

LESBIAN NEWS

VICTORIA'S MONTHLY LESBIAN
FEMINIST NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 1989

ISSUE #1
\$2.00

Yes!
Money!

A Look Inside

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You're not going to believe what it is
that you're about to see and hear
and what you are going to be inspired
to do, think, write and say.



Editorial

By Debby Gregory

WELCOME TO LESBIANEWS! Hopefully, this is the first of many issues devoted to the ideas, activities and rich daily experience of lesbians in our city. I arrived in Victoria just before Flagrant ceased publishing, and have wished for a newsletter ever since. As nobody else has started one, and now that I am half-owner of a personal computer, I've decided to make my wish come true.

Other than the monthly Coffee House and the annual GALA, all lesbian activity in our town seems to take place in private. There is no ongoing public sense in which we are a community. The main aim of this newsletter is to provide us with a public sense of ourselves, as well as to function as a safe forum for communication and exploration.

A second aim is to provide a supportive forum for Victoria lesbians wanting to share their written poetry, short fiction and non-fiction. Some of you have already submitted suitable material, which I have been delighted to print in this issue. You all have an open invitation to submit letters, poems, reflections, articles, short stories, reviews, regular columns, camera-ready drawings or cartoons, or ideas.

Editorial policy: You write it, I'll print it. I'll edit for space and clarity, and I won't print anything I consider to be racist,

sexist, homophobic, ageist, classist, able-bodyist, anti-semitic, or a personal attack. Hopefully, we can all avoid these politically dastardly categories without falling prey to the twin deadly sins of Creeping Boredom and Terminal Niceness.

My part in all this is to get LESBIANEWS printed and distributed each month. Your part in all this is first to subscribe and to get all your lesbian friends, family, colleagues and lovers to do the same. That's how I'll be able to afford to continue publishing. Next, you should let me know what you like and don't like about the newsletter so that you have a chance of getting what you want. Third, give me material. Keep me posted on local events and news you think other lesbians should know about. If you don't like to write but want to share ideas, get somebody to interview you.

Send all written material and subscriptions to Debby Gregory, PO Box 5339, Station B, Victoria, BC V8R 6S4. The deadline for each issue is the 15th of the preceding month. Subscriptions cost \$15 for one year.

I want to thank all the contributors to this first issue: Shirley Avril, Lisette Cook, Heather Gibson, Alisa Gordaneer, Loren Griffyn, Reva Hutkin, Nancy Issenman, Judy Liefschultz, Donna Murray, Karey Perks, and Deb Thiessen, with a special thanks to Lisette and Nancy on production. All your enthusiasm and expertise have transformed a bright but vague idea into an adventuresome reality. This issue is dedicated to my favourite computer nerd, DJM, without whom it would never have been possible.



TAKE BACK THE NIGHT!!

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 15TH, 8PM, CENTENNIAL SQUARE, PROCEEDING TO THE LEGISLATURE FOR A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS OF MALE VIOLENCE. BRING A CANDLE AND A FRIEND.

S H O R T S T O R Y

lecture #2, ancient to modern, with
anecdote

by Alissa Gordaneer

about when i was beginning to think it'd never happen, and had already abandoned marx mao trotsky and all the rest to a rubblepile because they "didn't quite do it" for me, mj called and said she knew the secret, we just had to look for it, and it had to be tonight. look for what, i asked, but she wouldn't say, she said i'd know it when i saw it, and said sometimes these things materialize in weird ways, and it's happening, we just have to look for it. so beside the fact that i only ever looked for things i couldn't find in the daylight, and beside the fact that i didn't think i really wanted to know what i would find, i agreed to go along when mj said "let's go and explore, i know a place and it isn't far." what a come on, what a...? "come on," she snarled, "i haven't got all night." so what we did was we took our satchels, and put into them all the things we thought we'd need, and that wasn't much because we were sure we probably wouldn't get back to the same place alive, or at least that's how i felt, so we left without a note into that dreary evening of time that seemed more drizzle than air, and in the same moment, we arrived. i didn't think it could possibly be so fast, but through a passage between buildings and there we were, in a midnight courtyard that loomed around us: she struck a match and it shrank. inside, now, and tenement walls sheltered our flames from the only air i could breathe, the breeze that was outside and i, away from it, claustrophobic. "just wait, you're ready now i think, the walls only look little, this is the place, it's time." i breathed but not lots, i looked around in candlelight and there they were, walls with writing on them in purple ink, bits of everything i recognized from school and politics,

i couldn't believe that the whole communist manifesto was scrawled there, i supposed it was (it looked big) but i didn't read it through, and there were bits of shakespeare, and marlowe, and dostoevsky and joyce and reagan and the various kings of everywhere, and i turned around, i wanted to leave. mj was already through the next door, so i couldn't. the air was colder than before when we came in, and so i couldn't unclench my fingers from around the candle, the wax dripped onto my hand, i gritted my teeth, i did all those things you usually are supposed to do when you go into places like that one, not knowing what you were getting into, what you were going to find. i shivered, i felt prickly, my skin felt the way a sequined suit looks. "we're there. this is the place and the time. it's the point of transformation."

Continued next month....



NOT ever too late

Dear Gertrude

DEAR GERTRUDE:

My lover and I are in the process of changing our relationship. We feel a continuing intimacy based upon our years together. However, we no longer live together. Calling her "my partner" doesn't feel quite right anymore. Yet, "friend" falls short of describing our bond. HELP!

Rose in Victoria

Dear Rose:

By any other name would you smell so sweet? OF COURSE! You've probably had all the usual offerings: special friend, girl friend, sweetie...Right, I wouldn't use them either...Somehow I always come back to "lover", which you used yourself. "Lover" is, to me, such a term of honour. Lovers can love parts or all of each other. They can love one or love many. They can love romantically, aesthetically, intellectually, sensually, sexually, emotionally and Platonically, with any or all in combination. Try it with your past partner. Then try it with someone else.

Love, Gertrude

Send YOUR queries on the fine points of lesbian living and loving to DEAR GERTRUDE. No worry is too big or too small for our Gertrude's concern. Deadline for inclusion is the 15th of each month for next month's edition. Send to POB 5339, Station B, Victoria V8R 6S4.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POTENTIAL LOVERS

1. Are you interested in a casual or long-term relationship?
2. Describe the level of intimacy in your other relationships.
3. What was the reason your last relationship ended?
4. Talk about the last time you felt afraid.
5. Describe something that makes you feel like a little child.
6. Talk about the women, men, and children in your life and their importance for you.
7. What role does sex play in your life?
8. What are your likes and dislikes about housekeeping?
9. What place does money play in your life?
10. Do you have any alcohol or drug dependencies?
11. How do you deal with anger?
12. Are you able to talk about sex with your friends?

Judy Liefschultz and her (non-dyke) buddies Jill Swartz, Liz Courtney, and Susanne Finger put this together one day for a laugh - but you can get the serious undertone.

EPIPHANIES

"You know you're over her when you can't remember how she spells her name."
"I've been up and I've been down. Up is better."
Got any great one-liners? You send 'em, we'll print 'em.

C O D E P E N D E N C Y

Codependence is a word that is used a lot lately in addressing the movement towards healthier relationships, both with ourselves and others. A number of good books deal with this issue in depth. In writing the following we are sharing how codependency has affected our lives. Some of you may recognize yourselves; to you we want simply to say that there is hope for change.

I first became aware of codependency about a year ago. I had been suffering much of my life from low self-esteem and even less self-love. I looked to people and things outside myself for reassurance of my worth as a human being. While this took the form of acceptable behaviour (model student and daughter, good friend, sociable person), what drove me was a compulsive need to please others, to be liked, to be accepted; I was willing to give up my self for approval and love.

This showed up most painfully in my intimate relationships with women. As I became intimate, the independent, self-assured me was transformed into a needy, dependent and insecure me: I didn't know where I stopped and my lover began. The transformation was disturbing to my lovers, and terrifying to me. Fear of losing my self eventually translated itself into no intimate relationships at all. More distressing was the belief I held that I was a flawed human being who wasn't good enough and never would be.

I am now in the process of healing and learning self-love; this began with the discovery and acceptance that I have been suffering from the emotionally disabling condition called codependence. I am learning that all the people-pleasing, loss of self and fear of intimacy is rooted in an unhealthy family background where I learned my ways of being and thinking. With this comes the awareness that I can unlearn these ways. I can change. Who I am is just fine. I'm on my way now to a healthier framework of self-love and self-care. There's work to be done and I'm on my way.

Deb T.

Codependency...it's a word I heard about six years ago, when I was doing couple counselling with my ex-lover. The therapist wanted me to start looking at my behavior as a contributing factor to the problems in the relationship. At first I was indignant: there was nothing wrong with me...she's the alcoholic (albeit recovering) and a pot addict and if she would just change a bit, then I would be happier and the relationship would work.

It took three years before I could admit to myself and others that my behavior and my attitudes were contributing to the dis-ease of my relationship. I started to attend support groups where other people were looking at themselves and not blaming the alcoholic or drug addict for the pain and the difficulties in their lives. My insights at this time were new and exciting, but as I looked back on my other significant relationships, I realized that my behavior was part of an old pattern that dates back to my family of origin.

As an adult I have tended to choose people with addictions. By judging and criticizing them, I didn't have to look at me. Ultimately, I believed that as soon as my lover was "fixed", then she would take care of me and transform my unmanageable life....Surprise! It never worked.

Now, in the process of recovery, I still struggle with the same issues but I now recognize my behavior and take responsibility for it. As a result, I am developing a greater respect and acceptance of myself and my lover.

Nancy I.

Next month we will be talking more about codependency in Lesbian lives.

BEYOND SISSINGHURST

By Heather Gibson

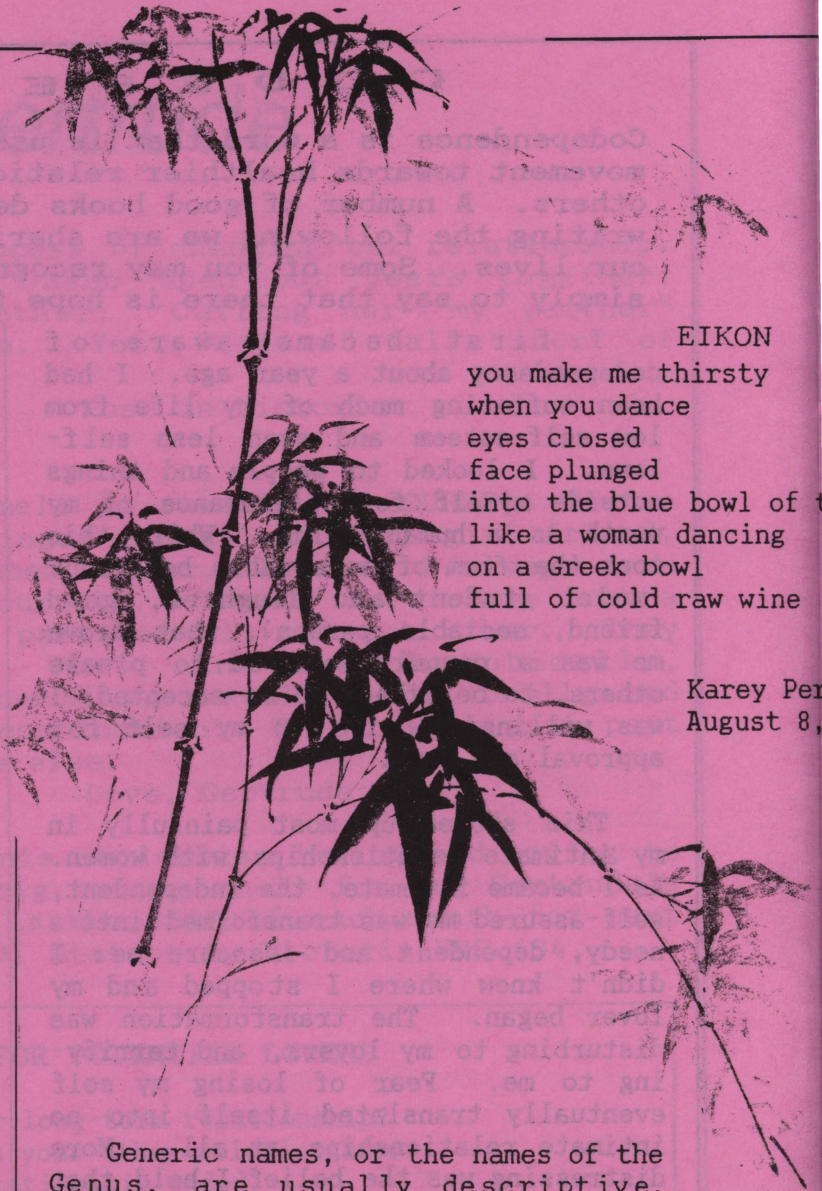
As a lesbian who loves the growing world around us, particularly plants, I offer my contribution to this publication. I hope to share my enthusiasm for plants, both wild and cultivated, and to answer your queries.

Plants are amazingly apolitical, yet continually embroiled in political controversy. The Stein Valley, South Moresby, Strathcona Park. C.P.R. brush control, 'hack and squirt', Eurasian Milfoil. Opium, coca, cannabis. Diazinon, Glyphosate, Casaron. We all require six inches of topsoil capable of growing plants to survive.

For those of you who love to garden or romp in the woods, this column should provide tasty tidbits for your perusal. For the unconverted...turn the page.

This month, I offer an introduction to the naming of plants. I'm often asked how I remember the botanical names of plants. My training as a horticulturalist introduced me to plants by their botanical names, and in the way that I might know a friend as Jane Doe, I know a plant in a similar fashion. I recognize who she is and how she looks. Common names are like nicknames - one person may have many - and for identification purposes, a nickname is too vague.

In the taxonomic scheme of things, we describe plants using their Genus, Species and sometimes Sub-species or Variety or Cultivated Variety (abbr. cv.) in that order. Our common potato is called *Solanum tuberosum*. If you plant one red variety called Pontiac, for instance, the full title would be *Solanum Tuberosum* cv. Pontiac.



EIKON

you make me thirsty
when you dance
eyes closed
face plunged
into the blue bowl of
like a woman dancing
on a Greek bowl
full of cold raw wine

Karey Per
August 8,

Generic names, or the names of the Genus, are usually descriptive, aboriginal, geographical, or given to honor a person (real or mythological). Our Rhododendrons are descriptively named. The word is derived from the Greek 'rhodos' for red and 'dendron' for tree. The title is appropriate - prior to extensive hybridization most wild Rhododendrons exhibited red flower trusses. Aboriginal names are abundant. Latin titles include *Acer* (maples), *Betula* (birches) and *Cornus* (dogwoods). *Colchicum*s, the autumn crocuses, are named for Colchis in Asia Minor where the plants abound. A bog plant native to our area, *Andromeda polifolia*, is named for the Greek Goddess Andromeda.

Specific names, or the Species name, originate in a similar fashion

but frequently emphasize description. Returning to *Andromeda polifolia*, the specific epithet refers to the white underside of this plant's leaves: 'Poli' for white, 'folia' for foliage. Our native Western Red Cedar (not a true cedar) is specifically named for her pleated or 'plicate' foliage hence her name, *Thuja plicata*.

Varietal names describe either a wild or cultivated variety abbreviated as var. or cv. respectively. Although descriptive and geographical names still abound at this taxonomic level, the focus is frequently turned to the 'discoverer', cultivator or nursery caretaker most closely related to the plant. Here the incestuous plant fancier's world knows no limits. Friends of the family, wives, concubines, lovers and other assorted associates find a place in the books. Thousands of cv.'s are named for people. Unsurprisingly, women stereotypically have been associated with *Rosa* varieties: Ophelia, Mme. Butterfly, Rose Marie Viaud, Queen Elisabeth to name only a very few.

The value of botanical names to the gardener is primarily the guarantee that the plant named will be the plant purchased. Common names don't offer this universal reliability! Secondarily though, as a lover of language, nothing can beat the musical tones of exotic botanical names rolling off the tongue. Well, perhaps a few things can...

NEXT MONTH: Autumn Gardening and Seed Collection.



UNFOLDING

Let me open you
As the sun
Opens flowers
Slowly unfurling
Each separate petal
Enabling the
Honey bee
To extract the nectar
For the honeycomb.

Without the sunshine
Flowers do not
Proliferate in open
Profusion
But they wither
On their stems.

Let me be the
Sunshine
That unfurls
Your dark and secret
Places
Enabling us to
Travel
Toward the light.

Reva

IMAGO

I dream that my mother,
hoping to grow some new lives,
or life,
has planted the severed heads of her children
in a garden.

We disgust her, like
diapers and bugs disgust her.
Like regurgitated strained peas,
semen, and blood,
and people without jobs
disgust her.

Just before I wake up
she begins tearing our heads
out of the ground.
Under each head is a vodka bottle;
but there isn't any vodka in it.

Karey Perks
August 8, 1989



DAWN CANADA: DisAbled Women's Network Canada
Réseau d'Action des Femmes Handicapées du Canada

ORDER FORM

DAWN CANADA is happy to announce the availability of our first set of position papers which investigate four issues of concern to women with disabilities:

- *Who Do We Think We Are?: Self-Image and Women With Disabilities*
- *Beating the 'Odds': Violence and Women With Disabilities*
- *The Only Parent in the Neighbourhood: Mothering and Women With Disabilities*
- *Different Therefore Unequal?: Disabled Women and Employment Equity*

In order to receive one or more of these documents, fill in the following order form and enclose your cheque or money order. If you are a woman with a disability and/or cannot afford to pay the suggested cost, please send whatever you can to help cover postage. We do not have the resources to do any billing, so please make sure that you enclose your cheque or money order with your order.



Return this order form to: DAWN CANADA
10401 Finlayson Drive
Richmond, B.C.
V6X 1W8

I would like to order:

"Self-Image"	___	X \$5.50 =	___
"Beating the 'Odds'"	___	X \$5.50 =	___
"The Only Parent"	___	X \$5.50 =	___
"Different Therefore Unequal"	___	X \$5.50 =	___
or			
Set(s) of Four Position Papers	___	X \$20.00 =	___

TOTAL (includes postage and handling): \$ _____

Send to: Name _____
Organization _____
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Notices

WOMEN IN THE WILDERNESS: SEPT 14 - 17 FORBIDDEN PLATEAU \$225

Seeking outdoor fun, adventure and challenge? If you have ever wanted to backpack in the wilderness, but have been afraid to try, or you just didn't have the skills, now is your opportunity. The objective of these trips is to relax and enjoy the spectacular natural environment while discovering your inner strengths, learning new skills and developing more self-confidence. For more information, phone Marjorie Herring, 656-8768.

[Editor's Note: This is advertised as for women, rather than for lesbians, but Marjorie was happy for me to run the notice in the lesbian newsletter.]

NOTICE OF UPCOMING CLASS

Traditional Chinese Medicine: An Introduction. This class will provide an overview of the different theories, introduce general terminology, discuss diagnostic tools and disease patterns and will stimulate analytic thought within the Eastern medical context.

On a more practical level, the class will familiarize you with the meridian system and with various treatment modalities such as acupressure, moxabustion, herbology and lifestyle suggestions, all with a focus on Women's health.

Nancy Issenman is a US-licensed and California State Certified Acupuncturist and Acupressurist, now in private practice in Victoria. This will be a seven-week class, beginning October 3; Tuesday evenings 7:30 - 9:30. Sliding scale \$100 - \$125 for the series. To register or for more info, please call 383-8440.

HOUSEMATE WANTED

Quiet, responsible, working Lesbian seeks the same to share a two-bedroom main floor flat in Fairfield house. Non-smoking space. Rent is \$300 inclusive. Available Oct. 1. Please call Marti at 1-473-3717.

BED AND BREAKFAST FOR GENTLEWOMEN

2896 Inez Drive - 386-6683

Call Lynn

\$30/single \$45/double

No Smoking

THURSDAY EVENING SOIREEES FOR WOMEN

Dessert Plate/Coffee/Tea

\$5.00

7 - 9:30pm

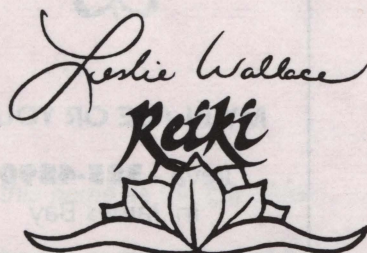
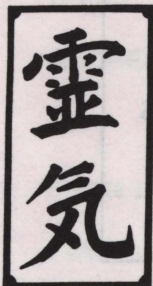
2896 Inez Drive

386-6683

Phone to reserve if possible

[Unsolicited Editorial Comment:

If you haven't tried Lynn's desserts, you haven't tasted paradise]



Classes & Treatments

P.O. Box 1865, Str. E, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2Y3 (604) 380-0368

Visualize your business card
in this space
and then send \$5 and
make your vision come true.

DAWN BC LOGO SHIRTS
ORDER NOW!

PLEASE CIRCLE SIZE:

Small/Medium/Large/XLarge

PLEASE CIRCLE COLOR:

(remember logo is purple)

pink/grey/navy/black/white/mint/aqua/
sunshine yellow/red/royal blue

COST: \$15.75 per shirt

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Sales Tax @ 6% _____

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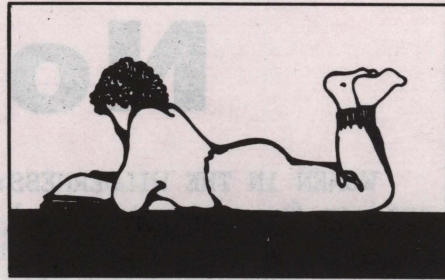
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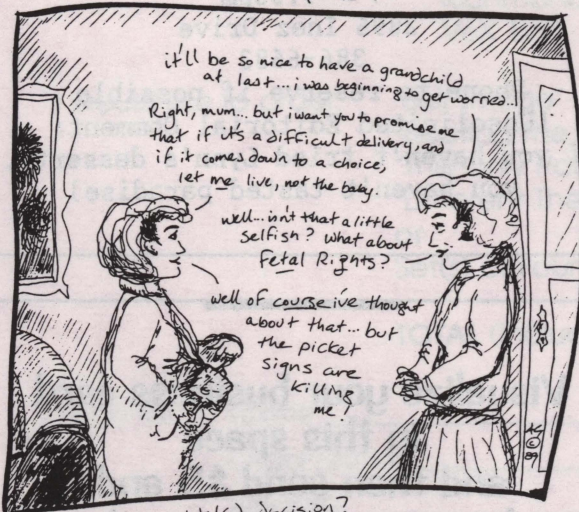
New Lesbian Titles From
Everywomans Books

Recent new Lesbian titles from Naiad Press include:

- Aldridge, Keep to me a Stranger
- Aldridge, Magdalena
- Gambill, Heartscape
- McNab, Fatal Reunion
- Sommers, Pleasures
- Grae, Edgewise
- Grae, The Secret in the Bird
- Martin, Pembroke Parr

Check with us for your favourite Lesbian authors - we have a great stock of Lesbian trash as well as quality fiction and non-fiction.
Everywomans Books 641 Johnson Street
Mon - Sat 10:30 - 5:30 388-9411

Portrait of panic



Portrait
Photography

by BLUEJAY



MY PLACE OR YOURS

Reva - 385-4890

in James Bay

it's all news to me

Calendar

- TUESDAY, SEPT 12TH** **NOONDAY TALK AT SWAG OFFICE**
"Traditional Chinese Medicine and Women's Health" with Nancy Issenman. Bring a bag lunch. Free. #320 - 620 View Street, 381-1012
- THURSDAY, SEPT 14TH** **LOUISE ROSE IN CONCERT**
Belfry Theatre, \$13
- SATURDAY, SEPT 16TH** **LOUISE ROSE IN CONCERT**
Belfry Theatre, \$13
Tickets for both concerts at the Box Office
- FRIDAY, SEPT 22ND** **ANDREA DWORKIN SPEAKING**
UVIC University Centre Auditorium, 8pm
\$12 waged, \$7 unwaged/student
Tickets from SWAG,
Sponsored by SWAG and UVic Student Society
- SATURDAY, SEPT 23RD** **GALA SECOND ANNUAL LESBIAN DINNER-DANCE**
ALL WOMEN WELCOME! Open bar 6-7pm, Dinner & Entertainment 7pm, Dance 9:30 featuring Women on the Edge, Seattle Women's Band.
Dinner & Dance \$25/Dance Only \$10
Limited Number Dance Only reduced admissions available at SWAG
Tickets: SWAG, Everywomans Books
Sponsored by SWAG and Hot Flashes Coffee House

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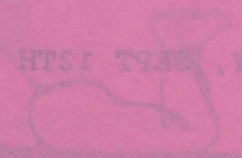
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Calendar

STYLING COOL ON NEWS
1988

TUESDAY, SEPT 13TH NOONDAY TALK AT SWAG OFFICE

Traditional Chinese Medicine and Women's Health with Nancy Jassman, BAing 5:30-7:00 PM
#330, 230 View Street, 281-1012



THURSDAY, SEPT 14TH LOUISE ROSE IN CONCERT

Belfry Theatre, 213

SATURDAY, SEPT 16TH LOUISE ROSE IN CONCERT

Belfry Theatre, 213

FRIDAY, SEPT 23RD ANDREA BUCKIN BREAKING

UW University Centre Auditorium, 8pm

SATURDAY, SEPT 24TH GAINA SECOND ANNUAL LESBIAN DINNER-DANCE

on the Edge, Seattle Women's Band, Dinner & Dance \$25/Dance Only \$10

SUNDAY, SEPT 25TH GAINA SECOND ANNUAL LESBIAN DINNER-DANCE

on the Edge, Seattle Women's Band, Dinner & Dance \$25/Dance Only \$10

MONDAY, SEPT 26TH GAINA SECOND ANNUAL LESBIAN DINNER-DANCE

on the Edge, Seattle Women's Band, Dinner & Dance \$25/Dance Only \$10

TUESDAY, SEPT 27TH GAINA SECOND ANNUAL LESBIAN DINNER-DANCE

on the Edge, Seattle Women's Band, Dinner & Dance \$25/Dance Only \$10

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