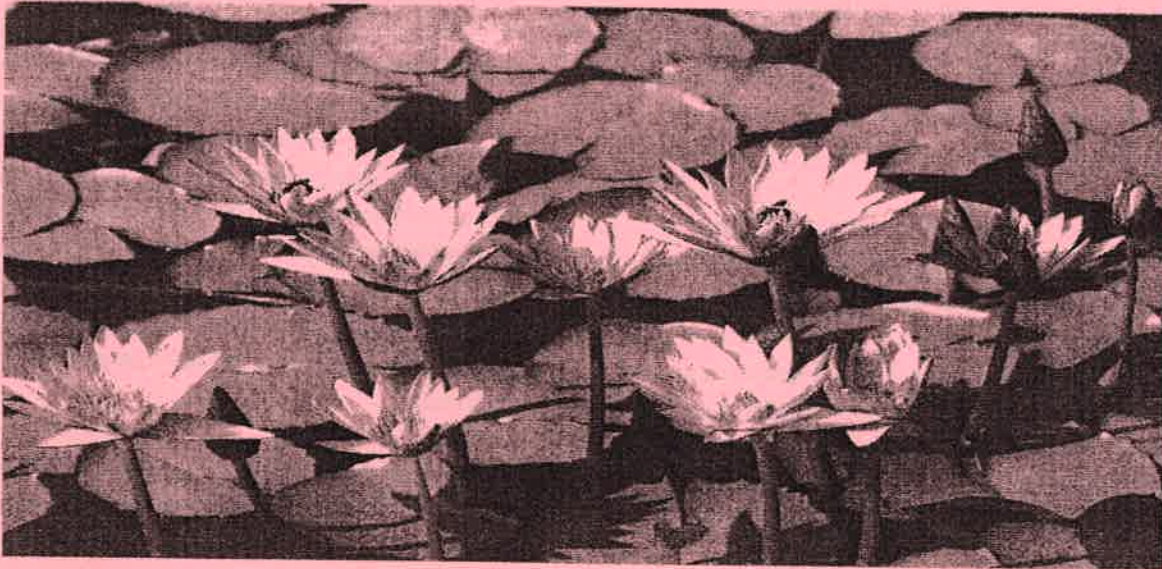


THE TAMARACK



SUMMER/ FALL 2007

Hello!

Cheri Reidy here. I've been privileged to serve as coordinator of a Status of Women Project called **Community Action for Women's Safety** over the summer. The goal of the project was to identify and raise awareness about women's safety concerns by involving and mobilizing women directly affected by this issue— particularly multicultural, aboriginal, elderly and disabled women.

After being away for a whole year, I see the impact of the economic downturn on our town. Local businesses have suffered loss and there are several empty storefronts. There are more individuals and families living in poverty or homeless here now too. Poverty can be a powerful factor behind violence but by no means the only one. Statistics show that some groups are at greater risk of violence than others, which led to the focus for this project.

Over the summer, the project invited women to explore, define and develop strategies to address safety issues through a series of public information sessions, one to one interviews, and focus groups.

TERRACE WOMEN'S CENTER UPDATE

SUMMER 2007

WHAT'S HAPPENED IN THE COMMUNITY:

- * Information displays on elder abuse went out in the community for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day June 15th. Anne Huston of Adult Mental Health did an excellent job of outlining the spectrum of elder abuse and related resources. All physicians and churches received this information as well as the Kermode Friendship Center and the Volunteer Bureau / Seniors Information center.
- * Cheri gathered stories from women of immigrant and aboriginal background as well as those of women with disabilities and the elderly in one on one confidentiality. These stories may represent a script for a play at a future date. There is a wonderful street theater company from Prince George called Street Spirits which offers "train the trainer" in forum style theater, an empowering and dynamic method to explore social issues. Perhaps we can do our own here.
- * August—September display at the Terrace Public Library on Stop Violence against Women
- * Amanda Sparkes and Cheri Reidy spoke at the Kermode Friendship Center about online safety for young women.

LEGAL-EASE

- * With funding from the Law Society of BC, the Women's Centre organized a series of workshops addressing legal issues from family law to landlord tenancy to bankruptcy. We had special success in offering workshops in outlying communities including Gitau, Kitsumkalum and New Aiyansh.
- * As well as the specific information facilitators shared and the resources distributed throughout the region, the strength of the project was in connecting various community service providers and other women with the people working in agencies that help people with legal issues.

WOMEN AND SAFETY

- Among aboriginal women, the rate of homicide is eight times greater. Aboriginal women are three times more likely to experience spousal violence than non-aboriginal women.
- Immigrant and visible minority women who experience abuse from their partners are less likely to report the abuse to police, and they are unlikely to use available support services.
- According to criminal offence reports for Statistics Canada, older women were just as likely to be victimized by their spouses (36% of the abusers) as they were by their adult children (37% of the abusers).
- 39% of married women with a disability have been physically or sexually assaulted by their partners.

*(Stats from the Ministry of Community Services
Community Guide for Preventing Violence Against
Women, p.7)*

TIME FOR CHANGE

As many of you know, the old and loved Women's Centre at 4542 Park Avenue is no longer our home. We are currently housed at The Family Place right across the street.



The board and staff of the Terrace Women's Resource Centre Society are grateful to the City of Terrace for its many years of support, but without core funding, the building is no longer viable for the society to maintain.

TERRACE WOMEN'S CENTER UPDATE

SUMMER 2007

THE KEY TO GOOD HEALTH THAT NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT

"If you think cigarette smoking is bad for your health, try a dead-end job." Public health research now tells us that lower socio-economic status may be more harmful to health than smoking or eating junk food.

It turns out that determining mortality and health in a society is *less* the overall wealth of that society and *more* how *evenly* wealth is distributed.

There are now those unfortunate neighbors of ours here in Terrace who are eating their daily food out of garbage cans while we sip our coffee and look on. This means we all have a problem.

More than once, a young mother has taken her own life, leaving behind young dependent children. They tried so hard to make ends meet, but there was never enough, never an end to the exhaustion of surviving.

For many years I was a foster parent with the Ministry for Children and Families. The monies I received for looking after someone else's child far exceeded any government support to the birth family of the child. The fallout from these destroyed families is costing us dearly as many former foster kids end up living on the streets.

How can this be different? How do we as women promote conditions that are favorable to all in our societies? How do we empower ourselves and others to raise the one voice we are given in opposition to policies that divide us into the haves and have-nots?

We do have resources among us to create a new picture: talent, intelligence, ideas and material wealth.

As always, working together and organizing is our hope.

As always, working together and organizing is our strength.

Cheri Reidy

THE GIRL WALKS

Silent shadow
throughout the
night
Imagine her
thin coat clutching
stiff frame,
the tap tap of heels
ricochet off limbs
taut with blood,
echo out of eyes
throb
of thick veins
her hidden circuitry.
Imagine her pilgrimage
pavement stretched
beyond 40 nights
black cold
intersecting bars
held up
held in.
A streetlight, her stage
outreaching branches
their black fingers
her audience.
Imagine you look out the window
You think of crows
scavenging in the
alleyway
a dead end
their sharp blackness
eyes unflinching
scrutiny
You catch your breath
tighten lips,
better to think of your own children
with dreams carried
on feather pillows,
better to pull the shade
turn out the light.

Joan Conway, 2007

TERRACE WOMEN'S CENTER UPDATE

SUMMER 2007

YOUNG WOMEN AND INTERNET DATING SAFETY TIPS

- Never reveal your last name or address to a stranger. Try to use a cell phone with a private number. If you call a stranger at home, use a caller ID blocking to maintain your privacy.
- Don't use your primary email address for online dating correspondence— create an anonymous account such as hotmail.
- If you decide to meet that special someone, always meet in a public place— never meet in a private place for your first date! Let someone know where you are going.
- Be honest about who you are and what you are seeking— do not reveal more than you normally would in a face to face first meeting. If your online contact pressures you to reveal more than you are comfortable with, re-evaluate his/her intentions.

BC RURAL WOMEN'S NETWORK

This is both a website and newsletter communication network to share information with rural women about ongoing advocacy for change based on rural women's recommendations.

The idea is to give an arena for rural women's voices around BC (that's us!) to influence change in government and industry policy on issues relating to rural women.

The website and newsletter also aim to facilitate women sharing resources and information with one another, as well as continuing to create opportunities for women to bring forward their experiences and suggestions for improving public policy.

Explore and express yourself at :
bcruralwomen.ca.

TWO ELDER WOMEN SHOW US THE WAY TO HEALTHY LIVING

ART IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL

Nass Valley artist **Dawn Germyn** says: "I have practiced my art gift since childhood. It is a source of meditation and spirituality, one which I have learned to protect in terms of time and space. Art is also physically demanding and it is essential for me to eat healthy foods and exercise regularly, especially walking. As a naturalist, I have found my niche in the Nass Valley. My studio on the Tseax River is also a small gallery surrounded by trees and birds."

Contact Dawn by email for workshops and retreats.
dawnart@telus.net



WHY NOT WOOF?

Most of us recognize local colour in the person of **Tess Tessier** with her signature feather festooned hat and art-rageous purple outfits. More than just a feast for the eyes, Tess is also a WOOFER which has nothing to do with her expert communication with canines.

She would like to pass on the word that *Willing Work on Organic Farms* is a great opportunity for seniors to remain healthy well into their later years.

To be a WOOFER is to visit an organic farm and offer four hours a day of your labor in exchange for room and board. The rest of the time you are free to explore and relax. Mealtimes are meaningful when you have helped to grow the food on your plate! New friends across the table is another bonus. Tess is currently preparing to take a cross country trip in her purple RV to promote WOOFing awareness. From her experiences, she will write another book.

At this point, a green sponsor to fund her fuel costs is all she needs to get on the road!