

LEAPING LACROSSE

NEWS

P.O. Box 532
La Crosse, WI 54602-0932

August 1988
Volume 8, Issue 8

SEXUAL ABUSE RECOVERY

GROUP FOR LESBIANS

Family and Children's Center is offering a Sexual Abuse Recovery Group for lesbian women who were sexually abused in childhood or adolescence. The group will meet 10 to 12 consecutive Monday evenings, for 3 hours each time, beginning in September.

The overall goal of the group is that individuals who complete the group will have been able to share with other women their common experience of sexual abuse. The group is part of the process of recovery in which women can begin to understand how abuse has impacted their lives, how to integrate the experience, and how to develop ongoing self respect, self acceptance and understanding.

The group will be led by Mary Wente and Kathleen Adams, therapists who work with the Sexual Abuse Treatment Program at Family and Children's Center. Group size is limited and a screening interview is required. Contact either Mary or Kathleen, at 788-6335, no later than August 7, 1988, with questions or to arrange for an interview.

Cost of the group may be covered by health insurance, medical assistance, or may be privately paid based on a sliding fee scale ranging from \$2.00 to \$10.00 an hour.

There is the additional possibility of a self help support group for partners of sexual abuse survivors. Please contact Mary or Kathleen by phone, or drop either of them a note at Family and Children's Center, 2507 Weston in La Crosse, if you are interested in a partner's group.

EXCERPT BELOW FROM: *Lesbian Passion* by JoAnn Loulan
158p. Francisco: Splinters/Aunt Lute 1987.

"Incest is staggering to contemplate. If you were sexually abused as a child, you're not alone.

"In my survey of 1,566 lesbians, 38 percent said they had experienced childhood sexual abuse, either from a family member or a stranger, before the age of eighteen. In her book, *The Secret Trauma* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), Diann Russell reports the same statistic, 38 percent, from

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

her random sample of 500 women.

"Though my survey was not a random sample, I think it's interesting that the two statistics match exactly. It leads me to believe that lesbians are not more likely to have suffered childhood sexual abuse than the general population. This is especially important because lesbian survivors often hear, 'Oh, you're an incest survivor? That's why you're a lesbian.'

"If almost 40 percent of lesbians are incest survivors, then at some point in her life, almost every lesbian will be affected by childhood sexual abuse. As a lesbian, if you weren't abused yourself, you're likely to come across a partner who was. That's why talking about childhood sexual abuse is so important in the lesbian community."



UPCOMING EVENTS

August 7: National Save Sharon Kowalski Day. See article elsewhere in this issue.

August 10-14: Thirteenth Annual Michigan Momyn's Music Festival. It's never too late to plan to go. You can buy tickets at the gate.

August 18: This month's potluck will be on Thursday, the 18th at Tara's, 2605 Jackson Street (east of Losey Blvd.) in La Crosse. Come early if you can, anytime after 4:00 pm, and maybe play some volleyball. We will eat about 6:30 pm. Bring a dish to pass, your own beverage, AND a lawn chair. Also bring your Michigan pictures and a musical instrument and we'll have a music potluck.

August 23: 65N Deadline.

August 27: Twin Cities Take Back the Night March. See Et Cetera for more information.



VOTE!



Just a reminder! September 13 is the date of the Primary election in Wisconsin. Tony Earl, long time friend of Wisconsin lesbians and Gays, is running for the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate. My voting for Tony Earl, we can show our appreciation for his past support and have a friend at the national level. And

remember, in Wisconsin you can register at the polls. You only need two pieces of identification showing you live at your current address (bills will do, or a driver's license, or a library card). If you are not sure where you vote, call your city or county clerk.

**DEMONSTRATORS
ACROSS THE
COUNTRY ASK:
"WHY CAN'T
SHARON COME
HOME?"**

Demonstrators will gather in cities across the country on Sunday August 7, to demand the release of Sharon Kowalski from a nursing home. Kowalski, a victim of a drunk driver accident, has been denied access to quality rehabilitation and court-ordered competency tests, forbidden freedom of association with her friends, and separated from her partner of nine years. National Free Sharon Kowalski Day will take place in more than a dozen cities, including Minneapolis and Madison.

When Sharon Kowalski awoke from a coma following her accident in 1981, the prognosis was bleak: her brain stem injury left her partially paralyzed and unable to speak. Through the devoted care of her partner of nine years, Karen Thompson, Kowalski's condition improved occasionally. She was able to eat and drink without a feeding tube, move her fingers, hands, and right arm, and comb her hair. She could communicate with an electric typewriter and clearly answered questions with it.

When Kowalski's father discovered the nature of the two women's relationship, he began working to overturn a court order giving him guardianship, but guaranteeing Thompson participation in all medical decisions regarding Kowalski's care. In 1984, over Thompson's protest, he moved Kowalski from the St. Cloud, MN area where she

had been living for several years. And where rehabilitation facilities are available, to a nursing home without such facilities. In 1985, he moved her farther from St. Cloud and Thompson to a nursing home in Duluth, MN.

Since moving her from St. Cloud, Kowalski's father has removed her typewriter and barred Thompson and other friends from visiting. Although the law requires annual competency tests of wards, Donald Kowalski has refused to have his daughter tested. Without proper care over the past 4 years, Sharon Kowalski's condition has deteriorated.

When Karen Thompson was last able to visit Kowalski in 1985, Kowalski typed to her: "Karen help me. Get me out of here. Take me home with you."

Sharon Kowalski is a victim of paternalistic attitudes about the disabled, homophobic fear of gay and lesbian people, abuse of guardianship, and the sexism that restricts women's self-determination. The National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski and participants in Sharon Kowalski Day are making demands, including the following, to assure that she receives quality care: Revoke Donald Kowalski as Sharon's guardian, guarantee Sharon Kowalski's civil rights, and ensure that she receives quality medical care and is allowed to participate in legal proceedings affecting her life; launch an immediate investigation into the case by the Minnesota Attorney General and the U.S. Justice Department; recognize that lesbians, gay men, women, and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

people with disabilities are full human beings with full rights and privileges under the law; end guardianship abuse; and end all oppression based on difference.

Until these demands are met, no one is free of the possibility of being imprisoned and isolated from friends and partners following an injury or illness.

ET CETERA

Quakers Sponsor Workshop: The American Friends Service Committee's Program on Militarism and Nonviolence is sponsoring a workshop entitled: *Touch and Be Changed, Change and Be Alive* on September 2-5, 1988 in Chicago. They say: "Gay men and lesbians have always been present in peace groups. Too often, however, these groups reflected the homophobia that is pervasive in society as a whole... By the same token, many lesbian and gay organizations have suffered by taking too narrow a view of the social forces we must overcome... The activities we have planned for September 2-5 will, we hope, give some of us a chance to get to know one another, learn about each other's lives and work, and figure out ways to support one another and build a stronger movement for a just and peaceful world." For more information, contact: Intensive Workshop, AFSC, 1414 Hill Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Our Right to Love Revised: That classic book, *Our Right to Love: A Lesbian Resource Book* is being updated by the original author, Ginny Vida. The book has articles discussing legal issues, relationships, counseling, parenthood, sexual expression, coming out, etc. It also has a pretty good list of organization and publications across the country of interest to lesbians. I remember when I bought my first edition in 1978. I saw it on a shelf in Readmore Inn Red Oak then. It took me 10 minutes of wandering through the store to get the courage to boldly carry it up to the counter. I probably learned as much about courage and being a lesbian from surviving the disapproving frown of the grouchy lady who sold it to me as I did from the book itself! However, it is a worthwhile resource. Watch *Et Cetera* for an announcement on its publication.

Anthology wants Your Story: Dr. Patricia Searles from UW-Whitewater and Beth Ann Pierre a graduate student at UW-Madison are putting together an anthology of acquaintance or relationship violence. They want personal accounts of emotional, sexual, or physical abuse experienced as adults. They intend the anthology to be as representative as possible, so encourage women and men of any race and social class or sexual orientation to respond. Send submissions to: Dr. Patricia Searles, Department of Sociology, UW-Whitewater, Whitewater, WI 53190.

LESBIAN ALLIANCES: COMBATING HETEROSEXISM IN THE 80'S

The Saturday plenary of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Conference was entitled *Lesbian Alliances: Combating Heterosexism in the 80's*. It was powerful and exhilarating. The facilitator and the panel members for this plenary session, were introduced by Inni McNair, a professor at the University of Minnesota. She began by saying she is the "oldest out Dyke on Campus." She noted that lesbians have been present in NWSA from the beginning and that lesbian voices have been clear and persistent. She stated that NWSA gave lesbians a forum to air our passions and radical scholarship to ourselves and others, a stage for our creative voices, and a declaration to the academic and feminist world that no woman should be separate.

The facilitator for the panel was Rosemary Curb, co-author of *Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence*. She said that in the ten years of NWSA conferences, that this was the first plenary session devoted to lesbians. She introduced the featured speakers: Beth Brant, Joan Nestle, Michelle Parklison, and Gloria Anzaldua.

Beth Brant is a Native American, author, Mother and Grandmother. She spoke of her experiences as a Native American lesbian and of the gathering of American Indian lesbians and gays held in Minneapolis the previous week. She said it was inspiring listening to the voices of

that conference and to be able to recognize and hear ways to transform her life. Recognizing the homophobia in some of Native American society, she told us that in some areas lesbians were prevented from participating in sacred ceremonies. She believes that in ceremony and in life we are to "present ourselves to the creator not to people." Also, as a result of this gathering, she believes we should listen to the voices of our gay male brothers.

Joan Nestle is co-founder of the Lesbian History Archives. She told a wonderful story of talking to a Polish Jewish lesbian who had survived the Nazi concentration camps. The woman said that just before she was taken to the camp, she had read *The Well Of Loneliness* (an early classic, though depressing, lesbian novel by Radcliffe Hall), and she said all the time she was in camp, she "just wanted to live long enough to kiss a woman." Joan talked about lesbian history, noting that in a woman's bar in New Orleans in 1955, 50% of the women were dressed in men's attire. She discussed roles, butch/femme, and how our sex and sexuality are part of both our personal and political lives. And she talked about how so often this aspect of our being as lesbians is either ignored or repressed. She spoke of how our sexuality has been used to degrade women, of pride and desire, and of a challenge to make our desire and our sexuality a part of our political confrontation.

Michelle Parklison is a poet, film maker, and co-chair of the Coalition of

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Black Lesbians and Gays. She talked about being black and lesbian, of the illusion of acceptance in a society where both are deemed as other. She said we must refuse silence. She has a vision of leadership, of coming out, of loving each other. She has made a film, *Stormy, The Lady of the Jewel Box*, which deals with the gay/lesbian experience in New York before Stonewall. It is scheduled to be shown on PBS sometime this fall or winter.

Gloria Anzaldua is a poet and co-author of *This Bridge Called My Back*. She told of how it is to be a Chicano lesbian, how when she is in her Chicano family or in her lesbian family, she feels at home and yet feels an outsider. She feels great affection and great loneliness, she stands alone and she stands together. She talked of how sometimes she is a bridge, sometimes a draw-bridge, and sometimes an island. She said she would ask white lesbians, "Can you leave your whiteness at home?" She asked us to be open without a sense of guilt. She asked for open hearts and open minds, and said the only victory is love and friendship.

The NWSA Conference was positive and challenging in that it helped participants to look at our assumptions and begin to confront our racism.

JOY

Take Back The Night: The Twin Cities Take Back The Night March is scheduled for August 27. The event will include workshops, entertainment and a rally as well as a march through the Lake Street area of Minneapolis. For more information, contact, Twin Cities Women For Take Back The Night, PO Box 8974, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

POEM BY SHARI

FAIR PASSAGE
THE METAPHOR
OF THE SEA
YOU COVER YOURSELF
WITH WHATEVER LIFE
YOU FIND

NOT UNLIKE THE VITALITY YOU CRAVE

YOU MAKE NO FALSE PROMISES
TO
ANY
WHO WOULD CONTAIN YOU

YOU
WITHOUT SOME REMNANCE OF INTERNAL,
INTERNAL BIRTHING
KNOW
THAT TO EVOLVE
YOU
MUST SOLVE

ADVERTISE WITH US

\$15 for a full page
\$8 for a half page
\$4 for a quarter page
50¢ for a classified ad
(25 words or less)

Send to: LLN, P. O. Box
932, La Crosse, WI
54602-0932.

*National Association
of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs*
114 Fifteenth Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Sister,

As you well know, in just a few months, our country will hold elections for President and Vice President.

The National Association of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs is committed, after seven years of a Republican administration, to finally electing a Democratic President.

No one else, not a President who will begin to address the concerns of gay and lesbian Americans across the country:

• We need a President who will work to ensure that the rights of gay and lesbian Americans are protected.

• We need a President who will do more than give lip service to the crisis of AIDS.

• We need a President who supports equal rights and reproductive choice for women.

• We need a President who will finally do something to include, rather than exclude, gays and lesbians and all those who face discrimination.

In July, the Democratic Party must nominate a Presidential candidate who will formulate a national message that addresses the issues that are vitally important to all of us.

The National Association of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs is part of the effort to steer the country in new directions.

However, we can only achieve our goals with your participation. By signing the petition to the Presidential candidates on the back of this letter, you will send a clear message that we will no longer be silent. Your contribution along with the petition will qualify you as an associate member of the National Association.

We can work together to elect a candidate who will take action on these critical issues. We will triumph in November and all Americans will benefit. Thank you.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE LLN

32 wonderful issues for \$8
(more if you can, less if you can't!)

Name _____

Address _____

Amount _____

Send to: LLN, P. O. Box 932, La Crosse,
WI 54602-0932.

A Petition to the Presidential Candidates



We call upon you, as aspirants to the highest office in our nation, to support the rights of lesbians and gay men and to reach out in your campaigns to the lesbian and gay community. We urge you, as we enter the third century of the US Constitution, to help 'promote the blessings of liberty' for all Americans.

- Add my name to the list of signers of this petition.
 Send me more information about the National Association of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs.
 Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ (membership is \$25)

Name (Please Print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (h) (_____) _____ (w) (_____) _____

JAZMINE GIKLING

is now offering the following massage therapy techniques;

Acupressure or Jin Shin Do is holding acu points in a pattern to balance the flow of energy (Ki/Chi) in the body by releasing blockages. These points are found throughout the body along pathways called "meridians." A treatment can address specific ailments such as shoulder, neck and back pain, female disorders, emotions, etc. Translated, Jin Shin Do means "the way of the compassionate spirit."

Shiatsu is a holistic acupressure treatment done in a massage form that gives attention to all 12 meridians in the body. It is performed on a floor pad with the client wearing loose, preferably cotton clothing. Part of the massage is done with my feet and includes gentle stretches. Shiatsu is relaxing yet energizing and balancing and can also address specific complaints if needed.

Swedish is an oil massage that concentrates on the muscles of the body. Some of its many benefits are stress reduction, improved circulation and muscle tone, hastens the elimination of wastes and toxins, and speeds recovery from injury.

Sliding fee scale

Acupressure - \$20⁰⁰ - \$30⁰⁰ per hour
Swedish - \$20⁰⁰ - \$30⁰⁰ per hour
Shiatsu - 1-1/2 hrs. starting at \$25⁰⁰
1/2 hour massages - \$15⁰⁰

123 N. 4th Street
Suite 215
Rivoli Building

Call 608-735-4814 for details

Certified Massage Therapist - Acupressure Institute
Berkeley, California

The Mill Road Cafe

PROUDLY PRESENTS

IN CONCERT

AUGUST ----- All concerts begin @ 8:30 PM

6 ~ No music - open until 9 PM for supper

13 = Steve [redacted] \$4.00

Steve performs American music that spans from 20's & 30's to Pop / Jazz to Windham Hill contemporary - a brilliant guitarist!

20 ~ No music - open until 9 PM for supper

27 = John Smith and Dan Sbronek \$4.00

lots of great acoustic jams and superb harmonizing!
Accomplished and well [redacted] performances

SEPTEMBER ----- All concerts begin @ 8:30 PM

3 ~ No music & Supper to 9 PM - this is the weekend of the Great River in
Traditional Folk & Craft Festival - [redacted]

10 = [redacted] Stacy Hughes and \$4.00
Dianna Anderson

This duo has been influenced by such artists as Joni Mitchell and John Denver. For a trip down memory lane don't miss this!

17 = Moulin Rouge \$4.00

Mark & Julie join us [redacted] in for "cooking" synthesizer, guitar, flute, mandolin and great vocals

24 = Musica Femina \$7.00

Flute and guitar duo from Portland, Oregon. They are dedicated to performing music by women composers both classical and contemporary. Mill Road's first chamber music!!

Note ~ Two months of concerts on this schedule

For Reservations ----- 608-582-4438

219 East Mill Road ~ Galesville