

The Volunteer's Guide to Events, Support Groups and People at the Nelson & District Women's Centre / West Kootenay Women's Association

June 1995

Welcome to the Women's Centre! The following guide provides you with some of the information to questions you will be asked as a drop-in volunteer. This guide won't answer all the questions and some of the information will change over time, but that's why we have staff — to help you answer those questions.

The guide has three sections.

- The first part is "A year at a glance" to give you a sense of what generally happens each year.
- Next, there is a listing of "On-going activities and committees" to familiarize you with what happens here and who's involved.
- The last part, "Upcoming events", gives you information to help pass on to women who call or come in.

Thank you for volunteering at the Women's Centre. We appreciate your support.



A year at a glance — annual events and groups

Fall

- new programming starts at the Centre
- Annual General Meeting of the WKWA in September
- orientation for the new collective
- new groups for Women in Abusive Relations and Survivors of Childhood Abuse

Winter

- December 6 memorial to honour the women murdered at the Montreal massacre and other women who have died violently
- solstice celebration in mid-December
- the centre is generally closed between Christmas and New Year

Spring

- new sessions for Women in Abusive Relationships and Survivors of Childhood Abuse
- International Women's Day, March 8 — usually an activity at the centre on the 8th and Five Feminist Minutes Cabaret on the Saturday closest to March 8.

Summer

- most programming wraps up and women head outside
 - the West Kootenay Women's Festival on the second weekend in August
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On-going activities and committees

Committees

- ❑ **Coordinating collective** — traditionally, this group manages the business of the West Kootenay Women's Association. It has met once a month on the first Tuesday of the month. Currently, it is being restructured. More information will be available soon. Current collective members: Tracey Allen, Chair; Linda Hawkins, Treasurer; Deborah Schwartz, Secretary; Betty Daniel; Sherry Cournoyer; Suzanne Mackenzie.
- ❑ **Women's Centre committee** - the committee meets Thursday mornings each week to make decisions about programming and administration of the women's centre. The members are: Betty Daniel, Chair; Sue Anderson, Maggie Shirley, Tracy Allen, Moe Lyons and Deborah Schwartz.
- ❑ **Finance committee** — meets monthly to discuss the finances of the centre and the association. It consists of Linda Hawkins; Penny Bonnett; Deborah Schwartz and Susie O'Donnell (our bookkeeper).
- ❑ **House Committee** — oversaw the purchase and renovations to Jean Mackenzie House and now manages the house. Sally Mackenzie, Suzanne Mackenzie, Pat Griffiths and Maggie Shirley meet at Mimi's on a semi-regular basis. This group has three sub-committees: the maintenance committee, headed by Pat Griffiths; the projects committee chaired by Sally Mackenzie and the yard committee led by Lyn Merryfeather.
- ❑ **Fundraising Committee** — organizes events to help raise funds for the Association. The committee consists of Moe Lyons and whoever volunteers to help out. Not to be confused with . . .
- ❑ **Fundraising Management Committee** — manages and plans the overall fundraising plans and activities to raise money to pay the mortgage and other associated costs of the house. The women on this committee are: Janice Butler, Janet Sawyer, Ann Harvey, Suzanne Mackenzie, Moe Lyons and Maggie Shirley.

Activities

- ❑ **Wonderful Wednesdays** — offers a variety of activities each Wednesday evening, beginning at 7:00. The first Wednesday of each month is a video night. On the second Wednesday there will be a political discussion. The following offers an evening with a woman who is doing something you want to hear/talk about. The fourth Wednesday is called "Recreating ourselves" and offers a wide variety of topics. Organized by Moe Lyons.
 - ❑ **Mom's the Word** — gives moms and their toddlers a chance to meet, talk and plan activities. They meet each Wednesday from 12 - 2 upstairs. Coordinated by Morgaine Longpré.
 - ❑ **Lesbian/bisexual women drop-in** — is a get together on the first Friday of every month between 7 and 10 p.m. The drop-in provides an unstructured, casual atmosphere for women to talk and socialize. Contact Maggie Shirley.
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Upcoming Events

June

- ❑ **Wednesday, June 21 "Donna Macdonald on Being a Feminist at City Hall"** 7 p.m. at the Women's Centre. Our favourite councillor gives us the scoop.
- ❑ **Saturday, June 24 "Second Annual Clothing Exchange"** noon - 4 p.m. at Judith Ceroli's house, 4335 Slocan River Road, Vallican. Women can bring clothing to exchange for someone else's clothing for a nominal (\$.25 - 50) fee for each piece. This is a fundraiser for the WKWA.
- ❑ **Wednesday, June 28 "Introduction to Birdwatching with Linda Vandamme"** 7 p.m. at the Women's Centre. People should bring their field guide, if they have one. Women, men and children are welcome.

July

- ❑ **Wednesday, July 5 "Motherland"** 7 p.m. at the Women's Centre. Video from the National Film Board.
- ❑ **Friday, July 7 "Lesbian/bisexual women drop-in"** 7 - 10 p.m. at the Women's Centre. Women are encouraged to bring games or snacks.
- ❑ **Sunday, July 9 "Nelson Clothing Exchange"** noon - 4 p.m. at the Women's Centre. See above.
- ❑ **Wednesday, July 12 "Discussion on Feminism with K. Linda Kivi"** 7 p.m. at the Women's Centre
- ❑ **Wednesday, July 19 "Working with Birute Galdikus and the orangutans"** featuring Juliet Craig. 7 p.m. at the Women's Centre

August

- ❑ **Note:** Lesbian drop in is cancelled in August. See you at the Fruit Float.
- ❑ **Friday - Sunday, August 11 - 13 "WKWA Women's Festival"** at the Vallican Whole Community Centre. You will get a lot of phone calls about the festival. See attached sheet for more information. If this sheet does not answer questions sufficiently, please talk to Moe or leave a message in the "Festival" pocket upstairs

September

- ❑ **Friday, September 8 "Lesbian/bisexual Women Drop-in"** 7 - 10 p.m. at the Women's Centre. Because of the long weekend, the drop-in will be on the second Friday of September.
 - ❑ Watch for information on the up-coming **"Women's Health Conference"**, organized by Sam Simpson.
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West Kootenay Women's Festival

West Kootenays hosts Women's Festival in August

On August 11, 12 and 13, the West Kootenay Women's Festival will once more be the event to be part of in the B.C. Interior. This wonderful annual celebration has happened for over 20 years, and has become one of the best-known secrets shared around in the women's community in Western Canada. It takes place at the Vallican Whole Community Centre in the beautiful Slocan Valley (turn on to Hwy 6 between Castlegar & Nelson, watch for signs). You can get a brochure with a map from the Nelson & District Women's Centre, 420 Mill Street, Nelson, B.C. V1L 4R9. The Centre is open Tues. - Fri. in the afternoons.

The Festival Committee wants everyone to fully understand that this is a genuine Kootenay event by, for and about Kootenay women. If you're from somewhere else, you're welcome to come and share in the true Kootenay experience! Part of this experience is that women of all stripes (and believe us - both on the Committee and in the Kootenays at large, women come in every conceivable stripe!) are very friendly and tolerant towards women of all shapes, sizes and persuasions. The other part is that we all work together - and every participant takes ownership of a little piece of the Festival by doing at least one hour of work to make the whole thing happen.

Work trades for admission are possible, and they must be arranged in advance. Don't wait to work these out at the door, as there are a limited number available. Women are asked to pay as much as they can, as this event is the main source of independent funds for the West Kootenay Women's Association.

Friday night will be a Literary Cabaret, co-hosted by the Kootenay School of Writing and featuring several well-known local writers. The Kootenays has a vibrant creative community in every aspect of the arts, and we will be privileged to share in some very exciting local work.

Saturday we will have an opening ceremony, including a square dance to get people's blood flowing! Registration starts at 9am, and it's advisable to get there early, or come on Friday, because once things get moving, they never stop. Saturday afternoon we will return to the early days of the Festival, with a genuine Open Stage, featuring several silly persons and as MCs two of our funniest local women, Nic and Tika, just to make sure the action never slows down. If you have been dying to strut your stuff, or if you've been a little bit shy to show what you can do, get there early and sign up. This could be the chance of a lifetime!

Saturday night will be The Dance, starting with drumming and singing by women from both the Kootenays and the Okanagan. After that, we'll move right into dancing to a local blues/rock band consisting of Bo, Norma, Grace and Carol (by then they'll no doubt have a snappy group name), who have been wowing women at local coffeehouses. The evening will wind up with local DJs' rompin' and stompin' favourites.

On both Saturday and Sunday, numerous workshops will take place all over the grounds. Some of what we hope to see are: bike repair; long-term relationships, both lesbian and heterosexual; battering in lesbian relationships; political organizing at a local level; reiki; ongoing drumming; rediscovering the goddess; voice; basic guitar; midwifery; and many more. We're even trying to get together a workshop on worm composting!

The Festival also includes a Craft Fair, featuring hand-made, woman-created arts and crafts. Women interested in selling at this event can still be included by calling the number below as soon as possible.

Camping is permitted on site, both quiet and not-so-quiet, but there are no showers. You are asked to pre-register for childcare: on-site for 0-5-year-olds; and an off-site Children's Festival for children 6 and over. This latter event has become a big hit with the younger set. Boys over 6 are not allowed on the Festival grounds. They either sleep over at the Kids' Festival or come and sleep with their moms in a specially designated area.

Your Festival admission includes breakfast Saturday and Sunday, snacks, and a potluck dinner Saturday night. Please bring a contribution to Saturday night's potluck. Lunches are separate, and are fundraisers for other community organizations, so either come prepared to buy your lunches or to provide your own.

On Sunday, the Festival will be showcasing several of the Kootenays' most talented women performers in a concert we will all remember for a very long time. This concert will be promoted as a somewhat independent event, as these women deserve recognition for their outstanding talent, and will prove to be a considerable draw.

Admission to the Festival is by sliding scale, \$45 - \$70 for the whole thing. A further breakdown of the fee schedule can be obtained from the Nelson and District Women's Centre. This is an alcohol-free event, and you are asked to leave your dogs at home. (This is a rural area - they won't be allowed on site and they can't run). All enquiries about the Festival should be addressed to the Centre, (604)352-9916 or fax (604)352-7100.



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