

HERLAND VOICE

November 2002

Website of the Month: www.progressivesecretary.org

Volume 20, Number 11

Adoption Workshop for Non-Traditional Families at Herland, 2312 NW 39th Street, Oklahoma City Saturday, November 16, 2002, 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Find out what is involved in adopting children in Oklahoma. Presenters will include Sandy Ingraham (attorney-at-law), Nancy Viviani, (adoptive mother) and a representative of a (family-friendly) adoption agency licensed to place children in Oklahoma.

Protecting Families and Partnerships in Same-Sex Relationships

*by Sandy Ingraham, JD, MSW
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Lesbians and gay men create families, both with and without children. Like all families those involving same-sex relationships fret over what will happen when one partner dies, or (heaven forbid) the couple breaks up. Unlike all families those involving same-sex relationships have precious few legal safeguards. Without a relationship recognized by law (biological parenthood, adoption or marriage) at least one of the partners stands as a virtual stranger in the eyes of Oklahoma law. Questions involving property division, inheritance, child custody, child support, child visitation will be answered by looking at strict legal entitlement, birth certificates, marriage licenses, divorce documents, and adoption papers. The emotions of sadness and betrayal are heightened as families are forced to navigate the nightmares of death and divorce without legal process.

Partners can do something! Key is being honest about the nature of the relationship. Then a series of legal documents can be crafted to specify what the couple wants to happen when the inevitable occurs. Depending on each specific situation documents might include: wills or trusts (to distribute property upon death), affidavits (specifying desires, such as cremation), partnership agreements (laying out financial agreements, payment of household expenses, impact on ownership, etc.), co-parenting agreements (laying out each partner's commitment to a child; specifying custody, visitation and support agreements), various powers-of-attorney (allowing partners to take care of each other's financial affairs, allowing the non-legal parent to exercise some parental rights such as consenting for a child's medical care, or allowing partners to consent to each other's medical care), assignment of hospital visitation rights (ensuring a partner the right to visit in a medical facility and stay informed of medical status) ... and so on.

Once agreements are made, partners are advised to honor them and do whatever is necessary to stay out of court. The inclusion of alternative dispute resolution clauses, such as required mediation and binding arbitration, can avoid the nightmare of a public proceeding in an open court which has no respect for non-traditional relationships. Partners must understand that some agreements may not even be

enforced by a court. There is hope that states will begin to honor co-parenting agreements (see, for example, *In re Bonfield*, 96 Ohio St. 3d 218, issued this summer). Other states allow second-parent adoption (Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont by case law; Connecticut by statute; California's new domestic partnership law allows registered domestic partners to adopt as stepparents). Most states don't do either. There is little basis to believe Oklahoma courts will follow the progressive path.

Oklahoma law and statutes protect a family and declare what will happen to the property or children when one partner in a legally-recognized marriage leaves or dies. For everyone else, silence means walking away with nothing, and possibly leaving your child at risk. Be proactive. Seek the advice of an attorney and make sure you have done all you can do to protect your family.

Womyn of Color

The Womyn of Color celebrated their first year anniversary at the Golden Corral with a lively crowd of members and friends. Their next meeting is Sunday, November 10, at 4 p.m., at Herland. If you have any questions or want information about our organization, please feel free to email us at womynofcolor@gay.com or call 405/842-3464 or 405/947-7691.

Herland Supper Club

The November Supper Club will meet
Saturday, November 16
at 6 pm at
La Baguette
323 W. Boyd
In Norman

Following dinner we will proceed to
Meachum Auditorium
900 Asp
in the OLI Student Union
On the OLI Campus
For the
OUT OK Film Fest

*We are not sure as we go to press
what films will be playing or at what time;
Tickets are \$10 at the door.*

Those who would like to carpool should
Meet at Herland at 5:20 pm

Saint Sybil presents: Guest Feminists

Yes readers, there are feminists in Oklahoma. Last month we heard from Rebecca in Tulsa; this week we give the floor to Kathy McCallie, Pastor of the Church of the Open Arms. Please note that Kathy rose to the challenge to define feminism in 25 words exactly.

"I was excited about an open discussion on the question of being a feminist. Here is my attempt toward a definition.

Feminist: someone who recognizes the unjust pervasiveness of male dominance in our world and who strives to replace sexism and patriarchy with egalitarian, cooperative alternatives.

Yes, I identify as a feminist. I try to be a radical feminist and a true lover of all that is Woman. For about 20 years, I have been proud and determined to make the feminist work part of my life. I have been saddened at times to hear of feminists who were not very good on issues of race or even lesbian issues... yet still, I want to be part of the feminist movement as it is learning and growing.

I don't often take time to tell you, but I appreciate Herland and your work there. It is a light spot in a weary world. Much love, Kathy McCallie"

Herland Hike -- Herland had a great hike at Sulphur in October, and so we have planned another one. Saturday, November 9, we will meet at 8 am at Panera Bread, 4401 W. Memorial Road (NE corner of Memorial & Meridian). After breakfast we will meet at 9 am at Martin Nature Park, 5000 W. Memorial, for an easy and pleasant hike. Once again we are lucky to have Jane Powell as our hike leader.

Are You Looking for a Good Time? Are you tired of meeting socially unavailable and mentally vacuous mates? Do you yearn for a committed short-term relationship? Your search is over. OUT OK - The Oklahoma Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival is looking for a few good women and men to assist in the operations. I need people to help in Norman, November 15-17 and in Tulsa, November 22-24. Please come out and be a part of this great event. Contact Philip Au: 918-682-4654 ext. 2 or pau@out-ok.com

Tails from the Closet "Do lesbians look good in hoop skirts?" "Are we born gay?" "Is bi-sexuality a sport?" These questions are answered in the gay comedy sketch, "Tails from the Closet: A Comical Orgy of the GLBT Life" playing Sundays November 3, 10, 17, and 24 and December 8 and 15. 7 p.m. in the IAO (Individual Artists of Oklahoma Gallery in downtown Oklahoma City

Save the Dates

- Friday, December 6: **Therapy Sisters** at the Blue Door
- Sunday, December 15: **Sisters of Swing Christmas Show**
- Tuesday, December 17: **Louise and Mary** at Galileo's

SGI-USA The SGI-USA Oklahoma Ethnic Diversity Group is meeting on November 24 at the SGI Community Center 3800 N. Cromwell at 7 pm. This is a new meeting started by some of the members who recently attended a meeting for African-American SGI at the Florida Nature and Conference Center. Contacts are: Rosetta Yeboa, 682-3363 or Rebbecca Ross, rossra@juno.com.

The Voice is published by: Herland Sister Resources, Inc. 2312 NW 39th, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. The Voice is offered as an open forum for community discourse. Articles reflect the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of Herland Sister Resources. Unsolicited articles and letters to the editor are welcomed and must be signed by the writer with full name and address. Upon request, letters or articles may be printed under a pseudonym or anonymously. Subscriptions to The Voice are free upon request although a donation is requested to meet publication and distribution costs.

The Music Scene

By Jill Garner

Congratulations to Emmylou Harris who won the 2002 Patrick J. Leahy Humanitarian Award for her efforts to focus attention on the plight of landmine survivors. Harris is one of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation's (VVAFA) most visible spokespersons for the organization's anti-landmine campaign. She spearheaded the creation of VVAFA's *Concerts for a Landmine Free World* in 1998, and has initiated many other singer-songwriters to the anti-landmine cause.

On November 12th, VVAFA supporters, including Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), will pay tribute to Harris in a benefit event at the *Birchmere Music Hall* in D.C. Musical guests will include Mary Chapin Carpenter, Guy Clark, Rodney Crowell, Steve Earle, Nanci Griffith, Patty Griffin, Buddy & Julie Miller and John Prine.

All proceeds from the 2002 *Patrick J. Leahy Humanitarian Award* event will support VVAFA's post-war assistance programs. VVAFA is a Washington, DC-based international humanitarian organization that assists civilian victims of conflict in countries overseas, as well as educates and engages the public about the global landmine crisis.

Since 1997, the number of landmine accidents has fallen, to around 15,000-20,000 per year according to a report by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. A total of 125 countries have ratified the landmine treaty, and another 18 have signed it but have not yet ratified. The United States is not one of those countries.

VVAFA established the Senator Patrick J. Leahy Humanitarian Award to honor those who have made a lasting contribution in the field of humanitarian affairs.

Music and More

- ▼ Sunday, November 3, 7:15 am; **Soulforce** vigil, Village Baptist Church
- ♪ Sunday, November 3, 8 - 10 pm; **Peggy Johnson** at Sisters, 2120 NW 39th, OKC; with **Dee Britt**; no cover
- Thursday, November 7, 7 pm, ♀♀♀ **Basketball**; Southern Nazarene v. the Flyers, at the Sawyer Center in Bethany
- ☼ Saturday, November 9, 9 am; Herland **Hike** at Martin Nature Park, OKC
- ♪ Saturday, November 9; 7:30 pm; **Mary Reynolds** at Java Dave's; 10 NE 10th Street, OKC. A benefit for RAIN -
- ▼ Sunday, November 10, **Womyn of Color**, 4 pm, Herland
- ▼ November 15-17, **OUT OK Film Festival**, in Norman
- ♪ Friday, November 15, 7:30, **Mary & Louise** at One, at White & Buchanan, Norman; \$5.00
- Friday, November 15, 6 pm; ♀♀♀ **Basketball**; SNU Varsity v. the Alumni, Sawyer Center, Bethany
- ▼ Saturday, November 16, 3 - 5 pm; **Adoption Workshop**, at Herland
- ▼ Saturday, November 16, **Herland Supper Club**, 6 pm at La Baguette in Norman, then to the OUT-OK Film Festival
- ♪ Tuesday, November 19; **Mary Reynolds and Louise Goldberg** at Galileo's, 8 - 11 pm; no cover
- ▼ November 22-24, **OUT OK Film Festival**, in Tulsa
- ▼ **Sundays**, November & December, **Tails from the Closet**, IAO, 811 N. Broadway, Oklahoma City; at 7 pm
- ★ **Thursdays**, 4:30 - 6 pm, **peaceful Rally for Peace** in Iraq; NW 23rd & Classen, Oklahoma City

Patsy Mink, RIP; 1927-2002

The world lost one of its greatest citizens on September 28 with the death of Hawaii Congresswoman Patsy Mink, the first Asian American woman elected to Congress. Girls and women also lost one of their most valiant and steadfast champions. Every woman today who is enjoying the fruits of her education and job opportunities, and every girl who has a chance to play sports in school, owes a profound thanks to Mink, who unremittingly and dauntlessly challenged old stereotypes about "women's place"; and who helped engineer the steady progress for women over the last four decades.

Patsy Mink graduated from the University of Chicago Law School in 1951, and was unable to obtain a position in a law firm anywhere, even as a law clerk. She stood up and showed up for women and girls. She persisted, cajoled, humored, and demanded of her colleagues that Congress attend to the business of over half its constituents. Among many accomplishments, she was a leader in shepherding the passage of Title IX in 1972 to promote educational equity. One of only two women ever to receive this honor, Patsy Mink was named a NOW Woman of Vision in June 2002, in a ceremony honoring the 30th Anniversary of Title IX. In the last decade of her political leadership, Patsy Mink was a vigorous advocate on behalf of poor families. Faced with the bi-partisan tidal wave that pounded poor women, insisting that they "get to work," Mink worked tirelessly to promote policies that truly addressed the realities of poverty and last year garnered substantial support in the House of Representatives for her legislation to provide additional education and skills that would support true self-sufficiency.

Patsy Mink will always be remembered with love and respect and gratitude. She was our champion — a tireless advocate and a hero to women and girls everywhere. In celebrating her life, let us rededicate ourselves to protecting her legacy, by preventing the current efforts to dismantle her landmark legislation, Title IX.

OUT OK Film Festival

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Don't forget: The Oklahoma Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival will take place in Norman on November 15 – 17, Meachum Auditorium; and in Tulsa on November 22 – 24. There has been a change of venue in Tulsa: new location is Fontana 6 Cinema 7810 E. 49th Street (51st and Memorial), Tulsa. See You in the Dark! We won't know the exact lineup of films and their showing times until a few days beforehand, so be alert.

Soulforce

On Sunday, November 3rd, Soulforce In Oklahoma will return to Village Baptist Church, OKC for their tenth monthly vigil in an attempt to get VBC leaders to resume dialogue and negotiations. Participants will arrive at Village Baptist Church at 7:15 am to be briefed on the specific plans for the morning. All participants must have been trained by Soulforce in the principles of nonviolence. If you have not been trained and want to participate, contact Soulforce and let them know. They will arrange training for you.

If you would like to participate in the November vigil, please email us at Karen@SoulforceInOklahoma.org or, you can sign up on line on our website at <http://www.soulforceinoklahoma.org/fdmtest.htm>.

VOTE November 5

If you have any questions about candidates for office or about state questions, an excellent website is provided by the League of Women Voters, a non-partisan civic group. Their election website is www.dnet.org. Find your state, type in your zip code, and you can get information on all the choices that will be on your ballot, including those pesky lesser offices no one ever knows how to vote, such as judgeships and state questions. Cockfighting is one of the questions on the ballot in Oklahoma this year, folks, and no one does *not* have an opinion on that issue. Go vote if it's only for that.

The response to our Plumbing Project fundraising request has been *most* gratifying. To tell the truth, we are overwhelmed and blown away by the wonderful response. As we go to print, less than a month after our plea went out, we are already over 90% of the way to our goal of \$4,000. Our donations look like this:

Angel Falls Angels

Equal! at Lucent Technologies
Karen Lewis (with love to all the women who have served Herland)

Niagara Falls Angels

Diane Brandmiller
Dee Butler
Darnell Bacher Family
Jeans Plumbing
Ginger McGovern
Barbara Hillyer
Gustav Friedrich & Erena Rae
Anonymous (4)

Bridal Veil Falls Angels

Gail & Edie
Jan Reed

In Honor of Mary Reynolds
In Honor of Theila Elliott
Calico 626
Anonymous (2)

Turner Falls Angels

Larry & Juliane Littlefield
Diane E. Weaver
Sue Hill
Margaret Cox
Nancy Scott
Amy Quate & Dana Townson
In Honor of Laura Choate
In Memory of Katherine Moore
Anonymous (5)

Additionally we have a self-designated **Fallen Angel** "who just wants us to be successful" and sent us \$100. With friends like her, we will be.




A special mention needs to be made of Equal! at Lucent. We are thinking of giving them a category of their own – Victoria Falls maybe? They deserve more. They knocked our socks off with a donation of \$1,500 – wow! The accompanying note read "*Although the Oklahoma EQUAL! Chapter is currently inactive, we retirees are still trying to keep the torch burning. We hope this contribution will help Herland continue to be a viable and visible force in Oklahoma.*" Signed, Karen Parsons, Female Co-Chair, Retired, and Rey Jones, Male Co-Chair, Retired. Our heartfelt thanks to them, and to all of our generous and kind donors. You are keeping our house in good repair and our spirits as well. To those of you who haven't gotten your donation in the mail yet, we're still not to 100%, so you can send us over the top; and we would love to get your names on our walls also. Thank you all so much!

Herland Sister Resources
2312 NW 39
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

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*Monday, November 18, 'round about
Midnight or later, check out the skies
- the Leonid Meteor Shower is
supposed to be spectacular this year!*

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