

[Oct 1981]

PORTLAND WOMEN'S COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

50c

DREAMS zzz??!!

Issue #12

a family of women

Nicole d'Entremont

*If I could let you know
two women together is a work
nothing in civilization has made simple.*

Adrienne Rich

I think about two women together. I think about many of us together in dwellings and groupings of our choosing, salvaging a world together. I think about all of our skills and talents fused into a concentrated flame that will burn away the systems that have been created to keep power and wealth entrenched. I think: Nicole, stop your dreaming, be realistic, realizing in the same breath that this visioning is realistic, especially since the earth is being pushed to her extremity. I do believe that women must take the earth into their hands and heal her. Everything that was once only the province of men is now possible to us. We can lead, teach, heal. We can operate heavy construction equipment and tie delicate surgical knots. We are creating art, literature and music. We are, in the latter half of a violent decade, creating bonds among ourselves that point to a new way of relating.

The more cynical side of myself sits back, reflecting...well, and you thought that about the civil rights movement and the peace movement. I remember communal tenement apartments, my friends young and starry eyed strumming guitars late into the night, long hours ladling out soup to homeless men and women, countless demonstrations, men refusing induction orders, the sense of being hunted,

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COMMUNITY SUMMIT IN NOVEMBER

Diane Elze

The Portland Women's Community celebrated its first year anniversary this past July. Our first year has been one of exploration, brainstorming, questioning, growth and dreaming. The year saw the birth and expansion of the newsletter, the creation of task forces and a statement of purpose, the prioritization of short- and long-term goals, and discussions on incorporation and possible models of structure. Many women feel we have reached a time where we should solidify the Community and develop concrete plans for future growth.

The November meeting of the Portland Women's Community will be devoted to making decisions on and developing plans of action for:

1. Incorporation - Do we wish to incorporate? If so, who will be responsible for implementation?

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family cont'd

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phones tapped, cars trailed, arrests. Certainly there was strong bonding around all of that. Yet, through all of that time I followed, like most women of that period, as men led the way, made the decisions, policies and were eventually imprisoned to return several years later ready to marry, settle down, buy some land, the women to have babies, their lives resigned to counter-culture bliss. But, some of us, while the men were away, began the slow process of bonding, a process that for many of us has become central to our lives. I remember a male friend of mine returning from jail, standing on Second Ave., looking baffled, holding two bottles of California Mountain Red in his arms, wanting to be assured his world had remained intact, his women attentive. It hadn't. I remember him blinking looking rather vulnerable and confused as if he had been in a dark room and suddenly came into a lighted space. I remember feeling a brief pang of guilt but mostly feeling strong and happy in the choices that I and the other women were beginning to make. We were no longer content to follow, having experienced in our own society a balance that did not exist with men.

Recently, during one of the evening concerts in Michigan, I found myself experiencing one of those rare and transcendent times of undifferentiated love of women. The night was blue-black, clouds skudded across the sky, stars made singular and brilliant appearances, a full moon rose behind trees---eight thousand women standing, swaying, singing, "every woman who has ever loved a woman stand up and call her name." Eight thousand women evoking in memory the women they love, have loved, a family of women. I felt high, close to the women I was with, everything was possible. I hold onto that feeling, as I hold onto other memories of that time, like talismans that will help keep me strong. At the same time, I feel keenly the forces that could break us apart and feel I must talk about that or this article will remain too easy, too pat. Just like any relationship, our community must go through changes and struggles if it is to become resilient and endure. So, whenever I find myself in danger of sinking into syrup, I re-read Women and Honor; Some Notes on Lying by Adrienne Rich.

....Lying is done with words, and also with silence.
....truth is not one thing, or even a system. It is an increasing complexity.
....(The liar) may say, I didn't want to cause pain. What she really did not want is to have to deal with the other's pain.
....Truthfulness, honor is not something which springs ablaze of itself; it has to be created between people.
....The politics worth having, the relationships worth having demand that we delve still deeper."

I re-read this because Rich refuses to let me off the hook. She unflinchingly asks the hard questions that I think we must ask of one another. I think we will abandon one another if we do not increasingly take more risks in our personal and communal relationships. By risks, I mean, admitting fear, vulnerability, anger, disappointment, love in ever more direct ways. It is not enough that we sit in a circle and invoke the goddess. If we fail one another as a community as chosen family, it will not be because of the white-heterosexual-male power structure. It will be because of our own failure of nerve, our reluctance to say the hard yet loving things to one another.

I see it in my own life. If I believe that I am family with another woman/women, then why do I edit so many of my feelings for fear of either exposing myself to hurt or causing hurt, therefore not wanting to deal with another's pain. Inasmuch as I relate, using the old codes of silence and lying, I am denying the family of women that I desire.

The Portland Women's Community is for me an extended family of women. Within that community there are women I feel particularly bonded to and these are the women with whom I risk the most. I hope that circle will widen. My dream for a Women's Community certainly includes that hope. I hope that we will live to grow old together, to see our faces and bodies change, to be there for one another's beginnings as well as endings and for all the changes in between.

The other day I was thinking I really ought to gather some of my stray thoughts together and write a piece on Jamaica for the Portland Women's Community Newsletter. As I was trying to figure out the best way to share impressions with you, I lived through a day. I moved through my activities and experiences with a sharpened sense of being a woman in Jamaica, thinking one theme or another would shine through on which to focus my prose. But rather than reducing the actual happenings to fit one particular theme or theory, I've decided, rather, to take you through my day in order to give you a glimpse of the women I've grown to admire and respect so profoundly.

In the morning, still carrying my cultural baggage of the American jogging syndrome, I get up at dawn to run around St. May's mountain roads. As the sun rises, the activity begins. I watch women appear out of the hillsides with buckets on their heads, descending and climbing steep rocky paths, with exquisite grace and poise, as they carry the morning water from the public pipe to their homes. Every day I am struck again by the strength and beauty of these women doing the morning water ritual. The dancers are of all shapes, sizes, colors and ages, moving rhythmically to their own inner music.

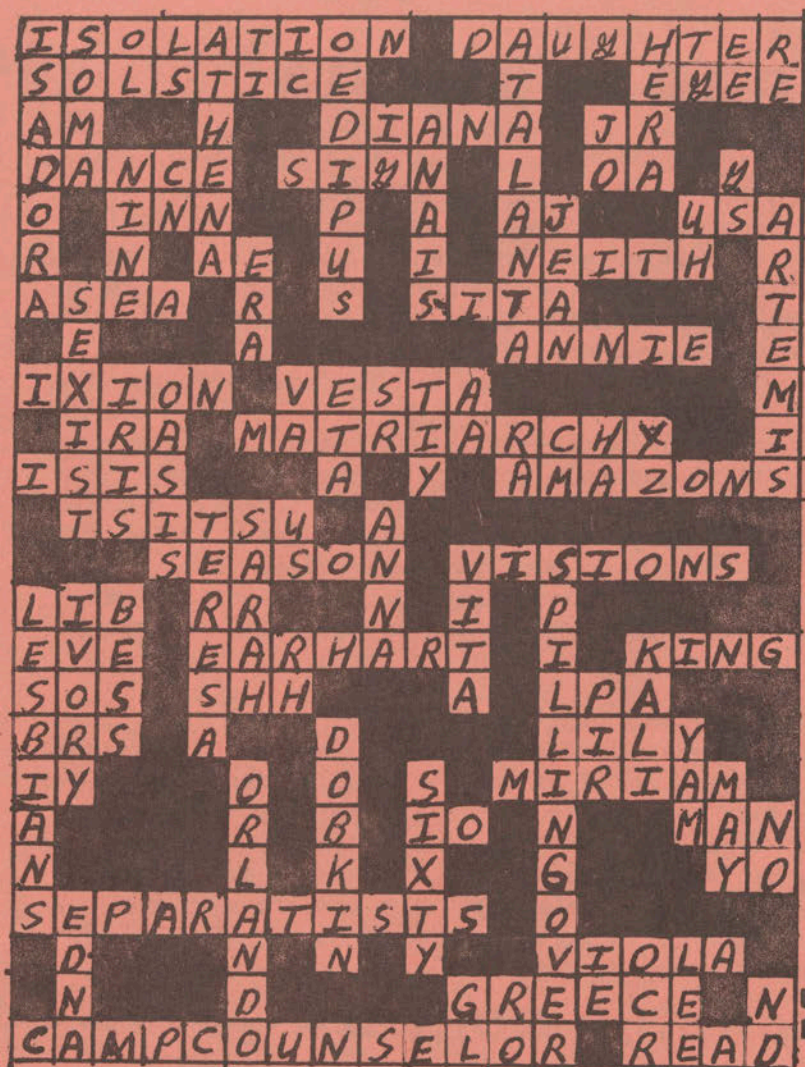
The day goes on and I begin to make my house visits. The first home I visit is where Miss Joyce lives, a seamstress in a three-room house. She and several other women are working in a cluttered room where pieces of fabric, Bibles, scissors cover every inch of space. I've come to talk with her son about his garden, but who knows where the son is? Typically, the women are more tied to the "yard" and the men and boys are out and about. Some may be legitimately working, but most are milling around, hanging out in peer groups. Mothers, daughters, and sisters stay home to clean, cook and care for the children. It is rare in Jamaica to see mixed groups. The men do their thing together and the women, theirs. con't. on pg. 4

slut summit cont'd

2. Structure - What will be the structure of the Community? If we incorporate, we will need, on paper, a Board of Directors. How do we wish to translate that within the Community? What will be our decisionmaking process? (Refer to Newsletter #9 for the spokes-hub model discussed at a Community meeting.)
3. Membership - How does one join the Community? How will we define Community membership? Should we have dues? If so, how much?
4. Naming - The Community needs a name. What will be the process for selecting a name? SEND IN IDEAS FOR A NAME TO THE NEWSLETTER AND WE WILL PRINT THEM IN THE NEXT ISSUE. WE CAN DISCUSS THOSE IDEAS AND ANY NEW ONES AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING. Do the task forces wish to name themselves? If so, is that a task force decision or a Community decision?

The meeting will follow the "maiden-mother-nymph" method of group process. At the August Community meeting, Deborah Cole, Ann Houser, and Nicole d'Entremont were selected to fill these roles, respectively. The "maiden" will be responsible for keeping the agenda; the "mother," for addressing and caring for the emotional tone of the meeting; and the "nymph," for scheduling fun and frolic. The meeting will be followed by a potluck supper and frolicking.

The meeting will be held on November 15 at 3 P.M. at the Williston-West Church, 32 Thomas Street, Portland. Hope to see you all there! This meeting will be one of the most important in our herstory.



Across

17. Ann Meyers
21. Jeannette Rankin
29. Aletta Jacobs
33. Amelia Earhart

Down

7. Irene Castle
12. Terry Garthwaite
19. Indira Gandhi
24. Carrie Nation
27. Gertrude Stein
45. Sally Ride
47. Ambitious Amazons
51. Colleen McMullough
52. Harriet S. Adams
70. Radcliffe Hall
92. Ida Stover Eisenhower
99. Nicole d'Entremont

P.S. Crossword puzzles take time. So, if you wish to see more, let me know. I do enjoy doing them and learn a lot of our herstory in the process. As long as womyn in the Community wish to see them, you'll have them.

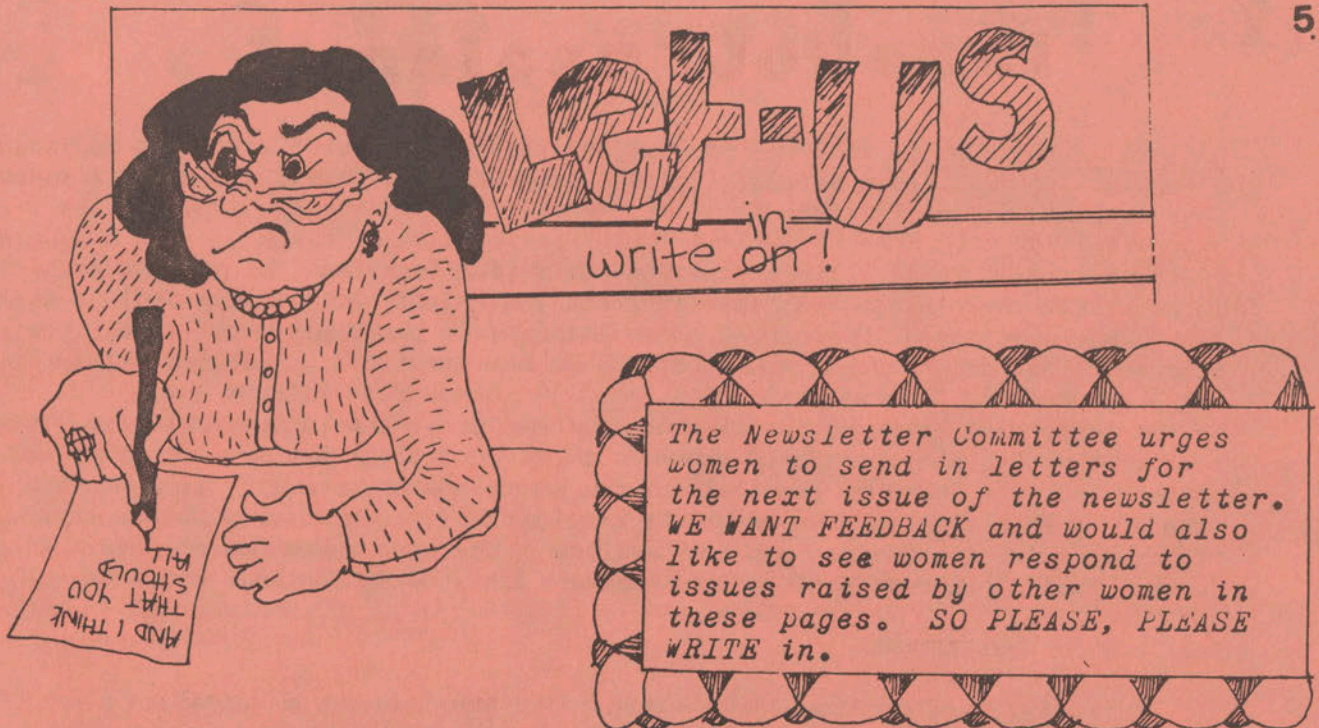
XXX Bunny

journal cont'd

I leave Miss Joyce and head back into "the bush" to a settlement called Hopewell, where I have never ventured before, to see the homes of two male friends, Jack and Doggie. Though I have seen these men often in the two months that I've lived in Highgate, their girlfriends (marriage is the exception, rather than the rule, in Jamaica) have never been with them. I soon learn why. These women are at home with pickney (children) to care for, and cleaning and cooking to do. Their lives revolve around their homes. Jack and Doggie are out and about daily (let me emphasize here, in case it is misunderstood, that these men do not have steady jobs out of the home), even coming to parties or visiting without the slightest notion of bringing their mates with them.

I leave Hopewell to go check the garden of a woman, Miss Catherine, who I admire for her diligence and creativity with vegetable cultivation. Every time I've gone to see her, she's been busy bringing sticks from the bush on her head to stake the tomatoes, weeding and breaking the clumps of rough clay earth with her machete, preparing and digging new beds. This day I find her out in the road instead of in the garden. Immediately I know something is awry. Her story: she is leaving the man she has been living with. They've quarreled too much, he's drunk too often, he treats her badly. But she is now without a home and without compensation for the four months of full-time labor which she has put into the garden. We work it out that at minimum wage of \$15 a week (that is Jamaica for you!) she has \$240 due

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LETTER TO THE EDITORS:

On Thursday, August 6, I walked into the Open Book and Arts Forum looking for information on women's services in the Greater Portland area. The woman behind the desk handed me your newsletter. I glanced at the title, Portland Women's Community Newsletter, and thought it might help me out some, since I am a woman and a member of this community.

However, within moments after beginning to read on (when I got home), I realized I had been duped by false advertising (i.e., title of newsletter). I felt outraged initially by at least six items in the newsletter (enclosed, circled in red).

It is especially ironic that you should publish an angry comment about Mother Earth News' name while slandering the beautiful and multi-faceted nature of women in the title of your own publication.

As an assertive, independent professional woman of this community, your newsletter offends me, and misrepresents and excludes those of us who do not label ourselves as feminist or Lesbian. The newsletter has a distinct Lesbian and anti-male flavor which is not revealed in the title.

All thoughts are very powerful. They become manifest in the earth. So what we think effects not only us, but also every living thing connected in the precious Web of Life in this planet Earth.

It would seem that if you really wanted to have a positive effect on the community of Portland, your thoughts, reflected in your writings, would be truly inspirational, uplifting, and soul touching to all women and to men too. Your newsletter would be based in love.

Instead, what I found in your newsletter, except for a few items, appears to be negative outpourings of immature, shallow, self-seeking lives where unconditional love is yet to be experienced because fear of not being loved blocks the way.

In summation of these feelings and thoughts, I have decided to send you back your newsletter.

May we all be transformed in Light and Peace...

Sincerely,

Judith Murray

Taskforce Replies



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Editors' Note: On the returned copy of the newsletter, Ms. Murray made several comments. We feel these should also be shared with the Community, since the Task Force has had access to them.

In the article on what women in the Community find humorous, Murray circled, "Men, in general," "Weddings," and "When supposedly straight men tenderly imitate gay men." She questioned, "Are these absurdities, faux pas, ourselves?" and "Does this mean that only gay men are tender?" In the crossword puzzle, she wrote "a bad joke" next to "A woman without a (man) is like a fish without a bicycle." On the announcements page, Murray felt the headline, "The Latest on Wastes," was too negative and she questioned whether the comment about New Age Community Enterprises, Inc. was based on personal experience or hearsay. Murray felt we were slandering Mother Earth News in our announcement of their discriminatory advertising policies towards gay men and Lesbians. She also asked how the New England Women's Musical Retreat decided upon the age limit of 10 for male children.

Dear Ms. Murray:

The Newsletter Task Force wishes to respond to the issues you raised in your letter and in your notes on the returned newsletter. We do this in the spirit of desiring further communication, promoting dialogue within the Community, and improving the quality of the newsletter. We appreciate feedback from readers. In fact, we'd like more of it, since it is through feedback and subsequent dialogues that people and organizations change and grow.

We wish to first share that we hope you continue to review future issues and not dismiss the newsletter because of your disappointment with one. In past issues, we have run articles on the Women's Pentagon Action, the Women's Party for Survival, spirituality and ritual, class consciousness, aikido, Cherokee culture, El Salvador, the Mother's Day Parade sponsored by Maine Women for a Nuclear-Free Future, the Feminist College, the Munjoy Hill Coop Housing Project, the founder of the Maine Movement dance studio, and much, much more. We know that every article will not appeal to all women. We hope that each article touches some women and that something in each issue will touch every woman who identifies herself as a feminist or who is interested in exploring feminism.

The Newsletter Task Force affirms that the Portland Women's Community Newsletter strives to be a feminist-oriented newsletter. Our purpose is to publish articles that integrate feminist thought. Our purpose is to spread feminist thought, as well as to give women a forum for writing on issues of interest to feminists and/or to women exploring feminism. We are not, nor are we striving to be, a "women's publication." There are countless publications available containing articles of interest to women that do not integrate a feminist analysis of women's lives (e.g. Redbook, McCalls, Ladies' Home Journal, Newsweek, Time, etc.). That is not our purpose, though we do print articles of that type when they are submitted.

The Newsletter is for both Lesbian and non-Lesbian women. Articles we have printed have been of interest to both Lesbian and non-Lesbian women. The "anti-male" comments you refer to were personal expressions, by individuals, of situations in life they found humorous, and several were made by non-Lesbian women.. We all have married friends who truly believe weddings are hilarious, especially when it comes to their own! Further, our purpose is to validate

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reply cont'd

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women's lives - their feelings, experiences, and ideas. Thus, some of what is printed may have an anti-male and/or anti-male behavior flavor. We will listen to those feelings and try to understand those experiences. Our purpose is not to be anti-male, but to be pro-woman. And, to be pro-woman in this society, to validate any woman's experiences and feelings, is to be "offensive" and "anti-male" because we live in a woman-hating society. We cannot talk about rape without talking about men - because it is men who rape women (and other men). We cannot talk about women's lack of economic and political power without talking about men - because men have it and women don't. And statements addressing such issues will automatically be seen as anti-male by some people, because we are talking about men changing their behavior.

We want the newsletter to be inspirational to women. We are not for all women. We are there for women who want us. We are not concerned whether or not men find us inspirational. We are not for men.

Philosophically, not all of us believe in the concept of "unconditional love," nor do we feel we should. Some of us do. Thus, some articles, poetry and prose will reflect that belief and others will not. Further, to label any woman or group of women "immature," "shallow," and "self-seeking" based on your feelings about one newsletter issue, or one comment by a woman, is, in fact, extremely harsh and unfair.

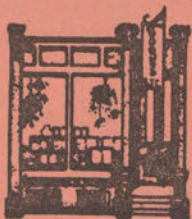
Immediately after the newsletter issue was printed, the Task Force discussed our comment on New Age Community Enterprises, Inc., and agreed it was in very poor taste. We, at that time, planned on running the announcement and an apology in the next full issue. They appear in this newsletter.

Mother Earth News does, in fact, discriminate against Lesbian and gay male advertizing. We have documentation of this. We hold by our statements. We encourage you to write the New England Women's Musical Retreat to express your concern about their policy on male childcare.

We hope your letter and our response provoke further discussion within the Community. We believe the issues raised are important ones. We want feedback. Though we may not agree with all the feedback we receive, the Task Force spends much time internally processing reactions to the newsletter and integrating women's ideas and concerns into our work. Further, we encourage wimmin to respond to our responses, for greater clarity is achieved by all of us when we challenge each other, discuss, challenge and re-discuss.

Sincerely,

Portland Women's Community Newsletter Task Force



**Shillito
BOOKS, ETC.**

38 EXCHANGE ST.
PORTLAND, MAINE
Telephone 774-0626
R. B. Kunkle, Prop.

Dr. James Barry, born Miranda Stuart, successfully disguised her sex all her life and had a long career as a doctor with the British army in the 1800's. Stuart studied at Edinburgh University, already in disguise. She qualified in 1811 and passed the Army examination. A long, successful career culminated in 1858 with her appointment as Inspector General of Hospitals. Barry's death created a sensation because her request to be buried without examination was ignored and her true sex was revealed.

more letters

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Dear Portland Women's Community,

I really enjoyed reading your issue on humor - a job very well done.

Corvallis Wimmings Collective is also very happy to be doing a newsletter exchange with you. Good luck in the future and keep up the good work.

In Sisterhood,

Evee Smith
Corvallis Wimmings Collective

TO THE WOMEN OF PORTLAND:

I'll be at Highland Lake from September 26 through October 18. While there, I'd like to offer my services as a feminist astrologer on a limited basis. These services include:

Natal (birth) Charts: Your life's blueprint; your innate strengths and weaknesses; areas of life that may be most problematic, and how to make them work for you; your karmic path through this lifetime. Date, time and place of birth are necessary. \$25.

Transits: (Natal Chart necessary.) The current and near future trends affecting you; what areas of your life are and will be energized, either positively or negatively, and how you can most productively respond. \$12.

Relationship Analysis: (Natal Charts of both or all individuals necessary.) The underlying reasons for attractions (and repulsions); areas in which personalities mesh and clash, and why; the most likely sources of problems and most constructive ways of dealing with them; what each individual needs from a relationship; what each can best give to and receive from it. \$45 (I know this is a lot, but the process involves constructing at least 3 charts for the relationship.)

Relationship Transits: (Relationship Charts necessary.) The probable course of a relationship's development and its affect on the individuals involved. \$10.

For more information or appointments, call Sherry Redding, 797-4186, or 774-3329.

AND, ANOTHER FROM OUR FRIENDS IN OREGON!

Dear Portland Women's Community,

We the members of the Corvallis Wimmings Collective are trying to inform women of all forms of life about each other. Our newsletter is a small one, but we believe that doing a newsletter exchange with different women's groups throughout the country is a very good start.

Informing women about each other is something that we all enjoy doing. Personally, I feel alot more informed when I know that somebody has taken the time to explain themselves to me. The CWC staff and some other women that we have talked to feel the same need to be informed about other women and/or their organization.

We've decided that for now the best way to do this is by having guest editorials. We would like having you appear as a guest editor for our newsletter so that you can share information that deals with your outlook on the future of women's issues, what your community is doing as far as political involvement and the progress of your community in general.

We will not edit or proof-read unless you want us to. We do ask that you try to keep your editorial to 400 words or less. The CWC staff knows that a person's mood and ability will control how much they will write at all times, so just consider

We will not edit or proof-read unless you want us to. We do ask that you try to keep your editorial to 400 words or less.

Please add an address where our readers can contact you and/or your organization if they choose to do so. Any feedback that we receive concerning your editorial will also be forwarded to you.

In Sisterhood,

Corvallis Wimmings Collective



Journal recont'd

her. Sadly she will probably never see it. And Goddess knows she needs it, as she has no place to live and no work to live on. I feel helpless, but give her all the sisterly support and encouragement I can. She is feisty though, and I have faith she'll pull out of this situation by finding a place of her own, where she can work for herself, without a man draining all of her energy and resources.

From Miss Catherine's I head to a women's group run by the Home Economics branch of the Ministry of Agriculture. With the minimum of supplies, an ever-growing group of women cluster around rickety benches doing string craft, smocking, and embroidery - laughing, gossiping, working diligently and skillfully. This weekly meeting gives them an opportunity, once a week, to leave the cleaning, cooking and washing, in order to come together formally to learn new skills and socialize. Women are forever gathering informally, as well - at market, community water pipes, or merely by living in large extended families sharing childcare. Again, I am struck by the productivity of this female group which is circumscribed by listless male youths hanging around, watching and making comments, but doing little worthwhile.

I leave seeds with a couple of the women there, then set on my way to my final visit of the day. Along the road, I encounter a man who asks me, out of the blue, if I am a Christian (not an uncommon question here). I've learned to evade the issue, usually without compromising myself too much. In this case, I can easily see that whatever I respond will make little difference, as he merely wants to tell me that he thinks it very inappropriate for me to be wearing pants. "Men should wear pants and women dresses, and why was I trying to be like a man, and the Bible says, blah, blah, blah..." My anger wells up and subsides as I realize he has no intention of listening to me anyway. I move on, disturbed by the encounter, only to run into a cocky youth I see now and again who always has some rude remark about coming to find me later. I've no idea where he ever got the impression that his company was something I could tolerate, much less welcome, when in reality I just feel like belting him or laughing at him each time our paths cross. (Being part of the Peace Corps - hmmm - I generally choose the latter option.)

Sephlin is the last woman I am to see this day and my favorite. She has become my closest Jamaican friend and inevitably impresses me with new facets of her character each time I see her. She is a 30 year-old large woman, mother of five children - the youngest being six. I've come to know her since she is the live-in helper at a wealthy woman's house where a friend of mine boards. As an excuse to spend time with Sephlin, I've been helping her with a garden at this woman's house. (She gardens in her spare time after cooking, cleaning, washing and waiting on Miss Ivy!) Sephlin left the father of her children some five years back, finally getting wise to his worthlessness. She has no use for men now, though she wastes no energy on bitterness. Every week Sephlin has to leave her children with her elder sister while she is at work. Each Saturday evening she makes the two or three hour trip home to do the week's washing, cleaning and cooking in a 24-hour time span before returning to work again. On my arrival this day, she has sad news to tell. Her sister has left the children in order to go to Kingston to a doctor and to live with another sister. Sephlin now has no one to leave her children with and no other sure possibilities of work closer to home. She had contemplated going home each evening after work, but this would be tiring, time-consuming and eat up \$5 of the \$15 she earns per week. Sephlin puts her children above all else and I can easily see that this new predicament weighs heavily on her. Again I feel helpless, providing only a supportive, encouraging sisterly ear and energy.

michigan womyn's music

10

by Bunny Mills



This year I made my second annual trip to the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival and I would like to express my continued appreciation of this womyn's event.

Early Tuesday morning, eight of us left Portland in the infamous Green Van and headed for Hesperia, Michigan. We had two days on the road and one night camping on Lake Erie to get to know each other. Several of us had been before and we shared those experiences, and many other things - lives, politics, beliefs, fun and games, reading aloud, taped music and the radio.

When we arrived Wednesday late afternoon and started to unload, we met other womyn from Maine and a group from California that had been living in Maine and had gone with us last year.

Soon we were shuttled into the camping area and set up camp. Some of us rested, others explored and others went to do our workshift.

Thursday morning brought the granola and yogurt breakfast (and much more), the beginning of workshops, games, and, most of all, music. Everyone had their favorite pastime - going to workshops, playing games such as rugby, walking around naked, or watching all the other 9,999 womyn (well, most of them) walking around naked, wandering through the land of womyn and brightly colored tents and forgetting that there is an outside world, or just sitting and listening to the constant music.

Workshops were held on almost anything you could imagine - politics (right, left and in the middle), dancing, relationships, music. I went to very few workshops because I was there to play and listen to

music, but I did go to the most widely attended workshop of the entire festival - on, would you believe, S&M. The only criteria was an open mind. Well, mine was a little ajar, anyway. Let me tell you, though - after listening to those womyn, all I can say is if S&M takes place between two consenting adults, then I have no right to question their fun and games. I don't want the heterosexual world to come down on my lifestyle. Why should I do the same to others? No more lectures.

Anyway, the entire four days was a smashing success, in my opinion, and I did not want to get back into the van and head home.

On the way back, we spent the night, unannounced, at the parents of one of the womyn we went with. ("Hi Mom and Dad. Just thought I'd drop in. By the way, I have a few (8) friends with me.") They were very hospitable to all of us - fresh cookies and hot showers.

Well, by the time we were almost home and still not ready to pick up our lives, we stopped at Iris in Portsmouth for sandwiches before the final stretch.

===== journal tri-cont'd =====

Women's problems and experiences take somewhat of a different form here in Jamaica, but the parallels are obvious to the U.S. in terms of ties to the home, domestic responsibilities, and getting trampled on by men. Opportunities are fewer for women here, and restrictions are overwhelming. A poor girl learns early in life that the easiest way to gain identity and acceptance is through motherhood, thereby quickly obliterating other possibilities. But as I grow to know Jamaican women better and learn more of their lives, I find I've much sympathy and empathy for their existences and our communication and exchange becomes increasingly valuable and precious to me.

Sandra Butler

To have by nature a point of view, to stick to it,
to follow it where it leads, is the rarest of possessions, and
lends value even to trifles.

Virginia Woolf

Fragments

Last night I awoke every two hours
ready to go but haunted, nabbed by unattached
dreams, fragments of psyche that crave power
and connection by toss and turn
alone.

For the time it takes me
to write this, you are a pebble
cradled in my hand.
I strike you with my eraser
and you release oil,
dark and rich.

You are a lover and I cannot
hold you thus. You will not be controlled
or contained. You will not be silenced
and I need you strong.

I want to melt into the wall.
I want to spread my legs
and become the cause
of your grief.
I want to be the fog.

Carol Lynn Barash

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vit your lli

vit your little
monogamies
unt your lonk Maine
Winter

you can eat
voyeur Soup
for me.

NATALIA



My Dream Was

You and I rolling and rolling
nude down a Lesbian olive-treed hill.
We rolled to Sappho's pebbled beach,
the two of us alone, silent and
discursive. We walked to the water
abundant in our firm pleasure,
the lapping, wandering moment of reunion
after decades and journeys
apart. We rolled down a long, almost
endless hill to a pebbled beach,
bluer than green, silver-tinged aqua
waiting for us I know. We ran
to this water, splashed and bathed
in Turkey's shadow, prayed and embraced
like new.

Carol Lynn Barash

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A Bargain

I don't know why I wanted it---
dingy wooden box
auctioned away
from some old woman's kitchen.
Recipes yellowed, grease stained
annotated in a faded hand
"nice for church supper,"
"reduce flour 1/2 cup."
I took out one card
especially worn,
imagined the woman
checking the list,
heating the oven,
flouring the pans.
On what day did she stand
her batter half mixed
to stare out the window?
And whose voice interrupted
as she started to scrawl
on the back of Pumpkin Souffle
"scarlet of sumac
bloodies the hills,
maples weep yellow tears"?

Sherry Redding
© October, 1976

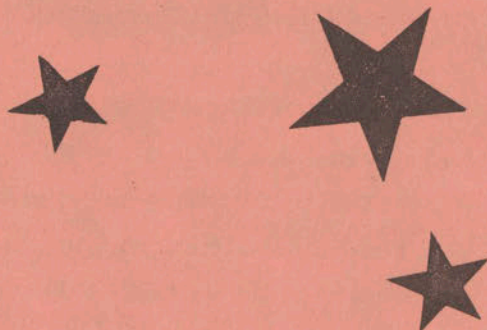
Breaking Out (for Deena Metzger)

I awoke prying out of a cage
the cage that has detained me
the cage where mother and I
hate ourselves, hate one another
free.

It took no superhuman strength
to break the bars. I knew I wanted out.
Night after night I scraped away metal,
loosened it with salt of rotting dreams.
I scratched at the cage
instead of my flesh, pointed ulcers
and headaches, small silver arrows
through smaller cracks. I assaulted fear
before it could enter
my skin.

Fear outside my body
is free from the past.
Fear inside my body
knows the future
and walks out
seeking.

Carol Lynn Barash
© September 1981

**ONE MORE LETTER**

Beep, Beep. Do you read me? This is planet Urania calling the Land of Port. Beep. Beep. I understand there's been a takeover of the Land of Port Women's Letter of News by a minute group of conscientious workers. It appears that this communique is correct since each issue dispatched to Urania, North of the Land of Port, contains the same routine etchings and straight lines as have existed for the past year. Hope did extend itself this far in the last large issue when the stars were seen floating along the sidelines and we were given some useful information about the location of the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn on a map. What a

relief from the high school cheerleader jumping to the tune of "I like women." But, I must maintain hope that this recent turn in the reporting of the news will continue to arrive here so as to provide inspiring connection between the two planets. Beep. Beep. Do you read me?

Electra

P.S. Urania is willing to do layout or even take care of an entire issue in the future. A communique must be sent to the North country early enough to plan ahead.



RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS!!!!!! Women, it is now October. A year has gone by since our first issue was sent out to some of you. We, the newsletter staff, are celebrating the creation of the Women's Community voice. So, in order for us to continue producing this newsletter, not only do we need input from you (i.e., articles, graphics, poetry, announcements), but we need the green stuff too. Printing and mailing costs never disappear, so, therefore, PLEASE DO RENEW. The current cost is \$5 for 12 issues - more if you can, less if you can't). In the future, a green dot will appear on the upper right-hand corner of your label to remind you that you have one more issue to go before your subscription runs out. For this issue, however, the green dot means you need to renew right away, for your 12 months is up. Whatever the case, please notify us as to whether you wish to resubscribe. If you don't, we would appreciate feedback as to why not. Thanks very much.

Further, the Newsletter Task Force will soon be discussing a possible raise in our subscription fee. The current price does not cover the cost of mailing and printing. We will update you in future newsletter issues on what we and the Community decide.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMON LIVES/LESBIAN LIVES is a new Lesbian feminist quarterly from Iowa City, Iowa, featuring history, oral history, biography, autobiography, correspondence, journal entries, reminiscences, photographs, drawings, fiction, science fiction, theory, and analysis.

The journal is done by a collective of Lesbians in Iowa City supported by a network of women throughout the country. If you are interested in becoming a CL/LL networker or would like to submit some material for publication, contact them at Box 1553, Iowa City, IA 52244.

SUMITRA IN CONCERT - Molly Scott, Sarah Benson, and Janet Fuchs, State Street Church, Portland, October 9, 8 P.M. \$4 admission; \$3.50 for senior citizens and students.

FUNDRAISER FOR BIRDSONG FARM - Workshop. "Music and Souls Journey: Centering Home," Birdsong Farm, North Berwick, October 9 at 12 noon. The workshop will explore the power and resonance of music for healing, creative unfolding and spiritual attunement. For registration and information, call 207-676-4038 on weekends, or 617-491-7372 weekdays.

NATURAL FOODS COOKING WORKSHOP, Birdsong Farm, October 16-18. For information, call same number in above announcement.

NATIONAL LESBIAN SLIDE SHOW AND COMPETITION. HERISON, a women's social club in Binghamton, New York, is sponsoring the competition on Saturday, October 17. The show will give lesbian photographers a chance to share their images of our lives. There will be \$100 cash prizes in each of three categories - Lesbian Community, Who We Are, and Our Environment. For more information, call Bunny Mills at 774-3329, or write The National Lesbian Slide Show and Competition, c/o HERISON, P.O. Box 1082, Binghamton, New York, 13902. Submissions must arrive by mail no later than October 15, or hand delivered by 1 P.M. on October 17.

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Sunday, November 8, MEG CHRISTIAN will be in concert with DIANE LINDSAY at the Lebanon Opera House, Lebanon, N.H. To benefit Women's Information Service (WISE) For more information, call 603-448-5922.

The FOURTH ANNUAL ATLANTIC COMMUNITY CONFERENCE OF LESBIANS AND GAY MEN will take place October 16-18 in Fredericton, New Brunswick. The theme is "Living Gay," and guest speaker is Don Clark, psychologist and author of Loving Someone Gay and Living Gay. A listing of workshops is available when you pre-register for \$20. The schedule of activities includes entertainment by gay musicians, a dance, and an art exhibit and sale. Childcare and housing will be provided, as well as arrangements for the physically-challenged, hearing-impaired and sight-impaired. If you need any of the above, you must pre-register. Contact: Atlantic Community Conference, Fredericton Lesbians and Gays, Box 1556, Station A, Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 5G2.

WOMAN DENTIST PRACTICING IN PORTLAND-----
After avoiding the dentist's office year after year, I finally gathered my guilt and called Dr. Deborah Waugh. My nerves were soothed as I entered her office and received a warm hello and smile. As I lay under the bright lights in the dentist chair, my shoulders relaxed having a gentle, healing dentist examine my teeth. Her fees are reasonable. Dr. Waugh's office is at 9 Sanborn St., Portland, 797-3130.

Barbara Cleveland

NEW AGE COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES, INC. has opened a second-hand store on Oak St. in Portland, "The End of the Rainbow." NACE hopes to create a successful small business and channel the profits into the community, through donations to community groups and sponsoring worthwhile projects. So, visit the store on Oak Street!!!!

FOR RENT!!FOR RENT!! Rustic cabin in the woods of Orland, Maine. Elec./hand pump/wood heat on 4 acres of land. River frontage. \$80/month. Call Barbara Cleveland, 549-5751, or write Box 112, North Whitefield, Me. 04353.

THE NEWSLETTER TASK FORCE APOLOGIZES TO NEW AGE COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES, INC. FOR OUR TASTELESS COMMENT APPEARING IN OUR HUMOR ISSUE. IT WAS A VERY BAD JOKE. OUR HEARTFELT APOLOGIES.

The National Organization of Lesbians and Gays is a newly-formed, national grassroots organization created in April at a national conference in Los Angeles. NOLAG plans to initiate and coordinate political actions such as national marches, lobbying days, and boycotts, and to share information among activists about local community projects. NOLAG is committed to participation and representation of all segments of the gay and Lesbian community. When a representative or office is chosen, there must be as many women as men, at least one-quarter must be people of color, and one-quarter must be from rural areas. NOLAG representation is organized as follows: The U.S. is divided into 11 regions. New England constitutes one region. Each region has 4 reps to the national steering committee, plus there are eight reps elected at-large, for a total of 52. Currently, the New England delegation includes 2 women and 2 men, 1 of whom is from Maine. A fifth New Englander, also from Maine, is a delegate-at-large.

A Maine chapter is forming which plans to act as a statewide coordinating body to facilitate communication between existing gay and Lesbian groups in the state and to encourage the creation of new ones. By joining NOLAG/Maine, you become a member of the national organization as well. Membership fees are based upon income. Part of the fee goes to the national office and part stays in Maine. Suggested fees are \$10, \$15, \$20 or more...Pay what you can afford. For more information, contact: NOLAG/Maine, P.O. Box 1117, Caribou, Maine, 04736.

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

Workshops and March-
Nov. 7, 1981, at the University of Maine in Portland. We will need volunteers for planning and for the day of the event. For more information or to volunteer, call 780-4086, or write to T.B.T.N., P.O. Box 8313, Portland, ME., 04104

Pass the word!



October

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		<p>• TAKE BACK THE NIGHT MARCH NOVEMBER 7th call 772-6953 to help!</p>				
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>• WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY ch. church 8:30-11 pm</p>	<p>• SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY 11 pm</p>	<p>• JEWEL SELF-RELIANCE WORKSHOPS 11-9 pm</p>	<p>• GUN-ECOLOGY GROUP READING 11 pm</p>			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<p>• NEEDLE LETTER DEADLINE! • SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY 11 pm</p>	<p>• JEWEL WORKSHOPS: JEWEL COUNCIL'S 11-9 pm call 772-1906</p>	<p>• GUN-ECOLOGY GROUP READING 11 pm</p>				
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<p>• SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY 11 pm</p>	<p>• JEWEL SELF-RELIANCE WORKSHOPS 11-9 pm</p>	<p>• GUN-ECOLOGY GROUP READING 11 pm</p>				<p>• CHRIS WILLARDSON CONCERT at barboia</p>
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<p>• SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY 11 pm</p>	<p>• JEWEL WORKSHOPS: JEWEL COUNCIL'S 11-9 pm</p>	<p>• GUN-ECOLOGY GROUP READING 11 pm</p>		<p>• WOMEN'S HOUSE COFFEE HUNTER call 772-1906</p>	<p>• Call 772-3329 with November calendar events</p>	

We love doing this newsletter, but WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!!! The newsletter task force needs more womynenergy in the form of articles, graphics, letters, calendar events, etc. etc. etc. etc.....anything that tickles your fancy. The theme for the next issue is "Sexuality/Sexual Fantasies/Sex." If you can, type your article with a maximum of a 7" width and a dark typewriter ribbon. Deadline for the next issue is October 13. Submit your writings to: Nicole d'Entremont, 381 Deering Avenue, Portland, Maine 04103. Subscriptions are \$8 (more if you can, less if you can't). Sorry about the increase, but we had no choice.

Name _____

Address _____

Amount Enclosed _____ (Checks can be made out to "The Community")

-----PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS-----

