



The GLSO NEWS

MARCH 2001

A publication of the Lexington Gay and Lesbian Service Organization

Vol. 16 No. 3

GLSO Receives Gill Grant

Lexington's Gay and Lesbian Service Organization is proud to announce that they have received a, \$10,000 grant from the Gill Foundation of Colorado. Gill is the largest private funder of LGBT issues. The Foundation "invests in organizations serving the needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual people, and in community programs designed to improve the quality of life for everyone." GLSO is proud to be partnered with this outstanding organization.

The funds from Gill come in the form of a Challenge Grant for \$7,500 to be used for general operating needs, and \$2,500 for technical assistance consulting to provide training in organization building.

The \$7,500 Challenge Grant requires that we as members of Kentucky's LGBT community raise funds that will be matched by Gill thereby doubling our investment to \$15,000. Throughout the coming year there will be many opportunities to provide financial support for the programs and activities of GLSO which include the Pride Center, the GLSO News, coordination of Pride Month activities, the Pink Pages, and community outreach.

See GLSO ...continued on page 2

Cincinnati Men's Chorus Live and Singing in Lexington.

The choral audience of Lexington is in for a treat as the Cincinnati Men's Chorus takes to the road to give a preview of the upcoming spring concert *Standard Time*.

On March 31 at 7pm for one show only at the St. Michaels Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Drive, the Cincinnati Men's Chorus will present songs from the American songbook. The music of George Gershwin, Duke Ellington and Cole Porter will be highlighted in the first half including "Our Love is Here to Stay," "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," and "It Don't Mean a Thing." Mix in a little Harold Arlen with "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," and we are just talking the first half.

The second set of songs has been arranged especially for CMC by Steve Miloy and includes the hits of Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn. The show is MC'd by popular Cincinnati radio personality, Mark Tipton. CMC, under the direction of Patrick Coyle is celebrating it's 10th Concert Season and Lexington Men's Chorus is proud to host their performance in Lexington.

Cin. Concert.....continued on page 3

New Pride Center

Activity at the new Pride Center of the Bluegrass has been fast and furious. In less than three weeks volunteers have moved the Center and put up walls. Many thanks to Jerry, Jerry, Scott, Cary, Tom, Deb, E.T., Ginger, Russell, Terry, Bill, John, Shelby, John, Michael, Jordan, Rose and all the others who moved us, scraped windows, cut and pieced drywall, taped and mudded, sanded (Oh the dust) and mudded again.

Hours of hard work and many aching muscles later we can really see what the new Pride Center will be. When completed there will be a large multi-purpose meeting area able to accommodate groups up to 50, a smaller conference room/library for up to 15 people, a relaxing foyer, and a small office.

In the midst of the renovation the use of the Pride Center continues.

Pride Center ...continued on page 2

Sponsor of the Month

Dr. T. Richardson O.D.

Vision Specialist



The GLSO NEWS

Vol. 16 No. 3

Published Monthly by:

The Lexington Gay
Lesbian Service
Organization
321 Second St.

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**GLSO Annual dues
and Newsletter: \$15.00**
**Dues and Newsletter
for couples: \$20.00**

Opinions expressed in the GLSO News are those of the authors and don't necessarily represent those of the GLSO Board. Submissions are welcome and become the property of the GLSO. The staff reserves the right to edit submissions and advertisements as well as the right to reject any submissions or advertisements.

GLSO Page 2

GLSO: *continued from page 1*

GLSO would like to thank all those individuals and organizations who provided guidance and support in the process that has resulted in the grants received from the Gill and Colin Higgins Foundations. There were many who contributed in so many ways, and our community can only benefit from their hard work, faith, and encouragement. We look forward to a year full of challenges and chances to better serve the needs of LGBT people throughout central and eastern Kentucky.

Pride Center..continued from page 1

Groups, including Fairness, the Court, FaYEN, and GLSO have met amid the clutter and dust signaling that the work of the community goes on.

We are looking forward to establishing regular daytime business hours when the Center will be staffed and open to the public. In the coming weeks the painting will be done, the restroom will be made accessible, and furnishing will begin. This month we will begin publishing a monthly "Wish List" in the GLSO News in an effort to raise the funds

necessary to furnish and equip the Pride Center. All donations to the Pride Center and GLSO are tax deductible and donations of cash will be matched by Gill Foundation grant funds. (Your cash donation will go twice as far.)

Help us to make the new Pride Center a place we can all be proud of and will enjoy for years to come. Make checks payable to GLSO and be sure to note which item you would like the money to go towards. Send donations to GLSO, P.O. Box 11471, Lex., KY, 40575.

Pride Center Wish List

- 6 ft. Conference Tables (2)
\$40.00 each
- 5 ft. Conference Tables (2)
\$30.00 each
- Chairs (20) \$25.00 each
- Office Desk Chair \$100.00
- File Cabinet (2) \$100.00 each
- Copier \$400.00
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Community News

Cin Men's Chorus from page 1

The concert is a benefit for Moveable Feast, as well as a fund raiser for LMC and CMC. Moveable Feast provides freshly cooked meals to people in need with AIDS/HIV. The concert is not ticketed with a suggested donation of \$5-\$10. Mark your calendars today for this special event--March 31st 7pm St. Michael's Church.

Pride Month

We have started organizing for Pride Month. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 6 at 7 pm at the Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave. This is a fun way to become involved in the community. Anyone who would like to help is encouraged to attend.

A number of events are already on the calendar. If your organization is planning an event, you need to contact Terry Mullins (255-5469).

GLSO Board Elections

The Glso Board Elections will be held at the Pride Picnic this year. Anyone interested in running should contact Terry Mullins at 255-5469. The terms are for two years with half the board up for election each year. We have a good time together and are looking for new people to help us envision a gay future.

LMC Rehearsals Begin

The Lexington Men's Chorus is returning to the rehearsal hall on Sunday March 11th to begin preparing for their upcoming Pride concerts in June. This should be an

exciting semester as LMC is joining voices with Voices of Kentuckiana and SisterSound for concerts in Lexington and Louisville entitled "No Turning Back."

As always, LMC is looking for new singers. LMC remains an audition free environment; so if you to love singing join us. Rehearsals are held each Sun from 5:30 to 7:45 at St. Michael's Episcopal Church at 2025 Bellefonte Drive. Questions? call Joey at 254-6850--join us!

Sistahs in the Life

Join Sistahs in the Life for a provocative discussion about experiences related to the lives of Lesbians and Bi-sexual women of African Descent. We chat at 7pm every 4th Wednesday at the Pride Center. See you on the 28th! (February if you get this in time or March if not)

Discussion Group Returns to Pride Center

The GLSO Discussion/Support Group will begin meeting again at the new Pride Center of the Bluegrass at 389 Waller Avenue, Suite 100 beginning Wednesday March 7th. This is a homecoming for the Group, which met at the Pride Center until last Spring.

Group participants would like to acknowledge their deep appreciation to Beverly Turner of Turner Associates. When the Group found itself without a home, Beverly graciously responded to our need for meeting space. Many in our community have benefited from having

this safe, convenient, and accessible location at which to come together every Wed. night. Thank you, Beverly.

The GLSO Discussion/Support Group meets every Wednesday night from 7-8:30. The Group provides a friendly and safe place where you can meet other GLBT persons who are willing to share their experiences. For info call Jane at 389-7698. Come join us.

GLSO YOUTH ADVOCACY

On Wednesday, March 14 at 7 pm we will be meeting at the Pride Center to discuss starting a Gay Straight Alliance for youth in Lexington. We have in mind focusing on high school age teens. We would particularly like to encourage young people to attend. (There are 6 or so that are planning to come)

We will clarify our goals, talk about when and where to meet, and discuss policies and procedures. We are looking for support from a variety of organizations and we are interested in forming an Advisory Board; if you are interested or want info, give Mary a call (266-5904)

Interweave

Interweave, the lesbian/gay/trans and friends social action group at the Unitarian Church, will be having a potluck after church on Sunday, March 11. Everyone is invited. We are planning a once a month movie night, call Davina for information 271-6174. Also, check out the Buddhist Meditation Weekend coming up at the end of the month. See page 13 for details.

...Community News continued page 4

GLSEN

The Kentucky Chapter of the Gay Lesbian Straight Educators Network (GLSEN) is meeting in Lexington periodically. Contact Gina Cooper at glsen_ky@hotmail.com. GLSEN is a national organization that focuses on reducing homophobia and creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere for both educators and students in public schools. Membership open to all.

Movable Feast,

Movable Feast needs help for delivering meals. It is easy; you come in at 5 pm and are through by 7pm (often earlier). You can get a specific route if you commit to a regular schedule. If you can drive a car you can change a life. 252-2867.

National Woman's Music Festival

The schedule is now available for the 2001 U.S. National Women's Music Festival, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, June 21-24, 2001. Information is on our webpage: <http://wiaonline.org/nwmf/index.html>

Lobby for Fairness

Please consider going to Frankfort to put a face on Fairness for Ky. legislators. They have to see that we're not going away, and we'll keep pushing 'til they get wise to the fact that we're their constituents also and we need to be protected as citizens of Kentucky. Consider lobbying on Thursday March 1. Call the Fairness line at 296-7812 for information. Someone will meet you in Frankfort and brief you on what to do.

SisterSound

SisterSound is rehearsing on a regular basis in preparation for a concert in May. We welcome new members, no audition required. Rehearsals are on Sunday evenings from 6 pm to 8 pm at Landsdowne Cumberland Presbyterian Church at 333 Reading Rd (off Tates Creek).

2001: A Faith Odyssey

Rev Mel Bailey

March 11 marks Faith Metropolitan Community Church's 8th Anniversary as a church family in Lexington. March 11 will be a celebration of ministry which continues to teach and celebrate God's unconditional love for all people. With a new home, new phone service, new look, and new mission, FMCC continues 2001 with a "Faith Odyssey." Plan to join us on March 11 and stay for fun and fellowship afterwards!

The month of March will offer a Bible study that is always popular- "Homosexuality & the Bible 101." Come and hear how scriptures have been used and abused to oppress minority groups throughout time. Come and find a new truth for your spiritual journey. Fellowship begins at 6 p.m. and the Bible study is held from 6:30-7:30 p.m. There is no charge and everyone is invited.

Faith MCC holds its spring congregational meeting and Dialogue with the Pastor on Sunday, March 4. This will be a time for church newcomers, friends, and members to give input into church renovation that will begin soon after. FMCC will offer a boat for sale in March-stay tuned!

St. Patrick's Day worship will be celebrated on Sunday, March 18 at 10:30 a.m. This is always a high-

light in the year as FMCC celebrates the "Irish" in all of us with Irish blessings, liturgy, prayers, and songs. Did you know "Danny Boy" began as a Christian church hymn?

And March roars in with the Lenten season. For many Christians, the idea of Lent is strange and foreign. For others, it is a serious time of sacrifice and spiritual growth. For all Christians, it is the beginning of the road to commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and the culmination of a tremendous resurrection celebration. Without Easter, Christmas would be just another day. What a great time of the year to consider joining "2001: A Faith Odyssey."

Worship service continues at 145 Burt Road, Suite 7. Burt Road is in Zandale, off Nicholasville Rd, across from O'Charley's Restaurant. Turn at the Taco Bell. See you at 10:30 a.m. NEW PHONE: (859) LEX-FMCC or 539-3622. E-mail- LMCCREVMCC@AOL.com.

BINGO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

GLSO can earn \$200 by providing volunteers to work at Bingo games on the fourth Friday of each month. Tom Collins is organizing volunteers. We need you even if you only can do it one time. The money will help pay the rent for the Pride Center. Call Tom's work number at 1-800-420-7431 and ask for Tom Collins. Thanks

Social Concepts

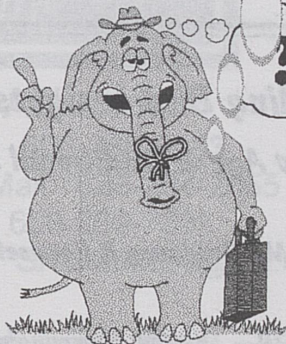
Social concepts, a social group for women, has successfully reached out to women within and outside of Lexington. Social Concepts is in need of a new organizer. If you are interested, Contact Ginger Moore at 389-7698 or gg40504@hotmail.com

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One World Films

The One World Film Festival has begun and there are six films scheduled for March. Many of the films center on the lives of women in a variety of cultures and circumstances. Admission is free. Contact Mary Crone 266-5904 for more info.

On Sunday, March 4 we will be showing *Voyages*, 2pm at the Central Library Theater. *Voyages* has just recently opened in New York City to rave reviews and it was voted best Feature Film at the Jerusalem Film Festival. This film tells three linked stories focusing on the lives of three elderly Jewish women.

On Wednesday, March 7 *Mississippi Masala* will be shown at Lexington Community College at 7 pm in the Oswald Building, room 230. This is a love story that also gives the viewer a glimpse into the lives of Indian immigrants to this county. Mina (Sarita Choudhury) and Demetrius (Denzel Washington) become romantically involved and both families react to their cross cultural relationship.

Thursday, March 8, 7 pm *Up To A Certain Point* will be shown at Transylvania University, Cowgill Building. This social comedy centers on Oscar, who is developing a script about the persistence of machismo

attitudes among Cuban working class men. Oscar falls under the spell of Lina, an independence female dock worker. Their ensuing romance reveals Oscar to be just as uncomfortable with unconventional women as his working class counterparts. This film uses a light touch to explore gender relationships

On Saturday, March 10, 2 pm *Sankofa* will be shown at the Central Library Theater. This is an outstanding and unusual film that can not be found in video stores. A Shaman transports Mona, an African American model, back in time to become Shola, a woman sold into slavery in the Caribbean. Shola struggles to survive in a slave community where brutality is common and where she must come to terms with her place in the division between house and field slaves. Director Halle Gerima explores issues not usually highlighted in films about this era such as the tension between followers of Christianity and adherents to traditional African Spiritual beliefs.

On Monday, March 19 at 7 pm, *Adam's Rib* will be shown at UK Worsham Theater, new Student Center. *Adam's Rib* is a perceptive look at a deteriorating Soviet society as well as a poignant comedy about

a single women trying to cope in the quickly changing modern world. The story centers on a household of four women, a demanding grandmother, a harried working mother and her two sexually active daughters.

On Thursday, March 22 at 7 pm. *Hatred* will be shown at the Central Library Theater, Co-sponsored by Humanitarium. The director of this documentary, Goldman investigates the role hatred plays in our lives. She examines the connections between individually felt hatred and hatreds that lead to mass violence, genocide and war. She interviews people from many different cultures, as well as individuals who have studied the issue of hatred including journalist Mike Wallace, author Akbar Ahmed, musician Mitt Hinton, psychiatrist Robert Lifton, and Prof. Yehda Bauer. This documentary won the 1997 Atom Award for "Best Social Issues" in Australia.

This year, One World Films has received a grant from The Kentucky Humanities Council. We are also sponsored by The Humanitarium, Central Ky Jewish Federation, The James Gray Foundation, U.K. Appalachian Studies Program, U.K. Women's Studies Program, Transylvania University, Bank One, and First Federal Bank.

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Research Studies need You

Gay/Lesbian Couples Sought

A research project focusing on lesbian and gay male couples has been undertaken at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Sherry Rostosky, a professor in the Department of Educational & Counseling Psychology, is the principal investigator. The research team is comprised of six people, several of whom identify as lesbian or gay. The long-term goal of this work is to positively affect public policy in relation to lesbian and gay male couples.

The project is funded by the American Psychological Foundation through the Wayne F. Placek Award. Mr. Placek bequeathed money to Dr. Evelyn Hooker, the visionary psychologist who, in the 1950s, sought to have homosexuality de-pathologized and removed as a diagnosis

from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. Since Hooker's death in 1996, the American Psychological Foundation has been responsible for dispersing the money to researchers working to increase the general public's awareness of homosexuality and to alleviate the stress experienced by lesbian and gay male individuals due to homophobia.

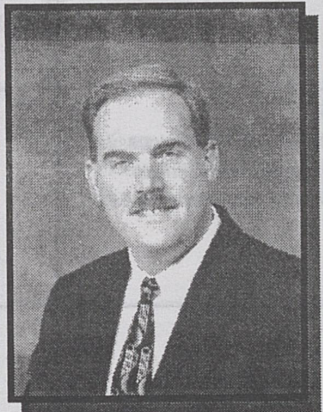
The research team at U.K. is looking for a total of 40 couples to participate by the end of May. So far, sixteen have participated. They are in need of both female and male couples, particularly male couples. Participants are asked to give about 3 1/2 hours of their time, during which they will engage in a videotaped conversation, participate in interviews, and complete several questionnaires. Participation is voluntary and confidential. Upon completion of the study, each couple

member is paid \$40.00. Interested couples may call 257-7880 or e-mail rostosk@pop.uky.edu to receive more information and to volunteer.

GLBT History in Lex

Jeff Jones, a doctoral candidate in the UK Department of Geography, is seeking individuals and couples to tell about their lives and memories involving Lexington's GLBT communities. Jeff is working on a history of the experiences of GLBT in Lexington for his dissertation work. He is openly gay himself and has worked with UK Lambda, GLSO, the Imperial Court, and Bluegrass Fairness among other groups.

If you are interested in answering some questions about your experiences and local history, please contact Jeff Jones at 859-268-2111 or jeff@QX.net.



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		1 THURSDAY		2 FRIDAY 7:30 pm Gay/Lesbian AA		3 SATURDAY	
4 SUNDAY 10:30 am MCC Worship Service (Faith MCC) 10:45 am UU Church 6:00 pm Sistersound Reh	5 MONDAY 8:00 pm AA Step Study	6 TUESDAY 7:00 pm Pride Month Planning (Pride Center) 9:00 pm Rainbow Bowling (Southland Lanes)	7 WEDNESDAY 7:00 pm GLSO Discussion Group (Pride Center) 7:30 pm FaYEN (Pride Center) 8:00 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	8 7:00 pm Fairness (Pride Center)	9 7:30 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	10	
11 10:30 am MCC Worship Service (Faith MCC) 10:45 am UU Church 12:15 pm Interweave Potluck (UU Church) 5:30 pm Men's Chorus Reh 6:00 pm DIGNITY 6:00 pm Sistersound Reh	12 8:00 pm AA Step Study	13 5:00 pm Rainbow Bowling (Southland Lanes)	14 7:00 pm GLSO Discussion Group (Pride Center) 7:00 pm Youth Support Meeting 8:00 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	15 7:30 pm Youth Support (Pride Center)	16 7:30 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	17	
18 10:30 am MCC Worship Service (Faith MCC) 10:45 am UU Church 5:30 pm Men's Chorus Reh 6:00 pm Sistersound Reh	19 7:30 pm GLSO Board Meeting (Pride Center) 8:00 pm AA Step Study	20 5:00 pm Rainbow Bowling (Southland Lanes)	21 7:00 pm GLSO Discussion Group (Pride Center) 8:00 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	22	23 7:30 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	24	
25 10:30 am MCC Worship Service (Faith MCC) 10:45 am UU Church 5:30 pm Men's Chorus Reh 6:00 pm DIGNITY	26 8:00 pm AA Step Study	27 7:00 pm Sistahs in the Life (Pride Center) 5:00 pm Rainbow Bowling (Southland Lanes)	28 7:00 pm GLSO Discussion Group (Pride Center) 8:00 pm Gay/Lesbian AA	29	30 6:00 pm Buddhist Meditation Retreat (UU Church)	31 7:00 am Buddhist Retreat (UU Church) 7:00 pm Cincienatti Men's Chorus (St. Michael's Episcopal Church)	

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WOMEN IN HISTORY

By ReINETTE F. Jones

1775 Mrs. William Coomes was the first Kentucky school-teacher (at Harrodstown a.k.a. Harrodsburg, Ky).

1820 Known today as Spaulding University and located in Louisville, Ky, the school originally opened in 1820 as a college for women.

1831 From the book Kentucky Marriages, 1797-1865, Mrs. Frances Tompkins, 105 years old, married a younger man, Moses Alexander, who was 93 years old. They spent one night together as husband and wife, and both died sometime before the next morning.

1847 Midway College, a private liberal arts college for women opened in Midway, Ky.

No Year Katchkona Winema, was a Native American interpreter and peacemaker between her people and White Americans during the gold rush era. She married Kentuckian, Frank Riddle, after which time she was called Toby Riddle. Kaitchkona was from the Modoc territory in California and Oregon. As more gold miners moved into the area, the Modoc people were corralled onto reservations, which lead to the Modoc War (1872-1873). The Army defeated the Modoc and their leaders were executed. Katchkona later returned to the Modoc reservation in Oregon, she was 84 years old when she died.

1855 Lucy Stone (1818-1893) kept her maiden name after marrying Henry Blackwell. Taking the husband's name was a custom, not a law, though local officials some-

times required it. Many decades later, the state court in Kentucky sided with the automobile licensing bureau that demanded a married woman use her husband's name.

1867 Henderson school teacher, Mary T. Saseen, created Mother's Day. It became a national day in 1916.

1880 Women were admitted to the University of Kentucky.

1890 Kentucky was the last state to prohibit a married woman from making a will, being the guardian of her children, owning or inheriting property. Josephine Henry (1843-1928), from Versailles, Ky, was one of the leading women to fight against such inequalities. She was the first woman to run for state office in Kentucky and the South. In 1894 the Married Woman's Property Act was passed.

1893 Nancy Green was born a slave in 1834 in Montgomery County, Ky. Thanks to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, Green became known as Aunt Jemima, the world's first living trademark. Her picture was featured on a pancake box.

1895 National Council of Jewish Women was founded in Louisville, Ky; it is the oldest and largest women's organization in the city. The organization started the first summer kindergarten in 1897 and the first free lunch program in public schools in 1914.

1898 Miss Marie Spratt Brown, from Louisville, was elected president of the Ky Negro Education Association. She would be the only female president for the first 68 years of the organization's existence.

1904 Ora Porter (1880-1970), was the first registered nurse in Bowling Green, Ky. Porter, an

African American, had attended the Tuskegee Institute School of Nursing. She graduated in 1904.

No Year Mildred Jane Hill (1859-1916) co-wrote the Happy Birthday song. She is buried in Louisville, Ky.

1916 The Ky Legislature raised the legal age of marriage for girls from 12 to 16.

No Year- Kentucky native, Margaret Ingels (1892-1971), was the first woman in the United States to earn a mechanical engineering degree.

1921- Mary Elliott Flanery (1867-1933) was the first woman to be elected to the Kentucky Legislature. She was a Democrat in the Republican district of Boyd County. The 19th Amendment had been ratified in 1920, giving women the right to vote.

1922 Mary Lois Roach (1896-1979) was the first female sheriff in the state of Kentucky. She served in Graves County from 1922-1927.

1943 Anna Mac Clarke (1919-1944), from Lawrenceburg, Ky, was one of three African American women to graduate from WAAC OCS program at Ft. Des Moines, she was the only African American officer in her class. Clarke died April 1944 after complications from a ruptured appendix; she is buried in Stringtown, Ky.

1950s Dian Fossey (1932-1985) dedicated the latter part of her life to the study of mountain gorillas. But prior to that, around 1954, she was employed as an occupational therapist at a children's hospital in Kentucky. In 1963 Fossey traveled to Africa to observe the gorillas, and in 1985 she was murdered at her campsite.

No Year- Ruth Mae Geiger

(1909-1996) was the first licensed female commercial fishing and hunting guide in Kentucky. She began hunting with a rifle when she was eight years old.

1982 Beth Bates attended Williamsburg High School; she was the first young woman to play high school football and score.

1987 Helen Lew Lang (1926-), was a leader in the opening of the Crane House in Louisville, Ky. The Crane House is a Chinese culture learning center.

1990 According to the 1990 census, of the 5,769 Native Americans, Eskimos, or Aleuts in Kentucky, 361 are women over 60 years old.

SOURCES:

- 1 Back Home in Kentucky www.edge.net/magazine/ghome4.htm
- 2 Famous Kentuckians [\[dogdesign.com/famous2.html\]\(http://dogdesign.com/famous2.html\)](http://www.big-</div><div data-bbox=)

3 Find a Grave www.findagrave.com/state/19.html

4 Louis, D. (1983). 2201 Fascinating Facts. New York: Greenwich House.

5 Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 99 [CD-ROM]

6 National Council of Jewish Women <http://www.ncjwlou.org/>

7 Potter, E. K. (1997). Kentucky women: two centuries of indomitable spirit and vision. [?]: Big Tree Press

8 Russell, H. C. (1946). The Kentucky Negro Education Association, 1877 - 1946. Norfolk, VA: Guide Quality Press.

9 Weatherford, D. (1997). Milestones: a chronology of American women's history. New York: Facts on File, Inc.

10 Williamson, J. et al. (1979). Women's action almanac. New York: William Morrow & Co.

11 Women in Kentucky <http://www.womeninkentucky.com/>

12 Women Spirit meyna.com/winema.html

Watch for the new GLSO Banner created by...



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more information on page 7

The Vagina Monologues
review by Jeff Jones

If you were fortunate enough to get a ticket to the SOLD OUT 1,400 seat Singletary Center then you were in for a treat! The Vagina Monologues really kicked!

The simple stage of 5 seats for the stars (Debra Hensley, Missy Johnson, Rev. Kelly Flood, Kathy Stein, and Cathy Rawlings) were the only props. Fortunately for the packed house, a big-screen TV did close-ups of the facial expressions of the cast that were easily visible even from the back seats.

The crowd was packed and very enthusiastic. Lots of laughs. The actresses were superb...and the great thrill of seeing one's local state representative as the "Angry Vagina" or in the throes of orgasm is something not to be missed. I only hope to live to see Kathy Stein use some of the dialogue in the Angry Vagina in the General Assembly!

I had asked people what the Vagina Monologues was actually about before I went and had difficulty pinning people down. All said it was great but the plot seemed elusive. Well, I would say that the series of interwoven monologues are about self-esteem. Although a gay man whose experience of vaginas is quite...er...limited, I found a lot in the VM that I could relate to. I think most everyone could.

The central theme of the VM is that women are usually socially taught to not talk about...not notice...not enjoy their vaginas, the defining point of their identity as women. Thus, the point is that women are told to not acknowledge the fullness of who they are...and the consequences emotionally and socially of this.

In many ways, I related to the VM as a coming out play for women. The vagina, the hidden, undiscussed Self, is akin to the feel-

ings of avoidance and silence about being gay/lesbian. The empowerment and self-esteem women felt in these monologues in celebrating and talking about this central physical part of themselves was a doorway to connecting to their true self...much as coming out. The monologue covering women from a Bosnian rape camp recalled interviews of hate crimes victims and the self-abuse of closeted men and women who punish themselves... or are punished... for any initial thought of same-sex love.

The larger message is that anything that is core to ourselves but hidden due to social obligation leads to half-living and repression. Talking about it...MOANING about it!...is liberatory. Whether this is one's vagina or one's homosexuality or one's childhood trauma or one's "boys don't cry" repressed emotions, the VM is about living...and living loud and free.

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The Ten Commandments A Pagan View Part 1

by Patrick Buck

Once, the Ten Commandments were by law posted in schoolrooms in the great Commonwealth of Kentucky and other places around the USA. Now, efforts are being made to post them here and elsewhere. Most folks in these parts seem to think that's a great idea. However, I'd also bet that most of those same folks couldn't even quote them from memory!

Let's take a quick look at the Ten Commandments and see just what all the ruckus is about. I'll be quoting from them (in abbreviated form) from Exodus 20:1-17, King James version of the Bible. That's the second book in the Bible, in case you didn't know. I'll start with commandments 5-10 for reasons which will soon become apparent.

5. "Honor thy father and thy mother." It's hard to argue with that. However, with all the child abuse, child molestation, etc. coming to light these days (I'm sure it's been going on all along) I must say that respect is a two-way street. You can honor your parents without doing, saying and thinking whatever they want you to. You have a right to make your own choices as an adult, whether or not your parents approve. Wise parents understand that their adult children may have needs, dreams and aspirations very different from their own. The best way to honor bad parents is by not being like them!

6. "Thou shalt not kill." My understanding is that the Hebrew is more properly translated as "Thou shalt not commit murder." Everyone but a few sociopaths would agree with

that! Please note that the Bible never mentions abortion, affirmatively or negatively. Whether or not their is such a thing as a "just war" is something Christians and others have argued over for millennia. Personally, I'd gladly fight to protect my family, faith, friends and country, but I wouldn't die for Big Oil!

7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." There's little joy in it anyway, what with the fear, the guilt and the sneaking. ...If you can't be happy with one partner (which is what seems to work best for most individuals), work out an open relationship and take due hygienic precautions. Please note that sexual relations between unmarried individuals are NOT "adultery"; although the same precautions do, of course, apply, and nothing in life, even (perhaps especially) celibacy, is devoid of risk of one sort or another. None of us, except a few astronauts, will ever leave this world alive, so live boldly and joyously!

8. "Thou shalt not steal." As a rule, this is a good idea. However, if the ONLY way you can feed yourself and your family is to steal, then a higher obligation (that of surviving and helping loved ones to survive) comes into play. Fortunately, this doesn't happen too often today in developed countries, although, in this Heathen's opinion, President (?) "Dubya" is doing his best!

9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Gossip and lying destroy communities, and we humans are by nature social animals. This is a useful bit of wisdom, whether or not it is of divine origin.

10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's ..." (home, slaves, wife, livestock and other property). Yes, greed will eat you up alive and ruin your life if you let it. In this day of rampant

credit card abuse and resultant bankruptcies, we would do well to reflect on this. However, please note that this commandment implicitly endorses slavery and the idea that a woman is her husband's property. And they want to plaster THAT up all over public buildings?!? SICK!!!

Commandments 5 - 10 deal with social relationships in what was for the time a fairly complex and well-organized society. Commandments 1 - 4 are of a different nature entirely. Here we enter the fascinating but obscure realm of myth and tribal taboo. (Stay tuned, commandments 1-4 next month-ed)

Meditation Retreat Caitriona Reed

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington is hosting Caitriona Reed for a weekend Meditation Retreat. The weekend of Friday, March 30 through Sunday, April 1 will include instruction in Vipassana and Loving Kindness meditation, discussion, and Dharma talks. Call Cynthia at 859-278-7552 for exact times and other information.

Caitriona was a student of Thich Nhat Hanh's for fourteen years, as well as having exposure to teachers in the Tibetan tradition. Her work is strongly influenced by the understanding that spiritual practice comes to fullness when it is based in everyday living, and by the urgency of our collective environmental and social conditions. Of particular interest to our community, Caitriona is transsexual (M to F). There was a time in many cultures that those of us in the middle of gender were considered ideal to be spiritual leaders. Perhaps that awareness is reemerging. Learn more about Caitriona's work: www.manzanitavillage.org.

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