

JULY 1978

FEMINISTS

NEWSLETTER

MINUTES OF JUNE MEETING

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The turnout at the June 24th meeting in Skowhegan was very low, with approximately ten women in attendance. The general meeting opened with a discussion of child care, and we affirmed the policy of consistently paying the child care worker \$15, regardless of the number of children present. We noted that the child care worker is told in advance the fee she will be paid and that attendance by children will, of course, fluctuate, with low attendance at some meetings and high attendance at others.

We speculated on why attendance was so low and discussed ways we might increase attendance at future meetings. The necessity of having more structure in MLF was again articulated as someone stated, "We're falling apart because we don't have anything to hold us together." It was suggested that those present find women in their area who would be committed to organizing carpools and/or providing rides to others.

providing rides to others.

MAINE COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS- Kate reported on the meeting held in Augusta on June 22nd to re-energize the MCHR. Some of the questions addressed at the meeting were: 1) Should legislation be submitted during the next session of the Maine legislature? 2) What kind of bill should be submitted - a general bill or one attached to the Maine Human Rights Act? 3) What steps should be taken now to build the coalition and gather support in Maine for gay rights legislation? The nine people present reached a consensus that it is essential to submit a bill, if for no other reason than to facilitate community education on gay rights. Since the filing date for bills is December, there is time to feel out the climate in Maine to see if submitting a bill would hurt us more than help us (eg. if we would suffer an overwhelming defeat). We can proceed as usual - lobby candidates, campaign for pro-gay rights candidates, etc. - and decide not to submit a bill if it looks bad. No consensus was reached on what kind of bill should be submitted. Kate spoke with the head of the Maine Human Rights Commission who felt that an amendment should not be attached to the "Act" if no money would accompany it to investigate discrimination cases. However, the Commission will support an amendment if MCHR decides on this type of bill. There is no known president for a general bill and this route would be difficult. MCHR is looking for a sponsor for the bill; Gerry Talbot, last year's sponsor, was defeated in the primary. People who worked in the MCHR last year are available to give a crash course in lobbying to those who are interested. Kate noted that more women are needed to do lobbying in the State House, for we present less of a threat to the legislators. Right now, the coalition is trying to build membership and non-gay people are being sought to work with the coalition. The next meeting will be held on July 20th at 7PM in Augusta.

MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY - Kate reported on the Maine Women's Lobby which is being organized. (See write-up inside)

organized. (See write-up inside)
MARCH FOR ERA - Kate distributed information on the NOW-sponsored march in Washington, DC on July 9

The next meeting will be held at Marjorie's in Bath, on July 29th.

The August meeting will be held in Hollis, on August 19, with Delores and Nadine.

DECLINE FOR THE AUGUST NEWSLETTER IS AUGUST 3.

DEADLINE FOR THE AUGUST NEWSLETTER IS AUGUST 3.

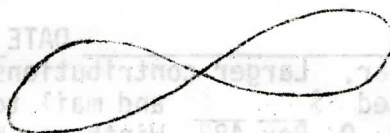
NOTICE:

NOTICE:
We are in the process of organizing a wholistic gay healing center to encompass all of the healing arts.- doctors, acupuncture people, counselors, psychologist lawyers, etc. This will not be centrally located, but will be a group practice. Each person will refer to the other appropriate people. Right now we are offering counselling, but nothing else as of yet. -Marjorie Meyer-

ring counselling, but nothing else as of yet. -Marjorie Ryan
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This JULY 1st saw another first - a Gay AA meeting along with a Gay Al-Anon was held in Brunswick. The Gay AA is a closed discussion meeting - Gay Al-Anon is open, with both groups joining together on the last Saturday of the month, for an open meeting. Both meetings are held on Saturday, 8PM. at the ~~Universalist-Unit~~ Unitarian-Universalist Church on Pleasant Street. This is the first time in the history of the STATE OF MAINE that a Gay AA/Gay Al-Anon meeting was held. As many of you are aware, there are women recovering alcoholics who attend MLF. I wish at this time to say my special thanks to each and all of you who have shown us support in our struggle and for those who helped make this Gay AA a reality. -- Janice

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The next meeting of MLF will be held JULY 29th at 1543 Washington St, Bath
Tentative Agenda:

10:00 - 10:30 Coffee, greeting, social

10:30 - 11:00 Agenda meeting - detail the days activities, review the rules
of the house, etc.

11:00 - 12:30 Activity period I

1 Workshop - report on Goals & Purposes mtg *Diane/Janice*

2 Workshop - Matriarchy: Power - Mary

3 Softball Game *Newcomer's Workshop*

12:30 - 1:30 LUNCH - Bring your own

1:30 - 3:00 Activity Period II

1. ~~Women & the Environment - Julia~~ ? *3:15 P.M.*

2. Information Sharing Workshop (Political/Social) *Goals & Purposes*

3. ~~Music - Jam session/entertainment~~

3:00 - 4:30 Activity Period III

1 ~~NLFO - Kate~~

2 ~~Music - continued?~~

3. Free Space/time - swimming?

5:00 PM POT LUCK SUPPER - BRING A DISH TO SHARE

Mary says we can swim in the river, there is open space for softball, frizbees
etc. a short distance from the house. Bring your instruments and equipment.
Please come and encourage your friends to come. We are revamping MLF, but
the "organization" cannot meet your needs if you do not contribute your ideas
to the process. MLF is open to ALL women.

DIRECTIONS:

From NORTH: Take I95 to Augusta, take Me Turnpike to Gardiner (25¢), then
take I95 to Brunswick/Topsham exit. Head toward Topsham, right on 201, go
across the bridge. Take first left, Route 1 to Bath. Take Business District
exit. Take a left at the bottom of hill at stop sign, which is Washington St.,
Go 24 miles to white house on right - #1543

From South: I295 to I95 to Bath-Brunswick Coastal Route ~~XX~~ 1, at one mile from
the exit you turn off on route 1 to Bath. then follow above directions.

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MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY

At the end of June, the Maine Women's Lobby announced its formation and began a
statewide fundraising drive to hire a lobbyist for the next session of the legis-
lature. The purpose of the organization is to promote legislation beneficial
to men and women's rights, and it shall be the role of the lobbyist to mon-
itor legislation impacting on women and to maintain a strong, daily presence
for women's issues, in Augusta.

Unlike other organizations formed for women, the Maine Women's Lobby has set membe
membership dues at \$2.00 annually, which will enable a lot of women to parti-
cipate who may have been restricted by higher fees. It is a basic goal of MWL
to draw support from thousands of people throughout the State (at whatever
level of financial support they can give) to have added strength for dealing
with legislators; women's issues backed by numbers they can't ignore!!!!!!
Membership in the MWL entitles one to have input into prioritizing the issues
to be lobbied, to nominate herself to the Board of Directors, and to vote for a
15-member Board of Directors, who will set final policy on prioritizing issues.
Because there is always the chance that without a strong lesbian presence,
our issues will be ignored or diminished, I'm encouraging women in MLF to become
members, to state issues of interest to you (and us), and to get yourselves
elected to the Board. It is through this participation that we can ensure that
issues of lesbian rights, child custody, welfare and other concerns become
priorities. If there are any questions, Contact Kate

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

LEGAL RESIDENCE IF DIFFERENT FROM MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE (TOWN) _____

PHONE (HOME) _____

(BUSINESS) _____

AREAS OF INTEREST _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

Membership is \$2.00/year. Larger contributions are welcomed. Please
indicate amount enclosed \$ _____ and mail to:

MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY, P. O. Box 482, Winthrop, Maine 04364

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR MAINE LESBIAN FEMINISTS

MAINE LESBIAN FEMINISTS has been formed to provide a way for Lesbians to meet each other. When we get together, the broad range of activities women may choose from include:

- forming a communication network
- lobbying for legislation
- participating in educational outreach for the public and our sisters
- receiving personal support
- developing, discussing and implementing lesbian feminist political theory and analysis
- creating an environment in which to share personal changes
- having social activities
- having athletic activities
- supporting cultural activities
- creating lesbian visibility
- establishing contact with other organizations
- responding to negative images
- creating a more positive image
- sharing skills
- sharing ceremonies/celebrations
- creating alternative environment
- creating new environments for children

(minutes from P&G meeting)

Purpose & Goals

present began with a review of MLF purposes expressed at July '77 mtg. Should we have a statement of purpose or philosophy? "MLF is a change-oriented organization."

Do we want to be an all-encompassing group or have a more specific philosophy? Is an all-inclusive group possible? Do we need two different organizations (social vs political)? What will be the structure to implement the statement purposes and activities?

These and other questions were discussed (at times heatedly) in the process of devising the purpose you see at the top of the page.

The structure for the meetings will be changing to find a manner that all can be comfortable with. To that end, it was decided to have an agenda meeting in the morning to plan the day's activities, and to dispense with the General meeting. We will try for varied activities in each activity period. Any announcements can be posted in a central location. If specific information need to be transmitted, one can hold a workshop or write it up for the newsletter.

Laurie agreed to act as social activities coordinator for the next meeting. It may be more long-term if needed.

Connie will work with Marj for format of the meeting. We are also trying to plan meetings further in advance. August is set and we will be looking for a place for September at the July meeting.

PLEASE REMEMBER!!!! If you are not happy with what is happening at MLF meetings you have to be willing to help in changing structures and formats. Every woman is needed for input and energy. The organization is only as good, useful, secure, need-meeting as we as individuals working together make it.

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THERE WERE NO NOTICES OF ACTIVITIES COMING UP FORWARDED TO THE NEWSLETTER.

LOOKS LIKE AUGUST IS NOT GOING TO BE A BUSY MONTH.

RELAX AND HAVE FUN...

DONT FORGET---- ~~2000372~~? AUGUST MLF MEETING - Aug 19 in HOLLIS

FLO'S - JULY26 August 9 and 30

DEADLINE FOR AUGUST MLF NEWSLETTER - - - August 3 - - any contribution welcome
poems, letters, notices, adds
IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER !!!

IS NUCLEAR POWER A FEMINIST ISSUE ?

(Or Why Bother?)

Women are rapidly becoming aware that nuclear fission, in the hands of the state and big business, poses the ultimate threat to life on our planet. Dangerous radiation levels in the environment are considered "unavoidable" by a white, male elite of corporate owners and executives who put profit before the health and real needs of ordinary people. The growing "No Nukes" movement in this country is challenging the authority of the utilities and multinational corporations to trade our health and the lives of future generations for a short-term source of power. Resistance to such authority is in the finest feminist tradition---our herstory is rich with women who have not been afraid to challenge the men who would control our lives: midwives challenging male doctors, lesbians challenging the institutions of marriage and forced labor, witches challenging the church, strong women challenging rapists and violent husbands.

Women as the childbearers will have to bear the brunt of the dangerous effects of nuclear power: that is, the genetic hazards to children and to women's reproductive organs. There is no safe level of radiation. Any increase in radiation exposure increases the incidence of cancer and leukemia, spontaneous abortions, sterility, gene mutations in our children and future generations... and death. No one is asking women if we want to live with (or die with) increasing levels of radioactivity. In fact, those in power have done a fair job of diverting the attention of lesbians from the issue altogether. We have been kept continually on the defensive about our right to live freely and autonomously as women-loving-women. While we struggle with gay rights legislation and lesbian custody rights, they continue to build power plants and play war games with the most dangerous technology that has ever been known. As lesbians and feminists, do we feel a responsibility to the innumerable life forms which are sustained by our creative mother, the earth? Is nuclear power a feminist issue? If it is, then let's begin. A workshop on Lesbians, Nuclear Power, and the Environment is happening at the July MLF meeting. Come and bring ideas, feelings and real womanpower. Interested women are welcome to contact me --

Julia Gies, RFD 2, Chute Road, So. Windham, 04082

892-3610

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