

# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

April 2002

## WOMEN OF ACTION FIGHT BACK

*Lynn Murray, community organizer at the Women's Center, discusses organizing for justice with Women of Action member, Jennifer Quinn.*

**LM:** *Tell me about Women of Action. Who are you and what are your goals?*

**JQ:** We just recently named ourselves and formed our mission statement. We are Women of Action (WOA), women who live in Cambridge and are working towards fairness, access to resources and economic justice. We're a direct action organization.

**LM:** *What does it mean that you're a direct action organization?*

**JQ:** We do things like write a letter asking for changes or set up a meeting or a demonstration. Some sort of action to push people for a fair solution. We don't just meet and talk about how bad something is, even though that happens as a result of getting together. We are very supportive of each other and we share information to help each other out, but that's not our primary focus. We're trying to make our lives easier and better.

**LM:** *Are you working on issues now?*

**JQ:** We've just identified what we want to work on. Most of the issues that come up in our group are problems that affect low income women, some mothers and some not. Most of the women in WOA and women who we've talked to in Cambridge are having problems with the MBTA, Cambridge Housing Authority, and/or Department of Transitional Assistance.

**LM:** *And what are the problems with these agencies?*

**JQ:** These agencies don't respect the women they serve. That's the underlying issue. As a result of that disrespect, women are getting crappy service, misinformation or no information.

**LM:** *Is your plan to work on one particular issue first?*

**JQ:** Yes. We've decided to begin with the MBTA. We want the MBTA to be more accessible to women with children. Often, women who are waiting at bus stops with children in strollers are not picked up by the driver unless the stroller is all packed up. This is extremely difficult for a woman with children and other bundles. Not only is it difficult but it's discriminatory and we want it to stop. Another problem with the MBTA is that many times the elevators are either not working or they are completely filthy.

**LM:** *Some critics would say that the T has to run on a tight schedule and that waiting for mothers with children in strollers would throw that schedule off. What would you say to that?*

**JQ:** I would say that the MBTA needs to add more time to that bus schedule. Women with children deserve the same accessibility to the public transportation as anyone else. We can't decide to get in our car if we're left at the bus station. We're dependent on the MBTA to get to

work and lead our lives. We want some accountability.

At the same time, we also are looking for solutions that are just. For example, the elevator issue is hard because so many homeless people use them as bathrooms. We're not looking for a solution that would punish homeless people. We don't want to oppress another group. We would suggest more public restrooms in busy areas like downtown crossing. Our group is focused on justice for all.

**LM:** *It sounds like Women of Action are serious about getting these problems solved. Is there room for more women to fight with you?*

**JQ:** Of course! We're still figuring out what the best solutions are for us. We need other women to join us and help us make these decisions. People power is the only way we're really going to solve these problems.

**LM:** *What would you say to someone who wants to work to change these problems but doesn't consider herself an activist?*

**JQ:** I'd say join the club! None of us at Women of Action thought of ourselves as activists. We're just women trying to handle our business for ourselves and our children. We don't want to be disrespected or discriminated against and we've figured out that we can win if we fight together.

*Women of Action meets at the Women's Center. To get involved or for more information, call Lynn at 617-354-6394.*

# From the Desk of the Executive Director

## On Our Way

Is the newsletter of the Women's Center, published 3 times per year in April, September, and December.

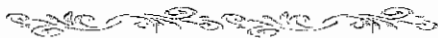
The Women's Center is a non-profit resource and support center for all women and their children, founded in 1971.

### Our mission is twofold:

*to provide women with the tools and resources they need to emerge from abuse, discrimination, addiction, sexism and racism, harassment, social isolation, violence, poverty, or other injustice*

*to challenge and change attitudes and actions which subjugate women.*

*Volunteers*



*The Women's Center gratefully acknowledges the ongoing efforts and contributions of our volunteers.*

*Thank you for giving so generously of your time and of yourselves.*

The Women's Center relies on the generosity of the community to provide our wealth of free programming.

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

email:

[info@cambridgewomenscenter.org](mailto:info@cambridgewomenscenter.org)

Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 10am-10pm  
Friday: 10am-8pm  
Saturday: 11am-4pm  
Helpline: (617) 354-8807

The year 2002 brings exciting developments to the Women's Center. We offer important new groups, announce ambitious new plans, and are able to report the realization of goals set during the last couple of years.

We are offering three new groups: *Healin' and Dealin'*, a support group for survivors of non-sexual child abuse; *Support for Women Whose Partners are Coming Out*; and *Collage Pot Luck*, where women will come together to express their creativity. We also are providing more educational workshops on financial planning and debt reduction. In addition, this month, we complete our first 10 week session of the new Mother-Child Art Project, a series of art classes for toddlers. In the coming months, we hope to begin an ESL class.

We are continuing in our efforts to be more accessible to Spanish speaking women. We have nearly completed a resource binder in Spanish with information on immigration, ESL, legal supports, and healthcare. Our free computer training program is now fully staffed with Spanish-speaking volunteers. We are currently working toward increasing the number of bilingual volunteers on our Helpline. In addition, we are collaborating with the Latino Health Institute to assess the needs of Latina women in the community, so that we may provide programming to meet those needs.

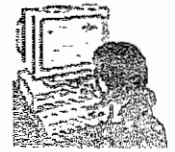
In a matter of four months, our new Community Organizing Project recruited a strong core group of members. They identified their first campaign and named themselves *Women of Action*, emphasizing their purpose: acting to create justice.

With the increasing number of children at The Women's Center and the success of our computer access program, we are now looking to completely renovate our basement. Soon we will launch a capital campaign to make the basement a pleasant and comfortable work and play space. This is a huge undertaking which includes foundation

repair, moving and enclosing the furnace putting in new flooring, and enhancing the lighting. We are excited by the prospect of creating a brighter and more welcoming space for women and their children.

We need your help, if we are to maintain our new programs and continue making improvements to the Center. If you are able to assist financially or through volunteering, please contact me at (617) 354-8807. Your support builds the foundation of the Women's Center.

*~ Mary Quinn*



## Computer Training

Yay! We have new computers in our computer lab and they all are operating with Windows 2000 and Office Professional 2000. (Don't worry if this means nothing to you, just know they have become very snazzy!). Women are free to drop in during any of our open hours. If you don't know how to use a computer we offer friendly introductory classes with patient volunteers. We can teach you how to create an email account and search the internet, and basic word processing. Classes are offered at 6pm-7pm Monday-Thursday and on Saturdays. We ask that you commit to one day per week for at least three weeks. Please call (617) 354-8807 to fill out a request.

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## Celebrating Our Beginning

On March 9, a large enthusiastic crowd gathered at the Cambridge YWCA to celebrate International Women's Day and the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Women's Center. The evening featured a viewing of a documentary in progress focusing on the takeover of the Harvard building at 888 Memorial Drive (now the large shrub/bush lot at Mahoney's) on March 6, 1971. The takeover, the endpoint of the 1971 International Women's Day march, was possibly the only building occupation by women for women ever, and it resulted in the creation of the Women's Center.

The Cambridge Y event included a viewing of Alice Maxfield's film of the 1971 march and occupation, excerpts from recent interviews of participants, materials from march leaflets and newspaper coverage, and women's music from the time. The participants' spunk, excitement, and dedication to women's and others' rights radiated as we watched them march through the streets, storm into the building, and occupy it for 10 days

Cambridge Councilwoman Marjorie Decker presented a proclamation from the city of Cambridge, noting in a heartfelt speech that 888 was too long ignored and represented the kind of history that should be taught in all schools. Mary Quinn talked about the Women's Center today. The evening ended with a series of comments by 888 participants, others who remembered the impact of the takeover, and current Women's Center staff.

The Women's Center History Project committee (Libby Bouvier, Susan Jacoby, Esther Leidolf, and Rochelle G. Ruthchild) thanks Lynn Murray, Judy Norris, Mindy Sage, Heather Searles and Rachel Woolfsy for their assistance and support before and during the event.

If you are interested in volunteering to work on this ongoing project, and especially if you have computer graphics, documentary film-making, and video skills, please contact Heather at hls4@aol.com.

~ Rochelle G. Ruthchild



## Women's Health Day

Usually a spring event, Women's Health Day has been moved to the fall this year. We're aiming for Saturday, September 21. We will have workshops, a lunch, tons of information, the ever popular massages, childcare and more—all absolutely FREE. Put it on your calendar now! We're hoping to make an energizing and fun day for all women.

We've created a survey (available in English, Spanish, Haitian Kreyol, and hopefully Portuguese), asking for your input about what kind of workshops you want. We want to hear from you! You may have received a survey with this newsletter. If not, you can pick one up at

the Women's Center, or call Page 3  
(617)354-8807.

If you would like to help with organizing the Health Day, or would like to help out on the day (childcare, lunch prep & serving, signing women in, etc.), please call Judy Norris at (617) 354-8807.  
~Judy Norris

### WISH LIST

Boxes of herbal tea  
Bag of sugar  
3 subject notebooks  
Computer choirs  
Toys for toddlers  
Playpen  
Art supplies  
Gift Certificate to WB Mason  
Tampons, Pads  
Large transparent heavy containers

## Foundations and Corporations

*A special "thank you" to the foundations, organizations, and individual donors who have contributed \$250 or more between 11/1/01 and 3/15/02:*

A Better Place Foundation  
Ascential Software, Inc.  
Boston Jewish Women's Community Fund  
Cambridge Community Foundation  
Cambridge Mustard Seed  
City of Cambridge  
Connor Charitable Foundation  
Crabtree Foundation  
First American Title Insurance Company  
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George & Beatrice Sherman Family Charitable Trust  
Mind's Eye Yarn, Lucy Lee  
North Star Asset Management, Inc  
Philips Medical Systems  
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Sheila Ganble Cook Fund  
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Marta M. Frank & Robert S. Frank, Jr  
Neal Buchalter  
Rebecca Anne Derby & Evan W. Morton  
Rodger G. Morrill  
Suzanne Pippin

**Thank You!**

# WOMEN'S CENTER CALENDAR - SPRING 2002

46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA - free & open to women - Info & helpline: (617) 354-8807

## GROUPS

### MONDAY

- Al-Anon for Women (weekly).....6-7:30pm
- Healing Circle (weekly through May 6)  
Info: [ashanti@nativestar.net](mailto:ashanti@nativestar.net) .....8:30-10pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors.. 7:30-9pm  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, Info: Daniela (617) 497-0911)
- \* Lesbian Rap (weekly).....7:30-9pm
- Women of Color Reading Circle (2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays).....7-8pm  
Info: Jyoti at [jgupta71@hotmail.com](mailto:jgupta71@hotmail.com)

### TUESDAY

- \* Bisexual Women's Rap (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays).....7:30-9pm
- Facilitated Mothers' Support Group (forming).....morning  
[call group facilitator Diane at (617) 876-2139]
- \* Support for Married Bisexual Women (2<sup>nd</sup> Tues).....7:30-9pm
- Women's Reading Group (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays).....7:30-9:30pm  
Info: Mary (781) 891-5727
- Writer's Circle (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays).....7-9pm  
Info: Cassandra at (617) 494-2695

### WEDNESDAY

- Battered Women's Support Group (all Weds, except 3<sup>rd</sup>)..7-9pm
- Liquid Poets (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays) .....7-9pm
- Transitioning out of the Patient Role .....6-7:15pm  
(ongoing group, open to new comers April 24)
- \* Women Maximizing Abilities Now (WOMAN) .....2-3:30pm  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays. Email: [woman@brainfrust.org](mailto:woman@brainfrust.org))
- \* Women Over 40 (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays).....7-8:30pm

### THURSDAY

- \* Collage Pot Luck (May 23 and June 20).....6:30-8:30pm  
info: [creativescavenger@yahoo.com](mailto:creativescavenger@yahoo.com)
- Healin' and Dealin' (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays).....6:30-8:30pm  
(for survivors of non-sexual child abuse)  
Info/to register: [maureen-b@yahoo.com](mailto:maureen-b@yahoo.com)
- Support & Strategies for Dealing with Language-Based Learning Disabilities (4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays).....6-7:30pm
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (weekly) .....7:30-9:30pm  
(Topic at 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of month, May 2, Sleep & Dreams)
- \* Volunteer Orientation (April 11) .....6:30-7:30pm

### FRIDAY

- Incest Resources Facilitated Discussion for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse.....6-7:30pm  
(usually last Friday of month, September - June)
- \*\*Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA) (weekly) .....6:30-8pm
- \* Game Night (April 19).....8-10pm

### SATURDAY

- \* Bankruptcy: An Option for Dealing with Personal Debt (April 13).....2-3:30pm
- \* Coming Out Discussion for Women of all Ages.....11am-1pm  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays except holiday weekends)
- \* Support for Women Who Have Partners Coming Out (April 13).....11:15-1pm

\* Wheelchair Accessible

\*\* Wheelchair Accessible except 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each Month  
All activities are free and open to women

## FREE CHILDCARE

If given four days notice, we do our best to provide free childcare for women attending groups and workshops.

Please do not wear perfumes or strong scents in the Women's Center.

## NEW AND FEATURED ACTIVITIES

**\*BANKRUPTCY: AN OPTION FOR DEALING WITH PERSONAL DEBT.** Saturday, April 13, 2-3:30pm. Attorney Susan Grossberg will provide information about declaring bankruptcy. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**COMPUTER INTERNET AND ACCESS.** We have 4 computers available to women on a first come first serve basis.

**FREE COMPUTER TRAINING.** We offer free introductory trainings on email, the internet, Microsoft Word, and Windows on weekdays at 6pm and on Saturdays. Must be able to commit to same time for minimum of 3 weeks. Please call (617) 354-8807 to fill out a request.

**\*COLLAGE POT LUCK.** Thursdays, May 23 and June 20, 6:30-8:30pm. No...not food. Bring supplies that you fancy and are willing to share. Info: [creativescavenger@yahoo.com](mailto:creativescavenger@yahoo.com) or (617) 216-5168.

**\*GAME NIGHT.** Friday, April 19, 8-10pm. Come frolic with us and play games such as *Cranium* and *Taboo* - a fun social evening for all. Light refreshments. Bring a game if you like.

**\*NOTHING TOO HEAVY TO SHARE (NTHTS).** For survivors of extreme abuse, such as torture, forced isolation, severe neglect or sexual exploitation. Info/to join: Esther (617) 969-9347.

**SUPPORT AND STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN WITH LANGUAGE-BASED LEARNING DISABILITIES.** Thursday, April 25, 6-7:30pm (4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays). Having a learning disability does not have to limit your options in education or career choice. Support and strategies. Facilitated by Kai Long, Speech Therapist. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**\*SUPPORT FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE PARTNERS COMING OUT.** Saturday, April 13, 11:15-1pm. Dating someone who is struggling with issues surrounding coming out inevitably negatively affects our relationships and ourselves as individuals. If you are a partner of someone coming out, please attend. Info: Robyn at (617) 522-5694.

**TRANSITIONING OUT OF THE PATIENT ROLE.** A facilitated six-session group begins Wednesday, April 24, 6-7:15pm. For women who have been labeled "chronic patients" by the mental health system. The session on April 24 is open to new members; the rest will be closed. Info: Diane at (781) 226-7097 [pager, 10am-8pm].

**\*VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION.** Thursday, April 11, 6:30-7:30pm. Come learn about our history, mission, and different ways you can volunteer at the Women's Center. Call (617) 354-8807 to RSVP.

**WOMEN WITH DISSOCIATIVE DISORDER / MULTIPLE PERSONALITY GROWING INTO A BETTER LIFE.** 4 Wednesdays, 7:30-9pm, beginning April 10 (may go longer). For women who suspect and women who know they experience or have experienced these confusing states. To understand yourself/selves better, have happier relationships and a more satisfying life. Info/to register, call the facilitator Vera S. Cohen, LICSW, at (617) 354-2304.

## TOPICS

**\*BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP - 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm**

- April 16 First Female Love.
- May 7 What Do You Consider Romantic?
- May 21 When Do You Tell Someone You're Bi?

**INCEST RESOURCES FACILITATED DISCUSSION FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE - Last Fridays, 6-7:30pm**

- April 26 Control; May 31, Spirituality; June 28, Letting Go

**\*LESBIAN RAP - Mondays, 7:30-9pm**

- April 15 Gay Marriage
- 22 Tupperware with Theresa
- 29 Safer Sex

**WOMEN OF COLOR READING CIRCLE, 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 7-8pm**

- May 13 Book: *Troublemaker & Other Saints* by Christina Chiu

**\*WOMEN OVER 40 - 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, 7-8:30pm**

- April 10 Describe Yourself in Three Words
- 24 Reinventing Yourself: Rebirth/Renewal

**WOMEN'S READING GROUP - 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30pm**

- April 23 Book: *Persian Mirrors: The Elusive Face of Iran* by Elaine Sciolino

## Women of Color Reading Circle

For two and a half years, the Women's Center has been hosting a Women of Color Reading Circle. The reading circle is open to all women who identify as being a 'woman of color.' The books that are read in the circle are written by women of color from around the world.

When Lynn Murray, a community organizer at the Center, and Vanessa Washington started the reading circle years ago, it was one of the few activities at the Center where women of color could bond.

*Lynn comments, "I wanted to hear stories that were out of a woman of color perspective and experience. It's comforting to have friends who share similar insights and we consider authors like friends. I also wanted to learn more about myself and connect my personal life to a larger political struggle but in a non-academic way. The reading circle seemed like a perfect place for that to happen."*

Since the first meeting, where women discussed the sci-fi Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler, books have been chosen by a loose algorithm: each month, we read a book either by a woman of a different ethnicity and/or a book that falls in a different genre (e.g. nonfiction, poetry, play, etc.).

Women submit their choices for books, and members of the group vote to pick the next book. Books are chosen two months in advance, so everyone has plenty of time to finish the reading.

We laugh a lot while discussing the books, our lives, and growing up and/or being women of color in the U.S. The books we've read range from easy-reading favorites such as Amy Tan's The Kitchen God's Wife to political tracts such as Cherrie Moraga's Loving in the War Years – now one of my favorite books.

For our May meeting (Monday, May 13) the book is Troublemaker and Other Saints by Christina Chiu. Christina Chiu will be speaking at New

Words bookstore on Thursday, May 16 at 7pm.

The group meets on the second Monday of each month at 7pm, and I encourage women of color to check it out. Snack-sharing is also encouraged! I hope to see you soon!

~Jyoti Gupta



## Mother-Child Art Class

Looking for a fun activity to do with your little one? The Women's Center is delighted to announce that we are continuing to collaborate with the YMCA to offer FREE Mother-Child Art Classes. Classes meet once per week for ten weeks at 10am and last for an hour. The classes are designed for toddlers ages 2-4. Marianne Guillette, an experienced Art Teacher, sets up three different art projects each week and matches them with a story. Marianne also shares tips on how to foster children's creativity and how to make homemade art supplies and inexpensive art projects.

Though the children are encouraged to create independently, Moms, Grandmas or other caretakers must be present to encourage them and to assist with tricky parts. Art projects include sculpture, collage, and painting. Research shows that, aside from being a lot of fun, these classes can help little ones develop their language and motor skills.

Please call Heather at (617) 354-8807 to sign up or to find out more information.

## Lesbian Dating Event

Back by popular demand, the Women's Center will be holding a second Lesbian Dating event on June 23<sup>rd</sup> (*specific time and location to be determined*). Our first was a wonderful success with over 50 women participating. The Women's Center was overflowing and buzzing with women eager to meet friends and potential dates. Women reported back that they loved being able to meet other single women in a comfy environment without alcohol and cigarettes.

In case you've never heard of speed dating, here's how it works: initially, everyone is assigned to different rooms on the basis of age (under 30, 30-45, over 45). Every five minutes, you switch and talk to a different woman. If she strikes your fancy, you write her name down on a card. Several 15-20 minute breaks are scheduled where everyone can mingle and eat snacks. This way, if a cutie catches your eye who isn't in your room or you aren't matched with her, you can make your move. Each woman should formally meet at least 12 other women, most from the age group you selected.

The next day, we will email or call everyone with mutual matches (meaning that she has to write down your name, and you, hers). After that, it is up to you to set up a date.

To improve the registration process, we're having everyone pay and register beforehand. Tickets can be purchased at New Words or at the Women's Center for \$20 beginning June 1st. You may also mail in your check to Dating Party, The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Cambridge, MA 02139. We need to know the age group you want to be placed in. Call (617) 354-8807 or email [dating-party@hotmail.com](mailto:dating-party@hotmail.com) for more information.





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

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of: \_\_\_\$25 \_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\$100 \_\_\_\$500 \_\_\_other \$ \_\_\_  
\_\_\_ I'm interested in volunteering at the Women's Center.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank You!*

If you'd prefer to be taken off of our mailing list, please check the following box and return to the Women's Center.  (Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139)

### Save Trees and Save Us Money

We're hoping to become technologically-savvy enough to post our newsletter on our webpage and notify you to check it out via email. This would save us a whole lotta time and money. If you would prefer to access your newsletter in this format, please email [newsletter@cambridgewomenscenter.org](mailto:newsletter@cambridgewomenscenter.org) with your name and current mailing address. Hopefully, we will put this in place by this coming September.



### Fun Night

Poetry, games, potlucks, music and more! Many of you have told us you want a fun, social event open to all women. WE HEARD YOU! We thought that was a fantabulous idea, so on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month we're keeping the doors open 'til 10pm and having a free night of frivolity. Now we need YOUR HELP. We have held *Words of Fire* and a *Women's Game Night* for the past few months and they have been a huge success. But we need new ideas and new women to take charge. So if you are inspired with some great social idea and have some energy to organize it, give Lynn or Heather a call at (617) 354-8807.

The Women's Center  
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Cambridge, MA 02139

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Fall 2002

## WHAT THE "T" DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW Women of Action (WOA) Speak Out

*Women of Action leader, Erin Hazard talks with Lynn Murray, WOA organizer about their transit justice campaign against the MBTA.*

**Lynn Murray:** *In the last newsletter (April 2002), Women of Action had just formed and you were trying to decide what issue to work on. What made you decide to pick the MBTA ("T") as a target?*

**EH:** We decided that our problem with the "T" was easy to understand and that our issues were clear cut. Not to mention that every member of Women of Action had gone through it. We've all been left at a bus stop while waiting with our kids in strollers. We've all been told there's no room on the bus because we have a stroller. And unfortunately, we've all had to ride in those filthy elevators or as my five year old likes to call them, "flying piss boxes."

**LM:** *Tell me about meeting with the "T" to discuss your issues.*

**EH:** Well, first of all, it wasn't easy bringing them to the table. We contacted them in May and didn't meet

with them until July. We made repeated attempts to schedule a meeting with them and they kept putting us off. We were getting the message that we weren't a priority: first they rejected every date we proposed, and when we did set a date, they canceled twice, saying "something had come up." Well, we were fed up. So instead of continuing to play the re-scheduling game, we told them we were going to step back and explore other options. That's when they changed their tune and offered to come to us the following week.

On July 15<sup>th</sup> all members of Women of Action met with Anne Herzenberg, Chief Operating Officer of the MBTA, Jeff Parker, Director of Subways, and Steve Epps, Director of Buses. Considering how they weren't really taking us seriously at all, we were sure we were going to be met by lower-ranking representatives. I think we were all pleased that the top officials at the "T" came

**LM:** *What did you want to get out of that meeting?*

**EH:** We had three demands that we wanted them to sign into MBTA policy:

- 1) We wanted a policy stating that women and children wouldn't be left at bus stops.
- 2) We wanted a policy stating that women would have access to the back lift upon request.
- 3) We wanted a policy stating

that all MBTA elevators would be cleaned and sanitized every day. They are visibly filthy and smell horrible. We also want an accountability system, like the checklists you see in McDonalds' bathrooms, that shows when and how often the elevators are cleaned.

**LM:** *Pretty specific demands, how did they react?*

**EH:** Steve Epps, the head of buses, said he agreed with the spirit of our first two concerns, but he wouldn't sign anything. He told us that our demands were already "T" policy, which surprised us. If it's "T" policy, either the drivers don't know their own rules or they are intentionally discriminating against mothers.

**LM:** *Did you get to see copies of these policies?*

**EH:** We got them in the mail within a couple of weeks. One of the Bus Operators' Rules stated that drivers are **required** to lower the lift for **anyone** who requests use of it, regardless of disability, and they are not allowed to ask questions about why you need it. There's also a rule stating that no person should be left at a bus stop and that women cannot be refused transportation because they have a baby carriage, folded or unfolded.

During that meeting, we asked the T officials flat-out why people don't know that they have these rights. They told us point-blank, "we don't want

*(Continued on page 2)*

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## On Our Way

Is the newsletter of the Women's Center, published 3 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 tools and resources they need to emerge from abuse, discrimination, addiction, sexism and racism, harassment, social isolation, violence, poverty, or other injustice*

*to challenge and change attitudes and actions which subjugate women.*



### Volunteers

*The Women's Center gratefully acknowledges the ongoing efforts and contributions of our volunteers.*

*Thank you for giving so generously of your time and of yourselves.*

The Women's Center relies on the generosity of the community to provide our wealth of free programming.

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

email:

[info@cambridgewomenscenter.org](mailto:info@cambridgewomenscenter.org)

Hours:

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

## WHAT THE "T" DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW

*(Continued from page 1)*  
people to know."

**LM:** *They actually said that?*

**EH:** Yes, they did! They claimed that too many people demanding access would throw off their schedules. As if the schedules are perfectly maintained in the first place. We're making it our job to get the word out. Imagine: we started this fight to obtain certain rights, when they are already on the books but nobody knows. So our focus becomes informing people of the rights they already have, which means we're doing the job the "T" is paid to do.

**LM:** *It seems like you're ahead with your first two demands. What about the third, clean elevators?*

**EH:** Well, that was a different story. Jeffrey Parker, Director of Subways, claims that elevators are cleaned every day. He dismissed our suggestion of a checklist, saying that any sort of list would be vandalized. We asked for his ideas on some sort of accountability system. He had none. What he did have was a bunch of excuses about how hard it is to document when the elevators are cleaned: for example, the cleaners can't read English to fill out any sort of form or checklist. He also said elevators can never "really" get clean because they are so old. We're not asking for elevators to smell like home baked bread, but you shouldn't have to hold your breath and place your body over your child's face just so you can ride without feeling sick. It's ridiculous.

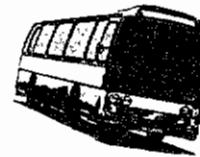
**LM:** *So, do you feel that you got anywhere at all on that issue?*

**EH:** It's slow going, but yes. This week Parker mailed us copies of internal memos that he'd circulated within the "T" after our meeting, about improving supervision of elevator cleaning and some new odor-fighting product they are using. So there's progress, but not enough for us. He's

still avoiding the issue of accountability to the riders.

**LM:** *What's your next step in this campaign?*

**EH:** I don't know what they were thinking when they told us "we don't want people to know," but it served as motivation for us. Women have a right to know, and we're going to make sure it happens! We're also going to continue the fight for cleaner, sanitized elevators.



**LM:** *So you're not giving up on the elevator issue?*

**EH:** Give up? Absolutely not. It's nice that they have a new citrus odor fighter, but that's not enough. We need to know when, if, and how often the elevators are cleaned. I'm confident that we'll get what we want. We just need to continue to organize and bring more and more women into the group so we can be stronger.

**LM:** *Speaking of that, what about women who are reading this and have experienced these problems with public transportation? What should they do?*

**EH:** They should stand up and act! We need all the help we can get. Every woman who is sick of this treatment should contact WOA and join us in the fight! They should also contact the MBTA and complain whenever they experience discrimination. The number to MBTA Customer Service is 617-222-5215.

*Women of Action meet three times a month: the first Thursday from 6-8pm and the second and fourth Saturday from 11am-1pm. Childcare is available if you call in advance. For more information contact Lynn at 617-354-6394.*





# Goodbye from Heather

After three years filled with excitement, challenge, learning, and inspiration, I am leaving my position as Volunteer Coordinator to attend the Risk & Prevention Program at Harvard in September. While I am thrilled to return to school, I must admit that I am saddened at leaving the Center at a time when so many wonderful and vibrant programs are taking shape.

Since I began working at the Center, we have developed a computer program where women can have free access and training in English and Spanish; a free mother-child art class for women with toddlers; a community organizing program for low-income women; frequent political action gatherings where women can learn about issues and make their voices heard; and a social night where women can come together and simply have fun.

All of these vibrant programs have created new volunteer opportunities and I've been continually amazed at the generosity of heart and spirit of so many women in the community. I've met literally hundreds of women who have been willing to do anything from cleaning the fridge, to answering emotional support calls, to teaching women how to search the Internet.

The Women's Center has been able to not only exist but thrive for over thirty years because of the tremendous contributions and commitment of volunteers. I feel lucky to have been able to take part in such a wonderful history.

~Heather

# Best Wishes to Heather

This fall, Heather Searles, our Volunteer Coordinator of the past three years, leaves us to pursue a Master's Degree at the Harvard School of Education.

Those of you who frequent the Center probably recognize Heather - by sight if not by name. She is the curly redhead who greets newcomers with a smile, constantly jokes with the many volunteers and visitors of the Center, and holds the periodic Game Night, which has become so popular.

Behind the scenes, she's done so much more. At a time of tremendous growth in the Center's programming, Heather went "above and beyond." She coordinated the Computer and Internet Access and Training Program, developed computer training for Spanish speaking women, provided support to the Mother/Child Art Project, and joined in organizing the first Dating Games at the Center - all the while developing strong volunteer outreach and training programs.

Heather, we thank you for all that you've accomplished. We'll miss your cheerful countenance and quiet competence in the day-to-day. Good luck in all that you do!

~Mary Quinn

# Liquid Poets Opens New Season

This summer Liquid Poets shared some wonderful writing and came up with fun new inspirational activities to get our pens, minds, and hearts going strong. Who knew poetry writing could make you laugh, cry... and even dance a little when the beat is strong? We have welcomed some new members and said goodbye to Sarah, the original founder of Liquid Poets. Christine and I will be leading the group this year, and we are excited about all the reading, writing, and sharing to come. We have many new ideas for the group, including the possibility of holding informal mini open mikes, to encourage some of the more stage-fearing poets to go public! We have a small group of friendly and talented women, of widely varying experience in writing. Some of us have been publishing for years, and others wrote their first poem last week! Sharing is always encouraged, but never a requirement. We hope to see fresh new faces this fall, and are open to new ideas on meeting format. Our first meeting of the season falls on September 11<sup>th</sup>, and thereafter we will meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 7-9pm. Please contact liquidwriters@hotmail.com with questions.

~Madeline Howard



# Foundations and Corporations

A special "thank you" to the foundations and organizations who have contributed \$250 or more between 1/1/02 and 8/31/02.

- Ascential Software, Inc.
- Boston Jewish Community Women's Fund
- Boston Women's Fund
- Cambridge Mustard Seed Foundation
- Charlesbank Real Estate
- City of Cambridge
- Sheila Gamble Cook Fund
- Francis R. Dewing Foundation
- Fleet Matching Gifts Program
- Foundation M
- Hartley Corporation

- Malloy Tsardounis Inc.
- Mind's Eye Yarn
- PipeVine, Inc.
- The R.O.S.E. Fund
- The George and Beatrice Sherman Family Charitable Trust
- The Uniterra Foundation, Inc.
- Verizon Foundation

# Thank You!

**WISH LIST**

- Helpline Volunteers
- Boxes of herbal tea
- Playpen
- Gift Certificate to WB Mason or Staples
- Tampons, Pads
- Xerox paper, white and color
- 3 subject notebooks
- Toys for toddlers

**GROUPS**

**NEW AND FEATURED ACTIVITIES**

**MONDAY**

- Al-Anon for Women (weekly)..... 6-7:30pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors.. 7:30-9pm  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays, Info: Daniella (617) 497-0911)
- \* Lesbian Rap (weekly)..... 7:30-9pm

**TUESDAY**

- \* Bisexual Women's Rap (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays)..... 7:30-9pm
- Coming Out Exploration Group ..... 6:30-8:30pm  
(10 wks beg 9/24). Info: Anna, (617) 547-6240
- Facilitated Mothers' Support Group (forming)..... morning  
[call group facilitator Diane at (617) 876-2139]
- \* Queer Married Women (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays)..... 7:30-9pm  
Info: Dpp1029@aol.com
- Women's Reading Group (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays) ..... 7:30-9:30pm
- Writer's Circle (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays)..... 7-9pm  
Info: Cassandra at (617) 494-2695

**WEDNESDAY**

- Battered Women's Support Group (all Weds, except 3<sup>rd</sup>) 7-9pm
- Healing Circle (weekly)..... 8-9:30pm
- Liquid Poets (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays) ..... 7-9pm  
Info: liquidwriters@hotmail.com
- \* Women Maximizing Abilities Now (WOMAN) ..... 2-3:30pm  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays; for women with disabilities.)  
Info: woman@braintrust.org)
- \* Women Over 40 (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays)..... 7-8:30pm

**THURSDAY**

- 30+ Multicultural Queer Women's Rap (weekly) ..... 7-8:30pm
- Healin' and Dealin' (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays)..... 7-8:30pm  
(for survivors of non-sexual child abuse)  
Info/to register: maureen-b@yahoo.com or (617) 354-8807
- \*Political Action Gathering ("T" Riders' Union), (Oct. 17) .6-8pm
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors  
of Child Sexual Abuse (weekly) ..... 7:30-9:30pm  
(Topic at 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of month, Oct..3: Connections)  
Info: Lillithline@aol.com)

**FRIDAY**

- Critique & Education Art Group (3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays) ..... 6-7:30pm
- • Fun Night (3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays)..... 8-10pm
- Incest Resources Facilitated Discussion for Survivors  
of Child Sexual Abuse (please be on time)..... 6-7:30pm  
(usually first Friday of month, September - June)
- Story Hour (2<sup>nd</sup> Fridays) ..... 7-8pm
- Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA) (3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays).... 6:30-8pm
- \* Women: Exploring our Comic Voices ..... 6-7:30pm  
(2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays; info: cafaye@juno.com)

**SATURDAY**

- \* Coming Out Discussion for Women of all Ages..... 11am-1pm  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays except holiday weekends)
- Support for Women Who Have Partners Coming Out  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays; Robyn at (617) 522-5694)..... 11:15am-1pm
- \* Women of Action (WOA) (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays)..... 11am-1pm  
Info/childcare: Lynn, (617) 354-6394

\* Wheelchair Accessible

All activities are free and open to women

**FREE COMPUTER & INTERNET ACCESS:** Four computers are available on a first come, first served basis

**FREE CHILDCARE:** If given four days notice, we do our best to provide free childcare for women attending groups and workshops Info: (617) 354-8807

**\*9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CAMBRIDGE WOMEN'S HEALTH DAY.** Saturday, Oct. 5, 10:30am-3pm, Lesley University, 1815 Mass Ave., Cambridge. Choose 2 workshops from 14, including Stress Reduction, Chi Gong, Low Impact Aerobics, Safety/Self-Defense, Self-Massage, Aging and Acupuncture. Add lunch, massages, health screenings, informational tables, and childcare. It's all free. Info: Judy Norris at (617)354-8807.

**30+ MULTICULTURAL QUEER WOMENS' RAP.** Thursdays, 7-8:30pm. A social group for queer women from all cultural backgrounds, designed to build community and break down barriers. We'll discuss topics that address our differences and similarities. Be prepared for lively debate! See topics below. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**COMING OUT EXPLORATION GROUP.** 10 week group will meet Tuesdays beginning September 24, 6:30-8:30pm. Anna Tarquinio facilitates this group. Members discuss any issues they have around coming out. Info, call Anna at (617)547-6240.

**\*CRITIQUE AND EDUCATION ART GROUP,** Friday, October 18, 6-7:30pm (3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays). A self-directed ongoing group for visual artists (2D and 3D). The group's purpose is to provide members the opportunity to explore their interests, and to encourage and provide feedback on work. Not a therapy group. For women with some art background who are producing work. Info: Kai at (617) 547-1438.

**NOTHING TOO HEAVY TO SHARE (NTHTS).** For survivors of extreme abuse, such as torture, forced isolation, severe neglect or sexual exploitation. One daytime group and a new evening meeting each week. Info/to join: Esther (781) 278-0997.

**\*POLITICAL ACTION GATHERING.** Thursday, October 17, 6-8pm. Presentation by the "T" Riders' Union. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**\*WOMEN: EXPLORING OUR COMIC VOICES,** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays, 6-7:30pm. If you love writing, directing, and performing comedy, or would love to try, please join us! Skits, improv, stand up, group feedback. A place to safely explore your comic voice and have fun. Info, Faye at cafaye@juno.com, or call (617) 354-8807.

**\*WOMEN OF ACTION (WOA) ORGANIZING MEETINGS,** Oct. 12 & 26, 11am-1pm (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays). WOA welcomes women of color and/or low-income women to join together to fight for justice. For info, or if you need childcare, call Lynn at (617) 354-6394.

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

**30+ MULTICULTURAL QUEER WOMENS'S RAP** Thurs. 7-8:30pm  
 October 3 Marriage in the Queer Community  
 10 Spending Quality Time with your Partner  
 17 No Meeting - Women's Week  
 24 Communicating with Lesbian Friends

**\*LESBIAN RAP** Mondays, 7:30-9pm  
 October 7 Game night - bring games.  
 Celebrate Canadian Thanksgiving  
 21 Escaping Lesbian Psychodrama  
 28 Ice cream social (Optional costume/drag).

**\*BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP.** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm  
 October 1 Gender identity; cross-dressing, role-playing; transexuality  
 15 What's goin' on? Talk about personal issues as they relate to bisexuality, or just listen

**\*WOMEN OVER 40,** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays., 7-8:30pm  
 October 9 Age differences in relationships  
 23 Menopause and physical changes

**INCEST RESOURCES' FACILITATED DISCUSSION FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** (1<sup>st</sup> Fridays, 6-7:30pm)  
 (Please be on time)

October 4 The healing process  
 November 1 Religion and abuse  
 December 6 Self-care and self-soothing

## Fall Political Action Gatherings

**T-Riders Union - Thursday, October 17, 6:30pm-8pm**

Khalida Smalls, a leader from the T-Riders Union (TRU), will speak about the organization, its current campaigns and how one can get involved in working towards transit justice and equality. Come to this political action gathering to gain knowledge, share experiences and ideas and learn ways we can take action to improve our public transportation.

The T-Riders Union is a membership organization of transit riders in Greater Boston. TRU is concerned about the MBTA policies that affect riders in low income neighborhoods and communities of color. In addition, TRU is a project of Clean Buses for Boston (CBB), and concerned with MBTA's pollution issues, mainly Diesel exhaust which can trigger asthma attacks and cause cancer.

### **Welfare Rights for Immigrant Women - November, date TBA**

In collaboration with the Cooperative Economics for Women, students from Northeastern University's Law Clinic will give a workshop discussing the welfare rights of immigrant women. We encourage all women to take part in this political action gathering because welfare rights, particularly of immigrant women, are currently under attack. Due to budget cuts, 1,500 legal immigrants in Massachusetts will stop receiving state welfare checks starting this September. Learn more about this issue and how you can take action.

"CEW is an organization dedicated to empowering women through income generating projects, advocacy, and organizing. We help immigrant and refugee women of color start cooperative businesses, while providing and advocating for services necessary to womens' survival: food security, English literacy, legal assistance, and child care. CEW also assists co-op members and associate members in organizing for changes in their communities." (<http://www.co-opwomen.org>) ~ Nuala Cabral



## From the Development Coordinator

Hello! My name is Nicole Marcotte, and I am the new Development Coordinator at the Women's Center. I am very excited to continue my involvement with the Women's Center by creating and managing its fundraising campaigns! As both the public policy intern during the summer of 2000 and a participant in various groups and activities at the Women's Center, I was impressed by the variety and the quality of resources that the Women's Center provides for all women. I am continuously inspired by the commitment of so many women to the development and maintenance of a progressive space for women. My goal as Development Coordinator is to raise funds to maintain and expand the existing resources available at the Women's Center and develop new resources in order to meet the needs of women. With your support and the support of the surrounding community, we can achieve this goal! We welcome your participation in the fundraising process. If you would like to make a donation to the Women's Center or have any questions or ideas about our fundraising campaigns and events, please feel free to contact me at 617-354-6394 or via email at [DevelopmentCoordinator@cambridgewomenscenter.org](mailto:DevelopmentCoordinator@cambridgewomenscenter.org).

Together, we can make a difference in our own lives and the lives of so many women! I look forward to working with all those involved in the Women's Center to continue its legacy and contribute to its progression in the upcoming years.

~Nicole



**Support The Women's Center**

By

**Honoring a Friend or Loved One with a Gift to the Women's Center**

## Critique and Discussion Art Group

I wanted to participate in a group with other women artists who were currently working on their art. Although I am always working, I find that sometimes I get stuck and would like another perspective, or I have hit up against my limits technically, or I just need to talk about what I'm trying to do with someone who can understand. So, I looked around Cambridge and found nothing that fit the bill.

I've taken lots of classes and also have a BA in art. I am always working to improve my technical skills which, let's face it, is a life time pursuit, but after years of classes what I really want is a network of artists. Don't get me wrong, more lessons may be in my future, but thought I'd also like to approach learning and growing from another side. Thought it would be a great idea to try and form a group that not only critiqued each other's work but also investigated different media and techniques together, visited museums, and just encouraged each other in our discovery. The group will on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month from 6:30-7:30. Our first meeting is September 20<sup>th</sup>. ~Kai Long

## Décor 'n You

Professional designers from Community Interiors are helping redecorate the Women's Center. For thirty years the 46 Pleasant Street building has united women seeking education, resources, empathy and empowerment. Positive environments foster personal and collective action. Help keep the Center's mission alive by revitalizing rooms for another generation of women. Expertise and referrals for free carpentry, electrical work, plumbing, upholstery and painting are needed, as well as volunteers to solicit donations of money and materials. Women of color are strongly encouraged to participate. Please call me at (617) 354-5651 to get involved or give input.

~Nan Genger, Founder/Designer, Community Interiors.



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

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of: \_\_\_\$25 \_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\$100 \_\_\_\$500 \_\_\_other \$ \_\_\_  
\_\_\_ I'm interested in volunteering at the Women's Center.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank You !*

If you'd prefer to be taken off of our mailing list, please check the following box and return to the Women's Center.  (Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139)

**9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CAMBRIDGE WOMEN'S HEALTH DAY  
"CARING FOR OURSELVES"**

**Saturday, October 5, 2002, 10:30am-3pm**, at Lesley University, 1815 Mass Ave. (Porter Exchange). Come on over and put your own well-being first for a day! Choose 2 workshops from about 15, including: Tai Chi, Stress Reduction, Aging, Low-Impact Aerobics, Safety/Self-Defense, Reiki, Writing for Your Health, Transformational Breath, Health Issues for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse, Intuitive Eating & Body Awareness, Self-Massage, Exercising for Improved Health and Hip Hop. Add a free lunch, information-filled tables, "sample" acupuncture minitreatments, massages, health screenings and childcare,. And it's all free! Wheelchair Accessible.

Help! If you could help with meal prep, getting food, childcare, cleanup, or something else, please contact Lenore at (617) 868-2900 or [ltsikitas@ceocambridge.org](mailto:ltsikitas@ceocambridge.org), or Judy Norris, (617) 354-8807.

Sponsored by the Women's Center, the Cambridge Women's Commission, CEOC, Abortion Action Project, Concilio Hispano, Lesley University, Cambridge Housing, Mount Auburn Hospital, Cambridge Health Alliance. *~Judy Norris*

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

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# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

December 2002

## WE DID IT!!!

Women of Action celebrates their first victory against the MBTA! Finally, mothers and children will ride in cleaner elevators.

Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, the MBTA announced a pilot program where janitors will patrol elevators at 23 stations. As part of the program, T workers will inspect the elevators every two hours and clean and disinfect them every four hours. The pilot program will be conducted at one Blue Line Station, one Green Line Station, 14 Orange Line Stations, and 8 Red Line Stations. This program comes after months of organizing by Women of Action members. If the program is successful it will be expanded to all of the T's 109 elevators.

Women of Action are still organizing to convince the "T" to publicize women's rights to access the wheelchair lift upon request and to board with a stroller without hassle.

Many thanks to all women who continue to struggle with us.

If you would like more information about the group, contact Lynn at (617) 354-6394.



## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

What a year! The Women's Center is busier than ever. We continue to expand our programming and services. The results are phenomenal, as we meet the needs of a broader spectrum of women. In fact, if you come by just before 11AM on a Saturday morning, you'll see a line of women waiting out front for the opening hour.

One of our newer projects, Women of Action (WOA) fought for and won their first major victory – forcing the MBTA to develop a better cleaning system for elevators. WOA obtained great media coverage on this issue. In addition, WOA members received training in: campaign strategy development; working with the media; and writing a press release. Members developed new skills and quickly put them to use.

Nicole Marcotte, Development Coordinator and Eunice Espinal, Volunteer and Latina Outreach Coordinator, joined our staff this Fall.

Both jumped into their jobs with gobs of gusto. Already planned are new fundraising projects and extensive Latina outreach efforts.

We are excited about the efforts of the All Communities Present (ACP) Committee, a group working hard to promote more diversity at the Center. The ACP is committed to making the Center more "child friendly" and, therefore, mom friendly. Building on this commitment, the Center provides child yoga to the children of *Women of Action* during some of their meetings. (It's amusing to watch the children demonstrate their yoga positions after each session.) In addition, the ACP is holding a series of focus groups for women of color. If the first is any indication of what's to come, we will learn much about what must change at the Center for it to be a truly multi-cultural organization.

After years of debate and community input, the Women's Center expanded its policy to include all those who identify and choose to be identified by others full time as women. This was a controversial decision and the Women's Center is making a great effort to make the transition as smooth as possible.

In 2002, the Women's Center provided Financial Empowerment Workshops, which women continue to request. We co-organized the Cambridge Women's Health Day - an enormous success. We held monthly Political Action Gatherings, covering

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## On Our Way

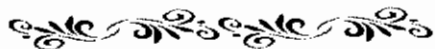
Is the newsletter of the Women's Center, published 3 times per year in April, September, and December.

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*Thank you for giving so generously of your time and of yourselves.*

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Saturday: 11am-4pm

Helpline: (617) 354-8807

(Continued from page 1)

topics ranging from freedom to marry to cuts in MassHealth. One of our newest groups, Transforming Lives: using what you know to change what you do began only a few weeks ago, and already participants are asking if we'll run it again. The Mother Child Art Project, which is held at the YWCA, entertained mothers and their toddlers throughout the year, while assisting in the development of each child's fine motor skills. And, of course, the Center continued to provide computer and Internet Access, numerous support groups, educational workshops, and several social events.

Amidst all of these new programs, we began a redecorating and de-cluttering project to make the Center a more comfortable, pleasant, and current environment.

In the coming year, we plan to start a capital campaign so that we may completely renovate the basement. Changing, updating, growing – the Women's Center continues to amaze!

~ Mary Quinn

### Therapists Needed or Need a Therapist?

Are you a low-income woman without insurance in need of a therapist  
or are you a therapist looking for an opportunity to volunteer?

**Call the Women's Counseling  
&  
Resource Center at  
(617) 492-8568**



We may have what you need.

## Childcare Volunteers Needed

Do you like being with children? Lots more moms are using the Women's Center these days, and we need volunteers to watch their children, do activities (games, art projects...), eat pizza, etc. Sometimes there are several children, and we need a couple of volunteers; other times there are 1-3 children, and one volunteer would work just fine. Women of Action (meets two Saturdays and one Thursday evening each month) and the Wednesday night Battered Women's group are groups that usually need childcare.

Please call Eunice at (617) 354-6394 if you're interested in doing childcare. You can make a regular commitment, or come in once in awhile. If you enjoy children and would like to help out their mothers, this may be for you.



### VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Thursday, December 12,  
6:30-8pm

Come learn about the Women's Center and all of our fabulous volunteer opportunities.

Call Eunice at (617) 354-6394 if you want more information

# Hola from Eunice

Hola my name is Eunice Espinal, the new Latina Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator for the Women's Center. I have always wanted to work for an organization such as this one. Finally my education and multicultural background has paid off.

I'm glad I made a change of job, a change of career if I may say. I was a Medical Spanish Interpreter and Coordinator for the language department at Faulkner Hospital. At the same time, I was working on a part-time basis for Boston Medical Center also as a Medical Spanish Interpreter.

Here at the Women's Center I bring my knowledge and the extensive experience that I have developed throughout my years as an Interpreter with many different cultures. I'm so excited to finally be working as a Latina Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator. My goals for the Women's Center is to keep it as strong as it has been but with a little bit of Latina Touch...

If you have feed back, questions, concerns, or thoughts that you think might be helpful or beneficial to this program, please feel free to contact me at the Women's Center.

I'm glad and proud to be part of a group of women that care so much for our community.

-Eunice Espinal



What the T doesn't want you to know

*Have you been passed by because there was "no room" for your baby carriage?*

*Have you been told that you have to fold up your stroller in order to ride?*

**MBTA policy forbids these discriminatory practices but doesn't want to inform women of their rights.**

Women of Action is passing along this information to you.

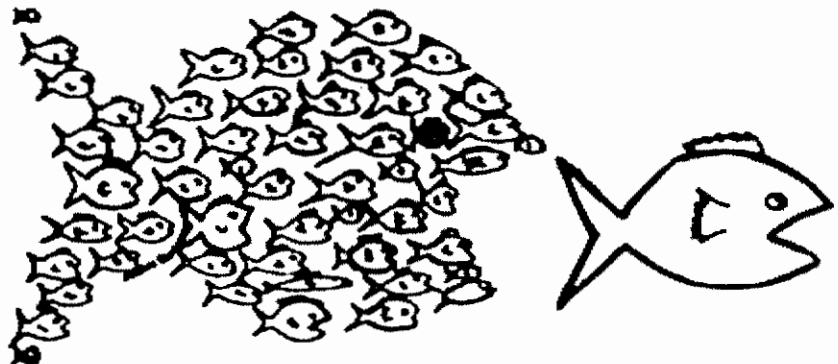
- 1) You have the right to use the wheelchair lift upon request, no questions asked.
- 2) You have the right to clean, sanitary elevator service.
- 3) You have the right to board the bus without hassle or harassment.

*For more information call Lynn at 617-354-6394.*

*The picture and text above are from a postcard created and distributed as part of WOMEN OF ACTION's campaign to confront and change the MBTA's discriminatory treatment of mothers with children in strollers and others denied access to the T. Women of Action meets three times a month: the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday from 6-8pm and the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday from 11am-1pm. Childcare is available if you call in advance. For more information, or before attending your first meeting, contact Lynn at 617-354-6394.*

## WISH LIST

- Office chairs
- Clean rugs
- Kid's computer software
- Coloring books
- Gift Certificates to Pearl Art, Staples, Crate & Barrel, etc.
- Office Supplies (copy paper, pens, notebooks, etc.)
- New child safety gate
- Tea, coffee, honey, etc.



# ORGANIZE!

# WOMEN'S CENTER CALENDAR - WINTER 2002/2003

46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA - free & open to women - Info & helpline: (617) 354-8807

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## GROUPS

### MONDAY

- Al-Anon for Women (weekly) ..... 6-7:30pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors . 7:30-9pm  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays, Info: Daniella (617) 497-0911)
- \* Lesbian Rap (weekly) ..... 7:30-9pm

### TUESDAY

- \* Bisexual Women's Rap (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays)..... 7:30-9pm  
Info: [lucylizard@yahoo.com](mailto:lucylizard@yahoo.com)
- Coming Out Exploration Group ..... 6:30-8:30pm  
(10 weeks, begins 3/4/2003). Info: Anna, (617) 547-6240
- Facilitated Mothers' Support Group (forming) ..... morning  
(to join, call group facilitator Diane at (617) 876-2139)
- \* Queer Married Women (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays) ..... 7:30-9pm  
Info: [Dpp1029@aol.com](mailto:Dpp1029@aol.com)
- Women's Reading Group (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays) ..... 7:30-9:30pm  
No meeting in Dec. Info: Mary, [mary.sifferden@verizon.net](mailto:mary.sifferden@verizon.net)
- Writer's Circle (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays) ..... 7-9pm  
Info: Cassandra at (617) 494-2695

### WEDNESDAY

- Battered Women's Support Group (all Weds, except 3<sup>rd</sup>) 7-9pm
- Healing Circle (wkly). Info: [ashanti.om@angelfire.com](mailto:ashanti.om@angelfire.com).. 8-9:30pm
- Liquid Poets (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays)..... 7-9pm  
Info: Christine, [liquidwriters@hotmail.com](mailto:liquidwriters@hotmail.com)
- \*Oriental Medicine, Acupuncture & Women's Health  
Wednesday, December 11 ..... 7:30-8:30pm.
- \* Women Maximizing Abilities Now (WOMAN)..... 2-3:30pm  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays; for women with disabilities.)  
Info: [woman@braintrust.org](mailto:woman@braintrust.org)

### THURSDAY

- \* Anika Nailah Reading from her book, Free ..... 6:30-8:30pm  
Thursday, January 30
- 30+ Multicultural Lesbian Rap (weekly) ..... 7-8:30pm
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors  
of Child Sexual Abuse (weekly)..... 7:30-9:30pm  
(Topic at 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of month. Info: [Lilithlive@aol.com](mailto:Lilithlive@aol.com))
- Volunteer Orientation (December 12) ..... 6:30-8pm  
Info: Eunice, (617) 354-6394.

### FRIDAY

- Critique & Education Art Group (12/20, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays).. 6-7:30pm  
Info: Kai, (617) 547-1438.
- Incest Resources Facilitated Discussion for Survivors  
of Child Sexual Abuse (please be on time) ..... 6-7:30pm  
(usually first Friday of month, September - June)
- Story Hour (2<sup>nd</sup> Fridays) Read, hear children's stories.. 7-8pm
- Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA) (3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays) ... 6:30-8pm

### SATURDAY

- \* Coming Out Discussion for Women of all Ages ..... 11am-1pm  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays except holiday weekends)
- \* Women of Action (WOA) (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays) ..... 11am-1pm  
Please call before attending your first meeting,  
and if you need childcare: Lynn, (617) 354-6394

### \* Wheelchair Accessible groups

The Women's Center closes at 3pm on Tues. 12/24; is closed Wed., 12/25; closes at 4pm on Tues., 12/31; and is closed 1/1/03.

All activities are free and open to women

**FREE CHILDCARE:** With 4 days notice, we can usually find a someone to do free childcare while you attend a group or workshop. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**FREE COMPUTER & INTERNET ACCESS:** Four computers are available on a first come, first served basis when the Women's Center is open - Monday-Thursday: 10am-10pm, Friday: 10am-8pm and Saturday: 11am-4pm

### Childcare Volunteers Needed!

We have lots of requests for childcare from moms who would like to attend meetings here. Can you help?  
Call Eunice, (617) 354-6394.

## NEW AND FEATURED ACTIVITIES

**30+ MULTICULTURAL LESBIAN RAP.** Most Thursdays, 7-8:30pm. For lesbians over 30 of all cultural backgrounds. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**ANIKA NAILAH READING.** Thursday, January 30, 6:30-8:30pm, Anika Nailah will read from her book of short stories, *FREE*. Her stories show the "cost" of survival in racist America and the astonishing "triumph" of moments of love and victory. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**COMING OUT EXPLORATION GROUP.** Tuesdays, beginning in March, 2003. 10 week group. Info/to register: Anna, (617)547-6240.

**NOTHING TOO HEAVY TO SHARE (NTHTS).** For survivors of extreme abuse, such as torture, forced isolation, severe neglect or sexual exploitation. One daytime meeting and an evening meeting each week (come to either/both). Info/to join: Esther (781) 278-0997.

**\*ORIENTAL MEDICINE, ACUPUNCTURE & WOMEN'S HEALTH.** Wednesday, December 11, 7:30-8:30pm. Oriental medicine views health as a constantly changing flow of energy (Qi). Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs can rebalance the flow of energy, treating conditions such as PMS, irregular menstruation, infertility & fibroids. With practitioners Julie Corwin & Sheila Fay. Info: (617) 354-8807.

**\*STORY HOUR.** Friday, December 13, 7-8pm. Theme: Hanukkah, Kwanzaa & Christmas stories. Come share a favorite story (or excerpt). Please keep to 10 minutes or less. Children over 5 are welcome. Light refreshments will be served. Info: (617) 354-8807

**\*VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION.** Thursday, Dec. 12, 6:30-8pm. Want to make a difference? Support women by listening to them and giving resource information. Staff the phones 2 hours/week, or every other week. We provide training & back-up. No experience needed. We ask for a 6-month commitment. Info: Eunice, (617) 354-6394.

**\*WOMEN OF ACTION (WOA) ORGANIZING MEETINGS,** Dec. 14 & 28, 11am-1pm (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays). WOA welcomes women of color and/or low-income women to join together to fight for justice. Before attending the first time, or for childcare: Lynn, (617) 354-6394.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

**30+ MULTICULTURAL LESBIAN RAP** Most Thursdays, 7-8:30pm  
December 12 Going Out for a Holiday Dinner  
January 16 Dating and Building Relationships  
23 Friends/Ex-partners  
30 Gay Marriages

**\*LESBIAN RAP** Mondays, 7:30-9pm  
December 16 Yankee Swap/Tacky Gift Exchange (\$5 limit)  
23 Religion, Spirituality & Dykiness  
30 Funny Childhood Stories

**\*BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP.** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm  
December 17 I'll be Bi for the Holidays  
January 7 What Does Being Bi Mean to You?  
21 Casual Relationships: Horrible or Helpful?

**INCEST RESOURCES' FACILITATED DISCUSSION FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (1<sup>st</sup> Fridays, 6-7:30pm)**  
(Please be on time)

January 3 Goals and Change  
February 7 Authority Issues  
March 7 Compulsions/Addictions

**THURSDAY NIGHT GATHERING FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** - Weekly, with a topic at first meeting each month  
January 2 Abandonment & Separation. Info: [Lilithlive@aol.com](mailto:Lilithlive@aol.com)

Please do not wear perfumes or strong scents at the Women's Center.



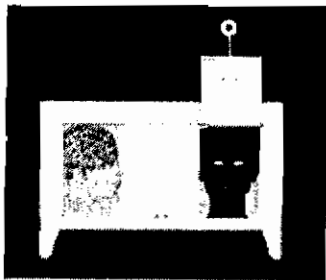
## Anika Nailah Reading

On Thursday, January 30, from 6:30-8:30pm, Anika Nailah will read from *FREE*, her book of fourteen short stories. *FREE* illustrates the emotional, physical, and social realities that control and sometimes devastate the lives of African Americans in this society. Her stories demonstrate both the "cost" of survival in racist America and the astonishing "triumph" of moments of love and victory amidst such oppression. The New York Book Review of Fiction described *FREE* as, "breathhtaking" and Nailah as possessing "insight and inward beauty."

In addition to her standing as a fine writer, Anika Nailah also acts as director of Books of Hope, a program that encourages young people to write and self-publish their own books. Ms. Nailah lives in Massachusetts.

Join us for a reading by and discussion with Anika Nailah.

# Free



ANIKA NAILAH

## Oriental Medicine & Acupuncture

Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture: Addressing Women's Health. Wednesday, December 11, 7:30 - 8:30pm.

Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture are effective modalities for treating women's health issues. Oriental Medicine is a holistic system of medicine which views health as a constantly changing flow of energy (Qi). As it relates to women's health,



this flow can be upset by physical or emotional problems, which present as symptoms such as irregular menstruation, PMS, infertility, fibroids, menopausal symptoms, and others. Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs can rebalance the flow of energy in the body and mind, thereby effectively treating these conditions.

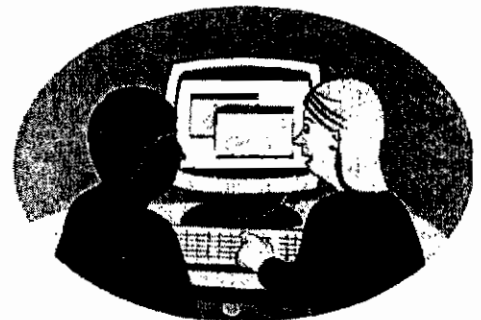
We invite you to come with your questions and curiosities and learn more about this ancient and effective medicine and how it can benefit your health. The presenters, Julie Corwin and Sheila Fay, both hold master's degrees from the New England School of Acupuncture, are recognized as Diplomates of Acupuncture by the National Accreditation Board and are licensed to practice by the Massachusetts Board of Medicine. Julie brings to her practice strong skills as a practitioner and a joyful personal style. Sheila is licensed to practice Chinese herbal medicine as well as acupuncture, and loves to help women discover their own healing process.

-Sheila Fay

## Thanks Jim and Germaine!

The Women's Center staff extends a special thank you to volunteers Germaine Wong & Jim Forsythe of SBHN (Solutions: Business, Home, Network) for their invaluable assistance with our Computer Access Program, as well as our other computers. They networked, repaired crashed hard drives, fixed pesky bugs in programs, and secured free replacement parts, and much more!

THANKS GERMAINE & JIM!!! Our computer program couldn't have survived and thrived without you. If any of you want to hire these fine folks, email them at [solutions@sbhn.net](mailto:solutions@sbhn.net) or call them at (617) 969-4841.



**Support The Women's Center**



*By Honoring a Friend or Loved One*

*with a Gift to the Women's Center*



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

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of: \_\_\_\$25 \_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\$100 \_\_\_\$500 \_\_\_other \$ \_\_\_

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank You !*

If you'd prefer to be taken off of our mailing list, please check the following box and return to the Women's Center.  (Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139)

## Volunteer Here!

*Here's how you can help the Women's Center.....become a volunteer!*

**Staffing:** Staff the center, greet and assist women and answer support and resource calls.

**General Office and Resource Maintenance:** Make calls to update information, brainstorm new resources, enter on computer, and assimilate into a Resource Binder

**Data Entry and Administrative Volunteers:** Assist staff with letters, reports and databases on a regular basis. Detail-oriented person skilled in Word, Access, and/or using the internet.

**Computer Training:** Share your computer savvy with women one-to-one or in small informal training sessions. Examples could be how to use the internet, how to set up email account, basic introduction to word processing, etc.

**Outreach:** Help out at mailing parties, for the newsletter and other mailings. Distribute flyers.

**Tabling:** Staff a Women's Center table at a public event like International Women's Day, Boston Pride, Cambridge River Festival, etc

**Artwork/Graphics:** Computer graphic design needed for fliers, invitations, etc.

**Special Events:** Help publicize, organize, and produce a special event.

**Help out around the house:** Housecleaning, Shoveling Snow, Painting, Running Errands with Car

**Special Assistance to Women in Need:** Accompany a woman to court, a clinic, other places where she needs support.

**Childcare:** Often needed for evening and Saturday groups.

**Language Translation:** ASL and Spanish

## Foundations and Corporations

*A special "thank you" to the foundations and organizations who have contributed \$250 or more between 11/1/02 and 11/24/02.*

Ascential Software, Inc.  
Boston Jewish Community Women's Fund  
Boston Women's Fund  
Cambridge Mustard Seed Foundation  
Charlesbank Real Estate  
City of Cambridge  
Fleet Matching Gifts Program  
Foundation M  
Francis R. Dewing Foundation  
Hartley Corporation

John Donnelly Trust  
Malloy Tsardounis Inc.  
Mind's Eye Yarn  
PipeVine, Inc.  
The R.O.S.E. Fund  
The George and Beatrice Sherman Family Charitable Trust  
Sheila Gamble Cook Fund  
The Uniterra Foundation, Inc.  
Verizon Foundation

**Thank You!**