

*Express***AT LONG LAST, JUSTICE!**

On Tuesday, December 17, 1991, on their twelfth anniversary and following an eight-year battle, Karen Thompson was appointed guardian of Sharon Kowalski.

In April of 1991, Judge Robert Campbell had ruled against Karen Thompson, citing as his reasons her inability to "understand Sharon's parents," her "outing of Sharon," the supposed harmful effects on Sharon from attending women's events such as the National NOW Convention in California, Karen's supposed conflict of interest in using the money she received as donations for the legal expenses, her "relationships with other women" (one), etc. Judge Campbell had been the first judge to go see Sharon in the nursing home, the first to allow Sharon the proper psychological and medical evaluations, and the first to let Karen see Sharon in 3 1/2 years. Apparently, however, he could not bring himself to allow Karen to be guardian.

The Appellate Court of the State of Minnesota voted unanimously to totally reverse any and all previous decisions made on the case by Judge Robert Campbell, including where Sharon should live. When Karen heard the verdict, she broke down and sobbed. The court found that Judge Campbell had "abused his powers." The three men on the appellate court addressed every finding of fact in this case, taking issue with the decisions reached on each one.

For example, they said in their order: (1) there was uncontradicted medical testimony that Sharon could

make many decisions for herself, should live outside of an institution, and that living with Karen would be best; (2) the evidence did not support the trial court's concerns and conclusions regarding the "outing" issue; in fact, doctors had testified that Sharon voluntarily told them of her sexual orientation and relationship with Karen; (3) Sharon was not harmed, but helped by her trips to events, as stated by the medical personnel who accompanied her; in fact, the only negative testimony was "speculation on the part of relatives" who neither attended with Sharon nor discussed the trips with her; (4) there was no conflict of interest regarding the donations as Karen had identified the account as the Karen Thompson Legal Defense Fund and used funds for those purposes only; (5) medical testimony indicated, in situations of this type, that it was not uncommon for relationships to develop with others, but the primary relationship with the person with disabilities often continued.

The court called the relationship between Karen and Sharon "a family of affinity" in their published opinion. Karen's lawyers see this as a precedent-setting decision which may help others in similar situations.

In a telephone conversation, Karen said she can hardly keep herself from bringing Sharon home to stay right now, but she has to be sure all proper arrangements for caring for her are made before she comes home permanently. She does come home for the weekends and is home at the time of this writing. The only negative out-

Auction '92 Time

It's auction preparation time again. What do I mean by preparation? Each year we prepare lists of potential people and businesses to contact. We try to solicit donations which will be sold to the highest bidder at the April auction.

The lists have been compiled; we now need help with contacting everyone on the lists to see if they will donate. This is a pretty easy task as most of the contacts are repeats from prior years and they donate every year.

The first meeting is scheduled for Feb. 12th at 7:30 PM. If you would like to attend please call 291-3791 for directions. Call 291-3791 or 648-4154 for details.

*IN SISTERHOOD,
FROGGER*

come is that Karen is again in debt (\$50,000) for legal expenses. Spinsters, Inc., has donated 1,000 copies of Karen's book on the struggle, *Why Can't Sharon Kowalski Come Home*, to raise money and has promised 3,000 more. Any suggestions on how to do this will be appreciated (phone # below). Perhaps arrangements can somehow be made for a book to be sent in exchange for a \$15 or more donation.

This article was submitted by **Arlene Gaumer, 904/576-6742**, a member of the National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski (no longer active). Arlene will try to keep us informed and noted that Karen can be contacted directly at 612-558-6766.

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FEB. 23 - Oldies/Retro Night 7 pm
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Classifieds

Dear LCN Readers,

Thank you from the heart.

I lost my father just before this past Christmas. I wanted to write a short note to the LCN so that I can acknowledge the support and love I got from my sisters in our community. My sister and I were able to fly to New York because a dear friend without any hesitation was fast with her credit card and helped me when I was in need. Then, to add to the great support, a group of friends pulled together their resources to send my life partner, Rachel, to New York to be with me during one of the hardest and longest walks of my life.

The cards I received, the phone calls and the numerous hugs have given me the strength to face this sorrow-filled time. If family is measured by love, devotion and support in hard times and the sharing of good times, then I have found my home here and my family. Thank you seems so small a choice of words, but behind them is a heart and a spirit that is better for knowing you all. Thank you dear sisters.

Rita Boo Krossber

Dear Pagoda Supporters and Friends:

We are in our 14th year of providing wimmin-only space in a Lesbian community 300 yards from the Atlantic for wimmin to rest, recuperate, and play. Many wimmin who have never been here support us because they know how important this space is. We need your help. Please send a tax-deductible gift so we might be able to ride out the recession. We are grateful for your support.

*Love & best wishes
from your Pagoda sisters.*

Dear Betsy & Pat:

Thank you so very much for the compliment in the Jan. issue. That really made my day. I needed that "warm fuzzy."

Yes, I'm still working on my album and am hoping to be finished soon. When I do finish, and if everything goes as planned I'll hopefully give a concert in Cocoa at either the Cocoa Village Play House or the Brevard Community College Auditorium. You'll know, though, because I'll put the date, time & location in the LCN and WIT, the Brevard women's newsletter.

Linda and Peggy from Cornucopia in Mt. Dora have asked me to come and sing at their new Coffee House. Willow, the women's community, will be producing my concert this March (both to be announced). I'm looking forward to being with the Mt. Dora women.

If anyone is looking for a great studio to record anything, you should certainly work with the extremely talented women at C.D. Bernie Studio in Deltona. They are wonderful and I highly recommend them. You're not working with the negative energy the "boys" give you. They help you and I've learned so much from our working together. They do everything from commercials to writing musicals! They've written great arrangements for me.

So, Betsy & Pat, please watch the next issue and I'll have a date, time, and location for you and anyone else who's interested. Thanks again to you and the LCN editors.

*Love in Sisterhood,
Sandy DeLegal*

Roommate wanted to share 3 bedroom, 1 1/2 bathroom home in Pin Hills. \$250 mo./\$200 deposit; includes utilities and partially furnished bedroom. Prefer non-smoker/non-drinker. Must like pets. Call LeJune: 293-9119 or 897-5926 days.

Feminine single female 30--independent, honest, out-going, caring and fun-loving. I enjoy movies, going to the beach, water-sports, traveling, quiet evenings, and quality time. Seeks same for friendship, possible relationship. P.O. Box 540102, Orlando, FL 32854.

For Sale: 14ft aluminum fishing boat with 15hp evinrude engine, magic tilt trailer and canvas boat cover. \$1000.00; call 291-3791.

Home Repairs & Improvements: Ceramic tile, Painting, etc. Call 869-0089 or 291-4839.

Accountant Services Needed: Help with sole proprietorship tax forms and accounting systems. Hope to pay by the hour. Becky, 282-6569.

Admin. Assist., Naiad Press: Permanent, full-time job; apply only if willing to make long-term commitment. CALL or WRITE Barbara Grier at the NAIAD PRESS, 904-539-5965, Monday-Friday, 9am to 4pm., P.O. Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302.

Something Special, 3rd Annual Lesbian "Bizarre," March 22. Call for artists, healers, musicians, & all interested wimmin. Entry Deadline: Feb. 14. SASE: 7762 NW 14 Ct., Miami, FL 33147-5771.

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Desperately Seeking Land

Every year LCN promotes a campout, inviting Lesbians from all areas to come have a relaxing weekend. The campout is usually scheduled for sometime in March. Normally we go to Wekiva Falls, but we have received suggestions to find a different location due to the cost, privacy, etc.

This year we are desperately seeking land that is either Lesbian owned or Lesbian safe to hold this event. If you, or someone you know has land that would be appropriate for a campout, please contact us immediately.

We need land that has a water source and a place for a campfire, etc. We are also willing to improve the land to accommodate a campout; such as building toilets, showers, etc. Please contact Cathy or Lucy at 291-3791, or Barb at 648-4154 for further details.

ACT OUT THEATER

Act Out Theater is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to producing theatrical presentations with gay and lesbian themes. They have several lesbian plays in the works for production this spring.

Curtain rises Friday and Saturday, February 14, 15, 21 & 22 on *Minnesota Moon*, a one-act play about the parting of two young friends. 8pm at the Phoenix, 7124 Aloma (one mile east of 436).

Local Events and Projects

ORLANDO PRIDE: We are currently planning fundraising and other activities for Pride Week 1992, June 13 - 20th. Meetings will be held every 2nd and 4th Monday at GLCS, 750 West Colonial Drive, Orlando. Orlando Pride, Inc. has also established a 24-hour message number: 236-9480.

LCN Express: Thanks! January's newsletter was folded, stuffed, licked, stamped, labeled and sealed by: Rachel, Maddo, Becky, Margaret, Cherie, Cheryl, Denise, Marcia, Sandy, Gina, Lucy, Cathy and Barb. Come out and join the revelry as we do it again Mon., Feb. 25th at Key Largo @ 7:00 pm.

REGISTER TO VOTE! Feb. 8, noon to 5pm at GLCS (address above). Tomes & Treasures (a gay bookstore from Tampa) will also be selling books.

BOWLING: By the time you read this, the Lucky Ladies Bowling League will be starting a new season. The league will be bowling 18 weeks until May 21st. Some teams have been bowling since Sept., but the new league gives everyone a chance to start again and become the league champion.

Lucky Ladies uses a handicapped system to calculate scoring, thereby equalizing scores so that no individual is a "handicap" to their team. Averages of bowlers presently in the league vary from the 80's to the 160's. Having fun in a congenial atmosphere is one of the league's goals. Come join us and roll through "92."

What: Bowling (Lucky Ladies)

When: Thursday, 6:45pm - 9:15pm

Where: Bowlamerica Fairvilla
2500 N. Orange Blossom Tr.

How: Call 293-8849 for more info

CALL for Would-Be Performers: Over the last few months, friends and I have discussed the possibility of creating a Lesbian Theater. Knowing there is a great deal of untapped talent in our community, I thought it a good idea to put out a call for lesbians interested in forming a theater.

No experience is required, just a willingness to try. If you aren't interested in acting, there is always a need for technicians, writers, singers and just all around help. Remember, no experience is necessary.

What I need then, is to hear from you and we can plan a meeting. You can drop a note to the LCN or give me a call at 831-2971. If you get my machine don't be shy. *Rita Boo*

PARENTS' GROUPS: The Central Florida Chapter of GLPCI (Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition International) announces the following events. **Friday, Feb. 14, 7:30 PM** - Parents Rap Group at GLCS for adults only. **Saturday, Feb. 15, 5:30 PM** - Social/support meeting starting with a potluck dinner for adults and kids. **Saturday, Feb. 22, 9:00 AM** - Family activity to be announced.

If you have any questions about any of GLPCI's activities, please leave a message on our hot-line at any time: 420-2191.

READER'S CO-OP: We initiated this group by going to Act Out's performance of *The Madness of Lady Bright*, Jan. 18. (It was very good!) We decided to bring some of our favorite books to a potluck on Sun., Feb. 2, 4:30 at Jan's house, 1321 CherryBark Road in Sheeler Oaks, Apopka. Call Jan for info: 884-8484.

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▼ MOVIE REVIEWS ▼

Fried Green Tomatoes

by Rosemary Curb

How delicious amidst a flood of woman-hating films to see *Fried Green Tomatoes!* A major movie starring four loving, smiling women.

Is it a lesbian movie? Only ambiguously. Alas, it wouldn't have splashed across the big screen at a major theater had the starring women been clearly lovers.

The screenplay by Fannie Flagg and Carol Sobieski, based on the novel by Flagg, weaves a present story about the relationship between a bored housewife Evelyn (Kathy Bates) and an old woman who calls herself Ninny (Jessica Tandy) in the same nursing home as Evelyn's husband's aunt with a past tale of murder, mayhem, and fun. Not till the end are we led to think that the old woman is the swaggering young butch hero of the tales which so fascinate Evelyn that she comes back to the nursing home for more episodes as often as she can. The past tale features two women who love one another beyond everything. A barely grown Idgie (Mary Stuart Masterson) rescues Ruth (Mary-Louise Parker) from a violent husband. Together they open a business and live out their lives under one roof in what certainly looks like wedded bliss until Ruth dies.

How can two beautiful young women get away with such blatant throbbing woman-loving in the rural South in the 1930's? Older femme Ruth and Idgie as a kid, together watch the freak train accident which kills Idgie's brother. Initially they are drawn together by their common love for the boy who died. Eight or so years later Idgie has bloomed butchily. Age differences don't stop the women falling in love or lust during a sensual summer of wild renegade escapades.

One juicy memorable scene has the blooming butch knocking herself out to please her filmy sundressed lady love by stealing honey from a swarming hive. Slowly, she reaches her long bare arm into the hollow of a buzzing tree and slowly withdraws a honey dripping comb. Bees retreat as Idgie carefully drops the comb into a

glass jar and presents it to Ruth with bashful bravado. As Ruth sucks honey from the dripping comb, few lesbian viewers can miss the symbolism.

A whodunit subplot suggests that Idgie arranges and maybe accomplishes the murder of Ruth's violent husband. The mostly silent maid (Cicely Tyson) of the two white women tells a tale on her deathbed of what happened the night the husband disappeared.

Meanwhile the contemporary tale shows Evelyn gaining imaginary and real Amazon power as she identifies with Idgie's adventures. When Evelyn joins clusters of housewives tossing off husband-bashing barbs, nobody objects and most join the fun.

Don't miss *Fried Green Tomatoes*. See women hugging and cuddling, giving each other love and gifts from overflowing hearts, vigorously defending one another against battering as well as boring husbands, yearning for and relishing each other's company.

SHE SPEAKS OUT

By Patty Sheehan

I just saw the movie *JFK*. I guess that means I'll have to get another button to go along with "I believe her," (Anita Hill and Patricia Bowman). This one will say "I believe Jim Garrison." Garrison was the District Attorney in New Orleans in the early 60's. Garri-

son unwittingly stumbled onto various characters who were involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. But I disgress-- the storytelling is better left to Oliver Stone, the movie director.

Anyone who tells you that this movie is a farce or a lie is probably not someone you'd trust your life or life savings to. I'm sure that Stone embellished the story line but the message is clear. There are far too many questions lingering after the assassination of J.F.K.

I wanted to get another viewpoint on the assassination prior to seeing *J.F.K.* so I watched a Walter Cronkite special on P.B.S., an establishment-style presentation that supported the Warren Commission report. Yet, even this report showed glaring inconsistencies that have not been explained. A pristine bullet was identified as one that had shattered bones and passed through two men's bodies. This bullet was found on a gurney in a hospital hall next to the one that actually carried Governor Connelly, who was wounded. Autopsy accounts on the president varied. The doctor in Dallas who placed the president's body in a casket wrapped him in a white sheet. When he arrived at Bethesda, Maryland, he was in a body bag. The brain of John Kennedy, a valuable clue as to the entry of the bullet, suddenly disappeared. The convertible in which the shooting took place was ordered cleaned and rebuilt by Lyndon B. Johnson just

Continued, page 6



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\$10,001-\$15,000	\$160	\$175	\$140	\$155	\$120	\$135	\$90	\$105
\$15,001-\$20,000	\$165	\$180	\$145	\$160	\$125	\$140	\$95	\$110
\$20,001-\$25,000	\$170	\$185	\$150	\$165	\$130	\$145	\$100	\$115
\$25,001-\$30,000	\$175	\$190	\$155	\$170	\$135	\$150	\$105	\$120
\$30,001 and up	\$180	\$195	\$160	\$175	\$140	\$155	\$110	\$125

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Send a SASE to GCWF, 1806 Curcor DR., Gulfport, MS 39507.

IN GOOD HEALTH

by Susan Paszkowski, CNM

Cancer is a topic that makes most women uneasy, if not outright anxious, and the statistics about women and cancer are sobering. One out of every 3 women in the U.S. will get cancer in her lifetime. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths among women. One in every 9 women will get breast cancer.

Lesbians may be at higher risk for breast, cervical and ovarian cancers because they are less likely to have children by age 30. Giving birth, especially by age 30, has been shown to decrease the risk of these cancers. Lesbians may also be less likely to seek regular, routine care because of the discomfort of coming out to health care providers or because they are affected by women's lower incomes and do not have the benefit of a spouse's health insurance coverage. As a result, lesbians may be less likely to have cancers identified at earlier, more treatable stages.

While we have no control over some factors that may increase the risk of cancer (such as age or family history), the good news is that there are many things we can do to lower our risk of cancer: **1) Stop smoking.** Cigarette smoking is directly related to lung cancer and increases the risk for other cancers. **2) Establish a healthy, balanced diet.** A low-fat, high-fiber diet can decrease the risk of cancer. **3) Avoid excessive exposure to sun.** Wear hats and sunblock to decrease the risk of skin cancer. **4) Have an annual Pap smear, breast and pelvic exam.** Regular exams can identify cancers before they progress to later, more dangerous stages. **5) Do a monthly breast self exam.** Most breast cancers are discovered by the woman with the lump. If you are not sure how to do it correctly, ask your health care

provider to show you during your next exam or call the American Cancer Society for a handout with instructions. **6) Have a baseline mammogram** between ages 35-40, every 2 years between 40-50, and every year after 50. **7) Be aware of the 7 warning signs** of cancer: thickening or lump in breast; unusual bleeding or discharge; nagging cough or hoarseness; change in bowel/bladder habits; a sore that does not heal; indigestion or difficulty swallowing; obvious change in wart or mole.

Hopefully by following these guidelines we can decrease our risk of cancer as much as possible and identify cancers in their early, more treatable stages. Thanks to the Mautner Project for Lesbians with Cancer for parts of the information included herein.

JFK, Continued from page 4

days after the shooting. The emergency room nurse who attended Kennedy insists that the wound on his neck was an entry wound. Witnesses heard shots and saw smoke coming from the grassy knoll. Walter Cronkite summed this all up by saying that this didn't mean there was a conspiracy, only unanswered questions.

I have lots of unanswered questions, and from what I've heard of Arlen Specter and Gerald Ford, the Warren Commission couldn't have been our best and brightest. Check out *J.F.K.* Read about the assassination. Then think about it. The greatest leaders of the 60's - John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, all died within 7 years. All of the leaders who encouraged the favor of women, and later maybe even lesbians and gays. Instead of fighting a

LCN Financial Report

8/91 - 1/92

Reported by Lucy Ford

Beginning Balance: \$2,239.43

Revenues:

Advertisements	873.00
Subscriptions	231.00
Fundraiser	<u>184.00</u>

Total Revenues 1,288.00

Expenses:

Newsletter	
Pronto (paper)	640.55
Postage	832.02
Envelopes	10.22
Labels	12.64
Renewal of PO Box	49.00
Computer Printer	202.15
Printer Fuses	2.42
Gifts, Donations	108.76
Fundraiser	<u>42.00</u>

Total Expenses 1,899.76

Ending Balance: \$1,627.67

useless, costly war, America could have been a leader in research & development and human rights. We could have had peace and prosperity, rather than the Nixon/Ford/Reagan dog-and-pony show, not to mention George Bush, who can't even maintain his dignity through a State dinner. It's enough to make you want to throw up.

Maybe the world would be different if J.F.K. were alive today. Maybe not. We'll never know for sure. The only thing we can do now is vote, demonstrate, and refuse to accept the Government's absolute authority. The very least is to vote. Politics affects the air we breathe, the food we eat, and our relationships, whether we like it or not. We are all vulnerable victims of an assassin's bullet unless we fight back. Support those who support social change - and scream bloody murder if they end up dead.

Suzanne Paszkowski, C.N.M., M.N.



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Reflections on True Meanings

by Diane

This has been a rough year for me. My son and I are on the no-frills budget, I hate being single, we've been rear-ended twice, and my house's plumbing seems to be disintegrating. Then just within the last month, my son's insurance was cancelled due to a slip-up on my part, I've had to put in more and more unpaid overtime at work, a young friend died unexpectedly, and I stupidly hurt someone I care for very much and may have irreparably harmed our friendship.

Now add the stresses and pressures of the Christmas season to all that. I told myself it was okay not to do all our usual Christmas things. There just wouldn't be time for everything. I guess I didn't listen. Somehow, every evening has had a list of things that HAD to be done. My son and I were rushing around doing one of those things that HAD to be done, and he asked me, "What's the true meaning of Christmas?" That stopped me cold.

Good question. I'm not religious, so I can't get by with an easy church answer, but Christmas has always had a meaning to me, hasn't it? I couldn't answer him, and after he went to bed I just sat and cried. What's the true meaning of Christmas? What's the true meaning of life?

I called my best friend and told her I needed her and she was there for me. She listened and she talked like best

friends do for each other. I could face another day. I was still exhausted and I still had a list of things that HAD to be done the next day, but I could face it. Then today I walked along behind my son carrying a box full of the Christmas gifts he had made for his teachers. His face beamed as he handed out his gifts. Each teacher showered him with love and praise as if he were handing them the most valuable gift in the world. And he was, you know. He was giving them, and they were giving him the true meaning of Christmas.

(We apologize for not having run this article in January, as the author had intended. Our sincere thanks to Diane for her continued contributions. Eds.)

Cookbook Against AIDS

Send this project your favorite recipe, and if you like, dedicate it to a loved one or the memory of a loved one lost to AIDS. Proceeds of the sale of this cookbook will go toward AIDS research.

Cookbook Against AIDS
16105-8H Victory Blvd., Ste. 346
Van Nuys, CA 91406

(And please mention you read about the cookbook in the LCN!)

Lesbians of the Year Award

Every winter, *Lesbian Connection* sends its subscribers notecards entitled "Lesbian of the Year Award" which women can send to individuals to thank them "for all the work they've done for lesbians."

This year, the LCN editorial committee sent our award to Dottie and Carol who have printed our community's newsletter for years now, donating their labor and the resources of Pronto Press.

We truly do thank you-- Carol and Dottie-- for being the wonderful women you are!

WOMEN'S EVENTS IN FLORIDA

Feb. 28, St. Augustine: MONICA GRANT, comic, singer, and songwriter will be performing at the Pagoda at 8:00pm. (2854 Coastal Highway). Tickets are \$6 - \$9, sliding scale. Monica's newest CD and cassette, *The Heart of It*, blends her wonderful music and comedy. *The Codependency Polka* is just one of the funny songs.

April 21-26, St. Augustine: A celebration for lesbians over 60. For an information packet, send your name, address, and year of birth to Rainbow, 2854 Coastal Highway, St. Augustine, FL 32095.

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VALENTINE'S DAY HUGGING

by Sandy Delegal

Hugging is healthy. It helps our body's immune system. It keeps you healthier, it cures depression, it reduces stress, it induces sleep, it's invigorating, it's rejuvenating, it has no unpleasant side effects; and hugging is nothing less than a miracle drug.

Hugging is all natural. It is organic, naturally sweet, no pesticides, no preservatives, no artificial ingredients and 100 percent wholesome. Hugging is practically perfect: there are no moveable parts, no batteries to wear out, no periodic check-ups, low energy consumption, high energy yield, inflation-proof, non-fattening, no monthly payments, no insurance requirements,

Deepest Sympathy

To Laurel, and her partner Chris,
on the death of Laurel's father.

Dear S.....

I saw you, and after all this time, my heart skipped a beat...and my lips quivered;, so did my mouth. The juice dribbled between my fingers, and down my leg. The green grocer said, "you squeeze it, you buy it." I never did like kiwi anyway.

We were young and impetuous, and in gym. No one wore a gymsuit like you did. Your curves, your splits, your dribbles. Oh, how I longed for those passes you made. The rebounds, the assists, going down ... the court. You scored more often...than any other player in the game.

Oh, what a game. A game that I willingly played, and I lost. And yet, at the same time, I won. I know I was only second string, the right fielder, the bat girl, the bottom of the roster, but that didn't matter, in your eyes I became the center, the starting line up. But you accused me of being too forward. Should I have guarded my innermost feelings? But no, too late, I struck out in the last minutes. I lost

my nerve. I missed your pass. A personal foul. The game called, time called, no score. I often wonder, if I had hit that home run, went for those extra points, stroked those last few waves, straddled that beam, if I could have met the mark...who knows? I can only speculate.

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**SUBJECT: Dr. Judith Reisman;
Opposed to children being raised by Gay/Lesbian parents**
by Jackie

On December 3, I was watching the Sally Raphael show. The subject was "Children being raised by gay/lesbian parents." On the program they had a lesbian couple who decided to have a child by a gay man. Dr. Judith Reisman was on the program to oppose their decision. Dr. Reisman believed that raising a child in the manner was cruel, immoral, unnatural and unfair. She based much of her research from data dating back to 1948 studies, she interviewed a lesbian couple stating they wouldn't go public because they were afraid of being ostracized and she read some homosexual books.

Throughout the program she stated they didn't have a choice to being raised in this atmosphere, parents were putting the child at risk of aids, failure in life, rejection from society, more prone to child abuse, the parents were raising their child to be promiscuous, in an unhealthy environment and experimenting with their child. She also stated by raising a child in this manner the child is being raised to be lesbian/gay. Her belief is that most of society feels this way and one day the American Public will pay for experimenting with children.

Also on the show were the grandmother and the gay father and the thirteen-year-old sister of the child. Dr. Reisman never mentioned "LOVE" until a member of the audience stood up and said, "What about love. This child has love all around her. It is clear to see these children are surrounded by love." Indeed there was

alot of love in this family. Dr. Reisman never mentioned that the family had love to give, a stable environment, non-drug using parents, a caring environment or that people have the freedom to make choices.

Not one person in the world had a choice to which family we were born into. Everyone has hills and mountains to climb throughout life. Just because a baby is raised in a gay/lesbian family doesn't mean the hills and mountains will be bigger. The couple on Sally Raphael stated they agreed to be on her show to help educate the public and because there are many people out in the world that don't have a voice, who are raising children in the same or similar manner.

Raising a child in a lesbian/gay family in only one of the issues here. Equal rights is more like it - being able to have two mothers on the birth certificate(in some states it is legal), having a significant other on our insurance plan, discrimination at the work place, women with AIDS aren't covered under their insurance policies like men are and there's a long list. People like Dr. Reisman are - to say the least, uneducated.

I used to be in the shadows allowing others to talk for me. In the past two years that has gradually changed. The main change occurred when my now ex-partner lost custody of her son because of people like Dr. Reisman. I guess the big question is how to educate people like Dr. Reisman. Dr. Reisman feels it should be illegal for lesbian/gay parents to have children.

In Honor of Black History Month

by Becky Acuna

I've been wrangling with myself for days, wondering what to say to commemorate Black History Month. Like our Gay Pride Week, it is a time to celebrate and explore the unique qualities of "the Black experience" over great expanses of time, place, and circumstance. Just as we ask straight people to examine their attitudes and actions as we assert our pride, so too is Black History Month an opportunity for non-Black individuals to both learn new things and turn their gaze inward.

Speaking as a white American lesbian to other white American lesbians, I believe we are all "racist." A large part of who we are is formed by a society that rates white as "the norm, better, preferable" (in varying degrees, of course, based on how much money you have, how straight/abled-bodied you appear, how quietly you toe the line, etc.). And it rates Black (non-white, English-speaking) as "lesbian, marginal, different, untrustworthy" while denying that the scales even exist.

We may not want or consciously choose to think and behave in accord with our training as racists, but it's always lurking about. Just ask yourself if your boss would have hired you if you were Black (mine wouldn't), or if you'd be living in the same home/neighborhood, or if you'd even be loving the same women you love now. Think about the last time you suppressed discomfort with differences in culture while you were interacting with someone who is Black.

This isn't white guilt speaking; our system is something of an equal

Continued on page 9

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AIDS Hotline/Haitian/Creole	1(800)AIDS 101
AIDS Hotline/Spanish	1(800)545-SIDA
AIDS Resource Alliance	425-2233
Alcoholics Anonymous/Orlando	647-3333
Alcoholics Anonymous/Brevard County	242-8063
AREA AIDS Related Services	647-2765
Breaking the Silence MCC (Cocoa)	631-4824
CENTAUR AIDS Related Services	849-1452
Gay & Lesbian Community Services	THE-GAYS
GLADD	236-9499
Hope & Help AIDS Related Services	628-8542
Joy MCC (Orlando)	894-1081
LCN Express Information	648-4154
PLAG (Parents & Friends of Lesbians/Gays)	236-9177
Rape Crisis Center	648-3028
Women's Health Center	896-2022
Women's Resource Center	898-1599

Black History, continued from page 8

opportunity oppressor. Men are certainly trained to be sexist and benefit from misogyny; straight people are taught to be prejudiced against gays. If you adhere to the myth of the American Dream (or now to New Age psychopolitics), you're welcome to judge anyone who hasn't "made it" because it's all their fault.

Nor is this an exercise of self-flagellation. Being able to really examine all of my precepts instead of denying and/or defending them has opened a whole new world to me. One I've found infinitely more exciting and rewarding--even when I feel a bit shaky as familiar guideposts get continually erased from the map.

All of this becomes vital as we try to build community among lesbians in Central Florida (and everywhere). When we speak about building "women's culture" or "women's community," my experience is that this is a euphemism for white, lesbian culture-- because even when others are included, the basic structures still tend to represent white women's ways of doing things. That doesn't mean we're bad, just that we "have a very demanding presence" (to borrow a concept from Alice Walker).

Interrupting patterns of racism first requires the willingness and ability to identify them as they unfold every day in our lives. We can, assertively, challenge racism in ourselves and in our society just as we challenge straight people to acknowledge and back away from the prejudices, presumptions, and limits they place upon lesbians and gay men.

It is my most ardent desire to bridge the gap between Black people and white (and all non-Black) people, especially women and lesbians. I hope to give voice to this through definitive and conscious actions during Black History Month and throughout the months and years to come.

LCN *Express*

Publication Information

LCN Express is a monthly publication for and by the Lesbian community of Orlando and the Central Florida area. We invite readers to submit articles, items of interest and announcements about women's groups and organizations. We welcome poems, political articles, social concerns, short stories, community questions and notices for upcoming events. **Deadline for submission of ads and articles is now the 15th of each month.**

Editorial length will be limited to 250 words and a phone number must accompany every article. Anonymity is acceptable, but a phone number is mandatory. Articles should be typed/neatly printed or preferably submitted on diskette, with word processing program specified.

Editorial policy is as follows: The views expressed in the LCN Express are not necessarily those of the LCN, the newsletter or its editors. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit all contributions for clarity, conciseness and length following consultation with the author, if possible.

It is, however, strongly recommended that caution be exercised to address an opinion, not to assault the author of an article/letter (or anyone else for that matter). *Thanks!*

The LCN Express Editorial Staff: Barb Fallon, Cathy McElhinney, Jackie, Jeanette Baudouy, Becky Acuna, & Rachel Gardiner.

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