

# IN OUR OWN WRITE

a monthly newsletter by the  
WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S CENTER  
January 1979

## THE RAP GROUP LIVES

The idea of the Rap Group started in March, 1975, when two women who had met at a gay women's open house discussed the lack of atmosphere conducive to sharing among all women, regardless of sexual preference. They felt that there were many topics of importance to women which could be shared and that the process could be complete only with the participation of women of different races, ages, backgrounds as well as different sexual and political persuasions. By the time the first flyer went up at local book stores, colleges and other open houses, a new woman had replaced one of the originators and the open house, as it was then called, began in earnest. The "moderators" were surprised to find the large number of women interested, many of them local, some from as far away as Gaithersburg, Md.

In December, 1976, the open house moved to the Washington Area Women's Center (then at the old Sumner School), where it later became collectively organized and "moderated" on a rotating basis among the three to five women interested. The purpose for the move to the Center was threefold: 1) the group would be more easily accessible to women from the area, particularly Maryland and Virginia, 2) the experience of moderating the group would be better shared and 3) the connection with the Women's Center, considered a vital force in the women's community, would contribute greatly to the exposure of the group as well as the Center. It had become "The Women's Rap Group."

Since its birth, the Rap Group has grown without interruption, except for a brief interval between moves to the Women's Center's present home. It has fulfilled its original purpose as a stepping stone for communications

and opened new avenues of learning for all the participants, including the moderators.

Every three months, a planning meeting is announced and you are invited to join in planning the next nine or so topics. This does not mean that you are therefore obligated to moderate the meetings themselves (although women are welcome to volunteer), nor does it mean that you must be a PhD, orator, political theorist or genius to plan or moderate. The planning meeting is an opportunity to make suggestions based on your personal field of interest, whether it be childcare, coming out, loneliness, relationships or money matters. We are looking for suggestions to broaden and better focus our choice of topics. We consider your experiences, suggestions and queries invaluable in constructing our new schedule and in evaluating the use and growth of the Rap Group.

### SCHEDULE OF TOPICS:

- January 8 - Monogamy, Non-monogamy and Open Relationships
- January 22 - Solitude and Loneliness
- February 5 - Third World Women
- February 26 - Parthenogenesis, Myth or Reality?
- March 5 - PLANNING MEETING! All Women Welcome!



# THANKS FOR THE MUSIC

"You take the hammer and nails and build the event." Amy Horowitz was summing up the kind of work that "ROADWORK" does in presenting a concert. The hammer and nails of which she spoke were the innumerable elements that Roadwork touches as it brings music to a community.

Roadwork is basically three women with a vision. They are Konda Mason and Amy Horowitz in D.C., and Leann Gustafson in the California Bay Area. Roadwork is also a non-profit group which organizes and produces community based concerts as well as national and inter-national tours for musicians.

But, realistically, Roadwork is not that cut and dried. The spirit of the women who comprise Roadwork leaves terms like "booking" and "promotion" far behind. While explaining the work that goes into a concert, Amy spoke of the "balancing act" between the needs of the performer and the needs of the community. She spoke of how both the "audience and performer grow from confronting each other," and how to create the "best event for the community."

Konda remarked that "we don't book or agent anybody-- we are political cultural workers putting the culture of women's music on the road."

Roadwork's most recent projects have been the "Sweet Honey In The Rock", and Varied Voices of Black Women concerts. Both of these concerts represented very real political milestones as well as very rich musical experiences. Their next project is the upcoming Holly Near concert which will go off January 13th.

The upcoming Near concert is an example of one of the new directions that Roadwork is hoping to pursue-- the idea of presenting the musical/cultural statement of women such as Holly Near to a wider group of people. There will be two shows on the 13th, one which will be for women only and give womanspace, and an earlier show which will be focused toward a mixed community. Amy pointed out a need that Roadwork feels to have woman's music reach and speak to more of the women "on the planet" and to present a broader picture of what womanhood is today.

Konda and Amy took this point further by talking about the real struggle that faces the women's music network today- the struggle to decide where it is going. "It's becoming a business", commented Konda, "and everyone, performers, women's sound companies, light companies, and agents must come together to get an answer." In a comparison to the commercial or "straight" music world, she continued, "it's like leaving your parents' home. You have to decide what to take that is good and what to leave behind." Amy, in answer to the query of whether women's music will just become a micro-cosm of the commercial music business, said, "It's not just music. It's a political culture

that confronts the mainstream of what exists today. It is struggle oriented."

Konda put it rather succinctly when she remarked, "nobody's getting rich."

Roadwork, like so many woman-owned and operated endeavors, can use help. They can use women to help around concert time, and in the myriad tasks that are ongoing in their attempt to be producers on a national level and sharing their skills by setting themselves up as a resource center for information on organizing and producing concerts. You can contact Roadwork by calling (202) 723-6744 in D.C. or (415) 835-9118 in California.

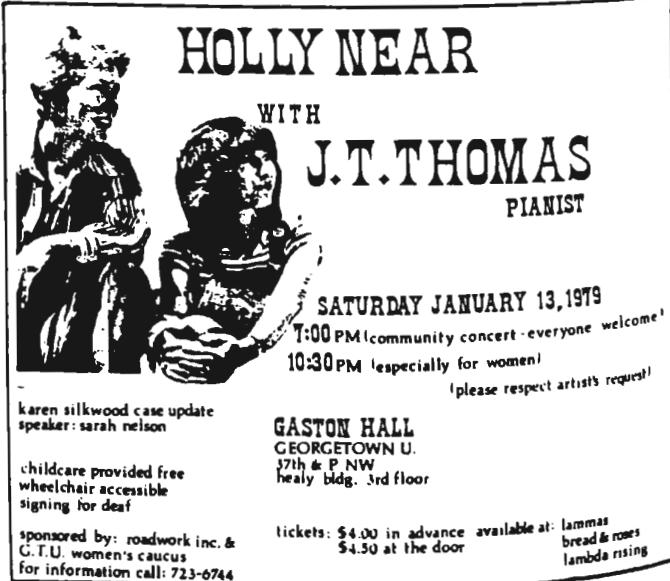
In summing up their feelings on the successes they have had Konda felt it was "having women working together; having the idea happening; bringing music to the women's community and having them writing us back and saying, 'Thanks for existing', 'Thanks for the music.'"

Thanks Roadwork, thanks a lot. (This article is another in the series which will spotlight women-owned/operated businesses and organizations in the D.C. area.)

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EVERY WOMAN HAS WITHIN HER THE SEEDS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE, SELF-ESTEEM, AND SELF-PRIDE. GIVE HER WARMTH AND LIGHT AND THESE SEEDS WILL GROW TO ENVELOP THE WORLD...

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**HOLLY NEAR**  
WITH  
**J.T. THOMAS**  
PIANIST

**SATURDAY JANUARY 13, 1979**

7:00 PM (community concert - everyone welcome)  
10:30 PM (especially for women)  
(please respect artist's request)

**GASTON HALL**  
GEORGETOWN U.  
37th & P NW  
Healy bldg. 3rd floor

**karen silkwood case update**  
speaker: sarah nelson

childcare provided free  
wheelchair accessible  
signing for deaf

sponsored by: roadwork inc. &  
G.T.U. women's caucus  
for information call: 723-6744

tickets: \$4.00 in advance available at: lammes  
\$4.50 at the door  
bread & roses  
lambda rising

# SOCIAL LIFE OR DEATH?

This is a topic that deserves discussion among women in the Washington area: why, in a city of this size is there no woman-controlled place for us to meet socially?

Let's look at what we've got. Two disco bars are owned by a single gay man. Both are famed as "women's bars", but don't look too close. The owner has a lot of friends, and tho' there are a million bars exclusively for men, more of them appear at The Phase and The Other Side all the time. In any case, we are the owner's livelihood yet when it came to issues around our safety he was slow to respond to Womanalert demands. Every time we pay over-rated cover charges and buy over-priced drinks we are being exploited by yet another man.

Supposedly, the Owl and Tortoise was to be a woman's bar. It's even owned by an actual woman. But to go there one needs to wear the right clothes and have plenty of money. A bar for elite lesbians only does not serve the needs of the community.

And then there's the Delta Elite, the most popular bar among Black women in town, though all women are welcome. It's a great place to dance; lots of room and good music... But only on Thursday nights is the bar specified for women, and don't even bother to go before midnight. Women of color need a place to socialize on any night of the week with a comfortable open atmosphere such as the Delta.

The options for a lesbian in pursuit of a social life are clearly bleak. There are a few alternatives to the bars --The Women's Center has seasonal social events. D.C.C.O.G.S. has several monthly get-togethers, and there are weekly open-houses (mostly based in the suburbs). We need a lesbian/feminist coffee-house or bar. It should be owned and run by women, and it should reflect the interests and needs of us all. It can be a place where our social lives and political lives merge in a complementary way...Sound too far-fetched? It may be. And it may be not.

There are many examples to learn from in other places. I would like to relate what I know of one in particular. I feel it provides a good role model despite the fact that it closed in the fall for financial reasons.

Several years ago the Lesbian Feminist Union in Louisville, Kentucky gave birth to a lesbian feminist bar and named it Mother's Brew. The initial capital came from local women in the following ways. Two kinds of stock were sold. Type A was purchased at \$100 a share. Each share gave the holder one vote in policy and management decisions. Several women could pool their money to buy a share. Note that no stock-holder was permitted more than one share of Type A stock.

Type B stock was also \$100 per, but there was no limit on the amount a single woman could buy. No voting rights were attached to Type B stock.

They leased a huge bar complete with a liquor license, and operated as a private club. Memberships were sold to any woman. Visitors purchased short-term memberships, and so on.

Its size made it an ideal location for everything from concerts, to feminist films, to just plain dancin'. It thrived for two years and I know it's well missed in Louisville today. Those women have an incredible amount of energy and they still hope to pay off their debts and begin again.

It seems that we in Washington must have the resources to develop our own variation on this theme. But when will it happen, and who will initiate it???

--jd



## MUSIC GROUP

The next meeting of the Women's Music Support Group will be held January 3rd, 7 p.m. at the Paintbranch Unitarian Church, 3215 Powdermill Rd., Adelphi, Md.

The intention of the jam is to share non-sexist folksongs, original songs, and old favorites in a non-competitive atmosphere where ideas such as talent, artistic sensitivity and ability are of no consequence. Rather than using contemporary judgments of music skill and ability, the idea of the group is to understand that music is a given quality within each woman. We can share in the development of musical ideas within each other while having fun.

Bring songs to swap--xerox a few copies, if you can--and bring instruments. For further information, please call Wendy Parham at 587-7185.

# AT LESB. HERST. - 101

Have you ever wondered what your life as a lesbian woman might have been like if you had been born in, say, 1790, or 1843, or even as recently as 1910? Are you tired of only reading about the Gertrude Steins of our heritage, women who were born with the advantages of wealth and/or talent? Do you ever wonder how you could discover more about the lives of the more typical women-loving-women in American history: the women shopkeepers, teachers, missionaries, farmers, factory workers, etc.?

In an attempt to begin answering these questions, WAWC is offering an eight-week seminar in American Lesbian History, beginning Tuesday, February 6th. The seminar will meet through March 27th on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9:30 p.m. The size of the class will be limited to 20 Women's Center members (you may join the Center by the first class meeting if you are not yet a member), and there will be a charge of \$10 per eight-week session. This limitation in size will allow all of us a chance to participate and discuss freely in a friendly learning environment. Last year's two Lesbian History classes proved very popular--one woman's comment was: "How come I never laughed in history classes in high school? I would have taken more classes if I thought it would have been this enjoyable!"

The seminar will focus on the history of single women in America, female relationships in the 19th and early 20th centuries, ways in which our history has been hidden from us, and sharing specific unpublished diaries, letters and manuscripts of previously unknown lesbians. Judith Schwarz, a researcher who has spent the last four years uncovering lesbian documents from archives and libraries, will lead the seminar. She is writing a book on American Lesbian history titled Close Friends and Devoted Companions (William Morrow, 1981?), and hopes the class will give her vital feedback on what they wish to see included in the book.

The textbooks used for the class are: Jonathan Katz's Gay American History (Thomas Crowell, 1976), Barbara Grier and Colletta Reid's Lesbian Lives (Diana Press, 1976), and Charlotte Bunch and Nancy Myron's Women Remembered (Diana Press, 1974). These books and many other biographies and women's history resource books are all available at Lammas. The Women's Center will also have a copy of each book in their library on reserve. Come, learn and enjoy discovering our fore-sisters with us.

# THE

## Photography Contest

Any photograph should portray some facet of a woman sharing herself with the community, and/or women sharing themselves with each other. Technical aspects will be secondary to the content of the picture itself. We encourage all women to enter who can fit into the amateur category. Photographs must be in black and white and no larger than 5" by 7". The photograph can be polaroid, or even Brownie products!

The preliminary judging will be done by a team of judges from the community, and the final judging will be done by you, the membership, in the March newsletter.

A \$2.00 entry fee must accompany each photo, and if you wish your photo returned, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Now, here's the CLINCHER! First prize will be \$50.00. Second prize will be a WAWC T-shirt and a full year free membership. Third prize will be a choice between a T-shirt or membership.

All entries must be received by February 15th for consideration, and be accompanied by the form below or a facsimile. Send your entries to: Washington Area Women's Center  
c/o 3210 S. 9th Street  
Arlington, VA 22204

I. \_\_\_\_\_, give my permission to the Washington Area Women's Center to publish the enclosed photograph, taken by me:

signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(photographer)

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_, give my/our permission to the Washington Area Women's Center to publish this photograph in which I/we am/are the subject:

signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is the \$2.00 entry fee in check or money order made payable to the WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S CENTER.

# CENTER

## LIBRARY UPDATE

Tanaka Kazuko, Jane Wallace, Toni Cade, and Charlotte Perkins. Do you know these women? If you don't, take this opportunity to read their works at the Women's Center Feminist Lending Library. The library is open from 6-7:30 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, except holidays.

As you may know, our ambition is to build a full-fledged Feminist Reading Resource Center Library complete with a D.C. Women's Herstory Archive and Current Events Section. We would like to expand it so that the library would provide a wide variety of research material, as well as leisure reading material. Can you help this ideal become reality? Donations of books which are for, by, or about women are always welcome and tax deductible. Just leave your name and address and an estimate of the total value of the books donated in the cover of the top book in the box. We will send you a letter acknowledging your contribution with our tax-exempt number.

In addition to book donations, we also ask you to donate any documents or papers you might have regarding the history and growth of the Washington Area Women's Center. Our archives are incomplete, and we would like to have as full a record of our growth as possible. The Women's Center has roots, too!

Like most lending libraries, our financial budget does not allow unreturned books to be easily replaced. Therefore, a \$1.00 deposit is required for each library withdrawal, which will not exceed two books, pamphlets or magazines. This deposit will be returned upon return of the loaned book(s). As usual, only members may take out books from the library.

We hope the deposit will insure the safe return of our hard-earned books or at least provide for the ultimate purchase of new copies. The library is an opportunity to read about the women before us, so we welcome you to join us.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

## 200 STRONG

THANKYOU THANKYOU THANKYOU THANKYOU THANKYOU!

The Women's Center Open House was a tremendous success. The turnout surpassed anything we expected. Nearly two hundred, yes 200, women came in the torrential rains to visit the new Center space. Many new faces and valued familiar ones appeared. Women started and renewed their memberships and just enjoyed each other's company.

To end the evening, a spontaneous "circle" formed singing along to "the rock will wear away." I believe a large chunk of the rock disappeared that day. We'll do it again soon.

## \$ MEMBERSHIP DUES \$

Due to our increased operating expenses, the Washington Area Women's Center is changing our rate structure. Membership, which includes a subscription to the newsletter, is still \$1.50 per thousand dollars of income per year, but the new minimum membership fee is \$7.00 per year. A subscription to the newsletter only is now \$4.00. These rates take effect January 1, 1979. They will not affect your present membership, however, until it is renewed.



(circle one)  NEW  RENEW  NEWSLETTER ONLY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Fee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(make checks payable to Washington Area  
Women's Center)  
Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

1. <u>IN OUR OWN TURF</u>	2. <u>GROSY AT FED FOR THURSDAY</u>	3. <u>Informal Coffee FRI - 11:15 AM at Howard County Rec Center.</u>	4. <u>Informal Coffee FRI - 11:15 AM at Howard County Rec Center.</u>
5. <u>IN OUR OWN TURF</u>	6. <u>IN OUR OWN TURF</u>	7. <u>IN OUR OWN TURF</u>	8. <u>IN OUR OWN TURF</u>
9. <u>WAVE</u>	10. <u>WAVE</u>	11. <u>WAVE</u>	12. <u>WAVE</u>
13. <u>WAVE</u>	14. <u>WAVE</u>	15. <u>WAVE</u>	16. <u>WAVE</u>
17. <u>WAVE</u>	18. <u>WAVE</u>	19. <u>WAVE</u>	20. <u>WAVE</u>
21. <u>WAVE</u>	22. <u>WAVE</u>	23. <u>WAVE</u>	24. <u>WAVE</u>
25. <u>WAVE</u>	26. <u>WAVE</u>	27. <u>WAVE</u>	28. <u>WAVE</u>
29. <u>WAVE</u>	30. <u>WAVE</u>	31. <u>WAVE</u>	

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION also has two new brochures available, entitled "It's Your Move," a resource guide for Alexandria women, and "Locking Our Doors Does Not Stop Rape," which discusses myths and facts about sexual assault. If you would like copies of the brochures, contact the Commission at 750-6631.

THE HOWARD COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTER will hold the following Thursday Morning Programs in January: Jan. 4th - Informal Coffee; Jan. 11 - Women and Depression; Jan. 18 - Women's Consciousness-Raising; and Jan. 25 - the movie, "Men's Lives." Programs are from 9:15 to 11:15 a.m. at Antioch College, Banneker Road, Columbia, Md.

THE LESBIAN HEALTH & COUNSELING CENTER is having an Open House Sunday, January 14, from 3 to 6 p.m. See enclosed flyer for details!

Don't forget that SOPHIE'S PARLOR has women's music on WPFW FM (89.3) every Tuesday afternoon from 3 to 7 p.m., and Woman's Story, a public affairs program, every Sunday at noon. Check them out!

60 WPM will be having their first meeting of the New Year on January 11, from 5:45 to 7:15 p.m. at 1346 Conn. Ave. N.W. (Dupont Circle Building), Room 601. The theme for discussion will be: "What does the New Year herald in employment options for women office workers?" For further info, call 466-4430.

C.O.G.S. will be having a potluck dinner on Jan. 20th. For more info, call 667-2616

The Lesbian Herstory Archives announces the start of a National Lesbian Photograph Drive. The roots of the Archives lie in the silenced voices, the love letters destroyed, the pronouns changed, the pictures never taken, the euphemized distortions that patriarchy would let pass. To end the legacy of lost faces we are asking Lesbians all across the country to send a photograph of themselves, friends, children, homes, pets, activities, to the Archives. Help them make sure our future sisters will be able to see us.

For further information contact Joan Nestle or Deborah Edel at the Lesbian Herstory Archives, P.O. Box 1258, New York, N.Y. 10001. Or call them at (212)874-7232 or (212)873-9443.

PRO FEMINA THEATRE returns to the New Playwright's Theatre with MOTHERHOUSES, a play which explores the complexities of the mother-daughter relationship. Showtimes are: Jan. 21, 27, 28 at 2 p.m. and Jan. 22, 23, 29 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the box office, 232-1122.

GYPSY, consisting of Deidre McCalla and Ilena de la Madrugada, will be performing at Food for Thought on Wednesday, January 3rd, from 9 to 11:30 p.m. Food for Thought is located at 1738 Conn. Ave., N.W.

D.C. AREA FEMINIST CHORUS is looking for a Choral Director, as well as women interested in sharing their musical energies in a supportive atmosphere. All women are welcome, regardless of musical experience. For more information, call Marcia at 433-4012 (days) or Flo at 547-2370 (nights).

D.C. N.O.W. is sponsoring Consciousness Raising groups and will be holding two demonstrations, January 13 at noon and January 16 at 8 p.m. For more information, please call Diane at 337-4837.

AN ACADEMIC WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP is now forming to discuss university or academic related issues, as well as personal issues related to academic identities. The focus will be very flexible. If interested, call Carolyn at 525-2160.

THE GAY COUNCIL ON DRINKING BEHAVIOR is holding a weekly discussion group on Drugs and Alcohol every Monday night from 6 to 8 PM at the Whitman-Walker Clinic, 1606 17th St., N.W. All are welcome. For further information call the Clinic at 234-6268.

THE WOMEN'S BUREAU of the U.S. Department of Labor has a new publication on women and blue collar jobs, entitled "Sources of Assistance in Recruiting Women for Apprenticeship and Skilled Nontraditional Blue-Collar Work." For free single copies, write The Women's Bureau, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

THE ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN'S Rape Victim Companion Program (RVCP) along with the Arlington and Fairfax County Rape Crisis Centers will begin a Rape Crisis Support Group this month. For more information about the group, contact the RVCP at 750-6631.

# ADVERTISEMENTS

**BASIC SOUND ENGINEERING** : Woman Sound is offering a 13-hour course in January for women interested in sound engineering. Topics include sound waves and room acoustics, equipment from mikes and speakers to limiter/compressors and equalization, mixing and recording, trouble-shooting techniques and "hands-on" session with live musicians. Dates: (1) Jan. 22, 7-10 p.m., (2) Jan. 24, 7-10 p.m., (3) Jan. 28, 1-5 p.m. and (4) Jan. 31, 7-10 p.m. COST: \$70.00, 1st 15 applicants accepted. Three scholarships available.

In Our Own Write is the monthly newsletter of the Washington Area Women's Center, 1825 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. This newsletter is brought to you by Lois Bull, Angie Carrera, Jan Dixon, Bentley, Judy Reagan, Susan Valenza and Holly. \* \* \* \* \* Thanks to Judy Schwarz for her contributions and to Tina Lunson, the printer. And special thanks also to all those devoted women who help with the mailing. The Women's Center does not necessarily support opinions expressed in articles, announcements, ads and inserts. All articles are subject to space limitations.

# AD POLICY

## Display Ads (camera-ready copy)

1/8 page - \$7.00

1/4 page - \$13.00

## Business & Services Offered (typed ad)

\$2.00 for the first 30 words.

10¢ per word thereafter

## Personal Ads - housing, individual, selling an item (typed ad).

\$1.00 for 30 words.

The staff reserves the editorial discretion to refuse any ad it deems exploitive and/or demeaning to women.

To place an ad, the copy or camera-ready display must be received with payment by the fifteenth of the month previous to the newsletter publication.

Mail all copy or inquiries to:

Washington Area Women's Center

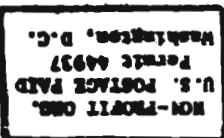
1825 18th Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20009

Make all checks payable to Washington Area Women's Center.

# Deadline for February

**January 15**



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