

INVESTING IN WOMEN'S EQUALITY...

West Coast LEAF is grateful for the ongoing support we receive from our donors, members and the Law Foundation of British Columbia. We also receive project support from our public funders. Thank you to Ethical Bean for kindly supplying our office with coffee and tea.



Centre for SUSTAINABILITY



enp
enterprising non-profit



vancouver foundation

Vancity

THE LAW FOUNDATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

JOIN THE THEMIS MONTHLY GIVING CLUB!

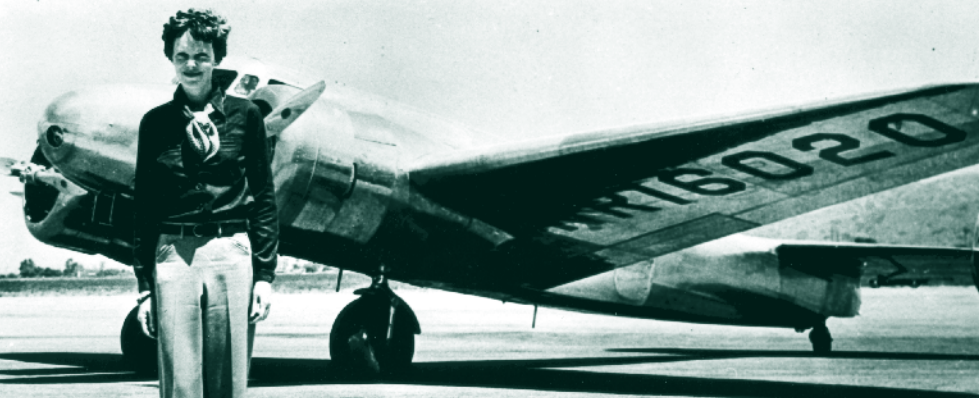
The Themis Monthly Giving Club is our fastest-growing group of donors! Monthly giving is the best way to support West Coast LEAF. It provides sustainable revenue, reduces administrative costs, and helps us to plan for the future. Please contact Fiona York at 604.684.8772 ext. 113 for more details.

LEGACY GIVING

Leaving a Legacy Gift to West Coast LEAF transforms the lives of women for future generations. Legacy Gifts can be made for now or for the future – there are options that allow you to benefit both yourself and a charity now and options that allow you to present a lasting gift in your will. West Coast LEAF strongly encourages you to seek professional legal, estate planning and financial advice before deciding on a course of action. For more information about planned giving, please contact West Coast LEAF at info@westcoastleaf.org.

AEROPLAN MONTH AT WEST COAST LEAF

October is Aeroplan Month at West Coast LEAF. Help West Coast LEAF stay province-wide in our focus with a donation of Aeroplan travel points or Vancity VISA points. Travel points are used by volunteers and staff to speak at events and deliver workshops, and to bring board and committee members to our office. For more details, contact West Coast LEAF at 604-684-8772 or info@westcoastleaf.org.



LET'S SEND EQUALITY AROUND THE PROVINCE

Themis Club Monthly Donors

Megan Adam, Aamna Afsar, Alice Albert, Milnor Alexander, Violet Allard, Carmela Allevato, Donna Anthony, Mary Atkins, Ellen Balka, Christine Basque, Renate Battaglio, Barbara Bell, Kathryn Berge, Jessica Beverley, Pam Bhatti, Sharon Blaker, Carolyn Bouck, Chris Bowers, Gwen Boyd, Susan Boyd, Anita Braha, Alison Brewin, Gretchen M Brewin, Barbara Britton, Karey Brooks, Linda Brotherston, Tracey Brown, Trudi Brown, Georgina Brunette, Melina Buckley, Lee Campbell, Megan Chorlton, Patricia Cochran, Faye Cooper, Lynn Copeland, Maria Corra, Lisa Cowan, Laura Cundari, Rosalind Currie, Kirstin Danielson, Cheryl Davies, Anne Davis, Olive Dempsey, Bridget Dentoom, Jennifer Devins, Pat Dewhirst, Mary Doherty, George Doubt, Elizabeth Dunn, Brenda Edwards, Avigail Eisenberg, Mahbuba Ergasheva, Catherine Evans, Darlene Facchin, Irene Faulkner, Aesha Faux, Melanie Ferrandi, Joan Feyrer, Jacqueline Flett, Amy Francis, Karen Frederickson, Beverly Gallagher, Keri Gammon, Nicole Garton-Jones, Lauren Gehlen, Crissy George, Marla Gilsig, Danielle Glass, Michelle Glen, Maggie Gold, Penny Goldrick, Maria Gomes, Frances Gordon, Dawn Green, Nancy Greene Raine, Donna Greschner, Katey Grist, Cherene Groundwater, Sue Hammell, Carol-Ann Hart, Kim Hart Wensley, Anna Helmer, Barbara Hestrin, Lesley Hobden, Agnes Huang, Iglia Ivanova, Nitya Iyer, Agnes Jackman, Audrey Johnson, Jennifer Johnstone, France-Emmanuelle Joly, Lorena Kanke, April Katz, Sheila Keet, Rose Keith, Phyllis Kenney, K.M. Kent, Karen Kilbride, Joy Korman, Joan Kotarski, Natasha Krotez, Rosanne Kyle, Roselyne Lambert, Gudrun Langolf, Judith Lee, Vera LeFranc, Goldie Leoppky, Allison Lepp, Nicole Liddell, Linda Light, Zona Macdonald, Carolyn MacEachern, Heather MacFadgen, Ron MacIsaac, Maureen MacLeod, Signy Madden, Ritu Mahil, Carla Margach, Francesca Marzari, Neilane Mayhew, Brenda McEachern-Keen, Cheryl McKay, Maris McMillan, Virginia Miller, Leslie Muir, Michelle Mungall, Barbara Nelson, Caroline Nevin, Wendy Norman, Jan O'Brien, Thelma O'Grady, Niveria Oliveira, Margaret Ostrowski, Lara Percy, Erica Pinsky, Monique Pongracic-Speier, Nerys Poole, Susan Powell, Norrie Preston, Nikki Reimer, Ramona Reynolds, Shirley Ridalls, Jillian Ridington, Catalina Rodriguez, Dominique Roelants, Andrea Rolls, Mary Salaysay, Sheila Schierbez, Ruth Simkin, Kerry Simmons, Michelle Simpson, Mary Woo Sims, Veronica Singer, Miriam Sobrino, Martin Spencer, Eloise Spitzer, Monica Staff, Theresa Stowe, Veronica Strong-Boag, Sarah Tarry, Jane Templeman, Janine Thomas, Petra Vanderley, Art Vertlieb, Elizabeth Vogt, Duff Waddell, Jennifer Waelti-Walters, Sheryl Wagner, Cathy Welch, Janice Westlund, Wendy Williams, Val Wilson, Allison Wolf, Barbara Yee, Fiona York, Anita Zaenker

West Coast LEAF

555 - 409 Granville Street,
Vancouver, BC V6C 1T2

T: 604.684.8772

T: 1.866.737.7716

www.westcoastleaf.org
info@westcoastleaf.org



LEAFlet

Newsletter of the West Coast
Legal Education & Action Fund

Fall 2010 Vol. 23 No. 2

PERSONS DAY

Kamloops: Breakfast
October 13, 2010

Vancouver: Constitute!
October 18, 2010

Victoria: Wine and Cheese
October 21, 2010

Nanaimo: Brunch
October 30, 2010

Please see insert or visit
www.westcoastleaf.org



MARCY COHEN Liberation and the Abortion Caravan

By Joan Morris

In 1970, reproductive rights activists staged a dramatic protest in the House of Commons. The protest followed a cross country abortion-rights caravan and rally on Parliament Hill with women's groups from across Canada, and was aimed at a demand for safe, legalized abortion services. Newspapers of the day were shocked by the action:

"Complete disorder and pandemonium took over in the House of Commons Monday as 31 young women rose one after another in the public gallery and screamed at startled MPs 'free abortions on demand.'" - Winnipeg Free Press

"It was likely the biggest demonstration staged by and for women ever held in Ottawa." - Toronto Telegram

"It sure as hell shook up some old MPs" - Lorne Nystom, MP, Montreal Star

The House of Commons protestors included a young Vancouver activist named Marcy Cohen, who had become involved with the Student Movement while a grad student at SFU. Marcy and other female activists at Simon Fraser University were frustrated when restricted to clerical roles in the student movement of the late 1960s. They formed what would become the Vancouver Women's Caucus, to liberate "women, the most exploited members of any society."

The VWC moved off campus, and membership increased substantially. The women's top objectives were: childcare, equal pay for equal work, contraception, and abortion access. *"The most important of these revolved around a woman's right to control her own body and reproductive functions."* (Roberta Lexier) The group protested the 1969 Therapeutic Abortion Committee law through demands for a repeal and guerilla theatre.

In April, 1970, Marcy was part of the VWC's "Abortion Caravan" that left Vancouver and held public meetings across the prairies. On May 9th, they rallied on Parliament Hill, then took a coffin filled with coat-hangers – representing the women who had died from illegal abortions – to the doorstep of the Prime Minister's residence. On May 11th, Marcy was one of the young women who chained themselves to their seats in the House of Commons and protested the law.

Marcy Cohen and members of the VWC are credited with kicking off the second-wave of feminism in Canada. Marcy remains committed to advancing equality rights. She is retiring from her position as the Research and Policy Director at the Hospital Employee Union, has been a Chair and Board Member of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and was nominated for a 2010 YWCA Women of Distinction Award.

Please join Marcy Cohen and West Coast LEAF in celebration of Persons Day! See insert for more details.

DONOR PROFILE

Ken Williams

By Lara Yeo

Ken Williams is West Coast LEAF's longest planned-giving donor, first donating in 1987. Born in Vancouver, Williams left home at an early age to work in logging camps on the BC coast. His exposure to daily inequalities, living in the camps and working as a high-rigger, first spurred his interest in social justice issues.

Williams left logging in his twenties to pursue his formal education. He practiced medicine as a country doctor in Invermere, BC. His decision to stop practicing medicine and start a career in health care management and consulting took him to different medical facilities and communities in the United States. Ken and his wife returned to settle in Victoria in 1987.

He describes himself as someone who has a natural "leaning to social justice". In the logging camps, Ken recalls, speaking out against injustices was a matter of survival. He considers educating one's self and financially supporting social justice causes, as one is able, to be a matter of common sense. To be alert in society is to be asking questions, recognizing inequities as they occur, and seeking to right the wrong.

Ken is interested in senior citizens' rights and women's and minority equality issues. Living in the United States, he supported racial integration initiatives that championed an individual's equal rights and self-worth. Since returning to Victoria, alongside his annual financial commitment to West Coast LEAF, he supports local women's sexual assault and transition centres, including the Victoria Women's Transition House in Victoria and the Prostitute Empowerment, Education & Recovery Society (PEERS).

Ken's wife ignited his particular interest in women's equality issues. He candidly questions the foolishness of societies that end up paying for the loss of women's great potential because of condoned social conditions that subjugate and silence women, denying them equal opportunities.

Ken is proud to support women and associate himself with West Coast LEAF and has made an annual donation to West Coast LEAF since his first contribution in 1987. Speaking of West Coast LEAF, Ken comments, "I've stayed with 'em because I think they've done some great stuff...I wouldn't keep donating if I didn't think they were cutting the mustard".

He clearly specifies how West Coast LEAF is to use his donated dollars. While in full support of West Coast LEAF's litigation strategy – intervening in test cases – he chooses to support legal education initiatives and workshops. He passionately describes how his funds support the translation process from the courthouse to the streets. His funds are "to help those battles won in court be implemented in towns," so women and children across BC can understand and benefit from test case victories that set legal precedents on gender equality. The "No Means No" campaign is an example of Ken's dollars at work.

continued on page 3

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Adam James

By Joni Reed

Adam is a 4th year student at the Sauder School of Business at UBC specializing in human resources management. He encountered West Coast LEAF for the first time at a UBC volunteer fair, and he was intrigued by the fact that it was a feminist organization actively recruiting men to help out in presenting their "No Means No" and "Youth in the Workplace" workshops. He decided to apply for the facilitator position and has never looked back!

A couple of Adam's reasons for being so interested and eager to contribute to women's organizations are that he has so many amazing women in his life and he sees this as a chance to give back to them. Also, he feels strongly that women's equality affects everyone.

Some of the other groups that Adam is currently involved with are the UBC Pre-Law Society and Global Agents for Change, which is a group focused around sustainable solutions to global poverty.

As a current volunteer, Adam continues to learn valuable skills and knowledge working with West Coast LEAF. Even though it is his job to educate youth on these issues, he says a lot of the time he feels as if he is the one that is learning the most! Adam enjoys working with West Coast LEAF because he feels it's such a pleasure and so rewarding to work with the amazing group of passionate people that are involved with West Coast LEAF.

EQUALITY RIGHTS ONLINE

The West Coast LEAF youth website is a new educational resource for equality rights and human rights milestones in Canada. "One of the most empowering, if not the most empowering thing in the world is knowledge. Knowledge of your rights empowers you in a way that you may never have imagined. If people are informed about their equality rights, they will be able to take an active role in asserting their rights." - from the website

Visit the youth website at www.youth.westcoastleaf.org

LOVE IS NOT ENOUGH

The cycle of legal aid



In August, Victoria resident Jenn Fisk embarked upon her "Love Is Not Enough" cycling tour. Responding to her partner's struggles with legal aid challenges, Jenn vowed to cross Canada raising awareness and

funds for legal aid reform in BC. "We're not doing this tour for me, because that would just be a Band-aid," said Jenn's partner Eve Petford (Chilliwack Progress). "We're doing it for everyone. We're doing it to make people aware of what these cuts to the legal aid system do to families."

Sadly, Eve's custody battle and complications forced Jenn to end her tour in Calgary. Their story is one that illustrates the momentous challenge of navigating complex legal matters without an adequate legal aid system.

West Coast LEAF honors Jenn's incredible success in cycling from Victoria to Calgary, for her courage in standing up for this cause, and for being the passionate and caring person she is.

"Thank-you to all those we have met along this trek.... you have touched our lives and our hearts.... most importantly restored our faith in humanity. See you all again soon, friends."

Leave a legacy with a gift to one of West Coast LEAF's endowment funds

The Access To Justice Fund supports efforts to establish a constitutional right to counsel in family law. The BC Litigation Fund sustains equality litigation work. Choose to support legal education with the Joy and Ken Williams Education Fund.

Please make donations payable to the Fund you wish to support and send to: Vancity Community Foundation, 510 - 815 West Hastings St Vancouver, BC V6C 1B4 or to West Coast LEAF.

continued from page 2

He commends the "excellent direction" of West Coast LEAF. He has developed a relationship with the organization over the years, avidly reading West Coast LEAF newsletters and calling the office with questions or comments. Ken cares deeply about women's equality issues and has made a commitment, intellectually and financially, to stay abreast of West Coast LEAF's work and to annually support the organization. He believes "you've got to be interested before you help; it is not just a matter of throwing a few bucks at them, you have to be ready to support them and stand up with them". Ken affirms this belief everyday, and West Coast LEAF is grateful for his support.

PROGRAM NEWS

West Coast LEAF has a busy fall with program work and celebrating our **25th anniversary**. The film *Constitute!* documents the landmark activism that went into the equality sections of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* 25 years ago. Join us at a screening of the film on October 18 (Persons Day) that also celebrates the founding of LEAF and West Coast LEAF.

Our **2010 CEDAW report card** will measure the BC government's compliance with international standards on women's rights, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Our annual review will record whether the BC government has made any improvements since last year's almost-failing grade.

After following the erosion of legal aid services – and especially family law legal aid – in BC over the past eight years, West Coast LEAF commends the **Public Commission on Legal Aid** for providing individuals and agencies with a chance to share their experiences and recommendations for the system. The deadline for written submissions is October 31st. Our 2010 Access to Justice petition is at www.westcoastleaf.org and our update of **Legal Aid Denied** will be released at the end of October.

West Coast LEAF is following the **Public inquiry** into the events leading to the Pickton conviction and the manner of missing women investigations. We're awaiting a decision on the issue of "public interest standing" in **SWUAV v AG Canada**, and preparing for our intervention at the BC Supreme Court in the **Reference** on the constitutionality of section 293 of the Criminal Code – the so-called "Polygamy Provision" – in November.

We're submitting comments on the **Family Relations Act** white paper and wrote to the BC Law Institute about potential changes to the employment and **Human Rights Tribunal** system. Our youth facilitators are gearing up for fall and we're planning three **Transforming Our Future** workshops around the province. Contact us to book a workshop for your class or group.

Hope to see you at one of our events this fall!
West Coast LEAF staff