

NEWS FROM THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PROJECT

by Ruth Beck

Last month, I told you about the "Employers' Tool Kit" I'm developing with simple practices employers can use to promote equity. I also mentioned the EE project's communication strategy and Maggie Shirley's and my submission to the Ministry of Women's Equality. Now I'd like to tell you about a few other activities the employment equity project is pursuing.

I am working with some regional training and education institutions to conduct a "mini needs assessment" for a potential Institute for Leadership, Equity and Diversity. Right now the "institute" is just a concept that could mean anything that supports best practices for human resource development. My vision is for the West Kootenays to develop an economic advantage by treating workers well and by understanding how to benefit from a diverse workforce. I suspect that there are business efficiencies to be achieved by recruiting and retaining workers equitably, consistently and innovatively. Step one is a questionnaire to poll people about their needs for human resource management training and support services (and their ability to pay for such services). If you would like to receive a questionnaire or have a suggestion of where we should send them, please leave a message for me, Ruth Beck, at 352-3177.

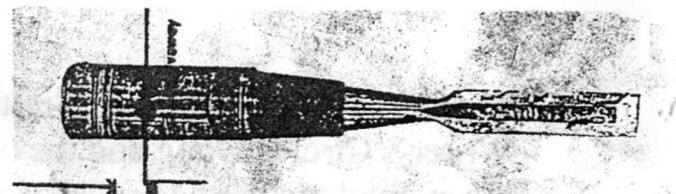
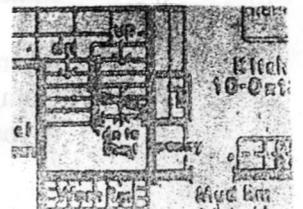
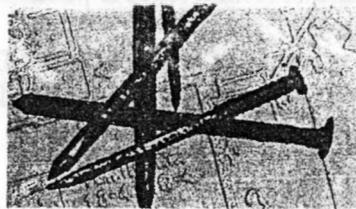
Another area that continues to require support is the advancement of women in the construction trades. This project has already achieved success in attaining a one-year, paid Equity Coordinator for the Keenleyside Powerplant Project. The project is up for its 6 month review shortly. Early indications are that there has been almost no increase in the number of women working on-site and that the work of the Equity Coordinator is being impeded in some ways. On the topic of power plants, we received a post consultation report on the Brilliant Expansion Project that makes no mention of equity despite verbal and written submissions by WKWA. This

stuff is happening despite the fact that there is support for equity in the Castlegar Office of the Columbia Power Corporation.

Moving over to Kootenay Lake, we've had disappointing reports from a couple of women about the hiring and retention of women on the Osprey 2 ferry project. This, combined with the power projects' situation, has pointed to the need for a revamped lobby effort to get government to implement some kind of contract compliance measures related to equity. I am working with Marcia Braundy on a strategy and we'll let you know when we need your support. On a positive note, the new President of Selkirk College, Marilyn Luscombe, is no stranger to issues facing women in trades. She was instrumental in helping North Atlantic College put together a WITT course. Right on!!

Before I sign off, I'd like to encourage women to come out and meet Marilyn Luscombe and Helen Sebelius. It's an important contact for these two women who are in key leadership roles in this region. Finally, I'd like to openly thank my Advisory Committee members, who continue to amaze me with their insights and fresh perspectives on equity.

In upcoming newsletters I'll tell you about the remaining activity areas for the EE project and I'll profile my Advisory Committee.



FUNDRAISING NEWS FROM MARY'S DESK

by Mary Crowe

Did you know that there are over 77,000 registered charities in Canada? And when non-profit organizations are included, the number jumps to 175,000? A website for Canadian charities at CharityVillage.com, reports 250,000 visitors each business day! Their core audience of repeat visitors exceeds 60,000 per month. The Big Database, more of which later, provides access to 5,000 funding sources listing over \$10 billion in granting opportunities.

This brief introduction will put the task of carving our own unique WKWA niche in the funding pie into a little perspective for our members. Fundraising is becoming an increasingly diverse, professional and business-like activity, with tools such as newsletters and websites helping agencies attempt to secure a toehold on the climb to fundraising success and stability. It is a process of thorough research, application and follow-through that would keep a fulltime fundraiser hard pressed to keep up!

As WKWA's fundraiser, I currently have a 6 hour a week for 6 weeks contract in order to net some significant dollars to establish a fundraising program, secure the Volunteer Coordinator post and obtain some building/mortgage costs ... Rome wasn't built in a day so we'll do the best we can.

During my brief post in May/June I designed a postal campaign to local businesses and the media to seek a sponsor for an Internet fundraising database. Before I had even got it off the ground, we had an immediate response from the Nelson & District Credit Union. With a combined generous donation of \$200 and an interest-free loan of \$1400 from NDCU – thank you! thank you! - WKWA purchased a one year subscription to the fundraising resource the Big Database.

This is a speedy, easy-to-use database which really maximizes fundraising work – for the month of August alone there were about 7 new foundations listed, all of them based in B.C! One of these is the Foundation for Charitable Excellence, whose mandate includes 'enhancing organisations' capacities' - to whom I sent a proposal for a 6-month fundraising project to secure our funding base. I have approached a half dozen other foundations with a similar package.

My next round of requests is for Thea's post beyond February next, when the B.C. Gaming Commission monies are finished. And so it goes. Stay tuned for results And if you can volunteer some time to help fundraise, welcome in!

\$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$ \$??\$

Thanks to Doug "Normal" Smith, organizer and promoter of Wild Rising - A Song Writer's Circle. Doug and the other musicians and technicians who participated in the event donated the proceeds of the evening to the Women's Centre.

WKWA EVENTS

Leaders in Post Secondary Education – an evening event to welcome the new President of Selkirk College, Marilyn Luscombe and to meet Helen Sebelius, Executive Director of Kootenay School of Arts. October 11 at 7:00 p.m., Women's Centre

Community Consultation – an opportunity for women to have input into the design of the new health campus. October 24 or 25 at the Women's Centre. Call Maggie at the Centre ASAP to determine which of the two days and time of day works for you.

All of Who we Are – Internalized Oppression and Internalized Domination – a presentation by and discussion with Janet Sawyer, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. at the Women's Centre

Women's Sexual Health – presented by Holly Jack and Christine Johnston of ANKORS, November 28 at 7:00 p.m. at the Women's Centre. First in a series of health-related workshops.

OTHER EVENTS

Heather Bishop LIVE – at the Capitol Theatre, October 12, 8 p.m. Tickets \$15. Call 352-6363 to reserve.

Art Show Openings – October 13 - see *Ms. Ellaneous* for details

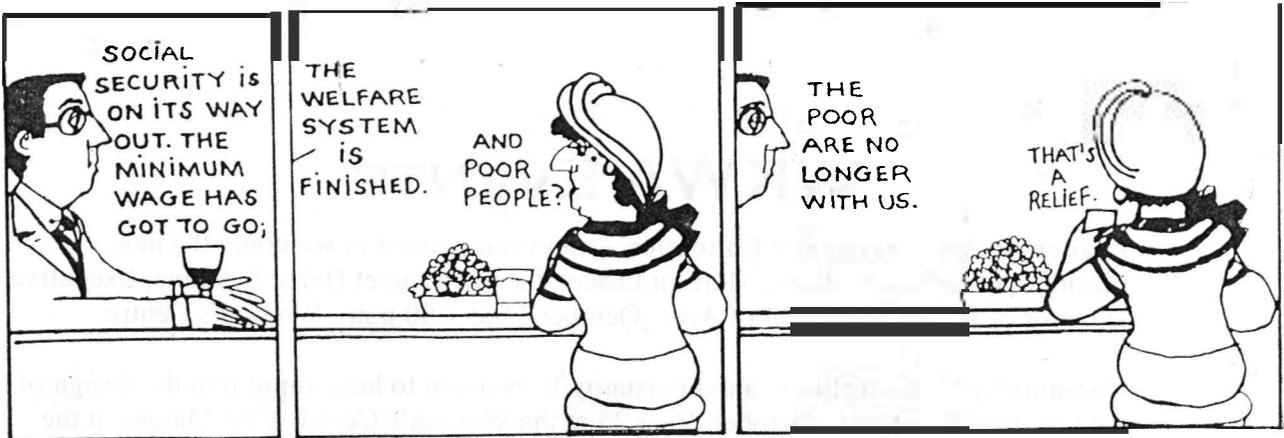
Beyond the Gap – Women's Economic Equality Conference – co-hosted by Premier Ujjal Dosanjh and Minister of Women's Equality Joan Smallwood. October 13 and 14, Vancouver B.C. Call Karin Ivand at (250) 652-1210

Wise Woman Way of Birth – 5 day Intensive Skills Workshop for doulas, student midwives, birth assistants and childbirth educators. By Gloria Lemay. October 16 – 20 at the Chamber of Commerce, Nelson. Cost \$250. Call Penny Ruvinsky at 352-2859.

World March 2000 to eliminate poverty and violence against women, 12:15 October 17, 2000 at the Advocacy Centre. The "march" will be a stand-in so come help us line Front Street with people. Also, tea towels and sheets painted with lists of our demands will be strung on a clothesline across the Government Building Square (or as an open house in the Advocacy Centre from 1- 3 if raining). Organized by Nelson agencies, including us.

Public talk on Child Birth - October 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce, Nelson. By donation.

Planning for Safer Communities Workshop – with Ali Grant of BC Coalition for Safer Communities and Terri Dame, Cowichan Valley Safer Futures Project. Sponsored by the West Kootenay Women's Council, with the Advocacy Centre- Safe Haven Program. November 22. Call the Advocacy Centre to register your interest.



Still tired of the same old attitudes?

☆☆RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP in the WKWA!☆☆

- ☆Continue to support the longest-running rural women's centre in Canada☆
- ☆Enjoy one of the finest feminist libraries, including books from the private collections of Kathleen Shannon and Suzanne MacKenzie☆
- ☆Be informed of news of women locally, provincially, nationally and world-wide☆
- ☆Be an active part of a local organization working to improve women's economic, social and political status – working to change our world!☆

Yes! I want to continue to support the valuable work of the West Kootenay Women's Association.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail (optional): _____

- Enclosed please find cash or cheque made payable to the West Kootenay Women's Association – sliding scale of \$15-30.
- I want to do a work-exchange. I will come by or call you to arrange it.

The Association continues to require both financial and volunteer support above and beyond our membership drive. If you are able or willing to provide either, it would help us continue our work for women in the community.

- I would like to volunteer for committee work
- I would like to "do" something, e.g. help in the yard, fundraising or drop-in
- I've added a lump sum donation of \$_____ on top of my membership fee
- I've enclosed _____ pre-dated monthly cheques for \$_____ each

Please return to:

The West Kootenay Women's Association - 420 Mill Street, Nelson V1L 4R9

thank you thank you

One in Nine

by *Thea Trussler*

It is still one of the leading causes of death amongst women over the age of 50 and still is receiving less funding for research than for prostate cancer. Now the "findings" that mammograms are no longer recommended biannually if regular monthly "manual" examinations are completed is in the news.

Breast cancer is still being pushed to the back of the priorities in research. The reality that most women don't do manual examinations for many reasons, such as being too busy, shy about the process, forgetful or simply that they do not know how to, leaves us in a precarious place of mortal danger. It takes at least 8 to 10 minutes to thoroughly examine our breasts and how many of us know the differences between normal lumps and swelling at different times of the month?

The following are guidelines to self-examination:

- test the same time every month, 7 – 10 days after the start of your period if menstruating. If not, then a fixed time each month.
- examining your breasts can be done with different methods. One way is to pretend your breast is a clock and using the flat pads of your fingers, press gently but firmly in small overlapping circles, starting at 12 o'clock, right below the collarbone and moving to the nipple.
- another method is to examine your breast in concentric circles, starting at the nipple.
- carefully examine the area between your breast and your armpit
- examine every part of your breast and repeat with your other breast

- check in the mirror to check size, shape and contour for changes, puckering, dimpling or changes in skin texture, colour or rashes
- to check while in the shower, raise one arm and use your right hand to examine your left breast and vice versa
- you must also check while lying down by placing a pillow or towel under your shoulder of the side you are checking and to check your left breast with your right hand and vice versa

Shower instructional cards are available at the Nelson & District Women's Centre and additional information on breast cancer is also available free for the taking. October is breast cancer awareness month. Be aware and take care... if may save your life! July of this year, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. She has since also been diagnosed with lymphatic cancer. Please find a place in your busy days to pray for her and all of our mothers, grandmothers, sisters, nieces, lovers and friends who have been affected by this disease. Remember the statistics of 1:9... someone you know has already been touched by breast cancer.



A Community Building Opportunity, *Reflection to Action*

by Cathy Pulkinghorn

On my daughter Maia's first day of grade four last week, her teacher Marcelle Edwards said to me her main focus for our first class parent meeting and the grade four curriculum would be that "it takes a whole community to raise a child". I agree.

After seeing the results of the stresses for Maia of being raised by one parent, I need to state clearly how necessary it is that a child have other adults be willing to make commitments to growing a child.

I am and have been acknowledged as being a good parent. And there is only one of me, which means that Maia has been exposed to primarily one perspective, and only one person to count on. Those of you who know me are aware of the fact that I am a strongly principled, assertive individual. I do spend thousands of hours per year organizing and enabling Maia to have access to my family, my ex-partner, extra-curricular programming, her buddies, and friends of the family, as well as exposure to and participation in a diverse array of community activities and travel. The one thing I cannot provide for Maia is another human being coming forth to share her/his self with her. That must come from the individual. And in our experience the number of those adults who value sharing their beautiful and real selves with children who are not their own offspring is minimal at best. I think it is not currently much of a social value.

I believe it is vital to humans to have a broadened perspective and an open mind. I believe this primarily comes from exposure to diversity and differing perspectives. There is a limit to how much I can do, arrange and offer to Maia. She (we all do) needs others in the world to come forward as guides for her life. She needs to have other women to show her how it is to be a woman in a different way

than her mom, she needs other adults to teach her skills and facts about life in the world. She needs men to show her what being a man is, in the complete absence of her father. She needs to be mentored by caring, committed individuals who recognize she is an only child being raised by an only parent. She needs to know what life is like in other families, to have a family experience beyond the size of two. She needs to know that there are other adults in the world who do, can, and will commit to taking responsibility to her in the world, so that being grounded doesn't only relate to one anchor, her only parent.

I wonder if some readers are asking what is the big deal? Maia only has one less parent than a two-parent family. As we have experienced, it makes a lot of difference. There is such an array of political and social positioning in our society around what I see as resulting in isolating those individuals who are not in the status quo, even when the status quo has changed. (ie. there are a huge number of children currently being raised in non-traditional family systems yet I'm not sure that the attitudes towards integrating the concept is entirely comfortable for many) The result is isolation.

Hereby my plea for you to consider what you think about the children around you, no matter what their circumstance. Is there something you can offer to a child you do or do not know? Will you? Our children are our future, no matter from whose body they are born.

If you particularly want to contact me and Maia about assisting us in the way of offering her time and a dependable positive mentoring relationship, please leave me a note at the Nelson and District Women's Centre. We would be extremely glad to have an opportunity to broaden her base in the world.