

♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

(617) 354-8807
TTY and VOICE



* MARCH '91 *

PARTY



The Women's Center's 20th Birthday Party is on March 23 at the MIT Student Center, 84 Mass Ave, Cambridge. The evening starts at 7pm in the Mezzanine Lounge. A historical exhibit of flyers and other documents of the Women's Liberation Movement will be on display. Speakers will commemorate the Center's history and discuss the future directions of the Women's Movement. They will include Leslie Cagan, National Coordinator for the Emergency Coalition for Peace, Justice and Non-Intervention in the Middle East; Julia Perez, writer, prison reformer, organizer of women in the military, veteran and mother; Diane Balser, Executive Director of the Women's Statewide Legislative Network, formerly active in Bread and Roses, and the originator of the idea to take over 888 Memorial Drive; Demita Frazer, member of the Black Feminist Group, the Combahee River Collective; Saundra Graham, former Cambridge City Councillor & State Legislator; and Tess Ewing, labor activist who was very involved in Bread & Roses, the building takeover, and the formation of the Women's Center.

Poet Karen Lindsev will read from her work; Karen writes for Sojourner and co-authored Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book. Music will be provided by the Sistematic Liberation Singers, an offshoot of the Newwoman's Chorus which rehearsed at the Center for years, and folk/soul singer Marcia Harris who has performed at Crone's Harvest and Christophers. The M.C. for the evening is Katherine Triantafillou, feminist lawyer and author of the Massachusetts Abuse Prevention Act. ASL interpreters will be provided.

This event will be followed by a dance at the Lobdell Cafeteria from 9pm-1am featuring D.J. Claire Frances. Suggested donation for the dance: \$3-\$5. Refreshments, including non-alcoholic beverages, will be available.

Childcare will be provided from 7pm-midnight. The Student Center is completely wheelchair accessible.

Come to learn, come to frolic, come to commemorate a colorful and amazing herstory, come to give tribute to one of the oldest community women's centers in existence.

For more information, or to volunteer to help, call 354-8807.



TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

LESBIAN RAP

Mondays, 8-10pm

- March 4 Ageism
- 11 Book Review
- 18 Night Out At Jillian's, Ipswich
St. Boston, meet there
- 25 Games Night

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30pm

- March 5 Bi-Phobia/Stereotypes
- 12 Rap on rap/group dynamics
- 19 Gay Militancy
- 26 2 in 20 (episodes 3 & 4)

30+ LESBIAN RAP

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm

- March 5 Lesbian Sex
- 12 Open Discussion
- 19 Feelings About the War
- 26 Where/How Do We Find Support

FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR INCEST SURVIVORS

Third Thursday, 7:30-9:15pm

- March 21 Sexuality
- April 18 Intimate Relationships
- May 16 Public Image/Private Selves
- June 20 Body Image/Befriending Our
Bodies

SPECIAL EVENTS

Knowing Herself: Women Tell Their Stories in Psychotherapy. Friday, March 22, 7:30pm.

Therapist/author Joan Hammerman Robbins discusses her new book. Using women's detailed accounts in therapy, Robbins reveals society's part in shaping women's roles and offers fresh understanding for women grappling with changing themselves as well as the culture's constrictions.

THE WOMEN'S CENTER'S 20TH BIRTHDAY

CELEBRATION, Saturday, March 23. MIT Student Center, 84 Mass Ave. Cambridge. Wheelchair accessible, ASL interpreters, childcare provided.
7pm: Speeches, singing, poetry, exhibit. Mezzanine Lounge.
9pm: Dance, Claire Frances, D.J., \$3-\$5 donation. Lobdell Cafeteria.

International Women's Day, a video by Cambridge Women in Cable
Tuesday, March 26, 7-8:30pm.

Compiled from the International Women's Day Video Festival, this video offers perspectives of women from many different cultures. A discussion will follow.

ONGOING GROUPS AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER

SUNDAY

-Women for Sobriety.....2-3:30pm
(starts March 17)

MONDAY

-Support for Battered Women.....7:30-9pm
-Women's NA 12 step.....7:30-9pm
-Lesbian Rap.....8-10pm
-Boston Bisexual Women's Network-Intro
(1st Mon, even #'d months)...7:30-9:30pm
-All Center Meeting (biweekly).....6-8pm
-Reproductive Rights National
Network R2N2 (2nd, 4th Mons.)...7-9:45pm
-Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest
Survivors (1st & 3rd Mon.).....7-8:30pm
-Coming Out As Disabled (3rd Mon.)...7:30-9pm

TUESDAY

-Bisexual Women's Rap.....7:30-9:30pm
-30+ Lesbian Rap.....7-8:30pm
-Video show and discussion
(last Tues., monthly).....7-8:30pm

WEDNESDAY

-Lesbian Al-Anon (childcare).....6:30-8pm
-Writing Support Group.....7:30-9:30pm
-Battered Women's Support Group (Weekly
except 3rd Wed. of month).....7-8:30pm

THURSDAY

-Incest Survivors Discussion
Group (weekly).....7:30-9:30pm
(facilitated 3rd Thursday, Sept.-June)
-Women's Community Cancer Project
(1st Thursday).....7-9pm
-Cancer Support Group
(2nd & 4th Thursday).....7-9pm
-Lesbians Choosing Children Network
(2nd Thurs, monthly).....7:30-10pm

FRIDAY

-Birthmothers (1st & 3rd Fri).... 7-9:30pm
-Incest Survivors Anonymous.....6:30-8pm

SATURDAY

-Women's Writing Group
(biweekly).....noon-2pm
-Open discussion on Coming Out for Women
of All Ages(monthly, 1st Sat)...11am-1pm
-Living Without Cigarettes for Smokers &
Ex-smokers.....noon-1:30pm
-Post-Abortion Support Group.....noon-2pm
(1st, 3rd Sats., starting March 16)

WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS

Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm
Friday 10am - 8pm
Saturday 11am - 2pm

COMING OUT GROUP

As we all celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Women's Center, we wish to also acknowledge the Coming Out Group. For two years, women of all ages, from all backgrounds, and from many geographic areas (including metro Boston, other parts of MA and neighboring states) have consistently gathered together to support each other as we confront coming out issues.

At each group session, held the first Saturday of every month from 11am - 1pm, women who are at different stages of exploring their sexuality have been meeting with two facilitators to openly discuss their fears, hopes and dreams concerning being a lesbian or bisexual. Some women come only once, others come repeatedly. Friendships have developed as well as some relationships.

The group exists and survives because of many factors, one being the bravery and openness of each woman who attends to share a piece of herself and to respect the other women who are present. Another factor is the dedication of the Women's Center staff and volunteers to help inform women about the group. The most important factor has been the commitment of the Women's Center to provide a safe, non-judgemental home for the coming out group to grow in, and for this we wish to say thank you.

To all women of the Coming Out Group and the Women's Center, Happy 2nd and 20th anniversary and congratulations for caring for and supporting each other.

Maria & Cheryl, Coming Out Facilitators

FILM CLASSICS ABOUT WOMEN/MARCH 1991

Film Classics and short documentaries about remarkable women shown FREE at 2pm & 7:30pm at the Brookline Public Library, 361 Washington Street. March 6: Queen Christina with Greta Garbo. Also Lotte Reininger, Filmmaker. March 13, Woman of the Year, comedy with Katherine Hepburn. March 20, Carnival in Flanders, French comedy. Also Grandma Moses, Painter. March 27, Black Narcissus, with Deborah Kerr. Also Matina Horner, Educator.

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CANCER PROJECT

Feminists meet to discuss strategies for political action on cancer issues and to develop support and services for women who have cancer. Thurs., March 7, 7-9pm.

PARTNERS & EXPARTNERS OF INCEST SURVIVORS

I'm sure that there are as many impressions of what our group is like, as there are women who attend it. So what follows are my own impressions as someone who has been coming to the group for several years, and who feels responsible to make sure that it continues.

It is a support group open to any lesbian who either knows or perceives herself to be the partner or lover, or former partner or lover of an incest survivor. Each woman is responsible for getting what she needs out of the group, and I believe that for most women, it is a validating experience. There have been anywhere from four to nine women at a given meeting, and right now there is a core of four of us who have been attending for quite a while.

While we request confidentiality, and make sure that every woman has a chance to speak, the group has a limited structure. Topics are based on what women need to discuss at the time, and we are never at a loss, in an effort to understand this very complex issue.

It also seems to me worthy to note, that while a woman may come to the group for many reasons, I think the underlying element is because she cares. She cares and wants to understand. She cares about someone and about their relationship. She cares enough to attempt to grapple with what may be unresolved or unsolved feelings.

Incest is so prevalent among women, its impact is very pervasive and deep. My own feeling is that since our community is based on our relationships and on our interconnectedness with each other, that when we try to shed light on or understand, we are walking in the direction of healing for our entire community.

SINGLE LESBIAN MOTHERS GROUP

Thank you so much for providing space for us to meet and for our children to play over the last few months. It's made a huge difference for us to be able to get together here every other week, and we really appreciate your generosity in setting aside two meeting rooms for us when there is so much demand for meeting space. We feel very supported as mothers.



MOTHERS GROUP SEEKS NEW MEMBERS & A FACILITATOR

The Mother's Support Group which meets on Fridays from 11am-12:30 is seeking several new members. The group is free of charge; childcare and healthy snacks for the children are provided.

In the meeting group members check in and share how the week has been for them. Out of the check-ins, a topic for discussion emerges. Topics have included limit setting, trying something new, and managing conflict. If you are interested in attending, call the Women's Center at 354-8807 and ask to speak to Alice.

The group has been meeting since October. Initially, Laura Laster volunteered to facilitate the group. More recently, Joan Parish has been the group facilitator. While they each have enjoyed facilitating the group, both had to stop facilitating because of overly busy schedules. At this point, the Women's Center is looking for another woman to volunteer to facilitate the group. We are looking for a mother who has experience with group facilitation, and who is not presently feeling in urgent need of support herself. If that sounds like you, and you are interested, give Alice a call at 354-8807.

LESBIANS CHOOSING CHILDREN NETWORK

In our last issue of On Our Way, there was an article which indicated that the Lesbians Choosing Children Network might be discontinued due to insufficient interest. Happily, that is not the case. The network continues to meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30. While the group is presently comprised of lesbians who are trying to get pregnant, the group is open to, and warmly welcomes, lesbians who are contemplating motherhood and lesbian moms.

INCEST SURVIVORS' NETWORK

The Incest Survivor's Network continues to provide strong and vital support for survivors through groups and resource books at the Women's Center. Facilitated open discussion groups meet at the Women's Center every third Thursday of the month from 7:30-9:15. These drop-in groups are open to anyone with a history of sexual abuse. These groups are facilitated by a few dedicated volunteers.

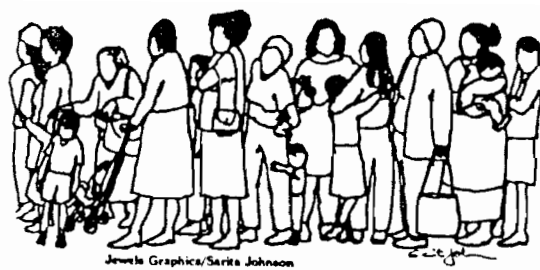
There is also a lesser known volunteer effort to maintain the Network: taking care of correspondence, finances, secretarial work and the resource books. In October, this part of the organization changed hands and these duties were turned over to a couple of new, willing volunteers. This is the first such transition and we see it as a sign of vitality.

The Incest Survivors' Network has developed and keeps up a current listing of therapists, groups, and resources available to anyone interested in professional counseling or self-help networking in the incest and child sexual abuse area. This resource is located at the Women's Center. The therapist referral section consists of questionnaires providing information on the therapist's location, fees, experience, and attitudes on a variety of issues. Feedback pages follow each counselor's questionnaire.

Public speaking also comes under the auspices of the Incest Survivors' Network. Invitations for public speaking engagements are welcome.

WOMEN'S COUNSELING & RESOURCE CENTER

The Women's Counseling and Resource Center is a volunteer collective of feminist therapists offering mental health services for low and no income women. We have had an office at the Women's Center for 3 years, after moving from the damp church basement from which we had operated since 1971. We currently have a waiting list of clients, and are recruiting new members. If you are a therapist with a master's level degree, at least 2 years post-graduate experience, and a feminist orientation, and can give 2-4 hours per week, please call us at 492-8568.



WOMEN'S SCHOOL

The Women's School has existed since 1971 and is the oldest, consecutively-running women's school of its kind in the U.S. We are committed to feminism and social change and therefore have adopted a non-hierarchical structure. For example, classes and workshops are offered by "facilitators" rather than "teachers" and the School is coordinated by a group of women who operate as a collective. All facilitators and staff are volunteers. Classes are offered free of charge; those who can are asked to contribute what they can to cover postage, printing and other expenses.

Our primary goal is to help women work for fundamental change that affects their lives. To the extent that it applies to the given topic, we encourage women in each of our classes and workshops to examine issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, classism, ableism, and other prejudices that oppress women and people in general.

Women taking courses through the Women's School have an opportunity to learn in a non-hierarchical and noncompetitive, women-only environment. The Women's School is feminist, woman-centered, and collectively run. It is not an academic environment. Courses focus on some aspect of social change or women's culture which would not be offered at colleges or adult education programs. We believe that every woman's knowledge is valuable. Frequently, "students" go on to offer classes and workshops of their own, sharing what they've learned. We encourage all women to participate as facilitators, regardless of their level of expertise; interest in a relevant topic is all that is needed.

The Women's School originally offered only 8 week classes. There was always a core group of classes including Marxism, Introduction to Women's Lib, and Lesbian Liberation. Over the years, our format has changed in order to reflect the changing needs of the community. In any give semester we now offer, in addition to a few ongoing classes, several workshops. Most are offered at the Women's Center.

Over the years, many women have been a part of the School -- by offering or participating in a course or by being on the collective. When the School reorganized this past fall, 6 women stepped forward to form the current collective. One of our members has been on the collective for over 7 years, another for 2 years, and the remaining are new to the collective - although they may have taken courses (for several years even!) at the School. We have coordinated 7 workshops and classes for this Spring semester.

If you are interested in attending these new workshops/classes, please register if you can (call 354-8807 for a school brochure.) If you can't register, just show up. Also, you can attend any individual class, even if it is part of a series that has already begun.

We are always interested in hearing from women who would like to facilitate courses for future semesters or who would like to take on other responsibilities by joining the collective. You may contact us by telephoning the Women's Center or by leaving a written message for us there. (It may take us a few weeks to return you message, and if you have not heard from us in a reasonable time, please be persistent.) With the new reorganization, we have not kept up our mailing list, so if you would like to remain on our list, please drop us a note. Come be part of the Women's School!

THE WOMEN'S SCHOOL SPRING 1991

WRITING SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesdays, 7:30-9:30pm; ONGOING

Come and join us and share some of your work. We are a casual and open group of writers who meet to discuss writing. Everyone gets a chance to read and receive feedback in a supportive atmosphere. Criticism is constructive, honest, clear, gentle, and respectful. Feminist issues are raised and addressed.

A SAMPLING OF 20th CENTURY AMERICAN WOMEN ARTISTS (You can join at any time.)

4 Saturdays March 9th-30th 11:00am-1:00pm

We begin with Georgia O'Keefe and some of her flowers. We'll ask what her contribution to American art is as a realist. Moving on, we'll consider Lee Krasner, an abstract expressionist. Finally, we'll cover more contemporary artists such as Judy Chicago.

WAR TAX RESISTANCE FEMINIST STYLE

Saturday March 23 9:30am - 12:30pm

Every day the US government spends millions to finance war while over 35 million people in the US live in poverty; 3/4 of these are women. In this workshop, we will discuss war tax resistance from a feminist perspective. We will also address the practical issues of tax resistance including methods and possible consequences.

GIRLS WITH GUITARS: A SERIES OF 3 WORKSHOPS (come to any or all)

Night 1: Tuesday March 19 7:00-9:00pm

Boston women singer/songwriters share an evening of their music and discuss the creative process with workshop participants. Bring your own experience to share.

Night 2: Thursday March 21 7:00-9:00pm

Similar to Night One but more time for workshop participants to share their own finished or unfinished songs. Feel free to bring your own instruments.

Night 3: Tuesday March 26 7:30-9:30pm

Breaking Into the Acoustic Music Scene
In this open discussion, we'll talk about the process of doing recordings, self-management, networking and playing open-mics. Participants are encouraged to come with questions prepared. Facilitators will discuss their own individual process and show examples of press packets.

LESBIAN AND BI SEX: BEYOND CUDDLING

4 Sats: April 13th-May 4th 11:00am-1:00pm

A look at the ways that our sexuality is hindered by a society that devalues being woman and lesbian - and the ways that we feel good about ourselves in spite of it. We'll use lots of laughter, comedy, poetry, imagery, and prose to broach "unspeakable" topics such as erotica and body image. Come prepared to share as we validate our sexuality!

STANDING AGAIN AT SINAI: A READING DISCUSSION GROUP

4 Mondays March 4th-25th 7:30-9:00pm

Have you ever wondered: "As a feminist, how can I be a Jew? As a Jew, how can I be a feminist?" Come explore and discuss the issues of Jewish feminism. Discussion will be based on independent reading of Judith Plaskow's Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective. Please try to read Chapter 1 for the first meeting.

WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY

Women For Sobriety is a self-help program for women with drinking problems. Its purpose is to help women recover from problem drinking through the discovery of self gained by sharing experiences, hope and encouragement with other women in similar circumstances.

Women For Sobriety is an organization of women for women. It stresses self-discovery and building self-esteem. It is not affiliated with AA.

Meetings are led by a moderator who is well-versed in Women For Sobriety.

The group will meet at the Women's Center on Sundays from 2:00pm-3:30pm starting March 17th.

POST-ABORTION SUPPORT GROUP

A new support group is forming for women who have had abortions and need to talk about their experiences as part of the healing process. It will be an open discussion group with a facilitator who will introduce topics and also make sure that those who wish to speak get a chance to do so. We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 12:30-2pm beginning March 16th.

**SUPPORT GROUP
DOS AND DON'TS**

My name is Maria Cimino, and I am doing a community project at the Women's Center. The project involves producing a manual about "How to Start a Support Group." The manual will include different ideas about support groups such as whether or not to have a facilitator, whether to keep the group opened or closed, whether groups should be open discussion, time-limited discussion, or topic-oriented. The purpose of the manual is to provide a resource for those of us who want to begin a group but don't know how to begin. Hopefully, the manual will help answer questions about how to keep members coming, how to include women of differing backgrounds, and how to confront disruptive group members.

The information I have compiled for this project comes from my own observations of various groups at the Women's Center. I have been able to speak to some facilitators of groups.

I would like to talk to members or facilitators of any Women's Center group. If anyone is interested or would like me to focus on any particular problem encountered in a group, please call me at 524-3793.

LIVING WITHOUT CIGARETTES: FOR SMOKERS & EX-SMOKERS

We are a new group comprised of women who have recently stopped smoking and women who are presently smoking. So far, we are a small group and the meetings have consisted of free-flowing discussion. Some members talk about why we feel the need to smoke and what situations are particularly difficult for us. Some of us talk about how we are managing to stay away from cigarettes and what that feels like. We offer each other encouragement and support wherever we are in the process of living without cigarettes.

The group is open to women in every stage of the quitting process. It is not necessary to quit cigarettes before joining the group, or even soon after, but only to have a desire to live without cigarettes. Women who have quit months or years ago but who are having difficulty staying away from cigarettes are also welcome. The group is non-judgemental and respectful of every woman's process. We are decidedly opposed to attitudes which are hostile or condescending to smokers.

Living Without Cigarettes is not a therapy group, nor a 12-step group. We are a self-help support group started by a woman who was still smoking when she requested space at the Women's Center.

Members are enthusiastic about the group. Although we are a diverse group of women, we find that we understand each others' experiences with cigarettes and the difficulties of stopping and staying stopped. We are excited to be able to share the process of discovering who we are without cigarettes. We welcome other women who are struggling with a nicotine addiction, and/or an obsession with cigarettes, to join us.

WOMEN WANTED FOR VIDEO ON SEXUALITY

"Finding Our Way: Men Talk About Their Sexuality" is a video that will be shown at the Women's Center at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 27. The producers want to make a companion documentary about women, and are looking for women of different ages, backgrounds and sexual preferences to be in it. It would involve spending a weekend with a group of women and participating in filmed discussions. (Info: 964-4466, Karen Levitt.)

Come to see if that might interest you, or just to see the video.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN WITH MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

For more than half a year a support group for women with multiple personalities (both self- and professionally-diagnosed) has been meeting at the Women's Center on alternate Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Several women find here the support and safety they have felt unable to get elsewhere for dealing with this complex and difficult issue.

The uncovering of the existence of multiple personalities in people with histories of severe early sexual (and other) abuse has become more prevalent in the past couple of years. As with incest itself, about 10 years ago, the professionals are now scrambling to catch up with those actually experiencing the MP phenomenon. Particularly because this is true, the women in the Multiples Group have found that the sharing of information, experience, histories, feelings, wisdom and caring which exists in the group is vital to their mental and emotional equilibrium and healing. On the occasion of its 20th Anniversary, the Multiples Group celebrates the Women's Center for all its efforts on behalf of women in the Boston area, and in particular wishes to express its gratitude for providing the group congenial, warm, safe and FREE space in which to meet -- as well as excellent staff services.

Women who may be interested in joining the Multiples Group are invited to call the Women's Center in order to be put in touch with a contact person in the group.

R2N2

Boston R2N2 (Reproductive Rights National Network) has been meeting at the Women's Center for over a year. After the Webster decision activated women around abortion issues, we outgrew our previous meeting place. R2N2 is a grassroots organization committed to educating and activating women and men around reproductive rights issues. Our work includes fighting to eliminate all forms of oppression which necessarily restrict our reproductive freedom, particularly economic oppression, racism, sexism, ageism, and homophobia. The group has existed since 1981, and was a member of the national network while it existed (until 1984). We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. If women are interested in joining us, please call 738-9479 for more information about R2N2 and our current activities.

THE WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL CENTER, INC.

46 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Phone: (617) 354-8807

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Boston, MA
PERMIT NO. 59699



**BOSTON AREA RAPE
CRISIS CENTER**

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center is deeply indebted to the Cambridge Women's Center for assisting in our birth and growth. We're proud of our roots and we wish you a long life.

**DORCHESTER WOMEN'S
DAY EVENT**

Saturday, March 9, 10am-4pm, at the Grover Cleveland School, 11 Charles St. (Fields Corner) Dorchester. The theme is 'Sharing Our Strengths, Defining Our Struggles.' Morning workshops will be broken down by cultural and ethnic groups. The goal is to find ways to unite and be supportive of each other's efforts.

There will also be a crafts & resource fair, and hopefully drummers and percussionists will be present to enhance the spirit of sisterhood. If you want to play, to help, to lead a workshop, or to get more info, call Maggie 739-9751; Samara 265-8784; or Mec 288-1235(TTY).

TRANSITION HOUSE

Transition House, a multi-racial and multi-cultural shelter for battered women and children, congratulates you on 20 years of loving care to the women's community. In the case of Transition House, which celebrates our own 15th anniversary this year, that care is essential. The Women's Center, which found Transition House, helped provide maintenance over the years, and continues to provide space for our volunteer trainings and support groups. Last year we sheltered 200 women and children, responded to over 6,000 crisis calls, and our Dating Violence Intervention Project made presentations to over 5,000 young people. We couldn't do it without you. Love.

The women and children of Transition House

(P.S.. our 24-hour hotline number is 661-77203, and our next volunteer training begins April 4. Call 354-2676 for info.)

MY SPECIAL 20th BIRTHDAY DONATION TO THE WOMEN'S CENTER IS:

\$20 \$40 \$60 \$80 \$100 \$200 \$1000 \$2000 Other

Name _____

Address _____

