

to the HERLAND VOICE

May, 1994

MOTHERSONG

by Judith Rycroft

Mother's Day is May 8—time to sing a little Mother-song:

"M" is for the million things she gave me;

"O" means only that she's growing old.

"T" is for the tears she shed to save me;

"H" is for her heart of purest gold.

"E" is for her eyes with lovelight shining;

"R" is right, and right she'll always be.

Put them all together, they spell "Mother,"
a word that means the world to me.

That's my mother, every word—even the "R" is right...."
She is so Right that she would vote for Pat Robertson for
President! I try to overlook that strange conviction...goodness
knows she overlooks many of mine!

I learned that song in my eighth year of daughterhood.
I sang it to Mother, who smiled mistily and said, "How
sweet; thank you!" and all that stuff, but there was a degree
of effusiveness missing.

Later, seeking reassurance, I asked, "Did you really like
the song?" "It was wonderful, Honey...but what was that
line about 'growing old'?" She has always had a little trouble
handling age.

Age is a Painful Reality, and my mother simply cannot
absorb Painful Realities. Oh, sometimes she can hang onto
one a little while, but then it fades. Part of this survival
technique is conscious—she prays away the negatives. Much
of it, however, is unconscious; her mind will not hold onto
more than she can deal with. The result is that she is
unfailingly cheerful, optimistic, and positive...and many
times in my life I was a motherless child.

I could be resentful of the times I told my mother about
pain—molestation, rape, abuse—and she didn't hear my cries
for help. She never suggested I wasn't telling the truth; she
just indicated that my version of the truth might not be valid—
"Oh, Honey, maybe you just misunderstood."

I could be resentful of the elocution, ballet, and voice
lessons, the dresses, the curls, all the devoted dedication that
went into her attempts to force a chunky tomboy into a Little
Lady mold.

I could be resentful, and perhaps I am—at some level or
at some times. One of the things she taught me, though, was
to try to understand others' motives and, thereby, their
behavior.

Mother Nature's prime motive is survival of the species.
Human motives echo Nature's; it's just that we have tried to
overlay instinct with manipulations of thought and environ-
ment.

(continued page 4)

MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR MOTHER'S DAY

by Helen Miller

In 1907, Anna Jasvis began a letter campaign to govern-
ors, members of Congress, and the President to recognize a
day to honor mothers. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson
issued a proclamation declaring Mother's Day "as a public
expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our
country."

As Mother's Day approaches, we may begin to think
about what motherhood means to us. In the courtrooms of
America, motherhood is being narrowly defined by conserva-
tive viewpoints that ignore the reality of healthy lesbian and
gay families. The question in the law becomes, "Are lesbian-
ism and motherhood compatible?"

Hundreds of lesbian custody cases are fought yearly,
with many being settled out of court. In most of the cases, the
lesbianism of the mother is given priority over her parenting
skills. In most of the cases, the lesbian mother loses.

In 1992, papers were filed in the District Court of Cleve-
land County seeking the removal of two young children from
the custody of their mother based solely on the grounds that
she is a lesbian and lives with her partner. The judge's ruling
stated that the mother was "unfit" solely because of her sexual
orientation and gave immediate custody to the father. In
response to this ruling the Herland Legal Defense Fund was
created to raise money for a series of appeals.

(continued page 8)

HERLAND SPRING RETREAT

featuring
Miss Brown to You

MAY 20-22

See Inside for Registration Information

ST. SYBIL

Sybil Ludington, Matron Saint of the Forgotten Woman, is an occasional contributor to this space. Although she likes to think of herself as all wise and all knowing, views expressed by her are her own, and not necessarily the views of The Voice.

Dear St. Sybil,

Here it is, Spring has sprung, and to go along with the gorgeous flowering trees and shrubs, my back yard has turned into a dandelion patch - it looks like the lawn is wearing a beautiful yellow and green dotted swiss coverlet. My problem is my partner, who thinks dandelions are weeds and wants me to get out there and mow them all under. Do I have to?

Sorrowfully,
Olive M. Aull

Dear Olive,

No. Of course not. Never. Not on your life. Well, ok, maybe some day; when those pretty little yellow blooms turn into fuzzy blowing grey things you will probably want to, and then you can.

The whole thing about lawns and flower gardens kind of has all of us here bemused, even those who were avid gardeners while living on Earth. Actually it is the grass more than anything which seems such-a-human anomaly. You tear down everything natural to build your little houses and then plant this boring manicured basically worthless stuff, and poison it and the atmosphere and any dogs, cats, birds, worms, snails, butterflies, beetles, ladybugs, lightning bugs, snakes, gophers, possums, raccoons and little kids who live or play on it; just to keep it as bland and boring looking as you can. Grass belongs on the golf course, Olive, tell your partner that.

And as for flowers - believe me, where I am we don't differentiate between "flowers" and "weeds." The dandelion is as bright and cheerful a color, and as pleasing in design, as any flower can be. Its appearance in the Springtime is a tribute to all that is beautiful and enduring. It is, truly, the good hardy peasant stock of the flower fiefdom.

What is my favorite flower, you ask? Lilac, of course, huge bunches and bushes of lavender and white lilac perfuming the earth with a sweet whiff of heaven; and zinnias, of course, a homely sweet flower with no perfume to speak of, but a perfect design in such subtle variations of color the heart sings; and carnations, fresh grown in the field, with an aroma that makes a person wish to be corporeal again...ahem.

And honeysuckle, a wonderful weed, sweet smelling and tasty too. The perfect weed, of course, is Hemp. If hemp were grown for paper, there would be no debate over spotted owls vs. timber - hemp is a renewable farmable source of fiber for making paper, clothes, rope, strong fabrics - did you know that during World War Two the US Government paid farmers to grow hemp for the war effort? A little known but fascinating nugget, and true.

The medicinal properties of hemp are still being discovered, more slowly than they should be because of the nature of the weed and the controversy surrounding it. It is quite amazing to us here to see your society attempt to suppress such a useful plant. Even if you didn't want to get together once a month and smoke it and celebrate and have fun and give thanks to Creation for it, you could still use it for its other benefits. Hemp was legal until very recently in your history, a valuable crop (and still Oklahoma's largest cash crop); but unfortunately Hemp is a lot like solar energy - so ample and available that not enough people can figure out how to make enough money from it. As soon as they do, my dear, it will be legalized, believe me.

Well, Olive, I believe I digress. Sorry. It's hard not to get on a high horse when people are being so idiotic. Love to you and your partner, and don't mow down anything you don't want to.

Love & kisses,
Sybil

Personal and confidential to VN: Oh my dear, you know Oklahoma needs you - your scholarship, your intelligence, your courage, and your cocky attitude...

Many Oklahomans love to appear ignorant and bigoted and crimson around the old collar, but one on one are usually just as pleasant and neighborly as anyone could ask for; and there don't appear to be more hate crimes per capita in Oklahoma than there are elsewhere - it's probably the frontier live-and-let-live spirit at work. *Howsomever*, there are a few very vocal idiots, notably in the legislature and in some pulpits, who celebrate ignorance and inflame bigotry; your voice is urgently needed to help quell their's.

Anyway, how could you even think of leaving after the gorgeous Spring you are having this year - really! Alaska, pshaw; rain and dark and cold; who needs it...

Admiringly yours,
SL

□

Debra K. Browning, R.Ph. D.D.S.

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JOY HUSKA, D.V.M.

May, 1994

SUPPORT GROUP forming for Women with HIV. If you are interested in helping form this networking/support group, call 405/524-3903.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 GAY MAY DAY * OK NOW Conference continues	2	3 Simply Equal 7 pm Herland	4 Cleveland County NOW 7 p.m. Norman Public Library	5	6 CoDA 7 pm Herland	7 PEGGY JOHNSON at the Wildflower & Herb Festival Posey Park. Eufala after 11am
8	9 Herland Legal Defense Fund 6:30 at Herland All Interested Folks are Welcome	10 Simply Equal 7 pm Herland	11	12 Teachers Group 7 p.m. Herland	13 PEGGY JOHNSON at the Grateful Bean NW 10th & Walker, 9-12 # CoDA, 7pm	14 ACADEMIC DYKES Call (405) 321-6350 for time & Norman location
15 Herland Board Meeting *** 3:30 *** Please note earlier starting hour	16	17 Simply Equal 7 pm, Herland * OKC NOW 6:30 pm Gaylord YW 2460 NW 39th	18	19 Malcolm X 1925-1965	20 SPRING RETREAT at Roman Nose	21 SPRING RETREAT tonight: MISS BROWN TO YOU
22 Herland Spring Retreat draws to a close	23 Margaret Fuller Feminist Philosopher 1810 - 1850	24 Simply Equal 7 pm Herland	25	26	27 CoDA 7 pm Herland	28 PEGGY JOHNSON at La Baguette 323 W. Boyd in Norman 9pm - 2am
29	30	31 Simply Equal 7 pm Herland	<div data-bbox="769 1503 1539 1703" data-label="Text"> <p>John Brown, May 9, 1800 - 1859; Abolitionist & Martyr Margaret Fuller, May 23, 1810 - 1850; Philosopher and Feminist. Mary Harris (Mother) Jones, May 1, 1830 - 1930 Malcolm X, May 19, 1925 - 1965 Harvey Milk, May 21, 1930 - 1978</p> </div>			



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HUMAN RIGHTS IN TULSA

The Tulsa Human Rights Commission's Committee on Sexual Orientation has issued a report stating that they found evidence of discrimination and prejudice based on sexual orientation and calling on the Tulsa Human Rights Commission to recommend changes in city policy and ordinances.

Among the recommendations are a proposal to amend the Tulsa human rights ordinance adding the words, "sexual orientation" and a proposal that the city's employment policy prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation be written into law by the city council. The committee's recommended changes to law would prohibit discrimination in housing and public accommodations in Tulsa.

The Tulsa Human Rights Commission will hold two public hearings to allow comments on the proposals before a decision is made about a recommendation to the Tulsa City Council. The hearings will be May 4 at Aaronson Auditorium in the Central Library and May 9 at the West Regional Library.

Tulsa Oklahomans for Human Rights is encouraging anyone who lives in Tulsa, does business there, or travels to Tulsa to contact members of the Tulsa City Council to support the proposed amendment to Tulsa's anti-discrimination act. □

LETTERS

Dear Herland:

Enclosed is my Herland Sustainer pledge. I am more than happy to be a contributor. I think that it's a splendid way to instill pride in the collective and in its stated mission.

I am also very happy to see that one of the stated goals for Herland is to develop a policy for active participation by transgenders and men. Support of the collective's mission does not necessarily stop at biological sex or gender identity boundaries, and I think I am at least one example.

As I'm sure that at least some of the staff is aware, I'm a lesbian-identified, male-to-female transsexual, still preoperative at this point in time, but scheduled for my surgery (finally) in June. I've been pretty open and up-front about being cross gendered and lesbian. I'm out and relatively outspoken. Not all TS's are comfortable being open about their transsexuality and /or their sexual preference, but that's an individual matter, and being open doesn't necessarily make me any more, or less, a human being. It just means that I feel good about who I am, and I want to share that feeling. Regardless of gender or sexual preference, it takes a belief in oneself as a whole person, as a complete being, to love ourselves and to live the life that we were created to enjoy. That affirmation cannot be manifested or given to us by someone else — it has to come from within.

My path to surgery has certainly been bumpy. I've taken my share of emotional lumps and bumps along the way, and my journey is not over. It has just begun. I sincerely thank my many friends, both men and women, both gay and straight, for affirming me as the whole person that I am. I thank Herland and my friends within the lesbian community for being straightforward and honest with me. I would expect nothing less.

Lovingly,
Kendra Marie Foyil

DUE PROCESS

by Vivien Ng

However you look at it, OU botched the way it handled the "Teepee Incident." If, as the American Indian students alleged, several fraternity members vandalized the teepee that they set up on campus to celebrate American Indian Heritage Week last month, the silence maintained by President Van Horn is disgraceful. The university ultimately decided not to file charges against the fraternity members because of "lack of evidence," and stoutly defended their actions by invoking "due process."

Well, I'm willing to take the officials at their word and accept their explanation that they had followed due process. But I'm not willing to excuse Van Horn's curious silence about the whole matter. On second thought, perhaps I shouldn't have been so surprised for, after all, it was Van Horn who came up with the brilliant idea several years ago that a good way to improve racial climate on campus was for majority students to "smile every morning at a member of the minority." Yes, flash a row of teeth and all will be forgiven.

A leader with moral courage would have taken the opportunity to address the issues of racism and intolerance. He (in the social and political context of OU, the leader will remain a "he" for a long time to come) could first ask students to withhold judgment about the specific fraternity members until all the facts could be determined, and then use the occasion to say that racism and disrespect for others have no place at the University of Oklahoma. His advisors should have shown him the *Michigan Law Review* article written by Mari Matsuda (a Japanese American law professor) that argues powerfully for the need to regulate racist speech.

Matsuda makes the convincing case that a university that opts to do nothing about racist speech on campus hurts all students: "Official tolerance of racist speech in [the university] setting is more harmful than generalized tolerance in the community-at-large. It is harmful to student perpetrators in that it is a lesson in getting-away-with-it that will have lifelong repercussions. It is harmful to targets, who perceive the university as taking sides through inaction, and who are left to their own resources in coping with the damage wrought. Finally, it is a harm to the goals of inclusion, education, development of knowledge, and ethics that universities exist and stand for. Lessons of cynicism and hate replace lessons in critical thought and inquiry."

Lacking access to all the facts, I have no way of telling what really happened that night on March 14. The fraternity insists that its members are innocent of the charges lodged against them by the American Indian students. But what I do know is the history of insensitivity on the part of Van Horn to racial matters on the campus of OU. What I can feel for the American Indian students is solidarity with them in their struggle for recognition and respect. I offer them a quote from Gloria Anzaldua from her book, *Borderlands*: "I will no longer be made to feel ashamed of existing. I will have my voice: Indian, Spanish, white. I will have my serpent's tongue—my woman's voice, my sexual voice, my poet's voice. I will overcome the tradition of silence." □

MOTHERHOOD

By Jo Soske

I stand in awe of the task before me. How shall I write about my experience of motherhood - a subject of volumes - for a short piece which must be completed within five days. Still, this may be the most appropriate time for me to do exactly that. My mothering is about to undergo perhaps the most major change I have known - perhaps not. It may be that change and contrast are inherent in the very definition of motherhood.

In 1981, I wrote an article about lesbian motherhood for the *Brazen Hussy Rag*. I was angry. The lesbian community - my community - was grappling with the politics of separatism. Ideas such as those espoused by Alix Dobkin were being discussed and examined. One woman even suggested to me that I should consider "giving my son up for the good of the lesbian community." It was in this atmosphere that I took pen in hand to defend my right to be both Lesbian and mother. This was not a theoretical discussion for me. This was about my baby. Jon was 4 years old.

In 1989, Jon wrote a chapter for Louise Rafkin's book, *different Mothers*. It articulates the struggle of a young person attempting to reconcile his life's experience with that of middle-school homophobia. It chronicles the beginnings of the passing from childhood to adolescence. I as mother was still greatly admired, but the world of peers was pressing. Jon was 12 years old.

In 1990, I was invited to participate on a panel of feminist mothers of sons. I was very excited. The participants included some of this country's most important feminist scholars. We discussed mother blaming, patriarchy, and many other pertinent topics. Though I gave a presentation, my major contribution was tears. Jon was 13 years old.

In 1992, I became quite involved in the project to pay off Herland's mortgage. Jon *insisted* in participating in this, the project of mothers and lesbians. The gesture rendered me speechless with pride. The result was phenomenal. Lesbians emerged from everywhere offering him encouragement and cash contributions toward meeting his goal. One woman who had not seen Jon in 10 years called and made a contribution. His history clearly had roots in our herstory. Today, there is evidence of this engraved on a permanent plaque in Herland. Jon was 15 years old.

In 1993, I rode to our semi-annual retreat in the back seat of a car with Alix Dobkin. We spoke of patriarchy and feminist mothers of sons. She told me how her views had changed and how she now views the sons of lesbians to be an important part of societal change. It was a delightful conversation. She is a wonderful woman. I considered the most important aspect of our conversation to be that I found her ideas irrelevant. Jon was 16 years old.

It is 1994. Jon has just received the University of Southern California's most prestigious scholarship. He has been admitted to skip his senior year of high school and enter directly into their resident honors program. By external societal standards, I believe I have done well. We have done well. Being a good mother means that I appear to have raised a capable, able son

who will now leave, and a capable able self who will help do so. It also means that though he will leave and he will receive the highest merit awards, I will remain while one quarter of my net income goes to USC with him for the next four years. No mother ever had a more wonderful son. No mother could be prouder. Writing about motherhood, though, I must say that my experience of it is pride laced with tears, joy tempered with loss, love joined by anger, gain coupled with cost, and Jo struggling, growing, and emerging with and without Jon. □

MOTHERSONG

(continued from page 1)

When I watch the PBS nature films, I marvel at the camouflage and behaviors which *fauna* use against predators...and I understand my mother better. Those frills and fripperies she put me through were her effort to provide me with protection from our culture's predators. If I could blend in and keep still at the right times, life would be easier for me - and for her. Her denial of my pain (and hers) was a desperate attempt to cling to the belief which she inherited from her mother: that if you do your best and live the Golden Rule, life will be beautiful.

The mother I know today is a sweet woman whom I love greatly; and I remember old resentments only when crisis requires an examination of my own reactions and choices.

I suspect that there is proportionally more resentment of mothers among lesbians than there is among our "straight" counterparts. Perhaps Mother's Day is a suitable time to assess our attitudes toward our mothers. Whether they are negative or positive, those attitudes affect how we relate to our lovers. Also, for those of us who are mothers ourselves, they affect how we deal with our children.

What might have been, wasn't. We cannot change what happened, only our attitude toward those events. We don't have to make the same mistakes or, sometimes as damaging, mistakes at the other end of the spectrum, in an attempt to change the pattern. We do, I think, need to find some way to live with a "mother complex" we'll carry through our lives.

Years ago I had a talk with my daughter - back when life suddenly boiled down to just the two of us in an unfamiliar world. "I don't know how to be a good mother," I told her, "but I promise you I'll be a good friend."

That was a cop-out on my part - like not playing the game because I wasn't sure I could win. Recently I was trying to do the Big Confession thing with her, saying that for years I have felt guilty about laying that exclusion on our relationship - that I've felt it was a kind of desertion at a time she really needed a mother more than a friend.

She laughed. "Hey, whatever you wanted to call your role, I always knew I had a mother - a weird one, but definitely a mother!"

We are three generations: a sweet old lady who listens to Rush Limbaugh, a lesbian still dragging her shreds of camouflage, and an outspoken feminist who believes that we all are women of value whose lifestyle choices deserve respect.

It's strange. It's wonderful. Pay tribute to the mysteries of motherhood on May 8 - hug a mother. □

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I would like to ride with someone. I can help provide rides to the retreat.

GODDESS MADE US IN HER IMAGE

By Deborah Fox

From time immemorial women have brought forth Life. Yes, men play their part, as stimulators, but women carry the seeds as well as bring them to fruition.

It's not surprising our Ancestors worshipped the Goddess, for Life taught them reverence for the female - who swells with new life over many moons and then with innate courage endures the great pains to miraculously bring forth a new human being. That's not all; She also produces sustenance from her own body to ensure healthy survival. Isis, Oshun, Demeter, Kuan Yin, Kali-ma, Danu, Copatlucue, Kunapipi, Ashtoreth, Freyja, Spider woman...And then there's Gaia, Erde-Mother Earth, who each Spring brings forth life anew fulfilling Her promise of rebirth and renewal.

Upon entering motherhood, entranced in labor, I felt a Cosmic Alliance with all mothers of all time, I could almost hear all their whispered words of wisdom and encouragement. Motherhood is a spiritual initiation - I, creatrix.

Under Patriarchy motherhood has been institutionalized - aiming to ensure that women's reproductive powers - and all women - remain under male control. Where children were once raised communally, giving mothers the time for their own needs and creativity, now mothers and their children are isolated and forced into unnatural dependence and arrangements, producing co-dependence, resentments, madness, child neglect, and guilt. Though some women have access to very good child-care, most mothers agonize over solutions to child-care.

What is more, most women go into motherhood unaware of all it will require of them. Patriarchy has been creating myths telling us for five thousand years that our greatest reward is raising children and that it is a blissful endeavor. Women who go into motherhood with these expectations are gravely disappointed. Motherhood will bring you some fulfillment but self-empowerment is our greatest reward. Another myth of motherhood is that having a child will hold a relationship together, in fact, if your relationship is in trouble, the stresses of having a child will probably destroy it. Or that motherhood is for every woman, it's not.

Raising children *in our society* is a thankless job that eats away our self-esteem. Because, though raising children is the most important job in the world, it receives no status or recompense. Women are made to feel that what they're doing has no value - only corporate heads or business professionals are important to our world. The patriarchal arrangement for motherhood undermines women's empowerment - always being in service to others (no matter how well they treat you) who are off to an important day of work or school subtly enforces feelings of worthlessness.

Raising children *is* a job, a labor of love, sure, but it is no picnic. Expect your whole life to change (it will, no matter how adamantly you deny it), expect sleepless nights and

constant interruptions, expect the spontaneity of your life to disappear, expect your sex life to be severely limited, expect to cook regular meals and keep regular hours, expect to worry and feel anxious about their well being, expect to feel guilty, expect everything to revolve around the kids and don't expect to go out dancing or horseback riding or hiking or star gazing or anything you enjoy doing as an adult on a whim as much as you like anymore.

Of course women do work things out and can and do enjoy motherhood (the older the kids get the more fun it gets) and some women really do experience bliss at it. But be aware of all the conditioning, illusions and delusions, pretty images and stereotypes brought to you and often unknowingly taken in by you, that patriarchal ideology serves up.

Motherhood will make you grow up, fast. Motherhood will show you strengths you never knew you had. Motherhood will teach you to really appreciate your mother (but you ought to do it anyway, even if you don't get along - try to understand her circumstances and conditioning). Motherhood will bring you a really wonderful little pal.

It is very important that women dispel the patriarchal myth of motherhood and redefine what motherhood really is and can be. "The human species is dependent on maternal (or adult) care in infancy much longer than any other animal species, and in creating a situation in which they could nurture and rear infants safely and effectively, women became the civilizers, the inventors of agriculture, of community, some maintain of language itself." (Adrienne Rich, "Of Women Born") Women's power to reproduce is awe-inspiring and womanhood ought to be revered. *We are all born of woman!* □

Rebecca R. Cohn, Ph.D.
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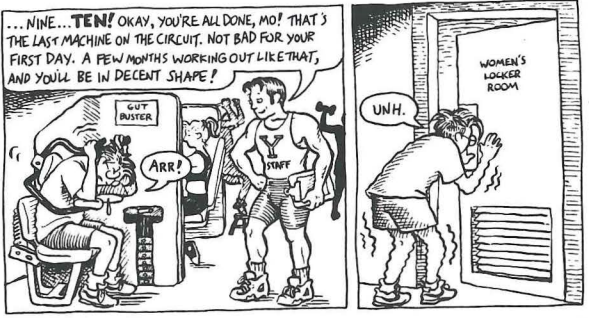
Dykes To Watch Out For

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186



CHERYL WHEELER: DRIVING HOME

By Jill Gamer

I had the wonderful pleasure recently of hearing Cheryl Wheeler sing at the Blue Door Cafe. I was floored by her voice, her songs, and the way they made me feel. Wheeler has a gorgeous voice that wraps around you and sweeps you away to New England in the spring and fall, to small Pennsylvania towns, and takes you through love rekindled and love gone wrong, from tears to the top of the world. Her latest release, *Driving Home* has made a lifelong fan of me, and this is music that's meant to be shared.

Wheeler's lyrics are vivid, moving and close to the heart. In "Spring" and "When Fall Comes to New England," the changing of the seasons is celebrated "and leaves are Irish Setter red, when fall comes to New England." "Spring" is one of the liveliest songs on the album and will have you tapping your feet and feeling like the world is truly a wonderful place to be. Mary Chapin Carpenter provides harmony vocals on "75 Septembers," a song Wheeler wrote for her father. It's a beautiful, touching song that muses "Are you more amazed at how things change, or how they stay the same?" Alison Krauss, two-time bluegrass Grammy Award winner (and voice like an angel), sings with Wheeler on the humorous "Don't Forget the Guns" about a family going on vacation prepared with an arsenal of weapons.

And what's an album without love songs? "Silver Lining," a cheerful and hopeful melody, describes a love that faltered but came back strong. "Almost," a tune that features just a piano and Wheeler's exquisite voice, is full of that familiar ache of wanting with lines like "I'm almost everything you have ever wanted, I'm almost your best dream come true." In "Act of Nature," a violent storm illuminates the death of a relationship as she sings "Someone said I should hear, warning cries soft and clear, whispered in the calm before the storm."

"Driving Home," with Patty Larkin providing her sweet voice on harmony and playing slide guitar, showcases Wheeler's fabulous singing and songwriting as she carries us over the backroads of Pennsylvania with no need to hurry.

Wheeler captures my feelings about this album in "Music in My Room" singing "I know I've played this one a hundred times, and I know the songs will end too soon, when I'm listening to the music in my room." Wheeler's *Driving Home* is definitely one to drive home with.

To order *Driving Home* call Herland at 521-9696.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

The *Herland Voice* is a forum for community discussion of issues and events of interest to lesbians and other women. We encourage submission of items for publication. Coming issues will focus on:

June - "Stonewall & Before:" This issue will focus on what it was like to live as a lesbian in Oklahoma in the 60's and earlier. We invite women to send essays, letters, stories, poetry and photos of lesbians in Oklahoma prior to 1969. If you would rather tell your story to someone else to write, please call Herland.

July - "Celebrating Stonewall:" We invite reports, reflections and photos from Stonewall 25, the Gay Games and events surrounding the celebration in New York, the OKC Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade and other lesbian and gay pride events.

Items submitted for the *Voice* are preferred on floppy disk in Wordperfect or ASCII format. They may also be sent typed and double-spaced or, if necessary, will be accepted in neat handwriting. Each article must be accompanied by the author's name and address when submitted. Pseudonyms may be used for publication if requested. Mail to: Herland, ATTN: *Voice*, 2312 N.W. 39, OKC, OK 73112; e-mail to preaves@delphi.com; or fax (405)524-7510. For more information, please call Herland at 521-9696.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR MOTHER'S DAY

(continued from page 1)

This fight continues. In October, 1993, the Oklahoma Court of Appeals challenged the findings of the Cleveland County District Court which stated the mother was "unfit" to have custody because she is a lesbian, but the higher court maintained that the possibility of future prejudice against the children is sufficient reason to refuse her custody. This decision is being appealed to the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

The purpose of the Herland Legal Defense Fund is to provide financial support for the legal expenses of lesbian mothers who are appealing loss of custody in cases where that loss is specifically due to their sexual orientation. Priority is given to cases which offer an opportunity to set precedent. At this time, any positive decision in the Appellate Court or the State Supreme Court in similar cases will set an important precedent in the state of Oklahoma for future child custody cases involving lesbian and gay parents.

The Herland Legal Defense Fund Committee is inviting interested women and men to join us in fighting the discrimination and prejudices that have been administered by the Oklahoma legal system. The HLDf Committee meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Herland Sister Resources to plan fundraisers such as phone banks, mailings~ auctions, dances, and concerts.

Please join us and help make a positive impact for our lesbian and gay families. Donations to the Defense Fund can be sent to Herland Sister Resources, 2312 N.W. 39th, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. For more information, call (405)521-9696. □

OKLAHOMA PRIDE SUMMIT

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Oklahomans and their friends will gather on the University of Oklahoma campus the weekend of July 15-17 for the Oklahoma Pride Summit. The Summit is the result of efforts of a number of Oklahoma's gay, lesbian, bi and transgender organizations to build an effective network.

By providing a forum for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgenders to meet and share news and goals, organizers say they hope the meeting will further empower and motivate participants, building unity while recognizing diversity.

Organizations involved in the development of the Oklahoma Pride Summit include Herland Sister Resources, Tulsa Oklahomans for Human Rights, Family of Faith MCC, Perspectives, Simply Equal-OKC, OU/GLBA, OSU/GLBSA., Affirmation - OKC, Simply Equal -Norman.

Interested Oklahomans from all parts of the state are invited to register and attend. Pre-registration forms are available at Herland. Organizers are working to keep registration fees as low as possible with a sliding-fee scale based on the participant's income. Inexpensive campus housing and child care will also be available to pre-registered participants.

Volunteers are needed to assist in conference planning and staffing. The next planning meeting for the Oklahoma Pride Summit will be held at 11 AM on May 7 at the Family of Faith MCC in Jenks. For more information on this meeting or on volunteering or registering for the Summit, call Herland at 521-9696 or OGLPC at 791-0202. □

BULLETIN BOARD

Lesbian only counseling group. Wednesday evenings. Contact Jo L. Soske, M.Ed., M.H.R., I.C.A.D.C., N.C.C., L.P.C at 354-5708.

Womyn's Works: Don't miss Womyn's Works, the current show of the Queer Consortium on display at Triangle Association, 2136 N.W. 39th, OKC. The next scheduled show will be themed around the Stonewall/Gay Pride Week festivities. Meetings for the Queer Consortium are open to the community. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 19th at 6:00 P.M. at the Triangle Association.

Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press is searching for a Managing Director to lead this unique non-profit cultural and political institution through its next phase of growth and development. The application deadline is May 15, 1994. Contact the Kitchen Table Search Committee c/o the Union Institute Center for Women by calling 202-667-1313.

Academic Dykes (lesbian faculty and staff at Oklahoma colleges and universities) will have our next potluck in Norman on May 14th from 7 p.m. to whenever: Please call Judy at 405-321-6350 for directions to the house. This will be our last get-together for the academic year.

Congratulations Crystos! The Audre Lorde International Poetry Competition of the Cleveland Poetry Center has been awarded to Crystos for her manuscript, *Fugitive Colors*, which will be published by the Cleveland Poetry Center at Cleveland State University in Spring, 1994.

National Women's Reproductive Health Call-in Day: People for the American Way is organizing a national call-in to Congresspersons and Senators on May 18th to urging them to include reproductive health services including abortion in the national health care plan.

Wanted: Essays, poetry, short stories and artwork for a book on women and our experiences with "mental illness." Looking for work on our histories with one or more of the following: psychiatry, psychiatric drugs, voluntary or involuntary hospitalization, and psychiatric diagnosis. Stories can be personal, theoretical or both. Send contributions or questions to: Alexandra Laris, P. O. Box 91106, Santa Barbara, CA 93190-1106. Deadline for submissions is September 1, 1994, but please send ASAP.

Domino's Pizza has just awarded its annual humanitarian award to James Dobson, president of Focus on Family, a large, right-wing Christian "family values" organization located in Colorado Springs that played a vital role in the passage of Colorado's anti-gay Amendment 2. To let Domino's know how this decision affects your digestion: Tim McIntyre, Director of Public Relations, Domino's Pizza, P. O. Box 997, Ann Arbor; MI 48106. (Info from GLAAD/NY)