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Lesbiannews

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Victoria Loves Musaïc

Three encores and a standing ovation prove Musaïc is beginning to find its home and its sound.

The 46-member lesbian/gay choir filled the Philip T. Young Auditorium at UVic, June

15, with near-glorious harmonics and a happy audience. It was good to have them back in a space that supports an uneven mix of voices and a constant new energy.

There are departures and new faces every concert: a struggle for both the conductors and those who hang in there. Despite the drift, the sound of Musaïc is stronger; diction, for the most part, is excellent.

What is clearly evident is the choir's ability to grab hold of its music and its audience in bliss-filled moments that make us all feel good about who we are as lesbians and gays in this world. When this happens, the music and lyrics are inevitably either lesbian/gay based or African freedom songs. Then the choir seems to link voice with spirit. We can feel the sound pushing back oppression. We, in turn, are pushed into a spiritual place: proud.

We got a "rush" right away with "The Circle." Musaïc does very well with a capella work, and Colleen Peterson's words and music, adapted for Musaïc by co-conductor Linda Mills, was a perfect opener. We felt invited in. Invited to share what Musaïc had to say. This is our voice.

"In The Mood" was fun with its doo dwee ba doo bah! This kind of stuff stretches the choir nicely. "Every Time We Say Goodbye" showed how much Musaïc can give harmonically. Peter McGehee's "Lost", about the enormous loss to AIDS of wonderful, special people, was sung with care and



reverence. "Wonfa Nyem", a song about community building that comes from Ghana, pulled us back, tingling, from a gentle, quiet place.

Co-conductor Ian Riddell's

wonderful "Can You Hear Us Singing" opened up a better, heartier, stronger second half. Personally, I lost it totally for "She's One Hell of A Guy", from the musical *Intimate Friends*. Composer/lyricist Miriam Moses was in the audience and she mouthed a big thanks to Musaïc in appreciation. What a great song!

Over the top for "Over the Rainbow" was Riddell in glittery red heels. The gentle insertion of camp is good. More important, however, the choir vocally excelled here.

Musaïc closed with "Ella's Song", a gutsy, in-your-face, no-nonsense throb that left us demanding more. And we got it.

Sometimes, Musaïc appears to be at war with its music. The problem, I think, is a lack of balance. More men are needed in the tenor section to provide less "strain", and more sopranos to overcome sometimes thin and reedy sounds. Discipline is still a problem; in-joke laughter is a no-no; excessive gyrations take focus and actually tire an audience. Stand still and be heard?

We need Musaïc to cheer us on and fill us up and swell us up inside. There is no better opiate to soothe the pains of finding our place in an uncomfortable time than powerful music powerfully sung. A great lead-in to Pride Week.

BcML



Got this from Carol Greenaway on e-mail. Rather than write an editorial I thought I would just let this stand on its own. Since there seems to be a lot of love and marriage and pride going around,

Statement No. 1. Same -sex marriage must be forbidden, said the Rep. Sen. from Wisconsin, simply because natural instinct revolts at it as wrong.

No. 2. An organization opposed to gay marriage claimed legalizing them would result in a degraded and ignoble population incapable of moral and intellectual development, and rested this belief on the natural superiority with which God (has) ennobled heterosexuals.

No. 3. I believe that the tendency to classify all persons who oppose gay marriage as prejudiced is in itself a prejudice, grumped a noted psychologist. Nothing of any significance is gained by such a marriage.

No. 4. A US representative from Georgia declared that allowing gay marriages necessarily involves (the) degradation of conventional marriage, an institution that deserves admiration rather than execration.

No. 5. The next step is that gays and lesbians will demand a law allowing them, without restraint, to...have free and unrestrained social intercourse with our unmarried sons and daughters, warned a Kentucky congressman. It is bound to come to that. There is no disguising the fact. The sooner the alarm is given and the people take heed, the better it will be for the civilization.

No. 6. When people of the same sex marry, they cannot possibly have any progeny, wrote an appeals judge in a Missouri case. And such a fact

sufficiently justifies those laws which forbid their marriages.

No. 7. Same-sex marriages are abominable, according to Virginia law. If allowed, they would pollute America.

No. 8. In denying the appeal of a same-sex couple that tried unsuccessfully to marry, a Georgia court wrote that such unions are not only unnatural, but ... always productive of deplorable results, such as increased effeminate behavior in the population. They are productive of evil only, without any corresponding good...(in accordance with) the God of nature.

No. 9. A gay marriage ban is not discriminatory, reasoned a Republican congressman from Illinois, because it applies equally to men and women.

No. 10. Attorneys for the state of Tennessee argued that such unions should be banned.

A slightly different version of each of the above statements was originally made regarding marriages between blacks and whites, which were illegal from 1823 to 1964 in the USA. Though the sentiments look hatefully ridiculous to us in 1996, they had sufficient appeal and staying power that 15 states still criminalized black-white marriage until 1967 when the US Supreme Court unanimously overturned those laws in the appropriately named case, *Loving vs. Virginia*.

Yet, those whose unaltered words today resemble statements 1 through 10 above, take note: the stench is familiar; the future is listening. The info originates from *The Chicago Tribune*.

This is the summer issue; we'll be back in September. Deadline for ads and copy is Aug. 10. See you at Pride. BMCL

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Letters to the editor may be edited for space and clarity. Letters and submissions must be accompanied by name and telephone #. Only under extraordinary circumstances, discussed with you, will we print letters that are unsigned.

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We encourage lesbian artists, writers, designers to contribute. Copy deadline is the 10th of the month prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit for space, clarity, readability.

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Advertising: Business Cards \$20 per issue, \$90 for five issues and \$150 per year. Display ads are \$35 for 1/4 page, \$60 for 1/2 page; full page is \$110. Send camera ready copy or layout with a cheque payable to S. Hamill to our mailing address. Deadline is 10th of the month prior to publication.

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Gift Certificates are available for those wanting to present LNews as a gift to discerning friends. Call Barbara for ads or certificates at 598-6490 up to 7 p.m. Messages will be returned.

Ty gains city-wide recognition

by Gwynneth Powell

Victoria-based musician/singer/songwriter Ty Chandler was recently one of four winners of the 8th annual Roctoria Contest sponsored by Q.100.3 FM. This contest is open to all Vancouver Island residents who have a professional music vision. Out of 90-plus entries four were chosen as winners. I interviewed Ty just before her performance at The Forge stage, shared with the "boy" bands winners *ThinKings*, *Blend* and *Morris*.

G. Is music something that comes easy to you?

Ty: I have a relationship with it, so yeah, sometimes it's really easy and other times total frustration, and all the places in between.

G. Why did you enter Roctoria?

Ty: After the *Focus On Women Festival*, a good friend of mine told me about the contest. I had no idea it existed (I listen to CFUV and CBC). The deadline was in one week and we had taped the *Focus On Women Festival* off the board, so I sent in a couple of cuts along with some other recording I had done. I guess I was curious, and, you know, you can't win if you don't enter...and free studio time sounded very peachy.

G. How did you feel when you won?

Ty: I was kind of preoccupied when I found out; I was baking bread. I was fairly astonished and excited - you know, when you don't quite know what you've gotten yourself into, but you're open?

G. What have you won?

Ty: Somewhere between \$3-\$4,000 worth of recording time at Seacoast Sound with Bob Benson; an opportunity to work with some very fine musicians; free air time and publicity until Labour Day on Q100.3 FM; a couple of boxes of CDs and tapes; free distribution and a live show for the CD release. That's Exposure!

G. Where do you think this experience will take you?

Ty: I know it will thrust me into a wider audience. I've been playing mostly for the women's communities. *Roctoria* has given me a good view of what to expect in the industry. I'm learning more about my options and it's helped me to see that it isn't so overwhelming. Also an opportunity to make two videos has presented itself.

G: Now that you have three recorded songs on the *Rocktoria '96* Compilation CD are you interested in recording your own CD? What might hold you back?

Ty: Yes, I 'm interested in recording a full CD and I've just recently created and sculpted enough songs to feel ready. I'm now looking for money, hah! I feel good about the connections I've made so far with the studio, musicians and producer.

G: Are you looking for a recording label?

Ty: Carefully, yes.

G: When did you start playing guitar?

Ty: About five or six years ago in a tree-planting camp.

G: What gets you through your day?

Ty: By not just "getting through" them. Tossing life's importance is a major violation. And, without friends, it would be no fun.

G. If you could take five CDs with you to a desert island, which ones would

they be?

Ty: *No Guru, No Method, No Teacher* by Van Morrison, anything by Chet Baker, *The Cure (Head On The Door)*, *Parkening* plays *Bach*, and then I would close my eyes and choose between Joan Armatrading's first album and anything by *Tracey Chapman*. That was tough, but while we're at it, I'd like them played at my wake.

Ed.s Note and Mini-Review.

I joined many of the dykes who had attended Helen Durie's 50th to hear Ty sing her stuff at the public hearing of *Roctoria 8* at The Forge. Our cheering section was very much in evidence and loudly supportive. The room was a real test of a performer's skill, and, prior to the concert, an endurance test for normal eardrums. Yikes! When Ty finally came on it was a relief to have the dB level lower, but frustrating not to be able to hear the words over an over-amplified guitar and a garbled delivery. The CD on air (I caught it on 100.3 thanks to Gwynneth) presents Ty as a clear-voiced artist.

In live performance Ty tends to misuse breath and delivery, and would benefit, for the concert stage for sure, with some voice production training. We all went over the top, however, for her *Chuck E's in Town*. Would love to have been able to hear her song written for "everyone who has ever loved a woman" and totally lost her words despite her invitation to share in a friend's poetry. Another highlight was the dancing by Liliana Kleiner and Constance Cooke. A Forge first? Way to go, girls!



Finally, the answer to the age old question "What are we going to do tonight?"



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A Good Sex Column

Scared but Eager

By Janna and Otter of Womyns'Ware

Ed.'s Note: Okay. I admit it. I have toned down the language and the preferred headline for this column and have checked it out with many of you. Also, I invite you to send your questions to Jan and Otter, who know their stuff, at Womyns'Ware, 896 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V5L 3E5. Fax (604)254-5472

Dear Jan & Otter:

I am a lesbian just out of a long-term relationship and I've got sex on my mind (safe of course) but I'm shy. How do I overcome my inhibitions without using drugs or alcohol?
Scared but Eager.

Dear Eager:

First of all, let us assure you that you're not the only dyke looking to get on with safe and sober sex, but not knowing where or how to start. Allow us to climb up on our soap box for a second.

One of the more visible parts of our community tends to be the bar scene. Most women delve into the bars during their coming out process because it seems that's where all the lesbians are. You may discover the truth, though, which is that there are a whole lot of dykes who don't venture into the bars on any regular basis, let alone weekly. We aren't saying that bars are evil, but they don't offer a

positive environment for meeting women for sex. Eventually, most people come to realize that drunken sex is neither safe nor fun. In fact, orgasm while intoxicated pales next to the sober variety (not to mention the questionable ability to choose a partner or deal with safe sex when one is

wasted).

Enough said about the cons of non-sober sex. You wouldn't have written if you didn't already know the down side. On to the alternatives. Regardless of where you find women who interest you, you must follow two rules: be honest and be frank. One of the best ways to overcome shyness around sex is to admit that you have it (the shyness, everyone already suspects the rest of the world is having sex). Rarely a day goes by without someone walking into our store and saying that they're too shy to ask questions. Low and behold, their admission opens up the floor for us to move on and talk about sex and why they've come in. So...when you see a woman that turns your crank, engage in conversation. Say that you are attracted to her and it makes you feel shy and awkward. She'll probably admit the same thing back. Once the topic of shyness is overcome, frankly state your desire. use whatever terminology is comfortable for you, but be blunt. Frankness is necessary if you're ever going to get on with the business at hand (that is, where and when). Say that you're going to be blunt and then do it. Your honesty and frankness should be appreciated.

Nonetheless, you should prepared for some rejection. It will be important that you don't own the rejection. The answer can be "no" for a whole host of reasons unrelated to you. With someone who doesn't yet know you a "no" answer is undoubtedly not about you. So get over it and move on. At this stage you have to keep repeating the phrase "you can't get anywhere if you don't ask."

After some practice runs, you will find that honesty about your shyness and frankness about your desire will break down the barriers that we so often mistakenly try to overcome through intoxicants or otherwise.

to be continued...

"Most of the time we stand with our backs to our own Light, looking into the shadows."

Susan-Rose Slatkoff MA, R.C.C.
Psychotherapist

1422 Wende Road, Victoria
Telephone: 477-8385

Mave Notes

By the Movie Maven

The Incredible Babe is on holidays at press time. However, we persuaded her to attend the screening of Celluloid Closet at Capitol Six and here's what she thought.

When Russo's scholarly examination of gays in film, *The Celluloid Closet*, came out, I read it with interest and thought: this guy must be one heck of a movie fan to have sat through so many poor to awful films in an attempt to discover whatever representation of gays exist in them. The film, *The Celluloid Closet*, is a less scholarly and more anecdotal rendering of Russo's book.

There are famous and infamous talking heads expounding on gays in film, motivation of film makers and studios, screen-writers' secret codes of dialogue (there's a gay line!), and a whirlwind film clip tour of many of the films. As the clips came at me in the darkened theatre, I started to coin titles for this review ...Docu Homo Clip ...Homo Clip festClip Home Flicks and, my favorite, Doc-U Homo.

I didn't care for this film/video; it's a film adapted from the written word and fleshed out with film clips. It's negative as a lot of history is; it's a history of an industry who have ridiculed, stereotyped and hurt gays and lesbians. I don't agree that we learn sexuality from the movies as Susie Bright avers, or that we are hard-done-by through lack of honest representation in film. Otherwise, there would be no gays and lesbians who are sexual or who'd "know" what to do. If I had to have waited for *Desert Hearts* to show me how, I'd be a slightly desperate looking woman with warts all over my hands.

Some highlights included the delightfully bitchy Gore Vidal explaining how the infamous Hays Office was set up with the assistance of the Catholic Church's League of Decency. I assume that this group included many priests and brothers who would have been indicted for sexually or physically abusing the children placed in their spiritual care. Bill Hays is described by Vidal as one of the few unindicted members of the Hoover Cabinet. I recommend Vidal's new memoir, *Palimpsest*, by the way, because he dishes the dirt with the best of them.

This documentary is OK as a reference but it omits a whole section on gay and lesbian sex that the porn industry has produced over the years. There was a group of

"independent" film-makers (often funded through the big studios) who put out prodigious numbers of "how-to" films; they, too, eschew plot.

There are a few good films around today, notably, *The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love*, *Philadelphia*, and *The Crying Game*. These films show gays and lesbians as regular folks, dealing with awakening sexual urges (I felt like a proud grandmother during *The Incredibly True Adventures*), and with illness and passages as in *Philadelphia*. The love scene in *Desert Hearts* still flicks my switch and *The Crying Game* still challenges straights, gays, terrorists and transvestites to see each other with all their strengths and frailties.

I agree with Tom Hanks, however, who, in *The Celluloid Closet*, says that by choosing him, a man renowned for his wholesomeness on screen, the studios were keeping middle America audiences virtuously, and yet distantly, aware of, AIDS. Hanks is a straight actor who dies beautifully and heroically? Will gay heroes ever live? Will Doris Day please eat...the daisies?

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BJS Drives 'Em Home and Wild

by Dawn Heiden

The Dyke Ball Tournament in Vancouver June 7-9 was a hit for Bjs, the novice team in the Victoria Recreational League. They took second place in the Rec Division, and were a hit with the fans as word had got around about how they had smeared the opposition in their third game. Here's how that went: The score was 12-4 for the other team at the bottom of the 4th inning. The fifth inning was the final and it was open. (That means that there is no limit to runs a team can score). Bjs took full advan-

tage and romped passed home plate 19 times to win 23-12. The fans went wild and hoarse. The final game, which gave Bjs second place, was a close, tight game with few errors. To their fans, they were still the winners. There was a nasty rumour that our team was stacked, but as we had just as many bottoms as tops, the writer believes it was a well-balanced team. Playing in the tournament as well, but not such hair-raising games, were George and Dragon and Rumors.

Wild Tongue II

LesbiaNews and Uvic Women's Studies are sponsoring a second lesbian comedy night to be held at the David Lam Theatre October 20 at 7:30 p.m.

On-Stage Talent: There may be auditions for some submissions to ensure a tight-running two-hour show. Auditions will be in August and early September.

Send your proposal to P.O. Box 5339, Station B. Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S4.

Performance time should be limited to 20 minutes.

Five-minute stuff for blackouts acceptable.

Crew: Backstage crew talent are also needed for lights, stage management, publicity, tickets, box office, production manager. Would like to hear from everybody interested for on-stage or back-stage by August 1.

Call 598-6490. Or write.

Remember to hold your head high

by Rowena Hunnisett

Pride is a way of thinking -- it's Attitude. It can be an outcome of healing homophobia; pride is not possible as long as we feel shame about our sexuality and life path. The measure of our pride depends on our willingness to face our internalized homophobia. For someone who has only just realized that they are lesbian, that might mean having the courage to tell a counselor for the first time, timidly and with heart in hand. For someone else it could mean making a speech at a gay pride rally.

Gay pride celebrations recharge us and remind us for the other 51 weeks of the year. Do we feel proud of being gay when we go to work or hear a homophobic joke? Or do we retreat, losing some of that self-respect we feel when we are all together? Some lesbians won't hold hands on the street for fear of anything from disapproving looks to gay-bashing. People can feel so overwhelmed about the first step of coming out that the very act has made them vomit out of anxiety. I think it is important to respect a person wherever they are in their process of developing pride.

There are times it is difficult to feel our pride, because of fear or because internal homophobia takes over. We may have good reason to be afraid, but equally, there are many times we allow ourselves be intimidated, when instead we could take a risk and the repercussions would be manageable or

even positive.

What does pride mean anyway? Webster's includes two types of definitions.

One is positive: a reasonable or justifiable self-respect; delight or elation arising from some act... or relationship. The other is intended to be pejorative: ostentatious display; a showy or impressive group. Sound familiar?

I like Webster's definitions. They help us see our diversity. Amongst our people there are those who show pride ostentatiously and impressively: these are the gay men and lesbians whose presence demands attention: drag queens, leather dykes and ACT UP activists come to mind. They may offend or delight us but, without them, it would take much longer to get mainstream society to give us the relatively serious attention we now have.

Some of us would like to distance ourselves from people who are outrageous or "flaunting it". Musaic sings a line in a song that goes "the next time you're seen with a dyke or a queen, remember to hold your head high". Perhaps holding your head high is not

so easy, when it's just you and one other person walking down the street.

Our outrageous folks help allow the moderate activists to move in with our reasonable and justifiable demands. These are people who know that being proud is a matter of having self-respect, knowing our rights and insisting on them, because they are only reasonable. These moderate lesbians and gay men do a lot of hard work to change laws, lobby parliamentarians, develop community, culture and services and can do a lot of bridging between the very closeted and the very out parts of our communities.

Let's celebrate with respect and love for all our levels of ability to show pride in who we are.

Rowena Hunnisett is a therapist in private practice in Victoria.



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Pride Day July 7, 1996

Parade

Time 12 noon. Assembly at 10:30 a.m. at 500 Block Herald Street

Route: South on Government Street, West on Belleville, South on Montreal to Saint Lawrence and ending at Fisherman's Wharf Park where organizers expect 800 persons to be present.

Festival

Time: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Fisherman's Wharf Park with Flags, Balloons,

Jugglers, Clowns, Information, Food and Souvenirs.

Concert

Time 2:00 p.m. at Fisherman's Wharf Park. Planned Events, very few political speeches, approximately 90 minutes of fabulous entertainment, and all the best people in town.

Details:

A \$5 donation per participant

would be appreciated at parade If you require signing or wish to inquire about physical accessibility John @ 360-0663 or Terry @ 385-6303. Raffle. Throughout Pride week there will be raffle tickets on sale to be drawn at the Pride Festival. Prizes include Paintings, custom blind services, bed and breakfast get-aways and more. Tickets \$5.

Pride Week Events Calendar

All events requesting donations are Pride Day Society Fund-Raisers.

July 1 — Canada Day features Pride with Terry Harrison on Dyke Dimensions 8 to 9 p.m.

—Bring your flag to the fireworks.

—Official Opening of Pride Week at Slooo-Pitch softball (as you've never played it, and possibly never seen it) Beacon Hill park (Douglas at Beacon) 1-4 p.m. Children Welcome. Grill & Condiments provided: BYO hotdogs, burgers, buns and drinks. Call Kevin 598-6460 to register team or individual player.

—Rumors Jazz Night with Noah Becker. BJ's Lounge for an all day beer bust.

July 2

— Banner Making Party at 1415 Bay Street from 4 to 9 p.m. Pre-register with Dawn at 595-7179 Bring materials and food. Children Welcome.

—CFUV 102FM at 8:30 Queer and Present Danger with Robb Stewart

—"Proud Performances" Coffee House 8 to midnight at Java Coffee House, 537 Johnson Street. \$3 - \$10 sliding scale. No alcohol or smoking on patio.

—"Simply Fruit" midnight at

Rumors, 1325 Government Street. By donation.

July 3

—Victoria Cares Art Exhibit, Studio Gallery, 532 Herald Street. 380-6788

—Victoria Lesbian Art Collective and Prime Timers Victoria 5 pin Bowling for Queers and Allies 7:00 p.m. Town & Country Lanes 3494 Saanich Rd. \$3/Game. Call Dawn 595-7179 in advance so she knows how many lanes.

Adult Body Art Show 7:00 onwards. Rumors Admission by Donation to Pride Society.

July 4

—Line Dancing with Robert Middleton 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. Rumors 1325 Government

—Pink Umbrella Web Site Launch & Open House 7-9 p.m. 613 Superior St. sponsored by Victoria PWA/VARCS/AVI Pink Umb.

July 5

—Womyn Only Special Pride Night 8 - 11:30 p.m. entertainment by April and Tracy Prizes, Surprises at Rumors

—Spikes Volleyball Sunset Drop-In Volleyball 7 to 10 p.m. Top Floor Stickey Wicket 919 Douglas St. Donations to Pride Society.

July 6

— Pride Society Tea Dance Dance 'til you drop 4 p.m. 10 p.m. DaVinci Centre 195 Bay Street. Admission \$5. Advance Tickets Only Zydecos, 565 Johnson or Pride Board Members.

—Rumors Proud to Be non-stop Dance Party 9:00 to closing. Hosted by David and Brent.

July 7

—Pride Parade: Assemble at 500 block Herald St. 10:30 p.m. Parade starts at noon. Herald Street to Fisherman's Wharf park.

—Pride Celebration at fisherman's Wharf park 1 to 5:00 p.m. Concert at 2:00 p.m. Children Welcome.

—Queer Christian gathering at Mile Zero at 9:00 a.m. Followed by breakfast and participation in the parade.

—Innecity Youth Works Punk Rock Bands for queer youth and their allies at Inner City 522 Pandora 7:00 p.m. \$4 at the door.

—Unzipped Jodie James celebrates pride at Rumors 8:00 p.m.

—BJ's Lounge presents Pride Windup Dance hosted by brand rogers 6:00 to closing.

Summer weddings



Mary Lois and Toni are delighted to announce we will be exchanging vows and rings on Saturday, August 17, in the presence of family and invited guests. Our small house/yard cannot accommodate all who have supported us in our relationship.

Nevertheless, we appreciate your love and best wishes.

Linda Mills and Stefan Carson are celebrating the wedding together of their lives in a ceremony, July 27, 1996, at the Church of Truth, 111 Superior Street, Victoria. Judith Boyle from Salt Spring Island is conducting the ceremony. Reception follows at the church for invited family and friends. Linda and Stefan have written their own vows and are exchanging rings. LNews joins the community in wishing them much happiness for a prosperous and joyous life together.

Molly Jane Kolabinski and Gizelle Suzanne River: "On this day we will create a ceremony wherein we will express our love, our trust, and our lasting commitment to one another. As part of the lesbian community, as part of an evolving culture, we want to celebrate the important event of our wedding, not through imitation but rather through transformation. It is our vision that friends will participate with us as we strive to do this in a progressive way. The ceremony will take place August 24 in our home." LNews wishes you happiness.

Lesbian Activity Group Sets New Program, Name

By Lynn Thompson

Ahoy all Couch Potatoes and Athletic Wannabes.

The Lesbian Activity Group, formerly known as the Lesbian Outdoor Club, recognizes its diversity in terms of interest and activity level abilities. Thus, those of you who shy away because of the rigors of the exercise, can join knowing there will be room for you.

The group gathers at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of every second month to brainstorm and schedule our activities. Some of us meet at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre Lounge at 8:30 p.m. the second Friday of the month. After a little chatting, and perhaps a drink or two, we head downstairs to join an adults only swim. Some of us never make it out of the hot tub or sauna. Others are right into the pool and zooming down the water slide.

Join us at Red Rock City on Wharf Street for pool of another sort at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month. We get a reduced rate.

We also have serious minded (should that read butch?) hikers who head for the hills every week or so. The femmes in the crowd have been attaching themselves to some CRD Parks activities or planning kinder, gentler hikes. We've been horseback riding and threaten to rent a boat.

The sky's the limit. Anyone want to organize hot air ballooning? Or sky diving? Come along to a meeting and make your suggestion. You'll surely find friends and, if you need it, fools, to adventure with you.

Feel free to meet us at one of our regularly scheduled activities or call Terry at 592-4276 to find out when and where we meet next or what else we are plotting in the

near future.

And, you might want to bring along a calendar to sort out what day of what month is the second month and the first full moon for sky-diving and all that other important stuff. Best of all, get out of the rut of being alone, being inactive, or being lonely, or of fearing having to do any activity all by yourself.



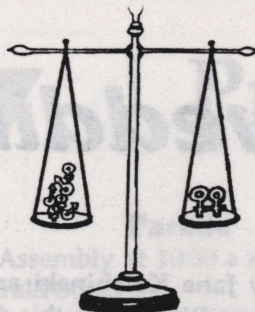
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Ask a Mediator

Dear Patricia:

Are there any situations in which mediation is not the appropriate way to resolve a dispute? What about when one party has a history of abusive behavior or when one of the parties does not trust the other to be honest?

Answer:

This is a very hot topic amongst mediators now mostly because the alternatives for abused people are so few. I believe mediation is often appropriate and indeed can be a good thing for the victim. But we have to start right back at the beginning and ask: "What is the mediator's job?"

Many assume that it is to help the parties reach agreement. I disagree. I suggest that my job as a mediator is to help the parties. Period. I define "Help" as assisting the parties to reach their legitimate goals. My job is to help them design a process which will work for them. I call this "empowerment". There is no right way to do this. There is a wrong way - and that is to "drive home" or "force" an agreement. With my approach to mediation both parties are empowered to design a process which will assist them to meet each

other's real concerns as human beings. This often leads to agreement, but, for me, it is a by-product: not the end in and of itself. I think it is empowering when an abuse victim gets to tell her abuser about the impact the abusive behavior has had; it is empowering when she obtains the abuser's meaningful agreement to stop, and, perhaps, to compensate her in some way which works for her. This empowerment occurs best in an atmosphere she controls and in which she feels safe. She will feel more powerful saying what she wants and needs in mediation than if she lets her lawyer say everything for her in court.

I emphasize that to use mediation in a situation where there has been abuse requires more than process neutrality. It requires the mediator to give a process veto to the victim. She must be in control or she will feel abused all over again.

I am a bit of a radical on this subject. Many mediators would tell you that mediation cannot work when there has been abuse because of the power balancing issues. I say let's think this through really carefully before we are so dismissive. I think mediation offers the promise of real empowerment and voice to victims, if the focus remains on the people, not on mere agreement getting. Consider the

alternatives - court or the adversarial system or "stuffing it". I think its time we in the mediation community thought creatively about how to make this process work for abused women rather than shrugging our shoulders and just saying, "It's too hard... it can't be done".

On the question of honesty and trust let me just say that none of my clients ever trust the other when we first begin working, least of all do they expect to hear the whole truth. Mediation can help people to build trust, but it is not dependent on it. It is dependent on helping people to get clear—about what it is they need to continue working on with the other person to reach agreement, and about what penalties they want to agree upon for dishonesty and other dirty tricks. I insert a standard clause in my agreements that penalizes the person who hides any assets, for example, by making them automatically shared assets if they are later discovered. And I encourage people to build their communication skills so that it is in fact safe to tell the truth and worth it to do so. Each situation is different. Lack of trust is not a reason to avoid mediation.

Patricia Lane is a mediator in private practice with a special interest in concerns of the lesbian community.



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Quotes & Queries:

News & views from the lesbian & gay press,

compiled by the truly literate and pruriently single Mary Lasovich.

Muffin Spencer-Devlin, an 18-year veteran of the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour circuit, describes her decision to come out — in a *Sports Illustrated* article which appeared just before the tee-off for this year's Dinah Shore tournament — as "a process worked out over time. [I] had no role model or any guide that I could follow. There was nothing to show me that this was a positive thing to do." She told *The Advocate* that she turned first to her partner of four years, Lynda Roth; then to her family and close friends; and, finally, to senior LPGA management and her sponsors. All were supportive, except for her male coach (with whom she has since severed ties) who "wanted to know why I wanted to get up on my soapbox." Straight golfers on the pro circuit have openly complimented Spencer-Devlin but there's been loud silence from her closeted colleagues. Has any golfer she knows to be lesbian approached her and confided that her coming-out may inspire others to follow her actions? "No," says Spencer-Devlin, "absolutely not."

Kings Island amusement park in Warren County, Ohio plays host to gays and lesbians with special promotions one day each year, and members of the community traditionally don red T-shirts for the festive outing. So followers of the Christian Family Network, a religious-right group, announced that their goal was to pack the amusement park with 4,000 homophobic folks clad in white T-shirts "who would bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to people we know are hurting." Gay and lesbian Christians reached a fashionable compromise, vowing to wear red- and white-striped shirts.

Novelist **Diane Salvatore** offers this word of advice: Read *The Girls Next Door: Into the Heart of Lesbian America* with a phone close at hand — because you'll want to call a friend to

chortle over some great one-liner or insight that's too good to enjoy alone. In a rave book review published by *The Advocate*, Salvatore says that just three chapters of the "friskily written, frequently witty, thoughtful, and thought-provoking" book by life partners **Lindsy Van Gelder** and **Pamela Robin Brandt** are worth the \$23 US price ("Icepicks and Lipsticks: The New Visibility"; "Everybody Out of the Gene Pool: Sexual Fluidity" and "Heart of Dykeness: Coming Out").

Not a lesbidyke tattoo... (OK, it's a weird intro but how else do I make room in *LesbianNews* for a poem by gay figure skater Doug Mattis?) During a time of intense self-examination, Mattis wrote "a self-affirmation that I could not run from" and had it tattooed on his upper arm: *All that I strive for / All that I lust for / All that I'm burdened with / binding my strength / in the struggle / that begins with my Perception / and ends with my own Self Worth*. Now that he's announced plans to compete at the next two U.S. national figure skating competitions, a judge has specifically warned him not to wear a costume that exposes the tattooed poem — a warning Mattis says he'll ignore.

Choreographer **Constance Cook** (who had the good sense to move her dyke self and her boundless creativity to our community from Winnipeg last fall) premiered an excerpt from a full-length work at ROMP! *A Festival of Independent Dance*, staged last month by Suddenly Dance Theatre. Though I'm utterly unqualified to review

modern dance, being a charter member of the two left-feet school of dance, I know what I like — and I thoroughly enjoyed watching dancers Rachel Anderson and Susan Perkins perform the premiere of *Belong*. Replete with lesbian sense and sensibility, Connie's choreography wrapped up the evening and, quite unexpectedly, moved me to tears, thus

prompting my hasty exit. So I offer belated congratulations, and look forward — do we dare hope? — to bringing readers advance notice of the full-length performance.

*All that I strive for / All that I
lust for / All that I'm burdened
with / binding my strength /
in the struggle / that begins
with my Perception / and ends
with my own Self Worth*

Finally, more **Barbies We'd Like To See** via Internet list mistress Amy Goodloe: **Blue Collar Barbie** - comes with overalls, protective goggles, lunch pail, UAW membership, pamphlet on union-organizing and pay scales for women as compared to men. Waitressing outfits and cashier's aprons may be purchased separately for Barbies who are holding down second jobs in order to make ends meet; **Bite-the-Bullet Barbie** - an anthropologist Barbie with pith helmet, camera, detachable limbs, fake blood, and the ability to perform surgery on herself in the Outback; **Transgender Barbie** - formerly known as G.I. Joe; **Dinner Roll Barbie** - a Barbie with multiple love handles, double chin, a real curvy belly, generous tits and ass, and voluminous thighs to show girls that voluptuousness is also beautiful. Comes with a miniature basket of dinner rolls, a T-shirt that reads "Only The Weak Don't Eat" and, of course, an appetite.



LITTLE Lezzie Flashes

Surely, Helen Durie's turning 50 was a grand party. Mary Lasovich, hostess supremo for the event, turned her garden into a veritable seraglio. At one point, as the three unweds at the bridge table found themselves alone in the hot tub, I remarked to Mary that I felt like I was in an oda. One oda (room in a harem) was a seating area for smoking, another was a campfire with benches around, and yet another held the hot tub. In the house was dancing, food, and pool. Mary did a bang-up job and Helen turned 50 in the nicest way possible - surrounded by 40 (or more?) gorgeous dykes! We were chatting and giggling in the smoking oda, when the talk got around to dolls. Jackie Denage had us rolling on the floor with her tale of ditching her doll in the outhouse. "It's not funny," she said through tears of laughter, "it was

a shitty thing to do!" It was time for the official celebration and presentation of the pre-crone— that's under 55— explained Gloro Levit, who presented this creature-on-a-pedestal to Helen. Helen and Shawnnah Farkas look so much alike, some guests presented their gifts to an amused Shawnnah. These two would like you to know that they are neither sisters nor the same person. Mary has some win-lose things that need mentioning. First, would the person who ate, stole, or simply ran off with part of her couch, please return it? No questions will be asked. It's a pillow, designed to match...And did you leave your Speedo Bathing Suit in the grass? And there's "odds and ends" of dishes, too. With Jan Trainor on holidays I feel lonesome. There's no other person who calls to say how busy she is so I can say how busy I am so that we both can say, "let's go for a walk." We can be busy anytime. One of the delights of deadline is the steady flow of sweet creatures through my bed-sitter. One of the faves is Toni Mercer who glowed in with her wedding announcement. Toni and beloved,

Mary Lois Alford, have too small a place to invite everyone. No one should feel slighted. Rather, as we do, join them in celebrating; lift a glass in their honour, August 17, and toast them into a happy future. And, at their request, when you are thinking of them, send a food or dollar donation to the Food Bank. Finally, in the oops department, we apologize to Susan-Rose Slatkoff for a Freudian slip. Instead of chronic eating, in her story, My Body...it should read, chronic dieting. So, please, eat. Thanks to Lynne Hayhoe who tells us lesbian life flourishes in Ojai, Cal., where she caught comedian and VI native, Lynda Montgomery in performance. Lynne loved *Celluloid Closet* and tells us that Donna Deitch has Patricia Charbonneau and Helen Shaver at least willing to reprise their roles in *Desert Hearts*. Hmm. Congratulations to Meg Herweier and Charlotte Semple, lesbians recently accorded title of Women of Distinction, and to Jannit Rabinovich and Tracey Porteous who received deserved nominations. Happy Birthday to the supremely gorgeous Denise Davies. Until next time. BMCL

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Summer Reads and Listens

What are we reading this summer? Even though she's researching for writing a book of her own, Jenny Waelti-Walters passes on some good reading fun.

She recommends *En Travesti: Women, Gender, Subversion, Opera* edited by Corinne E. Blackmer and Patricia Juliana Smith and published by Columbia University Press 1995. This book describes why lesbians would and do like opera—for its erotic nature and two women singing beautiful music on stage, sometimes in trouser roles, some wildly heroic. "These trouser roles were originally sung by castrati", notes Jenny, "but they provided a fabulous lesboid sound when women took them over." There's Octavian "who sings a heart-renderingly glorious aria at the end of *der Rosenkavalier*," Jenny sighs. Wondrous duets are most often found in 18th century opera before the 19th century composers and librettists started killing us off. At one point, it is recommended that opera can solve the question of: is she or isn't she? As the book says, paraphrased by Jenny, "I'm in love with a woman I don't know, and I don't know how she will receive my interest. I take her to a performance of *Rosenkavalier*. She watches the stage; I watch her."

Then there's "the crummy little volume" of Paris' literary society in 1890-1914 called *Lot's Wife* printed by

Janus Press in 1986 in Liverpool. It's by Catherine Van Canelaer and it sets out to name all possible or suspected lesbians. "Not all accurate, either," says Jenny. "So, it's a touch dubious, but monstrously gossipy". While I am still gossiping, Jenny's own latest book on Jeanne Hyvrard (non-dyke) has recently been reviewed in the Times Literary Supplement (TLS) which, I understand, for a Brit is the highest accolade possible.

I borrowed another good read, although it's not new to the stands or stalls: *Other Women*, by Lisa Alther, published in paperback by Signet, 1985. This little volume examines the thoughts and processes of a happily married therapist and her not so happily married, lesbian client. It is moving and touching, sad, funny and entrancing and, for some of us, a key to how unnecessarily we beat ourselves to the ground.

Also borrowed is a delightful little read called *bordering* by Canadian Luanne Armstrong. It's a coming out story, a mystery, an examination of a life going through another process: growing away and apart from, family tradition and old truths. Published by gynergy books. Sometimes I think Naiad goes quantity rather than quality. Another Canadian, Tracey Richardson, has produced a substanceless girl-meets girl in cop school in her book, *Northern Blue*. Save your pen-

nies.

Alyson Press has released in paperback Nancy Toder's classic *Choices*, and *Doc and Fluff: The Distopian Tale of a Girl and Her Biker* by Pat Califia. This one is packed with true love, rough sex and over-the-top adventure.

Sally Hamill went off to Denmark with a new release from Spinster's Ink which we'll try to review in the fall. Called, *Well-Heeled Murders* by clinical social worker-turned writer Cherry Hartman, it will be released in September.

The Flirtations have released a new CD and this one is called *Three* as they are now three including pop jazz vocalist Suede, baritone Jon Arterton and tenor Jimmy Rutland. There's 14 songs on the album. Order from The Flirtations, P.O. Box 655, Provincetown, MA 92657 and send money order for \$15 in US funds. You need to add \$2.50 US for postage. On tape it's \$10. They write to us: "Last July we finally put the long-held theory that women and men can and should work together into practice." The Flirtations recently made their debut as a mixed group at the Northampton Lesbian Festival—the first time men ever performed there. This group ranks with the world's best a cappella groups. BMCL

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BRAIN FEVER

Flossie was about to lose her balance, trying to see herself from all angles in a bathroom mirror that wasn't big enough. She supposed she looked like the picture which she had torn from a magazine. It had words over the top, which said, 'Secret life of stripper Lucky Price.' She didn't know what stripper meant, but she did know 'secret life.' That was when nobody believed you were a Golden Retriever, and they made you tear pictures out of magazines and try to look like somebody real. Like Lucky Price.

Under the letters you could see most of Lucky's clothes. Flossie wondered if Lucky felt as uncomfortable in them as she did. She waved her arms up and down and the fake Lucky Price imitated her movements to perfection. But there was no aura, just an empty shell in the shape of her clothes.

She flipped her ball cap on backwards the way she liked, and reported to the orderly at the sign-out desk, who let her off the ward to go to O.T., all the way to the basement, to a long room that smelled of turps and cement. The few patients there were already immersed in projects at the scattered tables. Onyx Ovieda, the occupational therapist, was wearing jeans and a sleeveless top, working a lump of clay at the wedding table. The muscles of her arms and shoulders rippled with effort.

She smiled. "Interesting outfit. The socks are not part of it, I take it?"

Flossie's socks had indeed fallen in defeat to the tops of her unlaced runners. She shrugged and held out the picture from the magazine. Onyx wiped her hands on her jeans and flipped her dark braid over her shoulder.

"The picture doesn't have any feet," Flossie explained.

Onyx frowned at the inspi-

ration for Flossie's miniskirt and skin-tight sweater. "How do you feel about these clothes, Flossie? Do you like the way they make you look?" She would enjoy reporting Flossie's choice of role model to the next treatment meeting. She might even be able to put a stop to this ridiculous exercise, which was little more than a male psychiatrist's primitive belief in the curative power of new wardrobes for women.

Flossie tugged at her sweater. "The skirt's okay for pissing, I guess, but this sweater makes me feel like I got ants in my armpits. And I don't look like anybody I know." She was willing to go along with the pictures because Nurse Onyx was her friend, even though she was Staff. Nurse Onyx said that even though she still felt like a Golden Retriever, there were things she needed to know about the body she lived in now. Flossie didn't want to disappoint Nurse Onyx, but the real reason she picked Lucky Price was that she thought Lucky was a dog's name.

But she couldn't bear another second of itching. Before Onyx could stop her both sweater and skirt had fallen to the floor.

"I hate these clothes!"

"But you must cover yourself," Onyx said. There were clean smocks in the office. Oblivious to the rest of the patients, Flossie strode there in her ball cap and panties. It was Onyx, with her gaydar going crazy, who felt naked and exposed, as if the sudden rush of feelings that had whooshed through her at the sight of Flossie's bare shoulders had been clearly audible, like a toilet flushing.

But if she said: this exercise cannot work for you; a baby butch is what you are and you have sisters (and mothers, and cousins, and aunts) waiting to be discovered at the doors of healing,

then the hospital would consider her unprofessional, exploitative. It could cost her job.

Flossie returned, buttoning the smock, and climbed onto the stool beside Onyx, who averted her gaze and handed over a chunk of clay, which Flossie poked at, anxiously waiting for Nurse Onyx's aura to explode in a shower of lips and teeth and elbows, after it had flared brightly and then suddenly shrunk over her like a plastic wrapper. But nothing happened to Nurse Onyx, except that she smiled an insincere smile and asked her if she'd thought about what she wanted to make.

Flossie shrugged and said she didn't know.

"Close your eyes," Onyx suggested. "Feel the clay. Be in your fingers."

Flossie followed her instructions, wondering how anything could be made from clay that was better than clay itself. She forced it through her fingers and squeezed it together, flattened it, rolled it and squished it again, enjoying its cool, gritty earthiness.

Nurse Onyx knew everything about clay. If Flossie wanted to be like anyone, it was Nurse Onyx. But whatever Nurse Onyx was keeping inside her aura was a secret, which meant Nurse Onyx had at least one secret, and maybe more. Maybe she had a whole life of secrets. Like herself. Like Lucky Price.

But her own secret was the best, no matter how Staff complained that she was delusional. She had a regal, a graceful, a wonderful tail. And she wouldn't trade that for anything.

Issues from around the country -

Updates

There's some stuff that just doesn't fit in gossip or other areas. So, when you are kind enough to flood our humble mailbox with anecdotes we shall include them here and, thus, keep readers apprised of your antics, adventures, enterprises and other useful bits of info that Little Lezzie eschews. Ed.

Discrimination Against Us in Campbell River

We got this fax from Campbell River Women's Resource Centre's Lori Horner and the campaign trail. Candidate for the Comox Valley/Willow Point riding, dentist Dr. John Krell, running for the Family Coalition Party, was allowed to tell students at Southage School in CR, that homosexuality should still be discriminated against. "The homosexuals need help," the Courier-Islander reported Krell saying. "You do not help a person by affirming them in their lifestyle. You need to help them get out and there are ways out. Their lifestyle choice is wrong. It has always been wrong, will always be wrong." The paper reports that the comments did not sit well with many of the students and that Krell was booed. I should hope so.

Pull Out your Pencils, Gals

Mary Lasovitch sends us this call for submissions from the net. Here it is: Submit entries to the First Annual Fiction Contest in 50/50 Magazine.

Pieces should be no more than 2000 words in length. No sexually explicit subject matter will be considered. First prize includes \$300 and reprint in January 1997 issue of the mag. Contest deadline is August 30, 1996. send typed submissions and \$5 entrance fee payable to 50/50 Magazine 2336 market Street, Suite 20, San Francisco, CA 94114 Attn: Fiction Contest. And did you notice the 15 & under 2nd place T/C writing contest winner Nicole Washington wrote a lesbian story? Well done.

EGALE Our Best Lobbying Tool

EGALE which stands for Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere and which the Globe and Mail calls the national lesbian and gay rights organization, is looking for donations. People can contribute from a recommended \$35 and up to help (a) lobby for same-sex equality in federal laws (b) intervene in significant court cases (c) develop an across-Canada communication and action network. It is also possible to become an EGAL-itarian by making monthly donations of \$10 or more to EGAL, 177 Nepean St. Suite 306, Ottawa, ON K2P 9Z9. Some of the things 'they' are saying about EGAL:

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The Hon. Sheila Finestone PC MP, Chair, Human Rights Committee.

"Of course, the government finally moved because of pressure from the community, notably the organized effort led by Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere".

Mr. Alex Munter, Regional Councillor.

We need an organized lobby to make sure we are heard and to support the lobbying efforts of others. Mail your donation to the above address today. It's one way of getting equal rights in this country and setting standards for neighboring ones. If we can't be on the front lines ourselves, we can support those who can and are.

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NOTICES

GAY-LESBIAN HOTLINE TOLL FREE: Province-Wide Resource Mon.-Sat. 1-4 p.m. 1-800-566-1170. Mon. Wed. Friday 7 - 10 p.m. (Pacific times) Trained volunteers ready to listen, refer, offer peer support.

ADOPTED women support group for those who have found their birth parents. Contact Trish Sharp at 598-9426.

DYKES ON BIKES: Motorcyclists who want to ride in the parade should call Sue Ondre at 592-9162.

BOWLING: Once a month now. Dawn 595-7179 for info.

DROP-IN SOFTBALL: All levels welcome. Time change expected for summer so call Marion at 598-1257 before you grab your glove.

DYKE NON-FICTION: Free-read on loan from Lahl. She has great selection of poetry, culture, health and herstory. Call her at 995-0147 for appointment to view and select.

LESBIAN MENOPAUSE: Interested in starting a support group? Call Gloro 380-7098.

LESBIAN SOBRIETY GROUP: feminist support group for lesbians dealing with substance misuse, food/body image and survivor issues. An alternative to 12-

Step programmes. Meetings wed. 7 p.m. 3200, 506 Fort St. Call Cindy who tells us the programme is based on work of Charlotte Kasl.

SUPPORT GROUP: for lesbians with disabilities. Meet in a comfortable setting, second Thursday of the month from 1:30 to 4:00. Info, call Reva 388-4161/Sandy 656-2772.

CLASSIFIED ADS

VICTORIA LESBIAN SENIORS CARE SOCIETY DANCE: Sat. Sept. 7. To make you aware of their membership drive and to launch the new society and have a good time at the same time. Music is golden oldies. Tickets at SWAG and Everywomans and are \$10 and \$12 at the door if available. Cedar Hill Rec. Centre. Watch for details in the fall issue.

FOSTER CAT HOME NEEDED: for six months. Will pay food, vet bills. Cat, Sappho is four months and needs space with no other pets and a yard to play in. Call Gwynneth 598-2327. Time frame is Aug. to Feb. 97.

DO ME LIKE YOU DOO: The Muffs are Back! Friday August 9 from 8 to 1 a.m. at Polish Hall, 90 Dock Street. Naughty door prizes for eager beavers - come early! Tickets \$5 from Zydeco-\$7 at door. Women Only.

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Blind Date Productions: Gwyneth Powell, 598-2327

Bowling: Dawn H., 595-7179

Bridge: Marion S., 598-1257

Dyke Basketball: Off for now. Jahnett 380-6617

Dyke Dimensions Radio Show: Mondays 8:00-9:00 p.m. CFUV 104.3 FM Cable FM 101.9

Dyke Writers: Serious writers meet bi-weekly. Lahl, 995-0147

Lesbian Drop-in Softball: Marion, 598-1257

LesbiaNews: P.O. Box 5339, Station B, Victoria, V8R 6S4 Barbara, 598-6490

Lesbian Activity Group: 1st Thurs. every 2nd month 7 p.m. Terry 592-4276 (was Outdoor Club)

Lesbian Seniors Care Society: Sally, 388-6036

Lesbian Sobriety Group: Cindy 995-2567

Lesbian Social Group: Mary, 361-9568 or Iris, 389-6772 (was Very Nice Dykes)

MUSAIC: Lesbian and Gay Choir: Contact Daphne, 480-0024

P-FLAG: Information, 642-5171

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