



A GAY DAY IN JUNE

"Bigger" and "better" are the key words to describe this year's Second Annual Gay and Lesbian Pride March.

With Oklahoma City police providing security at the front and back of the march as well as patrolling the route, participants carried signs, banners, balloons and Oklahoma panels for the Names Project quilt. They rode on horseback, in cars, on motorcycles, on bicycles and on floats. They walked all over banners taped to the road that contained negative words such as **IGNORANCE** and **FEAR**. If OKC didn't know after last year's march just how proud participants are to be who they are and to be a part of their community, it knows this year.

The day began with speakers and singers, including Peggy Johnson and Randall Powell, at Memorial Park, followed by the march and ending with a block party behind the bars on 39th Street. The sun was once again hot and high in the sky, but volunteers from the Gay Helpline provided water for the marchers along the route to relieve some of the stress from heat. The number of participants were double that of last year's march, if not more.

Although this year's march commemorated the anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York, it went off without any violence. But there were a few visible opponents. A few members of the KKK

stood silently watching the march, letting their signs voice their opinion.

At the conclusion of the march, participants found hot dogs, cake, refreshments, music, books and raffles at the block party.

The one thing everyone found was camaraderie; sisters and brothers who experience a common oppression came together peacefully as a community, to try to educate the ignorant, calm the fears of the unknowing and just survive. May Oklahoma City's Gay Pride Parade one day rival San Francisco's! ■

Chatterbox

by Sondra Metzger

Maggie E. is moving to San Diego in August and wants to turn her mowing business over to someone in the community. If you're interested, call her at 728-7856. We'd like to thank Maggie and Charleen for taking care of the grounds at the Resource Center. Great job!...

There will be a meeting Aug. 6, 4:30 p.m. at 2805 N. McKinley for anyone interested in being involved in planning concerts. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call Mary at 528-0020....

The newsletter is back to normal this month. Let's hear if for our typesetter, Rhonda!....

If you're wondering about the tape being made by Friendships United, no, they haven't skipped town with your money. There really is a tape (a good one!), and a tape release party is being planned for some time in August at Gushers. Coordinator Palmira Campos said the effort to finish the tape is moving slower than expected because they want the tape to be exceptionally well done—something the performers and

the community will be very proud of. Watch for more info in the August newsletter....

Due to my error, the cost of the Fall Retreat was left out of the article and the registration form. Pre-registration prices are \$17 - \$20. On-site registration is \$25. This price does not include the meal tickets. For example, the total for one person who wishes to purchase meals would be \$30. Scholarships and work programs will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. If anyone can offer to contribute a scholarship, it would be of great help to those who cannot attend....

I know this is a bit early, but the 1990 Gay Games and Cultural Festival will be held in Vancouver, Canada, from August 4-11, 1990. Anyone interested in the games should contact the Metropolitan Vancouver Athletic and Arts Association, 1170 Bute Street, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6E 1Z6. The newsletter will have more information as time draws near....

The head of our Volunteer Committee, Margaret C., has turned her duties over to Pam T. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Margaret for all the time and energy she has contributed toward ensuring that the store and tables at events were staffed. We can never repay her for the time she has devoted to making phone calls and keeping track of who is working when, sometimes filling in herself when no one else was available. Thank you, Sister 50, and good luck, Pam.

Herland has a new board member, Pam T. The executive committee has also changed, with Jill W. taking the reins as Sister #1, Pat C. as Sister #2, Kathy C. as Sister #3 and Rhonda S. as the new Sister #4. The former Sister #1, Jean K., is now our Networking Coordinator. Thank you, Jean, for your strong leadership, and welcome aboard, Pam!....



REGISTRATION FOR FALL RETREAT (FOR WOMEN ONLY)

NAME(S) _____ Number of Pets _____

ADDRESS _____ (Pets must be kept on leash and no
pets in main building.)

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE (____) _____

I would like a scholarship I would like a work exchange I will provide _____ scholarships

I would like to lead a discussion group on _____

I would like to attend a group on _____ and a possible leader is _____

COMMENTS: _____

Cost of the retreat is (preregistration) \$17 - \$20 sliding scale, or \$25 for on-site registration. A limited number of scholarships and work exchanges are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

At this year's fall retreat we are once again offering terrific meals at a great price. You may purchase them individually for \$2.50 apiece or buy all four for \$10.00. In order to plan how much food to prepare, we must know which meals you'll be purchasing. Please fill in the appropriate boxes below.

I WANT TO PURCHASE MEAL TICKETS FOR THE FOLLOWING MEALS:

Friday Evening Saturday Noon ALL FOUR MEALS

Saturday Morning Sunday Morning

Around the Country

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEWARK WELCOMES LESBIAN AND GAY COMMUNITY

The Episcopal Diocese of Newark has established an innovative new ministry, called "The Oasis," designed to make lesbians and gay men feel more welcome in the church.

"Just about every Episcopal church in the country has a sign out front that says, 'The Episcopal Church Welcomes You,'" points out the Rev. Robert Williams, director of The Oasis, "but in many places it would be more honest if they'd add a disclaimer: 'gays and lesbians need not apply'. The Oasis is an attempt to make the welcome of the Episcopal church a reality for gay men and lesbians."

"The uniqueness of The Oasis," Williams says, "is that simultaneously it is an indigenous gay ministry and an officially sanctioned organization of the church. This is certainly not a ministry to "convert" homosexuals to heterosexuality; it is rather a group of both gay and nongay Christians committed to doing ministry together as fellow members of the Christian Church." Williams, who was ordained an Episcopal deacon June 3 by Bishop Spong, is an openly gay man, and has been active in Integrity, the lesbian and gay caucus within the Episcopal church. "I'm about as out of the closet as you can be," he says, "and I have been for ten years. When I speak of the gay and lesbian community, I'm speaking of us."

The scope of the ministry of The Oasis is primarily to the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, which includes all of northern New Jersey. "But we also have a ministry to the entire Episcopal Church, and to the broader Christian community," Williams says, "to be a prophetic voice and to be a model for the formation of similar ministries." The Oasis office is in All Saints' Episcopal Church in Hoboken, just across the river from Manhattan's Greenwich Village with its large gay population. "I certainly hope our outreach extends to lesbians and gay men in Manhattan," Williams says. "That's why we chose this location."

The Oasis was officially commissioned as a new ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark in a liturgical ceremony Tuesday, June 20, at 7:30 p.m. at All Saints' in Hoboken. The date was

chosen to coincide with the Manhattan celebration of Lesbian and Gay Pride Week. The Rev. Ellen Barrett, who made headlines in 1977 when she became the first openly lesbian priest ordained in the Episcopal church, was the guest preacher for the event. Bishop Spong presided at the liturgy, which included dedication of a banner which was carried in the New York Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade. Its message: "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You." ■

COMMITTEE CLOSING DOWN

The National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski has closed its doors effective June 30.

"Everything is set in place for a secure future for Sharon," said Tacie Dejanikus, co-chair of the Committee. "With Sharon's move, we have substantially completed the agenda around which we organized in 1987."

On June 12, Sharon was moved to Trevilla of Robbinsdale, an extended care facility near Minneapolis, MN. The facility provides rehabilitation and transition to less structured care for brain-injured persons. This move is the first step in the rehabilitation plan recommended by Kowalski's therapists at the Miller-Dwan Medical Center in Duluth.

Sue Wilson, Karen Thompson's attorney, said Sharon's father Donald has asked St. Louis County District Court Judge Robert V. Campbell to terminate his guardianship of his daughter, "because if he can't do it his way, he doesn't want to do it." Campbell has specified that he will not appoint Thompson as guardian. His selection of a third party guardian is pending.

Thompson praised the work of the National Committee. "the Committee has achieved a great deal," she said. "Any further areas of question in Sharon's future can be hammered out by my lawyer in court. This nightmare is almost over, and Sharon and I can be free to determine what the future holds for us."

The Committee reiterates that the story of Sharon Kowalski represents a

powerful lesson about the need for all couples who choose not to marry, or do not have legal access to marriage, to create durable power of attorney documents for their own protection.

While awaiting a vacancy at Trevilla, Sharon spent several weeks at the Ebenezer Caroline Center in Minneapolis and participated for the first time in a medical staffing conference about her care. She also received a pass to attend a barbecue with Thompson and other friends. It is expected that her medical team at Trevilla will be aggressive in recommending further activities that allow her to leave the facility.

Sharon may receive cards, flowers, etc., at Trevilla of Robbinsdale, 3130 Grimes Ave. N., Robbinsdale, MN 55422.

For further information, contact Karen Thompson at 3070 Fulton Circle, Clearwater, MN 55320. ■

LESBIAN ISSUES AND OUTREACH PROJECT

The Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) has announced the creation of a new Lesbian Issues and Outreach Project to advance the lesbian political agenda within the U.S. Congress and the gay and lesbian community.

The project—one of the first of its kind in the nation's capitol—will address the political and policy issues of the lesbian

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HSR — CALENDAR OF EVENTS — JULY

July 11 - Peggy Johnson, Kerr Park, 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.

July 14 - Friday Night Video, 7:30 p.m., "Color Purple"

July 15 - Peggy Johnson, Cantina del Paseo, 3007 Paseo Blvd., 9 p.m.

July 23 - Sisters of Swing, Ada, call 528-0020 for more information

July 28 - Friday Night Video, 7:30 p.m., "Hotel New Hampshire"

Aug 6 - Open meeting for persons interested in planning concerts, 2805 N. McKinley, 4:30 p.m., call 528-0020 for more info.

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community and develop strategies to advance those issues through federal legislation, education and advocacy.

The project will be extensively involved in political strategizing, issues development, lesbian outreach, fundraising, coalition building and other activities.

"The Lesbian Issues and Outreach Project will enable HRCF to expand and communicate—to Capitol Hill and our community—a feminist agenda for civil rights," said newly appointed HRCF Executive Director Tim McFeeley. "This includes equal social and economic opportunities and a broad range of other issues, such as reproductive rights, guardianship and domestic partnership concerns."

HRCF is now accepting applications for director of the project. Responsibilities of the director will include:

- Develop policy positions and legislative proposals and integrate them into HRCF's political, lobbying, media and constituent mobilization operations;
- Design and implement an extensive outreach program using the press, speaking engagements and other methods to inform the lesbian and women's community of political developments and to provide feedback to HRCF on women's issues;
- Build coalitions within the lesbian community and with progressive women's groups;
- Create a fundraising campaign focused on the lesbian and women's community.

"Lesbian political power continues to grow," said Hilary Rosen, HRCF board of directors co-chair. "The National Lesbian Conference in Atlanta in 1991 will affirm a lesbian political agenda. HRCF looks forward to participating in its development and implementing it in the U.S. Congress."

Individuals interested in the position should send resumes to the Human Rights Campaign Fund, 1012 14th St. NW, Suite 607, Washington, D.C. 20005, **Attention: Lesbian Issues and Outreach Project**. Salary will be commensurate with experience. Deadline for applications is July 30.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund is the nation's largest political organization fighting for lesbian and gay civil rights and responsible federal AIDS policy. ■

ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE IN U.S. WIDESPREAD IN 1988

Washington, D.C.—At an emotion-charged press conference in a Senate Office Building in Washington, the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) released its annual report on violence against lesbians and gay men on June 7th. The report concludes that the problem of anti-gay violence continued to be alarmingly widespread in 1988. A total of 7,248 incidents, ranging from harassment to homicide, were reported to NGLTF by 120 organizations in 38 states and the District of Columbia.

The NGLTF report, entitled *Anti-Gay Violence, Victimization and Defamation in 1988*, is the only national measure of reports of harassment and violence against gay people.

Joining NGLTF Anti-Violence Project Director Kevin Berrill at the news conference were: Claudia Brenner, victim of a brutal shooting attack in 1988 which left Brenner injured and her lover dead, and representatives from the offices of the chief Congressional sponsors of the federal Hate Crime Statistics Act, Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) and Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL).

Berrill, author of the 1988 report, said, "This report is our annual wake-up call to the American people, to public officials, to the media, to teachers and to clergy. Each act of anti-gay harassment and violence is an act of terrorism aimed at depriving all lesbian and gay people of our rights to speak, assemble, associate and above all, to love."

Brenner's statement at the press conference added an emotional and personal dimension to the release of the report. On May 13, 1988, Brenner and her lover, Rebecca Wight, were brutally attacked while on a camping trip in Adams County, Pennsylvania. The assailant, who silently stalked them for hours, shot and killed Rebecca Wight, and seriously wounded Brenner during the attack. Despite sustaining five gunshot wounds, Brenner walked nearly four miles to find help and survived. The assailant, Stephen R. Carr, was convicted on October 28, 1988, of first degree murder and was sentenced on May 17, 1989 to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Brenner said in her statement, "Statistics about murder, death and tragedy mean different things to me now. Before

May 13, 1988, I believed that we, as lesbians, could be hurt or harassed. With words, most likely, maybe with some force if things got out of hand. I had accepted the potential harassment gay people are accustomed to... I did not consider brutal murder born of hatred and ignorance. Nobody should have to worry about brutal murder. I didn't. I lived my life, chose my love respectfully and honorably as I believe all people should. Brutal murder happened to me. And killed Rebecca. It happened because we were identified as lesbians. By a stranger, with whom we had no connection."

Of the 7,248 incidents reported to NGLTF last year, 4,835 were verbal harassment (67% of the total); 885 (12%) were physical assaults; 713 (10%) were threats of violence or menacing; 449 (6) were acts of vandalism; 205 (3%) were episodes of police verbal/physical abuse; 70 (1%) were homicides; 54 (1%) were bomb threats; and 9 were acts of arson.

The 7,248 incidents reported in 1988 slightly exceeds the total for 1987 (by 240 incidents or 3%), and is the largest number ever documented in a single year by NGLTF. However, this increase is the result of outreach by NGLTF to gay community-based Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) and campus gay/lesbian organizations. If data from MCC and campus groups are excluded from 1988 figures, reports of anti-gay harassment dropped 29%. By the same measure, however, the number of violent crimes increased. Among non-campus, non-MCC groups acts of arson doubled from 4 to 8, reports of physical assaults increased 4%, reports of homicide increased 9% and reports of police abuse increased 32%.

While offering comparison with incidents of violence reported in previous years, the 1988 NGLTF report stressed that such comparisons are made with great caution. "We cannot accurately gauge whether and how much the problem has changed in comparison to other years. Fluctuations in the number of groups reporting to NGLTF, lack of systematic data collection throughout the U.S., and underreporting by victims make it difficult to ascertain whether

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the problem has grown, diminished or remained constant."

AIDS-related incidents increased in 1988 indicating that hatred and blame associated with the disease continue unabated. Seventeen percent (17%) or 1,259 of the total 7,248 incidents reported to NGLTF in 1988 were classified by local groups as AIDS-related.

The 1988 report concludes that anti-gay organized hate group activity—most of it involving neo-Nazi "Skinheads"—appeared to be on the rise, with organizations in 17 communities reporting anti-gay threats and/or attacks by hate groups.

NGLTF called for a concerted effort by government and community leaders to fight anti-gay and hate-motivated violence. NGLTF named the passage of the Hate Crime Statistics Act, which now has 126 cosponsors in the House and 47 in the Senate, a top legislative priority.

Copies of the NGLTF report may be obtained for \$4.00 for single copies and \$2.50 each for copies of 10 or more, by writing NGLTF 1988 Report, 1517 U Street NW, Washington D.C. 20009. ■

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF LESBIAN & GAY HISTORY CREATED

The Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, located at 208 West 13th Street in Manhattan, New York, announces the founding of the first museum in the United States devoted to lesbian and gay history. It will be called the National Museum of Lesbian and Gay History.

"This is a crucial step in preserving our heritage," says Executive Director Richard D. Burns, who convened a six-member committee that is coordinating the organization of the museum.

The Center is acquiring a substantial portion of the contents of the International Gay History Archive, a major collection amassed over ten years by John Hammond and Bruce Eves. It includes periodicals, books and memorabilia.

The archive will be stored in rooms in the basement of the Center that are now being cleaned and repainted. It will be exhibited in the Center's meeting spaces on a rotating basis, with all of it accessible to students, scholars, historians, and writers, by appointment. "The Center will

serve as a safe place to store the archive and the many items we expect to add to it in future years," says Burns.

The museum's first independent project, a multi-media exhibition commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion, took place in June, Lesbian and Gay Pride and History Month. Entitled "Imagining Stonewall," the exhibit included audio, video, picture and documentary displays. The Center has already successfully displayed the photographs of Robert Giard and Marilyn Humphries. ■

Potpourri

SUMMER FUN IN THE SUN (MAYBE)

by Sondra Metzger

We have all heard about how harmful summers can be for us: dehydration causing heat stroke and one too many suntans and sunburns causing skin cancer. But some of us don't stop to consider what all this heat does to our pets.

If you have a pet, you are probably aware of the hazards summer can bring to your four-legged friend. The main problem with summer heat is the possibility of heat stroke. You already know about pets and closed cars, but you might not remember about the pet tied up out back. Tying dogs to trees or dog houses can also bring about heat stroke due to the movement of the sun as the day goes on. Fresh water is a must at all times as well as adequate shade.

And how about those summer treats? Did you know that ice cream is a no-no for dogs? As much as they love it, the lactose it contains is difficult for them to digest. Try giving your pet ice cubes instead. There is also a new product on the market called Frosty Paws. This is the dog version of ice cream and contains ingredients that are more digestible and much better for your dog.

Lyme disease can be another problem. This disease is spread by very small ticks that are hardly visible to the naked eye. Although there is no evidence that Lyme disease can be transmitted from dogs to humans, ticks can still carry the disease to both. Results of the disease are lameness in one or more legs, swelling and pain in the joints and a fever. If

your dog becomes lame or feverish, you should take it to the vet for lab tests as soon as possible.

You can eliminate ticks before they have a chance to spread the disease by using dips, sprays and powders. If your pet already shows signs of the disease, it can be treated successfully with antibiotics available from your vet.

Did you know that a dog or cat can actually die from fleas? They can actually lose enough blood to fleas and ticks that they develop what's called flea or tick anemia. The flea problem is going to be bigger than ever this year. Spraying your yard and your pet's bedding will help in controlling the problem to a point, but your pet should also be sprayed, dipped or powdered as well. Be careful with puppies and kittens. Up to a certain age, their systems cannot handle the potency of most flea and tick products. Age limitations and directions are listed on the products. There are also a few products made just for them.

Of the many different flea and tick control products on the market, some work, some don't. A year ago there was a fatality problem with Hartz Mountain Blockade. The product is still on the market. Hartz Mountain redesigned the can so the directions are more evident, and contends that if the directions are followed, no harm will come to the pet. Welfare groups are still watching and waiting to see if there are any more problems.

Consult with your vet before trying anything on your dog or cat that you are not sure of. It can't hurt; it can only help both you and your pet have a more enjoyable summer. ■

YES! I want to be a Friend of Herland. My minimum donation of \$12 allows me use of the Herland Library and a 10% discount on store purchases over the next 12 months. (My \$12 is enclosed.)

YES! I want to help Herland with a donation to the New Building Fund.

\$15 \$20 \$25
 \$50 \$100 \$_____

Bookstore volunteer Building volunteer

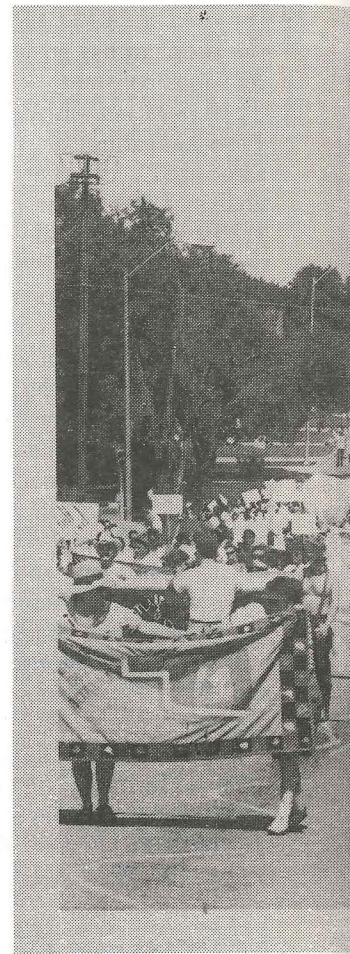
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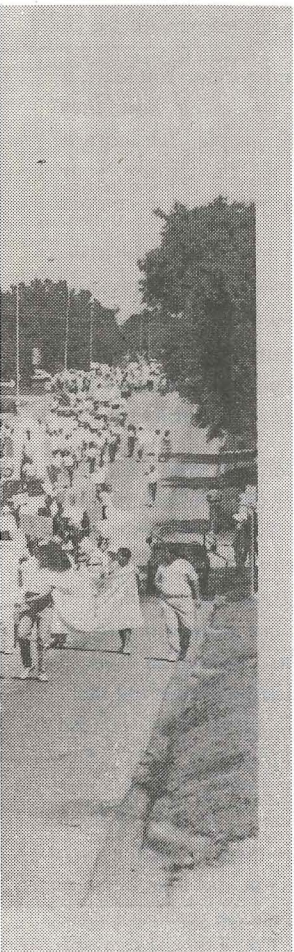
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City _____ St _____ ZIP _____

Telephone Number: () _____

Mail to: **Herland Sister Resources, Inc.**
2312 N.W. 39th
Oklahoma City, OK 73112





THE PRIDE IN '89



AN INTERVIEW WITH LYNN ATKINSON

conducted by Mary P.

Lynn Atkinson received her Masters in Social Work from the University of Oklahoma and her PhD in Sociology from Oklahoma State University. She has worked as a social worker in various areas of human services for fifteen years. Dr. Atkinson is currently employed as an Assistant Professor in Sociology and Social Work at OSU and as a contract worker for various social service agencies in Stillwater. Dr. Atkinson currently resides in Glencoe, Oklahoma.

Due to space limitations, the following is a condensed version of an interview with Dr. Atkinson about her new book, **Power and Empowerment, the Power Principle**, published by Falcon Press. We express our gratitude to Mary P. for a job well done in conducting the interview and sharing it with us.

Mary: One of the chapters in your book is titled "You can drink, take drugs, have a heart attack, or go crazy. For what are we working?". What does this have to do with your book?

Lynn: It has to do with the idea of getting more philosophical about what life is about and what you want to accomplish in life. Those things are peoples' way of coping with stressful situations and situations when they have gotten into a depowering mode. That question actually looks at what are we here for, what do we want to live for, how do we want our lives to be, what do we want our lives to be, and why are we getting caught up in the things that we don't want our lives to be.

Mary: What do you mean by depowering mode?

Lynn: Depowering is putting other people down in order to put yourself up in some way, or putting yourself down in order to put others up. It is a negative action to put someone down rather than raising someone up.

Mary: Basically we're talking about power and there are a lot of people who believe that you need to have power in order to be successful, and it doesn't matter how you acquire it. Obviously you don't believe this. Why?

Lynn: Everyone has power and everyone is using power in any situation they come across. To say that you're not is a lie. When people use their power in a depowering fashion, they have to worry about all the back-stabbing and the hatred that is going

to come because they've put somebody else down. They never really get what they want because they're always having to watch their back. With empowerment, my belief is the way you get power is by giving it away, and the more you give it away the more powerful a person you are. People that use empowering techniques are doing something that creates good will and loyalty. They may not always get what they want by doing this, but they create an environment where they will be empowered in the future, and it just kind of comes and goes, plus they create a habit that is empowering to the soul. Or depowering closes the soul down...

Mary: Power can be used for good or evil or to hurt or to help people. It's not as obvious as all that is it?

Lynn: My experience has been that most people do use empowerment unless they are in a situation where they feel in pain or threatened. When they feel in pain or threatened they'll come back to depowerment. When you look at power use or how people use power you have to look at their belief systems, at what happened to them, at their circumstances, and what would be the best in the circumstances, and you've got to analyze all of this to decide which is empowering and which is depowering. A lot depends on the situation.

Mary: Could you explain how personal pain and power tie into some of the principles in your book?

Lynn: Most people, when they are hurt and angry at someone, the first thing they do is run around and talk to all of their friends and tell them what a louse this person is because they did it to them. That makes them feel better but now all this gossip is going to get back to that person and that person is going to feel anger and resentment that they wouldn't come directly to them. Whereas if you look at the situation and try to say "What's the most empowering thing I can do?", you'd go directly to the person. When we choose to be in pain and see something as a problem then we want to get rid of that pain as quickly as possible, so we tend to do depowering things that will create more pain. If you look at the situation and say "what can I do to bring power to myself or to equalize the opportunity" you'll respond very differently.

Mary: Where do we learn our use of power?

Lynn: Through socialization. You learn it from your parents, by seeing how they empower and depower people. You learn it from television, schools, the culture, your peer groups; everyone you come in contact with.

Mary: If you use power and empowering techniques like you believe in using them, don't you come under a lot of criticism and aren't you running against the norm of what power should be?

Lynn: It's my hypothesis that you use power in every relationship and contact you make. When people help each other, feel good about what they're doing, enjoy each other's company, empowerment is in all of those. I think when we start thinking of power use as 'power use' most of us think of depowerment, and using depowering techniques. It's so much easier to go behind somebody's back and put them down rather than to face someone directly. My response if people put me down is to talk to them directly and empower them by saying such things as, "I know you did this because you're in pain and because you have some problems with what I'm doing. Let's talk about it."

Mary: If one is not superior to the other that's a no-win situation. How can that be a win-win situation for both the people involved?

Lynn: Well I think it can be a win-win situation depending on what you define as win. If you define winning as getting your way all the time then neither empowerment nor depowerment works. If you define winning as improving, then empowerment's going to work better than depowerment.

Mary: You have some opinions on changing the system and allowing the system to change. Your background is extensive in standing up for human rights. You've worked within the system. How do you feel that society or any system could change using the empowerment technique?

Lynn: A system is made up of individuals, and a system can't change, but individuals can, and by changing individuals you change the system. Empowering techniques are grass-roots level. You reach folks in their head and in their heart, and once you

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reach them they can change. In terms of changing depowerment in the system anyone who works in a system can refuse to do it. I have worked for organizations that have told me that I will make statements that I have done a certain activity and that I'll put it in my case records. I won't do it. It depends on what you are living for. Are you just living for making this money and staying in this little job or are you living as a person with a soul? If you are living as a person with a soul you look at life differently.

Mary: So you believe that using empowerment we can have an equal society. We can have everyone equal.

Lynn: We can have everyone, as a person, equally valued. That doesn't mean we'd all be doing the same things, or have the same skill or whatever, but I think we could have equal values. And I think it's possible that as a people, a group, we create our own reality, we create our own society. So if we change our hearts and minds and try to create something else I think it's real possible.

Mary: You said "we may be able to make people hurt, but can we set them free?" What does this have to do with empowerment?

Lynn: Basically empowering is the act of setting free. To me empowerment is helping create equality and it's also making people aware that less is more. You know, the whole crux to me gets down to the matter: what kind of person do you want to be? What is it that you're looking for out of life. If you're looking for material gain or whatever, chances are you're going to be depowering. If you're looking for gain but realize that you're a person with a soul and that you are living a life based on wanting to have a quality life or be a person that stands for something then you're looking at a whole different way of power use.

Mary: If you operate from empowerment then the idea is to realize that each human being has their own pain...

Lynn: Right. And we're going to look for the solution that's best for both of us. I'm not going to put you down, and I'm not going to put myself down.

Mary: Then power and empowerment is actually an opportunity to love?

Lynn: Yeah. And it's a little more. We get into the idea of love in terms of 'what you can do for me' or 'how I can make the whole world beautiful.' Empowerment to me is the idea of love where you can make the whole thing beautiful, or the Greek word *agape* love which is different from *eros* or *fillia* love. It's a spiritual love. It's a thing where by giving, by empowering, you are refilled yourself.

Mary: How is empowerment a possible solution to the problems of life?

Lynn: It's not a solution in terms of getting rid of the hardships. It's a solution in terms of how you look at life. And in empowerment you're not looking at anything different that hasn't been said by every messiah figure that has ever lived. When you're talking empowerment, you're talking about doing what Jesus Christ taught. Not what the churches teach today, but what he taught. In terms of equalizing people, reaching out and seeing the pain inside of other people, and healing it, in trying to realize that we're all in this together. I think it is a way you change things, because you get everybody working together, with their hearts and minds involved, and I think you'll see changes. ■

Meet the Board

OUR CAMP DIRECTOR

by Sondra Metzger

After the Spring Retreat, you didn't find our camp director and this month's featured board member propping her feet up. Laura is already preparing for the Fall Retreat.

"I volunteered to do the retreats until someone else came along who wanted the job," she said. "That was four years ago. I get such a kick out of it. I get a masochistic pleasure out of wearing myself out and exhausting myself."

If you thought planning a retreat was easy, guess again. Laura averages over 400 hours of volunteer time per retreat. It begins with telephone calls to locate a place to have the retreat. From that point on, she spends an hour working on the retreat every night after work,

then runs "retreat errands" on her days off.

Her expertise is unmatched within our organization. Laura's knowledge of people cannot be taught. She knows who would do workshops, the type of women who will be coming to the retreats and what to plan for them, who she can ask what of and the type of talent that would be great entertainment for retreat audiences.

She considers her hard work rewarded when she sees and hears campers wishing the retreat would last all year.

The native Oklahoman spent part of her young life in an institution as an alternative to living in an abusive home. During her stay, she watched as friends were raped and abused; some even died.

To combat what was happening in the system, Laura filed a lawsuit that received national attention while she was still in the institution. In hopes that she would wind up in prison and not fulfill the lawsuit, the institution gave her a high school diploma and sent her on her way. She has a tenth-grade-level education.

"I didn't go to prison, and the lawsuit was settled in 1984," she said. "Because of it, a lot of institutions were changed, laws were changed, the children's bill of rights was created, child abuse was outlawed in institutions, additional adjudication for children in need of treatment was created. It was a very corrupt system. Very victimized."

Following settlement of the suit, the state asked her to work within the system to help modify it. After that, Laura's background enabled her to gain a counselor's position at a psychiatric facility where she has worked with physically and sexually abused adolescents for three years.

She hopes someday to be a part of or start a transitional living program for teens 18 and 19 years old to train them to be on their own. She feels the program is needed by those who have not learned how to survive legally and within the social system; something that a college course would not teach them.

She would also like to develop a therapeutic pet program at the facility, and become more involved in the R.O.P.E.S. course, a wilderness adventure course.

Continued on next page

Outside of work, Herland seems to be Laura's biggest interest. She is presently trying to form an outdoor adventure club at HSR, along with planning the Fall Retreat.

Laura was introduced to Herland by Barbara Cleveland and was one of the first board members in 1984.

"We came to meetings with our checkbooks, pooled our money and bought books with whatever we came up with," she said.

She dreams of Herland being recognized and its existence acknowledged, not for who is involved with HSR but what HSR is and its intent. She feels that people know of HSR through specific people, not as an organization in and of itself.

"Our intent," she said, "has always been to be there for everybody, to be what is needed in the community and to be available no matter what to all women who need us. I think we can continue to evolve as long as the energy is positive and it doesn't become a personal thing. It's such a challenge because it has to change all the time to survive."

Laura also dreams of the day when the retreats will be equivalent to the music festivals around the country. "Someday people everywhere will look forward to coming to Oklahoma each year for the retreats," she said. "I foresee it growing in numbers, growing in workshops, growing to four days and drawing 500-600 people from all over the country."

Laura takes great pride in the fact that the retreat is a safe place to be whoever you are. She stresses the fact that the openness allows people to do whatever they want as long as it doesn't hurt someone else.

"When I arrive early, get the keys and start unloading," she said, "I feel like this is our home. When I have to load back up and turn in the keys, it's theirs again. But, we always leave it with a better feeling than it had when we came."

Laura admits that she looks forward to the potluck dinners at the retreats more than any other meal. She's hoping someone's around to roll her into one when she's 90. I think she just enjoys having 80 or so women cook for her.

She is also considering putting together a cookbook of potluck dishes.

In appreciation for all her hard work on making retreats a success, Laura was presented with a red director's chair by the Volunteer Committee at the Spring Retreat. Her name and title are embroidered on the back.

To Laura, Herland is quite a lady. When I asked her what HSR meant to her, Laura thought she was...

"... a thing of beauty that's a feeling, not a visual beauty," she said. "The first day I walked into the building on 39th Street, I walked through the window and looked at the trash laying all over the place. I cried thinking it wasn't going to work. Then I started cleaning up and people started coming in to help. Eight hours later we were eating burgers and that feeling was there. That feeling of community and family. Herland means family to me. Nowhere else are you going to get the experiences and friendships you get at Herland and her retreats. You won't get them sitting in some bar. If it wasn't for Herland, my whole life would be very, very different." ■

Letters to the Editor

Dear Herland,

Reading on the last page of the newsletter I see an announcement that begins "Herland is..."

Lately, it seems to me Herland is exclusively **lesbian** oriented.

Women, there alot of straight women in Oklahoma, too. They, too, need to be reached with literature and support, maybe even more since many of them deal with the patriarchal attitudes of not just society, but their families, even their "significant other" on a daily basis.

Bi-sexuals also exist and find themselves excluded by both straights and gays. I am bi-sexual, and I was beginning to wonder if I was welcome at Herland. I have never made any secret about my sexuality. I have been ridiculed by straights and gays. I fact, more so by gays!

Do you know how gays treat bi-sexuals. "You're too cowardly to be gay." "How can you be with that man." "It's all your fault us (clean) gays get VD" (from my dirty male partners). "You're just playing a game with us." The dirty looks/cold shoul-

ders if I walk in with a man go uncounted. Even if he is also bi-sexual. Sometimes especially if he is bi.

Do you know how straights treat bi's? "You're the reason straight people get AIDS," or they have a morbid fascination. The men want to watch. The women, about half the time, want to seduce you to see what it's like. Great. I'm a typhoid Mary or an organic vibrator.

I know how the public treats gays, and it's sad that gays, who have suffered so much from prejudice themselves, can still be so prejudiced and cruel. I, for one, am sick of advocating gay rights while being kicked in the ass by gay people.

So, am I welcome ANYWHERE?! Is Herland a feminist organization, or a strictly lesbian organization. Which is it? Sign me,

A Concerned Reader

Dear Herland,

The phenomenon of women's music is very important to women's cultural life. I think that everyone would agree that we want the travelling women musicians to make OKC a tour stop, continuing the tradition that Barbara Cleveland started and which has continued after her departure. However, I feel very strongly that the problems connected with presenting concerts and appearances need to be met by a strong, active and hardworking program committee. Therefore I would like to propose these motions for approval by the board.

1. That an open meeting for anyone who would like to be involved in planning concerts be called for a date during the first two weekends of August, so that it can be advertised in the newsletter and everyone who would like to may have some input and that a chairperson be chosen at that time.
2. The committee take full control of the coffeehouses. I am offering my new house for the coffeehouses after the June one because it is much bigger and the artists and Herland can make more money. There's plenty of room to sell books, too.
3. That the committee once formed be directed by the Herland board to hold a fundraiser for an endowment to meet expenses incurred by concerts. I think the Friendships United benefit where almost \$1000 was raised should show that we could put the concerts on a better budget. I feel that if the concert fund were secure, the concerts could be a money-maker for Herland, as well as a

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boon to our community.

All these proposals are saying is that the concert process has always been loose and never really under the control of any board. Therefore the concert situation has controlled us, rather than the other way around. I believe we must seize the opportunity to organize, to involve more people, and then to build our community using this valuable cultural force, women's music. Thanks.

Mary R.

The HSR Newsletter is offered as an open forum for community discourse. Materials printed herein reflect the beliefs and opinions of the authors of the articles or letters, and not necessarily those of the Newsletter or the Herland Board.

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DEADLINE on all advertising and submissions is the 15th of each month.

SUBSCRIPTIONS to this Newsletter are free upon request.



ANNOUNCES

FRIDAY NIGHT VIDEO

July 14, 7:30 p.m. - "Color Purple"

BOARD MEETING

July 16, 4:30 p.m. - Resource Center

FRIDAY NIGHT VIDEO

July 28, 7:30 p.m. - "Hotel New Hampshire"

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING

August 6, 4:30 p.m., 2805 N. McKinley, open meeting for anyone who would like to be involved in planning concerts

HERLAND CENTER IS NOW OPEN:

SATURDAYS 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

SUNDAYS 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.

WIN!

REGISTRATION FOR 2 for any retreat held within 1 year of date of eligibility. Includes registration and meals — A \$60 VALUE!

Drawing to be held during August Board Meeting.
NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN.

TICKETS ARE \$1. If you want to buy more than one chance, we will make the appropriate number of copies and drop them in the pot.

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Oklahoma City, OK 73112
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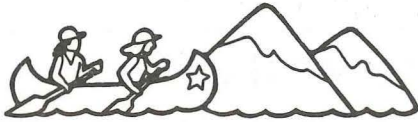
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