

WOMYNSPACE COFFEEHOUSE MAY 1983 NEWSLETTER

MAY all the days of this month be at least somewhat sunny.....
MAY the April rain-soaked flowers sprout brightly.....
MAY these coming days be just the beginning
MAY all the good "maybes" become "yes's"
MAY we all share Springtime's sweetness..
MAY all this years festivals be fantastic...
MAY those dreams you're dreaming all come true..
MAY the memories we're making be well-worth remembering...
MAY, the merry, merry, month of May.....Maybe it will be !!!

You haven't lived until you've seen your friends as entertainers!! **Pat and Amy** brought the karioki (spelling ok?) machine to Womyn-space last month, and with **Denise** helping them to fearlessly lead us, we had a blast! The music videos from the machine were amazing enough, but then to hear the classics (**Elvira, It's my Party, New York, New York...**) done in such grand style by our very own.. it was at times, too much!!! Ladies, this is one show that should definately be on the road.... where's Willie Nelson ????. Thanks a lot, Pat & Amy for the great idea and all the prep work - the healthy snacks were a pleasant change from our usual junk, too!!

The now famous **MARCH ON WASHINGTON** has been firmly planted in history /herstory for all time. Whether you ignored it completely, watched the coverage from your living room, or personally took some part in it - that event, and the effects of it, will impact your life. Congrats to all who.. made plans, worked for it, actually went, those who tried to go, those who supported and helped those who went...and those who attentively and enthusiastically listened to all the stories, and looked at all the pictures!!

Hey, LGLV THANKS!!!! The roller skating party they spnsored April 29th was pretty cool. We had the entire place, no pressure, fantastic music, lots of employee assistance (and no hassles), and just in general, a great way to spend a Thursday evening. Events like these take a lot of planning, work, and organization. We all need to be aware, and supportive, of community events!! Altho, it is certainly no surprise that skating (and falling!) are not everyones favorite pasttimes!!! Jo showed us some of her expertise on the rink, and even the first-timers were entertaining!! Thanks to everyone who made the nite fun!

IF YOU DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING TO DO, OR YOU THINK THERE'S NOTHING HAPPENING.... IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP!!! Spring is bringing with it a myriad of events and activities. To find out most of what there is to know, get your hands on an Erie Gay Community Newsletter... you can get them at Cup-a-ccino's, the bars, Earthshine (in Edinboro), here at Womynspace, or get in touch with Lynne S, Deb S, or call the newsletter at *814 456-9833. More Subscribers would allow our great new source of great information to be even better! Pick one up and pass it on!!

FYI...The table of GROW's that was damaged is being repaired. We are having the whole thing refinished, and it should be done before we meet again.

Everybody Dance Now - AC + Music Factory

The schedule for the Womans Modified Softball League is finally done -and will be available in the next week or so. Hunters first game will be against Metro, May 24th, 5:45, 2nd and Pa field. There will be a Wednesday game that week also, 7:30 at 11th and Hess, against Sidetrax. The softball season and all its assorted entertainments has begun - come on out and be a part of it! Take the attached **CAR WASH** flyer somewhere and stick it up! Thanks!

Don't forget about Tuesday night bowling at Presque Isle Lanes - enter through the club doors, and roll on over to the lanes.

Indiana wants you... if you're interested in going to the Bloomington, Indiana Music Festival, there's a bunch of us already planning... maybe we'll see you there - info see Lynne or the EGCN festival listing.

The next Bridges dance is scheduled for the same night as June Womynspace. Mary Ann is hosting June and has said she would organize a volunteer party to help set up the dance in lieu of having Womynspace at GROW that nite...so we could attend the dance instead (or Indiana). The discussion will be tonite.

"Somewhere Over the Pride Rainbow" Dance - Jun 5

Yes! Another fabulous dance! Be there on Saturday, June 5th to help us celebrate National Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Pride Month! The cost will be \$5 (\$4 with a non-perishable food item for the AIDS Council of Erie County, Inc) and will run from 8 pm to 1 am.

* There will soon be a new and improved AIDS Council Newsletter.. look for it and pass it on! If you want to help, contact Deb S or Mike Mahler.

* Remember the **PRIDE PICNIC** is scheduled for June 12th!

* Check out the Outrage Festival/Film listings attached.....
Claire of the Moon has been attracting a lot of attention - might be worth the road trip!!!

May 15th, **Altazor** will be playing in Cleveland..they are a women's Pan-American acoustic quartet, presented by Oven Productions in cooperation with the Hispanic Cultural Center of Cleveland. Ford Auditorium 11000 Euclid Ave, 8pm \$13. (216) 321-7799.

10,000 Maniacs will be in concert at the Reg Lenna Civic Center in Jamestown, 116 W. 3rd...tickets at box office (716) 664-2465.

KATE CLINTON!!!!!! will host the Pittsburgh Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual parade and rally in Pittsburgh, June 26... could be a mini-Washington? (412) 363-2991 or see EGCNewsletter.

No details yet on Cris Williamson concert tentatively scheduled for **6/12**
Athena Bookstore in Cleveland may know more... (216) 371-1937

May 9 is the next **INTEGRITY** meeting/ instructional Eucharist 7pm St. **PAULS**



Editorette Note: There are an unusual number of editorials this month. This is not the norm... nor is it necessarily bad... this month, it's just necessary. So bear with us, ok? ok.

As editorette, I asked the "Mothers group" to write a letter to the womyn of Womynspace... I believe this sub group of our community is a very vital and positive idea. These are the womyn whose children will someday be our leaders, providers, and future. Although we all have a vested interest in them, it is a personal choice on how active that interest is. I knew my perspectives on mothers, children, and co-parents in our community, but I wanted to know more about their perspectives... so I asked. The following is what they wrote to us. My thanks to them for responding, my thanks to you for reading it. Next month we'll hear from the "childless". Regardless of perspectives, may we all exist together peacefully.

(This letter is a combined effort of the mothers group that meets once a month)

Dear Sisters,

We wanted to express our gratitude to womyn in our community for the time and energy that you give our children when we are together. You continue to be a positive role model for children everywhere, for you help to reinforce a very important value that we try to instill - "acceptance". Paental responsibility is a committment that we take quite seriously and we would ask for your understanding when it comes to social events. It is not as easy as putting on a coat and walking out the door when we go to social activities. It is an involved process of locating a babysitter, transportation, and long goodbyes to our children. We seeleasbian/gay families as people who live and love together, it does not necessarily always involve children. We see lesbian/gay families as a progression, not a regression. We have made an importan decision to raise children in a gay/lesbian culture that should reflect total acceptance. Yet we often feel we are not accepted in our own community. As mothers/co-parents we see a separatist attitude when it comes to male children. Planned activities that could include children have a preface of "adults only". Statements such as "how happy you are to be childless" can be hurtful to children who are near and also very difficult for children to process. Children look to adults for guidance, they look to you for acceptance.

Children accept everything - everyone. Descrimination is a learned, yet changeable, behavior. Our children do not look at you as a different person.. they look at you as a friend, someone to play softball with, or someone to share a hot dog with, or someone that once gave them a horsey-back ride. You are their friends!

And we hope that all of the wonderful, shared experiences with or without our children will continue. Respectfully,

CONGRATS, PATS, APPLAUSE, HOORAYS, AND KUDO'S TO.....

- ... Aunt Killer (aka Kel) ... for attending her first cat show.
Our world needs more devoted cat-womyn like you, Kel !!!!!
Ask her to share all her new found knowledge (cat-knowledge)
with you !
- ... Jo ... for making it to, and through, yet another birthday!!
- ... Jaybird ... for putting another candle on her age-cake June 1!!
- ... Kristen and Michelle... have bought a home!! They'll be moving soon, and
you know what that's like! They'll provide liquid refreshments and
pizza after the labors..they could really use some help..ask Lynne S
for their number and/or details!
- ...special thanks to Deb S, for all her help and input lately... you're doin'
great things, buddy... keep up the fantastic effort!!!
- ... all the volunteers who've hosted Womynspace in the past, present and
future....it wouldn't be Womynspace without 'ya!!

UPCOMING WOMYNSPACE'S.....

JUNE... MARY ANN and the DANCE

JULY... PAT O.... what cha got goin, Pat??

AUGUST..KATHLEEN / DIANE ...can't wait, kids!

SEPTEMBER.. EDIE AND CINDY - LOOK OUT!!!

OCTOBER... BARB AND DOR DO IT AGAIN!!!

NOVEMBER... THAT ONE IS MINE!!! (Lynne's)

DECEMBER... BAYBERRIES AND BEV!

**Any one of these gracious hostesses would probaby appreciate the offer of
assistance or ideas - if you want ot help, they'd love to hear from ya!**

some submissions.....

"As the movement for lesbian/gay acceptance and equality continues, we will need lesbian/gay people who are willing to speak to organizations, classes, the local newspapers, and on radio and TV. If this is something you think you'd like to do, please attend this meeting: **The Out and Proud meeting on May 2 at 2pm... at the Aids Council.** Your being in attendance doesn't mean you'll be pressured to act on this. The group is just in the talking stage now. Also, you needn't be an expert on gay politics or other gay issues to speak as a gay person. Oftentimes a professor or reporter just wants someone who will share their own personal experiences or opinions. For more info, call 456-9833."

"Recently the PTL Network (channel 44) aired a story about the anti-abortion movement. They also showed pro-choice demonstrators; the women wore wreaths on their heads and were shirtless (de rigeur dress for pro-choice actions, or so they imply). The voice-over linked pro-choice activism with "pagans, and when they showed the shirtless women, they blocked out their nibbies with crosses." Interesting stuff, eh?

Last month, we asked about whether to continue this newsletter, or just join with the EGCN Newsletter. We asked for responses, as this is your newsletter. The following are the received responses. In fairness, know that the unspoken negative responses were also heard. In light of all this, here's the net result: I'll keep putting out as long as you keep putting in. (thats a direct quote from me, but feel free to use it in any situations you feel it's appropriate!!) If there's no input or interest, there won't be a newsletter. Pretty simple, eh?? We believe this closes the issue - WHEW!!

April 27, 1993

Dear Editorettes and Womynspace Community:

In the previous Womynspace newsletter, Lynne S. raised the question about whether to go on publishing the Womynspace Newsletter or "join forces" with us at the Erie Gay Community Newsletter. Lynne told me that people hadn't been calling up to give the newsletter (heretofore WSN) any news, and as a result the WSN was becoming something of an echo of EGCN.

As a co-editor of the EGCN, I must say that I would be very saddened to see the WSN stop publication. Your newsletter is a very important and necessary part of the Womynspace community. Some thoughts:

1. By sharing information about what's going on in each other's lives, WSN creates an atmosphere at the coffeehouse that encourages a sense of community and discourages the development of cliques. Think about how this works: if info just gets shared only among those who see each other a lot, these people will naturally participate more, others will feel left out, etc. Womynspace really is remarkable in its absence of cliques, and I have to think the WSN has a lot to do with that.
2. The Erie Gay Community Newsletter would be happy to publish just about everything that now goes into the WSN. But EGCN goes out to the community at large and the majority of Womynspace folks seem to feel uncomfortable about going public with Womynspace activities. If the WSN newsletter ceases, where will you find out about the picnics, softball games, parties and such? Where are you going to find out about what's what's going on with everybody? Do you really want to publicize these things through us?
3. At EGCN, our resources and space are limited. What that means is that, even if we have the desire to print all kinds of stuff, we simply don't have the money (hint, hint) to be large enough to accomodate everything we get. So we prioritize articles and info, using criteria like timeliness, interest to the LesBiGay community at large, balance (female-male, serious-light, upbeat-bummer, etc.), tie-ins with current organizing efforts, and so on. We scrunch as much in there as we can, but there's always a lot that gets left out, too.

WSN, on the other hand, is wide-open to just about anything. You don't really want to lose such a resource, do you?

4. WSN really sets a tone for Womynspace. The friendly, affirming, supportive, over-the-fence chatty style it is written in provides a model for relationships within the coffeehouse community and gives newcomers a comfortable introduction to that community. Michael Mahler, who is co-editor of EGCN, was so impressed with WSN and its contribution to building community that he started up a newsletter for the Men's Coffeehouse, modeling it after WSN.
5. The Womynspace Newsletter and the Erie Gay Community Newsletter serve two different purposes. One is not more important than the other; rather, they complement each other.

Some thoughts on how to address the concerns of the Editorettes:

EDITORETTE ??!!

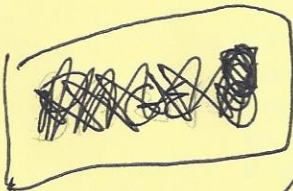
1. First, you start with getting some kind of indication of how many people use, read and need the WSN. I'm pretty confident that people will respond positively, but let's just start out by asking...say, at the next coffeehouse. I hope the Editorettes will not be discouraged if nobody else actually wrote down their opinions and submitted them to WSN; most people hate to write, and the fact that they didn't write anything doesn't necessarily mean they don't care.
2. Agree on some guidelines about what belongs in the newsletter, what belongs in the announcements, and what deserves mention in both.

★★ I have heard complaints that people take up coffeehouse time with announcements, which could have been just as effectively--or more effectively--communicated through the newsletter, thus freeing up time for socializing and such.

Another problem with reliance on announcements is, unless you are there when they're being made, you don't get the information. Information in the WSN, however, can be taken in just as well by women who arrive late or who weren't able to get to the coffeehouse.

You don't need to be rigid about the suggested guidelines, but it might help route things to where they belong.

3. It's possible that Womynspace people may not know what kind of participation or communication the Editorettes



SUBSCRIBE TO BUFF PITTS CLEVE ♀ PAPERS FOR NEWS TO INCLUDE IN THE WSN w/ \$ FROM COFFEEHOUSE



DRAWINGS FOR WSN - BEACH, SOFTBALL, ETC.



REINSTATE SUGGESTION BOX w/ QUESTIONAIRES

PG 6.

would like from them. This could be discussed with the group at the next available opportunity.

4. I am sure it would help the morale of the Editorettes if Womynspace people consciously and verbally recognized the contributions that they make to this community. That's not a call for phony, mechanical thank-you's... it's just that a healthy community needs its members to be appreciative of each other and to express that appreciation to one another.

In love & sisterhood,
deb spielko

PS: Editorettes--please know that I would be happy to help you out in anyway I can.

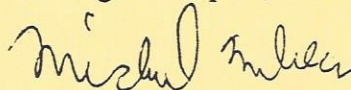
April 28, 1993

Dear Editorettes:

I am writing about the fabulous newsletter you do for Womynspace. I have heard that there was some consideration given to the idea of merging with the *Erie Gay Community Newsletter*. As a member of the editorial staff, I would like to say just how enjoyable and important your publication is and how much it needs to continue! Your newsletter serves a very important function in building community in your group. As you may be aware, we are trying to do a similar newsletter for the Men's Coffeehouse that was inspired by yours.

One of the reasons that I feel so strongly about this is that I believe that lesbians in this culture suffer the sting of discrimination both for being women and for being gay. I feel it is especially vital that they have their own forums and space. Erie's lesbigay community is incredibly and wonderfully diverse; I don't think any single publication could address all of the needs and interest that are out there. I really like the chatty, humorous and friendly tone in your newsletter, and I think it is one of the reasons that Womynspace has been around for so long. Please keep up the splendid work!

Yours with great respect,



Michael Mahler
EGCN Editorial Staff

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