

NETWORK NEWS

The Newsletter of the Maine Rural Network



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Rural Roots

Name withheld by request

Network News: Could [you] tell me a little bit about yourself, where you were born, where you're from...

Interviewee: ...originally from Pennsylvania. I moved to Maine approximately 30 years ago, fell in love with Maine, decided to stay. I kind of moved away from my family, I came from a very large family, and I'm kind of the black sheep of the family. (laughs) I have eight brothers and a sister ... so it was kind of good to get away. I came to Maine and decided that.. this has the best of all worlds and decided to stay.

NN: ...have you lived where you live now for the whole time?

I: ..[W]hen I first came into Maine... I lived in Freeport for a short while, that's how I got to Maine, I came in by Massachusetts. I came up for a company, they'd asked me to come up and look over a couple.. I used to work in the shoe industry and when the shoe industry was very strong in Maine... that's what brought me up here originally. I worked in the shoe factories... in Lawrence, Mass. and then I was asked to come up to Freeport... by a New York firm that I worked for - to kind of oversee the facility, you know putting soles on and with - adhesives. I consulted on how to set things up...and make it work. I worked there for quite some time and then... I had an offer given to me down in Portland, so I left there and I went into Portland. ...I moved to Portland because I had met my first lover from up in this area... and he was more attracted to Portland so I went to the Portland area.

I had some really bad times after that... it's really lean times 'cause I

quit the job and I had some, you know, that he was in and out of my life. He was just a few years younger than me, he was in and out of my life like a boot, I mean he just... if it rained today and he decided he didn't want to do anything he was gone. So, I had some lean times, and I went through some rough times by myself, I went through...

NN: When was that?

I: Oh goodness that goes way back, you're looking probably back 28 years or so back, 'cause when I first come up into the New England area I was kind of like, by myself. You know, I did the getting away from the family and I was actually married way back when. You know I came from a staunch, strict family, redneck town, rednecked area, ...you see the basics of life were you were born, you went to school, you grew up...you got a job, you went to work, got a family and that's where you were in life and then you died. (laughter)

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**I:** ...the only problem I had was years and years ago and it was only something I overheard and one of the neighbors, one of their sons, was with some of their high school friends they were like there and I was walking out our driveway and there was a large fence there, they couldn't see me and I think they were smoking cigarettes or something, or something (laughs). But, you know, I heard somebody say, "Won't your neighbors tell?", and he said "No, they're fags, they won't say anything to anybody." That caught me there, I wanted to jump over the fence and say "Want to make a bet?"

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I: I was one of the first people that TAP [The AIDS Project] called, "Do you find rentals for [people with] HIV?" And I was probably I think one of the first...management companies to...actually rent to HIV people. The owners of the company, like, left it up to me. 'Cause I went to the TAP training courses, that they had, well actually, I went to the Merry Meeting training that they gave, the courses that they gave, so, I'd at least be informed of what I'm doing and how to go about it. And we were very - I mean, we were, I think, one of the first and it's nice because I met a lot of really wonderful people. ...I'm glad I did it. Basically, I work with a lot of agencies through a lot of different things for housing and such.

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...there was only one person that ever yelled "fag" at me and that was just up the road and that was a long, long time ago. I don't know what his problem was but hey, that's ok, he's no longer there (laughter). He moved out soon after, so, it's fine, so, naw, other than that... I would rather live in the rural area then in the town. I really would. I just kinda like - town's wonderful to visit, I love walking the Old Port, [my lover] and I don't do the bars a lot. We go out once in a great, great while.... We go out to eat dinner, we like dinners and the hot tub once in a while, but other than that, we don't do the bars. And it's like, you know I think if we're happy enough with ourselves, we don't need that.

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#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Maine Rural Network is to promote visibility and security for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people living in rural Maine, and to work for social, educational and economic justice for all Maine people. The Maine Rural Network seeks to accomplish this by empowering individuals living in rural Maine to organize, establish and support autonomous groups locally and to create a network statewide.

#### **Publication Information**

*Network News* is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. If you would like to contribute a calendar item or short article please send it to us by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the quarterly publication date.

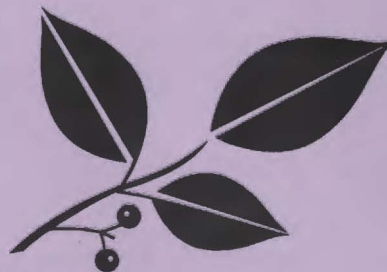
Maine Rural Network  
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## **Conference - From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom**

The Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts, cordially invites you to attend *From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom* to be held April 5 - April 7, 2002. This conference will explore the ways in which reproductive rights are linked to other social justice issues. Speakers from around the world will discuss racial equality, economic justice, queer rights, environmental justice, freedom from violence, welfare reform, access to healthcare and childcare, globalization, and support for immigrants. It is intended as a forum for learning and networking for all ages and experiences.

The conference is free, open to the public, and wheelchair accessible. Housing, childcare, and sign language interpretation are available with advanced registration. For more information and registration forms, please visit our website at <http://hamp.hampshire.edu/~clpp> or contact us at 413-559-5416 or [clpp@hampshire.edu](mailto:clpp@hampshire.edu)

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## **Have You Moved?**

If you receive your newsletter by mail, please notify us of any address change or seasonal mail stoppage. We are charged for every newsletter that is returned. Thanks!

# Community Bulletin Board

**Sat. 4/20** – Hope Festival 10-4. The fair will include approximately 60 different non-profit groups that work for peace, environmental and social justice.

**Fri. 5/10** — Holly Near with John Bucchino, accompanist. 8 pm Troy Howard Middle School, Belfast. Opening group: Pixie Lauer, Diana Hansen, Anne Cook. Tickets available at the Green Store, Wild Rufus, and all Grasshopper Shops, or call 338-6935. Tix will be sold at the door. Before 4/22 - \$18, after 4/23 - \$20. A portion of the proceeds to benefit New Hope for Women.

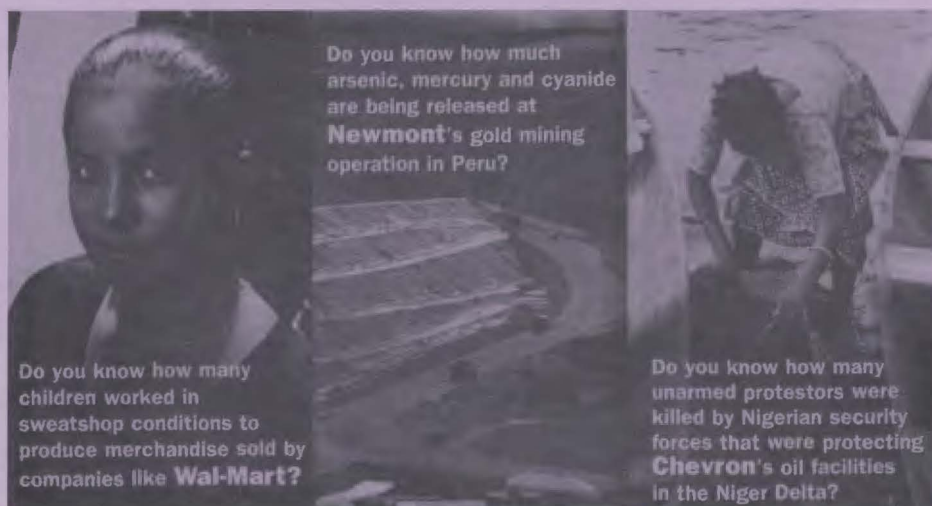
**Fri. 5/3** -The 3rd annual Living Wage Rally, organized by the Maine Rural Workers Coalition, 12-2 pm in the Hall of Flags at the State House, Augusta. Please join us to show your support for a living wage for all Maine workers and their families. For more information, to volunteer your time, to make a donation or to arrange transportation, please call Dena at the Maine Rural Workers Coalition at (207) 783-4208. Thank you for your support.

**Sat. 5/4** - "Bridges of Respect" conference will be on at John Baptist High School in Bangor, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Keynote speaker

Dale McCormick. Though this will be a statewide event we will put particular emphasis on attracting folks from the northern and eastern parts of the state, where, in many places, the climate for GLBTQ kids is particularly harsh.

**Sat. 6/15** - Portland Pride parade.

**Sat. 6/22** - Third Annual Pride Parade at 1 pm. The parade will start at City Hall, 655 Main St., Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. For more information on the parade and other Moncton Pride Week events visit our website at [www.monctongay.com](http://www.monctongay.com).



(left) Wendy Diaz, a Honduran textile worker who made Kathy Lee Gifford clothes for Wal-Mart at age 13, she worked 13 hour days, 7 days a week for \$2.61 per week. (center) Newmont Mining Corporation, Yanacocha mine in Peru. (right) A Nigerian woman fishing in oil sludge in the Niger Delta River near Chevron's facilities. (from The Right to Know Campaign, 1025 Vermont Ave. NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005.)

I want Maine Rural Network to bring that message to all parts of Maine.

☐ I'd like to join a local social justice group. Please contact me.

Individual  
☐ \$20

Household  
☐ \$35

Activist  
☐ \$50

Organizer  
☐ \$100

Visionary  
☐ \$250

☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

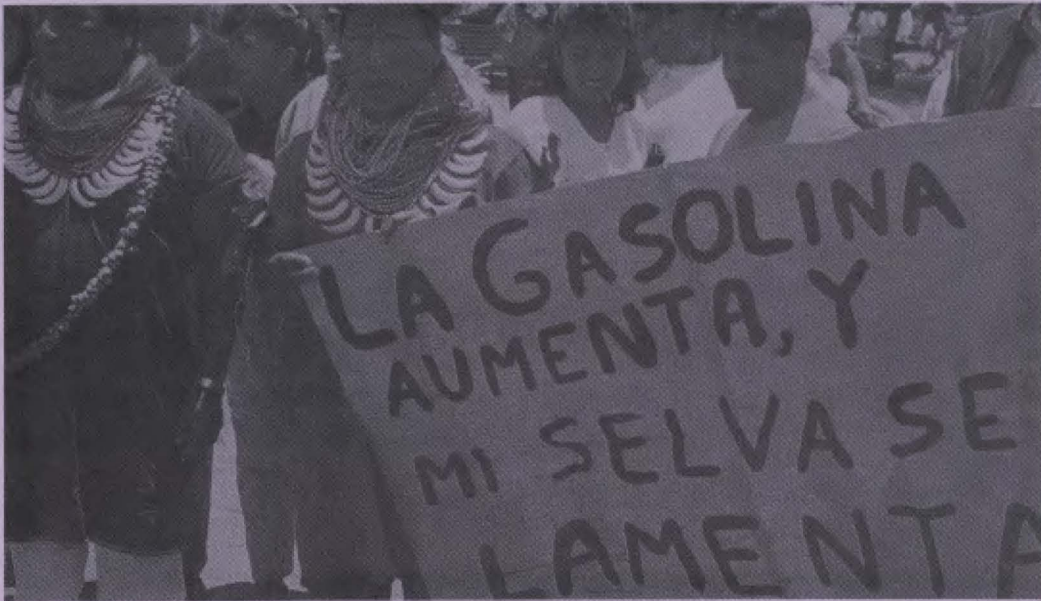
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: day \_\_\_\_\_ evening: \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Your contribution for our educational efforts is tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to MRN..

Maine Rural Network 51 Shore Rd. Standish, ME 04084



SIGN HELD BY MEMBERS OF THE CUYABENO DEFENSE COMMITTEE IN ECUADOR READS  
"GAS PRICES INCREASE AND MY RAINFOREST CRIES". \*

(Amnesty International USA Just Earth! Campaign, [www.amnestyusa.org/justearth](http://www.amnestyusa.org/justearth))

\*from conference on Race, Justice and the Environment held at Bowdoin College 2/22-23, 2002



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