
LIMELIGHT

On the Line

■ Music has often brought that extra ounce of strength to the picket line, so it's quite possible that **Jeanne Mackey** helped sway the tide in the recent victory by striking Group Health Associate nurses with these lyrics (by **Julie McCall**):

*We've diagnosed things at GHA
We're understaffed and we're
underpaid*

*So we've prescribed a picket line
The docs have joined us—we're
doing just fine.*

On Saturday, Mackey will perform labor and feminist songs at the YWCA in a special celebration concert for the GHA nurses. It's a full circle for the Washington folk musician, who did some work for the nurses' lawyer. "I ended up on the picket line a lot during my work hours," she says. "They won a decent settlement, for themselves and the patients—more staffing and time for patient education, as well as better wages."

Until recently, most of Mackey's activity was centered at women's

coffeehouses, labor and anti-nuke rallies, prisons, colleges and picket lines. She's slowly breaking into the club circuit as a solo act, playing at Gallagher's on the Hill, Park Place Café, Columbia Station and Food for Thought. Her repertoire, she points out, is chosen according to the venue. "Some songs I do everywhere, but some love songs and more subtle songs you just can't put over in a rally situation." Mackey may be one of the few singers of political songs who doesn't write her own material. "I interpret other people's stuff. I like to do it because I have a lot of friends who are on small, independent labels [among them **Holly Near, Si Kahn, Malvina Reynolds**] and they write great songs. I like to spread them around." Mackey will be backed up by one-time partner **Mary Trevor** and four other Washington women musicians. The concert begins at 8 p.m.; for information, call 589-1315.

—*Richard Harrington*



Jeanne Mackey