

The HERLAND VOICE

August, 1997

LOOKING BACK

by Pat Reaves

What were you doing on August 1, 1988?

On August 1, 1988, for the first time, Herland Sister Resources opened for business in our very own property at our current location. This August, Herland celebrates 9 years of operation at 2312 NW 39. Many hours of volunteer time and many donations made it possible for Herland to open our current location and to keep it open for the past 9 years.

The opening followed over two years of searching for the right property and preparing the building to house Herland's services. Herland had been operating in rented space in an old store building on NW 19th. Members of the Herland collective decided a move from the old location was necessary because of the deterioration of the building and potential zoning problems at that location as well as a desire for a more easily accessible location.

The Herland Board of Directors made an offer to purchase the property at 2312 NW 39th in September, 1987. The first hurdle to the new building was the down payment of \$3,500 that had to be raised within just a few weeks of making the offer. The Herland community came through and the down payment was raised. The Herland Board of Directors entered into a five year mortgage that would end with a balloon payment of \$31,000.

Soon after the purchase was made, renovation work began. That's when the second big hurdle to moving in surfaced. The electrical wiring was in terrible shape and needed to be completely redone before the building could be occupied. These were difficult times. For several months, Herland was essentially homeless — we had moved out of the old location and the new location could not be opened. The volunteers, Board and community preserved, keeping Herland alive with the newsletter, retreats and other events continuing even without a building.

Finally, on August 1, 1988 nearly eleven months after the initial offer to purchase, Herland's new home was ready to be opened to the public.

The story doesn't end there, though. There was still a balloon payment to be made. As the time for the balloon payment got closer and closer, Board members tried to come up with ways to meet it. Finally a volunteer stepped forward and said what we really need to raise the remaining \$20,000 is 100 people to donate \$200 each and she set about helping find those 100 people. Thanks to an incredible amount of support from this community, --over \$13,000 was donated in just 4 months -- on January 5, 1993 Herland made the \$31,000. Most of it from donations and a small amount in an anonymous loan from a member of our community (*Thank you, Ms. Anonymous, Herland will be forever in your debt*). The next time you are in Herland, take a minute to look at the plaque with the names of all those who contributed \$200 or more to pay off the mortgage. It is an impressive sight. (Continued on page 2)

WRITE HERE! WRITE NOW!

August 11 will see the first meeting of the Herland Writers Circle; interested women working in all genres and at any level of experience. We will meet with the purpose of sharing and critiquing work, and with an eye toward eventual readings and publication.

Please come, bring your writer's block or your work in progress and help build a supportive, creative group in which we all can grow. Monday 11 August at Herland. Coffee and snacks provided. See you there! □

STRUGGLE FOR RIGHTS

by Margy Dillon

The twenty-first century is the time for the homosexual rights movement. Only in the 1990's did a great number of homosexuals come to realize that they deserved to have the same rights as everyone else. I believe the collective consciousness of society is beginning to realize that this is the time to let go of old fears and prejudices.

In a way, it is a miracle that we even should come to this realization. We have been taught since childhood from our parents, teachers, and ministers that homosexuals are sick, sinful, disgusting, and we shouldn't talk about it.

"At least have the decency not to tell your father." "If you were a real woman you would have a husband." "Stay away from my children." "Repent and turn away from this vile sin."

The rights we seek are the same ones that others take for granted. We want the right to work without fear of being fired for who we are, to parent without the fear of having our children taken away, to marry and enjoy the benefits this status gives heterosexual couples. These are not special rights but basic rights of every American citizen. Unfortunately, those rights have not been recognized by our society.

Over the next 30 years, this will be our struggle. The history of the civil rights movement and the women's rights movement have shown that it takes this long to turn the tide and have some measure of confidence that our rights will be protected in the courts.

The court system will be our battle ground over the next decade. We must take many cases to court in order to gain our basic rights. This is why it is so important that we support groups that fund these legal battles. Currently in Oklahoma City there is such a group and it is the Legal Defense Fund of Herland Sister Resources. The fund's purpose is to provide financial assistance in cases involving lesbian issues, community education, professional education and referrals as needed. Please help Herland fight for your rights by making a donation to the Herland Legal Defense Fund, 2312 NW 39th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. □

IN REVIEW

By Jill Garner

Since I'm a music lover, and the theme this month is what gets us hot, bad music is my topic. What we hear on the radio and what's available in many of our record stores is for the most part far from the best music being made today. Actually, most of it is some of the worst stuff I've ever heard and I marvel every day at the fact that these people got record contracts (how?) and that radio stations are participating in the experiment to see just how much we can stand.

I'm not trying to be the taste police here. We all like different kinds of music and that's what makes life wonderful. It just makes me sad that what we're fed on commercial radio is often so banal, and there is so much excellent music available. We should demand better! No matter what kind of music we like, what is played on the radio is designed to appeal to the lowest common denominator. It's simple and catchy and played over and over and over.....and over. There are soooooo many extremely talented singers, songwriters, and musicians who are overlooked and instead we get a lot of second-rate, if even that good, music on the radio. I'm not blaming the artists themselves. I've read the horror stories of the pressures they're sometimes under to release something on the record company's schedule. I'm blaming the record companies and the radio stations for feeding us crap. And I'll admit I get impatient with people who accept it without question, and don't know about the incredible wealth of amazingly talented musicians who don't get played on the radio. We can find their CDs if we look hard enough, we can go hear them live sometimes, we can hear them on good radio stations in other cities. We have so much more available beyond that radio dial.

I'm not saying everything on the radio is bad. I actually like a little bit of what I hear or I wouldn't listen to it at all. But, to use an example from country music, why is someone as awful as Rhett Akins, with his sophomoric songs like "That's my girl, my whole world, but that ain't my truck", signed to a record contract when there are probably hundreds of people just in Nashville alone who are so much better? Who's idea was that? I don't get it. We should get better because it's definitely out there.

I recently bought a copy of a magazine called No Depression, an alternative country magazine (and in their words, "whatever that is"). Most of the artists written about and advertised I've never heard, or never heard of. I love it! It's exciting to me knowing about all this music that's out there yet to be heard; that Whitney Houston and Reba McEntire are not all there is. I'm in awe of the musical talent so many people possess. But unfortunately they're not usually the people you hear on the radio.

If you're sick of what you hear on the radio, search for music you love! At most record stores you'll find all kinds of music 50 times better than what commercial radio plays, if there's a commercial radio station playing that kind of music at all! Take some chances! Listen to CDs at the store if you can't afford to buy any. Find used CDs. Discover a whole new world of music that gives you goose bumps and makes you feel on top of the world, like good music should. You don't hear music like that every day on the radio. □

CALLING ALL SINGER-SONGWRITERS

For the first time, The Herland Fall Retreat will feature a Saturday afternoon stage that will give women musicians the opportunity to perform their own compositions for an appreciative audience. The Fall Retreat will be October 17-19 at Lake Murray State Park near Ardmore.

Other musical events already set for the Fall Retreat are a Saturday evening concert by featured performers, Circle of Friends and a late-night jam session open to all musicians.

If you'd like to participate in the afternoon stage, contact Nancy Nesser by email: njnesser@juno.com or phone: 942-1425. □

LOOKING BACK *(continued from page 1)*

Maintaining and improving the building is a continuing challenge. There's always something to be done — painting, plumbing, yard work, and cleaning. In just the past year, we finally got the central heat and air conditioning that had been only a dream for many years. (There's still a balance on the loan for the heat and air so contributions are welcome!)

Many people have made it possible for Herland to be in this location. Almost every time I'm at Herland, I'm reminded of some who made this space what it is -- Cindy Bookout, who was Sister 1 and took the responsibility of signing the mortgage note; Jo Soske and her son Jon whose leadership made the final fundraising drive successful; Kris Lund, planted and nurtured the grass and the trees in the front yard, Tommy and Diana who painted and carpeted the office area; Peggy Johnson, who tore out a wall to open up the meeting space; Natasha Rice and her army of volunteers who did the landscaping; Kris and Marian who donated the ceiling fans that were moved from the 19th street Herland; Ginger McGovern, who built the backyard stage and led the crew to build the ramp; and many more. And these are just some of the people who and some of the work they've done just on the building. There are so many more people whose work and contributions have made Herland happen.

So, who's responsible for Herland still being here? You are — if you've ever made a donation, pounded a nail, mowed the grass, swept the floor, met with a committee, performed at a fundraising event or worked a shift. Has it all been worth it? I know it was and is worth it everytime I hear a woman say "I didn't know where to go but then I found Herland." Thanks to every one of you for making it happen. □

**Timely, comprehensive
coverage of the lesbian
and gay community.**

THE OKLAHOMA
Community News WEEKLY

Herland Sister Resources

August, 1997

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 8:00 PM open mic at Diversity, hosted by Nancy Nesser	4	5	6	7	8	9 9:00 PM Wendy Allyn at Diversity
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 3:30 PM Committee Meetings 4:30 PM HSR Board Mtg.	18	19	20	21 Newsletter Deadline	22	23
24	25	26 Women's Equality Day	27	28 6:30 PM Newsletter Mailing Party	29	30 9:00 PM Peggy Johnson at Diversity
31	<p>COMING September 12: Mary Reynolds and Nancy Scott at Medina's ATTRACTIONS September 14: Mary Reynolds, Nancy Scott, Betty Elders and others perform in the annual Woody Guthrie Tribute at the Blue Door October 17-18 Herland Fall Retreat</p>					

If you have an event you'd like included on the Herland calendar, please leave a message at 521-9696 or email preaves@mail.icon.net.

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

On August 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote was certified as part of the U.S. Constitution. Referred to as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, it states, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The U.S. Congress designated August 26 as "Women's Equality Day" in 1971 to honor women's continuing efforts toward equality. □

ATTORNEYS FORM LESBIAN/GAY LAW ASSOCIATION

A group of Oklahoma attorneys has formed a professional organization for lesbian and gay attorneys in the state and the membership drive is gaining national support. The Oklahoma Lesbian and Gay Law Association (OLGLA) joins 31 similar professional associations in the U.S. The National Lesbian and Gay Association (NLGLA) is affiliated with the American Bar Association (ABA) and represented in the ABA House of Delegates.

The purpose of OLGLA is threefold, according to Oklahoma City Attorney Jane Eulberg. She said OLGLA was created to dispel stereotypes and demonstrate that lesbians and gays are professional leaders; to serve as a resource for attorneys and others working with issues affecting lesbians and gays; and to serve as a resource to the legal system by submitting amicus curiae briefs and assistance on appeals in issues involving gays and lesbians.

For additional information on OLGLA, including a membership packet, contact Eulberg at 405/340-1957. □

LOOKING FORWARD

The Herland Board is beginning the development of a new long-range plan that will take us into the year 2000. As always, we need your suggestions, opinions, feelings, thoughts or other input about what you would like Herland to be doing -- and what you would like to be doing with Herland.

The Herland Board meets at 4:30 PM on the third Sunday of every month at Herland. On August 17, all Herland committees will meet at 3:30 just before the Board meeting. If you can't make it to the meeting, drop us a note, call and leave a message, or send an email (preaves@mail.icon.net). We want to hear from YOU! □

FEAST WITH FRIENDS

The Tulsa Area Chapter will hold a Feast with Friends fundraising event on August 16, 1997. A number of dinner parties will be held in the homes of supporters to raise funds for the display of the Quilt in Tulsa.

There's still time to sign up to host a party. The Names Project will provide the invitations. You provide the food and your guests bring a contribution for the Tulsa Area NAMES Project. After dinner, everyone will convene for dessert and coffee at the Adam's Mark Hotel in downtown Tulsa from 8:30 to 10:30 P.M. There'll be fabulous desserts, entertainment, a display of sections about the Quilt, and lots of information about the upcoming October display of the Quilt in Tulsa at Expo Square Pavilion.

For information about hosting a party, call (918)748-3111. □

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HERLAND SISTER RESOURCES

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