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LPM

*Good News
Positive Reminders
Inspirational Messages*

*Makaw Press
August 2003*



LesbianPride Monthly

Good news, positive reminders
and inspirational messages

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IBM and the Project to Eliminate Homophobia in Sports

The Project to Eliminate Homophobia in Sport is pleased to announce IBM as a sponsor of its educational publication, *It Takes a Team! Making Sports Safe for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Athletes and Coaches*. This educational "kit" was developed for athletes, their parents, guardians, coaches, administrators and the general public as a turnkey 40-minute program that includes a curriculum guide, posters, stickers and video hosted by tennis champion Zina Garrison and former professional football player Don McPherson.

IBM will help fund project outreach, provide all videos for inclusion in each educational kit and offer its employees the opportunity to volunteer for the project.

"IBM is excited to sponsor the Project to Eliminate Homophobia in Sport. We want to help ensure that our future customers and employees, including today's high school and college athletes, are educated on the value of inclusion while still in school because that will certainly be their experience in doing business with IBM, where we respect our customers and colleagues in all their humanity," said Sarah Siegel, Program Director, GLBT Sales and Talent.

The Project to Eliminate Homophobia in Sport is a collaborative effort involving seven leading national organizations, including Astraea, Gay Lesbian and Straight Educa-

tion Network (GLSEN), Ms. Foundation, National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Uncommon Legacy Foundation and the Women's Sports Foundation. The Project's mission is to create an educated public that respects all athletes and sports-affiliated personnel regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity/expressions.

The Project also aims to educate athletes with the effects of homophobia in sport by developing diversified resources, promoting fair policy guidelines on teams and to publicly recognize the athletic achievements and professional successes of openly lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender sports participants, thereby providing healthy role models.

"By stepping up to the plate to fund the elimination of homophobia in sport, IBM is setting the standard for corporate social responsibility," said Dawn Riley, president of the Women's Sports Foundation. "With IBM's support, the project will reach thousands more athletes and key influencers and lead to a more positive and supportive sport environment for all. We're pleased to have them on the team,"

It Takes a Team! educational materials and kits are available now for \$50 (individual) or \$100 (institutional). Educational kits are available via www.HomophobiaInSports.com or by calling the Women's Sports Foundation at 800-227-3988.

Note: IBM Global Services is the world's largest information technology services and consulting provider, generating over \$36 billion in 2002. IBM also has a dedicated GLBT sales team that can help businesses grow, whether a company is a small startup or has many thousands of employees. For more information, visit www.ibm.com

The It Takes a Team! project was started by tennis legend Martina Navratilova and the Women's Sports Foundation in 1996 after the issue of female athletes being labeled as lesbians became controversial in the sports world. With Navratilova's active involvement in fundraising and a generous challenge gift, an endowment and a general fund were established to provide for the development of research, community outreach and educational programs addressing the issue of homophobia and other barriers to women's participation in sports. ☐

I choose my friends wisely

Thinking about who my friends are gives me clues about myself. If most of my friends are straight, am I denying my same-sex orientation? If most of my friends are lesbian and gay, am I becoming more isolated from the world at large than I wanted to be? I consider what the mix of straight, bisexual, lesbian and gay people in my life says about the choices I am making.



Sometimes I need more lesbian and gay friends to affirm my sexual orientation, to give me a sense of community, or to provide a feeling of safety. At other times, I need more contact with straight friends to help me realize my part in the larger world community. My bisexual

friends experience discrimination as I do, but can give me a different perspective on sexual orientation issues.

I look at the people I choose to spend time with, exploring the reasons for my choices. Finding relationships helpful to my sense of well-being creates a healthful place for myself in the world. My decisions regarding friendships help me learn and grow.


— Eleanor Ruth Wagner
in *Lavender Reflections*

Reminder:

What you resist persists...
accepting and surrendering into "what is"
doesn't mean you have to love it...
you can feel sad, cranky
or angry about it
and still surrender into it
at the very same time!

— Robyn Posin
Rememberings and Celebrations
www.forthelittleonesinside.com

GOLDEN THREADS
 is a monthly internet designed to link lesbians and lesbians among middle and older lesbians.
GOLDEN THREADS
 is a direct connection for lesbian women over 50 and their younger friends. It can publish you over 50, and their younger friends. It can be excluded because of her age. Send a AAR to:
GOLDEN THREADS, P. O. Box 1888
 Belmont, CA 94623-1888
 For information and application:
 e-mail: golden@earthlink.net
<http://www.earthlink.net/~golden/goldenthreads.html>
 Sample copy mailed directly \$5 US and Canada
 All other countries \$10 US funds or International Money Order for mailing outside US.



The Little LesbianPride Reader
 A 60-page booklet chock full of good thoughts, positive reminders and inspirational Messages; only \$5 postpaid, such a deal!
 Mel White,
 PO Box 130,
 Tehachapi, CA 93561

HAPPILY EVER AFTER
 a book by Stacy Chandler
FREE to good lesbian homes!
\$2 for postage to Speculators, Inc.
PO Box 99038, Troy, MI 48099

GAYELLOW PAGES informing the lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender community since 1973, Includes Women's Section and Ethnic/Multicultural section "You won't find a more complete guide covering literally all aspects of Gay and Lesbian life" Our World
<http://gayyellowpages.com>
 Renaissance House, PO Box 533 Village Station, New York, NY 10014 (or ask at your local feminist bookstore)

LAVENDER REFLECTIONS
 by Eleanor Ruth Wagner,
A book of affirmations for lesbians and gay men;
Meditations & quotations;
photos & holiday entries
\$10.95 (post paid)
from author.
5529 Vernon Ave S,
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 Ask for *A Catalog of Treasures*

New Web Campaign to Fight Anti-gay Constitutional Amendment

A new Web campaign was launched last month to fight the far-right's attempt to add anti-gay language to the US Constitution. The campaign, called *DontAmend.com*, is promising to be the largest online gay mobilization in history.

DontAmend.com is cofounded by Robin Tyler and John Aravosis, two of the founders of the successful *StopDrLaura.com* campaign, which ran a successful boycott of Dr. Laura Schlessinger's then-new TV show three years ago. The show was subsequently canceled after over 170 advertisers left as a result of the campaign.

"The radical right is angry the US Supreme Court recently ruled in *Lawrence v. Texas* that gay and lesbian Americans shouldn't be thrown in jail simply because of who they are," said Robin Tyler. "They fear the majority of Americans may not share their intolerance, and now want a constitutional amendment using the scare tactic of 'same sex marriage' to deny civil rights and equal benefits to millions of people."

While the proposed amendment to the US Constitution, called the Federal Marriage Amendment, has been around for several years, the possibility of it passing the Congress increased significantly two weeks ago when Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) announced his support for the measure on ABC's "This Week."

John Aravosis noted that the religious right is now organizing to pass this amendment like never before. "[They have] now made passage of an anti-gay amendment to the US Constitution its number one priority," he said. "Gay Americans and their allies must make fighting this legislative bigotry our number one priority."

Tyler said that *DontAmend.com* will use, and build on, expertise gleaned during the *StopDrLaura.com* battle, which "successfully melded the Internet and traditional grassroots organizing to motivate millions of people to fight prejudice. Tyler recently "used this organizing tool to successfully work with local activists to organize 38 cities in just 3 weeks so thousands poured into the streets from San Juan to Fairbanks to celebrate the *Lawrence VS Texas* Supreme Court victory on the day of that decision. We will replicate those successes and bring them to a level never before seen in history."

Aravosis believes that the religious right push for the amendment offers gays and their allies an unprecedented opportunity to organize. "While we would prefer not to be fighting this battle at all, we believe *DontAmend.com* has the potential to...create the largest mobilization of gays and their allies in the history of the world."

"In Germany, the Nazis first came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, but I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time there was no one left to speak up for me."

— Martin Niemöller, Berlin Lutheran pastor arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Dachau concentration camp in 1938; the Allied forces freed him seven years later.



A STUDY IN SELF-CONFIDENCE



A Short History of Medicine

- 2000 BC — *Here, eat this root.*
- 1000 AD — That root is heathen; *Here, say this prayer.*
- 1850 AD — That prayer is superstition;
Here, drink this potion.
- 1940 AD — That potion is snake oil;
Here, swallow this pill
- 1985 AD — That pill is ineffective;
Here, take this antibiotic.
- 2000 AD — That antibiotic is artificial; *Here, eat this root.*

On the Amazon Trail

by and © Lee Lynch

Dyke Statues

I met a really sweet young lesbian not long ago. By young, I mean that she was in her thirties. She let a mutual acquaintance know how welcomed she felt by our community. In her own, she felt discounted and rejected because of her relative youth. I'd really thought things had changed since the days when Suzy and I trailed the grown up dykes around New York. We, of course, were jailbait at 15 in the era when to be a lesbian was a crime, and the women we so admired, emulated, lusted after and copied had no choice but to shun us.

Why would any community today be anything but enthusiastically welcoming to those who will carry on our spirit, our work, our histories? Surely we are not fearing that the young whipper-snappers will in some way supplant us? I think the generation of gays that created a liberation movement, gave name and form to women's and gay male spirituality, started our publishing and music industries, put positive images of gays on T.V. and in films, accomplished the impossible with Act Up and similar groups, is on the verge of being granted some form of legal recognition akin to marriage, got the Supreme Court to outlaw sodomy laws and Justice Clarence Thomas to call such laws "silly" — I think my generation of queers doesn't need to worry about getting credit where credit is due.

I've been thanked many times for being a pioneer and for recording the present that was becoming our history. I'm pleased and grateful when a younger person recognizes and values what s/he has inherited and I try to pass back the baton. If not many of them are taking up the reins, could it be because we're loathe to hand them over? I'm not involved in activities like planning marches or providing health services or even keeping one of our few remaining bookstores running, but I suspect that there are hordes of 20 and 30-somethings who are quietly learning the ropes. I was way surprised when I found myself one of a smattering of suddenly mature women holding the lesbian pens that would endure. The young gays will be surprised too, when they wake up to find themselves in charge of fund-raising galas or managing gay-friendly motels in resort towns.

There is also an army of gay kids in their teens who have the energy and vision to do their part to sustain our community.

Maybe the next revolution needs to be generational. We can't just rack up victories, then sit on our laurels, complaining that purple-haired 25-year olds with nose rings shouldn't be canvassing for votes, or that no one wants 72 year olds at the Halloween ball. Nor can the new dykes and gay men take their relative freedom for granted — the right wing is never going to go away. How can we combine the strengths of all ages to do what needs to be done to make the planet safe for our people?

A warm welcome apparently goes a long way, according to that report from my friend. We don't have to become best pals with someone decades older or younger, but, oh, the thrill to see the young gays strut and prance and my seniors dare to live outside the closets they were born to. When I am with a peer, how our eyes spark with laughter and pleased self-consciousness when we break into a duet of some Meg Christian song.

I'm no organizer, but I host a potluck at my home on Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July. This year there was no one under 40, but we ranged well into our 70s. The sense of continuity and of family I experience when I look around the boisterous bunch of us is inspiring and sustaining. It took all of us to get this far and it'll take all of us to maintain the gains we've won.

One night at a potluck heavy in the category of what a 30-something lesbian called, "short, white-haired women," I was brought to tears of pain as they discussed a memorial to the women in the group who had died. There was no question of putting names on the plaque — even in death the anonymity of these women must be preserved. We weren't going to spell out the name of the organization because, daringly, it contained the "L" word. There was great sadness in the plan and although I sensed pride, it was a queer pride that we needed to hide.

What if, that night, there had been some young women with blueberry-colored hair and Doc Martens shoes, one with a skateboard parked at the door and another wearing leather pants and a t-shirt that ended just above her navel. What if a third, in goth black, had sprung from her supple, cross-legged position on the floor and cried, "Who are you protecting? Not me and not yourselves. If you really loved these dykes you'd get enough cash together to hire a sculptor and put up a damn dyke statue!"

"Cool!" the other baby dykes would shout.

The rest would have had a choice: quietly ignore these fearless pups or soak up a little of their outrageousness. The mute memorial could have found a voice and while that voice would have been quieter than the kids', it might have broken some lifelong chains of silence. ♀

Participants Needed for Study of African-American Lesbian Health

The Mautner Project is seeking Black lesbian and bisexual women age 18 and older to participate in the first comprehensive national survey of African-American lesbian health. Led by Mautner Project Health Promotion and Research Director Cheryl Pearson-Fields, the groundbreaking "Spirit Study" is designed, implemented, and evaluated by African-American lesbians and draws on partnerships with national and community-based organizations serving Black women who partner with women.

"As members of two medically underserved populations, African-American lesbians may face double jeopardy in terms of mortality and morbidity from cancer and other diseases," says Fields. "But because Black women who partner with women have not been well represented in health studies, very little is known about our health status and health needs. Our hope is that the Spirit Study will help bridge the information gap preventing Black lesbians from receiving the health services they need and deserve."

Among the organizations partnering on the Spirit Study are the Zuna Institute, United Lesbians of African Heritage (ULOAH), Unity Fellowship Church, Women in the Life, National Black Lesbian and Gay Lesbian Leadership Forum, Sophisticated Lady Productions, and Venus Magazine. The study is being guided by a Scientific Advisory Committee made up of noted African-American lesbian and allied health researchers, clinicians, and educators, including Former Assistant Surgeon General Dr. Marilyn Gaston, MD; Lucille Adams-Campbell, MD, Director Howard University Cancer Center; Alicia Matthews, PhD, Director, Psychosocial Oncology Program, University of Chicago; Lisa Bowleg, PhD, Assistant Professor Department of Psychology University of Rhode Island; Nicole Cozier Boyd, MBA/MS, Public Education Director Ovarian Cancer National Alliance; and Joyce Hunter, DSW, Director of Community Liaison Programs, HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies, New York State Psychiatric Institute.

This innovative research project is partially supported by a grant from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, which is funding the breast health segment of the study. "It is one of the Komen Foundation's highest priorities to empower all women in the fight against cancer by providing them with the resources and information they need to make educated decisions about their health," says Komen's Director of Public Policy, Diane Balma.

Founded in 1990, the Mautner Project is the national lesbian health organization. Its mission is to improve the health and well-

being of women who partner with women and their families through direct services, education, research, and advocacy.

The Spirit Study is completely confidential. Participants may complete the survey at their convenience online at www.spiritstudy.org or can request copies by phone/TTY (202-332-5536), email <mautner@mautnerproject.org>, or postal mail (Spirit Study, 1707 L Street NW, Suite 230, Washington, DC 20036). For more information about participating in the Spirit Study or if your organization is interested in joining as a community partner, please call 202-332-5536 or email cfields@mautnerproject.org



Lance Armstrong Foundation Funds Lesbian Health

The Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) has awarded the Mautner Project a \$5,000 grant in support of the Project's innovative lesbian cancer survivorship program. The first gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) organization ever chosen for funding by LAF, the Mautner Project is one of 43 community organizations in 22 states selected by the Foundation in its highly competitive 2003 grants cycle.

"The Lance Armstrong Foundation works to promote all areas of cancer survivorship," says Douglas Ulman, LAF's director of survivorship. "Through our partnerships with dedicated organizations like the Mautner Project, we will continue to enhance the quality of life for cancer survivors everywhere." Founded in 1997 by cancer survivor and champion cyclist Lance Armstrong, LAF works to promote the optimal physical, psychological, and social recovery and care of cancer survivors and their loved ones.

"The Lance Armstrong Foundation knows that although doctors, researchers and insurance companies may discriminate against LGBT people, cancer does not," says Mautner Project Executive Director Kathleen DeBold. "We are proud to partner with LAF in their quest to improve the quality of life for all cancer survivors and their families - regardless of their sexual or gender orientation."

Funding from the Lance Armstrong Foundation will help the Mautner Project increase services to lesbian survivors by developing a technical manual so other organizations and agencies can replicate their program in their local communities. "There is so little funding available for lesbian health that it makes no sense for any group to waste time and money starting from scratch when there are good programs like this we can share," says DeBold.

On sacred ground

by and (c) Joy Parks



Firebrand's Second Coming

There's an old adage that says if you live long enough, you get to see everything twice. At 43, I'm barely halfway through the first time around. But apparently, if you review lesbian books for more than 20 years, some good things do come around again.

During the renaissance of lesbian-feminist publishing in the late 1970s and 1980s, Nancy K. Bereano was the brilliant editor of the Crossing Press's Feminist Series who kept important lesbian writers like Judy Grahn, Audre Lorde, Jan Clausen and others in front of lesbian readers. In the early 1980s, Nancy established Firebrand Books, which was (and I know I'm not alone in this opinion) one of the finest, smartest, bravest lesbian publishing companies to exist, even during those years of profound activity. During the nearly two decades of Firebrand's first incarnation, it published books that would become classics from Leslie Feinberg, Joan Nestle, Pat Parker, Ellen Galford, Michelle Cliff, Paula Gunn Allan, comic book creator Alison Bechdel and so many others. Firebrand was unparalleled in its ability to find, nurture and promote those writers who would come to form the canon of contemporary lesbian writing. Firebrand not only knew what we wanted to read, but understood what we needed to know.

Unfortunately Firebrand ceased to be a few years ago, as a result of the typical demons that plague independent publishers, all too numerous and complicated to mention here. And with that demise, lesbian writing lost an significant publisher who didn't shy away from important issues or "serious" books, one who didn't jump on trendy bandwagons or depend on the quick fix of genre fiction, one whose passing left a enormous gap in lesbian culture.

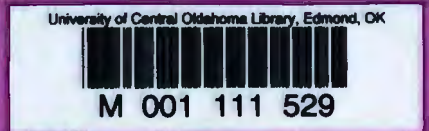
But there is a happy ending. Actually, more of a happy beginning. Recently, Firebrand Books was purchased by Karen Oosterhous and the first title is now on shelves.

Karen brings to this considerable task years of experience in marketing and public relationship and calls herself "the ultimate book geek." She knew the moment she heard that the publishing company was for sale that she had to buy it and states that "something that has, and I hope always will, distinguish Firebrand from other publishing houses, is its willingness to go where other publishers won't on issues

of politics, sexuality, alternative parenting, etc. These are the books that have brought Firebrand a strong and loyal readership, as well as literary recognition. These are the Firebrand titles that continue to be widely used in the academic world to introduce new generations of women to feminism — that's an important part of our mission and one we won't let go of." For readers who share my belief that lesbian publishing was burning a little less brightly without Firebrand, this is an event worth waiting to see a second time.

If *And Then They Were Nuns* by Susan J. Leonardi is an indication of the kind of writing we can expect from Firebrand, then all is right with the world. *And Then They Were Nuns* is simply wonderful, the kind of book that you read with your head and your heart and find your hands shaking as you turn the pages. It's a novel that unfolds the story of an amazing group of strong-willed, creative and highly spiritual women in a radically different kind of convent in the Northern California hills. The structure is brilliant — each chapter offers up a different form, a letter, a collection of lists, a theoretical piece on lesbian eroticism, even a chapter from a thriller. Taken together, these different forms create a compelling story, memorable, credible characters and a fresh, new and effective way to tell interwoven stories while remaining true to the character's point of view. It's hard not to fall in love with each of the women for a dozen reasons, but the highly sexual, sometimes conflicted but wonderfully free and outspoken Anne is totally unforgettable. And with vivid descriptions of the order's vegetarian meals, the simple tiny individual cabins, the peacefulness and the collective spirit with which these women live, it's hard to read *And Then They Were Nuns* and not want to get thee to this convent. (*And Then They Were Nuns*, by Susan J. Leonardi, Firebrand Books, 2003, \$14.95)

Sacred Classic: *My Mama's Dead Squirrel: Lesbian Essays on Southern Culture* by Mab Segrest I admit, it's hardly the kind of title one would expect of a classic. But it's exactly the kind of book that made the original Firebrand such an important resource in lesbian writing. This incredibly varied collection of essays from Southern writer Mab Segrest mixes literary criticism with autobiography, combines political theory with humor, and richly and deeply explores issues that matter in the lives of women. The essay on Barbara Deming is alone worth the effort to find a copy. It also includes a wonderful introduction by Adrienne Rich, who refers to these writings as "bulletins from the front." And while the title is irresistible, what's most exhilarating about this collection is Segrest's ability to use her own experience as a filter to explore women's and lesbian history and writing, the history of the south, feminist politics, homophobia and through it, reveal what we need to survive. (*My Mama's Dead Squirrel: Lesbian Essays on Southern Culture* by Mab Segrest, 1986, Firebrand Books, original price \$8.95; paperback)



University of the Center

Savvy Sappho's Solutions for Successful Living

by and © Stacy Chandler

Dear Savvy Sappho, My girlfriend likes to participate in Gay Pride Parades by going topless. I don't flash anything, anywhere, at any time. I'm not happy about her sharing her Amazonees with my brothers and sisters under the skin. What can I do to get her to stop? – Bug-Eyed in Boston

Dear Boston, Tell her how you feel and ask her to carry a banner. Should she continue to go topless, any banner or sign should make you feel better. Or see if the Gay Pride Committee will hold the parades in February. Actually, there are precious few occasions left to get naked in public any more, and I for one think that's a damn shame! – SS



Astrology

by and © Stacy Chandler

LEO
July 23 – August 22

*Courageously you roam the plains
Majestically, you're still untamed.
Adoring creatures get but a swat
Till you find your Camelot...
and evermore, you'll purr a lot!**

***BE WARNED – THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE AURA OF THE COSMOS!**

Call for works

Writers, photographers, poets, artists, cartoonists – all works are welcome as submissions for the upcoming *LesbianPride Readers*. The only criteria is that the works be positive, upbeat, or inspirational, focusing on the brighter side of being a lesbian.

You must submit original works, but previously published works are acceptable. Fiction should be 5,000 words or less; essays 1000 words or less (shorter is always better!). Poems should be limited to 40 lines or less. Drawings, photos and cartoons should reproduce well in black and white (color is not in the plans at this time).

Also welcome are quotes, thoughts, paragraphs – any form of writing as long as you are the creator and own the rights to your work.

One-time rights are requested by Makaw Press (the publisher of this newsletter and the upcoming *Readers*); all rights revert back to you upon publication. Compensation will be in the form of complimentary copies of the *Reader* in which your work appears.

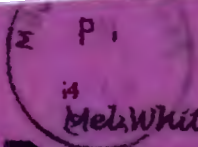
Don't send originals – send a copy; **your work will not be returned to you unless you have included a self-addressed stamped envelope**. Work may be submitted by mail or email: Makaw, PO Box 130, Tehachapi, CA 93561 or Morningland@msn.com.

*Clouds come floating into my life,
no longer to carry rain or usher storm,
but to add color to my sunset sky.
– Ramindranath Tagore*

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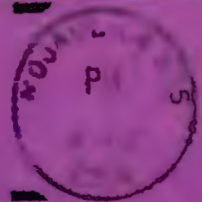


Mel White/MAKAW

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