International Women’s Day is an all-American holiday with connections to the Women’s Center. Now celebrated annually on March 8, International Women’s Day probably originated in the United States, commemorating a 1908 demonstration by Jewish women textile workers on the lower East Side of New York City. The following year, the U.S. Socialist Party initiated a National Women’s Day. In 1910 the International Socialist Women’s Congress, meeting in Copenhagen, approved the first socialist holiday for women, with its chief demand women’s suffrage. Seven years after this proclamation, women marking International Women’s Day sparked the uprising in Petrograd which toppled the Tsar, the ruler of the Russian Empire.

Fast forward to March 6, 1971, when Boston area women and their supporters gathered at the Boston Common for a demonstration and march with a ‘surprise ending.’ The high-spirited crowd crossed into Cambridge, marched into Central Square, took a left on Pearl Street, and soon arrived at their destination, 888 Memorial Drive, the former Hingham knitting factory, and at that time part of the Harvard Design School. Women occupied the building for ten days, demanding a community women’s center and affordable housing for residents of the adjacent Riverside area. Their act resulted in an outpouring of support from women and men all over Boston, legal actions by Harvard against Jane Does I-V, a judge demanding to “throw the bums out,” and a final victory march out of the building into Harvard Square.

Money raised before and during the takeover, including a donation of $5000 from Susan Storey Lyman, then Chair of the Radcliffe Board of Trustees, covered the down payment on the building at 46 Pleasant Street, which opened in January 1972. Our very own Women’s Center is the longest continuously operating community women’s center in the U.S., maybe the world.

This history is being captured in the documentary “Left on Pearl: Women Take Over 888 Memorial Drive, Cambridge,” by the 888 Women’s History Project. On March 8 of this year, the work in progress film was shown to an enthusiastic audience, which jammed the Cambridge Senior Center. The Women’s Center and the Cambridge Women’s, Peace, and Human Rights Commissions sponsored the showing. The members of the Project hope that by next International Women’s Day they will be able to premier the finished film.

Rochelle G. Ruthchild
The 888 Women’s History Project, Inc.
69 Spring St., Cambridge, MA 02141
www.888womenshistory.org
womentakeover888@yahoo.com

(The 888 Women’s History Project, Inc. is a 501[c]3 nonprofit educational organization, funded in part by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities.)
The Women’s Center
46 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 354-8807
Website: www.cambridgewomenscenter.org
What’s up at the Women’s Center?
Check out our monthly calendar on the website.
Email: info@cambridgewomenscenter.org
Hours: Monday-Friday: 10am-8pm
Saturday: 10am-3pm
We are closed on major holidays.
Helpline: (617) 354-8807
Business line: (617) 354-6394

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 a wealth of free programming.

All donations are tax-deductible.

For further information about various volunteer opportunities or to offer in-kind donations, contact the Center Coordinator Ming at:
(617) 354-6394
ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org

New Board Members—Nancy Horwitz

I am delighted to have joined the board of the Women's Center for so very many reasons. First, it is an organization that embodies many of my core values including that of empowering women. Second, the spirit of community and diversity that exists is something that has always been important to me. Last year, I had the opportunity to deliver several Career Workshops and knew right away by being at the Center that there was something more that I needed/wanted to do. In speaking with Ming, it became apparent to me that there might be a match between the needs at the Center and my desire to make a difference. Here's a bit about my background to give some context.

My interest in social justice, women's empowerment, and increased cross-cultural understanding has been a part of me for as long as I can remember. My mother was a social activist who showed me through her actions that one person can make a difference. I became aware, early, of the importance of being open to and embracing differences. My educational background included studies in Comparative Religion and Psychology which reflected my desire to deepen my understanding of people and cultures. After receiving my MS in Education, I moved into the corporate world where for the next 20 years, I focused in the areas of Employee Relations, Diversity, Management Development and Leadership Development in my Human Resources Roles. (Continued on Page 4)

New Board Members—Sarah Doherty

I am extremely excited to be involved with the Women’s Center! I have always been interested in promoting women’s needs, empowering and advocating for women. Over the past few months I have been so impressed by the women who attend the Center as well as the current Board members. You are truly an inspiration and I feel very grateful to be a member of this organization.

I graduated from Smith College, a women’s college, with dual degrees in clinical psychology and economics. While in school I received a certificate of training in domestic violence and violence against women. With this training I was able to donate my time answering the crisis line at a battered women’s shelter. In addition, I worked as a councilor for two years at the Northampton ServiceNet Crisis Respite program that focused on hospitalization prevention and step-down into the community. Here I conducted client assessments and intervention for suicidal patients and answered the Pioneer Valley emergency service line.

Currently I work at Putnam Investments as an Investment Associate on the fixed income team where I examine municipal tax-exempt bonds for higher education, charter schools, states, tobacco, and nonprofit credits. I am a member of the Putnam Early Career Networking Group, Education Committee (of the Diversity Committee) and the Women’s Leadership Forum. These groups work to promote diversity within the workforce and to empower women at the local level. (Continued on Page 4)
Thank You, Andrea!

Andrea would come into the Women’s Center smiling and offering to help. She said how much she appreciated the Women’s Center many, many times a day, how much it meant to her, how glad she was she had found it. Every time she saw me she enthusiastically greeted me and gave thanks. She volunteered to clean the bathrooms. She brought food to the kitchen to cook and share. She helped prepare mailings. She was homeless, except when she was at the hospital and at the Barbara McInnis House, where homeless women can stay after hospitalization. We knew she was sick, but not how sick. She died of breast cancer in the fall of 2007. There was no chance to say goodbye. She lit up the Women’s Center. We miss her bright, generous, beautiful presence, and are so thankful to have known her and to know that the Women’s Center meant so much to her.

Judy

Manage Money and More

Following up its initial five-session workshop series last fall, the Women’s Center is continuing its Financial Literacy program this spring through a series of classes in which participants are learning to manage their money and much more. Through mutual support and daily action, they are gaining tools and methods to help them value themselves in a whole new way.

Based on two books by financial whiz Ruth Hayden, “How To Turn Your Money Life Around: The Money Book for Women,” and “Your Money Life: The Make-It-Work Workbook,” the interactive classes are intended to empower women to successfully manage money, look at behaviors and beliefs they have absorbed from others, and learn and practice new money behaviors. Ruth Hayden has worked for over twenty years to help women gain control of their lives by recognizing the importance of responsible money management. The workshop instructor, Karen Bowen, is dedicated to bringing Ruth Hayden’s techniques to local women. See Karen’s accompanying article on page 6 for a description of the workshops in her own words.

This six-session series is being held on Monday evenings, ending April 14. The class is open to additional participants, and will continue to meet in the form of a monthly support group. We also hope to offer the workshop series again later this year. If you are interested in participating, email board@cambridgewomenscenter.org or call Ming at 617-354-6394 to register or be put on the mailing list for future notifications.

This series, like all the Women’s Center’s financial literacy workshops, is made possible by the Susan Guidrey fund, established in Susan’s memory by her partner, Valentia McDonald, for the purpose of educating women in financial matters. Stay tuned for other financial literacy offerings this spring and fall!

Laura Cherry

LBTQ Needs Assessment

The Women’s Center recently conducted a needs assessment to find out how we can better connect to and support LBTQ women in the Boston area. After posting an online survey and conducting a focus group, here is what we found out!

Among the types of services requested were lesbian, bisexual, and transgender social groups, speed dating, opportunities for activism, coming out support, relationship support, and outdoor activity groups. The most requested services were for social groups, specifically a LBTQ Book Club and a Women’s Coffee Hour.

We also discovered that there are many LBTQ women in the Boston area who have never heard of the Women’s Center. In fact, 38% of the women who completed the survey reported that they didn’t know it existed, and 26% had heard of the Women’s Center but didn’t know what we did. Please tell your friends about us, and we’ll do our best to get the word out there as well! Out of the women who have been to the Women’s Center, most rated their overall experience as ‘Good.’

If you missed the opportunity to participate in the needs assessment, it’s not too late! Just send us an email at info@cambridgewomenscenter.org and let us know what services you are looking for. If we can’t provide them at the Women’s Center, we’ll do our best to provide you with a referral.

We’d like to thank all of you who participated and provided us with your helpful feedback!

Cambridge Police and Center Liaison

In October we visited the Cambridge Police Department and made arrangements with them to come to the Women’s Center to give staffers and volunteers an overview of how the police can provide us community services and how we may be able to provide services to those they may want to refer to us. In the past I’ve had opportunity to call on them for backup in several domestic violence cases and their help was invaluable. In the even more distant past, we provided training for the police in handling domestic violence cases and supplied them with the first informational cards they handed out to victims when they answered such calls. That was in the mid-seventies. A few years ago our relationship lapsed, so we were happy to reestablish ties.

Detective Joanne McEachern and Officer Susan Cale visited with us on December 11 and spoke to us about security for the Center and how they could provide help or backup in domestic violence and mental health crisis situations. We also spoke with them about our long-standing work with battered women and assured them that they could refer women to us who they come into contact with in the course of their work. We were happy with our exchange of information and ideas and felt the meeting was of mutual benefit to all.

Betsy Warrior
A chance to write, edit, publish, and preserve our history

For Crying Out Loud (FCOL), a quarterly newsletter by and for childhood sexual abuse survivors, was launched by a collective of survivors at the Women’s Center in 1983. We believe it to be the oldest survivors' newsletter in the country. In 1990, the members of the first collective handed the newsletter off to a new group of women, the second collective. FCOL continued to publish as a survivors' newsletter for many years, and at its peak had a subscriber base of over 2000, from all regions of the US and including numerous international subscriptions as well. In 2005, FCOL changed its format to that of a literary journal for survivors, printing mostly poetry and receiving a flood of submissions.

At a time when resources for abuse survivors were few and hard to come by, For Crying Out Loud provided many things to many women: crucial information, welcome support, a creative outlet, confirmation that we were not alone either in our pain or in our healing. Members of the editorial collective shared writing, editing, and publishing tasks: writing topical essays and articles, compiling news and resource lists, selecting written submissions to include, and working with the printer on layout and formatting. Although, thankfully, many more survivors’ resources are available now than in 1983, the need for support and community has not diminished, and many survivors are isolated. There is still a place and a need for survivors to share their voices and hear those of others.

For me personally, being a part of the collective that produced FCOL was a great and even transformative experience, allowing me to explore what it means to heal from abuse, work with other survivors on a shared project, and give back to the Women’s Center community that had helped me begin my healing. The collective has been a source of both pride and support for all its members.

FCOL has been on publishing hiatus since 2006, and the members of the second collective are now seeking women to form a third collective to re-envision, recreate, and distribute the newsletter as they choose. The collective has starter funds to cover printing and mailing expenses for a number of issues, a mailing list/subscriber base to build on, and an impressive set of archives for inspiration. If you are interested in talking about how you might participate in this new incarnation of FCOL, please send an email to board@cambridgewomenscenter.org with “FCOL” in the subject line.

Laura Cherry

Therapists Needed or Need a Therapist?

Are you a low-income woman in need of a therapist or are you a therapist looking for an opportunity to volunteer? Please call

The Women’s Counseling & Resource Center
(617) 492-8568

We may have what you need.

New Board Members~Nancy Horwitz
Continued From Page 2

After 20 years, I started my own business, NLH Development Associates, a Personal and Professional Coaching firm which focuses on helping people to bridge the gap between where they are and where they want to be. I am the Boston Program Facilitator for Women Unlimited’s Leadership Development Programs that are focused on cultivating leadership skills for Women. This work, coupled with my involvement with the Women’s Center, gives me an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many people—-to help them to move beyond what they might have thought possible. This is what motivates me.

I am proud to be a part of the Women’s Center and look forward to contributing my skills, ideas and energy toward the mission of The Center. I am excited to be a part of this wonderful community and look forward to extending the reach of the Center and working to ensure that more people are made aware of this gem of a resource as well as the wonderful women who are a part of it. I look forward to meeting many of you in the months and years to come.

New Board Members~Sarah Doherty
Continued From Page 2

The Women’s Leadership Forum has hosted a variety of professional speakers and workshops for employees while the Education Committee promotes cultural events across the greater Boston area and provides funding for employee participation in the diversity arena. My extra curricular activities include volunteering for Power Lunch of Boston Partner in Education and the Advisory Board for the Boston Collegiate Charter School in Dorchester, MA. Power Lunch promotes a one-on-one mentoring relationship with a focus on reading with children in the Boston public school system.

I have already learnt so much from the talented and wonderful women at the Center and look forward to many years of working together. I bring with me my joy and dedication for supporting the community. I hope to meet and speak to you over the coming years!

Thank You, Adams Communications

The Women’s Center is now using more economical phone service and saving money!! How? We are very grateful for the capable free advice and hands-on help from Adams’ Business Communications Solutions, who work with businesses to help them increase their office efficiency and improve their bottom line. They do system consultation, business phone system solutions, voice mail, Internet service, carrier service, web-site development, and on-site staff training. They offer a 30 percent discount on both services and systems to 501C3 organizations. They can be reached at: (508) 866-4086 or http://adamscomm.net.
Lesbian Rap

The Lesbian Rap group spans decades at the Women’s Center. I had the pleasure of facilitating the social network five years ago, with group topics ranging from safer sex education for women who have sex with women, to newly forming laws regarding gay marriage. Several changes in the tide of attendance eroded the group’s presence as of late, and we need YOU to help us get back to the flourishing drop-in discussion space so many women thrived on. We had a turnout of 8 people at the first re-vamp gathering this January, though a snowstorm whittled the next gathering to two. In March, 12 attended! Please help us remind people there is a queer female community in the Boston area. It’s all in where you look.

The Lesbian Rap meets the 3rd Friday of every month from 6:30-8:00pm. For more info, please email Valerie deinde23@hotmail.com. Folks are asked to bring food & non-alcoholic drink to share. Then we go dancing out on the town!!

Coming Out Discussion

The Coming Out group is a safe space where women can explore their sexuality freely. The group welcomes all women who are questioning, or coming out as lesbian or bisexual. Topics that are discussed range from understanding feelings of same-sex attraction, examining stereotypes about the LGB community, exploring identity (i.e., race/religion/age) as it pertains to the coming out process, coming out to friends, family, and co-workers and developing an LGB support/social network. For more information, please contact mimi@outinboston.org.

Let’s Keep the “Human Touch” Alive!

The purpose of starting this support group is to give women a chance to relax, to turn to one another, speak and feel heard.

Women of today are so stretched out with their daily schedules of family commitments and jobs that there is not enough time left for themselves. Technology is robbing the valuable time people spend with each other.

We meet once a month at the Women’s Center to:

Turn to one another, Share our dreams, Share an inspiring story, Share a recipe, Plan a trip to discover nature, or Discuss an issue concerning the common good.

Please make a note that we do not share our personal problems and get or provide any kind of counseling. The whole purpose of meeting is to relax, respect and enjoy each other’s company and consider it a vacation time. Thank you.

This group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6-7:30pm. Everyone is welcome. There will be a theme for every meeting. On April 8 it is “sharing an inspiring story.” Please check the Women’s Center monthly calendars for future topics. We hope you will tell us what kind of topics you are interested in and email biftekhar@yahoo.com.

On-Going Groups

- Battered Women’s Support Group (Every Wednesday, 7-9pm, except 3rd Wednesday of the month)*
- Bisexual Women’s Rap (4th Friday of the month, 7-8:30pm)*
- Coming Out Discussion (1st Saturday of the month, 1-3pm)*
- Drumming with the Batucada Belles (4/12, 4-6pm)* No drumming experience necessary. Please call Janis at 781-925-3465 before attending and for more upcoming meeting dates and other locations.
- Emotional Healing Group (2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, 6:30-8pm)
- Incest Resources’ Drop-In Discussion Group for Female Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse (3rd Friday of the month, 6-7:30pm) Topic: Intimacy (April), Sexuality (May), The Healing Process (June)
- Lesbian Chat 30+ (all ages welcome) (1st and 2nd Fridays of the month, 6:30-8pm)*
- Lesbian Rap (3rd Friday of the month, 6:30-8pm)*
- Let’s Keep the “Human Touch” Alive! (2nd Tuesday of the month, 6-7:30pm)* Topic on 4/8: Share an inspiring story.
- Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. Peer led support group for the woman in a straight relationship struggling with her sexual orientation. For details please email kate.e.flynn@gmail.com
- Survivors of Incest Anonymous, Nothing Too Heavy to Share. A support group for survivors of severe sexual abuse and exploitation. Info/Screening: Ming at 617-354-6394
- The Women’s Center Board Meeting (Monday, 4/28, 6:30-8pm)
- Thursday Night Gathering of Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, 7:30-9pm)*
- Women & Media (2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, 7-8:30pm) Film title on 4/10: “War Zone”
- Women Empowering Recovering Together: An Eating Disorder Support Group (Wednesdays, 4/9 and 4/23, 7-8:30pm)
- Women’s Healing Circle (1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 7:30-8:30pm)
- Writer’s Circle (2nd Wednesday of the month, 7-8:30pm)

Workshops/Events in April

- Clean It, Fix It, or Paint It Day (Sunday, 4/27, 10am-4pm). Help revitalize the Women’s Center!
- Does Anger Make You Cringe? (Tuesday, 4/15, 5:30-7:30pm)* An introductory workshop learning how to handle anger in a better way.
- The Art Room. (4/12, 1:30-2:30—“Post Secret” It’s an ongoing community art project where people mail in secrets anonymously on one side of a homemade postcard, as seen on www.postsecret.com) (4/22, 6:30-7:30pm—“Join us in the sandbox”)
- Introduction to NonViolent Peaceforce (Tuesday, 4/29, 6-8pm)*

*Wheelchair accessible groups
Did you ever feel like there was no way out of your financial situation? You may have made changes for a few days and then found yourself repeating familiar self-defeating habits. The Women’s Center has a solution for any woman experiencing stress around managing money. We have just opened our first Ruth Hayden money classes for women. This training process is so simple that any woman can follow it. The class is called “Managing Money with Competence.” Currently, ten women are participating and loving every minute of it! Each woman is redefining her self-respect and financial future. Then she starts the process of reprogramming her money brain. She learns that managing money is not a matter of intelligence but a matter of developing useful, practical, effective daily money management habits.

The exercises give women the steps necessary to reach their goal. Each participant identifies her individual unconscious habits that interfere with good financial management. Then, she gives up self-destructive habits by facing the long term consequences of these habits on her health as well as her money life. Every woman consciously establishes intentional, well-thought-out new daily money practices and starts predicting the consequences of her financial choices. All participants pick one money life project they will transform. The project includes goals, milestones, action plans, daily habits, and money behavior changes. The women practice, practice, and practice these new behaviors so that the practices become second nature.

If you would like to take control of your finances once and for all with realistic practices, please contact Karen Bowen at (857) 294-1432 to learn more about the Monday-night classes or support group.

Karen Bowen

Managing Money with Competence
6 Mondays, 6:30-8:30pm
A workgroup based on Ruth Hayden’s money management book series
- Class 1: Write my money life vision statement
- Class 2: What does my money life look like?
- Class 3: What are my money habits?
- Class 4: Develop effective money habits
- Class 5: Create my money management system
- Class 6: Tracking my money life progress

Questions?
Contact Judy at 617-354-6394
Judy@cambridgewomenscenter.org

Please email board@cambridgewomenscenter.org or call Ming at 617-354-6394 for our next series in the fall 2008.
Yes, I want to support the Women’s Center!

By going to www.cambridgewomenscenter.org and clicking on "support us" and then "Donate Now"

___ $2,000 ___ $1,000 ___ $500 ___ $250 ___ $100 ___ $50 ___ $25 ___ other $ _____________

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to The Women's Center.

For a donation of $125 or more, you can receive a free poster from the Women Activist Series by Betsy Warrior.

For more info or to choose one of the seven full-color, matted posters, check our website: www.cambridgewomenscenter.org.

___ My gift will be matched by my employer ________________________________

___ My donation is in honor of: (name) _________________________________________

(address) ________________________________________________________________

Name _________________________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________________________

City_______________________ State_____ Zip Code___________________

Phone_____________________ Email________________________________

Checks payable to The Women’s Center. Mail to: Women’s Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139

☐ If you’d prefer to be taken off of our mailing list, please check this box and return this slip, or email us at info@cambridgewomenscenter.org.

Spring 2008

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Treats from Community Cooks

Every month, there are treats appearing in the Women’s Center kitchen: from healthy salad and hot pasta to yummy deserts. These are the delightful contributions from Community Cooks.

Community Cooks has been delivering nutritious meals to the Women’s Center once a month since September 2007. They are a group of over 90 Somerville/Cambridge area residents who, once a month, contribute to a meal or provide food items to several agencies and shelters in the community. For over 17 years they have carried on this work. Each volunteer chooses to do one thing once a month – from cooking a main meat dish or dropping off fruits to contributing food items, or even donating cash to help those who take on larger quantity cooking. To learn more about Community Cooks visit their website at www.communitycooks.org, or contact Vicky I at communitycooks@gmail.com if you would like to become a volunteer.

The Women’s Center sincerely thanks Community Cooks for their thoughtful food selection and warm generosity to everyone in our community!!

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My Experience with the Women’s Center

My friend, who is homeless, showed me the Women’s Center; she brought me here and showed me around. I was very shy at first, but I like to share.

The Women’s Center has helped me very much. I didn’t know about computers when I came here. Ming showed me. She is very helpful and so nice; especially Ming is nice among the people who work here. She showed me the library and the computers. Imagine, I was homeless, sleeping in my car and very stressed. Ming showed me a place where I could lie down. Ming is like the mother of this place, is always ready to help and is very calming. She knows how to handle this place; she’s open, doesn’t hide anything.

I like very much that you can stay all day at the Center and no-one asks questions. Now, I like to be with homeless people. I love them very much and would like to help in my own way. I want to move myself forward and make my life better, and help other people too.

We need this place. There are so many patient people here and they are very helpful. This is a very nice place, a good place for people to come. I am trying to find other people to help, to give money and to volunteer.

Roma

Correction: The article in the last newsletter (Fall 2007) on the Battered Women’s Support Group, the phone-recycling program and community outreach for battered women was by Betsy Warrior.
**WISH LIST**

- Dehumidifier
- Portable CD Player/Radio
- Laptop, Hard Drive 2GB or larger
- Desktop Computers: Pentium IV or Faster processor, Hard Drive 10GB or larger; Flat Monitors
- USB sticks
- Toner Cartridges  HP 45 (51645A) or Lexmark #70 Black
- CD-ROM drives & CD burners
- Good Desk Chairs
- Computer Tables
- Gift Certificates for Home Depot, Staples, Target, and Tags
- Paper Towels and Toilet Paper
- Non-Perishable Food in Cans, Bags, or Boxes (Within Expiration Dates)
- Coffee, Tea, Honey, Cream
- Food Containers, Trash Bags and Sandwich Bags
- Eco-Friendly and Unscented Hand Soap and Dishwashing Liquid
- Recycled Cell Phones
- Mops, brooms, buckets
- Printer Paper
- No. 6 3/4 Envelops

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**Helpline Volunteers Needed**

If you have an open mind, compassion, and 2-4 hours a week (between 10am-8pm) that you would like to make a difference in women’s lives, you can become a helpline volunteer at the Women’s Center. Orientation and training will be provided. Please contact the Center Coordinator Ming at ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org or 617-354-6394 for more information.

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**Computer Maintenance Volunteer Needed**

If you can help with computer set up, maintenance, repairs, or network security, we would love to have your expertise for our computer lab! Please contact the Center Coordinator Ming at ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org or 617-354-6394 for more information.
I recently had the opportunity to attend MichFest- a women-only music festival out in the woods of Michigan. Being there, eating women-prepared food, watching women performers on women-built stages, allowed me plenty of time and the perfect space to reflect on the importance of safe spaces like these, places where women from all backgrounds can come together under the common banner of sisterhood. That (amazing!) experience made me extremely proud of my involvement with the Women’s Center right here in Cambridge, an institution 5 years older than Michfest and with a similar overall mission- creating a safe space for women to gather.

My understanding of the Center is that we are in a period of transition. I’ve been lucky enough to read some of the testimonials attached to donations that talk of the Women’s Center of the 1970s and 80s, where 40 to 50 women would attend a single support group meeting, spilling out from the living room into other rooms. I’ve read letters from women who say they never would have had a child without the support they received from the Center, or women who met their partners right here. I love to think about that Center, brimming with women and crackling with the energy of deeply necessary feminism.

Today’s Center looks a little different. Some of that energy has morphed into a more service oriented approach. Today we serve many women faced with serious and pressing needs- food, housing, and jobs. But helping other women is always a feminist act, and helping women achieve the basic elements of safety- shelter, nourishment, and emotional support- is a feminist act on the most basic level.

In a few days I’ll be moving to the other end of the state to attend nursing school, and it’s with some sadness that I leave the Center. I will be sad to leave Ming, whose calm demeanor and deep humanity (as well as her infectious laughter!) has taught me to be a more tolerant, kind and patient human being. I will be sad to leave Judy from whom I have learned everything from grant writing (with help from Elaine as well!), to storm window installation, to what it means to be truly and tirelessly committed to something you believe in; she has been a role model to me in so many ways. I will miss Betsy’s warrior spirit, her boundless energy and fierce indictment of those committing violence against women on every level, from advertising to domestic abuse. I will miss Ann’s sense of humor and the many quiet lessons she has given me on how to be a better listener. I will miss the women who come into the Center- their stories, their sense of community, their cooking. And of course I will miss the Center itself, the lovely blue house that I’ve spent so many hours in since January of 2007. So often I am reminded of what a rare treasure it is, so full of history- my history and the history of my sisters, all of the women who have filled this space over the years, donated time and energy and books and love to the idea of a women-only space. So while I feel some sadness in leaving, I also look forward to watching the Center transition, to hearing about new groups and a bigger community full of beautiful, brilliant women like so many that I’ve met while here.

Alison
Women coming to use computers at the Center in the last few weeks are thrilled with the changes in the first floor computer lab. OLD, TIRED, VERY SLOW computers using Windows 2000 have been replaced with MUCH NEWER, ENERGETIC, FASTER ones with Windows XP as the operating system, and with Office 2003 and Norton Antivirus software. HEARTFELT THANKS to Harvard Art Museum for the computer donations!

There’s more to come! A basement room will become a second computer lab as soon as we can get it ready. We’ve been plugging holes in the ceiling and walls; sanding and painting the heating units, ceiling, walls, and trim; scraping and cementing and washing and painting the floor. Special thanks to Nan Genger for all your help with this! Now we need to cement some areas in a closet, furnish the room, and set up the computers. When the second lab opens, we’ll double our available computers! In addition to general computer use, we plan to offer computer trainings in the second lab. If you would be willing to volunteer to teach basic computer and Internet skills, to individuals or to small groups, please contact Ming at ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org or (617) 354-6394 or (or to volunteer to cement some gaps in the foundation walls).

2007-2008 Foundation & Corporate Support

- Agnes M. Lindsay Trust
- Alice Willard Dorr Foundation
- ASD Foundation
- Bay State Federal Savings Charitable Foundation
- Bushrod Campbell and Adah Hall Charity Fund
- Cambridge Community Foundation
- Cambridge Savings Charitable Foundation
- Cambridge Trust Company
- Clipper Ship Foundation
- Draper Laboratory
- East Cambridge Savings Charitable Foundation
- First American Title Insurance Company
- Frank B. Mazer Foundation
- Frederick E. Weber Charities Corporation
- Hartley Corporation
- John Donnelly Trust
- Marion L. Decrow Memorial Foundation
- Morrison Fund
- SAP AG
- Sheila Gamble Fund
- Sheila O’Malley Memorial Fund
- Susan Guidrey Memorial Fund
- TJX Foundation
- Wellington Management

THANK YOU SO MUCH!
In September, 2006, the Women’s Center was in a tailspin, with barely enough money to last 3 weeks! Could we regroup, raise funds, keep the Center open, and even bring new energy and activity here? Yes. Yes. Yes. And yes.

- **Regrouping:** A new Board President and members, and then new Board Co-Chairs and members; a new very challenging job description for Ming (THANK YOU, Ming, for your grace and excellent work!); getting along with only one paid staff member; lots of new volunteers, including a bookkeeper, interns and group facilitators
- **Raising Funds:** All our fundraising has been done by volunteers, (Board members, community members, and interns). This has saved the Women’s Center over $100,000 at a time when every dollar counts. We are very fortunate to have two long-term members of the Women’s Center community doing all our grant applications! Judy, a founder, current Board Co-Chair, and a volunteer since 1971, and Elaine, a founder of Incest Resources, a past Board member, and a volunteer since 1980, each work half-time on this, as well as doing other Center work.
- **Keeping the Center open:** it’s still going strong six days/55 hours a week!
- **New energy and activity:**
  - Children! A new art play group for toddlers and their caretakers, a new crafts group for 6-9 year olds, older children using the computers… and just yesterday Henry Stafford, a 9 year old boy, came here and gave us money he raised by asking for donations to the Women’s Center in place of birthday presents to honor his deceased aunt, because the Center meant so much to her,
  - Groups! 32 women at a Lesbian Chat; an awesome Women and Media group; well-appreciated Women and Money classes; the brand new Black Women Poets and Memoirs Writing Workshops, and many more. And of course old reliable groups continue and thrive, including the Incest Resources’ survivors’ discussion group, the Battered Women’s Support Group, the Writer’s Circle, and the Open Discussion on Coming Out.
  - Computers! Busy, better, working well.
- **The building:** groups of students from Pine Manor, Lesley, and B.U., as well as community members, pitching in, fixing and improving.

This has been and remains a great challenge, especially because we are operating with only one paid staff position because of lack of funds. We need all the help we can get! We are so grateful to all the corporations and foundations that have supported us during the past two years (see page 2) and we appreciate each and every individual donation. We are relieved that our doors have remained open, but we are certainly not out of the woods. As most of you know, we inherited an $80,000 debt from the previous administration. What most of you don’t know is that payments on the loan take $900 a month off whatever we raise. Please consider the meaning the Women’s Center has for you, personally, and send as big a donation as you can afford today.

**THANKS FOR ANY AND ALL HELP AND SUPPORT!**

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**A Low-Flow Toilet Lives Here Now**

Barbara Taggart has been keeping the Women’s Center plumbing and heating in shape for years and years. This year she and her son Remy Trahant gave the Center a new toilet and installed it for free! We are so pleased! New low-flow toilets are in the budget of our upcoming Capital Improvements Campaign, but we haven’t had time to write a proposal or research foundations to send it to. Now we are off to a great start, with our water-saving toilet. Thank you so much, Barbara and Remy! Their company is Cambridgeport Plumbing at (617) 868-5081. They do great work!

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**Contributions from Local Colleges**

This past summer, student groups from Pine Manor College, Boston University, and Lesley University (picture below) have been giving the Women’s Center their time and energy to paint, clean, fix, and reorganize many spaces at the Center. Thank you, ladies, for your amazing contributions to making the Center a very comfortable and inviting place!

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**Bookkeeping Plus**

A huge thank you to Marea Santos! She has been our pro bono bookkeeper for the past two years, and along with doing an excellent job with that, has also helped us reduce expenses in many other ways. She negotiated and oversaw installation of a much less expensive phone service, found a way to lower our insurance premiums without reducing coverage, and helps us with computer problems. She has donated lots of great equipment and furniture. And there’s more! We really appreciate all she has done and is doing.

Marea is a professional organizer. Her company is S.O.S. (Santos Organizational Strategies). If you want some help getting organized, we enthusiastically encourage you get in touch with her. Call her at 617-834-7315 or check out her web site: [www.sosorganization.com](http://www.sosorganization.com) or .
The Question Remains: MBTA and the Svedka Fembot

In May ’08 we wrote a letter to the MBTA and associated agencies protesting the Svedka Vodka ads appearing on many public transit sites. Subsequently, we received a memo that the ads had been removed as a consequence of our protest. Still, we’re not sure if the Svedka contract with the MBTA ended coincidentally with our protest or if some of the ads are still being deliberately displayed (one was sighted at an MBTA stop on the corner of Harvard & Comm. Av. in June ’08). The Svedka Fembot advertisements might be gone now, but still, the question remains of why such ads were exhibited throughout our public transportation system in the first place.

Why was it acceptable to promote an environment demeaning to women in heavily trafficked public areas? Why impose an image of woman as a mindless, hypersexualized subhuman just when women and girls are finally speaking out against the sexual assaults and molestation on public transportation that have been occurring for years? An overwhelming number of us have experienced these assaults in humiliated and terrorized silence as children and as adults. Who was there to tell? Certainly not the MBTA employees who, at best, would smirk, leer and suggest we take another route or walk, or at worst, sympathized with our attackers. This response not only silenced women, but isolated us from an awareness of other victims as well.

We women pay for our transportation system too. Why should we feel fearful or uncomfortable using it? There are degrees of discomfort and humiliation elicited in us by ads like the Svedka Fembot ones, to ads for movies like “Captivity” and the “Hostel” series based on the sexualized torture and killing of women, to outright unprovoked physical attacks women daily sustain simply because we’re female. The prurient atmosphere engendered by the above displays normalizes and mainstreams a contemptuous and dangerous viewpoint of women’s worth, integrity and safety. If you too question the decision to use public property to sponsor such despicable images of women, please contact Dan Grabauskas, General Manager, MBTA, (gm@mbta.com or 617-222-5000) and ask him why he finds this acceptable; or Grabauskas’ aide, Eric Scheir, (617-222-3214), who said the signs were removed; or Wendy Stern, Planning & Development, wendy.stern@vet.state.ma.us; or Paul Regan, E.D., MBTA, pregan.advbrd@verizon.net; or Bill Deignan, Transportation Manager, Cambridge Community Development. (617-349-4632). or Lynne Omlie, DISCUS Code Review Board, lomlie@discus.org; Ask them what gives. Why are women’s interests so expendable?


The Garden at the Women’s Center

Please check out pictures of our garden that were taken this summer at:
http://www.cambridgewomenscenter.org/aboutus/picture_gallery.html

The Women’s volunteer therapist group I belong to, the Women’s Counseling and Resource Center (WCRC), has been given space at the Women’s Center for over 35 years. It has been an ideal arrangement from our end, and, I think, a good one for the Women’s Center as well.

I joined the Women’s Counseling and Resource Center 20 years ago. In all those years it’s been my privilege to work with women who have been serious in their search for solutions to their pressing issues and problems. They have come from various circumstances and different backgrounds and places, some as far away as Pakistan, Israel, Belgium, Russia, and Central America, as well as from this area and other states. It has meant a lot to me that WCRC has been able to provide these women with extremely low-cost therapy when they needed it and could find it nowhere else. Touching so many lives in such a meaningful way means a lot to my colleagues and myself.

I have appreciated the home-like facilities of the Women’s Center, the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff and volunteers, as well as the resources available to our clients. The Women’s Center refers women to us who call looking for counseling. The Women’s Center also provides notices of our services in the newsletter, as well as openings for new therapists (see below).

I am happy for this chance to write about our WCRC collaboration with the Women’s Center and to thank Ming, the paid coordinator, as well as the volunteer staff who work with her, for their many services to our WCRC clients, ourselves, and to all women in the area. One tangible way we do this is to give a large portion of our client’s modest fees to support the Center in its important work.

Doris Tanner

Therapists Needed or Need a Therapist?

Are you a low-income woman in need of a therapist or are you a therapist looking for an opportunity to volunteer?

Please call

The Women’s Counseling & Resource Center
(617) 492-8568

We may have what you need.
On-Going Groups

- Battered Women’s Support Group (Every Wednesday, 7-9pm, except the 3rd Wednesday of the month)*
- Coming Out Discussion (1st Saturday of the month, 1-3pm)*
- Incest Resources’ Drop-In Discussion Group for Female Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse (3rd Friday of the month, 6-7:30pm): Upcoming topics: October 17: Grieving; November 21: Creativity in Recovery; December 19: Conflict; January 16: Fears about Ourselves.
- Lesbian Chat 30+ (all ages welcome) (1st and 2nd Fridays of the month, 6:30-8pm)*
- Lesbian Rap (3rd and 4th Fridays of the month, 6:30-8pm)*
- My Money Life Class Support Group (Every Monday, 6:30-8pm, starting October 10, 2008)*
- Procrastinator Support Group (Tuesdays, 7-8pm)
- Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. Peer led support group for the woman in a straight relationship struggling with her sexual orientation. For details please email kate.e.flynn@gmail.com
- Survivors of Incest Anonymous, Nothing Too Heavy to Share. Support group for survivors of severe sexual abuse and exploitation. Screening: Ming, 617-354-6394
- The Women’s Center Board Meeting (every 3rd Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7pm)
- Women & Media (2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, 7-8:30pm). Film title on 10/9: “Not A Love Story” (shown at the Central Square Public Library)
- Women’s Gentle Yoga (Every Wednesday, 6:30-7:30pm)
- Writer’s Circle (2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:30-8:30pm)

Workshops in October/November

- Creative Arts Group (Every Monday, 2-3:30pm) Info: 617-661-0405 x22,*
- Black Women Poets & Memoirists Writing Workshops. (Every other Tuesday, 6-7:30pm, starting 10/14) Info: mapsoneeditor@gmail.com*
- Kids Art Group. (Every Thursday, 4-5pm, from 10/16 through 12/4). For kids age 6-9. Sign up: kidsartgroup@gmail.com
- New Mother’s Baby Wearing Workshop. (Thursday, 10/23, 3:30-4:30pm). Info/Sign up: 617-354-8807.
- How to Declutter and Get Organized. (Saturday, 10/25, 12:30-2pm). Info/Sign up: ngenger@comcast.net

*Wheelchair accessible groups
"I have a good job with a good salary, but for some reason my bills never get paid on time. How can the process be less overwhelming?" "I have a bit of debt where I'm paying too much interest. Is it better to move that debt to one of those 0% APR cards?" "My son is a good kid and gets good grades, but I really don't think he understands the value of money. What else can I teach him?"

On a Monday evening ten women gathered together in the cozy living room at the Cambridge Women's Center on Pleasant Street asking questions like these during the My Money Class series. The series of free interactive monthly classes are led by Jameel Webb-Davis, founder of Start Money Smart, Inc.

Start Money Smart is an organization dedicated to helping others understand, organize and educate themselves regarding personal finance. Its primary mission is to help people acquire money management skills, since they do not come with the accumulation of wealth.

Jameel started on this mission two years ago, after leaving a 16-year career at a large insurance company. Quite suddenly she was overwhelmed with the notion that her burgeoning career was not addressing serious issues in our communities. So, with the support of her family, she started on a journey of financial education.

What's unique about the Start Money Smart mission is this lack of emphasis on wealth accumulation. Teach your kids to save! Don't let them buy a lot of junk! Get them a good education, so they'll make a good paycheck! These are the financial education messages we give ourselves and our kids. But these messages are not addressing the financial questions many of us have today.

With classes focusing on the basics of personal finance, women have been pleasantly surprised at how much of the information provided relates to their day-to-day lives. "You're having a two-hour class on checking accounts?" one woman asked. "I can't think of enough to say about checking accounts to fill five minutes!" But at the end, she made a point of commenting at how insightful the information was regarding fees and all the new details related to online banking.

Another attendee was so happy to learn how credit card companies handle interest rates on individual's accounts. "Be aware," Jameel explained, "that if you're even one day late paying that credit card bill, they can increase your interest rate by ten points or more." And that's exactly what had happened unknowingly to a woman in the class. Later she said she saved hundreds of dollars by calling that company and demanding that they lower her interest rate. She didn't realize that, at times, these terms are negotiable!

The Cambridge Women's Center is dedicated to providing women with the resources and support they need to emerge from adverse conditions. A financial education is an integral part of an independent and empowered woman. Start Money Smart is excited to work with the Cambridge Women's Center to further this knowledge. For more information, visit www.cambridgewomenscenter.org.

We have developed a traveling exhibit entitled “Incest Survivors Speaking Truth to the Next Generation.” The exhibit, which consists of four thematically connected art quilts created by survivors of child sexual abuse, will have its public debut at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center this November. The stunning and powerful quilts increase awareness of the devastation incest causes, promote public discourse on a subject that remains taboo, demonstrate the transformative power of creativity, and provide hope to victims. The exhibit’s main purpose is to encourage a larger discussion about how parents, caregivers, and family members can speak truth about incest with the next generation in a way that meets the developmental needs of the child. Another goal is to be proactive in preventing the continuation of incest within family systems by confronting it thoughtfully – through words, images, and discussion.

The first quilt was made a few years ago by incest survivors regarding faith. In this process it was determined by the quilters that their faith to make a positive change for the next generation was what helped them survive the abuse. The second quilt was made by a group of professionals who work with children with sexual abuse histories and are also incest survivors. Their discussions brought together personal and professional opinions about how to approach the next generation about incest. The third quilt is made by one person who grew up with a mother with a history as an incest survivor. She is one representative of the next generation speaking about what it’s like to hear about incest from a parent. The fourth quilt is made by Michelle Harris, who facilitated the making of the other three quilts, as a cumulative and integrative creative process. Two of the quilts were created by groups of incest survivors at the Women's Center.

The exhibit will run from Friday, November 14 to Wednesday, December 24 at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center at 41 Second Street. On Thursday, November 20 there will be a panel of some of the Women’s Center quilters from 5:30-6:00pm, followed by a reception from 6:00-8:00pm. Please come out and support this project. We welcome any feedback about your experience, and any suggestions on how you’d like to see this project continue. For further questions or to offer support, please contact: Michelle Harris at mharrisatr@gmail.com

The Women’s Center and Incest Resources are collaborating on a transformative theatre project about sexual violence which is being developed by Melissa Penley, theatre artist and graduate student at Emerson College. The time frame is October/November 2008. No acting or artistic experience is required. Interested survivors please call 1-828-230-3178 or email melissapenley@emerson.edu for more information.
Dear the Women’s Center,

I wanted to share the experience I had at The Women’s Educational Center. I attended a few meetings at your center for Domestic Violence. I was fortunate to meet Betsy Warrior. She has inspired me to fight for justice for abused women. I had spoken to Betsy and others in a battered women’s group about my own traumatic experiences. My ex-husband is a batterer. Betsy and the other women in the group understood my feelings and comforted me. They wanted to help me heal. I am very thankful to Betsy for her dedication, fighting spirit for justice, and caring for women who have been devastated by domestic violence. She listens, offers advice, and has a lot of compassion. She is truly a remarkable woman. I am very thankful for the help she has provided me. She has a cheerful spirit and is working hard to protect women from violence. She holds meetings so women can come together in a safe environment to talk about their own experiences and is involved with contacting advertisers to stop objectifying women.

Betsy Warrior is an incredible role model for women. She has taught me to move forward and to stand up to injustice. We have to speak up and make sure that batterers are held accountable for their actions. We also have to do all that we can to prevent future violence. We need to educate young children, teens and adults about domestic violence and raise community awareness to the devastating affects of domestic violence. I had suffered in silence for such a long time. We can not be silent. Betsy has shown me that we can all make a difference.

Anonymous Community Member

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

__ $2,000  __ $1,000  __ $500  __ $250  __ $100  __ $50  __ $25  __ other $___________

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to The Women’s Center.

For a donation of $125 or more, you can receive a free poster from the Women Activist Series by Betsy Warrior. For more info or to choose one of the seven full-color, matted posters, check our website: www.cambridgewomenscenter.org.

__ My gift will be matched by my employer__

__ My donation is in honor of: (name) __________________________

(address) __________________________________________________

Name _________________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________
City____________________________________State_____ Zip Code_______
Phone_________________________ Email________________________________

Checks payable to The Women’s Center. Mail to: Women’s Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139

If you’d prefer to be taken off of our mailing list, please check this box and return this slip, or email us at info@cambridgewomenscenter.org.

Fall 2008

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Survivor Drop-In Group

Incest Resources’ drop-in discussion group for survivors of child sexual abuse has started up again. The group runs from 6:00-7:30pm on the third Friday of the month from September through June at the Women’s Center. This popular group, based upon an original group model developed by Incest Resources for survivors of child sexual abuse, started 25 years ago! Dates and topics for the 2008-2009 series are: September 19: Denial & Minimization; October 17: Grieving; November 21: Creativity in Recovery; December 19: Conflict; January 16: Fears about Ourselves; February 20: Career and Work Issues; March 20: Boundaries & Assertiveness; April 17: Relationships; May 15: Sexuality; and June 19: Hope for the Future. The group is facilitated by Dr. Elaine Westerlund, survivor-psychologist.

Parenting Support/Coaching

If you are looking for parenting support, please give us a call at 617-354-8807. Depending on interest, a parenting support group and/or parenting coaching may be available soon at the Women’s Center.

Letter from A Community Member

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Anonymous Community Member
Board Members Wanted

The Women's Center Board of Trustees is looking to expand. If you are interested in joining an active Board, raising funds, and helping the Women's Center grow and thrive in other ways, please send a letter to Women's Center Board of Trustees, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139 or email board@cambridgewomenscenter.org

Snow Removal Volunteers Needed

The Women's Center needs to prepare for a possibly very snowy winter this year. Snow shoveling, if done right, can be good for you (great exercise, energizing, and warms you up!). If you can help with snow shoveling, please contact the Center Coordinator Ming at ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org

WISH LIST

- Portable CD Player/Radio
- Good Office or other Chairs
- Good Shovels (garden and snow)
- Headphones (for computer use)
- Flat Monitors
- USB sticks
- Herbs, perennials (shade, semi-shade)
- Toner Cartridges HP 45 (51645A) or Lexmark #70 Black
- Gift Certificates for Home Depot, Staples, Target, and Tags
- Paper Towels and Toilet Paper
- Non-Perishable Food in Cans, Bags, or Boxes (Within Expiration Dates)
- Coffee, Tea, Honey, Cream
- Food Containers, Trash Bags and Sandwich Bags
- Eco-Friendly and Unscented Hand Soap and Dishwashing Liquid
- Recycled Cell Phones
- Mops, brooms, buckets
- Printer Paper
- #63/4 & #10 Envelopes
- Ice melt/sand