

SCREENING FOR BREAST CANCER

-- WHY?

One in ten women in Nova Scotia will develop breast cancer in her life time. According to Stats Canada, Nova Scotia has the highest mortality rate due to breast cancer of all the Provinces. Approximately 200 Nova Scotia women will die of breast cancer this year and another 600 will find out they have breast cancer.

There is no known prevention for breast cancer, therefore the best that can be offered at this time, is early detection. The earlier that breast cancer is detected the more options that can be offered for treatment and the better the prognosis for a full and quality life style. Women need to become more aware of Programs that will assist them in taking control of their own health.

A good Breast Health Program is to perform Breast Self-Examination monthly, have an annual examination by your Family Physician and, after the age of 50, to have a Screening Mammogram performed once every two years.

The greatest risk for developing Breast Cancer is, by far, being a female and advancing in age. Women often feel that if there isn't a history of Breast Cancer in their family or if they or their Doctor can't feel a lump then they don't have to worry. Only 25% of the diagnosed Breast Cancers actually fall within what is commonly referred to as "the high risk group". The highest incidence of Breast Cancers occur in women between the ages of 50 to 69 years.

The role of mammography and Breast Screening is to detect lesions long before they become palpable. Palpable lesions range from a size of 1 to 1.5 cm. before they can be felt by the woman or by her physician. Good quality Mammography can detect lesions at 5 mm in size and often much smaller. This would be 2 to 4 years before you or your doctor can feel them. Early detection allows for early treatment.

The Nova Scotia Department of Health recognizes the need to assist women in the early detection of Breast Cancer. A new Program is being developed for the Province with the first clinic having been opened in the Halifax Shopping Center. Women who are residents of Nova Scotia, haven't had a mammogram in the past year and are between the ages of 50 to 69 years are invited to contact the Program at 496-3960 for further information.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR YOUR HEALTH

496-3960
1-800-565-0548

Marie Peek, R.T.R.
Manager, N. S. Breast Screening Program

NOTICE: On Monday December 11, 1995 at 7pm there
will be a BREAST HELP SELF EXAM by Betty
Ann Fraser at the AWRC.

WHO IS AT RISK

What causes breast cancer? No definite links have been found yet. So far there is nothing comparable to the connections found between cholesterol and heart disease, or between smoking and lung cancer. All we can do is keep up with the current theories.

What experts are sure about is that breast cancer can be inherited. If you have a history of breast cancer in your immediate family - this means if your mother or sister has the disease - your risk factor increases five to size times. (If you don't, you're still not free and clear. 70% of all breast cancer patients have no family history of the disease.) Hormones can also play a role: Doctors agree that getting your period early and delaying or not have children can also increase your chances of having breast cancer. This is the case because experts believe that the longer you're exposed to estrogen, the greater your risk.

But heredity and hormones are hardly factors that you can control (unless you're committed enough to your health to have a baby at the age of 21, just because it might slightly reduce the possibility of getting cancer). So what can be do? Caffeine and nicotine have been suggested as cancer-causing agents, but the good news is that despite their other health hazards, they probably have no link to breast cancer at all. Studies have tried to incriminate alcohol consumption and degrees of sun exposure (both excessive and insufficient), but again, these findings have yet to be substantiated.

Then there is the relationship between contraceptives and breast cancer. Two years ago, when studies appeared linking the two, the news was conflicting and confusing. it still is. But the bottom line seems to be that pill-takers don't have to kick the habit yet. The American Cancer Society believes that these studies showed a risk increase that was so slight, it wasn't enough to make the Pill-breast cancer connection one of concern.

Scientists are currently looking hard at two likely culprits in the breast-cancer arena: dietary fat and calories. Studies have drawn rather neat correlations between the amount of fat a population consumes and its breast cancer rate. (Since high-fat diets are usually calorie-laden, the problem could like there and not simply in fat content.) Until all the results of all the studies are in, some organizations like the National Women's Health Network advise that you try cutting down on fat. As they say, it can't hurt, and it might help.

GETTING PAIN OFF YOUR CHEST

Your breasts hurt. You can barely jog up a flight of stairs without clutching at your chest. No, it's probably not cancer: In young women, breast pain is usually caused by fluid retention - most common around the time of your period. Or it could be a high-fat diet or a new exercise program.

Your best weapon is a snug bra. Also staying away from caffeine, red meat, over-the-counter diuretics and bouncy aerobics. Taking the Pill can also reduce pain levels. But as always, before taking any type of medication -or if the pain persists - consult your doctor.



... F A C T S H E T

- Breast cancer is the leading cause of death from cancer for women. Nova Scotia has the highest mortality rate due to Breast Cancer in all of Canada.
- There is no known prevention for Breast Cancer. Early detection gives more options for treatment.
- International studies have shown that early detection and proper treatment can reduce the mortality rate due to Breast Cancer.
- In Nova Scotia this year approximately 200 women will die of Breast Cancer and another 550 to 600 will learn they have Breast Cancer.
- Mammography is one of the lowest dose x-ray procedures being used today. The radiation dose has decreased 87% to 98% in the last twenty years.
- Quality mammography can detect cancer as small as 3 mm in size which could be 2 to 4 years before it would be palpable.
- 20% of cancer tumors may not be detected by mammography. A good breast health care program would be to perform B.S.E. once a month, have an annual clinical examination by the Family Physician and screening mammography once every two years after the age of 50.
- The screening program can be Physician referred or self referral by women of the target age group.
- The Metro Clinic of the Nova Scotia Breast Screening Program has been accredited by the American College of Radiologists and the Canadian Association of Radiologists. The Program is endorsed by the Nova Scotia Medical Society, The Nova Scotia Association of Radiologists and the Canadian Cancer Society and is fully funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Health.
- The Program utilizes a "Team Approach" to diagnosis and treatment for all abnormalities detected at the Screening Clinic.
- Women in the target age group who participate in the program will receive a reminder to book subsequent rescreening appointments. Women between the ages of 40 and 49 are accepted for screening mammography but do not become part of the rescheduling program.
- Women participating in the Program receive information about breast cancer, instruction in B.S.E., explanation on how a mammogram is performed, a clinical examination of the breasts and a screening mammogram.

TELEPHONE 496-3960 FOR INFORMATION or 1-800-565-0548

WORKSHOP

PERSONAL GROWTH AND FREEDOM
(Who is in charge of my life)

A series of sessions to examine and explore ways we can be more centred in the world and our daily living to better cope with the stresses of life.
An opportunity to get in touch with ourselves and have a deeper understanding of who we are. Using exercises, imagery, and meditative techniques.
When - Starting early November.
Evenings 7:30 to 9:30
Where - Women's Resource Center
Facilitator - Barbara Hayes, counsellor/therapist
Fee - \$20.00 a session

More Canadian women with breast cancer are becoming activists, questioning the direction of current research, the effectiveness of detection and treatment, the adequacy of funding and education.



Supported by the Nova Scotia
Department of Health

Childbirth in

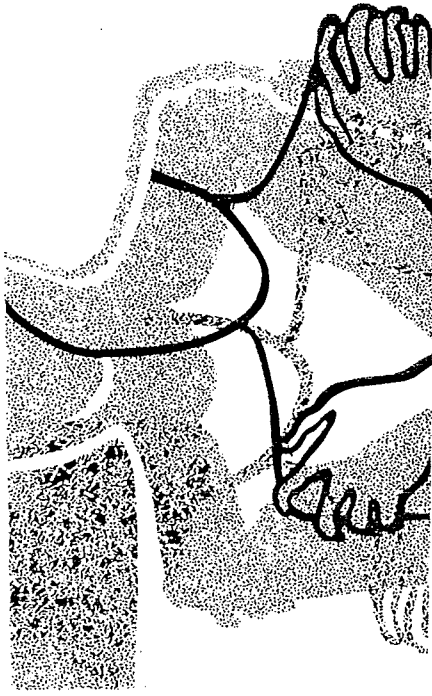
Nova Scotia:

Moving to

the Year 2000

Regional Conferences in
Intrapartum Care

Baddeck, Oct. 4 1995
Truro, Oct. 18 1995
Greenwood, Oct. 19 1995
Halifax, Oct. 25 1995



SURVIVORS, IN SEARCH OF A VOICE: The Art of Courage

SURVIVORS, IN SEARCH OF A VOICE is a unique collection of art inspired by the stories of pain, hope, fear and courage of breast cancer survivors.

The Woodlawn Arts Foundation brought together twenty-four of Canada's top women artists with more than 100 breast cancer survivors from coast to coast. The artists listened, felt and shared in the 'everyday' reality of living with breast cancer and from the experience, each created a work of art. This is truly the Art of Courage. Come see the stories.

WHERE ART MEETS MEDICINE

Support education and early detection of breast cancer through the purchase of a Mobile Breast Screening Unit for the women of Nova Scotia. Early diagnosis gives women treatment options.

Join us at ➡

The Gala Opening

Friday, November 10, 1995, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

TICKET ORDER FORM

SURVIVORS, IN SEARCH OF A VOICE - GALA OPENING, NOVEMBER 10, 1995,

☐ I WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE COCKTAIL RECEPTION.
PLEASE SEND ME _____ TICKET(S) @ \$100 EACH. (TAX
RECEIPT WILL BE ISSUED FOR MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE AMOUNT.)

☐ I CANNOT ATTEND BUT WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION IN
THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____.

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED IS \$ _____. PLEASE MAKE
CHEQUE PAYABLE TO 'SURVIVORS'.

I PREFER TO CHARGE MY TICKET(S) TO MY
☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ VISA

CARD NUMBER _____

EXPIRY DATE _____

(IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SPONSOR, PLEASE
CALL NANCY MARGESON AT 428-3932)

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PROVINCE: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

MAIL OR FAX TO: SURVIVORS IN SEARCH OF A VOICE - GALA
ART GALLERY OF NOVA SCOTIA
1741 HOLLIS STREET,
HALIFAX, N.S., B3J 3C8
TELEPHONE: 424-2635 FAX: 424-7359

Registration Form

Name: _____

Hospital: _____

Telephone: _____

Registration fee: \$10.00 per person (lunch will be provided).

Please forward a cheque to Reproductive Care Program of Nova Scotia, attention: Marilyn Muise, 5980 University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 4N1 by Sept. 30th for Baddeck Workshop, by Oct. 6 for Workshops in Truro, Greenwood & Halifax.

THE NASHA MURPHY MEMORIAL BURSARY FUND

Dear

This Bursary Fund has been established to honour the memory of Nasha Murphy. Nasha was a woman who touched many people very deeply. She was especially supportive of women and worked diligently to promote equality in many ways. She was particularly supportive of mature women returning to further their education. Nasha herself returned to St. Francis Xavier University and graduated with a Diploma in Adult Education in 1990. At the time of her death she was working on her Bachelor of Arts at St. F.X.U.

It is with these thoughts in mind that a committee of friends, family and colleagues have come together to raise the money needed to make this bursary a reality. We are asking for a generous donation to meet the \$10,000 needed so that a bursary can be awarded annually to a mature woman entering or returning to St. Francis Xavier University.

PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATION TODAY

TO

St. Francis Xavier University
Development Office
P.O. Box 5000
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
Canada B2G 2W5

\$50.____ \$75.____ \$100.____ OTHER ____

A tax receipt will be issued for donations over \$5.00.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Your generous support of the Nasha Murphy Memorial Bursary Fund will assist in keeping her memory alive as well as her enthusiasm and commitment. Thank you for your contribution!

Yours truly,

Betty Anne Fraser

Betty-Anne Fraser
Committee Member

OUR SISTER NASHA

I first met Nasha when I worked at Naomi Society what seems like many years ago. How can I describe her warmth, her caring, her openness, her passion for justice, her commitment to working with women and her awakening to feminism which we shared. She loved literature and learning returning to St. F. X. to graduate with a diploma in Adult Ed. she was working on her Bachelor of Arts Degree at the time of her death.

Nasha had a special solitary side to her nature. One of her favourite authors was May Sarton who wrote the book *Journal of a solitude*. It was this love of solitude which led her to living in her dream house on Big Island to walk the beaches which was a great source of joy to her.

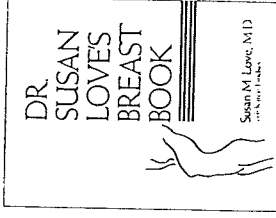
We miss her dreadfully, we mourn her and celebrate her.

Barbara Hayes

BREAST CANCER RESOURCES

Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book
by Susan M. Love, MD with Karen Lindsey (Addison-Wesley, 1990, \$18.95).

A breast surgeon and feminist who is a member of the National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations Medical Advisory Board discusses all conditions of the breast, from benign to malignant. A balanced view of treatment options and controversies is clearly presented in a friendly, accessible style. Good as a general reference. 455 pages. Available at bookstores.



Keeping Abreast: Breast Changes That Are Not Cancer

by Kerry A. McGinn, RN (Bull Publishing paperback, 1987, \$9.95).
A thorough overview of breast lumps and conditions that are benign in easy-to-read form: detection, treatment and need for further action. Includes a glossary of terms. 153 pages. Available in bookstores.

portive book by a specialist, who discusses how the risks of developing cancer can be reduced by modifications of lifestyle and dietary habits. The author stresses the importance of BSE and explains screening and treatment alternatives in detail. 196 pages. Available at bookstores.

"If You've Thought About Breast Cancer..."

A general pamphlet covering all aspects of breast cancer detection and treatment by the National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations co-founder Rose Kushner. Includes a section of definitions and telephone numbers for resources. Order from Y-ME, 18220 Harwood Avenue, Homewood, IL 60430, or The Komen Foundation, 6820 LBJ Freeway, Suite 130, Dallas, TX 75240. 44 pages. Single copies are free of charge; order multiple copies at a bulk rate from The Women's Breast Cancer Advisory Center, P.O. Box 224, Kensington, MD 20855.

Winning The Chemo Battle

by Joyce Slayton-Mitchell (Norton, 1988, \$16.95; paperback available).
A personal, sometimes angry, frequently idiosyncratic account of chemotherapy treatment from a woman who has "been there". Includes drug information and glossary. Available in bookstores.

Every Woman's Guide To Breast Cancer

by Vicki L. Seltzer, MD (Penguin Books paperback, 1988, \$7.95).
A lucid, informative and sup-

Women Talk About Breast Surgery

by Amy Gross and Dee Ito (Clarkson Potter, 1990, \$22.95).
Virtually a women's network

Cancer As A Woman's Issue

Edited by Midge Stocker (Third Side Press, Chicago, Illinois, 60625-1802, 1991).

In this anthology, "voices of women whose lives have been deeply affected by the experience of cancer speak of pain and solace, of isolation and community, of fear and power. Essays and personal stories explore how cancer affects us as women, individually and collectively" and answers the question, "How do we keep our fear from overpowering our ability to act on our own behalf?"

HEALTHSHARING WINTERS/SPRING, 1992

ularly Burlington, residents of support and counseling services. For copies write to Burlington Breast Cancer Support Services, P.O. Box 85112, Brant Plaza Postal Outlet, Burlington, ON L7R 4K3.

Up Front: Sex And The Post-Mastectomy Woman

by Linda Dackman (Viking, 1990, \$17.95).

A personal account, with frank details about the intimate challenges faced by a single woman in her 30s. 128 pages. Available in bookstores.

Relative Risk: Living With A Family History of Breast Cancer
by Nancy C. Baker (Viking Press, March 1991, \$19.95).

After a brief but thorough section on incidence and risk factors, the author presents a series of case histories describing how mothers, daughters and sisters have coped with a family history of breast cancer. 288 pages. Available in bookstores.

Low Fat And Loving It

by Ruth Spear (Warner Books, 1990, \$19.95).

Over 200 recipes, plus information on the diet-cancer link, fat and cholesterol. Includes an easy-to-follow daily plan. 318 pages. Available in bookstores.

Invisible Scars: A Guide To Coping With The Emotional Impact Of Breast Cancer

by Mimi Greenberg, PhD (St. Martin's Press paperback, 1989, \$4.95).

A useful guide which points out to women not only that they should be in joint charge of their treatment, but how to go about doing it. 204 pages. Available in bookstores.

No Less A Woman: Ten Women Shatter The Myths About Breast Cancer

by Deborah H. Kahane, MSW (Prentice Hall Press, 1990, \$18.95).

Ten women share their struggles, how they have confronted breast cancer and the emotional trials they faced. Each discusses how she coped with concerns about loss of femininity and sexual identity. 279 pages. Available in bookstores.

"What You Need To Know About Breast Cancer"

by the Burlington Breast Cancer Support Services (1991).

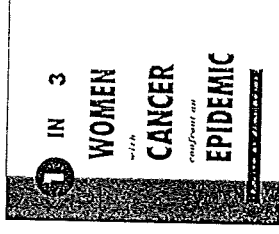
This informative booklet answers questions on cancer diagnosis and treatment and lends support to breast cancer victims by discussing the emotional trauma associated with the disease. A useful resource list for Ontario, partic-

and support group between two covers, a helpful manual on how to proceed and the questions to ask when faced with surgery, revealed through conversations with women who have "been there". 352 pages. Available in bookstores.

Coping With Chemotherapy

by Nancy Bruning (Ballantine Books paperback, 1986, \$4.95).

A matter-of-fact, objective and comprehensive overview of medical, physical and emotional aspects of chemotherapy treatment. Contains a list of standard drugs and their side effects and a glossary of terms. 329 pages. Available in bookstores or order in hardcover at \$11.95 from Coping magazine, Book Order Dept., P.O. Box 1700, Franklin, TN 37065-1700.



1 in 3: Women With Cancer Confront An Epidemic

Edited by Judy Brady (Cleis Press Inc., Pittsburgh, 1991, \$10.95).

This book is described as going beyond cancer as a health issue and forces us to question the medical profession, the cancer establishment and the industrial, nuclear and agricultural polluters who hold our health in their hands.



Cancer In Two Voices

by Sandy Butler with Barbara Rosenblum, (Spinsters Book Company, P.O. Box 410687, San Francisco, CA, 94141, 1991, \$15.95).

This is Sandy's personal account of coping with breast cancer. Co-authored with her lover, Barbara, Sandy speaks openly about the breast cancer, the politics of health care for women and the courage needed to cope with the disease. 183 pp. Available in bookstores.

MY STORY, OUR STORY

Experiences of Mastectomy

Becoming One-Breasted Shirley Masuda

It was a long process. First the lump, then the mammogram, the attempted aspiration, the ultrasound, the needle biopsy, the removal of the lump and then, finally the diagnosis — cancer.

After consultations with my doctor and thinking things through on my own, I decided to have a radical mastectomy. The doctor said if I had the mastectomy, I might not need radiation; only after the surgery could they tell whether I would require further treatment. His statement confirmed that I had made the right decision. My daughters, one of whom is a doctor, also felt that this was the best route.

I was scared but I didn't panic. My three daughters, Val, Kim and Jill, were listening to me speak of nothing else, tolerating my mood swings and never objecting—they simply let me do what I needed to do. We were all scared but we knew that we would do what we had to do. We accepted the seriousness of the diagnosis, but it did not change or rule our lives.

Meanwhile, Joan, a co-worker and good friend, who had been through a similar ordeal with her sister just a year earlier, knew exactly what I needed. She went wheeling around her neighborhood asking all her friends, men as well as women, to visualize rainbows around my right breast. Joan also got on the phone and set up a network of rainbows across Canada. A few men couldn't do the rainbow thing so they prayed, as did a few of the women; but prayers were just as welcomed as rainbows.

For my part, I searched for inner

strength. I read books about people who had survived cancer and how they had coped. I learned that these people played an active role in their healing process and that the first step was to make a conscious decision to live and to heal. Next, I began a visualization process that I felt would work for me and would arrest the cancer. I went into surgery with a feeling of being surrounded by rainbows, prayers and a lot of positive energy. I felt that I didn't dare not be okay after all of that. I will even go so far as to say that it was almost a spiritual experience. My mother had her breast removed 25 years ago and remembering her courage then gave me courage now.

This was a very difficult time and I felt the need to be with the women in my life to whom I felt closest — my sister, my daughters and my friend, Joan. I had no energy to give to people outside this circle of women. I found dealing with other people's reactions over and over again was draining, dragging me down and using up the energy that I wanted to channel into my healing process.

I turned on the answering machine and my daughters protected my space by screening my calls and dealing with the things that needed to be done. Not everyone respected my request for privacy and some even managed to get through leaving their worries and uncertainties with me. I felt that I was dealing with their fears about cancer and their own mortality. I felt like a dumping ground and it angered me. The misunderstanding that was spreading

throughout my community that I was seriously ill and could not work also angered me. It seemed that I was not only fighting the cancer, but a great mass of expectations for the worst possible outcome.

The surgery went very well. The cancer is gone. A lot of women have asked me: How I am? How am I mentally? I said fine. They wanted to know, How am I taking my loss? What about sex? What about feelings? What about....?

Sharing my room in hospital was one woman who was getting bilateral breast implants; another woman who was getting a new implant because of problems with the old one and another woman who had a lumpectomy and was waiting for radiation. The latter told me her husband was devastated.

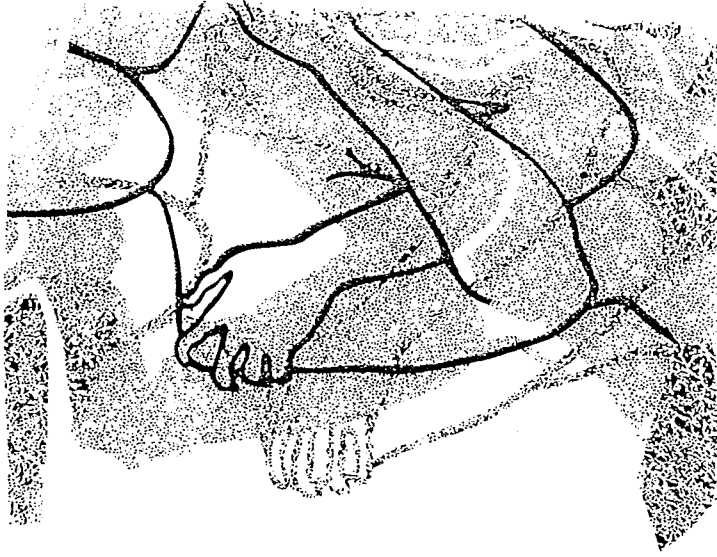
All of these women agreed that the hardest thing for them was not their own fears but the fears and reactions of other people to the cancer and to the part of their anatomy that had been affected. I have been encouraged by other women to get a prosthesis so I will look "nice" again. I'm never sure any more when women ask me how I am, if they are asking whether the cancer is gone or how I can live with only one breast. I had expected more from my feminist sisters.

By whose standards are we judging whether or not we are women? What happened to our pride in the women we used to be when we burned off our right breasts so we could be better warriors in order to protect our children and better hunters to feed them. Amazons we called ourselves — women without breasts, but no less women. (The word amazon derives from "amastos, without breast, referring to the burning of the lacteal gland on all girls, through the application of hot irons, when they reached their eighth year. With some groups, the breast was merely limited in growth by being tied up with cloth..." — Helen Diner, *Mothers and Amazons: The First Feminine History of Culture*.)

On behalf of all one-breasted and no-breasted women, I say again that we are still women. We

were born women, we grew up as women, our experience, our passions, our caring and our psyche are female. We are women because of who we are, because of our lives and our spirits, not because we have two breasts, 10 breasts or no breasts at all. We have never stopped being beautiful. We are still mothers, daughters, sisters and lovers. We are the same as we always were.

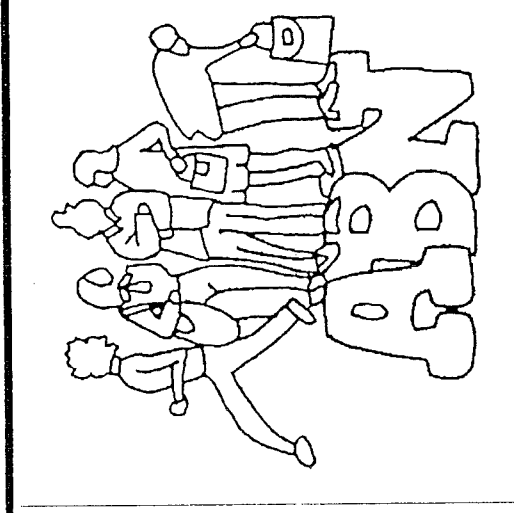
I do not feel that I have "lost" a breast. I lost a cancerous growth that would have taken my life away. There is no down side to that. I am a very happy, one-breasted woman. I am proud.



The Antigonish Women's Association operates from a feminist perspective. This means that we are committed to women's values, goals, and ways of knowing. We strive for a dynamical structure that changes as the issues change and as the voices of the women themselves change. We celebrate the diversity among women and are committed to offering information about issues and options in a balanced manner so that all women, regardless of their point of view, are able to trust that the Association is an organization that supports women. The Board of Directors for the Association is a working group committed to the ideal of consensus in decision making; the consensus of the collection of women's voices among us. There is active encouragement for all women to feel free to develop, and to voice their own point of view. There is a lateral structure within the Board of Directors, and the Board encourages participation and input regarding decisions from the membership at all times.

1995-96 BOARD MEMBERS LIST

Debbie Anderson
 Sarah avMaat
 Nadine Boudreau
 Sr. Fleurette Braun
 Janette Fecteau
 Nancy Forrestell
 Catherine Gascon
 Olga Gladkikh
 May Goring
 Shiela Grant
 Susan Jewkes
 Oona Landry
 Martha McGinn
 Charlie Rogers
 Brenda Silver
 Judy Donovan Whitty



MONTHLY MEETING

MONDAY, OCT. 30/95

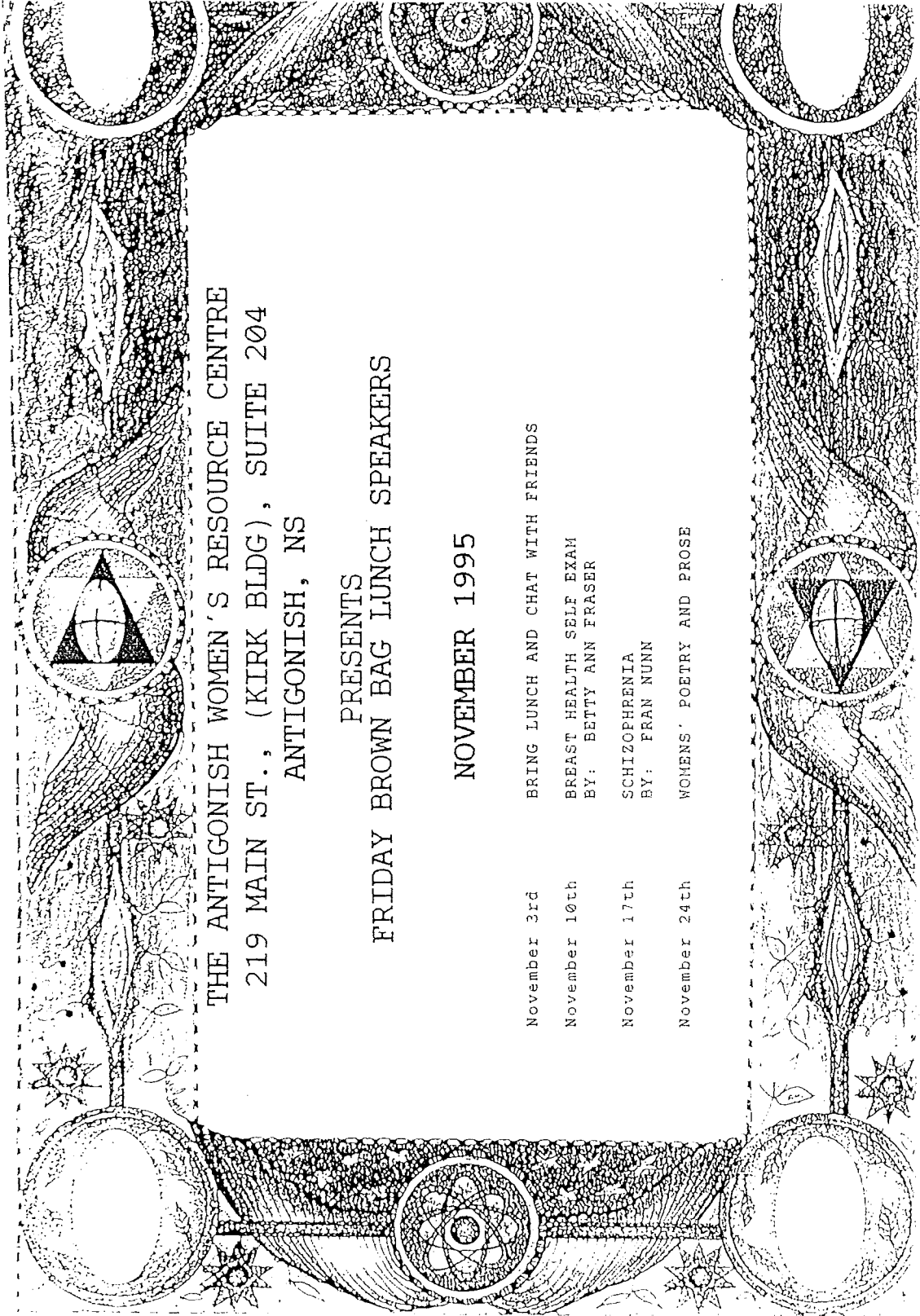
12:00 NOON

BERGENGREN
 CREDIT UNION

ANTIGONISH

BUSINESSWOMENS

NETWORK



THE ANTIGONISH WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE
 219 MAIN ST., (KIRK BLDG), SUITE 204
 ANTIGONISH, NS

PRESENTS
 FRIDAY BROWN BAG LUNCH SPEAKERS

NOVEMBER 1995

November 3rd	BRING LUNCH AND CHAT WITH FRIENDS
November 10th	BREAST HEALTH SELF EXAM BY: BETTY ANN FRASER
November 17th	SCHIZOPHRENIA BY: FRAN NUNN
November 24th	WOMENS' POETRY AND PROSE