

During the last six months, attendance at MLF meetings and general enthusiasm for MLF or related activities have slowly declined to the point where we need to determine whether we want to keep the organization going. That means determining whether lesbians in Maine want to maintain a group or space or organization to meet regularly, or whether a statewide, monthly newsletter is needed/wanted, or whether political groups within MLF wish to remain, or whether there is no longer a need for the organization. So... some Portland area lesbians have agreed to do the leg-work for an MLF-sponsored dance/get-together/women's event/end-of-the-year celebration/reassessment time -- which, obviously, will be held in Portland. The intention of those who supported the idea of this dance is to hopefully provide a very comfortable atmosphere, for women around the state to have a good time, to see old friends or make new ones, and to get a general sense of the women present whether they'd like to see MLF continue (and if so, how). There will be organizational materials -- about MLF, ideas for things an organization might do, questionnaire asking for suggestions, etc. -- but no one needs to deal with any of that stuff unless she wants to (i.e. no coercion).

Here's the scoop...the MLF women's dance will be Saturday night, December 30, 1978, at the New Age Community Center at 8:30. (The Center, an alternative-type/community oriented group, seemed very interested and enthusiastic about renting (for a very small fee) us their place for this event --seems they're interested in beginning a supportive atmosphere with us). The Community Center may be in a new space by then, and we can't say for sure when they will move, but we've been guaranteed space for the dance wherever they are located. Right now, the Center is at 97 DANFORTH ST., PORTLAND --go to that location unless you hear otherwise. If they've already moved, we'll have directions from Danforth to the new site. This will be a Bring-Your-Own-Bottle party and we're asking everyone to bring some small munchie or finger-food to share with everyone else. There will definitely be child care for those kids who accompany their moms, and we have excellent housing arrangements being made for those who come from afar (excellent because you'll be staying with us in the area!). To help us all out, we'd like those who will need childcare and/or housing to tell us before coming, so we know what to expect.

So... mark your calendars for DECEMBER 30--MLFDANCE--8:30--New AGE COMMUNITY CENTER--PORTLAND. We're going to ask 50¢ per person (probably) to help cover all the expenses involved (rent, childcare, coffee, etc.). No one will be turned away for inability to pay.

Please mail to : P.O. Box 2499, So. Portland, ME 04106

NAME

ADDRESS

I'll be there Dec. 30 and will need housing: _____ adults, _____ children.

I'll need childcare: _____ children, _____ ages

I won't be there but wish to put time/energy into revitalizing MLF

I won't be there and I see no more need for MLF

The Maine Women's Lobby was created last summer to provide a positive women's issues-oriented presence in the next session of the Maine legislature. The goal of the organization is to draw membership support from all areas of the state to hire a lobbyist for designated issues and bills (to support bills having a positive impact on women and work; to defeat negative bills). Currently, the membership is just under one thousand women and men, and the Lobby is continuing its membership drive to reach many more people; obviously, there are more than one thousand people in the state who support women's issues!!

The membership of the Lobby elected a 15-member Board in October. Board members: Kim Matthews, Portland; Becky Sarna, Hallowell; Lois Reckitt, So. Portland; Wandy Widman, Whitefield; Trish Riley, Augusta; Jane Riley, Hallowell; Kate McQueen, So. Portland; Janet Stratton, Bangor; Doris Baker, Whitefield; Laurie Balmuth, Lewiston; Pat Ryan, So. Gardiner; Barbara Alexander, Readfield; JoAnne Dauphinee, Bangor; Barbara Peppy, Bangor; Royena Heath, Hallowell.

By December, this Board will begin considering and determining those issues and bills to be supported, opposed, and lobbied by the lobbyist. It is anticipated that the person hired for the job will begin the first of January and will continue to the end of the legislative session.

The Women's Lobby is also holding a raffle, as a fund-raiser, and the board members would be eager to sell you a \$1 ticket. The prize is being sought all over the country -- \$300 worth of gasoline to the lucky winner! The Women's Lobby is also interested in hearing from new members regarding the issues of importance to those members; contact for information and membership forms can be made through any board member or from: Maine Women's Lobby, PO Box 15, Hallowell 04347.

US Commission on Civil Rights * * * The Maine Advisory Committee to the US Civil Rights Commission held 2 days of hearings in Augusta in mid-November to receive testimony from various groups and individuals regarding the status of civil rights in Maine. Kate McQueen was able to speak before the commission to represent MLF and to speak about the civil rights of lesbians and gay men in the state. She (I) spoke briefly about the history of MLF and its purpose and then discussed the civil rights of gay people in Maine, or rather, the lack of civil rights in Maine. She (I) recommended that the Commission study the (lack of) civil rights of gays and recommend creation or enforcement of laws to protect lesbians and gay men from discrimination. I (she) also spoke about the issue of lesbian mother custody cases and the need for protective legislation. Several Advisory Committee members had never been confronted with or informed of these issues before now and were somewhat enlightened. The report from the Maine Advisory Committee will be released sometime in the beginning of the new year.

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Mary M. would like to have an MLF meeting/get together at her house on December 16th. Come anywhere from 9-10am on. Children are welcome. Anyone willing to do childcare (pays \$15) or who knows of someone willing, call Mary- 968-2117 - mornings, so arrangements can be made ahead of time. If possible, please don't bring pets.

Directions to Mary's from Augusta :

take 202,9 & Rt. 3 to Flo's (appx. 10 miles); go left onto 202 to China; go to the tip of China Lake (appx. 7-10 miles); at The Landing - the ice cream place - past the red ranch house take a right hand turn (if you come to a blinking light and Rt. 137 you've gone too far); go up the hill, stay on the main (curvy) road appx 2 miles. Mary's house is at the tip of a hill - a white house with elm trees with a trailer across from the house, you've gone too far if you come to a white house and 2 trailers.

Directions from Waterville off I 95 :

get off either Waterville exits and follow signs to Winslow; get on to 137 east towards China, appx. 10 miles; go past the blinking light down the hill to China lake to where The Landing is and make a left turn by the red ranch house; go up the hill, stay on the main (curvy) road appx 2 miles. Mary's house is at the tip of a hill - and see directions above.

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sometimes when life's way's just ain't fair
we look around to see if anyone's there,
who really care's
caring is a natural state
generation of same often can be lame.
amidst our internal conflict we
flounder at heeding other's pain.
although things aren't the way
we wish they could be
thankfully they ain't worst.
no matter how we blunder,
can always converse.
Yes, unfortunately life seldom is fair
but it is a joy to share.
words and actions don't always properly convey
but care anyway.

Jan Lightfoot

(Jan, I'm sorry about the typos. Ruth.)

*

In speaking of lies, we come inevitably to the subject of truth. There is nothing simple or easy about this idea. There is no "the truth," "a truth" -- truth is not one thing, or even a system. It is an increasing complexity. The pattern of the carpet is a surface. When we look closely, or when we become weavers, we learn of the tiny multiple threads unseen in the overall pattern, the knots on the underside of the carpet.

from Women and Honor: Some Notes on Lying, Adrienne Rich. Motherfoot Publications, 1978.