

WEST KOOTENAY

# Women's

ASSOCIATION

W  
&

OCTOBER 2001

*To remember is to end all war*



## *Bread and Roses*

As we go marching, marching  
In the beauty of the day  
A million darkened kitchens  
A thousand mill lofts gray  
Are touched with all the radiance  
That a sudden sun discloses  
For the people hear us singing  
Bread and roses, bread and roses.

As we go marching, marching  
We battle too for men  
For they are women's comrades  
And we stand as one with them  
Our lives shall not be sweated  
From birth until life closes  
Hearts starve as well as bodies  
Give us bread but give us roses.

Our lives shall not be sweated, From birth until life closes  
Hearts starve as well as bodies, Bread and roses, bread and roses.

As we go marching, marching  
Unnumbered women dead  
Go crying through our singing  
Their ancient call for bread  
Small art and love and beauty  
Their drudging spirits knew  
Yes it is bread we fight for  
But we fight for roses too.

As we come marching, marching  
We bring the greater days  
The rising of the women  
Means a better human race  
No more the drudge and idler  
Ten that toil while one reposes  
But a sharing of life's glories  
Bread and roses, bread and roses



## Administrative Coordinator's Report – Cheryl Dowden

It's been roughly 6 weeks since I was hired as the new Admin Coordinator for the Nelson & District Women's Centre. I feel really excited about being a part of one of the oldest women centres in Canada and am proud to be a representative of an organization with such a rich 30 year herstory! As one WKWA member noted at the recent AGM, feminism is a lifetime membership and I guess my own membership dates back to about 15 years ago when I first became connected with a group of strong women who were fighting for gender equality and an end to violence against women. Immediately, I realized, as Gandhi once stated, that I too could work to be the change that I wanted to see in the world. From that time, I began to volunteer at the local Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, became a social activist, worked with women in prison and eventually as a counselor at a shelter for Homeless Women and Children. Over the years, my interests and experiences have reflected my passion for education, youth work and community and international development, but one thing has remained constant, I am a feminist and I do not fear the "F" word as it has sometimes been referred to in the backlash that we have all faced. Today, I am still as excited and passionate about being a part of the struggle for change.

Born of fire! That surely sums up my experience of the last few weeks. I am certainly coming on board at a very intense and important time in the herstory of the Women's Centre. Since I started work here, we have experienced the shock of the Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks in the US and the current US-led retaliation. We have felt the effects of the new "tightening of security" which appears also to be limiting our right to free speech which was made evidently clear in the backlash response to Sunera Thobani's condemnation of US foreign policy as "bloody" in her recent speech at a UBC Women's conference. We have also heard the BC Liberal Govt.'s announcement of the Core Review and the 40% cutbacks promised by Premier Campbell over the next 3 years. All of these events occurred around the same time as the women centre's annual Take Back The Night March which boasted an excellent turn-out, the AGM and the forming of a brand new Coordinating Collective made up of a wonderful, motivated, passionate and diverse group of women! So, although we may be facing a rough road ahead of us, I feel confident that we can remain positive, motivated and focused on the issues that are of a priority for women in this community. One piece of exciting news is that the members of the CC have decided to make it a fundraising priority to try and find a way of paying off the mortgage on the house so that in the event of any drastic funding cuts, there will still be a physical space for women to come, meet, share, organize, laugh, cry and plan the revolution just like they have for the last 30 years!

## Volunteer Coordinator Report – Thea Trussler

Whew, the past two months were beyond busy for the Women's Centre and for me, personally. Maggie left the week of September 11 and Cheryl Dowden, new administrative coordinator, was being trained during the stressful times of that week. The atmosphere of anxiety, fear and protest to the events of September 11, 2001, was palpable. Women had a full range of reactions to the events and we walked the fine line of keeping balance and safety inside the centre and out at the Take Back the night event. Cheryl has been a welcome addition to our staff and she has an amazing grasp of world issues thanks to her experiences abroad. I invite the membership to come and meet our newest addition!

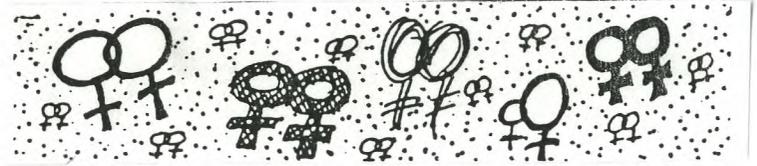
We also held our annual AGM with about 25 in attendance. Our new Coordinating Collective is a dynamic crew of dedicated and enthusiastic women. The broad base of skills and experience will help us through the next few months. We are facing governmental budget cuts. All the women's centres in BC are meeting October 22 and 23 in a strategy session about cuts. I presented our concerns about the budget cuts on October 16 in Trail to the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Programs. The current challenges have opened women's hearts to become more active in the WKWA. Perfect timing for that enthusiasm as the next ten-week volunteer training course will begin November 1 and will be a 2 hour per week commitment.

I would like to thank you all for your concern after my injury.....my broken bum is doin' much better thanks....who'da think a broken tailbone could be so debilitating!! Also for your condolences for the loss of Luna in my life.....by big white companion is looking out for me from beyond the earth realm now. Thank you for your kindness. For those who knew Teresa Shanks, tragically killed in a hit and run in January of 2000 in Winlaw the trial will begin October 22 and may run for as long as two weeks. Teresa was a volunteer here at the centre and a long term friend of mine. Her trial is high profile and there has been a media ban on the trial so those wanting to attend or receive information regarding the process please contact the centre.



## Blessings to You, Sunera

(A personal response to Ms. Thobani)



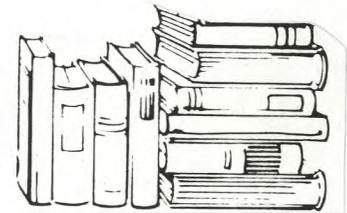
In 1997, I finished a general degree in Women's Studies/Native Studies at the University of Victoria. I felt both honoured and inspired when I had the opportunity that year to hear Sunera Thobani's lecture on "Globalization and the Effects on Women". I realize what was important to me then, is even more significant now and that is the pure and simple need to hear women leaders actively speaking out on feminist issues on a national level. Women leaders who speak out voice my own frustration at male political dominance the inevitable violence that hurts all of us.

I feel extremely empowered by Thobani's courage and ability to speak the truth about war following the September 11 terrorist attacks. Therefore, when I read in the major media tabloids about attempts to silence her, when I see her image manipulated on so many negative levels and when I hear the overall anti-woman reaction to her speech, I take it personally. I take it personally when I read about women studies being questioned as a legitimate academic field.

I am naïve at times, perhaps idealistic about the progressiveness of the world, but never before have I felt such a strong need for truth, restoration of balance and understanding. As I search for work in Nelson, my women's studies degree proudly heading the education section of my resume, I feel the fearless responsibility of a feminist crusader pulse through my veins.

Since Theban's speech I feel like a completely subversive rebel by simply having studied feminism. Look out patriarchy! On other days, I deal with the very real challenge of applying an academic feminist background to the world of employment and my ability to financially support my son, myself and my cat. So thank you, Sunera, for speaking out, thank you mothers of feminist academia and thank you women who try to support themselves through feminist work. This is our time to sing, dance and do our work.

Shannon Lanaway



### Library Report: October 2001 by K. Linda Kivi

The good news is that I spent our credit from Oliver's this afternoon. How exciting it is to buy new books! This is what I got for us:

- ***BELLY FRUIT*** by Lynette D'anna is a novel with erotic elements that takes place in Vancouver, New York and small-town Manitoba. It claims to "illuminate the strange fascination that self-destruction can hold." Sounds good to me.
- Starhawk's latest, ***THE TWELVE WILD SWANS: A JOURNEY TO THE REALM OF MAGIC, HEALING, AND ACTION***. If you know of Starhawk's work, we need say no more. If you don't, this is a good place to enter the world of Wicca and political action.
- ***CHIWD***, the story of a native woman from the Chilcotin who lives in the bush in the old ways of the people. These stories are collected by Sage Birchwater. I've read it and enjoyed this glimpse into a fast disappearing reality.
- ***HALF KNOWN LIVES*** by Joan Givner is a novel with the twisted plot of a bunch of women kidnapping a right-to-life professor and impregnating him. Must be read to be imagined. Satire.
- ***ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS: UTOPIAN EXPERIMENTS IN BC*** by Justine Brown is a book I've wanted to read for a while. Included is a chapter on the Doukhobors.
- ***BLOOD, BREAD AND ROSES: HOW MENSTRUATION CREATED THE WORLD*** is another book I can barely wait to open. If it's written Judy Graham's other works, it'll be a fascinating journey between imagination and history.
- Lastly, I got us a ***YOGA FOR BEGINNERS*** video which includes a guided relaxation, a centering exercise, and a workout.

The book sale that was planned for October has been postponed until spring. In the meantime, we continue to gather good books.



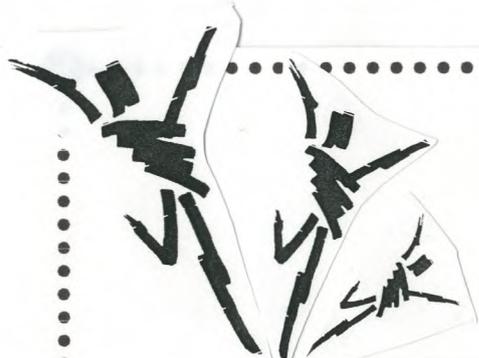
## Women In Trades and Technology (WITT)

This 20-week program starts on January 2<sup>nd</sup> and runs until May 22, 2002, at the Silver King Campus of Selkirk College in Nelson. Total tuition and fees are \$446.20. There is an additional estimated cost of \$140 for safety equipment.

The WITT program provides orientation and exposure to trades and technology programs for women and assists individuals to develop life skills and career planning. Various non-traditional trades and technologies will be explored allowing participants an opportunity to make concrete decisions about their own potential in each occupation.

Participants will have instruction from both industry practitioners and content experts through classroom lectures, laboratory/shop work, & practical experience at industry worksites.

For more information please contact Selkirk College Silver King Campus, 352- 6601, and ask about the WITT program.



Please **RENEW** your **MEMBERSHIP** to September 2002 & keep your **newsletter subscription**, your **library privileges**, & **your association** with other feminists in our community. **Sliding scale: \$15-\$30 OR a 4-hour work exchange.** Cheques payable to the **West Kootenay Women's Association**  
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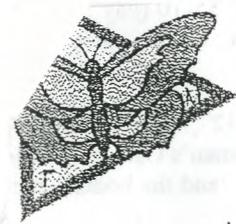
*If you're  
a woman  
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for you*

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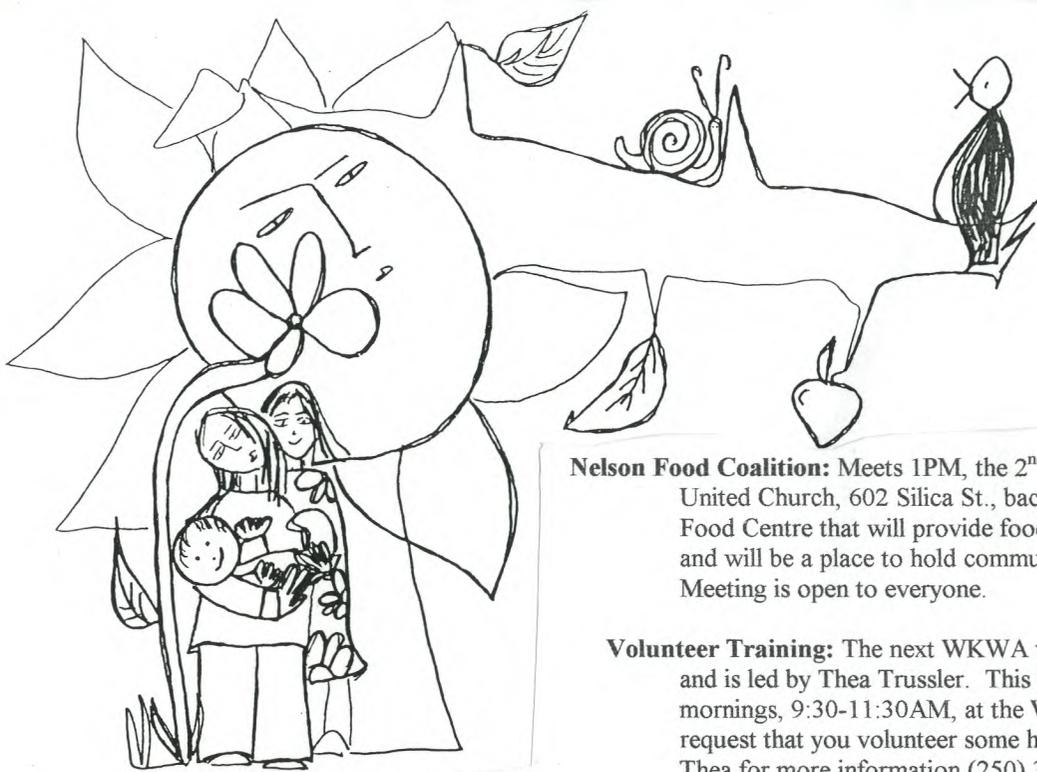
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Brenda Woolner BA, BSW

# EVENTS, MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS



**Nelson Food Coalition:** Meets 1PM, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at the Nelson United Church, 602 Silica St., back door. This group is working to create a Food Centre that will provide food security in a respectful, consistent manner, and will be a place to hold community kitchens, workshops, and dinners. Meeting is open to everyone.

**Volunteer Training:** The next WKWA volunteer training begins November 1, 2001, and is led by Thea Trussler. This is a 10 week course running Thursday mornings, 9:30-11:30AM, at the Women's Centre. There is no fee but we request that you volunteer some hours in the months after the training. Call Thea for more information (250) 352-9916, Tuesday to Friday, noon to 4PM.

**Women's Groups: *WOMEN & MIDLIFE CAREER CHANGES:*** Clarify and define your true life purpose. Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2001, 8:30-11:45AM. No charge. This workshop is led by Rose Stapenhurst, employment counselor trained as a course and workshop leader at Findhorn in Northern Scotland. Group meets at the Women's Centre. Please call Rose at 354-3881 for more information or to register.

**Nelson United Church Food Cupboard:** Open Monday to Friday, 9AM to noon for drop-off & pickup – 602 Silica, back door. The Food Cupboard is helping to provide food security for many community members while the Food Centre is being planned. Please help if you can by donating nonperishable good food items.

**World Trade Organization Protest Caravan:** Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. Peace March starts at 12 noon. WTO protest presentation takes place at the Nelson United Church at 7PM that same night. Look for posters for more information.



Presenting the wonderful women of the 2001/2002

**Coordinating Collective**

Gwen Brace Josee Corrigan

Reiko Fujibayashi Julie Kucera

Shannon Lanaway Carrie Magneson Anne Russell

Sylvia Schmidt Joan Sutherland Ashala Yardley

(Look for bios in upcoming newsletters)



## Anti-Poverty Action Coordinator's Report - Penny Ruvinsky

B.C. welfare recipients have received letters from the Ministry of Human Resources insisting they undertake a verifiable job search. This is the beginning of cuts to social and community services through the Liberal government. They want us to believe that this latest attack on welfare recipients is simply the carrying out of a program put in place by the NDP. That may be true, but it wasn't well accepted when the NDP tried to do it either. It is not about WHO is in government, or WHO is cutting the budget, it's about the budget cuts themselves and the fact that they cut at the very core of a social safety net that is supposed to ensure the health and welfare of Canadians. This safety net exists not because it's a "nice" thing to do, but because it's the right thing to do.

The Conservative Harris government of Ontario is the guiding light of this B.C. fiasco. What can we expect? Look forward to decreasing welfare benefits, an increasingly difficult and dehumanizing process of application for assistance, mandatory workfare programs, cuts to community social agencies, decreasing healthcare services - in short, a paralyzing attack on people without money or those otherwise living close to the edge. Through all this we need to remember that local welfare workers are not responsible for these cuts - we need to remember this because these local workers are in place to distance the government (any government) from the anger and frustration of the people. We need to all pull together and face the madmen (in Victoria, Ottawa, or wherever else they're hiding).

The terrorist attack on the United States affects the economy of the world and will be used as justification for cutbacks and government interference in our lives. It is urgently important that we compile the stories of women's lives and how we deal with the bureaucracy, the lack of support and the lack of money, how we feed our children and keep them clothed and sheltered, how we organize for change. We need to take these stories to the policy makers. Please call me at the Women's Centre, 352-3177, to arrange a time to meet and discuss your story. If I'm not there, leave a message and I'll get back to you.

Defeat terrorism - put an end to poverty and injustice in the world.



West Kootenay Women's Association News

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Graphics/Layout: P.Ruvinsky

We need your help, contributions, events, art, and "Letters to the Editor"!!

WKWA News is published 7 times per year. Call us for submission deadlines. JOIN US!

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