



Vol. 5, No. 2

Come Out Fighting

April, 1979

GAY RIGHTS ON THE MARCH

by Christine Riddiough

Actions are underway to promote passage of gay rights legislation at many levels in the US. In Illinois gay rights bills were introduced into the General Assembly on February 28th. These bills would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in housing, public accommodations and employment, both in general and in the Illinois higher education system. Sponsors of the bill are Susan Catania (R-22), Elroy Sandquist (R-13), and William Marovitz (D-12). The bill is now in the Human Resources Committee of the House. This committee usually deals with minority civil rights legislation. The bills are numbered HB 620, 621, 622 and 623.

The major group coordinating efforts to pass these bills is the Gay Rights Task Force, chaired by Martha Fourt and Bill Kelley. The Task Force meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 407 S. Dearborn, Suite 1000. The meetings are open and everyone interested in working on gay rights is invited to attend. The Task Force also holds meetings around the state. Their efforts now are directed at the bills recently introduced. They are encouraging everyone to write to the members of the Human Resources Committee urging their support of the bills. The members (listed in the box) can be written to at the Illinois House of Representatives, Attention Representative (name), Capitol Building, Springfield, IL 62706. The Task Force will also be training volunteer lobbyists. In conjunction with this effort, Blazing Star will be sponsoring 'gay rights coffees.' These coffees are aimed at educating people on gay issues and at gaining support for gay rights. People interested working on this project or holding coffees can contact Blazing Star. The Task Force also has a women's caucus which will meet next at 10am, March 31st at 407 S. Dearborn. Marth Fourt and Kathy McCabe described the caucus as an effort to strengthen the Task Force as a whole and to ensure that the needs of lesbians are met. More information can be obtained by calling 427-4064.

- Human Resources Committee
Illinois House
- Chairwoman Eugenia Chapman (D-3)
 - William Marovitz, vice-chair (D-12)
 - Bowman, Woods (D-11)
 - Braun, Carol Mosley (D-24)
 - Christiansen, Ray A. (D-43)
 - Currie, Barbara Flynn (D-24)
 - Rea, James F. (D-59)
 - Ronan, Alfred G. (D-14)
 - Slate, Michael (D-55)
 - Van Duijne, Leroy (D-42)
 - Kempiners, Wm. L. (R-54)
 - Bower, Glenn L. (R-39)
 - Catania, Susan (R-22)
 - Gaines, Charles E. (R-29)
 - Oblinger, Josephine K. (R-50)
 - Pullen, Penny (R-4)
 - Stanley, Roger C. (R-2)
 - Sumner, Mary Lou (R-46)

In addition to the state bills, efforts are now being made to secure passage of a federal gay rights bill. The 1979 bill was introduced in Congress on Feb. 8th. The bill, HR2074, extends protections in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to gay people. Main sponsors of the bill are Ted Weiss (D-NY) and Henry Waxman (D-CA). Earlier versions of the bill had been introduced by Bella Abzug and Ed Koch, now mayor of New York City. Co-sponsors of the bill include Sidney Yates and Abner Mikva, both Chicago and Democrats. Mikva recently has been appointed to the US Supreme Court of Appeals and, pending Senate approval,

will no longer serve in the House. Additional cosponsors are being sought.

Steve Endean, director of the Gay Rights National Lobby, is coordinating efforts at passage. The bill is expected to be sent to the Judiciary Committee, chaired by Don Edwards (D-CA), who is also a cosponsor. People are urged to write their representatives urging support of the bill. Members of the Judiciary Committee are especially important; they include Chicago area Republicans Henry Hyde, Robert McClory and Thomas Railsback. Hyde is a particularly conservative anti-feminist.

In conjunction with this, there is a call for a March on Washington next October 13 and 14. Calls for such a gay rights march have gone out over the last several years and were concretized in a meeting in Philadelphia held in February. It was felt by many attending the meeting that it was important to hold the march in 1979, the 10th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. The planners have called for an end to "all social, economic, judicial or legal oppression of Lesbian/Gay people." Several demands for the march were adopted: repeal of all anti-Lesbian/Gay laws, passing a comprehensive gay rights bill in Congress, a presidential executive order banning discrimination in federal jobs, armed forces and federally contracted private employment. Another demand -- for lowering the age of consent -- created a hot debate between gay youth groups and lesbian feminists. The former grouping sought the plank, based on opposition to age discrimination, while feminists feared that it might jeopardize the rights of young women in regard to statutory rape. A compromise position is being worked out. A temporary steering committee was chosen and regional co-ordinators selected. Local groups are expected to be efforts to mobilize people for the march.

On the local level, the Chicago Committee for Gay Rights Legislation is beginning to plan its strategy for the new city council. Ald. Cliff Kelley (20th ward) was re-elected without opposition in the February 27 election; he is the chief sponsor for passage of the city gay rights bills. Some observers feel that the climate for passage of gay rights may be more friendly than in the past. Jane Byrne, who will probably be elected mayor on April 3rd, has stated that she supports human rights. Her primary victory also opened the city council so that more members may be open to supporting gay rights. Some discussion has also taken place about the possibility of broadening the scope of the bill to include prohibition of discrimination based on sex, marital status and condition of handicap.

While gay rights activists are moving ahead, there have also been some setbacks in recent weeks. In Michigan a judge has denied custody of two children to their mother who is a lesbian. The judge said that her homosexuality fails to meet modern concepts of morality. He also said that the father's life-style "far exceeds the moral fitness of the wife. If the youngsters were put one one side of the scale and the lesbian relationship on the other, Mrs. Hall would, without hesitation continue the lesbian relationship." Sharon Hall, who was fighting for custody of her children, said that the ruling was unfair but that she was not completely surprised by it. She said, "I was prepared because I know what the social norms are." She may appeal the ruling to the Michigan Supreme Court. In



Credit: LNS Women's Graphics



Credit: Peter Mellillo/LNS

January that court awarded custody of a 12 year old girl to her mother who is a lesbian; that ruling may set a precedent in this case.

In another case Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams are suing the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the US government in an effort to block Sullivan's deportation. Sullivan, an Australian, and Adams a US citizen say they are legally married; they are both gay. In most heterosexual cases, the marriage of a citizen to a non-citizen is the basis for warding a visa to the non-citizen. However, the INS refused to award a visa to Sullivan, saying,

"You have failed to establish that a bona fide marital relationship can exist between two faggots. A union of this sort was never intended by Congress to form the basis of a visa petition."

Two churches gave mixed responses to the question of gay clergy. The Canadian Anglican Church bishops have decided to allow gay people to become ordained if they abstain from homosexual acts. The Roman Catholic bishop of Richmond, Va., defrocked Rev. Robert Hummel. Hummel is gay, though he says that does not mean, "I have broken my vow of celibacy."

VOTERS BYRNE DEMOCRAT MACHINE

By Christine Riddiough

The February 27th primary produced a number of surprises and some hope for the future of independent politics and gay rights in Chicago. Most stunning victory of all was, of course, Jane Byrne's capture of the Democratic mayoral nomination. Byrne seems assured of election to the office of mayor in the April 3 election where she faces Andrew Pulley of the Socialist Workers Party and Wallace Johnson, a Republican. Byrne, when she takes office, will be the first woman mayor of Chicago and one of the most politically powerful women in the US.

Observers, stunned by Byrne's victory, attributed it to three main groups. These were the independents on the North side and Hyde Park, white ethnic groups on the Northwest side and black voters. Blacks gave Byrne a two to one margin over Michael Bilandic and were the key factor in her victory. Voters seemed to be reacting to Bilandic's arrogance and ineptness in handling the snow. Black Chicagoans were particularly angered by the CTA not stopping in black communities along the Lake-Dan Ryan route.

Since the primary, Byrne has made a number of moves that indicate the direction of her administration. She has so far managed to walk the tightrope between regulars and independents and has received the endorsement of both the IVI/IPO and the Democratic Central Committee. Byrne has also appointed a transition team which includes Bill Singer, Leon Despres, and Dick Simpson, three leading independents, Timuel Black, a black educator, and Nancy Jefferson, a West Side community activist. Byrne has met with black groups and has pledged to open up more administrative positions for blacks

as well as women and Latinos. She has reiterated her promise to replace leading Bilandic cronies such as Police Chief O'Grady and CTA board members. She has also indicated her support for human rights and women's rights. While not known as a feminist, Byrne has supported the ERA and has pledged to stop police strip and search tactics against women, and to close profiteering abortion clinics. She has also shown opposition to the increase in condominium conversion, an issue of concern to many gay people who have a tendency to live in the areas now being converted.

Byrne's victory has had an effect on the city council as well. No longer simply a rubber stamp for the mayor, the council has already shown some independent action and blocs are forming in an effort to gain power in the new council. Two council members whom Byrne has particularly criticized are Eddie Burke and Eddie Vrdolyak, both of whom seem to be losing some of their council power.

Independents fared well in the primary with two seats assured. These are Marty Oberman and David Orr in the 43rd and 49th wards respectively. In the 5th ward two independents, Larry Bloom and Ross Lathrop, face each other in the run-off. Also victorious were Marion Volini (48), and Aloysius Majerczyk (12), who are maverick democrats and Cliff Kelley (20) who is the primary sponsor of many pieces of human rights legislation, including gay rights. Independents could also pick up as many as 6 seats in the April 3 run-off. In that election, independents could win wards 9 (Robert Shaw), 21 (Niles Sherman), 29 (Danny Davis), 44 (Bruce Young), 45 (Michael Holewinski) and 36 (Helen Shiller).

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FIGHT WOMAN ABUSE

By Christine Riddiough

Next month there will be a conference on woman abuse in Chicago-- that conference is discussed elsewhere in this issue. It represents an important step in the campaign against woman abuse in this country. It's only recently that people have begun to see woman abuse as an issue at all. For a while now the women's movement has fought against violence against women and so on. More recently, women's groups have taken up the fight against violence in the home.

Often connected with these is a kind of institutionalized violence that leaves women without any legal recourse when they are raped or beaten. A few examples clearly point out the problem. One of the most famous cases is that of a Madison judge who took no action against some men accused of raping a teenage girl. He said that she had invited rape by wearing "seductive clothes". Or there are the judges who let off some rapists because, they said, "when a woman says no, she really means yes." Or the case in France where two women who were raped "deserved what they got" because they are lesbians.

Then there is the kind of treatment women get when they've been battered by their husbands. For example a woman

in Chicago charged that her husband beat and raped her after they were separated. In Illinois, as in many other states, a husband raping a wife is not a crime, so this woman took her case to civil court. There the judge awarded her her \$65 because he thought the husband hadn't really done anything wrong.

There are other forms of institutionalized violence against women. The most recent examples are the police strip and search tactics against women for "crimes" like driving violations. What all of this clearly shows is that violence against women is not just a personal problem. Women do not get raped because they ask for it. Women are not beaten by their husbands because they deserve it. Women are not strip searched by the police because they are criminals. These and other violent acts against women are part of the sexist attitudes and behavior of men and of the institutions of our society-- attitudes that foster a disrespect, disregard and even hatred of women. Because they are social and political problems, they can only be solved by social/political response. As feminists, we most support the efforts of groups dealing with these issues and demand that the legislative and criminal justice systems deal with them too.

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

by Christine Riddiough

In recent issues, *Blazing Star* has had several articles that talk about socialism. Some of our readers have asked us why a lesbian newspaper is interested in socialism. In order to answer those questions, we are beginning in this issue a series of articles on women's liberation, gay/lesbian liberation and socialism. The first article in this series deals with the basic ideas of socialism. Readers who are interested in discussing these issues further are invited to call us at 248-9800 or 871-7700 -- we are tentatively planning a few informal discussion for this spring.

For most Americans, especially those who lived through the McCarthy era of the '50's, socialism and communism are dirty words. But for many hundreds of millions of people around the world, socialism is a way of life and for millions more it is a goal they are working for. Depending on who you talk to you'll get many answers to the question "What is Socialism?" Most socialists agree on some basic ideas.

Socialism is, first of all, a way of looking at the society in which we live-- a way of analyzing it and understanding it and a way of changing it. When we look around we see that in order to live, people have to produce and distribute many types of things, from food and clothes to houses and machinery. In order to produce and distribute these things we need two essentials: what socialists call "the means of production" -- things like land, mines, raw materials, machines, factories -- those things we use to produce other things, and labor -- workers who use their skills and strength to turn raw materials into other products. There are many ways to organize production; in the US the system that is used is called 'capitalism'. In this system a few people (who are called 'capitalists', or 'the ruling class' or the 'bourgeoisie') own the means of production, while most people (who are called the 'working class' or the 'proletariat') have to work for a living -- as carpenters, secretaries, steelworkers, nurses, teachers, bartenders and in many other jobs.

In order to produce the many things we need to live, a lot of work has to be done by many people. You might think, at first glance, that those who do the most work are rewarded the most by making the highest salaries. In reality, it's the people who own the most, not those who work the most, who get the largest incomes. The key word in the capitalists' vocabulary is profits. In order to get the highest profits the owner of a factory or other business tries to pay as little as possible for materials and labor and to charge as high prices as he (and it generally is a 'he') can. Competition forces each capitalist to find ways to produce goods more cheaply than others. This means that owners of businesses will try in

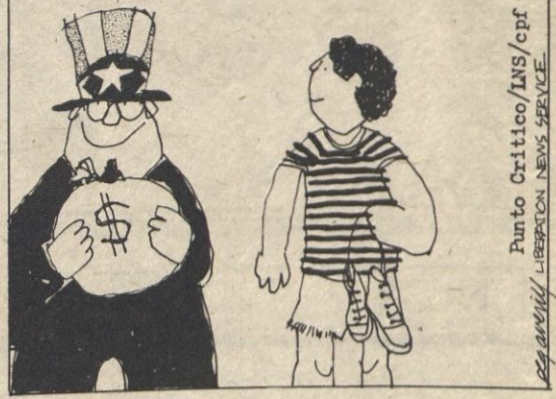
many ways to reduce costs. For example, in many factories there will be speed-ups in order to make more goods in a shorter time. Owners will often refuse to have adequate safety and health regulations (both for the people who work in the factory and for the people who live in the community around it.) They say that such safeguards are too expensive. So workers often suffer from diseases such as black lung or cancer because of poor working conditions caused by the capitalists greed for profits.

In order to fight these kind of conditions, workers sometimes try to organize themselves into union. By working together instead of as individuals, they can gain higher wages and better working conditions. In order to prevent this kind of organizing it is advantageous to capitalists to create divisions among workers. Two kind of divisions that have a long history in this country and elsewhere) are based on race and sex. Third world people and women are often paid lower wages than are white men. This means, most obviously, that women and Third world people are financially worse off; it also means that workers will fight among themselves -- white men fearing that women and Third world people are trying to take their higher wages from them, and both women and Third world people sometimes seeing each other getting ahead at the expense of the other group. So with workers fighting each other for a few crumbs the capitalist walks away with the whole cake.

Corporations are also looking for new sources of raw materials and labor and for new markets in which to sell their products. Only by doing this can they continue to expand their profits. This has led to the expansion of US corporations to places outside the US. Particularly in recent years many factories in the US are closing and are moving their shops to places like Asia and Latin America where labor is cheap. Businesses with interests in other countries want to protect those interests; this process of expanding corporations and protection of expansion is called imperialism. Over the last few years more and more information has come to light showing just how much control businesses have over other countries and US foreign policy. For example, one of the major factors in the Vietnam war was the interests of the US oil companies. In Chile the CIA and US business toppled the elected government of Salvador Allende, a socialist, and installed a military junta. Many more examples could be given.

These examples show the truth in what socialism says about our economic system in the US -- it is unjust both in our country and in other countries. But why has it been able to remain in control so long when so many people should have reasons for changing it? There are two powerful forces at work to keep capitalism entrenched. They are the state (the government of the US-- both federal and local arms of it) and civil society - institutions like the schools, the family

When poor people take things, it's called looting. When rich people take things, it's called profits.



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LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE

and the church. We can begin to see when we look at US foreign policy just how much control the capitalists have over the government, but that control goes even deeper.

In the US we are taught that we live in a democracy where every person has as much say in running the government as any other person. But if we look behind the scenes we'll see that that's not really true. Many people have pointed out that people who have money or have ties to businesses with money will be able to run and win office more easily than ordinary folks. Furthermore businesses are able to lobby very effectively for their interests. Because of this officials are more likely to support the interests of the capitalists. That's why the capitalists are also called the ruling class. (like the cartoon says, "What's the golden rule?" -- "Whoever has the gold makes the rules.") It is only recently that there has been any protection for the rights of workers in this country. And that protection was only won after long struggles. Among the most dramatic of these struggles have been the union organizing of the '30's, the black movement and the women's movement--and in each case the powers of the state, like the police

and the army, have been called out against those working for their rights and in support of the interests of the capitalists.

Of course the state and the capitalists can't rely on force, like the army to keep people in line. If this were the only way for capitalism to stay in power, we would be living in an armed camp. Another tool at the disposal of capitalists is -- civil society. Through the institutions of civil society, like the schools, church and family, we are all taught that the way things are is the way things ought to be. We are taught, for example, that

has to be for themselves, that there are roles that are natural for men and women, for blacks and whites. So what we see around us seems to make sense, it seems to be the only way to do things. Because of this we generally accept capitalism because we don't believe there are any alternatives. Socialism does present an alternative -- a new way of organizing society. Socialism tells us that capitalism is unjust and leads to oppression, imperialism and war, but there are ways to live that can lead to equality and justice for all people.


In our next issue we'll try to answer the question "What is Socialism for?" Future issues will explore topics like the connections between women's liberation and socialism, and the connections between gay/lesbian liberation and socialism.

opinion ★★★★★★

IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

This month's bigot of the month is the US Immigration and Naturalization Service. For years the INS has had a policy of excluding gay people from the US (as well as discriminating against Third World people.) Recently the INS has refused to grant a resident alien visa to Anthony Sullivan, whose spouse, Ricahrd Adams, is a US citizen. Such visa are routinely granted to heterosexual married couples. In its ruling the INS said, "You have failed to show that a bona fide marital relationship can exist between two faggots."





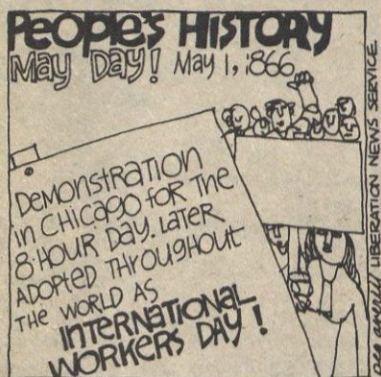
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Kirshman

Come Out Fighting

what's happening ★★★★★★★



Woman Abuse Conference

by Marla J. Cass, Student Intern
Women's Services Center, Loop YWCA

The Women's Services Department at the Loop Center YWCA will be sponsoring a two-day conference entitled "Confronting Woman Abuse: A Working Conference for the Midwest." The series of workshops, to be held April 23 and 24, promises to provide an opportunity for grassroots workers and professionals who work with abused women to meet, share knowledge and concerns, dilemmas and solutions.

The workshop will focus on an exploration of ways which our society's concepts of sex, class and race perpetuate the abuse of women. This focus will be emphasized in the three areas into which the workshops have been divided: Institutional Change, Shelters, and Therapeutic Issues. Workshops will emphasize experiential presentations, which will draw from the knowledge and experience of the participants. This approach will help attain a primary goal of the conference: to develop a vital network of services for women throughout the midwest. An additional feature of the conference will be a comprehensive assortment of films, videos and a theatrical presentation on woman abuse which will be open to the general public Monday evening, April 23rd for a \$2 donation.

The problem of woman abuse, although not new, has only recently been brought to the attention of society. According to the staff of Women's Services, more than 200 calls per month are received from abused women in the Chicago area. The assistance offered includes individual counselling, court advocacy, two support/self-help groups, one for women and one for their children, assistance in finding emergency housing and legal referral.

The conference, to be held at the Holiday Inn City Center at 300 East Ohio Street in Chicago, is open to all persons who have dealt with the problem of woman abuse, although pre-registration by mail is required. To receive registration materials, which includes a listing of the workshops, or for further information, contact Women's Services, 372-6600, ext. 75.

Pride Week

The Pride Week Committee is hard at work organizing Chicago's 10th Annual Gay and Lesbian Pride Week.

The theme selected for this year is "Stonewall: Ten Years After." This selection is in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the riot in the Stonewall bar in New York City, where on June 28, 1969, gay people for the first time in modern history fought back against police who were making a "routine" gay bar raid. Out of that riot came the organization of gay groups and the emergence of the modern Gay Liberation Movement.

The Committee has chosen to coordinate three major events this year, though as in previous years, other organizations and businesses will be organizing events to be placed on the calendar, such as the annual picnic, volleyball game, etc. A new event this year co-ordinated by the Committee is an Art/Street Fair to be titled "GALA I: A Celebration" (GALA stands for Gays and Lesbians in the Arts) on Sat. June 16 in the East Lake-view neighborhood. This fair is being

Gay Astronauts?

NASA is now training astronauts for its spacelab program and the astronauts include six women and a black man. So far all American astronauts have been white men; the only woman in space was Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova. Early tests on the first American women astronauts will be more nearly equal to men in space than they are on earth.

National space agency medical officer Dr. David Winter said, "The one physiological difference we all recognize -- weaker arm strength among women -- operates here on ground but does not operate in space."

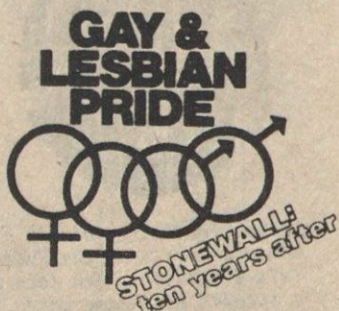
NASA, while it is slowly moving toward equality in some areas, still seems to harbor stereotypes in others. Because the spacelab is designed to orbit for increasingly longer periods, space officials said, the social characteristics of astronauts have become increasingly important. According to Kirmach Matani, a psychiatrist at the University of Oklahoma, who is working on astronaut screening procedures, studies show that men and women who function best in isolation, such as in space orbit, are persons he describes as "repressed heterosexuals."

Such a person would not be homosexual, but would be "an individual who can form extremely close attachments to members of the same sex without developing sexual involvement. They're willing to go without sex for a long period of time. What you mainly need is people who have good control over their emotions and who can exercise inhibitions when appropriate."

Apparently at least some people at NASA believe that gay people are unable to "exercise inhibitions" when it comes to sex. However another NASA spokesperson said that NASA would not automatically exclude homosexuals.

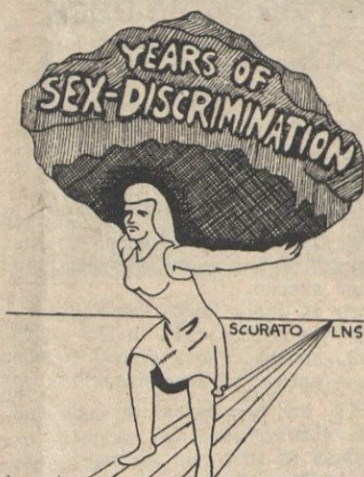
Alix Dobkin Concert

The New Alexandria Lesbian Library is sponsoring a concert by Alex Dobkin. The concert will be held at the Church of the Holy Covenant, 925 W. Diversey on Friday, April 13 at 8pm. Tickets are \$5 at the door and \$4 in advance. They are available at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse. Information about tickets and childcare can be obtained by calling 338-0720. Dobkin is a lesbian feminist singer. She has appeared in Chicago several times previously. She also has been involved in DYKE Magazine.. All wimmin are welcome.



planned as a "celebration of the visual and performing arts." Persons interested in displaying works of art, film, music, dance, theatre and other related fields are invited to contact the committee. With this event, the committee hopes to involve segments of the community not usually included in events of recent years--namely the artists, dancers, musicians, etc., in our community. This event could become an annual event. Location will be announced at a later date.

Another event of the week, a Loop Rally, is being planned for Friday, June 22 in Daley Plaza. Guest speakers from the gay community, as well as



"IN ANY GIVEN SOCIETY THE DEGREE OF WOMAN'S EMANCIPATION IS THE NATURAL MEASURE OF THE GENERAL EMANCIPATION."
— FOURIER

Lesbian Center News

The Lesbian Community Center (LCC) is open from 7-10pm weekdays and from 2-6pm Saturdays, at 1226 W. Grace, Chgo. The phone line, which is staffed at the same time as drop-in hours, is: 549-4370.

Open to all women in the community, LCC maintains a drug-free space. General meetings are held the first and third Sunday of the month at 3pm at the center. Meetings are open to any interested woman.

Since opening its doors in early December, LCC has been in the process of seeking women who wish to serve as staffers. Any woman who is interested in staffing should contact the center to volunteer her time.

LCC is also in the process of establishing programs for the community. Women interested in programs should contact the center.

Any woman wishing additional information about LCC programs or events, or wishing to be on the LCC mailing list, should contact the center.

The LCC is also beginning a games nite, starting Friday, March 30th. It will be held each Friday from 7-10pm.

Backgammon, monopoly, scrabble and cards will be available there, and women are invited to bring their own games with them. There will also be women's music there -- either provided by the center or brought by participants.

The center is also organizing to enter a lesbian float in the Gay/Lesbian Pride Week Parade. A meeting to discuss ideas and plan for the float will be held on Saturday April 7 at 3pm at the LCC. If you can't make the meeting, but would like to work on the float, call the LCC at 549-4370.

local politicians will be present to educate and inform the lunch time crowds. Several local musicians are in the process of organizing a marching band for the parade.

As always, the Pride Week Committee invites ALL segments of the community to participate in the parade as well as the other events of the week. Individuals, groups of individuals, organizations, bars and other businesses are welcome to enter the parade and march with friends, carry signs in the contingents, enter autos or flatbeds or prepare floats.

The committee is currently seeking benefits to help finance Pride Week '79. Any business, organization, or individual interested in sponsoring a benefit (or working with the committee on a "co-benefit") are urged to call. Also, we will be contacting businesses and organizations in the coming weeks. We look forward to your participation this year and if there are any questions, you can contact us at 528-8786 or 493-4979.

Mattachine Honors Kuda

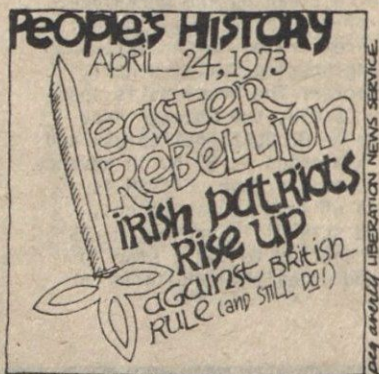
Mattachine Midwest held its annual Pearl Hart award dinner on Saturday, March 17 at the Courtyard Inn. This year's recipient of the Pearl Hart award was Marie Kuda, Chicago lesbian activist and writer. The award, which is presented annually by Mattachine, is named in honor of Pearl Hart, a Chicago lawyer. Hart was a longtime defender of the rights of gay people and the first woman to practice before the Supreme Court. Following her death, Mattachine established the award to honor people who have made contributions to the gay/lesbian community.

Kuda has been involved in the community for some ten years. She came to Mattachine in the 60's and quickly became involved in the production of their newsletter. Subsequently she founded Womanpress and published a bibliography on lesbian literature. She is best known for her sponsorship of the annual Lesbian Writers Conference. At the most recent conference, she presented a slide show on fifty years of lesbian literature. Kuda was also involved in the founding of the Gay and Lesbian Coalition and numerous Gay/Lesbian Pride Week activities.

In her remarks at the dinner, Kuda told of her experiences getting involved in the gay movement in the particularly exciting time of the late '60's and early '70's. She described how her horizons expanded as she became more involved in the movement -- allies grew to include transvestites, transsexuals, older people, labor groups and others. As the women's movement became active, she began to focus more on women's issues, while still seeing the need for places where women and men could work together.

Recently Kuda has been in San Francisco. She was moved by the tape Harvey Milk made to be played after his death and echoed his call for people to come out wherever possible. "We all need to make some kind of commitment, whether political or monetary, to make it work in Chicago. The time for factionalizing is over -- we need political power. We each have to make some choices about the meaning of our lives," she said. Her work in the future will be focussed on efforts to bridge the gaps between lesbians and gay men, lesbians and non-gay women and men and women.

Kuda received a standing ovation from those attending. The crowd clearly felt the honor was well-deserved. Additional remarks were made by Bill Kelley and Danny Jones. Kuda also spoke highly of Mattachine's role in the community. Mattachine is one of the oldest gay rights organizations in the country. In Chicago the group sponsors regular meetings and has a hot line. It also conducts rap groups for parents and friends of gays and other special groups. Their office is located at 100 E. Ohio, 337-2424.



culture

TWO FILMS THAT WORK FOR WORKERS

Sick to death but....

submitted by Elaine Wessel

Coal miners once took caged canaries into the mines because the tiny birds were sensitive to carbon monoxide gas. By collapsing and dying, the canaries warned of a danger that otherwise would have crept up undetected.

Today, workers themselves have become the canaries. By falling sick and dying, they warn that a crisis has overtaken the nation as stealthily as poison gas in a coal mine.

Over 100,000 American lives are lost each year to industrial diseases.

"Song of the Canary" is the first comprehensive documentary film to examine the epidemic of health hazards on the job.

"Song of the Canary" presents the story of workers exposed to hazards in two different industries. At a chemical plant in California, the filmmakers discover that workers have become sterile from manufacturing a potent farm pesticide called DBCP. This revelation brings national attention to the plant, forcing the cessation of DBCP production in the US. Then in North and South Carolina, the film documents the efforts of retired cotton mill workers with "Brown lung" disease as they battle mill companies and government bureaucracy for worker's compensation and safer working conditions in the mills.

The focus throughout the film is on those most affected -- the workers themselves. The chemical workers speak of why they work in such a hazardous place: "Where am I gonna get another job?" The widow of a chemical worker says: "They're in business to make

Norma Rae fights back

by Judy MacLean

If you like feeling strong enough to take on your problems and change things, if you want to remember your most rebellious moments, if you sometimes exult your righteous anger then don't miss Norma Rae. It's a movie with a gutsy heroine who says yes to life and no to just about everything and everybody who tries to push her around.

The story is about Norma Rae Webster, who works in a cotton mill in the south called O.P. Henley. She's widowed, young, restless, a mother of two who defies local morality and her father by carrying on affairs with various men. A union organizer comes to town and decides she's a natural leader. She joins the drive early, gets fired, goes to jail and eventually sees the union win (and the organizer drives off into the sunset.)

Films, TV, plays, books, records -- they all act on us in complex ways. One way is by giving us models, options, ways to try out living. How often have you gone to a film that seems true but leaves you depressed and paralyzed because that's how the women were depicted? This movie gives us a strong, complex, warm character to identify with, and makes it achingly clear how seldom we see heroines on the screen. It's a film to build our spirits.

It also shows several positive relationships and gives men good models, too. Norma and Reuben, the organizer, show a very rare relationship between a man and a woman. They work together, grow to like and respect each other and don't end up in bed together. Norma's new husband is initially angry about her inviting blacks from the mill to her house to



Field: Cute as "The Flying Nun" ...



... and gutsy as "Norma Rae."

Portrait of a Lesbian II

by Judith Speller

Tanya's hands are not small and they are not large. They are butter-brown like the rest of her body. The lines and forms of her hands are elegant--with a polished skin stretched tightly over forms that suggest the oval. The fingers taper at the tips, and the lower joints curve in a slim oval; likewise, the sleekly padded palm is longer than it is wide. Even each nail is a neat oval (and the nails are the least bit longer than appropriate for a true Sapphist). She is an ace secretary, and even after she has changed an electric typewriter ribbon, one cannot surprise her with ink-spots on her paw. She will already have licked herself clean -- petite slashes of a sandpaper tongue... like Dietrich, her blue-eyed gunmetal cat.

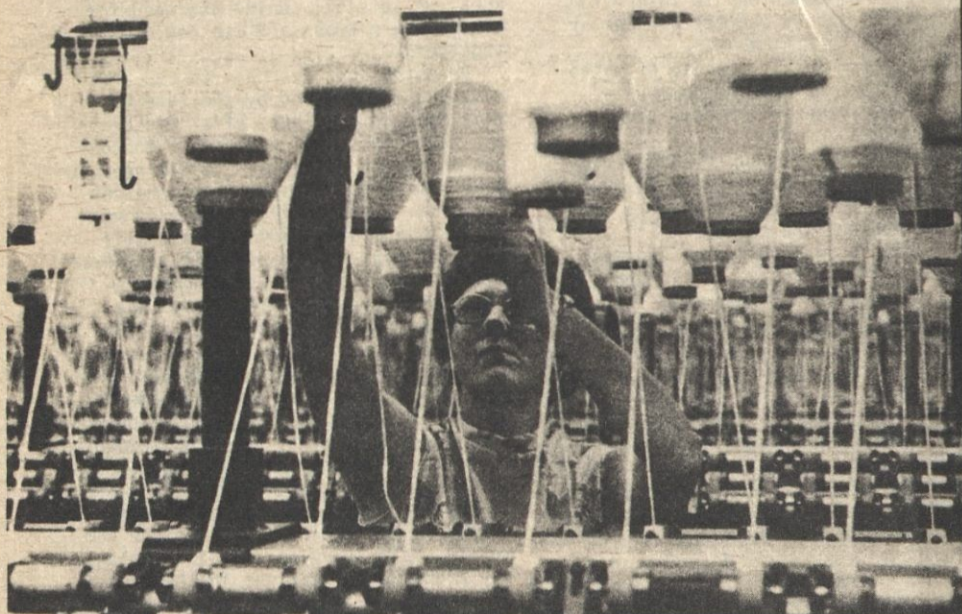
Her hands are like her speech. Because she learned English at 15, having spent her childhood in Germany, her speech has a hint of staccato in it. But she monitors and moderates: only her voice liquifies and connects, stretching the middle of words to fill up potential gaps. The staccato is barely permitted to show its face, and when it does so, the ponderous jowls are missing. The rhythms still chop, but they also ripple and play; they are grown light and supple.

The hands, like the speech, chop. The wrist snaps, 1 2 3 times, and the hand cuts the air fiercely, with a sinuous elegance. The hands body forth the guillotine logic of her mind. Her hands are laying out against the air the pieces of evidence, 1 2 3,

so that they may be appreciated visually -- and the proof concludes with a polite and well-satisfied "you see?" She has assembled the pieces as they must be assembled and now rides on a wave of relaxed benevolence.

Tanya lives in a world of precision. Her pupil is the lens of a camera: whatever it takes in, it records. Her pupil collects its evidence to the same rhythm that her wrist lays it out: snap snap snap. Or rather, the staccato rhythm, by virtue of a certain light speed, takes on continuity, liquifies. The snap of the Leica accelerates into a ribbon of clacks, into the husky trill of a movie camera. All events of her life she remembers in full and sequential detail.

Tatjana Marcus, ace secretary, aborted her career as an ace historian. At the penultimate moment she withdrew from a doctoral program -- to a chorus of despairing cries from those who cannot tolerate waste -- in terror of her own urge to compete and the unlovely extremes to which it might push her. She remains an historian manque, or else a film director manque. I am one of the actresses in the film she never made. I follow her directions with great subtlety, often before she has spoken a word. This is because I am devoted to her sensibility, always playful, cruel and tender by turns. I also bring a creative bent to the part, surprising her with personal contributions. This shall become already becoming-- an episode in her hypothetical film.



money, regardless of what happens to my life or Jack's life." A textile worker testifies: "We've been waiting a long time and many of us have died waiting. I don't want to die of injustice."

Striking photography of people at work, and interviews with doctors, lawyers, company officials and government representatives combine to make "Song of the Canary" a unique overview of the problems facing those who want to clean up the workplace.

"Song of the Canary" will have its Chicago premiere on March 31st, 8pm in the Engineering Building Hall, 205 W. Wacker. The premiere is sponsored by CACOSH, the Chicago Area Committee on Occupational Safety and Health. Admission is \$2.50 in advance and \$3.00 at the door. CACOSH is a coalition of local labor unions, legal and scientific professionals working together to put a stop to unsafe and unhealthy conditions on the job.

union meetings. He's upset when she gets so involved in organizing she stops paying attention to him. But he comes through for her, with loyal support, when it's needed. Angry, promiscuous Norma is also shown to be a good mother, with several nice scenes with her children.

Sally Field (who before now was stuck with parts like TV's *Flying Nun*) is wonderful as the downhome, southern working woman. Her accent and mannerisms are perfect. This is one of the few films that shows working people as complex human beings who can be victimized at times and who are also capable of amazingly brave actions.

The movie is corny. It romanticizes union organizing. It makes winning a union drive look much simpler than it is. Yet Hollywood has romanticized so much over the years, it's about time that a union drive and a strong woman got painted larger than life. What really matters is that here we have a rare commercial film that shows a woman who trust her own impulses, acts on them, doesn't stuff down her anger, and finally becomes both a leader and a winner.

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Hustle game tickets are at regular prices.
For game ticket and party ticket information,
call the Midwest Women's Center, 53 W. Jackson,
663-4163. See you at the game!!

THE WORD IS GOOD

"Word might get out that women can love each other. Word might get out that men can love each other."

Word Is Out-thanks in part to the film and the book of the same name. "Word is out" was the dream of Peter Adair, a filmmaker who wanted to make a documentary that would give gay people, especially young gay people, positive role models so that they could learn that they were not alone in their feelings. When he was coming out, Adair had no such models for himself so he decided to make a movie that, as his sister, Nancy Adair says, "would help all of us gays to believe more in ourselves, come out of our closets, and affirm each other."

Conceived in 1973 and filmed over the succeeding years, "Word Is Out" was released last year and has since been shown in theatres and on public TV. The film is a series of interviews with 26 gay men and women. Though seemingly simple in concept and style, it is the most powerful and moving statement about gay oppression, liberation and gay lives to appear on the screen. In making the movie, Adair gathered around him other gay men and lesbians, to work on the film. One of the first he brought was his sister, Nancy. They and the others on the project (Veronica Selver, Andrew Brown, Rob Epstein and Lucy Massie Phenix) videotaped a large number of gay men and lesbians from which six were chosen for an initial filming. Later others were added as the film group did interviews around the country.

Nancy Adair talked about the making of the film in an interview with BLAZING STAR. "There wasn't a problem with getting people to appear. People were eager to tell their stories," she said. "Most of the people were gotten by word of mouth. We made a conscious decision to get a diverse group of people. This created some contradictions in that we had to objectify people when at the same time we were trying to show how wrong it was for others to objectify gay people."

Everything in the film was planned from the people in it to the lighting of the shots. And through this planning the film show the variety of gay lives and the strength of gay people. We hear Pat Bond's story of life in the '50's as a WAC - both of the witchhunting that went on against lesbians and also of the day to day lives they led. We hear Rick Stokes talk about getting shock treatments to 'cure' his gayness. Pam and Rusty describe their lives as married women and later their meeting and living together. And many others show the great diversity among gay people. Through them we hear the horror stories of gay oppression, but also the joys, humor

and often the commonness of gay life. It portrays people who have been hurt, but can remain strong. In getting the diversity of people and the variety of emotions, it was necessary for the filmmakers to choose from some 200 videotape interviews. "It was hell to choose," says Adair. "It was almost arbitrary decision. There are some incredible people on videotape. Hopefully some of those interviews will be recorded in book form."

When the film was completed, Adair went on to collaborate with her mother, Casey Adair, in writing the book, "Word Is Out." The main body of the book is a transcription of the interviews with those people who appeared in the movie. It includes material that was not in the movie and because of this is particularly important. There is, for example, a long talk with Elsa about her coming out and her life as a lesbian in the early part of the century. And in the interview with Harry and John there is a description of their involvement with the founding of the Mattachine Society.

The book also includes a moving introduction by Casey Adair. She talks about finding out that two of her children are gay, her reactions, her need to know more about their life style. She describes her involvement in the film and later in putting together the book. Perhaps the most compelling is her exhortation to the families and friends of gay people to



keep the lines of communication open and to deal with, confront the issue of homosexuality. "To me this attitude (of ignoring someone's homosexuality) forms a large part of the oppression of homosexuals: making them invisible is degrading and incapacitating."

An afterword by Nancy Adair describes the making of the film, the group interactions, their struggles and their decision-making about who to film. She also writes about her own experience as a lesbian and what working on the film and book meant to her personally. She writes, "The viewing of these intercut oral histories (the initial tape out of which the movie grew) resulted in a quantum of our consciousness. We had created a mirror that gave us the affirmation we so desperately needed. Each story had been lived separately, yet each reflected every other. We realized with a great sense of responsibility that we were painting one of the first realistic portraits of homosexuals. We hoped that one result would be that gay people would never again doubt their own existence."

The film has changed the lives of those in the film, the filmmakers and many in the audiences. In her talk with BLAZING STAR, Nancy told the story of a lesbian mother, whose son, a strict Baptist, had rejected her. The son saw "Word Is Out" and was so moved by it that he called his mother and told her he had changed his feelings. So as Nancy says: "Conversations like this make me realize how important it is for everyone to see 'Word Is Out.'"

"Word Is Out" has been shown twice on Channel 11, WTTW, drawing exceptionally

high ratings competing with the late movies and the Tonight Show. They will show it again.

In its first two showings, the ratings showed that some 224,000 households were tuned in to see lesbians and gay men finally profiled as the dedicated, intelligent, sensitive and involved people we are.

For that, a drive is being organized for the whole community to say "Thanks." We think you'll agree it's thanks well given. If this drive is successful, as it should be, the total gift to WTTW will receive community-wide recognition.

We will be benefitting one of the most respected and deserving of all causes. It is a chance to show we care; not only of our own kind, but for our fellow citizens. We can show the whole of Chicago that we exist, we contribute, and we signify a substantial portion of the populus and have the ability and resources to help that populus.

Through subscribing to Channel 11 in this drive, you will be saying in effect that WE ARE HERE. WE CARE. WE ARE TRYING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR EVERYONE. There is seldom such an opportunity available to say this and have it heard. We can be heard. This drive will run through the month of March. All contributions must be posted no later than April 1. A presentation to Channel 11 will be made on behalf of the gay and lesbian community in mid-March. Please write:

THE WORD IS THANKS
c/o Chris Clason
521 W. Brompton #218
Chgo., IL. 60657

If you would like to contribute in any other capacity to this project, please call 281-3285.

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Moving On

Not Another Magazine!

Magazines and newspapers seem to keep multiplying in the left and the women's movement. Sometimes it's hard to know what to read or why.

We don't think our magazine, *Moving On*, is necessarily the best of the crop. But we do think it's very good. And it's unique in its scope and perspective. Each month *Moving On* covers labor, the women's movement, minorities, culture, and international events. It doesn't just report; it analyzes, probes, or lets organizers speak in their own voices.

And it is one of the very few publications that includes popularly written articles about socialism and what it could mean for America.

Moving On is also unique because of its commitment to democratic socialism, to feminism and to activists. Because it can take an articulate stand on an issue while leaving open space for differing views. And because it is part of an organization, the New American Movement, that is working to translate its words into political action.

There may be a lot of publications around today, but *Moving On* is different. And it's a difference that could matter to you. Subscribe for just \$4.00 a year.

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My Mother, Myself

by Cindy Kirshman

For many women, the Women's Movement has given them newly found confidence in their own abilities. I have often wondered why it is, at the core of many of us, lies such a shaky foundation, a lack of trust in ourselves. Nancy Friday tried to explain this as she explores the ways women build an identity in this society. *My Mother, Myself*, is about the struggle that women go through to become independent. I use the word "struggle" because Friday demonstrates the enormous obstacles that confront women while trying to become adults. In this context, Friday explores women's relationships, particularly, the mother/daughter relationship -- the main obstacle to becoming independent.

It took me a long time to get through the book. For one thing, *My Mother, Myself*, is very psychoanalytical in its content which can be tedious. But the main reason was that I could only read it in small doses, then stop to put it down, so overwhelmed was I with some of the passages. While reading the book it was impossible not to examine my own relationship with my mother. It is interesting to note, that while discussion the issues of the mother/daughter relationship, Nancy Friday also takes a look at her own relationship with her mother.

The main thesis of the book, is that daughters seldom become "emotionally separated" from their mothers. Nancy Friday observes "Being cute and helpless, clinging, clutching, holding on for dear life, becomes our method for survival -- and ultimate defeat." (61) Why is it that many women never become "emotionally separated" from their mothers? Nancy

Friday contends that the main reason is that this society perpetuates the myth of the "sacredness of motherhood". Daughters seldom view their mothers as total people. Motherhood is so glorified that a child's mother could only be perfect. Children, however, are not the only ones who but into this; it is mother, herself who becomes consumed with this belief. The result is that mothers can not become unseparated from their roles for they have too much at stake; Their entire identity is wrapped up in their being the ideal mothers and they ultimately pass on their roles to their daughters.

"Symbiosis" is the term that Friday uses to describe the "suffocating kind of closeness that infants need". Unfortunately, as little girls grow older, it is made difficult for them to break away from this symbiotic relationship. Unlike mothers' relationships with their sons, any sense of adventure in little girls is often inhibited.

Most psychological theory contends that at the foundation of building a strong identity lies a basic sense of self within that person. Friday observes, however, that daughters are seldom given confidence from the mothers -- the necessary approval -- to break away into the adventures of becoming an adult. The result is a sense of self -- full of fear and anxiety.

This theme, the building of an identity, is central to the entire book and is discussed in relationship to the main stages of women's lives. Nancy Friday observes that there are basic areas of conflict with their mothers that women learn to avoid -- our bodies,

anger, masturbation, aggression, sexuality and competition. These are themes that are discussed fully in the book. Friday points out, that women's relationships with men are very often a substitute for mother's control. She also discusses assertiveness and the types of jobs that women are encouraged to seek. She writes, "If your lifelong habit is to think of your identity only in terms of being someone's wife, someone's secretary or assistant, it is scary not to be

in that position. It means you have no identity." (371)

The question still remains, however, and it is one that Friday also raises, "Where do women get all that bravery?" In other words, how do women survive all the obstacles confronting them. Well clearly, there are other relationships besides the mother/daughter one, other role models or surrogates that play important factors in our lives. Nancy Friday describes a fantasy that she had with her own mother regarding this issue. She fantasizes that her mother says to her, "Nancy, you know I'm not really good at this mothering business... We'll try to find other people, other women who can fill in the gaps." (19)

The realization that women are raised to be dependent is certainly not a new concept, but I have never seen the mother/daughter relationship described with such clarity and in such depth. I could not help from becoming angry after reading the book, because it so clearly illustrates how women are sabotaged from becoming strong adults.

The book is not just psychoanalytical theory. Nancy Friday uses examples in her own life, discusses growing up in the south, and the process that she went through to understand her own relationship with her mother. Her personal accounts are beautifully written.

My Mother, Myself, helped me to understand my own relationship with my mother. I think that every woman goes through at least some of the issues that Friday raises in her book, can recognize some of the obstacles to becoming themselves. The book made quite an impact on me and I hope others will read it.



Lesbian Erotica

As I become more in tune with being me I become more excited about my sexual fantasies and patterns of erotic feelings. With a thrill of delight and increasing satisfaction I'd savor with each new discovery.

My lover and I once talked about "negative and positive" sexual fantasies of women in relation to getting turned on. I was suddenly overwhelmed by the enormous effects of those negative images of women that we all grew up with. Even as lesbians, women-identified-women, feminists or whatever, those negative images may still have a big effect on our sexual space. Immediately following the discussion I wanted to read some erotica about lesbians. (We were on a camping trip so there wasn't any available.)

When I got back to the city, I began to look for lesbian erotica, erotica by women, anything. It seems scarce -- there are a few posters and songs, seduction scenes in some novels, and women artists working in isolation. Of course, there is a tremendous amount of pornography by and for men -- including about "lesbians" (inaccurate at best) and sometimes involving children (sad and disgusting).

Is there a lesbian erotic reality? Or a women's erotic reality? Perhaps there are some common threads (or uncommon ones) running through our subconscious? Perhaps there are as many erotic realities as there are lesbians (or women).

I'd like to assemble and publish a collection of lesbian erotica, including both written and graphic material. What happened to the fantasies, dreams and illusions that are erotic experiences for lesbians? What are the preludes to lovemaking or accessories commonly used (vibrators, etc.)? How about descriptions of favorite lovemaking or masturbation experiences as erotica? Do non-lesbian feminist or non-lesbian women have erotic experiences that could be woman-identified, hence lesbian oriented? The possibilities are certainly multi-dimensional.

What would you like to see happen in a publishing of lesbian erotica? This book will become whatever lesbians and other women consider as erotic and send to me.

All descriptions, contributions, questions, etc may be sent to:
Pamir Productions
POB 40218
San Francisco, CA 94140
Anonymity is guaranteed unless you otherwise.

NOW Wins

A federal judge ruled that the National Organization for Women did not violate anti-trust laws by imposing a convention boycott against states that have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment.

US District Judge Elmo B. Hunter issued the ruling in a suit by the state of Missouri against NOW charging the women's organization with violation of the Sherman Anti-trust Act. The state contended in testimony last fall that at least a dozen conventions worth millions of dollars were canceled in Kansas City and St. Louis because of the boycott.

Firefighter

A woman firefighter was discriminated against by the Iowa City, Iowa fire department when officials refused to let her nurse her infant son during duty hours, the Iowa civil rights commission has ruled. "I think this is a positive step," Linda Eaton, 26, said of the report issued Wednesday. "I'm really glad the commission saw the problem and didn't just dismiss it." The complaint was filed by Iowa Atty. Gen. Tom Miller. Eaton had been suspended twice for violating orders and feeding her 4½ mo. son during unassigned time on a 24-hour shift.

Blazing Star

Want to help put out BLAZING STAR? Come to a meeting Thursday, April 12 at 7:30pm at 3244 N. Clark. We need help in all areas from thinking up articles to delivering the finished newspaper. Writing, art layout, advertising skills are welcome, but if you don't have them, we'll teach you. Our next three issues will focus on Mothers Day (May), Gay/Lesbian Pride Week (June) and a summer book review issue. (July-August). For the last issue, we are particularly looking for people willing to review books such as books for gay teenagers, women in science fiction, gay detectives and anything else you are interested in.

Self-Publishing Workshop

Metis Press, publishers of feminist literature, will be holding a two day workshop on self-publishing. Topics include lay-out and design, offset printing, distribution and budget. The sessions will be held April 7th and 14th; enrollment is limited. People interested in attending should send their name, address and phone number to Metis Press, 815 W. Wrightwood, Chicago, 60614. You should include a statement of reasons for participating and how the training might be used. There is no enrollment fee. Childcare will be provided.

Performing Arts Festival

Women in the performing arts will have an opportunity to share their gifts of expression at the Women's Performing Arts Festival to be held Sat., April 21 at the Blue Gargoyle in Chicago.

The festival is the first of its kind to be staged in Chicago and will showcase women performers and their art throughout the one day event.

A variety of performers will be featured at the festival which is designed to be a celebration of women's culture. Allowing from the diversified background of the performers, the Women's Performing Arts Festival is open to any woman in the performing arts, regardless of her medium of expression.

Childcare will be provided at the festival during performances. Those women who are interested in performing for or working with those in childcare should contact the Women's Performing Arts Festival Committee to volunteer their services. Tapes and auditions are not necessary for those who wish to perform at the festival. And performers are not limited to the main festival or the childcare action.

Organizations and craftswomen wishing to share information and works are also encouraged to attend the festival. Those

persons who would be selling items will be charged a nominal space fee. Information exchange space is provided free of charge. Those organizations and individuals wishing to take advantage in this aspect of the festival are asked to contact the festival committee at least two weeks before the event to reserve space.

Tickets will be available in advance for the festival. Donations for the entire day (morning to midnight) are \$5 in advance, \$7 at the door; evening tickets are \$3 in advance, \$5 at the door. All tickets are on a donation basis, more if you can, less if you can't. Tickets can be ordered by mail from: Women's Performing Arts Festival Committee, c/o LCC, 1226 W. Grace, Chgo IL 60613, enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for mail return.

Performers will be paid by dividing a major percentage of the net profits between acts.

The Women's Performing Arts Festival Committee is an autonomous group of women seeking to enhance women's culture. Additional information can be obtained by contact the festival committee. The festival is open to any woman in the performing arts.

Your money or your life!



Do you want to help put out Chicago's only lesbian newspaper? Well, we want you! To find out more come to our next

Planning Session

Thurs., April 12, 7:30 at 3244 N. Clark St. or come to a

Potluck

Thurs., April 26, 7:30 at 648 W. Webster or Sun., April 29, 6pm at 1619 W. Grace. To find out more, call us at 248-9300 and leave a message or write:

BLAZING STAR,

PO Box 7892 Chicago, IL 60680

ONLY GIRLS AND SISSIES JUMP ROPE FOR EXERCISE.



This ad for Blue Cross/Blue Shield recently appeared in some national magazines. What do you think of it?

So why do boxers like Ken Norton jump rope? To stay in good condition. If everybody followed his example, we'd all be in better health. And so would the cost of health care.

Because jumping rope is a bona fide aerobic exercise. Like jogging, cycling, and swimming. And it's something that everybody can easily do in their homes every day. To stay fit and healthy.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans are convinced that people who exercise and stay fit have found one real way to slow down the rise in health care costs. In fact, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans all over the country are actively promoting exercise, fitness and health programs.

Of course, there are other effective ways to fight rising health care costs besides asking you to stay fit. To do it, we've initiated many programs with doctors and hospitals.

Programs such as second surgical opinion, medical necessity programs, home care, health maintenance organizations, same day surgery, pre-admission testing and the like are in use in many Plans with positive money-saving results. As successes are achieved, the results are shared so that knowledge gained by solving local problems can be applied on a wider basis.

We're encouraged. The average length of hospital stays for Blue Cross Plan subscribers under age 65 dropped by almost a day between 1968 and 1977. That may not sound like much. But if the length of stay were the same today as it was in 1968, we would be paying an additional \$1,249,869,813 a year. In addition, the rate of hospital admissions for these subscribers dropped by 4.9%, representing \$554,938,847.

But controlling health care costs without sacrificing quality is a tough problem. One we all have to work on together.

That's why we're asking you to try and stay fit and healthy. See your doctor first, and then if you can, get involved in a regular, organized exercise program.

If you can't, at least do what Ken Norton does. Jump rope for about 15 minutes a day.

And help us put the high cost of health care down for the count. For a free booklet, "Food and Fitness," or for information on how your company can view a special film, "You Can't Buy Health," write Box 8008, Chicago, IL 60680.



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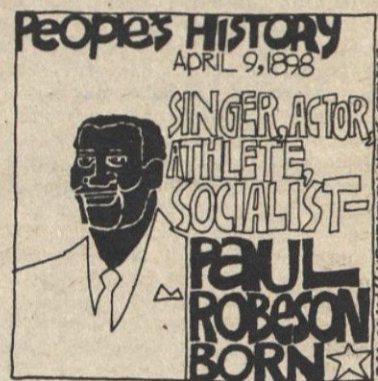
ALL OF US HELPING EACH OF US.

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Coalition Elects

The Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Metropolitan Chicago has elected officers for the coming year. Co-chairs are Delilah Kenny who has served as clerk of the Coalition for the last year and David Boyer of the Chicago Committee for Gay Rights Legislation. Mark Sherkow of the Rogers Park Edgewater Gay Alliance is secretary, Hal Wand of Dignity is clerk and Chuck Whitman of Lavendar University is parliamentarian. Randy Stover of Presbyterians for Gay Concerns was elected treasurer, but subsequently accepted a job in San Diego. Replacing him is John Gilun of All Zeit.

The Coalition also set up a committee to investigate increasing police harassment on the near north side. While it is yet unclear if the harassment is directed at the gay community, there have been some arrests in some of the area's gay bars. The committee will look into the situation and bring back a report for further action.



Occupational Hazards

The American Cyanamid Company is a manufacturer of chemical products, some of which use lead. Lead is one of a number of substances that can be harmful to the fetus as well as to adults. In the last year, American Cyanamid decided to do something about this dangerous situation in which many workers, including pregnant women, were exposed to lead. They told female workers that they would either have to be sterilized or transferred to other jobs. Of course the other jobs - if there were any -- were lower paying. Anthony Mazzochi, an officer of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union said "It's an outrageous situation. This company -- and others throughout the US -- is trying to force women out rather than cleanup the workplace for all the workers." OCAW is one of the leading unions in workers health issues. Mazzochi is trying to form a coalition of unions and other groups to protect workers from the threat of sterilization. As Mazzochi says, this type of policy is



"I think the safety record of our plant is excellent... especially when you consider how dangerous it is to work there..."

based on the premise that it's the workers who should be altered and not the workplace. "If we let this happen, we'll have neutering clinics in every town, like those for dogs and cats."

HERS Benefit

The Health Evaluation and Referral Service (HERS) is sponsoring a benefit dinner on Sunday, April 1 at the Heartland Cafe, 7000 N. Glenwood. The benefit will include food, wine and live music. HERS is a service to women in Chicago that has been in existence for over five years. They have referral lists of doctors and clinics, including gynecological care and obstetric care and feminist therapists. They have also produced the HERS Healthy Kits. Tickets are \$5.00 in advance and \$5.50 at the door and are available at HERS (2757 N. Seminary) the Heartland and the New World Resource Center (1476 W. Irving) The benefit will begin at 7pm.

DES-Less Of A Problem?

DES (diethylstilbestrol), a synthetic estrogen, has been used by some women during pregnancy. Women, especially in the late forties and early fifties, were advised by their doctors that use of DES might prevent miscarriage. Other women were used in large scale testing performed at Chicago's Laying-In Hospital in the early fifties; these women were not told what drug they were given. Recently a number of daughters of these women have been found to have cervical and vaginal cancer. (The effects of DES are fully documented in the recently published book, *The Politics of Cancer* by Samuel Epstein. Now efforts are underway to downplay the effects of DES. It has been reported in the press that a Massachusetts study by Stanley Robboy found "only four cancers of the genital tract among 3339 daughters of women who took DES." While four may not seem like very many, it translates into 4800 to 7200 cases when all 4 to 6 million DES users are considered. When these rates of cancer are compared to the US average for genital tract cancer, these rates are more than four times higher than expected. Don't let the industry pull the wool over your eyes -- DES is dangerous to your health!

* ALL WIMMIN WELCOME!

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APPEARING

at: Church of the holy covenant

925 W. DIVERSEY CHICAGO

on: FRIDAY APRIL 13th

8:00 pm

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Reproductive Rights

On March 31st, women around the world will be observing an international day of solidarity for reproductive rights -- holding demonstrations, leading marches, sponsoring teach-ins. They will be joining together because of our common recognition that a woman's right to determine whether and when she will bear children is abridged or denied in most countries of the world. The international calls are "Contraception and abortion are a woman's right" and "No forced sterilization." To build and strengthen work here, women in the US will be demanding 1.) Defeat the Hyde Amendment and restore Medicaid abortions, and 2.) Enforce the HEW regulations and prevent sterilization abuse.

In Chicago, the Chicago Women's Health Task Force invites all women to celebrate this day by joining in a workshop, "Women and the National Health Service." This event is part of the Second Annual Conference of the Chicago Coalition for a National Health Service (CCNHS). CCNHS has brought together community, church, minority, health worker, women, and trade union groups committed to a basic restructuring of the nation's health services into a publicly-financed, democratically-controlled, community-based, non-profit system. We support such a proposal introduced into Congress by Representative Ron Dellums. Dellums will speak at the conference luncheon.

The conference will be held on Saturday, March 31st at the Pick-Congress Hotel at 9:30am. There is a \$3.00 registration fee for the conference.



AAT 4290

sports



Sports Resources

Sports have not been traditionally very open to women, but as the women's movement has begun to open doors, more women are becoming involved in sports activities. As this happens a number of groups are beginning to put together resource materials to help women in this arena. One factor that has helped in providing opportunities for women in sports is Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972. This Title, a federal act, applies to educational institutions or programs that receive money from the federal government. It prohibits discrimination against students and employees on the basis of sex. One area in which this Title is applied is in sports. All school athletic programs have to have equality for men and women -- obviously this Title has not yet been fully enforced. Several groups have developed materials to help individuals and groups see that Title IX is enforced. Among these are the American Association of University Women (2401 Virginia Ave. NW, Washington DC 20037) and the Project on the Status and Education of Women of the Association of American Colleges (1818 R St. NW, Washington DC 20009). The latter group has some materials on how Title IX applied to school athletic programs.

The Women's Equity Action League has an Educational and Legal Defense Fund (805 15th St. NW, Suite 822, Washington DC 20005) which also has information on Title IX. This is included in their Sports Kit which in addition has other information on women and sports including reprints of articles, bibliographies, organization listings and ideas for local projects. They also publish *In the Running*, a newsletter of women and sports. These are part of their SPRINT project, which also includes a toll-free SPRINT line (800-424-5162) which women can call if they have been discriminated against in sports.

Another new program is the Women's Sports Foundation, founded by Billie Jean King. The foundation was formed to encourage and support women's sports activities and to educate people about women's athletic capabilities. They publish a new

magazine called *Women's Sports* and maintain a resource center for information on sports programs. Their address is Box 5032, San Mateo, Ca 94402.

Other groups are dealing with sports in different ways. One such group is FANS (Fight to Advance the Nation's Sports, 2333 Fulton, Berkeley, CA 94704). FANS is an organization for spreading information about rip-offs and inequities of the current sports system. They publish a newsletter called *LeftField*.

Locally there are also groups working for women's participation in sports. Two of the most prominent groups are the Chicago Park District, while it has not achieved full equality for women in does provide some opportunities for women to get involved in activities like softball and volleyball. Frequently women's bars and groups will sponsor teams in Park District Leagues and will have open participation sports days. The Health Education Recreation Enterprise (541 Indian Hill Ct., Naperville 60540) sponsors canoeing, rafting and other outdoor activities for women. Inward Bound (1613 W. Greenleaf, Chgo 60626) also sponsors recreational activities as does Outdoor Women (919 N. Michigan, Suite 3310, Chgo. 60611). The latter group also organizes clinics and seminars on outdoor sports. Two sports leagues are also organized in the Chicago area. The Illinois Women's Soccer League (c/o Roth, 5140 N. Albany, Chgo 60625) has eight teams in Chicago and plays both spring and fall seasons -- new participants are welcome. The Midwest Women's Rugby Football Union (c/o Augello, 1117 Leonard Pl., Evanston 60201) is an amateur league open to any woman interested in learning and playing rugby football. They also have spring and fall seasons.

If you have any other information on resources for women and sports, please send them to BLAZING STAR.



Hustle: Chicago Winners

The Midwest Women's Center is holding a benefit with the Chicago Hustle on Thursday, April 5th. They are having a tribute to Chicago women and women's sports at the Hustle's last home game of the '78-'79 season. The game starts at 7:30pm at the DePaul University Alumni Hall, 1011 W. Belden. After the game, there will be a post-game party at the Wise Fools' Pub, 2270 N. Lincoln. Tickets are \$5 and \$6 for the game and \$2 for the party. Also at the game and party will be Jorie Lueloff of WMAQ-TV. Information on the benefit can be obtained from the center at 53 W. Jackson, rm. 623 or 922-8530. The center recently published the Illinois Women's Directory and sponsors a number of other projects.

In other Hustle news, the team just cinched first place in the Midwest Division of the Women's Professional Basketball League. In the recent All-Star game, Rita Easterling of the Hustle was named most valuable player; she and Debby Waddy-Rossow, also of the Hustle, were the game's high scorers. The Hustle won a round with the hierarchy of the League recently,

when Commissioner Bill Byrne upheld their protest of a game with the Minnesota Fillies. The March 1 game, which the Hustle lost by a score of 141 to 139, will be replayed in part. The Hustle protested that the Fillies were not charged with two technical fouls for keeping to players in after they had fouled out. The replay of the last 5.29 of the game added another win to the Hustle's record.

While the Hustle has a better record than any Chicago professional sports team in recent memory, Chicago sportswriters seem unaware of their existence. A program on Channel 2 by Johnny Morris, as well as a series in the Tribune and columns in the Sun-Times, have focused on Chicago's losers. Nowhere do they talk about Chicago's winners. John Schullien, in his March 20 Sun-Times column sums up the attitude of Chicago sportswriters when he says, "You have to go back 16 years to find teams that could really be called winners." This is typical of the overwhelming male orientation of sports and needs to be challenged by us -- women athletes deserve better than they get.



"If she's half as good at selling papers as she is at playing third base, we're sunk!"



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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