sister) is a brand new 3130 square foot transition house located in South Surrey/White Rock where the number of seniors per capita is twice the national average. This transition house was opened by Atira Women's Resource Society in January 2004 and is the **first** transition house for older women in Canada. Women from any place can stay at Ama House; it provides shelter and support to women age 55 and over who are experiencing violence and abuse from an intimate partner or close family member.

Atira Women's Resource Society has worked tirelessly for several years to open a transition house to address the distinct needs of older women. The house provides a safe serene atmosphere for the residents with no children, only five residents at a time and stays up to six months permitted. Residents have access to emotional support, legal information, advocacy, resource referrals and accompaniments.

As with many women's services there are funding challenges at Ama House. To date there is no secure operating funding for staff and the House gets by with pieced together program money from a variety of sources, including grants from United Way and the Baxter International Foundation. To make ends meet volunteers are being trained to work at the House.

For more information please contact: Suzi Kram, Ama House Program Coordinator at 604.542.5992 or email ama@atira.bx.ca or Atira Women's Resource Society, 204-15210 North Bluff, White Rock BC V4B 3E6



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F Y I

Pro-choice Campaign www.clarification.ca

This site is a partnership between Lefty Lucy Communications and Pro-Choice Action Network.

It started in the classifieds.

For a few weeks we'd been noticing an ad running in Halifax's The Coast which read:

"Are you hurting after an abortion? Have you since developed depression, infertility, breast cancer, or any other complications? Call Denise 1-888-777-5503"

Sensing something dodgy (read: anti-choice) in the works, we ran that number through google and found TogetherForLife.ca. Among other things, the site contained a section requesting signed and notarized affidavits from post-abortive women detailing negative experiences they'd had during or after the termination of their pregnancies.

Well didn't *that* just set off some alarm bells? And if the alarm bells weren't ringing loudly enough already, on the affidavits themselves was the sentence *"The affidavits will be used as evidence in legal efforts to end legalized abortion in Canada."*

That doesn't sit so well with us, so we decided to do something about it. That's where you come in. What we aim to do is collect affidavits from post-abortive women who *don't* regret what they did, who *don't* feel their doctors lied to them, and who *don't* now want to deny future women the rights they enjoyed themselves. If you've not had an abortion, but still want to help out, you can circulate our posters and stickers. Thanks for reading! Feedback is always encouraged.

Oh. If you're wondering why we called the site "clarification", it's because we're battling bamboozlement ... and because it's a bilingual word.

Women Unite Against War and Violence (summarized by Brenda Ramsay, TWRC)

In March 2003, 100 participants from 36 countries and territories gathered in New Delhi, India for the 14th international meeting of the World March of Women (WMW). They sang songs of peace; reiterated their commitment to freedom and democracy; and distributed copies of their declaration against the US government's war in Iraq to media, police, and passers-by. Delegates met to share thoughts about the current world situation and prepare their next global actions to take place in 2005. Priorities for 2005 include building peace in zones of armed conflict. The working group on violence against women has selected sex trafficking "because it is an extreme manifestation of women's unequal status, representing the intersection of poverty and sexist violence in the context of neoliberal globalization". Actions leading up to 2005 include drawing up a global women's charter for humanity, organizing relay marches, and creating an immense quilt. The next international meeting of the WMW will be in 2004 in Rwanda or Peru where the WMW will adopt their Global Women's charter for Humanity.

For more info, contact them via email: marche2000@ffq.qc.ca



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UN Commission on Human Rights (UN CHR) (Summarized by Brenda Ramsay TWRC) *from an article written by Suki Beavers, Senior advisor, Human Rights, Action Canada for Population and Development; A Beginner's Guide to the UN Commission on Human Rights.*

According to Suki Beavers, when considering the key international arenas critical to work on women's rights, one important venue often overlooked is the UN Commission on Human Rights (UN CHR). Often women's Non governmental Organizations (NGOs) have tended to focus on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and on world conferences. In recent years, some NGOs have begun focussing on the treaty bodies, producing or contributing to country shadow reports submitted to the various treaty monitoring bodies. However this important work needs to be complemented by advocating to the UN CHR.

Suki Beavers went on to explain that the Human Rights Commission is the central forum for the international community's approach to the protection and promotion of all human rights. The 53 annually elected member and non-member states meet yearly for six weeks in Geneva, Switzerland. Although both groups fully participate in addressing the assemblage, and join informal negotiations of the text(s) of resolutions, the non-elected member states do not vote. The UN CHR sets the standard for the interpretation of, and actions in support of, international human rights. Canada was a member in 2003, but in 2004 will be an observer. The UN CHR is driven by resolutions related to human rights issues in either country specific resolutions such as Sierra Leone or Myanmar, or by thematic resolutions, both civil and political: and economic, social, and cultural rights. Usually decisions are made by consensus however, on contentious issues, votes are called.

Through the work of Action Canada for Population and Development's (ACPD) *Human Rights Project*, the ACPD has participated in the annual meetings of the UN CHR, working primarily on the resolutions on *the right to health, violence against women, human rights and sexual orientation, and the rights of the child*. According to Ms. Beavers, there are many other resolutions at UN CHR that also require a gender analysis and would benefit greatly from the advocacy of women's groups from Canada and around the world.

If you would like to know more about the ACPD's work please visit www.acpd.ca and for information on UN CHR please visit www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/2/chr.htm

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Every Women. Every Vote.

Do you remember that slogan from 1997? It was TWRC's slogan for that election year. The next few issues of Tamarack will try to follow the format of the 1997 issue that brought you summaries of each party's position on questions you submitted to the Centre. We'd like you to submit your questions on issues that concern you today, or just have you curious, by email to the Women's Centre at womyn@telus.net or fax to 638-1141. Feel free to send them anonymously.

Examples of questions from 1997 are:

- **If elected, what would your top three spending priorities be?**
- **If elected, will your party commit to the implementation (within one term) of the recommendations made to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples? Explain.**
- **Do you plan to implement a national childcare plan? Further, will you make a commitment to quality, affordable and accessible childcare? How will you do this?**

Note that many of the questions asked back in 1997 are still relevant today. Cuts to Women's Centres, access to funding for sexual assault crisis centres and transition houses, the ever popular gender wage gap, human rights, health care, and all of the other issues that affect our daily lives are all there, and still here!

YOUR SILENCE WILL NOT EMPOWER YOU

"When we talk about equal pay for equal work, women in the workplace are beginning to catch up. If we keep going at this current rate, we will achieve full equality in about **475 years**. I don't know about you, but I can't wait that long."

Lya Sorano, US Women's rights activist. Although women are now the majority of the world's labour force, in no country is the average female wage more than 71 per cent of the average male wage.