

♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
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Summer, 1982

Dear Readers,

We have had an irregular publishing schedule for many years now, but are seriously trying to have On Our Way come out at least four times a year. Anyone who has suggestions, comments and/or is interested in working with us on OOW, please leave a note, write to us, or call us at the Women's Center, 354-8807.

In this issue, we want to publicize several upcoming demonstrations and rallies that the Women's Center has endorsed and is participating in. We feel it is critical, given the deteriorating political climate in this country, to continue to be actively involved in public opposition to Reaganomics and the growing militarism.

SOLIDARITY DAY COALITION MARCH AND RALLY

On Saturday, May 15th, Boston witnessed a massive turnout for the Solidarity Day Coalition March and Rally. The Solidarity Coalition is composed of labor and community groups which came together after the September 19th March on Washington, in the hope of keeping the spirit of Solidarity Day alive in Massachusetts.

The Women's Task Force was a strong presence at the march and rally and raised the following demands:

1) *Economic Independence for Women.* More and more, the poor of this country are women--especially older women and women of color. Because we get paid only fifty-nine cents for every dollar received by men, we cannot earn enough to support ourselves and our children alone, nor freely choose to live with other women. Economic independence means full, equal employment at decent wages, for women in all workplaces, including the home. We support stronger affirmative action programs and adequate welfare benefits without stigma or coercion (workfare). Economic independence for

women also requires accessible, quality health care, quality child care, good public education, and good housing.

2) *Reproductive Freedom.* The right to choose if and when to have children, and how many to have, is crucial to other choices in women's lives. We support access to quality maternity and child care, birth control, and abortion for women of all ages, regardless of ability to pay. No woman should be prevented from having children she wants for any reason. We are opposed to the Human Life Amendment, the so-called Family Protection Act, and any administrative or legislative measures that restrict women's right to choose.

3) *An End to Violence Against Women.* Women are vulnerable to male violence in the form of rape, battering, sexual harassment, and incest. Women have spoken out and joined together to provide protective and supportive services. At a time when these programs are most needed, the federal and state governments are drastically cutting funds, while ever more federal money goes to support violence in the form of weapons for nuclear destruction.

MAY 29th WOMEN'S ACTION

The Boston Area Feminist Coalition, Boston Women's Pentagon Action and Women organizing for a feminist presence within the disarmament movement are sponsoring a Women's Action (march/rally) on Saturday, May 29th, Memorial Day Weekend.

Our lives are the front lines of Reagan's war effort. The Reagan Administration's military buildup is an attempt to dismantle the projects, programs, and social movements that have empowered us. Similarly, the New Right carries a vision which links militarism to a whole way of life - one that supports the needs of the military - self sacrifice, unquestioning obedience to authority, conquest, denial of women's rights and racism. This militarization of society contradicts the core of our values as feminists.

Memorial Day Weekend has traditionally been a time to commemorate war heroes and reinforce the idea that war is an inevitable part of life. We want to show the reality of what causes wars, not celebrate the myth of their glory. Rather than continuing to bury the dead, we claim Memorial Day Weekend as a time to recall and commemorate our victories in struggles for our health, safety, and reproductive freedom and to share our visions for the future.

The May 29th Women's Action will begin at 12:00 Noon at Mass. Ave. and Memorial Drive near MIT, where there will be a symbolic dismantling of the weapons of war. We will then march to Copley Square, where there will be music, theater, short speeches, and the building of a women's memorial to commemorate our struggles and celebrate our visions.

WE'LL SEE YOU ON THE 29th!

JUNE 12th: EVACUATE TO NEW YORK

Demonstrate at the United Nations Second Special Session on Disarmament (SSD2) to freeze and reverse the arms race and redirect priorities to meet human needs.

On Saturday, June 12th, there will be a massive demonstration to tell the world to:

- come out for disarmament
- turn military spending to human needs
- stop intervention in the third world

Trains and buses will be available from Boston (wheelchair accessible). Call 497-6754 for transportation information. For more information contact: Greater Boston June 12th Campaign, 2161 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge. 661-6130.

Lesbian/Gay Task Force of the UN SSD2, Write GCN, Box 543, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, MA, 02108

LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE MARCH AND RALLY

The 12th annual Lesbian and Gay Pride march and rally will be held on Saturday, June 19th, 1982.

The march will start at 11:00 AM at Copley Square, Boston and will go down Boylston to Charles St., through Beacon Hill, up Cambridge St. and around to the rally sight on the commons.

For further information and to help with planning, contact the "PRIDE" Committee, P.O. Box 1253, Back Bay Annex, Boston, 02117.

IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S LIVES

Demonstrate outside the National "Right-to-Life" Convention on July 17th in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Protest any restrictions on a woman's right to control her own body, support lesbian and gay liberation, oppose sterilization abuse, and Reagan's racist, anti-people policies here and abroad. Help organize New England around these issues. Call the Coalition for Reproductive Freedom at 242-4430 or 491-4818 for more information about the demonstration and transportation.

HELP

The Battered Women's Directory (8th edition) needs volunteer typists. Please call 492-5630 if you can volunteer a few hours a week.

The Transition House Support Group for Battered Women held at the Women's Center is now in its Fourth Year. During this time many dynamic, courageous women have graduated from it - to go on to better things. We meet every Monday night at 7:30 PM and every Wednesday morning at 11:30 AM. All battered women are welcome. Participants can go to either or both groups as they please. For more information, contact the Women's Center: 354-8807.

URBAN RENEWAL THREATENS THE WOMEN'S SCHOOL AND CENTRAL SQUARE COMMUNITY

Plans are already drawn up for the demolition of the building that houses the Women's School (595 Mass. Ave.) and several alternative organizations, including Clamshell, the Marxist bookstore, and many others.

Schochet Associates, which has been buying up property along Essex Street and Mass. Ave. for years, suddenly announced its plans to demolish 7 historical buildings on that block, buy up the parking lot in the rear of the buildings, and erect a huge building housing engineering firms, high class restaurants and expensive retail stores.

The Women's School is appalled that the poor and working class community of Central Square is being driven out. Those small businesses, apartments, shops and alternative organizations that are so integral to the Central Square community are in jeopardy.

We are asking the women's community to actively protest this demolition of our workspace, our living space, our community, and our history. Please write to both David Sullivan and Sandra Graham, Cambridge City Council, 795 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 02139 or call them at 498-9094.

TTY UPDATE

The Center has purchased a TTY. A TTY is a machine used by deaf people to communicate using the telephone. The machine has a keyboard like a typewriter and instead of talking, the person types what she wants to say. The other person must also have a TTY in order to receive the message which is shown either on a little screen or printed out on a paper, depending on the model. Giving information out over the telephone is an important part of what the Center does. Women call to ask what we do or when we're open. They call to get referrals for services offered either at the Center or all over the Boston area. They call to find out about meetings and women's events. For hearing women, finding out about these things is usually a simple matter but not for deaf women. By having a TTY, we hope to change this. Since the TTY will be at the pay phone in the office, it will also be available for deaf or hearing women at the Center to make calls, such as to arrange a meeting or a ride somewhere, as hearing women now do. In this way, too, we hope the Center will become more accessible for all women.

There is often a barrier between deaf and hearing women caused by communication difficulties. Sometimes these problems are made worse, though, by cultural differences and lack of knowledge about deaf people on the part of hearing women. We want to have some awareness workshops for the staff of the Center and members of the projects or groups and individuals interested in learning about deafness, the deaf community, and communication with deaf women.

We are also planning fundraisers to build an interpreters fund. If you have ideas or energy, contact Sasha or Charlotte at the Center.



COALITION OF BOSTON AREA FEMINISTS

The Women's Center is a member of the Coalition of Boston Area Feminists, which has been meeting monthly for over a year. Currently the coalition is co-sponsoring the Memorial Day Women's Action (see details earlier in this newsletter). The monthly meetings are open to all women, and are held the third Tuesday of every month at 100 Arlington St. (U Mass.). Orientation for new women starts at 6:30 PM and the meeting starts at 7:00. For more information, call Charlotte Laffin at the Center, 354-8807.

The following is a partial list of groups meeting at the Center. For more complete information, give us a call.

Monday

Battered Women's Support Group
7:30-9:00

CORE 6-8

Staff & Projects 8-10 (every other Monday)

TUESDAY

Rape Crisis Center 7-10
Women of Color Support Group
7:30-10:00

WEDNESDAY

Battered Women's Support Group
11-30 AM - 12:30

ECG 6-9

WAWAW 7-9

Introductory 8-10
Coming Out Group 8-10

THURSDAY

Lesbian Liberation 8-10
Lesbian Mothers 8-10
Fat is a Feminist Issue 8-10

WE DID IT!

Flames lept into the night as women danced and sang around the fire. A pagan ritual? No! At long last, it was the BURNING OF THE CENTER'S MORTGAGE at the International Women's Day Dance on March 13th.

Thank you all for responding so generously to our Mortgage Drive. The final push started at the Center's 10th Birthday Celebration, Sat. January 23rd, when a woman (remaining anonymous) contributed \$2000 toward the \$2588 mortgage balance. More donations were immediately collected at the birthday celebration and in the coming weeks. Finally in February, a woman contributed the final \$282 needed to pay off the mortgage.

Now more of the Center's funds can be used for the benefit of women... not for increasing banker's profits!

Our next fundraising effort will be to raise money for a wheelchair lift for the front porch of the Center. Because of the way the Center is situated, a ramp is not possible. Electric lifts cost about \$5000.00. If you want to help make the Center more accessible, please send donations marked "LIFT".

INTRODUCTORY TOPICS

May 26: Living Alone
June 2: Feminist Therapy
June 9: Not Having Children
June 16: Bisexuality
June 23: Socializing Women "To Fear"
June 30: Anti-Feminist Women
July 7: Homophobia

Introductory is an open discussion group, held at the Center Wednesday nights from 8 to 10 PM.

