



D.C. Women's Center M A R . 77

spring fever dance !

The Washington Area Women's Center is sponsoring a celebration of our long-awaited Spring with a SPRING FEVER DANCE!!! We have planned a great evening- one you won't want to miss! A Dance Contest is scheduled with prizes for women rated highest in the "Hustle", the "Limbo" and "Most Original Step".... And there will be plenty of time to practice with six hours of woman-selected music with a wide representation to please everybody- plenty of disco, women's music and slow tunes.

If you have children, they will be admitted free. A child care coop may be



forming for mothers who wish to take rotating shifts in child care (call the Women's Center for details). If you are a center member, \$2.50 will get you into the greatest Women's Center event yet! (non-members- \$3.50). Beer, tea, wine, soda and cider will be sold and you can eat all the munchies you want for free!!

Come to the Women's Spring Fever Dance and help us joyously celebrate the coming of a beautiful season. That's Sat., March 26th, 9pm-2am at All Souls, 16th & Harvard, NW---- AND BRING YOUR BEST WOMANFRIENDS!!!

SAT., MARCH 26; ALL SOULS CHURCH - 9 pm

Announcements !

A GAY DANCE is scheduled for March 12th, 8pm-2am, at GW's Marvin Center, 21st and H Sts, NW, 3rd floor ballroom. A mere \$3.00 will get you in for a great evening and FREE beer, wine and soft drinks! Proceeds will go to Gay Switchboard. Call Herbert Gingold for more info, at 965-3128.

MARGIE ADAM IS COMING TO DC!!!! A concert is scheduled for April 7th at 8pm at Lisner Auditorium, 21st and H Sts, NW. Tickets are available at Lammas and GWU Marvin Ctr. Info. Desk. Call the Center or Ann Ailes for details: 543-4129.

HELP!!!! FIRST THINGS FIRST (BOOKS FOR WOMEN) is moving around the corner to 18th St., NW. We need lots of help moving, cleaning, repairing, painting, etc... If you have any spare time between now and March 6th or if you can donate materials (paint, rug, desk, plants, scotch tape-- anything!) please call us at 234-2722. Thanks!

JOB OPENING: p/t coordinator wanted for DC based women's health clearinghouse. Knowledge of women's health issues, and research experience necessary. 20 hrs. per week, low salary. Send resume to National Women's Health Network, Box 24192, DC 20024. (hiring mid-April)

Meeting: "AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN THE GOVERNMENT" on March 2, at Marty Lafall's. CWPA members will speak. Call 275-7696 for more info.

The DC Gay Switchboard is a free public service organization which provides peer counseling and referrals to the Lesbian and gay men's communities in Washington. There is currently a need for more Lesbians on our volunteer staff of operators. To be an operator for Gay Switchboard you must participate in five, three hour training workshops. If interested in joining call the volunteer training committee chairwoman Sherry Barnhill, at 528-0027.

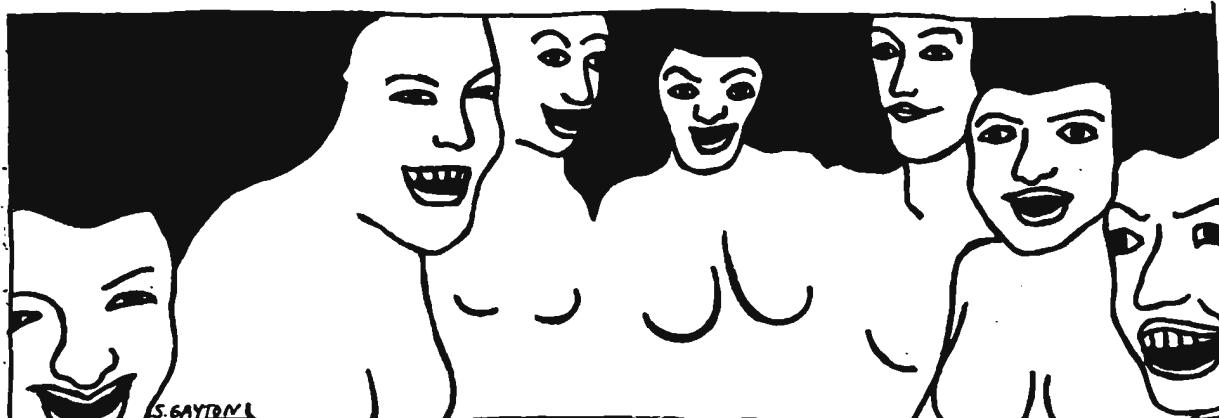
P ST. PAPERWORKS, an anti-profit women's collective, is beginning classes in silkscreen design and printing. Classes will be held every month and will meet for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. each week for four weeks. They offer introduction to various methods of silkscreening with emphasis on photosilkscreen. Fee is \$30.00, which includes all supplies. For more info., contact P St. Paperworks, Quaker House, 2121 Decatur Pl, NW, calling 347-4700.

Gay Students at GW meet weekly on Wednesdays, 8 pm, at GW Marvin Center, 5th floor lounge, with program for gay community. Call Herbert Gingold at 965-3128 for details.

Every Sunday from 1pm-3pm the wives of the striking Post pressmen walk a picket line in front of the house of Katherine Graham, president of the Post. They are there to let Ms. Graham know that they haven't given up and to make passersby aware of the continuing struggle. Since February, they have been joined by other women and would welcome your support. Call Ilona O'Sullivan at 938-0930 for more info. or meet them at 1pm every Sunday at 30th and R Sts, NW, across from Dumbarton Cemetery in Georgetown.

UPDATE: Rosemary Bramble (see last newsletter) has been transferred to the Federal Reformatory, Alderson, W. Va. 24910.

Like Natural Foods??? Try THE COUNTRY CUPBOARD, 3750 Howard Avenue, Kensington, Maryland. Sue Forward will sell you herb teas, spices, natural grains and beans, or exotic coffees. Her tea room (opening approx. March 1st) will provide the setting for fine vegetarian snacks, as well as pastries to satisfy your sweet tooth. Call 949-0983 for details.



A Women's Bank?

The committee to organize the Women's National Bank has been working for two years on the preliminaries necessary for chartering. On January 3, 1977 their charter application was denied by the US comptroller of the currency. Reasons given for the denial were that the women on the bank's board were not qualified, small banks in the District are already having difficulty competing, and the application failed to show evidence of credit discrimination against women and of the uniqueness of the services. This came as a shock to the organizing committee, as they had maintained close contact with the regional comptroller's office and been virtually assured of approval; in fact, they had been specifically discouraged from including information in their application that they were later faulted for not providing. They applied to the comptroller for a reconsideration citing mishandling of their case and prejudicial communications made to the comptroller's office by outside parties. Although not admitting to any mistakes, the comptroller granted a review on February 1. The committee has elected some new Board members and is still seeking deposit pledges and letters of support from women and women's organizations.

Originally the group working on the bank was very idealistic, but it has evolved in a more pragmatic direction; their goal is to have a successful business. Only then, they feel, will they be able to do things for women. Banks are restricted by federal and local regulations in the services they can offer. According to Emily Womach, who will be president of the Women's Bank, their essential difference will be one of attitude. They will offer respectful, "personalized" service, so that every customer will have one banker s/he deals with. It will be possible to get small loans and loans requiring only one signature; the bank will provide credit counselling and try to refer women who cannot get loans from them to "people who can help". As with many women's banks, they will offer seminars on credit, investment and other financial matters. Ms. Womach feels they will have con-

siderable financial expertise to offer the women's movement. In particular, women's businesses may benefit, because they are not specifically covered by the credit discrimination laws. Even though this is the Women's Bank, it will not be run and supported solely by women. Most, but not all, of the officers and Board members will be women; depositors include both men and women. Corporation support is necessary to improve the bank's financial standing. The organizing committee is hoping to get large corporate deposits as part of affirmative action programs.

Opinions on the political significance of the Women's Bank vary considerably. On the one hand, it represents our entry into a traditionally male profession and seat of power. It is a proof (if any were needed!) of our competence. If it is part of a trend, it will challenge male domination of concentrated wealth. From another perspective, it will not make much difference to the majority of us. Many of the reasons we cannot get credit are not related to overt discrimination: they are tied to our employment in low-paying jobs, to our being considered the most expendable workers, to conditions which make it necessary for us to put our families before our jobs. Even to a women's bank, we would still be bad risks. Beyond this, the financial power of a bank is always power in the hands of a few; most of us, as workers or housewives, have no control over the products of our labor.

— marcy rein

IN OUR OWN WRITE is the monthly newsletter of the Washington Area Women's Center. Contributions for the next newsletter are due by March 15th. Please send them to NEWSLETTER, Washington Area Women's Center, Summer School, 17th and M Sts., NW, Washington, DC 20036. This newsletter is brought to you by: Toni White, Lorraine Biros, Marcy Rein, Beth Karbe, Angie Carrera, Sandy Black, Susan Lorentz, Cynthia Callan, Marilyn Braithwaite, Cheryl Lees.

First Women's State of the Union Address and Rally

On January 13, 1977 Karen DeCrow, President of the National Organization for Women (NOW), gave the First Women's State of the Union Address at the Marvin Center on the George Washington University Campus. It was an historic event. Ms. DeCrow did not touch on how far we have come, and, therefore, how we should feel somewhat contented, but rather on the fact that we have many hard struggles ahead--on all levels. She emphasized that all problems in this country are chiefly women's issues, and are especially oppressive to poor and Third World Women. Sexism is the root of all oppression.

DeCrow opened her speech with a description of the broad range of problems women in this country endure. I feel I can give justice to the strength of DeCrow's speech only by quoting directly from it: "The areas of our most urgent grievances encompass no less than women's state in the labor force; in our country's tax, welfare and social security laws; in the homes and in our schools; in the area of medicine and access to adequate health care; and in the legal statutes which affect our privacy, our power of control over our own lives, and our role as homemakers, wives, and parents of the next generation."

DeCrow stated further that, "...Poverty is a women's issue. . . out of a total paid labor force of 91.7 million persons, 35.2 million were women [for 1974]. Our economy simply could not function without the participation of American women", and yet, "most women are poor, and most of the poor are women!"

In order to end the oppression of working women, DeCrow urged that, "women everywhere heed the call of the famous labor leader, Mother Jones, 'Don't agonize, organize! Let us explore and initiate worksite organizing to accumulate our own economic power and collective bargaining rights.' Calling for occupational health and safety protection for women workers, DeCrow said, "We denounce policies which make profits the highest priority, and people expendable objects. In this regard we affirm our commitment to seeking truth and justice in the case of Karen Silkwood." (Karen Silkwood, a union leader, died in a car crash before she could give evidence of nuclear safety violations to a reporter from the N.Y. Times.)

As DeCrow pointed out, women and minorities suffer most in fiscal crisis and recession. In the area of employment, they are

the last hired, first fired. "Cutbacks in decent health care, childcare, education and housing, and the lack of safe and effective birth control alternatives, induce women to be sterilized as a solution to dealing with these problems. Clearly such government and medical policies and practices are a violation of our right to control our own bodies. These practices are in addition racist and classist!"

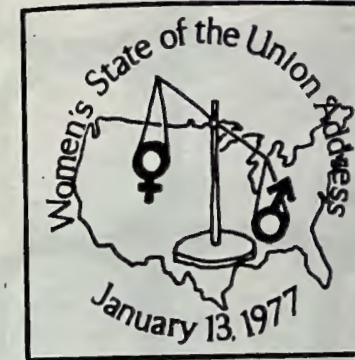
DeCrow did not shy away from the more hidden and brutal issues concerning women in the U.S. today. "There is perhaps no greater threat to women's health than domestic violence, a subject which only recently has been brought into the open. According to the FBI, the crime of wife-abuse is 3 times more unreported than rape, and 10 times more frequent than available statistics indicate. . . Experience shows that as soon as a refuge for battered women and their children is established, it is filled beyond capacity; the waiting lists are long. Needs assessments are unnecessary; money should be diverted immediately into emergency housing and services. Federal surplus properties should be turned over for emergency shelters. Legislation is desperately needed for an all-encompassing Federal Family Violence Prevention and Treatment Act."

Underlying much of DeCrow's speech was the awareness of the link between sexism and the oppression of workers, minorities, and homosexuals. Said DeCrow, "Sexism is the link between anti-feminism and homophobia. Sexism punishes persons who challenge the sex role stereotypes."

In her closing statements, Karen DeCrow said, "Women's state in this Union is not good. It is not simply women's 'intuitions' which tell us that something is wrong. It is our intellects. It is our understanding and awareness of the world in which we live. Facts cannot be casually ignored. Inequalities cannot be denied. Laws on the books which are unfair are not repealed; laws on the books which would lessen inequities are not adequately enforced; and the Equal Rights Amendment, which was first introduced in Congress in 1923, and which would provide a constitutional basis for fighting all types of sex discrimination cases, is blocked in four states [now three] short of national ratification! How much longer must women wait?"

Come down to the Women's Center and read the entire address or write to NOW for a copy (50¢): 425 13th St. NW Suite 1001, Washington, D.C. 20004

-- Lorraine



MORE ON THE RALLY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS...

The evening began with a movie entitled "How We Got the Vote", which featured film clips from the demonstrations in the early 20th century and recent interviews with Alice Paul and Mabel Vernon. It was a stirring movie, giving visualization to our history, but very disappointing at the end (how could I have been so naive?) when we discovered that it was a Post-Newsweek production and 80% to 90% of the credits were to men (including producer and director).

After Karen DeCrow delivered the Address, other women spoke to women's issues and concerns. Gloria Johnson, Treasurer of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, gave a talk on "Women and Work". Mariann Fineran, Director of Community Relations of the Women's Medical Center, spoke on "A Woman's Right to Control Her Own Body." Anita Shelton, Executive Director of the National Committee on Household Employment, gave a talk on "Women and Household Employment." Sara Deane, Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Retirement Security of the NOW National Task Force on Older Women, spoke on "Older Women." Mollie Abraham, State Coordinator of NOW, Virginia State, gave a talk on "Unratified States." All of these women had much to share with us and I came away from the rally feeling deeply moved and very proud.

Finally, the feminist entertainment for the evening was provided by comedienne Ivy Bottini. In her various skits she struck many deep chords in us all. In "Everywoman" she explored our lives from the time we are inside

our mother's body until, for many of us, our children are grown and our husband has died. Her humor is very poignant. I found myself laughing and sharing with all of the women in the auditorium.

The women from NOW worked very hard to put this rally together. I feel as though they did an excellent job.

As per usual, the Washington Post did not deem the Address or the rally newsworthy and did not send a reporter to cover it. The man I talked to at the national news desk said he did not know anything about it. Women from NOW told me that the Post and Star, as well as other media, were invited. There was no mention of the rally the next day in either paper. Women are still not newsworthy in this country. However, Channels 7 and 9 locally had camerapeople there, and the Address made the 11 pm news.

I had a long talk with a friend of mine whose views are revolutionary. We agreed that what was presented at the Address was not at all radical, but for those women who still think it is possible to effect change from within the system, the statements were extraordinary. The struggle must be fought at all levels-- from within and without.

-- Lorraine



321 Seventh Street S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003
(202) 546-7292

Handcrafted Silver
Gammes
WOMEN'S SHOP

Mary Lee Farmer

S M T W T F S

MARCH

1 COTTAGES 218-
PLAYED (AND THIS
MARCH BY DEARIES
EACH THURSDAY WHICH
COTTER "CLEANED
THINGS")

2 Don't
FORGET TO
CELEBRATE SPRING
WITH US ON MARCH
26TH !!

1 Pi Beta Gamma
open house

2 Lili's Open
House - 671-3762

3

4 Pi's Center
BONFIRE w/
MAGIC LANTERN
"THE EMERGING
WOMAN" 8pm

5 ART
DISPLAY ON
WORKSHOP &
CENTER
10am-4pm

6 Pi's Art
"WHAT YOU WORK"
1-3pm
Free Butter or
Bread
671-3762

7 Pi Gamma
Phi Center - Open
"JES BLESSING"
671-3762

8 Pi Gamma
Phi Center - Open
"JES BLESSING"
671-3762

9 Lili's Open
House - 671-3762

10

11
12 Pi's Center
Foreign women's
Art - 4pm
6W DAY
DANCE 8pm

13 Pi's Art
at the Center 8pm
"ARTS & ACTS"

14 Dance
Volunteer night at
the Center
7pm

15

16 Lili's
671-3762
OPEN HOUSE
671-3762
7pm

17 Women's
Center
OPEN HOUSE
1-3pm

18 TEENAGE
WOMEN'S BAR
GROUP - at the
Center - 4pm.

19 PROGRESSIVE
DAY WORKSHOP
10am-4pm

20
Programmes were
my discussion at
the Pi's Center
4pm

21 Pi Gamma
Phi Center - Open
"WOMEN, WOMEN,
WOMEN", 671-3762

22

23 Lili's
Open House
671-3762

24

25

26 SPRING
FEVER !!
(1AM) DANCE
All Souls

27 S. DEE AND
COTTAGE - Spring
House - 2pm at
the Pi's Center

28

29

30 Lili's
Open House
671-3762

31

AT THE CENTER:

"CLOSET THINGS"

The Washington Area Women's Center is pleased to announce the beginning of yet another monthly project! As an offshoot of our art exhibit, "Art on the Wall", which has been running successfully since Fall, we have initiated a new exhibit called "Closet Things".

"Closet Things" is our new art/craft display cabinet. Sculptors, weavers, jewelers, potters and other craftswomen may display their work in the cabinet on a monthly basis.

The cabinet has a locking glass front and four 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide and 46 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long shelves which are ideal for displaying many forms of art. Call the Center (547-5078) for information on how you can reserve space.

During the month of March "Closet Things" is featuring the ceramics of Mrs. Dolores King from Gaithersburg, Maryland. Her work includes several unique planters, ashtrays, figurines, and several all-purpose "collectables". Her work will be on display from March 1st through March 30th at the Center, Monday-Thursday 2:30 pm to 8:30 pm; Friday 2:30-8:00.

WOMEN'S PROFESSIONS DAY

On March 19th, between 10 am and 4pm, women representing 20 different professions will speak informally with anyone interested in how they entered their careers, how much pay to expect, what kind of training is necessary, how women are accepted in the field and other issues.

Women's Professions day has been designed to offer interested women an opportunity to discover and investigate the different possibilities in the job market. A carpenter, painter, auto mechanic, probation officer, editor, real estate agent, and artist number among the professional women that will be represented.

Call the Center for a complete schedule of speakers (547-5078) or Angie Carrera at 533-7842.

NEW RAP GROUPS:

Women in Transition Support Group

Transition periods may be times of stress and pain. Often this pain is accentuated by loneliness if we are striking out on a new path alone. The Women in Transition Support Group provides an opportunity for women who are making changes in their relationships, careers, or lifestyles to come together, share their experiences, and receive support and feedback from each other.

This group will meet Wednesday evenings beginning March 16th and ending April 20th, at the Women's Center, from 7 to 9:30 pm. For more information call Nan Fry, 652-7260.

Rap Group for Teenage Women

This rap group will be an open time for discussing anything that concerns you... sex roles, career choices and goals, health, sexuality, alternative lifestyles, whatever.

The rap group for Teenage Women will meet on Friday afternoons, 4-5:30 pm, beginning March 18th and April 22nd, at the Women's Center. For more info, call Nan Fry, 652-7260.

General Support Group

A group designed for general support of women who are dealing with a variety of problems i.e. job hunting, coping with city life, etc. is in the process of forming. If you are interested in taking part, please call Sue Slotnick, 892-4453.

WOMEN IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

There will be a meeting to discuss women in foreign countries at the Women's Center, March 12th at 2 pm. Anyone who has lived in or visited another country and would like to share what they have learned, or is just interested in hearing the experiences of others, is welcome to attend.

MORE AT THE CENTER...

FILM SHOWING: "THE EMERGING WOMAN"

There will be a Women's Center movie benefit with Magic Lantern Cinema in Summer School Basement (across the hall from the Women's Center), 17th and M Streets NW.

The film, "The Emerging Woman", is a carefully researched documentary film about the history of women in the U.S. Using old engravings, photos, newsreels, and other film clips, the filmmakers show the varied economic, social, and cultural experiences of woman, how she felt about her condition, and how her sex, race, and class often determined her priorities. The International Women's Film Project is loaning the film to us.

There will be 2 shows, Friday, March 4th, at 8 and 10pm. Admission costs \$1.50.

WASHINGTON POST STRIKE

The strike by the pressmen at the Washington Post has received scanty and slanted publicity in the mass media. In fact, it was the culmination of a blatant union-busting campaign, of continued corporate harrassment of working people trying to make a decent living.

If you are interested in learning the whole story, come to the Women's Center on Sunday, March 20 at 2 pm. Ilona O'Sullivan and Alice Zorbough, wives of two of the strikers, will be here to explain and answer any and all questions. Refreshments will be provided.

ONE WOMAN'S TRIP TO CHINA

Susan Hawkins will show her slides of China and give an informal presentation about her recent trip to China at the Women's Center, Sunday, March 27th at 2 pm.

Anyone interested may attend.

CHILD CARE AT THE SPRING FEVER DANCE:

Children accompanied by mothers will be let into the dance free. If mothers are interested in setting up cooperative child care in a separate space, please contact the Women's Center as soon as possible so we can make arrangements.

OK ALL YOU SOFTBALL BUFFS--it's that time of year again. All women interested in playing softball on the Women's Center Team call the Center (347-5078) and leave your name and telephone number. In order to play you must be a Center member, be prepared to pay a set fee to cover the cost of the team shirt and equipment and franchise costs.

HAVE A FREE AFTERNOON? The Washington Area Women's Center has a small lending library... Come in and browse! (Remember to bring your membership cards to check out books.)

CORRECTION: The date for "Self Images and Art" a workshop in self-expression through art media, will take place on Saturday, March 5th, from 10 am to 4 pm. (The wrong date was printed in the last newsletter.)

WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S CENTER



Summer School, 17th & M, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
202- 347- 5078

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