

A LESBIAN COMMUNIQUE

Rubyfruit

BOX 949 FELTON CA

Readher!



DEAR YOU'RE



JULY 1976 VOL. 1 ISS. 6

Also:
DEAR dee
UNCOVER STORY
LETTERS & MORE

DEAREST RUBY: LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Ruby,

Sorry I'm so slow in getting this off to you. I've been running around in circles the past few days getting things together. When the next issue goes out I'd also like to put another ad in again. By then I will have my phone number and my shop will be better organized. Thanx--

The Lady Bug Mechanic

RR-Thanks for your support, Lynne! Keep those cards and letters coming, folks, Remember, ads are only \$1.

Dear RR

An event occurred Friday Night (6/25) at the University presenting a video/doc. on childcare produced by three S.C. womyn. The event was well attended by the lesbian womyn's community, the workers at local childcare sites and interested community people. The video dealt specifically with worker control at C.C.C. and since the staff was predominantly womyn, this has particular relevance to the womyn's movement today. Gaining control over our lives means finding ways to change the old sexist, alienating, hierarchical, bureaucratic patterns of relating as workers and sisters. We want to thank all womyn who attended, gave thoughtful criticism and showed great love and support for the work of their sisters.

Love, Zoe and Pam

The Womyn's Coffeehouse of Santa Cruz was created to give the womyn of this community an alternative space in which to come together and enjoy one another's company. We are a nonprofit organization and need the support of our sisters in order to keep this space open. The 8 womyn of the collective volunteer their time and energy. We would like to hear from other womyn who wish to share their creativity or information with other womyn in the community. The coffeehouse collective meetings are held Mondays at 5pm at 122 2nd Ave near the yacht harbor 425-0788 or 427-2908 and are open to any womyn.

Counseling Collective...a counseling techniques group will be starting in August for six, one night a week, meetings. It will be led by Jerry Soloman, who works at community counseling. Six to eight womyn are needed. There are no requirements to attend, just a willingness to learn to listen. This is a way for us to support one another. Contact Sherril at 426-2330 for more information, not later than July 16.

PRESENTING

A Video/Documentary by Pam Springer and Zoe Horner
NOTHING IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM: RECONSTRUCTION IN VIETNAM.....

The community showing will take place wed July 7, at 8:30pm in the Video Theatre/Communications bldg. UCSC

2.



Our Chests Are Strong, Our Breasts Are Beautiful

When it's too hot, do you wish you could just take off your top? Well, you can in Santa Cruz County, if you're not on state land & if nobody complains. Whether you want to endure the harassment & scrutiny of the public, including the obnoxious men who roam the streets, is another matter. The male officer there told me it was against the law according to the Penal Code #314. I asked if officers were instructed, if nobody has complained, to do anything on seeing a bare-chested woman. He replied, "Pretty much no". He also said there hasn't been much problem this year. A female officer gave me her opinion. "There's no longer a county ordinance prohibiting toplessness, but there is a county ordinance prohibiting public nudity in all but specified areas. The Penal Code says to me that it depends on the circumstances. If it's not offending anyone, it's not a problem." The laws are vague, the answers are varied and legality goes further than 1 officer's opinion. The decision is yours. Ruby supports the Bare Chesting Campaign this summer and suggests that you uncover with friends & that you aren't doing anything illegal. "misdeemeanor" for every person who willfully & lewdly exposes his (sic) person or the private parts thereof in any public place or any place where there are present other persons to be offended or annoyed thereby". So the decision is up to the discretion of the interpreting officer, & there seem to be different interpretations.

The male officer at the



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The toplessness issue has been with Santa Cruz for some time. In 1972, a woman was arrested for being topless on the beach. She pled not guilty because of discrimination and won the case. That summer, 13 womyn, 1 child & 2 attorneys marched down the mall bare-chested to celebrate her victory.

Toplessness was intentionally omitted from the county nudity ordinance of Sept. 1974. The ordinance prohibits nudity everywhere except on the beach north of the city limits and on the beach just north of the Capitola pier. There is no SC city ordinance concerning toplessness. Capitola, however, has a city ordinance "whereby females must keep their chests covered while on the beach".

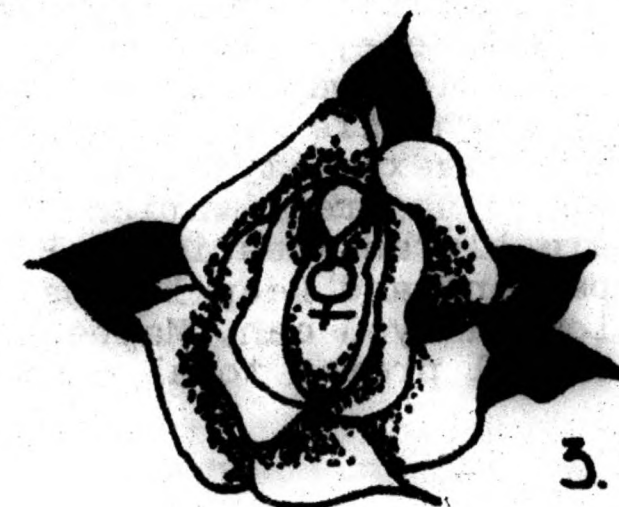
California Penal Code #314 could be loosely interpreted as defining toplessness as a misdemeanor "for every person who willfully & lewdly exposes his (sic) person or the private parts thereof in any public place or any place where there are present other persons to be offended or annoyed thereby". So the decision is up to the discretion of the interpreting officer, & there seem to be different interpretations.

The male officer at the

sherriff's desk told me it was completely legal for womyn to be topless. He cited the confusion in laws & when asked about action resulting from complaints said, "Even if some one complains, our hands are tied". I then called the city police. The male officer there told me it was against the law according to the Penal Code #314. I asked if officers were instructed, if nobody has complained, to do anything on seeing a bare-chested woman. He replied, "Pretty much no". He also said there hasn't been much problem this year.

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3.

Dear Dee 2



Dear Dee,

My girlfriend refuses to call herself a lesbian --insisting that she is a free spirit. Although she doesn't relate to men, except on a theoretical level, she will not break from those final, male-insured privileges that free spirits seem to enjoy. She loves the survival comforts that people responsible for her give her for being one of them. And she does this all at the expense of the women she is constantly copping out on, seemingly oblivious to the fact that we are her main source of fulfillment --however furtive. I know that she is afraid to take a stand about even considering coming out because a safe space for that decision doesn't exist in the 'walk the line' conditions that she lives under. How can I help her decide one way or the other, but preferably in the hopes that I will be her...

Closet Crasher

toward other women to her current half and half routine.

Sincerely,
Dee Queer

Darling Dee,

I know that fetishes are a common occurrence, but I have never come across one before this. My lover has a foot fetish. Normally, I suppose I wouldn't mind and actually it can be quite nice at times -- in moderation-- but she is an extremist. I've tried to get her interested in the rest of my body and soul, but all she seems to care for are my feet. And I'm tired of playing footsies! I feel there is more to me than just my feet and I resent her not noticing. I am almost at my wits end on how to deal with this and have taken to wearing shoes as much as possible in her presence. Please help me to move her vision up and onward. I've got the...

Foot Fondled Blues

Dear Closet Crasher Hopeful,

Having been raised and poisoned since birth by an arrow straight society does not leave a woman much space to open herself up about being gay. The family as nucleus people never liked us queers. If the women-love around and within your friend is not enough to help her brave the outside, then she is not ready yet. Persuading her otherwise would only remove the decision from her own hands. Remember, some women are happier wishywashing their way through life on the tightrope of 'bisexuality' than facing up to the realization that they are blatant lesbians. But be patient and keep loving her as long as you can. Maybe someday she'll prefer total commitment

Dear Blues,

Did you know that the foot holds the tingling nerve endings from every single part of your body? Do you know what this means? If expertly handled, and I assume your friend is an expert, womynipulation of the foot can bring complete relaxation or inconceivable pleasure to the rest of your body and soul, depending on the pressure, method, and sense in which it is touched. Are you, in your right mind, ready to throw such a friend away? If so, please have her contact me, lonely Dee, care of this paper as soon as she is free.

Viva la Foot Fondlers!!

Sincerely,

D. Queer
P.O.Box 949
Felton, C.

4.

Where lesbians' children are welcome

To meet their childcare needs last fall, mothers and child-responsible womyn in the Santa Cruz Women's Health Collective decided to form their own collectively-run playgroup. Six children were initially involved, but finances necessitated expansion. This spring, children were invited to join from outside the SCWHC, and the playgroup has become increasingly independent. Now, however, a group of children have left, and the continuation of the playgroup is seriously threatened financially unless more children join soon.

This playgroup is of particular importance to the lesbian community because it has the rare quality of being a place where children of lesbians can be truly open about their home lives. At present, half of the children involved have lesbian mothers. Fighting the sexist, heterosexist and other oppressive ideas that surround us constantly is an important objective of the collective.

Parents and childcare workers meet regularly to discuss the children's interactions and progress, as well as the practical matters related to running a playgroup. They have developed a consistent structure that insures the continuity and security children need. Emphasis is placed on the children feeling comfortable with their bodies and their emotions and developing necessary social skills.

If you know a child, approximately 2½-6, who would benefit from our playgroup experience (weekday afternoons), or if you are interested in donating energy, supplies or money, please call Maureen immediately at 426-7967 or at 426-DYKE weekday afternoons.

→ALERT←

As a gesture of retribution toward a wife who said that she no longer loved him, an angry and confused father has kidnapped two preschool children. The three have been roaming the country since March 6. If you have any information about their whereabouts, please help a sister, their grieving mother, by calling collect to 207-363-2807.

Elias Howell, age 4, short, slim and very fair, with a haystack shock of pinky-blond hair. Formerly a very outgoing child, he is now reported to be somewhat withdrawn.

Aaron Howell, age 5, slim and darker skinned, with straight brown hair. Aaron has had a below-the-elbow amputation of his right arm. He is also now reported to be very quiet and depressed.

Their father is A.E. (Erv or Ervin) Howell, 6'1", with thinning/greying sandy hair and rimless glasses. Formerly an orthopedic surgeon, he may try to practice medicine again.

They have been traveling by car (Vermont license GU 929) and staying in motels. Please do not confront the father, for he is sometimes irrational and very suspicious. An immediate telephone call may help rescue these children!!!

5.

Support Women in Prisons and Jails

FRIENDS,
WE HAVE
BEEN WARNED NOT
TO PARTICIPATE, OR
ALL OF OUR PRIVILEGE
SUCH AS CANTINE, ONCE A
WEEK VISITING, 2 HOURS ^{DAILY} - TELEPHONE
AND COFFEE, WILL BE TAKEN
AWAY. ALSO WE WILL MAKE IT
HARD FOR ONE OF OUR INMATES
WHO IS 6 MONTHS PREGNANT. BUT
KEEP IT UP - WE ARE SILENTLY
CHEERING YOU ON.

YOUR
SISTERS

(see story next page)

6.

Santa Cruz Prisoner Support

On Monday, June 15 a rally was held on the steps of Front St. Jail to oppose the busing of womyn from that facility to the S.F. county jail in San Bruno. The one hundred people (Mostly womyn) who gathered to protest the action want to see alternatives to busing implemented for the increasing numbers of womyn being arrested and put into the Front St. jail.

Many of these womyn are arrested on drug charges. This means they cannot be granted pre-trial release "privilege". To bus these womyn to S.F. where they are removed from their families and their public defenders is a measure which is unnecessarily cruel and alienating to these womyn who need help and support in their lives.

We do not want to see the overcrowding of Front St. jail used as a justification for a new law-enforcement complex in Santa Cruz. Renovation of the jail could be done to house inmates more humanely and decently. There are several groups in Santa Cruz working hard to set up alternatives for these womyn. i.e. encouraging people to take responsibility to house pre-trial womyn, putting pressure on county parole to parole womyn from the Graham Hill probation center so pre-trial and sentence womyn from Front St. could be moved to that facility.

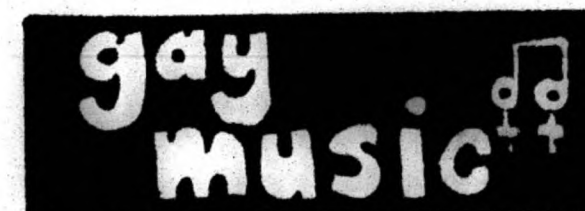
The S.C. womyn's prisoner support group feels committed to supporting these womyn by helping to make available more adequate and decent conditions for them during the difficult times of awaiting trial and being sentenced.

We strongly urge womyn to help put pressure on the supervisors to stop these disgusting measures which are implemented for the gain of those who desire harsher and more rigid controls vis-a-vis a new expensive law enforcement complex. We will not allow these womyn to be used in this way any longer.

The rally was exciting and encouraging in that it clearly expressed how much support there is for changing conditions which perpetuate the oppression of womyn and men who are struggling to survive in this society where money, class, race and sex dictate how we are treated.

We strongly need support of all kinds. Please contact the womyn prisoner support group if you can provide resources, ideas, and energy. 425-0639

The included letter was sent out to the demonstrators from the womyn inside the county jail. This gave all of us, demonstrator and prisoners alike, a great sense of unity and strength.



The room was full, the music started flowing, musical voices filling the room, reaching out and touching all who were open to the feelings. Guitars being played, fingers moving across the strings, the music flowed out. Feet keeping time, heads and bodies moving with the rhythm of the music; yes, the music just flowed out and met those who were listening. Many songs, many feelings, the music filled the room, filled the night.

Thanks to Brenda, Clytia, Liz, Pat, Chris, Jo, Alan, and Blackberry for an enjoyable evening during LAGMU's recent Gay Pride Week, held June 17-20.

7.

AN UNFINISHED CHANT IN FIVE PARTS

by Judy Greenspan

I.

the dust is settling/clearing
as if a great storm were over
the moment of our rebirth
a painful cleansing process
a process caught in the midst
of change

II.

I am a lesbian
I once said
we are all lesbians
I do not retract that statement
I am not afraid
for the past two years
I have been trying
to bridge the gap
between rhetoric and reality
between words and revolution
I have not written many poems
The words have cracked/dried
inside
caught between a hostile world
and one I am trying to create
it is not enough
to be only a lesbian

III.

I have seen my body
shattered/scattered
all around this city
in the bowry, park slope,
bedford stuyvesant
in welfare offices, unemployment
lines, hospital emergency rooms
The pieces are falling
stumbling back into place
an army is forming

IV.

lesbianism ain't enough these days
to buy my groceries
cause it ain't gonna bring those
prices down
lesbianism ain't enough to keep
me from getting laid off
from my job
cause we are unemployed like everybody
else
lesbianism ain't enough to free
Jill and Ellen and Terri
cause I spent some time in jail
it ain't enough

(Cont. next page)

to pay the rent/heat/subway fare
lesbianism just ain't enough
to make a revolution

V.

sifting through the ashes
of the past ten years
from the atom bomb
to Vietnam
from Montgomery
to Fred Hampton's Chicago apartment
from friedan to the lavender menace
our rallies/marches
casualties/liberation
I cannot find the words
to name this change
our struggle
good rhetoric makes bad poetry
This poem an unfinished chant
an early morning dream
words brewed for two years
spilling
bursting in incomplete rhythms
I am a lesbian
but caught between rhetoric
and reality
between womyn identified womyn
and the default of new york city
it is no longer enough

The READHER is published
monthly by a collective
of 6 womyn. We have open
meetings at 10 a.m. Fri-
days at Pergolisi's. The
READHER is supported by
your community response
alone. We need your don-
ations: monetary, liter-
ary, time, energy and
feedback. Send all cor-
respondence to:

Rubyfruit Reader
Box 949
Felton, Ca. 95018

..Whats happening at
the WOMYN'S Coffeehouse...
41st & Portals 7:30-10:30
Thurs. 1st Cackie &
Rebecca
8th Poetry Reading
Joan & Open
15th Nancy Shaw
Slides of ♀ in China
22nd Chris Condos
29th Open Jam
All ♀ Welcome...

loving ourselves

by karen belford

Womyn have been conditioned for so long to base our feelings and behavior on others.

We feel worthy when others "love" us/approve of us.

We feel happy when we're sure everyone else is happy.

We may feel insecure and weak when we're not noticed (when we don't stand out in a crowd...The Number One...)

We feel shitty when someone disapproves.

We fought each other for so long, with competition and jealousy because we were basing our feelings on men--thinking we needed their approval and special attention.

We bought the lie that we reach maturity when we marry--seeking still to join the Motherhood "sorority". Only then would we be called women.

It's a long process to decondition ourselves, to unlearn the damage, to base our feelings, actions, behavior, on our own selves and know that we are always beauty-full human beings at our cores--whether or not anyone tells us (verbally or otherwise). We must cultivate the tools to appreciate and energize ourselves and then from there--we have the strength to share that love with another or others.

There are two areas of blocks along this path that I want to speak to in this article. On one side we are waiting to judge on the other side we are judging.

Many of us have stopped basing our feelings on men but we have simply transferred that need for external affirmation onto other womyn.

I watch myself being tempted to do certain "Things" to get approval--to be "tough"...to be part of a couple...to hate men... as well as to fall into the same trap with womyn of slowly but surely basing my behavior on the validation and appreciation of my sisters. I want to emphasize here that I don't think its harmful to receive validation and appreciation from each other but we must use it as a tool to reach the first-priority love, which is that of ourselves. Also, the appreciation we give each other must be for that basic Beauty at the core of our sisters' being, whether we agree with all her particular actions or not. This includes dealing with those particular actions we find so uncomfortable, by learning to criticize with love, and know our anger is not hate.

We also perpetuate the tendency to base our feelings on others by granting and withholding our love/acceptance: "I love you when you be this way and this way..." Whatever the particular standards any of us have decides is right...civilised... "alternative"...whole...liberated, etc...we still tend to measure other womyn up to that standard and then grant or withhold our love and acceptance. I see womyn being shut out, feeling inferior, for being heterosexual...or housewives...or heading in conventional directions. As a result they are often totally turned off to womyn.

(continued next page) 10.

(loving ourselves, cont.)

But these womyn are out sisters too! These womyn are beautiful and radiant too!

What I ask, my sisters, is that we love each other and we find the means to help each other live healthy lives. I ask that we create a warm, safe environment supportive to all our sisters to change, grow, and learn to love ourselves as well as each other.

A fine friend wrote this song: (this is part of it)

I don't need you, I just love you

I don't need you, I just love you

I'm a womyn, I'm a womyn, I'm a female person

And I don't need your loving to make me complete

I'm a womyn, I'm a womyn, I'm a complete person

And I've got everything that I'll ever need.

Wages Due Lesbians

Wages Due Lesbians (Toronto) invites all womyn to a conference on lesbians and the wages for housework campaign. July 23-25, in Toronto, will be an international panel of lesbian womyn from Canada, England, and the U.S. talking about autonomy, and why our own organisations are necessary in order to guarantee that we won't have to hide our lesbianism and that more and more womyn will have the power to choose whether to be lesbian or not. Lesbian autonomy is in the interest of everyone fighting for sexual choices and full human liberation.

Sexuality--What does it do to our sex lives to always be thinking about having to go to work in the kitchen, typing pool, or on the assembly line the next morning? How the state organizes our sexuality through abortion laws, population control, and wagelessness, and how our fight against it explodes the separation between "personal" and "political".

There will be informal sessions on areas like: closets, lesbians in smaller towns, relationships, conflicts with straight womyn etc.

Child Custody--One of the most important fights we are making is to be able to be a lesbian without losing either our children or the possibility of having children.

We urge individuals and groups to write statements for the conference on any or all of the above areas, for the discussion which we hope will be as open and as full as possible. These papers, and any other materials should be sent to:

WAGES DUE LESBIANS

P.O. Box 38, Station E

Toronto, Ontario

(416 466-7457/465-6822)

(Contact RR for more exact directions to the location)

ACROSS

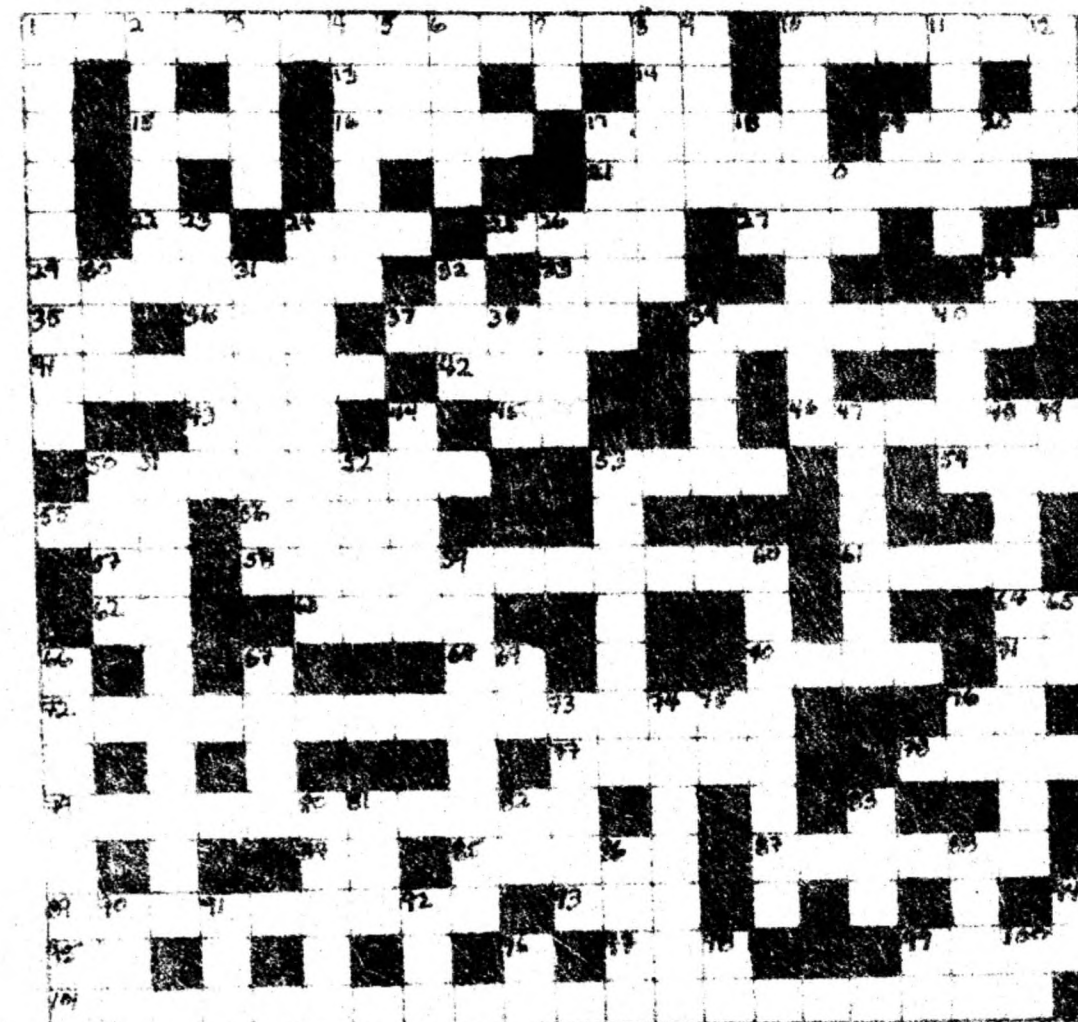
1. lesbian ruler of Sweden
10. rubyfruit-
13. opposite of in
14. each, one
15. mischiveous
16. to engrave w/acid
17. settled
19. not preferrable food
21. _____ King
22. providing that
24. also
25. ah
27. self
29. Sometimes pierced
33. tavern
34. see 14
35. this publication (ab)
36. Tokyo, a former name
37. Frodo's county
39. 7 yr itch
41. Doris _____
42. before
43. pretending to be shy
45. editor (ab)
46. candy paste w/almonds
50. bigger portion (3wds)
53. chronicle columist
54. aged
55. beer
56. mid-western state
57. cervical opening
58. tongue-in-clit
61. cleanser
62. type of skin test
63. sapphic socialist shopping system
64. carry-out
68. see 57
70. we all have them
71. US_A
72. way of producing females
76. Lynne Mitschke's cat
77. like an ape
78. more radical lesbian
79. "they all look alike to me"
84. regarding
85. used with thou
87. _____ recently come out
89. those who write
93. to be dishonest
95. negative
97. to and _____
99. floating bird
101. popular Thurs nite place

DOWN

1. Amazon publication
2. a tincture, essence
3. back of neck
4. using a hoe
5. in a groove
6. irritation of the skin
7. toward
8. Amazon
9. fag fixation
10. the Common Womon
11. terrific
12. _____ out
17. impending doom
18. _____ de France
19. myself
20. one, any
0. her B-day song
23. plaster painting
24. no name
26. employed
28. amidst
30. to be
31. idiot-like
32. her
34. thus, while
38. wrath
39. Susan
40. therefore
44. prefix w/ sexual or parent
47. better than cheesecake
48. seperatist songwriter
49. she likes older womyn
50. more
51. lesbian bandits
52. possesses
53. magic spell
59. only possible connection between eating out, fatherless daughters, and a neuter sex
60. lesbiate and _____ state
65. through, by
66. evident
67. scat
69. southeast
73. of the nose
74. womyn friends
75. exists
76. at, beside
80. hominy
81. aye
82. uncertian stutter
83. beer

cont. next page...
12.

Queerest Crossword

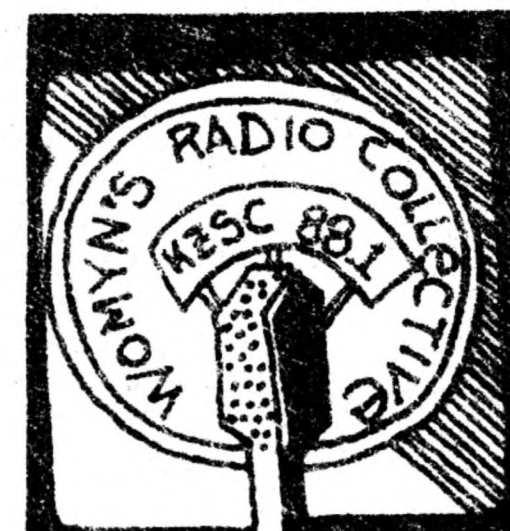


DOWN CONT.

86. existance
88. tired gesture
90. pig, female
91. donkey
92. part of foot
94. above
96. magazine
98. _____
99. South America
100. near, by

(The answers to the queerest crossword puzzle will be posted @ 2 SISTERS ON 41ST AVE.)

is the old folks giving
YA TROUBLE?
see the ladybug
Mechanic @
311 Thurber
475 4945



ON YER FM DIAL...

two sisters

Restaurant

Vegetarian food open 8-10p
everyday but Thurs.
Thurs. Nite... WOMYN'S coffeehouse.
41 St. & Portola

PEANUT BUTTER OATMEAL

cookies (ARE very good.)

1/2 cup shortn
3/4 cup honey
1 egg
1/2 cup p. Butter
1 1/2 cups flour
(But add more flour to thicken)

1 1/2 cups oatmeal
1 teaspoon Baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoon o.j
@ 375° for
10 (Ten) mins.

Roving Ruby

This month Ruby asked:

How do you feel about the Bare Your Chest Campaign this summer? Will you support it?

Lauren Playworks nonincorporated

People should be able to go naked anytime. I'd feel uncomfortable taking my shirt off on the mall but I'll do it on the beach.

Sybil Playworks nonincorporated

If men are able to, then womyn should be able to. I don't wear a bra, why wear a shirt.

Terri

I do it all the time. Sure I'll do it.

Pat Smith one of our favorites

If I felt there was support, like being with enough womyn I'd do it. I've never done it but on the nude beach.

Dana bi from Idaho

There's nothing that should be embarrassing about the female body. Sure I'll do it. Since it's not publicly accepted I'll do it mostly on the beach.

Jann the Schneib

I do it alot at public beaches. People occasionally say things but I do it. It's legal except on state beaches and I do it there too.

Namascar computer programer of the Lesbian Body

I didn't know there was a campaign. Yes, I support it. I was on the beach with a male friend of a friend the other day. I took off my shirt and nothing happened except he got embarrassed. A woman baring her chest is an ancient act of defiance.

Crystal

I'd do it where I wouldn't be hassled. I did it last year downtown and got hassled so now I'll do it on the beach.

Serena Oui calendar womon

There shouldn't be any laws against victimless crimes. I didn't know about it but I'll do it now.

Linda baker

I really support it in principle, but I wouldn't take my shirt off just anywhere 'cause I wouldn't like men leering at my tits.

Brenda dyke about town

Oh no, not that again!

Nancy & Sherry ann dairy goat farmers from Auburn, Ca.

We do it on the American River but are always scared we'll get raped. About 2 monthes ago a group of lesbians got beat up. We do it around family groups.

WE NEED MONEY
\$END SOME \$OON!