

WOMEN'S CENTRAL NEWS

NUMBER 3

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Holly Near in concert

The Grand Canyon Men's Chorale is extremely proud to present **Holly Near with John Bucchino**, featuring The Grand Canyon Men's Chorale and a special appearance by TLC Chorale, at Phoenix's historic Orpheum theater on Sunday, March 15th at 7:00pm.

The Orpheum Theater is located at 203 W. Adams in Phoenix. Tickets are available through Dillard's Box Office at (602) 530-5555 for \$25/\$15, youth (twelve and under) half price.

Holly Near, *Ms. Magazine's* 1985 Woman of the Year, is an extremely versatile performer, having appeared on film and in TV, on Broadway in *Hair*, and in collaborations with such artists as Arlo Guthrie, Bonnie Raitt, Pete Seeger and most recently with Mary Travers on the new Peter, Paul and Mary release *Lifelines*. Since 1994, Holly has been on a "semi-sabbatical" after a quarter century of non-stop performing, writing, producing and



world travel. She now tours only one week out of every month, which makes this a unique opportunity for Phoenix audiences to experience her performance.

Dr. Craig J. Westendorf has been Grand Canyon Men's Chorale's artistic director and conductor since the 1995-1996 season. Dr. Westendorf has served on the music faculties of the University of Notre Dame and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and has done extensive research and study in Europe. He has been Director of Music at First United Methodist Church, Phoenix, since 1991 and is also active as an organ recitalist.

The Chorale's 1996-1997 season was their most successful ever. This season the Chorale continues to grow, returning to the Orpheum for "Broadway Our Way" on May 16.

The Grand Canyon Men's Chorale is a proud member of GALA, the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses.

Grand opening rescheduled

The grand opening of The Center's new location has been rescheduled. The new date is Saturday, March 28. The Valley of the Sun Gay and Lesbian Community Center is now located at 24 West Camelback Road and is open for business during remodeling.

The grand opening was pushed back when remodeling was suspended until the final lease was signed.

Same sex partner benefits

According to an American Family Association Action Alert, The Amoco and Mobil Oil companies have joined with Shell and Chevron Oil companies in offering same sex Domestic Partner benefits to their employees. The AFA called for members to boycott these companies and send them messages expressing their concerns with this policy. We suggest that anyone who is interested contact these companies with praise for their very spiffy new policy to counteract the negative response they will get from the AFA. The address and what not are:

Amoco Corporation, 200 East Randolph Drive, Chicago, IL 60601-7125, Telephone - 800/333-3991, E-mail: info@amoco.com

Mobil Corporation, 3225 Gallows Road, Fairfax, VA 22037. Telephone - 703/846-3000, E-mail: pub_aff@mobil.com

Pride is on the way

By Margot Marie Bronski, WCN staff

Despite the load of debt strapped to their backs, the Pride committee somehow moves slowly, cautiously, towards April 18 - the day set for "Pride 98... A Gateway to Change."

And changes there are. This year will feature a parade and festival, held on just one day in Central festival, in the cooler part of the year. Starting at 10 am, the parade will move down Central Avenue from Park Central Mall to Margaret T. Hance Deck Park. The Deck Park festival will start right after the parade - approximately 11:30 am - and run until midnight.

This is what the community has been asking for, and now is the time for the community to turn out, and help carry part of that load.

Some Background

After several years of successful events, the 1997 Pride festival was a financial disaster. Arizona Central Pride, the sponsoring organization, wound up some \$20,000-plus dollars in the hole. That means there is none of the "seed money" they normally have for the next festival. And that is putting a real crimp in planning this year's event. The crunch is now, as ACP has to start making down payments to many of the event's suppliers.

This year's celebration is a day and a half shorter, and ACP has done some real aggressive cost cutting - however, that doesn't mean the event is all that much cheaper to put on. With the move to April, ACP lost many of

the off-season discounts. The move to the Deck Park also means added fencing, security and sanitation costs.

You Need to Help

"We really need a lot of advance sales," ACP president Ernie Mendoza told WCN. "We need donations too," he added.

Advance tickets are just \$8.00 and are available at all the regular community outlets. The day of the event, tickets will be \$10.00.

Your donations are tax deductible as Arizona Central Pride/Phoenix Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee, Inc. is a non-profit corporation with a 501(c)3 federal tax-exempt status.

Imagine if just one percent of us ten percent, sent in just a measly ten bucks...

After you've made out your check to ACP, you can mail it

to ACP/PLGPC, PO Box 16847, Phoenix, AZ 85011-6847.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to help with both the parade and the festival. As in past years, a variety of jobs and shifts are available. There is a job you can do; and like the money needs, every bit helps.

Forms on-line

If your organization or business has not received an entry form in the mail don't despair. Forms for both parade and festival entries are available on the ACP web page at www.aspride.org. This is a new Pride feature, and thus far response has been good.

The web site also includes direct e-mail addresses for all the officers and the various committees.



Arizona
Central
Pride

WOMEN WHO DARED - Fannie Barnes

Fannie Barnes, (b 1946) became San Francisco's first female cable-car gripman after 125 years of the job being performed by men. While it took a full year of serious workouts including pumping iron, to become a member of the city's elite crew of 76 drivers, Fannie said, "There was no way I was going to let the year 2000 come and not have a woman have this job."

Letters to the Editor

WCN greetings. in your january issue, you mentioned the new AZDykes list. Since that time, we phoenix wimmin have gotten together for brunch twice. We now meet every other Sunday, at 10:30, first was Pookies restaurant, second was the Good Egg at the Park Central Mall. Our first event was attended by 8, and now our second we had 11! We are excited about this new group, and have decided that we will call ourselves "Friends of Ellen" so that newcomers who don't know any of us, can just ask at the hostess if needed, where the Friends Of Ellen are sitting (in case they don't recognize us LOL).

You may pass along this information however you wish to do so in the newspaper. We are of course, open to any lesbian who wishes to come "brunch" with us! Our next meeting will be at the Good Egg again, at the Park Central Mall, at 10:30, Sunday, Feb. 8. Should they have any questions, they may call me at 847-7678.

WCN,

It is with regret that we have to inform you that Girlfriends Coffee House and Book Store will be closing Feb. 28th. We want to thank those of you who have supported us over the past two years and let you know that we are having a huge "going out of business" sale during our last week. Certain items we have carried in the store will still be available through our web page at <http://www.girlscafe.com/catalog.html>

Susie & Mary

Girlfriends Coffee House

Mountain Memories Touring

Jacalyn Maggin and Shari Thompson are both outdoors and modern day frontiers women. They have channeled their love, knowledge and enjoyment of the Arizona wilderness into Mountain Memories Touring (and parties!). Specializing in small groups they offer a personal touch to each guest. The venue is statewide from a few hours to a few days with hotel accommodations to campsites. Be prepared to have fun, learn about the native plants and animals and take loads of photographs on your tour! "Jackalope Jackie" is an accomplished photographer, picture framer and singer. "Sureshot Shari" is a professional dance instructor and artist. Both ladies follow many Native American beliefs and are waiting to share their time with you. They invite you to come, play outdoors in this beautiful land and feel like a child again.

Mountain Memories Touring guides activities in western style with emphasis on having fun! They specialize in touring with small groups in the comfort of their 12 passenger luxury van. They pride themselves on giving each guest their personal touch to create pleasant memories to be shared with others. They offer soft adventure recreation in the ways of: sightseeing, shopping, dining, hiking and camping.

Their Southwestern YAHOO is an outdoor party (for any occasion) held on their private property in the quiet and peaceful Desert Hills area, only a half hour's drive north of downtown Phoenix and a short distance off of Interstate 17 from the Carefree exit. This is a great opportunity for folks to feel young again playing cowgirls and cowboys. As the guests walk through the entrance gates they each receive their own western hat, smell the aromas of delicious food cooking on the grill, music filling the air and the dinner bell rings! A guitar strumming cowboy will

serenade folks while they eat and later have everybody joining him in sing alongs. Competitive games are played with unique prizes for winning team members. Country/western line dance lessons are given on our 676 square foot dance floor. Dancing can continue or other activities can be enjoyed such as shopping in our frontier town shops, roping with a real lasso from Ol' Woody, sitting around the fire pits munching on dessert, swinging with someone special on our Sweetheart Swing or taking photographs and visiting the medicine wheel across the bridge. Entertainers such as singers, bands, dancers, cowboy poets, magicians and speakers are available on request for additional fees.

For your personal commitment ceremonies and receptions of 10 to 100 persons, an ordained minister is available upon request and looks forward to performing your union in the beautifully log framed, western style ramada.

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President's Message

Dear Friends:

At 7 PM on March 11th the Women's Central News will be holding elections for President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer as well as for a board position. I encourage you to become involved in this terrific community-based newspaper - mark your calendar — Insights, 333 E. Virginia, suite 106, at 7 PM on March 11th.

As a kid, my Dad would say, "Life is not fair," when he punished me for something I didn't do, (typically followed by, "you probably deserved that for something I didn't see.") As an adult nothing infuriates me more than blatant unfairness. I never accept it. As lesbians we are forever being treated unfairly because of our typically unfeminine appearance and as women we are treated unfairly because of our perceived lack of brain power. When we have little or no say-so, we resent it. We may resent grown children coming home again, raising our grandchildren, long term parental/partner care-giving, losing our job/house/transportation or a friendship. Life is not fair, it is true, but we do not have to accept it as a given. We can fight for right. We can explore our choices. When we say, "Why did this happen to me?" we are in a rare state of getting our own attention, of having the unique opportunity to immediately acquire many answers to the biggest question of all: who are we really?

Robin

Centers annual meeting set

In compliance with the organizations bylaws (Article 10, Section 1) The Valley of the Sun Gay and Lesbian Community Center will have its Annual Meeting on Monday, April 6, 1998 at 7:00 PM. The meeting will take place at The Center located at 24 West Camelback Road, Suite B & C in Phoenix, Arizona.

During the Annual Meeting, the organizations Annual Report will be distributed, a new Executive Committee will be appointed, and newly appointed Board Members will take office.

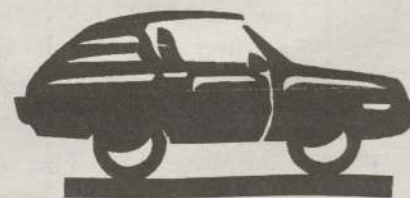
This meeting, like all general meetings of the Board of Directors is open to the public.

The Valley of the Sun Gay and Lesbian Community Center is a non-profit, 501(c)3, volunteer based organization. All donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

"She is happiest who hath power to gather wisdom from a flower."

- Mary Howitt

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A 2-DAY RETREAT / PARTY featuring area women finding ways to make creativity a part of everyday living. SATURDAY will include a transformational workshop on reclaiming your creativity, music by Lynx, and earth art activities.

SUNDAY will feature the women of Lynx and their creative process, body awareness that connects inner creativity, and a hands-on look at art / living inspired by nature.

PLUS lots of fun activities in a friendly, casual atmosphere. REASONABLE - \$20 for 1 day or \$35 for both (\$5 off if registered before April 3). Work exchange available.

Call 482-7804 for details / registration. HAVE FUN !!!!!

The Women's Central News is a community-based lesbian monthly newspaper published by the volunteer staff of the not-for-profit Women's Center, Inc.
Print Run 2,500 Members 350

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1 year - \$18.00 6 months - \$10.00
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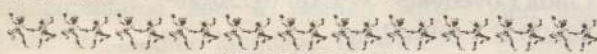
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Deadline is the 15th of the month. Display copy and/or artwork must be camera ready or laser printed on white paper and cannot be returned. Photographs must be grayscale.

SUBMISSIONS

You are encouraged to send in your event announcements, book reviews, dining experiences, news analysis, commentaries, poetry, coming out stories or anything of interest to the lesbian community. WORD LIMIT: Letters to the Editor: 200 words; Articles: 350 words.

Submissions must include name and address. You may request that your name be withheld. Submissions cannot be returned. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, brevity and spelling. Copyright remains with each contributor. Deadline is the 15th of the month.



HOW TO REACH US

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Internet Home Page: www.swlink.net/~news Electronic mail: wcn@swlink.net

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Pick up the Women's Central News at these fine businesses:

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- ASU West, Women's Resource Center - 4701 W. Thunderbird Rd., Suite 325
- Borders Bookstore - 7320 W. Bell Rd.
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- Ain't Nobody's Biz - 3031 E. Indian School
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- Unique On Central - 4700 N. Central Ave.
- The Wave - 998 E. Indian School Rd.
- Willow Coffee House - 149 W. McDowell
- Wink's - 5707 N. 7th St.

SCOTTSDALE

- B.S. West - 7125 E. 5th Ave.
- Crystal Moon - Los Arcos Mall

TEMPE

- Clan Tatu - 1415 E. University - #4
- Changing Hands Bookstore - 414 S. Mill
- Gentle Strength Co-op - 234 W. University - #105
- Healing Waters Church - 225 W. University

TUCSON

- Antigone Books - 411 N. 4th Ave.
- Girlfriends Coffehouse and Bookstore - 3540 N. Oracle Rd.

To Your Health

By Bonnie J. Brooks, M.D.

So...you're now post-menopausal - No more monthly menses/periods since that hysterectomy (with ovaries removed) or perhaps (finally) the time has come for your body to no longer cycle the estrogen and progesterone to produce the monthly uterine bleed/"flush-out"/period. Now...big questions!

Do you NEED estrogen? What are the benefits? What are the drawbacks? Is it going to hurt me? Is it the natural thing to do?

These are huge questions with murky, ill-defined answers. There are 2 big schools of thought that most health practitioners straddle: being postmenopausal is a natural state and the normal progression of life of older womyn versus postmenopausal changes must be fought/battled like any other harmful change/disease state in a womyn's body. A tough situation...here are some knowns:

Giving estrogen to womyn by pill, skin patch, or injection is described as "estrogen replacement therapy" to indicate the attempt to REPLACE the estrogen our bodies used to make in larger quantities. The obvious effects are less frequent "hot flashes", less vaginal drying and pain with sex, and less leaking of urine (urine incontinence). The vaginal and urine control areas become less flexible and more easily torn as the tissue thins out, produces less lubricant. You can see contracting of the tissues with shortening of the vagina also.

The not so easily seen effects are with the bones and heart (and probably other organs - my opinion). These are thought of as the "systemic" or body-wide effects of estrogen. The bones with less estrogen around tend to lose bone mass/density/weight leading to osteoporosis with weak, easily fractured/broken hips, wrists, spine. The most rapid loss is seen the first 7 - 10 years postmenopausal, then the decline slows but continues.

The heart "feels" the lack of estrogen also. Studies have shown there is an increase in blood factors which promote clotting of blood and a decrease in vasodilation (relaxing of blood vessels which helps blood to reach the heart). Also without estrogen the "bad" cholesterol (LDL) tends to rise and the "good" cholesterol fall...not what you want.

OK...This topic is too HUGE for one month. Let's continue this discussion in April...the negatives on estrogen, how to take, alternatives.

Dr. Brooks is an allopathic physician joining Deer Valley Medical. She can be reached for questions/suggestions/discussion at 869-6811 or email bonniejb@msn.com

Equal research amendment

Washington — The Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research wants increased US spending for women's health issues. Phyllis Greenberger, executive director of the Society, noted that "HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases is one example of an area that would benefit from expanded research. ... Women are more biologically receptive to developing STDs and suffer from more infections which have no symptoms."

The group wants an additional \$46.5 million from Congress in the next fiscal year, \$30 million of which would go to the National Institutes of Health, the US Newswire reported.

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." - Eleanor Roosevelt

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We lost one

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) -- Voters on Tuesday made Maine the first state to repeal its gay rights law.

"We feel great, great," said Paul Volle of the Christian Coalition of Maine, a leading force in the repeal effort. "We'll just have to see where we go from here, see what the other side does. We're in this battle for the long haul."

Gov. Angus King said: "I think it's unfortunate." The politically independent chief executive was chief media spokesman for the anti-repeal campaign. "We'll move forward, I think this is an evolutionary process," King said.

State officials predicted a low turnout for the single-issue election, and both sides were counting on their field organizations to deliver friendly voters to the polls.

Maine lawmakers enacted a bill last spring adding sexual orientation to the protected classifications in Maine's 25-year-old human rights act. As signed by King, the measure would bar discrimination against gays and lesbians in employment, housing, public accommodations and credit.

But a successful people's veto drive, as provided for in the state constitution, blocked implementation of the new law.



Rainbow's Edge

By Mary, WCN Staff

There is a new web site out there for us called Over The Rainbow, it is a travel agency for gays and lesbians. Containing travel news, bits and bites of travel trivia, and lots of good information, this site is fun to browse. There is comprehensive information on the agency itself, which is aimed at both vacation and business travel.

A creation of Reamy Publishing Company, they offer information about gay and gay-friendly accommodations, nightlife, restaurants, shopping, sightseeing, and cultural events in the city of your choosing. There is a message board, which was scanty when I visited (but they are new). And - Phoenix was listed!!!

So, if you are planning a trip, or just California dreamin', visit Over the Rainbow at www.overtherainbow.com.



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Coffee, coffee, buzz, buzz, buzz

By Boyd Foster-Burns, Department of Exercise and Wellness, ASU

The last couple of wellness articles have been about exercise, so for those of you out there who would like to hear about something else, this one's for you and anyone else who likes a caffeine jolt any time of day. Or even if you do decaf, read on!

If caffeine doesn't bother you, coffee drinks are relatively harmless although they can make a hole in your finances! Be aware, though, that caffeine may have its downside, especially if you are drinking too much. Some of the following symptoms may be familiar to you Java Jo's:

Insomnia, rapid or irregular heartbeats, chest pains, nervousness, tremors, sweating, clammy hands, irritability, stomach upset, diarrhea, fatigue (believe it or not), increased appetite, high blood pressure, feelings of panic.

Anything sounding like you or your significant other? Perhaps it is due to too much caffeination daily. Take stock of your dosage, because is a drug and can definitely have its side effects. Breast cysts and/or breast tenderness may be caused by high levels of caffeine, as well. Simple solutions are to cut back on consumption, or switch to decaf.

Now let's talk lingo. If you are planning to impress someone new (or old) in your life with your swashbuckling ways at a coffee shop (and who doesn't want to swashbuckle over a cup of coffee while looking into a pair of pretty eyes?) it is essential to know the language of grounds. Espresso is important to know; I say so from bitter (no pun intended) experience. It is very intense Italian-style coffee, strong and dark, made by forcing water through grounds under pressure. You get a very small amount, but that's all you'll need. Order this if you like it dark and bitter. Latte is espresso softened with steamed milk, topped with a frothy cap of foamed milk. This drink keeps its strong flavor, but the bite is

lessened. Caffe Americano is espresso mixed with hot water down to the strength of plain old brewed coffee (in other words, just order plain old brewed coffee).

Cappuccino adds a little steamed milk and a LOT of foamed milk added to our same old espresso. The foamed milk is what makes it seem so "light" of a drink. If you're really trying to reduce your coffee intake but need at least a taste of java, try latte macchiato: basically steamed milk with a dot of espresso on top. For those of you quitting cold turkey, there's latte caldo: no espresso, just hot steamed milk (also good for the insomnia caused by all those espressos earlier in the day). Last but not least, for all our chocolate lovers (and I just read somewhere that 90% of Americans love chocolate), there's caffe mocha. Caffeine in the form of a shot of espresso, steamed milk, and chocolate syrup or hot chocolate to add that touch of mocha. Yum, yum.

Now that you know the drinks, there are descriptors. Single, double, and triple refer to one, two, or three shots of espresso. Triples are for the brave, the caffeine resistant and the sleepy who need to stay awake. Do not try a triple if you are at all the nervous, jittery type. Short, tall and grande are coffee lingo for small, medium and large. Usually that means 8, 12 and 16 ounces. Skinny means nonfat milk rather than 1%, 2%, or whole milk, but there are no cool code words for those last three, you just have to ask for them. And, of course, unleaded is jargon for decaf.

Coffee can sometimes make the day seem nicer, and the delicious, expensive ways to drink it adds to the savor-the-flavor experience. Part of wellness is feeding your spirit and pleasuring your tastebuds and nose with the flavors and aroma of something you enjoy. Enjoy your next cup, and try something new if you dare.

"Good judgement comes from experience; and experience, well, that comes from bad judgement." - Anonymous

Internet sites to visits...

My Menus — www.mymenus.com Meal planning can be a snap with the information available at this site. You can access thousands of recipes, each of which includes a complete nutritional breakdown. Search by name, ingredient, nutrient content or category, such as low-fat, quick and easy, family style, low-sodium and gourmet. Can even print!

Mayo Clinic Health Oasis — healthnet.mayoclinic.com This wide-ranging site provides health and medical news on hundreds of topics. You can access a vast library of feature articles or search for specific health information by entering the subject in the search function. The drug database provides information about most medications. If you can't find the information you are looking for, you can direct specific health questions to a Mayo Clinic doctor or dietician in the "Ask an

Expert" area.

HMSBeagle — biomednet.com/hmsbeagle This site is rife with medical research news, breakthroughs and drug updates. The day's top medical headlines and a brief overview also can be reviewed.

Eureka! alert — www.eureka!alert.org Links to hundreds of research institutions and medical associations can be accessed on this site. The reference desk section includes a medical dictionary and a directory of on-line medical resources.

Positive Press: Good News Every Day — www.positivepress.com This site offers positive news stories culled from newspapers, magazines and TV networks. To keep your optimism high, you can have the site's positive news story of the day or a daily inspirational quote routed directly to your E-mail address.



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150th Anniversary of the First Women's Rights Convention

Meet Mary Wollstonecraft, Sojourner Truth, Margaret Fuller, Harriet Tubman, and Angela Grimke.

Witness the Trial of Susan B. Anthony - The real trial of the century - where she was charged with voting and being of the female sex.

Have a conversation with Crystal Eastman. Lawyer, author, wrote the first Workers Compensation laws, co-founded the ACLU.

Hear the Reading of the Sentiments declaring the right of women to be free, crafted at Seneca Falls in 1848

John Paul Theatre - Phoenix College
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Allison and Lamott at N.A.U.

By Bunni & Winnie

The enthusiastic spirit of the volunteers, speakers, and crowd at the portion of the Northern Arizona Book Festival that we attended was something awesome to behold. The audience happily stuffed money into the collection boxes being passed around as a 16 year-old young man energetically read a poem he had written. The applause that followed was equally energetic, although we wondered if it was more for his style of presentation than for the poem itself. We were there to attend a reading by Dorothy Allison and expected the crowd to be mostly lesbians, yet it seemed fairly mixed.

Anne Lamott was a total surprise. We'd heard of her book "Operating Instructions," but hadn't read it. Then Ms. Lamott came on-stage. In the process of adjusting to a squealing microphone that required her to stand in an awkward position and make several unsuccessful attempts to make sure the people in the back of the theater could hear her, she totally charmed the entire audience.

She read a story about being stuck in an airplane, waiting for hours to board, and waiting for hours to take off. As we sat with her in the middle seat, between a Christian fundamentalist and a woman who spoke in another language in which "Ack!" spoke volumes, she brought us into her own world. It was a world not unlike our own, in which innocent children are sick with incurable disease, young men suffer from AIDS,

cars break down, and airplanes are delayed. Yet she illuminated that world of problems and worries with compassion and love, telling stories of neighbors helping neighbors, of miraculous moments of understanding and love. She spoke freely about her love for these people, her own insecurities, and yes (dare I say it) her love of Jesus and her church. Her talk of religion was not annoying or oppressive. This is someone who could say the f-word, and joke about someone looking like "God's crazy nephew Phil."

It was a tough act for Dorothy Allison to follow, although she was game about it. She read a selection from her new book "Cavedwellers" (due out in March). Ms. Allison writes about a culture and people that live very hard and bitter lives in the poor South. This was a selection about her mother returning to a small Southern town to reclaim the daughters that she'd abandoned ten years before. You can imagine the poor reception she and her mother received in this small redneck community. She mentioned that she had been exploring the themes of hope and forgiveness in this newest book, but they were not evident in the selection she read. It was well written and a vivid depiction, but a very dark and despairing excerpt that suffered in contrast to the earlier reading by Ms. Lamott.

Hearing both women read and being part of the enthusiastic audience made the drive through the snow worth every moment of anxiety on the road.

Texas Lesbian Conference in San Antonio, Texas, May 29-31, 1998

The eleventh annual Texas Lesbian Conference, TLC '98, will be held in San Antonio, Texas, May 29-31, 1998. Over 400 women are expected to attend.

Keynote speakers and workshop presenters will focus on the theme of "Creating Balance / Creando un Balance." Scheduled speakers include the trainer and activist Suzanne Pharr from Oregon. Writer, director, and performing artist Sharon Bridgorth of the Root Wymn Theatre Company is scheduled for Saturday noon. A third keynote address is expected by Carmen Vasquez, the activist policy director of the Lesbian/Gay Community Center of New York.

Noted writer Katherine V. Forrest is scheduled as a workshop presenter. Conference attendees will also enjoy a comedy performance Saturday evening.

The conference will be held at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, downtown on the San Antonio River at 118 Lexington.

For further information send email to txlescon98@aol.com, visit our web site at: <http://members.aol.com/txlescon98>, call (210) 805-8398, or write to us at: PO Box 12327, San Antonio, TX, 78212.

Arizona Human Rights Fund

The Arizona Human Rights Fund has introduced the Arizona Employment NonDiscrimination Act (AENDA) with 31 cosponsors including 7 Republicans.

This bill would make it illegal for the State of Arizona to discriminate based on sexual orientation in its hiring and firing practices. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Government Reform Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee along with the Rules Committee. These are not good committees for us. We need calls or letters to Senator Patterson who is chair of the Government Reform committee to schedule the bill for a hearing.

Please call or write him and the other members of the committee in favor of hearing and passing the bill.

Tom Patterson, Chair 542-5955
Carol Springer, Vice chair 542-5584
Marc Spitzer 542-4480
Gary Richardson 542-4124
Joe Eddie Lopez 542-4171
Mary Hartley 542-4485
George Cunningham 542-5911
Russell Bowers 542-5288

Links to Arizona State Senator's email address can be found at:

<http://www.azleg.state.az.us/members/senate.htm>

Letters can be sent to:

The Honorable [Senator's Name]
Arizona State Senate
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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News from the Center

By Lyle C. Miller for WCN

We've moved

It's not gone as smooth as expected, but the Valley of the Sun Gay and Lesbian Community Center is expecting to have renovations of its new location (24 West Camelback Road) completed by the Grand Opening (rescheduled for Saturday, March 28, 1998). Logistical issues arose with signing the necessary lease agreement, which put The Center behind schedule by nearly four weeks.

New Youth Group

On a more successful note, The Center's Youth Services is please to announce the start up of a new social/support group for Valley young adults. HORIZONS now meets every Thursday at The Center from 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM. It is open to all young people ages 18 through 22. This expansion of Youth Services was formed out of the need that older VOIT participants had to continue meeting in a safe space.

Facilitated by Donna McHenry, The Center's Youth Program Coordinator, and adult advisors, HORIZONS offers young adults the opportunity to discuss issues directly related to them and extends social opportunities that have long been missing from their lives. For more information on HORIZONS, or VOIT, contact 602-264-5437.

Annual meeting/elections

The Center's Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, April 6, 1998 at 7:00 PM at 24 West Camelback Road. During the Annual Meeting, Executive Director Lyle Miller will deliver The Center's Annual Report, and a new Executive Committee will be appointed to help lead the

organization into 1999. The Center will say farewell to two long time Board Member, Becky Hansen and Patrick Whorton, whose terms come to an end on April 6 and who have served as Co-Chairs for the Board during the past year. The Annual Meeting is open to the public, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Ready for Pride

The Center is also preparing for the Valley's Pride Celebration in April. Once again, we will be carrying Arizona's largest pride flag down Central Avenue. Our exhibit booth will have updated information about Center programs and a new community assessment survey. All visitors to Pride Festival are encouraged to complete one of the surveys as your input is very important to The Center and helps us plan future programming.

Want to help?

Our next Volunteer Orientation will take place on Saturday, March 14, 1998 from 9:00 AM until 1:30 PM. Everyone interested in finding out about volunteer opportunities with The Center should plan on attending. We need assistance with answering phones, fund-raising committee, programming committee, administration assistance and many others. The four and one half hour orientation covers all aspects of volunteering, and a placement interview is conducted for everyone interested in giving a little bit of time back to the community. Bi-lingual persons are strongly encouraged to apply.

Call us

For more information about The Center, its' programs or volunteering, please contact The Center at 602-265-7283.

BiNetAZ

May 1-3, 1998, Phoenix, Arizona will be the host city for the first ever Southwestern Conference on Bisexuality. This weekend event is open to the public, members of BiNet, and the gay, lesbian and trans brothers and sisters.

We invite you to participate and off you the additional opportunity to provide a workshop, discussion panel or seminar at the conference. We have several workshop time-slots still available. Each session is scheduled for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

If you are interested in one of these areas or have a presentation on an important issue of value to the bisexual community and it's friends, please contact 1998 Southwestern Conference on Bisexuality, 24 W. Camelback Rd #B, Phoenix, AZ 85013.

So mark your calendar to attend this historic event to be held at Arizona State University.

Maryland Governor vows to Veto Abortion Ban

Maryland state senators are gearing up to vote on a bill that would ban D&X abortions. The bill, which has been introduced three times by Sen. Larry E. Haines, is supported by seven of the eleven members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening (D) promised to veto the resolution if it passes the Senate, despite effects it may have on his reelection campaign and advised the Senate to "reject" the bill. Glendening said, "I obviously know this whole issue of abortion is very serious and is to be treated with the greatest attention and care. But I also believe in the right of a woman in consultation with her doctor to make the decision."

MANAGING STRESS MINI-WORKSHOP SERIES

INSIGHTS: Exploring Body & Mind Connections

is offering a series of mini-workshops presented at our office:

333 E. Virginia, Suite 106, Phoenix starting in February. Cost is \$12 for each workshop; time is 6:30-8:30pm. Please call 257-1964 for information and to register for individual workshops (or the entire series).

Monday, March 9:

IMAGINATION & PLAY

Melody Hicks

Monday, March 23:

NURTURING YOURSELF

Melody Hicks

Monday, April 6: REFLEXOLOGY

Sandra Leal

Monday, April 20: VISUALIZATION

Melody Hicks

Monday, May 4: HEALING HERBS

Sandra Leal

Monday, May 18:

COMPASSION & FORGIVENESS

Melody Hicks

*Melody Hicks, MC, CPC

**Sandra Leal, ACSW, LMT

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85046-0053

Your lesbian community calendar and events pull out.

Simplicity Circle

Come enjoy the simple things in life: Food-fun-friendly folks!!! The Simplicity Circle will meet Saturday, March 7th for a 1:00 potluck followed by a short hike in the Phoenix Mountain Preserve. "Sustainability" will be the topic of informal discussion. Call Jo for information or directions at 482-7804.

We are sorting out the clutter in our lives and will have a group yard sale on March 28th near 75th Avenue and Camelback. Call Robin for details at 848-0083.

Community Potluck

Community Potluck is seeking a new place to meet and a new coordinator. Call Kathy at 899-7276 with ideas, suggestions and recommendations.

Support across America

Support across America for including sexual orientation in basic civil rights protections is strong among Christians, particularly with regard to ensuring that all Americans share the same safeguards against employment discrimination. The survey cited by Birch found a strong majority of Christians (70 percent) believe that gays and lesbians should be protected from discrimination in the workplace. In addition, when informed that federal law currently lacks such basic protection, Christians support a specific bill like the Employment Non-Discrimination Act to protect Americans from job discrimination based on sexual orientation by a margin of more than two to one (63 percent to 27 percent). Results come from a national survey of 1,007 voters conducted Nov. 5-8, 1996, for the Human Rights Campaign by the polling firm of Greenberg Research Inc. The poll's margin of error is plus or minus 3.1 percent.

Ten states currently include sexual orientation in their non discrimination laws: California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin. Of these, only two states -- Massachusetts and California -- have initiative or referendum procedures that may allow for a Maine-style repeal effort. According to the Feb. 13 edition of The Washington Blade, seven state legislatures are currently considering bills to protect their citizens from discrimination based on sexual orientation: Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Nebraska, New York and West Virginia.



1998 Ride Calendar

- March 15th - Sunday - Tortilla Flats/Casa Grande
- April 19th - Sunday - "Hot Rods & Harleys" show
- May 17th - Sunday - Boyce Thompson Arboretum
- June 14th - Sunday - Strawberry/Payson
- July 11/12 - Showlow/Globe overnight
- August 8th - Saturday - Saguaro Lake rest. Dinner ride
- September 13th - Sunday - Prescott via Wickenburg
- October 11th - Sunday - Jerome
- November 8th Sunday - to be announced

If you are interested in joining us on any scheduled club ride or event call Deb at 279-9228 for times and meeting locations.

Desert Hearts Motorcycle Club wishes you happy and safe motoring.

Pride - contact information



Arizona
Central
Pride

To volunteer, donate, get info, get registration forms - for any other purpose

Voice: mailbox at (602) 279-1771.

Fax: (602) 930-1348

Mail: ACP/PLGPC, PO Box 16847, Phoenix, AZ 85011-6847

E-mail: info@azpride.org

Web site: www.azpride.org

Note: the web site includes many additional, direct, e-mail addresses

Arizona Central Pride/Phoenix Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee, Inc. is a non-profit corporation with a 501(c)3 federal tax-exempt status.



Lesbian Resource Projections Upcoming Events

Lesbian Resource Project

(602) 266-5542 (tdd) 266-5797

(fax) 234-0873

email lrp@swlink.net

www.swlink.net/~lrp

When the Valley of the Sun Gay and Lesbian Community Center moved at the end of December, the LRP lost our offices on 3rd Avenue. The LRP Board of Directors decided not to move with the Center because the new location would be too costly for us at this time, and it does not meet the needs of the Lesbian Resource Project. However, we are committed to maintaining our collaborative relationship with the Center.

As a result, we are actively searching for a new home. **In the meantime, you can reach us at 266-5542 or at P.O. Box 1917, Tempe, AZ 85280-1917.** Since We do not have office space during this transitional period, please bear with us if we take additional time in returning your calls and limit some services.

As you know, moving is always costly and we have ongoing program expenses. For example, our expenses include rental of storage space, new voice mail services, and postage for mailings. While we keep you abreast of our plans, we need your help now. Please provide the stepping stones to a promising future for the women of the Valley.

MORE NEWS

TLC is still singing out. Please contact Lee at 254-0189 with any questions regarding the schedule or location of practices.

The Lesbian Mom's Group has been discontinued following the loss of our coordinator. If you know of anyone who would like to serve this need, please let us know.

The Xena group is ongoing. Call Tammy at 813-8681.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 14th at the John Paul Theater at Phoenix College. **The Susan B. Anthony Story.** A live(ly) presentation of feminist herstory during this 150th anniversary of Seneca Falls.

Dates and Times to Be Announced

Do you have questions about Legal, Financial, or Real Estate Affairs? A discussion with lesbian professionals will focus on these issues.

Our Experiences Across the Generations. A gathering of lesbians of all ages.

Call the
Greater Phoenix Lesbian Coalition
CONNECTION LINE

to find out about programs, services and events

(602) 266-5542

Please see the COMMUNITY CALENDAR for other events or

check out the community calendar ON-LINE
www.swlink.net/~lrp



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Resource directory for Verde Valley

Want to know what's going on in the Gay and Lesbian community in the Verde Valley? The Verde Valley Alternative Lifestyles Directory is now available to provide resource, social events, and friendly services available to the Gay and Lesbian community. For info. call 520-634-1405 or e-mail martimac@sedona.net.

Women writers WANTED:

Women writers, poets, essayists for a WOMEN'S SALON on May 3, 1998 at 3 pm. Sponsored by the LRP. If you are interested in reading your original works, call Diane Post at 258-7985.

"No age or time of life, no position or circumstance, has a monopoly on success. Any age is the right age to start doing!" - Gerard

Glenna's Community Potluck

Glenna's Community Potluck will be held on March 21st at Superstition Mountain R.V. park at 6 PM.

The ladies at the park will award prizes for the best tasting dishes. So make your favorite!

The Park is at 200 W. Southern Ave in AJ. Take 60 toward Globe an exit at Idaho. Go north or left to Southern then turn right to gated entrance on your left.

There will be a dance following dinner. This is your chance to meet many friendly women.

Any questions call Glenna at 345-7453 or 671-4166.



WREN hikes

Saturday, March 14th, the Women's Recreational Enjoyment Network (WREN's) will be hiking the Tortilla Creek Loop, starting at Tortilla Flats, near Canyon Lake in the Superstition Mountains. The loop is 7.4 miles (about 10 hours) of very difficult hiking, first over rocks and boulders in the creekbed, followed by bushwhacking over a low mountain pass and through a wash, and then finishing the loop on an old jeep road. If Tortilla Creek is full of water, we will take an alternate route in the same area. If both Tortilla Creek and the wash are full of water (from the "El Nina rains") we will take an alternative trail in a different area of the Superstitions. See below.

Bring your lunch and at least two

Scrabble league

The new women's Scrabble League meets every Friday, 5:30, at the Coffee Plantation in Tempe.

We usually play "Scrabble Queen of the Hill": winner plays winner, loser plays loser until there is one winner of the night. Most of the players are casual and supportive; however, a few players are harshly competitive and play to win every game!

We have fun! Coffee drinks, tea, and Italian sodas are half-priced for the first hour or so. If you have any other questions, please call 732-7916 for details.

New orienteering group

If you like to go hiking, then you have probably often wondered what lies beyond the narrow trails marked on your topographic map or in your hiking book. With orienteering you can explore wilderness areas beyond the confines of well-marked trails. Go cross-country and explore a rarely visited canyon or mountain. Not least of all, you will decrease the likelihood of getting lost when you can use a map and compass!

A new WREN Orienteering Group will have their first meeting on March 21st to begin learning orienteering. On our first few trips we will explore Hell's Canyon, a wilderness area 25 miles NW of Phoenix. You will need the following:

- ◆ Book *Be Expert With Map & Compass* by Bjorn Kjellstrom
- ◆ Two topo maps: Garfias Mtn and Governors Peak
- ◆ Compass, ruler, pencil and protractor
- ◆ Hiking boots, water and lunch.

Our first meeting will be March 21st at 8 AM at Margaret's. Call 464-8795 for directions. Assignment for the first meeting: read Introduction and Part 1 of *Be Expert With Map & Compass*. We will go over these readings and then drive out to Hell's Canyon to do some easy hiking. See you then!

litters of water. Also, bring or wear long pants and a long sleeve shirt for bushwhacking and bouldering. We also suggest gloves suitable for extensive bouldering.

Meet at 7 AM at the Black Eye Pea restaurant parking lot across from Fiesta Mall, on the southeast corner of Alma School Road just off the Superstition highway (US 60). The drive to Tortilla Flats takes approximately 45 minutes from the meeting place.

If you have questions, call Mason at 931-4891 or Margaret at 464-8795. If not, see you at the meeting place.

Alternate hike in case of creek and wash flooding: In case of flooding we will hike to the Spanish hieroglyphs from the First Water trailhead in the Superstitions. This is approximately 12 miles round-trip, along a well-defined trail. The hieroglyphs are atop a high mountain with a beautiful 360-degree view. There is a fee of \$4 per vehicle for parking at First Water.

The Merc at Work

Phoenix players have been keeping busy in the offseason

While many of the players from around the WNBA were looking to take time off after the introductory season, the Phoenix Mercury players were hard at work. Nearly every player on the team's roster and developmental squad has been involved in basketball in one way or another since season's end.

The team's Hall of Fame pair, Head Coach Cheryl Miller and guard Nancy Lieberman-Cline, have spent time in the broadcast booth, Miller for TNT's NBA coverage and Lieberman-Cline for ESPN's NCAA programming. Bridget Pettis, with her Mercury-red hair, a la Dennis Rodman minus the antics, has kept herself busy leading her team, Chieti, in the Italian League with an MVP performance in a recent tournament. Marlies Askamp is playing for the German National Team that met the WNBA Touring Team, which included Timms, during play in the European Cup. Askamp led all scorers with 26 points and 14 rebounds. Jennifer Gillom is averaging 23 points and 10 rebounds for Galatasaray from Istanbul, Turkey. Galatasaray has beaten its opponents by an average of 40 points. Toni Foster, selected by the Mercury as the eighth player in the first round of last year's WNBA draft, is the leading rebounder for her international squad in Holon, Israel. Umeki Webb and Tia Jackson have returned to their respective alma maters to coach. Webb, coaching as a graduate assistant at North Carolina State, is also attending classes to finish her degree. Jackson is coaching at the Virginia Commonwealth University. Monique Ambers, along with developmental players Melissa Gurile, Ryneldi Becenti and Molly Tuter, is competing in Greece on the Apollon MGS Kalamarias team. This is the first year of overseas competition for Ambers and Tuter.

Hall-of-Famer and former Mercury guard Nancy Lieberman-Cline was named the Detroit Shock's coach and general manager.

The Mercury will travel to Sacramento to face the Monarchs in the 1998 WNBA season opener on Thursday, June 11, 1998.

Phoenix's first home game of the season will be on Sunday, June 14, 1998 versus the Los Angeles Sparks.

Mountain Bike Adventures

I'm looking to start a mountain bike club for women of all ages and skill levels. This is not a competitive group. Just a group to explore Arizona and nature. Meet new friends and have fun.

All you need to join us is a mountain bike, helmet and water bottle. For more information contact Joy at 926-4261.

"My life has a superb cast but I can't figure out the plot." - Ashleigh Brilliant

Womyn 2 Womyn

Join us for breakfast on Saturday, March 14th, 10 a.m. at The Egger (NE corner of Central & Camelback).

Then, we head out to the movies on Sunday, March 29th in the afternoon. We'll pick a movie by Thursday and put it on the W2W voice mail line at 941-3513.

So, just call in for details. All women are welcome. We have no membership fees. Come on out and get connected!

Universal Life Hand of Love Ministry

Following the highly successful Workshop Networking Meetings for Reiki and other alternative healing practitioners in January and February, the Hand of Love Ministry, 6605 N. 14th Street, Phoenix (between Maryland and Glendale) is continuing the meetings on a regular basis, the third Tuesday of every month. The next meeting is March 17th from 7 till 10 PM. Admission by good-will donation. Monitors will be Reiki Master Bonnie Flanagan and long time Natural Healer Rev. Roderic Vickers. Adepts of all disciplines of Healing Therapy are welcome. For more information call 264-1470.

The regular weekly service at the Hand of Love Ministry is at 9 AM Sunday morning. Rev. Roderic Vickers and Rev. Tom Less presiding. For information call 264-1470.

Support group in Verde Valley

Women's Chat in the Verde Valley. Every Wednesday night 5 to 7 at the Huff n Puff Straw Bale Inn near Sedona, 520-567-9066 for more information.

"Los Amigos Del Sol"

Now 22 years old, Los Amigos Del Sol continues to benefit its members and the community as a social organization of men and women working together for the fun of it.

For information on the location of business meetings held the 2nd Saturday of each month at 3pm and the social events call GB at 997-2411.

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Same Time/Same Place Breakfast Club

Now's the time to join us at the Coffee Talk, 48 N. Robson, in Mesa (north of Main/East of Country Club). We meet every Sunday at 10 a.m. and talk and drink coffee and talk and eat and talk.... For more info. call Robin 848-0083.

Phoenix area women's shelters

National 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
Metro Phoenix shelters and safe homes:
*My Sister's Place, Chandler, 821-1024,
*Faith House, Glendale, 939-6798
*New Life Shelter, Litchfield park, 935-9161,
*Autumn House, Mesa, 835-5555
*DeColores, phoenix, 269-1515
*Chrysalis Shelter, Phoenix, 944-4999
*Sojourner Center, Phoenix, 244-0997
*Chrysalis Shelter, Scottsdale, 481-0402

Xena fans

Do you thrill to the weekly adventures of Xena, Warrior Princess and her devoted Bard? Come meet with other lesbian and bi women who share your passion for the dynamic duo, our "Amazon" heros for the 90's.



Xena group activities include: Reading Xena lesbian fan fiction on the Internet, screening never seen before material like bloopers and fan music videos, watching and making available early episodes, sharing information about posters, articles, books, tv interviews, and fan conventions. This common interest group of the Lesbian Resource Project meets once a month on a Sunday, 1-3:30 p.m. at Augustana Lutheran Church, 2604 N. 14th St., Phoenix (corner of 14th & Virginia).

For meeting dates & further information, call XenaFan at 813-8681.

LOOK FOR OUR UPCOMING "XENITES UNITE" FAN PARTY AT OBELISK BOOKSTORE !!!

G.A.S.P!

Looking for that special someone? Love hiking but don't have a hiking partner? Thought about romance ads but wasn't sure how they work? Well, WCN is announcing G.A.S.P! (Girls in Arizona Seeking People). Here's how it works:

- 1) you send in your submission - limit 50 words, tasteful, clever, discreet. List a P.O. box, and e-mail, or whatever for your reply.
- 2) WCN will run your submission up to three months (you need to tell us if you don't want it printed anymore) in the G.A.S.P! column
- 3) WCN reserves the right to edit, not publish, or otherwise destroy any submissions in poor taste, offensive, or obscene.
- 4) Send in your submission by the 15th of the month for the next issue. Either mail it or e-mail to our web site.

Since this is a new service WCN is trying, we are offering this for free for the April, May, and June issues. So if you send your submission in March (for the April issue), it will run for free in April, May, and June. If you send it in for the May issue (sent by the 15th of April), it will run free in May and June.

We will see the volume and response we have from you, our reader, and decide after the June issue to continue or drop the service.

Some hints for writing your ad:

- 1) Be honest. You can't ever meet the dreamboat you are corresponding with if you've told her you are a twin to k.d. lang when you are really a body double for Mama Cass.
- 2) Mention your likes/dislikes. If you love sand movies and hate dogs, say so. That's what interests the kind of person you want to get to know. Include significant details - like allergic to cats.
- 3) Don't babble. Say what you want, and leave it at that.
- 4) Be careful. We can't stress this enough. We wish the world was a safe place (and chocolate had no calories), but the reality is you must be careful. If you meet someone, go to a public place, do a group thing, whatever until YOU feel comfortable. Don't use your home phone. E-mail or a P.O. box is not expensive. Use your fist name only.

Please let us know if you like the service, hate it, or anything else on your mind! We write for you!

Telephone Tree

Try the tree if you want to spread an important announcement: want to buy or sell something: or you are looking for a roommate. Call Kathy 899-7276 for information.



NOW - National Organization of Women: East Valley Chapter

Meetings will be held the third Thursday of the month from 7-9PM at the Pyle Center, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe. For information contact Jennifer Deprey-Jackmen at 917-4760.



WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY GROUP

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THE HEALING & TRANSFORMATION OF OURSELVES,
OUR COMMUNITY, HUMANITY & THE EARTH.

MEETINGS

We Meet the 1st & 3rd Mon. of the Month

Mar. 2nd - "Healing Waters, Healing Ways"
Contact Valia - 458-9672

Mar. 16th - Creating Future Meeting Topics
& An Evening of Wine & Cheese
Bring Lots of Ideas!

Contact Sue - 253-3498



SOCIALS

All Women Welcome to
Join us for our Social Gatherings

Mar. 12th - Thurs. Nite At Pookies
Dinner 6:30 & Karaoke 8:30

R.S.V.P. to Sue 253-8498

Mar. 22nd - "Celebrating Spring Equinox"
Morning Hike & Breakfast

For more info contact Patti - 277-3911

"We win half the battle when we make up
our minds to take the world as we find
it, including the thorns." - Orison S. Marden



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"WELCOME WAGON"

Well it's an idea whose time has come again
in our Lesbian Community !!

We're in the process of gathering information and materials relating to GOODS, SERVICES, OPPORTUNITIES, & PLACES TO MEET that represent our community. We will present this to any "Newcomer" who makes known her wish to be visited.

If you have suggestions, or are a lesbian business, club, or group please call & let us know how you would like to be represented.

Contact

Patti - 277-3911 or Dawn 535-1208

Have a activity planned and need more
women? This is a great place to find them.

Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel



Community Calendar

Places to go, things to do!!!!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																													
1 SP/ST Breakfast Club, 48 N. Robson, Mesa, 10AM	2 Women's Spirituality Group, pg 9	3	4	5 Horizons Youth Group at Center	6 Scrabble league, pg 8	7																																																																													
8 International Women's Day SP/ST Breakfast Club, 48 N. Robson, Mesa, 10AM	9	10	11 Women's Central News general meeting at 333 E. Virginia #101, 7PM	12 Horizons Youth Group at Center Women's Spirituality social, pg 9	13 Scrabble league, pg 8	14 "Los Amigos Del Sol" meeting, pg 8 1st Women's Rights Convention recreation, pg 4 & 7 Center volunteer orientation, pg 6 Womyn 2 Womyn event, pg 8 WREN hike, pg 8																																																																													
15 Holly Near & Grand Canyon Men's Chorale at Orpheum, see front page SP/ST Breakfast Club, 48 N. Robson, Mesa, 10AM	16 Women's Spirituality Group, pg 9	17 Alternative healing practitioners, pg 8	18	19 Horizons Youth Group at Center	20 Scrabble league, pg 8	21 Glenna's potluck, pg 8 Orienteering group, pg 8																																																																													
22 Center annual meeting SP/ST Breakfast Club, 48 N. Robson, Mesa, 10AM Women's Spirituality social "Celebrating Spring Equinox", pg 9	23	24	25	26 Horizons Youth Group at Center	27 Scrabble league, pg 8	28 Valley of the Sun Gay & Lesbian Community Center grand opening, front page																																																																													
29 SP/ST Breakfast Club, 48 N. Robson, Mesa, 10AM Womyn 2 Womyn event, pg 8	30	31	<table border="1"> <caption>February</caption> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> </table> <table border="1"> <caption>April</caption> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>				S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
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Women's Center, Inc., serving the community for over 20 years.



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One year subscription: \$18.00 more if you can less if you can't, no one turned away for lack of funds. Mail payment, payable to the Women's Center, Inc., to P.O. Box 26031, Tempe, AZ. 85285. All donations are tax deductible. Allow six weeks for first delivery. We do not release or sell our mailing list to any other person(s) or organization(s), nor does our envelope indicate its content. Your privacy is our first concern!

Comments:

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Professional Lesbian/Lesbian

Professional

By Rhonda Sanner, Community submission

Most of you probably think this is an article about professional women in the working field. Actually it's an article on the professional lesbian within a relationship. We all know relationships are hard work and take training and skill. But, there's no school available for this kind of training. As I do, you all love women. And I've learned a lot throughout the years. I've put together a pop quiz to determine your status. And ladies be honest this is all out of fun. And a little advice from a professional lesbian. Do not show this to your girlfriend unless you have positive results.

1. Do you remember when your girlfriends last pms episode was?
Yes _____ No _____
2. When your girlfriend is screaming at you do you respond, "Yes honey, it's all my fault."
Yes _____ No _____
3. When your girlfriend pages you do you respond in less than 10 minutes?
Yes _____ No _____
4. When she ask you what your thinking do you respond, "About how much I love you?"
Yes _____ No _____
5. If she want's to go shopping do you hand her your credit card?
Yes _____ No _____

If you answered yes to the above questions you can consider yourself a professional lesbian. As stated above there is no training for this position. Just pulling yourself out of the dog house several times is enough training. So have a wonderful March and don't forget the pms calendar.

How much harder it was in the old days:

From a contest in which Baby Boomers were asked to tell Gen Xers how much harder it was in the old days:

In my day, we didn't have mouses to move the cursor around. We only had the arrows, and if the up arrow was broken and you needed to get to the top of the screen, well, you just hit the left arrow a thousand times, dadgummit. (K. Cuddihy, Fairfax)

In my day, we couldn't afford shoes, so we went barefoot. In the winter we had to wrap our feet with barbed wire for traction. (B. Flavin, Alexandria)

In my day, we didn't have hand held calculators. We had to do addition on our fingers. To subtract, we had to have some fingers amputated. (J. P. Smith, Washington)

In my day, we didn't have fancy high numbers. We had "nothing," "one," "twain" and "multitudes." (E. C., Laurel)

In my day, we didn't get that disembodied, slightly ticked-off voice saying 'Doors closing.' We got on the train, the doors closed, and if your hand was sticking out it scraped along the tunnel all the way to the next station and it was a bloody stump at the end. (R. B. Springfield)

In my day, we didn't have virtual reality. If a one-eyed razorback barbarian warrior was chasing you with an ax, you just had to hope you could outrun him. (Sarah M. Wolford, Hanover)

Back in the 1970s we didn't have the space shuttle to get all excited about. We had to settle for men walking on the crummy moon. (R. Beland,

Springfield)

In my day, we didn't have days. There was only "time for work," "time for pray" and "time for sleep." The sheriff would go around and tell everyone when to change. (E. Carnahan, Laurel)

In my day, people could only dream of hitchhiking a ride on a comet. (D. Ronka, Charlottesville)

In my day, we didn't have fancy health-food restaurants. Every day we ate lots of easily recognizable animal parts, along with potatoes drenched in melted fat from those animals. And we're all as strong as AAGGKK-GAAK Urrgh. Thud. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

In my day, we didn't have water. We had to smash together our own hydrogen and oxygen atoms. (Diana Hugue, Bowie)

Kids today think the world revolves around them. In my day, the sun revolved around the world, and the world was perched on the back of a giant tortoise. (J. P., Garrett Park)

In the old days, nobody asked you to sign petitions. The sheriff just came to your house and told you "you was part of a posse." (B. Blyveis, Columbia)

In my day, we didn't have dogs or cats. All I had was Silver Beauty, my beloved paper clip. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Back in my day, "60 Minutes" wasn't just a bunch of gray-haired liberal 80 year old guys. It was a bunch of gray-haired liberal 60-year-old guys. (R. Beland, Springfield, and J. Pannullo, Kensington)

A lesbian's place is in the House

By R. Dotiga, THE ADVOCATE February 17, 1998

When the 106th Congress is sworn in next January, three lesbians hope to make history by raising their right hands and taking the oath of office. Voters will have the final say on whether any openly gay women are sent to the House of Representatives for the first time ever. But with the election only nine months away, the future looks promising. "These are all tough races, but all three are very winnable," said Kathleen DeBold, deputy director of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, which raises money for gay candidates.

The most well-known of the lesbian hopefuls is Washington State's Margarethe Cammermeyer, a retired Army colonel who successfully fought the military when it tried to fire her over her sexual orientation. Cammermeyer is a divorced mother and grandmother and has lived with partner Diane Divelbess for nearly ten years.

The Democrat expects to face conservative Republican incumbent Jack Metcalf in a race to represent the northern suburbs of Seattle. Gay activists say Metcalf's voting record is appalling; he barely squeaked past his Democratic challenger in the 1996 election.

Cammermeyer hopes voters will focus on her stands on issues such as health care instead of her sexual orientation: "I've been a woman for 55 years, a nurse for 35 years, a soldier for 31, and yet it's other labels that are used to identify me. That's very unfortunate."

Halfway across the country, state assemblywoman Tammy Baldwin has a

shot at making history twice by becoming the first openly gay woman in Congress and the first woman elected to Congress from Wisconsin. Baldwin, 35, has been in politics since she was elected to the Madison-area county board of supervisors in 1986 while in law school. She was elected to the state assembly in 1992.

The congressional seat that covers the liberal Madison area has traditionally been a Democratic stronghold, and the Republican who has held the seat since 1990 is retiring. Baldwin will face at least three challengers -- all men -- in the Democratic primary; several candidates are running for the Republican spot.

The lesbian who may face the toughest odds is San Diego city councilwoman Christine Kehoe. A former editor of a gay newspaper, Kehoe was first elected to the city council in 1993. She lives with Julie Warren, her partner of 13 years.

Kehoe, 47, is very popular in San Diego's upscale gay neighborhood of Hillcrest, which is part of both her city-council and congressional districts. But Brian Bilbray, the Republican incumbent, won't be easy to beat. He has attracted significant gay support in the past because of his moderate views on gay rights and easily won a second term in 1996.

The San Diego Union-Tribune called Kehoe a long shot, but she expects to win by appealing to voters on education, the environment, and abortion rights issues. "The three of us running is a great step forward," she said. "The community is mounting campaigns across the nation. That's a statement as to how far we've come over the past 20 years."

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Don't wait until it's too late,
HAVE PEACE OF MIND NOW!

Good things to know....

Vitality

Cold pop. Storing unpopped popcorn in the freezer helps ensure more of the kernels will pop when you cook it. *Tightwad Living*, P.O. Box 629, Burgin, KY 40310, \$16/yr.

Timing medication to your internal clock. Most allergy/hay fever sufferers experience their worst symptoms—sneezing, sniffing, congestion and swollen eyes—early in the morning. A 24-hour antihistamine, one of the most common treatments, peaks 12 hours after you take it. So if you take it at night, it will have the most strength in the morning—when you need it the most.

American Medical Association.

If you suffer from migraines, try avoiding these foods, which often trigger the headaches: Cheddar cheese, herring, chocolate, sour cream, nuts, lima beans, figs, raisins, sourdough bread and anything pickled, fermented or marinated. National Headache Foundation, Chicago, IL.

To make your own fabric softener: Mix 2 cups baking soda, 2 cups white vinegar and 4 cups water in a plastic container, then shake. Add 1/4 cup of the softener to the final rinse of your wash. Use 1/2 cup if you have hard water. *Tightwad Living*, P.O. Box 629, Burgin, KY 40310, \$16/yr.

Doing more with less. Five percent of Baby Boomers have changed their lifestyles to simplify their lives. Within two years, the percentage is

expected to increase to 15%. *Utne Reader*, 1624 Harmon Place, Minneapolis, MN 55403, 6 times a year, \$19.97/yr.

Coating meat, fish or poultry with this mixture will give it a Mexican flair: 1 teaspoon each of ground cumin and crushed re-pepper flakes; 1 teaspoon grated lime peel; and 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt or garlic powder.

U.S. doctors who have been disciplined by state boards or federal agencies are identified in "Questionable Doctors," a listing produced by Public Citizen, a consumer group. To order, send \$19 to Public Citizen, 1600 20th St. N.W., Washington, DC 30008. Specify the state you're interested in.

A really good sign. Sweating profusely when you exercise means you are in good shape. Sweat helps keep your body cool when you work out and a fit person perspires more quickly and more heavily than someone who is unfit.

Penn State Sports Medicine Newsletter, 11 Gorham Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583, monthly, \$34/yr.

Cheap Goods. The Owens Group Unclaimed Baggage Center in Scottsboro, Alabama, sells items packed inside suitcases that were lost by airlines, and never claimed. The store sells all its merchandise at steep discounts. For more information, call 1-800-844-5753.

Food for thought. Seventy-eight percent of medical schools don't require physicians to study nutrition. *Men's Health*, 33 E. Minor St., Emmaus, PA 18098, 10 times a year, \$20/yr.

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Women in sports

Over two decades have passed since the enactment of Title IX, a federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in federally-funded education, including athletics.

As a result of Title IX, women and girls have benefited from more athletic participation opportunities and more equitable facilities. Because of Title IX, more women have received athletic scholarships and thus opportunities for higher education that some may not have been able to afford otherwise. In addition, because of Title IX the salaries of coaches for women's teams increased.

But women and girl athletes have yet to reach parity with men. Women are still only about one-third of interscholastic and intercollegiate athletes. In addition, women college athletes receive less than 24% of college sports' operating budgets, and less than

18% of college recruiting money.

Despite these persistent inequities, the federal government has been very reluctant to enforce the law. The Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, charged with enforcing Title IX, is underfunded and, despite the reluctance of schools to comply with gender equity, has never pulled federal funding from schools or colleges that discriminate against women and girls. Enforcement of Title IX has, instead, been left to individuals. Women and girls have had to file lawsuits on their own to challenge discriminatory practices in schools and colleges. While almost all of these lawsuits have so far been resolved in favor of women athletes and coaches, this is an expensive and time-consuming avenue to gender equity.

Opposition to gender equity in sports comes from football coaches who fear that putting more resources into women's programs will mean

taking money away from football. When Title IX was first passed, the National Collegiate Athletics Administration led a campaign to have football exempted from gender equity requirements, arguing that football teams produce profits which fund other sports. This my this just one that this report debunks. Few football teams make a profit; most run at a large deficit. In early 1995, the American Football Coaches Association again called on Congress to revisit Title IX, saying Title IX was hurting football funding.

Opposition to gender equity also comes from coaches of men's minor sports such as wrestling, golf, and gymnastics. These coaches have joined together to lobby Congress to change Title IX, which they argue is hurting their sports by taking opportunities away from men. This is another myth – that as more women become athletes, there will be less opportunity for men to play. In fact,

this is not the case. As more women have entered athletics, they have not displaced men – instead, the total number of athletes has increased.

This report also points out that our current model of athletics heavily favors only the 66 "superboy" athlete, leaving out women and all men who are not superstars. These "superstars" are trained to perform for big scholarships and eventually, for a few, huge professional salaries – often at great cost to the health and well-being of these athletes. This report makes a case for more emphasis on "lifetime" sports such as walking, swimming, and biking. Also included is a discussion of "partnership" models of sports that emphasize health, cooperation, and enjoyment over the "winning at all costs" philosophy that has caused so many athletic injuries, even among children.

Despite the obstacles women face in athletics, many women have led and are leading the way to gender

(Continued on page 13)

HUMAN RIGHTS ARE WOMEN'S RIGHTS: CAMPAIGN FOR COMMITMENT

The letter below is part of a campaign to get the Senators who have not committed their support for US ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women to do so. The campaign goal is to have 75 Senators committed to ratification by March 8, International Women's Day.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1.) Copy this letter to distribute as widely as possible to persons who would be interested in signing the letter.

2.) Sign the letter. Include name and address so the Senator knows that you are in his/her state.

3.) Mail the letter(s) to Ratification Working Group, c/o AIUSA's Washington Office (see note) for delivery to the Senator's Office with all the other letters being sent from your state.

RETURN SIGNED LETTERS BY FEBRUARY 16, 1998

Please mail all signed letters to:

RATIFICATION WORKING GROUP

c/o Amnesty International USA

304 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

Washington DC 20003

For Delivery to Your Senator

Date _____

Dear Senator _____,

I firmly believe that human rights are Women's rights. I hope that you do too. But the reality is that women suffer violence and discrimination in today's world. We all need to fight against this. I support US ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Women's Convention). I want the United States to stand behind the efforts of women and men who are working to end that discrimination. The Women's Convention is an important tool for that work.

As your constituent I am asking you to express your support for US ratification of the Women's Convention and work to bring the Convention to the floor of the Senate for a vote in the 105th Congress. On International Women's Day, March 8, 1998, we will be publicizing your position.

Sincerely yours,

signature _____

Name (please print clearly) _____

Street Address, City, State, Zip _____

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Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

February 13 and 14 was the weekend of the Second Annual Phoenix Lesbian and Gay Film Festival at the new Esplanade Theater. The film series was brought to us by a number of community sponsors, with proceeds going to the Lesbian and Gay Public Awareness Project. There were two lesbian films (*Fire* and *Late Bloomers*) and two gay films (*Broadway Damage* and *Green Plaid Shirt*) presented over the two days. I had the good fortune of being able to see two of the four.

Green Plaid Shirt is the debut effort by writer/director Richard Natale. It tells the story of Philip, his lover, Guy, and their three friends over a ten-year period. Philip is the sole survivor of the group, looking back on the relationships that they all shared and trying to understand what they were all about. There were happy times; scenes that had the audience laughing and making the "tacky" comments aloud that we all were thinking. And there were times of turbulence and trauma that brought a hush over the crowd. *Green Plaid Shirt* is not just another film about gay men dying of aids. It is a story of love, relationships, and the hard times that so many of us encounter. It touched the audience in many ways.

The romantic comedy *Late Bloomers*, by Julia Dyer and Gretchen Dyer, was, however, another story of a straight married woman falling in love with the math teacher/basketball coach at the local high school where she is the school secretary. Carly's husband and teenage daughter are initially appalled by the situation, but in the end rally to support her in the face of the ridicule and oppression that are born of her coming out. Her son thinks nothing of it. We don't know for certain if Dinah had already acknowledged being a lesbian before the love affair with Carly arises. The love that the two women share endures all of the torment that their small town and school community can throw at them. They also manage to break through the community homophobia as is evidenced by the attendance at their wedding. While following a common plot, there were twists enough to keep this film from being "the same old thing." It never hurts to be reminded of the difficulty so many of us encounter(-ed) as a part of the coming out process.

Thanks to David Horowitz, Amy Ettinger, and all the others who worked to bring this film festival to us! We look forward to next year.

Women in sports

(Continued from page 12)

equity. This report profiles women athletes and administrators who have paved the way, and offers "Strategies for Change" that women and girl athletes, coaches, administrators, and parents can take to make school and college athletics more equitable.

Is athletics an important feminist issue? Yes. Participation in sports benefits women just as it does men, helping to develop leadership skills, boosting self-esteem and grades, and promoting physical fitness and health.

Because of the pervasive discrimination against women and girls in sports, and because of the important benefits of sports participation, the Feminist Majority Foundation formed a Task Force on Women and Girls in Sports in May 1993. Chaired by Molly Yard, former president of the National Organization for Women and a long-time women's rights and civil rights activist, the Task Force brings together feminist advocates, women athletes, athletics administrators, and sports activists to address the issue of sex discrimination in sports.

This Empowering Women in Sports report is a publication of the Feminist Majority Foundation's Task Force on Women and Girls in Sports.

Gay Service members face increased harassment

Gays and lesbians in the military face increasing harassment, according to an annual report released by the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. The report cited 563 "command violations," during which commanders harassed, pursued and asked members about their sexual orientation in violation of a "don't ask, don't tell" policy put in place by President Clinton.

Harassment by commanders led to 850 discharges from the military for gay, lesbian and bisexual members in 1996, the highest number in five years. No numbers were released by the Pentagon for 1997, despite repeated requests from the Network. The report included recommendations for decreasing violations, including stricter limits on investigations into sexual orientation, punishing commanders who violate the limits, and offering recourse to officers who are being investigated. The report concluded, "It is time for military leaders to obey the law."

Violence against women

The International Secretariat of OMCT has received new information in the case SDN 031297 in Sudan.

As a brief reminder of the situation the International Secretariat was informed of the arrest and beating of 37 women by the Sudanese police in Khartoum on 1 December 1997.

According to information received, on the morning of 1 December, in Khartoum, the Sudanese Women Association and the Mothers of the Sudanese Students Union organised a march to the UN headquarters in Khartoum, protesting against the forcible conscription of the students and to deliver a memorandum to the UN representative. When the silent march reached the United Nations headquarters, the UN representative (Mr. Christopher Jaeger-from Germany) refused to meet them or to receive the memorandum and called instead the police informing them that there was a women's gathering in front of his office.

The arrested women were brought before a summary court and the judge, Mohamed Sir elkhatim Gharabawi, sentenced them to 10 lashed and 25 thousand Sudanese pound fine.

The arrested women are: Souad Ibrahim Ahmed (67 yr old) University lecturer; Sarah Nugdallah (50 yr old) University lecturer; Nemat Ahmed Mamluk (60 yr old) nurse; Sarah Hamd Elneil (who is currently in a very critical situation and suffering from internal bleeding); Kosar Hassan Mohamed; Zahra Mohamed Ahmed Fadiel; Amani Ahmed Osman; Wedad Mohamed; Asma Elsayid Ali; Samya Ahmed Osman; Omya Ahmed Mustafa (lawyer); Salwa Saeed (lawyer); Zienab Ali Alomda Abdelmajid (lawyer); ElKhansaa Omer Sureldahab; Seham Adam; Samera Osman; Huda Ahmed Abdalla; Setena Mohamed Salih; Sare Gesm Elsyed; Ibtisam Ibrahim; Entesar Siddig; Aml Osman; Sakena Abdalla Kambal; Neglla Ahmed Musa; Hayat Mahmoud; Lelyan Mohamed Salih Hussien (German and received 40 lashes because she was wearing trousers); Fawzia Ahmed ElFadil; Eyman Mohamed ElHassan; Bakheta Ahmed ElSheikh; Rana Mohamed Ahmen; Had El Rayid ElMahi; Fatima Kamel Mlhamed Kheir; Nagala Saad Ahmed ElShiekh; SameraTalib Ismael yman Abdelrahim.

According to the information received, the judge sentenced Mr. Mustafa Abdelghadir, one of the defenders of the women, to 500 thousand fine or six month imprisonment for exciting the court and expelled Mr. Hashim Awad Abdelmajeed, another defender, from the courtroom for the same reason. At the end of the trial the people outside the court gathered the fine and paid it immediately to the court. The judge refused to accept the fine of Mr. Mustafa and insisted on his spending his night in prison.

According to new information coming from the UN, certain events on the day of the arrest have been questioned by the UN representative. Apparently the UN representative phoned the foreign affairs department of the authorities - not the Police directly. He further states that he did not refuse to see the demonstrators, however, at no stage does it appear that he attempted to meet the demonstrators, nor to intervene before the violence erupted. Mr. Jaeger waited until the following day to send a note verbale to the authorities. OMCT has already informed the UN that they consider that the actions of Mr. Jaeger do not correspond to a sufficient response from a senior and experienced UN field official in the face of serious human rights violations. Mr. Jaeger, resident in Sudan for some years, cannot be unaware of the likely reaction of the authorities to a public demonstration. Both the physical and psychological situation of the women remains of grave concern.

Action requested: Please write to the Sudanese authorities urging them to:

- 1) guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of all the above mentioned women and their defenders;
- 1) order their immediate release in the absence of valid charges and assure that their sentences as well as the sentences of their defender will not be carried out;
- 1) take all necessary measures to bring an end to the practice of corporal punishment;
- 1) guarantee an impartial and exhaustive inquiry into these facts, identify those responsible, bring them before a civil competent and impartial tribunal and apply the penal, civil and/or administrative sanctions provided by law;
- 1) ensure in all circumstances the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with national and international standards.

Addresses:

His Excellency Lieu5tenant General Omar Hassan al-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan, People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan.

Brigadier Bakri Hassan Salih, Minister of Interior, People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan.

Mr. Abdel Basset Sabdrat, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General, Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan.

Mr. Ali Osman Mohamad Taha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PO Box 873, Khartoum, Sudan



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Rainbow Alliance:
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Memorial Union at ASU.

ARIZONANS FOR FAIRNESS

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STOP EMPLOYMENT
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Based on Sexual Orientation

The Ex Files

A Former Follower Sheds the Light on Ex-Gay Ministries.

By Kyle Young, Outsmart Magazine (Houston)

For 12 years Doug Upchurch struggled to become heterosexual. It didn't work. For most of that period, he was heavily involved in ex-gay ministries, a growing international movement of Christian groups whose purpose is to lead gay people toward heterosexuality. While some lesbians are involved in the groups, the movement is primarily directed at gay men. Today, Upchurch wants to expose the ex-gay groups as dangerous and misleading. He is developing a Web site called Ex.Ex, which will tell the story of others like him — those who sought out ex-gay ministries for heavenly intervention to make them straight, but found themselves in a living hell.

Brought up in a mainstream Methodist church, Upchurch grew tired of organized religion. He joined a small charismatic church his first year in high school. There was a contagious electricity in the church that made spiritual pursuit an exciting sensation. With a growing desire to one day become a minister, Upchurch knew that he had to put a stop to his feelings — his attraction toward other males.

He shared his struggle with close friends in high school. They prayed for him. Numerous times he was exorcised for the "demon of homosexuality."

In 1986, Upchurch left his home in Houston to attend Baylor University, a conservative Baptist school in Waco. "When I got to college, I gradually would tell people I knew that I was struggling with this," says Upchurch. "This is really sick, but in some cases you tell them because you like the person and you want to see if they are interested in you. In other cases you tell them because you really are hurting, and you feel that if you don't get this off your chest and get it done with, you're never going to live a normal life."

During his sophomore year, he was told that he could not be a leader in his church in Waco unless his homosexual feelings were "dealt with." Upchurch's college minister suggested prayer, reading the Bible and involvement in a weekly group that met in Dallas. The group was affiliated with an organization called Exodus International, the largest of several ministries who claim a "way out" of homosexuality.

Each week Upchurch would make the 90-minute trek to Dallas. In the group were men of all ages. Some married. Some promiscuous. Some whose homosexual thoughts had not led to "acting out."

The leader lectured weekly on the causes of homosexuality, which was thought to be a symptom of a larger problem.

"That larger problem could have been unmet personal needs as a child," explains Upchurch, "that my father either didn't love me enough or wasn't there enough or perhaps that it was abuse. It could have been a number of things, but I vividly remember the drawing on the blackboard of the

iceberg, and the tip of the iceberg was homosexuality, and everything below it was the real problem you had to get rid of."

The faithful students were taught that the way to overcome homosexuality was to replace the void left from a dysfunctional childhood with the love of God. Upchurch began seeking the void in his family. Through group discussions as well as weekly writing and reading assignments, he started to believe that he experienced a "lack of caring" as a child. At times he would weep for the loss he felt.

After spending the summer with his parents, Upchurch returned to Waco to find that the group had disbanded because the leader "fell into immorality."

He continued to bargain with God for a change in orientation throughout college. He dated girls and increased his involvement in church activities. His senior year, he requested an exorcism to rid himself of homosexuality. He fasted for three days before the ministers at his church surrounded him and screamed at the demons they believed were inside him.

"I basically cowered on the floor for a couple of hours wanting something to happen, and nothing happened," says Upchurch. "When it was all over, I felt very awkward and very weird. I felt like a complete idiot to ask for something like this. I mean this was like self-torture."

Upchurch says from that point on, he no longer viewed homosexuality as demonic — but it still was wrong, and needed to be changed.

After graduation, he returned to Houston. He put his teenage dream of becoming a minister on the back burner, postponing plans to attend a seminary in Los Angeles. He soon joined a small church in the Heights, the Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Houston. Vineyard had a structured program, where members had "accountability partners" to make sure each other was following the right path. Upchurch's partners, Bob and Kent, pushed him to continue "getting over" being gay. They also served as support to insure that he wasn't acting on his sexual desires. Bob and Kent paid for Upchurch to go to an ex-gay workshop in Los Angeles sponsored by Desert Stream Ministries, another national ex-gay organization.

The event started with gay men and lesbians weeping in front of the altar for their flawed childhood relationships with their parents. They were sprinkled with holy water.

"As I was watching, I really wanted something to happen to me," says Upchurch. "I kept thinking, Why are they getting all of the good stuff and I was getting none of it. How come something's not happening to me in my seat over here. I want to walk down and cry. You end up coming to a point where you either force yourself to start doing it and hope something will happen or you just totally zone out. I think that I just zoned out and I went to the bathroom."

He returned to Houston, disillusioned. Occasionally he would

venture to local gay bars looking for anonymous sexual encounters. Relationships were not an option, and sexually "acting out" reinforced the notion that homosexuality was dirty and sinful. Guilt led him to become active in the Christian Coalition for Reconciliation. The group was affiliated with Exodus International.

He became good friends with a member of the group. The two began to share each other's frustrations. Upchurch had read every book there was to read on the subject. He'd been to numerous seminars. He'd spent years through the church and ex-gay groups trying to change his sexual orientation.

"As time went on, we began to realize this just really, for both of us, wasn't working," says Upchurch. "We'd try to go to these groups and it was like, This doesn't make any sense

By this point in time, it was so regurgitated — your father hurt you, how did he hurt you, what can we do to heal that, how can God come in and do that — and I thought, You know, I've heard this for almost 12 years of my life. I don't get it."

In January of '93, Upchurch decided to take a break from his efforts to change.

"I decided to not put any rules on myself about what I could or could not do — I'm just going to see for a couple of weeks who I really am," says Upchurch. "I went out one night to JR's and happened to meet Craig Stevens. I had been to JR's a couple of times, and each time I thought I had fallen [from grace] — but I happened to meet Craig and he seemed so nice, such a great guy."

Stevens told him that he was a Christian, too — a gay Christian. Soon, Upchurch met others.

"I wondered why all of these people who said they were Christian and gay were so OK with it," says Upchurch. "How does that happen and how does that work, and why is it that certain churches say one thing about homosexuality and certain other churches don't say that at all? I was really beginning to see the discrepancies, which I think I always knew were there — but before, I always said, Oh well, those people just aren't saved. Now I was really beginning to question it."

The next week he told Hope, one of his closest friends from church, that he was questioning some of his beliefs about homosexuality. She said they could no longer be friends. "I thought, What do you mean, we can't be friends anymore?" says Upchurch. "What's that about?"

That weekend he was to attend a dinner at the home of Brian and Janet, some other friends from church. He called them to tell them about his conversation with Hope. Brian told him that it would be best if he didn't come.

"I hung up the phone. I just lost it," says Upchurch. "I thought, This is not what love is all about. This is not what Christianity is about. It's not about turning your back on somebody because they're questioning something or going through a thought process — something's really not right with this picture. I still wasn't sure that I could accept my sexuality, but I knew

THE WOMEN'S CENTRAL NEWS

something was off. I didn't go back to church after that experience."

A month later it was announced from the pulpit of the church that Upchurch had been "turned over to Satan." It was suggested that members of the congregation not associate with him.

"At that point it was rotten in Denmark all over the place, and I was hurting," recalls Upchurch. "It was a very painful time. I really lost all of my friends, because my church was my life."

Upchurch says he is grateful that Mel White's book, *A Stranger at the Gate*, came out at that time. Through the gay minister's autobiography, Upchurch felt like he was reading the story of his own life.

"I cried and cried, and I thought, I know these feelings. That was the point at which I realized I can be gay and I can be a Christian, or whatever I am religiously, but for me to try and deny my sexuality would be denying God's gift. Whether I was straight or gay, sexuality was God's gift. That was something that I needed to accept and integrate into my life, so it was two things happening at once — one, some really great reading material and, two, being completely and totally rejected by all the people I loved and trusted."

The next month, Stevens took Upchurch to a meeting of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

"It was the first time that I ever found people who were not gay who said, 'You know, it's OK for you be this way.' That was really odd," says Upchurch. "I remember [PFLAG mom] Jane Montgomery listened to my story, and she couldn't believe what I'd been through, and she said, 'We're really glad you're here — you're always welcome here.' I thought, Wow, these are people who look like the people in my church, and they're acting like the people in my church are supposed to be acting. It just blew me out of the water."

He continued to go to PFLAG meetings, as well as read more books that affirmed gay and lesbian people. His view about being gay was changing.

"All of a sudden you realize it's OK for you to be the way you are, and things that used to be real issues are not a real issue anymore," says Upchurch. "For example, I no longer had this issue of I got to have sex at the front of my mind. It was like it dissipated. I realized my life is so much more than sex, and I began to see that being gay meant more than just having sex. Sure that's a part of it, but it was just a part of it."

Several months after he left the Exodus group, Upchurch came out to his parents.

"They cried, but they were still very accepting, very loving," says Upchurch. "Dad just kind of smiled the whole time through and said, 'We knew and it's OK.' I knew that they always knew, but I didn't know how they'd respond to what I was going through. They were more hurt at what had happened to me in the church than anything else, and that just about killed them. My mom especially has a real hard time with that whole issue — that something like that could happen to somebody in a church."

Michael Newman, executive director of the Christian Coalition For Reconciliation, still remembers when

Upchurch turned away from "God's best for him."

"We talked about it, and of course there's great regret and sadness on my part that that's the decision he made," says Newman, "but you know I still care about him, and I still haven't forgotten him. I can't guarantee people success. It's not up to me, it's up to God."

"He may say it's up to God," says Upchurch, "but they teach that it's all dependent on the individual -- how much you pray, read the Bible, go to counseling. It's all directed at you actively trying to change the way God made you, and when that doesn't happen, it leaves you depressed and vulnerable. There were several times I strongly contemplated suicide, and that's true of many people I've talked to who were once involved with ex-gay ministries."

Newman says that promoting ex-gay ministries is God's will. He views himself as bridging a gap between the gay community and the church.

Through numerous speaking engagements and Christian radio appearances, he encourages the church to welcome gays, as long as they are working toward recovery. He says that conservative Christians are mistaken when they label homosexuality as the worst sin -- "A sin is a sin is a sin" -- but he's dedicated his life's work to irradiating this particular sin.

"Our understanding of scripture is that homosexuality is a sin, not in accordance with God's plan," says Newman. "That means sexual activity in a relationship, on a one-night stand or whatever, all of those are outside the standard we see in the Bible. In the Bible, the plan has been the committed, monogamous relationship between male and female recognized by the church, and anything outside of that is not according to the plan."

Newman, who now views himself as heterosexual, says his homosexual urges are no longer "that horrible thing that's intensive." He has dated women and hopes to marry, although he thinks God may be holding off that possibility in order to allow him more flexibility to travel to seminars and speaking engagements for Exodus.

Newman avoids the claim that he can change people's orientation through counseling and group work. He says that he is "a resource for people who are struggling with homosexuality and are feeling that it is inconstant with their value system."

Critics of the ex-gay movement say that leading people toward celibacy is not the same thing as changing people's orientation. In the early '80s, Exodus founders Mike Bussee and Gary Cooper announced that their orientation had not changed. The two became a couple, as well as a thorn in the side of Exodus Ministries.

Exodus International spokesman John Paulk said that in the 21-year history of the organization, they have not come to a definitive statement about what they consider success to be.

"That's something Exodus at large is wrestling with," said Paulk. "In the next couple of years we want to develop a uniform definition for what we consider to be change." Paulk, a former drag queen married to a former lesbian, is quick to add that he feels the

goal should be heterosexuality, not just celibacy.

"At the onset, Exodus did not know whether orientation change was even possible," says Paulk. "But what we've seen in the latter 10 years is that more and more and more people -- their orientation is changing and they are marrying."

He added that marriage, in itself, doesn't necessarily mean a change in sexual orientation for the gay individual. In Houston, Newman says that many of his clients "move out of homosexuality."

"My success rate is hidden because many of them don't desire to be public speakers or do public testimony," says Newman. "They're quietly moving on with their lives, getting married, having kids, family, active in their churches because they've mainstreamed into the world."

Upchurch says that ex-gay groups do not have the ability to turn gay people straight.

"I know I couldn't change, and I know I gave it the good old college try," says Upchurch. "I know a lot of other people who have tried too, and I know that the majority of people who have tried have failed."

Upchurch does not discount that some Exodus participants report a change in sexual orientation.

"Sure, there are some people out there who say that they've been cured," he says. "Either they're greatly in denial and they are living a life to satisfy the perceived demands of a harsh God or they are bisexual, which is a rare possibility, or that they were really never gay in the first place. There are a lot of people in ex-gay groups who were molested and therefore think they're gay."

Newman says it is mainstream science that is misleading by promoting a possible genetic basis for homosexuality. "I am constantly frustrated that the average person on the street believes that homosexuality is normal because they've heard that it's normal," says Newman. "I have not come to the conclusion by reading the information that [homosexuality is] unequivocally genetically, biologically, hormonally determined. There's 2,000 or so years of recorded history. It's all been in the last 20 years that all of a sudden homosexuality is considered an alternative or something. To me the burden of proof is on the part of people saying that it is the norm."

Newman, however, is eager to believe the work of a handful of Christian theorists who label any form of homosexuality as a disorder. Houston psychologist Bob McLaughlin says that ex-gay ministries have a "narrow-minded interpretation of science."

"They are as guilty as they accuse others of being of using simplistic models to explain everyone's adaptations," says McLaughlin.

Newman admits that he only gives credence to "scientific findings that are in accordance with God's words." He says he would "hold to God's word" if presented with studies that are "blatantly in opposition" to his ideas.

It is possible that a small segment of people who've had sexual

experiences with someone of the same sex may be inherently heterosexual, according to McLaughlin. In those cases, he says life experience may have drawn them into a different adaptation. He says it is also possible that because of psychosexual developmental issues, such as molestation during childhood, these individuals "may be acting out some pathological adaptation through same-sex behaviors."

"For those individuals, it may well be that some course of counseling or self-exploration or even clerical counseling would be helpful in their self-discovery of who they truly are in a healthy way," says McLaughlin, "and I would say a similar model to that are people who are inherently homosexual, who either because of life experience or as a result of early childhood psychosexual developmental issues are drawn into heterosexual adaptations as part of their pathological defense against their true inherent sexuality."

Newman says that mental health professionals are misguided when they allow the idea that it is possible to be inherently homosexual. He urges clients to ignore studies that present homosexuality as normal.

"Unfortunately, AIDS, in many cases, is a consequence of unhealthy behaviors, sexual promiscuity or drug abuse," says Newman. "So even if science says it's OK, there's this factor. So go ahead and kill yourself with unhealthy, inappropriate behavior?"

The idea that the "gay lifestyle" is dangerous has been promoted by many conservative churches. McLaughlin says the AIDS epidemic has been a powerful sales tool for the ex-gay movement. He says that gay men and lesbians who've never experienced affirming, positive same-sex relationships often have only engaged in sexual contacts that are otherwise. "Since those are, in many incidences, high-risk circumstances, a lot of these people are scared by their own adaptation," says McLaughlin.

He says it is natural, then, for some to seek a way out.

"They're moving into an ex-gay ministerial program as a way out as opposed to seeing that another way out is legitimacy of balanced, egalitarian, consensual relationships with other same-sex adults," says McLaughlin. "That hasn't been presented to them as a viable option in the settings where they've been exposed, which is in churches, in schools, in their families or in the primary culture."

McLaughlin says most people who approach ex-gay ministries have tried to change their sexuality on their own for years. He says this may make it difficult for the individual to clearly see who has his or her best interest at heart.

"At no time is it particularly useful to narrow your sources of support to a single view, because what you're dealing with is a very complex phenomena -- that is, what it is that makes you human, and particularly that piece of you that is your sexuality," says McLaughlin. "So, I would suggest talking to a variety of

people, and see who really seems attentive to you personally, as opposed to appearing to force their own agenda onto you."

Upchurch hopes his Web site will deter some people from taking the path he chose. The ex-gay movement has a growing visibility on the Net. Groups like Exodus, which has 85 affiliated chapters in North America, now have Web pages. One click on the Exodus Web site gives you a world of links including Aberrant Sexuality in the Bible, Homosexuality in America: Exposing the Myths, and Masturbation and the Bible.

The information paints homosexuality as a life of sadness and sexual promiscuity often leading to disease. The causes of depression in homosexuals stem less from societal oppression and more from childhood unmet needs and abuses. The bottom line -- being gay is a sin.

"To them being gay means sex with men," says Upchurch. "It doesn't mean a relationship necessarily. It really doesn't mean someone you can care for and be intimate with. It really just means the act of sex."

The ex-gay Web sites make numerous references to a few Bible verses which the groups say prove God's disdain of homosexuality.

"Homosexuals will never be able to live a 'good life' and go to heaven, in their eyes," says Upchurch. "It is unnaturally enlarged as a focus in their mind, and what happens is that as they focus on it and it is so big, they can't get around it. They can't see that that is not a big deal."

Ban on Female Genital Mutilation Upheld in Egypt

Egypt's State council on December 28th upheld a July 1996 Health Ministry ban on female genital mutilation, a destructive and painful operation in which all or part of a young girl's genitalia is removed. The procedure is often euphemistically referred to as "female circumcision" and is performed to rob women of sexual pleasure and ensure their chastity.

An administrative court in Cairo overturned the Health Ministry's ruling in June 1997, but the Health Ministry appealed the decision to the State council, which is Egypt's highest administrative court. The state council ruled that female circumcision is illegal except in cases of "medical necessity." "Circumcision thus falls under penal codes forbidding operations on the human body except when medically necessary," read the court's decision.

Violators of the law may be incarcerated for up to three years, regardless of whether permission to perform the procedure was granted by the patient or the patient's parents.

In December of 1997, 32-year-old Egyptian doctor Rabi Ibrahim Mahjub was convicted of "gross negligence and wrongful death" when his 14-year-old patient died after she was circumcised.

Female genital mutilation is often performed without anesthesia and in unsanitary conditions. It can lead to shock, hemorrhage, infection, urinary incontinence, painful sexual intercourse, infertility, and childbirth complications.

Bulletin Board

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Room needed: Gay N.S., quiet, resp. female seeking room to rent in a gay quiet N.S., sober household in N.W. or N. Central Phoenix. Can pay \$200-\$250 including utilities. Call Linnie at 202-2916 voice mail.

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Sunrise Retreat - Near Sedona, singles/groups (15), \$35.00, spa, 3 & 7 day Native American Spiritual Journeys with sweat lodge - Last week of each month; Women's Mind, Body & Spirit - March 20-22nd; Medicine Wheel/Totem Animals - April 17-19th and more. Call Bonny 502-567-0999. E-mail Sunrise@sedona.net

Studio apt for rent, 14th Street and Hatcher, non-smoking lesbian preferred. \$275.00 plus utilities. Available immediately. Call Sheila at 669-2793.

Large 2 bedroom 2 bath condo located near Bethany Home/12th Street. Large walk-in closet, washer/dryer, pool. No pets, non-smoking, no drugs. Responsible, health oriented, fun-loving and non-judgemental individuals welcome! \$350 per month Plus 1/2 utilities. Call Kristi at 692-6727.

Bulletin Board notices - .15 per word with \$3.00 min.

WCN is announcing G.A.S.P! (Girls in Arizona Seeking People). See page 9 for details.

Care To Join Us?

You see our work all over the community.

We're the women of Women's Central News, published by the Women's Center, Inc. We're a non-profit, all volunteer bunch. Somehow we manage to get this newspaper out every month. We do a whole bunch of other stuff too. Along with being rewarding, satisfying, fun, and a great way to meet other lesbians, WCN is also a lot of work. In order to better serve our readers - and our community - we could use some help...your help.

Currently, we need:

Writer/reporter - spirituality/religion.

Writer/reporter - sports.

Writer/reporter - women's health.

Writers/reporters - general assignment.

Distribution/drivers - once a month drop WCN at selected sites.

Helpers - help with all the other stuff we do.

Tucson - reporting and distribution help.

Norther Arizona - reporting and distribution help.

Wanna know more?

Contact Women's Central News at:

voice mail: (602) 898-4844

e-mail: wcn@swlink.net

snail mail: POB 26031 Tempe, AZ 85285

Visit our website: www.swlink.net/~wcnews

RESOURCES

(Please note: This is a PARTIAL list of non-profit groups. If your group would like to be included please write or call us at 999-4844. We are looking for groups supportive of and of interest to Lesbians.)

INFORMATION:

Women's Center, Inc. publisher Women's Central News PO Box 26031 Tempe, Az 85285, 898-4844, e-mail address wcn@swlink.net, website <http://www.swlink.net/~wcnews>

Lesbian/Gay Community Switchboard: 234-2752

Lesbian Resource Project: 3136 N. 3rd Ave, Phoenix, Az. 85013, 266-5542 (voice) 266-5797(TDD).

Valley of the Sun Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 24 West Camelback; , Phx 85013, 265-7283

The Gay and Lesbian Community, based out of Flagstaff, (520)526-6098.

Verde Valley Alternative Lifestyles Directory, 989 S. Main St. Suite 437, Cottonwood, Az. 86326 520-634-1405 e-mail: martimac@sedona.net

SOCIAL GROUPS:

Desert Adventures: Indoor/Outdoor social activities 266-Camp(2267).

Desert Valley Squares, Ltd.: Lesbian/Gay Square Dance Club, PO Box 34615, Phx 85067. Contact C.J. at 252-0048.

Same Place Same Time Breakfast Club, Sundays at Coffee Talk, 48 N. Robson, Mesa 10AM

Desert Hearts Motorcycle Club: Monthly rides. Deb at 279-9228.

Lesbian and Gay Seniors Group: 241-1604

Valley Community Women: PO Box 33393, Phoenix, Az. 85067. Call Melissa D. at 897-0528.

Camelback Business & Professional Assoc., Business networking, socialization, 225-8444.

Scuba Diving Club, Phoenix, 957-9399 or Tucson digital pager, 261-9602.

Womyn 2 Womyn Connection: social group for womyn (singles and couples). Call 941-3513.

Valley of the Sun Community Band: concert band. Call Jayne at 947-0907 or Terry at 954-9244

Parents By Choice-Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Parents Group. Family gatherings 1st and 3rd Sat of every month. Call 252-3393 or 924-9974 for info or e-mail at JJKOPRY@swlink.net

SUPPORT NETWORKS:

Women Veteran's Support Network: VIRAGO!, PO Box 1171, New Market, VA 22844.

Rainbow Alliance: meets Tuesday at 7:30pm in the Memorial Union at ASU. Contact 965-9756.

POLITICAL GROUPS:

Arizona Committee For Progress: PO Box 40374, Phx, 85067.

Lesbian & Gay Public Awareness Project: PO Box 60881, Phx, 85082. Call 351-3080.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS:

Casa de Cristo Evangelical Church: 1029 E. Turney, Phx 265-2831.

CCL/Conference for Catholic Lesbians: Donna 947-8187 (Phx area) or Pat at 326-8379 (Tucson).

Dignity/Integrity: PO Box 21091, Phx 85036. Bill 258-2556.

Gentle Shepherd MCC: Quality Inn, 2nd Ave & Osborn, Phx., 10AM Sundays.

Goddess Womyn Network: Meetings & quarterly newsletter. Call 266-4111.

Healing Waters Ministries: 225 W. University Dr., Tempe 85281, 894-8681.

Lutherans Concerned: Phoenix, Frank 870-3611

Aviv (Jewish lesbian & gays): Call Gene, 996-8622.

Augustana Lutheran Church, 2604 N. 14th St, Phx, 265-8400

In His Steps Christian Fellowship, call 209-8155.

Community Church of Hope, Sunday 10AM, Turney & Central, Phoenix, 234-2180.

Affirmations (Morman), 553-8674

Universal Church of Love, Pastor Joyce Cascio, Chandler, 917-5671

NEWSLETTERS OF INTEREST:

Rubyfruit Journal, Tucson Womyn's Community Newsletter. 517 E. Gay St., Tucson 85705. \$15.00.

Flagstaff Women's News: Aradia Bookstore, PO Box 266, Flagstaff, Az. 86002. \$18.00

connoción, Bi-lingual, bi-cultural, latina lesbian newsletter, 1521 Alton Rd, #336, Miami Beach, FL 33139, \$4 sample, \$13 for 3 issues.