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**13 women
 gather on
 Friday the 13th**
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Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered

by Peggy Storz

It was Friday the 13th and thirteen women were gathering at the Silk Purse in West Vancouver. No superstition here! What was their plan? A feminist re-enactment of the Last Supper? An Agatha Christie murder mystery? Wrong on both counts. These women had almost together to learn, in two days, as much as they could about marketing and publicity in the arts.

From art galleries they came. From theatres, music societies, arts organizations. Some came on their own, artists looking for tips on how to market themselves. Each one was searching for efficient and effective promotion techniques.

Facilitator Elaine Smookler was ready with the goods. In two days, she taught us everything (well, almost everything) she had learned during her eight years as a promoter in the arts.

Elaine began her career with the Vancouver Chamber Choir in 1984. Her official title was Marketing Manager, a role which often included setting up fundraising campaigns, selling tickets and coordinating those ever-so-valuable volunteers.

Elaine learned plenty in her five years with the Chamber Choir and, after a brief stint as Managing Director at Presentation House, established her own company. Today she is one of Vancouver's most effective arts publicists. Besides producing and promoting many shows in Vancouver, Elaine conducts seminars to share her wisdom, much of it acquired "by the seat of her pants."

Bewitched, Bothered & Bewildered was especially designed for non-profit agencies. After a stimulating "getting to know you" exercise, Elaine made a list of what each participant hoped to learn. Throughout the next two days, we referred to this checklist to see how we were doing.

From designing a poster to developing an audience, from special events to volunteer recognition, we tried to cover it all. As financing is a crucial aspect of any project, we spent a good deal of time on fundraising and sponsorship. Elaine stressed the importance of a concept she calls "WIFIM"—What's In It For Me. Whomever you approach, especially for sponsorship, must see some benefit for themselves. This might be an ad in the program, use of their product at an event, or supporting a cause which falls under their mandate. Be creative. Before approaching potential corporate or media sponsors, investigate their needs and be ready with an appealing offer.

Time is another important factor when promoting a show, exhibition or event. Again, do your homework. Know the deadlines of the publications you are targeting. Remember that submitting something too early can be as fatal as getting it in too late. Elaine showed us how to draw up a marketing plan as well as a workable timeline for preparing and distributing promotional materials. Find a system that works for you and stick to it. Dolly Hopkins and Bernard Sauvé came along to

assist Elaine and to talk about their experiences in the world of the performing arts. Our questions were encouraged. Also, Elaine cleverly capitalized on our expertise—yes, we all had some—encouraging us to share with the group what had and had not worked for us over the years.

By four o'clock on Saturday, we had just about completed our checklist. There were still plenty of questions to ask but it was now time to go out there and learn for ourselves. We had lots of new information to support our efforts.

Bewitched, Bothered & Bewildered was a great time as well as an incredible lot of learning. Elaine was fun to be with. She shared her knowledge, her successes and failures, and even the phone numbers of some very special contacts. Again and again, she reminded us that the arts is not a "them versus us" situation. It's a matter of we, and we will go a lot further by cooperating.

Thanks Elaine, for a couple of wonderful days!

Peggy is a West Vancouver singer/songwriter and Jill of Many Trades. Five of her songs are recorded on two albums which have been nominated for Juno awards.

AIDS in the Arts Workplace

by Ann MacKlem

Prior to going out on tour, an employee confides in his/her employer that he/she is HIV-positive. While on tour, this person starts drinking heavily, and their job performance begins to suffer. The employer gives the employee a warning, but the drinking continues. If you were the employer, what would you do next?

An employee discloses to his/her employer that he/she has AIDS and requests confidentiality. As the employee's condition worsens, it becomes clear that they have to be reassigned to less demanding tasks. How do you, as a manager, justify this to your other employees without divulging the real reason behind the transfer?

An employee with AIDS requests extended sick leave. This person has already been granted the maximum allowable number of sick days. Your organization does not offer extended health benefits. What do you do?

These are only some of the scenarios that were discussed at a recent seminar on HIV/AIDS in the workplace. Given by AIDS Vancouver's Michael Aze and sponsored by the Vancouver Cultural Alliance, the workshop was geared specifically to the arts community.

Given Barry (Ballet B.C.) Ingham's death of AIDS in January and Larry Lillo's (artistic director of the Vancouver Playhouse) going public about being a PWA (Person with AIDS), the workshop was particularly timely. As compared to any other professional sector, Aze contends that "the arts have been hardest hit" by AIDS. Whether this is because there is a greater concentration of so-called risk

groups in the arts or because people in the field tend to reveal more of themselves is debatable. In any case, it is beside the point.

The World Health Organization estimates that by the year 2000, there will be 30-40 million carriers of the HIV virus worldwide. In Canada, there have been 6100 cases of AIDS reported since 1983; in B.C., the figure is 1200. Of all the provinces, British Columbia has the highest per capita concentration of AIDS cases.

What can arts groups—understaffed and overworked as they are already—do to offset the inevitable losses? (By losses, I don't mean only loss of staff, but loss of productivity, loss of hope, loss of creativity, etc.) As Aze pointed out, it is best to plan ahead rather than find yourself scrambling and making decisions you might later regret. Planning ahead means developing a comprehensive policy with regard to AIDS in the workplace, a policy that will cover such issues as confidentiality, human rights, employee education, safety, and more.

Canadian Actors Equity was among the first to develop such a policy statement, and this was already two years ago. Other arts groups are well-advanced to follow suit. If you despair at the thought of striking yet another committee and struggling through months of board meetings to articulate such a policy, call Actors Equity. Ask them how they went about it. Talk to other professional groups. Share information with them.

Better yet, contact AIDS Vancouver. They have copies of a policy developed by the Canadian AIDS Society that you are more than welcome to crib from. ACT NOW: Managing HIV and AIDS in the Canadian Workplace explains how to develop and implement an AIDS policy, and offers guidance on how to educate your employees. It is available for \$60 through AIDS Vancouver. For information, phone 687-5220. Michael Aze is also available for consultation, on a one-to-one or group basis. He can be reached at 687-5220.

Cultural Honours Presented at Silk Purse

On May 8, 1992, North Shore MP Mary Collins presented long-time volunteer Myrtle Mayall with the Lescaquer Award, in honour of the West Vancouver resident's contribution to culture in the community.

Myrtle Mayall has been involved with the West Vancouver Community Arts Council since its inception in 1968. Myrtle has also served as secretary for the West Vancouver Visual Arts Society for many years. She is a Life Member of both the Council and the West Vancouver Sketch Club.

The Lescaquer Award was created last year by the Minister of Communications to recognize the contribution of volunteers to the promotion and development of cultural life in Canada. More than 70 people attended the ceremony held in Myrtle's honour.