

♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 354-8807 (TTY/Voice)

Fall 1999

SUSAN ABOD PERFORMS IN BENEFIT CONCERT FOR WOMEN'S CENTER ON SEPTEMBER 18, 1999

Women's Center supporter and singer/songwriter Susan Abod will delight us with a benefit concert on September 18, 1999 at 7:30pm at the First Parish Unitarian Church in Watertown.

Susan incorporates jazz, blues, pop and Broadway styles into her intimate cabaret-style performance. Her original songs cover topics from what to say to your friend who's in a hospital dying of AIDS (written for the *Living with AIDS Theatre Project* in 1989), to learning how to flirt. Her offbeat titles include *The Process Song* and *You Look Swell in Nothing*. Susan also sings moving versions of tunes like *Diamond in the Rough*, *Up On the Roof*, and *The Secret of Life*.

Susan Abod has been singing and playing since the early 70's, the heyday of the women's music scene. She was on Rounder Record's *Mountain Movin' Day* and played with the Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band. She's played with Willie Tyson, Cassie Culver, and Betsy Rose, among others, and produced concerts for Meg Christian and Margie Adams.

In 1986, Susan became ill with CFIDS (Chronic Fatigue Immune Dysfunction Syndrome) and Chemical Sensitivities. Unable to work full-time, Susan worked very part-time for 2½ years co-creating the video, *Funny, You Don't Look Sick: Autobiography of an Illness*, which was screened at the Museum of Fine Arts and is now distributed to schools and libraries nationwide.

When Susan received a fundraising appeal from the Women's Center, she offered to play a benefit as her donation. We happily accepted. She will perform with pianist/singer/composer Janet Hood, who has appeared on local and national television, as well as on numerous albums including her own *Jade & Sarsaparilla*. At the

"Susan Abod combines her extraordinary natural talents as a singer and songwriter with the depth of an experienced actor and the wit and timing of a born comic. She is that rarity, a total performer."

~ Martin Anderson, a *Next Move Theatre* founding member



September 18th concert, Susan Abod will be recording her first CD.

Join us for a fun and moving evening of song and festivity on September 18, 1999 at 7:30 pm, at the Unitarian Parish Church near Watertown Square. Tickets: \$12 gen. admission, \$10 students, \$6 low-income/seniors (or pay what you can). Tickets are available at the Women's Center, New Words bookstore, or at the door. Proceeds benefit the Women's Center. Info/directions: (617) 354-8807. Hope to see you there!!!

NEW GROUP PAGE 4

On Our Way

is the newsletter of the Women's Center, published three times per year in April, September, and December.

The Women's Center is a non-profit resource and support center for all women and their children, founded in 1971.

Our mission is twofold:

- * to provide women with the resources and support they need to emerge from conditions of abuse, poverty, discrimination, or social isolation
- * to challenge and change attitudes and actions which subjugate women

The Center relies upon the generosity of its community to provide its wealth of free programs. All contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

For further information, address change/corrections, contact:

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 354-8807

Hours:
Monday-Thursday:
10am-10pm
Friday:
10am-8pm
Saturday:
11am-4pm

Women's Center Wish List:



COMPUTER WORK STATION

REAMS OF COPY PAPER

PENTIUM COMPUTER

EASEL

TOASTER OVEN

FANS

COMPUTER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

*If you have any of these items and would like to make a donation to the Women's Center, please call (617) 354-8807
Thanks!*

A Fond Farewell to Montserrat Caballero

We are sad to bid farewell to Montserrat Caballero, the Women's Center Volunteer & Administrative Coordinator. Montserrat leaves us to travel back to her native Chile, where she will spend time with family members and reacquaint herself with her place of birth. She will travel throughout Chile, exploring her culture and learning more about Chilean history.

Montserrat volunteered at the Women's Center for one year, before joining the staff to coordinate our volunteer programming. For the past two years, she recruited, trained, and supervised all volunteers and interns at the Center. For many, she provided the first glimpse of the Women's Center. Her friendly, cheerful, and caring countenance became one of our trademarks in the community. Montserrat also hosted *Woman Speak*, a local cable program, on behalf of the Women's Center where she examined issues currently facing women.

Montserrat gave much to the women's community during the three years that she lived in Massachusetts. She was a founding member of *Act Out - Revolutionary Young Sisters For Social Justice*, which begins meeting at the Women's Center this month. Montserrat also volunteered at the *Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)* for one year and on various projects at the *Abortion Access Project* for the past three.

Montserrat's dedication to the advancement of women and the elimination of all oppressions will be missed by the Women's Center, but no doubt felt in Chile.



Patricia Hunt, LICSW

Individual & Group Therapy

Loss, Depression, Trauma, Sexual Abuse

Groups for:

Trauma survivors who are experiencing infertility

Women who are mothering while healing from sexual abuse

617-354-9787

44 Pearl Street Cambridge, Mass 02139

WOMEN OF COLOR READING CIRCLE

The Women of Color Reading Circle is a new book club with a purpose. We provide space for women of color to meet and discuss fiction and nonfiction written by authors who are also women of color. We exchange ideas and strategies for maneuvering in this world as women and people of color. We read books that challenge us and broaden our perspectives. Our discussions focus on how each book can help us develop practical responses to the issues we face in our lives.

The Reading Circle is a forum for women of color to share our thoughts, feelings and laughter. We critically examine the concepts and ideas presented by the books we read. The books we select inspire, teach and help us to shape constructive responses to the overt and covert attacks against our sex and race.

We meet the second Monday of every month from 7:00-8:30 pm. Join us on Monday, September 13, 1999 at 7:00pm. The book for this meeting is entitled *The Parable of the Sower* written by Octavia Butler. We'd love to see you there.

~ Lynn Murray

BATTERED WOMEN'S GROUP

Where would I be if it weren't for the Battered Women's Group on Wednesday evenings? Who knows. I'm so glad they were there when I needed them so that I didn't have to find out.

I left my husband of seventeen years with my two-year old son the night before I went to the group for the first time. A friend of mine brought me there. I was shell shocked and never said a single word that night. What was important to me was that everyone knew exactly how I was feeling even though I sat there mute.

I finally had the courage to leave my husband and the group gave me the strength to keep on going. The group gave me the strength to find a way to survive homelessness and depression. They helped me to sort out all of the mixed and confused feelings that I had. It was also great that the Women's Center had childcare, or I wouldn't have been able to go.

Betsy Warrior, who leads the group, is a beautiful person. She is sincere, compassionate and understanding. She never makes you feel stupid for having what you think are strange thoughts. Believe me, everyone thinks they are the only one with these feelings, thoughts and fears. You're not. That was one of the most important

things I needed to learn. I wasn't alone. I wasn't the only woman getting beaten and treated horribly.

Eventually, I found a job and an apartment. After I got back on my feet, I kept going every Wednesday. I hoped that someone sitting there shell shocked, not saying a word, would know that we understand what she's going through. I wanted other women to know that we'll get through it together. We help each other as only women who have been through this can. Even though I'm on my two feet and I don't go to the group anymore (because I'm now too far away), Betsy still keeps in touch. She still cares about how I'm doing. I also care about how the other women in the group are doing.

Thank you to the Women's Center and to Betsy Warrior for everything.

~ T.M.



WE'LL MISS YOU, MELISSA

As a volunteer at both the Women's Center and the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC), I am committed to ending violence against women. It is this commitment that led me to train as a volunteer at BARCC five years ago.

During that time I met Melissa Gosule, who was also in training at BARCC, and we soon became fast friends. Melissa would often stop by the Women's Center, visiting the Resource Room to research writing and career opportunities. During the next five years, we saw each other through many changes, and even though we were different in many ways, I knew we would remain friends for a long time. I considered Melissa to be the first great friend I ever had.

In July our friendship took a tragic turn, as Melissa was brutally murdered on July 11th. The man accused of ending her life is being held without bail on charges of kidnapping and first-degree murder.

It is hard to fathom that this violence occurs at all, but it is even harder when it happens to someone who was intensely committed to making the world a safe place for women. Obviously the work needed to end this violence is far from over, but I'm convinced that Melissa will not have died in vain. Her work to end violence will continue in each of us. This work we do, and the awareness that we all share, is a bond uniting all women. Melissa's spirit is included in that bond. We'll miss her tremendously.

~ Maureen A. Barlow

SUSAN ABOD IN CONCERT

A Benefit for the Women's Center



Saturday, September 18, 7:30-10pm

First Parish Unitarian Church

35 Church Street, Watertown



(is near Watertown Sq. bus stop & has free parking)

Tickets: \$12 (\$10 students, \$6 seniors/low-income, or pay what you can). Info./directions: (617)354-8807.

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP - Not Your Ordinary Career Development Workshop

Thursday, September 16, 6:30-9:30pm

Discover what you want to do & how to do it
With Barbara Harris of Leapfrog.

THE MAKING OF A HANDYWOMAN: THE BASICS IN ELECTRICAL REPAIR

Saturday, September 18, 1:30-3:30pm

With electrician Maggie Cohen

HEALING CIRCLE

Mondays, September 20 & 27, 7-8:30pm

Massage, meditation, singing & more

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT SEARCH SUPPORT

Wednesdays, 3-5pm

Find help writing resumes, tips for job interviews, info. on educational opportunities... Discuss concerns related to returning to work or school, etc. Sensitive to family trauma. Sponsored by Transition House. Call (617)354-2676 x21 to register before attending.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

LESBIAN RAP

Mondays, 7:30-9pm

- September 13 Flirting Dos & Don'ts.
20 Queer Cyberspots; Media.
27 Singles Scene 101.

30+ LESBIAN RAP

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm

- September 14 Surviving Singlehood.
21 Signing 101.
28 Lesbian Fantasy Expectations.

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm

- September 21 Are You ready for It? Timing.

WOMEN OF COLOR READING CIRCLE

Monday, September 13, 7-9pm

The book: *The Parable of the Sower*
by Octavia E. Butler

Info: Lynn, (617)436-0390

WOMEN'S READING GROUP

3rd Wednesdays, 7-9:30pm

- September 15: *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson
Info: Mary, (781)891-5727

FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Usually last Friday/month, Sept.-June, 6-7:30pm

- September 24 Isolation & Belonging.
October 29 Family Relationships.
November 26 Health.
December 17 Culture & Religion.

ONGOING GROUPS

MONDAY

- ACT OUT - Revolutionary Young Sisters for Justice
(September 20, but usually 1st Monday) 6-8pm
- Women's AI-Anon (biweekly; begins in Oct.) 6-7:30pm
- Battered Women's Support Group (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors
(Usually 3rd Mon.; info: Daniella, 497-0911) 7-8:45pm
- Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2)
(Usually one mtg./month; 661-1161 for information)
- Women of Color Reading Circle (2nd Monday) . 7-9pm

TUESDAY

- Bisexual Women's Rap (1st & 3rd Tuesday) . 7:30-9pm
- Separation & Divorce Support Group (weekly) 7-9pm
- Sexual Harassment Support Group (one Tuesday/mo;
Louise Bonar, 254-1729, for info, to register) .. 7-9pm
- 30+ Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7-8:30pm
- Transitioning out of the Patient Role [open every 6th
week - Sept. 7; info: Diane, (781)226-7097] .. 6-7:30pm
- Women with Disabilities and/or Chronic
Conditions (2nd & 4th Tuesday) 5:15-6:45pm
- Writers Circle [2nd Tuesday;
info: Cassandra, (617)494-2695] 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY

- Battered Women's Support Group
(weekly, except 3rd Wednesday of month) 7-9pm
- Boston Bisexual Women's Network (2nd Wednesday,
odd #d months) 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian AI-Anon (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Single Women in Mid-life & Beyond [2nd &
4th Weds; info Esther: (781)396-3415] 7:30-9pm
- Storytelling/Playback Theater (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Women Maximizing Abilities Now (1st & 3rd
Wednesdays; women@braintrust.org) 2-3:30pm
- Women of Color Rap (1st Wednesday) 7-8:30pm
- Women's Reading Group (3rd Wednesday) 7-9:30pm

THURSDAY

- Healing through Art (weekly) 7:15-9pm
- Older Women Finding Our Voices
(2nd & 4th Thursdays) 11am-12:30pm
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors of
Child Sexual Abuse (weekly) 7:30-9:30pm
- Women's Community Cancer Project, Open
General Meeting (1st Thursday) 7-9pm
- WRAG (♀'s Radical Action Group) (weekly) 6:30-9pm

FRIDAY

- Incest Resources Facilitated Discussion Group for
Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (last Fri) 6-7:30pm
- Incest Survivors Anonymous (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- South Asian Women for Action (2nd Friday) 5:30-8pm

SATURDAY

- Coming Out Discussion for Women of All Ages
(1st Saturday, except holiday weekends) ... 11am-1pm
- Making of a Handywoman (one Sat./month)
- Trauma Survivors Group (3rd Saturday) 1:30-3pm
- Women Writing (every other week) 12:30-2:30pm

THE THURSDAY NIGHT GATHERINGg

The Thursday Gathering is a weekly, open, drop-in discussion group for women survivors of childhood sexual abuse (CSA). It meets every Thursday night from 7:30-9:30pm at the Women's Center. Participants may have been abused by parents, older siblings, other relatives, family friends, teachers, coaches, or other authority figures. Wimmin without clear memories of specific abuse and those questioning a CSA history are welcome. There is a "contact person" each night who helps people settle in, but there is no facilitator. On the first Thursday of each month, there is a pre-published topic which is the focal point of discussion. Recent topics have included forgiveness, anger, sexuality, and death and loss.

The group is unstructured, which means that cross-talk is acceptable, there are no strict time limits or content limits on speech, and arriving late or leaving early is welcome as long as wimmin are respectful to those who may be speaking. There are a few simple guidelines that we use to keep the room feeling safe for all. These include respect for others' speech and experiences, and being respectful of others' needs when discussing graphic material which may be triggering.

There are many different types of CSA groups, and each survivor needs to find the space that is most productive for their own healing. An unstructured group can be challenging, because the flow of ideas and discussion is controlled solely by the participants, and not by a facilitator or the exclusion of subject matter. Any topic is available for discussion, including sobriety issues, ritual abuse, multiplicity, and sexuality. Therefore, the Gathering offers a space in which survivors of different experiences and history can learn from their diversity.

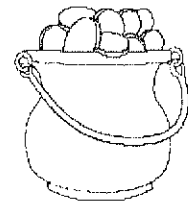
Participants of the Gathering over the years have included wimmin as young as seventeen and as old as seventy, traditional homemakers and lesbian separatists, from local communities and from overseas. We seek to offer a safe and supportive atmosphere in which all survivors can grow and heal.

If you would like more information about the Thursday Gathering before attending, please contact the Women's Center at (617) 354-8807 and leave your contact information - a Thursday Gathering contact person will return your call.

~ Judy Feinberg



FROM THE DESK OF OUR



FUNDRAISER..

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Spring appeal letter. We raised over \$4,000 for the Women's Center. Your generosity supports our many free programs. Survivors of child sexual abuse, battered women, women of color, older women, lesbians and bisexual women, mothers, and so many others depend on the Women's Center for resources that promote healing and growth. Your contribution also supports important internal changes at the Women's Center.

This is an exciting time. We are expanding the number and diversity of women participating in the Center's collective decision-making process. Many more voices are being heard. With your help, the Women's Center will be poised to enter the new millennium a stronger, more vibrant and representative women's organization. Your financial support is one of the things that makes this possible.

In other fundraising news, the "Trees of Life" *Commemorative Tile Mural* was completed this summer. (Hooray!) The mosaic reveals three birch trees with elegant green and gold leaves, intertwined with words of respect, love, memory, and dedication to women. The project raised more than \$16,000 and will be ceremoniously "unveiled" in the early fall. Please contact me if you would like to know when the mural is fully installed, or stop in for a viewing. The "Trees of Life" *Commemorative Tile Mural*, designed by Vermont-based artist Bekah Perks, is sure to be a stunning addition to our cozy Women's Center.

It's not too late to make a donation this season. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT to keep this thriving resource going (see the tear-off coupon in this issue). Thank you for putting your money where it counts for women: at the Women's Center.

~ Pamela Goldstein
Development Coordinator



WE NEED YOU!
Volunteer on the Women's Center
hotline.
It's fun and rewarding.
For more information,
call (617)354-8807

STORYTELLING/PLAYBACK THEATRE



Yes, I want to support the Women's Center!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other

or

I'd like to become a regular **monthly sustainer**, with a pledge of \$ _____ per month.

Add me to the Women's Center mailing list.

I'm interested in volunteering at the Women's Center.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Thank You!

"Storytelling Theatre," a mentor once said to me, "is enacting moments and situations from our own lives." Playback Theatre allows me to hear about people's lives and express feelings, conflicts and ideas, as well as the magic we live with everyday. We make strong connections and gain support in a myriad of circumstances.

Pairs: two women, one behind the other, play out conflicting feelings about a topic. For example, 'family.' "The family," Sarah says, smiling and flinging her arms open wide. "Ugh... the... family..." mutters Bonnie, as she drops toward the floor, clutching her head, leaning toward Sarah's knee. *Pairs* is an amazing way to watch two different voices in one woman play out her conflicting or symbiotic nature.

Another form we use is called *Fluids*. *Fluids* combine sound, movement, and musical instruments to create a kind of moving sculpture of a feeling, situation or aspiration.

I am facilitating Storytelling/Playback Theatre at the Women's Center, with the belief that our own style of playing evolves as we work together and develop trust.

If you would like to participate or learn more about Storytelling Theatre, please call (617)354-8807.

~ Kaeza Fearn

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Address Correction Requested
Return Postage Guaranteed

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Boston, MA
Permit No. 59699

♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 354-8807 (TTY/Voice)

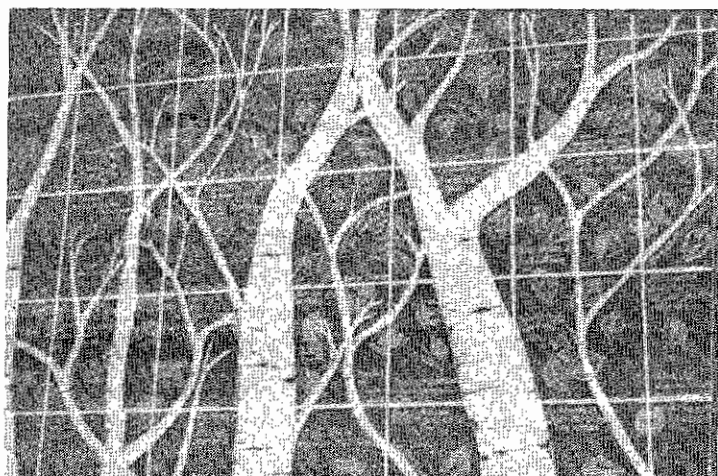
December 1999

BEAUTIFUL TILE MURAL HONORS WOMEN AND MOVES VIEWERS

On October 2nd the Women's Center unveiled "Trees of Life," a tile mural that honors and celebrates the lives of women. The mural, created by Vermont artist Bekah Parks, features three intertwining birch trees with lush golden leaves. Many women present told the stories behind the tiles, inspiring laughter and tears.

Mother and daughter Elaine and Virginia Westerlund shared their moving and inspirational story. The tile Elaine dedicated to her mother reads "For courageously choosing" and Virginia's tile to her daughter Elaine reads "Daughters Before Husbands." The story explaining the inscriptions on the tiles, as told by Elaine, is this:

"Unlike mothers in most incestuous families, my mother refused to accept my father's denial. She always believed me. She talked with me many times about my memories and she wept with me. When it became clear that my father would rather have the world perceive me as crazy than ever acknowledge his abuse, my mother told him that their 48 year marriage was over. She gave up a comfortable and financially secure lifestyle at the age of 75 - on Mother's Day! She was loyal to me, even during the difficult years when she remained with my



father hoping for a change. My relationship with my mother was one of the primary reasons I became a cofounder of the first incest survivor organization in the world. My mother was as outraged as I, and she supported me in publicly identifying myself as an incest survivor, despite the times. From the start she encouraged my activism and proudly told others about Incest Resources and the Women's Center. We are both so very grateful to have each other. I am so proud of my mother and happy to honor her with this beautiful tile."

The story told by Virginia Westerlund from her perspective, was equally moving. She encouraged all women to choose their daughters when confronted with such painful circumstances. The entire room was moved to tears as she said "It was not a difficult choice for me to make."

Each tile in the "Trees of Life" tells its own unique story, speaking to the special gifts that women give to others. The mural is a magnificent work of love and an inspiration to everyone who views it. The celebration of women and their contributions continues.

INSIDE. . .

Women's Center Calendar	4
New Group	5
The Year in Review	3
New Board & Staff	2, 3
Films For Thought	6
and More. . .	

On Our Way

is the newsletter of the Women's Center, published three times per year in April, September, and December.

The Women's Center is a non-profit resource and support center for all women and their children, founded in 1971.

Our mission is twofold:

- * to provide women with the resources and support they need to emerge from conditions of abuse, poverty, discrimination, or social isolation
- * to challenge and change attitudes and actions which subjugate women



A Warm Welcome To Our New Board

Annette Brown

Linda Duby

Judy Feinberg

Lynn Murray

Sandy Nickel

Kyoko Okamura

Pam Steinkamp

Debbie Wintner

The Women's Center relies on the generosity of the community to provide our wealth of free programs. All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

For further information, contact:

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 354-8807 TTY/Voice

Hours:
Monday-Thursday:
10am-10pm
Friday:
10am-8pm
Saturday:
11am-4pm

WE SAY GOODBYE TO PAMELA GOLDSTEIN

In October, the Women's Center said goodbye to Pamela Goldstein, the Development Coordinator. Pamela came to the Center in 1993 as our first full-time fundraiser. Her vision, skill, and commitment enhanced our fundraising capacity, allowing us to expand our staff and therefore our programming.

Pamela developed strong and caring connections with our donors and steadily persuaded more people to donate to our cause. Her passion for the Center's commitment to providing free services and her sheer tenacity ensured that, even in times of lean charitable giving and corporate mergers, the Center still received the funds critical to our work. Pamela coordinated two tile campaigns which raised much needed funds and permanently enhance the beauty of the Center. They serve as moving testaments to the lives of the women honored.

Pamela's caring attitude, sense of humor, and good nature created a welcoming environment for the hundreds of women who volunteered during her career here. She will be deeply missed. We thank you for your many contributions and wish you well in all of your endeavors and in your life Pamela!!!

HEATHER JOINS THE STAFF

I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Volunteer & Administrative Coordinator. The Women's Center has been an integral part of my life since I walked in the door five years ago looking for housing, the lesbian community, and feminist political action in the Boston area.

Inspired by the philosophy of women empowering each other through emotional support and practical information, I immediately began volunteering on the hotline. Later I became part of the Collective and the transitional Board.

I graduated from Dartmouth College with a Women's Studies Major (one of the first two women to do so) in 1994. The weight of student loans kept me tethered to a corporate job for my first years here, so volunteering at the Center and at the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center were cherished connections to the women's community and to making a difference.

During my short time in this position, I've been amazed and inspired by the committed and talented women who volunteer here. Volunteers are truly the heart of the Center. If you are interested in volunteering please call or stop by. I'd love to meet you!

~ Heather Searles

WOMEN'S CENTER WASH 1997



TV/VCR Stands
Reams of Paper
Manila Folders
Vacuum Cleaner
Computer Workstations

Thank you for helping with your gifts!

NEW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ELIZA HOYT

It is a privilege to introduce myself as the new Development Director of the Women's Center. On my first day at the Center I arrived to a fall bouquet of flowers on a polished desk, discovered the perfect spot in the sun to read about the history of the center and stole a moment to feel the joy of being here.

Ten years ago, I walked into the Women's Center, discovering a peaceful, welcoming and safe place. Since then, I've pursued work with non-profit organizations serving disadvantaged youth, people of color, battered women, and Asian communities.

Working in such diverse environments I've learned how necessary a women's space is for self-empowerment. In the role of fundraiser I look forward to advocating for social and economic justice for women.

I always carry a quote, "Gain the wisdom to change the things you can change." I will listen closely to the stories that underline the fabric of the Center, allow the voices of women to nurture a path towards growth and diversity. This wisdom I dedicate to you...

It will be a great pleasure to meet you!

~ Eliza Hoyt



A CALL FOR PRAYERS & CARDS

Jean Turner, facilitator of the Women's Center's *Women with Disabilities and/or Chronic Conditions*, has put the group on hold indefinitely due to serious illness. She's coping with treatments, and rests on treatment-free days. Jean's flair for fashion continues with her many colored hats and turbans. You can be sure black and purple reign supreme.

We at the Women's Center wish her a full and timely recovery. A seat will be saved at the table... so that she can continue her work on women's issues and her advocacy for the disabled. Jean asks for prayers to St. Jude on her behalf. Cards and encouragement may be sent to: E-mail: wishesforjean@aol.com or Jean Turner, P.O. Box 391424, Cambridge, MA 02139.

~ Rose Dixon

1999 WHAT A YEAR!!

Change was on the agenda for the Women's Center's 28th year, but exceeded all expectations!

Our first director, Mary Quinn, came aboard March 1, and has taken a major role in defining a new position (hers) and a new structure. With the new collective meetings, a new board of trustees, and a continuing commitment to consensus, the collective process is alive and well! Mary's commitment to inclusiveness, to expanding the number and diversity of women involved in decision-making at the Women's Center, has been invaluable.

Lynn Murray, the current coordinator of *Women of Color Rap*, also initiated the new *Women of Color Reading Circle*, which finds inspiration for coping with racism in the literary works of women of color. All this and she's a member of our Collective and Board too—way to go Lynn!

Young women, in addition to participating in the collective, have brought two dynamic new groups here, *WRAG (Women's Radical Action Group)* and *ACTOUT-Revolutionary Young Sisters for Social Justice*.

Speaking of acting out, *Storytelling/Playback Theatre* began in June, and has been a cherished group from the start. The new monthly *Making of a Handywoman* workshop attendees have been enthusiastic. We have been pleased to offer Vera's *Self-Injury* group, many new healing and empowerment workshops, and, beginning December 16, the monthly: *Films for Thought, A Viewing & Discussion*.

We have two new employees, Heather Searles, *Volunteer & Administrative Coordinator*, and Eliza Hoyt, *Development Coordinator*, filling the spots vacated by Montserrat and Pamela. For the time being, I, Judy, am filling in as *Program Coordinator* while Mary works with Eliza on getting crucial funding.

13 interns have helped out with referral updating, staffing the phones, helping with everything; one, Pam Steinkamp, is now a Board and Collective member! Thank you all so much!

Amidst the change, there were the constants: volunteers talking with callers and visitors; searching for resources; facilitating groups; coordinating groups; helping with events; typing; washing the dishes; opening & closing the curtains; caring for someone's child - whatever it takes. Thank you all so much!

I am so impressed with what's happening - good changes, growth, while keeping the basic warmth and caring at the core of the Center's strength and success.

~ Judy Norris

TRANSITIONING OUT OF THE PATIENT ROLE

Tuesdays, 6-7:30pm

Group is open to new members one meeting
(Dec. 14), then closed for the next 5 meetings.

Facilitated by Diane Loud, M.Ed.

Info: Diane, (781)226-7097(beeper)

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP - Not Your Ordinary Career Development Workshop REUNION/PARTY - with light refreshments

Wednesday, December 15, 6:30-9:30pm

With Barbara Harris of Leapfrog

FILMS FOR THOUGHT:

Viewing & Discussion for Women

3rd Thursdays, 7-9pm

- December 16 "The Ad & the Ego"
January 20 "Holding Ground: the Rebirth
of Dudley Street"
February 17 "Global Assembly Line"

Come watch & talk with others about the films.

Enjoy light refreshments too!

Info: (617)354-8807.

JOURNAL WRITING TO EXPLORE ONE'S SPIRITUALITY

Thursdays, December 16 & 30, 7-9pm

These 1st 2 meetings of a 6-session workshop are open,
the others (Jan. 13 & 27; Feb. 10 & 24) will be closed

Facilitated by Susan Teshu

THE MAKING OF A HANDYWOMAN

One Saturday/month, 2-4pm

- January 20 Plumbing & Heating Basics
February 12 Hands on Household Repair

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

LESBIAN RAP

Mondays, 7:30-9pm

- December 13 Preparing for the Holidays
20 Holiday Party
27 Game Night

30+ LESBIAN RAP

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm

- December 14 Money Issues
21 Is Codependency a Problem?
28 Giving vs Losing Self

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm

- December 7 Holiday Stress
21 Why is the Bi Rap Here?

WOMEN OF COLOR READING CIRCLE

2nd Mondays, 7-9pm

- December 13 So Long a Letter by Mariama Ba
Info: Lynn, (617)436-0390

INCEST RESOURCES' FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Usually last Friday/month, Sept.-June, 6-7:30pm

- December 17 Culture & Religion
January 28 Sexuality
February 25 Work and Career Issues
March 31 Mothers

ONGOING GROUPS

MONDAY

- ACT OUT - Revolutionary Young Sisters for Justice
(1st & 3rd Mondays) 6-8pm
- Al-Anon for Women (1st & 3rd Mondays) .. 6-7:30pm
- Battered Women's Support Group(weekly) .. 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors
(Usually 3rd Mon.; info: Daniella, 497-0911) 7-8:45pm
- Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2)
(Usually one mtg./month; 661-1161 for information)
- Women of Color Reading Circle (2nd Monday) .. 7-9pm

TUESDAY

- Bisexual Women's Rap (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) .. 7:30-9pm
- Healing Ourselves through Art (weekly) 5-7pm
- Self-Injury Education & Support Group
(1st & 3rd Thursdays, through December) ... 7-8:30pm
- Separation & Divorce Support Group (weekly) 7-9pm
- Sexual Harassment Support Group (one Tuesday/mo;
Louise Bonar, 254-1729, for info, to register) .. 7-9pm
- 30+ Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7-8:30pm
- Transitioning out of the Patient Role [open every 6th
week - Dec. 14; info: Diane, (781)226-7097] . 6-7:30pm
- Writers Circle [2nd Tuesday;
info: Cassandra, (617)494-2695] 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY

- Battered Women's Support Group
(weekly, except 3rd Wednesday of month) 7-9pm
- Boston Bisexual Women's Network (2nd Wednesday,
odd #d months) 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Al-Anon (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Storytelling/Playback Theater (weekly; not meeting
December 22 & 29) 6:30-8pm
- Women Maximizing Abilities Now (1st & 3rd Weds.;
(617)945-1447; woman@braintrust.org) 2-3:30pm
- Women of Color Rap (1st Wednesday) 7-8:30pm
- Women's Reading Group (3rd Wednesday) .. 7-9:30pm

THURSDAY

- Films for Thought (3rd Thursdays) 7-9pm
- Journal Writing to Explore One's Spirituality
(6 sessions, 1st two open: Dec. 16 & 30) 7-9pm
- Older Women Finding Our Voices
(2nd & 4th Thursdays) 11am-12:30pm
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors of
Child Sexual Abuse (weekly) 7:30-9:30pm
- Women's Community Cancer Project, Open
General Meeting (1st Thursday) 7-9pm
- WRAG (♀'s Radical Action Group) (for younger
women; not meeting in December) 6:30-9pm

FRIDAY

- Incest Resources Facilitated Group for Survivors of
Child Sexual Abuse (usually last Fridays) . 6-7:30pm
- Incest Survivors Anonymous (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- South Asian Women for Action (2nd Friday) 5:30-8pm

SATURDAY

- Coming Out Discussion for Women of All Ages
(1st Saturday, except holiday weekends) 11am-1pm
- Making of a Handywoman (one Sat./month) 2-4pm
- Trauma Survivors Group (3rd Saturday) 1:30-3pm
- Women Writing (every other week; Jan. 8) 12:30-2:30pm

ACT OUT

Revolutionary Young Sisters for Social Justice

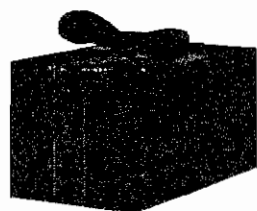
It is a long name for an organization. However, our mission is fairly simple: to activate young women to do grassroots political organizing in our communities. Since its creation, the young women in Act Out have been working to learn the ins and outs of political organizing by working with organizations like Women of Color AIDS Council and Dorchester Women's Committee and by rotating leadership responsibilities within the group. We feel that it is crucial for young women to not only participate in social change movements but also to take the lead and create the agenda in those movements.

As we continue to work with more established organizations in the community, we have also begun working on our own projects. This fall we launched The Media Project to combat distorted or non-existent images of young women in the art and media world. It is our belief that young women have to tell their own stories and to this end we are in the process of creating a magazine as well as producing our first art show. The magazine will be a collection of news articles, personal essays, cartoons, photographs and various rants about girl culture and young women's lives. In addition, the art show will feature Act Out member Alisa Cui, whose work explores issues of race, gender, and identity through the mediums of photography, painting, and digital imaging. Both the art show and the magazine premiere in the Spring of 2000.

Act Out is excited about the work that lies ahead. We are happy to have found a home at the Women's Center and proud to be plugged in to many of the exciting projects that the center is working on at this time. We also want more young women to join us in our struggle to challenge all oppression and to celebrate young women everywhere.

ACT OUT - Revolutionary Young Sisters for Social Justice meets the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month from 6-8pm. For more information contact Lynn at 436-0390.

~ Lynn Murray



*Consider Giving A Gift
To A Friend or Loved One
By
Making a Donation to the
Women's Center
In Their Name*

WOMAN MAXIMIZING ABILITIES NOW

"*Enabling the Able in the Woman*" is our emphasis for the next millennium. We are a small group of women living with chronic illness and/or disability who share and console one another about what was and rejoice at our achievements now.

We foster hope as we share the wonder and challenges that push us onward and allow us to find our own strength to stabilize our lifestyles and nurture the "able" within. The group strategizes ways of restoring the basic life needs often impacted by illness: income, housing, food, health care, transportation, and a lively social network.

We are seeking new members to join us the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 2-3:30pm in the Living Room. For more information, contact Rose at (617) 945-1447 or e-mail woman@braintrust.org.

~ Rose Dixon

MOVING ON - A SUPPORT GROUP FOR SURVIVORS OF SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE

The group will be for women who have cut all ties with primary abusers and are in therapy. It will meet every other week for a total of six sessions. We can discuss the special challenges we face as we make lives for ourselves in the outside world, and share our victories as we overcome those challenges. For more info, call (617)354-8807.

GROUP POSSIBILITY

Depending on level of interest, we will offer one of the following closed, facilitated short-term groups, which will start in February: Trauma Survivors Group, Self-Injury Group, or Ritual Abuse Survivors Group. Please call (617)354-8807 if you are interested, leaving your name, number, and which group(s) you'd like to attend. Thanks!

WOMEN'S HEALTH DAY

Lots of timely workshops, lunch, massages, information and more - make up this great free annual event held on a Saturday in late March or April. If you'd like to help out - join the planning committee, give free massages, do childcare, help with publicity, or anything else, please call Judy at (617)354-8807. If you'd like to attend, call in March to get the specific date/workshop info. Hope to see you there!

JOIN THE COLLECTIVE!

The Women's Center Collective discusses and decides policy issues for the Women's Center. We believe that the best policies are made with women from all parts of the Center working together: group members, volunteers, staff, and any other women who use the Center.

Our decisions are made by consensus to reflect that every woman's voice is important and needs to be heard. The consensus process is rewarding and challenging. We will provide training so that all women will be comfortable with it.

Currently, we are working on two areas: determining the Center's transgender policy and creating a diversity statement with a corresponding long-term outreach strategy. Any member is welcome to suggest new policies to work on. The meetings are well-attended with brainstorming, intelligent discussion, and laughter.

The Collective meets from 6-8pm once a month. We are committed to having a large and diverse group of women participate. Our next three meetings are: Wednesday, December 1st, Thursday, January 6th, and Monday, February 7th. We look forward to seeing you there!



~ Sharon Devine

20 YEARS!

Incest Resources, Inc. is celebrating its 20th anniversary in the year 2000! The first survivor organization in the world, Incest Resources made its home at the Women's Center in 1980. Along with the founders of Voices in Action, Inc. in Chicago and Incest Survivors Anonymous in California, the founders of Incest Resources, Inc. began the survivor self-help movement in this country, which later became international in scope. The co-founder of Incest Resources, Dr. Elaine Westerlund, has received a Twentieth Century Achievement Award for her pioneering role in the survivor self-help movement and her development of original self-help programs and treatment models for survivor healing. Her biography has most recently been published in Five Hundred Leaders of Influence. Incest Resources is an all-survivor, all-volunteer nonprofit organization and contributions are tax-deductible. Anniversary donations may be sent to: Incest Resources, Inc., Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139.

FILMS FOR THOUGHT

On December 16, the Women's Center features the debut of a new film series entitled "Films for Thought." Every third Thursday from December until March, we will view a political film and then follow it with a group discussion. December's film is "Ad and the Ego." This first film in the series examines how advertising's powerful impact on our culture sells us notions of what it means to be men and women in the United States. We are exposed to over 1500 such ads each day. Media critics in the film demonstrate how this barrage of images not only attempts to sell products but cultural values as well. As we scramble during the holiday season to find the perfect gifts for friends and family, this film gives us the opportunity to step back and ask ourselves what is influencing our holiday choices.

Join us on the 16th from 7:00 to 9:00pm to sit back, relax and enjoy an interesting film and discussion.

~ Kimberlee LaBonte

WORK WITH US

The Women's Center Board has Finance, Fundraising, Community Outreach, and Political Committees that are open to community membership. If you are interested, please call 354-8807!

A LITTLE ABOUT SELF INJURY

Self-injury (SI) includes cutting, burning, hairpulling, bruising oneself and other behaviors which cause pain. As most people now agree, self-injury is not about suicide or attracting attention or getting sympathy. It is usually done without the knowledge of others, is very secret. It is a way of coping.

This way of dealing with difficult feelings was probably helpful once, but becomes frozen in time, interfering with growth, good self-care, relationships, and happiness. Changing self-injuring behavior is hard, anxiety provoking and sometimes frightening; but it is worthwhile.

The SI group at the Women's Center is about making the changes, aided by sharing and learning and support from the group. The group is facilitated by an experienced, clinical social worker and is a safe space to talk about self-injury. We talk about the many reasons for having begun SI, how it continues, and the ways people deal with it; we exchange ideas about what part it plays in life and what substitutes for it are most useful.

The group will meet on December 7th and 21st, from 7-8:30pm. If you have questions or want to speak with the facilitator, call Vera at 617-354-2304.