



blazing star



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ABORTION RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK

by Kathy Isabell

Abortion rights confrontations have once again become major news items across the country. Newspapers are filled with accounts of 'Right-To-Life' (R-T-L) legislative moves, court decisions, city ordinances, funding cut-offs, and even numerous bombings of abortion clinics.

Chicago has not escaped this R-T-L plague. Three months ago, a R-T-L resolution was introduced to the Chicago City Council by a full half of the Council's members. Among other measures, the Resolution called for: 1) unnecessary licensing requirements which would have in effect closed down the majority of abortion clinics in Chicago; 2) requirement of parental notification for women under eighteen years of age, and husband notification for all women who are married; 3) an extensive 'counseling' procedure, including a week-by-week description of fetal development and wildly inflated warnings of the dangers (both physical and mental) of abortion.

This resolution was quietly made -- with no fanfare or publicity. In fact, Pro-Choice forces had much difficulty finding out about this would-be ordinance.

The Chicago Women's Health Task Force (CWHTF), a group which has been active in a variety of reproductive rights and women's health issues over the last year, launched a campaign to defeat this resolution. Their strategy centered around publicizing the issue, in the hopes of a withdrawal of the resolution due to popular opposition. Plans were made to begin an extensive advertising campaign, including a full-page ad in the *Sun-Times* endorsed by scores of organizations and prominent individuals.

In the midst of this counter-offensive, the resolution was withdrawn as quietly as it had been introduced. The reason for this move was an Illinois Supreme Court decision which rendered the bulk of this would-be ordinance illegal. The Council did not want to face angry women's groups, especially not if their ordinance would be automatically nullified.

Since that time, there has been a further ruling by the State Supreme Court favoring the rights of low-income women to have abortions. Citing the Social Security Act, the Court states that no one can be deprived of 'medically necessary' (meaning that a physician's statement is required) procedures due to financial status. This decision covers abortion.

Other places around the country have not been so successful. 'Right-to-Life' activities have mushroomed in recent months and abortion fights are now occurring virtually everywhere. And at this point, we are losing much more than we are winning.

Although poll after poll has indicated that the majority of American people favor abortion rights, the R-T-L forces are so well-organized and, up to this point, politically effective, that they have already had an enormous impact, and threaten to do away with legal abortions all together.

One major strategy of the R-T-L movement is the calling for a 'Constitutional Convention', which they hope will enact a so-called Human Life Amendment. Such an Amendment would guarantee Constitutional Rights to fetuses from the moment of fertilization. To this date, thirteen states have issued a call for a Constitutional Convention. Opposition to this frightening move is being mounted not only from Pro-Choice forces, but also from those who fear that other dangerous right-wing amendments to the Constitution would be introduced at the same time. Examples of possible amendments include: absolute repression of gay rights, elimination of affirmative action and bussing, and even mandatory capital punishment for a wide range of offenses.

Another major national fight is around the Hyde Amendment. This dangerous measure

would restrict federal funding for abortions for low-income women. This measure would make it virtually impossible for poor women to obtain legal abortions. The vote on this amendment could be as early as June of this year. If the measure passes, we can expect a very high death rate among low-income women due to botched illegal abortions, and a high incidence of sterilization of Third-World and poor women. Incidentally, the appropriations for sterilizations of poor women have increased as the funds for abortions have been slashed in many states.

In addition to these legal moves, there has been a shocking increase in clinic bombings and vandalism. Six clinics to date have been totally demolished by fires and bombings, as well as a number of reported injuries to clinic personnel. In one case, a group of Right-to-Lifers invaded a clinic and actual disrupted an abortion in progress. The judge in the case cleared the group of all charges, ruling that the action was legal since they had reason to fear that life was being endangered. No legal penalties whatsoever have been imposed in any of these cases, and police departments often refuse to investigate the bombings and fires.

The picture is anything but encouraging.

Why Should Gay People Support Abortion Rights?

During the past few years, we have seen women begin to exercise increased control over our lives--women opting for alternatives to traditional roles, including the option of lesbianism -- and fighting for the right to exercise this control. The divorce rate has skyrocketed, and the family as a viable social institution is threatened as never before. The breakup of this structure has led to a panic on the part of religious organizations (particularly Catholic and fundamentalist religions). And some women as well feel threatened by and fearful of the emerging measure of choice women now have.

The right-wing attack of the anti-abortion groups can be seen as part of a larger and more general movement -- the re-establishment of the sanctity of the family. In past months, the right has emerged in these areas: the 'Right-to-Life' anti-abortion movement, anti-Equal Rights Amendment activities, and the vicious anti-Human Rights for Gay People movement. These are very real and powerful forces, as we have learned in St. Paul and Wichita. These issues combine to form an attempt to force women back into the traditional roles we had begun to break out of, and to force gay people back into the closet (or even, according to Anita Bryant, to prison!). They symbolize a total lack of choice in any area of our lives -- certainly in our sexual preference, in our control over our reproductive processes, and in our ability to be free from discrimination.

The recent moves of the Anti-Gay forces is the most obvious of these movements, as far as its direct relationship to re-establishing the family is concerned. The degree to which there is actual cooperation and conspiring of these right-wing efforts is not clear -- nor is it especially important. What is important is the sum total of all these moves to abolish the rights of gay people and women, what this represents, and how different our lives will be if these moves are successful.

In the face of these attempts to turn back the clock, our most important weapon becomes the ability to clearly see the connectedness of these issues, and to act in a unified way to defeat the right wing. Mutual support gives us more strength to defeat these trends than we could have as individual groups and communities. By uniting gay people, reproductive rights activists, and pro-ERA groups, we can give Anita Bryant, the 'Right to Lifers' and Phyllis Schlafly a run for their money.



A Boy Scout drum corps lends its support as they lead a march for the ERA down State Street during April, 1978.

Photo by Elaine Wessel



Labor unions are pushing hard for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Photo by Elaine Wessel

ERA-ONE YEAR LEFT

by Ellen Falls

The Equal Rights Amendment is a constitutional amendment which is currently up for ratification in Illinois. It guarantees the elimination of discrimination on the basis of sex. Currently several states have ERA's; but all these state laws differ in scope and don't completely eliminate discrimination.

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." Thirty-four states are needed to attain ratification. If it passes it will have substantial effects on our lives. Labour legislation will be equalized, granting men the same special protections that women now have. It will also guarantee housewives, widows, divorcees and single mothers their full rights to a share in domestic finances, equal Social Security benefits and jobs. All of these things are denied to women now.

Several groups in Chicago are currently working for passage of the ERA. The Committee for the ERA has sponsored several large rallies in the past year. The latest of which, held April 29th downtown, was estimated to have been attended by about 4,500 people by the *Sun-Times*. Women United for the ERA, which is affiliated with Blazing Star, has for a year been petitioning legislators and holding informational coffees for women in the Chicago area. ERA Illinois is a coalition of a large number of groups which does extensive work throughout Illinois. The National Organization for Women has set aside a substantial amount of energy towards ratification efforts. For instance, the Thompson Tail is an effort to make sure that Governor Thompson is constantly aware of the presence of pro-ERA forces in the state, sponsoring demonstrations whenever he makes a public appearance. The League of Women Voters has, among other things, hired two full-time lobbyists. One, John Alesia, is a retired labour lobbyist. The other, Art Gottsha, was formerly a state legislator.

All efforts are now concentrated on the legislature. All voters in Illinois are strongly urged to contact their representatives in Springfield about the ERA. There are two telephone numbers for people who want information. NOW's number in Chicago is 312/922-0025. ERA Illinois' toll-free number is 800/252-2931. Either group can inform you on who the state legislator for your district is. The legislative process is one of trade-off. The voters' voices do play a part though.

Grimen, The House Speaker, has called a vote on the Equal Rights Amendment either the week of the 15th or the 22nd of May. As this article is being written before those dates, the results of the House vote are not known to its author. Subsequent to the bills being passed by the House, it will be given to a Senate committee for discussion. If it is given to the Judiciary committee, it is expected to pass right through to the Senate floor. If, though, it goes to the Executive committee, it could be held there a long time. Its chances of passing in the Senate are not known.

On May 25th there was a demonstration at the Conrad Hilton Hotel for the benefit of President Carter, who was attending the Cook County Democratic annual dinner. The demonstration began at 6:15 pm. There were over a thousand people at the demonstration, more than half of them supporting ERA. (Others demonstrated against apartheid in South Africa and against cuts at Cook County Hospital.)

There remains one year, as of March, 1978, for the Equal Rights Amendment to be passed. Illinois is one of the most important states now remaining unratified. At this time efforts are being especially concentrated by people interested in passing ERA. All voters are urged to help in this effort.

LI Feminist Serial Am B645

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BLAZING STAR

OPINION

Summer In The City

by Chris Riddiough and Eileen Willenborg

"Hot time--summer in the city
Back of my neck getting dirty and gritty."

Summer is finally here, though it looked for a while like it may never arrive. We all look forward to summer -- vacations, swimming, softball, picnics. But summer in the city can be a drag, especially if you are young. Summer in the city may mean looking forward to swimming and softball but not having a pool or a park nearby.

Chicago's youth

The parks in the city are supposed to be public places for recreation. The Chicago Park District has an annual budget of about \$70 million for upkeep, improvement and programming, among other things. But what kinds of facilities and programs do they offer? There are some swimming classes offered at the city's 72 pools, but this is hardly adequate to meet the potential needs of the city's 1.2 million youths. The parks also offer softball leagues throughout the city. The catch to this is that a team must come up with a \$200 (or more) entrance fee. What group of teenagers has that kind of money? How many merchants will pay that kind of money to sponsor a team?

Looking at a park district map, it's easy to see that most of the facilities (and the best serviced ones) are in white, well-to-do areas, but that the people who live in these areas often have enough money to send their children to private camps and athletic clubs. The kids in black, Latino and white working class neighborhoods are often left to play in fire hydrants or on glass-littered streets.

To teenagers the frustration of the summer is increased by the lack of jobs. Many kids need to work to help meet school expenses or just to support themselves. A job would solve many of the problems that result from too much unstructured time.

The highest jobless rates in the city are among youth in the 16-20 year age bracket. In some black and Latino neighborhoods, unemployment runs as high as 80% of the youth. Federal, State and City programs offer some money for summer jobs, but most of these jobs are for boys. Young women do not have equal access to the limited jobs available through government funding.

What impact does this rather depressing situation have on Chicago's young people? Many of them turn to street gangs because gangs at least offer them something to do. A sense of purposelessness and drifting is replaced by social activities and peer recognition which comes with gang membership. But the gangs are clearly no solution to the problem of youth or lack of neighborhood facilities.

For gay kids, summer can present even more problems. Whether they're out or not there are few social outlets for gay teenagers. They face the limitations of all kids, but have the added problem of not having many ways to get together with other gay people. Many gay adults are wary of working with or just being friendly to underage people because that's often looked on as 'recruitment' by society at large.

Discrimination in the Parks: Women Deserve Fair Play

For women and young girls the opportunities for recreation are often even more limited. We are not supposed to be interested in active recreation, but in more 'feminine pursuits' -- like playing with dolls or playing bridge. Recently we've begun to attack this idea and work for better opportunities for women to participate in sports. But this isn't always easy and sometimes even young girls have to fight for a chance to participate in sports. In the last few years there have been several examples of this. Tina Muscare is a young Chicago girl who wanted to play football -- but the authorities thought it was too dangerous. Only after a long fight was she able to play. Michele Emerson is a hockey player from Waukegan who was not allowed to play with her team against a Canadian boys' team. And Nancy Winnard from Detroit wanted to play in the Little League a few years ago. She was prevented from playing because she would not wear a boy's athletic supporter (a jock strap). The Little League insisted that all players had to wear them. These are just a few examples of what girls have to go

A familiar Chicago sight: neighbors visiting on the front porch trying to catch a cool breeze.



through to participate in sports.

It's not much easier for adult women. Just a few years ago, a woman was beaten with a baseball bat by a man from a man's softball team. Her team was supposed to be practicing on the diamond his team was using. He got so angry about having to give up the diamond to a bunch of women that he hit her with the bat. Of course, things aren't always that extreme, but there's a lot of discrimination. A recent report from the Chicago Park District states that of 50,000 people playing softball, only 8,000 are women. In some instances entry fees for women's teams are higher than for men's.

In most schools and parks, women are lucky to get any facilities at all, much less equal ones. Schools spend lots of money training, equipping, outfitting and fielding boys' teams. Girls' teams--where they exist--get little. Most parks, when they have women's softball at all, squeeze us into the worst time spots, giving priority to men's softball and boys' Little League. Even when we do get leagues, we often get unequal treatment. Frequently, women only get to play 5 innings to men's 7. In at least one park, the women's league isn't even guaranteed a five-inning game; if the men get there, the women have to leave the diamonds! In the parks (though this is true for men too), there is also great confusion about dates--when do teams start signing up? When does league play begin? What are the final dates for rosters? What are the fees? These vary from park to park, and often no one is quite sure what's going on.

The lack of Little League and equal sports programs in the high schools, combined with inadequate facilities in the parks, means girls and women have very poor training in sports. Many women might

enjoy playing softball, but they feel they're not good enough. But men weren't born knowing how to play. They were taught, and people invested a lot of time and money to teach them. The lack of childcare also means it is difficult for many mothers to play. It's hard to focus on a fly ball when your three-year-old is screaming her head off. If all these handicaps don't keep women out of sports, often the general attitude that sports aren't feminine will. Young girls who could compete with boys in Little League may be held back by their parent's fears. Or they may not care to deal with the hostility of their managers and teammates. High school girls may get laughed at or labeled tomboy for playing sports.

One final handicap women face is getting teams together. While men may be able to get a company or local tavern to sponsor their teams without any trouble, these same companies and taverns may be reluctant to sponsor a women's team. Many women do not work outside the home, which makes it even harder to get a sponsor. It's also difficult to get a team together when you're a housewife. In your daily routine you may not see enough women who would want to play. And even if you do work outside the home, your schedule will often be tighter than a man's--if on top of working you do all of the housework and take care of children.

We believe that women and girls should have equal sports facilities, equal training, and equal treatment with men and boys. At present, the lack of Little Leagues and equal sports programs in the high schools, combined with inadequate facilities in the parks, means that girls and women have very poor training in sports. We have a real fight on our hands to win the kinds of programs we want.

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Young women cyclists pause along Chicago's lakefront.

Photo courtesy of Rising Up Angry

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**COME OUT
FIGHTING**

What's happening.....

At WICCA

"If you want it done right, hire a woman." Woman-owned and operated businesses are flourishing in Chicago. What has been missing is a way to let prospective customers know about the range and quality of services available. Other than an occasional advertisement in local newspapers or magazines, these businesses lack exposure and many would-be clientele never learn of their existence.

But this gap is soon to be closed. Women in Crisis Can Act (W.I.C.C.A.), a city-wide women's referral service and crisis line, is currently adding a referral deck listing women-owned and operated businesses in the metropolitan area. After the new service has been in operation for a while, the catalog of businesses will include feedback from W.I.C.C.A.'s callers who have been patrons of the enterprises on file.

The new directory will include women who offer such services as: artists -- auto

mechanics -- baby sitters and childcare -- carpenters -- electricians -- janitors -- naprapaths -- painters -- plumbers -- typists -- writers -- yoga instructors -- and many more.

Women-owned and operated firms wishing to be included in the listing for referral should send the following information to the W.I.C.C.A. office (1628A W Belmont, Chicago, Illinois 60657): name, business name, telephone number, types of work done, basis of fees (hourly, estimate, etc) any restrictions about part of the city where work is or is not done, and so forth.

As is the case with all W.I.C.C.A. services, the information is this new category is free to any callers. The number to call is 528-3303 Tuesday through Friday. Other services offered by W.I.C.C.A. volunteer staff are quality legal and therapy referrals, drop-in services, phone counseling and advocacy.



With the Writers' Conference

Womanpress has announced that planning for the 5th annual Lesbian Writer's Conference is underway. The conference will be held in Hyde Park and is tentatively scheduled for mid-September.

Over 1,000 women have attended the conference in the past four years -- featured speakers and workshop co-ordinators have included Alma Routsong (Isabel Miller), author of *Patience and Sarah*, Lesbian activist and poet, Martha Shelley, novelist Valerie Taylor, bibliographer Barbara Grier (Gene Damon), academic and editor Beth Hodges, Chicago writers Andra Medea and Kathleen Thompson, authors of *Against*

Rape and area poets Claudia Scott, Vernita Grey and Penelope Pope.

The three-day conference will follow the format of prior years, with a keynote address by a principal speaker on Friday night followed by a full day of workshops on Saturday and an evening of entertainment. The conference will conclude with readings of works in progress by conference participants on Sunday afternoon.

For further information as details are available, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Marie Kuda, WOMANPRESS, Box 59330, Chicago 60659.

At the Library

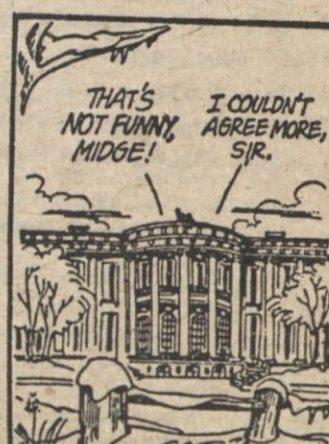
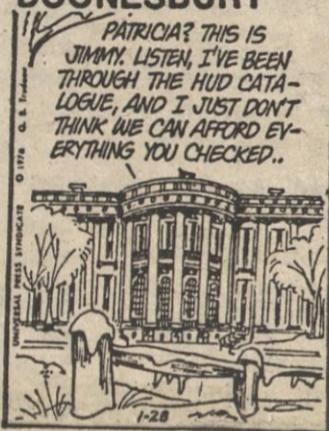
The New Alexandria Lesbian Library is a lending and resource library for Lesbians. She houses over 1,000 circulating volumes and nearly complete holdings of more than 75 different newspapers, magazines, newsletters of interest to Lesbians. Subject and regional files and a non-circulating reference section contain materials which are impossible to find elsewhere.

Membership in The New Alexandria Lesbian Library is open to all Lesbians upon payment of an \$8.00 yearly fee.

The Library is currently housed in a private residence. There is ample room to browse at your leisure, listen to tapes, research the files, check out books, and enjoy a cup of tea.

Call 327-0334 or 334-3449 any evening or weekend for an appointment to stop by.

DOONESBURY



With the Switchboard

The NATIONAL SEXUAL MINORITIES SWITCHBOARD is a project being developed in San Francisco which will provide free, accurate, and totally confidential information about sexual minorities and their lifestyles. Additionally, it will connect callers with resources for sexual minorities which exist in their local areas.

Sexual minorities are those persons who primary sexual orientation toward other people is other than heterosexual.

Those people who are seeking information about sexual orientation issues will use the service. They will be people who are either geographically isolated from helpful resources (mostly non-urban residents), or simply unaware of where to turn for confidential, non-judgmental information and referrals. Some will call because a person who they are close to recently 'came out' to them. The caller may be a relation of someone gay, a co-worker, or just a friend.

The NSMS will be patterned after the successful program model developed by the National Runaway Switchboard, located in Chicago, which has been providing information and referral services to runaway youth for nearly four years. The NSMS will operate a toll-free WATS line which can receive calls from anywhere in the contiguous 48 states. It will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and will be staffed by a highly trained group of volunteers. The NSMS will be well publicized in the straight, as well as gay, media.

The NSMS will be the first national service project for gay people and other sexual minorities. It will be highly visible to the heterosexual culture and, as such will be highly controversial. Its very existence will be an important statement about sexual minorities. Society will be confronting the fact that at least 10% of the population has a

primary sexual orientation which is not heterosexual. The switchboard will log all of its calls and the information will be analyzed in its research component. For the first time the incidence and distribution of sexual minorities across the country will be graphically documented on a monthly basis. Also documented will be the problems and discrimination faced by sexual minorities in an often hostile culture.

The NSMS will serve as a national focal point for the resources of the gay community which will enable us to provide some concrete services to thousands of people who have limited access to existing resources.

A main objective of the switchboard is to help callers identify local resources which can meet their needs. Thus more people will be utilizing existing resources as a result of calling the NSMS. Local services will also be free to refer after-hours callers to the NSMS and be certain that the caller will be able to speak with a 'live person' responsive to their needs. Finally, the NSMS will create an enthusiasm for services for sexual minorities which will aid the development, support and delivery of such services.

Because of the high cost of WATS lines (\$100,000 a year), the NSMS will have a budget of about \$200,000 annually.

Since the NSMS is a national service project, fundraising is proceeding on a national scale. Support from gay businesses, business associations, social groups, and individuals is being sought directly. Benefits will be held throughout the country for the project in coordination with local services. Heterosexual institutions and individual support will also be solicited.

For further information contact: David Palmer, Save Our Human Rights Foundation, 415/621-0536.

And Elsewhere

Congratulations to Petunia's on their second anniversary. A big celebration was held there May 15th. Other recent events at Petunia's have included a benefit for the new Lesbian Center, complete with a raffle of many items donated by a variety of businesses and groups. More recently they have held a cook-out benefit for Gay/Lesbian Pride Week.



An official of the United Steelworkers of America charged Sunday that several women who refused the sexual advances of their bosses at U.S. Steel Corp.'s giant Gary Works have been fired.

Frank F. Felix, Jr., co-chair of the Local 1066 Committee Against Sexual Coercion, said his union will press for new legislation in Indiana and Illinois, as well as at the federal level, to protect workers against such harassment.

One of the victims, Patrice Joyner, 20, was fired last Nov. 29, just 40 working hours before her probationary employment period was to have ended. In a signed statement she gave to the union, Joyner said:

"I believe I was discharged because these foremen believe they have special sex rights with new women employees, especially black women employees. When I refused to go along with their ways, they decided to get rid of me."



Women steelworkers, who face sexual abuse from their bosses at work, support the ERA. Photo by Elaine Wessel

Profile: AUGIE

by Bobbie Carlotta

Born and raised in Chicago, Augie is one of the true assets to our community. I walked with Augie down memory lane starting with the mid-60's to the present. Augie spoke seriously about the social implications of our lifestyle and the problems she faced in the 1960's.

Being raised in the neighborhood of North and Halsted, she would frequent some of the bars in that area, which at that time were the "Variety," "Big Lou's," "Shrimpy's," and the "Volleyball." Naturally Augie became aware of the lifestyle led by the women who went to the bars. Curiosity was her first reaction, as it is in most cases.

Coming from a very closely-knit Italian family, Augie did what most Italian young ladies do--married and had a boy. She did what was expected of her: raised her son and performed a typical role of a married housewife. Augie left the North and Halsted scene for those next two years. After struggling for over a year, her husband, not meeting with his responsibilities, left Augie on her own. At this time in her life Augie was in financial stress. She had to work and raise her child by herself. Constantly working and struggling to exist, which left no time for personal happiness, she began to look at her life in review. She became drawn to the lifestyle she had left behind.

Being the Taurian she is--stubborn and a mountain of determination--she had to experience her own feelings in this matter. Even knowing the repercussions that would arise from family and friends, Augie became aware of the pressures that were encountered by these women.

Among them were the dress code, which was limited--either you wore a dress or pants. The police constantly hassled the women because of this. Back then, that led to jail. Many of the women were into hard drugs, which of course led to many forms of hustling to support their habits.



Augie in 1968

So Augie started being aware of the persecution and the suffering these women encountered. Not only with the police, but with family, friends, and society as a whole. Of course this was not the accepted life then. You were frowned on, pointed at, you were really considered a freak.

As I talked with Augie, I could see and feel the pain and torment she felt for these women. I even noticed a few tears, for the past touched Augie deeply.

Yet she decided to suffer whatever consequences she must, but to live her life her way.

Augie expressed how much better it is today, because of different social groups, who have helped make society more aware and understanding. Today you can live most anywhere, but back then you were confined to certain areas. Recreation today is not solely limited to just a bar. Jobs then were one of two: either you hustled or you worked in a bar. Today you don't have those situations; there are fewer limitations today. It is a much freer lifestyle.

Augie also feels that through these experiences the older crowd paved the way for the younger generation of today. It was a hard fight, and a long battle, but they stood firm in their beliefs.

I asked Augie if she would go through this again if she had to. Her answer was loud and clear--"Yes! Yes! Because I am where I wish to be at."



Augie and Donna, early 1960's

We come to the 1970's now, and the changes were happening for the better. Augie and Donna (her friend of 9 years) watched and were both aware of this.

Their timing was perfect--their idea was far greater--a club for women. At this time, the "In Between" owned by Pat (owner of "Petunia's") was for sale. So Augie and Donna bought the bar, and felt that they could make this bar into a meeting place, where women wouldn't be hassled by anyone, and to give women a chance to communicate with each other on a one-to-one basis.

Good bar service and a sanitary, comfortable, and enjoyable



"Augie" Chicago's leading lady.

atmosphere were of the utmost importance to Augie and Donna. Of course, Augie's white-glove treatment of the bar and liquor was well appreciated by her clientele.

On Nov. 1, 1973, Augie and Donna redecorated the bar. The decor was unmistakably Augie and Donna. This was accomplished in five days.

The name "Augie's Club" was not originally their first choice. When they had gone downtown to obtain the licenses and to re-name the bar, the name they put down on their application was already in use, so Donna came up with the name of "Augie's", as this was her nickname through the years.

So on Nov. 8, 1973, "Augie's Club" had its grand opening. This was to be the christening of the now infamous "Augie's."

The first two years were filled with many problems, some expected, some not. Both being novices in the bar business, they had to learn how to deal with friends and acquaintances who were now on the other side of the bar.

"Augie's" was the first bar of its kind, that was created for, open to, and catered only to the personal enjoyment of women.

This took many long hours of hard work, patience and understanding by both Augie and Donna. I might also add that Augie and Donna worked their own bar the first two years.

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CK and Augie, late 1960's

Review: Our Right to Love

Our Right To Love - review reprinted from Gay Life.

By Christine Riddiough

What do you say about a book that's a lesbian resource list, a compendium of personal vignettes, a collection of thought-provoking essays, and much more? The book is *Our Right to Love: A Lesbian Resource Book*, edited by Ginny Vida of the National Gay Task Force. ORTC has sections ranging from lesbian politics and

activism to lesbian identity and sexuality, and on everything in between. It's hard to know even where to begin reviewing as major a work as this is.

One thing that strikes the reader immediately is the graphic design of the book. You're not faced with an overwhelming 300 pages of pure print — there are included some of the most striking photographs of women available. They give ORTL a feeling of reality — lesbians are real people and you can tell it not just from the words but from the pictures. There are lesbians alone and in couples and in groups; lesbians being affectionate, marching in demonstrations, making music; young, old and middle-aged lesbians; black, white, latina lesbians. This is photographic proof that, in fact, we are every-

where.

Another noteworthy aspect of the book is the way in which personal recollections are interspersed with essays. For example, in the section on "Coming Out as Process," there is an essay on what coming out is (by Karla Jay), followed by descriptions of their own comings out by nine women. There was within these tremendous variety — women who came out in the forties and fifties and sixties, black and latina women. They leave you with more insight than the essay would have alone.

I found most compelling the sections on "Lesbian Identity" and "Relationships." It was in these first two parts of the book that the personal stories had the most impact. After an essay on sharing your identity with your children, several personal stories really highlighted the joys, tensions and disappointments found by lesbian mothers.

As a politically-oriented person I turned also to the sections on activism and vision. The essays on the ways in which lesbians are politically active showed an incredibly broad scope. Del Martin and Phyllis Lynn describe the history of the Daughters of Bilitis,



thus returning to us some of our political roots. In three separate essays different women describe their experiences in working, as lesbians, within the gay movement, the women's movement and the left. While I found I had a few disagreements (for example, as a member of the New American Movement, I didn't feel I've had to submerge my lesbian identity as the article on "Lesbians and the Left" suggests), on the whole these essays were more than adequate and provide a good basis on which to consider the forum for one's political energy.

I found the essay on International Women's Year disappointing, largely because it does not include any discussion of last November's Houston conference. The visions section contained only three articles — none of them presented anything resembling my vision of what I'm fighting for.

I don't want to finish without mentioning the section on "The Spectrum of Lesbian Experience" which includes essays by Third World and working class women. I was particularly struck by the story a Puerto Rican lesbian Zulma Rivera, who described the tensions faced by her and other Puerto Rican lesbians who have to choose between their commitment to lesbian feminism and the Puerto Rican community.

Well, there's more, much more, in this book. It's uneven at times, as anything of this nature must be. It's unfortunate that it's as expensive as it is (\$13) but perhaps we can look forward to a paperback

edition. In any case, it's a book worth having and reading and passing on to friends, family, and anyone else who wants or needs to know about lesbians.

Sexuality: When We Were Very Young

by Marianna Ruffino

Correction

Readers of the first part of this article published in Blazing Star, Vol 4, No 3, April, 1978 undoubtedly noticed the error in the second paragraph from the end. The rest of that paragraph should read:

All of the infant children of my parents' friends happened to be male babies. I thought, therefore, that everyone, male and female alike, was born with penises and they fell off sometime in early childhood. My mother informed me that boys are born with penises and keep them, and women never have them, not even as babies.

In the first part of this article on childhood sexuality, I related memories of my earlier years, from approximately three years to nine years old. If there was anything conspicuous in its omission, it is likely to be the mention of attraction to others, either peers or adults. The phenomenon of the 'crush' did not arise, at least in my experience, until the onset of puberty. It seems that was true for the circle of friends I traveled in during my junior high school years. Suddenly what had been air-tight groups of girls (who thought boys were disgusting, dirty, brutal and stupid) began to mix. The mixing was a pairing process, amusing, in retrospect, for the obvious relation between who liked whom and the location of homes in the neighborhood. Little more than walking home after school went on in this early coupling; it was, therefore, no surprise that Jane Germann and Steve Brinkowski, who lived on the same block of Division Avenue, became a 'hot item'. It was unlikely, on the other hand, that Linda Cordoni and Mike Price would have ever given one another a second look since they lived in opposite directions relative to the school building. It was only natural that David Summers and I began holding hands and mashing together our orthodontic hardware. We lived around the corner from one another, and his twin sister, Lynne, was a close friend of mine.

With David Summers, a period of some ten years began; it was a period during which I did what seemed perfectly natural to those around me, regardless of what felt natural to me. I did exactly what was expected of me in spite of my feelings and thoughts. For it was my sad situation that David Summers carried my books, but my heart belonged to Noreen Connors.

That there were limitations on my friendships with other girls had crept into my awareness. I remember no one telling me directly, but somehow I knew that the feelings I had for Noreen would have been encouraged had they been for David. That they were for Noreen and not David would only lead to trouble, so they must not be expressed in any way, verbally or otherwise.

I became, at the tender age of twelve, a schemer. I had no malicious ends. I had no prurient ends, for that matter. I simply spent the larger part of my energy at gaining and maintaining proximity to Noreen. More than almost anything else, I thought of how to get into the same tent on Girl Scout camping trips, how to get chosen for the same team in gym class, how to get placed nearby when teachers changed seating arrangements, and how to get a seat next to Noreen Connors in the lunchroom. All the time, I made sure no one noticed, and I held on to David Summers' hand for dear life.

Most readers of this article's first part probably expected another humorous tale of the development of a budding young lesbian. My apologies to those who are disappointed. There is something to be learned, however, in this as it speaks of our society and the restraints of its conventions. As long as my sexuality was largely self-directed, a-social, as it were, I was mostly left alone to do as I pleased as long as I didn't do it in the town square. As soon as my sexual attention turned inside-out, and I began to notice other people sexually, there were a number of very strict rules to follow. For me, the hardest rule was that I was not to be attracted to the people to whom I was attracted. It simply doesn't make for a great deal of humorous material in my case. Rather, I believe, it generates much food for thought about how we deal with our sexual development and the needlessly painful situations created by our culture when it dictates the 'straight and narrow' as the only acceptable option.



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blazing star



GAY RIGHTS

RIGHT-WING CONTINUES ANTI-GAY MOBILIZATION

by Chris Riddiough

Residents of three more cities have voted to repeal gay rights laws. In each city - St. Paul, Minnesota, Wichita, Kansas, and Eugene, Oregon - the vote was by an almost two to one margin or greater. The defeats in St. Paul and Eugene were especially shocking since those areas have a reputation as progressive. In St. Paul, gay rights activists had garnered support from such diverse groups as the Roman Catholic archdiocese, the St. Paul Labor Council, the Urban League and the mayor and other officials. Shortly before the vote on the referendum, Anita Bryant came to St. Paul to add her voice to those speaking out against gayrights. Enthusiastic gay rights supporters rallied to protest her appearance; the 3,000 people at the rally constituted one of the largest demonstrations in St. Paul history.

In related action the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a North Carolina sodomy law which had been enforced against two gay men. Last year the Court upheld a similar Virginia law. It has also allowed to stand a Washington state school board firing of a gay teacher.

Even more ominous threats to gay rights have appeared on the horizon. A referendum on gay rights laws has been scheduled for July 24 in Seattle, Washington and petitions for such a referendum are being circulated in Madison, Wisconsin. In California, State Senator John Briggs has apparently succeeded in placing on the ballot an initiative that would affect jobs of gay people there. The initiative, to be voted on in November, would prohibit gay people and gay rights supporters from teaching in the California public schools. A similar law has been passed in Oklahoma.

It is becoming increasingly clear that these attacks on gay rights are not isolated incidents. Rather they are a coordinated effort to repeal gay rights laws and to attack gay people. A letter discussing this and signed by Anita Bryant was recently sent to the supporters of Protect America's Children. It stated in part:

Here's How You Can Save America's Cities from the Special Privileges of Homosexuals

Dear Friend:

I'm writing you this urgent emergency letter today because God's ministers are fighting a battle worse than the holocaust.

I'm talking about the nationwide effort going on to enact in every city 'special privileges' to sin openly and without shame. I know you don't believe in the right to sin either, and because you have stood by me before to stop the sudden flurry of laws to protect homosexuals.

I need you to send \$10 or more right now to help me get St. Paul and other cities well on their way to stopping the passage of 'right to sin' laws.

And that is why I'm writing you today

because you have the conviction of Jesus Christ to put down such filth.

Dade County was only a beginning of God's plan to bring morality back to America. St. Paul is another city God intends to nourish back to decency, and it is important to His overall plan because it represents a very liberal city in the north.

By winning in St. Paul it will prove that as a nation America stands united against immorality; no more can the militant homosexuals blame the Dade County success on the reasoning that it was in the fundamental south - the Bible Belt!

St. Paul will then become a major turning point in our spiritual battle against immorality...from there 'Protect America's Children' can go on to other victories.

That's why I'm trusting in you for a special gift to save our children in St. Paul and Wichita from homosexual perversions...

And to set up a fund to help other cities in their predicament. Anything you can send -- \$25, \$15, \$50 or maybe even \$100 will give God another way of speaking to His people through 'Protect America's Children' and His chosen leaders in American cities nationwide.

St. Paul is only one crucial point of 'Protect America's Children's' fight against homosexuality...just like when our forefathers fought for freedom from King George, a tyrant...Many men were lost in the struggle and they paid for liberty with their blood. Think about how much more you can do by supporting a city for God?

Are you going to let American be completely taken over city by city through evil forces?

I pray not!

When I see the militant homosexuals acting in perverse ways marching for their 'special privileges', I see the men of Sodom and Gomorrah waiting to attack the angels ---

---I see Satan deceptively seeking to tempt our children into believing homosexuality, lust and pornography are right and respectable.

You can see how the weight of your decision to help St. Paul, Minnesota affects you and your family and all American cities.

I am confident that you will act immediately with your usual generous gifts to 'Protect America's Children', which will be used to help St. Paul, Wichita, and several other cities facing the questions of homosexuality.

In the future, we hope to help cities throughout America to put decency and morality back into their laws.

By helping St. Paul today you are helping your own city or town protect itself, because God is using 'Protect America's Children' to fight the militant homosexuals nationally and locally.

Also, we will be helping homosexuals overcome their perverted lifestyles!

So please, I beg you, send a special gift today as your way of saying 'God, I love you and I



want to save your children in American from the hands of evil.'

May God Bless You.

Anita Bryant Green
Chairman

P.S. I have already sent Reverend William Chapman, a member of the 'Protect America's Children's Board to assist St. Paul's citizens in their fight to repeal the ordinance.

Time is running out. The cities need our help right now...I have forwarded some seed money to St. Paul with faith that you will support me.

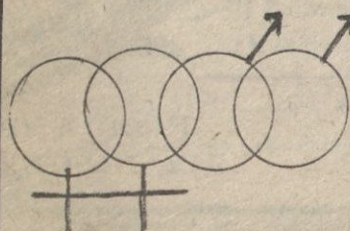
Please send your gift to me immediately! And remember St. Paul in your prayers as well as Wichita, Kansas and other cities fighting the militant homosexuals.

In other interviews and reports from Protect America's Children (PAC), it is clear that these attacks are also linked up with anti-ERA and other right-wing causes. In

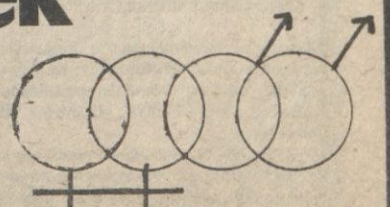
the Playboy interview, Bryant attacks Jews as well as homosexuals; the literature of PAC contains statements that are only slightly veiled examples of racist and anti-Semitic material. In Seattle, the opponents of gay rights are linked with groups that have been involved in attacks there on Native Americans.

Gay rights supporters across the country are attempting to plan a strategy to overcome these attacks. Campaigns so far have been waged on the basis on an appeal for human rights. But clearly these efforts have failed. The Tri-City Defense Fund has been coordinating efforts to raise funds for cities facing gay rights referenda, while the National Gay Task Force is planning a major public education campaign.

Locally the Committee on Chicago Gay Rights Legislation is beginning to work on the passage of gay rights bills in the Chicago city council. The committee projects that introduction of the legislation will take place next spring. In the interim, committees have been set up to build community support, work with the media, and work within the power structure.



Gay & Lesbian Pride Week Special Insert



Gay & Lesbian History: A PRO

by Eileen Willenborg

The Stonewall rebellion in New York City on June 28, 1969, is the event that sparked the contemporary movement for gay liberation in this country. Lesbians and gay men that night fought back for the first time as police tried to enter their bar. A riot-like protest against police harassment of gay people rages for the next three nights. In the nine years since Stonewall, lesbians and male homosexuals have carried on the first against the prejudices of our oppressive society. Gay liberation has become the rallying point for millions of men and women. For gays as well as for straight people who support our right to be free of social and legal restrictions. Victories have been won. We all live a freer, less closeted life-style than ten years ago. Unfortunately, the recent right-wing backlash is a threat to the progress made over the last decade. But as we celebrate Lesbian and Gay Pride Week, we should be aware that the struggle for gay liberation is not a new one. A rich tradition of lesbian and homosexual resistance is just now being uncovered, proving the existence of homosexual emancipation organizations in Germany, England and the United States since the middle of the last century. The following article traces the emergence of this earlier liberation movement.

Gay people and historians are re-discovering that 'gay lib' has been around for quite a while. Old letters, obscure books and magazines, and even official public documents provide us with ample evidence of conscious resistance by gay men and women to the restrictions placed upon them by a heterosexual society. Forums and sumposia were held throughout the latter half of the 19th century and the early decades of the twentieth century so that scholars could debate the issue of 'sexual inversion' as homosexuality was called. Psychologists, physicians, sociologists and political activists wrote long articles about the subject.



A copy of *Friendship and Freedom*, the paper published by the Chicago Society for Human Rights, appears prominently in the photo of a collection of early homosexual emancipation periodicals.

Both men and women were authors as well as case-history subjects of the surviving documents. The earliest records of a gay social organization in New York dates from 1897. It was called the Cercle Hermaphroditos and met weekly at the Paresis Hall, an infamous gay bar of the period. Letters as early as 1859 urged organized resistance to homophobia (fear/hatred of homosexuals) in this country and spoke of a visionary society in the future where

It shall be customary in all directions, in the houses and streets to see many affection. The departing brother or friend shall salute the remaining brother or friend with a kiss.

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* 1860

One of the earliest references to lesbian resistance in print was in a pamphlet by Edward Carpenter, a socialist leader of the English homosexual emancipation movement and a correspondent of Walt Whitman's. In 1895, he wrote 'Homogenic Love and Its Place in a Free Society', which he published thru the Manchester (England) Labour Press. In this defense of homosex-

uality, Carpenter suggests a connection between lesbianism and feminism, especially in the United States. He states that the struggle of women to get the vote and equality has been accompanied by a marked development of the homogenic (lesbian) passion among the female sex. He says that as women begin to realize that they are

treated unequally and unfairly by men, they become less willing to marry. 'Womankind now draws more closely together...and cements alliances of their own...of quite a passionate kind.' Carpenter concludes the passage by stating that there were even more lesbians in the women's movement in America where the first for women's rights was at that time more vehement than in England.

An American lesbian, Miss S. referred to her sexuality as 'this divine gift of loving' in the first edition (1897) of an English homosexual magazine, 'Sexual Inversion'. Miss S could not care for men but all her life 'has been glorified and made beautiful by friendship with women', whom she 'loves as a man loves women'. Her self-discipline kept her friends from knowing the 'true nature of her affections'. She did not direct her love toward an individual, rather toward many friends, and she endeavored to use 'this gift of loving as a stepping stone to high mental and spiritual attainments'.

In the 1901 edition of 'Sexual Inversion', Miss S wrote a statement advocating lesbian liberation and pride: 'inverts should have the courage and independence to be themselves...it is not a crime nor a disgrace to be an invert. All I desire --- and I claim it as my right --- is the freedom to exercise this divine gift of loving, which is not a menace to society nor a disgrace to men and women.'

Emma Goldman, anarchist, feminist and advocate of birth control and free speech, was another early defender of homosexual rights. A bi-sexual, Goldman often spoke in public for Uranian (homosexual) liberation, and frequently had to face mob and police violence as a result. In her autobiography she wrote of one incident on her 1915 speaking tour:

The men and women who used to come to see me after my lectures on homosexuality, and who confided to me their anguish and their isolation, were often of finer grain than those who had cast them out of society. Most of them had reached an adequate understanding of their differentiation only after years of struggle to stifle what they had

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ORGANIZING CLERICAL WORKERS:
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Anne Hill and Sherrie Holmes

Tuesday, July 18th, 8:00 P.M.

Resurrection Lutheran Church, 3309 N. Seminary

A socialist viewpoint on the importance of clericals in the nation's workforce, the history and structure of the working women's organizations, and the growing wave of union organizing among clerical workers.

Anne Hill is a secretarial employee at the University of Pittsburgh who is involved in a union organizing campaign, and Sherrie Holmes is the director of Dayton Women Working.

WHAT DO GAY PEOPLE WANT? ASK ME!

Blazing Star

Thursday, August 10th, 8:00 P.M.

Resurrection Lutheran Church, 3309 N. Seminary

What is it like being a lesbian in this society? This forum will discuss how gay people are oppressed, what the gay subculture is and what can be done (by gays and non-gays) to work for lesbian and gay liberation.

THE RESPONSE TO THE RIGHT-WING
ATTACK ON REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Chicago Women's Health Task Force

Thursday, August 17th, 8:00 P.M.

SCSS, 3244 N. Clark

An overview of the recent battles over abortion and related reproductive rights, placing the abortion issue in the framework of a generalized fiscal crisis, and a particular crisis in the American health care system. In addition, an analysis of the new strategies and perspectives that reproductive rights groups across the country are developing as we respond to the right-wing attack, will be presented.

The Chicago Women's Health Task Force is a group of socialists and feminists who see the problems of women's health as linked to a system that produces not for human needs but for profit. The group currently has committees working around reproductive rights, sterilization abuse, and the quality of health care.

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oud Tradition of Resistance



homosexuals have had to face throughout history.

Chicago was the location of the first known gay rights organization in the United States. In 1924, a group of men under the leadership of Henry Gerber, formed the Society for Human Rights. Gerber became familiar with the German homosexual liberation movement during World War I. The German leader was Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld who in 1897 founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee, which served as a model for the American group. On December 10, 1924, the State of Illinois granted the Society a charter as a non-profit organization. According to the charter, the object of the group was to 'promote and to protect the interests of people who by reasons of mental and physical abnormalities are abused and hindered in the legal pursuit of happiness which is guaranteed them by the Declaration of Independence...'. The charter goes on to say that the organization will seek to re-educate the public by 'dissemination of facts according to modern science'.

The Society for Human Rights was faced with problems from the beginning. Most homosexuals asked to join refused because of fear of exposure. There were never more than 15 members. Two issues of a magazine 'Friendship and Freedom' were published

to present homosexuality in a positive light to the general public. Despite his efforts, Gerber could not get the support from authorities, especially doctors and psychologists, that he felt was necessary if the Society was to have any great impact. Finances were an ongoing problem that never were adequately solved.

The State authorities had not checked the Society very carefully before they granted the charter. However, they soon discovered what the goals of the charter were really referring to. They began to harass Gerber, and in 1925, arrested him and two other organization officers on trumped-up charges of forcing 'family men' to perform unnatural sex acts with them. The men were arrested without warrants, an obvious violation of civil rights. Gerber managed to



Lesbian bar of the 'Golden Twenties', reprinted from *The Homosexual Movement in Germany*, Arno Press, 1975.

ment in Germany, Arno Press, 1975.

contact the lawyer who had filed the papers for the state charter. He evidently paid off the judge and the prosecuting attorney, and the men were released with a minimum fine and suspended sentence. As Gerber left the court, one of the detectives said: 'What was the idea of the Society for Human Rights anyway? Was it to give you birds the legal right to rape every boy on the street?'

Sounds like the stereotyped image still used today to portray gay men by the straight press, especially the *Chicago Tribune*.

We must realize that these sketchy glimpses of the early gay liberation movement are only part of the story. We will never know a great deal about our lesbian and homosex-

ual heritage because records were not kept or have not survived. We can be proud of the men and women who strove in their lifetimes to improve the quality of their lives, and those of all gay people. We can not do less than that today. In light of the right-wing attacks on the progress we have made in the last nine years, we must have even great commitments and sacrifices.

Sources quoted:
Jonathan Katz, *A Gay American History*
Emma Goldman, *Living My Life*
Una Trowbridge, *The Biography of Radclyffe Hall*

Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, founder of the Scientific Humanitarian Committee, considered a disease and shameful affliction. One young woman confessed to me that in the 25 years of her life she had never known a day when the nearness of a man, her own father and brothers even, did not make her ill...She had hated herself, she said, because she could not love (sic men) as she loved her mother...She had never met anyone, she told me, who suffered from a similar affliction, nor had she ever read books dealing with the subject. My lecture had set her free: I had given her back her self-respect.

This passage gives a glimpse of the isolation and self-denial that so many lesbians and

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- Wine & Bottle Beer 60¢



This Year's Events

Chicago's 9th Annual Gay & Lesbian Pride Week, with the theme 'Our Time Has Come...' is less than two weeks away. The Gay & Lesbian Pride Week Planning Committee recently announced its final plans concerning the events of the week. Pride week begins with a Candlelight Vigil on Friday, June 16th at 8:30 pm at the Lincoln Park Free Forum (south of the farm at the Lagoon). The vigil with guest speakers will commemorate gays persecuted throughout history. Sunday, June 18th, is the annual Picnic and Volleyball Game at 2 pm in Lincoln Park (located east of the Lagoon at Cannon Drive, south of Diversey). Bring your favorite picnic lunch.

A Parade Preparatory Meeting on Monday, June 19th at 7:30 pm at 615 W Wellington (social hall) will discuss issues concerning the Parade, including guidelines, marshals' duties, etc., and will end the films of past Pride Weeks. All Parade entrants are asked to have a representative present at this meeting. Workshops will take place on various evenings during the Week, including Tuesday, June 20 when the Sunday Evening Writers Group will be at 615 W Wellington at 8 PM performing a reading of its works (poetry, fiction, essays). For info on other workshops see the Pride Week Schedule, this issue.

The Loop Rally in Daley Plaza is scheduled Friday, June 23rd at 1 pm with guest speaker, Valeria Taylor along with local legislators. That evening, a Town Hall

Meeting, co-ordinated by the Coalition, will be held at 7:30 pm.

The annual Dance, this year titled 'Summer Magic', will take place on Saturday, June 24 (8 pm to 1:30 am) in the 'Clouds Room' (formerly Tip Top Tap) of the Allerton Hotel (701 N Michigan. Tickets are \$3.50 (\$4 door) and will include a fresh fruit table along with the best sound equipment and DJ's around. The Clouds Room, with sweeping views of the city, will be decorated in all white for the occasion.

The 9th Annual Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade on Sunday, June 25th, will follow the same route as last year with a 1 pm line-up on the east side of Halsted, just south of Belmont. At 2 pm the Parade will step off with the lead banner, color guard, contingents, cars and floats representing businesses, organizations and individuals.

As always, the Committee is concerned with the safety and well-being of Parade participants. For this reason, they want to reiterate the following guidelines as established by the City Permit. These include no alcoholic beverages, no drugs, no animals, no nudity, and no loud music or bands. This year the Parade Marshals will be wearing purple armbands and I.D. badges. Members of the Pride Week Planning Committee will be wearing yellow logo t-shirts with 'Pride Week Committee' stenciled on the back. If there are any questions or problem during the Parade, marshals and Committee members can help.



- Friday June 16 8:30 pm** *Candlelight Vigil - commemorating Gays persecuted through history - at Lincoln Park Free Forum, south of farm at Lagoon.*
- Saturday June 17** *Open! Visit your local Gay business or Gay group*
- Sunday June 18 2 pm** *Volleyball Game - Lincoln Park at Cannon Drive, east of the Lagoon near Diversey. Bring a picnic lunch.*
- Monday June 19 7:30 pm** *Parade Preparatory Meeting - 615 Wellington, with past Pride Week films*
- Tuesday June 20 8 pm** *Poetry, Fiction, Essay Readings - 615 W Wellington by Sunday Evening Writers Group.*
- Wednesday June 21 Evening** *Movie Night - Free admission. Movies courtesy of Little Jim's. Time and place to be announced.*
- Thursday June 22 8 pm** *Interfaith Religious Service and Pot-Luck Dinner - 824 W Wellington. Coordinated by Dignity/Chicago*
- Evening** *Mr. Windy City Contest & Gay Chicago Awards - part of door proceeds to Pride Week Committee Radisson Hotel, 505 N Michigan.*
- Friday June 23 1 pm** *Loop Rally in Daley Plaza - guest speakers include Valerie Taylor and local legislators*
- Evening** *Open Town Hall Meeting - coordinated by The Coalition*
- Saturday June 24 8 pm** *Annual Dance 'Summer Magic' at Clouds Room, Hotel Allerton. Fresh Fruit table \$3.50 (\$4 door).**
- Sunday June 25** *9th Annual Parade - lineup 1 pm Halsted Belmont Step-off 2 pm.*
- June 25 - 28** *Rally and awards follow parade in Lincoln Park.*
- Gay & Lesbian Movies - sponsored by American Library Association.**

blazing star

BLAZING STAR is a newsletter for the lesbian community. As lesbians and bisexual women who are active in the women's movement, we want to educate all women about the oppression that people face because of their sexual preference. We also want to keep our sisters informed about local and national events that affect us.

We are working for the passage of gay rights legislation and the Equal Rights Amendment. Any woman who is interested in working with us on these projects is welcome to join us. Write BLAZING STAR, Post Office Box 7892, Chicago 60680; or leave a message for us at 342-2398.

SUMMER IN THE CITY

continued from page 2

Who Really Runs the Park?

Chicago's motto is: "Urbs in Hortis" (a city in a garden) and a lot of play is given to the parks. They're supposed to be for the people -- but when you get down to it, you find they're not. The park district is very difficult to get any information out of -- it took several calls to get information on just the budget -- which should be public. On trying to find out what entry fees were for softball teams, one park said they couldn't "divulge that information". You'd think we were trying to get information on the CIA and not the Chicago Park District.

The distribution of facilities is not equal either. For example, Humboldt Park, one of the city's biggest parks, has no softball leagues. Taylor Park on the city's west side has no softball for adults. Those parks are in Latino and Black neighborhoods.

Sometimes what park facilities are available can't be used. Last summer the police kicked kids out of the park in Palmer A girls' softball game in a park, on the Northwest side.

Square and wouldn't allow them to play softball. Calling the police, the park district and the aldermen brought no results. No one would take responsibility. For women the parks can be outright dangerous. The parks are supposed to be for the people, but to much of the time they're not. Who really runs the parks?

We decided to check out how much money the Park District has and how it gets spent, so we could figure out how to get funds for childcare. Anyone with an understanding of shoe boxes and Chicago will already suspect that Chicago's parks are run in the interests of big business by rich men closely connected to the Democratic machine. It makes us really angry that our tax money gets spent on yacht harbors for rich people instead of on parks and services for Chicago's citizens.

The Chicago Park District has a budget of about \$70 million a year. There are 6800 acres of park land but not all of that public property is really available to the public.

Small private clubs like the Lincoln Park Gun Club, the Tennis Club and the Chicago Yacht Club rent land from the Park District for very small fees and keep tiny 'open to the public' signs - open that is if you have a big boat or x-ray vision to read small signs. The Sun Times recently exposed the lawn bowling clubs that were exclusively using Park District land by making sure only their members had keys to the greens - and their members were all rich, older white men. How many more things are there like that?

There's Meigs Field, a small airport on the lake shore which is kept open for the convenience of private businessmen at the cost of \$200,000 to the Park District. Now there's talk of building an airport in the lake.

Chicago ranks 32 out of 34 major cities in recreation land available to its citizens. If this isn't bad enough, less than half of our parkland is in residential areas and readily available to most people. New parks are built in high income areas like Lincoln Park, while parks in working class areas like Humboldt, Douglas and Washington are chopped up to build schools. The Chicago Plan contains a proposal to construct high rise apartments down the lakefront to 47th Street, eating up even more lakefront park land. What all this means is that your tax money finances really nice parks for upper income people who live close to the lake and average to lousy parks for the rest of us. If you don't have a car to get down to the lake you're pretty much out of luck.

Now to the average person this doesn't seem very logical. Most people would not spend their recreation money to improve the lifestyle of their rich neighbors. But for the men on the Park Board this is logical - since they are their own rich neighbors. Patrick O'Malley, the president of the Park District, used to be on the Board of Directors of the Stone Container Corporation, which is the ITT subsidiary in Chicago. He's also on the Board of the Michigan Avenue National Bank and the Michigan Avenue Financial Group, not to mention the Chicago Planning Commission and a number of other corporations and city committees. This means he's in a position to make a lot of

money. As a bank director he can profit from the mortgages and interest raised on the high rise developments he plans as a planning commissioner. Banks and financial groups are closely tied in with real estate, and property values go up when there's nice parkland around. Land itself is very valuable. The Railroad Equity Board, of which he's also a member, plans how the old IC railroad lands along the lakefront will be used. They decide who can build what where, and that leaves a lot of room for influence.

O'Malley's City Committees make the decisions that his corporations profit from. Just an average guy like you and your neighbors, right? When he took office, O'Malley called for a program of 1) mounted police in the parks and more security 2) more riding stables and bicycle paths and 3) more tennis courts. Hardly a program for all the people.

The City of Chicago is really proud of its parks and of course the parks along the lakefront are really beautiful, as are many of the other parks. They don't like it when people point out that the parks don't really meet the needs of Chicago's citizens, and sometimes they will even give in just to avoid a fuss. In the newspaper when they print the budget of city agencies as they have to by law every year they print this, under the Department of Recreation heading:

Responsible for programming and activating all recreational activities through the Park District, requiring consultation and cooperation with other community agencies when planning, developing, and directing recreation programs...

However, they don't seem too eager to come to the people of Chicago for our advice in planning, developing and directing. Women need equal treatment, more instructors and childcare so we can take advantage of what facilities there are.

Children and youth need more recreational programs. Black and Latino people need better park facilities in their neighborhoods. We have to get together to make sure that the parks really serve the people.



Photo: Secret Storm

PROFILE, continued from page 4

Both Augie and Donna's personality and vibrance created something new in the bar business. They became involved in their clientele. They cared about people. They became well-known and respected throughout the community.

Donna's close association with musicians initiated live entertainment at the bar. The exposure helped many who sang and played there.

In 1975, Donna had new interests she wished to pursue, and sold her half of the business to Augie.

Going into her third year of business, Augie ironed out the many kinks and set out for newer goals.

She sponsored the first women's bowling league. She also sponsored a women's basketball and baseball team, which was not only competitive, but also created a better understanding with young and old. Augie wanted one and all to 'enjoy.' This was a lot for one woman to do, but her dedication and stamina stemmed from her love of people.

There were phone calls at 5am -- "Augie, I'm in jail," "Augie, I'm hurt," Augie this and Augie that. It was a never-ending giving of her time and her heart which led to Augie's retirement. I asked her what made her sell the bar, and she said, smilingly,

"My customers." She was tired and wanted to relax for awhile. Her life was not her own for over 5 years, and she had to breathe again.

She sold "Augie's" to Lynn White, her friend of 15 years, her star bartender and manager, on Nov. 1, 1977. You might say Lynn was Augie's protegee. Through her three years of working for Augie, she learned from a great teacher.



Lynn (2nd from left) and Augie (3rd from right) with "Augie's" softball team, 1976

I asked Augie how she feels when she walks into Augie's now. She replied, "I have many, so many, good memories, that I will carry throughout my life. I will always be there to help Lynn in any way I can and always stand by her side."

The greatest thing Augie learned in the bar business was that everyone has a problem.

The funniest experience she



Augie and Carey, 1978. Now customers at "Augie's"

had was when someone's tub in the apartment above ran over and leaked through the ceiling onto her customers. Augie said it looked like Niagara Falls on Halsted Street. Augie, being Augie, said, "Keep drinking and move out of the way--it's only water."

I could go on and on about Chicago's leading lady, for her life is so full and so rich--it is impossible to say it all on paper--Augie! Our hats off to one hell of a woman who is loved and respected by all--

"Enjoy," Augie, God Bless.

This is the first in what we hope will be a continuing series of profiles of members of our community. If you have ideas, suggestions, or other input, please contact BLAZING STAR.

SPORTS

Softball

by Chris Riddiough

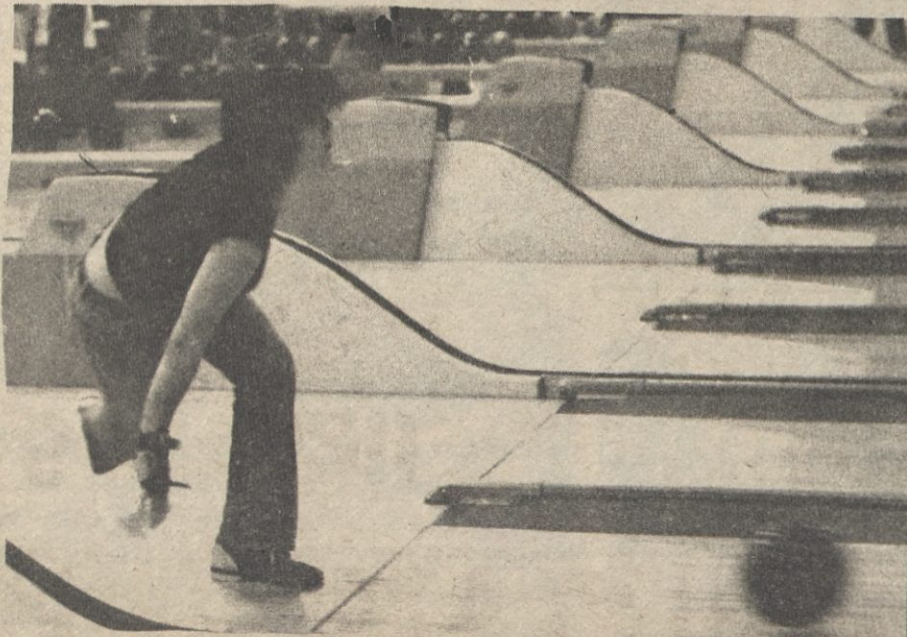
Softball season opened May 21 at Athletic Field Park. The season opener was postponed from May 7 due to bad weather that lasted throughout much of May. But the long-awaited games were finally played Sunday afternoon. Each of the eight teams in the league played two games. Augie's and CK's were victorious in both their games. Spurred by the powerful bats of many team members, Augie's scored 40 runs in the first two innings of the first game. Their opponents (Ernst-Ernst) admitted defeat at that point and left the field. The final score (40 to 2) reflects the fine hitting of Augie's. In its second game, Augie's faced a somewhat more competitive team (Mike's Our Place). Augie's won by a score of 22 to 9. A strong bench helped bring in the runs and indicated the depth of the team. CK's, also a powerful team, opened its season with a 21 to 4 victory of Mike's. In their second game, CK's easily defeated the Blazers, 23 to 6.

Tied for second place are the Music Box and Petunia's. The Music Box lost its first game in a squeaker to the Blazers by a score of 10 to 9. They rallied in the second game to defeat Petunia's, 14 to 5. Tex, coach of the Music Box team and the players are confident of continuing their victories; they also express respect for the capabilities of the other teams. They're cheered on by a group of fans called the 'Music Boxettes'. Petunia, though losing 14 to 5 to the Music Box, started off the season with a 25 to 4 victory over the Moonlight Tap. Strong fielding as well as good hitting led to this win and indicate that Petunia's, as well, will be a contender through the season.

Fans are invited to attend games at the Park (located at Addison and the Kennedy). Games are played on alternate Sunday afternoons from noon to 3 pm. Upcoming games will be held on June 18, July 8, and July 22. Reports on these games as well as team standings will appear in these pages.



CK's baserunner slides safely into second.



Augie's bowler Debbie demonstrates exciting action of bowling.

ATHLETIC FIELD PARK WOMEN'S SOFTBALL LEAGUE STANDINGS

| TEAM | W | L | PCT. | GAMES BEHIND |
|-----------|---|---|-------|--------------|
| CK's | 6 | 0 | 1.000 | ... |
| Augie's | 5 | 1 | .833 | 1 |
| Music Box | 3 | 3 | .500 | 3 |
| Petunia's | 2 | 4 | .333 | 4 |

Music Box baserunner takes a lead-off at first.



Petunia's baserunner heads for third.



Bowling

by Bobbie Carlotta

After six months of competition and much fun, Augie's bowling league has come to a close.

As you well can see the Unforgettables ran away with most of the honors. But there was a lot of competition and in the last 3 weeks of bowling it was very close, with just a few games deciding the first, second and third place teams.

The bowling banquet was held at the Courtyard Inn, Sunday evening, May 28. At that time all the trophies and cash prizes were given out. It was one of the biggest events of the season - dinner, cocktails, dancing and...need I say more (smile).

Augie's will continue to sponsor bowling as in the past, for it brings together not only competition but communication and understanding with each other. A great deal of work was done by the President and Secretary, Treasurer, Augie

It was a job well done, which all the bowlers appreciate. They'd also like to give a vote of thanks to the sponsor, Lynn White, of Augie's. While her first year had its ups and downs, we can look forward to an even better year next bowling season. Finally, thanks to all the Augie's Bowlers and see you next season.

AUGIE'S BOWLING LEAGUE FINAL STANDINGS

| TEAM | PLACE |
|----------------|-------|
| Unforgettables | 1 |
| Pantaloons | 2 |
| Rocky & Co | 3 |
| Hot Twots | 4 |
| Dilly Devils | 5 |
| Pinheads | 6 |

AUGIE'S BOWLING AWARDS

| CATEGORY | INDIVIDUAL/TEAM | SCORE |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| High Bowler | Bobbie O'Connor | 220 |
| High Bowler/with Handicap | Geri | 243 |
| High Series | Cathy Conway | 541 |
| High Series/with Handicap | Augie | 602 |
| High Average | Cathy Conway | 150 |
| High Series | Unforgettables | 1871 |
| High Series/with Handicap | Pantaloons | 2197 |
| High Game | Unforgettables | 675 |
| High Game/with Handicap | Unforgettables | 778 |

blazing star: who we are

Blazing Star is a newsletter for the lesbian community. As lesbians and bisexual women who are active in the women's movement, we want to educate all women about the oppression that people face because of their sexual preference. We also want to keep our sisters informed about local and national events that affect us. Blazing Star is produced by an all-women's chapter of the New American Movement. NAM is a socialist-feminist organization of women and men throughout the United States.

Blazing Star: Chicago Women's Chapter of NAM works on such projects as lesbian organizing and women's rights. We are working for the

passage of gay rights legislation and the Equal Rights Amendment.

Many people ask about our name. Blazing Star is the name of a lavender-colored wildflower that blooms throughout the Midwest, East and South. Because of its feathery appearance, its common names are 'Gay Feather' and 'Fairy Wand'. We also liked the name because we feel that the lesbian/gay liberation movement is taking off like a 'blazing star' across the heavens!

Any woman interested in working with us on these projects is welcome to join us. Write Blazing Star, Post Office Box 7892, Chicago 60680; or leave a message for us at 342-2398.

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