

# the HERLAND VOICE

NOVEMBER 1990

## THE GROOMING INSTINCT

a short story by R.L.S.

Regina Mathews was a picker. Not of produce, although she had done that on occasion, but of something far more exciting. She picked... things... from her person. From the time she could control her fingers she had picked at anything that even had a remote promise of being removable. It began with the plastic covering on her disposable diapers, and to her mother's dismay, she soon became adept at pulling off the little tabs that kept the diapers in place. Consequently she was graduated to cloth diapers, which Regina's mother pretended to her friends was due to ecological considerations.

Soon Regina grew old enough to run and skip, climb trees, build forts, ride bicycles, and enjoy other similar girlish pursuits. When the inevitable scraped knee occurred, she would quickly dry her eyes and smile to herself, knowing that the pain was worth the fun she would have in a few days. She would wait until the wound was nearly healed, then pick around the edges of the scab.

"Regina, stop picking at that, you'll make a scar," her mother would admonish. "Mom, I'm just checking it," would be Regina's reply. And of course the scab would come off and the scrape would bleed a little and a new scab would form... with little effort Regina could get one scrape to last for several weeks.

Another favorite activity was to deliberately play in the sun too long just so that she could burn to a crisp and reap the harvest of her sacrifice when she began to peel.

"Regina, you're going to die of skin cancer before you're fifteen," her mother would wail. But Regina, like all people under 30, was absolutely convinced of her immortality and invincibility, and continued to bask sublimely in the sun.

But when she reach a late puberty, she found something infinitely more interesting to occupy her time. She sometimes locked herself in the bathroom for hours at a time, causing much complaining and griping from family members who needed to take care of more important business. Her little brother Mikey liked to lie in wait outside the bathroom door so that when she finally emerged guiltily with one hand covering her nose, he could toss a softball at her, yelling "Think fast!" This would of course force her to reveal her nose as she caught the

ball, and Mikey would then howl "Reggie the red-nosed wierdo!" and race away down the hall. Regina became good at one-handed catches. She also became quite adept at hurling the softball after Mikey's retreating form, and got so that she could hit him square on the left cheek just about every time, causing him to squeal, "Mom, Regina hit me!"

One day Regina's mother cornered Regina in the kitchen. Stubbing out her cigarette and fixing Regina with a look of determination, she said without preamble, "Regina, you're spending too much time in the bathroom."

"Huh? But Mom, I just..."

"No buts, young lady. I've been worried about you for some time, and I've decided you need some outside activities to take your mind off your nose. I've joined you up with the girls' softball team—they need a good pitcher, and I told them you could pitch with one hand tied behind your back. Besides, I'm sick of Mikey whining at me about how you torment him..."

"Me, torment *him*!" cried Regina indignantly. "Mom, you never listen to my side of the story! Mikey just hangs around just waiting..."

"Now none of your lip, Regina Mathews. You know I can't abide tattle-tales. Team practice begins on Friday after school."

Regina hung her head and kicked at the corner of the stove.

"Geeeeawd, honey," laughed Regina's mom. "You're acting like it's the end of the world or something. Just be glad I didn't buy a straight-jacket."

Regina didn't actually mind joining the softball team, especially since that new girl at school, Mavis Stein, was going to play on the team. Mavis Stein had the nicest curly dark hair, and she wore T-shirts with the sleeves rolled up, and could out-arm-wrestle any boy in the school, seniors included. And sometimes she came to school with a red nose, which made Regina wonder.

Because Regina was a dynamite pitcher, she quickly gained Mavis' attention and respect, and soon the two of them were palling around in a very big way. Things began innocently enough. The two of them would lock themselves away in Mavis' bedroom to "study the finer points of softball." But one day after a particularly enjoyable study session, as Regina

was idly running her hands up and down Mavis' spine, her fingers suddenly stopped, and began slowly circling around a small bump on Mavis' left shoulderblade.

"Regina?" came Mavis' voice, muffled by Regina's hair. There was no answer. Mavis propped herself up on her elbows and looked into Regina's face. "Regina Mathews, what are you doing to my shoulder-b... ouch, that hurts!"

"Sorry," said Regina contritely. "I won't do it again. I don't know what came over me."

A little later, after a long, sweet kiss, Regina looked deeply into Mavis's brown eyes. Mavis, lying on her back, returned the look with equal rapture. But suddenly Regina's pupils dilated, her focus shifted, her eyes crossed. Mavis saw Regina's fingers come toward her nose like giant pincers, and she gave a shove and a twist and bounded to the other side of the bed, taking up her best fighting stance. "Ok, you wierdo, I know what you're up to!"

"But Mavis, there's a great big one right in the corner, and another one on the tip; you can't expect me to just sit here and look at them, can you?"

"No way! You know what you are, Regina? You're *wierd*, that's what. You're perverted. Don't come near me.

Regina went home with a heavy heart. How could she have misjudged Mavis so completely? And was Mavis right about Regina being wierd? She felt confused and unhappy. That night she composed a letter to the "Darling Darlene" column in the newspaper:

Dear Darling Darlene,

I have a terrible confession to make and don't know who else to turn to. You see, I can't keep my hands off myself. I mean, whenever there's a blister or peeling skin, or well, you know, a zit, I've just got to mess with it. I can't stop myself. And lately I've wanted to do it to other people. I haven't told anyone else about this because I'm afraid I might lose friends.

Signed, Finger-Happy

Darlene wrote back, saying:

Dear Finger,

First of all, let me reassure you; you are not alone! There are other people out there just like you. But you're right to question your behavior, and if you want to change that's the first step. The next step is to talk to your clergyman. Let me know what happens. I care.

Now Regina didn't even go to church, so she

(continued on page 2)



didn't think much of Darling Darlene's advice. Instead, she decided that if there were other people out there like her, maybe she could find them and start a club or something. She wasn't sure how she was going to go about recruiting members; what would she say to a likely prospect? "Excuse me, but do you pick? Are you a connoisseur of blackheads? What's the biggest piece of dead skin you ever pulled off in one piece? Do you ever cancel dates due to a red nose?" No, it would never work. She became more depressed than ever, and to console herself she worked on the best sunburn she'd ever had. She wouldn't even look at Mavis Stein at softball practice.

One evening after school as Regina was plugging away at her algebra homework, the front doorbell rang. Regina heard her mother go to the door and have a low-voiced conversation with someone. Then she heard the unmistakable clump of Mavis' feet taking the stairs two at a time. And there was Mavis at her door, looking downright contrite.

Regina stared at her from her desk, her pencil poised over a particularly difficult equation. Then she turned back to her books, a sour expression on her face. "What do you want, Mavis? I'm wierd, remember. Better watch out, it might rub off."

"Aw, Regina, look, I'm really sorry. I miss you. Can't we be friends again?"

There was an awkward silence. "Um, Regina, I brought you a present." Mavis held out a box of chocolates. "It's terrible for the complexion, if you know what I mean."

Regina put down her pencil as a slow grin spread across her face. In a flash they had their shirts off and were rolling around on the bed in a "skin-hug," as they liked to call it. And then Mavis stopped, with a strange look on her face, her fingers busy on Regina's back. She brought her hands in front of her and held up two papery sheets of dead skin, a look of complete satisfaction on her face.

"Ah hah!" howled Regina jubilantly. I knew it! A closet picker."

"You're right," sighed Mavis. "I've been one for as long as I can remember. I guess I just didn't want to admit it."

And that was the beginning of a beautiful relationship. On occasion Mavis would suffer fits of guilt, expressing concern about their activities. She said she felt sinful and that she didn't dare tell her friends who she really was. But Regina would simply smile and say it was all very natural; it was just... "the grooming instinct."



## LET US HEAR YOUR VOICE

Do you have an opinion about issues raised in the *Voice*, Herland activities, or other issues? Let us hear from you. Does your group have an activity planned or an issue you want raised with *Voice* readers? Let us hear from you.

The *Herland Voice* welcomes submission of non-fiction articles, poetry, and short fiction. Typed double-spaced manuscripts are preferred. Manuscripts should be no longer than 1500 words.

Letters to the editor are also appreciated. All letters must be signed and include a return address; however, letters may be published anonymously on request of the author. Letters to the editor will be limited to a published length of 300 words.

The *Voice* committee would like to receive news from your organization. We are limiting the number of flyers which can be inserted in the newsletter, but announcements of events of interest to our readers will be published in the *Voice*.

Please mail your submissions to: *Voice*, 2312 N. W. 39th, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. Deadline for each issue is the 5th of the preceding month (e.g. the deadline for the December issue is November 5.)

## KEEP THE VOICE COMING

The monthly cost for printing and mailing the *Voice* is approximately \$500. If you enjoy reading the *Voice* each month, please consider making a donation to help cover these costs.

- ☐ Please add me to the mailing list for the *Voice*
- ☐ Please change my address
- ☐ I'd like to receive the *Voice* in a sealed envelope by first class mail. I'm enclosing \$7.00 for the additional cost.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## FALL PEACE FEST

Mark your calendar now for Saturday, November 17, 1990. The Fifth Annual Fall Peace Festival is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the First Christian Church, N.W. 36th and Walker in Oklahoma City.

Herland Sister Resources will be sharing a table with the National Organization for Women, selling books, tapes and gifts and providing information and newsletters at the Fest, which is sponsored and organized by the Benedictine Peace House. Last year the Peace Fest attracted more than fifty organizations, representing a variety of progressive and social activist groups. This year the Peace House promises Crafts and Artists, Children's Activity Corner, Peace Art Booth, Exotic Foods and Patio Cafe, Weavings from Guatemala, Pottery and Carving from Mexico, and Entertainment all day by Oklahoma's Talent Pool. Food Booth by "The Earth."

And at 8:00 p.m., don't miss THE THERAPY SISTERS in Concert! If you weren't lucky enough to see and hear the Therapy Sisters when Herland presented them in concert earlier this year, now is your chance! \$5.00 donation at the door for the concert.

## UNICEF CARDS

(The Gift that Keeps on Giving)

Here is a partial list of outlets for Unicef Holiday cards, a gift that might save a child's life:

Churchwomen United 648 S.E. Wilshire Ave. Bartlesville 74006	Betty Bradshaw 107 N. Apache Sallisaw, 74955
St. Stephens 400 W. New Orleans Broken Arrow 74012	Jill Holmes P.O. Box 981 Stillwater, 74076
Southern Hill Christian 3207 S. Boulevard Edmond, 73013	The Learning Tree 7646 N. Western OKC 73116 (Books & Puzzles, no cards)
Frames 'N' Things 106 Plaza Madill, 73446	All Souls Unitarian Tulsa
United Ministries 1017 E. Elm Norman, 73072	Pier One Stores Oklahoma City
Church of the Servant 6009 NW Expressway OKC 73132	



National Lesbian Conference  
\*\*\*\*\*  
♦ ATLANTA, GA. ♦  
april 24♦28, 1991

♦DIVERSITY♦SOLIDARITY♦EMPOWERMENT♦

What if 5,000 lesbians of all shapes, sizes, colors, and abilities were to come together from around the country? And what if they listened to each other? And learned from each other? And what if, after four days of listening and learning, they returned to their homes all over the country with a new respect and understanding of how magnificently diverse and potentially powerful a community we are? And what if this diverse community, with new insight and understanding built coalitions on local, state, and regional levels to work toward improving the lesbian nation's socioeconomic, legal, and political status in this country?

What if .... can be! WE'RE DOING IT! PLEASE, JOIN US!

The National Lesbian Conference is scheduled for April 24-28, 1991, in Atlanta, Georgia. The goal of NLC is to provide a forum for all of the diverse populations of the lesbian community throughout the United States. It is a coming together of the Lesbian Nation. We need assistance to fund this effort. If every lesbian in the nation donated just \$1.00 to this project, annual conferences could be funded for the next three years. Please help. Send a dollar - cash or check - to:

NLC  
P.O. Box 1999  
Decatur, GA 30031

OR

Attn: Karen Lewis  
NLC - Gulf Region  
1932 NW 37th Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

A CALL FOR:      WORKSHOPS      CAUCUSES      PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Proposals are now being sought to fill 400 slots for workshops and panels in both traditional and non-traditional formats, to be held at the national conference in Atlanta. If you would like to help coordinate a caucus or present, facilitate or organize sessions on any topic concerning the lesbian community, please write the NLC at the above address or call the national office for more information at (404) 373-0000.

# NATIONAL LESBIAN CONFERENCE

*A woman-to-woman gathering finding strength through our diversity. The National Lesbian Conference is committed to safer and accessible space for all lesbians. Join us in celebrating the choice to relate across differences and enjoy wommin from all the various ways of lesbian lives. Meet me in*

**ATLANTA, GEORGIA**  
**APRIL 24-28, 1991**



**NATIONAL LESBIAN CONFERENCE, P.O. BOX 1999**  
**DECATUR, GA 30031** **(404) 373-0000**

TTY/Voice

The NLC is committed to fighting racism and other forms of oppression. The NLC is committed to accessibility for all lesbians with disabilities. Fragrances and scents make some lesbians ill. Please be sensitive in the use of such products. All NLC sponsored events are chem-free and the NLC affirms lesbians in recovery.





## STAFF CHANGES FOR NORMAN WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

Norman . . . The Board of Directors of the Women's Resource Center, Inc. (WRC) has announced an administrative restructuring and named former Shelter for Battered Women Director, Jo Ann Smith, to the post of WRC Executive Director.

Judy Harper Robinson, Center Director since 1986, has been named Fiscal Administrator for the center and its various components, including the Norman Shelter for Battered Women.

Prior to her appointment as WRC Executive Director, Ms. Smith served as a staff member at the Shelter for 10 years, most recently as Shelter Director. Prior to her affiliation with the Shelter, she served as a volunteer to the Rape Crisis Team and as a member of the Battered Women's Task Force in Greeley, Colorado. During her tenure with the Norman Shelter, Ms. Smith served as chairperson of the Oklahoma Coalition on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and served as the Coalition's representative to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Kristy Stewart, a former WRC volunteer and a Shelter Advocate since 1985, has been named to the position of Senior Shelter Advocate of the Norman Shelter for Battered Women. ■

## NONSENSE

The following "sayings," offered by Peggy Johnson and Cindy Craven, are derived from some famous statements and speeches. Can you figure out what the real statements were? If you have any similar adages, we will be running a monthly column and welcome submissions.

- There is some dash in the hair of grins which, baked in the mud flees on to wader rings, committed, all alike, and found in gallows and mysteries.
- Of all foliage, the wine and food speak mostly to show skinny elves.
- Freak and sea shell mind.
- Streak wafley and marry a pig hick.
- Delve alot and crawl to tell.
- Poor bores and heaven fears, ah-so.
- We mold these boothies to be irrelevant.
- Undermine that the train ran and sailed the sun, and then sail we, fine, today.
- The hurl is a frito.
- I freed crummy help.
- Hired or petting nude? Desired at netting school?

## Skeeter

*I've tainted the love*

*between my cat and me.*

*She's not much of a meower but prefers  
to scratch once or twice at the door  
so I'll let her in.*

*Today she scratched.*

*I glanced through the pane as I opened the door  
And just in time noticed  
her mouth was full of bird.*

*A live, wide-eyed bird that was looking  
toward the freedom of the sky*

*One wing free*

*Just let me go*

*I'll fly away.*

*She wanted to bring the bird in, of course.*

*Her home*

*Her favorite place.*

*Of course she wants to bring the bird in.*

*And I'm her favorite person.*

*After two and a half years she finally let on  
last month.*

*So she wants to show it to me*

*Show it to me.*

*But the bird is tasting freedom,  
like she's tasting that bird.*

*"Let it go!"*

*"Let the bird go!"*

*The cat, of course, is wide-eyed too  
and really needs to come in, she thinks.*

*I go out.*

*I grab her neck skin like she's a kitten.*

*"Let the bird go!"*

*(Does grabbing their necks make them open  
their mouths or close them tighter?)*

*I let go.*



*I grab her neck again and pull the hair on top of  
her head*

*When she was a little kitten*

*She had a buzz hair cut*

*So cute*

*So happy to be alive with her  
little buzz hair cut.*

*I pull her hair and the bird almost gets free.*

*Is she clamping down tighter?*

*Why'd she bring it here?*

*Cats catch birds, after all.*

*But don't bring it home*

*wide-eyed looking for freedom.*

*I do the pull routine one more time.*

*The bird knows the split second of freedom and*

*flies flies flies*

*Straightaway*

*across the street*

*free free free*



*She let the bird go!*

*No, she senses, you let the bird go.*

*I feel good I let the bird go.*

*I feel bad I interfered with cat things.*

*I have tainted the love*

*between my cat and me.*

*Will she forget I'm her favorite person?*

by Peggy Johnson

## BE A PART OF HERLAND

Herland is the collective effort of the women of Oklahoma. You can be a part of creating and sustaining this very special community we call Herland. Join a committee, volunteer to work in the resource center, or make a contribution to help meet the monthly expenses. Herland will be what you make it.

**YES, I want to help Herland continue to grow.**

- ☐ I'm interested in working on a committee. Please have the committee chair call me.
- ☐ I'd like to volunteer at Herland. Please have the volunteer coordinator call me with more information.
- ☐ Here's my contribution of \_\_\_\_\_ to help support Herland.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

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CIRCULATION: 750

GENERAL INFO: (405) 521-9696 (leave message)

SUBSCRIPTIONS to the *Herland Voice* are free upon request.



## REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM UPDATE

by Margaret Cox

The Oklahoma Coalition to Restrict Abortions has gathered 108,000 signatures on a petition calling for a statewide vote for a new abortion law, one which advocates say would shut abortion clinics throughout the state. The petition goes first to the Secretary of State Hannah Atkins' office for counting of the signatures, and next to the state Supreme Court, where challenges to both the signatures and the content of the proposed law may be brought.

Pro-Choice advocates have established The Choice Legal Defense Fund to fight efforts to get the abortion question on a state-wide ballot. The CLDF will of necessity be doing fundraising and accepting donations. As this newsletter goes to press we do not have an address or telephone number for them. Campaign for Choice, however, is still active; you may call them at (918) 749-5877 or (405) 842-3791.

Women throughout the country were alarmed and worried following the Supreme Court's Webster decision in the summer of 1989, and we rallied and worked and gave time and money to maintain our right to make our own reproductive decisions. In Oklahoma, we have been successful in maintaining the status quo: it was abundantly clear to our legislature that Oklahoma is pro-choice.

However, we must be careful to recognize that this is a temporary victory. New Supreme Court Justice David Souter has been careful not to give his opinion on *Roe v. Wade* and a woman's right to choose an abortion; but National NOW and other progressive organizations believe that his confirmation to the Supreme Court gives the Court a 5-4 majority to overturn *Roe*. Additionally, there are virulently anti-choice candidates running for office here in Oklahoma, in competition for the governor's office on down. If we elect pro-choice candidates in November we will give ourselves a margin of safety in the fight to come next year.

Even though we may not like some of the pro-choice candidates very much, women who want to protect their reproductive freedom are going to have to get out there and not only vote pro-choice, but put some time in on campaign work also.

Remember: if you don't vote, you can't gripe about it! ■



## ACLU AIDS PROJECT TO FOCUS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN WITH AIDS

In a significant broadening of its AIDS work, the American Civil Liberties Union has added a new staff lawyer to work specifically on issues revolving around HIV infection in women and children.

The new lawyer, Elizabeth Cooper, has received a one-year fellowship from the New York law firm of Skadden, Arps, Meagher, Slate & Flom, to pioneer test cases for this growing and underrepresented population.

Cooper, a 1988 graduate of New York University Law School, joins the ACLU's ongoing AIDS Project. She joins 9 other fulltime ACLU lawyers who are now working on AIDS and gay rights issues around the country.

"The idea of the Skadden fellowships is to serve people who would not otherwise get legal representation," Cooper said. "My goal is to provide legal services to the poor women and children who constitute the next wave of people to be hit hardest by AIDS."

With courts just now beginning to address legal questions arising from the high rates of HIV infection among women and children, Cooper said she plans to initiate test cases in several areas. Most important, she said, are developing ways of increasing basic levels of health care for women and children and of ensuring better access for women to drug trials.

"The women and children at greatest risk for HIV disease also happen to be the people most disenfranchised from the health-care system, the support-services system and the legal system because they most often are poor and people of color," Cooper said.

W. B. Rubenstein, Director of the ACLU's national AIDS Project, said the Skadden fellowship will allow his project to continue broadening its scope to an even greater focus on access to care and treatment.

"For the last three years, the ACLU AIDS Project has been a leader in fighting discrimination and protecting the civil rights of persons with HIV disease," Rubenstein said. "With Cooper's work, we will now be able to push even harder to develop cases of life-altering consequences for poor women and their children."

Cooper, a Root-Tilden-Snow Scholar at NYU Law School, has written previously about HIV disease. She published "AIDS Law: The Impact of AIDS on American Schools and Prisons" in NYU's Annual Survey of American Law.

The Skadden Fellowship Program annually awards 25 fellowships to help lawyers provide better legal services to the poor, disabled, homeless, elderly and those deprived of their human and civil rights. ■

## TENS OF THOUSANDS CONTACTING CONGRESS

Washington, DC—The Human Rights Campaign Fund, the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, and the organizers of the National Coming Out Day (which is held each year on October 11th) announced a program of broad participation of lesbians and gays and their supporters in the largest grassroots lobbying effort in the history of the lesbian and gay rights movement.

"1990 has been a year of remarkable legislative successes for the lesbian and gay community. Many of those successes have in part stemmed from growing participation in the 'Speak Out' program around the country," noted Tim McFeeley, Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund. "This is a remarkable story that has been missed by many writers who are analyzing the impact of the lesbian and gay community on the political process."

"The 'Speak Out' program allows both lesbian and gay and non-gay people to express their opinions to their representatives when it is most effective, immediately before critical AIDS and civil rights votes on Capitol Hill," McFeeley states. "Our supporters are taking an aggressive and positive approach to the issues that affect us."

Noting that many supporters of lesbian and gay rights "have the ability or opportunity" to march, demonstrate or come to Washington to lobby their Representatives and Senators face to face, McFeeley stated that the "Speak Out" program "presents an opportunity for every American who supports our issues to register their opinions at the appropriate moment in the political debate."

The "Speak Out" program, with 45,000 participants this year, has activated messages to Congress 42 times in the past 18 months, sending 170,000 messages on lesbian and gay civil rights and health issues, including AIDS. During that period, lesbian and gay activists have achieved more legislative victories in the lesbian and gay rights movement. Major successes have included the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, and the Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency Act.

McFeeley stated that the "Speak Out" program ensures that members of Congress know that they have constituents who support lesbian and gay rights and gives supporters an opportunity to participate in the political process in an effective way. "Folks in Boise, Idaho, Birmingham, Alabama, Schenectady, New York and El Paso, Texas have joined their colleagues in San Francisco and New York in the Fight for Fairness," he stated. ■



## To My Sisters

Do not,  
not for a minute  
think  
my love for you  
is not self interest;  
It is, and more:  
It is affirmation  
of myself,  
beatification  
of my mother,  
blessings  
on my daughter:  
it anchors me;

For each of you  
reflects more of me  
than I sometimes  
can acknowledge;  
and each of you  
I manifest.

If I could love  
my brothers  
as I do you,  
I would encompass  
the world.

by M.O.C.



## Looking

She wanders the streets alone,  
Looking this way and that;  
Looking for a home.  
She's looking for love  
And attention.  
The only one who loved her,  
Left her.  
The only one who cared,  
Deserted her.  
She gets kicked around,  
She gets teased and put down.  
So she goes to lay in  
The corner, lifting  
Her saddened eyes  
Looking for something she'll  
Never find.

by Michelle K.



## Ode To Midnight

Cat.  
Scat cat,  
Black cat,  
Witches cat,  
Halloween cat,  
Scroungy cat,  
Scruffy cat,  
Skinny cat  
Alley cat,  
Poor cat,  
Hi, Cat,  
My cat,  
Meow.



taC Cat.  
tac tacS Scat cat,  
tac kcalB Black cat,  
tac sehtitW Witches cat,  
tac neewollaH Halloween cat,  
tac ygnuorcS Scroungy cat,  
tac yffurcS Scruffy cat,  
tac ynnikS Skinny cat  
tac yellA Alley cat,  
tac rooP Poor cat,  
tac ,iH Hi, Cat,  
tac yM My cat,  
woeM Meow.

## Just Too Much

Too much love  
But none for me  
Too many wounds  
All to my soul  
Too many red drops  
All from inside  
Too much pain  
When will it stop?  
Too many friends  
But I'm all alone.



by Michelle K.

## Upon Thinking of Ruth

I would like to write a line  
that would make a difference  
to someone, somewhere-if  
only for a moment.

A line that would touch  
an open wound — and cause it to heal,  
that would touch a frightened soul  
and make her brave.

A line that would touch a heart  
and bring it back to me.

I would like to write that line.  
But I wonder now if I would  
write it to you.



by C

## Always Accoustic

When the light racks at Angles run out of juice  
When the smoke and lasers no longer entice

The dancers to come out  
I'll still be playing acoustic  
Long as I got an idea I will use it  
To make Jean a new song to listen to.



by Peggy J.

## Self-Love

I once saw a woman, in an open market place,  
Getting her ears pierced.  
I had often seen such people, always with  
a crowd around them,  
Watching their beloved in movement  
of outward expression.  
Well, this particular woman had none  
Other than me  
Yet she had such a jubilant look in her face;  
Such expectation, such happiness  
As I have never been able to define.  
I know she must have had someone  
waiting, somewhere,  
Whom she could show her prize.  
I have never known one  
who could drink so much joy  
only for herself.



by Peggy Johnson

by M.O.C.



## Chatterbox

The Oklahoma State National Organization for Women will hold its State Council Meeting on Sat., Nov. 17 at noon in Stillwater, 1223 Preston Avenue. All NOW members are welcome to attend....

The Benedictine Peace House is sponsoring a Mideast Forum—"U.S. Involvement in the Middle East" in Fri., Nov. 2, at 8 p.m. at St. Luke's United Methodist Church Hospitality Room, 222 N.W. 15th St., OKC. Speakers include Raymond Habiby, Ph.D, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at OSU; Jeff Hamilton, Okla. State Representative; and Hazih Zuhdi, M.D., Moslem Community Leader....

**GOOD NEWS:** On October 9, 1990, the Supreme Court left intact an affirmative action program plan for hiring and promoting more minorities and women in San Francisco's fire department. Let's hope it's a trend....

**November 6 is ELECTION DAY.** Get out there and exercise the right that people fight and die for; some races are won or lost by a few votes; let's make sure that the Herland voice is counted. First Class Citizens vote, and that means women!....

**Thanks to all who participated in the Ton 'O Pennies fundraiser.** The winner donated 29 pounds of pennies to Herland. A total of \$234.57 in pennies was donated. Donna D. entertained us with her wonderful music and humor, and a good time was had by all....

The Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display Nov. 30 through Dec. 2 at the Maxwell Convention Center in Tulsa. Any locally produced panels must be submitted by Wed., Nov. 21. For more info. contact Val Bode at 749-0063 or write: The Oklahoma Names Project, P.O. Box 702225, Tulsa, OK 74170....

The Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum will hold the 1991 National Gay & Lesbian Conference in Los Angeles, CA Feb. 13 - 18, 1991. The Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum is dedicated to empowering the Black gay and lesbian community and its organizations....

**Do you know a child dreading the prospect** of being required to dissect a cat, frog or other animal or face a failing grade in biology? Have her/him call the Dissection Hotline at 1-800-922-FROG for help in resisting this requirement and in finding suitable alternatives....

The Oklahoma Women's Network has valuable information on the candidates' stands in the upcoming election. To join OWN and receive their newsletter write OWN, P.O. Box 14339, Tulsa, OK 74159-1339....

**CHILD CUSTODY:** A local chapter of the Committee for Mother and Child Rights, Inc., has recently been formed in Oklahoma. Women are losing custody upon divorce at an alarming rate, as judges tend to ignore or deny the importance of awarding custody to the "nurturing parent:" the parent who was the primary caregiver. The CMCR is a national organization fighting for legal, judicial and legislative reform of a system that is clearly backslashing against women and our new-found freedoms. For more info on the local CMCR chapter, contact Colette Warkentin, 708 SW 50th, OKC, OK 73109; (405) 634-3910. (Info courtesy of the Oklahoma Women's Network.)....

**MAGAZINES AND PERIODICALS WANTED!** Do you currently subscribe to a wonderful, progressive magazine, newsletter or periodical, one that you wish everyone in the world could read? If so, take a step in that direction and give Herland a gift subscription. We would welcome subscriptions to the "mainstream" progressive rags like Off Our Backs, the new MS., the Progressive, In These Times, On The Issues, Mother Jones, Utne Reader, etc, but would also love to have available the lesser known ones. If you want to send us a subscription and don't want to duplicate a subscription (though we wouldn't at all mind having more than one copy of many of these!), give us a call at (405) 521-9696; leave a message during the week and we will call you back, or call during store hours on the weekends.

## JEWISH LESBIAN DAUGHTERS OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS TO HOLD FALL MEETING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

In this last decade of the twentieth century, waves of antisemitism and anti-Jewish violence are sweeping much of the world. Jewish cemeteries are being desecrated, and reports of attacks and defacements from Paris, London, Stuttgart, Jerusalem, Moscow, Auckland, Quebec, and throughout the United States indicate a resurgence of racism and antisemitism. Modern demagogues are revising history by belittling, and even denying, the Holocaust.

But the reality that was the Holocaust continues to have an impact on the second and third generation of those who survived. On the weekend of November 16-18, in New Hampshire, Jewish Lesbian Daughters of Holocaust Survivors (JLDHS) will meet for discussion, support, and networking around issues faced by children of survivors. JLDHS has become an international organization, with people from Australia and Nicaragua in addition to its members from the United States and Canada. The membership grows each year as more Lesbian daughters of survivors learn of the existence of this unique support group.

JLDHS is for lesbians whose parent or parents survived the Holocaust. This includes parents who were in Nazi Europe or North Africa in 1933 or later and who survived death camps or in hiding, by passing as non-Jews, or by managing to leave for safer territories. Jewish and non-Jewish lesbian partners of daughters are welcomed, and may attend workshops specifically for partners.

For further information write Box 6194, Boston, MA 02114, or call (617) 321-4254. ■



## THE QUILT IN TULSA

Hundreds of panels of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, an international memorial to those who have died of AIDS, will be on display in Tulsa, beginning Friday, November 30 from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., through December 2, 1990, at Tulsa's Maxwell Convention Center, 100 Civic Center.

This is the first time the Quilt has been on display in Tulsa. Over 800 panels, or less than 7% of the entire Quilt, will be on display through the weekend. More than 1.5 million people, in the U.S. and around the world, have seen the Quilt since its first display in October 1987. ■



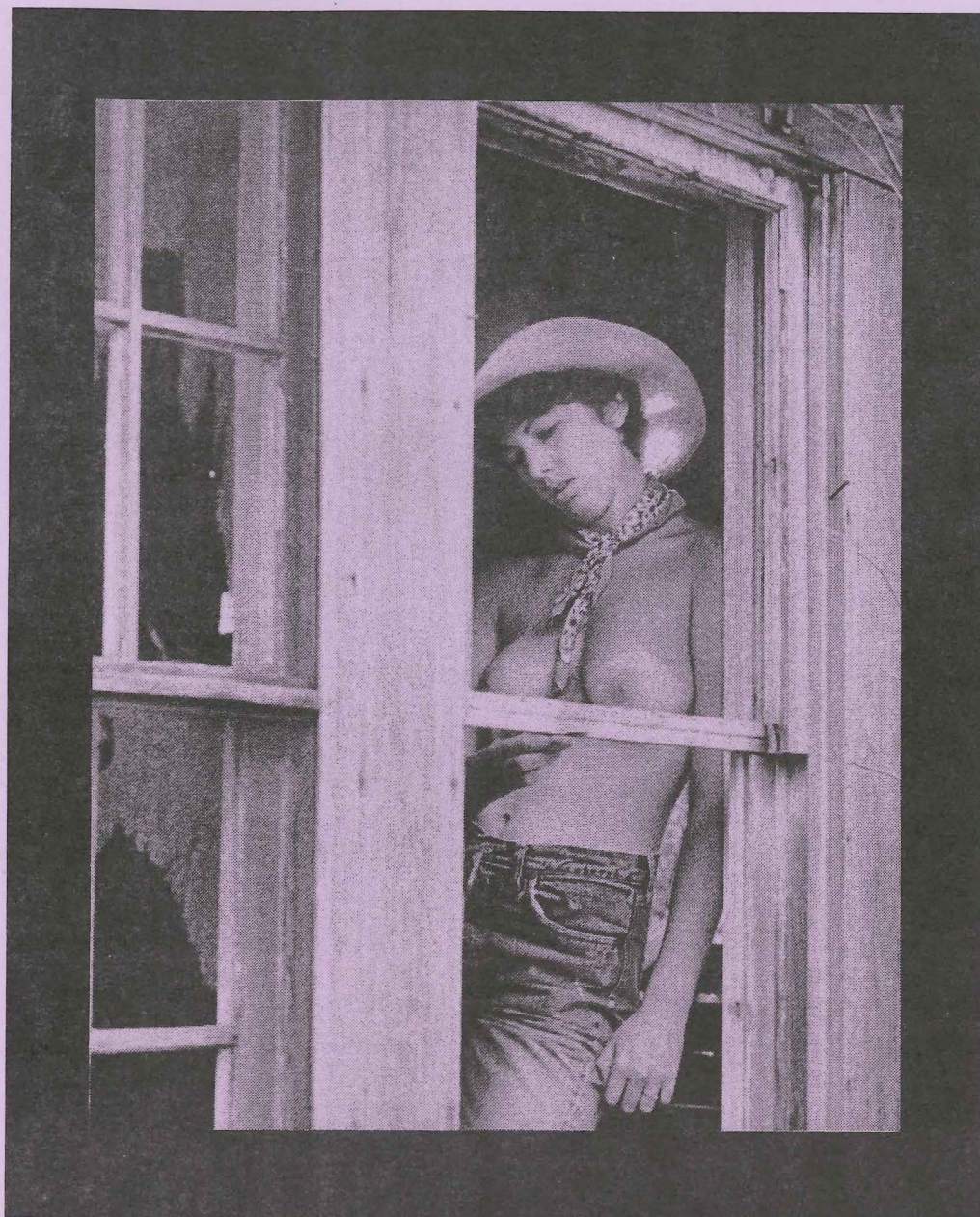


PHOTO BY GINGER MCGOVERN

## Soulstice

all along my sundry selves talking  
back and forth across the continents  
of my mind  
deep within across the heavens whispering  
through the stars comes a voice  
speaking gently, quietly...  
beckoning: listen to my call  
come to me, for you know  
the spring of wisdom flows  
in calm canyons, deep caverns  
and over valley hills,  
through misty morning gardens  
where dying flowers and sprouting seedlings  
know their beauties equally.



Deborah Fox

## Good-bye, dear mother

To my dearest mother,  
I should've written years ago,  
But I put it off  
I didn't want to say bye.

One day bled into another  
Soon—I never thought you'd go.  
Some would like to scoff  
The tears for me, that I cry.

Anger and grief I always smother  
Till at many times I'd blow,  
Cutting in my soul a deep trough,  
Wishing you didn't have to die.



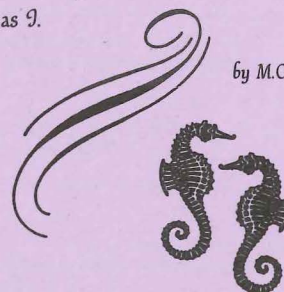
by Michelle K.

## The Beachcomber

Silent,  
searching eyes  
and slow feet  
my only moving parts,  
clasped hands behind my back  
ballast for a forward stoop,  
concentration so profound  
reality warps;  
I am all focus,  
a laser of intent;  
yet all dispersed:  
surely the sun must feel  
more boundaries than I.

A shard,  
a fragment  
of a perfect shell,  
I find;  
and hold it in my mouth,  
a talisman,  
love it respectfully  
with my tongue;  
not tucked in my cheek  
like a wad of gum;  
on my tongue it lies in state,  
becomes as much a part of me as  
the mother's milk  
my tongue remembers;  
with the power of the shard in me  
I will find its mate, as full  
and complete  
as I.

by M.O.C.



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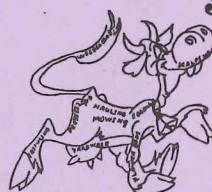
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