

Herland

VOICE

October, 2000

FALL RETREAT!

We are all excited because it's time for the Fall Retreat and for this year we don't have to worry about the weather or burn ban. The rustic campground at Osage Hills State Park has installed heat and air in all the cabins and there are two fireplaces in the main building.

Herland is premiering a new T-shirt, and with your pre-registration is a \$3.00 off coupon toward purchase of the shirt. As you know, pre-registering helps us and saves you money, but we don't mind collecting that extra on-site fee. (see inside this *Voice* for a registration form). Be aware of our accessibility accommodations if you can pay a little extra to sponsor a scholarship, please indicate so on the registration form. And never let cost be a reason to not attend - our sliding scale is for women who fit in those categories. If you need a scholarship, don't hesitate to register. *(continued inside)*

THE HERLAND LEGAL DEFENSE FUND: A WORK IN PROGRESS

In 1992, Herland was presented with a request for financial support from a lesbian mother who had lost custody of her two children as a result of the mother's sexual orientation. Herland rose to the defense of this individual creating the Herland Legal Defense Fund (HLDF). The HLDF, a group of dedicated volunteers committed to this cause, began a successful fund-raising campaign.

Many of you will remember the HLDF activities to raise funds. The most memorable, no doubt, was the Cris Williamson/Tret Frue concert at the OKC Civic Center. However, the concert was just a small part of the overall fundraising effort. There was also a cookbook published of recipes submitted by the OKC lesbian and gay community. Sales of that publication were kicked off with a recipe tasting party held at the Porthole. The HLDF also did a major mailing campaign that brought in funds from across the country.

Countless community organizations and musicians contributed their time and talents hosting fund-raising events or performing at open-mics. Through their efforts, substantial contributions to the HLDF were generated. The overwhelming support and response of the OKC lesbian/gay community to this cause was greatly appreciated and stands as a testament that we were able to work together as a community toward an end to discrimination against lesbian/gay parents in the courtroom. *(continued inside)*

LESBIANS AT RISK

Did you know that many lesbians have a higher than average risk for breast cancer? It's true. Women who have never had children are more likely to develop breast cancer than those who have. It has to do with exposure to the estrogen a woman's own body makes. Although estrogen has many benefits for a woman, such as protecting her from bone loss, it also promotes the growth of certain types of cancers.

The incidence of breast cancer in the U.S. is on the rise, perhaps due to environmental factors, but almost certainly related to diet. But, at the same time, the survival rate for women with breast cancer is improving tremendously. This is due to earlier detection and improved treatments.

Regular mammograms and manual breast exam are two of the best ways to improve your chances of catching a cancer early and decrease the treatment needed. Many women are afraid to get mammograms, afraid of the procedure, and afraid of the possible detection of cancer. But, the stigma and fear of breast cancer are being reduced by public awareness events such as the Race for the Cure.

Join women across the country in recognizing October as Breast Cancer Awareness month by talking about it with your friends, neighbors, and relatives. And visit our website at www.herlandsisters.org to read more about the experiences of women in your community who have had breast cancer. □

October Events

Herland Board Meeting -- October 8 4:30 p.m.

Herland Fall Retreat -- October 13-15, Osage Hills State Park

Herland Supper Club -- October 21 Meet at Herland at 5:30 P.M.

Women's Wholistic Health Forum -- October 21 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. First Unitarian Church, 500 N.W. 13, OKC, OK contact Dr. Denise Hall, coordinator 405-232-9224 or 405-210-4838

SAINT SYBIL

Sybil Ludington, Matron Saint of the Forgotten Woman, is an occasional contributor to this space.

Dear St. Sybil,

Help me, please. Is there really such a thing as a Feminazi, and if so, is she me? Am I her? I can't tell if I have stepped over the line here in my reaction to this thing that happened. Here's the scenario. A group of us were having lunch after a small but powerful demonstration. We were all feeling good and uplifted and pleased with ourselves and each other and our righteous cause. A man I didn't know had joined us. He seemed like a nice guy, and he was a good friend of a good friend of mine, so I was in a mood to cut him some slack and be pleasant. He was supposedly a longtime "liberal", and speaking of some pseudo-liberal organization he paused and said - "Well, I won't call it what it really is in mixed company."

Well. What I wished I'd said: Would you like me to leave? Would You Like Me To Leave So You Can Speak Freely???

What I did say: *Nothing*. Would you have spoken up and called him on it and spoiled the glow of solidarity around the table? I wish now that I had, but I am truly cursed with the twin paralyzing attributes of wanting to keep the peace and artificial good manners.

I don't want to appear like a Feminist With No Sense of Humor or a Wimmin's Libber with No Respect for Courtesies - although I am very much both of those animals - but give me a break.... I had just spent an hour outside in 104 degree weather in my best bib-and-tucker, sweating like a pig, in support of human decency; and this "fellow activist", this guy with a total lack of real progressive consciousness, chose to make me feel excluded and diminished. I know, I know, no one can make you feel small without your permission, but I had a choice of picking a fight or sulking in quiet, so I sulked.

What's that you say, he might be cursed with terminal good manners himself and couldn't help himself? No, that doesn't wash. Good manners would have automatically substituted a socially-acceptable word for whatever vulgarity he wanted to use - people do it all the time without skipping a beat. I frequently use language that would make a sailor blush, but you can bet that when I'm sitting in a Board meeting at work, not only is my language delicate and refined, I *never* feel the need to indicate to my boss that it would be earthier if only he weren't around.

So, Syb, help me, what do I do next time this happens?
Frankly, Confused

Frankly, my dear one, when you are up against a passive aggressive pro like that, there's almost nothing you can say or do that won't leave you looking like the bad guy. Look what he managed to get on the table in one little phrase: a. he's got a vivid earthy vocabulary; b. he's a real man's man, and c. you're not; you and your gender aren't quite full players at the table of real life; and d. that organization he was speaking about are real scumbags, but you can't quote him on it because he didn't really say it, did he?.

Your best chance to get a little of your own back is to lie low and wait for a turn in the conversation, and drop a little *bon mot* of your own, something along the line of "that #*!%#!# governor - oh sorry, I know you don't like language like that"; or, maybe steer the conversation to reproductive rights long enough to propound that vasectomies at birth is the only just way to eliminate the abortion debate for good.... I promise you he won't like the idea, - despite the fact that it's a good one.

And no, there is no such thing as a feminazi. There are, happily, such things as feminists with highly-tuned bull*#!# detectors; and you're one.

Hang tough, and keep the faith,
Sybil

□

FALL RETREAT (continued from pg. 1)

One way we are able to keep your fees so low is the communal environment created at Herland's retreats. Everyone no matter of status is responsible for making these retreats so much fun for so many years. This means signing up for work duties—help in the kitchen is the greatest need as this is a lot of work unless it is shared. Please take a full trash bag to the dumpster, put up T.P., read a book while helping people with purchases for an hour or two, or clean up around the camp fire. The Herland Retreat becomes a community when for a brief time we share our diversity in peace and harmony.

We are excited to bring "Wishing Chair" back to Oklahoma for your entertainment. They will also be doing a workshop on Harmony Singing and providing music by the fire.

Sandy will be doing her highly acclaimed Financial Planning workshop -- come and see how you can retire at 50! Julie will be helping us observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month with an informative workshop on domestic violence issues.

Remember to bring a covered dish for the pot luck on Saturday evening and an instrument for open mic Saturday afternoon.

Invite a friend and if you have questions, call Herland at 521-9696 or Laura, camp director, at 943-4070. We look forward to seeing you there.

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DEFENSE FUND (continued from pg. 1)

In the end, the loss of custody experienced by this mother was overturned by the Oklahoma Supreme Court in July of 1995. *Fox v. Fox* set a resounding legal precedent in the State of Oklahoma to protect lesbian/gay parents against discrimination in child custody cases. Sexual orientation can no longer be used to automatically deny a parent the right to raise her children. *Fox v. Fox* has been used on numerous occasions to successfully thwart attempts to take children away from their lesbian/gay parent. For their efforts in support of *Fox v. Fox*, Herland Sister Resources was recognized by the ACLU of Oklahoma with their 1997 Human Rights Award.

Although HLDF has been less visible since the ruling of *Fox v. Fox*, efforts continue to ensure that the community is aware of their legal protection in child custody cases. On numerous occasions, legal documentation has been provided to attorneys and parents seeking protection. Although, the focus of the HLDF has been one of education over the past few years, we are still committed to providing financial support to cases that will protect or strengthen the ruling in *Fox v. Fox*.

The HLDF is now gearing up to produce educational materials for the community to raise awareness of the legal protection available and to provide financial assistance for a case currently on appeal. We are seeking members of the community to serve on the HLDF committee and ask that you consider joining us. In the months ahead, we will be focusing our efforts towards fund-raising activities and designing educational materials for distribution to community organizations. If you would like to serve on the committee, host a fund-raising activity, or volunteer, your help will be greatly appreciated. If interested, please call Margaret Cox at 842-3206 at or email dfox@ou.edu. □

WWW.HERLANDSISTERS.ORG

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TRET FURE IN OKC

Imagine sitting in your living room enjoying the intimate experience of hearing some of the best acoustic guitar music from a nationally known female musician from the women's community?

Surprise....you have such an opportunity at your fingertips on November 1, 2000 when Tret Fure will perform live in Oklahoma City. This house concert is your chance to hear Tret perform some old familiar tunes as well as new material to be released on her upcoming solo acoustic CD.

Many of you will remember Tret's previous work on such albums as *Postcards From Paradise*, *Between the Covers* and *Radio Quiet* produced and performed with Cris Williamson. Tret has also recorded with Spencer Davis and opened for Yes, Poco and The J Geils Band.

So come enjoy the intimate setting of an up close musical evening with Tret on Wednesday, November 1, 2000, at 7 p. m. at 226 NW 22nd Street. Tickets are \$15.00 in advance and available by calling Helen Holgate at 942-3267 or Anthea Maton at 528-2355.

Please secure your seats early as seating is limited. Also check Herland Sister Resources Website (www.herlandsisters.org) for other updated information. See you at the concert! □

Dear Friends,

The Herland Oral History Project has gotten off to a nice start. We have interviewed three people to date, and hope to meet more of you so we can learn more about "where we have been and where we are going."

Oral history is an enterprise that requires contact and identification. The interviewer contacts people who can answer her questions, and she identifies strands of history that are revealed from the stories of interviewees. Oral history puts a face and a name on history. It is the people's history.

Herland wants to know its history. This is to be the organization's vital and vibrant story. That's why the project was conceived. I am volunteering my professional energies to help that history along.

Some of you have raised a valid, important concern; confidentiality. Confidentiality is very important to our community, for any number of reasons. It is something that encourages respect within ourselves and the community.

Herland honors all requests for confidentiality in the Oral History Project. Everyone who is interviewed is asked to fill out a release form saying that she knows she is being interviewed for a research and educational project. Included in the release is a space where the interviewee can make restrictions on the use of the information from the interviews. If desired, the interviewer and interviewee will decide together on a pseudonym to be used in the interview transcripts.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Herland Oral History Project, let us know. Contact any board member (521-9696) or feel free to call me (945-0867).

Jan Rosenberg

HERLAND FALL RETREAT

OCTOBER 13 - 15, OSAGE HILLS STATE PARK

Please choose the registration amount most appropriate for you. On-site registration will be \$65. Deadline for pre-registration is October 9 and registration is non-refundable

Single Person's Annual Income	Suggested Pre-registration per person	Household Annual Income
under \$6,500	\$15	under \$13,300
\$6,500 - \$13,250	\$25	\$13,300 - \$18,000
\$13,250 - \$19,500	\$35	\$18,000 - \$26,000
\$19,500 - \$30,000	\$45	\$26,000 - \$50,000
over \$30,000	\$60	over \$50,000

Registration fee enclosed (payable to Herland): \$15 \$25 \$35 \$45 \$60
 Saturday only Registration \$25

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I need a scholarship to attend.

I'm enclosing an additional \$ _____ to help provide scholarships.

I'm bringing _____ children (girls of all ages and boys under 10 are welcome)

Herland Sister Resources
2312 N.W. 39
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

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*Fall Retreat
October 13-15, 2000
Registration info. inside!*

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Thanks, Chas, for the great new Herland t-shirt design!

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