

♀ ON OUR WAY

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

December, 2000

THE WOMEN'S CENTER ANTICIPATES ITS 30th BIRTHDAY!

As the year 2000 comes to a close, the Women's Center prepares to celebrate its 30th birthday.

Yes, it was back in 1971 that women took radical action to demand a space of our own. Women from local activist groups joined together to take over a Harvard-owned building and dramatize the lack of space where women could meet to examine and begin addressing their own needs. Thanks to their energy and commitment as well as the generous financial support of those they inspired, the Women's Center was born. Volunteer efforts created rich resources for women, including mutual support groups, a helpline, educational materials and activist opportunities.

Thousands of women have come through our doors during the past thirty years, participating in support and activist projects, sifting through our resources, and helping each other find the strength to heal and fight injustice. The seeds of many thriving women's organizations were first planted at the Center such as the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, Incest Resources, and the Women's Community Cancer Project. In the spirit of sisterhood, we also supported the development of the

Elizabeth Stone House, Transition House and Finex House and continue to provide support to Transition House and the Boston Bisexual Women's Network.

Continuing our commitment to being a vital and relevant space for women, we plunged into the year 2000 with a spirit of growth and change. We worked hard repainting, repairing, and reorganizing to make the Women's Center welcoming and comfortable to a broader range of women. With pride, we instituted our new Computer/Internet Access Program, providing free access to women who can't afford or don't have computers or the internet readily available to them. Thanks to the contribution of The Art Connection, we installed a permanent art exhibit of works of local women artists, honoring the work of women in the community. We laid the groundwork for the *Women's Center Community Organizing Project*, which will bring low-income women together to address the issues that continue to confront them - despite this "boom" economy.

During the past year, we offered a number of new groups designed to meet the needs of women. *Women Over Forty*, which discusses topics relevant to their age group, is hopping, usually filling the room to capacity. *Beyond Living Paycheck to Paycheck: A Series of Personal Finance Workshops for Women of Color*, facilitated by Beverly McGary, is one of our most popular groups.



HerSay, a grassroots group which combines activism, social activities, and artistic expression, is taking off with plans for direct action around issues of women's safety. Through *Web Basics*, we provide women with an introduction to the internet twice each month.

As we enter a new decade, we are expanding and evolving. We plan additional renovations to our building, a more comprehensive computer training program, stronger efforts to affect public policy regarding women's issues, and a monthly exhibition of artwork to provide more exposure of the works of women of color and other local women. New groups and programming will include readings by women authors, starting with mystery writer/political activist Barbara Neely in January. At a time when managed care places strict limits on the time available to doctors, *Child Health Discussion with Doctor Ronnie Peterson* will give mothers an opportunity to engage in in-depth discussions concerning their children's health with a pediatrician.

Next fall, when we celebrate our 30th birthday with a major event, we will honor those who came before and take pride in the work, energy, and commitment that makes us a vibrant and diverse community of women.

~Mary Quinn

INSIDE...

New Groups	2
Volunteer Opportunities	3
Grief Support	3
Annual Calender	4
Thank you to our Supporters	5
And more. . .	

On Our Way

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

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

Our mission is twofold:

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



Volunteers

The Women's Center gratefully acknowledges the on-going 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: wmnscntr@mediaone.net

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

Helpline: (617)354-8807

HerSay

HerSay is on her way to becoming a strong grassroots organization, dedicated to the process of motivating positive change. Some of the things we are working on include an anti-violence/victim awareness campaign designed to provide outreach and education and the tools to help break the silence surrounding these issues. We are also looking to get involved with local pro-choice groups to see what we can do to help with the buffer zone laws and safe escorts service. Also in the works is the formation of a direct action group whose main purpose will be to provide immediate direct actions in response to incidents as they occur within our community.

A call to all writers is underway for open submissions for our first Zine due out in January 2001. Please submit your commentaries, articles, poetry, prose and fiction to:

J. Pich
c/o HerSay
30A Oakview Terrace
Jamaica Plain, MA,

or email: hersay@chickmail.com

Please include all necessary contact information. Deadline is December 28, 2000.

Don't wonder how you can make a difference. Make one! HerSay works to provide women with the materials, education, and support needed to vocalize issues important to them. What we do with HerSay is up to you! Please join us and let your voice be heard.

~Judy Pich

Recovering Our Voices

One thing abuse does is silence us. We're frightened into silence. When we begin to say "no more," we begin the long struggle to coax our voices out of hiding, to strengthen and support them, to give them a safe place to be heard. We hear our own voices and slowly shame turns into pride, self-hate into self-love, and victimization into victory. A powerful tool we can use in this process of recovering our voices is to write a play together.

As a playwright and an advocate for battered women, I am often struck by the poetry women unknowingly speak as they sit together in a support group, the poetry that comes from facing one's pain and speaking from the heart. I've wanted to hear their words spoken on a stage, for all to hear, not necessarily by the women themselves, but by actors celebrating those words.

From this desire was born "The Persephone Project." Persephone was a goddess who was captured by Hades, the king of the underworld, and taken underground. Her mother searched high and low for her, and eventually brought her back into the light. The Persephone Project is about bringing our voices up into the light.

We began in October and are looking for more people to join us. We meet once a week for 2 hours during which we share our experiences and do creative exercises. The group is multi-cultural, multi-age, and inclusive of all sexual orientations. We'll be meeting until next spring, when a group of professional actors will present the final product to the community in a staged reading. Naturally, all participants who wish to will remain anonymous.

You don't need to be a writer to participate. You don't need to tell your own personal story, though you can if you want. You don't need to be able to write, or to write in English. All you need to do is show up and share your energy and experience as a survivor of partner abuse.

For information or to register, call **Anna Baum 617-576-1308.**

A New Grief Support Group

A weekly Grief Support Group begins this December.

An intense and very difficult process of healing follows the loss of a close loved one. Often family and friends are not able to provide all of the support needed during this critical time. Every person deals differently with loss and the grieving process can feel very lonely.

This group will provide women, who are grieving the loss of a loved one, a place where they are less isolated with their sorrow. Women will have the opportunity to connect with others who are mourning. Together, women will learn how to hold on to memories while moving on in life. Safe and confidential, all are encouraged to come share their experiences, voice their concerns, and talk about their feelings.

If you are interested in attending or have questions about the group, call Lizzie at (617) 312-8761. The meetings are every Tuesday from 6:30-8pm.

~Lizzie Lundgren

Calling All Women of Color

Our monthly event for women of color is very popular!

To keep it going, we need you to help with event planning and organizing.

For more information, call Gabriele at (617)625-4951 or email: atchison71@aol.com

Volunteer Opportunities

The Women's Center is reliant on the energy, compassion, and creativity of volunteers. From answering emotional support calls to painting, from updating resources, to running support groups ... volunteers are the heart and soul of The Women's Center. Without you we truly couldn't exist.

Current opportunities include:

▶ Information and Emotional Support Helpline:

Welcome and assist women, answer support and resource calls for two hours per week. Training provided. Day and night openings.

▶ Update Resources:

Make calls and conduct internet research to keep our numerous resources up-to-date.

▶ Computer Training:

Conduct workshops on basic computer skills for small groups of women.

▶ Graphics/Layout:

Design our brochure, create thank you and holiday cards, and design posters.

▶ Mailing Parties:

Help us send out this newsletter 3 times a year!

Groups of women gather together to insert, fold, stamp and label our large mailings.

Free munchies and great conversation provided.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please call 354-8807 and ask the volunteer to send you an application. Thank you!!!

From The Desk of The Fundraiser

This holiday season we express our sincere appreciation to our individual donors, supporting community businesses, agencies, corporations, foundations and volunteers. We would not be able to provide needed resources and services without your support. You give us longevity and inspire innovation and dedication. Thank you.

Your support has made it possible to welcome new staff and volunteers, launch a computer lab with internet access, paint much of the Center's interior, celebrate the donation of 11 artworks by women artists through The Art Connection and increase our community outreach to a greater diversity of women. On the horizon, we will begin renovating the Children's Room with the help of volunteer artist Mary Ann Guillette, who will paint a mural along the Children's Room walls and in the spring will offer a mother and child art class. As new programs move ahead, the Women's Center is thankful for your continuous and generous support.

With your help, we hope to cover our current operating budget by the end of this year. We bring a wealth of programming to women in the community. Please join us in the commitment to meet the growing and changing needs of women by giving as much as you can. We thank you for your belief in our work and for making the year 2000 such a wonderful year!

~ Eliza M. Hoyt

WOMEN'S CENTER CALENDAR - WINTER 2000/2001

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

ONGOING GROUPS

MONDAY

- Al-Anon for Women (weekly) 6-7:30pm
- Battered Women's Support Group (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors
[3rd Monday; info: Daniella, (617)497-0911] .. 7-8:45pm
- *Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Women of Color Reading Circle (2nd Monday) 7-8:30pm

TUESDAY

- *Bisexual Women's Rap (1st & 3rd Tuesday) 7:30-9pm
- Grief Support Group (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Married Bisexual Women (2nd Tuesday) 7:30-9pm
- Persephone Project (weekly; survivors of domestic violence
working together to create a play) 7-9pm
- Women's Reading Group [4th Tuesday;
Info: Mary Siffelin, (781)663-4687] 7:30-9:30pm
- *Writers' Circle [2nd Tuesday;
info: Cassandra, (617)494-2695] 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY

- Battered Women's Support Group (all Wednesdays
except the third) 7-9pm
- Lesbian Al-Anon (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Sexual Harassment Support Group (Dec. 6) 7-9pm
- Transitioning out of the Patient Role [ongoing facilitated
group, open about every 6th week; for more
information, contact Diane, (781)226-7097] ... 6-7:30pm
- Web Basics (Dec. 20; RSVP: Heather, 354-8807) . 12-1:30pm
- *Women Over 40 (2nd & 4th Wednesday) 7-8:30pm
- *Women Maximizing Abilities Now (WOMAN)
(1st & 3rd Wednesday; woman@braintrust.org) . 2-3:30pm

THURSDAY

- Boston Bisexual Women's Network, Introductory
Meeting (2nd Thursday, odd months) 7:30-9pm
- HerSay (2nd & 4th Thursday) 7-8pm
- Support-4-Us (every other Thurs.; anxiety/panic) .. 6-7:30pm
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors of Child Sexual
Abuse [weekly; topic at 1st mtg. of month ... 7:30-9:30pm
- *Women's Community Cancer Project, Open
General Meeting [1st Thursday; (617)354-9888] .. 7-9pm
- Women of Color Rap (1st Thursday) 7-8:30pm

FRIDAY

- CODA (Codependents Anonymous; weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Incest Resources Facilitated Discussion for Survivors of
Child Sexual Abuse (last Friday) 6-7:30pm
- *Incest Survivors Anonymous (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Web Basics (Dec. 15; RSVP: Heather, 354-8807) .. 5-6:30pm

SATURDAY

- *Beyond Living Paycheck to Paycheck (Personal finance
workshops for women of color; 3rd Saturday) 2-4pm
- *Coming Out Discussion for Women of All Ages (1st Sat.
each month, except holiday weekends) 11am-1pm
- *Organizing Meeting for Lesbians & Children Conference
(December 9; info: Julie Joy, (617)522-7774) ... 12-2pm
- Trauma Survivors' Drop In Support Group
[3rd Saturday; facilitated by Amy Aisenberg,
(617)354-3721, 11am-7pm, please] 12:30-1:45pm

* Wheelchair accessible meetings

NEW GROUPS/WORKSHOPS

BARBARA NEELY READS! Saturday, December 27, 1-3pm.
Barbara Neely, the author of *Blanche Passes Go* and other
mysteries, is an African-American writer whose work focuses
on race, class, and other forms of oppression

**BEYOND LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK: A series
of Personal Finance Workshops for Women of Color,** 3rd
Saturday, 2-4pm. Designed to explore financial issues and
options in a comfortable setting. Topics: December 16: *More
about Investments*; January 20: *Wealth*. Info: (617)354-8807.

CHILD HEALTH DISCUSSION, Thursday, January 4, 2001,
10:15-11:30am. Come ask Dr. Ronnie Peterson about your
child's health, illnesses, any other issues (eg. child-rearing).

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP, Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm. A peer
support group for women who are grieving the loss of a loved
one. Info: Lizziewl@yahoo.com.

HerSay, Thursdays, December 14 & 28, 7-8pm. A group for
women interested in political, social, and artistic activities that
are focused on women's issues. Info: (617)354-8807.

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

***ORGANIZING MEETING FOR LESBIANS & CHILDREN
CONFERENCE,** Sat., December 9, 12-2pm. Help design
this year's conference. Info: Julie Joy, (617)522-7774.

PERSEPHONE PROJECT, Tuesdays, 7-9pm. A new group
of survivors of domestic violence working together to create a
play about the subject. Info: (617)576-1308.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR MARRIED BISEXUAL WOMEN,
2nd Tuesday, 7:30-9pm.

WEB BASICS, Friday, December 15, 5-6pm & Wednesday,
December 20, 12-1:30pm. An introduction to the Internet.
Must RSVP: Heather, (617)354-8807.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

INCEST RESOURCES FACILITATED DISCUSSION FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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

December 29 Self-Care

January 26 Anger

February 23 Growing Up

WOMEN OF COLOR READING CIRCLE

2nd Monday, 7-8:30pm. Info: Vanessa, (617)629-3106.

December 11: *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.

WOMEN OF COLOR RAP - 1st Thursday, 7-8:30pm

December 7 Holiday Gathering

***WOMEN OVER 40 - 2nd & 4th Wednesday, 7-8:30pm**

December 13 Dating Themes.

27 Review Our Year Together

Info: Suzanne, (781)393-4854.

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

December 4 Game Night

11 Economic Differences in Dating

18 Dealing with Holiday Diversity

***BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP - 1st & 3rd Tuesday,
7:30-9pm; activities on off weeks; Elle, (617)718-0386.**

December 5 Sex: Casual or Committed

19 Getting Bi the Holidays

THE WOMEN'S CENTER SUPPORTERS

*Many thanks to the following foundations, corporations, and individuals for supporting
The Women's Center with contributions equaling \$500 or more from 11/1/00-11/21/00*

Foundations & Corporations

Agilent Technologies
Lassor Fanny Agoos Charity Fund
Cambridge Community Foundation
Cambridge Savings Bank
Cambridge Trust
Bushrod H. Campbell and Adah F. Hall
Charity Fund
Charles and Sara Goldberg Trust
Citizens Bank
City of Cambridge
Clipper Ship Foundation
Connor Charitable Foundation
Cornyn Foundation
Charles Stark Draper Laboratory
Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
East Cambridge Savings Bank
First USA Partners
Fredrick E. Weber Charities Corporation
George and Beatrice Sherman
Family Charitable Trust
Gillette Company
Haymarket People's Fund
Hewat O'Connor Fund
IBM/Lotus
Medford Bank
Marcia Rough & John Nitzche Foundation
New England Financial
Quest Diagnostics
TJX Foundation
The Art Connection

Individuals

Anonymous, Maria Arseneault, Carolann C. Barrett,
Maureen Barlow, Anne Burling,
Grace Dinghee, Rosalene Dixon,
Kevin Dunckel, Marica Duvall,
Karin Ferencz, Gay Ferguson,
Christine Flynn-Saulnier,
Laurie Francis-Wright,
Marsha Gerstein, Celia Gilbert,
Deb Glancy, Harriet Ely Griesinger,
Jean Hardisty, Margaret Harrigan,
Deborah Holland,
Nancy and Robert Hurlbut,
Edith Kingsbury, Karen McIntosh,
Heidi Meyer, Gina Orden,
Avery Rimer, Janet Singer,
Lally Stowell, Elaine Westerlund
Genevieve Wichmann, Susan Yanow

THE WOMEN'S CENTER WISH LIST

Four ergonomic chairs
Copy Paper (white, colors)
TV/VCR stand
Children's videos
(ages 2-10)
Children's computer games
Children's art supplies
Children's art easel
volunteer seamstress



Thank you!

CONTINUE SUPPORTING THE WOMEN'S
CENTER



*Give a gift to a friend or
loved one
by making a donation to
the Women's Center
in their name*

A Special Thanks To Community Businesses

Peer to Peer, Framers' Workshop, A Street Frames,
FrameSmart, Cambridge Framery and Photo,
Food For Free, Picante, Cambridge Deli,
Carberry's Bakery & Coffeehouse,
Harvest Co-op, Starbucks, Ras Café,
Middle East Restaurant, Kabloom,
Adlen Merrell, Hi Rise Bread Company,
Bread & Circus, Shaws, Art Supplies Wholesale,
The Children's Museum, Toscanini's Ice Cream,



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

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of: ___\$25 ___\$50 ___\$100 ___\$500 ___\$other

For a donation of \$150 or more, you'll receive a Women's Center T shirt or cap!

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

___ Add me to the Women's Center mailing list.

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____, State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Thank You!

If you'd prefer to be taken off of our mailing list, please check the following box and return to the Women's Center

THE WOMEN'S CENTER SEEKS COLLECTIVE MEMBERS

The Women's Center's Collective is welcoming new members. The Collective meets for two hours once a month to discuss potentially controversial issues impacting women coming to the Center which don't require immediate action. We are seeking women who can make a good faith commitment to joining for at least six months. Over the past year we have discussed permitting men access to events held while the Center is closed, computer access issues, and our Transgender Access policy (which is still in process).

We are seeking women committed to The Women's Center and to the consensus process.

Consensus decision-making values the input of every woman who attends, and requires a commitment to finding a decision which everyone can live with. The process is both highly rewarding and highly challenging. All new members will have an orientation to learn how it works.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Heather at The Women's Center. Also, if you have issues which you would like the Collective to consider, please feel free to write them up and send them to the attention of Heather at the Women's Center or email them to wmnscntr@mediaone.net.

~Heather Searles

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

Address Correction Requested
Return Postage Guaranteed

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