

The WIHS Woman



The Connie Wofsy Women's HIV Study

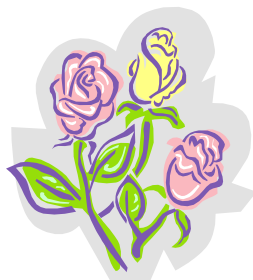
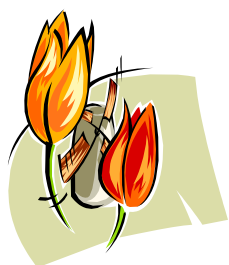
Spring Is Here



SpringThoughts

By Eling O. Eide

*When the grass in Yen is still jade thread.
The mulberries of Ch'in are dropping green boughs.
The days when your mind is filled with returning,
Those are the times when my heart is breaking.
But the spring wind and I have been strangers,
What is it doing in my gauze bedcurtains?*



2003 National Women's History Month

The theme for National Women's History Month is "Women Pioneering the Future". This includes pioneering women from our history and innovative women of today that have led and won struggles for equality, civil rights, created and advanced our educational and professional opportunities, and made incredible advances in the arts and sciences. The theme is also dedicated to the women of tomorrow who will expand the frontiers of possibility for generations to come.

On the next few pages you will read the brief descriptions of several Pioneering Women.



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Pioneering Women



This year, the National Women's History Project has selected women exemplary of the many women who inspire us. These women who serve as role models in pioneering our future by wholeheartedly meeting challenges in their present.

Rebecca Adamson, a Cherokee, is Founder and President of First Nations Development Institute (1980), and Founder of First Peoples Worldwide (1997). She works directly with grass-roots tribal communities, and nationally as an advocate on local tribal issues since 1970. Her work established a new field of culturally appropriate, values-driven development, which created the first reservation-based micro-enterprise loan fund in the United States; the first tribal investment model; a national movement for reservation land reform; and legislation that established new standards of accountability regarding federal trust responsibility for Native Americans.



Ms. Adamson serves in the corporate sector as a member of the Board of Directors for the Calvert Social Investment Fund (the largest socially responsible mutual fund) and serves in the non-profit sector on the Board of Governors for Indiana University's The Center on Philanthropy. Last year, Ms. Adamson was selected by the Virginia Foundation for Women as one of eight Virginia Women in History honorees.

Mae C. Jemison (b. 1956) blasted into orbit aboard the space shuttle Endeavour, September 12, 1992, the first woman of color to go into space. The space flight was just one of a series of accomplishments for this pioneering woman who is now founder and president of two technology companies.



Prior to joining NASA in 1987, Dr. Jemison worked in both engineering and medicine. Following two and a half years (1983-1985) as Area Peace Corps medical officer for Sierra Leone and Liberia in West Africa, she worked as a General Practitioner in Los Angeles. In 1994, Dr. Jemison founded and chairs The Earth We Share (TEWS), an annual international science camp where students, ages 12 to 16, work together to solve current global dilemmas.

Dr. Jemison's first book, *Find Where the Wind Goes: Moments From My Life* was published in 2001. The book, an autobiography, was written for teenagers, but is equally engaging for adults. Dr. Jemison loves cats and resides in Houston.

As a woman pioneering the future, Dr. Jemison speaks nationally and internationally on vital 21st Century issues including science literacy; sustainable development; education; achieving excellence; the importance of increased participation of women and minorities in science and technology fields; and investing in the present to secure the future.

Linda Chavez-Thompson, the daughter of sharecroppers, she worked as an agricultural laborer before joining the labor



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union, eventually rising through the ranks of the AFL-CIO to become the first person of color, and the first woman, elected to be the Executive Vice-President of the AFL-CIO in 1995.

Chavez-Thompson, a second generation Mexican American, was born in Lubbock, Texas, in 1944. As one of eight children whose parents were cotton sharecroppers, she began working in the west Texas cotton fields in the summer when she was only ten. The entire family worked all day in the hot Texas sun with adults earning fifty cents an hour and Linda earning thirty cents an hour. Her back-breaking labor in the scorching cotton fields of west Texas planted the seed of her future career.

Linda Chavez-Thompson has drawn wide praise from leaders in the labor movement and other sectors of society. Many supporters see her as a bridge between the Latino communities and major cultures. She has become active on many fronts since her election to the AFL-CIO council, serving on the board of governors of the United Way and as a vice chairperson of the Democratic National Committee. She is also a member of the executive committee of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute and the board of trustees for the Labor Heritage Foundation.

Yuri Kochiyama is a brave pioneer who worked to build alliances between diverse cultural groups through her commitment to social justice. For over forty years, she has championed civil rights, protested racial inequality, and supported political prisoners in the United States and throughout the world.



Yuri was born and raised in San Pedro, which at the time was a small working class town on the California coast. Her parents were Japanese immigrants, and she described herself then as being very provincial, religious, and apolitical. Her birth name was Mary Nakahara. The bombing of Pearl Harbor changed the life of every American, but for Yuri, her family, and those of Japanese ancestry, the American dream was shattered forever.

During WWII Yuri and her family were placed in an internment camp in Arizona. She saw the parallel between the ways African Americans were treated in the segregated South and the way Japanese Americans had been interned.

She married shortly after leaving the internment camp, and moved to New York City with her husband Bill (who was a veteran of the 442nd Infantry). In 1960, the family moved to Harlem – a community thriving with political activity and lived in a low-income housing project surrounded by Latino and Black families. It was in this new neighborhood that Yuri at the age of 40 began her political activism. She became involved with other parents in a grassroots movement to get safer streets and integrated education.

In 1963, she met Malcolm X. Their friendship and political alliance changed her life and outlook. She joined his group, the Organization for Afro-American Unity, to work for racial justice and human rights. The murder of Malcolm X in 1965 intensified Yuri's commitment to work for dignity and equality for all people.

Yuri appreciates addressing young audiences. Her advice includes all of the following: "Don't become too narrow. Live fully. Meet all kinds of people. You'll learn something

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from everyone. Follow what you feel in your heart."

In 1962, **Rachel Carson's** pioneering and meticulously researched exposé, *Silent Spring*, identified the devastating hazards of DDT, one of the most powerful pesticides the world had known. Her book helped set the stage for the environmental movement of the late 20th century.



Carson, a renowned nature author and a former marine biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, had grown up with an enthusiasm for nature matched only by her love of writing and poetry. Determined to be a writer, Rachel entered the Pennsylvania College for Women (now Chatham College), but feeling she did not possess enough imagination to write fiction, she turned to biology which always provided material for her beautiful prose. In 1934, limited finances forced her to withdraw from the PhD program. With her father's sudden death in 1935, she became responsible for the family's welfare and began her career with the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries.

Her first book *Under the Sea-Wind* published in 1941 did not attract a big audience. Yet, in 1951, Carson's *The Sea Around Us* was an instant success, receiving the National Book Award for nonfiction and remaining on the New York Best bestseller list for 86 weeks.

Rachel's interest in the dangers of DDT was rekindled in 1958, by a letter from a friend who was writing her about the number of large birds dying on Cape Code as a result of DDT sprayings. During the four years it took for Ra-

chel Carson to complete the *Silent Spring*, she was fighting breast cancer and then bone cancer.

Her finished work meticulously described how DDT entered the food chain and accumulated in the fatty tissues of animals, including human beings, and caused cancer and genetic damage. Her work was first published in *The New Yorker* in June 1962, the book alarmed readers across America and, not surprisingly, brought a howl of protest from the chemical industry.

Anticipating this reaction, Carson included 55 pages of notes and a list of eminent scientists who had read and approved the manuscript. President John F. Kennedy's Science Advisory Committee thoroughly vindicated both *Silent Spring* and its author. As a result, DDT came under much closer government supervision and was eventually banned.

Her work brought awareness to the public about nature and why we should care for this planet. Rachel Carson died in 1964. She had overcome extraordinary difficulties and adversities to pioneer a new way of thinking about the connection of all life.



Changes for Visit 18

By Claudia Ponath, Field Manager

This spring we begin WIHS visit 18 and are now in our 3rd WIHS grant funding cycle. A number of new sub-studies were proposed and funded for WIHS III. Below is an update on changes you can expect for visit 18.

What's new? We have a number of new sub-studies starting this visit. The first is called the PK study (or Pharmacokinetic study); it looks at HIV medication levels in the blood over a 12-24 hour period. The second sub-study (the Metabolic Study) involves testing for glucose and insulin and doing a bone density test (DEXA) (very much like the Bone Study we did during visits 14 and 15). The third study is called the Sex Steroid study and is looking at hormone levels during menstruation. The last new sub-study is the NRTI (Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors) study, which is looking at levels of certain HIV medications in the blood. At your core WIHS visit, your interviewer will determine for which of these new sub-studies you are eligible for and she will give you more information about each of these studies. In addition, more information about these studies is given in the boxes on page x.

What's gone? The Interim Event telephone interview for HIV-infected women whose most recent CD4 cell count was under 200 has been dropped.

What's back? For visit 18 and all even numbered visits, we will ask the mood questions on form 26. We will also do the blood tests called CBC's (complete blood counts) and flow cytometry (t-cell testing) on women who

are not infected with HIV.

What's continuing? We will continue to ask you to try and fast before your visit 18 study appointment. The reason for this is to get a more accurate measure of key laboratory tests for things like cholesterol, lipids, and glucose. These blood tests are important markers for diseases that affect women, including diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension (high blood pressure).

Abbreviated visits for women who are unable to have a full core visit will continue.

For women undergoing colposcopy, we will continue to ask if you want to donate tissue to the AIDS and Cancer Specimen Resource (ACSR). Women do not need to have cancer or HIV to enroll in this sub-study. Women who are eligible and wish to donate tissue to the bank will have an extra biopsy and blood specimen collected for this study at the time of their colposcopy examination. We have had great response from you to this protocol and we thank you for your help!

The oral, anal (Tushie) and VRS sub-studies continue in visit 18. If you are enrolled in the oral study, the field staff will set you up with an appointment with the dentists at UCSF. If you are enrolled in the Tushie study, your clinician will ask you the questions from the anal questionnaire and collect an anal pap from you. If you are enrolled in VRS, the field staff will ask you the VRS questions at the core visit, and ask you to come in for a 3 month visit between visit 18 and 19. The VRS study is still enrolling new participants. We are looking for HIV positive women from the newly enrolled group, who did not take HIV meds before and are now starting. The WIHS field staff will tell you about it at

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your next visit, if you qualify.

In conclusion, thank you all very much for being part of this really important study and for helping to make it so successful. We will continue to do our best to make study visits a pleasant experience for you and to offer you enrollment in these exciting new sub-studies.

WIHS SUB-STUDIES

Metabolic Study

WHY: The aim of this study is to understand more about the metabolism of women with and without HIV. This includes evaluating the risk for diseases common to women, such as diabetes and osteoporosis, and conditions that may be more common in women with HIV, such as body fat redistribution and muscle loss.

WHO: This study is open to HIV positive and HIV negative women who are under 65 years old, weigh less than 295 pounds are under 6 feet 1 inch tall, and are not pregnant or breast feeding.

WHAT: Participants come in fasting. They have their blood drawn once before and 3 times after they drink sugar solution. A catheter is inserted before the first blood draw, so as to avoid having to stick participants for each draw.

A DEXA scan (which measures bone density) is performed either right before, during or after the blood draws.

WHEN: This visit needs to take place within one month of the core visit.

WHERE: This study will be done at the General Clinical Research Center at Moffitt Hospital, 12th floor, 505 Parnassus, SF. All procedures

will be done by a GCRC nurse.

HOW LONG: 3 hours.

HOW MUCH: Participants will be reimbursed \$50 for participation in this study.

PK Study

WHY: The goal of this study is to learn more about how HIV drugs are absorbed, and what factors influence the absorption and therefore the levels of HIV medication in a woman's body. This information will help us to find out why some women do well on HIV medications, and why other women don't.

WHO: This study is open to HIV positive women who are taking at least one of the following HIV medications:

- ◆ Sustiva (Efavirenz)
- ◆ Viramune (Nevirapine)
- ◆ Kaletra (Lopinavir/Ritonavir)
- ◆ Viracept (Nelfinavir)

WHAT: Participants take their night and morning dose of their HIV meds during the study visit in front of the nurse. They have their blood drawn once before and 10 times after they take their medication over the course of 12-24 hours, depending on the medication. A catheter is inserted before the first blood draw, so as to avoid having to stick participants for each draw.

WHEN: This visit needs to take place within one month of the core visit.

WHERE: This study will be done at the General Clinical Research Center at Moffitt Hospital, 12th floor, 505 Parnassus, SF. The consent and blood draws will be done by a

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GCRC nurse.

HOW LONG: 24 hours.

HOW MUCH: Participants will be reimbursed \$150 for participation in this study.



NRTI Study

WHY: This study measures the level of two HIV drugs in the blood, Retrovir and Zerit.

WHO: HIV positive women are eligible if they are currently taking retrovir (AZT, zidovudine, AZT), Combivir (AZT plus 3TC) or Zerit (stavudine, d4T).

WHAT: One blood draw.

WHEN: Same day as your core visit.

WHERE: This study will only be offered to women who are seen at Mt. Zion or San Francisco General. The consent and blooddraw will be done by a GCRC nurse.

HOW LONG: 20 minutes.



Sex Steroid Study

WHY: This study measures the levels of certain hormones (estradiol, FSH, and inhibin B) during your period. The levels of these hormones change as a woman approaches menopause. Having more information on women's hormone levels will help us understand the effects of menopause on HIV disease and HIV.

WHO: This study is open to HIV positive

and HIV negative women who still have regular periods, don't take any hormones, are not breastfeeding and still have both ovaries.

WHAT: One blood draw.

WHEN: The first period after a woman's core visit, on days 2, 3 or 4 of her menstrual cycle.

WHERE: At any WIHS clinical site.

HOW LONG: 15 minutes.

HOW MUCH: Participants will be reimbursed \$20 to participate in this sub-study.

CAB CORNER



By Anna Groskin, CAB Liaison



So I think we discovered the perfect way to spend a dreary Thursday afternoon – arts and crafts, WIHS-style! Thursday the 13th was the WIHS CAB Arts and Crafts afternoon at Mt. Zion. There were people making bead necklaces and bracelets, people making their own stationary with stamps, and people painting on ceramic pots that held snap dragons and prim roses. It was a blast! Several staff joined in the fun – Ruth brought an assortment of beads, and Sarah and Janice brought their stamp collections. It was a very relaxing afternoon, complimented by cookies and juices, and lots of encouragement and creativity. We were sorry that the weather did not cooperate, but were thankful that a few participants could make it.

If you have an idea for a CAB event, please let me know! We're always looking for new ideas that will bring in the crowds. Until next time, take care!

The Importance of Showing-Up for Your WIHS

Everyone here at the Women's Study is extremely grateful for your participation in the WIHS. You are making huge contributions to a unique and important part of Women's Health Research, and you should be really proud of that!

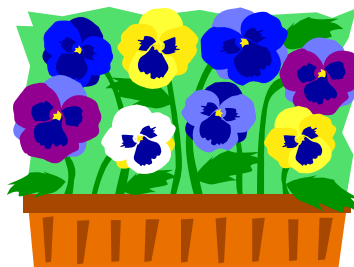
But now we want to get down to business. As most of you know, budgets everywhere are being cut – everything from HIV services to education funding. It's a tough time for everybody. Here at the Women's Study, we receive our funding based on the number of women we see for their study visits. When we schedule an appointment to see you, we are paying for the clinic space, the interviewer's and nurse practitioner's salary, and the courier to transport your specimens. If you don't show-up for your visit, we still have to pay these expenses but we do not get reimbursed. That's where you come in. In order for us to get enough funding to continue, we really need you to show-up for your scheduled appointments.

Of course, we understand that the Women's Study is not always on the top of your list. Over the past 10 years, we've had a chance to meet you and to become more than just an interviewer or clinician to you, and you've become more than just a research participant to us. We share a lot during those three-hour visits! It is through these relationships that we have learned about you, and seen a more complete picture of your lives. We have come to understand the many things you're juggling, and we can see how your Women's Study visit might get pushed to the end of the list sometimes. It's also important for you to under-

stand how this affects us at the Women's Study. It means less funding, and potentially fewer WIHS staff members, fewer incentives, and fewer WIHS events. Not only that, but it means the research suffers, and that ultimately, when you miss visits, we miss an opportunity to learn what is happening to women living with HIV and those without HIV.

We sincerely acknowledge and appreciate all of the women who make it in to see us for their appointments on a regular basis – thank you very much! And to those of you we don't get to see every visit, please take this opportunity and give us a call: in San Francisco, (415) 353-9797; in the East Bay, (510) 437-5080. We'd love to hear from you, and will hopefully see you in clinic soon.

So take care of your selves, and remember that we cannot do this important research without your help!



Celebrating Norouz, the Persian New Year



History

Norouz, new day or New Year as the Iranians call it, is a celebration of spring Equinox. It has been celebrated by all the major cultures of ancient Mesopotamia. What we have today as Norouz with its uniquely Iranian characteristics has been celebrated for at least 3000 years and is deeply rooted in the traditions of Zoroastrian belief system. This was the religion of Ancient Persia before the Arab invasion, when Persians were converted to Islam.

Norouz goes back to the Sassanid period. They were the last great Persian Empire before the Arab conquest. Their celebrations would start five days prior to the New Year. They believed the guardian angles (Fourahars) would come down to earth within these five days to visit their human counter parts.

Modern Iranians celebrate New Year for 13 days only.

Joyous Forecasters

Mir-e-Norouz, Atash Afrouz and Hadji Firouz, are traditional expressions that herald the joyous coming of Norouz. Hadji Firouz is regarded as the more enduring of the other two New Year announcers.

According to Iranian tradition, Hadji Firouz

was a man in red clothes who went from street to street singing and beating a tambourine on New Year's eve (which is also the eve of spring) and informing people that spring had come and that winter has gone. In return, people gave him gifts or money for the good news that he brought.

Spring Cleaning

A major spring-cleaning was carried out to welcome Norouz with feasts and celebrations. Bon fires would be set on rooftops at night to indicate to the guardian angles that humans were ready to receive them. This was called Suri Festival.

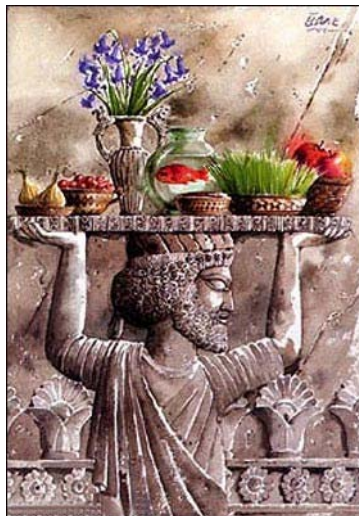
Modern Iranians still carry out the spring-cleaning and celebrate Wednesday Suri. Bon fires are made and all people will jump over the fire on the last Tuesday of the year. This is a purification rite and Iranians believe by going over the fire they will get rid of all their illnesses and misfortunes.

Haftseen

A major part of the New Year rituals is setting a special table with seven specific items present, Haft Sin (Haft chin, seven crops before Islam). In the ancient times each of the items corresponded to one of the seven creations and the seven holly immortals protecting them.

Today they are changed and modified but some have kept their symbolism. All the seven items start with the letter S; this was not the order in ancient times. Wheat or barley representing new growth is still present. Fish the most easily obtainable animal and water are present. Lit candles are a symbol of fire. Wine was always present. Today it is

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replaced by vinegar since alcohol is banned in Islam.

Egg a universal symbol of fertility corresponding to the mother earth is still present. Garlic is used to warn off bad omen.

Samano a thick brownish paste is present today. It is a nutritious meal and could have been part of the feasts. Coins symbolizing wealth and prosperity, fruits and special meals are present as well.

The Arrival of New Year

When the clock strikes New Year all the members of the family in their clean and new outfits gather around the Norouz table and Haftseen. The family begins the New Year with a prayer for health, happiness and prosperity

After the initial celebration to welcome the New Year, the members of the family hug and kiss each other, eat the bounties prepared for the New Year and wish each other the best. Then the oldest member of the family (usually the father) presents the Eidi (New Year's gift) to younger members. The Eidi usually consists of new and unused paper money that has been put between the pages of the Holy Book.

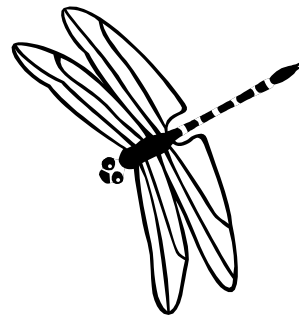
Visiting relatives during Norouz is among other customs widely practiced.

Sizdah Bidar

On Sizdah bidar (13th of Farvardin), people spend the day outdoors in order to get rid of the bad omen that the number thirteen usually represents. On this day people spend their time relaxing in the parks or mountain-side.

In early days breaking dishes was also among the expensive customs practiced. The belief now extinct was that it brought abundance.

Today, Norouz is celebrated as splendidly as ever. Setting the Haftsin and sitting around it at the turn of the year, wearing new garments, presenting Eidi (gifts of crisp paper money) to children, sprinkling rose-water, eating sweets and celebrating sizdeh-be-dar (13th Farvardin or 2nd April) are practiced by Iranians, even those living abroad.



NATIONAL CRAFT MONTH

That was fun on Thursday the 13th when we had the WIHS CAB Arts and Crafts afternoon at Mt. Zion.

There are so many fun things to do on a lazy afternoon with your friends, children, or just yourself.

Did you know that March is National Craft Month? Designated by the Hobby Industry Association, this month is to promote fun and creativity through hobbies and crafts. There are many hobbies, such as drama, dance, music, and art.

How many of you sew, quilt, bead, prepare scrape books, paint, draw, sculpt, make baskets, write poems, play a musical instrument, make flower arrangements, weave fibers, knit or crochet, paint or dye fiber, make pottery, work with wood, etc.? There are many ways you can express your artistic side. Yes, you have an artistic side. Why not share with us at WIHS your favorite hobby or craft? Use this newsletter to share some of your favorite hobbies or crafts. Just send your ideas to Anna Grokin, c/o WIHS, 405 Irving St. 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94122

Here is an idea that we wanted to share with you and your kids.

Encourage a Young Rodin or Become one Yourself -Make Play Dough.

Materials Needed: Flour, salt, vegetable oil, food coloring, cookie cutters, and kitchen utensils.

Rodin was a famous sculptor. Some of his famous statues include The Thinker and The Kiss. With your supervision, make homemade play dough for your son or daughter to sculpt their own work of art.

In a large bowl, let your child help mix together 1 cup of all-purpose flour, ½ cup of salt, 6 to 7 tablespoons of water and 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil. Add drops of food coloring to make blue clay, red clay, etc. For younger children under age 5, let them play with the homemade substance any way they wish -- rolling it into snakes, molding it into shapes, or pounding it flat with their fists. Give your child "toys" such as foil tart pans, cookie cutters, plastic eating utensils and kitchen gadgets to use with the dough-like material. A potato masher or garlic press can be especially fun to use with play dough. Store the play dough in the refrigerator in an airtight container for more fun the next day.



We Want to Hear From You!

The WIHS Woman Newsletter is looking for submissions! Send us poems, stories, rants, raves – even pictures or drawings. Feel free to share your adventures, cooking tips, and art! Everyone has a story, and we'd love to include them in the newsletter – YOUR newsletter.

Send your submissions to:
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405 Irving St. 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94122