

the HERLAND VOICE

march 2004

volume 22, number 3

From La Salle De Femmes to Herland

Why not the same name or same direction?

By B. Wahru Cleveland

When I took on the bookstore project I only took on a building and some boxes of books and a dream of having a bookstore in Oklahoma City. To be clearer, the dreams may have been similar, but my dreams were not the same.

It first starts with definitions of community. I am a black woman, womanist, feminist, diverse sexual orientation person. My life's experiences are deeply connected to culture and struggle, as well as my woman identity. I identify with strong women who may or may not be lesbian. They are smart, articulate, handy, self-assured, of strong will, able to get up when knocked down, women. My mother is such a woman, as are many minority women leaders. I could not imagine a successful lesbian bookstore at the time in Oklahoma. And it would not have included all of me and my identity, or all of my women sheros. I would have supported a lesbian bookstore, and did lend my support to the women whose idea it was to start La Salle De Femmes, but I would have supported it more as an alternative bookstore.

Many of those who helped me get Herland open seemed to share my vision and change of direction. So, Herland, in fact, opened as a woman's bookstore that addressed all issues, pertinent to women, including lesbianism. I am

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Put On Your Dancing Shoes!

Herland and the Oklahoma Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus (OGLPC) are joining together to host a dance—a gala evening, a spring fling, an April Fool's Ball to chase away the late-winter blues—on Saturday, April 3, 2004 from 8 – 11 pm. It will be held in Daniel Hall, First Unitarian Church, NW 13th and Dewey, OKC. We are keeping the ticket price at a ridiculous \$5, because we want you there!

The fabulous (or croon) your Dress is –

Masks are allowed. Feared to Her-

Friends of Her-

to cast your vote for your sweetie for King and Queen of the Ball, and... Fairy Princess. No gender stereotyping allowed, women as well as men will be eligible for Queen! Tickets are available at Herland, from any Herland or OGLPC Board member, and at the door. We hope to see you there, it'll be a Ball!



Gay Marriage Update

The issue of gay marriage, thrashed out in Vermont four years ago, is now a national issue, and Massachusetts is the central battleground. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court has put the state on course to become the first to make gay marriage legal by deciding that a proposed civil unions bill for gay couples would establish "an unconstitutional, inferior, and discriminatory status for same-sex couples." During a chaotic, two-day constitutional convention in February, state lawmakers rejected three proposed constitutional amendments banning gay marriage; two of the three also would have created some form of civil unions for gay couples. Surveys show an increase in opposition to legalizing gay marriage after a strong campaign by the Catholic Church and other opponents.

In what has been called a city-supported massive civil disobedience action, San Francisco has issued more than 3,000 marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Mayor Gavin Newsom, in open contravention of state law, ordered city officials to issue the licenses and two judges have thus far declined requests for court injunctions to stop the city's actions.

And in Oklahoma, SJR 38, a proposed amendment to the state constitution banning gay marriage, died in committee when Sen. Bernest Cain, committee chairman, refused to bring up the measure ahead of a legislative deadline. Senate President Pro Tem, Cal Hobson, calling the bill a "wedge issue", deemed it unnecessary since Oklahoma already has a law prohibiting recognition of same-sex marriages from other states. On Feb. 17th, while conservatives staged a "traditional" marriage rally at the capital in support of SJR 38, Interfaith Diversity and Equality Association (IDEA) hosted a Civil Marriage Equality Rally at the same time across the street in direct view of the other rally. Several other anti-gay proposals have been referred to the House Judiciary Committee and await action.

ous band Miss Brown To You, with Mary Reynolds and Louise Goldberg, will rock (or socks off singing Elvis, Patsy Cline, Cole Porter, and romantic, jazzy, rock 'n' roll. whatever you want to wear! Be as casual, funky, dressy, or creative as you like. We'll have Party Pics available, a cash bar, and a Silent Auction. We'll have a collection of tastefully-suggestive, mildly erotic, and very handsome art land by two of the founding members; and supplemented by donations from other land. OGLPC will also have some items in the Silent Auction. AND, bring a few pennies sweetie for King and Queen of the Ball, and... Fairy Princess. No gender stereotyping allowed, women as well as men will be eligible for Queen! Tickets are available at Herland, from any Herland or OGLPC Board member, and at the door. We hope to see you there, it'll be a Ball!

**The Deep Root Community Center,
Unity Church and Gather The Women
Proudly Present**

A Weekend with Lisa Thiel

Internationally recognized LISA THIEL, a talented vocalist, shamanic teacher and ceremonialist, will perform in concert on March 13th. On March 14th Lisa will conduct a workshop and facilitate a sacred ceremony in honor of Kuan Yin, the Mother of Compassion, to culminate local International Women's Week activities.

A popular artist in the women's spirituality movement, Lisa collects, creates and sings music with global influences that celebrate the Sacred Feminine found in all traditions in one form or another. With seven CDs and cassettes to her credit, her work spans two decades and is a source of inspiration, empowerment and deep healing for all audiences.

Traveling from Southern California in support of and to help raise funds for the Deep Root Community Center, Ms. Thiel's appearance is sure to be one of the highlights of 2004, and definitely one not to be missed.

Location for both events:

Unity Church 5603 NW 41st, OKC

Concert - Saturday, 3/13/04 7 pm \$25

Workshop - Sunday, 3/14/04, 4-7pm \$30

(Note: the workshop is limited to 50 participants)

For more information or to purchase advance tickets go to www.deeproot.org or by mail to DRCC-Lisa Thiel, 1609 Downing St. Oklahoma City, Ok 73120. Please make checks payable to 'Deep Root Community Center'. Online tickets can be purchased through Paypal (MC/Visa/debit card). Tickets at the door will be cash or checks only.

For more Information: Rev. Kathy McCallie – 525-9555 or openarmsok@aol.com

**March 5 & 6
2004**

**Homosexuality & Scripture Conference
Gender, Identity, and Sexuality**

Sponsored by:

Cathedral of Hope - OKC

Church of the Open Arms UCC

Epworth UMC

First Unitarian Church

Mayflower Congregational Church

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

Clegg Memorial UMC

Location: Church of the Open Arms UCC,
3131 N. Pennsylvania, Oklahoma City,
(405) 525-9555

Schedule: Friday 7pm—9 pm; Saturday
8:45 am—3:00 pm Cost \$15, includes
lunch.

Scriptures have often been distorted to condemn LGBT persons, but increasingly faith communities are speaking out for justice, inclusion and affirmation of all persons. This conference reflects our faithful understandings of scripture and the Spirit as well as our desires to faithfully relate to one another.

These six congregations have made a commitment to be welcoming and affirming of the GLBT community. In order to facilitate a continuing dialogue each of these sponsoring congregations is helping to organize this conference. The conference will include a discussion panel composed of ministers and scholars as well as workshops designed to explore the connections between homosexuality and sacred scripture. Though heavily focused on the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, the conference welcomes other faith traditions and seeks to engage their understandings of homosexuality.

Friday evening, March 5, a panel of religious leaders and scholars will participate in a discussion on their respective understandings of homosexuality and the scriptures of their tradition. The audience at the panel will have an opportunity to submit questions to the panelists. Saturday, March 6, religious leaders, scholars and others will host a variety of workshops. Topics include: Marriage: What is the Biblical Model?; Sexuality in the Hebrew Scriptures; Coming Out Young; Lesbians: Identity and Relationship Issues; Gay Men: Identity and Relationship Issues; Gender Queer - People Who Don't Fit; Sexism and Homophobia; Jesus: Humanity and Divinity; Bisexuality; Clobber Passages: What does the New Testament Say about Homosexuality?

Herland Video Night

After a successful run, the Herland Book Club is turning into Video Night. Join us at 7 pm on Friday, March 26th, for the movie *Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100*. In this film, first aired on the Sundance Channel, Director Yvonne Welbon uses interviews, photographs, archival footage, and dazzling dramatic re-creations to weave a touching tale of Ellis's long life and rich times: her first crush, her 30 years with a companion called "Babe," and their move to Detroit. There Ellis became one of the first women in the United States to own her own printing business, and their home became a popular Midwest party spot and haven from racism for African-American lesbians and gays long before Stonewall and the modern civil rights movement.



Herland Supper Club

This month we head to downtown OKC for dinner and a movie on Saturday, March 13th. First, we will eat at a great Mexican restaurant, La Luna's, 409 W. Reno. Then we will go to see the film *The Weather Underground* at 7:30 pm at the OKC Art Museum, 415 Couch Drive.

Outraged by the Vietnam War and racism in America, The Weather Underground organization waged a low-level war against the U.S. government through much of the 1970s, bombing the Capitol building, breaking Timothy Leary out of prison, and evading one of the largest FBI manhunts in history. This Academy Award nominated documentary explores the rise and fall of this radical movement, as former members speak candidly about the idealistic passion that drove them to "bring the war home" and the trajectory that placed them on the FBI's most wanted list.

Tickets to the film are \$7 and you are encouraged to get tickets early by going by the box office. Meet at Herland at 4:30 pm if you wish to carpool. Join us for a great evening! For more info, call Ginger at 942-1535.

Drumming Workshop

Herland is proud to host Barbara Wahru Cleveland, for a drumming workshop at 2 pm on Saturday, March 27th at Herland. If you are an experienced drummer or just getting interested, this workshop is for you.

Wahru has been a member of the Columbus, Ohio based drum, song, and dance group, Sistah Ngoma and was the 2003 National Women's Music Festival's "Drum Mother." Drumming with Wahru is a magical experience and you won't be able to resist the pulsating passion and energy.

Bring any drums you have and we will have a few extras for those that need them. Suggested donation for the afternoon workshop is \$15 (more if you can, less if you can't).

Herland Hiking

The Herland Hiking Group will have its regular monthly outing to Martin Nature Park, 5000 W. Memorial, at 10 am on Saturday, March 13. There is also an optional coffee gathering beforehand at Panera's, corner of Memorial & Meridian, at 9:00 am.

Womyn of Color

Womyn of Color group meets the 2nd Sunday of each month. Please email womynofcolor@gay.com or call (405) 842-3464 or (405) 947-7691 for more information.

Native American Women

OKC Two-Spirit Society is having meetings for lesbian and bi-sexual women of Native American descent. Please call the OKC Two-Spirit Hotline number at (405) 317-7283 for information about the next meeting.

HERLAND EVENTS CALENDAR

March

- March 5 & 6: Homosexuality and Scripture Conference, Church of the Open Arms, 3131 N. Penn, \$15
- Friday, March 5: Mary Reynolds and Louise Goldberg CD Release Party, Blue Door, 2805 N. McKinley, \$15
- Saturday, March 6: Sisters of Swing in Benefit Concert, Coca-Cola Events Center in Bricktown, 6:00 pm, \$25
- Monday, March 8: OGLPC Monthly Meeting at the Center, 2135 NW 39th, 7 pm
- Saturday, March 13: Herland Hike at Martin Nature Park, 5000 W. Memorial, 10 am
- Saturday, March 13: Herland Supper Club, La Luna, 409 W. Reno, 5pm followed by movie at OKC Art Museum, 7:30 pm
- Sunday, March 14: Womyn of Color Meeting, call 842-3464 for details
- Wednesday, March 17: Women's Issues Lobby Day at State Capital
- March 14-20: Second Annual LGBT Health Awareness Week
- Thursday, March 18: Miss Brown to You, Galileo
- Saturday, March 20: Spiritual Walk for Peace
- Sunday, March 21: Herland Potluck, 3 pm, followed by Herland Board Meeting, 4 pm
- Friday, March 26: Herland Video Night, 7 pm
- Saturday, March 27: Herland Drumming Workshop with Barbara Wahru Cleveland, Herland, 2 pm, \$15
- Saturday, March 27: Mary Reynolds and the So & So's, Benefit Concert, St. Thomas More, Norman, 7 pm, \$10
- **Looking Ahead**
- Saturday, April 3: **Miss Brown to You at the Herland/OGLPC April Fool's Dance, First Unitarian**
- April 3 & 4: IRIS at Chelsea's in Eureka Springs for Diversity Weekend
- Saturday, April 17: Herland Supper Club at Grand House 5 pm followed by OKC Lightning Football Game at Taft Stadium 7 pm
- Sunday, April 25: March for Women's Lives, Washington DC
- May 14-16: **Herland Spring Retreat at Roman Nose**
- May 19-22: Third National Lesbian Health Conference, Chicago, IL
- May 19-23: Midwest Wimmin's Festival, Lake of the Ozarks State Park, Mo (see midwestfestival.com)
- June 4-6: Texas Pride Weekend and Festival in Austin

Website of the Month

www.womens-project.org

Returning Division Champs OKC

Lightning Start New Season

The 2003 Midwest Division Champion OKC Lightning women's football team of the National Women's Football Association open its 2004 season on Saturday, April 17th at home against the Austin Outlaws. All home games are played at Taft Stadium, located at NW 27th and May, and begin at 7:05 p.m.

The Lightning consists of 41 women dedicated to bringing an NWFA Championship to Oklahoma City. The team is lead by twenty-two returning players and 19 who are new to the roster.

A potent offense that averaged over 30 points a game features a bruising running attack lead by tailback Iliana Calderon and fullbacks Holly Seales and Sunshine Sass. However the passing game is just as effective under the direction of quarterbacks Kim Mitchell, Tammy Raiber and Christy Poage throwing to sure-handed wide receivers Lameshia Roland, Christen Lozano, Ashley Gothard and tight end Lacey Schulz. The offensive line is anchored by Rochelle Ware, Dana Combs, Kris Williams, Mary English and Tammy Bowden.

Leading a defense that surrendered points begrudgingly will be linebackers Shannon Ford, Bo Stefanik, and Brooke Newburn. Controlling the line of scrimmage will be defensive linemen Bendee Zuck, Shonna Jones, Deanna Jones and Mary Arbuckle. Lead by free safety Lisa Rorick, the defensive backfield makes up in speed what it lacks in size. Lisa is joined by speedsters Jessie Worthy, Erika Briseno, Kristie Smith, Tammy Raiber and Phoebe Thurman.

The OKC Lightning also boasts one of the premiere coaching staffs in the league. Head coaches, Coco Bullock and Mike Harris are joined on the sideline by position coaches Bo Dobson, Calvin Bishop, Les Worthen, and Jim Davis. All of these coaches bring a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience to the game.

Last year, the Lightning averaged 375 fans per game. This year we want to put 1,000 fans in the stadium and there's no reason we can't do that. Ticket prices are affordable, and the entertainment this season will be nonstop. We will have cheerleaders, halftime contests and entertainment, music and top rate football. It's the best deal in town.

The Lightning plays an exciting all-out brand of football and is intent on bringing a championship home to OKC. Jump on the bandwagon and go for an exciting ride.

And we still need volunteers to work the games. We are still signing up halftime and pre-game entertainment and we need businesses to become our partners in marketing. Anyone interested should contact Donna Morris at 642-9846 or visit our website at www.okclightning.com The league website is www.womensfootballcentral.com.

(continued from page 1)

wanting this to be clear because some members of the lesbian community have felt left out of Herland "herstory." This need not be the case. Herland is still alive and there is still more to be done.

Why non-profit women's center instead of a bookstore? I still remembered the women's center on Western, and the great work of those women, and, I was not in it for the profit anyway. Although, sometime later, I did get some of the money from the original fundraisers, I used money from my regular job to open Herland and to keep her open. I also continued with the music productions and returned any profits to Herland. There was so much to be done. I needed more help and Herland was pushing for growth. The non-profit approach seemed to be the way to get volunteers and the funds needed for expansion.

The non-profit women's center approach, I think, is why Herland is still going. I feel that the initial attempt to reach into the women's community for diversity is what held her up. When I started looking for board members to initiate the non-profit process I asked women who were in the Women's Political Caucus and NOW if they would serve. I thought that a merger of members from Herland, NOW, and the Political Caucus would represent a powerful force in Oklahoma. I still feel that, in addition to those who identify as lesbian, more feminist, womanist, woman-caring, non-lesbian, women who are not willing or ready to declare, and women who don't care what you want to label them, is what is needed.

I love you Herland and I love this journey. May your future be bright and strong. May your leaders be wise, and may you live long.

Proposed Herland By-Laws Revision

At our Board meeting on Sunday, March 21, 2004, Herland will consider amending our by-laws to add the following, and anyone who wishes may come to the meeting and speak for or against these amendments.

Article VIII: DISSOLUTION: In the event of dissolution of the Corporation for any reason, its assets shall be distributed, in a manner determined by the Board of Directors, to non-profit organizations which have goals consistent with the goals and objectives of the Corporation.

AMENDMENTS: These bylaws may be amended, altered, changed, or repealed by the consensus of the full Board at any regular or special meeting of the Board if notice of the proposed amendment, alteration, or change or repeal be contained in the Herland Voice published immediately prior to said meeting.

The Voice is published monthly 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.

Strong Woman

She can pull a jeep, carry a 140-pound rock and flip a 5-ton tire. But that is nothing for Capt. Vernice Armour, one of the base's Strongest Warriors.

The quietly confident Super Cobra attack helicopter pilot is the first black female combat pilot in the Department of Defense. "The harder the challenge, the bigger the drive," said Armour, 30, who hopes to be an example and motivate others - just as others have inspired her. Back in 1994, when she was in the Army Reserve and attending an ROTC career day, she met a black female Army pilot and became interested in aviation.

After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in exercise science, Armour joined the Marines in 1998. "I joined the Marine Corps because I wanted to be in the most disciplined hard-core fighting machine out there," Armour said. By mid-2001 she had earned her wings, and last April she was promoted to captain in Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169. Armour recently returned from deployment in Iraq.

She never considers herself done studying, or training, but physical training is the fun part for Armour. Several years ago, she started working out in the 13 Area gym with the powerlifting and bodybuilding team. She entered the female division of the base's Strongest Warrior contest, which includes such requirements as jeep-pulling and tire-flipping. She was named a Strongest Warrior in both 2001 and 2002. Armour won the base's Female Athlete of the Year Award in 2002, the same year she played running back for the San Diego Sunfire women's professional football team.

But ask Armour what she is proudest of, and she does not talk about awards. Instead she tells about the time her young nephew was deciding which of his relatives to visit on the West Coast and chose her. "He asked my dad, 'Isn't Aunt Vernice a Marine? I want to be a Marine when I grow up.'" To Armour, that was a proud moment. "You can accomplish your dreams," Armour said.

Spiritual Walk for Peace

Oklahoma's Spiritual Walk for Peace is planning an action, in solidarity with people all over the world, on Saturday, March 20, 2004, to memorialize and mourn the one year anniversary of the start of the Iraq war.

The event will start at noon at the Episcopal Center, NW 9th and Robinson, in Oklahoma City. Plans are still being finalized, but there will be speakers, music, and a silent march which will be about one mile, down to and around the Murrah Memorial and back to the Center. Speakers are unknown as we go to press, but we do know that the music will be provided by Mary Reynolds. Signs are discouraged, the mood will be one of reflection and peace - "we must be the peace we seek" - rather than protest.

Participants Wanted for Research

Researchers at the University of Memphis are asking lesbian, bisexual, women-loving-women, or transgendered women who are or have been in a same-sex relationship to complete two surveys that will generate an appreciation of the complexity of same-sex relationships and gender expression. This research team is LGBT-positive and interested in furthering an understanding of the representative experiences of women's diversity in sexual and gender orientation. The online survey can be accessed at:

<https://www.psychdata.net/users/4218survey.asp>

This study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Memphis (#EO3-250, phone (901)678-2533). Responses are encrypted and stored on a secure server; answers are anonymous and no identifying information is asked. We appreciate your help in promoting this work by sending this information on to others who might be interested.

Don't Lose Your Voice!

Did you know it costs over \$300 each month to publish and mail the Voice? Just \$12 a year (a mere \$1 per month) will help us keep your Voice coming each month. Please help with a donation today!

Enclosed is a contribution for \$ _____

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Spiritual Walk for Peace

Mission Statement:

We are a community of diverse individuals and organization energized by spirit and conscience to build non-violently a lasting culture of peace with justice and to offer opportunities for action in Central Oklahoma.





www.okpeacemakers.org

Herland Sister Resources

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<p>REBECCA R. HOLT, Ph.D.</p> <p>Clinical Psychology (405) 321-2148</p> <p>Box 5119 Norman, OK 73070</p> <p>Individuals - Couples Family Therapy, Retreats</p>	<p><u>Julia Irwin, M.D., P.C.</u> Psychiatrist</p> <p>Doctor's Park 500 E. Robinson, Suite 600 Norman, OK 73071 (405) 321-3719</p> <p><i>Young And Older Adults</i></p>
<p>DOROTHY E. HEIM Attorney at Law (405) 691-4949 dheim033@yahoo.com</p> <p>Call me with your legal questions: estate planning personal injury contract issues small business</p>	 <p>Sandy Ingraham, J.D., M.S.W. Attorney-at-Law Ingraham & Associates, PLLC</p> <p>Estate Planning, Wills, Trusts, Probate, Adoption, Contracts</p> <p>Route 2, Box 369-B McLoud, OK 74851</p> <p>Tel. (405) 964-2072 ingraham@mccloudteleco.com</p>