

## THE WIMMIN'S ROOM

# Women are tired of band-aid solutions

WORKING TOGETHER/ The Wimmim's Collective sends out an invitation to Neil House.

by Rita Boudreau

OK, I got this thrown at me at the last minute. It's already a day late and Allan will be looking for me soon. Also, I'm not particularly angry about anything at the moment and I'm not at my computer at home with Guns & Roses screaming angrily in the background - hence, this will be a very calm, possible even rational column. Definitely not my usual style - but what the heck.

Hey, there's a very important meeting of the UNB Student Wimmim's Collective next Thursday at 12:30 in Room 103 (I think, there will be a note on the door if it's not in there). All executive members are asked to attend to discuss a major project that is in the works.

All women who are coming back to UNB next year and are interested in getting involved with the Collective are also asked to attend since this project will drastically affect your lives on campus if it goes through. Valerie sends her most sincere apologies for not calling an official meeting all term. However, she hopes all the women who expressed an interest to her about the collective will come to the meeting and we will spew out more groveling apologies and bring everyone up to date on what has been going on. If you can't make the meeting, call her at home. She's in the book under V. Kilfoil.

It was nice to read some rational people responding to the Wimmim's Room for a change instead of the usual ranting crackpots (almost always men, by the way. Coincidence? I think not!). Anyway, the point was well taken from Christine Deschenes, Kris Reynolds, Lisa Land and Krista MacFarlane that one of the problems with the Neil walk home program is that not enough women use it. Well, I think the next logical question to ask is Why? I don't think Karen Burgess's article was an attack on the program. I think she raised some valid concerns. If there is a perception out there that the program is not safe for women (and lets face it, if the program is for women, then we should have some input into it), then those concerns should be dealt with. Maybe the program isn't well advertised. I personally don't have a clue how to get in touch with anyone if I wanted an escort. Maybe if more women were involved as escorts, then more women would know about it. Maybe some women aren't comfortable with the way the program is set up. Maybe they would like to have some input.

I personally have a real problem with men who say they are doing something with women's best interest in mind, yet they jump all over a woman who expresses an opinion that they disagree with. There were some good points in the letters from some of the men, but they were also very defensive. And, in a way, I can understand their point of view. they are providing

what they think is a very valuable service. But, as victims of violence, women have a very different perspective on the issue of violence. And, while I agree wholeheartedly that the walk home program is a step - it is not enough. In many ways, it is a band-aid solution and many women are tired of band-aid solutions. We are tired of living in fear of men. We don't want to have to live our lives having to be protected from them and by them. We want the same freedom they have to walk and to live.

I think men have to realize that although they may know they are a nice guy, women have no way of knowing that. The attack on a female escort by her male partner was an example of why many women have lost trust in men as a group - not necessarily as an individual. And until men start dealing with the problem of other men who do rape and abuse (and one in three women will be sexually assaulted in some point in her life so there are a lot of men out there doing the raping), then unfortunately we have no way of knowing who we can trust and who we can't. And women can't change attitudes by themselves. It is men who have to start standing up and telling other men that violence against women is unacceptable. That is what women really want. And the Wimmim's Collective is more than willing to work with the men of Neil House or any other House or group on campus that wants to deal with male attitudes toward violence against women. Once people get past their stereotypical notions about what feminists are and aren't, they are often surprised to find that all we really want is a safer and more peaceful society for everyone.

Hey, Wanda Baxter. Your letter to the editor last week was one of the funniest I have read in a long time. Sarcasm is such an effective means of communication. Are you interested in writing for the Wimmim's Room by any chance? We need new writers for next year.

And finally, GREAT NEWS. The very popular Wen-do Women's Self-defense course is coming back to UNB. The Toronto-based

course was here last fall for a weekend and it's back again by popular demand. It will run May 8&9 from 9:30 Am until 5 PM both days and is organized by the UNB Student Wimmim's Collective. This is the course where you will break a board with your bare hands at the end of

the two days. Major empowerment going on here. The course is taught by women for women-only and is unique in Canada. Everyone who took the course last fall broke their board. Trust me. The cost will be about \$35 for students- we are still working out the final details. Space

is limited and priority will be given to mature and part-time UNB students because our funding this time is from the Mature And Part-Time Student Association (to whom we are forever indebted). You can call 457-4456 for more information.

## FIRST NATIONS' VIEW

## Reviving Native languages

by Brian Nicholas

Recently, I had the opportunity to listen to Billy TwoRivers speak. He is a very wise man and I would like to share his wisdom with you. He spoke at the Maliseet Language class at St. Thomas on March 17, 1993.

He first introduced himself in his Native tongue: Mohawk. He is from the community of Kahnawake, which in Mohawk means 'beside the rapids'. In all, there are 7 Mohawk communities in Canada. He was thankful for the opportunity to speak to a language class because it was good for students to listen to other languages.

He mentioned that all Native Nations, be them Micmac, Maliseet, or Mohawk, see and read each other as international, because they are. The Mohawk Nation is to the Maliseet Nation what England is to France. Native Nations are international because they are all different nations, but also because of their languages. The Mohawk Language is foreign to the Maliseet language. He added that, although they are different languages, there has always existed an international greeting - Kwie. This was the way Natives from different Nations said hello to each other. This showed that communication did exist between Native Nations and that they each respected each other.

He went on saying that he would mostly talk about his language and culture, since he was so familiar with it. He explained that the Mohawk language was and still is an oral language. But with the arrival of Europeans (France), it was translated by using the French alphabet. When Mohawk is written, there are only 13 letters in the alphabet. There is no 'L'; the 'R' is pronounced as the 'L'.

Mr. TwoRivers is very concerned about the loss of language within communities. He said that the problem is real. For the Mohawk Communities, there needs to be awareness of the language and the problems it's facing. By being aware of these problems, it helps them to make more efforts to keep the language alive.

It should be noted that the Mohawk Communities do not mind the English language or any other language. Mohawks have said that it is good to have a second language. But it is even better to have a first language.

There are many reasons for the loss of language within Mohawk Communities. One reason is for the many distractions by the Modern World. In the Modern World, the English language is constantly being used, making it easier for one to pick it up

and, at the same time, to be negligent to one's mother tongue. Instead of Mohawk being the language the children constantly hear, English is. Is this bad? It is if you want to keep the Mohawk language alive. To keep any language alive, there needs to be an interest in the culture. So is the children. If the children do not speak the language, then



introduced and available at all levels of school. It encouraged all Mohawk parents to make an effort to enroll their children into these language courses.

Mr. TwoRivers said that it was a responsibility for the elders to make sure that the children retain their language. Centres were built so that elders could speak. These centres were open to all Mohawks, especially the children. When the children hear the elders speak, they get the ear/basics of the language. It also gives the children a chance to use the language, an activity very much encouraged. The use of a language is the easiest way to expand the language. Without the ability to use the language, it cannot be revived.

Mr. TwoRivers was raised by parents who both spoke the language. When he was young, he had little access to TV. In his case, it was not hard for him to retain the Mohawk language. It is not that simple for the Mohawk Youth today. There are many distractions in the Modern World that makes it hard to retain the language. One of these distraction is TV.

Mr. TwoRivers said that the worst thing that helped cause the loss of the Mohawk language is TV. As I mentioned before, in the Modern World, English is constantly being used. It is the same way with TV. Many times, parents use the TV as an infant or a babysitter, so the first thing that an infant or a young child picks up is the English from

it could easily translate into the loss of a culture. So the first step into reviving a language is to make it available to all of its children. To make the children willing to learn it, you need to encourage them by congratulating them and to offer incentives.

The Mohawk Nation realized that the root of reviving their language was through its children. The first step was to have it

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