

The Flaming Feminist

by susanne millsaps

Lems: music for all

Well, this will be a real change. For everyone who has ever complained that all I ever do is moan and carry on about how awful things are, this column should be a welcome relief. I actually have no gripes—I am actually writing a positive column.

On April 9th, Kristin Lems will be performing at 8 p.m. at the YWCA. She will be performing for one concert only, and the concert will be \$2 at the door. The YWCA is at 322 E. 3rd South, and the concert will be held in a fairly small auditorium, so an early arrival is advised.

Lems has gotten good reviews from all over the country. For instance... "Singer-songwriter-guitarist Kristin Lems livened up the down-homey proceedings... a charmer in the most literal and least artificial sense of the word... delivered some nice feminist lyrics, and did a moving version of 'George Jackson'", says the *New Yorker*. National Public Radio, in describing a festival she played at, said, "One of the things that became obvious shortly after this festival began was the diversity of methods of the performers, exemplified by Kristin Lems; an energetic singer and songwriter, she offered fine topical songs. And one University student who has seen her perform in her home state, Illinois, said she enjoyed her concert so much that she went back for the following two concerts as well.

Performing with Lems are several other musicians. One is Jean Mackey, a bass player and songwriter. Her songs are of struggle and celebration, working women and minorities. Also with Lems will be Tim Vear, her vocalist and lead guitarist. He has performed at feminist rallies and at numerous colleges. (So there, for all you people who think that all feminists hate men, and vice versa.)

This concert is being sponsored by Women Aware, the YWCA and the Equal Rights Coalition. It is really nice to see local women's groups working together on something. All too often, these organizations are out of touch with one another and end up working against one another, instead of with each other.

An example of this would be International Women's Day in March. There are several activities going on in celebration, but they were all occurring at the same time. For instance, there was a rally on the Capitol steps from noon to 1 p.m., while the YWCA held a potluck luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the same day. It is this sort of poor planning that undermines women's activities. And on a larger scale, it is this continued disjointedness that keeps women from making bigger and better political and economic gains. Women do have enough power to change things—even if it isn't always easy—but we must work together. There is a strong sense of unity and closeness that develops among women when they work on a common project together.

It is with this sense of sisterhood—and brotherhood, for that matter—that I would encourage you to attend the Kristin Lems concert. It will be a pleasant evening, and a chance to meet other people who also enjoy good music. For those of you who would like to party afterwards, the Salt Lake chapter of NOW will sponsor a benefit party after the concert. There will be drinks and refreshments and such at the party, and it only costs \$1 to get in.

This is a chance to see a really outstanding feminist musician, of the caliber of Meg Christian or Chris Williamson or Margie Adam, at an unbearable price and to know that your money will be going for a good cause at the same time. This is music that everyone can enjoy, no matter what your political stance may be. It's a good opportunity for a mellow relaxed evening full of music and fun, and should not be missed. So come to the YWCA this Saturday night, and have a good time. See you there.

Making music to make change

By Judy B. Rollins

Assistant Lifestyle Editor

Kristin Lems, Champaign-Urbana, Ill., makes music to make change.

She's no superstar. There's no chauffeured limousine to whisk her away after a concert.

For her current three-week tour to the West Coast with a stop in Salt Lake City for a recent concert at the YWCA, she rides the Greyhound, with amplifiers and equipment tucked in the baggage compartment.

Money Is Tight

Money's tight so she and the other members of her group stay with friends along the way. They have to hurry back to Illinois to make up the money lost on the tour.

"It would be presumptuous for me to think my music can bring about change. But I can work as a catalyst moving others to action. I can help galvanize peoples' thoughts and affect their hearts and minds."

Her music embraces various feminist and environmental themes. She sees them as being closely related. She and her musical mates, Tim Vear and Jeanne Mackey, performed in Milwaukee at a Jacques Cousteau Society International Day.

Environmental Activist

"I am a feminist and an environmental activist. I think they have similar origins. Both women and the environment are abused in the interest of profit. Oppression helps the few to become more and more wealthy."

Ms. Lems travels, too, to encourage passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. She's anxious to record and distribute one of her songs, "The Ballad of the ERA," before the topic becomes an historical artifact.

Riding the bus leaves lots of time to read and doze, but scheduling is a problem. She stepped off the bus in Salt Lake City only a few hours before her concert.

The Salt Lake concert has been the most exciting so far. The place was packed. She commented on the diversity of the audience.

She produced a 45 rpm single working out of her bedroom. It cost \$1,500. The next step is to find \$5,000 to \$7,000 to produce a full-length album of her works.

"I admit my single is a real homemade product. But I retain all the control and freedom over that product. I sacrificed the distribution end to say what I wanted in the method I wanted."

Sold 800

She's sold almost 800 records since sales started Feb. 19.

She said she's found a network of feminists through her National Women's Music Festival each summer. This year's festival is June 28 to July 3 in Champaign-Urbana.

She wears the label of feminist musician comfortably. In perfecting her art, she's presenting her message.

"My songs serve the movement well. I try to present my message with wit. I use lots of satire. The song I recorded, 'Mammary Glands,' is a satire on America's breast fetish. I want to use my talent for social change. I think my music and my ideas are compatible."

She met Tom Paxton, a social-change-through-entertainment advocate and the man who recorded "What Did You Learn in School Today?" who told her his secret.

"We met after a concert. He told me he liked what I was doing. He said the secret is to keep the audience entertained and you can say really strong things. He uses lots of humor, parody and satire. I have begun to use them also."

Ms. Lems is a full-time musician. The group performs where they can — restaurants, bars, coffee houses, schools, weddings, rallies. They have a large repertoire and can fit the program to the audience.

Song writing is easy. She spent 10 years writing poetry and has kept almost a daily journal 15 years.

"My journal is my best friend. It's necessary for my mental health. And it never talks back."

Illinois, her home, is also the home of Phyllis Schlafly, a strong mover against passage of the ERA.

"I haven't met her. I have picketed a couple of events where she's spoken. But instead of talking about a negative force, let's talk about Alice Paul, 92, who's waited 50 years for passage. I want them to pass that amendment before she dies."

Success to Ms. Lems would mean not having to buy one-way bus tickets.

"The trip has been quite amicable. The bus people have been nice to deal with. And it's certainly inexpensive."

There's Temptation

She's tempted to find someone to produce her record. Courting a major company would be beneficial as far as distribution.

"It's pretty unlikely though. I think a big company would want to censor my work. Now I have the best of all possible worlds. I don't want the superstar treatment. I don't want to be isolated from the audience. Meeting people and making friends is the whole point. The ensuing dialogue is the bonus."

"I'm pretty optimistic about where I am. Even when we're playing in a bar and we keep getting requests for Captain and Tennille or Donny and Marie music. I'm really just beginning. This is the first step."



Kristin Lems rides the bus, travels the country making music to make a change.

Her concert in Salt Lake City was the bright spot of trip to the West Coast.

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Concerns Voiced

By ALICE PAULSEN
Press Gazette Staff Writer

How does a politically aware, opinionated young woman voice her concerns? If she's Kristin Lems, she uses music to present her messages.

A songwriter and singer from Champaign, Ill., Kristin has a number of commitments. Among them are feminism, environmental issues and anti-imperialism.

"I have boundless amounts of hope, but I don't think I am blind to the sad state of affairs we are in," she says. "I try to distill all my anger and frustration at the inequalities in the world and turn them in to entertaining and educational songs."

Kristin was a guest artist Friday at the 1977 Women's Festival of the Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Her musical roots and roots in feminism are of equal importance, she says. When she was 7 Kristin's parents were divorced, an event which greatly influenced her career. "I basically grew up in a matriarchal society with my sister and my mother. It taught me from a very early age that women can be self-reliant. Having a man living with you is not necessary for survival."

Kristin was introduced to social action movements early. Her mother, a concert pianist, was active in the civil rights movement. As a teenager Kristin was active in the antiwar movement. She learned the music of the movements through sing-alongs and folks songs.

Although she started playing guitar in the late '60s, Kristin didn't play her music until two or three years later "when I learned I could use my poetry instincts in a musical format," she says.

Kristin has kept journals for 12 years and has always been interested in creative writing and poetry. She won numerous poetry awards and has had poems published. Songwriting and singing provide Kristin with a versatile career, combining the creative and performing arts.

As editor of "Student Advocate," Kristin still writes. She started the alternative student newspaper two years ago. "I have a lot of things that I wanted to express that I felt weren't being heard and were important," she says. Publisher of the monthly newspaper is Tim Year, her companion and bass player in her band.

Kristin has written about 100 songs, many of them based on a specific event or injustice. She addresses her songs to important issues and keeps up on news and current events for ideas. Many are satirical.

Among her songs are "Ballad of the ERA," a rallying

point for women's groups; "Farmer," about a woman farmer who is deprived of her property when her husband dies, and "It's the Real Thing," a satire on the Coca-Cola tune.

Two months ago Kristin released her first single, "Mammary Glands" and "Women Walk More Determined." She wrote the songs and produced the record.

Kristin says the record has been well-received in Champaign-Urbana "and that has to say something about the song's impact. One is a satire on the American breast fetish and the other is a feminist anthem."

Kristin says criticisms against her songs stem from two sources. Most criticism comes from those who don't like her message, who consider her songs too explicit or don't like the combination of political messages and music. Some consider her music too primitive, she says.

Criticism also comes from some women involved in the separatist aspect of the women's movement. They feel a woman performer should not have male back-up musicians. "I know I'm serving the cause of women's freedom," says Kristin. "Men need to change as much as women and I want men to hear what I'm singing."

Twenty-six-year-old Kristin has always been willing to play for benefits, fund-raisers and rallies for exposure. She has been a fulltime, self-supporting professional singer for 2½ years and makes 15 to 20

appearances a month.

"Being a singer is extremely difficult. It's irregular and the overhead is tremendous. It's a hand in mouth existence, partly because once I am involved in political struggles a lot of groups I believe in don't have money to pay. I hate to turn them down because what they are doing is important to me and I want to make my contribution."

After receiving a degree in English and writing from the University of Michigan in 1972, Kristin taught English at a university in Iran. She then was a research assistant in the graduate program at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She received a master's degree in Middle Eastern studies in Persian in 1975.

Kristin eventually hopes to release a full-length record of her songs. Her single was released on her own label, "Carolsister" (Carol's daughter). "It's a cute name but behind it is the idea that we should give credit to our female ancestors," she explains.

She also plans to publish a songbook of her materials and is confident that she will be successful as a songwriter.

"I wouldn't trade any riches in the world for what I am doing now," Kristin says. "This is extremely personally gratifying. So many of the things which mean a lot to me are being used... my creative impulses are being expressed. I am being heard, my social activities, my love of music and my need to meet people and be loved are having outlets."



Songwriter Kristin Lems Sings
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THE DECATUR REVIEW

Lyrics Are The Focus For Singer

"Musicians have a responsibility to more than just their art — they have a responsibility to people too."

With energy sparking from bright eyes and soft spoken voice, musician Kristin Lems hardly need explain where her sense of responsibility is.

Her work speaks for itself.

"My music is about women taking control of their lives — challenging sexist institutions, feeling proud of what they are, and sharing what they're learning from other women."

Appropriately, Kristin will kick off the Women's Day Celebration at 8 p.m. Aug. 26 with a free concert in Central Park.

Sponsored by NOW (National Organization for Women), the celebration marks the 57th anniversary of the 19th amendment and women's right to vote. Other area women's groups will participate also.

The free exhibits, demonstrations and events will continue from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 27 in Central Park.

Performance Places

"I perform at a range of places, from rallies to concerts to classrooms to parties . . . wherever there is work," Kristin continues.

The 26-year-old Urbana resident, who has a teaching certificate in English as well as a masters degree in Mideastern studies, considers herself a full-time musician.

"I've supported myself with music for the last two and one half years," she says. She



Kristin Lems

plays guitar as well as piano.

"I originally wanted to be a writer . . . of poetry and essays.

"But now I find the nicest poems have melody.

"My primary focus is lyrics," she says, speaking intently. "To me a song that doesn't have a cogent narrative or verbal construction is not worth singing."

Kristin has cut two 45 rpm discs this year on her own label — Carolsdatter Productions — with thoughts on gearing up for a full-length album.

Her mother's name is Carol, she says, explaining the label, while datter is a Scandinavian word for daughter.

She wants to start a matriliney — where family names are handed down from mother to daughter — she quips, sounding serious.

Her Songs

"The four songs on the records are my own compositions," she says. The "Ballad of the ERA" and "Mammary Glands" are two of her more well known songs.

Not all the songs she performs in concert are feminist, she's quick to point out. Contemporary and acoustic are good ways to describe her performances.

"I get ideas from daily news, conversations with people and the little ironies and metaphors that talking to people brings forth," she says of her compositions.

She speaks Persian fluently — she taught for a year in Iran — as well as some Hebrew, French and Spanish, and she lets those languages reflect themselves in her work.

Kristin is still involved with the National Women's Music Festival held in Champaign Urbana that she originated several years ago, as well as with certain social issues she declined to discuss.

Next Friday night's appearance will be her first public performance in Decatur.

"The songs on that day will almost all be on women's equality," she comments, "because that is what I hold dearest."

Panel Series On Cancer Scheduled

Pro-ERA march, rally set Saturday

By Bonnie Johnston
Of The Southern Illinoisan

Just as women did more than half a century ago, Southern Illinois women plan to march for their rights.

And Chris Ervin is not going to let her wheelchair prevent her from joining the marchers.

Because of, rather than in spite of a handicap that confines her to a wheelchair, the 23-year-old woman intends to show her support for the Equal Rights Amendment by wheeling along the 10-mile walk-a-thon route through Carbondale on Saturday.

Ms. Ervin says she has been discriminated against because of her disability, and if the ERA is passed, "it's one less battle I have to fight."

The Carbondale Women's Center, where Ms. Ervin has volunteered her time since March, and the recently formed Shawnee National Organization for Women are sponsoring the march to



Kristin Lems

coincide with the 55th anniversary of the passage of the women's right to vote.

The 10-mile walk will start with registration at 10 a.m. at the west end of the University Mall at Carbondale. It will conclude with a rally at 2 p.m. in the free speech area near Susan B. Anthony Hall on the campus of Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

Guest speakers at the rally will include Naomi Ross, president of Illinois NOW, and Doris Turner, coordinator of ERA in Illinois.

Joyce Webb, a member of the Carbondale Women's Center board, and Charlotte West, director of women's athletics at SIU-C and president of the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics For Women, also will talk at the public rally.

Following the rally the Women's Center will hold an open house and an auction of men's baked goods. The auction will begin at 4 p.m. at the center located at 408 W. Freeman St., Carbondale.

Feminist singer and song writer Kristin Lems will entertain at a concert and party to begin at 8 p.m. that night at the New Life Center, 913 S. Illinois Ave., Carbondale. Tim Vear will accompany her.

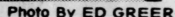
Admission to the concert and party is \$1 per person. A cash bar will be open there.

Sponsors of the march are seeking walkers and persons are being sought to pledge donations for each mile walked. Volunteers also are needed to help walkers at various checkpoints along the walk-a-thon route.

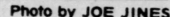
Proceeds from the day's activities will go to support passage of ERA.

For more information about the celebration or to volunteer services men and women should call 549-2324.





Feminist singer and song writer Kristin Lems (left) of Urbana entertained at the New Life Center, 913 S. Illinois Ave. in Carbondale Saturday night to raise money for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. The concert followed a rally, a men's bake sale, and a 10-mile walk (right) in which walkers sought pledged donations to raise money for the support of ERA. The day's events were organized by the Shawnee National Organization for Women and the Carbondale Women's Center in connection with the 58th anniversary of ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting suffrage to women.





Ms. Lems, Vear

Team to sing for ERA ratification

Feminist singer-songwriter Kristin Lems and her partner, Tim Vear, will appear in concert at 8 p.m. Saturday at Newman Center in Normal.

The concert is sponsored by the Illinois State University Equal Rights Amendment Ratification Project.

The duo have given concerts across the United States, including the 1979 National Women's Music Festival. Ms. Lems recently released her first album, "Oh Mama," on her own record label, "Carolsdatter."

There is a fee for the concert. Proceeds will be used for ratification of ERA in Illinois.

Gloria Steinem to Lead N.J NOW's ERA Walk in Atlantic City

Internationally known feminist writer and "Ms. Magazine" editor Gloria Steinem will join members of the New Jersey National Organization for Women and supporters of the Equal Rights Amendment at a Walkathon in Atlantic City on Sunday. Walkers will follow a route along the Boardwalk beginning at New Jersey ave.

A kick-off rally will be held at the starting point at 9:30 a.m.

Speakers will include Georgia Harris Kampf of Mountainside, coordinator of women's activities, Region 9, United Auto Workers; Robbie Cagnina of East Orange, president, women's affirmative action committee, Industrial Union Council, AFL-CIO, and Clara Allen, director of the State Division on Women in Trenton.

Music will be provided by Kristin Lems of Urbana, Ill., feminist

singer and songwriter who recently released the album "Oh Mama!" Kristin is well known for her song, "The Ballad of the ERA."

At the conclusion of the walk, marchers will be addressed by Ms. Steinem, a feminist whose writing and speeches have attracted many committed activists to rally to the support of the Equal Rights Amendment. Ms. Stein-

em's recent talk at the annual conference of the American Psychiatric Association in San Francisco resulted in the group endorsing the ERA and voting a substantial financial contribution to the ERA ratification fund.

Three to 500 walkers are expected to participate. They will be joined by state and federal legislators and other supporters. Each person will be sponsored by individuals or companies who have pledged a contribution to NOW's ERA ratification fund for each mile completed by the walker. The route is 10 miles long.

Walk '80 coordinator Ann Baker of Roosevelt said NOW expects to raise \$30,000 for the NOW ERA ratification fund from this event.

The New Jersey NOW Walkathon is part of a nationwide commemoration of Women's Equality Day sponsored by NOW to support its national ERA ratification campaign. NOW walkathons are scheduled in cities and towns in 50 states.

Aug. 26 is the 60th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment which granted women's suffrage and it has been declared Women's Equality Day by every president since 1974.

This is the fourth year the National Organization for Women has held nationwide walkathons.

ERA supporters wishing to contribute or to join Walk '80 should call the NOW information offices at (609) 655-8224 or (201) 761-4479.

Dealing With Feelings

By WILLIAM A. MILLER, Jr., Ph.D.



Poet Alice McGill

NOW picnic Sunday to benefit feminists

MUSICIAN KRISTIN Lems and poet Alice McGill will perform at a feminist picnic scheduled at 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 24, at the Stoney Run Friends' Meeting House, 5114 North Charles street.

The picnic, sponsored by the local chapter of the National Organization for Women, will celebrate the anniversary of the constitutional amendment allowing women to vote and will raise money for the national drive to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

Tickets, available from the 31st Street Bookstore and Gordon's Books in the Rotunda, are \$5 for adults and \$1 for those aged 12 to 18. Admission is free for children under 12.

If it rains, the picnic will relocate in the Lovely Lane Museum, 2209 St. Paul street.

Muncie Performance Scheduled

Women's Movement Gets a Singer's Point of View

By SHERITA CAMPBELL

For The Muncie Star

Kristin Lems, author of 100 songs, writes and sings about the womens movement.

Lems, not embarrassed about feminism, says "What I sing about isn't men-hating, but people loving." She and her accompanist, Tim Vear, recorded and sung *The Ballad of the ERA* at feminist rallies, and included it on her first album.

Kristin Lems will be in concert in the Pittenger Student Center Ballroom, at 8 p.m. March 26. Tickets are \$5. The concert is sponsored by Muncie-Delaware chapter of National Organization for Women.

Lems organized the *National Woman in Music Festival* in 1974 on the University of Illinois campus. She marched in Chicago in 1965 with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in what became her introduction to activism, freedom songs and a music career.

Her knowledge of the oil situation and the Arabs was, in part, acquired while still a student. She earned a master's degree in Asian studies, and has worked to educate people in Middle East politics.

She traveled to Jerusalem, learned Hebrew, and then sang and wrote ethnic songs there. When she returned to America she taught Hebrew songs in a Jewish Sunday school and was the only non-Jew in the school.

She taught a year in Iran and sung with a Persian rock and roll band, performing hit Persian rock songs.

Still a part-time student, she shares a house with six people in Urbana, Ill., and is the president of her own record company, Carolsdatter Productions, named in part for her mother. The label put out her first LP and two single releases. Her first album, *Oh Mama*, sold over 3,000 copies. She is working on a second album called *In the Out Door*.



Kristin Lems, feminist singer and songwriter, will perform in Muncie March 26 in Emens Auditorium. Her appearance is sponsored by the Muncie chapter of National Organization for Women.

ERA supporters make last stand

by Jill Johnson
Chronicle staff

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which opposes the Equal Rights Amendment, was the target of protests by those in favor of the amendment Saturday, during Utah's last rally before the June 30 ratification deadline.

According to Dr. Patti Reagan, a University professor and moderator of the demonstration which began at Capitol Hill and ended at Temple Square, it was not the protesters' intention to picket the Mormons for their religious beliefs, but rather their political ideologies.

"The Mormon Church is the major stumbling block toward the passage of the ERA," Reagan said. "If the Church supported the amendment, four states would ratify it immediately."

Reagan said the rally gave Utahns, both Mormon and non-Mormon men and women, a final opportunity to stand up and be counted as a supporter of equal rights under the law.

Further, the rally, which was publicized nationally, and attended by many out-of-staters, including *General Hospital* actress Robin Mattson; Barbara Rowe, an actress from Chicago who performs a monologue as Susan B.

Anthony; and Illinois feminist musician, Kristin Lems, attempted to enlighten the public of the church's influence in the unsuccessful ratification by four states—Florida, Illinois, Nevada and Utah.

Reagan remembered how disillusioned she was in 1977, when approximately 13,000 Mormon women attended the Utah International Women's Year Conference to vote against every resolution the conference was preparing for possible presentation to Congress.

"The women were dutifully responding to the church's calling and voting against many issues they were totally ignorant of, simply because they were instructed to do so," Reagan said.

According to Reagan, it is unlikely the amendment will receive the three states' ratification it needs before the deadline. She attributes its failure to legislators who are being influenced by right wing opposition, such as the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan and the Mormon Church, since the majority of Americans are in favor of its passage.

However, Reagan said the supporters are as determined to see the amendment succeed as the rightists are to see it defeated, and will introduce it again to Congress July 1 to begin again the ratification process first begun 59 years ago.



Kristin Lems

Feminist to sing Friday concert

Kristin Lems, feminist folk singer and songwriter, will perform at 7 p.m. Friday in Miller Park pavilion.

The concert will be a benefit for the Bloomington-Normal newspaper, the Post-Amerikan.

Ms. Lems, a graduate student at the University of Illinois, has recorded three albums.

Her best-known song is probably "Farmer." Its lyrics, "I am a farmer, been one all my life. Call me a farmer, not a farmer's wife," were written as a protest against inheritance tax laws that sometimes force widows to sell their farmland to pay death duties.

Appearing with the singer at the Friday concert will be musicians Frank Shepke, Bloomington, and Laurie Haag, Normal. Ms. Haag played bass fiddle on two of Ms. Lems' albums.

Tickets for the concert will be available at the door.

City/suburbs

Reykjavik's got nothing on us, Chicago informs world leaders

By Ann Marie Lipinski

Hoping to change Chicago's reputation from Beirut by the Lake to Reykjavik by the Lake, two aldermen and several political activists sent invitations Monday to President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev asking them to hold their next summit meeting in Chicago.

The letters, dispatched to the White House and the Soviet consulate in New York City, cite Chicago

as the scene of the first nuclear reaction and birthplace of the nuclear age. Diplomats all, the proponents declined mention of Chicago's cottage industry in political explosives.

"It should be known that Chicago is a town that knows how to promote peace," said Ald. Ed Smith [28th] who, it should also be known, had just emerged from a Chicago City Council meeting in which several of his colleagues had done their usual best to defy such

an image.

"I don't think Chicago is as bad and divided as people say it is," added Ald. Danny Davis [29th], the other aldermanic signatory to the invitations. "Mr. Reagan and Gorbachev could get rooms overlooking the lake and have a good time."

The invitations were the idea of Randall Kryn, chairman of the 7th Congressional Republican Council, who had noted that the two world leaders agreed to hold a second

summit meeting in the United States but had been unable to agree on a location. Figuring the two could "save face if a third party stepped in," Kryn organized a group of six supporters to promote Chicago as a summit site.

Kristin Lems, a feminist songwriter who is among the six supporters, said the city's reputation for political disagreement only enhances the attraction of Chicago.

"I don't think Chicago would be

a very tranquil backdrop for the meeting, but it certainly would be a representative backdrop," Lems said. "It is a very appropriate place to talk about disagreement."

"I would only hope that our city's spokespeople would act responsibly when the television cameras went on. I also hope that if they accept the invitation that the summit doesn't take place during our mayoral election. If anything could upstage an international summit, that

could."

Supporter James Bevel, who worked and organized many peace marches for Martin Luther King, added that a successful summit between Reagan and Gorbachev in Chicago might set an example for Mayor Harold Washington and Ald. Edward Vrdolyak [10th].

"All four of those guys need to work on their brother relationship, if you know what I mean," Bevel said.

ArtsWeek



Chicago Arts

By Charles Osgood

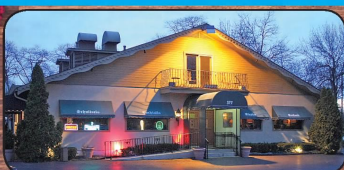
Folk singer and songwriter Kristin Lems celebrates the release of her first CD, "Upbeat!," at the Strange Brew Cafe and Art Gallery, 1147 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Sunday from 4 to 6 p.m. She will be joined by her mother, Carol Lems-Dworkin, on harpsichord.



Photo for the Tribune by Chris Sweda

Drawing history: Peggy Lipschutz (left) turns Kristin Lems' vocals into chalkboard sketches during the Second Women's Labor History Gala, recognizing 150 years of working women's struggles for equal rights.

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NEWS



MARK SWANSON/SWANSON MEDIA

Karl the guinea fowl was found wandering in Evanston.

Fowl inspires folk song

BY GREG TROTTER
 Chicago Tribune

A semiwild guinea fowl that won the hearts of some Evanston residents last year will soon make his musical debut.

Karl the guinea fowl became a local celebrity of sorts — think Vince Vaughn but louder and nimbler — after he was discovered roaming the streets of Evanston in poor health last May. Some residents of the Brummel Street neighborhood took him in, nursed him back to health and named him Karl.

Once he regained health, Karl was known for squawking from his roost before dawn and stopping traffic as he strutted down the street.

Kristin Lems, a folk singer and songwriter who lives in the Evanston neighborhood, decided to honor the bird's unusual legacy in song. "Carl the Guinea Hen" is one of 13 songs on her album, "You, Me and All of the Above," which is due out in July.

Lems calls it her "Puff the Magic Dragon" song," in reference to the popular children's song made famous by Peter, Paul and

Mary in the early 1960s. It's the only children's song on Lems' seventh album.

Lems, 64, acknowledged she took some creative liberties. Karl's name was spelled with a 'K,' for example, by the Brummel Street resident who found him. And Karl is a fowl, a male bird — not a hen.

But Lems said she needed the word "hen" in order to rhyme with "pen" and "again."

Guinea fowls, which resemble wild turkeys, are sometimes kept as a form of pest control in more rural areas, experts say, not in places like Evanston.

Indeed, Karl had his detractors. In past interviews with the Tribune, some neighbors complained of his pre-dawn "screeching cackle." Evanston officials confirmed that animal control officers responded twice but couldn't snare the elusive bird.

With winter looming, a few of Karl's staunchest supporters managed to catch him and transport him to a farm near Mahomet in central Illinois in November.

Julie Davis, whose family owns the farm, said he's thriving. Karl is one of seven

guinea fowls, including five brought to Davis from the Chicago area since last fall, she said.

At first, Davis worried about how Karl would get along with another male, Squiggy. But Karl and Squiggy have developed a "bronnance," Davis said, and they "chest bump" in the morning as a matter of routine.

As for the song, Davis started laughing.

"Honestly, I'm a farm girl. It just cracks me up that these people from Chicago who probably would never have met have gotten so excited about a guinea," said Davis, 55. "I think it's great."

And that's exactly the point that Lems, who said she's considering using a recording of the bird on the song, and other Brummel Street neighbors emphasize when talking about their feathered friend.

"I think he brought a lot of people together who otherwise might have just passed each other by," said Saul Lieberman, 44, a photographer who lives on Brummel.

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MUSIC

Evanston folk singer records her first album in a decade

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Pioneer Press

Evanston singer-songwriter Kristin Lems can touch your heart or make you laugh. She does both on her seventh full-length album of original songs, "You, Me, and All of the Above." A CD release party will take place on Aug. 16 at the Old Town School of Folk Music.

The silken-voiced folk singer recorded her first CD in a decade because the National Women's Music Festival, which she founded when she was a student at the University of Illinois, was celebrating its 40th anniversary.

"Last fall, they invited me to open and close the festival," Lems related. "My daughter said, 'Aren't you going to have new product there?'"

In addition to performing at the festival, Lems was the first recipient of the Women in the Arts Kristin Lems Social Change Through Music Award, which was created in her honor.

You can understand why that lifelong activist deserves that award by listening to "The Heart of a Woman," on the CD.

"I wrote it in Chile and I debuted it in Chile, when I was there in 2012, for Chilean English teachers I was teaching," Lems related. It tells the role played by the wives in the rescue of the 33 miners trapped for 69 days in the Copiapo mine in Chile.

"They wouldn't leave. They all camped out, it became Camp Hope and the international press became interested," Lems explained.

On the lighter side, there's an ode to "Carl the Guinea Hen," which Lems laughingly refers to as "The most famous guinea fowl in the universe." It tells of



KRISTIN LEMS PHOTO

Evanston singer-songwriter Kristin Lems has a CD release party Aug. 16 at Old Town School of Folk Music.

CD Release Party for 'You, Me, and All of the Above' by Kristin Lems

When: 7 p.m. Aug. 16
Where: Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago
Tickets: \$12; \$11 members
Contact: 773-728-6000; www.oldtownschool.org; www.kristinlems.com

Karl's appearance in an Evanston park and how neighbors fed and rescued him.

The album includes some new songs as well as some older ones. "The oldest was written in 1986 for the Chicago Song Contest when Harold Washington was mayor," Lems said. She received a letter from the mayor praising "Chicago I Will," but he decided not to declare a winner. She often plays the song but this is the first time it has been recorded.

"There's a very big production of it with nine backup singers from a Broadway show, and arranged by Susan Draus, who is musical director for Carole King's 'Beautiful' on Broadway," Lems said.

The album was produced by Lems' close friend Niles native Lynn Keller, a renowned bass player, who has performed for Broadway shows. "She's been on a hundred albums as a bass player," Lems noted. "She went to the U of I with me. We were in a women's band together."

Keller assembled some top musicians for the album, including legendary guitarist Tim Morey and Vance Okraszewski, drummer for "Mamma Mia."

Lems, who is a professor at National Louis University, admitted it was a little difficult to hand over full decision-making to Keller but it was a good thing. The singer/songwriter laughingly declared, "She was always right."