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Mainely Girls

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MAINELY GIRLS

The Source of Information For and About Maine Girls!

Mission:

Mainely Girls, a state-wide, non-profit organization, was founded in 1996 with a two part mission: to work with rural communities to assist them in focusing on girls' needs in a preventative, proactive and positive manner, and to work on the state level to bring about positive change for girls.

Mainely Girls Editorial Board

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Girls' Point of View Book Club Members

Mainely Girls is grateful for the support of
Bonnie Rukin Miller
which makes this newsletter possible.

The 10th annual Camden Girls' Festival: One Incredible Day, took place on March 21st, and once again, freelance journalist Kaley Noonan captured a glimpse of what this special day means to girls.

Sex Is The Main Topic At Girls Conference

By Kaley Noonan

VillageSoup.com first published this article and it appears here with permission.

CAMDEN (March 24, 2003): What's more uncomfortable, thinking about teenage girls having a sexual identity or actually talking to them about it? For girls all over Maine who wanted the straight dope about their bodies, contraceptives, diseases, double-standards and sexual orientation — the 10th Annual Camden Girls' Festival was the place to be.

Conference organizer Mary Orear realized that they'd be tackling a very sensitive subject this year. Orear initially had reservations about hosting a day-long conference specifically centered around this topic because she was afraid it would be too intense for girls. And her fears weren't totally unfounded as some regular conference attendees didn't want to come this year.

"But registrations started coming in immediately," she said and she applauded the girls who did attend the conference Friday in Camden.

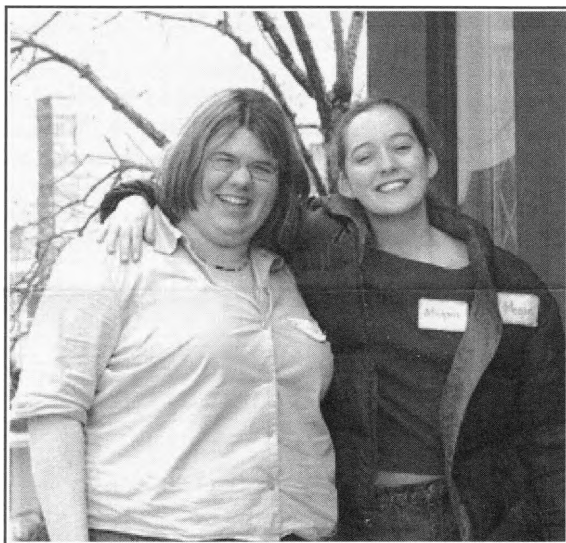
"We need to get groups of girls together and start talking about sex. We need to take the lid off so we can start to support each other, and figure out how to handle this in a society that really doesn't want to talk about sex," Orear said.

Brie Dietrich, 17, a junior at Camden Hills Regional High School, was instrumental in bringing this year's topic to Orear's attention.

"We thought that a lot of girls wanted to talk

about sex," Dietrich said. "It's a taboo thing to talk about, especially in Camden. I can see other places where it's a lot more open, but here I think we're all expected to be perfect and part of that perfection is not having any issues — and not having sex."

Dietrich likes a good laugh and has a good-natured, confident personality. She's on the stu-



Brie Dietrich and Megan Kennedy

Photo by Kaley Noonan

dent executive board at Mainely Girls, which plans the One Incredible Day Conference each year. She also student-produced the fall musical, "Little Shop of Horrors" and last year's "Crazy For You."

Active on the yearbook, National Honor Society, and volunteering in her spare time with New Hope For Women and Mainely Girls, her schedule has been so jam-packed that she admits recently she's been sick from getting only three or four hours of sleep each night.

"High school has been a blur," she says. "But I like to be busy and things like Mainely Girls

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Mainly Girls

69 Elm Street
Camden, ME
04843

phone/fax
(207) 230-0170
megirls@midcoast.com
www.mainlygirls.org

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Sex is the Main Topic (cont. from previous page)

reflect the issues that I want to start changing."

Traditionally at the start of each conference, Mainly Girls presents the Elizabeth and Rebecca Bradeen Award to an outstanding girl or woman in the community. The conference honored Camden Hills Guidance Counselor Judy Ottmann this year and Dietrich, herself, made the award, which was a paper mache heart with an inscription that reads in part, "For all the hopes and dreams you've made come true."

Dietrich explained the heart symbolizes the love Ottmann puts in everything she does. "She started a group for girls at our school called New Hope for Teens, which raises awareness about abusive relationships for teenage girls. If you have a problem, she's always there to try to find a solution for you. And always there to listen. And sort of able to step back and see from your perspective how you feel."

In later conversations, Dietrich's devotion to Ottmann and her work becomes more clear. "I was in a really bad relationship my freshman year of high school," Dietrich said, "and when it was over, I sort of felt like I was nothing. So I had to learn about myself and make myself into a new person and part of that was getting into activism. It was sort of the way I was raised, that you have to contribute to the world."

Dietrich's contribution to all the young women in Maine this year was to be the first one to speak up and out — about sex. "Some health classes discuss it but my health class never got to it," she said.

Friend Megan Kennedy 16, also on the Mainly Girls student executive board, joined in. "We talked about personal health and hygiene," she said with a shrug. Both said they learned about contraception in eighth grade, but have had no class discussions of sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy or contraception in high school.

Dietrich is aware of the controversy that sometimes surrounds sexual education in high schools, and feels that parents are afraid that "if we talk about it, we're going to be more encouraged to have sex. They think we're too young, we can't make decisions, we're naive but the world has changed since the 1950s when kids were young and naive and we're more aware about the world, ourselves, and our sexuality."

To illustrate that point, the conference's keynote speaker, Katie Brown, mentioned two statistics that show just how complex girls' feelings about sex and body image have gotten over the last 30 to 40 years.

She said 80 to 90 percent of American women are dissatisfied with their overall physical image today as opposed to 29 percent in the 1950s.

The post-1960 daughter sees more images of "impossibly" beautiful women engaged in sexual posturing in one day than her mother saw

throughout her entire adolescence, she said.

Girls in the audience listening to these statistics, nodded their heads, all too familiar with the conflicting sexual/body image messages they constantly receive. What adults don't hear about are the discussions girls like Dietrich and her friends are having in the bathrooms about what's really going on after school and on weekends.

They know quite a few girls in their grade who have admitted to being sexually active. And girls who've gotten pregnant or who have had secret abortions. In a loose estimate, Dietrich thinks that perhaps as many as 60 percent of teens in her junior class are having sex.

As far as how many of those students are aware of and using protection, Kennedy said, "Not many. I have a friend who has been in a relationship for a long time and has been having sex and statistically, she really should be pregnant."

Dietrich and Kennedy offer story after story about ignorant behavior in their high school as an exam-



Photo by Kaley Noonan

ple of lack of sexual education.

Ekta Aggarwal, 16, a bright, thoughtful exchange student from India who hangs around with Dietrich and Kennedy said, "If a male in India has sex with a lot of girls, he's known as a 'playboy' and not really respected in society. Whereas a guy who is really respected in my society has consideration for the woman before he [has sex with her]."

She said the culture shift in America, particularly in the classrooms where she notices boys encouraging each other to be promiscuous is so totally different from her own at home.

"That's the one thing I don't really like, but you can't really change it," she said.

As with other One Incredible Day conferences, a whole interesting array of hands-on events are offered for girls that are separate from the key topic. Several girls from Portland High School came up to take "Expressing Yourself through Art" while others tried new sessions which offered cooking with professional chefs, belly dancing,

dancing to West African drums and using video cameras to collect interviews on Camden streets and then turn them into personal videos.



Photo by: Kaley Noonan

Judy Ottmann with Brie Dietrich

For the day's second session, Dietrich chose a topic that gets very little media attention — date rape and young women. Dietrich is looking at top-list schools next year and wants to go for a degree in psychology and women's studies. She's looking forward to college but wants to arm herself with more social knowledge than just which parties to attend.

On date rape, Dietrich said, "I know girls who say to me, 'I didn't really [consent to have sex], cause I was drunk and I didn't know what was going on, but I guess I can't do anything about it now.' I've tried to talk to those girls and say 'you know you were drunk, you didn't even have the ability say no' — but they just don't understand."

In this session, it rapidly becomes clear how much more insidious date rape has gotten today as opposed to ten years ago with the use of new "date rape" drugs like GHB (Liquid X), Ketamine, (special K) and Rohypnol (Roofies). A disturbing trend among college males is to lace girls' drinks with these odorless, colorless drugs, which act as extreme sedatives. Presenter Jenny Boisvert, an educator for New Hope For Women, passed along tips for young women to protect themselves in college that other girls have learned the hard way:

- Avoid becoming drunk at big parties, because 75 percent of all date rapes happen when the woman is intoxicated.
- Avoid fraternity party punch bowls. "They're a cess pool for drugs," said Boisvert.
- Never let your drink out of your sight, even taking it to the bathroom with you. If you have any doubts, it's safer to get a new one.

- Don't get separated from your friends at big parties, particularly in large houses and dorms.

"One guy said I could use the phone in his room down the hall," said one older attendee, "then he followed me and locked the door behind him. Luckily he was drunk, and I managed to open another door and get out."

"And thank goodness you weren't," said Boisvert. "Because your judgment would have been impaired."

As Dietrich walked away, she commented, "That's the kind of information people at school need to know. Like partying is not really my scene — but all of those girls who do — there's a lot of them — every weekend, need to know that stuff."

What's A College Degree Worth?

According to the spring/summer AAUW magazine, over a life-time, women with a degree earn on average \$600,000 more than women without a degree. That more than covers the cost of a four-year degree (\$33,364 at a public institution; \$84,080, private). Numbers based on a 2001 report by the Mortenson Research Seminar on Public Policy Analysis of Opportunity for Postsecondary Education.

Wishes Come True!

Many thanks to Scott Horthy and Camden Real Estate Company for generously donating a color printer for Mainely Girls!

We Wish We May; We Wish We Might...



- Lodging for a summer college intern.
- Part time job for summer college intern.
- A MAC laptop for Zoey's E-Pals Club. It will be for a staff member but is going to be used during our girls' computer technology camp, and for the after-school program activities. It can be an iBook, Powerbook, or similar but preferably a model within the past 3-4 years.

College Chums

Mainely Girls is receiving growing support from women now living in Maine who have attended all-women colleges. We are very grateful for contributions from the following women who attended Vassar and Smith. (* indicates a Mainely Girls Board Member.)

VASSAR

Gigi Bass
Calista Harder
Joy Hoffman
Corallie Murray
Robin Whitten
*Ellen Wells

SMITH

Elizabeth
Lameyer Gilmore
Dawn Jellison
Mary Jeton
Dorcas Miller
Margaret Pingree
Marian Schmidt
*Sarah Szwajkos

Opportunities Abound!

Calendar

April 2003

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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May 2003

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June 2003

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August 2003

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September 2003

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October 2003

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Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day April 2003

For the first time, the Ms. Foundation's *Take Our Daughters to Work Day* will include boys, and Mainely Girls hopes that this will mean more schools will include their students in this important event.

Some see bringing boys into the day as caving into pressure. Others see this inclusive action as acknowledgement that many boys need the day as much as the girls do.

Regardless of your stand, I encourage you to consider the following:

1. As the official day falls during Maine's school vacation, choose whatever day you want, **preferably near the end of April.**
2. Don't perpetuate gender stereotypes when sending students to employment sites.
3. Send girls and boys to separate locations so they don't have to compete for attention or involvement.
4. For all the information you'll need about planning the day, their excellent website is: www.takeourdaughtersandsonstowork.org

YWCA Portland: Where The Girls Are Programs

This workshop series is designed to give girls a glimpse into their future careers, hobbies, jobs or interests. Each workshop is a one hour Saturday afternoon information session featuring guest speakers.

May 10th 2-3 pm Stephanie Chase and Lori Pritchard, personal trainers.

May 24th 2-3 pm Jean Ginn Marvin, former member State House of Representatives and Lynn Bromley, state senator.

2nd Annual UMaine Computer-Aided Design (CAD) Camp

If you are a student in grades 7 – 12 and interested in drafting, computers, design, art, engineering, take a look at the University of Maine CAD Camp. For a week every summer, campers have fun creating designs for everything from buildings and machines to jewelry. You spend mornings in an air-conditioned

computer lab. In the afternoons, try out the ropes course, visit the climbing wall, or canoe on the Stillwater. Evenings are hardly boring. You spend time in the computer lab, visit high-tech companies, chat with staff from the Women's Resource Center, or tour UMaine engineering labs.

Camp activities are designed to be as appealing to girls as to boys and to diverse campers with varied interests. One goal of the camp is to encourage girls and boys with or without prior expressed interest to consider technology related careers from New Media to Engineering.

Because women and members of ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in these career fields, girls and ethnic minority boys are especially targeted to attend the camp.

This fun, active camp experience builds computer, leadership and teamwork skills in commuter campers entering grades seven and eight, and resident and commuter campers entering grades nine through twelve.

Two sessions will be held: **July 6 - 11** and **July 13 - 18**. Register for CAD camp by printing the brochure at <http://www.umaine.edu/ofm/cjdirectory/CAD-CAMP/Camp2003.htm>, or contact the UMaine Conference Services Division at 207-581-4092, or e-mail them at rcsd@umit.maine.edu.

Scholarships might be available for some campers. Please email or call Karen Horton at karen.horton@umit.maine.edu or (207) 581-2136 if you have questions.

Only eighty campers can be accommodated so please register asap.

Maine School of Science & Math Nature & Numbers: Summer Camp for Girls

Girls who are entering grades 6 – 9 in the autumn are eligible to attend a week of two of camp this summer from **July 7 – 19**. MSSM summer camps provide eager young students who are curious about math, science and technology with new and exciting opportunities to explore these fields. Contact Linda McLaughlin by e-mail (linda@mssm.org). to request a camp brochure, registration and scholarship information, or a teaching or house parent application.

Zoey's Tec-Know Camp

This camp is the launching pad for middle-school girls who will participate in the after-school technology club, Zoey's E-Pals' Club, in the coming school year. The summer camp experience solidifies a real world community, provides peer-learning environ-

Save the Month: Mainely Girls Hosts Two October Conferences for Adults and About Girls

Our **October 3rd** conference brings to Maine Jane Margolis, Ed.D, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA, and Allan Fisher, former Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education in the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University, and President and CEO of Carnegie Technology Education, a Carnegie Mellon education company. They are co-authors of *Unlocking the Clubhouse: Women in Computing* (MIT Press).

Jane, a social scientist, and Allan, a computer scientist and educator, spent four years researching their book at Carnegie Mellon, a major center of computer science research. In addition they conducted classroom observations and conversations with hundreds of college and high school faculty while investigating the familial, educational, and institutional origins of the computing gender gap. Not only did they trace how the gap develops, but they described the educational reforms that they tried, and which made a dramatic difference at Carnegie Mellon, where the percentage of women entering the School of Computer Science rose from 7% in 1995 to 42% in 2000 – and at high schools around the country.

Having Jane Margolis and Allan Fisher speak to Maine educators at this specific juncture in the laptop initiative – when middle school teachers have had a year or two of laptop experience behind them

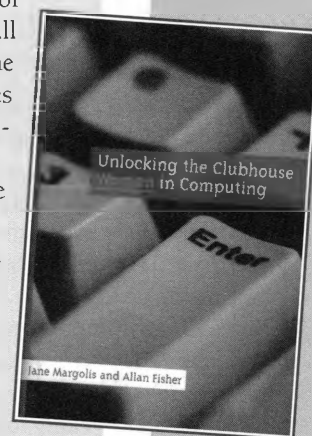
and are feeling more comfortable, and when high schools are preparing for the first wave of those lap toppers to enter 9th grade - will have a significant impact on helping Maine schools, technical colleges, and universities recognize and address the gender gap in technology.

More information will be available on the Mainely Girls' website this summer.

Later in October Mainely Girls will host a three day conference which will focus one day on each of the following:

1. Susan Willard and a team from River Oaks Hospital, an eating disorder treatment center in New Orleans, will work with community-based health care professionals on eating disorder intervention and clinical treatment.
2. Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair will provide a training for her effective eating disorder prevention program, "Full of Ourselves."
3. Mainely Girls will present a workshop to girls' program developers focusing on:
 - how to acquire local funding for girls' programs, and
 - how to sustain local girls' programs.

Though inclusive of programs in cities and larger towns, there will be a special emphasis on those in small, rural Maine communities. This day is sponsored by the Maine Women's Health Campaign. More information will be available on our website this summer.



ments, and connects girls with other E-Pals' statewide and beyond. The Camp and Clubs work in conjunction with the Zoey's Room interactive website, <http://www.zoeyroom.com>, where the content of the Camp and Clubs is showcased.

Girls will participate in technology classes that include, Beginner and Advanced HTML, Digital Moviemaking, Designing Interactive Games, and much more! And all girls will participate in "The 411 of ZR" where they will develop leadership skills and get revved up to be an active member of Zoey's E-Pals' Club in the Fall 2003.

In addition to hiking, nature walks, and swimming, girls will also participate in evening seminars with Fab Females: role models in the areas of science, math and new technology; have free time with their laptops, and visit museums and area sites.

Zoey's Tec-Know Camp will be held **August 17th - August 23rd**. To participate in this exciting summer camp that is critical, timely, and as unlimited as a girl's imagination, contact Vinitha Nair at (207) 749-9337 or download a brochure at <http://www.zoeyroom.com/GetInvolved.html>.

Avena Institute Garden Girls: Seasonal Days for Girls

On **Saturday, August 23rd** from 10 – 3, girls ages 12 – 17 will make herbal preparations, go for walks in gardens and woods, make lunch together and do activities and games. Register by calling 594-2403. \$10 fee.

8th Grade Girls Get Lucky!

This year's 8th grade girls are in luck: Kieve is busy planning a new and very exciting program: Ocean Term for girls! They anticipate opening their first session in the **fall of 2004** for sophomores in high school - in other words, girls currently in the 8th grade. We'll keep you posted on this creative and cutting-edge venture as it develops. For more information, and/or to reserve a space for yourself, contact Pam Erickson at (207)563-5215. It's never too early to let them know you're interested!

Project Updates

Zoey's E-Pals' Camp & Clubs

By Erin Brochette and Vinitha Nair

In January we held our mid-year retreat for Zoey's E-Pals' Club where both Adult and Girl Co-Leaders shared their experience thus far. Club Leaders told us that the girls are having fun, really enjoying working on their laptops, and getting to know other girls outside of their usual group of friends. Club Leaders also provided us with great insight on ways to improve the program and continue its success.

We have begun to implement some of their suggestions already with revamping www.zoeyroom.com to include a moderated chat line. Each month we feature Fab Females in the realm of math, science, and technology. Their topic discussions are posted online in advance, giving members time to formulate good questions for chatting with the Fab Female. If you or someone you know would like to be a Fab Female and sign up for a chat, email us at zoey@zoeyroom.com.

Zoey's Room is also honored to enter into a collaborative partnership with Maine's AAUW, American Association of University Women. AAUW has conducted extensive research on the need to develop special programs that encourage young girls to pursue their interests in math, science and technology. As a collaborative partner, AAUW-Maine will support and promote the program and will advocate for and support those local AAUW branches which choose to sponsor a Zoey's E-Pals' Club in their local middle schools. In addition, AAUW will help us reach beyond Maine by offering Zoey's E-Pals' Club as a model to other AAUW chapters nationwide.

Mary Madden, PhD, Assistant Research Professor at the Center for Research and Evaluation at the University of Maine, has agreed to evaluate the program. Dr. Madden has done extensive research on adolescent girls' development and gender issues in education.

These are both great additions to our team.

Stay tuned to learn more about our End of Year Event in June that will showcase each club's work for the year!

A Girl's Point of View Book Clubs

By Susan Dempster

Vinalhaven School now has TWO girls' book clubs up and running!

The High School Club has read *Pedro & Me* and will read *Make Lemonade* next. The girls loved *Pedro & Me*; it's our first graphic novel. Fourteen girls are involved with the Club right now.

New this year is the Middle School Club made up of 8 8th graders. They are a pretty neat group and are dedicated to reading! We read *Go Ask Alice* for our first book. They were wild over it! And they know how to discuss a book! We are reading *A Step From Heaven* next. We are working around cheerleading and basketball so our meetings are not on a regular basis, but we try for two a month.

See the back cover of this newsletter for girls' book reviews.

(Note: The Girls' Point of View Book Clubs gave a presentation at the Camden Girls' Festival. More girls signed up to attend that session than any other one offered this year!)

Talking In Circles

By Mary Orear

This autumn a school contacted Mainely Girls to ask if we might be available to work with some sixth grade girls on the issue of girlfighting. The school was concerned enough to offer class time to address this issue, and as a result, I met with the girls for ten two-hour sessions in January, February, and March. The school took this "girls" problem seriously, and the support shown by teachers, administrators and staff was remarkable.

I had named the work *Talking In Circles* because we would be literally sitting in a circle talking, and we certainly did talk in circles figuratively, from time to time! The girls were honest, open, good-hearted and very responsive. They recognized that a problem existed and relished an opportunity to address it. Despite hurt and pain from the past, they demonstrated an eagerness to move beyond where they were and establish new ways to relate to each other that would help make the next six years they will be spending together more fulfilling and positive for each individually and for the group collectively.

I had read much of the girlfighting research, and my experience with these girls underscored its accuracy. During the many long conversations, it was clear to me that the girls were being confined by a few commonly held beliefs:

1. Nice girls don't get angry, or if they do, they don't express their anger directly.
2. Girls can't talk honestly and constructively about someone if they are not present; conversely, they can say horrible things behind each other's backs.
3. Girls have to be friends with everyone.
4. Girls have to conform to the will of the group, even they disagree with it.
5. Girls can only be friends with others in their group and no one else.
6. Girls can't speak directly and honestly about their emotional pain to the person who has caused it.

We sat in a circle and talked about all these assumptions, and more. As girls became more trusting, they were more able to speak their truths to each other – even the hard ones – and to listen without becoming defensive. Empathy and understanding developed. Some barriers were lifted; some bonds forged. The girls all started eating together every day at lunch and making plans for slumber parties and get togethers that would include everyone.

Then, at the 8th meeting, I shared the theory that some girls fight with each other because it isn't safe to take on the people who are really causing them problems. I asked about what was happening in their school and their homes. The girls answered, and what they said was of some concern but not horrific by any means. But before I came for the 9th meeting, it was made clear to me that I had done something that was unacceptable. Though nothing was said overtly, I could tell that I wasn't supposed to continue that line of discussion. Instead, I was asked to do something fun with the girls for the last two meetings.

These days I'm thinking about how we, as adults, can't have it

both ways. We can't urge girls to speak their truths, to bravely and maturely address their conflicts with each other and work them through, and then censor the girls when their conflicts involve us.

All this time, while the girls and I have been sitting in a circle talking to each other, we've been sitting inside a larger circle. We now need to turn and talk with the people surrounding us.

Ongoing Awareness

Eating Disorders Awareness Week has come and gone, but don't let that stop anyone for addressing this major concern. Mainely Girls recently received a kit with some excellent materials from The National Eating Disorders Association which works to eliminate eating disorders and body dissatisfaction through prevention efforts, education, referral and support services, treatment, research and advocacy.

The materials include a video, brochures, and an extensive folder of very usable information and ideas. Please call Mainely Girls if you'd like to talk about some simple but effective efforts you can make to raise the consciousness about or address eating disorders in your school or community.

Turn Beauty Inside Out

Mainely Girls is a member of the steering committee for Turn Beauty Inside Out Maine whose goal is to redefine beauty as "Good Hearts, Great Works, and Activism." Under the leadership of Aileen Fortune, Christine Burgess, and Deb Burwell, the group has met three times. Lewiston/Auburn, the Mt. Desert Area, and York are pilot sites for this effort. For more about this program or to participate in the survey, or become involved in additional ways, the website is: www.umaine.edu/umext/genderproject.

Girls Action Group

During the last two year, this coalition group, convened by Mainely Girls, did significant work with and on behalf of girls at the Long Creek Correctional Center, formerly the Maine Youth Center. After a brief hiatus, we are regrouping and once again offering our assistance to help obtain for girls at the Center what they need to optimize their rehabilitation and return to their communities.

The Dilemma of Desire: Teenage Girls Talk about Sexuality

By Deborah L. Tolman

I've been keeping an eye on Deborah Tolman and her work for the last eight years, ever since listening to three high school girls who had spent one evening a week for two years talking about sex and sexuality with her. Their confidence and comfort level, their understanding of their sexuality, and their ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings on the subject were impressive!

In this book, Deborah, a researcher at Wellesley College, advocates for making it easier for girls to talk about their sexual wants with parents, teachers, or other girls, and makes a convincing case for why we should listen: girls in touch with their own desires make safer, healthier choices.

She discusses society's strictures that, "Girls are the objects of boys' sexual desires and have no desires of their own," and she looks at what happens when girls are not allowed to have acceptable sexual feelings of their own or are afraid to take ownership of their sexuality.

This book is really worth reading by anyone who wants to help girls work through the sexual dilemma they face today.

Membership form

Yes, I would like to support Maine girls, the women they will become and the families many will raise by becoming a member of Mainely Girls! (Members will receive the Mainely Girls newsletter which comes out three times a year.)

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We have connected to Network for Good located at www.Guidestar.org, a secure site that allows donors to make a gift on-line and passes on 100% of the donation to Mainely Girls. We couldn't have done it thus far without you and appreciate your continued support!

A Girl's Point of View: Vinalhaven Girls' Book Clubs

Stargirl

Review by Emma

Once upon a time, in a high school that could be anywhere in America, Mica High went along with its daily rhythm. Hillari Kimble and her boyfriend were setting the standards for everyone. The majority of the students weren't entwined or intrigued by anything unique or different. It almost seemed like they were waiting for something or someone to challenge their way of life, their order.

Everything was turned upside down when Stargirl Caraway waltzed into the lunchroom one day, playing a ukulele and singing Happy Birthday to people she had never met. Needless to say, Stargirl did nothing like anyone else. She danced in the rain when the spirit called her. She attended strangers' funerals to comfort them. She did all of this along with her pet rat, Cinnamon, her kindness, and her sandy hair shining.

At first, the students of Mica High were stunned at Stargirl's unconventional ways. Then, gradually, she began to gain recognition for her traits, and in high school the utmost award for that is popularity. Stargirl received that in utmost proportions. Many more transformations and twists took place, including the students painfully scorning her - the same person they had previously worshiped. Throughout everything was a boy who loved this beautifully unusual girl. He intensely

wanted to save her, and if the love they shared wasn't powerful enough, then nothing was. Would it be possible? Or was the world just not able to handle someone as individual as Stargirl? Read the book to find out. (Middle School Club)

Go Ask Alice

Review by Natalie

Recently in the girls' book club, eight middle school girls read the book *Go Ask Alice*, a journal of a troubled girl and her escapade into the world of drugs during the 1960s. The journal was a detailed account of her life around drugs and her fight to become clean after her first trip.

Having read this book two other times before the club met, I picked up details that I hadn't gotten the first and second time around. Because the book was written in the 1960s, some of the expressions and popular trends were extremely different than they are today. Moccasins were a popular thing to wear, as was blue eye shadow, and the expression "Groovy" was a must.

The way things were written in her journal, you could actually picture her and what she did in her life. You could actually feel yourself meeting the people she met, and how they acted on and off drugs. Some places, events, and names were altered to protect the rights of people in the book, but even with these changes, the book never lost its flare.

Everyone should read this book whether or not you are interested in drugs. This book is most definitely written for teenagers, but any one over thirteen would enjoy the book as well. (Middle School Club)

Make Lemonade

Review by Alicia & Hannah

This is a simple story of learning and of maturing beyond the years of a young girl. It tells a story of the plight of a young woman who has made too many mistakes. It tells of hardship, in the form of sticky floors and even stickier children.

LaVaughn is a fourteen-year-old girl who needs a job to raise money for college. She wants a good steady job with reasonable hours. She sees a babysitting ad in a store and writes down the phone number. Jolly, the one who put the ad out, is a mother of two children and works an evening job. LaVaughn takes the job to sit for Jolly. LaVaughn has her work cut out for her: the house is a mess and the children are dirty.

Something happens at Jolly's job and she gets fired. While Jolly tries to find another job, she cannot pay LaVaughn or the bills. LaVaughn realizes the only way that Jolly is going to help her predicament is for her to go back to school, via the "Moms Up Program." LaVaughn continues to watch the kids for free, tutor Jolly, and expands her own heart and mind. (High School Book Club)



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