

Lesbians find tradition and community in monthly potluck

By Stacey McKenzie
Senior Editor

Smorgasbord and soiree, casserole and company or potpourri and party.

No matter what the combination, take an assortment of foods and an assortment of lesbians and you've got a lesbian potluck.

Wally Martin, owner of Arbor Moon Alternative Bookstore, said the potlucks took place every third Sunday of the month.

These potlucks are a strong tra-

dition in the Lincoln lesbian community, she said, and estimated that the monthly gatherings have been going on for five to 10 years.

Word of the potluck is spread through the Women's Journal Advocate and by word-of-mouth, Martin said.

The most important part of the potluck, of course, involves the indulgence of food, she said.

"Like all potlucks, we don't try to plan it," Martin said.

Often there is a nice balance of food, Martin said, but sometimes

the selection can be dessert-heavy or appetizer-heavy.

But nobody worries about serving a well-balanced meal, she said; they just come to share company.

Sometimes, Martin said, the food is accentuated with readings, videos or music.

And some potlucks have themes.

The last potluck featured Easter-egg dyeing, Martin said. Next time, she said, the potluck goes will have a garden party, complete with a feminine dress code.

The garden party will create an

opportunity for lesbians to show their feminine sides, Martin said, which is important.

It can be fun to test out the different social fronts that society creates for women, Martin said.

For lesbians, being called "butch" can be negative because one can still be a lesbian without having "butch" characteristics.

"There is so much feeling that lesbians are butch," she said. "The garden party will let people have their feminine side indulged."

Lesbians are trying to break down

social fronts that are oppressive, Martin said. They are "trying to get away from the butch/fem thing."

Potluck turnouts vary depending on the size of the hostess's home. Sometimes eight people will show up, and other times 40 to 50 people will show up.

There have been several occasions when a man has shown up at the potluck, Martin said, but, for the most part, the event was created to give women, more specifically, lesbians, "a space of their own where they can feel safe."

Staying in also part of night life

By Dionne Searcey
Senior Editor

While many homosexuals are partying at the gay bars, there's a crowd of them who are having just as much fun staying home, the co-chairman of the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Student Association said.

Paul Moore said some homosexuals didn't feel safe leaving their homes to go out on the town.

"They do a lot of entertaining within their homes," he said.

Gay and lesbian couples have dinner parties or show videos for their friends just like straight couples. But for a few homosexuals, night life revolves around these parties.

"For some people it would be the main part of their social life because they're not comfortable with going out."

Since gay bars are the only social hangout for homosexuals in Lincoln, he said, gay and lesbian couples who don't like the bar scene must create alternatives.

"Where else is there in Lincoln that is gay/lesbian supportive that is not a bar scene?" Moore asked. "There isn't any other type of place."

Homosexual hangouts in bigger cities advertise in the gay/lesbian media. Homosexuals are then made aware that these places will have a comfortable environment for gays and lesbians.

Because Lincoln doesn't have a variety of gay and lesbian hangouts, local media don't include homosexual publications, he said.

Lincoln doesn't offer any restaurants that are homosexual hangouts or movie theaters that regularly show films about gay and lesbian lifestyles, he said.

Moore said this is why homosexuals just stay at home with their friends.

"Rather than go somewhere, you invite them over to your home," he said.

And some of these homes are incredible, he said, because homosexual couples put a lot of work into them. They spend money on their houses because they spend a lot of time there.

"Their life revolves around the safety of their home," he said.

Many don't feel comfortable going just anywhere in public, he said.

"In a (homosexual) relationship, if you want to show affection for that partner, that's something that's not accepted."

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