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# LPM

*Good News  
Positive Reminders  
Inspirational Messages*

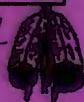
*Makaw Press  
May 2003*

# LesbianPride Monthly

Good news, positive reminders  
and inspirational messages

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## A Mother's Story

Inspirational speaker and author, Mary Lou Wallner will be the special guest speaker at the Cathedral of Hope Mother's Day services, May 11, in Dallas at 9 and 11 am and in Oklahoma City at 6:30 pm. Wallner, who lost her lesbian daughter, Anna, to suicide in 1997, will share her daughter's story, as well as her own journey from "tragedy to transformation".

Raised in a conservative, fundamentalist church environment, Wallner was taught that homosexuality was spiritually and morally wrong. However, after her daughter's death, she was faced with the spiritual implications of her refusal to accept Anna's homosexuality. "Anna's death brought me face-to-face with the untruth I have been taught throughout my life by the church," said Wallner.

In her book *The Slow Miracle of Transformation* she details her journey from ignorance to acceptance. "My transformation has occurred through a wonderful gift given to me by God and I am honored to call these LGBT children of God amongst my closest friends. I have a sincere desire to see the church accept and welcome LGBT people just the way God made them."

Wallner, who resides with her husband Bob in Elgin, Illinois, is an active member of Reverend Mel White's (no relation to LPM's editor) Soulforce movement and a frequent speaker at conferences across the country.

Led by Rev. Michael S. Piazza and Rev. Dr. Mona West, Cathedral of Hope is the world's largest liberal Christian church with a primary outreach to gay, lesbian and transgendered people. National church ministries, outreach programs, counseling services and Internet and television media, touch thousands of lives each day. For more information on Cathedral of Hope, please visit [www.cathedralofhope.com](http://www.cathedralofhope.com)

And on a little bit lighter note...

## Things My Mother Taught Me

My mother taught me to appreciate a job well done: *If you're going to kill each other, do it outside; I just finished cleaning in here.*"

My mother taught me religion: *You better pray that comes out of the carpet!*

My mother taught me about time travel: *If you don't straighten up I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!*

My mother taught me logic: *Because I said so, that's why.*  
And more about logic: *If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the store with me.*

My mother taught me irony: *Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about.*

My mother taught me about the science of osmosis: *Shut your mouth and eat your dinner.*

My mother taught me about contortionism: *Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck!*

My mother taught me about stamina: *You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone.*

My mother taught me about weather: *This room of yours looks as if a tornado went through it.*

My mother taught me about hypocrisy: *If I told you once, I've told you a million times - don't exaggerate!*

My mother taught me behavior modification: *Stop acting like your father!*

My mother taught me about anticipation: *Just wait until we get home,* and about receiving: *You're going to get it when we get home.*

My mother taught me about medical science: *If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to freeze that way.*

My mother taught me ESP: *Put your sweater on; don't you think I know when you are cold?*

My mother taught me genetics: *You're just like your father.*

My mother taught me about my roots: *Shut that door behind you - do you think you were born in a barn?*


My mother taught me humor: *When the lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me.*

And finally, my mother taught me about justice: *One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you!* ☺

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!**



**HAPPILY EVER AFTER**  
 a book by Stacy Chandler  
**FREE to good lesbian homes!**  
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A 60-page booklet chock full of good thoughts, positive reminders and inspirational Messages; only \$5 postpaid, such a deal!

Mel White,  
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**Nature affirms the rightness of my loving**

It is a well-established scientific fact that homosexual activity occurs in many species, from bedbugs to the primates. Homosexual activity is as much a part of nature as sexuality itself. I celebrate the sexual rainbow shining in the firmament of nature.

Today I cast off pronouncements of perversion and sinfulness concerning my loving. Moving beyond shame, I let myself feel my attractions. I sense the naturalness of my sexuality in my lovemaking. In caring about my partner, I find the joy I know was intended for me.



As I delight in the beauty of my same-sex loving, I breathe in its goodness, and it fills my being. The harmony of nature affirms me, and so do I.

— Eleanor Ruth Wagner  
 in *Lavender Reflections*

**Reminder:**

When change is moving quickly in your life, it's best not to look much beyond right where you are in this moment...  
 The "you-that-you-are-now" is likely to feel overwhelmed when it anticipates circumstances that the "you-that-you-are-becoming" will be well-prepared to meet when they actually arrive...  
 At such times of great acceleration, try living in the thinnest slice of now you can define!

— Robyn Posin  
 Rememberings and Celebrations  
[www.forthelittleonesinside.com](http://www.forthelittleonesinside.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

# On the Amazon Trail

by and © Lee Lynch

## *I Want My Country Back*

I've been reading a much circulated story about a national stronghold of anti-gay sentiment in Colorado, Focus on the Family. The poor babies are having a hard time staying afloat. The focus of America is definitely not on us gay folk any more, but somehow I get the feeling that this is only part of the reason why the purveyors of hate are losing their jobs. Could it be that their supporters feel they've finished their work? Wasn't it their flock who gave Bush and his band enough votes that all they had to do was steal one state in order to occupy the white house?

It's not that the bigots can retire — we're much too uppity for their peace of mind. And it's certainly not time for us to let down our guard — homophobia is too strong in them to fade away. So what is going on with these folks? Are they glued to their TVs, watching reality television Iraqi style? Are they donating to the Veterans of Foreign Wars instead of to Focus on the Family? Are we forgotten or just pushed to a dangerous back burner, hovering above a very low, but not extinguished, flame?

We are such a gentle people — and so understanding with non-gays. It's incomprehensible to us that our love is considered wrong. We simply and innocently expect that those unfortunate enough to be straight will, with time, patience and education, see the light. We've worked so hard, surely we've won?

That'll be the day. This is no time to put our deflector shields down, rebel troops. This is no time to be lulled into trust, to feel safe. For the first time in my life I believe there really is such a thing as evil and that it has enthroned itself in our nation's capitol. It's time to build on our gains, not to take a vacation. And as dismal a prospect as it may seem, it is time to coalition with the Democratic Party as we never have before. I believe we're fighting for our lives with every election.

I don't for a minute think we've been forgotten. I think the war against us — and we're not alone, the American people of color, poor people, non-Christians and others get in the way of WASP imperialism — will eventually be waged on an even higher, more sophisticated and lethal level if the current administration stays in

power. These guys in D.C. are serious. If they're going into other countries and grabbing with impunity anything they believe should be theirs, if they are defining what is right and wrong, deciding who should do what and how, what do they have in mind for their own country? They have big brother himself, Mr. Ashcroft, in mind.

Nor do I believe that the war with Iraq is only about oil. What is the media displaying — unchecked looting, disorder, dark-skinned guys in funny head gear — sound familiar? Is there a little race hatred going on over there too? There is certainly no respect for the ransacked culture of Iraq. At home our weapon is neglect, our bomb, the slashing of entitlement programs for the disenfranchised. Is Iraq just another ghetto we'll abandon?

I almost despair when I think about who runs this country and much of the world today: bullies who can send us to war and tempt warriors to our shores; insurance companies that have too much say over whether we live or die; agribusiness that poisons our food with genetic engineering and pesticides, bankrupts small farmers and enslaves poor farm workers; giant food processors who dilute our nutrition with additives and fillers for profit; religions that insinuate themselves into government to proselytize and accrue power; pharmaceutical companies that promote products which could be used to take the edge off a people too angry, too restive and smart enough to connect the dots; heterosexuals who, whatever their level of tolerance, inside are convinced their way is right.

Helen Thomas, a respected journalist who has covered eight presidents, is quoted as saying, "This is the worst president ever. He is the worst president in all of American history." And the most dangerous — the purveyors of hate love him."

The Green Party appeals strongly to me, and I could not vote with them. The Democratic Party is our best chance to hold back the belligerent hordes within. The good legislators need encouragement to keep sticking their necks out. They need the protection of our numbers and our allegiance. It would be criminal to allow four more years of greedy men apparently intent on world domination and the financial and moral gutting of this country. No one is more of an American chauvinist than I. No one could be more grateful than I to have the privilege of living here. I have a responsibility to defend my country against those who would do it harm. I want my country back.

## On sacred ground

by and (c) Joy Parks

### Ferociously Femme

One of the oddest memories I have of the lesbian-feminist 1980s is all the time I spent in the public bathrooms of the subway that rushed me from work to whatever dyke get-together I was racing to. In these dingy subterranean rooms, I'd tear off my skirt and blouse and hose and slip into something more suitably lesbian, trading my pumps for a well-worn pair of desert boots and inspecting my lips to ensure that any trace of rose or mauve was gone. I'd enter those dim unsanitary lairs looking like any young woman on her way home from work (or an instrument of the patriarchy, depending on who you asked) and emerge looking like what I thought a lesbian should. But the androgynous outfits, like the image they represented, never quite suited me.

I didn't know it then, but I was, and am now, a femme, something I finally figured out after discovering the writings of femme lesbians like Joan Nestle and butch writers like Lee Lynch. I loved how they spoke freely and lovingly of lesbian genders, how they gave me a language for what I was and what I wanted. And *Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity*, edited by Chloë Brushwood Rose and Anna Camilleri is most definitely part of my continuing education on how to balance being queer and feminine.

The magic of *Brazen Femme* lies in the wisdom of editors Chloë Brushwood Rose and Anna Camilleri to not attempt to speak collectively of what femme means. It can't be done. But there are common threads and the most common of all is the double bind of invisibility, both within the gay community and the world at large. Editor Anna Camilleri's "Cut from the Same Stone" is an explosive essay about how high femme is a celebration of the power of becoming stone and untouchable. "gonna get my girl body back: this is a work in progress" by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha is lush, painful rush of words on sexual abuse and how femme bodies and faces become canvases for self-expression. "Whores and Bitches Who Sleep With Women" draws from femme history, the fact that many femmes in the 50s urban gay communities were prostitutes, and how they have been rendered invisible by a sanitized lesbian history that traces its lineage through Sappho, Gertrude Stein and sexless Boston marriages. "Femme Fables," composed of three brief tales on class and opportunity, jealousy and the difficulty of femme aging, by Amber Houibaugh,



with a raw truthfulness that cleanly cuts through a lot of assumptions held by both the lesbian/gay community and society in general. But it's a brave and necessary book. And much like the constant pinch and scratch of a lacy push up bra, it leaves an impression that is worth the discomfort. (*Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity*, edited by Chloë Brushwood Rose and Anna Camilleri, Arsenal Pulp Press Distribution Consortium, \$16.95)

### Sacred Classic: *Morton River Valley* by Lee Lynch

While there are other exceptional anthologies that showcase writings by femme writers, such as *The Femme Mystique* edited by Lesléa Newman or *Persistent Desire*, edited by Joan Nestle (both have been reviewed in previous columns), credible femme characters are rare. One of my favorites is Paris Collins, in *Morton River Valley* by Lee Lynch, the third book in Lynch's four part series that deals with a community of lesbian characters in a small working-class Connecticut town. This in itself is notable; apart from those who pen mysteries, few lesbian writers have attempted to create a continuing plot or returning characters (one exception is Mazo De la Roche's *Jalna* serie, but De la Roche so completely encoded her lesbian perspective that most readers would never recognize it). *Morton River Valley* is one of Lynch's lesser known works and that's unfortunate; it's a strong story with poignant undercurrents that speak to the struggle between the need for intimacy and the fear of commitment. With Paris, Lynch resists femme stereotypes; there are references to her clothes and her hair and lipstick, but what shines through is an unapologetic, unabashed pleasure in what she brings to the butch/femme dynamic, both in and out of the bedroom. Paris is far more "likable" than many of Lynch's femme characters; there's a playfulness in her observations on butches' stances and gestures, how the way hands are thrust into pockets become a language. Too, there's a willingness to be vulnerable, to make her needs known, sensuously revealed in how she comes undone by undoing her lover's tie, in the magic she finds in unveiling her lover's female body from beneath its masculine tailored clothes. Paris' attraction to these butch qualities, her desire for the eroticism of this "otherness" is what so credibly defines her femme sexuality. And too, she seems to enjoy the knowledge that as a femme, the invisibility of her queerness makes it all the more deviant and rebellious. In *Morton River Valley*, Lynch gives readers something rare: a self-aware, compassionate and believable femme with enough confidence in her femininity to not need wield it as a weapon. (*Morton River Valley*, by Lee Lynch, originally published by Naiad Press, now available from Variant Press, P.O. Box 1173, Newport, OR, 97394, \$8.00, shipping included)

Ask for these books at your local  
feminist or alternative bookstore.

# Savvy Sappho's Solutions for Successful Living

by and © Stacy Chandler

Dear Savvy Sappho, I like the nightlife, but my lover is an early-call-it-a-night kind of gal. How can we reconcile this difference? – Night Owl

*Dear Owl, You both might make some headway (read compromise) by you getting up just a little earlier, and her staying up just a little later, and see how it goes. – SS*

Dear Savvy Sappho, My lover keeps saying "Life Sucks!" repeatedly. What should I do? – Concerned

*Dear Concerned, As soon as possible, sit down and talk to her. Listen careful to what she is saying. If it's just a bad mood, speak positively and be encouraging. If it's something more serious, urge her to get professional help. – SS*



**Astrology**

by and © Stacy Chandler

**TAURUS**  
**April 20 – May 20**

**Feels like you're stuck in a china shoppe.  
Relax, it's that insatiable urge to lead.  
You'll have to get out of your very own way –  
It takes only one to start a stampede.\***

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

## On the Level

by Mel White

(leaning to the left sometimes,  
leaning to the right other times,  
but never tipping over, hence:



*on the level!)*



## Remembering

The events of the last few months have affected me personally in many ways. Among them has been the agonizing reminder that the freedoms and privileges we have today – even though we have much to continue to struggle for – have come at a great price, and will continue to do so.

It is a price that many have been willing to pay, so that you and I can praise and support, or negotiate and teach – or gripe and moan – as we see fit.

Even our sisters and brothers who would be dishonorably discharged if their lifestyle preferences were known, have found a way to serve and protect you and me (and an oftentimes ungrateful and undeserving straight world), and sometimes to pay with their lives.

This Memorial Day, I ask you to remember those who have fallen in the battles of war around the world – soldiers both gay and straight – to keep us safe and free, and to ensure that you and I will remain able to fight our own battles within for acceptance and parity. It takes us all to make this world a better place. ♀

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