

♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street Cambridge Massachusetts 02139

(617) 354-8807

spring '86

TTY and VOICE



WOMEN'S SCHOOL

The school's current term is going very well, having drawn a large and diverse population for its classes. Classes held outside the Women's Center, "Women and Prison" (at the Aid to Incarcerated Mothers Office) and "Self Defense Workshop" (at Sanchin Women's School of Karate) were very well attended. At the Center, the "Lesbian Herstory Slide Show" drew a huge crowd, and the "Quit It" (stopping smoking for long-term smokers) is demonstrating that it can be done.

Anyone who is interested in teaching a class, giving a workshop, or joining the school collective in planning the next term (probably to take place in fall '86), please call 354-8807 and leave a message for the Women's School.

STAFFING THE CENTER

Ever wonder who that person is who grabs the phone on the first ring with one hand and directs women to their meeting rooms, the housing-to-share books and the bathrooms with the other? Of course! That's the Super Staffer!! The staff at the Women's Center answer the phone, giving out information on events in the Boston area, group meeting times and dates, directions to the Center, referrals to shelters, doctors, counselors, other women's organizations, . . . you name it. They open the Center in the morning and lock up at night. They are responsible for directing women arriving for group meetings to the right rooms, and just talking with women who come to the Center. They stuff, stamp and seal envelopes for mailings when needed. They help women find information on the bulletin boards and leaflet tables. Staffers have piles and piles of info at their fingertips, sometimes too much. (If you call or come to the Center looking for info and the staffer can't seem to come up with it, please leave your name & number. Sometimes the next staffer knows it or can find it.)

Staffing is lots of fun!! Meet new people, be up on all the latest events and groups in Boston, help out the Center!

Our coordinator, Sharon Stonekey, is responsible for, among many other things, finding and training new staff to fill empty slots. Staff slots are 2 hours long in the evening (Mon-Thurs, 6 to 8pm or 8 to 10pm), and 2 to 4 hours during the day and on Saturday. We ask for a 3-month commitment from new staffers. Slots are constantly opening up as people's schedules and energies change, so if you are interested in staffing at the Center, call Sharon at 354-8807.

BIG YARD SALE

SATURDAY MAY 3

11AM - 4PM

At the Women's Center
46 Pleasant St.
Cambridge

HUNDREDS OF ITEMS FOR SALE
(including a motor bike)

Benefit for the Women's School
(rain date, May 10)

THE CENTER IS OPEN

Monday-Thursday	10am - 10pm
Friday	10am - 5pm
Saturday	11am - 2pm

OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Every Wednesday, 8-10pm at the Center

- May 7 Setting up a cooperative house
- May 14 Women in politics
- May 21 Feeling oppressed
- May 28 The juggling act: work, others and the self

All women are welcome. If you would be interested in choosing topics and facilitating some discussions (no experience necessary), call 354-8807 and leave a message for the Feminist Discussion Group.



BOSTON BISEXUAL WOMEN'S NETWORK

Boston Bisexual Women's Network continues to grow by leaps and bounds. We are collectively run and open to all non-biophobic women without regard to your personal sexual identification. Here are some of upcoming events of interest:

Watch "People are Talking" on Ch. 4, Apr. 28 12:30pm, for a show discussing bisexuality

June 9th - BBWN Intro Meeting, 7:30pm at the Women's Center.

June 14th - BBWN's Pre-Pride Brunch, First Community Church, 565 Boylston St., 2nd Floor, \$3, open to all women, 10AM.

LESBIAN LIBERATION

Lesbian liberation meetings (every Thursday evening at the Women's Center) will begin at 7:30 as of now. Women of all ages who identify as lesbians or are unsure of their sexual identities are welcome. Lately, as few as 3 or as many as 11 women have come. We talk about anything! For more info, call Elizabeth at 776-5675.

LESBIAN ALANON

A new group is meeting at the Center to support partners of lesbians with the problem of alcohol addiction. Women share their experiences and ways of dealing with the issues and problems of an alcoholic partner. All interested women are welcome on Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8pm.

INCEST RESOURCES

Incest Resources sponsors a drop-in discussion group for women with incest histories on the third Thursday of every month (Sept. - June). The group meets at 7:30-9:30pm at the Women's Center. Upcoming meetings are:

- May 15 - Sexuality
- June 19 - Letting Go

Meetings are not scheduled for July or August, but will begin again in September. A referral and resource book maintained by Incest Resources is available at the Women's Center. Phone inquiries for resources and therapy referrals are being handled by Rape Crisis Center on their hotline: 492-RAPE, 9am to 5pm weekdays.

ONGOING GROUPS AT THE CENTER

MONDAY

- Support Group for Battered . . . 6:30-8pm Women
- Self-Help Group for Drug . . . 7:30-9pm Addicts
- New Women's Chorus 7-10pm
- Boston Bisexual Women's 7:30-10pm Network -Intro Mtg. (bimonthly)
- All-Center Meeting6-8pm (biweekly)

TUESDAY

- Rape Crisis Center 7-10pm
- Former Nun Lesbian Support . . 7pm Group (1st Tuesday, monthly)
- Writing Workshop 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY

- Support Group for Battered . . Noon-1pm Women
- Women's School 7-9:30pm
- Menopause Collective 7pm (monthly)
- Feminist Discussion Group. . . 8-10pm
- Lesbian Al-Anon. 6:30-8pm

THURSDAY

- Lesbian Liberation 7:30-9:30pm
- Ceres Grove (Spirituality) . . 7-9pm (biweekly)
- Incest Resources 7:30-9:30pm (third Thurs., monthly)
- Job Support Group. 6:30-8:30pm
- Lesbians Choosing Children . . 7:30-10pm Network (second Thurs., monthly)

HELP KEEP THE LINES OPEN

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center has been a project of the Women's Center since 1972. Since we opened we have received almost 20,000 calls for counseling, information, advocacy and referrals. But because we only have one phone line many more women who need help can't get through. Our goal is to purchase a 2-line system, costing about \$1000. We need your help; your donations will help us raise the money to keep the lines open!

Donations can be sent to:
Rape Crisis Center
c/o The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St.
Cambridge, MA 01239

If you'd like to volunteer your time to help RCC, please write, or call the Center and leave your name and number so we can contact you.

all booked up

Looking for that special book for spring or summer reading? Want to work with other women on a history of Boston women's groups? Itching to help file two years worth of Sojourner, Off Our Backs, GCN and more? The Women's Center library archives needs you! We have had a tremendous increase in use this past year, as well as acquiring loads of books, newsletters, periodicals, and clippings. We desperately need women who can help work on our collections to make them accessible. If you think you might be interested and/or want more info, leave a message for the Library Collective at 354-8807.



ASPECTS OF AGING

The "Aspects of Aging" group (open to all women over 35) will meet on Monday, May 5, 1986 from 6:30 - 8:30pm at the Women's Center. Bring supper if you wish. Until now, we have used guidelines for consciousness-raising provided us by Greater Boston Older Women's League Awareness Task Force. Many thanks to the Women's Center for making space available to us. For more information, call Eve, 926-9778.

WOMEN'S COFFEEHOUSE

The Women's Coffeehouse is now open from 8pm to Midnight instead of 7pm to Midnight, Friday nights at the Women's Center. Coffee and tea are provided. FREE! Your children are welcome. Donations of beverages, food, games, money are always appreciated.

Some future highlights:

- Fri., May 2nd, 8pm-12

"To Be Seen & Not Heard"; A night of young women's writing. For young women to read from recent journals, poems & essays. For older women (21 to 120) to read words from years ago. Themes: pleasure, anger, alienation, sex, ageism, future visions.

- Fri., May 9th, 8pm-12

Come join us! Forget the 'no-place-to-go-&-just-wanna-be-in-a-women's-space-blues'!

- Fri., May 16th, 8pm-12

Open reading for poetry & short stories.

- Fri., May 30th, 8pm-12

Readings by Kate Rushin & Rosario Morales

OUTREACH

The Women's Center is open to all women, but is used by some groups much more than others. How we should go about broadening the base of women who feel connected to the Center is a question we have addressed many times, without reaching agreement. We have decided to form an outreach committee to come up with concrete proposals, which would be brought to a future All-Center meeting. If you would like to join this committee, or have suggestions, call Sharon at 354-8807.

CERES' GROVE

Ceres' Grove is an open goddess study/women's ritual group which has recently begun meeting at the Center. The group meets at 7pm on alternate Thursdays (next meeting, May 1). Ceres is the Roman name of the grain or earth goddess, the counterpart of the Greek goddess, Demeter. Grove is a word meaning an open women's group of unspecified number. The group ranges from 5 to 20 women. The group meets to learn about spirituality and to celebrate holidays like the Spring Equinox. The May 1st meeting will celebrate the Goddess' coming of age. Other topics recently: Tarot readings, music and color healings.

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE

Last fall, a regular visitor to the Center pointed out that there really was no smoke-free sitting area designated at the Center. Except for the third floor library, women sensitive to cigarette smoke had no place to go within the Center where smoking was not allowed. There was sort of an unwritten rule that only one smoker should light up at a time. But, we felt a clearer statement was needed and possibly some division of areas into smoking and non-smoking.

At an All-Center meeting, we decided to ask the opinion of the groups and visitors to the Center, to help formulate a smoking policy. We sent out questionnaires and put up a 'graffitti sheet' with many different options for designating smoking and no-smoking areas among our sitting and meeting rooms and asked for votes both for and against. The debate raged both on the graffiti sheet and at Center meetings for several months. The results, however, were inconclusive. No clear policy was able to be agreed on. Finally, as of February 10, 1986, the following policy was accepted at an All-Center meeting for a trial period of six months. The smoking policy will be re-evaluated in August at an All-Center meeting and either continued or adjusted.

No Smoking In:

1st floor sitting room
1st floor phone/staff room
3rd floor (all rooms and hall)

Smoking is discouraged in the 2nd floor Children's Room. Smoking is permitted elsewhere.

Let's hope the whole controversy goes up in a puff of smoke!



ALL CENTER MEETINGS

It is through All-Center meetings (every other Monday 6-8 pm) that the Women's Center makes the decisions that keep it running and connect it to the larger community. All women are invited to attend. Prior to the meeting agenda items are written on a sheet posted outside the staff office. At the meeting, agenda items are written on a blackboard, someone consents to chair the meeting, and someone consents to record minutes. Notes of the meetings are kept on a clipboard on a bulletin board next to the staff office.

Requests for space and donations are frequent. In March, the issue of Center maintenance was explored. Many women use the meeting spaces and the Center needs to be cleaned more often than ever before. Volunteers and paid staff have been cleaning the Center for many years. Wages for housework has been a politicizing issue in the Women's Movement for fifteen years, as has the issue of volunteerism. The Center operates on a small budget. All these factors needed to be considered. A decision was made to hire a house cleaner to work one day twice a month to take some of the burden off of staff. Groups are still urged to leave rooms neat and ready.

An All-Center Meeting is an opportunity to see problem solving and consensual decision making in action. Meetings are open to all women from 6-8 pm on every other Monday, next meeting, May 5, 1986.

ACCESSIBILITY AND RENOVATIONS

Unfortunately, the wheelchair lift stopped working in early March. It has been taken back to the factory for repairs. We have been assured that it will be reinstalled as soon as possible, but we do not know when that will be.

The new wheelchair-accessible bathroom on the first floor is almost finished. A committee, which would welcome new members, is figuring out how to make the small staff office, the sitting room, and the large basement office more functional and pleasant. Making the children's room more attractive to children as well as comfortable for meetings is another current project that needs more input.

If you would like to participate in any way (including physical work!), on any of the above projects, please call Judy at 354-8807.

OUR BODIES

An amendment to prohibit both public and private funds for abortion has been proposed to our state constitution. If passed, it will be on the November 1986 ballot. Although the bill passed the legislature by a 2-1 margin in 1984, in order for it to be placed on the ballot, the legislature must pass it a second time. Mass Choice and Coalition for Choice are lobbying to defeat the amendment at the next constitutional convention. YOUR HELP IS NEEDED. Write or call your legislator, asking her/him to vote "NO". Write c/o State House, Boston, MA 02133. Call for the number of your legislators at 722-1455(Sen.) and 722-2000(Reps). If you can help distribute and collect lobbying postcards, call the Mass Choice office at 720-1880.

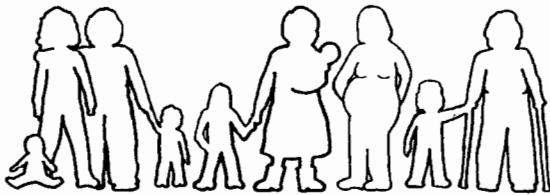
MAKE MUSIC

The Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail band rehearses every Tuesday night, 7:15pm at the YWCA on Clarendon St. Get your instruments out of the closet and come join us to harmoniously and gayly make music together.

Lesbians and Children:

The Community We Create

A Day-Long Conference For All Women



SATURDAY, MAY 3

9am-6pm

SIMMONS COLLEGE

300 The Fenway, Boston

- Wheelchair accessible
 - Vegetarian food available for purchase
- FEE \$10: More-if-you-can, less-if-you-can't**

Co-Sponsored by: The Lesbians Choosing Children Network
The Feminist Union of Simmons College

info 522-3918, 868-6922

LIFELINE CONCERT

Lifeline Concert, labor/feminist musical trio from Washington, D.C. perform May 1st, 7-9pm at Downtown UMASS College of Public and Community Service, 100 Arlington St., 1st floor. (2 blocks from Arlington T stop) \$2 suggested donation. Free with UMASS ID. Concert is in celebration of Socialist Labor Day (May Day), sponsored by Social Events Committee and the Women's Center. Wheelchair accessible and ASL interpreter Penny Gill. For info, call 956-1025 or 497-9555.



GAY PRIDE

The Gay Pride march will probably start from Copley Square on Saturday, June 14 at around noon. Operating on a no-budget basis, the flavor of the march will be determined by the input of the community. If you want a booth, can donate some time or money (especially for child care), please contact Robbin at 776-8307.

WOMEN, HEALTH AND AGE

A conference by and for women

Saturday, June 14, 9AM - 5PM

Lesley College, Cambridge

\$10 fee (more if/less if) includes lunch and refreshments. Speakers - Joyce King, Jane Porcino; Workshops - including "Menopause; a Woman's Point of View" by The Menopause Collective; Entertainment. For more info. call Catherine DeLorey, 868-9600 ext 468.

GAY GAMES II

Come play for ten days in San Francisco, August 9-16. Watch our Lesbian and Gay athletes compete for Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in various athletic events and marvel at the sound of all the Lesbian and Gay bands throughout the country playing together in one huge and never to be forgotten concert proclaiming our national pride. Call 497-9555 for more info about plane reservations.



THE WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL CENTER, INC.

46 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Phone: (617) 354-8807

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SOUTH AFRICA

Naomi Tutu-Seavers, daughter of Bishop Desmond Tutu, will be speaking at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge on Saturday, May 3, at 7pm. Her subject will be "South Africa: Generations of Resistance" a look at some of the tensions among generations as youth play an increasingly central role in the struggle against the white minority government. The Episcopal Divinity School is at 99 Brattle St., two blocks from Harvard Sq. \$3.00 donation requested. Sponsored by the Feminist Task Force of Mobilization for Survival and the Women's Theological Center. Call 354-0008 for info.

BOSTON WOMEN'S FUND WORKSHOPS

The Boston Women's Fund is sponsoring a series of Saturday morning workshops designed to aid non-profit women's organizations, their staff and interested individuals in program and organizational skills. The workshops are held from 9:30am to 12:30pm at the Women's Fund Office, Park Square Building, Suite 902, 31 St. James St., Boston, right at the Arlington T Stop. Upcoming workshops:

May 3 -- Media Outreach. How to handle the press so that you can get your message across, press-conferences and what is newsworthy.

May 10 -- Fundraising Strategy and Planning How to identify funding sources and their interests and how to develop your own case statements.

May 17 -- Fiscal Management. Budgeting, cash-flow management, record-keeping, reporting and controls.

Fees: Sliding scale, \$7 per session requested. For more information and to register, call 542-5955.

CENTRO PRESENTE

Centro Presente, Inc., a non-profit organization serving Boston's Central American refugee community is looking for volunteers. Help is needed in: legal services, social work, teaching both English and Spanish, and administration. Centro Presente is located at 10 Essex St., Cambridge. If you can help, call Carlos at 497-9080.

