## Womanews

# Aging well is team's forte

After nearly two decades, the 11 founders of the Boston Women's -Health Book Collective are still meeting, writing and talking about women and their bodies. Much has changed since the first informal gatherings in 1969 that haunched a 75-cent booklet about women's health, the precursor of the widely read "Our Bodies, Ourselves," published in 1973.

The landmark book encouraged women to talk openly about menstruation, sex and childbirth and options to routine medical treatments. Several updated versions and some three million copies later, it still has a wide audience here and abroad, where it is sold in 13 languages. Now the collective hopes its latest effort, "Ourselves, Growing Older: Women Aging with Knowledge and "Power" (Simon and Schuster, \$15.95), will be an informative, motivating resource for women over 40. The collective is busier than ever. said Esther Rome, 42, a founding member. The nonprofit corporation -has an annual budget of \$250,000. The original 11 members, joined by two long-time staff members, make policy decisions by consensus. Dayto-day operations are handled by five members and a staff of three. Among the collective's projects are the New England Coalition Against Surrogacy and a project on Women and Disability. Nationally the collective helped start the National Women's Health Network and the Endometriosis Association. The collective's Women's Health Information Center weekly answers some 200 inquiries about such topics as hysterectomics, fibroids,



From "Ourselves, Growing Older," a handbook for women on aging.

#### tampons and AIDS.

Although the collective downplays the individual achievements of its members, their full-time professions are diverse, Rome said. There are teachers, a social worker, a mental health therapist and craft store owner. (investments, pensions, housing alternatives, medical expenses) and the physical (urinary incontinence, cancer, osteoporsis).

Two of the most pressing issues facing aging baby boomers are affordable housing and at-home medical care, said coauthor Diana Laskin Siegal, founder of several public health programs, including the Cancer Information Service. The book offers a 62-page list of resources, including public agencies, self-help organizations, books on aging, nutrition and health and available audiovisual materials. 'Everyone says they want to be healthy in their old age," Doress said. "But when you think about staying healthy, you have to think about housing, care-giving, relationships and all those things that make a person feel worthwhile." For information: Boston Women's Health Information Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown, Mass. 02172; 617-924-0271.

### Bears sport new look for '88

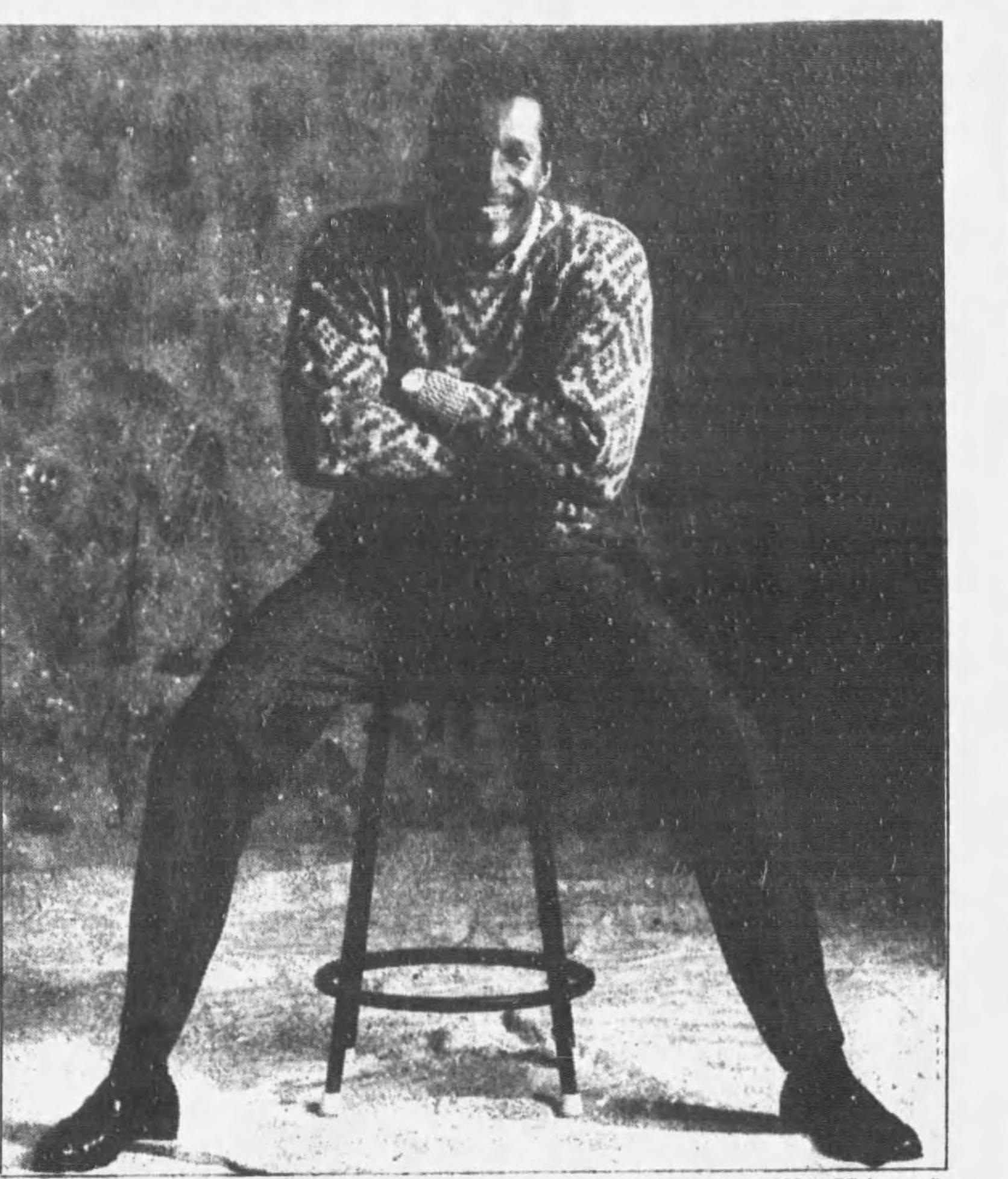
When Kathe Clements approached members of the Bears football team with an out-of-the-ordinary idea for a calendar, the response was so enthusistic that she ended up with 14 months of pinups.

"What we wanted badly was to break them out of their typical posing. And by and large they were all real willing to be there and to do what we wanted," Clements said.

The "Bear But Not Naked" calendar does show something different. For instance, January features Willie Gault in a tuxedo shirt and black cuff links leaning on black leather and gazing dreamily into the distance.

Then there's May-Gary Fencik in paisley suspenders, a lilac striped shirt and blue tie with pink and gray squares, waving and looking positively mischievous.

June's Jim McMahon, dressed in black and slate gray, perches in a fetal position on a stool. Otis Wilson was unfazed his new look. "I've been on lots of calendars I'm on lots of walls," he said at recent party to unveil the calendar. The intent of the calendar, according to Clements, is to bring fans an off-the-field impression of their grid heros in the pictures, taken by former Playboy associate photography editor Bill Arsenault. The idea came from Clements, 33, a sports agent turned sports promoter, who produced it in cooperation with Bear Dave Duerson. Clements produced a similar calendar for the Canadian Football League, where her husband, Tom, is a football player.



"Most of us are married, some are single or divorced and many of us have children, from toddlers to college age."

The collective has been successful, she said, because members research topics and pursue projects of particular interest to them.

Founding member Paula Brown Doress, 49, proposed the idea for "Ourselves, Growing Older," which she calls a "health and living handbook for, by and about, middle- and older aged women."

Chapters deal frankly with problems older women face, including the emotional (death and dying, relationships and sexuality, midlife childbearing), the practical

Darlene Gavron

She credits her interest in sports and unusual career to a "very athletCopyright @ 1987 by Bill Arsenault

Chicago Bear Otis Wilson poses for the February slot in a calendar conceived by Kathe Clements, a sports agent turned promoter.

ic father" with three daughters. "We are all tomboys," she said. "We all played football on the girls' team" at St. Mary's of Notre Dame College."

The calendar's suggested retail price is \$7.95.

Nina Burleigh



### **Stupid' book** brings relief

Finally. There's comic relief for women besieged by the dizzying stream of psychobabble advice books: how to love—but not too much; how to avoid foolish mate choices; how to love men who hate women; how to cope when he won't change, and, after all that, how to make him stay.

The antidote: "Smart Women Stupid Books," [Price Stern Sloan, \$4.95], a parody advising women to "stop reading and learn to love losers."

borative effort of Lisa Ann Marsoli, a children's book author, and Mel Green, a former "Saturday Night Live" writer and author of "Dudes: The Cult of Cool."

Inspiration for their book sprang from the glut of self-help tomes.

"We felt we were totally unqualified, so we decided we should write one, too," explained Green.

"Besides we saw the [sales] numbers for those books, and we thought we could make a lot of money."

Renumeration aside, Marsoli and Green believed the subject was ripe for lampooning. The result is 10 chapters of illumination, such as "The Convenient Man—Low Maintenance Relationships for the Woman on the Go," "Breaking the Rules—Dating the Deranged" and "Our Bodies/Our Cells—Finding the Snooze Alarm on Your Biological Clock."

In real life, Marsoli, 29, is married, happily, he said, to an Australianborn cable television game and talk show host. Green, 34, is single, hoping to meet a woman who heeds the book's advice, he said. Leigh Behrens

### At-home moms seek others

Before women entered the workforce en masse, mothers were surrounded by neighbors and friends with whom to share ideas and exchange information.

These days women who opt not to return to their jobs usually boast the distinction of being the only mom at home on their block.

So women in many parts of the U.S., who are making the transition to full-time motherhood, are to banding together in support and advocacy groups, such as the suburban Chicago-based Du Page Formerly Employed Mothers at Loose Ends (FEMALE). "I sat around feeling depressed, resentful and guilty for three months before I took matters into my own hands," says FEMALE's founder, Joanne Brundage, 35, a former postal carrier.

The Elmhurst resident, who has been at home for 17 months, placed ads in local newspapers seeking others in the same situation. She received more than 60 phone calls from Chicago-area women and discovered "misery loves company. It helps alleviate the situation once you talk to others in the same position." Because so many working women

Because so many working women don't know what to expect when they become full-time mothers, FEMALE has become a resource for those who want to separate fact from fiction, she says of the 4month-old group which meets two



Illustration by Tom Bachtell

evenings a month.

my house would be sparkling and the meals wonderful. But you don't turn into June Cleaver when you have children to care for."

Coping with changing relationships was a big problem, she says. "In dealing with my co-workers and employed friends, one day you're considered a peer, the next day a mindless housewife who is only concerned with diapers and dishwater."

According to Brundage, a common worry is how to stay intellectually active. Meeting topics have included book discussions, parenting styles and paths to nonpaid employement.

FEMALE's next meeting is 7:30 p.m. Jan. 5 at the Lombard YWCA, 26 W. St. Charles Rd., Lombard. For information: 279-8862. Edie Gibson

"I and many of the women had illusions about being at home that were totally unlike reality. I thought

## It's a statistical trend: Older women, younger men

#### By Lori Durso

t's billed as "a good-news book about women and relationships." Judging by scores of other works on the pop-psychology front, "Loving a Younger Man" (Contemporary Books, \$17.95) comes just in time.

Women in love have been in trouble. They have been reckoning with "Men Who Can't Love" and "Men Who Hate Women and the Women Who Love Them." They have seen themselves as "Women Who Love Too Much," "Women Who Can't Say No---And the Men Who Control Them" and "Women Men Love, Women Men Leave."

But some women do seem to be falling in love and making it work. While each situation is unique, author Victoria Houston said, these women are increasingly likely to have one thing in common: They are falling in love with younger men.

"Women are exercising their right to choose the men they love from a marriage pool of older and younger men—a pool that is identical, age-wise, to the one our male peers have always had the freedom to choose from," Houston wrote. Continuation of the trend should help alleviate the problems of older women living alone. In 1985, 79 percent of men aged 65 to 74 were married, while 49 percent of the women that age were married. The difference is greater for people over 75: In 1985, 67 percent of the men were married, compared to 23 percent of the women.

But old prejudices die hard. Society still snickers at the thought of an older woman marrying a younger man.

Houston, 42, attacked these stereotypes by describing her own courtship and marriage to a man nine years her junior, and by interviewing older woman/younger man couples. The oldest, Marie, 92, and George, 77, met and married at ages 65 and 50. One woman was 23 years older than her mate.

"The most difficult thing for women is to decide to go out with younger men," Houston said in an interview. The book's depiction of successful older woman/younger man relationships, she said, is intended "to get [women] over that initial hurdle and to get them to realize they're not alone."

## Easy does it What do you do when you feel overwhelmed at work?

Open for discussion

#### By Carol Kleiman

even laughing a lot—are some of the recommended antidotes for a tough day at the office.

Many women who have to cope with the demands of a hard job try to find time early in the morning, during the lunch hour or after work to engage in aerobics, swim, run, play tennis or just have fun. But what happens when things get to be too much during the work day itself? One stereotype has women "handling" difficult situations by screaming, throwing things, yelling or crying.

The latter—the stigma of crying—long has haunted women at work. Most management experts warn against crying because observers focus on the tears and not the problem. However, Jeanne M. Plas, an associate professor of psychology at Vanderbilt University, said "crying is a normal way for women to show frustration. We'd pay a terrible price if we didn't cry." tomers are always right, and if they're not right, at least they always should be satisfied. People pay a price to ride in a limo and certain expectations must be met: That's how the company and the drivers make money."

She said, "fortunately, I work better under pressure. Whenever there's a crisis, that's when I'm the coolest."

It's after things have calmed down that she gets tense.

"I pace like a tiger after the crisis is over," McFarlane said. "I walk and walk. It takes the tension out of my body. I have a tiny office and I take four steps in each direction."

It works. "I have a lot of perspective and I don't take things personally. That has to be learned. It's taken a lot of practice. That doesn't mean I don't express my feelings, because I do. I'm not nasty but I am firm."



"I don't list or sell anymore---I'm mostly involved in administration and management," said Monterroso, who is vice president of the Chamber of Commerce of Albany Park and a director of Realty Title Co. "When I did selling and had worked hard on a deal that didn't go through, it was a very emotional time. She said she sees no difference in reactions of women and men. "I'd sometimes cry in private but never in public. Losing is hard, but what I've learned is that yesterday is history." "If you exercise, eat the right foods and manage your time-you can handle anything. When you put too much of your time and energy into your work and ignore your personal and family life, office problems seem overwhelming," said Monterroso, who is married with a 16-year-old daughter. When the office becomes chaotic "with people arguing and phones ringing: Do what I do: Don't get upset. Tackle one thing at a time and take charge."

Joan McFarlane (above): "I pace like a tiger after the crisis."

Amalia L. Monterroso: "Tackle one thing at a time."

brochures and special supplements, plans conferences and helps develop policy and strategy. "Things sometimes get difficult,"

said Carr, who as a member of the

Women who feel the price of crying is too high have other solutions.

#### Joan McFarlane

Age 54, administrative assistant, O'Hare-Midway Limousine Service, Wheeling

"I have two phones and they're always ringing," said McFarlane, who as assistant to the company president is in charge of customer service in this intensely service-oriented and competitive business. "People lose things. They want to check reservations. Sometimes they have complaints. I also handle accounting and do whatever the president needs done."

McFarlane said what helps keep her calm is that she is "very service-oriented. I've been in business over 35 years. I've been around long enough to believe that cusWhile women may be accused of being hysterical, "I don't think they're any different from men. Most of the other women who work here are very young and I think they're fine in the way they handle themselves."

McFarlane believes there's nothing wrong with crying. "I've seen some women in tears and I don't view them as unprofessional."

#### Amalia L. Monterroso

Age 36, owner, Century 21 Agmont Real Estate

"I handle stress better as the years go by," said Monterroso, who went into real estate seven years ago and became owner of her own firm in 1983. "Maybe it's maturity; maybe it's confidence in myself."

A graduate and board member of Northeastern Illinois University, Monterroso supervises a staff of 12 salespersons and three office workers in the firm, which has a sales volume of \$20 million.

#### Marylea B. Carr

Age 42, special projects coordinator, Sherman Hospital, Elgin

Because of the current climate of "competitiveness of health care" there are extra pressures in the field today, said Carr, who writes hospital's public relations department also is in charge of "whatever comes along."

Carr said she's learned to "live one day at a time and handle problems that are my problems, that I can do something about.

"Often, several things are going at the same time. I act instead of react. And it works."

"I think it's okay to cry, but I don't believe yelling is a solution for anything," she said. "You need to step back from your anger, give it some thought, figure out where it's coming from and find a solution that's workable."

The better you feel about yourself, Carr said, the easier it is to deal with other people. "When there's a stack of work that looks overwhelming or if people are too demanding, I sometimes take a walk to put my priorities in order."

The hospital's working atmosphere, Carr said, "allows me the freedom to have a whole range of emotions—and still feel accepted."

Send comments and ideas for future questions to Carol Kleiman, The Chicago Tribune, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

"Older woman/younger man relationships reflect women's new willingness to apply to their personal lives the attitudes and selfconfidence they have learned from making it in the workplace."

Traditionally, women were expected to date and marry men their age or older. Men have been free to marry women many years younger. Now more women than ever are living with and marrying younger men.

Houston cited a National Center for Health Statistics analysis of 2 million weddings in 1983 that found that more than 30 percent of women over 45 married younger men and nearly 40 percent of women 35 to 44 married younger men.

A 1985 Census Bureau poll of 255,000 women age 35 to 44 found that 32 percent were living with younger men, up from 18 percent in 1980. Of 199,000 women 45 to 64 years old, 23 percent were living with younger men. What is so great about loving a younger man? The most important factors Houston identified in older woman/younger man relationships are their inherent compatibility and the equal roles of the partners.

Many couples met through their jobs or careers, and all the women were self-supporting. In most cases finances and decisions about spending are split 50-50.

"One of the factors in [traditional] older man/younger woman relationships is that he's supposed to dominate, he's got the money, he's in charge," Houston said. "Older woman/younger man relationships are different because they both have money, so they're both in charge. It's a relationship between equal partners.

Not every woman will find perfect lifelong happiness with a younger man. Houston only wants women to realize they have a choice.

"I'm not saying run out and look for younger men, but if it happens, don't turn it down."

Maturity News Service