

WEST KOOTENAY

WOMEN'S

ASSOCIATION

MAY 2001

Reclaiming the Roots of Mother's Day

by Allison Hack (with thanks to Mark Stoddart)

Mother's Day was first proclaimed by Julia Ward Howe in 1870, five years after the end of the American Civil War. Howe was an activist for humanitarianism and women's rights. In her Mother's Day proclamation she called on all mothers to leave their families for a day in order to gather as women across different nations to fight militarism.



A Mother's Day Proclamation Julia Ward Howe 1870

*Arise, then, women of this day!
Arise all women who have hearts,
Whether your baptism be that of water or of tears
Say firmly:*

*"We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies,
Our husbands shall not come to us reeking of carnage,
For caresses and applause
Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn
All that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy, and patience.
We women of one country
Will be too tender of those of another country
To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs."
From the bosom of the devastated Earth a voice goes up with
Our own. It says, "Disarm, Disarm!"...*



This Mother's Day, let us all celebrate the strength of women coming together and honour the important role that mothers play in so many aspects of our lives.

Inside this Edition

Admin. Coordinator's Report p.2

Volunteer Coordinator's Report p.3

Women Winning Vs. Cancer p.4

Slocan Valley Project p.5

Book Review: Ivan E. Coyote's *Close to Spider Man* p.6

52% Coalition p.7

Woman on a Soap Box p.8

Ms. Ellaneous .9

Events p.10





Administrative Coordinator's Report

by Maggie Shirley

Whew! It's been busy these past few months. Everything seems to be coming together all at once. Thea is back and just in time. Our drop-in stats indicate we've had over 1,000 visits in the past 6 months. Thank you to all the volunteers who kept everything running smoothly while she was away. You are wonderful, wise women!!

As for other things, we got the grant from Status of Women Canada for the anti-poverty project and hiring is underway. I am very excited that we can respond to the overwhelming need that we see in the drop-in and can be pro-active in the community. We'll have news of the project in the next newsletter. With an anti-poverty action coordinator, I'll be able to focus on violence against women, health and other issues and Centre administration. Thanks to Ruth Beck, our Employment Equity Coordinator, who did an excellent job of wrapping up the Employment Equity project and passing on responsibility for employment equity to the very institutions that should be handling them.

The Women's Centre is working with the Nelson & Area Health Council, Health Canada and other groups within the community on a project that is looking at women's health needs. The committee has developed a survey for individual women. We're also encouraging women to get together with a group of their friends to fill the surveys out and talk about your issues. This month, there will be a series of six focus groups in Nelson, and one each in Kaslo, the Slocan Valley, the East Shore and Salmo. The six groups in Nelson are for youth, parenting women, women in mid-life, elder women, women with special needs (addictions, mental health issues, etc.) and women with special issues and different diagnoses (e.g. women who've experienced violence, chronic illnesses). If you want to complete a survey or be part of a focus group, contact me at 352-3177. Now's our chance to make our voices heard.

A group of women in the community have formed a committee called "Women Plan Nelson". Our purpose is to encourage public planning and design from a woman's perspective. We're hoping to use tools such as safety audits on proposed public projects to increase safety and reduce fear for women and children. Recently, the Women's Association submitted a grant application, on behalf of the committee. The committee is looking for more members, so call me.

The Ministry of Women's Equality gave us an unexpected bonus. They presented us with a one-time-only grant of \$2,000 to use toward expenses for Prevention of Violence Against Women Week. Traditionally, in Nelson, the Transition House leads a community committee on this project so we offered to pay for expenses associated with the committee. As a result, we purchased two beautiful banners created by a drop-in regular, Keira Zaslov. The banners flew at the Advocacy Centre and the Women's Centre for the week. We are also using the money for a project initiated by the Women's Events Planning Team (who brought you the highly successful IWD concert). The project is to do some much-needed prevention outreach in the Slocan Valley (see story elsewhere).

P.S. Express your democratic right - vote on May 16!!





Volunteer Coordinator's Report

by Thea Trussler

Yipeeeeeeeeee! I'm back and feeling very blessed at the unexpected funding from the B.C. Gaming Commission. Our wishes for continuity have manifested! The two months off between contracts has revitalized me and just in time... things at the Women's Centre are becoming busier than ever.

I am canvassing now for those interested in becoming Coordinating Collective members. Our AGM isn't until September but at present we are operating with very few C.C. members due to a variety of reasons... all wonderful reasons like jobs and babies! We are entering a time of exciting opportunity with the new Economic Equality Project beginning in May and vibrant new energy with our various committee involvements. Our volunteer pool is experiencing some pressures due to summer approaching and many of the regular volunteers going away for the season. The need for outdoor maintenance of the gardens is a key area to be filled as soon as possible. If you have a couple hours to offer the Centre every week or two please contact me Tuesday to Friday here @ 352-9916.

I would also like to take this time to thank all of you who have shown me so much support during the time between contracts. I am blessed to be involved in such an organization that not only employs me but has introduced me to so many women I now consider friends! Here's to another year of expanding the sister circle!!



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We need your help, contributions, events, art, and "Letters to Editor"!!
WKWA News is published 7 times per year.
Call us for submission deadlines. JOIN US!



Women Winning Against Cancer

By Renee Hope

In recognition that April is Cancer Awareness Month, it is important to hear success stories of women fighting cancer. These two women, Lorraine and Cathy, faced cancer and won! Both these courageous women turned to alternative therapy and experienced the return of their health. They now both work to educate others and revolutionize cancer treatment.

Dr. Lorraine Day was Chief of Orthopedic surgery at San Francisco General Hospital. She spent 15 years on the Faculty of the University of California School of medicine as an Associate Professor and Vice Chair of the Dept of Orthopedics. Lorraine was a mother and wife as well. She felt successful and at top of her career.

Then at 51, Lorraine was stunned when she was diagnosed with invasive breast cancer. As a doctor, she had witnessed traditional medicine's treatments for cancer and their destructive health affects on patients. Lorraine had to face her suspicions that these treatments often lead to the death of her patients. After much deliberation, she rejected standard therapies.

After an initial lumpectomy, the tumor recurred with rapid growth. Lorraine decided that chemotherapy, radiation and surgery were not the answer, and she chose to rebuild her immune system instead.

"I had to defy everything I'd been taught in my medical training. My doctor colleagues said I was crazy and would certainly die." she writes.

Instead of traditional treatment for cancer, Lorraine decided to retreat to her home with relatives and explore her body's healing capabilities. Based on her knowledge of nutrition, and some research she had done on alternative healing, she created her own plan. Lorraine consumed only homemade organic carrot juice and 8 glasses of water a day. Part of her plan included daily doses of sunshine, fresh air, rest and even prayer.

Over the next four months, as the cancer grew, she became weaker and eventually had to be carried outside for her daily dose of sunshine. Her tumor grew to be as large as a grapefruit. Then one night her family wasn't sure she'd make it through the night, and they begged her to reconsider her choices an go to the hospital. But she believed that she would certainly die if she turned to chemotherapy or radiation at that point.



Lorraine made it through the night and as that climax passed, she slowly grew stronger. She continued her carrot juicing, sunlight, fresh air, and prayer. After two months, she expanded her diet to include a variety of vegetable and fruit juices. Within 2 more months she was eating organic raw vegetables and fruit

as well as whole grains. Remarkably, Lorraine's tumor slowly grew smaller and smaller. She believed her body was containing the toxins in one place, (in the tumor), until her immune system could expel the toxins.

She has been free of cancer for almost 10 years now and believes she is cured. She has quit her medical practice to devote her time to educating others, especially doctors, about her experience. She has written a best selling book and video of her experience and views on alternative healing, the cancer industry, and becoming healthy. She has appeared on 60 Minutes, CNN Crossfire, Nightline, Oprah Winfrey, Larry King Live, and USA Radio Network.

Lorraine has dedicated her remaining life to educate people about prevention and cure of disease through diet and lifestyle.

Cathy Hitchcock, was a respected successful social worker, wife and mother. In her late 40's, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She had limited surgery on her breast. The cancer continued to spread and she felt depressed.

Cathy's husband, a doctor already aware and open to alternative medicine, helped support Cathy in her exploration of alternative treatment. Together they created a plan for Cathy which included Imagery Counseling, a women's support group, dietary supplements, herbal medicine, hydrotherapy, with diet and lifestyle changes.

core of my alternative approach." she writes. "Eat lots of organic vegetables, fruit, whole grains, fish, soy products. Use olive oil. I take all my dietary supplements while meditating in the spirit of healing."

Along with her dietary changes, Cathy decided to join an Imagery Counseling group, where she had amazing experiences of deep relaxation. Her Guide would bring the patients on imagined peaceful journeys to mountains or beaches. Once there, they were encouraged to use the healing powers of an imagined hot sun.

"I felt in charge of my body again. I could literally feel my powerlessness and depression transforming into hope and a fighting spirit." Cathy writes.

In an effort to strengthen her immune system through visualization, Cathy chose the polar bear as the imagery for her "killer cells" that fight cancer. She imagined an army of tiny white polar bears entering her bloodstream and searching for cancer. To enhance this imagery, she would visit the polar bear exhibit at the zoo.

"I noticed how delicately the polar bears scooped up the herring," she writes, "and I imagined my cancer cells as dead herring that could be extricated from my healthy tissue."

Cathy shared her polar bear imagery with relatives and friends, who responded with gifts of beautiful polar bear figurines, toys, and cards. She received strength from these gifts and put them everywhere she looked: on shelves, on her fridge, and inside her cupboards.

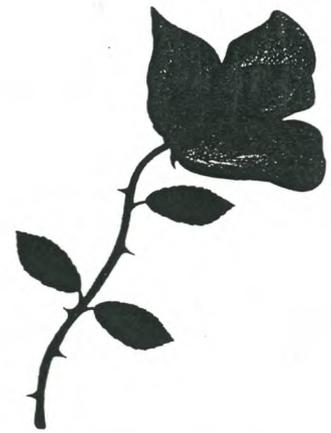
Next, Cathy joined a support group of women with cancer and found it most rewarding of all. She felt an acceptance of alternative medical options that she hadn't experienced anywhere else.

Now free of cancer, Cathy wrote a book with her husband, Dr. Steve Austin, about their experiences and the alternative choices available for others.

"It's not complicated. Stop eating meat, eggs, dairy and sugar – even if they're organic. Get regular exercise to improve mood, and keep off excess weight. This will reduce the risk of all disease." Cathy writes.

The success these women had is inspiring and filled with hope. For more info see Cathy's book *Breast Cancer – What You Should Know* and visit Lorraine's web site at www.drday.com.

Photo – Dr. Lorraine Day with breast tumor at its largest.



STRENGTH AND COURAGE

It takes strength to be firm
It takes courage to be gentle

It takes strength to stand guard
It takes courage to let down your guard

It takes strength to conquer
It takes courage to surrender

It takes strength to be certain
It takes courage to have doubt

It takes strength to fit in
It takes courage to stand out

It takes strength to feel a friend's pain
It takes courage to feel your own pain

It takes strength to hide feelings
It takes courage to show them

It takes strength to endure abuse
It takes courage to stop it

It takes strength to stand alone
It takes courage to lean on another

It takes strength to love
It takes courage to be loved

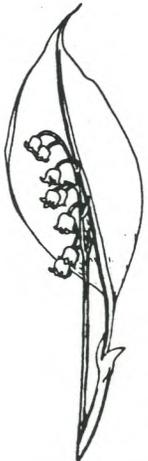
It takes strength to survive
It takes courage to live



Library Report:
A Book Review on: *Close To Spider Man* by Ivan E. Coyote
By Allison Hack



This is a collection of thirteen very short stories that come together to paint a portrait of the author's life in the North. The stories offer colourful glimpses of what it is like to be a tomboy and a young queer woman in a small Yukon town. Many of Ivan E. Coyote's accounts capture moments that are both painstakingly uncomfortable and hilarious at once. One of my favourite stories is "No Bikini" which is about the "sex change" she had when she was six. The story documents how her decision to not wear her bikini top during swimming lessons turned into her first cross-dressing/ gender-play experience. Her writing is raw and straightforward, and she aptly pulls vivid and sensuous images out of simple language. The storytelling in *Close To Spider Man* is casual, personal, and oral in style, making it an inviting and easy read. Coyote provides a wonderful mix of humour and reflective insights. I definitely recommend this book to anyone wanting a fresh, quick, and slightly quirky read.



WKWA Project: Prevention of Violence Against Women in the Slocan Valley

A new project is underway to raise awareness about the issue of violence against women in the Slocan Valley. The project is based on the understanding that rural women experiencing violence often face increased isolation and difficulty in accessing much needed services. The project aims to make information more easily available between Crescent Valley and Slocan city. A variety of Valley businesses will be approached about displaying information on regional services for victims of violence. Some specific security issues will be addressed in an effort to bring attention to public safety, particularly the safety of women. We will also hold a workshop in conjunction with the Advocacy Centre's Specialized Victim Assistance Program and Safe Haven Project. The workshop will explore definitions of violence and what that means in a small community. It will also give participants information on victim's rights and regional services. The project presents us with a great opportunity to reach out to women living in the Slocan Valley and to explore rural women's issues.





Women: Make your Vote Count!

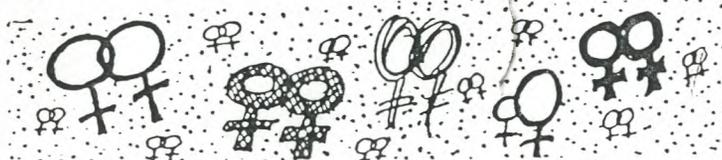
by Maggie Shirley

The provincial election is upon us and voting day will be here before we know it. Women throughout the province are working to put our issues on the political agenda this year. A diverse group of women's organizations, independent women and social justice groups in B.C. have gathered together to form the 52% coalition. The West Kootenay Women's Association and Nelson & District Women's Centre are part of the coalition. The 52% coalition has produced a brochure with questions relating to poverty, aboriginal women & the treaty process, employment and education, legal services funding, women & immigration, violence against women & girls, housing, women & health, childcare, women & the environment, lesbian & transgender rights, pensions, and women with disabilities & access. Some of these issues may be personal to you; some women may need us to ask the questions for them, if they aren't able to be there.

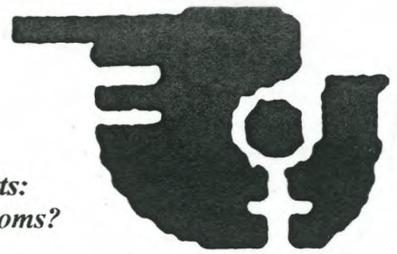
A sampling of the questions...

- Will your party restore or improve previous rates of income assistance so that women and their families can receive livable amounts of money?
- Will your party support self-determination for Aboriginal peoples? Will you party include all Aboriginal women living off-reserve and on-reserve in the treaty making process?
- Will your party commit to pro-active pay equity and work towards creating full-time, quality jobs for women in public and private sectors?
- Will your party vote to restore funding levels for the Legal Services Society of BC so that women, especially in rural BC, may have access to equal protection under the law, particularly in relation to Family Law matters?
- Will your party commit to expanding funding for front-line, independent, feminist women's groups who are working to end violence against women?
- Given there are long waiting lists for social housing, how many new units of affordable housing will your party commit to building?
- Will your party eliminate the Medical Services Plan premium charged to British Columbians to access health care?
- Will your party create and implement a universal child-care program in BC?
- Will your party continue to defend the inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the BC Human Rights Act and ensure funding specifically for: lesbians / gay women and bisexual women in our communities?
- What is the policy of your party on replacing the public pension system with a private scheme (one that relies on individual savings and the purchase of RRSP's)?

We strongly urge you to ask these questions at all candidate's meetings and when the candidates come door-to-door. Copies of the brochure are available at the Centre. Before you cast your ballot on May 16, think about which candidate will represent women's interests in the legislature and make your vote count!



Woman on a Soapbox



Women's Safety vs Corporate Interests: What's Being Protected in Our Courtrooms? By Allison Hack

A recent ruling in Nelson's BC Supreme Court has left me wondering how women's safety ranks compared to corporate interests in the courtroom. On November 27th 2000 two sentencings took place. That morning environmental activist Sheri Milford faced Court Justice McEwan on charges that were laid after she was arrested last summer for breaking a court injunction in the Trozzo Creek Watershed. Milford did a tree-sit that blocked Slocan Forest Product's (SFP's) road-building for one day.

Warren Ouderkirk was sentenced by McEwan on the same day. Ouderkirk was charged for repeated personal injury assaults against 5 women that spanned a twenty year period. He pled guilty to five of the seven assault charges that made it into the courts.

Both Milford and Ouderkirk were given conditional sentences. At the time Milford was sentenced three other protesters had already gone to jail for similar types of non-violent civil disobedience. Milford was spared jail time because of serious health concerns, but Justice McEwan did not pass down a conditional sentence lightly. He added weight to his ruling with a condescending tone and reprimanded her for disrespecting the courts.

Ouderkirk was handed a two-year conditional sentence with NO jail time. Justice McEwan agreed that Ouderkirk would suffer from self-esteem issues if he were to lose his job due to an absence from work. People trying to protect water and wilderness ended up in jail while a man convicted of several violent assaults on women was sentenced without jail time. Where is the justice?

The discrepancy in these rulings raises serious questions about the relationship between corporations and the courts. Who's threatening who and who's protecting what? When protesters interfered with SFP's access to the Trozzo Creek Watershed they challenged SFP's right to road-build and log in the area and questioned their logging practices in general. In other words, they posed a threat to SFP's reputation and economic interests. However, as they stood in front of the judge they were not being tried directly for disrupting SFP's business; they stood on trial for breaking a court injunction granted to SFP by the court. In this case a threat to corporate interest became entangled with a threat to the reputation of the court.

The courts and corporations are interconnected through their relationships with government. Government agencies sign cutting permits and "regulate" the forest industry. The government has clear economic investments in healthy corporate profits. Although the justice system is supposed to be an entity separate from the state, it is bound by laws and rules that are politically motivated and state legislated. Given the close relationship between government and corporations, and government and the justice system, it is not a huge stretch to suggest that the justice system is also invested in corporate interests.



high-ground. He was clear that within the realm of law a crime is a crime. The undiscerning nature of law is particularly troublesome.

The claim to neutrality and the individualization of "criminal incidents" allows the justice system to disregard the larger social issues that form the context of those incidents. For example, when violent assaults against women are treated as individual cases, the social epidemic of male violence against women is masked and the patriarchal context that perpetuates it is ignored.

Women experiencing violence in relationships are often reluctant to turn to the legal system for help. Many women have described feeling revictimized by the court process. What message does McEwan's ruling send to women victims of violence? One woman shared her response to Ouderkirk's sentencing: "It brought back all of my own experiences of violence... I was strangled too, my ex-partner tried to kill me. I feel like a victim again."

Our justice system exists within the capitalist and patriarchal structure of Canadian society. This fact points to a well-debated question: can the legal system be used to achieve substantial social change? I don't believe that legal reform or stiffer sentences can even begin to address the complex social factors affecting victims of violence or the perpetrators. As long as men still tend to have greater financial security, better jobs and job benefits, less child care responsibility and greater credibility in society, women will continue to be vulnerable. And, given the close relationship between the courts, government, and corporations, I have little hope of seeing environmental concerns being addressed in the courts. Still, we must continue to have a voice and women must be protected and respected by the courts until we bring about some radical social change.



Ms. Ellaneous

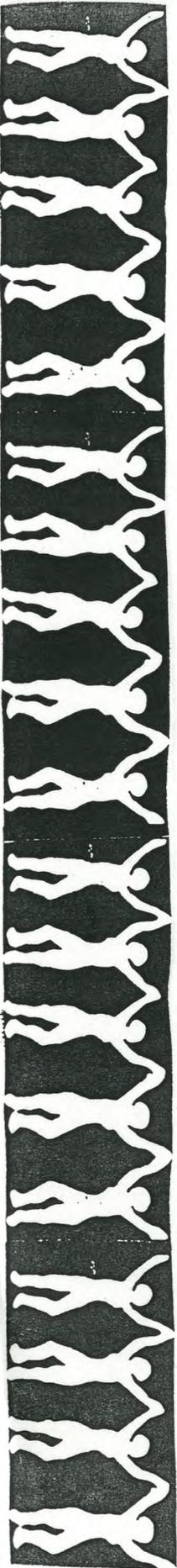


The **Vagina Monologues** have been postponed! For all of you who were anxiously waiting the Nelson premier of Eve Eisler's smash hit play, you will have to wait another few months. In an effort to pay the playwright her dues, Susie O'Donnell, Nelson Monologues co-producer, contacted New York to find out about paying royalties. She was referred to the man (yep, the man) who owns the rights to the play in Canada and the only way we can produce them is to be part of the V-day movement, which presents the Monologues on or around February 14th. After considering a few options, the Nelson producers have decided to wait until February rolls around.



Anyone interested in organizing the **women's festival**? If you'd like to be involved in putting on a gathering in the summer, there will be a meeting at the Women's Centre on May 10 at 4:00. Our summer festivals ran from sometime in the mid-seventies until they gradually lost steam in the late 90's. Women keep asking for a festival, but if it's going to happen, your help is needed. If you'd like to help out but can't attend the meeting, call the Centre and leave your name and number. 352-9916.

WANTED for Shakespeare In the Park: **Babysitter** for an actress's 2 ½ yr old boy. May and June- share or trade babysitting. Call Susie @ 352-6106.



WKWA and Other Events

International No Diet Day – May 6th - Stop Diets!! Join in celebrating your body at any size! Women everywhere are encouraged to smash your scales! Trust in healthy eating. And remember, “Life is uncertain – eat dessert first!”

May is **Asian Heritage Month!** Celebrate Asian contributions and culture! Visit Asian-Canadian historical sites (there are many in the Kootenays), meditate on the Buddha, and learn about Asian traditions and heritage. You will be richly rewarded!

Nelson Food Coalition meeting 1:00 May 9 at Nelson United Church (Silica and Josephine). Use the office entrance. Meets second Wednesday every month. Help Nelson create better ways to get healthy food to those who need it. Join us! All welcome!

First meeting of the **Women’s Festival Planning Group** on May 10 at 4:00 at the Women’s Centre (420 Mill St.). All women welcome!

Join **RITA MARIE & FRIENDS**, Friday, May 11 at the Glacier Gourmet, 8:00.

Women’s Health Project Focus Groups at various times and places throughout the region during the week of May 12 to May 18. Call the Centre (352-9916) if you would like to participate. Voice your health needs! All women welcome.

Here it is ... The Return of **Dyke Drop-in!!** Fri. May 25 - 7:00 at the Women’s Centre. All lesbian and bisexual women are welcome to join us for an evening of socializing and discussion. Hosted by the ever-charming card shark Catherine Fisher.

Larger Women’s Clothing Swap. Finally! If you are size 16 or up and have clothes in good condition that you’re ready to pass on, bring them to the Women’s Centre on Tuesday, May 29 at 7:00 and go home with a new wardrobe!

Ideas Swap and Barter Fare – join the West Kootenay Women’s Association for a morning of visioning and fun. Help us vision our future for the next three years. Bring something to exchange (clothing, bedding plants, seeds, whatever goes). Meet friends, new and old. Saturday, June 2, 10:00 at the United Church (Josephine and Silica). *On-site childcare available.*

Women Plan Nelson met at 11:30 June 5 in the NDCRS board room (above Home Hardware). See more info in Administrative Coordinator’s report. New members welcome.

SPUD has **Community Garden** spaces still available. \$5-50 sliding scale. Call 505-5267



THE BRIDGE

There are times in life when we are called to be bridges,
not a great monument spanning a distance
and carrying loads of heavy traffic,
but a simple bridge to help one person from here to there
over some difficulty
such as pain, grief, fear, loneliness,
a bridge which opens the way for ongoing journey.

When I become a bridge for another,
I bring upon myself a blessing,
for I escape from the small prison of self and exist for a wider world,
Breaking out to be a larger being who can enter another’s pain
and rejoice in another’s triumph.

I know of only one greater blessing in this life, and that is,
to allow someone else, to be a bridge for me.