

# MAIZE

A LESBIAN COUNTRY MAGAZINE

SPRING 9995



*Jennifer Weston*

MAIZE NUMBER 44 SPRING 9995

*MAIZE IS BY AND FOR LESBIANS*

MAIZE invites Lesbians to contribute articles, interviews, letters, comments, news of Lesbians on the land. Cassette taped interviews, discussions, articles, are accepted for transcription. Editing on any piece will be done only in cooperation with the author. MAIZE invites Lesbians to contribute photos and illustrations. Photos may be black and white or color. Photos with good contrast print best. Illustrations need to be black pen on white paper. If you wish to have your work returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Please note if the work you send has been submitted or published elsewhere. Please include a biographical note.

Letters to the editor may be published in full or in part, unless specified "not for publication". Names will be used unless you request your name withheld, as well as place of residence.

The contents of MAIZE do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the editor. Debate is encouraged. Editor: Lee Lanning

MAIZE will run free announcements of particular interest to country Lesbians and free classified ads by Lesbians especially for country Lesbians. Display ads: \$10 (4½h x 3½w)

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\*\*\* Please note there will be no time between receiving  
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\*\*\* Please plan ahead!\*\*\*

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*maryanne  
miami, florida*

# THE WIMMIN OF OUR DREAMS

Jae Haggard  
Outland  
Serafina, New Mexico

One trait I love about so many Landykes is our real conscious search for ways to live in balance with the Earth and other wimmin. I ask myself what a life might be like among Lesbians, in a Lesbian context and growing from Lesbian spirit?

A women's world is real. Marija Gimbutas is an archaeologist who grew up with the myths of eastern Europe where for decades she has studied ancient villages. She uses oral tradition, intuition and archaeological findings to recreate pre-patriarchal life in Europe--life where the values of women are central, where villages are located on the most arable land rather than the most defensible position, where there are no weapons and no killing. Reading *The Civilization of the Goddess*, I wonder how life was for these wimmin--a land where for thousands of years there was no war or aggression and no imposition of other male values or violence. How boggling to consider lives not molded by fear. The following is one way I explore a Lesbian world.

## THE WIMMIN

It isn't so long ago, or so far away, not really. In that timespace there is no word for fear. In villages and towns, on the land, in the woods, on the shores, fear is unknown. On the plains, in the hills, along the rivers, fear does not exist. On the roads and in the homes, there is no need for fear. Seasons and temperatures make no difference, nor does the lightness of sunrise nor the dark of night. This is the world of the Wimmin.

The Wimmin know grief for there are partings, disappointments, death.

The Wimmin know regret for in any time or place hasty words are spoken.

The Wimmin know disappointment for not always does anyone get everything wanted or in the way expected.

The Wimmin understand hardship for the weather can be bitter, and even here the crops can fail, and sickness can come into a body. Yet, they don't call these things hardships as we would. To them these are cycles of life.

Anger is not unknown. There are momentary sparks quickly released and aimed at no one and no thing.

There is no fear of hunger for grains are stored for the lean years. Never among the Wimmin does one starve while others are sated.

Since all have what is needed, there is no fear of loss.

Since all are respected and treated with kindness, there is no fear of revenge.

In the Wimmin there is no word for fear--for there is nothing to fear, no one to fear, to envy, to be jealous of, no one to disdain or despise, no one to outwit or defeat or even to defend against.

In a people who do not fear, giving and sharing bring the greatest joy. Assisting each other and working together in good spirit, laughter and song is a given.

For a people who do not fear, all that is done is creative, expansive. Planting, building, celebrating, making clothing, crafting homes and earthenware and baskets and adornments. Using colors, textures, rocks or shells, grasses or woods, fabrics or clays, fingers or tools. All is done in the ease of there-is-always-plenty-of time to make things beautiful, to make them just right, to go with the maker's imagination, to enjoy the making.

The Wimmin labor for themselves and for each other, their work always of the essentials--shelter, food, satisfaction, laughter, creativity, connection.

Since all use according to need, there is no waste. Since each uses what she needs, no more or less, there are no shortages.

Since all trust in each other, there is no hoarding. Profit is quite beyond the comprehension of the Wimmin.

Among the Wimmin happiness is highly regarded. Although they would be surprised we even note that, for what is there besides joy and appreciation of life, of each other, of the Earth. Joy is connection, the Wimmin live in connection. They know no other way.

And all is done from the heart, is given from the heart, is enjoyed from the heart. And the heart is a most creative place. When there is no fear, the heart can be most open indeed.

To the Wimmin there is no question but to attend the tiniest first feelings of imbalance or dis-ease whether in themselves or each other.

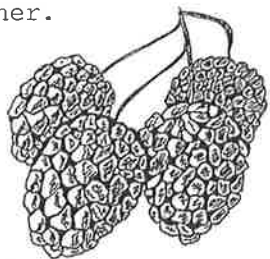
The Wimmin's days are filled with appreciation, with the big and little, alone and together celebrations--some quiet, some downright rowdy, in the laughing and dancing sense, of course.

The Wimmin appreciate, and even more than that treasure and take delight in themselves, each other, the Earth, every part of their lives. Although they do not know the word, compassion fills the lives of the Wimmin--for the joys and agonies of one are felt by all.

Another word the Wimmin do not know is Lesbian. Yet, these wimmin love other wimmin from the very depths of their being. The Wimmin know love.

Not so long ago there is no word for fear. Can we for a moment imagine a world, a life, a society without fear? On the surface, no, and no again. Yet look a little deeper--feel that sigh, feel the heart expand, feel the start-of-a-smile, feel the tears just behind the eyes. The knowing of this life is in us. We can touch it, remember it. And we can help to create it, live it again. For I am of the Wimmin, as are you.

Not so long ago, or so far away, not really, the Wimmin live on the land and in the villages, unable to imagine fear. Knowing only connection, creativity and celebration. They call it life. Perhaps it is time for us also to once again live. Shall we live--together.



Illustrations by  
Jae Haggard

*Patty/Chrysalis is a this-world/time dyke unintentionally visiting Wimmin's World. These are excerpts from her conversations with Ocean, an old potter in the village.*

*Good morning, Ocean. Yes, that's what we call the early day at home. Shall we talk more again today?*

*come sit down, patty, i love to talk as i work the clay of these bowls. and, i am liking these talks we have. i suggest we meet after firstmeal each sunturn until you get more settled or find other things you want to do.*

*Oh Ocean, I'd like that a lot. I can go on learning your language. Whatever you do, it's quite the charm. Uh, it works well. And I have so much to learn about your ways and your life. I'm stumbling around making too many mistakes. The ways of my world are so very different.*

*the loaf cannot be baked until it rises. the loaf is not bread until it bakes. do not rush yourself. the learning comes as it comes. the wimmin are patient.*

*That's for sure. Everyone is really helpful and puts up with my stumbles with great cheer, and some laughter too. Everyone is patient and lighthearted and everything's so calm. In fact isn't your life kind of boring? Not much happens.*

*oh how i cherish the quiet moments. it is no more likely to find a womn who calls this life boring than to find a seven legged beetle. at home you live with many wimin. living in this village is like living in a large household. we live close enough to know from which tree a womn takes her toothtwigs. we know the joys and sorrows, the new passions and the fading. we are a people most interested in each other. from our hearts we share our lives. dull, it certainly is not, keeping up with the lives of so many wimminfriends.*

*boring. are the unnamed colors of sunrise boring? or the evening voices of cicadas, frogs, and crickets joined by mockingbirds and poorwills? or the laughter of a circle of wimmin, to tell our lives in stories, talk with the trees and deer, walk along the stream? or the first wildflowers poking up on a spring morning? is it dull to sing, love, to dream, desire, mourn, to celebrate? is*

it boring to listen to your Voice, to talk with a dozen friends, to cuddle and make love with a woman you love, to tend the seedlings in the garden, to eat the first juicy peach of the new season? is it dull to learn to weave or make pots or build or bake springy bread or grow food?

oh, i think none of us have opportunity to be bored. you cannot be bored when you are always having such a good time, such meaningful times. we live meaning, not time. the wimmin are a people who enjoy each other, who delight in our lives.



*Are there days when the wimmin don't do tasks?*

this question is as curious as the cowbird that grows up in the finch nest. we perhaps have different meanings for this word.

*Task--a chore, a job, an errand, something you have to do.*

these words 'chore' and 'job' sound harsh in your voice, something you do not really want to do like removing the stickers before eating the luscious fruit of the prickly pear. 'errand' is softer, but there is no enthusiasm. if tasks in your world carry no joy or enthusiasm, they do not resemble the tasks of the wimmin. Our tasks are all the ordinary details that fill our lives.

like the rabbit, we browse as we gather. like the squirrel, we store. like the ant with aphids, we plant and tend and harvest. like the camel, we carry water. unlike most creatures, we prepare foods as well as eat them raw. these are some of our tasks.

like the birds we build nests and shelters like the phoebe we decorate them with bright colors and varied materials. like all creatures we sleep and raise our young. we are unlike most creatures who are birthed with body coverings, so we make clothes. these are some of our tasks.

we eat, we carry, we store so we make bowls and cups, baskets and bags, jugs and carts. these are tasks.

we gather foods to eat and we gather to

eat them. we love to be with each other to talk and laugh so we gather each sunset. we gather to celebrate--seasonsturn, birthing, naming, the rains, the full moon or any other thing we fancy. we gather for tasks that require many wimmin. we even gather to go gather. gathering is one of our tasks.

we make songs, tell stories, drum and chant. we bathe and swim. we heal. we dance and make love. these too are our tasks.

every little and big thing that makes our life is a task. we love our tasks. the wimmin are a people who love our lives.

ooo

*What about wimmin who raise the food, do they own the food?*

who owns the air? food can no more be owned than water or love. the wimmin sustain the Earth and each other and are in turn sustained. does the tent caterpillar own the tree or the catfish the river? does the deer own the forest? no one owns food or nourishment. how can one person own these essentials that are part of life itself? nourishment is of the commonwealth, gifts to all from an abundant gracious Earth, gifts to each other from loving caring friends.

*Does everyone help grow the food?*

some wimmin may do more planting or tending, some harvesting the wild foods while others prepare foods in the village kitchen. some may build granaries or carve spoons or craft tables while others make pots or dishes. some gather wood. some cast lenses to focus the sun's heat into the food. some weave mats for the gatherhouse floor or hangings for the walls. some gather honey or store fruits for eating another season. food is in plenty, we all eat our fill. each woman participates in some way to help meet our food needs, doing what is of most interest to her and most needed by all. like honeybees in a field of red clover, the lives of the wimmin are abundant.

perhaps most important, we are wellfed as much on connection as on food. connection is energy. can anyone own energy? how alive we feel when we are with someone we really like, who we know really likes us. how nourished after an intimate conversation or silent walk. how sated

after touching or flying with someone we are deeply in tune with. how satisfied we feel laughing together, how settled singing together, how expansive dreaming together. how whole we feel when we wholeheartedly love ourselves, love others, know--really know--others love us. without the nourishment of connection, without love--given and received--we starve. we are fed as much on the love that goes into our meals--growing, harvesting, preparing the foods--as on the nutrients in the foods themselves.

the wimmin are very wellfed indeed.

ooo

*Are wimmin paid for all they do?*

pay. what is that? you are as stuck on own and pay as the fresh pine sap to fingers in the spring. the wimmin live, each doing what is needed for herself and all others to live with happiness, contentment and connection. no one wants what another cannot have. what the wimmin do, we do because it is fitting, because we want to, because it needs doing, because it is part of the wholeness of everyone's giving and receiving, because it brings satisfaction.

the wimmin count on ourselves and each other. yet the wimmin do not count. when you do not count, all is valued. each womn has all we need. if there is a shortage of something, the shortage is spread among all so none suffer. there is nothing to barter. there is certainly nothing to sell, no one to buy and nothing to pay with. we do not need your word 'pay'.

when each womn gives and receives, all putting forth effort for ourselves and for each other, we are provided a bountiful satisfying life. the wimmin thrive on the energy that surrounds us, freely given and freely received.



*Ocean, does it create problems among wimmin if some do things different than others?*

i chuckle because few wimmin do anything the same. would you ever guess how many ways there are to put cups on the shelf or seedlings in the bed?

your ways cannot hurt my feelings or reflect on me. why would they? even if they do, why would i reject you? when one womn or household chooses to rise and celebrate the sunrise together, other wimmin do not feel threatened or judged for their own decisions to greet the day at another time, in another way. your choices are no personal insult, challenge, or rejection--this does not happen among the wimmin, for our every choice is in the harmony of life. the wimmin are a people who honor life.

we have among the wimmin as many delightful personalities as we have wimmin. each blossoms in her own way and time. each is a joy, even if one sometimes rubs like the fine sticker hairs on the dried borage plant. what is a flower bed without an occasional rose and cactus and borage among the marigolds, zinnias and feverfew? borage draws bees like scarlet runner beans attract hummin-birds. do you reject a flower because of its color or size or season of blooming? is the sunflower less a sunflower because it thrives in a field with burdock and calendula, chicory and flax? such a field even more sparks my senses as the sunflower dances to the moving sun. we wimmin are a people of many flowers.

ooo

*Jae: I write because it helps me find clarity and possibility so I can better live a land-based communitarian life rooted in Lesbian value. I've gathered these writings into a homemade book, The Wimmin of Our Dreams.*

*I believe our everyday Lesbian lives and perspectives are important. Every one of us has important stories to tell. No one else is going to record our lives. We must do it ourselves, for ourselves. I also believe it's essential to share our ideas, experiences, visions.*

*This is why I offer The Wimmin to you through Land LESY. I fervently hope that you too will write or tape your experiences, stories, understandings, analysis, fiction, ideas, dreams, songs, or...Then, make copies and offer them to other Landykes and other land-interested Lesbians--our own LandMade Books.*

# WOMAN VESSELS

## CONTAINERS FOR SPIRIT

Jennifer Weston  
Gathering Root Farm  
Ava, Missouri

The forms of these three vessels represent potent symbols that are especially connected with women: The Moon, The Yoni, and The Cauldron.

Their armatures are constructed from wild vines, branches, and other natural found materials, then given "skins" of different kinds: tarpaper, handmade paper, woven vines. Finally, these containers are embellished with stones, shells, webs; are colored with earth pigments; are incised with gyneglyphs ( a women's symbol language).

Thus, each vessel consists of several layers, weaving together women and myth, nature and spirit.

### "The Moon"

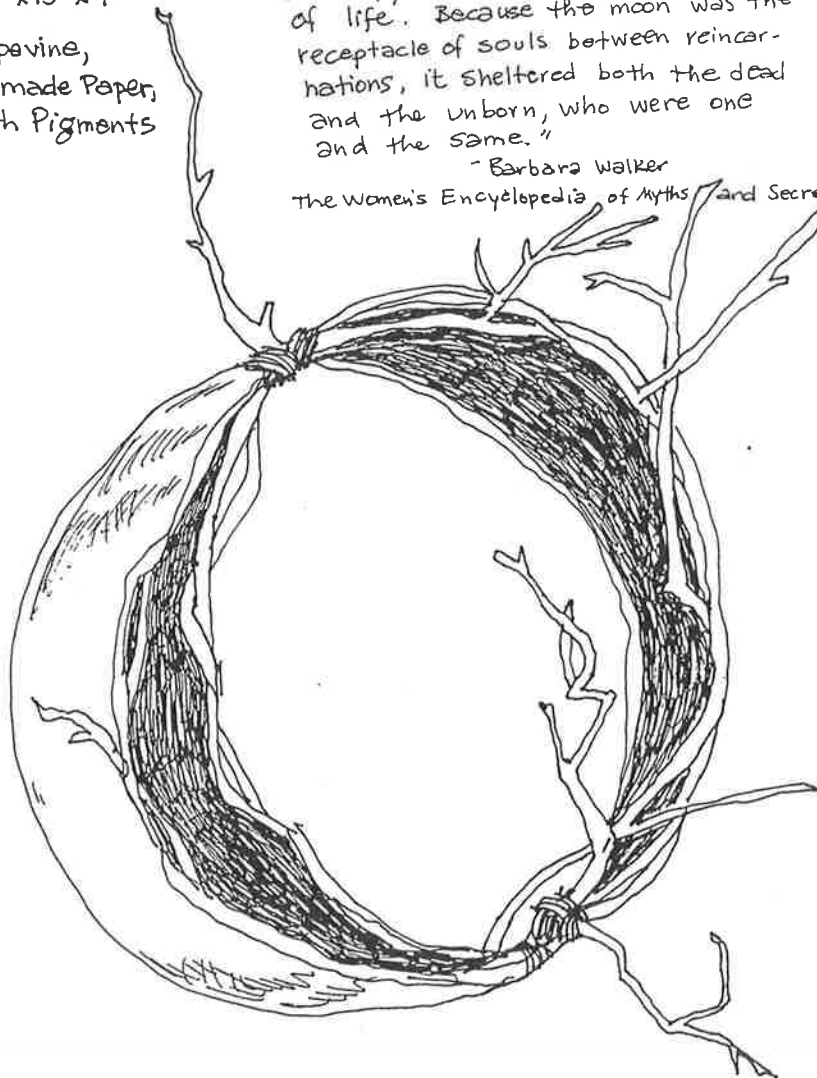
(wall vessel)  
27" x 15" x 4"

Grapvine,  
Handmade Paper,  
Earth Pigments

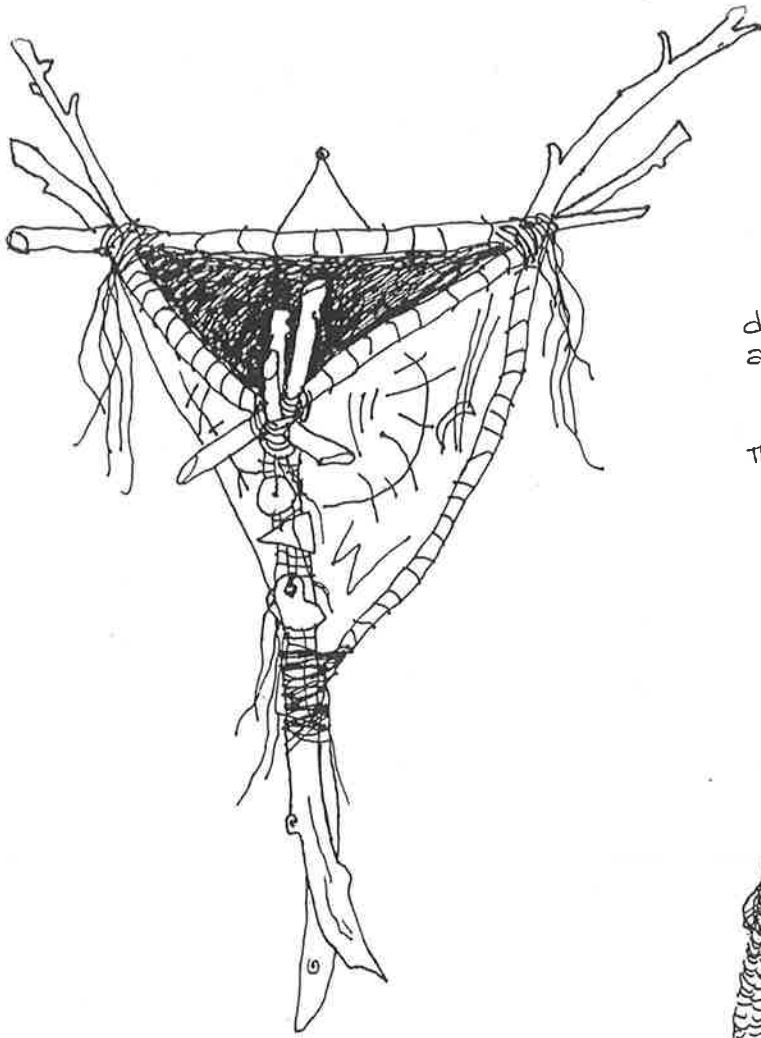
"The crescent moon is said to be the Ark or Vessel of boat-like shape, symbol of fertility, or the container of the germ of life. Because the moon was the receptacle of souls between reincarnations, it sheltered both the dead and the unborn, who were one and the same."

- Barbara Walker

The Women's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets







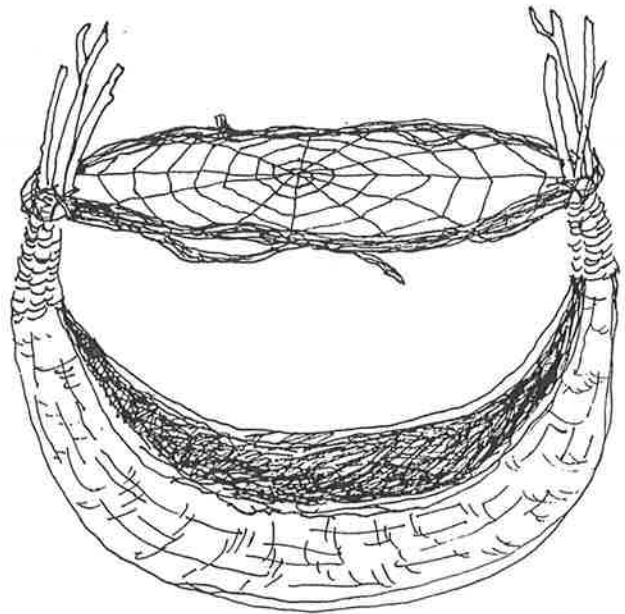
"The Yoni"

22" x 17" x 11"  
(Wall vessel)

Twigs, Tarpaper, Waxed Linen,  
Oil Pastels, Incised Symbols

"The Yoni Yantra or Triangle was known as the Primordial Image, representing the Great Mother as source of all life. As the genital focus of her divine energy, the Yantra was adored as a geometric symbol."

- Barbara Walker,  
The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths & Secrets



"The Cauldron"

(Sitting vessel)  
13" x 13" x 11"

Honeysuckle, waxed Linen, Hand made Paper

The Cauldron was the prime female symbol of the pre-Christian world, which is why Christians universally associate it with witchcraft. ... the Cauldron represented the womb of the Great Goddess, who was often a trinity. (People) used to believe their reincarnation and rebirth depended upon entering such a uterine Vessel to be reconstituted by its magic."

- Barbara Walker

The Women's Dictionary of Symbols & Sacred Objects

# ONE THING I'VE LEARNED SINCE MOVING TO THE COUNTRY

Susan Wiseheart  
Hawk Hill  
Drury, Missouri

Nothing has changed about how great it is to spend time blabbing with Lesbians. I loved it in the city, I love it in the country. Beginning in September of 94 and still going as I write this in January of 95, a group of dykes here has met every Tuesday night for Dyke Talk. Some drive for as long as an hour and a half. Others walk down the hill. Occasionally, someone spends the night. Once in a while, a few of us eat together before the talking begins.

After a little floundering, we've agreed to begin with a brief check-in, letting each other know how we are, both to connect and focus on us and so we'll be prepared if someone bursts into tears or laughs in a seemingly hysterical way. Then we select a topic and each of us has a chance to hold forth on it, uninterrupted except for an occasional clarifying question. After that, we all chime in with more observations or comments.

So far, the fewest in attendance have been four, the most, fourteen. We've made some profound statements, come up with new perceptions, learned much more about each other, and there's been so much enthusiasm that what started out as a six week series has already stretched to nineteen with no end predicted.

All but two gatherings have been at my house, which is a huge treat, knowing each Tuesday when I get home from work I'll be with at least a few other dykes.

Topic selection has ranged from one of us announcing we want to talk about something and the rest agreeing, to picking a topic out of a hat and everyone going along with it, to rejecting several topics until we find one that doesn't make at least one of us groan.

We have a long list of possible topics, recently increased magnificently by the addition to our resources of the *Important Pursuits*, the Lesbians values questions

Lee put together. There's a potential of continuing for years!

Some of you may have noticed the similarity to 70's Consciousness-Raising in our process. It is not unconscious. Several of us experienced that unique and wonderful form of women relating to each other and it was purposeful that Dyke Talk's design ended up quite like C-R, despite objections we have to using 'raising' as part of the description. We're expanding our consciousnesses and our awareness and knowledge of each other, bonding more closely as a community and as friends and cohorts.

My plan when I called the first meeting was to make sure I had Lesbian space once a week and to keep myself from being lonely on Tuesday nights. It has worked wonderfully well for me. Each week I look forward to Dyke Talk with much pleasant anticipation. I'm never sure who will show up, but always a few other dykes do. Hooray.

The topics have spread out to members of the community who weren't at the discussion and have often continued to be addressed by small clumps for days or weeks after the night they are first chosen.

Here are the ones we've covered so far: Community; Gossip; Couple, Singles and Beyond; Sex; What Am I Doing Here (on this planet at this place and time in this life)?; Our Relationships with Animals; Separatism; Transitions; Addiction; Enabling; Transexuals/Trans-genders; Lesbophobia; What is a Lesbian?; Secrets; Identification; Racism; Outness; How Involved Do We Get in the Patriarchy and Still Maintain Our Lesbian Values?; Relating with Men; What Happens When One Lesbian in a Couple Has Sex with Someone Else When that Isn't the Agreement?; Trust and Other Subjects in the Same Neighborhood; Land Dyke Community; and Judgement.

Yes, we've kept track not only of the topics but of who has attended each session. Altogether, there have been 24 different dykes from as far away as Massachusetts,

Connecticut, Vermont and New York. Any visiting Lesbian is welcome, as well as dykes in the "neighborhood." Our immediate neighborhood includes ten dykes, so there will almost always be someone willing to gab. The wider neighborhood has a radius of about ninety miles. We have drawn from both directions where the bulk of Lesbians live. There are some who never come. No one has been to every meeting, but several of us have been to most of them.

Dramatic community news has been announced at Dyke Talk. We've had much laughter and a few tears. We've expressed joys, fears, opinions, desires, experiences, and confusions. Often the talk has ranged far beyond the topic, but it always relates to Lesbian lives, the ones belonging to we who are there. Some of us have asked that we all try to tell only our own experiences and speak in the first person. It's not a rule, we say, but a preference, and most of us honor it most of the time.

This is a wildly disparate group in many ways. Age is between early thirties to sixties. Some of us were raised rural, some city. There are representatives of several class backgrounds. A few are of

Native American and European mixed racial heritage. Our patriarchal educations have varied from finishing high school to graduate degrees. We've worked a huge number of jobs to get by. Our experiences in Lesbian community are diverse. For some of us it is fairly new in our lives. For others, it has been ongoing for decades. That makes for some very interesting talk, let me tell you!

Shep wrote up notes a couple of times and the notes have grown to a newsletter that often picks up on a subject we've chosen or are about to choose.

As a result of the first meeting on community, several of us have adopted Hillydyke as a name to identify us as a "family" group. We've joked about putting it on all our mailboxes and holding a Hillydyke "family" reunion at the nearby camp that has refused to rent to us "Lesbian witches." That's only one concrete thing that has evolved from Dyke Talk. Besides that, we have a stronger sense of us as an entity, a community. It's a more structured way to do what we do all the time when we're together anyway. Yak, yak, yak.



*Susan Wiseheart*

*Photo by Jae Haggard*

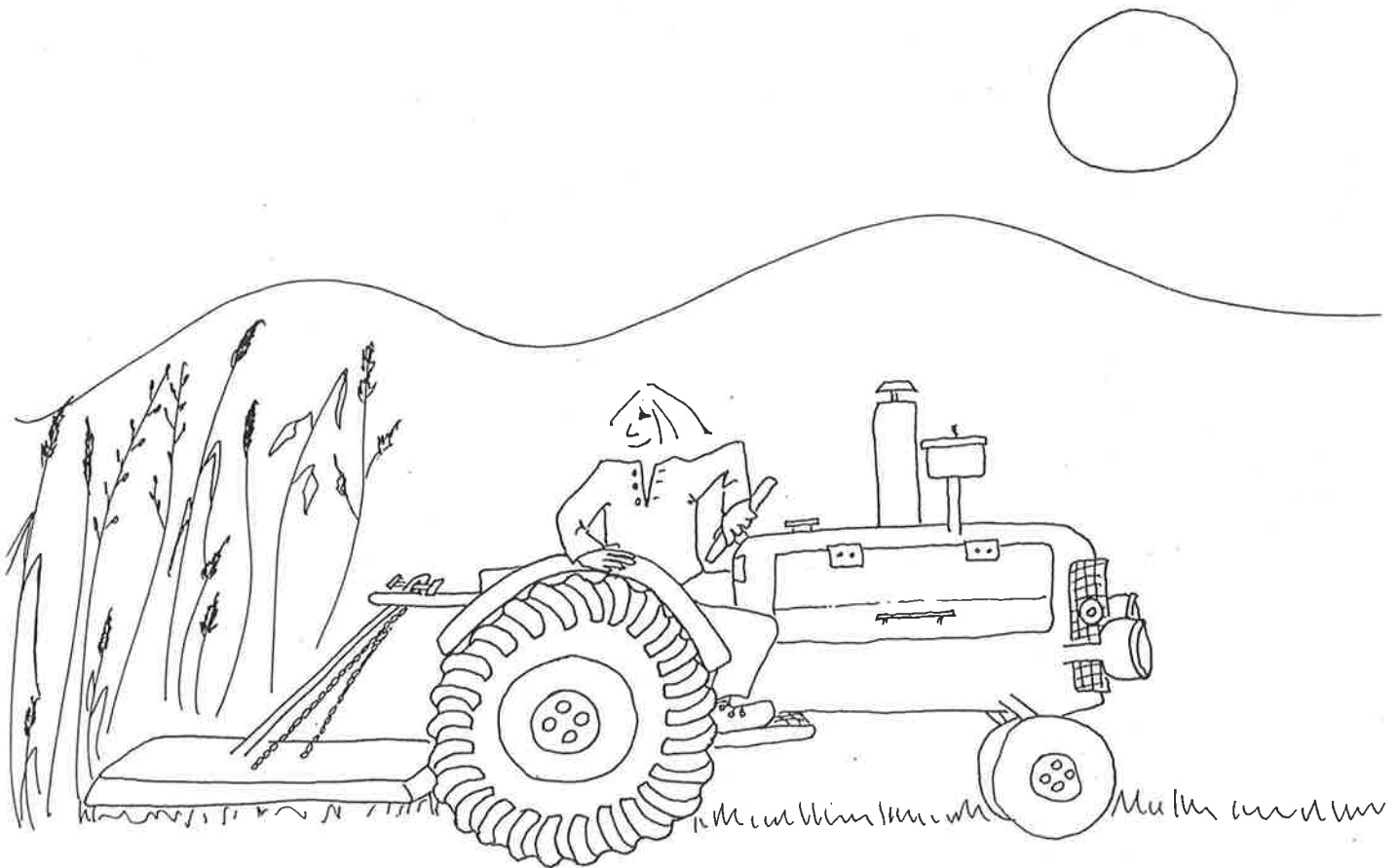
# LESBIANS FINDING EACH OTHER

Tamarack  
The Web  
Foreston, Minnesota

We say,  
I saw a dyke today she was downtown  
she was in the library  
she was in the corner store  
she was on that baseball team  
she was driving a tractor  
she was in the woods.

We say,  
I know she was a dyke  
She had that certain walk,  
We say,  
She had that certain look,  
We say,  
She looked me in the eye just that little bit longer,  
We say,  
She had that certain special smile,  
She had that air of freedom,  
We say,  
She had that wild, free look,  
We say,  
She had a labrys on,  
We say,  
She had on comfortable shoes,  
We say,  
She had purple on, and she was wearing it symbolically  
We know!  
We say,  
She was with another woman, and obviously loving her,  
We say, she was saying,  
I really love her, and I don't care what anybody thinks.  
She was saying,  
I'm out at work,  
She was saying,  
I'm out on the radio, out on TV, out in the classroom  
out in the office, out to that boss, out to that  
welfare worker, out at the restaurant, out to my  
doctor, out to the parliament,  
out to be free  
out to be me.  
We say, I saw a dyke today  
I know she was a dyke

We feel,  
She was free, as a dyke  
We feel,  
She was wild, like a dyke,  
We feel,  
She was different from what women were told to be,  
Like a dyke,  
We feel,  
She was herself  
A woman loving women, loving life  
Loving herself, Being herself  
Feeling herself to her limits.  
She was a dyke,  
I knew she was a dyke.  
I asked her, and she said,  
As a matter of fact I am.



*Tamarack*

*Tamarack*

# HOME DEATH/HOME BURIAL ON WOMYN'S LAND

Musawa  
We'Moon Healing Ground  
Estacada, Oregon

*My friend Bethroot asked me to write this story in response to the question asked in the Fall issue of Maize about sisters burying sisters.*

In the late Spring of 1989, Marcia Patrick came to We'Moon Healing Ground looking for a place to heal and possibly to die. She had been evicted from her apartment in the city (Portland, Oregon) because the woman who owned it (a friend of hers) suddenly got afraid that she might die there. She had friends scattered all over the country, but no one was there for her now that she had cancer and was going through it on her own, not through a medical institution. Her next step was to try to move out on the land as a caretaker of a Girl Scout camp nearby, but she had been unable to keep up with the work. So she came to women's land seeking sanctuary. She was carrying her garden in the backseat of her car--to be transplanted for the third time--her medicine, she called it, her life line to the Mother Earth.

Marcia was a foremother. She was one of the original members of W.I.T.C.H. (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell) with Robin Morgan and others in New York City in 1968. She was the first woman cabinet maker to make it into the union in California. She was a macrobiotic instructor in the early days when "counter culture lifestyle" was not seen to have anything to do with "counter-culture politics". She was one of the early researchers of matriarchal culture before any of the Goddess books came out--and had been in communication with Monica Sjoo while she was doing similar work in researching what became *The Great Cosmic Mother: The Ancient Religion of the Earth* (who had recently visited me on the land and was who Marcia was trying to reach when she originally contacted me). And



Kiwani  
Whaletown,  
British Columbia

she was the first woman I know to die and be buried on women's land.

At the time she first appeared, I was living alone on the land and desperately trying to finish up the *We'Moon '90: Birth, Death and Life Transitions*. Marcia certainly brought the message home to me. We sat under the old apple tree in front of the main house (half of which crashed down this year, I am sad to say), never having met each other before, to decide whether or not we could live together through this particular life transition that was coming up for her. It went counter to all my newly renewed resolve not to overextend myself and take on more than I could handle on my own on this land, and we did not currently have private living space with running water and electricity which were her stated needs, but when I consulted my inner guidance, the answer was a clear yes. Within a short time, between the two of us we had somehow conjured up the resources to fix up the abandoned trailer by the road for her and materialized a healing

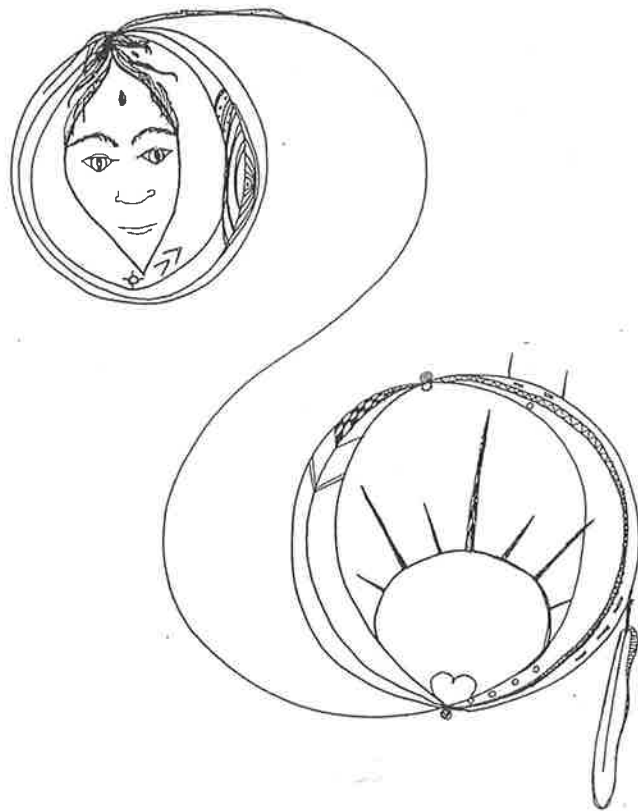
circle of five womyn on the land to take care of her (with the help of welfare and eventually hospice, as well as two city womyn who volunteered to facilitate a healing circle for the care givers).

Although she was in more physical pain than ever, she said she was also happier than she had ever been in her life. Sitting under the old wild cherry trees up in the field by the fire circle, she often declared was "the closest thing to heaven." Finally she was getting the support she had always wanted to do her art (by getting on welfare when she couldn't work a regular job anymore), she was surrounded by attentive friends that came in and out and called on the phone constantly, and she was greatly appreciated as an inspiring teacher to all of us about conscious living and dying. Five months after coming to the land--on the very day she had chosen for it 3 months earlier (spanning Hallowmas and All Souls Day, the pagan and christian death holidays)--she died naturally in a close circle of friends.

Originally she had wanted to be cremated, but when she found out that welfare does not cover funeral expenses, she decided to skip the funeral industry altogether and just be buried in the ground. I had met an old woman once who had moved to Oregon expressly for this purpose--as one of the few states that allowed home burial--so I knew it was possible. I researched it out and found that I could become a funeral director simply by going to the court house and signing a few papers. It involved getting the metal tag ID# that had to be buried with her and the death certificate that had to be signed by me, and the medical examiner, and digging a hole six feet deep. We rented a backhoe and did it ourselves--building in steps to walk down into with her body if and when the time came. Marcia had half-joked about having her "last art project" be photos taken of her looking down into the hole where she would be buried, entitled: "Confronting My Own Death," and "Dancing on the Edge of My Grave," and "One Foot In and One Foot Out," etc. But she was too weak to walk up there by the time we got it dug. It was hard to be digging a grave for someone who was still alive --and the hopes for

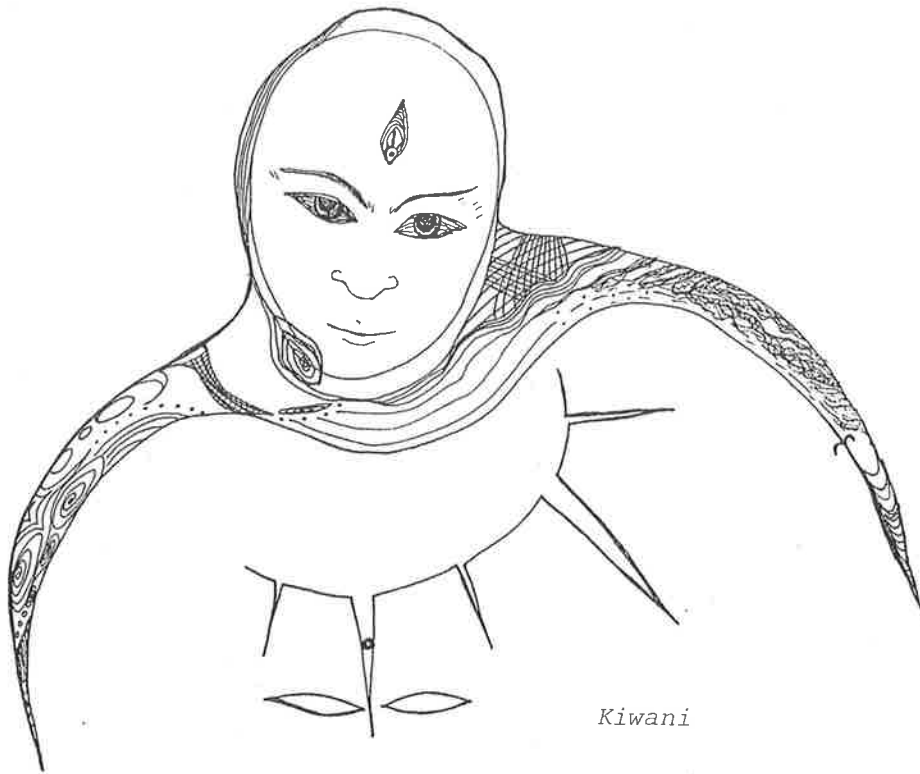
a miracle cure were always still alive. We decided it could always be a root cellar if it didn't need to be a grave.

The state officials had told us no official site inspection was needed--but then when she died and we called the county medical examiner, he said he thought we had to. The county office was already closed for the day. When we finally did reach someone, they said yes we did have to have it inspected and the next available appointment was in two weeks. Since she had to be buried within twenty four hours, I simply said we were burying her at noon and if they could make it before then fine, otherwise they could inspect the site after the fact. She did show up early that morning after all.



*Kiwani*

We washed her body in sage tea and dressed her in a red dress she wanted to wear for the occasion and stayed with her through one more night. In the morning, her body had stiffened into a ballet dancer's pliat position--a young woman had called that morning to say she had just had a dream about Marcia (whom she hadn't seen in several months, and did not know of her condition), first as a Great Mother Earth figure and then as a ballet dancer



Kiwani

only she couldn't move anymore and was dancing lying on the floor. We put her body in her sleeping bag--she didn't want to be put in a box--and someone in the circle had woven a bier (out of the bright colored Guatemalan scarves Marcia had used for a sling for her swollen arm) between two branches of the cherry tree at her favorite spot. The weight of her body, which we had lifted and moved several times while she was alive, was so much greater after she was dead ("dead weight"?) We lifted her onto the stretcher of scarves and four of us carried her up the hill in a slow procession, singing and resting along the way, to the grave site she had picked out on a peaceful hidden away spot behind the old garden.

We had laid fresh fir and cedar boughs in the bottom and walked down into the grave with her, folding the scarves around her like a cocoon, and then laid another layer of fir and cedar branches on top of her. Women gave her presents and poems and songs and special things along with the earth we buried her with. At one point, while we were all looking so intently down in on her, loud cries from above made us look up in the direction she was looking and saw the sky filled with ravens flying over. She had once written that breast cancer was like having an old raven sit-

ting on your shoulder constantly complaining at the world. The raven, as shape-shifter, was one of her totems. As with the elk who came and ate an apple off the tree outside her door moments before she died (the last thing she said she had wanted to eat was an apple!--we were continually surprised and awed by the magic of the whole universe being present in the act of dying--as in living--at home on the earth.

It took us most of the night and into the next day to bury her. It gave us something to do with the big hole her death left in our lives.

*Musawa has lived on womyn's land communities for over twenty years. She is the creatrix of We'Moon: Gaia Rhythms for Womyn, which is now being co-created with other womyn living at We'Moon Healing Ground in Estacada. She also practices a form of mind-body-spirit healing called Hakomi body-centered psychotherapy. At 50, she is looking around for a circle of close loving sisters to go the next step with, which she imagines has something to do with a spiritual healing sanctuary or center, grounded in a sustainable way of life on the land in community with mature far out lesbians who love each other and are guided to do this work together.*

#### MAIZE:

About caring for dead: about 8 years ago we buried a sister in the ground on her land in New Mexico. She did die at home. Also, a dear sister in California died last March, and she had a box ready and her body was gotten quickly from the hospital and cremated. Most of her ashes went to compost piles, so she had the box made without nails. So, there are several ways.

Spes  
Santa Fe, New Mexico



Dear MAIZE,

In answer to the questions from a Canadian woman (Fall '94) about whether lesbians are creating our own ways to care for the dead bodies of our sisters-- Yes! And we have much more to learn and devise about this important work. "Can we escape the patriarchal funeral enterprises?" Hopefully--it depends on the regulations in your state (country) regarding burial. It makes sense to research the options for your community well before the need arises. In addition to learning from Lisa Carlson's book, *Caring for Your Own Dead*, contact the appropriate state and county agencies (departments of health, sanitation, environmental quality, cemetery licensing, etc.) for information on laws about what is required when someone dies, about your rights to handle the paperwork, about burial on private property. Interview funeral directors to learn about their procedures, their flexibility, and their willingness for you to be intimately involved; cremation will no doubt require the use of a licensed facility, but otherwise you *may* not have to use a funeral establishment for anything. That's true in Oregon anyway, and a few other states.

Your locality may not offer you such liberal policies, but those of us in Oregon can be hands-on with our lesbian sisters' bodies, if we insist on doing so. According to state law here, a dead body must be buried, embalmed, refrigerated, or cremated within 24 hours of death. The county coroner's office must be notified at the time of death, and an "unattended" home death (where hospice or a physician has not been involved during the course of a terminal illness) may be investigated by the medical examiner. A professional funeral director need *not* be involved if simple burial is the option. One of us can fill out the necessary paperwork, e.g. death certificate--except that the medical portion must be signed by a physician within 48 hours of death. (Naturopathic physicians count.) We can transport our friend's body to wherever it is going. If it is going into Mama Earth on private property, we can do everything ourselves (although a backhoe can more quickly, easily create the requisite deep hole).

No container for the body is required (not even a wooden box). Burial on private property is fairly easy to arrange in terms of legal stipulations. A gravesite must be a specific minimum distance from water sources and property lines. Some counties require prior inspection of a gravesite by a county sanitarian, and eventual recording of the gravesite on the property's deed is recommended. If our friend's body is going into the flames of Mama Fire, we can accompany her as far as our insistence and the crematory officialdom will permit. Some establishments will let you participate in the cremation process--helping to put the body in the oven, pushing the button, staying present (it's a 3-4 hour process), helping sweep ashes into a container, etc. If circumstances require that our friend's body be handled by people other than ourselves, we can insist that only women touch her body (and a clincher for that could be to claim that she is Jewish. In Jewish tradition, only women touch a dead woman's body.)

Some of this information was compiled for and shared at a lesbian conference we organized a couple of years ago called Lavender Life Support: Visioning Alternatives for Assisted Living and Dignified Death. Several of us got interested in the idea of creating our own statewide Lesbian Memorial Association--offering structure for making advance arrangements about death, providing immediate assistance regarding options, paperwork, etc. to lesbians involved in a death. We haven't materialized this concept yet; any of you who have experience along this line, please let us know (LLS, POB 2233, Roseburg OR 97470).

I think that lesbians on land are in a unique position for inventing creative, loving ways for our cellular bodies to return to the Earth--as ashes, as flesh and bone. We hold the land, the land holds us, in our living and our dying. I believe that our lands can resource many lesbians who want to rest, in the end, on women's land.

Bethroot Gwynn  
Fly Away Home  
near Myrtle Creek, Oregon

# TWO WHO HAVE LEFT

Pelican Lee  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

The rural lesbian community centered at Albion, California has experienced the deaths of two lesbians in the past few years. I am extended family of this community, and was in and out during both of these times. This is what I remember.

Both Kim and Flame were very special lesbians. I know their shortcomings, but I treasure their gifts. They were both singers, lifting my heart in circles and in everyday life. They both welcomed lesbians to the community, providing hospitality and friendship. They were both concerned for the disadvantaged and oppressed, doing what they could to relieve suffering in the world.



*Kim Moonwater & Jerio  
1987 Photo by Mishwa Lee*

Kim Moonwater was on her way home from the West Coast Women's Music Festival in 1988 when she had a motorcycle accident in Marin County. She wasn't wearing her helmet! She landed in intensive care in a coma with massive head injuries. The extent of injury to her brain would not be known until the swelling went down.

For two and a half weeks, lesbian camp existed in the intensive care waiting room--food box shoved under the couch, blankets under the chairs, and a constant stream of lesbian visitors plus members of Kim's family. The hospital was progressive, allowing any of us in to see Kim without question, though only one or two at a time, and only for a few minutes each hour.

We lit candles and prayed for Spirit to be with her, to be gentle with her and help her and guide her. For her to survive if that was Spirit's plan, but if it was for her to die, that we could let go of her. Trying to let Kim herself decide which way to go and for us not to hold on to her or call her back to us. Some of us did rituals and prayed together in the nearby woods within view of her hospital window.

With so many family and friends from far away, I waited until 2 a.m. one night for a chance to see Kim. Although others had prepared me, I was still horrified to see how grotesque her swollen and bandaged head looked. She didn't look like herself at all! All sorts of tubes and computer numbers for life support, and worst of all, a respirator forcing breath in and out of her body. Her eyes were half open, but I didn't see her in her body. Others were trying to call her back into her body, but I felt ready to let her go.

Several days later, I was able to see her again, and she looked better because the swelling was less and her features showed more. We were all more hopeful, and some women said they thought she was responding to their visits.

The ICU nurses told us that hospitals give the most negative view, to prepare families for the worst, but that it was possible that Kim could pull through--"It's so hard to tell." All we could do was wait until there was some sign, one way or another, which could take weeks.

Autumn Equinox came and women circled for Kim both in Albion and in San Francisco. "In one form or another, you will always be in our circle, we will walk this earth together, in one form or another," we sang and we cried.

Several days later, Kim started going downhill with pneumonia--which we learned is not uncommon in that state of unmoving body and forced breath. Her father and sister flew back from the East Coast (her mother had stayed in California), and women gathered again. Her father was having a difficult time accepting that modern medicine was not able to heal his daughter.

The next day, Kim's heart stopped. The nurses did CPR long enough to call her family in. Only one community lesbian happened to be present, but she told the family she knew Kim through circling with her, and got the entire family into a circle with Kim for her crossing over. (When her heart stopped, was that when she crossed over? Or had it been earlier?)

I was surprised to learn that Kim, at 31, had prepared to die. She had made a will, leaving her share of the women's land that she part-owned to a landless friend. The three land partners hadn't been getting along well and were having trouble making the land payments. The friend due to inherit a share was not sure she wanted any part of it!

Kim had asked to be buried on her land, in a certain blanket with certain objects with her. California law didn't allow private land burial without prior arrangements. It was decided that the best way to follow her wishes was to cremate her, and bury her ashes there.

About 30 or 40 of us gathered on a foggy morning, along with her family and a neighbor couple. With so many years of circling, we knew what to do. We stood in a large circle around the

hole lined with fern fronds, dug the previous day at Kim's outdoor campsite. A local woman minister, friend of the community, read some Christian readings for the family. Others read poems and messages sent by friends from far away. A Jewish woman sang Hebrew burial words.

Then Kim's closest friend laid on her belly to center the bundle of her ashes along with the other things she specified, wrapped in the blanket, in the deep hole. The circle moved slowly around, each of us throwing in handfuls of dirt and other things--crystals, necklaces, herbs, flowers, rose petals, water. All the long while we were doing this, we sang. So many of our circle songs were appropriate to this ceremony.

This ceremony made Kim's death more real for me, but yet I knew it would still take time to get used to. It was so hard to believe that she's not with us, I'll never see her again or hear her sing.

Afterwards, we ate potluck in the Main House there, and made visits to Kim's house, which had been made into a shrine for her, with photos, flowers, and favorite and symbolic things on the altar.



*Memorial Circle for Kim Moonwater, Big River Beach  
September 29, 1988*

*Photo by Pelican Lee*

That afternoon there was a public circle on a public beach because Kim was a public person. She was politically active in local issues and worked at the local health food store. At her job, she welcomed many new lesbians to the area. A beautiful altar was made with cornmeal tracing a circle and the four directions, flowers of all kinds, and for an altar cloth, Kim's lavender Palestinian scarf that she often wore. There were several hundred people there in a 3, 4 and 5-deep circle, which was video-taped for Kim's relatives in the East. After a few readings, the rattle went around the circle, each person talking or singing. We talked about how we knew Kim and told stories about her. This took hours, but we heard so much! What a tribute!

The circle finished with all of us holding hands and moving back into one huge circle, hooting and shouting our good-byes to Kim. Then there was a memorial swim for her, with lots of people skinny dipping in the freezing cold ocean, something Kim loved to do.

That evening there was another pot-luck at another of the women's lands. Kim's mother told me she was glad she'd been around the community for so long while Kim had been in the hospital. She said she thought that's why Kim had taken so long to die. She had the time to get to know us and to experience the community, which she'd never been able to do when she'd visited just Kim for just a week. We just swept her into our lives, and she fit. Earlier, at the hospital, Kim's mother said to me that she'd always worried about something happening to Kim way out in California, because Kim had no family there. Now she was seeing that she need not have worried, that Kim was well taken care of.

The next day I went to the health food store, and there was an altar for Kim with photos and special things, with a written update. That altar is still there today, moved to a more permanent location above the stairwell.

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Flame 1985

Photo by Pelican Lee

Flame, who was Acorn until she changed her name a few years before she died, knew she had a lump in her breast for at least six months. She didn't see how she could afford a mammogram. But when she mentioned it to the lesbian who was the local Public Health nurse, she found her a free mammogram program. Flame didn't believe in going to doctors--the nurse had to write her a mammogram prescription at a party. It was discovered that she had two cancerous lumps in her breast, and cancer in eight lymph nodes. The lumps and lymph nodes all were removed in the summer of 1993.

Flame chose alternative healing methods which strengthened her immune system. She was OK until a year later she broke a rib while chopping wood, in July. A bone scan was done and cancer was found in four places in her bones, including her back.

Within a few months, she was breaking more ribs merely reaching for a coat or turning back blankets. She needed a cane to walk and couldn't stand up for long, and couldn't even hold up a full teacup. And she couldn't hold down food, so was getting very thin. Everyone was worried that she might die soon, and Hospice was called in.

But then it all turned around. Hospice came up with a different pain-control method, a skin patch so that the pain medication wouldn't be lost with throwing up, and an anti-nausea medication, an extract of marijuana, so that she could eat better. Flame's brother came across a method of extracting laetril from mung bean sprouts, and a daily injection of a

camphor compound was obtained and begun. When I came to visit in December, Flame was doing remarkably better, striding around the house forgetting her cane. Flame's condition was so good that there was hope that she might beat the cancer. But she was still losing weight.

By then a daily schedule had been set up, where women signed up to be present and do various tasks and work projects. Her primary supporter was her long-time friend, land partner and ex-lover, but many many others took major and minor roles. Someone was nearby at all times, to help Flame with whatever she needed, and slept in her room with her at night. Women did the hours-long mung bean extraction regularly. One woman did the household laundry every week. The women's barbershop quartet that Flame sang with came regularly to sing with her. Occasionally there were community singing circles at her house. Many out-of-towners came to visit and help out. Every afternoon, all who were present gathered around Flame for a hand-on visioning circle while she received her injection.

In the middle of all of this, money was raised by her land partner to buy the land they and other lesbians had been renting for some 20 years. Not long before I visited, crowds of women had spent several weekends scraping and painting the house a beautiful shade of blue for an insurance requirement.

Although there was concern about there being too many women around, Flame loved all of the attention, socializing, and outpouring of love. And it sure was fun for the visitor!

Flame's cancer brought the community together as women rallied in support of Flame and her land partner. Women were at their best, full of love. Flame's high spirits and good outlook throughout, the courage and the peace she radiated, affected us all. Her mother wrote to her after a long visit, "I've seen the love in this community, and realize it's a harvest of the love that you have sown for years. I'm so proud to be your mom." In the end, we were all healed by the love expressed.

Flame showed me her checks with her name printed on them, the first she had ever had, because she lived so far out-

side of the patriarchy. "Look at this! Can you believe I have checks?" she said. When the cancer appeared in her bones, the lesbian Public Health nurse helped her get on Social Security Disability and Medicaid. She also got money for home health aides and from the American Cancer Society for transportation to doctor visits.

One day I asked Flame what thoughts she had about the choices she had made, for others of us who may someday find ourselves in her position. She said that of the women she knew in her Women's Cancer Support Group, the ones whose cancer was discovered early enough when it was still localized and hadn't spread, and who had done radiation or chemotherapy, were still alive after some years. But those whose cancer had already spread hadn't done so well.

Although her condition remained fairly stable for several months, then it started slipping again. A community lesbian became her Hospice worker, helping her write a will and obituary and make funeral arrangements. Flame had an hour-long discussion with her about all the details of cremation, asking questions that she had had to go out and research. Flame asked the local lesbian carpenter to make a box to hold her body after she died and that she would be cremated in. It had to have no nails because she didn't want anyone to go through her ashes to sift out nails. She asked the lesbian community potter to make a special pot to hold her ashes.

Flame had wanted to die at home. But by March, her bones were so fragile her caretakers were terrified of breaking them by just touching her. The pain was so bad she was losing the will to live. We heard that bone cancer is the most painful of all. It was decided that she would go into the hospital to get the pain stabilized with morphine so that hopefully she could return home to die. But that was not to be.

Flame was in good hands, though! A community lesbian and close friend and ex-lover was nursing shift supervisor at the local hospital, so scheduled herself with Flame during her shifts. The doctor told the lesbian nurse that bone cancer does not kill fast, that Flame could be in this excruciating state for

months, that the nurse should do whatever she felt was right. When Flame clearly asked her nurse friend to help her die, and her family agreed, she raised the level of morphine higher, which slows down all body functions until they stop. Flame also asked for no life support and no IV feeding. Without a cooperative doctor and family, and a patient willing to die, people with bone cancer can linger in severe pain for months.

Whenever Flame came into consciousness, she sang with the women there and cracked jokes. And the women sang to her. As she got closer to the other side, she said and sang things that seemed to be coming from the other side.

Flame's father and brothers had been in Albion earlier, but had already left when she died at the end of March. Her mother, aunt, sisters, and "gal pals" were nearby. She had been in the hospital for two weeks, and was 43. After she was pronounced dead and was washed, the crematorium man came, wheeled her out of the hospital, and handed her body over to the lesbians. They put her into the wooden box and drove her home. As she had arranged, they dressed her in a special dress that had no buttons or zippers (more stuff to sort out of the ashes), put a seagull wing in her hand, and cedar all around her in the box.

The next day the community came to say goodbye. To prevent decomposition, her room was kept cool and ice was put on her organs. The bed had been moved out, to create more space. Cards and letters that women had sent were all over the walls. Along with her juggling balls and woodchucking and gardening tools was the pot for her ashes on the altar. The day after, her body was cremated.

On the Saturday after she died, there was a big circle at the outdoor circle place on the land, with a potluck afterwards. She had asked that there be a fire at the center and for the rattle to go around and each one to have an opportunity to talk.

Of maybe 200 people that came, about ten were men, who were neighbors and friends and co-workers. Flame's sisters lit the fire. Her lesbian sister told us that to satisfy a requirement to wear shoes for college graduation, Flame had painted sandals on her bare feet with magic marker! And that she and her childhood best friend called each other "Grub" and "Maggot". Flame had gone barefooted everywhere, "to keep herself grounded." We heard about her love for "critters" and children, and her child-like qualities. And her way of making everyone feel included and special.

Flame modeled for all of us how to die gracefully. She used her struggle with cancer as another adventure and "incredible challenge" for growth. I saw what I had previously only read about--one becoming luminously Spirit approaching the Spirit world.

Flame asked that her ashes be put in women's gardens and compost piles. She loved the "precious earth" and growing things, "puttering around" in the garden at home and gardening for money. How fitting, wanting her body to go back to the soil to nourish growing plants.

*Pelican Lee is extended family of the Albion community. She lives in New Mexico where's she's part of a land group that is buying new lesbian community land.*



*Venus singing at Flame's Memorial Circle  
April 1994 Photo by Pelican Lee*

# A HEALING JOURNEY

Willa Bluesky  
Sebastopol, California

One stormy night  
Shame dreamed that her home  
a ramshackle thing of cardboard pieces  
glued to cardboard patches  
took flight, landed on a piece of tidy lawn.  
Bump!

The closet door blew open and a wide stream  
of stale kisses, torn pages, cancerous body parts  
spread out on the green brush cut.

Slam! The thing took off again.  
A glorious glide over trees, silos, houses, trucks,  
horses, rivers ended by the Pacific  
where dolphins leap into a blue sky.

That winter the tides raged, the sands blew  
and fat raindrops pelted the cardboard home  
until summer's children came laughing.  
They surfed on shame's closet as the  
cardboard melted in ocean mother's embrace.

One bright day  
Shame came out of the closet  
to become herself  
a child of the stars  
a friend of the wind  
a sister of the moon.



Kitt Redwing  
Grand Rapids,  
Michigan

*Willa: Willa's mother died of cancer in her mid-seventies, her mother's mother died of cancer in her mid-forties. Willa will not die of cancer. She will come out of the closet, every closet, any closet, over and over again until Willa is free of all the shame she received from her family, community, school, Madison Ave., Main Street. Freedom from shame is the first and last step of any healing journey. Good luck on yours.*

# ABORESCENT

Hawk Madrone  
Fly Away Home  
Myrtle Creek, Oregon

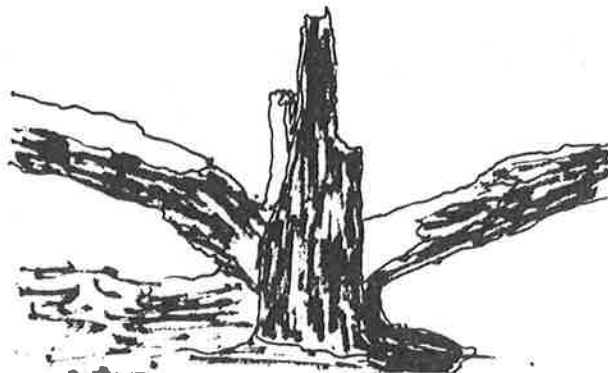
This has been a fine day. The sun came back for at least a visit after so many many days of rain/cloudy skies. I labored mightily yesterday to extensively improve the drainage ditch along my mile-long road, in case last week's torrent repeats itself. This morning I had a few sore muscles, which gave me permission for lighter work and a leisurely walk. I completed several small tasks, then set out with my camera and my dog companion Muphin's bounding enthusiasm. I have been wanting to photograph some particular trees, so today's clear weather was my first opportunity and I thought I had better make use of it.

First down to the old barn. In November there was a big snowstorm here, with a foot of snow on the ground and heavy on the trees. That weight brought down one of the 6 locusts in the barnyard, as well as large parts of the lilac bushes on the knoll and a few small firs and madrones on the path to the Poogoda. I've cut up the trees on the path, but have yet to get to the lilacs, or this locust. It is a heavy hardwood, its length just missing by inches the east barn wall when it fell. The barn is a derelict from the 1930's, standing insecurely on its primitive foundation and rotting beams. It might not take much of an impact to collapse a wall, and bring the roof down. Although no animals are kept at the barn, it stands as witness to the long history of this land, and visiting women often choose to sleep under its light-dotted roof, where missing shingles provide a glimpse of a summer's moonlit sky.

When I first visited the barn after the snow had melted, I was impressed by the fact that this tree had actually been two trees in one. There had been two separate trunks growing from a single base; when the tree fell the trunks toppled in opposite directions, each falling back from the center. Although surely the snow must have been a serious catalyst in the breaking asunder, I think it was

actually just the last straw in a demise that had been approaching for some time. As I closely inspected the stump, where the two had been joined together, I found that there was rot in the wood. Strange. There had been the usual abundance of the clusters of sweet-smelling white flowers last Spring, and no suggestion of dying that I had noticed then. Nonetheless, there was death in that tree that had been brewing undetected, even while she bloomed.

I photographed from several angles, trying to record something of the drama of the scene. As I studied the locust I thought about the falling apart that happened to my mate and me eleven years ago. I have mostly held that time as a failure, another case of a Lesbian relationship not "making it". We split up, she moved back to the city, and I eventually came to resolutely choose my singleness. I have worked hard in these years to understand the mistakes I made, the malignant patterns I enacted or participated in. This has been important work and I am healthier for it. At the same time, the locust gives me a different perspective on the subject. I am cautioned to remember that there is more to the story of this tree than its disease, its fatal weakness. For more than twenty years it had stood in the barnyard and, along with its sisters, filled the air each Spring with a fragrance that was worth the walk down, and back up, the hill. Now I stroked the wet rough bark and my hands easily remembered the loving my mate and I made together, the good and vibrant life we shared for over five



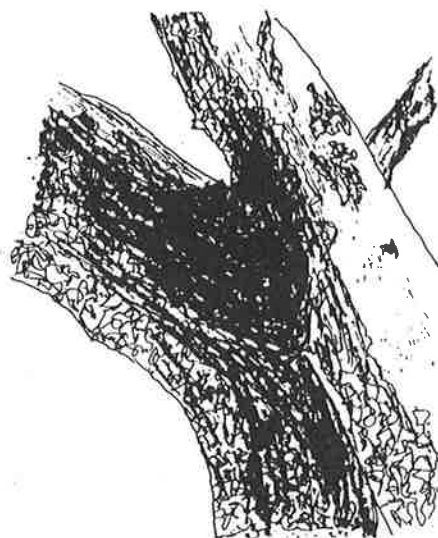
*Embellished photo tracings by Hawk Madrone*



years. But just as those two trunks could stand for only so long on what gave them their beginning, my love and I could stay together only as long as what we were creating was good for both of us, and that had come to an end. The sadness is that so much suffering attended our leaving. Like the dyad lying in the barnyard, we each had our own experience of a toppling, deprived of the foundation we had come to depend upon.

It will take a lot of energy, my ditch-digging muscles recovered and ready for the job, to cut the locust to manageable lengths and haul them out of the way. The tree, and the work, will wait.

After my musing at the barn, Muphin and I hiked up the hill to visit again the madrones I discovered a week or so ago when a break in the heavy rain gave both of us some desperately needed fresh air and physical exercise. There is a path that goes off into the forest about halfway up to the north boundary of these forty acres, an old logging track that has lots of young firs coming up in it, making it difficult to get through in places, though short-legged Muphin had no trouble. On that prior walk I had spied a strange-looking configuration of trees up the bank from the path and climbed up the slippery clay slope to investigate. Today I easily found again the two small madrones, each about eight inches in diameter, that had apparently been forced into an amazing intimacy some years back. One of them had grown to lie across the other, so that their trunks were overlapping about seven feet up from the ground. And not just overlapping, like one hand embraced in the palm of another. These two trees had taken on each other on a cellular level: the bark of one comingling with that of the other, such that the two trees shared one bark covering where they crossed. I climbed a nearby madrone to get a better look, trying to find flaw in this apparent merger, some place on the unitrunk that was incomplete. But their blending was perfect. At that place where the two trees held each other they had become one tree. But only at that place. They each had a history before their melding, and they each continued on singly, and in different directions, from their union.



I found a thick tuft of bear grass in a small patch of noontime sun where I could sit and think, while Muphin nosed about in the forest nearby.

Had my mate and I come that close, that enmeshed with each other? I know that is what I wanted: that depth of merger, of sharing one life. That is what I thought true love was supposed to be about, the ultimate goal possible for, and only in, Lesbian loving. But I have known one of my jobs is to change the way I have been prone to love, to let go of this desire to merge with my lover.

I do see the necessity for this change: in all my attempts at mergers in my adult loving I have always turned my back on myself, stunting my own growth, sacrificing too much of my identity in the name of commitment. Perhaps in this I but poorly harken back to my prenatal being of the same body as my mother, and an understanding of my identity with the earth, from whose matter I am made and into whose womb I shall return. Being-at-one-with is my beginning and ending in this life, an instinct for bonding which speaks to the deepest and final reality of my physical existence.

The sun had shifted, a wind had risen as the afternoon gained; I sat now in shade too cool for comfort. I went back to the madrones, reached up and caressed their bonding with envy. I noted the small side branches and vibrant green leaves each of them had birthed as they grew on and away from each other. Each came to their mating with their individuality and left with it intact. I looked with imagination's

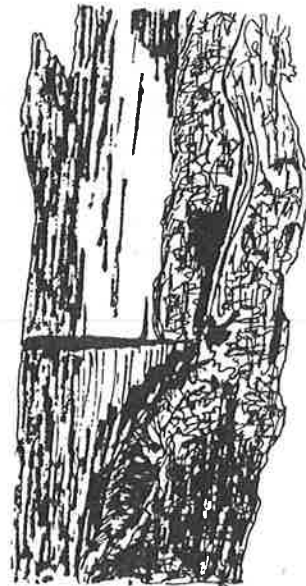
eye beneath their shared bark and saw the wood of each that had not stopped growing. It had been possible for these two madrones to encase themselves in a shared identity for a passionate pass of time, and then part with no apparent sacrifice.

We continued from there up to the small clearing that marks the northern boundary, where I wanted to complete this photographic study. One of the first things I discovered as I began walking this land, in 1976, was the assault that had recently been made on the madrones in the government-owned forest that borders this property on the north. A killing girdle had been chainsawed around the bark of each madrone, deep into the cambium layer, severing the tissues that carry the nutrients for sustenance and growth. This guaranteed a slow and certain death, freeing soil, water and light for the benefit of the adjacent firs and cedars, the so-called marketable timber. The forest up there is pocked with the steady demise of grand madrones. I have watched these nearly twenty years as their massive trunks have slowly metamorphosed from beige/green/orange/gold ochre to black, then bleaching out to grey. Watched the leaves wither and fall, not to be replaced, the smaller branches break off, leaving standing skeletons, denuded of the flaky bark.

In the early years of this vigil, when the drama of the madrones presented a slightly different scene each time I visited them, I observed one tree whose large southernmost top fork still held bright green leaves, the golden ochre trunk reaching like a woman's glistening flexed muscle into the sky above the conifers. Curious, I pushed through thick poison oak and wild honeysuckle vines, tripped over rotting logs on the forest floor, to stand beside this apparent survivor of the logger's sweep. There I found what seemed to me a miracle; the ugly gash around the bark was there, but on the southern side of the tree, the side that faces the nearby clearing where I had been singing my mourning, and praising, songs, this tree had knit herself back together over a small section of the wound. Curly reddish-brown bark flecked on green-ochre new growth that flowed like hardened liquid over the cut, making a life-sustaining bridge about eight inches wide. I could almost feel

the fluids of the tree pulsing through her brave viaduct.

This survivor has been an inspiring companion for me these many years, especially when I have felt my own lust for life become frail from heart-breaking disappointment, when it seemed a wound had gone too deep for healing. My namesake makes mockery of my despair, and I find that I too find a passageway to my roots, and keep on growing. Life did not end with that slicing my mate and I had to do, though it sometimes felt to me like it would. In truth, we have each mended ourselves, are glistening and strong, doing the loving and the good work we are each given to do in our parted lives.



Today, holding my camera safely against my chest, I trudged through the thick brush and celebrated this forest familiar with her portrait.

On the walk back down the hill I was charmed by a little yellow violet growing in the path, then two stumps, one lavishly covered with horseshoe lichens, the other boasting a cluster of fairy cups laden with seed coinage. The sky announced the bright sunshine's visit finished for now, with the return of the season's near-constant fare, beginning with a sprinkle, then turning to a downpour by the time we reached the house. I built up the fire in the stove, then Muphin and I sat in front of its opened double doors, warmed and dried by the burning logs while the rain pounded on the roof. I rested easily, knowing the good work I had done on the ditch, knowing the good work I have done.



# WISHES

S. Francis Elizabeth Undine  
Chico, California

I wish to live where the red-red earth lies.  
The richness of it, the colour...like the blood of the mother.  
I wish to live where I can see the earth,  
where mainroads go off to dirt roads,  
where the red-red earth winks at you, as the trees wave you onward  
to your destination.

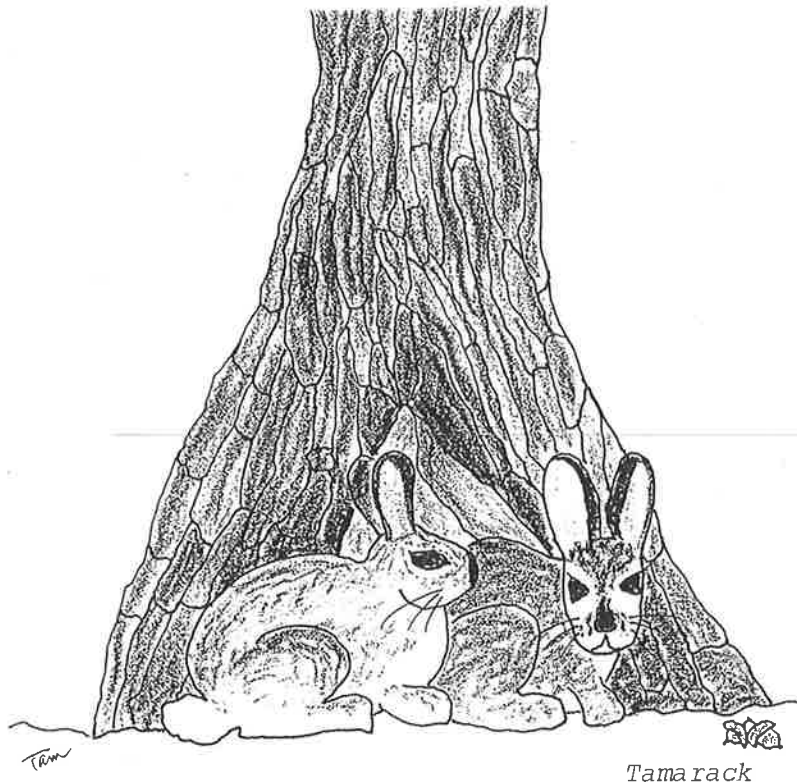
A home in the hills.  
Where value is in the earth and what you do.  
And when chopping wood you say a thank you to the mother earth.  
Where labor is counted in months and years,  
not hours and minutes.  
Where the mud sticks to my boots,  
and the leaves screech as I walk on them.

Where success is defined by how many friends pop in for dinner  
along their weary travels,  
and,  
how many dogs are romping in the back yard.  
Where people are dressed for warmth and not style.  
Where no-one cares how old and beaten the furniture is,  
just that there still is some...since the wild storm that  
stranded everyone last year.

I wish to live where I can touch the essence of the earth every day,  
to feel the spirit of the goddess in my finger tips and to  
honor her!

Jean Mountaingrove

*S. Francis Undine was born and raised in England. She now makes her home in sunny Northern California, with Roshi (an aussie dog) and an assortment of other critters. Where she enjoys writing songs and poems and painting watercolours for pleasure and healing.*



# STORYLAND

Nett Hart  
The Web  
Foreston, Minnesota

Like most Lesbians on land, I live in storyland. Visitors who come for a short time tour the sensory delights, the roll of the land and its vegetation, the signs of wildness, the evidence of Lesbian handiwork and invention. But stay any longer than a few hours and you come to the stories inside each place, each activity, each knowing. "It wasn't always this way..." We tell of how we came to plant these trees, or build, or witness the changes nature wrought. The more dykes that have been here, the more stories are woven into each artifice of Lesbian making.

The stories go deep and tie this present evolving way of life to the first hopes and illusions we brought here, the dreaming that preceded even that. We find the strands of experience that led us to believe that this is what we should be doing, this is how we want to live. We find the beliefs and politics

that are materialized in the care for dykes and the land, the creatures and the attention to the details that make this life a whole life. The stories document a series of ideas tested, patterns observed, friends' advice. They say everything is deliberate. Everything is connected to all the other ways we do things.

A visitor may first encounter this time-shifting storyland when she emerges from her car with the leavings of her road trip. "Where's your trash?" Well, we don't have trash. What do you have there? She is invited into an under the sink cupboard with a large number of labeled boxes. Is it plastics #1-6, paper, aluminum, compost? "Trash" goes to one place--the trash container. But string to be reused, wax to be made into new candles, jettisoned parts available for repair or craft projects, all wend their way to stories about how this room is made entirely of salvage, or there's a dyke who saves this for us, or every year at candelmas we make candles of the old wax.

A walk to the creek yields stories of how this giant tree succumbed to dutch elm disease and fell, creating a different ecosystem, or how the creek changed course with the beavers' help, or why we call the woods latrine "Karol's Can".

We go to the garden and can see where the rotation of crops has placed everything this year, but every vegetable has favored places as well as vegetables it favors to follow in rotation and vegetable companions. Many vegetables take after the "weeds" and hide offspring to remind this year's beans that potatoes grew there last year, or pak choi seeded itself to become the first greens up.

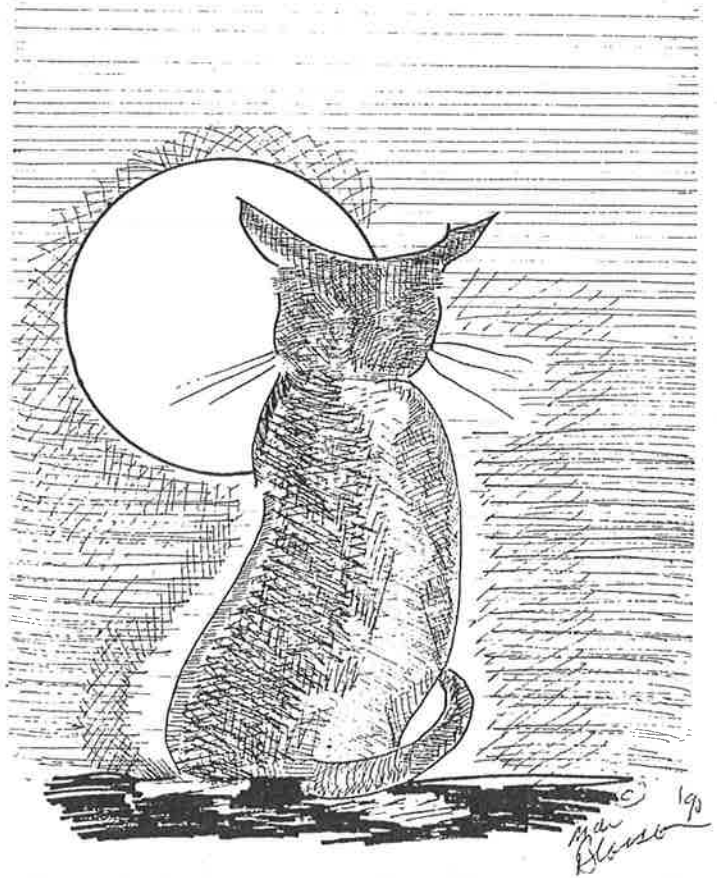
We look at the buildings and this is the wall Isis helped build or this is the corner Zanne made. Some dykes leave their mark with an individual solution or style. Whenever they return their contribution is there and when they are not here, their stories make them present.

In the kitchen these are Sally's beans or Kristen's oregano. Our sunchokes are offspring of Lee and Jae's garden (and those came from Sunlight's garden.) Many traded seeds and many traded recipes make the opening of any jar a story.

With all these stories you could wonder if there is always the sound of voices. I assure you, the silence of the country is what it has always been, animals busy in their activities, blooms bursting from trees and wildflowers, water chattering her way to an appointment with an adjacent creek. In this, the stories of the humans are a part of the same herstory of the land. The more dykes have walked here, left their touch, the more animate everything is until no thing may be desacrilized. Every thing is part of a living whole in a very physical sense.

The stories mark a developmental relationship with the land. At first all we could do was sense the animation of the place, the hum of life activity all around us. Then we asked questions, read books, and observed, observed, observed. We

began to name, to know the names of things as they are called in the language of mass culture and the language of cultures that preceded our tenure on the land. Then, through seasons of observation and interaction the relationships we developed with the land and creatures and with other dykes on the land became the stories, a context for us within the long saga of the land's own story.



Harvest Moon

Mau Blossom

Doniphan, Missouri

So here it is we weave ourselves into a place, develop a sense that we are part of a changing landscape of which we are both participant and observer. It matters less and less the distinction as we meld ourselves to the spirit of the place, for what we observe and what we enact are just different parts of the story.

# ON THE LAND

## RAVEN'S HOLLOW

CAZENOVIA, WISCONSIN

Hello and happy winter, 11/94

I write, admiring the first snow of the year, still accumulating. Lots has changed at Raven's Hollow since I last wrote. The biggest and most exciting of those changes is that now Raven's Hollow has two full time residents, Deborah and her daughter Mowita, who moved from Minneapolis to escape the city craziness.

I have really loved getting to know them and having Deborah's knowledge of carpentry to finally get things up and running on the land. We managed to put the trailer on batteries this summer and after working out the initial glitches everything now runs extremely well. It was my intention to avoid grid power on the land as the high voltage (and electromagnetic radiation which is its result) that they run from the nuclear power plants through the country on its way to serve the cities I'm sure has contributed to the high incidence of cancer in rural people in this area, along with the pesticides they all use without knowledge of, or head for, its toxic power. So now we are set up to install solar panels (someday) and in the meantime Deborah charges the batteries an hour/day with the generator. If anyone is curious about how to do this, cost and in general what to expect from a non-grid electrical system please feel free to contact me. It was definitely a gratifying learning experience.

Our other major accomplishments include building a deck, steps and a shed for all the tools that once strew the floor of the trailer. It's a lot more convenient and accessible, and there's a lot more room now which is nice. It really makes a difference having just one more person to help. Though I think Deborah could be counted as two with the work she does.

We also managed to have a Halloween gathering and officially welcome our dyke and pagan neighbors. It was really great to see everyone and raise power



Laura O'Brady

Photos by Jae Haggard

against the patriarchy, and to celebrate the witch spirits who guard the land.

I really am inspired by the work that Deborah is doing right here in this community to enlighten or at least resist the blatant racism, classism and sexism of our rural neighbors and its officials. She has shown me the true mental state of bravery and I learn much from watching and listening to her.

As for the future, we are battling around some ideas for a small cottage industry one of which is mapping the 50-some maple trees on the land. The other we've been thinking about is community supported agriculture. Though I personally feel less than totally confident about it, I've heard of others with less experience than I have successfully participating and am hopeful that if there is a need for good organic food that what we can produce will be appreciated. I grow enough to feed an army anyways, so I guess we'll try it, head first which is just my style.

Blessings to all,  
Raven

P.S. For those who are looking for land to live on we welcome all inquiries, though permanent living space is not available at present. Those who like to camp or with means to build or bring

their own dwellings are encouraged to call or write. We welcome all womon-identified lesbians and womyn and we are womyn-only land. We may also be looking for apprentices for our Community Supported Agriculture Project. Womyn who are interested in learning about CSA should contact us as soon as possible.  
Raven's Hollow, POBox 41  
Cazenovia, WI 53924

*See Deborah's article page 34.*

## TOAD HOLLOW FARM

DUBRE, KENTUCKY

We have been on the land since July 1, 1994. We moved into a 15 x 15 barn (open, very open) in August. And we moved into the shell of our home Nov. 19, 1994. We have no electricity and do not plan to. I think we may have a spring close by--one of my projects is to clean and dig out the area of the (hopeful) spring.

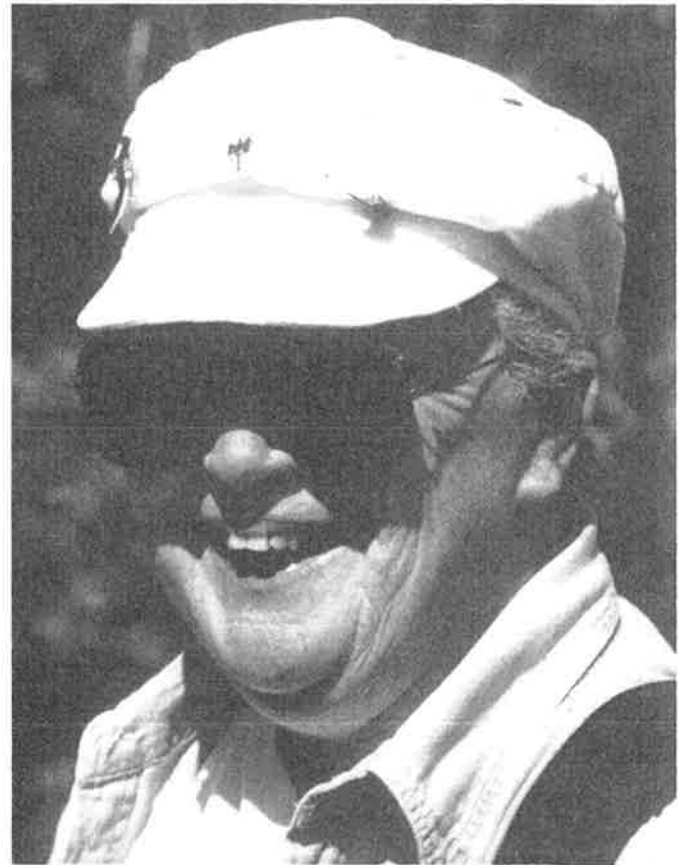
My interest of which direction to take this farmstead is limited by how much two people can do. Roxanna, my partner, is a writer and enjoys drawing (she's an excellent sign painter). She takes care of the house chores. She also grows flowers, herbs and loves to grow pumpkins. I, Dusty, work in the woods, grow vegetables, and herbs, and have a public job in a sawmill. Where to begin this first season of planting, what to plant, are limited by time and resources of seed. We have coyotes, big and not so friendly, so livestock must be watched, and deer so crops must be protected. We will be getting geese, a couple of goats, and some sheep. I need to have a main crop or two crops at two different seasons. Where is all this information leading?

We are looking for a couple of womyn who would like to live on the land, build their own cabin (we will help of course) in exchange work to market what grows here, what is crafted here as well. Skills that would be needed (or helpful or learned) would be the ability to dry flowers and wild plants, spinning, weaving, baking, and soapmaking. Well, be well-crafted. We have wild garlic, turnip, mint, onions/chives and a lot of bamboo, and I know there must be ginseng here somewhere.

We have a firm conviction to this land; we feel a spiritual bond to this land. The feeling is of an ancient spirit here. We need to come up with money (who doesn't) to buy this land. Any ideas? We would like to invite certain lesbians to buy a share in this land.

You know anyone with a used rototiller for sale?

Dusty Begin and  
Roxanna L. Chamberlin  
605 Ferris Creek Rd. Dubre KY 42731



*Ruesha Snow*

## CABBAGE LANE

SOUTHERN OREGON

Cabbage Lane will explore new directions toward becoming Lesbian Natural Forest (with hands-on educational workshops in eco-forest preservation) and Gaia Sanctuary for Women (with spiritual retreats for individuals and groups). Cabbage Lane will not be open to new residents at this time.

(from the OWLT newsletter)



Jenna

## RAINBOW'S END

ROSEBURG, OREGON

Dear Friends, February 13, 1995

The snow is falling, covering the cliffs, the trees, the fields, the daffodils already showing their bright blooms. I sit here trying to imagine how I might convey the beauty of this land as I ask for your help to preserve it.

On Candlemas, Feb.2, we celebrated 19 years at Rainbow's End, 17 years since we annexed 3 additional acres and created Rainbow's Other End. These women's lands are 50 acres nestled up against the forested cliffs, a sanctuary for women, trees, wildlife. We are learning to "walk gently" on this earth, to treat Her with reverence and respect. Many women have found sanctuary here as residents and visitors. This land is a safe place, a retreat, a place to heal and to grow.

Now the 38 acres adjoining Rainbow's End and Rainbow's Other End is for sale. This is the last parcel of land at the end of our private road. Easement is through

our lands. Ten years ago the 38 acres were logged. We sent out a call for help and raised enough money to buy and save 30 big trees. Many of those trees are still standing, the younger trees are growing and new seedlings are sprouting everywhere. This land has a seasonal creek, underground springs, stands of cedar, fir, oak and madrone, and meadows where no one has hunted for decades and where the wildlife lives unmolested.

We want to buy this land and preserve the sanctuary of women's land and the beauty of our small wilderness. We are asking for your help to raise the funds. We believe that for each of us who protects the earth from exploitation and development there will be a resulting hopefulness and sense of peace.

The asking price is \$89,500. We have pledges in the amount of \$30,000 to date. We are in process of creating a nonprofit corporation and applying for grants. AND we are asking for pledges of money to help buy and preserve this land. We hope to have your willing response as soon as possible so we can prepare our offer. Become an honorary deed holder to a beautiful 38 acre piece of our Mother Earth.

Valerie Sonnenberg and  
Annie Ocean

*Donations may be made to OWLT (Oregon Women's Land Trust) for tax deduction. Send to 925 Raven Lane, Roseburg OR 97470*



Lilith

Photos by Jae Haggard





Kathy

## OUTLAND

SERAFINA, NEW MEXICO

Outland is a wild life sanctuary where Lesbians are nourished and grow in a safe and stable atmosphere. The challenge is not to pit ourselves against whatever the world presents to us, but rather to find the circumstances in which we can flourish and become our wildest selves. If a flower or a hawk can so easily realize their true and wonderful selves, why not wimmin?

We are creating a clear space for the growth of possibility. We are discarding distractions until we can start fresh, move from within. We are not creating a place to hide, but to reveal ourselves. We want to know who we are inside. And we want to know who we are together. What do we create as we move farther and farther out? What values do we embrace, what life do we lead? How are we learning to love each other? The more we can remove ourselves from the sources of unloving energy, the more chance we have of unleashing our loving energy. Where do our hearts take us? Are we making choices that bring us to life, that consciously engage us in living? Lesbian land is not an escape from "reality"--there is perhaps more reality here than most places!

We are seeking more wild wimmin to create Lesbian community at Outland. Write us at POBox 130, Serafina NM 87569

## SBAMUH

SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL UNREST HOME  
MILLFIELD, OHIO

Have you ever considered community living? Join us on beautiful wimmin's land for an Exploring Community Weekend on June 16, 17 & 18, 95. We especially encourage womyn of color, Jewish wommin, feminist activists, and lesbians seeking a social community to attend. There are four white-skinned lesbian residents here, ages 44 to 70, who have radically different ideas about daily community lifestyles. We are *not* perfect, but we are each working on different aspects of change that we have made commitments to. We would like others to join us in making community decisions before all of our patterns are established. We seek both diversity in new members as well as support systems for our individual living styles. Our land and existing structures are not very accessible and we are working toward that goal. Please ask if we are able to meet your access needs; there is one chronically ill dyke living on the land now. For more information about us and the Weekend, which is Free of charge, please send an SASE to Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home (SBAMUH) #M, 13479 Howard Road, Millfield, OH 45761 or call (614) 448-2509



Ruth

# RAVEN'S HOLLOW

Deborah Kelly  
Raven's Hollow  
Cazenovia, Wisconsin

My daughter, Mowita, and I arrived in Raven's Hollow near the end of July 1994. We had barely escaped becoming homeless in Minneapolis, where I had lived for over 15 years. My daughter had been born there and unlike most poor children had had the luck to have lived in one residence her entire life. However, Minneapolis and in particular the inner city pocket of poverty wherein we resided was becoming more and more rancid economically, socially and politically and we both yearned to leave it behind us as quickly as possible. Occasionally we visited friends of ours in a small Wisconsin town, each time leaving large chunks of stress along the city streets and highways as we sped towards the little A-frame with its wood burning stove and quiet view of nothing but acres of trees beckoning to us through the patio doors. Each time our visit came to an end, we felt torn between returning to our home where our cats awaited us and our desire to stay where we could actually step outside and look at the stars without a layer of yellow fog from a garbage burner obstructing their fiery sparkle. We also did not have to worry about being shot by some cop or kid or man.

I had anticipated having problems with the Department of Social Services here when I began the task of having our AFDC, Food Stamps and MA transferred from Minnesota--a state still in progress towards becoming a fascist state--to Wisconsin--a state already seriously steeped in fascism. I have written an article which will appear in the April issue of Feminist Voices published in Madison, concerning the termination of our only source of income, AFDC. (Write to MAIZE or to Raven's Hollow for a copy.) I have been working on getting information regarding Wisconsin's "Father for Every Child" law to, in particular, lesbian couples who are having children. At this point there is no protection for them or their children, because quite simply unless they allow the sperm donor into the relationship (in which case

he will be ordered by the state to pay child support), there is no "father" (translation being, there is no adult penis) "attached" to their child.

During a meeting with a group of lesbians, while laughing about the humorous element in all of this, I noted that within five months of moving to Wisconsin, I was already in court. (We have filed in circuit court to overturn the state's decision to terminate our AFDC "benefits".) One of the women, who will soon deliver a child with her partner, stated, "Well, then you must be here for a reason." That simple statement reinforced what I have increasingly come to believe, and not just in my personal history.

I was becoming less able to hold it together in Minneapolis, partly because it was so clear to me what was wrong and what needed to be done, juxtaposed against the fact that I was only one person without the financial resources to even save her own family. I was working ceaselessly to keep other families from losing their homes and their children; while our home was being yanked from under us and my daughter was having nightmares about being forcibly taken from her mother and placed in an orphanage or of being shot through the living room window. My confrontations with the politicians and other poverty pimps who were deliberately destroying my community was becoming so routine, that I began each day to check beneath my car for bombs before turning the ignition. I knew that if we remained in Minneapolis we would have died, one way or another.

Now we live in the country and have been cut off from our only source of income, and I know that we will survive. Now we live on women's land. Now my skills as a carpenter, a lawyer, a troublemaker, and a writer are valued. Now, even as the U.S. and the world as a whole are goose-stepping towards the end result of extreme testosterone poisoning, we have a place where we can think clearly and calmly and can begin to envision and work towards a positive "future." Now we have a friend named Lisa Raven.

# MI HIJA

## (MY DAUGHTER)

By Maria Christina Moroles DeColores  
(Sun Hawk)  
Arco Iris  
Ponca, Arkansas

*Before you came  
I still a womoon child  
was lost  
no desire  
to live  
to breathe  
I played with death  
As with a close friend*

*But then you came  
Still only a spark  
Your small light  
Grew and grew*

*Lighting the forgotten  
caverns of hope*

*As you stirred  
Within me  
yet unseen*

*The light brightened  
The wonder  
The magic  
Of life  
Awakened me*

*From a long dream  
of sadness*

*With you came courage*

*Happiness for life  
like I had  
never known before*

*Always the bond we share  
grows stronger*

*As that of our ancient  
Grandmother Cedar  
Thrusting forth from  
Her rocky pedestal cliff  
She clings to Mother Earth  
Holding tightly*

*To the fragile sparse soil  
Yet Majesty and Strength she evokes*

*Remember all this  
I have said, mi hija  
And all that has passed  
Between us*

*Remember this  
When the North winds blow  
And storms come  
As they will*

*Love returned to me  
When you planted  
your seed within me*

*Without you  
I may not have survived  
Surely not be  
Who I am today*

*Remember  
When you walk away  
I am always with you*

*You strong  
as the thickest grapevines  
That grow over our mountain paths  
Climbing  
Always  
To the highest branch  
Oh, sweet wild rose  
with summer's dew  
Your quiet strength*

*Behold!*

Sun Hawk: I am a 40 year old lesbian chaman renegade. First generation Mexican American Indian (Coahuilateco Nation of Northern Old Mexico). Eldest daughter of a traditional working class Mexican family of eight. Living in a remote region of the Ozark Mountains with chosen sister, partner of 10 years, 6 year old son and all our wilderness relatives.

Founder and caretaker of Arco Iris (reclaimed native land) since 1978 rebuilding matriarchal spiritual community.

## GOING LIKE SIXTY

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING NEIGHBORS

Jean Mountaingrove  
Rootworks  
Sunny Valley, Oregon

My neighbors are the approximately 20 adults who live along a 5 mile stretch of this private dirt road which is the only access to Rootworks. The nearest family lives one mile downhill from me and it is 2 miles to the nearest one further uphill.

"Rough Roads" was the name of the newsletter the Womanshare Collective produced for 2 issues many years ago. I enjoyed it, and especially that title. A visit to lesbian lands in southern Oregon is still often a trip on rough roads. That is where cheap secluded land usually lies. And living in our evolving community is often a rough road in itself.

City dykes have their own forms of rough roads but the importance of being neighbors is different when you have quick access to help in an emergency and may not even know the people across the street or down at the corner.

When Ruth and I bought Rootworks in the fall of 1978 I was terrified of our new neighbors. I really thought we might be killed if they heard that "man haters" were moving in. That was the label with which our gay male landlords sealed off communication. They then threatened to "use any means necessary" to evict us from the cabin where we had lived for 5 years.

We turned to Bethroot and Madrone at Fly Away Home who listened respectfully to my fears. Then Ruth and I were able to figure out a preventive strategy, we hoped.

Just before Christmas we would pay my daughter-in-law (who had an oven and was a good cook) to prepare pumpkin pies. Then Ruth and I would deliver them. We nervously drove our 3/4 ton truck up to these strangers' houses. Appearing at their doors with smiles and a homemade pie, we were invited in to get acquainted.

"Have a beer?" We'd pass. "Want coffee?" No thanks. "How about a cigarette?" We don't smoke. Obviously we wouldn't fit into their social life. They talked about their land, their family and we talked about ours. I mentioned my grown children living nearby. We wondered what impression we gave by wearing the uniform of country lesbians in the 70's: blue jeans and plaid flannel shirts. I suspected they generally decided we were harmless, eccentric retired school-teacher sisters.

When all the houses were visited and the pies were gone, we gave a sigh of relief and turned to *WomanSpirit* business and construction projects on our new land. Since then I send Christmas cards to the families still here and to those new ones I have met on the road or at the mailboxes.

I wave when our trucks pass and may pause to ask how they are or for news of road repairs. Occasionally I pick up a boy from the school bus and drop him off by his gate. Or give a lift to someone walking toward the local store.

Several friendly visits occurred as I was clearing ditches or removing loose rocks from the road just below my place. Early on as Ruth and I and Caroline, who lived here and helped us that first year, were out in front of her house, a young woman came down to the road to visit while

we tossed rocks into La Truck for a pot-hole-filling project. Eventually she mentioned that her mother went to a gay AA meeting in Montana. She had figured us out and welcomed lesbians of her mother's age.

She has become our best neighbor, offering use of her telephone, well water in dry summer months, plants from her garden and a rest stop when I walk to the mail box on a snowy day. Sometimes I stop just to thank her for her kindness and to hear how she likes her job in town and how the kids are doing. I have done early morning childcare for her in an emergency. Her husband changed a flat tire for me and she towed La Truck when its brakes locked.

To preserve our reputation as uninteresting and harmless, the form letter I send to women inquiring about a visit contains this request, "We have no near neighbors but maintain friendly relations with people in the local area, and ask that you do also." We hope that discretion will be used in shopping locally, asking for directions, or meeting folks on the road.

A dear friend, just graduated from San Francisco State University, drove up for a Writer's Group meeting. She wore a black tee shirt emblazoned "Dykes from Hell". I was shaken. She wasn't concerned. "I didn't stop at the gas station or go into the store," she explained.

I said that in San Francisco that shirt might cause trouble for her alone, but here if someone unexpectedly stopped her for any purpose, that shirt could cause trouble for me and others here for years to come. It was not a matter I could take lightly. Finally she turned her shirt inside out.

When a recent tenant invited a local male firewood supplier into her cabin for a few minutes to look at her stove, I was upset again. Good to buy from a local person. Not good to familiarize him with our layout and buildings. Other male local workers are occasionally here but one of my rules is no men on this land overnight. With open outhouses and well-founded fears of men in the night, I need this rule to feel safe and I believe other women also feel more secure.

Another way I try to protect my

"boring though friendly" reputation, is to ask my summer bare-breasted visitors to stay away from the parking area, or to keep a shirt handy for a quick cover-up. Just one sighting of voluptuous nudity could bring a host of "lost" drivers, or hikers who "just happened" this way, or folks asking about a "missing dog."

Because of this possibility I had to ask a very helpful neighbor not to hike the old fire road through this land, and another one not to ride her horse along it. I didn't explain, of course. I hope it didn't add up to "man hating" in his mind, but I don't think I seemed very friendly to either of them.

So this country feminist dyke is friendly with her neighbors--within her own limits. That is how I describe my separatism. It is my right to have my boundaries where I choose them, to set my limits where I need to feel comfortable. Pure and complete separatism seems impossible except for a cloistered nun perhaps, or a woman in solitary confinement in a woman's prison.

But living in the world I do, I have the right to select who I want in my life and how much they are "in," how much and what kind of access I will grant to whom. Each woman's separatism is her personal/political decision. As I like to conclude when I get into this subject, "It comes down to this: I'm pro choice."



Jean Mountaingrove and Shewolf at Rootworks 1993  
Submitted by Shewolf

# LESBIAN PROJECT SYNDROME

Siné Anahita  
Bold Moon Farm  
McLeansville, North Carolina

I have suffered for two years with an affliction caused by living in the country. The only way that I can prevent debilitating depression is to juggle at least 28 on-going projects, all of which need to be finished yesterday. At one point last year I was building a chicken house and feed shed, working full time at a demanding job off the land, maintaining a romantic relationship with a dyke who lived an hour away, remodeling the interior of my home, taking care of goats, dogs and cats, doing artwork for two womyn's publications, organizing a concert on the land, and completing a major fencing project. I wasn't depressed, but I wasn't sleeping more than 3 hours a night either. Mother, was I exhausted! Finally, this winter, a therapist friend in Arkansas diagnosed my problem as Lesbian Project Syndrome, or LPS.

My friend knows alot about LPS because she, herself, is afflicted. In fact, many of the landdykes that I know have LPS. Although we get alot of work done, we have to be careful, because LPS can be fatal. For example, last year I was putting up metal roofing in January on my new chicken house. I didn't mind working in the freezing rain so much as I minded the 30 mph winds that kept ripping the metal roofing through my hands. LPS had me convinced that I JUST HAD to finish roofing on that particular Saturday without consideration of the cost to life or limb. Even being shocked by the jig saw didn't temper my determination. Now, any dyke who doesn't suffer from LPS can plainly see how operating

power tools in the ice, rain and wind while standing on a sharply slanting, icy metal roof can be dangerous. But at the time I was in deep denial of LPS, and I didn't acknowledge the danger.

New Year's Eve reveals alot about the womyn who have LPS. Now, non-sufferers have maybe one or two resolutions for the New Year. We who have LPS have dozens of resolutions. On New Year's Eve I sat down with pen and paper to make a list of land projects for the upcoming year. I usually tape this list to the refrigerator so I can mark each project off with a triumphant slash of ink when I complete it. This past year's list was two pages long, with two columns on each page. And, if you know me, you know how teesy tiny my handwriting is. Of course, the good news (or maybe this is further evidence of dysfunction...I'll have to ask my friend) is that here it is the end of the year and most of the projects have been checked off. This includes my new chicken house with a solid roof and hens nestled inside. And if I don't count the thumb that I smashed with the hammer, the fingers caught on the mower blade, or the paper cut from the project list, I was largely uninjured in spite of the risks that I took.

Dykes who suffer from LPS have to stay away from seemingly benign places and things. For example, for non-sufferers, getting seed catalogs in the mail is no big deal. But when a dyke with LPS peeks in her mailbox and discovers a catalog from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange or Bear Creek Nursery, the pressure to succumb to the syndrome mounts. In January there always seems to be room



Jean Mountaingrove  
Sunny Valley, Oregon

for JUST ONE MORE type of tomato, or maybe those purple peppers, or hey! I CANNOT LIVE if I don't plant thirteen kinds of zucchini this year. Then there are those dangerous trips to the feed store to buy goat chow. Oh, those little chick feeders are SO CUTE! I can order chicks to go along with them! And maybe some geese and ducks, too. But they'll need a pond. I know! I'll BUILD ONE! Where's a pen and my project list??

Even just visiting with dykes can be hazardous to sufferers. While well-meaning, womyn without LPS don't know that they are torturing us when they offer us things. Of course, they have no way of knowing that offering me a clump of garlic chives or that lovely burgandy yarrow will result in my expanding the herb beds three times over! I especially need to stay away from womyn who offer to give me salvage materials. It starts with the innocent offer of a used shower door; it ends with a new bathroom being planned with a cathedral ceiling, skylights and a rock-lined tub! Another high-risk behavior LPS dykes engage in is visiting other LPS dykes. There are several lesbians who I simply cannot afford ever to go visit again. These are the womyn who are building hand-hewn log cabins or putting in hand-made tiles or making cabinets from wood they cut on their land for their kitchen. I come back from visiting them and get out my project list. I also usually end up spending the rest of the night with my hammer and crowbar ripping out walls in my house!

Womyn who have LPS plan big. On New Year's Eve I think nothing of writing on my project list things like "build guest cabin" and "fence in the back 5 acres". Meanwhile, my house cries out to be swept, the goats hooves need trimming, the blueberry beds have to be mulched, and on-going chores like these are not even included on my project list. Like I said, 28 on-going projects, all of them pressing, none of them completed. Maybe I can sleep even less than I do now!

(Thanks to Lida for inspiration!)

Reprinted from *Womyn On The Land* newsletter, PO Box 412, McLeansville NC 27301  
January 1995

# TO RENOVATE OR NOT TO RENOVATE

Lynn Hicks  
Full Circle Farm  
Siler City, North Carolina

It seems that two of the biggest challenges of living in the country are housing and income. There are many options and each of us has to explore our own resources, abilities and desires to make our own decisions about what kind of housing will work for us and our situation. There is no right or wrong way to do it. My partner and I chose to buy land with an old farmhouse and renovate it. Here are some of my thoughts about that option.

First, on the economic side, I bet we've all heard that it doesn't pay to renovate an old house, that it costs more in the long run, and you can't make it as energy efficient as new construction. I've worked as a carpenter and have done both and know it's a lot harder to renovate than to build new, and a lot dirtier, but the cost depends on what you want to do with it: make it liveable or make it a showplace. Making it liveable is by far less expensive than building similar square footage new. Buying land with an old house on it is frequently cheaper than land without, because most people think the house is worthless and will have to be torn down and that's additional expense. And it's an eyesore so it devalues the property. We found this to be true when we were looking at land to buy, including the land we bought. Another economic factor is that you can live in the house as you're working on it, if you can stand the mess, and not have to pay rent elsewhere. That can add up to a lot of savings.

As far as the actual renovation goes, most of the building materials are already there, the house is there, so it's mostly labor and you don't have to pay for it (except in aches and pains). Old houses which were well built are built better than new ones, especially the materials are better. This house is all oak framing.

Today's lumber is pine that had been bred to mature fast enough to cut in 20 years. The faster it grows, the softer it is, the easier it rots and easier it is for insects to do their thing. I have done repair work on 10 year old houses where the sills have rotted. When we had a termite inspection here the inspector said this house would be standing long after new ones and it's almost a hundred years old. If you've ever worked with aged oak you know how hard it is (one of the downsides of renovating), but that's the very reason termites and other wood boring insects are not such a problem--it's just too hard for them, as long as it hasn't rotted from water damage.

It is true that it is very difficult to insulate enough to make an old house as tight and energy efficient as new construction. This house has clapboard siding and beadboard walls which means boards on the outside and boards on the inside, leaving lots of spaces for the wind to blow through. And no insulation. Newer houses have solid sheets of sheathing or plywood on the outside under the siding and sheetrock (also solid sheets) on the inside, plus insulation. When renovating, most people choose to remove the beadboard and insulate and put up sheetrock, or just put sheetrock on top of the beadboard, and/or rigid insulation and aluminum siding on the outside. I like the beadboard and the original cedar siding and have chosen to keep them. I have removed the siding on one side and insulated, along with rewiring and framing in more windows, which made it more worth the effort of removing the siding. It's easier to remove and replace the siding than the beadboard. It's generally easy to insulate the ceiling and ceiling insulation is the most important. If you have the money and desire you can replace the old windows and doors with expensive new energy efficient ones. I like the old ones so have chosen to repair them and put up storms, not as efficient. Another point I always consider when thinking of the tightness of

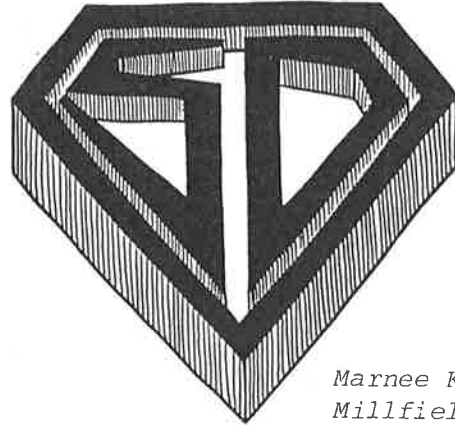


buildings is that when you have a leaky house (air, not rain) you get fresh air exchanged often. With air tight houses you don't and it's not healthy to breathe stale air. So, these are some economic points, both short and long term, to be considered when thinking of renovating. What else needs to be considered?

The condition of the house is of course the first thing to consider. It's too hard for most of us to tell so I think it's a worthwhile expense to have someone who knows inspect it. Make sure it's someone who values renovating old houses though. The foundation is the most important thing and you can tell a lot just by walking on the floors or the old rolling a marble test. Even if it's not level, it can be structurally sound. Whether the floors bounce or not is more to the point. Even that can be shored up, but the sills and joists need to be in good shape. Probably the next most important thing is the roof. If there are leaks and they have been there for a while, it could mean serious water damage to structural parts. Our house had some leaks that hadn't destroyed the studs or rafters too bad. The first thing we did was put a new roof on. Later I discovered some rotted studs in an interior wall where a chimney is. That's not going to be fun to repair. But overall, having someone inspect is a good idea, unless you really know what to look for.

If you intend to live in the house while you renovate, a real important consideration is the liveability of it, by that I mean primarily power and water. Living in the mess is hard enough, but roughing it could ruin the experience, although a lot of people do it. Also because electricity and plumbing are the hardest and most expensive things to deal with in renovation, and the safety of the wiring is real important. Rewiring isn't so difficult, but putting wire in an old structure that has never been wired is real hard unless you take the wall covering off. So, if you want to live there while you renovate think twice before you do it without some conveniences. I have been here 6 years and am nowhere near finished, but I and others (right now three of us) have been able to live here the whole time. Many others choose not to live in the cons-

truction site and if you have the resources that's a good option. I personally have enjoyed being so intimately involved in the process, knowing what's inside my walls and in my attic and in my crawl space. (I wish I knew the recesses of my mind so well!) But it's not for everyone. This is just one woman's experience.



*Marnee Kennedy  
Millfield, Ohio*

I have often felt I had a mission to save an old farmhouse. Maybe some past life stuff. Or maybe because my father lost his family farm during the depression. But it also has to do with energy and preserving it, the energy that went into building the house in the first place, both human and materials. And the energy of the people who lived here for generations before me. I can feel their spirits and the warmth of the hearth and the meals cooked and shared here. And it also has to do with waste. When I drive down country roads and see beautiful old farm houses, abandoned, something in me cries. It's the most wasteful expression I see of the throw-away mentality of our society. We have little history and we throw what we do have away. Those houses are vandalized, burned, they fall down, they end up in the landfill. It feels like a violation of the people who built them (most often the farmers themselves) and struggled and lived their lives there for generations. I read something recently that expresses some of this: "...ancestral land where the strength of vision from the past remained, for now, at a safe distance from the amusements and predatory warmth that have replaced the lessons of history."

*(Reprinted from Womyn On the Land newsletter, POBox 412, McLeansville NC 27301, November 1994)*

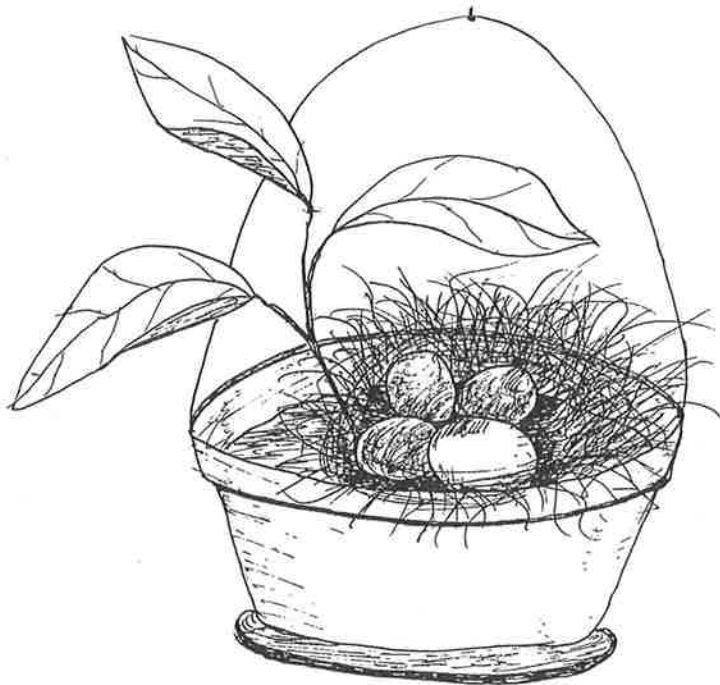
# NEST

Lois DeWitt  
Falls Village, Connecticut

I hung a plant out in May after a long cold winter  
in the dim sunshine next day there was a nest  
with four eggs three brown and one blue  
they hatched and the parentbirds  
flitted and chirped busily feeding  
three small brown heads and one big gray one  
needier and hungrier than the rest  
dominant it stood above the others  
screeching its alien cry it grew more quickly  
I watched the parents faithfully feed them  
resenting the big one's usurping and its skill  
but all the birds survived and flew away  
leaving their encrusted nest as a message  
in this order of their being I am only human  
our welfare system doesn't work as well.

*Lois: I am an active artist, a published poet and a librarian. My move from Boston four years ago to Falls Village, CT, was mainly precipitated by my meeting a woman who I fell in love with. I was so intimidated and fearful at the time, never having had a relationship with a woman before, that I thought by moving away everything would be the same again. I met another woman here who I fell in love with, but our relationship was damaging because she was an alcoholic and because I was responding with patterns that were as damaging as hers. I thought love would cure everything, but ultimately I could not live with her and this was very painful. I have shared this with my daughter, who is very supportive, as I have been with her, and accepting of my gender preferences.*

*I am not a seasoned lesbian. In this beautiful rurality where there is no lesbian community, it has been difficult to make contact. I have begun art*



Jae Haggard  
Serafina, New Mexico

*and writing workshops and have learned that my expertise as an artist and a writer empowers women and verifies my strengths as a creative person. What they have given me thus far, their enthusiasm and positive response, has encouraged me in this most challenging time of my life. I thought it all would be simpler and easier moving to the country, but it has not proven true. I am trapped in a low paying job in a region where taxes and living costs continually increase. I cannot help but remember a much more solvent and socially expansive time in Boston. In March when child support will cease and my debts will increase substantially, women in my workshops who have never had child support or responsibility of any sort shown by the father, speak my words back to me--Have faith in the power of what you are and what you can do and you will have the courage to persist.*

# LETTERS

MAIZE:

I have missed getting Maize--even though I am not a "country dyke" so to speak--hearing from all of those wonderful self-sufficient womyn gives me a vicarious pleasure in that they are living the way I wish I had the courage, and the strength to live. Once upon a time I would have--but then there were no supportive communities--and no role models. You all are very lucky to have "community"--and take a lesson from one who waited too long--Do it NOW!!! Follow your dreams--even if they seem impossible.

Warmly,

Peg Pauline

a 61 year old crone who loves womyn--in all her guises, and all her faces, and all her beauty.

Dear Maize Readers,

12/14/94

Hi. I decided to respond to my own question about outreach. My recent letter to Maize (Fall 94) talked about an article on the Lesbian Land Movement that I wrote for Communities Magazine and sent to everyone in the new land directory. I withdrew the article, waited awhile, then rewrote it and sent it to Lesbian Connection. This addresses most of the reservations. It's in the lesbian community and has a land resource list so I didn't have to decide what info to include.

Communities magazine is not something I want by myself or for myself. I think there are economic resources in the communal movement that might come our way if we did some outreach but this is not something I can decide as an individual. If we decide to pursue some economic opportunities outside our own community I'm available to help. I don't talk about my lesbian land experiences in public forums outside the lesbian community. I'd like to do some lesbian land presentations in the lesbian community but even there I don't want to be the only one doing it and I don't want to decide by myself what info to give out.

I live at a large, prosperous, straight, white commune. People here know that I'm a lesbian, a writer and interested in

lesbian land. There are about a dozen lesbians and womyn-identified womyn here. I don't make my lesbian land book and other writings publicly available here and I don't do lesbian land outreach here at Twin Oaks.

I've done lesbian land workshops at In Touch, a women's campground nearby where I make sure everyone knows about the *Lesbian Land* book, MAIZE, LNR, and SEEDS and the new directory. I'll keep giving away free copies of my book on lesbian of color land until I run out.

Twin Oaks has a Womyn's Gathering and a Communities Gathering (2 separate events) every summer. So far I have not done lesbian land workshops at either, although if lesbians seem interested I approach them privately. A lesbian who does a woman's radio show at a University radio station in Charlottesville is interested. Again, all these opportunities can't be limited to lesbians only. Sometimes people wonder why I ask people to tell me what to do. Because I'm not doing this just for myself. I also don't want anyone to feel betrayed. I'd like to do all 3 above but with others since I don't live on lesbian land right now. How does that sound?

Juana (703) 894-5126

## LESBIAN HOME COMPANION

The Grapevine reports that Southern Oregon has another group to join: Lesbian Home Companion. The purpose: To assist lesbians in Douglas County who are house or land bound. Who should join: Any woman who can devote a half day every other month to visiting a lesbian. The concept: Sometimes an individual lesbian in our community is in need of assistance because of an injury, illness, advancing age, or other circumstance. She might need someone to take her to doctor's appointments, bring her groceries, take her to community events, or she just might need someone to visit with.

How it works: The process and organization of Lesbian Home Companions is new, and will undoubtedly go through changes and refinements, but here is a start: Two women will decide to join Lesbian Home Companions together. The pair of women will commit one half day a month to Lesbian Home Companions. Within them-

selves, the pair can decide how to allocate their time. For instance, they can both decide to visit every month, or they can individually visit every other month. If a woman can't make it one month, the other woman in the pair can cover for her.

If we get 10 pairs of women to join Lesbian Home Companions, a house/land bound lesbian can receive assistance about once every third day. If we have two lesbians we are serving, they can expect assistance about once a week. If you do not have a friend to pair up with when you want to join, Lesbian Home Companions organization can help match you up. By being involved in pairs, the volunteers have more flexibility over their time commitments.

Volunteers would be reimbursed by the client for groceries she requested and gas money for driving her someplace (but not gas money for the regular trip to the lesbian's house). Volunteers can decline to provide service to any particular lesbian in need of assistance, at the time services are being arranged. (from the Womyn's Grapevine, POB 2233, Roseburg, OR 97470)



NEW! CROP-DUSTING!

Debby Earthdaughter  
Tucson, Arizona

## REVIEWS

THE NATURAL REMEDY BOOK FOR WOMEN

By Diane Stein

Crossing Press \$15

WITCHES HEAL

By Billie Potts

DuReve Publications \$13

Reviewed by Diann Bowoman

*The Natural Remedy Book for Women* is a timely and practical natural health care resource. The book is divided into two sections for easy use. The front chapters contain specific information on ten different holistic treatment methods: vitamins and minerals; herbs; naturopathy; homeopathy and cell salts; amino acids; acupuncture; aromatherapy; flower essences; gemstones and gem essences; and emotional healing.

The second portion of the reference is organized alphabetically by illnesses and conditions. A description of the problem, possible causes and some diagnostic suggestions are followed by a listing of all ten healing systems with specific advice for treatment of that disease. Each womyn can choose to try only one route, combine several methods or use them in combination with other holistic or mainstream health-care options.

I have skimmed the whole book and thoroughly read most sections which were of personal interest to myself or my friends. My partner and I have begun using it on a regular basis with Billie Potts' *Witches Heal*, a classic educating us to know our individual body patterns in health or sickness, sharing facts about herbs and herbal healing and reminding us where disease comes from and that we have conscious choices about our health and preventative measures. Along with Adelle Davis' *Let's Eat Right to Keep Fit* (\$5) and *Let's Get Well* (\$5), two books on nutritional health through food and vitamin use, *The Natural Remedy Book For Women* rounds out the information we need to diagnose our disease and outline a healing plan in most situations.

Order these books from Diann Bowoman, For Women Only Books, 13479 Howard Road, Millfield OH 45761. Add \$3 postage and handling for the first book, 50¢ for each additional book.

# LAND LESY

Land LESY (Lesbian Economic System) is a regular MAIZE listing for Dykes on the land or reading MAIZE. LESY includes anything we want to give, offer or pass along to each other, as well as specific things that we need. Everything is Dyke to Dyke, for our personal use (not to sell or give to someone else.) (See article in Maize #41)

LESY is not money-based: no buy/sell, no barter/exchange. No Dyke needs to offer something in order to accept something and visa versa. LESY works when we give what we have to offer (no sacrifice) and when we accept as much as we need or want. We each find our own balance in giving and receiving.

With each response to an offering or request, the Lesbians decide between themselves the details of the transfer--how, when, how many or how long, who pays for gas or shipping or materials, etc. We will create our Land LESY as we use it. Yes, use it, that's what it's for!

MARNEE & DIANN, SBAMUH, 13479 Howard Rd,  
Millfield OH 45761

Offer: \*New 50/50 tee shirts left from our screen printing business. They are recycled prints--a heavily inked womyn's silhouette printed ovetop of the words "disco dyke" which sometimes peeps through after washing. (DD wasn't a great seller.) Sizes available: 1 XL, 2 L, 6 S, 2 petite all mixed colors. Free. Please send \$1 for third class postage or \$3 for priority mail along with your address and size request.

Request: \*Organic onions, will pay shipping and handling.

\*Used lesbian fiction & nonfiction, feminist, healthcare, gardening, building or children's books, especially multicultural resources. We'll circulate them or give them a new home. Sorry, can't pay shipping unless you send a list first and I can see what we might use and what we'd just give away.

ZANA, HCR #2, Box 850-398, Tucson AZ 85735

Offers: \*Book of my poetry and art, *herb woman* (Send 6x9" self-addressed envelope with \$1.05 postage.)

Requests:

\*Home-canned organic grape leaves

OUTLAND, POBox 130, Serafina NM 87569

We'll pay postage on anything we offer or request.

Offers: \*Any size or style of Red River Menstrual Pads (for your personal use)  
\*Any back issues of MAIZE that we still have copies of  
\*information on building: adobe, round, non-toxic  
\*Organic, open-pollinated seeds from our garden: corn(Inca, multicolor, sweet), green beans(pole), scarlet runner beans, kale, rutabaga, dill, basil, feverfew, calendula, cosmos, parsley, marigold (large and small), New Mexico chili (mild), horseradish root(to plant or eat)  
\*seeds for desert or dry farming: dill, marigold, New Mexico sunflower, desert four o'clock, bush morning glory (these last 3 are wild)

\**Important Pursuits, Questions of Value for Lesbians* (by Lee) A set of 170 cards to stimulate thought and discussion. For Lesbian use only.

\**The Wimmen of Our Dreams*, By Jae Haggard. Homespun fiction about a Lesbian world. A LandMade Book.(150 pg.)

\**Keep Breathing* (by Lee), part of the Dyke Well-Being Series. A LandMade Book. (20 pg.)

Requests: \*Organic seeds (not hybrid) anyone have golden bantam corn?

\*Old cotton fabrics, sheets, shirts for making quilts and rag rugs. Write and tell us what you have.

JENNIFER WESTON, Gathering Root Farm,  
Rt.5, Box 934, Ava MO 65608  
417-683-3610

Offers: \*Instruction in Basketry, Drawing, and Horsemanship

\*Emotional support for dyke incest survivors,

\*some of my own vegetarian recipes (featuring garden produce, etc.)

\*organically grown garlic

\*basket "seconds"

Requests: \*Carpentry and Plumbing assistance

\*tree pruning and trimming

\*eucalyptus pods and palm tree flower stalks(to use in my baskets)

THE WEB, POBox 8742, Minneapolis MN 55408

Offers: \*Comfrey salve

\*seeds

FULL CIRCLE FARM, 604 Silk Hope Rd,  
Siler City NC 27344

Offers: \*Seeds (many kinds left from  
organic farming operation)  
\*Information/instruction in organic  
gardening/farming/greenhouse, carpentry/  
renovation

Requests: \*Work: carpentry,  
gardening, orchard, general work on  
the land (experience not necessary)

TERRA, Chateau Gres, 21440 Poiseul La Grange,  
St.Seine L'Abbaye, France

Offers: \*A true fairy tale on cassette,  
"The Curious Princess" by Viviane and  
Doris.

\*Doris: I've got lots of flower seeds  
to offer, various kinds. I'll make a  
surprise flower seed package for every  
woman writing. (Mainly because I am not  
very organized yet and it would take me  
hours now to take out all the seeds and  
write down their names here, but I'll  
have great fun finding, selecting and  
sending them to every woman interested.)

DEBI SLATKIN, TURTLE ROCK, 1755 Highview  
Lane, Upper Black Eddy PA 18972  
610-982-9012(10a-9p only, please)

Offers: \*Her 60-minute relaxation tape  
\*ideas (I enjoy helping others brain-  
storm and problem-solve)

Requests: \*suggestions for rituals (tried  
or not) for particular Sabbats, moons,  
purposes

\*Interesting rocks, feathers  
\*diagnosis/cures (organic) for what  
seems to be a wood-boring insect infes-  
tation in a much-loved Hemlock tree

SACRED SEDONA, PO Box 3661, Sedona AZ 86340

Offers: \*One night stay in tent

Requests: \*Gardening, greenhousing  
\*rock work: building a rock wall

WILLA & ERDA, Wellness and Joyfulness,  
POBox 591, Sebastopol CA 95473

Offers: \*Homeopathic remedies, open and  
unopened. List available.

Requests: \*Cassette tapes of ethnic music,  
women's music (we like Cris Williamson)

X HEATHER, POBox 809. Lumsden, Sask, Canada  
S0G 3C0

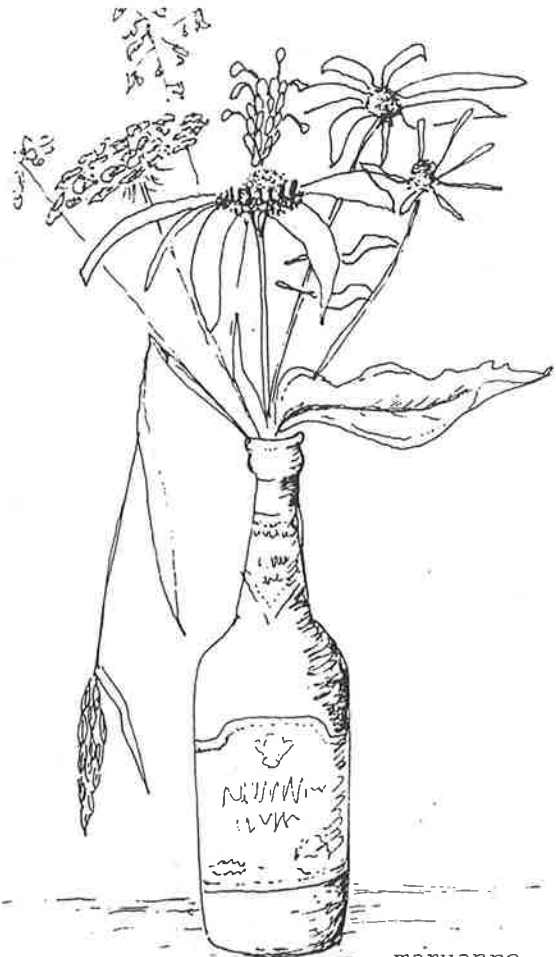
Offers: \*Handbound soft-covered journals,  
postage paid

X \*Long distance reiki (healing energy; let  
me know if you want this focussed on a  
specific part of your body or generally  
physically or emotionally; a description/  
drawing/picture of your physical self  
will help me to focus on you while I  
send energy but is not necessary.)

Requests: \*Wild wimmin stories/poems  
\*Wimmin's/lesbian's songs/chants on  
tape or paper with music  
\*Handmade rattle  
\*Handmade paper for books

SUSAN D.SMITH, RD 3, Box 880,  
Port Matilda PA 16870

Offers: \*Organically grown catnip, pack-  
aged in recycled plastic from bags my  
dialysis supplies come in. (small bags)  
\*Plastic tubing from my dialysis supplies,  
this tubing would have had only sterile  
solution in it, no body fluids.



maryanne  
miami, florida

+

NANCY EVECHILD, 3608 14th Ave. So,  
Minneapolis MN 55407 612-729-5984

Offers: \*A well-respected professional  
psychic with a practice in Minneapolis  
since 1988, I offer insightful, useful,  
in-depth readings by mail on tape for  
the cost of the tape and postage. Call  
or write for brochure. Please indicate  
LESY.

NANCY ESTES, RR2, Box 710,  
Broken Bow, OK 74728

Offers: \*A pair of shoes, white with white  
shoe laces, no velcro, all leather,  
athletic style, Voit brand name. Stated  
size is 7, but they are a mighty large  
7. From toe tip to heel tip on bottom  
of sole is 10½ inches. Widest point is  
4 inches across. They are slightly worn  
by me, but are too big. They are not  
super bouncy like Reebok, LAGear, etc.  
They are only slightly bouncy. (Postage  
paid to lower 48 states.)

\*A small amount of seeds of cypress  
vine and puke weed(lobelia).

Requests: \*A small amount, perhaps 30  
seeds of a very hot or hot green pepper  
such as Jalapeno or hotter. I will pay  
postage.

KARINA, POBox 3074, Charlottesville, VA  
22903 or Rt.12, Box 31, Charlottesville  
VA 22901

Offers: \*Radio air time, live or on tape/CD  
on WTJU-FM Charlottesville. Send your  
songs, stories, poems, jokes...

\*Very informal B&B, place for people to  
stay en route, can sleep in 1 room of  
3 room cabin.

Requests: \*Correspondence with womyn living  
in community. I am 41 years old, love  
country life and now seek a community to  
share with. I am preparing to change  
my way of life from solo cabin dweller  
and want to learn from womyn who are  
happy with their communities/land trusts.  
My focus is on the way of sanely living  
in community--ensuring the integrity of  
self, relationships, spiritual growth,  
economic stability, mediation and pro-  
cessing differences...Personal stories  
of what went wrong/right are welcome!  
Thanks and many blessings of health and  
love everyone!

\*Writer to co-write Lesbian plays/  
screen plays, and discussions with  
directors.

LIERRE KEITH, 103 Country Club Rd,  
Greenfield MA 01301 413-772-6270

Offers: \*Copies of my novel, *Conditions  
of War* (postage \$1)

\*Sewing (you need to supply materials)  
I can make replicas of clothes you have  
and love, I can patch and repair worn-  
out favorites, I can make clothes to  
order, especially clothes for fat dykes--  
I've got lots of large-size patterns,  
and quilts--I love making quilts.

DORIAN GREGORY, 103 Country Club Rd,  
Greenfield MA 01301 413-772-6270

Offers: \*Grantwriting and fundraising  
advice

\*Handpainted Goddess clocks

JUANA MARIA GONZALEZ PAZ, Twin Oaks,  
Rt.4 Box 169, Louisa VA 23093  
703-894-5126

Offers: \*About 50 copies left of my book  
*The La Luz Journal*, true story of a  
lesbian of color land group in Calif-  
ornia circa 1978 that I want to go to  
people seriously interested in and  
committed to lesbian land

\*about 8 copies of a 1983 book about  
Twin Oaks the straight commune I live  
at, that explains how it works

\*Lesbian Community Development: Planning,  
Education and Retreat Programs. I can  
work with groups to help design an  
educational self-help or study group  
geared to you interests.

\*I accumulate assorted reading material  
on womyn, ecology, community and educa-  
tion that I'd like to pass on.

Requests: \*help in planning more formal  
community-based education programs,  
even just discussing ideas  
\*transportation to lesbian lands or  
retreat spaces. I don't drive but I  
can pay for gas.

\*a retreat, preferably on lesbian land  
half to a day's drive (I'm off hwy 64  
halfway between Charlottesville and  
Richmond, VA, 2½ hours from DC) with  
people interested in my lesbian  
community development workshop ideas.  
I'd like to talk one-on-one without  
responsibility for a formal program,  
not seeking fun or entertainment,  
just peace and quiet (I live in a  
commune.) I can help with chores  
and provide some food but I can't  
pay money.

# COUNTRY CONNECTIONS

AMAZON ACRES, HC 66, Box 64A, Witter AR  
72776

visitors, primitive camping, 240 acres  
ARCO IRIS, HC 70, Box 17, Ponca AR  
72670-9620

ARF/New Mexico Women's Land Trust,  
POBox 707, Tesuque NM 87574

BOLD MOON FARM, 5780 Plowfield Rd,  
McLeansville NC 27301  
Camping only for dykes who write well  
in advance. Also concerts and other  
special events in the summer. Write  
to be on the mailing list.

CABBAGE LANE, POBox 2145, Roseburg OR  
97470

CAMP SISTER SPIRIT, POBox 12, Ovett MS  
39464

COVENTREE, Chris of Coventree, Troy ME  
04987

camping, visitors, apprentices,  
community members

CREATIVE WOMANS COMMUNITY, Mitzi, 8936A  
Thumbwood Circle, Boynton Beach FL 33436  
Community will be 15 min. from Asheville.  
Acre, 1/2 acre plots for sale, rooms to rent  
Central studio space

DOE FARM/Wisconsin Women's Land Cooper-  
ative, Rt2, Box 150, Norwalk WI 54648  
camping, lodging, memberships, summer  
work

FULL CIRCLE FARM, 604 Silk Hope Liberty Rd,  
Siler City NC 27344 919-742-5959  
Visitors (camping and guest room),  
community members/farm partners,  
work exchange.

FULL MOON ENTERPRISES/MOONSHADOW  
PO Box 416, Hopland CA 95449  
(707) 744-1648  
camping

1987  
HARMONY HILL FARM/Northern Minnesota  
Women's Land Trust, c/o Audrey Freesol,  
POBox 124, Cotton MN 55724

895  
HOWL/Huntington Open Women's Land,  
POBox 53, Huntington VT 05462  
(802) 434-DYKE

Open to all women and children  
INTOUCH, Rt.2, Box 1096, Kent's Store,  
VA 23084

camping and events center  
KIMBILIO, 6047 TR501, Big Prairie OH 44611  
216-378-2481  
Artist residencies

LUNA CIRCLE FARM, Rt 1, Box 1200,  
Soldier's Grove WI 54655  
visitors, apprentices

NORTHERN MINNESOTA: Barbara Hodges,  
1403 Savage Rd. Cook MN 55723  
218-666-3114  
Come share work and friendship in  
Northern Minnesota. Visitors welcome.  
Very primitive camping.

OUTLAND, POBox 130, Serafina NM 87569  
Remote Lesbian Community seeking  
residents committed to self-sufficient  
living based in Lesbian culture and  
spirit. We welcome a variety of Dykes  
including old Dykes, Dykes with dis-  
abilities, Dykes of color and Dykes  
without money. Write for info on  
becoming part of our intentional  
community.

OWL FARM/Oregon Women's Land Trust,  
Box 1692, Roseburg OR 97470  
open land

OWL HOLLOW, c/o 25650 Vanderburg Lane,  
Arlee MT 59821 (406) 726-3662

RAINBOW'S END, 886 Raven Lane, Roseburg,  
OR 97470 phone: 673-7649

We welcome visitors.

RAVEN'S HOLLOW, POBox 41, Cazenovia WI  
53924 (608) 767-3075 or (608) 983-2715  
Visitors welcome

Looking for residents/partners inter-  
ested in self-sustaining woman-centered  
living.

RIVERLAND, POBox 156, Beaver OR 97108  
Lesbian art retreat, community members  
Write for more info on either.

ROOTWORKS, 2000 King Mountain Trail,  
Sunny Valley OR 97497

Women and girl children. No dogs.  
Cabins and camping, \$5/day includes  
meals.

SILVER CIRCLE SANCTUARY, Rt.5, Box 100,  
Holly Springs MS 38635 (601) 564-2715  
6-8pm CST. One hour from Memphis TN  
Camping, visitors, apprentices

SISTER HOMELANDS ON EARTH(SHE)  
Box 5285, Tucson AZ 85703  
Saguaro Sisterland, 12101 W. Calle  
Madero, Tucson AZ 85743

SKY RANCH, C4, Site 20, RR2, Burns Lake,  
British Columbia, V0J 1E0 Canada  
(604) 694-3738  
Women's Land Trust, seeking members



SPINSTERHAVEN, POBox 718, Fayetteville,  
AR 72702

SPINSTERVALE, c/o Sunshine Goldstream,  
Box 429, Coombs, British Columbia,  
VOR 1M0 Canada (604)248-8809  
Any travelling woman is welcome to stop  
by Spinstervale on Vancouver Island, BC.  
We have a few small cabins (\$5/nite/  
person) and camping is always available.  
Work exchange, too, by arrangement.  
Herbs, goats, gardening.

SPIRALAND/Spiral Wimmin's Land Trust  
HC 72, Box 94-A, Monticello KY 42633  
Visitors, work exchange

SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL UNREST HOME,  
13423 Howard Rd, Millfield OH 45761  
or call (614)448-2509  
Seeking community members, visitors,  
campers. Work exchange available.

SWIFTWATERS, Rt. 3, Dahlonga GA 30533  
Riverfront campground or bed and breakfast

TERRA, Chateau Gres, Poiseul La Grange,  
21440 St. Seine L'Abbaye, France

TOAD HOLLOW FARM, 605 Ferris Creek Rd,  
Dubre, Kentucky 42731  
Seek Lesbians to share land.

TURTLE ROCK, 1755 Highview Lane, Upper  
Black Eddy, PA 18972  
610-982-9012 (10a-9p only, please)  
Camping and guest room for womyn  
travelling through. Companion animals  
welcome outside only. We love company.

WE'MOON, 37010 SE Snuffin, Estacada OR  
97023 phone: 630-3628  
Wimmin-only rural intentional community,  
35 miles southeast of Portland, OR is  
seeking new members who are very inter-  
ested in living and participating in  
the work and play of community life.  
Beautiful land, 52 acres, large organic  
garden. We use consensus decision-  
making, and celebrate the cycles of the  
Earth. We currently have two spaces  
available. Drug and alcohol free.

WHITE ROCKS HOMELAND, POBox 231, Willcox  
AZ 85644  
Rugged high desert country. Very rough  
road to get to land. No water or elect.  
Campers are welcome and need to provide  
all necessities.

WISEHEART FARMS, Box 237, Williamsport  
OH 43164  
Seeking community members

WOMANSHARE, POBox 681, Grant's Pass, OR  
97526  
Seeking collective members.

WOMAN'S WORLD, Shewolf, POBox 655,  
Madisonville LA 70447  
Work exchange for landswomen, builders,  
and gardeners to improve rural living  
and construction skills, about one hour  
from New Orleans. Developing community  
with land ownership as well as community  
land ownership of women-only space.  
Please try to write for invitation to  
visit and for rural living experiences  
at least two months in advance.

WOMEN'S ART COLONY FARM c/o Kate Millet,  
295 Bowery, NYC, NY 10003  
summer: writers and artists work exchange  
spring & fall: landswomen and builders  
work exchange

WOMLAND, POBox 55, Troy ME 04987

## TIPS FOR VISITORS TO LESBIAN LAND

The visitor calls or writes in advance.  
She includes an SASE if writing, she  
doesn't put "lesbian" or "dyke" on a  
postcard or envelope.

She arrives somewhere near when she  
said she would. If she can't find the  
land she doesn't talk to neighbors about  
the wimmin's land.

She comes prepared to care for herself  
totally, or makes specific arrangements  
with the land.

She doesn't presume anything; she asks  
what is appropriate in the way of food,  
money, pets, phone use, scents, smoking,  
chemical use and anything else that affects  
the wimmin on the land.

She respects the land, leaving every-  
thing the way she found it. She takes her  
garbage with her.

She comes willing and ready to enter  
into the life of the land, to pitch in  
on work projects as well as cooking and  
dishes, unless other arrangements have  
been made.

She communicates what she is seeking  
from the wimmin on the land and what she  
has to offer.

She knows that Lesbians on the land  
are not likely to have more resources  
than she--no more time, energy, love,  
strength, money.

She respects the life the land Dykes  
are creating, living as they do during  
the visit.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

*WOMANSHARE* has been a home and family of lesbians, and a vital part of the women's community for over 20 years. We'd like to continue our vision in a new way that supports our individual needs, and the needs of the ever-expanding and diverse women's community. We're looking for new collective members who are self-motivated, practical, creative, and enjoy living in the country with other lesbians. If you're interested, send your questions and information about yourself to: WomanShare, PO Box 681, Grants Pass, OR 97526

*LESBIAN WANTED* for work exchange on women's land. To participate in the maintenance of a farm with livestock and gardens. Must be flexible to work alone or with others. Cabin and food in exchange for 2.5 hours/day physical work. Contact Liberty or Sunshine, Spinstervale, Box 429, Coombs, B.C. V0R 1M0, Canada or phone (604) 248-8809

*NICE DUTCH DYKE*, age 32, with a wide sense of humor is looking for an outdoor summer job (1995) in the U.S.A. Ideal would be outdoor place with lots of women around, like a guest house or cabins, combined with animals. I worked with animals for years (I am trained to do so) and am also experienced in bar and restaurant work. If you provide me with good food and a place to stay I am willing to work for free. Write to: Jacq Verhofstad, 39 Sarphatistr., Amsterdam 1018 EW, The Netherlands.

*CREATIVE WOMANS COMMUNITY*: Will be 15 min. out of Asheville. 8 1/3 acres will be divided into acre or 1/2 acre plots for sale. There's also the possibility of an apt. or rooms to be rented. A central barn will be built as studio space for those in the community, where our creative energies can be shared. Garden...MORE. Mitzi, 8936A Thumbwood Circle, Boynton Beach, FL 33436

*LEARN TO BUILD A HOUSE YOU CAN TAKE WITH YOU!* Yurt Building Weekend for Women, Memorial Day Weekend 1995 (May 27-29). Woman's World in Louisiana near New Orleans. A Women on the Land Tenting Affair. Registrations due on or before May 1st to PO Box 655, Madisonville, LA 70447 c/o Shewolf. Total cost for 3 days of instruction, a tent site, outdoor shower, and 2 meals a day, is \$85 plus 6 hours work exchange or \$120 with no work exchange during the three day event.

*HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED COMMUNITY LIVING?* Exploring Community Weekend, June 16-18, 95. Free of charge. More info in On The Land section in this issue. Send SASE to SBAMUH #M, 13479 Howard Road, Millfield OH 45761 or call (614) 448-2509

*DANCING FISH LODGE* held its grand opening as a women's country lodge on Kentucky Lake, 80 mi. W. of Nashville, on March 3. It will be open year round. Five guest rooms, meeting rooms for workshops, great room, 2 fireplaces, hot tub, end of country road surrounded by 7000 acres of unspoiled Tennessee woods, boat launch, swim dock, very private. Rooms \$45-85 with wholesome breakfast and picnic included. Extended stays welcome. Debra 615-296-3533 or write 627 Wisteria Lane, Waverly TN 37185

*THE SIXTH ANNUAL DYKE ART RETREAT ENCAMPMENT (DARE)* will be held July 2 to July 8, 1995 (Sunday to Saturday) at Rootworks, wooded women's land near Sunny Valley, in Southern Oregon. One exciting week of focused group and individual self-initiated art projects in a supportive environment. Rustic cabins and tenting space and three nourishing vegetarian meals a day are provided. Limited registration, \$135-150. For info and registration brochure send SASE (self-addressed stamped envelope) to DARE, 2000 King Mountain Trail, Sunny Valley OR 97497

**DYKE WELL-BEING SERIES:** We at Outland (Jae and Lee) with Susan Wiseheart from Hawk Hill, are gathering anecdotes on Lesbian healing and well-being. Consider sharpening your pencil and jotting down your experiences. Put down anecdotes in a few lines or write stories that take pages. Write any kind of self-healing practice that we can do ourselves or with other Dykes. As there are enough anecdotes on a practice or dis-ease, we'll put them together into homemade booklets and offer them as gifts through LandLESY in MAIZE. No booklet will ever be done--we'll just keep adding.

Some topic ideas: breathing, loving ourselves, toning, first aid, herbal remedies, healing with energy, visualizations, 'exercises' and stretches and... Or, write on specific dis-eases: cancer, chronic fatigue, allergies, skin problems, back injuries, PMS, menopause, carpal tunnel, depression, and...The topics will become clear as the information comes in.

Write for more info: Outland, POBox 130, Serafina NM 87569

**BIOREGIONAL "GRANDMOTHER SPEAKS" WALKS** 1996/1997. A series of walks in different ecological areas of North America; a pilgrimage to Her, the old Crone, for women who have been introduced to Her Mysteries of Birth, Menopause and/or 45 winters. Contact redmoonsong, c/o Grandmother Speaks, POBox 8191, Silver Spring MD 20907. 202-387-2785

**JOIN US ON BEAUTIFUL WIMMIN'S LAND!** Cabin, campground, furnished outdoor kitchen under roof, firewood, solar shower, swimpond, bookstore. Women only. SBAMUH #M, PO Box 5853, Athens OH 45701 (614) 448-2509

**SEEDS FROM THE LAND:** Catalog of Land Dyke crafts. SEEDS, 4115 Scenic Hwy, Honor MI 49640

**SHEWOLF'S DIRECTORY OF WIMMIN'S LANDS AND LESBIAN COMMUNITIES**, \$8.50 from Royal T Pub, 2013 Rue Royal, New Orleans LA 70116

**LESBIAN NATURAL RESOURCES** supports Lesbian community land projects. Supporting this Lesbian community resource with even a small contribution is necessary to make this fund yours. LNR POBox 8742, Minneapolis MN 55408-0742

## What is your refrigerator wearing in the '90's?



English!

Français!

Espanol!

**a poster by Nett Hart**

\$5 each includes shipping in a sturdy tube

Word Weavers, POBox 8742, Minneapolis MN 55408-0742

Be sure to indicate which language

## The WOMAN-CENTERED ECONOMY

Ideals,  
Reality,  
and the Space

in Between

Lorraine Edwards  
Midge Stocker  
editors

\$15.00

This groundbreaking collection of essays and interviews explores the culture that has grown up around the women's movement in the United States in the past 20 years—

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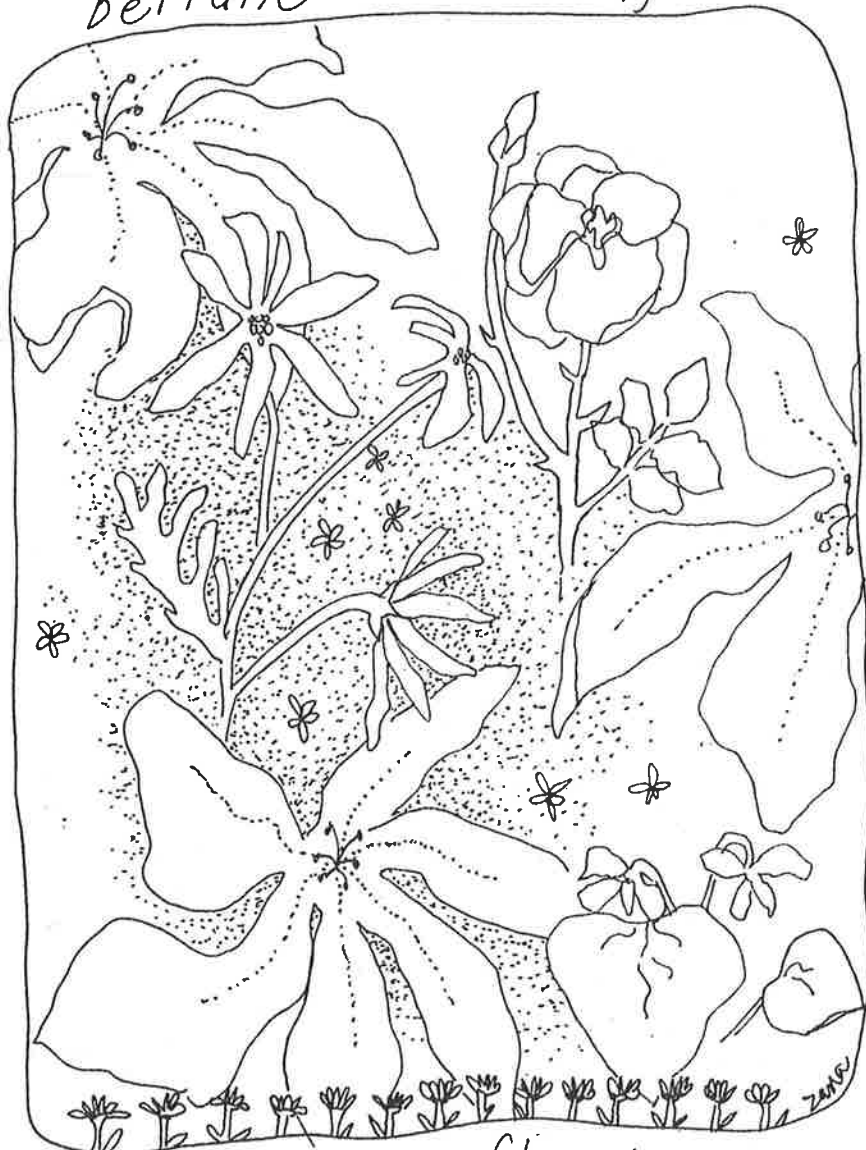
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