

# IN OUR OWN WRITE

a monthly newsletter by the  
WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S CENTER

APRIL 1979

## THE REAL STORY BEHIND WAWC DANCES

For all the women who have attended or may in the future attend a Women's Center dance, we want to explain the mechanics of putting a dance together--the myriad big and little things involved, why we do it that way, and why dances don't happen more often. The Women's Center feels strongly committed to providing a feminist alternative to the bars, and our dances are a real priority for us. The work we put into a dance has rewards beyond the experience itself.

Dances are not big fundraisers for the Women's Center, the return usually being just above cost. The motive instead is to provide a social event in a safe and fun atmosphere for women in the D.C. area.

Once a date is set for the dance the first arrangements to make are for renting space, usually All Souls' Church; sound and sound system (Womansound); and publicity. Sound--taped music--is one of the most consuming tasks, since each record has to be listened to individually on the tape to be sure the transition between songs is smooth. These sessions tend to turn into small parties, to assure that the tape is danceable.

Publicity starts with an article in IN OUR OWN WRITE, printing fliers, and making phone calls to Off Our Backs, The Blade, and Out to have the dance included in their calendars.

Someone works on getting door prizes, like the artwork by Sudie Rakusin, massage by Lenora Trussel, Beth Karbe's photography, and the luncheon for two on the Dandy donated for the Winterdance. Security for the hall the night of the dance also must be arranged. Women in Gear provided security at the last

dance, which was a great addition and which we hope will become a tradition at future dances. Volunteers, who work for two hours in exchange for the admission fee, are co-ordinated to cover various tasks during the dance.

The day of the dance Center workers chip in homemade baked goods to be sold. Someone makes the big shopping spree to buy the free munchies, the liquor and soft drinks. The Center takes care to have healthful snacks available and soft drinks and spring water provide an alternative to beer and wine.

Preparation at All Souls' the night of the Winterdance began at 6:00. The room is a crazy place while everything is being set up, decorations hung, baked goods and beverages set out, chairs and tables arranged, and lighting and sound equipment wired up. The coordinator makes sure volunteers show up and then are delegated to tasks where needed and helped to feel comfortable in the hectic atmosphere. All odds and ends, such as tickets, change, candles, etc. etc., fall into place by the time people arrive. When the dance is over, many weary women stay to clean up, discuss the evening's high points, and turn chaos into order. There is an audible sigh of relief among the Women's Center staff.

The Center is now turning to the future with plans for an exciting second annual Debutante Ball to be held in May and to jointly benefit the Lesbian Health & Counseling Center and the Women's Center. Look for the full story in next month's newsletter, and if you are interested in lending your energy to this dance, contact the Center.

# book review

MAY SARTON -- A Review by Clarice

For each of us, there comes a time when it is necessary to come to terms with the events and relationships that make up the fabric of our life. This process of discovering and facing who we are and what our life means is always difficult and at times very painful. Laura Spelman, the dying widow in May Sarton's latest novel, A Reckoning, takes us on just such a journey.

To find the "real connections" in her life, Laura sifts through the various bonds she has had with her family and friends. In the end, it is three women who dominate her thoughts: her overpowering, brilliant and larger-than-life mother; Daisy, the rebellious daughter; and Ella, a schoolmate and lifelong friend. Of the three, Laura makes a real connection only with Ella.

With Ella, there is none of the emotional tightness and inability to give of self that is present in the other two relationships. Laura and Ella have learned to share their thoughts, to discuss their fears, to talk about what to do with their lives, and to struggle together to develop some sense of their individual identities. Only at the end of the novel do they discuss the one unbroached subject between them, the love they have felt for each other. For Laura, this release, this final coming to terms with herself, means that her reckoning is complete.

May Sarton's novel reflects the poet's concern for the beauty, poignancy, gentleness and suffering that make up a life. We are made keenly aware of Laura's need to experience life in her own way. There is a scrupulous examination of self, to bring order to inner chaos, and a need for communion to deal with the chaos of the outer world. In A Reckoning, Sarton is, as always, first a poet and then a novelist. Consequently, the reader may feel disappointed because the poet does not need to have the inner struggles manifest themselves in overt acts.

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May Sarton will be part of a reading at the Library of Congress (ground floor auditorium) on Monday, April 23 at 8 p.m. The event is free and no tickets are necessary.

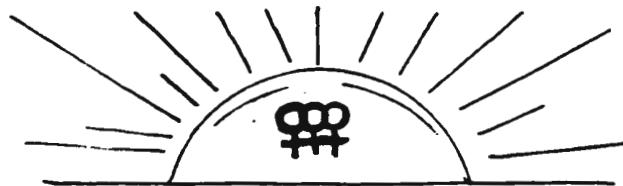
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--c.m.

## LHCC UPDATE

The health group at the Lesbian Health and Counseling Center has changed its opening date to May 24th. We have decided that we need to do consciousness-raising on the issue of racism because we expect many of our clients will be women of color, and hope in the future to be a racially mixed group. To be sure that all women will be comfortable in our center, we want to be sure that racism is an open issue - not one that we "assume" has been dealt with. Therefore we are beginning this process and feel it is important enough to delay our opening temporarily.

The counseling group is currently operating every Wednesday night from 7-10. The health group will provide pap smears, gynecological self-help and wholistic health assessment every Thursday night beginning May 24th. Call for information, 332-5295.



## RACISM IN THE BARS

Several weeks ago a woman dropped into the Center who was new in town. She told us this story, which I feel is worth repeating since it's not the first time such incidents have happened.

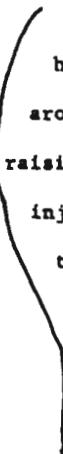
She had heard of the Other Side as being a place to dance and meet women. She went there on a Saturday night for the first time. The door person demanded two picture ID's and refused to let her in because she only had one. One ID is sufficient to meet any D.C. Liquor laws, and most of us have managed to enter the bar with one ID, or even none at all. However, these rules seem to be most lax if you are white. Clearly, the two ID requirement is used as an arbitrary weapon against women of color and other "undesirables." Probably, if it were used to keep men out or straight couples, I wouldn't be as angry as I am. These people have many other places to go and dance. But Lesbians have so few options that even the thought of a boycott (womancott?) is a difficult undertaking. How can we pressure the owners to stop their racist policies?

Comments and ideas are welcome.

--j.d.

# POETRY

Beauty Encompassed in a Spanish Woman  
curving softly, the  
hills and valleys of your body  
arouse me,  
raising my senses to heights unbelievable,  
injecting my soul with ecstasy;  
turning my world into a kalidoscopic garden  
overrun with joy and love



sjb

# CONGRATULATIONS RCC

The D.C. Rape Crisis Center has received CETA Title VI funding for the second year to continue its "Designing a Neighborhood Approach to Rape Prevention Project." The program is a logical outgrowth of the Rape Crisis Center and is bilingual (Spanish and English). The neighborhood project is a program to help people and organizations of the Shaw and Adams Morgan communities develop self-help prevention programs. If you are interested in further information about this project contact Cynthia Washington at 347-8715.

## CLASSIFIED

W.A.W.C. CLASSIFIED RATES AND INFORMATION: Personal Ads (housing, individual, selling items)-\$1.00 for 30 words. Business & Services Offered-\$2.00 for first 30 words, 10c per word thereafter. Display Ads (camera-ready copy)- $\frac{1}{4}$  page-\$7.00,  $\frac{1}{2}$  page-\$13.00. The Staff reserves the editorial discretion to refuse any ad it deems exploitative/demeaning to women. Check or money order MUST accompany ad copy and be received by the 15th of the month previous to publication. Make all checks payable to the Washington Area Women's Center. \*\* Thank you.

## ALIVE !!

ROADWORK AND FRIENDS presents ALIVE! in concert at D.C. Space on Thursday and Friday April 26th and 27th at 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. each night. The Friday 8 p.m. concert will be especially for women. For more information or reservations call Roadwork, 667-1597.

\* \* \*

WANTED: Gay woman, 23, would like to share your house or house-hunt with you in Arlington. Will share with one or two women only. Cannot be around cats (allergy). If interested, please call Chris at 534-8774 (home) or 751-4100 (work). Rent not an issue. Will compromise.

\* \* \*

GUITAR LESSONS by experienced guitarist. Call Diane, 525-4921. Please leave message if not home.

\* \* \*

HOUSEMATE WANTED. Share 200 year old carriage house, modern conveniences, 30 acres. One hour south of N.W., in La Plata, Md.). Available in May; looking for mature, neat, amiable woman. Call (202) 347-4700 and leave message for Judith.

\* \* \*

THE WOMEN'S GROWTH & THERAPY CENTER is offering the following groups and workshops as part of its Spring Program: Groups: Women's Therapy Group (ongoing), Women in Troubled Relationships--the Decision to Stay or Go (8 wks.), Sexuality in Our Times (8 wks.), Mind Meets Emotion--a Thinking Women's Group (8 wks.) Workshops: Lesbian Mothers and their Lovers (4 hr.), Exploring Motherhood (one day) and Motherhood and Power (3 hr.). It continues to offer individual and couple therapy, at sliding scale fees. For more information about the Groups and Workshops, times, dates and fees, or other services call 462-4300 x108 Mon.-Fri. 9-12 or 726-1911 and leave a message.

# AT THE CENTER

## RAP GROUP TOPICS

Mothers, Daughters / Sisters, Friends - Is there friendship after motherhood? Does real friendship exist between mothers and daughters? Mother-daughter teams welcome. April 2.

Life Decisions - During every stage of our lives, we make important decisions based on the choices (options) we perceive as available. When and where do we obtain the expertise to choose? April 9.

Female Systems - As women, we must know the rules of the game in a white male system. Men aren't even aware a female system exists. How do we perceive power, truth, even time? A discussion of female systems as described by Anne Wilson-Schaeff.

April 16

Expressing Creativity - We search, spin, weave, live, love, struggle and grow, we describe our journeys in words, colors, shapes, sounds, movements. Each of us creates, each of us finds joy and pain, solitude and sisterhood, in our creating. Come share your experiences, your feelings, and - if you want - your work with your sisters!

April 23

Coming Out - The continuing process of coming out - what it's like, how it's done, who do you tell, when do you tell them, why do you tell them - and where are you now?

April 30

## SPORTS

Softball season is here! If you're interested in playing for Women's Center sponsored "B" League team (D.C. Dept. of Recreation) call Sandy, 521-3199 or Donna, 234-2314.



COACH WANTED- Women's Center Softball Team seeks coach for B League. Interested? Call Sandy at 521-3199 or leave message at Center- 347-5078.

## LIBRARY

The library is finally shaping up--we are in the process of re-sorting our books and shelving the ones which are already cataloged, and cataloging all the new donations which have come in since we moved in December. We thank all of the women who responded to our request for materials--this is the kind of support which keeps the Women's Center going.

We are so optimistic about the library's coming into being again that we are planning an Open House on April 21 from 1-4 p.m. and urge everyone to come and help us celebrate this long-awaited event.

The help we received from community women in getting our bookshelves up was fantastic--we especially want to thank Elizabeth Heisler for her expertise and energy. With more help like this from women interested in putting the library into operation we will be able to open for regular hours, Monday through Thursday, 6-7:30 p.m. As usual, only members can check out books, and in an effort to reduce losses, we are implementing a \$1.00 deposit for each library withdrawal. We have a wealth of women's history, literature and culture waiting for you to experience--come in and explore.

## BICYCLE REPAIR COURSE

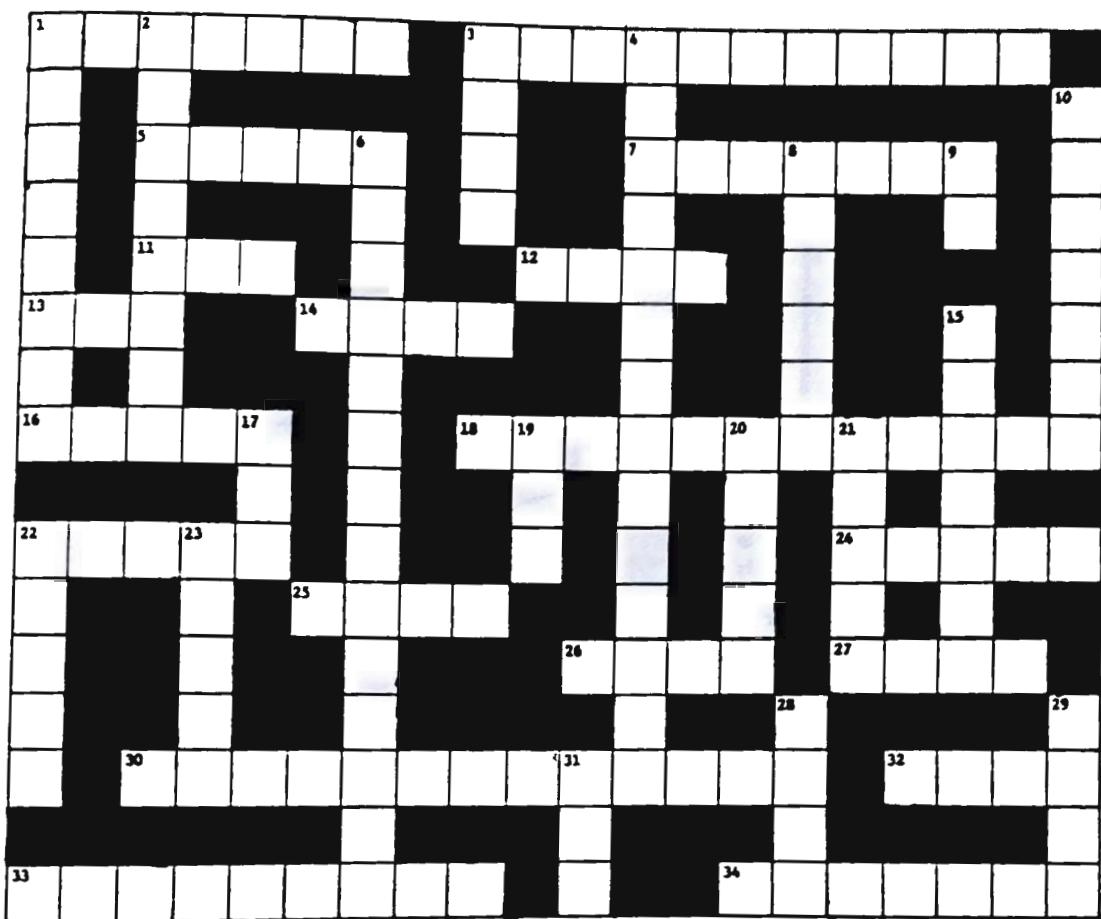
This is an intensive, 3-hour, hands-on course in which you will actually be working on your own bicycle. The class will cover proper fit and adjustment, basic tools, general maintenance, flat tire repair, and gear and brake adjustments for 3, 5, and 10 speed bicycles.

Tools will be provided by Chevy Chase Bicycle Service. All women who take the course will receive a 10% discount on all purchases at Chevy Chase Bicycle Service.

For obvious, logistical reasons, each class will be limited to 8 women, but enough classes will be scheduled to accommodate everybody who signs up for the course. The first class will be held Wednesday evening, April 18, from 6:30 - 9:30 at Chevy Chase Bicycle Service, 5614 Connecticut Ave., N.W. The cost is \$10 and must be paid in advance. Please make check payable to the Washington Area Women's Center and mail with name, address, and day and evening telephone numbers no later than April 10. You will be contacted by phone to confirm your registration before the first class. Please call the Center if you need more information.

# who do you read?... a crossword puzzle

by Sandy Black



## ACROSS

1. She knows why the caged bird sings, Maya \_\_\_\_\_
3. wrote "Against Our Will", Susan \_\_\_\_\_
5. novelist, short story writer, Joyce Carol \_\_\_\_\_
7. noted for "Golden Notebook", Doris \_\_\_\_\_
11. poet, \_\_\_\_\_ Lowell
12. Contemporary science fiction writer, Joanna \_\_\_\_\_
13. Famous for her diaries, Anais \_\_\_\_\_
14. Contemporary science fiction writer, Ursula Le \_\_\_\_\_
16. English writer, took male name, George \_\_\_\_\_
18. Mary Shelley's famous book, \_\_\_\_\_
22. wrote "My Antonia", \_\_\_\_\_ Cather
24. wrote "Vaginal Politics", \_\_\_\_\_ Frankfort
25. wrote "The Kin of Ats Are Waiting for You", \_\_\_\_\_
26. Most recent book "Gyn/Ecology", Mary \_\_\_\_\_
27. wrote "Crazy Salad", \_\_\_\_\_ Ephron
30. Jill Johnston's book, \_\_\_\_\_

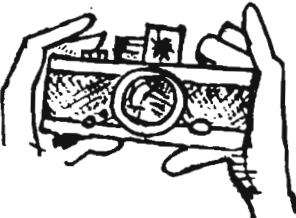
32. noted for report on sexuality, Shere \_\_\_\_\_
33. she thought she was a nobody, poet, Emily \_\_\_\_\_
34. movie made from her book "The Children's Hour", Lillian \_\_\_\_\_

## DOWN

1. wrote "Of Woman Born", Rich \_\_\_\_\_
2. Black poet, Nikki \_\_\_\_\_
3. noted for novels on China, Pearl S. \_\_\_\_\_
4. 18th Century feminist, wrote "A Vindication of the Rights of Women", Mary \_\_\_\_\_
6. Kate Millet's dissertation, \_\_\_\_\_
8. poet, novelist, wrote "Journal of Solitude", May \_\_\_\_\_
9. English writer who took male name \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)
10. wrote "Seven Gothic Tales", Isaak \_\_\_\_\_
15. wrote "Women and Madness", Phyllis \_\_\_\_\_
17. Monogram of author of "Amazon Odyssey", - - -



# APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
WASH. Q's ART CENTER PRESENTS ALICE DENNEY (Thru April 7)* <i>Kenetha Rankin, former 1874-1917</i>	1. Q's RAP * Group - 8 PM <i>Mothers, Daughters, Sisters, Friends.</i>	2. Lesbian Hist. Class - 7:30 PM WAWC LOUNGE	3. MONT. COLLEGE Q's CENTER CAREER COUNSELLING DISCUSSION *	4. <i>Donna Dix from 1802</i>	5. Great day to volunteer!	6. WASH Q, ART CENTER presents ALICE DENNEY (LAST DAY)
Start saving your pennies for food sale at WAWC April 20th!	8. Q's RAP GROUP 8PM. WAWC LOUNGE <i>Life Decisions*</i> <i>Lucy Ellin Swell, performing physician from 1837</i>	9. Deadline for Photo Contest BALLOTS. Lesb. Hist. Class WAWC. LOUNGE 7:30 PM	10. ARLINGTON VA. 522-0443	11. MISHPOCHEH SEDER at 6:30 PM CALL 552-3392 for reservations	12. U. OF MD GAY COFFEEHOUSE 9-12 PM STUDENT UNION - RM 2111 <i>N.L. Deadline is April 15th!</i>	13. 14.
5. N.L. Deadline 15. "IN Our Own Write"	15. Q's RAP GROUP 16. 8PM. WAWC LOUNGE <i>Female Systems*</i>	17. LESBIAN HIST. CLASS - 7:30 PM. WAWC LOUNGE	18. BIKE REPAIR CLASS *	19. Visit us!	20. WOMEN'S CTR. 21. Library Party! 1-4 PM 88 WELCOME! 	21.
Ellen Glasgow, Virginia Feminist, born 1873	22. Q's RAP GROUP 23. 8PM. WAWC LOUNGE <i>Expressing Creativity</i>	24. LESBIAN HIST. CLASS - 7:30 PM WAWC LOUNGE <i>Q's ART OF THE EIGHTIES!</i> G.W.U. - MARVIN CENTER 8PM * SUE FULLER	25. BIKE REPAIR CLASS * RAPE CRISIS CTR. PARTY 347-4278*	26. NARAL * ANNUAL CONF. Thru April 30. → ROADWORK CONCERT: <u>ALIVE</u> * 8 PM AND 11 PM ← <u>ALIVE</u> AGAIN!	27. U. OF MD GAY COMMUNITY COFFEEHOUSE 9-12PM - STUDENT UNION - RM 2111	28. Women Celebrating Women Conference (N.O.W.)
Marguerite Hahn, Journalist, born 1867	29. Q's RAP GROUP 30. 8PM. WAWC LOUNGE <i>Coming Out *</i> <i>Alice B. Tolles, born 1877</i>	LEGENDS: = OPEN HOUSE * = SEE ARTICLE ANNOUNCEMENT OR AD FOR FURTHER INFO.	SEE MARCH '79 NEWSLETTER FOR FINALIST PHOTOS	CAST YOUR BALLOT FOR BEST PHOTO IN THE WOMEN'S VISIONS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST 1979 DEADLINE: APRIL 10 <sup>th</sup> BALLOT ON PAGE 8 		

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Workshop for Lesbian Mothers and their Lovers:

The Lesbian Health and Counseling Center is offering a workshop designed to assist lesbian mothers and their lovers in exploring the difficulties encountered in their relationships with one another and the child(ren) involved. It will be facilitated by Jane Mara and Ellen Kirschner. Date: April 21, 1-5 PM; at the Whitman-Walker Clinic, 1606 17th St., N.W.; suggested donation: \$3 for single women \$5 for couples. Advance registration required. Call 462-4300, Ext. 108 for Jane or 547-3356 and leave a message.

WASHINGTON WOMEN'S ARTS CENTER is showing a multi-media exhibit which "explores the boundaries of the artist's fantasies," juried by Alice Denney. The show runs through April 7 at 1821 Q St., N.W. For more information on W.W.A.C. activities call 332-2121.

**QUEST SEMINAR: Women in their Communities.** Quest: A Feminist Quarterly will sponsor a seminar/discussion based on the recent Quest issue "Women in their Communities," Vol. IV, No. 4. Ideas from this issue will provide a reference point for a discussion about the feminist community: the needs it serves both for individuals and the movement; our expectations of the community; and possible ways that some of our needs can be better met within the community. Several authors whose articles appear in this issue of Quest will be on hand for the discussion. Copies of the issue are available at local bookstores, including Lammes, 321 7th St. SE and Lambda Rising, 2012 S St. NW. The Seminar will be held on April 17th, 8 p.m. at the Public Resource Center, 1747 Conn. Ave. (near S St.) NW, third floor.

**JEWISH WOMEN AGAINST RACISM** are Jewish women looking for other Jewish sisters who accept the black and matriarchal roots of the Jewish people, have a class consciousness and yearn for a Jewish, woman-centered Goddess worshiping spirituality. Interested? Call Sherrie, 291-2924.

**COME PARTY WITH THE RAPE CRISIS CENTER** at their first gala benefit affair, Wednesday, April 25, 1979--an evening of dancing hosted by Jim Vance, news anchorperson for WRC-TV, with many other local celebrities. Call the Rape Crisis Center at 347-4278 for further details.

WOMEN CELEBRATING WOMEN CONFERENCE (N.O.W. Sexuality Task Force) will be held on Saturday, April 28 at George Washington Univ., Marvin Center (21st & H Sts., NW). Workshops and films will be going on all day and a big dance will be held in the evening. Cost is \$10 for the conference, \$5 for the dance. For more information call D.C. N.O.W. at 466-2934.

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MONTGOMERY COLLEGE WOMEN'S CENTER, located in 124 Science West at the Rockville, Md. campus is holding a Career Counseling Discussion on Wednesday, April 4 from 1-2 p.m. The Center is also sponsoring a Women's Week, April 23-27. Contact them through the Student Activities office, 762-8034.

THE GAY COMMUNITY of the University of Maryland has an ongoing Coffeehouse, every other Friday night from 9-12 p.m. in the Student Union Building, Room 2111. Upcoming coffeehouses will be held April 13 and 27, and May 4.

LESBIANS WITH HYPOGLYCEMIA and other special dietary concerns: we can support each other. If you're interested in getting together to talk about it, call Jo, 332-4538.

A SUPPORT GROUP is forming for women in transition. For more information call Louise at 379-6899 or call the Women's Center and leave your name and phone number.

EARTH ONION WOMEN'S THEATRE HAS CHANGED ITS NAME to Theatre of Sorts and now has a studio at 3106 18th Street where Jane LeGrand teaches classes and performance workshops in The Acting Process. One such workshop will be open to audience participation, April 1st at 8 p.m. Free. The Acting Process is a process of unmasking for the actor and for the character. For the non-actor it is a theatrical exploration of one's relationship to self and to others. New classes are forming. Call 462-6396 for more information.

THEATRE OF SORTS would like to share their house with other women's groups or individuals working with women. There is studio, living and office space available. Call 462-6396.

WASHINGTON WOMEN'S ARTS CENTER presents the fourth in their series of lectures, April 24 when Sue Fuller will talk on "Women's Art of the '80's" at the George Washington University Marvin Center, 8 p.m. Call the Arts Center for further information, 332-2121.

TONI MORRISON, author of Song of Solomon will be reading from her fiction at the Library of Congress ground floor auditorium, Tuesday, April 10 at 8 p.m. For further information call the Library at 426-5000.

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 issue is brought to you by Claudette, Clarice, Angie, Susan, Lois, Trudy, Jan Dixon, Jane McInerny and Chris. The Women's Center does not necessarily support opinions expressed in articles, announcements, ads and inserts. All articles are subject to space limitations.

See last month's issue for photography contest finalists.

## PHOTO BALLOT

Circle the number of the photograph you think is best:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

This portion of ballot must be filled out to validate your vote.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 10!

## DEADLINE FOR MAY

April 15



WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S CENTER  
1825 18th Street, NW • Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: 347-5078  
U. S. Postage PAID  
Permit No. 44937  
Washington, DC

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