

HERLAND VOICE

March 2003

Celebrating Women's History Month

Volume 21, Number 3

ARE YOU NATIVE AMERICAN?

Are you a self-identified Native American? Are you gay, lesbian, bisexual, or trans? Then this group is for you! The OKC Two-Spirit Society has joined the circle with our brothers and sisters across Turtle Island. Please come and join us as we share meals, information and talents, learn new crafts, and meet new friends. Our general meetings are led by Philip Roulain and are on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 1:00-3:00 pm at The Center. Food is provided.

We are having the new women's meetings at 6:30pm on the 4th Thursday of the month at Herland Sister Resources. These meetings are designed to address the unique needs of our women two-spirits. Each meeting will begin in a traditional manner with smudging and prayer. The first women's meeting to be held at Herland will be on the 27th of February. We will share traditional food and have a Talking Circle. Afterwards we will discuss future plans and events that will include a special retreat weekend with a guest.

The next meeting date will be March 27th at 6:30pm. We will continue with event planning for those unable to attend the February meeting due to short notice. There will also be an opportunity to work on a craft project.

For updates and additional information call our OKC Two-Spirit Hotline at (405) 317-7283. All meetings are drug and alcohol free events.

In The Spirit Of The Circle,
Denise Smith
deniseasmith@hotmail.com

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

www.womensenews.org

ARE YOU INCLUDED IN THE U.S. CONSTITUTION?

.....Not if you are a woman!

Leona Evans, an enthusiastic supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment and the Oklahoma Coordinator for the National ERA Campaign Network will present a workshop, "The Equal Rights Amendment - Simple Justice, Long Overdue", at Herland on Saturday, March 8th at 3:30 pm.

The ERA Campaign Network is a nationwide network of women and men activists planning a "3 State Strategy" to add to the U.S. Constitution the "Alice Paul" Equal Rights Amendment: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

In the 1990's, this promising new strategy for ERA began to rise. The "Madison" Amendment, concerning congressional pay raises, became the 27th Amendment to the Constitution after a ratification period of 203 years. This established a precedent such that the ERA's ratification period, currently three decades, could hardly be considered unacceptably long. Today, the "3-State Strategy" is gaining attention and a major new push for the ERA is growing rapidly. Since 35 states have already ratified the ERA, only three are needed to reach the necessary 38 — three-fourths of the 50 states. Now is the most promising time yet to achieve the ERA.

With the growing attention to the worldwide importance of equal rights and opportunities for women, it is becoming increasingly embarrassing that, unlike the constitution of almost all other democratic nations, the U.S. Constitution still does not guarantee its female citizens equal rights with men.

A 2002 nationwide survey commissioned by the ERA Campaign Network showed that 96% of the American adults believe that men and women should have equal rights, and 88% believe that those equal rights should be guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. And the majority of Americans mistakenly think the Constitution already specifies that male and female citizens are entitled to equal rights.

Strong efforts to achieve ratification are now underway in many of the 15 unratified states, with campaigns developing in several. Oklahoma is an unratified state.

Many will remember the exciting days of 1981 and 1982 when we fought so hard, valiantly, and passionately to get our Legislature to ratify the ERA. The effort radicalized hundreds of us who will never be the same and who today toil with unflagging dedication in one aspect or another of the Women's Movement.

Leona and her 14 member Task Force are again aiming toward Oklahoma ratification of the ERA. Leona is a longtime member of the Oklahoma Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs (OK/BPW), and has served as the OK/BPW Legislation Chair for the past four years. Leona represents the OK/BPW on the Oklahoma Legislative Coalition, an organization which sponsors "Legislative Day" at the State Capitol in March of each year.

Herland Supper Club

Saturday, March 8th, 5:30 pm

at The Grand House

2701 N. Classen

followed by

Mary Reynolds and Louise Goldberg

in Concert at 7 pm

at Full Circle Bookstore

50 Penn Place

The Supper Club will go to the Grand House for fine Asian dining again this month after an unplanned detour to the Lido last month. After supper, we will go to Full Circle Bookstore in 50 Penn Place, NW Expressway and Penn, to hear Mary Reynolds and Louise Goldberg perform. Meet at Herland at 5:00 pm if you wish to carpool.

Herland Book Club Notes

Ten people discussed Rita Mae Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle* at the February Book Club meeting. Two participants share their impressions of the book.

Brown gives a consistent description of the character development of a young woman who recognizes that she is lesbian early in life. She remains centered in her allegiance to her own identity and resilient in the face of harsh criticisms from family, peers, and community members. Her resilience and her loyalty to her visions of a life as a film director seem to serve as a core of her personality, which only gains strength during the progression of her life. The author provoked my curiosity to know more about the character's relationships. A thought provoking book which offers a role model for women coming out. *PM*



It was sheer pleasure re-reading Rita Mae Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle* for the Herland Book Club. My appreciation for the gay scene - and lesbian love scenes, mild and sweet as they are in this book - was certainly different than when I read it as a straight woman twenty-five years ago. Most compelling to me about the book today is its depiction of the rampant, unrestrained, unapologetic sexism in the academic and working world just a short time ago. Thirty years ago the glass ceiling was about knee-high. (Things are better now, feminists have made a difference.) The book is a ton of fun, as well as being a time capsule of a changing era. I recommend it highly, as a first read or a re-read. *MC*

The next book club meeting will be Monday, March 3rd, 7 pm at Herland. Tentative selections for upcoming book club meetings include:

March - *Desert of the Heart* by Jane Rule
April - *Herland & the Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman
May - *Tipping the Velvet* by Sarah Waters
June - *A Woman's Reality* by Anne Wilson Schaef
July - *Woman on the Edge of Time* by Marge Piercy
August - *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* by Audre Lorde

Japanese Women Reclaiming their Birth Names

Nobu Yatabe has waited two years to tie the knot and says she is happy to hold out longer if it means she can keep her maiden name. "I only dream of a wedding, even though my partner is getting impatient," the sprightly acupuncturist says. "I really want to go ahead but don't know when the big day is ever going to come."

If Japanese feminists have their way, Yatabe's day could come soon. This month, the Japanese Diet may debate a bill that would allow women to keep their maiden names when they marry. According to Japanese civil law, a couple must decide on one surname when they register. Traditionally, most groom's name, of feminists who discouraging gender. Meanwhile, Japan-begun to use their their business cards. In keeping with the tural governments use their premarital the central govern- in October. Japanese editorials have also begun to note that the contemporary family takes many forms, including single mothers, and is no longer bound by the tradition.

♀ *History Looking Back* - Forty years ago, women entering Harvard University Law School were asked the question, "Why are you at Harvard Law School, taking the place of a man?" That question has been answered quite satisfactorily over the years by women including the likes of Janet Reno and Pat Schroeder.

Young Africans Reject Genital Mutilation

from www.equalitynow.org

When Genet Girma and Addisie Abosie got married in Kembatta, Ethiopia, they did the unthinkable in their community. Genet wore a placard saying "I am not circumcised, learn from me" and her groom wore a matching one that said "I am very happy to be marrying an uncircumcised woman."

During a recent visit in the United States, Genet talked about being the first known woman in Kembatta to marry in public who had refused the mutilation to her genitals that is considered a rite of passage for all girls and young women in that part of Ethiopia. Between the ages of 16 and 18, young women in that region are subjected to what is known as step-two female genital mutilation (FGM): the clitoris, as well as the inner and outer labia, is removed. This type of mutilation is also known as excision.

Before her wedding last year, Genet explained, she ran away from home rather than undergo the ordeal. that of Addisie re-couple and would wedding. Because Addisie's courage in ing the practice, people did attend the which was also tele-extensively in newspaper. Their recently accepted expecting their first

Genet and Addisie States recently as organized by Equality Now to raise funds and highlight the work of Africa's young people who have rejected female circumcision and who are working to end it in their communities. Since their wedding and public stand against female genital mutilation, ten other couples have followed suit.

The World Health Organization estimates that 6,000 girls a day are genitally mutilated. Doctors say genital mutilation causes lasting psychological trauma, extreme pain, chronic infections, bleeding, abscesses, tumors, urinary tract infections and infertility. For more information about FGM, please go to www.equalitynow.org.

♀ *History Looking Ahead* - Afghan women are getting back behind the wheel after 10 years of driving prohibition under the Taliban regime. In addition to the requirement to cover themselves from head to toe in public, women were barred from schools, jobs, and public life. Thirty Afghan women have completed the driver's ed course and will become the first licensed female drivers since 1992.

Both her family and jected the young not attend their of Genet and so openly confront-some 2,000 other ceremony however, vised and covered Ethiopia's main families have only the couple, who are child.

were in the United part of a tour

The Voice is published by Herland Sister Resources, Inc., 2312 NW 39th, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. The Voice is offered as an open forum for community discourse. Articles reflect the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of Herland Sister Resources. Unsolicited articles and letters to the editor are welcomed and must be signed by the writer with full name and address. Upon request, letters or articles may be printed under a pseudonym or anonymously. Subscriptions to the Voice are free upon request although a donation is requested to meet publication and distribution costs.

WOMEN'S WORK - 2003

from *womensenews*

It doesn't bother Sheila Clogg that she's the only woman on a Great Lakes freighter with 25 other male crew members. She's just happy to be doing something she loves. "I like the hands-on aspect, I like working with the machinery, I like getting dirty," says Clogg, an engineer aboard the Buckeye, a 698-foot freighter in the Oglebay Norton Company fleet.

It doesn't hurt that starting pay for skilled mariners is \$45,000. Or that they work just 180 days a year, receive full benefits and can retire after 20 years. Not bad, if—like Clogg—you don't mind being in the extreme minority.

Despite the troubled economic waters of late, employment in the shipping industry is wide open. More women are getting on board, but times have changed. Whereas women were relegated to cooking and cleaning on the big vessels until as recently as the mid-twentieth century, now they're more likely to be found swabbing decks or servicing the mammoth steam turbines below, just like their male counterparts.

More women started taking jobs aboard ships in the 1980s. Seven women are enrolled now in the Maritime Academy. They don't need to go through the academy to work in the shipping industry, but to become officers, they must either go through the program at the academy or work their way up through the ranks. While the women make up a small percentage of the academy's 100 students, the number of female students—mainly in the engineering program—has been growing over the past decade.

Pride Parade Grand Marshall

Pride Network is soliciting nominations for Grand Marshall for the June 22, 2003 Pride Parade. If you have a suggestion, please send it to PNI, PO Box 60296, OKC, OK 73146; or email it to pni@okcpride.com. Please include a brief description of the nominee and a few words on why you feel the person should be honored as Grand Marshall of the Parade, and do it by April 15, 2003.

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Holly Figueroa in Concert

by Jill Garner

Don't miss an intimate evening with Holly Figueroa March 7th at the Heritage Room in the OU Student Union at 8 pm. Figueroa's latest CD, *How it Is*, has been garnering a lot of attention and she was recently interviewed on NPR's *All Things Considered*. Her earlier CD, *Dream in Red*, also earned her quite a following and rave reviews as well. Her music has a bluesy/alt-country sound, though she touches on gospel, folk, jazz, avante-garde, and Americana. Figueroa is the founder of Indiegrrl, a 1500 member international organization for women in the independent music industry. Opening the show will be Edie Carey, who opened for Melissa Ferrick in Norman last year. She was great and had a smile that wouldn't quit. She's got a beautiful voice and great songs, and she also sang harmony on a number of Ferrick's songs. \$10 for two performers may be the best deal you get all year!

SportsWomen to Watch

by Jill Garner

For those of you following women's college basketball, you may know that Duke has one of the top basketball teams in the country this year. In fact, they were ranked Number 1 until February 1 when Connecticut knocked them from their top ranking by beating them 77-65 at Duke. Most press about Duke revolves around Amanda Beard, for good reason. She's an incredible player and one that most opposing teams can't stop from scoring an average of 23 points a game. She's equally as dangerous on defense, blocking passing lanes with regularity, and has 64 steals this season, second in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC).

However, the press also can't fail to mention Iciss Tillis, a 6'4" junior forward from Tulsa, OK. Together, Tillis and Beard, also a junior, have helped Duke become a powerhouse basketball program. This year Tillis is scoring an average of 15.7 points a game. She can shoot 3-pointers, play inside, and dunk, although she has yet to dunk in a college game.

Tillis has played a huge part in propelling Duke to a 21-1 record as of this writing, and an 82-8 record since she and Beard have been at Duke. They're quite a talented basketball duo and one that's definitely worth watching.

Duke's next game on TV will be against North Carolina State, March 2nd, on Fox Sports. But be sure and catch them sometime during the NCAA tournament since most games will be televised this year. And if they don't make it to the Final Four again this year, then something is wrong. Last year they lost to Oklahoma in the semi-finals, but I hope to see them make it to the championship game in a rematch with Connecticut.

In addition to her basketball skills, Iciss Tillis is the comedian of the team and will soon be starring in her own TV show, *The Iciss Tillis Show*, on Duke's campus station. She joked in an article that the sports segment might sound like this: "In Duke sports, the women's basketball team won again last night. In other news..." And if the rest of the season is anything like the first half, that will be pretty accurate! The Duke women are flying high this year, helped along by a talented Oklahoma woman, Iciss Tillis. Now if only she were playing for OU...

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

March

Saturday, March 1: Drumming Workshop at Herland, 10 am

Saturday, March 1: Peggy Johnson in concert at Church of the Open Arms, 3131 N. Penn, 8 pm

Monday, March 3: Herland Book Club, 7 pm

Friday, March 7: Holly Figueroa at OU Student Union, 8 pm

Saturday, March 8: ERA Workshop at Herland, 3:30 pm

Saturday, March 8: Herland Supper Club at The Grand House, 2701 N. Classen, 5:30 pm

Saturday, March 8: Mary Reynolds and Louise Goldberg at Full Circle Bookstore, 50 Penn Place, 7 pm

Friday, March 21: Louise Goldberg and Mary Reynolds at Galileo's, 3009 Paseo, 8 pm

Wednesday, March 26: Women's Issues Legislative Day at the State Capitol

Thursday, March 27: Two Spirits Group meets at Herland, 6:30 pm

April

Saturday, April 12: Feminist Spirituality Workshop at Herland, 1:30 pm

May

May 16-18: Herland Spring Retreat at Roman Nose featuring the band IRIS Saturday evening at 8 pm

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