



Focus on Women in Politics

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District of North Vancouver;
District of West Vancouver;
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The North Shore Women's Centre would like to acknowledge the Squamish Nation on whose territory the Centre is located. We would also like to acknowledge the Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam Nations.

For People, For Change, For a Stronger Community: An Interview with Sherry Shaghghi

Sherry Shaghghi, who has been involved with the North Shore Women's Centre for over five years, is currently running for North Vancouver City Council. She stopped by the Centre recently and agreed to answer a few of our questions.

Danielle: *You have a long-standing relationship with the North Shore Women's Centre (NSWC). Can you tell us a bit about your involvement here and at other organizations?*

Sherry: I have been involved with the NSWC since 1999 when I was hired for a summer position as an advocate. Since then I have been a member, volunteer and strong supporter. I refer women to the NSWC all the time to get connected and get support and I plan to start a networking group for multicultural women based in the Centre as soon as the election is over. I have also been involved in various capacities with the North Shore Association for the Mentally Handicapped, the North Shore Multicultural Society, MOSAIC, Immigrant Services Society, the Ismaili Community, the Persian Awareness Community, the Persian Senior Society and the Multicultural Family Matters Society.

D: *What motivated you to run for City Council?*

S: I am running for City Council because I am passionate about our community and the City of North Vancouver. I've been always ready and available to help people, especially poor and powerless ones - I understand their issues and concerns, and I want to extend my reach from the individual level to the community at large.

D: *What challenges have you faced or anticipate facing both in this campaign and if you are elected to council?*

S: In this campaign the biggest challenges are running as an independent (I have no political affiliations or membership to any political group or party), which has its advantages and disadvantages. It is hard to get recognition and to connect with the community so that they get to know me. And there's also a financial challenge, because my campaign is entirely self-funded and quite expensive. If I was elected, the most challenging thing would be the issues themselves:

involving more women in decision making, increasing affordable housing, helping small businesses to stay alive and grow, keeping the city safe and clean, keeping the schools safe and ensuring proper education for our children, keeping taxes below the inflation rate and finding an effective way to deal with the effects of Crystal Meth and other drugs.

D: *What do you think are the most important issues facing women in North Vancouver?*

S: There are a number of issues. For different women there are different issues. For instance, for single mom's on low income, it is the struggle to make ends meet for her children, her subsidy for day care and so on. For multicultural women and newcomers it is language, homesickness, integration, jobs.

D: *Despite several recent women mayors and council members, there are still more men than women sitting on local councils. There are even fewer visible minority women. Why do you think this is?*

S: Yes, the fact is that there are more men elected than women. In the case of minority women I believe it is more complicated than other women. I would guess women intend to be good candidates and win campaigns. It means that many women try to be more careful and pay perhaps too much time on becoming the best candidate rather than getting involved. And that doesn't necessarily translate into having the political viability needed for being nominated by a party to run for office. Those who are nominated have usually been brought up in the system and are willing to serve it faithfully. And you know running for political office takes a lot of money. More money than most single, especially young women, have access to. Campaigns are also notoriously grueling, often ugly and very time consuming. Many women who like me are the primary care-givers -- either for their children or their parents -- can't or won't make the sacrifice it would take to run for office.

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Looking for unique holiday gifts?

Check out the items for sale at
the North Shore Women's Centre!

"I Love My Vagina" sweatshop-free tank
tops and underwear: \$15, \$25 for both
"Give Your Lips a Voice" t-shirts: \$20
Victory Over Violence CDs: \$15
Chocolate Vagina-Pops: \$2

All proceeds go towards our programs &
services.

*Drop by the Centre or call us at
604.984.6009 for more information.*

Equality is Good for You

*CRIAW Factsheet: Women, health and action
by Marika Morris,
www.criaw-icref.ca (Accessed September 10th, 2005)*

"Studies...show that if you live in a society that has a great deal of income inequality (a wide gap between rich and poor), you are likely to be sicker and die sooner than someone making the exact same amount of money or less in a more egalitarian community....There is something about inequality in societies that kills people. In particular, greater gender equality in political participation, economic autonomy, employment and earnings, and reproductive rights is linked to higher life expectancies for both women and men."



Excerpt from A Woman's Creed: Declaration of the Woman's Global Strategies Meeting

We are poised on the edge of the millennium—ruin behind us, no map before us, the taste of fear sharp on our tongues.

Yet we will leap.

The exercise of creation is an exercise of will.

All this is political. And possible.

Bread. A clean sky. Active peace. A woman's voice singing somewhere, melody drifting like smoke from the cookfires. The army disbanded, the harvest abundant. The wound healed, the child wanted, the prisoner freed, the body's integrity honoured, the lover returned. The magical skill that reads marks into meaning. The labour equal, fair and valued. Delight in the challenge for consensus to solve problems. No hand raised in any gesture but greeting. Secured interiors—of heart, home, land—so firm as to make secure borders irrelevant at last. And everywhere laughter, care, celebration, dancing, contentment. A humble, early paradise, in the now.

We will make it real, make it our own, make policy, history, peace, make it available, make mischief, a difference, love, the connections, the miracle, ready.

Believe it.

We are the women who will transform the world.

Written by Robin Morgan, in collaboration with Mahnaz Afkhami, Diane Faulkner, Perdita Huston, Corinne Kumar, Paola Melchiori, Sunetra Puri and Sima Wali at the Women's Global Strategy Meeting, November 1994, sponsored by the Women's Environment and Development Organizations (WEDO).

The Municipal Election: November 19th

ALL CANDIDATES FORUMS

More to be announced

City of North Vancouver

Coalition of Community Associations

Saturday November 5th, 1:00 pm
North Shore Neighbourhood House
225 East 2nd Street

Wednesday November 16th, 6:30

Carson Graham Secondary
2145 Jones Ave.

District of North Vancouver

Parkgate Community Services

All Candidates Harvest Tea

Saturday October 29th, 3-5:00pm
Parkgate Community Centre
(Seniors' Lounge), 3625 Banff Crt

Blueridge Community Assoc.,

Parkgate Community Assoc. and

Mount Seymour United Church

Tuesday November 15th, 7:00pm
Mount Seymour United Church
1200 Parkgate

District of West Vancouver

Chamber of Commerce

Thursday November 3rd, 7:00pm
Kay Meek Theatre
1700 Mathers Ave.

Western Residents Association

Tuesday November 8th, 7:00pm
Gleneagles Community Centre
6262 Marine Drive

Village of Lion's Bay

Monday, November 14th, 7:00 pm
Community Hall

Questions for Candidates

1 What do you think are some of the important issues facing women in your municipality?

2 a) In what ways will you, as a city councilor/mayor, support women in the community?

b) In particular, how might you and Council support marginalized groups of women to have more leadership positions in local government?

3 **In the City of North Vancouver:** There are many ways that municipal governments can improve and maintain the safety and equality of women in their communities. What are your ideas about how the City of North Vancouver could remain a leader in promoting women's safety and equality?

In the District of North or West Vancouver:

There are many ways that municipal governments can improve and maintain the safety and equality of women in their communities. What are your ideas about how the (insert District of North Vancouver or West Vancouver) could better promote women's safety and equality?

4 **In the City of North Vancouver:** The City of North Vancouver has been very supportive of the North Shore Women's Centre since it lost 100% of its provincial government core funding in 2004. If elected, would you continue this support? Why or why not, and if so, how?

In the District of North or West Vancouver: The District of _____ has been supportive of the North Shore Women's Centre since it lost 100% of its provincial government core funding in 2004. Although the Centre has been able to keep its doors open, in particular due to the donation of free rental space from the City of North Vancouver, it is still very much in need of other stable sources of funding. If elected, would you increase support to the North Shore Women's Centre? Why or why not, and if so, how?

5 In light of provincial government cutbacks and policy changes that have reduced or eliminated important social services for women—particularly income assistance, housing and legal aid—what role do you think the municipality could play in ensuring that social services are maintained so that women in the community are not vulnerable or in crisis?

MUNICIPAL ELECTION INFO

Vote on November 19th

For information on voting and candidates please contact:

District of West Vancouver

604-925-7049

www.westvancouver.net/vote

City of North Vancouver

604-990-4230

www.cnv.org/election

District of North Vancouver

604-990-2211

www.district.north-vancouver.bc.ca/election

Village of Lion's Bay

604-921-9333

www.lionsbay.citymax.com/

Municipality of Bowen Island

604-947-4255

<http://www.bowen-island-bc.com/index.html>

Further Info on Election Issues:

Ministry of Community Services

www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov-structure/Elections/index.htm

BC Health Coalition. Elect a Public Health Defender:

www.bchealthcoalition.ca/materials/soct05.html



New Library Books and Reading Room

The NSWC is in the process of moving our non-fiction library downstairs to create more space for books and a comfy reading room for use during our drop-in hours.

We are also continuing to add to our library collection, with new books arriving all the time. Recent new titles include:

- Cavedweller, by Dorothy Allison
- Where the River Narrows, by Aimee LaBerge
- Keep Sweet: Children of Polygamy, by Debbie Palmer and Dave Perrin
- Fresh Tracks: Writing the Western Landscape, Ed. Pamela Banting
- Sister of My Heart, by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
- Sisters of the Earth, Ed. Lorraine Anderson
- Mercy Among the Children, by David Adams Richards
- **Plus many new books on women's health and other topics!**



Websites of Interest

Equal Voice BC: a pan-partisan group focused on increasing the number of B.C. women elected to political office: http://www.equalvoice.ca/BC/events_bc.html

Canadian Women's Voter Congress: a nonpartisan grass roots organization, dedicated to encouraging all Canadian women to become strong, effective voices at all levels of government: <http://www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org/>

D: *How do you think municipalities like the City of North Vancouver can encourage a more diverse range of women to become involved in local decision-making?*

S: Local governments, municipal governments, make decisions that affect people's daily lives. Without the input of women in all their diversity – as politicians, board members, staff and citizens – municipal leaders have too little information about how their decisions affect the people they serve. I believe that women are engaged in their communities. They might be interested in participating in municipal decision-making; but for many reasons, they are not involved.

Why is it important that more women become involved in municipal government? An increase in women's participation will help to ensure that municipal governments mirror the populations they serve. It will boost the range of people who make decisions and who have input into decision-making.

It will promote democracy by ensuring women's perspectives are counted. To sum it up, it will make municipal governments better related to their residents and citizens.

How we can get women more involved? The local government and the provincial government, with the help of other agencies, need to collaborate hand in hand help the community to conduct a research to first find out what is that women in BC don't participate as much as they could and needed to in the decision making and next how the government can help to engage them. The answer has to come from women themselves but government can help the process.

The municipal government need to ensure that women become aware of their important role as a citizen because if decisions made by municipal governments are to be representative of and responsive to the needs of both women and men, both women and men must take part in and give input to those decisions, which often affect their daily lives. When women are not consulted, when they are not at the table,

municipal governments make decisions without the complete picture of how their decisions affect citizens' lives.

What we can do locally is to come up with new ways that are based on theoretical research and practical knowledge in core groups of women, encourage collaboration between all levels of society through a broad network of contacts and get women involved as much as possible, work on increasing women's participation in change processes through resource mobilization and motivation, help motivate women and increase possibilities and willingness to improve themselves and their worlds and work in co-operation with other organizations and associations in the field of different issues.

Sherry Shaghghi
North Vancouver City Council
604.924.4726
sherry@shaghghi.ca

Recommended Reports

Available Online and or at the North Shore Women's Centre:

Losing Ground: The Effects of Government Cutbacks on Women in British Columbia, 2001-2005, Written by Gillian Creese and Veronica Strong-Boag, <http://www3.telus.net/bcwomen/archives/rep-iwd-reese-strong+boag-losing+ground+report.pdf>

Inclusive Cities Canada: Vancouver/North Vancouver City: A Preliminary Report
<http://www.inclusivecities.ca/developments/reports/Vancouver-Findings.pdf>

Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Decision-Making: The Federation of Canadian Municipalities
http://www.femmesetvilles.org/pdf-general/ICMD_SWC_Report_ENG.pdf

A City Tailored to Women: The Role of Municipal Governments in Achieving Gender Equality, Femmes et Ville and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities
http://www.femmesetvilles.org/pdf-general/FCM_city_tailored_eng.pdf

Women in Transit, Bus Riders Union, <http://bru.resist.ca/wit>

Upcoming Events

Women's Health in Women's Hands



Workshop Series

**Navigating Our Well-Being:
A Walk Through the Health Care
System for Women in BC**

**Tuesday November 22nd
6:30-8:30 p.m.**

at the North Shore Women's Centre

Facilitated by Lisa Moore of the Vancouver Women's Health Collective.

Free of cost. All women welcome. Please call 604.984.6009 to register or for more information

V-DAY NORTH VANCOUVER 2006



Feb 4th: Evening Show of *The Vagina Monologues* & Silent Auction
Feb 5th: Matinee Production of *The Vagina Monologues*

Our 2005 production of *The Vagina Monologues* was such an overwhelming success, we're doing it again! We're currently seeking volunteers, donors and steering committee members to help make V-Day 2006 our most exciting fundraiser ever.

V-Day is a global movement to end violence against women and girls that raises funds and awareness through benefit productions of Playwright/Founder Eve Ensler's award-winning play "The Vagina Monologues." In 2005, more than 2500 V-Day events took place in the U.S. and around the world. To date, V-Day has raised over \$30 million and educated millions about the issue of violence against women and the efforts to end it; crafted international educational, media campaigns; reopened shelters; funded safe houses in Kenya, South Dakota, Egypt and Iraq, and over 5000 community-based anti-violence programs. The 'V' in V-Day stands for Victory, Valentine and Vagina.

For more information, please see: www.vday.org & www.northshorewomen.ca/V-Day/

To get involved please call 604.984.6009, or email info@northshorewomen.ca

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

appreciations

Many thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who work at the Centre, including our new Board of Directors.

Thank you to all of our members who support the North Shore Women's Centre and those individuals who have graciously made financial contributions, including: Skye Stuart, Marian Shipley, Heather Johnston, Rod Clark, Margaret Ramsay, Pat Heal, Justine Campbell, Karmala Yonzon, Aphrodite Harris, Mary Bellerby, Doris Dungey, Margaret Roy, Sherry Shaghagi & Lee Grills

As well, thanks so much to all the businesses who have supported us with donations, including: Utopia Gifts for the Soul, Book Warehouse, Cheers Restaurant, Crabtree & Evelyn, Deep Cove Market and Grill, Pro-Care Nannies and Caregivers, Escents, Garden Works, Milestones, Namaste Gift Shop, Presentation House, Safeway, Save-On Foods, and Victoria O'Hara (Yoga Instructor).

And special thanks to our Feeding Freedom participants: Red-Tom Bo Japanese Restaurant, Queen's Cross Pub, Le Bistro Chez Michel, Paspalos Taverna, Artisan Bake Shoppe, Amici Restaurant, Tomahawk Restaurant, Bella Pizza, Oh La La Bistro, and Moustache Cafe.



I WISH TO BECOME A MEMBER:

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

City: Please check the appropriate box:

- City of North Vancouver District of North Vancouver
- District of West Vancouver Other: _____

Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: (H) _____ (W) _____

Email: _____ Fax: _____

Subscribe this email to the NSWC Email News and E-Nellie List:

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE ENCLOSED

____ \$20 Individual

____ \$ 5 Senior/Un(der)employed/Student

____ \$25 Organizational

During the last 4 years, have you:

- Been denied legal aid?
- Been on social assistance or disability?
- Had your childcare subsidy reduced or experienced difficulty finding quality childcare?
- Lost your public sector job or participated in the HEU or BCTF strikes?
- Been unable to find affordable housing?
- Had your child's school closed or underfunded?
- Had financial or other difficulties while attending university, college or a training program?
- Lost access to health care services you need or had them decline in quality?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we'd like to document your story in our upcoming report on the impact of recent provincial government cutbacks and policy changes on women on the North Shore.

If you participate, your anonymity will be ensured, and the report will be used as a tool by the North Shore Women's Centre in our work to make the voices of women heard at all levels of government. We will also work with women who get involved to address common concerns.

For more information, please contact Danielle at 604.984.6009 or email info@northshorewomen.ca

I would like to make a donation in the amount of:

\$20 \$35 \$50 \$75 \$100

Other: _____

I would like to be contacted about making a monthly donation through pre-authorized payments.

I would **not** like my donation acknowledged in the North Shore Women's Centre Newsletter *the Nellie*.

Membership offers: Opportunities to be a part of a diverse network of women, a subscription to the *Nellie E-News* and our print newsletter *the Nellie*, library borrowing privileges and voting privileges at the Annual General Meeting. Please make your cheque payable to the North Shore Women's Centre and return it with this form. The NSWC is a non-profit registered charity. Income tax receipts will be issued for donations.

**NSWC 131 East 2nd Street, BC V7L 1C2
604.984.6009 info@northshorewomen.ca**