Women's softball is flourishing across the country. According to the Amateur Softball Association, there are about 25,000 different girls' and women's leagues around the country, with about 130,000 adult women as regular players and many thousands more as part-timers.

In Monterey, women's softball is in its fourth season. There are two women's softball leagues, each of which has six teams with a total of 180 women participating, according to the Monterey Department of Parks and Recreation. In addition, the local colleges and high schools field teams. There is also a women's softball league at Fort Ord.

Women's organized softball got off the ground more than 45 years ago primarily as a working-class, factory-oriented recreation. Today about 60 percent of the women's teams are commercially sponsored.

One of the most striking things about women's softball is the different tone of the players. While they are extremely talented and determined athletes, they seem to emphasize cooperation and skill over blind competition. The spectators share in the enthusiasm. Cheering on friends, family members, or simply good athletes, they obviously enjoy the players' professionalism and supportive nature.

As a newcomer to women's softball, I realized that this is no sissy sport played for laughs. It is a tough, fast-action sport played by well-coordinated, no-nonsense athletes. Nor is it a pale imitation of baseball, but, as the cliche goes, a whole new ball game.

I've seen a dozen contests at Peter J. Farrante Park, Jacks Park and Via Paraiso Park. To me, it's a better game — more exciting, more exacting than baseball. In baseball a fielder can bobble the ball and still get it to first base for the out. It's not so easy in softball with those 60-foot baselines. Three hops to the shortstop and you can give a batter 50-50 odds, even with a good pick-up.

And it's a different game. The bunt devastates. Fielders at first and third play halfway.

I watched a team called Gerry's Execs play the other night. Yes, Gerry's Execs. You'll just have to put up with the names: Collins Electric and Stan's Cocktail Lounge.

Actually, there are two versions: fast pitch and slow pitch. Slow pitch softball (the ball must travel to the plate in a high arc) allows for lots of hits and high scores, while fast pitch tends to be ruled by strike-out artists. In the women's leagues, fast pitch is more popular.

Continued on page 4

CAT AT BAT
"Cat" Balicci, of the Coast Gallery team, pops up in a game at Via Paraiso Park against the Salinas Blazers.
Women Making Music Collectively

On July 7 Demeter Productions, a local women's production team, made its debut at MPC with the Trish Nugent concert. It was a great success. Over 170 people attended, cheering enthusiastically after each song. With ticket and refreshment sales the concert not only broke even, an unusual occurrence for smaller concerts, but made $140.

There are many reasons why this concert was a success. First of all, the performers were extremely talented both in their music and in the way they related with the audience. It was one of the most supportive and appreciative audiences I have ever been in. At one point Vicky Blevins asked if her dulcimer could be heard and a woman in the audience answered, "Yes, and it's beautiful."

Secondly, Trish Nugent is the first feminist recording artist to come to Monterey since 1976 when Holly Near did a benefit for Tom Hayden. Until now people who wanted to hear good women's music had to drive to Santa Cruz or further. It felt wonderful to me to attend a feminist concert in Monterey surrounded by friends and familiar faces.

But most importantly this concert was a success because of the energy generated by the women of Demeter Productions. I have been given a lot of credit for the concert and though I worked hard on it there are many others who deserve recognition for their talent and invaluable help.

Debi Busman volunteered much time in designing and typesetting the tickets and posters. Vicki Smith sent information to the many newspapers and did a phone interview with Ms. Nugent on KAZU. Sandra McKee sent information on the concert to the different radio stations in the area and along with Barbara Bastian, organized and staffed the refreshments at intermission. Candice Tahara and Cyndi Sumner transformed a bare linoleum area into a warm and inviting stage. Everyone sold tickets, put up posters, baked goodies, supported one another and kept me from getting an ulcer.

Many thanks to Tran-Sisters and Switch Productions for providing an excellent sound system, to Barbara and Debi for the wonderful crew party, and to the audience for being so warm and receptive.

Demeter Productions’ next event will be a feminist talent show co-sponsored with Kate Elvin's Community Mural Project. It is scheduled for the weekend of September 8. Here local women will have a chance to display their various talents.

If you're interested in working with Demeter Productions contact us either individually or write to P.O. Box 1661, Monterey, 93940. We want to make sure that it's not another three years before the next feminist concert happens in Monterey.

—JT Mason

New Subscribers

Thanks and welcome to our new subscribers:

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<th>New Subscribers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Karin Strasser Kauffman</td>
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<td>Patricia L. Block</td>
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<td>Michelle A. Welsh</td>
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<td>Kris Franco</td>
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<td>Kathy Stoner</td>
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<td>Idelle Sullens</td>
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<td>Peggy Schmidt</td>
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<td>Constance McCormick-Kirwan</td>
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<td>Candy Berlin</td>
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<td>Lynn L. Inlow</td>
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<td>Pamela L. Stephens</td>
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<td>Barbara Bastian</td>
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<td>Margo Greene Zauner</td>
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<td>Yamaha Suzuki Sports Center</td>
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<td>Lauri Meagher</td>
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<td>Kathy Russo</td>
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<td>Candice Tahara</td>
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<td>B.J. Moutrey</td>
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<td>Linda M. Melendez</td>
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<td>Jeanette Nicely</td>
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<td>Jan Martin</td>
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Editors: Lois Van Beers  
Production: Debi Busman  
Graphics: Barbara Bastian  
Reporters: Janie Forrest, Cathy Kozak, Sandra McKee

Demeter is a feminist publication designed to keep women informed of pertinent issues. Contributions of articles, graphics and money are welcomed. Subscriptions are $3.00 for six months. Mail check or money order to Demeter, P.O. Box 1661, Monterey, Calif. 93940.
Letters to the Editor

Demeter’s Fan Mail

Editor:
You are getting better and better: the July issue is indeed top drawer! I am happy to renew my subscription and I hope the financial situation continues to improve enough to permit full-year expectations of publication. It is delightful to find Karin Strasser-Kaufman, Mickey Welsh, and Cuea Hepburn among your contributors—three of many women whom I know and much admire.

Also, if any of the women’s organizations need a volunteer poet for a program—or just a poetic evening—I am available. The enclosed was written for a presentation at the Full Moon Coffeehouse in the city in 1976—not typical, exactly, but I still feel the same about the purposes of feminism.

Suzy Sullens
Carmel

Beginning with this issue Demeter is offering full year subscriptions. Ms. Sullens poem is printed in this issue. We encourage readers to submit poetry for possible publication.

Editor:
I want to thank Demeter Productions for coordinating the Trish Nugent concert last Saturday night and to compliment you for a job well done. I thoroughly enjoyed the concert, and I’m so pleased to have been able to attend a women’s concert here on the Peninsula. There’s a special energy, excitement, and enthusiasm that is present at women’s events. I hope that the Trish Nugent concert was the first of many to come.

Again, thanks.

Peggy Schmidt
Pacific Grove

We hope to see the supporters of the Trish Nugent concert at the Feminist Talent Show September 8.

Editor:
A wonderful production performance the other evening. Trish Nugent and all! Hurrah for you for initiating it and hurrah for the performers’ talent, personal honesty and concern for women and growth! I’m so very glad that you are here in Monterey.

Gladly do send along a subscription.

Also, I am an artist here in Carmel Valley. I have a one-woman exhibit at Carmel Art Association coming up on Nov. 8. I would like to inform other women artists and interested non-artists, also.

How do I reach out to other artists to tell them I’m here, too?

Thank you for your help.

Lynn Inlow
Carmel Valley

One way to reach out to other women is through Demeter. Each month we list on the calendar the deadline for receiving articles for next month’s issue. If you send us announcements of shows, etc., we will try to include them in our listing of community events.

Editor:

Please send me a six-month subscription to Demeter. Love your new format—it’s beautiful!

Kris Franco
Pacific Grove

Fonda in Monterey

Jane Fonda, well-known for her activism and her acting, came to the Monterey Peninsula July 1. Her visit was a fund-raiser for C.E.D., Campaign for Economic Democracy. During the press conference and, later, before the film presentation of Henrik Ibsen’s play, A Doll’s House, Ms. Fonda talked about C.E.D. and its purpose. She emphasized the importance of people’s participation in basic economic decisions which affect our lives. The Campaign for Economic Democracy is a grass-roots organization dedicated to individuals working together to regain control over the basic necessities of life: energy, health care, food, housing.

At the film presentation, Ms. Fonda noted that the film, A Doll’s House, was sort of retribution for her pre-feminist film, Barbarella. She portrayed the central character, Nora, who flees her protective and fatherly husband in search of herself. The film was made in 1972, when Ms. Fonda was being blacklisted for her anti-war activities. But, she noted, “I’m working now and Nixon’s not.”

The essence of Ms. Fonda’s speech is very familiar to the struggles of women. History tells of how long women fought to gain legislation for women’s rights. It is a battle that women have not yet won, evidenced in the failure to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. Economic freedom is necessary. Our choices are limited without it.

—Sandra McKee
Continued from page 1

On the field, teams are efficient and boisterous, the women pumping their gloves, twitching their bats in the on-deck circle, flipping the ball around the infield between batters like one sees at Candlestick Park.

On the bench, they bellow encouragement to their teammates. As with other groups of women athletes, there is a sense of a close-knit sisterhood about them.

Few of the women had much to say on the subject of women's liberation. Irene Shea, a college teacher who has a Ph.D. in physical education, was one of the few players I talked to who had given serious thought to feminism and its relationship to women's sports. Among her students, she said, she had noticed that "there is nothing culturally against women's participation in sports anymore. Exposure has taught people you can still be a woman if you're an athlete, just like you can be a woman doing anything else."

The nation-wide, burgeoning interest in women's sports has led high schools and colleges throughout the country to form more and more all-women softball, basketball, volleyball, field hockey and lacrosse teams. In addition, the Title IX anti-sex-discrimination proposals have forced colleges to upgrade their athletic scholarships and physical education programs for women.

It may take more time than we think before women playing what the public at large still regards as "masculine" sports, such as softball and basketball, are as accepted as Billie Jean King and Chris Evert.

Above, Deb Ford, Blazers' pitcher, releases the ball while Cheryl Smith, first base, and Leslie Johnson, shortstop, get ready to field a grounder. Below, Barbara Bagley, catcher for the Blazers, waits for the throw as Wendy Berriman scores for Coast Gallery.

Dr. Sharon Coniglio, director of Women's Studies at Monterey Peninsula College, will give orientation classes for women of all ages who are considering attending MPC. The sessions will be held August 13 and 14 at 10 a.m., 1:30 and 6:30, and will last about 1½ hours. Call 649-1150, ext. 200 to reserve a place.

New in the Women's Studies Program are the classes, Women in Cross Cultural Perspective, Women and Non-Traditional Careers, and Women's Body, Women's Mind.

The Women's Educational Program also offers Women's Re-Entry Services. Women's Re-Entry provides counseling and other services to women just starting college or resuming their education after lengthy interruptions.

The fall semester runs August 20-December 22. Registration can be done by mail until August 9. It is also possible to register during the first week of classes.
YWCA
- Women's Center, General meeting Wednesday, August 1, 15, 29, 5:15-7 p.m.
- River Raft Trip. A white water trip down the Stanislaus, August 18 and 19. $75 for meals and equipment. Reservations are absolutely necessary.
- Investment Club. An educational group designed to explore the various aspects of finance and investing. Meets semi-monthly. Membership is open to any woman who feels stuck on money. No fee.
- The Women's Center library is ready to accept books that are of special interest to women. Donations of books or subscriptions to periodicals can be made by contacting Maureen or Jill at the Y.

Cafe Balthazar
Peninsula artist Amber King will have a show of oils, watercolors and drawings at the Cafe Balthazar, a women-owned business located at 170 Forest, Pacific Grove. The show will run August 6-September 16, with an opening reception scheduled 7-9 p.m., Monday, August 6. The public is invited.

The show can also be seen during the restaurant's regular business hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 5-10 p.m.

Women's Space Collective
A women's space collective party has been scheduled August 24 for the purpose of raising money for a coffeehouse where women can meet together on a more regular basis. Our immediate need is to have a place for this event. If you know of an available space, or have one to offer, please contact Mary van Buuren at 372-6680.

There will be a $2 donation or whatever you can afford. We wish to stress that no one will be turned away for inability to make a donation. All women are encouraged to join

Monterey Peninsula College
MPC is offering the following classes of interest to women:
- Women's Body/Women's Mind (9 weeks), August 22-October 17, 7-10 p.m. Focuses on the relationship between a woman's attitudes and beliefs about her mind-body and provides information about her mental and physical health. Instructor: June Schwartz.
- Women and Assertiveness Training (9 weeks), August 21-October 18, 7-10 p.m. Aids students in sharpening their skills at asserting themselves. Deals with clarification of assertive, non-assertive, and aggressive behavior. Instructor: Cuca Hepburn.
- Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective MWF, 9:10-10 a.m. Survey course examining women's roles in various cultures. Special emphasis on public status, economic role, religious participation, family patterns and male-female relationships. Instructor: Kathy Miller.
- Women in History TTh, 11:10-12:30 p.m. Role of women in various civilizations, ranging from the ancient societies to the present. Instructor: Idelle Sullens
- Images of Women in Culture MWF, 10:10-11 a.m. Images and roles of women implicit within contemporary American culture and of their influence upon one's self-image. Instructor: Idelle Sullens
- Women and Non-Traditional Careers W, 12:10-1 p.m., and M, 7-9 p.m. Provides information about skills, availability of jobs and descriptions of jobs that are considered non-traditional for women. Instructor: Cuca Hepburn.
- Self Defense: Of Special Interest to Women Th, 7:30-9:30.

For more information contact the college at 649-1150. (See article in this issue.)

New Resource Center
A new resource center has opened for women. Handicapped Activities Unlimited, 511 Grand Ave., Pacific Grove, has a library of 166 periodicals and journals on arts, publishing and women's issues, some available for checkout. The hours are 8-9 a.m. and 2-4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information call 375-0800.

Women's Rap Group
There will be an organizing meeting Thursday, August 17, 7:30 p.m. for a women's rap group. Everyone's input is welcome in order to see where the women's community interests and needs lie. Call Mary or Janell, 372-6680 or Claire, 375-6484 for location.

Mural Project
Artist Kate Elvin has set up headquarters in the Pacific Grove Art Center, 568 Lighthouse, Studio 12. She is in need of help for the Community Mural Project. If you have even a few hours to spare, drop by and see Kate, Tuesday-Friday, 1-5. There are many odds and ends that need to be done. Stop by if you can lend a hand. In other words HELP!

National Women's Political Caucus
The National Women's Political Caucus will not hold a monthly meeting in August. Regular Thursday night meetings will resume in September with a function planned to celebrate women in public office.

NOW
The National Organization for Women had not scheduled its August meeting at press time. Call Sandra McKee, 375-7794 or Bev Harrison, 375-6484 for date, time and place.

WADV General Meeting
Women Against Domestic Violence will hold its monthly meeting Wednesday, August 8 at 5:30 p.m. at the YWCA, 276 El Dorado, Monterey.
## August Calendar

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Amber King's show opens at Cafe Balthazar</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>River raft trip, YWCA</td>
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Lesbianism and Feminism: The Connection

‘An Ounce of Perversion is Worth a Pound of Cure’

“All you women libbers are a bunch of dykes!”

For a long time this accusation was an effective tool in keeping feminists in line. To be called a lesbian meant that you were stepping too far over the line of acceptable “female” behavior and were becoming a “non-woman,” a “man-hater” and, at best, a social deviant.

With the maturing of the women’s movement and the advance of gay liberation, the myths inherent in that accusation have been largely exposed as such and the threat is much less effective in dividing women. Feminists, recovering from their initial recoiling from the threat, have come to realize that it was a tool used to divide women and that the real issue was not one woman’s sexual preference that was being attacked, but the freedom of all women to openly state values that fundamentally challenge the basic patriarchal structure of our society.

There is still some confusion, however, concerning the relationship between straight feminists and lesbians. At the recent Trish Nugent concert at least a couple of people expressed confusion at coming to what was billed as a “feminist concert,” and finding five lesbians performing very beautiful, but definitely “women-loving-women” music.

There is no need for confusion. Feminists fight for women’s rights on the political, personal, financial, legal and cultural levels. Recognizing the oppressive definitions this culture has ascribed to the female role, they seek new, positive directions for women. Their goal is to end sexist discrimination which keeps women confined to traditional roles, and to create and expand choices for women.

Through this struggle, feminists seek to identify and build on women’s strengths and common goals. There is a sense of unity that emerges from feminism in the recognition that all women, regardless of individual differences, share a common oppression.

While not all lesbians view themselves in political terms, or consider themselves feminists, their alternative lifestyle as “outsiders” in this society has resulted in the actualization of many of the principles and goals of their straight sisters in the women’s movement. Lesbians are women who love, value, and celebrate women; who have learned to survive without men financially and emotionally and have made a total commitment to women. Lesbians have rejected the limits society places on the female role and have had to create whole new ways of relating based on parity and “non role playing.”

The goals and actions of lesbianism and feminism overlap and enhance each other. In many ways lesbians are doubly oppressed — as women and as homosexuals — and stand to benefit from the political and economic goals of the women’s movement.

At the same time, feminists can learn from the “street knowledge” that lesbians have acquired from having to create a lifestyle outside of patriarchal definitions, based on women-defined relationships that develop from care, communication, and non-hierarchical value systems.

It is, therefore, neither surprising nor conflicting that straight feminists and lesbians alike support any activity such as the Trish Nugent concert where women are celebrating women and telling of their common joys and struggles.

—Debi Busman & Lois Van Beers

Demeter’s Crossword Puzzle

This crossword consists of the names of 22 women who have made contributions in the field of sports. Information for this puzzle was taken from The Women’s Book of World Records and Achievements. Good luck.

—JT Mason

Across:
1. Has won Wimbledon the last two years.
2. Holds the most gold medals in women’s diving.
3. She flew the longest consecutive solo flight ever in 1965.
4. She holds the most Wimbledon titles of any tennis player.
5. First woman to swim the English Channel.
7. First woman to qualify for the Indianapolis 500.
8. First woman to swim the English Channel.
9. Holds the most titles for women’s racquet ball.
11. First woman to win the U.S. National Championship.
12. First woman to win the U.S. National Championship.
13. Holds the greatest number of world titles in swimming.
14. First woman to swim the English Channel.
15. First woman to win the U.S. National Championship.
16. Five time World Cup champion in downhill.
17. Holds the women’s world land-speed record of 612 mph.
We are women
and kitchens are our business,
sweet glazed breads and steamed asparagus.
The asparagus is from our garden.
We are women and gardens are our business,
upturned earth and carrot seed,
cocoa bean mulch and the wind that carries
toxic spray from the apple orchards on Valencia Road.
We are women and toxic spray is our business.
We call the orchard man, say, "Your spray
is settling on my asparagus."
"I got to feed my family," he says,
"I'm not gonna lose my crop to the bugs."
We are women and families are our business.
We send him a subscription to Organic Gardening.
We are women and magazines are our business.
We are women
and groceries are our business,
Taster's Choice and Nestle's Quik.
But we are women and magazines are our business
and we read that Nestle’s pushes baby formula on third world mothers.
One day’s formula costs half a day’s wages,
there’s no refrigeration, the water is impure,
the mother’s milk’s dried up, the babies die.
We are women and babies are our business,
healthy fat little hands and cheeks.
So we are women and boycotts are our business.

We are women
and homemaking is our business.
Daisies from the garden and a cozy warm hearth.
But the heat comes from electricity
that comes from a nuclear power plant
that’s leaking radiation and our children are, right now
living out the days of the years it will take for their cancers to appear.
We are women and shutting down nuclear power plants is our business.
We are women and civil disobedience is our business.

We are women
and children are our business,
children who jump and laugh and shout,
children called hyperactive,
unable to sit like cabbages and asparagus.
Our children are given ritalin, 5mg before breakfast and lunch,
with gradual increments weekly, not to exceed 60mg.
We are women and pharmaceuticals are our business
the AMA is our business, advertising is our business,
and how they’re all in cahoots making
so we don’t get anxious about
all the other drugs we’re taking.

How can we stay in our kitchens?
How can we stay in our kitchens
when our children go out in the world?
What good will our cookies and clean rugs and clarinet lessons do
when we are all too sick to eat or hear?

We are women.
We are women and life is our business.
The preservation of life is our business.
We are women, the bearers of life
and we have abandoned our business for too long.
We have let it be taken from us.
We have let ourselves be taken in.
Like a mother whose child has been taken away,
whose breasts sting with milk, we ache.
We ache to get on with our business.

Poem For A Feminist
Find a way to say it, I said,
Even if you don’t believe in it —
Mind you — not from failure of faith —
I / only we could now see that there is
No discrimination, and
I / we could overcome
So many years of unwilling slavery,
The future would be ours.

—Suzy Sullens

my dance is not enough
here I stand half
a
woman
—Lambert-van Buuren

this chain
this chain that
links from
mother to daughter
this chain of fear
in a
thousand ugly forms
this chain that
passes on in ignorance
all the misunderstandings
of truth
I deny this chain
within my body
is the universe manifest
and in this way
I deny the continuance
I break the chain
and in my refusal
I create
not a void
but give birth
to a struggling new seed.

—bb bastian
Local and National News Briefs

Monterey County Women
MONTEREY – The Monterey County Commission on the Status of Women has trained 14 women to serve on oral review boards. These boards, formally called Qualifications Appraisal Panels, will interview applicants for county positions.

The women trained by the Commission to serve on these panels will make it easier for women to acquire county jobs. Not only will some women on the panel make it look less formidable, but these women can recognize certain skills in volunteer work and running households which their male counterparts might overlook.

The Commission is particularly interested in training additional women from Salinas. Call Carol Kaplan, 394-5120, evenings, for more information.

Volunteer Work Recognized
MONTEREY – On July 10 the Monterey County Board of Supervisors gave some recognition to women’s volunteer work. They voted to reimburse the members of the Monterey County Commission on the Status of Women for their mileage and expenses incurred while doing Commission-related work.

Women Protest Medicaid Cuts
CINCINNATI – More than 1,500 persons, including representatives of 37 women’s groups, gathered in Cincinnati in late June to protest the Right to Life organization’s efforts to deny poor women the right to obtain an abortion.

The demonstrators marched to the chant of “Right to Lifers are going to lose; women demand the right to choose.” During the hour long march, the women also voiced their opposition to recent firebombings of abortion clinics, the cutting of Medicaid funds for abortions and the Hyde Amendment.

The demonstrators, angry about the recent House Appropriations Committee vote that tightened the already restrictive guidelines of the Hyde Amendment for Medicaid-funded abortions by allowing payments only in cases where a woman’s life is in danger by a full-term pregnancy, view that decision as a denial of economically disadvantaged women’s right to make their decisions about abortion in light of their own consciences and religious beliefs.

—In These Times

NWPC Convention
CINCINNATI – Gloria Steinem told 2,000 cheering delegates at the National Women’s Political Caucus convention (July 13) that she is a feminist before she is an American.

Steinem said the world may be ready for a “feminist and humanist revolution.”

Another convention speaker, former Congresswoman Bella Abzug, chided women for continuing to linger “outside” the American political structure. She suggested that women support “favorite daughters” at next year’s presidential nominating conventions.

Steinem told the women, “We must perceive ourselves as autonomous, independent creatures. That means before we are Democrats or Republicans — and frankly, in my case, before I am American.”

—San Francisco Chronicle

The Dinner Party
SEATTLE – The Seattle Center, which was scheduled to show the feminist art project The Dinner Party in August, has cancelled its participation on the grounds that the exhibition space it originally set aside had been pre-empted, reports the New York Times.

The Dinner Party, which drew record crowds to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, honors the achievements of women throughout western civilization. It was created over several years by hundreds of women, and was originally conceived by artist Judy Chicago.

—Plexus

Pro-Choice Hotline
MONTEREY – Planned Parenthood affiliates of California has received a grant from the Ms. Foundation for a tryout of a toll free “Pro-choice Hotline.”

The hotline offers a 24-hour recorded message about current happenings in the courts, legislature and elsewhere that have a statewide effect on the issues of abortion, family planning and reproductive health. Call toll free 800-952-5765.

—YWCA Newsletter

DES Settlement
In an unprecedented move, a woman has been awarded half a million dollars from the John Lilly Pharmaceutical Corp. on the grounds that she contracted cancer as a result of having a mother who had been using the drug DES. DES was prescribed to women during the late 1940’s and 1950’s to prevent miscarriage, and has been found to have caused cancer in their sons and daughters.

—Pacifica News

Crossword Answers
I was watching the 6 o'clock news the other evening when I heard the newscaster use the word "chairperson." It sounded so normal to me and it made me remember a time about a decade ago when I'd first heard the word. It had seemed so strange back then.

As we look back upon the past ten years of the women's movement, we can clearly see that along with the political and social reforms that have come about, a whole new language has been established to accommodate these changes. A limitless variety of words, ideas and expressions are being formed in the lexicon, and many undesirable, traditional words are on their way to extinction, or are becoming taboo at the very least. Since even our most instinctive perceptions are comprised of language, this evolution in word usage is a tremendous milestone for women, and indeed for all humankind.

Looking at some of the no-longer-acceptable vocabulary, we can easily see the power of language in influencing our thoughts. Just for curiosity, visualize the images that come to your mind when you hear the following taboo words: shrew, hussy, the little woman, broad, chick, spinster, my old lady, slut, cat fight, girl-talk. Is your impression of any of these words different from your impression of a Playboy? What about the difference between girl-talk and a man-to-man talk? And how does spinster compare with bachelor?

On the positive side, take a look at all the interesting new words that have been formulated as a result of the women's movement: feminism, Equal Rights Amendment, liberated woman, liberated man, consciousness raising, ms., sisterhood, NOW, sexist, male chauvinist, unisex.

When I was in high school fifteen years ago, I often excused myself in restaurants by saying that I was going to the little girl's room. My mother readily admits that she used to tell her dates that she had to powder her nose. In college, I adored being referred to as a chick or foxy lady. But nowadays you don't often hear those words on college campuses.

Remember how strange the word spokesperson sounded when you first heard it? Now it's perfectly natural. As a matter of fact, nearly all the changes in words ending in "man," or "ess" are now widely used. Stewardesses are now flight attendants, deliverymen are deliverers, councilmen have become council members, and the list goes on and on.

Or how about the word extinctions with regards to pregnancy — In 1850, people said "she's cancelling all social engagements." In 1900, the expression was "she's in a family way." In 1930, it changed to "she's expecting," and in 1950 it finally became "she's pregnant." As for menstrual periods, our grandmothers called it "the curse," and our mothers called it "my friend," all because they were too embarrassed about saying the word period.

And so it seems that the changes in language can be viewed as exciting, in spite of the fact that many transgressions are still being made by people whose evolution of language is just a little bit slower than we would prefer. But I'm optimistic. I hear they're having some trouble with terms like first-base person and fisherperson, but who knows ... Maybe someday I'll turn on the 6 o'clock news and these too will fit just as comfortably as an old-maid's shoe.

Title IX Threatened by Lobbying Effort

WASHINGTON — Title IX, the only federal law protecting the principle of equal educational opportunity for girls and women, is being threatened by an intensive lobbying effort in Congress.

Over 300 colleges and universities have banded together to launch an attack on Title IX. Their aim is to get an amendment which would exempt the major portion of men's athletic programs from equity requirements under Title IX.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all federally funded education programs and states in part that "No person in the U.S. shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program actively receiving federal financial assistance."

Letters to Leon Panetta, our congressperson, and senators Hayakawa and Cranston opposing this lobbying effort are needed.

If you want to know more, contact Peer, (202) 332-7337, a project of NOW's Legal Defense and Education Fund.
Arriving at a feminist perspective is a profoundly personal experience. The process forces one to re-examine many unquestioned customs and relationships. Feminism helps women realize they have a right to make many more choices than society commonly permits. Through Demeter we hope in some way to reach every woman. Each month a woman will be writing a chronicle of the process she went through in becoming a feminist. We encourage others to send in their own accounts of their emergence as feminists.

My feminist awareness has developed within the last year as I became more intense in my search for an understanding of myself. I became interested in feminism through meeting women with whom I identified. Their choices of lifestyles that were more personally rewarding challenged the idea that every woman should be content in the home without a career of her own.

I felt the need for an alternative in my own life. The women's movement has given me a sense of support in exploring possibilities that will make my life more fulfilling.

In discovering feminism I have begun questioning my past values and attitudes, uprooting judgements that inhibit growth and replanting them with seeds that foster life. I've been struggling to find out what is best for me, what feels good.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman said, "Life is growth." With this I strongly agree. Anything repressing growth is repressing life. I have become aware of repressive attitudes I grew up with in digging deeply into my past experiences. It has been difficult to examine my conditioning for it has meant a reevaluation of concepts I had previously held true.

Emerging from the peer pressures of high school I have become aware of the desire in me for others' acceptance. Until moving away (in time and space) from that influence I did not question my opinions. I've found it repressive to constantly abide by sexually defined roles. I feel the need to redefine the rules and eliminate the roles.

For me, feminism has inspired a search for a more unified self. I will not be limited in my life by my sex, by attitudes of my own or of society. I feel a sense of strength and support knowing that other women are discovering themselves. The greatest realization I've come to is that I can do anything. The next step is to understand what I really want to do.

Being in touch with myself, knowing from inside what is good for me, I can uncover many possibilities. Having the support of women who have acknowledged their own oppression lets me know that the oppression is not a myth but a reality. Unearthing, unlearning ingrained attitudes is a continuous process of looking inside and I am sometimes scared. I'm also amazed at the richness and my quest goes on.

I began this article in hopes of defining for myself what feminism means. For me it is all of the above and much more. Primarily I see it as a questioning of my attitudes about myself as a woman, finding out where these attitudes came from, what they are and how I live them.

They come from our culture, political structure, social interaction and economic values as well as family ties. They are the little voices that tell us what is right and wrong. I live them in my career, education and relationships. I challenge them by dismissing their limitations on my life.

Feminism to me means strength, caring, occasional anger and loving myself, all through a process of discovery.

—Cyndi Sumner

Far from implying sameness, the language of equality emphasizes sexual differentiation by making women visible.

—Casey Miller & Kate Swift

—Words and Women